Author's response to reviews

Title: High maternal mortality estimated by the sisterhood method: a rural area of Mali

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Author's response to reviews:

Re: MS: 2063542242505378 : High maternal mortality estimated by the sisterhood method: a rural area of Mali, by Ingvill Aa, Mari A Grove, Anita H Haugsjå and Sven G. Hinderaker

Thank you for your very constructive suggestions for important improvement of the document. The changes are as follows:

1. The abstract has more details
2. Careful copyediting has been done
3. Some more details about the calculation have been added. Abbreviations are spelt out at first appearance, in addition to listing at the end.
4. Total fertility rate: We have provided trends of TFR for 1950-1995, for comparison.
5. The extremely high Lifetime Risk for lowest age group: Thank you for pointing this out. From the table it looks like each age group has a LTR. The col.8 is rather deaths/exposed, and this comes to LTR only in the last row. Therefore we have deleted numbers of the LTR for separate agegroups. Still, using the “deaths/exposed” in this group we can calculate a risk of 85% and MMR (MMR 2000 per 100 000 live births, 95% CI 1990-2030 per 100 000). This may confuse the readers, so I leave this out. But we added a comment that if this age group is deleted we still have a MMR above 2500/100 000.
6. We have also added some comments in the discussion. We would love to have additional analysis of age at death, but data was not available for this. Subanalysis by village does not have sufficient sample.