Reviewer's report

Title: Perspectives of men on antenatal and delivery care service utilisation in rural western Kenya: A qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 14 November 2012

Reviewer: Johanne Sundby

Reviewer's report:

Male involvement in maternal care - a paper that is interesting and adds information to a growing body of literature on this topic.

Minor Essential Revisions

I miss a few things. WHO wants male involvement? Policy or bottom up? In Western countries, men are always part of these services nowadays. This is also a reality. Africa is different.

I feel that a little theoretical intro would be better placed than the demographic/socioeconomics of part of Kenya. What are male domains and what are female domains... that you already know of? It is enough to say that it is "typical Kenya rural". I want more on culture, less on socioeconomics. Culture shapes gender roles.

The research questions are relevant.

I guess the method and sample is adequate.

The presentation of the findings are fine, interesting and well presented in themes. No surprising findings, but they are important to notice. Men are just not involved in care!

I would have liked a more detailed description of the Patriarchal society that the study is embedded in: what are the general ideas that also filter over on maternal care and spousal roles? Obviously, this may have to be challenged if one is to venture further into male involvement. Also, what does male involvement in pregnancy and delivery mean for male involvement for the children? These attitudes also probably influence providers. I would have liked to add a piece of provider attitude to the paper, but I guess you do not have that. But you can describe the "architecture" or structure of care giving, both in ANC and delivery, to understand the real barriers.

I am still curious about suggested ways forward: Is this something that can be driven through incentives, or are gender equality bottom up strategies better? What are the characteristics of the few men that really see their role as participants, versus mainstream attitude?
Other than that, I feel the article is of good value.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I am the supervisor of a PhD student that does research on male involvement in malawi, so I have ben exposed to the thematic area just recently.