Reviewer's report

Title: Recurrence of perinatal death in Northern Tanzania: A registry based cohort study

Version: 4 Date: 24 May 2013

Reviewer: Bettina Utz

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions

Page 7
Not clear in several text passages: do you mean mothers who lost child in first pregnancy or in first recorded pregnancy when you say “women who lost their child in the first pregnancy..”

Page 8
•Incomplete, data refers to? “Table 3 shows that recurrance risk was 90.6 per 1000 birth” : for which group? For women who lost their child in first(recorded ) pregnancy??
•Same applies to “women who lost their child in the first pregnancy were…”: fist or first recorded pregancy?
•“This amounts to a 3.2 fold relative risk” for who? For mothers who lost child in first reported pregnancy?

Page 9:
•Whole paragraph “in effect, the relative risk of recurrence high baby had normal birth weight , but low when low birth weight...” confusing for the reader. Should it not be the other way round? Especially confusing when comparing above statement with information in 1st paragraph on page 10 “ If a previous baby was lost by perinatal death and was also born preterm or had low birth weight, the risk of PND in the subsequent pregnancy was as high as…”
•First paragraph in discussion section rather long, could be written crisper, as all findings already in the result section
•On page 11 last paragraph “ using reproductive history data” would actually better fit in the limitation section, but the last sentence of that paragraph is repeated in first paragraph on page 14. So check if these two paragraphs can be joined, as the main message is short: data limited on neonatal deaths, as death might have occurred after discharge.

Discretionary revisions

Page 3:
•Linkage between sentences missing: “Pregnancy complications are among…Perinatal mortality is considered…”
• Sources do not belong into the text and should be in the reference section: “4.7 per 1000 births…(reported by the Medical Birth registry….)”

Page 7
• Avoid to have sources in the text and put them into references: “statistical analysis performed using SPSS version (http://....)”
• Grammar: “of losing the next baby in an early perinatal death”: better rephrase

Page 8/9
• Grammar: low birth weight had a risk of perinatal death in their next baby of 10% of losing their next baby regardless…”- maybe better to write: LBW was associated with a 14% risk of having a perinatal death in a consecutive pregnancy…
• No need for subheading “comparisons with other studies” in the discussion section
• Avoid judgements: “it is surprising …”- would remove that sentence
• Wording unclear: “symmetric reproductive patterns”???
• Paragraph 2 on page 14: “women who experienced..”: actually this belong to paragraph on selection bias, as women who had a previous loss are more likely to deliver at KCMC
• Would use discussion section to discuss assumptions: page 13, first paragraph “There is some possibility…”
• Generally: start with strengths first and then come to limitations and not the other way round.
• All in all: quite wordy- could be a bit shorter and crisper.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.