Reviewer’s report

Title: The Effect of Health Facility Delivery on Neonatal Mortality: Systematic Review And Meta-Analysis

Version: 1 Date: 8 September 2012

Reviewer: Zulfiqar A Bhutta

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This is an interesting concept attempting a systematic review of the area. What is confusing is the source of information? Since skilled attendance is hardly the subject of randomized controlled trials and the best information is gleaned from an analysis of trends in observational studies, household surveys or vital registration data. This is the way this has been evaluated in the past through analysis of DHS and MICS data.

The current review evaluated a large number of reports and ONLY analyzed 11 studies (of which 9 are beyond 2000). This is implausible and I wonder if the authors can explain the lack of information. I am aware of several studies (cluster RCTs) that have evaluated the link between facility births and skilled attendance and newborn outcomes, which are not in the meta-analysis. The findings are probably intuitively sound, and consistent with what has been shown in the past. The devil is in making the study selection criteria, listing and methods defensible.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

No competing issues apart from an interest in this area