Reviewer's report

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

Version: 2 Date: 5 December 2012

Reviewer: Victoria Nankabirwa

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made significant improvements since the last version & should be commended. Still, I have a few comments.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) Consider limiting the studies to low and middle income countries (LMICS) because:
   a. There are huge differences in this field between high income countries and LMICs
   b. There is only one high income country that is included in the review. Conclusions from this paper may still not be generalizable to high income countries.
   c. The authors can focus & strengthen their discussion & introduction sections based on LMICs

2) Secondary data analyses or retrospective data analyses are not in & of themselves study designs. These analyses can be done with data from cohort, cross-sectional or case-control studies. I suggest that these analyses be distributed in their appropriate study design categories

3) Several limitations are explained in the methods section. I suggest that these are transferred to the limitations section in the discussion.

4) Consider discussing the possibility that your overall effect could be an underestimate of the true association between your exposure and outcome variables. This is because in areas with low facility delivery uptake (which is the case in many LMICs), the likelihood that only very high risk deliveries end up at health facilities is quite high. As such, deliveries at health facilities could represent to a great extent those women that initially attempted to deliver at home and then resorted to a facility when the delivery failed to progress (information bias/misclassification). Because these are extremely high risk, the associated mortality in hospital deliveries could be exaggerated, while that happening among home deliveries could be underestimated.

5) The discussion section generally needs tightening

Minor Essential Revisions

6) Are there any strengths to this analysis? Perhaps these could be added to the discussion.
7) Table 2 and figure 2 seem to provide more or less the same information, which is redundant

**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.