Reviewer's report

Title: Availability of drugs and medical supplies needed for emergency obstetric care: experience of health facility managers in a rural district of Tanzania.

Version: 1 Date: 17 December 2013

Reviewer: Rob Mooij

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1) The length of the manuscript is quite long for the amount of information presented. Especially the introduction should be shorter and more to the point.
2) The study is said to focus on supplies for emoc and not other essential drugs, but there is no clear reason why this was specifically chosen. Was there reason to believe the situation with EmOC drugs is different? Also the qualitative result from the interviews are often not specific to EmOC drugs and could have easily been about other drugs. Sometimes I miss focus on EmOC drugs and large parts of the article could have been about other drugs as well.

Minor Essential Revisions

1) Background can be shorter: "relies upon an environment where drugs"
2) p 3: inadequacy of drugs is not correct English, please replace inadequacy
3) p 3: "In a complication such as… etc": remove, not essential
4) p4: "on improving (without THE) health service, in which the CONTINUOUS provision"
5) p6 The section about Kongwa in “Study setting” should be put in a different position in the text, since it is about the drug ordering procedures, maybe even in the introduction.
6) p8: the section about facility survey can be much shorter and to the point
7) p8 the section about desk review can be deleted in my opinion: the found references are discussed throughout the text.
8) p10: delivery packs. (remove: supplied for women
9) p10 only half of the facilities. (remove: surveyed)
10) p11: after EMOC in the heading remove .
11) p 11: we depend on THE district hospital.
12) p11: to get drugs. When you request drugs...
13) p11: for all the quotes: the quotation mark should follow the dot: “… they don’t have them.”
14) p12: deliverIES daily
15) p12: : they still use the same money you have for the drugs": what is meant here? That for the items which are not ordered and needed money is substracted from the MSD account? Please clarify.

16) p15: please specify the amount in MSD per which time? Per month or per year? Alternatively do not mention the amount at all since it has no meaning to the rest of the text as it is not made clear what amount is necessary.

17) p15: THE government sets a small

18) p15: opposite TO what we expected

19) p16: you mention the CHF for the first time in this paragraph. I would at least mention it earlier, somewhere in the introduction

20) p 16: it was reported that neither (remove .)

21) p 17: availability of drugs and medical supplies, INCLUDING essential drugs for EmOC, at rural health facilities

22) p18: the first part of “Availability of drugs...” is a repetition of the introduction and is too long, as well as the example of the dying mother.

23) p18: increased number of deliveries reported in this area: do you have a reference for this? Or is this a result from the facility survey: if that is the case please put this in as a result.

24) p18: “as described by the 3 delay model", please remove, not necessary.

25) p21: their perspectives would HAVE added a deeper

26) p 31 denial of supply of necessary drugs (remove AT DISP LEVEL)

Discretionary Revisions

1) p4: I think the link from drug shortages and effect on health care to a need to improve access to drugs is very quick. Maybe it would be better to say: from these studies it can be concluded that there is a need… etc.

2) p5: perhaps change “unneeded"

3) p7: participation/involvement: better to use OR instead of /

4) p9: Swahili INTO English

5) p14: difficult working environment

6) p19, 2 times “lack” in 2 sentences, better to replace one time with a synonym.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

no competing interests