Reviewer’s report

Title: Adherence to four antenatal care visits and newborn care practices among lactating mothers in rural Uganda

Version: 1 Date: 16 October 2013

Reviewer: Malabika Sarker

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Introduction
The article does not represent the title. The logical flow is missing. The reasons for neonatal deaths described in chaotic order. The authors jump from neonatal mortality to infant mortality without paragraph transition. The focus of the introduction is not specific and rational for the study is not justified.

Method
The strength of the multi stage cluster sampling is generalizability.
The sample size was calculated based on home care practices but authors did not explain ‘what kind of home care practices’.
The reason for selecting mothers who had children age less than 5 months was not explained (why not mothers with less than 6 months).
The description of the parish in terms of population and geography should be presented.
Data collection process was missing.
All outcome variables are self-reported variables, which should be acknowledged.

Result
Negative (eg. 25% mothers used unclean cloth) and mixed results (negative and positive) should not be presented. The findings presented as ‘desired new-born care practice was observed ……’ is not correct, author did not use observation as a method.
Presentation of the non-significant results (P value > 0.05) was unnecessary and confusing.
Education was categorized in to ‘none/primary’ and ‘secondary plus’, but combining no education and primary education could influence the direction of the result.
In the method section, the exposure variable was identified as ‘sufficient ANC” but analysis was not done based on that, so the reason for presenting it was not clear.

Discussion
The statements in the first paragraph are not based on the findings of the study. The results showed a better practice of neonatal care by those who delivered at the health facility. Those who delivered at the facility or attended ANC four time and more reported better neonatal care practice than those who were not. The question regarding quality of care is not evidence based. The discussion is repetition of the results and little bit misleading. There is no in depth analysis of the findings including policy and implementation implications.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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