Author's response to reviews

Title: Antenatal care and perinatal outcomes in Kwale district, Kenya

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Brown, Sohani, Khan, Lilford and Mukhwana

Response to reviewers’ comments
October 2007

Reviewer: Jos van Roosmalen

3. Relating ANC to pregnancy outcome
We have revised the paper so that live births are only compared to stillbirths in the analyses.

4. Wealth, income and education in Matuga
Matuga is close to Kwale town and the relatively easy access to the schools and facilities there means that more women from Matuga have had secondary education or above. The proximity to Kwale also explains why more families in Matuga have the assets included in derivation of wealth quintiles. However, Matuga is generally poor in terms of income. We now explain this in the paper.

5. Statistical significance of variables between dispensaries
Small differences are statistically significant due to the large sample size and high precision in the data (and all calculations have been checked). However another referee has asked us to remove the between-dispensary comparisons from the table and we have now done so.

Reviewer: Anthony K Mbonye

We have undertaken all the required changes, except the following:

3. We have retained ITMN in the list of abbreviations as we have used ITMN in the paper. However, we have changed the detail so that it reads ‘insecticide-treated mosquito net’.

4. We have retained the data on the variables included in the analysis as a table rather than including the information in the text, as we feel this adds clarity. The table is referred to in the methods section.

Reviewer: Justus Hofmeyr

2. Reporting of between-dispensary comparisons
We have removed these comparisons from the table.

3. Time to attend ANC
We have now amended the analysis to consider live birth vs. stillbirth. We consider the possibility that prematurity may impact on both ANC visits and birthweight in the discussion. However the aim of the paper is to determine the association between ANC and outcomes and hence we have retained these comparisons.

4. Use of the word ‘effect’ rather than ‘association’
We have changed the text throughout as requested.