Reviewer's report

Title: Duration of exclusive breastfeeding; validity of retrospective assessment

Version: 1 Date: 24 December 2010

Reviewer: Upul Senarath

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The question posed by the authors is clear, but its relevance was not described to the point. There should be some discussion as to why the study evaluated recall methods done at 9 months of age. Is there any evidence that 9-months recall methods are used anywhere? Widely used method is 24-recall in cross sectional surveys (authors mention that this has been described elsewhere)

   The objective should be more specific to include "9 months" rather that after cessation of EBF. The argument is that EBF duartion can only be measured after cessation.

2. Methods

   Authors need to explain why the prospective data method used a long recall of 2 months, despite the infants were being followed up at monthly intervals

   Use of routine care providers for data collection would introduce a interviewer bias. Need to justify this issue.

   Main variables should be clearly defined: EBF duration (the average time period an infant was breastfed exclusively) Or Proportion Exclusively breastfed for 6 months. But the results in abstract mention only the rate breastfed for 6 months implying that this this is the main outcome variable.

6. Key limitations of the work should be highlighted together with an attempt to show that the study would be still valid despite such limitaions. Eg. methodological issues

7. Acknowledge previous work - need to cite situations where recall at 9-month being used

8. title and abstract accurately

   Title to be more specific : suggest "Duration of exclusive breastfeeding; validity of retrospective assessment at 9 months of age"

Abstract - acceptable

Minor Essential Revisions

9. Writing - generally acceptable - Need editorial corrections for few grammer & spelling errors
to name a few,
**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:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'