Reviewer's report

Title: Uptake and outcomes of a prevention-of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) program in Zomba district, Malawi

Version: 2 Date: 30 March 2011

Reviewer: Nyaradzai Edith Kurewa

Reviewer's report:

Minor Revisions:
In the introduction i think the authors wanted to say MTCT of HIV accounts for 90% of vertical transmission.
Line 93 i am not sure if you would want to use the word relevant but that might be prioritized or strategic because i think every health institution is relevant in some way.
Line 145. Personal health passports-this terminology needs to be explained further as it might be a documentation term not familiar in other countries and settings.
Line 147; I did not quite understand the affirmative observation.
Statement in line 180 should fit well after line 172 as 173.
There is an ommission in line 208 where it should be the percentage in the bracket.
Line 217/18 could be put across like this"A total of 128 HIV infected mothers were not on ART; 56(44%) had a high CD4 count(WHO stage 1 or 11), whilst 72(56%) did not have a CD4 count test and were also not clinically staged".
Line 221, its not usual to start a sentence with a number could be put as; Among the HIV infected, 99(61%) recalled about the importance of follow up of their exposed infants.
Line 248 iam not sure at how many months was the seroconversion calculated at and also appears that half of the HIV negatives were lost to follow up.
There is also no mention regarding the mean CD4 count of the cohort and those commenced and not commenced on HAART.
Whilst loss to follow up of HIV exposed infants is discussed there is no reference literature to show the magnitude of this loss.
Table 1: I think the word mothers registered is more appropriate than to say traced as this was the total that you registered but those you traced are the ones you managed to follow up.
Table 2: I do not quite see the relevance of the line HTCT at ANC and labor =162??
I would suggest that the table be modified by comparing those varibales
appropriate for both HIV infected and uninfected. Then a separate one for the HIV infected related variables only. The table can be split into 2.

Generally people prefer using medical terminology of referring to infants and not babies. Also human rights activists are not for the word HIV positive they prefer HIV infected as more polite term putting a human face in it.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests