**Author's response to reviews**

**Title:** Why the Non-improvement in under five mortality in Uganda from 1995 to 2000? A retrospective analysis

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**Author's response to reviews:** see over
28 May 2011

The Editor-in-Chief,
BMC Public Health

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RE-SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPT

We are re-submitting a manuscript entitled: NON-IMPROVEMENT IN UNDER FIVE MORTALITY IN UGANDA FROM 1995 TO 2000: A RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS for possible publication in your esteemed journal.

We thank you, your editorial team and the two referees that have reviewed this manuscript in a record time. The issues raised have been incorporated and believe they have improved the quality of the manuscript.

We have added a point by point response of the issues raised by the referees. We have also tracked these changes in the manuscript.

Yours Sincerely,

Fred Nuwaha
Juliet N. Babirye
Natal Ayiga
Point by point response of the issues raised by the referees

Referee 1
Minor Essential Revisions .In my opinion they could add some information about teenage pregnancies and the socio- religious component and which may contributed to the need for multiple pregnancies which is not very well illustrated. My suggestion is that they review more recent data some of the data used is from 2002 almost a decade away and include more recent findings .We do not clearly understand this comment! Information on teenage pregnancies is included (see adolescent pregnancy in table 2 page 21). Data on socio components is available in table (see poverty levels and levels of education). Data on religious component is not available in UDHS. We investigate the period 1995-2000 because this appears to be the only time of stagnation for U5MR in the country. Thereafter there was improvement.

Referee 2
1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? The authors state that the problem was an unexplained increase in the under 5 mortality rate (U5MR) from 1995 to 2000. The increase referred to is from 147.3 to 151.5 per 1000 live births. This level of change should not be referred to as an increase that is worthy of study. The problem should be described as lack of change in the U5MR during that period. The statement deterioration has been changed to stagnation (page 3 second line from the bottom).

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? It appears that only bivariate analyses were carried out. An explanatory study of determinants should use a multivariate approach. All factors investigated at bivariate level were not significant (see table 2 page 21). Therefore, there were no determinants to include in a multivariate model. This is why the study leads to a hypothesis rather than generating explanatory variables.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? No. The discussion is focused mainly on the problem of malaria, and not on the question posed in the title and abstract. As a reader, I felt misled by the title and abstract, because I find this to be a study of the impact of malaria on U5MR in Western Uganda, and not on the study question as posed. The aim of the study was to investigate reason(s) for non-improvement. After ruling out the major causes of non-improvement of U5MR (table 2, first paragraph of discussion on page 9), we zeroed on malaria. This is the reason why malaria appears to take the bulk of the discussion. We feel shy to label this a study of impact of malaria on u5mr! The title has been changed to Why the non improvement in under five mortality in Uganda from 1995-2000? A retrospective analysis, to reflect these concerns.