Reviewer's report

Title: Non-improvement in under five mortality in Uganda from 1995 to 2000: a retrospective analysis

Version: 1 Date: 28 June 2011

Reviewer: Laura C Altobelli

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

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.

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.

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.

No problem with the following aspects:

3. Are the data sound?
Data were from a national survey with technical assistance from Macro International – Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) using internationally accepted sampling, questionnaire design, and data collection and data processing procedures, so the data should be sound.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Yes
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes
9. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests.