Reviewer's report

**Title:** Targeting condom distribution at high risk places increases condom utilization - Evidence from an intervention study in Livingstone, Zambia

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 31 October 2011

**Reviewer:** Adamson Sinjani Muula

**Reviewer's report:**

Thank you for the opportunity given me to review this manuscript. My observations are as below:

1. I find the Abstract not descriptive enough in incorporate the key issues that the manuscript represents. I am asking myself whether, if I was planning a systematic review of the literature, would I have enough information to guide me include this paper [manuscript] in my review? The answer is most likely no. Why: Because I do not know how many people were included as peer group educators; I do not know if the training provided was home-grown or followed some validated programme; I do not know the age and sex distribution of the peer educators; I do not know what were data analysis methods for both qualitative and quantitative data; and other key information that should be in the abstract. Now, the abstract is long enough and so, it needs to be made more concise;

2. Can we really say that there is evidence of increased condom utilization? I am not sure but may be "reported condom utilization" is much more appropriate;

3. The objectives and rationale of the study are not obvious to me from the Abstract;

4. The ethics section is ok, but it is not clear to me where the interviews with patrons of PLACE sites was done. Was it within the bars, shebeens, hotels in "public" or a safe private place was identified for this purpose?

5. The presentation of p values need to be consistent i.e. as inequalities < and not sometimes as equal and less than at the same time;

6. I am not sure that the only interpretation of not finding condoms at a site by the external evaluator ought to be negative. What if sites which had condoms all the time meant that people were not collecting them? What if sites with no condoms meant that the condoms were going at a faster rate?

7. I am uncomfortable with reference 21 which is just submitted to a journal but not even in press;

8. The spellings for Sandoy as author need to be consistent

9. The bar charts presented should rather not rely on different colors as these do not print out well in black and white. Different shapes are much better.
10 The tables did not come out well.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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