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: 14 November 2011

Reviewer: sharon S. weir

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
- None

Minor Essential Revisions
1 p 2- Put some of the key numbers in the abstract to give more credence to the text.
2 p 4- Specify population estimate for Maramba and Dambwa.
3 p 4- Specify in the text the number of venues visited at baseline and number of male and female guests interviewed in Maramba, Dambwa and the city center.
4 Provide some indication of the cost of the intervention and the cost of the PLACE assessments.
5 The information at the beginning of the impact section from the peer educator interviews could be moved to the intervention process section to show increasing acceptability of the intervention over time. The first sentence of the impact section could be the comparison of intervention vs control indicators such as the percentage of venue representatives who reported HIV prevention activities onsite (91% vs 30%).

Discretionary Revisions
5 Table 2 may benefit from some additional formatting. For example "Marital Status" and "Residence" may not need separate columns to the left. "Single, Married, etc could be left justified in first column to give more room in table so that CI could be on one line and not on two lines. Bolding is not needed for pvalues. The table could be put in portrait mode with a section for Men above and Women below.
6 Was the information from the baseline survey used to design the intervention in any way? For example, did the peer education messages reflect any of the baseline findings?
7 If possible, a better reference than private communication would be useful for the decline in STI in the intervention community. Are there any summary reports to cite or could the clinic registries be cited?
8 How were the findings shared with local and national governments? What was the response from the local and national governments?
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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. As a co-author on three articles referenced in the paper and one of the original developers of the PLACE method, I am pleased that the authors used the PLACE method in Zambia. I did not contribute to the Sandoy et al paper under review in any way.