Reviewer’s report

Title: Unintentional injury mortality in India, 2005: nationally representative mortality survey of 1.1 million homes

Version: 1 Date: 22 December 2011

Reviewer: Michael Keall

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Generally this is a good paper and worthy of publication. However there needs to be more detail of the methods, greater clarity of presentation of the results, and international comparisons.

Major Compulsory Revisions

More detail is needed of the survey. Were the data collected from the households as enumerated in 1993? (this would be a major problem!) What updating is carried out? Why was weighting carried out using 2005 totals rather than choosing population estimates from the middle of the survey period (2001-2003)?

Page 5 - how can be sure that the missing deaths were "at random"? A death may lead to the household moving, so missing deaths are unlikely to be at random. Why were "136,000" deaths enumerated? You need to give the precise number. Surely the 9% that were unable to be coded could have systematic errors (e.g., a field worker with poor handwriting). How did you establish these were not systematic?

"The year 2005 was selected for estimation due to the availability of the most accurate, stable demographic estimates and were comparable to Indian census projections for 2006". Where did the 2005 estimates come from? "and were comparable to" what is the subject of this ... what were comparable?

Was stratified random sampling used? (State this)

What test has the p value? Just because there may have been little change over 2001-03 does not mean that there was no change from 2001-2005.

"segregating the national totals" what does this mean?

The UN estimates - you need to explain how these were produced. Why are these a better estimate of totals than the survey-based ones?

"Live births" where did these data come from?

Why not use 95% confidence intervals? These are more commonly accepted and people are used to them.
Results
You need to present the confidence intervals with each estimate.
"122,828 deaths" - how did you get to this total from the initial 136,000? Maybe a table could explain this.

The differences in the regional estimates need some explanation in the Discussion.

Minor Essential Revisions
In the Discussion, you need to review the sentence starting "our mortality rates ...." as grammar is wrong.

Page 11: "Nevertheless" is the wrong word. How can a death "present" to a hospital?

Page 12, first para: you need to add a sentence something like "this means that .... would underestimate the burden of drowning ...."

"unaddressed" is the wrong word
"higher deaths" = "higher death rates"

Causes of deaths - say which causes.
"and because of the noted ..." this is clumsy and needs rewording. There is also a spelling mistake.

What is an "epidemiological transition"? Reword this.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests