Reviewer's report

Title: Do accurate HIV and antiretroviral therapy knowledge, and previous testing experiences increase the uptake of HIV voluntary counselling and testing? Results from a cohort study in rural Tanzania

Version: 2 Date: 4 June 2013

Reviewer: FREDRICK MAKUMBI

Reviewer's report:

Date June 2 2013

General comments

• A well written and presented manuscript, addressing an important research question of public health interest, especially during the HIV/AIDS epidemic

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract

• It may be important to indicate the level of statistical significance between proportions in the results section of the abstract

Data analysis section

• Page 8, it is not clear how “positive experiences” was defined. Please include this definition

Experience of HIV and VCT

• Page 11, it is not clear if this is the definition of “positive experiences”. If it is, then you need to move it to earlier part in the write up

Tables-1

• It is important to indicate which percentages are column and which ones are row; otherwise it may be quite confusing to the reader

Table-4

• The variable “ART knowledge” has “Fair” as the reference category. I thought that it may be better to main one the extreme levels as a reference; this has been done for the “HIV knowledge” variables

• I also have concerns with the use of “Primary 5-7” level as the reference for the “Education” variable. Why not choose one of the extreme levels?

Table-5

• I suggest that you switch the 95%CI to come immediately after the “Odds ratio”, and the p-value is put at the end. It is better to read the measure of association together with its CI before reading p-value

• The variable “ART knowledge” is collapsed into 2 levels in the adjusted
analysis, yet it has 3 levels in the crude analysis (Table 4)

Discretionary Revisions

Figure-1
• I hope the bars in figure-1 can easily understood when not in color print

Recommendations
• Recommended for printing after addressing comments

Major Compulsory Revisions

Discussion section
• The mentioned study limitation is a big challenge that clearly may impact on the generalizability of the findings. Although the limitation is indicated, I would suggest that you provide more evidence by assessing “potential differences” comparing the 61% participants to the 31% who did not. A comparison of their characteristics that are related to the study variables could be done and results presented.
• Unless this is assessed, it may not be reasonable to infer “generalisability” of your study findings

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.

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