Reviewer's report

Title: A cross sectional study: Latrine coverage and associated factors among rural communities in Bahir Dar Zuria, Ethiopia.

Version: 3 Date: 13 November 2012

Reviewer: Laura Sima

Reviewer's report:

MAJOR Compulsory Revisions:

- Include discussion of latrine quality in more general terms (see Montgomery et al, 2009) The standards used to distinguish "Latrine condition" into the two categories 'need maintenance' and 'no need maintained' need to be better explained. A more extensive conversation of the types and standards for latrine design that are being assessed needs to be concluded in the discussion section. Need discussion that relates these findings to the literature about latrine coverage in Africa (a rich field) in more detail.

- Data relies on self-reported data but there is no discussion of the limitations of this form of data collection. Limitations should be reported and acknowledged.

- There is no mention of ethics review but this data collection method involved household surveys and monitoring sanitation facilities at the household-level. Recommending a section be added to discuss ethical review board consideration.

- Should justify the use of the arbitrary distances that are used to group the population (e.g. 5,000 bir, 30 minute walking time, 6 meters, 2 year construction time). Were these simply selected because they were significant or is there conceptual rationale???

Minor Essential Revisions

- Recommend removing the 2nd paragraph of the study design section or at least rephrasing. It is worded in a confusing way and is unnecessary to the paper.

- Recommend removing table 3 from the paper -- there is no need to list insignificant odds ratios. The addition of a sentence to report that several variables are insignificant is sufficient.

- Need expanded section that describes the variables that were considered in the study as part of the study design section (how were questions selected, etc).

- Recommend removal of the graph in the paper. This data can be incorporated into a table and its inclusion as a graph does not add to the paper.

- recommend removal of lines from Table 1 that do not need to be discussed in Table 3 (see above)

TYPOS in table 2 (page 15)
- "iof" rather than "of"
- Construction is capitalized but should not be
- "functional of latrine"???

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

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