Reviewer’s report

Title: Physical and mental health impact of a sport-for-development intervention in a post-conflict setting: randomised controlled trial nested within an observational study of adolescents in Gulu, Uganda

Version: 2 Date: 17 February 2014

Reviewer: Ferdinand Salonna

Reviewed paper presents a consistently elaborated study focused on very interesting and rarely studied topic. Authors evaluates the health impact of sport for development interventions in urban society emerged from years of war that was characterized by high levels of internal displacement and child abduction (Gulu, Northern Uganda), with some contradictory findings with broad range of social and health related claims of the sport for development sector.

Unfortunately, the presented study has some several shortcomings which makes the generalization of its results problematic. Authors are aware of these limitations and they are discussed.

Nevertheless, presented study results challenge the blanket statements that resonate from the physical activity literature suggesting positive mental health outcomes in young people and thus contributes to scientific discourse in this field of research. These results has also implications for program implementers, policy makers, clinicians or other stakeholders.

Despite all the limitations, I would advise to publish the article Minor Essential Revisions.

Minor Essential Revisions.
Article contains six large tables some of them unnecessarily detailed or redundant information.

1. Table 1 should be reduced or deleted. I suggest to omit info about attended school or division of residence and to keep only the narrative description of history of abduction.

Discretionary Revisions
2. Tables 2-6 include plenty of redundant information in narrative parts and tables. I suggest to avoid that.

As BMC Public Health has no limits for number of tables or their size this is really discretionary.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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