Reviewer's report

Title: Descending the Sanitation Ladder in urban Uganda: Evidence from Kampala Slums

Version: 1 Date: 30 March 2014

Reviewer: Andrea Rechenburg

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

1) The authors use qualitative data obtained during interviews and Focus Group Discussions to verify their hypothesis. While they apply a content thematic approach and were able to identify emerging themes and sub-themes, which were used for further sub-analysis of the data, the authors do not present these quantified data in their manuscript. Sometimes the author refer to "...many users...,", or "...some landlords often rent latrines...", but there is no evidence provided, that this quantification made by the authors reflects the observed situation. The reader is not able to check the statements based on numbers.

It should be able for the authors to overcome this fault by adding numbers gained through the content analysis. It should also be possible to provide data from the expert interviews, e.g. 15/18 interviewed key informants mention... By this the quality of the manuscript would improve a lot.

2) Sometimes the authors seem to present their own result, but cite other references at the end of the sentence. For example: "Generally, improved latrines were cleaner than the unimproved latrines [28,29].". If the authors show their own result and would like to point out, that this is in accordance with other publications, than they should rephrase their sentence to make this clear. There are other sentences in the manuscript, where citations are included in the same strange way, leaving the reader a little bit puzzled, whether this is a citation or the unique observation of the authors.

3) Move quotations you obtained during the study, to the text, where the argument is useful. Currently, some of the quotations are given at the end of a long paragraph, but it would make more sense for the reader to get them right at the point, where the quotation could underline a statement given by the authors.

4) Please read your manuscript carefully once more and correct minor errors, such as the dot between "...to be eradicated. Slums are now viewed...". Here a comma should be included instead of the dot. There are other such minor mistakes as well. Second example: Whitenile in text, while White Nile in the Table.

5) I would like to advice to use the complete noun directly in the text, instead of putting it in brackets. E.g. "...because it (UN-Habitat)..." Why not writing "...because UN-Habitat..." Please check the text for other positions, where this occurs.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare, that I have no competing interests in relation to the reviewed paper.