Reviewer's report

Title: The family as a determinant of stunting in children living in conditions of extreme poverty: a case-control study.

Version: 2 Date: 20 July 2004

Reviewer: ann hill

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a resubmission following comments made by two reviewers, who raised concerns relating to the study design, analysis, and interpretation of the data.
1. Basic weaknesses in study design. The authors have added a statement about the limitations of the study as requested.
2. Interpretation. The Discussion was considered weak, confusing and conflicting. The authors have rectified the overtly conflicting statements.

Inherent weaknesses in this study hamper interpretation, but the basic idea is sound, i.e. to identify family-related risk factors for stunting and determine if these differ in rural and urban communities. Although not a robust study, it may serve as a stimulus to others for more in-depth research.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

a) Definition of stunting (p4) reword to ‘whose height-for-age is less than -2 standard deviations of the reference population median.
b) Definition of wasting (p4) reword to ‘whose weight-for-height is less than -2 standard deviations of the reference population median.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

NONE