Reviewer's report

Title: Gender distribution of adult patients on highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) in Southern Africa: a systematic review.

Version: 1 Date: 7 January 2007

Reviewer: Carmen Zorrilla

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting report about gender-related access to HAART in Africa after the efforts of scale-up. The authors could have expanded on the reasons why relatively more women are accessing HAART and the relationship to the MTCT (mother-to-child-transmission) prevention efforts. It would complete the analysis if they can include some statistics of how many women have been intervened with these programs, thus allowing for early detection of HIV through VCT programs.

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
The first sentence in the Conclusions section makes no sense. It should be corrected. One suggestion: Published data suggest that women are not at a disadvantage when accessing HAART in Africa...

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Again, more information and an expanded section discussion why women have accessed HAART (after scale-up of free services) and its relationship to the MTCT programmes.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
Roche, Pfizer, Tibotec----sponsored clinical research
Pfizer, Tibotec----Speaker's Bureau