Reviewer’s report

Title: Voluntary HIV counselling and testing among men in rural western Uganda: implications for HIV prevention

Version: 1 Date: 21 January 2008

Reviewer: Surinda Kawichai

Reviewer’s report:

Reviewers report

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- Major Compulsory Revisions

This article sought to determine the prevalence of VCT and factors associated with VCT use among men in Bukanzo West sub-district, rural western Uganda. VCT prevalence and factors associate with VCT had been studied and published by others in several populations.

Cross-section on qualitative and quantitative methods was used by the authors to investigate the issues. The quantitative data were gained by face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire on randomly selected cluster sample. Explanation of sampling the clusters was too brief to understand how PPS was obtained for the clusters sample. Was each individual sample of the men yielded in equal probability?

Revise of data analysis for factors associated with VCT is needed. Participants can be divided into 3 groups; men who never exposed to VCT, men who had pre-test counseling but did not go for HIV test, and those who had complete VCT. To compare these 3 groups of men to see their differences and what associated with complete VCT will give insight into how to implement interventions to encourage complete VCT among those who had pre-test but refuse and those who never had VCT which invaluable to public health. Men who decided to have VCT but refused after pre-test counseling may have some characteristics similar and some different to men who never involved in any process of VCT. To combine these two groups and compared to those who had completed VCT may dilute association for some variables.

Some variables are not made sense to find the association includes disclosure of HIV results to partners (this variable only those who had complete VCT had the answer, how those who never had VCT can answer this question), To know my HIV sero status is a reasons for taking VCT (this would not relevant to those who never had VCT).

Some variables can compare only between those who taking pre-test but refused VCT and those who had complete VCT includes test with partner, feel comfortable at VCT site, and willingness to seek VCT.
Variables Social belief exists, It would be better if investigate each social belief with VCT.

What does it mean of No Yes for distance to nearest VCT? This variables should be classified into distance such as less than 1 km One km or more.

This study has invaluable data that can be investigated to suggest for interventions to encourage complete VCT among the population or similar.

What next?
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Based on your assessment of the validity of the manuscript, what do you advise should be the next step?

- Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest
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- An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
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Cannot assess (reviewer is none native English).

Statistical review
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Is it essential that this manuscript be seen by an expert statistician?

If you feel that the manuscript needs to be seen by a statistician, but are unable to assess it yourself then please could you suggest alternative experts in your confidential comments to the editors.

- Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

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