Reviewer's report

Title: Lost opportunities in HIV prevention: programmes miss places where exposures are highest

Version: 1 Date: 5 November 2007

Reviewer: Jesus M Garcia Calleja

Reviewer's report:

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

'I declare that I have no competing interests'

The authors seem to ignore the latest Epi reports and papers and discussions on HIV in Africa with the diverse heterogeneity and levels of HIV infections and reported declined prevalence and new infections in several countries including Zimbabwe, Zambian, Malawi. They make several assertions saying like condom use is too low, but several reports, in STI journal, special issue on HIV declining epidemics in Africa highlight the links between sexual change and HIV declining prevalence. There are also several other papers in the recent year.

The discussion on the contribution of special vulnerable populations to the overall national HIV epidemic, specially in countries with high levels, it needs to be improved, what is the evidence for one or another ?.

The prevention activities in the areas are poorly recorded, can be improved this section to know what exactly was done in these places as preventive activities ?

The authors say that there are 2000 sex workers in Livingstone ?, knowing personally the city I doubt very much of this figure ?, can provide definition of sex workers and serous reference for this number ? they may be repeated clients on the clinic ?

Recognize the limitations of Place , and perhaps refer to other Place studies in Zambia if it has been done before. How this data will be used afterwards ?, any concrete plans to improve preventive activities there ?

The da results could be comared wit the DHS 2004 data with HIV testing amom general population and see if there are any significatn differences.

What next?: Accept after minor essential 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:

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