Author's response to reviews

Title: Do the socioeconomic impacts of antiretroviral therapy vary by gender? A longitudinal study of Kenyan agricultural worker employment outcomes

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Dear Editor:

As requested, we have revised the Discussion section of the submitted manuscript to cite the earlier article and discuss the results and differences in the Discussion section of the current manuscript.

In the revised manuscript, we added the following section to the end of Results and Discussion Section (note that reference 25 is the reference to the earlier analysis):

Relationship to Prior Research

We previously reported preliminary results for one outcome, days plucking tea, for 59 index subjects [25] based on a simple comparison of means between the index group and a comparison group matched only on gang. These 59 index subjects worked significantly fewer days plucking tea monthly than the comparison population beginning in the 9th month pre-ART. After initiating ART, they quickly increased days plucking during their initial 12 months on therapy, although by month 12 they continued to work 2.67 fewer days (p-value = 0.04) than the comparison group.

The analysis and results reported in the current analysis provides a substantial improvement to the earlier analysis. First, due to the smaller sample size (33 women and 26 men in the index group) in [25], we did not stratify the analysis by gender. The results reported in this analysis show that stratifying by gender is needed both to understand dynamics in the intervention group as well as the general workforce. Second, beyond gender, matching a fixed number of
comparison workers in the same gang based on age and experience creates a better comparison group for analysis. Since some gangs have larger numbers of workers than others, the comparison group in the earlier analysis was weighted more heavily to larger gangs. And third, while days plucking tea is one employment outcome of interest, the current paper includes two other key outcomes, kilograms harvested and days working non-plucking assignments, that provide a more complete picture of employment adjustments over time during the pre- and post-ART periods.

Thank you for the advice and assistance.

Sincerely,

Bruce Larson
Associate Professor