Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors associated with unintended pregnancy, poor birth outcomes and post-partum contraceptive use among HIV-positive female adolescents in Kenya

Authors:

Anke van der Kwaak (a.v.d.kwaak@kit.nl)
Francis Obare (fonyango@popcouncil.org)
Harriet Birungi (hbirungi@popcouncil.org)

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RESPONSE TO REVIEWER’S COMMENTS

Referee 1:

Minor necessary comments:

1. Provide more information on who conducted the study apart from informing the reader that it was conducted as “part of a diagnostic study...”. Even if further details of the study are provided in Birungi et al. and Obare et al., we need a synopsis of the study in the paper.

Response: The information has been provided (see the third sentence in the first paragraph of the ‘Data’ section).

2. Provide examples of the unobserved characteristics of pregnancies to justify the use of random-effects logit models.

Response: The examples of unobserved characteristics that may be correlated with the outcomes have been provided in the last part of the first paragraph in the ‘Statistical analysis’ section as well as in the last paragraph of the ‘Discussion’ section (third sentence).

3. The titles of tables should add a phrase to show that the study comes from Kenya.

Response: This has been corrected accordingly.

4. There is a need to reflect more on the model covariates with one significant variable only. Does its effect remains strong if the other variables are removed from the model?

What is the key variable in each of the models which is considered to significantly influence each of the outcome variables?

Response: As noted in the discussion, one covariate that is significantly associated with both unintended pregnancy and poor birth outcomes is paternity status. There is, however, no single covariate that is significantly associated with all the three outcomes. With respect to examining if such association remains strong when other covariates are removed from the model, it is worth noting that no major conclusions can be made from such results given that they are likely to be affected by confounding factors. A more meaningful question is whether the association remains strong if other covariates are included in the model to determine whether the results could be affected by other confounding factors. The analytical approach therefore considered all the available covariates that could affect the outcomes.
Additional comments provided by the Associate Editor:

"This article describes the unintended pregnancy and related factors among a specific group of HIV positive adolescents in Kenya. Being a sensitive research issue, it is natural that the sample includes only those who were aware of their status or willing to participate. Although the results are highly expected ones, the study shows lack of well-functioning reproductive health care.

The paper is clearly written and the conclusions are justified. However, slightly more accurate description of the data collection would increase the understanding of the data quality."

Response: The detailed description of the data collection process has been provided (see second paragraph of the ‘Data’ section and also fifth statement in the last paragraph of the same section).