Reviewer’s report

Title: Facility and home based HIV Counseling and Testing: a comparative analysis of uptake of services by rural communities in southwestern Uganda

Version: 1  Date: 7 August 2010

Reviewer: Moses Bateganya

Reviewer’s report:

Major essential revisions
None

Minor essential revisions (see below)
Reviewer’s comments
General comments
Relevancy: The paper contributes to a very important clinical and public health concept that is important to scaling up HIV counseling and testing especially in resource limited setting.

Readiness for publication: This paper requires rewriting and clarifying in key areas on the methodology, and interpretation of the data.

Language: Consider revising the language to make the paper more concise and the meaning clear to the reader.

Detailed comments
Title: Clear but the paper does not way the data is interpreted does not clearly bring out the comparison between the two modalities being compared.

ABSTRACT

Background: Home based HIV testing has extensively conducted in Uganda both programmatically through TASO, CDC and others quoted. Last paragraph; in the sentence “….to comparatively evaluate predictors….” Could simply be written as “….to compare predictors or to identify predictors…."

Methods: Clarify what the intervention was. “employing quantitative methods” is not necessary to include. Second sentence which starts “Nine hundred could be put in the results instead. Describe the intervention(s)

Results: Include a sentence on the demographics of the two communities.

Conclusion: Not stated instead you have put a recommendation

BACKGROUND:

1st sentence. The number of people living with HIV is what should be quoted since it includes all those with AIDS. The background should be reviewed for flow so it can tell a story rather than it being facts with no connecting words. For example use However, In etc to connect the facts.
After sentence ending in reference 5 mention that incidence in Uganda has started rising. This can also be stated at the end of the background as justification for this study.

Page 5 state reference for the second sentence “Matovu et al)—Ref? Last paragraph the sentence needs to be rewritten so the word “services” is not used twice in the sentence. Second sentence in the last paragraph needs a reference.

Page 7: Last paragraph the phrase “comparatively evaluate” change to just compare. The last sentence. Home based VCT is not really new.

METHODS (page 8)
Design and sample calculation. Again get rid of employing quantitative methods! Provide a reference for the last sentence of paragraph one.

Please mention that the two groups were separated in terms of time (2007 and 2008 respectively and mention why you chose that time)

Paragraph 2: sentence 2. Add that prior to providing the intervention of……… And in the same service clarify which service (VCT?) A map and picture may be good to show where the two areas are.

Page 9: No need to state the formula just reference it and mention the assumptions. Provide a reference for the figures you used in the assumptions even if unpublished e.g Hospital records, MoH report etc. Provide a reference for Hayes et al

Page 11: Analysis; State what was compared in both groups and both time periods.

Ethics: The first sentence is enough. Once IRB approval has been given it is assumed that the right procedures were used.

Results: Page 12. 1st sentence should go to methods. In general for results just explaining some results and not all would be good since you have very good tables.

Page 15: Last sentence “did not predict” may be a better word than “was not associated”

Page 17 No need to mention the opening section such as the sentence in the last paragraph. Rephrase as Participants perception of … etc. So the sentence saying “people have different perceptions about HIV risk” and similar ones at the beginning of most sections of the results should be deleted.

Page 18. 1st sentence. The word AIDS virus should be replaced

Last sentence should be based on some statistics so quote the p-value.

Page 19: Factors associated with use of VCT can be used instead of just “logistic regression. Or put as multivariate analysis of factors associated with VCT. That paragraph may fit more in the methods where you talk about analysis.

DISCUSSION
Succinctly start with you main finding or a statement to that effect.. Paragraph 3.
Add some connecting phrases such as “as expected”.
Last paragraph: Findings show instead of findings reveal.
Page 21 could be revised. It is not clear. I will send some hand written notes with some edits on the paper.
Limitation: what you have stated is not really a limitation.
Page 22. Would rewrite the last section to say “our study was confined to two districts in Uganda. These represent typical districts in a resource limited setting etc.

Conclusion
The first sentence is not a conclusion from the results described. If it comes then clarify

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have no competing interests