Reviewer's report

Title: Vitamin A supplementation in Tanzania: The impact of a change in programmatic delivery strategy on coverage

Version: 1 Date: 26 July 2006

Reviewer: Joanne S Katz

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper compares vitamin A coverage in two surveys done in 1999 and 2002 in Tanzania. The premise of the paper is that the coverage improved significantly (from 13% to 76%) and that this was due to the change in program strategy from delivery through EPI to a twice yearly campaign approach. This is a valuable analysis as there are not many such evaluations of vitamin A program strategies. Although the increase in coverage may well be attributable to the change in the delivery method, given there is no control group and that this is a pre post comparison, the authors could be a little more circumspect in their conclusions.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

It would be appropriate to acknowledge that there may be secular trends in coverage that may have occurred independent of the change in delivery strategy. For example, in the abstract the authors state that "we report the impact of a change in strategy...and change in programmatic delivery has been shown to achieve a major improvement in coverage..." It would be perhaps more appropriate to say that coverage increased substantially over a time period before and after a change in delivery strategy.

The analysis in Table 2 comprises bivariate associations between coverage and various characteristics. It would add to the paper to do a multivariate analysis of these factors as many of them are likely correlated and associations may emerge (or go away) in the presence of others.

There are several papers describing vitamin A delivery programs and associated coverage that would be relevant to cite in this paper and would enhance the discussion. For example, the Bangladesh and Nepal vitamin A programs have been written up in the literature.

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests