Reviewer’s report

Title: Association of Khat and alcohol use with HIV infection and age at first sexual initiation among youths in Gamo-Gofa Zone, South west Ethiopia

Version: 4 Date: 15 October 2012

Reviewer: Getnet Kassie

Reviewer’s report:

Comments:
1. General: the author(s) have tried to show gaps in knowledge about the problem. They have presented many interesting findings; however, a thorough editorial revision is needed to correct spelling and grammatical errors.

Minor essential revisions:
2. Abstract: follow the requirements of BMC Public Health including word counts. It seems it needs shortening.
3. Background: editorial revisions including correcting inappropriate citations. For example, khat is widely used among the youth of Ethiopia as shown by ... it is better that the references 6 and 7 are indicated here. Reference 5 is appropriate for the pharmacological effects and should be separately indicated.
4. Paragraphs one and two refer to two references and this maybe too much.

Major Compulsory revisions:
The methods require revision in the following areas:
5. The paper lacks operational definitions of important variables such as comprehensive knowledge, Khat use and alcohol consumption. In some of these variables the frequency of use would be relevant e.g. Alcohol, Khat
6. The sample size assumptions are given under data processing and analysis. It is better is this presented separately.

Results:
7. It is not clear why mean age was calculated instead of median age (table 2).

Discussion:
8. Could there be a role of law enforcement by the Ethiopian Government? It may be worth mentioning this.
9. Reference writing is not consistent in some (ref.# 17)

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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 declare that I have no competing interests