Reviewer's report

Title: Developing a Health and Human Rights training program for French speaking Africa: lessons learned, from needs assessment to a pilot program.

Version: 1 Date: 20 April 2009

Reviewer: Bebe Loff

Reviewer's report:

The article addresses a matter of some importance, the effective delivery of teaching programmes that address health and human rights. The article describes the steps taken by one programme to ensure that their programme was of relevance to their audience. While the process undertaken by the authors was well described in a procedural sense, the course content and the discussions that took place around its determination, which might have been of potentially greater interest were not addressed. For example, it would have been helpful to learn, in a more descriptive and discursive way, about how the country visits, focus groups and questionnaires helped to shape the course content. How might the original assumptions of those offering the programme have changed as a result of this preparatory work? Were the assumptions concerning the relationship about health and human rights uniform or did they vary - even as between those designing the programme? Was there any discussion about whether this subject matter should be regarded as a priority or whether something else might have been preferred? What do the authors mean by "implementation of human rights in the health sector" and were the authors' assumptions shared by those participating in the preparatory process or by the students? Other than plagiarism were there any other surprises that emerged from the teaching process that may be lessons for the future? What would the authors actually do to make their programme more "student centred"? As a person who is also interested in teaching this material, it is that sort of discussion that I would find most beneficial. This journal, I assume, is one that is likely to be more interested in the content of what was taught and why, and its applicability to the local populations - as opposed to a reasonably stark discussion of a process used to determine course design. I may be mistaken, but as a reader that is what I would want to see.

Finally, the article contains expressions that do not read well in English. The article should be edited with this in mind.

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.