Reviewer's report

Title: Removing financial barriers to access reproductive, maternal and newborn health services: The challenges and policy implications for Human Resources for Health

Version: 3 Date: 15 May 2013

Reviewer: Juliet Nabyonga

Reviewer's report:

Please, you should have submitted a case by case cover letter on how you responded to comments instead of a manuscript with tracking. It would have made the re-review much faster.

Minor essential revisions

Under literature review:

Last sentence 1st para, please add the point that Bamako initiative was also to stimulate community participation. This was a strong element of BI well documented in literature.

Under results:

(1) How financing policy change affected utilisation levels

Last sentence para 1

…..there was no difference in use of maternal care ... what could be the reason for this?

Sierra Leone section:

the phrasing post FHCP year can be misleading, one might think that FCHP was for only one year. Although this is explained esle where in the manuscript, consistency in clarity helps, because what authours mean is "a year after implementation of FCHP was started"

The discussion on no absolute HRH shortages on pages 21 - 22 is a good one but could there have been a data quality issue with regards to HRH? to what extent does it affect coming up with such a conclusion.

The other consideration is the cyclic nature of the problem with regards to HRH and utilisation of health services. Utilisation is low because of poor quality of care among which is rude health workers, absenteeism etc. So the deliveries are low because patients do not want to come in the first place.

Computing workload based on current utilisation levels needs to factor in this reality.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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