Author's response to reviews

Title: Infant mortality rate in Brazil, 2000-10: correction of vital statistics based on a proactive search of deaths and live births

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Version: 2 Date: 8 April 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

On behalf of my co-authors, I resubmit the manuscript “Infant mortality rate in Brazil, 2000-10: correction of vital statistics based on a proactive search of deaths and live births” for consideration by Population Health Metrics. There are no conflicts of interest. The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Oswaldo Cruz foundation, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The paper has not been published elsewhere and it is not under consideration by another publication. The summary was accepted for oral presentation at the Global Health Metrics & Evaluation (GHME) Conference, Seattle, 2013 and published in the Lancet.

We thank the handling editor and the reviewers for the useful comments and suggestions. We highlighted the changes using red colored text in the revised paper. Following, we give point by point responses to all suggestions and comments:

Handling Editor

1. We added 2 paragraphs in the introduction (pages 4 and 5) to explain the Brazilian mortality information system. In theory, every death should have a certificate and should be registered. But in practice, we have registered deaths not reported to the Ministry of Health and vice-versa.
2. We considered total and infant deaths. This is emphasized in the last paragraph of the introduction section.
3. We added a paragraph in the Methods section (last paragraph page 8 of the revised version) and two paragraphs in the Results section about the household visit (1st and 2nd paragraphs, page 13).
4. The parameters for live births and total deaths are given in table 2 of the revised version.
5. We added the IMR estimates using informed and corrected data in Table 5.

Reviewer 1:

1. Suggestion accepted. We added 4 paragraphs in the Introduction section describing the two vital information systems SIM and SINASC.
2. We included more information about the proactive search in the introduction section (last paragraph, page 6).
3. We accepted the suggestion and added three paragraphs to better describe the sampling process in the beginning of the Methods section.
4. We accepted the suggestion and added two paragraphs (2nd and 3rd paragraphs, Page 8) with a detailed description of the active search.

5. We added the sentence in the second paragraph of page 10: "The model was applied to all Brazilian municipalities to estimate the predicted total death correction factors in each municipality" to emphasize this point.

6. We clarified this paragraph in the revised paper and mentioned all health information systems (last paragraph, page 8 of the revised paper).

7. We clarified this point (standard population) in the revised version of the paper (Page 9, 3rd paragraph).

8. We would be grateful if the language could be reviewed by someone of the editorial team.

Reviewer 2:

1. We included a paragraph in the Discussion section about the limitations of IMR estimates based on household surveys.

2. As suggested by the editor as well, we highlighted the household investigation in two paragraphs of the Methods section.

3. We accepted the suggestion and added two paragraphs (2nd and 3rd paragraphs, Page 8) with a detailed description of the active search.

4. We clarified this point (standard population) in the revised version of the paper (Page 9, 3rd paragraph).

5. As has been mentioned before, we would be grateful if the language could be reviewed by someone of the editorial team.

6. The tables were changed according to the journal standards.

Yours Sincerely,

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