Author's response to reviews

Title: Verbal Autopsy completion rate and factors associated with undetermined cause of death in rural poor resource setting of Tanzania

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Responses to reviewer comments

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the valuable and constructive comments. Both the compulsory and minor comments were addressed. We would like to address as follows:

Reviewer Abraham Herbst

1. Editing before it will fit for publication- we did some editing see the document with truck changes even

2. All irrelevant details in the methodology were removed- for example, regarding the geographical area coordinates and extent see methods (Study area).

3. The clarification and re-computation of the rate was done see pg – the rates changed from 23% to 31% in figure 2

4. Also, the clarifications were provided on the computing the rates see data analysis and management section in methods

5. Unnecessary repetitions were checked and removed in the results

6. The analysis was included age as exploratory variables changes was observed see Tables

Reviewer 2 Elisabeth Franca

1. The statement of the proportional of the undetermined 29% was reviewed see page 2 in the Abstract results. Figure 2, were clarified by showing that 2352 total lost is product forms lost including the undetermined.

2. The result in the abstract was reviewed and reclassified basing on the age group see the abstract.

3. The abstract conclusion was reviewed and clarity was provided see abstract conclusion

4. Clarity on the background: justifying the importance of the VA method as “among” instead of only method used to obtained cause of death in Asia and SSA. Additional literature reviews was done, and see page 2 more clarification which showing other mechanism used widely for interpreting the cause of deaths.

5. In the method section: assess the VA completion rates are not only related to figure 2 but also to figure 1. In Ifakara HDSS, the households visit done in every four months.
6. Results section - the description of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent is related to the total of 4244 deaths – the comments was considered by providing descriptive explanation to include 5027 eligible deaths. See below the table 1 indicated with symbol ‘. Also, other variables were added in the results example relation to the head of the household co-residence of the mother, co-residence of the father, number of death per households. Also, there was typing error on the undetermined description see the changes in Table 1.

7. Completion rates of VA- the edit was done and the proportional was changed to 92%, and improvement on figure 2 was done to show the 1178.

8. Page number was inserted

9. Abstract-Background: changes was done from word “subject” to “study”

10. In table 1 – the comments on omitting the total was done. Yes two variables have the same name, the way this information captured in the field for children and neonates are similar compared to adults.

11. The journal table format and were followed