Author's response to reviews

Title: Towards elimination of maternal deaths: maternal deaths surveillance and response

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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From: Sennen Hounton, M.D., Ph.D.
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To: Editor of the Reproductive Health Journal

Re: Submission of Manuscript: Towards elimination of maternal deaths: maternal deaths surveillance and response

Dear Editor,

I am very pleased to submit the revised version of the manuscript entitled "Towards elimination of maternal deaths: maternal deaths surveillance and response"

On behalf of the authors I would like to say sincere thanks for the comments and recommendations which we have addressed in the revised version:

Reviewer Jose Belizan

Please see table 2 9th target there is a ? sign. Is this correct?

Response: No, this was a typo and we have removed in the revised version

Reviewer Maurice Bucagu

The limitation of this paper is that it does not clearly address the relationship between effective MDSR implementation and quality of care – an essential factor for improving maternal and perinatal health outcomes.

Response: The relationship between MDSR and quality of care is better clarified under the fourth pillar (investigation) and throughout the document and we have made more explicit reference to the WHO Beyond the number document.

First line: Maternal mortality is the target of one of the least successful Millennium Goals (MDG). Suggest the following:’ of all MDGs, Improving maternal health (MDG5) is the least likely to be achieved’...
Response: we have revised accordingly

Eliminating maternal mortality, Page 2, para 1: MMR less or equal to 50/100,000 by 2030: Please provide source/reference.

Response: The reference has been provided (it is Gilmore K, Gebreyesus TA. What will it take to eliminate preventable maternal deaths? Lancet. 2012;380(9837):87-8)

Page5 figure 1: In lieu of ‘Develop pregnancy-related deaths case definitions; consider using ‘identification of maternal deaths’ (as used in table 1) (based on existing pregnancy-related deaths case definitions / ICD10 – WHO publication).

Response: we have revised accordingly

Page 5 – Box: % districts which conducted MDSR. Need to capture the fact that MDSR is actually conducted in all facilities of the district.

Response: Actually we meant MDR (Maternal Death Reviews) and we indeed meant district hospitals. We cannot do MDR in health centers (there is no capacity to do so). Every health facility is part of the MDSR system and will be involved in notification, but Maternal Death Reviews are conducted in hospitals

Thanks again for the review, all contributing authors have consented to publication, read and approved the revised manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

Sennen Hounton, M.D., MPH., Ph.D.