Reviewer's report

Title: Drivers and Deterrents of Facility Delivery in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Systematic Review

Version: 1 Date: 7 May 2013

Reviewer: Béatrice Nikiema

Reviewer's report:

The article reports on a systematic literature aiming at documenting factors associated with facility-based delivery, across sub-Saharan Africa. The review targeted empirical quantitative studies published in English in peer-reviewed journals between January 1995 and December 2011.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) It is recommended to involve a minimum of two researchers at all stages of a systematic review in order to minimize bias and errors. Please describe the review team and indicate how disagreements between raters have been solved.

2) One characteristic of a systematic review is that it focuses on all high quality research evidence on the review question. Please explain how the quality of the selected studies have been assessed and how it impacted the decision-making on the accuracy of the presented evidence.

3) “Original research” is one of the inclusion criteria. Therefore the rational for including review articles is thus unclear. Please further clarify your decision to include them instead of (or in addition to) working with the original articles listed in these review papers.

4) The review was restricted to articles published in English language. This language restriction may lead to “language bias” and should be addressed in the discussion.

5) Selected studies should be described, ideally in a table, with authors, sample size, design & method, and, if available, assigned rates after quality assessment.

Minor Essential Revisions

6) The reason for not performing meta-analysis is not convincing. The author could define more rigorous inclusion criteria (including methodological criteria) and restrict the meta-analysis to a sub-sample of studies meeting those criteria.

7) In the seventh paragraph under the discussion section the author states that
“this systematic review of the literature builds upon the previous reviews in several important ways”. However, only one way (the first) was described.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None