Reviewer’s report

Title: Homebirth and barriers to referring women with obstetric complications to hospitals: a mixed methods research in Zahedan, Southeast of Iran

Version: 1 Date: 18 January 2012

Reviewer: Kirti Iyengar

Reviewer’s report:

1. There are discrepancies in data presented on proportion of deliveries at home (page 2 mentions 10.8 and 19.5% deliveries at home, while page 3 mentions 23%. This needs to be corrected.

2. The question posed by the authors is not well defined. The objectives of the study should be clearly mentioned after the introduction.

3. Methods: The methodology mentions quantitative phase, while results are presented only for qualitative study. Please clarify whether there was a quantitative component of the study, and if yes, details of its methodology and results.

4. The conclusions need to take into account the results of the study. For example, results suggest economic barriers and fear of unnecessary caesarean as barriers to seeking institutional delivery. The authors should discuss how these problems can be addressed.

Minor essential revisions

1. The setting: Mention the population covered by the study blocks.

2. At various places, the term EOC is mentioned where there is reference to an institutional delivery. EOC refers to care for life threatening emergencies, hence this term is not appropriate to refer to deliveries.

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

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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.