Reviewer's report

Title: Barriers and facilitators to antenatal and delivery care in western Kenya: a qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 6 July 2014

Reviewer: Johanne Sundby

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revision:
1. The paper is about why women in Kenya (one part) do not seek care as advised by policies. This is indeed an interesting question, and it has been addressed elsewhere. A recent article evoked a bit of debate around the role of TBA (this article is not included in the references, but the authors may want to consult it. (Lerberg, Priya et al, on the Gambia). The results of this qualitative study is well presented, but I would have wanted a bit more analysis of the findings in one or another theoretical framework. These days a lot of the "remedies" are centered around incentives, while quality of care is even less attention.

Minor essential revisions
2. I feel that the paper, as many others, in the intro could take us directly to kenya, not by way of once again addressing the very much quoted international/global maternal health picture.

3. Skilled birth attendants plus an enabling environment is what seems to be advocated recently. The health system aspect of providing a continuum of care is not really discussed in the introduction.

4. That being said, I feel that the presentation of the analysis should bring in the aspect of how the different structure of antenatal care (scheduled, daytime, routine, mass examinations) and delivery care (as described, unpredictable timing etc) may affect utilization. I feel that the main issues could be summed up, the presentation of results is a bit long and winding.

5. I feel that there could be a discussion around the organization of care, since waiting time is mentioned by so many. I also feel that a "social desirability bias" in the answering has to be discussed, especially around the role of TBA.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:
No financial conflict of interest