Author’s response to reviews

Title: Spatial and Temporal Trends of Cesarean Deliveries in Uganda: 2012-2016

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Author’s response to reviews:

18th October 2018
The Editor-in-Chief
BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth

Dear Editor,


Kindly receive our revised manuscript titled, “Spatial and Temporal Trends of Cesarean Deliveries in Uganda: 2012-2016”
We have revised the manuscript and on the next page, we present a point-by-point response to each of the comments raised by the editor and the reviewers, see page 2 below. We also confirm that the map depicted in figure 2 is our original work, created as part of this manuscript. We are grateful that your journal is considering our paper potentially acceptable for publication in your prestigious journal.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Atuheire Barigye

Corresponding author

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue raised</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Keyword: After the abstract section, please include three to ten keywords representing the main content of the article.</td>
<td>We have included the keywords as advised on page 4, Line 67</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Please rename 'Introduction’ heading into ‘Background’.</td>
<td>We have renamed the heading as advised on page 5, line 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. 'Conclusions' heading - Please add the heading 'Conclusions' after ‘Discussion’ section.</td>
<td>We have added the heading ‘Conclusions’ on page 16 line 267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Figure legend heading - Please add the heading “Figure legend&quot; before you list the ‘Figure legends’. In your manuscript, this will be directly after the ‘Reference’ section.</td>
<td>We have added the heading ‘Figure legend’ as advised on page 21, line 407</td>
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<td>5. Map permission – Please state in the cover letter whether the map depicted in figure 1 is your own or taken from another source. If taken from another source please acknowledge the source in the figure legend, and if it is under copyright also state the written permission given to use and adapt it. If the above conditions are not met the image needs to be removed. Please note the editors may request proof of permission at any time. Should you require an alternative source you may wish to try Wikimedia Commons: <a href="http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page">http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page</a>.</td>
<td>Dear reviewer, the map in figure 2 is our own work, derived from the data reported on in this manuscript. We have therefore stated this fact in the cover letter above as advised.</td>
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<td>6. Please remove the figure legends embedded within</td>
<td>We have removed the figure legends</td>
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This is a very well written manuscript which requires only minor amendments. In addition to the reviewer comments, please revise the first sentence in both the abstract and the introduction:

"Caesarean section (CS) makes complicated deliveries easier and safer for the mother, the newborn and the care providers." It sounds too simplistic especially in regard to the ease for care providers. I suggest something like ...."Caesarean section (CS) is an important intervention in complicated births when the safety of the mother or baby is compromised"

Also I would prefer that the authors did not use the abbreviated HC for health services throughout the manuscript - it becomes cumbersome and at times confusing amidst the many other acronyms used.

Dear editor, thank you for raising this concern about the abbreviation ‘HC’. We have re-written ‘HC’ in full as ‘health center’ throughout the paper.

7. Check through the manuscript for the citation style. Use square bracket [].

Reviewer 1:

Dear reviewer, we have revised the citation style and used the square brackets [] as advised.

8. Page 5 line 31: In Sub-Saharan Africa, where 2/3 of... We have replaced the text as advised on page 5 line79.
the…. Replace "2/3" with "two-thirds"

9. Page 9 line 15: Replace "during 2012 to 2016" with "between 2012 and 2016" We have replaced the text as advised on page 10, line 158

10. Table 2 does not provide much information here. It could be moved to the supplementary material while the temporal changes in CS rates could be better presented with a line graph for different groups (all births, live births and population CS rate). Dear reviewer, we have moved table 2 to ‘additional file 1’. The temporal CS rates for the different groups are presented in figure 1.

11. I will suggest to the authors to carry some sort of spatial analysis to verify the presence of spatial variation in the CS rates across regions, eg. Moran's test. We used Moran’s Index test to rule out presence of spatial autocorrelation in the CS rates across the 14 health-service regions. Spatial autocorrelation was not significant in the data.

12. Reviewer 2: I suggest using cesarean delivery instead of cesarean section throughout the paper This has been addressed as necessary throughout the paper

13. Background I suggest summarizing line 82-110 in the introduction This section has been summarized.