Reviewer's report

Title: Mediators of the relation between War Experiences and Suicidal Ideation among Former Child Soldiers in Northern Uganda: The WAYS Study

Version: 2  Date: 29 May 2014

Reviewer: Susan Rees

Reviewer's report:

This is an important paper for the post-conflict and mental health field. The methodology is generally well described and the manuscript adheres to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition. The discussion and conclusions are well balanced and adequately supported by the data. The article is also clearly written.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors stated that there was evidence of partial mediation, after removing anxiety items from the analysis. It would make sense to present this as a separate outcome - for depression, anxiety, and depression/anxiety, as suicidal ideation is arguably more related to depression. Alternatively, the authors may consider focusing on depression alone.

2. I wonder if the authors collected any data on PTSD. It looks like the anxiety subscale taps into the more generic anxiety-related symptoms.

3. how the items are analyzed should be clarified, whether as continuous variables or.

4. Building on model 1 (figure 1) I wonder if the authors looked at depression, anxiety as separate outcomes in addition to suicidal ideation?

5. the authors stated that gender was a confounding variable and thus included in the models. Please provide more information on how this was done in the analysis.. could gender play a moderating role in the mediated relationships amongst war experiences, post-war hardships, depression/anxiety, suicidal ideation?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests. I would like to acknowledge Kuowei Tay the statistician in our unit for reading and commenting on the statistics in this paper.