Reviewer’s report

Title: Why mothers still deliver at home: understanding factors associated with home deliveries and cultural practices in rural coastal Kenya, a cross-section study.

Version: 0 Date: 24 Nov 2015

Reviewer: Rajendra Karkee

Reviewer's report:

This article describes factors associated with home delivery in Kenya. The findings are not new and interesting. The authors should have carried out a community-based survey rather than clinic-based survey to find the home-delivered women. The article needs major revision in presentation styles, especially the results and tables with correction in language.

Page 2: the postpartum age of mothers i.e. the recent child's age range should be mentioned

Page 2 line 31: mention number of FGD and IDIs

Page 2, line 41-42: is the distance 5 Kms further or within 5 Kms ? please make clear.

Page2: How did authors calculate RR from cross sectional data ?

Page 3, line 49-53: Need to rewrite and explain why the deaths rate is high in 2008-9?

Page 4 line 17: Reference should be superscript. Besides the authors should be clear about delivery at home, delivery at a health facility and Skilled attendant at birth. Is SBA equal to delivery at a health facility or SBA can also occur at home? What is the national policy?

Page 4, line 44-49: the aim already declares the stated factors as cause of home delivery, so need to rephrase this.

Page 5 line 10-11: what are the three levels of healthfacilities-4, 3, 2? Make clear

Page 6: it is good to describe the study population very well rather than calculating the sample size from the formula. Readers are more interested on the expected
number of pregnancies in the study area and how sufficient and representative is the sample size proposed.

Further it is not clear whether the study is facility-based (in the study design); if so will all the mothers who have given birth at home will come to immunization clinic? How many immunisation clinics where there in study areas? Have all these clinics been selected or why only three?

Page 6, 47-51: Log-binomial regression gives RR? Why not logistic regression which gives OR?

Results page 7, line 23: why used only 394 out of 410, please explain.

Page 8: While describing socio-cultural results of home deliveries, authors described breastfeeding issues and reason for home delivery, i.e. the distance and cost, which are not the socio-cultural factors.

Page 8: The last paragraph of page 8 (perceptions of mothers towards home delivery) needs to be rewritten because the writing is not clear and confusing, for example what is the 'difference' between delivering at home and in a health facility?

Page 9: line 21 and line 33/34: How the distance was categorized?

Page 10: line 32/33: what are the 'other reasons'?

Page 10, line 41/42: please make clear whether it is higher age or lower age that is associated with home delivery

Page 12: conclusion includes only the distance, what about the education of the women and other socio-cultural aspects?

Table 1: 'Delivered not at home' can indicate in the field or on the way

Table 2: The content of table 2 are not all socio-cultural practices, for example 'why did you deliver at home'.

Table 3: the heading is not suitable because the authors split the table by place of delivery. The content all do not include perceptions of home delivery, for example antenatal care.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
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