Reviewer’s report

Title: The challenge of complexity in evaluating health policies and programs: The case of Womens' Participatory Groups to improve antenatal outcomes

Version: 0 Date: 15 Nov 2016

Reviewer: France Donnay

Reviewer's report:

The paper argues that the realist evaluation approach is more suited to research looking at relationships between participation and action of women groups and antenatal outcomes. It would enable evaluators to examine underlying mechanisms which influence actual practices and outcomes, as well as contextual conditions required to make it work, following the sequence Context-Mechanism-Outcome.

This makes sense, and I have no further comments on this paper, but trial design and methodology is not my main area of expertise.

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.

Unable to assess

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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