Reviewer’s report

Title: DECIDE: A cluster-randomized controlled trial to reduce unnecessary caesarean deliveries in Burkina Faso

Version: 0 Date: 21 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Gerhardus Barnard Theron

Reviewer's report:

General:
The authors embarked on a multifaceted intervention to improve decision making about the need for a Caesarean delivery (CD) during a time when fees for CD were eliminated. The research is most relevant to LMIC to counter rapid increasing CD rates because accessibility has increased. A valid study design was used to address the research question and the findings well presented. The paper is well written and will be of global interest. The paper should be accepted for publication with the provision that some changes are made to the satisfaction of the editor.

The focus is measures to improve the quality of decision making by implementing evidence based clinical guidelines to improve CD practice. Including Robson groups 1 and 3 in the analysis added clearly defined groups.

Changes that need to be considered:
The discussion must to be confined to the research question. The claim to no effect on maternal and perinatal outcome is not supported by any information proved in the results section (p15, sentences 373-4). The data collected about maternal and perinatal outcome were confined to the CD cases (page 18, sentences 442-9) and could be added in a supplementary file.

Organisational issues (page 16, sentences 390-2) were also addressed as this led to "actionable solutions". These must be mentioned in the methods section as the outcome may also be related to other interventions and not only implementing evidence based clinical guidelines. Dystocia need to be better described when initially mentioned. Generally speaking labour dystocia is a synonym for obstructed labour. The poor progress of labour algorithm supplementary file clearly describe poor progress of the active phase of the first stage of labour due to cephalo pelvic disproportion.

One correction:
Page 6, sentence 151: 80.30% should be 80.3%.

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.

Yes

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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