**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Reducing maternal and newborn mortality in Nigeria – A qualitative study of stakeholders’ perceptions about the performance of community health workers and the introduction of community midwifery at primary healthcare level.

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 05 Sep 2019

**Reviewer:** Carinne Magnago

**Reviewer's report:**

The article addresses a theme very important for the health field. The community-based approach represents an option for expanding the access of population to primary health care and decrease the rates of the maternal and newborn mortality, mainly in the remote and rural areas and development countries.

The background is appropriate. The authors present the principal information for the understanding of theme and shows a statistical data and the study relevance.

The method was well written. However, more information is necessary for allow duplication the study by other researchers and for better understanding the research techniques applied. Recommendations: explain better the key informant interview guides used and the analysis techniques applied (Was any referential adopted? What were the analysis steps taken to determine the categories? What were the categories?); inform the period of data collection.

About the informed consent obtained from each study participant, did it foresee the breaking anonymity or just the accepting for the participate in the study? This information is important to mention as participants are identified through their roles.

In the Table, include the country in legend and the period of data collection.

In the Results topic, is very important to present a brief profile of participants, mainly about how many years have they occupy the current job? This information is important because it was not considered as a criterion for inclusion of participants. The category "Context of Community Midwifery Programme and Practice in Nigeria" does not appear to have originated from the search results. In this sense, perhaps it should be diluted in the discussion or background.

Considering the results presented, only the third category responds to the objective of the article. In this case, might want to extend the objective (including changes to the title and other parts if necessary). The first two categories repeat some information already presented in the introduction; Still, in some cases, the speech clippings repeat what the authors already mention in the text that precedes these clippings. It is necessary to review.

The information that 44 important people were interviewed for the context generates an expectation of deepening the perspective topic. However, there is only a brief description of the
informants' opinions. Can nothing else be extracted from the interviews in relation to the object of the study?

The discussion does not present new information; on the contrary, it repeats the information already highlighted in the results. Only the last paragraph brings important points of reflection that should be better argued and dialogued with the literature. Other than points informed, what are the other differences or hypotheses that explain the contrary perception about the introduction of community midwifery by participants from different places? What is the evidence from other places / countries about the introduction of community midwifery? What is the position of the authors regarding the proposed of qualification of existing professionals at the expense of introducing a new professional? What are the possible benefits and losses of this proposal?

The title is long, and I am not sure that it represents the purpose of the study. In the summary and introduction, the authors state that the study was designed to assess stakeholders' perceptions of the feasibility of introducing and using community midwifery; The title highlights the stakeholders’ perceptions of the performance of community health workers. The results present the perceptions about the two points, as well as the perception about the role of the community health workers. Is needed to standardize title, objectives and results.

For keywords, I recommend using MeSH indexed terms.

The results presented can be better discussed and the authors' position regarding the opposite positions and the respondents' proposals is extremely important. Although the study proposal is relevant, what has been presented lacks greater robustness.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of limited interest

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

Acceptable

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