**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** PRENACEL - a mHealth messaging system to complement antenatal care: a cluster randomized trial

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 12 Aug 2017

**Reviewer:** Atem Ajong

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Review comments of REPH-D-17-00197 (An innovative antenatal messaging system (mHealth) to complement antenatal care: a cluster randomized trial)

The authors did a great job and addressed a very important health issue. Even with the about free antenatal care offered to pregnant women with the goal of limiting maternal mortality, adherence remains an issue. M-health services have been shown to improve on the demand of important health packages. The paper is well written, with acceptable English and the message is easy to assimilate. I however have a few worries that could make the paper better.

**Comments**

**Background:**

Line 84: the talk on the MDG which are out of date is not very good. It could be precised that Brazil failed to attain the fifth MDG. Your statement makes the reader to feel Brazil is still working on that goal. I say this because maternal mortality reduction is an integral part of the SDGs. Will it not be better to see it as compromising the effective attainment of the current SDG agenda?

**Methods:** This study seems to have no methodology issues but my first impression is that this section is too long and cumbersome. Authors must find a way to pass their message in a contracted and concised manner. This looks more like the method section of a thesis. Please review.

- Concerning the study population section, what rational do you have for not including women aged below 18, and considering women with GA 20weeks or less. Including this to your methodology will reduce questions.
- The section on study period is too long and off track. Most of the things said there do not fall in to the study period but is part of procedure of implementation.
Results: this section is well structured and answers the objective of this study. I however do not see which position the PRENACEL cost section occupies in the results. I think if this section must be included, it should be included at the end of the methodology section.

Discussions

Line 368-369. I think the message you want to pass out is the increased percentage of women with more antenatal care visits. When you say your results are comparable?? I will want to say, Tanzania and Brazil are two very different countries with different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

Line 402-403. I don't think your study evaluates the quality of antenatal care services and the qualification of the health personnel in this domain…. Your conclusions and recommendations should therefore be well formulated.

Line 412-419. I think these are advantages of the study and the PRENACEL system not strength of your study. Please review

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

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
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