Reviewer's report

Title: Using verbal autopsy to assess the proportion of HIV-associated deaths in the ART period in rural Uganda: a prospective cohort study, 2006-2008

Version: 1 Date: 1 April 2011

Reviewer: Stefania Vergnano

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

None

- Minor Essential Revisions

1. I am not sure table 1 adds much to the content of the article. Table 3 and 4 could probably be condensed in a single table.

2. I wonder why the authors chose to use weighted kappa statistics and what does complete and partial agreement refer to.

3. Table 4 shows that the proportion of deaths with available VA in 1990 was much lower than in 2006-8 (53 vs 79%) In the discussion it would be helpful to comment on how this could have impacted on the observed reduction of HIV positive deaths.

3. The overall conclusions advise policy makers to integrate VA in the health information systems while the manuscript refers specifically to VA for HIV only. I think the conclusion should therefore stick with the data and restrict the consideration to VA for HIV.

- Discretionary Revisions

1. Number superscript in table 3 should be “1”

2. Pag 10 2nd paragraph “in 2007” to be consistent it might be better to use in 2006-8.

3. Same paragraph line 5: was co-trimoxazole not available before ART?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests