

Author's response to reviews

Title: Translating global recommendations on HIV and infant feeding to the local context: The development of culturally sensitive counselling tools in the Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania

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Version: 5 Date: 31 August 2006

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29th August, 2006

To the Co-Editors in Chief
Implementation Science Editorial Team

Dear Editors,

RE: Author's response to reviews: MS: 1484341573102056 – “Translating global recommendations on HIV and infant feeding to the local context: The development of culturally sensitive counselling tools in the Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania”

I refer to your letter dated 12th August, 2006 regarding one further issue raised and suggested by our distinguished reviewer.

Reviewer's comment: *“In the original manuscript, the authors noted that a brochure on the expression and heat treatment of breast milk had been designed. In my comments, I suggested that the inclusion of this option seemed to run contrary to the underlying client-centred philosophy of the intervention. In their response, the authors agree with this (point 21) and noted that the description of this brochure had been removed from the manuscript. I am a little concerned about this response because its consequence is to make this particular aspect of the project ‘disappear’, even though this brochure was presumably developed (and used?) in the field. I think it would be more appropriate to retain a brief description of this component and discuss any problems related to it”.*

We greatly appreciate this suggestion and retained a brief description of this component in the manuscript text (*please refer to 3rd paragraph in page 17 and 1st paragraph in page 18*). Below the exclusive breastfeeding description we clarify that the expression and heat treatment of breast milk is among the global recommended

options for HIV-positive women, and it deserves a brief note as a potential method to promote for the future use given its growing evidence of feasibility and acceptability in some parts of Africa (Jeffery et al, 2000; Israel-Baillard, 2006). Its value in reducing the risk associated with mixed feeding especially during the transition from exclusive breastfeeding to exclusive replacement feeding is of great importance. However, we had to explain that although the brochure was developed for future explorative purposes, it was not launched as part of the integrated set of the counselling tools employed in counselling at KCMC for this study. This decision was based on the results of the formative research where it was revealed to be unacceptable by the local actors, and hence, contrary to the client-centred philosophy of this intervention.

We thank you very much for the great contributions in improving this article, not forgetting the amazingly quick and efficient responses from the reviewers. The word count for the text is now: **6, 241 words** excluding the abstract, acknowledgement, references etc. We have ensured that our revised manuscript conforms to the journal style, English edited and files correctly formatted.

Yours sincerely,

Sebalda Leshabari

The corresponding author