

### Review Form 3

Journal Name:	<b>International STD Research &amp; Reviews</b>
Manuscript Number:	<b>Ms_I-SRR_123651</b>
Title of the Manuscript:	<b>Uptake of HIV Testing Services Among Refugee Men in Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement Camp, Mid-Western Uganda.</b>
Type of the Article	<b>Original Research Article</b>

#### **General guidelines for the Peer Review process:**

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guidelines for the Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

<https://r1-reviewerhub.org/general-editorial-policy/>

#### **Important Policies Regarding Peer Review**

Peer review Comments Approval Policy: <https://r1-reviewerhub.org/peer-review-comments-approval-policy/>

Benefits for Reviewers: <https://r1-reviewerhub.org/benefits-for-reviewers>

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**PART 1: Review Comments**

Compulsory REVISION comments	Reviewer's comment	Author's Feedback (Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
<p><b>Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. Why do you like (or dislike) this manuscript? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.</b></p>	<p>This manuscript is important for the scientific community as it sheds light on the critical issue of low HIV testing uptake among refugee men, a vulnerable population often overlooked in public health strategies. By identifying specific factors hindering HIV testing, such as stigma, lack of education, and socio-economic barriers, the study provides valuable insights that can inform targeted interventions. I appreciate the manuscript's focus on a marginalized group and its use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to capture a comprehensive view of the challenges. However, more detailed exploration of cultural and systemic barriers could enhance its impact further.</p>	
<p><b>Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title)</b></p>	<p><b>"Barriers to HIV Testing Uptake Among Refugee Men in Kiryandongo Settlement, Uganda: A Cross-Sectional Study"</b></p>	
<p><b>Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Clarify the study design:</b> While the term "cross-sectional" is mentioned, specifying that both quantitative and qualitative methods were used early in the abstract would provide a clearer picture of the methodology.</li> <li>2. <b>Expand on key results:</b> Include more details about the qualitative findings to complement the quantitative data. This would provide a balanced perspective on the factors influencing the uptake of HIV testing.</li> <li>3. <b>Add context to the conclusion:</b> It could briefly mention how the findings contribute to broader HIV testing efforts or suggest specific interventions.</li> <li>4. <b>Remove redundancy:</b> The phrase "uptake of HIV testing services" is repeated several times. Consider rephrasing to avoid redundancy.</li> </ol> <p>Suggested revision:</p> <p>"The level of uptake of HIV testing services among refugee men was 32%. Key factors negatively associated with testing included stigma (P=0.006, AOR=0.29), lack of education on HIV/AIDS (P=0.002, AOR=0.14), and unemployment (P=0.015, AOR=0.17)."</p> <p><b>Keywords alphabetically</b></p>	
<p><b>Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate?</b></p>	<p><b>1. Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths:</b> The introduction provides relevant statistics on HIV, including global, regional, and local data, which help set the context. The focus on refugees, particularly men, is clearly articulated, and the study's rationale is well-stated.</li> <li>• <b>Suggestions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The introduction could benefit from smoother transitions between global, national, and local HIV statistics. You could merge the first two sentences to create a cohesive statement about HIV prevalence globally and in Africa.</li> <li>○ The second paragraph begins with statistics on refugees but transitions abruptly into a discussion of men with HIV in Uganda. Consider introducing the challenges refugee men face earlier to maintain a logical flow.</li> <li>○ You might want to clearly outline the <b>objective</b> of the study at the end of the introduction, stating it concisely after describing the gaps and importance of the issue.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<p><b>2. Methodology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths:</b> The study design and sampling methods are clear, and the description of the study area is detailed, providing good context.</li> <li>• <b>Suggestions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Subsections like "Study area," "Study design," and "Sampling technique" are appropriate, but they could be better organized by numbering them more clearly. For example, "Study area" should be under "2.2" to reflect hierarchical numbering.</li> <li>○ "Study population" could be expanded to briefly justify why refugee men are a key population of interest in the context of HIV testing, providing a rationale for focusing on this group.</li> <li>○ The sampling technique is described well but lacks detail on the sample size determination or recruitment process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Results and Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths:</b> The integration of results with discussion provides an immediate interpretation of findings, which helps readers understand the context.</li> <li>• <b>Suggestions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consider splitting the <b>Results</b> and <b>Discussion</b> into separate sections. While combining them can make for a streamlined narrative, separating them would allow for a more in-depth discussion of implications and limitations in the "Discussion" section.</li> <li>○ Figures and tables (e.g., Table 1 and Figure 1) should be clearly referenced in the text, but the interpretation of these results should come in the discussion section, not immediately after presenting the table.</li> <li>○ Statistical significance and the factors associated with HIV testing are presented effectively, but more narrative interpretations of the bivariate analysis results could enhance understanding of the factors.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>4. Clarity in Presentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths:</b> The manuscript maintains a clear focus on the objective and follows a logical progression from introduction to results.</li> <li>• <b>Suggestions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure consistent use of terms. For instance, "uptake of HIV testing services" should remain consistent throughout the manuscript. Additionally, be consistent with the formatting of the references to maintain a professional appearance.</li> <li>○ Subheadings such as "3.1.1.1 Socio-demographic factors" and "3.1.1.1.1 Socio-cultural factors" could be simplified for better readability.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>Please write a few sentences regarding the scientific correctness of this manuscript. Why do you think that this manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.</p>	<p>The manuscript demonstrates scientific robustness through its clear research question, well-defined methodology, and comprehensive analysis of data. The use of appropriate statistical methods ensures the accuracy and reliability of the results, while the sample size and study design contribute to the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the discussion is grounded in current literature, which strengthens the study's relevance and validates the conclusions drawn. The inclusion of limitations and potential areas for future research also reflects an objective and thorough scientific approach.</p>	
<p>Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.</p>	<p>Please follow references style</p>	

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Minor REVISION comments <b>Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</b>	The language and English quality of the article are generally clear and understandable, suitable for scholarly communication. However, there are some minor areas where improvements can be made to enhance clarity, readability, and precision. This includes refining sentence structure, improving the flow between ideas, and addressing occasional grammatical inconsistencies. A thorough proofreading and slight rewording of certain phrases would ensure the article fully meets the standards of academic writing.	
<u>Optional/General</u> comments		

### **PART 2:**

	<b>Reviewer's comment</b>	<b>Author's comment</b> (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
<b>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</b>	<i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i>	

### Reviewer Details:

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