Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence and determinants of unintended childbirth in Ethiopia

Version: 3 Date: 15 August 2014

Reviewer: Asheber Gaym

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Comments on article “Prevalence of unintended childbirth in Ethiopia”

Major compulsory revisions

Abstract: Conclusions sections should be more focused indicating a few of the recommended strategies in the article which should be implemented to improve family planning in Ethiopia. As it is now, it is highly general.

Introduction

Paragraph 1 - Africa 5.2 million; Sub-Saharan Africa 5.5 million – please check again.

Paragraph 4 - 2015 (Ethiopia 2007/2008) and not Ethiopia 1993 – Please correct.

Last paragraph – DHS 2011 should be changed to EDHS 2011

Last paragraph - Although there is no national level studies on unintended pregnancies as indicated by the author, there are many large studies at subnational level or facility based that have much more detail and depth than the EDHS. It would be prudent to review the major ones and present their findings at least in one paragraph rather than dismissing them for the mere reason of not being nationally representative. The EDHS as is well known although having a national coverage lacks the depth of smaller studies.

Methodology

The use of “intended” in this study in place of “wanted” in the EDHS and the same for “unintended” is not acceptable and does not signify the same meaning. Suggest keeping “wanted” and “unwanted” as it is used in the EDHS.

The operational definitions of intended and unintended used in the paper are not
acceptable unless they have been specifically used in the EDHS methodology. A study that is doing a secondary analysis on a previous database cannot in my view go into the process of providing operational definition of study subjects other than the one already used in the parent study. This creates too much of a bias.

Results
Most of the result section in the initial paragraphs describes the frequency of the findings in percentages without indicating the significance level of the findings either in p values, unadjusted and adjusted odd’s ratios. Better to include those from the initial results section and summarize the results section.
The remainder of the results section is well organized.

Discussions
Paragraph 7
Please clarify the statement “Plus, Afars and Somalis have the highest wanted fertility of 4% and Oromos 3%”. What exactly is wanted fertility? Could the level of empowerment of women explain some of the discrepancies of this study such as the unintended pregnancy being more among some regions and less in Somali and Afar; lesser among the poor than the middle class … etc. In a situation where a woman may be expressing the opinion of her husband rather than her own on whether a pregnancy was intended or not the discrepancies observed in this study might appear.

Minor essential revisions
If the article can be shortened a bit it is ok.
It would also be good if the authors can add a small paragraph on 1. the level of empowerment of women in Ethiopia; 2. The general role of planning in life – the view of society on planning in general and 3. The highly religiosity of the society expressed in the belief that outcomes happen anyway and individual interventions will not alter predestined outcomes. All of this has a huge impact on the kind of responses couples and individuals may provide to questions like whether a
pregnancy was intended or planned. In the strictest sense of the word, I really doubt as to whether even 1% of pregnancies in Ethiopia are PLANNED or INTENDED. But as is obvious the majority are accepted anyway.

Discretionary revisions
None.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I do not have any conflict of interest.