Reviewer's report

Title: Risk factors for reported obstetric complications and near misses in rural northwest Bangladesh: Analysis from a prospective cohort study

Version: 3 Date: 22 September 2014

Reviewer: Eileen Yam

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? Yes.
> 2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes.
> 3. Are the data sound? Yes.
> 4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes.
> 5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes.
> 6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes.
> 7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building both published and unpublished? Yes.
> 8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes, though the conclusions in the abstract merely restate results, so this could be strengthened by stating specific recommendations or implications.
> 9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes.

- Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

The rationale for the study in the introduction describes the lack of knowledge about risk factors for obstetric complications, compared to maternal mortality. It would be informative to have included some reflection on how this study's findings differ from or are the same as reported risk factors for maternal mortality. If the same, then the programmatic implications regarding increasing ANC, skilled attendance, and FP use are the same - these are recommendations to improve maternal health more broadly, not just to prevent maternal death.

The discussion paragraph about MR and induced abortion makes a good point about the distinction between safe and unsafe abortion. A policy-relevant follow-on study that could be mentioned here would be comparing maternal outcomes for those whose induced abortions were safe or unsafe (defined appropriately with whatever relevant data available).

- Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures or the wrong use
of a term which the author can be trusted to correct)

See above comment on the abstract conclusions.

> - Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'