Reviewer's report

Title: Woman-centered research on access to safe abortion services and implications for behavioral change communication interventions: a cross-sectional study of women in Bihar and Jharkhand, India

Version: 2 Date: 28 December 2011

Reviewer: Jenny Ruducha

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The title has the word “Access” that is again used a few times but is not defined nor connected to the conceptual model, the research questions, presentation of results, and discussion. Can it be assumed that in the conceptual model that perceptions about abortion services (attitudes, availability and affordability) are actually proxy measures for access? There is no actual measure of access, that is women who desired an abortion but did not get one. Table 9, only describes factors associated with women who actually received an abortion. There is a whole access literature that may help to use these terms with specific definitions (perceived access as opposed to realized access). Clarifying these issues directly would really enhance the understanding of the study.

2. There needs to be further attention to ensuring that the results section is directly in sync with the presentation in the tables. For example, the statement “Factors that facilitated access to safe abortion services included perceived health risks associated with unsafe abortion and high self-efficacy in reproductive decision making.” (page 2, in Abstract). Are the regression models used to answer these questions? If so, then is access measured by perceived availability, accessibility and favorable attitudes? If yes, then perceived health risks, self-efficacy and social support are not found in this model.

3. Rework the titles of some of the tables to match content: Labeling of Table 9 should be more than choice of provider.

4. More aggregation of some categories when there are values of 1, 2 or 3

5. For Table 4, could consider reorganizing so that the 4 issues are placed in columns and the sources of information by rows so that you could easily compare the differences across and reduce duplication of the same categories. However, some of the categories are different – not sure if questions were asked differently or the names changed from one to another issue.

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 declare that I have no competing interests.