Reviewer's report

Title: The Reach and Impact of Social Marketing and Reproductive Health Communication Campaigns in Zambia

Version: 2 Date: 13 September 2007

Reviewer: Marc Boulay

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

I appreciate the inclusion of the p-values from the endogeneity tests. Given the high p-values, it seems you were justified in using single-stage models, although one test seems to have been significant.

I continue to be confused about the background section's inclusion of two older programs that were not included in the survey and, for all I know, no longer broadcast at the time of the survey. To me, the description of these programs sheds little light on the analysis and conclusions of the paper. I would suggest either dropping the program description section or, better still, describing the programs included in the analysis.

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

Two revisions still need to be corrected. First, I can not find your discussion of the limitations with this analysis. Perhaps it should be more explicitly identified. As stated in the earlier review, the low R2s from the models are clearly a limitation of this study and should be included in such a section.

Second, while I understand that the focus of the paper was on condom use, it is still necessary to control for those factors that may confound the relationship between program exposure and condom use. In my opinion, contraceptive use is a potentially serious confounder: program exposure may be positively related to contraceptive use, which will be negatively related to condom use. The analyses that you do or the conclusions that you draw from your analyses - that the programs were not effective among women - should account for this potential confounding.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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'