Reviewer's report

Title: Sexual Practices among Adolescents in Tanzania

Version: 2 Date: 13 April 2009

Reviewer: Kåre Moen

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Background chapter: The contents of are not very well connected with the rest of the article. My recommendation is that it be rewritten.

2. Methods: If I understand it correctly, the investigators did not draw a simple random sample of secondary school students, as reported. It was rather a simple random sample of form 3 and form 4 students, i.e. a subset of secondary school students.

3. It is an improvement that the previous article by the same authors using the same data material has been mentioned and referenced in the article under review. It is, however, still not made explicit that several of the variables presented in the new article has been dealt with in the already published article, for example:

   - Both articles discuss age at first sexual experience in this population. Whereas the first article breaks this variable down on sex, the previously published article reports the overall age at first sex and provides a breakdown by school status (in or out of school).

   - Both articles discuss the number of current sexual partners (overall, by sex, and by school status (in or out of school)), but the findings differ considerably between the two.

   - Both articles discuss the proportion reporting condom use at last sexual encounter, but the findings differ somewhat between the two.

4. What still seems to be lacking is a discussion of the marked differences that seem to exist regarding some variables that have been reported in both articles, notably:

   - In the present article, the authors report that 40.3 per cent of the adolescents in the study area were sexually active. In the previous article, the authors indicated that this proportion was considerably smaller; 30.57 per cent ((352+130+256+151) divided by (1008+997+463+440)) = 889/2208 = 30.57 (ref table 2 in the previous article).

   - In the present article, the authors report that 14.8 per cent of sexually active adolescents in the study area have “multiple sexual partners”. In the previous
article, the authors indicated that this proportion was considerably higher. Out of 889 (352+130+256+151) sexually active adolescents, that article indicated that 218 (130+34+45+9) had multiple sexual partners. This is equivalent to 25 per cent (218/889; ref table 2).

Differences like these need to be discussed and explained if the new article is to .

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.