Reviewer's report

Title: Household Exposure to Violence and Human Rights Violations in western Bangladesh (I): Prevalence, Risk Factors and Consequences

Version: 2 Date: 3 September 2009

Reviewer: Edward Mills

Reviewer's report:

I enjoyed reading this manuscript and found it both interesting and sufficiently detailed. I applaud the authors for using epidemiologic methods over simple case reports, making this a major step forward for the field of epidemiology. My comments below should not be interpreted as harsh and should help improve the manuscript.

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract would benefit from estimates of the prevalence or rates of the prevalence of the main outcomes.

Final sentence of abstract. It isn’t a startling finding that OPV is driven by economic and political gains. I’d be amazed if it weren’t.

Throughout, don’t start sentences with numbers.

Small grammatical errors throughout that a proofread would identify.

No need to state that torture is brutal.

Page 3. “Torture and violent attacks against women have been widespread as well [4, 5]. It is reported that from 1 January 2001 to 28 February 2007, a total of 1,884 women were victims of dowry-related violence: 1,241 were killed, 479 were brutally tortured, 61 suffered acid burns, and 95 committed suicide [6]

• I don’t see why dowry-crimes are related to OPV. Can you explain?

Don’t refer to this as conflict-affected population. It isn’t technically a conflict, but it is violence-affected.

I’m afraid that Human Rights Watch reports are not considered a particularly credible source of evidence. Is there a local NGO that you can reference?

Stick to proper headings, intro, methods, results, etc.

This isn’t “This is a multi-site case study of conflict epidemiology” There is no such thing as conflict epidemiology. There is only epidemiology used in conflict settings.

How was the first house in each cluster chosen and was it each nth house?
A greater description of the multivariable model is required. Was this a step-wise evaluation, for example?

How many houses were empty and what did you do if an empty house was your nth house?

How did you assess mortality, how did you confirm?

Table 2, do you think that Iraq data for violent mortality is an adequate control? I would have thought simply comparing it to some place like India would be appropriate.

Table 4 and text, why use exact p-values most of the time and then threshold p-values (eg. <0.05) at other times?

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

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

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests