Reviewer's report

Title: Does an effective monitoring system improve family-planning performance? An experience in rural Bangladesh

Version: Date: 22 February 2007

Reviewer: A.M Dr. Choudhury

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)

1. The rationale of the study should be stated at least by a single sentence.
2. The literature review is inadequate to compare findings of the study. Therefore the authors are to provide sufficient references.
3. Page-4: The authors must specify what exact data collection techniques were used and what are the indicators.
4. Page-5: "The study employed 30 cluster survey method and 600 MWRAs were the sample"
   a. Did the authors consider cluster effects in calculating sample size? If not, the reasons should be stated clearly.
   b. The authors should clearly mention how the MWRAs were selected from the clusters for interview.
5. Context issues; in which contexts were questionnaires completed, qualitative data collected?
6. Sources of data were not mentioned in the methodology of the study.
7. Page-6-data analysis: Not a single word is written about analysis of qualitative data. The paper should contain the details of how qualitative data were analyzed.
8. The findings of the study contain very limited information about qualitative issues. Excerpts from qualitative data were not provided.
9. Page-7 and table3: The study was conducted in one sub-district and thus the findings are not representative of national level data. Therefore, the authors are suggested to compare the study findings with concerned Division instead of national level data.
10. The authors should have indicated the limitations of the study.

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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)

1. Page-4: "Salary day meeting, mid-level supervisory meeting and H&FWC meeting" may be explained in the forms of footnote.
2. The title of the paper may be made straight forward. It may either be 'Improvement of family planning performance by effective monitoring system: An experience in Rural Bangladesh' or 'Impact of an inbuilt monitoring system on family planning performance in rural Bangladesh.'
3. The nature of the in-built monitoring system may be stated.
4. The last sentence in the abstract (page-2) may be rephrased.
5. The authors may initiate to check some grammatical and spelling mistakes (eg, page-5, the 'word information must have plural expression and thus the verb should be 'were’ instead of 'was' or in page-7 the word is likely to be except not expect) with someone having better command on English Language.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1. Page-3: The word "sub-district" should be defined in the context of Bangladesh and be shown as footnote.
2. The authors could state some hypotheses and specify the data need of the study.
3. I am not sure whether the policy of the journal demands that the tables or figure should be shown at the end of the write up. If not, the tables or figure in the study should be placed at the relevant parts of the text.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.