Reviewer's report

Title: Association of programmatic factors with low contraceptive prevalence rates in a rural area of Bangladesh

Version: 1 Date: 28 February 2013

Reviewer: Tariq Azim

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Major compulsory revisions:

This is an important study which is done at a time when the TFR in Bangladesh has remained stagnant for quite some time. The study attempts to associate some of the programmatic factors with low CPR in a hard-to-reach sub-district of Bangladesh. However, if the study is trying to prove that low contacts with field workers is contributing or associated with the low CPR, that's nothing new. Other studies mentioned in this report have already found that.

Nevertheless, the study has some very important findings which the authors should try to analyze further (I am sure there's sufficient data collected during this study to do that).

Firstly, Nabiganj is not socioeconomically same as the rest of the country. The study reports that in Nabiganj (in comparison to the national average):
- there's low education rate
- people are more like to be richer
- families are more likely to have mobile phone accessibility
- and possibly, there's a changing trend in having higher age at marriage. Probably less percentage of women are married in Nabiganj at ages 15-19yrs (6.6%) and 20-24yrs (17.2%).

Secondly, the study has found that in Nabiganj the main source of contraceptive is the private sector and which is significantly higher than the national average.

Thus, the investigators need to revisit their data and analysis plan and thereby the conclusion drawn from this study. Instead of recommending to increase contacts with FWAs (and that nothing innovative), the study can point towards exploiting the private sector as the source of contraceptive and how the private sector source can be made more accessible, exploiting the mobile phone connectivity for reaching out to MWRA in hard to reach areas and encouraging higher age at marriage which probably is becoming an acceptable norm in Nabiganj.

Thus, the analysis and discussion sections need rethinking. Even analyzing and trying to explain the differences (or no difference) between hard to reach and not hard to reach areas within Nabiganj can be helpful in understanding the
determinants.

In Table 3: the authors need to recheck the data and the analysis done. For example, the crude OR for frequency of contacts is near or above 2 but after adjustments it goes down below 1.

Minor essential revisions:

Fig 2: need to clarify that the bars are representing unions of Nabiganj. It would be good to put a rationale for the study.

Discretionary revisions

• Operational definition of hard to reach and not hard to reach areas
• Reorganizing the flow of the Introduction and Discussion sections, putting various arguments in a coherent manner - (For example see the attachment)

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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.