## SIMPLE MEASURES FOR REPORTING THE MAGNITUDE OF SMALL AREA VARIATION IN RATES

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We adopted a two-stage sampling procedure to select 20 sub-centres in south India. We contacted all households and collected information on recent births and socioeconomic variables from all ever married women aged 15-49 years. Median General Marital Fertility Rate and its 95% CI of the observed rates were suggested. Using nonparametric bootstrap we converted small area variation in to median standardized fertility ratio, percentage and number of births that can be averted for each selected socio-economic factor. Under median General Marital Fertility Rate as a simple measure the percentage of births that could be averted for selected socio-economic factors varied between 2% and 5%. Using median standardized fertility ratio, an alternate measure to systematic variation the percentage of births that could be averted varied between 45% and 77%.

Nonparametric bootstrap can be adapted to estimate systematic variance in fertility across small areas. This systematic variance can be further converted in to three simple measures, viz., median standardized fertility ratio, percentage and number of births that can be averted for each selected socio-economic factor. These measures can help public health officials to demystify the art of decision to initiate necessary intervention for some and not all areas and to make judgements whether to proceed with detailed studies without depending entirely on statistical significance of the test statistics.