Reviewer's report

Title: An implementation evaluation of a policy aiming to improve financial access to maternal health care in Burkina Faso

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Reviewer: Matthias Borchert

Reviewer's report:

I am satisfied with the way how the authors have responded to my comments of the first round of reviewing and revising. I have read the paper once again and think the following point still merit attention.

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract, background: This section creates the impression as if “the national health policy … designed to boost the assisted delivery rate.” consisted only of the following: “The worst-off are exempted from all fees.” But the policy provides subsidies much more comprehensively; the exemption is only one element of it. The policy should be described more adequately.

Abstract, results: “All the activities were implemented as planned except for completely subsidizing the worst-off, and some activities such as surveys for patients and the quality assurance service team aiming to improve quality of care.” Without actually reading the paper this is very difficult to understand. What are “all the activities”? These sentences may become clearer when the background section of the abstract has been revised.

The grant for the worst-off: “A budget from the national subsidy obstetric care policy of 50000000000 CFA (76,224,509 Euros) was planned”. The readability of such large figures must be improved: “50,000,000,000 CFA (76,224,509 Euros).

The reimbursement system: Replace “dystocia labour” by “dystocic labour”

Transportation: “The outstanding amount, supported by the district hospital, is estimated at 6000000 CFA (91469 Euros).” Improve readability: “The outstanding amount, supported by the district hospital, is estimated at 6,000,000 CFA (91,469 Euros).”

The benefits of evaluating the implementation process: “problems with entering data on the software, resulting on long delays in reimbursement.” Change to “problem with using the software for data entry, resulting in long delays in reimbursement.”

Discretionary Revisions

Title: “An implementation evaluation of a policy aiming to improve financial access to maternal health care in Burkina Faso” Since the evaluation was carried
out in sex health centres of one district only, and the reservations the authors express about the generalizability of the results, there is a certain mismatch between the title and the study’s limited geographical scope. Consider rephrasing “An implementation evaluation of a policy aiming to improve financial access to maternal health care in Djibo district, Burkina Faso”

Quality of care: “Health workers are supposed to conduct surveys of patients to assess quality of care in health centres”. Could it be explained a bit more what these surveys should look like? Audits or case reviews based on the records? Patient interviews? And what does “surveys of the beneficiary population” mean – interviews of community members served by the health facilities?

Supplies and equipment: “no gloves for revision” consider changing for clarity to: “no gloves for revision [of the uterus]”

Traditional birth attendants…: “They feel useless and excluded from the activities of the health centre. Therefore, they feel discouraged from participating in the health centre’s activities.” The second sentence seems redundant – consider deleting it.

**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.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.