Reviewer's report

Title: Incidence and course of child malnutrition according to clinical or anthropometrical assessment

Version: 2 Date: 18 December 2013

Reviewer: Kevin R Short

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper is generally well-written and describes a novel and significant analysis of an existing data set. The data are more than 20 years old now, but appear to remain relevant given that the environment and population have likely not changed much in the intervening years. There are no major recommendations for revision, but a few minor changes should be addressed.

Minor
Page 10-11: “The majority of the children normalised after one month, except stunting...” Explain or revise. In the methods the interval frequency for follow-up was stated to be 3 months, so it is unclear how the authors could make the selected comment. Was there more frequent follow-up for children diagnosed with a condition?

Page 11: “According to our knowledge we are one of the rare authors who have provided incidence rates...” Awkward. Consider revising to “To our knowledge, the current study is among the first to report incidence rates...”

Page 13: the final paragraph is only 3 sentences. Is it meant to be merged with the paragraph that begins on page 14?

Figure 1: The line style in the legend should be adjusted so that there is a clearer difference between Severe wasting, Moderate stunting, and McM. In the figure these are distinct but in the legend McM and Moderate stunting look very similar.

Figure 2: The label for the x-axis (Age) is not properly aligned under the panel and the units of measure (months) should be included. The y-axis should have a label for units of measurement.

Tables: the titles should be shortened. Some of the text currently listed in the title area should either be shifted to a legend placed under the table, or could be removed (especially the definitions of the nutritional states), with reference to the text for full details.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests