Reviewer's report

Title: Systematic Review of Diarrhoea Duration and Severity in Children and Adults in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

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Reviewer: Olivier Fontaine

Reviewer's report:

This is a very well written systematic review on a topic of major interest. To my knowledge this is the first time that such an analysis on the duration and severity of diarrhoea episodes in children and adults is done, presenting very clearly the proportions of mild, moderate and severe episodes. In addition, for the first time, this article presents an estimate of the proportion of diarrhoea episodes leading to dehydration. These are extremely useful information for programme managers and decision makers.

This is why I strongly recommend this article for publication.

I have only one comment/query. The main difficulty with this analysis is to determine the severity of diarrhoea episodes. However, the authors are not describing in any details how they classified the episodes reported in the reviewed articles as "mild", "moderate" and "severe". It would be interesting to have the exact algorithm used to classify the cases of diarrhoea:

- Was the classification based on the one reported in the articles, or was the classification based on a set of specific variables? The way the metod section is written does not allow to precisely understand this important part of the article.

- On the same issue, the authors are mentioning that episodes were classified as "mild", "moderate" and "severe" based on stool output or stool frequency. How were the cut-off points for stool volume and stool frequency determined? A 70g/kg/day does not seem to be a high stool output.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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.