Reviewer’s report

Title: Nutritional Status and Dietary Intake of Urban Residents in Gondar, Northwest Ethiopia

Version: 2 Date: 14 June 2012

Reviewer: Getahun Ersino Lombamo

Reviewer’s report:

Dear authors,

I have tried to go through your responses to the suggested comments and also the revised sections in the main manuscript. You are appreciated for most of the changes you have made. However, two major comments have not been adequately addressed. Therefore, I strongly suggest that you consider the following comments:

• It is inappropriate to categorize individuals’ intake of nutrient as adequate or inadequate based on just a one day intake data. Individuals’ dietary intake varies day by day. As I have indicated earlier, your data doesn’t support estimations of prevalence of risk of inadequacy. Therefore, if your singles 24-h recall data were collected in such a way that each days of the week were represented, please calculate mean intakes of the selected nutrients for various groups (gender, income etc. groups) and compare them with appropriate standard. You have good data and they make better story only for calculating group mean intakes so please use your data for what they can be used for.

• The appropriate DRI to compare your calculated mean nutrient intakes of your various groups is EAR. [The following is just FYI, given you have data on usual intakes: The use of RDA as a cut-point for estimating group intakes (even when you have collected data on usual intakes), will result in serious overestimation of prevalence of inadequacy. Since RDA is an intake level that exceeds the requirements of almost all healthy individuals in a population, an individuals’ intake that is below the RDA doesn’t necessarily mean they are inadequate. Accordingly, the use of RDA as a cut-point to evaluate nutrient adequacy of groups was discouraged long before 2005 (Dietary Reference Intakes: Applications in Dietary Assessment (2000) Institute of Medicine (IOM) retrieved from http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=9956&page=R1). Therefore, I suggest comparing your mean estimates with EAR].

• Comparing mean takes of gender groups is good but has to be meaningful. Example if the EER for women and men is different, you would also expect that their intake would be significantly different. It would be more meaningful if you compare their energy intake with their respective EER to find out if they are significantly higher or lower. You may want to do the same for other nutrients (i.e., compare mean intakes with the respective EAR and, where meaningful, among groups as well).
Other comments:

- My previous comment on #15 was not suggesting looking the association/correlations of nutrient intakes and socioeconomic variables. Still correlations/associations also require data on ‘usual intakes’ of nutrients. I only suggested (e.g. income vs. frequency of fruit/vegetable consumptions; and also associations between BMI and income categories, BMI with consumption of some food groups etc.) just to be able to answer questions such as ‘who are the overweight?’, ‘does income dictate consumption of fruit and vegetables?’…

- Use the term EER (estimated energy requirement) for Energy in table 5 since there is no RDA for energy.

Level of interest: An article of importance 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 interest.