Reviewer's report

Title: Trade and health in the Pacific: views from the insiders

Version: Date: 10 November 2013

Reviewer: Sharon Friel

Reviewer's report:

This paper covers an important topic, is presented well and provides some key policy insights into how to address trade and health goals.

Minor essential revisions:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?

It takes a little time before the question appears in the introduction and it is buried. It would be good to state the question very early on and then explain why the need to ask that question.

The introduction could be tightened up in a few ways:

It moves between trade and health inequities, trade and nutrition, and trade and health – this is not a problem per se but it would be good to make clear that trade can affect health in various ways and then explain how.

Paragraphs one, two and five in the introduction repeat some of the same issues – this would benefit from culling and reorganising a little.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?

Qualitative key informant interviews were used, which are appropriate for this study/question, and the methods are well described.

There is some repetition in this section e.g. page 5 first paragraph methods noted that interviews lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour. Page 6 tells us that the interviews lasted 60 minutes.

Need to describe why this number of interviews – data saturation?

What does the last paragraph methods page 6 refer to? Presumably the interview questions. Need to tidy this up.

3. Are the data sound?

The data follow what would be expected of qualitative interviews. It is not clear what the table on page 7 refers to.

If possible to do without breaching confidentiality, it would be helpful to know which sector each interviewee is from – that would give a sense of difference/similarity in perspective.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

Yes
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, the discussion/conclusions use the data well and bring in supporting references.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
While the authors acknowledge that the views expressed by the respondents did not represent that of the government, there are no other limitations identified in the conclusion. These should be stated more comprehensively – including the limitations associated with the identification of key informants.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
NA

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

9. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes although there are a few words missing from sentences, it would benefit from a good proof reading.

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