Reviewer's report

Title: Vaccination resource tracking: a systematic review of the data and literature

Version: 2 Date: 19 May 2014

Reviewer: Ann Levin

Reviewer's report:

The paper is of interest but needs to go into more detail about the various sources of information, define terms used in the paper, and be more nuanced about the prospects for streamlining data collection processes and enhancing the reliability of data.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors do not explain what the objectives of the JRF, the APR, and the Sabin SIFP. I recommend that the authors explain how the audiences and objectives of each report are different as well as similar and what the incentives are for countries to complete these so that the reader can understand the potential for streamlining and improvements to accuracy.

The authors state that WHO's cMYPs are used for planning purposes for countries. It should be noted that these require a large amount of data collection and analysis and the process is time-consuming and intensive, particularly in decentralized countries. Before the cMYP was developed, countries were asked to complete Financial Sustainability Plans and these were reviewed more rigorously at GAVI. The decision was made to make the cMYP into a country-based planning document and not review these as intensively as the FSP so that it could be country-owned. Thus, this will limit the prospects for making these a part of a global tracking process due to the varying motivations for developing this document. This should be noted as a limitation of using the cMYP for tracking.

2. Currently countries filling out the JFR do not have incentives to provide accurate estimates of total routine immunization costs. In addition, they are only asked to provide one number on total costs rather than to provide more disaggregated information by cost component. For this reason, it is impossible to determine whether similar assumptions are made by each country. Thus, although this document covers the largest number of countries and is generated each year, it would not be a good tracking mechanism without significant changes. Thus, the authors should not state that the JRF 'collects information sufficient for monitoring immunization funding.'

3. The paper does not talk about the role of private for-profit clinics and hospitals in provision of immunizations although we know that many consumers choose to purchase immunizations at private clinics in countries such as India and Sri Lanka. While information is limited about the role of the private sector in the
provision of immunizations (see Levin and Kaddar, 2011), it should be mentioned as a limitation of the study.

Minor Essential Revisions

4. The cMYP is a WHO tool and not a UNICEF tool. WHO is responsible for assisting countries with data collection and analysis for the cMYP and making improvements to the tool. This should be corrected in the paper.

5. The paper should define key concepts in the paper such as 'immunization' and 'vaccination' and use these in a consistent manner in the paper rather than use these interchangingly.

6. In Table 1, indicate that the costs of developing cMYPs are substantial, particularly in countries that are decentralized or have a lot of local contributions

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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:**

No conflict of interest