Reviewer's report

Title: Economic burden of cholera in the WHO African Region

Version: 2 Date: 13 April 2009

Reviewer: James R Butler

Reviewer's report:

The revised version of this manuscript is a considerable improvement over the original version, and the authors are to be commended for their efforts. The new Appendix is very useful - clearly designed with sources well documented.

There are only two outstanding revisions to which I believe the authors should attend. Although minor, I designate them as essential because I believe they will improve the user-friendliness of the paper considerably.

1) In Tables 2a, 2b and 2c, add two extra lines of results as follows:

- one, to be inserted after line (6), labelled 'Total direct costs'. The cells under the 'US$' columns will then show the summation of the direct costs in lines (1)-(6), and the '%' columns will show the percentage of Grand Total Cost accounted for by direct costs.

- the second, to be inserted after line (10), labelled 'Total indirect costs'. The cells under the 'US$' columns will then show the summation of the indirect costs in lines (7)-(10), and the '%' columns will show the percentage of Grand Total Cost accounted for by indirect costs.

As these tables stand, if as a reader I ask the question, 'How important are the direct costs of cholera relative to the indirect costs in contributing to the overall cost of cholera?', I cannot see the answer and would have to calculate it myself.

2) In the Appendix, in reporting the 'Unit price of medicine for a child and adult at a health centre', and 'Cost of medicines at hospital for children & adults', report the dollar figures to 2 decimal places only instead of 9+ places.

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

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.