Reviewer's report

Title: Supporting local planning and budgeting for maternal, neonatal and child health in the Philippines

Version: 2 Date: 20 December 2012

Reviewer: Alejandro Herrin

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The revised paper has sharpened its focus on the process of implementation of the IC initiative allowing it to focus on key challenges including data issues. The problem-solving approach is also highlighted. Both are important.

A third aspect of the process is the identification of the different strategic options and their corresponding cost. In my first review, I found this to be the innovative feature of the approach to planning introduced in the paper as current planning by LGUs often take on a “one-problem, one-solution” perspective, when in fact there could be several options to address a given problem.

To get a real appreciation of this feature, I expected more discussion on the nature of these alternative strategies that respond to the identified problems. As it is, only a paragraph is devoted to this on page 9. An example of some of these “different combinations of strategies” would be extremely instructive and interesting. What insights into other strategies would have been lost had the approach been a “one-problem, one-solution” approach rather than one of considering explicitly a set of options?

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.