Reviewer's report

Title: The financial burden from non-communicable diseases in low- and middle-income countries: a literature review

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Reviewer: Anderson Stanciole

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this important paper. As noted in the paper, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) already are a major public health and economic issue in many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Moreover, their future importance can only be expected to increase in view of the main achievements in the control of communicable disease in recent years, the accelerated process of population ageing and the increasing prevalence of NCDs risk factors in LMICs. At the same time, policy makers and the major funders in global health are still reluctant to devote enough attention and resources to support NCDs prevention, treatment and control. The paper fills an important gap by providing an extensive review of the available evidence on the costs imposed for households.

An innovative contribution of the paper is to shed light on the huge unmet demand for services related to NCDs prevention and control. In many countries the observed household economic impact is likely to be an underestimate of the real impact, as many people do not report spending money on NCDs simply because they have no resources to afford the expense. This is a very important aspect of the NCDs response which has been overlooked in the literature.

The paper is clearly written and well argued.

Discretionary Revisions

1. One suggestion for the authors is that the title should focus on the economic instead of financial burden of NCDs. The paper clearly goes beyond only financial aspects and also covers other indirect costs including, for instance, the impact on loss of time, including food consumption, non-health consumption and employment.

2. It would be useful if the authors could provide an overview of the conceptual framework that describes the channels through which NCDs can affect the economic welfare of households. Having a clear description of the main pathways would be useful to highlight some of the finer points of the paper, for example the impact of limited financial risk protection.

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 interests.