Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 1 Date: 5 June 2013

Reviewer: Jacky Mathonnat

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very interesting paper addressing an important and timely issue from a research and a policy oriented perspective. It can be considered as “An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field”

It is well reasoned and fairly balanced. The standard of writing seems to me to be very good, but English is not my mother language.

I would like to make three comments that I am considering to lead to “major compulsory revisions”, following the expression used in the Guidelines. The authors can do it easily

1. The process leading from the 8966 results to 49 papers should be more detailed. Two reviews can provide useful elements for developing this question:

2. I can present my second remark by a question: “To what extend can we trust the results of the 49 papers?”. The authors should give more space to some assessment of the methodology used in the papers. It is not obvious to do, but it is important, as we guess that some studies are rather weak and other more robust. The authors can also try to rank them according to their expert opinion. A good example can be found in Witter S, Fretheim A, Kessy FL, Lindahl AK, Paying for performance to improve the delivery of health interventions in low- and middle-income countries (Review), The Cochrane Collaboration, 2012.

3. Regarding the (very interesting) discussion, I suggest to have more flesh around the bone regarding “What we don’t know and what we would like to know”.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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 have no competing interest.
JM