Reviewer's report

Title: Micronutrient Fortification of Food and its Impact on Woman and Child Health: A Systematic Review

Version: 4 Date: 19 June 2013

Reviewer: Alexander Tsierdsvadze

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Conceptual framework: Authors present outcomes in general terms (‘any health outcome would do’), instead of focusing on a set of specific clinical outcomes. It is not clear if they had specific outcomes in mind or they assessed all outcomes what’s reported in studies. Authors need to be focused and presenting patient-oriented outcomes such as anthropometric indicators, pregnancy outcomes, morbidity (need to be specific what conditions?), mortality and translating less relevant bio-chemical indicators and hematologic markers into more relevant outcomes such as anemia, zinc deficiency, etc...

Data extraction: Please, list the key outcomes of interest to this review (page 9)

ROB assessment section: The authors do not mention if the included non-RCTs were assessed for risk of bias. If they were, please state the assessment tool and its domains. Present the quality assessment of non-RCTs in tables

Grading overall quality of evidence: Authors need to be transparent enough to present text (in methods) and tables (appendices) how each outcome was graded using the GRADE group system. There is no explanation what CHERG rule means (page 10).

Results: I find it problematic how these pooled SMDs (Table 4 and text) can be interpreted clinically? Or translated in terms of clinically relevant outcomes such as ‘iron deficiency’, ‘anemia’ etc...

Meta-analyses: Authors are not transparent enough on how they pooled the studies. Were they considering clinical or statistical heterogeneity across studies while pooling? In which cases they did not pool the studies? And why they would not pool? Not clear. It seems the studies were just pooled for sake of pooling.

Authors are asked to provide Forest plots.