Reviewer’s report

Title: Haiti and the health marketplace: The role of the private, informal market in filling the gaps left by the state

Version: 3 Date: 7 October 2014

Reviewer: Neil Spicer

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

A much improved piece. The background very nicely sets up the value of the study and leads the reader into the rest of the article. The Methods are much better.

I think a few further essential changes would be well worth making – none of these are very major in scope and I don’t think will take the authors very long but should improve the piece.

Minor issues:

- P 1 Should be low and middle income not lower middle income.
- Methods – useful to add dates in the document inclusion criteria.
- P 10 – ‘Global Fund initiatives’ is vague – is this Global Fund programmes (which diseases)? A few more words are needed.
- Quotes (various places). For each quote it’s good to state the type of respondent. And to weave each quote into the text a bit more smoothly e.g. A respondent from a multilateral organisation said: ‘...
- Throughout – a few minor typos, punctuation errors etc.

More substantial issues:

Background section: This reads well. But I think a couple more sentences are needed to be really clear about what follows – specifically what issues or themes are being looked at in the results under the sections on the different sectors and governance (these start to be hinted at the beginning of the Findings section – different aspects of governance being assessed e.g. state fragility, limited regulation, poor coordination. But I think it would be helpful to clearly frame the analysis from the beginning.

Findings section: Some good material here. But I think it could really benefit from a few background numbers (small table or box?) so the reader gets a better sense of the relative importance of the different sectors described – e.g. proportions of health spending under the different sectors, proportion of donor spending as % of overall domestic spending on health etc. Also I would like to see a list of the major health donors and global health initiatives and how much
money they have contributed e.g. Global Fund, PEPFAR, GAVI etc.

Also – I noticed there isn’t very much on the private for profit sector here and in the Discussion – which seems an important omission. Can this be strengthened in both Findings and Discussion – otherwise it seems to be dominated by donor/NGO implementer issues.

**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'