Reviewer’s report

Title: Developing a mental health care plan in a low resource setting: the Theory of Change approach

Version: 4 Date: 29 June 2015

Reviewer: Peter Ventevogel

Reviewer’s report:

The revision of the paper addresses several of the concerns raised by me and other reviewers. It is more clear now what ToC is, and what one can expect from TOC workshop and what not. The paper is now more balanced and, as such, is an interesting illustration of how ToC workshops can be used in the development of (mental) health programming. This is not limited to mental health programmes, but is also of interest for those outside the mental health field.

1. The authors have adequately addressed my concern about the absence of qualitative data on local concepts and help seeking behaviour. They have mentioned this as a limitation of what they did and that in this research they wanted to focus on the ToC. This is sufficient to me.

2. The question whether the traditional healers were able to participate in the workshops is also answered.

3. I am less convinced with the response to my point 4, in which I doubted whether lack of knowledge among care providers was the main issue. The authors respond with giving two references from high-income settings. That does not answer my point, as they could also have provided references that give the opposite answer, namely that training primary care staff does, by itself, not lead to improved care for people with depression (See Sikorski, 2012 in this journal). However, it is not central to the paper, and it is, of course, completely clear that training of care providers is a central element in any attempt to integrate mental health into general health care. So propose to leave it as it is, even though I am still not convinced how the ToC methods helps to validate such hypothesis or make it more or less credible...

4. The authors have now (on page 20/21) added some critical remarks to the ToC methods and this makes the paper more balanced.

Discretionary revisions:

1. Ensure consistency in spelling, eg on p 7 ‘Kebede’ is spelling with and later without initial capital. Please harmonize

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 have no competing interests