Reviewer's report

Title: Selling my sheep to pay for medicines - Household priorities and coping strategies in a setting without universal health coverage

Version: 0 Date: 09 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Olena Levenets

Reviewer's report:

Evaluation and comments to the authors:

* Please consider providing a description of the key terms, such as OOP and coping strategies.

* The development of the main point starts with UHC, but very little is said about Ethiopia's de facto progress toward UHC goals and the reason for its failure. Therefore, I recommend adding this information to the background section. This problem is more obvious in conclusion: "steps toward UHC… are promising" (pg 23, lines 23-25). It is not clear what actions in implementing UHC were done de facto and are promising? This idea isn't clearly developed in the article.

* It seems that description of Ethiopia's healthcare in the beginning of the "methods" section is displaced. I see it more as a part of the background.

* Choice of methods corresponds well to the research questions but it is still unclear from the description of methods (even though table gives some clarity), how many FCDs were conducted and what was the main focus of the FGDs.

* I have some concerns regarding conclusions. While research question is "how families make choices about health care seeking and health care spending", conclusion rather explains what policymakers should take into account when implementing UHC. Thus, the explanation of the main findings is basically missing. Consider, summarizing how people make choices, what arguments and circumstances they take into account, etc.

* Pg. 5. line 22. The sentence that starts with "Despite" should be the beginning of the new paragraph, since new ideas are introduced.

* Pg. 8 lines 1-3. The magnitude of the newborn mortality decline is unclear. Please specify the previous rates to stress the change.
* Pg. 9 Lines 1-3. What is the relevance of given information to the research? What availability of demographic surveillance site tells us about healthcare in Butajira?

* Table 2. All table is ambiguous and especially the category "Total". You can overcome it by the provision of more explanation in the text.

Conclusion.

In general, this article seems to be logically structured toward answering the main research question and chosen methods allow to reach a set goal. Meanwhile, the conclusion section requires major restructuring in adherence to the research question and should depict answer to this question, main findings and the final value of your paper.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**

If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**

If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**

If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**

If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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