Reviewer’s report

Title: Impact of stakeholder perspectives on cost-effectiveness estimates of four specialized nutritious foods for preventing stunting and wasting in children 6-23 months in Burkina Faso

Version: 0 Date: 25 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Courtney Heisler

Reviewer's report:

Overall: This is a novel study seeking to determine the cost-effectiveness of diet interventions in the reduction of wasting and stunting in pediatric populations in Burkina Faso from multiple stakeholder perspectives. A valuable contribution to existing literature and the knowledge base of nutritional interventions for the prevention of stunting/wasting in young children. Excellent choice using ABC-I approach but would like to have more detailed methods in the paper, as opposed to referring to other documentation that is unpublished (reference #17). Remove line numbering, numbering restarts on every page and is non-informative. Also remove personal pronouns ("we", "they"). Include overall N in abstract. There is a significant gap in methodology description - authors repeatedly cite reference #17 but this is an unpublished manuscript.


Page 2, first line of Results: Change to "(CSWB w/oil was less effective)"

Page 4, paragraph 1: Define wasting and stunting rather than describing it was "low height" and "low weight".

Page 4, Paragraph 1: Is there a statistic to estimate the societal/healthcare cost of children who experience stunting/wasting? Are there cost savings estimates for prevention of acute malnutrition? Given this is a CEA paper, it would be beneficial to further define the issue from a financial angle.

Page 4, Line 37: Please provide a description of SNFs or refer to a table with this information.

Page 5, paragraph 2: This is the first and only mention of Burkina Faso in the Background section. Describe the region - what is the wasting/stunting situation in BF? Why is this area well-suited for this intervention?

Page 5, Methods: Describe the four regions assigned to the four arms. Are they comparable, urban vs rural, etc.? Include baseline characteristics table with these data.

Page 6, paragraph 3: Define "lead mothers"

Page 6, paragraph 4: Change to "…a set of values assigned to parameters"
Page 8, Line 29: Write out all acronyms at first usage (MT = metric ton) and add MT to abbreviation page (page 20).

Page 7, paragraph 3: Define Social Behavior Change Communication and its relevance to this study.

Page 9, paragraph 2: What are the "predefined individual, household, and community level covariates"

Methods section: Need clarification on how stunting and wasting were determined to change if there was no baseline measurement of these variables? Is this clarified in the unpublished manuscript?

Page 10, paragraph 3: Change to "....the extent to which the control group had worse outcomes…"

Page 11, paragraph 3: What is the p value for LTFU across the four arms? Also if only 908 individuals were LTFU, why do Table 3 &amp; 4 have numbers that are less than those reported in the first paragraph of the Results, after taking away the # LTFU?

Page 11, paragraph 6: Include standard deviations for the mean costs provided.

Page 13, paragraph 3: This description is insufficient, the referenced citation is not published.

Page 14, paragraph 1: Unfinished sentence: "A recent literature review on methods used…"

Page 18, paragraph 1: Elaborate on "several analytical strategies were used…"

Table 1: Include number of participants per arm in table.

Table 2: Distribution and Caregiver Cost data sources not clear. Which observational/interview instruments were used to collect these data?

Table 2: It would be nice to clarify which Cost Component/Activity composed each perspective. The first 6 compose the donor perspective, the next 2 compose the volunteer/program perspective, and the final component/activity compose the caregiver perspective - correct?

Table 2: Clarify which "observational instruments" and "interview instruments" were used

Table 2: Capitalize "Observation" under Data Source column

Table 3: How did you arrive at N = 4268 from your original sample, even when excluding LTFU. The n's in the arm add up to 5204, not 4268…

Table 3: Add ORs and 95% CIs directly into the table, not just as a footnote.
Table 4: How did you arrive at N = 4995 from your original sample, even when excluding LTFU. The n's in the arm add up to 6112, not 4995 …

Table 4: Add ORs and 95% CIs directly into the table, not just as a footnote.

Table 4: Add explanation of "NA" under RUSF arm column as a footnote.

Figure 6: Remove "(Ref.)" after "arms to the reference"

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