Reviewer’s report

Title: The effect of payment and incentives on motivation and focus of Community Health Workers: Case studies

Version: 2 Date: 13 April 2015

Reviewer: Joseph Zulu

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. The use of the case study approach in the study is good. However, the inclusion criteria for Paid- full time community-based health workers is not well explained. For instance, the study has included only the CHWs (Behvarz’s) in Iran and did not clearly explain why other national community-based health workers such as the Community Health Assistants in Brazil and Lady Health Workers in Pakistan –who are also full time paid national community-based health worker programmes have not been included in the study. They authors may consider including the two categories of CBHWs as they fit within the inclusion criteria that they have outlined in this paper, or provide a detailed explanation as to why such programmes can not be included in the study.

2. The difference in the categorisation between the Health Extension Workers and CHWs (Behvarz’s) in Iran is not very clear. The authors may consider including or mentioning other CHWs in the HEP programme apart from Health Extension Workers for it to qualify as being both full-time and volunteer CHWs working together- otherwise if the focus is purely the HEWs, then the Health Extension Workers may have to be considered under the full time –paid CBHW category.

- Minor Essential Revisions
1. The categorisation of the CBHW main approaches is very good. However, the part-time volunteer category is not well defined. It is important to categorically state whether or not part-time volunteers have any incentives .i.e. on page 8 before the case study description.

2. In the discussion chapter, the authors need to include references or reference at the end of this sentence: “From the information available in the literature it appears that -- according to behavioural economics theory -- CHWs work best within monetary or a mixed market rather than social market.”

3. In the discussion chapter, the authors state that “A social market is one where volunteering one’s time for the common good, social status and community appreciation, are the most important motivators whereas the monetary market is one in which the CHWs work are integrated in the health system full time for the hours expected of them” —it would be important to explain or define what is meant by integration of community-based health workers into the health system.
- Discretionary Revisions

1. The authors have nicely described the effects of the remuneration model in most of the cases. However, for the programme in Iran, the description of the effect of remuneration model needs to be strengthened by adding references which clearly state or show that remuneration has an effect.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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