Reviewer's report

Title: The factors affecting the institutionalization of two policy units in Burkina Faso’s health system: a case study

Version: 1 Date: 15 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Christian Dagenais

Reviewer's report:

I liked the reading of the article and I think that it brings some useful information, although the conclusion about the importance of leadership, funding, human resources and a clear mandate falls under the common sense and does not really shed new light on the policymaking process.

My first comment concerns the fact that the same authors published another article very recently in HRPS on a two policy units’ study. The focus of these two articles are different and complementary. In the first article, the two units are identified but not in the second. Because the documents included in the analysis seem to be the same in the two studies and we do not know if the interviewed responded are the same. This is a bit confusing and I think that this must be explained to the readers. This should be done in the abstract and in the introduction.

My second comment is about the first section added in the manuscript on page 5. The example of the "rapid response service" would be a good one, but only if there is any evidence that this service has been implemented and proven useful in the Burkinabè context. To my knowledge, this is not the case and the "potential benefits" has to be demonstrated. I suggest to use a more convincing example to support this argument.

Line 163-167: Two policy units were selected because they were generally considered successful or not. By whom?

In the method section, the authors should give more information about the "external reviewers who were engaged to review the study's findings". Where did they come from? How were they recruited? What were their qualification?
Line 584: "...a second researcher was involved in and consulted during various stages of data analysis (and in interpreting the results)". This is presented only in the discussion, it must be mentioned in the method section. And his contribution must be detailed.

The first paragraph of the result section (line 246) should be in the method section.

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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