**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Household dietary diversity and associated factors among residents of Finote Selam Town, North West Ethiopia: A cross sectional study

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 08 Jan 2017

**Reviewer:** Martin Mwangi

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is a timely manuscript which helps add more data and information to the existing data sets on dietary diversity in Ethiopia. There are however, some revisions needed before the manuscript is ready for publication. Below is a page-by-page review of the manuscript.

Title page: Manuscript title needs grammatical revision. Consider changing "...residents in Finote Selam Town" to "...residents of Finote Selam Town".

Page 2 line 15: I do not agree the authors view that "very little information exists on HHDD in Ethiopia". Workicho et al 2016 is an example of availability of data. However, there is need to review past information and update it with new data. The introduction is not exhaustive in its review of previous information.

Page 2 line 30: correct spelling error of the word questionnaire

Page 3 line 19: delete the word 'which'

Introduction lacks the following:

- A review HHDD data from the Ethiopia national statistics especially from the Central Bureau of Statistics (or similar government institution) of Ethiopia

- Information about the region studied and Specifically about Finote Selam Town. Why was this region/town selected? why is it of interest? what are the dietary habits of people living there and how do they compare to the rest of the country etc.

- Introduction also lacks comparative information with neighboring countries and/or peers of Ethiopia for the reader to place the research objectives in context. It is not enough to just say that 'the situation is bad!' as stated by the authors.

Study setting and participants: authors should describe how they obtained a list of all the households? was it through a census? who conducted it? how comprehensive was this list?
Measurements: It is not clear how the process of checking for the accuracy of the back-translated questionnaire was done. Were the same translators used or were different independent questionnaires asked to back-translate the questionnaire? Description could be more clear.

Page 5 line 4: the description of the qualifications of the nurses i.e. "diploma nurses" and "BSc nurses" is vague in the international context given the strict definition of a diploma as a "a certificate awarded by an educational establishment to show that someone has successfully completed a course of study".

The authors should also state how they assessed whether the one day training was adequate to equip the interviewers with the necessary skill to carry out the research.

Operational definitions: Is there a better way of presenting this section? the authors should consider converting the section into a paragraph or a table etc.

Page 5 line 44: sentence should be revised to remove the parenthesis and improve readability.

Page 6 line 14-16: needs grammatical revision

Table 1: Insert footnote explaining the meaning of "diploma"

Page 7 line 41: needs grammatical revision

Table 2: Insert footnote indicating the conversion rate of the birr to USD

Table 3: Suggestion; why not present the Dietary Diversity Score as low, medium, and high as presented in the operational definitions?

Table 5: needs editing to improve presentation and readability

Table 5: column one does not indicate what the numbers mean i.e. including those in parenthesis

General comment regarding tables: ensure that units are inserted in all sections to describe to the reader what the numbers mean. The tables can be revised to look more presentable.

Discussion

General comments: though the discussion is well written, the authors should improve it by reviewing more exhaustively the internal and external validity of their findings. The authors do not discuss whether the period of data collection is special in any way in the Ethiopian context (e.g. public holidays or religious festivals etc.). The observed adequate dietary diversity 87.2% in this population is high (especially given the African context) and requires a strong discussion and appraisal of the tool(s) and methods used, the population selected, sampling technique etc. The discussion should also compare this findings with the rest of Ethiopia and the neighboring countries to enable the reader to place the results in context.
Page 13 line 7: remove the word "tried"

Page 13 line 23: Inset the year of the publication by Belachew and Yemane. Do the same for all other sections where you mention published studies

Page 13 last paragraph, last sentence: I do not agree with the view that the reason why male-headed households have higher dietary diversity is because women have low decision making power. We are comparing male headed versus female headed households. It is my understanding that the decision making power in a female headed household is solely with the woman and though she could theoretically have a lower decision making power, I postulate that it is a question of the financial position/capability of the female heads of the households compared to the male heads of the households. Simply put, male headed households have more money at their disposal hence the higher dietary diversity. Could the authors clarify this issue in the discussion?

Page 15 lines 34 and 49: needs grammatical revision

Ethical statement: authors should expound whether written informed consent was obtained or they simply obtained verbal consent as stated. Is the verbal consent verifiable?

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.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
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