Reviewer’s report

Title: Risk Factors Associated with Poor Health Outcomes for Children under the Age of 5 with Moderate Acute Malnutrition in Rural Fagita Lekoma District, Awí Zone, Amhara, Ethiopia, 2016

Version: 2 Date: 16 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Silvia Berciano

Reviewer's report:

Specific comments are provided below.

Page 4:

Line 23: The authors state that "in areas not considered chronically food-insecure, there are public SFPs" when it appears they mean that in fact, there aren't.

Line 32: Average food security at the woreda level may mask severe food insecurity at the household level.

Line 34: A brief definition of "food security" may be informative for the reader.

Page 5:

Line 4: MAUC should be corrected to MUAC (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference).

Line 9: Mentioning "poor health outcomes" instead of simply "health outcomes" establishes the direction of the association and therefore the term "food insecurity" should be used instead of "food security".

Lines 40-43: Repetitive terms and statements should be avoided.

Lines 43-50: For each of the exclusion criteria, what percentage of the sample was excluded from the study? This information is key to understand the generalizability of the results.

Page 6:

Line 6: Results that were taken from a previous study.

Line 57: We categorize children as having MAM
Page 9:
Lines 41-42: The sentence should be revised for clarity.

Page 10:
Line 45-49: Incorrect interpretation of Figure 1.

Page 11:
Lines 4-6: Please explain the clinical relevance of a 1-day increase in recovery time, in the context of the study.
Line 30: at the 5% level of significance.

From line 42: Care should be exercised when interpreting Adjusted Hazard Rates. All the risk ratio interpretations are incorrect (e.g. AHR=1.50 corresponds to a 50% higher risk, not a 1.5 times higher risk).

Line 60: Would food insecurity confound this association?

Page 13:
Line 43: This would require the additional investment of scarce resources.

Tables:
Please apply a standardized, uniform style in the use of symbols, capitalization, spacing and decimal digits across all tables.

Please include p-values for the variable comparisons between the food secure and insecure groups.

On Table 3, the data corresponding to the frequency of family food in food-insecure households should be corrected. MDD in 24 hours includes a duplicated row.
Figure 1: As constructed, the figure is not informative.

**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

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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