Author's response to reviews

Title: Lessons drawn from research utilization in the maternal iodine supplementation policy development in Thailand.

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Version: 3 Date: 1 May 2012

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Title: Lessons drawn from research utilization in the maternal iodine supplementation policy development in Thailand.

Reviewer: Karen Daniels
Reviewer's report:
5 April 2012

Comment 1:

“Primarily I feel that the headings “Methods” and “Findings” are not appropriate. I think it would be more appropriate to have “Researchers involvement in the policy process” (instead of Methods); and “Observations from engaging in the policy process” (instead of Findings). Alternatively the methods section could be renamed “Authors role in policy process and evidence generation”. Then the findings can be called “Observations and reflections on the experience of research utilization”...

Response 1:

As suggested in the new title that we gave to the manuscript, our intention is to share our observations and lessons learnt from the policy process in which we were involved in the Correspondence section of BMC Public Health, because we believe that they may be useful for researchers working at the nexus of research and policy, especially in developing countries. We concur with the reviewer to change specific headings of the report to “Researchers’ role in policy process and evidence generation” and “Observations and reflections on the experience of research utilization” and we thank her for her suggestion. Likewise, the abstract has been modified accordingly.

Comment 2:

“In particular I don’t think that what the authors did can really be described as participant observation...”

Response: As suggested, we have replaced the expression ‘participant observation’ with ‘observation’ alone.
Reviewer: Nyokabi Musila

Comment 1:

“There are established research methods in the area of observational documentation and evaluation of the policy development process…. Some background on this would be useful. Whilst there is an improvement in having a methods section, the authors have still not made any attempts to link their work to an established model or framework in the introductory and methods section, or to reported case studies in this area in the discussion section. I have noted that my co-reviewer also highlighted this in her comment #2. “The retelling of the story of evidence use would be greatly enhanced by the use an existing policy process model or conceptual framework...”

Response 1:

We agree with the useful comments provided by the reviewer. However, our main objective is to be able to share with researchers and policymakers our lessons learnt from this policy process in a timely and concise manner. In line with one reviewer’s additional comments we have clarified this in the manuscript, and we believe that its publication as a short note in the Correspondence section of this journal is still of interest for those working at the research-policy nexus.