Author's response to reviews

Title: Tuberculosis diagnosis delays in Chad: a multicenter, hospital-based, survey in Ndjamena and Moundou.

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Dear editorial board of BMC Public Health, Dear reviewers,

Thank you for considering the revised manuscript enclosed: “Tuberculosis diagnosis delays in Chad: a multicenter, hospital-based, survey in Ndjamena and Moundou”.

We thank the reviewers for their comments, patience and advice that enabled us to improve this manuscript.

The abstract was completed in order to reflect the manuscript findings. Words in French were translated in English. Then a professional English translator reviewed the whole manuscript before this resubmission.

We hope that these changes and these clarifications fulfill the requirements to make the manuscript acceptable for a publication in BMC Public Health.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Please find below the answers to the questions of the reviewers.

Sincerely yours,

Corresponding author: Ndeindo NDEIKOUNDAM NGANGRO

Rachel Royce

1. We add conclusions about structural changes and capacity building in the abstract conclusion to reflect the main conclusions in the report.

2. This mistake was corrected. Indeed, patients with other lung diseases, with extra pulmonary TB, who refused to give their consent and/or who were too weak to answer the questionnaire were excluded from this study. We thank the reviewer for her comment.

3. The starting point was the onset of pulmonary TB symptoms: cough longer than 15 days, night sweat, weight loss, and main respiratory signs according to national TB control program guidelines. A pulmonologist reviewed the cases to confirm these signs as symptoms of tuberculosis.

4. The acid fast bacilli test mentioned in the manuscript was in fact the smear test. This was explicitly mentioned in this revised manuscript.

5. Sentences that suggest causality or a level of certainty that is not warranted were corrected considering the reviewer’s comments and advice. Explanations about gender differences were completed by the fact that the demands of family responsibilities may be obstacles that can delay women's access to TB diagnosis. This paragraph was re-written for clarity.

6. Results were withdrawn from the discussion section.

7. The first paragraph (pg 13) was rewritten for clarity.

8. The word “denounced” was withdrawn and the sentence was rewritten for clarity.

9. The statements about the recall bias were withdrawn and the limitation described in 4th sentence lead this paragraph on the reviewer’s advice.

10. We agree with the reviewer’s point of view and we tempered the sentence stating that the 286 patients exposed members of their households to TB infection because some of these household members may have been the ones that transmitted TB and these household members were exposed when the case was infectious, not after.

11. The words written in French were translated in English. It was also noted that numbers in the brackets refer to references. The column headings were improved considering the reviewer’s comments.
12. The figure title was replaced by “Study recruitment” and incomplete box was completed.

13. All minor points were corrected considering the reviewer’s advice.

Ibrahim Sendagire

1. French words were translated in English and a professional English translator reviewed the manuscript.

2. The findings of Martin et al. about TB diagnosis delays in Ndjamen were reported in the introduction.