Author’s response to reviews

Title: Striving for better health through health research in post-conflict Timor-Leste

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors,

Re: Striving for better health through health research in post-conflict Timor-Leste

Please find attached our revised article.

Professor Lyndal Trevena’s revisions have been addressed as follows:

1. The Background section is well-researched and outlines clearly the important role that research capacity building can play in health and development. This section could be strengthened by adding the paucity of published work on developing country-driven concepts for research capacity building systems. This paper is therefore novel in describing such an initiative and may serve to stimulate similar papers and debate from other nations. (Discretionary revision)

Revision: This comment has been added to the Background section.

2. The Main text section is clear and well-written. However, I feel that much of the content in the discussion section should probably sit within this section. The objectives and function of the CHRD, funding and development of a research partnership should be shortened if possible and moved to this section. (Major compulsory revision)

Revision: The content of the discussion section was moved to the Main text and shortened.

3. The CHRD vision, objectives and key components could perhaps be summarised in a figure to make it easier for the reader to view at a glance. This would allow for some shortening of the text in this section as well. (Discretionary revisions).

Revision: The CHRD objectives and function section was removed from the text and incorporated into a figure.

4. The Discussion might be of greater interest to this journal’s readership if it considers some of the future challenges for development and sustainability of this initiative. I suggest that the authors add some thoughts on this and replace the descriptive content moved to the main text. (Major compulsory revision)

Revision: The descriptive content was moved to the main text. The Discussion now includes a discussion considering some of the future challenges for development and sustainability of the CHRD.

Professor Derrick Silove’s revisions have been addressed as follows:

- Perhaps some comment about internal debates about this issue - do all members of bureaucracy and government agree that research is worthy of funding - or are there strong arguments that funds should be reserved for services?
Worth mentioning if there is or has been resistance at any levels to highlighting research for example, arguments that funds should be used exclusively for services given the pressing needs.

Revision: This important point has now been commented on in the discussion section.

The word count has also reduced to 1932 words excluding titles and references.

Thank you very much for considering our revised article.

Yours sincerely,

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