Author’s response to reviews

Title: Evidence for heterogeneity in China’s progress against pulmonary tuberculosis: uneven reductions in a major center of ongoing transmission, 2005-2017

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Version: 3 Date: 03 Jul 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Oliver,

Thank you for the opportunity to make final clarifications and resubmit our manuscript “Evidence for heterogeneity in China’s progress against pulmonary tuberculosis: uneven reductions in a major center of ongoing transmission, 2005-2017” (INFD-D-19-00048R2). We appreciate your careful review, and have addressed your final requests in this revision.

The maps depicted in Supplemental figures 4, 6 and 7 and Figures 5, 6 and 7 are our own renderings, developed with publically available administrative boundary data obtained from
China’s National Earth System Science Data Sharing Infrastructure; we confirm these products are not under copyright. Please see the other updates below.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding our revision, and we would be glad to respond to any further questions or comments that you or reviewers may have.

Our sincere regards,

Drs. Qu Cheng, Justin Remais and Jin’ge He (on behalf of all authors)

1. Please clearly indicate the Corresponding Author on the Title Page of your manuscript.

The corresponding author is now denoted with § on the title page.

2. Please add a “Conclusions” section after the “Discussion” section. This should state clearly the main conclusions of the research article and give a clear explanation of their importance and relevance.

   A “Conclusions” section has been added after the “Discussion” section, as follows:

   “The present study suggests that the overall reported incidence rate of PTB is decreasing at the province-level, but progress has not been equally distributed. Achieving the goal of reducing the incidence rate to below 58 per 100,000 people by 2020 [52] will require additional resources and control efforts directed at western Sichuan, where HIV prevalence is high, the reported incidence rate of PTB is increasing, and the laboratory capacity is low. Future research should focus on achieving a greater understanding of the environmental and socioeconomic drivers of PTB in this region—including temperature, sunlight exposure, PM2.5 level, GDP, prevalence of other respiratory infectious diseases and HIV/AIDS—in order to better understand the observed spatiotemporal pattern and to inform targeted interventions.”

3. Please confirm whether the need for informed consent was waived by the ethics committee that approved your study in the "Ethics and Consent to Participate" section of your declarations. Additionally, please clarify whether any administrative permissions were required to access the raw data. If so please state who granted permission in the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” section.

   We have added the following sentences to the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” section to address these points:
“This study was approved by Committee for Protection of Human Subjects at the University of California, Berkeley, and all personally-identifiable data were removed from the dataset prior to analysis in this study. The requirement for written informed consent and assent was waived because this study only used routinely collected data by China Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as part of their standard public service mission, and posed no more than minimal risk to participants. Administrative authorization to access the data was obtained from Sichuan Center for Disease Control and Prevention.”

4. Please state in the cover letter whether the maps depicted in Supplemental figures 4, 6 and 7 and Figures 5, 6 and 7 are your own or taken from another source. If taken from another source please acknowledge the source in the figure legend, and if it is under copyright also state the written permission given to use and adapt it. If the above conditions are not met the image needs to be removed. Please note the editors may request proof of permission at any time.

   The maps depicted in Supplemental figures 4, 6 and 7 and Figures 5, 6 and 7 are our own renderings, developed with publically available administrative boundary data obtained from China’s National Earth System Science Data Sharing Infrastructure; we confirm these products are not under copyright. We have added the source for the boundary data to the “Methods” section, and to figure captions, as follows:

   “Publically available administrative boundaries used for data visualization were obtained from China’s National Earth System Science Data Sharing Infrastructure (http://www.geodata.cn/).”

5. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

   Done.