Author’s response to reviews

Title: Public-non-governmental organisation partnerships for health: an exploratory study with case studies from recent Ghanaian experience

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Authors response to reviewers

Dear Editors-in-Chief,

I am very grateful to the Editors and reviewers for taking time once more to review this manuscript and for their constructive comments. I am most pleased to resubmit the revised manuscript with this cover letter highlighting point-by-point responses to their comments and requests. Most changes to the manuscript are indicated in the text by using track changes or highlighting.

Reviewer #1: Overall, the authors have done an excellent job in addressing each of my concerns. There remains just a couple of items that could benefit from further modifications, although these are mostly quite minor.

Minor essential
1. The only substantive comment is in regards to my original point 3. Although the text has been revised, and a table created, there is a lot of duplication between the text and the table. Please consider either (1) substantially reducing the information in the table, in which case the text remains as is, or (2) reducing the associated manuscript text, and separating the table into multiple tables with one per NGO considered. If option 2 is chosen, the manuscript text would not necessarily need to have a section for each NGO, as most of this information would be in the tables.

Response: Thanks. I chose option 2 in which I have substantially reduced the manuscript text, leaving only the introductory section for each partnership regarding how it started, and as well, provided multiple tables (one per NGO) to go with the introductory text for each partnership.

2. Could you please re-check the abbreviation list now encompasses all abbreviations used? For instance, I did not see "PHC" nor "CIMACS" in the abbreviation list.

Response: I have re-checked abbreviation list and now included PHC and CIMACS. Moreover, I had not abbreviated Primary Health Care at the first appearance in the text on Pg. 4, which has now been done.

3. The term "Evidence-based research" generally implies rigorous and systematic evaluation of the research. Given your response to my previous point 11 suggested this was not the case, would suggest rephrasing.

Response: I have changed the term "Evidence-based research" to baseline study for the two partnerships (BasicNeeds-GHS, ARHR-GHS) where such evidence served as drivers for the formation of the collaboration.

Minor optional/grammatical

4. A minor suggestion for the table is to change the row heading "Time started" to "Time frame" as it seems to encompass the entire time the project was conducted.

Response: I have changed the row heading "Time started" to "Time frame" in the separated tables highlighted in yellow.

5. In the abbreviation list, there is one open bracket "(" in the definition for M&E - please replace with a colon.

Response: This open bracket in the abbreviation list concerning the definition of M&E has been replaced with a colon.

6. When "Memorandum of understanding" is defined in the text, it should be "a" in front of "Memorandum". The "an" is only used immediately before "MOU". My apologies for any confusion.
Response: I have corrected this. It now reads as a Memorandum instead of an Memorandum on Pg. 7 where it first appeared.

Reviewer #3: The author has made a serious effort to respond to my comments on the previous draft. The study clearly has limitations but the author now addresses these more clearly and is more cautious in drawing conclusions, in particular about generalisability of the findings.

Response: Thanks a lot.

Again, many thanks to the editors and reviewers, for their constructive comments.

Sincerely,

Martin Hushie