Author’s response to reviews

Title: Piloting a low-cost hardware intervention to reduce improper disposal of solid waste in communal toilets in low-income settlements in Dhaka, Bangladesh

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Version: 2 Date: 10 Aug 2017

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Editor Comments:

(1) Please provide a 'Declarations' section heading after your List of Abbreviations section

Response: Thanks for your valuable comments. We have added.

(2) Please remove your funding information from your 'Acknowledgements' section and provide a separate 'Funding' section within your Declarations, as detailed here:
Response: We have removed the funding information from the 'Acknowledgements' section and provide a separate 'Funding' section within our Declarations.

(3) Provide a 'Consent for publication' section in your Declarations, as detailed in our guidelines: https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/submission-guidelines/preparing-your-manuscript/research-article

Response: Not applicable

(4) Provide an 'Ethics approval and consent to participate' section in your Declarations as detailed here: https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/submission-guidelines/preparing-your-manuscript/research-article

Response: Thanks for your concern. We have added this statement.

“We obtained written informed consent from the adult study participants as well as verbal permission to conduct intervention activities from the landlords in the pilot communities. We secured assent from children and obtained consent from parents to conduct the focus group discussions with children. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the ethical review committee of icddr,b and institutional review board of Stanford University.”

BMC Public Health operates a policy of open peer review, which means that you will be able to see the names of the reviewers who provided the reports via the online peer review system. We encourage you to also view the reports there, via the action links on the left-hand side of the page, to see the names of the reviewers.

Reviewer report:

Jennifer Margaret Cavallari, ScD (Reviewer 4): The authors have adequately addressed the majority of concerns raised by reviewer 3.

- Introduction - review of the IBM-WASH method.
The authors chose to present the details of the IBM-WASH method in the methods and in the discussion. The authors should consider incorporating this background into the introduction of the manuscript. Especially the first few sentences of the 2nd paragraph of the discussion.

Response: Thanks for this valuable suggestion. We have revised according to your suggestion which you can find on the last paragraph of page 9.

Revision in manuscript: Our formative research followed three phases leading up to a multi-component, behavior change intervention to improve usage and functionality of communal toilets. We structured our qualitative interview guides according to the three dimensions of the IBM-WASH framework to address influential behavioral factors along contextual, psychosocial and technological dimensions [12]. IBM-WASH is a Social Ecological Model, with rows representing the nested levels where actions need to be taken, and the three columns or dimensions serving to identify different categories of factors that need to be considered when developing WASH interventions.

- Recruitment strategy

The authors provide little detail on how the participants were recruited to take place in the interviews and focus groups. It seems to be a convenience sample - the authors may want to discuss this as a limitation and whether they believe that the information they gleaned is representative of the perspectives within the larger community.

Response: The sampling of participants for the interviews for this qualitative study was not intended to be statistically representative; rather we sought to recruit participants into the study who had different types of toilets and housing arrangements. Nevertheless, we conducted baseline and final household surveys on statistically representative sample of the study population, and these results are reported on Alam et al. 2017. The findings from these quantitative surveys are broadly comparable with the qualitative findings presented here.

We have revised on the manuscript which you can find on the last paragraph of page 12 and the last paragraph of page 13.

Revision in manuscript: “We selected the participants who were available at the time of focus group discussion, after informing landlords or compound managers prior to the focus group discussion and asking them to remind their tenants.”

“Each assessment included 12 in-depth interviews- five with male who were available on that time and were willing to participate, five with female communal toilet users who belonged in
reproductive age and agreed to participate and two with waste bin emptiers. One site (Bauniabad) had a toilet which comprised three cubicles and the latrine at the other site (Kalyanpur) had two toilet cubicles.”

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Where a mandatory section is not relevant to your study design or article type, for example, if your manuscript does not contain any individual persons data, please write "Not applicable" in these sections.

For the 'Availability of data and materials' section, please provide information about where the data supporting your findings can be found. We encourage authors to deposit their datasets in publicly available repositories (where available and appropriate), or to be presented within the manuscript and/or additional supporting files. Please note that identifying/confidential patient data should not be shared. Authors who do not wish to share their data must state that data will not be shared, and provide reasons for this in the manuscript text. For further guidance on how to format this section, please refer to BioMed Central's editorial policies page - http://www.biomedcentral.com/submissions/editorial-policies#availability+of+data+and+materials.

Response: The data supporting the conclusions of this article are included within the article and its additional files.

Declarations

- Ethics approval and consent to participate

- Consent to publish
- Availability of data and materials
- Competing interests
- Funding
- Authors' Contributions
- Acknowledgements
- Authors' Information