Author’s response to reviews

Title: Exploring barriers to seeking health care among Kenyan Somali women with female genital mutilation: a qualitative study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Thank you again for your comments and the opportunity to resubmit a revised draft of our manuscript IHHR-D-19-00031R4 titled “Exploring barriers to seeking health care among Kenyan Somali women with female genital mutilation: a qualitative study”.

We appreciate the interest and time that you and the reviewers have dedicated in our manuscript and the constructive criticism they have given. The insightful comments have been very helpful and are all addressed in our revision. We have addressed the changes within the manuscript and unmarked copy have been submitted. Kindly find below our point-by-point responses to the Associate Editor and Assistant Editor’s concerns.

Thank you again for consideration of our revised manuscript and we hope that it will be suitable for BMC International Health and Human Rights Journal. We look forward to hearing from you regarding our submission and to respond to any further questions and comments you may have.

With this cover letter, the revised manuscript no. IHHR-D-19-00031R4 titled “Exploring barriers to seeking health care among Kenyan Somali women with female genital mutilation: a qualitative study” is enclosed.

All the comments have been addressed in the relevant pages as indicated in the response below.

Associate Editor Comments
1. In the study aim sentence in the Background section of Abstract, please add ‘complications related to FGM/C’. • This has been included in the abstract section line 29.

2. It is quite possible that the mentioned complications might not be directly related to FGM/C but due to the general reproductive problems. The authors have highlighted this issue appropriately in the manuscript, particularly in the limitation of the study. However, it will be good to indicate this concern in the title or the abstract. • The theme of general reproductive health problem including FGM/C-related complications has been comprehensively highlighted and addressed in the Abstract, introduction
and the discussion sections

3. I feel that the manuscript is very long for readers. I understand that this is a qualitative study that needs a long Results section. However, I think that the Introduction and Discussion sections can be shortened and be more focused. The manuscript has been reviewed and summarized within the introduction and discussion sections and any redundant content expunged

Assistant Editor Comments
1. Associate editor comments
The Associate Editor has provided some additional comments. Please address these in the point-by-point response letter. All the comments by the Associate Editor have been addressed

2. Corresponding author
Please ensure that both the corresponding author email addresses, provided on the manuscript title page and in the submission system, are matching. This has been addressed in the title page 21

3. Interview guide
Thank you for providing all the interview guides used in your study. In the Methods section, please clarify whether the interview guides were specifically developed for the purposes of this study. If they have already been published, please remove the interview guides and instead provide references to them in the Methods.
• This has been addressed in line 120-121
• The interview guides used in the have not been published yet.

4. Funding
In the Funding statement of the Declarations, please describe the role of the funding bodies in the design of the study, the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, and in writing the manuscript. The statement of the role of funding body has been included in line 595-597. It now reads “The funding organization did not have any role in the design of the study, the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, and in writing the manuscript”.

5. Missing Figure 1
We note that Figure 1 is missing from the manuscript. If you would like to publish the figure, please ensure that it is uploaded with the manuscript. Figure 1 has been uploaded together with the manuscript.

*At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strike-throughs 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. This had been addressed