Reviewer’s report

Title: Performance of community health workers: situating their intermediary position within complex adaptive health systems

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Reviewer: David Musoke

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting and well written article on community health workers (CHWs) and their performance. Below is the specific feedback for consideration:

- Very good background to CHWs and CHW programmes.

- Lines 101 - 105: The authors provide information regarding performance of health workers (and not CHWs). Given that the terms and conditions in which health professionals work is much different from CHWs, it may not be appropriate to directly relate the two.

- Line 119: The authors mention about a systematic review. Can they provide some more detail of this review such as what was the search strategy, which databases were sought, how many articles came up, how was analysis carried out, etc.

- It is not clear regarding the precise origin of the conceptual framework. Did it originate from literature review, the REACHOUT consortium research, both, or otherwise?

- The authors on several occasions state that '...intermediary position of CHWs between the community and health sector .....' This statement has its truth, however CHWs should be considered as an integral part of the health system (whether volunteers or not) and they indeed contribute to human resources for health as they are involved in health promotion and service delivery.

- Although the write up is generally impressive, it it not explicit in many instances whether some sections are from literature review or REACHOUT research. Can the authors be more explicit regarding which sections are from where for example by having concrete sections to that effect.

- Availability of data: the authors state ' ...... no datasets were generated or analysed ......'. However, in the manuscript, several focus group discussions and interviews (lines 132 - 135) were held. This is therefore contradictory.

Level of interest

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An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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