Author’s response to reviews

Title: Analysis of strategies to attract and retain rural health workers in Cambodia, China and Vietnam and context influencing their outcomes

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear editor,

Thank you very much for the further comments from the reviewers. We appreciated the valuable comments and have revised the paper accordingly. Below are the point-by-point responses to each comment. All new changes are highlighted in red in the manuscript.

Best regards,

Xiaoyun Liu

Reviewer #3:

1. Well done on the revisions they are addressed very well. I am pleased with your paper and think it is valuable. Just minor suggestions to the abstract to make some small points clearer for the international reader: abstract methods - delete "to understand the context for human resources strategies in each country" (as this is already addressed in the background)
Response: Thank you very much for the further detailed comments. We have deleted the sentence as suggested.

2. abstract results - add "more" socioeconomic development was related to "a wider" range of interventions and their scope. then next sentence add "The context influenced the outcomes" (so as to connect the contextual findings). Then please break the rest of the abstract into "socioeconomic" and "health system context" issues by just rearranging what is there. Explain "pro poor as "subsidies for poor people to access health services"

Response: Edited as suggested.

3. Methods - This study is a policy "analysis" (not narrative)

Response: Edited as suggested.

4. Results p7 - delete first paragraph after "Human resource strategies employed". Add in when interventions happened e.g the three year program for secondary nurses and midwives. ...through organizing examination" - what is this?

Response: changed as suggested. “through organizing examination” means based on examination performance. This is now changed to the sentence.

5. Cambodian government announced...all health workers (in urban and rural areas)...- what was specific effect on rural workforce in particular if it aimed at all urban and rural workers? Clearly state a sentence about what the benefits of being a civil servant is.

Response: To be a civil servant means a permanent job and better social welfare benefit. This is now added to the sentence.
6. China - make it clear this is national scale package of interventions.

Response: The intervention was for all central and western provinces of China. This is made clear in the text.

7. Results - under :health system contexts" make the "this situation left primary health facilities ' - are these rural primary health facilities in particular?

Response: The loss of health professionals is especially severe in rural area. This is made clear in the text.

8. Conclusion - delete "context-specific", they are just interventions.

Response: Deleted as suggested.

9. I think you might be able to address these comments easily without this article needing further review.

Response: Thank you very much.