Reviewer’s report

Title: HRH dimensions of Community Health Workers: A case study of rural Afghanistan

Version: 2 Date: 21 Mar 2018

Reviewer: Onaedo Ilozumba

Reviewer's report:

The authors have adopted an approach of justifying their choices in the response to the reviewer without adequately addressing the comments within the manuscript. The authors should refer to the last set of comments and ensure that all justifications are included within the manuscript including appropriate supporting references when needed.

- An example of this is the authors still do not clearly explain a HRH perspective in a comprehensive manner.

- Also in response to two comments the authors refer to a previously published article by one of the coauthors. It is essential that this paper can be read without reference to an external publication. Readers can choose to refer to the 2014 citation for additional details but should understand the sample composition within this article. Especially as these sociodemographics are discussed in this paper "CHWs younger than 20"(page 24, line 34)

- It also appears that this manuscript is based on the same data as the 2014 publication. Was any additional data collection conducted for this study? If not, how is this study any different from the 2014 publication?

Additional comments

Comment 1

The introduction and contextual background can be merged into one section but they need to be revised to have a logical flow and clearly state what the HRH perspective is. It currently begins with the evidence on CHWs effectiveness and then discusses why CHWs are important in addressing Health worker shortages. Whereas the reverse would be more logical. The authors should then present evidence related to CHW effectiveness especially in Afghanistan and similar contexts. The claim that HRH research focus on physicians etc based on a reference from 2013 is not convincing enough especially in light of significant literature which discusses CHW within the field of HRH. A clear knowledge gap is still missing.
Comment 2

The presentation of the results still needs to be addressed to improve the readability. For example the section on size and distribution of CHW actually deals with factors related to CHW recruitment and retainment as well as motivation of CHWs. In addition the results section on CHW-Traditional Workers relations presents finding beyond the relations between these groups. There's discussion of selection of CHWs, community responses to the these providers and the roles of CHWs and traditional birth attendants.

Comment 3

After restructuring the results section. The authors need to consider their original research objective and results in structuring the discussion. What are key messages from this study? The authors for example give signification attention to the CHW-Traditional birth attendant relationship yet this is not reflected in the discussion. Are the key findings of this study supported or disputed by the current evidence on CHW functioning within Health Systems?

Comment 4

The authors need to also carefully edit the manuscript for grammatical and structural errors.

**Level of interest**

Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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