Author’s response to reviews

Title: A review and framework for understanding the potential impact of poor solid waste management on health in developing countries

Authors:

Abdhalah Ziraba (akziraba@yahoo.com)

Tilahun Haregu (tharegu@aphrc.org)

Blessing Mberu (bmeru@aphrc.org)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dr. Abdhalah K. Ziraba,

African Population and Health Research Center,

APHRC Campus, 2nd Floor

Manga Close, Off Kitisuru

P.O. Box 10787, 00100

Nairobi, Kenya

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The editor,

Archives of Public Health Journal

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Revision of article titled: A review and framework for understanding the impact of poor solid waste management on health in developing countries.

The authors of the above mention manuscript hereby submit their revised manuscript based on the reviewers’ and editors comments. Below we prove a point by point response to all comments. We tracked changes in the manuscript for ease of identifying the changes we have made on the original manuscript.
Reviewer reports:

Reviewer #1:
Comment:
This is an interesting review, the findings are similar across most cities or urban areas in developing economies. Of all the intervention points identified and recommended; the primary point of collection and use of protective wears should be legalised across all urban cities. These points are assumed to be entry or beginning points, waste sorted can reduce injuries and infections, are there studies showing that considerable reduction in injuries and infections is possible with the interventions of waste sorting at collection points and use of protective wears by waste collectors?

If interventions are adapted, how will they be monitored or what approach will be used to assess and monitor impact on the concerned population at high risk.

Response:

The suggested recommendation has been taken. On the issue of whether waste sorting and use protective wear can reduce injuries and infections. A good example is the use of sharps containers in medical facilities. This has been shown to reduce needle stick injuries and cuts.

Reviewer #2:
Comment:
This article should have a different title. As it is right now, I expected to see a relation between bad solid waste management systems and bad health, but what I can read are issues more related to possible/potential risks and waste management systems. Therefore, my recommendation is to change the title to something like: A review and framework for understanding the potential impact of poor.....

Response:

The title has been revised to read: “A review and framework for understanding the potential impact of poor solid waste management on health in developing countries.”
Comment:

There is a very important study done by Giusti called "A review of waste management practices and their impact on human health" which is a reference document for this type of studies. I am surprised that it doesn´t appear in the literature review. In this study Giusti comes to the conclusion which is that the overall assessment of the literature in relation to the evidence of adverse health outcomes for the general population living near landfill sites, incinerators, composting facilities and nuclear installations is usually insufficient and inconclusive. In order to improve the quality and usefulness of epidemiological studies applied to populations residing in areas where waste management facilities are located or planned, preference should be given to prospective cohort studies of sufficient statistical power, with access to direct human exposure measurements, and supported by data on health effect biomarkers and susceptibility biomarkers. And I really think that this article should be analyzed under the framework proposed in the article being reviewed.

Response:

Thank you for directing us to this rich reference. Indeed the findings are conclusions are very important. We had however captured similar findings from similar other papers including issues around difficulty in establishing causal linkages due to multiple exposures, not long enough follow up period or loss to follow up etc (Vrijheid, Met al 2000; Antwi, S.O et al 2015; Porta, D., et al.2009; Rushton, L 2003).

In terms of specific comments:

Comment:

1. Often it is written using personal pronouns such as "we"

Response:

This has been addressed throughout the paper.

Comment:

2. Some statements are not with a reference

Response:

Thank you for flagging this. Additional references have been added wherever this was found to be important.
Comment:

3. Waste picker is the right word, not scavengers (it is derogative)

Response:

We regret this oversight. This has been correct throughout the manuscript.

We look forward to hearing from you soon

Kind regards

Abdhalah K. Ziraba (Corresponding Author)