

Peer Review File

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Reviewer A

Comment 1: It would be helpful to outline the purpose /objectives of the project in the abstract- this are alluded to- but not defined

Reply 1: We have included the purpose of the study in detail on the abstract Page 01 Lines 26-28.

Changes in the text: This evaluation aimed to assess the project's purpose and impact, delivering insights to donors regarding their contributions, best practices, and lessons learned, potential challenges encountered, and recommendations for future project development or refinement.

Comment 2: Introduction- rephrase the term ‘...200,000 new children...’) I think here you mean children and newly diagnosed.

Reply 2: We have now edited the line on Page 04, Lines 56-57, accordingly.

Changes in the text: Childhood cancers are the ninth most common cause of childhood illnesses [1], and 200,000 new children are newly diagnosed with cancer worldwide each year [2].

Comment 3: Please also rephrase “resources the scarcest for curing or effective pain relief” – I suggest resources and drugs (or pharmaceuticals) are the scarcest for treatment of cancer or providing pain relief”

Reply 3: The necessary changes have been made on Page 04, lines 58-59.

Changes in the text: resources and drugs (or pharmaceuticals) are the scarce for treatment of cancer or providing pain relief

Comment 4: The World Bank data for per capita income is data to 2015 – are you able to update this?

Reply 4: The data has been updated as suggested on Page 04, lines 65-66.

Changes in the text: Bangladesh is an LMIC with a per capita income of \$ 2,688.3 (in current international \$, World Bank data 2022) [4].

Comment 5: At line 67 clarify that you are taking about health care

Reply 5: Clarified as suggested on Page 04 line 67.

Changes in the text: Only 27.9% of the public expenditure is spent on health, and the per capita expenditure on healthcare is only \$31.

Comment 6: The count of newly diagnosed children in BSNNU is from 2012/13- can you update this to more recent years? Can you also please provide information about when the project was conducted and how long it lasted, as well as when the interviews were undertaken in relation to the project

Reply 6:

The updated information regarding the newly diagnosed children in Bangladesh has been included on Page 04 lines 77-79.

The information regarding the initiation of the project is already provided on page 06, lines 91-92 (In order to improve the situation, World Child Cancer-UK (WCC-UK) has been working in Bangladesh since January 2012 at the BSMMU in Dhaka).

The project ran for five years (Page 05, lines 94-99).

The project overview is already provided in Supplementary File 1.

The data collection, as well as the interviews conducted for the study, took place during the second and third weeks of May 2017.

Changes in the text:

An estimated 9,000 to 12,000 children are diagnosed with cancer annually in Bangladesh, yet only one-third of them receive proper diagnoses (Page 05 lines 77-79).

The project ran for five years (Page 05, lines 94-95).

The data collection, as well as the interviews conducted for the study, took place during the second and third weeks of May 2017. (Page 07 lines 146-147).

Comment 7: At line 167 – clarify that these are the deductive Themes. No subthemes are provided here so remove reference to this

Reply 7: The necessary correction has been made on line 167, as suggested.

Changes in the text:

The following themes were used for data analysis (Page 08 line 175).

Comment 8: The analysis section needs a little re-ordering for flow. The information presented at lines 173-177 should be presented with lines 162

Reply 8: We have reordered for better flow as suggested. The information previously presented in lines 173-177 has been moved to line 162, and now appears as lines 165-169 on page 8 in the revised version.

Changes in the text: We have reordered the following section from lines 173-177 to line 162, now appearing as lines 165-169 on Page 08 in the revised version. No new changes have been made to the text-

The transcripts underwent a thorough review by the researchers, with a minimum of three readings to ensure a comprehensive understanding of their contents. The subsequent data analysis was conducted meticulously, characterised by precision, consistency, and

exhaustiveness. This process involved recording, systematising, and transparently detailing the analytical technique, providing readers with adequate information to determine its credibility.

Comment 9: Please explain how the senior authors maintain the components of data trustworthiness- I am not sure what is meant here

Reply 9: The explanation regarding the components of data trustworthiness is provided on Pages 08-09, lines 190-194.

Changes in the text: He ensured the trustworthiness components through random checks of the transcript, ensuring quality by comparing transcripts with recordings of KIIs and IDIs. In case any discrepancies were found, they were revised by the data collection team and transcriber. Furthermore, he conducted double checks to maintain data trustworthiness.

Comment 10: No information is provided about how the document review was analysed – was their content reviewed? By whom and what was sought in the review?

Reply 10: The document review was conducted thematically, as outlined in Table 1 on page 05, and detailed further from lines 119 to 212, where it is mentioned that documents were identified through consultation with project personnel. These documents included the project proposal, mid-year reviews, annual reviews, guidelines developed through the project, and other relevant materials prepared during the project period. The document review was carried out by the first author (TJ) and the senior author (SZ). Since the review was thematically analyzed, its findings are aligned with the data findings from the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs).

Changes in the text: The thematic analysis of the document review was also conducted by the first author (TJ) and the senior author (SZ) (on page 08, lines 191-192).

Comment 11. While there is a statement that the analysis processes involved “recording, systematising, and transparently detailing the analytical technique, providing readers with adequate information to determine its credibility” it is not clear how the analysis was completed, or what the analytical technique was- e.g. Were codes applied to segments of the data? How were the sub themes groups under the inductive themes? How were these data then developed into the narrative that is presented?

Reply 11:

Thematic data analysis was conducted manually by color-coding the transcripts, as previously mentioned on page 8, lines 169-170. The answers to these questions are detailed on page 08, lines 170-184.

Changes in the text: While our analysis process involved reviewing transcripts and grouping similar contents under each theme, we applied codes to segments of the data to identify patterns and themes. Simultaneously, we grouped similar sub-themes under main inductive themes to further organize the data. This allowed us to develop a reliable storyline that expressed the

essence of our findings. Eventually, the analysis was conducted with transparency and maintained its credibility. (Page 08, lines 170-184).

Comment 12. There is mention of the lack of some documents – such as ToR and MoU- however there is no mention in the methods of a management structure – or that such documents were expected. Was the document review undertaken and documents mapped to an established management structure?

Reply 12: Yes, documents were reviewed, and based on the findings from both document review and interviews, the lack of a clear management structure is highlighted in the text. On page 09, lines 212-217, it is mentioned that despite efforts, the project lacked formal documents such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Terms of Reference (ToR). This absence made it challenging to establish accountability and define roles, leading to confusion among project personnel regarding their responsibilities.

Changes in the text: No changes were made because the answer is already provided on page 09, lines 212-217.

Comment 13.

13. Line 273 – typo? Reportedly

Reply 13: Yes, that was a typo. Now we corrected on page 09, lines 297-298.

Changes in the text: The project reportedly required a manager with some understanding of cancer morbidity, which was difficult to communicate with someone lacking a clinical background. (page 09, lines 297-298.).

Comment 14. Please clarify what the ‘sessions’ are referring to at lines 290-294 – I assume this is education sessions?

Reply 14: Yes, it is about the educational sessions. Necessary changes have been made on (On Page 13 lines 317-324).

Changes in the text: For nurses, the challenge was their lack of knowledge in paediatric oncology care. They requested a morning educational session, similar to that of the physicians, either separately for the nurses or in conjunction with the physicians. A nurse said, “We did not have any knowledge on paediatric oncology prior to coming here (Paediatric Oncology Department). So, if we could either stay with the physicians in the morning with education sessions; or at least have a separate session among ourselves (Nurses), that would improve our skills.” – Nurse at the Hub. (On Page 13 lines 317-324)

Comment 15. At line 434 there is a statement that the knowledge and training in paediatric oncology is sustainable – but there is no data to justify this statement. If these are sustained- please provide more information of the how this is achieved

Reply 15:

On page 19, lines 492-495 of the revised manuscript, the methods employed to achieve sustainability include community engagement, policy advocacy, resource mobilization, and the institutionalization of services and protocols within pediatric oncology initiatives.

Changes in the text: The sustainability of knowledge and training in pediatric oncology is achieved through community engagement, policy advocacy, resource mobilization, institutionalization of services, and shared protocols.

Comment 16. The data presented under the theme challenges to sustainability at lines 456-459 refers more to general challenges rather than sustainability issues.

Reply 16: We have made minor changes to this paragraph on page 20, lines 518-522.

Changes in the text: Another sustainability challenge identified by the Twinning Partners was the arrangement of wards according to consultants' preferences, rather than the needs of patients. Some beds were located far away from the nursing station to facilitate consultants' ease of access, compromising patient care due to the distance from the nurses' reach. This situation threatens the project's success as well as sustainability.

Comment 17. It appears this project and the data collection may have occurred some time previously (possibly 2012-2015?) If this is the case, please also acknowledge this in a limitations section of the paper.

Reply 17: The data was collected in May 2017, and we have included this limitation in the "Limitation of the Study" section on page 23, lines 623-626.

Changes in the text: Moreover, the data were collected in 2017, after over three years of the project had been completed, leaving about two years remaining. It would have given more depth to the scenario to collect data immediately after the completion of the entire project.

Reviewer B

Comment: We failed to find mention of *Ref 13* in your text. Please check and revise.

Response: We have updated the references and confirmed their accuracy both within the text and in the reference list.

Comment: *Ref 1* and *Ref 13*, *Ref 19* and *Ref 22* seem duplicates. Please recheck.

Response: References 1 and 13 were the same, but 19 and 22 were different. We have reviewed them and made the necessary corrections.

Comment: If available, please update your reference list by including related literature published **within a year**. Some of the references are outdated.

Response: We have updated the reference list with the most recent literature where available; however, for some references, updates were not feasible. Thank you for your understanding.

Comment: Please check all your figures and tables to make sure **all abbreviations** have been defined in their **legends or footnotes**.

Response: The figure and table have been thoroughly reviewed now to ensure that all abbreviations are defined in their respective legends or footnotes. The updated figure has been attached for your reference.