Reviewer’s report

Title: Are we asking too much? Addressing community health worker productivity

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Reviewer: Lauren Crigler

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Discretionary Revision:
The question that is posed in this report is a very important one. CHW productivity is difficult to define and improve. This review of literature is helpful in that it lays out a model for what elements contribute to productivity. Below are more specific comments:

1) In the first paragraph of the conclusions, the author states that “…it is critical to pay attention to two critical factors: the overall system…. and b) the elements that affect CHW productivity.” She continues on to describe 5 factors that produce a system that supports productivity”. I fail to see where these five factors are discussed in the body of the report. Although I don’t disagree with this statement, I don’t think it can be clearly stated as a conclusion unless there is more of a direct connection to the literature that supports it. It is also confusing, as she continues on to discuss the enabling work environment and productivity factors- which are different from the first five factors in the paragraph before.

2) Her conclusion that the productivity factors must all be addressed (workload, supportive supervision, supplies/equipment ) at the same time is also a bit confusing as it inconsistent with her model on what affects productivity. I think it is just a matter of being clear on terms and definitions, because I do think she addresses each area well – too many ‘factors’ and ‘elements’

3) The recommendations are very wide reaching and I am not sure they can be derived from the body of the report. For example, the first one did not clearly come out in the report: “ understand the broader policy, leadership and management framework…. I would recommend being more focused in the conclusion section and restrict recommendations to what was discussed in the report.

Overall, I find the report publishable as I think it begins to lay out a valuable framework that others can move forward from here.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests