On behalf of myself, and the co-authors, I would like to thank both editors and reviewers for their valuable comments, which we have addressed to the best of our ability in order to improve the quality of the paper. All the comments made by the reviewers have been addressed, and the requested changes were made to the manuscript based on the suggestions. We have edited the manuscript and the revisions (in responses to the comments of both reviewers) incorporated in the manuscript are highlighted in Red. We also gave detailed point-by-point responses to the comments and suggestions raised by each reviewer.

We hope we have addressed the comments adequately and look forward with anticipation to the publication of our revised manuscript in your journal, IJERPH

Sincerely yours,

The corresponding author
On behalf of the authors.
Re: Authors’ responses to the reviewer’s comments,
Ref: ijerph-647961
Title: Community stakeholders perspectives on intimate partner violence during pregnancy – a qualitative study from Ethiopia

Point-by-point responses to the comments and suggestions raised by reviewers:

Response to Reviewer II

1. This is a well written piece of work. The main topic is of interest mainly because it presents data from a non developed country, which is not well known to the European societies. The research on IPV during pregnancy is a common place in many countries and many similarities can be found in the content of the research and results with many other research conducted in other patriarchally structured societies of the developing even the developed ones.
   Response: Thank you for your appreciation, encouraging further work on the issue.

2. Most of the participants (14) come from the patriarchally structured institutions and as such the results can be up to a point predictable. How the authors deal with that situation?
   Response: thank you for your meticulous observation. Yes, reconciliation between IPV victims and their abusers was the solution encouraged by almost all the respondents (i.e, may be predictable from the patriarchally structured institutions). However, our study also identified the responses and context why the different respondents prefer reconciliation differ which is very essential for any intervention.

3. It is not clear what Woman affairs are. E.g. is it a governmental institution, a non governmental one, an NGO.. ? Needs to be clarified.
   Response: Thank you for raising this important issue. Women’s affairs are in our context the office under Ethiopian governmental structures/institution working in Jimma town (study site).

4. How about institutions come from Educational settings, or Health sector which are also vital for dealing with IPV during pregnancy issues? Why these are not considered as informants to the study?
   Response: we really appreciate your concern. Yes, the Health sector plays a vital role on IPV during pregnancy, but we prefer/plan to study it separately.

5. What is the legislation on IPV in the country? There is no relevant reference at all.
   Response: thank you for your observation. We include the legislation on IPV in the Ethiopia with the following references:
   “The legislation in Ethiopia towards IPV, the 2004 criminal code, criminalizes most forms of violence against women and girls including rape, abduction, female genital mutilation, and early marriage. However, the legislative framework in not strong enough to protect survivors from domestic violence. There has so far been no separate domestic violence act or law providing specific civil remedies for survivors; such as the right to obtain protection order,
compensation relief, residence order, shelter, or medical benefits. There is an absence of sufficient criminal liabilities for perpetrators. This may again enforce survivors to stick with an abusive partner”.

6. Connell’s theory on gender and power is presented very briefly and vaguely in the text. E.g "the structure of cathexis" is not clearly explained. In general, it needs to be more analytically mentioned as it is the authors main theoretical approach.

Response: we really appreciate your concern. We have addressed your concern in the text (See on page 1):

“This identified this structure to address the affective nature of relationships, a structure that defines the culturally normative roles for men and women which may weaken women’s role and increase the inequality felt by women in a heterosexual relationship. At the societal level, the structure of cathexis characterizes the sexual attachments defining appropriate female sexual behavior. In the area of public health, women are adversely affected by such structures, fostering supportive attitudes of wife beating, regarding violence as a notion of masculinity, enforcing strict gender roles in the society. All linked to increased IPV in pregnancy implicating the adverse effect of such structure”.

7. Connell’s theory needs also to be more well connected to the whole of the discussion parts. It is only mentioned in the section of "reconciliation ".

Response: thank you. Per your suggestion we have modified and connected Connell’s theory to the whole of the discussion parts (see statements highlighted in red in the discussion section emphasizing the Connell’s theory of gender and power constructs).

8. Respondents’ different religious dogmas are not clearly explained and a connection with how they treat women accordingly is not stated. This could possibly add some information to the researchers for their discussion parts.

Response: thank you. Regarding how religious leaders treat victim women, we have stressed their common advice as tolerating and /or reconciling with the abusers, despite type or severity of the abuse. Divorce is considered sinful and religiously prohibited. This is stated both in the result and discussion section.

9. Content analysis is explained satisfactorily and literature on that needs to be added.

Response: Thank you for your meticulous observation. We have added the requested literature under the analysis section.

10. It is not clear why ethical approval from Norway is needed.

Response: thank you, ethical approval from Norway is needed as the 1st author is Oslo university PHD student and all co-authors and /supervisors are from Norway, Oslo and Trondheim university. This is a collaboration project between Jimma University (in Ethiopia) and Oslo University (Norway).
11. Respondents’ educational status grades 6-12, need to be explained what they mean.  
   **Response:** thank you, educational status (grades 6-12), means the participants’ level of education is between 6-12 grades.

12. Data triangulation needs to be further explained and justified for the purposes of the research.  
   **Response:** thank you for your concern. We have deleted this term.

We hope we have addressed the comments adequately and look forward with anticipation to the publication of our revised manuscript in your journal, IJERPH

Sincerely yours,

The corresponding author,  
on behalf of the authors.