

Bilharzia Prevention Communication Project

Radio Talk Show Guide: 7 Call-in Programmes on Bilharzia

**Johns Hopkins University Center for Communications Programs
(JHU/CCP)**

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Introduction

The Ministry of Health Vector Control Division has been implementing the National Schistosomiasis Control Program since 2003 with the goal of controlling morbidity from Schistosomiasis through mass treatment in endemic areas of Uganda.

Commonly known as Bilharzia, the disease is endemic to 81 districts of Uganda, and is most prevalent in areas surrounding lakes and rivers, and urban areas including Kampala. Recent surveys show that approximately five million people are infected and approximately 18 million are at risk.

In late 2016, Mr. T.J. Mather, a private philanthropist provided funding to The Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Program (JHU/CCP) to support the Ministry of Health Vector Control Division to implement a media campaign promoting Bilharzia prevention. Mr. T.J. Mather is also supporting PMA2020 to conduct a national survey in November/December 2017 to evaluate the effects of the Bilharzia prevention media campaign.

The Bilharzia Prevention Communication Campaign will run for 5 months, from August – December, 2017. The central element of the campaign is a series of radio call-in talk shows featuring Bilharzia experts. The talk shows will be reinforced with DJ mentions, radio spots, a jingle, and a series of short radio skits in 9 languages. The stations of broadcast have been carefully selected to reach 47 districts where Bilharzia is most prevalent plus Kampala, where Bilharzia is less common but still an issue, particularly among communities on the lake.

This document describes the radio talk shows with expert guests.

Purpose

The purpose of the call-in talk shows is to.

The program will do this by:

1. Providing information to listeners about Bilharzia—what it is, its consequences, and how to prevent it.
2. Providing information to listeners about realistic, practical actions they can take to prevent Bilharzia and minimize its consequences.
3. Promote use of latrines or toilets and never defecating or urinating near or in a body of water.
4. Encouraging listeners to take advantage of the MOH's free distribution of Bilharzia medicine every year to prevent serious consequences of Bilharzia.

Objectives

1. To increase awareness about Bilharzia and how to prevent it.
2. To increase the audience's perceptions of risk for Bilharzia.
3. To encourage listeners to adopt practices that reduce their risk of Bilharzia and its consequences.

Audiences

Primary: Men and women between 20 and 45 years of age and their school age children living in areas where Bilharzia is particularly prevalent

Secondary: Health workers, teachers and leaders in areas where Bilharzia is particularly prevalent.

Creative Considerations

The programmes will use local languages of the endemic areas reached by the broadcasting station. Presenters and expert guests will use easy-to-understand language and explain Bilharzia simply.

Program Elements

Each program will include 6 key elements:

1. **Pre-recorded drama skit:** JHU/CCP has recorded five 2-minute dramas called "At the Waters Edge" in 9 languages. At the beginning of each programme, after the introduction, the presenter will play one of the skits. The skits should be introduced in chronological order from 1 – 5, before repeating. During the live community broadcasts, the skit will not be played.
2. **Discussion with the Expert Guest:** The presenter will comment on the skit and ask the Expert Guest questions related to the skit and Bilharzia (see questions in each programme outline).
3. **Audience call-ins:** Throughout the discussion with the Expert Guest, the Host will invite listeners to call in with their questions. The Expert Guest will answer each question as it comes in. If no calls are coming in, the Host can read SMS's that have come in between programmes.

4. **Music:** When time allows, the Host should play popular music from the area of the country. Instrumental music can serve as a “bridge” and run under the interview with the Expert Guest to keep the audience engaged.
5. **Bilharzia Jingle:** The Bilharzia jingle should be played at least once during each programme. It can be played at the beginning or end of the programme, or just after the skit and before the discussion begins.
6. **Call to action:** During each programme, the Host should remind listeners that Bilharzia CAN be prevented, and the 3 actions that everyone should take to protect themselves from Bilharzia. See script for the call to action in the programme outlines.
7. **Outro/Promo for the next program:** the Host will provide contact information (SMS or mailing address) for those who are interested to give feedback on the program, then give a sneak peek of the next Bilharzia program and finish with branding of the program, **“This radio program was sponsored by the Ministry of Health Bilharzia Prevention Campaign.”**

Program format and timing

Subject	Time
Host: Intro	1:30 min
Play episode of “At the Water’s Edge”	2:00 min
Bilharzia Jingle	1:00 min
Host comment on the skit and Q&A with Expert Guest	10:00 min
Music	2:00 min
Q&A with expert continues while inviting calls from audience	5:00 min
Listeners’ calls and answers by Expert Guest	27:00 min
Host Outro/Promo for next program / call to action	1:30 min
TOTAL	50 min

The Hosts

The Host will be the usual host for the programme.

The Host has a critical role in the show. The Host should have a clear understanding of Bilharzia and the general and specific objectives of each programme. This will

allow him/her to keep the show on track and focused on relevant issues. In order to do this, the Host is expected to follow the outlines in this guide.

The Expert Guests

Expert Guests will be District Vector Control Officers or Focal Persons for Neglected Tropical Diseases or another health worker who is well-versed in Bilharzia and is fluent in the local language. JHU/CCP and the MOH will select and orient 2 Expert Guests for each radio station. The Expert Guests must be familiar with the programme outline for each programme and focus on the objectives and key messages for each programme.

Implementation

The programmes will be produced and broadcast on 24 radio stations located in 22 districts (see list of stations and locations below).



Media House	Location - Broadcast Town
CBS 88.8FM	Kampala, Bulange Mengo
Buddu FM	Masaka,
Spirit FM Mukono	Mukono
Sun FM	Mityana
Radio Ssesse	Kalangala Island
Etop FM	Soroti
Jogo FM	Busia
Baba FM	Jinja
NBS Kodheyo	Jinja
Smart FM	Jinja
Eastern Voice	Bugiri
Voice Of Lango	Lira
Radio Apac	Apac
Mega FM	Gulu
Spirit FM Koboko	Koboko
Transnile FM	Moyo
Mighty Fire	Kitgum
Arua One	Arua
Paidha FM	Nebbi
Radio Hoima FM	Hoima
Voice of Bunyoro	Masindi
Voice Of Tooro	Fortportal
Voice Of Kamwenge	Kamwenge
Guide Radio	Kasese
Biiso FM	Buliisa

Topics Covered

1. Bilharzia is a common and serious disease
2. Contact with water contaminated with Bilharzia causes Bilharzia.
3. How Bilharzia is transmitted—the transmission cycle—and prevented
4. MDA for Bilharzia
5. How Bilharzia gets into the water and how to protect the water
6. Live community programme
7. Repeat one of the above, depending on what is most needed.

Monitoring Plan

JHU/CCP Consultants will keep in contact with the Bilharzia Experts and programme Hosts to ensure the Experts are available for each scheduled programme. Metropolitan Republic, the ad agency employed by JHU/CCP will also receive calls from the presenters following each talk shows, stating that the programme has broadcast. The presenters will also email digital recordings of each radio programme to the agency.

The JHU/CCP Consultant responsible for each radio talk show will listen to the recordings of each programme. For programmes broadcast in a language the consultant is not familiar with, JHU/CCP will hire a translator to prepare verbatim transcripts in English, which the Consultant will review. For each programme broadcast, the Consultants will submit reports, using the attached format, to the Lead Consultant responsible for the Bilharzia campaign at JHU/CCP. Data from these reports will be entered into a spreadsheet shared on Google Docs, which can be accessed by the consultants, presenters, experts, and agency representatives.

At the end of each month, the JHU/CCP consultants will prepare a report, summarizing their activities for the month. The reports will include the following data from the programme reports:

1. Number of talk shows broadcast on each station and in total
2. Number of call-ins on each station and in total
3. Summary of most common questions from callers for all talk shows
4. Issues having to do with quality of programmes
5. Actions taken to address quality issues.

In addition, Metropolitan Republic will engage a commercial media monitoring firm to track broadcasts of the Bilharzia hosted radio talk shows on the stations it monitors. Media monitoring reports will be shared with the JHU/CCP Lead Consultant and compared with monitoring reports from the JHU/CCP Consultants.

PROGRAM OUTLINES

PROGRAM 1. WHAT IS BILHARZIA AND WHY SHOULD WE BE WORRIED ABOUT IT?

PURPOSE

- To raise awareness that Bilharzia is a common disease that can have serious consequences.
- To reassure that people CAN protect themselves from Bilharzia.

OBJECTIVE

After listening to the show, listeners will

Know

- Many people in their community have Bilharzia but probably don't know it
- If left untreated, Bilharzia causes serious problems and even death

Feel

- Worried about Bilharzia
- Relieved that there is something they can do to protect themselves and their family

Do

- Listen to the new programme
- Discuss the program with family and friends and encourage them to listen
- Decide to take an action to protect themselves against Bilharzia

CONTENT

- Play Episode 1 of "At the Waters Edge."
- Discuss Jame's illness and the symptoms he had. Stress that the symptoms may easily be confused with other illnesses. They do not become serious until you have had Bilharzia for some time.
- Explain that in Uganda 1 out of every 5 adults and one out of every 3 children have Bilharzia. But, in communities that are near lakes, rivers, dams, or wetlands, even more people are infected.
- Describe how Bilharzia affects the body—how it reproduces in the body and damages vital organs like the liver or kidneys. If untreated, the damage is so severe that the person dies.

- Emphasize that the purpose of these programmes is to explain how to prevent Bilharzia, and how to protect yourself from serious illness if you have Bilharzia already.
- During future programmes, we will discuss how to prevent Bilharzia. Tell them when the next Bilharzia talk show will take place.
- The program is brought to you by the Ministry of Health.

QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT DISCUSSION:

1. In the drama we heard, how did James probably get Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Emphasize that he washes vehicles and uses water from the river. The river water must be contaminated with Bilharzia. So, when he gets the water on his hands, and when he steps in the river to fetch more water, the Bilharzia worms can enter through his skin.

2. Can one get Bilharzia from drinking unclean water?

DISCUSSION: Emphasize that the Bilharzia worms only enter through the skin. They do not enter the body through water we drink.

3. If James did not get treated, what would happen to him?

DISCUSSION: Emphasize the damage Bilharzia does to the liver. Describe ascites. Talk about how it is incurable once it has damaged vital organs like the liver. Give examples of people you have met who are incurable because of Bilharzia.

4. If the water is clear or running very quickly, is it safe from Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Emphasize that Bilharzia can live in any body of water. Even if the water is clear and even if it is fast moving. It's best to avoid contact with the water in rivers or lakes or dams, even if it looks very clean.

5. How many people in Uganda have Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: An estimated 5 million people in Uganda have Bilharzia. And 15 million people are at risk of getting Bilharzia because they come into contact with water contaminated with Bilharzia frequently.

CALL TO ACTION

Tune in for the next call-in programme (give the date and time) to learn more about Bilharzia. Luckily, we can protect ourselves from Bilharzia with 3 easy steps:

1. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
2. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year.
3. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

ADD TAG LINE

PROGRAM 2: WHAT CAUSES BILHARZIA?

PURPOSE:

- To explain the cause of Bilharzia.
- Explain the Bilharzia transmission cycle and how to break it.
- To dispel common misconceptions about Bilharzia and how it is spread.

OBJECTIVE:

After listening to the show, listeners will

Know

- Bilharzia is caused by a tiny worm that lives in fresh water
- Bilharzia is NOT caused by witchcraft

Feel

- Concerned about Bilharzia
- Encouraged to protect themselves and their family from Bilharzia

Do

- Talk with others in their family and community about Bilharzia
- Decide to adopt a prevention action

CONTENT

- Play Episode 2 of “At the Water’s Edge”.

- Discuss the likelihood that all members of a family can become infected with Bilharzia. Be sure to explain that Bilharzia is not passed from one person to another by touching, having sex, sharing food. People get Bilharzia when they come into contact with water contaminated with Bilharzia. The tiny worms that cause Bilharzia live in the water and enter a person through their skin.
- Discuss the transmission cycle: How the Bilharzia gets into the water when someone who has Bilharzia urinates or defecates in or near the water. When a person has Bilharzia, there are tiny eggs in their faeces or urine. These eggs hatch in the water and reproduce in snails. After a time, the worms leave the snails in search of humans. When they come in contact with a human, then enter through the skin.
- Explain that, if left untreated, Bilharzia destroys the liver or other organs. This causes children and adults to get distended abdomens. In many communities, people think these people are bewitched. But, it is caused by Bilharzia that has not been treated and has destroyed the liver.

QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT DISCUSSION:

1. In the drama we heard, the nurse suggests that Alice should collect water for bathing and let it sit for 24 hours before using it. How does that help?

DISCUSSION: Explain that when the Bilharzia worm comes out of a snail, it is looking for a human to enter. If it does not find one, it will die. Most worms cannot live for more than 24 hours. So, if you collect the water and let it sit for 24 hours, the worms will no longer be alive, and it will be safe for use.

2. Many people in our communities do not have access to well or borehole water. And, like Alice, they must bathe and wash clothes in lakes or rivers. What other things can these people do to protect themselves from Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Emphasize that people can minimize their risk by entering the water for only short periods of time. And, by entering the water before 8 am, when the Bilharzia worms are not so many. Explain that the worms come out of the snails when the water is a bit warmer. So, most of them wait until later in the day. If you enter the water early in the morning to collect water, you will be less likely to come into contact with a Bilharzia worm.

3. What other things can people do to protect themselves from Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Suggest that they wear protective gear like boots if they are going to walk in shallow water, and rubber or plastic gloves if they are going to put their hands in the water. Also suggest that parents should not allow their children to swim and play in lake or river water, as that is how they will get Bilharzia.

CALL TO ACTION

Tune in for the next call-in programme (give the date and time) to learn more about Bilharzia. Luckily, we can protect ourselves from Bilharzia with 3 easy steps:

4. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
5. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year.
6. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

ADD TAG LINE

PROGRAM 3: BILHARZIA TRANSMISSION CYCLE AND HOW TO INTERFERE WITH IT

PURPOSE:

- Explain the Bilharzia transmission cycle
- Explain ways to interrupt the transmission cycle, including MDA

OBJECTIVE:

After listening to the show, listeners will:

Know

- How Bilharzia gets into the water
- How Bilharzia gets into the human body
- That the free medicine given by the MOH kills the Bilharzia in the body.

Feel

- Concerned about Bilharzia
- Eager to protect themselves and their families from Bilharzia

Do

- Discussion the programme and Bilharzia with family members and friends
- Decide to take a protective action against Bilharzia

CONTENT

- Play Episode 3 of “At the Water’s Edge”.
- Discuss Paul’s distended abdomen. That it is most likely caused by liver damage. When the liver is damaged, fluid backs up in the abdomen. Bilharzia damages the liver if it is left untreated for long. As the nurse said, once the belly is swollen, the liver is often damaged so badly that it cannot be repaired.
- Talk about Bilharzia medicine. That is it not available at health centers all the time. However, in communities with lots of Bilharzia, the MOH gives everyone—adults and children—free Bilharzia medicine once a year.
- Explain that Bilharzia medicine kills the Bilharzia in the body. But, it does not prevent future infection. That’s why you have to take it every year. Even if you take the medicine today and are cured, if you step in water contaminated with Bilharzia again, you will get infected again.

QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT DISCUSSION

1. What happens inside the body when you are infected with Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Emphasize that the worms move in the blood to the liver or kidney or another organ where they reproduce. If the worms reproduce for a long time, they will form a lump that obstructs blood flow to the organ. This damages the organ so it doesn’t work correctly. If left for long, the organ will die. A person cannot live without a liver. So, if the Bilharzia damage your liver, it will kill you.

2. How long does that take?

DISCUSSION: It depends on the person, their state of health. If they are very healthy, and their immune system is good, they can live many years before the Bilharzia affects their organs. In other people, who are not so healthy, or who don’t have good immune systems, Bilharzia can cause serious damage more quickly.

3. So, how does Bilharzia medicine help prevent Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: If everyone who has Bilharzia treats themselves, then they will no longer have Bilharzia eggs in their faeces or urine. That means that they will not be able to introduce Bilharzia into the water. In reality, the Bilharzia medicine is given

to prevent serious illness from Bilharzia. It is not given to prevent introducing Bilharzia into lakes and rivers.

CALL TO ACTION

Tune in for the next call-in programme (give the date and time) to learn more about Bilharzia. Luckily, we can protect ourselves from Bilharzia with 3 easy steps:

1. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
2. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year.
3. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

ADD TAG LINE

PROGRAM 4: MASS DISTRIBUTION OF BILHARZIA MEDICINE

PURPOSE:

- To explain what MDA is, and why it is important to take Bilharzia medicine when offered

OBJECTIVE:

After listening to the show, listeners will

Know

- Bilharzia medicine treats Bilharzia but does not prevent it
- Bilharzia medicine stops Bilharzia from progressing to serious disease
- How to minimize side effects of Bilharzia medicine

Feel

- That it is important to take the Bilharzia medicine when offered
- That it is important for their children to take Bilharzia medicine when offered.

Do

- Discuss the programme with their family and friends
- Decide to take advantage of the government's free Bilharzia medicine distribution.

CONTENT

- Start the programme by playing Episode 4 of "At the Water's Edge"

- Discuss what James told Irene about the Bilharzia medicine treating the disease but not preventing it. Comment on the fact that people can simply get Bilharzia again as soon as they step in a river or lake again. Make it clear that the medicine is meant to prevent serious illness from Bilharzia but does not prevent the person from getting Bilharzia again.
- Discuss the need to take the medicine every year to be sure you don't get seriously ill from Bilharzia.
- Discuss what James and Alice are doing to protect their family from Bilharzia: no longer washing clothes and bathing in the river—now they collect water and let it stand for 24 hours before use. And, James wears boots when he's fetching water for washing cars. Discuss other things that people can do to reduce their risk of Bilharzia.

QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT DISCUSSION

- When does the MOH distribute free Bilharzia medicine?

DISCUSSION: Explain that the distribution takes place in April/May and again in Oct/Nov. There are communities in 47 districts, including the district where the radio programme is broadcast from, that receive free Bilharzia medicine once a year. In another 39 districts, where there are not so many people with Bilharzia, the MOH distributes Bilharzia medicine to communities every 2 years.

- Is the medicine safe? I've heard that the tablets can make a person sick.

DISCUSSION: Emphasize that the medicine is very safe. Some people get headaches or feel sick to their stomachs after taking the medicine. These symptoms can be prevented if you eat something just before taking the medicine. People who are infected are more likely to feel a little sick after taking the medicine than people who are not infected. So, if you have side effects, it probably means you were infected with Bilharzia and the medicine is working to kill it.

- For children, the medicine is given out at schools. But, for adults, where can we get the medicine?

DISCUSSION: Explain how adults can get MDA for Bilharzia in the communities that get MDA.

- I have heard that you need to take many tablets at the same time and that they do not smell good.

DISCUSSION: The number of tablets you will be given is determined by your height. So, the taller you are, the more tablets you will need to take. But, it is rare for someone to take more than 6 tablets. Some people complain that the tablets smell and taste bad.

CALL TO ACTION

Tune in for the next call-in programme (give the date and time) to learn more about Bilharzia. Luckily, we can protect ourselves from Bilharzia with 3 easy steps:

4. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
5. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year.
6. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

ADD TAG LINE

PROGRAM 5: WHAT'S A LATRINE GOT TO DO WITH BILHARZIA?

PURPOSE:

- To explain how open defecation contaminates bodies of water with Bilharzia
- To convince listeners to use latrines or toilets and never defecate or urinate near or in a body of water.

OBJECTIVES:

After listening to the show, listeners will

Know

- Bilharzia gets into lakes, rivers and wetlands through human faeces or urine.

Feel

- Concerned about Bilharzia
- Encouraged to protect themselves, their families and their communities from Bilharzia

Do

- Talk with family and friends about Bilharzia and this programme;
- Avoid defecating or urinating in or near a body of water.

- Encourage others in their communities to use latrines or toilets, even for babies and small children.

CONTENT:

- Play Episode 5 of “At the Waters’ Edge”
- Discuss why James said that Bilharzia is a cycle. Repeat the explanation that the Nurse gave about how defecating or urinating in or near water spreads Bilharzia. Explain the transmission cycle again—how it starts with an infected human contaminating the water, then continues when the Bilharzia worm infects another human.
- Discuss whether or not baby’s faeces is clean and free of Bilharzia eggs. Remind the audience that children younger than 5 years of age are more likely than older children and adults to have Bilharzia. Emphasize that baby’s faeces should be disposed of in a latrine or toilet and that they should not wash their soiled clothes or bodies in the water because this can spread Bilharzia.
- Discuss how Uganda will only be free of Bilharzia when everyone starts using toilets and latrines to relieve themselves. Until that happens, people will continue to contaminate the water with Bilharzia, and people will continue to become infected with Bilharzia.

QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT DISCUSSION

- If Bilharzia needs snails to reproduce, why can’t the government remove the shells from rivers and lakes?

DISCUSSION: This has been done in some countries in the past. However, it is an expensive operation and needs to be repeated regularly because the snails come back. It would involve putting chemicals in the lakes and rivers that might affect fish and other animal and plant life. It is not a preferred method to stop Bilharzia.

- There are many reasons why people cannot always use latrines. If they are far from their homes, or if they are fishing late on the lake, it is not possible to use a latrine. What is the recommendation for these situations?

DISCUSSION: It is never a good idea to defecate or urinate outside a latrine or toilet. Faeces contains a lot of bacteria and parasites in addition to Bilharzia that can make people sick. For Bilharzia, it is very important that people do not defecate or urinate in lakes, rivers, or wetlands. In fact, they should also not urinate or defecate near to

a body of water because when it rains, the rain can wash it into the lake or river. People who work in fields or rice paddies or on the lake, far from a latrine, should bring along a container to defecate and urinate in. This can then be emptied in the latrine when they return home.

CALL TO ACTION

Tune in for the next call-in programme (give the date and time) to learn more about Bilharzia. Luckily, we can protect ourselves from Bilharzia with 3 easy steps:

7. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
8. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year.
9. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

ADD TAG LINE

PROGRAM 6: COMMUNITY OUTREACH-LIVE BROADCAST

PURPOSE:

- To inform the audience about Bilharzia—what it is, how it is spread, and how to prevent it.
- To hear from community members about what they are doing to protect themselves from Bilharzia

OBJECTIVES:

After listening to the show, listeners will:

Know

- What Bilharzia is and how it is spread
- How to prevent Bilharzia

Feel

- Concerned about Bilharzia
- Committed to doing something to protect themselves from Bilharzia

Do

- Discuss Bilharzia with their friends and family
- Take some action to reduce their risk of Bilharzia

CONTENT

- This programme will be broadcast live from a community near the radio station.
- The programme will begin with a short talk by the Expert about Bilharzia, using the Bilharzia flipchart (this may be projected on a screen if there is equipment available).
- Encourage the audience to ask questions.
- Ask the audience to share stories about what they do to prevent Bilharzia.

CALL TO ACTION

Tune in for the next call-in programme (give the date and time) to learn more about Bilharzia. Luckily, we can protect ourselves from Bilharzia with 3 easy steps:

10. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
11. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year.
12. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

ADD TAG LINE

PROGRAM 7: FINAL RECAP

PURPOSE:

- To review information that has been covered in previous programmes
- To talk about issues that the audience has had many questions and concerns about.
- To ask a quiz question and give a prize to the person who answers correctly.

The outline for this programme is based on questions that listeners have been asking during the previous 6 programmes.

OBJECTIVES:

After listening to the show, listeners will:

Know

- What Bilharzia is, how it is spread, and how it is NOT spread
- How to prevent Bilharzia

Feel

- Committed to doing something to protect themselves from Bilharzia

Do

- Discuss Bilharzia with their friends and family
- Take some action to reduce their risk of Bilharzia

CONTENT

- Discuss how serious the problem of Bilharzia is, particularly in communities that live near lakes, rivers, swamps or dams.
- Emphasize that it is difficult to get the medicine that treats Bilharzia. It is only available at district or private hospitals, or in communities or schools once a year in places where there is medicine distribution. So, it is important to protect yourself and your children from Bilharzia by avoiding direct contact with lake, river, or swamp water.
- Emphasize that even water that looks clean can have Bilharzia and that most lakes, rivers and swamps in Uganda are not safe from Bilharzia.
- Emphasize that you cannot get Bilharzia from *drinking* dirty water. The acid in your stomach will kill any Bilharzia worms that are in water you drink. Bilharzia enters the body through your skin. So, you get it when any part of your body touches water that contains Bilharzia.
- Ask one quiz question and give out a t-shirt to the first caller who answers correctly. Be sure to read the correct answer afterwards.

QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT DISCUSSION

Over the course of the campaign, we have had a lot of questions about Bilharzia. We would like to talk about some of the most common ones today. [Presenter: please invite callers' questions from the very beginning, and ask some of these questions while waiting for calls]

- Is Bilharzia only in dirty water? What about river water that is moving quickly? Does it have Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Bilharzia lives in any water body—river, lake, swamp, or dam—that has the snails where Bilharzia reproduces. In Uganda, that means almost every lake, river and swamp. Even if the water is moving, it can contain Bilharzia worms and if you step in it with your bare feet and legs, you can get Bilharzia. Even if the water is so clear you can see to the bottom, it can contain Bilharzia worms, which are too small to see with your eyes.

- What about tap water or water from a borehole? Can I get Bilharzia if I use it for bathing and washing?

DISCUSSION: Bilharzia can only live in water where there are a certain type of snails. Tap water that has been treated, like the water provided by the National

Water and Sewerage Corporation does NOT contain Bilharzia. But tap water that comes directly from a lake or river where there are Bilharzia snails may contain Bilharzia. Water from boreholes and wells does NOT have Bilharzia.

- Why does the government only give Bilharzia medicine in some communities and not others?

DISCUSSION: The Ministry of Health provides Bilharzia medicine in communities where there are many people who are infected. The medicine is too expensive to give to every person in Uganda every year. So, we concentrate on places where the problem is the worst.

- How long will the medicine protect me from Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Bilharzia medicine does NOT protect you from getting Bilharzia again. It kills the Bilharzia worms that are living in your body so you do not get seriously sick. To PROTECT yourself from Bilharzia, the only thing you can do is to avoid contact with lake, river, swamp or dam water. Because it is difficult to completely avoid contact with contaminated water, the Ministry of Health recommends that people who live in areas where there is a lot of Bilharzia should take the medicine every year.

- In many landing sites, people use and defecate in the same water. Does it mean everyone there has Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: In some landing sites where there are few latrines, and people defecate in the water, as many as 80% (8 out of 10) people have Bilharzia. So, it is almost everyone who is infected. Communities need to build latrines and stop people from defecating or urinating in the water. Not only does this practice spread Bilharzia, it also causes Cholera and other forms of diarrhea.

QUIZ QUESTION:

Please read the question and invite listeners to call in. The first caller who can answer the question correctly wins a prize. Please ask the expert to read the correct answer and explanation after you have a winner.

QUESTION: How can you protect yourself and your family from getting Bilharzia in the first place?

Correct answer: The only way to protect yourself and your children from getting Bilharzia is to avoid contact with lake, river, dam and swamp water.

Additional information to be read by the presenter/expert: Here are some suggestions to help you and your family do that:

1. Use borehole, well, or treated water for bathing and washing laundry and dishes. Never bathe or do your washing in a lake, river or dam.
2. If you must step or stand in lake, river, dam or swamp water, wear boots.
3. If you must put your hands in lake, river, dam or swamp water, wear rubber gloves.
4. If you do not have access to borehole, well or treated water, collect water in a container and let it sit for 24 hours before use. This will allow the Bilharzia worms time to die before you use the water.
5. If you must go into lake, river, dam or swamps, do so before 8 am, when there are fewer Bilharzia worms.

CALL TO ACTION

This is the last programme on Bilharzia this year. We hope you have learned about Bilharzia, feel compelled to protect yourself by following these 3 easy steps:

1. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
2. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year.
3. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

Put a stop to Bilharzia before Bilharzia stops you!

MAKE GOOD PROGRAMMES: COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PURPOSE:

- To talk about issues that the audience has had many questions and concerns about.

OBJECTIVES:

After listening to the show, listeners will:

Know

- What Bilharzia is, how it is spread, and how it is NOT spread
- How to prevent Bilharzia

Feel

- Committed to doing something to protect themselves from Bilharzia

Do

- Discuss Bilharzia with their friends and family
- Take some action to reduce their risk of Bilharzia

CONTENT

- Talk about the community outreach programme that the expert participated in. How many people won t-shirts for answering questions correctly. And, concern that there are still many people who do not understand how to prevent Bilharzia.
- Discuss how serious the problem of Bilharzia is, particularly in communities that live near lakes, rivers, swamps or dams.
- Emphasize that you cannot get Bilharzia from *drinking* dirty water. The acid in your stomach will kill any Bilharzia worms that are in water you drink. Bilharzia enters the body through your skin. So, you get it when any part of your body touches water that contains Bilharzia.

QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT DISCUSSION

Over the course of the campaign, we have had a lot of questions about Bilharzia. We would like to talk about some of the most common ones today.

- Do children also get bilharzia, and how can we prevent a child with Bilharzia infecting another especially when they sleep together and the one with Bilharzia wets the bed?

DISCUSSION: Many children in Uganda have Bilharzia. In fact, according to a recent study, about one third (one out of every 3) children who are between 2 and 5 years

have Bilharzia. These children got Bilharzia from playing or bathing in water contaminated with Bilharzia. Bilharzia cannot spread directly from one child's urine to another child. A child who has Bilharzia will only have the eggs in his/her urine. Those eggs only hatch into the worms that can enter through human skin inside snails that live in rivers, lakes, or swamps.

- Is Bilharzia only in dirty water? What about river water that is moving quickly? Does it have Bilharzia?

Bilharzia lives in any fresh water body—river, lake, swamp, or dam—that has the snails where Bilharzia reproduces. In Uganda, that means almost every lake, river and swamp. Even if the water is moving, it can contain Bilharzia worms and if you step in it with your bare feet and legs, you can get Bilharzia. Even if the water is so clear you can see to the bottom, it can contain Bilharzia worms, which are too small to see with your eyes.

- What about tap water or water from a borehole? Can I get Bilharzia if I use it for bathing and washing?

Bilharzia can only live in water where there are a certain type of snails. Tap water that has been treated, like the water provided by the National Water and Sewerage Corporation does NOT contain Bilharzia. But tap water that comes directly from a lake or river where there are Bilharzia snails may contain Bilharzia. Water from boreholes and wells does NOT have Bilharzia.

- If one stays out of lake, river and swamp water, are they guaranteed to be free of Bilharzia?

If a person has no Bilharzia worms in their body, and never comes into contact with water contaminated with Bilharzia, they will stay free of Bilharzia. But, if you have Bilharzia and do not treat it, then do not come into contact with water, you will still have the Bilharzia. You first have to treat the Bilharzia in your body. Then, stop coming into contact with contaminated water.

- After getting infected with Bilharzia, how long does it take before one falls sick?

It varies. Most people will only feel cramping and diarrhea or feel tired. But, after months or years, the Bilharzia will cause damage to their bodies and they will become very very ill. It is difficult to diagnose Bilharzia. So, even when a person starts feeling sick, it is often confused with other diseases. This delay in getting properly treated can lead to damage that cannot be reversed. So, the best cure is to protect yourself from getting Bilharzia in the first place by staying out of the water; and, in communities where the government gives out free Bilharzia medicine, take it every year.

- Why does the government only give Bilharzia medicine in some communities and not others?

The Ministry of Health provides Bilharzia medicine in communities where there are many people who are infected. The medicine is too expensive to give to every person in Uganda every year. So, we concentrate on places where the problem is the worst.

- How long will the medicine protect me from Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: Bilharzia medicine does NOT protect you from getting Bilharzia again. It kills the Bilharzia worms that are living in your body so you do not get seriously sick. To PROTECT yourself from Bilharzia, the only thing you can do is to avoid contact with lake, river, swamp or dam water. Because it is difficult to completely avoid contact with contaminated water, the Ministry of Health recommends that people who live in areas where there is a lot of Bilharzia should take the medicine every year.

- When I put on ordinary but strong shoes and enter the water, can I still be infected by Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: If your feet can get wet when you're wearing those strong shoes, then you can get Bilharzia. It is best to wear plastic or rubber boots and gloves so that the water cannot touch your skin. Bilharzia worms are so small that they can move through your clothes with the water. So, you need to wear plastic or rubber that will not allow any water to touch your skin.

- In many landing sites, people use and defecate in the same water. Does it mean everyone there has Bilharzia?

DISCUSSION: In some landing sites where there are few latrines, and people defecate in the water, as many as 80% (8 out of 10) people have Bilharzia. So, it is almost everyone who is infected. Communities need to build latrines and stop people from defecating or urinating in the water. Not only does this practice spread Bilharzia, it also causes Cholera and other forms of diarrhea.

QUIZ QUESTION:

1. **How can you protect yourself and your family from getting Bilharzia in the first place?**

Correct answer: The only way to protect yourself and your children from getting Bilharzia is to avoid contact with lake, river, dam and swamp water.

Additional information to be read by the presenter/expert: Here are some suggestions to help you and your family do that:

6. Use borehole, well, or treated water for bathing and washing laundry and dishes. Never bathe or do your washing in a lake, river or dam.
7. If you must step or stand in lake, river, dam or swamp water, wear boots.
8. If you must put your hands in lake, river, dam or swamp water, wear rubber gloves.
9. If you do not have access to borehole, well or treated water, collect water in a container and let it sit for 24 hours before use. This will allow the Bilharzia worms time to die before you use the water.
10. If you must go into lake, river, dam or swamps, do so before 8 am, when there are fewer Bilharzia worms.

CALL TO ACTION

Tune in for the next call-in programme (give the date and time) to learn more about Bilharzia. Luckily, we can protect ourselves from Bilharzia with 3 easy steps:

1. Avoid contact with lake, river or swamp water;
2. Take the free medicine provided by the Ministry of Health each year; and
3. Relieve yourself in a latrine or toilet and NEVER in or near a body of water.

Put a stop to Bilharzia before Bilharzia stops you

ATTACHMENT: MONITORING FORM