

**TITLE OF THE STUDY**: **The role of social network approaches in delivering integrated Public Health interventions: Application to HIV and schistosomiasis services**

**Principal Investigator: Dr Madalo Mukoka Cluster name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Cluster ID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Focus Group Discussion Topic Guide**

**Opening statements**: Thank you for taking time to be part of this discussion. As you may remember, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. As part of our research to understand the role of social network approaches in optimizing the delivery of integrated public health interventions targeting HIV and schistosomiasis services, we are asking selected fishermen in this community to have a discussion with us. This will give us important information on the role of social relationships in taking up health services and your views on the factors that encourage or discourage people from taking up services when approached by a network member. We will also discuss a future study where we plan to collect information on relationships that exist amongst fishermen. We will discuss whether what we plan to do will be acceptable and areas that can be improved. The interview will take 45-60 minutes to complete, but feel free to let me know if you need a break at any time. You can also stop the discussion if you do not want to continue. Before we begin do you have any questions?

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| Housekeeping | * Confidentiality is assured. “What is shared in the here stays here.” * Only one person talks at a time. * It is important for us to hear everyone’s ideas and opinions. There are no right or wrong answers to questions – just ideas, experiences and opinions, which are all valuable. * It is important for us to hear all sides of an issue – both the positive and the negative. * Before you speak, please mention the number you have been assigned |
| **Boat teams and leadership** | |
| Question 1 | How are boat teams formed? What criteria are used to select team members? |
| Question 2 | Can you describe the leadership structure within the boat teams? How are leaders chosen? |
| Question 3 | How are decisions made within the boat teams? Is it a collaborative process or more top-down? |
| **Social Relationships** | |
| Question 4 | In what ways do social relationships influence individual choices related to healthy or unhealthy behaviors in this community? |
| Question 5 | How do social relationships within this community facilitate the sharing of information about health services, programs, and initiatives? |
| Question 6 | Who influences the behavior of men in this community (for any reason)?  Probes:  It could be about social developments or farming or any critical personal decisions  Responses to provide the roles/positions (official or not) of these people (e.g. chiefs, parents, friends etc.) and not names  Why do these people have such an influence? And how do these people influence the behavior of others? |
| Question 7 | Can you help us map out the layers of influential people (on any matters) in this community?  Probe: Starting with the group of people you think is most influential to the least influential |
| Question 8 | Which group of people that you have mentioned can influence the community to support a health initiative? And how can they do this? |
| Question 9 | In this community, what are the social situations/events that are important for sharing information generally?  Which are the events where health information is shared? And how is health information shared in these events? |
| **HIV and Schistosomiasis** | |
| Question 10 | What beliefs do people hold about HIV and the services available (for prevention, diagnosis and treatment)? especially amongst men  Probe: Are there myths surrounding HIV testing and treatment that can influence a person to take up or not to take up these services |
| Question 11 | What beliefs do people hold about schistosomiasis, its diagnosis and treatment (especially amongst men)?  Probe: Are there myths surrounding schistosomiasis testing and treatment that can influence a person to take up or not to take up these services |
| Question 12 | Can you describe the common practices and unspoken rules that guide how health facilities (providing HIV and schistosomiasis services) operate in this community?  How does this affect the overall use of these facilities by fishermen? |
| Question 13 | What do you think prevents men from taking up HIV or schistosomiasis services in this community apart from what we have discussed already? |
| **Future Social Network Study**  We believe that peer leaders can help improve how quickly information and health services are delivered among fishermen. To choose the leaders, we plan to collect information on the relationships that exist amongst the people and draw maps as shown below. We will then look at the maps and identify people who have the most connections and select them to promote HIV and schistosomiasis services.    [The network diagram shows the social connections that exist amongst 15 individuals. The circles and numbers represent unique individuals, and the lines show the ties/connections that exist amongst them. Person 1 has the most lines (i.e. connections) and is also connected to person 8 who also has a lot of connections.] | |
| Question 14 | What do you think about this approach of collecting information about social relationships?  Probe: Would it be acceptable in this community? |
| Question 15 | What can we do to make the process of taking photographs to be more acceptable in the study we plan to conduct? |
| Question 16 | Do you have any recommendations or questions which are related to this topic that you would like to talk about? |