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The use of remote sensing and GIS in public health: A case study: Geospatial risk analysis for Schistosomiasis in Turkana, Kenya

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Using Remote Sensing and Geographical Information System (GIS) is a very useful tool for Public Health practice and research, for disease mapping, risk prediction and visualization of the spatial pattern of health and disease phenomena.

Statement of the Problem: The locality encompasses cupule of pastoralist activities that set an ideal environment conducive for Schistosomiasis the problem is for public health decision makers to locate these sites in order to direct care and health programs where needed that reduce the physical and human resources wasted where no need for it.

Objective: To locate high/low Risk of Schistosomiasis areas in form of a map.

Methods: A cross sessional study where Hazard factors and vulnerability factors data acquired from the survey, records and remotely sensed data are formulated in Raster data set in order to be calculated to obtain a risk map using a GIS software.

Results: A risk map showing high /low risk of Schistosomiasis transmission in term of socioeconomic and environmental suitability been conducted.

Discussion: The resulted risk map showed areas with high-risk, while others were shown as a moderate risk area; those results were validated with the epidemiological survey for Schistosoma Haematobium and Schistosoma Mansoni for school children in several basic schools in the locality.

Conclusion: Using Remote Sensing and GIS is a very valuable tool for Public Health Practice and Research, for can be helpful for health decision maker to guide them where to direct health policies and better to visualize health problem.

Recommendations: For Public Health Practitioners and Researchers to consider the use of remote sensing and GIS.

Keywords: Geospatial Risk analysis, Schistosomiasis, Remote Sensing, GIS, Environmental suitability