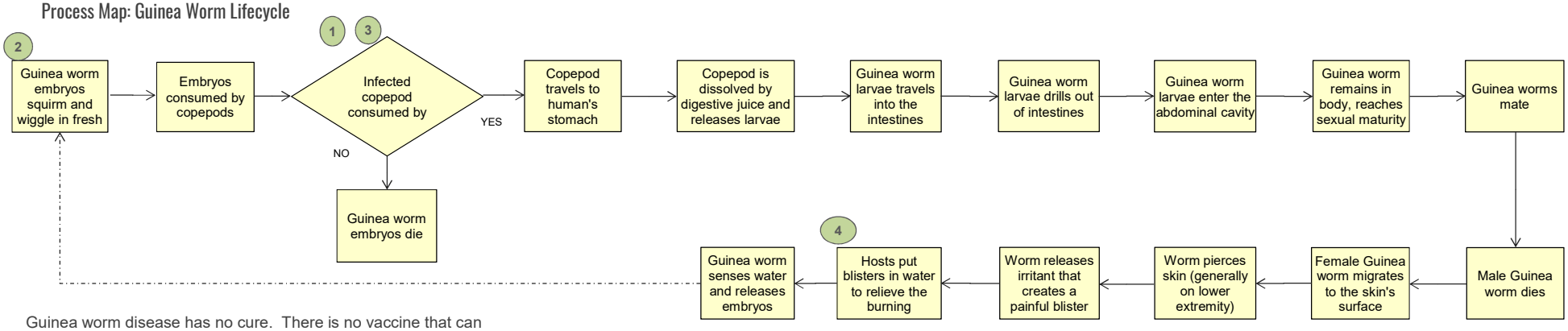
Case Study: Guinea Worm Disease

There were an estimated 3.5 million cases of Guinea worm disease in 21 countries in 1986. In 2017, only 30 cases of Guinea worm disease were reported in the 4 remaining endemic countries after an international campaign to eradicate the disease. Aid organizations believe Guinea worm disease will be the second human disease to be eradicated in the near future.

The success of the eradication effort has been possible because of knowledge about how the disease is spread and use of a few relatively low tech solutions.

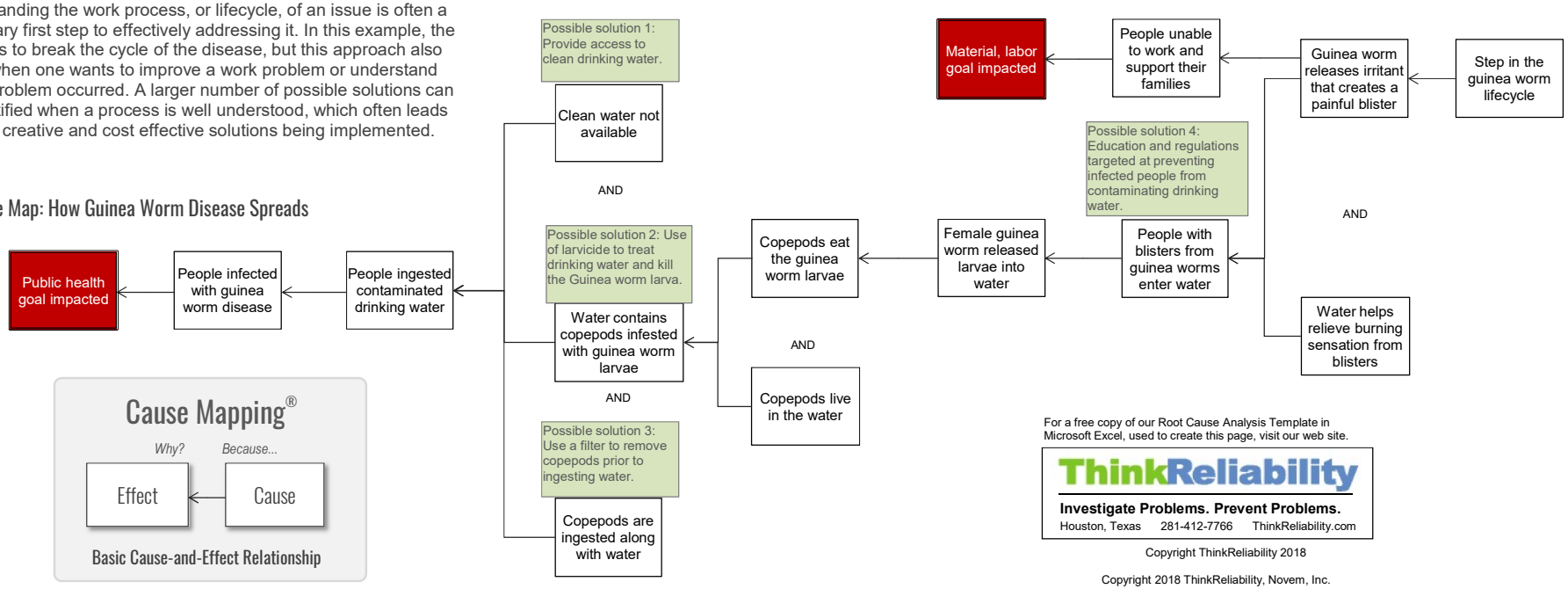
Process Map: Guinea Worm Lifecycle



Guinea worm disease has no cure. There is no vaccine that can prevent it and no medication to treat it. The only way to eradicate this disease is to understand how the disease is spread and prevent the parasite from infecting new hosts.

This root cause analysis case study is a reminder that thoroughly understanding the work process, or lifecycle, of an issue is often a necessary first step to effectively addressing it. In this example, the goal was to break the cycle of the disease, but this approach also works when one wants to improve a work problem or understand why a problem occurred. A larger number of possible solutions can be identified when a process is well understood, which often leads to more creative and cost effective solutions being implemented.

Cause Map: How Guinea Worm Disease Spreads



For a free copy of our Root Cause Analysis Template in Microsoft Excel, used to create this page, visit our web site.

ThinkReliability
Investigate Problems. Prevent Problems.
Houston, Texas 281-412-7766 ThinkReliability.com