

INVESTING IN SCIENCE

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE, INNOVATION, AND
COLLABORATIONS FOR A HEALTHY ZAMBIA

2025



Editorial Team

Moses Nsunge, Ginah Mudenda, Jill Morse and Saboi Songiso

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Editor's Note

Dear Esteemed Readers,

As we conclude another quarter at CIDRZ, we reflect on our collective efforts to advance health equity and strengthen health systems across Zambia. This edition presents updates on CIDRZ's core health programmes, including advancements in HIV and tuberculosis care, maternal and newborn health, adolescent and young women's health, and enteric disease research.

It also highlights work in health systems strengthening, implementation science, and responses to emerging public health challenges. The edition demonstrates the impact of collaborations with local and global partners, showcasing CIDRZ's contributions to public health and efforts toward a healthier Zambia. This edition also features insights from recent research publications, community outreach initiatives, and policy engagements, providing a comprehensive view of CIDRZ's work. These stories reflect our commitment to informing, inspiring collaboration, and fostering innovation across the organisation.

In line with CIDRZ's mission, all staff are encouraged to share their published research, updates, photos, and stories with the Communications Department. Together, every achievement can contribute to the shared goal of a healthier Zambia.

Warm regards,

Editorial Team: Moses Nsunge, Ginah Mudenda, Jill Morse and Saboi Songiso

A message from CEO

Dear CIDRZ Team,

I wish to extend my gratitude to each of you for your steadfast dedication, resilience, and professionalism throughout what has been a particularly challenging year. Together, we have navigated uncertainty, supported one another through difficult moments, and continued to advance the organisation's mission, even amidst funding constraints and organisational changes. Your commitment and positive spirit remain the cornerstone of our success.

Despite these challenges, CIDRZ has continued to make remarkable progress in advancing health research, improving patient care, and strengthening community engagement. During this quarter, our Matero Research Site had the honour of hosting a high-level delegation from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). The delegation witnessed firsthand our seamless integration of clinical research, patient care, and community programmes, including ongoing HIV and Shigella vaccine trials, advanced HIV treatment studies, and our robust data management and patient enrolment processes. This visit not only reaffirmed our global partnerships but also positioned CIDRZ as a hub of innovation and excellence in public health research.

Our research portfolio consistently pushes the boundaries of innovation. From studies examining syphilis treatment in pregnant women with and without HIV, to innovative vaccine development using the double mutant heat-labile toxin (dmLT) for safer polio prevention, CIDRZ remains at the forefront of evidence-based healthcare solutions. We also hosted an intensive immunology training course in collaboration with France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), equipping MSc, PhD, and postdoctoral researchers with advanced laboratory and analytical skills. In addition, Camp Tuli Bonse 2025 brought together young people living with type 1 diabetes and sickle cell disease, fostering learning, peer support, and mental health awareness. These accomplishments reflect the collective effort, expertise, and dedication of every member of CIDRZ.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on expanding our research footprint and deepening our engagement in implementation science, health systems strengthening, and vaccine development.



In partnership with the Ministry of Health, we have also continued to strengthen healthcare systems and support the scale up of HIV testing, counselling, and awareness campaigns. In Addition, CIDRZ successfully hosted the Rapid Testing Continuous Quality Improvement (RTCQI) Awards, which recognised outstanding contributions to HIV testing services while reinforcing a culture of excellence, accountability, and innovation nationwide.

Our commitment to holistic health also remains strong. This quarter, CIDRZ spearheaded Zambia's Annual Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) Global Week of Action by hosting the PEN-Plus NCDs Open Day at our Head Office. This initiative provided free, life-saving health services to our staff while promoting early detection, prevention, and awareness of NCDs. Furthermore, we proudly supported the opening of the 4th and 5th Zambia PEN-Plus NCD Clinics at Chifubu Level 1 Hospital in Ndola and Chipata District Hospital, respectively, expanding access to essential care for individuals living with chronic conditions.

Your role in this journey is invaluable. Together, we will continue to achieve extraordinary outcomes for Zambia and beyond. Thank you for your continued commitment, perseverance, and the passion you bring to our shared mission.

Sincerely,

Dr Carolyn Bolton
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Career Development: Building a Future Beyond Today

Dear CIDRZ Team,

In today's fast-paced work environment, career development is essential for both personal growth and organizational success. It is not just about promotions; it's an ongoing process of setting goals, learning new skills, and aligning personal aspirations with organizational needs.

At CIDRZ, we believe career development is a shared responsibility. While we provide tools, training, mentorship, and a strong performance management system, employees are encouraged to take ownership of their growth. This partnership fosters a culture of continuous improvement, empowering staff to thrive in their roles and prepare for future opportunities.

Why Is Career Development Important?

Career development matters for both individuals and organizations.

Here's why:

- **Personal Fulfillment:** When employees feel they are growing and progressing, they experience a sense of purpose, which contributes to their overall well-being and mental health.
- **Organizational Impact:** A continuously learning and evolving workforce is more innovative, adaptable, and productive.
- **Future Preparedness:** In an era of rapid change driven by technology, funding shifts, and global trends, career development ensures employees are not left behind. It equips them with the skills and mindset needed to navigate transitions confidently.
- **Enhanced Performance:** Employees who invest in their development tend to perform better, take initiative, and contribute meaningfully to team goals.

The Role of Upskilling

Upskilling is non-negotiable. Digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and global competitiveness demand that employees be competent in their current roles and prepared for the jobs of tomorrow.

Upskilling includes:

- Attending workshops or training sessions (in-person or online)
- Pursuing further education or certifications through professional associations
- Participating in mentorship or coaching programs
- Engaging in cross-functional projects



My Career, My treasure

While CIDRZ is committed to supporting your growth, the journey begins with you.

Reflective Questions

- What are my career goals?
- What extra skills do I need to enhance my current state?
- What opportunities can I pursue today to move closer to those goals?
- How involved am I in my professional association, and what contributions am I making?

Whether you are just starting out or have years of experience, it is never too early-or too late-to invest in your development.

Let us Grow Together

As we continue to build a culture of compassion, understanding, and support, career development remains a cornerstone of our HR strategy. We invite you to engage actively in upcoming sessions, share your aspirations, and take bold steps toward your future. If you need special guided, sessions reach out to our team and let us engage. Together, let us create a workplace where growth is not just encouraged but celebrated.

Learn, Unlearn, and Relearn. The more we invest in our careers today, the more we secure our futures tomorrow.

Best regards,

Mwansa Lombe
Director Human Resource

CIDRZ, CNRS Hosts an Intensive Immunology Training



CIDRZ Acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr Carolyn Bolton, addresses participants during the Immunology Training Residential School.

The Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ) and France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) conducted an exclusive, fully immersive immunology training programme to boost Africa's scientific capacity.

The two-week Residential Research School, which took place between August 11-22, 2025, at CIDRZ head office in Lusaka, combined expert-led lectures on the fundamentals of immunology with hands-on laboratory training in ELISA, ELISpot, and Flow Cytometry techniques. [Read More...](#)



CIDRZ staff with the visiting delegation from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

UAB Delegation Visits CIDRZ to Strengthen Local and Global Collaborations

A high-level delegation from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) has visited the Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ) to strengthen collaborations in advancing local and global health.

The delegation included:

- Dr Alan Tita, Senior Associate Dean for Global Health and Women's Health and Director of MHIGH.

- Dr Victor Garcia-Martinez, Chair of the Department of Microbiology.
- Dr Martin Rodriguez, Director of the Division of Infectious Diseases.
- Dr Rena Patel, Associate Director for Global Health Research at MHIGH.
- Dr Stephen Obaro, Associate Director for Faculty Engagement and Service Initiatives at MHIGH. [Read More...](#)

CIDRZ and MoH Lead Stakeholders in Reviewing Draft Health Data Statutory Instrument to Strengthen Health Data Management

The Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, convened a two-day review meeting with key stakeholders to assess the Health Data Management Regulations, specifically the draft Statutory Instrument (SI) 2025 of the national Data Protection Act 2021.

[Read More...](#)



Stakeholders during the two-day review meeting on Health Data Management Regulations, focusing on the draft Statutory Instrument (SI) 2025 of the National Data Protection Act 2021.

CIDRZ, LPHO Deliver Sexual and Reproductive Health Outreach at UNILUS

CIDRZ, through its PROUD Z Project Paediatric and Adolescents Unit, successfully partnered with the Lusaka Provincial Health Office (LPHO) to conduct an integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) outreach at the University of Lusaka (UNILUS), Silverst Campus.

The initiative sought to raise awareness among adolescents and young people (AYP) about a variety of essential services, including sexual and reproductive health, HIV testing and prevention, mental health support, social and behavioural change, and post-sexual violence care. [Read More...](#)



UNILUS students access vital health services at the CIDRZ tent.

CIDRZ Joins MoH, Partners in Commemorating National HTCT Day

Zambia has continued to make significant strides towards achieving epidemic control of HIV. Despite visible gains in achieving HIV targets such as the 95-95-95, gaps remain, especially among children, adolescents, and high-risk populations.

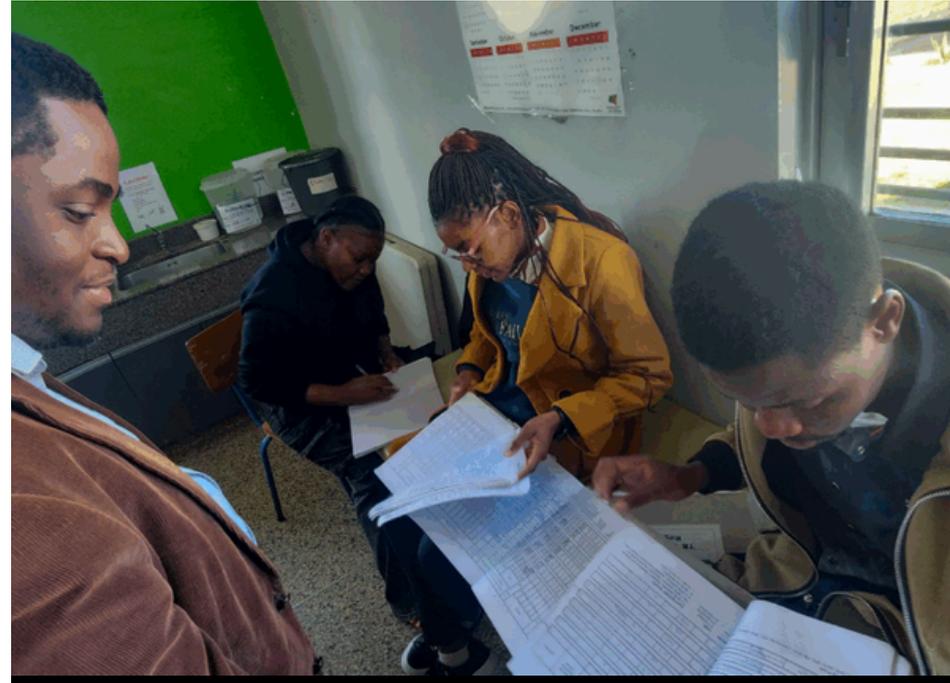
According to the Ministry of Health, 1.4 million people are living with HIV in Zambia, with a prevalence of 11.1 percent among adults. Adolescents account for 40% of new HIV annual infections. Despite this high prevalence among adolescents, only six out of 10 adolescent girls and 5 out of 10 adolescent boys aged 15 – 19 years have ever tested for HIV and know their status.

As a demonstration of our commitment to support Zambia’s efforts in scaling up efforts in HIV Testing, counselling, and treatment, CIDRZ joined the Ministry of Health, the National HIV/AIDS/STI/TB Council Zambia (NAC) and many other civil society organisations with a shared goal to commemorate the National HIV Testing, Counselling, and Treatment (HTCT) Day. [Read More...](#)



CIDRZ's Dr Monica Chibesakunda interacts with community members during the National HTCT Day Commemorations.

Turning the Tide Against Tuberculosis, One Register Entry at a Time



Health workers review TB registers at Chanda Urban Clinic, supporting Zambia’s data-driven approach to tracking and managing tuberculosis care.

Zambia faces a significant tuberculosis (TB) burden, ranking among the top 30 high-TB-burden countries globally, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). To address this challenge, the Ministry of Health (MoH), with support from the U.S. government through the Tuberculosis Local Organisations Network (TBLON) Project implemented by the Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ), has adopted a data-driven approach. Central to this strategy is the use of comprehensive TB registers across all health facilities, which track patients throughout the entire TB care cascade, from symptom onset and diagnosis to treatment and recovery. [Read More...](#)

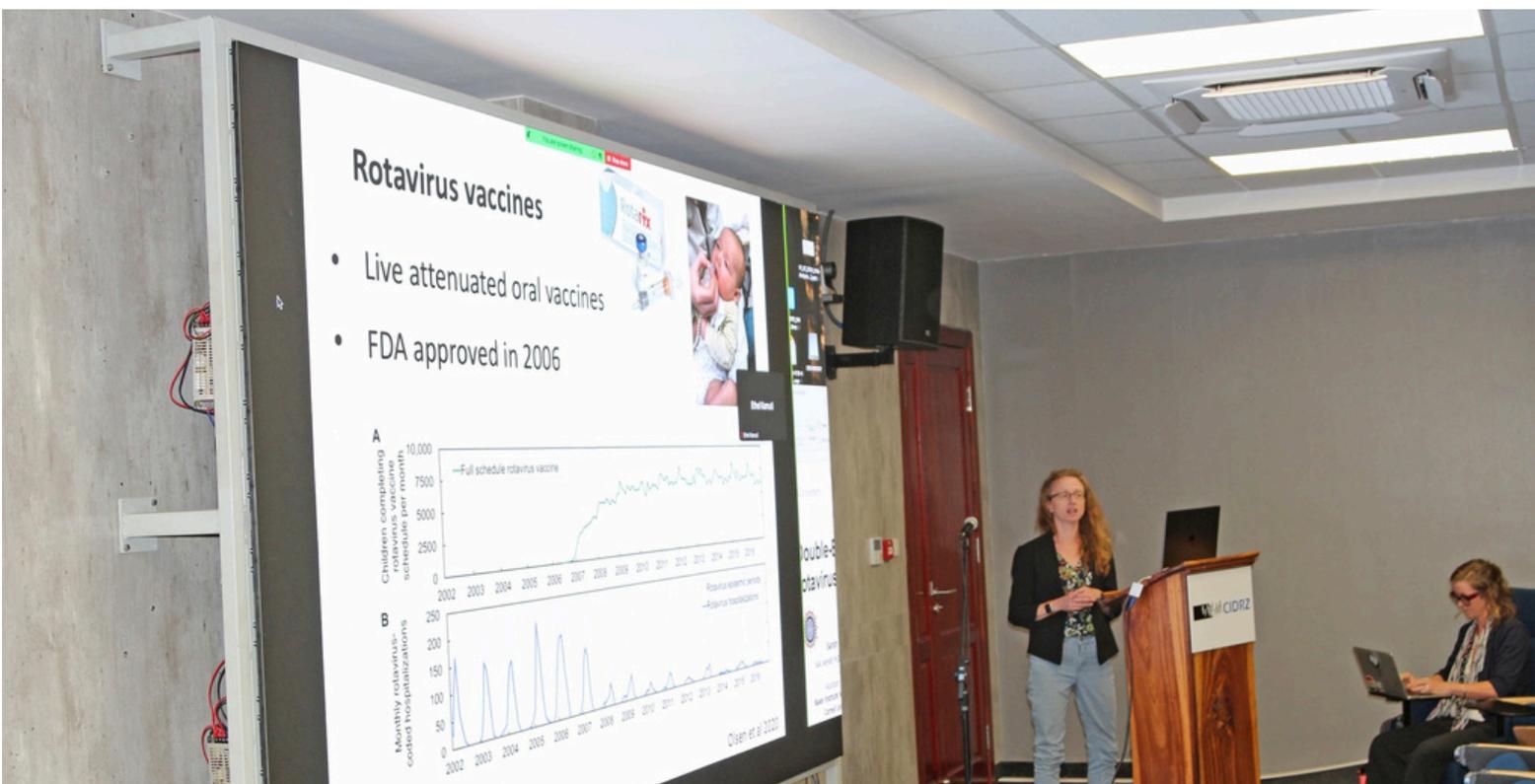
CABLA Training Model Strengthens HIV Prevention in Lusaka

Zambia is advancing HIV prevention efforts by scaling up long-acting injectable cabotegravir (CAB-LA) services through a comprehensive training programme targeting managers and healthcare providers.

This training, led by the Ministry of Health (MOH) with support from CIDRZ and partners, focuses on supervisors, clinical staff, nurses, counsellors, and programme managers across facilities supported by the Cooperative Agreement (CoAg) and MOH. [Read More...](#)



CIDRZ HIV Prevention Mentor Barbara Miti during the CAB-LA training.



Dr Sarah Caddy, Viral Immunologist at Cornell University, presents her work on rotavirus antibody assays at a CIDRZ Head Office research meeting.

CIDRZ Hosts High-level Research Meeting on Vaccine Innovation

CIDRZ recently hosted a high-level research meeting bringing together local and international scientists to discuss ongoing projects, knowledge exchange, and future collaborations in global health. The event focused on advancing vaccine research and fostering partnerships to improve Public Health outcomes. [Read More...](#)

CIDRZ Showcases Success of Lung Disease Screening in Kafue



CIDRZ's Dr David Singini delivers a presentation during a stakeholders' meeting held in Lusaka.

CIDRZ, with support from the Stop TB Partnership and in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and key stakeholders, recently held a stakeholders' meeting in Lusaka to share critical findings and highlight the progress achieved since the launch of the TB REACH Wave 11 Project.

The project aims to improve diagnosis and treatment of lung health through integrated screening, diagnosis, and management of tuberculosis (TB) and chronic respiratory diseases at both primary healthcare level and in communities.

[Read More...](#)

George Compound Outreach Brings Life-Saving Health Services to Adolescents

A recent adolescent HIV testing and reproductive health outreach in George Compound has been described as a model for integrated, community-based health services. Organised by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with CIDRZ and other partners, the event brought essential adolescent services directly to the community. [Read More...](#)



Adolescents and teachers at the George Compound outreach display key health messages on their T-shirts, promoting HIV testing and reproductive health awareness.



Participants during the TASKPEN mentorship meeting in Lusaka, organised by CIDRZ and the Lusaka Provincial Health Office.



TASKPEN Mentorship Meeting Highlights Progress in Integrating NCD Care into HIV Services

As Zambia faces a growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) among people living with HIV, the TASKPEN initiative, implemented by CIDRZ, is leading efforts to integrate NCD care into routine HIV services. [Read More...](#)

CIDRZ, MOH Strengthen HIV Rapid Testing in Zambia

CIDRZ, through the Transitioning and Integrating Laboratory Services (TRAILS) project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH), recently supported a five-day HIV Rapid Testing Continuous Quality Improvement (RTCQI) Programme annual planning and review meeting. The initiative aimed to strengthen laboratory services, enhance patient outcomes, and ensure the sustainability of testing initiatives nationwide.

[Read More...](#)



CIDRZ TRAILS Project Chief of Party, Mr Powell Choonga, addressing participants at the HIV RTCQI Programme Annual Planning and Review Meeting in Lusaka



Participants engage in discussions during the HIV RTCQI Programme Annual Planning and Review Meeting in Lusaka.

CIDRZ and Partners Unveil One Health Study Findings to Support Zambia's Sustainable Food System Transition

CIDRZ, in collaboration with the Zambia National Public Health Institute (ZNPPI), Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MFL), Ministry of Health (MoH), Lusaka City Council (LCC) and with support from Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI) under the Zambia Ireland Sustainable Food Systems Strengthening Programme, an initiative of the Government of Ireland, has disseminated key findings from the One Health Baseline Study.

Conducted between July 2024 and March 2025, the study sought to gather insights on knowledge and practices related to food safety, animal disease surveillance, the control of veterinary medicines, and the regulation of Zambia's One Health (OH) system.

[Read More...](#)



CIDRZ Chief Scientific Officer, Dr Monde Muyoyeta, addressing the gathering during the dissemination of key findings from the One Health Baseline Study.

Zambia Launches PEN-Plus National Operational Plan to Combat NCDs

In a significant step towards addressing the growing burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), the Government of the Republic of Zambia, through the Ministry of Health, has launched the PEN-Plus National Operational Plan (NOP), which includes a comprehensive curriculum and treatment guidelines.

[Read More...](#)



CIDRZ Acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr Carolyn Bolton (2nd left), with CIDRZ PEN-Plus team during the launch of the National Operational Plan (NOP).



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Our Vision

A Zambia, and a region, in which all people have access to quality healthcare and enjoy the best possible health.

Our Mission

To improve access to quality healthcare in Zambia through innovative capacity development, exceptional implementation science and research, and impactful and sustainable public health programmes.

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Our mailing address is:

Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia

Stand No F/378A/15, Main Street, Ibex,

P.O Box 34681

Lusaka, Zambia

Email: info@cidrz.org

Website: www.cidrz.org

