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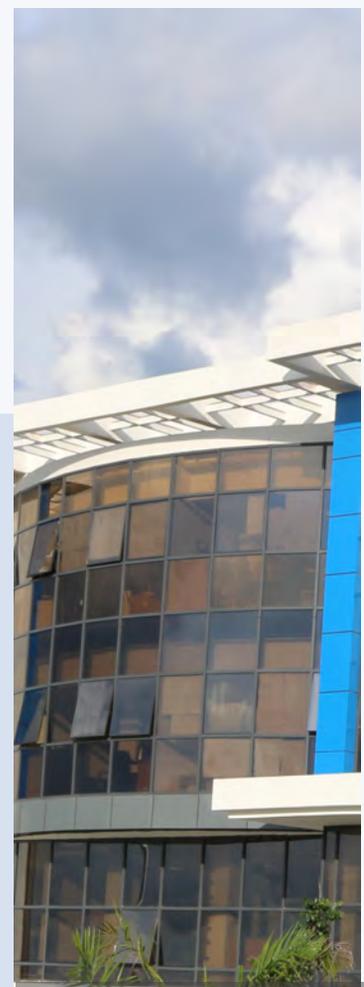


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Editor's Note.

Dear All,

We would like to sincerely thank you for your continued

loyalty and support, which enable us to effectively share the organisation's impact both internally and externally. To all our writers and contributors who consistently share their work with the communications department, your contributions are truly making a difference and positively impacting both our audiences and stakeholders.

Over the course of the year, we have covered numerous projects that highlight the impact of our work, and we are encouraged by the growing number of projects engaging with us. However, we continue to face challenges where some activities are undertaken without the involvement of the Communications team. It is important to note that documentation is essential. It helps preserve our

achievements, builds our institutional legacy, and ensures our work is visible and recognised. By working together, we can more effectively showcase our collective achievements.

As we move into the next quarter, we look forward to strengthened collaboration with all projects and programmes. Please be assured that we are here to support you and are available whenever you need us. Your involvement is key to successfully sharing our achievements both internally and externally.

We look forward to working closely with all teams and programmes across the institution. Should you require any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at Comms.Dept@cidrz.org. Happy holidays.

The Communications Team

Editorial Team

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Message from Acting CEO



Dear Colleagues,

As we enter this festive season and close out 2025, we reflect on an eventful year that has tested our resilience and reinforced our commitment to our vision of a healthy Zambia. This year brought unprecedented challenges, including the impact of the U.S. Executive Order that disrupted funding for many of our projects. These changes led to the cancellation of several of our projects and the departure of many of our valued colleagues, a reality that deeply affected us all.

Despite these setbacks, the CIDRZ family has continued to make me proud. You have all displayed remarkable commitment and perseverance, continuing to give your all, despite the uncertainties and struggles. Your dedication has continued to provide hope to the communities we serve and remains the driving force behind our organisation.

Recognising the emotional toll of these circumstances, CIDRZ, through the Human Resource Department, has prioritised staff wellness by organising sessions to support you during these difficult times. Management has worked to ensure timely communication,

keeping everyone informed amid the rapidly changing funding landscape. And we commit to doing even better in the coming year.

I am pleased to announce that Dr Otto Nzapfurundi Chabikuli, the incoming CEO, will be in the country in the new year. Join me in welcoming him and wishing him every success in this critical role. As I transition out of the acting CEO position, I would like to personally thank each of you for your support, encouragement, and kind words. It has been an honour leading this organisation over the last five months.

I would also like to commend every person, project, programme, and department for your invaluable contributions toward realising our shared vision. You, the CIDRZ family, are CIDRZ's greatest asset. Despite all these disruptions, CIDRZ has repositioned itself for success, building resilience in our teams and programs to ensure sustainable programmes and significant outcomes. I am confident that together, not only will we survive, but we will also thrive once again.

Now, as we take a well-deserved break, I encourage you to use this festive season to reconnect with your loved ones, recharge, and spread positive energy. Let this time of reflection inspire us for the year ahead.

On behalf of the executive committee and the senior leadership team, I wish you a blessed Christmas and a prosperous 2026. Thank you for your dedication and for keeping the spirit of CIDRZ alive. Keep safe!

Warm regards,

Dr Carolyn Bolton
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Executive Appointment Announcement



Dr Otto Nzapfurundi Chabikuli

The CIDRZ Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Otto Nzapfurundi Chabikuli as Chief Executive Officer, effective 1st of December, 2025.

Dr Chabikuli is a seasoned physician, academic and public health leader with more than 30 years of experience across clinical practice, research, and nonprofit leadership. He most recently served as Vice President for East and Southern Africa programmes at FHI 360, where he led a large portfolio across 18 countries, including major HIV, TB, and nutrition programmes in Zambia. His extensive expertise in research, programme implementation, and resource mobilisation positions him well to guide CIDRZ into its next phase of growth as a regional public health hub.

The Board extends its sincere gratitude to Dr Izukanji Sikazwe, who after 12 years of exceptional leadership at CIDRZ, recently joined the Global Fund as Head of HIV/AIDS Programmes. We also thank Dr Carolyn Bolton for her steady and compassionate stewardship as Acting CEO during a challenging transition period.

We warmly welcome Dr Chabikuli to CIDRZ and look forward to his leadership in strengthening Zambia's health system and advancing CIDRZ's mission.

Charles Mpundu
CIDRZ Board Chairperson

Voices of Our People: What We Learned from You in 2025



HR Corner



As we wrap up 2025, one thing is clear, your voice truly matters. Through the Employee Satisfaction Survey and ongoing conversations, you've helped us see what we're doing well and where we can grow.

Dear CIDRZ Team,

This year, 539 of you shared honest feedback that will shape our priorities for 2026. Here's a quick look at what you told us:

The Highlights

1. Job Satisfaction – 83% Positive

Most of you feel fulfilled and supported in your roles, but a few said we can work on recognition, workload balance, and clearer expectations.

2. Work Environment and Culture – 82% Positive

You appreciate our inclusive and collaborative culture, and we'll keep working on strengthening team spirit across the board.

3. Leadership and Communication – 73%

Positive

You have noticed improvements in visibility and communication. Still, many of you want even stronger feedback loops and consistency, and we're taking that to heart.

4. Compensation and Benefits – 51% Positive

This remains our biggest improvement area, and your feedback has been noted. We recognise the desire for improved salary adjustments, allowances, and enhanced non-monetary benefits. While funding limitations and constrained budgets continue to influence what is immediately possible, management and HR are actively exploring practical options within these constraints. Our focus is on identifying sustainable improvements, prioritising equity, and strengthening non-monetary benefits where possible, while continuing to

engage funders and leadership on longer-term solutions.

5. Purpose and Values – 98% Positive

Our strongest score! You feel deeply connected to the CIDRZ mission, our greatest strength and anchor.

Overall Satisfaction Score: 77.4%

Looking Ahead to 2026

HR and leadership are committed to turning your insights into action. Thank you for speaking, and for trusting us to listen. Together, we'll continue building a workplace where purpose thrives, people grow, and every voice makes a difference.

Kind regards,

Mwansa N. Lombe
Director Human Resource

CIDRZ

Rising Loss and Damage of Portable Computer Devices: A Call for Accountability and Timely Reporting.



Mr Stephen Shatewa Makasa, Risk and Compliance Manager.

The Risk and Compliance Department has reported that the organisation has observed a concerning rise in the loss and damage of Portable Computer Devices (PCDs), including laptops, tablets, and mobile phones, in recent months.

Mr Stephen Shatewa Makasa, Risk and Compliance Manager, noted that data from 2025 indicates a significant increase in incidents involving PCDs compared to previous years. He emphasised that this trend underscores the urgent need for enhanced accountability and stricter measures to safeguard organisational assets.

"Even more concerning is the pattern in which these losses are being discovered," he said. "The majority of incidents are only detected during staff clearance, particularly when employees are exiting the organisation."

Mr Makasa highlighted that when reporting is delayed, the organisation is unable to lodge insurance claims within acceptable timelines, often resulting in denied compensation. "Delayed reporting or confirmed negligence often leads to significant financial consequences for employees," he added.

He explained that when insurance claims fail due to late notification, the full value of the lost device must typically be recovered through payroll deductions or from an employee's terminal benefits upon separation, adding that, if a case is escalated to Compliance and negligence is established, the affected employee becomes fully liable for the cost of

replacing the device.

To prevent these avoidable losses and to protect both the organisation and individual employees, Mr Makasa recommended several key practices. He emphasised that employees should report any loss or damage to PCDs immediately to both their supervisor and the ICT Unit, adding that obtaining a police report promptly is essential, as it is a mandatory requirement for processing insurance claims.

"Timely action ensures that insurance coverage can be accessed, greatly reducing the financial burden on staff," he said.

Additionally, he recommended that in cases of burglary, employees should take photographs of the incident and share them with the ICT Unit for verification purposes. Mr Makasa also highlighted the importance of full cooperation during compliance reviews, as these assessments determine whether negligence occurred and guide recovery options.

Mr Makasa encouraged employees to work together and embrace prompt reporting to safeguard organisational resources and minimise their exposure to unnecessary financial loss. He urged employees to remain accountable and act as responsible custodian of company assets.

CIDRZ



Behind the success of the CIDRZ Central Laboratory is a collective of skilled professionals who support research, clinical trials, and routine diagnostics across Zambia, guided by a strong culture of teamwork, quality, and excellence.

Jacinta Sandra Muyaba is one of the professionals whose dedication and precision have helped

uphold these standards over the years.

Since joining CIDRZ in 2007, Jacinta has played a key role in supporting laboratory

operations that underpin critical research studies, clinical trials, and routine diagnostic services. Her work involves ensuring that samples received at the Central

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Laboratory are assessed for fitness for testing, processed accurately, and channelled to the appropriate testing laboratories, with results delivered to clients in a timely manner, thereby contributing meaningfully to the country's public health response.

Jacinta's career path began with a diploma in journalism in 2004 from Greenwood Institute under the Institute of Commercial Management. She initially gained experience in news writing and editing at the Zambia Information Services (ZIS) then, and now the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) focusing on daily news and feature writing for ZIS and population-focused publications and research attachments with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

During one of these assignments, she had the opportunity to visit CIDRZ offices in Northmead, Lusaka. This exposure sparked her interest in public health, leading her to join CIDRZ as a laboratory assistant in the Pre- and Post-Analytic Department at CIDRZ Central Laboratory.

"I started as a General Lab Assistant, but I did not know then how much I would grow in this field," Jacinta recalls.

A pivotal moment in Jacinta's career came after nearly a decade in the same role with limited progression. During a formal job evaluation at CIDRZ, a conversation with a Human Resources Officer challenged her to reflect on her professional growth and positioning. Jacinta describes this moment as a wake-up call, one that prompted her to pursue further training and formal qualifications in public health. This led her to earn a bachelor's

degree in public health in 2017 and a master's degree in the same field in 2021, both from the University of Lusaka, thereby strengthening her contributions to research and laboratory services.

Over the years, Jacinta transitioned from General Laboratory Assistant to Technical Laboratory Assistant, a role in which she supervises staff, coordinates pre- and post-analytic laboratory operations, and ensures that samples, ranging from routine diagnostics to complex research and clinical trials, are handled with the highest level of precision.

Her work spans a broad range of critical studies, including nationwide viral load studies, HIV Vaccine Clinical Trials Network (HVTN) protocols, IMPAACT Studies, IeDEAS Studies, TB Studies and COVPN research studies, as well as multiple local and international research collaborations. She plays a key role in ensuring that samples requiring referral testing within Zambia are properly preserved, bio-banked at correct temperatures, and transported according to strict protocol requirements.

Jacinta is also directly involved in study initiation processes, participating in protocol orientations and laboratory trainings prior to study activation. These sessions ensure that laboratory teams fully understand study objectives, testing requirements, turnaround times, and sample-handling procedures, helping to prevent protocol deviations that could compromise study outcomes or funding.

Beyond her technical expertise, Jacinta is a mother of three and

passionate about church worship and singing. She is driven by a strong commitment to improving health outcomes across Zambia, balancing her demanding professional responsibilities with faith, community involvement, and service to others.

Her philosophy is simple yet powerful, based on continuous learning, self-improvement, and excellence in every task, which are essential to making a lasting impact. She advises, "Education is something no one can take away from you. Improving yourself each day positions you for opportunities that can change your life. Push your career forward."

A central principle guiding Jacinta's work is inspired by the legendary coach John Wooden, who famously said, "If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?" She has adopted this philosophy wholeheartedly, recognising that in the health sector, there is rarely a second chance. As Jacinta explains, "If I make a mistake, it affects the person's life, their health, and the decisions that doctors make. Doing it right the first time saves time, resources, and ultimately, lives." This approach reflects her commitment to precision, accountability, and excellence.

Looking ahead, Jacinta aims to deepen her role in public health research and laboratory management, applying her expertise to innovations in diagnostic and evaluation. In laboratory diagnostics and public health research, every specimen Jacinta oversees, every result she disseminates, and every decision she guides contributes to saving lives, strengthening health systems, and advancing scientific knowledge across Zambia and beyond. **CIDRZ**



Many people underestimate the seriousness of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a largely overlooked but growing global challenge that makes infections harder to treat, increases the risk of disease spread, and can result in severe illness or even death.

At the Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ), dedicated professionals are working tirelessly to confront this threat and strengthen the country's animal and human health sector. Among these champions is Dr Mwendalubi Hadunka, an Animal Health Specialist who is playing a pivotal role in advancing AMR efforts in Zambia.

Dr Hadunka joined CIDRZ in January 2020, driven by a desire to contribute to Zambia's public health landscape. The opportunity to support AMR surveillance systems, strengthen capacity, and make a meaningful impact on communities nationwide was a major motivation. "I began as an Animal Health

Specialist, a position I still hold.

Initially, my work was largely desk-based due to COVID-19 restrictions. Over time, it evolved into a more blended role with significant field exposure.

This shift has allowed me to visit every province and provincial capital in Zambia. "This journey has enriched my understanding of our health systems, especially from a One Health perspective," he said.

One Health is an integrated and unifying approach that seeks to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals, and ecosystems (the environment). His work involves strengthening AMR surveillance in animal health, capacity building in microbiology and data analysis across both the animal and human sectors, and contributing to the development of national tools that enhance

animal health systems. "I enjoy the balance between technical work, field engagement, and collaboration with partners. It makes every day impactful and purposeful, especially now that we are in an era where everyone is looking at multi-sectoral collaborations," he explained.

Reflecting on his professional growth, Dr Hadunka noted that CIDRZ has significantly shaped his technical abilities, leadership, stakeholder management, and adaptability. Working within a diverse and mission-driven organisation, he said, has taught him the value of collaboration and the importance of considering all perspectives, even when opinions differ.

He is particularly proud of his contributions to national-level documents, including the Beef and Dairy Standard Treatment Guidelines, the Essential Veterinary Medicines List, and

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Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) curricula for farmers, veterinary paraprofessionals, and veterinarians. He described seeing these tools adopted and implemented across the country as “a major highlight of his career”.

“My career path was inspired by the desire to bridge animal health and public health through a One Health lens. While my childhood dream was to be a famous veterinarian performing miraculous surgeries on lions and impala, this has become a fulfilling calling,” he said.

Looking back on his journey, Dr Hadunka emphasised the profound impact mentors have had on shaping his professional path. “Picking a single mentor or role model would be difficult. In my line of work, I have been fortunate to learn from mentors who model humility, professionalism, and excellence. He said they have taught him the importance of consistency and intentionality, especially when venturing into this relatively unexplored space of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and One Health.”

Dr Hadunka added, “Simply saying 'thank you' has reshaped how I approach every task, big or small. “If you are intentional and dedicated, your work has impact. Knowing that my efforts contribute to the wellbeing of people, their animals, and the resilience of Zambia's health systems keeps me grounded and motivated,” he said.

However, his journey has not been without challenges. “Every field has its challenges, and what truly matters is how one overcomes them. I have faced challenges ranging from limited resources to logistical constraints in the field. I have learned to adapt quickly, rely on strong teamwork, and remain

persistent even in difficult conditions,” he said.

Dr Hadunka also acknowledged the invaluable support of his colleagues. “It helps immensely to have the brilliant minds at CIDRZ in your corner. Special thanks to the Procurement and Finance teams, you have navigated my many requests with grace, and you hold a special place in my heart.”

Dr Hadunka explained that he draws inspiration from the words of Mahatma Gandhi: “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” This quote, he said, resonates deeply with him because it directly connects animal health to human well-being and societal values. “It helped me understand the One Health concept even before I knew what it was in practice,” he explained.

Dr Hadunka has a very busy work schedule: “Meetings! Lots of them! I never imagined I could sit in a five-hour session, but here I am. My week usually blends meetings, technical writing, planning, and occasional field visits.”

He emphasised the importance of self-care to maintain balance: “By being deliberate about rest, personal time, and setting boundaries where possible, balance becomes intentional. We live in a time when mental health is a big part of productivity.”

Outside work, Dr Hadunka enjoys video games and reading Japanese manga, though he admits, “I still cannot read kanji.” He is also a fan of anime, listens to a wide range of music genres, and has recently begun exploring podcasts, inspired by his volunteer work with Reclamation Zambia.

Beyond his professional role, he

enjoys volunteering at his local church as a sign language interpreter, as well as supporting Reclamation Zambia, an organisation focused on behavioural science and mental health. “I genuinely enjoy the sense of community and the opportunity to serve in a meaningful way,” he shared.

When asked what alternative career he might have pursued, he smiled and said, “I would likely go into computer hardware engineering. I have always been fascinated by machines and how they function.”

He added that he easily becomes immersed in fictional worlds. “I get surprisingly invested in fictional universes, whether it is games, manga, or science fiction, and I will happily debate their logic with great passion.”

As for his dream travel destination, he did not hesitate: “Japan! Its blend of advanced technology, stunning landscapes, and, of course, the manga and gaming scene makes it a dream destination for me.”

Choosing a favourite film proved more challenging for Dr Hadunka, but after consideration, he settled on the 1997 anime classic Princess Mononoke. “The film explores the fragile harmony that once existed between humans, animals, and the gods and how that balance begins to crumble,” he said. “What resonates with me most is how it highlights the consequences of environmental conflict, the misuse of natural resources, and the struggle to restore coexistence. Its themes mirror so many real-world challenges in One Health. It reminds me of the importance of protecting ecosystems while still supporting human development.”



Driving Hygiene Behaviour Change in Zambia: Inside CIDRZ's Social and Behavioural Health Science Group



SSRG Group Team Building

At the heart of effective public health solutions is an understanding of how people live, decide, and act. CIDRZ's Social and Behavioural Health Science Group (SSRG) brings this perspective to health research, combining rigorous social science with practical, community-driven solutions that improve everyday health practices.



Founded in 2016 with just two staff members, SSRG has grown into a 27-member multidisciplinary team delivering high-impact research across Zambia, Nigeria, Uganda, Malawi, South Africa, Kenya, Indonesia, and the USA.

Today, the group manages 14 active studies, providing technical assistance, qualitative research expertise, and capacity building to strengthen health programmes locally and globally.

One of SSRG's flagship initiatives, the Hygiene

Behaviour Change (HBC) Lab, demonstrates how evidence-driven design can transform something as simple, yet vital, as handwashing. The BC Lab is funded by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) with an unrestricted donation from Reckitt.

The Hygiene Behaviour Change Lab: From Insight to Impact

Running from January 2023 to December 2025, the HBC Lab focuses on improving household hand hygiene in peri-urban, low-income communities in Lusaka.

Implemented in partnership with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), the study responds to a critical gap in hygiene programming: understanding what components of hygiene interventions actually works for households in high density resource-constrained settings.

Rather than assuming a one-size-fits-all solution, the study placed communities at the centre of the research, testing technologies, listening to user preferences, and rigorously evaluating the effects of a 4-arm intervention on hand washing with soap behaviours.

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Left to Right: Jenala Chipungu and Dr Anjali Sharma, co-founders of the unit

A Phased, People-Centred Approach

Phase 1: Scoping and Co-Design

Researchers worked with diverse community members including men, women, older adults, and people with disabilities, to assess eight handwashing technologies, including the Kalingalinga Bucket, Tippy Tap, Happy Tap, SatoTap and others.

Participants ranked each option based on a list of elicited attributes including usability, attractiveness, hygienic use, and cost. A clear message emerged early on: affordability matters. When cost was considered alongside other attributes such as functionality, the Kalingalinga Bucket stood out as the most preferred option.

Phase 2: Pilot Testing

In the pilot phase, 60 households tested two different handwashing facilities over a two-week period. This hands-on experience allowed families to assess convenience and practicality in real-world conditions. There were also given a chance to purchase a hand washing facility of their choice using a real money

donation and at a randomly picked discounted cost. Once again, the Kalingalinga Bucket emerged as being the most preferred.

Phase 3: Large-Scale Household Trial

Building on these insights, SSRG implemented a six-month randomised trial with 1,800 households in high-density, low-income Lusaka communities. An engaging hygiene intervention promoting behaviour change called “Ulupwa” was developed and implemented using the art of storytelling.

Households were assigned to one of four groups:

- Hand washing facility (HWF) only
- HWF and “Ulupwa” behaviour change promotion
- Ulupwa behaviour change promotion only
- Control (no intervention)

Baseline and endline surveys measured changes in handwashing with soap and key junctures as the primary outcome.

What the Evidence Showed While findings from phase 3 are being analysed, phase 1 and 2 provided clear and policy-relevant findings:

- Community preferences are shaped primarily by cost and usability, reinforcing the importance of affordable, user-friendly designs.
- At current market prices broad uptake of HWFs above 100 ZMW (~\$4) in peri-urban communities in Lusaka is unlikely

The Hygiene Behaviour Change Lab marks an important milestone for Zambia's WASH sector. Its findings are already shaping policy and practice, contributing directly to Zambia's Hand Hygiene for All Roadmap and aligning national efforts with WHO and UNICEF global guidelines.

By grounding interventions in community realities and robust evidence, SSRG's work in collaboration with LSHTM ensures that hygiene programmes go beyond infrastructure, supporting sustained, meaningful behaviour change.

Key Lessons from the Field

- Flexibility strengthens research: Adapting methods in response to emerging findings improved both relevance and impact.
- Partnerships matter: Collaboration with communities, NGOs, and global institutions was essential to addressing long-standing evidence gaps.
- Building capacity creates ripple effects: SSRG continues to train qualitative researchers across the region, extending impact far beyond a single study.

Through initiatives like the BC Lab, SSRG is demonstrating how social and behavioural science can turn everyday practices into powerful public health gains - one household, and one insight, at a time.

Why This Matters





Cholera Respects No One: Protect Yourself This Rainy Season

The rainy season is a time of abundance, lush greenery, fresh farm produce, and vibrant landscapes. But along with these blessings comes a hidden danger: waterborne diseases. Among them, cholera stands out as one of the deadliest if ignored.



*By Dr David S. Singini
Medical Doctor | Public Health specialist.*

What is Cholera?

Cholera is a severe diarrheal disease caused by a bacterium called *Vibrio cholerae*. Once inside the body, it triggers massive fluid loss through diarrhea and vomiting. If untreated, this can lead to dehydration and death within hours. Cholera does not discriminate, it can affect anyone, rich or poor.

Who is at Risk?

Anyone can get cholera, but the risk is higher in areas with poor sanitation, limited access to clean water, and during floods when water sources mix with waste. Communities relying on shallow wells, rivers, or unprotected water sources are especially vulnerable.

How is Cholera Transmitted?

Cholera spreads through the fecal-oral route. This means germs from infected feces contaminate food or water, and when consumed, they enter the body. Common causes include:

- Drinking untreated water
- Eating food prepared with contaminated water
- Poor hand hygiene after using the toilet

Signs and Symptoms

The hallmark symptom is profuse watery diarrhea, often described as “rice-water stools.” Other signs include:

- Vomiting
- Rapid dehydration (dry mouth, sunken eyes)
- Muscle cramps. If untreated, shock and death can

occur quickly.

How Can We Prevent Cholera?

Prevention is simple but requires vigilance:

- Drink safe water: Boil, chlorinate, or use water purification tablets.
- Wash hands: Always after using the toilet and before eating.
- Eat safe food: Cook thoroughly and cover food to keep flies away.
- Use toilets: Avoid open defecation.
- Clean surroundings: Dispose of waste properly.

What Should You Do If Cholera is Suspected?

Act fast! Cholera kills through dehydration, so immediate steps are critical:

1. **Start Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS):** Mix clean water with ORS to replace lost fluids.
2. **Seek medical care immediately:** Cholera requires prompt treatment with fluids and sometimes antibiotics.
3. **Do not wait for symptoms to worsen:** Early intervention saves lives.

Remember: Cholera is preventable. By practicing good hygiene, drinking safe water, and acting quickly when symptoms appear, we can protect ourselves and our communities. This rainy season let us enjoy nature’s blessings without falling victim to cholera.

CIDRZ Hosts Thriving in Tough Times: Move Me Case Study Training to Strengthen Leadership Resilience in Challenging Times.



In response to the recent impact of the U.S. Executive Stop-Work-Order, which resulted in the closure of several U.S. government-funded programmes and unprecedented job losses across the public health sector, CIDRZ, in partnership with LRMG, convened a “Move Me” Case Study Training session for its leadership team to foster organisational resilience and equip leaders with strategies to navigate adversity.

This immersive, case-based retreat was designed to challenge how we think, decide, and act under pressure while fostering reflection, resilience, and practical high-performance habits to navigate complex public health and operational challenges.

Centered on the theme “Alive: Thriving in Tough Times,” the training underscored the importance of forward-looking leadership, acknowledging present challenges while proactively building tools and strategies to overcome them.

Speaking when she opened

the session, CIDRZ Acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr Carolyn Bolton, described the Thriving in Tough Times: Move Me case study as an investment in the CIDRZ leadership team.

“Today’s case study is really about resilience and moving on. It’s designed to help each of us reflect and grow, both as individuals and as leaders. This investment in you and in science is an investment in us as leaders. Keep going, keep finding new paths, and continue to move forward, even through difficult times,” Dr Carolyn Bolton said.

Meanwhile, LRMG Founder and CEO Ricky Robinson described the Thriving in Tough Times: Move Me

experience as an evidence-based, poignant case study that equips leaders and teams with practical high-performance habits for volatile, uncertain contexts.

During the event, CIDRZ Human Resource Director, Ms Mwansa Nancy Lombe, also took time to thank CIDRZ Acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr Carolyn Bolton, for her exemplary leadership during a very difficult time when the organisation was undergoing rapid transition. “Thank you for your time, Dr Bolton. Thank you for your wise counsel. Thank you for remaining steady for us. I think we needed to have a familiar face to lead us during this transition period,” an emotionally

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overwhelmed Ms Lombe said, while adding, “I honestly don’t know how we would have made it through the year without you.”

The Move Me Case Study session brought together both current and former CIDRZ leaders, creating a reflective space to reinforce unity and develop practical approaches for strengthening individual and organisational resilience during periods of uncertainty.

Through this initiative, CIDRZ reaffirmed its commitment to adaptability and resilience, ensuring that its leadership remains prepared to guide the organisation effectively through complex and evolving circumstances.

CIDRZ



CIDRZ Launches Ven You Canteen to Support Staff Wellness and Workplace Efficiency



Elliot Goledema

The Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ) has officially opened the Ven You canteen, giving staff immediate access to affordable, fresh, and nutritious meals within the workplace.

Opened on 1st December 2025 and operated by Duckgril at Ven You, the facility supports CIDRZ's health and wellness agenda while enhancing convenience and efficiency for staff and conference activities.

Speaking on the development, Elliot Goledema, Business Development Coordinator, said the new canteen is a timely addition that responds to staff needs while enhancing operational efficiency.

"The opening of the Ven You canteen means CIDRZ staff now have access to cheaper, fresh food in a convenient and safe environment. This directly supports our health and wellness agenda and improves the overall work experience," Mr Goledema said. He explained that introducing an in-house canteen was essential as CIDRZ Ven You continues to host an increasing number of meetings, trainings, workshops, and conferences. "With convenient on-site catering, timely delivery of meals and snacks, and customisable catering packages now available to projects and external clients,

the canteen improves quality control and reduces complaints related to delayed food delivery," Mr Goledema said. "We wanted to be more efficient, offer fresh and quality food, and improve convenience for our conference and workshop activities."

He added that the canteen offers a wide selection of meals and services tailored to meet the diverse needs of staff. These include healthy breakfast options, lunch meals such as matebeto, hot meals, fast foods, and vegetarian options, as well as snacks and refreshments available throughout the day.

Mr Goledema noted that the special discounted rates for CIDRZ employees are expected to deliver meaningful financial and operational benefits. These discounted menus reduce off-site movement and associated costs, provide staff with greater savings, improve access to nutritious meals, and enhance convenience, ultimately supporting productivity and creating a more supportive working environment for both CIDRZ and its subsidiary operations.

2025 World AIDS Day Commemoration



CIDRZ Central Laboratory Director, Mr Bolarinde Joseph Lawal, together with Laboratory Sales Representative, Mr Tamani Banda, attending the National Health Research and Training Institute's Golden Jubilee Celebration.



Zambia Disseminates Findings Of The 2022–2026 TB National Strategic Plan End-term Review

The Ministry of Health Zambia (MoH) has expressed concern over the high number of deaths caused by #Tuberculosis (TB) in Zambia, which causes about 5,000 deaths every year, making it one of the deadliest diseases in the country.

UK Deputy High Commissioner Commends CIDRZ For Leadership in Strengthening Zambia's AMR Response.



CIDRZ Showcases Adolescent Health Research



CIDRZ Showcases TB Diagnostic Innovation at the 2025 Union World Conference on Lung Health.



CIDRZ Basic Science and Immunology Team Drives Innovation at CESORA Symposium in Durban, South Africa



CIDRZ, MOH Successfully Hold Human-Centred Design Workshop on Person-Centred Approaches to Address VIREMIA.





CIDRZ

for a healthy Zambia

About CIDRZ

The Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ) is an independent non-governmental organisation committed to improve access to quality healthcare in Zambia through innovative capacity development, exceptional implementation science and research, and impactful and sustainable public health programmes. CIDRZ supports local ownership of high-quality, complementary, and integrated healthcare research and services within the Zambian public health system and facilitates clinical research, and professional development training.

CIDRZ has over two decades of ongoing strategic collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) and its relevant ministries. CIDRZ longevity and success are attributed to the deep relationships with leading local and international universities, foundations, and partner organisations.

CIDRZ ensures that the latest research methodologies are used to answer locally relevant questions to improve healthcare delivery. CIDRZ also supports fellowship programmes for Zambian scientists and researchers focused on building the knowledge and skills needed to drive evidence generation to support health policy development.

Over the past two decades, CIDRZ focus areas have evolved organically, shifting from primarily an HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) focus to encompass other infectious diseases, such as enteric pathogens and emerging and re-emerging disease and global health threats. Further, CIDRZ uses its skills in social and behavioural change, health systems improvement, laboratory work, and supply chain management to enhance the delivery of health services.

CIDRZ Vision

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

CIDRZ 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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