

Hundreds of thousands of Zambians have watched community dramas about injection safety and medical waste in their communities. After the dramas, the audience participates in discussions and question-and-answer sessions. The goal of this activity is to encourage people to avoid unnecessary injections while obtaining necessary ones, and to report any medical waste in their communities and warn their children about it.



*Community drama*

The dramas have been organized by Answell Chipukuma, The Manoff Group's behavior change communication (BCC) Advisor on the Medical Injection Safety Project (MISP). MISP aims to prevent the medical transmission of HIV and other blood borne diseases by achieving appropriate safe injection practices through reducing unsafe and unnecessary injections. The project is funded by USAID/PEPFAR and managed by Chemonics.

Recent figures estimated that 920,000 Zambian adults and children were living with HIV/AIDS (WHO 2004). Injection safety is critical to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS, as well as Hepatitis B and C. Mr. Chipukuma is working to make sure that decision makers at all levels get the message.



*Answell monitoring BCC in Mufurila*

Mr. Chipukuma supports the Zambian Ministry of Health (MOH) and the District Health Management Teams (DHMTs) in influencing behavior change among healthcare providers, clients, patients, and community members to reduce the demand for and use of unnecessary injections. He provides technical support in all injection safety activities carried out by the MOH and its partners, through membership with several technical working committees such as the National Infection Prevention Working Group, the Child Health Technical Committee, and the Social Mobilization subcommittee.

MISP staff work with Mr. Chipukuma to ensure that injection safety is a national priority by lobbying for the incorporation of infection prevention and injection safety into the MOH strategic and action plans. Mr. Chipukuma participates in capacity building for infection prevention and injection safety, and implements a country-wide public education campaign for injection safety through print and folk media.

Mr. Chipukuma coordinated a situational assessment and formative research on private and non-formal providers in Zambia, and the project is in the process of finalizing a behavior change strategy and plan for addressing injection safety and infection prevention among formal private providers.

Trained as a Public Health Inspector and District Health Manager, Mr Chipukuma worked for the Zambian Ministry of Health for 19 years, where he gained wide experience in implementation of health programs at the district and community levels. He has eight years of BCC experience and has been a Manoff employee for six.

In addition to his injection safety work, he is the father of four children (with one on the way), and his wife is a nurse midwife. He enjoys spending his free time on family activities and constructing and fixing up his new home.