



Godfrey Chama

## Godfrey Chama Malaria Elimination Officer

Godfrey Chama is a Malaria Elimination Officer coordinating public health activities in Serenje District. Godfrey has worked with the MAMaZ team for many years, starting with a maternal health project. Godfrey later worked closely with MAMaZ to tackle malaria.

Before the MAMaZ programme, there was no form of transport at the community level. The community of Muzamani in Serenje District depended on a vehicle which had to come from the district office, and if obstacles got in the way, or the distance was too far, the journey became difficult. Some patients live 145 kilometres from the district office.

The difficulties in accessing transport meant that members of the community often had to travel on foot to the health facility when they needed medical assistance. However, when the MAMaZ programme introduced bicycle ambulances, the communities saw improvement in the shortening of travel times to the health facility. In particular, children under the age of five that

had contracted severe malaria were being transferred without delay to health facilities for follow-up care.

**“The bicycle ambulance for us is a gamechanger. It saved the lives of children transported using this system, compared to the past when we had no such mode of referral and transport.”**

In addition to the bicycle ambulances, Godfrey stresses the importance of community health workers, who can sensitise their communities to the symptoms of malaria and provide pre-referral treatment.

“Once we have the presence of community health workers, we can bridge the gap between the health facility and the community. For as long as we have these linkages, the community and health facilities will always be communicating, and we’ll reduce mortality figures because there will be a quicker referral for the



people who need further treatment.”

**“As a district, a partnership with MAMaZ enables us to ensure families can access health services as quickly as possible, and when they need it most.”**

Godfrey hopes that in the future, organisations like Transaid and its partners will continue investing in programmes like MAMaZ.

He says: “The Ministry of Health wants to bring services closer to people through the training of community health workers and provision of bicycle ambulances. I hope that the necessary partners like Transaid

continue investing in these life-changing interventions in this part of our country.”

*The bicycle ambulance was established as an Emergency Transport System (ETS) in a context where there are limited formal ambulance services. Staffed by volunteer riders and custodians, they provide a vital link between rural communities and health services.*

*\*the Mobilising Access to Maternal Health Services in Zambia (MAMaZ) programme partners include: Transaid, the Zambia National Malaria Elimination Centre, District Health Management Teams, DAI Global Health Limited, Development Data, and Disicare.*



Emergency Transport System (ETS) rider and bicycle ambulance.