

## The Zambia Story

During a visit to Namibia, Project Hope's Regional Director had seen first-hand the value that Zvandiri was bringing to the DSD model for CAYALHIV. It was evident how CATS in Namibia were changing the lives of their peers, disclosing and sharing experiences. The Zambian team were motivated by the peer-led nature of the Model and how it builds adolescents' capacity to be part of the solution to challenges faced by their peers. The MoH recognised Zvandiri's potential to support government efforts to address adolescent HIV in Zambia.

### Implementing Partners:

- Project Hope
- Centre for Infectious Disease Research, Zambia (CIDRZ)

### Web links:

<https://www.projecthope.org/country/zambia/>  
<https://www.cidrz.org>

- **Started implementing Zvandiri:** 2021
- **No of CAYALHIV living in Zambia:** 65,000
- **As of June 2022:** 119 trained and mentored CATS are collaborating with health care workers in 37 health facilities to support 2,200 children, adolescents and young adults living with HIV.

### Viral suppression

- **98%** of CATS are virally suppressed.

### Key highlights of the Zvandiri technical assistance plan

- Virtual orientation for health care workers
- Training and ongoing mentorship
- Zvandiri M&E tools and support to adapt them to the Zambian context.

### Positive change

- *"Every CATS intervention is squarely aligned with the 95-95-95 goals. It has already been picked by the MOH that we are contributing to the national strategic plan through the CATS interventions."*
- *"Before the CATS Programme, I am not sure if our health facilities were exposed to the WHO Global Standards. Now most health staff are trained in quality standards and know how they can provide quality services to adolescents."*
- Health staff are now trained as Support Group Leaders and are able to provide quality services and support to CAYALHIV
- CATS are mobilising their peers and providing information sessions around HIV and other issues.
- *"The MOH health care workers are very supportive and are driving the programme; they are owning the processes and you can see the cordial relationship between our MOH health care workers, the CATS and other health facility staff members."*

### Our proudest moment:

- *"Being a CATS has really helped me a lot whereby I have accepted who I am today. I have come to terms with things that used to bother me. At first, I was bothered by my HIV status, I felt it was a burden. Ever since I became a CATS everything is fine."*
- *"I am more confident than ever before. I have become more knowledgeable; I have learnt different skills and I am now able to talk in public! It's really been a great journey."*
- *"Me being a CATS encourages me to take my medication. It's an amazing thing for me in the sense that I have gained skills on how to support adolescents living with HIV."*
- *"I am able to help those that are having difficulties in accepting their status."*
- *"I have become proud of myself by sharing my story to help adolescents adhere to ART and become virally suppressed."*
- *"I am now able to identify adolescents that are defaulting from medication and give them the help they need."*

### Factors for success:

- Careful CATS selection and ensuring they understand what it means to be a CATS
- Adequate resources and allowances for CATS
- A path for graduation, e.g. savings groups, private sector job opportunities etc.

### Hopes for the future:

- Scale up to more facilities and train more CATS
- Continue to engage with Zvandiri to ensure quality of services in health facilities.

### Would you recommend Zvandiri?

*"Certainly, I would recommend it! I have seen how it has really contributed. Using volunteers — quite a lot of clients were lost, but with the CATS, most of the ones they lost are coming back. I wish you could hear these words from the health care workers themselves of how they appreciate what the CATS are doing to supplement their work when it comes to, for example, defaulter tracing, engaging adolescents that could have defaulted at any point. Yes, because it contributes to retention in treatment and viral suppression for all CAYALHIV.."*

**Esther Ngulube-Chileshe, Project Hope**