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My name is Michael Musenga from Zambia. I work for Livingstone City Council in the Public Health Department as Senior Environment Health Officer. I have been instrumental in mobilizing communities such as schools, clubs, churches, etc, in food safety, chemical and wastes management through a committee, “Keep Livingstone Clean”, which I chair.

I have been also an effective and committed Public Health Prosecutor, who has used legal enforcement as an effective tool to prevent environmental health nuisances, including food safety, chemicals and waste management. A number of persons have appeared in courts and almost all prosecutions have been successful. Experience has shown that even when we have been unsuccessful, the authors of nuisances have been known to eventually comply with observations made. Therefore authorized officers in Zambia are encouraged to enforce the law. International agreements should explicitly mention the importance and authority of local law enforcement officers. Livingstone is on the border and is a tourist capital of Zambia, and because of endemic malaria, the government has reintroduced DDT for Public Health use for indoor residual spraying. Control and enforcement of existing laws is a major problem. In certain areas, especially border areas, it is difficult to control the illegal entry of chemicals. We need an awareness campaign, and if schools are involved through curriculum it will help raise awareness at the community level. We need assistance with monitoring for compliance with international agreements, especially support to improve the facilities of our national laboratory to efficiently support the legal administration in the enforcement of the international agreements. We also need support for capacity building and training of local enforcement officers and educators.

Enforcement can be done but if the communities are not aware of laws, it becomes difficult to enforce. Therefore support is also needed in our awareness campaign to the communities.