

# Z'bar mulls law on compulsory indoor mosquito spraying

THE Zanzibar government plans to introduce a law to make indoor residual spraying (IRS) compulsory for households.

Health officers have repeatedly complained that a considerable number of people deliberately reject their houses from being sprayed, which is a drawback in the fight against malaria.

"We think it is because of a lack of a law to that effect. We are now drafting a law to be ready in the near future. We want all households to be sprayed to prevent mosquito breeding," said Mr Khamis Mwinyi, an officer with the Ministry of Health.

Mr Mwinyi, from the Zanzibar Malaria Elimination Programme (ZAMEP), said the law would have several sections, including some on punishment for

offenders.

He said the ongoing phase of IRS in Zanzibar targeting fifty thousand homes had delayed due to several challenges, including people's refusal to have their homes sprayed. Approximately four thousand houses missed the IRS.

Despite assurance from health officers that the spray is safe if due precautions are observed, some people have been complaining of itching, body swelling and bad smell in the wake of spraying. Malaria prevalence is now below one per cent in Zanzibar. Success in combating malaria is attributed to IRS, a campaign to use treated mosquito nets, and proper diagnosis and use of recommended malaria drugs.