

# President's Note

Shouts M.G. Simeza



Dear reader

Welcome to the issue of the April - June Quarter. In this quarter, we have undertaken many activities and achieved significant progress in some advocacy issues that we have been engaging government for a very long time; I will mainly focus on some key advocacy issues that we have made big advancements on in this quarter.

Firstly, I am glad that we have seen a breakthrough in the recruitment of additional healthcare workforce, particularly nurses and midwives, which is an issue that we have been discussing with government for as early as 2022. This initiative targeted those who were unemployed and facilitated the process for nurses and midwives who had been interviewed but placed on reserve lists. These individuals were subsequently recruited from the reserve without needing to attend further interviews. So we congratulate the system and ourselves as the mouthpiece of the nursing and midwifery profession, for taking a step towards ensuring that adequate numbers are in place to provide comprehensive care to the public. We are proud to announce that a total of 6,813 healthcare workers were recruited, with over half being nurses and midwives. Congratulations to NONM and the newly recruited healthcare workers.

I am also delighted to report that over half of these 3,000+ newly recruited nurses and midwives have registered for membership with NONM. We encourage the remaining new members to do the same, as our collective strength enhances our bargaining power.

Additionally, we have seen progress in our efforts to engage the government in reviewing health sector-specific allowances. Although this has been an ongoing process from previous quarters, this quarter saw decisive advancements. We advocated for the expedited review of three key allowances: government top-up, professional allowance, and medical/risk allowance. We are pleased with the milestones achieved so far because of our collective efforts, and are currently awaiting the final paperwork from government.

Finally, let me talk a little bit about International Nurses' Day (IND). The timing of the event was hard and difficult, considering that it coincided with our call for government to review and adjust our allowances, which even that time had not yet been effected. So we were anxious, emotional but it was a wonderful function; It was well-attended, well-organized, and our members conducted themselves well. We received overwhelming support from many stakeholders and organisations of good will and government authorities, including the head of state, who was represented by the Minister of Health. We proudly share with the world that our 2024 IND was a success. We extend our gratitude to all stakeholders who supported us materially, financially, and through prayers. Their contributions were invaluable, and we thank them wholeheartedly.

Wishing you an enjoyable read as you go through the articles in this issue.





Apr - Jun 2024

# NONM Newsletter

## 2024 IND Commemoration

12<sup>th</sup> May 2024 - A day of solidarity and Advocacy

## NONM Dates HRMOs

HRMOs play a crucial role for the check-off and NONM general recruitment efforts

## Activities in Pictures

Main activities in the April - June quarter



**World Bicycle Relief Donates Bicycles**  
16,371 health workers benefiting  
**Vote of thanks**  
For Retired Nurse's House project

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Officer on 0888207290.



# 2024 IND: A Day of Solidarity & Advocacy

The 2024 International Nurses' Day (IND) was a remarkable event, marked by a blend of celebration and ongoing advocacy for better working conditions for nurses/midwives. The festivities began with a solidarity march from Mzuzu Central Hospital, proceeding via the Petroda fueling station, and culminating at the Luwanga FAM Stadium where a series of planned activities unfolded.

In a keynote speech, guest of honour, Honourable Khumbize Kandodo Chiponda, MP, and Minister of Health, reassured the healthcare professionals of the government's efforts to address their concerns, highlighting the recent mass recruitment of nurses and midwives as a significant step forward.

"You should be aware that the government has conducted mass recruitment of nurses using funding which was secured from Global Fund. This is a significant milestone in our healthcare system."

Chiponda also took the opportunity to address issues of professionalism, urging



*Nurse Leaders posing for a photo after receive awards*

nurses and midwives to maintain high standards of patient care and avoid behaviors that could tarnish their reputation. However Chiponda did not say anything on allowances which is the hottest issue presently. Shouts Simeza, President of the National Organization of Nurses and Midwives (NONM), also spoke at the event. While he expressed gratitude for the recent recruitment efforts, he emphasized that many issues remained unresolved.

"We have repeatedly appealed to the government to promote nurses, as read more

<https://www.nonmmalawi.com/celebrating-international-nurses-day-a-day-of-solidarity-and-advocacy/>

## NONM Dates HROs

Human Resource Officers (HROs) hold a pivotal role in seamlessly integrating newly registered members into the check-off system. Recognizing this, NONM has engaged HROs from across the country, in the April - June quarter, to foster closer ties and fortify the bond between NONM and these essential stakeholders.

During the gatherings, delegates highlighted their accomplishments in enrolling nurses into the check-off system following recent recruitment drives. Additionally, they discussed the challenges they face in their roles and collaborated on potential solutions.

Scholastica Jimu, the Programs Manager for NONM, expressed optimism that the workshops would address the challenges



encountered in enrolling newly recruited members into the check-off system.

She said: "NONM appreciates the vital role by our HROs in effecting our members on check-off and these meetings have brought out the successes, challenges and recommendations which are beneficial for a sustainable check-off system at all levels.

Read more <https://www.nonmmalawi.com/nonm-dates-hros/>



# Activities in Pictures



Programs Manager explaining more about NONM to the minister and delegates



NONM and HROs workshop on check off system, South East and West Zones



Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi approved uniforms of all cadres in nursing and midwifery - International Nurses Day, 2024



Minister of Health launching NONM Strategic Plan



NONM officials, Dr. Triephornia Mpinganjira, pose for a photo with Iren Tembo at a house handover ceremony



# World Bicycle Relief Donates Bicycles to CMAs



*World Bicycle Relief has donated many bicycles across Malawi which help to improve health outcomes*

This year's International Nurses' Day was marked by many remarkable gestures including the donation of bicycles by World Bicycle Relief to Community Midwife Assistants (CMAs) in Malawi, through the National Organization of Nurses and Midwives of Malawi (NONM). A total of 29 bicycles were provided.

According to the latest report from the organization, 16,371 healthcare workers are now utilizing these bicycles to deliver crucial healthcare services.

"Bicycles enable health workers to visit more patients' homes, more often. Increased quality of care leads to improved health for entire communities."

"The individuals, families, and communities transforming their lives with the Power of Bicycles are our ongoing inspiration and motivation," read statements on the organisation's website.

Gladys Mwale, one of the recipients of these bicycles, expressed her gratitude, emphasizing how the bicycle will streamline her travels to provide healthcare services in remote communities.

"I am currently stationed at Mphanga health post, and I have to traverse 28 kilometers one way, to offer healthcare services in neighboring communities. Previously, I relied on personal resources to book transportation, but now, costs will significantly decrease," said Mwale.

NONM acknowledges the significance of this generous gesture, recognizing the transformative impact these bicycles will have on healthcare provision and accessibility, particularly in remote areas. This initiative represents a meaningful step towards improving healthcare delivery and promoting the well-being of communities across Malawi.



*Minister of Health handing over a bicycle to CMA*

# Best Recruiter of the quarter

Ken Kaonga - Chairperson - Thyolo district NONM branch.

Kaonga recruited 91 new members in the April - May quarter. He shares his strategies and motivation below:



The strategies that I have used to recruit more members are mainly four. Firstly, as a chapter, we developed a strategic plan aiming for 100% membership. Secondly, I understood that the strategy only without building a good relationship with the Human Resources Office, wouldn't bring results so I developed rapport with the Human Resource Officer. He is usually busy but because of the good relationship, he assigned one individual from his team whom I work very well with. When there are new nurses coming to start work, he tells me 'boss, akubweratu ena mawa.' That way I am always ready to make sure that I meet them as soon as they arrive.

Further to that, I have also made use of windows of opportunities. For example, when nurses are just getting employed, even if their duty station is a health centre, they have to come at the district to fill the GP1 forms. So, I printed NONM forms and, with the HR team, we put them alongside the GP1 forms. That way its easier to remember to remind the new nurses/midwives to fill the NONM forms too. Lastly, I have also incorporated recruitment in other activities that happen around the hospital. For instance, I am a CPD coordinator and every-time that we have a physical CPD meeting, I make sure I carry forms with me.

My main motivation for doing recruitment this way is firstly, understanding the mission and vision of NONM which is to have a strong and vibrant organisation that will result in a motivated and empowered nurse/midwife. Just looking at it, you can see that it gives you that passion, that many people may be helped. Now, when you take it at personal level you will see that having a strong and vibrant organisation, cannot just happen out of the blues, we need to have more numbers but good numbers cannot just come, we need to do more recruitment.

The second motivation is just the motivation that I have as a leader. I believe that it is not an accident that I am a leader but there is something that I should do for the profession. So as a leader I feel good when a nurse who faces some trouble is assisted, you know, sometimes things go wrong, we are not angels. If things have gone sour and the person is not a member and we are not helping him/her, I am really grieved even though it was his/her responsibility to join the organisation; I see that as much as it is a personal responsibility to join NONM, as a leader I also have the obligation to help them join so that all may be assisted when there is need.

Lastly, we work in various places and sometimes very far away from our home of origin. I take it that the people that you are working with are your closest family at that particular period; when something happens they are the first ones to run to your rescue. And its not only about the bad days; sometimes you just need to have fun and have some social interactions because humans are social beings. I see that NONM provides a special opportunity and platform for a kind of professional social interaction among nurses that is hard to find anywhere else.

## How many have you personally recruited?

# Best Recruiter of the quarter

**Vida Kambuzi - Mzuzu Central Hospital  
chairperson**

**Kambuzi recruited 98 new members  
between April and June**



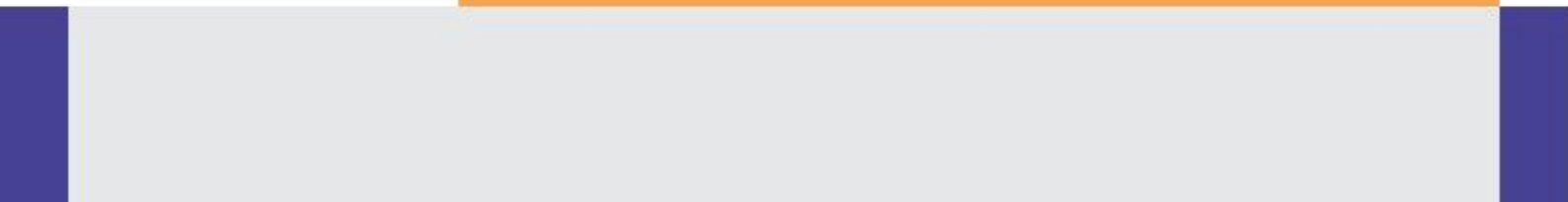
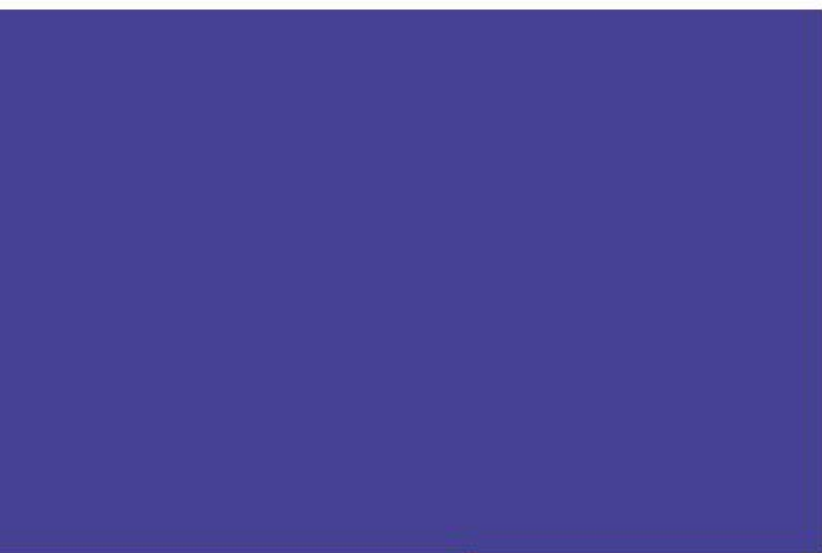
As a branch chairperson I make sure that we do the following things; Firstly, once the newly employed nurses come to report for duties, we explain to them the benefits of being a NONM member and the same day, we appeal to them to fill the registration forms. So, whatever number of nurses/midwives comes, once they enter into the premises of Mzuzu Central Hospital, we take them all on board. There were so many non-members here at Mzuzu Central Hospital but as of now in 2024, we have 100% membership because we do this. We tell everyone the benefits of NONM, so that they should make the choice themselves. Many of our nurse leaders were not NONM members but currently all of them are members. This is excellent and it sets a good example to new nurses/midwives as well.

Further, we also make sure that we retain membership by doing a few things. At the end of each year we organize a party just to promote togetherness and thanking the members. And for the past three years, we have been buying uniforms and NONM branded items for our members. Last year specifically, we bought the NONM Chitenje for every NONM member; we are more than 400 but all were given. We cheer each other as well when someone falls sick and I usually visit the members in their wards from time to time just to keep their morale up. Most importantly, the money that we use for all these activities comes from our pockets, we contribute monthly and bank it in an account that we opened as a branch. All these things also motivate non-members to join.

Another thing that has helped us to have full membership is the good relationship that we have managed to establish with management, Human Resources Personnel and Accounts office. You know that these offices are very key when it comes putting the new members on check-off. I short these things have managed us to recruit more members.

Thank you.

## How many have you recruited?







## Nurses, Physician Assistants Stage Sit-In

In a determined effort to have their demands met, the National Organization of Nurses and Midwives of Malawi (NONM) and the Physician Assistants Union of Malawi (PAUM) held a sit-in on June 10th. This action followed unsuccessful attempts to resolve issues through contact and dialogue with the government, centered on a conciliatory agreement brokered by the Malawi Human Rights Commission.

The sit-in was spurred by grievances stemming from last year's significant 44% currency devaluation in Malawi. NONM and PAUM initially demanded that the government increase salaries by the same percentage. However, the government only approved a 15% raise. Consequently, a conciliatory agreement was reached, suggesting that allowances should be adjusted upward instead.

"These allowances were negotiated to address pressing financial challenges and to recognize the indispensable contributions of healthcare workers as professionals in Malawi. As you are aware, these professionals work tirelessly, under difficult and distressing conditions," stated NONM and PAUM in a joint statement.

The delays in implementing the agreed-upon allowances have been disappointing and undermine the commitment to dialogue and cooperation that the leadership of both organizations has shown thus far.

The sit-in was intended to continue until the government provided a solid response. However, it lasted only a day after the government served NONM and PAUM with an injunction against the action. NONM and PAUM have since suspended the sit-in and are currently consulting with their legal team on the next steps.



NONM executive director - Peter Mvuma

"I confirm that we have suspended the sit-in as the government has served us with an injunction. Let me emphasize, however, that we have only suspended it, not canceled it, to consult with our legal team," said Peter Mvuma, NONM's Executive Director.





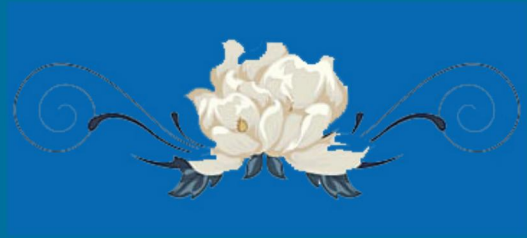
# Condolences

**Barbra Njamwaha**

The National Organisation of Nurses and Midwives of Malawi (NONM) expresses its heartfelt condolences for the loss of one of our beloved nurses and midwives, Barbra Njamwaha, who until her passing was a dedicated paid-up member of NONM working with the Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust (MLW). NONM is very grateful because Barbra made every minute she lived to count for NONM and the broader nursing and midwifery profession in Malawi and beyond. She will be greatly missed not only by the Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust NONM family and the other employees but by the entire NONM family. We take comfort in the hope of the resurrection morning when we will meet all our loved ones again.

Goodnight Barbra until that morning.





# Condolences

## Ulemu Jere

The National organisation of Nurses and Midwives of Malawi (NONM) is deeply saddened by the unexpected death of Ulemu Jere, who until her death, was a Nurse Midwife Technician working with Mzimba South District Hospital and as NONM North Zone vice-chairperson. Ulemu was a bonafide nurse and member of NONM. She was very patriotic to the broader nursing and midwifery profession and NONM and was a cheerful friend to many.

When she is assigned a task, you would rest assured that it will be executed to the highest standard possible and will be done timely and heartily. Her passing is a significant loss not only to her family but to the entire nursing profession and NONM as an organisation. She was truly unique in her own way!

We say Goodnight Ulemu until the golden morning when death itself will die (1 Corinthians 15:26). . . never to take our loved ones away again!



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Central East & West Zone: NONM Secretariat

Further information about becoming a NONM member may be accessed at  
<https://www.nonmmalawi.com/membership/>



# Vote of thanks for Retired Nurses' House Project



On June 7th, the National Organization of Nurses and Midwives (NONM) handed over a new house to Mrs. Ireen Tembo, a retired nurse, in a heartfelt ceremony. Mrs. Tembo, who had both legs amputated due to diabetes, faced further tragedy when Cyclone Freddy destroyed her home and belongings.

The project showcased incredible community solidarity, with numerous individuals and organizations contributing. NONM extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone involved for their generosity. A special acknowledgment goes to Mrs. Triphornia Mpinganjira, the main donor, who contributed 30 million kwacha. Pinnacle Financial Services also played a significant role by donating 50 bags of cement and MWK 500,000. The efforts of many nurses—including nurse leaders, retired nurses, and those working in various facilities—are deeply appreciated.

We will reiterate Dr. Mpinganjira's words on the importance of helping those in need. She said "When I met Ireen, I cried seeing the pain that she had to go through. Those who have the capacity should be kind enough to help the needy because God blesses us through that."

Beyond material and monetary contributions, many nurses provided emotional support by visiting Mrs. Tembo to offer encouragement. This spirit of solidarity and compassion is a testament to the community's strength and unity.

Recognition is also due to the dedicated project committee members who worked tirelessly to make this project a reality. Special thanks to Mr. Osman Asamu, the committee chairperson, and Professor Address Malata, who sought donations and connected with Mrs. Mpinganjira. Their efforts were crucial to the project's success.

The house, purchased for 27 million kwacha, required additional work such as installing a ceiling, flooring, and furnishing. The remaining funds were used to complete these finishing touches.

May God bless everyone who contributed to helping Ireen find a home!