



Jan - Mar 2024

# NONM Newsletter

This issue highlights NONM's determination to tackle climate change since last year, acknowledging the intrinsic link between climate and health. It goes on to capture Yasinta's inspiring journey as a nurse, overcoming disability to excel in her profession. It also presents quick important facts about NONM, etcetera.

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NONM undertook tree planting initiatives in the Lilongwe Ecological Corridor Initiative & in Mangochi

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She keeps going despite her life taking an unexpected turn of having a disability that she never had

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Officer on 0888207290.



# Planting to Fight Climate Change



*NONM Members and officials from Lilongwe City Council Pose for a Photo after the tree planting exercise*



*Nurses From Kamuzu Central Hospital also took part in the initiative*

It is an open secret that climate change has brought numerous woes around the world and in Malawi in particular with cyclone Freddy being the latest and worst disaster that hit the country. Yes, it is true that climate change has great and direct bearings to life. This is why NONM has recently made efforts to support climate action initiatives. Apart from last year's tree planting in the Lilongwe Ecological Corridor initiative, Early this year, in January,

NONM and The Malawi-UK Nurses Association (MUNA) collaborated to conduct a tree planting exercise at St John's Girls Secondary school in Mangochi as a way to contribute towards fighting climate change; to the present day, 300 trees have been planted out of the 600 expected.

Read full stories on our website at

<https://www.nonmmalawi.com/muna-joins-forces-with-nonm-for-tree-planting-campaign/> and <https://www.nonmmalawi.com/nonm-joins-in-commemorating-biodiversity-environment/>

## Disability is not Inability

Born without any disability, she embraced every opportunity that came her way with boundless enthusiasm. However, fate had its own plans. In 2017, her life took an unexpected turn when she was diagnosed with gutted belly syndrome, a debilitating condition that left her reliant on a wheelchair for mobility. Her name is Yasinta Namgome.

The sudden transition from walking freely to navigating the world from a seated position was not just physically challenging but emotionally taxing as well. Yasinta found herself grappling with a myriad of obstacles that she never anticipated. Yet, amidst the struggles and setbacks, she discovered a resilience within herself that she never knew existed. Rising above the barriers she resolved to face life



boldly and that is why to the present day she is working as Nurse Midwife Technician at Kalembo health Centre in Balaka district.

Yasinta believes that living in denial is one of the reasons why some persons with disabilities look down on themselves and do not face life boldly.

# ◀ Disability is not Inability

“What is important and should be foremost is accepting that I have a disability. Once you accept, then you can sit down and think, ‘what can I do with my disability?’ So once you do that, you will see that there is always something that you can be able to do,” she says.

Yasinta also highlighted some challenges that PWDs face beyond themselves such as societal stigma surrounding disabilities and unwillingness to recruit PWDs. She narrates that despite having the relevant qualifications and skills, PWDs encounter discrimination in employment opportunities. Many companies, organizations, and even government institutions hesitate to hire individuals with disabilities, perpetuating a cycle of

exclusion and marginalization. This, she says, is aside from the other challenges that PWDs face like disability unfriendly infrastructure.

“Many of our buildings in Malawi are not disability friendly. For instance, at the hospital where I work steps are put on one side only and if I want to go through the other side I have to be carried. You can imagine how challenging that is,” she says.

“You will find that a person with disability, who uses a wheelchair, goes to the bank but there are only steps, you want to go to some place to have fun, but only steps are there; this brings a lot of stress

to the people with disability,” she adds.

NONM Executive Director, Peter Mvuma, emphasized the need for people to understand that individuals with disabilities, both in Malawi and globally, possess the same inherent rights as any other person.

He said: “It is pertinent that civil society organizations, businesses, and government bodies should recognize the talents and potential of people with disabilities by providing equal employment opportunities. A person with disability is just like any other person. We should realize that a person with disability also has the same rights that a person with no disabilities has, so lets respect the rights that people with disability have.”

## Mzuni NONM Students Chapter Mobilizes Fees for Needy Student.

NONM students’ chapter at Mzuzu University has rallied together to support one of their own. Led by Mzuni NONM Students’ chapter president, Idah Msimuko, they have mobilized fees support totaling K525,000 for a fellow needy student.

Msimuko expressed excitement and gratitude for the funds raised saying that they managed to do it because of togetherness and unity. Activities such as blood pressure checks at local supermarkets and reaching out to well-wishers have been part of their fundraising efforts.

Msimuko further indicated that once the outstanding balance is settled, the student, identified as Linda Justus, will receive



*From Right to Left: NONM Students’ chapter President, Linda Justus and Students’ Vice president.*

additional support from the Loans Board for her fees and upkeep expenses starting from her second year.

NONM Executive Director, Peter Mvuma, applauded the chapter saying that students are the future of the organisation and it is very gratifying seeing that they are championing such initiatives.



# NNO supports NONM to Recruit Programs Manager



Programs Manager - Scholastica Jimu

The Norwegian Nurses Organization (NNO) has again thrown its weight behind the National Organization of Nurses & Midwives of Malawi (NONM) in the recruitment of a Programs Manager (PM). This crucial step underscores NNO's commitment to bolstering NONM's operational capacity and helping it achieve self-sustainability. The PM was recruited late last year and has started work in January this year as per the arrangement.

The position of PM holds significant importance for NONM, serving as the linchpin in executing strategic initiatives and fostering organizational growth. The recruitment of a Programs Manager further signifies more than just filling a vacancy; it represents a pivotal moment for NONM. It signals a renewed focus on advancing our mission, enhancing programmatic excellence, and fortifying our position as the voice for nurses/midwives nationwide.

In her remarks, the programs manager has called for collective action for NONM to achieve its goals.

She said: "Team work makes dreams work; I'm so excited to be part of this great team and I'm looking forward to achieving greater things together."

**JOIN NONM**  
ENJOY THE BENEFITS

- . Legal representation
- . Capacity building
- . Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
- . Best nurse awards
- . Funeral Insurance cover
- . Solidarity with likeminded organisations
- . Collective bargaining (lobbying & advocacy)
- . Leadership grooming & networking
- . Care of carers initiatives

A group of diverse Black nurses in white uniforms, some with stethoscopes, are smiling and raising their fists in a celebratory gesture. The background is a light blue gradient.



*Peter Mvuma, Executive Director, receives NONM vehicle*

*A representative from another institution also receives their vehicle*

# NAC donates Vehicles to Institutions

The National AIDS Commission (NAC) has donated 181 used vehicles to various institutions in the country, including NONM, to assist in the fight against HIV/AIDS and ease mobility. NAC board chairperson, Chipo Kanjo, said this decision has been arrived at because of the change in their mandate as a body.

She said: “These vehicles have been handed over because as you remember in 2018, Nac changed from being a grant aided body to a government subvented body and the mandate also changed to leadership and coordination; so most of these vehicles were not serving their purpose and they have been handed over to implementing partners so that we can use them in the HIV/AIDS national response.”

“Our expectation is that the vehicles are going to ease mobility for those who did not have any and those who did not have vehicles which could get

to hard to reach areas,” she added. NONM second vice-president, Tawire Boko, expressed gratitude for the donation stating that it has come at a critical moment. She said: “As organisations, we are struggling with our finances. We have many competing needs and vehicles are one of the most important needs, so giving us these vehicles is a timely blessing which will help us in the programs that we have in our organisations.” “For example, at our organisation we have care of carers program and

another one of building houses for people who were affected by Cyclone Freddy. We did not have a good vehicle which could get to hard to reach areas easily, but the car that they have given us is good for that,” she added.

According to NAC CEO, Unlike in the past when vehicle ownership remained with NAC, this time, ownership is going to be changed to the receiving organisation completely.



*NONM Received a Toyota Land Cruiser*



# Did You Know?



## NONM

- Has presence in all the 28 districts of Malawi
- Speaks for 16 000+ Nurses/midwives
- Has a membership of over 6 000
- Was established in 1979
- Is a professional body, Trade Union & a non governmental organisation (NGO)

Learn more about us at [www.nonmmalawi.com](http://www.nonmmalawi.com)

## Thoughtful Quotes



### “Nurses

are our future. If you don't believe me, try imagining a Malawi without them. Investing heavily in nursing will bring immediate dividends now & for decades to come; **growing the nursing workforce is a simple answer to a very complex question**”

National Organisation of Nurses & Midwives of Malawi



### “Nurses

care for us in our communities, we must care for them. That means investing in their employment, training, education and making sure that they have decent pay & working conditions. We can do this!”

National Organisation of Nurses & Midwives of Malawi