

# UNIMA Bulletin



## Inside this issue:



VC articulates  
UNIMA Vision

page 2



UNIPŪNGŪ hosts  
UNIMA staff

page 5



Vice Chancellors  
discuss MW2063 at  
workshop

page 7



## Celebrating service to UNIMA

Some of the events in the past months make us feel that it is helpful to reflect on the fact of retirement. This is, primarily, a call to celebrate some individuals who have served the University of Malawi for many years, offering their leadership, mentorship and wisdom to those who continue to run the institution. As one colleague remarked a few weeks back, most of these individuals quietly fade away from the campus. Professor Brighton Uledi-Kamanga of the English Department is an example, as is Associate Professor Edge Kanyongolo of the Faculty of Law, Dr. Zondiwe Mbano of the LACS Department, Mr. Peter Nakoma of the Finance Section, and Mrs Lydia Chiotha from the library, individuals with a wealth of experience and leadership that they have shared with all of us over the years. There are others that are not mentioned here but whose contributions are just as much appreciated. We, together with other generations of staff and students, salute the contribution of such individuals, who have been anchoring our academic and administrative sections with diligence. UNIMA is where it is today thanks in part to the efforts of these individuals.

When we consider our individual roles within the University of Malawi, we should visualize the institution as a machine, with

all its parts functioning to keep it running. Think of it as a car engine, complete with the fuel to drive it, the oil to keep its parts well lubricated, and various pistons, cogs, nuts and bolts that keep the structure in good running condition. Like any engine, these various components wear out and have to be replaced, but the engine continues to operate.

The institution has been functioning since 1964, but over the decades it has had to replace its various components – lecturers, accountants, librarians, registrars – the list goes on. Today, as we serve the university, we believe ourselves a key component of the institution, and we are proud of this fact. Sure, we may be motivated by the salaries that we receive, but there is always a part of us that wants to ensure that the engine keeps running.

But a day comes when we all have to bow out.

These thoughts remind us of the debate surrounding the raising of the retirement age of judges in the country to 70, a move apparently emanating from the extremely *expert* reasoning that the wisdom of judges, which comes with age, should not be disposed of through retirement. For those who may not know, as we write

this, the retirement age at UNIMA is 60. This is a point that many fresh employees understandably do not mull over, given the illusion that they have many years ahead, and plenty of time to plan.

The realization that we will one day retire should make us start to plan for our life after UNIMA. Most of us are used to a certain quality of life. How shall we sustain it? In the recent past, people from NICO and Old Mutual have visited the campus to give advice on these matters. They came at the behest of the unions, but the university administration also makes routine arrangements for those nearing retirement to meet with these professionals for the sake of ensuring that staff understand retirement and its implications quite well. And when they do show up, it is important to heed their advice, before we find ourselves one day flushed out of the institution like used engine oil.

### EDITORIAL TEAM:

Associate Prof. Ken Lipenga Jr  
(Chief Editor)

Mr Alfred Banda

Mr Gervasio Manyungwa

Mr James Ngwenya

Mr Felix Mwalemba





*Staff in attendance at the function*

## VC articulates UNIMA Vision

Ever since Professor Samson Sajidu was appointed Vice Chancellor of the University of Malawi, stakeholders at the institution have been curious to know what plans he had in mind in order to take the university to greater heights. Some of his plans have been hinted at in various speeches, but the vision was yet to come. On 27th June, 2022, the Vice Chancellor invited all members of staff to a meeting at the Great Hall, where he took the opportunity to officially accept his appointment, and to share this vision.

Delivering his speech, the Vice Chancellor informed the gathering that he had devised his vision around the central theme of “Redirecting University of Malawi to its former glory: Reaping the fruits of reformation”. This was a deliberate move, given that he has taken the helm of the university following the delinking process. In his speech, he pointed out that it was his aim to ensure that UNIMA is well governed, promotes innovative teaching and learning, is research-driven, has a conducive learning and living environment, and adequate and motivated staff, and is financially stable. As a

‘reformed’ university, UNIMA operates under the vision of being “a quality driven University that leads in humanities, social sciences, science and technology for skills development for Malawi and humanity”, a goal that requires all stakeholders to work together.

The Vice Chancellor further pointed out that the strategic priorities of his office will be guided by the UNIMA Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2027. In line with this document, the priorities include increasing enrolment of students using various strategies including ODeL, constructing hostels for students through avenues such as PSIP and with private sector players, expanding teaching and learning space, improving the success rate of students and reducing student withdrawals, increasing the research profile of schools within UNIMA, enhancing resource mobilization initiatives, promoting international visibility, introducing a performance management system, strengthening quality assurance for teaching and learning programs, developing and reviewing policies and instruments, and reducing conflict escalation.

In closing his speech, he informed the gathering of the efforts of UNIMA management to work towards the improvement of staff welfare. He also pledged that Management would work to restore the sporting glory that UNIMA used to have, that the institution would exercise financial discipline, and that his office would maintain an open-door policy.



*The Vice Chancellor of UNIMA,  
Prof. Samson Sajidu*

## New Deputy Vice Chancellor for UNIMA



*The Deputy Vice Chancellor of UNIMA, Dr Sunduzwayo Madise*

After the lengthy process of delinking, UNIMA continues to make strides by appointing senior officers to lead the institution. The first of these steps was the appointment of the Vice Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu. This has been followed by

the appointment of the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Dr Sunduzwayo Madise. The announcement of Dr Madise's appointment was made on 16th June, 2022, and was well received by the UNIMA community.

Unlike the office of the Vice Chancellor, the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor is a new one, established in the UNIMA Act 18 of 2019. The role of the Deputy Vice Chancellor is generally to assist the Vice Chancellor in the performance of his functions. Some of the duties of the Deputy Vice Chancellor include providing strategic leadership in academic, research, outreach, consulting and library services; and providing academic and administrative oversight for Schools of the University.

Dr. Sunduzwayo Madise holds a PhD in Law from the University of Warwick (UK, 2017), among various other qualifications. Apart from being an accomplished academic, Dr. Madise is also a legal practitioner and has also been admitted to the Malawi Bar to practice law in the Malawi Supreme Court of Appeal, the High Court and all subordinate courts. Dr. Madise has international academic experience as a visiting lecturer at the University of Pretoria (RSA) and the University of the Western Cape (RSA) as well as an external examiner at the University of the Western Cape and the University of Cape Town.

Administratively, he has held several managerial leadership and academic positions. Dr. Madise has been a Chairperson of Internal Transition Unit that has seen the development and review of the governance instruments for the re-established UNIMA. He has been a member of Council of University of Malawi as Senate Representative as well as a University Senator. Dr. Madise has also been the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Dean of Students, Deputy Head and Head of Practical Legal Studies at UNIMA.

We wish the Deputy Vice Chancellor the best as he joins the UNIMA leadership team.

## PS of Finance Ministry tours UNIMA infrastructure



*The PS receives a briefing on the construction projects*

People from various sectors of the Malawian society have travelled to the UNIMA campus in recent months, just to have a glimpse of the infrastructural erections changing the face of Zomba. One of the most recent visitors, the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Mr. Patrick Zimpita, undertook a tour of the newly constructed Economics buildings and

the New Administration which is under construction.

The tour, according to the PS, was aimed at appreciating the professionally-built and designed new Economics buildings and tracking the progress of the new Administration Block, which is still under construction.

“Our ministry's great concern is for quality and value for money. We do not

want projects that just look beautiful for the first two or three years only to deteriorate miserably. This is why we take time to visit projects and track progress as well as find out issues that need to be addressed. The first time I came here, the School of Economics was done but not furnished. Today I see everything is in order, which is a good thing. The Administration block is also on track and even ahead of the initial schedule,” Zimpita explained.

Speaking on behalf of the project contractors for the two buildings, Mr. Baleke Kaomba said such visits are a source of motivation to them.

“When we get inspections from Ministries and high-level government officials, it puts us on our toes to make sure that we deliver quality products and on time. It also offers a direct line of communication with controlling officers that enables us to express our challenges. We then use the feedback to adjust accordingly to make sure that we are in line with government's expectations,” he said.





*UNIMA delegates on a tour of Pungue University Chimoio campus*

## UNIPÛNGUË hosts UNIMA staff

One of the more recent partnerships established in the history of the University of Malawi is that between the institution and Universidade Púnguè in Mozambique. Officials from Universidade Púnguè visited UNIMA on 7th February 2022. As a way of concretizing this working relationship, personnel from the University of Malawi (UNIMA) on 12th September, 2022 made a reciprocal visit to Universidade Púnguè (UNIPÛNGUË), during which a memorandum of understanding was signed, formalizing the relationship between the two institutions.

UNIPÛNGUË delinked from Universidade Pedagógica of Mozambique and is now headquartered in the City of Chimoio, Manica Province. The university was created by the Mozambican Government under the Decree-Law No. 4 of 2019, passed on 4th March, 2019. The University has another campus in the City of Tete. This campus has been established in light of the restructuring process.

Speaking during the MoU signing ceremony, which was attended by senior academic and administrative members of staff in Chimoio, the UNIMA Vice-Chancellor (VC), Professor Samson Sajidu, said he was delighted to have signed an MoU. The objective of the agreement is to promote the development of joint studies, research and training activities, and other educational programs of mutual interest. The MoU is for an initial period of five (5) years, after which it may be renewed.

“We are very happy that we have concretised this dream for a partnership that should facilitate collaborations and mobility of both staff and students between our two universities. We have high expectations from this agreement,” he said.

The VC, accompanied by Acting Executive Dean of the School of Natural and Applied Sciences, Professor Cosmo Ngongondo, and Acting Executive Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Associate Professor Emmanuel Ngwira, said similarities in environment and closeness of the two universities should make it easier for the partnership to be a success.

On her part, the hosting Chancellor of UNIPÛNGUË, Professor Emilia Zulmira Afonso Nhalevilo, said her university has embarked on a robust internationalisation drive with the neighboring countries to foster collaborations that will provide African solutions to African socio-economic challenges.

She said she was impressed with the UNIMA’s record of quality education, and observed that the partnership was a great opportunity for both universities to benefit.

“We have been motivated by this collaboration, especially with an impressive record of the number of PhD programmes that UNIMA offers. I feel we have a great opportunity ahead of us,” she said.

She concurred with her counterpart that the similarities of the universities should

make it easier for the two to implement successful future collaborations.

The MoU indicates that the two institutions will share experiences for university governance; implementing joint programs and projects for institutional development, scientific research and mobility of faculty and students; and providing training for both academic and administrative members of staff.

While in Mozambique, the UNIMA officials toured both the Chimoio and Tete campuses of UNIPÛNGUË. They appreciated the infrastructure, including lecture theatres and science laboratories, as well as the robust ICT services available to students and staff. On 14th September 2022, Professor Cosmo Ngongondo delivered a public lecture entitled “Climate Change Adaptation: The Role of Partnerships at the Local Level.” The talk was well attended by the UNIPÛNGUË academic community.

UNIPÛNGUË has six faculties, namely Education; Exact and Technological Sciences; Biological and Agrarian Sciences; Social Sciences and Humanities; Geoscience and Environment; and Engineering. The institution has a student population of 5,800, and has 266 academic and 145 administrative staff members.

UNIPÛNGUË prides itself as a highly tech-savvy and leading university in Mozambique, well-known for offering high quality online classes at both of its campuses.

## Economics staff occupy new offices

One of the new developments at the university campus has been the completion of construction of the new buildings meant for use by the Economics Department. The buildings include a block that houses offices that are currently being used by members of staff in the department, and another containing state-of-the-art lecture theatres.

With the completion of the Economics buildings, the situation of office space at UNIMA has improved. The offices previously occupied by lecturers in the Economics department are now being used by lecturers from other departments, who had previously been starved for office space.

Speaking on the move into the new structure, the Head of Economics Department, Dr Jacob Mazalale, pointed out that the new offices are more spacious, are air-conditioned, and that a few of the offices have their own toilets. He also showed appreciation for the increased parking space. "We now have 40 more parking lots," he said. "I have seen colleagues from the PAS and LAW sections using our parking lot - which is beautiful. The furniture is great! The atmosphere in general is much better."

The Head of Department also pointed out that the new facility includes classrooms for Masters students

as well as a computer laboratory. The Department also has plans to have separate offices for exclusive use by PhD students.

The lecture theatre block has been christened Wadonda Lecture Theatres, in memory of the late Prof. Ephraim Wadonda Chirwa, who was part of the department until his passing in 2019. The late professor also donated a substantial amount of his personal funds towards the construction project. Within the complex is also the Chinyamata Chipeta Library, and the department will be hosting Ben Kaluwa Seminar Series. "We decided to name these structures and events thus as a way of showing how the Department of Economics feels obliged to honor the professional leadership of these great sons of Africa," Mazalale said.

The block includes a 250 seating capacity lecture room, two classrooms with a seating capacity of 100 students each, one 60-seat restaurant and kitchen, one 100-seat undergraduate computer room, two 35-seat postgraduate lecture rooms, one 35-seat postgraduate computer room and one 20-seat meeting room, among other facilities. Unlike some other lecture rooms on campus, which are reserved for exclusive use by students in selected programmes, the lecture theatres at Economics have been opened up for use by students in all programmes at UNIMA. Similar to the situation with office space, therefore, the construction of these lecture theatres has eased the pressure on allocation of classes for lectures at the university.



*Aesthetics: The fountain outside the new Economics building*

## UNIMA and MPS sign MoU

Over the years, the University of Malawi has valued the good relations that it has with various organisations in the country, both public and private. Among these is the Malawi Police Service.

As a way of further strengthening this relationship, on 24th August 2022, the University of Malawi (Represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor) and Malawi Police Service (represented by the Inspector General of Police) signed an MoU at Blantyre Police Training College. This MoU follows the approval by the UNIMA Senate of the Bachelor of Social Science in Law Enforcement Management and Leadership on 31st October, 2018. By signing this MoU, the UNIMA and MPS express a shared commitment to provide seamless opportunities to members of the Malawi Police Service and other law enforcement institutions to access higher education.

The degree programme was developed by a taskforce comprising parties from these two institutions as part of their long-term strategic partnership. Specifically, UNIMA and MPS agree to provide a framework through which MPS through Police College and UNIMA shall collaborate in delivering the Bachelor of Social Science in Law Enforcement Management and Leadership programme. The aim of the programme is to offer a tailor made and multidisciplinary degree that equips law enforcement officials involved in, among

others, policing and investigations, immigration and correctional services, with knowledge necessary for proper execution of their mandates. In this regard, the programme is divided into six thematic areas namely: Management and Leadership Studies (MLS), Behavioural Sciences (BEH), Law and Ethics, Safety and Security Studies (SSS), Forensic Sciences and Language and Communication Skills. The programme is currently hosted in the School of Law, Economics and Governance.



*UNIMA and MPS officials at the MoU signing function*





The VC's meeting underway

## Vice Chancellors discuss MW2063 at workshop

As a display of leadership in the area of higher education in the country, the University of Malawi recently hosted a maiden workshop for Vice Chancellors (VCs) of all public and private universities in Malawi. The workshop took place in the New Economics boardroom on 10th August, 2022.

The workshop was organized around the theme of “Popularizing the Malawi 2063, its first Ten-Year Plan and the National Research Agenda”. The workshop, which was the first of a series to be held, brought together VCs of higher education institutions (HEIs) who discussed modalities and logistics of working together and contributing to ensuring that Malawi sets a solid foundation for the achievement of Malawi 2063.

Speaking after the workshop, the host Vice Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu said the interface provided invaluable insights into the variety of contributions that universities can offer towards the attainment of the MW2063 and the National Research Agenda.

“For this reason, we commit to lead in the subsequent follow-ups and meetings for the implementation of the proposed joint commitments that we all made. It is therefore our resolve that we shall play the appropriate strategic role and are open to new ideas in improving the objective of our project and partnership”, he said.

The Vice Chancellor of UNIMA further explained that, during the meeting, universities were challenged to conduct research that provides solutions to the communities in response to the national research agenda. He said with funding from UNICEF, the workshop also oriented the VCs on national priorities as contained in the Malawi 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan, and the draft 2022-2027 National Research Agenda.

He added that his university was ready to lead in the engagement and collaboration processes in order for the universities to make significant contributions towards the attainment of MW2063.

“We have a very significant role to play in as far as research is concerned and I would propose that fellow VCs should take

lead in rallying staff towards creation and implementation of programmes that speak to the attainment of MW2063”, he said.

During the workshop, the National Planning Commission (NPC) made a presentation on the Malawi 2063, its first 10-year implementation plan and the highlights of the draft National Research Agenda.

The African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) country director, Professor Nyovani Madise, also made a presentation on translating research evidence into policy and programming and the role of HEIs.

Centre for Social Research under the School of Law, Economics and Government (LEG) coordinated the workshop and Mzuzu University, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences, Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, Malawi University of Science and Technology, University of Livingstonia, Unicaf University, Malawi Adventist University, and Catholic University of Malawi were among other universities that attended the workshop.



*Dr Edister Jamu presents the academia commitment statement to H.E President Dr Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera*

## UNIMA Academics at Anti-Corruption Conference

Academics at the University of Malawi contribute to various developments in the nation in different ways. Some of these include participating in the government's efforts to fight the evil of corruption. One of the most recent of these efforts was witnessed during the National Anti-Corruption Conference, which was held from 25th to 26th July 2022 at Mount Soche Hotel in Blantyre. Among the UNIMA academics who took part at the conference were Professor Happy Kayuni (PAS Department), Dr. Edister Jamu (Psychology Department), and Dr. Boniface Dulani (PAS Department).

During the conference, Prof. Kayuni was part of a panel discussion at the conference, whose theme was "Resetting the nation's moral tone". Other members of the panel were Ms. Colleen Zamba, Secretary to the President and Cabinet; Dorothy nyaKaunda Kamanga, Justice of Appeal and Mr Jimmy Lipunga, former CEO Private Public Partnership. As a member of the panel, Prof. Kayuni explained what is meant by morals, distinguishing the term from ethics and values.

"Values such as *honesty, integrity, friendship, commitment* form our personality types or identity," he explained. "When these values

are shared by others in our community, they are known as morals. In other words, they become a belief system. Ethics are basically an institution's attempt to regulate behavior with rules based on a shared moral code. Violating ethics has the same consequence as breaking a rule, while violating one's morals results in personal guilt and shame."

Prof. Kayuni also observed that since 1994, Malawi has undergone transition without transformation. There is a lot of rhetoric about rights, at the expense of responsibilities, which ultimately affects moral principles in the country. He noted that corruption is still on the rise.

Dr. Jamu and Dr. Dulani were members of the academia who took part in the drafting of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy II. During the conference, various sectors of the society made commitments to the anti-corruption campaign in the country. Representing the academic pillar, Dr. Jamu signed the commitment statement by the academic body, and presented the document to His Excellency the State President, Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera. The commitment states that the academia will, among other strategies, conduct localized workshops and awareness targeting staff, students and communities, disseminate research findings on governance, and review the governance and corruption perception survey tools.



*Panel discussion speakers pose with H.E President Dr Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera*



## Legal Scholar in Queensland Conference

One of the most gratifying moments of being in the academy is when one is able to share academic work with colleagues, especially those from institutions other than your own. The most common platform of this is academic conferences. The former Dean of the Faculty of Law, Mr Chikosa Banda, recently travelled to Queensland, Australia, where he attended the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Academy of Environmental Law Colloquium on “Recovery • Resilience • Regeneration: Re-imagining Environmental Law”. The Colloquium was hosted by the School of Law at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane from the 11th to the 15th of July 2022. While at the conference, the Dean presented a paper entitled “Re-imagining Environmental Law and the Need to Strengthen the Principle of Cooperation”.

As indicated on the IUCN website, the theme of the conference “invited participants to imagine new ecological possibilities, new modes of operation and action, and potentially new governance structures to respond more effectively to an increasingly uncertain future.”



*Mr Chikosa Banda poses with co-presenters at the conference*

The IUCN Academy of Environmental Law is an international network of approximately 200 environmental law faculties and research centres from 60 countries. The IUCN Academy promotes the advancement of knowledge of environmental law through an international network of universities teaching and researching in this area. The Academy engages participating universities, governmental institutions and international environmental organisations in innovative multi-disciplinary research into how law can best address environmental problems around the world. The Annual IUCN Academy of Environmental Law Colloquium attracts a broad range of environmental law academics, legal practitioners and judicial officers.

## History Department hosts Dr. Zoe Groves

On 20th July, 2022, the history department hosted Dr. Zoe Groves, a lecturer in Modern Global, Colonial and Postcolonial History from the University of Leicester, as she gave a talk at the Faculty of Law boardroom, focusing on her recent publication *Malawian Migration to Zimbabwe, 1900-1965: Tracing Machona*. The book has been published by Palgrave Macmillan as part of its Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies series.

During the talk, Dr Groves highlighted the beginnings of migration of Malawians to Zimbabwe, specifically the Salisbury region. She highlighted the fact that in the early days, before Malawi became independent, Zimbabwe (then known as Southern Rhodesia) was an attractive region for people to go and work. Malawian migrants were regarded

as educated, thanks to the presence of missionary efforts in the country, and were therefore highly valued in Zimbabwe. She also highlighted the attitudes that migrants had about returning home, such as fears that they would be magically killed if they did so. The talk ended with the writer highlighting various factors that led to the decline in migration to Zimbabwe, such as the attainment of independence by both Zimbabweans and Malawians. During the discussions, the audience engaged Dr Groves on various aspects of migration covered in her research, such as the roles of women in relation to migration, the existence of Malawian communities in Zimbabwe, and the routes and modes of transport used by migrants.

After the talk, the Head of History Department, Dr. Gift Kayira, informed the gathering that a copy of Dr. Groves' book had been donated to the UNIMA Library's

Malawiana Section. He also pointed out that the author was willing to share electronic copies of the book with anyone who desired a copy.



*Dr Zoe Groves*



*Participants pose for a group photo*

## PAS Society celebrates International Democracy Day

On 15th September, 2022, the Political and Administrative Studies (PAS) Society was part of a gathering that celebrated the International Democracy Commemoration Day at the T&D Lodge in Zomba. The theme of the event was “Democracy Beyond Elections”. Dressed in matching clothing celebrating the event, around 70 Public Administration and Political Science students from UNIMA were in attendance.

The event was sponsored by the European Union in conjunction with the Malawi Government through Parliament as well as the University of Malawi through the Political and Administrative Studies department. There were several other guests who attended the function, including the European Union (EU) Ambassador to Malawi, Rune Skinnebach, and the Speaker of the Malawi Parliament, Hon. Catherine Gotani Hara.

Representing the UNIMA VC, Associate Professor Mustapha Hussein observed that democracy is indeed beyond the ballot box. He asked for continued partnership of EU, parliament and government with UNIMA.

Taking his turn to speak, the EU Ambassador to Malawi, Rune Skinnebach,

pointed out that this was the first time for the EU to hold a democracy commemoration day in Malawi. He also observed that, in Malawi, the only time democracy is practiced is during elections. He therefore encouraged students to defend democracy at all costs, noting that it is also about everyday rights, safeguarding rights of minorities, freedom of the press, transparent and accountable government and respect for each other’s views. He ended with reminding students that the youth, especially university students, play an important role in fostering democracy. He recalled, in particular, events in the early 90s when university students in Malawi influenced the eradication of one-party rule in the country.

In her speech, the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Catherine Gotani Hara, also stressed that the students and the youth in general have the responsibility of shaping Malawi’s democracy. She observed that students can help the nation to forge a home-grown democracy that is in line with Malawian values. She also invited the PAS Department to organise some time for students to interact with Members of Parliament in Lilongwe.

The PAS Society President, Mr Chikondi Matiki, expressed the students’ gratitude

to be part of the function. “As Political and Administrative Studies scholars, this event has been very important to us as it has helped us to bridge the democracy theories we learn in class with what is actually happening on the ground from international, government, civil society and youth perspectives,” he said.

The event was spiced by two other events. One of these was a panel discussion on democracy. Speakers on the panel gave their views on democracy, drawing on their various experiences and perspectives. Panellists included Rt. Hon. Catherine Gotani Hara, who spoke on the role of the Parliament in democracy; Dr Augustine Magolowondo (Regional Director and Chief of Party, Democracy Works Foundation), who spoke on the role of CSOs in democracy; and Ms. Kohnemie M’meta, a student representative who commented on the role of the youth in democracy. Mr Fortune Nkungula served as the panel discussion moderator.

The gathering also watched a 45-minute documentary produced by renowned Malawian filmmaker, Shemu Joya. The documentary highlighted some events of political violence that happened after the 2019 elections, and prior to the 2020 Fresh Presidential Elections in Malawi.



## NWU scholars visit UNIMA



*Associate Professor Kruger making his presentation in the Little Theatre*

For a long time, one of the most visibly vibrant departments at UNIMA has been the Fine and Performing Arts Department. The department has always showcased the work of students and lecturers in its various sections to the public, who get to appreciate what is offered. The vibrancy of the department also tends to attract international scholars.

From 19th to 23rd September, the department hosted three scholars from North-West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa. These scholars included Dr. Yvonne-Marie Brand, Director of School of Music and Senior Lecturer in Brass; Assoc. Prof. Chris van Rhyn, Director of Musical Arts in South Africa: Research and Applications (MASARA) and Assoc. Prof. of Music Theory; and Assoc. of Musicology Prof. Jaco Kruger. The purpose of the visit was to engage in discussions with members of the Music Section leading to the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) aimed at fulfilling one of UNIMA's strategic objectives of internationalization of the University's programmes and activities.

During their visit, two of the scholars gave talks to staff and students at UNIMA. Associate Professor Kruger's talk was entitled "Indigenous knowledge and responsorial indigenous narratives," while Associate Professor Van Rhyn gave a talk on "A Music Curriculum for an African University". The department also organized a mini-concert on 22nd September, 2022, as a way of showcasing the Section's performance capacity.

Lecturer in the Music Section of the FPA Department, Dr. Peter Okeno Ong'are, noted that the visit was timely, given that the section has now become a full department called the Department of Music and Dance. The events therefore created a platform for a symbiotic relationship between UNIMA and NWU. "This has sparked the beginning of a relationship between North-West University and UNIMA. We are currently motivated to engage in future research collaborations together," he said. He further observed that as a department, they have now adopted an international outlook, even as they engage in their various operations.

During their visit to Malawi, the scholars also appreciated some locations such as Kungoni Arts and Culture Centre and Hippo View Lodge.

## UNIMA Drills Records Managers



*Participants pose with UNIMA Vice Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu*

The University of Malawi through its library section held a short course training workshop from 6th to 9th June 2022 in the Little Theatre. The training workshop was organised under the theme "Professionalism and Ethics in Records Management in the Public and Private Sector". The training drew participants from the Roads Authority, Malawi Law Society, Central Medical

Stores Trust, and the host UNIMA. 24 participants were equipped with skills in Records Management, Ethics for Records Managers and File Management.

In his welcoming remarks, the Vice Chancellor of University of Malawi, Professor Samson Sajidu, said UNIMA is committed to offering programmes that are relevant to the contemporary socio-

economic development needs of the country.

"It is within our strategic direction that we should be offering such short programmes that bring together key stakeholders in the public and private sector. As we all know, there have been cases of leakages of confidential documents and mishandling of confidential information in various offices. UNIMA has therefore risen up to address this challenge by organising this workshop so that record managers know the Dos and Don'ts of their profession and are able to avoid doing bad in the presence of good," he explained.

Taking his turn to speak, UNIMA College Librarian, Brian Sitima Ndau concurred with the VC in commending the need for such training. "People that handle records need to have ethics because we have seen how unprofessionalism in record handling affects not just the doer but even other people around," he said.

## IIC to combat corruption in academia

Following the National Anti-Corruption Conference held in July, 2022, academic institutions pledged to join the fight through the establishment of institutional academic committees. Specifically, the National Anticorruption Strategy II, launched recommended the establishment of institutional integrity committees in all government departments and parastatal organisations.

Responding to this call, the University of Malawi established its Institutional Integrity Committee (IIC) on 27th July, 2022. The IIC at UNIMA comprises of membership representing the different sections of the institution. Members include Dr. Yamikani Ndasauka, Dr. Ngcime Mweso, Dr. Dalitso Kafumbata, Dr. Symon Makwinja, Dr. Nick Tembo, Prof. Mercy Kazima and Mr. Moses Chintokoma. The committee also includes a member of staff from the Registrar's office, serving as secretariat.

From 8th to 9th September, 2022, the IIC convened a meeting with the Anti-Corruption Bureau, where the latter provided training to familiarise members of staff with current issues surrounding corruption and the national anti-corruption drive. The meeting was held at Gmelina Lodge in Liwonde. The training



*The IIC training workshop in session*

session was also meant to impart knowledge and skills in investigation and corruption indicators.

According to the Chairperson of the IIC, Dr. Yamikani Ndasauka, following this training session, the IIC will meet to develop an action plan of activities for the next 6 months. "Amongst the activities and inline with our mandate, we will sensitize both staff and students on the role they can play in avoiding and reporting corrupt or unethical behaviour at UNIMA," he pointed out. "All in all, we want to institutionalise ethics and integrity as key components in the fight against corruption."

Among other functions, the IIC is expected to develop, implement and review anti-corruption action plan for UNIMA, monitor procurement processes within the institution and carry out corruption risk assessments. It will also carry out preliminary investigations into reports of corruption and make necessary recommendations to management.

## Exchange programme takes UNIMA scholars to Germany

As part of University of Malawi's Internationalization Policy, the institution endeavours to establish and nurture links with other institutions across the globe. Recently, one such relationship was established when the Friedrik-Alexander University (FAU) at Erlangen in Germany contacted the University of Malawi when the Erasmus Mundus call for scholarships was open. UNIMA responded positively to the Geography Department at FAU, and this led to the commencement of an exchange programme.

So far, a number of students enrolled in the Master of Science in Geography and Earth Sciences have travelled from Malawi to Germany. These include Lisa Njanji, Medson Makuru and Giovanni Mataya. Some other members of staff are scheduled to travel to FAU in March 2023. These include academic members of staff, namely Dr. Mirriam Joshua, Dr. Evance Mwachungu, Dr.

Blackwell Manda, Dr. Zuze Dulanya, Mrs. Yambeni, and Mrs. Mwafulirwa; as well as support staff, namely Mr. Gwaligwali, Mr. Chilembwe and Mrs. Misomali. The students will be expected to develop their research literature reviews, data analyses, and write-ups. Among the staff members, some will be engaged in teaching and fieldwork, whereas others will attend short courses. The students are expected to stay for 6 months, whereas the staff will visit for two weeks.

So far, one PhD candidate from FAU, Mr Willie Bauer, visited Malawi in July 2022. He will return at the end of September, 2022, and will offer some guest lectures to students, as well as undertake some research in Malawi.

According to current Acting Dean of the School of Science, Prof. Cosmo Ngongondo, the exchange programme is extremely valuable. He observed that the staff and students will be exposed

to international teaching and research practices, and the students in particular will have undisturbed time to focus on their research and write-ups, access to literature and develop networks for further collaboration.

All expenses for the exchange programme are fully supported by the Erasmus Mundus programme.



*One of the Masters students: Lisa Njanji*





*UNIMA Research Grants awardees*

## Scholars awarded grants for research

On September 15, 2022, the University of Malawi, through the office of the Dean of Research, awarded research grants to 8 academic members of staff. These grants are drawn from the University of Malawi Research Fund (UNIMAReF) with support from the University of Malawi Research Ethics Committee (UNIMAREC) and UNICEF. The grants are worth a total of MWK31.5 million.

The function was presided over by the Acting Executive Dean of Education, Dr Peter Namphande, on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malawi. In his remarks, Dr Namphande said that research helps to develop policies and that evidence-based research that the University of Malawi is conducting in the country in different areas has the potential of bringing solutions to the challenges the country is facing and helping the country to achieve its 2063 agenda.

Commenting on the same, the University of Malawi Dean of Research, Associate Professor Mangani Chilala Katundu, observed that one of the criteria used in university ranking is research output and academic excellence, hence the funds

given to the researchers will go a long way in helping to enhance research at the university. He further said that there is a need for institutions of higher learning to capitalise on research if the country is to achieve Malawi 2063.

In her remarks, Chief Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Management for UNICEF Malawi, Dr Mussarrat Yossuf, pointed out the organisation thought it wise to partner with the University of Malawi to support the young researchers with capacity building in order to strengthen research in different areas in the country.

On behalf of the awardees, UNIMA analytical chemist, Dr Margaret Maoni, said that the results from the grants received have the potential to contribute to the development of the country. The other awardees include Dr Rachael Chimbwete-Phiri, Dr Benson Munyenembe, Dr Mayeso Lazaro, Mr Kondwani Chikadza, Ms Laetitia Pemba, Dr Edister Jamu and Dr Bernadette Malunga.

The function was followed by capacity-building training for young and upcoming researchers which was attended by other

researchers from the Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences (MUBAS), Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR), Mzuzu University (MZUNI) the Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA) and University of Livingstonia (UNILIA).



*Dean of Research-Associate Professor Mangani Chilala Katundu*

## Law students attend Christof Heyns African Human Rights Moot Court Competition



*The students pose with other participants at the event*

Students at the University of Malawi have a history of travelling to participate in international events, including conferences and moot court competitions. On 25th July, 2022, two Law students travelled to the 31st Christof Heyns African Human Rights Moot Court Competition at the British University in Egypt. The two students, Ms. Taona Banda and Mr. Bentry

Ignatious Nyondo, in fourth and third years respectively, represented the University of Malawi.

The Moot Court Competition took place from 24th to 31st July, 2022. It is an annual event, organized by the University of Pretoria, South Africa, in partnership with a host university which brings together law students, academics, and judges from more than half of Africa's 120 law faculties to argue a hypothetical human rights case and share expertise in the field of human rights law.

Reflecting on the trip, Ms Banda said her experience at the Christof Heyns African Human Rights Moot Court Competition was one that was filled with thrills and lifelong lessons. Said she: "Among several highlights of the trip was being able to meet people from different law schools and being able to appreciate how diverse or similar our experiences are".

She said her major highlight was being able to engage in conversation and argue a hypothetical case around human trafficking, regulation of AI technology (access list) and the protection of the environment and being able to appreciate the vast body of knowledge around these topics.

"I am looking forward to the next opportunity to once again be able to internalize a hypothetical case and to learn from the various issues that arise from arguing both the applicant's and the defendant's case and continue to improve on my oral," she concluded.

On his part Mr. Nyondo said he richly benefited from his participation in the competition, adding that the most notable lessons drawn from participation in the competition included the importance of embracing loss and perfecting one's shortfalls.

This year's competition tackled issues relating to climate change, human trafficking, and social media giants and artificial intelligence.

## First Years attend Mental Health Talk Show



*Ms Maliwichi addressing questions during the function*

Investigators in the Covid-19 and Mental Health Project have been engaged in a Mental Health Awareness Campaign, and the most recent activity in that campaign was a mental health talk show at the Great Hall of the University of Malawi on 19th July, 2022. Facilitators at the seminar included Dr.

Olive Liwimbi (Zomba Mental Hospital), Ms. Chilungamo M'manga (Kamuzu University of Health Sciences), and Ms. Limbika Maliwichi (University of Malawi). The seminar was attended mainly by first year students.

Introducing the function, the Principal Investigator of the project, Dr. Yamikani Ndasauka, noted that many people are reluctant to talk about mental health. Men, in particular, fear a certain emasculation that is associated with talking about one's mental health. Among young girls, there is also a fear of one's private mental health issues being exposed on social media if they talk about them with a friend.

During the talk, some of the speakers highlighted misconceptions and stereotypes associated with mental health. For example, Ms. M'manga highlighted the fact that mental health on its own is not a negative phenomenon. Taking her turn, Ms. Maliwichi engaged the students on stressors, risk factors, and coping strategies.

Maliwichi also highlighted a number of risk factors that can increase chances of developing mental health problems, such as family mental health history, existing medical conditions, alcohol and drug abuse. She also highlighted the need to use positive coping mechanisms, as opposed to negative ones. The positive coping strategies include time management, self-care and socialization, among others. Dr. Liwimbi highlighted the dangers of self-medicating, especially with some of the dangerous drugs to address anxiety.

During the interaction, students asked questions concerning matters to do with the connection of mental health and depression, suicide, sleep, Covid-19 and other issues affecting them. At the end of the talk, some of the students pointed out that the fear of being 'weeded' was one of their main stressors, coupled with worry about finances, and forming relationships, as well as discrimination.



# Malawi hosts CUCSA 2022 games

The Tertiary Education Students Sports Association of Malawi (TESSAM) played host to sportsmen and women from several institutions within Southern Africa, who travelled to Malawi to participate in the CUCSA Malawi 2022 games. These visiting institutions included University of South Africa, Chalimbana University of Zimbabwe, University of Angola, University of Zambia and University of Science and Technology NUST of Zimbabwe.

TESSAM comprises public and private universities and colleges (UNIMA, MUBAS, MUST, MZUNI, KUHES, LUANAR, Domas College of Education, DMI, MAGU, Nalikule) TESSAM alone assembled 143 sports men and women who competed in different activities such as athletics, football (men and ladies), volleyball, netball, lawn tennis and chess.

Despite hosting the Malawi 2022 CUCSA games, the country's team came fifth in overall teams performance. Malawi attained 4 gold medals, 4 silver and 4 bronze. It emerged 5 points above Angola which had managed to get 1 silver in chess and came the last number 6.

The Malawi team scooped gold medals from athletics, achieving position 3. Botswana was number 2 while South Africa emerged on position number 1, with 10 gold medals and 3 gold medals in total.



*Malawian netballers tussle with their South African opponents*

Commenting on the overall organization of CUCSA games, the Acting President of TESSAM, Martha Sambani said lack of adequate sponsorship hampered the smooth running of preparations and games, but she was quick to say it was an experience that readied them for better preparation in future. She expressed appreciation to Malawi government and member universities for the financial support that enabled the event to take place. Sambani asked for additional support in the future CUCSA games.

CUCSA games had a long hiatus due to Covid-19 pandemic that had seen most mass gathering events being postponed for years on world sports platforms.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



It is always a sad moment when we reflect on those who have departed from within our midst, but we take heart in remembering them fondly. In that regard, we join the entire UNIMA community in celebrating the life and achievements of the late Prof. Ben Kaluwa, formerly of the Economics Department, who passed away in July, 2022. May he rest in peace. We shall also fondly remember the moments shared with our colleague Mr. George Majawa, formerly of the Human Ecology Department, who departed from our midst on 26th September, 2022. In August, the university community also bid farewell to Ms Marriam Pinto, a student in the Bachelor of Arts Theology programme. May she rest in peace.

We also join colleagues in mourning the passing of various loved ones in the past few months. Our thoughts and prayers are with Dr Dylo Pemba, who lost his daughter in September. Our condolences also go to Mr Patrick Sawerengera of the Mathematical Sciences Department, on the passing of his father. Similarly, our prayers are with Dr Lewis Bande of the Foundational Law Department, on the loss of his mother. To Mr George Mandere of the Department of Population Studies, on the passing of his father, we offer the Lord's comfort. We also offer condolences to Dr Nelson Dzupire, on the passing of his step-father. We also offer words of comfort to Mr Vincent Peheriwa, upon the loss of his father. To Mrs Miriam Kumwenda of

Human Ecology, we offer condolences on the passing of her mother. We also pray for comfort for the soul of Mr. Ntaphiko's mother, who passed on in June. Words alone cannot suffice to capture the grief we share with Mr. Goodson Witika of the Library, upon the passing of his child. We similarly pray for the Lord's comfort to the family of Mr James Khuku, on the loss of his son in July. To Mr Abiku Sumani of the Administration Department, on the loss of his mother, we pray for the comfort that can be offered by the Lord. We also offer condolences to Mr Johnstone Livata of the Finance Section, on the passing of his mother in July.