



# East Central and Southern Africa college of Nursing and Midwifery - ECSACONM

## Annual Report for the period of July 2024 to June 2025

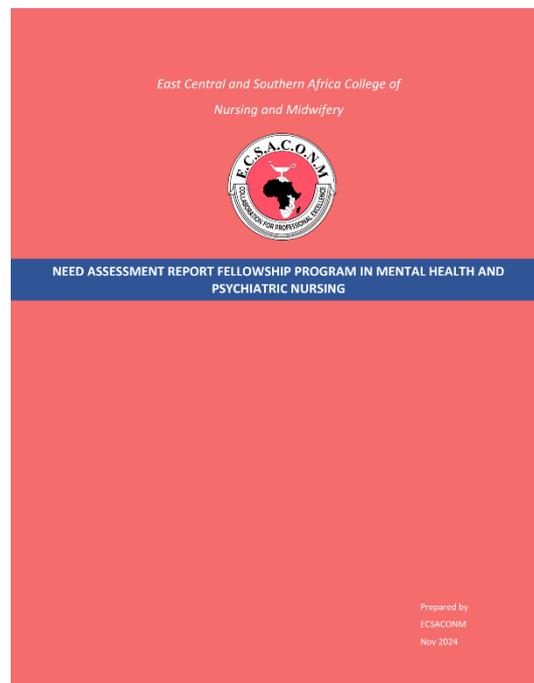
### 16th Biennial Scientific Conference (Lesotho) - September 2024

The 16th Biennial Scientific Conference of ECSACONM, held from 11–13 September 2024 at Avani Maseru Hotel in Lesotho, convened 373 delegates from over 19 countries (Botswana, China, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, United States, Zambia, Zimbabwe), including policymakers, educators, researchers, and frontline healthcare professionals. Centered on the theme “*The Role of Evidence-Based Practice and Innovations in Nursing and Midwifery in Combating Emerging and Re-emerging Pandemics*” the event emphasized the critical importance of evidence-based practice (EBP), innovation, and collaboration in strengthening healthcare systems across the region. The conference featured 143 oral presentations, 18 poster displays, 6 key partner-led sessions, and numerous exhibitions of cutting-edge technologies. Major highlights included engaging plenaries on Human Resources for Health, innovation through Appreciative Inquiry, and Universal Health Coverage (UHC); interactive partner sessions by Amref Health Africa, Jhpiego, Intuitive Foundation, SolidarMed, Axis Solutions, and Empower School of Health; and rich cultural celebrations including a gala dinner and traditional performances. Key recommendations called for integrating EBP into education, investing in telehealth and AI, strengthening research collaboration, and advocating for policy changes aligned with the Abuja Declaration. The conference closed with strong calls to action, urging participants to implement learned strategies locally to drive measurable improvements in healthcare delivery and workforce resilience across ECSACONM member states.



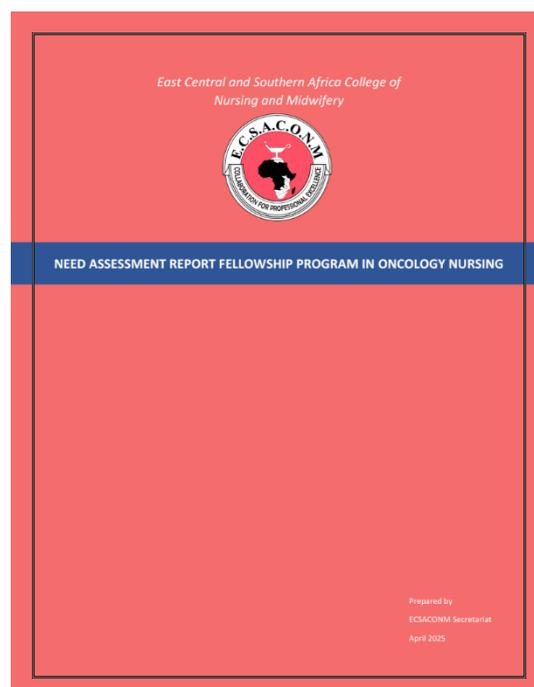
### Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing Fellowship Needs Assessment November 2024

In response to the rising mental health burden across East, Central, and Southern Africa, ECSACONM conducted a regional needs assessment survey to explore the feasibility and demand for a Fellowship Program in Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing (FMHPN). The online survey garnered 396 responses from nursing and midwifery professionals across more than 16 countries, with the majority representing Zambia (12.6%), Kenya (12.1%), Eswatini (11.6%), Malawi (10.9%), and Uganda (10.6%). Respondents were predominantly female (70.7%), with the largest age group being professionals aged 50 and above (37.1%). Educational backgrounds ranged from diploma to PhD holders, with 33.8% holding bachelor's degrees and 28.0% master's degrees. Most participants (45.7%) work in hospital settings, followed by academia (19.9%) and public health institutions (12.1%). Notably, 63.7% reported always or very frequently encountering mental health cases, while only 23.7% felt highly confident in managing these conditions—signaling a pressing training gap. Common conditions identified included mood disorders (depression, bipolar), anxiety and PTSD, psychosis, substance use disorders, developmental disabilities, and trauma-related disorders. Participants emphasized the growing impact of poverty, stigma, and social instability on mental well-being and called for better consultation services, as nearly 40% rated access as poor or very poor in their workplaces. A significant 97% agreed or strongly agreed that the burden of mental illness is rising and that mental disorders contribute to increased disability and impaired daily functioning. These insights reinforce the urgent need for a regionally coordinated, competency-based mental health training program to enhance clinical practice, boost workforce confidence, and improve access to quality psychiatric and psychosocial care across the ECSA region.



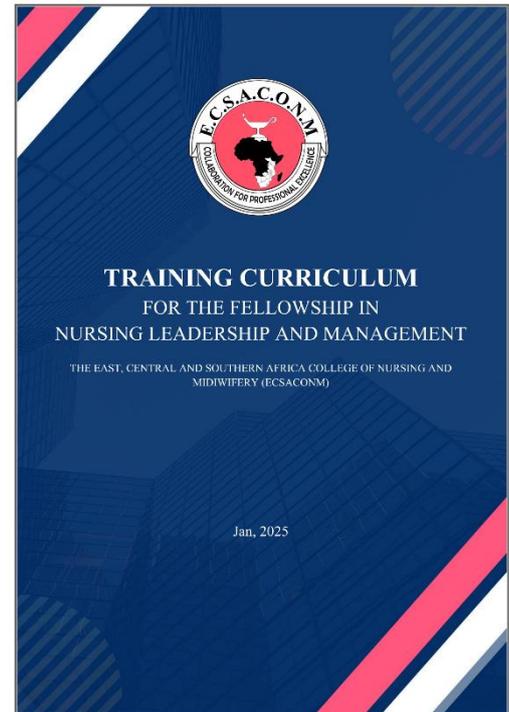
### **Oncology Nursing Fellowship Need Assessment April 2025**

To address the growing burden of cancer and the shortage of specialized oncology nurses in the ECSA region, ECSACONM initiated the development of a proposed Master of Science in Nursing Oncology Fellowship Programme. This strategic effort aligns with regional health priorities and aims to build a highly skilled oncology nursing workforce. A needs assessment was conducted using a mixed-methods cross-sectional design, targeting ECSACONM's 1,809 active members. A 30% sample (n = 542) was selected, yielding 215 complete responses (39.7%) from 14 countries, with high participation from Eswatini (17.2%), Malawi (13.0%), Kenya (11.6%), Uganda (11.2%), and Tanzania (11.2%). The demographic profile of respondents included 74% female professionals and 77.7% practicing nurses or clinicians. Notably, 51.6% had more than 10 years of experience in oncology, and 38.6% held a Master's degree, indicating strong professional maturity and readiness for advanced training. Stakeholders including educators, policymakers, employers, and regulatory bodies expressed overwhelming support for the program, emphasizing the need for advanced competencies in chemotherapy administration, palliative care, communication, leadership, and ethical practice. The assessment also confirmed institutional readiness and demand for a competency-based, contextually relevant oncology training model. Respondents advocated for a curriculum that balances clinical rigor with psychosocial and ethical dimensions of care, along with opportunities for interprofessional learning and research. The proposed fellowship is poised to fill critical gaps in cancer care delivery, enhance patient outcomes, and contribute to progress toward Universal Health Coverage and Sustainable Development Goals related to non-communicable diseases. The program will complement ECSACONM's existing fellowship offerings and further strengthen regional capacity in specialist nursing education.



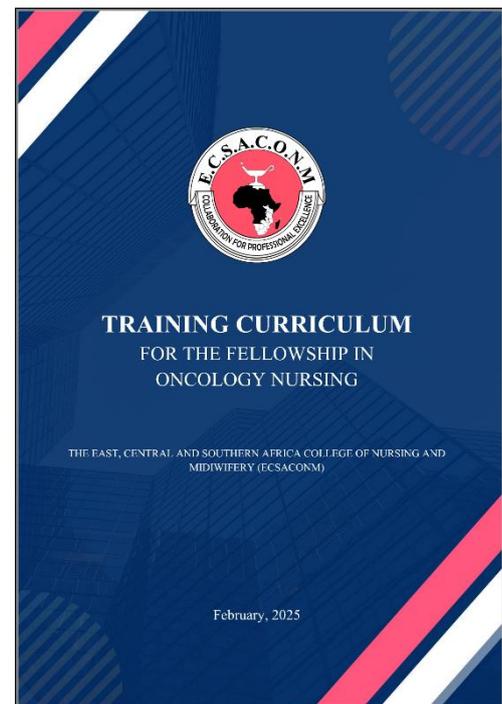
## Fellowship Curriculum in Nursing Leadership and Management March 2025

In March 2025, ECSACONM finalized the development of the Fellowship Curriculum in Nursing Leadership and Management, a milestone in strengthening strategic leadership capacity among nurses and midwives across the East, Central, and Southern Africa (ECSA) region. Developed in collaboration with the Empower School of Health and validated through extensive regional stakeholder engagement, the curriculum is designed to produce competent, visionary nurse leaders capable of navigating complex healthcare systems. The program equivalent to a master's degree adopts a blended, two-year structure combining self-paced virtual learning in the first year with hands-on mentorship in accredited clinical and policy institutions during the second year. Structured into 9 comprehensive modules, the curriculum addresses strategic management, global health systems, governance, financial and human resource management, ethics, digital health, disaster management, quality improvement, and professional development. Fellows will acquire competencies in transformational leadership, interprofessional collaboration, advocacy, and health policy engagement. With 900 hours in year one and over 1,000 practicum hours in year two, the curriculum integrates theory and practice to meet pressing regional leadership gaps. Stakeholder input was central to the curriculum design process, with contributions from Chief Nursing Officers, registrars, association leaders, and academia across ECSACONM's 18 member countries. The curriculum aligns with regional health workforce priorities, the WHO Global Health Workforce Strategy, and global goals such as SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).



## Fellowship Curriculum in Oncology Nursing April 2025

In 2025, ECSACONM made significant strides toward expanding specialist nursing education by developing the Fellowship Curriculum in Oncology Nursing, a key response to the growing cancer burden across the East, Central, and Southern Africa (ECSA) region. The curriculum was designed following a rigorous needs assessment involving 215 respondents from 14 member countries, representing nurses, midwives, policymakers, educators, and regulators. This two-year, competency-based fellowship equivalent to a master's degree aims to strengthen the regional oncology nursing workforce by equipping fellows with advanced clinical and leadership skills across the cancer care continuum. The curriculum consists of 11 comprehensive modules covering essential domains including: Cancer Biology, Genetics, and Pathophysiology; Cancer Epidemiology and Prevention; Advanced Clinical Assessment; Pharmacology and Therapeutics; Treatment Modalities (Chemotherapy, Radiotherapy, Surgery, and Immunotherapy); Oncologic Emergencies; Symptom Management; Psychosocial and Spiritual Care; Pediatric and Geriatric Oncology; Ethical, Legal, and Cultural Issues; and Research and Quality Improvement. This modular structure ensures that oncology fellows develop core competencies in clinical reasoning, holistic cancer care, communication, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The fellowship combines online and in-person learning, including clinical placements at accredited cancer care institutions across member states. It aligns with global cancer control priorities, Universal Health Coverage, and Sustainable Development Goals (notably SDG 3 on Health and Well-being). By strengthening oncology nursing capacity, ECSACONM positions itself as a regional leader in addressing non-communicable diseases and reducing health inequities.



## Curricula submission to the nursing regulatory authorities March 2025

In line with its mandate to harmonize specialist nursing and midwifery education across the region, ECSACONM submitted three advanced-level fellowship curricula (Perioperative Nursing, Nurse Anaesthesia, and Nursing Leadership and Management) to the respective Nursing and Midwifery Regulatory Authorities (NMRAs) in member states during the 2024–2025 reporting period. These submissions mark a critical step toward full implementation of ECSACONM’s long-term fellowship training programs, which are aligned with regional workforce needs and global health priorities. The Fellowship in Perioperative Nursing curriculum emphasizes surgical safety, sterile techniques, anesthesia support, and post-operative care. The Nurse Anaesthesia Fellowship focuses on the development of advanced competencies in anesthesia administration, critical care support, and perioperative pain management. Meanwhile, the Leadership and Management Fellowship developed in collaboration with the Empower School of Health targets the preparation of nurse leaders to manage complex health systems, influence policy, and lead quality improvement initiatives. Each curriculum is equivalent to a master's degree and employs a two-year blended learning model combining theoretical coursework with hands-on clinical training. Submissions to NMRAs included detailed curriculum documents, accreditation frameworks, trainee assessment strategies, and implementation plans. Regulatory engagement was facilitated through ECSACONM’s Council of National Representatives and in-country focal points to ensure compliance with local standards and endorsement for institutional adoption. These regulatory submissions signify ECSACONM’s continued leadership in building a standardized, regionally recognized pathway for specialist nursing practice. Approval and rollout of these curricula will further strengthen the professional capacity of nurses and midwives and accelerate progress toward Universal Health Coverage and health systems resilience across the ECSA region.

## Enrollment and Commencement of Second Fellowship Cohort - March 2025

In April 2025, ECSACONM commenced training for its second cohort of fellowship trainees, marking another significant milestone in expanding specialist nursing and midwifery capacity across the East, Central, and Southern Africa (ECSA) region. The application window opened in October 2024, attracting 50 applications across nine member countries. Following a rigorous review and selection process conducted between February and March 2025, 29 applicants were successfully enrolled into the ECSACONM Fellowship Programmes. This cohort reflects strong regional representation, with fellows drawn from Eswatini (3), Kenya (5), Lesotho (8), Malawi (1), Rwanda (3), Seychelles (3), South Sudan (1), Tanzania (2), and Uganda (3). The diverse enrollment highlights growing interest in the program and alignment with country-specific workforce development priorities. The fellows were distributed across eight fellowship specializations, with the highest enrollments in Leadership and Management (5), Midwifery (5), and Oncology (5) the latter marking the first cohort for the newly developed Oncology Fellowship Programme. Other enrollments included Anaesthesia (4), Critical Care Nursing (4), Neonatal Care Nursing (3), Perioperative Nursing (2), and Chronic Disease Management (1). Training for the second cohort commenced in April 2025 using ECSACONM’s blended learning approach, combining virtual foundational modules with clinical mentorship in accredited facilities. This intake reinforces ECSACONM’s mission to build a competent, regionally harmonized workforce capable of addressing critical health challenges and achieving quality, people-centered care across member states. Ongoing monitoring will ensure program quality and alignment with regulatory and institutional standards.



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- ✓ Leadership & Management
- ✓ Oncology
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## Facilitation First Cohort of the ECSACONM Fellowship Programme (2024–2025)

From July 2024 to June 2025, ECSACONM successfully facilitated its inaugural fellowship program cohort, enrolling 11 trainees across three specialties: Chronic Disease Management (1), Midwifery (6), and Critical Care (4). The program’s foundational year was delivered virtually, engaging trainees in a total of 148 virtual learning sessions via iECHO platform, demonstrating strong commitment to accessible and flexible education. The final summative assessment, conducted virtually through the ZipGrade platform, was centralized at multiple exam centers across the region to ensure wide accessibility and standardization. Exam locations included Vuvulane Town Board in Eswatini; Kamuzu Central Hospital, Bwaila Hospital, Mzuzu Hospital, and Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in

Malawi; and Coast General Teaching and Referral Hospital in Kenya. Academic performance reflected high trainee achievement, with the majority earning distinctions: 6 trainees achieved an ‘A’ grade (Distinction), and 5 attained a ‘B’ grade (Credit), indicating solid competency development across the cohort. In addition to coursework, fellows engaged in research proposal development and defense as part of their scholarly output. A total of 9 fellows successfully defended their research proposals, all scoring above 60%. This outcome indicates strong foundational research competencies, and all candidates are now equipped to refine and implement their proposals based on examiners feedback. This research component not only strengthens evidence-based practice among fellows but also reinforces ECSACONM’s commitment to building a research-driven health workforce. Overall, the successful implementation of the first fellowship cohort demonstrates ECSACONM’s leadership in advancing nursing and midwifery education through innovative, regionally coordinated, and academically robust programs.

### **Assessment and Accreditation of Training Sites in Malawi and Eswatini March – May 2025**

Between July 2024 and June 2025, ECSACONM undertook a critical quality assurance exercise through the assessment and accreditation of five key fellowship training sites across two member countries. In Malawi, four central hospitals (Queen Elizabeth, Zomba, Kamuzu, and Mzuzu) were assessed for their capacity to serve as accredited training centers for advanced nursing and midwifery education. These institutions were evaluated based on infrastructure, clinical training resources, mentorship capacity, case mix, and alignment with ECSACONM fellowship standards. Similarly, in Eswatini, the Good Shepherd Catholic Hospital and College of Health Sciences underwent a comprehensive site assessment. The evaluation process involved direct engagement with hospital leadership, facility tours, and consultations with staff and administrators to ensure readiness for high-level clinical training. All five sites demonstrated compliance with core accreditation requirements and were successfully accredited to host ECSACONM fellowship trainees. This activity marked a significant milestone in expanding the regional network of accredited training institutions, thereby enhancing accessibility to quality fellowship programs and strengthening the capacity of health systems to support specialized nursing and midwifery education. The accreditation also reinforces ECSACONM’s commitment to promoting excellence and standardization in postgraduate clinical training across the East, Central, and Southern Africa region.

### **Completion of Implementation and Post-Assessment of the Essential Newborn Care (ENC Now) Project – Tanzania (July 2024–June 2025)**

Between July 2024 and June 2025, ECSACONM, in collaboration with partners, successfully completed the implementation and post-assessment of the Essential Newborn Care (ENC Now) Project in Tanzania, aimed at strengthening newborn care competencies through a cascade training model. The project involved 44 in-country master trainers experienced healthcare professionals in neonatal care who received 12 hours of remote training from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). These trainers conducted direct hands-on training for 92 frontline newborn healthcare workers across six regional hospitals. The implementation timeline included multiple assessment stages, with clinical data collected over 9 months to measure the impact on neonatal mortality. Quantitative assessments showed significant improvements: in-country facilitators increased their knowledge check pass rates from 86.1% at baseline to 100% post-training and post-CRISP. Their Bag-Mask Ventilation (BMV) skills rose from 60.0% to 100%, and OSCE A performance improved from 81.8% to 97.2%. Healthcare workers’ knowledge scores rose from 69.6% to 95.7%, while BMV skills jumped from 48.1% to 100%. OSCE A scores improved from 70.0% to 97.1%, indicating both effective training and strong knowledge retention. The post-implementation phase featured qualitative assessments including eight endline interviews with master trainers and healthcare workers from hospitals in Mtwara, Mbeya, Lindi, and Katavi in May 2025, and two focus group discussions in Morogoro and Tumbi in April 2025. The knowledge-based assessments and sustained mentorship underscored the project’s success in creating a scalable, sustainable model for neonatal care



improvement, contributing to reductions in preventable neonatal deaths across Tanzania.

### **Preparations for the 17th ECSACONM Biennial Scientific Conference and 8th Quadrennial Meeting – Kigali, Rwanda (2026)**

During the July 2024 to June 2025 reporting period, ECSACONM made significant progress in preparing for the 17th Biennial Scientific Conference and 8th Quadrennial Meeting, scheduled to take place from September 14–18, 2026, at the Kigali Convention Center in Rwanda. Preparations included ongoing monthly coordination meetings with QUAD leaders, held in collaboration with the ECSA Health Community, Rwanda’s Ministry of Health, and other key partners. The conference, themed *“Nurses and Midwives Sustaining Quality Healthcare in a Changing World,”* is expected to attract over 1,000 delegates from at least 20 countries, underscoring its strategic importance in advancing regional nursing and midwifery leadership. Key milestones during this period included sending official letters to the Permanent Secretary and the Minister of Health, identifying the conference venue, developing a tentative budget, and beginning to map potential speakers. These activities facilitated high-level planning, stakeholder engagement, and early discussions around conference logistics, content, and program structure.

The planned structure of the 2026 event includes a closed pre-conference workshop on September 13, followed by open plenary and scientific sessions from September 14 to 16, and culminating in the 8th Quadrennial Meeting from September 17 to 18. Preparatory efforts during this reporting period have laid a strong foundation for a well-coordinated, inclusive, and high-impact event.

### **Building Research Capacity Among Nurses and Midwives in the ECSA Region March – July 2025**

ECSACONM launched and advanced the Building Research Capacity Among Nurses and Midwives in the ECSA Region project in March 2025, generously supported by the Intuitive Foundation one year based project with possibility of extension. The initiative aims to strengthen the research competencies of nurses and midwives across East, Central, and Southern Africa through structured training, mentorship, and implementation-focused methodologies. A major milestone was the successful conduct of the first regional research workshop on April 10, 2025, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, led by Ms. Lemmy Mabuga (ECSACONM), Dr. Godfrey Sama Philipo (COSECSA), and supported by faculty including Milka Ogayo (Kenya), Sibongile Chituku (Zimbabwe), and Chifundo Coleta Zimba (Malawi). The workshop introduced a research methodology curriculum covering essential topics to be covered such as study design, ethics, data analysis, grant writing, and implementation science, with contributions from an expert interdisciplinary faculty. Priority thematic areas include patient outcomes, perioperative care, maternal and child health, innovation in surgical care, simulation-based training, and use of WHO checklists and guidelines. Following the workshop, a regional call for mentee applications opened in May 2025 and closed on June 18, 2025. A total of 75 applications were received and are under review, aiming to select one mentee per ECSA member country to participate in ongoing mentorship and project implementation. The content modules for the research curriculum have been drafted and are undergoing final review. This project marks a significant step toward institutionalizing research capacity among frontline nursing and midwifery professionals, fostering leadership in evidence-based practice and policy development across the region.



### **Clinical Skills Development workshops in Zimbabwe Dec 2024 and Malawi Feb 2025**

As part of ECSACONM’s ongoing commitment to strengthening perioperative nursing capacity in the East, Central, and Southern Africa (ECSA) region, two regional Clinical Skills Development Workshops were successfully conducted with support from the Intuitive Foundation. First in Zimbabwe in December 2024, and the second in Malawi in February 2025. These workshops were designed to address the critical skills gap in perioperative care

across ECSA member countries. Delegates included clinical experts and participants from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Seychelles, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, ensuring broad regional representation and collaborative learning. The workshops focused on advanced perioperative clinical procedures and surgical nursing competencies, using hands-on simulations and interactive deconstruction of essential surgical tasks. Content delivery was led by a committee of seasoned experts tasked with finalizing clinical skills procedure outlines and preparing high-quality simulation videos for integration into ECSACONM’s Learning Management System (LMS). The approach emphasized building sustainable capacity through locally adaptable training content and practical skill reinforcement. Further expanding the initiative, preparations were finalized for a third Clinical Skills Training Workshop scheduled for September 14–15, 2025, at Nairobi Hospital Convention Centre in Kenya. The workshops underscore ECSACONM’s strategic goal of capacitating Human Resources for Health by addressing perioperative care gaps and fostering high-quality clinical education through regional collaboration, expert mentorship, and digital innovation.



### Monthly ECSACONM Webinars – Advancing Regional Knowledge Exchange and Professional Development October 2024 – July 2025

ECSACONM delivered a dynamic series of monthly webinars via iECHO Platform aimed at fostering continuous professional development and cross-border collaboration in nursing and midwifery. These virtual sessions attracted over 700 participants from more than 33 countries across Africa, Europe, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas including representation from Argentina, Australia, Botswana, Chile, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, the United States, and many others. This global engagement underscores ECSACONM’s growing influence and reach in promoting nursing and midwifery leadership and education worldwide. The webinars explored a wide range of timely and high-impact themes. In October 2024, ECSACONM hosted a webinar focused on Advancing Health Education on Breast Cancer, followed by the Associate Membership Webinar for students on January 17, 2025, which encouraged mentorship, early professional engagement, and career development. Subsequent webinars covered: Digital Health Innovations in Nursing and Midwifery (March 2025); Managing High-Risk Pregnancies: A Midwife’s Perspective (April 2025); Mental Health and Well-Being for Healthcare Workers (May 2025); and Combating Maternal and Neonatal Mortality: Evidence-Based Approaches (June 2025). Each session featured expert speakers, interactive discussions, and practical insights aligned with regional priorities. Through these webinars, ECSACONM effectively created a platform for knowledge exchange, best practice sharing, and professional networking empowering nurses and midwives across diverse settings to advance healthcare quality, equity, and innovation within the region and beyond.



## Learning Circles Program on Postpartum Family Planning – November 2024

In November 2024, ECSACONM, in collaboration with Knowledge SUCCESS, successfully conducted a virtual Learning Circles cohort titled “Strategies by Nurses and Midwives to Effectively Reduce Maternal Mortality in Rural Communities through Postpartum Family Planning (PPFP).” The program brought together 20 engaged participants from Kenya, Tanzania, Lesotho, Botswana, and Rwanda for a series of four interactive sessions held on November 6th, 14th, 21st, and 28th. Each two-hour session was designed to foster rich dialogue, peer learning, and actionable insights among frontline health professionals in the East, Central, and Southern Africa region. The structured progression of the Learning Circles began with introductions and context-setting in the first session, followed by sharing successful PPFP practices on November 14th. The third session, held on November 21st, focused on identifying gaps and challenges in implementing PPFP strategies in rural settings, while the final session on November 28th emphasized reflection and development of context-specific action plans. Participants benefited from a collaborative learning environment that encouraged practical, evidence-based discussions tailored to the realities of rural healthcare. All attendees who completed the full series received Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points, reinforcing ECSACONM’s commitment to advancing professional standards and continuous learning. The Learning Circles program exemplifies ECSACONM’s efforts to empower nurses and midwives to lead in reducing maternal mortality through innovative, community-sensitive family planning approaches. It also strengthened regional collaboration, knowledge sharing, and strategy development in support of improved maternal health outcomes.



## Young Nurses and Midwives Giveaway! – December 2024

In December 2024, ECSACONM concluded its inaugural Young Nurses and Midwives Giveaway a vibrant campaign designed to recognize, celebrate, and empower emerging nursing and midwifery professionals under the age of 35 across the East, Central, and Southern Africa region. The month-long initiative ran from November 1st to 30th, 2024, and attracted wide engagement through ECSACONM’s social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook, X, and LinkedIn. Participants were invited to post one-minute videos introducing themselves and sharing personal stories, career highlights, or reflections on the value of ECSACONM membership. Out of many creative and inspiring entries, three winners were selected for their exceptional storytelling and engagement: Deardone William from Tanzania, Elphas Muricho from Kenya, and Ordinator Majengeta from Zimbabwe. These outstanding young professionals received complimentary ECSACONM memberships, valued at \$50, which included full access to member benefits, a 50% discount on future short courses, and reduced registration for the upcoming 2026 Biennial Scientific Conference in Kigali, Rwanda. In total, ten winners were selected for free registration and annual subscriptions, and all participants were awarded a one-year waiver on their 2024–2025 annual ECSACONM subscription fees. Existing members retained their status with waived renewal fees, while new members paid only a \$30 registration fee. This initiative not only strengthened ECSACONM’s youth engagement strategy but also expanded its professional network, promoting leadership,



mentorship, and visibility for the next generation of nurses and midwives in the region.

## Perioperative eFoundation Course–2025 intake

Perioperative Nursing E-Learning Foundational Programme (PeN Programme) developed in partnership with RCSI, a landmark initiative aimed at strengthening perioperative nursing capacity across the East, Central, and Southern Africa region. A total of 250 nurses enrolled in the 2025 intake, reflecting strong demand for accessible, competency-based surgical nursing education. The program is designed for both in-service perioperative nurses seeking to enhance their skills, and pre-service trainees aiming to build foundational knowledge in operating department nursing. Structured to support continuing professional development, the PeN Programme delivers up-to-date, evidence-based content to improve learners' theoretical understanding and practical competencies in the operating theatre environment. Upon completion, learners are expected to critically engage with topics such as the evolution and contemporary role of Operating Department Nursing, the principles of pre-, peri-, and post-operative care, and issues related to patient safety, interdisciplinary teamwork, and quality improvement in surgical settings. The one-year program is delivered through 30 interactive, self-guided e-learning modules that incorporate formative assessments and promote active, reflective learning. By empowering nurses with specialized knowledge and skills, the PeN Programme directly supports ECSACONM's strategic goal of closing critical skills gaps in surgical care and fostering safe, high-quality perioperative services. The 2025 intake represents a significant step toward regional standardization of perioperative nursing education and enhanced surgical outcomes through well-prepared nursing professionals.

**PERIOPERATIVE NURSING FOUNDATIONAL COURSE**  
**ADMISSION FOR JAN-2025 COHORT**  
One year e-Learning program enhances clinical competence in perioperative nursing, ensuring safe patient care pre-, during, and post-surgery across East, Central, and Southern Africa.

**PROGRAMME DELIVERY**  
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## Participation at the International Council of Nurses (ICN) Congress 2025 – Helsinki, Finland

In 2025, ECSACONM achieved a significant milestone in global health diplomacy with the participation of its President, Dr. Glory Msibi and registrar, Elizabeth Oywer, at the prestigious International Council of Nurses (ICN) Congress held in Helsinki, Finland. Representing the collective voice of nurses and midwives from East, Central, and Southern Africa, Dr. Msibi delivered a compelling presentation that spotlighted ECSACONM's transformative regional efforts in strengthening nursing and midwifery education, regulation, and leadership. Her address highlighted core initiatives including ECSACONM's flagship fellowship programs, the harmonized development of postgraduate nursing curricula, and strategic capacity-building interventions designed to address the region's health priorities. Dr. Msibi emphasized that empowering nurses and midwives is central to strengthening health systems, achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and accelerating progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Her statement, *“When we empower nurses and midwives, we strengthen entire health systems,”* resonated deeply with attendees and underscored ECSACONM's leadership on the global stage. The ICN Congress provided a powerful platform for ECSACONM to share best practices, forge global partnerships, and position African nursing leadership as an integral force in global health transformation. Dr. Msibi's presence not only elevated ECSACONM's visibility but also affirmed the organization's commitment to advocacy, innovation, and advancing the professional status of nurses and midwives in the region. This historic representation marks a proud moment for ECSACONM and serves as a call to action to continue investing in nursing leadership for a healthier, more equitable world.



## **ECSACONM Leadership Engagement at the Pan-African Surgical Conference 2025 – Rwanda**

ECSACONM continued to strengthen regional and global partnerships through high-level engagement at the Pan-African Surgical Conference held in Rwanda. ECSACONM President Dr. Glory Msibi, alongside Dr. William, Director of Operation Smile, participated in strategic discussions aimed at improving access to safe, high-quality surgical care across the African continent. The conference served as a crucial convening platform for leaders, health professionals, and experts committed to transforming surgical services and addressing disparities in perioperative and surgical health systems. Dr. Msibi's presence at the conference reflected ECSACONM's leadership role in advocating for nursing and midwifery integration within surgical care systems. The discussions focused on collaborative approaches to workforce capacity building, innovation in surgical and anesthesia nursing education, and expanding access to lifesaving surgical interventions especially in underserved regions. The engagement with Operation Smile marked a promising opportunity to align efforts on surgical training, advocacy, and outreach, particularly through strengthening perioperative nursing competencies and enhancing support for surgical patients. Such partnerships embody ECSACONM's strategic vision to drive health systems improvement through interdisciplinary collaboration, investment in human resources for health, and elevation of nursing and midwifery leadership within surgical ecosystems. This event reinforced the importance of regional dialogue, shared solutions, and unified action in ensuring that every patient regardless of geography has access to safe, timely, and affordable surgical care. It also positioned ECSACONM at the forefront of policy, education, and clinical innovation for surgical and perioperative nursing in Africa.



## **Expansion of Strategic Partnerships and Regional Affiliations**

During the reporting period of July 2024 to June 2025, ECSACONM strengthened its regional footprint through the expansion of new partnerships and affiliations, reinforcing its role as a unifying body for nursing and midwifery leadership across East, Central, and Southern Africa. Three institutions formally joined the ECSACONM network as partners: the Harare Institute for Public Health in Zimbabwe, Kira Hospital in Uganda, and the Kenya Progressive Nurses Association. These collaborations aim to foster joint efforts in professional development, research, clinical training, and policy advocacy in nursing and midwifery. Additionally, ECSACONM welcomed new country affiliations from Madagascar, Burundi, and Ethiopia, marking a strategic expansion into previously unrepresented territories. These new affiliations significantly enhance ECSACONM's regional inclusivity, bringing the total number of participating countries to 19. The involvement of these nations is expected to bolster regional knowledge exchange, improve alignment of educational standards, and promote shared solutions to healthcare challenges facing nurses and midwives. These new partnerships and country affiliations reflect ECSACONM's sustained commitment to building a collaborative, Pan-African platform for advancing nursing and midwifery excellence. Through shared initiatives, ECSACONM continues to promote harmonized training, research, and leadership development, ensuring that nursing and midwifery professionals across the region are empowered to lead responsive and resilient health systems. This strategic growth strengthens the organization's capacity to influence health outcomes at both national and regional levels.

## Participation in the 74th ECSA Health Ministers Conference – Malawi

ECSACONM actively participated in the 74th East, Central, and Southern Africa (ECSA) Health Ministers Conference held in Malawi. This high-level regional meeting convened health ministers and key stakeholders from member states to deliberate on critical health priorities and strategies aimed at improving health outcomes across the ECSA region. ECSACONM's involvement underscored its commitment to engaging with policymakers to elevate nursing and midwifery issues within national and regional health agendas. At the conference, ECSACONM representatives contributed insights on workforce development, capacity building, and the role of nursing and midwifery leadership in achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The organization advocated for strengthened investments in nursing education, regulation, and professional development as vital components of resilient health systems. ECSACONM also emphasized collaborative approaches for tackling emerging health challenges, including maternal and child health, infectious diseases, and non-communicable diseases. Participation in this ministerial forum allowed ECSACONM to align its strategic initiatives with regional health policies, fostering partnerships that support advocacy and resource mobilization for nursing and midwifery programs. This engagement strengthens ECSACONM's influence in shaping health policies that directly impact the nursing and midwifery workforce and ultimately improve patient care quality across the region.

