



THE ECAMA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Jan-Mar 2018

...Improving standards for the economics profession in Malawi...

E-mail: ecamamw@globemw.net

Website: www.ecamamw.org

Welcome on board!

This is the first newsletter for ECAMA and we intend to use it to mobilise economists in the country to raise the profile of their profession. We want them to stand up and be counted, just like their colleagues in other prominent professions. And ECAMA is the most appropriate forum for them to do just that.

Formally launched on 27th February, 1999, as a voluntary membership organization, ECAMA has always struggled to make itself a vibrant forum for its members to demonstrate their expertise and shape the destiny of their profession through open/proactive debate and policy dialogue on economic issues affecting the country. There is urgent need to reverse the trend and this newsletter is one of the attempts that are being made by the current ECAMA Executive Committee and its management to galvanise economists into positive action about the destiny of their profession in the country.

There is a lot of work to be done and it will call for the contributions of all its members in one form or another. Long standing issues of defining the economist and achieving self-sustaining financial capability have to be resolved. We need to develop more forums for national policy dialogue based on proper research by our members, and the emerging challenges of a modern economy to which research should be brought to bear are many too. We also need to communicate among ourselves and share experiences.

So, indeed, welcome on board the ECAMA Newsletter! Let us keep together on the journey of rebuilding our Association.

Know your Executive Committee...

Article 8 of the ECAMA Constitution stipulates that the Association shall have an Executive Committee (EXCO) that shall serve for a period of three years from the time of election for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Here is the list of your current EXCO:

Chikumbutso Kalilombe	President
Lowina Mwasigala	Vice President
Andrew Kumbatira	Secretary General
Esnat Chilije	Deputy Secretary General
Frank Chantaya	Treasurer
Lauryn Nyasulu	Vice Treasurer
Eric Hanjahanja	Executive Member
June Kambalometore	Executive Member
Hope Chavula	Executive Member
Enock Kondowe	Executive Member

The Executive Committee came into office in November 2017.

Know your Management Team...

Article 9 of the Constitution provides for a Secretariat of the Association, which shall consist of the Executive Director, and other employees of the Association appointed from time to time.

The current Executive Director is Mr. Maleka Thula who joins ECAMA on two-year secondment from the Reserve Bank of Malawi. The Association has inadequate resources to recruit its own staff in this position.

The other staff members are:

Khumbo Chibambo	Economist
Tandulechi Mtambo	Administrative Assistant

Sources of finance

The major source of funding is membership subscription which has over the recent years been volatile and declining. There are two categories of membership: corporate and individual. Of the two, corporate membership has been the major source of financing compared to individual membership subscription.

Based on subscription records for 2017, ECAMA had 11 corporate members and 39 individual members. The membership fees for the two categories are different,

and for corporate membership there is further differentiation.

The corporate membership categories and their annual fees are as follows:

Platinum Members	K 3,000,000
Gold Members	1,000,000
Silver Members	500,000

There are differences in benefits applicable to each category and such information can be provided upon request from the Secretariat.

Individual membership has currently no categories and the annual fee is K 50,000. Efforts are underway to introduce some categorization so as to attract a wider membership base and also recognize differences in professional experience as is the case with other membership-based professional associations.

Strategies for revitalizing ECAMA...

As already pointed out, ECAMA is in urgent need of revitalization if it has to remain relevant and overcome steep challenges that it is facing. All its members and well-wishers have to engage an extra gear in their efforts to support the organization either technical or financially or both. The Executive Committee and the Management Team have already begun to put in place some measures intended to achieve this much needed change.

Here are some strategies that are being put in place to address the challenges:

- Enhanced lobbying for corporate membership;
- Revamping the individual membership base
- Establishing a credible membership-based clientele to work on various opportunities coming through ECAMA;
- Establishing and promoting of working partnership with other similar institutions;
- Strengthening the Research Unit of the Secretariat;
- Raising ECAMA profile and visibility through organizing quarterly economic/research symposiums on topical issues;
- Improving ECAMA-Media interface to enhance ECAMA's visibility.

Some of Key events and activities this quarter...

Here we report important events ECAMA engaged in or those relevant to the economist in the national economy.

- ✓ Meetings for corporate membership lobbying. 21 meetings with corporate institutions, of which,

five institutions expressed strong interest to establish working collaboration with ECAMA and these are: JTI; CDH; MACRA; ESCOM; and REUNION Insurance. The collaboration with JTI has already begun as ECAMA is providing monthly economic briefs for a corporate member.

- ✓ The mid-year national budget review took place and showed no relief to the tight fiscal space that government is operating in.
- ✓ In-put to pre-budget consultations
- ✓ Consultation meetings with IMF, World Bank and Japanese Ambassador to Malawi.

...and next quarter

It is believed that most of the activities ECAMA was engaged in this quarter will continue in the next quarter. We will continue lobbying for both corporate and individual membership. We also look forward to the National Budget Statement for 2018/19, the election year.

Feedback...

The continuation of this quarterly bulletin will depend mostly on the feedback that may come from the members of ECAMA. We would like them to contribute technically and materially in shaping the future of the Association, and this bulletin will acknowledge all such feedback.

Specifically, ECAMA needs ideas and support to:

- Clearly define the economics profession and its membership. This will help to determine activities that ECAMA should focus on to improve the economics profession.
- Establish a membership-based technical capacity to undertake research with shared benefits. ECAMA cannot afford to have in-house capacity for undertaking technical support for its clients and partner institutions.
- Prioritise strategies to make the association self-sustaining and visible at the national level.

We will also welcome feedback on any other issues that members feel should be addressed by ECAMA. It is our belief that there is adequate economic expertise in the country but it is not utilized to its full potential in many spheres of economic activity.

For purposes of readability, this Bulletin will not exceed two pages. You can send your feedback to ecamamw@globemw.net