



**CICIAMS VII
AFRICAN REGIONAL
CONGRESS**
NAIROBI 2024

Congress Report



**Catholic Nurses
Association
of Kenya**



**INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC
COMMITTEE OF NURSES AND
MEDICO-SOCIAL ASSISTANTS**

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Introduction

The **CICIAMS VII African Regional Congress**, held from **5th to 9th August 2024** at the **Kenya School of Monetary Studies** in Nairobi, Kenya, was a landmark event that gathered healthcare professionals, policymakers, and key stakeholders from across Africa and the world. The Congress served as a critical platform for addressing the most pressing issues facing the healthcare sector, with a particular focus on **nursing and midwifery education**, the promotion of **spirituality in healthcare**, and the integration of **sustainable healthcare practices** in line with *Laudato Si* and Synodality.

The overarching theme, *“Enhancing Nursing and Midwifery Education for Improved Health Care Services in the Spirit of Laudato Si and Synodality,”* reflected the Congress’s commitment to combining healthcare excellence with ethical and spiritual dimensions. *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis’s call to care for our common home, was central to the discussions, emphasizing the need for a healthcare approach that is not only technically sound but also spiritually grounded and environmentally sustainable. The Congress also focused on **Synodality**, a principle of collaboration and teamwork, highlighting the importance of unity among healthcare professionals from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds.



The Congress was attended by over 90 delegates from **six African countries**, including **Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Eswatini, Zimbabwe, and Zambia**, as well as participants from **the USA, Japan, Ireland, Thailand, England & Wales and Netherlands**. The inclusion of both in-person and virtual attendees allowed for a broad spectrum of insights and experiences, making the event truly international in scope. This diversity of participation enriched the Congress, fostering a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities in healthcare across different regions.



The Congress provided an opportunity for **cross-border collaboration**, with participants exchanging best practices and discussing joint initiatives aimed at improving healthcare in Africa. The event featured a series of **keynote speeches, panel discussions, and workshops**, all of which were designed to explore practical solutions to the complex challenges facing healthcare professionals today.

The Congress also highlighted the role of **faith-based healthcare providers** in Africa, particularly in remote areas where access to healthcare is limited. By aligning healthcare services with the ethical and spiritual principles outlined in *Laudato Si*, the Congress emphasized the need for a holistic approach to healthcare that addresses the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of patients.

This approach not only improves patient outcomes but also strengthens the moral and ethical foundation of the healthcare system itself.

Overall, the **CICIAMS VII African Regional Congress** was a resounding success, offering participants a unique opportunity to learn, collaborate, and innovate. It laid the groundwork for future initiatives aimed at improving healthcare delivery across Africa, with a focus on education, sustainability, and ethical practice.



Participants

The **CICIAMS VII African Regional Congress** saw participation from a broad range of healthcare professionals, policymakers, religious men and women, and stakeholders from across Africa and the international community. A total of over **90 delegates** attended, representing diverse regions and institutions, with both in-person and virtual attendees contributing to the discussions.

Delegates came from **six African countries**, including:

- Kenya
- Nigeria
- South Africa
- Eswatini
- Zimbabwe
- Zambia

We also welcomed representatives from **other regions**, such as:

- United States of America
- Japan
- Thailand
- Ireland
- England & Wales
- Netherlands

Participants included leaders from **Catholic Church**, **nursing and midwifery learning institutions**, and **faith-based healthcare providers**. High-level representatives from various **health ministries**, **educational institutions**, and **religious organizations** played a key role in shaping the discussions throughout the Congress. Additionally, various **international nursing associations** and healthcare bodies were represented, contributing to the global perspective of the Congress.

The diversity of participants allowed for comprehensive discussions on the challenges and opportunities in healthcare, with a particular focus on how **African healthcare systems** can integrate ethical and sustainable practices into their frameworks. The Congress encouraged networking and collaboration among professionals, fostering future partnerships aimed at improving healthcare outcomes across the region.



Congress Proceedings

The **CICIAMS VII African Regional Congress** was structured over **five days**, from **5th to 9th August 2024**, with a well-organized schedule of sessions, keynote speeches, workshops, and panel discussions. The Congress proceedings covered a range of healthcare topics, focusing on **nursing and midwifery education, healthcare challenges, and the integration of spirituality in healthcare.**

Spiritual Nourishment: Key on the agenda and Celebration of Holy Mass celebrated Daily. Reflection/ Homily based on the readings of the day.

Pre-congress Activities and meetings:

5th August 2024: CICIAMS Executive Board (EB) meeting chaired by International president Dr Rosemary Khosi Mthethwa: Members came from regional presidents, and CICIAMS Chairman/ persons of various committees, representatives to the United Nations and Crescendo.

6th August 2024: General Council Members (GCM) meeting: This is the supreme governing body of CICIAMS. This meeting includes EB and Presidents or delegates from CICIAMS member associations and representatives from the organizing committee of the host country. Meeting chaired by International president Dr. Rosemary Khosi Muthethwa.

Hospital Visit: team visited St. Francis mission hospital and The Aga Khan university hospital.

Congress Day 1: Opening Ceremony

All delegates assembled at Queen of Apostle Catholic Church. Procession from the main gate to the church, led by the band from Don Bosco boys. Delegates displayed beautiful flags from all countries represented.



Choir: Queen of Apostle church.

The Congress officially commenced with an **Opening Ceremony**, featuring welcoming remarks from:

- Rev. Fr. Francisco Moriasi, Kenya Spiritual Director, led the opening prayer.
- **Flag Parade:** Bosco boys band triumphant sounds led the flag parade representing all present countries.
- **Grace Thirikwa**, President of the **Catholic Nurses Association of Kenya (CNAK)**, who introduced the theme of the Congress and emphasized the need for collaboration to enhance healthcare education in Africa.
- **Rosaline Ezinegbe**, Africa regional president gave her remarks.
- **Dr. Rosemary Khosi Mthethwa**, International President (CICAMS) gave an overview of the organization's role in promoting healthcare through ethical practices and highlighted the Congress's objectives of enhancing nursing education and integrating spiritual care into healthcare systems.
- **Mrs. Wilbroda Juma**, First regional President, gave her remarks and the need for commitment from members. Collaboration is key.
- **Dr. Judy Awinja**: Representative from the Ministry of Health gave the keynote Address. Networking with other like minded organization associations remains key.
- **Dr Anne Wawire** Gave Vote of Thanks.

Keynote Addresses and Presentations

The first day of the congress was dedicated to keynote speeches and presentations on various healthcare challenges and advancements.

Day One: Session 2

Sub Theme: Spirituality in Nursing and Midwifery Care.

Topics covered included:

- Spirituality and well being; the difference between religiosity and spirituality by Prof. Rev Fr. Selvam Sahaya from Kenya.



Fr. Sahaya G. Selvam presented on the importance of spirituality in promoting wellbeing among healthcare workers, particularly nurses. He defined spirituality as a broad concept that includes personal coherence, compassionate morality, and a sense of connectedness with the divine and others. His talk highlighted the distinction between religiosity—rooted in structured practices and community—and spirituality, which supports personal meaning. Fr. Selvam emphasized that spirituality plays a critical role in enhancing mental and physical health, serving as a coping mechanism for stress, illness, and addiction. He further discussed the positive effects of spiritual practices, such as meditation and prayer, on fostering emotional resilience and improving patient care. Nurses, he argued, can benefit from integrating spirituality into their professional lives to nurture compassion and maintain emotional wellbeing.

“Spirituality helps nurses connect with a deeper sense of purpose, fostering

resilience and compassion in their care for patients.”

- Enriching personnel experience in the context by Rev Fr. Philip Kiprop Yego from Kenya.



Fr. Kiprop Mbaaga concluded the Congress with a presentation on the role of the Catholic Church in healthcare, particularly its responsibility to provide care that aligns with the values of compassion, dignity, and respect for life. He spoke about the moral and ethical responsibilities of healthcare workers in Catholic institutions, emphasizing that their work should be seen as a form of ministry. Fr. Mbaaga addressed the spiritual challenges faced by healthcare providers, particularly in situations involving ethical dilemmas, such as end-of-life care or treatment decisions for terminally ill patients. He encouraged healthcare workers to seek guidance from their faith and the Church’s teachings when faced with difficult decisions. Fr. Mbaaga concluded by reminding participants that their work is not only about healing the body but also about nurturing the soul.

“Our work in healthcare is not just about treating the physical body. It is a ministry of compassion and healing that must respect the dignity of every human life.”

- Finding balance in our lives at home and at work with faith in God by Rev. Fr. Kenneth G. Sleyman, MM CICIAMS Ecclesiastical Assistant from Sapporo, Japan.



Fr. Ken Sleyman’s presentation emphasized the importance of balancing life and work through faith in God, especially for Catholic healthcare workers. He described life as a “wheel,” with Jesus at its center, ensuring balance amid life’s challenges. Drawing on Pope Francis’s *Laudato Si*, Fr. Sleyman highlighted that work is essential to human growth and fulfillment but must be integrated with spiritual life to achieve true balance. He outlined the core ethical principles of Catholic bioethics—autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice—and discussed their relevance in nursing dilemmas.

The presentation stressed that Catholic healthcare workers must nurture their own spiritual lives, engage in prayer, sacraments, and service, and let Jesus guide them. By deepening relationships with God, Fr. Sleyman argued, healthcare workers could better minister to patients and promote a pro-life ethos.

“The spoke of the wheel gives us balance in our lives and in our work, and Jesus is the center of our wheel holding our lives together.”

- A short Introduction to the life and spirituality of Blessed Hanna Chrzanowska by Dr. Gosia Brykczynska from the USA.



Dr. Gosia Brykczynska delivered a thought-provoking presentation on the ethical dimensions of nursing care, with a specific focus on the role of spirituality in ethical decision-making. Drawing from her extensive experience in pediatric nursing and bioethics, Dr. Brykczynska argued that ethical dilemmas in healthcare often require more than just clinical solutions—they demand a deeper understanding of the patient's spiritual and emotional needs. She emphasized that nurses, especially those working in Catholic healthcare institutions, have a responsibility to integrate ethical principles rooted in compassion and spirituality into their practice. Dr. Brykczynska provided case studies that illustrated how spiritual care can guide nurses in navigating difficult situations, such as end-of-life care and decisions about treatment for terminally ill patients.

“Ethical nursing care is not just about making the right clinical decisions—it is about understanding the patient as a whole person, which includes their spiritual and emotional needs.”

- 5PM : Elections to the CICIAMS Executive Board done and led by the CICIAMS International president - Dr. Rosemary Khosi Mthethwa.

Day Two: Session 3

Sub Theme: Nursing and midwifery education

Presenters explored the current gaps in education and training in Africa, with suggestions for curriculum improvement and skills development for healthcare professionals.

- Knowledge and perception of Nurses as a calling by God,” the unheard voices of the Catholic Nurse by Dr. Caroline Zulu From Zambia.



Dr. Caroline Zulu addressed the perception of nursing as a calling within the context of faith-based healthcare, particularly in Zambia. She shared insights from her research, which explored how nurses in Catholic healthcare institutions view their roles as a spiritual vocation. Dr. Zulu argued that this spiritual dimension of nursing contributes to a higher level of commitment and compassion in patient care. Her presentation also discussed the impact of this perception on patient outcomes, noting that nurses who view their profession as a calling often go beyond their professional obligations to meet the emotional and spiritual needs of patients. Dr. Zulu concluded by advocating for more support for nurses, both professionally and spiritually, to sustain their motivation and dedication in challenging healthcare environments.

“Nursing is not just a job; it is a calling that demands compassion, dedication, and a deep sense of service to humanity.”

- Advanced Practice nursing role and integration of spiritual assessment for advanced care planning; a South African context by Cecilia Nondumiso Shanga from South Africa



- Nursing and Midwifery Education in Kenya : opportunities by Dr. Rose Maina from Kenya



Choir and liturgical dancers from St. Francis Nursing School.

Day Two: Session 4 - 9

Sub theme: Nursing Practice, Non Communicable Disease (NCD) and emerging diseases, the role of the nurse.

- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in Catholic health facilities, a project for Catholic Nurses by Dr Anne Wawire Kabimba from Kenya.



Dr. Anne Lydiah Wawire Kabimba presented on the importance of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in healthcare settings, with a focus on how these factors affect maternal and child health outcomes. She highlighted the challenges that many healthcare facilities in Africa face in maintaining proper hygiene standards due to inadequate infrastructure and limited resources. Dr. Wawire emphasized that improving WASH conditions in hospitals and clinics is crucial not only for preventing infections but also for safeguarding the health of vulnerable populations, particularly pregnant women and newborns. She provided practical recommendations for improving WASH infrastructure, including the need for investment in sanitation facilities and regular staff training on hygiene protocols. Dr. Wawire concluded by calling for collaborative efforts between government bodies and healthcare providers to prioritize WASH in healthcare delivery.

“Without proper water, sanitation, and hygiene in our healthcare facilities, we cannot hope to provide safe and effective care, especially to mothers and their newborns.”

- Prevalence of Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) risk factors among people living with HIV; increasing burden of NCDs in Africa and how healthcare professionals can address these challenges by Roseanne Nyabera from Kenya



Roseanne Nyabera focused on the intersection of HIV care and cardiovascular health, discussing the growing prevalence of cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors among people living with HIV in Kenya. Nyabera presented data that showed how advancements in HIV treatment have extended life expectancy for patients but have also led to an increased risk of non-communicable diseases, such as heart disease. She emphasized the need for a comprehensive healthcare approach that integrates HIV management with the prevention and treatment of CVD. Nyabera advocated for the inclusion of routine cardiovascular health screenings in HIV care protocols, highlighting the importance of early detection and intervention to improve long-term health outcomes for this vulnerable population.

“As we improve the treatment and management of HIV, we must also address the emerging threat of cardiovascular disease among people living with HIV. It is not enough to manage one condition; we must adopt a holistic approach to care.”

Sub Theme: Mental wellness

- Mental wellness by Ms Elizabeth Adol from Kenya.



Elizabeth Adol's presentation centered on the importance of mental health support for nurses and healthcare workers, particularly in the context of high-stress environments like hospitals and clinics during the pandemic. She discussed the psychological toll that healthcare work can have, especially when dealing with public health crises, long working hours, and emotionally draining situations. Adol highlighted the critical need for mental health programs within healthcare institutions to support staff well-being and prevent burnout. She shared data showing the prevalence of mental health issues among healthcare workers and presented strategies for creating supportive work environments, including mental health check-ins, counseling services, and peer support groups. Her presentation also called for a cultural shift in how mental health is viewed within the healthcare profession, emphasizing that healthcare workers must be cared for, just as they care for patients.

"If we don't take care of the mental health of our healthcare workers, we risk losing the very people who are essential to the health of our communities."

- Integrating psychological well-being in managing Drug Abuse; Discussed the importance of integrating mental health support in healthcare systems by Mary Ogina from Kenya



Mary Ogina focused her presentation on the integration of faith and healthcare in Catholic healthcare institutions. She explored how spiritual care, grounded in Catholic teachings, plays a vital role in patient healing and recovery. Ogina discussed the importance of understanding and addressing patients' spiritual needs alongside their physical and emotional ones. She shared case studies from Catholic hospitals where spiritual care had positively impacted patient outcomes, particularly in end-of-life care and chronic disease management. Ogina also emphasized that healthcare workers need to be trained not only in clinical skills but also in providing compassionate, holistic care that acknowledges the spiritual dimensions of healing. Her presentation concluded with a call for Catholic healthcare institutions to strengthen their spiritual care programs and train healthcare workers in spiritual counseling.

"Holistic care in Catholic healthcare institutions is rooted in the understanding that healing involves not only the body but also the spirit. We must be prepared to offer that level of care."

Sub Theme: Scientific methods of natural family planning

- Creighton Model FertilityCare System and NaProTECHNOLOGY - the paradigm shifts in the scientific methods of natural family planning by Sr Cecilia Adache from Nigeria (Virtual presentation)



Sr. Cecilia Adache OSF's presentation introduced the Creighton Model FertilityCare System and NaProTECHNOLOGY as innovative, natural methods for family planning and women's healthcare. She described the Creighton Model as a scientific and natural approach to fertility management, which allows couples to either achieve or avoid pregnancy without artificial interventions. This method, based on observing biomarkers of a woman's fertility cycle, respects the natural design of married love and aligns with the Catholic Church's teachings on human dignity and procreation. Sr. Adache also highlighted the role of NaProTECHNOLOGY in addressing women's health issues such as infertility, hormonal imbalances, and menstrual irregularities. This approach works cooperatively with a woman's fertility cycle rather than suppressing it, offering a restorative solution to reproductive health challenges..

"The Creighton Model FertilityCare System is a genuine form of human ecology, recognizing that fertility is a gift and should be respected and nurtured."

Sub Theme: Sustainable health and development In Africa

- Health systems interventions for prevention of maternal peripartum infections in the low-and middle-income countries; a systematic review by Roselyne Abwao from Kenya.



Rosaline Abwao's presentation addressed the role of midwives in providing culturally sensitive care to women in diverse communities. She emphasized that midwifery care should not only focus on the medical aspects of childbirth but also consider the cultural and spiritual needs of expectant mothers. Abwao highlighted the importance of building trust between midwives and the communities they serve, particularly in areas where traditional practices play a significant role in childbirth and maternal care. She shared strategies for midwives to effectively communicate and collaborate with families, respecting their cultural beliefs while ensuring safe delivery practices. Abwao concluded by advocating for the inclusion of cultural competency training in midwifery education to help healthcare providers deliver more inclusive and respectful care.

"As midwives, we must not only focus on the clinical aspects of childbirth but also understand and respect the cultural and spiritual needs of the women we care for."

Sub theme: End of life and ethical dilemma

- End of life care: providing comfort, dignity and support by Christiana J. from Nigeria



Christiana J. Bawa's presentation focused on end-of-life care, which encompasses a multidisciplinary approach to providing comfort, dignity, and support to individuals facing terminal illnesses or advanced age. Bawa outlined the core components of end-of-life care, including effective pain and symptom management, emotional and psychological support, and advance care planning. Her presentation emphasized the need for family involvement and education, guiding families on how to care for their loved ones and preparing them for the dying process. She highlighted the holistic nature of end-of-life care, which addresses not only physical needs but also spiritual, emotional, and cultural dimensions, ensuring a dignified passing for patients. She also distinguished between palliative care, which begins earlier in the illness trajectory, and hospice care, which focuses on the final months of life.

“End-of-life care is about providing comfort, dignity, and support to patients while guiding their families through this challenging phase.”

Sub theme: COVID-19 Pandemic

- Perception, experience and challenges of online and virtual learning during COVID-19 pandemic students midwives of the Garden City University College, Kenyase-Kumase Ghana by Anyanmu Sylverleen Onyekachi Anyanwu for Dr. Alberta David Nsemo from Nigeria.



Anyanmu Sylverleen Onyekachi Anyanwu presented on behalf of Dr. Alberta Nsemo, focusing on the challenges of transitioning nursing and midwifery education to online platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation emphasized the difficulties faced by student nurses and midwives, particularly in African countries where access to reliable internet and digital tools is limited. Anyanwu discussed how these challenges affected the quality of education, engagement, and hands-on training that is critical for healthcare students. She stressed the need for innovative solutions to bridge the digital divide, such as blended learning approaches and partnerships with technology providers. The presentation concluded with a call for more government and institutional support to ensure that nursing education remains resilient in the face of future disruptions.

“Online learning was not a choice, but a necessity during the pandemic, and it exposed the gaps in our educational infrastructure that we must now work to close.”

- COVID-19 pandemic practical experience at Mater Dolorosa parish Eswatini, by Dr Gcinile Buthelezi from Eswatini



Dr. Gcinile Buthelezi shared her experiences from Eswatini, where she was actively involved in managing healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her presentation focused on the challenges faced by healthcare workers in resource-limited settings during the pandemic, particularly in faith-based institutions. Dr. Buthelezi highlighted the critical role played by Catholic healthcare facilities in responding to the crisis, providing not only medical care but also emotional and spiritual support to patients and communities. She discussed how healthcare workers were forced to adapt to new protocols, often with limited resources, and emphasized the importance of community involvement in the pandemic response. Dr. Buthelezi also shared lessons learned from the pandemic, particularly the need for stronger emergency preparedness and support systems for healthcare workers.

“The COVID-19 pandemic tested our resilience, but it also showed us the power of community and the importance of faith in times of crisis.”

- COVID-19 Pandemic: the perspective of a Nurse from the USA by Diana Ruzicka from USA (Virtual presentation)



Diana Ruzicka, presenting virtually from the United States, shared insights from an American nurses' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her presentation described the response of public officials as they rapidly responded to the evolving pandemic with limited information. She discussed the challenges of over reporting COVID19 deaths and the advent of a treatment regimen available in March 2020 that was shared online but not made readily available. Finally she discussed the mRNA vaccine and its effects on the health of the population. Ruzicka's presentation emphasized the need for factual, scientific, research-based approaches to illness management.

“The response of public officials was truly amazing considering the limited information. Early treatment is key to health..”

Sub theme: Synodality

- Walking the Catholic journey together with our patients the spirit of synodality by Prof. Busisiwe Bhengu from South Africa



Busisiwe Bhengu's presentation focused on the integration of synodality into Catholic nursing, emphasizing how nurses can embody the principles of communion, participation, and mission in their professional practice. She highlighted the historical roots of nursing as a calling of self-sacrifice, noting how the Catholic Nurses' Guild of Southern Africa has adopted the motto, "See Christ in every person," to guide their work. In line with the Synod 2021's revival of synodality, Bhengu emphasized that Catholic nurses are called to journey together with their patients, creating a deeper sense of spiritual connection and shared mission. Her research aims to assess Catholic nurses' understanding of synodality, how they practice its principles, and the factors influencing their ability to implement synodality in healthcare settings.

"Our patients have been entrusted to us, and we are called to journey together with them in the spirit of synodality—communion, participation, and mission."

- Synodality for Japanese Catholic Nurses by Dr Hiroko Shimizu from Japan



Hiroko Shimizu presented on global health and the role of nurses in promoting universal healthcare, drawing on her experience working in international health settings. She focused on how nurses, particularly in low-resource settings, are critical in delivering essential health services and ensuring that even the most vulnerable populations have access to care. Shimizu discussed the various barriers to achieving universal healthcare, including resource limitations, healthcare worker shortages, and disparities in health access. She emphasized the importance of empowering nurses with the skills and resources they need to serve as frontline providers in their communities. Shimizu also highlighted the need for international collaboration and the sharing of best practices to overcome common challenges in healthcare delivery, particularly in low-income countries.

"Nurses are the key to achieving universal healthcare, especially in underserved communities where they are often the only point of contact for essential health services."

Plenary Discussions

The Second day of the congress featured panel discussions focusing on policy and practice in nursing and healthcare. The discussions centered around:

- Sustainable Health and Development in Africa, addressing how healthcare systems can integrate environmentally responsible practices.
- COVID-19 Pandemic and Healthcare Response, where panelists shared their experiences and lessons learned during the pandemic.
- Synodality in Healthcare, exploring the collaborative nature of healthcare delivery within the Catholic framework, and the importance of teamwork and community involvement.

Each workshop concluded with a plenary session where participants shared key takeaways and recommendations for implementation in their respective regions.

Gala Night

Witnessed different cultural dance presentations, and an evening of excitement and dining.



Day 3: African regional meeting, Holy Mass closing ceremony

African regional meeting: led by regional president Rosaline Ezinegbe Okoobo from Nigeria. Meeting went on as per the agenda, review on congress done among other items. Current office members introduced.



Closing Holy Mass: Celebrated By His Lordship Rt Rev Simon Peter Kamomoe Auxiliary Bishop of Archdiocese of Nairobi; Incharge of Health and lay and Co celebrants (Rev. Fathers from all regions)

Choir: St .Benedict Choir

Newly elected CICIAMS Executive board members introduced to members present.

Blessed Hannah Chrzanowska Relics blessings by Fr. Kenneth G. Sleyman MM.



International president Dr. Rosemary Khosi Mthethwa announced the Next venue for CICIAMS Congress: Thailand, November 2026.

Menstrual Cycle project: Rev Fr. Ken Sleyman gave a Donation of 700 dollars to the African regional countries. Regional President African region to guide.

Mrs. Mary Ogina delivered the closing remarks on behalf of CNAK President Grace Thirikwa, summarizing the key outcomes of the Congress and expressing gratitude to all participants and organizers.

Afternoon: Sightseeing and excursions by Delegates.

Key Outcomes and Resolutions

The **CICIAMS VII African Regional Congress** concluded with several important outcomes and resolutions aimed at improving healthcare services, particularly in the fields of **nursing and midwifery education** and the **integration of spirituality into healthcare practice**. These outcomes are intended to guide future actions and foster collaboration among healthcare professionals across the region.

1. Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery Education

A key resolution of the Congress was the recognition of the need for ongoing improvements in nursing and midwifery education across Africa. Participants agreed on the following actions:

- **Curriculum development and standardization:** There was a call to align nursing and midwifery curricula with current healthcare challenges, such as Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and mental health. Educational programs must be standardized across African countries to meet international standards while addressing local needs.
- **Increasing the number of nurse educators:** To meet the growing demand for healthcare professionals, it was recommended that African countries invest in training more nurse educators to address shortages in nursing faculties.
- **Continuous professional development (CPD):** Emphasis was placed on the importance of lifelong learning and CPD programs for healthcare professionals, ensuring that nurses and midwives remain updated on the latest practices and technologies.

2. Integration of Spiritual Care in Healthcare

The Congress reinforced the importance of integrating spiritual care into healthcare services. Key actions included:

- **Training healthcare professionals in spiritual care:** There was a consensus on incorporating spiritual care into the formal training of nurses and midwives. This would equip healthcare workers with the skills needed to address the spiritual needs of patients in addition to their physical and emotional health.
- **Development of spiritual care guidelines:** Faith-based healthcare institutions were encouraged to develop clear guidelines on how to integrate spiritual assessments into patient care, ensuring that spiritual wellbeing is a core component of healthcare services.
- **Collaboration with religious leaders:** The Congress emphasized the need for healthcare institutions to work closely with religious leaders to offer holistic care, particularly in areas with limited access to healthcare.

3. Addressing the Mental Health Crisis

The Congress highlighted the growing importance of addressing mental health issues, both among patients and healthcare workers. The following actions were proposed:

- **Integrating mental health services into primary healthcare:** Governments and healthcare institutions were urged to make mental health services accessible as part of routine healthcare. This would involve training healthcare professionals to recognize and address mental health issues.
- **Supporting healthcare workers' mental health:** Recognizing the emotional toll on healthcare workers, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a resolution to create support programs that provide psychological and emotional support to nurses and midwives.

4. Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Congress acknowledged the valuable lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and proposed actions to strengthen healthcare systems:

- **Strengthening emergency preparedness:** Healthcare institutions were urged to develop comprehensive preparedness plans for future pandemics and public health emergencies.
- **Enhancing community health education:** Emphasis was placed on educating communities about the importance of vaccination, preventive health measures, and early treatment, as key strategies to prevent future outbreaks.

5. Fostering Collaboration and Networking

A key outcome of the Congress was the emphasis on fostering stronger networks and collaborations across countries and institutions:

- **Regional healthcare networks:** Participants resolved to create formal networks between healthcare institutions across Africa to share best practices, research, and resources.
- **Cross-border partnerships:** The Congress called for the establishment of partnerships between African and international healthcare institutions, enabling resource-sharing and professional exchanges to improve healthcare outcomes.



Participant Feedback

Participants of the **CICIAMS VII African Regional Congress** provided valuable feedback on the organization, content, and overall experience of the event. The feedback was gathered through surveys and informal discussions with attendees, and it highlighted both the strengths of the Congress and areas for improvement.

Positive Feedback

Many participants praised the Congress for its organization, the quality of presentations, and the opportunity to network with other professionals. Key areas of positive feedback included:

- **High-quality content:** Participants found the presentations and workshops to be informative, well-researched, and relevant to current healthcare challenges. The focus on **nursing education**, **mental health**, and **spiritual care integration** was especially appreciated.
- **Diverse perspectives:** Attendees valued the diversity of speakers and participants, with insights from various regions and healthcare sectors contributing to a richer discussion. The inclusion of international perspectives was seen as a major strength.
- **Networking opportunities:** The Congress provided a platform for healthcare professionals to network and share experiences. Many participants expressed that the connections made during the event would be valuable for future collaboration.
- **Spiritual enrichment:** Several participants noted that the integration of spirituality, including daily Masses and discussions on faith-based healthcare, was an enriching aspect of the Congress.
- **Quality of presentations:** The majority of participants rated the papers presented as either “Excellent” or “Very good.” Many attendees appreciated the depth and relevance of the topics, particularly those on **nursing and midwifery education**, **spiritual care**, and **mental health**.
- **Opportunity for discussion:** A significant portion of the respondents rated the opportunity for discussion as “Very good.” Attendees felt that the interactive nature of the sessions allowed for meaningful dialogue and knowledge exchange.
- **Venue and accommodation:** Participants were highly satisfied with the venue and accommodation, with most rating both as “Excellent” or “Very good.” The facilities were praised for their comfort and suitability for the event.
- **Overall satisfaction:** The majority of respondents expressed high overall satisfaction, with comments highlighting the Congress as well-organized, enriching, and educational. The spiritual elements, including the Holy Masses, were especially appreciated by many attendees.

Areas for Improvement

While the Congress was largely seen as successful, participants also identified areas where improvements could be made:

- **More engagement opportunities:** A few participants expressed a desire for more interactive workshops or hands-on training sessions, especially on technical topics like the use of technology in healthcare and mental health intervention strategies.
- **Internet connection:** Some participants mentioned that the internet connection at the venue was inconsistent, which affected their ability to fully engage with certain aspects of the program.
- **Time management:** A few respondents suggested that the scheduling of sessions could be improved. Some attendees noted that certain sessions ran over time, limiting the opportunity for Q&A or discussion. It was suggested that better time management could allow for more interactive sessions.

- **Excursion and sightseeing opportunities:** Several participants noted that there were no planned excursions or sightseeing activities, which they felt would have enhanced the overall experience of the Congress. The Congress included plans for local excursions and cultural experiences, but several participants felt that these activities were not well-coordinated or did not fit smoothly into the event schedule.
- **Longer discussion periods:** There were suggestions for allocating more time to discussion and interactive sessions, especially on technical topics such as technology in healthcare and ethical dilemmas in end-of-life care.

Future Recommendations

Based on the feedback, the following recommendations were made for future congresses:

- **More time for interactive sessions:** Future events should allocate more time for interactive workshops and discussions, allowing participants to engage more deeply with the material.
- **Improved excursion coordination:** Excursions and site visits should be better integrated into the event schedule to ensure a smoother experience for attendees.
- **Follow-up and continued engagement:** Participants expressed interest in continued engagement after the Congress, suggesting that CICIAMS could create an online platform or forum where healthcare professionals can continue discussions and share updates.

Additional Comments

Participants also provided the following specific feedback:

- “The Congress was well-organized and provided excellent opportunities for learning and networking.”
- “It was an interactive session, and both in-service and student nurses benefited greatly.”
- “The accommodation and meals were very good, but better internet connectivity would have been appreciated.”
- “More time should be allocated for discussion to allow deeper engagement with the topics.”





Conclusion

The **CICIAMS VII African Regional Congress** successfully addressed key issues in **nursing and midwifery education**, the **integration of spirituality in healthcare**, and the **challenges facing healthcare systems** across Africa. Over five days, the Congress facilitated meaningful discussions, workshops, and panel sessions that brought together diverse perspectives from healthcare professionals, policymakers, and religious leaders.

Key resolutions emerged from the Congress, focusing on the need for:

- **Improved educational frameworks** for nursing and midwifery to address current and emerging healthcare challenges.
- **Greater integration of spiritual care** into healthcare practices, ensuring a holistic approach to patient care.
- **Collaborative efforts** to address mental health issues, both among healthcare workers and patients, and to implement sustainable healthcare practices across the continent.

Participants left with actionable insights, reinforced by the collaborative spirit of the Congress. The **CICIAMS VII Congress** demonstrated the importance of cross-border partnerships and knowledge-sharing among healthcare professionals, which will be vital for addressing the healthcare challenges in the years to come.

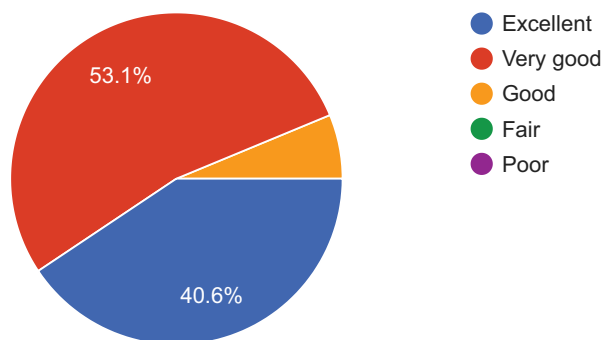
The Congress closed with the announcement of the next **CICIAMS World Congress**, which will take place in **Thailand in November 2026**, continuing the work of improving healthcare through education, ethics, and spirituality.

Annex 1: Post-Event Feedback Form Responses

Following the culmination of the congress, participants were presented with an online form to submit their feedback on the event. Out of the 89 registered participants, 33 filled out the feedback form, representing a 37.1% response rate. The charts below are a visual representation of the participants' experiences.

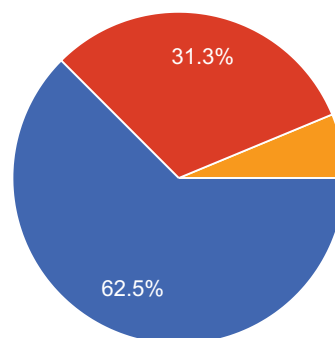
The papers presented were

32 responses



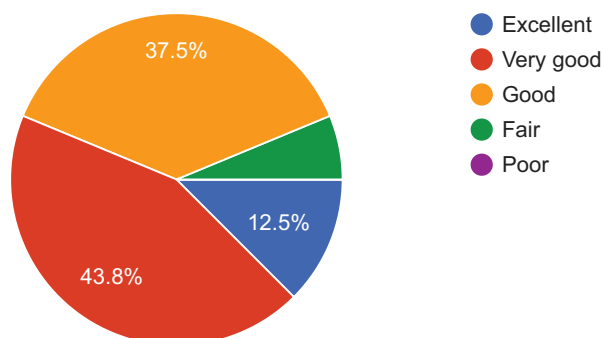
The venue was

32 responses



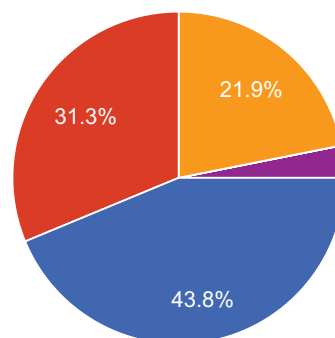
Opportunity for discussion was

32 responses



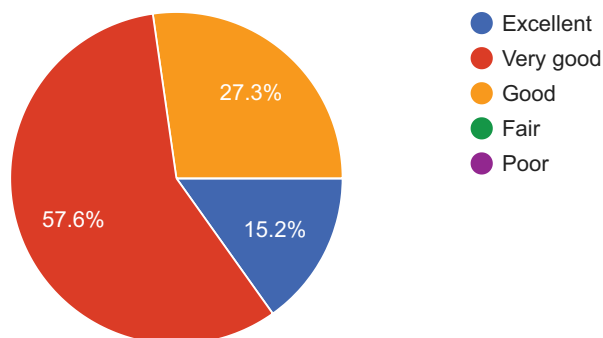
The accommodation was

32 responses



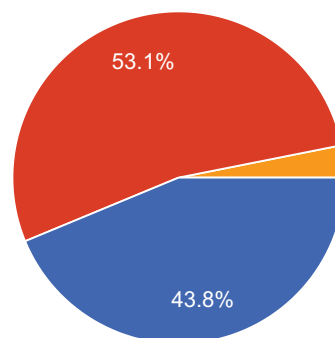
Effective use of audio-visual aids

33 responses



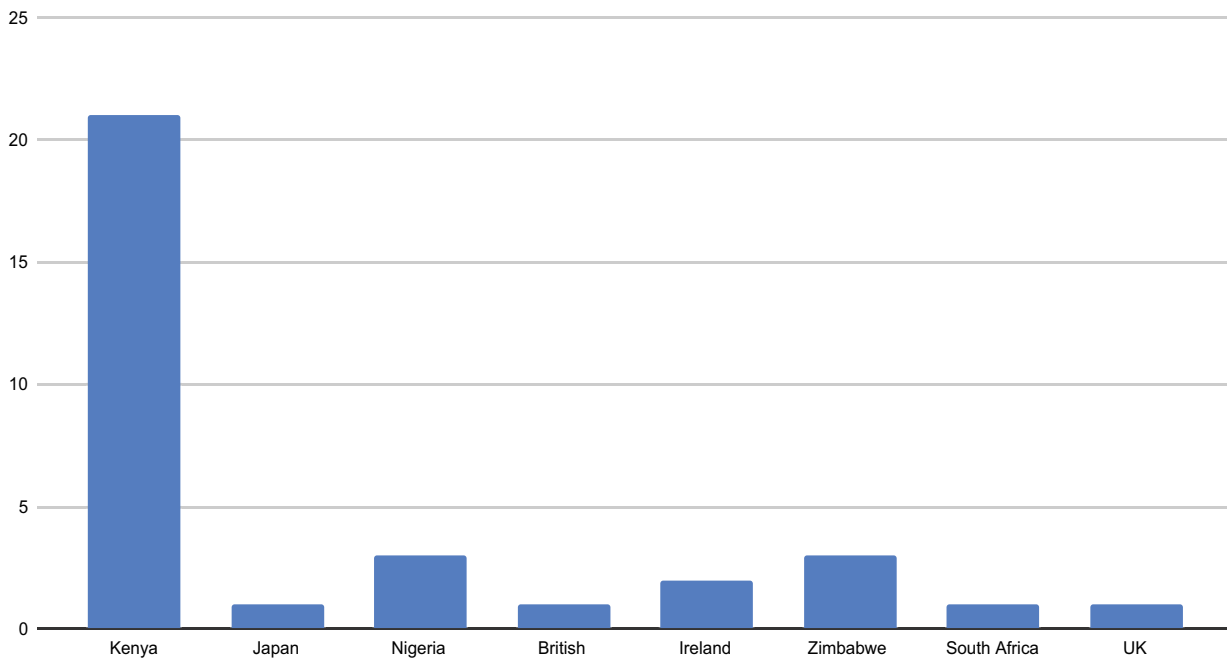
My overall satisfaction of the event is

32 responses



Out of the 89 registered participants, the chart below demonstrates the distribution by country of the 33 persons that shared their feedback on the event.

Country of Nationality



Annex 2: Participants list

The congress witnessed its highest turnout on the first day with a total of 89 registered participants. This is excluding the invited performers and volunteers.

	Name	Nationality		Name	Nationality
1	Dr Nangama Bogoy	Eswatini	46	Jacqueline Chai	Kenya
2	Fr. William Mkhanta	Eswatini	47	Justina Kusewa	Kenya
3	Dr. Khosi R Mthethwa	Eswatini	48	Jacinta Kina	Kenya
4	Rosaline Izinegbe Okoobo	Nigeria	49	Lucy Kuria	Kenya
5	Ms Alice Banze	South Africa	50	Marbel Ngaira	Kenya
6	Busisiwe Rosemary Bhengu	South Africa	51	Margaret Njoroge	Kenya
7	Hlongwane Bajabulile	South Africa	52	Margaret Oduor	Kenya
8	Nxumalo Priscilla	South Africa	53	Mary Obae	Kenya
9	Zindile Peggy Gcaba	South Africa	54	Mary Ogina	Kenya
10	Catherine Thembeke Mazibuko	South Africa	55	Modesta Nyangau	Kenya
11	Tryphina Mjamba	South Africa	56	Nancy Muthini	Kenya
12	Reginaldis Nontobeko Zuma	South Africa	57	Nelly Chelagat	Kenya
13	Reginald Mlangeni Busiswe	South Africa	58	Prisca Maina	Kenya
14	Debora Thembeke Busiswa	South Africa	59	Rebecca Kemoni	Kenya
15	Margaret Lebata	South Africa	60	Roseanne Nyabera	Kenya
16	Nobelungu Tiheli Cecilia	South Africa	61	Roselyn Abwao	Kenya
17	FR. Chomane Thabo David	South Africa	62	Sr Florida Kawira	Kenya
18	Nondumiso Shangase	South Africa	63	Sr Generosa Gicuku	Kenya
19	Dr. Caroline Zulu	Zambia	64	Sr. Phillis Ngarora	Kenya
20	Dr Asst. Professor Suwanna	Thailand	65	Theresa Isoe	Kenya
21	Dr Magdalena Supaporn Daodee	Thailand	66	Teresa Omoding	Kenya
22	Fr. Pairat Sriprasert	Thailand	67	Teresia Mungai	Kenya
23	Fr. Kriengkrai Sukjit	Thailand	68	Veronica Njoroge	Kenya
24	Gosia Malgorzata Brykczynska	Ireland	69	Violet Ambundo	Kenya
25	Geraldine Mc Sweeney	Ireland	70	Virginia Kyalo	Kenya
26	Susan McGoldrick	Ireland	71	Virginia Njenga	Kenya
27	Anyanmu Sylvleen Onyekachi A.	United Kingdom	72	Mildred Mukasia Huti	Kenya
28	Janet Muchengwa	United Kingdom	73	Monicah Musyoka	Kenya
29	Mpumelelo Mhlanga	Zimbabwe	74	Dr. Gcinile Buthelezi	Eswatini
30	Alice Bhebhe	Zimbabwe	75	Thabisile Dlamini	Eswatini
31	Limukani Ndlovu	Zimbabwe	76	Cynthia Nompumelelo Sosibo	South Africa
32	Simphiwe Mdlongwa	Zimbabwe	77	Ugbong Felicia Akwenaboye	Nigeria
33	Beatrice van Dorsser	Netherlands	78	Cecilia Omariba	Kenya
34	Agatha Ngithi	Kenya	79	Peters Josphine Wairimu	Kenya
35	Agnes Abunga	Kenya	80	Jedidah Seraphino	Kenya
36	Anne Gikuni	Kenya	81	Ms. Debra Mabunda	Zimbabwe
37	Anne Kanyuga	Kenya	82	Janet Nzai	Kenya
38	Anne Wawire	Kenya	83	George Osoo	Kenya
39	Anne Yator	Kenya	84	Anastacia Ruuri	Kenya
40	Elizabeth Kamau	Kenya	85	Patrick Kariuki	Kenya
41	Florenca Waswa	Kenya	86	Rose Makena	Kenya
42	Fr. Francis Moriasi	Kenya	87	Dr. Thandiwe Dlamini	Eswatini
43	Fr.Stanslause Simiyu	Kenya	88	Hiroko Shimizu	Japan
44	Grace Thirikwa	Kenya	89	Fr. Kenneth Sleyman	Japan
45	Jacinta Macharia	Kenya			

	Online Attendees				
1	Diana Ruzicka	USA	4	Addis Hlomani	Zimbabwe
2	Patria Sayers	USA	5	Manan Nowak	USA
3	Anne Reeser	USA			

	2 Days Attendees			1 Day Attendee	
1	Martha Kwatumba	Kenya	1	Willbroda Juma	Kenya
2	Irene Omagwa	Kenya			

	Guest Speaker	
1	Dr Judith Awinja	Kenya
	Director of Nursing, Ministry of Health	

	Presenters				
1	Fr. P.Y. Kiprop-Mbaaga	Kenya	3	Dr. Rose Maina	Kenya
2	Fr Selvam Sahaya	Kenya	4	Elizabeth Adol	Kenya

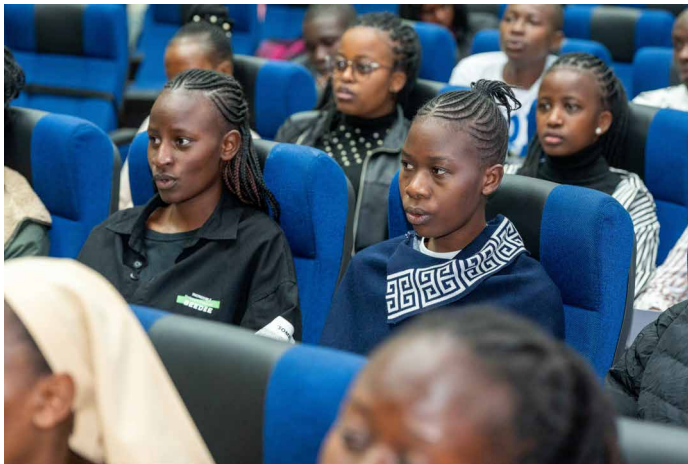
	Other Guests				
1	Venerandah Shivachi	Kenya	3	Alloys Kibosa	Kenya
2	Collins Anjwang	Kenya			

	Volunteers				
1	Derrick Onseria	Kenya	4	Brian Mbithi	Kenya
2	Lesely Nekesa	Kenya	5	Robert Odhiambo	
3	Eusebia Jepkosgei	Kenya			



Annex 3: Photo Gallery

Here's a look back at a few of the moments of the CICIAMS VII Congress.









CICIAMS VII AFRICAN REGIONAL CONGRESS

NAIROBI 2024

The 7th African Regional Congress of the International Catholic Committee of Nurses
and Medico-Social Assistants (CICIAMS)

VENUE: Kenya School of Monetary Studies, Nairobi

DATE: 7th - 9th August 2024



Catholic Nurses
Association
of Kenya



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC
COMMITTEE OF NURSES AND
MEDICO-SOCIAL ASSISTANTS