

STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI



MANUALS COMPEDIUM

September 2020

STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI



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Student Christian Organisation Of Malawi (SCOM)
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**CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT
CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION
OF MALAWI (SCOM)**

AMENDED VERSION

JANUARY, 2019



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PART I

PRELIMINARY

Section 1: Name and Address

- a) The name of the organization shall be **STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI**, here in after referred to as the “**ORGANISATION**” in brief, “**SCOM**”
- b) The constitution shall be referred to as “constitution of Student Christian Organization of Malawi,” in brief, **SCOM** Constitution.
- c) The registered office of the organization shall be in Lilongwe, Malawi and any other place in Malawi as Trustees will determine
- d) The postal address of the organization shall be post office Box 657, Lilongwe

Section 2: Patron

- a) The patron of the organization shall be elected by the National General Council at its Annual General Meeting.
- b) Within 30 days of the election, the National Executive Committee shall notify the proposed patron in writing who shall also consent in writing.
- c) The Patron shall hold the office for a period of five years, after which he/she may be re-elected.
- d) The organization shall not be obliged to have a patron.
- e) The patron, if appointed shall reserve honorary and advisory capacities with public relational and promotional functions.



Section 3: Interpretation

a) In this constitution, unless context otherwise requires: “Organization” shall mean the Student Christian Organization of Malawi;

“**Constitution**” shall mean the Constitution of the registered trustees of the Student Christian Organization of Malawi;

“**Council**” shall mean the general Council;

“**Executive Committee**” shall mean the Executive Committee of the SCOM as established under section 09.3 of the constitution;

“**Student**” shall mean any person studying at any of the post-primary institutions in Malawi;

“**Bible**” shall necessarily mean both Old and New Testament of the Holy Bible;

“**Scriptures**” shall mean the word of God as written in the Bible;

“**Statement of faith**” shall mean the statement of faith established under section 05 of the constitution;

“**Member**” shall mean member of the organization in terms of section 07 of the constitution;

“**Church**” shall mean the worldwide body or grouping of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah, Lord and coming Judge of the world.

“**Denomination**” shall mean any denomination of any Christian congregation;

“**Jesus Christ**” shall mean Jesus Christ as portrayed in the Bible;

“**Men/Man**” shall necessarily include women/woman;

“**General Secretary**” shall mean the employed Chief Executive Officer at the national secretariat of the organization;

“**Associate**” shall mean any mature Christian who loves Jesus Christ and who has first been trained by the organization and is a duly registered member of a zone and subscribes to the aims of SCOMAF;



“Senior Friend” shall mean any non-student Christian who is interested to work with students at a particular institution and has been officially attached to the institution by the organization;

“Organ” shall mean the three Student and Associates Outreach; Business, Investment and Fundraising and SCOM Development Commission divisions operating under the National Executive Committee of SCOM

“Section” shall mean the Associates Fellowship, Universities and Colleges’ and secondary schools sections of the organization;

“Region” shall mean any of the four geographical division of Malawi;

“Zone” shall mean a zone of the SCOM Associates Fellowship established under section 11 (a)

“Branch” shall mean any group of Christian students operating under the organization at a particular institution;

“Employed Staff” shall include persons on regular paid-up contract with the organization;

“Moral standards” shall mean standards as determined in the Bible;

“Trustees” shall mean the registered trustees of SCOM;

“Commission” shall mean the SCOM Development Commission composed of appointed commissioners



PART II

OBJECTS, STATEMENT OF FAITH AND POWERS

Section 4: Objects of the Organization

- a) The organization shall be a non-profit making ecclesiastical and interdenominational whose objects shall be:
 - i. To call all students to personal faith in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit according to the scriptures, and to a life of union with Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit
 - ii. To deepen the spiritual life of the students through prayer, study of the Holy Scriptures as the word of God and the record of Gods' revelation of himself to man.
 - iii. To help Christian students to witness for Jesus Christ in and out of school or college, and by study and discussion their Christian vocation by living as his true disciples.
 - iv. To bring Christian students into fellowship with each other in serving the needs of all students and the wider world.
 - v. To call Christian students to work for unity, renewal and extension of the church in Malawi and throughout the world, and to encourage them to be responsible members of their particular church denominations, in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 5: Statement of Faith

- a) In fulfilling its objectives, the organization shall be guided by the following statement of faith:



- i. There is one God who is the Holy Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)
- ii. God created everything that there is out of nothing; and all that He created was good. He continues to care for what he created. (Genesis 1:1-10)
- iii. God created man in his own image, giving him authority over the earth (Genesis 1:27-28). However, man rebelled against God in co-operating with Satan. (Genesis 3: 1-7)
- iv. Even though all men have sinned, God still loves men with an everlasting love, and has sent his own Jesus Christ to save man. (Romans 5:6; 1 Timothy 1:15) Jesus Christ though being truly to God became real man and died for our sins. He rose bodily from the grave, never to die again and ascend to heaven. (Acts 2:23, 32-33). He thus brought us new life, so that in fellowship with him we receive salvation (Thessalonians 5:9).
- v. From heaven, God sent His Holy Spirit upon man to convict man of sin, righteousness and judgment leading to repentance, rebirth and faith (John 16:8). By the Holy Spirit God seals all believers, calls them into fellowship with Himself and one another in His church, and seeks to fill them daily (Ephesians 1:13;5:18).
- vi. God commission believers to take His gospel in love and service and make disciples of all men.(Matthew 28:18-20)
- vii. God has given us the Bible, which is inspired and infallible word of God hence inerrant, the only true record of how He has created us and saved us in Christ Jesus, and is the final authority in matters of faith and conduct. (II Timothy 3: 15-17; II Peter 1:16, 19:21).
- viii. At Gods' appointed time, Jesus will come again in power and great glory to judge all men and bring to final fulfillment salvation for those who do not. (Matthew 24:30-31).



Section 6: Powers of the Organization

- a) Subject to the general and specific directions of the trustees, the organization shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession, common seal and powers to:
 - i. Open and/close any branch or branches of the organization at any of the institutions in Malawi;
 - ii. Raise funds by way of borrowing, donations or gifts of money or other property from any person or institution for the furtherance of its objects;
 - iii. Employ any person or body corporate upon such terms or conditions and remuneration as the organization may consider necessary;
 - iv. Where necessary, establish sub-committees and quasi-independent bodies as well as appoint members to assist the organization in carrying out any of its functions;
 - v. Print, publish, issue or circulate any information, report, periodical, book, pamphlet, leaflet or any other materials relating to the Organization;
 - vi. Legally and administratively represent the interests of its members before any legally-instituted authority;
 - vii. Invest and deal with any of its money not immediately required in any securities in such manner as the Organization may deem fit;
 - viii. Acquire, lease, hold, maintain, develop, let, sell, mortgage, exchange or dispose of property whether real or personal, or immovable, and generally deal with its property in any way the Organization may deem necessary;
 - ix. Generally, do all such lawful things as may be required for the attainment of the objects of the Organization.

PART III

ADMINISTRATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Section 7: Sections of SCOM

- a) The ministry shall comprise of three sections namely secondary school students, post-secondary school students and SCOM Associates.

Section 8: Membership of SCOM

- a) Membership of the organization shall be open to all students at any of the post primary institutions in Malawi as long as he/she:
 - i. Subscribes to the objects of the Organizations;
 - ii. Subscribes to the statement of faith of the Organization; and,
 - iii. Is registered with the Organization through an institutional branch.
- b) Operating branches shall be required to register with National Secretariat of the Organization, provided that such branches pay their subscription to the Secretariat.

Section 9: Secondary and High School Branches

- a) Membership of SCOM in post primary schools but pre-colleges shall be open to all students as long as they in totality fulfil the following:
 - i. Subscribe to the aims of SCOM
 - ii. Pay annual membership fee as prescribed by NGC
 - iii. Abide by the SCOM Code of Conduct



- b) Secondary and High School Branches shall operationally report to zone leadership of the SCOMAF Zone in which they jurisdictionally fall.
- c) Secondary and High School Branches shall strive to update and consult the SCOM Patron on branch operations and transactions.

Section 10: Universities and Colleges Section (UCS)

- d) Membership of SCOM in universities and colleges shall be open to all students as long as they in totality fulfil the following:
 - i. Subscribe to the aims of SCOM
 - ii. Pay annual membership fee
 - iii. Abide by the SCOM Code of Conduct
 - iv. Do not display behaviors that put the reputation of SCOM into bad light
- e) SCOM members in universities and colleges shall operate under a branch committee which shall at basic constituted of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Treasurer, Bible Study Coordinator and 2 Committee Members.
- f) Universities and Colleges Branches (UCS Branches) shall operationally report to zone leadership of the SCOMAF Zone in which they jurisdictionally fall.
- g) The operations of Universities and Colleges branches shall be prescribed in the SCOM Handbook
- h) At the discretion of zone leadership, members of different UCS branches shall be assigned secondary schools in which they will operate as Coordinators/mentors jointly with SCOMAF associates.
- i) UCS Branches shall with guidance of SCOMAF zones and school authorities appoint a Patron who shall be regularly updated and assist in smooth operations of the UCS Branches.



Section 11: Associates of SCOM and Associates Fellowship

- a) Associates of the ministry shall operate under the SCOM Associates Fellowship (SCOMAF) section which subject to the general and specific directions of the SCOM National General Council, shall pursue the following aims:
 - i. To further the work of SCOM through prayer, evangelism, counseling, teaching, encouragement and financial and material support.
 - ii. To identify and provide part time service to such SCOM branches as stand in need in complementary to full-time staff.
 - iii. To promote Christian growth, fellowship and service among non-student Christians.
 - iv. To promote and publicize the ministry of SCOM.
 - v. To foster the attainment of highest standard of Christian and professional conduct, commitment of personal training and abilities to Gods' service, and commitment to witness for Jesus Christ, among members.
 - vi. To perform any functions delegated to it by the NGC or National Executive Committee.
- b) SCOMAF shall welcome and seek to promote the participation of all associates without discrimination provided that such associates:
 - i. Are committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and to His great commission
 - ii. Are committed to the statement of faith of the Organization.
 - iii. Are committed to the fulfillment of the Organization;
 - iv. Are subscribers to the prevailing published SCOM Code of Conduct



Section 12: Organs of the Organization

- a) For purposes of smooth running of the organization, there shall be three specialized organs reporting to and operating under the guidance of National Executive Committee namely
 - i. Student and Associates Outreach Division (SAOD)
 - ii. Businesses, Investment and Fundraising (BIF)
 - iii. SCOM Development Commission (SCOM Dev)

Section 13: Operational Structure

- a) Subject to review by the National General Council the operational structure of the organization shall comprise of and be of the order below:
 - i. Board of Trustees;
 - ii. National General Council;
 - iii. National Executive Committee
 - iv. Three organs namely Student and Associates Outreach Division (SAOD), Business, Investment and Fundraising (BIF) and SCOM Development Commission (SCOM Dev)
 - v. Regional SCOM Committees
 - vi. SCOMAF Zones
 - vii. Secondary and Post-Secondary Branches

Section 14: General Qualities for Committee Members

- a) Eligible members for election into any of the above committees and organs shall necessarily have the following qualities:
 - i. They shall have had a life changing experience with the Lord Jesus Christ provided that they are not recent converts.
 - ii. They shall lead a life above reproach with reputable standing even among the unbelievers.



- iii. They shall hold prayer and the Word of God central in their regular life in conduct and doctrine.
- iv. They shall subscribe to both aims and statement of Faith the Organization.
- v. They shall be a member of the Organization, a member of the associate fellowship, a senior friend or a member of an Organization with which SCOM has good spiritual relationship.
- vi. Subscribe to the published SCOM Code of Conduct

PART IV

OPERATION

Section 15: National Governing Council

- a) There is hereby established a body called National Governing Council (NGC) which shall be the highest broad policy making body of SCOM.

Section 15.1 Powers and Functions of the National Governing Council

- a) Subject to the general and specific direction of the Board of Trustees and to any rules made by it, NGC shall have powers and functions:
 - i. To manage the affairs of the Students Christian Organization of Malawi under its Jurisdiction to the best advantage.
 - ii. To be responsible for the spiritual needs and growth of the organizations' members.
 - iii. To approve appointment and dismissal of staff for the promotion of the organizations' objects.
 - iv. To ratify appointments in the National Executive Committee made between General Council meetings
 - v. To elect and dissolve a National Executive Committee in the interest of the organization.
 - vi. To raise support for the promotion of the organizations objects.
 - vii. To control the financial expenditures of the organization.
 - viii. To appoint auditors and legal advisers of the organization.



- ix. To advise and seek advice from Trustees Board on matters affecting the running of the organization.
- x. To maintain good working relations with all parties concerned, without loss of vision and /divine calling
- xi. To affiliate or disaffiliate the organizations' to/from any other institution or organization.
- xii. To represent interests of the organizations' members before legally instituted authority.
- xiii. To amend the constitution.
- xiv. To appoint or dismiss trustees.
- xv. To approve the audited accounts.
- xvi. To appoint and dismiss patron
- xvii. To dissolve the SCOM Associates Fellowship.
- xviii. To dissolve the National General Council.
- xix. To decide upon the general policy of the organization.
- xx. To issue rules/instructions as may be considered necessary for the furtherance of the organizations' objects.

Section 15.2 Undelegated powers of the National General Council

- a) Notwithstanding the powers of the National Executive Committee in section 15.1, the National General Council may not delegate the following powers:-
 - i. To amend the constitution
 - ii. To appoint or dismiss the Trustees Board
 - iii. To appoint or dismiss the patron
 - iv. To dissolve the SCOM Associates' Fellowship
 - v. To dissolve the National General Council



Section 15.3: Composition of the National Governing Council

- a) The National General Council shall compromise:
 - i. All members of the National Executive Committee
 - ii. All members of the Regional Committees
 - iii. All members of the Trustees Board
 - iv. All members of the Student and Associates Outreach Division (SAOD)
 - v. All Members of the Business, Investment and Fundraising (BIF) Division
 - vi. All SCOM Development Commissioners
 - vii. All members of the National Universities and Colleges Committee
 - viii. The General Secretary
 - ix. All SCOM Management Members
 - x. One representative of the Malawi Council of Churches
 - xi. The General Secretary of Scripture Union or his representative
 - xii. One representative of University Chaplains who shares vision and faith of the organization
 - xiii. One representative of the Trans World Radio
 - xiv. The General Secretary of the Evangelical Association of Malawi or his representatives
 - xv. One representative of the Bible Society of Malawi.
 - xvi. One Representative of World Vision Malawi Office
 - xvii. One Representative of the Ministry of Education



Section 15.4: Meetings and Procedures of the National General Council

- a) The National General Council shall meet at least once a year at such specific places and times as deemed convenient to members, one of which shall be the annual general meeting
- b) Such meetings shall be preceded by written notice given at least fourteen days in advance.
- c) In addition to members of the organization, interested persons and organizations may be invited to annual general meetings as may be decided by the NEC.
- d) In a situation where 15.4 9 (c) prevails, the invited persons and organizations shall be treated as observers and will not have voting rights
- e) The quorum for such a meeting shall be half of the membership. In the event that quorum is not formed after sixty minutes from the advertised time, the meeting shall stand adjourned for four weeks; and if the quorum is not formed by then, the members present form quorum.
- f) The NEC chairperson shall preside over all meetings. In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chairperson shall preside over the meeting; and in the absence of both the chairperson and the vice chairperson, members present shall elect from among themselves a member to preside over the meeting. The vice chairperson or the member so presiding the meeting shall have all the powers of chairperson for that meeting.
- g) A decision and resolution of NGC shall be resolution of the majority of members present and, in the event of an equality votes, the chairperson or member presiding shall have a casting vote in addition to his /her elaborative vote as member of the executive committee.



- h) An extraordinary general council meeting may be called for by the National Executive Committee provided that half of the membership of the National General Council demands so.

Section 16: The National Executive Committee

- a) Subject to the general and specific direction of the Board of the National General Council (NGC), there shall be an elected National Executive Committee (NEC) which shall be the highest steering and operational Committee of SCOM

Section 16.1 Powers and functions of the National Executive Committee (NEC)

- a) Unless so decided by NGC, NEC shall have the following powers and functions:
 - i. To implement policies of the National General Council.
 - ii. To ensure that the Council is represented at all Trustees Board meetings through the persons of the chairperson and the general secretary.
 - iii. To maintain the integrity and calling of the organization.
 - iv. To appoint and dismiss the General Secretary and all other staff.
 - v. To be responsible for the welfare and discipline of staff, whether full-time or voluntary.
 - vi. To make proposals of appointments in the National Executive Committee either in place of or in addition, for the General Councils' approval.
 - vii. To assist in the select or proposal of suitable sites and/ premises for operation or facilitation of the operation of the organization.
 - viii. To initiate, facilitate or supervise all infrastructure development.



- ix. To facilitate the raising of support and observe all necessary terms of such supporters.
- x. To choose saving banks, prepare annual budget, control expenditure, and facilitate the auditing of accounts.
- xi. To motivate and oversee the Sectional, Regional and Organs' Committees.
- xii. To arrange, organize and conduct Annual General Meetings of the National General Council.
- xiii. To arrange, organize and conduct seminar, retreat, conference, workshop, forum, symposium, or any public meeting to facilitate the furtherance of the organization's other public meetings.
- xiv. To appoint any committees or subcommittees of the National Executive Committee as may be deemed necessary.
- xv. To carry out any functions delegated to it by National General Council.

Section 16.2 Composition, Election and Tenure of National Executive Committee

- a) The National Executive Committee shall be composed of the fifteen members namely: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Vice Chairperson, General Secretary (or his/her representative), Chairperson of BIF, Chairperson of SCOM Development Commission, 5 Committee Members and UCS Chairperson and Vice Chairperson
- b) The National Executive Committee shall be elected by National General Council at its annual General meeting
- c) Members of the National Executive Committee shall hold office for three years, after which they may be re-elected once.
- d) Candidates proposed in absentia will necessarily have been contacted and confirmed willingness in advance to the proposer.



- e) For purposes of committee's institutional memory and continuity of policies, three of the five committee members will be elected two years after the election of the other nine members and will serve for subsequent three years.

Section 16.3 Meetings and Procedures of the National Executive Committee

- a) The specific operations of NEC shall be guided by SCOM Board Operations Manual
- b) The National Executive Committee shall hold meetings at least once every three months at such specific venues and times as deemed convenient.
- c) Such meetings shall be preceded by a seven days' notice.
- d) The quorum for such meetings shall be half of the membership. In the event that quorum is not formed after sixty minutes from the advertised time, the meeting shall stand adjourned for four weeks; and if quorum is not formed by then, the members present
- e) The chairperson shall preside over all meetings. In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chairperson shall preside over the meeting; and in the absence present; and in the absence of both the chairperson and the vice chairperson, members present shall elect from among themselves a member to preside over the meeting. The vice chairperson or member so presiding shall have all powers of chairperson for that meeting.
- f) A decision of the Council shall be by resolution of the majority or members present; and in the event of an equality of votes, the chairperson or member presiding shall have a vote as a member of the Council.

Section 17: Student and Associates Outreach Directorate (SAOD)

- a) Except with the determination of NGC, there shall be the Students and Associates Outreach Division (SAOD) which shall be the overall organ under NEC responsible for students and schools outreach as well as associates welfare and outreach



- b) The Chairperson of SAOD shall be NEC vice Chairperson
- c) SAOD shall be composed of Regional Chairpersons, Zonal Chairs as well as two regional representations of UCS and 2 regional representatives of students
- d) SAOD shall ensure that all students and associates outreach conferences and retreats are undertaken routinely and in line with the vision and goals of SCOM
- e) SAOD shall meet at least twice a year

Section 18: Business, Investments and Fundraising (BIF) Directorate

- a) There shall be an organ under NEC called the Business, Investment and Fundraising (BIF) whose core objective shall be to identify, advise, articulate and champion the implementation of SCOM Investments and Business Ventures capable of sustaining the boosting and sustaining the financial and material resource flow of SCOM in line with SCOM objectives and statement of faith.

Section 19.1 Composition, Election and Tenure of BIF

- b) There shall be 13 Directors nominated by registered Associates at ASCO who upon confirmation by NGC shall constitute the BIF.
- c) Besides the 13 elected directors, chairs of key fundraising projects shall be automatically seconded members of BIF.
- d) There shall be Chairperson of BIF who shall be the Head of BIF
- e) BIF members will serve for three years and can be reappointed for one extra term.

Section 19.2 Functions and Powers of BIF

- a) Except with the directive of NEC, key functions of BIF shall be to:
 - i. Identify areas of viable investments and business opportunities capable of boosting financial and material resources for attainment of SCOM's goals in line with its values and principles.



- ii. Facilitate crafting of SCOM's Business Plans and their implementation in all its investment and business opportunities that have a plausible effect on the flow of resources to SCOM
- iii. Formulate (strategic) plan, plans on and facilitate processes and mechanisms for popularization and implementation of SCOM's Investments and Business Opportunities
- iv. Monitor implementation and progress of SCOM's Investments and Business ventures
- v. In conjunction with SCOM Secretariat, advise structures of SCOM on best practices and processes for mainstreaming Investment and Business ventures
- vi. Convene on quarterly basis internal planning and review meetings of its own
- vii. Convene and organize annual SCOM Investments and Business Review Forum for reflections, reporting, review and stakeholders' interactions on progress made against establishment of sustainable financial bases in SCOM
- viii. Devise a mechanism, advise and cause to be effected the regular remittance of resources to SCOM
- ix. Report as a whole to NEC and NGC progress and performance of SCOM's Investments and Business ventures
- x. Summon any member within SCOM circles for purposes of enriching or soliciting some input to its meetings
- xi. Establish Sub-committees for smooth running of Directorate if deemed necessary
- xii. Where subcommittees have been established and where other members have been co-opted into such committees, seek the endorsement and clearance of SCOM NEC for such names.
- xiii. Inform NEC of any vacancies that may arise in the Directorate for NEC's action
- xiv. Report to NEC on quarterly basis of the Directorate's work



- xv. Attend SCOM Annual National Governing Council Meetings
- xvi. Appear and Attend (as one or whole) NEC Meetings at NEC Chair or his delegate's invitation or summon

Section 20: SCOM Development Commission

- a) There shall be a specialized organ called SCOM Development Commission whose key objective shall be to identify, advise articulate and champion the implementation of SCOM Social Development Programmes within SCOM Structures and within the boundaries of its strategic stakeholders in line with SCOM objectives and statement of faith.

Section 20.1 Composition, Election and Tenure of SCOM Development Commission

- b) Unless otherwise proposed by NEC and approved by NGC, there shall be seven commissioners who shall serve for a 3-year term and can be re-elected once.
- c) The Chairperson of SCOM Development Commission together with the other six commissioners shall be confirmed at the NGC after NEC's nomination
- d) Nominated Commissioners shall be drawn from different academic and practical backgrounds as may be deemed necessary by NEC from time to time.

Section 20: 2 Functions and Powers of SCOM Development Commission

- a) In constant collaboration, coordination and working with the secretariat, the commission will:
 - i. Identify, consolidate and prioritize core areas of interest and connection to students which should form broad basis for establishment of SCOM Social Teachings in all relevant areas of human life, and align them to the SCOM mandate.
 - ii. Facilitate crafting of SCOM's Teachings on various topics of interest, in line with SCOM's Social Development Model, and



Constitution

relevance to students that have a bearing on their future or present social life either directly or indirectly

- iii. Facilitate the development of SCOM's Social Development Model
- iv. Formulate (strategic) plan, plans on and facilitate processes and mechanisms for popularization and implementation of SCOM's Social Development Model
- v. Monitor implementation and progress of SCOM's implementation of the devised social development model and its programmes, projects of activities
- vi. In conjunction with SCOM Secretariat, advise structures of SCOM on best practices and processes for mainstreaming SCOM Social Development Model
- vii. Convene on quarterly basis internal planning and review meetings of its own
- viii. Convene and organize annual SCOM Social Development Forum for reflections, reporting, review and stakeholders interactions on progress made against mainstreaming and implementation of SCOM's Social Development Model
- ix. Work with FBI in mobilizing resources for SCOM's social interventions
- x. Identify resource persons within SCOM circles for purposes of enriching or soliciting some input to its activities
- xi. Establish Sub-committees for smooth running of Commission if deemed necessary
- xii. Where subcommittees have been established and where other members have been co-opted into such committees, seek the endorsement and clearance of SCOM NEC for such names. Report to NEC on quarterly basis of the Commission's work
- xiii. Attend SCOM Annual National Governing Council Meetings
- xiv. Attend (as one or whole) NEC Meetings by invitation



Section 21: Regional Committees

- a) Unless otherwise decided by NEC, there shall be four regional committees responsible for operations of SCOM in southern, eastern, central and northern regions of Malawi.

Section 21.1 Powers and Functions of Regional Committees

- a) Subject to the general and specific directions of the National Executive Committee, the powers and functions of the sectional committees shall be:
 - i. To oversee the operation of zone committees as guided by the 3 organs of the ministry
 - ii. To translate and implement the strategies of SOAD, BIF and SCOM Dev as mandated by NEC
 - iii. To maintain in the integrity and calling of the organization in the section or region.
 - iv. To represent the region at all National General Council and other relevant meetings of the organization.
 - v. To identify the needs of the region, present them before relevant authorities, and facilitate the meeting of those needs.
 - vi. To arrange, organize, and conduct conferences and annual general meetings of the section or region.
 - vii. To organize and conduct leadership training in liaison with the associates' fellowship.
 - viii. To arrange, organize and conduct seminar, workshop, forum, retreat, conference, symposium or any public meeting for the furtherance of the organizations' objects within the region or section.
 - ix. To appoint any committee or subcommittee of the committee as may be deemed necessary.
 - x. To carry out any functions delegated to it by the three organs as mandated by National Executive Committee



Section 21.2 Composition, Election and Tenure of Regional Committees

- a) Core membership of Regional Committees shall be made of up of zone chairpersons and representatives of secondary and universities and colleges (UCS) sections. The regional committee may incorporate not more than 5 extra members if the committee requires skills that are not possessed by zone chairpersons.
- b) The following positions shall be tenable in the regional committees:
 - i. Regional Chairperson
 - ii. Regional Schools Outreach Coordinator
 - iii. Regional Colleges Outreach Coordinator
 - iv. Regional Associates Fellowship & Welfare Coordinator
 - v. Regional FBI Coordinator/Treasurer
 - vi. Regional Social Development Coordinator
 - vii. Regional Church Engagement Coordinator
 - viii. Regional Secretary
 - ix. Regional Student Representatives (2)
 - x. Regional UCS-Student Representatives (2)
 - xi. Regional Ladies Coordinator
 - xii. Regional Literature Coordinator
 - xiii. Prayer Coordinator
- c) The Regional Chairperson shall be elected at the first regional meeting upon expiry of the term of the previous committee
- d) Upon election as Chairperson of the region, the person elected will seize to be Chairperson of the zone he/she represents in the regional committee. The regional chairperson's subsequent member-



ship in the committee (after initial three years) will be automatic and shall only serve as a member for the subsequent three years.

- e) The zone whose chairperson has subsequently assumed the position of regional chairperson shall be required to appoint the new zone chairperson as its representative in the regional committee.
- f) The election of regional committee shall be presided over by representative of NEC
- g) Regional Committee members shall hold office for three years and can be re-elected once

Section 21.3 Meetings and Procedures of Regional Committees

- a) There shall be an annual regional general meeting every section at such specific venues and times as deemed convenient, to which representation of all registered zones be present and undertake deliberations that culminate into resolutions
- b) The chairperson shall preside over all meetings. In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chairperson shall preside over the meeting; and in the absence of both the chairperson and the vice chairperson, members present shall elect from among themselves a member to preside over the meeting.
- c) A decision of the meeting shall be by resolution by the majority of the members present; and, in the event of an equality of votes, the chairperson or member preside shall have casting vote in addition to his/ her deliberative vote as a member of the Council.
- d) An extraordinary general meeting may be called for by the regional or zonal committee, provide that half of the membership of the region demands so.

Section 22: SCOMAF Zone Committees

- a) Subject to the general and specific directions of the national executive committee, the powers and functions of SCOMAF zonal committees shall be:-



- i. To oversee the operation of the fellowship at the zonal level as mandated by regional committees.
- ii. To translate and implement the strategies of SOAD, BIF and SCOM Dev as mandated by regional committees
- iii. To plan the weekly programs of activities for the fellowship at the zone.
- iv. To organize all the detailed activities of the monthly and / weekly activities.
- v. To represent the zone before any relevant authorities.
- vi. To receive all local support for the zone, maintain records of accounts, and facilitate the channeling of all the zones' support to the national secretariat and any other beneficiary.
- vii. To arrange, organize and conduct an annual meeting of the zone.
- viii. To arrange, organize and conduct a seminar, workshop, retreat, forum, conference symposium, or any public meeting in conjunction with the divisional committees for the furtherance of the objects of the fellowship.
- ix. To appoint any committee or subcommittee of the committee as may be deemed necessary.
- x. To carry out any functions as may be delegated by the SCOM national executive committee, and the organs of the ministry

Section 22.1: Composition, Election and Tenure of Zone Committees

- a) The following positions shall be tenable in the zone committees:
 - i. Zone Chairperson
 - ii. Zone Schools Outreach Coordinator
 - iii. Zone Colleges Outreach Coordinator
 - iv. Zone Associates Fellowship & Welfare Coordinator
 - v. Zone FBI Coordinator/Treasurer



- vi. Zone Social Development Coordinator
 - vii. Zone Church Engagement Coordinator
 - viii. Zone Secretary
 - ix. Zone Ladies Coordinator
 - x. Zone Literature Coordinator
 - xi. Prayer Coordinator
- b) The zone Chairperson shall be elected at the first zone meeting upon expiry of the term of the previous committee
 - c) The election of regional committee shall be presided over by representative of regional committee
 - d) Zone Committee members shall hold office for three years and can be re-elected once

Section 23: Operation of Branch Committees

- a) Subject to the general and specific directions of the regional and zone committee, secondary/high school and UCS Branches shall have powers and functions:
 - i. To oversee the operation of the organization at the branch as guided by zones.
 - ii. To plan the weekly program of activities for the organization at the branch.
 - iii. To organize all detailed activities of the weekly activities.
 - iv. To represent the organization before the institutional authorities.
 - v. To receive all local support for the organization, maintaining records of accounts, and facilitate the channeling of the branches, support to the national secretariat and other beneficiary.
 - vi. To arrange, organize and conduct an annual meeting of the branch.



- vii. To arrange, organize and conduct seminar, workshop, retreat, forum, joint meetings, symposium, or any public meeting for the furtherance of the objects of the organization, provided that the total number of branches involved does not exceed three.
- viii. To appoint any subcommittee or subcommittees of the committee as may be deemed necessary.
- ix. To carry out any function delegated to it by the zone, regional or sectional committee.

Section 23.1 Composition, Election and Tenure of Branch Committees

- a) The following positions shall be tenable in the branch committee:
 - i. Chairperson
 - ii. Vice Chairperson
 - iii. Secretary
 - iv. Vice Secretary
 - v. Treasurer
 - vi. Welfare Coordinator
 - vii. Bible Study Coordinator
 - viii. Prayer Coordinator
 - ix. 2 Committee Members
- b) The election of the branch committee shall be presided over by the SCOM Associate delegated by the zone responsible for the branch
- c) Zone Committee members shall hold office for 1 year and can be re-elected once
- d) No member in their final year of schooling will be eligible for election



Section 23.2 Meetings of the Zones and Branches

- a) Notwithstanding the other provisions of the clauses in this constitution, there shall be a SCOM Handbook which shall guide the meetings, procedures and operations of the zone and branches as well as there respective committees

Section 24: General Election Procedures

- a) There shall be a SCOM Handbook which shall laydown procedures for election of office bearers for elected positions in SCOM

Section 25: Discipline of Membership

- a) There shall be a published SCOM Code of conduct which shall prescribe behavior for members and leaders in SCOM
- b) Notwithstanding clause (a) above, membership of both or either organization and / or committee may be frozen on the grounds of:
 - i. Failure to abide by the statement of faith and objects of the organization; or
 - ii. Any act perceived to be contrary to the moral standards, or detrimental to the wellbeing of the organization.
- a) A member shall be dismissed from either the organization or any committee by the immediately responsible committee in consultation with either the senior friend in case of branch committee higher committee.
- b) Any disciplined member may have the liberty to appeal for revision of disciplinary measures to the immediately higher committee, provided that no appeal shall be made against the national general councils' decision.
- c) Disciplinary measures may include:
 - i. Suspension for a specified period of time.
 - ii. Expulsion
 - iii. Public confession and apology.



Section 26: Arbitration

- a) No member, associate, senior friend or committee of the organization shall take the organization or any part of it before any court of law, while such a member, associate, or committee is still the organization, on matters whose substance is a matter of the organizations' operational principles.
- b) Staff in full employment shall be exempted from the constitutional requirements to section 26 (1).



PART V

TRUSTEES

Section 27: Appointment and Tenure of the Trustees

- a) The organization shall have five trustees who shall be the legal overseers of the organization and shall hold office for a period of three years, after which they may be re-elected.
- b) All trustees shall be elected by the National General Council at the councils' annual general meeting
- c) Candidates proposed for membership on the trustees board shall be only those who have confirmed willingness to serve.
- d) All the property of the organization shall be vested in the trustees.
- e) NEC Chairperson and General Secretary shall be ex-official attendees of Trustees Meetings

Section 27.1 Powers and Functions of the Trustees Board

- a) Subject to the general and specific guidance from the National General Council, the trustee's board shall have the power:
 - i. To present t
 - j. he organization before such other, churches, government and other local organizations.
 - ii. To enter into contracts and agreements for the furtherance of the organizations' objects.



- iii. To authorize the acquisition of all property, suitable sites and/or premises for the organizations as well as the fellowship.
- iv. To raise support for the organization and the fellowship.
- v. To borrow money from any person or institution on such terms as may be mutually agreed.
- vi. To appoint any subcommittee or subcommittees of the trustee's board as may be necessary.
- vii. To ratify the appointment of the General Secretary

Section 27.2: Incorporation

- a) As soon as is practicable after being elected, the trustees shall apply for the incorporation of the organization under the trustees incorporation act (cap 5:03 of the laws of Malawi).

Section 27.3 Indemnity of the Trustees

- a) The trustees shall be indemnified against any risk and loss out of the organizations' property incurred in the execution of duties.

Section 27.4 Meetings of the Trustees

- a) The trustee's board shall hold meetings at least once every six months.
- b) Such meetings in 27.4 (a) shall be summoned by the chairperson or secretary in writing at least twenty one days in advance.
- c) The quorum for such meetings shall be at least half of the members. In the event that the quorum is not formed within forty five minutes from the scheduled time, the meeting shall adjourned for thirty days; and if again, less than half members turn up then members present shall form quorum and make binding decisions.
- d) In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chairperson shall act as chairperson and in the absence of the vice chairperson; members present shall elect a member from among themselves to act as chairperson.



Section 27.4 Cessation and Filling of Vacancies

- a) A vacancy on the trustees board shall arise on:
- i. The expiry of the term of office of a member.
 - ii. Resignation of a member after one months' written notice.
 - iii. The death of a member.
 - iv. A member leaving the country for a period of one year or such other period as the Board of Trustees may from time to time decide.
 - v. A members is certified by a competent medical practitioner as being incapacitated to discharge the power, function and responsibilities of his or her office
 - vi. A member being guilty of misconduct deemed to be against the standards set by the Bible
 - vii. A member no longer subscribing to the objects and statement of faith for which the organization stands
 - viii. A member being continuously negligent in the discharge of his or her duties and responsibilities
 - ix. A member being incompetent in the due discharge of the duties and responsibilities of the office
 - x. A member failing to attend three consecutive meetings of the board without valid reason; and
 - xi. Dismissal by the national general council on majority vote.

Section 27.5: Common Seal

- a) The common seal of the organization shall, when not in use, be kept in a secure and safe place at the organizations' national secretariat and its key placed under the custody of the chairperson of the trustee's board or the general secretary.
- b) The seal shall be affixed to all documents required by any written law, in the presence of not less than two trustees.



PART VI

FINANCE AND PROPERTY

Section 28: Funds and Accounts

- a) The organization shall keep or cause to be kept books of accounts another records related to its funds.
- b) The organization shall open and operate a suitable bank account or accounts in the name of the organization, into which all funds of the organization not immediately in use shall be deposited.
- c) All bank transactions involving the organizations' account or accounts shall bear the signatures of at least two signatories appointed by or working on behalf of the national executive committee, one of whom shall be the treasurer.
- d) Books of accounts of the organization shall be kept at such a place as the national executive committee deems fit, and shall be open for inspection by members of the organization.
- e) All investments of the organization shall be in the name of the registered trustees of the organization.

Section 29: Audit

- a) The books of accounts of the organization shall be subject to audit annually by an auditor specially employed to example the accounts.
- b) The audited accounts shall be presented to the annual general meeting of the national general council submitted at least seven days in advance.



Section 30: Dissolution and Disposition of Property

- a) If upon winding up or dissolution of the organization there remains, property after, satisfaction of all debt and liabilities, any property, whatsoever shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the organization but shall be given or transferred to an institution or institutions which have similar vision, objects or focus as SCOM as determined by the members of the organization at or before the time of winding up.



PART VII

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND INTERPRETATION

Section 31: Amendment to the Constitution

- a) Subject to the general and specific directions of the national general to council, no amendment shall be made to this constitution unless:
 - i. A motion to so amend has been communicated in writing by the secretary of the national executive committee to all members of the national general council at least thirty days in advance.
 - ii. The motion has been assented to by not less than two thirds of the present members of the national general council; and;
 - iii. The decision is made by the national general council.

Section 32: Interpretation of the Constitution

- a) Any question or dispute concerning interpretation of this constitution shall be determined by the national executive committee in accordance with rules of procedure.
- b) The interpretation to the constitution so given may be appealed against before the national general council.



PART VIII

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 33: Entering into Contracts

- (a) No branch, zone, section or division of SCOM shall enter in contract with any organization without the knowledge and consent of the National Executive Committee
- (b) The National Executive Committee shall provide guidelines to all members on the partnerships with other organizations
- (c) Copies of all contract agreements made at any level of the organization shall be sent to the secretariat for information and monitoring purposes

Section 34: Dysfunctional Committees

- a) The National Executive Committee will monitor the performance of all sectional committees to ensure they comply with the basic requirements of the organization
- b) Malfunctioning committees will be handled by the committees they report to
- c) When responsible committees are unable to handle cases involving their committees, the National Executive Committee will come in to help

Section 35: Legal Advisor

- a) The Organization shall have a legal advisor who shall be identified, from time to time by the national executive committee



- b) The legal advisor shall be an active associate and a registered and practicing lawyer with a proven record of integrity and reputation in society

Section 36: Logo of SCOM

- a) The organization shall protect its logo and letterhead by registering it with the relevant government authorities.
- b) All branches, zones and sections/divisions shall get their headed letters from the secretariat to ensure uniformity of letterhead and logo
- c) Legal action shall be taken against any individual, organization or group that uses the SCOM logo and letterhead without prior approval of the national executive committee of SCOM



SCOM AND SCOMAF OPERATIONS GUIDELINES



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PART 1:

STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATION OF MALAWI (SCOM)



WHAT IS THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI [SCOM]?

The Student Christian Organisation of Malawi (SCOM) is an indigenous inter-denominational Christian Organisation committed to the evangelisation, discipleship and training of students so that they would love and serve the Lord effectively in the Church and the world.

The Organisation consists of groups of Christian students in Secondary schools, colleges and universities throughout Malawi. These students meet regularly to deepen their own Christian faith, to discuss their difficulties and to see what the Bible has to say which can help them in their Christian walk and in sharing their faith and God's love with their fellow students.

SCOM is a fellowship that receives all students regardless of their denominational backgrounds provided that they accept SCOM aims and statement of Faith. In SCOM evangelism is a priority, discipleship is a necessity and training is a requirement. This approach is to be emphasised in both the secondary schools as well as the Universities and Colleges of the SCOM.



Aims of SCOM

In order for SCOM to fulfil its vision it is guided by these five clearly stipulated aims.

1. To call all students to a personal faith in God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit according to the scriptures, and to live as true disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. To deepen the spiritual life of students through prayer, study of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the record of God's revelation of Himself to men, written by men inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the corporate worship of the Church.
3. To help all students to witness to Jesus Christ both in and out of School or College, and by study and discussion to fulfil their vocation as students by bringing every thought into captivity to Christ.
4. To bring students into Christian fellowship with each other in serving the needs of all students and of the world.
5. To call students to work for the extension, unity and renewal of the Church throughout the world, and to bear witness as responsible members of a particular Church, in personal commitment to Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

Vision of SCOM

The five aims of SCOM can be summed up into one statement which summarises what SCOM exists for. The vision of SCOM therefore is **“To be a vibrant student movement on every campus capable of impacting the whole society for God.”**



Mission Statement

The mission statement is there to guide the organisation's efforts to achieve its vision. Therefore, the mission statement of SCOM is as follows:

“SCOM is dedicated to building a well-coordinated and financially stable organization that is committed to the evangelism, discipleship and training of students, equipping them to be witnesses of Jesus Christ on campus and beyond.”

Brief History of SCOM

Before 1961 various independent Christian fellowship groups existed in a number of institutions such as Kongwe, Domasi, Kapeni and Malosa. These groups operated in much the same way as the SCOM branches do today.

Then in January 1961 the World Student Christian Federation sponsored a leadership training conference for countries south of the Sahara at Mindolo in Zambia. The Christian Council of Malawi sent four young people to it. One of them was a theological student from Livingstonia, Franklin Chunga.

When the Christian Council met in May of that year, Rev. Chunga gave a report. A discussion followed and a wide general agreement was reached with regard to the developing pattern of Christian work amongst students in Malawi. It was agreed to ask Don Moxon, a teacher at Livingstonia to see what he could do together with people like Dr J K Louw, then of Kongwe Secondary School and Rev F. A. Chunga. They had to try and coordinate the existing groups and eventually, if possible, link them into a national movement. Contacts with the various Christian groups were made and it was found that there was a general interest and willingness to support a national conference. This resulted in a planning committee being convened at Chongoni. The committee met on 19 and 20 August 1961, to make arrangements for a national conference. Between seven and nine groups were represented here, with at least five or six absent, yet interested. It was agreed that a conference was to be held in December 1961; again at Chongoni.

A full report of this meeting was laid before the Christian Council meeting in November 1961. The report was signed by four people: Mr. Moxon, Dr Louw, Rev Chunga and Miss Liebenberg of Kapeni College. In this report the following words are found. "The Chongoni meeting produced a remarkable consensus of opinion, and the sense of unity and fellowship in the service of our Lord in the student world was something that we all experienced deeply and cherished throughout our weekend together."

First Two National Conferences

The first conference, taking as its theme the words *"To live is Christ"*, took place from 8 to 15 December, 1961, at Chongoni near Linthipe in the Central Region. It brought together about 25 Senior Friends and over 70 students. Nearly 20 institutions and nine denominations were represented.

At the conference a planning committee was formed with Rev. Richard Baxter from Blantyre mission in the chair. It had to start preparations for the next conference to be held in August 1962. At the same meeting Rev Franklin Chunga who was to be paid by the Christian Council was appointed to travel throughout the country to organise branches in schools and colleges. During February and March of 1962 he visited 20 different places. That was the beginning of SCOM work.

Meanwhile the steering committee met again in February 1962, this time in Lilongwe, and drew up a proposed Constitution, which became the basis of the Constitution of the SCOM, which was formally adopted on 30 August 1962.

The Second conference took place again at Chongoni from 27th August to 3 September 1962. The theme was "Jesus Christ the Light of the World". Over 80 students and at least 30 senior friends, representing at least 16 different institutions attended. The conference was also attended by Rev Deny's Whitehead, at that time SCOM Travelling Secretary for Rhodesia and Zambia. He provided much assistance in getting the work of the SCOM started here in Malawi.



At this conference the SCOM officially came into existence. Its inaugural meeting took place on 30 August 1962, and the name Nyasaland Student Christian Organisation was adopted. Afterwards it became MSCO and later still the name finally became the Student Christian Organisation of Malawi [SCOM], as it is still known today.

The Basis Of Faith Of SCOM

The SCOM accepts the historic Christian faith which it summarises as follows:-

1. There is One God who is the Trinity of The Father, Son and Holy Spirit. [Mat 28:19]
2. God created everything that is there out of nothing and all that He created was good. He continues to care for what he created. (Gen. 1:2)
3. God created man in His own image giving him authority over the earth. [Gen 1:27-28]. However, man rebelled against God in co- operating with the evil one. (Gen 3:1-7)
4. Even though all men have sinned, God still loves men with an everlasting love and sent His own Son Jesus Christ to save men (Rom 5:6). Christ, though being truly God, became a real man and died for our sins. He rose bodily from grave never to die again and ascended to heaven (Acts 2:23, 32-33). He thus brought to us new life, so that in fellowship with Him we receive Salvation. (I Thess. 5:9).
5. From heaven God sends His Spirit upon man to convict man of sin, righteousness and judgement leading to repentance, rebirth and faith (John 16:8). By the Holy Spirit, God seals all believers, calls them into fellowship with Him and one another in His Church, and seeks to fill them daily (Ephesians 1:13, 5:18).
6. God commissions believers to take His Gospel in love and service and make disciples of all men. (Matthew 28:19-20)
7. God has given us the Bible which is inspired by the Holy Spirit and infal-



lible Word of God and hence inerrant, the only true record of how He has created and saved us in Christ Jesus, and is the final authority in matters of faith and conduct (II Tim 3:15-17; II Peter 1:16, 19-21).

8. At God's appointed time Christ will come again in power and great glory to judge all men and bring to final fulfillment Salvation for those who trust Him and condemnation to hell for those who do not. (Matthew 24:30-31).



STARTING A STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION BRANCH

A new branch of SCOM is usually formed in a post-primary institution once some members of the school or college have become interested in the organisation.

This may be when a student or member of staff is transferred to a new school from the one where SCOM is active, or after a Training Secretary or any other person interested in SCOM has visited the place. The minimum number for a SCOM branch to be formed is ten (10) students.

When students are interested in forming a branch of SCOM in their school or college they must first get permission from the head or principal of the institution. The authorities will want to know the aims and objectives of SCOM and exactly what will take place in the branch. It would be a good idea to show them a copy of the handbook of SCOM.

Once permission has been granted by the authorities, it will be good to call for a meeting of all who are interested in the SCOM in the institution. At this meeting the aims and objectives of SCOM can be explained and a committee elected to organise the branch and its meetings.

The qualities of a leader, duties of the committee and of the individual committee members are described later on in this Handbook.

The number of committee members will depend on the size of the institution and of the branch. It is good to try and get each year or hostel, etc, represented on the committee, as long as this does not make the committee too big (e.g. more than ten). One person can both be an official (e.g. Treasurer) and represent his year or hostel on the committee at the same time. As far as possible try to get only committed Christians into the committee.

When the committee has been formed they will then get down to organising and running of the branch as described in the next pages.

MEMBERSHIP OF STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI

There are two types of membership of SCOM:

- Student membership (Secondary schools and Universities and Colleges)
- Associate membership of SCOM.

Individual Student of a Branch

It is important that only those who accept and follow the aims and the statement of faith of SCOM can become members. Beyond this, some branches may insist on attendance at certain number of meetings or on payment of a certain branch subscription, set by the branch, for membership.

Only those who have qualified for membership should be eligible to have a SCOM membership card, to vote in elections, or to sit on the committee. The SCOM National General Council accepts for full membership only students who have paid in their subscription fee.

Branch Registration

When a SCOM branch has been formed, it should be registered with the SCOM National Office through the appropriate Regional/Sectional Committee. When such a branch affiliates with the SCOM, the branch will be asked to give a registration fee of K1, 000. 00 per year for secondary schools and K3, 000. 00 for universities and colleges. In subsequent years an annual subscription fee fixed by the SCOM Council is asked for from each branch. The annual subscription fees may be revised from time to time by the National Governing Council of SCOM.



Subscription Fee

The SCOM National General Council expects every member in Secondary Schools and CDSS's to pay K100 per year to the SCOM National Office. Students in the Universities and Colleges Section are asked to Pay K500 per annum as their subscription fee. These figures are subject to review by the National General Council from time to time. The money could be sent directly to the SCOM National Office by respective branches or through their appropriate Regional or Sectional Committees. Regional/Sectional Committees should make sure that every branch under their jurisdiction has sent in the subscription fee. When a branch has sent in the subscription fee then it can receive free membership cards for its members who are in need of them.

It must be emphasised that one is not a full member if he/she does not pay his/her membership fee (subscription).



RUNNING A STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI

Size of the Committee

To be run effectively a SCOM branch must have a good committee. Generally, the committee will at least have the following officers:

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Secretary

Treasurer

Apart from these there will be other committee members who may have responsibilities such as Librarian, prayer or Bible Study Coordinators or who may just represent their year or hostel on the committee. It is important that the committee is not too large (not more than 10) so that it can discuss things properly. Some branches like to think of their Senior Friend as a member of this committee whilst other branches ask her/him to attend only special committee meetings.

Responsibilities of the Committee

These are many and varied but may be summed up by the following points:

- a) To plan the programme for the SCOM each week and each term.
- b) To organise the details of each week's meetings in advance so that everyone knows what they are expected to do.
- c) To discuss ways in which the branch can be improved and the aims of SCOM fulfilled in the branch.
- d) To discuss ways in which funds can be raised for branch activities and



for sending delegates to conferences etc.

- e) To discuss problems and complaints raised by members.
- f) To report to administration, senior friends or SCOM Associates any challenges or needs the branch might have.

Help for the Committee

When a new committee takes office and also on many occasions during its term of office it will want to ask for advice about different points. Help can be gained in the following ways:-

- a) Attending the Leadership Training Course arranged each year in different areas. Details of these can be obtained from your Regional or Sectional Secretaries.
- b) Using your Senior Friends as constant advisors and not just running to them when a crisis arises.
- c) Asking advice from ex-committee members before they leave school.
- d) Making use of this handbook.
- e) Writing and asking advice from your Regional Training Secretary, Regional UCS Coordinator, Regional Committee or SCOM-AF Zone leadership.

ELECTION OF A NEW COMMITTEE

Electing New Officers

The efficient running of the organisation depends upon the committee. Therefore, the first steps towards success depend on the choice of committee members. Only people who have had a personal experience of Salvation should be considered for the position of leadership. Here are some other few hints to help you know whom to choose into the committee.

- a) Aim at those who are committed Christians, truthful, loving and not boastful.
- b) They should be those you can trust:
- c) They should be clever enough to understand things;
- d) They should be interested in SCOM.
- e) Do not choose those who are just about to leave School/College.
- f) Do not choose people just because they are your personal friends or are popular students.
- g) If you are in mixed School/College choose both boys and girls.
- h) Choose people of different denominations if possible.
- i) Do not choose new converts or people who have just joined SCOM.

In Every Branch

There should be elections for a new committee each year. It is probably good for these elections to take place at the beginning of the second term/semester. This has two advantages:



- a) Form IV or finalist students who have been the leaders up to this point will be able to concentrate on their examinations and the new officials will be able to concentrate on SCOM.
- b) The new committee members (who should not be Form IVs or finalist) will be able to ask for advice from the ex-officials before they have left the School or College.

Notice of Elections

All members of the branch should be given good notice of the forth-coming elections. At least two weeks' notice should be given. This enables members to pray about their choices before the elections.

Who can Vote and Be voted For?

Each branch must decide for itself who is a member and thus eligible to vote. It may be those people who have paid their subscriptions or those who have attended at least a certain number of meetings. It is good to have some safeguard against a large number of non-members attending the elections just to vote for a friend of theirs. Please note that people who have not paid in their subscription fees are not full members. On the other hand, people who pay in subscription fees but don't come to the meeting cannot be regarded as committed members. Students who only come to the election should not be allowed to vote or stand for elections.

It is important that each person who is elected:-

- a) Knows and agrees with the aims of the organisation and is willing to work towards their fulfillment;
- b) Is a regular member who pays his/her subscription fees;
- c) Knows what his/her responsibility will involve;
- d) Is willing to give the time and effort necessary to fulfill their responsibility.



How To Conduct The Elections

The elections may take place in the regular SCOM meeting or else they may be held in a special meeting. Senior Friend can chair them by the out-going Chairperson or, The Senior Friend or Patron Must be present when elections take place. This applies for both Secondary and UCS branches.

A suggested order for the meeting would be: -

- a) Welcome to the meeting by the Chairperson.
- b) Opening prayer for God's guidance.
- c) Explanation of the need for elections and the procedure to be followed.
- d) Each member of the out-going committee, in turn, should describe briefly what their post on the committee involved, or else one member should be appointed to describe the different posts to the members.
- e) Each post on the committee should be voted for in turn.
- f) The out-going Chairperson thanks the out-going committee and the branch for their help and co-operation (if he/she feels they have given it) and asks them to co-operate with and pray for the new committee.
- g) The new Chairperson thanks the out-going Chairperson for all his/her work, thanks the members for putting their confidence in him/her and the new committee by electing them and asks for their prayers and co-operation.
- h) Closing prayer asking for God's leading and strengthening for the new committee.

Notes On The Election

- a) Nominations from the members should be seconded and the person being nominated should agree, before any voting takes places.



- b) Voting can Be:
 - by show of hands with eyes closed; or
 - written on pieces of paper
- c) Counting should be done by at least two people who are not eligible for election or by a Senior friend,
- d) If two or three names with the highest votes get equal votes, there should be a second vote, restricted to these names.
- e) It may sometimes be necessary for nominations for the new committee to be handed in to the old committee and the Senior friend before the Election Day for screening.
- f) In some branches, the out-going committee makes nominations for the candidates from which the branch should choose its committee.
- g) The presence of a Senior Friend at elections will help them run smoothly.

Handing Over

After the elections, there should be a joint meeting for the old and new committees. The old committee should explain what the new committee needs to know about their jobs and what has been planned for the future. The retiring members should handover everything to the new members. The Treasurer should see to it that the cash records and cash agree and are up to date; the Secretary should make sure that the Minute Books are in order, and so on.

It is very suitable to have at least a short handover ceremony at which a charge is given to the new committee to carry out their duties well as servants of our Lord Jesus Christ.



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Frequency of Meetings

The efficient running of the SCOM branch depends on the effectiveness of the committee. The committee should have a regular meeting, at least once every two weeks and should be prepared to meet at other times when necessary.

Purpose of Meeting

As the committee meets together it has the following responsibilities:

- a) To pray together for the branch activities and members
- b) To discuss past meetings
- c) To discuss details of next meetings
- d) To plan for the future
- e) To discuss general matters concerning the branch

Attendance at Meetings

As far as is possible, all committee members should attend every committee meeting. It is the Chairman's responsibility to follow-up members who do not attend meetings. If he is not satisfied with the reasons given by a member for failing to attend three consecutive meetings, the committee should discuss whether or not that person should be replaced on the committee. When the decision to replace him/her has been taken then the branch should be informed accordingly. Then the branch should be asked to choose a replacement.



It is up to each branch to decide whether or not their Senior Friend is invited to attend all committee meetings or only specific committee meetings. The Senior Friend should be informed of any important decisions made in his absence.

Agenda For Meeting

The Chairman and Secretary should decide before hand the items to be discussed at a Committee Meeting. These will form an Agenda. Possible order of events or Agenda could be:

- i. Opening Prayer
- ii. Minutes of last Meeting
- iii. Matters arising from minutes of last meeting (i) (ii) (iii)
- iv. Correspondence. (Secretary reports on letters written/received)
- v. Discussion on last General Meeting
- vi. Plans for next General Meeting (e.g. who will chair? Who lead the different discussion group? Who will open in prayer? Which song will be sang etc?
- vii. Closing (time of) prayer.

This is only a suggested agenda and should be varied according to circumstances e.g. Treasurer's report should be included once a month, which should include details of how money has been spent and the balance that remains.

Minutes of Meetings

The minutes of a committee meeting are the record of what takes place. It is the responsibility of the Secretary or Vice- Secretary to keep this record. A separate notebook should be kept for the committee minutes. It is not necessary to record every detail that is discussed. The following points need to be



recorded:-

- a) Date of meeting
- b) Names of those present
- c) Essential details of reports given
- d) Decisions made
- e) The names of people responsible for carrying out the decisions.

Each separate item discussed should be given different number. This makes it easier to refer to the minutes later. At the beginning of each meeting the minutes of the last meeting should be read to the committee.

The Chairman should ask those people who were present if they are accurate. If there are any inaccuracies, they should be corrected at this point.

If the Secretary makes rough notes during the committee meeting, it is important that he/she writes up the neat copy of the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting so that things do not get forgotten.

Conduct of Meetings

The Chairperson is responsible for conducting committee meetings. It is best for all discussions to go through him. When members are speaking they should always address (and face) the Chairperson and not the person they are opposing.



THE SCOM BRANCH COMMITTEE

To help you understand properly what your different responsibilities are, and help you overcome some of the difficulties you face, your Regional/Sectional SCOM Committee will organise a Leadership Training Course, somewhere in your district at least once during your term of office usually in the second or third term. It is therefore very important that you hold your elections by the beginning of second term so that the new committee would be able to attend the leadership training.

It must be continually emphasised that the strength of any SCOM Branch depends on the strength of its leaders. For that reason, every committee member must take her/his responsibility seriously. It is not just a matter of passing time. God put you at that institution for a purpose.

If a leader does his/her work without dedication, other leaders must approach him/her and plead with him/her to be more committed. Failing that, the leader should be asked to resign and be replaced by a committed person. Apart from commitment, every committee member must be clear on what exactly are his/her responsibilities. Conflicts may occur if a committee member is lazy and others are hardworking fellows. The primary role of every leader is to lead and develop others into godly disciples. Below are the suggested responsibilities of each committee member:

Chairperson

Primary responsibility -

- loving, leading, discipling, supervising a few key Christians closely and the branch more broadly.
- Planning for and leading the SCOM in God's calling at institutional (School/Centre/College) level.
- Supervises committee members in their roles.
- Chairs all General and Committee meetings of SCOM



- Signs the approved minutes of the Committee Meetings once they are accepted as true record.
- Gives an annual report to the branch of the past year. The report must cover the activities of the branch of the past year and general plans for the following year.

Other recommendations:

- Must know and care for each SCOM member not just the committee members.
- Must familiarize himself/herself with work of every committee member.
- Must brief other committee members of the work of others
- Must see that plans are carried out by those responsible.

Vice Chairperson

Primary responsibility -

- loving, leading discipling, supervising a few key Christians closely and the branch.
- Planning for and leading SCOM in God's calling at School/Centre/College.
- Do the work of the Chairman when he is away and generally share his load of work.
- May also be given another post. e.g. prayer coordinator

Secretary

Primary responsibility -

- loving, leading, discipling, supervising a few key Christians closely and the SCOM more broadly.



- Planning for and leading the SCOM in God's calling at School/ College/Centre.
- Takes and keep minutes of all meetings held.
- Be responsible for all correspondence receiving and answering letters.
- Chairs meetings when both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman are absent.

Other recommendations:

- It is very important that the Secretary be in constant touch with the Chairman.
- Must keep a record of both members and ex-members, and Christian members of staff.
- Draw up an agenda (items for discussion by the committee) after the discussions with the Chairman. Other members must see the agenda before the meeting.

Treasurer

Primary responsibility -

- loving, leading, discipling, supervising a few key Christian closely and the branch broadly.
- Planning for and leading the SCOM in God's calling at School/ College/Centre
- Keeps balanced accounts of the branch
- Produces financial reports every month and as required
- Where subscription or special donations are required, the Treasurer will be responsible for collecting money and keeping an accurate record of money spent.



- Must consider possible and acceptable means of fund raising.

Other recommendations:

- Expenditures must be authorized by the committee.
- Avoid mixing SCOM money with his/her own.
- Encourage members to give to the work of the Lord

Librarian

Primary responsibility -

- loving, leading, discipling supervising a few Christians closely and the SCOM more broadly.
- Planning for and leading the SCOM in God's calling at School/ College/Centre.
- Shall keep the SCOM literature e.g. Christian books, newsletters etc
- Shall recommend and lend books to members and other interested readers.
- Shall buy books for the SCOM when money is available.
- Shall read widely and be in touch with Christian libraries and bookstores.

Bible Study Coordinator

Primary responsibility -as above

- Planning and leading Bible Study Programmes
- Producing or facilitating the production of study materials
- Encouraging members to be enthusiastic with Bible Study



- To ensure that Bible Study materials are available to the members
- Spot gifted members and help them develop their gift of leading Bible studies

Prayer Coordinator

Primary responsibility - as above

- Planning and leading Prayer meetings
- Producing or facilitating the production of prayer items
- To ensure that members live a life of prayer.

OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS TO NOTE

Any committee member who, for any reason, knows that he/she will be unable to attend a committee meeting must send apologies in advance to the secretary. The Secretary should explain to the committee why that member could not be present. Such a member must be informed later of any matter discussed at the meeting.

It is advisable to have a committee meeting at least once every two weeks to review the past and plan for future. Notice of any meeting must be circulated to all committee members together with the agenda before the meeting.

There should be an annual General Meeting (AGM) once every year when the new committee takes over. At this AGM the Chairperson and perhaps other members of the outgoing committee, should give the group their Annual reports. The group as a whole should be given opportunity to comment on the general status of SCOM and make suggestions for the future.

Each committee member must keep a record of what she/he does and this must be handed over to the successor (who takes over that post).



RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

a. Making a Programme

One of the major responsibilities of the branch committee is to plan a programme (or timetable) of meetings for the term. It is important that planning is done well in advance and not just week to week.

These points will help you:

- i. Prepare a varied programme
- ii. Give the speakers and Bible study leaders enough time of notice
- iii. Fit meetings into an overall theme
- iv. Concentrate on details of individual meetings

The programme for a complete term should be made either at the very beginning of that term or at the end of term.

At the beginning of each term, or at the end of the term before, you will receive a Suggested Term's Programme from the SCOM General Secretary. This is a suggested series of meetings that you could use in your branch if you have problems in making your own programme. For each meeting there will be details of suggested outlines to follow to guide you in your preparation.

Each meeting has a special aim. You may use any or all of these outlines as you wish. Please do consider them carefully, though, before using your own material in their place, as a lot of careful prayer and thought has been put into their preparation.

Before deciding what you want to do in your programme, there are a few things you must do:-

- Pray about it - both in committee meetings and as individuals, ask God to guide you into the best ideas for your group.
- Write down, one under the other, the dates of all of the days on



which you plan to hold meetings during the term e.g.

Monday 3rd March
 10th March
 17th March

- Consult the School calendar and leave out those days which fall on holidays which might make it difficult to hold Meetings (Your Senior Friend or Patron should be able to help you with this). You know how many Meetings are possible during the term and you can plan realistically for them.
- Each meeting you plan should have: -
 - An aim - What you are trying to achieve in that meeting
 - A topic - What you are going to discuss in the meeting
 - A title - What you will call the meeting to inform and attract people
 - A format- The type of meeting it will be.

b. Aim of the Meeting

It is essential that we should know where we are going if we are going to get there. We must know what our aim in having a particular meeting is, if we are going to achieve anything. Some of our meetings should be aimed at attracting non- believers and "fringe" members to Jesus Christ and other meetings should be aimed at strengthening the faith of those who are already committed Christians.

As you try to achieve one of these things you may also achieve the other as well. But if you try to do both at the same time you are likely to achieve neither. SCOM has five stated aims (see page3) and it is important that:

- During the year each one of these aims is catered for in the pro-



gramme;

- You can see which one of these aims is being helped by each meeting planned.
- Time is so short that you should not waste time on irrelevant things in SCOM meetings.
- In deciding what aims you are trying to achieve in a particular term, consider carefully the aims of specific meetings in the suggested term's programme - both the current one and old ones.

c. Topic of the Meeting

This is the subject matter for the meeting. It may be a Bible Passage to be studied, a subject for a speaker to tackle or a topic for discussion. It is often good to have a theme for three or four (or more) meetings. Bible Study, discussion and speaker on consecutive weeks cover related topics. e.g.

Week 1	Bible Study on the Lord's Prayer
Week 2	Discussion "Does God answer Prayers?"
Week 3	Speaker "Why I Pray"
Week 4	Panel Problems on Prayer

At the end of the series like this, even though there may have been some overlap, more will have been gained than from four isolated meetings.

d. Title of the Meeting

This may or may not be the same as the topic. A discussion on the resurrection (topic = Resurrection) could be called "Alive from the dead". A Bible study on Acts 14 (topic = Act 14) could be titled "Mistaken for God", whilst a talk on Christian Friendships (topic = Christian Friendships) could simply be called "Friendship".



The title is for the sake of publicity. Notices on the notice board, announcements in assembly or simply personal invitations are made more appealing by an attractive title. Be honest with your title. If someone is deceived into coming into a SCOM meeting, you may do more harm than good.

e. Format of the Meeting

The type of meeting, Bible Study, Speaker, Discussion etc, is one of the last things to be decided - not the first! Once you have decided on the aim of your meeting and the topic, you can then decide which method or type of meeting will achieve your aim best. It is important to have a varied programme. Some of the possible types of meeting are: -

Speaker	Drama
Conference Reports	Bible Study
Dialogue/discussion	Welcome to Form 1's
Conference Planning	Question Time
Hat Night	Discussion Panel
Farewell to Form 4's	Hospital Visiting
Singing/Fellowship	etc

You will be able to think of many more types, but do not let the format dictate your aim; the aim should dictate the format.

With your desire to have a varied programme do not neglect your Bible Studies. These should form the bulk of your programme. You do not have to use all of the above types of meeting each term, or even each year. There are many different ways of holding Bible studies (see section on Bible Study later in this Hand book) and by varying these you can make the Bible Studies themselves a varied part of the programme.



General Comments on the Programme

- Every SCOM member should know the Programme.
- Sometimes the whole programme can be put on the Notice Board, but it is more interesting to advertise each event as it comes during the next week.
- Publicity of meetings should welcome all students and not just members of SCOM. This may attract more to join in.
- As many members as possible should be encouraged to take an active part in the activities of the programme.
- Notices or letters of invitation to speakers should be sent in good time to help them prepare their talks indicating their topic, time, date duration of talk, language of communication e.t.c.
- For Bible Study, it is good to put the passage to be studied on the Notice Board. This will help people to come prepared.
- The programme planned at the beginning of the term should be followed as much as possible, but it does not bind the branch. If the committee feels it is necessary, some items can be left out and others included.
- The programme should be drawn up by the student committee with the advice of the Senior Friend.
- All activities should begin at the time they are advertised for and end at the right time; unnecessary overshooting should be avoided.
- The Headmaster or Principal should have a copy of the programme as much as possible, and so should the Senior Friend and the Regional or Training Secretary of SCOM.
- The whole programme should be balanced providing plenty of activity and catering for the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical aspects of students.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Each branch, section or Region is supposed to hold an Annual General meeting (AGM) once a year where business issues concerning the running of SCOM at that level are discussed. At the branch level only full members who have paid in their subscription fee should be allowed to take part in the AGM while at the Regional or Sectional level, only branches that have paid in their subscription fee should be represented in the AGM.

The Chairperson should chair the AGM and make sure that only relevant issues are discussed. It may also be a good idea to hold elections during the Annual General Meeting. The secretary should take minutes of all the decisions or resolutions made. Members present or branches represented should also be recorded. It is important that senior friends should attend the Annual General Meeting. The agenda of the meeting should be made known to the members in advance.

At the Regional or Sectional Annual General Meeting, branches should report on the progress of SCOM work at their respective branches. Again only relevant issues should be reported.

GENERAL/TRAINING SECRETARY'S VISIT

It is one of the responsibilities of the General or Training Secretary to make branch visitations as a guest and a servant of the SCOM branch. He carefully plans visits to several branches throughout the country. These visits give him the chance to build up friendships and have some fellowship with members of the branch.

Hence, once notice of his visitation to any branch has been received, serious arrangements should be made. These visits are rare and expensive on the part of SCOM. They must not be taken for granted. Besides, these visits are meant to be an eye opener as to the life of a branch being visited. Therefore, the following points need to be considered:



Operations Guidelines

- Publicize or make sure members have been told of the visit in good time
- Make sure the Headmaster/Mistress/Teacher-in-charge or Principal is aware. Get his/her permission
- Members to discuss practical details with the patron and senior friends.
- Put a public notice to invite non-members as well
- Make sure you have read the letter informing you of the visit and understood all instructions.
- Call for a committee meeting to discuss the visit. Make sure you involve as many committee members in arranging for the visit as possible
- Make sure the venue of the meeting is ready before the visitor arrives or arrange it soon after his arrival. Do not waste time.
- The Chairperson and members of the Committee must be available around the area where the visitor is expected to meet them
- Once the visitor arrives at your School take him to meet with the Patron and Senior Friend. These will take him to the headmaster/mistress/teacher-in-charge.
- Where possible, let the visitor know the problems facing your SCOM or School in general.

JOINT MEETING

In order to fulfil aim number 4 of SCOM "To bring students to christian fellowship with each other in serving the needs of all students", the SCOM branches in a particular area have been organising Joint Meetings where SCOM branches in that zone or district come to one place. They are held once each term and are organised by a steering or zone committee.

The joint meeting programme includes singing, Bible Study, sketches/drama Praise and worship, sharing experiences/testimonies, living in harmony, talks, Poetry etc.

Joint meetings are meetings where more than two branches come and fellowship together. They can only be organised by a Steering or zone Committee and not by a single SCOM branch.

The Joint Meeting planners are responsible for:

- Booking the venue
- Communicating with the branches in the zone and the speaker(s)
- Coming up with the Theme, Topics, Speaker(s) Bible Study etc
- Drawing up a programme
- Reporting to the Zone, Regional Committee, the Regional Training Secretary and the General Secretary.

There are Regional Committees responsible for SCOM activities in each region. Therefore Steering Committee Must at all times work with and report to these respective regional committees. Again Steering Committees must cultivate good working relationships with school administrators and patrons of SCOM.



INTER- BRANCH MEETINGS

This is a meeting where two branches come and fellowship together. A branch may visit other near-by sister branches not more than twice in an academic year. A branch is discouraged from visiting distant branches in order to cut down on travel expenses and risks of road accidents.

When deciding which branch to visit the following points must be considered:

- Not always pairing boys with girls Schools only.
- Visit also smaller and less active branches in order to encourage them and share faith and experiences with them.
- During the meeting boys and girls should not wander around outside the hall in pairs.

A SCOM outing is for SCOM members only hence the Committee is strongly advised not to recruit or pick non-members for the sake of raising funds. Names of those going on an outing must be submitted to the Patron or Senior friend for approval. The school administration must be well informed about all the arrangements.

The inter-branch meeting programme includes Bible Study, sketches/drama, praise and worship, talks etc.



BIBLE STUDIES

Why Study the Bible

As stated in our second aim, the prayerful study of scriptures is necessary for spiritual growth. The importance of Bible Study in the life of a Christian cannot be overemphasised. The word of God is our spiritual food. (I Peter 2:). In 2 Timothy 2:15 Paul is advising Timothy to study the Bible for a number of reasons) Read the text). We should study the Bible to:

- Know what God wants us to do in our lives
- Know our God more and more.
- Come closer and closer to our God and develop a deeper understanding of Him.
- Equip ourselves for spiritual battle.

Approaches to Bible Study

There are several methods of studying the Bible, namely: Cover to Cover, A Book at a Time, Small Sections, Character Studies and Words and Topics. In our case we are mostly interested in the first three since the last two approaches can only be handled by people who are well equipped with study aids such as Bible Dictionary, Bible Commentary, Concordance, Atlas etc.

From Cover to Cover: In this approach you begin with the book of Genesis and read right through to the book of Revelation. This approach gives you a comprehensive idea of what is in the Bible. You must resist the temptation of rushing through or ignoring some books that might not seem interesting. This method is helpful to the older and more mature Christians. Those who have just come to the Lord are not encouraged to use this method.



A Book at a Time: The Bible is a library of 66 complete books. The reader is therefore free to start with any book of his/her choice and follow it to the end before starting another. This kind of approach helps us to see how the author has developed his theme. It is a good idea to take down notes as we read, and going through a book more than once will help us have a clearer understanding. This method can be used by both mature and new Christians. The newborn Christians are however encouraged to start with books in the New Testament.

Small Sections Approach: These methods is particularly useful when you want to get down to the details and want to know what the words and sentences of the passage mean to you. Here you read much shorter portions of the scripture than whole books. You read up to the next natural break of the story or the argument. In some translations the text is already divided for you into sections with headings, which tell us what is in each section. Daily reading notes. (Daily Guides, Daily Power, etc.) are particularly helpful in this approach. Bible Study Guides which involve answering of questions after reading are frequently used in this approach. It can be used for both personal as well as group Bible Studies.

Manuscript approach: This bible study approaches Bible passages with an aim of understanding what the story meant then before its practical application today. To achieve this the passages are approached as if verses or chapters are not there. A book or passage of interest is selected depending on available time. Some books are longer as such the leader may provide the team with a background of the book to ensure that people have a reference point. The book or passage is approached in 3 stages known as the **observation, interpretation and application** stages.

The **observation** stage involves noticing what is happening in the passage. The passage may be read 2 times while encouraging the participants to write down key characters, key events, strategy of the story or the mood of the author. At this stage we can also look at maps to understand the biblical location of the story. Participants may write down questions on what they are observing? Participants can be given a chance to share



with each other what they are personally observing. This should be done without cross referencing to other passages in the Bible. The idea is to encourage every one to talk as the leader writes down every observation made.

The **interpretation** stage involves focus on answering the raised questions. Participants are allowed another alone time to re-read the story and try to answer the questions based on the same passage without cross referencing to other bible books. The idea is to get the most of the passage. It is very important for the leader to avoid imposing ideas for participants to be able to express what they are studying. After this read-alone time they are encouraged to share again in their small groups before sharing with the whole group. The leader needs to be writing down or asking further questions during this time to help uncover the passage.

The **application** stage is to do with what was true then and then what is true now based on the passage. Depending on the interpretation you might have the need to let people meditate on what God is teaching. Action points might be taken as the group is lead to discuss and meditate to help them apply some of the lessons that have been learnt to their daily life. The leader may suggest alone time for participants to write down what they will start, stop or continue doing as a result of the bible study.

Note that this approach requires some training and students are encouraged to seek guidance from associates or those who have been trained in manuscript Bible study approach.

Some General Guidelines on Bible Study

- Since Bible is not just another book, but the very word of God, our approach to it should obviously be that of reverence and expectancy. We should start with prayer and expect the Lord to speak to us through the Scriptures. We should also end with prayer.



Operations Guidelines

- Use an appropriate translation - a translation you can understand very well.
- Read your chosen portion slowly, trying to take in what it says. Reading more than once will help you discover some of the things you failed to notice during your first reading.
- Try to decide the meanings of the words and sentences used. Try to find out if the author used picture language or plain language.
- It is necessary for us to use our power of imagination and try to put ourselves into the picture. Try to imagine how it would have been there when the words were being spoken.
- If you come across a difficulty try to compare that passage with easier passages on the same subject. It is also helpful to ask your Senior Friend or someone who may have more experience in studying the Bible than yourself. If the problem cannot be solved at once don't worry, you may come to understand the passage later.



CONFERENCES

In order to promote fellowship and sharing of experiences among branches, each section organises an Annual Conference. The participants are drawn from the branches in that section.

a) Secondary School Conferences - for Secondary schools and CDSS's in a particular zone or area in all the regions – a zone can have more than one conferences depending on size / capacity and number of schools under their jurisdiction.

b) Regional SCOM - UCS Conferences – for all universities and colleges in a particular region: North, Centre, South, East.

c) National SCOM - UCS Conference - For the Universities and Colleges throughout the country.

e) SCOM-AF Conferences - for all School Leavers and graduates throughout the country.

The Conferences are organised by the Sectional Committees in conjunction with the General Secretary and/or the Training Secretary.

The Sectional Committee may delegate the organising of the Conference to a planning Committee (the members are appointed by the sectional Committee). It is the responsibility of the sectional committee to look into the Theme, Topic, Bible Study, Conference Programme etc.

The Planning Committee is responsible for:

- The booking of the Conference venue
- Communicating with the speakers
- Budgeting the Conference expenses
- Fund -raising



- Publicity etc

The branches are encouraged to try to send a delegation to their Annual Regional (Sectional) Conference. Each branch is expected to report on what goes on in its branch; the activities they have had, problems encountered, fund-raising strategies etc.

Only branches that have paid in their annual subscription fee for that year are allowed to take part in voting for the regional/sectional committee.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Qualifications

Choose your speakers carefully. A speaker can be a blessing to the group, but some speakers have been known to do more harm than good. Any speaker you invite should at least have the following two qualifications among others.

He/she must ascribe to the SCOM basis of faith as contained in the SCOM. This means, in part, that the Speaker will respect the interdenominational character of the SCOM. Some Speakers might misuse the privilege of addressing SCOM members by trying to attract them to their Churches or ministries.

He/she should be used to the thinking of students at different institutions and conversant with student life ie limitations rules, etc.

What to include in a Communication to a Speaker

- Purpose of the meeting
- Biblical passages or general topic. But do not be so specific as to leave the speaker with no freedom.
- Time meeting starts (and time you would like him/her to arrive).
- Amount of time he/she will have for God's message and do not wait



until the audience is too tired of "items" and choruses to pay proper attention to the Speaker.

- Approximate size of the group he/she will speak to.
- Probable proportion of that group who will be non- Christians.
- Particular problems that face students at your school/centre/college.
- State an outline of your term's or year's programme.
- Venue of your meeting, who will welcome him/her where and when.
- If the Speaker comes from far, possibly make arrangements for the provision of food travel expenses and overnight accommodation.

When your Speaker Arrives

- Welcome him/her
- Introduce yourself or yourselves to him/her
- Make sure he/she is always escorted.
- Brief him/her on the situation of your school/centre/college
- Talk over again details of meeting, especially time and conclusion of the message.



SCOM PATRONS

SCOM Patrons play a very important role in the running of branches, yet very little has been done to prepare them for the work. This lack of preparation has led to a lot of misunderstanding and misuse of the responsibility of a Patron.

It was therefore deemed necessary for SCOM to come up with a guide, which will provide necessary information for the office of a Patron.

Who is a patron?

Patron is a teaching member of staff who has been appointed or approved by the administration to link the SCOM branch to the administration. S/he also links to the ministry of SCOM.

Qualities of a reliable SCOM Patron

As far as SCOM is concerned, a Patron is a very important person to the SCOM branch because is in direct contact with students (SCOM branch) on a daily basis. The following therefore are our expectations of a person reliable to be a Patron:

- S/he must be a Christian, who is in good stand with his/her church.
- S/He must be conversant with history, vision, statement of faith and interdenominational nature of SCOM as provided in the sections above.
- Someone with good morals.
- Someone concerned with the general welfare of students.



The role of a SCOM patron

As a link, the Patron shall be responsible for:

- Channeling issues from both the ministry of SCOM and SCOM branch to the school administration.
- Ensuring that the interests of SCOM are protected at all times.
- Advising SCOM branch leaders on school administrative procedures.
- Reporting to the SCOM ministry of all matters that must come to its attention.
- Providing necessary guidance to the students on program planning e.g. term program, external speakers' identification, joint meetings, etc.
- Accompanying students to all activities happening outside the campus. e.g. joint meetings, conferences, etc.
- Must be present during branch committee elections, and give guidance when necessary.
- Approving all visitors to the branch. i.e. those who claim to be associates must show SCOMAF cards and speakers must show invitation letters.
- The Patron should only preach when requested.
- Attending SCOM branch meetings regularly.
- Providing pastoral care where necessary and referring all difficult issues to the SCOM ministry.
- Encouraging members to subscribe and ensure that the money has been sent to the National Office
- Delegate responsibility to an equally reliable staff member when absent.



The cost of being a patron

In executing his duties, a Patron must be willing to sacrifice a lot e.g.

- **Time** - might be needed during awkward hours.
- **Resources** - might be required to use his/her resources for SCOM activities.
- **Comfort** - SCOM is an extra-curricular activity, hence it may inconvenience the Patron in one way or another.

Benefits of being a SCOM Patron

Despite the sacrifices that patrons are expected to make for the sake of the students, being patron of SCOM:

- Provides them an opportunity to live out their faith on campus.
- Provides them an opportunity to impact students positively.

Above all, any kind of work that is done for God is never in vain as there are spiritual blessings attached to it as the Bible says “God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped his people **(students)** and continue to help them” - Hebrews 6:10 (NIV) -.

*“Therefore, my dear brothers **(Patrons)**, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain” - 1 Corinthians 15:58 (NIV)*

words in brackets added.



THE ROLE OF A SENIOR FRIEND

Senior Friend is an older Christian Friend who loves the Lord Jesus and wants to help students come to a Living Faith in Him and grow up as mature Christians. He therefore, seeks to be involved in evangelism, teaching and pastoral work.

The SCOM has of course, many other such friends, speakers, members of the local churches, graduate students, etc.

What distinguishes a Senior Friend is that he takes a special spiritual interest in the practical affairs of running a local SCOM branch. Here are listed some of the things a Senior Friend can be of help with to a SCOM branch:

- He or she must read and understand the Aims and Statement of Faith of SCOM and subscribe to them all himself.
- Programme Planning: He can help in the programme planning or he should at least see the programme the committee has made before it goes into operation.
- He has to see to it that members abide by the aims and objectives of SCOM.
- He has to see to it that members are in good standing with their local churches.
- He should be present when elections take place, and he should try to see to it that only trustworthy leaders are elected.
- He should try to promote the creation of prayer groups and guide members into a more fruitful prayer life.
- He should see to it that the programme is followed, and that the Bible Studies are well conducted.
- He should have zeal to reach people for Christ, and should promote evangelism on the campus, both by himself and by SCOM members.



- When students come to know Christ, the Senior Friends should keep touch with them, so that they be nourished from the Word. He should also teach members how to *"FOLLOW -UP"* a new Christian.
- If no SCOM branch exists in a neighbouring institution, the Senior Friend should try to create contacts there with the aim of the founding a new SCOM branch there.
- He should try to find out how the branch can attain good, faith-building Christian books and magazines. It is also necessary that he scrutinizes the literature which the students have, to make sure that it is sound in doctrine.
- He should guide students into a life where spiritual matters and academic work don't act as opponents of one another, but where a healthy, balanced view is developed regarding good, responsible use of time.
- He should be willing to act as mouthpiece of SCOM members to the School authorities especially on matters concerning SCOM.

FUNDRAISING

Each SCOM Branch is expected to raise funds to help in the running of the SCOM General Council. This will take place once in a year and is apart from the normal branch subscription fees. The General Council among other things provides essential services to the SCOM. Some of these are as follows:

- Employment and up keep of SCOM full time staff in the four offices i.e. Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba and Mzuzu.
- Rent for these four offices.
- Acquiring and maintaining transport for the SCOM work.



- Paying office expenses e.g. office furniture, utility bills, communication, stationery, etc.
- Production of Bible Study Guides and relevant literature for students.
- Paying for the visitation of staff to branches on SCOM Business.

There is need for more money for all these to be done, hence the appeal for every branch to do a special fundraising activity at least once a year to support these needs.

Once the money has been raised it will be sent to the General Council Treasurer directly or through your regional/sectional Treasurer. The following are some of the suggested methods for fundraising:

- The first method of fund raising is by asking every member of SCOM to pay his/her subscription fee. Every branch member is supposed to pay a subscription fee annually.
- Tuck shop - In some schools there is no tuck shop. The SCOM committee open one and use the profits to help in running the branch well.
- Sale of certain items like mandasi, roasted groundnuts, sugarcane, sweets, Jiggies or whatever is easily obtainable in your area. Girls can prepare mandasi during the weekend and sell them to students. You can buy sugarcane from a farmer in your area and resell them at a profit.
- Choir festivals and drama - You can arrange to perform in the school hall or at a trading centre, community centre hall. People coming to attend can be allowed in free, but free offering can be collected inside.
- Piece work (ganyu) - You can ask your teachers for manual work for which you will be paid after your members have worked. This could be, cultivating gardens, splitting firewood, planting grass or flowers, slashing grass etc.
- Photography - You can borrow somebody's camera or phone to use



in taking pictures during special activities at your school at a fee.

- Jumble sale. This is the selling of all sorts of items donated by SCOM members, teachers and other people around your school. These could be old books, clothes, food items, ball pens, soaps, oils and anything that can be donated.
- Appeals made to former members of the SCOM. You can write to your former members of the SCOM wherever they are working telling them of the continued activities of your branch and asking them to help you in your financial needs.
- Appeals to be made to your patrons and senior friends and even Christian teachers in your school.
- Some branches provide special tins in which members put in their weekly donations. These are apart from the normal offering.

NB: In general, the spirit of giving is there within your members. What sometimes is the problem is the way those of us charged with the responsibility of looking after this money behave. When members and even people around us notice that we don't put the funds to good use they will not respond to any appeal to give. So please make sure you account for all the funds properly. Then people will give to the work of the Lord. If only we understood that what we are keeping is the Lord's money, we would handle it with care.

PART 2

STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI ASSOCIATES FELLOWSHIP (SCOM-AF)





DEFINITION OF SCOMAF

SCOM-AF is an interdenominational association of ex-members, senior friends, patrons and well-wishers of the Student Christian Organisation of Malawi. Who are in different parts of the country and abroad from where they continue to take an interest in the organisation to the extent of supporting it morally as well as materially.

AIMS OF SCOM-AF

- To further the work of the SCOM through prayer, encouragement counsel and financial support.
- To help identify and provide part-time workers/senior friends/patrons to such branches as may stand in need of them.
- To make the work of the SCOM as widely known as possible.
- To promote Christian fellowship among members.
- To encourage members to seek the highest standards of Christian and professional conduct, to commit their training and abilities to God's service, and to commend faith in Christ to colleagues at work.
- To foster constructive Christian thought and to help in the production of evangelical literature.
- To complement the work of SCOM staff-workers under the guidance and supervision of SCOM Council.

All members of SCOM-AF shall also ascribe to all stated aims of the SCOM.



BASIS OF FAITH OF SCOM-AF

The Association shall have and use the same basis of faith as that of the SCOM.

FORMING A ZONE

A SCOM-AF zone may be formed and registered with the National Executive Committee when there are at least five (5) associates. Each zone shall elect its own Committee whose members should be in office for two years, unless if there is a good reason to terminate their service earlier. The possible composition of the committee may be as follows: -

Chairman - To preside at all meetings of the Associates, prepare a report on each year's activities and ensure that the stated aims are carried out.

Secretary - To keep minutes of all meetings, handle correspondence in consultation with the chairman and maintain records.

Treasurer - To receive membership fee of associates, donations and all other revenue; make payments as authorised by the Chairman or Committee and prepare annual reports of the Associations accounts.

Business Investments and Fundraising (BIF) Coordinator - To explore business opportunities and coordinate fundraising activities for the zone.

Social Development Coordinator - To facilitate and coordinate initiatives in response to social or emerging issues affecting students and Associates; document key activities and achievements and promote publicity of the zone. This is to ensure relevance of SCOM is society.

Church Engagement Coordinator - To facilitate meaningful linkages with Churches and denominations within the zone.



Student Outreach Coordinator – To facilitate training programs and activities for secondary school and college students. Where necessary, and depending on the size of the zone, the position may be split so that each section has its own coordinator.

Associates Fellowship and Welfare Coordinator – To coordinate training programs for Associates and activities aimed at strengthening fellowship and uplifting the welfare of Associates.

Ladies Coordinator – To ensure representation of women in the decision making process for the zone and to facilitate / coordinate activities aimed at empowering women and girls in the zone.

Prayer Coordinator – To organize prayer meetings for the zone and encourage members to grow in prayer.

Some of the positions can be combined and if need be, each of the key positions or offices may have deputies.



ACTIVITIES OF SCOM-AF

SCOM-AF takes an active role in coordinating and promoting SCOM work in different parts of the country. It is however important to note that SCOM work in each Region or Section falls under the respective Regional or Sectional committee.

These are responsible for planning, supervising and monitoring SCOM work under their jurisdiction. In order for these committees to achieve this they need the assistance of associates.

SCOM-AF should therefore be seen as the helping hand of the Regional Committees and as such they should work under the Regional Committees. Each Regional Committee is therefore supposed to work out the modalities of its cooperation with the associates in its Region.

The associates may among other things have the following activities:

- Organise conferences or retreat at least once a year.
- Visits to the SCOM branches to have firsthand experience of the state of affairs of the movement.
- Coordinate support and fund-raising activities for the SCOM related programmes.
- Train key students in evangelism, follow-up and leadership skills.
- Produce a magazine and a newsletter from time to time, for circulation among members, interested persons and organisations featuring a wide range of items such as Bible expositions, testimonies, information about developments in the SCOM, book reviews, personal news etc.
- Attend SCOM Regional/Sectional and School Leavers Conference to assist in counseling and otherwise. It must be emphasised that no SCOM-AF member or group is allowed to visit schools unless and



until it has been properly trained.

FLOW OF FUNDS

The guiding principal here is that there should be an efficient mechanism for ensuring the swift flow of funds from the branches/zones through the Regional to the National Office. To make this possible, it is proposed that:

- i. Branches or zones in different sections of the organisation should be required to organise at least one specific fund-raising activity in an academic year for the General Council and applicable Regional Sectional Committee, with 50% of all funds raised in this way going to the General Council and the other 50% going to the Regional/Sectional Committee;
- ii. All subscription or membership fees from members should be sent either directly or through Regional/Sectional committees to the National General Council;
- iii. That all appeals for funds from local supporters not tapped by branches or Regional/Sectional/SCOM-AF Committees as well as from supporters abroad, should be directed by the General Council. All proceeds from such appeals shall find their way to the General Council Treasurer and;
- iv. That there shall be a Finance Sub-Committee of the General Council whose task will be to assist the General Council Treasurer in monitoring the flow of funds within the organisation and in planning fundraising projects.



RELATIONSHIP WITH CHURCH

Although SCOM undertakes a number of activities aimed at enhancing the spiritual lives of the students, it is not a Church and cannot substitute the role of the Church.

SCOM, which was formed by the Churches, seeks to compliment the efforts of the Churches in reaching out the young people in Schools and Colleges with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through the Bible Studies, Prayer and Corporate worship, provided by SCOM students who already know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour are helped to deepen their faith in Him.

We believe that these activities will help in producing balanced and dedicated Christians who would become useful and effective members of their Churches in personal Commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ.

As our fifth aim clearly spells out, SCOM is working for the extension, unity and renewal of the Church in Malawi, and indeed throughout the world. This means that the Churches should expect people who have gone through SCOM to be Christians who are dedicated to Christ and are seeking to work for unity of the Church, which is the body of Christ, and not breaking away from their Churches to form new denominations.

Patrons, Senior Friends and Committee members should see to it that all activities and programmes are aimed at producing quality Christians who would be committed to serving the Lord in and through the established Churches. They should guard against anything that would make SCOM members misfits in their Churches. Some guest Speakers may also misuse the privilege of speaking to SCOM members by directly or indirectly wooing students to join their Churches. Such a Speaker would be going against SCOM aims.

SCOM is an arm of the Churches. It is not independent of the Churches. It can also be seen as a vehicle with which the Church brings young people in schools and Colleges to Christ and their God.



Since SCOM was formed by Churches, its relationship with the Churches should be seen as that of a grown-up child and her mother. This means that SCOM is for the churches but it does not expect churches to dictate to it what it should do.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE AIMS OF THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI (SCOM)

[See Minutes No. 15, Central Committee Meeting, 26th September, 1969, and Minute No. CC 13/36 Central Committee Meeting, 6th August 1973]

Aim 1

To Call All Students

Our responsibility is towards all students with whom, being ourselves students, we are brought into contact. For Christ's command is that we should take the message about Him and His call to men, to everybody. [Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; I Cor. 9:6; Matthew 11:28]

To A Personal Faith

Faith is the personal trust in God and His word which means receiving Jesus Christ and trusting Him alone for forgiveness. (Ephesians 1:7-8) and for new life here and eternally. (2 Cor 5:17, John 1:18)



In God - Father Son And Holy Spirit

Our faith is in the one only living and true God besides whom there is no other (I Cor.8:4-6; Isaiah 44:6) but who has revealed Himself through the scriptures as God, the Father (Ephesians 1-3) God the Son (John 1:1;1 John 1:1-3), God the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; 5:3,4, 32).

According To Scriptures

Through the scriptures (both Old and New Testaments) we are to believe in God, and learn what our duty to God is [2 Timothy 1:13] [See also aim 2]

To Live As True Disciples Of Jesus Christ

To Live implies the total commitment of one's life, the willingness to deny oneself; to follow Jesus Christ to be his disciples without reservations [Romans 12:1; 1 Cor.6: 19-20, Luke 9:62]

Aim 2

What Is Spiritual Life

Life controlled by the Holy Spirit of Christ, that is Christ Himself dwelling in us. Without this we cannot have spiritual life. [I John 5:11-12]; Ephesians 3:16 -17, Revelation 3:20, I Cor 6:19-20]

What Is Meant By Deepening The Spiritual Life?

It means the growing friendship with Christ, who dwells in us through His Spirit and reveals God to us, knowing Him better and trusting him more and more. We learn to know Him better through: -



- Prayer, which means talking to our Father and listening to Him. (Matthew 6: 9-13; Psalms 46:10; John 1:9; I Thess. 5:18; Phil 4:6-7)
- The prayerful study of the Bible through which our Father speaks to us. (Psalms 119:105, 11: I Peter 2:2, Acts 20:32; John 5:39)
- Worshipping in our personal submission to Him, and together in the fellowship of the word and the sacraments. (Heb.10: 25; Matt 4:9-10, John 4:23-24; John 14:6, Eph 2:18; Colossians 3:17; 1Cor 11:23-29, Gal 3:27)

What Is Understood By The Holy Scriptures Of The Old And New Testaments

Those 66 books contained in the Old and New Testaments whose authority the Church has accepted. All of these books were written by the inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life. They are God's word to us, given by His authority, and we can receive and understand them only by the light of the Spirit of God. (2 Timothy 2:16; 2 Peter 1:24)

Aim 3:

Why Should All Christian Students Witness To Jesus Christ

Because Jesus Christ calls all who believe in Him to be His witnesses, and He does not acknowledge as His own before His Father those who deny Him before men. (Matt 4:19; 10:32-33; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 1Cor 10:31; Luke 15:10; Ezekiel 33:11)



How Are We To Help Them Witness To Jesus Christ?

By leading them, by means of God's word:

- To the knowledge and experience of personal salvation in Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit; (Eph 1:17)
- To the regular study of God's word in order to enable them to bring the message of salvation in Jesus Christ clearly to another person.
- To see that no witness can be true unless it is as much by their own lives and deeds (controlled by a living relationship to Christ) as by their words (Philippians 1:27, I Peter 1:15 I Peter 2:12)

What Is The Witness To Be?

It is to be a witness to Jesus as the only Saviour, who through His death on the cross and His resurrection removed the barrier between us and the Father, and made it possible for us to find forgiveness and eternal life by faith alone in Him. Acts 4:12; 1 Tim 2:3-9, Hebrews 9:23-28, John 3:36; Eph 1:7; Galatians 3:11; 26; Ephesians 2:8-9). It is to be witness to Jesus Christ as Lord to whom we owe complete loyalty and obedience. (Acts 2:36; John 13:13; 1 Peter 3:15; John 15:14)

Aim 4

What Is Christian Fellowship

It is the unity that can exist only in a common loyalty to Jesus Christ, in the lives of those who know Him and have fellowship with Him. True Christian Fellowship is with the Father and with His son (I John 1:3) and lead to the service of others [John 13: 14-17].



Whom Should We Serve

Students, because we are students and live among students, and also the people of the whole world who are our neighbours because God loves them. (Mark 12:31; John 13:14-17; 20:21).

Aim 5

Why Must All Christian Students Work For The Extension, Unity And Renewal Of The Church Throughout The World?

Because they have made a personal commitment of their lives to Jesus Christ who is their Saviour and Lord. His Church consists of all those who know Him as Saviour and Lord and it is His purpose that His church should reach all mankind

In Jesus Christ all those who believe in Him are one, but the outward expression of this unity is also His desire and the witness to His work of Salvation.

This desire of His must also be that of those committed to Him (John 13:34-35; John 17:21) I John 1:5-7). In Jesus Christ all those who believe in Him are made new. In obedience to Him only can this renewal be found. (Rev 21:5; 2 Cor. 5:17)

Why Should Every Christian Student Bear Witness To Christ As A Responsible Member In His Own Particular Church?

Every christian student needs continuing fellowship with Christians of all backgrounds and not just fellowship with other students. He should therefore be a responsible and active member of his local church.

GUIDELINES TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN SCOM FAMILY

**For Use in SCOMAF Zones, SCOM UCS and
Secondary School SCOM Branches**

-June 2011-



GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS USED

SCOM	-	Student Christian Organization of Malawi
SCOM UCS	-	SCOM Universities and Colleges Section
SCOMAF	-	SCOM- Associates Fellowship
HTC	-	Health Testing and Counseling
HIV	-	Human Immune Virus
AIDS	-	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
NEC	-	(SCOM) National Executive Committee
NAC	-	(SCOM) National Associates Committee

And where referred

- *Member* refers to the registered member in Secondary School, University and College branches and SCOMAF zone,
- *Constitution* refers to the Constitution of SCOM
- *Politics* refers to the act of direct or indirect involvement in the process of visibly yielding or exercising of *power in public* domain at various levels in politically charged groupings such as political parties and political pressure groups.
- *Human rights* refer to rights as recognised in Bill of rights in Malawi.
- *Freedoms* refer to freedoms as recognised in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi

And in this document

- *Ministry* and SCOM are used interchangeably



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PREFACE

Pursuance of similar objectives, cherishing of uniform values, homogeneous visualization of societal destiny, congruent aspirations and general consensus on the means of fulfilling the objectives are the core tenets that differentiate one group from another. Corollary, they are also the pillars on which the formation and survival of any organization firmly rests. As organizations grow, an impartial stander-by will rate its level of success based on how each of these tenets together are embraced by the members of the organization. As organizations grow in years, membership and resource base, the litmus test of their continued survival is on the same tenets.

SCOM is one such organization which has geometrically grown in membership in all its structures. The enormous responsibility bestowed upon us by God continues to be a humble honor to us. All eyes of SCOM members now see the same thing: the harvest is too plenty. Notwithstanding the wide membership base, the 'annual harvest' is too huge as well. The challenge of SCOM therefore is twofold: inside and outside. Internally, the ministry has to deal with the diversity of its membership, in terms of ages, social-economic status, sex, generational gaps, denominational parities and different cultural and tribal orientations. Externally, the environment is changing everyday as some segments of the world are preaching a seemingly strange message on what it means to be happy in this world. A SCOM member is thus faced with challenges from these two dimensions and has to move on faithfully uprightly in the eyes of God in such environments. SCOM believes in the word of God contained in the Bible entirely. Thus the word of God as espoused in the Bible is SCOM's supreme guide on how its members should conduct themselves.

That granted, any prescribed guidelines of how SCOM members should conduct themselves may not be exhaustive. However, in a fast cruising world, it serves greatly to agree on a few areas as put and implied by the Bible that the world has labeled as controversies to avoid the constant and



perpetual incidences of putting the name of God in shame and tarnishing the innocent image of SCOM (deliberate or unintentional). Thus the guidelines to the code of conduct provided here do not in any way add or intend to impose any new prescriptions on top of those provided in the Bible. To the contrary, these guidelines strive to remind, reinforce, accentuate and underscore our commitments to the Biblical principles in how we, as Christians foremost should conduct ourselves as we achieve the objectives of SCOM. Put differently, the guidelines incalculably repeat our commitments to live in concordance with the Biblical principles. Equally, the guidelines do not even in trivial sense replace, amend and modify the existing SCOM constitution but enables the latter to be upheld operationally. It is obvious that the possibility of incorporating extra guidelines to signify SCOM's standards on emerging issues in this fast cruising world is highly likely. Finally, as Philippians 2: 14-16a implores us, let us “do everything without complaining or arguing so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life” There is a lot of stake in our society and unless Christians begin to look at things from the biblical point of view, they will be swallowed by the world.

Dr. Alfred Maluwa

SCOM National Executive Committee Chairman



INTRODUCTION

Being part of a global village in the fast permeating global order, third world countries continue to face the quagmire of controlling the rate of erosion in their societal values, courtesy of Western orchestrated 'free-life' campaign. The Church in Africa is consequently under pressure to relinquish its tightly embraced Biblical values that the very West irresistibly and passionately preached to our open minded ancestors, not long ago. As the world order is uncontrollably taking roots, the once seemingly consensus on the universal standard for Christian conduct has unnoticeably evaporated. The major reason is that human philosophy is using the same Bible to propagate doctrines which are standing parallel to the 'orthodox truth'. Unsurprisingly, Christians rarely easily agree on Christian 'norms'. Fueling the Church's crisis is the third wave of democratization, mainly with its twin features of freedoms and rights. Rights and freedoms by their very nature are *always* individualistic in nature, at least to a greater extent. The Biblical notion of being 'a brother's keeper' thus striking runs counter to the concept of human rights and freedoms substantially and can hardly be married. Pressure emanating from these two fronts continues to erase the once and a 'supposed-to-be' visible line between believers and non-believers. Where such boundaries exist, there are undeniably conscious efforts by believers to live as such and display the undiluted Biblical values in their entirety. It is the need for the latter option which gave birth to the initiative of compiling these guidelines to the code of conduct in SCOM family.

The guidelines are meant to be used in SCOM's three structures, SCOMAF, SCOM UCS and Secondary School SCOM branches. Deliberate efforts have been made to touch on all areas that affect the lives of diverse members in all the structures. Emphasis has been placed on issues of relationships, fellowship, responsibility in the ministry, disciplinary processes, involvement in politics, human rights and freedom, dressing and integrity in places of one's trade. The guidelines cannot claim to having exhaustively dealt with all is-



sues. Being the first version, there is likelihood therefore that additional areas will be incorporated at appropriate later stages.

Patrick Reuben Kaudzu
SCOM General Secretary



1.0 RELATIONSHIPS

SCOM believes and recognizes that life revolves around relationships and that we are all borne out of relationships. Relationships are the heart that pumps the blood of life. The ten commandments are about relationships.¹

1.1 Relationship with ,Parents, Guardians and Elders

- 1.1.1 SCOM members should respect their parents, guardians and elders at all times both in actions and speaking
- 1.1.2 SCOM members are required to respect and honor their parents, elders and guardians even if they are not Christians.²

1.2 Relationship with Wards and Youngsters

- 1.2.1 SCOM members who are parents, elders or guardians should treat their wards and youngsters in a dignified manner in order to foster a bond that will be conducive to fruitful relationship between guardians and wards as long as both sides do not compromise on Christians standards³
- 1.2.2 In their interaction with wards, SCOM members should strive to lead by good example both in actions and speech.⁴

1.3 Relationships with those in Authority

- 1.3.1 SCOM members must be submissive to all forms of authority that have been instituted such as patrons, teachers, school administrators, and the government.
- 1.3.2 SCOM Members must strive to maintain a good and healthy working relationship with authorities as long this does not compromise SCOM's core values.⁵
- 1.3.3 SCOM members must exercise wisdom and maturity to judge between submitting to authority and submitting to sin.⁶



1.4 Relationship with the Opposite Sex

- 1.4.1 SCOM recognizes the fact that marriage starts with courtship but the general rule is that marriage is for those that are mature emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually.⁷
- 1.4.2 SCOM discourages relationships between boys and girls still in secondary schools.
- 1.4.3 SCOM Associates must not get into relationship with SCOM students because the latter still have significant life goals to achieve such as attaining education, earning a stable income and living.
- 1.4.4 SCOM encourages senior members (in the UCS) who want to embark on a relationship to be yoked with fellow believers.⁸
- 1.4.5 Senior SCOM students (in the UCS) who embark on a relationship should observe sexual purity and must handle themselves in a manner that does not put the name of God in shame before they get married.⁹
- 1.4.6 Unmarried SCOM members who impregnates or is found pregnant shall be liable for a disciplinary action to be administered by an internal disciplinary committee.

1.5 Marriage

- 1.5.1 SCOM encourages married Associates to continuously seek God's face, guidance and bond in their married lives.
- 1.5.2 SCOM encourages married couples to love and be submissive to each other both in times of happiness and sorrow.^a
- 1.5.3 SCOM encourages married associates to develop the habit of resolving their issues amicably and without resorting to public judicial-forums such as courts and police.^b
- 1.5.4 SCOM encourages married couples to share their family struggles



with Church brethren or close confidants within the ministry.^c

- 1.5.5 Married associates should live by biblical standard of marital faithfulness to one spouse and thus should not have extra marital status. If evidence is established on misconduct such associates must be approached and should repent. If this does not work, they must cease to operate under SCOM and schools must be informed of this.
- 1.5.6 Married associates who impregnate or is impregnated by somebody (other than his/her spouse) will be subjected to disciplinary action.
- 1.5.7 At all times, married associates should act ethically and with the integrity before God and towards the opposite sex and the general public/society so as to honor the sanctity of marriage and not to bring shame to the Lord's name.
- 1.5.8 Married couples living in conflicts caused by or resulting into battling, alcoholism, adultery, communication breakdown must be approached as above.

1.6 Divorce and Separation

- 1.6.1 SCOM appreciates the various interpretation of scriptures pertaining to divorces and separation by different churches and theological schools of thought.
- 1.6.2 However, in view of the fact that married SCOM members are supposed to be role models to students and the society at large, SCOM members who have divorced and separated on the grounds stated below should be excused and relieved from the ministry:
 - i. Adultery
 - ii. Witchcraft
 - iii. Misunderstanding
 - iv. Departure of spouse
- 1.6.3 In a case where one spouse is dead and the surviving spouse decides



to marry, SCOM encourages such members to maintain Christian standards in course of planning to re-marry.

- 1.6.4 In a case 1.6.3 above holds, the member will be allowed to discharge his roles as any member.

2.0 FELLOWSHIP^d

- 2.1 SCOM cherishes the need to strengthen our bonds of relationships as we live for the others
- 2.2 SCOM members must live to promote the interest of others as long as those interests are in line with scriptures.
- 2.3 SCOM members are encouraged to assist each other in times of need and sorrow.
- 2.4 SCOM members are encouraged to celebrate each other's success, achievements and any form of breakthrough through sharing of personal strides.
- 2.5 SCOM members are encouraged to be open to each other so they have a safety vent through which to share their experiences and struggles.
- 2.6 SCOM members must treat each other with respect and dignity regardless of their social divides .
- 2.7 No SCOM member should be segregated on the basis of social divide such as education prowess, income, and position in society, outward looks and disability.
- 2.8 SCOM members who, in terms of social divide such as income and education prowess are above others are encouraged to try their best to open up to those below them so that true and meaningful fellowship in SCOM is sustained.



- 2.9 SCOM members must desist from indulging in gossiping, backbiting and spreading rumors in order to foster unity and be a source of blessing and joy to each other.
- 2.10 SCOM members must be sensitive to the way they speak to each other to avoid being a thorn in the fellowship.
- 2.11 SCOM members who, in terms of social divide such as income and education thinks are less advantaged than others should not feel inferior to those who are seemingly well to do, but they should mix freely for healthy fellowship.

2.12 Treatment of Singles in the Ministry

SCOM realizes that marital status can either be a choice or circumstantial and whichever of the case, all members deserve respect regardless of their marital status. SCOM also cherishes the enormous contribution that has been made and continues to be made by both married and single associates. It is in this vein that SCOM:

- 2.12.1 Encourages its members to respect and treat each other in dignified manner regardless of their marital status.
- 2.12.2 Encourages both married and single members to be open to each other in order to enable both categories understand and appreciate each other's struggles and feelings.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MINISTRY^e

- 3.1 SCOM members should strive to support the ministry at all times either through prayers, resources or emotional support.
- 3.2 SCOM members should strive to attend SCOM meetings where possible and are encouraged to develop a habit of notifying the leadership of their absence in advance where possible.



- 3.3 Those entrusted with leadership positions must at all times be accountable and transparent in the manner in which they make decisions and use resources for the ministry to the upper committees and those under their jurisdiction
- 3.4 SCOM encourages those in leadership committees to regularly initiate independent financial audits exercises of accounts – done by qualified accountants, auditors and firms – where capacity allows, to ensure transparency, financial prudence and cultivate the trust of members. In the same vein, SCOM encourages its members to constantly access copies of audited accounts and where the need warrants, objectively raise questions to the responsible leaders.
- 3.5 SCOM members are encouraged time and again to bring forth substantial and constructive ideas and suggestions on how the ministry can progress further. In the same vein, SCOM members are encouraged to pool in their various expertise/skills/gifted talents in the undertaking of SCOM operations.
- 3.6 SCOM members should be pro-active in seeking information, clarification and guidance in areas where they are not clear from leaders in relevant structures and the secretariat in order to reduce antagonisms that arise because of asymmetric information and divisive speculations.
- 3.7 SCOM members should ensure that they are supportive and submissive to those in SCOM leadership positions in order to ensure that SCOM objectives are accomplished.
- 3.8 SCOM members should strive at all times to present a good image of the ministry to other people who are not members of SCOM
- 3.9 SCOM members are strongly encouraged to strive for excellence in all areas of education, business and career by constantly upgrading



their respective attainments through further studies, business seminars and career development programs.

4.0 DOING BUSINESS WITH SCOM MINISTRY

- 4.1 In the spirit of integrity, SCOM members shall declare their interest when dealing with SCOM in any monetary business.
- 4.2 SCOM members should strive to deliver the same or an even better quality of service that they would provide in a professional capacity to any other client in the marketplace

5.0 ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTERGRITY IN PLACES OTHER THAN SCOM^f

- 5.1 The ministry expects all its members to be people of integrity and handle any resources entrusted to them with the fear of the Lord.
- 5.2 It is for this reason that SCOM expects its members not to indulge in acts of theft, embezzlement of resources, violent demonstrations, misuse of resources and people, money laundering and sexual harassment at their work places or any other place where they are entrusted with resources and power. Such actions will meet disciplinary actions.

6.0 DRESSING^g

- 6.1 1 SCOM is cognizant of controversy that surrounds the issue of dressing in society as well as in the church but is also aware that Christians dressing goes beyond the covering of one's nakedness and looking presentable to glorifying God and His temple which is our bodies. SCOM also realizes that society will always embrace its own definitions of what is acceptable and even the limits of freedom of dressing but Christians must be guided by the biblical principles. While the desire for SCOM is not to provide a list of dos and don'ts SCOM cherishes the following principles:



- (a) The body is for the Lord and the Lord is for the body.
- (b) Whatever you put on, wear it as unto the Lord giving thanks to God through Him.
- (c) Dressing must reflect our appreciation to God for creating us in His image.
- (d) Jesus must be the Lord of our every choice we make even of clothes.
- (e) Freedom of dressing must be defined by what is beneficial to us and the body of Christ in general
- (f) Fashions must not enslave us, we must determine what is good for us as guided by the Word of God.
- (g) Associates and SCOM members should be cautious that God first provided clothes to Adam and Eve so that they cover their nakedness and any clothes that exposes hidden parts of the body are not recommended for the SCOM family

6.2 It is on account of the above principles that SCOM members are encouraged at all times to:

- (a) Dress with modesty and decency
- (b) Cover all parts of the body that can stimulate others sexually and desist from clothes that make others to stumble by avoiding buggy trousers that go so low (kukhwefula), see-throughs, suggestive tight skirts and trousers that depict the body contours, mini-skirts that expose thighs, tops that expose the base of breasts and large portions of the back.



7.0 ALCOHOL INTAKE, SMOKING, ABORTION AND HOMOSEXUALITY^h

SCOM perceives itself and its members to be playing a key role in the spiritual lives of its members and the community at large. SCOM members are expected to be examples and a shining light to the world. Guidelines with regard to abortion, homosexuality and alcohol and substance abuse have thus been developed in order to let SCOM members live a life that is above reproach and worthy of their calling. SCOM therefore encourages its members to separate themselves from habits and practices that would bring shame to the Lord's name and are asked to live by a higher stand of moral practice by following these recommendations as follows

7.1 Alcohol and substance abuse

7.1.1 Alcohol and substance abuse (antidepressants such as marijuana and cocaine) lead to several negative consequences such as putting the Lord's name to shame, causing a stumbling block in other people's faith, health problems, family and other varied social problems and may even result in deaths related to substance and alcohol abuse, SCOM Members must therefore abstain from these (alcohol and substance abuse) in order to successfully achieve its mission. The Bible lists these as the fruit of the flesh (Gal 5:19).

7.2 Homosexuality and abortion

- 7.2.1 SCOM prohibits marriage of same sex in its entirety. In the beginning God created them male and female. Homosexuality is prohibited and condemned in the Bible.
- 7.2.2 SCOM respects the sanctity of life and strongly prohibits abortion in any form. It believes that life begins at conception so



killing the fetus is murder and brings punishment from God. The way out of pregnancy is to repent the sin and carry on rather than aborting.

8.0 HIV AIDS PANDEMIC¹

8.1 SCOM acknowledges the untold misery that HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused in the world and how its members have been infected and affected by the pandemic. SCOM also believes that those infected by the virus are full human beings fully capable of contributing meaningfully to socio-economic development and in the preaching of the Gospel. In this vein SCOM:

- 8.1.1 Strongly encourages its members to go for Voluntary Health Testing and Counseling and Testing (VCTHTC) in order to know their sero status. Knowledge of one's sero status ensures that proper care is taken regarding ones health after receiving proper counseling.
- 8.1.2 Prohibits members for discriminating and stigmatizing against members or non-members who are HIV positive and/or are suffering from AIDS.
- 8.1.3 Prohibits members from publicizing or disclosing the sero-status of fellow members who are positive without their prior permission or consent.
- 8.1.4 Prohibits members from forcing anybody to declare his/her sero-status.

9.0 PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS^L

9.1 SCOM understands politics as the process of yielding power in order to run or influence the government for the benefit of general citizenry. SCOM therefore does not perceive politics as a dirty game. It is in this



vein that interested SCOM members are encouraged, where possible to take part in public affairs.

- 9.2 SCOM members involved in politics are advised not to use SCOM structures, slogans and resources in the pursuance of their political interests.
- 9.3 SCOM members who are involved in politics should observe integrity in politics and where there is evidence to the contrary, disciplinary measures shall be taken.

10.0 HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

SCOM is cautiously aware that while human rights and freedoms are meant to stimulate the attainment of maximum material, spiritual and socio-economic aspiration, not all human rights and freedoms are permissible from a Biblical perspective. It is for this reason that SCOM:

- 10.1 Encourages its members to be civic educated in order to be conversant of their respective human rights
- 10.2 Encourages members to routinely check if some of the rights are in line with God's word.
- 10.3 Discourages members from exercising the rights that do not edify or build the body of Christ.
- 10.4 Discourages members against causing confusion, divisions and anarchy in the ministry under the pretext of exercising their rights
- 10.5 Prohibits members against championing and advocating for rights or pervasions that are not in concordance with the word of God.



11.0 ISSUES OF DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

11.1 Context

11.1.1 Acts of sin and misconduct whether done willfully or ignorantly are not new in the Christian faith. When these have been committed, elders are supposed to take steps that will correct the brother/sister in a manner that will preserve the faith of the estranged brother or sister. The need to guide SCOM leadership at national, regional, and branch levels to restore wandering believers lovingly has led to the development of these procedures.

11.1.2 The procedures have been developed in line with the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ as presented in Matthew 18:15-17:

¹⁵ 'If your brother or sister¹ sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

11.1.3 The procedures are to be applied to every SCOM member and they are not independent of the SCOM Code of Conduct. By this, it is meant that the implementation of the procedures will help the ministry to implement the SCOM Code of Conduct which does not have clear provisions for disciplinary processes in the case of its breach.

11.2 The Purpose of Discipline

11.2.1 Disciplinary processes in the church are implemented for purposes of restoring a brother or sister who have gone astray, as well as, de-



fining the values and beliefs of the system. In SCOM, the purpose of the disciplinary processes is the spiritual restoration of fallen members and the consequent strengthening of the ministry and glorifying of the Lord. When a believer is rebuked and he or she turns from his/her sin and is forgiven, he/she is won back to fellowship with the body and with its head, Jesus Christ.

- 11.2.2 In administering discipline leaders should not aim at throwing people out of the ministry or feed themselves with self-righteous pride. Leaders should not aim at embarrassing people or to exercise authority and power in some unbiblical manner.
- 11.2.3 The guidelines also recognise that a member can be said to have sinned when in fact he or she has not sinned or committed any misconduct. It is the goal of these procedures to establish whether a misconduct or sin has actually occurred or not so as to protect members who may suffer from mere backbiting. In this case, SCOM will not apply disciplinary sanctions on members that are not supposed to face these.

11.3 Disciplinary Committees

11.3.1 Constitution of Disciplinary Committees

- 11.3.1.1 Disciplinary matters in SCOM shall be handled by adhoc committees that shall be called disciplinary committees.
- 11.3.1.2 The disciplinary committees shall be set at every level of the organisation and these include branch, zonal, regional and national disciplinary committees.
- 11.3.1.3 A disciplinary committee shall be set up by the executive committee at the level where the matter is being considered. Members of the disciplinary committee shall be carefully selected by the executive committee to consider spiritual maturity and the ability to handle the case at



hand. Both executive and non-executive members of the branch or zone shall qualify to be part of the disciplinary panel but the chairperson of the executive shall not be part of the committee.

- 11.3.1.4 The after determination of a matter, the disciplinary committee shall report to the executive with recommendations and the final determination will be made by the executive who will communicate to the member.

11.3.2 Jurisdiction of Disciplinary Committees

- 11.3.2.1 The primary role of taking care of the spiritual lives of members are in the zonal or branch committee.
- 11.3.2.2 Primarily, disciplinary cases shall be heard in a zone or branch where the member who is alleged to have sinned or committed a misconduct belong.
- 11.3.2.3 Branch and zonal disciplinary committees are expected to conclude all the matters before them to avoid discussing people's spiritual lives in many committees.
- 11.3.2.4 Referrals to higher disciplinary committees are thus expected to be made under exceedingly rare circumstances.
- 11.3.2.5 When a matter is referred to a higher disciplinary committee, the lower disciplinary committee will no longer consider it until its final determination.
- 11.3.2.6 Regional and national disciplinary committees shall primarily handle cases of misconduct by office holders at that level who committed the misconduct while exercising their duties. Disciplinary committees at this level will more likely relate to organisational misconduct. For example, if a regional treasurer misappropriates resources that belong to the region or a regional Chairperson has a sour relationship with one of the regional committee members, the regional committee will handle the disciplinary case; if



the same person is alleged to have been involved in sexual immorality, this will be handled by his/her zonal committee but the regional committee will be informed of the outcomes of the disciplinary processes.

- 11.3.2.7 Regional or national disciplinary committees will also be handling appeals by members that feel that their cases are unfairly handled.
- 11.3.2.8 The determination by the national disciplinary committee in the referral case shall be considered final.

11.4. The Disciplinary Process

A disciplinary process shall be instituted after an allegation of sin or misconduct by a member had been brought to the attention of the committee. The allegation can be brought by another member or it may be an allegation that has become public information in the media.

A member who brings an allegation to the committee should provide as much information as possible and be ready to serve as a witness in the case. When an allegation has been brought, a disciplinary process shall follow three main steps which includes investigating the allegation, private discipline, and disciplinary hearing.

11.4.1 Investigating an Allegation

All allegations that have been brought to the attention of the committee shall be investigated before the disciplinary processes start. At this stage, the committee will aim at establishing the truth about the allegations. One or two members will be assigned to investigate on the allegations. If the investigations involve interviewing the concerned brother, it should be made to him or her that the investigating brethren are just establishing the facts.

- 11.4.1.1 Outcomes of the investigations could be either of the fol-



lowing:

- 11.4.1.2 The allegations is false. The disciplinary processes will be discontinued;
- 11.4.1.3 The allegations are true. The case shall proceed to the private discipline stage.
- 11.4.1.4 If the allegations were brought by a member, the outcome of the investigations should be communicated to him to appreciate his/her role as well as make him/her aware of the truth in case the disciplinary action is discontinued.

11.4.2 Private Discipline

- 11.4.2.1 Basing on the teaching of our Lord Jesus, this stage will aim at restoring a brother or sister after it has been established that he/she was involved in wrongdoing. In some cases, implementation of private disciplining can be part of the investigations of the allegation.
- 11.4.2.2 During private disciplinary process, a minimum of two and maximum of three members will be sent to the brother/sister who has committed a sin or an act of misconduct with the aim of making him/her realise that he/she has sinned or committed a misconduct.
- 11.4.2.3 Upon accepting the wrongdoing, the brethren will lead the member to repentance.
- 11.4.2.4 When the brother or sister repents in response to the private disciplinary hearing, that brother or sister is forgiven and restored. Based on the type of sin or misconduct committee, the branch or zonal executive committee will decide on either of the following:



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- 11.4.2.4.1 Completely discontinue the case;
 - 11.4.2.4.2 Discontinue the case but put the brother or sister under another brother or sister's guidance for some time;
 - 11.4.2.4.3 Discontinue the case but suspend the brother from leading or visiting schools for some defined time as he or she will be observed;
 - 11.4.2.4.4 Discontinue the case but request the member for restitution of all wrongs. Restitution can be in a form of offering an apology, paying back stolen money, breaking ungodly relationships, etc; and
 - 11.4.2.4.5 Combination of decisions shall be allowed based on the cases.
- 11.4.2.5 The brother or sister who refuses to accept to have committed an act of sin or misconduct although there is adequate evidence that act of sin or misconduct was committed. Under this case, the member shall be requested to appear before a public disciplinary hearing.
- 11.4.2.6 The brother or sister accepts to have committed sin or misconduct but refuses to repent and change. This member shall be requested to appear before the public disciplinary hearing.
- 11.4.2.7 The brother or sister convinces the brethren that there was no act of sin or misconduct. The brethren will encourage him or her and discontinue the case.



11.4.3 Public Disciplinary Hearing

Public disciplinary hearing will be reserved for cases that were not concluded at the private disciplinary hearing. At the public disciplinary hearing, the alleged member will be allowed to bring witnesses. The branch or zonal committee shall also be allowed to bring witnesses. Witnesses shall be brought if the member did not act the act at the private hearing although the committee has adequate evidence. If the member accepted wrongdoing but was not repentant, the public disciplinary hearing shall not bring witnesses.

11.4.3.1 In case when the member refused to accept wrong doing during the private disciplinary hearing, the public hearing will follow the following procedure:

11.4.3.1.1 The chairperson of the hearing shall read the allegation and ask the member whether he/she accept the allegation or not;

11.4.3.1.2 If a member accepts the charge after step 11.3.1.1, the committee will suspend steps 11.3.1.3 to 11.3.1.5.

11.4.3.1.3 The chairperson shall bring out the evidence they have including allowing witnesses to testify.

11.4.3.1.4 The member will be asked to respond to the evidence and he/she will use his/her witnesses at this point.

11.4.3.1.5 The committee will cross examine the member and all witnesses

11.4.3.1.6 All witnesses and the member shall be requested to go out for the committee to make a determi-



nation of whether the act was committed or not.

- 11.4.3.2 If the member accepts act of sin or misconduct at the private disciplinary hearing or public disciplinary hearing, the committee shall choose any of the decisions under 11.4.2.1.
- 11.4.3.3 When the member refuses to accept but the committee finds evidence of act of sin or misconduct, the committee shall make any of the following determination:
 - 11.4.3.3.1 Suspend a member
 - 11.4.3.3.2 Give a member sometime to reflect before the final determination is made
 - 11.4.3.3.3 Ex-communicate a member
 - 11.4.3.3.4 Refer the matter to a higher court.

11.4.4 Conditions under suspension and ex-communication

- 11.4.4.1 The following conditions shall apply to a member who is under suspension for committing an act of sin or misconduct:
 - 11.4.4.1.1 The member shall cease to hold any position within the ministry;
 - 11.4.4.1.2 Another member shall be assigned to assist a member until the ministry wins the member back;
 - 11.4.4.1.3 The member shall not be allowed to preach or perform an activity within a SCOM meeting;
 - 11.4.4.1.4 The member shall not be allowed to conduct

- branch visitations;
- 11.4.4.1.5 Suspended members are expected to attend SCOM conferences and any other gathering;
- 11.4.4.1.6 The member shall be encouraged to continue to attend SCOM meetings for the period of suspension; and
- 11.4.4.2 The member will be restored after the defined suspension period if the member who was following up on him can attest to the change in his life. The decision to restore him shall be communicated to the member.
- 11.4.4.3 The following conditions shall apply to a member that has been excommunicated
 - 11.4.4.3.1 The member shall cease to hold any position within the ministry;
 - 11.4.4.3.2 The member shall not be allowed to preach or perform an activity within a SCOM meeting;
 - 11.4.4.3.3 The member shall not be allowed to conduct branch visitations;
 - 11.4.4.3.4 The member shall not be allowed to attend SCOM conferences;
 - 11.4.4.3.5 Excommunicated member is allowed to attend SCOM meetings; and
 - 11.4.4.3.6 The member will be allowed to apply for re-admittance if he realises his sins. When a member applies to re-join SCOM, the committee shall put him under observation for



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some time based on the case. During observation period, the committee shall decide on points under 11.4.2.1 that shall apply to the member.



Endnotes

Refer below for some scriptural backing to some of the above stand when applied in our context.

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| <i>1-Exodus 20:1-17.</i> | <i>6-Eph 6:9.</i> |
| <i>2-Exodus 20:12,Eph 6:1-4.</i> | <i>7-Gen 24,2:21-23,Heb 4:13.</i> |
| <i>3-James 2:8,3,Eph 4:25,29.</i> | <i>8-2 Cor 6:14-16.</i> |
| <i>4-ITimothy 4:12.</i> | <i>9-Rom 2:21-24.</i> |
| <i>5-Rom 13:1-4,Eph 6:5-8.</i> | <i>a-Eph 5:21-23. h-Eph 5:18.</i> |
| <i>b-1Cor 6 :1-11.</i> | <i>e-1Thess 2:6-9. i-James:1:27,2:1-5,Gal 4:28-29</i> |
| <i>c-Heb 10:24-25.</i> | <i>f-1 Sam 12:1-5 L-Math 5:13-16,John 17:15,18</i> |
| <i>d-1 John 1:1-5,Ps 133:1-3.</i> | <i>g-1 Pet 3:1-4,ITim 2:9-10. J-Phil 2:3,Gal 5:1-6,1Cor:12-13,ICor 8:9</i> |

