The College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa
2016 Annual Report
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Executive Summary

In 2016 the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) marked its Seventeenth year in operation. This report highlights the activities implemented as well as the achievements realized by the college in 2016.

In 2016 the college witnessed an increase in the number of Specialist graduates where by 43 graduated in different specialties—now COSECSA has now produced 206 graduates since 2004. COSECSA now has 973 members and fellows. 760 of these members and fellows are practicing surgeons in the 10 COSECSA countries, representing 35% of all practicing surgeons in the region (n= 760/ 2161).

2016 was the year of significant growth for COSECSA. A new strategic plan 2016-2020 was developed which will show the roadmap for COSECSA in realizing its vision. The AGM endorsed Namibia and Sudan to join as Member Countries of COSECSA. New training hospitals were accredited in Namibia, Zambia and Uganda significantly increasing the potential number of trainees—this brought the total number of COSECSA accredited training hospitals to 110 out of which 60 have trainees enrolled.

The College in collaboration with other partners launched the interactive map showing the distribution of surgeons in the region, also conducted a survey of graduates in the ECSA region as well as a retention study. COSECSA has been registered in Tanzania as a legal entity. COSECSA established its first Court of Examiners for the college, and introduced Paediatric Orthopaedic Course as an additional to the Fellowship programmes.

By the close of program registration for 2016, COSECSA had registered 127 trainees making a total number of 389 surgical trainees in the training programme, a number equivalent to 24% of the entire current surgical workforce in the region.

Numerous courses were delivered to trainees, including Essential surgical training, basic laparoscopic courses, management of surgical emergencies, Orthopaedic courses, Basic Surgical Skills Course, Basic Science courses, Trauma courses as well as a number of Fellowship level specialty training courses. COSECSA Train the Trainer courses were delivered in several countries.

At the international level, COSECSA was represented in various forums namely the American College of Surgeons Annual Congress, Global surgical frontiers Conference and Global Health Partnership Conference.
About COSECSA
The College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) is an independent body that fosters postgraduate education in surgery and provides surgical training throughout the region of East, Central and Southern Africa. COSECSA is a non-profit making body that currently operates in 10 countries in the Sub-Saharan region: Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

What does COSECSA do?
The primary objective of COSECA is to advance education, training, standards of practice and research in surgical care in this region.

COSECSA shapes and leads the training, examination and accreditation of surgeons in the East, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) region. The College delivers a common surgical training programme with a common examination and an internationally recognised surgical qualification.

Programmes offered

Membership of the College of Surgeons – MCS (ECSA): A certificate of competence in surgery at General Medical Officer Grade (2 years training).

The membership examination is designed to assess understanding of the basic principles of surgery and a broad knowledge of surgery in general. Trainees register to work in institutions accredited by COSECSA and attend compulsory courses.

After two years trainees should be able to take responsibility for emergency surgical admissions, deal with life-threatening situations resulting from trauma or critical illness and be able to diagnose and plan treatment for a variety of common surgical conditions.

The MCS examination does not confer specialist status but qualifies a candidate to register for and pursue higher surgical training in a surgical specialty of his or her choice.

Fellowship of the College of Surgeons – FCS (ECSA): The College Fellowship examination (FCS) is a recognized specialist qualification.

A specialist qualification is in General Surgery, Orthopaedics, Urology, Paediatric Surgery, Otorhinolaryngology, Plastic Surgery (all 5 years training) or Neurosurgery (6 years)
Key Numbers

17
Years in Operation

206
Specialist graduates

97%
Graduate Retention Rate

973
Members and Fellows

389
Surgical Trainees

10
COSECSA member Countries

8
Training Programmes

110
Accredited Hospitals

744
Completed cases in School for Surgeons

39,751
Operations logged in Electronic Logbook

40+
Courses Conducted

3
Representation in Regional Events

78%
Members and Fellows are in the COSECSA region

400+
Delegates attending the Annual Scientific conference.

COSECSA MEMBERSHIP

Member (Specialist) 0%
Honorary Fellow (COSECSA) 1%
Honorary Fellow (ASEA) 1%
Member 15%
Fellow by Election 25%
Fellow by Examination 22%
Foundation Fellow 36%
Graduates: COSECSA has now produced 206 FCS graduates of which 43 graduated in December 2016. 97% (122/126) of COSECSA graduates (until December 2015) were practising surgery in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2016.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainees (Dec 31°)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>263</td>
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<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical/Viva Exam Candidates</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCS Successful Candidates</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Successful Candidates</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<td>Active Training Centres</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>Cumulative FCS Graduates</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>206</td>
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Trainees: By the close of registration for new candidates at the end of February 2016, a total of 127 trainees had enrolled for MCS and FCS training programme making a total of 389 trainees on the training programme.

Members and Fellows: COSECSA now has 973 members and fellows. 760 of these members and fellows are practising surgeons in the 10 COSECSA countries, representing 35% of all practising surgeons in the region (n= 760/ 2161).

Training Hospitals: As of end of year 2016 there are 110 COSECSA accredited training hospitals, of which 60 currently have trainees enrolled in COSECSA programmes. As well as the 60 accredited training hospitals with current trainees in the COSECSA region, there are now 5 COSECSA accredited hospitals outside the region with current trainees:
2016 Achievements

Strategic Plan 2016-2020

A new five year Strategic Plan commenced in 2016. The COSECSA Strategic Plan is the dynamic blueprint for the growth of COSECSA and is based on four key goals.

COSECSA Strategic Goals 2016 – 2020 are:
1) Graduate 500 surgeons by 2020
2) Achieve excellence in training and research
3) Maintain best practice in examinations and assessment
4) Build to organisational excellence and financial sustainability

These 4 goals will inform COSECSA’s activities, new partnerships and engagements and resources will be utilized to achieve them.

Surgical workforce gaps in the ECSA region

In the East, Central, and Southern Africa, access to surgical care remains one of the most significant and under-reported issues. COSECSA, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and International Collaboration for Essential Surgery produced an interactive map showing the location of all surgeons throughout the COSECSA region. This was developed to help stakeholders understand one of the most significant public health issues in this region – shortage of surgical health workforce.

In 2016 COSECSA launched an interactive map showing the location of all surgeons throughout the ECSA region. This map shows the number of surgeons per 100,000 individuals in an area. This was to identify surgical workforce gaps in the region. The map is available through the following link: http://www.cosecsa.org/global-surgery-map
Increasing the Number of Specialist Surgeons

In 2016 examinations 43 candidates passed examinations at the membership level and 47 graduated as specialist surgeons. We had international representation of examiners and observers from over 20 countries. To date COSECSA has graduated 205 specialists since 2004.

![Successful FCS Candidates by Year](image)

### COSECSA first Court of Examiners

The Council of the College of Surgeons of East Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) has recently passed a resolution to inaugurate the college’s own Court of Examiners from amongst its senior fellows. The main responsibility of the members of the Court will be to participate in the examiners training workshop prior to the examinations and to help conduct the clinical examinations as an examiner of the College.

The selection was done upon the recommendation of Country Representative in each COSECSA member country and subsequent approval of the COSECSA Council. The Court of Examiners will serve for three years- 2016-2018.

The establishment of the court will increase the profile of postgraduate surgical examining and make examining activity more relevant and attractive to COSECSA’s community in the East, Central and Southern Africa and beyond. There are benefits for the members of the court. They have the opportunity to;
• Process in COSECSA’s postgraduate conferring.
• Become involved in COSECSA’s overseas activities.
• Get Complimentary attendance at the Court Annual Dinner and Meeting
• Get nominated for the Presidential Award for Outstanding Contribution.

**Trainees**
2016 we had 127 new trainees joining our training programmes in total we had 389 trainees in the programme, a number equivalent to 24% of the entire current surgical workforce in the ECSA region.

![Trainees Enrollment in COSECSA Programme From 2002 to 2016](image)

**Comprehensive e-learning platform – “School for Surgeons”**
COSECSA has a Comprehensive e-learning platform known as “School for Surgeons” which contains mandatory learning materials for FCS and MCS trainees. The School for Surgeons (SFS) was fully redeveloped in 2016 to match the new COSECSA branding and make it more user friendly and accessible. The new features of School for Surgeons included mobile optimisation of the platform. This was seen to be a more effective and efficient way of delivering mobile optimised learning for trainees.

As a requirement, each candidate must complete at least six cases before sitting their exams. In 2016 a total number of 744 cases were completed by trainees before they took their final exams. In addition to dedicated online training material on the SFS e-learning portal, full syllabi are available for each speciality on the COSECSA website. In 2016 mandatory specific case-based courses were run for MCS, FCS General Surgery, FCS Orthopaedics and FCS Urology while course specific training material is available for FCS
Bespoke surgical electronic logbook

The e-log book is a mandatory tool through which trainees record all operations conducted during their training period. As of end of year 2016, 39,751 operations were logged. The MCS candidates sitting the 2016 examination were the first group to have used the logbook for their entire training period. All candidates for whom usage of the logbook was mandatory recorded their operative record in the logbook. The logbook was rebranded in May to bring it in line with COSECSA branding guidelines.

Training Hospitals

COSECSAs training takes place in accredited hospitals. By end of 2016 a total of 110 hospitals were accredited and out of those 60 are active for surgical training in various specialties within the ECSA region. COSECSA accredited 5 hospitals for FCS and MCS training. 4 hospitals were accredited in Namibia and one in Uganda. The hospitals accredited in Namibia are Windhoek Central Hospital for MCS, FCS GS and Urology; Katatura Intermediate Hospital for MCS and FCS OS; Oshakati Intermediate Hospital for MCS, FCS GS and FCS OS; Onandjokwe Intermediate Hospital for MCS and FCS GS. In Uganda accreditation was done for the Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services in Uganda.

Increasing the number of Fellowship Training Programmes

COSECSA introduced the Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery training program. Currently COSECSA has eight Fellowship training Programmes which are General Surgery,
Pediatric Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Plastic Surgery, Neurosurgery, Urology, ENT and Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery. This programme started in Tanzania and the training centre is Muhimbili Orthopedic Institute (MOI)

**Increasing the knowledge and competence in surgery through Courses**

In 2016, over 40 courses were conducted for different surgical specialties in the countries. In 2016, three FCS basic laparoscopic skills seminars took place, two in Uganda (May, Oct) and one in Ethiopia (June). Over forty participants attended each seminar, making them the most successful FCS seminar courses in COSECSA's history.

**Management of surgical emergencies**

The Management of Surgical Emergencies (MSE) courses in 2016 were held in Lusaka, Zambia (April) and Nairobi, Kenya (October). This course was aimed at surgical trainees and medical officers with an interest in surgery. It shows trainees how to assess signs and symptoms of common surgical emergencies and how to initiate an immediate management plan based upon sound principles of clinical practice. The Nairobi course was the first course conducted entirely by local trainers who had undergone the Training of Training part of the MSE course in the past.

**ZEST and REST Courses**

Essential Surgical Training aims to ensure that standardised, cost efficient and high quality essential surgical services are accessible the rural population in the district's hospitals in Zimbabwe (ZEST) and Rwanda (REST). Four ZEST courses took place in Zimbabwe in 2016. In total 102 non-surgeons (26 twice) undertook ZEST trainings over the programme cycle. In Rwanda Six REST courses took place in 2016. Forty non-surgeons have now completed REST trainings, 26 of them twice.

**COSECSA RCSI Mobile Skills Unit Courses**

Two five-day Basic Surgical skills courses took place in the RCSI COSECSA Mobile Surgical Skills Unit which is currently stationed in Arusha Lutheran Medical Hospital (ALMC) in Tanzania. Over fifty people availed of these courses. The course was designed to introduce surgical trainees to safe surgical practice within a controlled workshop environment. It aimed at teaching, assessing and certifying the ability of the trainees to use safe and sound surgical techniques that are common to all forms of surgery.
Research
In 2016 four COSECSA trainees (Dr. Philip Blasto from Kenya, Dr. Gift Mulima from Malawi, Dr. Vanda Amado from Mozambique and Dr. Ryuba Nyamsogoro from Tanzania) received small research grants of 3,500 each to undertake independent research projects in the ECSA region. Each grant is supervised by a COSECSA Country Representative and the research findings are due to be published in 2017.

Graduate Survey
The COSECSA graduate survey was undertaken in 2016. 108/158 graduates responded to the survey. The survey had a 68% response rate and showed that 96% of COSECSA graduates are in full time employment with 84% engaged in public sector work.

COSECSA Graduate Retention Study.
A study on the retention rate of surgical graduates (COSECSA and 24 MMed institutions) from 1974 – 2013 across eight COSECSA countries was completed in 2016. The data shows that 84% of graduates are retained in their home country, 87% in the COSECSA region and 93% of graduates are retained within Africa.

Gender Equity in Surgical Training
COSECSA established a womens wing known as Women in Surgery Africa in December 2015. The aim is to increase the number female surgeons by supporting female doctors to train in surgery. The college will pursue to ensure that they are mentored until they complete the training programme and beyond. This will increase the number of female surgeons, which currently stands at 9% of the total number surgeons in the region.

The WiSA Mentorship Programme which was developed by the Programme and WiSA Board with support from the RCSI/ COSECSA Collaboration Programme, COSECSA and the RCSI Institute of Leadership commenced in January 2016. The WiSA Mentorship Programme facilitate engagement between senior surgeons with experience in the field and junior surgeons/surgical trainees.

The WiSA Pocket Mentorship booklet was launched at the annual dinner which took place in Mombasa in December 2016. It is intended to provide practical information and advice, to trainees which will make their surgical training experience more rewarding, help improve communication with their peers and consultants, and inspire them to develop confidence in their skills and abilities.
International Representation

COSECSA was represented in various fora over the year. This shows that the college is gaining visibility globally, partners are recognising the role COSECSA is playing the ECSA region. Partners are also appreciating that COSECSA is a key player in the global surgery matters.

In October 2016, the COSECSA President Dr Milliard and the vice president Prof Pankaj Jani, met the American College of Surgeons leadership and discussed the future partnership of the two colleges in addressing the critical surgical workforce shortage in the COSECSA region. Dr David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS, Executive Director of the College, and Dr Girma Tefera, Director of Operation Giving Back (OGB) of ACS reassured the commitment of their college to support COSECSA in its efforts to address the surgical workforce deficiency in the ECSA region.

The president of COSECSA also had an opportunity to attend the world surgical leaders’ forum and also participated on the Lancet commission panel where many international college leaders requested to have more discussion on the future involvement of their college in addressing safe and affordable surgery in LMIC.

1st from the right is the COSECSA Vice President Prof. Pankaj Jani, Dr. Milliard Derbew, President of COSECSA, Dr David B. Hoyt, Executive Director of ACS and Dr Girma Tefera, Director of Operation Giving Back (OGB) of the ACS.

Global Surgical Frontiers Conference.

The Global Surgical Frontiers Conference was held on 15th April at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in London. COSECSA was represented by the Chief Executive Officer Ms. Rosemary Mugwe and the COSECSA/RCSI Collaboration Programme was represented by the Program Director and Assistant Program Director, Mr. Eric O’Flynn and Dr. Avril Hutch.
The conference was a follow up of the Lancet Commission on global surgery one year on. Discussions were around the continuing work of the commission: progress made by countries and organizations in response to Lancet Commission findings; global surgery 2030- evidence and solutions for achieving health, welfare and economic development.

**Global Health Partnership Conference.**

The Global Health Partnership conference was held in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin on 21\(^{st}\) and 22\(^{nd}\) April. The discussions were based on building sustainable partnerships with low and middle-income countries. Particular emphasis was placed on the RCSI/COSECSA collaboration programme as a best practice for other organizations to emulate.

COSECSA was represented by the President (Dr. Milliard Derbew), Secretary General (Prof. Eric Borgstein) and the Chair of Examinations and Credentials Committee (Dr. Abebe Bekele) and the CEO- Rosemary Mugwe.

The President made a presentation touching on the long partnership between COSECSA and RCSI which began in 2007.

**COSECSA Leadership and Governance Meetings**

In 2016 the executive meeting of the college was successfully held in Arusha in April and the council meeting was also held in August in Entebbe.

The AGM was successfully held in Mombasa, Kenya where it brought together Fellows and Members of the College, over 400 participants from different continents. The AGM made a resolution of approving Namibia and Sudan to join COSECSA as member countries.
COSECSA NGO Forum

The inaugural COSECSA surgical NGO forum comprised of a two-day workshop took place at the Pride Inn Hotel, Mombasa on 03\textsuperscript{rd} – 04\textsuperscript{th} December 2016. The forum was designed to bring together NGOs that provide surgical, obstetric, trauma, and anaesthesia related services in Kenya and the region. The purpose of the forum was to recognize and build a community of Surgical NGOs that make a significant contribution to delivering service and training in the COSECSA region, and to provide a trusted arena for surgical NGOs to discuss programmes, assess their collective contribution and maximize coordination between organizations.

The forum was attended by 44 local, regional and international representatives. Participating organizations included 10 local NGOs, 9 professional societies and federations, as well as mentors and observers from 16 international organizations.

The programme included a series of introductory exercises, NGO presentations, interactive co-creation sessions, expert speakers and group discussions. The CEO of COSECSA Ms. Rosemary Mugwe presented on the theme “Promoting Excellence in Surgical Care”

COSECSA/SSK Scientific Conference

The conference took place on 8\textsuperscript{th} and 9\textsuperscript{th} of December 2016. It was attended by about 400 participants - both local and international representation. The theme of the conference was Cancer care in Africa: Delivering safe, affordable and timely care. Enormous surgical papers were presented with various findings and recommendations that will go a long way in improving surgery in the world. In attendance were about 400 delegates from around the world.

The East and Central African Journal of Surgery (ECAJS)

The ECAJS is COSECSA's journal. A part-time Editorial Assistant was hired to support the Chief Editor in preparation of the upcoming editions and also prepare the journal for the Pub med indexing and an online application system for authors/reviewers.
Honorary Fellowship of RCSI and COSECSA

At the April 2016 scientific meeting in Dublin, Professor Krikor Erzingatsian, a graduate and Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) by examination, was awarded an honorary Fellowship of RCSI, along with Professor Omaswa who was COSECSA’s founding President. Professor Erzingatsian and Professor Omaswa, through their dedication to COSECSA, have worked tirelessly to reshape the surgical landscape in Africa and this award was a fitting recognition of their efforts. It also served to underline the bond between the two Colleges which had deepened and enriched both partners during the past 10 years.

From the left, Prof Francis Omaswa, Mr Declan J. Magee-President of RCSI and Prof Krikor Erzingatsian

COSECSA Honorary Fellowship

In December 2016 at the COSECSA Annual General Meeting held in Mombasa, Mr. Declan Magee was honoured with an honorary fellowship of the COSECSA.

He supported COSECSA's growth for the last ten years through the RCSI/COSECSA collaboration program.
Impact COSECSA is making in the ECSA region

- Increasing trained and qualified Surgical workforce in the ECSA region through training and credentialing.
- Participating in policy formulation platforms are shaping the discourse of surgery in the world example Global Surgery 2030, WHA 68.15
- Retention of health workforce in the ECSA region at 97%.
- Providing a networking space for trainees, fellows, member, partners etc during the annual scientific conference.
- Saving the life of vulnerable population in the ECSA region by providing free medical and surgical services through surgical camps.
Gratitude to our Partners

COSECSA whole heartedly appreciates all its partners for their financial or and in-kind support to the college and enhancing its growth.

Through the RCSI/COSECSA collaboration program, the Irish Aid has supported and continued to support the college activities. They have continued to pay a big role in building a strong secretariat to run the college affairs. The growth of the College has been made possible and we are grateful.

Other partners we would like to appreciate are BEIT, PAACS, COOL, G4, PAAS, WACs, CMSA, and RC Edinburg, RSC England and Rotary Club of Banderberg.

We also thank all the fellows and members of the college for their in-kind support.
Membership / Fellowship of COSECSA

Fellowship and Membership of COSECSA provides professional accreditation from one of the most respected surgical bodies with strong educational, clinical and collegiate support.

As a Fellow/Member, you are an ambassador of the College and COSECSA takes great pride in supporting the growth of COSECSA into the largest surgical training and examination institution in the region. By paying your annual subscription fees you are supporting the next generation of surgeons. If you are interested in becoming a COSECSA Fellow or Member please see our website.

Benefits of COSECSA Fellowship/ Membership

As a Fellow/Member you will enjoy the following benefits:

- On-line recognition on the COSECSA website
- Subscription to the college newsletter
- Use of the post-nominal MCS (ECSA) and FCS (ECSA)
- Access to the college e-learning platform School for Surgeons
- Full access to an international library and journal portal facilities
- Opportunities to become COSECSA faculty, trainer, examiners
- Opportunities to be elected to council or any other College senior position
- Networking opportunities, including COSECSA AGM & scientific conferences

Partners

COSECSA is ready to partner with like-minded institutions to scale up surgical workforce in the region and to ensure that safe surgical services are universally available. Willing partners are welcome to join the College.

Our Contacts

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