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GOAL 1: Graduate 500 surgeons by 2020
GOAL 2: Achieve Excellence in Training and Research
GOAL 3: Maintain Best Practice in Examinations and Assessment
GOAL 4: Build to Organisational Excellence and Financial Sustainability
Message from the President

As President of COSECSA, I am very pleased to present the Strategic Plan for 2016-2020. This plan will guide change and improvement in our College for the next five years. The plan is focused on the areas of training, research, examinations, organizational effectiveness and sustainability. The plan also builds on the progress and impressive results achieved by COSECSA over the past sixteen years.

From its inception, COSECSA has been focused on quality surgical care and practice and is committed to building and strengthening quality surgical care for the neglected patient. Access to quality surgical care is a vital component of universal health coverage and an effective means of realizing many of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

COSECSA will continue to increase access to surgical care by training and credentialing the surgical health workforce, setting and maintaining standards, and conducting research which will inform policy. As a “College without Walls” we also need to ensure that we use our resources in the most effective manner possible. COSECSA looks forward to working collaboratively and in partnership with national governments, like-minded institutions and partners who share our vision.

In particular I take this opportunity to thank the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland who have supported the development of this document and with whom we continue to work in collaboration with.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr Miliard Derbew
President, COSECSA
I am delighted to welcome you to our Strategic Plan for the period 2016-2020.

This document is the dynamic blueprint for the growth of COSECSA. It is the product of intensive and extensive discussions and consultation by the Executive Committee, College Standing Committees, the Planning Sub-Committee, key partners and Secretariat.

We have a Mission for what we want to achieve, an assessment of where we are now and a set of criteria to measure our progress. We have defined the values that describe how we conduct our work and developed a list of goals and strategies to guide us from where we are to where we want to be as the leading surgical college in the region.

This planning process has provided us with a system to lead, manage, and grow the College in a well-planned, integrated manner based on our goals. This approach also provides a management process that will change the way we do business day-to-day. The priorities in the plan become the priorities for our annual work plans and budgets, ensuring that we focus our resources in those areas that move us toward our Mission.

We applaud all those who participated in the planning process for their imagination, dedication, and perseverance throughout this process.

Sincerely,

Ms Rosemary Mugwe
CEO, COSECSA
COSECSA STRATEGIC PLAN

The College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA), incorporating the Association of Surgeons of East Africa (ASEA), is a professional body that fosters postgraduate education in surgery and provides surgical training throughout the East, Central and Southern Africa region. The college was founded in 1999. It 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.

The primary objectives of the college are 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.

COSECSA provides a comprehensive Membership programme in Basic Surgery and Fellowship Programme in Orthopedics; ENT; Urology; Pediatric Surgery; Neurosurgery; Plastic Surgery; and General Surgery. COSECSA has 94 accredited hospitals in 15 countries and 169 trainers distributed across the region, providing access to training in urban and rural locations.

There exists a global inequity in the burden of surgical conditions and the comparative access to surgical and anesthetic care between high-income countries and low income countries. The Lancet Commission on Essential Surgery (2015) estimates that worldwide 140 million people who need an operation to save their lives or to prevent long term disability lack access to surgical care. Over a million more are impoverished as a result of the process of seeking surgical care because of the high cost of surgical treatment. In May 2015, COSECSA has made significant strides towards addressing the surgical workforce shortage in this region. This is highlighted by the exponential annual increase of the number of trainees and graduates.
health ministries from across the world approved the first World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolution on Surgical Care and Anesthesia and by doing so, have formally committed to scaling up surgical care and training. This aims to improve patient outcomes and seeks to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable in society.

COSECSA is dedicated to scaling up surgical services and care within the ECSA region by increasing the number of appropriately trained, well qualified surgeons. Where appropriate to the national context, COSECSA will engage with basic surgical training of non-surgeon cadres. Due to the huge burden of surgical disease, scaling up basic surgical services is crucial to health system strengthening. 6.5% of the global burden of disease is amenable to surgery. To effectively meet healthcare needs, the existing surgical workforce would need to be doubled in the next 15 years.

COSECSA has made significant strides towards addressing the surgical workforce shortage in this region. This is highlighted by the exponential annual increase of the number of trainees and graduates. As of March 2016, COSECSA has over 400 trainees enrolled in COSECSA training programmes. The College is proud to have graduated over 150 specialist surgeons since 2004. COSECSA is now the leading body in surgical training in the region, producing more surgeons than the combined national university training programmes. COSECSA's training programme is unique in that it is primarily undertaken in a trainee's country of origin. Locally led and delivered training improves surgeon retention, with up to 93% of graduates remaining in the COSECSA region post-qualification.

The College leadership understands the importance of having a Strategic Plan (SP) that guides the important work of the College by providing strategic direction based on the priorities and goals agreed by Council Members. The SP will ensure COSECSA remains relevant and responsive to the needs of its community and stakeholders. Further, it will provide clear focus to the Secretariat for programme development, implementation and management. Finally, the SP will serve as a benchmark for monitoring.
The Council is responsible for the overall supervision and organisation of the College. The Council is composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary General, Assistant Secretary General, Treasurer, the three Chairs of the Standing Committees, Registrar, two Country Representatives elected from each member country, Overseas Fellows Representative, the Editor of the East and Central African Journal of Surgery (ECAJS) and the immediate Past President in the year following their presidency.

The Executive Committee (EC) manages the affairs of the College, is elected by Council and reports to and is accountable to Council. The EC is composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary General, the three Chairs of the Standing Committees, the Registrar and co-opted fellows appointed by Council.

The standing committees are the Education, Scientific and Research Committee, the Finance and General Purpose Committee and the Examinations and Credentials Committee.

The Secretariat manages the day-to-day affairs of the college under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is appointed by Council and is answerable to Council through the President.

An Annual General Meeting comprising the College Fellowship and Membership is convened annually. The Members consider any motions brought forward by Council or any individual Fellow.
Organisational Organogram

Council

Executive Committee

Education, Scientific and Research Committee
Examinations and Accreditation Committee
Finance and General Purpose Committee

CEO

Secretariat Staff
Country Coordinators
Strategic Plan Background

In order to develop this strategic plan, a deep and wide planning process was undertaken. This included consultation with council members, partners and relevant stakeholders in the surgical community. A SWOT analysis was undertaken to inform/identify choices and key issues to be addressed in the plan. The document was then approved by the executive committee as the working document to guide the College for the 2016-2020 period.

Strategic Plan Context

COSECSA has taken stock of its leadership position in surgical training and accreditation in the region. This was done taking into account the findings of the Lancet Commission and World Health Assembly Resolution 68.15 emphasizing that surgical care is a vital component of universal health coverage.

In considering our priorities for the next five years we are cognizant of:

• The shortage of well-trained surgical health professionals in the region
• The challenges facing the surgical profession such as shortage of equipped clinical training sites in hospital
• The multiplicity of surgical training institutions in the region, with which COSECSA needs to cooperate and co-exist
• The necessity to grow in the region and beyond to ensure future sustainability

We view our future growth as contingent on our ability to expand our regional presence and maintain our reputation of excellence in surgical training. Our strategy is focused on training, examination, sustainability and professional excellence.

The comparative advantage of the COSECSA training model is over other surgical training bodies is threefold. Firstly, it is a low-cost model, utilizing pre-existing human resources and infrastructure. Secondly, the greater geographic spread of the COSECSA model allows trainees to train (and remain) close to home, thus improving distribution of the surgical workforce. Thirdly, the greater numbers in the COSECSA model allow for innovations such as a bespoke electronic logbook and e-learning platform, and quality improvements such as examiner training, which would not be practical with lower numbers.
Organisational Vision, Mission and Core Values

Vision
To be the reference surgical body in the region of East, Central and Southern Africa and beyond.

Mission
Promote excellence in Surgical Care, Training and Research.

COSECSA Core Values

• **Transparency:** COSECSA practices utmost transparency in the processes by which trainings, examinations and accreditation are conducted.

• **Quality and Continuous Improvement:** COSECSA strives for quality in all that it does and practices continuous improvement in all areas, according to international best practice.

• **Learning and Development:** COSECSA is a trainee-centered institution that provides high quality educational training and research experiences.

• **Institutional Integrity and partnership:** COSECSA demonstrates integrity, based on honesty, fairness and respect, in all its dealings with its members and with its partners.

• **Institutional Agility and Entrepreneurism:** COSECSA conducts business in a lean and cost efficient manner.

• **Stewardship and Service:** COSECSA demonstrates responsible stewardship of all its resources and reliable services in all its activities.

• **Accountability:** COSECSA stands by its decisions and actions and is fully accountable for the overall probity of its programmes and partnerships.

• **Gender Equity:** COSECSA promotes allocation of resources, programmes and decision making fairly to both men and women without any discrimination and aims to address any imbalances in its undertakings.
Goals, Strategies and Core Activities

**GOAL 1: Graduate 500 surgeons by 2020**

**Strategies**
- Grow a model of practice based training

**Core Activities**
- Add three new member countries
- Increase the number of accredited hospitals by 30
- Increase the number of trainers by 100
- Increase the number of female trainees to 20%
- Add three specialties
- Increase the number of non-surgeons trained in basic surgery

**GOAL 2: Achieve Excellence in Training and Research**

**Strategies**
- Expand and enhance COSECSA training programme
- Establish continuous professional development (CPD) programme
- Build research capacity within COSECSA

**Core Activities**
- Revise and update COSECSA syllabi and curricula
- Increase number of surgical short courses to 80 per year
- Add courses for three new specialties to e-learning platform
- Review accreditation status of hospitals every five years
- Gain recognition for CPD courses across 10 countries
- Establish an institutional review board
- Develop a research strategy for COSECSA
- Define one area of research interest for COSECSA
- Host at least one research methodology course in each of the 10 countries

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1. In the period 2004-2015, 158 specialist surgeons graduated from COSECSA FCS training programmes. The target of graduating 500 surgeons includes this cohort. 2. As of December 2015, COSECSA has 10 member countries, 90 accredited training hospitals, 164 accredited trainers. 14.5% of trainees are female, trains 7 FCS specialties are offered and 74 non-surgeons have received training in basic surgery.
GOAL 3. Maintain Best Practice in Examinations and Assessment

Strategies
a. Benchmark examination against international best practice
b. Develop two state-of-the-art centres of excellence for examinations
c. Track and analyse trainee operative experience

Core Activities
- Conduct one multiple choice question writing workshop per year
- Conduct one clinical case writing workshop per year
- Establish a court of examiners and train/retrain examiners
- Organise examiner exchange programme for six examiners per year
- Implement objective structured clinical exams for MCS
- Revise and implement examination standard operating procedures
- Establish two examination centres, one in the North and one in the South
- Ensure recognition of COSECSA qualification in all countries
- Ensure e-logbook use is universal and accurately supports training programmes.

GOAL 4. Build to Organisational Excellence and Financial Sustainability

Strategies
a. Ensure predictable diversified funding model
b. Ensure good governance, transparency and accountability
c. Engage in advocacy and policy development
d. Ensure gender equity
e. Build comprehensive sustainable partnerships

Core Activities
- Develop and implement a communications strategy
- Secure COSECSA land for new Secretariat HQ
- Develop and implement fundraising strategy
- Increase internal and external resources by 50%
- Grow Membership and Fellowship by 750\(^2\)
- Secure annual government funding from member states equal to 1/3 of income
- Participate in the development of national surgical care plans in three countries.
- Participate in all relevant global health advocacy and policy making platforms
- Develop a COSECSA gender policy
- Build administrative capacity of Women in Surgery Africa (WiSA)
- Ensure all partnerships contribute to COSECSA’s strategic goals

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2. As of December 2015, COSECSA has 907 Members and Fellows.
Snap Shot: COSECSA Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020

**TO PROMOTE EXCELLENCE IN SURGICAL CARE, TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN THE REGION**

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Find out more

If you would like more information about COSECSA please contact us at:

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