



COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF  
EAST, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

**COSECSA**



**COSECSA BI-ANNUAL REPORT  
(2023 – 2024)**

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## STATEMENT FROM THE LEADERSHIP



**Dr Jane Odubu Fualal**  
President, COSECSA

The years 2023 and 2024 have been transformative for COSECSA, characterized by significant growth and impactful initiatives across the region. We celebrated the Milestones of 910 surgeons, training over 1,150 trainees, and recorded more than half a million (500,000) surgical procedures. Our strategic partnerships have strengthened our surgical training programs, enhancing collaboration with various institutions and health professionals throughout the ECSA region.

In 2023, we reached a pivotal achievement of 910 graduates, bringing us closer to our target of 1,000 surgeons by 2025, with an impressive 88% retention rate of graduates in the region. Additionally, we launched the Admission System on May 15, 2024, streamlining the application process. This innovation has not only reduced administrative burdens but also led to an increase in trainee enrollment, with 425 trainees joining in 2024, surpassing previous years. The system was further enhanced with a Finance Module, which optimizes payment management, ensuring that only trainees with confirmed payments are approved and enrolled.



**Prof Abebe Bekele**  
Secretary General, COSECSA

Our commitment to supporting women in surgery and enhancing surgical specialties remains strong, with over 350 scholarship applications processed and 200 grants awarded to women and specialists in various fields. We are grateful to the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) and other partners for their invaluable support.

Moreover, COSECSA has prioritized building the capacity of the surgical team. 904 professionals have undergone training in non-surgical critical care specifically Leadership, and 350 frontline health workers have benefited from the Essential Surgical Training Programme. These efforts have led to 540,000 surgeries, improving access to quality care, especially in rural areas where 57% of our training sites are located.

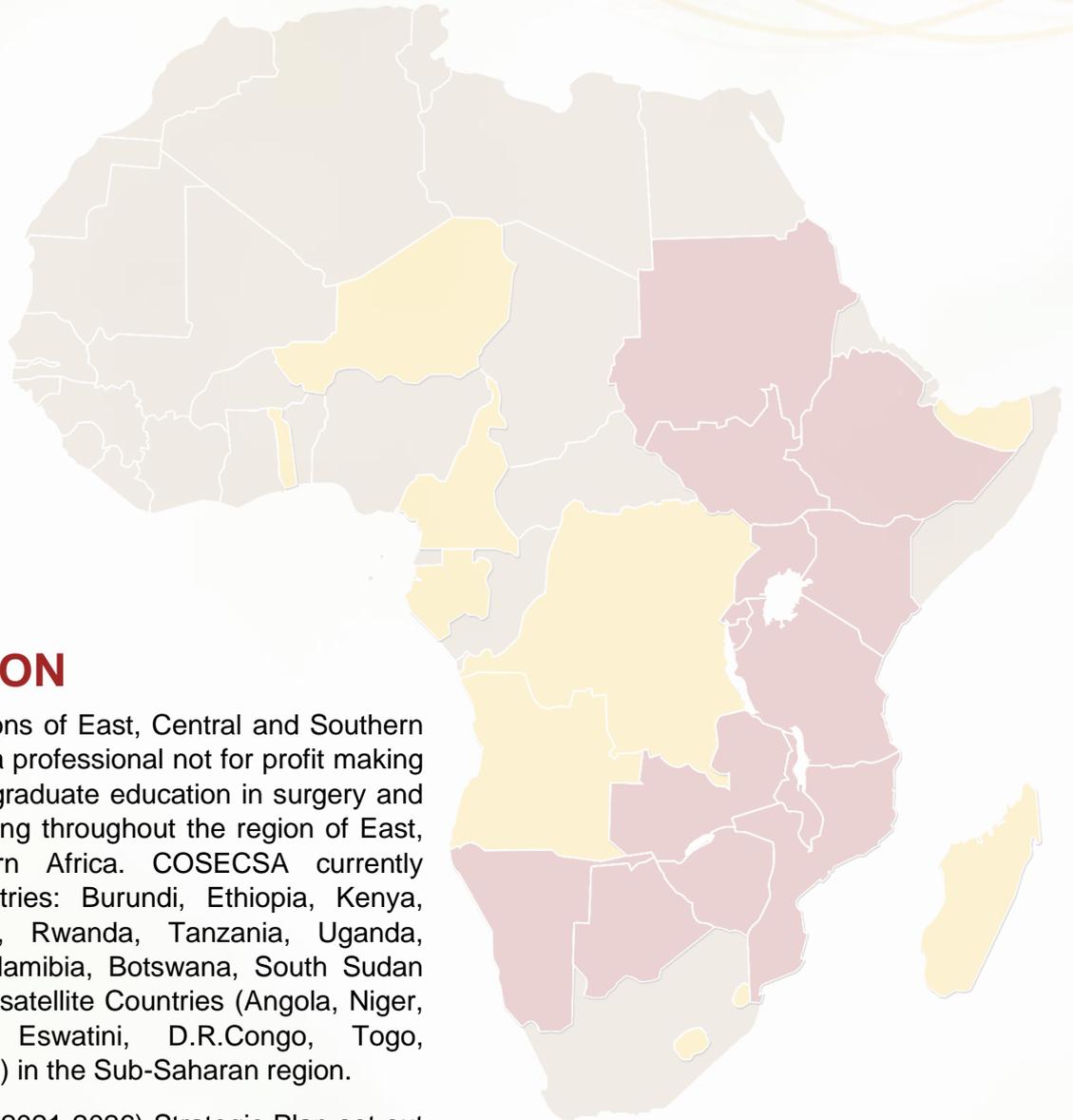
While we celebrate these achievements on the 25th Anniversary of the College, we recognize the ongoing need for initiatives to meet workforce targets and improve global surgical indicators. Our dedication to high-quality surgical care remains unwavering as we advance into the future.

## GRATITUDE TO COSECSA PARTNERS

COSECSA wholeheartedly appreciates all partners for their financial and/ or in-kind support to the College. The College has continued to receive immense support from partners and donors for its programs (training, education, research, operations and governance), this has built an efficient training institution as well as functional administrative structures.

Gratitude to the Council, Executive, Programme Directors, Surgical Societies, Fellows, Members of the college, Country Coordinators and the respective Medical Councils for their commitment to COSECSA's success.





## INTRODUCTION

The College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) is a professional not for profit making body that fosters postgraduate education in surgery and provides surgical training throughout the region of East, Central and Southern Africa. COSECSA currently operates in 14 countries: Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, South Sudan and Sudan, and in 10 satellite Countries (Angola, Niger, Cameroon, Congo, Eswatini, D.R.Congo, Togo, Somaliland and Gabon) in the Sub-Saharan region.

COSECSA five years (2021-2026) Strategic Plan set out the following goals:

- Goal 1: Graduate 1000 Surgeons by 2025
- Goal 2: Achieve Excellence in Training and Research and maintain best practice in exams.
- Goal 3: Build organizational Excellence and Financial Sustainability.

Please view our Strategic Plan through the links: <https://www.cosecsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/COSECSA-Strategic-Plan-2021-2025-2.pdf>

## FACTS & FIGURES 2023 - 2024

**25**  
Years in Operation

**1250+**  
Surgical Trainees

**910**  
Specialist Graduates  
(165 Females)

**92%**  
Graduate Retention  
Rate

**10**  
Training Programmes

**904**  
Registered Trainers

**77**  
Master Trainers

**14**  
Member Countries +  
(10 Partner Countries)

**144**  
Accredited Hospitals

**150+**  
Programme Directors

**28**  
Workshops

**26**  
Collaboration Partners

**209**  
Awarded Scholarships

**39**  
Online Lecture  
Sessions

**15**  
Trainees Exchanged

**1742**  
Members & Fellows

**582,000+**  
E-Logbook Operations

## OVERALL IMPACT OF COSECSA ON GLOBAL SURGERY



- 582,135 Trainees' Surgical Procedures



- 582,135 Patients treated



- Reduced the gap between the patient and the surgeon



- Response to the call to healthy lives and promotion of well-being for all at all ages

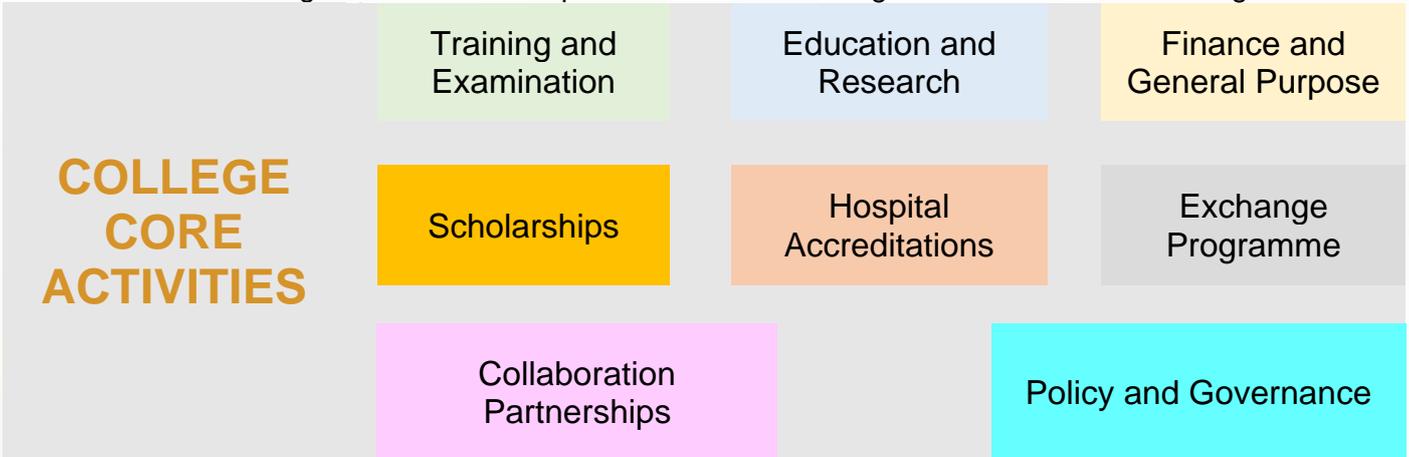


- Contributed to the objective of Universal Health Coverage (Target 3:8)



- Increased Economic activity

The successes are registered under the operations of the following core activities of the College.



The above snapshot of Facts and Figures is a presentation of the exponential increase in COSECSA numbers and the growth of the College leading to the positive results.

- Steady improvement of the COSECSA fund base
- Continuation of the Exchange/rotation Programme
- Increased number of scholarships
- The high volume of Hospital Accreditation
- Online courses
- Case based discussions
- Improved Online Examinations
- Increased interest from Collaboration Partners
- Improved visibility through advocacy
- Enhanced Leadership of Programme Directors & Trainers
- Recognition of COSECSA Qualifications
- Built research capacity among surgeons
- Reignited the journal (ECAJS)
- Reviewed the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan



## COSECSA LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

90% of the College Governance and administrative meetings were held as scheduled throughout the 2 years reported. This encompasses the Council Meetings, Executive Committee meetings, 3 standing Committee meetings (ECC, FGPC and ESRC) and Secretariat meetings.

### COSECSA Governance/Policy meetings held between 2023-2024

MEETING	2023	2024	TOTAL
Council	2	3	5
Executive Committee	9	7	16
Examination and Credentials Committee	2	2	4
Finance and General Purposes Committee	2	3	5
Education, Scientific and Research Committee	2	3	5
Secretariat Staff meetings	9	12	21
<b>Total Number of Meetings held</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>56</b>

The Council and Executive Committee made the following policy and strategic decisions/resolutions; -

- Amendment of the constitution.
- Evaluation of the 5-year (2021-2025) Strategic Plan.
- Conducting of the statutory audit.
- Consideration and approval of financial reports.
- Reviewed, approved and signed new Grants and MoUs.
- Construction of the final phase of the COSECSA land fence in Arusha.
- Launch and further development of the new College Admission System.
- Strategies to increase internal income and build a strong financial base.
- Approval of new courses and online courses (plastic surgery post fellowship.)
- Approval of Trauma and Orthopaedic guidelines.
- Review of old and development of new policies.
- Recruitment of the 3 new Secretariat Staff.
- Recruitment of 1 Managing Editor for the ECAJS Journal.
- Re-establishment of the Editorial Board.
- Approved 98 Fellows and Member Specialists By-Election applications.
- Accredited and re-accredited training sites/hospitals leading to 144 sites in.
- Oversight of the silver jubilee celebrations.



COSECSA Council Meeting 2023



## THE COUNCIL



**President**  
Dr Jane Fualal  
Uganda



**Vice President**  
Prof Laston Chikoya  
Zambia



**Registrar**  
Prof Eric Borgstein  
Malawi



**Secretary General**  
Prof Abebe Bekele  
Rwanda



**Ast. Secretary General**  
Dr Celestine Mbangtang  
Namibia



**Treasurer**  
Dr Samwel Nungu  
Tanzania



**ECC Chair**  
Dr Hanna Getachew  
Ethiopia



**ESRC Chair**  
Dr Michael Mwachiro  
Kenya



**FGPC Chair**  
Prof Wakisa Mulwafu  
Malawi



**Country Representative**  
Dr Chiapo Lesetedi  
Botswana



**Country Representative**  
Dr Mpapho Motsumi  
Botswana



**Country Representative**  
Dr Gallina Kazobinka  
Burundi



**Country Representative**  
Venerand Barendegere  
Burundi



**Country Representative**  
Dr Woubedel Kiflu  
Ethiopia



**Country Representative**  
Dr Ataklitie Berhea  
Ethiopia



**Country Representative**  
Dr Karen Mbaabu  
Kenya



**Country Representative**  
Dr Mathenge Nduhiu  
Kenya



**Country Representative**  
Dr Tiyamike Chilinjika  
Malawi



**Country Representative**  
Dr Gift Mulima  
Malawi



**Country Representative**  
Dr Vanda Amado  
Mozambique

College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa  
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**Country Representative**  
Dr Segio Salvador

Mozambique



**Country Representative**  
Dr Akutu Munyika

Namibia



**Country Representative**  
Dr Pueya Nashidengo

Namibia



**Country Representative**  
Prof Emmy Nkusi

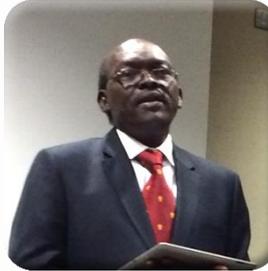
Rwanda



**Country Representative**  
Prof Faustin Ntirenganya  
Rwanda



**Country Representative**  
Prof Ahmed El'Sayed  
Sudan



**Country Representative**  
Dr Mayen Achiek  
South Sudan



**Country Representative**  
Dr Paul Kisanga  
Tanzania



**Country Representative**  
Dr Joel Kiryabwire  
Uganda



**Country Representative**  
Dr Josephat Jombwe  
Uganda



**Country Representative**  
Dr Seke Kazuma

Zambia



**Country Representative**  
Dr Collin West

Zambia



**Country Representative**  
Dr Kusezweni Nduku

Zimbabwe



**Country Representative**  
Bothwell Mbuwayesango  
Zimbabwe



**Oversea Representative**  
Prof Sherry Wren

United States of America



**Oversea Representative**  
Dr Steve Mannion  
United Kingdom



**WiSA Chair**  
Dr Mumba Chalwe  
Zambia



**CEO Secretariat**  
Ms Stella Itungu  
Uganda

## INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION



*RACS, ASGBI & COSECSA President's*

Dr. Fualal graced the ASGBI meeting in Belfast. As a session chair on breast cancer, she catalyzed discussions on cutting-edge surgical techniques and educational initiatives. Interactions with leaders from the Royal Colleges of Surgeons in Ireland and Australasia illuminated pathways for future alliances in endoscopic and robotic surgery, underscoring a global vision for advancing surgical practice.



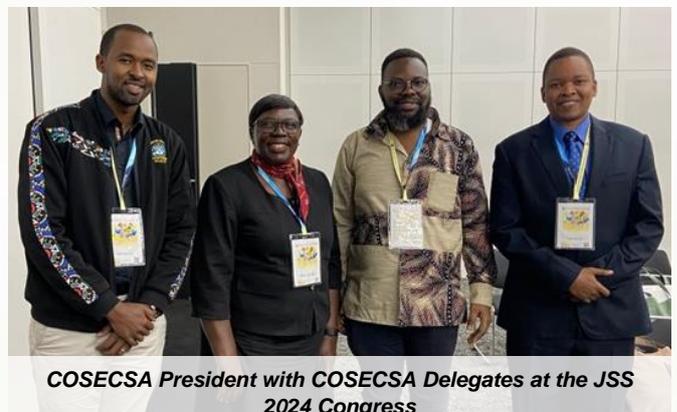
*Dr Fualal with Prof Chagla*

In Bournemouth, at the invitation of the Association of Breast Surgeons president, Prof Leena Chagla and Dr. Fualal explored synergies in training breast surgeons within the COSECSA region. The conference brimmed with opportunities for collaboration, as surgeons pledged their expertise to nurture future generations of specialists in breast cancer management.



*COSECSA President with Delegates at the 2024 Japanese Surgical Society Congress*

The COSECSA President illuminated the Nagoya Japan Surgical Society Congress where she spoke on diagnosing primary hyperparathyroidism in resource-limited settings. Here, residents from COSECSA made their mark, presenting pioneering research and engaging in invaluable observerships at prestigious medical centers. The stage was set for collaborative ventures in surgical oncology and cardiothoracic surgery, promising mutual growth and knowledge exchange.



*COSECSA President with COSECSA Delegates at the JSS 2024 Congress*

## International Forums at which COSECSA was represented

NO	DATE	BY	FORUM
1	February 2023	President	1. <b>Presenter:</b> African Network of Medical Excellence. Khartoum, Sudan. <b>Govt of Sudan &amp; Emergency ONG ONLUS.</b> 2. <b>Guest Speaker:</b> International Medical Education Leadership Forum (IMELF). Pretoria, South Africa. <b>CMSA.</b>
2	March 2023	President	<b>Invited Speaker:</b> Graduation and Annual Scientific Conference. Togo. <b>West African College of Surgeons (WACS)</b>
3	April 2023	President	<b>Invited Speaker:</b> 123 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Congress of the Japan Surgical Society (JSS 2023) Japan. <b>JSS</b>
4	May 2023	President	<b>Invited Speaker:</b> International Surgical Congress of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland. Harrogate, Yorkshire. <b>ASGBI</b>
5	July 2023	President	1. <b>Facilitator:</b> Executive Leadership in Global Surgery course closing ceremony. Cape Town, South Africa. <b>UCT.</b> 2. <b>Panelist:</b> Women Deliver Conference. Kigali, Rwanda. <b>Operation Smile</b>
6	September 2023	President	<b>Invited Guest:</b> ECSA-HC College of Health Science Meeting. Arusha, Tanzania. <b>ECSA-CHS</b>
7	October 2023	President, SG, Registrar, CEO	Meeting of the Leadership of RCSI and COSECSA on the Longstanding Collaboration Partnership. Dublin, Ireland. <b>RCSI</b>
8	October 2023	Secretary General	ACS Clinical Congress 2023. Boston, USA. <b>ACS</b>
9	October 2023	President	<b>Invited Speaker:</b> Mentorship Series. Kampala, Uganda. <b>WiSA Uganda</b>
10	March 2024	President	<b>Invited Speaker:</b> Graduation and Annual Scientific Conference. Togo. <b>West African College of Surgeons (WACS)</b>
11	April 2024	President	<b>Invited Speaker:</b> 124 <sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of the Japan Surgical Society. Lecture on “Primary Hyperparathyroidism and Its Diagnostic Challenges in Low-Resource Settings.” Japan. <b>Japanese Surgical Society (JSS)</b>
12	May 2024	President	1. <b>Invited Speaker:</b> Conference. United Kingdom. <b>Association of Breast Surgeons (ABS)</b> 2. <b>Panelist:</b> Session Chair on Breast Cancer. United Kingdom. <b>Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland (ASGBI)</b>
13	June 2024	President	<b>Participant:</b> Global Alliance for care of the Injured and quality improvement meeting. Geneva, Switzerland. <b>World Health Organization (WHO)</b>
14	June 2024	Secretary General	<b>Representative:</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> Best Practice Forum (BPF) and 30 <sup>th</sup> Directors Joint Consultative Committee (DJCC). Arusha, Tanzania. <b>ECSA- HC</b>
15	July 2024	Vice President	<b>Invited Guest:</b> Joint Meeting of the Regulatory Capacity Development Technical Committee and the Interim Executive Committee of the College of African Regulatory Science Professionals. Johannesburg, South Africa. <b>African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Africa’s Development (AUDA-NEPAD)</b>
16	October 2024	President	<b>Invited Guest:</b> Clinical Congress. United States of America (USA.) <b>American College of Surgeons (ACS)</b>
17	November 2024	Secretary General	<b>Invited Guest:</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> Senate Meeting. Nairobi, Kenya. <b>ECSA-CHS</b>
18	November 2024	President	<b>Invited Guest:</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> Pan-African Association for Cleft Lip & Palate Conference. Harare, Zimbabwe. <b>Smile Train</b>



**COSECSA President at the 2024 WACS Conference with the ACS President and WACS Delegates**

**The COSECSA President at the 16<sup>th</sup> Biennial Scientific Conference of the East, Central and Southern Africa College of Nurses (ECSACONM) with CANECSA President and ECSA-HC's Director of Operations and Institutional Development.**



**American College of Surgeons (ACS) Clinical Congress**



**Dr Joshua Azere Manyasi**  
**Plastic Surgeon (Trainee)**  
**Kenyan, Training in Uganda**  
**Mulago National Referral Hospital (Kiruddu)**  
**COSECSA - Operation Smile Scholar**

The wise say that time and tide waits for no man and chance visits the ready. I worked in a Rural government hospital in Western Kenya where I did my medical internship posting. At the time, I saw a poster on one of the hospital WhatsApp groups about an application to join the newly started Membership to College of Surgeons (MCS) programme at the facility and two years of working experience was the requirement. I was still interning hence one and three were not adding up to four. However, my eyes were locked on the COSECSA programme and I was not going to let the opportunity pass me, at least not in the future.

Later, I was engaged as a medical officer post internship where I worked in a busy maternity unit. My hands became easy on the needles and sutures and two years later I started the MCS training at the same facility. It was an easy transition owing to the familiarity of the environment. Furthermore, I did not need a bus or plane to get to my new college. It was just a few corridors away from the surgical department. This has been the spirit of COSECSA. Taking surgery to the people and surgeons in their locality. I trained under a valuable team of surgeons at Kakamega. The programme was well organized with a whole range of didactics, bedside teachings, learning in theatre and skills training by the college.

The college offers us several academic exchanges and travel, training through partnerships with venerable organizations like Operation smile, Resurge and second chance. It is good to sit in webinars, zoom meetings and tele links. However, no experience stays around like physical human meeting and travel to countries you haven't been to. Who said learning has to be boring? Off course not COSECSA. I have met colleagues from the region, and some have become more than friends.

Fast forwards and I am sitting the MCS exams. It was my first time doing a full exam online and at first, I was nervous. The COVID pandemic chanced upon us and came with its technological revolutions. However, the teams did a good job to ensure minimal disruptions, and we came out unscathed. That is how I ended up meeting Kampala for a Fellowship in Plastic surgery.

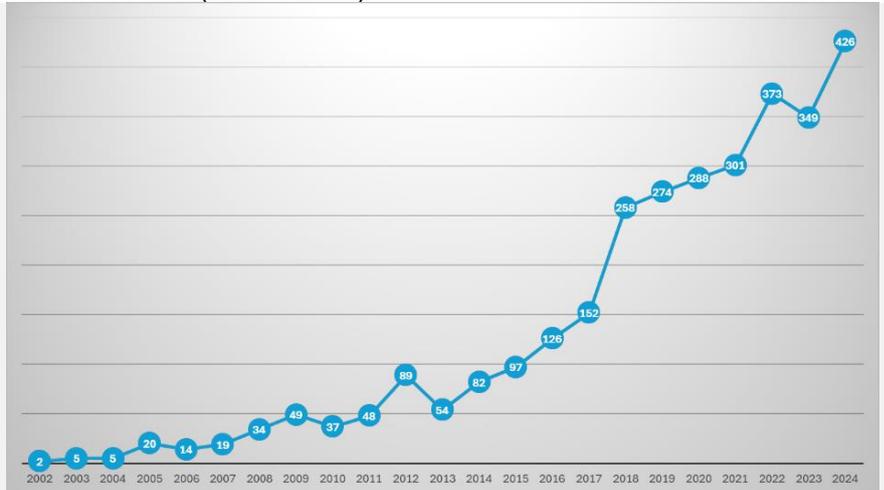
I am writing this piece in Kampala at Kiruddu (Mulago) hospital, about a kilometer from the shores of Lake Victoria and Mulungu Beach. The sweet aroma of fresh fried lake fish is always around the corner as we seek to do the next flap, graft or attend to that new burnt patient. We have great mentors and teachers here. We are afforded a good platform to practice what we read and become better as we journey on to become the next generation of plastic surgeons. I have an interest in research with global surgery appeal and I am currently working on one such project in the Burns unit here in Kampala.

In summation COSECSA has revolutionized surgery training in the region by making it more accessible, affordable and doable. When the annals of history are written, they will be put in indelible ink and scrolled in papyrus reed!

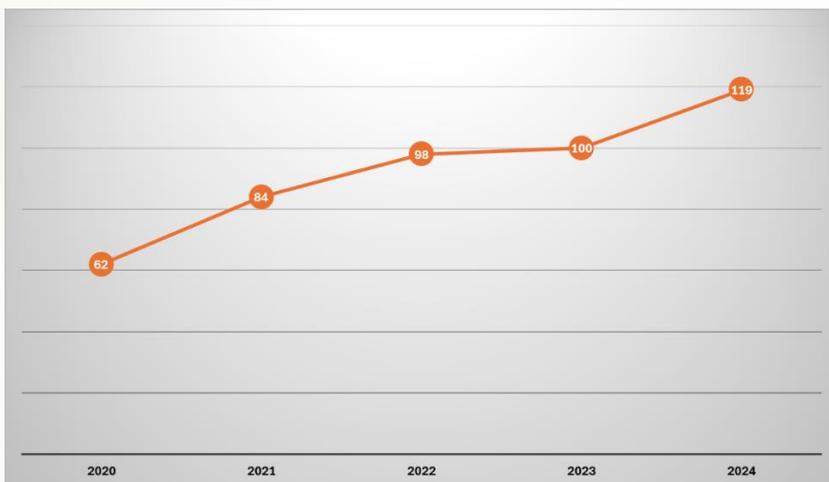
## TRAINING AND GRADUATION TRENDS

There has been a steady rise in the number of Trainees registered for the COSECSA training programme with an increment from 373 (2022), 349 (2023) and 426 (2024). Additionally, the percentage of females among the total trainees has risen by 24% from 16% (2020-2022).

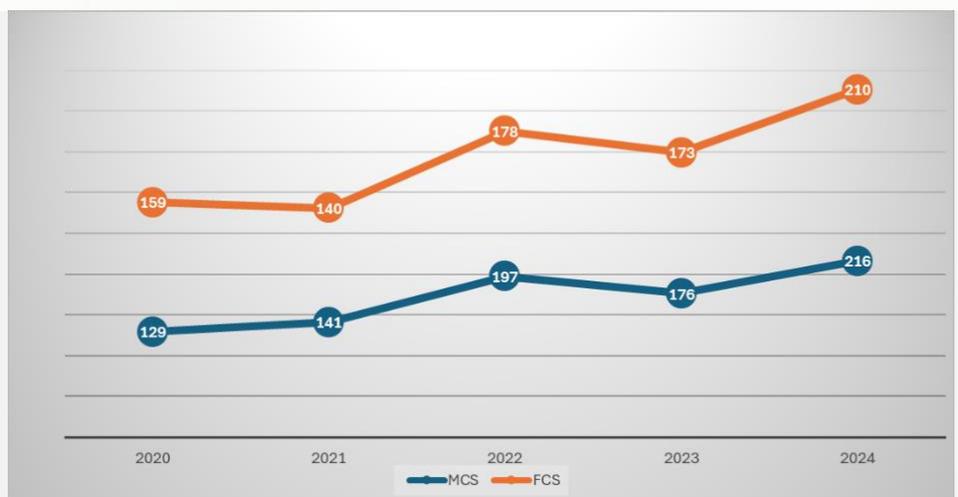
### Trainee Enrolment Trend 2002-2024



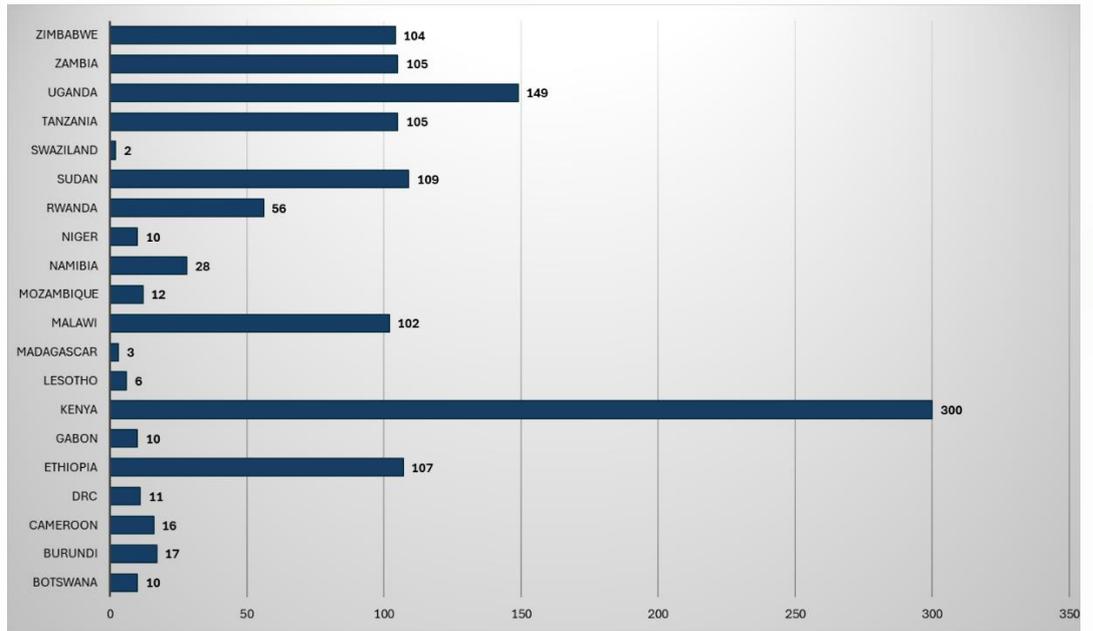
### Female Trainees Enrolment 2020-2024



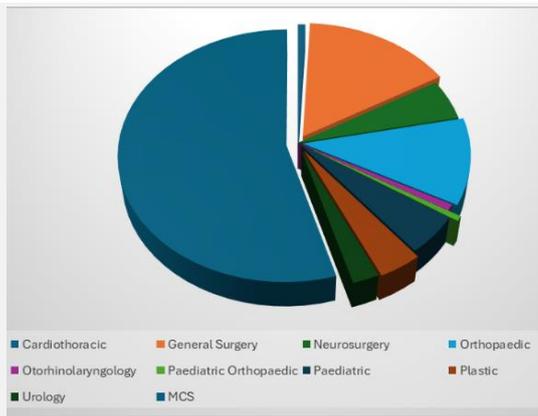
### Trainee Programme Enrolment Trend 2020-2024



## Trainees by Country



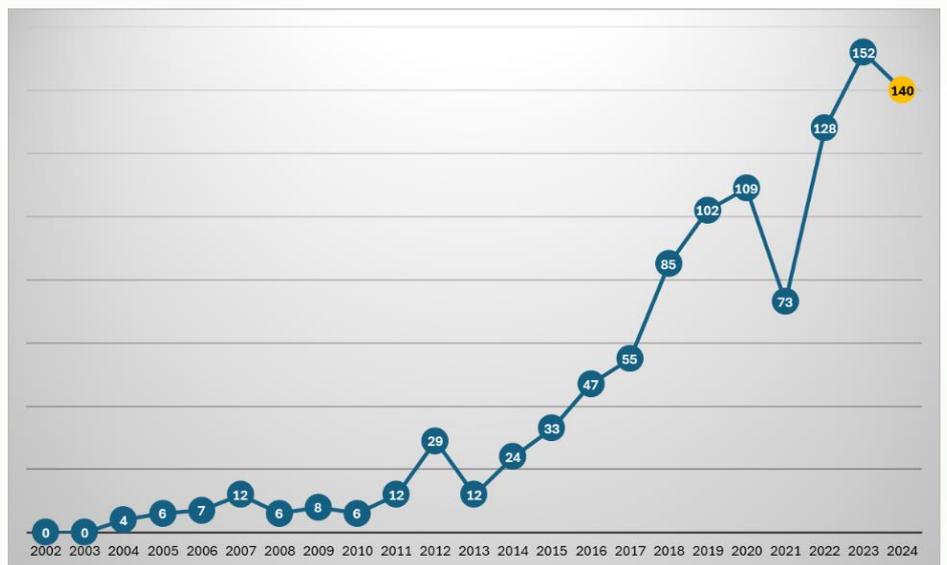
Programme	Trainees
Cardiothoracic	10
General Surgery	199
Neurosurgery	65
Orthopaedic	140
Otorhinolaryngology	10
Paediatric Orthopaedic	8
Paediatric	63
Plastic	49
Urology	30
MCS	688
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1262</b>



## Trainees by Specialty

## Graduate Trends

2024 Estimate



## COSECSA STRATEGIC PLAN MID-TERM REVIEW (2021-2023)

Funded by Irish Aid, through the COSECSA-RCSI CP. The overall Strategic Direction was given the following ratings:

### 2021-2025 Strategic Plan Goals

- Excellence in Training, Examination and Research
- Quality Surgical Care
- Organizational Excellence and Financial Sustainability

### Objectives of the Mid-Term Review

- Evaluate progress towards strategic objectives.
- Assess relevance and effectiveness of the strategic plan.
- Review Implementation/Business Processes and Partnerships
- Assess sustainability and inform future implementation.

### Key Findings

College focused on promoting quality surgical care, developing online examinations, systems improvement, Partnerships Strengthening, Gender Inclusivity, support for trainers, Accreditation management, and financial sustainability

### Progress towards goals

70% achieved, 20% on steady progress, 10% unsure.

### Goal Achievement Rating

Progress made towards specific goals (excellent progress in training and examinations)

Goals behind schedule (quality of surgery assessment and desired financial sustainability.)

## ACHIEVEMENTS AS PER STRATEGIC GOALS

### GOAL 1 - Excellence in Training & Research

- **Surgeons Graduated:** On-track to surpass the SP target of 1,100 graduates by 2025.
- **Examinations:** MCS fully implemented online, partial for FCS.
- **Scholarships:** Provided 450+.
- **Trained Trainers:** Increased from 303 (2020) to 744 (2023.)
- **Admission System:** Salesforce installed, streamlined process.

### GOAL 2 - Quality in Surgical Care

- **Hospital Accreditations:** Increased from 125 to 142.
- **Essential Surgical Training:** Expanded to five countries.
- **Programs and Fellowships:** Various exchanges, fellowships, and research initiatives.
- **CPD Workshops:** Registered as a provider, focus on increasing women's representation.
- **Recommendations:** Better tracking of patient-centered outcomes, baseline study suggested.

### GOAL 3 - Organizational Excellence & Financial Sustainability

- **Financial Growth:** Funds more than doubled.
- **Secretariat Capacity:** Improved efficiency.
- **Partner Management:** Effective coordination and gained trust with partners.
- **Challenges:** Dependency on partners, need for internal income sources, surgical unit within Secretariat needed.
- **Risks:** Legal, quality, and financial issues.

## Impact Assessment

- Improvement in surgical care and education (positive remarks)
- Notable improvements in surgical outcomes, access to care, and training opportunities (challenges in tracking patient outcomes)

## Risk Management

- Primary risks and challenges (legal, financial, operational, reputational, competitive)
- Effectiveness of risk mitigation efforts and emerging risks to be addressed

## Overall Recommendation

- Integration of Laparoscopy/MIS training.
- Periodical curriculum reviews.
- Development of an assessment system for trainees.
- Tracking of fellows' progress.
- Regional study on COSECSA's impact.

## Operational Effectiveness & Stakeholder Engagement

- Operational processes supporting plan execution (90% respondents very satisfied)
- Areas for improvement (strengthening links between MoHs, Medical Councils and PDs (Trainers), expanding Secretariat)

## Proposed Future Direction

- Internal Systems: Enhancement needed
- Secretariat: Strengthening capacity
- Government Engagement: Improve relationships
- Sustainability: Develop sustainable strategies

- Comprehensive impact assessment.
- Focus on leadership training and quality improvement
- Involvement of faculty in decision-making.
- Completion and integration of ICT systems.
- Advocacy for full recognition in member countries.

# COSECSA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SALESFORCE)

COSECSA successfully completed the installation of the Admissions System and the Finance Module on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and in 2024, respectively. Developed by TEKENABLE in collaboration with RCSI (Irish Aid) and COSECSA IT Team, is built on the Salesforce platform, representing a significant leap forward in the way COSECSA manages its processes. Together, these systems streamline the entire applicant journey from application to payment enhancing both user experience and operational efficiency.

## Phase I: Admissions System

This Admission system provides for: -

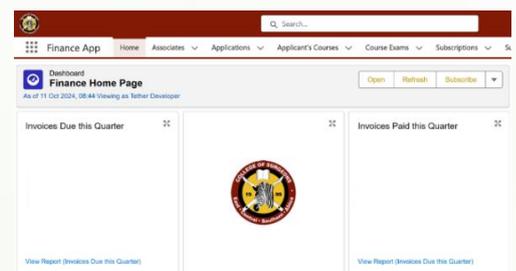
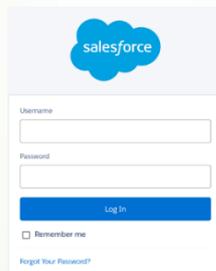
- **Seamless Application Process**
- **Centralized Applicant Database**
- **Enhanced, Automated & Timely Communication**
- **Transparency and Tracking**

Comprehensive training was conducted during implementation for the COSECSA Secretariat after two staff members visited RCSI and TEKENABLE's offices in Ireland in late 2022 for intense training. The Staff in-turn transferred their knowledge to the secretariat, Executives and the Council.

## Phase II: Finance Module

To the system, this module incorporated: -

- **Automated Invoicing and Receipting**
- **Payment Follow-Up**
- **Automated Payment Reminders**

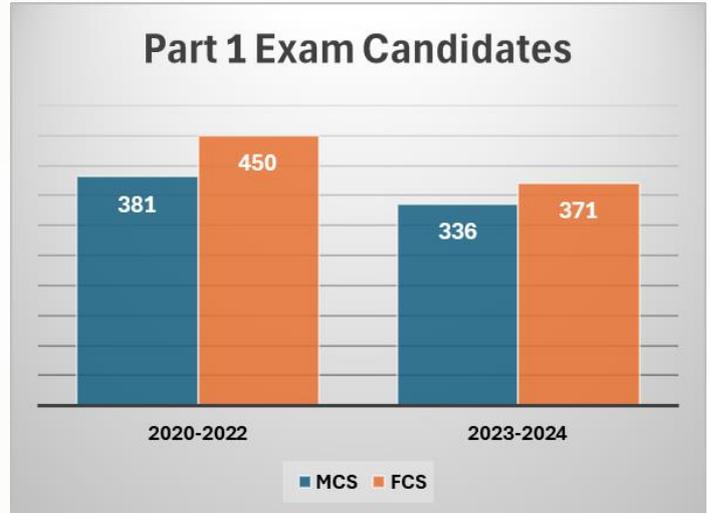


## EXAMINATIONS AND CREDENTIALING

The 2-year period has been a busy and impactful one for the Examination and Credentials Committee, with significant advancement. Part I MCQ Written Exams are now fully delivered through online systems, MCS OSCE Exams are conducted virtually, and simulation-based assessment done by MCS Candidates (ENTRUST Exam).

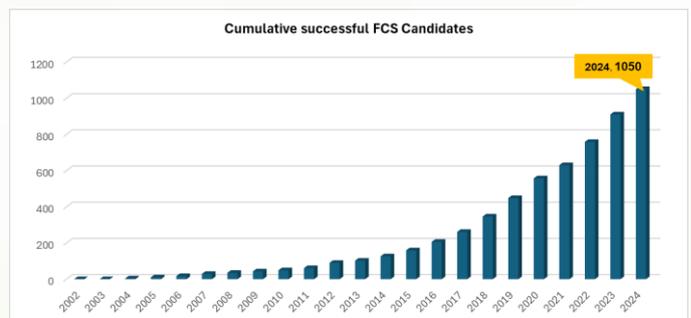
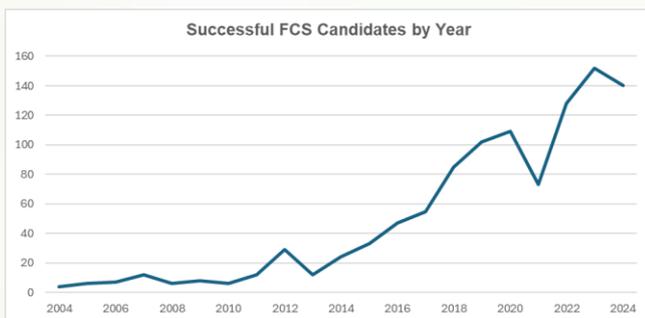
FCS Clinical/Viva Exam are continuously conducted physically involving over 270 international and local examiners every year.

We thank all our examiners for their commitment and invaluable support in upholding the standards of training and surgery.



The college's number of candidates for written examinations has increased in the last years as illustrated on the charts in this page.

For part two examinations, there was a moderate increase in candidates sitting for the examination in 2023-2024 compared to 2020-2022 which in turn results in an increase in surgical care.



## Accreditation of COSECSA Hospitals/Training Sites

### Status of COSECSA Accredited Hospitals by 2024

COSECSA through the accreditation committee and in conjunction with the in-country Medical Councils assesses and accredits several hospitals for Training within the region. The College currently has 144 Accredited hospitals. This increased from 139 in 2020. Out of this accreditation, new training sites were identified as well as existing hospitals being re-accredited or adding to their existing programmes. Special thanks to the countries for assessing and accrediting hospitals as well as gratitude to the fellows for identifying their hospitals as potential training sites for COSECSA training. The table to the right illustrates the accreditation status of the hospitals.

Country	Accredited Hospitals	Active Hospitals	No of Trainees
Angola	1	1	0
Botswana	1	1	10
Burundi	3	3	17
Cameroon	1	1	17
D.R.Congo	2	2	11
Eswatini	1	1	2
Ethiopia	15	11	107
Gabon	1	1	10
Kenya	38	15	300
Lesotho	1	1	6
Madagascar	1	1	3
Malawi	7	6	102
Mozambique	3	1	12
Namibia	5	1	28
Niger	1	1	10
Rwanda	7	5	56
Somaliland	1	0	0
Sudan	4	0	109
Tanzania	11	9	105
Togo	1	1	0
Uganda	16	7	149
Zambia	13	13	105
Zimbabwe	10	2	104
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1262</b>

### Rahima Dawood Travelling Fellow

Through engagements between the Rahima Dawood Travelling Fellow engaging Medical Students in various Countries in the region as well as from various regional interactions, the College has received increased recognition and visibility, which has attracted a big number of trainees, increased the number of active hospitals as well as brought in new countries who are opting for COSECSA Training.



Accreditation Visits

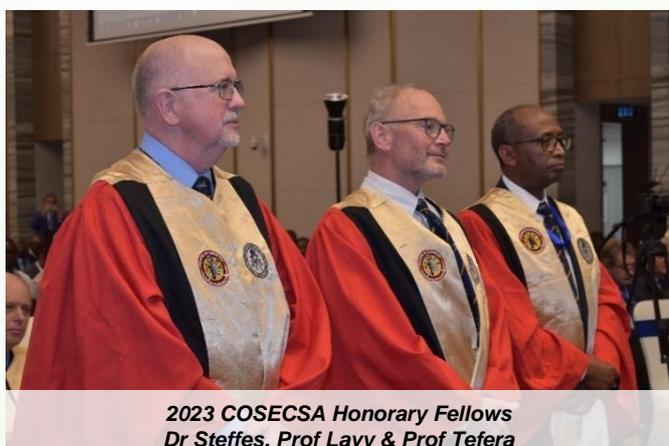


## Election of Members and Fellows of the College

Between 2023-2024, the Council reviewed and considered Seventy-five (75) applications from different countries and for different specialties. Thirty-four (34) were approved for FCS by Election and Forty-one (41) for Member-Specialist by Election as illustrated in the tables below with the expectation the 2024 number will increase: -

### 2023 (64)

FELLOWS BY ELECTION (25)		MEMBER-SPECIALIST (39)	
Full Name	Country	Full Name	Country
Annelise Olson	Angola	Didier Kamatari	Burundi
Andrew Ojuka	Botswana	Didier - Xavier Ndendi Penda	Cameroon
Kazadi Jean-Marie	D.R.Congo	Alazar Aregawi	Ethiopia
Ntsambi Eba Glennie	D.R.Congo	Yared Woldetsadik	Ethiopia
Sanduku Dieudonne	D.R.Congo	Yishak Suga	Ethiopia
Mr. David Selbach	Ethiopia	Swaleh Shahbal	Kenya
Tesfaye Mulat Jimma	Ethiopia	Carnjin Thambaiya	Kenya
Henok Tekleselassie	Ethiopia	Sydey Rono	Kenya
Mahteme Bekele Muleta	Ethiopia	Elkana Nande	Namibia
Stefano Bolongaro	Ethiopia	Ahmed Elsanawsi	Sudan
Caesar Ochieng Bitta	Kenya	Abdelgadir Amin	Sudan
Bahaty Riogi	Kenya	Abuabida Hamdi	Sudan
Josiah Albert Ruturi	Kenya	Abumadian Fadlalmula	Sudan
Mark Siboe	Kenya	Dafalla Shani	Sudan
Peter Saula	Kenya	Ahmed Mohammedkhair	Sudan
Kauffmann Rondi	Kenya, USA	Faisal Abdel Galil Elnour	Sudan
Pueya Nashidengo	Namibia	IBRAHIM Elhassan	Sudan
Odisang Montwedi	South Africa	Mohamed Mohamed	Sudan
Samwel Byabato	Tanzania	Mohanned Abdelrahman	Sudan
Jack Edward Kehl III	Togo	Elrofai Abdalla	Sudan
Coleen SABATINI	USA	Mahboub El Hashemi	Sudan
Dilantha Bandara ELLEGALA	USA	Mohammed Eltoum Azoz	Sudan
Linda ZHANG	USA	Abdala Idris Abdalaadm	Sudan
Electron KEBABEW	USA	Sami Arbab Hammour	Sudan
Sion Melanie Kay	USA	Nasir Hasaballa	Sudan
		Omer El Faroug Salim	Sudan
		Alphonse Chandika	Tanzania
		Baiya Rashid	Tanzania
		Dino Mwaja	Tanzania
		Aron Weldegebreal Desta	Tanzania
		Said Ahmada	Tanzania
		Francis Tegete	Tanzania
		Henry Humba	Tanzania
		Juma Mzimiri	Tanzania
		Omary Mussa	Tanzania
		Christine Namugenyi	Uganda
		Irene Mugisha	Uganda
		Josephine Katusabe	Uganda
		William Lubega	Uganda



**2024 (11)** (as of august 2024)

FELLOWS BY ELECTION (9)		MEMBER-SPECIALIST (2)	
Full Name	Country	Full Name	Country
Jean Claude Mbonicura	Burundi	Mekdim Tadesse Siyoum	Ethiopia
Medard Kabuyaya Kakule	D.R.Congo	Dorothy Nakuya Bbaale	Malawi
Engida Abebe	Ethiopia		
Elkana Nande	Namibia		
Gustave Buname	Tanzania		
Masumbuko Mwashambwa	Tanzania		
Isaac Mubezi	Uganda		
Katherine Shafer	USA		
Valerie Rusch	USA		



COSECSA Trainees becoming Fellows

## College Fellows and Members Breakdown

Members and Fellows: Upon the College’s inauguration, 340 Fellows were admitted as fellows of the College who possessed qualifications entitling them to be registered in their Surgical Practice as per Article 6.0 of the Constitution.

The College now stands at a total of 1962 Fellows and Members:

FELLOWSHIPS	
Foundation Fellows	340
Honorary fellows	38
Overseas fellows	170
Fellow by Examination	910
Fellows by Election	357
<b>Total Fellows</b>	<b>1815</b>
MEMBERSHIPS	
Members	44
Member specialist by election	100
Associate members	3
<b>Total Members and Fellows</b>	<b>1962</b>

## COSECSA ADVOCACY, BRANDING AND GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENTS

### COSECSA Annual Scientific Conference – Ethiopia 2023

In 2023, COSECSA's leadership, alongside the ECSA-HC Director General, engaged in significant discussions with Professor Birhanu Nega, the Honorable Minister of Education of Ethiopia, and representatives from the Ministry of Health. These discussions focused on the impactful work COSECSA is undertaking across Africa, particularly in Ethiopia, to enhance surgical education, practice and elevating the standards of surgical care.

Furthermore, during the 2023 examinations held at ALERT Hospital, the Honorable Minister of Health Dr Lia Tadesse of Ethiopia attended and met with the President Dr Jane Fualal and the Secretary-General Professor Abebe Bekele. This meeting provided an opportunity for the Minister to gain insights into the rigorous conduct of COSECSA examinations and the importance of our initiatives in advancing surgical care and education.



COSECSA Leadership with the Hon MoE of Ethiopia

As a result of these fruitful advocacy efforts, Ethiopia officially recognized COSECSA's curriculum and certificates as professional surgical certifications, marking a significant milestone in our commitment to fostering surgical excellence in the region.



COSECSA Leadership, candidate & examiner with the Hon MoH of Ethiopia



## COSECSA 2023 Partner's Forum

In December 2023, COSECSA hosted an engaging and impactful Partners Forum, aimed at achieving cohesion of the Partners' programs and celebrating the invaluable contributions of its partners. At this event COSECSA acknowledged each partners' unwavering support in advancing the college's mission of improving surgical care across the region.

The forum brought together an array of partners, including esteemed organizations such as the RCSI, ECSA-HC, ECSACON, AO Alliance, Intuitive Foundation, Life Box, Kids OR, Smile Train, RCSEd, CMSA, ReSurge International, Operation Smile, ACS/AWS and PAACS.



Insightful discussions took place on the progress achieved over the years and strategic goals for the future, highlighting key accomplishments in surgical training and capacity building contributing to college successes.

The discussions fostered a renewed sense of purpose and motivation.



In closing, COSECSA handed its partners tokens of appreciation for their continued support and dedication. Together, COSECSA and its partners are poised to make an even greater impact in the pursuit of excellence in surgical education and healthcare delivery.

## GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

### East, Central and Southern Africa – Health Community Health Minister Conference 2024



*COSECSA Secretary General Prof Abebe Moderation a session at the ECSA-HC Health Ministers Conference*

From June 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, in Arusha, Tanzania, the COSECSA Secretary General, Prof. Abebe Bekele, attended the ECSA-HC Health Minister Conference, which brought together, H.E Philip Isdor Mpango, Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania, senior officials from the ministries of health, health experts, and collaboration partners in the region.

The aim was to review key policy matters affecting the health sector, identify policy issues, and make Resolutions to accelerate and scale up best practices in the ECSA Region.

Prof. Abebe moderated the panel discussion on Developing Human Resources for Health: An ECSA-CHS Collegiate Model, which featured the presidents of the colleges (ECSACON, CANECSA, and ECSACOG) and the ECSA-HC Director General as panelists for the session.



*COSECSA CEO Ms Stella presenting on the Collegiate model at the ECSA-HC Health Ministers Conference*



During the ECSA-HC Health Minister Conference and Best Practice Forum held in June 2024 in Arusha, Tanzania, the CEO of COSECSA, Ms. Stella Itungu delivered a significant presentation on "Developing Human Resources for Health: An ECSA-HC Collegiate Model."; A model that has been appreciated in the region for enhancing health workforce capacity.



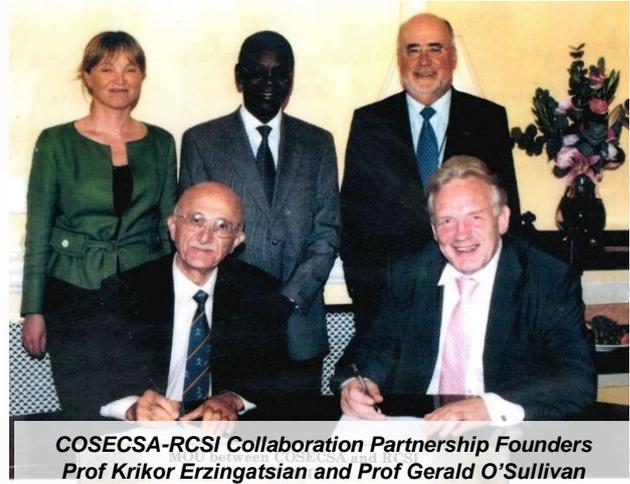
COSECSA Secretary General Prof Abebe (3<sup>rd</sup> left) with COSECSA Secretariat at the ECSA-HC HMC

## COLLABORATION PARTNERS



COSECSA and RCSI have enjoyed a longstanding and fruitful relationship supported by the Irish Aid. This has remained a cornerstone of the college in providing technical, financial, and administrative support, significantly enhancing the latter's operations. With this the College has registered tremendous growth in major aspects of its programs.

Additionally, we have seen improvements in rural surgical patient outcomes and enhanced research capacity among our trainees. These advancements have not only strengthened our internal processes but also elevated COSECSA's recognition both regionally and internationally.



COSECSA-RCSI Collaboration Partnership Founders  
Prof Krikor Erzingatsian and Prof Gerald O'Sullivan  
30 JUNE 2007

Furthermore, this collaboration has facilitated COSECSA's visibility on the global stage, attracting numerous partners such as The Beit Trust, the American College of Surgeons (ACS), the Association of Women Surgeons (AWS), Smile Train, KidsOR, Operation Smile, Intuitive Foundation, AO Alliance, Resurge International, LifeBox, Jhpiego, the Pan African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS), Oxford University, the University of Toronto, the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh (RCSEd) and British Journal of Surgery. Their collective support has been instrumental in advancing COSECSA's mission and ensuring that we remain on track to achieve our strategic objectives.

### Renewed MoUs and New Partnerships

In 2023-2024, the College Executive approved the renewal and establishment of new and existing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and grant agreements to enhance collaboration in the College Mission, successfully securing new grants and activity agreements. Ongoing funding continues through existing MoUs with partners. These partners are

#	Partner Renewals
1	RCSI/ COSECSA CP
2	AO Alliance
3	The Beit Trust
4	Smile Train
5	Operation Smile
6	Resurge International
7	Intuitive Foundation

#	Partner Continued
8	KidsOR
9	ACS/AWS
10	DeckerMed
11	UoZ ICSS
12	CAGS
13	UNITAR
14	Jhpiego

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE COLLEGE

### Annual Workplan and Budget

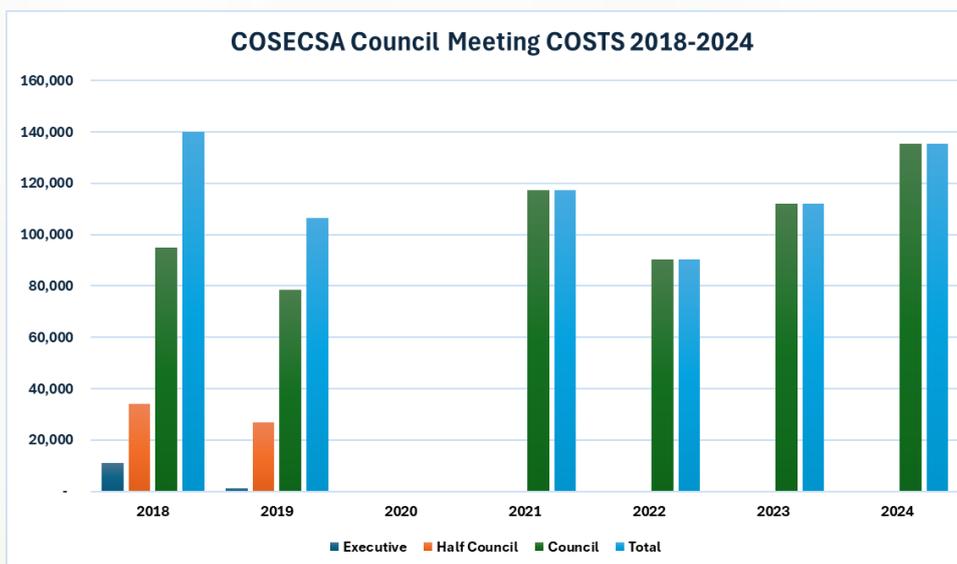
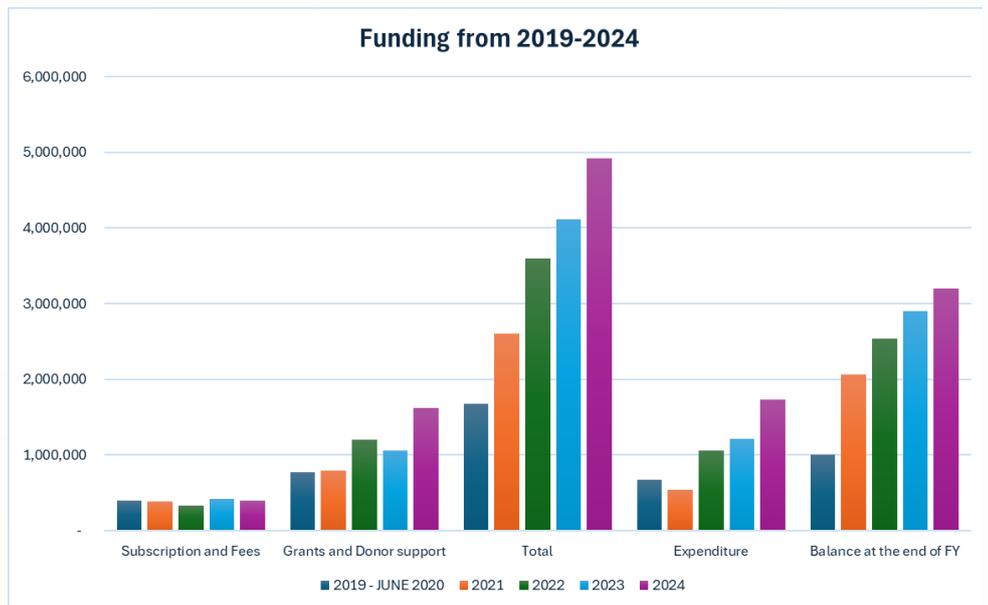
COSECSA developed Annual Workplan and budget to facilitate the implementation of the College activities that included but are not limited to: -

- a) Amend the constitution.
- b) Evaluate the Strategic Plan.
- c) Develop guidelines and Policies.
- d) Implement and operationalize an IT system (Salesforce system.)
- e) Offer Scholarships to COSECSA Trainees and Fellows.
- f) Conduct ToT workshops for trainers and Master Trainers.
- g) Implement the recommendations of the Rwanda and Zimbabwe essential surgical training programme evaluation and expand to other countries.
- h) Implement Short Term (1-month) exchange programme for trainees.
- i) Convene a Master Trainer physical workshop on leadership development of the Health Workforce
- j) Coordinate accreditation and re-accreditation and maintain the training standards for all training facilities.
- k) Develop a CPD program and conduct workshops on Research and Leadership.
- l) Implement RCSI Programme Directors Clinical Leadership Course scholarships.
- m) Furnish COSECSA Annual data to all MoHs to facilitate decision-making at the Member State level.
- n) Implement the RCSI-COSECSA CP Research Activities (Research conducted by Trainees & Fellows and Surgical Audits & Standards.)
- o) Participation/ representation of COSECSA at international and regional forums to share the work done at the country/regional level.
- p) Engage surgeons and other disciplines to join fellowship and membership of the College.
- q) Enhance Cleft Care within the region.
- r) Curriculum reviews to meet the demanding standards.
- s) Facilitate and coordinate COSECSA Governance meetings.
- t) Carry out the COSECSA annual audits.
- u) Performance Evaluation of all Country Coordinators.

## College Financial Status

This reporting period has demonstrated a significant increase in internal revenue, particularly through Programme Entry, Examination, and Fellowship fees. As outlined earlier, we have successfully established new agreements and renewed existing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with our Collaboration Partners which have resulted in substantial financial commitments that have consistently been met accordingly. As a result, the College has experienced steady growth in its annual income, with a significant portion derived from the contributions of our Collaboration Partners.

### College Income and Expenditure Analysis



### Cost of Council Meetings

## Examination Expenditures

A total of **\$247,219** was spent on examinations in the 2 years under review. The 2023 exams cost \$111,979. This reflects a slight increase in examination costs compared to the past 3 years (2020-2022) where exams amounted to **\$207,594**. The increase in cost between the two periods is mainly due to the 2020-2022 period being hindered due to the global pandemic and the rise in candidates between 2023-2024. However, the fact that the College has shifted MCS exams to be fully online has been a major cost saver. The cost of FCS exams is bound to rise year on year, as the number of candidates is also increasing each year as well as various shifts in the global economy which would mean more expenditure to facilitate exams.

## Partners Financial Support for Examinations

The College received funds from Partners to support the examiners' participation in 2023 and 2024 examinations. This financial support covered travel costs, accommodation, visa, ground transport and meals during the examination that were held in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe across a maximum of 3 sites.

PARTNERS 2023 EXAMINATIONS SUPPORT	
Total Amount Received = \$79,448	
PARTNER	AREA OF SUPPORT
RCSI (CP)	Court of Examiners
KidsOR	Paediatric Surgery
Smile Train	Examination Budget
AO Alliance	Examination Budget
ReSurge Int.	Plastic Surgery
Prof Kokila Lakhoo	Examination Budget

PARTNERS 2024 EXAMINATIONS SUPPORT	
Total Amount Received = \$68,860	
PARTNER	AREA OF SUPPORT
RCSI (CP)	Court of Examiners
Smile Train	Examination Budget
KidsOR	Paediatric Surgery
ReSurge Int.	Examination Budget
AO Alliance	Examination Budget

2023 – 2024 DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM INSTITUTIONS & INDIVIDUALS	
Total Amount Received = \$20,000	
DONOR	AREA OF SUPPORT
Global Help Initiative Inc	College Support



COSECSA Examiners and COSECSA Examinations 2023



## EDUCATION, SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH

Under the leadership of the Chair of ESRC, Dr Michael Mwachiro, the Education, Scientific and Research department, implemented impactful education initiatives in the two years under review (2023-2024). These are Scholarships, Exchange and Rotation Programs, Training of Trainers, Workshops, Online Webinars, Research Grants, Clinical Leadership Course, Modular Training for MCS and FCS, Curriculum Reviews, In-Training Policy Developments and New Educational Initiatives. The following section details the implementation status of these various activities, highlighting our collaboration with key partners.

College Activities				
ACTIVITY	2023	2024	TOTAL	PARTNERS
Scholarships	125	120	245	ACS/AWS, AO Alliance, Beit Trust, Operation Smile, Smile Train, ReSurge International, KidsOR, PAACS, JSS.
Exchange/Rotation Programmes	9	6	15	Smile Train & Resurge International
ToTs Leadership workshops	10	9	19	RCSI (CP), Smile Train, Jhpiego, PAACS
Workshops	2	1	3	Operation Smile
Surgical Webinars	16	19	55	UGHE-CEGS
Research Webinars	10	10	20	RCSI (CP)
Faculty Development	5	0	5	COSECSA
Essential Surgical Training	0	0	0	AO Alliance
Research Grants	6	6	12	RCSI (CP), Intuitive Foundation, BJSS
Programme Directors' Clinical Leadership Diploma	0	2	2	RCSI (CP)

### Scholarships

From 2023-2024, the College with support from the partners has awarded a total of 194 Scholarships as detailed below. This is significant because we received 354 applications for scholarships.

Partner	2023	2024
ACS/AWS	17	10
PAACS	31	32
KidsOR	10	10
Beit Trust	5	2
Smile Train	4	10
Operation Smile	6	21
ReSurge Int.	3	0
AO Alliance	26	15
JSS	3	6
RCSI	0	2
	<b>105</b>	<b>108</b>

### Training of Trainers and workshops

COSECSA in collaboration with RCSI (CP), Smile Train and Jhpiego, successfully implemented the Leadership Development Trainings aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the surgical team (Surgeons, Nurses, Anaesthesiologists, gynecologists) through a train-the-trainers model to strengthen their leadership skills.

A total of 302 trainers from Accredited Hospitals within the COSECSA countries were taken through these training sessions. These were identified for their potential as future training leaders for their affiliated professional colleges COSECSA, CANECSA, ECSACON, and ECSACOG.

Financial support has fostered a growing network of 904 trainers in the region who have successfully completed COSECSA Train-the-Trainer Workshops since the program's inception.

## Leadership Development Master Trainers Workshop

COSECSA - Jhpiego hosted a five-day Master Trainer workshop aimed at enhancing the quality of healthcare within the surgical workforce. This focused on Master Trainers from the ECSA Region, alongside representatives from ECSACONM, ECSACON, and CANECSA.

The workshop provided an updated Leadership Development Curriculum that emphasizes critical non-technical skills such as **leadership, teamwork, communication, and a culture of patient safety**. This focus on capacity development is intended to enhance surgical and clinical outcomes across various domains, including education and training.

The newly developed curriculum aligns with contemporary leadership development trends and prepares Master Trainers to effectively deliver this curriculum to aspiring fellows in their respective countries. These initiatives are designed to empower surgical teams within the COSECSA region, ultimately leading to improved surgical outcomes and enhanced healthcare delivery.



COSECSA Master Trainers with Jhpiego in 2023



COSECSA-Operation Smile Cleft Care Workshops



## Cleft Care Workshops

COSECSA and Operation Smile Partnership implemented 3 Cleft Care Workshops to improve access to plastic surgery specifically Cleft Care. 2 Didactic and 1 Clinical Workshop took place between 2023-2024.

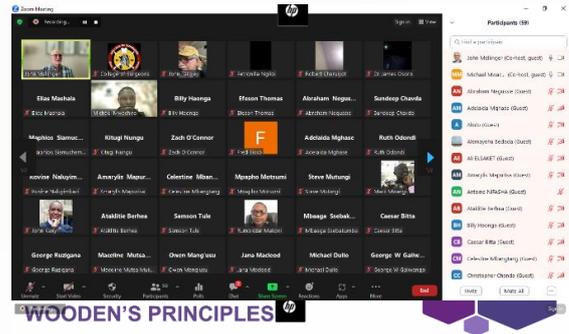
These workshops also included Research Methodologies to advance education, training, standards, research and practice in surgical care, and to enhance the skills of Plastic and Cleft Surgeons.

Through the expertise of Dr Nthumba Lead Trainer and Dr Yeageremu and Dr Ataklitie, a curriculum was developed which has so far furnished 29 COSECSA Plastic Surgery Trainees

## Faculty Development

Under the guidance of the Chair, ESRC, the college successfully conducted a series of Faculty Development sessions designed to enhance the skills and expertise of our trainers. These sessions encompassed a diverse range of topics, critical to effective medical education and contributed significantly to the continuous professional development of COSECSA trainers. By fostering a culture of excellence in surgical education, we aim to elevate the quality of training provided. The sessions were facilitated by renowned international and regional surgeons, ensuring a high standard of instruction and insight. Topics covered are

Prof Maswime	Salome Innovation & Global Collaboration
Dr Andrea Parker	Flipped Classroom learning
Dr John Mellinger	Surgical Leadership
Dr James Smith	Optimizing bedside teaching
Dr John Tarpley	Evaluation & Assessment



- Be true to yourself
- Make every day your masterpiece
- Do something for someone else who can't repay you every day
- Drink deeply from good books, especially the Bible
- Make friendship a fine art
- Build a shelter for a rainy day
- Pray for guidance, and give thanks daily



## Programme Directors' Clinical Leadership Course

COSECSA emphasizes the importance of supporting Programme Directors (PDs) who are pillars of the college, tasked with the daily training and implementation of programmes at COSECSA hospitals. RCSI-COSECSA CP launched an initiative in 2021 that allows PDs to pursue the 9-month part-time remote Professional Diploma in Clinical Leadership (PDiCL) at the RCSI Institute of Leadership upon completion are awarded a Professional Diploma in Clinical Leadership.

To date, 10 PDs received their diplomas: 8 between 2021-2022 and 2 in 2023-2024. Below is a list of COSECSA PDs who have participated in this programme.

Programme Director	Country	Year
Ronald Tubasiime	Rwanda	2021
Vihar Kotecha	Tanzania	2021
Kizito Kabongo	Zambia	2021
Jack Barasa	Kenya	2021
Zaitun Bokhary	Tanzania	2022
Akutu Munyika	Namibia	2022
Atakiltie Baraki	Ethiopia	2022
Zachary O'Connor	Gabon	2022
Fadipe Akinniyi	Kenya	2024
Sufyan Ibrahim	Zambia	2024



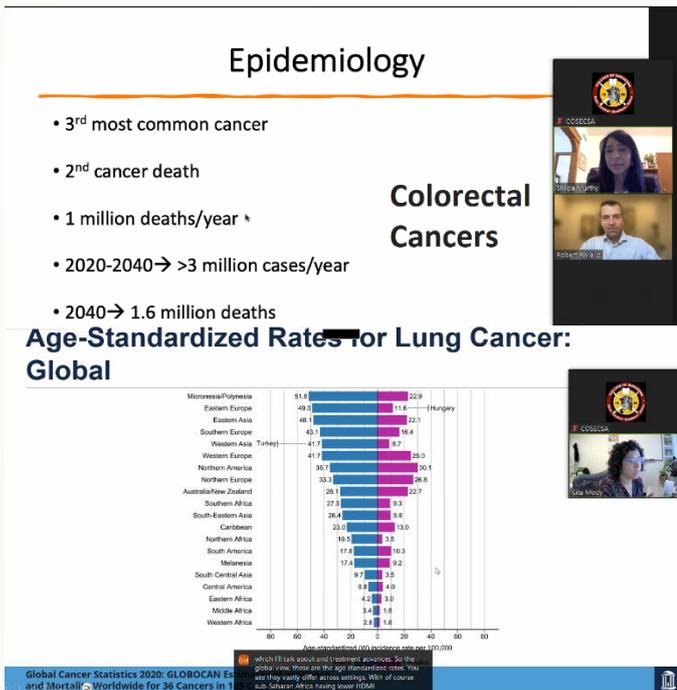
Dr Atakiltie (PDiCL Scholar) during a workshop

## Online Lecture Sessions

The College, in collaboration with the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE - CEGS), successfully conducted an online lecture series known as the COSECSA-CEGS Virtual Lecture Series in 2023 and 2024. This series comprised 16 distinct lectures in 2023 and 19 lectures in 2024 delivered by Global surgical experts specializing in oncology, cardiothoracic, vascular, and transplant surgery.

The lectures were effectively administered through the COSECSA platform and were facilitated by instrumental expert speakers.

The weekly sessions garnered active participation from over 1200 attendees cumulatively. Recordings of these sessions are readily accessible on the Learning Management System (LMS).



## Essential Surgical Training (EST)

COSECSA in collaboration with RCSI – Irish Aid in the reporting period implemented 7 Essential Surgical Training (EST) programs in 5 COSECSA countries. These are 3 in Kenya, 1 in Uganda and 3 in Zambia.

In total, 259 rural providers received this training through COSECSA Master trainers (Kenya - 152, Uganda – 25 and Zambia – 27) giving an overall total of 397 since the inception of the project in 2022.

All stakeholders highlighted that EST is needed and may improve the whole surgical/health system, recommending longer training, use of media technology, continuous mentorship and, live teaching in theatre to bridge the gap between knowledge. This project was accepted and presented to the Irish Global Health Network (IGHN) in 2024.



Essential Surgical Trainings taking place in Kenya 2024

## COSECSA – AO Alliance Trauma & Orthopaedic Guidelines Development

The partnership between COSECSA and AO Alliance has been fruitful in the development of guidelines to manage Trauma and Orthopaedic Cases.

Currently, 3 Guidelines have been developed namely: -

- **Closed Ankle Fractures Guidelines**
- **Femoral Shaft Fractures Guidelines**
- **Open Tibial Fractures Guidelines**



This is aimed at standardizing and improving the management of these complex injuries across our respective training sites and is a product of extensive research, expert input, and collaboration between leading professionals in the field. These guidelines are intended to serve as a valuable resource for all Surgical Practices in COSECSA, providing evidence-based recommendations and best practices for the treatment of orthopedic trauma.

### The Management of Open Tibial Shaft Fractures

<https://bit.ly/AOC0Smotsf>

**Background and rationale:** Open tibial shaft fractures are increasingly common and are associated with high morbidity and costs to patient, family, and hospitals.

**Inclusions:** Skeletally mature patients with open tibial shaft fractures.

**Exclusions:** Patients presenting late with an established fracture-related infection.

### The Management of Closed Ankle Fractures

<https://bit.ly/AOC0Smcaf>

**Background and rationale:** Ankle fractures are common, and the goal of treatment is to restore and maintain stability and alignment of the joint, with normal anatomy of the ankle mortise. This should optimise functional recovery and reduce the risk of developing post-traumatic arthritis.

**Inclusions:** Patients with closed malleolar and syndesmotic ankle injuries who are skeletally mature.

**Exclusions:** Patients with pilon fractures and open ankle fractures.

### The Management of Closed Femoral Shaft Fractures

<https://bit.ly/AOC0Smcfsf>

**Background and rationale:** Femoral shaft fractures are caused by high-energy trauma. There is strong evidence that early reduction and stabilisation, allowing prompt mobilisation, leads to better outcomes and reduces morbidity. Non-operative treatment may result in malunion with significant functional deficit.

**Inclusions:** Patients with closed femoral shaft fractures who are skeletally mature.

**Exclusions:** Patients with pathological fractures and periprosthetic fractures.

## Post Fellowships in Cleft Care

The College (COSECSA) in Partnership with Smile Train and the West African College of Surgeons (WACS) developed an 8-month Post-Fellowship Curriculum in Cleft Care. It aimed at: -

- Improving the skills of surgeons in the comprehensive management of Cleft Lip and Palate and associated problems
- Educating the understanding of the embryologic & anatomic basis of cleft lip & palate surgery.
- Strengthening the impact & understanding of multidisciplinary team care for cleft lip & palate.
- Providing hands on surgical training in primary & secondary repair of cleft lip & palate, as well as alveolar bone graft.
- Developing & advancing research in cleft lip & palate & provide a regional research platform.

During the reporting Period, COSECSA enrolled its first group of 6 of its Fellows in this Post Fellowship.



Samrawit Girmay  
Ethiopia (Plast)



Richard Miti  
Zambia (GenS)



Patricia Shinondo  
Zambia (Paeds)



Dereje Gashaw  
Ethiopia (GenS)



Martha Mukonka  
Zambia (Paeds)



Ashenafi Ytbarek  
Ethiopia (Plast)



*Medhanit Demeke with Supervisors in Italy*

## Cleft Surgery Training Programme

COSECSA - Operation Smile organized a two-year Cleft Surgery Training Programme for 10 COSECSA Plastic Surgery Fellows which kicked off at the end of 2022 and will conclude at the 2024 graduation.

The training will be structured into various 1-week to 1-month programs taking the scholars to various cleft peak centers around the globe to furnish their surgical skills.

This Post Fellowship training has taken the fellows to India, Pakistan, Italy, Philippines, Morocco, D.R.Congo, Ethiopia and South Africa where Cleft surgeries are hotspots for the fellows to polish their skills.

These are Metasebia Worku, Hellina Legesse, Meklit Kidane, Tewodros Melese, Tshimbila Kabangu, Getaw Alamnie, Medhanit Demeke, Amanuel Kebede, Tingadini Kyoni and Abebe Saketta.

## Continuous Professional Development

Before launching the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program, a thorough needs assessment was carried out to determine the educational requirements of early career fellows within the COSECSA Region. The assessment indicated that around 80% of respondents viewed research and audit as their key training priorities. Consequently, these areas were prioritized in the design of CPD programs for early COSECSA Fellows.



To address these identified needs, COSECSA secured CPD provider registration from the Medical Council of Tanganyika (MCT), supported by the COSECSA/RCSI Collaboration Program.

Utilizing a participatory approach, an Online Research Methodology Course was carefully developed and accredited by the MCT, granting participants a noteworthy 20 CPD credit points.

In 2023, The course ran for 10 weeks, while the same programme is also running for the 2024 year. This research course included 20 live Zoom sessions in 2023 and 2024 totaling a maximum of 40 hours.

Participants came from a diverse range of 10 countries, as highlighted on the map accompanying.

Overall feedback regarding the course's content, scheduling, and relevance to participants' future research careers was overwhelmingly positive. As a result, COSECSA plans to offer this course annually, incorporating modifications based on participant feedback. Additionally, COSECSA is actively exploring and implementing more CPD programs to further provide professional development of its trainees, fellows and health community.

In Addition to the above 2 Research Methodology Courses CPD accredited under the Medical Council of Tanganyika, an in-person Research mentorship program was held in 2024 with an additional 20 CPD Credit Points.

Our providers are COSECSA researchers and partners. 60 fellows and trainees undertook the course from 13 countries for the RMC.



*Research Methodology workshop 2024*

CPD is crucial in the context of COSECSA as it ensures that surgical professionals remain current with the latest advancements, techniques, and best practices in their field. This enhances individual competencies but also elevates the overall quality of surgical care across the region.

## COSECSA RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

Currently, there is inadequate surgical care research output in the region. Research capacity among surgeons should be improved. High interest in conducting research among trainees and fellows in COSECSA is poised to improve research and research output in surgical care. To achieve Excellence in Training & Research, COSECSA has an IRB mandated to oversee the ethical conduct of research. This was Registered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Modifications have been made to improve the Online IRB system using Research Ethics Information Management System (REIMS). Furthermore, the college provides opportunity for surgeons in the region to disseminate their findings through the East and Central African Journal of Surgery (ECAJS). The journal also provides an opportunity for surgical providers in the region to share their best practice which may have impact in the region. To enhance this, COSECSA has:

- East and Central African Journal of Surgery (ECAJS) for research data dissemination
- Surgical Audits System (RedCap) in addition to the Research Ethics Information Management System

Research in COSECSA is based on and guided by the following seven areas



CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)



SURGICAL AUDITS AND STANDARDS



RURAL PATIENTS



COSECSA INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH BOARD (IRB) AND DATA GOVERNANCE GROUP



RESEARCH PRODUCED BY TRAINEES AND FELLOWS



INCOME DIVERSITY AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



ADVOCACY

### Research Travel Grants

Four Trainees/Fellows were offered Travel Awards to present their research at the 2023 COSECSA Scientific Conference. This gave them an opportunity to disseminate their findings and get feedback from experts on the subject matter.

Kabelele Sipalo Trainee Zambia

**TOPIC:** Surgical Outcomes of Head Injuries in Zambia: A Retrospective Hospital-Based Study

Wongel Shale Fellow Ethiopia

**TOPIC:** Implementation of Enhanced Recovery after Surgery in Jimma University Medical Center

Precious Mutambanegwe Fellow Zimbabwe

**TOPIC:** Specialist Surgeon Workforce in COSECSA Affiliated countries

Chihena Banda Fellow Zambia

**TOPIC:** Addressing the Gender Gap in the COSECSA Surgical Workforce: Where do we Stand?



Dr Sipalo, Dr Shale, Dr Precious, Dr Chihena

### Audits and Standards

A pilot phase of the project was completed with 4 hospitals participating in 2023-2024. A total of 1066 patients were enrolled during this phase. Informed by the pilot, a REDCap Database was revised to have three parts

1. Admission and operation form
2. Post operative and discharge data
3. 30-days follow-up information.

Implementation of Phase 2 has been planned to take place from November 2024, which will be for a total of 40 days; 10 days of data collection and 30 days of follow-up.



## Small Grants

COSECSA offered twelve (12) small research grants to early carer researchers who are young fellows and trainees of the College. The following are the ongoing research projects awarded from 2023-2024.

<b>Timothy Jumbi</b>	<b>Fellow</b>	<b>Paediatric Surgery</b>	<b>Kenya</b>
<b>Title:</b> Assessment Of Voiding Patterns by Uroflowmetry In Paediatric Patients Post Resection Of Posterior Urethral Valves At Kenyatta National Hospital			
<b>Wongel Shale</b>	<b>Fellow</b>	<b>General Surgery</b>	<b>Ethiopia</b>
<b>Title:</b> Implementation of "Enhanced Recovery after Surgery" (ERAS®) protocol in a LIC (low-income country) tertiary hospital			
<b>Olivier Kubwimana</b>	<b>Fellow</b>	<b>Orthopaedic Surgery</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>
<b>Title:</b> Outcomes of Geriatric distal radius fractures at CHUB: A Cross-section study.			
<b>Rachael Kirabo</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>General Surgery</b>	<b>Uganda</b>
<b>Title:</b> Impact of Frailty on postoperative outcomes among patients undergoing major surgery in Mulago Hospital			
<b>Ngam Blessing</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>General Surgery</b>	<b>Cameroon</b>
<b>Title:</b> Evidence Supporting Performance Measures of Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy Using a Novel Low-Cost Training System			
<b>Joseph Mkandawire</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>General Surgery</b>	<b>Malawi</b>
<b>Title:</b> In Adults Presenting for Surgery, How Does Good 6 Minute Walk Test (6Mwt) Scores Compared to Poor Test Scores Impact the Surgical Decisions & Outcomes?			
<b>Lele Fabrice</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>General Surgery</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
<b>Title:</b> Predictors Of Mortality and Development of A Predictive Score In Geriatric Surgical Patients: A 5Years Retrospective Cohort Study			
<b>Thierry Cyuzuzo</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Plastic Surgery</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>
<b>Title:</b> Prevalence And Risk Factors of Preoperative Malnutrition Among Non-Syndromic Cleft Lip and Palate in Rwanda.			
<b>Kabelele Sipalo</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Neurosurgery</b>	<b>Zambia</b>
<b>Title:</b> Determinants Of Post Operative Myelomeningocele Wound Dehiscence Among Patients Operated on At the University Teaching Hospital, Lusaka, Zambia.			
<b>Faraja Magwesela</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>General Surgery</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
<b>Title:</b> Randomized Controlled Trial on Autologous Platelet-Rich Plasma Versus Conventional Wound Care in Treatment of Wounds			
<b>Misha Abayneh</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Plastic Surgery</b>	<b>Ethiopia</b>
<b>Title:</b> Assessment Of Training Environment of Plastic, Reconstructive and Hand Surgery in Ethiopia: Qualitative Method Study			
<b>Violet Otoki</b>	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>General Surgery</b>	<b>Kenya</b>
<b>Title:</b> Trauma Registry and Outcomes Assessment at Tenwek Hospital: A Catalyst for Surgical Systems Improvement			

## Global Surgery Attachment Programme

COSECSA hosted its first research attachment program where trainees/ fellows got time to spend time in Tanzania and Zambia at Accredited sites under supervision from COSECSA senior fellows. The aim of this program was to give them a context-based knowledge on challenges facing access to surgical care among people. They got to see healthcare delivery by visiting various levels of healthcare and policy levels.



Dr Nzayikorera, Dr Kotecha, Dr Kubwimana

## Publication

The following four projects have been submitted for publication.

- Sipalo KM, et al, 2024. Investigating the incidence of Head injuries in Eastern Province, Zambia and surgical Outcomes. World Neurosurgery Journal
- Mwaungulu M, et al, 2024. Assessment of Orthopedic Injury Pattern among Motorcycle Trauma Patients Admitted at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital. ECAJS
- Jumbi T, et al, 2024 Assessment of Voiding Patterns By Uroflowmetry In Paediatric Patients Post Resection Of Posterior Urethral Valves At Kenyatta National Hospital. ECAJS
- Kubwimana et al, 2024. Outcomes of Geriatric distal radius fractures at CHUB: A Cross-section study. BJS

In addition to funding support, we run monthly Mentorship Meetings and arrange one-on-one meetings with mentees to support and share with them some research expertise. Currently we have projects ongoing in 13 countries, both COSECSA members and partner countries.

## COSECSA Participation in Grant Applications

COSECSA worked on a Grant Application to bust research activities and continue the 2023 grant from the Intuitive Foundation. In August 2024, the college was awarded a \$148,000 grant for research activities, which is an additional of \$14,900 from the 2023 grant.

This grant will support:

- **Research Capacity Building:** Comprising of provision implementing a Research Workshop in person for a period of 1 week.
- **Travel Grants;** This will be for trainees and fellows to present their papers at the COSECSA conferences.
- **Small Research Grants:** This will provide funding support to 8 trainees and/or young fellows to implement their research programs
- **Team project:** To submit team-based research grants, to be implemented by surgical teams.

## EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN JOURNAL OF SURGERY (ECAJS)



### East and Central African Journal of Surgery

The East and Central African Journal of Surgery (ECAJS) is a quarterly, peer-reviewed, open-access publication of the College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa (COSECSA), whose aim is to advance the science of surgery and surgical care while facilitating the exchange of ideas among surgeons and surgical care researchers in COSECSA member countries.

In existence for 46 years, since 1978, the journal has published a total of 29 volumes with about 60 issues and over 1000 articles. The journal runs on a diamond open-access publication model to ensure free and increased access to published content at zero costs to authors and readers alike. The ECAJS is indexed in several databases, including African Journals Online (AJOL), African Index Medicus, EBSCO, ASCI, Bioline International, Crossref, ROAD, Global Health, CAB Abstracts, FATCAT, ZDB, Wikidata, SUDOC, and OPENALEX.

#### Issues Published

- Volume 28, issue 1 (2023): <https://www.ecajs.org/issue/10546>
- Volume 28, issue 2 (2023): <https://www.ecajs.org/issue/10544>
- Volume 28, issue 3 (2023): <https://www.ecajs.org/issue/10538>
- Volume 28, issue 4 (2023): <https://www.ecajs.org/issue/10545>
- Volume 29 issue 1 (2024): <https://www.ecajs.org/issue/10638>
- Volume 29 issue 2 (2024): <https://www.ecajs.org/issue/10930>

<https://www.ecajs.org/>

#### New Manuscript Submission System

ECAJS have procured and integrated a new, author-friendly manuscript submission system to streamline the submission and review process: <https://app.scholasticahq.com/submissions/ecajs/new>

#### ECAJS Indexed in Two Databases

- Asian Science Citation Index (ASCI)
- African Index Medicus (AIM)

#### ECAJS Journals Partnerships

Journal of Global Surgery  
The Surgery Journal  
Diseases of the Colon & Rectum Journal

#### Recruitment of a New Managing Editor

Dr. Vincent Kipkorir recruited as Managing Editor for the ECAJS sitting at the COSECSA secretariat

### Editorial Board Reconstitution:

2 new deputy editors in chief recruited and a diversified editorial board with 26 members reconstituted.

**Editor in Chief**                      **Prof Abebe Bekele**                      **Rwanda**

**Managing Editor**                      **Dr Vincent Kipkorir**                      **Kenya**

### Deputy Editors

Dr Seke Kazuma	Zambia	Dr Robert Parker	Kenya, USA
Dr Tihitena Negussie	Ethiopia	Dr Mumba Chalwe	Zambia
Dr Michael Mwachiro	Kenya	Dr Godfrey Philipo	Tanzania

### Editorial Board

Dr Kajombo Chifundo	Malawi	Dr Akutu Munyika	Namibia
Dr Mpapho Motsumi	Botswana	Dr Christopher Dodgion	U.S.A
Dr Rondi Kauffmann	U.S.A	Dr Celestine Mbangtang	Namibia
Prof Berhanu Kotisso	Ethiopia	Dr Gift Mulima	Malawi
Prof Eric Borgstein	Malawi	Dr James Munthali	Zambia
Prof Larry Akoko	Tanzania	Dr Jean Byiringiro	Rwanda
Prof Laston Chikoya	Zambia	Dr Kirsteen Awori	Kenya
Dr Philip Ooko	Kenya	Dr Rose Alenyo	Uganda
Dr Ainhoa Costas	Malawi	Dr Barnabas Alayande	Rwanda
Dr Christophe Mpiribanyi	Rwanda	Dr Chiapo Lesetedi	Botswana
Prof Faith Muchemwa	Zimbabwe	Dr Faustin Ntringanya	Rwanda
Dr Gallina Kazobinka	Burundi	Dr Fred Bisso	Uganda
	Dr James Geraghty	Ireland	



Twitter: <https://x.com/ECAJS>

LinkedIn: <https://t.ly/lmf2d>



Instagram: <https://t.ly/Zilyq>

Facebook: <https://t.ly/YNpw->

Journal Website: <https://www.ecajs.org/>



**Dr Louisa Nneka Nwachukwu**  
**General Surgeon (Trainee)**  
**Niger**  
**Sim Galmi Hospital**  
**PAACS**

As a general surgery resident, I began my COSECSA training in January 2021 with clear objectives: “To enhance my surgical skills, principles, leadership, and research expertise.” Over the past year, I have witnessed remarkable growth, both personally and professionally.

I have been privileged to manage complex cases, notably patients with typhoid perforations and gastric perforations requiring omental patches. These critically ill patients presented significant challenges, but under expert guidance, we achieved remarkable recoveries. The COSECSA program emphasized meticulous preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative care, ensuring optimal patient outcomes.

My mentors and supervisors provided invaluable encouragement and instruction. In the operative room, they taught me precise surgical techniques, emphasizing careful bowel handling and attention to detail. Their passion for research and discovery inspired me to explore innovative approaches to advancing surgical care in sub-Saharan Africa.

As an English speaker in a French-speaking country, language barriers initially posed significant challenges. However, I overcame this through dedicated language learning, enabling effective communication with patients and providing comprehensive postoperative instructions.

The COSECSA program has profoundly impacted my professional growth. I have acquired enhanced surgical skills, practical expertise, and a deeper understanding of surgical principles. COSECSA's comprehensive resources and networking opportunities with global peers have broadened my perspectives and fostered collaboration.

My COSECSA experience has been transformative. I have gained confidence, expertise, and a renewed commitment to delivering exceptional patient care. I am grateful for the program's emphasis on optimal care of surgical patients following global acceptable practices, research, leadership, and cultural competence. As I continue my surgical journey, I remain dedicated to advancing healthcare standards in sub-Saharan (developing countries).

Thank You COSECSA! LONG LIVE COSECSA!!

**“Growth in Surgical Excellence”**

## CHALLENGES

Despite the success story of the College in the period, the College also has registered several challenges associated with funding, government support and trainees' support, as follows; -

### **Government Support:**

COSECSA's vital role in strengthening the health workforce, as mandated by ECSA-HC Health Ministers under resolutions; HMC25/R4 and HMC26/R8, is acknowledged. However, full recognition of the collegiate training model varies across countries; in some, colleges are recognized exclusively by Medical and Dental Councils, while others are also recognized by the National Councils for Higher Education. Additionally, variations in curriculum approval processes and challenges in securing study permits for foreign trainees add complexity to the training framework. Strengthened collaboration amongst Ministries of Health, Medical Councils, and National Councils for Higher Education is crucial to ensure cohesive recognition and streamline processes, advancing shared healthcare goals.

### **Programme Management and Administrative Support:**

Despite successful partner engagements, a critical funding gap remains due to expanded operations. Limited financial resources are impacting technical, administrative and operational functions, creating imbalances in program implementation. To achieve long-term sustainability, it is essential for the government to incorporate annual support for the College into the national budget and to negotiate funding allocations with development partners. Addressing the funding disparity and establishing dedicated administrative support offices within the Ministry of Health is vital to enhancing operational efficiency and stability.

### **Trainee's Limited Funding:**

An increase in applicants for the surgical training program has highlighted financial barriers due to limited funding and a scarcity of scholarships, leaving approximately 45% of qualified candidates unable to enroll. This financial strain restricts the College's ability to expand its services and improve accessibility to surgical care. To address this, the Ministries of Health and Education are encouraged to collaborate in implementing government scholarship programs.

### **Training Content:**

The lack of training content for certain specialties is hindering trainees' access to essential resources and up-to-date educational material, negatively impacting skill acquisition and training outcomes. It is crucial to address this deficiency to maintain high standards in medical education. Currently, there are limited learning resources for various FCS specialties, including Orthopaedics, Neurosurgery, General Surgery, ENT, Cardiothoracics, and Paediatric Orthopaedics.

## TRAINEES & FELLOWS



**910**

SPECIALIST SURGEONS  
SUCCESSFULLY  
GRADUATED

**1261**

SURGEONS CURRENTLY  
IN TRAINING

### FEMALES



**165+**

GRADUATED  
FEMALE  
SURGEONS

**24%**

FEMALE IN  
TRAINING

ESTABLISHED WOMEN IN SURGERY  
AFRICA ASSOCIATION (WiSA)

## TRAINERS



**904**  
OVERALL

**77**  
MASTER  
TRAINERS

ESTABLISHED  
COURT OF EXAMINERS



INTERNATIONALLY  
RECOGNISED



**92%**

RETENTION OF SURGEONS IN  
COUNTRY OF TRAINING

## OPERATION LOGS



**582,135**

SURGICAL PATIENTS TREATED  
(As of October 2024)

## ADVOCACY



ESSENTIAL SURGERY IN  
AFRICA, RESULTING IN  
GREATER LEVELS OF  
INVESTMENT

## PUBLICATIONS



**63**

PUBLISHED  
ECAJS  
ISSUES

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD



REGISTERED WITH UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN  
SERVICE

## TRAINING SITES



**144**

ACCREDITED  
HOSPITALS

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



SHORT  
COURSES  
ORGANIZED  
REGIONALLY

## MOBILE LEARNING



“SCHOOL FOR SURGEONS”  
LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM  
BESPOKE SURGICAL ELECTRONIC  
LOGBOOK



**25**

YEARS IN  
OPERATION

## SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

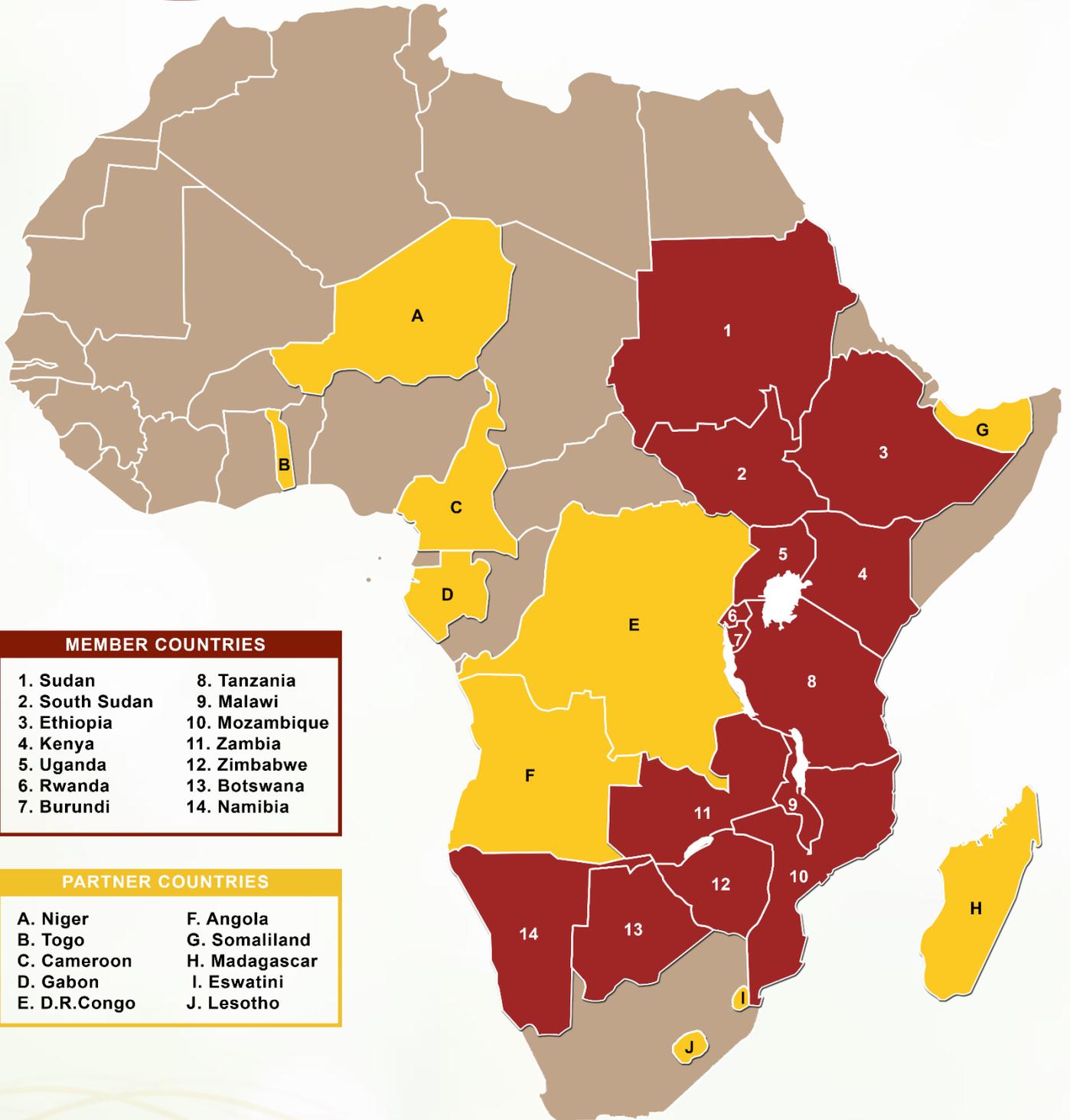
ANNUAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCIENTIFIC  
CONFERENCE





# COSECSA

College of Surgeons of  
East, Central and Southern Africa





## CONTACT COSECSA

**The College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA)**

**157 Olorien, Njiro Road ECSA-HC P.O. Box 1009, Arusha, Tanzania.**

**Tel:** +255 27 254 9362 / 5

**Fax:** +255 27 254 9324 / 92

**Email:** [info@cosecsa.org](mailto:info@cosecsa.org)

**Web:** [www.cosecsa.org](http://www.cosecsa.org)

**X:** @cosecsa

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/school/cosecsa/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/COSECSA-1476132912684891/>