

COSECSA & CANECSA

Newsletter



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Welcome from Melini Baruth – Senior Director, Global Medical Education

There is much to look back at the end of another productive year, during which time our COSECSA and CANECSA fellows have continued their studies, faced exams and joined Operation Smile's programs throughout the region and beyond.

Congratulations to the MCS residents for passing their exams and wishing them great success as they embark on the next part of their journey, the three year FCS – Plastic Surgery Program.

It is always a pleasure to meet and spend time with our fantastic residents, surgeons and educators. I have loved the many insightful conversations I have shared with so many of you over the past 12 months.

I look forward to another action-packed year and following your journeys as you continue your education and service to your local communities.

Wishing you all a very happy holiday season, and a healthy and successful 2024.

Melini Baruth

A Warm Welcome to our New Sponsored Trainees



Dr Imran Sherman

Dr Imran Sherman is a second year COSECSA Plastic Surgery Fellowship student from Mombasa, located in the coastal region of Kenya. He is currently stationed in Kampala, Uganda. He is expected to complete his FCS - Plastic exams in December 2024. Dr Sherman has a special interest in cleft care and trauma reconstruction and establishing accessible plastic surgery services across the coast of Kenya. He aspires to be a COSECSA surgical trainer and researcher.

Fun Fact: Dr Sherman enjoys martial arts and online strategy games.



Dr Oscar Nyamunyamu Sumba

Dr Oscar Nyamunyamu Sumba is a second year COSECSA Plastic Surgery Fellowship student from Kakamega, western Kenya. He is currently stationed at Kirru National Hospital in Kampala, Uganda. He is expected to complete FCS - Plastic Surgery exams in 2024. He has a keen interest in cleft, craniofacial and hand surgeries. He is motivated by the opportunity to change patients' lives and intends to practice and serve his community in Kakamega upon completing the training program.

Fun Fact: Art has a special place in Dr Sumba's life, whether written, performed or on canvas. His musings also lead him into an abyss of African poetry, and he has been writing for several years now. He dreams of publishing his poetry in the future and passing on some African traditions.



Dr Biswal Yango

Dr Biswal Yango is from Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. He is currently doing his second year FCS Plastic Surgery at ALERT hospital in Ethiopia. He is expected to complete FCS - Plastic Surgery exams in 2024. His passion for plastic and reconstructive surgery started when he was in the second year of his residency and realised that there is a huge gap in plastic surgery services in Tanzania, apart from the few providers stationed at Muhimbili National Hospital. At the time there was no accredited plastic surgery training centre in Tanzania, so Dr Yango was advised to train in Ethiopia through the COSECSA FCS - Plastic Surgery Program.

Fun fact: In his native language, his name means a shy person.

Meet the nine new CANECSA trainees sponsored by Operation Smile



Dr Mwenecho Chiweta

Dr Mwenecho Chiweta is a Malawian who completed a Bachelors in Medicine and Surgery at Kamuzu University of Health Sciences in Malawi. He is currently training at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre, Malawi. His dream is to be part of the team that trains more anaesthesiologist specialists to strengthen Malawi's health system.

Fun fact: Dr Chiweta plays three musical instruments; guitar, piano and drums. He perfected his skills over the years by joining a band created by friends.



Dr Bokosi Mayamiko

Dr Bokosi Mayamiko is from Malawi and graduated from Kamuzu University of Health Sciences. She has always had a passion in anaesthesia and serving patients in her community.

Fun fact: Dr Mayamiko loves dancing and watching cookery videos.



Dr Julita Kathumba

Dr Julita Kathumba is a Malawian, currently based at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre. She is so excited to be training as she knows that in Malawi there are insufficient anaesthesiologists and sometimes theatre lists are cancelled due to this. She has joined this training program to help make a difference to the country's health system and the lives of patient. Her passion lies with the critical care component and she always feels so delighted seeing patients as they are restored to health after being in the ICU.

Fun fact: She cried a lot when hurt as a child and does not like to see someone feel pain, hence her love for anaesthesia.



Dr Sidonie Soki

Dr Sidonie Soki is Congolese and completed her bachelor in Medicine and Surgery at the Free University of Great Lakes in Goma, DRC. She is currently training in the department of anaesthesiology and resuscitation at the University clinic of Kinshasa. She chose this opportunity to increase the number of anaesthesiologists in her hometown, where currently there are only two. She is excited to be a small part of the solution to this problem.



Dr Amos Sicali

Dr Amos Sicali is from Malawi and is currently in the first year of the CANECSA training program at the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Bantyre. He completed his medical degree at the Kamuzu University of Health Sciences and chose this opportunity because he saw a gap in anaesthesia provision in his country. He would like to make a difference, serve his community and aspires to become a trainer to pass on his skills and knowledge to others.



Dr Falanga Pitchou

Dr Falanga Pitchou is Congolese and completed his medical degree at the University of Kinshasa before starting the anaesthesia training program there. He chose this opportunity because in the province of Kwilu there is not even a single anaesthesia specialist. During and after his training he hopes to save many lives through his service. He plans to join Operation Smile as a volunteer in the future.



Dr Muriel Mpaka

Dr Muriel Mpaka is from the DRC and became a doctor in 2018. She works at the Evangelical Medical Institute of Kimpese Hospital in the province of Kongo Central. Currently there is no trained anaesthesiologist at her hospital so she is thrilled to be a recipient of the Operation Smile scholarship and to pursue the CANECSA training program.



Dr Ivan Pascal

Dr Ivan Pascal is from Goma in the east of the DRC and graduated with his medical degree in 2018. He has recently moved to Kinshasa to pursue the training program at the University of Kinshasa training hospital (Cliniques Universitaires de Kinshasa). Dr Pascal is happy to be part of this program due to the scarcity of anaesthesia and critical care specialists in his region and shared that although anaesthesia competency is pivotal for safe surgery, opportunities for such training are rare and costly. He states that this opportunity with CANECSA comes as a timely solution to address this problem and he hopes to make the best of this opportunity.

Fun fact: Dr Pascal loves dogs and is a tennis enthusiast. When he was a child he dreamt of being a pilot and later a doctor and gets the feeling of both worlds while practising anaesthesia.



Dr Masambu Bin Kaiv

Dr Masambu Bin Kaiv is a Congolese from Kolwezi, Lualaba province. He graduated from the University of Lubumbashi (MBChB) in 2012 and worked for many years as a general practitioner. He believes that the lack of anaesthesiologists is an evident problem in many regions but worse in his, which has just one for a population estimated at 2.5 million people. Dr Kaiv is so excited to be on this journey and to positively change things by not only increasing the number of anaesthesiologists but also to contribute to standard practice for patients safety. He says that this will be the best way for him shine his light for the region.

Dr Hellina Legese Shares Some Education Experiences as a Cleft Surgery Scholarship Recipient

My name is Hellina Legesse Mamo and I am a plastic and reconstructive surgeon working in ALERT Comprehensive Specialized Hospital located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I am currently on the first year of my fellowship with Operation Smile and the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) - Cleft Surgery Training Program (CSTP).



I had the opportunity to participate on my first local and regional cleft surgery campaigns conducted by Operation Smile in the months of August and September 2023.

Both campaigns were great opportunities to learn from many experienced cleft surgeons from across Africa and throughout the world. It was also a significant milestone in the training program and an opportunity for us young plastic surgeons to pick their brains on cleft related topics. We had many rich, interesting discussions. It was also wonderful to see the fruits of the Operation Smile/COSECSA partnership and their mutual commitment to advancing cleft care in Africa.

Site 1 - Jimma University Medical Centre (JUMC) - Jimma, Ethiopia

My first campaign experience took me to Jimma University Medical Centre (JUMC), located in Jimma (also known as the birthplace of coffee), some 355km from the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. I had the opportunity to train under Dr Mark Solomon Mlamba, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon from Kenya, Dr Zenebe Teklu, a general and plastic and reconstructive surgeon from Ethiopi, and Dr Nebyat Abadi, an Ethiopian plastic and reconstructive surgeon.

The first day at JUMC was screening day, where we evaluated 36 patients requiring cleft surgery. Of these 24 were approved to undergo surgery, which took place over four days on two tables. During this time we were able to learn different techniques of primary cleft lip and palate repair from all of our mentors, and were also able to operate solo under their supervision. All the local staff in the operation theatre were extremely welcoming and supportive and made our stay enjoyable and worthwhile.

Site 2 - Chirurgicale Hôpital Université Joseph Ravoahangy Andrianavalona) (CHU-HJRA) - Madagascar

The second cleft surgery campaign I was part of was conducted in CHU-HJRA, the largest hospital in Madagascar found the capital city Antananarivo. I had the chance to work with CSTP educators Dr Mamy

Lalatiana Andriamanarivo (plastic and reconstructive surgeon- Madagascar) and Dr David Chong (plastic and reconstructive surgeon- Australia) and Operation Smile volunteers Dr Omri Emodi (oral and maxillofacial surgeon - Israel), Dr Zach Sharony (plastic and reconstructive surgeon - Israel)and Dr Gertuida van Niekerk (plastic and reconstructive surgeon - South Africa). I was working with fellow CSTP trainees Dr Joëlle Horace and Dr Jacques Adrien Ramangason. We had 2 screening days where we triaged more than 200 patients before operating on 120 over four days.

I had the opportunity to operate alongside each surgeon and learnt different techniques of repair for both primary and secondary clefts. I had the opportunity to assist and learn from Dr Chong on tips and tricks in anatomic repair techniques for cleft lips and the use of local flaps to repair palatal fistula was well demonstrated by Dr Andriamanarivo. We had long but enjoyable days of surgery with one-to-one time with each surgeon to observe different techniques of cleft lip and palate repair and I was able to operate on patients independently using the knowledge and skills they passed on.

Despite the difference in number of surgeries performed, the surgical campaigns in both centres were well organised and my appreciation goes out to program coordinators in Ethiopia and Madagascar and their teams. Being exposed to these campaigns helped me to explore ways I can enhance my knowledge and skills regarding cleft surgery, and it was a great opportunity to interact and make friends with professionals from different parts of the world.

It was also a proud moment for me to work alongside so many female cleft surgeons. This program undoubtedly paves the way for many upcoming female surgeons interested in managing cleft lip and palate repair for years to come. Overall, both campaigns have been productive elements of the CSTP program and I look forward to similar opportunities to help us advance cleft care in our countries and across our continent.

Dr Metasebia – Gaining Valuable Work Experience in India

I am a plastic and reconstructive surgeon at St Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I visited Bangalore, India, in October 2023 where I had the privilege of participating in a five-day Operation Smile short-term surgical program (STSP) with Dr Krishna Shama Rao and his team from BGS Hospital and Medical College.

During the program I witnessed a variety of cases, ranging from primary cleft lip and palate surgeries to revision surgeries and fistula closures. This short and intense exposure to numerous cases, along with the opportunity to assist and observe many surgeons, significantly contributed to refining my knowledge and skills. Despite having performed several cleft surgeries before, observing another surgeon operating on a case proved



to be a unique learning opportunity. This experience allowed me to pick up valuable tips and tricks to further refine and sharpen my skills.

My participation in the Operation Smile trip in Bangalore fulfilled its purpose by offering me the chance to see and learn from the many cases operated on, as well as to meet and network with exceptional surgeons.

I highly recommend anyone interested in learning cleft surgery to join this team of surgeons, as they serve as outstanding mentors and individuals.

I eagerly anticipate the possibility of seeing and working with the BGS team again in the future, should I be fortunate enough to have such an opportunity.



My Resident Experience – Dr Victoire Mukamitari

It is a great honour and privilege to share my resident experience for the current academic year, which began in January 2023. In my previous report, I detailed my experiences during Year 1 and Year 2 up to June.

Starting from July, I resumed my rotations in general surgery. I had the privilege of working on various cases, and I even had the opportunity to perform some procedures myself under supervision. During the same month, Rwanda's Plastic Surgery Department had the privilege of hosting visiting professors from the American College of Surgeons, primarily focused on cosmetic surgery. It was an incredible experience as we worked on a variety of cases, including abdominoplasty, breast reduction, and liposuction.

At the end of the month, I participated in a research proposal competition organized by the NIHR Global Health Research Unit on Global Surgery and emerged as the winner, securing a grant for my project.

In September I resumed my rotation in plastic surgery and had the opportunity to participate in a community outreach program organized by Operation Smile Rwanda in the Eastern Province, where we were delighted to welcome Operation Smile co-founder and CEO Kathy Magee. Mid-September brought a flap dissection course on cadavers in the Southern Province, which was incredibly informative.

I cannot conclude without expressing my deepest gratitude to Operation Smile for their consistent support in facilitating our learning journey.

DR MAADOT WOLDETINSAE - THE SMILE I WILL NEVER FORGET



As a young surgeon I have had the privilege of witnessing countless transformations – the healing of wounds, the restoration of function, the rekindling of hope. But amidst the many remarkable cases I have encountered one recent surgery stands out, not just for its medical significance but also for the profound emotional impact it has left on me. It was the day I performed my first cleft lip surgery.

Cleft lip, a congenital condition that causes a separation in the upper lip, is a relatively common birth defect affecting one in 700 newborns worldwide. While it may not be life-threatening, it can have a significant impact on a child's self-esteem and social interactions. The surgery to repair a cleft lip, though technically complex, is often life-changing, restoring a child's natural smile and transforming their self-perception.

As I prepared for the surgery, a mix of anticipation and nervousness filled the air. The patient was barely a year old, his small face marked by a distinctive cleft. His parents, eyes clouded with concern, held onto their son tightly, their hearts filled with a mixture of hope and trepidation.



I can still recall the anticipation that filled me as I stepped into the operating room, ready to embark on this delicate and life-changing procedure. I took a deep breath, my hands trembling slightly as I reached for my surgical instruments. I knew that this was no ordinary operation; it was an opportunity to give a child a chance to experience the joy of a full, unimpeded smile.

As I began to work, I was struck by the precision with which each incision had to be made, and each suture had to be placed. The time passed almost unnoticed, my focus solely on the task at hand. With each incision and stitch, I felt a sense of responsibility, not just to the boy but also to his parents and the countless others who carry the burden of cleft lip. I knew that my actions held the power to transform not just a child's face but also his life's trajectory. Finally, with a final stitch, the procedure was complete. I stepped back, my heart pounding with anticipation as I removed the surgical drapes.

In that moment, I was overwhelmed by a surge of emotion. I had not just performed a surgery; I had restored a child's smile, renewed the hope of his parents, and played a small part in shaping his future. The sentimental weight of that experience has stayed with me ever since, reminding me of the profound impact that surgeons have on the lives of their patients.

Cleft lip surgery may be a routine procedure for many surgeons, but it will always hold a special place in my heart. It was a moment of pure transformation, a reminder of the power of medicine to heal and uplift. As I continue my journey as a surgeon, I carry with me the memory of the boy's first smile, a beacon of hope that inspires me to make a difference in the lives of others.



Dr. Getaw Alamnie – My Experience of an Educational Exchange in Pakistan

My name is Dr Getaw Alamnie and I am a plastic and reconstructive surgeon working as an assistant professor in the Department of Surgery at Addis Ababa University. I have also been a fellow and member of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) since December 2021.

In December 2022 I had the opportunity to attend the 1st International comprehensive cleft care conference in Marrakech, Morocco through which I met world class surgeon Professor Ghulam Qadir Fayyaz and got to know about his work at CLAPP Hospital. I was both a little nervous and incredibly happy with I was then given the opportunity to spend a month at CLAPP Hospital in Pakistan by Operation Smile through their educational exchange program.

During the first week at CLAPP I observed 17 surgeries with a variety of diagnosis including primary cleft lip and palate repairs, simple to complex palatal fistula closures and speech surgeries mainly comprised of pharyngeal flaps, which was not something I had been exposed to much before.

During the second week I was invited to join a surgical campaign in the historic city of Multan, some 340km away from Lahore at ALKHIDMAT hospital. We had the pleasure of being part of the wonderful CLAPP hospital team, which provided over 250 surgeries in just four days.

This time I had the opportunity to observe, assist and perform many cleft lip and palate surgeries. My focus was mainly on primary cleft palate surgeries, revisions and palatal fistula closure and speech surgeries. I was involved in over 120 surgeries, either as a participant or an observer.

At the surgical campaign I saw a team that worked like no other, with unmatched coordination and speed while maintaining quality and safety.

The team consisted of medical officers, logistic suppliers and organizers, speech pathologists, ward nurses, anesthesia providers, post-op patient follow-up and

monitoring personnel, wonderful OT scrub nurses and surgeons.

The team's dedication, coordination and speed in executing their job while maintaining safety and quality is just beyond words and left me speechless. Everyone in the team knows what they are doing, and I believe this is something that comes with years of experience and above all everyone being accepting and supportive with kind hearts.

It was easy for me to blend in with the team in such short period of time and it felt as if I have known them all for years. Along with the surgical experience I got from the camp I had the opportunity to see rural Pakistan, the wonderful road system they have built, the evergreen villages and amazing irrigation canals all the way from Lahore to Multan. The temperature in Multan reached 45 degree centigrade but the experience I got was worth it.

During my time at CLAPP Hospital not only did I gain hands-on experience in cleft surgery, but I also gained an understanding of how to build a comprehensive cleft care team and how teamwork can impact and improve cleft delivery.

I am indebted to Prof Fayyaz for his dedication and commitment in teaching us, the guidance he provides us and the generosity he showed us to make our stay so worthwhile and enjoyable.

Finally I would like to thank Operation Smile, particularly Melini Baruth and Daniel Bradley for their continuous follow-up and making sure everything was running smoothly, and COSECSA for supporting my journey through this wonderful opportunity.

BRIGHT WASAMBO MWAFULIRWA - MY ACADEMIC JOURNEY



My name is Bright Wasambo Mwafuliwa, I am a senior plastic surgery resident at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Malawi.

My journey into plastic surgery began when I was an undergraduate in 2017. I was in my final year of medical school and we were doing rounds in the burns unit. We saw large wounds that made us cringe and wonder if they were going to heal. We were then taken to another ward where we saw post-op patients who had similar burn wounds and had been skin grafted; the change was unbelievable! Later on as an intern medical officer I saw how surgery could transform a cleft lip and cleft palate, and this was all I needed to convince me to pursue plastics.

I started my surgical training in 2021 after declining two job offers to work in district hospitals because I was so convinced that all I wanted to do was plastic surgery. I had no financial support, not only for my fees but even my daily expenses. I was introduced to operation smile Malawi who started funding my education and made my dream a reality.

My residency has been immensely enriched by the invaluable experiences, hard work and the guidance of exceptional mentors I have known. I recall the milestones of learning how to suture and hold instruments with precision; making the incision and being left to close up the patient; performing my first appendectomy and now leading on a cleft lip/palate repair, of course under the watchful guidance of my esteemed consultants.

After passing my MCS in 2022 I transitioned into my first year of FCS. The advanced training and exposure to more plastic surgery cases has pushed the boundaries of my knowledge and skills. I have the privilege of working alongside seasoned professionals whose expertise has been both inspiring and instructive. The support and mentorship provided by Dr Tilinde Chokotho and Dr Daniel Getachew have been invaluable, allowing me to navigate complex cases with confidence and contribute meaningfully to patient care.

In addition to my clinical pursuits, I have actively engaged in mentorship roles. I take pride in mentoring junior plastic surgery residents for the 2022 exams, passing on the knowledge and skills I have acquired and fostering an environment of shared learning and growth.

I am enthusiastic about the future challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, and I am grateful for all the support from my mentors that has paved the way for my growth. I look forward to the possibility of contributing my passion, skills and experiences to the broader landscape of plastic surgery.



Building the Next Generation of Plastic Surgeons in Africa

Operation Smile/COSECSA Cleft Lip and Palate Workshop, Kijabe, Kenya - Dr Imran Sherman, Dr Biswalo Yango & Dr Oscar Nyamunyamu



On November 12th 2023, young COSECSA plastic surgery trainees from eight different countries arrived at CURE Kijabe Hospital. Nestled in the evergreen walls of the Great Rift Valley, the hospital was to be the training site for the second part of the Operation Smile/COSECSA cleft lip and palate training course. Previously, the same group had met in Nairobi for a week-long didactic session that covered cleft surgery as well as research modules.

The week at CURE Kijabe was educational, inspirational and motivating. Fourteen plastic surgery trainees of varying levels of competencies were systematically trained on the operative techniques of cleft lip and palate. The first day was divided into an introductory phase of lectures and orientation whilst the afternoon was spent in the operating theatre. The hospital is a pearl of surgical excellence and professionalism sitting in the most rural of areas. The staff were welcoming and quick to adapt to our needs.

The next three days were spent mostly in the operating theatre where residents and their trainers took turns performing a variety of operations. From unilateral cleft lip repair to the

revision of palatal fistulas, the trainees saw, assisted and gained hands-on experience. This experience really built trainees confidence, decision-making and dexterity in regard to these procedures.

Every morning and evening the group had briefing sessions that included cleft related lectures as well as research projects. In part one of the Operation Smile Training course held in Nairobi, Dr Peter Nthumba tasked the trainees with research initiatives. In this session, the trainees showed how they applied what was learnt previously and shared project progression updates. It was motivating to witness and hear about peers' collaboration across borders to develop unique and relevant projects. Research training can often be dull, but Dr Nthumba has devised a high energy formula on how to keep trainees interested, engaged and passionate.

From assessing the knowledge of different cadres of maternity professionals in cleft care, to the challenges facing young researchers in our speciality, the diversity of ideas and solutions were exciting and refreshing. By the end of the week the trainees had ideas, proposals and goals in our respective projects. Research is not

an optional aspect of our surgical development and we will strive to share and collaborate with each other as well as the wider scientific community.

We all also appreciate the efforts of Dr. Baraki Atikaltie, who thoroughly covering all the scientific and technical aspects in his lecture series. In addition to his vast experience, he proved to be a great teacher and an excellent orator. Most notably, we enjoyed learning about the history of cleft surgery from its humble beginnings as well a lecture on art and science photography in plastic surgery. A great deal of time was spent discussing comprehensive cleft care and how to assemble a multi-disciplinary team. It has been made clear to us that the cleft surgeon of the future has to be more than just a surgeon. They must be an advocate, a team leader, a counsellor and an academic.

Dr Yegeremu Kebede was instrumental in keeping our nerves in check as we made our first attempts at these operations. We appreciate his calm and reassuring nature, in and outside of the OR. Throughout the week he spent a lot of time giving us valuable advice in regards to career progression,



teamwork and personal development. He brought a strong low pressure-high learning aura with him and this pushed all of us to achieve our goals.

The final day of our course was spent presenting our research as well as a short exercise on public speaking. We were tasked to develop three-minute presentations with an emphasis on presentation skills rather than scientific acumen. It was a great team building exercise as we shared laughs and compliments with each other.

A special thanks to the team at Kijabe Motel for accommodating us. They kept us warm and fed through out the week and were flexible to address our concerns.

In conclusion, the partnership of COSECSA and Operation Smile which provides us with this cleft lip and palate training is greatly appreciated and highly valued. We learned and practised principles of cleft surgery, we became better researchers and most importantly, we built strong connections with peers from different countries.

The true stars of the show were the trainers. They excellently fulfilled their roles and their open-door policy towards us was felt at every moment. We strongly believe that the bonds forged in such an exercise will ripple through the coming years.

A big thank you to Operation Smile and COSECSA for tailoring the event to our needs and aspirations. We couldn't have scripted it better ourselves. Thanks to Linda from COSECSA for excellently orchestrating the five-day course. We hope to use what we have learnt to become better surgeons. These inspiring moments has enabled us to leap to new heights.



New Agreement Signed Between Operation Smile and COSECSA

A stronger partnership and more collaboration between Operation Smile and COSECSA has been forged, as Dr Elizabeth Cote, Vice President of Global Medical Education from Operation Smile and the President of COSECSA, Dr Jane Fualal Odubu signed a new agreement.

This new agreement will fund the training of sixteen plastic surgeons in sub-Saharan Africa over the next five years. The continuation of this partnership provides educational advancement to these surgeons, helping us to reach more patients and strengthen the health systems we work in.

This partnership will help ensure the growth of our global health network and empower the next generation of providers to deliver world class care to patients across the communities they serve.

Congratulations to the newest COSECSA graduates in FCS – Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery, Dr Zebiba Meka and Dr Brhane Biedom from Ethiopia.





A Holiday Message from Karen Jaques, Regional Senior Vice President for sub-Saharan Africa



At the end of another busy year I wanted to thank you, our wonderful COSECSA and CANECSA fellows, for all of your hard work and dedication over the past twelve months. It is a key organizational focus to increase surgical and anesthesia capacity within the countries in which we work, a goal you are all at the forefront of. So many of you have also joined many of our surgical and non-surgical programs as you work towards your fellowships- this is something we do not take for granted and are incredibly grateful for.

I hope you are able to spend some time relaxing with friends and family over the holiday period, and wish you well for 2024. May it be a good year for us all.

Karen