

Helina

Helina could not take place in Tanzania in 2006 because of difficulties the Tanzanians had in setting up their National Society. They are waiting on their government decision as to the extent to which it will help set up the Tanzanian Health Informatics Association and otherwise support their effort.

Mali in the meantime got their Society off the ground spearheaded by Dr A Koita and the Malians offered to host Helina in Bamako in January 2007. This offer has been accepted and the Tanzanians have agreed to this with the understanding that they will be given a chance to host Helina in the future when they have managed to establish their Society.

Helina 2007 Conference - Bamako, Mali Helina Reconstituted

The IMIA National member for Mali, SOMIBS, Société Malienne d'Informatique Médicale, Biomédicale et de Santé and the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) organized Helina 2007 – a combination of a long –standing (12th Edition) Franco-phone Health Informatics Conference,

JFIM, and an IMIA “*Special Topic Conference*” on the topic “E-Health in Africa”. The conferences were held in Bamako, Mali January 9th– 12, 2007. The International Organizing Committee represented some 15 African countries in addition to members from Europe and the Americas.

IMIA’s “*Special Topic Conference*” (January 9th and 10th, 2007) in Bamako, aiming to bring together the medical informatics community around the World on the topic “E-Health in Africa”. JFIM (January 11th & 12th 2007) provided attendees with a high quality concurrent session and workshop schedule, focused on improving health professionals and students achievement.

Delegates came from Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe as well as from Canada, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Finland and USA. Prof. Reinhold Haux and Prof. Antoine Geissbuhler represented the IMIA Board.

Papers are available on the Helina 2007 website <http://www.sim.hcuge.ch/helina/list.htm>.

During the conference a meeting of the African Region took place and the African Region as a region of IMIA was formally constituted. HELINA standing for Health Informatics in Africa was adopted as the name of the Africa Region. A constitution was crafted and will be formally adopted possibly by e-vote process. Officers of the Region were elected: Dr Sedick Isaacs from South Africa was elected President, Dr Amadou Koita from Mali as the vice President, Dr Isaacs assisted by Ghislain Tchuitcheu from Cameroon will serve as the Africa representative at the IMIA Board and Brenda Faye from South Africa agreed to serve as the Treasurer.

Two interest groups were identified by the meeting: Education Working Group and a Collaboration Working Group. The meeting agreed to have the next Helina Conference in the Ivory Coast in 2009.

Regional Editor

Dr S. Isaacs,
Africa Regional President
15 Third Avenue
Crawford 7789
R. of S. Africa
E-Mail: sisacs@telkomsa.net