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Trip Report

Participation in the 8th Regional ECOSA Nutrition Experts Committee Meeting

Windhoek, Namibia: January 28-February 4, 1996

Ellen G. Piwoz, Sc.D.
SANA Project Director

**Participation in the 8th Regional ECSA Nutrition Experts
Committee Meeting**

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Background

From January 28 to February 4, 1996, Dr. Ellen G. Piwoz attended the 8th Regional Nutrition Experts Committee Meeting of the Nutrition Network for East, Central, and Southern Africa (ECSA) held in Windhoek, Namibia. Dr. Piwoz was invited to attend the meeting as an observer. The theme of this year's meeting was making nutrition programs more effective through program-related research and training. The priorities identified during the meeting will influence decisions concerning the activities to support under the Sustainable Approaches to Nutrition in Africa (SANA) Project.

Meeting Objectives

The meeting was attended by ECSA nutrition focal persons, and representatives of nutrition training and research institutions from 11 countries in the region. Representatives from UNICEF, the World Bank, and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) were also present at the meeting. A list of participants is found in Appendix A.

The stated objectives of the meeting were to:

- ♦ counteract the feeling of isolation experienced by the region's nutritionists;
- ♦ facilitate sharing and exchange of experiences on focused food and nutrition issues;
- ♦ promote a regional response to common food and nutrition problems; and
- ♦ find mechanisms for making training and research better tools for effective nutrition programming.

The expected outcomes of the meeting were to identify:

- ♦ regional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating training and research activities;
 - ♦ primary windows of opportunity for strengthening nutrition training and research;
 - ♦ a plan of action for a group of countries to conduct training and research that is program-driven;
 - ♦ mechanisms to support research and training to boost particular programs;
 - ♦ ways to proceed with nutrition program constraints assessments that are relevant to ECSA's emphasis on capacity building; and
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Training and Research Priorities

- ♦ ways to operationalize the results of the ECSA training and research needs assessment.

The detailed agenda for the meeting is found in Appendix B.

Training and Research Priorities

After a series of plenary sessions, the meeting participants divided into four working groups to identify priority activities for regional action:

1. pre-service training;
2. in-service training;
3. research; and
4. human resource development.

Pre-service Training

The participants agreed that the primary nutrition problems affecting the region are protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, although some countries such as Seychelles and Botswana are affected by nutrition-related chronic diseases. The region offers nutrition training at the diploma, bachelor of science, and post-graduate level. Most nutrition training at the graduate and post-graduate level takes place within Departments of Home Economics placed within Schools of Agriculture.

The priority actions that were identified for the region:

1. Countries will collect curricula and catalogue the courses being offered in their country (by April 1996).
2. Each county will send this information to the ECSA Health Secretariat (by May 1996).
3. ECSA will organize a regional meeting to review the material so as to identify core competencies and harmonize nutrition training in the region (by August 1996).

In-service Training

The in-service training working group recommended nine areas for regional training. The top four are described below:

1. Development of a regional training of trainers (TOT) course on program management and planning, with a package that can be implemented at the national level.

- ♦ Tanzania Food and Nutrition Center will be the lead institution;
 - ♦ a consultant will be hired to develop the course proposal;
 - ♦ ECSA and the training sub-committee will review the proposal;
 - ♦ resources to implement the proposal will be mobilized;
 - ♦ the course will be offered regionally and nationally in June/July 1997.
2. Development of a regional TOT course on program monitoring and evaluation.
- ♦ Bunda College (Malawi) and the Applied Nutrition Programme (ANP) at the University of Nairobi would be the lead institutions;
 - ♦ the approach is similar to the one stated above;
 - ♦ outside input from Cornell University, the International Food Policy and Research Institute (IFPRI), and the International Agricultural Center at Wageningen University will be sought.
3. ECSA participation in the newly developed SADC course on nutrition policy formulation and analysis.
- ♦ resources will be mobilized for non-SADC ECSA countries to participate (Kenya, Uganda, Seychelles) in this course scheduled for 1996.
4. Develop a regional TOT course on how to develop training materials.
- ♦ the approach is the same as in 1., above.
 - ♦ potential collaborators include TFNC, ANP, the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), and University of Natal (Adult Education Program).
 - ♦ activities would be coordinated with the ECSA Information Dissemination Program.

Other areas identified for regional training include:

- 5. diet-related chronic diseases;
 - 6. laboratory analysis skills;
 - 7. nutrition epidemiology;
 - 8. disaster preparedness; and
-

Research

9. food safety and quality control.

Research

The major research priorities identified were:

- ♦ micronutrient-related research;
- ♦ food security research;
- ♦ HIV/AIDS;
- ♦ food security indicators;
- ♦ cost-effectiveness of programs to reduce mild-to-moderate malnutrition;
and
- ♦ policy analysis.

In terms of follow-up activities, the group recommended the following:

- ♦ ECSA's national "Focal points" complete an inventory of regional expertise in different areas (by April 1996).
- ♦ "Focal points" draft letters of intent describing areas where research is desired (by July 1996).
- ♦ The ECSA Secretariat facilitates a multi-center approach to protocol development and review of protocols.
- ♦ The ECSA Secretariat facilitates development of an ethical review plan.

Human Resource Development

This working group identified the need to define who is considered a nutritionist in the region, and initiate the process for developing human resource development plans in ECSA member countries.

A summary of the meeting's conclusions is found in Appendix C.

Next Steps

A number of priority activities for program-driven training and research were identified during the meeting but a coordinating institution and mechanisms for follow-up were not identified. It was agreed that SANA would be in touch with the UNICEF Re-

gional Office (Dr. Festo Kavishe) and with the ECSA Health Secretariat by the end of March 1996 to identify mechanisms and specific activities for follow-up and support.

Appendix A: ECSA Nutrition Experts Committee Meeting List of Participants

List of Participants

Botswana:

Mr. Kesitegile Gabotswang
Research Fellow
National Institute of Development
Research and Documentation
University of Botswana
Private Bag 0022
Gaborone. Botswana
Tel: 00267 356364
Fax: 00267 357573
Home Address:
P.O. Box 50380, Gaborone. Botswana
Tel: 00267 308363

Ms. Segametsi Ditshebo Maruapula
Chief Nutritionist
Food and Nutrition Unit
Ministry of Health
P.O. Box 992
Gaborone. Botswana
Tel: 00267 353561 Direct 301905
Fax: 00267 302092
E-Mail: Smaruapula@bot.healthnet.org
Home Address:
P.O. Box 20985
Gaborone. Botswana
Tel: 00267 372319

Mr. Jerry Kutlwano J. Makhanda
Assistant Lecturer (Nutrition)
Institute of Health Sciences
P.O. Box 985
Gaborone. Botswana
Tel: 00267 353033
Fax: 00267 300935
Home Address:
P.O. Box 1249
Francistown
Botswana

x
1

Kenya

Evaline Cheptoo Irongi
Food and Nutrition Planning Unit
Economist
Office of the Vice President and
Ministry of Planning and National Development
P.O. Box 30005
Nairobi.
Tel: 02 338111

Dr. David L. Mwaniki
Ag. Director MRC
Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI)
P.O. Box 20752, Nairobi
Tel.: 254 2 725016/7/8
Fax: 254 2 725012
E-mail: Dmwaniki.kemri@ken.healthnet.org.

Rahab Muthoni Waweru
Appropriate Technology Officer
Ministry of Agriculture Home
Economic Branch
P.O. Box 30028
Nairobi.
Tel: 254 2 718870
Home Address:
c/o David Njoroge
P.O. Box 43561
Nairobi

Malawi

Ms. R.B. Ayode
Principal Food and Nutrition Officer
Food and Nutrition Unit
Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock Development
P.O. Box 30134
Lilongwe 3
Tel: 265-780213
Fax: 265-784915
Home Address:
Tel: 265-731295

Dr. Beatrice M. Mtimuni
Associate Professor in Human Nutrition
University of Malawi, Bunda College
of Agriculture
P.O. Box 219
Lilongwe
Tel: 265 277 222
Fax: 265 277251/364
Home Address:
Tel. 265 277310

Mrs. Tomaida Msiska
Economist/Nutritionist
Ministry of Economic Planning and
Development
P.O. Box 30136
Lilongwe 3
Tel: 265 782300

Namibia

Ms. E. Shihepo
Nutrition Unit
Ministry of Health & Social Services
Private Bag 13198
Windhoek 9000
Tel: 00264 61 2032333
Fax: 00264 61 2032334

Ms. A. M. Soroses
Deputy Director
Ministry of Agriculture, Water & Rural
Development
Private Bag 13184, Robert Mugabe Avenue
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 224550
Fax: 00264 61 222974
Home Address:
23 Fritsche Street, Pioneers Park
Tel: 246366

Ms. M. Nghatanga
Deputy Director
Ministry of Health & Social Services
Private Bag 13198
Windhoek 9000
Tel: 00264 61 2032339
Fax: 00264 61 2032334
Home Address:
27 Klein Hamburg, Andries de Wet,
Avis, Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 236106

Dr. Ndapewa Hamunime
Nutrition Department
Senior Medical Officer
MOHSS, IDD Focal Person
Ministry of Health & Social Services
P.O. Box 8699
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 2032331
Fax: 00264 61 2032334
Home Address:
Perlhuhn Str No. 22,
Hochland Park, Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 241755

Ms. M. Van Wyk
Nutrition Department
Ministry of Health & Social Services
Private Bag 13198
Windhoek 9000
Tel: 00264 61 2032346
Fax: 00264 61 2032334
Home Address:
P.O. Box 3828, Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 213495

Ms. Justina-Nelago Amadhila
Senior Health Programme Administrator
Ministry of Health & Social Services
Private Bag 13198
Windhoek 9000
Tel: 00264 61 2032346
Fax: 00264 61 2032334
Home Address:
23 Traupant Street Hochland Park
Tel: 00264 61 221693

Ms. Maria Charlotte Keyter
Lecturer, University of Namibia
Private Bag 13301
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 2063640
Fax: 00264 61 2063980
Home address:
P.O. Box 2595
Tel: 00264 61 223120

Festus Jason Iifo
Sectoral Development Planner
National Planning Commission Secretariat
Private Bag 13356
Windhoek 9000
Tel: 00264 61 222 549
Fax: 00264 61 226501
Home Address:
Okureongava, ERF 810, Ongurukwena Street
Katutura
Tel: 00264 61 219200

Sofia Tauhulu Nekongo
ADO - Health
UNICEF
P.O. Box 1706
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 229270
Fax: 00264 61 224413
Home: 4 Mantz Street
Klein Windhoek
Tel: 220178

Dr. Tewabech Bishaw
Project Officer - Health
UNICEF
P.O. Box 1706
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 229220
Fax: 00264 61 224413
E-mail: tbishaw@fo.unicef.un.na
Home address:
Gervers Street #30
Ludwigdorf, Windhoek
Tel: 240161

Johanna Elizebeth Rourke
Administrator: NSFP
Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
P/Bag 13186
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 2394320
Fax: 00264 61 230932

Lydia Von krosigk
Nutritionist
Consultant
Conrad - Adenarier - foundation
P.O. Box 24727
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 223362
Fax: 00264 61 245315
Home address:
Mission Road #30
Windhoek

Maria Kasita
Development Planner
Ministry of Lands Resettlement &
Rehabilitation
Private Bag 13343
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 223306
Fax: 00264 61 228210
Home Address:
22 Palman Str, Windhoek North

Seychelles

Ms. Daniella Geraldine Larue
Senior Nutritionist
Ministry of Health
Nutrition Unit
P.O. Box 52, Victoria
Mahe.
P.O. Box 52
Victoria, Mahe
Tel: 00248 388000/388168
Fax: 00248 224792
Home Address:
Le Niole, Mahe
Tel: 00248 266966

South Africa

Salokazi Rachel Ramatsui
Nutrition Training Coordinator
Directorate of Nutrition Department of Health
Room 2412 CIVITAS Private Bag X828
Pretoria 0001
Tel: 27 12 312 0667
Fax: 27 12 323 7457
Home Address:
P.O. Box 7089
Pretoria 0001
Tel: 27 12 373 6816

Dr. Thabisile Hlatshwayo-Moleah
Deputy Director: PHC Research Unit
University of Transkei
UNITRA, Private Bag XI
Umtata 5100
Tel: 0027 471 302 2604(W)
Fax: 0027 471 23884
Home Address:
No. 22 Stanley Nelson Drive, Umtata
(0027 471 22859
E-mail: Thabi@getafix.utr.ac.za

Swaziland:

Dr. Thokozile Sibiyi
Lecturer
University of Swaziland
Tel: 00268 83021
Fax: 00268 85276
Home Address:
UNISWA
P.O. Luyengo
Tel: 00268 83298

Mrs. Christabel Motsa
Principal Home Economics Officer
Ministry of Agriculture & Cooperatives
P.O. Box 162
Mbabane
Tel: 00268 42731
Fax: 00268 44700
Home Address:
P.O. Box 2402
Mbabane
Tel: 00268 85645

Khanyisile Mabuza
Food Technologist
Malkerns Research Station
P.O. Box 4, Malkerns
Tel: 00268 83017/83220
Fax: 00268 83360
Home Address
P.O. Box 4840
Mbabane
Tel: 00268 83043

Tanzania

Dr. Godwin D. Ndossi
Director, Department of Food Science &
Nutrition
Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre
P.O. Box 977
Dar es Salaam
Tel: 255 51 29621/2/3
Fax: 255 51 44029
Telex: 41280
Home Address:
P.O. Box 22451
Dar es Salaam.

Mrs. Hidaya Missano
Principal Nutrition Training Officer
(Communication)
Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre
P.O. Box 977
Dar es Salaam
Tel: 255 51 29621/2/3
Fax: 255 51 44029
Telex: 41280
E-mail: TFNC@tan.healthnet.org.
Home Address:
P.O. Box 20698
Dar es Salaam
Tel: 74293

Dr. Kaswija Mtebe
Senior Lecturer and Head of Department
Department of Food Science and Nutrition
Sokoine University of Agriculture
P.O. Box 3006, Morogoro
Tel: 255 56 4402
Fax: 255 56 4562/3355
Telex: 55308 SUAMOTZ
Home Address:
Hse No 5, Maji Street
Tel: 255 56 3355

Mr. Benedict Jeje
Director of Nutrition Policy Plans
Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre
P.O. Box 977
Dar es Salaam
Tel: 255 51 2961/2/3
Fax: 255 51 44029
Telex: 41280
Home Address:
Box 977
Dar es Salaam.

Uganda

Mrs. Louise Sserunjogi
Nutritionist/Dietitian
Child Health and Development Centre
Makerere University
P.O. Box 7072
Kampala
Tel: 256 41 541684/530325
Fax: 256 41 531677
Home Address:
P.O. Box 22679
Kampala
Tel: 256 41 531500

Ms. Ursula Wangwe
Senior Nutritionist
Ministry of Health
P.O. Box 8
Entebbe
Tel: 256 42 21112
Fax: 256 42 21112
Home Address: McKenzie Vale - Plot 20
Kololo

Dr. F. Oriokot
Acting Head
Ministry of Health
Mulago Hospital
Mwanamugumu Nutrition Unit
P.O. Box 7051
Kampala
Tel: 256.41.530 324
Fax: 256.41.532 591

Zambia

Ms. Dorothy Namuchimba
Nutritionist
Natural Resources Development College
P.O. Box 310099
Chelston
Lusaka
Tel: 260 1 283667/283718
Home Address:
House No. 36, NRDC Residence
Tel: 00260 1 283718

Ms. Dorothy Kaputo Sikazwe
Nutritionist
National Food and Nutrition Commission
P.O. Box 32669
Lusaka
Tel: 00260 1 227803/4
Fax: 00260 1 221426
Home Address:
Insurance Village, Lloyds Court
flat I, Long Acres,
Lusaka

Ms. Mutinta Nseluke Hambayi
Nutritionist
National Food and Nutrition Commission
P.O. Box 32669
Lusaka
Tel: 00260 1 227003/4
Fax: 00260 1 221426
Home Address:
Plot No. 955, New Avondale
Tel: 00260 1 281368

Zimbabwe

Mrs. Julia Tagwireyi
Director of National Nutrition
Ministry of Health
P.O. Box 1122CY
Causeway, Harare
Tel: 00263 4 792454
Fax: 00263 4 791169
Home Address
5 DAN Judson Rd
Milton Park, Harare
Tel: 00263 4 741007

Mrs. Isabel Natsai Bhowa
Senior Nutritionist
Ministry of Health
Box CY 1122,
Causeway, Harare
Tel: 00263 4 792454
Fax: 00263 4 791169
Home Address:
26 Richwell Gardens
Richwell Avenue, P.O. Mabelreign
Harare, Tel: 00263 4 228300

Mr. M. Hakutangwi
Chief Trainig Officer
Ministry of Agriculutre,
Agritex
P.O. Box CY 639
Causeway, Harare
Zimbabwe
Tel: 00263 4 794381-7
Fax: 00263 4 730525
Telex: 22445
Home Address:
No. 11 Nuitt Road, Cranborne Park

Mr. Charles Hongoro
Medical Research Officer, (Head HSR Unit) (Economist)
Blair Research Institute,
Ministry of Health
Box CY 573
Harare.
Tel: 00263 4 792747/8
Fax: 00263 4 791169
Home Address:
14029C Zengeza 4, Chitugwiza

CRHCS/ECSA

Prof. Kihumbu Thairu
Regional Secretary
Commonwealth Regional Health
Community Secretariat
P.O. Box 1009
Arusha
Tel: 255 57 8362/3; 4105/6
Fax: 255 57 8292
E-mail: tthairu@ken.healthnet.org
Home Address:
P.O. Box 14428
Arusha. Tel: 00255 57 4230 AR

Ms. Catherine Siandwazi
Coordinator, Food and Nutrition Programme
Commonwealth Regional Health
Community Secretariat
P.O. Box 1009
Arusha
Tel: 255 57 8362/3; 4105/6
Fax: 255 57 8292
E-mail: csiandwazi@ken.healthnet.org

Mr. Lawrence Gikaru
Assistant Coordinator, Information Dissemination
Commonwealth Regional Health
Community Secretariat
P.O. Box 1009
Arusha
Tel: 255 57 8362/3; 4105/6
Fax: 255 57 8292
E-mail: lgikaru@ken.healthnet.org

**Development
Bank of South
Africa**

Dr. Milla McLachlan
Associate Director, Policy & Information
Development Bank of South Africa
P.O. Box 1234
Halfway House 1685, South Africa
Tel: 0027 11 3133144
Fax: 0027 11 3133411
E-Mail: milla@DBSA.org
Home Address:
316 Bourke Street
Muckleneuk, Pretoria 0002
Tel: 0027 12 3435727

**Ziken
International**

Dr. Mungai Lenneiye
Consultant Planner
ZI Consultants
P.O. Box UA 517
Union Avenue
Harare
Tel: 00263 4 708165
Fax: 00263 4 707698
E-Mail: PDTC MANGO.ZW
Home Address:
Tel: 00263 4 735284

SADC

Graham Eele
Regional Training Adviser
SADC Food Security Training Project
Food Security Technical and Administrative Unit,
P.O. Box 4046
Harare
Tel: 00263 4 736051/2
Fax: 00263 4 795345; E-Mail: geele@fstau.stellar.zw
Home Address
16, Maasdorp Avenue, Alexandra Park
Harare
Tel: 00263 4 744646

REDD BARNA

Lois Mushonga
Health Nutrition Adviser
REDD-BARNA-Zimbabwe
P.O. Box 4581
Harare
Tel: 00263 4 721541/795472
Fax: 00263 4 796535
Telex: 26001 ZW E-mail: reddbaz@harare.iafrica.com
Home Address:
690 Reeler Crescent
Parktown Waterfalls
Harare
Tel: 00263 4 666137

World Bank

Dr. F. James Levinson
Director, International Food and
Nutrition Center
Tufts University
126 Curtis St.
Medford MA 02155
U.S.A.
Tel: 001 617 627 3223 x 2284
Fax: 617 3887
E-Mail: JLevinso@Emerald.Tufts.Edu
Home Address:
31-C Jay St.
Cambridge MA 02139
Tel: 001 617 441 3647

SARA

Ellen Piwoz
Support for Analysis and Research in Africa
SARA/SANA Projects
Academy for Educational Development
1255 23rd St. NW
Washington D.C. 20037
U.S.A.
Tel: 001 202 884 8816
Fax: 001 202 884 8701
E-Mail: epiwoz@aed.org
Home Address:
225 Chancery Rd
Baltimore MD 21218
U.S.A.
Tel: 410 235 8437

UNICEF

Dr. Micheline Beaudry
Senior Adviser, Nutrition
UNICEF
3 UN Plaza
H 10 F
New York, N.Y 10017
U.S.A.
Tel: 001 212 326 7385
Fax: 001 212 326 7336
E-Mail: mbeaudry@unicef.org
Home Address:
30 River Rd 10H
Roosevelt Island
N.Y 10044, U.S.A.
Tel: 212 753 4745

Dr. Festo Patrick Kavishe
Senior Project Officer
Household Food Security & Nutrition
UNICEF-ESARO
P.O. Box 44145
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: 254 2 622200: Fax: 254 2 521913:
E-mail: festo.kavishe@unep.no
Home Address:
P.O. Box 44145
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: 254 2 717657

NDT

Nuusita Ekaku
Programme Officer
NDT, P.O. Box 8226
Bachbrecht
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 238002
Home Address
Omboma 1502
Okuryangava

OXFAM-Canada

Gillian Brewin
Project Consultant
OXFAM-Canada
P.O. Box 50295
Windhoek
Tel: 00264 61 237.908
Fax: 00264 61 233.347

22'

MBEC

Johanna Elizabeth
Administrator NSFP
MBEC
P/Bag 13186
Windhoek
Namibia.
Tel: 00264 61 2934320
Fax: 00264 61 230932

Appendix B: ECSA Nutrition Experts Committee Meeting Agenda

The 8th Meeting of Food and Nutrition Experts Committee: Improving Nutrition Programmes in East Central and Southern Africa (ECSA), January 29 - February 2nd, 1996, Namibia

The Preliminary Programme

Sunday 28th:

- 2.00 - 6.00: Registration
- 6.00 - 7.00: ECSA Orientation Meeting
ECSAFAN: Historical perspective, Achievements and Constraints.
J. Tagwireyi / Daniella Larue

Monday 29th:

WORKSHOP: IMPROVING NUTRITION PROGRAMMES IN ECSA

- 8.00 - 8.45 Registration continues
- 9.00 - 10.30: OFFICIAL OPENING AND LAUNCHING OF THE NAMIBIA FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY
- 10.30 - 11.00 Nutrition break
- 11.00-1.00 **ECSA OPERATIONAL ISSUES**
- Chairperson:
- Rapporteurs:
- 11.00 - 11.20: Meeting Objectives and Expected Outcome
Catherine Siandwazi - CRHCS/ECSA
- 11.20 - 11.30: Discussion
- 11.30-11.50 Review of the role of ECSA Food and Nutrition Programme and ECSA Country Focal Points.
Dr. Mungai Lenmeiye, Ziken International
- 11.50-12.10 DISCUSSION
- 12.10-12.30 The ECSA Food and Nutrition Strategy
Catherine Siandwazi CRHCS/ECSA
- 12.30-1.00 discussion

1.00-2.00

LUNCH BREAK

AFTERNOON SESSION:

2.00-2.20

Information Dissemination and Advocacy Strategies to support Policy and Programme Management in ECESA
Lawrence Gikaru - CRHCS/ECESA

2.20-2.30

DISCUSSION

2.30 - 5.40:

Country perceptions on constraints and achievements: programme implementation, training and research.

Chairperson:

Rapporteurs:

2.30 - 2.40:

Botswana - S. Maruapula

2.40 - 2.50:

Kenya - E. Iringo

2.50 - 3.00:

Lesotho - M. Ntsike

3.00 - 3.10:

Malawi - R. Mapembwa

3.10 - 3.20:

Mauritius - D. Dooreemeah

3.20 - 3.30

Namibia - E. Shihepo

3.30 - 3.40:

Seychelles - D. Larue

3.40 - 3.50:

South Africa - Director of Nutrition, MOH.

3.50 - 4.00

Swaziland - C. Motsa

4.00 - 4.30:

Nutrition Break

4.30 - 4.40:

Tanzania - W. Lorri

4.40 - 4.50:

Uganda - U. Wangwe

4.50 - 5.00:

Zambia - A. Luneta/D. Sikazwe

5.00 - 5.10: Zimbabwe - I. Bhowa
5.10 - 5.40: Discussion on Country Presentations
5.40-6.30 Facilitators meeting
EVENING : Country working groups constituted

Tuesday 30th: Presentations on Assessment Results

Chairperson:

Rapporteurs:

8.30 - 9.00: The ECSA Training and Research Needs Assessment: perspectives on regional achievements and constraints
Dr. Mungai Lenneiye - Ziken International
9.00 - 9.20 Discussion
9.20-11.20 Nutrition Break
9.20-11.20 Group Work:
- country Strategies and Plan of Action based on the ECSA Needs Assessment.
11.20-12.40 PLENARY : presentation on group work
12.40-1.00 Discussion

Afternoon session

2.00-4.00 GROUP WORK: issues from country presentations
4.00-4.30 Tea Break
4.30-5.30 PLENARY: Group presentations
5.30-6.00 discussion
6.00-7.00 Facilitators meeting
EVENING: country working groups start meeting

Wednesday 30th:

**FOCUS ON PROGRAMME DRIVEN
TRAINING AND RESEARCH:
Overview on Bellagio Conference Initiatives**

Chairperson:

Rapporteurs:

8.00-8.20

Historical Perspective
Dr. Jim Levinson - Tufts University

8.20-8.40

Interim Committee Mandate and Activities/Follow-up
Dr. M. Beardy, UNICEF - New York HQs.

8.40 - 9.00

Relevance to ECSA
Julia Tagwireyi - Nutrition, Zimbabwe

9.00-9.20

Discussion on Bellagio Conference Initiative

**Plenary: Understanding the big picture in Food and
Nutrition.**

Chairperson:

Rapporteur:

9.20-10.00

The Conceptual Framework on the Causes and
Consequences of Malnutrition
Dr. Festo Kavishe - UNICEF-ESARO

10.00-10.20

Discussion

10-20-11.00

TEA BREAK

11.00-1130

Nutrition relevant actions : focus on ECSA countries
John Mason, ACC/SCN

11.30-11:30

discussion

11:30-12.00
for

Learning from success stories: methods and protocols
appraisal
Festo Kavishe, UNICEF/ESARO

12.00-12.30	discussion
12.30-1.00	Group work on Nutrition relevant actions and lessons learnt
1.00-2.00	Lunch Break
2.00-3.00	Group work continues
3.00-4.00	Plenary : presentations on group work
4.00-4.30	Tea Break
4.30-5.00	Presentations continue
5.00-5.30	Discussions on presentations
5.30 - 6.30	Facilitators Meeting
EVENING:	country working groups, Technical working group,
Thursday 1st February:	Recommendations and follow-up action
	Chairperson:
	Rapporteurs:
8.30- 9.00:	Mechanisms to establish a Training and Research Advisory group to monitor Implementation Plans. <i>Julia Tagwireyi - Ministry of Health, Nutrition Department, Zimbabwe. Current Chairperson Training Sub-Committee</i>
9.00-9.30	discussion
8.30 - 10.00	Reports of country working groups on possible solutions and plan of action <i>country team leaders</i>
10.00-10.25	discussion
10.25-10.55	Tea Break

- 10.55-11.30 - the Technical working group on Recommendations and Decisions from group work.
N.M. Leinneiye
- 11.30-12.00 Discussion
- 12.00-12.30 Presentation of outline procedures from the South African Programme constraints assessment
Jim Levinson with others
- 12.30-1.00 discussion
- 1.00 - 2.00: Lunch Break
- 3.00 - 4.00: **Official Closing and presentation of major issues**

Friday 2nd February

DEPARTURE

Meeting of the Technical Committee to consolidate operational regional plans for implementation of follow-up activities and preparation of meeting report.

Appendix C: Summary of the Meeting's Conclusions

RECOMMENDATIONS

Windhoek, 1 February 1996.

Preamble.

The CRHCS/ECSA region reiterates that the areas for high priority action remain PEM and Micronutrients *deficiencies*.

I. Nutrition Human Resources Development.

1. In the execution of food and nutrition programmes, there are cadres whose primary role and function is nutrition, and there are those where a considerable part of their job is nutrition. In view of this, the job functions of professional nutritionists in the region should be defined explicitly..
2. Countries will share information and experiences in the development of a Human Resources Development Plan (including staffing norms) for Food and Nutrition cadres. Those countries that have not prepared such a Plan should initiate the process.
3. In view of the agenda given to the Secretariat, there is a need to strengthen it so that it can monitor and evaluate regional programmes.

II. Formal training.

4. Towards the harmonisation of training programmes in Human Nutrition in the region, heads of training institutions should meet and review the training curricula. Such a review should incorporate competence-based training.

III. In-service training.

5. The development of Food and Nutrition training packages and their use to prepare Trainers of Trainers will be undertaken as a matter of urgency. This will be followed by training at the national level.
6. Focal points should be encouraged to regularly send information on in-service training courses to the regional secretariat to facilitate information sharing.

7. The CRHS/ECSA should develop mechanisms for collaborating with the SADC Food Security Training Project in the areas of training and research.

8. The secretariat should mobilise support and resources for programme driven training and research. Member governments and development partners should be involved in this process.

9. Alternative approaches such as distance learning and on the job training be undertaken to reach those cadres who are unable to attend in-service training or more formal training.

IV. Research.

10. The existing Training and Education Sub-committee will be restructured to become the Training and Research Sub-Committee.

11. The information dissemination programme of ECSA should facilitate the exchange and sharing of food and nutrition information.

12. It is recommended that the Secretariat prepares a situation paper on food and nutrition trends in the region. Such a paper should form a keynote address at future meetings dealing with food and nutrition issues in the region.

V. Advocacy.

13. Food and nutrition information should be disseminated to all relevant ministries, NGOs, private sector, and other actors as a way of mobilising support for food and nutrition programmes.