

# INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATICS ASSOCIATION

Special Interest Group of the International Federation for Information Processing

To A. Bakker  
M. Ball  
J.H. van Bommel  
S. Kaihara  
S. Mandil  
H. Peterson  
O. Rienhoff  
R. Salamon

EC/JW/vd/91-208

Leuven, May 6th 1991

Dear Friends,

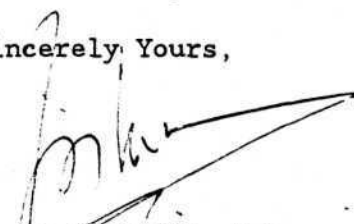
Hereby enclosed I am sending you a Finnish proposal for the organization of a Working Conference on Health Informatics in Africa in June 1992. Enclosed you will also find copies of my reply dated May 2nd as well as of the FAX of Mr. Korpela dated May 3rd.

I am quite in favor with this initiative, since it deals with a topic and a continent which needs our attention. In addition, as it now stands, it will be a joint IMIA-IFIP or IFP-IMIA endeavor, something we want to obtain also in other areas.

I would appreciate to receive your advice on how to handle this further.

What kind of editorial and financial assistance can we promise the organizers in case the plan succeeds ?

Sincerely Yours,

  
Jos L. WILLEMS, M.D.  
President of IMIA

President: J.L. Willems (Belgium)  
Past-President: S. Kaihara (Japan)

Vice-President: F. Roger (EFMI)  
Vice-President: V. Yacubsohn (IMIA-LAC)  
Secretary: R. Salamon (France)  
Treasurer: A.R. Bakker (Netherlands)

Trustee: Z. Ouyang (PR China)  
J. Michel (GDR)  
M.J. Ball (USA)  
J.R. Scherrer (CH)  
J. Flint (Canada)



IMIA

IMIA Secretariat: c/o IFIP Secretariat, 16 Place Longemalle CH-1204 Geneva, Switzerland



IFIP

# INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATICS ASSOCIATION

Special Interest Group of the International Federation for Information Processing

To Dr. Mikko KORPELO  
Computing Centre  
University of Kuopio  
P.O. Box 6  
SF-70211, Kuopio  
Finland

EC/JW/vd/91-195  
FAX : 358-71-225566

Leuven, May 2nd 1991

Dear Dr. Korpela,

I hereby acknowledge receipt of your FAX dated April 30th, 1991 with the latest information on HELINA '92, the International Symposium on Health Informatics in Africa you propose to organize.

Your proposal is well presented and quite detailed. I am quite confident that the Board of IMIA will approve your initiative and will be pleased that you propose IMIA as the international Main Organizer.

As you state on page 5, IMIA will be in charge of the scientific and professional quality of the programme through an international Programme Committee, but the organization and financing of the Conference will not be IMIA's responsibility.

Although the official language will be English, I am quite satisfied with the fact that you are trying to open up the conference to French-speaking Africa (cfr. p. 6). I hope that you will find speakers from these countries for the open slots in the programme.

With respect to the Proceedings I urge you to present it as a joint IFIP and IMIA publication, and certainly not as an IFIP publication only. This would indeed diminish IMIA's standing and efforts in trying to promote Health Informatics around the World. IMIA has made several contacts in the past with certain African countries and is determined to pursue in this direction. Your initiative is full in line with the objectives of our WG 9. Elsevier/North-Holland is also the main publisher for IMIA.

I will send your proposal to the Members of the IMIA Board for advice. I understand that you are in a hurry, and that you cannot wait until November 15th

President: J.L. Willems (Belgium)  
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J. Flint (Canada)



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1991, the date of your next Board Meeting, since finding funds and setting up the whole organization is a tedious process. However, all our conferences need to be approved by the Board. Therefore planning is usually started 2 years ahead.

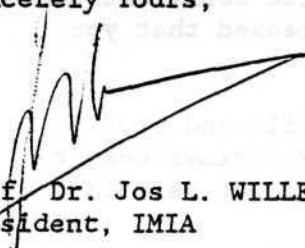
Shifting the Conference to November or December 1992, would in my opinion be highly desirable for making all decisions and to make the Conference more Pan-African. It will give you more time to make contacts with French-speaking Africa, appoint a programme committee chairman and improve the programme.

During the IMIA Board meeting of March 21-23rd 1991, Prof. Rienhoff has announced that he will step down as Chairman of WG 9 of IMIA in the fall of this year. At the November meeting the Board has to select and vote on his succession.

The best person who could be IMIA's main representative for HELINA '92 is in my opinion Dr. Salah Mandil. As you know, he is from Sudan. He is since many years very active in IMIA, and is the Programme Chairman of the next World Congress on Medical Informatics, IMIA's biggest event each 3 year. This congress, as you probably know, will be held in September 1992 in Geneva. I am afraid that Dr. Salah Mandil will be very busy in the months ahead of Medinfo 92.

I will try to phone Prof. Roger Salamon, Otto Rienhoff and Salah Mandil on these issues, as soon as possible, but please let me know your reaction on the timing of the Conference as soon as possible by telefax. This is of prime importance for making the right choices in getting the approval of the Board.

Sincerely Yours,



Prof. Dr. Jos L. WILLEMS  
President, IMIA

cc. : Prof. R. Salamon, Secretary IMIA  
Prof. O Rienhoff, IMIA WG 9 Chairman  
Dr. Salah Mandil, W.H.O.

# INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATICS ASSOCIATION

Prof. Dr J.L. Willems,  
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven  
Afdeling Medische Informatica  
Herestraat 49  
B-3000 Leuven  
België

Leiden, May 16, 1991

Our ref.: AB/vtH/911609

Dear Jos,

The Finnish proposal for the organization of a Working Conference on Health Informatics in Africa, in my view deserves a positive support from IMIA side. The timing by the end of 1992 seems better indeed than June 1992, in view of the MEDINFO activities.

As far as the contents is concerned I suggest that the organizers consult the related chairmen of IMIA working groups (WG8, WG10) both for the contents and for suggestions on speakers to be invited. This to ensure the scientific quality.

Although the organizers are not asking for financial support, I feel when necessary IMIA might give them a grant of e.g. SWFR 2000, this to encourage the initiative.

Yours sincerely,

Ab Bakker



IFIP

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Past-President: S. Kaihara (Japan)

Vice-President: F. Roger (EFMI)  
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J. Flint (Canada)



IMIA

Date: Tue, 01 Oct 91 09:43:24 CET  
From: MANDILAUNICC.BITNET  
Subject: HELENA: consideration by IMIA Board  
To: <FEKAA01aBLEKUL11>

to: DR J WILLEMS, President IMIA  
Jos,

I wish to refer to Mr M Korpela's proposal re HELENA, which you and I, and I believe a few other colleagues, received copies of. The objective is quite in line with IMIA's, the proposal is well-articulated, the national and international dialogue/involvement strikes me as quite right and healthy and the main driver behind it (Mr Korpela, Finland) is knowledgeable and capable of doing a good job.

The problem is the uncertainty of funding at this stage, both locally and internationally. But, it is quite clear that a chicken-and-egg situation has arisen. They require an international body to initially "bless" the proposal before funding could be seriously considered by FINNIDA and local institutions.

I recommend that the IMIA Board considers their application for an "international working conference", positively subject to confirmation of funding. The IMIA endorsement could include expressions that would facilitate funding e.g. IMIA would assist by circulating info on HELENA to all its national organs and by identifying suitable international contributions and speakers. We could expand on this further at the IMIA Board mtg. Best regards. Salah MANDIL, WHO, Geneva

UNIVERSITY OF KUOPIO  
FINLAND

Kuopio 18 April 1991

No  
Ref. IFE/91/52

Mikko Korpela  
University of Kuopio  
Computing Center  
PL 6  
SF-70211 Kuopio  
FINLAND

Prof. J.L. Willems, IMIA President  
Prof. R. Salamon, IMIA Secretary  
Prof. O. Rienhoff, IMIA WG 9 Chairman

Dear Sirs,

## RE: SYMPOSIUM ON HEALTH INFORMATICS IN AFRICA

University of Kuopio, Computing Centre, has a Joint Project on Health Informatics in Africa with the Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex (OAUTHC) and the OAU Computer Science Department, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. As a part of the Project, an international scientific symposium on the above-named topic has been planned. An early draft proposal is enclosed.

Participation to the symposium would be based on invitation, and the invited participants would be fully sponsored. A lesser quota would be reserved for self-paying participants, mainly from Nigeria probably.

The Nigerian organizers have formed a Local Organizing Committee. University of Kuopio is in charge of international contacts and administration. A Programme Committee will be formed, representing sponsors, experts, African subregions, and so on. Preliminary contacts to a few of the proposed speakers (Dr. Mandil, Dr. Foster, Mr. Woelk, Dr. Osiobe) raised unanimous interest. Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health has a favourable stand also. IFIP publication facilities can be used if necessary, through WG 9.4 'Social Implications of Computers in Developing Countries'.

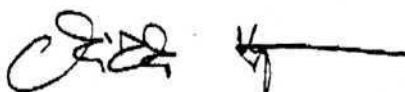
Funding for the bulk of the expenses will be applied from Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA). Funding will also be applied from the Commonwealth Secretariat. Contacts to and funding for the Francophone Africa are still somewhat problematic.

The Joint Project would very much appreciate *IMIA participation in the Symposium*. IMIA's role can be anything from the Main Organizer (with the Joint Project as the technical organizer) to a co-sponsor or a co-supporter. We prefer as high an IMIA profile as possible.

As we need to submit a tentative application to FINNIDA by *29th April already*, we would appreciate your preliminary stand before that. The decision on the funding is not expected before September, by which time the detailed budget and the organizational base must be formally decided on.

Please reply by telefax (+358-71-225566) as soon as convenient to you.

Yours sincerely,



Mikko Korpela, Senior Researcher  
for the Joint Project

# **International Symposium on Health Informatics in Africa**

**HELINA'92**

**~~23-27 June 1992, Ile-Ife, Nigeria~~**

**March 1993,**

**Organized by**

**International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA)**

**jointly with**

**Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife, Nigeria  
Computer Science Department, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria  
Computing Centre, University of Kuopio, Finland**

**Plan, 29 April 1991**

**This is a confidential, tentative plan for negotiations with  
IMIA, FINNIDA, IFIP, WHO and Commonwealth Secretariat.**

**The plan was prepared by the Joint Organizers.  
Computing Centre, University of Kuopio, is responsible for the final editing.**

## I. General information

### Objectives

In the industrialized countries computers have long since been regarded as an indispensable tool in putting the scarce resources of the health care delivery system into the best possible use. Large scale statistics is virtually impossible without computers, on-line systems relieve health personnel from writing the same information into dozens of note books, and so on. The advent of cost-effective microcomputers has recently brought the same advantages to the reach of the African countries also. The private sector has already found the micro, and public health institutions are following. This development is in accordance with recent WHO resolutions stressing the importance of information services as means for reaching the goal "*Health for All*".

Very few Africans have participated in the big international conferences on health informatics like MEDINFO and MIE, although articles in scientific journals have represented interesting cases in Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, The Gambia, and so on. The requirements and problems of health informatics in Africa are so much different from those in the industrialized countries that a *specialized forum* is needed.

The HELINA Symposium is the first scientific meeting on health informatics on a Pan-African base. The programme forms a logical structure of *invited papers*, attempting to cover the whole range of existing understanding and experience on the field of health informatics in Sub-Saharan Africa, *from Primary Health Care to hospitals and national planning*. Researchers and reflective practitioners throughout the subcontinent are drawn together. The speakers are the best experts in their respective topics. The Symposium is thus an ideal opportunity for newcomers to get a comprehensive view of the state of the art.

In the same time, a conversational and multi-voiced mood is strived for. The Symposium attempts to establish a *network of researchers and practitioners* who want to cooperate, share their experiences, and learn from each other in the future also. This is seen as a significant factor in promoting Health for All through health informatics in Africa.

### Time

~~23-27 June 1992~~, Tuesday morning through Saturday morning.

March 1993,

### Language

The official language will be English.

### Venue

Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) Conference Center and Guest Houses, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. A demonstration takes place at the OAU Teaching Hospitals Complex, some 10 km away in Ile-Ife town.

The Conference Center has rooms for lectures and group work. The Guest House has 2 minisuits and 18 double rooms with air-conditioning on an affordable price. The Diganga Hotel near to the campus gate provides a more expensive alternative.

Ile-Ife is a friendly rural town with an extraordinary cultural history, at a three-hour drive from the international airport in Lagos. OAU is the second biggest university in Nigeria, situated on a spacious, beautiful campus. In June, the weather is usually moderated by early rains and the nature is on its highest bloom.

### Target audiences

1. **Researchers** of African health informatics in Africa and elsewhere.
2. **African Government officials** in charge of Health Planning and Health Records.
3. **Administrators and Health Records officers** of hospitals, district centres and other health institutions which are using or plan to acquire computer systems.
4. **Managers and Systems Analysts** of computer firms developing systems for the health sector, mainly in Nigeria.

### Size and quotas

The **main quota of 45 persons** consists of invited participants and speakers who are fully subsidized (including travelling, registration fee, accommodation and full boarding, but no allowances or lecturing fees). A lesser "**commercial quota**" is reserved for participants who do not fit into the invited quota but can pay for the fee, travelling, accommodation and boarding. The third, **local quota** consists of the representatives of the Host Organizers who can attend the sessions free of charge but without any other advantages.

## II. Tentative Programme

The programme starts on Tuesday morning by discussing the meaning of "Informatics" and its relation to Health Care Delivery. Tuesday afternoon is dedicated to National Health Information Systems, and the whole of Wednesday to Informatics in support of the Primary Health Care. Thursday is reserved for Hospital Information Systems, and for methodological issues. Participants who are interested in a general-level understanding only, have the option of staying just from Tuesday to Thursday.

Friday is dedicated to an in-depth representation and demonstration of a real life case, namely the Hospital Information System of the Obafemi Awolowo Teaching Hospitals Complex. On Saturday morning the discussions are drawn together, problems and trade-offs are pointed out, as well as the potentialities and future tasks are identified. Finally a resolution is made on continuation of the Symposium and the cooperation in general.

At the end of each session there is a Discussant's Commentary. They are not intended at challenging the other lectures, but in drawing attention to risks, contradictions, and critical voices concerning the topic of the session in general, in order to stimulate open-minded and informed discussion.

### **Informal get-together party (Monday evening)**

### **1. Informatics and its relation to Health Care Delivery (Tuesday morning)**

- 1.1. Opening address: *The Role of Health Records and Statistics in Nigerian Health Care Delivery System.*  
The Honourable Minister of Health, Federal Government of Nigeria.
- 1.2. *Informatics and Its Uses in Health Care, with Special Emphasis on Developing Countries.*  
Dr. Salah H. Mandil, WHO Information Systems Support Division.
- 1.3. Discussant's Commentary: *New Dependency, Wasted Resources, Nothing for the People?*  
Dr. Dayo Forster, Kenya/U.K.

### **2. National Health Information Systems (Tuesday afternoon)**

- 2.1. *Information Needs for Strategic Planning of Health Care Delivery.*  
Dr. K.S. Adeyami, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- 2.2. *National Health Information Systems: Structures and Procedures.*
- 2.3. *History and Role of Health Informatics in Nigeria.*  
Dr. Femi Agbalajobi, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
- 2.4. Discussant's Commentary: *How Much Technology, How Much Managerial and Leadership Skills?*

### **3. Computer support to preventive and primary health care (Wednesday)**

- 3.1. *Computers and the Primary Health Care - Zimbabwean Experience.*  
Mr. G.B. Woelk, University of Zimbabwe.
- 3.2. *Regional Decision-Making and Health Information Systems.*  
Dr. S.F. Tessier, Chobe Regional Council, Botswana.

- 3.3. *Epidemiological Research with Microcomputers.*  
Dr. Peter Byass, Medical Research Council Laboratories, The Gambia.
- 3.4. (Topics to be elaborated)
- 3.x. Discussant's Commentary: *Keep It Simple, or How Small Changes Can Make a Big Difference and Grandiose Plans Can Reach Nothing.*

#### 4. Hospital Information Systems (Thursday morning and afternoon)

- 4.1. *Computerization in Lagos University Teaching Hospital: A Systems Development View.*  
Mr. A.N. Okeke, Computer Systems Associates, Nigeria.
- 4.2. *Computers and Teaching Hospitals: A Lecturer's View.*  
Dr. I.H. Wilson, University Teaching Hospital, Zambia.
- 4.3. *Pharmacy Information Needs and Priorities.*  
Dr. A.A. Odutola, Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria.
- 4.4. *Billing and Accounting Systems.*  
(private hospital representative)
- 4.5. Discussant's Commentary: *Can Hospital Information Systems Serve the Preventive and Primary Care?*

#### 5. Methodological and general issues (Thursday afternoon)

- 5.1. *Computers and Medical Libraries/Information Services in Africa.*  
Dr. Stephen A. Osiobe, Nigerian Universities Office in Lagos.
- 5.2. *How to Keep Your Microcomputer Working: Electrical and Maintenance Aspects.*
- 5.3. *Alternative Ways of Organizing Systems Development and Support.*
- 5.4. Discussant's Commentary: *Learning from Failures.*

#### 6. Case: The OAUTHC Hospital Information System Project (Friday)

- 6.1. Guest Speaker's Address: *The Experience of the V.A. Decentralized Hospital Computer Programme.*  
Representative of the Department of Veterans Affairs, U.S.A.
- 6.2. *Analysing OAUTHC's Work Activities: The Development Potentials.*
- 6.3. *The OAUTHC Medical Records System and Its Future Expansions.*

- 6.4. *The MUMPS/FileMan Technology: Making the Most of Microcomputers.*
  - 6.5. *What Have We Benefited? A Clinician's View.*
  - 6.6. Demonstration of the system at OAUTHC. Discussions with the Medical Records staff, consultants, and Management.
7. **Conclusions: Which way forward? (Saturday morning)**
- 7.1. General discussion about the conclusions of the week. Resolution on future cooperation and the need for regularisation of the Symposium.

### **III. Operational Plan**

#### **Organizers and sponsors**

The roles of the organizations involved are being negotiated for the time being. The initiators propose that the official Main Organizer of the Symposium would be the *International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) Working Group 9 "Health Informatics for Development"*. The practical organizational work will anycase take place in Ile-Ife, Nigeria and Kuopio, Finland. The international Main Organizer would be in charge of the scientific and professional quality of the programme

The *Local Organizing Committee* in Ile-Ife has been formed by the Host Organizers, which are the *OAU Teaching Hospitals Complex* and the *OAU Computer Science Department*. It is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University. It is in charge of local arrangements, local accounts, and contacts with Nigerian speakers and sponsors.

The Finnish Joint Organizer, the *Computing Centre of University of Kuopio*, runs an *Overseas Bureau* together with the Centre for Training and Development, University of Kuopio. It is in charge of international communication, travelling arrangements, international funding and accounts, and cooperation with the Local Organizing Committee and the International Programme Committee.

The International Programme Committee will comprise of representatives of the organizers and sponsors, together with some individual experts representing African subregions and different levels of the health care delivery system. It will be chaired by the Main Organizer's representative. It is in charge of deciding on the programme and speakers, and of selecting the rest of the invited participants. The decisions will be made by mail.

UNIVERSITY OF KUOPIO  
FINLAND

3 October 1991

Mikko Korpela  
University of Kuopio  
Computing Centre  
PL 1627  
SF-70211 Kuopio  
FINLAND

No  
Ref. IFE/91/75

To: Prof. R.O.A. Mäkanjuola, Chief Medical Director, OAUTHC  
Dr. A.D. Akinde, Head, Computer Science Dept. OAU  
Dr. O.A. Daini, MUMPS Group Coordinator, CSc OAU  
Dr. Hamed, Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee OAUTHC  
Mrs. H.A. Soriyan, Research Assistant, CSc OAU

Cc: Dr. Salah H. Mandil, WHO Director-Advisor on Informatics (part 1)  
Prof. J. Willems, IMIA President (part 1) Fax: 790+32-16-215500  
Prof. P. Järvinen, IFIP TC 9 Secretary (part 1)  
Ms. Karin Koivisto, International Secretary, U Kuopio (part 1)  
Dr. Yrjö Jokinen, Director of Computing Centre, U Kuopio

Dear Sirs/Madam,

Each of us in the Joint Project on Health Informatics has been busy with various routine and unexpected tasks for some months. There are a lot of issues to discuss which I try to summarize. For practical reasons I am writing one common letter, so some parts of it may not be of interest to all of you.

### 1. The HELINA situation.

I am enclosing excerpts of my correspondence with Dr. Mandil and others. In addition, I have been in contact by phone with Dr. Marja Anttila (FINNIDA advisor on health care) and with the Finnish Society for Health Informatics.

*In general*, the situation seems quite encouraging, although much work will be needed. All the feedback from people having to do with the management of health information in Africa has been expressedly positive. The work done by the Local Organizing Committee in Ife and the attitude of the Federal Ministry of Health in Nigeria are convincing about the feasibility of the conference. IMIA will discuss the proposal on 15-16 November.

About the funding, Dr. Anttila will contact me next week about the options available. There appear to be two alternative sources for *FINNIDA funding*: First, the FINNIDA research funds, administered by the Academy of Finland. The problem with this option is that the Academy tied up the Joint Project's application with the completion of my Licentiate Thesis. I am currently on leave of absence to write the Thesis, but due to all the communication and administrative tasks I will certainly not get it ready before the end of the year.

Secondly, the grants for Non-Governmental Organizations. These have much less constraints than the governmental projects (FINNIDA is increasingly concentrating on big projects in a few countries, due to problems of administration). The applications must be submitted before end of November and will be processed by March next year. FINNIDA funding can cover up to 75 percent of approved NGO projects. It is not clear to me if a joint undertaking by a Finnish NGO with Finnish and international institutions will qualify.

Regardless to that, some kind of involvement of the Finnish Society for Health Informatics would be welcome. The Board of the Society will discuss the issue on 10 October.

There will be a meeting about *other sources of funding* at the Training and Development Centre, University of Kuopio, next week (the Centre provides consultancy and conference arrangement services, and is determined to make HELINA succeed). There are some new ideas but I will return to them later.

We should make preliminary contacts at both ends already before the IMIA Board meeting, but *in the names of the initiators only*. Specifically, preliminary discussion with the Federal Ministries and the West African Health Community (cf. two faxes from the Commonwealth Secretariat) could be held so that the procedures would be cleared for official moves rapidly after the IMIA meeting. Please keep us informed about your contacts and the response.

About the *dates*, I understood March 1993 has been proposed. I agree November 1992 is getting too close. The dates should be selected so that:

- Easter, Eid-el-Fitri, university examination terms, election times, etc. are avoided;
- the season is favourable (is March not a bit hot still? what about late April?);
- the Conference Centre and accommodation facilities are available;
- the weekdays fit with international flights (hence my original proposal that the programme would start on late Monday afternoon and end by Friday night);
- there are no conflicts with other relevant international events.

Please discuss the above and send 2-3 alternative dates by telex so that the IMIA Board can select one after considering the time for preparations and the other international events.

About the *programme*, please send your viewpoints in general and about the proposed Nigerian topics and speakers in special. When preparing for the National Workshop, you no doubt come across with the people and projects which will be the most interesting for the international audience as well. I am searching for potential speakers from other countries, especially French speaking. In contacting potential speakers we must make it clear that everything is *conditional* on, first, funding and, second, the would-be International Programme Committee's decisions.

In order to make it fully Pan-African, we should consider providing for full simultaneous translation between English and French. Please find out whether there are facilities for this at the Conference Centre (or Oduduwa Hall?) and experienced simultaneous interpreters available locally, and the costs. Experience at least in Europe shows that the threshold for French speakers to attend a conference in English, and the other way round, is very high. We could prepare a separate budget for bilinguality and try find a Francophone sponsor for that.

I suggest country reports, discussion sessions, and health research are made more visible in the programme, and the detailed time schedule added.

About the *budget*, the main idea is that the international financiers would pay for the invited participants' expenses, FINNIDA (hopefully) for the administrative expenses, Nigerian sponsors for local publicity, and the self-paying participants for their share of the accommodation and on-the-spot expenses. If Nigerian sponsorship can be found for a get-together party, snacks, etc., then the registration fee can be accordingly smaller.

Quite a lot of work is needed in organizing the event in practice — this goes under "clerical services" in the budget proposal. In Kuopio we can hire these from the Training and Development Centre, but in Ife it might be a better idea to appoint a few people from both the OAUTHC and the Computer Science Department on a part-time basis (full-time closer to the event). Please provide me with an estimate of the type and amount of staff required,