

**PARTICIPATION
AT THE EUROPEAN GEOSCIENCES UNION (EGU) INTERNATIONAL
MEETING**

VIENNA, APRIL 8TH – 13TH 2018



The European Geosciences Union General Assembly (EGU) Meeting 2018

The European Geosciences Union (EGU) General Assembly is one of the largest international geosciences meetings, which brings together experts from all over the world covering all disciplines of the earth, planetary and space sciences. The meeting aims to provide a forum where scientists, especially early career researchers and postgraduate students, can present their work and discuss their ideas with experts in all fields of geoscience. The conference was held from the 8th to the 13th of April 2018, at the Vienna International Centre, Austria. For the year 2018, over 15000 scientists from 112 countries participated, featuring 4,776 oral, 11,128 posters, and 1,419 PICO presentations (www.egu2018.eu). Furthermore, 68 short courses and 294 side events were hosted together with 666 unique scientific sessions and Medical Geology was one of them hosted and convened for the first time in this event by Hassina Mouri (SA) (convener), and co-conveners Brenda Buck (USA), Olle Selinus and Prosum Bhattacharya (Sweden), and Carla Candeias (Portugal).



The Med. Geos: Outside and inside the EGU conference venue

Purpose of attending EGU Meeting

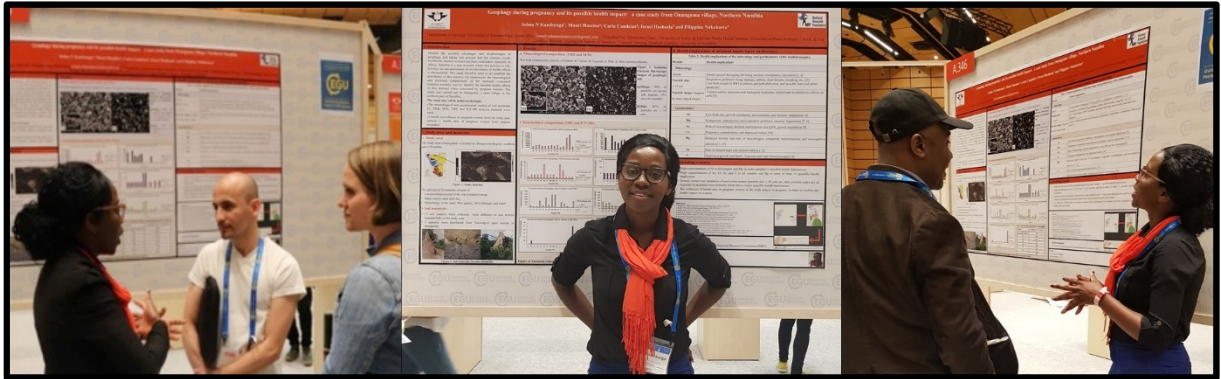
The aim for attending the conference was to learn more about the latest technologies and developments in Earth sciences in general and Medical Geology in particular, and enhance our research productivity through the identification and application of cutting-edge solutions to current challenges. We perceive this as a unique opportunity to familiarize with good practices as a channel for our personal development, and network with other professionals from the World, which is exceptional for horizontal exchange of knowledge, skills and experience. Our attendance at this international meeting was also to give the University of Johannesburg important exposure, access to exhibits and presentations from many other organizations within the geoscience community, allowing gaining valuable information about what other institutions are doing and where they are focusing their efforts, especially in terms of sustainable development and wellbeing using natural resources such as minerals and water in Africa. This is especially important given the mandate of the University of Johannesburg to becoming a Pan-African and leading international institution of learning with emphasis on cutting-edge research outputs as well as partnership with other organizations in the development of new applications.



With the Medical Geology Group: Ready to travel to Vienna

EGU conference experiences

Excellent conference! Is it because it was my first time attending an international conference or it was just a great conference? The EGU conference- very well organized, very professional with people from various backgrounds and countries, excellent venue, great quality speakers, and opportunities for discussion and networking. It's worth a recommendation to more scientists and researchers in the field of geoscience. The presentations covered a wide range of very interesting scientific research topics, which were informative and valuable. It was a great opportunity travelling out of Africa for the first time, to communicate and share scientific excellences from the experts, and to get exposed to a strategic thinking tank, which enhanced a constructive dialogue and collaboration on themes relevant to Medical Geology. The conference did not only enhance my knowledge on medical geology studies but also provided extended knowledge in many fields, which are related to geosciences such as atmospheric sciences, bio-geosciences, climate, soil system, energy resources and environment, geomorphology, geochemistry, and mineralogy. Consequently, I have known a number of academics and professionals from different countries who have similar or related research interests. "To me the conference was a true success, I enjoyed every moment!"



Poster presentation and interaction with different delegates

The city of Vienna

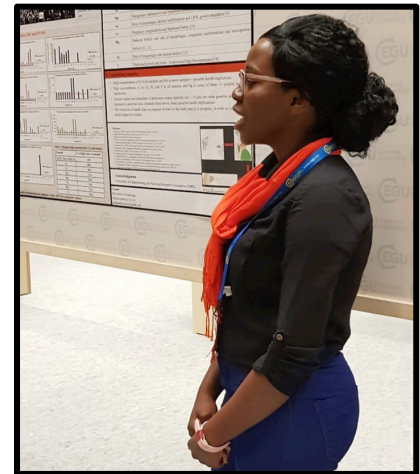
I am definitely going back to Vienna! Although the visit was short, however i still had the opportunity to visit interesting historic places such as the Votivkirche Neo Gothic church, Gartenpalais Liechtenstein palace, St. Stephen's Cathedral (12th Century church), St. Peters Catholic church, Vienna Pestsäule (Memorial column for plague victims), Hofburg palace and Michaelerplatz. Worth noting is the fast and perfect public transport system in Vienna.



With my colleagues, roaming around the city of Vienna. To the right is the Votivkirvhe Neo Gothic church.

EGU Outstanding Student Poster and PICO (OSPP) Awards

Outstanding Student Poster and PICO (OSPP) Awards aims at improving the overall quality of poster and Pico presentations and more importantly, encouraging early career scientists to present their work in the form of a poster or Pico. The evaluation criteria are mainly based on the scientific quality of the poster presentation, the poster design, and the student's ability to answer questions. The judges can visit your poster any time and you are not made aware of them. After the General Assembly, the average marks are compiled automatically by the system: a ranking based on the ratings of the judges is made. The top posters of this ranking then receive awards. The awardees receive a conference fee waiver for the next EGU General Assembly and are invited to submit a paper (where the awardee is first author) free of publication costs to one of the EGU journals.



This is in addition to an award certificate at the respective division meeting held at the next General Assembly. *“There are thousand posters in different halls, and they are all competing for attention, so, you need to stand out a little bit”*. As my supervisor always says *“if you love what you are doing, you will excel in your work”*, and **that was my secret to this winning**.

Words of gratitude and encouragement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the international office at the University of Johannesburg and Prof Mouri for a “dream came true” opportunity. Many thanks to the National Research Foundation (NRF) for funding my study and my co-supervisors Prof Carla Candeias from Portugal and Mr Israel from Namibia for their support and contributions to my learning process. To my fellow young scientists; when opportunities like this cross your path, don't let them go, and don't just grab them, **shine through them**. Conferences provide a unique convergence of networking, learning, and fun into a single package. It allows you to invest in yourself, your career, and even your company (institution). You never know where and when your perfect provider or prospect will be. So, take advantage of any chance you got to sharpen your saw. Always remember that great achievements result from preparation and hard work, but do not forget to have fun along the way. Thank you.

“If you are working on something that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you.” – Steve Jobs

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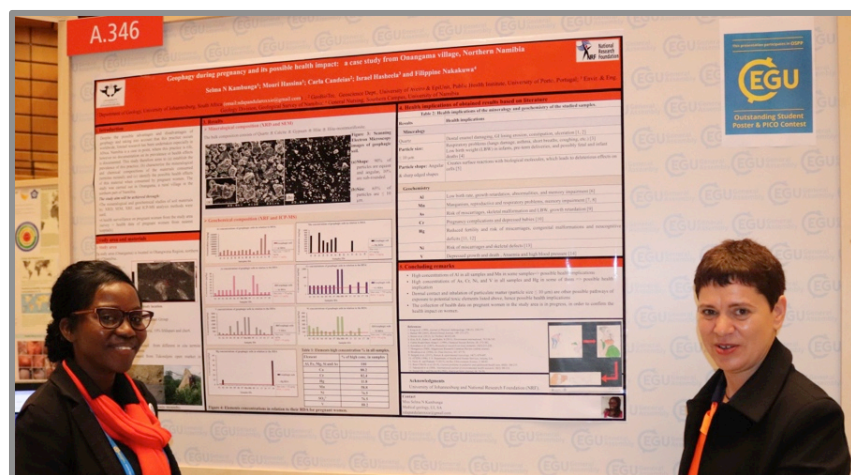


Photo next to my poster with my supervisor Prof. Hassina Mouri (to the right)