

REPORT UROLINK TRAVEL GRANT TO ADDIS ABABA FOR COSECSA EXAMINATION AS EXAMINER .

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INTRODUCTION:

I would like to appreciate my sponsors, Urolink, for giving me a travel grant of €1260 to enable me to attend the COSECSA examinations for the first time, as examiner, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I count myself luckiest to be among those ever to be sponsored by Urolink.

This was another milestone in my professional career as a junior urologist. Being part of academic institutions such as COSECSA was my long term dream. Soon after COVID 19 pandemic, COSECSA resumed its physical Fellowship (FCS) examination, with the first one being held in Windhoek, Namibia in 2022. Urolink, enabled me to attend the COSECSA exams as an observer in Namibia. Following that experience I received an invitation to attend the COSECSA examinations as an Examiner this year which were to be held in Addis Ababa. However, I had a financial challenges for the air ticket and accommodation. Urolink, again, offered me another travel grant for this year.

Coming to Addis Ababa as examiner was a great opportunity to reinforce my skills for examining residents but also for setting examinations. It was also a great opportunity for increasing my network with different distinguished urologists and professors from Africa and developed countries.

Moreover, I got the opportunity to discuss development of urological services at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) following completion of my fellowship at the University of Cape Town. Currently, Urolink is helping to establish endourology stone surgery, Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy and Ureteroscopy for ureteric stone. I had important

discussion with Dr Suzie Venn (Urolink Chair) to advance endourology services at KCMC. Improvement of endourology services at KCMC will help both the patients and residents by introducing sustainable minimally invasive procedures for stone disease. Currently, there is no centre which performs PCNL in Tanzania with only about two centres performing ureteroscopy and laser in the central and eastern parts of Tanzania. Our discussion ended by a promise from Urolink to help buy a C-arm, lithotripsy and telescopes preceding a stone workshop, expected to be conducted in mid-June 2024.



Dr Orgeness Mbwambo with Urolink chair (Suzie Venn) and Prof Catherine R. deVries at Yod Abyssinia cultural restaurant in Addis Ababa at examiners' dinner

We also had discussions about a program of improving teaching in the Urology department at KCMC for residents and undergraduate through visiting Urologists and resident from the UK. This would strengthen interactions between the two parties and advance the quality of training at KCMC.

Moreover, I had opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other distinguished urologists from developed countries for the advancement of services and training at KCMC.

When I was young one of my neighbours used to see me waking up very early, before 6 am. One day he told me “ I like that you wake up very early, even if you are not going to work. It is better for a human being to wake up early, he may pick something valuable from the road just because he woke up very early”. Attending conferences, and international examinations such as COSECSA FCS, is, for me, comparable to waking up early. It was through a Urolink travel grant to Kigali, Rwanda, to present my thesis when I was a resident at KCMUco, that I got to know more about COSECSA and decided to do COSECSA examinations the following year (2019). This showed me that there is always something new to learn, and opens up the mind through interactions with different experts from around the world.



Urology Examiners from different parts of the world

It is the Urolink sponsorship that has enabled me to get such wide exposure which has helped me to improve, and advance in, my career. This is of great help not only to patients in Northern zone of Tanzania but also to trainees at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC).

CONCLUSION

In a special way I would like to thank Dr Suzie Venn, and Urolink, for their continued support for me to attend conferences and examinations since I was a resident. I would, therefore, like to recommend that Urolink considers grants, at least once every two years, for specialists from Africa to attend European Association of Urology and BAUS conferences, and also to experience hospital practice in the UK. I believe the exposure of heads of departments and junior specialists in Africa will help to open their mind and therefore improve the services in their home environments . Thank you very much.