

YOUNG SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE AT THE 7TH YOUNG SURVEYORS CONFERENCE AND 27TH FIG CONGRESS 2022 IN WARSAW, POLAND

Kumbirai Matingo (Zimbabwe)

FIG Congress 2022 – Young Surveyors Grant Awardee

This report details all the events that took place leading up to my participation at the FIG 2022 Congress in Warsaw, Poland through sponsorship and support from the FIG Foundation whom I will forever be grateful for providing me with such an opportunity and experience that has opened many channels, opportunities and doors in my career.

Initial Preparations to Attend

I remember after having applied for the grant in my final year as a Surveying and Geomatics student at the Midlands State University, one afternoon while I was traveling between cities for my research, I received an email from the FIG Foundation which read.

Congratulations! You have been selected to receive an FIG Foundation grant to attend the XXVII FIG Congress and 7th FIG Young Surveyors Conference in Warsaw, Poland, 11-15 September 2022.

After having read the email, I took my time to find a nice place so I could express my gratitude and respond to the email as well as providing all the necessary documentation that would facilitate my attendance.

All preparations went well including visa processing as the FIG office was very helpful in providing all the much-needed support for this process. The final day came for travel to Warsaw, and everything was smooth and well organised, thanks to the organizing committee.

The Young Surveyors Conference Experience

After having arrived in Warsaw, the first part of the experience was attending the Young Surveyors Conference which was set for the first two days of the event beginning 9 September and was running under the theme: *"Volunteering for the Future: Smart Surveyors for Social Good"*.

Having had an abstract that was also accepted for presentation during the event, I had a presentation titled *"A COVID-19 Hub for Zimbabwe"* which showcased a project I undertook for Zimbabwe during the pandemic, and I was glad to have been provided the opportunity to showcase how this project through the intervention of geospatial solutions became a success in fighting the deadly pandemic.



Figure 1: Delivering my presentation during the first session of the FIG Young Surveyors Conference.

This provided me with my first opportunity to network with like-minded young surveyors with whom we shared and exchanged experiences on how others also did it during the pandemic period in their respective communities and countries.

Following the presentation I also managed to attend various sessions and presentations that were conducted by other young surveyors from across the globe.

That same afternoon as a member of the Volunteer Community Surveyor Programme (VCSP) supporting the Knowledge Portal pillar, I also had the opportunity to be a panellist in a session titled: *"Building Relationships and Securing the Future"* which was a section dedicated to the VCSP to facilitate an exchange dialogue among young surveyors.



Figure 2: VCSP Panel Discussion on *Building Relationships and Securing the Future*. How can we use our volunteering activities to drive sustainability?

The session was a success as we (the VCSP) managed to successfully get insights from young surveyors which would enable us to better understand the needs and facilitate better support going forward throughout the planned activities.

This was also the first in-person meeting with the VCSP team as I was used to volunteering and meeting up virtually with them. I recall how excited I was to finally meet Claire Buxton and Angela Anyakora after a long time of virtual meeting and collaborations.

Before finalizing the day for some outdoor surveying activities and explorations as young surveyors, we also managed to go through the certification awarding process together with the FIG Foundation President, Mr John Hohol whom I was also delighted to meet at the very same event. Its not everyday that once gets the opportunity to be surrounded by great people who have set the pace and paved the way for the future of the profession.

The sessions, learning, and networking opportunities continuity throughout the afternoon and I also had a chance to participate in the **Leica AP-20 AutoPole** competition that was organized by the Leica.



Figure 3: Young surveyors posing for a photograph after the Leica AP-20 Auto pole competition.

This was also my first time to use such advanced equipment in the surveying industry and surprisingly, I turned out to be in the top three of the competition which was such an exciting event full of a rich learning experience.

As part of the organized activities for Young Surveyors we had a tour of the city on a city bus and explored the *Polish Vodka Museum* where we got to learn more about some history.

At the museum the power of maps rooted in the ancient history of vodka reviewed how geospatial applications can enhance story telling and enable interactive learning as the maps clearly outlined the historical paths taken within the city.

I also had the opportunity to go through the vodka tasting experience which was also part of the tour.



Figure 4: Ancient map showing the history of the Polish Vodka

The second day of the Young Surveyors Conference was an activity day which included activities such:

- Ballroom dance
- Treasure hunt
- Old Warsaw tour
- And the Welcome cocktail which was conducted in the evening.

Treasure Hunt Experiences



Figure 5: Young surveyors posing for a photograph after the fun-filled treasure hunt



Figure 6: Kumbirai posing for a photograph during the treasure-hunt activity

I managed to take part in a treasure hunt which was all based on GPS to locate the next clue and embrace the power of collaboration among teams.

In all this action, there was always a lesson to learn and the greatest of all was the emphasis on teamwork, collaboration and communication as a professional.

The FIG Congress Experience

The next following days were packed with the FIG Congress which was also taking place at the same venue. Over five-hundred people were in attendance, and this presented much more networking and learning opportunities.

Some of the interesting sessions attended include the official opening of the FIG Congress and

- The GLTN and FIG Young Surveyors VCSP – Continuing on a Path of Collaboration
- Young Surveyors and the Future of Volunteering
- And most of the FIG Commission 3 sessions

It was also interesting to be part of the VCSP workshop on the Land Tenure on Mars competition which had a session dedicated during the conference to enlighten participants on the competition and to promote brainstorming on what an ideal land tenure system would look like if we were to relocate to Mars.

I also had a chance to attend the *FIG Dinner* where I got the chance to experience and network with different surveyors around the world while exchanging ideas and establishing collaborations for the future.

The dinner also providing me an opportunity to enhance my networking skills and experience through various interactions.

In the end of this remarkable and unforgettable experience, I was given the platform during the FIG Assembly together with other Young Surveyor Grant recipients to share my career ambitions for the future as a young surveyor.



Figure 7: With other young surveyor grant awardees during the final day of the congress in Warsaw

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my gratitude to the FIG Foundation together with the entirety of the organizing committee for allowing me this great opportunity to attend the FIG Congress 2022 in Warsaw, Poland. Through this event I have managed to grow my career and to become a better young surveyor through the networks and collaborations that were established during the event.

About Kumbirai Matingo

Kumbirai is a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) practitioner who began his journey as a GIS Analysis, Developer and Land Surveyor.

Through his work, Kumbirai explores and experiments with spatial data among various tools and is obsessed with the dynamics of spatial data and innovation towards driving sustainable causes.

He is also an Assistant-Lecturer in the field of Surveying and Geomatics in Zimbabwe and a mentor who loves sharing knowledge and transferring skills to the younger generation.

Kumbirai is also the founder of Geo-Connect (formerly known as African Surveyors Connect) a community based and non-profit organisation which seeks to build geospatial skills and capacity in the youth across Africa.

