

EGU21-4975

<https://doi.org/10.5194/egusphere-egu21-4975>

EGU General Assembly 2021

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MOPGA/Make Air Quality Great Again: AfriqAir and solution-oriented approaches to improving air quality in the Global South

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Air pollution is responsible for seven million premature deaths each year, linked to numerous cardiovascular and other diseases. Both monitoring pollution levels and identifying sources is necessary to reduce overall exposure. Many parts of Africa suffer from extreme pollution levels, but the cost of traditional air quality monitoring leads to a significant data gap, which also hinders the development of local capacity to do these tasks. In order to overcome these obstacles, the “Make Air Quality Great Again” (MAQGA) project was funded by the French Agence nationale de la recherche (ANR) under the MOPGA program. The MAQGA project in turn set up the AfriqAir consortium, a global organization that brings together air quality scientists and researchers interested in using air quality data to tackle air quality problems in Africa. Now entering its third year of existence, the consortium has made real strides in increasing the number of air quality monitors in Africa as well as building capacity with local researchers and partners across the continent. This presentation will provide a recap of what the consortium has achieved with ANR and MOPGA support, how we have persevered through the COVID-19 pandemic, and our plans for the immediate and long-term futures. This presentation will cover the scientific gains made by connecting African air quality researchers as well as the successes aided by the network building that AfriqAir has facilitated.

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