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Calibration of the local magnitude scale (MI) for Central Southern Africa

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Research Article

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1	Calibration of the local magnitude scale (M_l)
2	for Central Southern Africa
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13

Abstract

The Central Southern Africa is an area of moderate seismic activity 14 generally caused by the presence of the East Africa Rift System. To 15 improve the quantification of seismicity in this region, we propose a local 16 magnitude scale (M_l) , based on the original Richter definition to be 17 used by the Zimbabwe and Botswana national networks. The magnitude 18 scale is developed using 854 seismic events that occurred between 1997 19 - 2000 and 2013 - 2018. These events were recorded by 61 broadband 20 seismic stations located in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. We 21 evaluated 6128 traces of zero to peak maximum amplitude, recorded on 22 the horizontal channel from simulated Wood-Anderson seismograms. All 23

24 25 6128 maximum amplitude measurements were inverted simultaneously to determine the attenuation constants. The resultant M_l is defined as

$M_l = \log_{10} A + 0.80 \times \log_{10}(R) + 0.00086 \times R - 1.37 \pm S$

in which A is ground displacement amplitude determined from instru-26 ment corrected synthetic Wood-Anderson seismograms in nanometres, 27 R is the epicentral distance (km), and S is the station correction. Sta-28 tion corrections were determined for all stations during the regression 29 analysis resulting in values ranging between -0.44 to +0.31. The range 30 in station corrections suggests a strong influence of local site effects on 31 the amplitude of the seismic signal. Without station correction, the over-32 all standard deviation of the magnitude residuals using our magnitude 33 relation is 0.32 with a variance of 0.10, while using station corrections, 34 the standard deviation and variance improved to 0.17 and 0.02 respec-35 tively. There is 80 % reduction in variance when our relation is used 36 together with station corrections. A comparison of our local magnitude 37 relation with published m_{blg} relationships for Southern Africa shows 38 that these two magnitude scales are almost equivalent. The M_l equation 39 for Central Southern Africa derived in this study has good correlation 40 with m_b values reported by the ISC and NEIC and attains system-41 atically lower magnitude values than the South African relationship. 42

Keywords: Wood-Anderson seismogram, Local magnitude scale, Amplitude,
 Seismic attenuation, Central Southern Africa

45 Article Highlights:

- Local magnitude scale was developed for Central Southern Africa region.
- ⁴⁷ The new scale will help in developing more accurate homogenized earthquake
- 48 catalog for Botswana and Zimbabwe.
- The new scale will also improve seismic hazard studies Central Southern
 Africa.

⁵¹ 1 Introduction

Local magnitude scale (M_l) is one of the commonly used scales to quantify 52 relative size of an earthquake. It was defined by Richter(1935, 1958) as the 53 logarithm of the maximum zero to peak amplitude measured on a Wood-54 Anderson (WA) instrument with amplification of 2800 at a natural period of 55 0.8 sec (Anderson and Wood, 1925). Some recent studies (Uhrhammer and 56 Collins, 1990; Uhrhammer et al, 1996), as does the IASPEI standard formula 57 (Bormann and Dewey, 2012) have shown that the effective amplification of 58 the typical WA seismograph is around 2080 times. A standard formulation of 59 Richter's M_l is written as (Richter, 1935, 1958; Hutton and Boore, 1987): 60

$$M_l = \log A - \log A_0 + S \tag{1}$$

Where, A is half of the peak-to-peak amplitude (mm) of a horizontal compo-61 nent on a standard WA seismometer, $-logA_0$ is the distance normalizing term 62 that reflects the overall attenuation attributes in the region of interest, and S 63 is the station correction defined relative to a reference site condition. In order 64 to maintain (Richter, 1935) original definition of M_l , $-logA_0$ is defined such 65 that 1 mm of amplitude on a WA instrument located at a reference site 100 km 66 away from an event would register as a magnitude 3 event. The main aim of 67 this study is to propose a relationship that estimates M_l from the inversion of 68 amplitudes of earthquakes recorded by broadband seismic stations located in 69 Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. Results from this study will improve 70 the calculation of earthquake magnitudes in the region. The study area is 71 characterized by a moderate level of seismicity. Although, the area experi-72 ences, low-magnitude seismicity, one large shallow earthquake occurred on the 73

4 Calibration of the local magnitude scale (M_l) for Central Southern Africa 3^{rd} of April 2017 with a magnitude M6.5 (Asefa and Ayele, 2021; Gardonio 74 et al, 2018; Midzi et al, 2018). This earthquake was followed by aftershocks 75 which lasted for several months (Mulabisana et al, 2021; Olebetse et al, 2020; 76 Midzi et al. 2018). Monitoring of earthquakes in this area is carried out by 77 the Botswana Geoscience Institute (BGI, formally the Botswana Geological 78 Survey), Goetz Observatory (Department of Meteorological Services) in Zim-79 babwe and also by the Council for Geoscience (CGS), South Africa. Seismic 80 monitoring in Zimbabwe started in 1959 through the installation of the first 81 seismic station in Bulawayo. The need to establish a seismic network in Zim-82 babwe was necessitated by the building of the world's largest man-made lake 83 in Kariba. The current network is made up of four broadband seismic stations. 84 One of these stations (BLWY) is operated by Africa Array (AF). In addition, 85 MATP seismic station was installed in 2004 as part of the International Mon-86 itoring System (IMS) network. In 2014, Goetz Observatory installed 2 more 87 seismic stations at Chipinge (CHIPN) and Karoi (KRI) to add to the existing 88 stations. 89

Since April 1993 a global telemetered seismograph station (LBTB), located in 90 Lobatse, has been operating in Botswana. From November 2013 to February 91 2018, a temporary array of seismic stations (Network of Autonomously Record-92 ing Seismographs (NARS), Botswana network) was deployed in Botswana to 93 address the questions about the crustal and upper mantle structure. The NARS 94 consisted of 21 broadband seismic stations distributed over the whole coun-95 try. In February 2018, following the 3^{rd} April 2017 M6.5 earthquake, the BGI 96 converted the 21 temporary NARS stations to become part of the permanent 97 network, which is now used to monitor earthquakes in and around Botswana. 98 Data that is recorded from these stations is transmitted in real time to the 99

BGI for analysis. Between 1997 and 1999, the Southern African Seismic Exper-100 iment (SASE) was set up and broadband seismic stations were installed in 101 Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa as part of this experiment. It was part 102 of the Kaapvaal project (Carlson et al, 1996, 2000) with the responsibility to 103 investigate the seismic structure of the region. Both BGI, Goetz Observatory 104 and CGS use SEISAN (Havskov et al, 2020; Ottemöller et al, 2021) for manual 105 analysis of local and regional earthquakes. BGI does not have its own magni-106 tude relation and currently the South African M_l scale (Saunders et al, 2013) 107 is used. This is assumed to be reasonable since the two areas are close and 108 tectonically similar. The geology of South Africa and Zimbabwe are similar, 109 they both consist of Archean cratons which are almost of similar age and the 110 cratons are both surrounded by mobile belts (Eriksson et al, 2011; Fouch et al, 111 2004; Jelsma and Dirks, 2002) 112

¹¹³ During the 1963 — 1991 period, the m_{blg} magnitude scale was developed by ¹¹⁴ Henderson (1974) and used for magnitude estimation in the southern African ¹¹⁵ region by the Goetz Observatory. The Henderson (1974) relation (equation 2) ¹¹⁶ assumes shallow focal depth between 0 and 10 km.

$$mb_{lg} = \log[A_{(\max)}/T] + \beta[\Delta]$$
⁽²⁾

¹¹⁷ in which $A_{(\text{max})}$ is the maximum ground motion amplitude of the Lg phase in ¹¹⁸ μ m, T is the period in seconds and the $\beta[\Delta]$ is the distance normalizing term. ¹¹⁹ Further details of this relation are found in Chow et al (1980) and Hlatywayo ¹²⁰ (2001). The scatter in the derivation of $\beta[\Delta]$ in Henderson (1974) was large and ¹²¹ in order to improve the magnitude values of earthquakes in Southern Africa, ¹²² Chow et al (1980) developed an m_{blg} magnitude scale using a large dataset ¹²³ and obtained the following distance normalizing term

$$\beta(\triangle) = 2.66 \log_{10} \triangle + 2.61 \tag{3}$$

for

$$5^{\circ} \le \triangle \le 20^{\circ}$$

where $A_{(\max)}$ is the ground motion amplitude of the Lg phase in nanometres (nm) and \triangle is the epicentral distance.

¹²⁶ 2 Data and Processing

Three component digital recordings from 61 seismological stations from 127 Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, were used to carry out this study. 128 These recordings correspond to shallow earthquakes of focal depth less than 129 35 km. Of the 61 stations used in this study, 20 are part of the SASE broad-130 band seismic stations. Furthermore, we used seismic stations from NARS, BX 131 - Botswana network and two Zimbabwean permanent stations. These stations 132 continuously recorded earthquake data in that time period. Fig. 1 shows a 133 map of stations as well as epicentral locations of the 854 earthquakes whose 134 parameters were used in this study. 135

The reviewed standard earthquake Bulletin that is routinely released by the International Seismological Centre (ISC) (publicly available at http://www.isc.ac.uk) was used to select 854 events for which matching waveform data were obtained from the Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology (IRIS). Fig. 2 shows the distribution of earthquakes used with respect to hypocentral distance. The analysis was restricted to earthquakes recorded in the range 0 – 1000 km from the hypocentre. Magnitudes in Fig. 2





Fig. 1 Topographic map showing the spatial distribution of earthquakes (red open circles) used in this study. Dark blue triangles show the NARS stations while the white triangles are stations from the SASE network used in this study. The black triangle represents MATP station. The sky blue triangles represent stations used by the Council for Geoscience (CGS) in their routine data analysis (Saunders et al, 2013)

were calculated using the relationship obtained in this study. Fig. 2 also shows that most earthquakes used in this study are within the M_l range of 2–7.

To generate an M_l scale for Central Southern Africa, a Python-based algorithm was developed to automatically measure half peak-to-peak displacement amplitudes using the compiled waveform data. We took advantage of the software Obspy (Beyreuther et al, 2010), a Python-based package with several



Fig. 2 Magnitude and hypocentral distance distribution for earthquakes used in this study. Event magnitudes are computed using the scale developed in this study.

¹⁴⁹ modules designed to help users in the workflow of downloading, inspecting and ¹⁵⁰ processing of seismic waveforms. All waveform traces were demeaned, filtered ¹⁵¹ between 1 and 10 Hz, and transformed to displacement through deconvolution ¹⁵² of the instrument response. Given the location of an event as provided in the

ISC Bulletin, we used the AK135 velocity model (Kennett et al, 1995), to predict local P and S wave arrivals. We then applied a standard signal-to-noise
ratio (SNR) detector around the predicted arrivals to check the quality of the waveforms (example of a processed waveform is shown in Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 Regional earthquake seismograph 1997/08/01 4.7 $m_{b(isc)}$ for an earthquake located in South Africa that was recorded by station SA80 in Zimbabwe at 8.97° from the epicentre. The top trace is the original record whilst the bottom trace is the simulated WA record. p_onset and s_onset are the theoretical P wave and S wave arrival times respectively.

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¹⁵⁷ We performed several tests on the SNR to identify the best minimum thresh-¹⁵⁸ old. In this study we define the threshold to be 2.0, thus waveforms with

Calibration of the local magnitude scale (M_l) for Central Southern Africa 10 $SNR \leq 2.0$ were rejected. For each station and for each earthquake, maxi-159 mum trace amplitudes were measured on both N-S and E-W components. The 160 absolute maximum amplitude between the 2 components was used to consti-161 tute a single measurement. The automatically measured amplitudes at most 162 seismic stations compared favourably to amplitudes that are stored at the ISC 163 Bulletin (e.g Fig. S1). Our approach for amplitude picking, described above is 164 summarized in the flowchart in Fig. S2. The number of observations made at 165 each seismic station are shown in Fig. 4a and amplitudes picked are plotted 166 against hypocentral distance as shown in Fig. 4b. 167

In order to develop the M_l scale for Central Southern Africa, we applied the general form of local magnitude scale by (Richter, 1935) as follows:

$$M_{l(ij)} = \log_{10} A_{ij} + a \log_{10} R_{ij} + b R_{ij} + S_j + C$$
(4)

where i and j are earthquake and station index respectively. The coefficient a, 168 depends on geometrical spreading, b on attenuation, A_{ij} is amplitude measured 169 in nanometres (nm), R_{ij} is the hypocentral distance in km, S_j is the station 170 correction to the magnitude for the j^{th} observation site and C is a station 171 correction term which gives the same magnitude for the same amplitude at the 172 reference distance as in Southern California (Richter, 1935). We invert for a and 173 b using singular decomposition method as implemented in the MAG2 program 174 which is part of the SEISAN software package Ottemöller and Sargeant (2013); 175 Havskov et al (2020); Ottemöller et al (2021). MAG2 utilizes singular value 176 decomposition (SVD) using Numerical Recipes (Press et al, 1996) to invert the 177 observations. Furthermore, we also conducted another inversion in which a, 178 and b values are fixed to the scale we obtained, and only invert for the station 179 corrections. Table 1 represents the input parameters that were used with the 180



Fig. 4 (a) Number of station readings used in analysis (b) Logarithm of the WA amplitudes in nm as a function of distance.

¹⁸¹ MAG2 code. We calculated magnitude residuals between magnitude assigned ¹⁸² to a single station and the median magnitude earthquake. The M_l values ¹⁸³ obtained using the new relation derived in this study were then compared to ¹⁸⁴ those obtained for the same events using the Saunders et al (2013) relation ¹⁸⁵ for South Africa, Hutton and Boore (1987) for California, and Ottemöller and 12 Calibration of the local magnitude scale (M_l) for Central Southern Africa 136 Sargeant (2013) scale for the United Kingdom. Furthermore, our M_l values 137 were also compared to m_{blg} values which we calculated based on the Henderson 138 (1974) and Chow et al (1980) relations.

Table 1Input data to the mag2 code.

Input variable	Value		
Minimum number of observations per event	5		
Number of events used	854		
Number of observations	6128		
Number of stations	61		
Number of equations for SVD inversion	5310		
Number of model parameters	687		
Distance range	0 - 1000 km		

To evaluate whether the new scale is an improvement over any alternative relation, we look for a reduction in standard deviation (equation 5) and overall variance (equation 6) of all magnitude residuals computed as

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\sum \frac{(x_i - \mu)^2}{N}} \tag{5}$$

$$\sigma^2 = \sqrt{\sum \frac{(x_i - \mu)^2}{N - 1}} \tag{6}$$

¹⁹² in which σ is the standard deviation of all the observations, N is the number ¹⁹³ of all observations, x_i is the value of each observation, μ is the mean of all the ¹⁹⁴ observations and σ^2 is the variance of the observations.

¹⁹⁵ 3 Results and Discussion

The coefficients (a, b and C) were determined by applying the SVD using the (a, b, b, c)

¹⁹⁷ Numerical Recipe routines (Press et al, 1996) to invert 6128 amplitude value

¹⁹⁸ observations. The corresponding epicentres-station path covers most of the ¹⁹⁹ studied areas in Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5 Ray-Path coverage of 854 events used for M_l inversion. Red open circles give the event locations, dark blue triangles indicate NARS station locations, white triangles are SASE stations and sky blue triangle is the MATP station in Zimbabwe. The black lines represent epicentre-station path.

²⁰⁰ After inverting our observations, we obtained the following scale:

$$M_l = \log_{10} A + 0.80 \times \log_{10}(R) + 0.00086 \times R - 1.37 \pm S \tag{7}$$

in which A is ground displacement amplitude determined from instrument cor rected synthetic WA seismograms in nanometres, R is the hypocentral distance

14 Calibration of the local magnitude scale (M_l) for Central Southern Africa 203 (km), and S is the station correction. The estimated value for the geometrical 204 spreading coefficient, a, is 0.80 ± 0.24 , and the anelastic attenuation coefficient, 205 b, is 0.00086 ± 0.00025 and C is -1.37. The obtained M_l relation is valid for 206 distances up to 1000 km.

Fig. 6 shows the comparison of our calibration curves against those for South-207 ern California (Hutton and Boore, 1987), South Africa (Saunders et al. 2013) 208 and United Kingdom (Ottemöller and Sargeant, 2013). It can be seen that for 209 distances less than 80 km, the attenuation rate for Central Southern Africa is 210 slightly larger than the (Saunders et al. 2013) relation, the (Hutton and Boore, 211 1987) relation and the relation by (Ottemöller and Sargeant, 2013). However, 212 for all distances greater than 80 km, the attenuation obtained in this study 213 is significantly lower than that of Southern California and the United King-214 dom. This is not surprising since the geology of our study is dominated by old 215 cratons which promote low seismic attenuation. 216

The station correction factor for a particular station represents the local site conditions (Richter, 1958) and can be used to compensate for heterogeneous velocity structure near affected stations (Douglas, 1967; Pujol, 1988). High station correction values indicate site effects related to geological conditions or the presence of seismic noise have a strong influence on amplitude.

Fig. 7 is a representation of mean station residual variation across different networks within the study area. As we have explained before, BX network is a continuation of the NARS network. The only difference between the two networks is that during the transition, the sample rate was changed from 20 Hz (NARS network) to 40 Hz (BX network).



Fig. 6 Comparison of attenuation curves for Southern California, South Africa, United Kingdom (UK), Turkey and for the area of this study.

For the NARS and BX networks, stations are arranged such that the station 227 below is a cosite station to the station above it. As an example, station NE201 228 is a cosite station to SKOMA and station NE213 is now station PHPEN. From 229 Fig. 7, it can be seen that the two networks have similar station corrections. 230 Also shown in Fig. 7 are the mean station residuals for cosite station BLWY an 231 Africa Array (AF) station and SA72 from the SASE network. Station MATP 232 is located at approximately 20 km south of station SA72/BLWY. As seen from 233 Fig. 7, station SA72 has a low station correction and standard deviation. This 234 is not surprising since it can be seen that almost all stations from the SASE 235 network have consistently low station residuals as compared to the NARS and 236

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BX networks. Furthermore, the station correction differences between SASE stations and BX/NARS network stations is clearly visible at some nearby sites such as NE220 and SA68 as well as NE217 and SA71. We are not sure as to why the SASE network has low station corrections but we can only speculate that this may be due to good metadata stored at IRIS. To sum up, station corrections calculated in this study range from -0.44 to +0.31.units of magnitude, which suggests significant differences in site effect.



Fig. 7 Spatial variation of average station residuals (station magnitude-median magnitude) deduced in this study. Negative and positive average are shown by green and red colour, respectively. Text near the vertical bars denote seismic stations names. White polygons indicate the boundaries of the cratons inside our study area.

Fig. 8 shows comparison of our M_l with m_{blg} derived from Chow et al (1980), 244 m_{blg} after Henderson (1974), $m_{(bISC)}$, $m_{(bNEIC)}$ and M_l reported by South 245 Africa $M_{l(PRE)}$. To compare our relation with m_{blg} , we extracted Lg maximum 246 amplitudes from the ISC Bulletin. These Lg amplitudes were then used to 247 compute the m_{blg} magnitudes using relations after Chow et al (1980) and Hen-248 derson (1974). For $m_{b(ISC)}$, $m_{b(NEIC)}$ and $M_{l(PRE)}$, we downloaded network 249 magnitudes from the ISC Bulletin (Storchak et al, 2017, 2020) and then com-250 pared the network magnitude with event magnitudes calculated in this study. 251

For our M_l and m_{blg} (Chow et al, 1980) we obtained a strong positive correlation of $(R^2 = 0.86)$ from regression analysis using 100 entries. The relation between our Ml and mblg is shown in Equation 8:

$$m_{blg(Chow\ et\ al.,\ 1980)} = 0.80 \times M_l - 0.006,$$
 (8)



for $m_{blg} \le 5.9$, n =100

Fig. 8 Comparison of our local M_l obtained in this study plotted against (a) m_{blg} by Chow et al. (1980) (b) m_{blg} by Henderson (1974) (c) $m_{b(ISC)}$ (d) m_{bNEIC} (e) $M_{(lPRE)}$. In all figures, the solid black line represents the best-fit line obtained from the regression analysis.

18 Calibration of the local magnitude scale (M_l) for Central Southern Africa Similarly, there is a good correspondence $(R^2 = 0.86)$ between the Henderson (1974), m_{blg} and M_l from this study. We derived the following relation (equation 9).

$$m_{blg(Henderson, 1974)} = 0.85 \times M_l + 0.12,$$
 (9)

256 for $m_{(blg)} \leq 5.9$, n =100

The correlation of our M_l and $m_{b(ISC)}$ from 90 entries as depicted in Fig. 9c is seen to follow the relation in equation 10,

$$m_{b(ISC)} = 1.08 \times M_l - 0.18,\tag{10}$$

for $m_{b(ISC)} \leq 6.7, n = 90$, with a strong positive correlation. Similarly, the regression between $M_{l(thisstudy)}$ and $m_{b(NEIC)}$ as presented in Fig. 8d yielded the following relation (equation 11), where $(R^2 = 0.94)$

$$m_{b(NEIC)} = 0.65 \times M_l + 0.57,$$
 (11)

for $m_{b(NEIC)} \leq 6.8$, n = 84, with a positive correlation ($R^2 = 0.80$) Magni-262 tude residuals, defined as the difference between the magnitude calculated at 263 individual stations and the event magnitude for all the stations for a particu-264 lar seismic event are shown in Fig. 9 and Table S1. The magnitude residuals 265 obtained using the relation by Hutton and Boore (1987) with station correc-266 tions is shown in Fig. 9a. Similarly, Fig. 9b shows results obtained using the 267 relation by Saunders et al (2013) with station corrections. Magnitude residuals 268 obtained using the relation derived in this study without station corrections 269 is shown in Fig. 9c and with station corrections in Fig. 9d. From Fig. 9, it is 270

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observed that there is less scattering in residuals for the newly developed mag-271 nitude scale with station corrections as compared to the residuals obtained 272 using the other relations as well as the relation from this study without correc-273 tions. The overall, standard deviation of the magnitude residuals was computed 274 to check the effect of the new magnitude relation on magnitude estimates. 275 Summarised in Table 2 is the comparison of standard deviation and variance 276 of the magnitude residuals, and it can be seen that the standard deviation σ of 277 magnitude residuals from our study without stations correction is 0.32 (vari-278 ance, $\sigma^2 = 0.10$). Similarly, with station correction, we obtained a standard 279 deviation of 0.15 and variance of 0.02. These results show that the addition of 280 station corrections reduces the variance by 80~% and this reduction of variance 281 reduces station residuals close to zero. The standard deviation in residuals 282 and variance for Saunders et al (2013) using station corrections is also quite 283 low with values of 0.16 and 0.02 respectively. The average of the magnitude 284 residual for different stations are shown in Fig. 9e for bin distances of 100 km, 285 along with error bars. The residuals in Fig. 9e are small, which shows that the 286 newly developed magnitude scale compensates attenuation effects for all dis-287 tance ranges. Even though our new M_l scale with station corrections and the 288 Saunders et al (2013) M_l scale with station corrections produce almost iden-289 tical residuals a closer look at the number of observations (bar graph on right 290 hand side in Fig. 9) indicates that the average residual of our results with sta-291 tion correction is close to zero compared to the Saunders et al (2013) relation. 292 The geometrical spreading parameter and the distance attenuation parameter 293 values are slightly different. 294

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Fig. 9 Magnitude residuals calculated (a) (Hutton and Boore, 1987) with station corrections, (b) Saunders et al (2013) relation with station corrections (c) this study without station correction and (d) this study with station correction. (e) Mean values of magnitude residuals for the relation from this study with station corrections, divided in 100 km bins as a function of distance.

²⁹⁵ 4 Conclusion

A local magnitude scale was derived for Central Southern Africa using 6128
 traces of maximum amplitude observations. The observations were measured

Table 2 A comparison of the geometrical spreading parameter a, distance attenuation parameter b and standard deviation σ and variance σ^2 in magnitude residuals of the (Saunders et al, 2013) scale and the scale developed in this study.

Magnitude Scale	а	b	σ	σ^2
This Study (without station corrections)	0.80	0.00086	0.319	0.102
This Study (with station corrections)	0.80	0.00086	0.154	0.024
(Saunders et al, 2013) (with station corrections)	1.14	0.00063	0.156	0.024
(Hutton and Boore, 1987) (with station corrections)	1.11	0.00189	0.251	0.063

on the horizontal components of observed WA seismograms at distances rang-298 ing from 0 to 1000 km. The data used was obtained from records of 854 shallow 299 earthquakes recorded by 61 broadband seismic stations. The scale derived was 300 based on the Richter (1935) definition of M_l . As part of the inversion process, 301 station corrections were determined for each of the stations that contributed 302 data. Values determined range from -0.44 to +0.31. Magnitude values obtained 303 using the new Central Southern Africa M_l scale were compared to those pub-304 lished by NEIC, PRE and ISC. The comparison shows that our solutions are 305 stable and can replace the current M_l relation being used in the region. Results 306 obtained were also analysed by studying the trend of the magnitude residuals. 307 Overall, the standard deviation and variance of the magnitude residuals with-308 out using station corrections are 0.32 and 0.1 respectively while those obtained 309 in this study using station corrections is 0.16 and 0.02. This shows 80 % reduc-310 tion in variance indicating that using the new relation obtained in this study 311 brings the average residual close to zero. 312

5 Data and resources

The bulletin data that was used in this study were downloaded from the ISC Bulletin (ISC, 2022). Waveform data were obtained from the Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology (IRIS). The python package Obspy (Beyreuther et al, 2010) was used to obtain some of the waveform data. Most 22 Calibration of the local magnitude scale (M_l) for Central Southern Africa 318 of the plots were generated using the Generic Mapping Tool (GMT) of (Wessel 319 et al, 2019).

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327 7 Authors' contributions

Blessing Shumba contributed to the development of the concept, data analysis, interpretation, and report writing. Vunganai Midzi was instrumental in the concept development and report writing. Brassnavy Manzunzu was involved in the report writing. Joseph Maritinkole was involved in data collection.

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³³⁴ 9 Competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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Fig. S1 Log (amplitude) obtained in this study plotted against amplitudes from the ISC Bulletin for LBTB seismic stations.



Fig. S2 Flowchart of the procedure we used to pick amplitudes.

Table S1 Station Correction factors with corresponding error at different stations. cf is the Station correction factor, symbol σ represents standard deviation and abbreviation sr denotes the sampling rate. Net is the network and obs represent the number of observation at a seismic station.

No.	Net	Code	Sensor	sr	Lat	Lon	Elev	Obs	\mathbf{cf}	σ
1	NR	NE201	STS2	20	-24.51	23.93	980	300	0.32	0.20
2	BX	SKOMA	STS2	40	-24.51	23.93	980	227	0.26	0.19
3	\mathbf{NR}	NE202	STS2	20	-24.11	21.78	1153	227	0.07	0.12
4	BX	LKGWB	STS2	40	-24.11	21.78	1153	175	0.02	0.12
5	\mathbf{NR}	NE203	STS2	20	-22.99	20.19	1313	127	0.06	0.15
6	BX	KOOLE	STS2	40	-22.99	20.19	1313	127	0.06	0.15
7	\mathbf{NR}	NE204	STS2	20	-18.53	21.33	1060	73	-0.18	0.14
8	BX	XAUDM	STS2	40	-18.53	21.33	1060	23	-0.38	0.19
9	\mathbf{NR}	NE205	STS2	20	-18.62	23.50	961	89	-0.11	0.21
10	BX	SLIND	STS2	40	-18.62	23.50	961	32	-0.20	0.17
11	\mathbf{NR}	NE206	STS2	20	-17.80	25.16	1006	113	0.008	0.26
12	BX	KSANE	STS2	40	-17.80	25.16	1006	89	0.02	0.22
13	\mathbf{NR}	NE207	STS2	20	-19.52	21.17	1094	64	0.46	0.17
14	BX	QNGWA	STS2	40	-19.52	21.17	1094	28	0.41	0.18
15	NR	NE208	STS2	20	-21.94	25.44	1083	244	-0.19	0.18
16	BX	KHWEE	STS2	40	-21.94	25.44	1083	157	-0.35	0.21
17	NR	NE209	STS2	20	-21.40	23.77	1005	83	-0.24	0.16
18	BX	CKGRV	STS2	40	-21.40	23.77	1005	117	-0.27	0.20
19	NR	NE210	STS2	20	-21.36	21.21	1198	200	0.24	0.18
20	BX	GRTLG	STS2	40	-21.36	21.21	1198	195	0.10	0.17
21	NR	NE211	STS2	20	-22.85	22.20	1153	352	0.06	0.13
22	BX	KGCAE	STS2	40	-22.85	22.20	1153	231	0.02	0.12
23	NR	NE212	STS2	20	-23.38	24.66	1038	357	0.14	0.29
24	BX	KDWAN	STS2	40	-23.38	24.66	1038	255	0.05	0.17
25	NR	NE213	STS2	20	-25.47	22.85	1030	407	-0.29	0.18
26	BX	PHPEN	STS2	40	-25.47	22.85	1030	150	-0.36	0.20
27	NR.	NE214	STS2	20	-19.38	22.16	985	16	-0.11	0.18
28	BX	GMARE	STS2	40	-19.38	22.16	985	34	-0.26	0.25
29	NR	NE215	STS2	20	-18.78	25.19	1035	64	0.14	0.16
30	NR	NE216	STS2	20	-20.19	24.53	956	280	-0.11	0.14
31	BX	PHDHD	STS2	40	-20.19	24.53	956	109	-0.16	0.16
32	NR	NE217	STS2	20	-21.09	27.33	1047	352	0.44	0.18
33	BX	BROLN	STS2	40	-21.09	27.33	1047	354	0.31	0.22
34	NR.	NE218	STS2	20	-20.56	26.21	941	376	-0.12	0.16
35	BX	SOOWA	STS2	40	-20.56	26.21	941	221	-0.16	0.17
36	NR	NE219	STS2	20	-22.56	27.44	911	408	-0.20	0.19
37	BX	MREMI	STS2	40	-22.56	27.44	911	243	-0.22	0.21
38	NR.	NE220	STS2	20	-23.36	25.85	1020	382	0.47	0.22
39	BX	LPHEP	STS2	40	-23.36	25.85	1020	322	0.39	0.20
40	NR.	NE221	STS2	20	-25.81	24.80	1158	540	-0.18	0.22
41	BX	NE221	STS2	40	-25.81	24.80	1158	237	-0.25	0.20
42	XA	SA55	STS2	20	-22.97	28.29	918	279	0.08	0.12
43	XA	SA56	STS2	20	-23.00	29.07	909	569	-0.10	0.09
44	XA	SA57	STS2	20	-22.98	30.02	787	621	0.05	0.08
45	XA	SA63	STS2	20	-23.65	26.08	1008	208	-0.21	0.15
46	XA	SA64	STS2	20	-22.96	26.20	1151	187	-0.08	0.14
47	XA	SA66	STS2	20	-21.90	26.37	1057	184	-0.22	0.14
48	XA	SA67	STS2	20	-21.88	27.27	913	192	0.05	0.09
49	XA	SA70	STS2	20	-21.08	26.33	990	206	-0.06	0.1
50	XA	SA71	STS2	20	-20.92	27.14	1072	153	0.04	0.11
51	XA	SA72	STS2	20	-20.14	28.61	1337	265	0.08	0.13
52	XA	SA73	STS2	20	-21.85	30.27	590	165	-0.03	0.19
53	XA	SA74	STS2	20	-21.92	30.93	487	165	0.13	0.12
54	XA	SA75	STS2	20	-20.86	28.99	971	192	0.04	0.09
55	XA	SA76	STS2	20	-20.63	29.84	978	353	0.01	0.07
56	XA	SA77	STS2	20	-20.75	30.91	576	203	0.03	0.08
57	XA	SA78	STS2	20	-19 46	30 77	1401	224	-0.05	0.09
58	XA	SA79	STS2	20	-20.02	30.51	1078	122	0.03	0.1
59	XA	SA80	STS2	20	-30.97	22.24	1452	130	0.01	0.08
60	AF	BLWY	STS2	40	-20.14	28.61	1348	93	-0.11	0.20
61	XA	MATP	CMG-3T	40	-20.42	28.49	1215	23	-0.16	0.17