



Commonwealth Scholarship
Commission in the UK

Evaluating Commonwealth Scholarships in the United Kingdom

Review of the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme 2008-2011



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Executive summary

The Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme was established in 2002, the newest of seven programmes offered by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC). Aimed at professionals working in development-related organisations, its goal is to provide mid-career professionals with the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills in their given sector, and in turn have catalytic effects on their workplaces. The programme has a strong focus on development and targets candidates working in one of the following sectors: agriculture/fisheries/forestry, economic growth, education, engineering/science/technology, environment, governance, and public health.

In 2012, the CSC began work on a review of the programme over the past ten years, starting with an overview of the data currently held on the scheme. It was noted that, although regular monitoring had been undertaken and Professional Fellows had been included in broader evaluation and alumni exercises, the data collected showed some gaps and inconsistencies in the way it had been collected, not least the large amount of qualitative data collected as free text narrative. The first outcome of this review therefore is that, going forward, a new method of data collection will be employed in which regular surveys will be sent to Fellows, host organisations, and Fellows' employers, providing usable quantitative data to analyse.

That said, we do have a good amount of data and have collected more during the process of this review, which this report will seek to summarise by providing an overview of the scheme over the past decade and of the reported impact of its alumni. In the first chapter, we begin by outlining the purpose of the review, new activity that has been implemented in regard to evaluation of the scheme, and the scope of data that we currently hold on Professional Fellows. Chapter 2 gives a brief summary of the Professional Fellows themselves, exploring who they are and the disciplines they work in, as well as describing the survey results and analysis from the updated survey sent specifically to Professional Fellows who undertook an award between 2008 and 2011. Chapter 3 details the focus group discussion that was held in November 2012 with a group of Professional Fellows who undertook an award in 2012.

We then move on to consider the input and views of other participants in the programme: the hosts and employers. Chapter 4 consists of feedback from host organisations and employers on knowledge and skills gained from the award. It also includes results from a focus group discussion held in December 2012 with a select number of host organisations. Finally, Chapter 5 provides some individual examples of activity and subsequent outcomes as reported by Fellows after their return home, and some further examples from host organisations.

The report ends with some concluding remarks and recommendations for next steps. To summarise these, we find that, overall, the findings yield very positive results with regards to the Professional Fellowship scheme. The structure of the programme is very different from other CSC awards, in that it targets mid-career professionals and only lasts for a short duration, usually up to three months. However, it is a programme that seems able to demonstrate almost immediate impact upon return home, particularly within Fellows' workplaces. In recent years, the CSC has recognised the positive outcomes of the Professional Fellowship scheme by increasing the number of awards offered.

The notion of institutional capacity building is a key aspect of the Fellowships and is a central theme of the updated Professional Fellows survey, as well as the host organisation and employer surveys. One recommendation of this review is to develop this into a full report once more data has been collected and a more in-depth analysis can be conducted. However, in the interim, this review shows that:

- In total, 745 Professional Fellowships have been awarded as of 2012, with numbers increasing in 2013.
- The majority (68%) of Professional Fellows come from low income countries, reflecting the CSC's and DFID's focus on development impact. Over three-quarters (77%) of these awards have been given to individuals from sub-Saharan African countries.
- Professional Fellows undertake fellowships in a variety of sectors, with public health (38%) being the most popular.
- With regard to gender parity in take-up, more men take up Professional Fellowships than women. 2010 was the most balanced year, with 45% of Fellowships being taken up by women; however, this decreased to 40% in 2012.

In terms of survey responses, a total survey population of 278 Professional Fellow alumni were sent a separate evaluation survey in 2013, of which 114 responded. This response rate of 41% shows considerable improvement from previous years, and supports the recommendation that Professional Fellowship evaluation

needs to be better targeted and conducted separately from that of other CSC alumni. 46% of survey respondents were female, which is an improvement on the equivalent figure for the CSC's main alumni survey, whose survey population in the same period was 37% female. From the analysis, it was found that:

- **The vast majority of Professional Fellows return home upon completing their award, which fulfils the CSC expectation that alumni will return home following their award to make an impact in their home countries and institutions.** Survey results show that 95% of survey respondents currently reside in their home region.
- **Professional Fellowships provide individuals with the chance to enhance their work skills and knowledge that they would have not otherwise have had.** Findings show that 84% of survey respondents felt that it would have been impossible to undertake the Fellowship without the Commonwealth award.
- **Professional Fellowships help individuals gain further academic and professional qualifications.** Of the respondents that answered the question regarding academic qualifications (n=49), 30 reported receiving further academic qualifications, of which 83% felt that their Professional Fellowship contributed to this. Of the respondents that answered the question regarding professional qualifications (n=49), 40 responded that they had undertaken further professional qualifications, of which 77.5% reported the Fellowship contributing to this.
- **Undertaking Professional Fellowships contributes to individuals' career advancement.** Survey data shows that 45% of respondents reported obtaining a more senior position at their workplace within 12 months of completing their Professional Fellowship, of which 66% noted that the Fellowship contributed significantly to their career advancement. 67% of respondents reported that their Professional Fellowship played a significant role in gaining further advancements after the 12-month period following completion of their award.
- **Professional Fellowships provide the necessary skills to enable individuals to transfer knowledge they gain while on award. Furthermore, the Fellowship enables individuals to contribute to institutional capacity building.** Survey findings highlight that 89% of respondents stated that they had trained other colleagues on specific skills that were gained from undertaking the Fellowship, highlighting that knowledge transfer is far-reaching. 80% of respondents reported that they were able to make changes in how work or programmes were conducted in their workplace as a result of the Fellowship, with 73% asserting that they were able to establish new areas of work upon return home. 70% of respondents reported that departmental policies had been created or changed as a result of their input, while 66% reported having had influence over organisational policies.
- **Through direct and catalytic effects, Professional Fellowships play a significant role in contributing to socioeconomic development.** Survey results highlight that 81% of respondents claim to have had impact on socioeconomic development, which is a far higher percentage than reported by Commonwealth Scholars in the main evaluation survey (Masters' 74%, PhDs 60%). When breaking down development impact to specific areas, 53% (60 respondents) reported having an impact on education at the socioeconomic level. For those who reported socioeconomic impact in education, 57% (34 respondents) specified that this was in the area of research and training.
- **In addition to enhancing professional development, Professional Fellowships provide invaluable life experience.** The focus group discussion held in November 2012 with a select number of Professional Fellows highlighted how their Fellowship enabled them to gain an understanding of British culture and conversely gain an insight into the UK's global perspectives, which was viewed by Fellows as a very positive outcome.

Introduction

Alongside the academic awards it provides, the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC) offers individuals the opportunity to pursue career development through the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme. Since its inception in 2002, the scheme has provided a total of 745 awards (as of 2012) to Fellows from across the Commonwealth, with numbers steadily increasing in 2013.

Although a variety of programme data has been collected since 2002, resource limitations have meant that no specific analysis of monitoring and evaluation data has taken place until recently. As of 2013, new mechanisms have been put into place to ensure more efficient and reliable data collection from Fellows and host organisations, as well as Fellows' employers, which will enable a full-scale evaluation study in the future if need be. This consists of a tailored survey schedule in which Fellows receive a total of three surveys over an approximate three-year period: one after six months to a year, a second after 18 months, and a final after three years. This represents a change from previous practice, which was to include Professional Fellows in the broader evaluation surveys sent to all alumni on a five-yearly basis.

In addition to ensuring that data is captured from Fellows much sooner after their awards, host organisations and employers will also receive a one-off survey after a period of six months to a year following completion of the Fellow's award. It was felt that asking them to contribute anything further would be unreasonable, given time and resource constraints.

The overall aim of this report is to provide an overview of the existing data that is held on the Professional Fellowship scheme, including the most recent survey exercise, as well as outlining the new methods and procedures being implemented by the Evaluation Team to ensure consistent data collection going forward. The report also provides first-hand evidence of participant perspectives through summaries of focus group discussions that were held with both Fellows and host organisations in November and December 2012 respectively.

The report begins by providing a brief overview of the scheme and purpose of the review. The next section of the report consists of descriptive data analysis of the Professional Fellowship scheme and basic data regarding the Fellows. The second chapter provides a summary of the focus group discussion held with Fellows, and the third chapter reports on our engagement activities with hosts and employers. Finally, Chapter 4 provides some individual examples of impact and the type of work being undertaken by Fellows on their return home. In conclusion, we note that, although there is scope for greater data collection and more rigorous analysis in due course, we are still able to report that data currently held clearly demonstrates the positive impacts that Professional Fellowships have on individuals, institutions, and wider society.

Overview of the scheme

The Professional Fellowship programme has been part of the CSC's portfolio of awards since 2002. It is a professional development programme that aims to have a catalytic effect on international development by enhancing skills that can be subsequently applied in the Fellows' home countries upon their return. The programme provides funding for professionals from developing Commonwealth countries to undertake programmes of activity in the United Kingdom for between one and six months, with programmes normally tenable for three months.

Candidates are nominated and hosted by organisations in the United Kingdom ranging from international NGOs to UK-based charities, as well as organisations from both the public and private sectors. Candidates would normally be expected to have at least five years' relevant experience and must be able to demonstrate that their work is valuable to development in their home country. In addition, as well as the primary aim of enhancing the capacity and knowledge of the individual and their employer, the programme hopes to have a positive impact on host organisations and act as a tool for international collaboration.

The development focus is reflected in the fact that priority is given to applicants who are seeking to gain practical experience in the following areas:

- Agriculture/fisheries/forestry
- Economic growth
- Education
- Engineering/science/technology
- Environment
- Governance
- Public health

Applications are invited from nominating organisations in the UK willing to set up a programme of activity and either host the Fellow themselves or provide a link to a host. Organisations wishing to apply are required to set up a suitable programme and identify the Fellow(s) themselves. A programme can include time spent within the organisation itself, learning from colleagues in a structured manner, as well as time spent at other organisations in the UK and at conferences, and a limited time on short courses. In line with the CSC's mandate, programmes must have demonstrable development impact in the Fellow's home country.

Purpose of the review

The purpose of the review is twofold: firstly to provide an overview of the programme to date as well as an analysis of data collected since 2002, and secondly to identify the potential outcomes and development impact of the programme. For the latter, an analysis of data collected from the new survey tailored specifically to Professional Fellows has been undertaken, as well as qualitative research through focus group discussions held with the Fellows and host organisations. This review also seeks to address the fact that, although the CSC has collected a variety of data since the programme began 11 years ago, this data has not always been consistently collected or reported. In addition, this review is very timely as the methods undertaken will assist the CSC as it develops its evaluation capacity and will offer the opportunity for extrapolation of methods to the evaluation of its other programmes in due course.

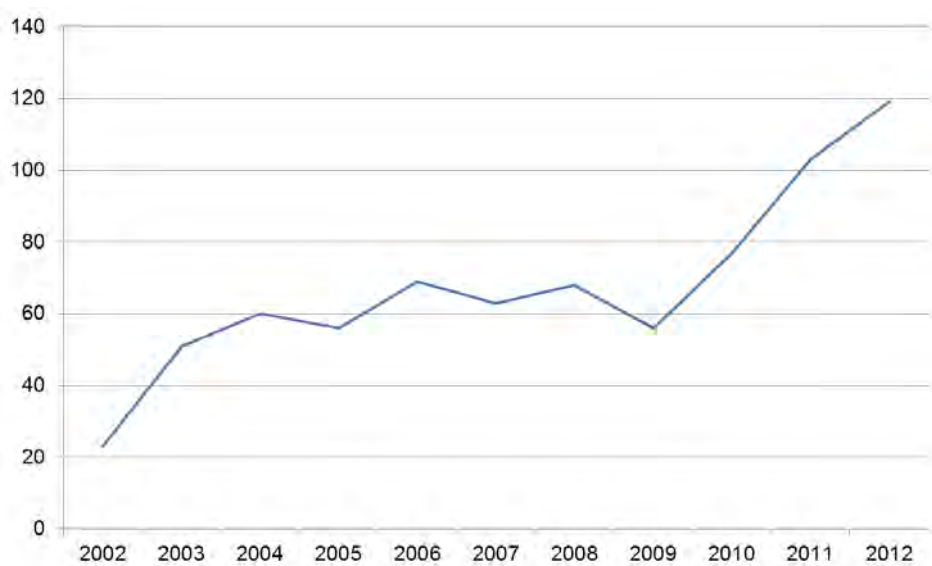
Chapter 1 Commonwealth Professional Fellows: who are they and what do they do?

Professional Fellowships 2002-2012

As part of this review process, the CSC Evaluation Team undertook a brief analysis of information held from the start of the Professional Fellowship scheme in 2002 to date, covering Fellowships held from 2002 to 2012 inclusive, although the new Professional Fellows survey was sent only to Fellows who held an award between 2008 and 2011 and who as such had not been included in other evaluation survey exercises.¹

As shown in Figure 1, a total of 745 awards were taken up from 2002 to 2012, with the highest annual number of awards (119) taken up in 2012. The general increase in the number of awards highlights the CSC's recognition of the positive impacts that Professional Fellowships have at the individual and institutional level, despite their relatively short length of tenure.

Figure 1 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012, by year



Gender

The data also shows that, while not at parity, the gender breakdown of Professional Fellowships is closer to it than some other programmes. As Figure 2 illustrates, men have held 427 of the 745 Fellowships offered to date (57%), while women have held 318 (43%).

¹ It should be noted that, due to the CSC funding cycle, the Professional Fellowship scheme begins in April each year. For example, Fellows in the 2012 cohort year will have started their award between April 2012-March 2013 and therefore, although some Fellows technically commenced their award in 2013, they are still counted in the 2012 cohort.

Figure 2 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012, by gender

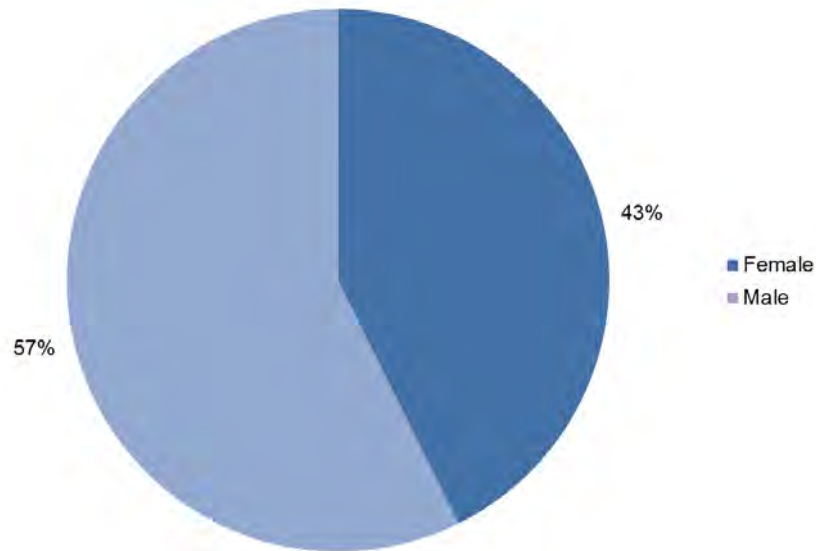


Figure 3 and Table 1 highlight the gender breakdown of awards between 2002 and 2012. Though more women than before have been awarded Fellowships in terms of actual numbers, there have been inconsistencies in the female to male ratio over the years. In 2010, 45% of Professional Fellows were female, meeting both the CSC’s and DFID’s business case targets. However, in 2011, this dropped to 38% before increasing to 40% in the last year for which we have complete data, 2012.

Figure 3 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012, by gender and year

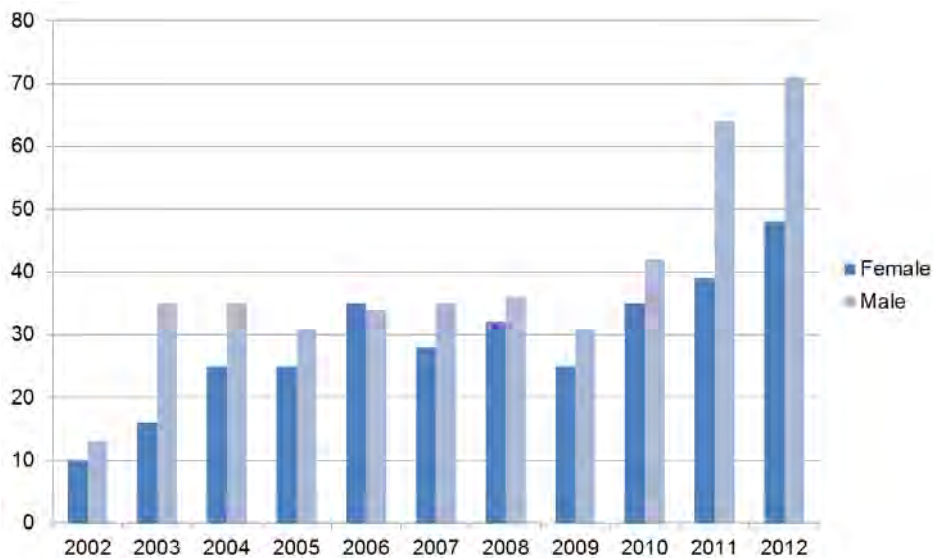
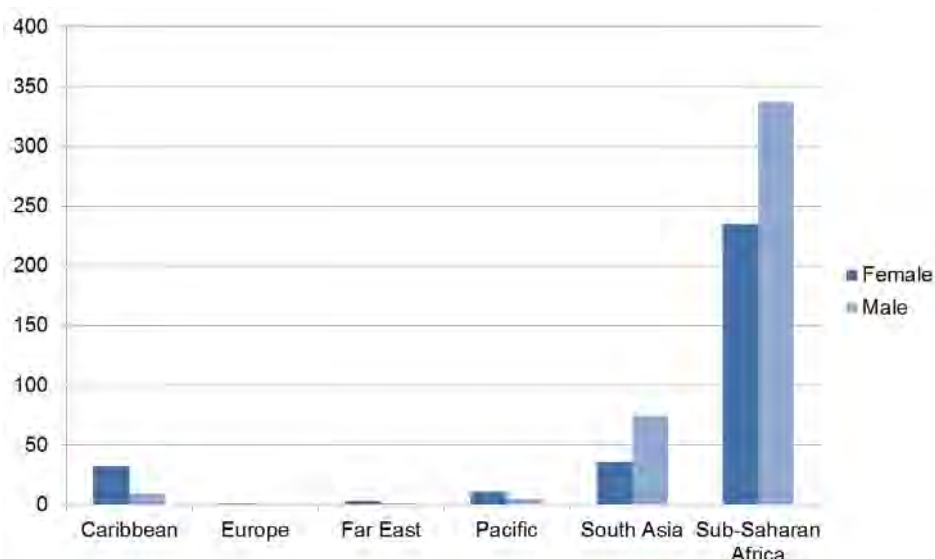


Table 1 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012 – gender breakdown

Award year	Female (n)	% Female	Male (n)	% Male	Total (n)
2002	10	43	13	57	23
2003	16	31	35	69	51
2004	25	42	35	58	60
2005	25	45	31	55	56
2006	35	51	34	49	69
2007	28	44	35	56	63
2008	32	47	36	53	68
2009	25	45	31	55	56
2010	35	45	42	55	77
2011	39	38	64	62	103
2012	48	40	71	60	119
Total	318	43	427	57	745

Figure 4 shows South Asia has the largest disparity between male and female Professional Fellows, with 67% (74) and 33% (36) respectively. Sub-Saharan Africa also has a fairly large disparity, with 59% (337) of award holders being male, and 41% (235) female. There is also a disparity in the Caribbean, although it is women with the largest share of awards with 76% (32) of awards, while males hold 24% (10).

Figure 4 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012, by gender and region



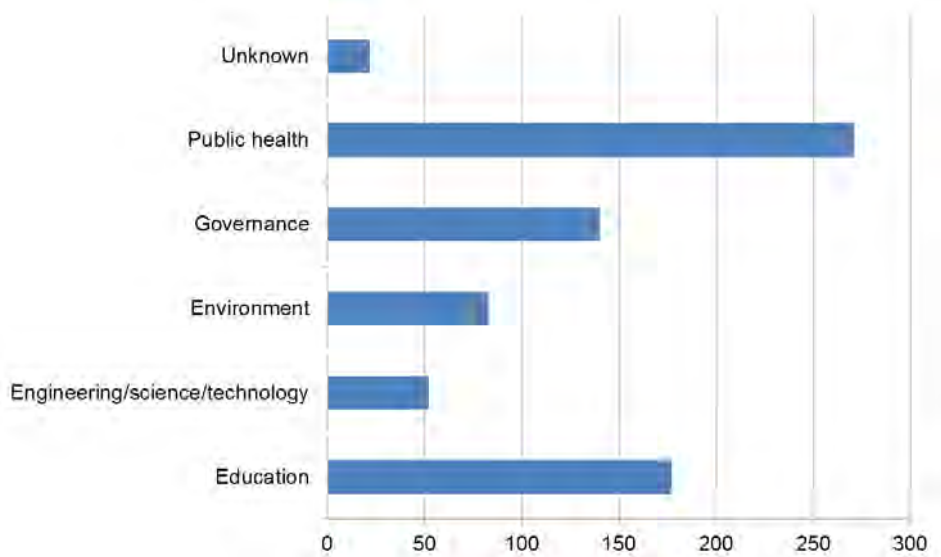
Region

Figure 4 also highlights the regional breakdown of award holders and shows that the vast majority of Professional Fellows (572, 77%) come from a sub-Saharan African country, with 110 (15%) from South Asia. This further reflects the CSC's emphasis on ensuring that awards have an impact on development in low income countries.

Sector

Professional Fellows work in a variety of different sectors, which have historically been coded in our records as education, engineering/science/technology, environment, governance, and public health. Chapter 5 provides some specific examples of the kind of activities our Fellows undertake within these sectors. Figure 5 below shows the breakdown of awards by sector. Public health is the most common, with a third (271, 36%) of Fellowships in this area, followed by Education, with almost a quarter of all Fellowships held (177, 24%).

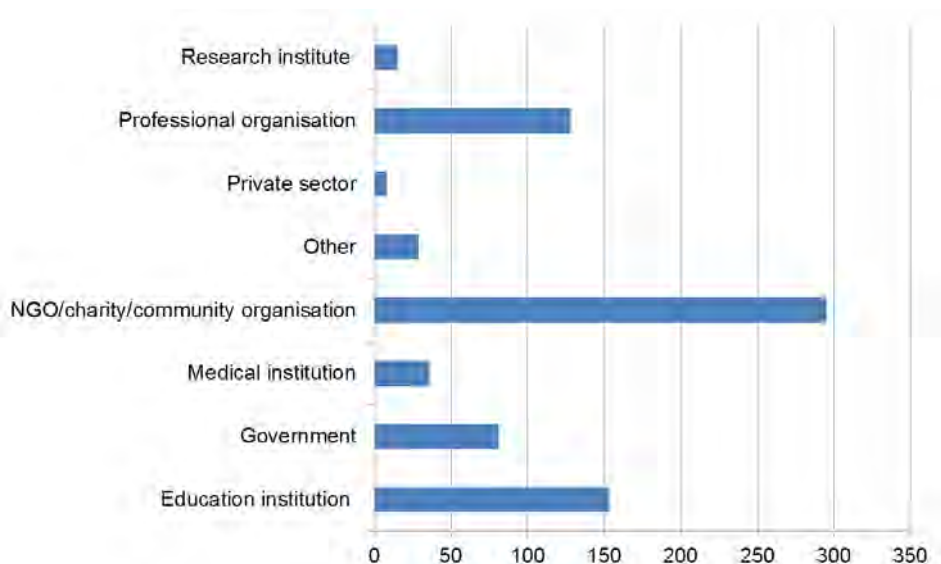
Figure 5 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012, by sector



Nominator category

Connected to the sector our Fellows held awards in is the kind of organisation that nominated them for the Fellowship. Figure 6 represents the spread of nominator categories. Nominators are organisations that nominate Professional Fellows for the scheme and in the vast majority of cases also host the Fellows in the UK. Nominator categories have been coded by the following types: education institution, government, medical institution, NGO/charity/community organisations, private sector, professional organisation, research institute, and other. The chart shows that 40% (295) of nominators fall under the category of NGO/charity/community organisation, while 21% (153) are an education institution. A number of Fellows (128, 17%) undertook their Fellowship within a professional organisation.

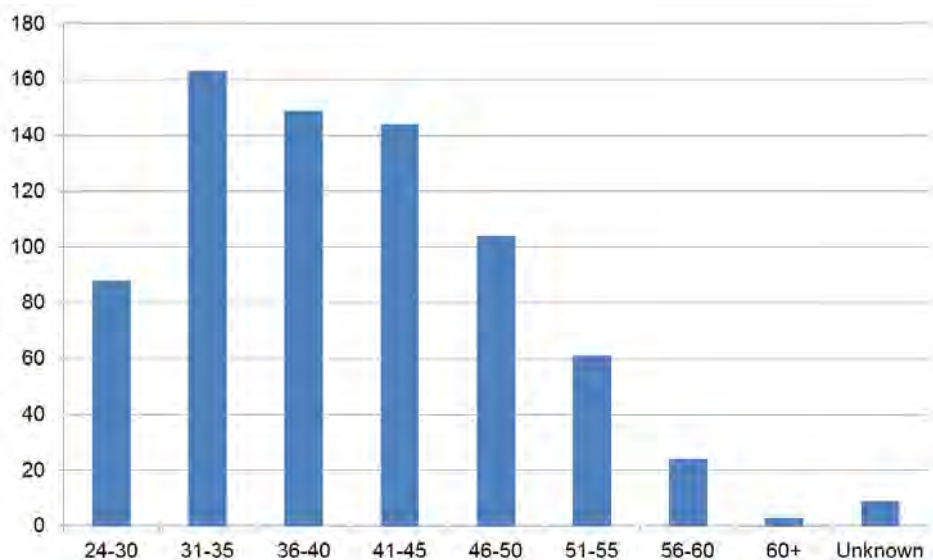
Figure 6 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012, by nominator category



Age

The majority of Professional Fellows are between the ages of 31-40 as outlined in Figure 7 below. This reflects the scheme’s mandate of selecting mid-career professionals to participate in the programme. 22% (163) of Professional Fellows for whom we hold data fall in the age group of 31-35, while 20% (149) are in the age range of 36-40.

Figure 7 Professional Fellowships 2002-2012, by age



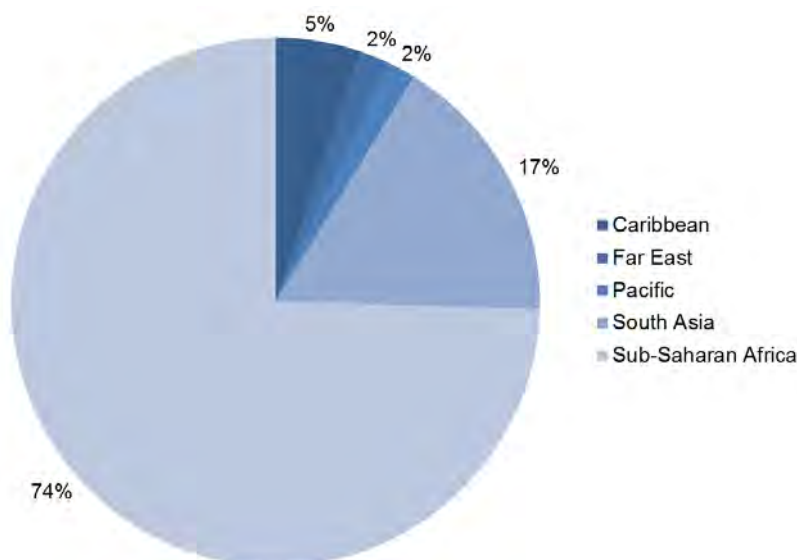
Professional Fellows 2008-2011: survey results and analysis

In this section we consider the responses of a subset of Professional Fellows who were sent an evaluation survey in 2013. As an earlier survey has allowed for the participation of Professional Fellows holding awards prior to 2007 in our impact evaluation work,² a new survey was sent electronically to 303 Fellows who held an award between 2008 and 2011. Of the 303 emails sent, there were 25 bounces, bringing the total survey population to 278. The response rate was 41%, with a total of 114 Fellows completing the survey, which is a vast improvement on the response rate of 9% in the 2012 annual survey that was sent to Professional Fellows who undertook an award in either 2002 or 2007, as part of the wider alumni evaluation exercise.

Survey section 1: who are the respondents?

Figure 8 shows that the vast majority (74%) of Professional Fellows who responded to the survey are citizens of countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This figure is no surprise given that the majority (77%) of the total population of Professional Fellows come from a Sub-Saharan African country. Although not explicit, this is a reflection of both the CSC's and DFID's commitment to have development impact in low income countries.

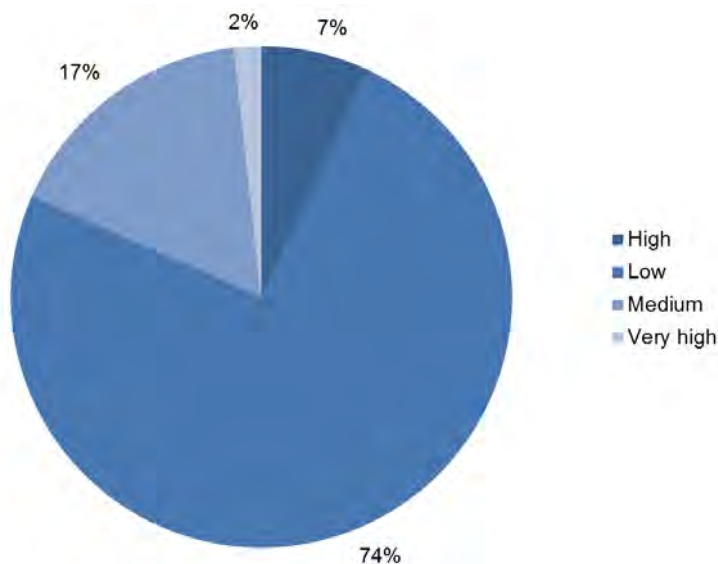
Figure 8 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by region of citizenship



² See Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom, *Evaluating Commonwealth Scholarships in the United Kingdom: Assessing impact in key priority areas* (2009) < <http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/2009/06/assessing-impact-in-key-priority-areas>>

Figure 9 illustrates that, although emphasis is given to providing awards to candidates from low income countries, and thus survey respondents mostly come from lower income countries, survey respondents also came from countries with a medium HDI ranking, as well as a small number from countries ranked as high/very high. This reflects the CSC's focus on development impact and the nominating routes of the programme rather than operating country quotas.³

Figure 9 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by HDI ranking of citizenship countries



95% of survey respondents are currently residing in their home region. Table 2 shows a regional breakdown. The brackets indicate the total population, and the percentages calculated are based on those totals. The figures presented are positive in the sense that they fulfil the CSC's expectation that Fellows will return home upon completion of their award to effect change in their respective countries or region.

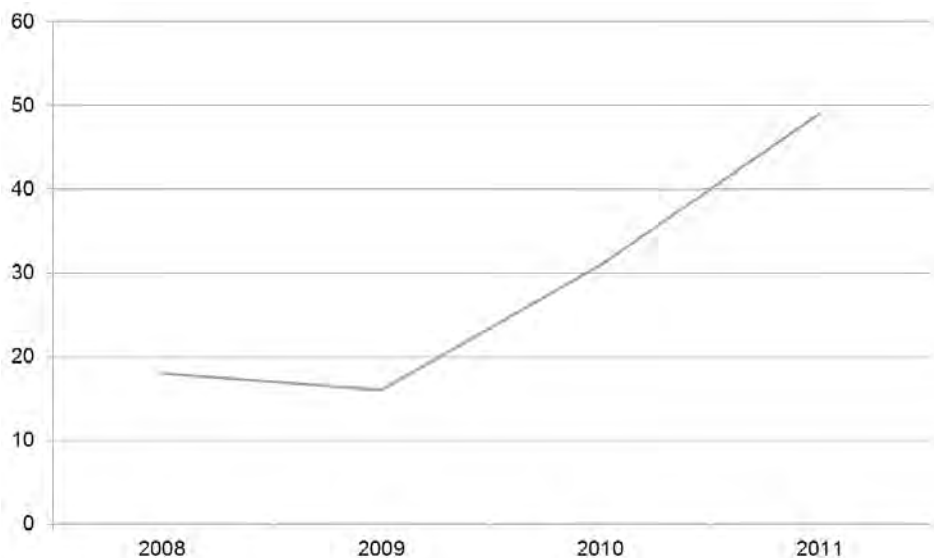
Table 2 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents working in their home region

Region	Respondents working in home region	% of region total
Caribbean (n=6)	6	100
Far East (n=2)	2	100
Pacific (n=2)	0	0
South Asia (n=19)	18	95
Sub-Saharan Africa (n=85)	82	96.5

As was expected, the majority of survey respondents (43%) undertook their Professional Fellowship in the year 2011, as highlighted in Figure 10. As this particular survey was a one-off retrospective study, response rates for 2008 and 2009 Fellows were anticipated to be low, due to the time elapsed since completion of their award. Going forward, methods have been implemented that will survey Fellows much sooner after they have completed their award, which will hopefully increase survey responses.

³ Source: United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2013* (2013)

Figure 10 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by year of award



46% of respondents to this survey were female, showing an improvement on the CSC's main alumni survey, which in the same year had a survey population consisting of 37% women. This is particularly positive for the Professional Fellowship scheme, as in the past overall response rates have been low, especially amongst women.

Survey respondents were also asked what their primary focus of work was. Due to the cross-sectional nature of many fields, Fellows were given the option of choosing multiple areas. Table 3 shows the number of times an area of work was chosen, and therefore exceeds the total population survey (114) as some respondents ticked multiple responses. Public health (33, 29%) was the most popular area for respondents from this cohort.

Table 3 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by primary area of work

Area of work	Respondents	% of total (n=114)
Agriculture/fisheries/forestry	4	4
Economic growth	4	4
Education	21	18
Engineering/science/technology	10	9
Environment/climate change	9	8
Governance	10	9
Public health	33	29
Gender equality	7	6
Poverty reduction	6	5
Other	25	22
Unknown	16	14
Total	145	100

Survey section 2: the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship

The CSC Evaluation Team was tasked with investigating the counterfactual, which asks questions around what might have happened had scholarships or fellowships not been awarded. Survey respondents were therefore asked to think about their programme of qualification and rate on a scale from 1-10 (1 = Impossible, 10 = Definitely) how likely it is that they would have undertaken a similar fellowship in the UK *without* the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship. 65% of survey respondents selected 1 (Impossible), highlighting the importance of the scheme. The rating average for this question, based on weighting of responses, was 1.71, which indicates that, overall, the survey population would not have been able to undertake a fellowship in the UK without the provision of the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship.

Table 4 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘Thinking about the programme or qualification you undertook while on your Commonwealth award, how likely is it that you would have undertaken this in the UK without the Commonwealth Fellowship?’

Rating	Respondents	% of total
1 = Impossible	74	65%
2	22	19%
3	10	9%
4	1	1%
5	4	4%
6	1	1%
7	0	0%
8	1	1%
9	1	1%
10 = Definitely	0	0%
Total	114	100

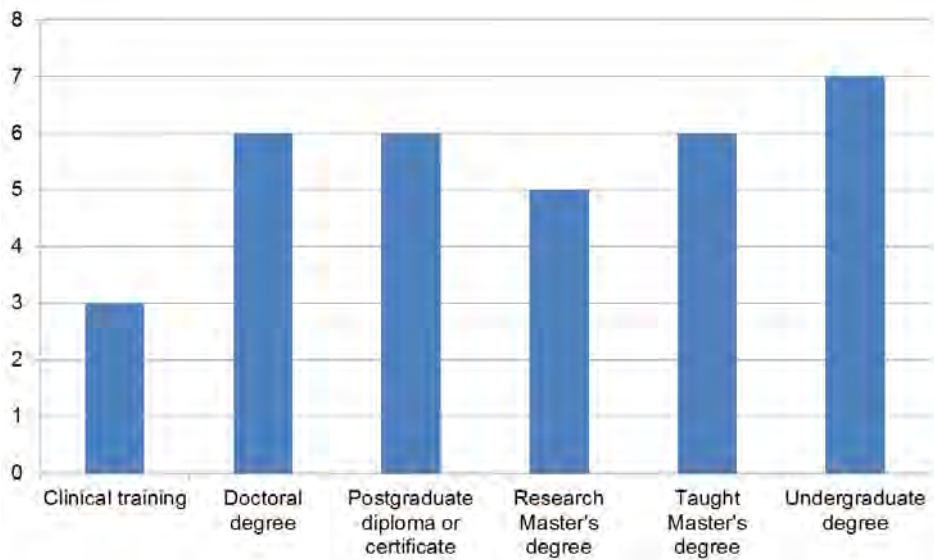
Similarly, respondents were asked to think about whether they would have been able to undertake the programme or qualification in another country. The rating average was 2.74 for this question, which, although higher than for the previous question, still indicates that undertaking a fellowship in another country would have been unlikely without the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship.

Table 5 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘If you had not undertaken the programme or qualification in the UK, how likely is it that you would have undertaken a similar programme in another country?’

Rating	Respondents	% of total
1 = Impossible	36	32
2	36	32
3	17	15
4	7	6
5	8	7
6	0	0
7	3	3
8	3	3
9	0	0
10 = Definitely	4	4
Total	114	100

Respondents were also asked if they undertook any academic or professional qualifications following the completion of their awards. As this was not a forced question, only 49 people answered the question; out of these, 61% reported that they had attained an academic qualification following their award. Respondents were asked what kind of qualification they undertook. Only 33 people answered this question, with results shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by type of further qualification



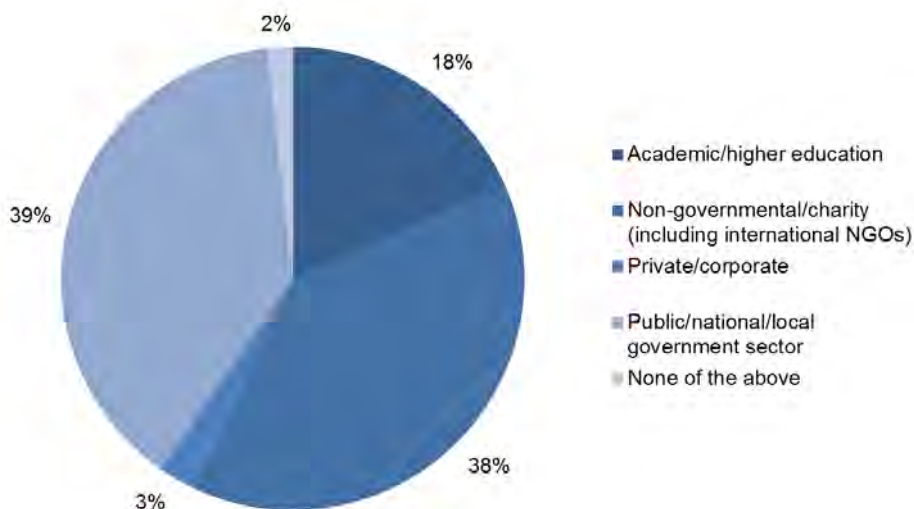
49 people responded to the question regarding further professional qualifications, of which 82% did complete one following their award. Respondents were asked to report whether they felt their Professional Fellowship helped them gain these subsequent qualifications. 52 respondents answered this question, of which 79% reported that the Professional Fellowship did play a role. Finally, respondents were also asked to rate on a 5-point scale (1 = Minimal, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Essential) the level to which they thought the Professional Fellowship contributed towards gaining the qualification. 41 people responded to this question, with a rating average of 4.26. This indicates that, for the people that responded to the question, the Professional Fellowship played a significant role in their ability to gain further qualifications.

Survey section 3: employment

Section 3 of the survey asked respondents about their employment, both at the time of the award and currently.

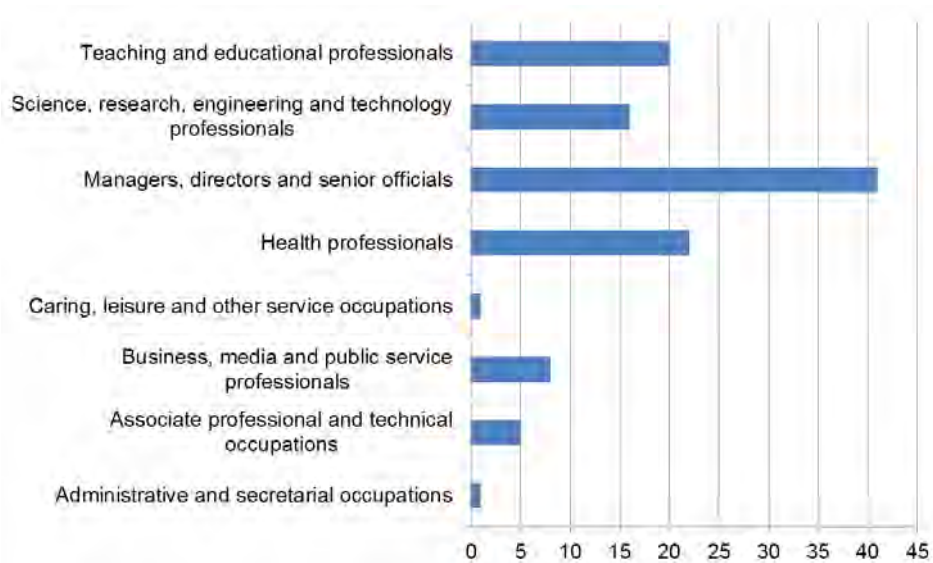
At the time of the award, the majority of respondents worked in either the non-governmental/charity sector or the public/national/local government sector, as highlighted in Figure 12.

Figure 12 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by employment sector at time of award



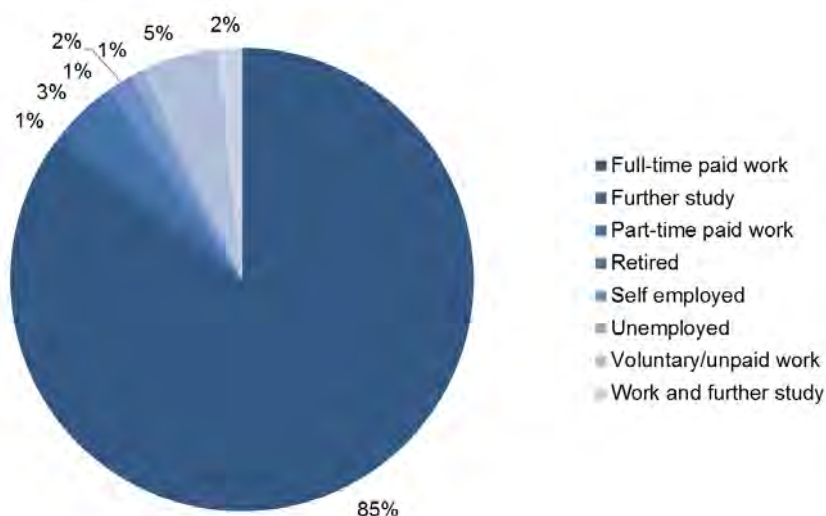
Respondents were asked to categorise their employment type. 36% reported being managers, directors or senior officials, indicating that the Professional Fellowship scheme does attract established professionals.

Figure 13 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by employment type at time of award



As to be expected, the majority (85%) of respondents reported being in full-time paid work at the time of their award.

Figure 14 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by employment status at time of award

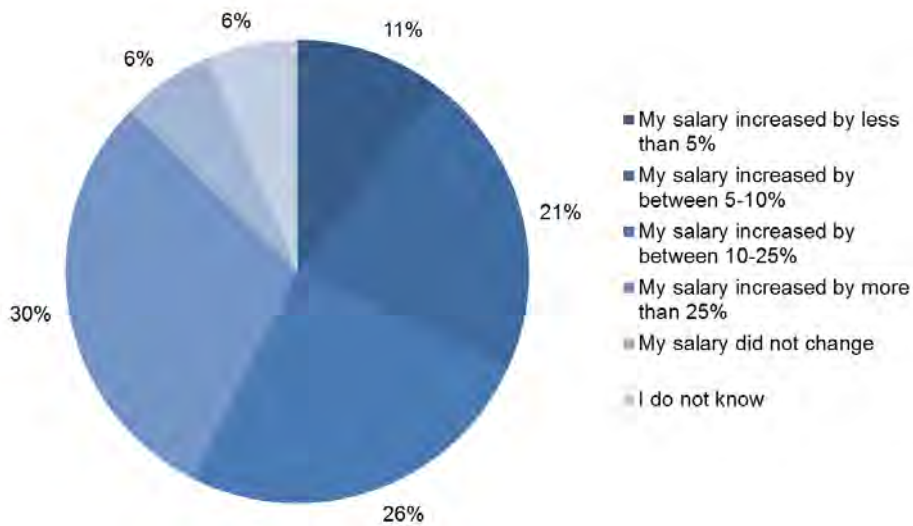


As the Professional Fellows scheme aims to improve the skills of mid-career professionals and enhance their performance in the workplace, it is important that Fellows' employers are supportive of their applications. Therefore, respondents were asked to rate on a 5-point scale (1 = Very unsupportive, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Very supportive) how supportive their employer was of their application. The vast majority (83%) responded that their employers were very supportive. The rating average for this question was 4.68, which denotes that, in general, Fellows' employers are very supportive of participation in the programme.

Respondents were asked whether they obtained a more senior position than the one they previously had before the award within 12 months of their Professional Fellowship. 45% reported that they had. These people (51) were asked to rate to what extent they felt the Professional Fellowship contributed to this. 66% answered 8 or above, indicating that they felt the award has made significant contributions. The rating average for this question was 7.63, suggesting that, overall, Professional Fellowships do contribute to career advancement.

Respondents were asked how their salary changed following their promotion. 30% reported that their salary increased by more than 25%, as highlighted in Figure 15.

Figure 15 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by salary change upon promotion



All respondents answered the question which asked them to rate on a scale of 1-10 (1 = Not at all, 10 = Very significantly) to what extent they felt that their Professional Fellowship helped them obtain further advancements after this 12-month period. 67% reported 8 or above, indicating that the award helped career progression for many Professional Fellows. The rating average was 7.63 and, though lower than 8, still suggests that this scheme has positive impacts on the careers of people who undertake a Fellowship.

Respondents were also asked to report on their *current* employment status. As Figure 16 shows, the vast majority (86%) are currently involved in full-time paid work. Similar to at the time of award, the two most common sector types of Professional Fellow alumni are non-governmental/charity (37%) and public/national/local government (34%), as outlined in Figure 17. The figures also show that their current employment type is similar to that while on award, in that 37% (42) of respondents reported to be managers, directors or senior officials, illustrated in Figure 18.

Figure 16 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by current employment status

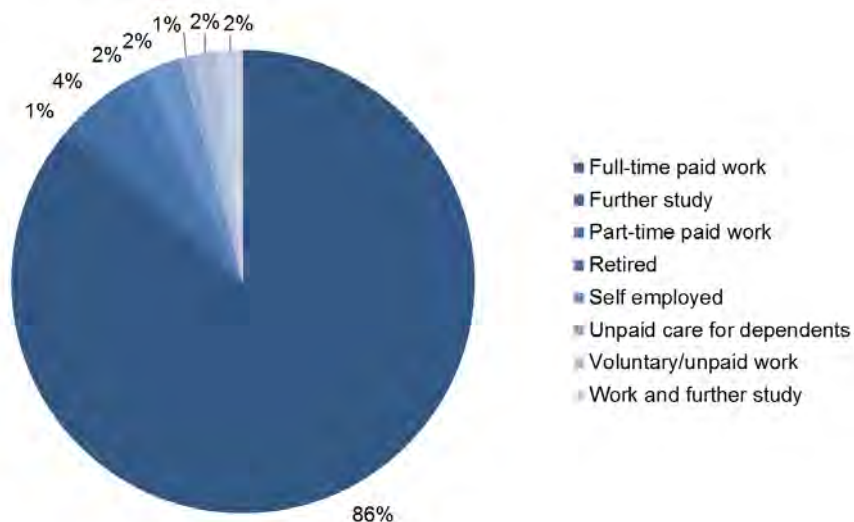


Figure 17 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by current employment sector

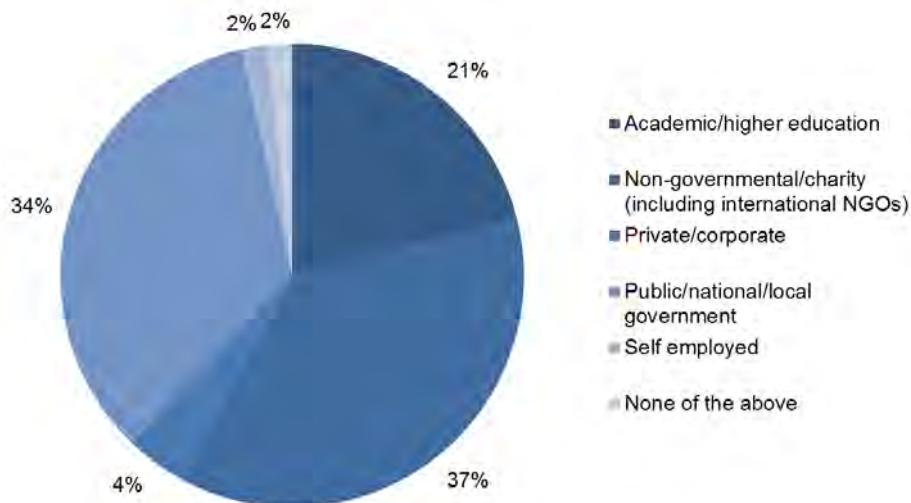
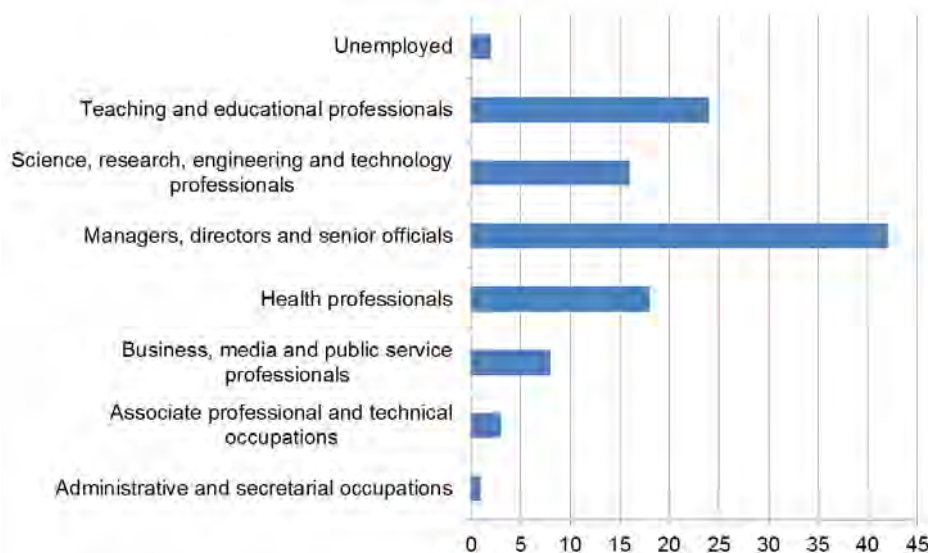


Figure 18 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by current employment type



We also endeavour to find out about additional activities that our alumni are involved in. 110 people responded to the question regarding what other activities they partake in aside from their primary employment. Almost half (47%) stated that they were involved in voluntary/unpaid work, and 27% reported undertaking further study. It was also determined that half (50%) of additional activities occurred in the non-governmental or charity sector, and 31% in the academic or higher education sector.

Survey section 4: knowledge and skills

Section 4 of the survey seeks to understand how the Fellowship enhanced the knowledge and skills of Professional Fellows and whether they were able to utilise said knowledge and skills in their workplace. A new section was added specifically to the Professional Fellows survey asking about their ability to influence the following areas in their workplace: knowledge transfer, implementation, decision-making, transparency and accountability, strategic planning, policy and procedures, and evaluation. These areas were chosen based on the notion that a key objective of the Professional Fellows programme is to promote institutional capacity building, in which all the aforementioned elements play a major role. These questions were also posed to host and employing organisations, whose results are presented later on in this report.

Figure 19 Institutional capacity building

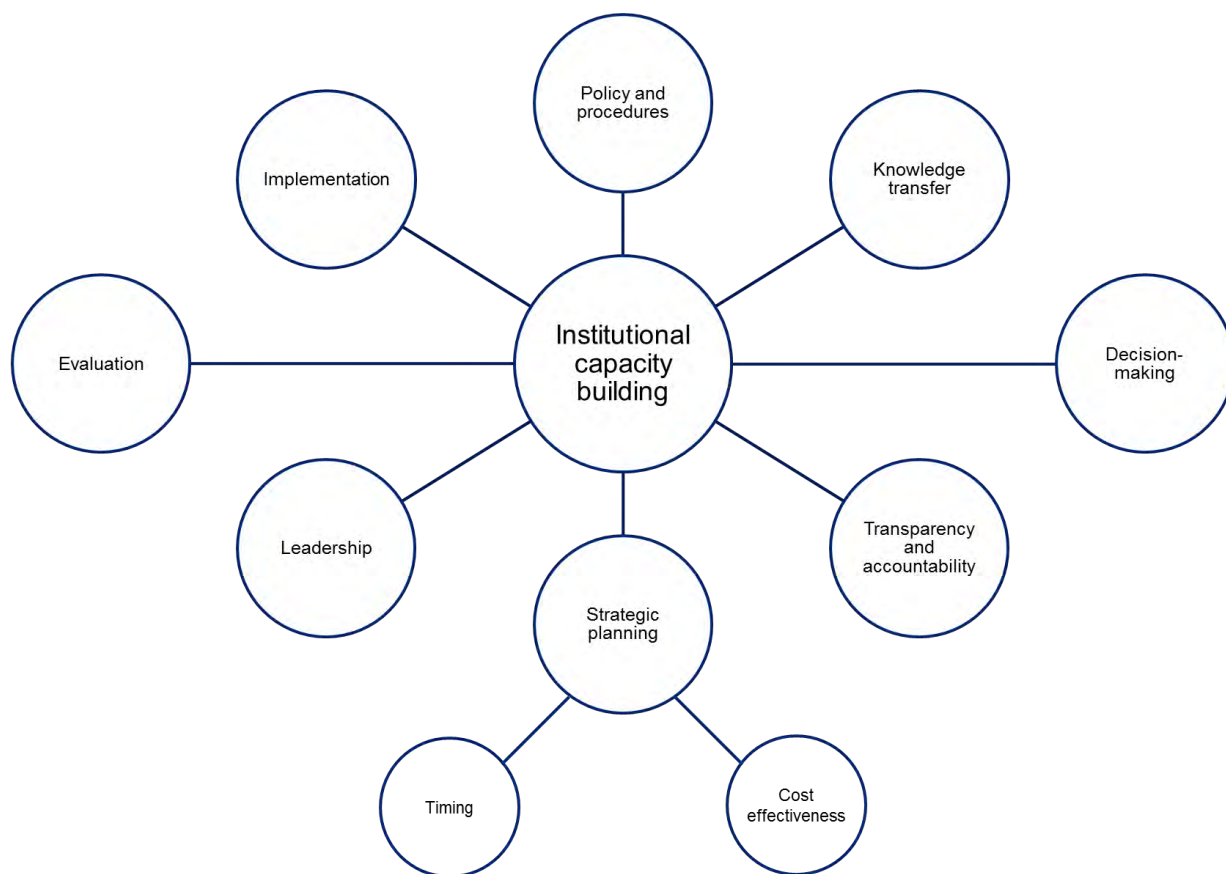


Table 6 lists a number of statements and shows the rating averages of respondents' answers. It also includes the percentage of respondents that answered 4 or 5, which on the 5-point scale indicate that they agree or strongly agree respectively. All of the following statements were mandatory questions, and therefore all 114 respondents provided answers. The results are overwhelmingly positive, with rating averages tending to be above 4. The only exception was 'I accessed equipment and expertise not available in my home country', which had a rating average of 3.97.

Table 6 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – knowledge and skills acquisition⁴

Statement	Rating average	% of respondents who answered 4 or 5
I gained knowledge in my field of expertise	4.64	96%
I increased my analytical/technical skills	4.36	89%
I have been able to transfer or pass on my skills and knowledge gained during my award to others	4.39	90%
I use the specific skills and knowledge gained during my award in my work	4.40	89%
I accessed equipment and expertise not available in my home country	3.97	71%
I learned techniques for managing and organising people and projects	4.24	80%
My Commonwealth award has increased my confidence and ability to make changes in my work	4.60	93%
My workplace enables me to make full use of my skills	4.18	78%
I have been able to introduce new practices or innovations in my workplace(s) as a result of skills/knowledge acquired through my award	4.17	79%
I have been able to increase my influence on decision-making within the organisation as a direct result of skills/knowledge acquired through my award	4.18	81%

⁴ 1= Strongly disagree, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Strongly agree. Rating averages calculate a weighted average based on the weight assigned to each answer choice.

Please note that it was compulsory for respondents to answer the following questions and therefore, unless otherwise stated, all results are calculated based on a survey population of 114 respondents.

Knowledge transfer

The vast majority of respondents (89%) stated that they had trained other colleagues on specific skills that were gained from undertaking the Fellowship. This result is highly positive, as a core aim of the Professional Fellowship programme is to enhance institutional capacity building. The people who reported that they had trained other colleagues (102) were asked to indicate how many people they had trained. 29% reported between 1-10 people, while 28% had trained 50+. The breakdown is shown in Figure 20. Respondents were also asked what type of skills they provided training for. As they were able to tick all appropriate answers, some people selected multiple options. Therefore, Figure 21 shows the number of instances an answer was chosen as opposed to the number of individuals that answered the question. As this was a mandatory question for people who had reported training others, the number of respondents was 102. It should be noted that over half of respondents reported providing specialised technical training, which is in line with the CSC’s overall objective of building technical capacity.

Figure 20 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by number of people trained with skills gained from the award

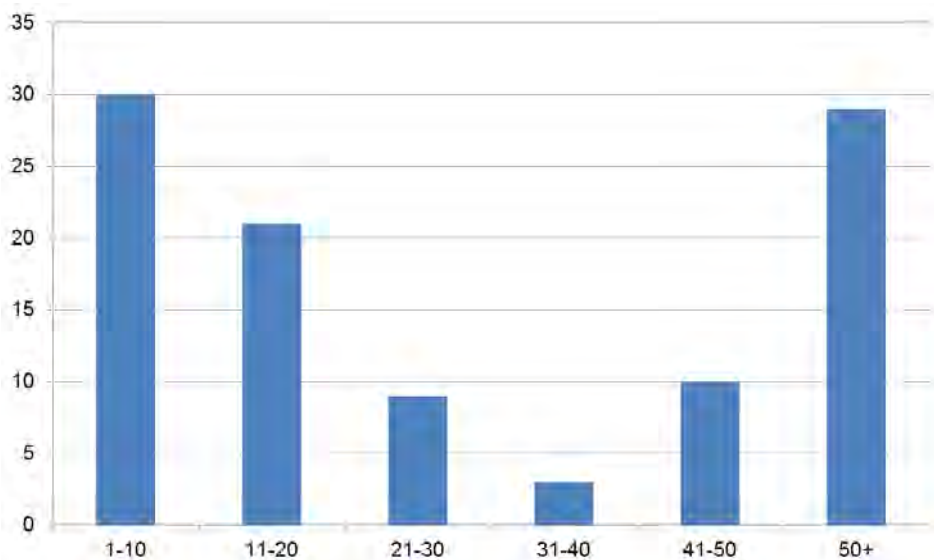
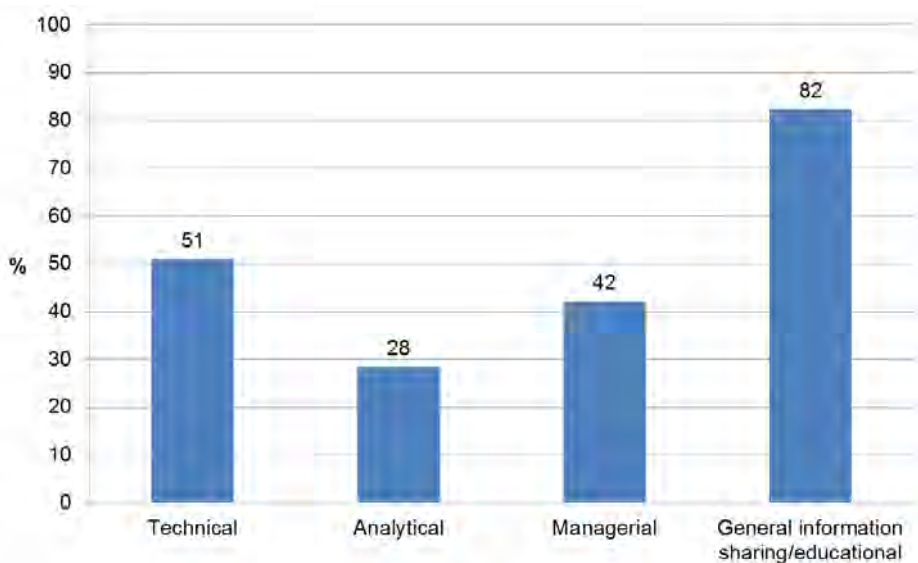


Figure 21 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by type and percentage of skills provision



Implementation

Respondents were asked whether they had established any new areas of work/programmes upon their return from the Fellowship, to which 73% reported that they had been able to. More significantly, 80% stated that they were able to make changes in how work/programmes are conducted in the workplace upon their return from the Fellowship. This indicates that the Professional Fellowship programme is indeed meeting its objective of providing the appropriate skills and knowledge to enhance effectiveness in the workplace.

Table 7 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – decision-making, transparency and accountability, strategic planning⁵

Statement	Rating average	% of respondents who answered 8, 9 or 10
To what extent have you been able to influence decision-making at the team level?	8.15	73%
To what extent have you been able to influence decision-making at the department level?	8.02	72%
To what extent have you been able to influence decision-making at the organisational level?	7.25	54%
To what extent have you contributed to transparency and accountability in your organisation as a result of the skills you acquired through the Fellowship?	7.71	68%
To what extent have you contributed to strategic planning at the team level?	8.08	73%
To what extent have you contributed to strategic planning at the departmental level?	7.94	70%
To what extent have you contributed to strategic planning at the organisational level?	7.54	62%

Policy and procedures

Respondents were asked whether they were able to contribute to their organisation's policy and procedures. 70% reported that departmental policies had been created or changed as a result of their input, while 66% reported having had influence on organisational policies. The high percentage of Fellows that reported a contribution in this area shows a high level of input into their respective organisations' strategic direction, which is significant in the context of institutional capacity building and suggests that the programme is reaching the right people, with alumni well placed to have an impact on their return.

Evaluation

As being able to measure an organisation's overall effectiveness is seen as an integral part of institutional capacity building, it was decided that questions regarding evaluation should be incorporated in the survey. 72% (82) of respondents reported that their respective organisations had formal evaluation methods in place. Of that group, 98% (80) confirmed that the evaluation methods inform the policy and procedures of their organisations. Of these 80 people, 77% noted that they contributed to these evaluation methods, highlighting once again the high level of capacity building that Fellows provide their employers.

Ranking

Another new addition to both the main annual survey and the Professional Fellows survey was a question which attempted to measure the extent to which career development might be attributed to the award. We asked respondents to think about their current professional situation and rank in descending order the factors that they felt contributed most to their professional development, with 1 = Least important and 5 = Most important. The rating averages shown in Table 8 represent the weighted averages of all respondents' answers in the five areas provided. The evidence shows that the majority of respondents felt that personal attributes were the most important quality in enhancing their professional development. There were, however, some potential problems that arose with analysis of this question that should be considered. Firstly, the level of importance of each factor appeared in the same order that they were presented, i.e. personal attributes overall the most important, the Professional Fellowship second, contacts abroad third, and so on.

⁵ In this instance, the rating average is based on a 10-point scale, with 1 = Not at all and 10 = Very significantly.

Because the factors were not randomly generated in the survey, all respondents received the same order. Therefore, it is difficult to tell whether respondents simply answered the question based on the order rather than the actual factor. This is also reflected by the fact that the identical result was observed in the analysis of the main survey. However, we will not be able to determine whether this is the case until we are able to collect more data in subsequent years' surveys.

Table 8 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘Please rank the following elements based on how much you think each has contributed to your professional development to date’

Factor	Rating average
Personal attributes	4.17
Your Commonwealth award	3.87
Contacts at home	2.55
Contacts abroad	2.39
Socioeconomic background	2.03

Links with the United Kingdom

One of the additional benefits of international scholarship and fellowship programmes such as the CSC's is the potential for links and collaboration with colleagues and institutions in the United Kingdom. Our evaluation surveys therefore ask alumni whether they have maintained links following their return home and we are now seeking to explore what impact those links might subsequently have on the careers of Fellows.

Table 9 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘To what extent have you maintained links with the following groups since your award?’⁶

Group	I have no contact at all with this group (%)	I still receive emails and correspondence but have no regular contact (%)	I have occasional communication with this group (%)	I have regular communication with this group (%)
Universities in the UK (n=100)	37	23	21	19
Academic contacts/supervisors (n=102)	18	16	29	37
Peer group/fellow students from your time in the UK (n=102)	10	23	48	20
Professional associations in the UK (n=104)	15	28	32	25
Work contacts in the UK (n=105)	18	22	31	29
Social contacts in the UK (n=106)	8	22	36	34

⁶ Professional Fellows rarely hold their award at a UK university (unlike our other award holders) so we would not expect the figure for universities in the UK to be high.

Table 10 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘To what extent do you think the contacts you made whilst on award have contributed to your career and professional development?’⁷

Group	Rating average
Universities in the UK	5.26
Academic contacts/supervisors	6.80
Peer group/fellow students from your time in the UK	5.91
Professional associations in the UK	6.36
Work contacts in the UK	6.13
Social contacts in the UK	6.21

In the following sections we asked about direct outputs and outcomes from the Professional Fellowship. Table 11 shows responses with regards to tangible outcomes such as publications. While less obviously relevant in terms of academic publications at least, these questions are included for later comparison with other CSC programmes.

Table 11 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘Has your Commonwealth award resulted in any of the following?’

Outcome	No (%)	Yes, as a result of my award (%)	Yes, but not as a result of my award (%)
Articles and publications (n=110)	52	30	18
Secured additional funding for research/projects/initiatives (n=110)	62	20	18
Created jobs (n=108)	67	21	12

Survey respondents were asked whether they felt they were able to effect change at the institutional, local, national, and international level, as shown in Table 12. Results for the institutional level category were very highly positive, in that 86% of respondents felt that they were able to effect change. This indicates that the Professional Fellowship scheme is greatly contributing to institutional capacity building. 81% of respondents also felt that they were effecting change at the local level, which suggests a high level of community engagement.

Table 12 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘In your opinion, has your award enabled you to effect change at the following levels?’

Level	Yes (%)	No (%)
Institutional (n=108)	86	14
Local (n=110)	81	19
National (n=108)	59	41
International (n=103)	32	68

Survey section 5: wider development impact

Section 5 of the survey seeks to capture the wider development impact that Professional Fellows are able to deliver. While Section 4 mainly focused on their ability to influence changes at the institutional level, this section looks at their impact on eight key areas in international development:

- Environmental issues
- Health
- Governance, security and conflict
- Gender equality
- Poverty reduction
- Education
- Population growth and development
- Economic growth and the private sector

⁷ These questions were based on a 10-point scale, with 1 = Not at all essential and 10 = Absolutely essential.

This section again mirrors questions in the wider survey to allow for comparison with other programmes in due course.

As a top-level question, the Professional Fellows survey asked respondents whether they felt that were able to have an impact on socioeconomic development in one or more of the eight development areas mentioned above. 81% (92 respondents) reported having impact on socioeconomic development, which is much higher compared with the percentage of Master's Scholars (74%) and PhD scholars (60%) who reported having impact in this area in the main annual evaluation survey. Similarly, the survey questioned respondents on whether they believe that they have influenced government policy in one or more of the eight development areas listed above. Although this percentage (49%, 56 respondents) was substantially lower compared with socioeconomic development, it was a far greater percentage than that reported by Master's and PhD Scholars (35% in both cases) in the main annual survey.

Respondents were asked if they had been involved in a project in one or more of the eight development areas mentioned above. Please note that they were allowed to tick multiple responses. Table 13 shows that there is a fairly even spread of Fellows working in the various development sectors, though a particularly low percentage (13, 11%) reported involvement in the area of population growth. Governance, security and conflict (18, 16%) and economic growth and the private sector (22, 19%) were also fairly low. This may change over time, as the priority areas of the programme have been expanded.

Table 13 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents working in key development areas

Area	% of total (n=114)
Environmental issues	26
Health	39
Governance, security and conflict	16
Gender equality	26
Poverty reduction	26
Education	38
Population growth	11
Economic growth and the private sector	19

Respondents were then asked to rate their level of involvement on a 10-point scale if they had selected a development area. Table 14 shows the rating averages by each sector. Health and education were the areas that Fellows seemed to be the most involved in through projects.

Table 14 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents, by level of involvement in key development areas⁸

Area	Rating average
Environmental issues	6.87
Health	7.93
Governance, security and conflict	5.89
Gender equality	7.60
Poverty reduction	7.18
Education	7.93
Population growth	5.31
Economic growth and the private sector	6.00

Two important questions that the CSC Evaluation Team has been tasked with investigating are whether alumni are able to make an impact on socioeconomic development and/or influence government policy. The following tables show the percentages of respondents who felt that they had contributed to these areas. Please note that respondents were allowed to select more than one area. Overall, it seems that respondents felt they were able to have an impact more on socioeconomic development in each of the eight areas than on influencing government policy.

⁸ These questions were based on a 10-point scale, with 1 = Very limited involvement and 10 = Extremely involved.

Table 15 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘Have you been able to have an impact on socioeconomic development in one or more of the eight development areas?’

Area	% of total (n=114)
Environmental issues	28
Health	48
Governance, security and conflict	25
Gender equality	32
Poverty reduction	42
Education	53
Population growth	7
Economic growth and the private sector	28

Table 16 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘Have you been able to influence government policy in one or more of the eight development areas?’

Area	% of total (n=114)
Environmental issues	13
Health	20
Governance, security and conflict	15
Gender equality	15
Poverty reduction	12
Education	25
Population growth	3
Economic growth and the private sector	11

For those who reported socioeconomic impact or influence on government policy, we then asked them to specify the activity area. This information is presented in Tables 17-23.

Table 17 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – specified activity in environmental issues

Environmental issues	% Socioeconomic (n=32)	% Government policy (n=15)
Climate change	50	40
Natural resources	59	67
Water and sanitation	50	53
Agriculture and food security	44	33
Agriculture/rural productivity	44	33
Food security	34	13
Other	9	13

Table 18 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – specified activity in health

Health	% Socioeconomic (n=55)	% Government policy (n=23)
HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis	49	61
Child/maternal Health	29	61
Preventative health	51	43
Reproductive and sexual health	42	30
Other	24	17

Table 19 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – specified activity in governance

Governance	% Socioeconomic (n=29)	% Government policy (n=17)
Democracy	52	41
Human rights	59	47
Civil society	62	53
Local government	45	41
Conflict resolution	45	29
Humanitarian assistance	31	24
Other	17	24

Table 20 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – specified activity in gender

Gender	% Socioeconomic (n=36)	% Government policy (n=17)
Primary education	56	53
Secondary education	50	47
Tertiary education	31	18
Employment (non-agricultural)	36	35
Governance (national)	31	24
Reproductive and sexual health	44	29
Other	11	24

Table 21 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – specified activity in education

Education	% Socioeconomic (n=60)	% Government policy (n=28)
Research and training	57	50
Primary education	38	50
Secondary education	30	36
Higher education	45	32
Technical and vocational training	28	18
Planning and administration	27	21
Other	13	18

Table 22 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – specified activity in population growth and development

Population growth and development	% Socioeconomic (n=8)	% Government policy (n=3)
Family planning and reproductive health	75	100
Migration	0	0
Other	38	33

Table 23 Professional Fellowships 2008-2011 survey respondents – specified activity in economic growth and the private sector

Economic growth and the private sector	% Socioeconomic (n=32)	% Government policy (n=12)
Employment/job creation	59	50
Admin of public finances	16	25
Trade and private sector	28	33
Entrepreneurship	56	58
Production and manufacturing	34	25
Other	16	8

Chapter 2 The Fellow's perspective: summary of focus group discussion

On 20 November 2012, the CSC Evaluation Team held a focus group discussion (FGD) with a group of Commonwealth Professional Fellows who were currently on award. The purpose of holding the FGD was to collect qualitative data that answers key questions regarding pre-, during, and post-award experiences, as well as determining methods of increasing Professional Fellows' participation in the CSC's evaluation activities. Holding the FGD was also a good opportunity to foster relations between the Evaluation Team and the Fellows, which had the benefit of identifying individual case studies for future reports. Additionally, the FGD served as a platform for Fellows to voice their opinions regarding the programme, and therefore was an important information-gathering session and networking tool that helped to enhance the Evaluation Team's review of the Professional Fellows programme.

The FGD lasted approximately two hours, and was held at the CSC's offices in Woburn House, London. As only 15 Fellows attended the event, the group was not split up into smaller groups for discussion. The structure of the FGD consisted of three parts: the first part addressed 'Before the award'; the second part discussed 'On the award'; and finally the last part answered questions about 'After the award'. The exact questions asked were as follows:

Before the award

- How did you find out about the programme?
- What was your main motivation for taking up the award?
- How did you determine the objectives you set on your application?

On the award

- Are the objectives you set on your application being met so far?
- Are you learning anything you didn't expect?
- Are there things you feel are missing from your learning experience?

After the award

- Is there anything you think you will do differently upon your return home?
- Do you think your employer will benefit from your take-up of the award and, if so, how?
- In the past, we've had relatively low response rates to our Professional Fellows' surveys. What do you think are some ways that we could motivate you to respond?
- What do you think is the optimum time for us to contact you regarding the longer term outcome of your award?

Participants

The 15 Professional Fellows that attended the FGD were mainly from countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria, but there were also two Fellows from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. This is reflective of the overall regional spread of Professional Fellows, as the vast majority (77%) come from a country in sub-Saharan Africa. The second largest group of Fellows come from South Asia, but they comprise only 15% of the overall number. The majority of Fellows undertook a placement at an NGO/charity/community organisation, but two worked at education institutions, while another two had their Fellowship in a private sector company.

Summary of FGD results

How did you find out about the programme?

One trend in the discussion showed that some organisations had partnership links with host organisations. Another common theme was Fellows learning about the scheme through other Fellows' positive experience. One Fellow stated that they were impressed with one of their colleagues who undertook the Fellowship, as they were able to increase their performance from 'a 3/10 to a 9/10'. Others reported hearing about the programme through host organisations, government departments, and professional associations.

What was your main motivation for taking up the award?

There were several reasons given as motivation for taking up the award. An interesting point was being motivated by positive feedback from former Fellows. Respondents also cited social reasons and a desire to effect change as a strong motivation. Many Fellows also stated a desire and need to build technical skills and learn best practices that were not available in their home countries. Others reported wanting to have a cross-cultural experience, as well as personal interests.

How did you determine the objectives you set on your application?

Fellows mentioned a few different avenues through which objectives were set. Some stated that objectives were set directly with their own organisation, while others said that they were determined by the host organisation. There were also a number of Fellows who set their objectives in conjunction with partner organisations. Others were allowed to establish their own objectives, which they set based on their country's context and needs. Another Fellow looked at organisational gaps and set their objectives based on those needs.

Are the objectives you set on your application being met so far?

Quite a few Fellows affirmed that their objectives were being met. Some even mentioned that their expectations were exceeded, due to their host organisation's strong commitments. Many stated that more objectives were added to their programme which served to be beneficial. There was a general belief that the UK has clear-cut systems in place that enabled Fellows to learn new skills not available in their home countries. However, there were also some Fellows who stated that they were unable to meet their objectives due to time constraints, as the Fellowship duration is three months. One Fellow in particular was unable to complete his project, which was the main objective of his stay in the UK. However, he hoped to have gained enough general knowledge and skills to finish the project in his home country.

Are you learning anything you didn't expect?

A general theme was that Fellows reported gained an unexpected understanding of British culture. The Fellows also found it very interesting to gain insight into how the UK seemingly views Africa. They were also surprised to be able to share their own experiences from their home countries. While some Fellows said that they were able to gain unexpected technical skills, learning other important assets such as interpersonal skills was also brought up.

Are there things you feel are missing from your learning experience?

The two areas that were discussed in regard to gaps in their programmes was a lack of training and programme management. Some Fellows felt that there was not enough time to fulfil their training needs. Others felt that, although they had received a lot of training, they were not given the opportunity to learn management skills, which they saw as an asset that they would have liked to take back to their home country.

Is there anything you think you will do differently upon your return home?

The responses to this question varied greatly depending on the Fellow's field. Those who worked in an education institution intended to restructure school policies and introduce new classes. One Fellow working in the health sector wanted to ensure that services in their home country were being used, as opposed to only focusing on advocacy and awareness. Another Fellow working in the private sector felt that they could influence banks and corporate companies to donate to charities. Many Fellows stated that they would become more heavily involved in various kinds of advocacy. One Fellow in particular said that they would advocate for sanitation to be implemented through legislation. Others also stated that they wanted to provide training to people to teach advocacy skills. One Fellow working in education reported the possibility of meeting with the Ministry of Education to discuss ways of improving standards and practices. Fundraising and strategy skills were also cited as something that would change upon return home.

Do you think your employer will benefit from your take-up of the award and, if so, how?

All of the Fellows felt that their employers would benefit from the Fellowship, through building networks which can act as a support mechanism, continuing to provide technical and capacity building. It was also asserted that there would be obvious benefits to organisations and government agencies through increased knowledge and the gaining of new skills.

In the past, we've had relatively low response rates to our Professional Fellows' surveys. What do you think are some ways that we could motivate you to respond?

There were some interesting ideas that were proposed in regard to motivating Fellows to respond to evaluation surveys. One suggestion was to ensure that responses are published in some kind of format, such as a report or online. If published online, it was recommended that links to the websites of Fellows' organisations be included. The idea of involving home organisations to encourage Fellows to answer surveys was also mentioned, and it was even suggested that this should be implemented into policy. The provision of stipends and funds to support events was also proposed as a way to incentivise responses. Finally, it was recommended that specific networks for Fellows be created that could be divided by region, which could potentially promote collaboration between Fellows, and consequently between them and the CSC.

What do you think is the optimum time for us to contact you regarding the longer term outcome of your award?

Almost all Fellows agreed that the optimum time to contact them would be six months to a year after their Fellowship. It was also suggested that there should be a small questionnaire leading up to a bigger survey, in order to keep them thinking about evaluation. Lastly, it was noted that it is important for the CSC to consider not only longer-term impacts, but also the short-term benefits that the Fellowships bring, such as the ability to impart knowledge to other colleagues both formally (through training) and informally.

Lessons learned from the FGD

Overall, the focus group discussion revealed very positive results in regard to the Professional Fellowship scheme. All of the Fellows showed keen enthusiasm for the programme, and all stated that it provided valuable skills and experience both professionally and in their personal lives. An issue was raised regarding the length of the award, as some Fellows felt that it was too short to enable them to complete their project or gain certain desired skills such as training. However, given resource constraints and the CSC's desire to provide this Fellowship to a greater number of people, the three-month time period is appropriate. In order to address the aforementioned concerns, host organisations and Fellows must coordinate closely to set out realistic objectives and discuss the needs of the Fellows.

The Fellows expressed willingness to maintain contact with the CSC but, given busy schedules and the short duration of the award, innovative measures need to be put in place in order to facilitate this connection. Publishing responses and case studies in a report or online is a realistic and feasible option to consider. Creating regional networks is another viable choice, but would require a coordinator.

The FGD confirmed that the Professional Fellowship scheme is helping to improve the skills and knowledge of the Fellows who undertake the programme, which is consequently having a positive development impact on the various fields in which they work – a finding which is further reinforced by those Fellows who report that they learned about the scheme through former Fellows and seeing the benefits for themselves. It provides individuals with the opportunity to enhance their professional development, which in turn has a catalytic effect in their workplace. It also offers an invaluable life experience that Fellows would not otherwise have had the opportunity to undertake. It is essential to continue and improve this scheme in order for the CSC to maintain its commitment to contributing to wider international development impact.

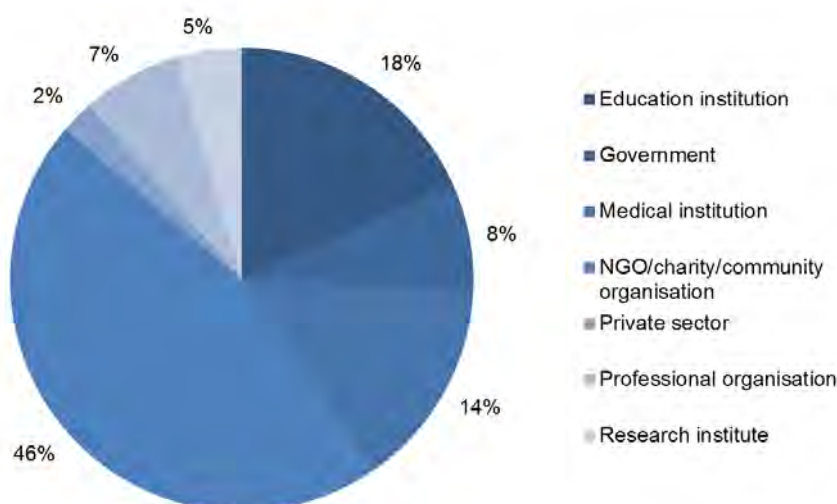
Chapter 3 Other perspectives: feedback from host organisations and employers

Engaging with Professional Fellows' host organisations and employers is important, as it allows for data verification and further substantiates results, thus adding rigour to the evidence that we provide. The CSC has, since the outset of the Professional Fellowship scheme, sought to establish good working relationships with host organisations, many of which have hosted a number of Fellows over the years, as shown in Appendix 1. Organisations such as the Environment Agency, Conciliation Resources and VSO, for example, have also undertaken their own evaluations and, along with many other organisations, have regular contact with the CSC Secretariat. The Evaluation Team is also now working closely with the programme administration team to ensure synergy between processes and easier identification of impact and outcome examples. Employers are a more complicated group to engage with, as the CSC has most contact with the host organisation. However, we are seeking to increase contact with Fellows' employers, both to verify the evidence provided to us by Fellows and hosts, and also to contribute to our understanding of the relevance and effectiveness of the programme.

Therefore, as part of the new phase of evaluation work that the Evaluation Team is currently undertaking, a new survey was sent to host organisations and Fellows' employers. The survey results for the host organisations are detailed below. However, the response rate for the employers was so low (3%) that only partial analysis was conducted. This is not entirely unexpected, considering the length of time that had elapsed since the earlier awards particularly and, going forward, the Evaluation Team intends to engage in more outreach as a way of increasing the response rate.

Between 2008 and 2011, there were 131 host organisations that took part in the scheme by hosting a Professional Fellow. It should be noted that, in most cases, the nominator organisation is the same as the host, though there are a few instances in which they are different. For a full list of all host organisations that have taken part in the scheme from 2002 to the present, see Appendix 1. Figure 22 details the types of organisations that took part in the scheme. The majority (46%) were in the category of NGO/charity/community organisation.

Figure 22: Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011, by type



Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011: survey analysis

In addition to updating the Professional Fellows alumni survey, the CSC Evaluation Team created a new survey for host organisations as a means of further data collection and verification. The survey asked about the host organisations' views on the impact of the Fellowship both on the Fellow and on the organisation itself. A total of 300 surveys were sent out, with 32 bounces, bringing the total survey population to 268. Of this number, 87 responded to the survey, providing a response rate of 32%. The response rate was higher than anticipated, and is intended to increase as the CSC streamlines this survey into part of the package that host organisations must complete when participating in the scheme. The results of this year's survey are as follows.

Respondents were asked to detail their type of organisation and their organisation's primary focus of work, as shown in Table 24 and Table 25. Please note that respondents were allowed to tick multiple responses for each question.

Table 24 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents, by type

Type	% of total (n=86)
NGO/charity/community organisation	34
Government	8
Education institution	17
Professional organisation	10
Medical institute	0
Research institute	9
Public service provider	10
Private sector	2
Other	13

Table 25 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents, by focus of work

Focus of work	% of total (n=86)
Agriculture/fisheries/forestry	0
Economic growth	1
Education	20
Engineering/science/technology	9
Environment/climate change	9
Governance	2
Public health	33
Gender equality	1
Poverty reduction	16
Other	22

Host organisations were asked about the size of their organisation and whether they worked at the international, national or local level, as shown in Figures 23 and 24.

Figure 23 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents, by size of organisation

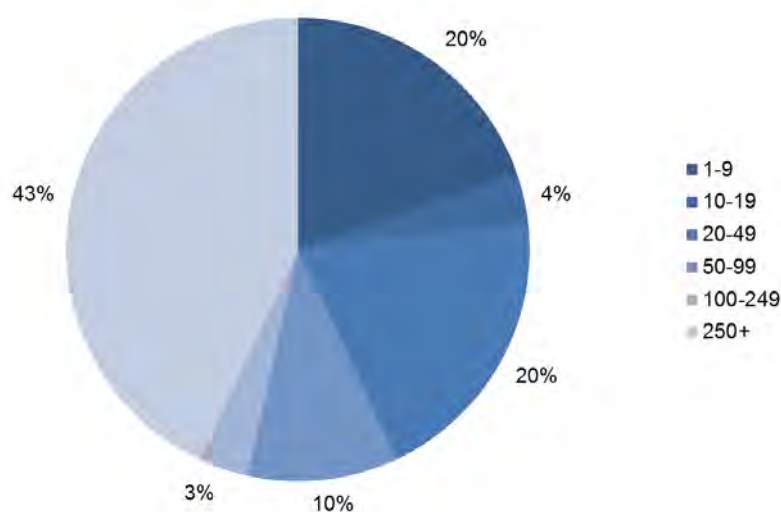
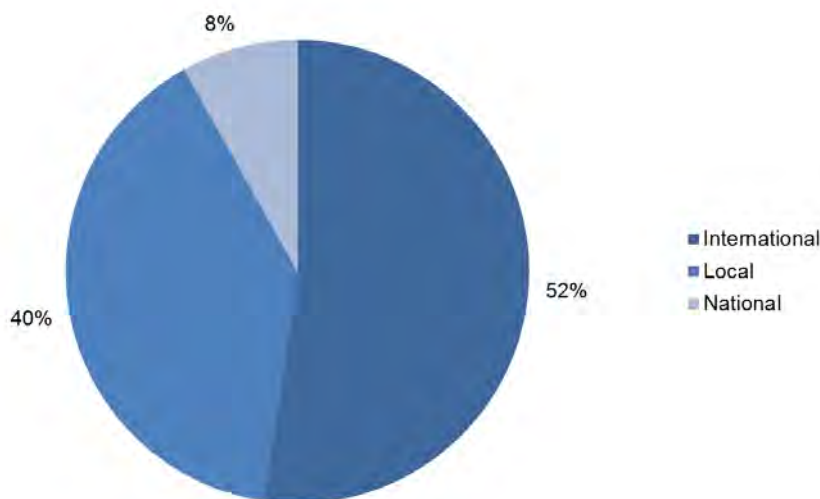


Figure 24 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents, by scope of work



Relationship with Fellow’s employer

The CSC Evaluation Team was interested in how the Professional Fellowship scheme could build relationships to enhance institutional capacity building. Hosts were asked to rate on a ten-point scale how closely they worked with the Fellow’s employer both before and after the Fellowship. The rating average prior to the Fellowship was 4.38; following the Fellowship, this rose to 6.40, indicating that the Fellowship helped to strengthen working relations between organisations.

Knowledge and skills

As part of the triangulation of data process, we asked hosts similar questions as were posed to the Fellows themselves regarding the attainment of knowledge and skills. Please note that we have not yet matched host and Fellow responses in a structured way, but will factor the need to do this into our data integration work.

Table 26 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – knowledge and skills⁹

Statement	Rating average
The Fellow gained knowledge in their field of expertise	4.59
The Fellow increased their analytical/technical skills	4.26
The Fellow accessed equipment and expertise not available in their home country	4.34
The Fellow has learned techniques for managing and organising people and projects	4.15

In the next part of this section, the CSC Evaluation Team focused on questions about areas to increase institutional capacity building, as illustrated in Figure 19: knowledge transfer, implementation, decision-making, transparency and accountability, strategic planning, leadership, and policy and procedures.

Knowledge transfer

Hosts were asked to consider to what extent they thought the Fellowship was able to provide the Fellow with knowledge transfer and industry expertise. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with a rating average of 8.17.

Respondents were asked to rate on a ten-point scale the extent to which the Fellowship enabled the Fellow to build on relevant skills: technical, analytical, managerial, general information/education. Table 27 shows the rating averages of the responses.

⁹ 1 = Strongly disagree, 3 = Neutral, 5 = Strongly agree.

Table 27 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘Please rate the extent to which the Fellowship enabled the Fellow to build on the following skills’¹⁰

Skill	Rating average
Technical	7.79
Analytical	7.53
Managerial	7.00
General information/educational	8.49

Implementation

The two questions regarding implementation sought to understand the extent to which the host organisation was able to provide the Fellow with the relevant skills and knowledge to implement new areas of work and changes in how work/programmes were conducted within their organisation upon their return home. Questions were asked on a ten-point scale. Both yielded very positive results, with the question about implementation of new areas of work resulting in a rating average of 8.52, and the question about being able to make changes in how work/programmes were conducted having a rating average of 8.25.

Decision-making

Hosts were asked on a ten-point scale (1 = None at all, 10 = Very significantly) to what extent they felt the Fellowship was able to equip the Fellow with the ability to influence decision-making within their organisation. The rating average for this question was 7.88, showing generally positive results. Respondents who answered 7 or above were then asked whether this was at the team, departmental, and/or organisational level. Respondents were allowed to tick all appropriate answers, and the majority (69%) responded at the organisational level, as outlined in Table 28.

Table 28 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘At what level do you think the Fellowship prepared the Fellow to influence decision-making within their organisation?’

Level	% of total (n=74)
Team	49
Departmental	57
Organisational	69
Don't know	0

Transparency and accountability

As transparency and accountability make up another tenet of institutional capacity building, respondents were asked to rate on a ten-point scale the extent to which they thought the Fellowship brought awareness of transparency and accountability in an organisational setting. The rating average for this question was 7.12, inferring that, although not the most pertinent topic, it was still relevant. Secondly, hosts were asked to what extent they felt that the Fellowship equipped the Fellow with knowledge and skills to implement transparency and accountability within their home organisations. The rating average was 6.82, demonstrating that this was generally not a core area of work that Fellowships focused on.

Strategic planning

Respondents were asked to rate on a ten-point scale whether they felt the Fellowship prepared the Fellow to contribute to strategic planning within their organisation. The rating average for this question was 7.62, which denotes that strategic planning is generally a fairly important element of the Fellowships. Respondents who answered 7 or above were then asked at which level this occurred, as shown in Table 29. Respondents were allowed to tick multiple responses.

¹⁰ 1 = None at all, 10 = Very significantly.

Table 29 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘At what level do you think the Fellowship prepared the Fellow to contribute to strategic planning within their organisation?’

Level	% of total (n=67)
Team	46
Departmental	54
Organisational	69
Don't know	0

Leadership

Respondents were asked whether they felt Fellows were able to improve their management skills and facilitation skills during the Fellowship. The rating average for management skills was 7.07, while for facilitation skills it was 7.23.

Policy and procedures

Hosts were asked to what extent the Fellow was trained on how to influence policy and procedures. The rating average was 6.58, indicating that this was generally not a main focus area of the Fellowships. Respondents who answered 7 or above were then asked at which level they were trained, as shown in Table 30. Respondents could tick all appropriate answers. Training on how to influence policy and procedures departmentally seemed to be the most significant (67%).

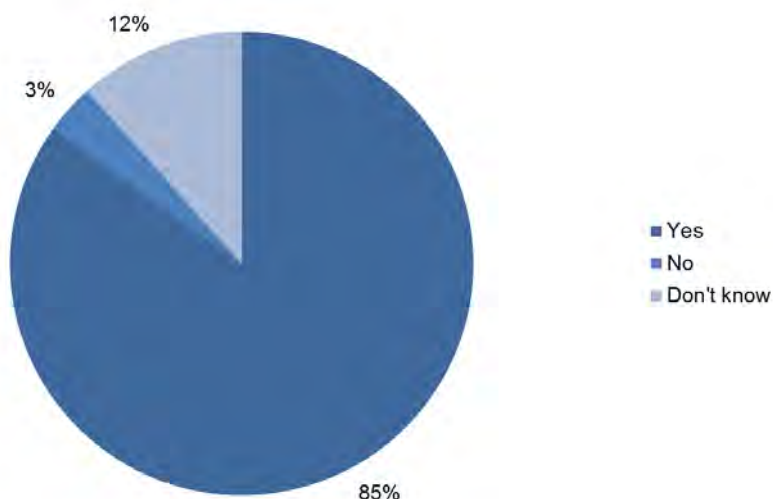
Table 30 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘At what level was the Fellow trained on how to influence policy and procedures?’

Level	% of total (n=60)
Team	57
Departmental	63
Organisational	57
Don't know	0

Development impact

As development impact is a key desired outcome of Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships, host organisations were asked to report whether they felt the Fellowship has been able to provide development impact. The vast majority (85%) responded ‘Yes’, as shown in Figure 25.

Figure 25 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – ‘Do you feel that the Fellowship has been able to provide development impact?’



Links

Host organisations were asked whether they still maintain links with the Fellow, to which 86% reported that they did. Hosts were also asked whether they were able to establish new links with Fellows' employers that did not exist prior to the Fellowship. The response for this was not overwhelming positive, with only 37% claiming they had newly-established links.

Organisational costs

In this section, the CSC Evaluation Team sought to understand the costs that organisations incur in hosting a Fellowship. Respondents were asked to rate a number of different areas on a ten-point scale including: financial costs, time and resources, individual commitments of staff outside work, logistical planning, programme planning, extra training (both within the organisation and external training), and support to the Fellow's employer (after completion of the Fellowship). The results show that, generally speaking, the biggest cost to organisations was the individual commitments of staff outside work. The smallest cost to organisations was providing support to the Fellow's employers after completion of the Fellowship, as shown with rating averages in Table 31. As all rating averages fell below 7, it can be deduced that hosting a Fellowship certainly has costs, but is not a massive burden.

Table 31 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – 'Please rate the effect the Fellowship has had on your organisation in the following areas'¹¹

Cost to organisation	Rating average
Financial costs	3.90
Time and resources	6.34
Individual commitments of staff outside work	6.87
Logistical planning	6.41
Programme planning	6.74
Extra training	4.70
Support to the Fellow's employer	3.08

Organisational benefits

Equally as important to the CSC Evaluation Team were the perceived benefits to organisations participating in the Professional Fellowship scheme. Respondents were asked to rate the following on a ten-point scale: increased knowledge and capacity building of their organisation, deeper understanding of in-country issues (in the Fellow's home country), inspiration and motivation, profile raising of their organisation, ability to have an impact in the Fellow's home country, cross-cultural exchange, ability to enhance their own work skills, and organisational links. Overall, the results indicate that the greatest benefit to organisations was the deeper understanding of in-country issues (in the Fellow's home country), with the least beneficial aspect being increased knowledge and capacity building, as highlighted in Table 32. Generally speaking, all rating averages received a score less than 7, perhaps indicating that host organisations take part in the scheme for altruistic purposes.

Table 32 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents – 'Please rate the benefits to your organisation in the following areas'¹²

Benefit to organisation	Rating average
Increased knowledge and capacity building of your organisation	5.49
Deeper understanding of in-country issues (in the Fellow's home country)	6.98
Inspiration and motivation	6.97
Profile raising of your organisation	6.69
Ability to have an impact in the Fellow's home country	6.84
Cross-cultural exchange	6.77
Ability to enhance your own work skills	5.59
Organisational links	6.64

¹¹ 1 = Not at all significant, 10 = Extremely significant

¹² 1 = Not at all significant, 10 = Extremely significant

Timing and administration of the scheme

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the timing and administration of the Professional Fellowship scheme by both the CSC Secretariat and the British Council.

Figure 26 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents, by rating of CSC Secretariat administration

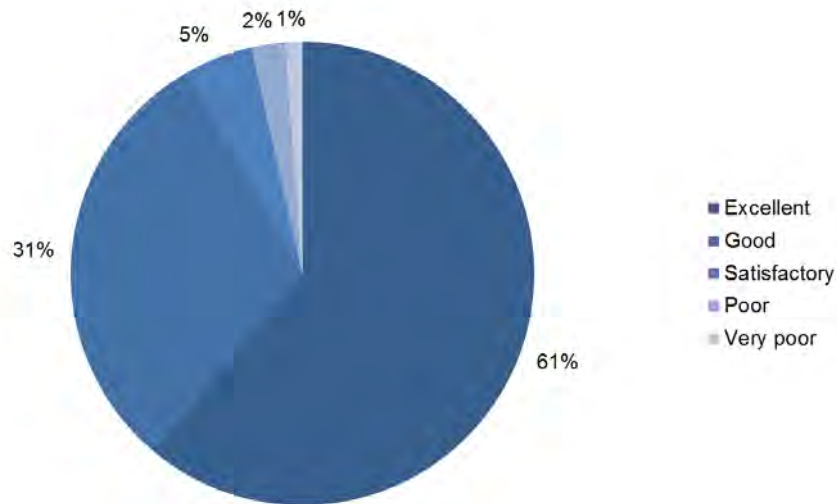
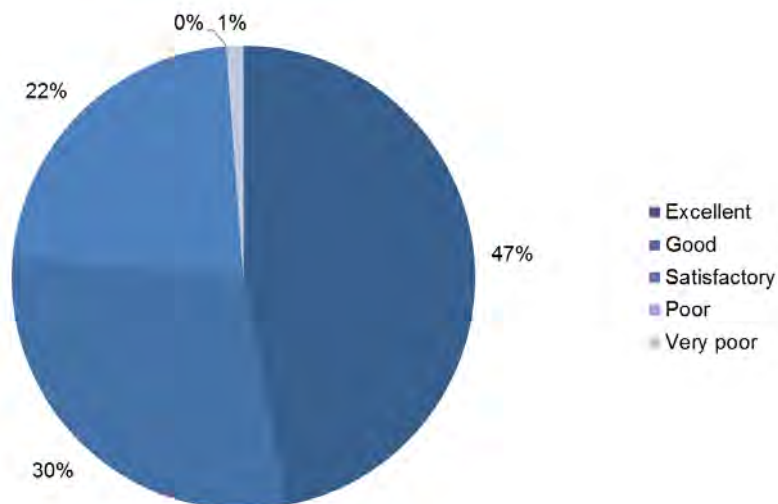


Figure 27 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents, by rating of British Council administration

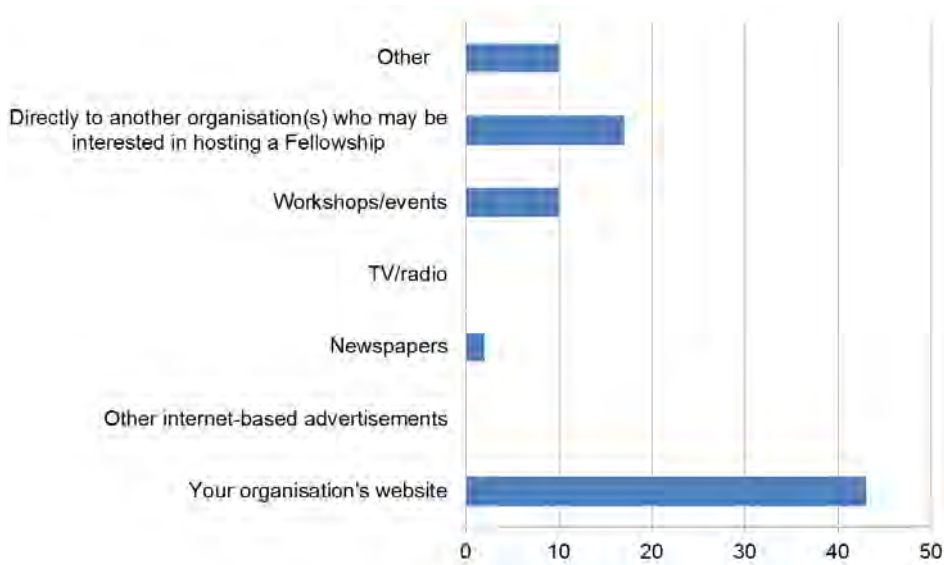


Publicity

Host organisations were asked whether they would participate in the Professional Fellowship scheme again. The vast majority (99%) stated that they would take part again, indicating that, overall, the scheme yields positive experiences for both Fellows and host organisations alike.

Finally, we were interested to know where host organisations publicised information about the Fellowship. 52% reported posting it on their organisation's website, as shown in Figure 28.

Figure 28 Professional Fellowship host organisations 2008-2011 survey respondents, by publicity channel



Host organisations: summary of focus group discussion

The hosts' focus group discussion (FGD) was held on 6 December 2012 at the CSC's offices in Woburn House, London. It was attended by representatives from 14 different organisations and lasted one and a half hours. It was part of a day's programme billed as a networking opportunity for host organisations participating in the Professional Fellowship scheme, giving them the chance to meet each other, to hear about scheme developments from the CSC Secretariat, and to learn about the experience of one particular host – the Environment Agency, which has hosted Fellows every year since the scheme's inception in 2002, and were able to provide an insightful account of their evaluation of the programme.

The main aim of the FGD was to gain an insight into the first-hand experiences and motivations of host organisations with regard to participation in the scheme. A secondary aim was for the Evaluation Team to build longer-term working relationships with the host organisations, with the intention of being able to easily identify potential case studies for future reports.

Similar to the Fellows' FGD, the session was split into three parts: 'Before the award', 'On the award', and 'After the award'. The questions that were asked are as follows:

Before the award

- What was your main motivation for becoming a part of the scheme?
- What are your criteria for selecting a candidate? (Are there specific skills you look for?)
- Do you have a partner organisation that you work with?
- If so, what are the benefits to having a partner organisation?
- If not, would you prefer to have a partner organisation? What are the benefits of not having a partner organisation?
- What is your relationship with the Fellows' home employer?

On the award

- What effect does the take-up of the Fellowship have on the resources or your organisation?
- How do you ensure that the Fellow's objectives for the programme are being met? Does this relate to your organisational objectives?
- What benefits does your organisation get from hosting a Fellow?

After the award

- Does your organisation undertake any evaluation of the programme in relation to the benefits and costs it has to you? (If not, what do you think would be involved in an evaluation?)
- For the organisations that have been in the programme for at least a few years, what motivates you to continue hosting Fellows?
- How can the CSC motivate you to participate in our evaluation of the programme?

Participants

The host organisations that attended broadly represented the wide range of types of organisations involved in the Professional Fellowship scheme. Some organisations have close international links because they have international offices (for example, Childreach International), or because they work closely with professionals from around the world (for example, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation). There was also a mix of levels of engagement with the scheme, ranging from the very experienced (the Environment Agency) to organisations that had hosted their first Fellow in the most recent application round (Childreach International).

Table 33 Professional Fellowship host organisations – participation in the focus group discussion

Organisation type	Organisation name
University	Roehampton University
University	University of Edinburgh
NGO/charity/community organisation	The Law Society of England and Wales
Professional body	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health - East Midlands
NGO/charity/community organisation	Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation
NGO/charity/community organisation	Childreach International
NGO/charity/community organisation	Garforth Academy
Government	Environment Agency
NGO/charity/community organisation	Widows and Orphans International
NGO/charity/community organisation	The Haven Wolverhampton
NGO/charity/community organisation	St Lucia Diabetes Project
Private sector	Hogan Lovells LLP

Summary of FGD results

What was your main motivation for becoming a part of the scheme?

Host organisations provided a number of reasons regarding motivations for taking part in the scheme which were dependent on the method of operation and relationship with employer organisations. Nonetheless, it was clear that there are benefits to be had for hosts and Fellows alike. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) was cited as a reason by the only private sector organisation represented – the international law firm Hogan Lovells LLP – as well as by the Environment Agency, a UK government body. In addition, the Environment Agency also mentioned that it takes part in the scheme as a learning opportunity, to gain knowledge of techniques and methods to deal with situations, such as flooding and drought, in which other countries have more experience.

With offices in India, Bangladesh, and Tanzania, Childreach International said that it takes part in the scheme as a means of sharing learning across the organisation and to provide shared training opportunities. In addition, the scheme helps the organisation to build brand awareness and increases awareness of different in-country operational situations.

Similarly, the two participating universities stated they are involved in the scheme because it provides an opportunity for colleagues involved in cross-border research projects to come together, allowing for ‘train the trainer’ opportunities (University of Edinburgh). It was also highlighted that, for Fellows, participation in the scheme is seen as a badge of honour and consequently involvement in the scheme motivates other staff who see their colleagues being awarded Fellowships.

What are your criteria for selecting a candidate?

The criteria do differ slightly depending on the type of host organisation and the relationship they hold with the employing organisation. However, there were a number of commonalities that arose. Many host organisations expressed the need for candidates to have a minimum level of qualifications and relevant experience. Moreover, candidates across the board need to demonstrate that, in addition to being personally suitable, their work is in an area that ensures they will be able to effectively implement knowledge gained and influence positive change. To do this, organisations use criteria that show commitment to the issues involved and the ability to take initiative.

Another key criterion, alongside qualifications and experience, is the seniority of candidates. This is seen in the context of long-term involvement and the impact of taking part in the scheme, with the logic being that if the most senior members of staff participate first, they will see the value of the scheme to their workplace and proactively champion it on their return, encouraging the staff they manage to also take part. Those hosts that work with partner organisations rely on the latter to shortlist candidates; they deem this the best method due to the fact that they work closely with the candidates and therefore have first-hand knowledge of the best-suited people.

This issue of partner organisations' involvement in candidate selection directly links to the question about the benefits of working with partner organisations. Having partners ensures quality and consistency of candidates. It also facilitates long-term engagement and the increased likelihood of deeper impact, particularly when senior management take part, as it allows for the needs of the organisation and staff to be most effectively addressed.

What effect does the take-up of the Fellowship have on the resources of your organisation?

The impact on host organisations' resources is significant. While the award covers the costs of travel, accommodation and living expenses, there are often additional expenses. Some relate to finances; for example, the award might not be sufficient to cover additional costs such as accommodation if a Fellow attends a training course away from their usual place of residence. However, the main effect is on human resources. The pastoral care of Fellows is labour intensive and lasts throughout the period of award. Usually, management of the scheme is handled by one or two individuals, who dedicate a large amount of personal time.

On the positive side, the high personal involvement in the Fellowships means that individual friendships are often maintained after the Fellows return home. This personal contact also sometimes results in unexpected benefits. Outside London, where finding appropriate accommodation for such a short period of time can be difficult, Fellows often stay in the homes of employees. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health regularly does this, and recounted a story where a female employee who regularly housed Fellows commented to one of her guests that all the Fellows who had stayed were men and questioned why there were not more women. Following this, the partner organisation now regularly sends a more balanced gender mix – something the host organisation itself had been trying, unsuccessfully, to encourage.

For host organisations that were new to the scheme, the logistical planning is very difficult because of the large number of considerations that need to be taken into account. They suggested that including a planning checklist in the guidance for hosts would be helpful, as would the ability to seek guidance from more experienced hosts.

How do you ensure that the Fellow's objectives for the programme are being met? Does this relate to your organisational objectives?

Most hosts had some kind of system in place for ensuring objectives were appropriately set, monitored and achieved, some more formal than others. The Environment Agency has the most formal process, with the implementation of a mentoring system, involving weekly meetings between Fellows and their mentors to discuss objectives and change them when appropriate. This last point was echoed widely in the group. With Fellows often unfamiliar with the environment they are coming into, their own expectations about what they want to achieve can change considerably once they are aware of the opportunities on offer. As a result, ensuring Fellows' objectives stay focused on their original intention is sometimes a challenge. In order to achieve this, host organisations do different things. Some work with employer organisations to devise general areas of focus for the Fellowship, to ensure that the organisational objectives are kept in order and the Fellowship does not become focused on individual development only. Some ensure that Fellows are aware of the host's objectives when setting their own and that the objectives were SMART (Smart, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound).

In terms of issues related to Fellows achieving their objectives, there were a few common recurring issues. Some hosts have problems with Fellows being expected to continue doing their job while in the UK because temporary arrangements have not been made. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health solved this by implementing a memorandum of understanding to ensure that Fellows do not do this, as it detracts value from the Fellowship. Many hosts commented that it can be challenging to ensure that Fellows stay focused on their objectives because they can be overawed by the many potential opportunities which might not be relevant to their objectives or their employers.

Does your organisation undertake any evaluation of the programme in relation to the benefits and costs it has to you?

Only one of the organisations in attendance has conducted a formal evaluation of the scheme – the Environment Agency. When asked how hosts know if the Fellowship has been successful, they stated it is mainly as a result of information obtained via individuals and personal friendships with Fellows and through unrelated in-country visits post award. This kind of anecdotal information was recognised as difficult to capture, with a lack of knowledge of evaluation methods and resources given as the reasons for not doing so. It was suggested that it would be helpful if the CSC could provide the resources and tools for hosts to use.

Due to the differing nature of work of the host organisations, timeframes given for post-award evaluation ranged from six months to two years. There was a majority agreement that some initial contact after six months would be advantageous. It was acknowledged that, while this might not give sufficient time for the effects of the Fellowship to be adequately judged either for Fellows, hosts or employers, the fact that it would involve contacting the employer organisation would show senior management that there is follow-up and evidence to demonstrate success, which would encourage future participation.

For the organisations that have been in the programme for at least a few years, what motivates you to continue hosting Fellows?

For those that have had long-term involvement with the scheme, the perceived level of positive in-country impact was the main reason for continued involvement. The positive impact on host organisations was also cited. The efficiency of the scheme's administration by the CSC Secretariat, particularly the quality of communication, was also given as a reason for continued involvement.

Conclusion

The FGD yielded useful and insightful information. It was successful not only in terms of the evaluation aims and outcomes, but also for the participants themselves. The FGD was part of a networking day which provided host organisations with the opportunity to meet each other and share experiences on an informal level. This was a major factor in its success, as it not only gave the Evaluation Team the opportunity to learn about the experiences and ideas of the host organisations, but also gave hosts the opportunity to learn and share with each other for the first time. This meant the discussion and conversation in the FGD was enthusiastic and plentiful.

A major theme that emerged was the long-term nature of host organisations' involvement in the Professional Fellowship scheme. Participation in the scheme was generally seen as part of a long-term strategic alliance with employer organisations. As a result, participation by senior management of employer organisations was seen as integral to ensure buy-in for the scheme. This has potential impact on how we evaluate the impact of the scheme, because it may mean tracking long-term change of employer organisations in addition to Fellows.

In addition to the comments relating to the questions asked, other issues emerged:

Return visits

In order to improve the effectiveness of the scheme, hosts thought it would be good for UK staff to conduct return visits to the Fellows' employer organisations. This would increase the transmission of knowledge and expertise, because it could allow for 'train the trainer'-type schemes which would involve more individuals and potentially increase impact.

Community of practice

Hosts were enthusiastic about the creation of a community of practice for all host organisations. Organisations that were newer to the scheme were particularly keen to have a forum that would enable the exchange of ideas and information, so that less experienced hosts could get advice from those with more experience. It could also facilitate identifying and sharing events and courses for Fellows at different organisations who work in the same region. This in particular was reported as being requested by many Fellows; it does not currently happen because hosts are not aware of other organisations or Fellows on award at the same time.

Guidance and checklists

Related to the community of practice, there were suggestions to add to and improve the application and guidance documents that would not only help new hosts, but also have the potential effect of increasing host numbers. Inexperienced hosts suggested providing checklists of elements to consider when planning hosting a Fellow, which would ensure robust planning and promote a high-quality Fellowship experience.

The issue of ensuring a certain standard of experience for Fellows came up at various points throughout the discussion. As a result of organisations being located in different parts of the country and the lack of aforementioned checklists and guidance on such issues as finances and other aspects of the day-to-day experience of Fellows, the discussion highlighted that an individual Fellow's experience can differ considerably. While much of this relates to issues such as accommodation, which are outside the control of the CSC, a negative experience for a Fellow may reflect badly on the CSC's reputation. Providing more guidance on making an application and planning a Fellowship programme would not only ensure key elements are planned for and provided, but could also possibly increase both the quality and number of applications.

Evaluation resources

As a result of the focus group question asking whether host organisations conduct any evaluation of their participation in the scheme, a request was made for the CSC Evaluation Team to provide resources and tools to enable hosts to evaluate Fellowships. This could include survey questionnaires to be completed by hosts, Fellows and employers. It was highlighted that hosts often have close relationships with employer organisations, which could facilitate their participation in evaluation work, for both the hosts and for the CSC.

Case study: Environment Agency¹³

The UK **Environment Agency** has hosted Commonwealth Professional Fellows since 2003. During this time, around 50 Fellows from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan have spent periods of three months at the organisation.

'The Environment Agency takes a strategic approach to the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme, working with our international partners to develop programmes which meet their needs as well as deliver environmental outcomes in the UK.'

*'Our programmes focus on "practitioner to practitioner" learning, which exposes Fellows to a range of activities to ensure the best possible conditions for the **transfer of knowledge and skills**. This encompasses desk-based research, attending meetings with internal and external staff, site visits, and practical hands-on training. Feedback from previous programmes supports this approach as a means of creating the best possible conditions for knowledge transfer. Not only does this programme add value to existing relationships and programmes, it is a great way of starting new ones.'*

*'Since 2003, our Fellows have achieved a lot in terms of implementing the knowledge from their placements. In 2006, Anna Maembe, who at the time was Director of Environmental Information, Communication and Outreach at the National Environment Management Council in Tanzania, undertook a Professional Fellowship to learn about our different environment management processes for water, land, and air, as well as understand how we communicate to the public and others about the environment. On her return to Tanzania, Anna implemented a new web portal for **sharing environmental information about industries**, and helped develop guidelines for environmental regulation in the areas of bio-fuels, mining, and telecommunications.'*

*'In 2005, we hosted Benjamin Langwen, Deputy Director of Compliance and Enforcement at the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) in Kenya. We have continued to engage with NEMA Kenya to understand their strategic priorities and how we can support them through the Professional Fellowship scheme. Next year we hope to add value to Benjamin's first placement by hosting him a second time, along with Fellows from Uganda and Nigeria, to take part in a programme to develop laboratory management and analytical skills. Benjamin is responsible for setting up an environmental laboratory within NEMA Kenya, so this placement fits well with his responsibilities. Scientific data is also integral to successful **compliance and enforcement of environmental regulation**, so the placement also supports the risk-based approach to regulation which he implemented following his last placement. This programme also is also aligned with our*

¹³ First published in Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom, *Evaluating Commonwealth Scholarships in the United Kingdom: Assessing impact in environmental sustainability* (2013) <<http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/2013/06/assessing-impact-in-environmental-sustainability>>

new model for the Professional Fellowship scheme, as it will benefit the Environment Agency through staff development opportunities. It will also help us to more accurately target our commercial services through understanding the requirements of laboratories in developing countries.'

Professional Fellowship employers 2008-2011: survey analysis

In conjunction with the host organisations' survey, the CSC Evaluation Team also sought to collect relevant data from Fellows' employers back in their home countries. In line with the notion of data triangulation, employers were sent a survey with similar questions to host organisations that reflected key questions asked on the Fellows' survey.

Employers were selected to take part in the survey based on the 2008-2011 Professional Fellows for whom we held employer contact details. This amounted to a total of 162 employers, who were sent a survey via email. There were 22 bounces, bringing the total potential survey population to 140. It should be noted that this survey had a very low response rate of just 3% (4 responses). Going forward, the CSC Evaluation Team intends to capture information from employers at a much earlier stage, in order to increase response rates.

Breakdown of respondents

All four respondents held senior positions within their organisation. Their working relationship to the Fellow ranged from line manager to head of department to executive director of the organisation, which all indicated high-level positions.

The types of organisations included an NGO, government, an education institution, and a medical institution. Respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses, which led to some overlap. It should be noted that one of the respondents worked with the Fellow on an individual basis, and therefore their organisation was not relevant to this study. Furthermore, many of the questions were not applicable and were therefore left out of the analysis. The employers' primary focus of work varied, and included agriculture/fisheries/forestry, environment/climate change, governance, public health, and poverty reduction. As respondents were able to select multiple responses, there were some intersections in areas of work. The size of these organisations varied from small-medium (10-19 people) to very large (250+), and operated locally, nationally and internationally.

Relationship with Fellow's host organisation

With the exception of the Fellow who worked for the employer on an individual basis, all other respondents noted working very closely with the Fellow's host organisation prior to the Fellowship. Of these three respondents, two reported maintaining an extremely close working relationship with the Fellow's host organisation, while one indicated a small decrease due to cutbacks within their organisation.

Promotion

In all four instances, the employer reported that the Fellow is currently working at the same organisation or on an individual capacity basis. Employers were asked to report whether the Fellow had received a promotion within 12 months of completing the Fellowship. One respondent noted that the Fellow had received a promotion, while another two noted that they had not. The employer whose Fellow had attained a promotion reported that the Fellowship had a very significant role in this: '[The Fellow] gained skills and knowledge from BTCV [the host organisation] especially in fundraising and organisational management which has contributed a lot to the growth of the organisation'.

Impact of the Fellowship

In this section, the CSC Evaluation Team sought to determine whether employers felt that the Fellow was able to gain knowledge and expertise in their field as a result of the Fellowship, as well as whether they were able to increase their analytical and technical skills. Furthermore, we sought to identify whether the Fellow was able to transfer these skills to others and whether they were able to introduce new policies and procedures into the workplace following the Fellowship. As with the host organisations' survey, we looked at key areas related to institutional capacity building, including: knowledge transfer, implementation, decision-making, transparency and accountability, strategic planning, leadership, policy and procedures, and evaluation. We also asked whether the employer felt that the Fellowship had a development impact, whether they still maintained organisational links with the Fellow's host organisation, the costs and benefits to their organisation, and if they had publicised the Fellowship.

Although the data was analysed, no conclusions could be made given the small amount of respondents. It is intended that over time, once more employer data is collected, the analysis of the four respondents who provided answers to this survey will be added onto the analysis of other employers, in which stronger conclusions can be made.

Chapter 4 The impact of a Fellowship: individual stories

As noted in the introduction, priority is given to Professional Fellowship candidates who can show that the Fellowship will result in practical application in one of seven key fields: agriculture/fisheries/forestry, economic growth, education, engineering/science/technology, environment, governance, and public health. In this section, we provide some individual examples of activity and subsequent outcomes and impact in some of these seven areas – in the words of our Fellows themselves. Some of these stories have been previously published in other CSC Evaluation publications, while others are drawn from the survey data or focus groups detailed earlier in this report.

It should be noted that, while we group these stories under the key sector headings, the work of many of our Fellows is interdisciplinary and could be categorised under more than one heading.

Agriculture/fisheries/forestry

Dr Munir Hussain Zia spent his 2011 Professional Fellowship at the British Geological Survey. As R & D Co-Coordinator for a fertiliser company, his work is able to cross over from the private sector to benefit his wider community.

'I was able to introduce a new and cost-effective technique for determination of soil arsenic and iodine at FFC laboratories. The training also enabled me to train others on the development of scientific reports based on analytical data. Especially after learning from the UK fertiliser industry training programme, I have developed/introduced here online fertiliser recommendation systems that will be available free of cost to growers and agriculture extension workers soon.'

'[My company] is also highly interested to spend some of the earned profit on CSR [corporate social responsibility]-related activities. Upon my suggestions the company has started donating money to other related R&D organisations working in the country under budgetary stress.'

Economic growth

Professional Fellows frequently report activity that cuts across sectors. One such example is the work of **Deborah Afolabi**, Chief Nursing Officer in Kwara State, Nigeria, who also works with and advocates for women and children. She came to the UK in 2010 and her Fellowship was hosted by the Haven Wolverhampton, a charity supporting victims of domestic violence. As well as various health and education initiatives, including the provision of eye operations and glasses for the visually impaired, she reports that her work has had an impact on poverty reduction by providing machines and assistance to a group of female farmers. She states:

'We have been able to install machines including rice, nut and corn threshing machines for a group of women farmers at Tsaragi community in Edu, a local government area of Kwara State. Our activities have helped these women to generate more income and funds. It has also helped them to start a cooperative society named Women and Child Watch Initiatives (WOCWI) Women Group Tsaragi where they now use the capital realised to maintain the machines and provide loans to members.'

Lucy Kanu is the Founder and Executive Director of Idea Builders Initiative, an inspiring charity whose mission is 'to inspire, engage and equip women and girls to transform their lives and serve as change agents in society'. Their work is specifically focused on gender equality, social entrepreneurship, and economic empowerment. In 2009, she spent three months on a Fellowship at the Prince's Trust.

'[I have given training sessions on] capacity building including financial planning, budgetary oversight, cash flow management as well as strategies to secure the sustainability of social enterprise networking and partnerships for development. [I also] installed a new financial control system and initiated a part-time and at-home mom employee flexibility plan.'

Sampson Titus Agba is Executive Director of the Eastern Obolo Community Development Foundation. He spent three months at Groundwork Manchester, Salford and Trafford on a Professional Fellowship in 2008. Sampson asserts that his Fellowship provided the stimulus to help him restructure his organisation.

'In 2010, my organisation underwent a restructure with a move toward sustainability. This move was largely because of inspiration that I drew from my Fellowship working with Groundwork Manchester, Salford and Trafford. We have refocused the work of the Eastern Obolo Community Development Foundation away from

micro-infrastructure to promoting and supporting local enterprise for income generation and employment creation.

'My responsibilities include planning and decision-making, coordination, control, and supervision. I represent my organisation at high-level meetings with other organisations and with individuals, keep minutes for the board, and facilitate training for staff of the organisation. My role also includes seeking funding support from donor organisations.'

Education

Catherine Mugambi was awarded a Professional Fellowship at SCOPE, the leading UK disability charity for children and adults with cerebral palsy, in 2007. She is now District Special Education Coordinator for the Kenyan Ministry of Education, and works on increasing social equality for disabled people. She is responsible for the early identification, assessment, and educational placement of children with disabilities, as well as training teachers and parents as trainers. As well as embarking upon distance learning programmes, she raises public awareness and supervises teachers. Catherine also provides strategic direction with a case-based reasoning approach and networks with partners locally and internationally.

'Through this strategy, I was provided with the opportunity to continually practice what I learnt, but also to share at the organisational level and among other partners through the training of stakeholders, teachers, and parents, which resulted in the replication of good practice and adoption of better working strategies. I have improved the quality of education in special programmes, and developed much higher leverage and confidence in working with adults through empowering.'

Godfrey Semtumbwe is a 2004 Professional Fellow from Uganda. A Training Officer and General Programmes Manager Support Officer at the Literacy and Adult Basic Education Trust in Uganda, his Fellowship was hosted by Education Action International in the UK.

'Illiteracy is a major barrier to poverty alleviation. This is, for instance, noticeable in entrepreneurship and market transactions. By increasing literacy skills among poor and marginalised communities, we have contributed to strengthening the education of girls and women in eight war-affected districts of northern Uganda. The projects in this focal area have included the provision of basic literacy and numeracy skills to the mothers of out-of-school children, which has enabled these adults to engage in micro-enterprises.'

'Poverty encompasses not only low monetary income and low consumption; it also includes poor health, poor nutrition, and a lack of basic education. It is also responsible for a lack of self-respect leading to powerlessness. Through basic education provided to war-affected women and girls, we have been able to contribute to conflict resolution and the appreciation of the need for peacebuilding at family and community levels. Finally, by training child dropouts in embedded literacies with vocational skills and crafts, we have contributed to job creation in this largely ignored informal sector. We have also worked with the government functional adult literacy programme to provide functional English for adults, which is widening communication opportunities for such learners, since English is the official language and a language of wider communication.'

Esther Neromba held a Professional Fellowship in 2006 at the League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers. She is Advisory Teacher and Subject Adviser for the Programmes and Quality Assurance Department at the Ministry of Education in Namibia.

'I have been involved in the national school external evaluations where a number of schools have been inspected to see at which level they are. This exercise has also allowed individual teachers to judge themselves against set standards and paved a way forward for setting up achievable targets. Working closely with the school principals and head of departments and sharing my UK experience of school leadership and management has redirected their thinking of leadership, and I see that to some extent as an achievement.'

Ena Eulalee Barclay is a Liaison Officer for the Jamaica Teachers Association who spent time at Wandsworth Borough Council in 2010 as part of her Professional Fellowship hosted by the League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers. Ena was able to use specific skills gained from undertaking the Fellowship to train colleagues with educational information relating to processes which help schools pass inspections.

'I liaise between the Ministry of Education and the Jamaica Teachers Association to ensure that agreements signed by the union, finance and education ministries are adhered to. At the local level, I deal with complaints from teachers. At the regional and national levels, I assist teachers in obtaining pensions and

other important documents from the ministry, as well as recommend teachers for assistance from the ministry and the union. Additionally, I coordinate all sporting activities in the union and assist in conducting workshops and seminars.'

Simon Daffi Kirway is Senior Programme Officer at the Education and Councillors Accountability Programme based in Tanzania. He undertook a two-month Professional Fellowship hosted by African Initiatives in 2011. Simon credits the Fellowship with helping him to train hundreds of people in technical, analytical, managerial, and general information that he learnt while on award.

'Besides the Education Programme, I am also involved in a Public Accountability Innovative Programme. The programme is involved in improving accountability relations in local government, working with local councillors and local government staff to improve social service delivery, including education and water. My current work in the Education Programme focuses on improving girls' access to education in 44 secondary schools in Tanzania. I conduct the training of school boards, local community leaders, district officials, parents, and teachers on improving teaching and learning systems in schools.'

'During my time on the Professional Fellowship, I worked with other teachers. When I came back to Tanzania, I got the opportunity to share key learning experiences with teachers across 44 secondary schools. One of the areas which I put emphasis on was how teachers and education providers could support children with disabilities. That involved providing the necessary skills for teachers to identify children with disabilities and others with learning disabilities. I am responsible for ensuring that the necessary infrastructure exists to support children with disabilities. I am also involved in mentoring and coaching volunteers in my organisation to give them the skills to work with local communities, schools and various government departments.'

Prince Tommy Williams is Deputy Director of Lifeline West Africa, based in Sierra Leone. He spent two months at Lifeline Network International on a Professional Fellowship in 2011. Prince reported that the Fellowship provided him with a great deal of confidence which he was able to take back to his home country, to further his career and make a lasting impact on his local community.

'Before I undertook the Fellowship, I was an IT Manager for Lifeline. I was also Dean of a boys' orphanage home which housed 48 children at that time. Upon my return from the Fellowship training, I was able to do many things. I trained other staff to take over the IT position. I organised training sessions for boys in the orphanage, and now 75% more report gaining confidence to gain leadership roles and are presently managing different sectors of the organisation. My confidence has grown to a point that I even council elderly people in the community. I presently manage technical and vocation projects funded by the Big Lottery Fund, which focus on a number of different areas such as building and construction, auto-mechanics, hairdressing, and electrical installation, among other things. I can proudly say that, since I returned from the UK, I have gained a great deal of confidence. I was once a soldier in the war in the 1990s and lost my parents. The late Reverend Richard M Cole took me into the Nehemiah Home for Boys, of which I am now the head.'

Engineering/science/technology

Dr Godfred Frempong was a Professional Fellow at the Institute of Policy Research in Engineering, Science and Technology, University of Manchester, in 2005, where he gained evaluation skills and was exposed to critical thinking. These skills and exposure are crucial for policy research, and he applied them to his follow-up research work and progression. Currently, he is Deputy Director of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Science and Technology Policy Research Institute in Ghana.

'I have conducted studies that sought to improve the deployment of ICTs [Information and Communication Technologies] to support e-government in Ghana. Currently, I am the research coordinator for an IDRC [International Development Research Centre] project with the aim to improve university research governance so that university research addresses societal needs.'

Emmanuel Ntambara is Cyber Security Officer for the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA). He undertook a three-month Professional Fellowship at the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) in 2011. Emmanuel noted that he was able to share his experience at the CTO in national, regional and international meetings related to the subject matter. He has been able to contribute greatly to the draft of the Rwandan National Information Security Policy and ongoing consultations on the ICT bill.

'I develop guidelines to improve cyber security and to increase the protection of critical information infrastructures. I facilitate the implementation of national cyber security policy and other government-related initiatives. In collaboration with other entities at regional and global levels, I carry out research on cyber security issues with the objective of increasing the resilience of national ICT infrastructure against

adversaries. In consultation with ICT industries and other stakeholders, I propose practical solutions to be implemented by service providers in order to improve national and private information security.'

Environment

As a 2006 Professional Fellow, **Anna Maembe** was hosted by the Environment Agency, where she learnt how the agency develops programmes for working with the private sector companies it regulates. She also gained experience in environmental regulation and permitting, which helps her to monitor environmental investments and develop databases of investors and their environmental management plans. She is now Director of Environmental Information and Outreach at the National Environment Management Council in Tanzania.

'I convinced two local communities to enact bylaws which ban farming on river banks below 60 metres from the high water and a fine for those who set forests on fire. I also negotiated on behalf of Tanzania during the preparation of the Conference of Parties agenda of business of the Convention on Conservation of Biodiversity. Moreover, I work with colleagues in areas of residence to educate each other on waste sorting and recycling techniques.'

Keisha Garcia held a Professional Fellowship at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge in 2006, where she contributed to UNEP's efforts to develop and implement a strategy to follow up the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. She is now a consultant to the Environmental Management Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, where she is principally responsible for the production of the national *State of the Environment* report. Keisha has also assumed the role of Programme Coordinator at the Cropper Foundation, a small not-for-profit organisation in Trinidad and Tobago, where she has been employed in various capacities for the last seven years. She helps to give strategic direction to the foundation's programmes and provides managerial support to the organisation. She is also the lead person for the foundation's education programme.

Herman Hakuzimana is one of the CSC's first award holders from Rwanda. His 2011 Professional Fellowship was hosted at Heriot-Watt University as part of the Rwanda Scotland Alliance project and focused on climate change science. While on award he attended a number of lectures and conferences in Edinburgh and around the UK, as well as visiting a variety of organisations and individuals involved with climate change in Scotland, from power stations and wind farms to the Scottish Minister for Environment and Climate Change and DFID representatives. He has been able to pass on the knowledge learnt to his colleagues back at Rwanda's Environmental Management Authority.

'I shared the knowledge gained in climate change science with my colleagues that I work together with in the Department of Climate Change and International Obligations and I gave them some documents. I also shared with them the experience of Scotland in waste management and recycling and renewable energy generation as well.'

Dan Otieno Ong'or is Head of Research Coordination and Assistant Registrar at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology in Kenya. In 2011, he spent one month at the Institute for Energy Systems at the University of Edinburgh on a Professional Fellowship. Through his Fellowship, Dan published a paper on assessing the effect of water on bioenergy resources that he presented at Maseno University's international seminar on water. He was able to train other colleagues on educational issues surrounding soil conditioning.

'My duties include the coordination of research programmes at the university, administering research funds, assisting students in drawing patent information and descriptions, initiation and coordination of collaborations with other research institutions and industry, carrying out research, and coordination of research publications.'

'I have been involved in training political candidates on the new constitution in Kenya, specifically chapters 5 and 6 that deal with gender and the governance of natural resources such as land and leadership. As a direct result of my work, at least three women obtained positions in the country government.'

Governance

Harshani Wijeratne was a Professional Fellow in 2005, hosted by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation. She is currently Head of the Legal Section of Sri Lanka Telecom. She is an Attorney-at-Law and has an LLM from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, and intends to start a PhD in the near future. She is also a member of the Women Lawyers Association in Sri Lanka, and the International Development

Law Organisation. Harshani feels that her award contributed significantly to her work, and also to the area of conflict resolution – in her case, involving her contribution to legal disputes.

'The programme I undertook on my Commonwealth Professional Fellowship was to establish an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centre for the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation. Through this programme, I was able to gather knowledge on various mechanisms of dispute resolution other than litigation, which is commonly used in Sri Lanka. I was able to replicate this knowledge in the work I do in my home country, particularly through participating in domestic arbitrations as the instructing attorney, handling litigation, and also drafting and scrutinising a large number of complex agreements, most of which entail cross-border transactions, in which I have proposed the best source of dispute resolutions mechanisms through the practical experience I gained while in the UK.'

Pamela Mwelela Chisanga is Country Director of ActionAid in Zambia, and undertook a three-month Professional Fellowship hosted by EPCAT UK in 2009. Pamela believes that the Fellowship enabled her to effect change at the institutional, local and national levels. Additionally, through the award, she was able to train high-level management personnel and implement new systems and procedures.

'I provide strategic guidance to the programme and supervise a country management team of six managers to support internal governance processes and ensure effective financial management, accountability and transparency. As a result of the Fellowship I was able to train senior management and the board of trustees on the use of financial and administrative systems and procedures that the organisation previously did not have in place.'

'In governance, I have led and supported work in the area of tax justice. I have supported the processes of chief security officers in my country submitting tax policy proposals that have led to an increase in some areas of taxation, such as an increase of mineral royalty tax from 3% to 6%. Other achievements include the passing of the rural development bill in parliament and a private members' motion from an MP sponsored by my organisation.'

Olusola Babatunde Opeibi is an Associate Professor at the University of Lagos who spent three months at the University of Westminster in 2010 on a Professional Fellowship in the area of governance. Through the skills that she was able to gain while on award, Olusola has been able to train colleagues in analytical skills and general information on speechwriting and its relationship with public policy.

'As head of the speechwriting unit, I manage and coordinate resources for effective service delivery. I also advise the Lagos State Deputy Governor on public communication and policy issues. Additionally, I teach and supervise undergraduate and postgraduate students. In regard to my own work, I research and publish papers on governance and civic engagement, as well as the role of new media in emerging democracies.'

Grace Babihuga is Executive Director of the Uganda Law Society (ULS) and spent one month on a Professional Fellowship hosted by the Law Society of England and Wales in 2012. Grace credits the Fellowship for providing training which enabled her to organise courses and train colleagues in organisational management and work cycles.

'My role as Executive Director includes management of staff, business and finance planning, asset protection, council support, public relations and organisation memory, the Society's strategic direction, succession, development of strategic alliances, management of the Society's activities, supervising staff, ensuring the organisation's objectives are met, guiding evaluation activities, developing grant proposals, undertaking research analysis and advocacy, and networking with a number of stakeholders.'

'When I returned from the Fellowship, I organised two courses: one for the Ugandan Law Society management team, and another for the whole secretariat. I was able to share what I had been taught in the Sherwood management development course that I undertook during the Fellowship that included identifying and managing our stakeholders, managing meetings and people, and the work cycle, among many other things. I also shared and educated the secretariat on new ideas and ways of effectively running a bar association which I learnt from understudying the Law Society of England and Wales during the six-week period of the Fellowship.'

'With my experience and level of training, as the Executive Director, I greatly influence decision-making at all levels in the secretariat. I have also been recognised by the ULS auditors and Executive Council as pertinent to the accountability of the organisation.'

An alternative perspective: the view from a host organisation

Cooperating with its sister law societies and bar associations across the Commonwealth, the **Law Society of England and Wales** has hosted 15 Commonwealth Professional Fellows – through four intakes – from Barbados, Botswana, Malaysia, Namibia, Nigeria, OECS (Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States), Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uganda.

While the scale and capacity of the Law Society's corresponding organisations abroad may differ, the organisations do share similar challenges, which are reflected in the comprehensive programme provided for the Professional Fellows. This includes hands-on experience of the regulatory and representative functions of law societies and bar associations, the sharing of best practice, bespoke training opportunities, and, perhaps most importantly, the opportunity to make direct contacts with the legal and regulatory profession in the UK – relationships which continue to grow long after the Professional Fellows have returned home.

'The [Professional Fellowship] programme is an invaluable opportunity for the Law Society and the participating Commonwealth bars and law societies to build links with the profession globally, and to provide shared positive support to the development of the rule of law and good governance through capacity building of our sister organisations. The programme provides a varied and stimulating insight into the roles and capacities of legal regulatory and representative institutions, and enables the Professional Fellows to focus on key areas of development in their own organisations.'

Judy Ann Prescod, a 2004 Professional Fellow from Trinidad and Tobago hosted by the Law Society, was able to see immediate benefits from the award – even while still in the UK.

'Staff at the Society have given us great support and we've learnt so much about their work. I feel that the management skills training has empowered me and will benefit both my colleagues and lawyers. It has been rewarding to learn more about client care and the emphasis that the Society puts on it. I am discussing with the Society some help in drafting guidelines for accounting rules for lawyers, and I hope this is just the beginning of our working relationship.'

Jose Jude Mathew spent three months as a Professional Fellow at the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association in 2002. As a senior producer at India's national public broadcaster, Doordarshan, he has been able to influence public opinion and behaviour and policymakers in a number of areas.

'I have been extensively involved in producing developmental programmes that aim to create both public opinion and an atmosphere contributing to social and economic growth and positive change. In particular, I have been actively associated at national levels with major public health campaigns in the fight against diseases such as polio, TB and HIV/AIDS. Some other examples of our work include the introduction of the condom in India, in partnership with the National Aids Control Organisation and BBC World Service Trust; the Education for All initiative, connecting stakeholders countrywide through an UNESCO/Commonwealth Broadcasting Association grant; and the EU-India MEDIAIDS initiative, when I was one of six Indian journalists who partnered with European journalists to image HIV/AIDS. We have been able to influence government thinking and policy by creating an environment through television programmes whereby stakeholders and opinion leaders get an opportunity to proactively support or press for suitable alteration of government initiatives for public good.'

Health

Cecilia Dricuru is a Nursing Officer at Butabika Hospital in Uganda who spent three months at the NHS East London Partnership on a Professional Fellowship in 2009. A specialist in child and adolescent mental health, she found the Fellowship extremely valuable and was able to implement some significant changes on her return.

'Before I went for the Fellowship, the hospital was admitting young people and adults on the same ward which was real hard for the young people. After my three months' training in east London, specifically in the management of young people on an inpatient basis in Coborn, Newham, I was able to open up the child and adolescent inpatient ward separate from the adults. This has been followed by certificate course training by the team from the East London Partnership in child and adolescent mental health, which is ongoing. Generally speaking, a lot of changes have taken place since I returned from my Fellowship.'

Philip Waweru Mbugua held a Commonwealth Professional Fellowship at Community Service Volunteers in 2005.

'The Commonwealth Professional Fellowship enriched my experience and helped to make me a better leader at the head of a young and dynamic organisation – NOPE (National Organisation of Peer Educators). Peer education involves the use of volunteers, and keeping them motivated is one of the key challenges. This was one of the main areas that I sought to address after my Fellowship in the UK.'

'NOPE works with different organisations to address HIV/AIDS awareness and other emerging challenges. NOPE has facilitated sensitisation meetings for over 1,000 managers to win their support for peer education programmes. Many of the organisations have put in place motivation mechanisms for peer educators, such as provision of t-shirts, training, and recognition through award schemes.'

'The HIV prevalence in Kenya when NOPE started in 2000 was over 14% – this now stands at 7.4%. I therefore feel that NOPE, under my leadership, is making a significant contribution to Kenya's fight against HIV/AIDS. The uniqueness of our programmes and facilitation techniques has created demand for NOPE services beyond Kenya, and we have conducted consultancy services in southern Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia, Liberia and Sierra Leone.'

Hilary Kimeli Limo was awarded a Commonwealth Professional Fellowship in Public Health and Environment at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (North East) in 2007. He is Public Health Officer at the Kenyan Ministry of Health, where he coordinates the weekly surveillance of communicable diseases in a region of the country. His skills were called upon two weeks after returning to Kenya, during the violence in the wake of the election at the end of 2007.

'[The] Ministry of Health constituted a team to coordinate health and nutrition issues in internally displaced people (IDP) camps and I was nominated to be part of the team. With fresh ideas from the Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit, I led the team in establishing various sub-committees to deal with shelter, sanitation and hygiene, safe water, and psychosocial support. The IDPs are still in the camps, but at least they are able to access their basic needs as we plan to reconcile the communities. I personally feel that the award opened a new chapter in my work and I thank the Commonwealth for the sponsorship. I am proud to be associated with you.'

James Achanyi-Fontem is Executive Director of Cameroon Link, and spent three months undertaking a Professional Fellowship at the Sickle Cell Society in 2008. James was able to obtain a more senior position within 12 months of completing his award, and strongly attributes this advancement to the Fellowship.

'Immediately upon completion of my Commonwealth Professional Fellowship award in 2008, I was elected to the position of International Coordinator of the Men's Initiative of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, a position that I still currently hold. Additionally, I have been the National Coordinator of the International Baby Food Action Network since 2009, the National President of the Federation of Cameroon Breastfeeding Promotion Associations since 2010, COL Cameroon Link Partnership Liaison since 2010, and the Health District Coordinator for Scaling Up Malaria for Impact since 2011. These are all cumulative functions within my current position as Executive Director of Cameroon Link (Human Assistance Programme).'

'I organise capacity building training for media professionals working on the development of community radio stations in Cameroon. I coordinate research work on infant and young child feeding for approximately 30 health district civil society organisations in Cameroon. I supervise, monitor and evaluate the work of the Commonwealth of Learning at the community radio stations in the west and southwest regions of Cameroon involved in the design of community of learning programmes on mother and child health care. 12 community radio stations are involved in this activity. Under my coordination, 110 community-based organisations are involved in the promotion of malaria prevention in the district of Bonassama.'

Anselmo Kapandila is Managing Director of the Ansade Foundation, based in Tanzania. He undertook a Professional Fellowship at the East Lindsey District Council for three months in 2010. Anselmo was able to provide technical, analytical, managerial and education training to more than 50 colleagues on specific skills that he gained from undertaking the Fellowship, particularly in the area of household sanitation and hygiene.

'I provide care and support as well as education to children in need including orphans, homeless, street and disabled children with involvement from women and the wider community, which also involves facilitating the construction of schools and fundraising. I am also involved in providing support to marginalised women through micro projects, with the aim of also having a positive impact on children. I create partnerships with other charities, development partners and NGOs, both within and outside the country, as a means of establishing other resource centres.'

George Onyango is Deputy Director of Slums Information Development and Resource Centre (SIDAREC) in Kenya. He undertook a three-month Professional Fellowship at the International HIV/AIDS Alliance in 2010.

George asserts that the Fellowship provided him with the capacity to help shape SIDAREC's five-year strategic plan.

'I am responsible for programme design, monitoring and evaluation, and staff development. I also influence decisions on project management, staff hiring, and programming. I was able to develop a conflict of interest policy that has been the guiding principal of the organisation's work. Upon my return from the Fellowship, I helped develop a five-year strategic plan to guide the organisation. I have been able to start a street family programme that rehabilitates families from the streets to empower them to lead decent lives. I also created a mobile library that takes books to children who do not have access to reading materials or lack access to library facilities.'

'SIDAREC has projects in the slums that improve the livelihoods of people living there. Mobile and community libraries have played a greater role in improving performance of children in the slums who did not previously have access to reading materials or libraries. In order to inform the organisation on the need for this programme, we evaluate the number of children coming to the centres to access library facilities, the number of children borrowing and returning books from the libraries, and school performance in the national examination. On livelihoods, we look at how people provided with loans are repaying them and any significant changes in lives of those we provided with grants (loans).'

Oluwatoyin Olubunmi Opawoye is Head of Health Programmes for the Leah Charity Foundation based in Nigeria. She spent three months at the Haven Wolverhampton in 2011 undertaking a Commonwealth Fellowship in the area of health and gender equality. Through skills that she learned from the Fellowship, Oluwatoyin was able to hold multiple seminars for women's groups and school children, teaching them about domestic violence prevention.

'Our activities include taking health care services to rural and hard-to-reach areas via mobile clinics, preventing maternal mortality through the provision of free antenatal and delivery care services, free treatment for under-five children, support to orphans and vulnerable children, financial support to children with eye cataracts, and a range of other health services. I am also responsible for a campaign against domestic violence and challenges to women's health.'

Gender equality

Abiola Ruth Adimula is Legal Practice Chairperson of Women and Child Watch Initiatives in Nigeria. She undertook a Professional Fellowship at the Haven Wolverhampton for a period of six months in 2010. As a result of her Fellowship, Abiola has been able to provide training to Nigerian magistrates on improving the administration of the child justice system. This led to the magistrates undertaking Fellowships themselves.

'After completing the Professional Fellowship, I was able to empower women farmers against domestic violence through economic initiatives. With support from Fate Trust Wolverhampton UK, I was able to establish a women's centre that installed modern harvesting equipment for Tsaragi women. In 2011, I helped established a children's sight-saving endowment which provides free eye surgery for indigent children.'

'I trained scores of students in different high schools about domestic violence and abuse, the effect it has on children, and how to access help. I also provide managerial training to the board of trustees and other members of my NGO and have sensitised the Kwara State Judiciary on the importance of improving the Nigerian child justice administration system, which led to two magistrates undertaking Commonwealth Professional Fellowships [and] who now greatly add to the functionality of the family court system.'

Poverty reduction

Musaka Mutondo is Coordinator of the Siavongo Nutrition Group in Zambia. He undertook a three-month Professional Fellowship in 2009 hosted by Discovery Student Volunteering Swansea. Musaka credits the Fellowship with making contacts that enabled him to secure funding for further research projects.

'I have a managerial position that involves drawing up training programmes for junior staff which I present to the committee for approval. I am also responsible for determining staff salaries, recruiting both junior and senior staff, and ensuring that the executive carries out processes accordingly.'

'I have conducted two training sessions on how to conduct research and surveys on nutrition and food security for groups of volunteers where I work. This research, including the surveys, has resulted in over 600 households reached by our volunteers. The survey has been supported by the National Food and Nutrition'

Commission and Self-Help Africa. Other training research was funded by Comic Relief through Spice UK, through contacts I had made during the Fellowship.

'Through my lobbying efforts, I have convinced the Department of Fisheries to put aquaculture as a priority in Siavongo (Zambia), as most communities were suffering and yet we have the resources which could be utilised to generate income for them. The most important issue I have managed is to influence the allocation of agriculture inputs to women in the district, which has seen an increase in the number of women registering and accessing aquaculture inputs.'

Other

As previously mentioned, many of our Fellows work in areas that cross these sectors. The following two stories are examples of the interdisciplinary nature of their work.

Robert Ntalaka is Information Officer and HIV Project Coordinator at the Association of Microfinance Institutions of Uganda. He undertook a three-month Professional Fellowship in 2008 at the University of Sheffield in the area of education and technology and public health. Robert was able to train over 50 colleagues in technical and education skills that he gained from undertaking the Fellowship. Additionally, as a direct result of the award, he was able to publish six articles that were accepted by different international conferences.

'I manage information, communications and media relations, working with the technical team at the Association of Microfinance Institutions of Uganda to produce working papers and other publications for policymakers and other stakeholders in the microfinance industry. I also produce a bi-monthly newsletter and quarterly bulletin, as well as managing the microfinance journal. Lastly, I coordinate and manage the HIV microfinance project.'

Walter Augustine Tuni was Prosthetics Orthotist at the CCBRT Disability Hospital in Tanzania at the time of his six-month Professional Fellowship at the University of Strathclyde in 2009. He is currently Clinical Instructor in Health Education (Disability Management) at the Sirindhorn School of Prosthetics and Orthotics based at the University of Bangkok in Thailand. Walter credits the Fellowship with enabling him to gain the necessary skills for career advancement.

'As a clinical instructor/lecturer, my main duties are to develop lecture plans and teach. Apart from teaching, I am also involved in the Policy and Planning Department, where we look at all infrastructures, material procurements, and health and safety measures on the area of prosthetics and orthotics. I also supervise students in their research and projects.'

'Before the Fellowship, I had few clinical skills but, after being at Strathclyde for six months, I gained the necessary skills that enabled me to become a clinical instructor in my area of work. I am now able to conduct intensive clinical assessments and teach my colleagues and other paramedic staff in areas related to physical disability management.'

Conclusions

The Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme is a particularly development-focused CSC programme with the added benefit that award holders are often able to have an effect on their workplaces almost immediately. The CSC's recognition of the value of the programme is evident in the increasing numbers of awards offered since its inception, with numbers rising from 23 in 2002 to 119 in 2012 and, although the variety of data collection methods employed since the start of the programme does not allow for a rigorous full scale evaluation, the data available does seem to justify this.

In particular, data collected over the last ten years supports the hypothesis that the Professional Fellowship programme contributes to development impact on institutions and wider society by supporting mid-career professionals. It shows, for example, that over three-quarters of Professional Fellowship awards (77%) are given to people whose country of citizenship is in sub-Saharan Africa, with the majority of the remainder going to individuals from countries in South Asia (16%) and the Caribbean (7%). Rates of return are very high, as you might expect for a short-term fellowship, and survey results show that 95% of respondents are currently residing in their home region. These same survey results also show that the vast majority of respondents state that they would have not been able to undertake the same or similar programme in the UK without the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship, indicating the necessity of the scheme in providing opportunities to people that would not otherwise have been possible.

On a practical level, the survey shows overwhelmingly positive results with regard to acquisition of knowledge and skills, as illustrated by 96% of respondents reporting that they gained expert knowledge in their field. Furthermore, results show that the scheme prepares individuals to transfer knowledge to others, as shown by 90% of respondents stating that they were able to subsequently transfer the skills and knowledge gained while on award. The survey also demonstrates the relevance of the programme, as 89% of survey respondents reported using specific skills and knowledge they gained while on award in their workplace. These findings are further reinforced by the focus group discussion that was held with a select number of Professional Fellows in November 2012, which also confirms the benefits of the programme, with overall results highlighting the programme's role in helping to improve skills and knowledge, and providing individuals with opportunities to enhance their professional development as well as processes within their work environments.

With regard to wider development impact, the survey data again shows very positive results. 81% of respondents reported having socioeconomic impact, compared with 60% of Commonwealth Scholars who studied for a PhD and 75% of Commonwealth Scholars who studied for a Master's degree reporting the same impact in the main evaluation survey. 49% of Professional Fellow respondents stated having impact in government policy, while in the main survey 35% of both PhD and Master's Scholars reported impact in this area. This provides clear evidence that Professional Fellowships are one of the most effective of the CSC's schemes in terms of having impact in key development areas.

As part of the new methods implemented for evaluating the Professional Fellowship programme, host organisations and Fellows' employers were also sent surveys. Although the response rate from employers (3%) was too low to make any conclusive remarks, the host organisations' results provided some valuable insight into their perspectives of the programme. In line with responses from the Fellows, host organisations felt that the Fellowship provided a high level of knowledge and skills gain and that they are able to provide industry expertise. The host organisations' survey also supported the notion that Fellowships do have development impact, with the vast majority (85%) of respondents reporting impact. This type of evidence is also supported by the work of hosts who have undertaken their own evaluations.

In conclusion, although more data needs to be collected over time in order to conduct a full-scale evaluation study, the preliminary results from this year's survey and recent focus group discussions do provide very convincing evidence that the Professional Fellows scheme is a highly valuable element of the CSC portfolio of awards. It enables individuals to gain a wealth of knowledge and skills that they are then able to transfer to other colleagues and to their organisations, as a result often having an impact on wider society. It is the view of the authors, therefore, that the CSC should continue to invest its resources in this programme. In the meantime, as a result of the findings of this review, we suggest the following recommendations to ensure the continuing relevance and effectiveness of the programme.

Recommendations

- If evidence collected from Professional Fellows is to be verified and supported, it is essential that we expand attempts to engage with other stakeholders such as host organisations and employers. In terms of the latter particularly, we stress the need to continue with the employers' survey exercise and actively seek to build closer working relationships with them to increase response rates.

- We also recognise the important role of host organisations in terms of data collection and ensuring the relevance and efficiency of the programme, and recommend that measures to work more closely with them are put in place. This includes the Evaluation Team working more closely with the programme administration team to make the most of existing relationships with hosts and implementing a considered and targeted host organisations' survey programme.
- During the process of this review it was decided that data collection for Professional Fellows should follow a different time schedule to that for the longer and more academic awards. It is noted, however, that, due to the complex nature of Professional Fellowship cohorts and start dates, a consistent timeline must be set with regard to when surveys are sent out to Fellows. The recommendation, for the purpose of administration, is that surveys are sent in batches no more than twice a year, and cohorts should be decided based on award year and start dates.
- With regard to gender parity in take-up, more men take up Professional Fellowships than women. The percentages change year-on-year. 2010 was the most balanced year, with 45% of Fellowships being taken up by women; however, this decreased to 40% in 2012. Therefore, it is important to ensure that there is gender parity year-on-year, which could perhaps require further engagement with nominating organisations for this scheme.
- The success of both the Fellows' and the host organisations' focus groups – not only in terms of generating ideas and collecting data, but also in building good relations with current Fellows and hosts for the future – leads to the recommendation that we continue to host such events where appropriate and also to work closely with colleagues in the programme administration team to make the most of other opportunities to engage with Fellows and host organisations.

Each of these recommendations can be applied in the coming months, building on work already commenced and allowing for a more rigorous analysis of specific outcomes and impact in due course. In the meantime, this review confirms that the CSC's support for the Professional Fellowship scheme is well placed and that these awards should continue to form a key element of its portfolio.



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