



CSC Evaluation and Monitoring Programme

Impact in organisational governance

Samwel Marwa Werema



Dr Samwel Werema was awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship in 2002 to pursue a PhD at the University of Strathclyde. He had previously attained a Master's qualification in Accounting and Finance at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and was working as an Assistant Lecturer at the Open University of Tanzania. After completing his PhD, Samwel returned home and secured his current post as Administration and Finance Director at the African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) in Nairobi, Kenya. AICAD is a regional organisation, funded by the governments of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, and operates in the area of human capacity development to reduce poverty. In this diverse role, Samwel is responsible for managing AICAD's support function and directs the facilities, finance, and human resources departments.

PhD research

Samwel's PhD, titled 'An Analysis of Corporate Restructuring in the UK', examined decision-making processes in corporate reform and governance. The research focused on corporate restructuring over time and the impact of differing organisational scenarios on this process. Samwel highly rated the research and analytical skills that he developed, the techniques for managing and organising projects that he learnt, and the access to equipment and expertise available to him during his PhD research. His study led to the publication of two articles co-authored with his research supervisor in the *European Journal of Finance* and the *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*. Additionally, upon returning home, he continued to use the research materials designed and developed as part of his PhD to investigate corporate restructuring in Tanzania, and his continuing academic work has led to further publications within the field.

'Although my study was based on UK companies, the research outcomes and skills learnt can be applied in other countries.'

Employment following PhD

At the time that Samwel was awarded his Commonwealth Scholarship, he was working as an Assistant Lecturer at the Open University of Tanzania. His employer was supportive of his decision to move to the UK to study for a three-year period and, upon his return in 2006, he was promoted to the post of Lecturer and Dean of the Faculty of Business Management – a position for which a PhD qualification was a prerequisite.

Samwel stated that, at the time of his award, his employer anticipated that the academic knowledge and skills with which he would be equipped on his return would greatly benefit and build capacity at the university. He credits his promotion to Dean at that stage of his career to his Commonwealth Scholarship and believes that, if he had remained in his home country, it would not have been possible for him to gain a PhD qualification in three years, due to lack of university resources. Therefore, his Commonwealth Scholarship was a key factor in Samwel's career progression.

One of the significant programmes that Samwel established in his new role was the Executive Master of Business Administration degree at the Open University of Tanzania in 2007. With approximately 100 students enrolled each year, the degree aims to build business management and decision-making skills in middle- and senior-level corporate managers. While Samwel is no

longer employed at the university, he continues to supervise students on the Executive MBA programme.

Work in the development sector

Approximately a year after returning to Tanzania, Samwel secured the role of Administration and Finance Director at the African Institute of Capacity Development (AICAD). AICAD operates in Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya, and is involved in a range of development initiatives, including training programmes for local government officials on topics such as poverty alleviation and revenue collection, and training in rural communities to build enterprise development capabilities.

‘The PhD gave me the ability to think, to analyse and to make decisions.’

As Administration and Finance Director at AICAD, Samwel manages the central support functions of the organisation. His responsibilities range from managing human and other resources in order to ensure that the organisation is able to meet its strategic objectives, to directing the facilities and finances functions in order for teams to perform effectively. He acknowledges the importance of the knowledge and skills developed as part of his PhD, including theoretical knowledge of corporate management and governance and the skills to introduce decision-making processes, which are key factors in his ability to perform efficiently in his role. Other areas from his PhD which Samwel identified as integral to his ability to perform effectively are knowledge of human resources management, budget and financial administration, and procurement and facilities management.

Commonwealth award

For Samwel, a significant benefit of his Commonwealth Scholarship is the many academic and research links that have developed since the completion of his PhD. He remains in regular contact with his university supervisors and they are continuing to collaborate on research projects. Additionally, he is also in contact with fellow Scholars, based in the UK and other Commonwealth countries. He said that links with his peers are particularly beneficial to his work, as they share knowledge and relevant resources. He noted as an example that his contacts update him on the latest academic study and research materials which he may not otherwise access.

‘Through my Commonwealth Scholarship award I now have more confidence and ability to make changes, not only in my work but also to the community.’

In addition to the strong links with his supervisors and peers, Samwel noted that another distinct advantage of his Commonwealth Scholarship is the resources and facilities available to him during his PhD, which facilitated the development of decision-making skills as well as building the confidence to influence work processes. He explained that these outcomes could particularly be attributed to the fact that study in the UK had provided him with access to the latest research and research materials, which gave him a broader perspective than would have been available at his home institution.

Looking to the future, Samwel expressed his hope that the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan will continue to support individuals hoping to benefit from studying in the UK.

More about Samwel’s work

1. African Institute for Capacity Development: <http://www.aicad-taku.org/?q=node/43>
2. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13518470802173438>
3. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-5957.2007.02042.x/abstract>

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