



COMMONWEALTH
SCHOLARSHIPS

Knowledge, Networks and Development:

20 years of Commonwealth
Professional Fellowships

Full Report

The authors would like to gratefully acknowledge all the Professional Fellows and Hosts who contributed to this report. Every individual who took time out of their day to provide us with their honest thoughts, opinions, and experiences with the programme helped contribute to the quality and depth of this report. It is genuinely appreciated by the CSC, who would not have been able to do this work without you.

Thank you.

© Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (2021)

The text of this document may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context.

The material must be acknowledged as Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom copyright and the document title specified. Where third party material has been identified, permission from the respective copyright holder must be sought.

This report was written by Siobhán Margolis and the CSC Evaluation Team, and published December 2021.

For further information regarding the CSC Evaluation and Monitoring Programme, please contact:

Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK
Woburn House
20-24 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9HF
UK

evaluation@cscuk.org.uk
cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Introduction	12
Section 1- Methodology	14
1.1 – Methodology and Data Sources.....	14
Section 2 – Programme Context	16
2.1 – Commonwealth Professional Fellowships: An Overview of the Programme	16
2.2 – Review of the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme 2008-2011	19
2.3 – Post-2018 Programme Updates	20
2.4 – Summary	21
Section 3 – The Fellows’ Perspective	22
3.1 – Demographics and Background	22
3.2 – Pre-Fellowship: Objectives and Expectations.....	27
3.3 – On-Fellowship: Activities and Achievements	32
3.4 – Post-Fellowship: Outcomes for Fellows	38
3.5 – Post Fellowship: Application of Learnings	45
3.6 – Post Fellowship: Networks and Collaboration	51
3.7 – Post Fellowship: Impact	58
3.8 – Challenges and Constraints	65
3.9 – Summary	68
Section 4 – The Hosts’ Perspective	69
4.1 – Pre-Fellowship: Motivations and Expectations	71
4.2 – Pre-Fellowship: Networks and Nominations	73
4.3 – On-Fellowship: Activities and Achievements	76
4.4 – Benefits for Hosts	78
4.5 – Challenges for Hosts	80
4.6 – Post-Fellowship: Contact and Collaboration	82
4.7 – Summary.....	85
Section 5 – The Employers’ Perspective	86
5.1 – Outcomes and Impact	86
5.2 – Networks and Collaboration	90
5.3 – Benefits for Employers	91
5.4 – Costs to Employers	92
5.5 – Summary.....	93
Section 6 – Summary and Conclusions	94

Executive Summary

Background

Since 2001, the CSC has supported career development through its Professional Fellowships programme, supporting mid-career professionals to spend a period at a UK Host organisation working in their sector for a programme of professional development. The purpose of these awards is to ‘provide professionals with the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills in their given sector, and to have catalytic effects on their workplaces.’¹ The programme seeks to support ‘mid-career professionals (with five years’ relevant work experience) working in development-related organisations in low and middle- income Commonwealth countries.’²

Having welcomed its twentieth cohort of Fellows in 2021, this programme has become an integral part of the Commission’s work, with 1,390 individuals having taken up Professional Fellowships to date, representing 40 Commonwealth countries, and completing placements at 271 Host organisations across the United Kingdom.

The primary purpose of this review was to explore a number of questions specific to the outcomes and impact of the Professional Fellowship programme from the perspectives of its various stakeholders, including the Fellows themselves, their UK host organisations, and their Employers. In particular, the review was intended to shed light on the following:

- To better understand the demographics, contexts and motivations of those applying for and completing Commonwealth Professional Fellowships.
- To better understand the experiences of Professional Fellows, their knowledge and skills development through participation in the programme, and career trajectories following the Fellowship.
- To identify the catalytic institutional impact, and wider societal impact, of Professional Fellows upon their return home, as reported by Fellows and their home Employers.
- To identify the benefits and challenges for UK Host organisations participating in the programme.
- To identify the extent to which international professional networks are established or strengthened through the programme.

¹ CSC Professional Fellowships: Terms and Conditions, 2020

² Ibid.

Methodology and Data Sources

While the demographic overview provides a summary of all Professional Fellows since the programme's inception, the main focus of this review was to analyse the data collected following the establishment of the CSC's longitudinal survey framework, which covers the 2015-2019 cohorts of Fellows. Qualitative data collected from interviews with Fellows and from Host organisations invited to attend a focus group, were also limited to those who have participated in the programme during this same timeframe.

In undertaking this review, the CSC Evaluation Team has drawn on a number of different methods and sources of data. These included:

- Existing demographic data held on Professional Fellowship recipients in the CSC's database (2001-2020)³
- Data from Longitudinal surveys conducted by the 2015-2019 cohorts of Professional Fellows⁴
- Data from the CSC Alumni census conducted in 2019⁵
- Data from Host organisation surveys conducted from 2015-2019⁶
- Data from Employer surveys conducted from 2015-2019⁷
- Case study interviews with seven alumni of the Professional Fellowship programme conducted between May and July 2021
- An online focus group attended by fifteen Host supervisors conducted in June 2021

This data set was then analysed with appropriate methods, including descriptive and comparative statistical analysis of quantitative survey data, and thematic coding and analysis of qualitative survey, interview and focus group data.

Findings

1.1 The Fellowship experience

Demographically, the majority of Professional Fellows have come from Africa (78%) with a further 17% coming from Asia, and 5% from the Caribbean. There has been a slight gender imbalance, with males receiving 58% of Fellowships, and females 42%. Fellows come from a wide range of development-focused professional backgrounds, but the most heavily represented area of pre-Fellowship employment has been public health (42%), followed by education and governance (both 14%).

³ n=1390

⁴ The number of respondents varies for each survey interval as follows: Baseline=244, 6 months=243, 18 month=122, 36 months=105

⁵ n=287

⁶ n=58

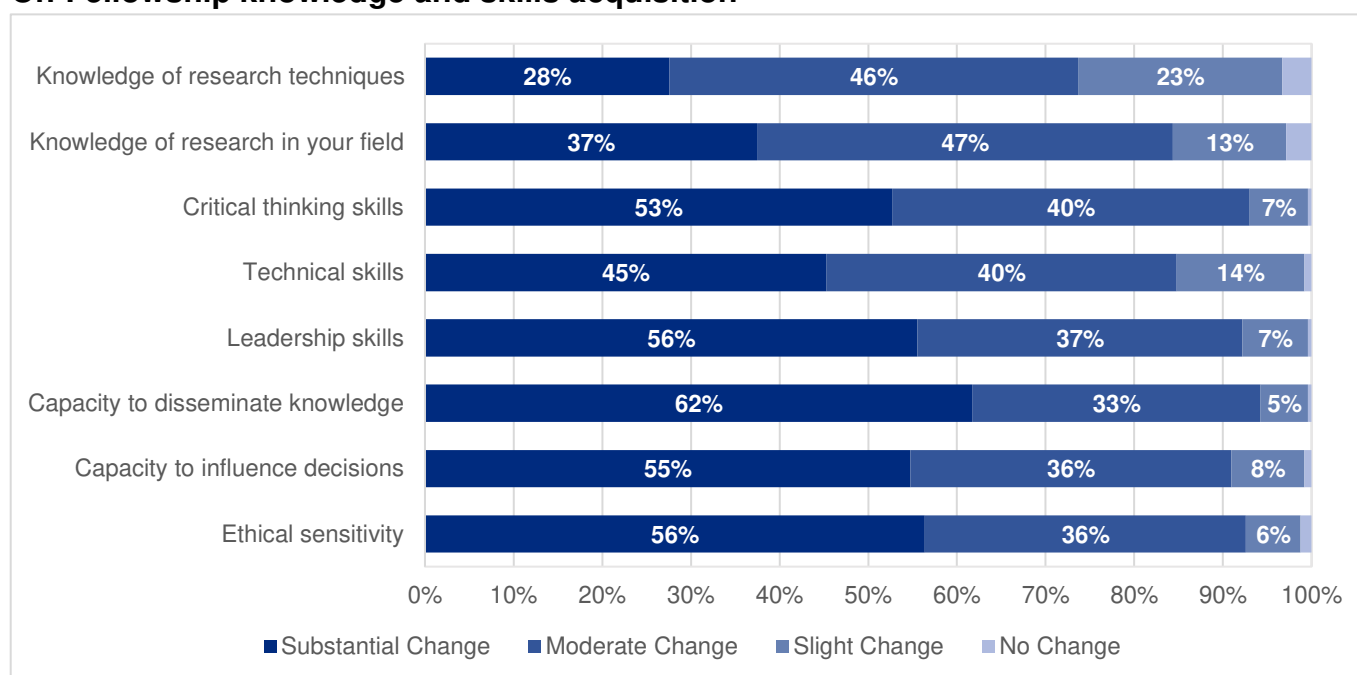
⁷ n=82

Despite their diverse backgrounds, Fellows share common **objectives for participation** in the programme, geared towards their own professional development, building capacity at their home organisations, and establishing opportunities for future collaborations. Most Fellows have a specific set of technical knowledge and skills that they aim to acquire through the Fellowship and a clear idea of how they plan to apply these to their work going forward.

‘I expect to gain knowledge and skills which will help me improve on my service delivery at home in child and maternal health since our country has a high mortality rate. With the knowledge and skills gained I will be able to mentor the junior midwives, be able to network and collaborate with other organisations for better service delivery.’

During their time in the UK, Fellows take part in a wide variety of activities and training, designed carefully to align with their set objectives. They overwhelmingly report achieving the goals set for their Fellowship and this is supported by Hosts, with 94% ‘strongly agreeing’ or ‘agreeing’ that Fellows met the objectives of their Fellowship. Fellows also report very high levels of knowledge and skills acquisition across a variety of academic and professional skill sets, with 95% reporting ‘moderate’ or ‘substantial’ improvement in their capacity to disseminate knowledge, 93% in their leadership skills and 91% in their capacity to influence decisions.

On-Fellowship knowledge and skills acquisition

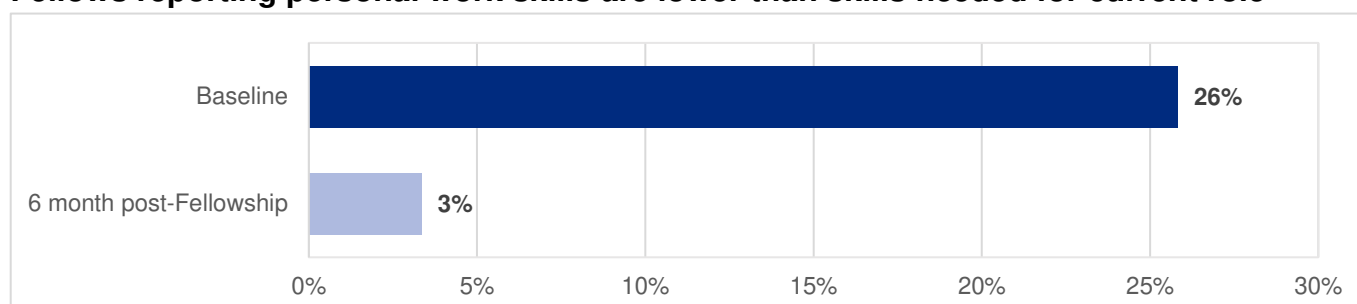


Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁸

⁸ n = 243

Furthermore, only 3% of Fellows still felt that their ‘personal work skills were lower than skills needed’ for their current role six-months post-Fellowship, down from one quarter (26%) of Fellows at the baseline. As a result of their enhanced knowledge and skills, Fellows are well-equipped to assume positions of greater influence, and affect meaningful change, upon returning to their places of employment post-Fellowship.

Fellows reporting personal work skills are lower than skills needed for current role



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)⁹, CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)¹⁰

Upon returning to their home organisations, Fellows see an immediate boost to their **professional prospects**, with many receiving promotions or salary increases, as well as reporting broader areas of responsibility and a greater influence in the workplace. They **apply the learnings from the Fellowship** in their workplaces, and beyond, in a variety of ways, both immediately and consistently over the longer term, with 97% of Fellows reporting to still use the knowledge and skills gained on their Fellowship in the workplace ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ three years post-Fellowship. Surveyed and interviewed Fellows provided details of how the knowledge and skills acquired through the Fellowship influence not only their own work, but the **overall direction of their organisations**, leading to the implementation of new strategies, the upskilling of colleagues, and the initiation of innovative new projects.

‘My fellowship was over two years ago. However, the training and exposure I got about advocacy for climate change still influences how I make decisions and communicate about climate-related issues daily.’

‘Some of our Fellows have gone on to significantly accelerate their careers and move into senior positions in their chosen fields from a starting point of grassroots programming.’

In addition to their enhanced skills sets, Fellows return with newly established, or strengthened, **international professional networks**, leading to increased contact, influence and collaboration. Three quarters (76%) of Fellows remain in contact, and more than half (58%) are engaged in collaborative projects or research with their UK Host organisations six months post-Fellowship. Fellows also provided details of ongoing networking and collaboration with other UK professional contacts and with other Professional Fellows.

⁹ n = 244

¹⁰ n = 239

‘The relationship I made with library professionals at Cardiff University continues resulting in impactful improvements in our library services. Specifically, we managed to finalize our Information Literacy programme for our first-year students, and [conduct] a quality review of our library services by a panel of experts.’

‘I’ve also maintained engagement with [other] Fellows. Some of them are also based in Kenya, so we’ve been in touch, especially in relation to some of the projects that we are leading. We see which interventions we can jointly work on and we can also avoid duplication of efforts’

Fellows have leveraged their enhanced capabilities and networks to create meaningful **impact** at various levels and relating to several distinct development areas. Impact has been strongest and most consistent at the institutional level, but Fellows also reported increased impact at the local, national, and international levels post-Fellowship, providing a plethora of examples of new and improved service provision, policy influence and wider dissemination of knowledge and skills beyond the workplace.

The most notable **challenge** reported by Fellows is an absence of the resources needed to implement their Fellowship learnings upon returning to their home organisations, with 50% of Fellows reporting that their home organisation ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ had the resources to implement their ideas six months post-Fellowship. This has been recognised as a challenge by UK Hosts and must be taken into consideration when designing training programmes, and plans for follow-up activities, if Fellows are to be empowered to realise the full extent of their developmental ambitions in the post-Fellowship period.

‘There are now plans to roll out the training module that I developed [on psychological support provision] based on Fellowship learnings throughout the country. We’ll be providing the same training [to professionals in the field], who are distributed all over the country. So, it’s building more professionals and paraprofessional, for national impact.’

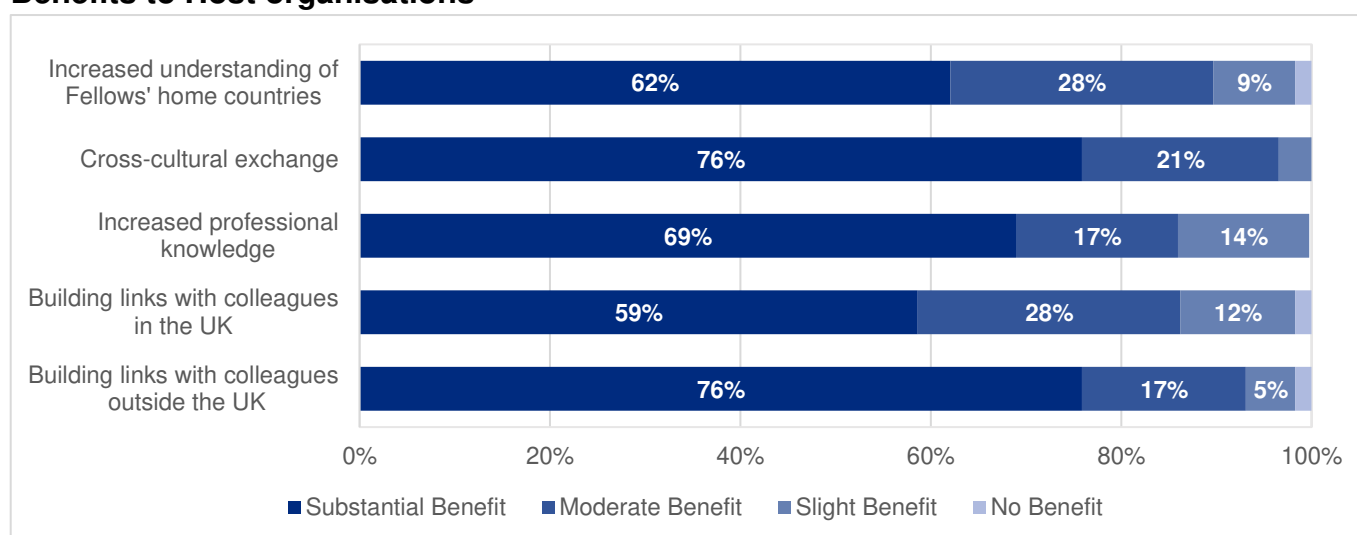
1.2 The Host experience

Professional Fellows are hosted at a wide variety of development-focused UK Host organisations, ranging from universities and research institutions to charity organisations and local government. Host organisations reported being motivated to participate in the Professional Fellowship for reasons that closely align with the mission of the programme; namely, in order to contribute towards capacity building in Fellows’ home organisations and in their professional sectors more broadly, to strengthen and expand their international networks, and to foster reciprocal learning.

‘Our primary motivation has always revolved around building stronger and more meaningful relationships with our partners in developing countries. Hosting a Fellow allows for a dedicated period of training and working together which engenders new ideas and serves as a catalyst for new and better work in the future.’

In order to ensure that Fellows are best placed to benefit from the programme, and to implement meaningful institutional change, Host organisations largely recruit Fellows through **pre-existing professional networks**, often with input from local partner organisations. Two-thirds of surveyed Hosts (66%) report having previously worked or collaborated with their Professional Fellow and three quarters (76%) had worked with their Fellows’ home organisation or colleagues, prior to the Fellowship. Hosts overwhelmingly report that Fellows are highly qualified, competent, and produce high quality work and that their levels of on-Fellowship knowledge and skills acquisition are impressively high.

Benefits to Host organisations



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019¹¹

Administrative and logistical **challenges** were flagged by Hosts, with roughly three quarters of those surveyed citing ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ costs relating to logistical planning (75%), programme planning (72%), and other time and resource costs (77%). Additionally, several Hosts in the focus group highlighted that hosting Fellows was very resource intensive and significantly stretched their staff capacity. Funding limitations and lack of opportunities for follow up face to face interaction with Fellows were also flagged by some Hosts as inhibiting potential for sustained mentoring and collaboration.

However, these challenges appear greatly outweighed by the numerous **benefits** reported by participating Host organisations, including greater cross-cultural understanding, reciprocal learning, and developing key links to Fellows’ home institutions and countries. This is reflected in the high levels of ongoing contact between Hosts and Fellows, with the vast majority engaging in mutually beneficial **professional collaboration** post-Fellowship.

¹¹ n=58

‘The stronger human and professional relationships which are developed with the Fellows help cement our partnerships with the prison services and other justice institutions. This allows us to strengthen the organisation’s presence in the country and foster a more conducive environment to implement new projects and run its current programmes.’

1.3 The Employer experience

Analysis of Employer surveys provided key insights into both the immediate outcomes, and longer-term impact of the CSC Professional Fellowship programme. Feedback from Employers reinforced the significant knowledge and skills acquisition achieved by Fellows, as reported by Host organisations and Fellows themselves. Additionally, they confirm that Fellows were able to apply these new skills at a very high and consistent rate upon their return to the workplace, using the learnings of the Fellowship to improve their own work, to disseminate knowledge to colleagues and, crucially, to make positive changes to their organisations’ working practices, with 90% of Employers reporting a ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ benefit from capacity building of their workplace. They also described Fellows as applying their enhanced skills to make positive contributions in their wider professional fields.

‘As a result of the Commonwealth Fellowship, his level of competence and confidence in his area of experience and training has greatly increased which has created a positive impact on our organisation, colleagues, clients and students.’

Employers themselves are key **beneficiaries** of the Professional Fellowship. In addition to returning employees’ contribution to overall **organisational capacity**, Employers benefitted from the expanded **professional networks** established by Fellows during their time in the UK, with 90% of Employers reporting that their relationship with the Fellows’ UK Host organisation had become stronger following the Fellowship. The majority also reported new or strengthened relationships with wider professional and academic contacts in the UK and internationally, as a direct result of the Fellowship.

The Fellowship was indeed hugely beneficial to both the recipient and the entire University. As a result of the Fellowship, more fundamental collaborations have been reached with Lancaster University in particular, and this has resulted in wider understanding and cross-cultural collaborations. There is currently a joint bid for a multidisciplinary project involving multiple organisations, and the University is part of this. There is no way this would have been possible without the Fellowship.’

Summary

It is clear, from the evidence outlined in this review, that the CSC Professional Fellowship programme has been successful in its mission to equip talented mid-career professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to have catalytic effects in their workplaces. Through the analysis of multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data from Fellows, Hosts and Employers, this report demonstrates that the Fellowship programme plays a role not only in empowering individuals but also contributing to institutional capacity building and the development of strong international networks. Leveraging their enhanced expertise, networks and greater influence in the workplace, Professional Fellows are enabled to create meaningful, long-term impact in a variety of development-focused sectors across the Commonwealth.

Introduction

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC) has been offering Scholarships and Fellowships in the United Kingdom since 1960 as part of the multilateral Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP). Since it was established, more than 35,000 individuals have held a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship, 30,500 of whom were funded by the UK government through the CSC.

Alongside awards for Master's and PhD study and other academic research, since 2001 the CSC has also supported career development through its Professional Fellowships programme. This programme allows mid-career professionals to spend time at a UK Host organisation in their sector of employment to complete a programme of professional development. The purpose of these awards is to 'provide professionals with the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills in their given sector, and to have catalytic effects on their workplaces'¹² The programme seeks to support 'mid-career professionals (with five years' relevant work experience) working in development-related organisations in low and middle income Commonwealth countries.'¹³

Having welcomed its twentieth cohort of Fellows in 2021 this programme has become an important element of the Commission's work, with 1,390 individuals representing 40 Commonwealth countries having taken up Professional Fellowships and completing placements at 271 Host organisations across the United Kingdom.

The primary purpose of this review is to answer a number of questions specific to the outcomes and impact of the Professional Fellowship programme on each of its various stakeholders. In particular the review seeks to:

- Better understand the demographics, contexts and motivations of those applying for and completing Commonwealth Professional Fellowships;
- Better understand the experiences of Professional Fellows, their knowledge and skills development through participation in the programme, and career trajectories following the Fellowship;
- Identify the catalytic institutional impact, and wider societal impact, of Professional Fellows upon their return home;
- Identify the benefits and challenges for UK Host organisations participating in the programme; and,
- Identify the extent to which international professional networks are established or strengthened through the programme.

¹² CSC Professional Fellowships: Terms and Conditions, 2020

¹³ Ibid.

While the demographic overview includes an analysis of all Fellows since the programme's inception, the main focus of this review is based upon the data collected following the establishment of the CSC's longitudinal survey framework, which covers the 2015-2019 cohorts of Fellows. Fellows and Host organisations, who provided additional data through interviews and a focus group, were also limited to those who have participated in the programme during this timeframe.

This opening section of the review describes the methodological approach taken by the CSC Evaluation Team in approaching the study. The second section provides context and background to the Professional Fellowship programme, including a brief overview of a previous review of the programme published in 2014, and detailing a number of revisions that were made to the programme from the 2018 cohort onwards.

The bulk of the analysis is contained in Sections Three to Five, which presents the primary research conducted as a part of the programme review.

Section Three looks at the experience of the Fellows themselves, providing a demographic summary of those who have held Fellowships, their motivations for applying, their on-Fellowship experiences, and knowledge and skills acquired through the programme. This section also presents findings from the data collected through the longitudinal surveys conducted to identify post-Fellowship outcomes and impact, with a focus on the institutional impact in the period following the Fellowship. Additionally, this section features a number of case studies based on interviews with individual alumni of the Professional Fellowship programme who are working across the CSC development themes.

Section Four focuses on the experience of UK Host organisations, detailing their perceptions of the Fellows' experiences of the programme, as well as the direct benefits and challenges experienced by the Hosts themselves. This section also examines what kinds of collaborative activities occurred after the Fellowships, and how international networks have been formed or strengthened as a result.

Section Five provides an overview of Employers' experiences with the programme, investigating their perception of Fellows' achievements and application of new skills in their workplace, benefits accrued by the Employers themselves, as well as evidence of enhanced professional networks. Finally, Section Six summarises the findings of the review, as well as recommendations to improve the programme and the future experiences of Professional Fellows, Hosts, and Employers.

Section One: Methodology

1.1– Methodology and Data Sources

In undertaking this review, the CSC Evaluation Team has drawn on a number of different methods and sources of data. These include:

- Existing demographic data on Professional Fellowship recipients held in the CSC’s database (2001-2020);¹⁴
- Data from Longitudinal surveys conducted with the 2015-2019 cohorts of Professional Fellows;¹⁵
- Data from Host organisation surveys conducted from 2015-2019;¹⁶
- Data from Employer surveys conducted from 2015-2019;¹⁷
- Data from the CSC Alumni census conducted in 2019;¹⁸
- Case study interviews with seven alumni of the Professional Fellowship programme conducted between May and July 2021; and,
- An online focus group attended by 15 Host supervisors conducted in June 2021.

Longitudinal surveys were sent to Fellows as a part of the CSC’s ongoing data collection for its evaluation programme. These included baseline surveys completed by Fellows in advance of the Fellowship, as well as surveys completed at 6-month, 18-month, and 36-month intervals post-Fellowship. The initial 6-month post-Fellowship survey focused on whether the objectives of the programme were met and the immediate outcomes of the Fellowship. The 18- and 36-month surveys were identical to each other and were focused on understanding the longer-term impact of the Fellowship.

Surveys to Host organisations were also distributed at the end of the Fellowship tenure, whereas **surveys to Employers** were distributed once permission and details had been obtained from the Fellows who they employed. The Host supervisor and Employer surveys focused on gathering their perspectives on the benefits of the Fellowship both for the individual Fellows and for the Host and Employers’ respective institutions or organisations.

The Alumni census was sent to all Commonwealth Alumni in 2019 with the primary aim of updating the employment details and other professional information held by the CSC about alumni. The census was completed by 287 Professional Fellowship alumni, representing 22% of those who

¹⁴ n = 1,390

¹⁵ The number of respondents varies for each survey interval as follows: Baseline=244, 6 months=243, 18 month=122, 36 months=105

¹⁶ n = 58

¹⁷ n = 82

¹⁸ n = 287

completed the Fellowship between 2001-2017. This data was used primarily to assess Professional Fellows' employment outcomes post-Fellowship.

Interviews were conducted with seven Professional Fellows, who completed their Fellowships within the period of focus of the review (2015-2020). They were selected to represent a variety of professional areas, including health, environment, education, and criminal justice. Fellows were invited to participate in an interview based on the examples of impact reported in longitudinal surveys or references from Hosts participating in the focus groups.

Host organisations were invited to take part in a focus group conducted on the online platform FocusGroupIt. Invitations were sent to organisations who had hosted a Fellow within the period of focus of the review (2015-2020) and representatives from 15 different Host organisations attended the focus group. In a discussion board-style forum, Hosts were asked to respond to a series of questions aimed at gauging their perception of the programme, including motivations, nominations, benefits, challenges and engagement opportunities.

These data sets were then analysed with appropriate methods, including descriptive and comparative statistical analysis of quantitative survey data, and thematic coding and analysis of qualitative survey, interview and focus group data.

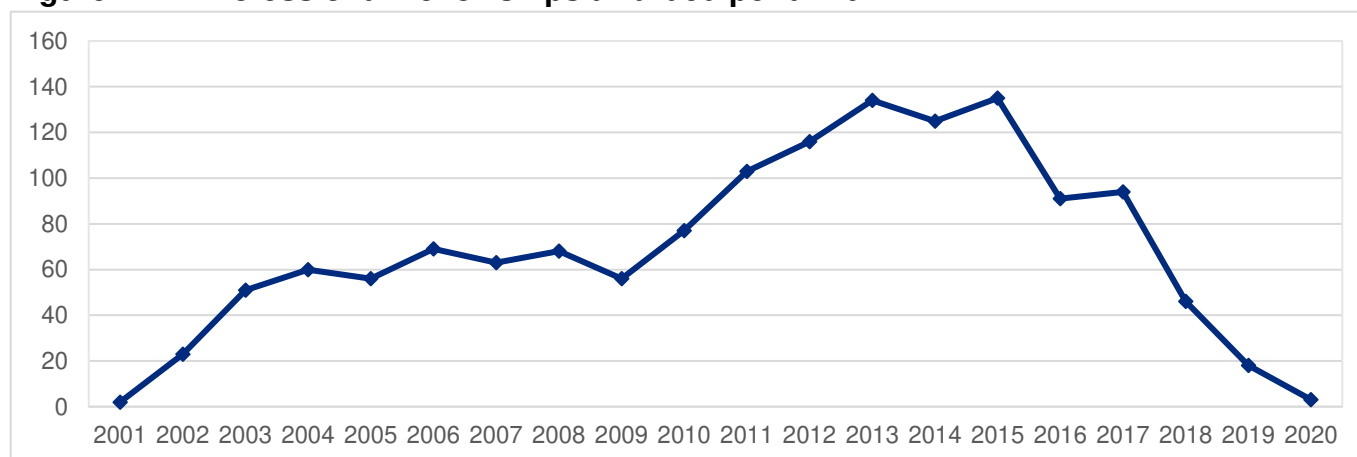
Section 2 – Programme Context

2.1 – Commonwealth Professional Fellowships: An Overview of the Programme

The Professional Fellowship programme has been part of the CSC's portfolio of awards since 2001.¹⁹ The programme provides funding for mid-career professionals from low and middle income Commonwealth countries to undertake programmes of activity in the United Kingdom for between six weeks and three months. It is a professional development programme that aims to have a catalytic effect on international development by enhancing Fellows' skills which can be subsequently applied in their workplaces upon their return.

The CSC has funded 1,390 Commonwealth Professional Fellows since the programme began in 2001, averaging 70 awards per year over the lifetime of the programme, with a peak of 135 Fellowships awarded in 2015. The number of Fellowships offered per annum was reduced following a review of the programme in 2018 which recommended focussing on a smaller number of Fellows in order to maximise their on-Fellowship experience and subsequent impact, and saw further reductions for the 2019 cohort due to the impact of Covid-19. For the 2021/22 academic year, as part of a series of annual thematic Time Limited Programmes (TLPs), and in line with the objectives of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the CSC will be running a special Professional Fellowship programme promoting Girls' Education.

Figure 2.1 – Professional Fellowships awarded per annum



Source: CSC Awards Data²⁰

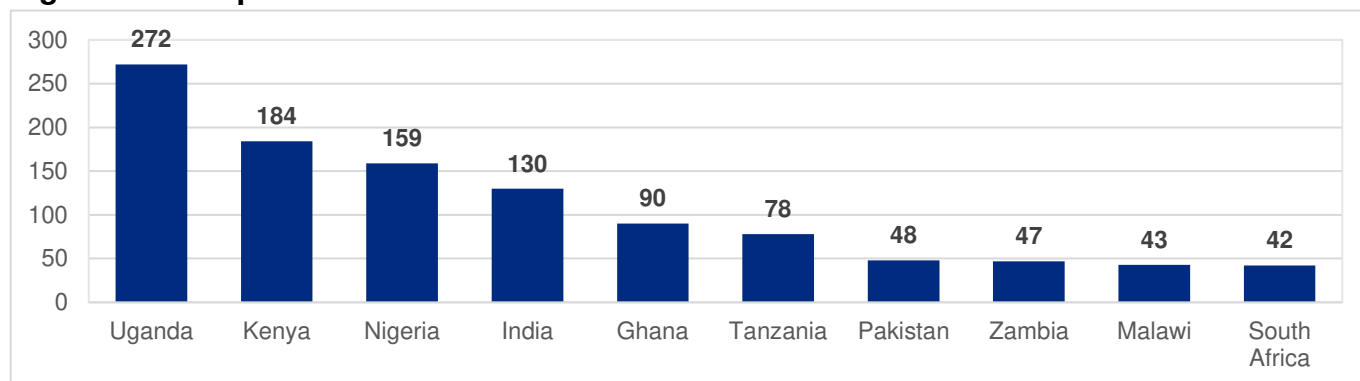
In total, the CSC has awarded Professional Fellowships to individuals from 40 countries from across the Commonwealth. The countries with the largest proportions of Scholars have been Uganda (20%), Kenya (13%), and Nigeria (11%), followed by India (9%) and Ghana (6%) rounding out the top five.

¹⁹ The first cohort of CSC Professional Fellows were nominated in 2001 and came to the UK in 2002. For the purposes of this review, we will refer to the cohorts based on the year that they were nominated; therefore, we will be referring to the 2001-2020 cohorts.

²⁰ n = 1,390

When broken down by region, a large majority of Professional Fellowship recipients have been from Africa (78%), with a further 17% coming from Asia. The Caribbean (5%), Europe and the Pacific (both <1%) account for the remainder of Fellows.

Figure 2.2 – Top countries of Professional Fellows

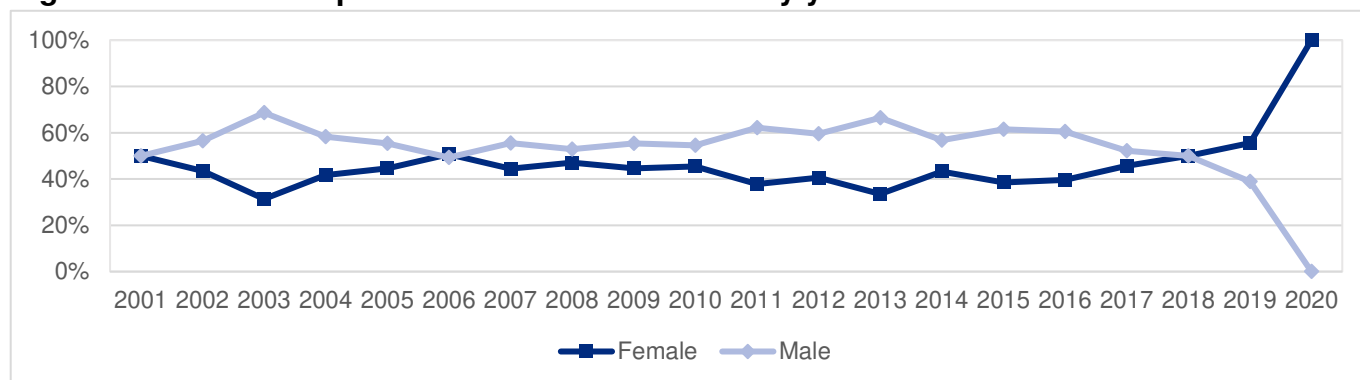


Source: CSC Awards Data (2001-2020)

Nine-tenths (89%) of Fellows have come from Least Developed Countries (LDC or LDC/Fragile) or Lower and Middle Income Countries (LMIC or LMIC/Fragile) with a further 10% coming from Upper Middle Income countries and a small minority (1%) coming from non-ODA countries.²¹

With respect to gender, overall, 58% of Fellows have been male, and 42% female. As illustrated in Figure 2.3, gender parity (recruitment of at least 45% female and 45% male Fellows) has been achieved in nine years (45%) of the programme to date.

Figure 2.3 – Gender split of Professional Fellows by year



Source: CSC Awards Data²²

Candidates are nominated and hosted by a variety of organisations in the United Kingdom ranging from UK-based charities to research institutions, NHS Trusts, and local governments. Candidates are expected to have at least five years' relevant experience and must be able to demonstrate that their work is contributing to development priorities in their home country. In addition to the primary aim of enhancing the capacity and knowledge of the individual Fellows and their home organisations, the programme aims to have a positive impact on the participating UK Host organisations and act as a catalyst for enhanced international networking and collaboration.

²¹ The non-ODA countries in question would have been eligible for ODA funding at the time of the relevant Fellows being awarded a Fellowship. These countries have subsequently graduated to non-ODA status.

²² n = 1,390

The development focus of the Fellowships is reinforced by the fact that, since 2018, applicants must be seeking to gain practical experience in a professional area that corresponds to one of the CSC's six development themes:²³

- **Science and technology for development:** The Fellowship, which may be in any area of science or technology (including, for example, agriculture, veterinary science, or forestry), will develop knowledge and/or skills that are directly related to the specific needs of a low or middle income country.
- **Strengthening health systems and capacity:** The Fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will improve health provision or outcomes for disadvantaged groups in low and middle income countries. A range of approaches could be adopted, such as training staff to fill critical shortage areas; establishing better systems, processes, or management; health promotion and improving understanding of non-take up; or developing new treatments.
- **Promoting global prosperity:** The Fellowship will support economic prosperity in low and middle income countries. The knowledge and/or skills gained could lead to, for example, enhanced trade capacity; improved economic understanding or decision-making by business or government; new products and services; or long-term capacity building, through the development of entrepreneurial skills.
- **Strengthening global peace, security and governance:** The Fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will strengthen peace and security at national, regional, or international levels. Multiple approaches could be used, such as strengthening open and transparent governance; improving mutual understanding within and between societies; or building systems that reduce the potential for conflict or encourage its resolution.
- **Strengthening resilience and response to crises:** The Fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills which will help low and middle income countries adapt to changing contexts, withstand sudden shocks, or increase capacity to preserve the continuity of operations following such events. This could apply to a broad range of threats, including natural and physical disasters; long-term threats such as climate change; interruptions to the supply of key resources; or sudden economic or technological disruption.
- **Access, inclusion and opportunity:** The Fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will promote opportunity amongst historically disadvantaged groups in low and middle income countries. This could be through, for example, expanding educational opportunities; conducting community outreach; enhancing access to decision making; or increasing understanding of the barriers faced. A range of disadvantage can be addressed – including social, economic, gender, ethnic, regional, or political – provided that the need is clearly stated.

Applications are invited from nominating organisations in the UK who are willing to set up a suitable programme of activity and act as Host to between two and five Professional Fellows. Host organisations must be able to identify Fellows who they wish to nominate, either through existing networks or wider advertising. 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, at conferences, and on short courses. In line with the CSC's mandate, programmes must have demonstrable development impact in the Fellow's home country.²⁴

²³ CSC Professional Fellowships: Terms and Conditions, 2020.

²⁴ CSC Professional Fellowships: Terms and Conditions, 2020.

2.2 – Review of the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme 2008-2011

In 2014, the CSC published an evaluative review covering the first decade of the Professional Fellowship programme. 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, notably the large amount of qualitative data collected as free text narrative and an absence of consistent quantitative data.²⁵

The aim of the 2014 report was to provide an overview of the existing data that was held on the Professional Fellowship scheme, including a specially created survey sent to 278 Professional Fellows.²⁶ The report also provided first-hand participant perspectives through summaries of focus group discussions that were held with both Fellows and Host organisations in 2012.

The key findings from the 2014 review were as follows:

- In total, 745 Professional Fellowships had been awarded as of 2012, with annual numbers increasing in 2013.
- The majority (68%) of Professional Fellows came from low income countries. Over three-quarters (77%) of these awards have been given to individuals from African countries.
- Professional Fellows undertook Fellowships in a variety of sectors, with public health (38%) being the most popular.
- With regard to gender parity in take-up, more men took up Professional Fellowships than women. The most balanced year was 2010, with 45% of Fellowships being taken up by women; however, this decreased to 40% in 2012.
- The vast majority of Professional Fellows returned home upon completing their Fellowship. Survey results showed that 95% of survey respondents were residing in their home region.
- Professional Fellowships provided individuals with a chance to enhance their work skills and knowledge that they would not otherwise have had. Most (84%) survey respondents felt that it would have been impossible to undertake the Fellowship without the Commonwealth award.
- Undertaking Professional Fellowships contributed to individuals' career advancement. Survey data showed 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.
- Professional Fellowships provided the necessary skills to enable individuals to transfer knowledge and to contribute to institutional capacity building. Survey findings highlighted that 89% of respondents had trained other colleagues on specific skills that were gained from undertaking the Fellowship. A large proportion (80%) of respondents reported that they were able to make changes in how work or programmes were conducted in their workplace.

²⁵ Review of the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme 2008-2011, p. vii.

²⁶ Response rate of 41% (n = 114)

- Professional Fellowships played a significant role in contributing to socioeconomic development. Most (81%) of survey respondents claimed to have had impact on socioeconomic development.
- Professional Fellowships provided 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 an insight into the UK's global perspectives.

A primary recommendation and outcome of the 2014 review was that, going forward, a new method of data collection be established in which regular surveys were to be sent to Fellows, Host organisations, and Employers, providing consistent quantitative data to analyse. The data collected from the longitudinal survey programme that was established, covering the 2015-2019 cohorts of Professional Fellows, as well as the Host organisation and Employer surveys, are some of the key data sources informing the present review.

2.3 – Post-2018 Programme Updates

Following a review of the scheme and consultation with Professional Fellowship Host organisations,²⁷ a number of changes to the eligibility and operation of the Professional Fellowship Scheme were implemented from 2018 onwards.

The changes approved by the Commission were as follows:

1. **Introduction of CSC Themes to replace existing priority areas:** This brought the programme in line with Commission strategy for 2018/19 onwards.
2. **Introduction of fixed start dates for programmes rather than rolling start dates throughout the year:** This made the programme more straightforward to administer and evaluate, as well as presenting additional opportunities for Fellow engagement.
3. **A new minimum of two Fellows per cohort:** This made the programme more straightforward to administer, as well as mitigating potential safeguarding issues.
4. **A reduced number of selection rounds (from three to one):** This reduced administration for the Secretariat and removed the challenge of ensuring an equitable balance of awards based on the same level of quality between selection rounds.
5. **Length of award to change to a minimum of 6 weeks and a maximum of 3 months** (previously minimum of 4 weeks and maximum of 6 months): Extending the minimum length of awards to six weeks would ensure that all programmes allow sufficient time for induction and evaluation and would allow for some 'leeway' if a start date should slip. As the programme is intended to offer an intensive period of professional development, three months was decided to be the maximum length of awards.
6. **Adjust grant to £2,000 for awards under two months and £3,000 for awards of three months:** Linking the amount to be claimed to the length of an award is fairer and puts the amount in line with other CSC Fellowship programmes.

²⁷ In 2018, a survey was sent to 54 Host organisations who had hosted CSC Professional Fellows since 2016. The response rate was 50% (n=27).

- 7. Remove the option to have separate Nominators and Hosts:** The ‘nominator’ must also host the Fellows (although Fellows could continue to visit and attend courses at other organisations) in order to ensure stronger oversight of Fellows’ activities as required by UKVI.

Overall, the changes made to the Professional Fellowship programme led to a reduction in the amount of administration needed, allowing for more streamlined and robust administrative processes as well as creating the capacity to undertake increased engagement activity, including site visits, and showcasing the outcomes and achievements of Fellows and Host organisations.

With respect to this review, the majority of data was gathered prior to the implementation of these changes to the programme. The review will therefore reference elements of the programme, including tenure lengths and nomination routes, that have subsequently been revised. Additionally, for purposes of analysis, Fellows and Hosts have retroactively been mapped to the CSC development themes although, prior to the 2018 cohort, they will not have applied under these theme headings.

2.4 – Summary

Since its introduction in 2001, the Professional Fellowship scheme has occupied an important role within the CSC awards portfolio, offering valuable professional development opportunities to mid-career professionals who are working towards key development goals in low and middle income Commonwealth countries.

A review of the programme conducted in 2014 showed that the Fellowships were contributing to high levels of knowledge and skills development for Fellows, and significantly enhancing their ability to have an institutional impact. However, the review also identified a gap in reliable quantitative data and recommended the establishment of a systematic longitudinal data collection framework going forward in order to measure the outcomes and impact of the programme more robustly. Data from the longitudinal framework that was subsequently established is one of the primary sources of information for this review.

A number of changes were made to the structure of the Professional Fellowship scheme, from the 2018 cohort onwards, aimed at improving the programme’s outcomes and efficiency. For the 2021/22 academic year, the established Professional Fellowship programme has been replaced with a special Professional Fellowship programme promoting Girls’ Education, as part of a series of annual thematic Time Limited Programmes (TLPs).

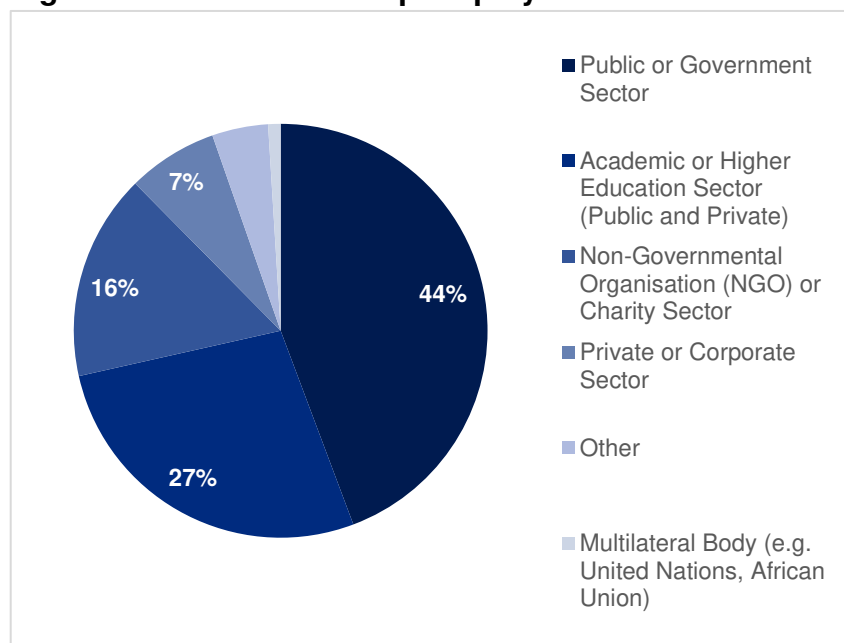
Section 3 – The Fellows’ Perspective

3.1 – Demographics and Background

As outlined in Section 2.1, Professional Fellowships are open to a wide range of mid-career professionals from across a variety of sectors, as long as there is a demonstrable development focus to their work. Since the programme began in 2001, the CSC has awarded 1,390 Professional Fellowships to individuals from 40 countries from across the Commonwealth, with a large majority (78%) coming from Africa. In terms of gender, there has been a slight imbalance, with 58% of Fellowships having been awarded to male Fellows.

Analysis of baseline survey data revealed further details about the professional backgrounds of Fellows. In terms of pre-Fellowship employment, the largest proportion of Fellows were employed in the public sector (44%), with a further quarter (27%) employed in the academic sector. Only 16% of Fellows were employed in the NGO or charity sector, with the remainder working for the private sector (8%), multilateral bodies (1%) or other (4%).

Figure 3.1 - Pre-Fellowship employment sector

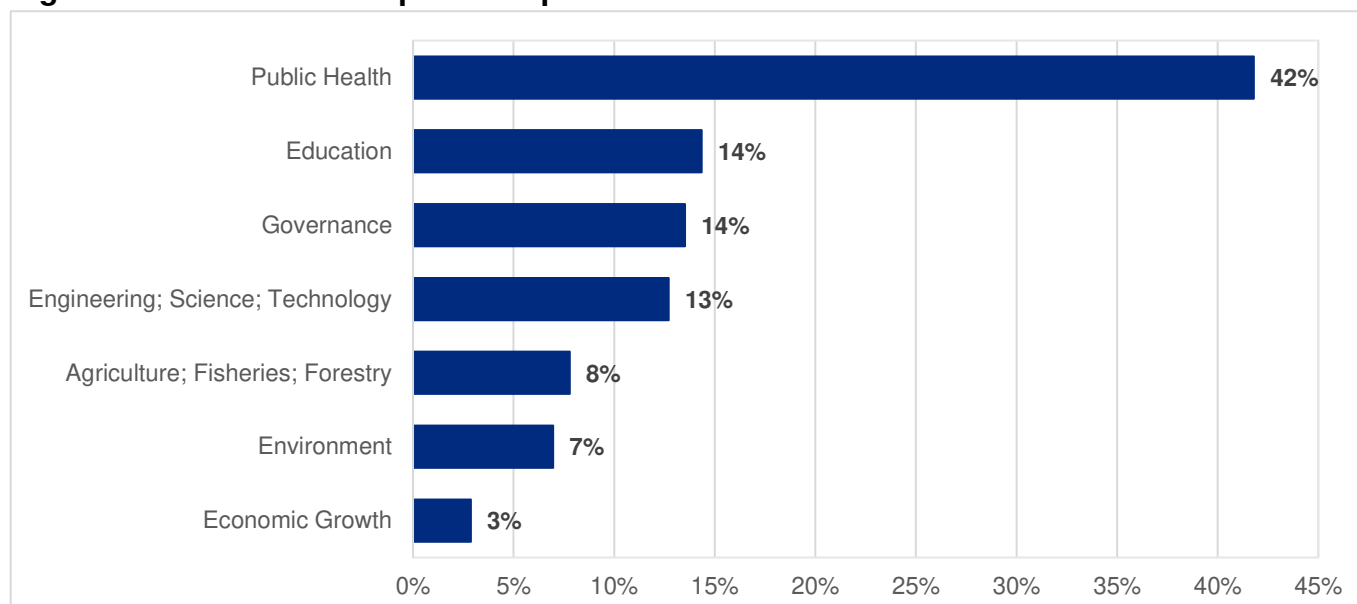


Source: CSC Baseline Surveys, 2016-2019²⁸

Public Health was by far the most common professional focus of pre-Fellowship employment, with 42% of Fellows working in this area. This was followed by roughly equal proportions working in Education, Governance (both 14%) and Engineering, Science and Technology (13%), with the remainder working in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (8%), Environment (7%), and Economic Growth (3%).

²⁸ n = 244

Figure 3.2 - Pre-Fellowship area of professional focus



Source: CSC Baseline Surveys, 2016-2019²⁹

Fellows have also been retrospectively mapped to the CSC development themes that were introduced in 2018 (as detailed in Section 2.1). Given the predominance of Fellows coming from the Public Health sector, it is unsurprising that almost half of Fellows (46%) since 2015 have been mapped to the 'Strengthening Health Systems and Capacity' theme, followed by more than a quarter (26%) mapped to 'Science and Technology for Development'. More than one-tenth (13%) were working towards 'Strengthening Global Peace, Security and Governance', with smaller numbers mapped to the remaining themes of 'Access, Inclusion and Opportunity' (6%), 'Strengthening Resilience and Response to Crises' and 'Promoting Global Prosperity' (both 4%).³⁰

It should be noted that these development themes are not mutually exclusive and can be cross-cutting, with Fellows often addressing more than one development theme in their work, as evident in the Fellow case studies featured in this review.

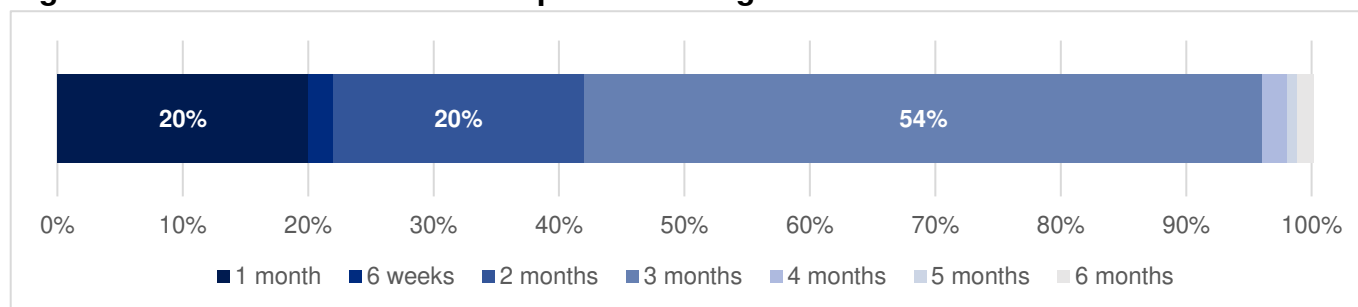
Professional Fellows have been hosted by 271 Host organisations across the UK from a variety of sectors, including hospitals, charity organisations, and local government. Fellowship tenures have historically ranged between one and six months, with the majority of Fellowships (54%) lasting for a duration of three months.³¹ Fewer than half of Fellows (42%) were placed on their Fellowship for two months or less, with half of these (20%) spending just one month in the UK. A small number of Fellowships have been longer in duration, with 4% of Fellows based at a UK Host organisation for four months or more.

²⁹ n = 244

³⁰ This exercise was carried out by the CSC Evaluation team in May 2021, and CSC themes were mapped to all Professional Fellows from the 2015-2020 cohorts (n = 424).

³¹ Since 2018, Fellowship tenures have been set to a minimum of six weeks and a maximum of three months (See Section 2.3).

Figure 3.3 - Professional Fellowships tenure length



Source: CSC Awards Data³²

For the vast majority of Professional Fellows, the Fellowship offered them a unique opportunity to gain professional experience in the UK, with 94% indicating that they would be ‘unlikely’ to be able to gain similar experience in the UK without the Fellowships, and 57% indicating that it would have been ‘impossible’.³³ For two-thirds (67%) of Fellows, the Fellowship was the first time they had ever undertaken professional training outside of their home countries.³⁴ This offers some insight into the factors motivating individuals to participate in the Fellowship, which will be further explored in the following section.

³² n = 1,390

³³ On a scale of 1(Impossible) to 10(Definitely), 57% chose ‘1’ and 94% chose 1-5.

³⁴ CSC Baseline Surveys, 2016-2019 (n = 244)

Professional Fellow Profile: Dr Akinniyi Ayobami Adeleke

‘I would say, one of the best things that happened to me is this Commonwealth Fellowship. In my career, it’s the best thing that has ever happened.’



Dr Adeleke is a university librarian who is contributing to digital upgrades and systems innovations in Nigeria. He completed a Professional Fellowship at the University of East London in 2016. Upon returning to his role as Acting University Librarian at Redeemer’s University, he has succeeded in implementing innovative reforms making his library more user-friendly, modern, and efficient, as well as conducting training workshops to share his skills with colleagues and the wider community of librarians in Nigeria.

What were some of the key knowledge and skills that you learnt at the University of East London?

I expected to learn some of the best practices in librarianship, the deployment of appropriate technologies for library services, and the implementation of ICT programmes. That expectation was not disappointed because the University of East London has one of the best information services infrastructures I have ever seen in my life. I had valuable hands-on experience and I learnt technical skills that I was previously only reading about in books. I also learnt soft skills and leadership skills. My experience at the University of East London drove home the point that leadership is service. Another soft skill I learnt there was the art of public speaking. I used to be a very shy person but after taking part in public speaking training, all my fears were defeated. The lessons I learnt from the Fellowship has now made me a courageous leader who is able to manage both human and material resources.

How did you apply these knowledge and skills in the post-Fellowship period?

The first change that I made was introducing patron-driven acquisitions, which I witnessed in the UK. This means that before materials are acquired into the library, we consider the opinions of the user, preventing a lot of wastage and helping us to manage our budget. Another change that I was able to introduce into my library after the Fellowship is the faculty-library liaison, having a professional librarian attached to every faculty. That has helped our library immensely and has improved our reputation in the university community.

Do you think that you have succeeded in implementing long-term institutional changes?

Of course, because a tree does not make a forest. If you want a legacy, the best way is to share that legacy with other people. I have shared all the learnings from the Fellowship with my colleague librarians and support staff. So, I am sure that all these skills and technology, and these changes that I’ve been able to introduce will outlive me in Redeemer’s University.



What about wider impact beyond your university?

I am one of the leaders of our professional association in Nigeria, the Nigerian Library Association and I would say many of our members look up to me for direction. Young librarians and those who are in the same level with me have a lot of respect for me when it comes to leadership, bringing everybody onboard, sharing my ideas and my skills. If I find a job in another place, I will also take these changes with me. I'm not just a Fellow at Redeemer's University. If I find myself in any other university, I will still be a Commonwealth Fellow. And all these skills I've acquired, these changes that have happened to me, I will replicate them wherever I find myself.

Have you maintained contact with professional networks established through the Fellowship?

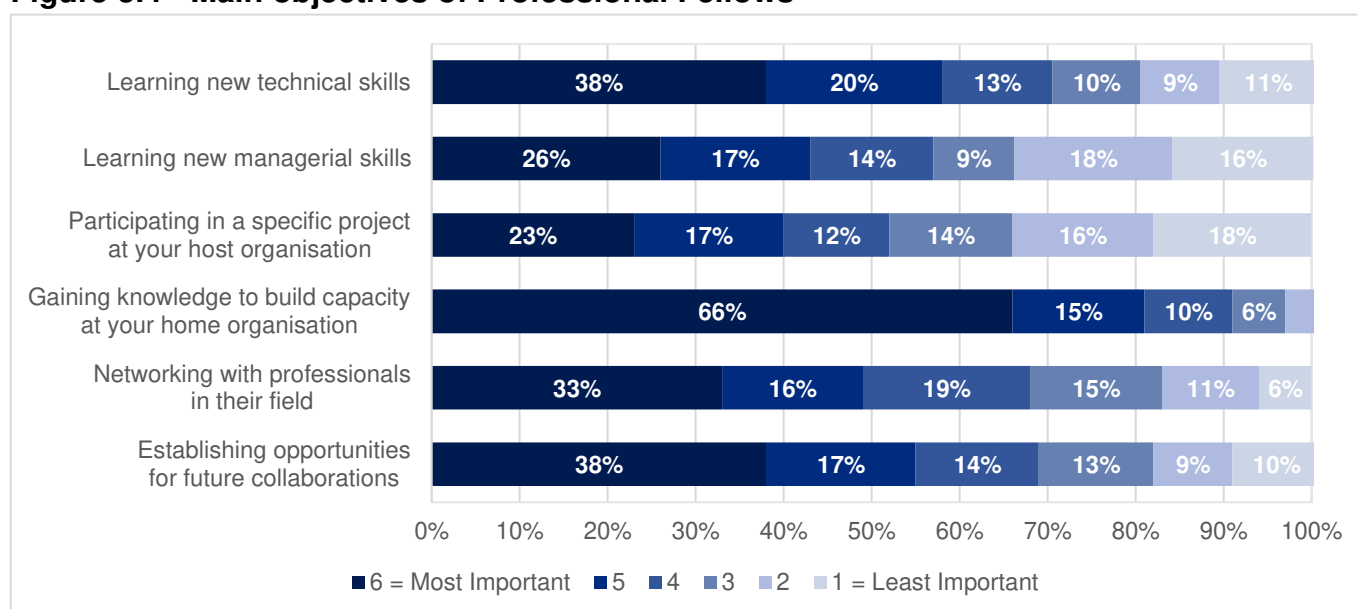
We created a WhatsApp platform for us Fellows and our mentor from the University of East London. Recently, our professional association organised a virtual workshop and I invited a Fellow from India, who is very accomplished with ICT, to speak to my colleagues on the topic of 'Making the Best of the Digital Environment for Library Services'. We are planning another session because they benefitted immensely from that interaction. It's part of the benefits I gained from the Fellowship. If I did not have the Fellowship, I wouldn't have made this contact and he wouldn't have been able to impart this important knowledge to my colleagues here in Nigeria.

3.2 – Pre-Fellowship: Objectives and Expectations

While individual Professional Fellows will have had unique motivations for participating in the programme, the central purpose of the Fellowship is to ‘provide professionals with the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills in their given sector, and to have catalytic effects on their workplaces.’ As a result, Fellows selected to participate in the programme expressed a number of common, core objectives relating to their own professional development, as well as to the development of their home institutions.

When asked to rank their main objectives for the Fellowship, the most commonly top-ranked objective, as detailed in Figure 3.4, was ‘gaining knowledge to build capacity at your home organisation’, selected by four-fifths (81%) of Fellows as their most or second most important objective for the programme. This was followed by ‘learning new technical skills’, which was most or second most important more than half (58%) of Fellows, and ‘establishing opportunities for future collaborations’ for 55% of Fellows.

Figure 3.4 - Main objectives of Professional Fellows³⁵



Source: CSC Baseline Surveys, 2016-2019³⁶

All Fellows interviewed for this review³⁷ provided clear details of the specific technical knowledge or skills that they planned to acquire through the Fellowship, ranging from cervical biopsies to systemic family therapy, to advanced library management skills. Furthermore, all mentioned that they aimed to apply these newly acquired skills directly in their home institutions as a means of improving the services available to their stakeholders.

³⁵ Due to a limitation in the surveying software, respondents were able to choose multiple options as ‘most important’ rather than ranking them in order as the question intended.

³⁶ n = 244

³⁷ n = 7

‘My objective was to learn all about cervical screening, building on the little knowledge that I had from the local training that we had here. I wanted to learn how to do cervical biopsies, how to make clear diagnoses of the pre-cervical polyps.’

Dorine Natukunda, 2019 Fellow, Knowledge for Change³⁸

As well as the core objectives outlined in Figure 3.4, surveyed Fellows detailed a number of additional objectives for their time in the UK, with many seeking to gain an understanding of UK working practices and culture or detailing specific projects that they hoped to initiate or develop through the Fellowship.

‘My organization is in the process of developing a strong component of renewable energy and climate change resilience. Using the skills and knowledge acquired during the fellowship programme at The University of Edinburgh I will be taking lead in the development and implementation of the climate change projects in response to organisational aspirations.’

2016 Professional Fellow³⁹

Several Fellows also mentioned that they were looking forward to engaging in reciprocal learning and the opportunity to share their own expertise with their UK Host organisations and with other Professional Fellows.

‘I plan to share my experiences of the Rule of Law in my jurisdiction, including our achievements and constraints. With my Hosts, and other Fellows, I will share the structure, programmes, membership and best practices of my home Bar Association.’

2017 Professional Fellow⁴⁰

Given that developing the capacity of Fellows’ home organisations is a central purpose of the Fellowship, and a primary objective for most Fellows, it is unsurprising that Employers have generally been supportive of their participation in the programme. Nine-tenths (91%) of Fellows reported that their line managers were either ‘very’ (84%) or ‘somewhat’ (7%) supportive, and 81% of Fellows were granted paid leave to take up the Fellowship.

³⁸ Professional Fellow interview, 2021

³⁹ Free text response, CSC Baseline survey 2016

⁴⁰ Free text response, CSC Baseline survey 2017

The vast majority (91%) of Fellows planned to return to their same position at work following the completion of the Fellowship; however, many expressed hopes that certain aspects of their roles would evolve, with them taking on additional responsibilities and becoming more valued members of their teams and organisations post-Fellowship.

‘I am not aspiring for a change of job but rather an improvement in the quality of work and the way we do things. There is a lot to learn in all aspects of organisational development. I look forward acquiring life skills and building relevant connections and collaborations that will impact on our work.’

2016 Professional Fellow⁴¹

Many Fellows mentioned specific projects that they would be equipped with the skills to lead, training that they hoped to pass on to their colleagues, and networks that they hoped to leverage following the Fellowship.

‘I expect to gain knowledge and skills which will help me improve on my service delivery at home in the area of child and maternal health since our country has a high mortality rate. With the knowledge and skills gained I will be able to mentor the junior midwives, be able to network and collaborate with other organisations for better service delivery.’

2017 Professional Fellow⁴²

Overall, Fellows reported a number of core objectives for participation in the programme, geared towards both their own professional development and building capacity at their home organisations. Most Fellows had a specific set of technical knowledge and skills that they aimed to acquire through the Fellowship as well as a clear idea of how they planned to apply these to their work going forward.

⁴¹ Free text response, CSC Baseline survey 2016

⁴² Free text response, CSC Baseline survey 2017

Professional Fellow Profile: Dorine Natukunda

‘The managerial skills I attained have helped me create a harmonious working environment which has caused a great improvement in performance.’



Dorine Natukunda is a clinical officer and team leader at the Kasusu Health Center III in Uganda, responsible for attending to patients as well as administrative oversight of the clinic. A qualified nurse, Dorine completed a Professional Fellowship with Knowledge for Change in 2020, where she developed her cervical screening skills and gained additional leadership and managerial skills that have allowed her to progress in her career and launch projects aimed at offering better services and standards of healthcare in the community.

How has the Fellowship impacted your career and ability to deliver quality care?

As regards cervical screening, which was the main objective of my Fellowship, I really gained strong skills in proper diagnosis and management of pre-cancerous lesions and cervical cancer. Before going for the Fellowship, I was working as a nurse but since returning, I have been entrusted to work as a clinical officer as well as heading a facility. I attained valuable skills from the Fellowship including managerial skills, computer skills, research proposal, report writing and lobbying and have been able to implement all of these in my new role as a manager.

What kind of impact do you think you've had in your institution?

Using the lobbying skills attained through the Fellowship, I successfully established an effective ART (Anti-Retroviral Treatment) clinic structure at my facility. I identified a problem of stigma in HIV clients due to the lack of privacy when collecting their treatment refills, which was causing a lot of missed appointments. I produced a report and successfully requested for intervention to establish a new structure to provide enough space and privacy for the clients in ART care. Currently I am working hard to set up a functional maternity ward, this includes having an equipped labour suit and ward set ready to accommodate mothers plus other necessary resources required to have a successful safe delivery at the facility.

How do you see yourself having a wider impact at community or national level?

I have been involved in an ongoing effort to sensitize women about cervical screening. In Uganda, many people are dying silently just because they don't know what to do and where to go for the services. At my former facility, 95% of all eligible women who are receiving ART care have been screened for cervical cancer and all those found with pre-cancerous lesions have been successfully treated with thermocoagulation. I also took part in the CSC Alumni Community Engagement Fund (ACEF) activity where I produced a video creating awareness about cervical screening. This video has been distributed to health facilities in my district, and it is played in waiting areas so that patients can learn and take the message back to other people in the

community. This will help to create awareness about cervical screening among health workers as well as community members and political leaders. With this I hope to have a very positive impact both locally and all over the country.

Have you faced any challenges in trying to implement your post-Fellowship goals?

There have been some challenges encountered due to inadequate resources, like a lack of finances to produce my awareness video. At facility level, we also lack certain key equipment, and the government has not yet embraced supporting cervical screening to be offered as a free service, so this is only supported by NGOs. Knowledge for Change has really been there to support us in offering those services, whereby they provide for us all the necessary requirements that we need and have also funded renovations of the facility.

How have you made use of the professional networks established through the Fellowship?

The doctors whom I interacted with through the Fellowship have been so useful in terms of consultations in cases when I need professional assistance. They support us in the process of diagnosis and in developing treatment plans for patients who have pre-cancerous lesions or cervical cancer. This relationship is both a formal institutional one but also individual. If I have an individual concern, I do not hesitate to consult them, and they are always willing to help.

How have you managed to pass on the knowledge gained through the Fellowship to your colleagues?

It started while we were still on the Fellowship when we organised for a Zoom training for over 20 colleagues back home. And when we came back, we continued medical education, answering colleagues' questions ourselves, sharing new skills, or going back to the UK consultants for additional support where needed.

3.3 – On-Fellowship: Activities and Achievements

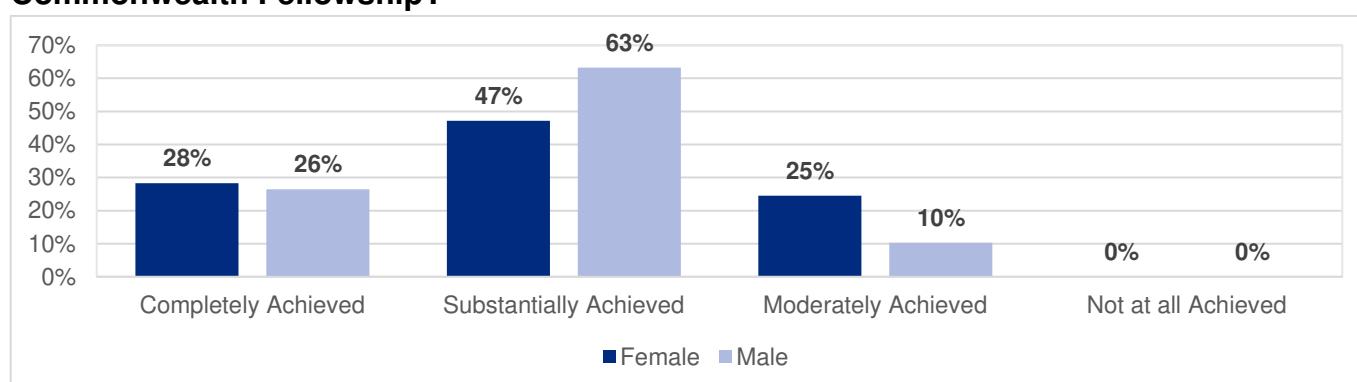
In order to examine whether the objectives and expectations of Fellows outlined in the previous section were met, it is necessary to look at the on-Fellowship experience, and the achievements, knowledge and skills development reported by Fellows and Hosts from their time in the UK.⁴³

Professional Fellows reported high levels of overall achievement, with 84% having either ‘substantially’ (57%) or ‘completely’ (27%) achieved the goals set for their Fellowship. This high success rate is confirmed by Host organisations, with 94% of surveyed Hosts ‘strongly agreeing’ (66%) or ‘agreeing’ (28%) that Fellows met the objectives of their Fellowship.⁴⁴

Male Fellows reported a slightly higher rate of goal attainment, with nine-tenths (89%) reporting having ‘substantially’ or ‘completely’ achieved their goals, compared to three quarters (75%) of female Fellows.

The length of the Fellowship does not seem to have had a significant effect on the level of goal attainment, with 80% of Fellows in the UK for two months or less having ‘substantially’ or ‘completely’ achieved their goals, compared to 85% of Fellows on-award for three months or more.⁴⁵

Figure 3.5 - To what extent do you feel that you achieved the goals that you had set for your Commonwealth Fellowship?



Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁴⁶

Despite the relatively short timeframe of the Fellowships, Professional Fellows had the opportunity to get involved in a wide range of professional activities, as illustrated in Figure 3.6. It is encouraging to see that the areas ranked by Fellows as the most important in their initial objectives for the Fellowship; namely, gaining knowledge in their field that can build capacity at their home organisation, developing technical skills, and establishing opportunities for future collaborations, were all substantially covered through their on-Fellowship activities. Significantly, an overwhelming 98% of Fellows reported that they had either ‘substantial’ (73%) or ‘moderate’ (25%) involvement in activities that would contribute to capacity building at their home organisations, while 93% reported ‘substantial’ (61%) or ‘moderate’ (32%) involvement in activities that enhanced their technical skills.

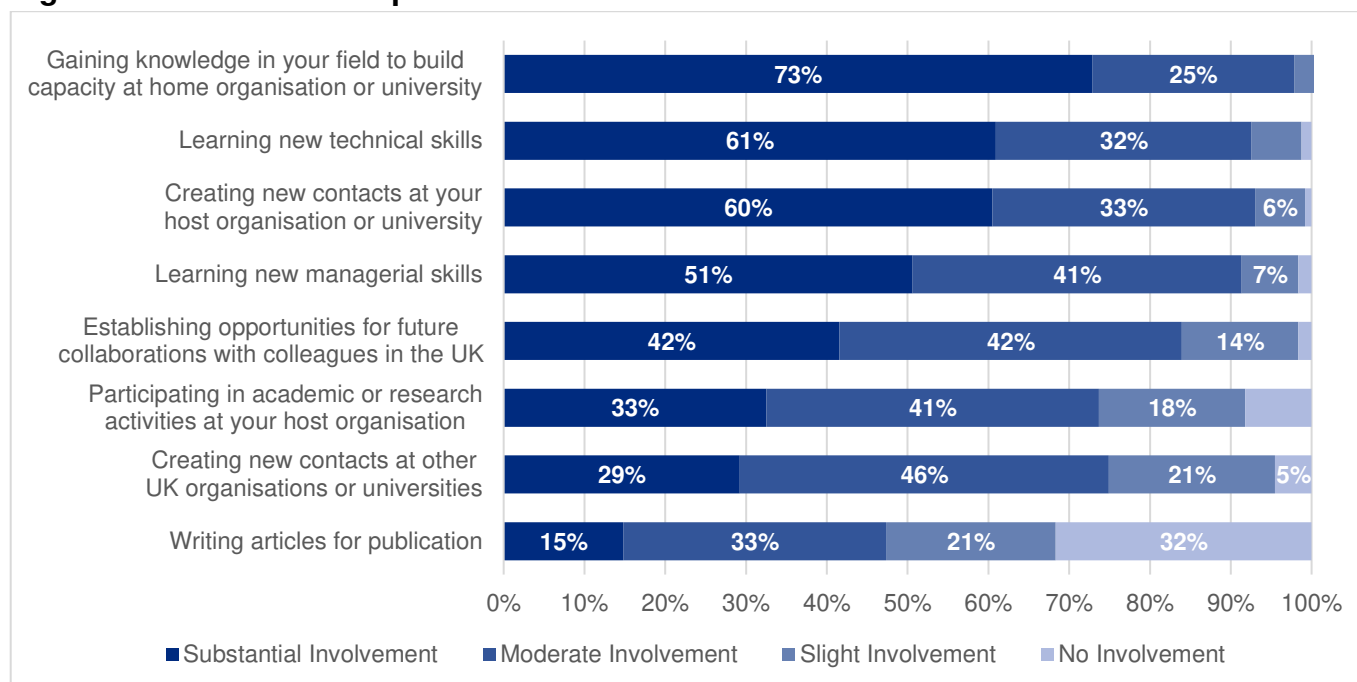
⁴³ The perception of Host organisations is discussed in further detail in Section 4.3.

⁴⁴ Professional Fellowships Hosts surveys, 2016-2019 (n = 58).

⁴⁵ CSC Longitudinal Surveys, 2015-2018 (n = 165)

⁴⁶ n = 243

Figure 3.6 - On-Fellowship activities



Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁴⁷

UK Host organisations participating in a focus group for this review provided further details of the extensive programmes of activities arranged for Fellows, including training programmes, site visits, conferences, peer shadowing and networking events. Many highlighted that these programmes were developed in conjunction with the Fellows themselves, and in some cases their home Employers, to ensure that they were of maximum relevance and in line with the Fellows' learning objectives. There is a strong emphasis on Fellows having a say in their on-Fellowship activities, and an acknowledgement that they are best placed to determine the most productive and beneficial use of their time in the UK.

'Fellows undertake a mixed programme of activities including experiential learning, didactic training, a significant amount of relevant training for the Fellows to take back and develop. Their training programme starts before the Fellows arrive with a training needs analysis. This is followed by training as a group but including bespoke training for each Fellow.'

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Liverpool

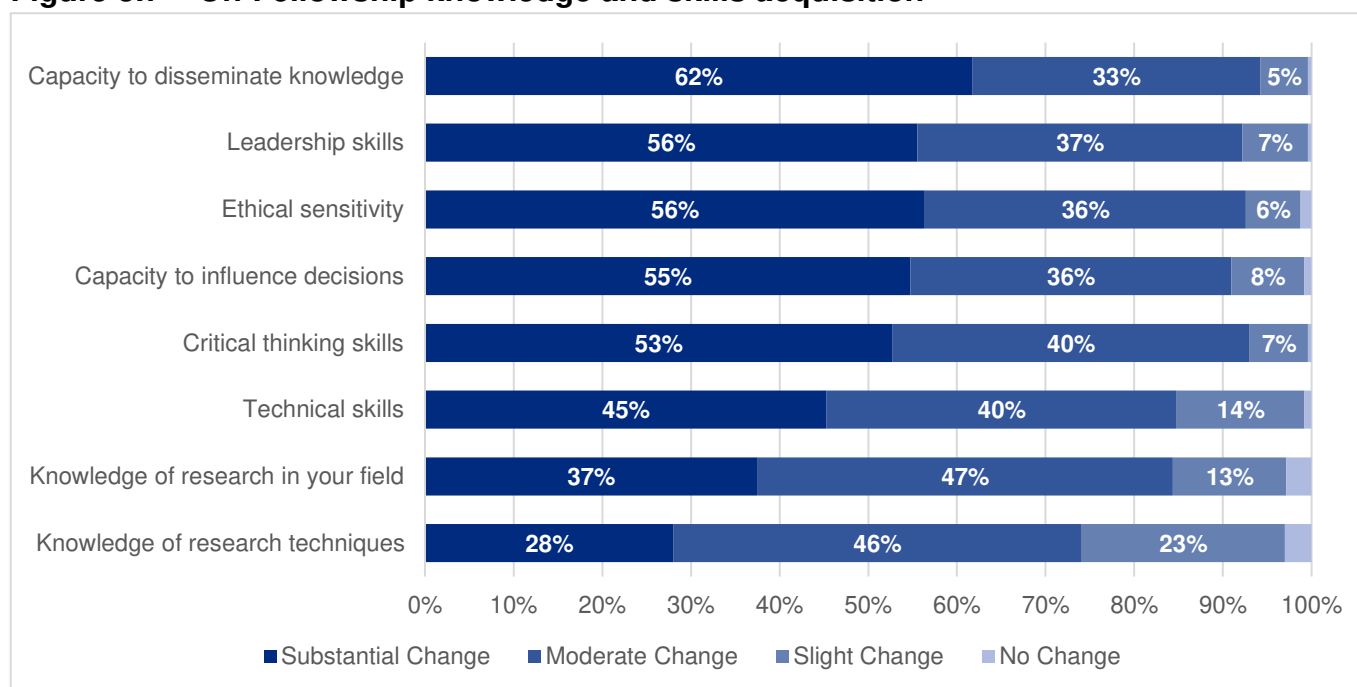
'Fellows are encouraged to use their own initiative to identify ways to make best use of their time in the organisation. To facilitate this, emphasis is placed on giving the Fellow the opportunity to spend time with different staff members; attending seminars, short courses and workshops which may be relevant; and organising visits to UK partner organisations.'

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Greenwich

⁴⁷ n = 243

Fellows also reported high-levels of on-Fellowship knowledge and skills acquisition across a variety of academic and professional skill sets, as detailed in Figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7 – On-Fellowship knowledge and skills acquisition



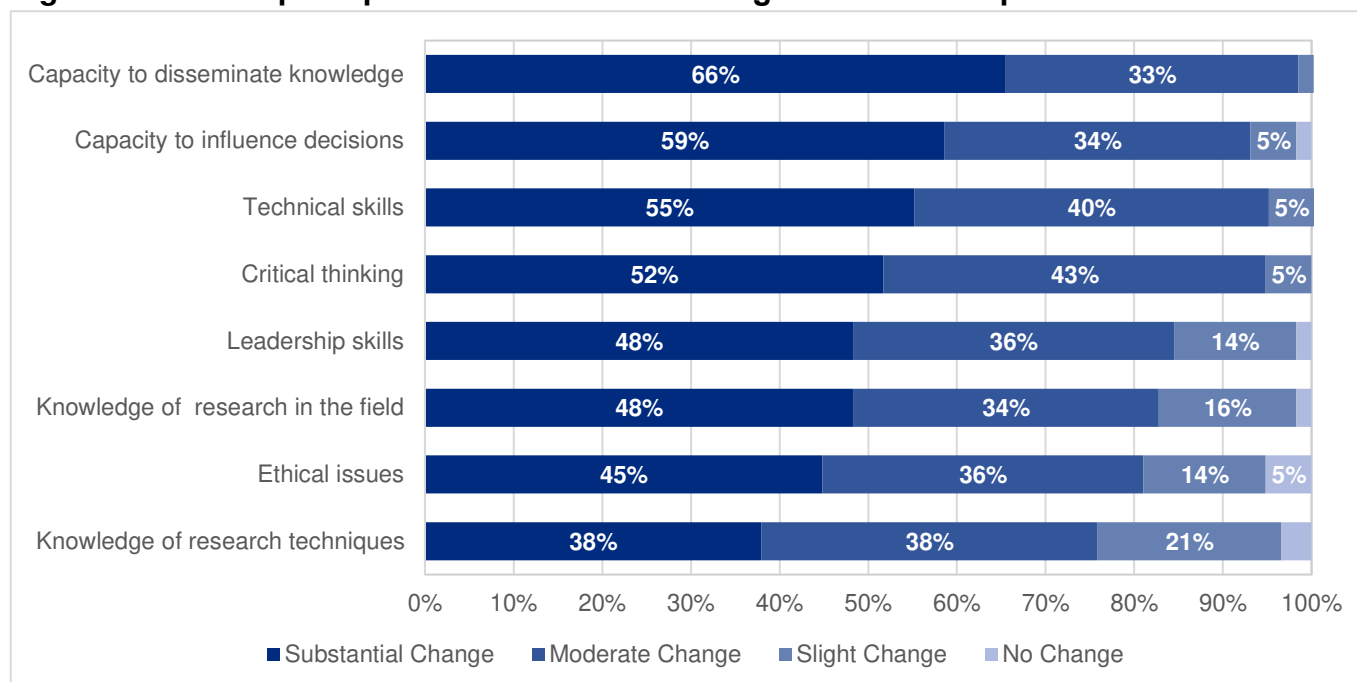
Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁴⁸

Given that Fellows expect to return to positions of greater influence in their home organisations post-Fellowship, it is encouraging that more than nine-tenths of Fellows report ‘moderate’ or ‘substantial’ changes in their leadership skills (93%) and in their capacity to influence decisions (91%). Additionally, 85% of Fellows reported a ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ change to their technical skills, relating to their specific professional fields.

These considerable gains in knowledge and skills were confirmed by UK Host organisations, who identified capacity to disseminate knowledge as the area where Professional Fellows made the most substantial gains, with 99% of Hosts indicating ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ improvements in this area. Additionally, more than nine-tenths of Hosts reported that their Fellows had ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ improvements in their technical and critical thinking skills (both 95%) and in their capacity to influence decisions (93%). Employers further corroborated these high levels of skills acquisition and application of these skills by Fellows upon their return to the workplace (see Section 5.1).

⁴⁸ n = 243

Figure 3.8 – Host perception of Fellows’ knowledge and skills acquisition



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019⁴⁹

Fellows have emphasised the benefit of these enhanced technical skills in combination with the ‘soft skills’ acquired through the Fellowship in areas including leadership, communications and management.

‘As well as the advanced skills in library management and ICT programmes, I learnt soft skills, leaderships skills. I also used to be a very shy person before my Fellowship experience. We had two days of brilliant training on public speaking and all the fears I used to have were defeated. The Fellowship has made me a courageous leader who is able to manage both human resources and material resources.’

Dr Akinniyi Adeleke, 2015 Fellow, University of East London⁵⁰

Overall, the experience of Professional Fellows has been overwhelmingly positive, with 98% indicating that they would recommend the Fellowship to peers or colleagues in their home country.⁵¹ Fellows have reported high rates of achievement regarding the goals and objectives set for their Fellowship, have reported substantial involvement in activities that relate directly to their objectives, as well as very high levels of knowledge and skills acquisition. These findings all indicate that Fellows are well-equipped to assume positions of greater influence, and affect meaningful change, upon returning to their places of employment post-Fellowship.

⁴⁹ n = 58

⁵⁰ Professional Fellow interview, 2021

⁵¹ 98% chose either ‘definitely agree’ (85%) or ‘mostly agree’ (13%)

Professional Fellow Profile: Watson Matamwa

‘I improved my understanding, my knowledge, my skills on climate change. And then when I came back, I took that opportunity to train farmers and other climate change actors.’

Watson is an agricultural researcher working on procedures aimed at increasing crop yields, enhancing resource efficiencies, and developing more efficient, climate-smart crop production. His Professional Fellowship, at the University of Greenwich in 2017, focused on climate change and the importance of agricultural advisory services for farmers. Following his return to Tanzania, he implemented several successful initiatives to promote productive and sustainable agricultural practices and increase the participation of women and youth in farmer field schools.



What kind of institutional impact were you able to have as a result of the Fellowship?

The Fellowship has positively changed my way of thinking especially in areas of climate change by increasing my understanding of key issues pertaining to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and its relation to crop production. Upon returning to Tanzania, I was working for local government in Kilolo District as an agricultural officer, providing extension services to farmers and local communities and training farmers on good agricultural practices through farmer field schools. I introduced some key changes to our work, focused on promoting climate smart agriculture, and encouraging the participation of women, youth, and disabled farmers in farmer field schools. Additionally, I managed to write several proposals that were successfully funded, and these projects are now being implemented by my former colleagues, for example, promoting livelihood improvements to farmers through the introduction of soybean farming. Although I have moved on to a research role at Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), I have left behind a legacy as Kilolo and I still regularly provide guidance, particularly on climate change issues.

How has this contributed to local development?

Due to our interventions, productivity has increased compared to previous years because farmers now are using improved seeds and more sustainable practices. They know the importance of improved seeds in terms of productivity and in terms of quality. Farmers are also now more aware of issues of climate change and its impact on their daily activities. Additionally, the funding that I secured to introduce soybean farming is tackling malnutrition in vulnerable families, teaching farmers how to cultivate soybeans for their own use and for income generation.



What kind of professional networks and collaborations were established through the Fellowship?

Through the Fellowship, I established a number of valuable professional networks that have benefitted me personally, as well as Kilolo district and the wider community. Linking Kilolo District with Sustainable Agriculture Intensification Research Learning Alliance (SAIRLA), a University of Greenwich funded organisation, has increased awareness on the importance of allocating district funds to execute agricultural activities, and empower women, youth, and disabled groups. Kilolo district also benefited by receiving funds from the University of Greenwich to establish 15 farmer field schools, through which more than 300 farmers and 15 agricultural extension staff were trained on reducing the impact of climate change in agricultural production. A member of staff from the University of Greenwich attended these training sessions and shared materials relating to climate change and agricultural development that we are still using to this day. Additionally, we launched some collaborative research, funded by the University of Greenwich, investigating the utility of mobile phones on disseminating agricultural advisory services and weather information, involving six villages and 300 farmers.

How have you been able to disseminate your Fellowship learnings more widely?

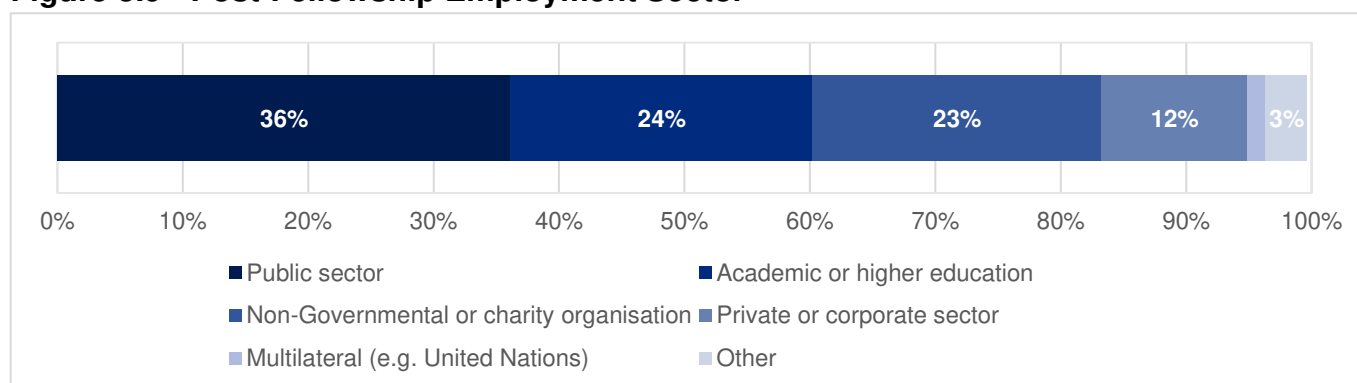
Following that collaborative research, I attended several workshops, some of which were organised by the University of Greenwich through SAIRLA, as well as the Tanzania Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance. At these workshops, I presented on our efforts to reduce climate change impacts with smallholder farmers, and the findings of the research assessing the utility of mobile phones for dissemination of weather information. Through these workshops, we were able to reach mobile phone network providers who agreed to provide these services to farmers free of charge, allowing them to make informed decisions concerning crop production, particularly in areas where there is a shortage of agricultural extension officers.

3.4 – Post-Fellowship: Outcomes for Fellows

In the period immediately following their Fellowship, the vast majority of Professional Fellows returned to employment, with 98% returning to their pre-Fellowship place of employment. The results of the 2019 Alumni Census revealed that 97% of Professional Fellowship alumni were working in their home countries, and 99% were working in their home regions, indicating that they remain committed to contributing to development in their home countries and regions in the long term.⁵²

In terms of employment sector, more than one-third of respondents (36%) indicated that they were employed in the public sector, including national or local government. Roughly a quarter were in the academic or higher education sector (24%), and in the NGO or charity sector (23%). A sizable minority were employed in the private or corporate sector (12%), with a smaller number working for multilateral organisations (1%) or other (3%).

Figure 3.9 - Post-Fellowship Employment Sector



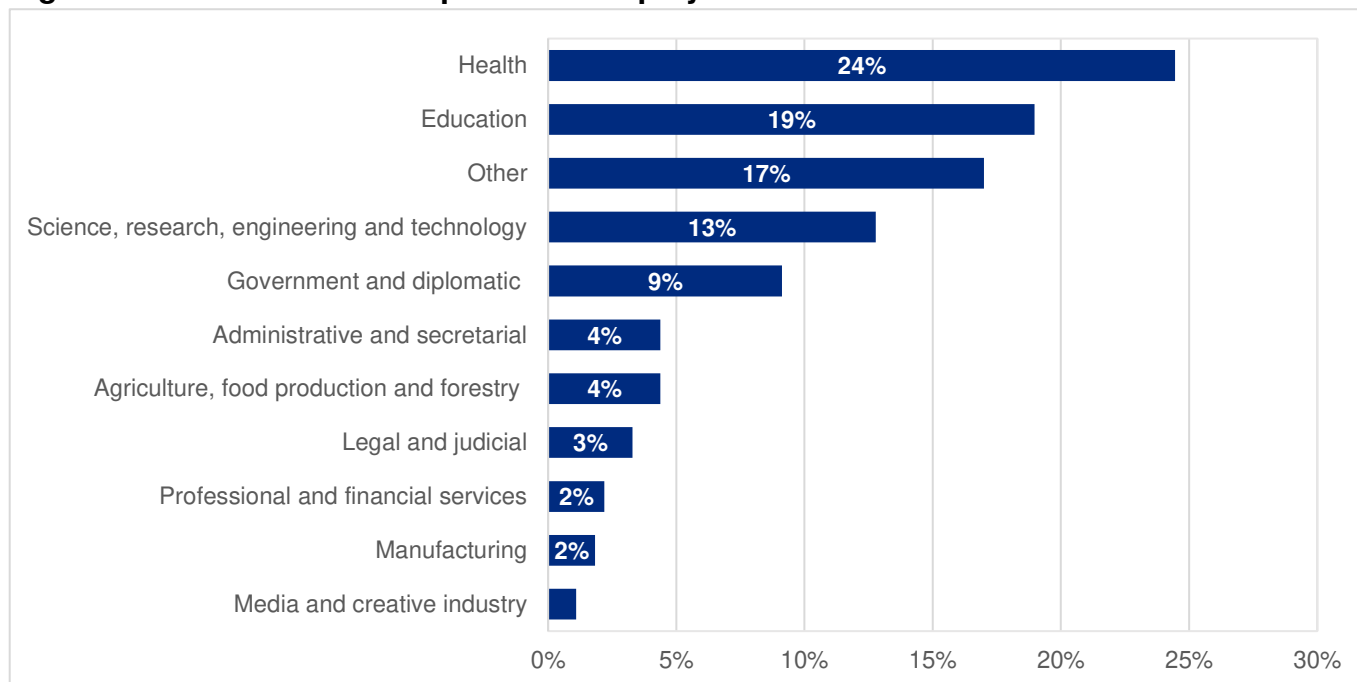
CSC Alumni Census, 2019⁵³

The health sector was the most common area of employment, with one quarter (24%) of alumni employed in roles including doctors, nurses, surgeons, pharmacists, psychologists, and health technicians. This was followed by education, with one fifth (19%) of alumni employed in roles in the higher education sector such as fellow, lecturer, or professor, as well as teaching roles in primary or secondary schools. More than one-tenth of alumni (13%) indicated that they were working in science, research, engineering, and technology roles, while 9% were working in government or diplomacy.

⁵² CSC Alumni Census, 2019 (n = 287).

⁵³ n = 274

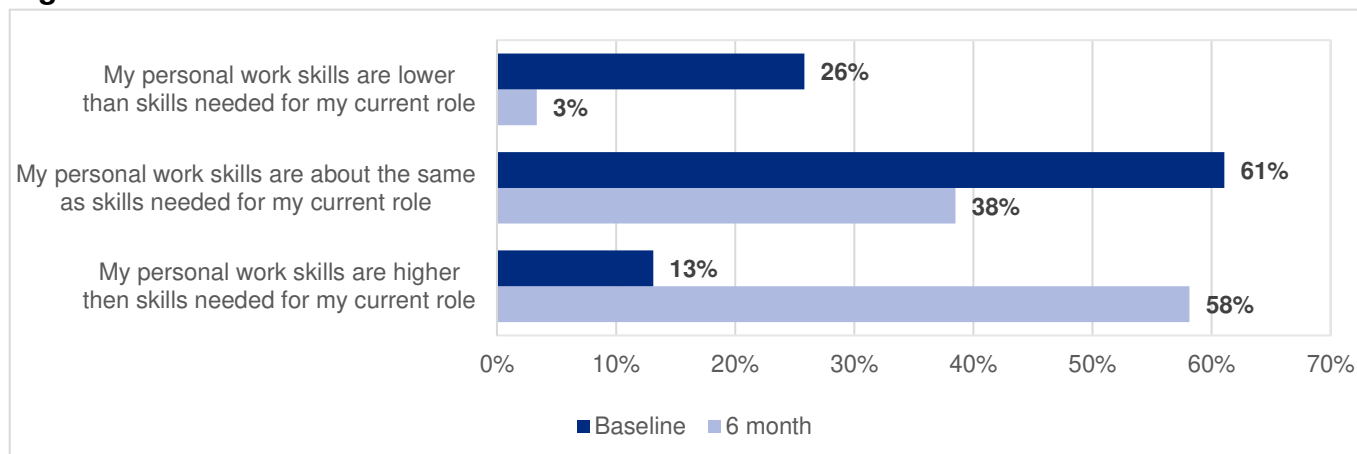
Figure 3.10 – Post-Fellowship Area of Employment



CSC Alumni Census, 2019⁵⁴

As a result of the high level of skills acquisition detailed in the previous section, Fellows reported a significant increase in their personal work skills immediately after the Fellowship. Only 3% of Fellows still felt that their ‘personal work skills [were] lower than the skills needed’ for their current role six-months post-Fellowship, down from one quarter (26%) of Fellows at the baseline. Additionally, more than half (58%) of Fellows reported that their ‘personal work skills were higher than the skills needed for their current role’ six months post-Fellowship, compared to only 13% pre-Fellowship.

Figure 3.11 – Skills match for current role



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)⁵⁵, CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁵⁶

⁵⁴ n = 274

⁵⁵ n = 244

⁵⁶ n = 239

In terms of personal professional development, some Fellows reported an immediate boost to their prospects, with one-tenth (11%) receiving a promotion and more than one-quarter (27%) earning a higher salary within six months after completing their Fellowship.⁵⁷ Of those who had been promoted, 85% indicated that the Fellowship had been either ‘substantially’ (54%) or ‘moderately’ (31%) relevant in contributing to their progression.⁵⁸ By eighteen months post-Fellowship, 40% of Fellows were earning a higher salary, indicating continued and rapid career progression.⁵⁹

‘Based on my improved credentials I have been promoted to the next rank with further responsibilities.’

2017 Professional Fellow⁶⁰

More than half of UK Hosts participating the focus group also emphasised the direct professional development opportunities for Fellows, highlighting how this has translated into promotions and rapid career progression for many.

‘Some of our Fellows have gone on to significantly accelerate their careers and move into senior positions in their chosen fields from a starting point of grassroots programming.’

Professional Fellowship Host, TackleAfrica

Progress has also been reflected in a gradual increase in formal responsibilities and influence in the workplace, with Fellows slightly more likely to have responsibility in areas such as supervising colleagues, overseeing budgets, and devising strategic direction following the Fellowship, as shown in Figure 3.12. It is worth noting that the majority of Fellows already reported high levels of responsibility across many of these areas prior to the Fellowship. This would have contributed to their ability to make a persuasive argument that they would be in a position to implement meaningful institutional change post-Fellowship.

‘In many cases, Fellows have gone on to be invited to participate in projects or given additional responsibilities using the knowledge gained in the UK.’

Professional Fellowship Host, British Geological Survey

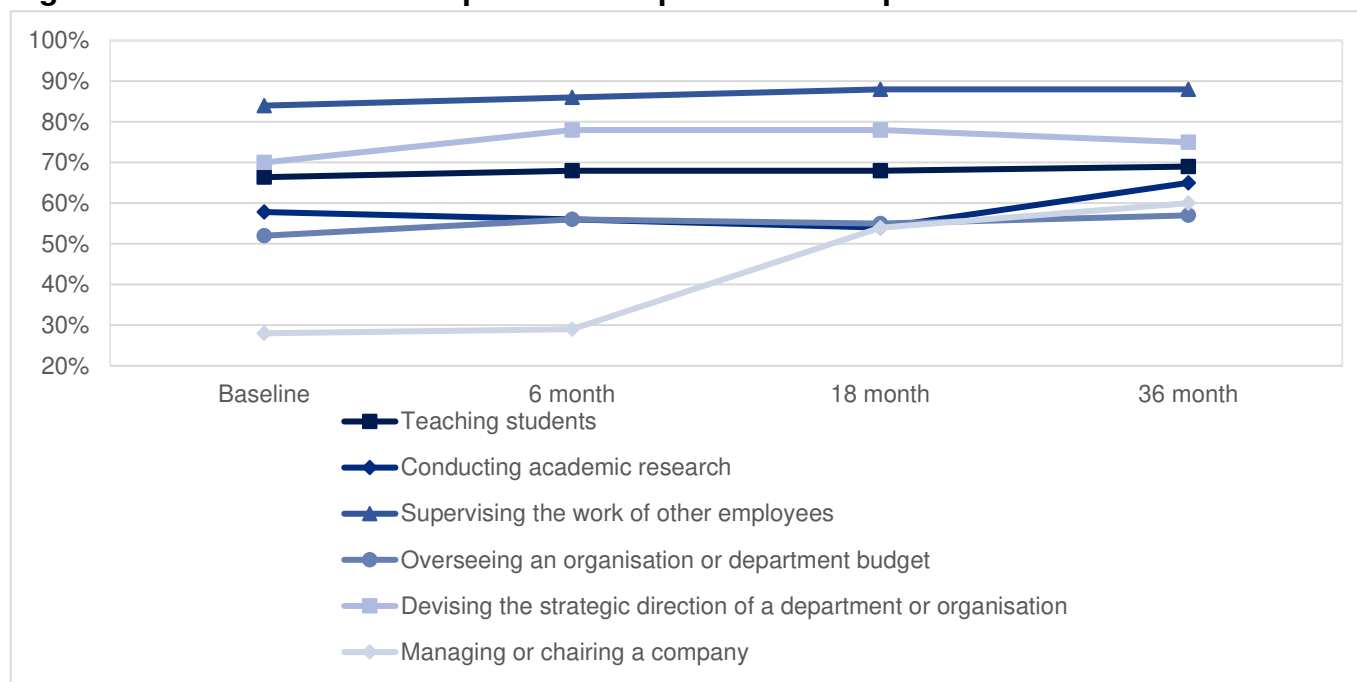
⁵⁷ CSC Longitudinal Surveys, 2015-2019 (n = 239)

⁵⁸ Ibid. (n = 26)

⁵⁹ Ibid. (n = 113)

⁶⁰ Free text response, CSC 6 month survey

Figure 3.12 – Formal work responsibilities post-Fellowship



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)⁶¹, CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁶²

The most notable increase in formal work responsibilities was the proportion of Fellows who reported 'managing or chairing a company', which more than doubled from just 28% at the baseline to 60% of Fellows three years post-Fellowship.

'Since returning to Nigeria in 2017, I have fully set up my own Youth Sports Development organisation. I have had to overcome a lot of hurdles, and I can say that my Fellowship experience helped to prepare and empower me to face a lot of the challenges. I went into the Fellowship with the full intention to return Nigeria armed with enough information and resources to enable me to start-up and lead the youth sports organisation after studying the UK's youth sports strategy and networking with some UK organisations. Now I have a fully functional organisation that is ready to host the biggest school sports event in Nigeria.'

2016 Professional Fellow⁶³

Being recognised by their Employers as an alumnus of a prestigious international Fellowship has undoubtedly enhanced Fellows' overall standing and influence in the workplace. Fellows reported their opinions being taken more seriously, and their voices being more respected in the workplace as a result of the Fellowship. More than one-third (35%) of Fellows indicated that senior managers were supportive 'all the time' when they suggested implementing new practices following the Fellowship, compared with less than one-quarter (23%) at the baseline.⁶⁴

⁶¹ n = 244

⁶² The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 112; 36 month = 102.

⁶³ Free text response, CSC 36 month survey

⁶⁴ CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019) n = 244 , CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019) n = 243

‘The executives at my place of work showed a renewed respect for me and my opinion is greatly valued in all areas of our work following my return from the Fellowship.’

2016 Professional Fellow⁶⁵

This is reflected in Employers’ overall perception of the CSC Professional Fellowship programme, with 94% of Employers ‘definitely’ (77%) or ‘mostly’ (17%) agreeing that the Fellowship is prestigious.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Free text response, CSC 6 month survey

⁶⁶ Professional Fellowships Employer surveys, 2016-2019 (n= 82)

Professional Fellow Profile: Elizabeth Sivi

‘Human rights training is critical to support best prison practices.’

Elizabeth Sivi is the Officer-in-Charge at Nyeri Women prison where she oversees administration, staff management, prisoners’ programmes, and partnerships, to achieve the prison mandate of effective rehabilitation and reformation of offenders. Since completing her Professional Fellowship with Justice Defenders in 2016, she has implemented progressive reforms, focused on promoting the human rights and rehabilitation of prison inmates, as well as improving service delivery and staff morale.



How have you leveraged the Fellowship learning to improve access to justice for prison inmates?

One of the primary outcomes of the Fellowship was capacity building of colleagues and skills development of prisoners through training. In liaison with Justice Defenders, seven inmates and six prison officers at my former station of deployment, Machakos Women prison, along with ten inmates and eight officers from Machakos Main prison, were trained as paralegal officers. Their role is to support and empower the inmates in legal matters, handling their pending court cases and appeals, and advising them on self-representation where they are not able to afford advocates. In Kenya, pro-bono legal services are not widely available, so most inmates have no representation in court. Through the training that we have provided, many are now able to effectively represent themselves, especially for petty offences.

What kind of long-term institutional reforms have you been able to implement?

During the Fellowship, we participated in human rights training at the University of Nottingham that were reinforced through a visit to the Penal Reform International offices. I came to understand that human rights training is critical to support best prison practices. In Machakos, and in my current station Nyeri Women Prison, through stakeholder support, I have delivered in-house training on the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules). This training has empowered prison staff with knowledge, skills, and attitude for effective and improved service delivery in observing, respecting and applying human rights in their daily operations.

How have you worked towards implementing a justice system focused on rehabilitation rather than punishment?

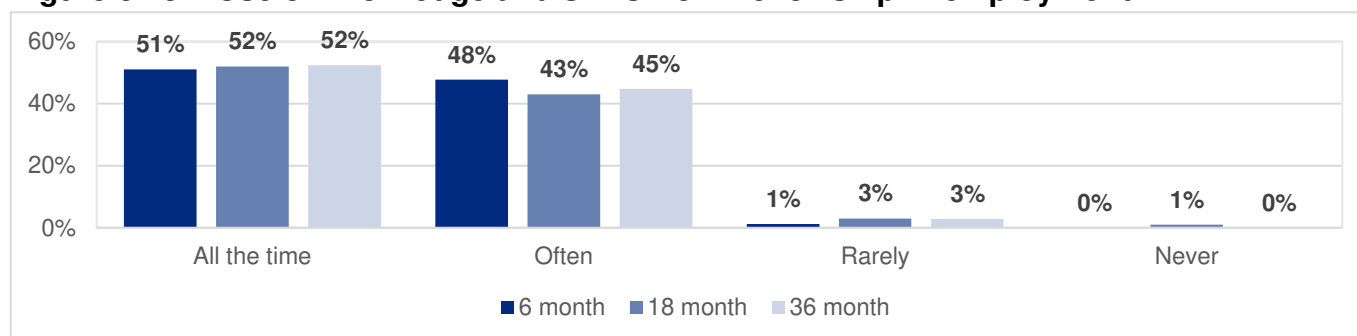
Using a human rights-based approach, I have leveraged the advocacy and networking skills gained through the Fellowship to secure public-private partnerships to support our Prison Discharge Board which prepares prisoners for release and eventual resettlement and reintegration into the community, as well as reconciliation with victims. Partnering with NGOs including FIDA-Kenya, Cleastart, Nafisika Trust, we have provided training on self-representation, as well as psychosocial engagement for support. Reintegration also applies to the children of inmates, who need access to child-friendly spaces, so I have established a day care centre where children living both outside and within the prison walls can access basic educational opportunities and bond as they learn and play together.

3.5 – Post Fellowship: Application of Learnings

As a result of their enhanced knowledge and skills, greater responsibilities, and more prominent voices, Fellows are well-equipped to apply and disseminate their learnings in the workplace in the period following the Fellowship.

The application of knowledge and skills gained from Professional Fellowships begins immediately and remains consistently high over time. As illustrated in Figure 3.13, an overwhelming 99% of Fellows report using the knowledge and skills gained on their Fellowship in the workplace ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ six months post-Fellowship, and 97% are still using them at the same frequency three years post-Fellowship.

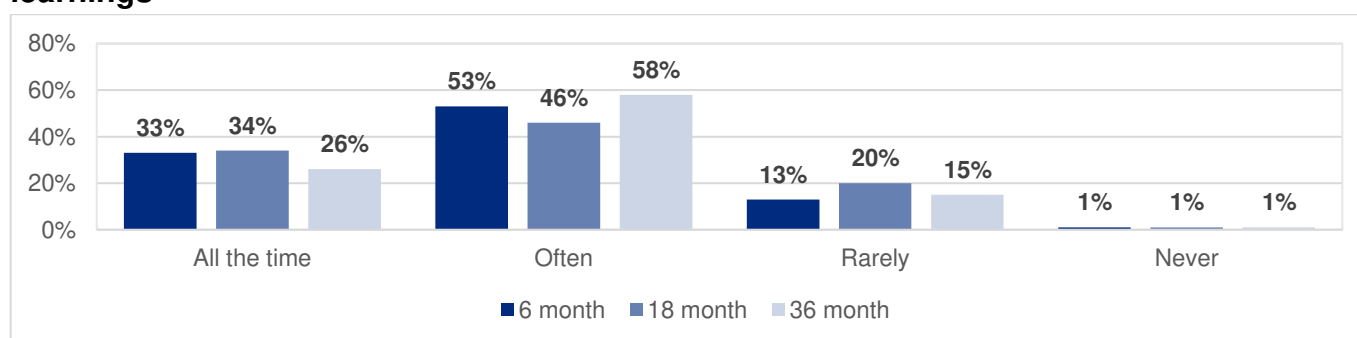
Figure 3.13 – Use of knowledge and skills from Fellowship in employment



Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁶⁷

Given the programme’s emphasis on supporting catalytic changes in the workplace, it is encouraging to see that the institutional impact of the Fellowships is evident immediately, with 86% of Fellows reporting that they made changes to their organisation’s working practice based on something they learned during their Fellowship ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ by six months post-Fellowship.

Figure 3.14 – Make a change to your organisation’s working practice based on Fellowship learnings



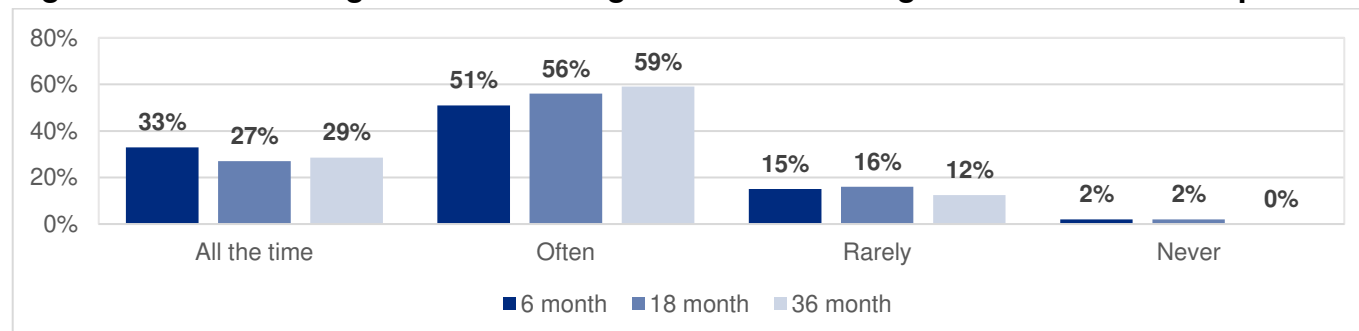
Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁶⁸

⁶⁷ The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

As noted in the previous section, Fellows feel that their voices carry more weight in the workplace following their time in the UK, and this is reflected in the fact that 84% of Fellows encouraged a senior manager to make a change based on their Fellowship learnings ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ in the six-month period following the Fellowship. Fellows continue to leverage their Fellowship learnings to influence senior management in the longer term, with almost nine-tenths (88%) doing so ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ three years post-Fellowship.

Figure 3.15 – Encourage a senior manager to make a change based on Fellowship learnings



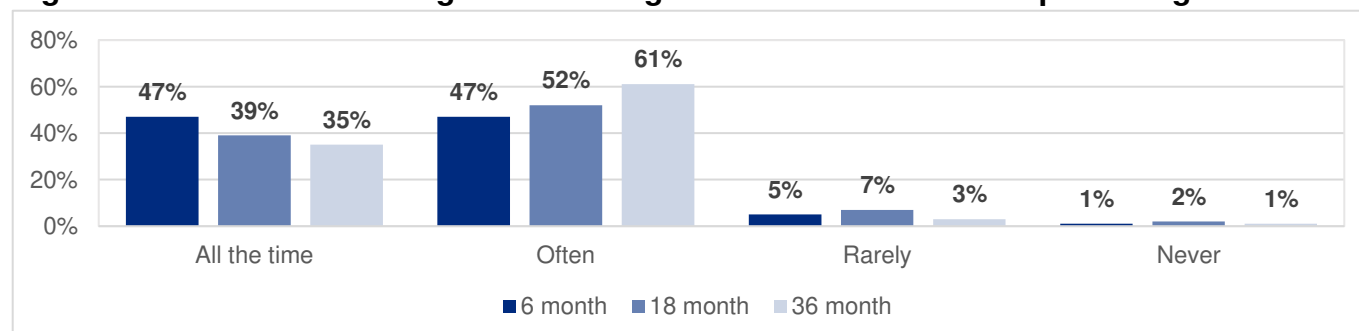
Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁶⁹

‘With the experience I acquired through the Fellowship, I have managed to convince top management to review our existing clinical and pre-transfusion guidelines...That has significantly improved the safety of blood that our patients are receiving.’

2017 Professional Fellow⁷⁰

In addition to applying their knowledge and skills directly to organisational practices and strategies, more than nine-tenths of Fellows reported teaching colleagues at their institution something they learned on their Fellowship ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ at each post-Fellowship interval. In this way, Fellows have contributed to the ongoing professional development of their peers and further enhanced institutional capacity.

Figure 3.16 – Teach a colleague something new based on Fellowship learnings



Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁷¹

⁶⁹ The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

⁷⁰ Free text response, CSC 6 month survey

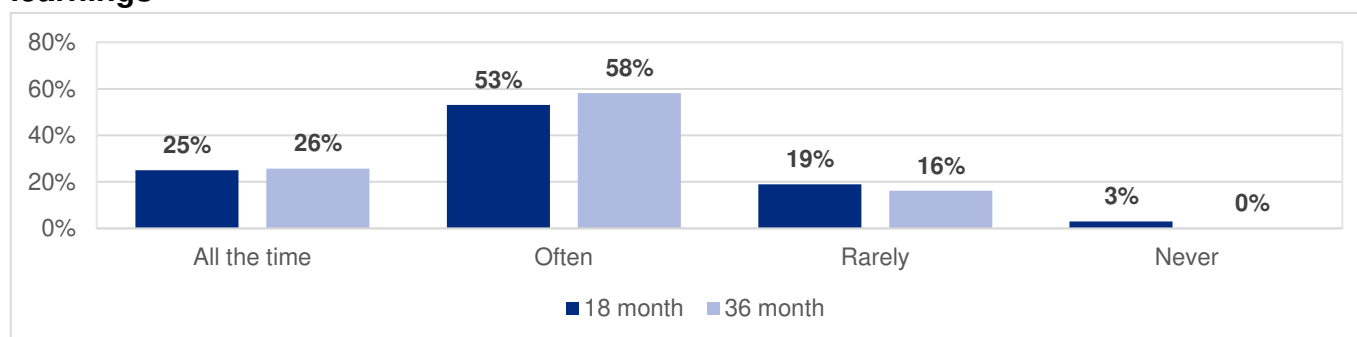
⁷¹ The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

‘Through the knowledge I acquired during the fellowship, I have embarked on the project of forming groups within the hospital...and I train them on similar subjects I learnt in the UK; for example, I have taught them about infection control, leadership skills, care for patients, play therapy for children and following rules of drug administration.’

2016 Professional Fellow⁷²

Fellows also reported developing training resources and guidance that could be used to disseminate the knowledge gained through the Fellowship even more widely. This is most common three years post-Fellowship, at which point 84% of Fellows reported developing these kinds of training resources ‘all the time’ or ‘often’.

Figure 3.17 – Develop training resources or guidance for others based on Fellowship learnings



Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁷³

In an interview for this review, 2017 Fellow Dr Kamruzzaman Mozumder detailed some of the training sessions and resources that he has designed and delivered, both for colleagues at his university and for mental health professionals more widely. These sessions, described as ‘lifechanging’ by some participants, provide a grounding in the systemic family therapy approach which he learned through the Professional Fellowship and is new to Bangladesh.

‘We have done orientation training with our other colleagues as well, so now we have almost 70 people trained in systemic orientation, and almost 12 persons actively engaged in delivering systemic therapy...We are seeing new hope for the families and mental health problems in Bangladesh, with systemic therapy.’

Dr Kamruzzaman Mozumder, 2017 Fellow, East London NHS Foundation Trust⁷⁴

⁷² Free text response, CSC 6 month survey

⁷³ The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

⁷⁴ Professional Fellow interview, 2021

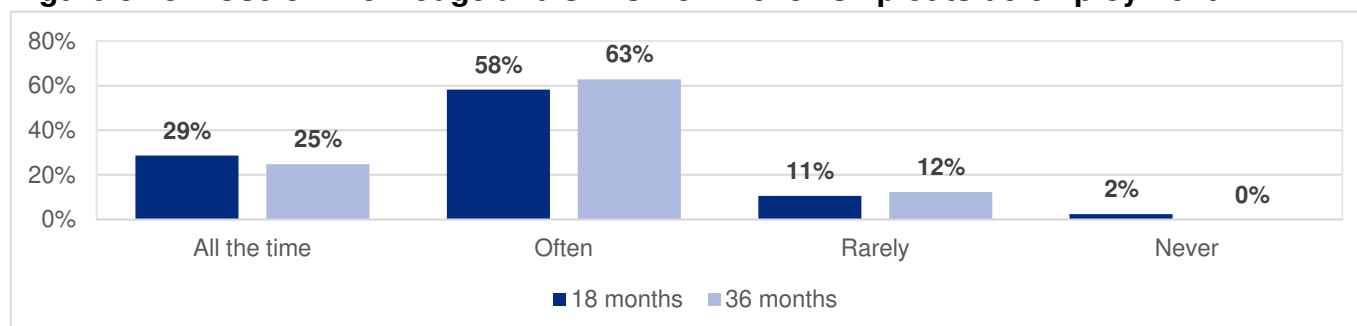
On the back of the knowledge and skills acquired during their time in the UK, Fellows reported the initiation of a number of new projects in the post Fellowship period, giving them the opportunity to apply their learnings directly to their respective areas of work in the field. Nine-tenths (90%) of Fellows reported that they established new areas of work as a result of their Fellowship ‘all the time’ (33%) or ‘often’ (57%) six months post-Fellowship.

‘My Fellowship was related to the use of effective communication techniques for those who could not read and understand the English language. After gaining insights at my Host institution and upon my return, I have been able to develop a translation policy to be used by public health officers to disseminate public health information to persons in local languages. In addition, the use of animation and cartoons have also been incorporated to present information in a graphical form for those who cannot read and write.’

2017 Professional Fellow⁷⁵

Beyond the workplace, Fellows are heavily involved in civil society, including voluntary work and positions of public office. Two-thirds (67%) of Professional Fellows who completed the 2019 Alumni Census indicated that they were involved in charitable activities or community outreach, with a particular emphasis on youth work and the provision of pro bono access to health, legal, or other professional services. Almost one-third (29%) of census respondents were also serving public appointments, in roles such as local councillors, school governors, or board trustees.⁷⁶

Figure 3.18 – Use of knowledge and skills from Fellowship outside employment



Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁷⁷

This provides additional outlets for Fellows to apply their Fellowship learnings, with almost nine-tenths using the knowledge and skills from the Fellowship outside of their employment ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ at eighteen months (87%) and three years (88%) post-Fellowship.

It is clear from the evidence outlined above that Professional Fellows apply the learnings from the Fellowship in their workplaces and beyond in a variety of ways, both immediately and consistently over the longer term. The knowledge and skills acquired through the Fellowship influence not only their own work, but the overall direction of their organisations, leading to the implementation of new strategies, the upskilling of colleagues, and the initiation of innovative new projects.

⁷⁵ Free text response, CSC 6 month survey

⁷⁶ CSC Alumni Census, 2019 (n = 287).

⁷⁷ The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

Professional Fellow Profile:

Dr Muhammad Kamruzzaman Mozumder

‘We are seeing new hope for the families and mental health problems in Bangladesh, with the introduction of systemic therapy.’



Dr Mozumder is a clinical psychologist who is currently working as a Professor at the University of Dhaka as well as a development consultant and clinical practitioner. His areas of interest include community based mental health and working with LGBTQ and refugee populations. Since completing a Professional Fellowship at the East London NHS Foundation Trust in 2017, he has been a leader in the introduction of the systemic and family therapy approach in Bangladesh.

How have you applied the Fellowship learnings to your various projects?

The training and exposure I received during the Fellowship has enhanced my perspective and orientation in my work. It has improved my training skills and enriched my teaching where I now try to focus more on process rather than content. A couple of years back I led a project for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) where I designed and delivered a 25-day intensive training program on mental health and psychological support for counsellors working with the Rohingya refugee population, and 5-day training with Rohingya volunteers. It was a huge success, with participants describing it as ‘life changing’, mostly due to incorporation of systemic ideas and processes that I acquired through the Fellowship.

What institutional changes have you been able to implement as a result of your Fellowship?

The most prominent mode of psychotherapy in Bangladesh is cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in which we try to find flaws with people, in a nutshell. In the UK, I learned more about the systemic approach, which focuses on resources and external factors rather than just the people themselves. Following the Fellowship, I have been working towards introducing a dual focus of CBT and systemic therapy in our department, which is a requirement for the programme to be accredited by the British Psychological Society. Once this is done, our students will receive both formal systemic training and CBT training, which will benefit them directly and have long term institutional impact.



What kind of impact have you had beyond the university?

Along with two other Professional Fellowship recipients and colleagues, we have delivered several batches of training on systemic and family therapy for Bangladeshi mental health professionals under the supervision of our UK mentor, who has joined as a visiting faculty member at our department. Now we have almost 70 professionals trained, and 12 actively engaged in delivering systemic therapy. So, we are seeing new hope for the families and mental health problems in Bangladesh with systemic therapy. Additionally, I have received support from high-placed individuals to extend the training designed for the IOM throughout the country which will have a national level impact. I'm also working with BRAC, a Bangladeshi social development organisation, and we are planning to run the same module for their community-based mental health programmes around the country, so that will be a huge contribution to the community.

How do you think the East London NHS Foundation Trust benefitted from hosting you as a Fellow?

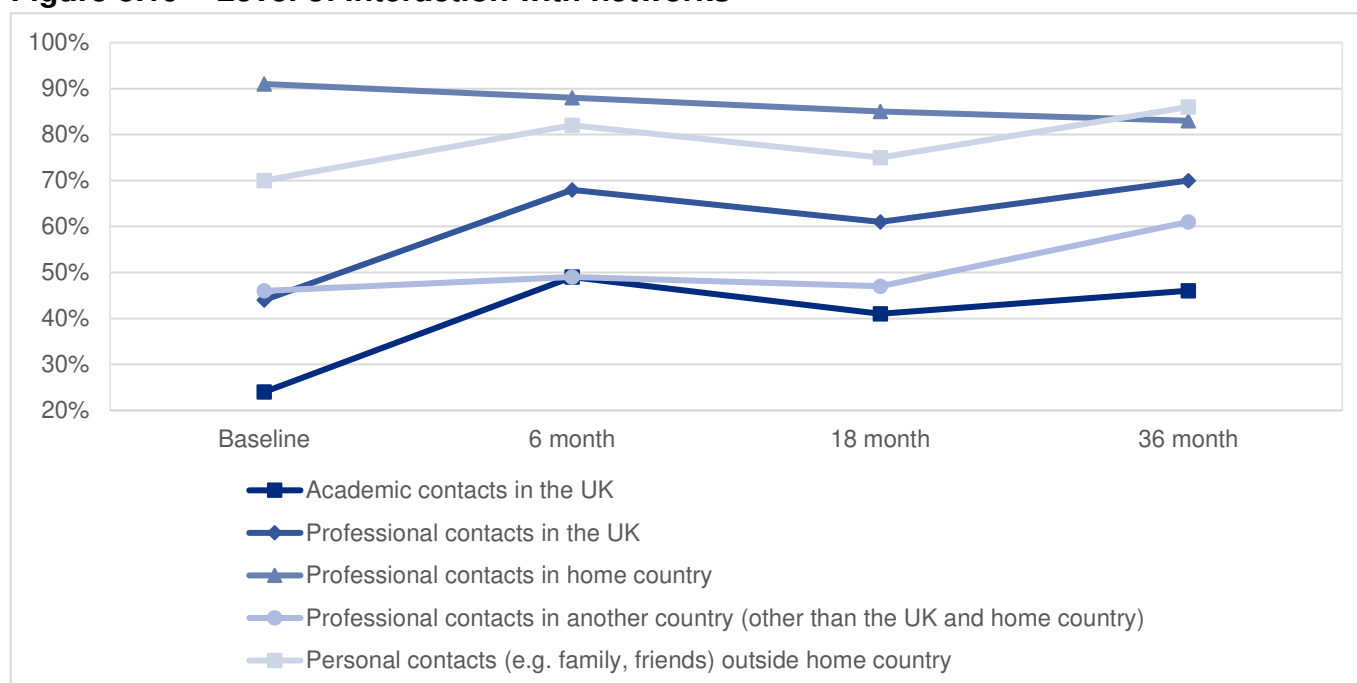
I think it has a dual benefit for both Fellow and Host. The East London Foundation works a lot with the Bangladeshi diaspora so when we go there, we can learn from them and we can contribute to their sessions as well, sometimes running the sessions ourselves, and contributing our specialised Bangladeshi knowledge.

3.6 – Post-Fellowship: Networks and Collaboration

In addition to the development of their individual capacity and skills, and ability to apply these skills upon their return to the workplace, Fellows have placed importance on the development of their professional networks, with more than half (55%) having selected ‘establishing opportunities for future collaborations’ as a key objective of their Fellowship.

It is therefore encouraging to see that Fellows reported a significant increase in interaction with their UK contacts in the period following the Fellowship, with more than two-thirds (68%) of Fellows interacting with professional contacts in the UK ‘all the time’ (12%) or ‘often’ (56%) in the six months following the Fellowship, compared to less than half (44%) reporting one of these two levels of interaction at the baseline. Levels of interaction with UK academic contacts rose even more steeply, with half of Fellows (49%) interacting with these networks ‘all the time’ (10%) or ‘often’ (39%) six months post-Fellowship compared to just one-quarter (24%) at the baseline.

Figure 3.19 – Level of interaction with networks⁷⁸



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)⁷⁹, CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁸⁰

It is evident that the Fellowship led to an immediate boost in interaction with UK contacts, and rates of engagement remained high across the post-Fellowship survey intervals, with the highest level of interaction (70% ‘all the time’ or ‘often’) with UK professional contacts being reported at the 36-month interval.

Notably, interaction with professional contacts in Fellows’ home country remains consistently high post-Fellowship, indicating that new international contacts compliment rather than replace existing professional networks.

⁷⁸ This graph uses the combined top-two responses (‘all the time’ and ‘often’) in order to simplify the visualisation of the time-lapse analysis.

⁷⁹ n = 244

⁸⁰ The number of respondents varies for each time point: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 112; 36 month = 102.

To measure the depth of these interactions, Fellows were additionally asked to reflect on the level of influence that these networks have on their professional development, as detailed in Figure 3.20. The level of influence of UK contacts rose significantly post-Fellowship, with three-quarters (75%) of Fellows reporting that their UK professional contacts had an influence on their professional development ‘all the time’ (19%) or ‘often’ (56%) at the six-month interval, compared to less than half (46%) at the baseline. The influence of UK academic contacts more than doubled in the same period, with just over one quarter (27%) of Fellows reporting that these contacts influenced their professional development ‘all the time’ or ‘often’ at the baseline, rising to more than half (57%) six months post-Fellowship.

Figure 3.20 – Networks influence on professional development⁸¹



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)⁸², CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁸³

Given the nature of the Professional Fellowship programme, with Fellows spending a short and intensive period working directly with a UK Host organisation, it is unsurprising that the most influential UK contacts were the Hosts themselves. This is evidenced through the high levels of Fellow-Host communication and collaboration reported in the post-Fellowship period.

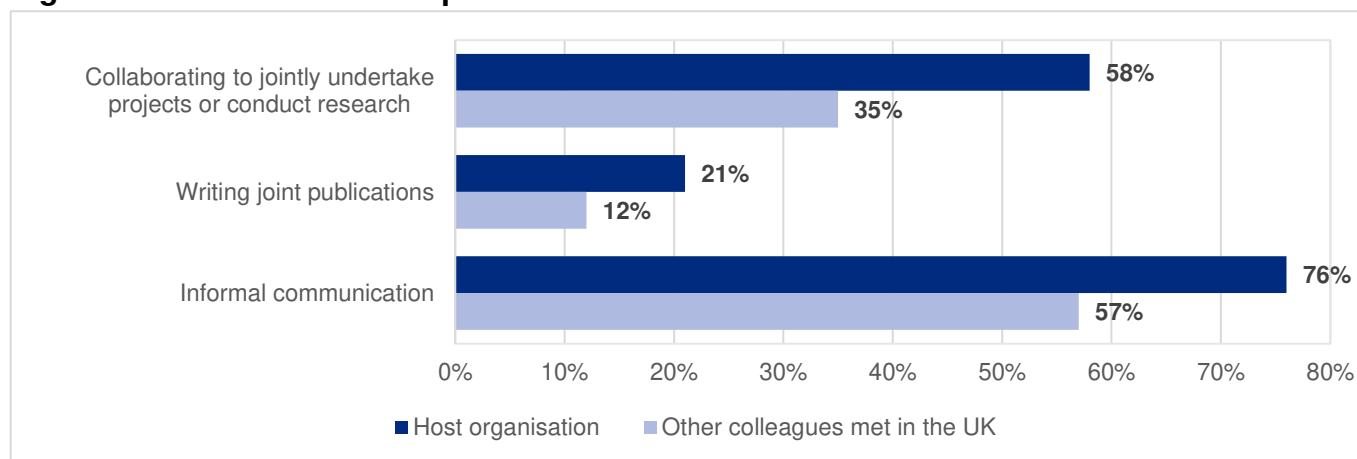
As shown in Figure 3.21, three-quarters (76%) of Fellows remained in at least informal contact with their UK Host organisation contacts in the six-month period following the Fellowship, and more than half (58%) were engaged in collaborative projects or research. An additional fifth (21%) of Fellows collaborated with their UK Hosts on writing joint publications in this same period.

⁸¹ This graph uses the combined top-two responses (‘all the time’ and ‘often’) in order to simplify the visualisation of the time-lapse analysis.

⁸² n = 244

⁸³ The number of respondents varies for each time point: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 112; 36 month = 102.

Figure 3.21 – Post-Fellowship collaboration with UK contacts



Source: CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁸⁴

Fellows have provided numerous examples of ongoing collaboration with their UK Hosts and the positive outcomes of these international professional networks for themselves and for their home organisations.

‘The relationship I made with library professionals during my fellowship in 2015 at Cardiff University continue resulting in impactful improvements in our library services. We continually exchange ideas on how to better our services. Specifically, with the assistance of Cardiff University Library we managed to finalize our Information Literacy programme for our first year students, and [conduct] a quality review of our library services by a panel of experts and chaired by the Director of Library services at Cardiff University Library.’

2015 Professional Fellow⁸⁵

The importance of these new and strengthened professional networks, and associated opportunities for the ongoing professional development of the Fellows, was reinforced by Hosts who participated in the focus group, all of whom indicated that they are still in touch with Fellows either on an individual basis, or through a wider established relationship with their home organisation (See Section 4.5).

‘We continue to provide ongoing support to the Fellows once they return to their offices. Our staff provide the returned Fellows with mentoring, coaching and further training, both in person and remotely. Links are generally maintained through on-going working relationships, regular communication via email and other social media platforms, as well as site visits to the Fellows’ prisons in the case of Kenya and Uganda.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Justice Defenders

⁸⁴ n = 243

⁸⁵ Free text response, CSC 36-month survey

Beyond their Host organisations, Fellows also established strong connections through the Fellowship with other UK organisations, or individuals working in their fields. More than half of Fellows (57%) remained in informal communication with these contacts, and more than a third (35%) were working on joint projects or research with other UK colleagues in the six-month post-Fellowship period. Examples provided by Fellows in later surveys suggest that these collaborations continued in the medium to long term post-Fellowship.

‘We initiated a Capacity Building for Lawyers project, building partnerships with different UK organisations in transferring legal skills to Rwandan Lawyers. A group from the UK spent a week in Rwanda providing legal skills to the lawyers and this will be an annual event.’

2017 Professional Fellow⁸⁶

Finally, many Fellows mentioned the importance of professional networks established with other CSC Professional Fellows, both in their home countries and internationally. Most Fellows interviewed for this review indicated that they were in contact with other Fellows that had completed the CSC Fellowship at the same time as them, as well as those from different cohorts, and that they provided mutual support and advice through informal communication, joint research, and participation in conferences and events.

‘I’ve also maintained engagement with [other] Fellows. Some of them are also based in Kenya, so we’ve been in touch, especially in relation to some of our projects. We see which interventions we can jointly work on and we can also avoid duplication of efforts.’

Irene Mwaura, 2017 Fellow, University of Edinburgh⁸⁷

These networks are often supported by the Host organisations, who encourage Fellows to stay in touch and collaborate independently, as well as in conjunction with the UK Hosts.

‘Each year, the Fellows are connected via WhatsApp and support one another with technical questions. Besides building partnerships and follow-on activities, the building of a network that will hopefully provide Africa-Africa support was unexpected and particularly cemented on a couple of occasions when we were able to gather the fellows at conferences or training events we were hosting in Africa. They forged friendships with each other and with my team that will ultimately determine any lasting links.’

Professional Fellowship Host, British Geological Survey

⁸⁶ Free text response, CSC 6-month survey

⁸⁷ Professional Fellow interview, 2021

It is clear that the Fellowship lays the foundations for the development of strong professional networks, leading to increased international contact, influence and collaboration. As well as increased interaction with their UK Host organisations in the post-Fellowship period, Fellows report ongoing networking and collaboration with other UK professional contacts as well as with other Professional Fellows.

Professional Fellow Profile: Irene Mwaura

‘The Fellowship was an eye opener for me. It has made me move out of my comfort zone.’

Irene Mwaura is a climate change and energy professional working for WWF-Kenya on issues around climate change advocacy and renewable energy. She completed a Professional Fellowship at the University of Edinburgh in 2017 and since her return has been working towards mainstreaming climate change in her organisation’s various workstreams, as well as amplifying the voices of marginalised groups who are directly affected by climate change.

What projects have you managed to implement based on the Fellowship learnings?

I went into the Fellowship hoping to learn how we can diversify our climate change and energy portfolio for greater impact for both people and the environment. The Fellowship provided a platform for me to see what is possible, through visits to organisations that are using innovative ways to address energy and climate change challenges. As a result, we have diversified our work to focus on the productive use of energy which requires more investments, and collaboration with partners that we hadn’t previously worked with. Currently, we are working with commercial partners to address some of the challenges in the agriculture and fisheries value chain to ensure efficient use of water, minimise food wastage and promote sustainable practices. This has not only a significant environmental impact but also a positive economic impact on local farmers and fishing communities.

What long-term institutional changes have you been able to influence as a result of your Fellowship?

One goal of the Fellowship was to learn more about climate change resilience. Upon my return, I led the development of the climate change work stream to ensure climate change is mainstreamed in WWF-Kenya’s new Strategic Plan (2020-2030) This has been a key institutional change and required a change of mindset internally. To realise this, I have organised trainings for 22 staff and have facilitated staff to attend virtual meetings on climate change to further strengthen their capacity. I think my colleagues now see the relevance of ensuring that climate change is strongly embedded within all the work that we are doing. The Fellowship also provided training in resource mobilisation, and I have led four successful fundraising bids. The climate and energy portfolio now has more resources going towards climate change advocacy and adaptation, and energy resources are directed towards productive use of energy as opposed to just household energy.

What kind of wider policy impact have you had post-Fellowship?

During the Fellowship, I was inspired by a visit to [Scottish] Parliament, and the ability of communities to have input in policy development processes. I am now involved in a climate change advocacy project called Amplifying Voices for a Just Climate Action which seeks to ensure that the voices of marginalised communities in Kenya are heard when it comes to climate change solutions and policy development. We are targeting indigenous groups, women who are disproportionately impacted by climate change, youth, and people living with disabilities. This has come with a lot of success to date because we've managed to work with communities on a number climate change and energy-related policies and they've had their voices heard.

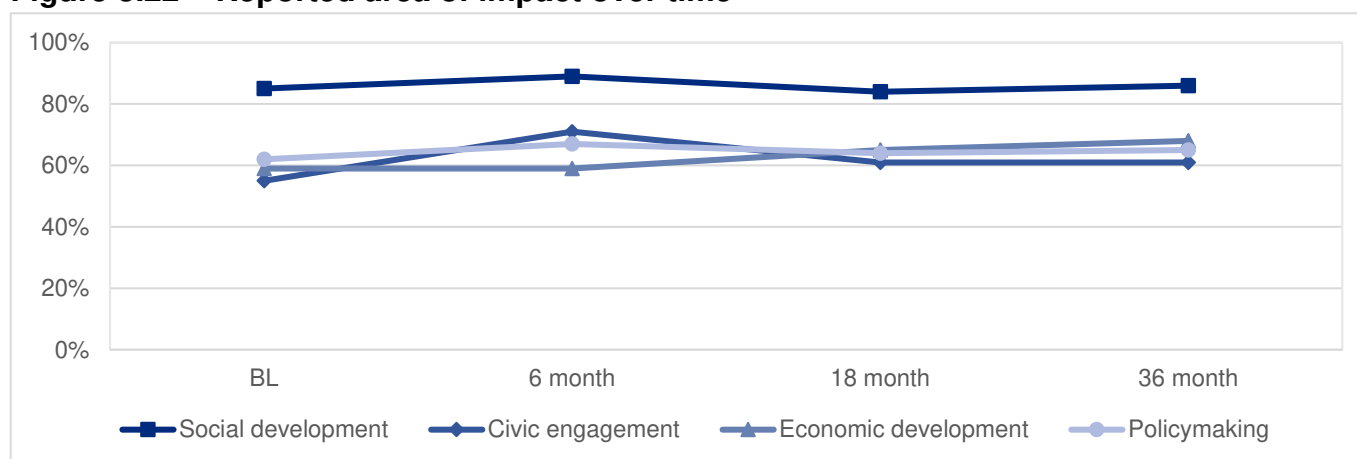
What kind of networks did you develop through the Fellowship?

I've maintained interactions with our primary Host, and he has shared several opportunities with me, including events and potential research collaborations. As a result of these connections, our organisation is actively rethinking how we can engage with higher education institutions, especially in the context of research. I've also maintained engagement with other Fellows, some of whom are based here in Kenya, and are working on similar projects. We share what we are doing, learn from each other and avoid duplication of efforts. In this way we have wider coverage in terms of impact.

3.7 – Post Fellowship: Impact

It has been demonstrated in previous sections that Fellows go on to have significant and sustained institutional impact following the Professional Fellowship, as evidenced through their application of acquired knowledge and skills to make changes to working practices, influence organisational strategies, and provide training and resources for colleagues. However, impact is not limited to the workplace, with Fellows leveraging their enhanced capabilities and networks to create meaningful impact at various levels and relating to a number of distinct development areas.

Figure 3.22 – Reported area of impact over time



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)⁸⁸, CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁸⁹

With regards to area of impact, Fellows report high levels of social development impact at the baseline (85%), and this remains the highest area of impact at all survey intervals, peaking at 89% six months post-Fellowship. As evidence of social impact, Fellows have provided examples of work aimed at improving the well-being of society through provision of improved health, education, legal and social services to vulnerable groups within their communities and beyond.

‘Through the sexual reproductive health and family planning [education] I have offered in the community...young people are better informed and very confident to make decision on their own sexual health and prevention methods for HIV and STIs. Teenage pregnancy and marriage have been reduced by 12% in the community we work with.’

2016 Professional Fellow⁹⁰

The most notable immediate shift, however, is in the rate of civic engagement which rises from 55% at the baseline to 71% six months post-Fellowship. Fellows have provided numerous examples of promoting community and youth involvement in political life and addressing issues of public concern in the post-Fellowship period.

⁸⁸ n = 244

⁸⁹ The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

⁹⁰ Free text response, CSC 36-month survey

‘I have successfully mobilised the Batwa indigenous community to petition the Prime Minister who has since then directed...the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to [begin] developing a comprehensive solution to the issues of poverty and exclusion affecting the indigenous and ethnic minorities in Uganda. I have also been able to mobilise USD 200,000 towards capacity building of indigenous peoples to participate in... policy development.’

2015 Professional Fellow⁹¹

Rates of economic impact, focused on raising standards of living and promoting prosperity, rise more over the longer term, from 59% at the baseline to 68% three years post-Fellowship. This timeline suggests that these kinds of activities may take longer to get off the ground, and to start showing dividends post-Fellowship. Fellows report significant economic impact through projects promoting entrepreneurship and improved agricultural practices, for example.

‘I have been promoting beekeeping as a source of livelihood for active but poor youth and women in northern Uganda. A total of 400 youth and women have been trained and equipped with skills in beekeeping and are now practising beekeeping as a business. 40% of the trained youth are now employed as apiary masters, 30% of the women, mainly widows, are running small business in honey trade and are paying school fees for their children out of the proceeds.’

2016 Professional Fellow⁹²

Finally, there is a slight rise in Fellows’ impact on policymaking, with two-thirds (67%) of Fellows reporting impact in this area six months post-Fellowship, up from 62% at the baseline. In their post-Fellowship surveys, Fellows provide numerous examples of policy impact at both local and national levels, in areas ranging from climate change, to waste management, to gender mainstreaming.

‘I have led on the development of Kilifi county’s forest policy, forest bill, and fuelwood regulations. I was a key member of the task force that organised workshops to sensitize the county assembly on the content of the documents. The outcome was a better policy which is specific to the county’s needs and aspiration. This is the first such a law in the 47 counties in Kenya and will hopefully set a precedent.’

2015 Professional Fellow⁹³

⁹¹ Ibid.

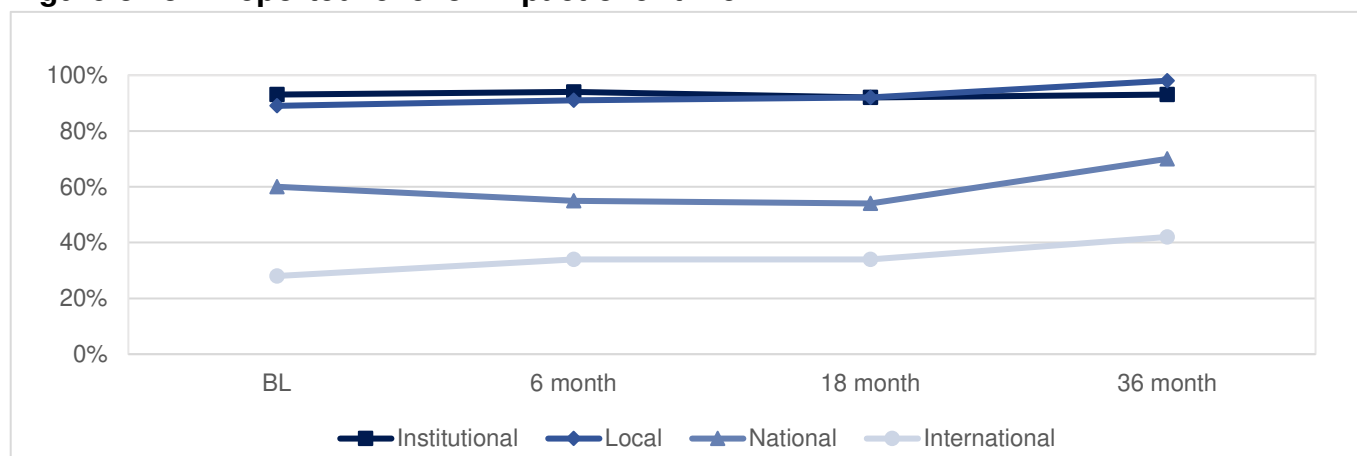
⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Free text response, CSC 18 month survey

There have also been some significant shifts in the reported levels of impact, as illustrated in Figure 3.23. Notably, rates of reported institutional impact are consistently high from the baseline and remain steady in the post-Fellowship period, ranging between 92% and 94%. Given that catalytic institutional impact is one of the central aims of the Fellowship, it is logical that Fellows selected to participate in the programme are already well-situated within their organisations to influence change at this level, and they continue to do so at high rates post-Fellowship.

Some changes implemented to organisational working practices (as discussed in Section 3.5) can lead to fundamental shifts in the long-term practices and strategies of the Fellows' home organisations, as highlighted by several Fellows interviewed for this review. Irene Mwaura (2017 Fellow, University of Edinburgh) explained how the knowledge acquired through the Fellowship helped her to play an instrumental role in the development of her home Employer, WWF-Kenya's, ten-year strategy, ensuring that climate change is mainstreamed through all strands of their work going forward. Mark Kalibbala (2018 Fellow, University of Salford) described how he influenced long term changes to the client assessment style adopted by Spinal Injuries Uganda, introducing the client-centred approach that he first encountered at the University of Salford.

Figure 3.23 – Reported level of impact over time



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)⁹⁴, CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)⁹⁵

Many surveyed Fellows also shared details of long-term institutional transformations that have been implemented based on the knowledge and skills gained through the Fellowship.

‘Before I did the internship with Bees for Development, my employer had only two funders but with the management and communication skills acquired, I am proud to say that our organisation now has more than five programme funders. I was inspired by the honey shop that BfD operates and am happy to report that my organisation has now formed a one stop centre [that] enables members to access markets and collectively purchase equipment.’

2016 Professional Fellow⁹⁶

⁹⁴ n = 244

⁹⁵ The number of respondents varies for each time point: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

⁹⁶ Free text response, CSC 36 month survey

Fellows also reported increased rates of impact at the local, national and international levels post-Fellowship, with local impact rising from 89% at the baseline to an impressive 98% three-years post-Fellowship, and national impact raising from 60% to 70% in the same timeframe. The rate of impact at an international level sees steady growth, from 28% at the baseline, to 34% six months, and 42% three years, post-Fellowship.

Fellows have described their local impact as it relates to a wide variety of social, economic, and civic community work. This has generally involved application of the knowledge and skills gained through the Fellowship directly towards improved service provision for members of the local community. Additionally, it has involved the sharing of best practice and dissemination of learnings to other local professionals working in the field, as well as influencing local government policies.

‘In the community, I formed the cluster of Head Teachers where I shared my Fellowship experiences and agreed to implement some of the leadership styles that could be beneficial to a smooth running of school.’

2015 Professional Fellow⁹⁷

‘My experience has been very useful in reshaping the Waste management sector in Lagos State. Specifically, my practical experience with a Waste to Energy Facility in Lancaster has assisted me tremendously in appraising waste to Energy proposals we receive here in Lagos State and in advising local government appropriately.’

2015 Professional Fellow⁹⁸

At a national level, Fellows’ impact has been evidenced through successful advocacy, policymaking, and influential research. Additionally, some Fellows have been involved with the introduction of new professional practices, and the dissemination of training and skills at a national level.

‘I was a part of research team which engaged in National Level Research Study on Human trafficking in India. This is first kind of national level research on the topic of human trafficking in India. We hope that this report will be helpful for influencing policy at district, state and national level to curb practices of human trafficking.’

2015 Professional Fellow⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Free text response, CSC 18 month survey

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Free text response, CSC 36 month survey

‘There are now plans to roll out the training module that I developed [on psychological health and psychological support provision] throughout the country. We’ll be providing the same training [to professionals in the field], who are distributed all over the country. So, it’s building more professionals and paraprofessional, for national impact.’

Dr Kamruzzaman Mozumder, 2017 Fellow, East London NHS Foundation Trust¹⁰⁰

It is worth noting that for significant impact to occur at a national level, this may involve multiple Fellows working together rather than individually. This has been the aim of some of the more long-running partnerships between UK Host institutions and networks of Fellows in particular countries or region.

‘We have hosted more than 10 Fellows over a period of 10 years to build sustainable change in healthcare services in Tanzania, most notably introduction of laparoscopic surgery as a new service for Tanzania. Three [Fellows] were trained and went on to establish a laparoscopic surgery service for northern Tanzania and have for 10 years run a national training course for other surgeons across Tanzania.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

At the highest level, international impact, which is reported by two-fifths (42%) of Fellows three years post-Fellowship, has typically involved representing their countries or industries at international bodies, convening international symposiums, or producing research of international significance.

‘My research, which has been presented at international forums in UK, Belgium, Pakistan, and India involves testing impact of bio-fortified wheat flour on household communities which are deficient in zinc and iron. The findings will contribute to the evidence base for the potential impact of biofortification to alleviate zinc deficiency among the world’s poorest communities.’

2017 Professional Fellow¹⁰¹

Overall, alumni of the CSC Professional Fellowship programme have reported and provided evidence of significant impact across a variety of development areas, and at all levels ranging from institutional to international. Through their enhanced knowledge, skills, and networks, they are in a position to influence meaningful developmental impact in their workplaces, communities, and countries in the post-Fellowship period.

¹⁰⁰ Professional Fellow interview, 2021

¹⁰¹ Free text response, CSC 36 month survey

Professional Fellow Profile: Mark Giggs Kalibbala

‘I’m now seeing my organisation put the client centred-approach into practice...giving people with disabilities the opportunity to choose what works best for them.’

Mark Giggs Kalibbala is a community worker and disability activist who, since returning from his Professional Fellowship at the University of Salford in 2019, has also been a part time lecturer in disability studies at Kyambogo University. He is passionate about uplifting marginalised people with disabilities and introducing client-centred approaches to improving their lives and livelihoods.



What were some of the key takeaways from your time in the UK?

As a person with a disability, who uses a wheelchair, it was a very nice experience for me coming to the UK and experiencing how persons with disabilities are being catered for and how accommodative the system is in the UK. I was also introduced to the client-centred approach whereby the person with a disability has an opportunity to decide themselves what kind of support and equipment they need, instead of a one-size fits all approach. At the prosthetics and orthotics lab in Salford University, we met professional clients and practiced our assessment with them and received feedback and advice from the clients themselves about what exactly they want and need.

How has the Fellowship impacted your career trajectory?

I am currently a part time lecturer in Kyambogo University under the department of Community and Disability studies, an opportunity that was made possible immediately after coming back from the Fellowship in 2019. The Fellowship enhanced my research and academic writing skills, and this has provided me an opportunity to participate in two successful research projects at the university as a research assistant. I am currently conducting research examining the impact of Covid-19 on the livelihood of persons with disabilities in Uganda. The Fellowship also provided me a platform for enhancing my digital skills through conference presentations and training sessions and that has greatly helped me to carry out online lectures and assessments during this Covid-19 pandemic period.



How have you applied Fellowship learnings to change practices in your places of work?

I'm a voluntary rehabilitation support officer in Spinal Injuries Association Uganda and one of the roles which I do for this association is to identify persons with spinal cord injury within the communities. I provide psychosocial support, counselling, and guidance as well as lobbying on behalf of clients who cannot afford a wheelchair or mobility devices. Since the Fellowship and learning about the client-centred approach, I have improved my interpersonal relations with my clients. The Fellowship gave me a chance to acquire practical experience on how to develop and maintain a good service provider- client relationships, starting from the assessment phase up to the termination. I have also shared this information with my colleagues so that we can focus on what the client is really interested in. I'm now seeing my organisation putting that into practice.

What kind of professional networks and collaborations have endured post-Fellowship?

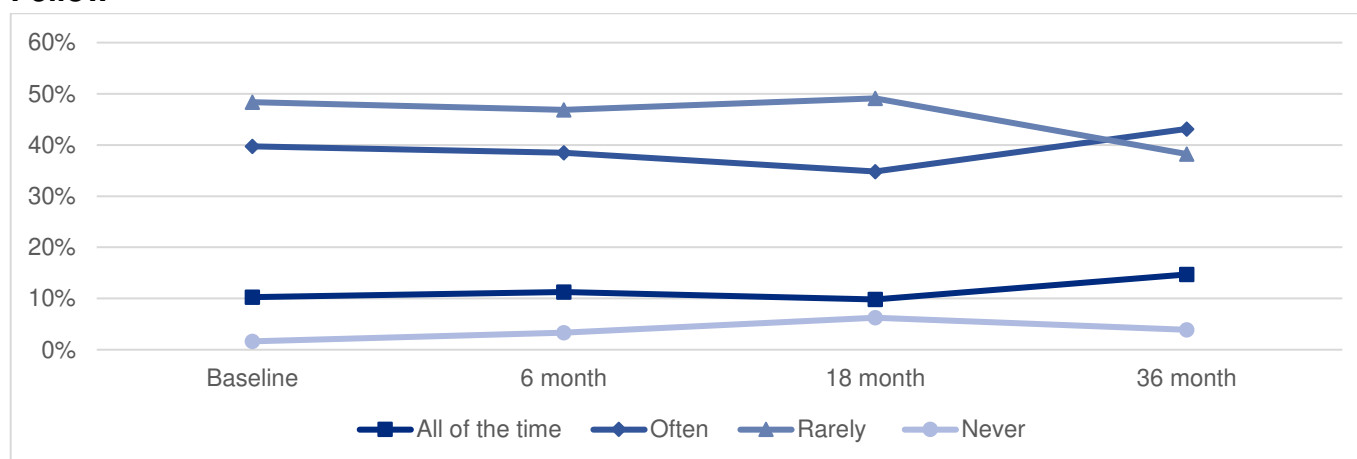
While in the UK, myself and two other Fellows from Uganda, who were Orthopaedic Technologists, were able to establish a collaboration between our home organisations and a UK charity that collects used prosthetic legs, dismantles them into spare pieces then ships them to partner organisations in Africa. This collaboration has greatly benefited a good number of amputees as many now can access subsidised repair services of their worn out or broken prosthetic legs with the availability of spare parts from the UK. On a personal level, I am still in contact with our Host from the University of Salford and she provides valuable feedback and guidance on my research. If I have a research-related question, she always answers promptly.

3.8 – Challenges and Constraints

Despite the significant levels of impact detailed above, Fellows have also reported challenges that may have prevented some from realising the full extent of their developmental ambitions in the post-Fellowship period.

Perhaps most prevalent is the issue of an absence of resources, with half (50%) of Fellows reporting that their home organisation ‘rarely’ (48%) or ‘never’ (2%) had the resources to implement their ideas at the baseline. With the vast majority of Fellows returning to the same Employer post-Fellowship, it is unsurprising that this issue remained evident at the six- and eighteen-month survey intervals with more than half of Fellows continuing to report that the necessary resources were ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ available. While this dips slightly three years post-Fellowship, 42% of Fellows still reported a lack of available resources to support their ideas.

Figure 3.24 – Home organisation has the resources to implement new ideas suggested by Fellow



Sources: CSC Baseline Surveys (2016-2019)¹⁰², CSC Longitudinal Surveys (2015-2019)¹⁰³

Fellows have expressed frustration at being held back from achieving their goals due to the lack of available funding or resources.

‘At community level, I have not been able to implement my skills acquired from the fellowship because it requires additional resources of transport, fuel, lunch allowance for me to reach out to the community. The institution I work for has been unable to mobilize these resources for mental health community services, yet it is one of the services that would reduce the morbidity due to mental illnesses.’

2018 Professional Fellow¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² n = 244

¹⁰³ The number of respondents varies for each time point. They are: 6 month = 243; 18 month = 122; 36 month = 105.

¹⁰⁴ Free text response, CSC 18 month survey

The resources issue was also raised by Hosts in the focus group, with several flagging that that they were aware of sometimes exposing Fellows to resources or technology that would likely not be available to them beyond the Fellowship or initiating projects that they may struggle to complete due to a lack of available resources at their home organisations.

‘On returning to Tanzania, the main limitation was a lack of resources to put into practice some of the ideas that were developed in the UK... At the time, the Fellow worked for a district agricultural extension office with a very low operational budget. This situation is quite common in local government agencies.’

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Greenwich

‘This is a twin edged sword as the majority of clinical settings we take the Fellows to are very well serviced in terms of infrastructure and equipment, and the Fellows are seeing what the developed world can provide, for example, with regards to neo-natal care in saving very low weight, very premature babies. The Fellows then return to a working environment where basic equipment such as incubators are not provided in their hospital setting. The Fellows then have to think about how to combine the two settings. It can be very difficult.’

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Liverpool

Some Fellows interviewed for this review flagged that the relatively short timeframe of the Fellowship was a challenge and that they would have benefitted from longer tenures, as well as from opportunities for follow up visits to the UK to solidify and build upon their learnings.

‘I think we needed a bit more time. There was so much to explore, so much to learn, so much to share, but the time was quite limited. Sometimes we were just rushing from one point to another so that we could meet all our appointments.’

Irene Mwaura, 2017 Fellow, University of Edinburgh¹⁰⁵

It should be noted that the quantitative evidence does not suggest a strong link between tenure length and positive outcomes, with 80% of Fellows in the UK for two months or less reporting to have ‘substantially’ or ‘completely’ achieved their goals, compared to 85% of those in the UK for three months or more. Hence, while a longer tenure length was flagged as desirable by some, this does not seem to have been a major issue for most Fellows.

Several Hosts did, however, support the point that Fellows could considerably benefit from follow up visits to the UK to consolidate learnings and undertake more advanced training.

¹⁰⁵ Professional Fellow interview, 2021

‘Onward support to develop systems is difficult via online discussion without follow-up trips. The limit of five years for a return fellow is far too long, follow-up visits after two-three years would help to have a longer standing impact.’

Professional Fellowship Host, British Geological Survey

‘It would be helpful to have an opportunity for Fellows to return within two to three years to augment and fast-track speciality training. We have found that when new skills are learnt it is good for the mentors to visit in fairly quick succession to embed practice and build confidence.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Fellows also flagged the strain of maintaining professional or supervisory relationships with their Host organisation and other UK contacts without formal arrangements in place to support this.

‘Our three supervisors [from the UK Host organisation] are there voluntarily but I’m not sure how long it will continue as they are having a tough time managing their time. If we can find some resources to fund them, fund their visits, or if we can [formally] accolade them, that will be really useful.’

Dr Kamruzzaman Mozumder, 2017 Fellow, East London NHS Foundation Trust¹⁰⁶

Finally, many Hosts mentioned logistical and administrative challenges faced by Fellows in finalising their visa and travel arrangements, often at very short notice; however, they noted these could largely be mitigated by careful advance planning.

‘One of the most significant challenges to fellows was the travel arrangements and gaining visa approval. Even when applications were made at the same time our fellows were split up in terms of their travel arrangements based on their visas being approved for some this was very daunting being their first international travel and they had to do it alone.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Capacity Development International

In order to maximise the outcomes and impact of the Fellowship, it is important to recognise and respond to these challenges faced by Fellows, particularly through ensuring that the training provided through the Fellowship is suitable and applicable in resource-constrained environments, and that all necessary provisions are put in place to alleviate logistical and administrative challenges.

¹⁰⁶ Professional Fellow interview, 2021

3.9 – Summary

Fellows come from a wide range of development-focused backgrounds but share common objectives for participation in the programme, geared towards both their own professional development and building capacity at their home organisations. Most Fellows have a specific set of technical knowledge and skills that they aim to acquire through the Fellowship as well as a clear idea of how they planned to apply these to their work going forward.

During their time in the UK, Fellows take part in a wide variety of activities and training, designed carefully to align with their objectives. They overwhelmingly report achieving the goals set for their Fellowship, as well as very high levels of knowledge and skills acquisition. As a result, Fellows are well-equipped to assume positions of greater influence, and affect meaningful change, upon returning to their places of employment post-Fellowship.

Upon return to their home organisations, Fellows see an immediate boost to their professional prospects, with many receiving promotions or salary increases, as well as reporting broader areas of responsibility and a greater influence in the workplace. They apply the learnings from the Fellowship in their workplaces, and beyond, in a variety of ways, both immediately and over the longer term. The knowledge and skills acquired through the Fellowship influence not only their own work, but also the overall direction of their organisations, leading to the implementation of new strategies, the upskilling of colleagues, and the initiation of innovative new projects.

In addition to their enhanced skills sets, Fellows return with newly established, or strengthened, international professional networks, leading to increased contact, influence, and collaboration. As well as increased interaction with their UK Host organisations in the post-Fellowship period, Fellows report ongoing networking and collaboration with other UK professional contacts and with other Professional Fellows.

Fellows have leveraged their enhanced capabilities and networks to create meaningful impact at various levels and relating to a number of distinct development areas. Impact has been strongest at the institutional level but Fellows have also reported increased impact at the local, national, and international levels post-Fellowship, providing a plethora of examples of meaningful social and civic development, policymaking and economic impact.

The most notable challenge reported by Fellows is an absence of the resources needed to implement their Fellowship learnings upon returning to their home organisations. This has been recognised by UK Hosts and must be taken into consideration when designing the training programmes if Fellows are to be empowered to realise the full extent of their developmental ambitions in the post-Fellowship period.

Section 4 – The Hosts’ Perspective

Since 2001, 1,390 Professional Fellows have been hosted by 271 Host organisations across the UK, including universities, research institutions, NHS Trusts, local government bodies and charity organisations. Thirty-five Host organisations have hosted ten or more Fellows over the lifetime of the programme and collectively, these organisations have hosted 60% of all Professional Fellows (n = 827).

Figure 4.1 – Top 10 Professional Fellowship Host organisations 2001-2020

Host Organisation	Years participating	Number of Fellows
Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation	14	60
Environment Agency	13	56
East London NHS Foundation Trust	12	41
Cardiff University	11	41
African Medical and Research Foundation	10	35
University of Roehampton	9	34
Conciliation Resources	8	33
The Law Society	8	31
Widows and Orphans International	8	31
University of Edinburgh	7	28

Source: CSC Awards Data

Since 2015, which is the period of focus for this review, 135 Host organisations have hosted a total of 387 Fellows. Ten Host organisations have hosted fifteen or more Fellows during this time (2015-2020) and collectively these organisations have hosted 45% of all Professional Fellows (n = 176) during this period.

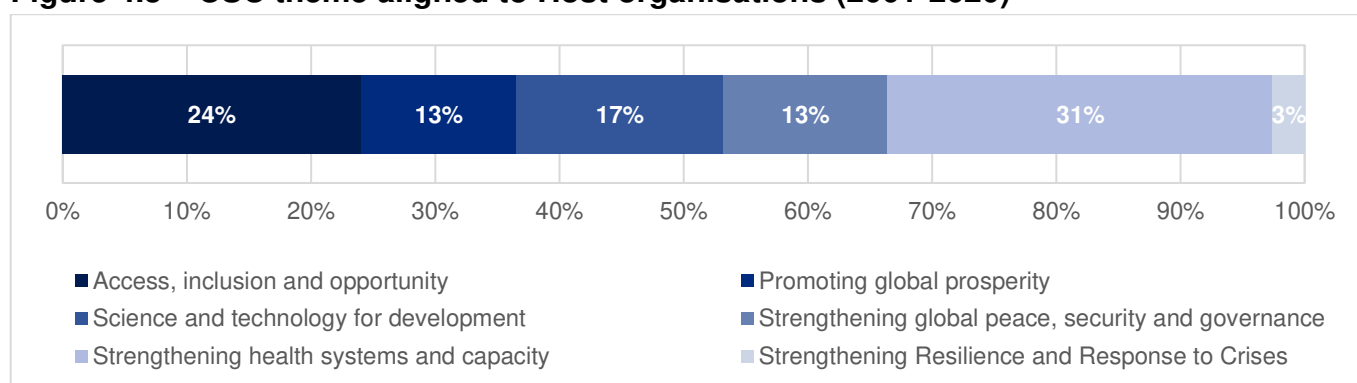
Figure 4.2 – Top 10 Professional Fellowship Host organisations 2015-2020

Host Organisation	Number of Fellows 2015-2020
Liverpool John Moores University	22
Conciliation Resources	22
University of East London	19
University of Liverpool	18
Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation	18
University of Edinburgh	17
Cardiff University	15
Justice Defenders (formerly African Prisons Project)	15
Knowledge for Change	15
University of Salford	15

Source: CSC Awards Data

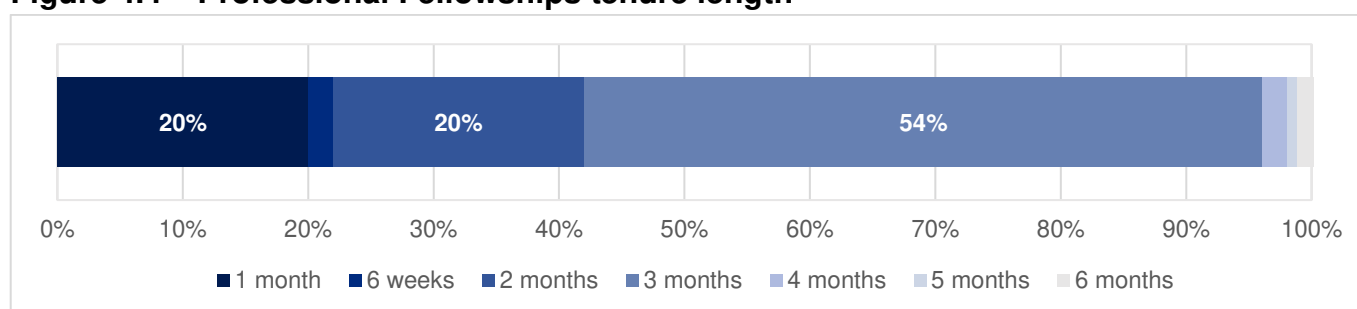
Since the 2018 review of the Professional Fellowship programme, Hosts have applied to participate under a particular CSC development theme, whereas prior to this they applied under broader development-focused priority areas. For the purposes of this review, all Hosts were mapped to a primary CSC development theme, with ‘Strengthening health systems and capacity’ the most commonly aligned theme, mapped to roughly one-third (31%) of Hosts. This is unsurprising considering this is also the most common theme mapped to Fellows, and that public health is the most common area of pre-Fellowship employment (see Section 3.1). The second most commonly aligned theme was ‘Access, inclusion and opportunity’ mapped to one-quarter (24%) of Host organisations, and ‘Science and technology for development’ mapped to just under one-fifth (17%). It should be noted that these themes are not mutually exclusive, and many organisations have missions and activities that cut across multiple CSC themes.

Figure 4.3 – CSC theme aligned to Host organisations (2001-2020)



Host organisations have hosted Professional Fellows for durations ranging between one and six months, with the majority of Fellowships (54%) lasting three months. Considering Fellow and Host feedback gathered in a previous review of the programme indicating that shorter award tenures were impacting Fellows’ ability to achieve their overall objectives¹⁰⁷, the terms and conditions of the Professional Fellowship were revised from 2018 onwards, requiring award length to be a minimum of six weeks and maximum of three months.

Figure 4.4 – Professional Fellowships tenure length



Source: CSC Awards Data¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ *Review of the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme 2008-2011, 2014, p.25.*

¹⁰⁸ n = 1,390

4.1 - Motivations and Expectations

Hosts participating in an online focus group were asked to share their motivations and expectations for participating in the CSC Professional Fellowship programme. For all participants, a key motivating factor was contributing to the upskilling of Fellows in order to contribute to their individual professional development as well as building capacity in their home organisations. For many Hosts, this was encouraged by the fact that Fellows were working directly with their international partner organisations, whereas others were motivated by contributing to capacity building in their professional sectors more broadly in areas ranging from public health to telecommunications to sustainable agriculture.

‘Our primary motivation has always revolved around building stronger and more meaningful relationships with the partners we work with in developing countries. Hosting a Fellow allows for a dedicated period of training and working together which engenders new ideas and serves as a catalyst for new and better work in the future.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Bees for Development

‘The primary motivations for participating in the Commonwealth Fellowship programme was to enable partners to have access to learning that they may not be able to get exposure to in Uganda. Particularly as mental health is such a stigmatised issue in Uganda.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Sheffield Health and Social care NHS Foundation Trust

For many Hosts, supporting this kind of capacity building is a fundamental mission of their organisation’s work and the Fellowship is just one component of their partnerships work in one or more Commonwealth countries.

‘Our Fellowships aim at building capacity and supporting lawyers, law societies, and bar associations to increase their skills and opportunities.’

- Professional Fellowship Host, The Law Society



2017 Professional Fellows at the Law Society

For some, their motivations and expectations became more ambitious and strategic over time, with one-third of participating Hosts reporting a shift towards building capacity in a longer term and more sustainable way, and an emphasis on creating knowledge hubs and networks of highly skilled practitioners ‘in a sustainable way that supports rather than undermines local systems and economies’.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Professional Fellowship Host, Knowledge for Change

‘In 2004 we changed approach in order to support more long-term sustainable changes. This entailed the invitation of a number of Fellows over a period of 10 years to build capacity within the new service of laparoscopic surgery.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

‘Over time, we extended this opportunity to other criminal justice actors as well. By hosting judges, magistrates, and probation officers alongside prison leaders, we aimed to create coalitions of like-minded change-makers who could drive coordinated reforms from different angles.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Justice Defenders

Hosts have also been motivated by the opportunity for reciprocal learning and cultural exchange. One-quarter of participating Hosts mentioned that the Fellowship provided a unique opportunity for their UK staff to meet and work directly with some of their partners and professional peers from other Commonwealth countries.

‘A motivation was to foster a learning and cultural exchange between our African staff and the UK team many of whom never meet in person despite working for years together. The challenges of bringing staff to the UK are often insurmountable without the CSC support.’

Professional Fellowship Host, TackleAfrica

In terms of expectations for their organisation, the majority of Hosts mentioned the importance of strengthening and expanding their international networks. As well as consolidating relationships with existing partners, some Hosts see the Fellowship as means to build new relationships with individuals and organisations in the regions where they are working.

‘We expect to foster new relations with young professionals in the countries where we work who are then more aware and understanding of our work. We also indirectly expect to expand our networks and to explore new partnership opportunities.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Conciliation Resources

Off the back of these international networks, Hosts expressed the expectation that the Fellowship will lead to enhanced collaboration with the Fellows and their home organisations going forward.

‘For staff members, the scheme provides an opportunity to develop links with a practitioner from overseas which may potentially lead to collaboration after the fellowship is completed.’

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Greenwich

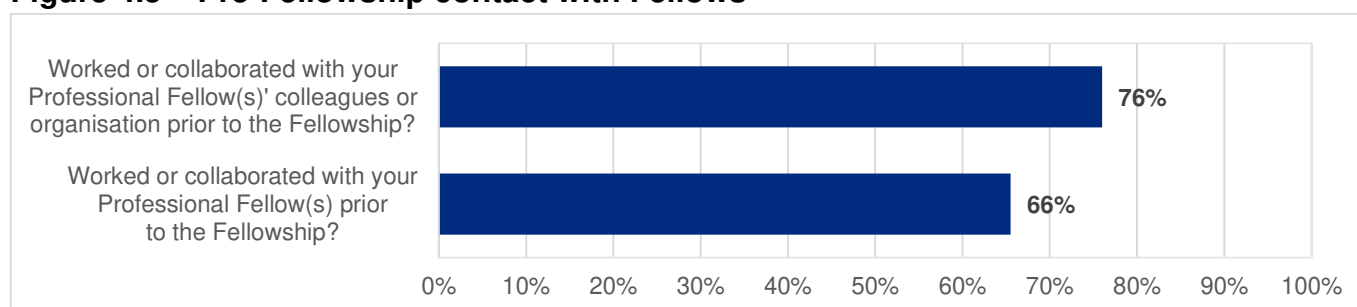
Overall, UK Host organisations have been motivated to participate in the CSC Professional Fellowship for similar reasons as the Fellows themselves; namely to contribute towards capacity building in the Fellows’ home organisations and in their professional sectors more broadly, to strengthen and expand international networks, and to foster reciprocal learning. To ensure these expectations are met, it is important for Hosts to recruit Fellows who are best placed to facilitate collaboration and effect meaningful change, as explored in the following section

4.2 – Pre-Fellowship: Networks and Nominations

Host organisations are permitted to accept Professional Fellowship applications from individuals within their existing professional networks, or from applicants who may learn of the opportunity through wider advertisement.

It is clear from the motivations outlined in the previous section that Hosts place a high level of importance on strengthening existing partnerships. It is therefore unsurprising that pre-existing networks are particularly important to the recruitment and nomination process, with two-thirds of surveyed Hosts (66%) having worked or collaborated with their Professional Fellow prior to the Fellowship period and three-quarters (76%) having previously worked with their Fellow’s home organisation or colleagues.

Figure 4.5 – Pre-Fellowship contact with Fellows



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019¹¹⁰

Surveyed Hosts highlighted the importance of long-term professional relationships with particular organisations, or networks of organisations, in Fellows’ home countries, with whom they collaborate to select Fellows in a way that fits strategically with the needs of the home organisation and contributes towards long-term capacity building. Others described having previously collaborated with their Fellows on specific projects or having met through workshops or events.

¹¹⁰ n = 58

‘We regularly select Fellows from SAfRI / Mbale Hospital. We work with them in advance to plan the Fellows’ selection so that it fits strategically with the needs of the hospital and the research unit.’

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Liverpool¹¹¹

In the focus group, Hosts further detailed the benefits of recruiting from within their existing networks. The majority reported working closely with their partner organisations in Commonwealth countries, highlighting that those partners were often best placed to identify suitable applicants.

‘The Fellows are senior ranking staff within our partner prison services and are selected in close consultation with the leadership of the prison department. Their selection is informed by their offices and positions, and the invaluable contribution they make in shaping the strategic goals of the Prisons Services and Justice Defenders.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Justice Defenders

‘We leave the Fellows’ recruitment to our partners overseas. They are in the best position to identify suitable candidates with commitment and enthusiasm. It is important to be led by partners particularly when it comes to health partnerships.’

Professional Fellowship Host, East London NHS Foundation Trust

Less than one fifth (16%) of surveyed Hosts reported having no prior relationship with the Fellows nor with their home organisations prior to the Fellowship. Some Hosts in the focus group flagged potential drawbacks of recruiting through open-call advertisement, or from organisations that they had not worked with previously.

‘We would be unsure about recruiting a Fellow from an organisation we have no links with and does not fall within our medium-term planning. Are we likely to extend our partnership working to that organisation? If not, we would not look to have a Fellow from there.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Knowledge for Change

However, three Hosts in the focus group did flag that they had often or occasionally recruited their Fellows through open advertisement. Additionally, half of Fellows interviewed for this review mentioned that they heard about the Fellowship either through internet research, or through word of mouth, and had no prior individual or institutional connection to the UK Host organisation.

¹¹¹ Professional Fellowships Host survey, 2016

In terms of desirable individual characteristics, Hosts cited the need to recruit Fellows who are competent, capable and have demonstrable, long-term commitment to their respective fields of development.

‘We are looking for those who are committed to working in the field of social development, sexual and reproductive health rights, and youth.’

Professional Fellowship Host, TackleAfrica

Several Hosts mention the importance of recruiting Fellows who are already in a position to influence change within their organisations. It is therefore unsurprising that Fellows have reported very high levels of institutional impact prior to beginning the Fellowship (see Section 3.7).

‘The person [selected] is usually highly placed in leading a major piece of change at the hospital and has been working with the UK team to develop and implement the changes.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Finally, many Hosts emphasised the need to promote diversity and inclusion, recruiting Fellows who may not otherwise have the opportunity to undertake professional training. For some Hosts, this involved expanding recruitment to more ‘neglected cadres’; for example, in the field of health, offering opportunities to technicians and nurses rather than just doctors.

‘When nominating a Professional Fellow we look for a diversity of experiences and profiles. We are mindful of geographical representation and a gender balance.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Conciliation Resources

‘We are particularly interested in individuals at a level with little opportunity for international engagement, but critical to development of technical capacity.’

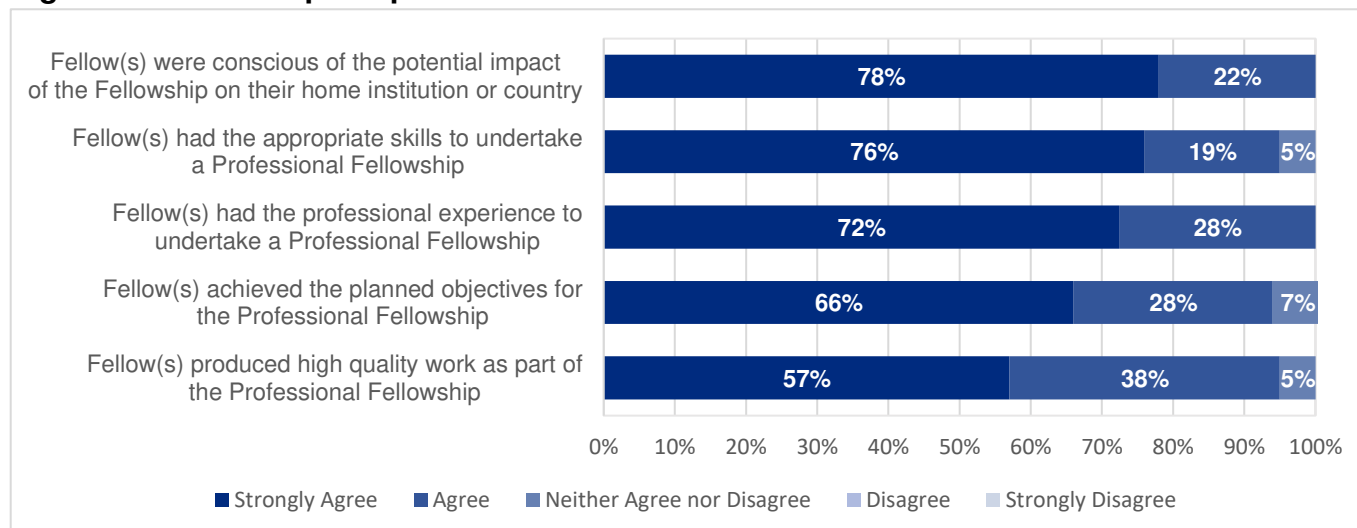
Professional Fellowship Host, British Geological Survey

Overall, Hosts aim to recruit Professional Fellows who, through their abilities, commitment, and networks, will be best placed to effect meaningful impact post-Fellowship. To identify suitable candidates, the majority of Hosts recruit from their existing networks, with many relying on the guidance of local partner organisations; however, Fellows have also successfully been recruited through open-call advertisement.

4.3 – On-Fellowship: Activities and Achievements

Hosts had extremely positive feedback about their Fellows’ outputs and achievements during their time in the UK, highlighting their suitability for the programme, high quality work, and successful engagement in a wide variety of on-Fellowship activities.

Figure 4.6 – Hosts’ perceptions of Fellows



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019¹¹²

Given the rigorous criteria for recruiting candidates, as outlined in the previous section, it is unsurprising that Host organisations overwhelmingly felt their Fellows suitably qualified for the programme, with all surveyed Hosts (100%) either ‘strongly agreeing’ (72%) or ‘agreeing’ (28%) that their Fellow had the necessary professional experience, and 95% ‘strongly agreeing’ (76%) or ‘agreeing’ (19%) that they had the appropriate skills to undertake the Fellowship.

These positive perceptions were reiterated by Hosts in the focus group, who described Fellows during their time in the UK as ‘highly committed’, ‘enthusiastic’ and ‘proactive’, and generally willing to immerse themselves in the Fellowship experience. All Hosts stated that their expectations for Fellows were either completely or largely met.

‘We expect Fellows to get a better understanding of our work, to get technical knowledge on the topic at hand, and to start meeting with individuals from different countries which they wouldn’t meet easily otherwise. We provide a lot of space for technical training, dialogue and social visits. Generally, our expectations are fully met.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Conciliation Resources

The overall competence of the Fellows is further evidenced in the fact that 95% of surveyed Hosts either ‘strongly agreed’ (57%) or ‘agreed’ (38%) that their Fellows produced high quality work as part of the Fellowship.

¹¹² n=58

‘The Fellow we hosted added capacity to produce a policy briefing through their skill set, they conducted the literature review and helped to draft the report.’

Professional Fellowship Host, UCL Energy Institute

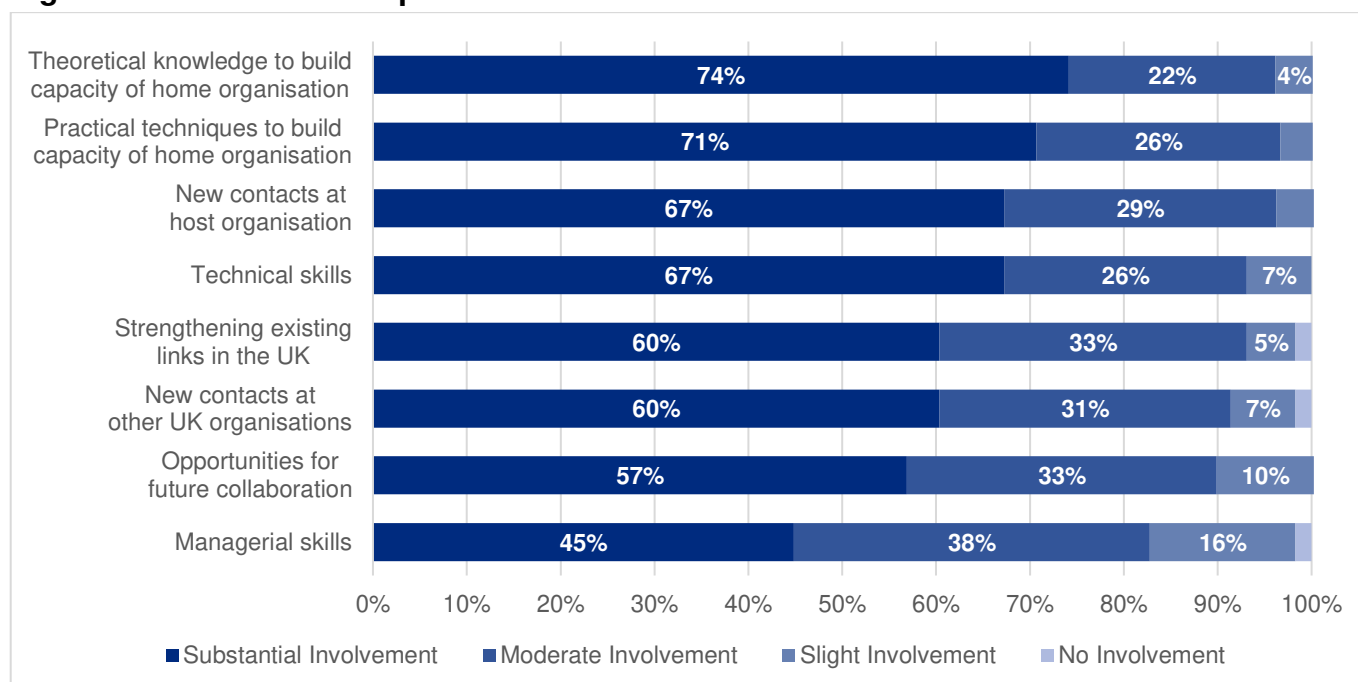
Hosts reported Fellows taking part in a wide variety of activities during their Fellowship tenures. These activities were directly related to the key objectives listed by Fellows for their time in UK, including ‘gaining knowledge to help build capacity of home organisations’, ‘learning new technical skills’, and ‘establishing opportunities for future collaborations’.

Host organisations report Fellows making significant gains in all these priority areas, as well as engaging in additional on-Fellowship activities, as detailed in Figure 4.7. An impressive 97% of Hosts reported their Fellows having ‘moderate’ or ‘substantial’ involvement in gaining theoretical knowledge to build the capacity of their home organisations, while 96% report their Fellows as gaining new practical techniques to contribute to capacity building. More than nine-tenths (93%) reported that their Fellows had ‘moderate’ or ‘substantial’ involvement in activities that developed their technical skills.¹¹³



2020 Professional Fellows at Knowledge for Change lead a training session

Figure 4.7 – On-Fellowship activities



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Hosts’ perceptions of Fellows knowledge and skills acquisition is outlined in greater depth in Section 3.3.

¹¹⁴ n = 58

In terms of networking and strengthening ties during the Fellowship, 93% of Hosts reported that their Fellows had ‘substantially’ or ‘moderately’ strengthened their existing ties to the UK, with 96% establishing new contacts at the Host organisation, 91% establishing contacts at other UK organisations, and 90% reporting that their Fellows had ‘moderate’ or ‘substantial’ involvement establishing opportunities for future collaborations with UK colleagues.

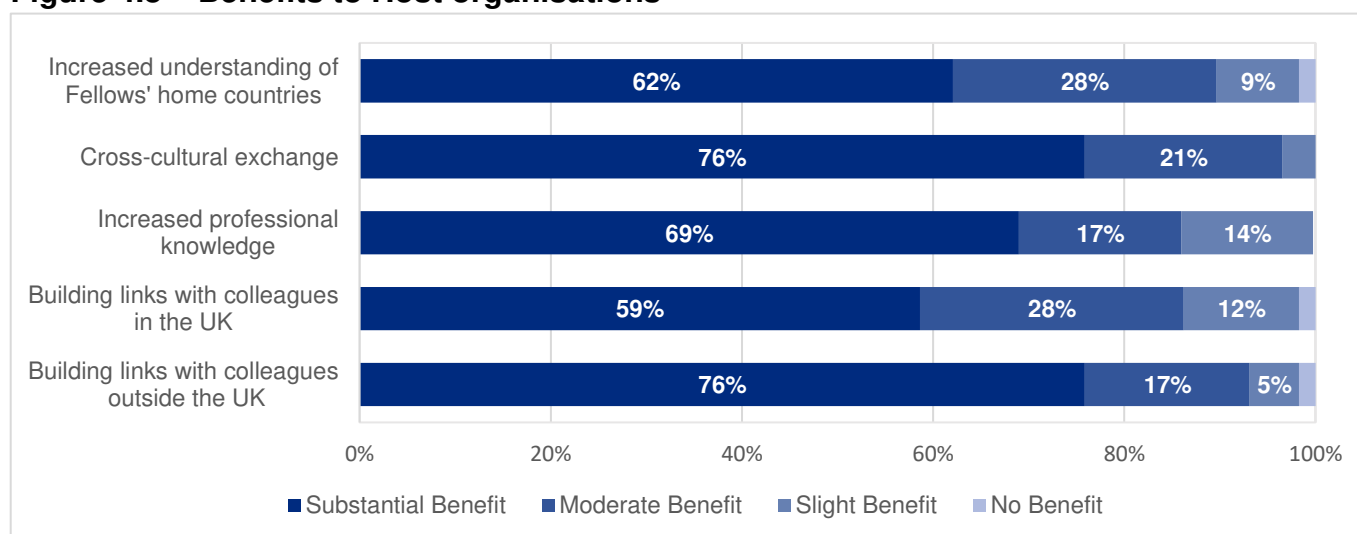
Given the levels of activity and skills development reported above, as well as the general positive feedback about their capability and commitment, it is unsurprising Host organisations report high levels of overall achievement for their Fellows, with 94% ‘strongly agreeing’ (66%) or ‘agreeing’ (28%) that their Fellows met the objectives of their Fellowship.

4.4 – Benefits for Hosts

In addition to the demonstrable opportunities for professional development and skills acquisition offered to Fellows, the programme also offers significant benefits for the UK Host organisations themselves.

The most notable immediate benefit reported by surveyed Hosts was cross-cultural exchange, almost universally (97%) identified by Hosts as a ‘substantial’ (76%) or ‘moderate’ (21%) benefit of participating in the Fellowship. Closely linked to this, 90% of Hosts reported substantially (62%) or moderately (28%) benefitting from an increased understanding of Fellows’ home countries.

Figure 4.8 – Benefits to Host organisations



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019¹¹⁵

These benefits were echoed by Hosts participating in the focus group with the majority highlighting that their organisation was culturally enriched by the visiting Fellows. Interaction with Fellows was reported to encourage greater cultural sensitivity amongst UK staff as well as offering fresh perspectives on their organisations’ existing work and activities.

¹¹⁵ n = 58

‘The Fellowship has promoted greater awareness for Trust staff of other perceptions of mental health in different cultures as well as alternative responses.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Sheffield Health and Social care NHS Foundation Trust

‘We have embraced the Fellowships as an opportunity for our staff to learn from healthcare professionals from another country and become more culturally competent.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Given that one of their primary motivations for participating in the Professional Fellowship programme was to strengthen and expand their professional networks, it is encouraging that 93% of surveyed Hosts reported that they had ‘substantially’ (76%) or ‘moderately’ (17%) benefitted from building links with colleagues outside the UK. Hosts participating in the focus group described how the Fellowship allowed them to both solidify existing links and partnerships, as well as develop new professional relationships.



Kenyan prison staff graduate from a training programme organised by Justice Defenders and Professional Fellow, Elizabeth Sivi

‘The stronger human and professional relationships which are developed with the Fellows help cement our partnerships with the prison services and other justice institutions. This allows to strengthen the organisation's presence in the country and fostered a more conducive environment to implement new projects and run its current programmes.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Justice Defenders

‘As a result of the Fellowship, we have built new relationships and partnerships in both India and Pakistan. For colleagues who don't travel to the region, this gave them an opportunity to meet new partners and to interact with them and learn from their experiences.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Conciliation Resources

A large majority of surveyed Hosts additionally benefitted directly from the expertise of their Fellows, with 86% identifying a ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ benefit of increased professional knowledge within their organisation as a result of hosting their Professional Fellows. In the focus group, a number of Hosts mentioned that they benefitted from new ideas and approaches introduced by the visiting Fellows, or from specific outputs produced during the Fellowship.

‘Not only do Fellows learn from the NHS, the NHS benefits and learns from Fellows also in how to develop and run health services with limited resources.’

Professional Fellowship Host, East London NHS Foundation Trust

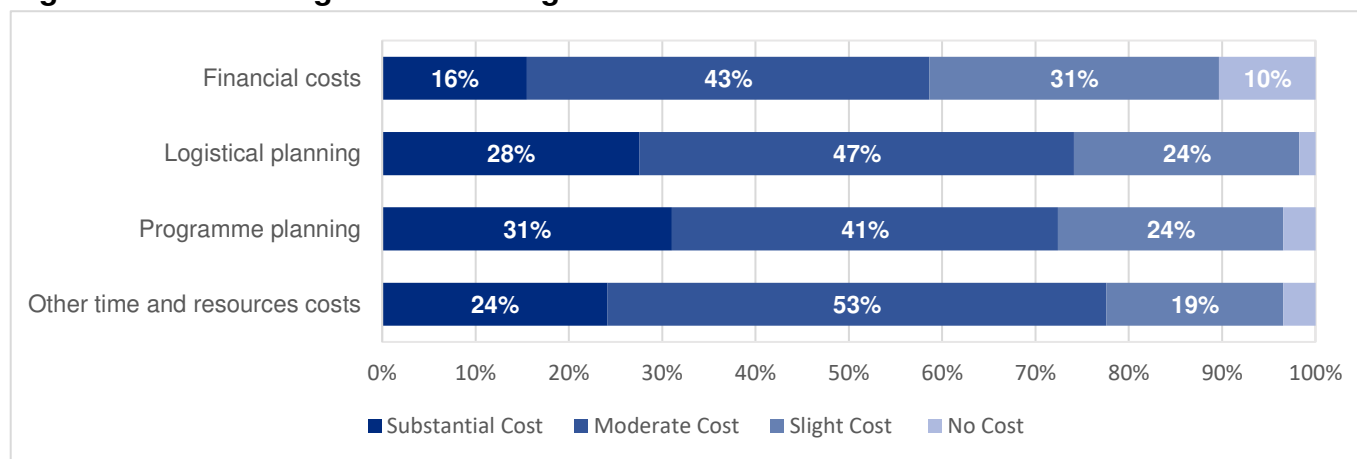
Hosts have identified a number of direct benefits of participating in the Professional Fellowships programme for themselves and their colleagues, including expanded professional networks, opportunities for reciprocal learning and enhanced cultural awareness. These benefits tie in closely with Hosts’ motivations and expectations for participating in the Fellowship and indicate that these expectations have largely been met through their experiences with the programme.

4.5 – Challenges for Hosts

In addition to the numerous benefits of participating in the programme outlined in the previous section, Host organisations have also identified some costs and challenges associated with hosting Professional Fellows.

Roughly three quarters of surveyed Hosts cited ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ costs relating to logistical planning (75%), programme planning (72%), and other time and resource costs (77%), as displayed in Figure 4.9, indicating that the Fellowship can place a considerable strain on the staff of Host organisations in the build-up to and duration of the Fellowship.

Figure 4.9 – Challenges for Host organisations



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019¹¹⁶

In the focus group, administrative and logistical burdens of planning for the Fellowship were highlighted as challenges for the majority of Hosts, particularly in the context of rigid timelines. Additionally, several Hosts flagged that hosting Fellows was very resource intensive and significantly stretched their staff capacity.

‘The main challenge for us as a Host organisation is that the administrative requirements for the scheme are quite onerous and take up a lot of staff time.’

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Greenwich

‘The Fellowship tend to be very time consuming for the Host organisation staff. We have tried our best to prepare for it in advance, but it has involved a lot of work.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Conciliation Resources

Several Hosts suggested that these challenges could be alleviated through the provision of funding for dedicated administrative and logistical support during the Fellowship period.

‘If there could be funds available for Host organisations to hire some administrative support for the delivery of the project, it would help a great deal.’

Professional Fellowship Host, The Law Society

Despite the grants provided by the CSC, more than half of Hosts (59%) also reported ‘substantial’ (16%) or ‘moderate’ (43%) financial costs associated with the Fellowships. Some highlighted the issue of ‘economies of scale’ in organising bespoke training for small cohorts of Fellows, flagging that the smaller the cohort, the greater the cost per Fellow, making some training unaffordable.

¹¹⁶ n = 58

An additional challenge flagged in the focus group was a lack of opportunities for follow up face to face interaction with Fellows which some saw as inhibiting potential for sustained mentoring and collaboration.

‘Whilst I was able to visit the Fellow using funds from another programme, provision through the CSC scheme for a short reciprocal visit by someone from the UK Host organisation would help to facilitate further collaboration with the home organisation.’

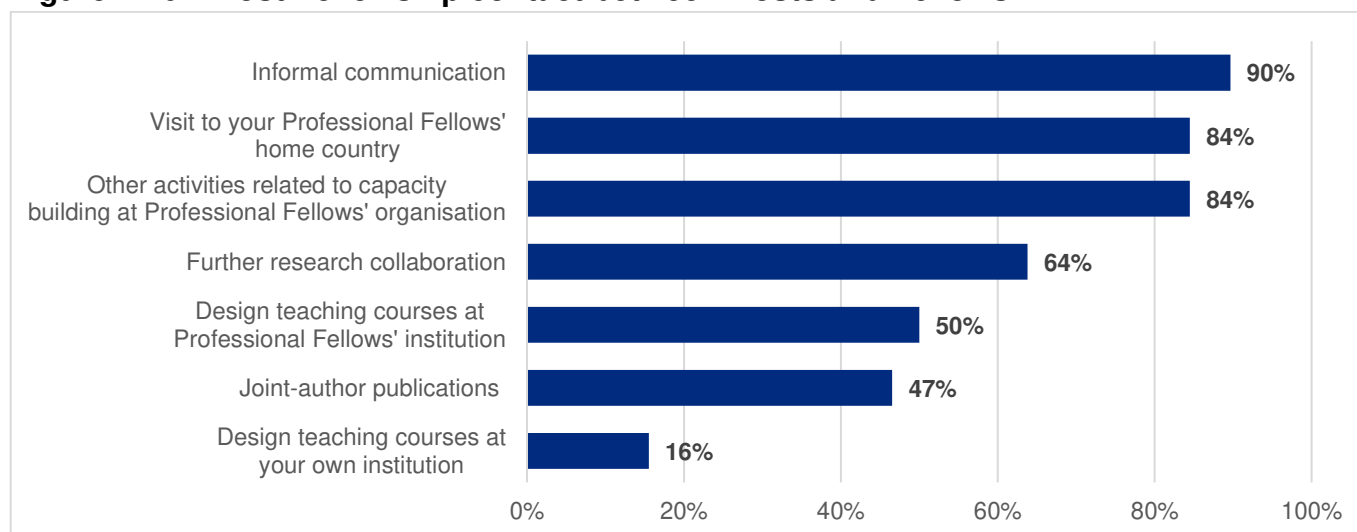
Professional Fellowship Host, University of Greenwich

Overall, the challenges raised by Hosts have largely been related to the administrative and logistical burdens associated with hosting Professional Fellows. Although the process can be time consuming for Host organisation staff, the majority have expressed that these challenges are surmountable, and are outweighed by the many benefits associated with hosting Fellows.

4.6 – Post-Fellowship: Contact and Collaboration

Hosts maintain high levels of post-Fellowship contact and collaboration with their Professional Fellows, with 90% of surveyed Hosts maintaining at least informal communication, and the vast majority maintaining ongoing professional engagement, as detailed in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10 – Post-Fellowship contact between Hosts and Fellows



Source: Professional Fellowship Host surveys: 2016-2019¹¹⁷

Hosts participating in the focus group confirmed this, with all reporting ongoing contact with some, or all, of the Professional Fellows that they had hosted over the years and describing a wide range of ongoing collaborative activities with Fellows and their home organisations.

¹¹⁷ n = 58

The most commonly reported post-Fellowship interactions were activities related to capacity building at the Fellows' home organisation which, as noted in previous sections¹¹⁸, was a central objective of the Fellowship for both Hosts and Fellows. More than four-fifths (84%) of surveyed Hosts reported involvement in ongoing organisational capacity building, and Hosts participating in the focus group described how this has been achieved through provision of coaching, mentoring and programme support in the post-Fellowship period.

This ongoing support has often involved follow-up face-to-face contact, with 84% of surveyed Hosts, and the majority of Hosts participating in the focus group reporting to have visited Fellows in their home countries after the Fellowship.

'We have been really pro-active with maintaining contact with all of our Fellows. We travel to Uganda two or three times per annum and always visit our Fellows who remain in Mbale. We make the Fellow aware that our door is always open should they need help or support.'

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Liverpool



Dr Tim Chancellor (Professional Fellowship Host, University of Greenwich) and Professional Fellow, Watson Matamwa with village agricultural extension officers in Kilolo District, Tanzania.

More than half of surveyed Hosts (64%) reported engaging in further research collaboration with their Fellows, with 47% going on to joint-author publications. Furthermore, half of Hosts (50%) have been involved with designing courses to be delivered at their Fellows' home organisation, further extending the opportunities for ongoing knowledge-sharing and institutional development.

¹¹⁸ See Sections 3.2 and 4.1

‘I have maintained contact with the Fellow I hosted and we have subsequently developed and implemented some joint field research in Tanzania.’

Professional Fellowship Host, University of Greenwich

Hosts participating in the focus group offered a number of additional examples of ongoing collaboration with Fellows’ and their home organisations, including delivering joint workshops and training programmes, continued supervision of Fellows’ work, and reciprocal input into organisational strategic planning.

‘We will ask for input from the Fellows on our own strategic planning and programme design and provide support for them on their project planning.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Conciliation Resources

‘We have maintained contact with Fellows following their time at the Law Society and we have managed to organise several joint activities, including running "women in law" sessions; webinars; and substantive pieces such as amicus curiae.’

Professional Fellowship Host, The Law Society

The foundations of these post-Fellowship relationships and networks have varied depending on the nature of pre-existing institutional relationships. For many Hosts, these relationships were primarily linked to the Fellows themselves, and not contingent on them working with a particular organisation. Even in cases where the Fellows have been employed by a partner organisation, Hosts report maintaining the direct professional relationship with the Fellow after they have moved on to different employment.

‘In cases where Fellows have moved on to better jobs and positions we are often still in close contact. For us continued clear communication is the key aspect of staying in touch.’

Professional Fellowship Host, TackleAfrica

Other Hosts emphasised the centrality of the institutional relationships with the Fellows’ home Employers more broadly and were less focused on individual Fellow-Host contact.

‘The Fellowships are under the auspices of a 16-year health partnership between the UK institution and the Fellows home country institution, hence we are in regular contact with various staff and colleagues including hospital Management team involved in discrete ongoing projects outside of the Fellowship Programme.’

Professional Fellowship Host, East London NHS Foundation Trust

However, most commonly, these relationships are a hybrid of the individual and institutional, with organisational networks being cemented by strong personal and professional connections developed between Fellows and colleagues at their UK Host organisations.

‘Our partnerships are inter-organisational - in terms of longer-term planning, agenda setting, sustainability and continuity. However, the critical anchors or mechanisms of inter-institutional partnerships are individuals. Unless we can build strong trust relationships with individuals, we will struggle to achieve partnership working overall.’

Professional Fellowship Host, Knowledge for Change

Based on these comments, it is clear that Hosts maintain strong and enduring professional relationships with their Fellows in the post-Fellowship period, engaging with them individually, and with their home organisations more broadly, to contribute to ongoing institutional capacity development, reciprocal learning, and a variety of collaborative projects and activities.

4.7– Summary

Professional Fellows are hosted at a wide variety of development-focused UK Host organisations, ranging from universities and research institutions to charity organisations and local government. Host organisations have been motivated to participate in the Professional Fellowship to contribute towards capacity building in Fellows’ home organisations and in their professional sectors more broadly, to strengthen and expand international networks, and to foster reciprocal learning.

In order to ensure that Fellows are best placed to benefit from the programme, and to implement meaningful institutional change, Host organisations largely recruit Fellows through pre-existing professional networks, often with the guidance of local partner organisations. They overwhelmingly report that Fellows are highly qualified, competent, and produce high quality work. In agreement with the self-assessment provided by Fellows, Hosts confirm that Fellowship goals are largely met, and that levels of knowledge and skills acquisition during the Fellowship are impressively high.

While administrative and funding challenges are flagged by Hosts, these appear greatly outweighed by the numerous benefits accrued, including greater cross-cultural understanding, reciprocal learning, and developing key links to Fellows’ home institutions and countries. This is reflected in the ongoing contact between Hosts and Fellows with the vast majority engaging in mutually beneficial professional collaboration post-Fellowship.

Section 5 – The Employers’ Perspective

Since 2015, the CSC evaluation team has requested permission from Professional Fellows to contact their Employers, roughly six months post-Fellowship, to gain a different perspective on Fellowship outcomes after their return to employment in their home countries.

Eighty-two Employer surveys have been completed to date, by Employers from at least 64 different home institutions, ranging from hospitals and universities to international charities and government departments. The Fellows managed by these Employers had completed their Fellowships with at least 36 different UK Host organisations.¹¹⁹ The findings from these surveys are used to gauge the success of the programme from the perspective of Employers, including benefits accrued by the Employers themselves, enhanced professional networks for their organisations, as well as their perception of Fellows’ post-Fellowship achievements and application of new skills.

5.1– Outcomes and Impact

In support of the data supplied by Fellows and UK Host organisations, Employers were able to offer a unique perspective on the immediate outcomes and longer-term impact of the Fellowship, both for the Fellows themselves, their home organisations and the wider communities and stakeholders whom they serve through their work.

As outlined in Section 3.2, when asked to rank their main objectives for the Fellowship, most Fellows based their objectives around gaining knowledge and skills to help build the capacity of their home organisations. Both Host organisations and Fellows, in their self-assessment, indicated that these objectives were overwhelmingly met. Employers confirmed these high levels of Fellow skills acquisition, as well as the application of these skills upon their return to the workplace.

As detailed in Figure 5.1, more than nine-tenths of Employers noted ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ improvements in their Fellows’ critical thinking and technical skills (both 95%), indicating high levels of professional development. Employers overwhelmingly saw their Fellows as better placed for leadership roles after having completed the Fellowship, with the vast majority noting ‘substantial’ or ‘moderate’ enhancement of leaderships skills (93%), as well as Fellows’ capacity to influence decisions (94%) and disseminate knowledge (92%).

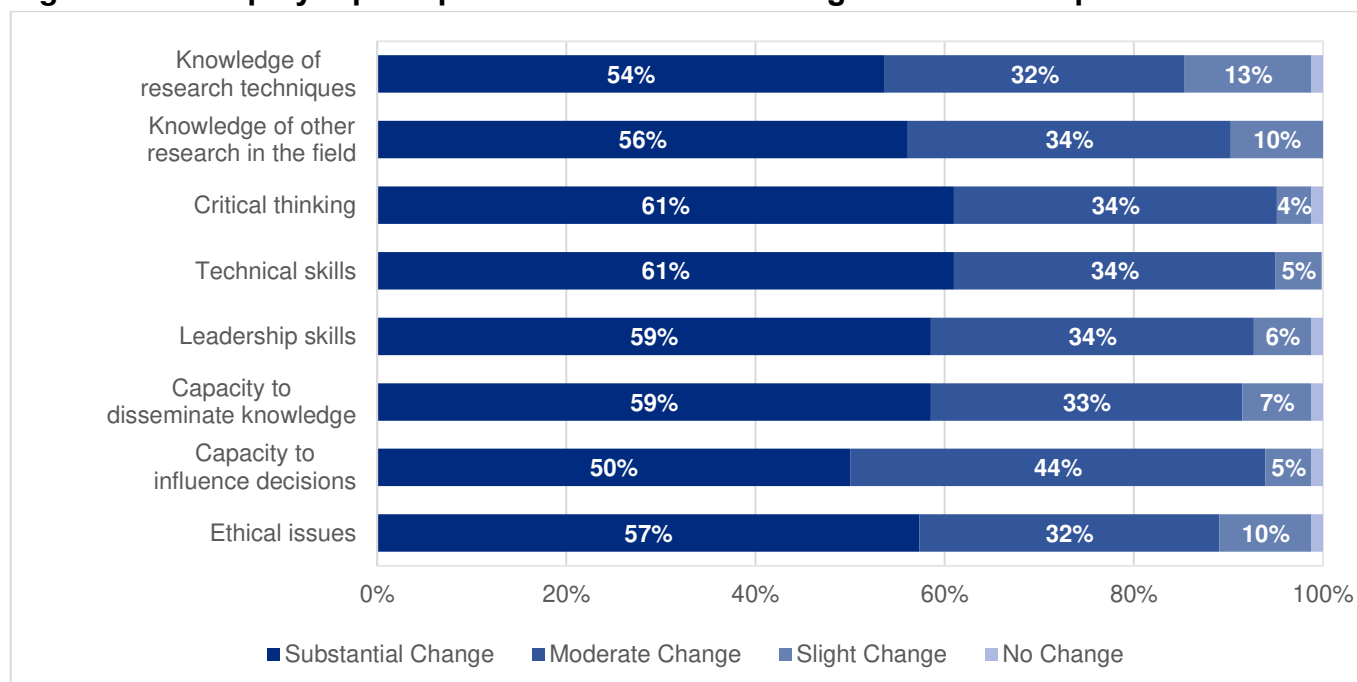
‘The Fellowship built her knowledge and leadership skills, and she has become one of the most reliable members of the management team.’

Employer of 2017 Professional Fellow¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ These fields were left blank in seven surveys making it impossible to determine the exact number of home and Host institutions represented.

¹²⁰ Free text response, CSC Employer survey

Figure 5.1 – Employer perception of Fellows’ knowledge and skills acquisition



Source: Professional Fellowship Employer surveys: 2015-2018¹²¹

As previously explored in this review, returning Fellows experienced a significant boost to their professional prospects, being given additional responsibilities and having greater influence in the workplace (see Section 3.4). Employers supported this narrative, highlighting the personal growth and individual professional development evidenced by returning Fellows, citing increased confidence, capability, and dedication to their work.

‘As a result of the impact of the Fellowship, his level of competence and confidence in his chosen area of experience, study and training has greatly increased which has created a positive impact on our organization, colleagues, clients and students.’

Employer of 2017 Professional Fellow¹²²

Employers were also well-placed to assess Fellows’ ability to directly apply their enhanced knowledge and skills set upon return to the workplace. An overwhelming 97% of Employers indicated that Fellows used these skills in their work either ‘all the time’ (38%) or ‘often’ (59%) in the twelve months following their Fellowship, and 85% reported Fellows establishing new areas of work as a direct result of their Fellowship.

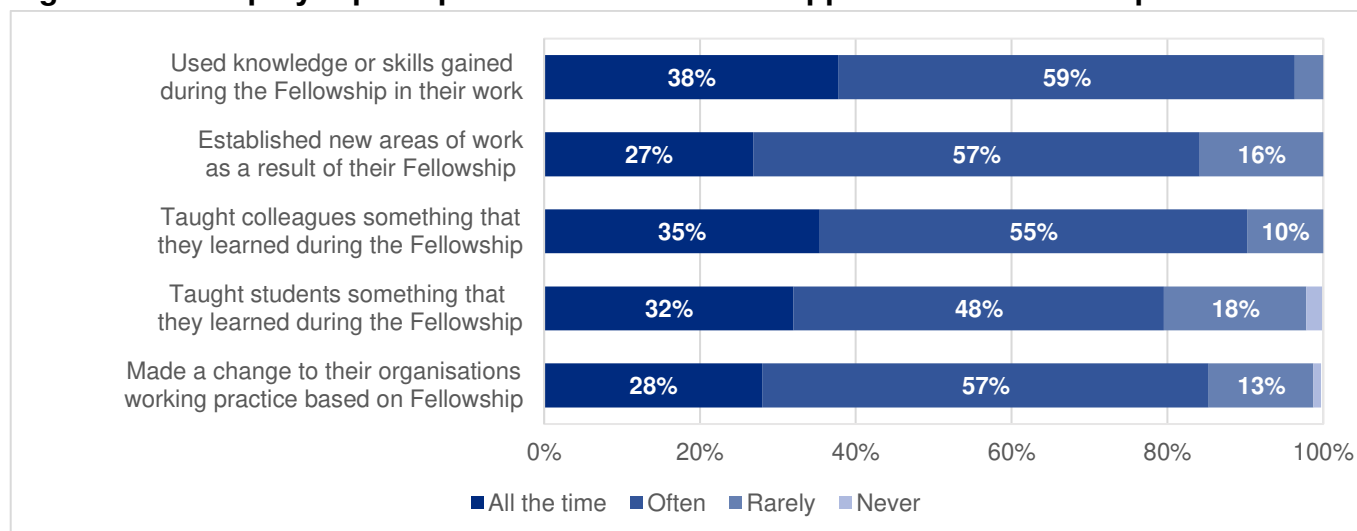
¹²¹ n = 82

¹²² Free text response, CSC Employer survey

‘With her newly acquired knowledge, [the Fellow] has launched weekly foot care clinic at the hospital, identifying early impairments of the feet and preventing complications which may result in amputations. The hospital plans to expand this clinic to the community and begin accepting external referrals.’

Employer of 2016 Professional Fellow¹²³

Figure 5.2 – Employer perception of Fellows’ skills application in the workplace



Source: Professional Fellowship Employer surveys: 2015-2018¹²⁴

‘The skills and knowledge she acquired has greatly impacted both her daily work, and [has had] institutional impact. She strongly advocated the idea of computerized patient data management, which has now been adopted.’

Employer of 2016 Professional Fellow¹²⁵

In addition to applying new skills to their own work, Employers reported Fellows engaging in high levels of knowledge dissemination, with 90% indicating that returning Fellows taught their colleagues something that they learned on their Fellowship ‘all the time’ or ‘often’, contributing to building wider team capacity and institutional impact.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ n = 82

¹²⁵ Free text response, CSC Employer survey

‘He has supported and retrained staff and partners on effective citizen-government engagement toward peace building and sustainability.’

Employer of 2015 Professional Fellow¹²⁶

‘She has used her experience to improve care in our ward and has given training to many junior staff and students.’

Employer of 2016 Professional Fellow¹²⁷

Perhaps most significantly, a large majority of Employers (85%) confirmed that Fellows have been able to make changes to their organisations’ working practice based on their learnings from the Fellowship, indicating that they returned equipped and empowered to effect institutional change.

Finally, Employers provided a wide variety of examples of how Fellows were applying the learnings from their Fellowship to make impact more broadly in their professional fields, in areas ranging from public health, to telecommunications, to prison reform.

‘The knowledge, skills and experiences gained during the fellowship has helped him immensely. He has been able to implement the community-based model of infant breastfeeding in 20 community primary health care centres [and] his knowledge is being utilized in the implementation of country wide HIV control program in 12 States in Nigeria.’

Employer of 2015 Professional Fellow¹²⁸

‘She is taking a lead role in disseminating her new learning on family therapy and narrative therapy approaches. Gradually, more and more mental health professionals are [focusing] on family therapy. It is a significant contribution for the entire community of Bangladesh.’

Employer of 2018 Professional Fellow¹²⁹

Overall, Employers have provided strong supporting evidence demonstrating the individual, institutional, and wider societal impact of their employees’ participation in the Professional Fellowship programme. Employers confirmed Fellows’ high rate of knowledge and skills acquisition as well as the direct application of those skills in the workplace post-Fellowship, resulting in improved outputs, dissemination of knowledge, new workstreams and meaningful institutional change.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Free text response, CSC Employer survey

¹²⁹ Ibid.

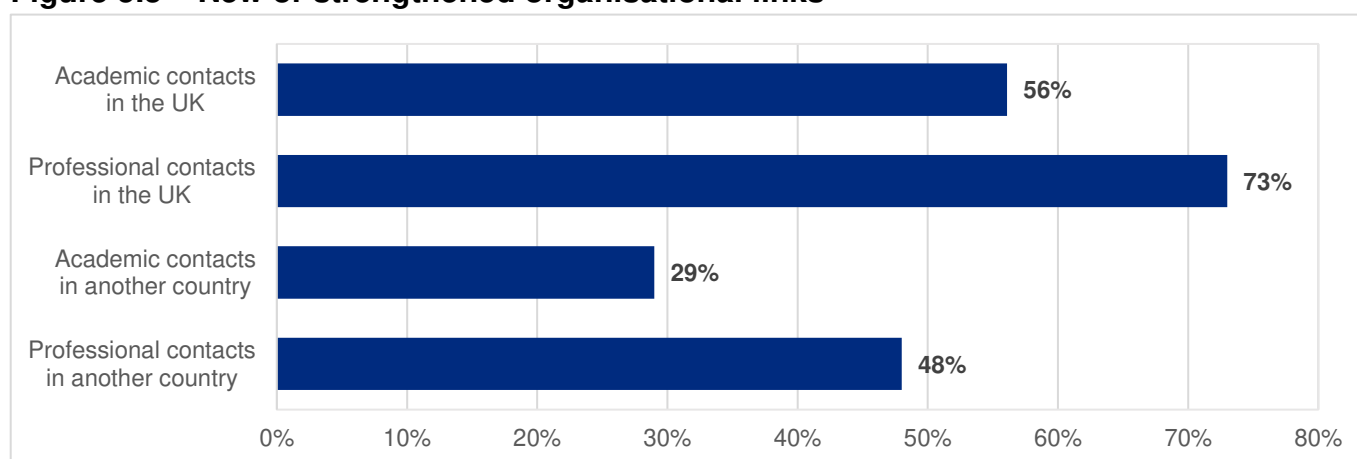
5.2 – Networks and Collaboration

In addition to the direct institutional impact of the returning, upskilled Fellows, Employers reported significant strengthening of international organisational links and, in many cases, establishment of new professional relationships as a direct result of the Fellowship.

More than half (54%) of Employers who completed the survey reported a pre-existing connection with their Fellows' Host organisation, having collaborated or worked together prior to the Fellowship. Of these, 90% reported that their relationship with the Host organisation had become stronger following the Fellowship. Of those who had no prior contact with the Host organisation, the majority (61%) reported having established new links with them through the Fellowship.

As well as the direct links between Employers and Host organisations, Employers identified broader new and strengthened professional relationships in the UK and beyond as a direct result of the Professional Fellowship.

Figure 5.3 – New or strengthened organisational links



Source: Professional Fellowship Employer surveys: 2015-2018¹³⁰

Almost three-quarters of Employers (73%) reported having established new links, or strengthened existing links, with professional contacts in the UK, and more than half (56%) identified new or strengthened links with UK academic contacts. The Fellowship also opened opportunities for Employers to develop their international networks beyond the UK, with almost half (48%) having established professional contacts in another country due to their employees' participation in the Fellowship.

Additionally, just under half of Employers (46%) reported that their organisation had joined a network, association, or forum as a direct result of the Fellowship, further expanding their international professional connections.

Highlighting the importance of these international networks, Employers detailed some of the collaborative projects planned between their organisations, UK Hosts, and other international contacts established through the Fellowship.

¹³⁰ n = 82

‘The linkages created are useful especially with Coventry University and Fellows, we look forward to developing joint project proposals, action research and joint advocacy to ensure sustainable development and efficient natural resources management.’

Employer of 2015 Professional Fellow¹³¹

‘The Fellowship was indeed hugely beneficial to both the recipient and the entire University. As a result of the Fellowship, more fundamental collaborations have been reached with Lancaster University in particular, and this has resulted in wider understanding and cross-cultural collaborations. There is currently a joint bid for a multidisciplinary project involving multiple organisations, and the University is part of this. There is no way this would have been possible without the Fellowship.’

Employer of 2015 Professional Fellow¹³²

As a direct result of the Fellowship, Employers have seen their organisations benefit from the strengthening of existing institutional ties, as well as the establishment of new international networks, facilitating ongoing knowledge exchange, collaborative projects and activities.

5.3 – Benefits for Employers

It is clear from the evidence provided in the previous sections that Employers have benefited from their employees enhanced knowledge and skillsets, their application of these skills in the workplace, as well as through the international networks opened to them through their employee’s participation in the Fellowship.

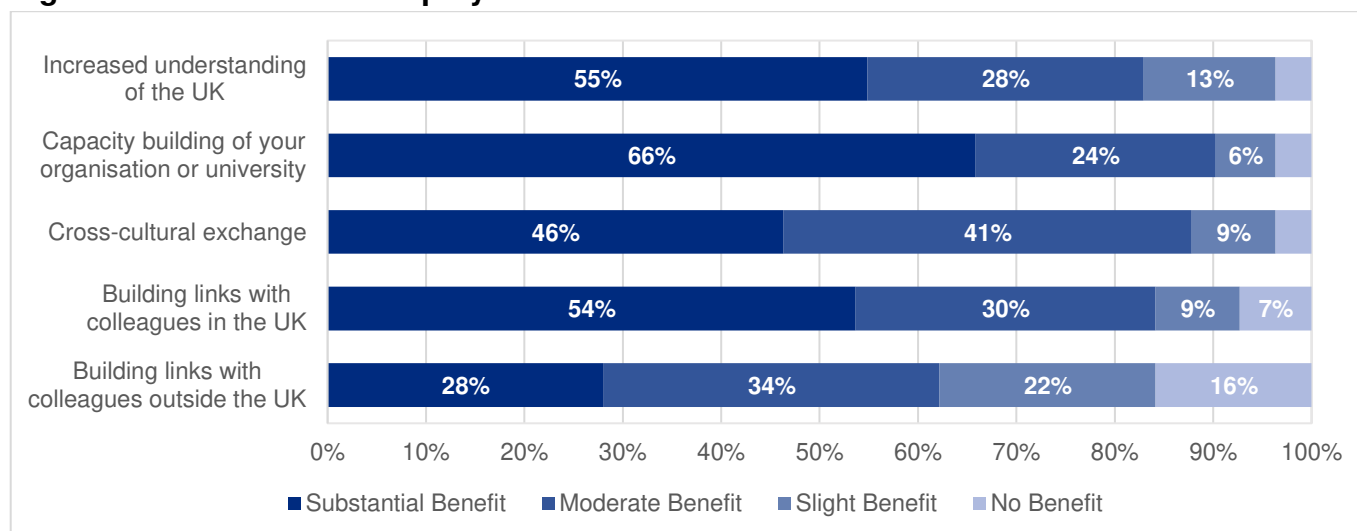
This was reiterated by Employers, when asked to specifically rate the benefits of their employees’ Fellowship to their organisation, with 90% confirming that they had ‘substantially’ (66%) or ‘moderately’ (24%) benefitted from capacity building of their workplace. The importance of new professional networks was also highlighted, with 84% also confirming the ‘substantial’ (54%) or ‘moderate’ (30%) benefit of building links with colleagues in the UK.

Additional social and cultural benefits were also highlighted, with 83% of Employers benefitting from an increased understanding of the UK, and 87% from the cross-cultural exchange element of the Fellowship.

¹³¹ Free text response, CSC Employer survey

¹³² Ibid.

Figure 5.4 – Benefits to Employers

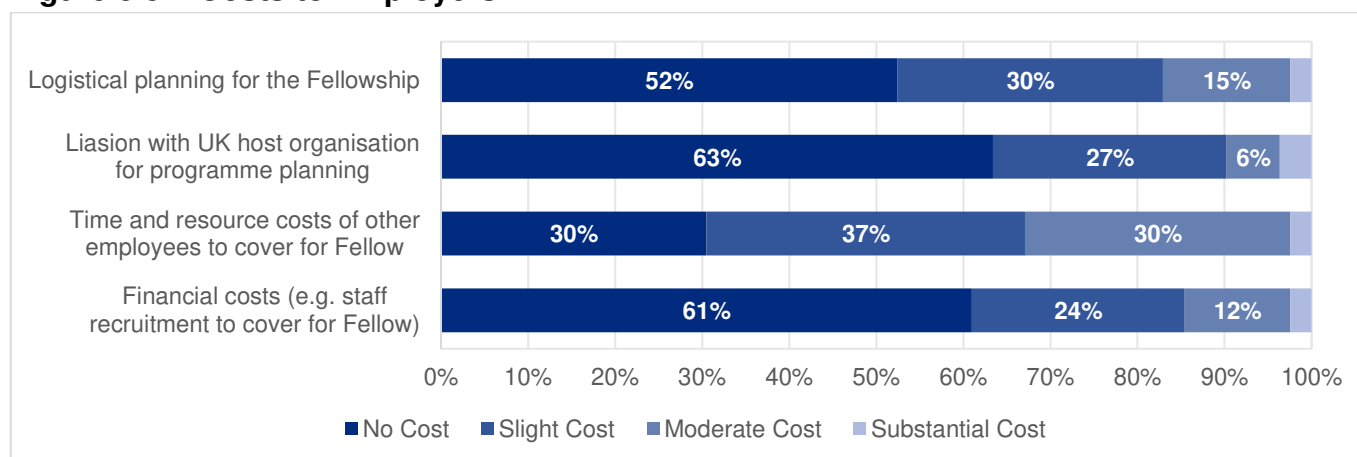


Source: Professional Fellowship Employer surveys: 2015-2018¹³³

5.4 – Costs to Employers

Employers did also identify some costs associated with their employees participating in the Fellowship programme; however these were relatively minor, with less than one third of Employers (32%) claiming ‘substantial’ (2%) or ‘moderate’ (30%) strain on the time and resources of other employees to cover for the Fellow costs, and only 17% identifying ‘substantial’ (2%) or ‘moderate’ (15%) costs associated with the logistical planning for the Fellowship from their side. Even fewer Employers (10%) considered liaising with their employees’ Host organisations to arrange the Fellowship to be a ‘substantial’ (4%) or ‘moderate’ (6%) cost.

Figure 5.5 – Costs to Employers



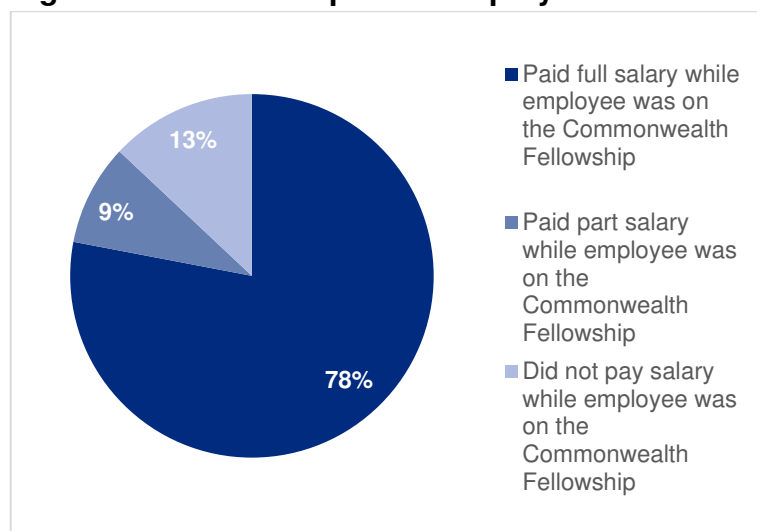
Source: Professional Fellowship Employer surveys: 2015-2018¹³⁴

In terms of the financial costs associated with covering for their employee while they were away, only 14% of Employers considered this to be ‘substantial’ (2%) or ‘moderate’ (12%), whereas 61% of Employers reported no financial costs. This is despite nine-tenths of Employers reporting to have paid their employees either a full (78%) or partial (13%) salary during their Professional Fellowship.

¹³³ n= 82

¹³⁴ n= 82

Figure 5.6 – Salaries paid to employees while on Fellowship



Source: Professional Fellowship Employer surveys: 2015-2018¹³⁵

It is clear that the numerous benefits to Employers, outlined in the previous section, vastly outweigh any minor costs associated with their employees' participation in the Fellowship. This is reinforced by the fact that 99% of Employers would be happy to allow another member of their staff to undertake a Professional Fellowship, and that 99% would 'definitely' (91%) or 'mostly' (8%) recommend others to apply for a CSC Fellowship or Scholarship.

5.5- Summary

Analysis of Employer surveys provided key insights into both the immediate outcomes, and longer-term impact of the CSC Professional Fellowship programme.

Feedback from Employers reinforced the significant knowledge and skills acquisition achieved by Fellows, as reported by Host organisations and Fellows themselves. Additionally, they confirm that Fellows were able to apply these new skills at a very high and consistent rate upon their return to the workplace, using the learnings of the Fellowship to improve their own work, to disseminate knowledge to colleagues and, crucially, to make positive changes to their organisations' working practices. They also described Fellows applying their enhanced skills to make positive contributions in their wider professional fields.

It is clear that Employers themselves are key beneficiaries of the Professional Fellowship. In addition to returning employees' contributions to overall organisational capacity, Employers benefitted from the expanded professional networks established by Fellows during their time in the UK. The majority reported new or strengthened relationships, not only with the Fellows' UK Host organisation but also with wider professional and academic contacts in the UK and internationally, as a direct result of the Fellowship.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

Section 6 – Summary and Conclusions

Since its introduction in 2001, the Professional Fellowship scheme has occupied an important role within the CSC awards portfolio, offering valuable professional development opportunities to mid-career professionals who are working towards key development goals in low and middle income Commonwealth countries. The aim of this review was to measure the outcomes and impact of the programme to date, and specifically to answer a number of key research questions:

To better understand the demographics, contexts and motivations of those applying for and completing Commonwealth Professional Fellowships.

Professional Fellowships have been awarded to 1,390 individuals from 40 countries across the Commonwealth, with a large majority (78%) coming from Africa. Fellows come from a wide range of development-focused backgrounds with the largest cohort coming from the health sector, as well as representation from sectors as varied as climate, agriculture, education, and criminal justice. Despite their diverse backgrounds, Fellows express common objectives for participation in the programme, geared towards both their own professional development and building capacity at their home organisations. Most Fellows have a specific set of technical knowledge and skills that they aim to acquire through the Fellowship as well as a clear idea of how they plan to apply these to their work going forward.

To better understand the experiences of Professional Fellows, their knowledge and skills development through participation in the programme, and career trajectories following the Fellowship.

During their time in the UK, Fellows take part in a wide variety of activities and training designed by Hosts, often in direct consultation with Fellows and their home Employers, to align closely with their set objectives. Fellows overwhelmingly report achieving the goals set for their Fellowship, as well as very high levels of knowledge and skills acquisition across a range of academic and practical skill sets. As a result, Fellows are well-equipped to assume positions of greater influence and effect catalytic organisational change upon returning to their places of employment post-Fellowship. Host organisations report that Fellows are highly qualified, competent, and produce high quality work during their Fellowship tenures. They also agreed with the self-assessment provided by Fellows, confirming that Fellowship goals are largely met, and that levels of on-Fellowship knowledge and skills acquisition are impressively high. Feedback from Employers reinforced the significant knowledge and skills acquisition achieved by Fellows, as reported by Host organisations and Fellows themselves.

Upon return to their home organisations, Fellows see an immediate boost to their professional prospects, with many receiving promotions or salary increases, as well as reporting broader areas of responsibility and a greater influence in the workplace. This is supported by both Host organisations and Employers, with both reporting that Fellows go on to progress rapidly in their careers post-Fellowship.

To identify the catalytic institutional impact, and wider societal impact, of Professional Fellows upon their return home.

Fellows report applying the learnings from the Fellowship in their workplaces and beyond in a variety of ways, both immediately upon returning from the UK, and consistently over the longer term. The knowledge and skills acquired through the Fellowship influence not only their own work but the overall direction of their organisations, leading to the implementation of new strategies, the upskilling of colleagues, and the initiation of innovative new projects. Employers confirm that Fellows were able to apply these new skills at a very high and consistent rate upon their return to the workplace, using the learnings of the Fellowship to improve their own work, to disseminate knowledge to colleagues and, crucially, to make positive changes to their organisations' working practices.

Fellows have leveraged their enhanced capabilities and networks to create meaningful impact at various levels and relating to a number of distinct developmental areas. Impact has been strongest at the institutional level, but Fellows have also reported increased impact at the local, national, and international levels post-Fellowship, providing a plethora of examples of meaningful social and civic development, policymaking, and economic impact. Employers also described Fellows as applying their enhanced skills to make positive contributions in their wider professional fields. The most notable challenge reported by Fellows is an absence of the resources needed to implement their Fellowship learnings upon returning to their home organisations. This has also been recognised by UK Hosts and must be taken into consideration when designing the training programmes if Fellows are to be empowered to realise the full extent of their developmental ambitions in the post-Fellowship period. Additionally, both Fellows and Hosts have flagged that Fellowship learnings could be reinforced, and impact enhanced, through more formalised opportunities for follow-up visits and ongoing mentorship.

To identify the benefits and challenges for UK Host organisations participating in the programme.

Professional Fellows are hosted at a wide variety of development-focused UK Host organisations, ranging from universities and research institutions to charity organisations and local government. Host organisations have been motivated to participate in the Professional Fellowship for reasons that closely align with the mission of the programme; namely, to contribute towards capacity building in Fellows' home organisations and in their professional sectors more broadly, to strengthen and expand international networks, and to foster reciprocal learning. To ensure that Fellows are best placed to benefit from the programme, and to implement meaningful institutional change, Host organisations largely recruit Fellows through pre-existing professional networks, often with the guidance of local partner organisations.

While administrative and funding challenges have been flagged by Hosts, these appear greatly outweighed by the numerous benefits accrued, including greater cross-cultural understanding, reciprocal learning, and developing key links to Fellows' home institutions and countries. This is reflected in the ongoing contact between Hosts and Fellows with the vast majority engaging in mutually beneficial professional collaboration post-Fellowship. Areas of concern could potentially be alleviated by increased funding for administrative support for Hosts, and by reviewing the CSC's administrative processes and requirements.

To identify the extent to which international professional networks are established or strengthened through the programme

In addition to their greatly enhanced skills sets, Fellows return with newly established or strengthened international professional networks, leading to increased contact, influence, and collaboration with these networks. As well as increased interaction with their UK Host organisations in the post-Fellowship period, Fellows report ongoing networking and collaboration with other UK professional contacts and with other Professional Fellows, providing a plethora of examples of joint projects, research, events, and other collaborative activities.

Employers also benefitted significantly from the expanded professional networks established by Fellows during their time in the UK. The majority reported new or strengthened relationships not only with the Fellows' UK Host organisation, but also with wider professional and academic contacts in the UK and internationally, as a direct result of the Fellowship.

It is clear, from the evidence outlined above, that the CSC Professional Fellowship programme has been successful in its mission to equip talented mid-career professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to have catalytic effects in their workplaces. Through the analysis of multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data from Fellows, Hosts and Employers, this report has demonstrated that the Fellowship programme plays a role in empowering individuals as well as contributing to institutional capacity building and the development of strong international networks. Leveraging their enhanced expertise, networks and greater influence in the workplace, Professional Fellows are enabled to create meaningful, long-term impact in a variety of development-focused sectors across the Commonwealth.