

Mapping UNSW Impact Global Development

Primary SDG	4: QUALITY EDUCATION
Broad theme	Training PhD students
Research	Facilitating the training of Africa-based PhD students
Impact region	Africa
Faculty	UNSW Business School
School/Institute	Finance
Academic	Professor Jerry Parwada
Project partners	UNSW Business School
Related SDGs	10: Reduced Inequalities

Elevator pitch

Jerry is facilitating the training and education of Africa-based Masters and PhD students, helping to plug the brain drain from African universities and lift overall academic standards for the long term.

The Challenge: There is brain drain at African universities

Because of better prospects overseas, African academics and researchers often leave the continent for work elsewhere creating a drain on talent in Africa. This means upcoming African researchers are not getting the quality supervision they deserve. Universities like UNSW routinely turn away African students because of a lack of preparation at the Masters level.

At the same time, African Governments are aiming to lift academic standards. Many African governments have given the directive that by 2020 academics hired to lecture must have completed a PhD. To fulfil this demand, African universities are pushing Masters and PhD students to complete courses and research projects. This is destined to result in poor PhD quality and negative world rankings for these universities if the research students are not supervised properly. If they get the supervision they deserve, they can improve their research output and train other researchers, lifting overall research quality.

UNSW's solution: Train Africa-based PhD students in research and supervision

Jerry is coordinating the supervision of Africa-based Masters and PhD students by academics from strong universities in Africa, Australia and around the world. As part of this, he facilitates training symposiums to bring supervisors and Africa-based Masters and PhD students together, and helps organise fellowships for Africa-based students from countries like Uganda, Zimbabwe and Nigeria to travel to these symposiums. Jerry is hosting a student symposium on finance in Nairobi, Kenya in April 2018.

Jerry also volunteers at African forums where Africa-based PhD students compete to have their work reviewed by senior academics from strong universities on the continent and elsewhere. He also facilitates training for students and researchers at strong universities in Sub Sahara Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa). Jerry involves academics from the University of Cape Town (South Africa), Makerere University

(Uganda), and Midlands State University (Zimbabwe) in these training sessions. He also volunteers as a PhD supervisor for Africa-based students.

Jerry self funds this work together with a colleague from the University of Sydney. With further funding, Jerry can expand these programs, fund revamps in Masters and PhD programs at African universities according to international standards, and quantify the extent of the brain drain in a large sample research project.

The Impact: Improve researcher and publishing quality, lifting standard of African universities

Jerry's work is helping to improve the quality of Masters and PhD students in African universities in countries such as Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa. He is also improving their supervision skills so that they can positively influence the next generation of students and researchers. These efforts will ultimately lead to an improvement in publishing quality and rankings for these universities over the long term, resulting in them attracting more talent than previously and losing less local talent to overseas institutions.

Researcher

Jerry Parwada is a Professor of Finance in the UNSW Business School. He served as Head of School - Banking and Finance from 2011 - 2017. Jerry has three years' investment banking experience and is an active consultant to industry on issues relating to managed funds and valuation. He is a member of the Credit Suisse Endowment Advisory Council, the FINSIA Industry Council for Institutional Markets and the Australian Lenders' Index Expert Panel. Born in Zimbabwe, Jerry is passionate about reducing the gap in education standards between African and the rest of the world.

Ben Falkenmire 19.03.18