Activities and achievements in 2017

The International Science Programme (ISP) at Uppsala University, Sweden, aims to contribute to the growth of scientific knowledge in low-income countries, by engaging in long term collaboration with institutionally based research groups and regional scientific networks in chemistry, mathematics and physics. ISP’s activities are mainly funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Uppsala University and Stockholm University provide additional support. This is a summary of the achievements of ISP and supported activities in 2017.

SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

In 2017, ISP provided support to 40 research groups and 20 regional networks. One network received first time support, no groups or networks were phased out. Supported groups are located in eleven countries in Asia and Africa; Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Laos, Mali, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The regional networks are coordinated from countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Groups and networks together utilized close to 27 million SEK.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Registered. In 2017, 1073 postgraduate students were reported as active in ISP supported groups and networks, 442 students on the PhD level (28% female) and 631 students on the MSc, MPhil or Licentiate level (31% female). About 24% of the PhD students and 3% of the other postgraduate degree students were trained on a sandwich basis, spending part of their research training at home and part at a host university abroad. The remaining students pursued their postgraduate studies locally. A majority (95%) of the PhD students from previous year has either continued their studies or graduated, 99% of the female students and 93% of the male.

Graduated. Supported groups and networks graduated 348 students during the year, 90 PhD students (38% female), and 258 MSc, MPhil and Licentiate students (39% female). The PhD students took, on average, 4.8 years to complete.

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DISSEMINATION

In 2017, the supported groups and networks published 310 papers in international journals out of which 46% were in high impact journals, listed with Thomson Reuter (TR) impact factors. Group and network members gave 439 conference contributions out of which 262 were in Africa, 120 in Asia, 44 in Europe, 9 in the Americas and 4 in Oceania; 30% were at international conferences. They arranged 74 scientific meetings with 6,000 participants.

HOW ARE GROUPS AND NETWORKS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SDGs?

Burkina Faso. An ISP supported chemistry network laboratory at University of Ouagadougou was requested by the government to elaborate on the national strategic nutrition plan in Burkina Faso.

Mali & Kenya. The first female PhD student in physics in Mali graduated from an ISP supported physics group at University of Sciences, Techniques and Technologies of Bamako. “The Women in Physical Science in Kenya” was initiated by an ISP supported research group at University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Uganda. Group members of an ISP supported research group at Makerere University were invited by the government to assess the environmental conditions of the wetland on the edge of Lake Victoria. The reports will be the basis of government policy streamlining the management of Ugandan beaches.

ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN 2017

Sida. ISP's coordination assignment on the Swedish side in the Sida bilateral research programs in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda continued in 2017. ISP paid subsistence allowances to students from Bolivia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, while in Sweden, and engaged in the Research Management subprogram at University of Rwanda.

Saudi Arabia. ISP's coordination of Uppsala University's cooperation with Al Baha University (ABU), Saudi Arabia, aiming to strengthen the academic staff and the higher education programs in sciences and related fields, continued.

Thailand. The collaboration with the Thailand Research Fund and the Thailand International Cooperation Agency on PhD fellowships for students from students from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, and Vietnam continued in 2017, with three grantees awarded from Myanmar.

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