International Science Programme (ISP)
Annual report
2025



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Cover photo: School visit at Yusuf Makamba Secondary School, Tanzania (IPPS TAN:01/2).

1. Executive summary

In 2025, the International Science Programme (ISP) at Uppsala University has continued to build research capacity and postgraduate education in low and lower-middle income countries **despite the** cut in Sida funding in 2023. ISP has made considerable efforts to develop strategies to raise money from different donors, public agencies and the EU.

A reorganisation of ISP´s programmes was initiated in 2024, with a focus on creating larger networks and reduce the number of groups. This is expected to reduce expenses but also increase scientific output and competitiveness of the networks. The reorganisation of ISP Mathematics and ISP Physics will be implemented in 2026, while IPICS will implement its plan in 2027.

In 2025, the reduced funding became evident in the results reported from ISP-supported groups and networks:

- Fewer members of staff
- Lower (or the same share as in 2024) of women leaders in two of the three ISP programmes
- Fewer PhD students
- Lower share of female PhD students in two of the ISP programmes
- Lower share of female PhD graduates
- Fewer MSc students
- Lower share of female MSc students
- Fewer MSc graduate
- Lower share of female MSc graduates in two of the three ISP programmes
- Fewer conference contributions

During 2025, ISP has fulfilled most of the objectives and strategies outlined in ISP´s Strategic Plan 2019-2024 (strategy extended to 31 December 2026).

Research findings and the SDGs

There are many examples of research findings reported by the ISP-supported research groups and networks linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such findings can be found in the fields of (in alphabetical order): Agricultural chemistry, Algebra, Analytical electrochemistry, Applied mathematics, Applied statistics, Astrophysics, Atmospheric physics, Biomedical engineering, Biophysical modelling, Biophysics, Chemical physics, Climate science, Computational physics, Cosmology, Ecological chemistry, Environmental chemistry, Financial mathematics, Geophysics, Magnetism, Materials chemistry, Materials physics, Mathematical epidemiology, Mathematical modelling, Mathematics education, Medical physics, Nanophysics, Natural products chemistry, Nuclear physics, Numerical analysis, Pure mathematics, Seismology, Solar energy, Statistical theory, Theoretical physics, and Water chemistry.

Most research results are connected to *SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being* and *SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy.*

Because many of the ISP-supported networks include researchers from more than one university and country, the results are connected to and shared among a large number of higher education institutions (HEIs).

Use of research results

Researchers from the supported groups and networks have used their research results and skills to serve as consultants to governments, municipalities, FAO, NGOs and companies (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Laos, Mali, Nepal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe). The earthquake catalogue of Ethiopia developed by one of the physics groups, is now used to revise the national building code of the country.

The ISP-supported research groups and networks have also contributed to technical development and services in their home countries and beyond. Examples are, performing tests and analyses for public and private organisations (Bangladesh), and investigating the levels of heavy metals in rice grains and paddy fields (Myanmar).

Outreach and policy influence

The outreach activities performed by the ISP-supported research groups and networks were directed towards governmental bodies, societal organisations, the general public, primary schools, high schools, university/college students, student organisations, universities/schools, industry and other stakeholders. The groups and networks have worked in different ways to popularise their research-based findings:

- Through media (YouTube, TV, newspapers, online media).
- Through events (health camps, open-houses, competitions, conferences, workshops, meetings with the local community).
- Through education (training programmes, postgraduate courses and field visits).

ISP-supported groups and networks have had considerable policy influence, mainly on a national level when members act as consultants to national governments, e.g., wastewater and pollution-load data (Laos), renewable energy (Kenya) and reforestation (Ethiopia).

Gender

Due to the financial crisis for ISP, the ISP Gender Equality Grants were cancelled in 2022. These grants was utilised between 2017-2022. Despite this, ISP groups and networks have continued to address the gender gap in science in 2025.

However, ISP has continued to sponsor the *AfNWA Award to Early and Mid-Career Researchers* through the African Network for Women in Astronomy (AfNWA) part of the African Astronomical Society, and in 2025 two female astronomers received the award.

The variety of gender equality promoting activities carried out have addressed different and essential areas, as required for a serious and sustainable gender work. The activities can be grouped into the following main tracks:

1. Activities to support female researchers
    - Female researchers received targeted professional-development support (Zambia)
    - International networking opportunities (Bangladesh).
2. Activities encouraging female undergraduates to pursue Master's/PhD studies
    - Initiatives like Undergraduate Research Assistantship Programme to mentor female students (Uganda).
    - Promotion of women in science through podcasts and "Ciencia Express" sessions where female researchers shared their work (Bolivia).
3. Affirmative actions directed at female students

- Practical support, e.g. accommodation support (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Tanzania).
- Financial support, e.g. fee waivers (Bangladesh), scholarships (Zambia), stipend prioritisation (Ethiopia).
- Transportation support (Bangladesh).
- Research materials (Bangladesh) and laptops (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso).
- Gender-balanced trainee recruitment (Uganda).

4. Meetings to inspire female pupils and higher-education students through role models
    - Career talks and mentorship programmes were held in secondary schools (Zambia).
    - Gender-inclusion events (Kenya).
    - Awareness campaigns featuring women scientists to motivate girls to pursue science and engineering (Mali).
5. Activities to inspire primary and secondary school girls
    - Extensive outreach included school visits (Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda).
    - Mentorship visits by the Association for Women in Mathematics in Africa (AWoM) to primary and secondary schools, providing both inspiration and material support, e.g., shoes for girls in need (Uganda).
    - Robotics boot camps (Tanzania), and Mathematics Camp (Uganda).

Supported groups and networks

In total, 34 research groups and 20 networks were supported by ISP in 2025.

One group and two network nodes were phased out in 2025, one chemistry group in Zambia, and two mathematics network nodes in Myanmar and Cambodia.

Staff

In 2025, 838 staff members were involved in ISP-supported activities, and 22% of them were women. That is a decrease of actual staff members, and also in the share of women staff.

The positive trend from 2013, with higher numbers of female leaders and deputies in mathematics, has been broken in 2025. In physics, a small increase for female leaders.

Students

Since the last reporting year there is a considerable decrease in the number of PhDs and MSc students. Also the share of woman PhD and MSc students has decreased in two of the three ISP programmes. In 2025, in total 967 postgraduate students (Master, Licentiate and PhD level) were reported to be active in research groups and networks:

- In 2025, ISP supported 495 PhD students, and 472 MSc students.
- In 2024 the number was 1,177 postgraduate students. 566 PhD students and 611 MSc students.

Today, most postgraduate graduates are local students. This is what to expect considering the reduced budget allocated to the groups and networks in 2025.

In 2025, a slight increase in PhD graduates was reported. But the share of women PhD graduates has decreased profoundly (to 17%). The share of woman PhD graduates in chemistry and physics is higher than in mathematics.

The average time PhD students take to graduation has remained the same over the years (close to 5 years), but in 2025 it is lower for sandwich students (4,8 years) and higher for local students (5,8 years). These figures are the same as the previous two years.

For MSc graduations in 2025, the number of MSc students in chemistry and mathematics has decreased, and in physics it is more or less the same as previous year. The same trend goes for the share of women MSc graduates: decreased share in chemistry and mathematics, and an increase for physics.

Publications

The total number of publications reported by the supported groups and networks (including book chapters, etc, reported in Tables 8, 9 and 10 in Appendices) increased to 573 in 2025 (441 in 2024). The number of papers published in quality journals has decreased to 63% in 2025 (82% in 2024). 9% of the publications are in journals by "predatory publishers" (11% in 2024).

The rate of acknowledgements of ISP in published articles in 2025 is 33%, almost the same share as in 2024.

Conference contributions

For 2025, 254 contributions at scientific conferences were reported by groups and networks, 56% of them at international conferences. 81% were oral contributions. For 2024, the number was 261 conference contributions, and 75% were at international conferences.

Arranged meetings

A total of 56 scientific meetings with 4,471 participants were arranged by ISP-supported groups and networks in 2025. The digitalisation of conferences and meetings in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic has made it possible to arrange meetings, workshops, seminars and international conferences without any costs for travel, hotels and per-diem. There is an increase from last reporting year (47 scientific meetings with 2,442 participants).

Expenditures

In 2025, the total available budget from ISP for research groups and networks amounted to 7,8 MSEK, calculated as the sum of the total allocations for 2025 plus the balances brought forward from 2024 – the latter amounted to 1,7 MSEK, about 22% of the total available budget.

ISP´s total available budget contributed 22% of the total available resources for groups and networks. Overall, institutional co-funding accounted for 49% of the total available resources, substantially lower than the corresponding figure of 74% in 2024.

Challenges

ISP funds were cut by more than 50% by Sida in 2023 and continued to be so in 2024 and 2025, so many activities were hampered or simply cancelled.

In addition to considerable successes for ISP research capacity building, ISP encounters several challenges and obstacles in its work at partner institutions. These may, for instance, be related to the partners´ research infrastructure, e.g., expertise, instruments, funding, and institutional environment, such as procurement, import clearance, and financial administration.

There are still considerably fewer women than men who are active researchers, so ISP needs to continue its gender activities.

In 2025, predatory publishers continued to claim victims among ISP-supported groups and networks. ISP still needs to improve previous partners´ engagement, so that it can help strengthen more recently supported groups and networks.

ISP works in many fragile states. Political turmoil may affect supported groups and networks if the Swedish government decides that Sida should withdraw or suspend support because of the political development in a country. This is the case for the supported groups and networks in Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Mali, and Myanmar.

Lessons learnt

The reduced Sida contribution to ISP has continued to dominate much of ISP´s work in 2025. ISP has made considerable efforts to raise funding from different donors, agencies and the EU. The efforts show that fundraising is hard and takes time. ISP was not successful in obtaining any new external funding in 2025.

The massive budget cut has forced ISP to heavily reduce travel, so travel by ISP staff is now more or less non-existent. However, meetings in real life (IRL) constitute a crucial part of ISP's operational method because on-site observation of opportunities and challenges concerning people, laboratories, working strategies, institutional environment, and other conditions are generally the fastest and most efficient route towards making the best use of ISP support.

ISP will continue to promote gender equality, for instance by encouraging and reminding groups and networks about the gender gap in science and applying gender considerations in their planning.

There is still a need to continue arranging seminars and workshops (both online and IRL) about predatory publishers and how to avoid them. Such seminars and workshops have attracted great interest among our supported groups and networks and will continue to be arranged by ISP in the future.

ISP will continue to increase the visibility of the programme and of supported groups and networks, by engaging in international conferences, social media and newsletters. Also, ISP has continued to make the programme better known within and outside Uppsala University with 6,459 followers on Facebook and 656 on LinkedIn.

Other ISP cooperation

In 2025, ISP continued the cooperation with Stockholm University, TICA (Thailand International Cooperation Agency), Thailand Center of Excellence in Physics and Unisa-iThemba in South Africa.

ISP has also continued to cooperate with UPE (Unit for Professional English) and the Division for Research and Partnership Support at Uppsala University (through the PEP project).

ISP has continued to coordinate the Sida bilateral programmes for research cooperation, on the Swedish side, in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania. ISP has also administrated the payments of subsistence allowance to students in all bilateral programmes while in Sweden. ISP has

also assisted the universities in Bolivia (UMSS and UMSA) with international payments due to the difficult situation with foreign currencies in the country.

Seven PhD students from the former Sida bilateral research programme in Cambodia have successfully defended their PhD theses in Sweden.

Sida has prepared a three-year pilot programme at the University of Zambia (UNZA). In 2025, it launched a call for Expressions of Interest, which ISP helped disseminate. ISP also hosted a UNZA delegation in Sweden from 6–11 October 2025, has been responsible for payment of planning grants to Swedish partners, and was invited by Sida to apply to coordinate the programme on the Swedish side.

2. What is ISP?

ISP is short for the International Science Programme and refers to a centre at Uppsala University in Sweden.

ISP assists low and lower-middle income countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to build and strengthen research capacity and higher education in the basic sciences chemistry, mathematics and physics, where such capacity is non-existing or weak, by support to institutionally based research groups and scientific networks. The work is carried out in close cooperation with researchers at better equipped host institutions. Although the programme is hosted by Uppsala University, ISP is a truly international programme. Host institutions for research collaboration and for sandwich students may be located at other Swedish universities, in other Nordic and European countries, or in the regions of supported partners.

ISP is also coordinator on the Swedish side for the Sida bilateral research cooperation in Bolivia, Ethiopia (2025 last year), Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania.

[For more details about ISP, please see Appendix 4]

3. What does ISP do?

ISP's ultimate goal is to increase research capabilities in the target countries, and to promote the use of results in the fight against poverty, for example through innovations and increased employability. From a long-term perspective, the results and acquired skills are expected to favorably impact society by promoting social and economic growth and by developing human resources useful for addressing development challenges. Once groups and networks have reached sufficient strength, ISP may redirect its resources to environments with greater need for support.

In the following sections, each of the ISP objectives and strategies[1] will be reviewed. In the Appendices, all objectives and strategies are listed, indicating which section in the report they are linked. *[Please see Appendix 4.5]*

[1]ISP´s Strategic Plan 2019-2024: https://isp.uu.se/digitalAssets/504/c_504322-l_1-k_isp_strategic_plan_2019-2024_final-paged.pdf

In short, ISP promotes:

1. Better planning of and improved conditions for carrying out scientific research and postgraduate training.
2. Better-qualified postgraduate students (Master´s and PhD levels).
3. Increased production of high-quality research results.
4. Increased use of research results by society and of graduates in development.
5. Improved gender balance in the basic sciences.
6. An expanded global perspective through increased collaboration between scientists in the global South and the global North.

Below we will see how and where ISP's support has succeeded in fulfilling ISP's objectives and strategies.

4. Reorganisation of ISP

After the reduced Sida-budget in 2023, ISP has worked with a reorganisation of the programme. In 2025, the reorganisation was being implemented in two of the programmes: ISP Physics (IPPS) and ISP Mathematics (IPMS). Below follows a summary for each programme.

ISP Physics (IPPS)

IPPS has been the ISP-programme with most supported groups and networks. It is also the oldest of the programmes.

In 2025, IPPS supported 19 groups:

- In Asia: BAN:02/2, BAN:04, BAN:05, LAO:01, MYA:01, MYA:02; NEP:01
- In Africa: BUF:01, KEN:01/2, MAL:01, ETH:01, ETH:02, ETH:03, RWA:01, TAN:01/2, UGA:02, UGA:02, ZAM:01, ZIM:01

IPPS has decided to maintain three existing networks (AFSIN, EAARN and MSSEESA) and to phase-out direct support to most of the groups that already were included in these three networks. Also, the network for seismological monitoring (ESARSWG) is maintained and will receive a lower allocation for two years (from 2025), followed by a slightly increased budget in the third year[2].

At the end of 2025, the groups RWA:01 TAN:01/2 UGA:01, UGA:02 and ZAM:01 will be phased out.

ISP Mathematics (IPMS)

IPMS has been reorganised from seven networks (APREA, CoRS, EAALG, EAUMP, PDEAPP, PDE–MC, and SEAMaN) and one group (AAU) into three mainlines of support: CoRE-Math (combining EAUMP and AAU), PDE–MC/BURK:01, and activities previously organised under SEAMaN.

The purpose is to reduce administrative burden and enable a stronger strategic focus on CoRE-Math. The support to APREA, CoRS, EAALG, and PDEAPP will be channelled mainly through CoRE-Math and, where relevant, PDE–MC/BURK:01.

In Southeast Asia, activities have been scaled down, with the University of Mandalay (UM) and the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) phased out from 2026, while limited support continues for ongoing doctoral training at the National University of Laos (NUOL).

For 2026, ISP Mathematics will support three mathematics networks (instead of seven networks and one group) in 2025:

- CoRE-Math
- PDE-MC (aka BURK:01)
- SEAMan – Laos node

ISP Chemistry (IPICS)

There were 19 groups considered in the reorganisation of IPICS, but during 2025 IPICS didn´t reorganise due to heavy resistance from m chemistry groups and networks.

[2] Why keep ESARSWG (seismology): the network activity is significant since the nodes in different African countries monitor the seismological activities of the African rift. Their measurements are essential for risk and hazard analysis for policymakers, i.e., for improving the population's information and safety in case of earthquakes.

In 2026, IPICS will support 14 groups, and suggests that the number of groups will be reduced to 11 in 2027 after phasing out the following groups:

1. BAN:05 (Phase out after 2026 and join ANRAP)
2. LAO:01 (Phase out after 2026 and join ANFEC)
3. LAO:04 (Phase out after 2026 and join ANFEC)

The number of IPICS groups will be further reduced to 10 in 2028 after phasing out ETH:01, which is strong enough to stand on its own. ETH:01will continue to be a member of IPICS and act as a support/resource for other groups and networks.

The following networks are kept:

1. NAPRECA: Natural Products Research Network for East and Central Africa
2. ANCAP: African Network for Chemical analysis of Pesticides and Other Pollutants
3. ANEC: African Network of Electroanalytical Chemists
4. ANFEC: Asian Network of Research on Food and Environment Contaminants
5. ANRAP: Asian Network of research on Antidiabetic Plants
6. CAB-CCS: Cambodian Chemical society
7. NITUB: Network of Instrument Technical Personnel and User scientists of Bangladesh
8. RABiotech: West African Biotechnology Network

The networks, ANCAP and NAPRECA, whose main activity is to organise conferences, workshops, and trainings, will from 2026 explore opportunities to host and supervise postgraduate students, share laboratory facilities etc. and make their networks attractive for research groups to join. The outcome will be presented and it will be discussed whether ANCAP and NAPRECA will receive continued support from ISP or not.

In addition, the funding from Stockholm University have been used to support groups and networks in Burkina Faso and Cambodia, since ISP isn't allowed to use Sida money for local use in those countries. If the restrictions remain and ISP doesn't receive continued support from SU, two groups (BUF:01 and BUF:02) and two networks (ANEC and RABiotech) in Burkina Faso and one network in Cambodia (CAB-CCS) may also face phase out.

5. What is ISP´s impact on development?

5.1 Research findings and the SDGs

One of ISP´s specific objectives is *to improve supported partners' ability to on a longer term use research results and acquired skills (…) having a favorable impact on society*.

Examples of this can be found in the contribution by ISP-supported groups and networks to create a more sustainable world. Below are some of the research findings and their relation to the UN´s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) presented. The most common SDG is presented first, followed by the others in descending order.

Most of the research results reported to ISP align with ***SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being.*** In Myanmar, a physics group investigated heavy metal contamination in rice grains and downstream paddy fields near Mandalay Industrial Zone II. In Bangladesh, a physics groups studied ferrite nanoparticles for cancer treatments. In Boliva, Burkina Faso and Bangladesh, chemistry groups analysed different plants for their effects on inflammation and diabetes. In Rwanda, a mathematics node conducted numerical analysis on how diseases spread among various interacting competing

species within ecosystems presents a significant challenge. In Uganda, a mathematics node performed mathematical modeling on Covid-19 case distribution across age groups. Also in Uganda, a chemistry group discovered that several organochlorine pesticides—especially DDT metabolites and dieldrin—were present in maternal blood, breast milk, and placenta in higher amounts in rural Uganda than urban areas, underscoring the need for better pesticide regulation and monitoring. In West Africa, a physics network investigated how to characterise malaria infected erythrocytes with different microscopy techniques. In Zimbabwe, a chemistry group discovered that five medicinal plants—especially *Viscum verrucosum*— strongly can slow cancer-cell growth but may cause blood-cell damage at high doses, highlighting both their anticancer promise and the need for safety checks.

In Bolivia, a chemistry group analysed pollen composition, and the physicochemical properties of honey produced by three species of stingless bees in order to determine the quality of the honey.

There are also many connections to ***SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy*****.** In Ethiopia, a physics group study of cathode materials for LFP batteries ($LiFePO_4$) is a prominent cathode material for lithium-ion batteries. The same group also investigated nanoparticle-enhanced thin-film organic solar cells. Another physics group in Ethiopia, worked on improving perovskite solar cell films. A physics group in Mali analysed if photovoltaic solar energy can be a viable solution for electrifying Mali's rural areas not connected to the national grid, based on an assessment of the country's solar potential. In Bangladesh, a physics group studied magnetocaloric properties of perovskites to find out if Pb-doped manganites are effective candidates for applications in magnetic refrigeration and high-performance dielectric resonators (they are!). In Myanmar, a physics group studied how to optimise α-$NaFeO_2$ cathode materials for sodium-ion batteries. In Uganda, a physics group continued to develop and scale-up solar cookers with heat storage systems for domestic and institutional cooking applications. Also in Uganda, a chemistry group created a new electrode material from a CO_2-based plastic and showed that it works very well for energy-storage applications.

There are many connections to ***SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure*** through the many activities aiming to enhance scientific research. For example, a physics group in Bangladesh investigated manganese-doped zinc ferrite thin films for advanced sensing and electronics. In Zambia, a mathematics node studied statistical theory to enhance computational efficiency and support advanced training in mathematical statistics. In Nepal, the physics group investigated thin films as gas sensors. In Rwanda, there were several research findings in astrophysics and in cosmology. In Ethiopia, a chemistry group successfully synthesised a thermally stable copolymer for organic solar cell application. The same group also, investigated how water hyacinth leaves can be used as an ultra-stable metal-free bifunctional electrode for zinc-air batteries.

Quite many research findings are connected to ***SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation***. A mathematics network in Rwanda modelled the dynamics of pollutants in rivers. A physics group in Myanmar, investigated temperature effects in redox flow desalination systems. This study will provide guidance for improving the efficiency of electrochemical desalination technologies. In Zimbabwe, a physics group studied regional groundwater surface modelling in a region in Zambia. The dataset provides an important reference for the hydrogeology of the area and improves the understanding of underground water flow patterns that could affect future geothermal studies. A chemistry group in Burkina Faso, investigated the removal performance of lead and copper in water with local materials which are low-cost and eco-friendliness, and can be found in abundance. In Rwanda, a chemistry

group, discovered that volcanic gravel–based constructed wetlands achieved high pollutant removal and offer an effective, low-cost, and sustainable wastewater treatment option.

Also, the ***SDG 13 – Climate Action*** is well represented. The physics group in Mali, investigated the predictability of extreme precipitation events in the Sahel. They also assessed high-resolution regional climate models. In Rwanda, a physics group assessed historical variability, trends, and future changes in five standard climate indicators for extreme temperatures in Rwanda. The group also analysed trends and change points in six agroclimatic indicators across 56 stations in Rwanda's Eastern Province from 1981–2021, to improve seasonal forecasts and weather information for farmers, and targeted adaptation strategies. For more activities targeting the *SDG 13* please also see section *5.4 Outreach and policy influence.*

Some ISP-supported activities are connected ***SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities***. In Ethiopia, a physics group recorded and analysed seismic data during 2024 and 2025. In Bangladesh, a physics group found that rice-husk-derived silica is a scalable, energy-efficient platform for selective room-temperature gas sensing. In Tanzania, a physics group developed thermochromic thin films for smart windows.

Further, there are some contributions to ***SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production.*** In Laos, a physics group conducted a geophysical investigation to examine subsurface structures, particularly iron ore bodies.

A few research findings are connected to ***SDG 2 – Zero Hunger.*** A mathematics node in Zambia, used nationally representative data, to investigate childhood undernutrition trends in the country (2002–2018). In Myanmar, a physics group investigated heavy metal contamination and health risk assessment in rice.

Please also see the activities described in section 5.1, where ISP-supported groups and networks work with gender equality is described (*SDG 5 – Gender Equality*).

An essential part of ISP's overall goal is strengthening higher education at partner institutions. Target 4B in *SDG 4 – Quality Education*, calls for expanding the enrolment in higher education and scientific programmes through fellowships, one of ISP's main activities through supported groups and networks. In Zambia, a mathematics network, conducted a project strengthened postgraduate research in algebra by providing rigorous structural results for quasi-deformations of sl2(F), a mathematical object. [*Please see section 6.3 Students in supported activities]*.

Finally, there is a general alignment of ISP´s work with *SDG 17 – Partnerships to achieve the SDGs*, more specifically Target 17.9 aiming to "*enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation*".

[For a full list of activities, please see Appendix 1.2]



Photo 1: Mr Valens Habimana presenting his research findings, Rwanda (IPICS RWA:01).

5.2 Use of research results

One of ISP´s specific objectives is *to improve supported partners' ability to, on a longer term, use research results and acquired skills (…) having a favorable impact on society.*

This section presents the use of research findings and reported skills. Researchers from ISP-supported groups and networks have used their research results and skills as consultants for governments, municipalities, FAO, NGOs and companies (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Laos, Mali, Nepal, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe).

In Kenya, both Industry and private-sector clients increasingly seek a physics group's expertise for structural integrity assessment, safety evaluation, and environmental compliance monitoring. This is also the case for a physics group in Mali.

The telemedicine programme of a physics group continued at centres established by local entrepreneurs in many rural areas of Bangladesh, providing health consultation to the public. The same physics group also continued the 'Tele-Apa' scheme, in which female telemedicine operators provide healthcare services directly to marginalised groups such as disabled persons, women, children, and the elderly in their homes. This initiative has significantly increased healthcare accessibility for those unable to travel to Telemedicine Centers.

In West Africa, the chemistry network is represented in various regional and national organisations working with nutrition and food safety, e.g. SUN, Platforms for Nutrition, FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), WFP (World Food Program), and the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment.

The ISP-supported research groups and networks have also used their research results and skills in technical development and services. Some examples are presented below.

- The earthquake catalogue of Ethiopia that a physics group developed is now used to revise the national building code of the country.

- A physics group in Kenya serves as the technical consultant for the Clean Air Catalyst Project, implemented by the World Resources Institute (WRI) with funding from the IKEA Foundation. The project supports air quality monitoring in Nairobi to generate evidence for policy and regulatory action. The group successfully operated and maintained monitoring instrumentation and supported data generation.
- In Laos, a physics group serves as trainers for the use of geophysical equipment and data processing at the Laotian Department of Geology, Ministry of Energy and Mines, as well as for private companies. They also provide training on groundwater exploration for the Laotian Department of Water Resources.
- In Mali, the physics group continued to perform efficiency test of nine local made cookstoves for granting the quality label GWA+ a certification aimed at promoting clean, efficient cooking technologies that benefit the environment and public health, particularly in regions where traditional cooking methods are still in use.
- In Nepal, the physics group provided technical input and advisory support to government bodies and humanitarian organisations on lightning and electrical hazard mitigation, contributing to improved awareness and safer practices.
- In Zambia, a physics group was asked for consultancy to test for electrical performance of a defunct solar plant to enable them to re-use some of the panels for other projects in the rural Zambia by the National Technology Business Council.



Photo 2: Performance test of defunct solar plant in Zambia, November 2025 (IPPS ZAM:01).

- In Bangladesh, a physics group provided a service by performing measurements with their own equipment for other actors in society. In total, 620 samples were analysed with the group´s equipment.
- In Uganda, members in the mathematics network worked at the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) which results have direct applications to the medical sector.
- In Zimbabwe, a chemistry group member was selected to serve on a national technical committee mandated to develop soil quality standards for Zimbabwe. The committee's role is to establish scientifically sound, regulatory guidelines for assessing and managing soil health, including the identification of permissible limits for chemical contaminants and other pollutants.
- In Uganda, a chemistry group is is working with the NGO *Community Integrated Development Initiatives* to set up a small solid-waste treatment plant in Kampala.

- Also in Uganda, a chemistry group periodically monitors the quality of the treated effluent and also the quality of the treated water.

[A detailed list of all reported activities can be found in Appendix 1.3]



Photo 3: Patients of different age and gender taking therapy and health services during a free health camp organised in January and February 2025, Bangladesh (IPPS BAN:04).



Photo 4: Field work in communities of Chuquisaca region to identify pesticides in stingless bee products, Bolivia (IPICS BOL:01).

5.3 Outreach and policy influence

This section describes how supported groups and networks have *increased the visibility of the program* (one of ISP´s specific strategies) and how they have *improved supported partners' ability to, on a longer term, (…) engage in outreach activities having a favorable impact on society* (one of ISP´s specific objectives).

The outreach and policy influence activities of ISP-supported groups and networks are directed at governmental bodies, societal organisations, the general public, primary and high schools, university/college students, student organisations, universities/schools, industry, and other stakeholders. The activities aim to describe the research results and their relevance to a broader audience, and to influence decision-making at different levels of society.

Groups and networks worked in different ways to popularise science:
Through media:

- In Mali, the physics group´s results from using biogas-based cookstoves as an alternative to wood and charcoal stoves, were advertised across Bamako through various TV channels.
- The chemistry network in East and Central Africa, NAPRECA, has a YouTube channel where it is possible to see all webinars for 2025, https://www.youtube.com/@NAPRECA-Network.
- In Bolivia, the chemistry group strengthened their science communication efforts through the continued production of their podcast and the launch of the "Ciencia Express" initiative, which offers open sessions where researchers present their projects followed by discussions with the public. Also, the research findings were shared with local authorities, published in local social media, and featured on television and USFX's official social media platforms. https://www.youtube.com/@dicytusfx

Through events:

- In Ethiopia, a physics group designed a short summer training programme, from both public and private schools, for promising high school students who have completed Grade 11 and will enter Grade 12. The goal is to challenge the negative connotations associated with physics and to encourage interest in science in general, and physics in particular. At the conclusion of the programme, each student delivers a short oral presentation of their work to an audience of department staff and parents. The training program has been conducted for 10 consecutive summers, except in 2020 (due to the Covid-19 pandemic).
- The mathematics group in Ethiopia in collaboration with the Ethiopian Mathematics Professionals' Association organised the *Ethiopian National Mathematics Olympiad* for high school students.
- In Rwanda, the network in mathematics organised the Rwanda Mathematics Competition for secondary school students at all three stages (District, Provincial and National).
- In Ethiopia, a physics groups arranged several outreach activities to explain the seismic activities to the general public and to some embassies in Addis Ababa.
- In Bangladesh, a physics group in collaboration with BiBeat Ltd., organised a month-long free health camp. During this program, Pulsed Electromagnetic Field (PEMF) and iontophoresis-based treatments were provided for the management of pain and related conditions, in addition to general health services and medical consultations which were given to about 250 individuals. The initiative aimed to extend affordable therapeutic services to the community and raise awareness about non-invasive treatment options.
- In Uganda, the mathematics network carries out much of its outreach activities together with *Uganda Mathematical Society*. The activities include the annual National Mathematics

Contests for primary schools, secondary schools, and universities, and the identification of participants in regional *and* international Mathematics Olympiads. For 2025, the total number of participants was 20,626, of which 12,703 were in the primary school category, 5,207 in the O level category, 2,645 in the A level category and 71 at university level. Prizes were awarded to the best performers in each category in July 2025. Compared to the year 2024, (17,913 participants), this was a 15% increase in the total number of participants. The best performing students from the 2024 National Mathematics Contests took part in regional and international olympiads, that is: *East African Junior Mathematical Olympiad* (EAMO-J) which started in 2024, where brilliant young stars below 16 years competed, *The East African Mathematical Olympiad* (EAMO), *International Mathematics Summer Camp* (IMSC), *International Mathematical Olympiad* (IMO) and *The Pan African Mathematical Olympiad* (PAMO).

- In Tanzania, mathematics network members participated in the *International Day of Mathematics celebration* held on 14 March 2025. During the event, students from primary to secondary schools were introduced to various real-life applications of mathematics.



Photo 5: Primary and secondary school pupils during the IDM day in Zanzibar (IPMS CoRE-Math UDSM).

- In Nepal, physics group member installed lightning protection systems on seven buildings (five school buildings and two municipal buildings) as part of a pilot project, aiming to enhance protection against lightning.

Through education and trainings:

- In Bangladesh a physics group organised two training programmes for five local telemedicine entrepreneurs. These sessions focused on improving service delivery, enhancing technical skills, and ensuring better patient outcomes.
- Also in Bangladesh, a chemistry network performed their technical training programmes for other universities as well as chemicals and pharmaceuticals industries.

- In Bolivia, the chemistry group conducted field visits to rural communities, where they trained meliponiculturists in sampling procedures and organised workshops on best practices regarding pollinator management and pesticide use in meliponiculture and agroecology.
- In Laos, the physics group served as trainers for using geophysical equipment and data processing at the Laotian Ministry of Energy and Mines.
- In Nepal, Dr Shriram Sharma facilitated several trainings/workshops on safety measures against lightning and electrical hazards. The trainings were held for Nepal Army Team, Kathmandu Metropolitan City Ward 23 and authorities in rural municipalities.
- In Bangladesh, physics group members served as the examiner of postgraduate theses in different public universities.
- In Tanzania, a physics group trained school teachers and technicians on simple repair and maintenance techniques of school laboratory apparatus at several schools.



Photo 6: Maintanace and training in repairing laboratory equipment in Tanzania (IPPS TAN:01/2).



Photo7: Group members organised open-house event for awareness raising on chemistry for high school students, Laos (IPICS LAO:04).

The policy influence by the groups and networks is considerable, mainly on a national level when partners act as consultants to national governments. For example:

- In Bangladesh, a group member continued to serve as a member of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Strategic and Technical Advisory Group for Medical Devices (STAG-MEDEV). The STAG-MEDEV functions as an advisory body to the WHO on global policies and

strategies related to medical devices and health technologies. It provides guidance to WHO on global priorities and emerging issues in the field.

- In Tanzania, members of the physics group participated in governmental and international committees, e.g. Tanzania Bureau of Standards, Tanzania Institute of Education, Institute of Physics UK, Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology.
- In Burkina Faso, Egypt, Rwanda and Uganda, chemistry group members various positions in national committees, agencies and governmental bodies, for example Burkinabe National Council for Organic Agriculture (CNABio), Rwanda Standard Board and the Rwanda Environmental Management Agency (REMA), Rwanda Food and Drug Authority. Ugandan National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Uganda the Agricultural Chemicals Board and Egyptian Drug Agency (EDA).
- In Bangladesh, one physics group member continued to serve as the Reviewer of the projects of the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS), Ministry of Education, and another physics group member is still a member of the Medical Device Evaluation Committee of the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA), Government of Bangladesh.
- In Ethiopia, a physics group member is involved as chairperson of a committee that is undertaking an initiative to reforest Galema Mountain located in Arsi area of Oromia Regional State.
- In Kenya, three members of another physics group, continued to be members of the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBs) in three different committees: Renewable Energy and Energy Management, Solar and Wind Technologies, and Dosimetry, Radiotracer and Non-Destructive Testing. The committees contribute to the development and harmonisation of national standards aligned with International Organization for Standardization (ISO) frameworks, supporting quality assurance and regulatory policy in Kenya.
- In Laos, the chemistry group's data on wastewater and pollution-load data from Vientiane's drainage canals give local authorities an essential baseline for identifying pollution hotspots and planning future urban wastewater-treatment systems.
- The advanced analytical skills acquired by one of the chemistry groups in Laos—particularly in chromatography (GC/MS, HPLC) and sample preparation (SPME, SPE)—are directly transferred to the national workforce. Graduates from the group have moved into positions within governmental laboratories, environmental agencies, and the private sector, applying their specialised skills to improve national standards for environmental monitoring and chemical analysis.
- In Uganda, chemistry group members were tasked to review and update of Uganda's National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention.

[A full list of reported activities can be found in Appendix 1.4]



Photo 8: Participants in the 87th training programme of the chemistry network in Bangladesh (IPICS NITUB).



Photo 9. Groundwater management training in Laos, 2025 (IPPS LAO:01).

5.4 Gender equality

This section describes ISP´s objective to improve gender equality in supported research groups and scientific networks, and ISP specific strategy to continue promoting gender equality among supported partners.

As in 2023 and 2024 ISP could not allocate any Gender Equality Grant in 2025, but nevertheless several groups and networks continued to engage in initiatives focused on gender. The Gender Equality Grants were earmarked extra funds for activities designed to promote gender balance in science at the supported institutions. They were introduced by ISP in 2017, for a maximum amount of 30,000 SEK/year over three years. Until and including 2022, groups and networks in physics and mathematics could apply for these grants, while groups and networks in chemistry could use their regular ISP allocations for gender-related activities. Following the inception of the Gender Equality Grants, an increased awareness of gender issues was observed, with the majority of supported groups and networks applying for the Gender Equality Grant. Importantly, ISP had noted a positive trend, after a while, with an increased number of female students in MSc and PhD programmes in the supported groups and networks. As mentioned in some of the activity reports, the ISP Gender Grants had a significant impact in supporting female students in many countries. These funds allowed many female students to continue their university education despite the common lack of financial support from their families.

ISP every year allocates funds to the network Eastern Africa Network for Women in Basic Science (EANWoBAS) whose mission is to improve gender balance and gender bias awareness in the basic sciences. Founded by female mathematicians and physicists from Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, the network is coordinated from Uganda. Today it is also joined by researchers in chemistry and Kenya. EANWoBAS often co-organises workshops and school visits via its branches in several countries, with other ISP-supported groups, as well as with different university departments.

As in the last two years, in 2025 the total budget for activities promoting gender balance has been limited to the allocation of SEK 200,000 to the EANWoBAS network. Extra sponsoring was offered to a female PhD student to attend a conference, and ISP co-sponsored the 5th edition of the African Network of Women in Astronomy (AfNWA)-ISP 2025 Award for Women in Astronomy in Africa. AfNWA is a sub-committee of the African Astronomical Society (AfAS) and the awards aim to recognise and support the scientific achievements and contributions of women in Astronomy in Africa.

In 2025, many groups and networks organised a large number of activities promoting gender equality in science and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) studies despite not having received any earmarked funds from ISP, showing that the awareness that was elicited by the Gender Equality Grants still persists. Awareness and engagement were at the basis of the efforts of many groups to create inclusive and supportive research environments for female students and staff, to attract female students and to encourage women to undertake a career in STEM disciplines.

The low number of females choosing a career in STEM is a severe problem worldwide and is a waste of talents and resources.



Photo 10: School visits and inspiration talk on STEM in Tanzania (IPPS TAN:01/2).

The opposite situation occurs at the Myanmar universities of Mandalay and Yangon where the gender balance is reversed, with a higher number of female students. This trend is primarily attributed to limited post-graduation employment opportunities and the lack of entrepreneurship skills in university education. These factors tend to draw more male students toward institutions like Defense Services Academy and medical/technical universities, where job prospects are perceived as better.

Various initiatives took place in 2025 with the aim of increasing female recruitment into science, as well as training and internships for undergraduate students, financial support for female students, and mentorship activities to encourage student retention.

Many groups focused on female students in primary and secondary schools, and organised school visits, science camps, or other types of events, to elicit the female pupils' interest in STEM disciplines and to encourage their access to university programs in science and technology. Most activities included motivational talks, presentations of the possible careers in STEM disciplines, meetings with female researchers, and university teachers serving as role models.

The activities can be grouped into the following main tracks:

1. Activities to support female researchers
    - Research and Professional Development was provided by a mathematics node, to encourage female postgraduate students and early-career researchers to participate in network seminars, workshops, and collaborative projects (Zambia).
    - Organisation of the IUPAC Global Women's Breakfast 2026 (Bangladesh).

2. Activities to encourage female undergraduate students to continue to Master´s studies and/or PhD studies
    - A chemistry group started an Undergraduate Research Assistantship Programme (URAP), to specifically encourage female students to undertake research under the

mentorship of the group members. Due to recent drastic budget cuts this initiative was suspended (Uganda).

- Science communication initiatives such as the podcast and the "Ciencia Express" sessions in Bolivia were undertaken. At the podcast women researchers could present their research and share their experiences (Bolivia).

3. Affirmative actions directed at female students
    - Facilitate the participation of female students and researchers in activities like seminars and workshops by supporting their accommodation (Bangladesh, Burkina, Tanzania).
    - Partial waivers of training fees were in place, when possible, for female participants to chemistry training programs (Bangladesh).
    - Female students were provided with laptops to facilitate their studies (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso).
    - Economically disadvantaged female students in physics were offered transportation support using ISP funds for their studies (Bangladesh).
    - Female students were given priority in the usage of ISP funds by providing essential chemicals, consumables, and logistical support for their research activities within a physics group (Bangladesh).
    - Female students were provided with scholarships (Zambia).
    - Priority was given to female graduate students in the student competition for the stipend support (Ethiopia).
    - A chemistry team is continuing with an internal policy of improving the gender balance by recruiting more female trainees. (Uganda).
    - Three female students graduated and joined a physics group thanks to targeted scholarships (Zambia).

4. Meetings to inspire female school pupils and higher education students through role-models
    - Career talks and mentorship programmes in secondary schools were conducted to promote female engagement in STEM fields (Zambia).
    - Members of a physics group took part to events organised by their faculty to promote gender inclusion in STEM fields, with mentorship and peer support, and addressing challenges affecting female participation and retention in engineering and technology programmes (Kenya).
    - At a physics group, awareness campaigns were conducted including the introduction of examples of women scientists (Mali).

5. Activities to inspire primary and secondary school female students

    School visits

    - A network conducted visits to high schools to sensitise girls to choose STEM subjects in higher education (Rwanda).
    - Secondary school girls from various schools across Tanzania attended a university seminar focusing on science-related subjects (Tanzania).
    - A physics group carried out outreach activities for over six weeks for thirty high school students (14 females and 16 males) to promote science in general, and physics in particular (Ethiopia).

- In 2025, a physics group visited to 10 secondary schools in the Dar es Salaam and Pwani regions to encourage and sensitise female students to take STEM subjects, particularly physics (Tanzania).
- Some members of staff also organised a Robotics Boot camps involving secondary school students in robotics projects, Dar es Salaam (Tanzania).



Robiotics Boot Camp at Physics Departent University of Dar es Salaam

- The Association for Women in Mathematics in Africa (AWoM) organised and conducted a one-day mentorship and support visit to St. Bruno Kanjuki *RIC* Primary School in Kayunga District. The visit included inspirational mentorship, needs assessment, material support, and community engagement. As part of the material support, shoes were provided to the girls in need, as the lack of proper shoes represents a serious hinder to regularly attend school (Uganda).
- The Association for Women in Mathematics in Africa (AWoM) organised and conducted a mentorship and outreach visit to Kasumba Nursery and Primary School in Mubende District on 2 August 2025 to identify, support, and nurture young mathematical talent in Uganda in connection with the Pan African Mathematics Olympiad (PAMO) and the International Mathematics Olympiad (IMO). (Uganda)
- The Association for Women in Mathematics in Africa (AWoM) organised and conducted a mentorship and outreach visit to Makindye Secondary School - Careers Day, on 11 July 2025 (Uganda).

Science Camps

- A Mathematics Camp (MATHCAMP) was implemented to nurture talents, build confidence, and provide mentorship, with focus on supporting girls in mathematics (Uganda).

Competitions and Mathematics run

- As an activity of the Eastern Africa Network of Women in the Basic Sciences (EANWoBAS) the International Day of Mathematics in Uganda was celebrated with a RUN4MATH marathon in Tororo Girls´ School Run, organised by the Busitema University. The Mathematics Run combines physical activity with mathematics awareness, mentorship, and community engagement. Each year, the event is organised under a different theme aligned with the goals of the International Day of

Mathematics and focuses on inclusivity, inspiration, and the promotion of mathematics beyond the classroom (Uganda).

- Visit to Nakaseke International College, Nakaseke District, Uganda, in connection to the annual Mathematics Run. The visit was conducted as part of AWoM's early engagement strategy with host institutions. The primary objective of the visit was to initiate discussions with the school administration and teaching staff regarding the hosting and organisation of the 2026 Mathematics Run (Uganda).
- The Uganda Applied Mathematics Olympiad (UAMO) was initiated by EANWoBAS to connect classroom mathematics with problem-solving, critical thinking, and real-world contexts, in collaboration with key stakeholders. UAMO will be officially launched in 2026 (Uganda).

[For a full list of gender activities, please see Appendix 1.1]

6. ISP in numbers

In the following section it is described in numbers how ISP-supported groups and networks fulfil ISP´s objectives and strategies;

In *Supported groups and networks:*

- To plan, manage and carry out high-quality scientific research (ISP specific objective).
- To facilitate partners' collaboration with better resourced host institutions. (ISP general objective).
- To build on local, needs-based ownership of research activities and training, applying a collegial approach to collaboration, and with a focus of improving the local conditions for developing scientific activities. (ISP general strategy)

In *Students in supported activities:*

- To support scientific research groups and scientific networks in partner countries to develop their research activities and postgraduate training (ISP general objective).
- To improve supported partners' ability to train high-quality postgraduates at the Master and PhD levels (ISP specific objective).

In *Publications, Conference contributions, Arranged meetings:*

- To improve supported partners' ability to disseminate research results at high-quality venues (ISP specific objective).
- To continue increasing the visibility of the program (ISP specific strategy).
- To continue contributing to the enhancement of quality at all levels with supported partners, including establishment of a well-developed academic and scientific research culture (ISP specific strategy).

In *Expenditures:*

- To increase supported partners' financial independence of ISP, with the ultimate goal of becoming self-sufficient and sustaining on grants awarded in open competition (ISP specific objectives).
- To continue increasing supported partner's skills with regard to financial management (ISP specific strategy).

6.1 Supported groups and networks

In 2025, in total **34 research groups** were supported in 14 countries *[Table 1].* There were 14 research groups in chemistry, one in mathematics, and 19 in physics. *[For a list of all research groups and what they do, please see Appendix 2.1]*

Five of the countries are classified as low-income economies and nine as lower-middle income economies, while 11 are denoted as least developed countries (LDC). All countries were classified as fragile, six on the "red alert" level, and eight on the "orange warning" level. Regarding the nine LDCs, five were also low-income economies, and six belonged to the most fragile category.

Table 1. Number of research groups supported in listed countries 2025, and the situation in the countries with regard to income level (World Bank fiscal year 2025),[3] developmental state (2025),[4] and fragility (2025).[5] Countries that score between 60.0 and 89.9 are classified in the orange "Warning" category; those scoring between 90.0 and 120.0 in the red "Alert" category. LDC = Least Developed Country.

Country	Chemistry (IPICS)	Mathematics (IPMS)	Physics (IPPS)	World Bank income level	UN Develop-mental State	Fragile State Index Rating (0-120)
Bangladesh[6]	BAN:05		BAN:02/2 BAN:04 BAN:05	Lower-middle	LDC	85.9
Bolivia	BOL:01			Lower-middle	Not a LDC	69.4
Burkina Faso	BUF:01 BUF:02		BUF:01	Low	LDC	94.2
Ethiopia	ETH:01 ETH:02 ETH:05	AAU	ETH:01 ETH:02 ETH:03	Low	LDC	98.1
Kenya			KEN:01/2	Lower-middle	Not a LDC	86.5
Laos[12]	LAO:01 LAO:04		LAO:01	Lower-middle	LDC	73.8
Mali			MAL:01	Low	LDC	97.3
Myanmar			MYA:01 MYA:02	Lower-middle	LDC	100
Nepal[12]			NEP:01	Lower-middle	LDC	78.8
Rwanda	RWA:01		RWA:01	Low	LDC	81.8
Tanzania			TAN:01/2	Lower-middle	LDC	75.7
Uganda	UGA:01 UGA:02		UGA:01 UGA:02	Low	LDC	91.1
Zambia			ZAM:01	Lower-middle	LDC	81.2
Zimbabwe	ZIM:01 ZIM:02		ZIM:01	Lower-middle	Not a LDC	95.7
Total number	**14**	**1**	**19**			

One of ISP´s specific strategies is *to continue supporting research groups in complementarity with Sida's bilateral programs and facilitate regional cooperation*. ISP supports research groups and networks in complementarity with Sida's bilateral programmes in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania.

Another of ISP´s general strategy is *to facilitate partners' collaboration with better resourced host institutions*. ISP facilitates regional cooperation since the early 1980´s, when it was decided to start supporting **scientific networks**. ISP believes that regional and interregional cooperation is a fruitful

[3] https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups 2026-03-25.
[4] https://unctad.org/topic/least-developed-countries/list 2026-03-24.
[5] https://fragilestatesindex.org/ 2026-03-25.
[6] UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/76/8 adopted in 2021, decided that **Bangladesh, Laos and Nepal** will graduate from the list of least developed countries five years after the adoption of the resolution, i.e. on 24 November 2026.

approach to overcome many constraints, adding value to participating scientists and their institutions by generating complementary scientific activities, giving access to advanced equipment, and increasing the human capital needed for good standard postgraduate education.

In addition to the research groups, totally **20 scientific networks** with nodes in 38 countries were supported in 2025 *[Table 2]:* eight in chemistry, seven in mathematics[7], and four in physics. In addition, a network formed to promote the participation of women in basic sciences was supported.

[Please see the list of all networks and what they do in Appendix 2.2]

Table 2. Scientific networks supported by ISP, by region and by ISP programme.

Region	Chemistry	Mathematics	Physics	Gender	Total
Africa	ANCAP ANEC NAPRECA RABiotech	BURK:01 APREA CoRS EAALG PDEAPP CoRE-Math	AFSIN EAARN ESARSWAG MSSEESA	EANWoBAS	15
Asia	ANFEC ANRAP CAB-CCS NITUB	SEAMaN – NUOL			5
Total	8	7	4	1	20

One of ISP´s specific strategies says that ISP should *focus on supporting physics, chemistry and mathematics in present partner countries (…).* In 2025, no **new support** was initiated.

The mathematics network EAUMP **changed name** to CoRE-Math (*Africa-Europe Cluster of Excellence in Mathematics)* and is one of the Clusters of Excellence, an initiative led by ARUA (*African Research Universities Alliance*) and The Guild (*The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities*). From 2026, the mathematics network AAU/ETH:01 will be integrated in CoRE-Math.

In total one group and two network nodes were **phased out** in 2025:

- One chemistry group (IPICS ZAM:02[8]) was phased out because of inactivity towards ISP.
- In the mathematics network SEAMan, the nodes in Cambodia (Royal University of Phnom Penh) and Myanmar (University of Myanmar) were phased out. Communication with Myanmar has been hard since the military coup d´etat in 2021.

In all, ISP supported 34 research groups and 20 scientific networks in 2025 *[Table 3].*

Table 3. Number of research groups and scientific networks supported in 2020-2025, and the yearly averages 2008-2013 and 2014-2019.

[7] From 2026 the mathematics networks APREA, CoRS, EAALG and PDEAPP will be phased-out.

[8] IPICS ZAM:02 focused on Natural products research for non-communicable and communicable diseases and was supported by ISP between the years 2011-2024.

Supported activities	Average 2008-2013	Average 2014-2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of groups and networks supported each year.	49	59	56	63	63	63	55	54

6.2 Staff in supported activities

In 2025, in total 838 staff members (918 in 2024) were involved in ISP-supported activities, 22% of them were women (29% in 2024).

In all, 22% (21% in 2024) of the group leaders and network coordinators and 33% (24% in 2024) of the deputies, were women.

The distribution according to discipline and gender was:

- Chemistry: 46% women leaders and 36% deputies (2024: 22% and 41%).
- Mathematics: 0% women leaders and 0% deputies (2024: 10% and 0%).
- Physics: 20% women leaders and 0% women deputies (2024: 20% and 16%).

[For a table of the gender proportion of staff, please see Appendix 2.3]



Photo 11: Team meeting – Group leader Jean Claude W. Ouédraogo, PhD student Tegwendé Tibnongdo Zabré, postdoc Bassalia Ouattara and MSc student Céline Kaboré, Burkina Faso (IPICS BUF:01).



Photo 12: Group members and colleagues at the science fair University of Yangon, Myanmar posing in front of their exhibition display (IPPS MYA:02).

6.3 Students in supported activities

The students reported to ISP enjoy ISP support to various degrees. Some may even be supported by other sources. Still, the ISP groups and networks make up the platform for the students' training, and therefore all reported students are accounted for here.

PhD and MSc students

In 2025, in total 968 postgraduate students (Master, Licentiate and PhD level) were active in ISP-supported research groups and networks (1,177 in 2024).

The exact number of the **PhD students** in 2025 was 495, (2024: 566 students, 31% women) with 30% women students. 29 of them (28% women) were sandwich PhD students. The distribution according to discipline and gender was:

- Chemistry: 154 PhD students, 31% women (36% F in 2024)
- Mathematics: 157 PhD students, 11% women (14% in 2024)
- Physics: 185 PhD students, 44% women (42% in 2024).

When it comes to **MSc students** in 2025, there were 472 MSc students (611 in 2024), 33% are women (36% in 2024). The distribution according to discipline and gender was:

- Chemistry: 136 MSc students, 42% women (220, 45% in 2024)
- Mathematics: 99 MSc students, 16% women (148, 20% in 2024)
- Physics: 237 MSc students, 35% women (243, 39% in 2024).

Since last year there is a considerable decrease in the number of PhDs and MSc students. The share of woman PhD and MSc students has decreased in two of the ISP programmes.

MSc and PhD graduations

Today, most postgraduate graduates are local students. This is what to expect considering the reduced budget allocated to the groups and networks in 2025.

PhD graduations

The actual numbers for PhD graduates in 2025 are:

- Totally 92 PhD students graduated, 17% were women (in 2024: 84, 27% were women).
- Of these 92 PhD graduates, 14 were PhD sandwich students, 21% women (in 2024: 26, 46% women) and 78 were local students, 46% women (in 2024: 53, 21% women).

The numbers for each ISP programme are:

- Chemistry: 36 PhD graduates, 22% women (42% in 2024).
- Mathematics: 24 PhD graduates, 8% women (10% in 2024).
- Physics: 32 PhD graduates, 19% women (21% in 2024).

The average time PhD students take to graduation has remained the same over the years (close to 5 years), but in 2025 it is lower for sandwich (4,8 years) and higher for local students (5,8 years). It is the same as previous two years.

In 2025, there is a slight increase in PhD graduates. But the share of women PhD graduates has decreased profoundly. The share of woman PhD graduates in chemistry and physics is higher than in mathematics.



Photo 13: PhD thesis defense of Nana COULIBALY, Mali (IPPS MAL:01).

MSc graduations

Actual numbers for MSc, MPhil and Licenciate graduates in 2025: 192 MSc students graduated (220 in 2024). Of these 192, three were MSc sandwich students (67% women) and the rest were local students.

For each ISP programme the numbers were:

- Chemistry: 63 MSc graduates, 43% women (78, 51% in 2024)
- Mathematics: 47 MSc graduates, 23% women (63, 14% in 2024)
- Physics: 82 MSc graduates, 39% women (81, 34% in 2024).

For MSc graduations in 2025, the number of MSc students in chemistry and mathematics has decreased, and in physics it is more or less the same as previous year. The same trend goes for the share of women MSc graduates: decreased share in chemistry and mathematics, and an increase for physics.

[For tables and lists, please see Appendix 2.4]



Photo 14: Graduation of PhD students at University of Rwanda, October 2025: Dr Theogene Ndacyayisenga (PhD in Space Physics, full ISP-support), Dr Kagabo Safari Abdou (PhD in, Atmospheric Physics, full ISP-support) and Dr Sebaniga Ndakize Joseph (PhD in Climate Science, full ISP-support). The photo pictures students and their supervisors (IPPS RWA:01).



Photo 15: ANFEC Training on Atomic Absorption Spectroscopic Techniques for Food Analysis in Laos (IPICS ANFEC).

6.4 Publications

One of ISP´s specific strategies is *to continue contributing to the enhancement of quality at all levels with supported partners, including establishment of a well-developed academic and scientific research culture*. This is measured by the number of articles in high-quality peer-reviewed journals and contributions to high-level conferences. ISP also keeps track of the number of seminar series the research groups and networks arrange.

In 2025, the ISP-supported research groups and networks published 573 articles (441 in 2024). Compared with last year this is an increase.

- In chemistry, 235 publications (241 in 2024).
- In mathematics, 163 publications (129 in 2024).
- In physics, 175 publications (205 in 2024).

Since 2010, ISP has distinguished between "quality publications" and publications in journals of unknown quality. From 2018, articles also in journals by "predatory" publishers have been recorded.

The quality publications are defined as those appearing:

- With Clarivate Analytics Impact Factors (IF)[9] in Web of Science (WoS)[10] and/or in the *Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Series and Publishers*. The latter is operated jointly between the National Board of Scholarly Publishing (NPU) and Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills on behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

The publications in journals of unknown quality are those not listed in the two above databases but not published by predatory publishers.

Journals by predatory publishers are considered to be those appearing in:

- Cabell´s Predatory Report.

In 2025, 363 (63%) (in 2024: 361, 82%) publications reported were in quality journals, whereas 51, 9% (in 2024: 48, 11%) were in journals by predatory publishers. ISP will continue to make particular efforts to inform about the risk of wasting scientific research results in predatory journals.[11]

In 2025, networks and groups in Africa are represented in the predatory statistics in all three ISP programmes. Particularly networks in West Africa are overrepresented. The majority of ISP supported groups and networks have an awareness of the problem with predatory publishers, possibly at least partly because of ISP's efforts to promote publications in quality journals.

One of ISP´s specific strategies says that ISP should *continue increasing the visibility of the program.* That´s one of the reasons ISP requires that groups and networks to give credit to ISP/Sida when they publish or present at a conference.

The rate of **acknowledgements** of ISP in published articles has ranged between 27% and 33% since monitoring started in 2016, and in 2025 the acknowledgement rate for ISP is 33%. Observing the past low figures, one should however consider the nature of ISP support, which is intended to strengthen

[9] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impact_factor 2026-04-08.
[10] https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/smart-search 2026-04-08.
[11] https://awandahl.github.io/isp_60_choosing_journal/ 2026-04-08.

the research capacity and is directed to institutionally affiliated research groups and scientific networks. As research capacity increases, attraction of additional research funding in openly competitive calls will increase, resulting in research activities that do not acknowledge ISP support when published. Nevertheless, the supported ISP partner will continue to report all publications to ISP, because they reflect the overall research capacity and not only of ISP funding as such.

As in the years before, mathematics has the lowest acknowledgement rate:

- Chemistry: 34%
- Mathematics: 8%
- Physics: 54%

Why is the rate of acknowledgement in the mathematics programme consistently lower than the other programmes? The following issues may contribute to the differences:

- In the mathematical sciences, there is less of a tradition to acknowledge financial support in publications, possibly manifested in the fact that many journals in mathematical sciences do not feature any acknowledgement section at all, which may impair the possibilities to express acknowledgement of ISP support.
- The ISP mathematics consists primarily of networks and publications reported by scientific networks which appear to lack acknowledgement of ISP support to a larger degree than publications reported by research groups. The explanation may be that in many networks, ISP supports networking more than research activities. Still, research activities carried out by network members are reported when published, as an expression of the development of research capacity that is partially a result of the networking supported by ISP. But ISP is not acknowledged because the research itself was supported by other sources.

[*See the full list of publications in Appendix 2.5*]

Table 4. Summary of publication data for 2025, by category and programme. The number of publications (Publ.) in scientific journals is specified to those with and without Thomson Reuters (TR) impact factors (IF) or/and NCDR ranking, and whether ISP funding was acknowledged (yes) or not (no).

Publication category	Africa		Asia		Latin America		Total	
ISP acknowledged	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	No
Publ. in Scientif. Quality J. (TR or/and NCRD ranked)	93	216	18	34	1	1	**112**	**251**
Publ. in Other Scientific Journals ("unranked")	22	84	24	13	1	1	**47**	**98**
Publ. in Journals by "predatory publishers"	18	33	0	0	0	0	**18**	**33**
Books, Chapters, Popular Publ., Technical Reports, etc.	10	2	0	2	0	0	**10**	**4**
Total number of publications (yes/no)	**143**	**335**	**42**	**49**	**2**	**2**	187	386
Grand total	**478**		**91**		**4**		**573**	

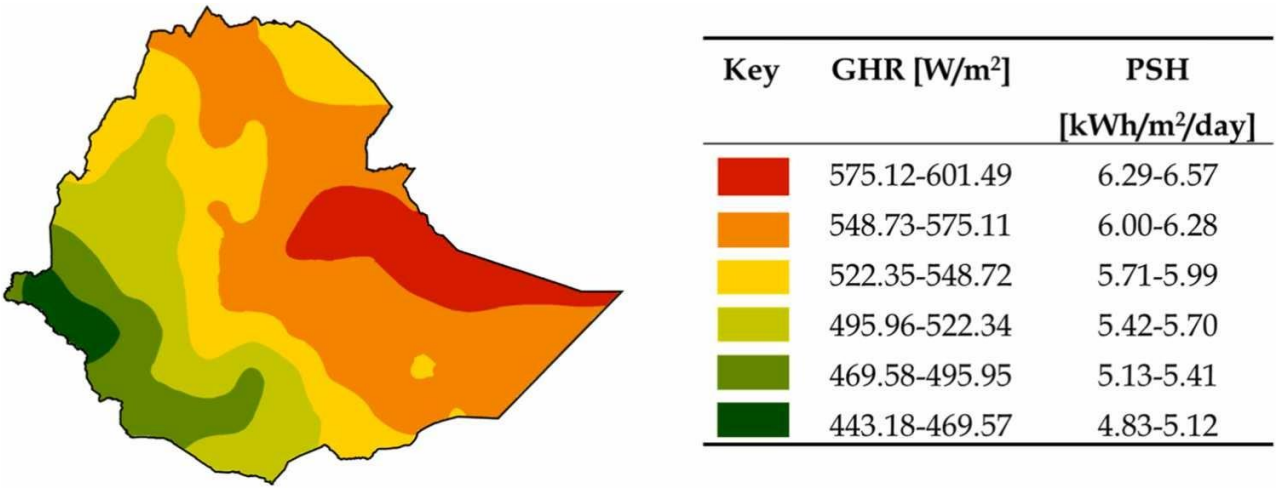


Photo 16: In 2024, the research group published an article on the positioning of solar panels (including inclination angle and orientation). In 2025, they supplemented their previous study and further investigated the average annual distribution of global horizontal radiation (GHR in W/m^2) and peak sun hour (PSH in kWh/m^2/day) over Ethiopia. The project is highly relevant and applicable to energy policy and management. The research on this issue was published in *Energy Reports*, 13, 3369 (2025). (IPPS ETH:05)

6.5 Conferences contributions

For 2025, in total 254 (261 in 2024) contributions at scientific conferences were reported by groups and networks, 56% of them at international meetings (75% in 2024). The number of international contributions continues to be high (in 2019 it was only 24%). The high number is an effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, since many conferences afterwards turned into hybrid mode, making online participation easy. *[Table 5]*

Table 5. Yearly number of conference contributions, and share at international conferences, in previous Sida agreement periods and in 2020 to 2025.

Indicator	2008-13*	2014-19	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
o) Total number of yearly conference contributions and proportion international.	235	392	317	339	473	349	265	254
	39%	36%	47%	36%	58%	54%	75%	56%

Usually, there is a significant variation over the years in the distribution of contributions between international, regional and national meetings. In 2025, the regional contributions were in minority (11%), followed by national (34%) and then international contributions (56%).

Besides the share of contributions at international conferences, the share of oral communications is also seen as a quality indicator. In 2025, the percentage was 81% for oral contributions (77% in 2024).

[*Please see the full list of conference contributions in Appendix 2.6*]



Photo 17: The conference of the local chapter NAPRECA-Zimbabwe in collaboration with the Royal Society of Chemistry, Pan Africa Chemistry Network, and Zimbabwe Chemical Society. (IPICS NAPRECA)

6.6 Arranged scientific meetings

A total of 56 scientific meetings with in total 4,471 participants were arranged by ISP-supported groups and networks in 2025 (47 meetings, 2,442 participants in 2024).

In Africa, 32 meetings were arranged in 14 countries:

- 19 (23 in 2024) by chemistry partners
- 6 (10 in 2024) by mathematics partners
- 7 (4 in 2024) by physics partners.

In Asia, 13 meetings were arranged in four countries:

- 13 (3 in 2024) by chemistry partners
- 0 (0 in 2024) by mathematics partners
- 11 (7 in 2024) by physics partners.

[*Please see the full list of Arranged meetings in Appendix 2.7*]



Photo 18: Professor Stanley Mukanganyama delivering his keynote address at the 2025 Annual Conference of the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Society of Zimbabwe - BMBSZ (IPICS ZIM:01).

6.7 Expenditures

In 2025, the **total available budget** from ISP for research groups and networks amounted to 7,8 MSEK, calculated as the sum of the total allocations for 2025 plus the balances brought forward from 2024 – the latter amounted to 1,7 MSEK, about 22% of the total available budget.

The total expenditures for research groups and networks in 2025 amounted to 6,04 MSEK, representing approximately 77% (84% in 2024) of the total available budget.

The reported **research funding from other sources than ISP** in 2025 amounted to 10,2 MSEK, which is higher than in 2024 but lower in comparison to the years before (see indicator e in Table 6).[12] This accounted for 57% of the total available budget at the aggregated level (i.e., ISP funding plus research funding from other sources than ISP; see indicator e.a in Table 6).

The **institutional co-funding** reported by the groups, in the form of **in-kind contributions**, amounted to 17,4 MSEK in 2025.

The **total available resources** to the supported research groups and networks, calculated as the sum of in-kind contributions, research funding from other sources, and the ISP total available budget, amounted to 35,5 MSEK.

ISP´s total available budget contributed 22% of the total available resources. Overall, institutional co-funding accounted for 49% of the total available resources, substantially lower than the corresponding figure of 74% in 2024.

[12] The exact values of the reported research funding from other sources than ISP in 2025 is SEK 10 185 952, and the reported in-kind contributions for 2025 is SEK 17 463 307.For a list of all other funding, please see *Appendices Expenditures 2.8.*

The research funding from other sources plus the in-kind contributions, amounted to 78% of the total available resources, slightly lower than in 2024 (see indicator e.b in Table 6).

Table 6. ISP indicators of the outcome d and e. Total values for previous Sida agreements periods, and the figures for 2020 to 2025.

Indicator	2008-2013	2014-2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
d) Expenditures (MSEK) in relation to ISP available budget (allocations plus balances brought forward)*	85% (113/132)	87% (156/180)	72% (19/26)	79% (27/34)	93% (20/22)	92% (13,6/14,9)	84% (9,7/11,5)	77% (6,04/7,8)
e) Yearly amount of funding granted from other sources than ISP (OS).	11,5 MSEK	34,7 MSEK	53,9 MSEK	22 MSEK	44 MSEK	26 MSEK	8,6MSEK	10,2 MSEK
e.a. Percent of OS in respect to the sum of OS+ISP total funding	34%	50%	67%	64%	60%	64%	43%	57%
e.b. Percent of OS + In kind contributions with respect to the total resources available (OS+ In kind contributions + ISP total funding)	n/a	73%	81%	70%	78%	82%	85%	78%

*Expenditures include transfers to groups/networks for payments from local accounts, which may not have been fully used locally in the same year.

Management of Expenditures

Each group and network is granted a yearly allocation, decided by the ISP board after an application and assessment procedure involving the programmes' scientific reference groups. The use of the allocated funding is distinguished between:

- expenditures carried out locally, after the transfer of funds to a local account;
- expenditures by payments to third parties carried out by ISP.

In both cases, the transactions are formally requested by the accountable group leader or network coordinator. They should follow the budget for the year in question.

Funds transferred to groups/networks for payments from local accounts may not always be spent directly, and are to be accounted for each year. The feasibility of managing funds locally depends on the local financial management system and the administrative competence of the local staff. ISP has the ambition to increasingly transfer the responsibility for the management of the funding to the supported activities and has monitored this since 2015.

- In total, 58% of the expenditures by research groups and networks were managed locally (56% in 2024).

When it comes to the ability to manage the funds locally, ISP operates in countries (except for Rwanda) which have a low position on Transparency International´s[13] Corruption Perceptions Index. It might be so that supported research groups and networks want ISP to manage the transfers simply because there might otherwise be a risk that the funds get partly lost on the way. *[For table of Corruption Perception Index, please see Appendix 2.8].*

[For full details, please see Appendix 2.8]

[13] https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023 2026-03-30..

7. ISP challenges

Needless to say, ISP´s most significant challenge for 2025 has been to secure new funding for its activities with limited success.

Moreover, the reorganisation of ISP´s three programmes has taken considerable time, please see *4. Reorganisation of ISP*.

In previous sections of the Annual report, ISP´s gender work has been described *[see e.g. section 5.1 Gender equality]*. Even though much has been achieved, there are still more men than women researchers in science, especially in mathematics and physics. Here, there is a need for continued work to raise awareness of the importance of gender equality, mainstreaming and equal opportunities among supported partners.

Many of the ISP-supported groups and networks work in politically vulnerable states. This is in itself a risk since ISP support is linked to the Swedish government´s foreign aid policy, and Swedish aid can be withdrawn or paused, as in Cambodia, Burkina Faso, Mali and Myanmar. The military coup d'état in Myanmar (February 2021) has continued to impinge the Burmese supported research groups and networks; many staff members have been fired for criticising the military and students have been expelled for the same reason. One of the ISP-supported mathematics network nodes at University of Mandalay have been badly affected, and ISP has felt obliged to phase out the node since we are unable to get in contact with them. The two physics groups (one at University of Mandalay and one at University of Yangon) have continued with activities.

In some cases, the policy of universities in low and lower-middle income countries still focuses on the number of publications, rather than on the quality of the publication, when it comes to career promotion/PhD graduation. Therefore, researchers and students might publish their papers in journals without checking the impact factor. Unfortunately, some articles end up in journals by predatory publishers. ISP will continue to raise awareness and knowledge of this phenomenon among supported groups and networks.

Strategies completely fulfilled

In 2019, ISP developed a retrospective data document, based on the theory of change. This document serves as an instrument for systematic baseline assessment and chronology of capacity development stages with supported partners (ISP specific strategy). In 2022, this approach was fully implemented in all three ISP programmes and has since 2023 been used as a background document particularly in the meetings of the Scientific Reference Groups.

Strategies partly fulfilled in 2025

In 2020, ISP *refined the monitoring and evaluation of ISP's performance to better show the results and the efficiency of the program* (ISP specific strategy) by updating data retrieval forms in the Activity report requests. In 2025 (as in 2023 and 2024), some groups did not provide all facts in the Activity reports in a satisfactory way. This might be due cut funding and to the groups/networks giving ISP-reporting less of their time. However, the Activity reports were sent in on time for the huge majority the groups/networks.

In 2019, ISP started the work *to develop and implement guideline criteria for the phase out of ISP support* (ISP specific strategy). Before 2024, ISP began the phase-out process six years in advance to

adequately prepare the group/network in question, informing them that they are entering their penultimate and final grant periods. However, in 2024 and 2025 the process was accelerated due to the financial constraints. Based on the practical experiences of phasing-out groups and also by using the above-mentioned retrospective data documents, guideline criteria are intended to be developed.

The retrospective data document can also be used *to develop an instrument for periodical planning of progress expectations with supported partners at a time course over a number of support agreement cycles* (ISP specific strategy). ISP plans to implement the document in this sense when new support is initiated. Today, no new support is planned.

Strategies failed in 2025

Since no new groups/networks are planned to be initiated, ISP did not *further increase the transparency in the "application by invitation" modality* (ISP specific strategy). If ISP´s financial crisis is solved, information about the procedure will be published on the ISP website, www.isp.uu.se.

Moreover, ISP did not improve on the fulfillment of the specific objective *to make better use of previously supported partners in the development of new support*. This has for a long time been ISP´s ambition, but it has not been widely and systematically implemented. Today some previous partners contribute as hosts for sandwich students, for MFS (Minor Field Studies) students, and as scientific collaborators and mentors. In the future, ISP aims to put a stronger focus on attaining this specific objective.

8. Lessons learnt 2025

The reduced Sida funding to ISP, has continued to dominate much of the financial considerations, and has implied less funds available for the activities budgeted by groups and networks: their allocations had to be drastically decreased. **ISP has made considerable efforts to elaborate strategies to raise money from different universities, donors, agencies and the EU:**

- CIMPA (International Centre for Pure and Applied Mathematics)
- Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education *(please see TeaSTEM below)*
- ICMS (International Centre for Mathematical Sciences)
- ICTP (International Centre for Theoretical Physics)
- Intra-Africa Academic Mobility
- Lund University
- Simons foundation
- UU´s Division for Research and Partnership Support

In July 2025, ISP first application for the Erasmus+ CBHE (Capacity Building in Higher Education) project, TeaSTEM, was not approved for funding although high marks. During autumn 2025, ISP improved and finalised a new application for the same project. TeaSTEM, addresses the poor university education in STEM at universities in Cambodia and Laos, and is developed in close contact with ISP´s trusted partners at Royal University of Phnom Penh and National University of Laos. Other partners in Asia are Champasak University in Laos, Svay Rieng University in Cambodia, and the Ministry of Education and Sports in Laos. The EU-partner is University of Evora, Portugal. The application was submitted to EU in February 2026. The results will be announced in late July 2026.

The Covid-19 pandemic taught ISP that many meetings, seminars and other events, can be arranged digitally. This has improved the contact between the partners and ISP, for example between two physical visits. Compared to IRL meetings, digital meetings are cheaper, more inclusive (since more

people can interact without travelling long distances), and much more environmentally friendly. It is important to remember, though, that digital interaction never fully can replace physical ones. ISP will continue to elaborate on hybrid meetings since there is almost no room for travel in the budget.

However, physical meetings, seminars, and conferences offer better opportunities to comment, discuss, share experiences and knowledge (as well as have informal chats in between meetings) than digital meetings. It is essential to interact with people and, to really see the working environment of supported partners, to meet and discuss with students, and to follow up on the implementation of new instruments and activities, i.e., to maintain a good understanding of context, challenges and progress of the supported groups and networks.

The problem with predatory publishing must be taken seriously, and ISP will continue to encourage group and network members to choose journals wisely.

ISP has continued to make the programme better known within and outside Uppsala University, and has almost 6,459 followers on Facebook and 656 on LinkedIn.[14] UU´s Vice-Chancellor Anders Hagfeldt takes every opportunity to talk about ISP when discussing internationalisation (e.g. at STINT seminars), but this hasn´t resulted in more funding for ISP.

9. Other ISP cooperation

ISP´s specific objectives say that ISP should *continue cooperation with other organisations to the benefit of the program.*

Besides the ISP core programme, reported in the previous sections, ISP carries out assignments by Sida and collaborates with other organisations.

In short, the cooperation with Stockholm University, Sweden, with ThEPCenter and with Unisa-iThemba continued. Also, the three-year Erasmus+ CBHE (Capacity Building in Higher Education) project, PEP continued. Cooperation within the CoRE-Math network, which started in September 2024, continued in 2025.

9.1 Stockholm University

The agreement with the Faculty of Science, Stockholm University (SU), continued. SU contributes with SEK 1 million per year (2021-2025[15]).

The SU funding for 2025 has been used for:

- Continued support to the research groups in Myanmar (IPPS MYA:01 and IPPS MYA:02), in Mali (IPPS MAL:01), in Burkina Faso (IPPS BUF:01 and IPICS BUF:01) and in Cambodia (IPICS CCS).
- Support for the Rwanda mathematics competition.
- Costs related to the ISP physics and chemistry reference group meeting in Uppsala, November 2025.

[14] Numbers from 2026-04-08.

[15] The funding from SU was discontinued in 2026.

9.2 Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA)

In 2015, ISP partnered with the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) and the Thailand Research Fund (TRF).

The partnership offered scholarships to PhD students in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal and Vietnam, in 2019 extended to Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Students registered at Thai universities, where they spent two years of their PhD training, with one intermittent year in Sweden.

In 2019, the responsibilities of TRF were transferred to the Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI) at the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) under the Thai Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Innovation.

The first admitted student in the Joint Thailand-Sweden PhD Scholarship Programme, Ms Thiri Yadanar Htun, graduated in 2022 after studies at Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand and Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden. She now works as a lecturer at University of Mandalay, Myanmar.

The second and third admitted PhD students, Ms Moh Moh Aung (nuclear physics) and Mr Soe Ko Ko Aung (physical chemistry) studied in Uppsala in 2021. It became a prolonged stay due to the Covid-19 pandemic). Mr Soe Ko Ko Aung returned to the University of Mandalay after he successfully defended his PhD thesis at Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University in Thailand, in September 2021. He is now an associate professor and works as a lecturer and leader of the supported group physics group at Mandalay University (IPPS MYA:01). Between 9 October, 2023 and 30 April, 2024 he was permitted to stay in Sweden to work as a postdoc at the Department of Chemistry, Uppsala University. On April 3, 2024, Moe Moe Aung successfully defended her PhD thesis at Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. She is now working as postdoc at the same university in Thailand.

The fourth admitted student, Ms Ei Ei Phyo Myint, Myanmar graduated in 2022, at Tropical and Parasitic Research Unit, Faculty of Medicine, Mahasarakham University, Thailand. She was expected as a guest student at Umeå University in Sweden in 2021, but the Swedish embassy in Bangkok declined her visa application.

The fifth admitted student, Ms Su Yee Win, Myanmar, continued her PhD programme at the Laboratory of Biopolymers and Nanoengineering for Drug Delivery and Molecular Imaging, Faculty of Biomedical Engineering, Mahidol University, Thailand. She stayed in Sweden for 12 months, starting from March 2024, to work with her research project at the Department of Chemistry, Uppsala University with Professor Oommen Varghese as Swedish supervisor. In June 2025 she successfully defended her PhD thesis *"In vitro and in vivo evaluation of a co-encapsulation system combining Cyclosporine A-loaded PLGA nanospheres and immortalized hepatocytes within crosslinked alginate microbeads containing RGD peptide"*at Mahidol University.

Su Yee Win was the last student in this successful programme, since TICA only approves Myanmar PhD students, and ISP can not support students from Myanmar, because of the Swedish government´s rules.

Su Yee Win was the last student in this successful programme, since TICA selected only Myanmar PhD students the last years of the agreement, and Sida (and then ISP) can not support students from Myanmar, because of the recent Swedish government´s cooperation policy. The Agreement has not

been renewed after 2025 and the collaboration, even if successful, is now terminated.

9.3 Thailand Center of Excellence in Physics (ThEPCenter)

ISP has had a long-lasting cooperation in physics with University of Chang Mai, Thailand[16]. In 2019, Professor Thiraphat Vilaithong, Executive Director of ThEPCenter, visited ISP and requested a formalised cooperation based on previous relations. In January 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ISP and ThEPCenter.

The MoU allows short-term research training for the duration of maximum one year in Thailand for ISP-associated physics PhD students or postdoctoral fellows in a facility where ThEPCenter has affiliated academic and technical resources, including ThEPCenter member institutions. ThEPCenter will accept up to five such fellows annually from ISP partner institutions in Asia and Africa. *The travel and living expenses, including health insurance, will be financed by ISP, whereas ThEPCenter will provide an in-cost and/or in-kind contribution according to Thai standards.*

The same MoU will also facilitate postdoctoral research visits for the duration of maximum one year in Sweden for Thai PhD physics graduates in various areas of physics, where ISP has the competence to propose host institutions. *ISP commits to introduce and arrange accommodation in Sweden to successful candidates, if necessary, but accommodation costs are in all cases to be paid by the visiting postdoctoral researcher*.

During 2025 no student exchange occurred within this agreement. Actually, the MoU expires in January 2026. Unfortunately, renewal has become critical because the ISP budget no longer allows to fund students' visits to Sweden.

9.4 Unisa-iThemba

The agreement between ISP and Unisa-iThemba lab in South Africa, signed in June 2021, allows Master´s and PhD students from ISP-supported groups in Africa and Asia to spend a research visit at the iThemba lab for up to one year. The costs for the students' exchange is usually covered by the supported group´s allocation. The agreement has generated a large number of exchanges of students form the ISP-supported groups in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Due to the very reduced budget of the ISP physics groups the expenses in 2025 were covered by funds from iThemba lab. The agreement expires in June 2026.

9.5 Erasmus+ CBHE project PEP

In the long collaboration between ISP and the francophone part of Africa, the low English language proficiency has posed a challenge when communicating with supported researchers/students and when organising research seminars and workshops. This gave rise to the idea to develop the English language proficiency at the partner universites. In 2021, ISP worked together with the Unit for Professional English (UPE) of Uppsala University to deliver two online English courses for Master´s students and researchers in Mali, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. The courses received excellent feedback and the African partner universities suggested a larger project that would build more institutional capacity.

[16] Between 1982 and 2005. More information in The International Science Programme in Sri Lanka and Thailand: Three decades of research cooperation by Rebecca Andersson and Marta Zdravkovic, 2017.

To secure funding for this initiative, ISP together with Uppsala University´s Division for Internationalisation and UPE, submitted an Erasmus+ CBHE application which was approved, in tough competition, in 2022.

The lack of advanced English skills at ISP´s West African partners, means that students and researchers alike are limited in their ability to share their knowledge and expertise with the international scientific community. To address this, the main objective of PEP is to train French-speaking university staff in English, and to establish Units for English proficiency in the participating universities.

Partners in PEP are:

- ISP, UPE, and Division Research & Partnership Support, Uppsala University, Sweden
- University of Galway, Ireland
- University Joseph Ki-Zerbo (UJKZ), Burkina Faso
- University Nazi Boni (UNB), Burkina Faso
- University of Sciences, Techniques and Technologies of Bamako (USTTB), Mali
- University of Arts and Humanities of Bamako (ULSHB)[17], Mali
- University San Pedro (USP), Ivory Coast
- Institut National Polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny (INPHB), Ivory Coast

During spring and autumn semester 2023, much time was spent on coaching the African partners how to deal with EU administration and the EU funding and tender portal. In addition to learning the EU funding landscape, ISP considers this time valuable for supported groups and networks to build their capacity when applying independently for EU funding.

In November 2023, the kick-off meeting for PEP was held at Uppsala University, and all partner finally met in person. During the kick-off, a steering committee, teacher team and a communication team were formed. ISP is responsible for the communication deliverables, e.g. the website, communication plan and dissemination. ISP´s communication officer had through AI created several suggestions for PEP logos. All PEP participants voted for their favourite and the winner can be seen to the right.



In 2024, the second meeting took place at the two partner universities in Ivory Coast, and the third meeting (teacher training) took place at Uppsala University. ISP was co-organisers together with the Uppsala University Divison for Internationalisation. The planned pilot courses in Professional English oral communication were held at all six West African partners.

In 2025, the fourth meeting took place in Galway, Ireland. However, due to the strict visa application procedure only three teachers from Ivory Coast and four staff from Uppsala University could participate. The other 10 teachers participated online. The planned pilot courses in Professional English written communication were held at all six West African partners. The first of three PEP dissemination webinars was arranged in autumn 2025 and was directed to similar projects in the region.

[17] ULSHB changed name in 2025 to Université Yambo Ouologuem de Bamako, but it still has no new website.

Before PEP ends on June 30, 2026, there will be two more dissemination webinars: one for ISP-supported groups in non-English speaking countries, and one for university management in all partners countries.

With this project, ISP continues to address the need for French-speaking West Africa to develop their English language proficiency, in order to fully participate in the international science community whereas English is the lingua franca.

9.6 Cooperation with Peru

On December 18, 2025, the agreement between Uppsala University (UU) and Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería, Peru, was signed. The initiative comes from UU Vice-Chancellor Anders Hagfeldt and his former ISP PhD student Monica Gomez. ISP has committed to finding supervisors for up to four PhD students in the field of sustainable energy.

9.7 African Network for Women in Astronomy

The African Network for Women in Astronomy (AfNWA) was set up in 2019 to connect and support women in astronomy across the African continent. Every year the network assigns awards to women astronomers in recognition of their scientific achievements and contributions to society. ISP alumna Priscilla Muheki is one of the founders of the network and now the responsible for the network.

ISP sponsored the Women in Astronomy in Africa Awards that in 2025, were assigned to two to Dr Mona Molham Mostafa Elhalaby (Egypt) for the early creer researcher award, and Dr Zara Randriamanakoto (South Africa) for the mid-career award, in recognition of their outstanding research and outreach activities.

- Dr M. Molham is an assistant researcher at the National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics (NRIAG) in Egypt. She does both observational and theoretical research activities. She is also very engaged in outreach activities to share her passion for astronomy and space sciences with school and university students and the broader community, with the aim to inspire curiosity and make science accessible to everyone.
- Dr Zara Randriamanakoto works at the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAOO) in Cape Town, South Africa. She is an expert in both optical/near-infrared and radio astronomy, i.e. astrophysical research done with traditionally quite separate techniques, utilising very different technologies in different areas of the electromagnetic spectrum. She uses both observational and computational methods in her research, making her work even more relevant and useful for the community. She has always been very active in promoting astronomy, and science in general specially for her original country (Madagascar) and for Africa in general. Her scientific and outreach works has been awarded by many prize and awards, like the L'Oréal-UNESCO Sub-Saharan Africa Young, National Geographic Society's Explorer grant.

9.8 CoRE-Math

In 2024, CoRE-Math (Africa-Europe Cluster of Research Excellence in Mathematics) was selected as the 21st CoRE (Cluster of Research Excellence) to join the initiative led by ARUA[18] and The Guild[19]. It should be noted that the CoRE label doesn't come with any funding. The label is intended to help the clusters attract funding, primarily from the European Union.

The CoRE was built around ISP´s math programme EAUMP (Eastern Africa Universities Mathematics Programme), which was established in 2002 to provide collaborative postgraduate training, as well as Finnish and Norwegian-supported activities.

CoRE–Math aims to promote research collaboration between African and European universities with the intention of contributing to achieving the goals of the AU-EU Innovation agenda. Specifically, the cluster seeks to:

- To develop capacity for research and postgraduate training in African universities
- To substantially increase the research outputs from research involving African and European partners
- To substantially increase high-quality collaborative postgraduate training in African universities
- To substantially increase the participation of women in postgraduate training and research in African universities
- To leverage mathematics to address socio-economic challenges, especially in Africa

Main contacts are Bengt Ove Turesson at ISP and John Mango at Makerere University, Uganda. Partner universities are:

- Uppsala University, Sweden (co-lead)
- Makerere University, Uganda (co-lead)
- Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa
- University of Nairobi, Kenya
- University of Rwanda, Rwanda
- University of Zambia, Zambia
- Groningen University, Netherlands
- Lappeenranta–Lahti University of Technology, Finland
- Linköping University, Sweden
- Stockholm University, Sweden
- University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
- University of Bergen, Norway
- University of Oslo, Norway
- University of Vienna

In 2025, University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), South Africa became a member of CoRE-Math. As part of its commitment to the network, UKZN will support up to four postdoctoral researchers for stays of up to six months each year and will host up to 20 self-sponsored postgraduate students annually.

[18] ARUA = The African Research Universities Alliance.

[19] The Guild = The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities.

Uppsala University has committed EUR 50,000 per year for five years (with the possibility of renewed funding after evaluation) for research visits to Uppsala. In 2025, 38 applications were received. Out of them, four PhD students and two postdocs and two senior researchers were selected and they visited Uppsala in autumn 2025 (three months for the PhD and postdoctoral researchers, and two weeks for the senior researchers).



Photo. CoRE-Math meeting at Makerere University, Uganda (IPMS CoRE-Math MAK).

9.9 Cambodian PhD students

The Sida bilateral programme with Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), Cambodia, ended 31 December 2024. However, there were still eight PhD students at SLU, Linköping, Umeå, Uppsala and Lund universities who hadn´t finished their theses. After an agreement with Sida, ISP took over the remaining PhD students within the ISP core programme.

In 2025, five PhD students graduated, and the remaining three have planned to defend their thesis in 2026 (one defended on 6 March 2026).

[For more details, please see Appendix 3.2]

9.10 Sida bilateral research cooperation

Ongoing bilateral programmes

By assignment by Sida, ISP is managing a number of activities related to the Sida bilateral programmes for research cooperation. In 2025, these assignments comprised the coordination on the Swedish side of the programmes with:

- Bolivia
- Ethiopia
- Mozambique
- Rwanda
- Tanzania

ISP is also administrating the payments of subsistence allowance to participants (PhD students and postdocs) in all bilateral programmes while in Sweden.

Zambia

Sida has prepared a three-year pilot programme at the University of Zambia (UNZA). In 2025, Sida launched a call for Expressions of Interest. ISP supported the dissemination of the call.

ISP also organised a visit to Sweden for a delegation from UNZA from 6 to 11 October 2025. ISP has also been invited to apply to coordinate the programme on the Swedish side.

[For more details, please see Appendix 3.1]

10. More about ISP

10.1 ISP´s participation in conferences, meetings and networks

To increase the visibility of ISP´s work and to attract possible funders, ISP staff participate in international conferences, networks and meetings.

Launch of report

On January 23, Bengt Ove Turesson took part in the launch of the report *Standard hellre än särart? Förutsägbarhet och (o)förståelse i svenska biståndsrelationer* at SCORE (Stockholms centrum för forskning om offentlig sektor), Stockholm University.

SESAME

During 2025, Professor Carla Puglia participated at the two council meetings of SESAME (Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East), one in Hamburg, Germany, in July and the other at the Dead Sea in Jordan in December. SESAME is the synchrotron light facilities in Jordan, the only in the Middle East. It is based on a cooperative model like CERN and it was developed under the support and guidance of UNESCO in 2002. It is an autonomous intergovernmental organisation for researchers of its members states: Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Palestine, Pakistan and Turkey. Sesame can be regarded as a unique example of Science diplomacy. The facilities run thanks to the member states' contributions and from many donations. Carla Puglia and Sverker Werin (Lund University) are the two representatives of Sweden within the observatories´ countries. SESAME can have an important role for new collaboration, projects and for hosting researchers and students from the ISP-supported groups and networks, especially considering the idea of promoting synchrotron light-based science in Africa.

Meeting with UU´s Division for Research and Partnership Support

On January 31, Bengt Ove Turesson, Carla Puglia and Solomon Tesfalidet met with the Director Johan Kreuger and Head of Unit for Management Support Anne-Sophie Fröjmark, UU´s Division for Research and Partnership Support, to discuss ways of cooperation.

Visit from University of Iringa, Tanzania

On March 10, University of Iringa, Tanzania, visited Uppsala University, and also ISP. The Ambassador of Tanzania to Sweden also participated.

Visit from Université Jean Lorougnon Guédé of Daloa, Ivory Coast

On April 8, Université Jean Lorougnon Guédé of Daloa, Ivory Coast, visited Uppsala University, and also ISP.

EMS–CDC

The European Mathematics Society - Committee for Developing Countries (EMS-CDC) assists mathematicians in the Global South, e.g. developing mathematics curricula, libraries and sources of support funds. The ISP director, Dr Bengt Ove Turesson, chaired this committee in 2023–2024. In April, 2025, he participated in the annual meeting of EMS-CDC in Cook, Ireland

Uppsala University Africa Days and Forum for Africa Studies

On June 9-10, 2025 Forum for Africa Studies organised a Uppsala University Africa Day open to the public in the University Main Building. Professor Carla Puglia presented ISP work with the presentation “Internation Science Programme a Success Story of Global Sustainable Development”.

Forum for Africa Studies at Uppsala University is a strategic centre for research and higher education in, on and with Africa for the whole university. ISP, represented by the Director and Deputy Director, is a member of the Board of Forum for Africa Studies together with the representative of the UU different faculties.

Visit to Stellenbosch University and University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

In September 2025, Bengt Ove Turesson and John Mango from Makerere University Co-leads of the Africa–Europe Cluster of Research Excellence in Mathematics (CoRE-Math), visited Stellenbosch University and University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa to explore opportunities for collaboration within the ISP-supported network CoRE-Math.

Visits to chemistry groups and Final conference for Sida-Ethiopia bilateral research cooperation

In October 2025, Solomon Tesfalidet and Hossein Aminaey visted chemistry groups in Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania. They also took part in the final conference for the Sida bilateral research cooperation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and in ANIE (African Network for Internationalization of Education) conference in Uganda. Solomon Tesfalidet held a presentation about ISP at the conference.

Visit to Lund University

On November 28, Bengt Ove Turesson, Carla Puglia and Solomon Tesfalidet visited Lund University to discuss support to ISP. They met with Kristina Eneroth, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Strategy and Global Affairs and Eva Åkesson, former Vice-Chancellor of UU, now Special Adviser at Lund University. Researchers from Lund reported to Carla that they had secured SEK 70 million in external funding as a direct result of cooperation with ISP groups and networks.

STINT Forum on Science Intelligence

On 16 December 2025, Ulrica Ouline and ISP board member Kersti Hermansson participated in the STINT Forum on Science Intelligence, where the audience met STINT’s Overseas Team. UU VC Anders Hagfeldt and former ISP network leader Nelson Torto were speakers. Both mentioned ISP in their speeches.

The Africa network at UU

ISP is part of the Africa Network at Uppsala University. This network meets three times per semester to share news on Africa-related research at the university. Members come from Forum for Africa Studies, Department of Anthroplogy, ISP, Department of Women's and Children's Health, Division for Internationalisation and Division for Research and Partnership Support.

10.2 Other ISP Activities

Student activities

ISP arranged a social event on June 9, 2025 for ISP students and staff in Sweden. Besides ISP staff, 22 students and staff from Bolivia, Cambodia, Mozambique and Rwanda participated in the traditional *Summer fika* outside the ISP office.

IPICS Research Management

IPICS Research Management was launched in 2016 to strengthen research environments across Sub-Saharan Africa, with a specific focus on chemistry. The aim is to strengthen the scientific research and research management capacity of universities and scientific institutions across Sub-Saharan Africa, empowering them to produce internationally recognised research, attract sustainable funding, and translate scientific findings into socioeconomic value for their communities. Programme goals are concrete and measurable:

- Postdoctoral researchers are supported to publish two papers and apply for two research grants annually.
- PhD candidates to publish one paper and submit one grant application per year.
- MSc students to graduate on schedule.
- Equally important is a cultural shift from aid-dependency toward institutional self-reliance, including active engagement with policymakers and the private sector.

In 2025, IPICS Research Management network provides support to over 100 scientists and laboratory technicians across 20 countries. The network is organised into teams, each led by a designated team leader responsible for a specific scientific programme or set of *Outcome Challenges*. Team leaders maintain contact with their members between meetings, ensuring that communication, accountability, and momentum are sustained at the team level regardless of attendance patterns at the network level.

During 2025, 45 formal meetings were held, rising to 70 in total when training sessions and bi-monthly Saturday sessions are included. Participation ranged from 5 to 25 per session, depending on the topic.

Unreliable internet connectivity and intermittent access to electricity are well-documented challenges that affect participation levels across the network. To ensure no team member falls behind, all 100+ researchers and technicians have participated in at least three meetings over the course of the year. Those who cannot attend regularly stayed engaged through the network´s WhatsApp group, the Notion workspace, and the SharePoint platform.

In 2025, the funding agencies/platforms below have been approached. However, no grants have been awarded to IPICS Research Management to date.

- Anders Hultman Foundation, focusing on research management training and coaching by IPICS, targeting the following partner institutions: AiBST (Zimbabwe), Makerere University (Uganda), National University of Science and Technology (Zimbabwe), Cheikh Anta Diop

University (Senegal), University Jospeh Ki-Zerbo (Burkina Faso), University of Zambia (Zambia), University of Nairobi (Kenya), and University of Rwanda
- Anders Hultman Foundation, Project NITUB, Bangladesh
- Biltema Foundation focusing om research management training and coaching by IPICS
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Nordic), focusing on research management training and coaching targeting health-related research
- Merck Foundation, focusing on research management training and coaching in Burkina Faso, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
- Swedfund: Oral presentation delivered; relationship established and under development
- TETFund: Application under review, focused on laboratory management
- Global Giving: Crowdfunding platform application for business loans through GS&T
- Pro bono law firm engagement targeting intellectual property rights in business contracts

The following cross-country cooperation have been identified across the network:
- Water pollution, emerging contaminants & remediation — Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, and Kenya
- Circular chemistry & waste valorisation — Rwanda and Zimbabwe
- Natural products, drug discovery & pharmaceutical chemistry — Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, Botswana, and Sudan (includes members of NAPRECA)
- Agricultural chemistry, soil science, biomass chemistry & bio-based materials — Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe
- Equipment sharing — All network members

Every activity is structured around ROPE (*Real-time Outcome Planning and Evaluation),* a management methodology developed by the IPICS deputy programme manager, Dr Cecilia Öman. Rather than imposing an external diagnosis of what African research institutions need, ROPE begins by asking partners directly what has hindered their progress and recording their responses in their own words. The obstacles that emerge, called *Outcome Challenges*, become the programme's working agenda. 60 such challenges have been identified simultaneously at the researcher, institution, and laboratory levels, on the premise that sustainable impact cannot be achieved by funding individuals or purchasing equipment. Examples
- On researcher level: grant-writing competency, manuscript preparation to international publication standard.
- On institutional level: access to computers, reliable power, and internet connectivity, intellectual property support.
- On laboratory level: access to instruments through financial viability, daily procedures, accreditation, equipment sharing, repair and maintenance, procurement, and responsible disposal of hazardous waste and obsolete instruments.

Activities are broken into time-bound work cycles, tracked in a *dedicated database* and anchored to agreed *milestones*. Researchers document their own progress on a *shared collaboration platform* as a condition of participation — a design choice that builds the documentation discipline essential to institutional sustainability, and that shifts responsibility for progress from the programme to the partner.

10.3 ISP organisation

The operation of ISP is regulated in an ordinance established by the Swedish government in 1988[20] through the then Office of Universities and Higher Education (Universitets- och högskoleämbetet, UHÄ). *[For details, please see Appendix 4.2]*

ISP Board

The ordinance requires the Uppsala University Board to establish additional directions needed for the operation of the programme. These are established in the Instruction, latest revised and decided by the Vice-Chancellor 22 March 2016.[21]

The ISP Board, appointed for 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2027, had the following composition (deputies included):

- 50% Female
- 50% Male

In 2025, the Board had no votes *per capsulam*. Two meetings were arranged in hybrid format (18 June and 17 December).

ISP Executive Committee

The ISP Executive Committee (EC) is a standing working committee to the Board, regulated by the Rules of Procedure,[22] established by the Board in June 2019. It met four times in 2025. All meetings were hybrid meetings.

The members are all Uppsala University staff and the composition was:

- 57% Female
- 43% Male

The ISP Scientific Reference Groups

The ISP Scientific Reference Groups has among its tasks to evaluate the applications from invited research groups and networks. The reference groups are composed by renowned senior scientists; half of the members are from the regions where ISP operates, and half are from Nordic countries.[23]

ISP Chemistry (IPICS)

The IPICS scientific reference group had its annual meeting in Uppsala, 10-12 November, 2025. It had the following composition: 50% F and 50% M (4 women and 2 men).

ISP Mathematics (IPMS)

The IPMS scientific reference group had its reference group meeting online 4 November, 2025. The group had the following composition: 67% female and 33% male (2 women and 2 men).

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[20] UHÄ-FS 1988:18; SFS 1992:815.

[21] The ordinance and a translation to English can be found at https://www.uu.se/en/centre/international-science-programme-isp/about-isp/organisation, 2026-04-08.

[22] The Rules of Procedure can be found at https://www.uu.se/download/18.74423c3a18a92ebfb60810dd/1696341336856/Rules%20of%20Procedure.pdf, 2026-04-08.

[23] Terms of Reference for the Scientific Reference Groups https://www.uu.se/download/18.74423c3a18a92ebfb6081264/1696341888950/ToR%20ref%20groups.pdf, 2026-04-08.

ISP Physics (IPPS)

The IPPS scientific reference group had its annual meeting in Uppsala on 6-7 November, 2025. It had the following composition: 20% female and 80% male (1 woman and 5 men).

ISP Staff

In 2025, ISP had 14 staff members, 64% female and 57% male.



Photo 19. ISP staff from left: Najat Tahboub, Ulrika Kolsmyr, Solomon Tesfalidet, Anna Wallin, Carla Puglia, Bengt Ove Turesson, Ulrica Ouline, Monica Lindström, Olle Terenius, Barbara Brena, Cecilia Öman and Hossein Aminaey.