



## **IBSA EDUCATION WORKING GROUP**

### **1. Introduction**

The Education Working Group was established with the objective of deepening mutual knowledge, exploring common points of interest and encouraging academic collaboration and partnerships. The working group comprises the Department of Higher Education and Training from the South African side; the Ministry of Education from the Brazilian side; and the Ministry of Human Resource Development from the Indian side.

### **2. Memorandum of Understanding**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the Field of Higher Education was signed by the three countries in Pretoria, South Africa in 2007. The MoU aims to create conditions for cooperation between the IBSA countries' academic institutions, faculties, researchers and students through joint research projects in areas of mutual interest; to explore, investigate and develop new forms of South-South linkages in the field of education; to align the higher education systems; and to strengthen training and professional development.

### **3. Thematic Areas**

Five thematic areas were identified in the MoU as the focus of academic cooperation:

- i) Engineering, Computer Sciences and Mathematical Sciences;
- ii) Biotechnology, Agriculture and Livestock;
- iii) Sustainable Development;
- iv) Social Transformation and Empowerment; and
- v) Higher Education Studies

Two additional thematic areas have also been considered by the Education Working Group:

- vi) Climate change and its effect on rural livelihoods, health and food security;
- vii) Global Governance and International Trade and Investments

### **4. Academic Collaboration**

The three IBSA partners agreed to allocate funding annually to encourage academic collaboration between the three countries. The funds are used to enable academics to attend meetings, conferences and seminars in the three countries to start collaborative research work and projects. It was envisaged that this would result in an increase of research output that will benefit all three countries.

#### **South Africa**

The IBSA Mobility Fund is allocated by the DHET and is managed by Higher Education South Africa (HESA). To date fourteen projects have been funded within the thematic areas listed above.

All projects included a South African lead researcher and a partner each from Brazil and India. Funding resulted in a number of workshops, exchanges and publications in subjects ranging from urbanisation and human settlements, women studies and comparative education research to agricultural biotechnology and future generation energy materials.

The grants served as a strong catalyst for the establishment of IBSA collaboration programmes and it is evident that the potential for further collaboration is great. Another call for proposals will be made in 2013 to support academic collaboration between the three countries.

#### **Brazil**

[input from Brazil required here]

#### **India**

[input from India required here]

### **5. Areas still need to be explored**

### **6. Academic Forum**

The IBSA Academic Forum reflects the interest of the three Member States in improving relations between their respective societies. Scholars interested in IBSA meet to discuss various issues on the international agenda. The practice has been to hold the Academic Forum on the margins of the Summit meetings. The next Academic Forum will be held in India in 2013.

Five IBSA Academic Forums have been held, each resulting in a set of recommendations.

**2011 South Africa**

**2010 Brazil**

**2008 India**

**2007 South Africa**

**2006 Brazil**