

IDSA Occasional Paper No. 51

# India-Africa Cooperation in Human Resource Development

*Education, Training and Skills*

**Kenneth King**



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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE  
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रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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E-mail: [contactus@idsa.in](mailto:contactus@idsa.in)  
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The fieldwork for this paper was carried out during the three-month visiting fellowship of the author in IDSA, from mid-January till mid-April 2018. In this period, interviews were carried out with African students from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Ghana as well as with many members of the academic, NGO, think-tank and policy communities in New Delhi, Mumbai and Pune, as detailed further below. Support for this research on India-Africa cooperation was supported by the Binks Trust, Edinburgh, Scotland. The views in this paper are those of the author and may not be attributed to IDSA or to the Binks Trust.

## Introduction

Capacity building is frequently claimed to be at the heart of India's development cooperation. The terms "training" and "capacity building" appear throughout the *India-Africa Framework for Strategic Cooperation* which emerged from the 2015 Third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) as they do in earlier Summits.<sup>1</sup> This is so not just in the section on cooperation in education and skills development, but in most of the other sectoral dimensions of development treated in the Summit documents. Equally, capacity building is one of the five elements of the "development compact" synthesized by Chaturvedi in *India's Approach to Development Cooperation*.<sup>2</sup> It also appears frequently in the India-Japan initiative of 2017 for the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC).<sup>3</sup> Typical of the identification of this talent as peculiarly Indian are these comments from a former ambassador to many African countries as well as from Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi:

Our unique strength is in the area of capacity building and skill development and that is what we must leverage. Modi himself has stressed that our approach to partnership with Africa was "driven by the aim of empowerment so that people in Africa have the capability to shoulder the responsibility of their continent's development."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Capacity building" is mentioned no less than 15 times in the 11 pages of IAFS 2015 and "training" 16 times; capacity building refers to Indian support not only in skills development and education, but also energy and infrastructure, trade and industry, agriculture, blue economy, science, technology, research and innovation, and peace and security. See IAFS, *India-Africa Framework for Strategic Cooperation*, Third India-Africa Forum Summit, 29 October 2015, New Delhi.

<sup>2</sup> S. Chaturvedi, and A. Mulakala, (eds), *India's Approach to Development Cooperation*, *Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series*, Routledge, London and New York, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> K. King, 2018, "Japan, India and China on Africa: Global Ambitions and Human Resource Development", in Jagannath Panda and Titli Basu (eds), *China-India-Japan in the Indo-Pacific: Ideas, Interests, and Infrastructure* Pentagon Press, New Delhi.

<sup>4</sup> V. Gupta, "Entwined dreams", in *Indiafrica: Intertwined Dreams, India and the World*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 2018, p. 15.

The term is not easily defined but it does suggest something done by one party to another to make good deficits of various kinds. This is not the only possible meaning. In the African Union's framework, *Agenda 2063*, capacity building covers the African initiatives of its financing partners as well as some of its own institutional development aspirations.<sup>5</sup>

In this occasional paper, many different dimensions of India's cooperation with Africa are reviewed, but particularly in the area of human resource development (HRD), and specifically in relation to education, training and skills development.<sup>6</sup> These cover India's engagement with Pan-African initiatives, its bilateral involvement in institutional development, as well as the support to non-state actors in Africa, both non-governmental organizations and the private sector. India's support to African students through scholarships as well as to professionals through short-term training awards is one of the oldest elements in its cooperation. But attention will also be given to India's "soft-power matrix" in its outreach to the world, including to Africa.<sup>7</sup>

The subject of Indian aid had come up frequently during our study of *China's Aid and Soft Power in Africa*.<sup>8</sup> Already in that book, there were references to "Indo-African skills transfer", Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation, and to the India-Africa Forum Summits; and we were aware that India had one of the largest programmes for short- and long-term training in the world. We were aware that India had followed Japan and

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<sup>5</sup> AU (African Union), *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*, AU, Addis Ababa, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Skills development was briefly reviewed in Kenneth King, 2018. "Skill Development in India and Africa: Interactive Agendas?", author's presentation at the 4th India-Africa Strategic Dialogue, 27-28 March 2018, IDSA, New Delhi.

<sup>7</sup> A. Sasi, "On Modi Government Drawing Board: Tool to Hardsell Soft Power in Diplomacy", *The Indian Express*, 14 February 2018, available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/modi-diplomacy-strategic-partnership-soft-power-hard-state-india-5063098/> (Accessed on 2 April 2018).

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth King, *China's Aid and Soft Power in Africa: The Case of Education and Training*, James Currey, Woodbridge, UK, 2013.

China in holding a series of India-Africa summits, and it was clear from these that India felt it had a particularly close historical relationship with Africa.

## **Fieldwork in India**

Work on this paper was carried out in India between mid-January and mid-April 2018, building upon a four-week visit to India in March-April 2017. Apart from reviewing the relevant literature, and press-clippings during these four months, it was fortunate that during this former period, there were four major conferences on different dimensions of India-Africa relations.<sup>9</sup> Beyond this, interviews with 28 African students were held in Delhi, Mumbai, Panjim and Pune. Seminars were given in Delhi, Mumbai and Jindal Universities, and discussions were held in IGNOU, BITS Pilani, Symbiosis University, Amity University, and Jindal Global University. Visits were made to the High Commissions of Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda and Tanzania in Delhi, as well as to the Egyptian and Japanese Embassies. Discussions were held with RIS, the CPR, the ICCR, the ICWA, TCIL, the CII, SEWA, Rwanda Renaissance and the ORF (Mumbai). Visits were made to JETRO, JICA and GIZ.<sup>10</sup> Meetings and discussions were

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<sup>9</sup> There was a conference organized by the Observer Research Foundation on 'South-South Cooperation: India-Africa partnerships for food security and capacity-building', 23-24 January 2018, Trident, Mumbai; next, there was an International seminar on India and Africa: an Afro-Asian perspective' 15-16 February 2018, at Jamia Millia Islamia, in New Delhi; during 25-27 March 2018, there was the 13<sup>th</sup> CII EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa project partnership in New Delhi; and on 27-28 March 2018, there was the IDSA 4<sup>th</sup> India-Africa Strategic Dialogue on 'India-Africa: Deepening the security engagement', also in New Delhi.

<sup>10</sup> RIS: Research and Information System for Developing Countries; CPR: Centre for Policy Research; IGNOU: Indira Gandhi National Open University; ICCR: Indian Council for Cultural Relations; ICWA: Indian Council for World Affairs; TCIL: Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd; CII: Confederation of Indian Industry; SEWA: Self-Employed Women's Association; ORF: Observer Research Foundation; JETRO: Japanese External Trade Organisation; JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency; GIZ: German Development Agency; MEA: Ministry of External Affairs.

held with the MEA and the World Bank, and interactions were organized with media experts on India-Africa relations as well as with business people and former diplomats engaged with Africa. Discussions were held with colleagues in IDSA, and particularly with Ruchita Beri and Jagannath Panda. All the interviews were carried out jointly with Pravina King.

## **African Students**

### *Africans in India: The Early Years*

We start however with a word on history, since the engagement of Africa with India does not start at Independence in 1947. Indeed, it is often said to go back for centuries. For the moment, we mention just three accounts of Africans in India that are worth some attention for the historical connections. One of these is entitled *African Elites in India: Habsbi Amarat* edited by Kenneth Robbins and John McLeod<sup>11</sup> and a second is an exhibition from the Schomburg Collection of the New York Public Library which was shown in the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, in Delhi during October-November 2014. It was called “Africans in India: A rediscovery”, and was co-curated by Kenneth Robbins and Sylviane Diouf. The third source is called “Africans in India” and is a section of a celebratory volume created for the India-Africa Forum Summit of 2015, entitled *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons*.<sup>12</sup> All three collections pay attention to the lives and fortunes of Africans who were brought to India as slaves or who traded as merchants. Commentaries on the exhibition have contrasted the history of some of the celebrated Africans in India such as Malik Amber<sup>13</sup> with the continued stereotyping of Africans in

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<sup>11</sup> K. Robbins and J. McLeod (eds), *African Elites in India: Habsbi Amarat*, Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> MEA, “India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons”, Public Diplomacy Initiative of Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, 2015.

<sup>13</sup> On Malik Amber, see Sunil Khilnani, “The Dark-fated One”, in *Incarnations: India in 50 Lives*, Allen Lane, New York, 2016, pp. 178–187.

India today.<sup>14</sup> We shall return to this issue in the discussion of African students in India.

Even before Indian Independence in 1947, a small number of African students were sent to India at the initiative of what would become the new government.<sup>15</sup> Equally, there was a suggestion from central government in 1953 that each state government should support at least two students from East and Central Africa to come to India. That same year, 1953, there was even a conference of African students in Delhi, and All India Radio started broadcasts in Swahili.<sup>16</sup> These African students must have come to India over the immediate post-Independence years, though it is not yet known whether they came through the newly established ICCR in 1949 or through their own resources. Certainly, by the time Oginga Odinga, a local leader from the central Nyanza district of Kenya, was invited by ICCR to visit India for two months in February 1953, there were already several other Kenyan students in New Delhi, as well as students from the former Nyasaland and from Ethiopia. Odinga asked one of the Kenya students to organize a meeting for him of all the African students in Delhi, and wrote one of the earliest accounts by an African of their time in India.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Natha, “Tracing Africa’s Association with India, Back to the 1300s”, Commentary on “Africans in India: A Rediscovery”, IGNCIA, New Delhi, 2014, available at <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/When-black-was-no-bar-How-Africans-shaped-Indias-history/articleshow/44766055.cms> (Accessed 1 April 2018); Sharma, “When Black was no Bar: How Africans Shaped India’s History”, Commentary on “Africans in India: A Rediscovery”, IGNCIA, New Delhi, 2014, available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/tracing-africas-association-with-india-back-to-the-1300s/> (Accessed 1 April 2018).

<sup>15</sup> Suresh Kumar, “Non-Aligned Movement: India, Yugoslavia Indonesia, Sri Lanka”, in Arnold J. Temu and Joel das Neves Tembe (eds.), *Southern African Liberation Struggles 1960-1994, Volume I-IX, Contemporaneous Documents, Vol. IX*, Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, Dar es Salaam, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> For detail on the capacity building side of the “development compact”, see Sachin Chaturvedi *The Logic of Sharing: Indian Approach to South-South Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2016, Chapter 2, p. 57.

<sup>17</sup> O.Odinga, *Two months in India* [Original 1965], Law Africa, Nairobi, 2010, p. 45; for a photograph of these African students in New Delhi in 1952, see Odinga, p. 45. I am indebted to Tony Omondi for a copy of Odinga’s book.

Unlike the “Airlifts” for Kenyan students, organized by Kenya politician, Tom Mboya, which took hundreds of young Kenyans to the USA from 1959, including Wangari Maathai and Obama’s father, there appears to have been no publicly coordinated campaign or government scheme to organize Africans to go to India in this early period. We should note, however, that Nehru made a speech on the occasion of Ghana’s independence in March 1957 which affirmed the future of African students in India, but made the crucially important point about two-way learning:

We shall welcome here ever more students from Africa who will learn something about India, but who, more specially, will teach us something about their own country, because we shall inevitably be thrown more together.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps for this reason, their numbers continued to grow, also spurred by the very small number of institutions of higher education within the recently independent countries of Africa. In the case of Kenya, for instance, there are said to have been as many as 10,000 Kenyans studying in India by the 1990s.<sup>19</sup>

### *The Scholarship Role of the ICCR*

The ICCR has already been mentioned for its role in taking a key young Kenyan politician, Odinga, to India in the early 1950s. Scholarships were by no means its only way of linking countries in culture and educational exchange as we shall see later, but its Africa Scholarship Scheme had featured regularly in its annual reports. It should be noted, however, that as late as its *Annual Report* of 2011-2012, there were only 251 scholarships specifically earmarked for Africa, and of these slots, only 77 were actually taken up.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches: Volume Three: 1953-1957*, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1958, p. 341; it is worth noting that the speech by Nehru on Ghana’s independence day was organised by the African Students’ Association (India) on 6 March 1957, see p. 340.

<sup>19</sup> Fred Koigu (Kenya High Commission, New Delhi), communication to author, 9 March 2018.

<sup>20</sup> ICCR, *Annual Report 2011-12*, Annexure IV, ICCR, New Delhi, 2012, p. 36.

Within a year, that had changed, possibly as a result of the influence of the 2nd India-Africa Forum Summit of 2011; and suddenly by the 2012-2013 *Annual Report*, the Africa Scholarship slots had almost quadrupled to 900 annually, though again, only 420 of these opportunities were actually taken up.<sup>21</sup> By 2016-17, the situation had improved somewhat, and no less than 540 of the 900 slots were taken up.<sup>22</sup> India also offers a small number of Commonwealth scholarships for study in India, but these are not open to African Commonwealth countries.<sup>23</sup>

### *African Students in India: The Numbers' Game*

There are some mysteries in the current analysis of African student numbers in India. One of the most recent analyses of the internationalization of higher education in India <sup>24</sup> notes that one source for foreign student numbers puts the total of African students in India at 4,193, almost 10 years ago, in 2008-9,<sup>25</sup> while the Ministry of Home Affairs puts African student numbers in 2013 (4-5 years later) at 26, 816.<sup>26</sup> A third source from 2017 puts total African student numbers at 5880. <sup>27</sup> In contrast, the latest *All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) (2016-17)* does not provide a

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<sup>21</sup> ICCR, *Annual Report 2012-13*, Annexure IV, ICCR, New Delhi, 2013, p. 31.

<sup>22</sup> ICCR, *Annual Report 2016-17*, ICCR, New Delhi, 2017, p. 34.

<sup>23</sup> See further: <http://www.iccr.gov.in/content/commonwealth-scholarships> (Accessed on 12 February 2018). Under this scheme, at present, the Council offers scholarships to the nationals of the following Commonwealth countries: Bangladesh, Canada, Guyana, Maldives, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom. It can be seen that it does not cover any of the African countries of the Commonwealth.

<sup>24</sup> V.R. Yarevdekar and G. Tiwari, *Internationalisation of Higher Education in India*, Sage, New Delhi, 2017.

<sup>25</sup> K.B. Powar, *Changing Landscape of International Higher Education: An Indian Perspective*, D.Y. Patil, Pune, 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Yarevdekar and Towari, *Internationalisation of Higher Education in India*, n. 24, pp. 204, 211.

<sup>27</sup> F. Qamar and V. Bhalla, *Internationalisation of Higher Education in India: Annual Survey of International Students in India, 2014–2015*, Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi, 2017.

total number for African students in India at all, but just mentions that Nigeria (2091) and Sudan (2073) are the fourth and fifth among the top ten sources of foreign students in the country;<sup>28</sup> it then lists figures for the 56 countries providing over 100 foreign students.<sup>29</sup> If the 23 African countries providing more than 100 students are totalled, they come to 10,697.

Here, then, are four very different figures for African student numbers from 2017 publications: 4193; 5880; 10,697 and 26,816. Given that total foreign student numbers for 2016-17 are said to be 47,575 in AISHE 2017, it seems unlikely that the 26,816 figure is correct, since that would suggest that Africa provides more than half of all foreign students in India. Five of India's neighbours (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal) provide 20,763 students according to the AISHE survey, and it is noteworthy that a single country, Nepal, provides 11,250 students. If the AISHE 2017 figures are accurate, then one neighbouring country sends more students to India than the entire continent of Africa if we accept that the 10,697 figure may be nearer to an accurate assessment.

One possible explanation for the Home Affairs figure of 26,816 is that it covers all those granted student visas, which could include the majority of the 10,000+ who come each year for short-term, non-degree, courses under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC). More than 40 per cent of these are from Africa. We shall return to ITEC in a later section.

Clearly, more work needs to be done on African student numbers, and it is an area where the Association of African Students in India (AASI) and its currently four chapters in Mumbai, Bangalore, Rajasthan and Pune could play a useful role as well as the African embassies and high commissions in

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<sup>28</sup> AISHE, *All India Survey on Higher Education (2016-17)*, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi, 2017, p. 18.

<sup>29</sup> Table 16, *Ibid.*

Delhi.<sup>30</sup> At the moment, the AASI website claims to have 5,800 student members. This figure may also be taken into account in reviewing student numbers, though it should be acknowledged that many students will not register for AASI membership, and others may have left India without removing their membership. As far as African student numbers in total are concerned, the President of AASI has suggested that there are “somewhere around 25,000”<sup>31</sup> of them.

### *Beyond the Numbers*

Given the centrality or “niche area” of “capacity building” to India’s discourse on collaboration with Africa<sup>32</sup>, and the claim by a senior figure in the MEA that “in training and capacity building, we are second to none”,<sup>33</sup> it is vital to have clarity about the scale of the African presence in Indian higher education. But equally there are some key issues about its character beyond the numbers. The first of these is that the great majority of African students in India are pursuing under-graduate studies. Only Ethiopia is distinguished by having some 440 of its 723 current students registered at the PhD level. A second issue of importance is that whichever of the four possible figures for total numbers of African students proves to be accurate, it is the case that a majority of all African students in India are self-supported and not on Indian government awards. We have already commented on the rise in ICCR African scholarships to 900 from 251 in 2012-13. There are also opportunities for African students to apply for some of the ICCR’s arts and culture scholarship opportunities. But even if these are added and if it is also noted that a number of African

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<sup>30</sup> One ambassador talked to the author of there being “tens of thousands” of African students in India (personal communication to author, New Delhi, 3 April 2018).

<sup>31</sup> President of AASI to author, New Delhi, 4 April 2018.

<sup>32</sup> R. Beri, “India’s Evolving Blueprint with Africa”, S. Chaturvedi and A. Mulakala (eds), *India’s Approach to Development Cooperation*, Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series. Routledge, London and New York, 2016, p. 126.

<sup>33</sup> IASD, *India and Africa: Deepening the Security Agreement*, 4th India-Africa Strategic Dialogue, 27-28 March 2018, IDSA, New Delhi.

researchers are coming to India on C.V. Raman science and technology shorter-term fellowships, the total of publicly available scholarships from the India central government may still be around 1000, and not all of these slots were filled.<sup>34</sup>

It should be acknowledged that though the ICCR requires that its scholarships can only be taken up in public universities or colleges, there are, beyond ICCR, partial or full scholarships available to international students, including from Africa, at several private universities. It should also be noted that not all the scholarships for African students are from the Indian government. Several countries, including Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, Nigeria and Mozambique, offer a number of scholarships to their own students and others such as Egypt have scholarship exchange schemes. It would be important to have a better sense of these African scholarship numbers since India-Africa cooperation in training cannot surely be a one-way street consisting mainly of scholarships in India for Africa provided by India.

At present, few Indian students get the benefit of having scholarships to study at African institutions of learning. It would contribute both to developing the cadre of Africanists in India as well as contributing to the impact of people-to-people interactions if this could increase. Other countries engaged in the study of African nations, for example, China, Japan and Korea, appear to have more opportunities to study in Africa but even short sabbaticals taken at African organizations of learning (universities, think tanks, etc.) would help in maintaining up-to-date research, possibly shared research, and publications. In effect, this would be a kind of reverse ITEC, taking Indian students to Africa.

### **Learning from India in Africa and India**

The reasons for African students coming to study in India are diverse, beyond the shortage of opportunities for study in Africa and the very

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<sup>34</sup> In the latest round of ICCR scholarships for Africa, 2016-2017, only 540 of the 900 were taken up. See ICCR, *Annual Report April 2016-March 2017*, ICCR, New Delhi, 2017, p. 34.

moderate fee levels in India, though these are rising sharply. But there is no single account of these reasons as there may be for African students in China who widely talk of Chinese students working twice as hard as they had done before coming and always being on time.<sup>35</sup> Certainly, there are students who came to India because they wanted to find out the secret of why Indians were “so smart” or so good at science and maths, or their firms in Africa were so enterprising (students from Cameroon, Nigeria and Zimbabwe). But there are mixed African accounts about studying in India. In the sciences, for instance, there is a real possibility for practicals to take place in Indian higher education, unlike in some parts of Africa, since the chemicals and other laboratory materials are easily available and are made in India. In terms of learning from India, one of the Zimbabwean students argued that he had been influenced by the fact that “everyone is business-minded; they seem to be entrepreneurs by nature. Whereas we have been taught to be job-seekers.”<sup>36</sup> Other students talk of being influenced by the strong family ties that are evident among Indian students and even of the stability associated with arranged marriages.

On the other hand, and in other fields, several African students report on their Indian colleagues not attending class much except for the sessions linked to preparation for examinations or assessments, and on the need for assignments to focus on quantity rather than quality to gain good marks. But this is hardly something special to take from studying in India, as one student has mentioned:

On what to learn from our Indian counterparts, there’s a big disagreement on what the hard work should be devoted to in the first place. Is it really about working hard to pass exams which our counterparts do or is it holistic learning? Hard cramming-work is not about to be a take-away from our Indian counterparts.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> King, *China’s Aid and Soft Power in Africa*. 10, pp. 80, 81.

<sup>36</sup> Zimbabwe student to author, Mumbai, 18 March 2018.

<sup>37</sup> Ugandan student to author, Pune, 4 April 2018.

Another has added:

Teachers want you to reproduce exactly the same words they have used. What matters in assignments and exams is the volume. One of the teachers said to us: “These are the key words I am looking for; you can underline them; and you’ll be sure of passing.”<sup>38</sup>

But in other situations what was appreciated was that there was an atmosphere of “critical debate”.<sup>39</sup> In the case of one student, however, he had been told by his student friends not to make any critical comments on Indian politics, “as he was a foreigner”.<sup>40</sup>

A last comment seeks to put in place what has been learnt in the formal setting of the university and what has learned outside:

My time in India has been a revolutionary journey and has altered my very way of thinking. It has had a profound effect. But I have actually learned more out of class than in class. In class I have learned very little.<sup>41</sup>

### *The Continuing Challenge of Social Relations*

The reactions of the Ahmedabad spectators, though, I won’t forget. As the West Indians took to the field, loud monkey whoops filled the air, and bananas came raining down from the stands. The pelted players—probably the greatest West Indian team in history—stood there in their flannels, stunned.<sup>42</sup>

Social relations between the local students and local communities on the one hand and African students on the other remain a subject of concern. Indeed, the challenge of relations between the local and the foreign student

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<sup>38</sup> Kenyan student to Author, New Delhi, 6 April 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Eritrean student to Author, New Delhi, 16 February 2018.

<sup>40</sup> Ghanaian student to Author, Panjim, 28 March 2018.

<sup>41</sup> Kenyan student to Author, New Delhi, 6 April 2018.

<sup>42</sup> Sunil Khilnani, *Incarnations: India in 50 Lives*, Allen Lane, New York, 2016, p. 178.

lies at the heart of the iconic account of the founding of Symbiosis University back in the early 1970s, and positive approaches to “engage with Africa” remain central to the mission and mandate of the Symbiosis University.<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, incidents that have involved attacks on African students have continued over the years, and the Group of African Ambassadors in India have even set up an Education Committee, largely because of these.

The challenge of being perceived as strange and different is commonplace amongst African students. Few would go so far as to say what one Kenyan had mentioned— “I die every day” just through a series of regular small incidents and interactions.<sup>44</sup> Rather, there is the feeling of just being looked at in a special way and even avoided. Most students would argue that it is important to understand what lies behind these cultural differences or the naïve attitudes towards Africa; otherwise it could become an obsession and impede their studies.<sup>45</sup> Illustrative of this culture of staring—especially by Indian men—and also of indifference is that one student has mentioned that one of the most memorable things to have happened to him in his whole two years in Delhi was that a 13-year old kid came up to him and his friend and just said with great interest: “Hello, where are you from?”<sup>46</sup> Students appreciate being asked what country they come from rather than just being categorized as coming from the continent of Africa. So often they report that Africa is thought of being a single country. This interested

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<sup>43</sup> “The story of the Mauritian student who fell ill and was attended to by his girlfriend who passed on food through the window of his hostel room is well known.” For S. B. Mujumdar, the founder of Symbiosis, this key event led to his establishing an international student hostel, and then a university, based on an ethical approach to internationalization, available at <http://corporatcitizen.in/v2-issue10/cover-story-the-lady-behind-the-legend.html> (Accessed on 4 April 2018). See also S. B. Mujumdar and V. Yeravdekar (2014) for a whole book dedicated to interviews with foreign students in Pune.

<sup>44</sup> Kenyan student to author, New Delhi, 9 March 2018.

<sup>45</sup> Nigerian student to author, Mumbai, 23 March 2018.

<sup>46</sup> Kenyan student to Author, 10 April 2018.

approach resonates with Nehru's expectation that African students "will teach us something about their own country".

## **African Trainees and Professionals in India**

### *Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation*

A key year in Indian cooperation was 1964 when Indira Gandhi's first goodwill visit to Africa, as Minister of Information and Broadcasting, took place. The foundation of Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) followed on directly during that same year, 1964; this had been a key ambition of Nehru, her father, who also died in 1964. Even if Nehru did not live to see its development, this "flagship programme" of short-term training<sup>47</sup> over the years became one of the largest short-term training programmes in the world, along with those of China, Germany and Japan. ITEC offers some 10,000 slots a year in 280 programmes in almost 50 different institutions, both civil and military. It has been understandably celebrated in a range of academic and cultural diplomacy sources. Thus, it has been profiled as "Skill Development: The ITEC Way" in Chand's *Two Billion Dreams: Celebrating India-Africa Friendship*.<sup>48</sup> In the MEA volume, *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/ New Horizons*,<sup>49</sup> ITEC is described in a special section, "Arc of knowledge: ITEC Courses Aim to Usher in an Era of Knowledge and Empowerment in Africa". Similarly, the MEA's *Fifty Years of ITEC* (2014) underlines the fact that India had itself gained from being an aid recipient even if not all the prescriptions from Western donors were applicable:

At the same time, the assistance received in capacity building was invaluable and had a tremendous impact on India's development.

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<sup>47</sup> S. Chaturvedi, *The Logic of Sharing: Indian Approach to South-South Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2016, p. 57.

<sup>48</sup> Manish Chand, *Two Billion Dreams: Celebrating India-Africa Friendship*, Public Diplomacy Division, MEA, IANS Publishing, New Delhi, 2011, pp. 110–119.

<sup>49</sup> MEA *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons*, Public Diplomacy Initiative of Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, 2015, pp. 77–81.

This was the inspiration for the ITEC – the idea genuinely was to share the lessons in development that we were imbibing.<sup>50</sup>

The analyses of ITEC in some of the academic publications such as Tuhin in Chaturvedi and Mulakala, 2016;<sup>51</sup> Chaturvedi, 2016;<sup>52</sup> and Mullen, 2015,<sup>53</sup> help us to answer some of the quantitative and qualitative issues regarding this major programme of South-South Cooperation. It is clear that the scale of the ITEC initiative grew rapidly from less than 2,000 candidates in 1999 to some 10,000 annually by 2014–15.<sup>54</sup> On the African side of ITEC, the series of IAFS summits had the effect of raising the participation of Africa in the scheme to some 40 per cent of the total. However, as late as 2013–14, the number of training slots allocated to Afghanistan (675) was still significantly higher than the highest African countries such as Mauritius (264), Tanzania (250) or Ethiopia (220). Nevertheless, ITEC's overall connection could be celebrated in its connection with Africa and HRD:

The ITEC has focused primarily on Human Resource Development and Capacity Building. Thousands of African men and women were trained in Indian institutions in many practical fields of economic activity to enable them to contribute positively to the socio-economic development of their respective countries.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> MEA, *Fifty Years of ITEC*, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, 2014, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup> K. Tuhin, "India's ITEC program", in S. Chaturvedi and A. Mulakala (eds.), *India's Approach to Development Cooperation* (Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series). Routledge, London and New York, 2016, pp. 29-44.

<sup>52</sup> S. Chaturvedi, *The Logic of Sharing: Indian Approach to South-South Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2016.

<sup>53</sup> Mullen, R. D., *Fifty Years of Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation*, Indian Development Cooperation Research, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, 2015.

<sup>54</sup> By 2018, the ITEC website was referring to there being 12,000 training slots, though it is not clear if this includes both civilian and military training. See <https://www.itecgoi.in/about.php> (Accessed on 7 April 2018).

<sup>55</sup> H.H.S. Viswanathan, "10 years of IAFS: A New Paradigm in Engagement", in *Indiafrica: Intertwined Dreams, India and the World*, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 6.

It should also be noted that despite the disparity at the level of the individual country, overall “a large number of ITEC training slots have been enjoyed by Sub-Saharan Africa”;<sup>56</sup> indeed, over the period 1998-2005, no less than 36 per cent of the total slots were allocated to Sub-Saharan Africa, making it possible to argue that “the focus of the ITEC has been Sub-Saharan Africa”.<sup>57</sup>

The ITEC numbers and its smaller corollary, the Special Commonwealth Africa Assistance Programme (SCAAP), may also help to explain some of the substantial differences that were noted in the African student numbers in India. Apparently, all the trainees coming into India for the ITEC and SCAAP courses are given student visas.<sup>58</sup> This would mean, of course, that there would be some 4,000 additional African “student” visas, even though the majority of these would be professional trainees on 1-3 month courses. There is a tendency with some Indian analysis in writing about ITEC candidates to talk of their being on “scholarships” rather than on shorter-term training awards.

### *New Approaches to an Old Modality*

There is a good deal of new thinking going on in respect of some of these time-honoured flagships in India’s development fleet, including ITEC. These changes reflect wider thinking across the governance of India’s development cooperation. One noticeable trend is a recognition that courses on offer need increasingly to be demand-driven rather than the providing agencies continuing to assume that their regular courses will go on being offered year after year. Indeed, there is talk of Indian institutions having to bid to continue their offerings on a yearly basis, and of the ITEC programme having to respond to specific requests. The non-state sector is, of course, already a key player in aspects of India’s HRD cooperation, as will be seen in a later section. Indeed, one of the best-known courses

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<sup>56</sup> J. Tilak, *Education and Development in India: Critical Issues in Public Policy and Development*, Palgrave MacMillan, Singapore, 2018, p. 455.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> MEA policymaker to author, New Delhi, 6 April 2018.

offered in the ITEC portfolio has been provided since 2008 by a non-state actor, the Barefoot College in Tilonia, Rajasthan, in the training of women as “solar engineers”.<sup>59</sup>

In respect of Africa, there has been an exploration of what public-private partnerships (PPPs) could deliver in an ITEC-like process, and in 2017, no less than 1500 Africans took advantage of training opportunities in some 20 different courses, in IT, agriculture, medicine, marine, etc. These involved training in some of the best medical facilities in India, for example, but without government paying fees. This kind of “mini-ITEC” for Africa paralleled a wider trend in ITEC of moving up market and offering leading-edge courses in artificial intelligence, nano-technology, total quality management, enterprise development, etc.<sup>60</sup> A further development was the introduction of trilateral courses where a Northern agency could partner with India to deliver courses for less developed countries. This is not unique to India, but has already been done for quite some time by Japan’s JICA with its short-term courses, using training centres in Singapore and Thailand, to offer training to less developed nations.

### *Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)*

Though it has been noted above that ITEC has been described as “skill development”, it should be acknowledged that a good deal of India’s human resources cooperation with Africa, like China’s, is at the higher education level, and not at all related to TVET. This is the case for India’s main scholarship schemes, as well as for the majority of their ITEC courses. In other words, the patterns of exchange between India and Africa focus primarily on higher education rather than technical and vocational skills development. Thus, the movement of thousands of Africans to India is

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<sup>59</sup> Bunker Roy, “Barefoot Solar Engineers: Lighting Up Africa”, in M. Arora and S. Chaturvedi (eds), *India-Africa Partnership towards Sustainable Development*, FIDC, RIS, New Delhi, 2015, pp. 19–24.

<sup>60</sup> MEA policymakers to author, New Delhi, 5 and 6 April 2018.

driven by the desire for undergraduate and graduate qualifications, and for short professional courses in higher education institutions and not by the search for TVET. The same is the case with the majority of institutions that India has set up or has at least pledged to set up in Africa, as will be seen a little later.

It is perhaps surprising that India's development aid has not been very significantly involved with skills development since, for over a decade, India has been engaged in one of the largest initiatives for skills development in its independence history. "Skill India" proposes to skill almost one in every two Indians. This mission of the previous government has been taken over and sharpened by the current Modi administration.<sup>61</sup> But there are few implications of this yet for skilling Africa.<sup>62</sup>

There are, however, at least two initiatives in skill development that should be noted. The most clearly vocational pledge from the first conference in the IAFS series was the provision of ten VTCs to Africa. Interestingly, this was not delivered through India's Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) or its predecessor, but through the National Small Industry Corporation (NSIC) which is under the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises of India. These VTCs were first proposed at the 2008 Summit, and by mid-2018 seven of them were in place in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi, Egypt, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe and Gambia, and a further was under execution in Mozambique. It is important to note that they do not just provide technical and vocational courses, but strongly emphasize enterprise development or business incubation. In the case of Rwanda, this initially single institution is being multiplied nationally through a new and much larger agreement with the Indian government.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> See King, "Skill Development in India and Africa: Interactive Agendas?", n. 8, for an elaboration on "Skill India" and its international dimensions.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Rwanda High Commissioner, New Delhi to author, 6 February 2018. In addition to this single centre, there is an agreement to provide ten vocational training centres and four business incubation centres to Rwanda at the cost of \$81 million. See <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/read/229017> (Accessed on 17 February 2019).

Apart from this Pan-African initiative, VTCs, especially in information technology, have been set up through bilateral agreements, and there has been a readiness to involve the private sector more in this provision, in line with the trend just remarked upon.

However, there has been one significant marker of possible significance to India-Africa skill development. That was the five-day summit in Delhi in late October-early November 2017 entitled “India-Africa Knowledge Exchange Mission”, organized by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, and the World Bank. Ministers and other senior figures in skill development were present from Rwanda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania and Ghana. According to the World Bank, these countries are keen to learn from India’s experience as it strides to implement one of the world’s largest skill development programmes.<sup>64</sup> Amongst the objectives of this meeting were the challenges of skill development in the informal sector, employer-led skilling strategies for enhancing industry competitiveness, and institutional reforms for the delivery of skill training, both long and short-term.<sup>65</sup>

It is still too early to say what may be the financing mechanisms for Indian skill development experience being supported in Africa, but this is clearly an area to watch.

### *Pan-African Pledges of Institutional Development*

The first India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) was held over 10 years ago, in April 2008. India had then promised, amongst many other pledges, institutional development across Africa. This is not surprising considering that “India has made capacity building and human resource development

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<sup>64</sup> See [http://www.skilldevelopment.gov.in/assets/images/latest%20news/Press%20Release\\_Africa-%20India%20Knowledge%20Exchange%20Mission.pdf](http://www.skilldevelopment.gov.in/assets/images/latest%20news/Press%20Release_Africa-%20India%20Knowledge%20Exchange%20Mission.pdf), (Accessed on 17 February 2019).

<sup>65</sup> See <https://www.nationalskillsnetwork.in/knowledge-sharing-workshop-for-african-delegates/> (Accessed on 17 February 2019).

the template for its engagement with Africa”.<sup>66</sup> India agreed to create 19 institutes across the continent, “modelled on their Indian counterparts and set up with their assistance”.<sup>67</sup> These 19 proposed India-Africa institutes covered a whole range of sectors from foreign trade, civil aviation, and diamonds to educational planning and a stock exchange. There was also a proposal to set up an India-Africa Virtual University.

India won plaudits at the time by offering its Pan-African proposals for institution-building via the African Union (AU), and at the request of the AU. The downside of working through this over-arching body was that decisions were taken on the allocation of the institutes via the Banjul formula, ensuring that there was representation of countries from all the different regional economic communities of Africa. This did not always make good sense in terms of rapid implementation. For instance, the India-Africa institute for civil aviation was allocated to a country, Chad, which does not have a civil aviation industry,<sup>68</sup> and an educational planning institute was offered to a Francophone country just emerging from a protracted civil war. In other words, the institutions were not necessarily allocated on the basis of a demand at the country level, and their implementation was made more challenging by the partnership agreement which required that the host country provide the land and the buildings.

By the time of the second IAFS, which took place in Addis Ababa, the number of institutes promised had risen to 21,<sup>69</sup> and later to 100,<sup>70</sup> and the then Prime Minister of India was further proposing some 10,000 new

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<sup>66</sup> R. Beri, “India’s Evolving Blueprint with Africa”, in S. Chaturvedi and A. Mulakala (eds.), *India’s Approach to Development Cooperation*, Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series, Routledge, London and New York, 2016, p. 132.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> MEA policymaker, New Delhi, 6 April 2018.

<sup>69</sup> MEA, 2011, *Second Africa-India Forum Summit 2011: Africa-India Framework for Enhanced Cooperation*, available at <http://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/34/Second+AfricaIndia+Forum+Summit+2011+AfricaIndia+Framework+for+Enhanced+Cooperation> (Accessed on 8 April 2018).

<sup>70</sup> MEA, *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons*, 2015, p. 101.

scholarships to be available for African students once the India–African Virtual University had been established.<sup>71</sup> The reality, 11 years after the initial pledge of 2008, is that there is little evidence of these many Pan-African institutions, including the Virtual University.<sup>72</sup> This implementation challenge concerned participants in the 3<sup>rd</sup> IAFS in 2015, as well as the group of African ambassadors in New Delhi. Accordingly, in the *Framework for Action* of IAFS III, there was mention of the need to “fast-track the implementation of those capacity building institutions that have been found to be feasible for continuation under IAFS III”.<sup>73</sup> Equally, there was a specific requirement to tackle the implementation challenge, made, as the final item in the *Framework*:

### ***Monitoring Mechanism***

52. Agree to establish a regular formal monitoring mechanism to review the implementation of the agreed areas of cooperation and identified projects by the competent bodies of the partnership. Modalities of the monitoring mechanism and the detailed Plan of Action will be jointly developed within three months.<sup>74</sup>

There had been no movement forward on this monitoring modality as of May 2018. But before rushing to judgement on this, it should be acknowledged that the government has been seriously rethinking the value

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<sup>71</sup> M. Singh, “Address by the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, at the Plenary Session of the 2nd Africa-India Forum Summit”, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, available at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=72281> (Accessed on 8 April 2018). The numbers game of institutions pledged to Africa is confusing, as it changes from 19 to 21, and even a further 80 institutes are mentioned by R. Beri, 2016, “India’s Evolving Blueprint with Africa”, n. 65, p. 133. See also MEA, *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons*, 2015, p. 101 for mention of 100 institutes.

<sup>72</sup> “Most of these [institutes] are underutilised due to local capacity constraints”. See G. Singh, “Engaging the Horn of Africa”, in *Indiafrica: Intertwined dreams, India and the World*, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 22.

<sup>73</sup> IAFS, *India-Africa Framework for Strategic Cooperation*, Third India-Africa Forum Summit, 29 October 2015, New Delhi, p. 8.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

of all these AU-supply-driven pledges to countries that may not even have demanded the particular institution in the first place. Already, the number of pledges has been reduced from 100 institutes to 56, but it will be important to follow carefully how these commitments get implemented in many different African countries.

An internal review has also been carried out of the ITEC institutions in India and their provision. The result is support for a whole series of additional institutes that are widely supported in topics such as English language teaching in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and Sri Lanka, as well as enterprise development in the first four of this group.<sup>75</sup> But the government would acknowledge that institutional development is seldom trouble-free. Even when successful centres for advanced IT have been established in Africa, and local staff have been fully trained, their sustainability can be undermined by local staff being poached by multinational IT companies.<sup>76</sup>

### *The Pan-African e-Network*<sup>77</sup>

This brain-child of the then President of India, Abdul Kalam, back in 2004, has been celebrated more than any other human resource initiative of the Government of India. It has been called a “radiant example of South-South cooperation”,<sup>78</sup> and “a model of social responsibility” by Kalam,<sup>79</sup> as well as epitomizing “the power of innovation and visionary

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<sup>75</sup> MEA policymaker to author, New Delhi, 6 April 18.

<sup>76</sup> MEA policymaker to author, 6 April 2018.

<sup>77</sup> I am indebted to Tom De Bruyn for discussion of the Network; see also De Bruyn, “Equal Relations and Appropriate Expertise in India’s South-South Cooperation? Discourse and Practice of the Pan-African e-Network”, *Insight on Africa*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2017, pp. 1–20. I have also profited from a series of exchanges with Vincent Duclos during 2018 and 2019.

<sup>78</sup> Manish Chand, “Building South-South Digital Bridge: Pan African E-Network Project”, in M. Arora, M. and M. Chand (eds.), *India-Africa partnership towards sustainable development*. FIDC/RIS, New Delhi, 2015, p.25.

<sup>79</sup> Manish Chand, “Pan-African e-Network: A Model of Social Responsibility”, in *Two Billion Dreams: Celebrating India-Africa Friendship*, Public Diplomacy Division, MEA, IANS Publishing, New Delhi, 2011, p. 97.

thinking in India-African cooperation”.<sup>80</sup> It was effectively a turn-key supply-driven project of great ambition, seeking to make tele-medicine and tele-education available in the great majority of African countries. It was already a PPP initiative, as the bulk of the participating super-speciality Indian hospitals were private, as were two of the five universities providing tele-education, including the most active of them, Amity University. As far as its tele-education component was concerned, it succeeded in enrolling some 22,000 students, between 2009 and 2017, of which 16,875 chose to link with Amity. The pass-rate was some 45 per cent on average and possibly higher in the case of Amity.

Each of the three IAFS events confirmed the continuation of the Network, most recently in the 2015 summit which undertook to: “Renew, expand and upgrade the existing Pan African E-Network Project infrastructure so as to permit an innovative utilization of the E-Network Project with the view to cover newer areas of mutual interest”.<sup>81</sup> Though there are accounts of the Network being renewed till 2021, it effectively came to an end in June 2017.<sup>82</sup> A good deal has, however, been learnt both for India and for Africa through this unique networking over eight years.

There had indeed been a cabinet decision to renew the network at a cost of \$250 million USD – more than a \$125 million greater than the first phase. But in doing so, the reach of the Network could go beyond Africa, and would embody Kalam’s dream, expressed in 2011:

India may endeavour to extend this international social responsibility to all developing nations in a mission mode based on this Pan-African e-Network so that knowledge shared is knowledge multiplied.<sup>83</sup>

What is anticipated in the next phase is essentially a technological transformation of the Network from a satellite-based to an internet-based

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<sup>80</sup> MEA, *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons*, 2015, p. 85.

<sup>81</sup> IAFS, *India-Africa framework for strategic cooperation*, New Delhi, 2015, p. 9.

<sup>82</sup> TCIL to author, New Delhi, 14 March 2018; 16 March 2018.

<sup>83</sup> A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, “Pan-African e-Network: A Model of Social Responsibility”, in M. Chand, *Two Billion Dreams: Celebrating India-Africa Friendship*, Public Diplomacy Division, MEA, IANS Publishing, New Delhi, 2011, p. 106.

global knowledge hub, offering access to the best Indian universities, both public and private, as well as to courses and skill development qualifications. There would be a parallel in health. The “Pan-African” label has been dropped and the name now agreed for tele-education is *e-Vidya Bharati* [Indian Global Education], while in tele-medicine it would be *e-Arogya Bharati* [Indian Global Health].<sup>84</sup> There would still be a substantial quota of free access to the new provision (4,000 annually in Education, and 1,000 annually in Health), but the experience of the Pan-African e-Network had been that an element of fee-paying has not proved negative to participation. It is anticipated that the new provision will be operational during 2019.

In launching this phase on 10 September 2018, the Minister of External Affairs hailed the project as a “digital bridge” between Africa and India,<sup>85</sup> and saw it also as a direct illustration of Modi’s ten principles for India’s engagement with Africa, delivered in Uganda in July 2018. It especially confirms Principle 4:

We will harness India’s experience with the digital revolution to support Africa’s development; improve delivery of public services; extend education and health; spread digital literacy; expand financial inclusion; and mainstream the marginalized.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> TCIL to author, 7 March 2018; 14 March 2018. This should not be confused with Vidhya Bharati which promotes nationalist schooling in India. The same caution is relevant for Arogya Bharati which is also a name linked with a nationalist organization in India, the RSS, promoting ancient methods of producing customized babies. See <https://thewire.in/health/rss-kolkata-super-baby> accessed on 17 April 2019.

<sup>85</sup> MEA “Signing of Agreement between MEA and TCIL for the e-VBAB Network”, 10 September 2018, New Delhi, available at <https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/30373/Signing+of+Agreement+between+MEA+and+TCIL+for+the+eVBAB+Network+Project> (Accessed on 10 September 2018).

<sup>86</sup> MEA “Prime Minister’s Address at Parliament of Uganda during his State Visit to Uganda”, 25 July 2018, available at [https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152/Prime\\_Ministers\\_address\\_at\\_Parliament\\_of\\_Uganda\\_during\\_his\\_State\\_Visit\\_to\\_Uganda](https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152/Prime_Ministers_address_at_Parliament_of_Uganda_during_his_State_Visit_to_Uganda) (Accessed on 10 November 2018).

Although the global Network as signed off in the presence of the African diplomatic corps in New Delhi, it is possible that it would no longer be confined to Africa in the future but could be accessed also in the Gulf, South and South East Asia and even Eastern Europe.<sup>87</sup>

## **Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Private Sector**

### **NGOs**

The role of NGOs in India's aid activities does not yet cover a wide canvas in Africa. Indeed, it has been argued that they have "played an almost negligible role in the last decade's considerable expansion of Indian development cooperation".<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, India's NGO engagement with Africa is well illustrated by the Solar Mamas, already referred to. The Barefoot College in Tilonia, Rajasthan, has promoted skills in the assembly and maintenance of solar panels mainly by rural women with basic levels of education, and its ITEC participants from developing countries have been supported by MEA since 2008. While this funding has not been exclusively targeted at Africa, there are now plans for five regional vocational training hubs in the continent. The first of these is located in Zanzibar, Tanzania, which already operates as a regional centre for skills development, and others are under execution in South Sudan, Burkina Faso, Liberia, and Senegal.<sup>89</sup> All these training activities in Africa are carried out in conjunction with locally-based NGOs.

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<sup>87</sup> TCIL to author, 10 November 2018.

<sup>88</sup> E. Mawdsley and S. Roychoudhury, "CSOs and Indian Development Cooperation", in S. Chaturvedi and A. Mulakala (eds) *India's Approach to Development Cooperation*, Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series, Routledge, London and New York, 2016, p. 81.

<sup>89</sup> See "The Barefoot Model for Global Sustainability", The Barefoot College, Tilonia, Rajasthan, 2016, p. 9.

One of the few other Indian NGOs<sup>90</sup> that has engaged with Africa in any substantial way and has been supported by MEA is the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA). It has developed with local partners a range of skills development activities, including in microfinance, microenterprise, micro-insurance and leadership capacity-building, working with five countries in Africa, including S. Africa, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Senegal and Ghana. In 2018, it was invited by Mozambique to work with a local NGO in developing their own informal workers' organization, as well as being asked by the Tanzanian government to set up a SEWA Tanzania.<sup>91</sup>

### *India's Private Sector in Africa*

Over the last decade and more, India's private sector has become much more visible in Africa. Most of the country's international brand names are present in different parts of the continent from Algeria to South Africa. And several of them, such as Tata Africa Holdings, have highly developed education and training programmes for African employees.<sup>92</sup> The mantra of India's triple A technologies being "appropriate, adaptable and affordable" is widely heard.<sup>93</sup> So is the claim that India's private sector approach towards Africa is distinctively different from China's mode of intervention. Not least is the human resources' side of Indian enterprise in Africa: "The difference between the Chinese model and the Indian model is that the Indian model is more sustainable, developing the local

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<sup>90</sup> Another NGO, Dastikari Haat Samito, the National Association of Indian Crafts People, would be worth examining for its work with South Africa and more broadly.

<sup>91</sup> SEWA to author, New Delhi, 6 April 2018.

<sup>92</sup> For the example of Tata Africa Holdings in South Africa, see P. Kumar, "Skill Development and Capacity Building in Africa: Opportunities for Development", Paper presented at the 4th India-Africa Strategic Dialogue on India and Africa: Parlaying the Security Engagement, 27-28 March 2018, IDSA, New Delhi.

<sup>93</sup> V. Duclos, "Of Doctors and Wires: ICTs, Healthcare, and India's Venture into Africa", *Journal of Critical Southern Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2014, p. 15.

capacities.<sup>94</sup> The Apollo Group's private hospital in Mauritius, plans for Tanzania<sup>95</sup> and tele-medicine units in Nigeria illustrate a wider process in health services for Africa. There is a parallel in education with the establishment of private universities such as the Mahatma Gandhi University in Rwanda in 2014.<sup>96</sup> It is also clear that if there were developments in the India-Africa Knowledge Exchange, discussed earlier, there could be a substantial role for India's multi-national companies.

With the exception of the Indian large-scale, multi-national firms where formal industrial training either in Africa or in India has been the norm, many smaller Indian firms have trained their African workers on the job, in preference to using the formal TVET institutions in their country. The latter have tended to be supply- rather than demand-driven. There is, furthermore, a huge disconnect between the great majority of African skilled workers who are trained on the job, in the informal sector and the much smaller number of formally trained workers from TVET institutions, or large-scale firms. There is in fact much in common between the approaches to on-the-job training of small-scale Indian investors in Africa and those pursued by African entrepreneurs in what is termed the informal (*Jua Kali*) sector.<sup>97</sup> It should be remembered that in both India and in Africa the bulk of all employment, and of all training, is to be found on the job in the informal, unregulated sector. Even in the now highly formal industrial estates in East Africa, the majority of Indian firms continue to prefer training on the job.

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<sup>94</sup> Sinha, quoted by Duclos, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>95</sup> See further <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/apollo-clinic-in-tanzania-in-four-months/article23118982.ece> (Accessed 18 February 2019).

<sup>96</sup> Rwanda policymakers to author, 20 March 2018, and 11 February 2019. Also see, <https://www.masterstudies.com/universities/Rwanda/MGU-Rwanda/> [Last (Accessed on 17 February 2019). The Mahatma Gandhi University in Rwanda was actually closed by the Higher Education Council of Rwanda in 2016.

<sup>97</sup> K. King, *Jua Kali Kenya: Change and Development in an Informal Economy*, James Currey, London, 1996.

There is therefore something slightly naïve about the image of win-win cooperation in human resource development mentioned in this excerpt from “Manufacturing: Made in Africa for the world”:

Indian private companies can join hands with public and private institutions in India and Africa to provide skill training to local African youth as it will create a skilled labour force and boost economy as well as usher an era of social changes. This is already being done with India in the process of setting up around 100 training institutes under IAFS-I and IAFS-II.<sup>98</sup>

### ***India and Japanese Capacity Building for Africa through the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC)***

Although the *Vision Document* of the AAGC, developed by just three Asian think-tanks, was a year old in May 2018, there was still very little flesh attached to its skeleton. What is, however, clear in this preliminary *Vision* is that “Enhancing capacity and skills” and “People-to-people partnership” are two of its four key pillars. Within the first of these pillars, “human resource training” and “vocational/ industrial training centres” are underlined as important.<sup>99</sup> Some indication of how that impinges upon India-Japan cooperation, including for Africa, is suggested in three RIS/AAGC discussion papers which focus on skills and human resource development in both public and private sectors.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> MEA, *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons*, 2015, p. 101.

<sup>99</sup> See *Asia-Africa Growth Corridor: Partnership for Sustainable and Innovative Development: A Vision Document*, African Development Bank meeting, Ahmedabad, India, 22-26 May, 2017.

<sup>100</sup> S. Mehrotra, “Asia-Africa Cooperation in Human Resource Development”, RIS/AAGC Discussion Paper 218, RIS, New Delhi, 2017; M. Agarwal, “Skill Development in Africa: Scope for India-Japan Cooperation in Asia-Africa Growth Corridor”, RIS/AAGC Discussion Paper 214, RIS, New Delhi, 2017; R. Beri, “India-Japan Cooperation for Promoting People-to-People Partnership in the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor”, RIS/AAGC Discussion Paper 213, RIS, New Delhi, 2017.

What is intriguing about the *Vision Document* is that its main section of some 16 pages is about how the “India-Japan partnership under the AAGC can intervene to address the daunting challenge of unemployment and skills, especially to design and implement project” [sic] [in Africa].<sup>101</sup> There is, however, virtually no experience of Japan and India working collaboratively in Africa.

Surprisingly, for a document that is about capacity development for Africa by Japan and India, the main illustrations of capacity building and HRD are drawn, in Annexure 1, from what Japan is doing in India, currently the largest recipient of Japanese yen loans:

The two Prime Ministers [Abe and Modi] decided to cooperate on the human resource development in the manufacturing sector in India through “Manufacturing skills transfer promotion programme”. This programme will enhance the manufacturing base of India and contribute to “Make in India” and “Skill India”, through training 30,000 persons over the next 10 years with Japanese style manufacturing skills and practices through the establishment of the Japan-India Institutes for Manufacturing...<sup>102</sup>

As far as working collaboratively in Africa is concerned, Indian firms are looking through the AAGC to gain support from Japanese financing and technologies, and Japanese firms are seeking from Indian firms to gain access to networking and social relations in Africa. It should be noted, however, that although the *Vision Document* focuses a good deal on India and Japan’s interactions, it is important to acknowledge the wider ambitions that this initiative encompasses: “It would in fact open up doors for the developing countries from both Asia and Africa to work together for a prosperous Indo-Pacific region”.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *Asia-Africa Growth Corridor*, 2017, p. 11.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19. See also T. Sakamoto, *Role of JICA in India’s Development: Opportunities and Challenges*, JICA Office, New Delhi, 2017.

<sup>103</sup> S. Chaturvedi, “AAGC: Moving towards Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region”, in *Indiafrica: Intertwined Dreams, India and the World*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 2018, p. 27.

We currently await the translation of these ideas into the *Vision Study* of the AAGC. While it had been hoped that the detailed *Vision Study* would be available by September 2018, it has now been decided that more fieldwork is needed to put flesh on to the bones of the *Vision Document*.<sup>104</sup> Hence, there may not be a next version of the Vision before the G20 in Japan in June 2019.<sup>105</sup> It is assumed that there will be more significant African agency in this next detailed round of putting flesh on the skeleton of the AAGC framework than there has been in the development of the *Vision Document*.<sup>106</sup> It would also be important to emphasize that capacity building is not a one-way street of building African capacity, but of Japan and India also learning from Africa. We have suggested elsewhere<sup>107</sup> that one of the biggest challenges for both Japan and India will be to add to and possibly rebrand some of their existing bilateral and continental engagements with Africa as something specifically related to AAGC.

### **India's Aid and Soft Power in Africa**

In this paper, we would draw attention to a series of celebratory, coffee-table volumes on the multiple dimensions of the India-Africa partnership. The first of these appeared in connection with IAFS-II which took place in Ethiopia in 2011. Entitled *Two Billion Dreams: Celebrating India-Africa Friendship*, it was essentially an Indian production, but it drew on African

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<sup>104</sup> RIS to author, New Delhi 10 October 2018.

<sup>105</sup> RIS to author, New Delhi, 25 October 2018.

<sup>106</sup> See the comment of E. Sidiropoulos, "AAGC & African Agenda 2063: Synergies and Opportunities", in *Indiafrica: Intertwined Dreams, India and the World*, Vol. 1, No 4, 2018, p. 31): "Initiatives such as the AAGC create significant opportunities for a network such as ours, the Network of Southern Think-Tanks, to both walk the path with it and to do research on a number of these initiatives."

<sup>107</sup> Kenneth King, "Japan, India and China on Africa: Global Ambitions and Human Resource Development", in Jagannath P. Panda and Titli Basu (eds.), *China-India-Japan in the Indo-Pacific: Ideas, Interests, and Infrastructure*, Pentagon Press, New Delhi, 2018.

voices as well, and none more powerfully than Meles Zenawi, the co-chair of IAFS-II, and the then Prime Minister of Ethiopia. He commented that “India matters to Africa more than ever before because it has incomparably more means to support Africa economically and because Africa itself is on the move after decades in the doldrums... .It can use every rupee it earns to fight its own poverty and yet India has chosen to share its resources with Africa”.<sup>108</sup>

The lavish pictorial record of India-in-Africa and Africa-in-India covers all the major dimensions of the relationship, but the value of Indian higher education is promoted through an alumnus of Delhi University, the then President of Malawi, Mutharika: “India is one of the best countries to attain quality education. As a product of the Indian education system myself, I can unequivocally attest to the high quality of education available in India”.<sup>109</sup>

One of the illustrations of soft power is precisely this readiness by others to appreciate the characteristics of a country. Indeed, sometimes comments such as those above are worth a great deal more in terms of cultural diplomacy than any amount of praise by the country itself.

Though *Two Billion Dreams* was an extraordinary illustration of India-Africa friendship, it was just a single public expressions of this special relationship in IAFS-II. Four years later in 2015, the IAFS-III went a great deal further in terms of public diplomacy. Not only were all the nations of Africa invited, and not just the smaller number (15) associated with the Banjul Formula of the African Union, but there were a whole series of volumes produced, to a very high standard, on the India-Africa relationship. These are worth a brief review:

1. *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons* is a remarkable photographic demonstration, by the Ministry of External Affairs, of the partnership in 200 pages of picture and text. As usual in these

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<sup>108</sup> Meles quoted in Chand, 2011, *Two Billion Dreams*, p. 1011.

<sup>109</sup> Mutharika in Chand, *Ibid.*, p. 88.

publications, the people-to-people dimension is particularly emphasised, and several of its key soft power elements are illustrated, including: International day of yoga celebrations in Africa; Education; ITEC; CV Raman International Fellowship; Pan-African e-Network; and Bollywood.<sup>110</sup>

2. *India-Africa: Towards a New Global Partnership* is a second volume bearing the special lion logo of the India-Africa Forum Summit.<sup>111</sup> Inevitably, it too promotes the Pan-African e-Network, but it covers many other facets of India's relations to the African continent, including maritime connectivity, football, and medical tourism. It explicitly comments on the "goodwill earned through peacekeeping operation and 'soft power' in the form of educational links and the film industry".<sup>112</sup>
3. *India-Africa Partnership towards Sustainable Development* also carries the lion logo of the IAFS-III on its cover.<sup>113</sup> Almost half of its 13 chapters are on some dimension of either "Innovation and creativity" or "Knowledge power". They exemplify a range of education, science and technology, and capacity building projects that are icons of India's HRD collaboration with Africa. Even if "knowledge power" is the term preferred to "soft power" in much of the volume, it acknowledges in its analysis of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) in Mauritius, founded in 1970 some 45 years before the IAFS-III, that Indian studies, in all its diversity, can be brought into the mainstream of Mauritian education. It argues that "The

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<sup>110</sup> MEA, *India-Africa: Shared Destiny/New Horizons*. 14, pp. 70-93.

<sup>111</sup> See *India-Africa: Towards a New Global Partnership*, Society for Policy Studies, New Delhi, 2015.

<sup>112</sup> K. Mathews, "Anatomy of India's Africa policy", in *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>113</sup> M. Arora and M. Chand (eds.), *India-Africa Partnership towards Sustainable*. FIDC/RIS, New Delhi, 2015.

MGI is also a unique project in India-Africa partnership in so far as it underlines the critical importance of culture and soft power in deepening this vital relationship”.<sup>114</sup>

These are just three of the doubtless many more documents which appeared at the time of the 2015 summit, apart from special issues of weeklies and dailies. It is worth noting the amount of research and data-gathering that went into this process. For instance, there is an entire volume dedicated to all the Kenyans who came on ITEC between the time of the first IAFS in 2008 and 2015—*ITEC: Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation: Kenya*. For each alumnus, there is a photo, the course they attended in India, their position in Kenya, as well as their phone, email and postal contacts.<sup>115</sup> It is not yet known for how many other countries of Africa such an exhaustive inventory was carried out in advance of the Summit, but they would prove an invaluable resource for any ITEC alumni/alumnae activity to be carried on by the Indian high commissions or embassies on the continent.

Even though such volumes tend to be associated with major summits and conferences, anniversaries are also an occasion for celebration. This can be seen in the special edition of *India and World* which was entitled *Indiafrica: Intertwined Dreams*.<sup>116</sup> This became available on the tenth anniversary of the India-Africa Forum Summit series which started in April 2008, and it celebrates all the dimensions of India-Africa cooperation covered in this paper with the exception of NGOs.

These valuable volumes which celebrate a particular summit or anniversary year, and inevitably go back onto the shelves of ministries, embassies and high commissions, must be seen as transitory expressions of soft power.

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<sup>114</sup> P. Mehta and K. Sharma, “Knowledge Bridge: Creating Dialogue of Ideas”, in *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>115</sup> MEA, *ITEC: Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation: Kenya*. MEA, New Delhi, 2015.

<sup>116</sup> *India and World. Indiafrica: Intertwined dreams. Special edition*, 2018, Vol. 1.No. 4.

But there are other sources of cultural diplomacy which maintain a daily presence and engagement with the public, including nowadays the multiple dimensions of social media. There are several well-known institutional examples of these associated with the UK's British Council, France's Alliance, Germany's Goethe, and Spain's Cervantes, to refer to only a few comparators.

### *Indian Cultural Centres in Africa*

The mention of the mainstreaming of Indian culture in the MGI above is a reminder of the role of cultural centres as a critical aspect of India's public diplomacy. India in fact supports through ICCR no less than 36 cultural centres world-wide, but just four African countries are included in the list (South Africa (2); Egypt; Tanzania; Mauritius).<sup>117</sup> It is by no means an exact comparator but there are no less than 54 Confucius Institutes in 38 African countries, including five in South Africa alone.<sup>118</sup> It should be noted that the historical and cultural side of India in Africa continues with the planning of the Gandhi Heritage Centre, to be located at Jinja, Uganda, where there is already a statue of the Mahatma.<sup>119</sup> The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gandhi's birth in 2019 will doubtless encourage many more examples of this in Africa.

### *Indian Studies' Chairs*

Similarly, the ICCR promotes Indian studies, including Indian languages, worldwide. In this domain there are as many as 74 chairs across the world. Just seven countries in Africa are represented in this community: Mauritius

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<sup>117</sup> *ICCR Annual Report 2016-17*, Annexure V, ICCR, New Delhi, 2017, p. 36.

<sup>118</sup> Kenneth King, "Confucius Institutes in Africa: Culture and Language without Controversy", in Kathryn Batchelor and Xiaoling Zhang (eds), *China-Africa Relations: Building Images through Cultural Cooperation, Media Representation and On The Ground Activities*, Taylor and Francis, London, 2017, pp. 98-112.

<sup>119</sup> [https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152/Prime\\_Ministers\\_address\\_at\\_Parliament\\_of\\_Uganda\\_during\\_his\\_State\\_Visit\\_to\\_Uganda](https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152/Prime_Ministers_address_at_Parliament_of_Uganda_during_his_State_Visit_to_Uganda) (Accessed on 17 February 2019).

(2) Morocco (2), Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Egypt.<sup>120</sup> It can be readily seen, therefore, that only three countries in the whole of Africa have both an Indian Cultural Centre and an Indian Studies' Chair: Egypt, Mauritius and Tanzania.

### *Indian Missions in Africa*

It is a further illustration of India's expanding diplomatic footprint in Africa that the number of high level visits has risen dramatically over recent years. Equally significant has been its decision to open 18 new Indian Missions in Africa over the four-year period (2018-2021). This will raise the number of Resident Indian Missions in Africa from 29 to 47.<sup>121</sup>

### *Fresh developments in cultural diplomacy*

If the heightened visibility, just discussed, of the IAFS-III in 2015 can be associated with the Modi government from 2014, so too, perhaps, can the establishment of the International Day of Yoga (21 June) in 2015. But there are other areas of cultural diplomacy, broadly conceived, which have also been established or rebranded in 2014. Notable here would be the new Ministry of AYUSH,<sup>122</sup> representing and promoting Indian systems of medicine and health care, including Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy.<sup>123</sup> Equally, in 2014, the Directorate General of Employment and Training, under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, was taken out of Labour and Employment, and, along with other elements, made into a self-standing MSDE. Associated with this new ministry has been the intensification of the previous government's skills mission and its re-articulation as "Skill India" and "Make in India". The ultimate aim as

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<sup>120</sup> ICCR, *Annual Report 2016-17*, Annexure VI, ICCR, New Delhi, 2017, p. 38.

<sup>121</sup> M. Chand, 2018, "India and Africa: Interlinked dreams", In *India and World. 2018. Indiafrica: Intertwined dreams. Special edition*, vol. 1, no. 4, p. 3.

<sup>122</sup> Earlier this Ministry had just been a Department.

<sup>123</sup> See further: <http://ayush.gov.in/about-us/about-the-ministry> (Accessed on 17 February 2019).

announced by Prime Minister, Modi, in 2015 is that “India must become the world’s skill capital” or the “human resource capital of the world”.<sup>124</sup> A further area that may repay analysis is the encouragement by India of English language teaching centres.<sup>125</sup> This may appear directly at odds with India’s cultural centres and Indian Studies’ chairs.<sup>126</sup> But as many international companies and ministries in the West know only too well, India has a massive resource of highly competent English speakers. Turning a fraction of this resource into an international English teaching organization would not be difficult; indeed, it is already underway.

India’s soft power resources that specifically touch Africa, as well as the African students that were interviewed for this paper, would include the many thousands of Indians who have taught in secondary schools and universities in Africa, the successful diasporic communities in Africa, including in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Nigeria, and the Pan-African impact of Bollywood. But it should be noted that the Indian teachers in schools and universities in Africa were normally not part of Indian government or formal volunteer schemes such as the US Peace Corps or the UK’s Voluntary Service Overseas.

## Conclusion

This paper has sought to review some of the principal dimensions of India’s concern to engage with Africa in different modalities of human resource development. This desire has intensified in the more than ten years since the first of the India-Africa Forum Summits took place in 2008. Any single element amongst those discussed here could be substantially

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<sup>124</sup> See further: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india/india-can-become-world-s-h-r-capital-pm-modi-at-skill-india-launch/story-O4KPka9addQtUXSHoOe5pI.html>; <http://www.btv.in/article/read/policy/1908/modi-says-india-must-become-world-s-skill-capital> (Accessed on 17 February 2019).

<sup>125</sup> MEA policymaker to author, New Delhi, 6 April 2018.

<sup>126</sup> Almost half of the 74 Indian Studies Chairs focus on Hindi or Sanskrit.

elaborated. But far greater attention needs to be given to the African side of the India-Africa partnership. It is important to recognize the challenge of this, given the 54 very different countries of the continent, and the difficulty of treating the African Union as some counterpart of India. However, the elaboration of African agency will be crucial in the development of the AAGC, as has been mentioned, but also in many other dimensions of the India-Africa partnership. Perhaps IAFS-IV, scheduled provisionally for 2020, will be an occasion to celebrate more of this African side of the partnership.

One key aspect of increased African agency will be to mark the transition from an African “entitlement culture of expecting to receive only” to a more two-way engagement between India and Africa.<sup>127</sup> At a time when Africa has six of the world’s ten fastest growing economies according to the World Bank, it should be expected that Africa’s involvement should be increasingly two-way.<sup>128</sup> It is of course already the case with the great majority of African students in Indian universities being fee-paying and not on scholarships, but there are other areas, including of cultural exchange, where there could be greater mutual benefit and common development.

The paper has examined African students and short-term professional training in India, and several of the “flagships” of India’s institutional development in Africa, as well as considering the role of non-state actors in HRD. It has sought to examine some of the latest directions in which these may be moving within development cooperation. It will be valuable to follow very critically what exactly is being conceptualized in the current attempt to “hardsell soft power in diplomacy”,<sup>129</sup> but it is certain that

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<sup>127</sup> M. Chand to author, New Delhi, 13 April 2018.

<sup>128</sup> <https://qz.com/1179387/africas-economic-outlook-is-promising-for-2018-but-there-clouds-on-the-horizon/> (Accessed on 17 February 2019).

<sup>129</sup> Sasi, 2018, “On Modi government drawing board: Tool to hardsell soft power in diplomacy”, 14 February 2018, accessed on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018 at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/modi-diplomacy-strategic-partnership-soft-power-hard-state-india-5063098/>.

international students, scholarships and awards, skilling and digitally connecting Africa will be key elements in the design:

The Modi government is working on developing a “soft power matrix”, a tool aimed at calibrating the effectiveness of India’s soft power outreach in dealings with neighbouring countries and leveraging it better as an operational instrument in India’s broader diplomatic doctrine. “The process of putting in place a soft power matrix is currently at a research stage and the government expects that this, when ready, would help foster better diplomatic traction in India’s immediate neighbourhood and beyond,” a government official said.<sup>130</sup>

However, as important as anything else in this research around India’s soft power must be the recognition that India should also be determined to continue to learn from Africa and from other civilizations. This will need to involve many more Indian students, NGOs and researchers going to Africa than is presently the case.<sup>131</sup>

It is clearly much too early to conclude on what precisely may be the future shape of soft power with Indian characteristics. But, for the moment, we shall be content to let Jaya Jaitly have the last word on just one side of this cultural attraction that also touches capacity building in Africa and beyond:

In the past decade, India has been attaching growing importance to the use of its vast resource of “soft power”. This happens for both capacity building in African countries and people-to-people contacts with countries like China and Japan. These should not go unnoticed. Soft cultural diplomacy resonates positively among the common

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> There is currently no figure for the number of Indian students going to Africa, but it is tiny compared to the 18,000 Indian students now going to China, more than go to the UK. See further: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/china-gets-more-indian-students-than-britain/articleshow/62398336.cms> accessed on 17 February 2019.

people of different countries through Bollywood music and films, classical and folk music, linguistic similarities, arts and craft, food, and even dress. Across countries, from Iran, Russia, China, Egypt and Ethiopia to Brazil, some music group or individual will start singing a familiar Hindi film song when they spot Indians, admire Indian handwoven silk saris, roll their eyes at a chicken tikka and stop you in a crowded bazaar to ask about Aishwarya Rai or Katrina Kaif.<sup>132</sup>

### ***Policy Issues***

Unlike India's diplomatic engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean which has been characterized as "hesitant and somewhat apathetic", there has been a distinctive pattern of increasing policy engagement with Africa, and not just with the Indian diaspora countries but continentally.<sup>133</sup>

Our reflection on this interaction has been through the lenses of education, training and capacity building. This is highly appropriate since it is in these areas particularly where it is claimed that India is "second to none", as we have seen. Further education for Africans in India was not encouraged during the colonial period by the British because of their concern with politicization; but as soon as India was independent, African students were encouraged to cross the Indian Ocean. Equally, in the current period, education, capacity building and people-to-people links are at the heart of the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor.

African students have been a central component of this special relationship with education in the India-Africa partnership, and we have noted their policy importance, especially in the eight years of the India-Africa Forum

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<sup>132</sup> Jaya Jaitly, "The Unnoticed Agreement: Prime Minister Modi's Iran Trip also Yielded a Significant Cultural Impact", *The Indian Express*, 11 June 2016, available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/pm-narendra-modi-iran-india-agreement-2846268/> (Accessed on 9 April 2018).

<sup>133</sup> S. Badri-Maharaj, *India's relations with the Latin America-Caribbean region: Prospects and Constraints*, IDSA Occasional Paper 45, 2107, New Delhi, p. 4.

Summits. It remains quite unclear how many African students there are in India. It would therefore be valuable if the bodies responsible for surveying international student numbers were able to give attention to the quantitative side of their presence. Equally, Indian High Commissions and Embassies in Africa could play a role in encouraging alumni/ae associations of returnee students. This already happens with a handful of countries, but it could be replicated more widely. Such students are, after all, potential ‘ambassadors for India’ as we have seen with the former President of Malawi.

Fees for Indian universities are low compared to several other Commonwealth countries such as Australia and the UK; they are nevertheless rising, and recent African students interviewed in this research have felt that the “eligibility fee” of some \$1,100 US dollars is high for merely checking the qualifications of the applicant.<sup>134</sup>

Linked to this issue of African students in India is the great paucity of Indian students in Africa. This is partly an issue of the perceived quality of higher education in much of Africa, but it is also related to the lack of encouragement through scholarships from African countries and India to spend a year abroad. Clearly, many Indian students taking African Studies in Indian universities such as Mumbai, Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and Jindal Global, or pursuing Development Studies in Chennai and Trivandrum (Thiruvananthapuram), would be interested to visit Africa for their fieldwork for masters’ theses. Equally, Indian doctoral students and academic staff would be ready to spend time in Africa if there were more research support available to do so.

Short-term professional training awards through ITEC are one of the oldest dimensions of India’s HRD cooperation world-wide. A thorough review of its functioning has very recently taken place, and it is anticipated that there will be a series of new initiatives and approaches taken with this modality.

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<sup>134</sup> Nigerian student to author, Mumbai, March and April 2018.

Another facet of these training awards is that they are frequently called scholarships, including in the pledges of the IAFS. Thus, in IAFS -3, there is mention of providing “50,000 scholarships to young people from Africa” over the next five years.<sup>135</sup> These are in fact the 10,000 short-term training awards provided annually by ITEC,<sup>136</sup> about 40 per cent of which are allocated to Africa. Of course, 4,000 training awards annually is still a substantial number, but it is very different from the 1,000 full scholarships provided annually to Africa by the ICCR for university study. In respect of these latter, it would be helpful if these 1,000 scholarships could be broken down by countries in Africa to which they are allocated, and if they were available on the ICCR website, since there are several wrong assumptions made about their distribution within Africa.

India’s Africa policy and Africa’s policy and perception of India are two of the issues that surfaced during this research. Apart from the declarations and frameworks for action associated with the IAFS series from 2008 to 2015, there is no published Africa policy of the Government of India, even though academics such as Mathews have written on the “anatomy of India’s Africa policy”.<sup>137</sup> Arguably for some, an Indian Africa policy would be invaluable for shaping consistently and sustainably India’s approach to the continent. For others, India’s Africa policy is already in place, implicitly, but even these would agree that it has changed substantially over the decades since Independence.<sup>138</sup> Undoubtedly, the latest substantive

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<sup>135</sup> V. Gupta, 2018, “Entwined Dreams”, in *Indiafrica: Intertwined Dreams. India and the World*, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 13.

<sup>136</sup> These ITEC awards were 10,000 annually in 2015, and 12,000 by 2018.

<sup>137</sup> K. Mathews, 2015, “Anatomy of India’s Africa policy”. In SPS (Society for Policy Studies), 2015. *India-Africa: Towards a New Global Partnership*. SPS, New Delhi, p. 9.

<sup>138</sup> C. Xavier, 2010, “The Institutional Origins and Determinants of India’s Africa Policy”, IDSA Fellows Seminar, IDSA, New Delhi; re-published in K. Bajpai, S. Basit, and V. Krishnappa, V. (eds), *India’s Grand Strategy: History, Theory, Cases*, Routledge, New Delhi, 2014, pp. 479-506.

contribution to this issue of India's Africa policy is the elaboration by Prime Minister Modi of the ten principles of "India's engagement with Africa".<sup>139</sup>

The other side of India's Africa policy is the question of whether Africa has an India policy. This question has also often been raised about Africa's approach towards China. But, perhaps understandably, because of the diversity of the countries in the continent, there is no single India policy of the African Union.

Possibly more important is the question of what are the individual perceptions of India in Africa. This has not been researched in this phase of our research beyond the views of African students in India on which we have reported. The volumes celebrating India-Africa cooperation, which we have referred to, do have a handful of African voices, but overall they are essentially Indian creations. They rehearse a well-trodden track of claims about the essence of the India-Africa relationship. Many aspects of this special relationship are repeated including the claim that "India does not impose any conditionality; India does not prescribe policies; [and] India does not question the sovereignty of the countries".<sup>140</sup> It would therefore still be invaluable to have research on African perceptions of India in Africa, similar to what Sautman and Hairong did for China in Africa.<sup>141</sup>

A last policy issue that could be raised before concluding is that there is potentially fertile ground for intensified Indian cooperation around HRD. Prime Minister Modi's enunciation in Kampala, Uganda of the ten principles

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<sup>139</sup> MEA, Prime Minister's address at Parliament of Uganda during his state visit to Uganda, 25 July 2018. See [https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152Prime\\_Ministers\\_address\\_at\\_Parliament\\_of\\_Uganda\\_during\\_his\\_State\\_Visit\\_to\\_Uganda](https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152Prime_Ministers_address_at_Parliament_of_Uganda_during_his_State_Visit_to_Uganda) (Accessed on 10 November 2018).

<sup>140</sup> H.H.S. Viswanathan, "10 years of IAFS: A New Paradigm in Engagement", in *Indiafrica: Intertwined Dreams. India and the World*, Vol. 1 No. 4, 2018, p. 7.

<sup>141</sup> Sautman, B. and Hairong, Y. 2009. African perceptions of China-Africa links, in *The China Quarterly*, 199, 749-751.

for India's engaging with Africa, in July 2018, provide a very fertile ground for this goal. Here are the central excerpts from these principles which focus around capacity, education and skills:

We will build as much local capacity and create as much local opportunities as possible [sic]

We will harness India's experience with the digital revolution to support Africa's development

extend education and health; spread digital literacy;

we must all work together to ensure that Africa ... becomes a nursery for the aspirations of Africa's youth.<sup>142</sup>

HRD might well be the beginning of a new and collaborative relationship in Africa, but one starting point might be to encourage larger numbers of young Indian students, researchers and scholars to consider studying and working there. This could well be one of the key ways to put in place Nehru's hope, back in 1957, that Africa and African students "will teach us something about their own country".<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> MEA (Ministry of External Affairs). 2018a. Prime Minister's address at parliament of Uganda during his state visit to Uganda, 25 July 2018. See [https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152/Prime\\_Ministers\\_address\\_at\\_Parliament\\_of\\_Uganda\\_during\\_his\\_State\\_Visit\\_to\\_Uganda](https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152/Prime_Ministers_address_at_Parliament_of_Uganda_during_his_State_Visit_to_Uganda) (Accessed on 10 November 2018).

<sup>143</sup> J. Nehru, *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches: Volume Three: 1953-1957*, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1958, p. 341.

**H**uman resource development (HRD) and capacity building are frequently claimed to be at the heart of India's development cooperation. This paper is one of the first to look inside these claims and to review critically the many different facets of India's capacity building. The focus is India's engagement with Africa, and the time-frame is from 1947 till the present. Many of the key HRD elements in India's cooperation are covered: from support to thousands of African students and professionals to learn from Indian institutions to the ambitious HRD pledges of the three India-Africa Forum Summits. India's soft power in Africa is examined along with its support to institutional and digital development. Also noted is India's non-state involvement with Africa, with its well-known NGOs as well as its brand name private sector firms. At a time when several emerging donors are actively engaging with Africa, it is all the more important for India's comparative advantage in different investments in the continent to be clear. None is more crucial than capacity building.

This paper will interest the many research and policy constituencies which are actively concerned with India's approach to development cooperation, both within India and in the wider, international communities interested in South-South Cooperation.

**Kenneth King** was Director of the Centre of African Studies and Professor of International and Comparative Education at Edinburgh University for many years. He is now Emeritus Professor in its Schools of Education and of Social and Political Studies. His research focuses on international education, aid policy, and skills development, especially in the informal sector. He edited *NORRAG News* for 30 years until 2017. From 2006, he analysed China's educational cooperation with Africa, and published *China's Aid and Soft Power in Africa* (2013). From 2016 he began researching India's human development cooperation with the continent. His latest book is: *Education, Skills and International Cooperation: Comparative and Historical Perspectives* (2018).



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No.1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg,  
Delhi Cantt., New Delhi - 110 010  
Tel.: (91-11) 2671-7983 Fax: (91-11) 2615 4191  
E-mail: [contactus@idsa.in](mailto:contactus@idsa.in) Website: <http://www.idsa.in>