



Institutional Evaluation of the Netherlands
Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD)

Final Report

Elaborated by the European Centre for
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background to this evaluation

- i. The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD) was founded in 2000 by seven political parties represented in the Dutch Parliament. Its mandate is to support the process of democratisation in young and emerging democracies, with a specific focus on the institutional development of political parties and of pluralistic political systems.
- ii. In 2002, a four-year programme 2003-2006, entitled '*Without Democracy Nobody Fares Well*' was developed. Implementation of the programme has moved on at a rapid pace. IMD is currently involved in fifteen country programmes in Africa, Asia and Latin America, with rapidly expanding portfolios of activities (also at regional level) and funding involved.
- iii. As a young organization, IMD has been concerned with learning through evaluations, turning them into a strong component of its institutional development strategy. The purpose of the current institutional evaluation is to "make a comprehensive external evaluation of the organization and the programme". The exercise is expected to provide insights in the overall quality of the IMD programmes and in the outcomes of the implementation of its first four-year programme. The evaluation therefore focuses on institutional and strategic issues, reviewing IMD's interventions at country and programme level. It was carried out using participatory methodologies, involving broad-based stakeholder consultations in the Netherlands as well as five country visits.

Understanding the IMD

- iv. The IMD operates as an actor in a relatively new and complex field. Its specificity lies in:
 - o a focused mandate, that is underpinned by a set of political values it seeks to promote (i.e. participation and inclusion) and embedded in a broader development agenda (i.e. the facilitation of democratic transition, sustainable poverty reduction, security and conflict prevention);
 - o the co-existence of three distinct yet potentially complementary identities (and related set of competencies) as a political actor; a development actor and an institutional development actor;
 - o its hybrid structure, characterized by a mix of professionals and party-political seconded staff.

Main findings

- v. The main findings of the evaluation process relate to six key evaluation questions: the relevance of the IMD mandate; the effective application of stated approaches and methodologies; the quality of programme execution; emerging patterns of impact achieved; the institutional capacity of IMD to deliver on its mandate; and the involvement and added-value of Dutch constituencies.
- vi. The mandate of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD) is considered to be highly relevant and to add value by a large majority of actors in the field of democracy. Likewise, its interventions, which follow a two-track approach that links support to political parties with the promotion of multiparty dialogue and the development of democratic institutions, is perceived to be well-directed and justified.

vii. The IMD stresses the importance of adopting approaches and methodologies that facilitate local ownership, genuine partnership relations and an empowerment of political parties. It also recognises the need for strategic alliances with other actors and agencies (national or external) so as to consolidate and ensure the sustainability of its activities. Major efforts were made to apply these principles in programme countries. In the process, the IMD has been confronted with complex implementation challenges and dilemmas. In order to address these in a more structured and consistent way, the IMD is still to invest more time and resources into policy debate and strategic thinking for the purpose of developing a coherent set of country specific strategies, methodologies, tools and guidelines to systematically integrate the issue of sustainability throughout its operations.

viii. Important differences in implementation approach were observed. These are partly explained by the clear need for country differentiated approaches. Yet the considerable variations in programme design and management also seem to point at the existence of weaknesses in the implementation of IMD approaches and methodologies, as well as to weaknesses in the capacity available within IMD to implement programmes. So far, the IMD has primarily invested in the conceptual specification of its mandate and in financial/administrative aspects of project management, while less has been done to strengthen the IMD operational capacity to systematically and consistently implement its policies, approaches and instruments all along the programme cycle.

ix. Both the field visits and desk studies have resulted in substantial evidence that IMD programmes have yielded a wide range of (tangible and intangible) outcomes which contribute positively to the strengthening of political party institutions, as well as to promoting multiparty dialogue and interaction. Regional programmes are growing in importance and the IMD has also successfully invested at international/European level.

x. Different outcomes were observed in the countries visited. These reflect local realities, the stage of maturity of the processes as well as 'entry points' chosen by the IMD. Perceptions on the patterns of impact of IMD interventions tend to differ among stakeholders consulted. This underlines the need for IMD of having adequate systems for systematic performance-based monitoring and evaluation. It is too early to assess the contribution of IMD programmes to systemic changes in the overall democratic process and to broader development objectives. The findings also suggest that the IMD may not achieve a meaningful impact unless its activities are integrated into national development processes and linked to the work done by other actors. Time will show how IMD deals with this challenge.

xi. The IMD has invested considerable resources into the development of adequate systems for systematic performance-based reporting, monitoring and evaluation. A comprehensive online Programme Management System (PMS) was introduced, but needs to become better integrated with the practice of the organisation. The IMD has made a commendable shift from an expenditure-based to a more results oriented reporting mechanism, which links activities to policy outcomes. The evaluation team advises the IMD to review the purpose of collecting data, and to ensure that what it collects and measures is instrumental to ensuring accountability, organisational learning and long-term focused developmental practice.

xii. As a fast-growing organisation, IMD is confronted with the need to further invest in building its internal capacity. This may help to cope with increases in workload; the relatively high turnover of staff; the lack of content-related support and coaching for strategic thinking and reflection; and the fact that the growth in staff has stayed behind compared to the growth in country programmes and actual expenditure. IMD procedures are considered unclear by its beneficiaries, and delays in payments to political parties

which may be attributed to capacity shortages on the side of the IMD compromise potential impact of planned interventions.

xiii. The support from the seven Dutch political parties to the IMD is currently evolving and reshaping itself. Accordingly with the changes in the IMD, there is a need to re-assess the role and added-value of Dutch constituencies at the three organisational levels (Board, Supervisory Council and PACOs).

Lessons learned and future orientations

xiv. Based on these findings, nine interrelated lessons emerged from this evaluation:

- The IMD approach to democracy assistance is innovative and could become a 'bestseller';
- Its 'pioneering phase' has been very effective;
- The time is ripe for more focus and consolidation;
- Look critically at what works and what doesn't;
- Be proactive yet remain ideologically neutral;
- Intensify initiatives to become a learning organisation;
- Mainstream networking and strategic partnerships;
- Consolidate the use and impact of IMD's unique selling point.

Strategic orientations

xv. It was stressed by several actors that the future development of the IMD needs to be primarily determined by results on the ground and Southern demand, rather than by Dutch political agendas. Strategic orientations should be informed by the fact that the IMD is 'on track' in the implementation of its four-year programme, during which it has showed to be able to deliver. Building on these premises, six strategic orientations were identified for the IMD to further mature in its institutional development:

- Temporarily limit growth in favour of institutional consolidation;
- Develop a solid policy framework and decision-making process to consider new demands;
- Adopt a more selective and strategic focus;
- Move from 'pioneering' to institutional maturity;
- Deepen the institutional knowledge base to deliver efficient, effective and result-oriented programmes;
- Understand what results are being achieved at different levels.

Institutional orientations

xvi. In the view of the evaluation team, the IMD will have to face three main institutional challenges during the coming years. These are (i) fine-tuning and strengthening the added value it derives from its unique hybrid structure; (ii) professionalisation; and (iii) internationalisation.

xvii. The combination of political and developmental agency in a hybrid structure sets the IMD apart from other actors in the field of democracy assistance, represents an essential component for translating its mandate into practice, and therefore constitutes a main ingredient of its added-value as a development institute. The hybrid structure may be further strengthened and fine-tuned by taking action in three complementary areas, which are (1) anchoring the integration of political and developmental professionalism in strong

regional teams; (2) enhancing institutional conditions for learning and knowledge sharing within the organisation as a whole; and (3) balancing the mix of political and developmental professionals in the Board, Supervisory Council, management, regional teams and among IMD staff in general.

xviii. Given the first institutional challenge, the need to 'professionalise' requires further specification in the case of the IMD. Within the IMD, different professions need to be combined for achieving its mandate: politicians, development specialists, as well as institutional development specialists – all of which should be professionals. The IMD has made distinct progress over the last three years on monitoring, planning and evaluation; human resource development, financial management, and keeping policies and implementation in line. There continues to be an institutional challenge for the IMD in the areas of

- Continued balancing and fine-tuning at each level of the organisation;
- Appointing professionals to each level of operations with a clear professional profile in line with the professional mix required;
- Challenging professionals not only on what they are good at and have been appointed to do but also on their capacity to learn from others;
- And ensuring continuity, institutional memory and learning.

xix. The IMD is under pressure to internationalise. Given the current phase of its institutional development, it may best respond to this challenge through intensifying its networking and partnership approach, rather than through seeking institutional transformation. Concretely this would mean:

- To continue investing in international networks and partnerships in support of its own programmes, joining up with partners who can play complementary roles, or take over certain programmes and activities from IMD.
- To continue networking in Europe, and establishing partnerships that may eventually lead to the establishment of IMD-like initiatives elsewhere in Europe, or in partnerships with others, to the establishment of an EU facility.
- To strengthen its role in providing policy and practical information to partners and stakeholders, and assisting in building a European platform of like-minded organisations.
- To gradually develop its capacity to lobby for more support to political parties and multi-party democracy in EC governance programmes.

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I INTRODUCTION

1. The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD) was founded in 2000 by seven political parties represented in the Dutch Parliament. Its *mandate* is to support the process of democratisation in young and emerging democracies, with a specific focus on the institutional development of political parties and of pluralistic political systems¹.
2. In 2002, a four-year programme 2003-2006, entitled ‘*Without Democracy Nobody Fares Well*’ was developed. **Implementation of the programme has moved on at a rapid pace.** IMD is currently involved in fifteen country programmes in Africa, Asia and Latin America, with rapidly expanding portfolios of activities (also at regional level) and funding involved. A special unit has been established within IMD to run the Multi- and Bilateral programme². In a short period of time, IMD has also acquired quite some visibility and profile on the European scene of actors and institutions involved in democracy assistance.
3. As a young organization, IMD has been concerned with *learning through evaluations*, turning them into a strong component of its institutional development strategy. Over the past years, IMD has carried out programme evaluations in four countries³. The current ‘institutional evaluation’ is there to complement these exercises. As suggested by its name, the purpose of the institutional evaluation is to “make a **comprehensive external evaluation of the organization and the programme**”. The exercise is expected to provide insights in the overall quality of the IMD programmes and in the outcomes of programme implementation⁴. Its focus is therefore on key strategic and institutional challenges facing IMD, based on a qualitative review of IMD interventions at country and programme level. This evaluation will therefore not seek to assess in a detailed manner IMD's efficiency and achievements at activity level, nor will it provide a comprehensive financial management review. The lessons learnt should contribute to a further institutional and programmatic development of the organisation while providing evidence-based information on IMD's achievements to the core funding agency (the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
4. While it could be argued that such an exercise comes at an early stage of the institutional life of IMD, there are **ample justifications** for doing it in 2005, including: the rapid growth of IMD and correspondingly steep institutional development curve; its innovative and unique nature as a multiparty institution in the field of democracy promotion; the specific political status of the organisation requiring high standards of accountability; and the need for evidence-based learning, feedback as well as ongoing adaptation of the policy and institutional framework in the light of the new programme 2007-2010 to be formulated in the next months.
5. A specific methodology has been developed and agreed upon to carry out the institutional evaluation. It attaches great importance to ensuring a **participatory approach** all along the

¹ IMD evolved from the ‘Stichting voor het Nieuwe Zuid-Afrika’ (NZA), which was established by eight Dutch political parties as an innovative funding mechanism for supporting the democratisation process in South Africa, particularly through strengthening the country's political parties. IMD inherited its unique institutional feature of being an organization where politicians and development professionals bundle and complement each others capacities.

² This programme seeks to respond to external requests for cooperation (from bilateral or multilateral organisations). The first joint agreements made with a variety of organisations concern Georgia and Nicaragua.

³ These being Guatemala, Bolivia, Ghana and Mozambique

⁴ The issue of impact is included in the Terms of Reference. Yet considering the young age of IMD and its programmes, it was agreed that the focus would be on ‘plausible emerging patterns of impact’.

evaluation process. To this end, consultations took place with a wide range of IMD staff, representatives from IMD governing bodies, beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders in five selected programme countries⁵. Opportunities were provided for feedback on initial evaluation outcomes⁶, including a one-day seminar with IMD staff on a first version of this document as well as a presentation of key evaluation finds to the Board and to the Supervisory Council.

6. This report first presents our understanding of IMD --as the obligate starting point for a meaningful institutional evaluation (chapter II). It then reviews the main findings with regard to the key questions of this evaluation, as agreed in the terms of reference: (i) relevance of the IMD mandate; (ii) approach and methodology; (iii) quality of programme execution; (iv) emerging patterns of impact; (v) adequacy of IMD's institutional set-up and internal levels of capacity; (vi) the link with Dutch constituencies (chapter III). Based on this analysis, it draws a number of key lessons learnt (chapter IV) and presents a possible outlook for further strategic, institutional and programmatic development of IMD (chapter V).

⁵ These include Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Mali and Tanzania. It is important to stress that the visits of evaluation members were not conceived as full-fledged 'country evaluations', but as short missions aimed at collecting insights from the field that could help to inform the wider institutional evaluation. The experiences in other programme countries were integrated in the evaluation process (through an in-depth desk review).

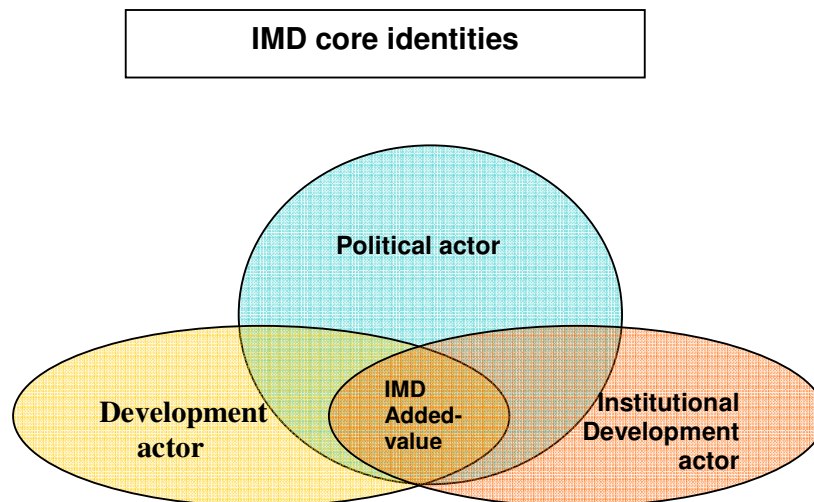
⁶ For instance, with the Board of IMD (through an 'Issue Paper' specifically prepared for feedback purposes) and with the Executive Director (through bilateral contacts).

II UNDERSTANDING THE IMD

7. In an institutional evaluation, it is critically important for the evaluation team to fully understand the ‘nature of the animal’. This is a pre-requisite for (i) a contextualization and conceptualization of IMD programmes; (ii) an objective evaluation of strengths and weaknesses *in the light of IMD’s own mandate, strategies and approaches*; (iii) the formulation of meaningful recommendations for future programmatic and institutional development and (iv) the facilitation of a process of strategic reflection within IMD to define its own path of evolution in the coming years. From the outset, the evaluation team sought therefore to build a solid understanding of the specificity of IMD (as an actor operating in a relatively new and complex field of work) and its institutional set-up (as a hybrid structure).
8. This proved no luxury, as the consultation process clearly revealed that *there is no such thing as ‘one IMD’*. The organization shows a multitude of faces; brings together a rather unusual mix of professional cultures; and intervenes at different levels with a plethora of different actors and with (sometimes hugely different) approaches to implementing the IMD mandate. Linked to this, key actors and stakeholders, particularly those in the Netherlands, tend to hold different perceptions on issues such as the evolution of the organisation since 2002, the delineation of the mandate (i.e. with regard to ‘core’ and ‘non-core’ activities) and the desirable shifts in the programme and institutional set-up beyond 2006.
9. In the view of the evaluation team, the *specificity of IMD* lies in the following features:
 - *Focused mandate embedded in broader development agenda.* The aim of IMD is not simply to promote ‘party twinning’ or to provide capacity support to a variety of political parties. IMD seeks to combine a focus on supporting individual parties with the facilitation of joint efforts to deepen and strengthen a pluralistic political party system. IMD programmes are framed in a holistic perspective⁷ and are underpinned by a set of political values it seeks to promote (i.e. participation, inclusion). In the vision of IMD, democracy is much more than competition between political parties. Electoral competitiveness needs to be accompanied by efforts to develop trust in the democratic culture and system of governance. Hence, support to political parties and multiparty systems is not seen as an end in itself, but as a means to contributing to *broader development objectives* including (i) the “facilitation of democratic transition processes”; (ii) the establishment of “more democratic societies”; (iii) “sustainable poverty reduction” and (iv) “security (conflict prevention)”. These broader objectives are defined in key IMD policy documents and are captured in a diagram, prepared by the evaluation team (see Annex 1). *The evaluation will need to assess the quality and outcomes of IMD programmes against these different levels of objectives and expected impact.*
 - *Search for an effective integration of three identities and related competencies.* The origin and mandate of IMD explain another unique feature: the co-existence of three distinct yet potentially complementary identities (and related set of competencies) within IMD. As an organization created and owned by Dutch political parties, IMD

⁷ For IMD, institutional development of parties cannot be isolated from the political system and how it functions. The constitutional provisions, the electoral system, the political party laws and supervisory boards are all building blocks for the environment in which political parties operate. This environment is further determined by the strength of civil society and the media.

obviously has a strong *political identity*. This constitutes the backbone as well as the specific ‘niche’ and legitimacy of the organization and enables it to network and establish links with top-level politicians in a way that a development agency could not do. A second identity relates to IMD’s role as a *development actor*, seeking to exercise a positive influence on broader development objectives in programme countries (e.g. on democratic governance, poverty reduction, security, conflict prevention, etc.). The third identity refers to IMD’s role as an actor promoting *institutional development*, providing technical assistance and direct funding to political parties and other democratic agents/institutions for a wide range of capacity building activities (at the level of individual parties and for a smooth functioning of multi-party systems). IMD thus operates at the interface of three different arenas of work (politics, development, capacity-building), each of them having a distinct culture, ways of thinking and working as well as competencies. For IMD, this poses two major challenges. First, to reconcile the different identities around a common agenda. Second, to fully build or mobilize capacity in each of these arenas so as to provide a genuine added-value in delivering democracy assistance to political parties (Figure 1). *The evaluation will seek to understand how this integration of the different IMD identities and competencies works in practice.*



- *Choice for a hybrid structure.* Linked to its unique composition, IMD has opted for a ‘*hybrid*’ institutional set-up. Typically, the composition of staff is a mixture of development professionals (hired by IMD) and party-political staff (seconded by political parties and contracted by IMD). Political parties also actively participate in the governance of the IMD (both at the level of the Board and the Supervisory Council) and programme implementation through mobilization of party experts. *The evaluation will check the adequacy of these governance and institutional arrangements against the requirements of an effective and efficient execution of the IMD mandate in the field.*
- *Ownership, partnership and empowerment of political parties.* These key words can be found in all IMD discourses, policy statements, programme documents and reports. They reflect a strong IMD commitment to put political parties in the driving seat in all phases of the cooperation process. A recent discussion memo⁸ captures well

⁸ Meijenfeldt, R. von. (August 2005) ‘Memo for discussion: the IMD concept of ownership’ [unpublished]

the practical implications of the ownership concept promoted by IMD: “In the context of democracy support, ownership means reasserting the control over the analysis of the problems or challenges that political parties encounter, over the agenda to address these matters and over the activities to implement the agenda, and over managing the relations with the international partners”. The concern with ownership also explains why IMD adopts a facilitating role and prefers to work (where possible) with local institutions and or/local consultants rather than to set-up IMD offices in all countries. IMD has also invested in refining its partnership concept⁹, based on key principles such as mutual respect, shared ownership, joint decision-making and exchange. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that IMD emphasises ownership most of all, as this should lead to the empowerment of political parties (perceived to be the “single most important explanation for the positive results of IMD’s programmes”)¹⁰. *The evaluation will seek to understand how these laudable principles are translated into practice.*

- *Flexible process-approaches to implementation.* IMD recognizes the need for flexible, country-specific ‘process approaches’ to implementation. There can be no ‘one-size fits it all’ approach nor does it make sense to develop blueprint models to providing IMD support. This is fully consistent with (i) the principle of demand-driven support; (ii) the dynamic (and often unpredictable) political course of events in a country or at the level of the political parties involved and (iii) the long-term nature of democratization processes. However, while *diversity and flexibility are key* in providing democracy assistance, there are also *limits to an approach of “constructing a path as we walk along”*. IMD also needs a basic set of common foundations, principles, guidelines and tools to ensure a clear and common sense of direction as well as a coherent application of the IMD mandate. *The evaluation will assess how IMD managed to reconcile these two potentially contradictory demands.*
- *Young and fast-growing institution.* IMD finds itself in the first cycle of developing its institutional identity and capacity. In this *pioneering phase*, experimentation and ‘learning by doing’ are of key importance. Inevitably, the organisation will need to address a wide range of strategic and operational questions during this initial period: how can the specific ‘niche’ of IMD be further delineated? How can a shared vision on core priorities, roles and operating methods be developed? What mix of skills and expertise is required at different levels in the organisation? How can an adequate task division between the various institutional layers (e.g. Board-Executive Director-field representatives) and actors (e.g. between PACO’s and policy officers) best be ensured? As a new organisation, IMD also needs to cope with the pressure to put itself ‘on the map’ as a new player in the democracy assistance arena and to *quickly show ‘results’* to its different constituencies. This may also explain the rapid passage of IMD to high-profile interventions in a growing number of hugely diverse countries (in size, political development, culture, ethnic and religious composition, language, post-conflict background etc.). *The evaluation will seek to assess how the rapid growth of IMD has impacted upon the quality of the work of IMD.*

10. These key features have served as the main guide for the consultations with the Dutch stakeholders and for the five field studies. They also provide the framework for analyzing the findings, drawing lessons and proposing needed changes.

⁹ During the Partnership days organised in the Hague (July 2005) a ‘Partnership Charter’ was thus elaborated in a participatory manner, clarifying the content and modus operandi of the concept.

¹⁰ See diagram with the intervention logic in Annex 1.

III MAIN FINDINGS

11. The current institutional evaluation invites all parties involved to adopt a *'helicopter view'* in assessing IMD's work and performance and to focus on a limited set of fundamental questions. This approach was followed during the five country missions. In order to ensure this focus and facilitate a comparative analysis, a *common set of evaluation questions*, judgement criteria and indicators were elaborated and used by each country team (see Annex 2)¹¹.
12. During the feedback-seminar with IMD staff (26 October 2005), the need to fully recognize the *dynamics* of IMD interventions was repeatedly stressed. The evaluation team shares this view. All country programmes are 'moving targets', following their own implementation path according to sometimes unpredictable patterns. The 'political space' available for IMD to operate effectively can vary over time. This, in turn, requires an ongoing adaptation of IMD's implementation approach. It is also agreed that progress achieved or difficulties encountered in a particular country should be analyzed from *both a political and a developmental perspective*.
13. The main findings of the evaluation process relate to six key questions: (i) the relevance of the IMD mandate; (ii) the effective application of stated approaches and methodologies; (iii) the quality of programme execution; (iv) emerging patterns of impact achieved; (v) the institutional capacity of IMD to deliver on its mandate; and (vi) the involvement and added-value of Dutch constituencies.

3.1 Relevance of the IMD mandate

14. The IMD mandate focuses on political parties, which it considers as "essential elements in political society" as well as the "missing link in democracy assistance". Yet IMD also recognizes that political parties are generally perceived as the "least trusted institutions in most countries"¹². Intervening as an external actor in such a highly politicized arena carries all sorts of *risks*. As a donor, IMD brings along relatively generous funding. This can 'generate' demands from local actors which are not necessarily committed to the objectives and values underpinning the IMD mandate. Providing 'the right mix' of support to country programmes is likely to be a complex and sensitive enterprise, with uncertain outcomes in terms of contribution to democratization and mainstream development processes.
15. Hence, the importance of *assessing the relevance of the IMD mandate and overall intervention approach as perceived by local actors and stakeholders*. To what extent is support to political parties and multi-party systems considered as a key priority on the democratisation agenda in the countries where IMD operates? How relevant is IMD's dual intervention strategy? Is the support provided in a country-specific vision and strategy of democracy promotion? Does IMD offer an added-value compared to other agencies dealing with political parties?
16. In the view of a large majority of consulted actors, the IMD mandate is perceived to be *highly relevant*. The case studies indicate a growing recognition that democratic consolidation can neither be substantive nor inclusive without strengthening the

¹¹ This tool fully takes into account the main evaluation questions included in the Terms of Reference

¹² IMD Partner in Democracy. Support for political parties and party systems. The IMD Approach.

institutions of the political system, and in particular the political parties. Yet at the same time, all country studies also confirm the volatility, fluidity and institutional weaknesses of these same political parties. On the whole, political parties enjoy very limited levels of credibility and trust among the population (and donor agencies¹³) and do not yet perform their fundamental bridging role between society at large and the state. They tend to serve the (private) needs of political elites and be used as a direct route to power rather than to act as a channel for articulating societal demands or political reform agendas. The large majority of political parties do not have an ideology, elaborated programmes, institutional infrastructure, let alone a vision for the society. There are generally limited debates on substance within political parties. Levels of internal democracy are low while leadership battles proliferate, often resulting in further fragmentation of the party landscape. Parties tend to gain momentum just before elections, but are virtually non-existent in the periods in between. All these weaknesses point to a fundamental mismatch between the potential role of political parties (as key agents of democratic governance) and their current functioning (i.e. levels of legitimacy, internal democracy, institutional development and capacity). Against this background, IMD interventions are seen as vital and critical in helping to overcome this divide and promote the institutionalisation of political parties.

17. There is **general support for the two-track approach** followed by IMD. An exclusive focus on institutional development of political parties would be far too limited and potentially dangerous approach¹⁴. The challenge at hand for parties is to “re-value politics, politicians and the political culture and system”¹⁵. In this scenario, the IMD strategy to link support to political parties with the promotion of multiparty dialogue and the development of democratic institutions is generally perceived to be well-directed and fully justified.¹⁶
18. The **added-value** of the IMD mandate is seen to reside in a variety of elements including : (i) the open-ended approach and related absence of ideological preconditions to access funding¹⁷; (ii) the space left to local partners to decide directions or outcomes; (iii) the provision of direct support to the institutional development of political parties; (iv) the focus on supporting multi-party dialogue and the elaboration/consolidation of joint political agendas; (v) the capacity of IMD to act as a catalyst for political innovation with possible trigger effects into wider, systemic changes (e.g. in terms of improving internal democracy; moving towards more inclusive approaches, especially towards women and minority groups; enhanced election processes; reduced polarisation in society); (vi) the institutional set-up of IMD as an organisation ‘owned by political parties and working for political parties’, with the related opportunities for ‘peer reviews’ and sharing of relevant specialised expertise (e.g. on setting up political parties, decision-making within party structures, consensus and coalition-building, etc.).
19. The relevance of the IMD mandate is also highlighted by Dutch Embassies in programme countries, by the representatives from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by the wider international donor community. The increased demand for IMD services from a variety of sources is another indication of the value of the IMD mandate and overall intervention niche.

¹³ The Tanzania study confirms that many donors in Tanzania do not consider political parties to be ‘ready’ for direct support. Some respondents went as far as saying that “one cannot promote multiparty democracy through undemocratic institutions”.

¹⁴ The Kenya and Tanzania studies, for instance, mention the risk that institutional support to parties merely props up powerful political individuals and their support structures.

¹⁵ See Guatemala report, p. 4 (a message that can also be found in the other country notes).

¹⁶ Different publications about the IMD have identified this. The 2004 Ghana country evaluation, for instance, commented on the ‘uniqueness’ of the IMD approach of combining bilateral and cross-party activities.

¹⁷ Including the possibility for smaller political parties to participate in the programme.

3.2 Effective application of the IMD approach and methodology

20. The IMD stresses the importance of adopting approaches and methodologies that facilitate local ownership, genuine partnership relations and an empowerment of political parties. It also recognises the need for strategic alliances with other actors and agencies (national or external) so as to consolidate and ensure the sustainability of its activities. Yet how are these principles applied at field level?
21. On the whole, the evaluation team found quite important variations in the application of basic IMD approaches and methodologies in the countries visited. ***First of all such diversity reflects a flexible approach:*** IMD customizes its support according to prevailing local conditions. Yet the choice of implementation approaches and methodologies is not neutral, as evidenced by some selective findings presented below.
22. In order to understand how IMD applies key approaches and methodologies, it is useful to consider ***four specific dimensions:*** (i) the demand-driven nature of IMD activities; (ii) the strategies, methods and tools used to promote ownership and effective partnerships; (iii) the preparedness of IMD to build strategic partnerships and develop complementarities (based on comparative advantages); and (iv) the existence of strategies to ensure sustainability (political, institutional and financial).
23. Let's first consider the ***principle of demand-led intervention strategies.*** Evidence collected suggests a clear IMD commitment to apply demand-driven approaches. However, the processes and methodologies used to ensure this have tended to differ substantially from one country to another. This, in turn, has influenced the dynamics and outcomes of the country programmes. Furthermore, in several instances IMD has also been confronted with the 'limits' of demand-driven approaches and the corresponding need to play a more pro-active role. A few examples will illustrate these points:
 - The ***Guatemala*** report provides ample evidence that IMD has earned respect among political parties through "the way it treats political issues with propriety, how it facilitates dialogue processes while it fully respects the political parties, their agendas and (joint) decisions". Contrary to other supporters of the democratic process, IMD is not perceived to have a political agenda of its own. It entered in the democracy assistance arena "at the right moment and was able to support developments that have emerged from genuine national processes". The 2004 country evaluation of Bolivia also commends the IMD for its ideological neutrality, and the degree of trustworthiness that was derived from the Dutch funding provided.
 - In ***Kenya***, political parties were also firmly placed in the driving seat. Yet the report sheds an interesting light on the critical link to be made between demand-driven approaches and the existence of adequate mechanisms for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation. It stresses the importance of adopting a critical look at the substance of the 'demand-side'. For instance, although a first tranche of institutional support has been released to most parties for developing their Strategic Plans, to what extent were member consultations carried out, and to what extent are these plans 'owned' by members afterwards. Or is the programme just seen as a means to accessing much needed institutional funding?
 - In ***Tanzania***, IMD did commendable efforts to build trust, to promote dialogue and to create room for the Tanzanian political parties to develop context-specific and home-grown agendas. All political parties stressed that they had enjoyed considerable freedom in proposing, formulating and executing bilateral project activities. However, the report observes that the parties' real needs were not identified in a

“systematic and consistent” manner. It also expresses concerns that the demand-led approach has been “practised to an extent where the overall strategic direction was compromised”.

- In *Mali*, perceptions on how demand-led the process had been so far, tended to vary widely. In the view of the IMD team, the country programme was put together with political parties, who formally approved decisions made through their representatives in the ‘Advisory Committee’ of the programme. However, for a majority of local actors interviewed, the IMD had not invested enough during the design phase in a comprehensive political and institutional context analysis as well as in a structured dialogue with relevant Malian authorities and other key stakeholders (including the Dutch Embassy). This was seen to have hampered a proper identification of the ‘demand-side’.
 - *Indonesia* provides still another, radically different scenario. A thorough identification study was conducted, which concluded that established political parties did not seem to express a real interest in receiving IMD support. Despite this apparent absence of a genuine demand from the primary target group, IMD opted for starting-up a programme in Indonesia. It chose a long term ‘phased approach’, thinking in terms of twenty years, whereby the relationship with political parties was to be constructed from the ‘bottom-up’. IMD decided to initially work through intermediary CSOs in order to support a wide range of democracy initiatives with a variety of partners. It is now moving towards connecting to political parties as well. This strategy inevitably means that the process has during the initial phase has been led by IMD and its civil society partner rather than driven by political parties.
24. A similar picture emerges when looking at *IMD practices in promoting ownership and effective partnerships*. These principles are considered as the starting point for any IMD intervention, yet they tend to be applied in considerably different ways at the stage of formulating and implementing country programmes. In some countries, a ‘let go’ attitude prevails (with perhaps a too open-ended and hands-off approach by IMD), while in other country programmes IMD is at times perceived to be ‘supply-driven’ and control-oriented.
25. The Guatemala programme seems to have been particularly effective in putting into practice the principles of ownership and partnership. In the view of the evaluation team, the main explanatory factors are (i) a clear ‘insertion strategy’ for the IMD programme, based on a precise tuning in on local processes and priorities; (ii) a strong ability to identify, facilitate and empower national and local initiatives; (iii) a scrupulous respect for local ownership and demands from political organisations and groups; (iv) a systematic concern with documenting and ensuring an effective dissemination of the outcomes of political dialogue processes and fora; and (v) a creative, well-networked, sensitive and efficient local coordinator (representing ‘El Instituto Holandés’).
26. In the other programme countries, examples of promising attempts to build ownership and effective partnership relations can equally be found. Yet the country reports also raise a number of fundamental dilemmas and/or concerns:
- *Whose ownership?* This question seems particularly relevant in the case of Indonesia. The political analysis, underpinning the IMD intervention, concluded that it was not possible, *at this stage*, to lay ownership directly into the hands of the political parties. A partnership was therefore developed with a civil society structure so as to start providing democracy assistance and to ensure a gradual linking up with political parties. The country note Indonesia describes high levels of ownership, displayed by the civil society leaders in charge of the programme. Yet the question can be raised

how the programme will succeed in overcoming the initial ‘ownership deficit’ at the level of political parties.

- *Trust as a precondition to build ownership.* The Malian report presents an interesting ‘ownership dilemma’. Confronted with the fragility of the Malian political party system, IMD preferred to anchor the programme in a neutral civil society organisation rather than directly in a structure owned by political parties. In order to facilitate implementation, a technical programme management team was set-up, supported by a Dutch consultant. While all these moves may have been justified from an IMD management perspective, they are not perceived to have been helpful in building ownership among political parties. Leaders of political parties felt that IMD wanted to provide support without granting “un minimum de confiance”. This example illustrates that ‘trust’ is both a precondition to build ownership and a difficult thing to achieve (particularly in fragile political and institutional environments). It would appear that part of the confusion in the Malian case is linked to problems of communication¹⁸.
- *IMD’s own agenda?* To what extent is it possible to have a balanced partnership if IMD does not provide clarity on its own agenda? This question is raised in the Tanzania and Mali reports but the issue is also relevant for other country programmes. If partnership is all about “working together in a co-operative spirit, combining resources and efforts in order to achieve a shared objective that results from a common interest”¹⁹, the IMD might need to be more explicit about its own agenda, its mission, values, goals, theory of institutional change, etc.
- *Whose ideas?* In several programme countries, Centres for Multi-party Democracy or comparable national level entities are established to relate to IMD and to other potential donors. In principle, these ‘clones’ of IMD may have a positive impact on local ownership and help to complement IMD capacities in executing the programme. They can also strengthen the hand of the counterparts in dealing with IMD and in setting their terms for the cooperation. However, the question can be raised to what extent these new structures are genuinely owned by local partners, as IMD clearly played a pro-active role in promoting (and funding) their establishment?
- *Two-way transparency.* How much transparency should IMD provide in its partnership relations? Several country reports (Mali, Tanzania, Kenya) call for a greater openness on the side of IMD on how decisions are made and about available budgets for parties and country consultants. Yet local stakeholders in Tanzania also stressed the need for IMD to be “more strict when it comes to monitoring the activities under the bilateral programme”. In a country plagued by ubiquitous corruption, the IMD funds should be regarded as “seed money to learn to be accountable for public funds”.
- *Overstepping partnership principles when needed?* Managing conflicts is generally a good test-case for the quality of the partnership relations. The Kenya report provides an interesting example of a partnership conflict (related to eligibility criteria for members). In the perception of some local actors, IMD did not respect the partnership principle when a swift resolution could not be reached. It used its control over the resources by freezing funding as a means of “getting it their way”. This perception is not shared by the IMD team. In their view, a bold intervention was needed in order to secure the programme from being hijacked by non-representative politicians and in order to protect the core democratic value of ‘inclusion’ (underlying IMD interventions). It is not up to evaluation team to make judgements on this specific

¹⁸ This is recognised in the IMD 2004 Annual Report, which indicates that one of the lessons learnt in the Mali programme is the need to improve the (direct) communication with political parties. Despite the Advisory Council being composed of party representatives, a number of politicians were not sufficiently informed about the institutional changes within the programme --changes approved by this Council.

¹⁹ IMD draft Partnership Charter, August 2005

case. Yet it raises the more generic question of how well-equipped IMD is to deal with conflicts situations in a true partnership mode.

- *The challenge of rooting ownership.* The Tanzania study rightly observes that differing styles of leadership and levels of internal democracy within political parties result in differing capabilities to ‘assume’ ownership. In most cases, it found the IMD methodological principles to rest with a few key persons. Ownership, partnership and dialogue were seen to be still insufficiently rooted in the wider parts of the political parties. The report of the IMD country evaluation in Mozambique from 2003 also underlined this, by mentioning that there is ‘yet not formal structural approach to further the inclusion of these target groups in activities’.

27. There can be little doubt that IMD demonstrates an overall culture of networking and partnership building; considerable time is invested in this type of activities at different levels. Yet in practice, it is not always easy to discern a clear and consistent line in the *IMD approach to establishing strategic partnerships* and mutually beneficial cooperation agreements with other actors (both domestic and external). In Guatemala, the mainstreaming of a networking approach, the mobilisation of respected local experts (as political advisors) and the search for strategic partnerships are both a central feature of the approach and a major explanatory factor behind the successes achieved. In other programme countries however, IMD seems to have followed a more timid approach towards collaborating with key national institutions or external agencies in the field of democracy assistance. In Indonesia, a choice was made, at this stage, for ‘functional partnerships’ rather than for strategic partnerships. In Tanzania, IMD tends to associate with other actors as well as to contract implementing agencies. Yet it has not yet developed strategic partnerships with key players in the field of democracy assistance. In Mali, critical voices perceived a lack of interest on the part of IMD to link-up with other players.
28. To some extent, these differences can be explained by local conditions. In some countries, the ‘right set’ of actors and individuals may at a certain moment in time be available to broker strategic partnership deals. In others, IMD may face difficulties in finding partners that share its approach to democracy assistance or individual actors willing to engage their institution in collaborative arrangements²⁰. However, the variations in practice also suggest that the use of strategic partnerships – as a key component of the IMD policy and approach – has not yet been fully mainstreamed in all parts of the organisation.
29. The last methodological principle relates to the *existence and quality of strategies to ensure sustainability* (political, institutional and financial). For IMD, as for other external players involved in democracy assistance, sustainability forms the linchpin of the overall intervention strategy. In practice, IMD is confronted with the challenge to ensure the sustainability of:
 - the investments in capacity building and institutional development of political parties;
 - the multiparty dialogue processes that have been engineered and facilitated;
 - the local institutions that have been engendered by these processes;
 - the overall results achieved by the programme (after phasing out).
30. Evidence collected during the evaluation suggests that IMD is still to invest more time into developing a coherent set of country specific strategies, methodologies, tools and guidelines to systematically integrate the issue of sustainability (in all its dimensions) in

²⁰ Bolivia is a case in point. Personnel changes at the level of potential international partners now create new opportunities to adjust its intervention strategy by seeking strategic partnerships.

its operations²¹. On several dimensions of sustainability, much strategic thinking and policy debate is still required. A case in point is the question of ‘phasing out’ or ‘exit strategies’. What does that mean for an organisation with the mandate and approach of IMD?

31. This is not to say that *good practices* have not emerged from the field during IMD’s pioneering phase. Thus, the main strategy for ensuring sustainability in Guatemala is the systematic embedding of IMD activities within ongoing national/local processes. Institutional sustainability is brought about on the one hand by working with existing institutions (political parties, Congress, international and national service providers) and on the other, by facilitating the establishment of the Political Parties Forum and the Multiparty Institute for Political Studies (and Education). Financial sustainability is promoted through diversification of donor funding and lobbying for a new law that would increase official funding to political parties.

3.3 Quality of programme design and management

32. This evaluation question goes straight into the way country programmes are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. A wide range of interesting insights have been collected on matters related to the quality of programme execution during the five field visits. These were complemented with lessons learnt from the four programme evaluations that have been carried out.
33. In order to illustrate this diversity, the box below presents some concrete examples of how different IMD programmes execute their mandate. In each of the three countries, the IMD has been guided by the same mandate, objectives and principles of ownership of partnership. Yet the path followed in terms of implementation approaches has often been strikingly different.

Different ways of programme execution – selected findings from the country notes:
<p>The IMD has been present in <i>Guatemala</i> since 2002. In almost four years, “el Instituto Holandés” has gradually built up its reputation as a multiparty broker institution in support of political parties and multiparty democracy in Guatemala. It has found ways to embed its effort in on-going national processes contributing significantly to events of great national significance, such as the establishment of a multiparty National Shared Agenda through which a wide range of political parties in Guatemala took an effective stake in the implementation of the 1996 Peace Accords. Through firmly anchoring its efforts into existing national and local initiatives, the programme showed a scrupulous respect for the demand and ownership of the parties. Through a consistently facilitated, integrated approach, and especially through the mobilisation of relevant and top quality national expertise, the programme has been quite successful.</p>
<p>IMD started its activities in <i>Indonesia</i> in 2003 with the aim to (i) reduce polarisation among Indonesian parties; (ii) improve understanding of internal party democracy; and (iii) bridge the gaps between political parties, government and civil society. The approach adopted by IMD in Indonesia was quite different from other IMD programme countries. It did not want to</p>

²¹ Some valuable conceptual work has been done on the broader institutional development strategy that should underpin IMD capacity building initiatives if sustainable impact is to be achieved. Yet it is unclear how much of this knowledge has yet been internalized by staff operating the programmes.

engage directly in political party support and made a clear choice for a more bottom-up, 'phased' approach to supporting the democratisation processes. Consequently, the IMD has invested in a broad package of activities, parallel to the programme's flagship of the School for Democracy (KID). Key challenges for the programme now include how this phased approach may at one point be owned by the political parties, and how to integrate the short term results into a long term strategic vision for the country. The same goes for the different functional collaborations with other institutions, which are yet to evolve into long term strategic partnerships.

In **Kenya**, the country programme gravitates around the Centre for Multiparty Democracy-Kenya (CMD-K), launched in 2004. This Centre was the result of a process that started in 2003 to develop a partnership between IMD and Kenyan political parties. The CMD-K is a body founded by political parties in Kenya, who are also its members. The Centre's main goal is to enhance and reinforce multiparty democracy in Kenya through capacity building of political parties and through ensuring they are effective players in the democratization process. A balanced approach between institutional support (bilateral) and joint programmes for all parties was worked out in a four-year strategic plan – designed by the parties – and is believed to contribute to joint-party learning and institutional development. Strategic cooperation with other institutes and organisations is limited due to the latter's preference of supporting democratisation through governance reform or NGO's / CSO's.

34. How to explain these important differences in implementation approach? Clearly, the *country context* – and related need for differentiated IMD approaches – is a key explanatory factor. Prevailing conditions on the ground as well as higher level policy considerations may lead IMD to choose different and evolving trajectories for executing country programmes. Obviously, tailoring interventions to country realities is both a need and perfectly justifiable.
35. Yet in view of the evaluation team, there is more at stake than just a justifiable concern with country specific approaches. The variations in programme design and management, as observed during country visits and highlighted by IMD stakeholders, also seem to point at the existence of *important weaknesses in the practical implementation of IMD approaches and methodologies and in the capacity available within IMD to implement programmes*. Putting it a bit bluntly, besides starting up an impressive array of programmes and activities, so far IMD has invested primarily in the conceptual specification of its mandate (related to the IMD vision and general approach) and in financial/administrative aspects of project management (related to the day-to-day management and financial accountability requirements). In the light of its rapid expansion, much less has been done to strengthen the *IMD operational capacity to systematically implement its policies, approaches and instruments all along the programme cycle*. This would have meant heavily investing in the institutional capacity to: (i) carry out a solid baseline study as well as a political and risk analysis before entering into a country; (ii) design and agree upon a tailor-made and coherent country intervention strategy, translated in clear objectives, work plans; targets and medium term outcomes; (iii) choose adequate support modalities and innovative instruments, adapted to the realities of each country; (iv) design and agree phasing out or exit strategies and (v) ensure a strategic monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved, difficulties encountered as well as adjustments required.²²

²² In the Georgia programme, which is part of the Multi- and Bilateral programme, innovations are emerging that may result in useful lessons learned for other IMD interventions. In this programme, the Organization for Security and Co-operation (OSCE) have agreed on a concise identification and analysis of the current situation of Georgian political institutions, particularly of political parties and their representation in parliament. This assessment will be carried out in 2005. It will be an interactive process between different actors in which political parties themselves will produce an objective self-assessment of their own organizations. This process will provide the analytical

36. Several interviewees referred to this gap at the level of implementation methodologies and capacities. In their perception, the strategic management of the country programmes seems at times to be “more driven by political instinct than by strategy and method”; “dangerously dependent on one individual”; “improvised”, etc. There is also a quite common concern that the operational management of most country programmes is left to “junior and fairly inexperienced staff”, primarily dealing with micro project management and accountability issues (rather than with policy management and pro-active process management)²³. To some degree, these trial-and-error approaches are a normal part of the start-up phase of any organisation. Yet they also seem to reflect a current imbalance between the political and developmental agencies within IMD as far as implementation of its programmes is concerned²⁴. Besides, *experimentation and pioneering have their limits*, especially for an agency like IMD which intervenes in highly complex environments and considers to systematically expand its geographic and thematic areas of work. Under these conditions, the gap in implementation strategies, approaches and tools can be a dangerous thing, and could perhaps even become a recipe for failure.

3.4 Quality of Programme administration, emerging patterns of impact

37. As mentioned before, it is too early to make an in-depth assessment of the impact and sustainability of IMD interventions in programme countries as most of the processes have only recently been initiated. Yet it is possible to observe results and to analyse emerging patterns of impact in the overall support provided.

38. At a general level, a striking result is the *high visibility* that *IMD* has been able to acquire since it started to operate. Admittedly, there is still no overcrowding of actors in the field of political party assistance (especially not of organisations sharing IMD’s focus on establishing pluralistic multi-party systems and providing direct funding to political parties). Still, as a result of a very dynamic approach, IMD has managed to carve out an important niche for itself in the field of democracy assistance.

39. This dynamism has led to (i) a high-profile presence in an expanding number of countries; (ii) the development of a wide range of activities and networks in programme countries; (iii) new requests for support or partnerships; (iv) a growing visibility in the international donor community and the European Union; (v) an emerging interest of other agencies to fund IMD activities (opening perspectives for a diversification of funding). In the process, IMD has generally been able to create and maintain *trust and credibility* among its different partners, stakeholders and funding agencies.

40. In order to address the question of emerging patterns of impact, it is useful to *go back to the main objectives* of the IMD (see Annex 1) as this defines the types of impact IMD

fundament on which future assistance programmes can be built, and will be concluded with a conference where a final report will be presented and discussed.

²³ Reference was made, for instance, to the limited continuity of PACOs and the perceived lack of guidance and feedback from the party headquarters.

²⁴ The evaluation team came across an interesting example. Its value is relative but it may help to illustrate the issue at stake. The case relates to a situation whereby donor agencies were considering support for IMD activities in a given country. However, one of their demands was to obtain more **explicit** information about the medium term objectives and methodologies IMD would use in order to promote transformational change. According to available information sources, IMD preferred not to put its methodology on paper, arguing that the political parties still had to sign the programme document. This explanation makes sense from the perspective of a ‘political approach’. Yet it did not convince the donors as in their prevailing ‘development culture’, implementation cannot rely exclusively on the ‘political instinct’ of IMD but should be driven by a clearly formulated strategy, with justification of the choices made in terms of approach.

seeks to promote. On this basis, the evaluation needs to consider to what extent and how IMD programmes have contributed to:

- strengthening political party institutions;
- building thematic and programmatic capacities of political parties
- promoting a pluralist multiparty political system
- the consolidation of democratic transitions and (indirectly) to broader development objectives (e.g. poverty reduction)

41. Both the field visits and the desk review reveal that IMD programmes have yielded a *wide range of (tangible and intangible) outcomes* that are contributing positively to strengthening political party institutions and to promoting multiparty dialogue and interaction.

Tangible and intangible outcomes of IMD country programmes <i>some selected findings:</i>
<p>Kenya:</p> <p><i>1. Political parties in Kenya have started focusing on institutional and structural needs.</i> The programme has ensured that parties have begun reflecting on their institutional needs, in particular on how they can grow into institutions that are not ‘owned’ by individuals or, identified with particular ethnic constituencies. They are now also paying attention to institutional and structural challenges, preventing them from operating as institutions.</p> <p><i>2. Unprecedented dialogue among political parties, large and small.</i> The IMD support has resulted in political parties developing common positions and view points on several issues. However, only the middle level leaders/officials of the party who are engaged in programmatic dialogue. Senior leaders or owners of the parties are less involved.</p> <p><i>3. Strategic plans may contribute to institutional development.</i> The fact that parties can now develop strategic objectives and activities, to be carried out between election periods, is an important outcome.</p>
<p>Tanzania:</p> <p><i>1. Building of trust.</i> The IMD has in three years succeeded in building up the necessary trust which allows the organisation to function as an esteemed neutral catalyst of multiparty-democracy in Tanzania. This is recognised and valued by all partners and many stakeholders. Most actors welcome IMD to go further and use this trust to more proactively strengthen multiparty democracy.</p> <p><i>2. Contributing to social and political cohesion.</i> The IMD programme in Tanzania has contributed towards increased social and political cohesion of the political system. Intimidating statements are heard less and less; more parties are instead saying what they want and what they have to offer. Contrasting this perception, others remarked that when the opposition parties were still smaller in number, they were relatively more vibrant and appealing to the public. Again others commented that, concerning the political atmosphere, nothing has changed in recent years.</p>
<p>Mozambique:</p> <p><i>1. Facilitating interaction leads to trust.</i> Being the only organisation that directly supports joint activities by political parties, its activities have contributed to interaction and discussion between parties, as well as to the building of inter-party trust relations.</p> <p><i>2. Mixed results.</i> The country evaluation of Mozambique mentioned that FRELIMO and</p>

RENAMO have become more responsible in terms of understanding the democratic game and playing a part. There are still disputes and heated arguments between parties, despite being mostly under constitutional principles, and some parties have disappeared while remaining registered.

3. *Bilateral projects as a starting point.* It is believed that the external assistance to the political parties as provided by the IMD has contributed to the institutional development of those parties with organisational potential.

Guatemala:

1. *Unprecedented outcomes of multi-party dialogue – the Shared National Agenda* – based on non-partisan engagement and effective strategic partnerships. With the benefit of hindsight, different actors would probably agree that to engage in strategic partnerships with UNDP and OAS – each with its own unique type of expertise and established networks in Guatemala and beyond – was a master stroke.

2. *Increased participation by disadvantaged groups.* The establishment of specialised committees of the Political Party Platform on women and youth is certainly linked to the increased political space that women, the youth and indigenous peoples obtained in the process of multiparty dialogue facilitated by IMD and its partners.

3. *Changes in political culture as a result of peer influence and networking.* There is clear evidence of a positive effect of peer group support on political culture in Guatemala and the effectiveness of institutional strengthening of multiparty interaction initiatives.

42. However, *differences among countries* reflect the different ‘entry points’ chosen in the programmes:

- Since 2002, the *Guatemala* programme has focused mostly on multiparty interaction. Impressive results have been achieved in the process, including the elaboration of a Shared National Agenda; a noticeable shift in inter-party political culture (away from destructive antagonisms) and a set of new institutions supporting the move towards a pluralist multiparty political system. Fewer outcomes can be shown yet on strengthening of political parties and building programmatic and implementation capacities as a bilateral programme was only recently launched.
- In *Tanzania* it was decided to start with a bilateral programme. The mission report concludes that the activities have led to “beneficial and constructive effects” at the level of political parties. The programme is now shifting towards a larger focus on supporting multiparty dialogue.
- In *Mali* the whole process still finds itself in an embryonic stage after three years of implementation. There are signs that the programme is about to acquire a new impetus, amongst others by the planned development of ‘bottom-up’ activities at decentralized level.
- In *Kenya*, the IMD programme is perceived as “an important initiative towards institutionalization of political parties”. According to the report, this is the “first time political parties are paying attention to institutional and structural needs”. Promising effects are noticed in terms of promoting internal democracy, dialogue among political parties (big and small) while strategic plans have been developed which hold a strong potential to institutionalize political parties.
- According to the *Indonesia* report, the recently created ‘School for Democracy’ (KID) as well as the wide range of activities supported by IMD have contributed to promoting interesting debates on key democratic issues and yielded some concrete products (e.g. a Code of Conduct for political parties). The planned activities at decentralized (regional) level also seem relevant from a broader perspective of supporting the emergence of a democratic culture. However, while promising efforts

have recently been made to fully associate political parties in the formulation and implementation of programme activities, some wonder whether the link will be strong enough for genuine ownership to emerge and effective change to be promoted at the level of IMD's core objectives and primary target group. The evaluation team recognizes the explicit strategy of IMD to work with civil society in this initial phase of the process. Yet the question can be raised if a more balanced 'mix' of channels (civil society, political parties, multi-party dialogue) similar to other programme countries, would not have more useful from the perspective of promoting sustainable change.

- The **regional programmes** are growing in importance and seem to hold great potential for displaying a variety of functions (e.g. exchange of information and good practices; peer pressure, etc.). It may also help to trigger new dynamics in the region. Thus, the success of the Ghana country programme is starting to influence thinking in neighbouring countries (Togo, Ivory Coast) and recently led to new demands for possible IMD support.
 - IMD has also successfully invested at the **international/European level**. In the view of the evaluation team, it was a wise decision to consider European-level activities as a necessary component for an effective implementation of the overall IMD mandate as it helps to build European partnership (much needed for deepening and extending the work of IMD) as well as to diversify potential funding sources (as requested by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs). There is also evidence that IMD has exercised a positive influence on overall European approaches to democracy assistance, thus potentially helping to create a more conducive environment for its own operations.
43. The contribution of IMD programmes to **systemic changes** in the overall democratic process and to broader development objectives are obviously more difficult to assess at this early stage. In this context, it is interesting to note that the Guatemala programme has added a third component to the classical IMD menu. It has invested heavily in '**political innovation**', focusing in particular on promoting the participation of groups so far excluded from effective involvement (women, youth, decentralised groups and indigenous peoples). This assumes a long-term bottom-up perspective and its impacts will be in line with that. Yet this sort of work, combined with support to political parties and multiparty systems, could over time have a major impact on the prevailing democratic culture.
44. This debate on the link between 'political and economic poverty reduction' also lives among Dutch constituencies. Thus, the point was forcefully made that IMD may not achieve a meaningful impact unless its activities are **integrated into (mainstream) national development processes** (through complementarities and inter-linkages with the work done by other actors). Time is needed to see how IMD deals with this challenge. In this context, it is interesting to note that there is now, in the (more mature) Ghana country programme, a move towards elaborating a 'Democratic Consolidation Strategy Paper' as complement to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).
45. The consultation process (in the field and in the Netherlands) as well as the desk review also helped to identify a set of **key factors that have tended to dilute the relevance and added-value** of the IMD intervention strategy (see box below).

Factors that may reduce the relevance and added-value of IMD programmes

- a limited knowledge base among IMD staff (or local teams) on political transition processes in fragile environments and on the possible contribution of political parties to pluralist democracies;
- too limited or superficial identification studies as the basis for selecting countries and for defining a relevant intervention strategy (with a clear and realistic set of objectives and expected outcomes);
- the failure to put responsibilities right from the start on the shoulders of political parties (the primary target group of IMD support);
- the choice for ‘top-down approaches’ (focused on ‘elite pacification’) as opposed to a more long-term bottom-up approach;
- a limited integration of IMD activities into mainstream (local, national and regional) development processes and democracy agendas;
- lack of strategic partnerships with key democratic institutions an effective inter-linkages and complementarities (task division) with other external agencies;
- a limited IMD capacity to respond to evolving demands from the field (as country programmes grow in maturity and expand into broader agendas);
- insufficient attention paid to measuring the effectiveness of the programmes (including performance-based aid allocations to political parties); the impact achieved and the sustainability of supported institutional development processes;
- a too rapid expansion of the overall IMD portfolio and number of programme countries, leading to a situation whereby “the butter is spread to thinly” to have a meaningful impact in-country and whereby IMDs capacities are systematically overstretched.

3.5 Quality of Management, Evaluation and Reporting

46. In general, questions as to whether IMD programmes have contributed to achieving results (particularly in terms of systemic changes) resulted in varying statements, covering the whole spectrum from deeply cynical to overly optimistic comments. This clearly illustrates the *difficulty of measuring results* but also underlines the need for IMD of having adequate systems for systematic performance-based monitoring and evaluation.
47. Establishing a clear framework of measurable indicators at the start of a programme, ideally grounded on a solid baseline against which progress can be measures over time, is a precondition for measuring organizational performance and effectiveness. In addition, it provides a clear and transparent framework on objectives and expected outcomes and provides useful guidance during programme implementation.
48. A substantial amount of time has been put into the development of the online Programme Management System (PMS), which may be accessed and operated from anywhere in the world. This system, as well as the investments which were made in the contracting and accounting systems have reaped good results, but sometimes seem to be somewhat disconnected from the programming and practice. Parts of the PMS appear to be following what is happening in practice, rather than the other way around.
49. Notwithstanding the steps which need to be taken for further internalisation and integration of the PMS into the organisation’s operations, it remains an important and accessible tool for IMD staff and management to keep track and remain aware of the

progress of the different projects which are implemented in the different programmes. The monitoring and reporting function of the PMS is reinforced by separate country pages which function as ‘bulletin boards’ and allow country teams and regional representatives to share minutes, mission reports, announcements and relevant political information.

50. The countries where IMD programmes are running are regularly visited by IMD programme staff, particularly by PACO’s, and fulfil a variety of needs including relationship-maintenance and building of trust with political parties and other relevant stakeholders; monitoring and reporting on programme activities and political developments; and documenting of decisions made. The reports which are written after these missions are made available within the IMD organisation, but are not always shared with the IMD country consultants and are not made available to the political parties which the IMD supports. Albeit appearing somewhat standardised, there are considerable variations between country programmes concerning the format of the reports, as well as in what is reported.
51. Concerning the reports which are made by the beneficiary parties after implementing bilateral projects – or by organisations/foundations which were contracted to implement certain activities – commonalities and requirements for each final report have been drawn up and disseminated as guidelines. Besides always containing a financial and narrative part, they describe the activities which were undertaken; reflections on problems which were solved; spending of funds; qualitative and quantitative results; and the relevance of results in relation to the project’s objectives. The financial report should be comparable to the original budget in the proposal, and discrepancies should be explained and motivated. The IMD country evaluation reports, as well as the country notes from the missions undertaken for the institutional evaluation, resulted in a number of qualitative reflections concerning reporting procedures and practice between the IMD and its partners:

<p>How (much) to report? – some findings from the Bolivia country evaluation (2004)</p>
<p>According to the report of the Bolivia country programme evaluation, the IMD funds are in theory transferred on the basis of a yearly programme, which is to be designed and submitted by a counterpart. This annual programme contains specific activities and expenditures which are related to a multi-annual strategy.</p> <p>However, the planning and progress documents submitted by the IMD’s counterpart in Bolivia, the Bolivian Foundation for Multiparty Democracy (fBDM) were found to be ‘sketchy’. The evaluators concluded from their analysis that <i>‘there is as yet no clear format for substantial reporting, let alone progress monitoring, either designed by fBDM or made available by IMD.’</i></p> <p>This lack was also found to be partly compensated through the frequent visits which were made by IMD party co-ordinators, staff, and the permanent consultant. The evaluators found that these visits <i>‘contributed to a by and large adequate understanding within IMD of what goes on in the programme, as well as to a solid basis of mutual understanding and trust. It possibly leads to higher overhead costs for programme monitoring than would be the case if consolidated reporting procedures are available and used in practice. However, close face-to-face contact between IMD and fBDM has been an important aspect of the take off and consolidation of the Foundation during its first and turbulent 18 months (January 2003-June 2004).’</i></p>

Some interesting questions are thus brought forward in this country evaluation:

- Can consolidated reporting procedures replace the communication which takes place through the frequent visits in terms of the building of mutual understanding and trust?
- If the face-to-face contact was instrumental during the take-off and consolidation phases of the first 18 months, does this mean that they may be gradually replaced by written correspondence?
- Who reports to whom? Is there a consolidated policy within the IMD on the procedure for reporting, and with whom these reports are shared?

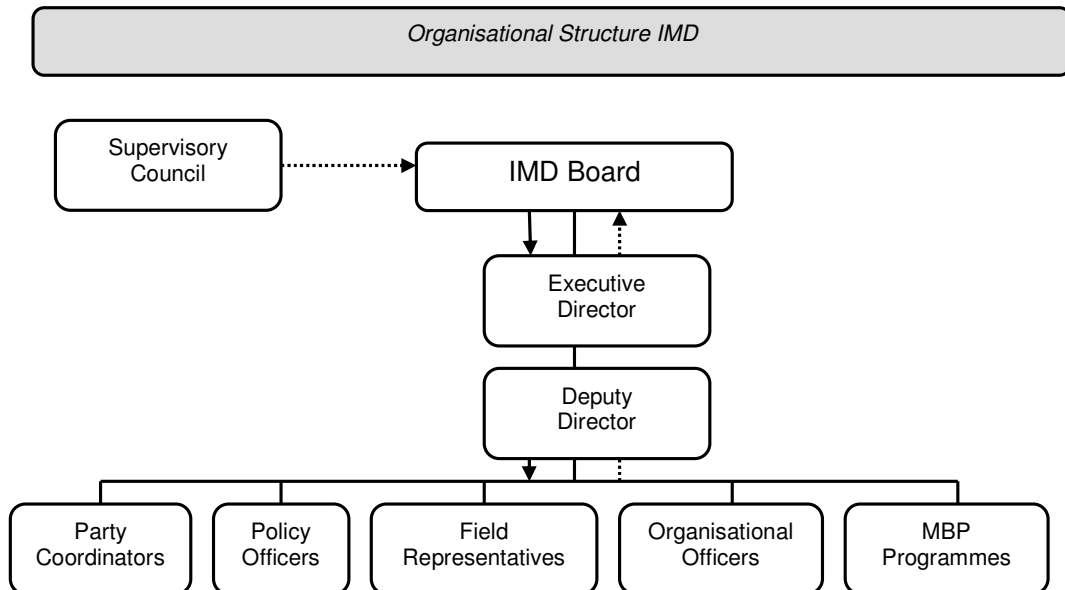
Concerning this last question, the mission to Kenya which was part of this institutional evaluation also mentioned that there is a need for more clarity concerning decision-making procedures. Similar observations were made during the mission to Tanzania, as well as the observation that reports from IMD are not always shared with the political parties and IMD country consultants. In the country notes of the Kenya mission, it was concluded that the *'(...)challenge in the partnership is to come up with procedures and checks and balances that ensure transparency and accountability, reinforce trust between partners, and still let local partners "get on with the job" without being bogged down in unnecessary administrative procedural requirements from IMD headquarters.'*

52. IMD recently decided to shift from an expenditure-based to a more results oriented reporting mechanism, linking activities to policy outcomes, based on the BuZA's SMART/DRAM principles. Programme countries have undergone important changes as performance-based criteria have been introduced and strategic plans have been complemented with milestones that can be monitored. The field in which the IMD operates, as well as the particular kinds of higher level goals it aims to contribute to, puts a premium on making its 'process work' more visible and open to interpretation. . SMART/DRAM principles create an illusion of make-ability and predictability, whereas attribution for actors who intervene in democratic transition processes is often very difficult to make even plausible. Based on its findings, the evaluation team recommends the IMD to put more efforts into deepening and making more visible the 'midriff' between its vision/approach, and the choices that are made during implementation.
53. This shift from expenditure-based to more results oriented reporting mechanisms is a commendable one, and fits well in IMD's objective to be a learning organization. It is, however, not an easy shift and it poses a number of challenges. The 2004 Annual Report, for instance, has made a great effort to improve IMD's monitoring framework, but it still contains a vast amount of indicators (193 objectives and 224 outcomes); largely consists of activity-based and process-oriented objectives and results (as opposed to higher level, strategic outcomes) and mainly uses annual indicators (instead of multi-annual ones to which IMD's activities contribute). Likewise, the semi-annual report for 2005 does not show a change towards multi-annual indicators. In addition to this, the report shows significant variations between the planned and actual ratio between content and support activities. It shows that in some countries – for a variety of reasons – there are some difficulties to spend the budgeted process and content activities, and the actualisation of the planned country programme budgets is often behind schedule (for an overview of selected country programmes, see Annex 2).
54. Our findings also suggests that IMD may *need to review the purpose of collecting data* on these different objectives and expected outcomes and assess whether all of these data will usefully help inform its progress and performance assessment. Data collection on mainly activity-based and process-oriented objectives and results might create an unnecessary laborious monitoring system, possibly overburdening both the staff and its contract partners. In addition, these data (e.g. on the number of training programmes, meetings and reports, etc.) do not inform IMD on the extent to which its activity actually

impacted on long(er) term transformational change processes, nor do they contribute much too IMD organizational learning.

3.6 Institutional capacity IMD

55. The current organisational structure of the IMD may be schematised as follows:²⁵



56. The IMD's semi-annual report of 2005 mentions an *increase in workload* for the IMD bureau staff. This increase in workload was also mentioned by most of the PACO's and policy officers who were interviewed during the evaluation, who admitted that practically all their time went into operational issues to 'keep things moving', and little time remained for reflecting on what had happened and could be learned and shared between country teams. The semi-annual report mentions recent institutional developments in the IMD that will further increase workload, specifically new demands connected to the introduction of the DRAM and SMART concepts into the annual country programme planning; the introduction of higher quality organisational standards as part of a process of ISO-certification process; as well as decisions such as to spend more time on keeping the IMD website updated.

57. The workload is further increased by a relatively *high staff turnover*, especially on the side of the PACO's, of whom four left the IMD and were replaced during 2005. By October 2005, four new job positions were opened, partly in order to fill up posts that were left vacant after the departure of two IMD bureau staff members.

58. Further reflecting on their work, the IMD staff felt it required *more content-related support and coaching* in areas such as strategic thinking and reflection regarding their work. These needs, as expressed by the IMD staff members, cannot be solved only by recruiting more people, but require a certain degree of institutional and hierarchical reorganization in order to be fully effective. While some functional decentralisation has occurred in the organisation, there was a widely expressed need among the staff for a clear devolution of tasks with associated final responsibilities. Currently most decisions,

²⁵ Source: IMD Compendium, October 2005

including those that may be categorised as ‘non-core’, such as website updates, payments and minor reports, need formal approval by the director.

59. These investments in human resources and internal management structure will be crucial for the continuation of the IMD’s institutional development and sustained overall performance; especially knowing that the annual growth in IMD bureau members has lagged behind the growth in actual expenditure, as well as the growth in the amount of IMD country programmes and consequent responsibilities. The time available for the PACO’s has fluctuated with the results of parliamentary elections, but the overall time allocation has remained at the same level as agreed in the year 2000.
60. Contrasted to the development of the size of the IMD staff, which increased by more than thirty percent between 2002 and 2005, the actual expenditure of the IMD rose by almost 274% and the number of country programmes increased by 240%.²⁶ Despite these impressive and demanding growth rates, the IMD has managed to professionalise its bureau, and has invested considerably in the coordination with local IMD country consultants.
61. While the IMD’s relatively junior staff²⁷ is highly motivated, investments in its project cycle management skills could considerably improve its performance in this regard and consequently in all other activities. The fact that, according to the budget of 2005, 80% of the IMD’s mission is realised through a project modality further underpins the need for development of competencies regarding operational (and strategic) identification, implementation, monitoring en evaluation of projects en programmes. It furthermore highlights the need to further explore IMD’s initial efforts to evolve from strictly project-based to more *medium term, programmatic partnership agreements*, based on past performance. This will not only free up precious time of IMD staff but will also further deepen ownership and partnership.
62. Based on the perceptions of the majority of interviewees, the following scheme may summarise IMD’s critical capacity issues:

Critical capacity issues to be considered		
Policy and analysis	Operational management	Facilitation and networking
Systematically synthesising and sharing lessons learned from implementation, and exchange with other country teams	Effective middle level management and strategic coaching of junior staff	Effective identification of local experts with political analysis, facilitation and networking skills
Analytical and policy management skills (systems thinking, interdisciplinary thinking, intervention analysis, policy to practice analysis)	Pro-active guidance and project management support (including proposal writing, reporting etc)	Effective communication of Dutch lessons learned regarding governance and political system
Monitoring and evaluation skills (learning-oriented and forward-looking)	Enriching technical comments on project proposals with	Systematic sharing of knowledge and information with local counterparts /

²⁶ Excluding two regional programmes in Africa, as well as the IMD’s international relations programme

²⁷ The balance between ‘junior’ and ‘senior’ has improved as of late (amongst others with the recruitment of a senior Regional Coordinator)

	content/organisational suggestions (cost-benefit).	beneficiaries
Explication of choices made / relating operational decisions into country specific, medium term strategies;	Balancing the need to keep programme processes going with the need for pure demand-driven programming	Effective networking and mobilisation of relevant knowledge and expertise within Dutch party cadres;
Establishment of long term strategic partnerships to with a view to optimise complementarity and interlinkages with key development actors.		

63. The need for the IMD management to prioritise its internal capacity development regarding this matter is further underpinned by the findings of some of our country studies. IMD procedures are considered unclear by many of the local stakeholders, and there are often considerable (unexplained) delays in payments for bilateral projects from IMD the Hague, which compromises the potential impact of the planned party activities/interventions. Furthermore, the fact that first lead programme coordinators manage multiple country programmes and therefore spend considerable time on travelling complicates communication lines between them and the respective IMD country consultants and auditors.²⁸
64. IMD's approach to support locally-driven processes has helped to mobilize (and even institutionalize the use of) relevant *local expertise* in several programme countries can be considered as beneficial to the achievement of the objectives which are set for the country programmes. This is not only positive for promoting ownership, it also significantly contributes to complementing the capacity base of IMD to ensure effective implementation of programmes. Yet it also challenges IMD to have the necessary internal capacities to properly relate with these local sources of expertise (at strategic, operational and M&E levels).

3.7 Involvement and added-value Dutch Constituencies

65. The **Dutch political parties** are the backbone of IMD. Not only did they conceptualize and initiate the IMD, the unique structure of the organization also to a large extent defines its specific niche and determines its legitimacy ('organization owned by and in support of political parties'). In addition, Dutch political parties carry political responsibility for IMD's actions. Investment in keeping "*het draagvlak*" (political support base) thus remains critical for IMD, not only to safeguard its credibility and comparative advantage, but also to guarantee a coherent and consistent promotion of a common approach (and avoid being subjected to the 'political fashion of the day'). This responsibility is to be shared by the political parties.²⁹
66. How strong is the IMD 'draagvlak', four years after its creation? A mixed picture emerged during the consultation process and the feedback session with IMD staff, which points at *an evolution / transformation* of the political support base.

²⁸ In the case of Tanzania, this apparent confusion regarding communication lines and procedures was also shared by many of the parties who participated in the programme. According to one of them, 'The IMD headquarters sometimes says we need a document, when the local representative says we already have everything.'

²⁹ In addition to this, it will be important to reflect on 'what' to maintain. There was no agreement among board members and PACO's as to whether they should focus on the support from their respective political parties, or from the Dutch society at large.

67. On the one hand, a degree of erosion of IMD's 'draagvlak' seems to have emerged since IMD's inception in 2000. As a result of differences in interpretation of IMD's role and mandate; the varying expectations of the Dutch political parties as well as professionalisation and internationalization trends, IMD appears to be less high on the internal party agenda's than in the late nineties (although it should be noted that the evolution of the support base differs from party to party).
68. Coupled with the relatively junior and inexperienced party representatives (PACOs) appointed by the political parties, who often work part-time; not necessarily have an appropriate professional background and often lack the necessary networks and influence within their party, the observation was made that IMD runs the risk of becoming the Cinderella of the political parties.
69. This trend is an unfortunate one and potentially poses a risk for the sustainability of the organization. It is thus critical to re-assess the importance and added value of political parties at all three organizational levels (Supervisory Council, Board and PACOs) and clarify the roles and responsibilities of actors involved.
70. With respect to PACOs, the need to better define their comparative advantage and clarify the roles between PACOs and policy officers was repeatedly stressed. According to the majority of interviewees, the key responsibility of PACOs should be network maintenance (through which specialized expertise is attracted) and "draagvlak onderhouden" (to safeguard the strong ownership and commitment of political parties). Other respondents saw this responsibility only as one of the tasks of the PACO's, including the PACO's themselves. As a result of their many and often time-consuming tasks, such as co-managing multiple country programmes, some PACO's admitted to underprioritise the need of maintaining support of their respective parties to the extent of not investing time in it. In addition to clarifying their roles and priority tasks, many interviewees especially stressed the need to tackle the issue of the part-time employment of PACOs from smaller political parties.
71. As a result of their part-time appointment, these PACOs do not seem to be strongly embedded in the organizational structure, find it hard to prioritise and appear to 'spread themselves too thinly'. As a result, it is hard to guarantee impact and continuity as a result of high staff turnover. A decision is required for part-time PACOs to either concentrate on one country or to increase the number of hours by enlarging the PACO budget. A condition sine qua non for the latter is a solid selection procedure based on clear criteria.
72. Yet on the other hand, several indicators of a **'reinforcement' of the political support base** can be noticed, particularly among (i) Dutch politicians that have been directly involved in country programme activities; (ii) Dutch political youth organisations, who have been pro-actively developing proposals to ensure their participation in the IMD; (iii) officials from the Ministry and the Embassies (where initial scepticism on the relevance and feasibility of the IMD approach has waned and support is growing) and (iv) partners of IMD in the developing countries.

In thinking about reinforcing the political support base, due consideration should be given to the fact that the 'product' that IMD now delivers is quite different from the more restricted type of services that its predecessor (NZA) used to provide to political parties. This evolution may help to explain why some Dutch constituencies find it difficult to recognise themselves in the expanded mandate of IMD. It also invites IMD to globally reconsider the issue of 'draagvlak' and explore how it can be broadened and strengthened accordingly (while keeping the umbilical cord with the Dutch political parties),

IV. LESSONS LEARNT

73. In this section of the report, the evaluation team draws some of the main lessons learnt, based on preceding analysis of findings and the insights collected during the interviews with IMD staff members, relevant stakeholders in the Netherlands and actors in the field.
74. Nine inter-related lessons have emerged from the evaluation process:

Lesson 1: The IMD approach to democracy assistance is innovative and can become a ‘bestseller’

75. “It is a risky business, but if it works, it would be fantastic...” This quote from the field captures well the growing realisation among political and development actors that political parties are indeed “the missing link in democracy assistance” (as assumed by IMD). Their current status of legitimacy, credibility and capacity may be very low in the developing world, they’re nevertheless increasingly perceived as “part of the solution” in moving towards more democratic societies that can deliver on development. In this context, IMD has appeared on the scene ‘at the right moment’. It brings along a solid conceptual framework, an attractive set of approaches and methodologies and flexible funding, all of this underpinned by an original and potentially powerful institutional set-up (integrating political and developmental competencies). ***The resulting ‘package’ gives IMD a potential comparative advantage over other democracy assistance providers.*** It has helped IMD to put itself ‘on the map’ in a short time span. The cooperation facilitated by IMD has been well-received in programme countries. The continued pressure on the IMD to expand its operations is a clear sign that its mandate and approach can become ‘bestsellers’.

Lesson 2: The ‘pioneering phase’ has been very effective

76. New organisations face a number of difficult struggles, as they seek to construct a shared identity; start-up activities; test-out approaches and methodologies and build their own capacity. IMD has managed well this ‘pioneering phase’. It has avoided the use of blueprint models in promoting its mandate, leaving space for approaches based on political intuition, experimentation, trial and error as well as institutional innovation. It has been able to achieve a lot of short term successes over a short period of time, and dealt with difficulties on the go, while applying an organic and relatively effective risk-management strategy. In short, IMD demonstrates remarkable progress in the implementation of its four-year programme: *Without Democracy Nobody Fares Well.*

Lesson 3: The time is now ripe for focus and ‘consolidation’

77. This is clear cry coming from the field and from different stakeholders in the Netherlands. In the different programme countries, IMD has managed to start-up a wide range of interesting activities which are triggering, in several places, promising processes of change. Yet these are still young and fragile plants that need to be carefully nurtured over a longer period of time if they want to realise their full potential. This is particularly true if IMD support wants to successfully influence the ‘substance’ of democracy rather than

only its 'form'.³⁰ However, the evaluation clearly shows that IMD has continued to move forward at a high pace, relatively neglecting the question of how to focus and consolidate, to make the best possible use of the windows of opportunities it helped to create and to further innovate.

78. Hence, *priority should now be given to deepening the work done and for IMD to achieve greater institutional maturity* (before embarking on major new programmes). This means, amongst others, to take time to rethink the strategic approaches and capacities needed to consolidate both “highly successful” programmes (as suggested by the Guatemala report) and more problematic country programmes (where IMD may have deviated too much from its primary target groups and core competencies). It implies a much more solid and systematic consolidation of the IMD knowledge base (particularly of lessons learnt in its implementation strategies) so as to complement and enrich the ‘political intuition’ and skills of IMD. The consolidation of the IMD’s hybrid structure is another priority, so as to ensure that IMD’s unique composition remains an asset for responding to evolving demands.
79. The need to move towards a consolidation phase does not mean that ‘pioneering’ is excluded from now on. In the view of the evaluation team, a proper consolidation should allow IMD to continue pioneering from a much stronger, informed and enabled basis.

Lesson 4: Look critically at what works and what doesn’t work

80. IMD is concerned to become a ‘learning organisation’ and has made important initial steps in this direction. Yet at the same time there seems to be some inhibition to look in detail at country programmes and to make a detached analysis of ‘what works, what doesn’t work, and why’. This, combined with the prevailing culture of systematically expanding into new areas and with the time pressure on staff, hampers IMD’s capacity to truly learn from ongoing programme experiences.
81. The evaluation clearly shows that there are major differences in outcomes in the different programme countries. In some, impressive results have been achieved; in others, the process moves on, yet slowly and with a lot of difficulties; there also cases where all kind of activities take place, yet fairly disconnected from IMD’s primary target group and core competencies. These differences cannot solely be attributed to the ‘political/cultural context of the country’ nor to stages of development in which the programmes find themselves. These are, of course, important variables. Yet insisting too much on these factors, may gloss over other fundamental reasons why some programmes work and others less.
82. A comparative analysis of the five case studies suggests that it is possible to identify some of the *key constitutive elements that enhance the chances of a ‘successful IMD approach’ --irrespective of country conditions*. Thus, the potential of the IMD mandate seems to be optimally used when IMD:
- engages directly with its primary target group so as to ensure their ownership in the identification of the strategy and the programme (right from the outset);

³⁰ Similar recommendations were made in the four IMD country evaluations. In the Bolivia report, the evaluation team advised the IMD to ‘add more substance’ to the potential of the Bolivian Foundation for Multiparty Democracy (fBDM) as a platform for dialogue and consensus building and pro-active generator of activities directed at the parties and system at large. It advised the IMD to do so by developing a more ambitious programme and profile for the foundation, in accordance with its strategic objectives and priorities.

- combines demand-led approaches with a clear strategic orientation of its own;
- embeds its activities into on-going national political processes and mainstream development processes;
- adds a strong component of ‘political innovation’ to its bilateral and joint programmes, so as to pay full attention to issues of substance and inclusion.
- works at both national and local level;
- develops strategic partnerships and effective complementarities (based on a task division) with a wide range of actors (governments, institutions of the political society, local governments, political fora, independent advisors, international donor agencies, foundations, etc.);
- combines the political instincts of its Dutch constituencies, director and staff with the sound analysis and planning of more developmentally inclined staff and partners;
- creatively mobilises relevant expertise at local, regional, Dutch and European level to support processes of institutional development.

Lesson 5: Stick to your approach, primary target group and core competencies

83. Closely linked to the above lesson, is the need for IMD to ***be relatively strict in the interpretation of its mandate and approach***. The evaluation team fully acknowledges the need for country-specificity and tailor-made approaches. Yet there are risks attached to applying the basic tenets of the IMD approach in a too loose and flexible way. In a similar vein, the evaluation team recognises that it might be difficult to engage directly with political parties at the start of a particular country programme and that phased approaches may be an option (like in Indonesia). However, IMD would be well-advised to consider in greater depth the strategic and operational implications of this choice. For instance, how does IMD define the notion of ‘difficult countries’? In virtually all countries of intervention, political parties share the fundamental flaws of their Indonesian partners. What makes Indonesia so unique so as to justify a huge difference in intervention strategy? In a similar vein, it might be useful to think through the possible risks of this approach. In the view of the evaluation team, there is a real danger that this approach may (i) not succeed in building genuine ownership by IMD’s primary target group³¹; (ii) lead to the development of institutional structures that are too distant from the political parties to exercise a real influence on their functioning, capacities and democratic culture; (iii) reduce the possibility for IMD to mobilise its core competencies and (iv) dilute the specific added-value of IMD (as other actors may be better placed to provide civil society oriented democracy assistance programmes).
84. This lesson also raises questions on the process and selection criteria used for taking on board particular countries. For instance, why does IMD decide to engage with a country if the basic conditions for delivering its mandate are not fulfilled (e.g. an effective demand; a minimally conducive environment, etc.)?

Lesson 6: Be pro-active yet remain ideologically neutral

85. While IMD rightly puts ownership at the centre of its intervention approach, it should not be reluctant to fully play its role in the partnership. What this means is well reflected in one of the country reports: ***“to push without being pushy; to facilitate without being soft, and to inspire without imposing ideas”***. In a similar vein, the IMD is invited by local partners to put its own agenda, strategy and underlying theory of change on the table. In the view of the evaluation team, the choice for locally-driven approaches does not exempt

³¹ It should be noted that the programme explicitly recognises that a long period of time (i.e. twenty years) will be required to promote effective change.

IMD to play a pro-active role in ensuring that (i) a solid baseline study (including a risk analysis) takes place before engaging with a country; (ii) programme activities are integrated in a jointly elaborated and agreed long-term country strategy; (iii) adequate tools and methodologies are developed and consistently used; (iv) demand-led approaches are balanced with performance-based monitoring and evaluation.

Lesson 7: IMD initiatives to become a learning organisation should be intensified.

86. Closely linked to many of the previous lessons, is the need to intensify the promising moves that have been made to transform IMD into a learning organisation. This is key to improved performance in all aspects of the IMD work. For instance, developing an adequate answer --in institutional terms-- to the question “what next?” in the different country programmes, requires more depth of analysis and knowledge so as to elaborate a more consistent strategic approach towards regional, country, partner and programme choices. It is important to stress here that answering of the “what next?” question should be the joint responsibility of the IMD and the parties it supports through its programmes. In order to meaningfully reflect on what it does, the IMD may also invest in setting up a ‘sounding board’ [klankbord] of scientific / theoretical experts within Dutch political parties, as well as liaise and share knowledge with selected Dutch NGO’s and CSO’s. Networking may increase the IMD’s ability to learn from what it does, and also to reflect on more fundamental matters such as exit-strategies (the “what if?” and “What else?” questions). The focus for the IMD, however, should remain firmly in building and sharing its knowledge from practice, and from the questions of its practitioners.

Lesson 8: Mainstream networking and strategic partnerships

87. The IMD aims to provide a ‘missing link’ in democracy assistance. By itself, this notion invites IMD to systematically think in terms of networking and strategic partnerships. Yet the evaluation suggests that much remains to be done to effectively mainstream this approach in all country programmes in order to link its own efforts to broader democratisation agendas and development processes³². Mainstreaming its partnership and networking approach will determine IMD’s strength as a knowledge-based organisation; ICT systems may support this, but can not replace interpersonal ties. The comparative advantage of IMD as a knowledge-based organisation relies on its capacity to network systematically and effectively both internally and externally with its constituencies, stakeholders and partners; ICT can be a tool to support this but can never be the sole solution.

Lesson 9: Consolidate the use and impacts of IMD’s unique selling point

88. The integrated use of different identities and competencies constitutes the unique selling point of IMD. In order to better calibrate and fine-tune its added value and core competencies, IMD should also invest in its internal symbiosis. Both the political party experts and development professionals should be enabled to do what they do best, in order for IMD to fully exploit its internal comparative advantages.

³² By its very nature, the Multi- and Bilateral Programme of IMD holds potential to realise these linkages, as it is based on coordinated efforts

V. FUTURE OUTLOOK

89. Based on the preceding analysis of key findings (chapter III) and related lessons learnt (chapter IV), this concluding chapter proposes a set of basic strategic and institutional orientations that IMD might consider in preparing its new programme and in thinking about its future development as a Dutch democracy assistance institution..

5.1 Strategic orientations

90. During the consultation process, several actors interviewed stressed the need for the future *evolution of IMD to be “primarily determined by results on the ground* and demands from local partners rather than by political party agendas in the Netherlands”. The evaluation team supports this essential premise and has elaborated its strategic and institutional orientations in that spirit.
91. A second important premise is the conclusion that IMD is clearly ‘on track’ in the implementation of its four-year programme ‘Without Democracy Nobody Fares Well’, fulfilling its contractual obligations towards its main donor, the Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation. Implementation is generating a wide range of promising outcomes that augur well for the future development of the country programmes. IMD has demonstrated it can ‘deliver the goods’
92. Building on these premises *six essential* and closely inter-related *strategic challenges* need to be addressed as IMD moves from pioneering into a more mature stage of its institutional development:
- *‘Take a break’ and temporarily limit growth in favour of institutional consolidation.* IMD cannot have its cake and eat it. IMD has achieved a lot in a relatively short time. However, as a result it shows the characteristics of an organisation ‘under heavy stress’; its institutional capacity is systematically overextended. This, in turn, reduces the time to reflect; to organise solid, in-depth policy discussions; to invest enough time and energy in strategic thinking about follow-up and desirable changes in the country programmes; to fully exploit the potential of the international/European initiatives; to ensure high quality monitoring and evaluation on an ongoing basis; to systematize and internalize lessons learnt; to ensure that all levels of the organisation can ‘digest’ the rapid strategic and institutional changes of the past years; to improve its overall capacity to communicate (internally; with its Dutch political base; and with partners in programme countries) etc. As a consequence, IMD imperatively needs to curb its rapid growth and geographic expansion (e.g. into new countries, multi- and bilateral programmes, European-level initiatives, etc.) and to achieve a balanced match between its programmes and activities and its installed capacity and skills base. The evaluation team is fully aware of the continued pressures from all sides³³ on IMD to expand its operations. Yet under these conditions, it would not be sign of ‘good governance’ on the side of IMD to continue embracing new programmes and activities without *addressing the current institutional constraints first*. It potentially risks turning itself into a project bureau through which financial resources are

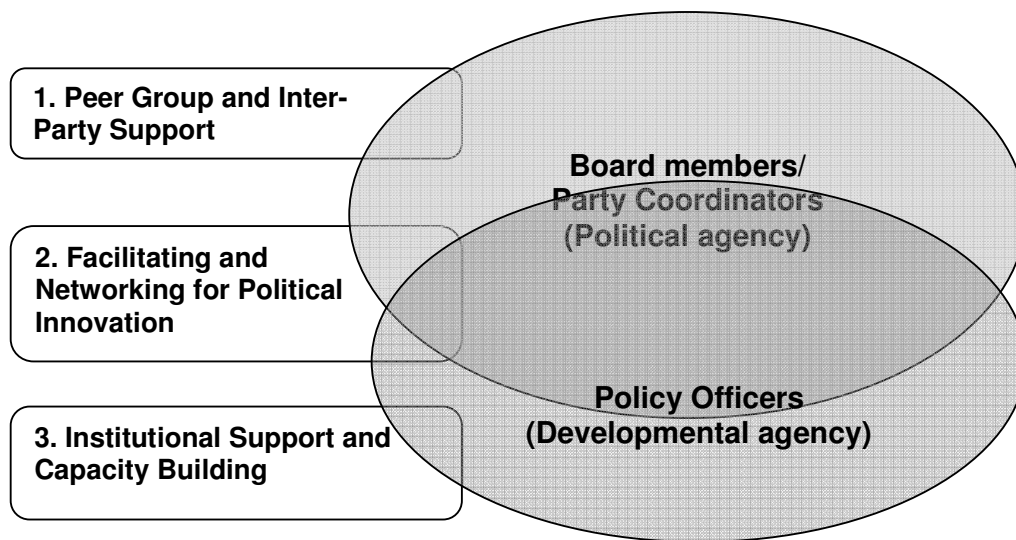
³³ The new requests are either linked to pressures on IMD to become more market-oriented and generate income; suggested by important Dutch political voices; or emanate from the success of country programmes (e.g. the new demands for support from Ivory Coast and Togo have clearly been triggered by the Ghana country programme and related regional contacts).

channelled to political parties in developing countries, instead of acting as a catalyst of change that can support processes over a longer period of time with a genuine added value.

- *Develop a solid policy framework and decision-making process to consider new demands.* The call for a ‘pause’ in the growth of IMD is not to be equated with immobility. It would be unwise to completely shut the door for new demands or opportunities, including in the framework of the Multi- and Bilateral Programme. Yet in order not to compromise the above mentioned need for institutional consolidation, it will be crucially important for IMD to develop a solid policy framework and decision-making process for possible new intakes. In practice, this means: (i) identifying more sharply the specific ‘niche’ of IMD as a political society actor (rather than civil society player) whose support is embedded in a broader democratisation and development agenda; (ii) refining the selection process of possible new countries based on a more in-depth and detached analysis of the feasibility of an IMD intervention (both in terms of country conditions and available IMD capacities); (iii) defining more sharply the strategy and role of IMD in programme countries; (iv) reflecting more on the potential limits of working too exclusively with civil society actors (even if this choice is grounded in phased approach); and (v) considering the optimal balance between country programmes and multi- bilateral programmes³⁴.
- *Selectivity and strategic focus.* A related priority, strongly voiced by several Dutch stakeholders, is the need for much more selectivity and strategic focus – both in country programmes and in other activities. A potential risk of not going down this route is that IMD loses its trust and credibility if it cannot effectively respond to the evolving needs and potential of its country programmes. Adopting a more selective approach includes an open and inclusive debate on what constitutes ‘core’ and ‘non-core’ activities. Strengthening the strategic focus is a priority in country programmes, since expectations continue to grow as IMD gets involved in more complex processes of institutional change (triggered by the success of its pioneering activities). In this context, what to do as IMD and what to leave to others, is the central, pervasive question.
- *From ‘pioneering to institutional maturity.’* This is a fourth major strategic challenge. IMD has remarkable achievements to show after just a few years. Yet, these initial successes are largely related to the set-up of institutions and platforms for consensus based dialogue. These are promising openings, yet they only constitute the first steps towards effective change processes related to the substance of democracy. The ‘what next’ question looms in every country programme and is not always addressed in a structured and systematic manner. IMD therefore runs the risk of not being able to demonstrate longer term impact, if it does not invest in capacity building for effective operationalisation of the new democratisation and development agenda’s. In order to avoid its high profile and the rising expectations among its partners to turn into liabilities, IMD urgently needs to streamline, professionalize and institutionalise its core business. IMD’s unique selling point is the balanced application of a combination of three different competencies or, forms of agency: political, developmental, and institutional development agency. Yet the right balance has yet to be found. Political agency has been strong; development agency has been vastly improved but leaves to be desired in terms of analytical capacity, strategising for implementation and M&E. The institutional development capacity however - the

³⁴ In this context, it would appear that multi- and bilateral programmes offer some comparative advantages over country programmes. By nature, they’re embedded in broader national processes and related strategic partnerships with other players. They also tend to facilitate an IMD involvement based on its core business and competencies.

capacity to guide and facilitate institutional change - has so far been developed less comprehensively throughout the organisation. It requires specific analytical capacities, strong (party and professional) support networks and adequate change strategies that are as yet not generally available within IMD. Ironically, this line of activities is what IMD emphasises most: institutional strengthening of political parties and other democratic institutions. It is also the line within which party coordinators and policy officers need to collaborate most closely as it requires a finely tuned combination of political sensitivity; specific experience in innovating political party procedures on the one hand, with strategic insight in development issues and facilitation skills with on the other. The figure below illustrates how a better symbiosis could be achieved between the different identities/competencies within IMD.



- *Deepening the institutional knowledge base to deliver efficient, effective and result-oriented programmes.* This is not a new challenge, yet it should get priority attention in the next phase. It will not suffice to put in place internal management systems to make progress. What is at stake is to some extent a **cultural change** within IMD whereby the drive ‘to do things’ is better balanced with a structured concern, at all levels of the organisation, to reflect upon and learn from what is done; to better use and share knowledge and information both within the organization and with outside partners; to take more time and structured opportunities for inter-programme exchange and for establishing stronger connections between the many diverse programmes³⁵; to strengthen capacity to design, implement, monitor and evaluate programme activities, etc. This shift also means investing heavily in developing a truly IMD-wide institutionalised and internalised tool set that guides and informs political analysis; baseline studies; strategies underpinning (long-term) country programming; ownership approaches; partnership choices; risk analysis; phasing out strategies, etc. With regard to the decision of exploring the possibility of establishing

³⁵ Exemplifying this latter point, the IMD’s international relations programme contributes to the implementation of the IMD mandate by trying to foster cross-organisational learning and invest in networking for the purpose of establishing future strategic partnerships. In order to further invest in the learning aspect, the IMD could complement its current activities by networking with and connecting the implementation levels of the different organisations.

an online ‘knowledge centre’³⁶, respondents suggested a focus on the collection and collation of information related to ‘political education in developing countries’. Especially ‘knowledge tools’ that would help operationalise abstract concepts of institutional strengthening and capacity building and the shaping of a political culture (focusing on the “how”) were considered helpful and currently insufficiently available. Where possible, IMD’s knowledge centre could be linked up with local academic institutions and policy think tanks so as to facilitate local applicability and lesson learning. The centre should also be relevant to IMD’s stakeholders.

- *Understanding what results are being achieved.* Though it continues to be important to measure activity-based and process-oriented performance, IMD might want to highlight a few strategic outcome/impact indicators which enable the organization to ‘tell a story’ about the overall direction in which the country is progressing (a trend assessment) and establish a Track Record, which is particularly useful for measuring impact on ‘systemic’ changes. The advantage of using impact indicators is that these focus on higher level strategic policy outcomes, and can often be used from international and local monitoring frameworks, which includes a number of additional advantages including: (i) reducing the burden of data collection and analysis for IMD and local partners; (ii) contributing to the institutionalization of national and international monitoring mechanisms and; (iii) improve comparability between countries. A consequence of using higher level indicators is that these are largely proxy indicators. It will be more difficult to justify how IMD’s activities ‘reasonably contributed’ to its stated objectives – but certainly not impossible. Also, results might not be directly attainable within the allocated budget (DRAM requirements). Most agencies have recently decided that given the shifting nature of its aid instruments and programmes, and the increased focus on longer term transformational change processes and donor harmonisation, demonstrating full attribution will no longer be necessary. In line with international trends, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently loosened the DRAM requirements in its guidelines for annual plans for posts and directorates.³⁷

5.2 Institutional orientations

93. In the view of the evaluation team, the institutional challenges of IMD for the coming years are basically three: (i) fine-tuning and strengthening the added value it derives from its unique hybrid structure; (ii) professionalisation; and (iii) internationalisation.

(i) Fine-tuning and strengthening the added-value derived from hybrid structure

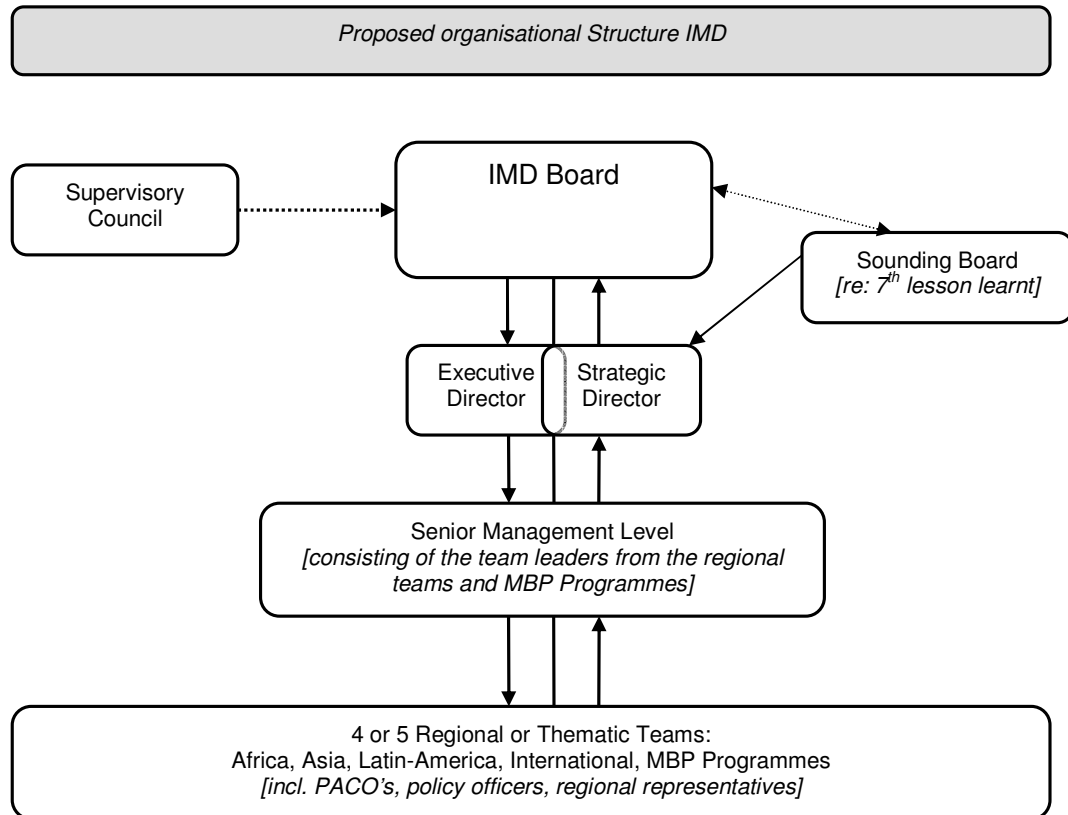
94. The combination of political and development agency in a hybrid institutional structure sets IMD apart. As we have seen, it represents an essential component of translating its mandate into practice and, contributes directly and significantly to its value added as a development institute. In its present form, however, it still shows certain imbalances that stand in the way of achieving its full impact. The further institutional fine-tuning and organisational strengthening of its hybrid structure may therefore be considered the core institutional challenge to IMD for the coming years. In the view of the evaluation team, this challenge requires action in three complementary areas:

³⁶ Most interviewees, however, stressed the need to carefully think through the idea of a fully fledged knowledge centre, with respect to its purpose, niche, added-value, level of maintenance, and input of skills. A knowledge centre focused on political systems strengthening (electoral laws and systems, training manuals for election observers, codes of conduct etc) was generally considered not to be useful, in light of the number and added-value of organizations already active in this field, such as International IDEA, IRI, NDI.

³⁷ Changes include: ‘D’ and ‘R’ will directly be related to multi-annual plans (which are country specific translations of the MvT) and ‘A’ will be dropped as the focus will lie on key objectives and trends.

- *Anchoring the integration of political and developmental professionalism in strong regional teams.* These regional teams should become the dynamic “learning hubs” in the hybrid network organisation IMD is, supporting on the one hand, the country programmes and on the other, enabling a systematic exchange of lessons learned with other regional teams. They should combine political insight, professional judgement and access to networks, with strong developmental analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation. The teams should focus on designing, consolidating and documenting IMD’s strategy, approach and experience within a particular regional context; team learning should be informed by a permanent, joint reflection on the effects, outcomes and impacts of IMD programmes, drawing out lessons learned that can be shared widely within the global organisation.
- *Enhancing institutional conditions for learning and knowledge sharing within the organisation as a whole.* In a sense, this means strengthening the articulation (“spokes”) between the country and regional teams allowing the organisation to learn effectively and fast from what it does. This implies much attention to information and communication systems but even more to strengthening the current mechanisms for regional and global exchange of knowledge and experience. IMD has made a promising start as a knowledge-based organisation and needs to continue to systematically strengthen the mechanisms that allow its staff and stakeholders to draw and share lessons learned, and to reflect upon their significance for IMD’s strategy and approach. A “vibrant knowledge network” is probably a better metaphor for what IMD is and should be, than a “knowledge centre”.
- *Balancing the mix of political and developmental professionals in the Board, Supervisory Council, management, regional teams and among IMD staff in general.* Reality forces us to admit that very few people are both political professionals and developmental ones. Outstanding exceptions among Board members, PACOs and current staff members just serve to illustrate this general rule. In practice therefore, balancing these two main forms of agency within IMD requires an adequate mix of professionals in each of the different bodies of the organisation; and a consistent challenge to such professionals to learn from the others, besides delivering on what they are good at.

These actions would result in changes to the organisational structure of the IMD. If some of the above recommendations for institutional development would be incorporated, the changed organisational structure could be schematised as follows:



(ii) Professionalisation

95. Within IMD many speak of rendering the organisation more “professional”. Given the above, such a term needs specification. It should first of all be recognised that within IMD different professions are to be combined to achieve the desired results: professional politicians, professional development specialists as well as professional institutional development specialists. Besides, in an organisation of the size of IMD with the great potential for growth that it has demonstrated, professional managers are needed to keep organisational policies and practical implementation in line with each other; to guide organisational monitoring, planning and evaluation, human resource development, finance, etc. Over the last three years IMD has made distinct progress on each of these accounts.
96. The institutional challenge is not therefore a question of gap-filling, but one of continued balancing, fine-tuning at each level of the organisation; appointing professionals to each level of operations with a clear professional profile in line with the professional mix required; challenging professionals not only on what they are good at and have been appointed to do but also on their capacity to learn from others; and last but not least, ensuring continuity, institutional memory and learning. A few examples may illustrate this point:
- *The IMD Board is relatively close to the day-to-day operations of the organisation, Board members being actively involved not only in strategic decision-making but also actively involved in identification missions, country level decision-making, etc. The Board should permanently ask itself whether the positive impulses generated by their individual involvement in IMD affairs outweigh the potentially negative effects of lack of attention for stimulating broad-based party involvement and the risk of*

being drawn into micro-management issues. Besides, it should ask itself how to ensure its continuity in view of shifting party priorities.

- *Party Coordinators are brought in to ensure political ownership of IMD programmes and to provide a pro-active link with their party's membership and networks.* However, the set up of the PACO function currently doesn't allow the smaller parties to experience a lot of ownership nor does it guarantee the appointment of persons with a solid party background and easy access to relevant party networks. The PACO system therefore has to be rethought to ensure that all of them are fully enabled to play these roles so crucial to achieving the unique contribution of IMD to development
- *The management structure of IMD is structurally flat, but as yet culturally centralised.* This is characteristic and understandable for an organisation in its "pioneering" stage when strong leadership often requires strong leadership of a few persons. However, when such an organisation grows and extends its reach this may become more and more a limitation, as too many decisions are centralised in the hands of too few people. As a result, IMD should rethink its decision-making processes and adapt these to the new situation. Together with its ambition to become a learning organisation, this requires rethinking its understanding of what represent "overhead costs" as well.
- *Regional teams should reflect an adequate mix of different professional perspectives needed within IMD;* as a "knowledge hub" within the organisation, special attention should be paid to participation of professionals capable of leading the process of synthesising and systematising experiences and formulating and sharing lessons learned with IMD stakeholders, partners and the rest of the organisation.
- *Local anchoring of IMD should be robust.* If IMD wants to play a more effective and pro-active role and fully assume its part of the partnership in long-term support processes, the systematic use of local facilitating institutions is required but may not be sufficient. Evidence from the field suggests that there can be a clear added-value of having a 'structured presence' of IMD itself in the countries of intervention. Hence, the need to seriously reconsider whether the initial choice of not having IMD offices is still a valid option for the next phase of IMD's institutional development

(iii) Internationalisation

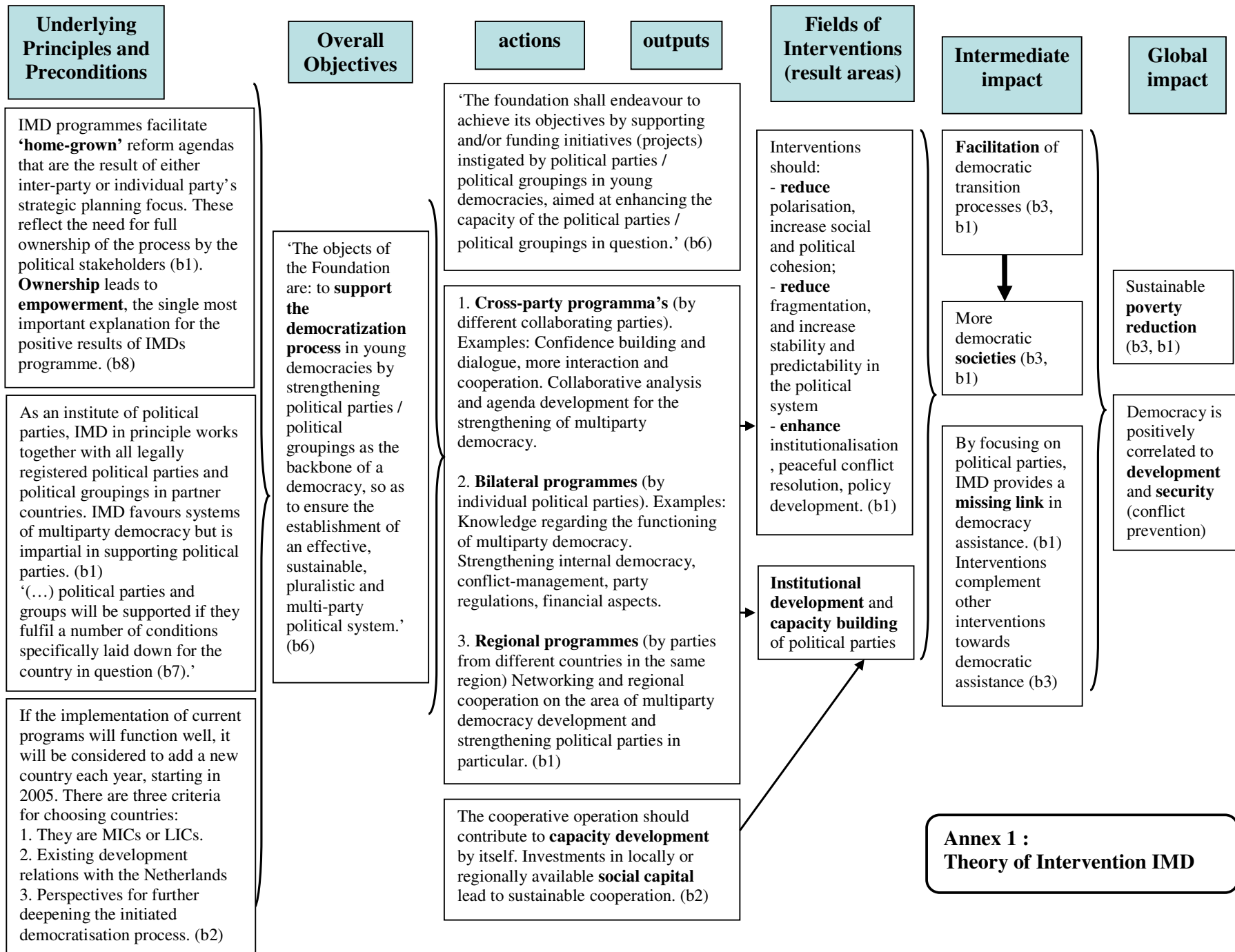
97. IMD is under pressure to internationalise, both in Europe and in developing regions. Stakeholders express interest in not just the Dutch but also the "European" model of Multi-Party Democracy; they often stress the importance of regional networking to break out of their national isolation; also, European donors are increasingly interested in taking a stake in IMD programmes; the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation on the other hand, underlines the importance of diversified funding; IMD forcefully claims that support to multi-party democracy should be on the EU agenda. While the evaluation team recognises the importance of such challenges, it feels that in this phase of its institutional development IMD should concentrate on consolidating its own organisation, approach and programmes. Hence, the IMD may best respond to the challenge of internationalisation through ***intensifying its networking and partnership approach, rather than through seeking institutional transformation.***

98. Concretely, this would mean:

- To continue its investment in international networks and partnerships in support of its own programmes, joining up with partners that can fulfil complementary roles in response to concrete stakeholders' demands or take over certain programmes and activities from IMD.

- To continue its networking operations in Europe, in order to identify institutions and individuals that may assist IMD in implementing its programmes or, may be able to fund part of these. Such partnerships may eventually lead to the establishment of IMD-like initiatives elsewhere in Europe, or in partnerships with others, to the establishment of an EU facility. The IMD experience is extremely relevant for such a potentially useful supplementary capacity.
- To strengthen its role as a European knowledge “hub” on Multi-Party Democracy building, providing policy and practical information to partners and stakeholders and assisting in building a European platform of like-minded organisations.
- On the basis of (2) and (3) to gradually develop its capacity to lobby for more support to political parties and multi-party democracy in EC governance programmes.

ANNEXES



IMD key documents, referred to in the scheme:

Strategic documents:

b1. IMD (2005) Support for Political Parties and Party Systems: The IMD Approach:

http://www.nimd.nl/upload/publications/2005/supporting_parties_the_imd_approach.pdf

b2. IMD (2003) Zonder democratie vaart niemand wel. IMD Instellingssubsidieaanvraag 2003 – 2006.

b3. IMD (2001) Introduction, objectives, activities. in: IMD (2001) Network Democracy: Enhancing the Role of Parties:

http://www.nimd.org/upload/publications/2001/11_25_conference_report_english.pdf

Other documents (country, theme specific and miscellaneous):

b4. IMD (2004) IMD Institutional Development Handbook A Framework for Democratic Party Building:

http://www.nimd.org/upload/publications/2004/imd_institutional_development_handbook-a4.pdf

b5. IMD (2005) IMD annual report 2004: http://www.nimd.org/upload/publications/2005/imd_annual_report_2004.pdf

b6 IMD statutory act of establishment [certified translation from Dutch]. (18-04-00)

http://www.nimd.nl/upload/imd/imd_formation_foundation.pdf

b7 <http://www.nimd.nl/> (section: about IMD)

b8 IMD (undated) annex 2: IMD Partner in democracy. Support for political parties and party systems: the IMD Approach. [received from Roel von Meijenfeldt]

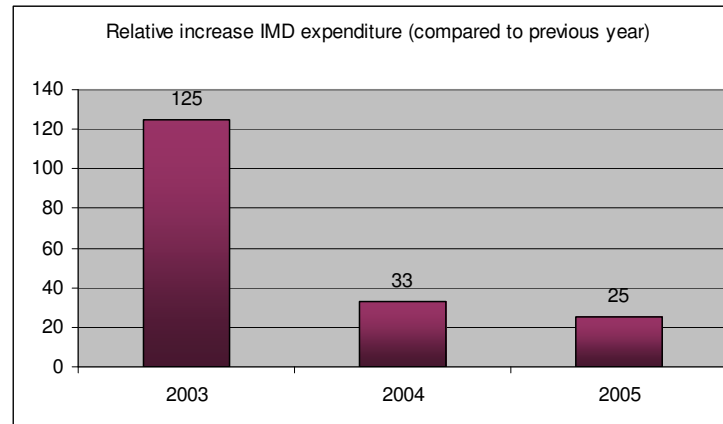
Note: b1 is very similar to b11

Annex 2: Selected financial overviews of IMD country programmes per June 2005

Comparison of selected IMD country programme expenditure and budget realisation

(based on semi-annual report 2005)

Country	Budgeted				Actuals as per June 2005				Actual exp. as % budget
	Total budget 2005	Content and process	Support activities	Support as % of total	Total expenditure	Content and process	Support activities	Support as % of total	
Bolivia	€ 465,000	€ 385,000	€ 80,000	17.20	€ 312,728	€ 278,000	€ 34,728	11.10	67.25
Guatemala	€ 728,000	€ 578,000	€ 150,000	20.60	€ 254,955	€ 166,470	€ 88,485	34.71	35.02
Ghana	€ 700,000	€ 650,000	€ 50,000	7.14	€ 190,895	€ 169,866	€ 21,099	11.05	27.27
Kenya	€ 700,000	€ 625,000	€ 75,000	10.71	€ 101,050	€ 56,489	€ 44,561	44.10	14.44
Malawi	€ 338,000	€ 275,000	€ 63,000	18.64	€ 62,020	€ 22,988	€ 39,032	62.93	18.35
Mali	207,000	194,000	13,000	6.28	171,540	149,635	21,905	12.77	82.87
South Africa	€ 150,000	€ 120,000	€ 30,000	20.00	€ 124,429	€ 93,171	€ 31,258	25.12	82.95
Zambia	€ 350,000	€ 270,000	€ 80,000	22.86	€ 168,992	€ 104,738	€ 64,254	38.02	48.28
Indonesia	€ 680,000	€ 630,000	€ 50,000	7.35	€ 285,765	€ 237,282	€ 48,483	16.97	42.02



Annex 3: Evaluation Questions and Judgement Criteria

<p>EQ 1</p> <p>How relevant is the IMD mandate from the perspective of the partners and the different actors and stakeholders involved/concerned?</p> <p><i>Rationale for this EQ</i></p> <p><i>As its name indicates, the Institute for Multiparty democracy focuses on strengthening political parties and promoting cross-party dialogue and cooperation with a view to consolidate democratic systems in developing countries. Its mandate is based on the premise that support to political parties is the ‘missing link’ in democracy assistance. But how is this mandate perceived by the different actors and stakeholders where IMD has chosen to operate? Our first evaluation question focuses on the relevance of the IMD mandate. To assess this relevance, three main ‘glasses’ or judgement criteria are proposed : (i) the importance attached to strengthening political parties at country level; (ii) the link between the IMD support to political parties and the broader democratisation agenda; (iii) the added-value IMD can bring (compared to many other players in this ‘booming’ field).</i></p>

Judgement criteria	Indicators
1.1 Support to political parties is a key priority on the democratisation agenda in the countries where IMD operates ³⁸	1.1.1 The importance of political parties as the most appropriate channel to articulate social demands of citizens is recognised by the different actors and stakeholders at country level 1.1.2 Current levels of political and social legitimacy of political parties and political groupings (as compared to other channels for interest articulation) 1.1.3 Current levels of institutional development of political parties and political groups 1.1.4 Existence and quality of home grown agendas for moving towards multi-party democracy (at country, cross-party or individual party level) 1.1.5 Existence and quality of donor programmes in support of political parties (others than IMD)
1.2 IMD support to political parties is embedded in a broad, country-specific vision and strategy of democracy promotion	1.2.1 The IMD intervention strategy is underpinned by a solid assessment of the prevailing democratic system, political culture and party system 1.2.2 A clear and realistic set of objectives and expected outcomes for the IMD

³⁸ This first judgement criterion is not directly linked to the work of IMD. Its aim is to make a snapshot of the state of affairs with regard to political parties and the party system in the countries where IMD has chosen to operate. This baseline analysis, however, should help us to understand to what extent there is (or can be over time) a match between the IMD vision (i.e. political parties as the ‘backbone’ of the democratic system) and local realities (i.e. the actual functioning of political parties and their credibility in the eyes of citizens).

	<p>programme are defined and shared between all parties involved</p> <p>1.2.3 The IMD support is linked to the broader national democracy agenda as well as to other relevant national policies and programmes</p> <p>1.2.4 The IMD programme includes activities at decentralised levels³⁹</p> <p>1.2.5 Other key players in democratisation processes (e.g. civil society) can participate in the design and implementation of the IMD programme</p> <p>1.2.6 The IMD support to political parties is linked to broader development objectives (e.g. poverty reduction, economic development, peace and security, conflict prevention)</p>
<p>1.3 IMD offers an <i>added-value</i>⁴⁰ compared to other agencies involved in the strengthening of political parties and promoting multi-party democracy</p>	<p>1.3.1 The overall IMD support strategy and approach is demand-driven and conducive to ensuring local ownership of multi-party democracy programmes</p> <p>1.3.2 Capacity of IMD to transfer relevant knowledge in different areas (e.g. institutional development of political parties; party-political renewal, etc.)</p> <p>1.3.3 The direct involvement of Dutch political parties in the formulation and management of country programmes produces a clear added-value for partner organisations</p> <p>1.3.4 Capacity of IMD to act (directly or indirectly) as a (neutral) catalyst or specific generator of activities to enhance the democratic quality of political parties</p> <p>1.3.5 Capacity of IMD to provide support in a flexible, process-oriented and smooth way (compared to other donors)</p> <p>1.3.6 Efforts to ensure the coordination and complementarity of the IMD supported political party programmes with the initiatives of other (donor) agencies</p>

³⁹ The evaluation of the IMD programme in Bolivia stressed the need for IMD to develop activities beyond the capital, with a view to include stakeholders at decentralised (municipal) levels

⁴⁰ How to assess 'added-value'? IMD policy documents provide some guidance, as they identify a number of key elements of added-value, such as the IMD capacity to promote demand-driven approaches; to transfer relevant knowledge on the functioning of political parties, etc.

EQ 2

To what extent and how are the key methodological principles of IMD (i.e. demand-driven approach, dialogue, facilitation role, strategic partnerships and alliances) applied throughout the programme cycle?

Rationale for this EQ

In all its policy documents, the IMD stresses the importance of adopting approaches and methodologies that facilitate local ownership and empowerment of political parties. To this end, it has defined a set of core methodological principles that should inform all its activities. This evaluation question seeks to understand how IMD deals with these broad principles at field level. Complementary (and more detailed) information on approaches and working methods should normally be obtained through the inter-related evaluation questions 3 (on approaches to partnership and ownership) and 4 (on the quality of programme execution).

Judgement criteria	Indicators
2.1 The IMD approach pursues a demand-driven approach to programme design and implementation	2.1.1 Overall quality of the preparatory process leading to programmes/activities (particularly a proper identification study, instruments/methods used by IMD to identify demand, ensure inclusiveness, etc.) 2.1.2 Available space and commitment to developing country-specific approaches 2.1.3 Effective management of possible tensions between IMD approach/conditions and need for country-specific approaches ⁴¹ 2.1.4 Capacity of IMD to assess the existence of a genuine demand for (financial) support 2.1.5 Evidence of ‘empowerment’ ⁴² of political parties to formulate and implement home-grown agendas for political party development
2.2 Dialogue is systematically used as a tool to develop the partnership and ensure effective implementation of the IMD programme	2.2.1 Overall quality of the IMD approach to dialogue with partners (e.g. main features, focus, forms, institutional arrangements) ⁴³ 2.2.2 Regularity/structure of dialogue processes 2.2.3 Effective use of dialogue as a mechanism for conflict resolution within partnerships 2.2.4 Capacity of the IMD to effectively promote ongoing dialogue processes with and between political parties
2.3 The primary role of IMD is to facilitate processes of institutional development and cross-party collaboration (i.e. to act as a	2.3.1 The IMD has defined a clear methodology for playing an effective and efficient role as ‘process facilitator’

⁴¹ This invites us to look at how IMD presents itself, its mandate and approaches (from the perception of local actors) so as to capture possible tensions between a ‘demand-led’ approach and a ‘supply-driven’ approach

⁴² The concept of ‘empowerment’ is used in key IMD policy documents, hence the importance to assess how it is put into practice.

⁴³ In this context, it will be interesting to have an idea of how much dialogue is spent on ‘content’ matters and how much on technical issues or accountability questions.

neutral catalyst)	<p>2.3.2 The IMD combines selective approaches to funding with the principles of neutrality and inclusiveness</p> <p>2.3.3 Capacity of local partners/intermediaries to play a facilitating role</p> <p>2.3.4 The IMD staff has been enabled to act as neutral process facilitators</p>
2.4 IMD seeks to complement its action and increase its impact through <i>strategic partnerships</i> with other key players in the field of assistance to political parties	<p>2.4.1 The IMD systematically assesses opportunities for complementary action with other agencies involved in democracy promotion and in particular political party assistance</p> <p>2.4.2 The IMD engages in strategic partnerships based on mutual interests and a division of responsibilities (according to the comparative advantage of the different players involved)</p> <p>2.4.3 The IMD implements activities through partnerships</p> <p>2.4.4 The IMD contributes to building alliances for effective change (at different levels)⁴⁴</p>

⁴⁴ This indicator refers to the advocacy role possibly played by IMD at different levels (national, regional, global).

EQ 3

To what extent and how has the IMD ensured effective partnership relations as well as promoted ownership of the programmes in different country contexts?

Rationale for this EQ

As can be seen from the IMD logical framework, 'partnership', 'ownership' and 'empowerment' stand central in the intervention strategy. In order to obtain more details on how IMD translates these key elements into practice, evaluation question 3 is proposed (with a view to complement information gathered under the previous evaluation question pertaining to the IMD approach and methodology).

Judgement criteria	Indicators
3.1 The IMD has elaborated a solid strategic and operational framework to develop effective <i>partnerships</i>	3.1.1 Existence of a clear set of partnership principles and operational guidelines at the level of the overall organisation 3.1.2. Effective application of IMD partnership principles and guidelines in different country contexts 3.1.3 Quality of dialogue with partner organisations (all along programme cycle) 3.1.4 Existence and quality of conflict-resolution mechanisms between partners 3.1.5 Existence of specific partnership features that go beyond the traditional logic of a donor-recipient relationship ⁴⁵ 3.1.6 Existence and quality of mechanisms for mutual accountability ⁴⁶ 3.1.7 Country programmes display an evolution over time in partnership approaches --shifting from project-based to more programmatic partnership relations
3.2 The IMD disposes of adequate methodologies to promote <i>ownership</i> in the design and implementation of the programmes	3.2.1 Existence and quality of a solid analysis of political situation in partner countries, including the degree to which the overall environment is conducive for nurturing multi-party democracy 3.2.2 Availability and effective use of tools and methods to assess the existence of a proper 'demand' for IMD support 3.2.3 The processes and methods used by IMD for programme design and implementation contribute to building ownership

⁴⁵ For instance, the possibility for local partners to fundamentally challenge aspects of the proposed IMD approach and methodology; to participate in the process of defining new policies; or to question the quality and performance of IMD

⁴⁶ Mutual accountability is another key feature of balanced partnerships. In practice, it means that both parties share responsibility for the success or failure of programmes. It invites us to look at the existence of systems ensuring a *joint* monitoring and evaluation of programme activities and to see how the partners provide accountability *to each other* (rather than simply ensuring the traditional 'upwards' accountability to the donor).

	<p>3.2.4 Availability and effective use of tools methods and indicators to assess levels of ownership among partner organisations and their evolution over time</p> <p>3.2.5 IMD funding strategies are compatible with building ownership</p> <p>3.2.6 IMD has the flexibility and capacity to strengthen or re-orient support according to (ownership) changes within partner organisations or in the multiparty context</p> <p>3.2.7 Quality of ownership approach when IMD works through or in cooperation with partners (e.g. UNDP)</p>
<p>3.3 Existence and quality of <i>strategies</i> to ensure <i>sustainability</i>⁴⁷ (political, institutional and financial)</p>	<p>3.3.1 Existence and quality of a broader IMD institutional development strategy underpinning the support to political parties (systemic approach)</p> <p>3.3.2 The IMD programmes address capacity building of political parties in an integrated manner (skills, organisational systems and structures, resources, enabling environment)</p> <p>3.3.3 The ‘political dimensions’ of supporting political parties are effectively integrated (e.g. power, vested interests, norms)</p> <p>3.3.4. Existence and planning of phasing out strategies of IMD support</p>

⁴⁷ IMD programmes are too ‘young’ to measure impact and sustainability. Hence, the third judgement criterion does not seek to assess the ‘sustainability’ of interventions, but rather the existence of *strategies* at the level of IMD *to work towards sustainability*.

EQ 4

To what extent has the IMD support been implemented in an effective and efficient way?

Rationale for this EQ

While the previous questions tackle generic aspects of the IMD programmes (e.g. the overall relevance, methodology and partnership approach), this evaluation question 4 goes straight into concrete programme activities in the country under consideration. The purpose is to assess the quality of programme execution and to identify relevant lessons learnt and challenges for the overall evaluation. To facilitate the analysis, the three judgement criteria relate to key phases in the programme cycle.

Judgement criteria	Indicators
4.1 The IMD invests in a qualitative process to identify and <i>design</i> programmes and activities	4.1.1 Time, resources and expertise involved in the identification and design process 4.1.2 Adoption of a participatory and inclusive approach to programme identification and design (including promotion of local creativity rather than mimicry) 4.1.3 Existence and quality of clearly defined (general and specific) programme objectives (derived from multi-party consultations) 4.1.4 Existence and quality of programme documents (with specific and budgeted activities related to general and specific objectives) and effective dissemination of these documents to the relevant stakeholders 4.1.5 Quality of the ‘portfolio mix’ (i.e. balance between ‘cross-party programmes’, ‘bilateral programmes’ and ‘regional programmes’) and efforts made to create synergies between these different instruments 4.1.6 Agreement on suitable implementation modalities, including a clear division of roles and responsibilities between local actors and IMD staff 4.1.7 Existence and quality of risk assessment (including the issue of “incentives for reform or the existence of ‘drivers of change’”) 4.1.8 Formulation of result indicators (on process, intended or expected outcomes and plausible impact)
4.2 <i>Implementation</i> of (planned) programme activities takes place in an effective and efficient (process-oriented) manner	4.2.1 Transparent application of eligibility criteria and IMD conditions to make funds available to political parties 4.2.2 Effective/efficient delivery of the overall services provided by IMD (e.g.

	<p>workshops, strategic planning exercises, training sessions, facilitation practices)</p> <p>4.2.3 Effective/efficient facilitation of multiparty dialogue processes</p> <p>4.2.4 Existence and quality of activity-based budgeting (linked to objectives)</p> <p>4.2.5 Balance in spending on personnel and institutional costs vs. spending on programme activities</p> <p>4.2.6 Effective, efficient and transparent role division between local partners and IMD staff</p> <p>4.2.7 Effective and efficient management of collaborative arrangements with other agencies/donors</p> <p>4.2.8 Creativity or mimicry of political parties when it comes to executing programmes</p>
<p>4.3 There is a systematic effort to monitor and evaluate progress/results achieved and to adapt, if needed, the intervention strategy</p>	<p>4.3.1 Existence and quality of management information and monitoring systems</p> <p>4.3.2 Partners are involved in an ongoing process of (joint) monitoring of progress/results achieved</p> <p>4.3.3 Lessons learnt are documented, debated and used for strategy adaptation/reformulation at country and institutional level</p> <p>4.3.4 Efforts are made by IMD to share the lessons learnt with local partners and collectively reflect on ways forward</p> <p>4.3.5 Activities concerning monitoring and evaluation are well-integrated with other tasks and executed in a planned way</p>

EQ 5

To what extent and how has the programme contributed to achieving the mandate of IMD, i.e. the establishment of an effective, sustainable, pluralistic and multiparty political system through (i) strengthening of political party institutions (with an emphasis on promoting internal democracy); (ii) building thematic and programmatic capacities of parties (with regard to key development policies); and (iii) facilitating dialogue and multi-party interaction. To what extent do IMD programmes contribute to the overall democratisation and development process

Rationale for this EQ

This evaluation question addresses the issue of ‘impact’. Considering the young age of the different IMD programmes, the challenge will be to identify plausible forms or patterns of impact. Again, the logical framework developed from key IMD policy documents provides a helping hand. It defines what types of impact IMD seeks to promote, including to

- *reduce polarisation, increase social and political cohesion;*
- *reduce fragmentation and increase stability and predictability in the political system*
- *enhance institutionalisation, peaceful conflict resolution, policy development*

For the three first judgement criteria (related to the three specific objectives), largely the same indicators are proposed. The fourth judgement criterion should help us to assess the plausible impact of the IMD programmes on the broader democratisation agenda (as spelled out in the logical framework of IMD⁴⁸) as well as on other key development objectives (e.g. poverty reduction)

Judgement criteria	Indicators
5.1 The IMD programme has provided effective and efficient support to the <i>institutional strengthening</i> of political parties, particularly to improving internal democracy	5.1.1 Existence of a coherent intervention strategy (based on a solid analysis of the political, institutional and practical aspects of party renewal, including incentives to reform 5.1.2 Existence of adequate implementation modalities, adapted to the specific partner context (e.g. with regard to intervention methods, choice of actors and strategic partners, focus of capacity building activities, financing instruments) 5.1.3 Evidence of effects and impact on the institutional capacity and internal democracy of political parties (e.g. changed party statutes) 5.1.4 Capacity of IMD to respond to evolving needs and/or windows of opportunities ⁴⁹
5.2 The IMD programme has contributed to build <i>thematic and programmatic capacities</i>	5.2.1 Existence of a coherent intervention strategy for enhancing the policy development capacity of political parties

⁴⁸ See the forms of ‘intermediate impact’ and ‘global impact’ that IMD defined for its programme activities

⁴⁹ In a balanced partnership, the external agency is not simply a provider of funding. It has a stake in the evolution of the programme. While respecting the principle of ‘ownership’, IMD sees a role for itself as a ‘catalyst’ for change. Hence, this indicator should help to assess to what extent IMD seeks to influence (in a pro-active and positive way) the development of the programme

	<p>5.2.2 Existence of adequate implementation modalities adapted to the country-specific context (e.g. with regard to intervention methods, choice of actors and strategic partners, focus of capacity building activities, financing instruments)</p> <p>5.2.3 Evidence of effects and impact on the national policy debates, policy formulation processes in key sectors, etc.</p> <p>5.2.4 Capacity of IMD to respond to evolving needs and/or windows of opportunities</p>
<p>5.3 The IMD programme has facilitated <i>multiparty dialogue</i> and interaction</p>	<p>5.3.1 Existence of a coherent intervention strategy for promoting dialogue, consensus, trust-building and cooperation among political parties</p> <p>5.3.3 Existence of adequate implementation modalities, adapted to the country-specific context (e.g. e.g. with regard to intervention methods, choice of actors and strategic partners, focus of capacity building activities, financing instruments)</p> <p>5.3.4 Evidence of effects and impact on the capacity of political parties to formulate programmes and to engage in structured forms of inter-party dialogue</p> <p>5.3.5 Capacity of IMD to respond to evolving needs and windows of opportunities</p>
<p>5.4 IMD programmes contribute to the <i>consolidation of democratic societies</i> and (indirectly) to the achievement of key <i>development</i> objectives</p>	<p>5.4.1 Citizen confidence and participation in political parties increases</p> <p>5.4.2 (Enabled) political parties have a positive influence on the deepening and consolidation of a democratic culture</p> <p>5.4.3 (Enabled) political parties have a positive influence on development policy management (e.g. fight against poverty, sound economic policies, conflict prevention)</p>

EQ 6

To what extent and how has the IMD developed its overall institutional capacity to deal effectively with the promotion of multi-party democracy processes?

Rationale for this EQ

This final evaluation question focuses on the ‘ internal kitchen ’ of IMD. The purpose is to assess how well equipped IMD is to deliver on its mandate. This means looking at the adequacy and functioning of the overall governance structures. It implies assessing the prevailing management culture as well as the human resource base and the capacity to learn of IMD. Some of the questions below may be difficult to answer in the context of field missions (as they relate to the IMD organisation in the Netherlands). Yet on many other points, it should be possible and most useful to collect the perceptions of local actors and stakeholders on the internal capacity and functioning of IMD (as reflected in day-to-day cooperation).

Judgement criteria	Indicators
6.1 The overall <i>governance and institutional framework</i> of IMD facilitates the effective implementation of the organisation’s mandate	6.1.1 Adequacy and effective functioning of the IMD governance structure (including profile of Board members) 6.1.2 Clear and transparent processes are in place to set strategic priorities and make fundamental choices with regard to IMD mandate (particularly with regard to the type and number of countries of operation) 6.1.3 Existence and effective application of a clear division of roles and responsibilities between the Board and the Director 6.1.4 Existence and effective application of a clear division of roles and responsibilities between IMD programme staff and coordinators of political parties (PACOs) 6.1.5 Adequacy and effective functioning of decentralised IMD structures (e.g. regional representations) 6.1.6 Existence and effective functioning of accountability mechanisms (on strategy, results, financial management)
6.2 The <i>management culture</i> of IMD is conducive to an efficient and effective management of the programmes	6.2.1 Quality of information and communication flows across the organisation (at all levels) and with programme partners 6.2.2 Existence and effective application of participatory approaches to policy formulation and implementation 6.2.3 Levels and degree of decentralised authority, including decision-making responsibility 6.2.4 Existence of clear and transparent reporting lines at appropriate levels (e.g. PACO’s dual reporting lines) 6.2.5 Openness to critically review performance and change intervention

	<p>strategies, approaches and methodologies</p> <p>6.2.5 Recognition of possible risk of ‘work overload’ and capacity to take remedial action</p>
<p>6.3 IMD disposes of adequate <i>staffing levels</i> and capacities to execute its mandate</p>	<p>6.3.1 Quantity of staff at different levels (compared to workload and requirements of effective programme design and implementation)</p> <p>6.3.2 Adequacy of the knowledge base of IMD staff for an efficient and effective involvement in executing the organisation’s mandate (including expertise on political change processes; on institutional development, etc.)</p> <p>6.3.3 Adequacy ‘mix’ of skills among IMD staff to properly address all aspects of multi-party democracy assistance (e.g. political analysis, process facilitation, capacity building)</p> <p>6.3.4 Adequacy of knowledge base and skills of coordinators of political parties to assume assigned roles</p> <p>6.3.5 Existence and application of transparent selection and recruitment processes for IMD staff</p>
<p>6.4 The IMD seeks to become a <i>learning organisation</i></p>	<p>6.4.1 Existence and quality of monitoring and evaluation systems within IMD to assess evolution of the programmes, bottlenecks encountered as well as results and impact achieved (including an effective use of lessons learnt from country evaluations)</p> <p>6.4.2 Capacity of IMD to draw lessons learnt from different country programmes on an ongoing basis and to use them for refining strategies, approaches and methodologies</p> <p>6.4.3 The IMD manages to promote institutional learning between the different country programmes and actors involved</p> <p>6.4.4 Systems are in place to gradually build an institutional memory</p> <p>6.4.5 Openness of IMD for learning from approaches used by other institutions involved in strengthening political parties</p> <p>6.4.6 Active participation in knowledge and learning networks</p> <p>6.4.7 Availability of systematic training and staff development opportunities</p>