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ANNUAL REPORT

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# FOREWORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thijs Berman, Executive Director of NIMD



Across 19 countries spanning four continents, NIMD's programmes are promoting peaceful, just and inclusive politics. We are creating breakthroughs via dialogue, bringing together parties who were once sworn enemies. We are also supporting the next generation of promising young leaders through our Democracy Schools, giving them the tools to build a brighter democratic future.

I joined NIMD in February 2019, and am extremely grateful to be part of this organization. My personal experience as a journalist and MEP taught me that democracy is so much more than a box ticking exercise. It is a culture that relies on accountable and inclusive governance, with respect for individual rights at its core. And this doesn't happen by accident.



NIMD gets this. The multiparty dialogue platforms that NIMD has established deliver legislative change. Our Democracy School graduates have gone on to lead inspiring campaigns and build remarkable careers as democrats. We take an inclusive approach that means no-one is left out of their country's future.



We also get that nations' self-determination is key if democracy is to take deep root. Each nation has its own needs, its own traditions and its own challenges. Understanding that context is crucial for ensuring people have control over their own democratic future. After all, the countries and people we work with do not want a "Dutch model" of democracy; they want their own model.

NIMD respects that, which is why we are still working in countries where many other organizations have given up or been forced to leave. I cannot praise our staff enough for their dedication, both in the Netherlands and in our country offices.

As we continued pursuing our goal of ensuring inclusive multiparty democracy can thrive, 2018 was another successful year for the organization. In the following pages you can see what we achieved, and hear the stories of some of the many remarkable people that we have met in the process.



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# HAVE WE FORGOTTEN WHAT DEMOCRACY IS?

**Often, when we think of ‘democracy’, we think we have a good idea of what it means. It means elections, parliaments, and parties. But is that really all there is to it?**



Elections, parliamentary hearings, and party conferences take place in all manner of contexts, from democracies to dictatorships. However, elections can be defrauded, politicians can make false political claims, and patronage can stop the best candidates being put forward by parties. This can undo efforts at democratization; beckoning corruption, diminished gender and minority representation and even political violence.

So, looking below the surface, it's clear that institutions alone aren't enough to safeguard democracy. In a genuine democracy, these institutions need to be populated by 'real democrats'; people who hold democratic values and lead by consensus, not coercion.

It is the core values of dialogue, inclusiveness, and accountability that underpin democracy and allow people to have a say in their country's future.

The need to defend these values is what has driven NIMD's commitment to work with parties from across the political spectrum for almost 20 years. In 2018, as in previous years, we saw that ongoing commitment bear fruit, even in the most challenging of circumstances.

## Democracy starts with dialogue

When people consider open access to the political arena, they often think of voting rights and freedom of speech. But, in reality, those in charge are not always listening to competing views and opposition groups in the country. In contrast, when genuine dialogue takes place, reforms, peace agreements and inclusive societies follow in its wake.

Take the case of Uganda: we were able to facilitate a breakthrough in 2018 with a landmark meeting of party leaders. The president and leaders of all but one of Uganda's parliamentary parties were brought together by the Inter-Party Organization for Dialogue, a platform set-up and facilitated by NIMD. Following on from this, continued trust-building and multiparty-backed dialogue is set to begin in earnest.

Frank Rusa, NIMD's Country Representative in Uganda, comments: "The challenge of moving from a no-party system [Uganda's previous arrangement] to a multiparty system is that it needs not only institutional reform, but a mindset change. It calls for politicians to look at each other differently."



Dialogue aims to encourage that change in mindset. It is based on collaboration and building trust, rather than aiming to immediately persuade or agree reforms. In order to move from a closed political system to an open and democratic one, parties need to start listening to one another and working together. And that begins with political dialogue.

### Building genuinely inclusive societies

One of the greatest objectives of democracy is to break down the visible and invisible barriers to equal participation. We often talk of universal voting rights as the way to build an inclusive society but, in reality, many groups still face political hurdles because of their gender, ethnicity or age. For instance, UN figures show that less than a quarter of the world's parliamentarians were women in November 2018. Worse still, when underrepresented groups have managed to enter government, they often find themselves locked out of key ministries and the real decision-making process.

So how can we ensure a government is genuinely inclusive? Granting the right to vote is just the beginning; we need a generation of empowered rights advocates who can bring the message of women, young people, and minorities to the halls of government and affect real change. NIMD's programmes specifically target the cultural and informal barriers that stand in their way, using training, dialogue and our Democracy Schools.

For example, this year we worked with almost 7000 female MPs, activists, and party members in Central America. We provided them with training in how to manage campaigns, write legislation, and resolve conflicts in their constituencies. We've seen many of these remarkable women go on to forge successful political careers, showing exemplary leadership and promoting gender equality in their countries. What's more, several parties, in Uganda for example, have invited us to help improve their candidate selection processes and identify the barriers to women's participation. To help reforms stick, we continue supporting these parties as they develop action plans to redress gender imbalances and recruit more female candidates.

Through projects such as these, we aim to lay the groundwork for inclusive societies. When we see all genders with strong voices in parliaments, an engaged youth and dialogue across the political spectrum, we can see an inclusive democratic culture taking hold. We often lose sight of this by thinking we've ticked the box through formal *de jure* processes such as elections and party conferences, but it is a culture of *de facto* inclusiveness that makes democracy come alive.

## Making sure politicians put the people first

One of the core values underlying democracy is accountability. Without transparent politicians who uphold democratic institutions such as judicial independence and a free press, there is space for corruption to creep in. In a well-functioning democracy, politicians are accountable to the people; there are safeguards to ensure that funds are spent responsibly; and transparent institutions mean that people have insight into how their country is run.

To help build this accountability, NIMD works with parties as they become accountable bodies that put the public's needs first. Through our programmes, we provide training for parties on areas such as manifesto drafting, options for selecting candidates and political communication.

This translates into open parties that play by the same rules, offering all members the same chance of being selected as candidates regardless of their ethnicity, gender, or religious background. It also means voters can see what parties are up to, and hold them to account over their manifesto promises.

When a culture of accountability really takes hold, we see that democracy is far more than just elections; it is a continuous sequence of events taking place in a culture of openness and equality. This can take years or even generations to become embedded, and requires constant support from parties and other actors across the political system - in both established and developing democracies.

## Keeping the door open to democracy

When we take a closer look, it becomes clear that dialogue, inclusiveness, and accountability are essential for developing a democratic society. Defending these values is all the more important in our current context where, in many countries, democracy is on the back foot.

Today, we see widespread public distrust of many democratic institutions. Populist leaders are questioning the importance of the rule of law and casting doubt on the universality of human rights.

The increasingly difficult context has consequences for democracy support organizations like NIMD. It has led to renewed debates on how to help bring about lasting steps towards inclusive, open societies. Some governments are discussing the opportunity to invest less in "governance" and instead prioritize the related issue of "access to justice".

While access to justice is an important part of a well-functioning democratic system, it is not the full picture. If we want to foster peace, secure economic growth and reduce inequality, we need all democratic institutions to work effectively, upheld by the values that underlie democracy.

In short, we need strong and inclusive political institutions - with accountable and transparent governance that works in the peoples' interests.

That's why NIMD, with a history of almost twenty years of democracy support, is committed to safeguarding democracies and the values behind it. Because we know democracy matters if we want to build a sustainable future.



# NIMD IN 2018

In 2018, NIMD worked in 19 countries in Africa, Latin America, the MENA region, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe. NIMD's programmes this year saw us work with over 26,000 people, including both aspiring and established politicians, civic activists, and party members.





## ▶ Benin

The political landscape in Benin underwent profound changes in 2018. Reforms of the partisan system announced by President Patrice Talon have started to materialize, through the adoption by Parliament of a new Political Parties Charter and a revised electoral law. The provisions of these two bills are intended to encourage larger parties and national coalitions, since Benin currently has a crowded field of over 200 parties. NIMD organized dialogue sessions between Benin's main parties on the proposed party reforms and supported the actors through these changes, in the run-up to the 2019 parliamentary elections. The joint proposals of this dialogue were then presented to Parliament, and NIMD will continue to assist the parties through the reform period.

Implementing partner:  
**NIMD Benin**

## ▶ Burundi

Through a process called strategic planning, NIMD helped Burundi's 11 main political parties to analyze their strengths and weaknesses, develop a strategy to address them, and set up a working team to communicate and implement this strategy. In a year in which the legal and practical space for opposition parties to operate further decreased, this strategic planning helped opposition parties to mobilize large campaigns during the subsequent constitutional referendum. The referendum saw active and peaceful participation from the main opposition parties throughout the country, a momentous achievement in the current context. However with the roots of the political crisis unresolved, democracy and peace in Burundi remain in danger.

Implementing partner:  
**Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP)**

## ▶ Colombia

During congressional and presidential elections, NIMD, in partnership with other civil society organizations and the Colombian Government, developed the Pact for Non-Violence during Political Campaigns to reduce interparty polarization. All four 2018 presidential candidates signed the Pact and encouraged their supporters to follow its principles. NIMD also supported a social media campaign called #DebatirSinAgredir (Debating not Attacking), which became the 13th most used hashtag in Colombia during the Pact signing. Later analysis found that 20% of the 45 million election-related messages posted before the election contained violence or aggression. This was halved after the signature of the Pact and the implementation of the campaign during the election.

Implementing partner:  
**NIMD Colombia**

## ▶ El Salvador

The 2018 presidential election in El Salvador saw the new challenge of online misinformation and fake news websites. In order to educate voters on how to assess if information is true, NIMD responded by developing a strategy called "for a clean campaign", in partnership with Facebook. The strategy sought to equip voters with tools to assess the value and truthfulness of information they saw online. As part of this, NIMD teamed up with FACTUM magazine to come up with a publicly accessible list of false "newspapers" that emerged during the electoral period.

Implementing partner:  
**NIMD El Salvador**

## ▶ Ethiopia

▶ [Read more](#)

Political changes in 2018 and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) in Ethiopia this year enabled NIMD to expand its programme. With this agreement, NIMD now assists NEBE in its role to organize elections and, in coordination with NEBE, helps political parties refine their organizational capacity and policy drafting skills. In August, NIMD trained representatives of all Ethiopia's political parties in dialogue and conflict resolution, ahead of a new inclusive dialogue between all Ethiopian political parties on reforms of areas such as Ethiopia's electoral system and federal arrangements.

Implementing partner:  
**NIMD Ethiopia**

## ▶ Georgia

Georgian political life had become increasingly polarized in the run up to the 2018 presidential elections. This, and the fact that personalities often trump policies in Georgian politics, had the potential to undermine the country's democratization. To help parties communicate their policies to voters, NIMD's partner in Georgia, EECMD, launched the renewed version of its manifesto comparison website for the 2018 presidential elections. Since 2013, the website ([www.prezidenti.ge](http://www.prezidenti.ge)) has regularly published the programmes of the all major presidential contenders. It aims to ensure that candidates offer voters specific and results-oriented pre-election commitments, so voters can make an informed choice.

Implementing partner:  
**Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD)**

► Read more

## ► Guatemala

2019 will see elections held in Guatemala for the president, parliamentarians, mayors, and municipal councillors. However, political parties often lag behind public opinion as parties have no mechanism for receiving information from civil society groups and other organizations. To overcome the persisting gap, NIMD organized several meetings between party representatives and community and indigenous leaders, women's organizations, farmers' co-operations, and LGBTI representatives to jointly identify policy proposals. Half of Guatemala's political parties have committed themselves to include these in their electoral programmes.

Implementing partner:  
**NIMD Guatemala**

## ► Honduras

Elections in November 2017 had led to protests and increased political polarization in Honduras. As a result there was also heightened friction between the political parties, and a need to rebuild bridges between them. NIMD responded to this by providing 126 MPs from seven political parties with two training programmes. The first focused on the technical aspects of lawmaking, and the second on "soft" political skills such as working together in a commission, facilitating dialogue, and building consensus. After this induction training, the two largest parties asked NIMD to organize more advanced training on these soft skills for their members in Congress.

Implementing partner:  
**NIMD Honduras**

## ► Indonesia

Despite high levels of voter turnout, Indonesian elections are still often fought on individuals' personalities rather than on policies. Ahead of the 2019 elections, our partner in Indonesia, Kemitraan, facilitated a three-day training for 34 female and 19 male candidates from across the country. Professors and experienced parliamentarians were invited to show the participants how effective manifestos and election campaigns, that link the individual candidate's ambitions with the overall party programme, can generate public support.

Implementing partner:  
**Kemitraan**

## ► Jordan

► Read more

Since commencing at the start of 2018, NIMD's programme on political youth engagement in Jordan has seen a flurry of activity. As part of the "EU Support to Jordanian Democratic Institutions and Development (EU-JDID)" programme, NIMD provided training to over 60 young political actors in political communication and activism, advocacy, and influencing public opinion. With NIMD's assistance, Jordan's Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs also received support in strategic planning, and parties received training in manifesto drafting. This is part of the wider goal of ensuring that voters can participate in upcoming 2020 elections based on political parties' policies and manifestos, rather than individual affiliations.

Implementing partner:  
**NIMD Jordan**

## ► Kenya

A reconciliation between Kenya's top political rivals at the start of 2018 (the famous 'handshake' between President Kenyatta and opposition leader Odinga) resulted in a nine-point agenda for reform. This prompted NIMD's implementing partner in Kenya, CMD-K, to facilitate an inclusive dialogue on the agenda. Through this, leaders of Kenya's political parties and civil society organizations agreed far-reaching positions, each critical to Kenya's governance. These related to the adoption of an electoral system of proportional representation, the shift to a parliamentary system, and enhancing devolution. CMD-K then presented these positions to the task force overseeing the reform agenda, a group formed by a joint agreement between Kenyatta and Odinga.

Implementing partner:  
**Centre for Multiparty Democracy-Kenya (CMD-K)**

## ► Mali

Electoral turnout in Mali is notoriously low, rarely passing 50%. Ahead of the August 2018 elections, NIMD's implementing partner in Mali, CMDID, conducted a voter survey of more than 2000 citizens across seven of Mali's eight regions. The first of its kind, the survey showed that almost half of surveyed non-voters in the 2013 elections did not vote because they were missing the specific 'NINA' card required for voting. CMDID's presentation of these findings made Mali's Government revise its approach and change the rules to allow voters to use any identification document, rather than explicitly NINA cards, to cast their vote.

Implementing partner:  
**Centre Malien pour le Dialogue Interpartis  
et la Démocratie (CMDID) and NIMD Mali**

# ► Mozambique

In 2018 NIMD's partner in Mozambique, IMD, organized election observation centres known as "Peace Rooms" around two elections; the first being for the Nampula by-elections, and the second for the local elections in October. The Peace Rooms brought together a diverse set of social and political actors from parties, government and civil society to monitor every stage of the election in real-time. If any issues arose, these could be solved through dialogue with the different political parties or the electoral management bodies present. The participants could examine the campaigns, voting, and vote counting in real time. This supported the credibility and non-violent nature of the elections.

*Implementing partner:*  
**Instituto Para Democracia Multipartidária  
(IMD Mozambique)**

# ► Myanmar

In 2018, MPs representing all 12 parties in the Shan State Parliament attended five multiparty dialogue sessions, one Shan State parliament visit and one study visit to Indonesia. The 12 parties' leaders then met with Myanmar's Food and Drug Administration, Shan State's Chief Minister, and the Speaker of Shan State Parliament. As a result, the 12 parties, alongside a Democracy School alumni-led working group, drafted "Shan State Law of Food Safety in Basic Education Schools bill". The parties went on joint lobby visits to the different party leaderships to build cross-party support for the bill, which will be tabled in 2019.

*Implementing partner:*  
**NIMD - DEMO Finland**

# ► Tunisia

Tunisia saw the reemergence of protests at the start of 2018, and local elections were held in May. The elections were seen as a valuable opportunity for furthering the country's democratic transition and were widely deemed fair and credible, but the results made parties keen to reengage with younger voters in particular. To help them achieve this, NIMD's partner CEMI hosted 15 sessions for parliamentarians on political communications, campaigning, and creating strategic alliances. During these sessions, parliamentarians had a rare chance to freely debate the issues that were the root cause of the protests and mattered most to young voters, namely the decentralization process, preventing domestic violence, regional politics, and economic policies.

*Implementing partner:*  
**Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes  
et Internationales (CEMI)**

# ► Uganda

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In 2018, Uganda saw heightened political polarization and a spike in political violence. This underlined the need for dialogue between political leaders, both to defuse tensions and agree a collective way forward. The NIMD-supported Interparty Organization for Dialogue (IPOD) organized a series of meetings between the main political parties, which culminated in the first ever party leaders' Summit in December 2018. One parliamentary party, the opposition FDC, did not attend. Nonetheless, the attendees of the IPOD Summit endorsed an agenda to address political rights and electoral reform, as well as increasing the participation of women and youth in politics. The FDC has since committed to this agenda and to participate in the next stages of the dialogue process.

*Implementing partner:*  
**NIMD Uganda**

# ► Ukraine

In 2018, NIMD's implementing partner EECMD opened the Poltava Democracy School, its third in Ukraine. The three Democracy Schools are now well-established platforms for organizing discussions on topical issues in Ukrainian politics such as gender equality, youth participation, and preventing corruption. With a local presence in Poltava, EECMD was able to pursue its locally-informed agenda. Female politicians were trained in the intricacies of writing financial plans and creating communication campaigns around fundraising activities. Grassroots level civic leaders in Ukraine also went through an intensive anti-corruption training, in which they were shown how publicly available data can be examined to spot corruption. The skills from both are already being put into practice ahead of elections scheduled for March 2019.

*Implementing partner:*  
**the Eastern Europe Centre for Multiparty Dialogue (EECMD)**

# ► Zimbabwe

Zimbabwean politics has been tumultuous in recent years and the need for consensus between the Government ZANU-PF party and opposition MDC remains strong. In NIMD's Interparty Dialogue Platform, the political parties of Zimbabwe agreed to collectively review the Code of Conduct for Political Parties. Subsequently, they worked in partnership with the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission and the Ministry of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs to ensure the collectively agreed changes were able to pass through Parliament, resulting in the Amendment to the Electoral Act. This in turn led to the signing of a peace pledge among political parties and the deployment of a provincial conflict mitigation mechanism during the elections.

*Implementing partner:*  
**Zimbabwe Institute**

# REACH4D

As part of the Reach for Democracy project (REACH4D), launched in 2018, a group of high-potential young leaders from Benin and Morocco participated in a two-week intensive training in Tunisia. The course covered dialogue and institutional change management, taught through the workings of the NIMD's Tunisian interparty dialogue platform. Through these courses, participants are creating a global network of multiparty advocates. A similar approach is also being implemented in Georgia, with participants from Moldova and Kyrgyzstan.

*Consortium partners:*

***Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales (CEMI); Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD); European Partnership for Democracy (EPD)***



## Ghana

NIMD used 2018 to wind up its projects in Ghana after 16 years of working with parties across the country. Through the interparty dialogue facilitated by NIMD, we helped parties address reforms of the electoral system and constitution, as well as the separation of powers within the country.



## OUR WORK IN UGANDA

# THE INTER-PARTY ORGANIZATION FOR DIALOGUE WHERE BIG AND SMALL ARE EQUAL

Uganda's Justice Forum (JEEMA) was formed in 1996, despite an ongoing 20-year ban on political parties. When Uganda transitioned to multiparty politics in 2005, JEEMA took up its role as a small opposition party.

Since then the party has never held more than one parliamentary seat, coming out of the 2016 elections with none at all. But changes in electoral districts in 2018 meant JEEMA was able to regain its seat, ending its three-year absence from parliament.



Uganda's political culture is interesting. The country has over 50 registered political parties. Outside of the main few parties, the rest are little known in the mind of an ordinary Ugandan.

This, of course, has a lot to do with Uganda's recent political history. When the country's president, Yoweri Museveni, came to power in 1986 he outlawed political parties.

Although Uganda is now once again a multiparty democracy, the country still has a de-facto one-party dominant political system and a polarized political landscape. Opposition parties have only limited space to influence the political reform agenda. As such, they remain fragile and face several challenges.

But some political parties have weathered the storm and remained politically afloat. One such a party is JEEMA.

## The Inter-party Organization for Dialogue

The Inter-party Organization for Dialogue (IPOD) was pleased to welcome back JEEMA as a member in 2018, when it regained its seat in parliament.

Founded and facilitated by NIMD, the IPOD platform brings together all of Uganda's parliamentary political parties in the spirit of dialogue and cooperation. The dialogue takes place outside of the parliamentary arena, which changes the power balance between the parties. Regardless of the number of seats they have in parliament, parties take part in the IPOD platform as equal members. Any decision taken requires consensus, and all parties have an equal voice. As such, IPOD provides small political parties with a means of political engagement, where they are placed on a level footing with their peers.

## JEEMA's return

Since IPOD only targets political parties with a seat in parliament, JEEMA did not participate in the platform from 2016 to 2018.

The party's Chair, Kibirige Mayanja, was very happy to be able to rejoin the platform, and recognized the opportunities it offers smaller parties like JEEMA. He particularly values JEEMA's participation in the IPOD secretariat. As a member of each party takes part in the secretariat, this space allows all parties to voice their concerns openly to find constructive ways of dealing with the issues that arise.

"What is fascinating is the ability for NIMD to treat all parties as equals. JEEMA with one MP and NRM with over 300 MPs is the biggest take away for me. No one has a bigger voice under IPOD".

According to NIMD Country Representative and IPOD Executive Secretary, Frank Rusa, new additions like JEEMA have the capacity to both strengthen IPOD and contribute to the rich discourse of diverse opinion. "Since the IPOD platform is a safe space to promote important and honest discussions between political parties at the highest levels, a new political party like JEEMA coming in with a unique perspective on national issues is a much welcome addition to this platform".

## The IPOD Dialogue Summit

For JEEMA, one highlight of rejoining IPOD has been the chance to make their voice heard at the IPOD Summit in December 2018. This high-level event brought together Uganda's political party Secretaries General and leaders, including President Museveni, to discuss how to strengthen multiparty democracy.

The Summit was the first of its kind in Uganda. Never before had the party leaders agreed to meet and engage in dialogue together. It was a chance for the political parties to make a real commitment to continued dialogue in the interests of their country.

For JEEMA, a party which often finds it difficult to have a real influence on the future of Uganda, the Summit provided an essential opportunity to make their voice and opinion heard at the highest level.

JEEMA's leader Asuman Basalirwa was therefore excited to put forward his proposals. Despite the momentous occasion, the unique spirit of cooperation and cordial atmosphere made him feel comfortable. He eagerly proposed two practical steps forward.

Basalirwa suggested that IPOD revisit old proposals to guide the council in their debates on the endorsed agenda for reform. His second proposal related to Uganda's Public Order Management Act (POMA), an act which provides a regulatory framework for public assemblies and has come under public scrutiny due to the powers it grants the police force to deny and disperse public meetings. Basalirwa argued that, although the act can be improved, it could

also go a long way to help the practice of politics if all state agencies and political actors adhere to its provisions. Based on this input, the parties agreed unanimously that security agencies, in particular, need to apply this law fairly and objectively across all political actors.

### A long way still to go

While the Summit was a major step forward for interparty dialogue in Uganda, JEEMA, like NIMD, was disappointed to note that not all parties attended. The Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), Uganda's main opposition party, decided not to participate due to the restrictions imposed by the ruling party on their freedom of association and assembly.

The withdrawal of the FDC from the Summit has been a major drawback to the IPOD platform. It created worries that any reforms or resolutions reached may not have the full support of all the political parties represented in IPOD. However, the FDC has agreed to adopt the reform agenda and participate in the next stages of the dialogue process.

Looking back at the Summit and FDC's absence, JEEMA Chair Kibirige Mayanja observes that there is still a long way to go, despite an increase in understanding between political parties. "We are still far apart. Some of our colleagues in other parties ignore us because they look at us as a small party. But they forget we have a common interest in growing multiparty democracy in Uganda."

This goes to show that there is still a lot of work to do when it comes to building trust between Uganda's political parties.



### Making a commitment to continued dialogue

The problems that exist in Uganda’s political party system will not be solved overnight. But small steps towards working together will make an impact on the country’s democratic future.

That’s why NIMD hopes that the flagship IPOD Summit will open the door to a next phase of dialogue and legislative reforms which have multiparty backing.

Indeed, at the end of the Summit, JEEMA and all the other participating parties committed to attending future summits in order to continue the dialogue.

For JEEMA, this commitment is a cause for hope. When political groups come together in dialogue, reforms, peace agreements, and nation building all stand a far greater chance of success. What’s more, the continued dialogue will give JEEMA an opportunity to play a part in changing the political landscape of Uganda for the better, regardless of their size.





▶ OUR WORK TO FACILITATE DIALOGUE WORLDWIDE

SOME TOPICS COVERED:

GENDER EQUALITY

ELECTORAL REFORM

POLITICAL PARTY FINANCING

DEVOLUTION AND DECENTRALIZATION

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS



**17** COUNTRIES WITH DIALOGUE PLATFORMS



**268** DIALOGUE PLATFORM MEETINGS HELD



**68** CONSENSUS-BASED DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE PLATFORMS



**54** PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO PARLIAMENT



OUR WORK IN GUATEMALA

# STRENGTHENING POLITICAL IMPACT AND LEADERSHIP THE YOUNG INDIGENOUS LEADER WHO PUSHES FOR WOMEN’S RIGHTS

“NIMD has given me the tools to strengthen my political knowledge and leadership,” says Nanci Paola Chiriz Sinto, a young leader who promotes the collective and individual rights of women and indigenous peoples in Guatemala. At only 21, Nanci was already deeply involved in politics. She became the National Secretary for Youth for Winaq, a political movement with roots in the indigenous communities of Guatemala.

It was in this role, and as the youngest representative of her party, that Nanci first came across NIMD. Her relationship with the organization grew quickly as she took on the role of Coordinator of the Youth Commission of the Permanent Forum of Political Parties, a multiparty dialogue platform supported by NIMD until 2015.



## Sharing experiences and learning from others

In 2014, NIMD invited Nanci to share her experience as National Secretary for Youth for Winaq at the International Seminar for Equity and Political Equality for Women in Honduras. At the event, which brought together young people from across Central America, Nanci described what it means to be a young indigenous woman in Guatemala's political system, one which harbours deep inequality and exclusion under the surface.

Among the participants of the Seminar were many women who were members of two or even three groups facing discrimination in Central America. As well as being women, many were also young and belonged to an ethnic minority. Listening to their stories, Nanci came to understand the barriers many women face when they participate in political campaigns. She understood how difficult it can be to thrive in a political culture where women are expected to stick to the traditional roles of mother, wife and caregiver. With her new understanding of the regional context, she learned the importance of building alliances between women and strategizing together.

The seminar also looked at the challenges that young people across the region face when they participate in politics. Tackling these challenges together with other young and ambitious women made sense to Nanci. With her new knowledge and network, she felt more determined and empowered than ever to stand up for the rights of other young women and indigenous people in Guatemala.

Nanci was also the youngest participant in NIMD's Women's Political Rights conference, held in Tunisia in 2017. She found it enriching to learn from participants in such an international environment outside of her country. As she reflected on their different experiences, she started to understand the scale of the violence faced by women around the world, and the importance of making sure that societies do not see this kind of violence as normal.

"Often, we think that the insults and verbal attacks are just the cost that we, as women, have to pay for participating in politics. Women are fighting against a system which is not only patriarchal but also adult-centrist and racist. Faced with this, we have to come together as women and young people. I had the chance to forge alliances and friendships with other women. Sharing experiences made us stronger. Suddenly, it didn't matter that we were from different political parties or different social groups."

## Opening space for the political participation of women and youth

Looking back, Nanci recognizes the valuable impact that these experiences made on her contribution to politics in Guatemala. She became more confident in herself and in her leadership skills, and she was motivated to have a real influence on the political participation of women and young people within her party. For example, during her party's 2015 convention, Nanci was part of an internal dialogue

process, which successfully led to the appointment of two new members onto the Executive Board as representatives of the Women's Office and the Electoral Affairs office.

This involved many hours of dialogue and negotiation. Nanci recognizes that what she learned from NIMD helped her to set out her approach for the debate. Throughout the process, she contributed to a participative and tolerant environment, where dialogue was valued.

Her new confidence also helped her, as Coordinator of the Youth Commission of the Permanent Forum of Political Parties, contribute to gathering a series of recommendations and suggestions from young people from across the political spectrum. These were used as input to Guatemala's existing National Law on Youth.





The Youth Commission proposed placing the real experiences and wishes of young people at the centre of this law. Since many young people in Guatemala face discrimination, unemployment and marginalization, the Commission felt it was crucial to hear their voices and respond to their needs.

In order to do this, the Commission carried out an analysis. Nanci and her team created dialogue platforms for youth representatives from across the political spectrum. Although it can be very difficult to reach consensus in interparty settings in Guatemala, the young people put their political differences aside and engaged in real discussions on the needs of young people in their country.

The Youth Commission used this session to write a technical report identifying the needs of young people. Among other things, they identified a call for a holistic education, which would include physical, artistic, social and emotional learning.

“It was a very difficult process but it was also enriching, and our input was used in reforms to the law.”

For Nanci, NIMD’s work in Guatemala is crucial. NIMD helped her gain the skills she needed to contribute to the reform. She says it was through the experiences NIMD provided her that she learned the value of tolerance and respect.

“I believe NIMD plays a key role in strengthening democracy in Guatemala, by providing training for political party and civil society representatives. I was part of this process and I gained tools to strengthen my political impact and leadership.”

“The training that NIMD provides for political parties, women and youth gives them the knowledge and skills they need to strengthen Guatemala’s political system.”

### Supporting indigenous women

Nanci now uses her new skills to provide specialist training for indigenous women on human rights, justice, land rights and reporting mechanisms. For personal reasons, she decided to step down as National Secretary for Youth and she is no longer active in a political party.

Despite this, the support and opportunities that NIMD provided her have contributed to her personal and professional development as a young indigenous Guatemalan woman. Having taken part in NIMD’s many dialogues, she is no longer scared to talk publicly and with conviction about her political views and experiences within a party.

Though the progress she sees is incremental, with changes in her participants’ daily lives unfolding over time, she finds it rewarding to be able to support indigenous groups in this way. She emphasizes that “women and indigenous communities are majority in Guatemala” – it is time for them to enjoy the same voice and rights as other groups.

Nanci shows her commitment to Guatemala through everything she does. Her life and her work to promote women’s rights and empower indigenous communities resonate strongly with NIMD. We know that leaders like Nanci are key to strengthening democracy and making a long-lasting impact in their country.

▶ **OUR WORK ON CAPACITY STRENGTHENING WORLDWIDE**

SOME TOPICS COVERED BY TRAINING:

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

INTERPARTY DIALOGUE SKILLS

STRATEGIC PLANNING

POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS

FINANCE AND BUDGETING



**412** POLITICAL PARTIES TRAINED



**335** POLITICAL PARTIES PARTICIPATING IN DIALOGUE PLATFORMS

## OUR WORK IN JORDAN

## INVESTING IN YOUTH EMPOWERING A YOUNG ACTIVIST TO INFLUENCE POLITICS

Hamza Hyassat is an activist. He works at the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development, a non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting rights-based, sustainable human development in Jordan.

He is also a graduate of NIMD's first Young Political and Civic Actors Trainee programme, which took place from November 2017 to August 2018. He chose to embark on the programme to meet and engage with other young activists and political party members. But he could not have expected the profound effect the training would have on his career and his engagement in local politics.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS®

## Developing skills in training and debate

NIMD's Young Political and Civic Actors Trainee programme targets young political party members and social activists. The aim is to encourage young people to build a network of politically active peers and participate in their country's political process.

The programme also places strong focus on the personal development of participants. With increased skills and deepened knowledge, these young people are better equipped to make an impact on Jordanian politics. Throughout the first training programme in 2018, NIMD's team was quick to notice Hamza's potential. Throughout the intense programme, he showed real commitment and enthusiasm. He used every opportunity to learn from the experts and trainers to develop his skills and acquire new political knowledge. In particular, Hamza shone in public speaking and debate, quickly learning how to construct arguments and work with data to strengthen his points.

As part of the personal development aspect of the course, NIMD's Jordan team provides participants with different roles and responsibilities to develop their particular strengths. They therefore invited Hamza, as a natural speaker and teacher, to deliver a training session to his peers. Hamza trained his fellow participants with confidence, preparing them for the debate session that took place during the graduation ceremony.



Hamza was given another opportunity to let his confidence shine when the Jordanian Prime Minister and a ministerial team held a meeting with 150 youth representatives from different governorates (administrative regions) in Jordan. The meeting, organized by the Ministry of Youth, aimed to make youth voices heard and address the challenges young people face.

Because of his participation in NIMD's Youth Training programme, Hamza was selected to represent his governorate. He was able to use the skills and tools he

had picked up during his training to contribute actively to the debate on the economic challenges currently facing Jordan. His arguments were convincing and he skillfully analyzed data to back up his points.

"This training course has taken me to a different level; from exchanging opinions and information to proposing ideas, building arguments and coming up with statements. I have always followed the news, but after the training course I became more engaged and most importantly I feel my voice is being heard.



## Passing on the skills

After the course, Hamza continued to pursue his passion for training and public speaking. He started to carry out training sessions in different governorates across Jordan, both in his personal capacity and in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth. Through his training, Hamza passes on the knowledge and skills he learned from the Youth Training. He covers many topics to help young people become more politically involved, particularly how to engage in debate and dialogue and build a convincing argument. He hopes that, by passing on these skills, he will enable others to advance their own political participation and careers.

In a short time, Hamza has proved himself a successful trainer. He has received an official accreditation from the International Board for Scientists in Human Development, as well as an official accreditation as a trainer from the Ministry of Labour.

"You can count on me for your future programmes for youth as a trainer, not only as a trainee".

## Networking for political change

It was not only his new skills that broadened Hamza's horizons. For him, the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with young members of political parties was priceless. As he got to know the students, and understand their different viewpoints and ideologies, he started to build a network of young political actors keen to make a difference in their communities.

Seeing the potential to create political change by working together with others, Hamza began a lobbying effort along with peers from his own region. Together, they successfully lobbied to form the Shadow Government for Decentralization in the Balqa Governorate.

This new organ will monitor the actions of the Governorate Council, an elected assembly which aims to enhance development and provide services locally to reduce pressure on the Parliament. Governorate Councils are fairly new in Jordan, having been founded by a 2015 Decentralization Law, and first established in the 2017 local elections.

Given how new the Councils are, Hamza saw the need to provide support to the new organ in his Governorate. The main purpose of the Shadow Government for Decentralization is to monitor and oversee the actions of the Balqa Governorate Council. It also proposes new projects, including the establishment of parks, parking spaces and clubs, based on the needs and perspective of the youth. While still in its early stages, the Shadow Government is a good step towards increasing accountability in local structures, as well as increasing the political voice of Jordan's young people in their local area.

We are proud, at NIMD, to be able to mentor students like Hamza, encouraging and enabling them to create change in the political structures and culture that they see around them. It is clear to us, in every country we work in, that democracy needs strong and committed people to hold it up. By empowering young people to take up that role, we hope to contribute to more openness and inclusiveness in politics for years to come.





▶ **OUR DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS  
WORLDWIDE**

SOME TOPICS COVERED  
IN THE CURRICULA:

**CAMPAIGNING**

**DEBATING**

**SPEECHWRITING**

**POLITICAL  
THEORY**

**PROGRAMMATIC  
PARTIES**



**11** COUNTRIES WITH  
DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS



**1,814** GRADUATES

## OUR WORK IN ETHIOPIA

## DIALOGUE AMONG POLITICAL PARTIES IN ETHIOPIA

### RECONCILING POLITICAL RIVALS

Dr. Chanie Kebede became determined to play a role in Ethiopia's development after graduating in economics and development studies from Addis Ababa University in the 1990s. He initially joined politics as a member of the All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO), a political party formed to represent the Amhara ethnic community, who make up roughly a quarter of Ethiopia's population.



The AAPO subsequently faced both mounting internal crises and pressures from the ruling party, which led to the imprisonment of its leader in 1994. The decline of the party forced Dr. Chanie and his colleagues to think of alternatives. He thought establishing a more inclusive, multiethnic party would help pave the way forward for Ethiopia's fledgling democracy, which led him to co-found the Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) in 1999.

The EDP was a member of the broader opposition Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), in 2005. Despite its electoral success, the coalition descended into crisis following the imprisonment of several of its leaders in 2005. The EDP then withdrew from the coalition and continued its peaceful struggle for democracy independently. Dr. Chanie was elected to his current position as Chair of the EDP in 2014, which led him to becoming involved with NIMD's work.



## A political crisis unfolds

Ethiopian society has a long tradition of customary dispute resolution in which elders play a key role not only in resolving disputes among parties, but also in ensuring community peace. The elders focus on settling the dispute, reconciling the affected interests, and more importantly healing broken relations and maintaining order in the community. Conflict is viewed not as an individual incident but as a disruption to community peace whose integrity needs to be restored.

Yet despite this rich tradition, the political elite in Ethiopia since the 1960s had sidelined indigenous values. This led to the tragedy of what is infamously known as the "white terror" and "red terror" in 1976; nationwide political violence which

cost hundreds of thousands of young men and women their lives. The simultaneous outbreak of a 16-year civil war further split the country's leadership, and the military regime's insistence on addressing all conflicts by force meant tensions persisted.

Between the ruling party's political hegemony and the shrinking space for political activity, it remained almost impossible to have dialogue and peacefully resolve conflicts. Despite the ruling party's lip service to democracy and political diversity, the lack of political reform and the sidelining of the political opposition culminated in mass public protests in 2015.

## Reaching out through dialogue

It was in this context that Dr. Chanie and his EDP party, along with a few other political parties, decided to participate in dialogue initiated by the ruling EPRDF party in 2016. They saw it as an opportunity to address the mounting pressures related to youth unemployment, social repression, rising corruption and, most importantly, the marginalization of the political opposition. However, the process was fraught with difficulties.

Dr. Chanie says "We knew the dialogue was incomplete from the start." Some of the major political actors decided to withdraw early on in the process, because there was no trusted third party to mediate the dialogue. What's more, the fact that only national representatives were involved meant regional parties were excluded. Other leaders were in exile, having been branded as "terrorists". Nor was the process balanced; it was a fragmented opposition facing a hegemonic regime.

Yet the parties were able to reach some minimum agreements. The ruling party was eventually persuaded to release political prisoners such as journalists and activists. They also agreed to revise the existing electoral law based on first-past-the-post to a mixed system, which added proportional elements to the existing arrangement. However protests mounted in subsequent years, culminating in the ruling party electing new Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed in early April 2018. As a younger leader who was a vocal reformist, his ascendancy marked a dramatic change in direction for Ethiopian politics.

## A fresh opportunity for peace

A new, more inclusive dialogue programme on a code of conduct for parties was opened in 2018, facilitated by the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) with its new chair Ms. Birtukan Midekssa. As a far more inclusive dialogue than anything attempted before in Ethiopia, all political parties (including all those that were branded as "terrorists" and were in exile) are now part of the dialogue. NIMD, as a trusted mediator for interparty dialogue, has been invited to support the facilitation of this dialogue through technical expertise, logistical and financial support.

As part of the programme, NIMD provided a training on dialogue and conflict resolution to all political parties in early September 2018. The training provided a framework for the peaceful resolution of conflicts among political parties, so those involved could assess Ethiopia's ongoing dialogue and refine the process. The need for more peaceful and inclusive politics in Ethiopia was what inspired Dr. Chanie to meet NIMD and enroll in the training sessions.

According to Dr. Chanie, "the training added value in improving the country's political culture. We were doing politics in a fragmented context without knowing how best to do it. It helped us discover the other side, understand

its views and interests, and possibly create some common ground and take Ethiopian politics one step further." Effective democratic politics could only take root once the parties could articulate their respective interests, effectively communicate to one another, and reach common ground.

NIMD's training was even more relevant for Dr. Chanie and his colleagues as it complimented the shift towards inclusive dialogue happening at the same time. Dr. Chanie said the NIMD-backed training meant parties were able to debate, agree, and approve their rules of engagement as equals, breaking the cycle of elite dominance. With only two years until the next elections and a rapid reform agenda already underway, maintaining free spaces to train and debate will help other parties keep their and their constituents' voices heard.

The winds of political change in the country and NIMD's intervention to support dialogue and conflict resolution met at the right time in Ethiopia. The dialogue is already bringing results, with the Prime Minister signing the agreed new code of conduct for political parties in Spring 2019. Ahead of the 2020 elections, the dialogue platform will play a crucial role in maintaining momentum behind Ethiopia's democratic reforms.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## INCOME

In 2018, NIMD received contributions for programmes funded by 18 different donor sources. These contributions brought our total annual income to €11.8 million, compared with €13.6 million in 2017. Even though the total annual income was slightly lower than last year, it was still in line with expectations and provided a solid basis to continue NIMD's work for the coming years. In addition, this basis also allows NIMD to invest in further funding diversification to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization and its programmes around the world. This investment has already resulted in an increase in the overall number of donor contracts, which rose to 25 in 2018.

## EXPENDITURE

NIMD's overall expenditure over the course of 2018 was €11.6 million, some 12% lower than 2017 (€13.1 million). This figure is in line with annual budget (€12 million). Of the total figure, 75% (€8.7 million) was spent on country and regional programmes, as well as thematic programmes (knowledge, innovation and positioning). The remaining 25% was dedicated to human resources and office running costs (management and accounting costs).

## RESULTS

Overall, NIMD achieved a positive result of €0.2 million in 2018. Similar to last year, this will be added to NIMD's continuity reserve, which now stands at €1.44 million. This positive result is due to more efficient financial management systems, such as a new system of monthly timewriting, and income generated from funding contracts.

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Donor	Programme	Country	Income in 2018 (€)
DEMO Finland	Myanmar School of Politics	Myanmar	127,254
Democratic Governance Facility (DGF)	Enhancing Democracy through inclusive dialogue and capacity development of political parties in Uganda	Uganda	51,853
Embassy of Canada to Guatemala	El Techo de Cristal: Análisis y propuesta para mejorar la participación política de las mujeres en Guatemala	Guatemala	10,578
Embassy of the Netherlands in Burundi	Schools for Democracy	Burundi	44,908
Embassy of the Netherlands in Costa Rica	New players in Guatemala; strengthening youth civil society organizations for inclusive democracy	Guatemala	72,578
European Union	Projet d'appui à l'Assemblée Nationale du Bénin pour la promotion de la gouvernance participative et les droits de l'homme	Benin	134,361
European Union	Acción democrática para la paz	Colombia	640,146
European Union	Construcción de mecanismos para fomentar la participación ciudadana y fortalecer la gestión legislativa en la Asamblea nacional del Ecuador	Ecuador	442
European Union	Pro-DEMOS: Partidos políticos hondureños más inclusivos, transparentes y democráticos	Honduras	147,156
European Union	REACH for Democracy - Regional Engagement to Advance the Creation of Hubs for Democracy	Benin, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia	551,890
European Union (via ECES)	Enhanced Support to Democratic Governance in Jordan	Jordan	127,083
European Union (via EPD)	INSPIRED+	Multiple	74,504
European Union (via Olaf Palme International Centre)	Strengthening Democratic Dialogue in Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	14,538
European Union (via International IDEA)	STEP 2 Democracy - Support to Electoral Processes and Democracy in Myanmar - Phase 2	Myanmar	23,161
Global Partnership for Multiparty Democracy (GPMD)	Secretariat services for GPMD	Global	22,661
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Dialogue for Stability - Inclusive politics in fragile settings	Burundi, Ukraine, Tunisia, Jordan, Colombia	2,854,985
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Strategic Partnership - Conducive environments for effective policy influencing: the role of political parties and parliaments	Benin, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Uganda, Ukraine, Zimbabwe	5,186,900
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Roasting Coffee the Ethiopian Way	Ethiopia	194,797
Open Society Foundations	Strategic strengthening of organizational and political capacities of citizen collectives in Guatemala	Guatemala	66,614
Oxfam Guatemala	Youth strengthening project	Guatemala	11,215
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	PARLAD - Open Parliament project	Guatemala	298,411
Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)	Technical Assistance to Political Parties in Burundi	Burundi	137,579
UN Peace Building Fund (PBF) (via UNDP)	Youth LAB - Leaders politiques pour l'Avenir de Burundi: Empowering Young Women and Men to Participate in Burundi's Political Parties	Burundi	858,121
USAID (via IREX)	Proyecto accion transformadora: Transformational action project	Guatemala	44,394
US State Department	Foundations for Interparty Dialogue in Burundi	Burundi	57,652
<b>Total</b>			<b>11,753,780</b>





**Democracy starts with dialogue.**