

A N N U A L R E P O R T

2019

DIALOGUE
AROUND A
NOISY TABLE

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy

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FOREWORD BY THIJS BERMAN, NIMD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



THE NIMD 2019 ANNUAL REPORT MARKS A YEAR OF SOLID PROGRESS AND GROWTH IN THE WORK OF NIMD AND OUR PARTNERS, IN NEARLY TWENTY COUNTRIES ACROSS THE WORLD. WE HAVE MADE THIS PROGRESS IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT MARKED BY TWO CONTRASTING DEVELOPMENTS.

ON THE ONE HAND, DEMOCRATIC SPACE IS DECLINING, EVEN IN MANY OF THE COUNTRIES WHERE NIMD IS ACTIVE.

ON THE OTHER HAND, MANY GOVERNMENTS ARE FACING A STRONG PUBLIC DEMAND TO ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE AND IMPROVE DEMOCRACY WITHIN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES.

FOR NIMD, THE OBJECTIVE IS CLEAR: WORLDWIDE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THAT LEAVES NO-ONE BEHIND. FOR THIS TO BECOME A REALITY, OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY NEEDS TO BE COUNTERING THE GRADUAL DEMOCRATIC DECLINE AND SUPPORTING DEMOCRATIC DEMANDS.



Thijs Berman joins former politicians and democracy experts from Dutch civil society to explore the topic of inclusive democracy. >





< *The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia visits the Netherlands on the invitation of NIMD to, among other things, observe and draw lessons from the 2018 Dutch local government elections.*

"Against the tide: In an ever more illiberal world, democracy is the key to sustainable development"

Democracy support today

Democracy support has changed immensely in recent years. Twenty years ago, when NIMD first started out, our work was seen as part of an almost unquestionable effort to improve respect for human rights in general.

Today, our work can feel like a continuous struggle against a growing tide of illiberal regimes; ideologies based on hatred and exclusion; and populist movements. Freedom House issued a stark warning in its 2019 report. Its findings confirmed the 13th consecutive year of a gradual deterioration in respect for civil liberties and democratic rights. In the same vein, the 2019 UN report on progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) shows only minor positive steps on SDG 16.

SDG 16 is about reaching peaceful and inclusive societies; ensuring access to justice for all; and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. Stagnation on this goal stands in the way of meaningful improvements on many other SDGs. Accountable, transparent and inclusive governance is key to unlocking the potential of a country to tackle the major developmental challenges defined in the other SDGs. To put it bluntly, it is hard to end poverty with unaccountable elites in power.

Seeds of hope

Ethiopia stands out as the most notable exception to the trend of democratic decline worldwide. Despite tensions and setbacks, it is undeniable that strong and fundamental progress is being made in the democratic transition of the country. NIMD is proud and grateful to have the opportunity to contribute to this truly historic change. We see it as a great responsibility to work with the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia and to support the country's historic national dialogue.

In 2020, we will also start a capacity building programme through our newly established Ethiopian Democracy Academy for young and aspiring politicians. This makes Ethiopia a strong example of what we do in many other parts of the world: we bring diverse groups together, we start talking to each other, and we learn from each other. We do this in countries where significant parts of the population have traditionally been kept a great distance away from political decisions.

NIMD brings everyone to the table, so all voices can be heard

A noisy table

In a way, NIMD simply stands for a noisy table, with all kinds of people sitting around it, and some empty chairs for unexpected guests.

Dialogue and inclusion. These are the two central tenets of our working method. They bring the world closer to fully respecting equal rights and opportunities to freely participate in democracy.

In our work, we witness how former rivals engage in a real dialogue, how they start respecting each other and reach concrete political decisions. In these small changes, we see that an inclusive democratic society is not a far-off Utopian horizon. This is what inspires and drives us.



NIMD IN 2019

IN 2019, NIMD worked in 17 countries across Africa, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia. In addition, NIMD conducted exploratory analyses and scoping missions in Burkina, Iraq, Niger and Venezuela.



Legend

- ▶ Programme countries
- ▶ Exploratory countries
- ▶ Featured countries

► Benin

NIMD engages Benin's political parties through our Democracy School programme, and we train the School's attendees to advocate for a strong multiparty system in which dialogue prevails. Since 2016, NIMD has often insisted on the need for Benin's parties themselves to pay more attention to the training of their members. In 2019, the government reformed Benin's Political Parties Charter, and authorities factored in historic recommendations made by NIMD. As a result, political parties are now required to have an internal "party school", inspired by NIMD's Democracy Schools, in which to train their activists.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Benin

► Burundi

In 2019, NIMD and Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP) hosted a workshop for women from Burundi's ruling CNDD-FDD party, aiming to enhance women's participation in future elections. Senior party members attended, including the Second Vice-President of the National Assembly, the Minister for East African Community Affairs, and the President of the Women's League. BLTP planned to host the workshop in six other provinces, and to complement that the participant women began hosting their own workshops to help reach rural areas, increasing the affordability and sustainability of the programme.

Implementing partner:
Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP)

► Colombia

In partnership with the Electoral Observation Mission (MOE), NIMD Colombia investigated and published the report, "Dynamics of political violence since the signing of the Peace Agreement and in the framework of its implementation: challenges and proposals for authorities and political parties for the elections local 2019". The results were presented to members of the National Commission of Electoral Guarantees and to the Minister of Interior. Authorities then incorporated these insights from NIMD Colombia when creating a national strategy for preventing violence in elections, known as Plan Agora.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Colombia

► El Salvador

NIMD has supported the young parliamentarians comprising the multiparty Youth Parliamentary Group (YPJ) for several years. In the second semester of 2019, NIMD hosted the first session on Reflection and Training of Young Parliamentarians, which had two main objectives. Firstly, to reflect on the progress of YPJ's consensus-backed agenda on data and information, and secondly to strengthen their capacities to draft proposals and find innovative solutions to political problems. All parties with parliamentary representation attended, and each named a responsible party member for continued work with the YPJ. The YPJ then used the lessons learned to draft and propose a Law on Sports, which successfully passed through parliament in 2019.

Implementing partner:
NIMD El Salvador

► Ethiopia

In 2019, after months of intense debate, the political parties' Code of Conduct (CoC) was approved and signed by leaders of the 100+ parties participating in the Ethiopian Political Parties Dialogue (EPPD). Ruling party chair and sitting Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed joined opposition leaders to add his signature at the CoC launch event in Addis Ababa. The signing of the CoC by the Prime Minister and opposition parties shows their commitment to a political culture that facilitates the peaceful resolution of disputes among political parties, especially during campaigning and elections. NIMD supported (technically and financially) the development of the CoC under the EPPD.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Ethiopia

► Guatemala

NIMD proposed launching a multiparty dialogue initiative with Guatemalan political parties' Youth Secretaries. In preparation for this, NIMD convened seven political parties (WINAQ, UCN, SEMILLA, FCN, BIEN, PODEMOS, HUMANISTA) at an event entitled "Status of Youth in Guatemala". The Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman presented the *Baseline Report on the Status of Youth Rights*, and the Centro de Estudios de Guatemala presented the *Youth and Democratic Security Report*. As a result of this gathering, the Youth Secretaries committed to following up on this dialogue initiative and using this multiparty space to further the specific needs and interests of young people in Guatemala.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Guatemala



▶ Honduras

In Honduras, NIMD is supporting the EU Electoral Observation Mission's recommendation to engender a more inclusive political system and increase trust in electoral organizations. This is important, as the lack of the trust in the former electoral management body led many to question the outcome of the 2017 elections, resulting in demonstrations and violent riots. NIMD therefore supported the new electoral institutions, the National Electoral Council and the Electoral Court of Justice, in their strategic planning processes to increase their robustness. To further consolidate acceptance of the reforms among political actors, NIMD pushed for smaller parties to be included in the dialogue processes on electoral and political party reform that we currently facilitate in Honduras.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Honduras

▶ Indonesia

A screening and discussion of a movie called 27 Steps of May, organized by INSPIRE, had a major impact in spreading awareness of sexual violence. Ministers and government committee members responsible for education, women's empowerment, and the prevention of sexual violence were joined by rape survivors for the screening and parallel dialogue. They sent a collective message to the public on the urgency of formulating comprehensive protections to prevent sexual violence. They also sent a collective message to the Parliament and the Government to speed up the deliberation of Bill on Prevention of Sexual Violence as an umbrella regulation to protect the rights of women.

Implementing partner:
Kemitraan

▶ Jordan

After a busy first year of operation, NIMD's Jordan School of Politics (JSoP) closed the year by welcoming 40 aspiring young men and women politicians for 16 training days, focused on both theoretical knowledge and practical skills such as debating and public speaking. Additionally, in cooperation with Ministry of Youth, JSoP provided courses in political theory and debating skills to 200 young people across all of Jordan's 12 governorates. This geographical spread meant NIMD was able to support young participants who are often not included in similar training available in major cities.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Jordan

▶ Kenya

In collaboration with the Parliament of Kenya, NIMD partner Mzalendo organized public participation on four important bills, covering subjects such as free speech, budgeting, public participation and protections for whistleblowers. The interactions involved on and off-line dialogue between citizens, CSOs and MPs, creating a lively public debate that in turn inspired and pushed forward the debate on the floor of parliament. The online activities on Twitter earned an average of 15,000 daily impressions. With 68% of the participants in Mzalendo's activities being youth under 25 years old, the campaign provided a good example to Kenya's government on how they can involve this key demographic.

Implementing partners:
Mzalendo
Centre for Multiparty Democracy-Kenya (CMD-K)

▶ [Read more](#)

▶ Mali

After a political crisis earlier in the year, President Keita agreed to a National Political Dialogue requested by the opposition. However, unhappy with their involvement in the preparations, the main opposition parties refused to participate. Insisting on the importance of dialogue, NIMD organized a high level meeting in which the opposition *did* participate. Through this meeting, majority and opposition parties and civil society organizations agreed on a list of priority electoral reforms. Securing cross-party participation in the high level meeting made it possible to advance on the sensitive subject of electoral reform, essential for the credibility of future election results and the governments they produce.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Mali

▶ Mozambique

In August 2019, the MPs of the 4th Committee of Parliament of Mozambique were working on amending the country's electoral legislation. IMD, NIMD's partner in Mozambique, wanted to ensure inclusivity in the process and facilitated several meetings of the Committee with experts and civil society organizations to discuss possible electoral reforms. IMD also facilitated the Committee's regional consultation meetings with citizens. Thanks to this inclusive approach, the eventual reforms were influenced by experts, civil society and the citizens. By ensuring that the parliamentary committee's reforms receive input from society before upcoming elections take place, IMD helped defuse some of the conflict and contribute to more peaceful electoral conduct on all sides.

Implementing partner:
Instituto Para Democracia Multipartidária
(IMD Mozambique)

▶ Myanmar

The collaboration and trust among the 12 multiparty dialogue platform (MDP) parties in Shan State has increased considerably in 2019. “Shan State Law of Food Safety in High Schools” was drafted through dialogue, and submitted to the Shan State Parliament by 12 MPs from the 12 parties in June. This came after joint lobby visits by the MDP to different party head offices and military representatives, so as to secure their support. It is the first bill to be drafted in such a deliberative way between government and opposition parties in Myanmar. The Bill successfully passed into law in early 2020.

Implementing partners:
**NIMD Myanmar, DEMO Finland,
the Myanmar School of Politics (MySoP)**

▶ [Read more](#)

▶ Tunisia

The Tunis School of Politics (TSoP) is a space for young politicians to come together in a multiparty setting, offering them the skills that they need to further their political careers. The TSoP curriculum seeks to strengthen these aspiring leaders by instilling democratic values and giving training in practical skills. These efforts came to fruition following Tunisia's parliamentary elections of October 2019, when 53 participants in TSoP activities, including 14 women, were elected to the National Parliament. Spread across multiple parties, these young politicians used the skills they learned in TSoP to win their places in the Tunisian parliament.

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

Uganda

Through careful guidance and mediation, NIMD Uganda managed to create an inclusive environment for political dialogue under the umbrella of the Interparty Organisation for Dialogue (IPOD) platform. Accordingly Uganda's political parties now place a significant amount of trust in IPOD as a valuable platform for interparty dialogue. This was proven when a second Summit of Political Leaders took place in May 2019, which included the President of Uganda. No fewer than seven agreements were reached by the cross-party forum, including a review of the 2013 Public Order Management Act and an agreement on increased public funding for political parties.

Implementing partner:
NIMD Uganda

▶ [Read more](#)

▶ Ukraine

NIMD and EECMD succeeded in expanding our Ukrainian democracy education programme in opening our fifth Democracy School in Ukraine. The Schools aim to improve the democratic capacities and skills of regional activists, with a particular focus on anti-corruption capacities as a response to Ukraine's current context. The newest School, based in Kyiv, was opened in 2019 as a hub of political parties, civil society and non-governmental organizations. This year, it welcomed a highly diverse cohort, including journalists, political party representatives, civil society activists, civil servants, university lecturers and veterans of the anti-terrorist operation in Donbas, as well as LGBT and ethnic minority representatives.

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

▶ Zimbabwe

NIMD's partner in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Institute (ZI), continuously works to bring together the political parties of Zimbabwe in its dialogue platform. In February 2019, ZI organized a meeting in Bulawayo that brought together the Secretaries General of the parties to lay the ground for fruitful dialogue. With all four parties represented in the Zimbabwe Parliament present, The Secretaries General reached consensus on a 10-point agenda for 2019 and committed to undergo political training together. This agenda paves the way for cross-party collaboration after the party leaders agree to resume participation in the ZI dialogue programme.

Implementing partner:
Zimbabwe Institute

► Iraq

In late 2019, NIMD laid the foundations to start implementing its first project in Iraq, which seeks to strengthen the political participation of Iraqi women and facilitate parliamentarians' interparty dialogue. This project offers training to a multiparty group of 25 men and women from the Council of Representatives, Iraq's National Parliament. Through intensive sessions and exchange visits, NIMD will give these MPs insights on inclusive policymaking methods and ways to broaden political participation to include women. Ensuring the voices of women find parity with those of men is an essential aspect of ensuring that democracy thrives - for the long term - in Iraq.

Implementing partner:
Women's Empowerment Organisation Iraq

► REACH4D

As part of the EU-funded multi-country REACH for Democracy programme, NIMD and its partners provided two week intensive trainings for students from Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Benin and Morocco. We ran these trainings in collaboration with seasoned experts from Results Mediation so that we could provide a highly practical course, specifically for mediation in the political sector. Thanks to the training, participants were able to be more effective as mediators within their own parties, as well as when building coalitions and consensus with others.

Implementing partners:
**The Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD),
Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales (CEMI), and
the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD).**

► Sahel Regional Programme

Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.
2019 was dedicated to developing NIMD's Sahel strategy and theory of change. NIMD conducted political economy analyses for each of the three countries in the Sahel region - Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. These studies combined desk research and interviews with stakeholders with a participatory validation workshop in each country. Moreover, NIMD conducted studies on the cost of politics in each of the countries. These studies permitted NIMD to develop a better understanding of the functioning of the democracies in the Sahel and develop a theory of change, ahead of developing contextualized regional strategy in 2020.

► Venezuela

In 2019 NIMD completed scoping missions to Venezuela as part of the Dialogue for Stability programme. During these missions, our analysis highlighted a dominance of personalities in parties, and showed political turmoil has undermined developmental progress. To respond to the democratic crisis in the country, NIMD and our partners hope to offer a range of support for Venezuela's democratization in 2020, covering areas such as women's political rights, dialogue and consensus building, and connecting civil society organizations with politicians.



OUR WORK IN TUNISIA

THE TUNISIA SCHOOL OF POLITICS: OPENING DOORS FOR YOUNG POLITICIANS

Yasmine Ben Hamida is one of the youngest people in Tunisia to be elected to a political position. Shortly after her election as a City Councillor, she decided to join the Tunisia School of Politics. She saw it as a way for young politicians to come together in a multiparty setting, and acquire the skills and knowledge that they need to go further in their political careers. What she did not foresee was the impact the School would have on her own aspirations and relationships.

When she was growing up, Yasmine didn't hear about politics much. It wasn't a frequent topic of discussion in her family, and it was rarely mentioned in her friend group at school.

It was only after the Jasmine Revolution, when Yasmine was 12, that freedom of expression took hold, and politics became more accessible:

“Suddenly, there was an explosion of political discourse across all levels of society. Overnight, everyone became an expert in political analysis.”





But it wasn't until a few years later that Yasmine also started to take notice of the new opportunities available to her. Her civil society work opened her eyes to the power of politics. Among many other projects, she was part of a team who organized medical consultations. She saw the concrete impact that the consultations had on the lives of her fellow citizens, who would otherwise have had no access to this kind of service. That's when she decided to bring services closer to the people through politics.

So, Yasmine embarked on a political campaign at the age of 19. It wasn't an easy ride for her. She had to juggle campaigning and studying for her university exams. And many people didn't believe that someone so young could be there on merit. The criticism Yasmine faced only spurred her on: "It was my motivation for passing on a clear and positive message about young people. We are there and we are ready to take up our place in politics."

A first step into politics

After months of arduous campaigning, Yasmine was elected as a City Councillor. While she had a lot of experience working in civil society, it was her first time working in politics. From her campaigning, one lesson stood out to her: as a young woman in politics, she would have to fight to prove herself in this domain and be accepted by the older generation.

With this in mind, Yasmine decided to take part in the Tunisia School of Politics (TSoP), a platform for young politicians, run by our Tunisian partner, the *Centre des Études Méditerranéennes et Internationales* (CEMI), with support from NIMD and Demo Finland.

New knowledge and new perspectives

At TSoP, Yasmine was excited to meet so many people from different backgrounds and ideologies; young people who, like her, had entered politics for the first time. She took part in a whole series of interactive sessions, including training and group work, focusing on public law and political sciences; economic sciences and social science. In each, she learned a bit more about the political landscape in Tunisia.

She learned about the role of municipalities, which helped her to see her tasks as City Councillor in a new light. She learned the definition and objectives of Tunisia's decentralization process – a crucial task of shifting power from the national to the local level.

And, through the School's focus on political communication and leadership, she learned to refine her soft skills and enter negotiations in her political life on a different footing.

But, what she soon also learned is that the School was about much more than political knowledge and skills. It was about democratic culture.

As Ahmed Driss, Director of CEMI, puts it: "Democratic culture goes beyond the traditional understanding of democracy as a political system and the rule of law. Participants also need to understand values such as integrity; how to bring about change through peaceful means; and respecting minorities and people who are different."

This started, of course, with the multiparty setting. Before taking part in the School, Yasmine did not have contact with people from other political parties. While Yasmine had always believed in human fraternity as a key principle, TSoP helped her to put this into practice with people who held very different beliefs.

As time went by, her relationship with the other participants went beyond mutual respect. She made friends with many participants; learned about their motivations; and forged a long-lasting connection.



Expanding horizons

Through the School sessions, it was clear that Yassmine was thriving. Based on examination results, CEMI and NIMD selected her as one of 10 high-performing students who would take part in a series of regional exchanges between young politicians in Jordan and Tunisia, including a final exchange visit to the Netherlands.

Yassmine was inspired by the experiences that her peers in Jordan shared. It was refreshing to see things from a different perspective and work together to consider practical ways to help young people into politics and address regional challenges.

She also believes that the exchanges helped her to widen her perspectives. Meeting other young politicians from Jordan opened her up to the possibilities of a more interconnected world, one where she could work directly with other young leaders across her region.

The exchanges also affected her view of her future prospects. She recalls how, during her visit to the Netherlands, she entered into conversation with H.E. Elyes Ghariani, Tunisian Ambassador to the Netherlands. They discussed possible agricultural cooperation between her municipality and the Netherlands.

While she had previously focused solely on working locally, this conversation showed her the more international possibilities and awoke in her a commitment to explore different sectors in her role as City Councillor.

New opportunities for her community

Yassmine is determined to take what she has learned back to her community. For example, she is working on an international architecture and urban planning project entitled “space for citizens”. As part of this project, she is creating a space in her city dedicated to managing citizen affairs such as complaints and registrations. This will increase responsiveness to citizen demands and, ultimately, bring the services of the Municipal Council closer to the people.

In addition, Yassmine wants to make sure that other young people also have access to TSoP. She is working with CEMI to start to involve even younger people from her municipality in the School, including secondary school pupils. These pupils will attend training and even Multiparty Council sessions. They will learn how local politics works, how it affects them, and how to get involved.

“For me,” explains Yassmine, “the idea of cooperating with TSoP to help young people in my city came from my deep belief in the need to create new generations of engaged citizens.”

Unlike Yassmine, these young people will have the chance to grow up in a democratic environment, with real understanding of how they can make their voices heard.

“It’s an opportunity for today’s young people, but also for the future of Tunisia. This is how we make sure democracy is here to stay.”



Plans for the future

Yassmine is excited for what the future will bring. For her, TSoP is about expanding horizons. And one of her possible ambitions is to pass from local to national politics, where she can propose national solutions to the challenges her country faces.

Whatever path Yassmine takes, she is pleased to have the continued support of TSoP and the new friends she has made. Her network of alumni cuts across traditional party boundaries. Its members are not only Tunisian, but hail from across the wider region. They share a vision of a more democratic future, and they will be there to help each other towards achieving that future.

As Yassmine puts it “Perhaps one day, we will be the leaders of our parties, and the connections we have built through TSoP will have a major impact on the decisions we take as leaders”.



▶ **OUR DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS
WORLDWIDE**

SOME TOPICS COVERED
IN THE CURRICULA:

CAMPAIGNING

DEBATING

SPEECHWRITING

**POLITICAL
THEORY**

**PROGRAMMATIC
PARTIES**



11 COUNTRIES WITH
DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS



1,525 GRADUATES



OUR WORK IN MALI

MONEY AND POLITICS IN MALI INVESTIGATING THE COST OF DEMOCRACY

Honourable Issa Togo is a member of Parliament in Mali. He comes from the centre of Mali, an area in great turmoil. Jihadist attacks on the military and civilian population have become an almost everyday occurrence, and the absence of the state has made it impossible to curb violent clashes between communities. Corruption is also rife, and many politicians are accused of using cash, rather than policies, to win voters' support. We met Togo when he took part in NIMD's Cost of Politics study, which aimed to understand the role of money in Mali's democracy.

A reluctant MP comes forward

Togo's political career is a great illustration of how over the years, money has taken the upper hand in politics. "When I was a candidate for a parliamentary seat for the first time in 2002, I didn't spend a dime! I hadn't planned to get involved in politics, but I was quite popular in my district, Koro, so several political parties wanted me to run for them. I was personally more interested in my work as a researcher, but my family decided that it would be best for everyone if I ran. So I read the political programs, and chose to run for ADEMA."

Sitting in the NIMD office in Bamako today, Togo reflects on the 2002 campaign: "It really didn't take much for me to win those elections. I remember going into a village when I was campaigning. The population had come out with drums and costumes to support my candidacy. A village elder came out of his house, wondering what all the fuss was about. When the people told him that it was to mobilize votes for me, he said: 'but that is not necessary. Tell the sous-préfet [local government official] that we will not vote; Togo is our MP'."

Honourable Togo laughs when he talks about the old man's conception of democracy, but he adds: "But that was how it went. I won. Without effort."

Money enters the political space

The power of money became clear to Togo five years later, in 2007, when he ran for re-election. A rival party prioritized

winning Togo's seat, and presented a very wealthy candidate who went around distributing money left and right.

Togo remembers a phone call that he received from one of the villages that voted for him in 2002. The opposition candidate had visited and offered the women of the village a mill, so the men were worried that they might switch to the opposition. Togo told the men that they should take back the mill to the opposition candidate, and that he himself would make sure the women got a mill. In the end, his list lost the 2007 elections. However as a matter of principle, he still delivered the mill.

"You see, that is when it started..." muses Togo.

Paying the price to be a parliamentarian

During the five years following 2007, Togo rose to Head of Cabinet of the President of the Parliament. All the while he would regularly visit his district in preparation for his candidacy in the next elections. It was in those 2013 elections, after the coup d'état and a transition period, that the influence of money really exploded. He says: "Had I been alone on my list, I would have won without much cost, no doubt."

However, Togo was not alone. Mali's winner-takes-all majoritarian list system means voters were not only making a choice for Togo, but for all the names with him on his party list, some of whom depended more on their collective capacity to buy votes. As money was poured

into the district from certain sides, all other parties were pressured to follow suit in a self-perpetuating cycle of vote buying. Once vote-buying entered the system, parties were incentivized to choose candidates not only for their skills and political beliefs, but also for the funds they would bring to the campaign.

"Oftentimes, one or two candidates on a list of a maximum of seven seats may be serious, but the others are just there because they bring in money! And so I had no choice but to start spending too." He and his running mates spent tens of thousands of euros during those elections. "I'm sure we spent over 200,000 euros - but the other side spent even more!"

Togo's list won those 2013 elections and he went back to being an MP, but he was already looking ahead to the next elections. It was during this parliamentary cycle that Togo decided to collaborate with NIMD and investigate how and why the cost of elections had rocketed so high.





Challenging big money in politics

In 2019, NIMD Mali, with the help of local think-tank and action-oriented research group Odyssee, conducted an extensive survey among MPs, local elected officials and political parties. It showed that an electoral campaign for legislative elections costs on average the equivalent of 54,000 euros, while the average salary in Mali is under 100 euros per month. It also showed that as much as 28% of that amount is spent on the day of elections itself, indicating large-scale vote buying.

The study made evident that the negative impact of money in politics is on the rise, thanks to the exclusion of those who cannot afford to fund a campaign - especially historically economically disenfranchised groups such as women and young people. In candidate selection processes, the money needed to finance campaigns has started taking precedence over the ideological and political capacities of the candidates. As a consequence, the political class is losing credibility fast.

However, thanks to the publication of studies such as NIMD's Cost of Politics report, Mali's voters and MPs are increasingly aware of how money can undermine democracy, and how they can try to mitigate that risk.

Togo was one of the 44 out of 147 MPs who agreed to participate in the survey. At the presentation of the final report, he made a courageous witness account of his own experience with the crippling hold of money on Malian democracy. He also participated in a radio debate on the subject. This radio debate was part of a sensitization campaign launched by NIMD in the run up to the 2020 legislative elections. The campaign, which includes bloggers, rappers, spoken word artists and regular media in both French and local languages, aims at explaining how selling votes undermines democracy and inclusive politics.

Arguing for a new system

Togo went from the reluctant candidate of 2002 to one of the few Malian MPs willing to publicly acknowledge the cost of politics in Mali. Today he argues "a mentality change is needed, on the part of political parties, and on the part of the electorate. But the system needs to change as well.

With the majority vote system, the individual merit of the candidate doesn't count for much. I tell you, if that would change, we would be wasting a lot less money on elections."

Togo reflects on his participation in the study: "This is why the NIMD study was so important. It is clear from the findings that a lot of money goes into vote buying, but also into paying for your place on the list of your party. With the result that in the end, a lot of elected officials feel neither accountable to their electorate, nor to their political party! They are just there to use their position to make good on their investment during the campaign."

As someone on the inside of politics, Togo now sees that the harmful impact of money goes far beyond the election: "And let's not forget all the money that we spend while being in office. There is no way you can even think of being re-elected if you don't spend your money on keeping your voters happy by solving their day to day problems."

For Togo, the lessons from the NIMD study have compelled him to look at alternative electoral models – ones that he thinks can be more conducive to governance that is accountable, inclusive and representative. He fears democracy could become 'an affair of the rich', and that voters and the political class need to be sensitized to the dangers of that. NIMD's work in Mali aims to improve Mali's democracy, and that means making sure that public support, and not deep pockets, is what decides the government agenda.



▶ **OUR WORK ON CAPACITY STRENGTHENING WORLDWIDE**

SOME TOPICS COVERED BY TRAINING:

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

INTERPARTY DIALOGUE SKILLS

STRATEGIC PLANNING

POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS

FINANCE AND BUDGETING



349 POLITICAL PARTIES TRAINED



335 POLITICAL PARTIES PARTICIPATING IN DIALOGUE PLATFORMS



NIMD'S DIALOGUE APPROACH



OUR WORK IN UGANDA

ANATOMY OF AN NIMD DIALOGUE PROCESS

NIMD believes that democracy starts with dialogue. By building trust and bringing parties to an inclusive 'noisy table', NIMD has acted as a trusted partner in democratization in several countries. Although national context influences how we structure and facilitate dialogue, our five-step trustbuilding model lies at the core of our work. This is the approach we took when working on inclusive dialogue with Ugandan politicians through the Interparty Organization for Dialogue (IPOD).

The platform has been active for ten years, bringing political parties together as equals for open interparty discussions. In what can be a tense political environment, IPOD has helped the parties work together and resolve disputes in areas such as electoral reform and party funding rules.

One such dispute was about a piece of legislation named the Public Order Management Act 2013, also known as POMA.

The issue was how authorities interpreted the legislation. Within the text of POMA, a passage stated that political groups must notify the police in regard to upcoming events and activities. Two conflicting interpretations came from this; some said it mandated simply notifying the police, while others said it meant police permission is required for parties' activities to go ahead. Many in Uganda's political opposition feared the latter interpretation could give the police sweeping powers to break up their rallies and other legitimate activities.

The next pages illustrate how through dialogue facilitated by IPOD, parties were able to work on an equal footing to identify, devise and propose solutions for the issues around POMA.





NIMD's Uganda Country Representative > Frank Rusa (left) with party leaders, including President Yoweri Museveni, at the Second Leaders' Summit in May 2019.



< Ugandan Prime Minister Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda (centre left) with NIMD's Uganda Country Representative Frank Rusa (centre right) and senior Ugandan officials during the POMA review.



Secretaries General from all five of > Uganda's parliamentary parties, along with the Attorney General and several other senior government ministers, meeting in Kampala in 2019.



ANATOMY OF A DIALOGUE PROCESS: NIMD'S WORK IN UGANDA

Between 2017 and 2019, the IPOD platform managed to bring Uganda's parliamentary parties from holding opposing views to presenting a unified position on the contentious Public Order Management Act (POMA). This is how it happened.





Party leaders and Secretaries General, including Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni (centre right, in yellow) at the first IPOD Leaders' Summit in 2018.



World map



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▶ OUR WORK TO FACILITATE DIALOGUE WORLDWIDE

SOME TOPICS COVERED:

GENDER EQUALITY

DEVOLUTION AND DECENTRALIZATION

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

POLITICAL PARTY FINANCING

ELECTORAL REFORM



14 COUNTRIES WITH DIALOGUE PLATFORMS



227 DIALOGUE PLATFORM MEETINGS HELD



111 CONSENSUS-BASED DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE PLATFORMS



15 PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO PARLIAMENT

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

INCOME

In 2019, NIMD's total income was €13.6 million, which is an increase of 16% compared to 2018 (€11.8 million). This additional income aligns with plans made at the start of the financial year, and facilitated a continuation and expansion of NIMD's work. As in previous years, we have used part of our income to pursue funding diversification. This resulted in seven new donor contracts covering activities in six different countries. The largest of these is the contract signed with the EU for NIMD's Ethiopia programme (€1.7 million covering 18 months). In 2019, NIMD had a total of 25 different donor contracts.

EXPENDITURE

NIMD's overall expenditure over the course of 2019 was €13.3 million, some 15% higher than 2018 (€11.6 million). This figure is in line with annual budget (€13.3 million). Of that total figure, 93% (€12.3 million) was spent on country and regional programmes, as well as thematic programmes (knowledge, innovation and positioning). The remaining 7% was dedicated to non-direct human resources and office running costs (management and accounting costs).

RESULT

Overall, NIMD achieved a positive result of €0.30 million in 2019. Similar to last year, part of this (0.12m) will be added to NIMD's continuity reserve, which now stands at €1.56 million. The other part (0.18m) is added to an appropriated reserve for our new Project Management System. 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 2019 (€)
DEMO Finland	Myanmar School of Politics	Myanmar	135.000
Democratic Governance Facility (DGF)	Enhancing Democracy through inclusive dialogue and capacity development of political parties in Uganda	Uganda	449.817
Embassy of the Netherlands Guatemala (in Costa Rica)	New players in Guatemala; strengthening youth civil society organizations for inclusive democracy	Guatemala	40.628
Embassy of the Netherlands in Iraq	Democratic skills and Gender Politics training for Iraqi Parliamentarians	Iraq	171.809
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	130.928
European Union	Acción democrática para la paz	Colombia	1.019.435
European Union	Supporting the Ethiopian Political Parties Dialogue for political reform	Ethiopia	86.334
European Union	Pro-DEMOS: Partidos políticos hondureños más inclusivos, transparentes y democráticos	Honduras	264.180
European Union	REACH for Democracy	Multiple	68.460
European Union (via ECES)	Enhanced support to Democratic Governance in Jordan	Jordan	171.702
European Union (via International IDEA)	STEP2 Democracy - Support to Electoral Processes and democracy In Myanmar phase II	Myanmar	360.268
European Union (via Olaf Palme International Centre)	Strengthening Democratic Dialogue in Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	11.628
Foundation Pluralism	Training political leaders of Guatemala	Guatemala	88.815
Government of Canada (Fund for Local Initiatives)	El techo de cristal: Análisis y propuesta para mejorar la participación política de las mujeres en Guatemala	Guatemala	7.021
Global Human Rights Fund	Instituto 25A	Guatemala	6.251
Global Partnership for Multiparty Democracy (GPMD)	Secretariat services for GPMD	Multiple	10.776
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Dialogue for Stability - Inclusive politics in fragile settings	Multiple	3.299.927
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Strategic Partnership - Conducive environments for effective policy influencing: the role of political parties and parliaments	Multiple	6.542.866
Open Society Foundation	Strategic strengthening of organizational and political capacities of citizen collectives in Guatemala	Guatemala	118.801
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	Open parliament project	Guatemala	292.015
UK Department for International Development (DFID)	Exploring Dialogue in Tanzania	Tanzania	35.928
UN Peace Building Fund (via UNDP)	Youth LAB (Leaders politiques pour l'Avenir de Burundi: Empowering Young Women and Men to Participate in Burundi's Political Parties	Burundi	247.046
USAID (via IREX)	Accion transformadora	Guatemala	51.096
Total			13.588.631



NIMD'S WORK IS SUPPORTED BY...



European Union



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

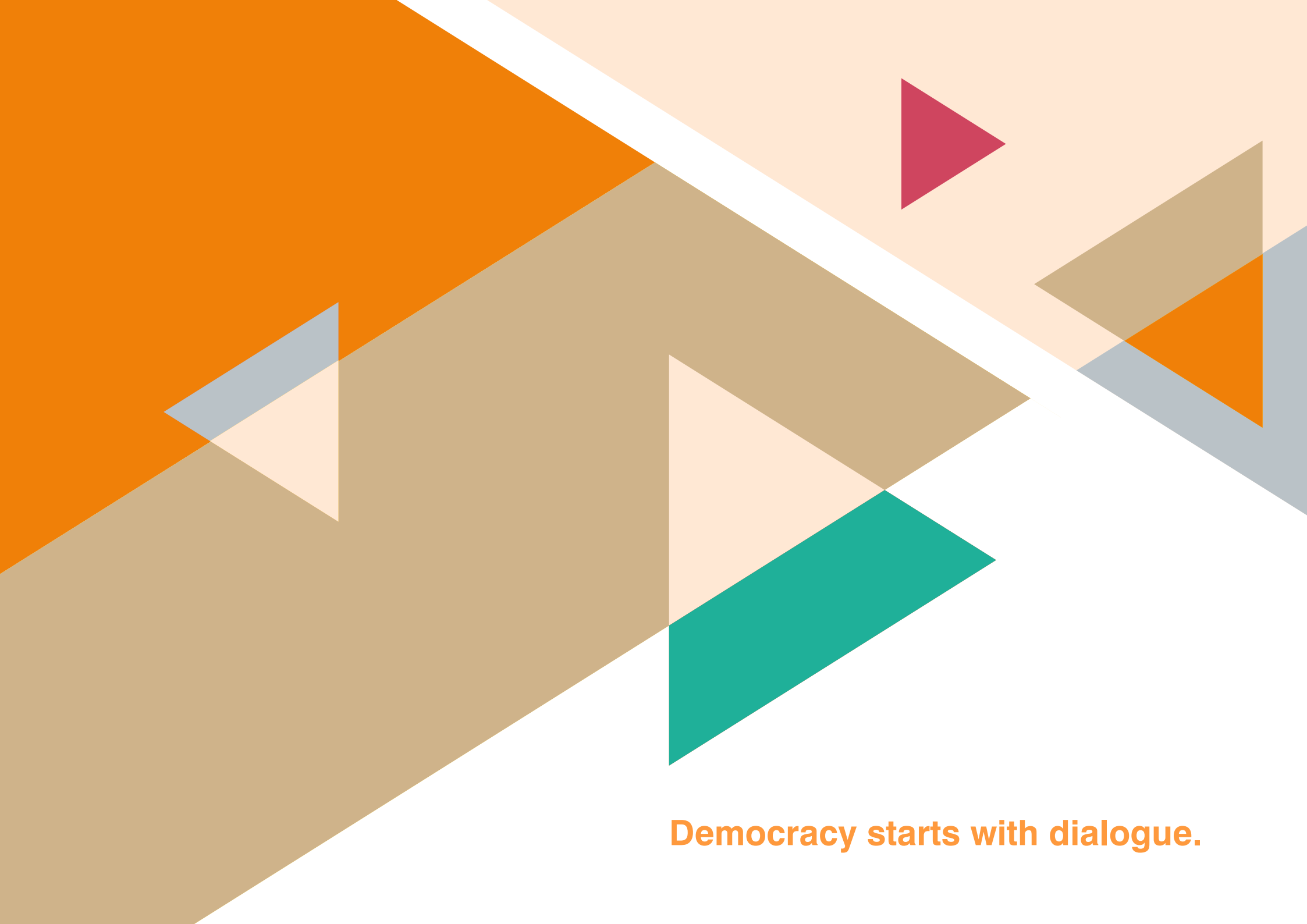


Government of the Netherlands



Department for International Development





Democracy starts with dialogue.