

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.