

An evaluation of NIMD's application of direct party assistance

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1 Introduction

This report contains an evaluation of NIMD's use of direct party assistance to improve the institutionalization of political parties in new democracies. This introduction provides the background for NIMD and outlines the objectives as formulated by the organization. In section 2 we discuss some of the methodological challenges in studying party assistance, describe the sources available for the evaluation and how the evaluation has been conducted. Section 3 describes how direct party assistance has evolved between 2002 and 2012 and highlights the findings from the country evaluation reports with respect to direct party assistance. Section 4 presents some of the contextual settings for the direct party assistance projects. This comparative perspective is relevant because it is well recognized in the study of party assistance that projects should be targeted to fit with the local contexts. All the evaluation reports that NIMD has previously conducted are reports for individual countries, hence in those evaluations the institutional context for the support is mostly constant. But the local settings for NIMD's projects are likely to influence the outcome of projects. Section 5 discusses the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of direct party assistance, while in section 6 we summarize lessons learned and offer some recommendations for various approaches of direct party assistance.

NIMD was founded in 2000 by Dutch political parties to support their counterparts in young democracies. In 2002, the first support programmes were launched in 6 countries. NIMD's total expenditures in this year were around 2.3 million Euros. The number of partner countries rapidly increased to 12 in 2003 and stabilized at 13 between 2004-2006. The number of partner countries increased again to 16 in 2007 and remained fairly stable till 2012 when it sharply increased again to a total number of 25 partner countries.

NIMD's total expenditures more than doubled in 2003 (5.1 million Euros), became fairly stable between 2005-2009 (around 9 million Euros), increased significantly in 2010 (11 million Euros) and decreased sharply in 2011 (7.8 million Euros), the year in which NIMD faced a reorganization that led to a severe reduction in staff and a restructuring of the organization.

NIMD's overall mission has been formulated as "Supporting the process of democratization in young democracies by strengthening political parties and political groups as bearers of democracy in order to create a well-functioning, sustainable pluralist political party system."¹ The overall objective has been divided into three components: 1) promoting inter-party dialogue, 2) support for institutional development of political parties and 3) strengthening party – civil society relationship. It is the second of these components that is the focus for the evaluation. Over the years the three main objectives of the NIMD have been maintained, but the formulations have differed.

The 2003-2006 strategic plan identifies: cross-party programs, bilateral programs and regional programs².

The bilateral programs were divided into four topics:

- Institutional development and management capacity
- Training and education of (future) party officers
- Political participation and communication

¹ (NIMD, 2007b: 7)

² (NIMD, 2003c)

- Understanding how multiparty democracy works

In 2007-2010 the three objectives have partly changed: improving the functioning of the multiparty political systems, assisting the institutional development of political parties, and improving the relationship between political parties and civil society organizations.³ Each of the three objectives has four substantive objectives, the achievement of which, are monitored by four main indicators:

- Decreasing polarization and increasing social and political cohesion
- Decreasing political fragmentation and increasing continuity in the political system
- Supporting the political parties' institutionalization, policy development and ability to solve problems,
- Expanding the participation of women, youth and marginal groups in the political process.

The third indicator is the one corresponding to the previous plan's 'Bilateral programs'. This indicator is further specified as containing:

- Development and implementing a code of conduct to regulate inter-party relationships, not only during elections but also in the interim,
- Implementing strategic plans to institutionalize political parties and to consolidate the political system,
- Developing and implementing party programs,
- Focusing more attention on policy discussions and coalition-forming.⁴

In the current multiyear plan (2012-2015) NIMD's vision has been reformulated – and substantially widened - to be “Democratic societies in which the rule of law is observed and the public good fostered”. At the same time, the concern with polarization and fragmentation of the party system in the previous plan has been left out and the emphasis on expanding participation for some disadvantaged groups has disappeared.

The specific objective is “a well-functioning multiparty political system”.⁵ Three outcomes will contribute to this objective:

- Functional multiparty dialogue
- Legitimate political parties
- Fruitful interaction between political and civil society.

Direct party support is now related to the second outcome - Legitimate political parties - and more specifically to “Policy seeking capacity of political parties improved”.⁶ The motivation for supporting this specific party activity is twofold. It is stated that through improvement of the policy function also other weaknesses of the parties can be improved: “As indicated in the Outcome definition, the NIMD program aims specifically to improve the policy function of parties, which also contributes to the weak performance of parties on other objectives”. Through improved policy development the electorate will have a clearer choice between political alternatives.

As can be seen, the formulations have changed over the years, but in general the three objectives; inter-party dialogue, institutional development of parties and improved party-civil society relations, have been maintained. As will be seen below, reporting of, and assessments of, institutional development projects, have not been related to

³ (NIMD, 2007b)

⁴ Ibid. p. 8

⁵ (NIMD, 2012)

⁶ Ibid. p. 12

a set of indicators that allow for a precise conclusion of whether a program has succeeded or not. This is particularly true for projects aimed at improving internal party democracy.

Although the formulations for the objectives have changed somewhat over the years, two elements appear repeatedly:

- Policy formulations, and
- Institutional development.

Each of these objectives can contain several elements. The policy formulation function of political parties often refers to the ability of political parties to develop so-called programmatic capacity (Kitschelt & Wilkinson, 2007: 1068). Institutional development is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and conceptually disputed (Randall & Svåsand, 2002). To analyze institutional development requires multiple indicators (NIMD, 2004b), which rarely are available.

2 Methodological issues in the study of direct party assistance

In this section we outline some of the methodological issues involved in studying how direct party assistance has worked. We first clarify what is meant by direct party assistance. This is followed by a paragraph on the problems of analyzing change. The next paragraphs first, describe the sources available for the evaluation and second, the use of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.

Party assistance in general has been defined as “The organizational effort to support democratic political parties, to promote a peaceful interaction between parties, and to strengthen the democratic political and legal environment for political parties”.⁷ The term “direct party assistance” has not been clearly defined by NIMD. Based on the review of the various relevant NIMD documents, the evaluators have reconstructed its meaning and defined it as: “*the support that is provided to political parties through the specific allocation of financial funds for the bilateral programme with these parties, whereby the parties can receive a share of these funds based on their annual plans/project proposals*”. It does not include *all* NIMD activities that aim to strengthen political parties (like trainings on financial management in a multiparty setting), nor all the activities whereby (part of) the activities are implemented in a direct relation with a party and the NIMD (like individual policy development support for parties in preparation for a VoteMatch project). In short, only the support that is provided via the process of allocating specific funds for the bilateral programme, which parties can access through the submission of annual plans/project proposals, do the evaluators qualify as “direct party assistance”.⁸

2.1 The study of change

The purposes of international assistance to political parties are to help promote *change* in a desired direction; such as towards more stable party systems, towards more institutionalized political parties, or improved policy development capacity. The forms and the scope of party assistance are *independent* variables that are assumed to have a positive impact on one or more *dependent* variables (stable party system or institutionalized political parties)

In general, to speak of a *cause* having a particular *effect* requires that several conditions are fulfilled:

- There must be a *mechanism* linking a variable (in this case modes of party support) and the outcome (for example improvement in party institutionalization),
- The cause (party support) must come *before the observed change* in the dependent variable,
- The two variables must have *co-variation*, we must be able to observe that change in independent variable (cause) corresponds to observed changes in dependent variable (effect),
- Alternative explanations must be accounted for and *rejected*.

Two caveats are relevant to any findings of effects. First, a ‘cause’ can have an effect as aimed for, but also *unintended* effects, or in the worst of circumstance, *primarily* unintended effects. (An example would be if the prospect of international party support triggered the formation of new parties, rather than consolidation of existing ones). Second, observed effects may be context dependent; transfers of ‘causes’ to other contexts, or at new time points, may not necessarily yield similar results. (The call for context sensitivity is repeated throughout the

⁷ (Burnell & Gerrits, 2010: 1068)

⁸ See for more information section 3.2 “Definition and features of direct party assistance”

literature on democracy promotion, including party assistance). Hence, the comparative information provided in section 4, may shed light on why there are differences in the 'success rate' of direct party assistance efforts.

It is also a challenge in all studies to have a clear specification of *what* the expected causal variable is supposed to change. 'Institutionalization' is a typical case where the meaning is not always understood. Attempts to measure the impact of party assistance requires data observations at least two time points; prior to and after the introduction of the causal variable.

The time perspective for detecting changes caused by the independent variable complicates the study of effects. It may not be possible to see any *effect* of an independent variable until after several years of support.

International party assistance is recognized to be of this kind⁹. Even if a change can be observed after a short time, there is no way of knowing if the effect is lasting or fades out in the long run.

2.2 Information for the evaluation

For this evaluation we have had available background information, secondary data and primary data.

The multi-annual plans provide background information about the long term objectives for party assistance and annual plans and reports for how programmes for individual countries were specified and carried out. Evaluation reports of NIMD provide information on the functioning of the organization.

The secondary data consist of evaluation reports of country programs.

Evaluation reports of country programs provide relevant information for this study. But direct party assistance is only one of the topics of these reports. The reports vary also considerably with respect to how long NIMD's country programs had been in operation before the evaluation was conducted. This obviously impacted on the conclusions that were drawn on how the programs functioned. Thus, in Mozambique the report was written a few years after the start of NIMD's engagement in 2002. In Tanzania NIMD's engagement also started in 2002, but the report covers the years 2007-2011. Thus, the latter had considerable more information available.

The primary data collected for this evaluation covers Georgia, Malawi and Uganda.

We have conducted short field visits to these countries. We have met with representatives of political parties that have received direct party assistance, local staff managing party support, as well as with some stakeholders, such as civil society organizations, and academics. For these countries we've have had available budgets, project documents; such as project proposals and reports. We have also interviewed program managers at NIMD HQ.

Although these three countries were selected for more detailed study, there are limitations with regard to the conclusions that can be drawn across the cases. The selection of the three countries does not follow a design meant to identify crucial variables that may make a difference, as in a most-similar or most-different systems design. Uganda, Malawi and Georgia have only little in common apart from being fairly new and not consolidated democracies. Uganda and Malawi share a common past as British colonies, a first-past-the-post electoral system for parliament, and a presidential system. (Until recently this was also the case in Georgia.). But with regard to many other contextual factors there is more variation than similarity. NIMD's program in Malawi is one of the longest engagements, from 2003. This report stops at 2012, but the program in Malawi was continued with bridging funds until the CMD-M and UNDP together formulated proposals for further projects. NIMD's long term engagement in Malawi offers a better opportunity to identify impacts of the support than Uganda and Georgia,

⁹ See the critique of the 'hunt' for immediate results and the use of 'impossible measurement indicators' in (Pinto-Duschinsky, 1997)

where NIMD became involved in 2009¹⁰. Moreover, the focus of direct party assistance has been different in each of these countries.

2.3 Direct party assistance and other modalities

The improvement of the institutional capacity of political parties is one of the three main objectives of NIMD, together with inter-party dialogue and strengthening of party-civil society linkages. There are obviously interactions between the three objectives, particularly regarding the two first, as direct party assistance in most (but not all) countries depend on participation in the inter-party dialogue. We have not been able to systematically study the interactions between the three objectives, but there is some information available in the country evaluations and information from the interviews regarding the relationship between the inter-party dialogue and support for individual parties.

2.4 Indicators across time and additional factors

A challenge in any study of *change in political parties* is to have relevant information at different time points and to be able to control for other potentially relevant factors.

As can be seen from several of the evaluation reports, the lack of baseline data that can be compared with later data, limits the possibility of drawing conclusions. Molenaers' review of the program in Zambia is a case in point: "...the main problem of assessing the impact of the bilateral support remained: there is no solid indication that these objectives are or aren't reached"(Molenaers, 2007: 21). A related problem is how to account for additional factors that may have an impact on change in political parties. We have not had available information that allow us to separate the effects of direct party assistance, from other variables. This regards in particular how significant the financial support provided by NIMD's program is for the recipient parties. Data on party finance is usually not publicly available, at least not completely. Thus, to the extent that financial resources are important for the operation of political parties, we do not know the significance of NIMD's support.

The data that are available for the institutionalization of political parties are for the most part absent. A common indicator, the number of party members, is either unavailable or not relevant, in many new democracies. In the cases of Malawi and Uganda we have added data on the nomination of candidates as a proxy for organizational strength. Nomination of candidates is one of the defining characteristics of political parties and one of the key functions parties perform in political systems. We assume that political parties seek to win elections. Therefore, stronger parties will attempt to field candidates in as many constituencies as possible. By comparing parties across elections it is possible to gain insights into the capacity of parties to perform the nomination function. The number of independent candidates is an indicator of how well all the parties together are able to control the total supply of candidates and therefore an indicator of the strength of the party system as a whole. The decision to field candidates is of course also influenced by other factors. A party may decide not to field candidates in areas where its allies are strong. Another factor may be the availability of funds. However, when the number of candidates running as independents is high, or increasing, it is a sign that the parties are not seen as the most natural base for candidates.

Other data on party organizational development is generally not available. The parties' reports on projects and information provided through interviews naturally will try to portray the parties in the best light. Alternative information can in some instances be gauged from other types of reports and/or from academic studies. Where

¹⁰ NIMD has supported multiparty-democracy in Georgia from 2005 onwards, but from 2009 through a local NIMD office.

available we compare information from such sources with the information provided by the parties themselves and as found in the evaluation reports.

2.5 Evaluation framework

This evaluation has been guided by an evaluation framework, which we have constructed based on a detailed reconstruction of the intervention logic and linked to specific OECD-DAC evaluation criteria¹¹. The OECD-DAC evaluation criteria used are:

- **Relevance:** “The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.”
- **Efficiency:** “A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.”
- **Effectiveness:** “The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.”
- **Impact:** “Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.”
- **Sustainability:** “The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time”¹²

¹¹ The reconstructed intervention logic and complete evaluation framework is found in Appendix 2.

¹² OECD (2002). Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management.

3 Direct party assistance and its evolution between 2002-2012

3.1 Introduction

This evaluation focuses on NIMD's direct party assistance in the period 2002-2012¹³. In this period, 12 countries benefitted from direct party assistance. Based on the information received, the evaluators have not been able to reconstruct a comprehensive picture of the budget that has been allocated to direct party assistance support during the 2002-2012 period. Financial information on direct party assistance is scarce and scattered. The table below provides an overview of the information that the evaluators have been able to reconstruct based on the annual reports. The expenditures stated do not only involve those allocated to direct party assistance, but also expenditures on other activities that focus on strengthening political parties. The amounts stated for Kenya and Guatemala do not contain any activities focused on direct party assistance as this type of support had been ended for both countries after 2007.

Table 1 Overview of recipients of direct party assistance in the period 2002-2012 and of the expenditures on strengthening political parties

Country	Country programme since:	Expenditures on strengthening political parties, including direct party assistance (% of total expenditures) ¹⁴	
		2008	2012
Bolivia	2002	116,220 (25%)	78,538 (32%)
Georgia	2005	-	165,860 (34%)
Ghana	2002	223,944 (37%)	155,568 (37%)
Guatemala	2002	49,849 (5%)	167,819 (30%)
Honduras	2012	-	N.K.
Kenya	2004	48,797 (8%)	55,287 (11%)
Malawi	2002	189,120 (37%)	111,362 (27%)
Mali	2003	179,918 (32%)	17,850 (5%)
Mozambique	2002	4,080 (3%)	88,066 (18%)
Tanzania	2002	169,198 (34%)	78,008 (28%)
Uganda	2009	-	87,419 (60%)
Zambia	2003	169,412 (26%)	-

No conclusions can be drawn from comparisons between the level of 2008 and 2012 expenditures as the expenditures have fluctuated substantially on an annual basis due to various factors, including temporary decisions to keep the direct party assistance programme on hold due to elections and/or political unrest (e.g. Mali in 2012). Furthermore, annual expenditures fluctuated due to the fact that parties were not always able to adhere to the reporting requirements, which had consequences for the bilateral allocations in the next period.

In addition to the financial information stated above, other data sources on the allocation of direct party assistance -including a 2010 NIMD working paper¹⁵-, suggest that the amounts of funds received by each individual party in Africa has differed greatly. This, while in Guatemala and Honduras, for example, all parties received the same amount of direct party assistance (€20,000,- per party in Guatemala and €5000,- per party in Honduras).¹⁶ From 2009 on, NIMD decided to decrease the expenditures on direct party assistance support significantly due to the fact that there were serious doubts about the effectiveness of the support¹⁷.

NIMD's approach to direct party assistance has changed over time due to evolutions in NIMD's strategy, focus, organization and operational procedures. In the next paragraphs, we will describe these developments in detail.

¹³ NIMD at the start used the terminology «bilateral support» but later changed it to other terms, among others «direct party assistance».

¹⁴ (NIMD, 2009b, 2013a)

¹⁵(NIMD-AfricaTeam, 2010: 5)

¹⁶ Source: Interview NIMD programme officer.

¹⁷ Source: Interviews NIMD programme officers; (NIMD, 2009c)

First, we shall, however, describe what exactly is meant with direct party assistance support and what the features are of the different approaches to this assistance.

3.2 Definition and features of direct party assistance

One of the objectives of this evaluation is, according to the ToR, to:

“Identify and assess the various implemented approaches and achieved results of NIMD’s direct political party assistance in the period 2002-2011 in relation to the objectives as set out in NIMD’s Multi-Annual Plans 2004-2007 and 2007-2011”.

In order to identify the various implemented approaches and assess their results, one needs first to know what is meant by “NIMD’s direct political party assistance”.

The ToR refers to “*bilateral programmes*’, pointing at the direct (funding) assistance to the political parties”.

Bilateral programmes are, in turn, described as programmes focused on the strengthening of political parties that are implemented as a direct relation between NIMD and the individual political parties, instead of the support that is provided to political parties in a so-called cross-party setting through NIMD’s local implementing organization.¹⁸ The ToR makes no clear distinction between “direct party assistance” and “bilateral programmes” and both terms are used in the description of the object of this evaluation.

Based on the ToR, NIMD’s direct party assistance seems to be:

“NIMD’s support to strengthen political parties, implemented in a direct relation between NIMD and the individual political parties.”

The review of relevant NIMD documents and reports, and the various interviews with NIMD programme officers, has not led to a clearer picture of what exactly is meant with direct party assistance. Amongst NIMD staff, different conceptions and definitions are held, which can be explained by the fact that an explicit strategy or policy on direct party assistance support has never been formulated, nor has it ever been defined in NIMD documents and guidelines. In fact, the term (direct) party assistance was not even used in the early years of NIMD’s support; the term “bilateral support” was used instead¹⁹. The terms (direct) party assistance and bilateral support have, furthermore, often been used interchangeably. The closest attempt the evaluators have found -based on the review of relevant documents- to describe and define (direct) party assistance was in the document “MEMO: NIMD expert meeting on party assistance, 26 May 2009”. In this document the “current strategy/working method” of (direct) party assistance is described. It is stated that based on parties’ strategic plan and annual plan, NIMD would in most countries directly fund political parties to implement their proposed activities; in addition:

¹⁸ (NIMD, 2013c: 2)

¹⁹ Since the terms direct party assistance and bilateral support have been used interchangeably in the various NIMD documents and the term direct party assistance was not even used in the early years of NIMD support, this evaluation report will also use both terms interchangeably. The use of either the term direct party assistance or bilateral support in the different sections of the text has often depended on the period covered and the way the support was described in the documents the evaluators have based their findings on.

“NIMD informs all political parties of the total amount of funds available for the bilateral programme (direct party support) in the upcoming year”

This seems to imply that direct party support can be defined as “*the support that is provided to political parties through the specific allocation of financial funds for the bilateral programme with these parties, whereby the parties can receive a share of these funds based on their annual plans/project proposals*”. It does thus not seem to include all NIMD activities that aim to strengthen political parties (like trainings on financial management in a multiparty setting), nor all the activities whereby (part of) the activities are implemented in a direct relation with a party and the NIMD (like individual policy development support for parties in preparation for a VoteMatch project²⁰). In short, only the support that is provided via the process of allocating specific funds for the bilateral programme, which parties can access through the submission of annual plans/project proposals, seems to qualify as “direct party assistance”. This description is the one the evaluators have kept in mind when evaluating NIMD’s direct party assistance support, but the evaluators have also taken into account developments in activities that may not strictly fall within this description but are deemed to be of relevance for this evaluation given their close link to direct party assistance.

Different approaches to NIMD’s direct party assistance existed in different countries and over time. These approaches differ from each other in multiple ways. Based on the desk research and interviews the evaluators identified various main elements that can be used to describe the various approaches. These elements relate to the financial features of the assistance, the institutional and organizational framework/setting in which the support is provided, and the focus of the support.

Financial features of the assistance

First of all, direct party assistance approaches differ in terms of the allocation of the direct party assistance funds to the individual parties. While in some countries, like in Guatemala, Zambia and Honduras, all beneficiary parties received an equal share of the total budget, in other countries parties’ share of the total budget was unequal and either based on a transparent “allocation rule” that was agreed upon by the political parties involved, like in Tanzania and Malawi, or based on NIMD’s discretion, like in Georgia. These allocation rules have not remained unchanged over time, but were adapted in various countries to arrive at allocations that were deemed to be more appropriate. Examples of allocation rules are:

Tanzania: “*Capacity building activities undertaken in 2005 were financed through a transparent system for allocating funds. The parliamentary parties agreed on a formula whereby 50% of the funds would be equally distributed, 30% based on seats in parliament and 20% based on the popular vote*”.²¹

Malawi: “*50% of the total allocation was shared equally among all the parties and the remaining 50% to be shared on a pro rata basis, considering the number of parliamentary seats for each party. In 2009, the distribution formula was changed: 85 % was shared equally between the parties and the remaining 15% proportionally*

²⁰ From 2007-2008, an internal VoteMatch (an interactive tool to develop political party programmes) project was implemented in Georgia with the aim to strengthen the programmatic capacities of political parties and to assist them in developing party programmes. Internal party workshops were provided to the six participating parties who had engaged in a process of providing answers and motivations to a list of 117 political statements and submitting the same statements to a large number of party members. A strategic electoral analysis and an internal party analysis of the party’s main political priorities, and of the correlation between the viewpoints of the party leadership and other party members, were conducted. (Source: (NIMD, 2008, 2009b)

²¹ (NIMD, 2006: 25)

*divided based on the parties' share of the parliamentary seats. As of 2010, 15% of the project costs could be used by the parties to cover general administrative expenses for running the projects*²².

Mozambique: *"The bilateral fund is based on a system of drawing rights for each party. In accordance with this principle the funding was eventually based on a basic amount for each of the 25 parties that participated in the 1999 elections, with an extra sum for those parties that gained 2% or more during these elections. The extra sum is based on the percentage of votes*²³.

Kenya : *"The discussion on transparent bilateral financing resulted in a formula for distribution in which 50% of the drawing rights are divided equally among the parties. 40% is divided based on national electoral vote and ten percent on representation of women and councilors."*²⁴

In **Georgia**, the local NIMD office decides itself how much funding is available to support each party based on their assessment of parties' needs and commitment and the discussions with the individual parties.²⁵

A second, related, distinction can be made between those approaches whereby both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary political parties were eligible for support and those approaches that only focused on parliamentary parties. In Guatemala, for example, parties could qualify for support if they were recognized by the electoral commission that was charged with the legal registration of political parties.²⁶ In Zambia, however, only parliamentary parties qualified for support. In some countries, changes were made over time in the specific approach followed. For example, while the approach for Mozambique had first been to include extra-parliamentary parties in the bilateral programme, in 2005 it was decided to no longer support the extra-parliamentary parties via the bilateral programme but via a cross-party approach.²⁷ While in most countries only individual parties were eligible for support, coalitions have also been supported within the bilateral support programme. In Mali, for example, major parliamentary parties have received individual funding as well as parliamentary coalitions.²⁸

A final distinction can be made between the approaches whereby the funds were directly transferred to parties' bank accounts and the approaches whereby NIMD reimbursed the expenses made or funded the activities directly itself. While during the first years of direct party assistance the parties received the funds, in most countries, directly on their bank accounts, after a couple of years of experience with bilateral support the system was changed, in many countries, into a system where NIMD would either reimburse the expenses made or financed the activities itself directly. This change was driven by concerns regarding parties' weak financial and project management capacity.

Institutional and organizational framework/setting

²² Communications from NIMD to CMD-M board 15.04.2008, and 18 September 2009

²³ (Dijkstra, Lundin, & Machado, 2003)p. 17 (This system was dropped in 2004).

²⁴(NIMD, 2006: 15).

²⁵ One could question whether this approach in fact still constitutes "direct party assistance support" as it differs significantly from the description as provided above. The evaluators have regarded it to be part of party assistance support as it is still based on the format that a specific amount of funds is available for projects with individual parties based on their proposals/annual plans.

²⁶ (NIMD, 2003b:32)

²⁷ (NIMD, 2006:20)); (NIMD, 2005:37).

²⁸ (NIMD, 2007a, 2009b)

Under the heading “institutional and organizational framework/setting” we can identify one key difference between the various direct party assistance approaches. This is the difference in approach regarding the division of labour between NIMD the Hague and the local partner, which was either a pre-existing independent local ngo/cso, a Centre for Multi-Party Democracy (CMD), or an NIMD Country Office. In some countries (e.g. Tanzania) the local partner had hardly any role to play with respect to the direct party assistance, while in other countries the local partner was more substantially involved (e.g. in Malawi) or played even a very strong role (e.g. Ghana and Georgia). Many of the specific country approaches developed over time, whereby often the role of the local partner was increased. Very often local partners have been involved in the administrative management of the programme, have supported political parties with the drafting of their proposals/annual plans, and have monitored the implementation of parties’ activities.

Focus of the assistance

With respect to the focus of assistance, we can identify four main differences between the approaches followed. The first distinction that can be made is between approaches that are very much demand-driven (like many of the direct party assistance approaches in African countries during the first years of direct party assistance support) and those that are much more steered by NIMD (e.g. as currently happens in Uganda and Georgia). Especially during the first years of the direct party assistance, the principle of ownership was regarded to be key and parties were deemed to know best what they would need to strengthen their institutional capacity. This led to the situation whereby parties were clearly in the “driving-seat” and NIMD “*was rather ‘unconditional’ with regard to activities proposed by the parties, and did not check whether their proposals were really helpful (the downside of the pragmatic approach)*”.²⁹ Overtime, NIMD’s approaches to direct party assistance developed and led to increased “steering” in many countries (e.g. Ghana and Mozambique).³⁰ In some countries, like Georgia, NIMD has had a great influence on the specific focus of the activities to be supported by direct party assistance. In fact, in Georgia, the local NIMD office decides itself, based on the discussions with the political parties and the assessment of their needs linked to the strategic plan, which specific activities it will support.

The second distinction is related to the first one discussed above. It covers the differences in approaches with respect to the width of the focus of the support. While in especially the African countries, and mostly during the first years of the direct party assistance support, a wide range of different activities have been undertaken, in other countries, like Bolivia and Guatemala and also in many African countries in the last couple of years, the focus of the activities has been less broad. In Bolivia, for example, the focus of the 2002 bilateral programme was specifically focused on developing the content of parties’ election manifestos in the run-up to the general election. This support was combined with targeted support to non-governmental organizations, focused on their role in enhancing the public political debate.³¹

The first two features are closely related, as with the increase in NIMD’s steering of activities an increase in focus also occurred. The main development in this respect has been the deliberate decision to focus on developing parties’ policy capacity from 2009 onwards.³²

The third distinction concerns the focus in terms of its timeframe. Especially during the first years of direct party assistance, many of the support activities had a short-term focus without the individual activities being interlinked overtime. The introduction of a strategic planning exercise and related annual plans has in many countries

²⁹ (IOB, 2010:67).

³⁰ See for more information the other sections of chapter 3.

³¹(NIMD, 2003b:28).

³² See for more information the other sections of chapter 3.

gradually resulted in a move-away from individual project activities to a longer-term focus on parties' institutional and policy capacity building.

The final distinction in approaches that can be made relates to the link between the direct party assistance activities and the other support activities of NIMD. In some countries, the direct party assistance activities have been implemented in quite an isolation of NIMD's inter-party dialogue and other support activities (e.g. in Guatemala in the first years of direct party assistance support, Tanzania and Malawi), while in other countries these activities have been stronger linked (e.g. in Uganda). In addition, a development can be detected in the perception of direct party assistance in relation to the inter-party dialogue component of NIMD's support. In the first years of direct party assistance, many of the NIMD country programmes, and especially those in Africa, strongly focused on strengthening individual political parties (e.g. Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia) and less on the wider political system and inter-party dialogue. In these countries, emphasis was mainly put on direct party assistance. Cross-party activities were often considered useful to support the bilateral activities (e.g. during the first years of support in Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia). Overtime, a shift in approach occurred whereby the cross-party programme became more prominent at the expense of the direct party assistance support.³³

3.3 Evolution of direct party assistance: period 2002-2006

3.3.1 NIMD's strategy

NIMD published its first Multi-Annual Plan (MAP) in 2003. This plan covers the period 2003-2006. The plan does not refer to direct party assistance, but only to bilateral programmes/projects. According to the MAP, NIMD's mission is "to support the democratic process in young democratic countries by strengthening the political parties or political groupings as bearers of democracy". The specific objective is "to create a well functioning, sustainable and pluralistic party political system". In order to achieve its mission, three types of programmes are implemented:

- cross-party programs;
- bilateral programs; and
- regional programs.

The regional programmes focus on regional co-operation and exchanges.

Cross-party programmes include activities that focus on:

- confidence building and dialogue between the political parties;
- facilitating the development of national agendas to strengthen multiparty democracy and political parties within the political system;
- improving the normative framework that regulates the multiparty democratic system; and
- strengthening the involvement of the population in decision-making within the public domain.

The bilateral programs were divided into four topics:

- Institutional development and management capacity;
- Training and education of (future) party officers;
- Political participation and communication; and
- Understanding how multiparty democracy works.

³³ See for more information the other sections of chapter 3.

The first topic includes all activities that focus on strengthening parties' institutional development and management capacity, like those focused on improving internal democracy, the development of policy programmes, party regulations and financial-administrative management. The second topic involves the training of party officers with special attention being paid to cadre training at the regional and local level and the inclusion of women, youth and the indigenous population. The third topic includes activities that focus on improved communication between the elected representatives and the electorate and the fourth topic focuses on activities that aim at improving the democratic system and the way parties operate in it.

Two key principles are to guide the programmes: "local ownership is key", i.e. a demand-driven approach is followed, and "co-operation should lead to capacity development" to achieve sustainable results. Four levels of added value are, furthermore, identified in the plan, of which two are of particular relevance to this evaluation:

- "Direct capacity build-up of political parties via bilateral projects"; and
- "Cross party projects to promote dialogue between the political parties that often have very different views on how to gain and maintain power"³⁴

Both the definition of the added values and the description of the cross-party and bilateral programmes show that a clear separation is being made, on paper, between the focus of bilateral programmes/projects and the cross-party programmes/projects. The first focuses on the capacity building of political parties while the latter focuses on dialogue between political parties and on strengthening the political system. As will be shown below, this clear distinction has, however, never been made in practice.

3.3.2 NIMD's bilateral programmes/projects in practice

From the start, NIMD decided to implement tailor-made programmes in the various countries to adequately respond to countries' specific social, economic and political context. The choice of the partner countries was made by the Dutch political parties. The focus of the various country programmes was the outcome of negotiations between NIMD and representatives of the leading political parties in the various countries. Especially in the first years of NIMD's operations, the principal of local ownership was key. The country programmes were to be drafted by the political parties themselves and "the organisation, development and implementation of the programme are in the hands of local partners."³⁵

During this time, no reference was yet being made to "direct party assistance". Instead, the term "bilateral support" was used. The country programmes consisted of a "mix of programme types", whereby bilateral support was combined with cross-party projects. Cross-party projects could, according to the 2002 annual report, "contain both training and dialogue elements" and bilateral support was "based upon so-called "drawing rights" – an allocated, maximum sum a participating party may draw to facilitate approved activities".³⁶

Variations in country programmes concerning the approach to, and focus of, bilateral support and its link with cross-party assistance existed from the beginning. An important difference that can be identified, for the period 2002-2003, is the difference between country programmes that very much focused on strengthening individual

³⁴(NIMD, 2003c: 5-9).

³⁵ (NIMD, 2003b: 10).

³⁶ Idem.

political parties (e.g. Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia) and those that focused more on the wider political system and inter-party dialogue (e.g. Guatemala, Bolivia and Ghana). In the former countries, the emphasis was put more on bilateral programmes/projects than on cross-party programmes/projects compared to the latter countries. Next, there were countries for which it was decided that the “normal approaches” would not work given the specific country context (e.g. Mali and Zimbabwe).

In Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, for example, NIMD’s support was very much focused on strengthening political parties. Cross-party activities were often implemented in support of the bilateral programme. Thus, while according to the MAP only bilateral programmes/projects would focus on building the capacity of parties, in practice, also cross-party projects were conducted to strengthen parties’ capacity.

More concrete, in Mozambique, bilateral support was implemented, based on a system of drawing rights, with the aim to improve the functioning of political parties. The specific projects mainly focused on the organization of national and regional conferences to discuss issues like elections, strategy development, and internal communications. Cross-party activities were closely linked to the bilateral support and focused on building parties’ capacity. Examples of these activities are a training course on financial management and a strategic planning project for political parties.

“Additional initiatives should concentrate on cross- party activities in terms of providing training programmes and the necessary follow-up, including an assessment of costs and objectives. Training should be the main element in improving the quality of the projects while keeping the ownership in the hands of the Mozambican parties.”³⁷

The combination of both bilateral and cross-party support was assessed to work well *“Parties are using the knowledge gained from cross-party activities in their own projects, and the cross-party projects dovetail well with party needs.”³⁸*

A similar approach was followed in Tanzania, where bilateral support was provided to strengthen political parties, based on a system of drawing rights. Cross-party activities were to support the bilateral programme.

“In addition to the bilateral programme, part of the programme involves cross- party activities. Activities within the cross-party programme aim at supporting the bilateral programme and enhancing the quality of all activities.”³⁹

Also in Zambia, bilateral support was provided, based on a system of drawing rights, and focused on strengthening the internal organization of political parties. Both the bilateral and cross-party support were focused on *“strengthening the internal organization and the capacity of the Zambian parliamentary parties.”⁴⁰*

However, in Guatemala, Bolivia and Ghana for example, a different approach was followed whereby the wider political system and inter-party dialogue was more prominent. In Guatemala, the core of the programme was the multiparty dialogue process and the bilateral programme was in fact to support and complement this process.⁴¹

³⁷ (NIMD, 2004a: 29)NIMD (2004).

³⁸ (NIMD, 2003a: 16)NIMD (2003)

³⁹(NIMD, 2004a: 37; 2005).

⁴⁰(NIMD, 2005: 49)).

⁴¹ (Jimenez, 2003:20-36); (NIMD, 2004a: 52).

The bilateral support was in the early years very much demand-driven, based on parties' project proposals, and weakly developed.

*"The bilateral projects component of the programme appears weakly developed, especially in comparison to the multiparty dialogue component. IMD Guatemala is actually not receiving many proposals from the parties. There is little sense of thematic focus to what grants have been made, other than very general ideas about participation. Clear selection criteria for the bilateral projects will have to be developed as part of a strategic vision about the role of these projects in relation to the cross-party projects."*⁴²

The country programme in Bolivia started in 2002 with bilateral assistance that was exclusively focused on strengthening the public political debate in the run-up to the elections. Political parties were supported in drafting their election manifestos and this support was combined with the support of three NGOs linked to their work on strengthening the public debate. After this short bilateral programme, a country programme was established that clearly focused on strengthening the political party system in general and enhancing the dialogue between political parties and civil society. It involved a wide range of activities whereby the bilateral component had no prominent role.⁴³

In Ghana, the four political parties committed themselves to a country programme that focused on parties' role in consolidating constitutional democracy. A long term strategy was formulated by the parties –a Joint Action Plan– to achieve this aim. Next to various cross-party activities, the programme included a bilateral support component that was focused on the strengthening of parties' organizational and institutional capacity and linked to the objectives outlined in the Joint Action Plan.⁴⁴The bilateral support component of the programme was thus clearly linked and guided by the multiparty dialogue process.

Mali and Zimbabwe are examples of countries for which it was decided that the "normal approaches" would not work given the specific context of the countries. In Mali, the lack of a clear party landscape and the large number of political parties made it impossible to implement a bilateral support programme based on a system of drawing rights. It was, therefore, decided to first strengthen political parties through cross-party activities.⁴⁵

In Zimbabwe, it was deemed to be impossible at all to focus on strengthening political parties and, therefore, it was decided to focus only on "intensifying the dialogue about potential developments in the country".⁴⁶

Lessons learned and changes in the approaches to bilateral support⁴⁷

During the first two years of implementing bilateral programmes/projects important lessons were learned. A key problem encountered was that the system of providing bilateral support based on drawing rights appeared, in general, to be difficult to implement due to the weak institutional and organizational capacity of parties. In Mozambique, Malawi, Guatemala, and Tanzania, for example, it was hard to obtain project proposals of a sufficient quality and the financial management of allocated funds was a major issue of concern as parties' financial management capacity appeared to be too low. As a result, the provision of bilateral support proved to be

⁴² (Jimenez, 2003: 20-31)

⁴³ (NIMD, 2003a: 28-32; 2004a: 48-49).

⁴⁴ (NIMD, 2004a:14-15).

⁴⁵ (NIMD, 2003a: 22-23).

⁴⁶ (NIMD, 2003a:26-27).

⁴⁷ This section is based on NIMD's annual reports 2002-2006; the country evaluations of Mozambique (2003), Guatemala (2003), Bolivia (2004), Ghana (2004); and interviews with various NIMD program officers.

very time-consuming, since parties required a lot of support, and the quality of the overall outcomes achieved was, according to various annual and evaluation reports, not satisfactory.

In addition, the quality of the results of the bilateral projects also appeared often to be low due to the fact that parties seemed to lack a results-oriented approach towards the strengthening of their own political party and the projects were often not linked to a longer-term strategy.

Finally, it was clear that, in general, a sound monitoring framework was lacking that would allow for the monitoring of parties' individual progress and link these developments to the analysis of general developments in the political system.

In order to address these problems various approaches and strategies were developed. In some countries (e.g. Mozambique and Zambia), cross-party training activities were implemented to build parties' capacity related to, for example, financial management. Another (complementary) approach was to allocate more time to the local office/representative/partner to support parties with drafting the project proposals. Moreover, some initiatives were undertaken to improve the monitoring of the results of bilateral support and developments in parties' institutional capacity in general. In 2004 NIMD published the Handbook "A Framework for Democratic Party-Building", which provides guidelines and criteria for improving the performance of political parties, based on a workshop NIMD held in 2003 with its partners from Africa, Latin America and Central Europe. While this handbook does not aim to provide an all encompassing monitoring framework for tracking developments in parties' institutional capacity, it does include criteria and indicators that can be used when designing a monitoring framework focused on tracking parties' institutional development.⁴⁸ In some countries (e.g. Guatemala and Nicaragua) specific monitoring and evaluation systems were developed to track and assess parties' institutional development and the effects of NIMD's interventions.

Over time, also more substantial changes were made to the bilateral support approach. Key changes that were implemented between 2003/2004-2006 are:

- the introduction of a strategic planning exercise;
- the introduction of a performance-based system; and
- the decrease in emphasis put on bilateral support in favor of cross-party support.

In various countries⁴⁹ a strategic planning exercise was introduced with the aim to improve the contribution of bilateral support to the long-term objectives of party institutional development by linking the bilateral support activities to a longer-term strategic plan. In some countries, this support was provided as part of the bilateral programme (e.g. in Kenya and Ghana), while in other countries it took place as a cross-party activity (e.g. in Mozambique and Zambia). Regardless of whether the exercise was labeled as a bilateral or cross-party activity, the approach was very similar in all countries in the sense that political parties were first trained in "strategic planning" and subsequently developed a strategic plan, which was to provide the basis for future bilateral support. The introduction of "strategic planning" was, according to the various annual reports, an important achievement as it allowed for a more strategic and long-term focus on the strengthening of parties' institutional development.

⁴⁸ (NIMD, 2004b).

⁴⁹ E.g. in Ghana, Guatemala, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique and Zambia.

Kenya: *“The continuous reference to strategic plans in guiding party programmes and activities is a key achievement. Traditionally, the parties tended to blame all their difficulties on a lack of resources, even when they had no clear-cut programmes. With NIMD support, they now use their strategic plans as a guide to action, intra-parties dialogue, debates and setting priorities”⁵⁰*

Malawi: *“The focus in the bilateral programme shifted from projects (often without clearly linked activities) to an approach based on annual plans linked to strategic plans. All parties developed strategic plans and annual plans targeting specific areas in their strategic plans.”⁵¹*

In addition, a performance-based system was implemented in various countries (e.g. in Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania) with the aim to increase the effectiveness of bilateral support. A system of a series of rounds of drawing rights allowed for a differentiated allocation of resources based on parties' performance. In Zambia, for example, extra funds were allocated to parties that performed well during the first half of the year in fields such as reporting, meeting deadlines and making use of the strategic plan⁵².

Next, from 2004 onwards the strong emphasis on bilateral support, which was present in various country programmes between 2002-2003 (e.g. in Mozambique, Tanzania and Malawi), diminished in favor of cross-party assistance and inter-party dialogue. This shift was triggered by several assessments/evaluations that pointed to the fact that the results achieved with bilateral support were limited and/or the political context required a stronger focus on the political system as a whole. This shift in focus had now also become more feasible as the provision of bilateral support and the past cooperation between NIMD's local offices/representatives/partners and political parties had contributed to building the necessary trust and good working relationships.

Malawi: *“Before the elections, the programme consisted of a strong bilateral and a modest joint-party programme. Following the elections, an IMD review mission concluded in July 2004 that a cool-down period of several months without bilateral activities was essential. Indeed, considerable political manoeuvring took place during this period. The mission further concluded that a stronger focus on the political system was desirable, given the fluidity mentioned earlier. Hence, priority was given to re-modelling the cross-party modes of cooperation to further enhance ownership, bring the top brass fully on board and develop a full-fledged joint-action plan. The result was a common strategic plan drawn up by the main political parties in October 2004 and the establishment of the ‘Malawi Centre for Multiparty Democracy’ (MCMD).”⁵³*

Tanzania: *“The difficult context meant rough sailing for the programme in 2004. Because the IMD's past activities focused too heavily on the bilateral programme, it now opted to shift the balance towards more joint activities.”⁵⁴*
“In 2005, the Tanzania programme was once again restructured, changing from a primarily bilateral programme to a more balanced bilateral and cross-party programme. The joint programme revolves around the new Tanzania Centre for Democracy (TCD).”⁵⁵

⁵⁰(NIMD, 2007a: 19).

⁵¹ (NIMD, 2007a: 21).

⁵² (NIMD, 2005: 50).

⁵³(NIMD, 2005:28).

⁵⁴(NIMD, 2005:45-46).

⁵⁵ (NIMD, 2006:24).

Mozambique: “IMD evaluated the results of the parties and concluded that a change in approach was necessary. The electoral results provided IMD with a tool to evaluate the democratic role of the parties and their growth during the past four years. It became clear that some small parties do not have the capacity to develop into fully operational parties on their own, despite having received support. IMD has therefore changed its strategy. From focussing on bilateral support to each party to cross-party support and dialogue between the parties. (...) The IMD also increased support for dialogue, aiming to reduce the tensions between the parliamentary parties and increase cooperation between parties outside of parliament.”⁵⁶

In spite of the several changes made in the approach to bilateral support, and while beneficial results of bilateral support were identified (for more information see section 5.2 Effectiveness), for various countries it continued to be a struggle to increase the effectiveness of bilateral support. The quality of project proposals remained problematic, parties’ reporting was frequently not of good standards nor on time, and a clear need was seen to better monitor the results of bilateral support.

Tanzania: “The quality of proposals by individual parties differed significantly and was in certain cases below par. The NIMD needs to pro-actively assist some of the partners in developing their parties”⁵⁷

Mozambique: “Some parties that participated in the bilateral programme in 2003 and 2004 did not manage to produce proper reports on time. This hampered the progress of the programme as a whole. Again, new measures have been introduced to ensure appropriate reporting.”⁵⁸

Malawi: “Malawi’s parties are relatively under-institutionalised and lack the necessary resources, structures and secretariats to effectively implement the programme”⁵⁹

Kenya: “The bilateral party programme is both ambitious and labour-intensive. More attention should have been devoted to guidance, monitoring and supervision of the fourteen programmes with bilateral partners. Additional assistance is required to assist the NIMD coordinator in Kenya to effectively monitor the bilateral programme in the election year.”⁶⁰

Guatemala: “The IMD and the Organization of American States (OAS) created a budget for capacity- building activities of political parties. Although the parties had conducted an internal assessment of their situation after the elections and had started to develop a capacity- building strategy, it soon became clear that the parties still lacked the capacity to formulate proposals within an overall long-term strategy. The project will therefore be reformulated and will include providing support for political parties on how to develop proposals.”⁶¹

3.4 Evolution of direct party assistance: Period 2007-2012

⁵⁶(NIMD, 2006:20).

⁵⁷ (NIMD, 2007a:29).

⁵⁸ (NIMD, 2006:21).

⁵⁹ (NIMD, 2007a: 21).

⁶⁰ (NIMD, 2007a: 19).

⁶¹ (NIMD, 2005:67).

3.4.1 NIMD's strategy: MAP 2007-2010/2011

The second MAP "Political Parties Pillars of Democracy" covered the period 2007-2011⁶². This MAP defines three objectives of NIMD's assistance:

- improving the functioning of multiparty political systems;
- assisting the institutional development of political parties; and
- improving the relationship between political parties and civil society organizations.

In addition, four substantive objectives are formulated that are part of these three general objectives:

- Decreasing polarization and increasing social and political cohesion;
- Decreasing political fragmentation and increasing continuity in the political system;
- Supporting the political parties' institutionalization, policy development and ability to resolve problems; and
- Expanding the participation of women, youth and marginal groups in the political process.

Especially the third substantive objective is of relevance for this evaluation as it is specifically focused on the support to political parties. The realization of this objective is, according to the MAP, to be monitored by the parameters:

- Developing and implementing a Code of Conduct to regulate inter-party relationships, not only during elections but also in the interim;
- Implementing strategic plans to institutionalize political parties and to consolidate the political system;
- Developing and implementing party programmes; and
- Focusing more attention on policy discussions and coalition-forming.

In addition, the MAP contains a "table of objectives". This table defines NIMD's meta-objective as "Supporting multiparty democracies and the institutional development of political parties as a contribution to strengthening democracy, and ensuring greater political stability and economic development while reducing violent conflicts and poverty." The formulated specific programmatic objectives are similar to the three objectives mentioned above, whereby for the objective that is of relevance to this evaluation "assisting the institutional development of political parties" the following expected results are identified:

- leadership and organizational capacities of political parties strengthened by a strategic multi-annual programme;
- political identity and party manifesto developed and implemented;
- internal party democracy strengthened and representative representation of population groups increased; and
- financial management systems and decision making procedures institutionalized and made operational.

These expected results should in turn contribute to the following impacts:

- Political parties' knowledge and capacities strengthened and institutionalized;

⁶² The MAP was originally written for the period 2006-2010, but its coverage was later extended with one year.

- Using a party programme, parties present themselves more clearly in the period between two elections;
- Improved internal representation and inclusiveness; and
- Political parties' accountability for activities and finances improved.

In order to monitor the results achieved the following indicators were defined:

- Party secretariats strengthened;
- Party manifestos and programmes developed and made available to the public;
- Regularly occurring and transparent internal elections; and
- Quality of financial reports and annual reports improved.

The MAP, furthermore, lists seven intervention instruments or methods that should be used to achieve the objectives aimed at:

- partnership, ownership and inclusivity;
- dialogue;
- peer pressure;
- performance-based financial support;
- meetings with politicians;
- training programmes; and
- promoting support for democracy assistance.

These instruments/methods in turn have their own objectives, outputs and effects. Of particular relevance for this evaluation are the following instruments/methods:⁶³

Instrument/ method	Objective	Output	Effects
Partnership, ownership and inclusivity	Establishing and maintaining partner relationships with political parties as the bearers of multiform democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusive approach • mutual respect • mutual trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong ownership • greater self-confidence • own initiatives
Dialogue	Making it possible for parties to discuss shortcomings and find ways of improving the functioning of multiparty democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structuring and institutionalising dialogue • supporting interactive assessment • exchanging 'best practices' • developing agenda for implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less polarisation • more public debate about matters of policy • agendas for reforms (strategic plans)
Peer pressure	Encouraging positive competition among political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitating inter-party dialogue • regional collaboration among political parties • exchanging best practices • transparent methods of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased willingness to change • more emphasis on institutionalisation
'Performance based' Financing	Transparent financing of political parties based on terms agreed on by all parties and coupled to the results achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreement about terms of financing with 80% of the programmes • transparent financing • financing ends for parties who do not honour the agreements (self-elimination) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financing is not a source of conflicts among parties • setting up financial administrations • introduction of accountability in party financing
Training	Contribute to sustainable development of capacity of politicians and administrative staff of political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitating various sorts of training programmes • training the trainers • developing material for training programmes by using the knowledge centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expands professional capacity • contributes to institutionalisation of political parties

Partnership, ownership and inclusivity are, according to the MAP, "the cork upon which the realization of the NIMD programme floats, since no change can be sustained if it is not supported by those responsible for its

⁶³ (NIMD, 2007b).

having been implemented”.⁶⁴ Inclusivity here means that all political parties should be included in the country programme but also that attention needs to be paid to the inclusion of marginalized groups in society.

The instrument/method “dialogue” does not only refer to inter-party dialogue but also to intra-party dialogue, recognizing the importance of a broad participation of party cadres in parties’ institutional development processes, like for example in the development of strategic plans. Therefore, “NIMD strongly emphasizes the need for a broad participation of party cadres in drawing up these plans”.⁶⁵

Both the agreements with the political parties and their implementation are, according to the MAP, completely transparent to allow for peer-pressure amongst the political parties. NIMD uses this mechanism, according to the MAP, where possible to stimulate the process of change.⁶⁶

The MAP also formally introduces the performance-based financial support, whereby political parties who do well on a range of criteria (e.g. related to administrative, procedural and contractual agreements) can receive extra support, whereas bad performers may receive reduced or no support. According to the MAP, “the performance-based criteria will be implemented in 80% of the programmes in which political parties are supported”.⁶⁷

With respect to the training programmes, it is stated that requests concerning training programmes should first of all appear in partners’ strategic plans. NIMD, nevertheless, also has a pro-active policy regarding training programmes in the following areas:

- the political party’s financial administration;
- the use of strategic planning processes; and
- the use of ICT to improve communication with and between political parties and to give parties better access to the information available.

NIMD, therefore, “strongly urges its partners to mention in their annual report those training programmes that give attention to these areas”. The reason for this pro-active approach is that this is deemed to be necessary by NIMD because of the parties’ weak administrative infrastructure.⁶⁸

Compared to the MAP 2003-2006, we can detect a couple of developments in NIMD’s overall strategy regarding strengthening political parties through bilateral support.⁶⁹ First of all, the objectives of strengthening parties’ institutionalization are defined in more detail, whereby strengthening organizational & management capacity, policy development, and internal democracy have acquired a prominent place. Secondly, explicit reference is made to fostering parties’ institutional development based on strategic plans and building parties’ capacities based on strategic multi-annual programmes. Thirdly, instruments/methods are defined that should guide the support and which emphasize, for example, the inclusivity of the support, performance-based financing and the importance of broad based participation of party cadres in the institutional development processes. Finally, a pro-active, and thus automatically less demand driven approach, is suggested concerning training in areas that are to deal with parties’ weak administrative infrastructure.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p.22

⁶⁵ Ibid. p.23.

⁶⁶ Ibid p. 24.

⁶⁷ Idem.

⁶⁸ (NIMD, 2007b: 25-26).

⁶⁹ The MAP does not use the term “direct party assistance”.

All these developments can clearly be linked to the key lessons NIMD learned during the 2003-2006 period, like the necessity to address parties' weak financial management capacity and the importance of providing bilateral support based on a long-term strategy instead of via short-term individual projects that are often not interlinked.

Apart from the MAP, no other policy guidelines were developed to provide direction to the strengthening of political parties via bilateral support. Also, no specific procedural guidelines existed to inform the country programmes. In fact, the scope, focus, financial and procedural aspects of the bilateral support programmes depended a lot on the individual strategies, policies, and managerial decisions of the responsible Political Party Co-ordinators and Policy Officers. This is not to say, that no joint reflection and knowledge sharing took place. Lessons learned were shared and strategies and implementation procedures were discussed, but very often on an ad-hoc basis, driven by individual staff members. From 2009 on, however, more structured attempts have been undertaken to draft guidelines for direct party assistance. The various attempts got, however, always stuck in the "working paper phase" and have never led to a set of finalized guidelines that could guide direct party assistance.⁷⁰

The need to review and reflect upon the bilateral support approach was felt from around 2008. Based on the experience with bilateral support in the various countries and the lessons learned from the country evaluations, it became clear that it was often very labor intensive to provide bilateral support while the results achieved were very difficult to assess. Some staff members even became doubtful about whether it had been effective at all.⁷¹ It was, therefore, decided in 2008 to undertake a review of the approach and adjust it where necessary.⁷²

3.4.2 NIMD's bilateral programmes/projects in practice; period 2007-2008

In the period 2007-2008, continued attention was provided to strategic planning, building the organizational and financial management capacity of parties and strengthening policy development and internal democracy. The principle of ownership was still a key guiding principle, but, as reflected in the MAP, over time a very demand driven approach developed into a more balanced steered demand driven approach. Examples of this are the focus of the trainings as described in the MAP and the emphasis on strategic planning, which requires parties to – at least on paper- link their project demands to a longer-term institutional development strategy. The negotiations about the project proposals between NIMD and the parties also reflect this. While in the past, parties wishes were often simply followed as long as they were in line with NIMD's broad objectives, it now happened more frequently that NIMD seriously reflected on the relevance of the proposed activities. A good example is Mozambique, where RENAMO requested NIMD to finance the national congress. NIMD did not finance it as congresses are *"the basic preconditions of parties and parties should be able to finance such events themselves. Especially in Mozambique where parties do receive governmental funding. In addition, although parties do need congresses, they are organized in such a way that they do not have any positive impact on internal democracy or accountability of the party"*.⁷³ In addition, the bilateral negotiations with FRELIMO were not successfully concluded as FRELIMO had requested capacity building support but did not provide information on their overall capacity building strategy, which NIMD had requested to ensure the embedment of NIMD's activities in the overall strategy and the impact and sustainability of NIMD financed activities.⁷⁴ These examples illustrate an increased orientation on achieving

⁷⁰ Source: interviews with various NIMD programme officers.

⁷¹ Idem.

⁷² (NIMD, 2009b: 14).

⁷³ Ibid. p: 68-69.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 69.

results and a shift in approach from partner ownership to shared ownership based on the agreed objectives of the provided support.

According to the 2008 Annual report, various results were achieved (for more information on the effectiveness of the support, see section 5.2). In various project proposals, for example, parties referred to their strategic plans (e.g. in Tanzania and Zambia), party secretariats were strengthened (e.g. in Kenya and Ghana), and policy development capacity improved (e.g. Ghana, Mali and Tanzania). However, in general, the country programmes still faced difficulties with the implementation of the bilateral support component. This, in spite of the provision of trainings on, for example, project and financial management, and incentives, through the performance-based financing system. Also the role of the local office/representative/partner was often enhanced to better support political parties and monitor the activities. Nevertheless, the beneficiary parties remained organizational weak, which negatively affected their ability to draft and implement good proposals and fulfill the administrative and reporting elements. The following examples illustrate these points:

Malawi: *“Although NIMD and CMD-M have tried to improve their project management capacity with a training programme at the beginning of the year, parties remain organisationally weak. Reporting from political parties to NIMD remains a big challenge, although the more hands on monitoring of the bilateral activities by the CMD-M secretariat proves to be effective. Essentially, the main problem regarding reporting is that most parties do not have functioning secretariats and that people work on part time basis. This makes it difficult for them to be keeping track of logistics and administrative details. (...) Although much attention was given to a better execution of the bilateral programme in 2008, it remained a challenging programme as discussed earlier under 2.a.1. The coaching role that CMD-M has fulfilled in 2008 in this programme has been positive and contributed to the good execution of several of the party programmes and timelier reporting. CMD-M also monitored and evaluated the activities of the parties with spot checks. This greatly improved the information on the implementation and quality of undertaken activities.”⁷⁵*

Zambia: *“An external evaluation of the NIMD/ZCID programme was undertaken in October. The programme framework was assessed positively, but the evaluators noted that additional work needed to be done in such areas as the bilateral support to political parties.”⁷⁶*

“UPND was still unable to meet or explain long outstanding reporting requirements from 2006, for which reason they were excluded from the bilateral programme in 2007 as well. Two other parties, PF and FDD, were not able to meet the deadline and requirements for the interim report, resulting in an exclusion of the second instalment of their 2008 contract (...) The challenges in managing the bilateral programme were discussed as well. The main bottlenecks concern the untimely submission of proposals and reports due to little capacity within parties and poor communication lines within parties and between party representatives and ZCID staff on the bilateral programme.”⁷⁷

In order to address the above mentioned problems, NIMD continued investing in capacity building through training and increasing the support provided to the parties by the local office/representative/partner.

Other lessons were also learned during this period. For example, in line with the MAP principle of broad participation of party cadres in parties' institutional development processes and to avoid the situation that only one

⁷⁵ Ibid. p 53-54.

⁷⁶ (NIMD, 2009a:40).

⁷⁷ (NIMD, 2009b:93-95).

party member controls party's entire bilateral program, it was decided for the Zambia country programme to establish a team of 3-5 technical people within each party, who would be involved in the management of the bilateral programme. Another lesson learned in Zambia relates to division of labor between NIMD, the board of the Zambian Centre for Inter-Party Dialogue (ZCID) and the secretariat of the ZCID. One of the key problems encountered was the *"somewhat too much ownership of the board over the secretariat, with the risk that ownership turns into predatory tendencies"*. With the help of an external consultancy company, the respective mandate and responsibilities of NIMD, the ZCID board and ZCID secretariat were clarified and recorded and the secretariat was strengthened.⁷⁸

A final example is Mozambique, where lessons were learned concerning how (not) to operate in a political context with one dominant party in power, a limited span of control of the opposition, and a lack of a politically independent governmental bureaucracy. In the past, NIMD had spent a lot of attention to supporting the small extra parliamentary parties. It turned out, however, that these parties were not able to develop into effective parties with political impact. It was, therefore, decided that NIMD would need to develop new criteria for supporting extra parliamentary parties and new instruments to stimulate democratization in these type of countries.⁷⁹

3.4.3 NIMD's working papers/memos on direct party assistance; period 2009/2010

As stated in section 3.4.1, NIMD decided in 2008 that it was time to undertake a review of the direct party assistance⁸⁰ approach. In May 2009, an expert meeting was organized to discuss NIMD's approach. According to the Memo of the meeting, the strategy behind direct party assistance needed to be critically assessed as *"NIMD's direct assistance to political parties (over 150 in total of which the vast majority in Sub-Sahara Arica) has proved more challenging than its support provided to these platforms of inter-party dialogue (...) Notwithstanding a number of positive exceptions, NIMD does not have sufficient view on the impact generated by its direct party support programme and, in some cases, doubts whether impact is generated at all."* For these reasons, NIMD decided to seriously scale down the party assistance programme for at least the year 2009 and expressed the need to draft a new strategy that would be included in the 3rd MAP.⁸¹

The MEMO contains a summary of NIMD's current strategy/working method of direct party assistance. Based on our documentary research and the interviews conducted, this seems to have been the first attempt to actually reconstruct and write down the way direct party assistance was provided. Since no specific written strategy or guidelines on direct party assistance existed⁸² and, in fact, the individual Political Party Co-ordinators and Policy Officers decided on the specific country strategy and approaches, the summary of the "current strategy/working method" is a generalization of the various ways direct party support had been provided in the past. The described method was thus not strictly applied in all countries.⁸³ The "current strategy/working method" was:

- 1) In some countries NIMD started with undertaking a baseline study of the political context and parties' institutionalization;

⁷⁸ Ibid. p 95-96.

⁷⁹Ibid. p. 65.

⁸⁰ Both terms are used interchangeably.

⁸¹(NIMD, 2009c:1-2).

⁸² This is not to claim that no strategic guidance at all was available. NIMD's 'Framework for Democratic Party Building' has been used as reference document for many strategic planning exercises and has informed NIMD's direct party assistance approach in many countries.

⁸³ Sources: Interviews with the NIMD programme officers; various annual reports and independent evaluations.

- 2) Political party members were trained in strategic planning on the basis of NIMD's 'Framework for Democratic Party Building'. This framework provides do's and don'ts and indicators for the following 5 areas:
 - Party Identity;
 - Internal Unity;
 - Internal Democracy;
 - Electioneering Capacity; and
 - Strong Organisation.
- 3) After the training, political parties would organize internal consultations with "their regional rank-and-file, women branches and youth organisations in order to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of their party and define priority areas for NIMD support."
- 4) Subsequently the parties would draft a strategic plan for institutional development (often with a 5-year scope);
- 5) Based on the strategic plan the parties would develop annual plans with requests for support to be submitted to NIMD;
- 6) Based on the annual plans, NIMD would then, in most countries, directly fund political parties to implement the proposed activities;
- 7) At the end of each year, NIMD would inform "all political parties of the total amount of funds available for the bilateral programme (direct party support) in the upcoming year. The Secretary-Generals of the parliamentary parties and the representative of the non-parliamentary parties then jointly agree upon the manner in which the funds are to be divided amongst themselves (equally or on the basis of parliamentary strength). NIMD's annual contribution to a party is roughly around 20.000 euros annually, although in countries with a limited number of parties this amount is higher."; and
- 8) The accounts of the parties would be audited by an external firm and parties would need to present midterm and final reports. In case parties would fail to oblige these criteria or no positive audit report was submitted they would not be eligible for the next annual funding cycle. In addition, in some countries external M&E experts would also monitor at least two activities per party annually.

While each step of this approach was not strictly followed in each country it does provide a general overview of the process. The MEMO continues with describing some key lessons learned, some of which also were discussed already above in the description of NIMD's experience with the bilateral programmes/projects in practice. These lessons are:

On results/impact:

- The impact and effectiveness of the support has not been monitored effectively. Even when sound performance indicators are included in the proposals (which often only is the case after lengthy discussions with party representations and numerous drafts), the monitoring reports of parties often do not reflect upon these performance indicators. In addition, based on the external monitoring visits conducted, NIMD has seen that there are often much more results achieved than what becomes obvious from the reports.
- The most positive result achieved with the support is the greatly improved contact between the national party leadership and their regional rank-and-file in the period between elections.
- While for some parties internal accountability has been improved, illustrated by the fact that regional rank-and-file questioned their national leaders during internal party meetings, for other parties national leaders simply used NIMD funded projects to entrench their own positions and dictate party positions to the lower ranks.

- NIMD support projects had sometimes, especially during the first years of bilateral support, been monopolized by individual party representatives who use the support in pursuit of their own agenda instead of for strengthening the party. It is, therefore, of importance to ensure the support projects are decided upon by multiple party members and managed by technical party staff.
- Supporting internal democracy has proven to be very difficult in absence of a clear NIMD strategy and in the context of parties that often do not have reliable party membership data available, suffer from internal party conflicts, and where substantial funds seem to float through the parties in a nontransparent way.

On parties' commitment:

- The support provided is often taken more seriously by the opposition parties who have limited access to funding than by the ruling parties who often have access to many other sources of funding and do not always seem to consider the support to be beneficial enough given the administrative and reporting demands.

On parties' capacity:

- Frequently parties have not been able to fulfill the project management requirements in time, with as a result that the support had to be suspended.

On linkages with cross-party support:

- Linking cross-party and individual party support has proved successful in a number of cases. *"In Zambia, for example, a debate on improved access to media in the run-up to the 2006 elections between the Minister of Information, the heads of media, senior party representatives was followed by a cross-party training on issue based campaigning. Subsequently all parties were individually enabled to draft a media strategy following an internal consultative process and to come up with a two page issue based agenda. These were then published together and big inter-party meetings were organised in every province during which the policy issues were discussed."*⁸⁴

Finally, the MEMO lists some elements for discussion when drafting a strategy on direct party assistance. Questions raised include whether:

- NIMD's direct party assistance should be much more restrictive and focused on a limited amount of functions to be executed by political parties, since only limited amounts of funds are available and strengthening political parties is a very complex process;
- NIMD should link all of its direct party support activities to the agenda of inter-party dialogue (e.g. if inter-party dialogue focuses on access to media, should direct party support then be focused on supporting parties developing media strategies?);
- there is a need for a sequential type of support or differentiated support based on a categorisation of political parties to better reflect differences between parties;
- NIMD would need to actively establish partnerships (e.g. with other donors, universities, think tanks) when implementing its direct party support; and
- all parties should contribute a percentage of funds to activities funded by NIMD.

The MEMO itself does not contain any answers to the questions raised. The related document "Political Party assistance brainstorming session NIMD; 26/05/2009" does arrive at a couple of relevant conclusions but again no answers to all of the questions above are provided:

⁸⁴ (NIMD, 2009c: 5).

- There is no unique model based upon which party assistance can be delivered as there is need for context sensitivity. Nevertheless, it can be useful to design a menu of possible intervention options, which should be closely linked to the electoral cycle;
- Focus on a specific niche (e.g. policy development) as it is unrealistic to focus on parties' institutionalization as a whole;
- Be realistic with what you expect to achieve with the assistance; over time the contribution can be very valuable but don't expect immediate results on the party system;
- Do no harm: ensure that the support is never enforcing authoritarianism or instability; and
- Build upon past achievements, don't drastically change the support programmes, and focus upon the countries NIMD is already active in.

Next to these documents, two other documents have subsequently been prepared, in 2009 and 2010 respectively, on a revised NIMD Party Support Strategy. All this work on party assistance has been mainly driven by NIMD's African team and informed by their experiences with the support in African countries. The first document that was prepared is the "NIMD Bilateral support strategy, African political parties 2011-2016, Very first draft" and the second one "Working paper; As input for a revised NIMD Party Support Strategy 2012-2016; Towards more accountable political parties".

The document "NIMD Bilateral support strategy, African political parties 2011-2016, Very first draft" describes a number of strategic and operational considerations for future support, which include answers to some of the questions raised in the MEMO:

- Focus NIMD's bilateral support on policy debate and development, while still leaving sufficient possibilities for the political parties to take ownership over the content of their institutional strengthening programmes;
- Link the support to the electoral cycle and ensure that contact is being maintained between the national and local level within parties in between elections;
- Find a balance between a generic and country specific approach;
- Facilitate broad based participation in defining party priorities by providing each parliamentary party / caucus with the financial means to ensure that its priorities for institutional strengthening are based on a process of internal consultation with its members and specific interest groups (e.g. women and youth);
- Continue with the direct funding of political parties while also strengthening the project & financial management capacity within political parties;
- Do not accept political representatives of a party to conduct the financial management duties, but require this to be done by non-political, administratively trained, staff;
- Develop and use country specific indicators for party strengthening related to policy development and debates within parties; and
- Reduce on an annual basis the percentage of NIMD's contribution to parties' national budgets, especially in countries where public funding is assured.

The "Working paper; As input for a revised NIMD Party Support Strategy 2012-2016; Towards more accountable political parties" has never been finalized but does contain some important elements. Next to the description of the past working method of party assistance⁸⁵, which is very similar to what was described above, it contains, amongst others, information on the funding strategy, the focus of the party support and revised guiding principles

⁸⁵ The document uses both bilateral support and party support (interchangeably) but does not refer to *direct* party support.

and working methods. Also some (new) lessons learned are included. For example, a lesson learned is that the strategic plans have proven to be useful as internal and external organisational reference document for party representatives. Another lesson learned is that the institutional support areas have been very broad and parties have implemented activities in a very wide range of areas, which has made it difficult for NIMD to develop practical support tools. Next, it is concluded that the funding strategy of NIMD had a number of unintended negative consequences that need to be addressed. These are:

- The relatively small amounts of NIMD bilateral funding available were dispersed over a large number of parties, which has negatively affected the overall impact on parties' institutionalization;
- NIMD's bilateral support may actually have sustained high levels of fragmentation of the party system in quite some programme countries as more than 50% of the bilateral funds was directed to parties without or with very limited representation in parliament;
- NIMD's funding may in some countries (e.g. Tanzania) have contributed to the sustained dominance of one party since the majority of funds were allocated to the largest party.
- Since the total amount of bilateral funding for each African country has been quite similar, the total number of parties in a party system has frequently very much affected the amount of funds available to each party. This has led to the situation whereby large parties in, for example, Mali and Zambia received less funding than small parties in Ghana.

The working paper contains only limited information on how these negative consequences can be addressed. It is proposed that the country teams agree upon a funding strategy with their political partners and concluded that "*in practice this will only mean a substantial change in policy towards the Tanzanian political parties where the ambition should be to create a better balance between the funds available to CCM and the other parliamentary parties*". In addition, it is mentioned that the total bilateral support budget available for each country could differ per country "*although the NIMD funds should not stimulate fragmentation and fund a vast amount of smaller parties*"⁸⁶. No clear strategy to solve the allocation related problems is thus provided.

Next to the proposals related to a revised funding strategy the working document contains revised guiding principles, focus areas and working methods. The revised guiding principles are:

- Shared Ownership (instead of ownership): Where in the past party representatives decided themselves on the distribution of bilateral funds amongst parties in a programme country, now party representatives and NIMD representatives jointly decide on the distribution of these funds;
- Inclusivity: "All parliamentary parties and/or parliamentary coalitions (and sometimes platforms of non-parliamentary parties) receive NIMD funding";
- Towards multi-party democratic consolidation: The allocation of NIMD's funding should "avoid sustaining either fragmentation of or considerable dominance within the party system";
- Stimulate political cooperation: "In party systems where high levels of fragmentation are considered a challenge for democratic consolidation, the NIMD funding strategy should include incentives for political cooperation";
- Focus on minority groups: A percentage of NIMD's bilateral funds should be earmarked for supporting the youth league or women's wing of the political parties;
- Decentralization (instead of centralization): While in the past the majority of NIMD funds were utilized to strengthen institutional areas at the national level, in the long run NIMD should allocate part of the bilateral funds to strengthen regional branches of political parties; and

⁸⁶ (NIMD-AfricaTeam, 2010:10).

- Thematic focus: Instead of the wide range of institutional thematic areas of support applied in the past, NIMD should focus its support “on three core themes: organizational capacity, policy development and the parliamentary caucus-party nexus”.

The “old” principle of performance based support was not included in the revised guiding principles list and it was noted in the working paper that this principle was not realized in practice. The thematic focus areas were described as follows:

- Capacity of parties/movements to formulate vision and policy enhanced – policy support:
 - Policy officer package;
 - Vote Match; and
 - Manifesto formulation.
- Basic organisation capacity and infrastructure of parties/movements improved – core organisational capacity support:
 - Strategic planning party organization;
 - Basic Secretariat package;
 - Financial sustainability package;
 - Decentralisation package; and
 - Internal party democracy package.
- Party-Parliamentary Caucus nexus strengthened – wider party operation support:
 - Policy link party – parliamentary caucus;
 - Linking democratic reform agenda to parliamentary support; and
 - Strengthening MP-party-constituency link.

More information on these packages and elements of support was not provided and no follow-up work that links to this has been found during the desk research. The indication of the packages and mentioning of specific tools seems to suggest that the ownership concept would be significantly reduced to allowing parties to make a choice concerning the indicated specific elements of support. Depending on the exact content of the elements and packages this could still leave a lot of scope for ownership, but this would in turn have as disadvantage that the focus areas would still be very broad and support would be scattered. Many different activities can be thought of, for example, in the areas of decentralisation and internal party democracy.

The working methods would not drastically change according to the working document and a specific procedure was proposed. First, NIMD would fund a baseline analysis focused on parties’ state of affairs regarding the three thematic focus areas. Then NIMD would outline a multi-annual bilateral plan and develop practical tools. Subsequently, NIMD would assist parties to develop their strategic plans that would focus on their needs related to the three focus areas and include performance indicators. Based on the strategic plans, multi-annual contracts would be signed between NIMD and the parties (instead of annual contracts). Then concerning the monitoring and evaluation of the support, parties would be obliged to report once a year, their accounts would need to be checked annually, an independent mid-term review would need to take place after two years, and an overall impact assessment after three years. Apart from this outline, no other information was included in the working

paper to shed light on the specific working methods to be followed. We have, in addition, not found any indication during the field and desk research that this proposed procedure has been followed in practice.

3.4.3 NIMD's strategy: MAP 2012-2015

In the current MAP (2012-2015) NIMD's vision has been reformulated – and substantially widened – as its vision now foresees “Democratic societies in which the rule of law is observed and the public good fostered”. At the same time, the concern with polarization and fragmentation of the party system in the previous plan has been left out and the emphasis on expanding participation for some disadvantaged groups disappeared. The specific objective is “a well-functioning multiparty political system”.⁸⁷ Three outcomes are to contribute to this objective:

- Functional multiparty dialogue;
- Legitimate political parties; and
- Fruitful interaction between political and civil society.

Direct party support is related to the second outcome: Legitimate political parties and more specifically to the related output “Policy seeking capacity of political parties improved”.⁸⁸ The motivation for this specific party activity is twofold. It is stated that through improvement of the policy function also other weaknesses of the parties can be improved, and moreover, through better policy development the electorate will have a clearer choice between political alternatives. The shift from a more open type of direct party support (various forms of self-defined institutional strengthening projects) to a more focused support (policy development) combines a strengthening of the individual political parties with the quality of the party system. For the party system to represent different policy alternatives to the voters, it is a requirement that the individual parties have the capacity to develop policy positions in the first place. The shift also seeks to address two problems in party developments in new democracies: a focus during elections on personalities rather than on political issues and a prevalence of clientelistic relationship between politicians and voters.

While in the previous two MAPs, the strengthening of political parties appeared at least to be regarded as important as the other objectives, this current MAP makes it very clear that the support focused on arriving at legitimate political parties is not the primary objective of NIMD. The primary pillar and objective of NIMD's approach is facilitating interparty dialogues. Nevertheless, providing basic capacity support for parties is regarded to “form an important supplement in this regard” as “it is in the direct interest for a dialogue process to be successful to have respected stakeholders that are well organized and have sound capacities.”⁸⁹

3.4.4 NIMD's bilateral/party assistance programmes/projects in practice; period 2009-2012

The amount of funds allocated to bilateral/party assistance support decreased substantially from 2009 on. In addition, support to some countries was stopped (e.g. Zambia in 2010, Tanzania in 2011, and Malawi in 2012) while also new countries were added (e.g. Uganda in 2009).

In the “old” programme countries where NIMD had been providing bilateral/party assistance already for some years no substantial changes in the approach occurred, apart from the key change that the amount of funding significantly dropped. However, subtle changes were made. For example, the decision of NIMD to increase the focus on parties' policy development from 2009 on led, according to one of the NIMD program officers, to a real

⁸⁷ (NIMD, 2012:11).

⁸⁸ (NIMD, 2012:12).

⁸⁹ (NIMD, 2012:15).

shift in focus towards policy development issues in, for example, Ghana and more subtle changes in Mozambique. In Ghana, policy advisors were, for example, provided under the bilateral programme in the election year in 2012 to assist the political parties with their timely production of political programmes.⁹⁰

In Mozambique, the 2009 and 2010 guidelines for the bilateral programmes clearly stated a request to political parties to focus their proposals on strategy and policy development (2010) and political accountability (2009). Another example of the focus on policy development is Bolivia, where in 2012 two projects with political parties were undertaken specifically focused on party policies.⁹¹

Other developments continued, like increasing the role and responsibility of the local office/partner in managing the party assistance (e.g. in Mozambique and Malawi) and building the project and financial management capacity of parties. The strategic planning exercise was also reinvented in this period. Over time, less reference and/or mere lip-service was paid to the strategic plan in the proposals of the parties in the various countries. The function of the strategic plan as long-term guide for parties' institutional development process appeared more and more to be quite limited. The NIMD Georgia office redeveloped the strategic planning tool into a comprehensive strategic planning process consisting out of the development of a party-organization vision and mission, stakeholder analysis, SWOT analysis and the identification and formulation of specific strategies. Based on the successful implementation of this process in Georgia in 2010/2011, the strategic planning exercise was also initiated in Mozambique 2012, followed-up by the process of designing multi-annual plans, to improve the long-term outlook of direct party assistance and move away from more ad-hoc annual projects.⁹²

In the "new" programme country Uganda the new insights concerning direct party assistance support were implemented from the start. Shared ownership instead of ownership is practiced, the political party capacity strengthening support is linked to the multiparty dialogue component and policy development is a key focus area. Parties' policy development capacity was strengthened by providing each party with a policy analyst. These analysts are trained and remunerated by NIMD's Inter Party Organisation for Dialogue and their work is monitored via monthly meetings and progress reports. Next to this policy development capacity support, parties' organizational and managerial capacity is also build by the provision of skills trainings and the strengthening of parties' secretariats with office equipment and internet access.⁹³

In Georgia, where NIMD launched a field office in 2010 -after it had to cancel its support programme in 2008 due to the withdrawal of OSCE/ODIHR's support for the programme- the strategy to direct party assistance also benefitted from the new insights and lessons learned from the beginning. Again shared ownership was applied and instead of allowing parties to decide on the allocation of funds, the NIMD office decides upon the amount they spend on each party based on their assessment of parties' needs and commitment to institutional and policy development. The programme started with a well-developed strategic planning exercise and various policy development activities have been implemented. Based on the strategic planning exercise the New Rights Party, for example, requested NIMD's support for building their policy development capacities in various thematic fields like healthcare, local self-governance and agriculture. The NIMD provided this support through training sessions, consultant advice and the joint drafting of policy papers/party programs.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ (NIMD, 2013a: 29-30).

⁹¹ Sources: Interviews NIMD programme officers and political party representatives; (NIMD, 2013a) ;(NIMD.Mozambique-country-team, 2009) (NIMD.Mozambique-country-team, 2010).

⁹² Sources: Interviews NIMD programme officers and political party representatives;(NIMD, 2013a).

⁹³ (GPG, 2013:10-11).

⁹⁴ (NIMD, 2009b:65); (NIMD, 2013b: 6-15); interviews with political parties and staff of the NIMD office in Georgia.

4 The political and social contexts

The diversity of the direct party assistance projects reflects NIMD's efforts to take the local context into consideration when designing and implementing projects, an approach that is generally called for in reports and evaluations of party assistance.

The diverse historical context and institutional contexts for NIMD's engagement are likely to have an impact on how effective various assistance programs can be or how long it can take before one can expect to see changes in how political parties function. Some of the new democracies have emerged from civil war, such as Mozambique, Uganda, Guatemala, while other countries have experienced a peaceful transitions from single-party rule (Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia), or a combination of the two; as in the case of Uganda's transition from the 'no-party movement' system to multiparty system in 2005/2006. Mali represents a unique case as it for long was considered a consolidated new democracy until it experienced a military coup and internal war in 2013.

Party support in these contexts is introduced in political systems that have recently experienced a transition to a democratic polity, at least in terms of formal institutions. However, in spite of formal democratic institutions the political actors as well as citizens generally are often imbued with a mind-set from the previous regime. A consequence of this is often lack of confidence in institutions and political processes. Particularly in countries that have experienced a bloody civil war and where political parties in the new democracy reflect the conflict lines in the civil war it is hard to build institutions which assumes a level of trust. Mozambique represents a more difficult context for party support than Zambia or Malawi. In place of formal institutions, informal practices play a significant role. Cultural norms, like respect for individuals in positions of authority collides with ideas of organizations based on equal status of individual members.

The effectiveness of party assistance is also likely to be influenced by the institutional environment of political parties. Political actors respond to the incentive structures in the political system. Structures can be more or less conducive to the development of strong political party organizations. Studies of party developments in new democracies have identified some features of the political system that are important:

- Parliamentary vs. presidential forms of government;
- Electoral rules; and
- Centralized vs. decentralized governance.

In addition to the formal set-up of the political system, the overall quality of economic and social developments and the extent of democratic qualities provide important contextual factors for party system development.

Parliamentary vs. presidential forms of government

The structure of political institutions has important consequences for the organization and functioning of political parties. Political systems in which the presidency is the dominant institution tends to "hinder parties' organizational development" (Samuels and Shugart 2010: 13). In presidential systems, the major parties are primarily structured in pursuit of this office. When the presidency controls patronage and other resources, the party structures will also become 'presidentialised', with strong central leadership dominating over organizational routines and more widespread divisions of power within the political parties. Parliamentary systems stimulate the development of party organizations because of the need to coordinate for the winning of parliamentary seats and for the continuous organization of the parliamentary caucus and the relationship with the government, particularly for the governing party/parties.

Electoral rules comprise all the rules (paragraphs in the constitution and legal acts) that structure the whole electoral process. Among the regulations that are particularly important for the functioning of political parties are: registration of political parties, rules regulating nomination of candidates, rules regulating political finance, rules for election campaigns, and the formula used in the electoral system. The latter aspect is the most important aspect of the electoral rules, both regarding the distribution of seats in the parliament and the system for the election of the president. Proportional electoral systems encourage stronger political parties than plurality or majority types of systems used in single-member districts because of the need for coordination inside political parties to nominate candidates and because it is almost impossible to be elected as an individual candidate. Majority systems encourage more cohesive parties than plurality systems because of the need to make credible commitments between parties, either to build coalitions in-front of the first round of voting, or to convince voters to vote for a coalition partner in the second round of voting. In general, all kinds of electoral system characteristics that require coordination tend to stimulate stronger organization. The electoral systems in use can be classified into broad categories, each of which contain multiple sub-categories (Bormann & Golder, 2013): 362. But the many other aspects of electoral rules; such as rules for registration of political parties, the nomination of candidates running for office, rules regulating the financial aspects of political parties, candidates and election campaigns are also important parameters for how parties operate. At present there are no similar measurements or categories that capture all of these aspects.⁹⁵

The two first of these institutional factors distinguish between the countries where NIMD is engaged (Table 4.1) and can also be contrasted with the status of several established democracies. Fish and Kroenig have developed a parliamentary power index (PPI) to measure the strength of the parliament as an institution, which includes the relationship between the parliament and the executive (Fish & Kroenig, 2009). The index ranges from 0 (no power) to 1 (powerful), based on 32 different items.⁹⁶ The main element of the electoral system is indicated by assigning a country to one of the three main categories of electoral systems for the parliament: MM (Mixed Member), P (single member constituency, plurality), M (single member constituency, majority), and Prop. (Proportional system), and for the election of the president: P (plurality), M (majority).

Finally, table 4.1 includes Freedom House scores (political rights and civil liberties)⁹⁷ for 2014 and 2005. The scores indicate the overall status of democracy in the countries. Hence, the scores capture the state of the legal environments that political parties operate in. The better the overall democratic status is likely to be associated with better performing party systems and party organizations. Most of the countries in the table fall into the categories of 'partly free'. The exception is Ghana which is classified at 'free'. Mali stands out because it has been

⁹⁵ See for example (Massicotte, Blais, & Yoshinaka, 2004)

⁹⁶ The index may be seen as proxy measure of the balance between the president and the parliament, but it is actually only a part of the index that captures the balance as such.

⁹⁷ Political Rights:

- Electoral process—executive elections, legislative elections, and electoral framework
- Political pluralism and participation—party systems, political opposition and competition, political choices dominated by powerful groups, and minority voting rights
- Functioning of government—corruption, transparency, and ability of elected officials to govern in practice

Civil Liberties:

- Freedom of expression and belief—media, religious, and academic freedoms, and free private discussion
- Associational and organizational rights—free assembly, civic groups, and labor union rights
- Rule of law—-independent judges and prosecutors, due process, crime and disorder, and legal equality for minority and other groups
- Personal autonomy and individual rights—freedom of movement, business and property rights, women's and family rights, and freedom from economic exploitation

Source: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/methodology-fact-sheet#.UuDsGhAo51t>

scored as 'free' by FH for decades, until the military take-over in 2013. Most of the countries changed from unfree to partly free in the mid-1990s, but with little change after that. In one case, Uganda, there has recently been a decrease in the quality of political rights, while Malawi scored better in the first years after the multiparty system was introduced compared to later years.

To the extent that these institutional contexts impact on the development of party organizations, the 'probability' of a successful development is higher in Georgia than in any of the other countries. Georgia has a stronger parliament, has at least some proportional representation, has more extensive decentralization than some of the other countries and, as outlined in the country report (Annex B) has made significant progress in organizing the elections and having an orderly transfer of power, while the most 'problematic cases' in terms of institutions, re Malawi and Zambia where the parliament is very weak and the election of the president is by simple majority; as well as for parliament.

Table 4.1. Political institutional characteristics of NIMD countries.

	PPI*	El.system Parliament	El.system President	FH score pol.rights 2014(2005)	FH score civil liberties 2014(2005)
Georgia**	0.59	MM	M	3(3)	3(4)
Guatemala	0.50	P	M+	3(4)	4(4)
Ghana	0.47	P	M	1(2)	2(2)
Kenya**	0.31	P	M+	4(4)	3(3)
Malawi	0.38	p	P	3(4)	3(4)
Mali	0.34	M	M	5(2)	4(2)
Mozambique	0.44	Prop	M	4(3)	3(4)
Tanzania	0.31	P	M	3(4)	3(3)
Uganda	0.44	P	M	6(5)	4(4)
Zambia	0.28	P	P	3(4)	4(4)

* Source: PPI (Fish & Kroenig, 2009), scored 2008-9. ** Kenya's new constitution which came into effect in 2010 gives more powers to the parliament. In Georgia a constitutional revision that came into effect in 2012 shifted many of the powers of the president to that of the prime minister, but only indirectly affecting the powers of the parliament. Electoral system: Parliament: MM (Mixed Member), P (single member constituency, plurality), M (single member constituency, majority), Prop. (Proportional system), President: P (plurality), M (majority). FH scores from: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world>

The third institutional dimension, centralization vs. decentralization, is not included the table below. All the systems covered by this evaluation are unitary states, with the exception of Tanzania. However, in Tanzania the mainland itself is not divided into autonomous units. There are also elements of territorial autonomy in Uganda, but a formal federal system is not in place but is an issue in the political debate⁹⁸. In at least some of the other

⁹⁸ There are no similar indexes that measure decentralization in general and it is not obvious what the concept of decentralization covers Schneider (2003). Schneider has examined three dimensions of decentralization (financial, administrative and political) for 68 countries in 1996, some of which are countries where direct party assistance have been

countries where NIMD is engaged with direct party support, decentralization has limited extension, as in Mozambique, or as in Malawi where local government has been completely absent from 2005 until 2014, while in Zambia local government has limited autonomy (Gumbo 2012). The significance of decentralization as a dimension of the political system is because with locally elected offices, more opportunities exist to nominate candidates and to win office. Responding to such opportunities requires a conscious effort and capacity to build extensive party organizations. But as the rewards of winning local offices are much lower than for winning national offices, parties may choose to spend resources on the latter.⁹⁹

provided, such as Georgia, Guatemala and Kenya. The scores for these countries can be compared to an established unitary democracy, Sweden.

	Fiscal	Administrative	Political
Georgia	0.49	0.66	0.06
Guatemala	0.35	0.02	0.01
Kenya	0.15	0.68	0.12
Sweden	0.58	0.83	0.50

Particularly political decentralization receives a low score in the three new democracies, compared to Sweden. Georgia score higher than Guatemala and Kenya on fiscal and administrative decentralization, while Kenya has a higher score for political decentralization. ((Schneider, 2003)

⁹⁹ See(Muriaas & Svåsand, 2013).

Economic and social context of party support

The socio-economic context for party support is challenging for all of the countries where NIMD is active, with the exception of Georgia, which is ranked among the mid-level countries on the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI). Some countries, such as Mozambique and Mali are almost at the bottom of the HDI ranking, while Ghana is scoring better than any of the other African countries. Although the HDI-ranking is a crude measure of the socio-economic conditions, it does capture some of the characteristics that usually influence a populations' ability to act politically. Low level of education tends to work against the building of strong formal organizations. Low economic development and widespread poverty mean that there are few economic resources that can be mobilized to sustain complex organizations, while the combination of dispersed population settlements and multiple culturally based cleavage lines (religious, linguistically and ethnic) are barriers against effective communication and mobilization, which parties depend on to function.

	HDI 2012 rank
Bolivia	108
Georgia	72
Guatemala	133
Ghana	135
Kenya	145
Malawi	170
Mali	182
Mozambique	185
Tanzania	152
Uganda	161
Zambia	163

Total no. of countries ranked: 187

Source:

<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/HDR/2013GlobalHDR/English/HDR2013%20Report%20English.pdf>

These characteristics of the political system, the nature of the societies and the experiences of the political actors interact in shaping the development of the political parties. NIMDs' support for political parties is therefore entangled in a set of constraints. These constraints make it less likely in some contexts than in others that direct party support will lead to a change towards more institutionalized parties.

5 Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability of NIMD's direct party assistance

5.1 Introduction

According to the ToR, the evaluation should:

- Identify and assess the achieved results of NIMD's direct party assistance in the period 2002-2012 in relation to the objectives as set out in NIMD's Multi-Annual Plans; and
- Assess the results of NIMD's direct party assistance regarding the institutional strengthening and policy capacity of the political parties.

Central questions the evaluation should address –both for each case study as well as for the approach as a whole- are:

- What are some of the achieved results – intended and unintended, positive and negative – of the NIMD direct party assistance programmes?
- What results can be identified of the direct party assistance programmes at the level of institutional strengthening of the political parties involved?
- What results can be identified of the direct party assistance programmes on the development and strengthening of a multi-party democracy in the countries? ¹⁰⁰

This section shall deal with these questions and analyze the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of NIMD's direct political party assistance in the period 2002-2012. Based on the annual and multi-annual plans the evaluators have reconstructed NIMD's intervention logic for the period 2002-2012. The ultimate goal of NIMD's support has been to arrive at "Democratic societies in which the rule of law is observed and the public good fostered"; and which are based on:

- free and fair electoral processes;
- respect of basic civil and political rights; and
- the provision of accountability mechanism.¹⁰¹

The impact aimed at is defined as "Legitimate political parties that operate in a functional multiparty political system which initiates, manages and implements policy based reforms".¹⁰²

In order to achieve this, NIMD has allocated resources to, amongst others, direct party assistance. With these inputs various outputs of direct party assistance are created, including:

- Trainings and workshops delivered to party members/staff focused on strengthening organizational and individual skills; e.g. on topics like party structures, party history, political dialogue, manifesto/programme development, political party management, financial management, strategic planning, use of ICT, internal democracy, campaign management, civil and political rights, and good governance;
- Technical assistance provided to, for example, support the design and implementation of parties' capacity needs analysis, the development and implementation of parties' manifestos/programmes, the

¹⁰⁰ (NIMD, 2013c: 4-5).

¹⁰¹(NIMD, 2012:11).

¹⁰²(NIMD, 2012:52).

institutionalization and operationalisation of financial, human resource, and knowledge management systems, the institutionalization and operationalisation of decision-making procedures;

- Parties' national conventions and internal party elections financed; and
- Equipment delivered to support party secretariats. ¹⁰³

These outputs are hoped to contribute in the long-term to the achievement of the impact and goal as stated above, and in the medium-term to the outcome "Parties' policy seeking capacity and institutional development improved" This outcome includes the following (sub)-outcomes:

- improved design process and implementation of parties' manifestos/programmes;
- parties' organizational strength improved;
- parties' internal democracy improved;
- parties' political identity strengthened;
- parties' internal unity strengthened; and
- parties' electioneering capacity strengthened. ¹⁰⁴

In this section we will assess to which extent NIMD has been able to achieve the outcomes aimed at and contribute to "Legitimate political parties that operate in a functional multiparty political system which initiates, manages and implements policy based reforms". This assessment is based on the three case study reports produced for this evaluation, on the secondary information available from the various evaluation and annual reports and on the interviews with NIMD programme staff.

The assessment of NIMD's direct party assistance effectiveness and impact was unfortunately severely constrained by the lack of baseline data and the very limited availability of relevant monitoring data at outcome and impact level that is necessary to arrive at any founded conclusions. No data has been systematically collected on, for example, the level of parties' organisational strength, internal democracy, political identity etc. It is, therefore, impossible to know for certain how effective direct party assistance has been and what kind of impact has been realized. The information provided below does, however, aim to provide a better understanding of the possible effectiveness and impact realized.

5.2 Effectiveness, impact and sustainability of NIMD's direct party assistance

From the case studies and the various country evaluation reports it has become clear that NIMD's direct party assistance has resulted in the achievement of a variety of outputs that are relevant for the development of parties' institutional and policy capacity. Examples of the achieved outputs are:

- Party secretariats were supported (e.g. in Kenya, Malawi, Mali and Uganda);
- Internal party elections and national conventions were organized (e.g. in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia);
- Party programmes, manifestos and policy statements were developed (e.g. in Bolivia, Malawi, Georgia, Ghana and Guatemala); and
- Party members/staff were trained in areas like strategic planning, project and financial management, public policy design, internal democracy, party structures, and monitoring elections (e.g. in Georgia, Mali, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi).

¹⁰³ (NIMD, 2007b, 2012).

¹⁰⁴ Idem.

The achievement of these outputs is significant in itself. From the interviews with various party members during the field visits and the analysis of country evaluation reports, it has, furthermore, become clear that the achievement of these outputs is highly valued by the beneficiary parties. In addition, the support provided by NIMD through the bilateral programmes was in various countries the first attempt of a donor to seriously support political parties with their institutional development. Given the fact that political parties often are, and feel, ignored by the donor community and suffer from a bad reputation amongst the public, the provision of this type of support has been of great importance for boosting their confidence.¹⁰⁵

The question remains, however, to what extent the achievement of these outputs have resulted in an improvement in parties' policy seeking capacity and institutional development. As stated above, a clear answer cannot be provided to this question as relevant data to measure progress has not been collected by NIMD. As was noted by the IOB evaluation report in 2010, "*NIMD's direct support for political parties has been insufficiently monitored in the past, making it difficult to account for results*".¹⁰⁶ While efforts have been made by NIMD to improve the monitoring of the direct party assistance support, it has not resulted in the collection of sound performance data that can shed more light on the results achieved with direct party assistance in the period 2002-2012. Nevertheless, it is possible, based on the qualitative information collected during the field missions and the information provided in the various country evaluations and annual reports to account for some results achieved and at least review whether steps have been taken in the right direction that are likely to support the achievement of the outcomes aimed at.

NIMD's support has clearly contributed to improvements in the institutionalization and policy capacity of political parties

According to NIMD's annual reports and other (working) NIMD documents, various results have been achieved with its direct party assistance. The document "NIMD Bilateral support strategy, African political parties 2011-2016, Very first draft" states, for example, that the most positive impact of NIMD's bilateral support has been to "*greatly improve contact between the national party leadership and their regional rank-and-file in the period between elections*" and to improve internal party communication. In addition, the document continues that for some parties "*internal accountability has greatly improved*" as regional rank-and-file started to question their national leaders during internal party meetings.¹⁰⁷ The annual report 2008 further claims that:

*"parties receiving modest NIMD funding become better organized in producing and planning programmes and in accounting for its results and expenditure. In some cases it results in enhanced internal accountability and transparency. A number of political parties have been able to strengthen their outreach to local branches whilst at the same time the local branch are periodically reporting back to party headquarters on political, financial and membership issues. Through these written documents, leadership can better be held accountable by party cadres. This contributes to the objective of strengthening internal party democracy. The programming need in order to qualify for financial support also enhances the need to clarify policy choices and to formulate policy platforms."*¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Sources: Interviews with NIMD programme officers; (IOB, 2010:67).

¹⁰⁶ ibd p. 12.

¹⁰⁷ (NIMD, 2011:9).

¹⁰⁸ (NIMD, 2009b:13-14).

More in general, the results claimed in NIMD reports and documents, for specific countries and parties, include the improved functioning of party secretariats, strengthened policy development capacity, improvements in parties' ability to articulate and aggregate citizens' interests, and improvements in the internal management capacity of parties. Some of the specific country examples are provided below:

Ghana: *"Through its bilateral support programme, IEA successfully contributed to the improved functioning of the party secretariats of the four Parliamentary parties in terms of operational capacity as well as their ability to formulate policy objectives and strategies and communicate these effectively to the electorate".*¹⁰⁹

Kenya: *"Party secretariats have been professionalized through training and investment".*¹¹⁰

Mali: *"The bilateral programme has thus contributed to an enhanced policy based functioning of political parties in Mali and the strengthening of horizontal accountability (checks-and balances between the various government branches) (...). A positive side-effect of the bilateral programme was the enhanced visibility of political parties at the local level in the period between elections when parties usually tend to reserve most of their local activities for campaigning periods."*¹¹¹

Zambia: *"Internal management capacity of political parties has slightly improved."*¹¹²

Tanzania: *"With the help of NIMD's bilateral programme the political parties, especially the opposition parties are developing step by step in the direction of being able to articulate and aggregate citizens' interests. They are now better prepared to compete for voters with a view to the upcoming local and general elections of 2009 and 2010".*¹¹³

In spite of these positive claims, various NIMD documents also include serious concerns about the lack of visible results achieved with direct party assistance. As also described in section 3.2, the Memo of an NIMD expert meeting on party assistance states *"NIMD's direct assistance to political parties (over 150 in total of which the vast majority in Sub-Saharan Africa) has proved more challenging than its support provided to these platforms of inter-party dialogue (...). Notwithstanding a number of positive exceptions, NIMD does not have sufficient view on the impact generated by its direct party support programme and, in some cases, doubts whether impact is generated at all."*¹¹⁴

The interviews with NIMD programme officers also reflected this concern. Some programme officers stated that they in fact had no idea what the effectiveness and impact had been of the direct party assistance support.

In 2010, the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign affairs of the Netherlands conducted an evaluation of the Dutch support to Capacity Development, and more specifically of the support provided by the NIMD. This evaluation covered, amongst others, NIMD's direct party assistance. According to this evaluation, the main result achieved with the bilateral programmes is that it has increased the professionalization of political parties, improved their organizational set-up and enhanced the knowledge and skills of party members/staff. This in turn has led to increased efficiency of the political parties, *"more efficient*

¹⁰⁹ (NIMD, 2009b:32)

¹¹⁰(NIMD, 2008:32)

¹¹¹ (NIMD, 2009b:60)

¹¹². (NIMD, 2008:39)

¹¹³ (NIMD, 2009b:75).

¹¹⁴ (NIMD, 2009c:1-2).

approaches to the functioning of parliament and, occasionally, better articulation of positions".¹¹⁵ NIMD's support was, in fact, assessed as **being essential** for parties' professionalization and was seen to have boosted parties' confidence:

*"NIMD's direct financial support (through the bilateral programme) has been essential for the professionalization of the parties. In many cases, this has been the first serious institutional support they have received, and this has boosted their confidence."*¹¹⁶

The various independent country evaluation reports and the case study reports written for this evaluation also give evidence of valuable results having been achieved with NIMD's support.

The **Kenya** 2010 IOB Case Study report, for example, concludes that NIMD's support significantly enhanced political parties' institutional capacity as it helped them creating a minimal level of party infrastructure, skills & knowledge, and headquarter facilities. In addition, NIMD's strategic planning exercise positively contributed to parties' policy capacity as it helped parties with refining and utilizing their visions, mission and mandates.¹¹⁷

The **Guatemala** 2010 IOB Case Study report arrives at the conclusion that modest but, for some parties, significant changes have been achieved concerning political parties' capacity to plan, prepare party programmes and become more inclusive with respect to the participation of youth and women.¹¹⁸

For **Tanzania**, it was assessed in an independent country evaluation in 2012 that the bilateral support had strengthened the competences of party officials.¹¹⁹

Based on the field visit to **Georgia**, the evaluators found that NIMD's strategic planning exercise had increased parties' capacity to engage in strategic planning. The interviewed party officials in Georgia indicated that this exercise had been the first time for them to reflect upon their party's strengths and weaknesses and to design strategies on how to best foster their mission and vision and build the institutional and policy capacity of their parties. Some party officials even claimed the exercise to have been of great importance for the survival of their party.¹²⁰

In **Malawi**, some positive results were also found during the field visit. For example, in the case of one party, NIMD's support clearly contributed to an improved process of policy development. In addition, NIMD's support was also seen to have facilitated increased communications between the national party leadership and their regional rank-and-file and between the parties and the electorate. Moreover, some of the party officials interviewed claimed that NIMD's support had been essential for their party to survive.¹²¹

The field visit to **Uganda** showed that opposition parties are now better equipped to communicate with sub-national units and have made improvements in engaging sub-national levels in policy issue discussions.

¹¹⁵ (IOB, 2010: 12).

¹¹⁶ *ibid.* p. 70.

¹¹⁷ (Kasumba & Bartholomeeussen, 2010).

¹¹⁸ (Samandú & Vranckx, 2009)S.

¹¹⁹ (Whitehead & Killian, 2012).

¹²⁰ Source: Various interviews with political party members in Georgia.

¹²¹ Source: Various interviews with political party members in Malawi.

The evaluation report for **Mali**¹²² argued that, although many problems remained, as of 2008 the development of strategic plans for parties (and parliamentary groups) has professionalized the parties made management of the organizations more efficient: “Many policymakers have said that the NIMD’s actions have helped improve the capacities of the parties to commit and to act, and have cited various arguments in support of such statements” (p. 29). Improvements included better preparations for and conduct of election campaigns.

In **Ghana** the evaluation report found that “There is a noticeable improvement in the ability of the parties to achieve their objectives. This has been produced especially by three elements of the bilateral programmes namely the on-off equipment grant, the establishment of the function of policy analysts and the capacity-building activities.... Indeed, an unexpected benefit to which all the parties drew the evaluators attention is the improvement in internal democracy.”¹²³

In **Mozambique** the evaluation report found that the projects had improved the institutional capacity of the parties in several ways: improvement of contacts with the grassroots, increased awareness and understanding of the meaning of multiparty democracy, improved capacity to programme and implement tasks, and developing people’s confidence, within and outside the party.¹²⁴

Although NIMD’s support has contributed to the strengthening of parties’ institutional and policy capacity it has not resulted, in general, in very substantive improvements in parties’ institutional and policy capacity

From the above, it has become clear that NIMD has contributed to the strengthening of parties’ institutional and policy capacity with its direct party assistance. Nevertheless, in order to assess how effective the support has been one needs to assess the extent to which the outcomes sought have been achieved. This is, however, problematic as not only is there a lack of baseline and progress data, but there are also no targets defined at outcome level for NIMD to achieve. The main- and sub-outcomes (for a description of these please see section 1) are described in terms of “X improved/strengthened”. The level of improvement aimed at was not defined. This makes it very hard to arrive at an objective conclusion concerning the effectiveness of NIMD’s support. There is evidence that some improvements have been made in the institutional and policy capacity of supported political parties, but have these improvements been large enough? What kind of improvements may realistically be expected from the (relatively limited amount of) resources invested, and this type of support? Since NIMD is a pioneer with respect to its direct party support we cannot compare their results with the results achieved by other donors. In addition, due to the fact that NIMD has failed to collect relevant monitoring data over time we can also not compare the results achieved with the different bilateral programmes in the different countries. There is, therefore, simply not sufficient evidence available to arrive at any grounded conclusions on the relative effectiveness of certain programmes in certain countries, which could in turn have shed more light on the overall effectiveness of the programme. What is, nevertheless, possible is, of course, to assess whether the support has been effective in building parties’ policy seeking capacity and institutional development up to a level at which parties face only limited weaknesses concerning their organizational capacity, internal democracy, internal unity, political identity, electioneering capacity etc. In other words, it is possible to assess whether NIMD’s support has been sufficient to arrive at the final outcomes aimed at. While it is important to bear in mind that there is ‘no standard model’ for what an institutionalized political party should look like, important indicators of

¹²² (Loada, 2009)

¹²³(Dijkstra & Kumado, 2004: 16)

¹²⁴ (Dijkstra et al., 2003)

institutionalization are that regular party functions, such as nominations, election of office holders, changes in party rules, adoption of party policy, follow procedures that are known to, and accepted by, participants in the party. Such predictability has implications for future change because it enables participants to take a long-term view. If individuals or fractions lose at a certain point in time, they know there will be further opportunities. Institutionalization also means that an organization can survive independent of the individuals that occupy the leadership roles at any given point in time. Institutionalized parties have routinized processes and resource mobilization that do not depend on particular individuals. Programmatic parties also are distinct from each other. Together programmatic orientation and organizational stability helps to create loyalty among participants.

The 2010 IOB evaluation concludes that while positive results have been achieved with NIMD's bilateral support, the *"capability of political parties to deliver on development objectives or to contribute effectively to the democratic process is limited (...)*The ideological position of many parties remains unclear, which negatively affects their internal cohesion. Unity is mainly built around personalities or along ethnic lines, and links with wider society remain fragile. Most parties (except for the left-wing parties in Guatemala) lack a stable social base. Politics still has a public image problem and citizens are not motivated to participate in the public political arena. We can conclude that, in general, the role of political parties as actors in shaping legislative processes remains weak, particularly in Mali and Kenya. (...) In addition, their financial resource base remains weak and their human resources are inadequate". NIMD's support is, furthermore, assessed to have had "little effect on achieving structural changes within the political parties that are needed to transform them into reliable intermediaries acting between the public, civil society and the state" and "The bilateral programme has not been able to achieve genuine change at the level of political parties."¹²⁵

The various country evaluations and the case studies for this evaluation contain similar observations.

The 2010 IOB Case Study report for **Kenya**, for example, concludes that parties' capacity to commit and act¹²⁶ has only minimally changed in the period between 2004 and 2010. Overall this capacity remains very weak. Annual plans, for example, are not used for organizational management and decision making processes. In addition, parties' capacity to deliver results¹²⁷ has also only slightly changed during the six years reviewed by the 2010 case study. Parties were still assessed as having very limited capacity to deliver results and/or to contribute to the democratic process effectively. A key problem hindering parties' effectiveness was the lack of financial resources. As financial resources are scarce, most parties have insufficient infrastructure and human resources to properly function.¹²⁸

¹²⁵(IOB, 2010:12-13,67, 70)

¹²⁶ The 2010 case study used the following indicators for assessing this capacity:

Presence of an annual work plan, decision taking and acting on these decisions collectively; Effective resource mobilisation (human, institutional and financial); Effective monitoring of the work plan; Inspiring /action oriented leadership; Acceptance of leadership's integrity; Sufficient knowledge and capacities available; Decision-making processes are functional; Organisational chart is clear and comprehensive.

¹²⁷ The 2010 case study used the following indicators for assessing this capacity:

Adequate financial resources; Infrastructure, facilities, equipment and premises is considered sufficient; Adequate and stable human resources; Access to knowledge resources; Existence and quality of home grown agendas for moving towards multi-party democracy (at country, cross-party or individual party level); Human Resources Management: Staff turnover, recruitment policies; Human Resources Development policy in place;

ICT equipment available and functional; Quality control systems and M&E practice in place.

¹²⁸(Kasumba & Bartholomeeussen, 2010).

During the field research in **Malawi**, not one party could demonstrate that NIMD's support had contributed to, for example, parties' organizational strength, internal democracy, or political identity. While some parties (e.g. PPM) claimed to have been able to survive due to NIMD's support, larger parties seem to struggle with the same problems as earlier. After almost a decade of NIMD's party building support it has not been possible to detect clear signs of progress in parties' institutional and organizational development. The UNDP-CMD plan for 2013-2016 identifies, furthermore, the same problems as have been present in the parties from the start: "*Despite practicing multi-party politics for approximately twenty years, Malawi's political parties are far from being institutionalized (...) Wide-ranging weaknesses in the organizational structure of political parties play a significant role in hampering the developments (...) There is little democratic culture within and between parties (...) absolute disregard of their respective constitutions and rules (...) over-reliance on party leaders*".¹²⁹

For **Zambia**, the 2007 evaluation report states that while "*it is virtually impossible to draw any substantive conclusions because of the methodological problems encountered (bad quality of data, indicators were erroneously formulated)*" and "*there is no solid indication that these objectives are or aren't reached (...) Not one party could mention lasting effects or lasting results*".¹³⁰ Developments in Zambia after the evaluation was completed partly support the impression that some parties have not improved, while others, however, have. The reports by Yezi (Yezi, 2009) show that the Patriotic Front (PF) was quite successful in using the support from NIMD to increase its organizational reach at the local level, while NIMD's support for other opposition parties, including UNIP, National Democratic Focus (NDF), and United Liberal Party (ULP), seemed to have had less success. None of these three opposition parties has succeeded in penetrating the territory with candidates for local elections (Muriaas & Svåsand, 2013). The contradictory developments are that on the one hand, the party system has not consolidated because the number of parties has been expanding and there are few indications that the individual parties have become more institutionalized (Tobolka, 2014).¹³¹ But on the other hand, the electoral victory of PF in 2011 has turned Zambia into a competitive party system and the peaceful transfer of power is an important indicator of democratic consolidation. To some extent then, it appears that in the case of PF, NIMD *did* make a contribution that enabled the party to expand organizationally and ultimately secure an electoral victory. Whether or not that will lead to an institutionalization of the party, independent of the party leader, is impossible to say. For other parties though, studies of the quality of party organizations that NIMD's support sought to achieve indicate little improvement.

The 2012 evaluation report on **Tanzania**, stated that it was difficult to identify the impacts of NIMD support in terms of building more inclusive organizations and improve internal party democracy. Parties continued to be strongly leadership dominated with poor mechanisms for handling internal conflicts. In addition, the report notes that elections continued to be devoid of issues and dominated by personalities. Opposition parties in particular "*continue to show substantial deficits in technical knowledge related to organizing and contesting elections*".¹³²

Due to the short time period that NIMD has been active in **Uganda**, it is of course only to be expected that parties will have not changed fundamentally. Although the field visit to Uganda found improvements in the communication capacity and policy development capacity of the parties, the evaluation reports also showed several cases of organizational weaknesses and problems¹³³ in performing basic organizational functions¹³³.

¹²⁹ UNDP-CMD Strengthening Political Parties Project Malawi, 2013-2016. p. 1- 2, (See also (Chinsinga, 2011)

¹³⁰ (Molenaers, 2007:15-22).

¹³¹ 29 parties participated in the 2009 elections and eight more in 2011.

¹³² (Whitehead & Killian, 2012:12) , p. 12.

¹³³ See Annex 5.

The evaluation report for **Mozambique** noted that although the immediate results were positive, impacts could not be assessed because they could only be measured “after a certain time has passed, and based on specific programme-related indicators that have not been previously available”.¹³⁴ But based on the years covered by the evaluation report, the recommendations were positive: continuation of the support, but also the need to improve the capacity of parties to handle projects, extending the projects to include dialogue between parties, and between parties and civil society, widening the criteria for parties to be involved and the development of indicators to monitor impact of programmes. Later developments in Mozambique have proved the evaluation committee right regarding the problem of assessing long-term impacts. It is worth reflecting over the contrasts between the early assessments of positive party developments and what later seems to have taken place, which the evaluation report of course could not foresee. But it underlines the problems of sustaining an improvement of internal processes in political parties and creating a level playing field. Whatever early positive results there were from the direct party support, seem to have suffered setbacks, both regarding internal party relationship (at least in RENAMO) and with respect to improving democracy. Manning, for example, characterized the 2009 election as “... the least democratic yet” ((p. 150), and she is particularly scathing about the role of the incumbent party¹³⁵, but also of RENAMO: “Renamo’s leader, Afonso Dhlakama, presided over the transition from rebel group to political party. Dhlakama has resisted institutionalization or even a minimum of organizational development within Renamo, favoring instead a highly centralized and personalized leadership”(Manning, 2010).

Based on the information provided above, it has become clear that although NIMD’s support has contributed to the strengthening of parties’ institutional and policy capacity it has not been sufficient to arrive at well-functioning political parties. More specifically, NIMD’s support has, in general, not resulted in very substantive improvements in parties’ institutional and policy capacity. The *impact* NIMD’s support had on the development and strengthening of multi-party democracy in the beneficiary countries is, therefore, also likely to have been limited. However, firm conclusions cannot be drawn as it is impossible to properly assess the impact of NIMD’s support. This, because relevant data is lacking and the goal aimed at (well functioning multi-party democracy) is too large and complex compared to the type of the intervention (direct party assistance support), which makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible at all, to trace the impact.

The sustainability of the results achieved with NIMD’s support is very questionable

From the above, it has become clear that NIMD’s direct party assistance has contributed to the strengthening of parties’ institutional and policy capacity, while very substantive results have, however, not been achieved. Next to qualifying the extent to which results have been achieved, it is also of importance to understand how sustainable the achieved results are. If NIMD would decide to end its support in the countries it operates, would this then be detrimental to the results achieved?

Some of the results achieved are, at least to a certain extent, sustainable. For example, the improvements achieved in party members’ skills and knowledge remain relevant as long as the trained party members stay active in the political arena. However, since no substantive improvements have been realized in parties’ institutional and policy capacity and the parties in the various countries still suffer from a lack of access to financial and human resources and effective organizational structures, parties remain very dependent for their

¹³⁴ Ibid. p. 37

¹³⁵ See also (Orre, 2010)

institutional and policy capacity development on external sources. The sustainability of the results achieved are, therefore, very questionable. As the 2010 IOB evaluation concluded:

*“NIMD’s support has had little effect on achieving structural changes within the political parties that are needed to transform them into reliable intermediaries acting between the public, civil society and the state. Since political parties are unable to generate their own income, any increases in capabilities will remain directly dependent on NIMD support, unless other donors come in (but many are not keen to fund political parties) or national funding schemes are extended.”*¹³⁶

The various country evaluations confirm this too. For example, the evaluators of the 2010 **Guatemala** Case Study report found that even for the better-consolidated parties that have advanced the most, the results achieved are not certain to be sustainable as three key issues that condition the results achieved continue to exist:

- caudillo-style leadership (caudillo-style leaders maintain total control by controlling their party’s access to funding)
- weak party funding; and
- an insufficient legal framework that regulates parties’ activities.¹³⁷

The **Kenya** Case Study report observed that when direct funding to the parties stopped in 2007, the operational ability of many parties significantly declined, indicating a high dependence of parties on external assistance and a limited sustainability of the NIMD programme. None of the parties that received NIMD grants before 2008 had designed a serious alternative financing scheme for itself, making them very dependent on NIMD funds. The evaluators even claimed the NIMD program have *“perpetuated the money syndrome within member political parties (that is commonly found in all political parties in Africa) to the extent that they believe that all their problems are to be solved by money and money from outside”*.¹³⁸

In **Malawi**, several of the activities financed by NIMD’s support involved activities that do not focus on strengthening party institutions, like the financing of party conventions and district meetings, but only involve the one-off financing of normal party activities. For this type of support, sustainability is negligible as no structural weaknesses are addressed, but instead only the symptoms of a perceived problem namely “parties’ lack of financial resources”.

NIMD has been highly aware of the sustainable issues surrounding its party support. It has, therefore, in several countries advocated and worked on-e.g. through the interparty dialogue platforms- the introduction of state financial contributions to the parties.

¹³⁶ (IOB, 2010) p. 70.

¹³⁷ (Samandú & Vranckx, 2009)

¹³⁸ (Kasumba & Bartholomeeussen, 2010:52).

6 Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations with respect to the various approaches of direct party assistance

The country evaluation reports, annual reports, and the findings from the three case studies reveal a range of approaches to direct party assistance, its relevance, effectiveness and impacts. Three qualities of NIMD's approach to direct party assistance cut across the variations in the approaches: inclusivity, context sensitivity and long-term engagement.

NIMD's vision, as formulated in the current MAP is (2012-2015) is to contribute to the development of "Democratic societies in which the rule of law is observed and the public good fostered", which requires a functioning party system. NIMD therefore includes both the incumbent and the opposition parties. Where relevant, the criteria for selecting parties to be supported, is parliamentary representation. But in other cases, such as Georgia and Mozambique, additional criteria are applied. Inclusivity has greatly contributed to building trust among NIMD and the local parties. Such trust is a pre-condition for assistance projects to work.

The variation in approaches reflects NIMD's sensitivity to the local context. Practically all studies of party assistance point out that there is no single 'model' for direct party assistance that fits in all contexts. NIMD should be greatly commended for the attention it pays to the circumstances of the political parties in each of the countries it operates.

It is also recognized in studies of party assistance that for such activities to have an impact, a long-term engagement is necessary. In some countries, such as Guatemala, Ghana and Mozambique, NIMD has been present for more than a decade.

There are variations in how successful direct party assistance has been in terms of contributing to the development of institutionalized parties. In countries like Ghana, as the evaluation report documented, direct party assistance has supported the development of stable political parties and a functioning multiparty system. Although NIMD's engagement in Uganda and Georgia is more recent, the indications are that important steps have been taken in the right direction. In other countries, such as Zambia and Malawi, the party system continues to be unstable, and political parties have great problems in functioning according to their own statutes. Mozambique and Tanzania are cases where the structure of the party system, the dominance of the previous single party, is virtually unchanged after a decade of party assistance.

Why is it that direct party assistance seems to have the desired effect in some countries but not in others? The way party assistance has been organized and implemented is one of several factors influencing the effectiveness and impact of assistance, but contextual characteristics of the countries and parties are also relevant. Thus, Ghana is a country that in general scores better on democracy indicators than other countries. That party support has been more successful in such a country is fully consistent with Cornell's finding about the effect of democracy promotion efforts in general.¹³⁹ In Georgia the chances that party assistance will be successful is greater than in many African contexts: Georgia's financial situation is far better, the institutional environment, with mixed-member electoral system for parliament and the recent shift from a presidential system to a stronger prime-ministerial

¹³⁹ (Cornell, 2013).

system, the elimination of corruption, and great improvements in the electoral processes, are all factors conducive to party developments.

In contrast, the electoral rules in Zambia and in Malawi create incentive structures for more parties, rather than for consolidating and improving existing ones. The low level of economic development and widespread poverty are factors obstructing the development of sustainable organizations. Instability in the party system is not so much a failure of direct party assistance as the presence of such competing incentives. The entrenchment of FRELIMO in Mozambique and NRM in Uganda in the state structures is so deep that it requires a really long-term engagement before change is likely to occur.

Successful party assistance seems also to be linked to the nature of the parties themselves. The evaluation reports indicate that a pre-condition for successful projects is that the leadership in the parties is genuinely committed to promoting *change* away from the status quo, such as in the cases of Ghana and Mali. Although party assistance projects create incentives for developments, change requires the consent of veto-players or that the role of veto-players is diminished. An example of the power of veto-players is the control of finances. Because it is not known what the total financial resources are of parties that receive direct party assistance, it is not possible to assess how important this source of funding is for the recipient parties. For smaller parties, direct party assistance is likely to be highly significant, while for large parties, either long-time incumbent parties, or parties funded by a wealthy party leader, direct party assistance may be marginal in financial terms. Hence, it would not be reasonable to expect direct party assistance to result in major changes in such parties, particularly not in the short term. Moreover, assessing the impact of direct party assistance is problematic because in some countries there are several donor organizations working to assist political parties it is not possible to assess the cumulative impact of various assistance programs.¹⁴⁰

Thus, with the variations in approaches, local contexts and longevity of the programs the lessons learned are similarly diverse.

The lessons learned and recommendations are structured around three main issues:

- the focus of the assistance,
- the institutional and organizational setting,
- the financial features of direct party assistance.

Focus of the assistance

1) Direct party and/or cross-party assistance?

Lessons: Direct party assistance can be very relevant to the beneficiary parties and for contributing to NIMD's objective of "a well-functioning multiparty political system with legitimate political parties". In addition, it is highly valued by many beneficiary parties and has contributed to building relationships of trust between NIMD, local partners and the beneficiary parties.

Recommendations: Whether or not NIMD should start/continue with direct party assistance depends on the specific circumstances in the beneficiary country and the specific objectives of NIMD's overall strategy. First of all, the weaknesses in the functioning of the democratic system need to be identified. Then, it needs to be assessed

¹⁴⁰ NIMD should be commended for being so transparent concerning the publication of several evaluation reports as well as the annual budgets

whether these weaknesses are caused by structural weaknesses in the political system as whole (due to, for example, weaknesses in the legal framework) and/or weaknesses within the individual parties (lack of institutional and/or policy capacity). If weaknesses within the individual parties are an important cause of the weaknesses identified in the functioning of the democratic system, then the structural causes of these weaknesses need to be identified (which might link again to the weaknesses in the political system (for example, linked to legislation on financial resources for political parties etc.)). Based on this analysis it can be assessed whether direct party assistance might be a suitable tool for addressing the weaknesses identified, or whether cross-party activities might make more sense or a combination of both approaches.

It is recommended that a holistic approach is followed whereby the contextual analysis dictates the type of support (i.e. direct party support, cross-party support, or both) to be provided. Cross-party assistance can, for example, be very suitable to address weaknesses in the wider political system, strengthen general skills & knowledge and improve trust and cooperation between parties through cross-party trainings, while direct party assistance is preferred when the focus is on parties' individual structural institutional and policy capacity related problems.

The assessment can inform, in combination with NIMD's specific strategy/intervention theory, the focus of the assistance, the type of activities that need to be supported, and if/how it can be best be linked to the cross-party activities that address the weaknesses in the political system as a whole.

2) Focus on structural issues and not only on symptoms

Lessons: NIMD's direct assistance support seems to have had limited effect on achieving structural changes within the political parties and wider political system, which are needed for strengthening parties' role as legitimate political parties and for contributing to a well-functioning multiparty democracy.

Recommendations: It is recommended that direct party assistance, in combination with the other country activities, focuses on addressing the structural weaknesses and not (only) the symptoms. To be more concrete, in many countries the lack of access to financial resources has been indicated to be a key problem of parties' weak institutional capacity. While direct party assistance that entails, for example, the financing of national conventions, meetings at the local level, office hardware etc. can (at least partly) address the symptoms of this problem and contribute to parties' improved functioning in the short-term, it does not solve the key problems in the long-term and makes the support not very sustainable. Therefore, while addressing the symptoms in the short-term, it should always be combined with addressing the structural weaknesses in the long-term. Especially by strategically linking the direct party assistance activities with cross-party work (focused, for example, on decreasing polarization and improving the legal framework) reasonable opportunities might exist to address the symptoms as well as the structural causes of the weaknesses identified.

If it seems to be impossible/not recommendable for NIMD to address the identified structural weaknesses itself, other partners can be sought (e.g. other donors) to address these issues. If, however, no scope seems to exist to address the weaknesses effectively, then NIMD should consider not to address the symptoms either and to focus on other issues/countries since it, otherwise, could result in a waste of resources in the long-run.

3) Direct party assistance as a carrot for inter-party dialogue?

Lessons & Recommendations: In some countries, direct party assistance has, during some specific time-period, mainly been seen as "a carrot" for the interparty-dialogue activities; i.e. to provide incentives for parties to participate in interparty-dialogue activities. If, given the specific country context and NIMD's strategy, this is the only function of the assistance, then it should be clearly limited in time and scope. This because the provision of

“a carrot” should not be needed for the total duration of the cross-party activities; if this is the case one has good reasons to question parties’ commitment to, and the expected effectiveness of, the cross-party activities. In other words, while the provision of a carrot could make sense for the first couple of years of cross-party support, after a certain period relationships of trust should have been built and the cross-party activities should have proven their value. The direct party assistance should also be limited in scope in the sense that it should not cost more financial and human resources than is necessary for it to perform its function as carrot. During some interviews, it became clear that the carrot function was seen to be the main reason why direct party assistance was provided in certain countries, but at the same time this carrot had been provided for many years and the type of support provided had resulted in a situation that considerable resources were spent on improving its effectiveness (like, for example, the provision of a lot of support by NIMD staff/local partner with writing project proposals etc). Overall, this had made the provided support not very efficient. To be more concrete, if the focus is on providing incentives for parties to participate in the cross-party activities then it is advisable to implement a type of direct party assistance support that is cost-efficient in its implementation—e.g. focus on directly procuring equipment to strengthen the party secretariat and/or providing trainings to strengthen skills/knowledge, instead of allocating resources based on parties’ project/annual plans, whereby proposals need to be of a good quality, activities and outcomes need to be monitored, expenses need to be checked etc.

4) Focus on specific thematic areas

Lessons: Supporting a wide-range of activities with direct party assistance seems to be not very efficient as it decreases the opportunities for specialization and learning lessons. A focus on a specific thematic area, like policy capacity development, can therefore be beneficial as long as its scope is not too broad and context-specific factors can still be taken into account when designing and implementing the support.

Recommendations: The focus on policy capacity development is still very broad. In addition, there are many good reasons why a focus on parties’ institutional development can also be justified, bearing in mind that policy development is seen as one of the factors that can also improve party organization, provided that policy development becomes more inclusive. In countries with a high number of candidates running as independents, for example, support targeting nomination rules could strengthen party organizations, whereas in systems where one party is dominating, projects enabling parties to expand the number of candidates in national and/or local elections could lead to a more competitive party system. It is, therefore, recommended to analyse for the beneficiary countries what NIMD’s key comparative advantage is—in terms of thematic focus— and whether it is possible to define specific “thematic clusters” of support. Around these clusters, with matching countries, learning groups can then be established (constituting of staff from both NIMD the Hague and local offices/partners) to share lessons learned and develop common instruments/tools/guidelines for the direct party assistance support. E.g. while in some countries a focus on public policy debate might be justified, in other countries a focus on intra-party democracy might be more suitable (taking into account the political system, parties’ capacity and the support provided by other donors). Two learning groups can then be established whereby the staff involved in countries where NIMD focuses on the public policy debate can share lessons and develop guidelines/tools concerning how to support parties with the drafting of manifesto’s and public debates, while the group of the other set of countries can share lessons and develop guidelines/tools on how to improve parties’ internal democracy.

5) Focus on the long-term

Lessons: In order to effectively contribute to parties’ institutional and policy capacity one needs to have a long-term focus. The introduction of “strategic planning”, and especially of the improved strategic planning exercise as

implemented in Georgia and Mozambique, was an important achievement in this respect as it allowed for a more strategic and long-term focus. The planning exercise needs to be followed by an effective implementation phase to be able to effectively contribute to parties' institutional and policy capacity.

Recommendations: To stimulate an effective implementation of the strategic plans it would be advisable if NIMD would clearly agree with parties upon an implementation plan and schedule. The strategic planning tool that was implemented in Georgia and Mozambique included the drafting of a detailed implementation plan. This plan can form the basis of negotiations between the individual party and NIMD about the kind of support NIMD can provide to help with the (at least partial) implementation of this plan. It requires that the plan has a long-term focus and that the key activities that are required to address the structural weaknesses are properly identified as well as an identification of the specific party members that are responsible for the respective activities. It is important that the design and implementation of the strategic plan is well embedded within the party, and broadly owned, whereby both the party leadership and a broader base of active party members are actively involved. NIMD can then, based on its own strategy, select the areas it is willing to support. Ideally, this selection is made in close collaboration with other development partners to arrive at an efficient and effective division of labour. This process may be fostered if other development partners are actively engaged and support the strategic planning process from the beginning. The agreed implementation plan should outline the long-term support areas NIMD will focus upon, the specific objectives to be achieved, and, ideally and as far as NIMD's funding horizon it allows, the inputs that NIMD will provide, linked to the achievement of concrete milestones. The plan can then be translated in concrete (rolling and costed) multi-annual and annual-plans, with specific performance indicators and targets that can be monitored on an annual basis and complemented with mid-term and final evaluations.

Institutional and organizational setting/framework

6) Develop clear strategy, policy and operational guidelines

Lessons: Supporting political parties with their institutional and policy capacity development requires a tailored-made approach whereby the political-economy context is taken well into account. In addition, it also requires a clear strategy/underlying Theory of Change that is translated into specific strategy/policy and operational guidelines that can support NIMDs' partners and staff in the Hague and the local offices in implementing the direct party assistance. In the past, these guidelines have been missing, which may have negatively affected the efficiency and effectiveness of NIMD's direct party assistance support. This was already concluded, more in general, in the 2010 IOB evaluation "*The management of the 17 country programmes requires clear operational guidelines, and staff at the NIMD office in The Hague have indicated that strategic guidance and clear direction are currently insufficient*" and seems –based on our field visits, the documentary analysis and various interviews, to be still the case. In addition, the modus operandi of NIMD makes the organization –due to the lack of clear guidelines in combination with the limited practices of institutionalizing knowledge in the past- very dependent not only on the quality but also on the longer-term commitment of staff/partners that implement the programmes. A departure of some key staff in local offices, for example, may have huge consequences for the individual country programmes.

Recommendations: In order to ensure that the specific activities of direct party assistance will contribute to NIMD's objectives effectively it is important to ensure that a sound intervention strategy underlies the direct party assistance approaches in the various countries. This intervention strategy should link NIMD's overall objectives to the country specific objectives, which in turn should be linked to individual parties' objectives that are agreed upon by the parties and NIMD. These strategies can then be used as inputs for the (rolling) multi-annual and annual plans for NIMD as a whole, the specific countries, and the beneficiary parties. The strategies need in turn to be

translated into concrete policy and operational guidelines that support the staff in implementing direct party assistance and contribute to a higher level of institutionalization of NIMD's operations, which can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations and lowers the risks linked to being very much dependent on individual staff.

7) Implement a sound M&E framework

Lessons: Especially since the practice of direct party assistance very often might be one of trial and error it is of great importance that lessons learned are institutionalized and the effects of NIMD's support activities are monitored well. This has not been properly done in the past. NIMD is currently implementing an innovative PM&E agenda to create a useful evidence base for its political party support programmes. Part of this agenda is the introduction of a baseline toolkit, which consist of four different reviews including a political context scan, a partner scan, a programme scan and a political party scan.

Recommendations: It is recommended that one differentiates between the outcome data that needs to be collected for NIMD as a whole and country and party specific outcome data. For the outcome data at the party level, agree with the individual parties clear outcome indicators that will be monitored by NIMD and the individual parties to track whether the individual party support contributes to the party outcomes aimed at. These outcomes could be part of parties' strategic plans (see above) and be translated into clear targets in parties' multi-annual and annual plans. Based on their performance on these outcomes, and provided justifications for the performance, in combination with indicators related to the achievement of agreed outputs, a transparent performance-based support framework can be designed to allow for a differentiation in the support provided to good and bad performing parties.

8) Allocate resources for technical support by the local office/partner to the parties and M&E activities

Lessons: The experience with direct party assistance in the past has shown that the role of a local office/partner in supporting parties with drafting their proposals/plans and in monitoring the implementation of these is of great importance. Parties often lack the capacity to write plans/proposals of sufficient quality, which should include sound performance monitoring frameworks, and face difficulties with their reporting requirements.

Recommendations: It is recommended to allocate a share of the bilateral budget to the provision of technical support to the individual parties by the local office/partners or an external agency focused on helping the parties with drafting their implementation/multi-annual/annual plans and/or proposals and with the setting up and implementation of their monitoring and reporting framework. In addition, sufficient resources need to be set-aside for external monitoring visits. If these tasks are to be provided by CMDs then it might be advisable to clearly separate these tasks from the tasks that focus on the cross-party assistance to ensure that sufficient time and resources are allocated to these tasks and independence from the staff concerning these tasks is warranted.

On financial features of direct party assistance approaches

9) Allocate funds based on needs

Lessons: In the past, the allocation of funds to individual political parties has proven to be sub-optimal. Unintended funding consequences have occurred like the dispersion of relative small amounts of funding over a large number of parties that has made the provided assistance overall less effective, the support of many small

parties that may have sustained fragmentation, and the contribution to the dominance of one party by allocating most of the funds to this party.

Recommendation: It is recommended to base the allocation of funds to direct party assistance on the specific identified needs, linked to the opportunities for supporting change and other development partners' contributions. The country specific strategy and multi-annual plan should inform the objectives to be achieved with the direct party assistance and determine the inputs to be allocated. The question about which parties (e.g. only parliamentary or also extra-parliamentary parties) to support should be addressed by looking at NIMD's specific strategy and the country context. Valuable lessons can be learned from the experience in various countries. For example, in fragmented and polarized countries it can be sensible not to provide support to small political parties, but to (specifically formed) coalitions instead. The approach to the allocation of resources to the individual parties should also be based, as far as possible, on NIMD's strategy and multi-annual plan. In some countries the parties themselves have decided upon the allocation rule while in other countries NIMD was clearly steering this process or decided it alone. It is advisable that where possible NIMD takes control of deciding upon the allocation of resources to the individual parties. This provides the scope to allocate resources based on identified needs and NIMD's specific objectives and allows for differentiation, which may improve the effectiveness of direct party assistance. Differentiation in allocation between parties is, however, also a very sensitive issue as NIMD may risk losing its reputation of being a neutral player. Therefore, it will often be of great importance that the allocation procedure is transparent. NIMD could in sensitive contexts even consider hiring an external intermediate party, such as one or two independent consultants familiar with democracy/political party assessments in the country, for appraising parties' strategic and implementation plans and proposals based on which NIMD can start the negotiations with the individual parties. Another option is to arrive at an initial allocation rule through open and inclusive negotiations amongst parties and then to allow for sharp differentiations to exist based on individually agreed performance indicators and targets (whereby the smart setting of targets can allow for the effective targeting of support).

10) Direct funding?

Lessons: The system whereby the direct party assistance funds were directly transferred to parties' bank accounts has proven to be problematic in the past due to parties' limited financial management capacity. There are quite a number of examples where parties failed to handle and/or report properly for funds that call for a reconsideration of the practice. An advantage of the system was that it helped with building the relationship between NIMD and the individual parties and positively boosted parties' confidence.

Recommendations: Base the financing modality of the direct party assistance on an assessment of parties' financial and project management capacity and the focus/objectives of the assistance. If parties' financial management capacity is too low, then allocate a share of the assistance to project management (including M&E) and financial capacity building and directly fund and/or reimburse the (other) proposed outputs. Sufficient financial and project management capacity could for instance be documented by the formal qualifications of responsible staff members and documents relating to the exercise of the functions of such staff. The direct allocation of funds to parties' bank accounts should be based on clear agreements with respect to the outputs and outcomes aimed at and with a clear outcome-oriented monitoring framework.

Appendix 1. ToR

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy

**Terms of Reference for the evaluation of the NIMD's
direct party assistance approach 2002-2012**

Third Draft

NIMD, The Hague, May 2013

Steering committee:

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1) Background information

Seven Dutch political parties founded the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) in 2000, to assist political parties in new and developing democracies and to deepen and sustain their young political systems.

Since the establishment of its secretariat in 2002, NIMD now supports over 150 political parties and democratic movements in 25 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and the Caucasus. NIMD engages directly with political parties to strengthen their organisations and brings parties around the table to discuss and agree on democratic reform agendas. NIMD's programmes are country-owned and tailor-made.

NIMD works with political parties and democratic movements in new and developing democracies to improve political cooperation, increasingly through facilitation of interparty dialogue as its main intervention strategy, and by working directly with political organisations to strengthen their organisational and policy capacities.

In general, NIMD programmes are built around three main strategies:

- (i) fostering inter-party dialogue that addresses issues of national concern;
- (ii) strengthening political parties to become legitimate, accountable and responsive actors, equipped with dialogue and policy development skills and
- (iii) supporting alliances between political and civil society to create a broad support base for the agenda that emerges out of the dialogue platform.

The second strategy above is implemented either in so-called crossparty setting through NIMD's local implementing organization (a pre-existing independent local ngo/cso, a NIMD and political parties co-initiated and jointly founded CMD - Centre for Multi-Party Democracy, or a NIMD Country Office) where activities are done in multiparty presence and settings or as a direct relation between NIMD and the individual political parties. The latter are within NIMD often referred to as 'bilateral programmes', pointing at the direct (funding) assistance to the political parties.

Since the start of the direct party assistance programmes in 2002 in what can be considered a NIMD 'pioneering phase', there has been no formal internal policy guiding NIMD's direct party assistance programme strategy. The programmes have gradually experienced some changes over the years, with the amounts allocated to direct party support gradually dropping, the focus and scope of the activities under the direct party assistance programmes narrowing towards policy development related capacity building and the development of tools for more targeted political party assistance. Not unimportantly, cutting through programmatic objectives, is the extent to which implicitly or explicitly direct party assistance funding to political parties was considered a buy-in or 'carrot' mechanism for NIMD country entry strategy.

In order to gain more insights into the principles behind this approach, the practical advantages and disadvantages of the various ways of implementation and, the effects and impact of NIMD's efforts in

the area of direct political party assistance, an evaluation of the direct party assistance approach will be undertaken in 2013. Both the results and the process of the evaluation will be used as input for the development of a clear and focused NIMD policy for direct party assistance.

2) Direct party assistance in practice

The direct support to political parties started even before the formal setting up of NIMD, under its predecessor NZA with direct support to parties in Mozambique. Direct party assistance programmes were started between 2002 and 2004 in Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania and Bolivia. Later on, programmes in countries such as Ghana, Mali, Uganda and Georgia followed. As such, the direct party assistance programmes, in NIMD's starting years, actually preceded the strategic focus on multipartyism, political cooperation and interparty dialogue as NIMD's current spearhead focus. 'Multiparty' at that stage was already a novelty in the sense that NIMD engaged in bilateral relations with the wider scope of the political party landscape, in contrast to traditional political foundations supporting only one or a limited number of ideologically related sister parties, which too, but in a different meaning of the word as meant in this ToR, is referred to often as 'bilateral political party support'.

The reasoning behind setting up the direct party assistance programmes were, among others, the perceived lack of political party financing schemes in many countries and as a means to attract and engage political parties in multiparty dialogue. When deciding on how to grant the available funds for direct party assistance, principles including the following were taken into account:

- **Ownership.** Party representatives decide on distribution party assistance funds and parties receive NIMD budget support on their own bank accounts.
- **Inclusivity.** All parliamentary parties (and sometimes platforms of non-parliamentarian parties) receive NIMD funding

In terms of process for direct party assistance, in most countries the political parties that are eligible for NIMD-funding (usually those represented within the board of the NIMD partner organization and/or with representation in parliament) present a project plan to NIMD highlighting a number of specific objectives for institutional strengthening and capacity building. Parties are usually assisted on the ground by the staff of the NIMD local partner organization, in defining strategic and realistic objectives, strategies, activities and performance indicators, or even in as simple matters as drafting or checking the budget before submitting to NIMD. The modalities for providing the support (directly or through the local partner) for direct party assistance vary per country, as well as the amount of funds available.

In some country cases the parties decide between and amongst themselves (in many cases in a multiparty setting as members of the board of the NIMD local partner organization, giving a crossparty element even to the bilateral programmes) how the funds available will be shared. The amount available to each party can therefore differ greatly. In countries like Ghana, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi all parliamentary parties agreed to share the total amount of funds (almost) equally whereas the dominant party in Tanzania, CCM, based on parliamentary seat proportionality received almost three times as much as the other parliamentary parties.

Throughout the years, the approaches used for direct party assistance have differed per country. Increasingly, it seems that the distinction between crossparty and bilateral is decreasing as in several

countries there are approaches that blend the two. For instance, there are countries where NIMD and its partners offer multiparty support which in its implementation is bilateral with a needs-based design, implementation and results. Examples are the strategic planning exercise in Georgia and the remuneration of a policy officer for each party in Uganda.

In NIMD's Multi-Annual Plan 2012-2015 it is stipulated that the NIMD approach to strengthen capacity of parties is twofold: strengthening processes needed by a party to analyse, develop, and promote policies relevant for its support base, and secondly on skills, capacity and knowledge needed in a dialogue process. In order to identify these specific capacity needs of a party, a dedicated analysis (SWOT/strategic planning) should be the starting point to identify specific assistance requested by a party.

It is important to note that NIMD has always been aware of the complex nature of political parties. It has been noted time and again that political parties are often characterised by very turbulent histories. Some come on stage in just a few months and some disappear with the same speed, with enormous differences within and between countries in this respect. Some experience internal changes by means of which all trained cadres suddenly leave. This volatile context should be taken into account during the evaluation. Issues complicating the cooperation with political parties include:

- often opaque party structures;
- often limited capacity of financial management;
- often few explicit political goals;
- often unclear criteria for membership;
- often relatively short existence.

The effect this complex nature of political parties has on the direct party assistance approach of NIMD should also be taken into account during the evaluation.

3) Objectives of the evaluation

- To identify and assess the various implemented approaches and achieved results of NIMD's direct political party assistance in the period 2002-2011 in relation to the objectives as set out in NIMD's Multi-Annual Plans 2004-2007 and 2007-2011. For the period of 2002-2007 this should be done on the basis of a desk study into the available documentation at NIMD and additional interviews. For the period 2007-2012 this will be done through the field visits and as further specified in this ToR.
- To identify the practical and principle choices made as part of the larger process in developing the direct party assistance approaches, the instruments and methodologies to improve support to political parties and assess the results achieved through this;
- To assess the results of NIMD's support regarding the institutional strengthening and policy capacity of the political parties in several of the countries (case studies) where NIMD provided direct political party support

- To provide recommendations on strategic repositioning of NIMD interventions in the area of direct political party assistance, and wherever relevant, their link to improving political cooperation and multi-party dialogue.
- To recommend on the desirability of , and in case affirmative, recommend a framework for an overall direct party assistance programmes policy

4) Central questions

1. Results of the direct party support

The evaluation of the programmes should address the results of the direct party assistance approach at different levels, both for each of the case study countries as well as for the approach as a whole:

- What are some of the achieved results – intended and unintended, positive and negative – of the NIMD direct party assistance programmes?
- What results can be identified of the direct party assistance programmes at the level of institutional strengthening of the political parties involved?
- What results can be identified of the direct party assistance programmes on the development and strengthening of a multi-party democracy in the countries ?

2. Implementation modalities

- What different modalities have been applied for the implementation and management of the NIMD bilateral programme, both in-country and in the Netherlands? Connected to this, what are the advantages and disadvantages of the various modalities?
- What financial accountability mechanisms are used in the direct party assistance programmes and how have these been adapted throughout the years to increase accountability? (*focus on process / steps of implementation*)
- How are the activities under the direct party assistance programme (pillar 2) linked to activities under NIMD's pillar 1 (inter-party dialogue) and 3 (relation political-civil society) in the different NIMD programmes, if at all, and what has been the effect thereof?
- To what extent can the results of the direct party assistance programmes be considered sustainable?

3. Lessons learned

The evaluation should, amongst others, result in lessons learned and recommendations for the future regarding the following issues:

- The main lessons learned from the first decade of implementing various forms of direct party assistance
- The way in which the direct party assistance programmes can be implemented in a more effective manner and its possible future direction (e.g. focus on specific forms/areas of direct party assistance);
- Provide concrete suggestions to formulate an overall general framework on NIMD institutional level for providing customized direct party assistance within NMD country programmes in order for it to be effective, accountable and ethical;
- Provide possible alternatives for more effective implementation/management modalities for direct party assistance;
- Suggestions to further enhance the interlinkage between NIMD's efforts in the area of direct political party assistance, and where relevant NIMD's two other main intervention areas.

5) Methodology

- The evaluation will be executed by a lead international consultant with support from a second consultant, to be decided on jointly between the lead consultant and NIMD.
- We expect the evaluation to be conducted through in-depth interviews based on a semi-structured questionnaire.
- *A desk review of existing documentation should be part of the inception report. The inception report will be discussed during a meeting between the evaluation team and the steering committee.*
- As part of the evaluation methodology a stakeholder approach is to be applied. All the evaluation topics should be addressed from a stakeholder perspective and with use of triangulation.
- The consultants are to explore the underlying theory of change employed by NIMD and relate the evaluation findings to these change perspectives. Linked to this is a clarification of the analytical framework used by the consultants in evaluating the strengthening of political parties.
- The evaluation is considered a learning process in itself and participative and appreciative methods are to be employed.
- The evaluators are expected to comply with best practices within evaluation, including the principles of impartiality and independence, credibility and usefulness as per DAC evaluation principles.

- As part of the evaluation field visits to 3 programme countries where NIMD has provided bilateral support to political parties will take place. The three countries selected for inclusion in the evaluation are:
 - Uganda → Direct party assistance programme since 2010, with 6 parties participating, prospects for significant expansion of the direct support to parties in the near future. Funds directly disbursed to the parties, through the local partner.
 - Georgia → Direct party support since 2011, largely based on an extensive strategic planning process, XX parties involved. No direct transfer of money to the parties, but activities paid for by the NIMD Office.
 - Malawi → 'traditional' bilateral support programme, 2013 being last year of NIMD funded programme, location allowing for on the ground assistance/meeting with ARP coordinator
 - Latin American country: suggestion Guatemala, on the basis of available material (IOB and other evaluations) complemented by (Skype) interviews with staff

- *Conduct survey amongst those partners that are not involved in the field visits (subject to further discussion with evaluation team).*

- Expert meeting to discuss the preliminary findings with people working in the field of political party assistance (selection of Wilton Park organisations, timing to be further defined).

- The evaluation will be monitored by a steering committee composed of the ARP Team and the PME-coordinator and the Programme Manager responsible for follow-up at NIMD HQ level.

- The responsibility for contact with partners, preparations and follow-up at the level of the partners will lie with the ARP Team. The responsibility for preparations at NIMD HQ, internal discussions and follow-up will lie with the dedicated Programme Manager and the PME Coordinator.

- The NIMD partners at country levels will be responsible for providing the consultant(s) with all relevant background documentation on the bilateral activities they have been involved in (reports, minutes, etc) and linking them to the parties.

6) Planning – to review

Activities to be undertaken:

- *Review of the archive at the NIMD office and interviews with NIMD staff*
- *Inception meeting with steering committee*
- *Writing of inception report to further conceptualise and structure the evaluation*
- *Country visits*
- *Country reports*
- *Production of draft report*
- *First reading by NIMD and others and possibility for comments*
- *Final Report*

The evaluation is expected to take place in the period May – October 2013 in three phases

- *Preparation phase: 1 April – 15 June 2013*
 - o *Discuss ToRs with NIMD HQ staff, and revise draft ToRs based on their input*
 - o *Share ToRs with NIMD partners involved in the evaluation and revise draft ToRs based on their input (ARP)*
 - o *Approach possible evaluators, ask them to indicate their availability and share their CV*
 - o *Select consultants: Agreement upon final ToR, budget, and planning of country visits with consultant (steering committee)*
 - o *Preparation and signing of contract for evaluation assignment*
 - o *Inception meeting between steering group and evaluation team – planned for mid June*
 - o *Interviews with NIMD HQ staff (as needed)*
- *Implementation phase: 15 June – 15 September 2013*
 - o *Preparation of inception report by consultant(s) based upon ToRs*
 - o *Desk study*
 - o *Discussion of inception report with NIMD steering group*
 - o *Approval of inception report by NIMD*
 - o *Country visits*
 - o *Conduct survey amongst those partners that don't receive a field visit (optional/subject to further discussion)*
 - o *(skype) Interviews with NIMD HQ staff*
 - o *Submission of country reports with preliminary findings to NIMD*
 - o *Workshop with international experts in the field of democracy/political party assistance to discuss the preliminary results and suggestions for a revised bilateral support strategy*
 - o *Written comments NIMD on preliminary findings*
- *Wrap-up phase : 15 September – 15 October 2013*
 - o *Submission of draft report to NIMD Team*
 - o *Comments of NIMD Team on preliminary report*
 - o *Submission of final evaluation report, including a draft policy paper to NIMD*

7) Budget

The available total budget for the evaluation is €XXXXX,-. A detailed budget is to be proposed by the lead consultant and approved by the steering committee. The final bill will be based on actual expenses made, with proof of these expenses. In case of expected over expenditure, the consultant will inform NIMD for approval as soon as these over expenditures are foreseen and before such expenses are made.

8) Deliverables

- o Inception report
- o Draft report
- o Final Report, including suggestions or a framework for a draft policy paper/direct party assistance strategy (max 40 pages)
- o Summary of the report (3 pages)
- o PowerPoint presentation outlining the key findings and recommendations

9) Composition of the evaluation team:

One international lead consultant and one regional consultant:

10) Use of the report - audience

In view of the stated objectives of this evaluation, we intend to use the report for a variety of purposes.

- For existing NIMD partners to improve their work with in direct party assistance programmes
- For NIMD management and staff to be able to reposition the direct party assistance programmes
- For potential new partners and donors to have a good overview of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the past programme interventions and possible opportunities for the future
- For political stakeholders to strengthen objective setting and planning and increase impact of the cooperation
- For other actors in the field of political party assistance to ensure more streamlining of initiatives and better donor coordination

In order to ensure a proper follow-up once the evaluation report is available, the following is suggested:

- Organise an internal meeting at NIMD HQ in order to discuss the outcomes and the suggestions for a new bilateral strategy
- Prepare an draft bilateral strategy
- Further develop bilateral tools and instruments, based on the strategic direction decided upon
- Present and discuss bilateral strategy, and tools for bilateral support, during the Africa Regional Conference in 2014

11) Documents for desk review

- NIMD programme documents (strategic multiannual plans 2004-2007, 2007-2011 and 2012-2015, theory of change, past annuals plans, reports, internal papers and memo's on the bilateral programme)
- Political parties strategic multiannual plans, annuals plans, narrative and financial reports, contracts and correspondence with NIMD.
- IOB Evaluation on NIMD as commissioned by Dutch Government ministry of Foreign Affairs (2010) and Institutional Evaluation of IMD by ECDPM (2005).
- "Ball book" (framework for working with PP)
- *Others to be decided* General documents on political party assistance

Appendix 2. Evaluation framework

Reconstructed intervention logic (based on the (multi-) annual plans):

Context	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact	Goal
<p>In many programme countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a highly informal culture (patronage networks); ▪ Nepotism, corruption and rent-seeking behaviour is endemic in politics; ▪ Parties are dependent on the financial contributions of the elite; ▪ Political polarization is high and there is limited space for open dialogue and little common acknowledgment of parties' shared responsibilities for society; ▪ Citizens' trust in political parties is limited; ▪ Parties play only a marginal role in the accountability chain; 	<p>NIMD's financial, human, and material resources spent on direct party assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equipment delivered to support party secretariats. ▪ Trainings and workshops delivered to party leaders/staff/active members focused on strengthening organizational and individual skills'; e.g. on topics like party structures, party history, political dialogue, manifesto/programme development, political party management, financial management, strategic planning, use of ICT, internal democracy, campaign management, civil and political rights, and good governance. ▪ Technical assistance provided to, for example, support the design and implementation of parties' capacity needs analysis, the development and implementation of parties' manifestos/programmes, the institutionalization and operationalisation of financial, human resource, and knowledge management systems, the institutionalization and operationalisation 	<p>Parties' policy seeking capacity and institutional development improved; which includes the following (sub)-outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved design process and implementation of parties' manifestos/programmes; • parties' organizational strength improved; • parties' internal democracy improved; • parties' political identity strengthened; • parties' internal unity strengthened; and • parties' electioneering capacity strengthened. 	<p>Legitimate political parties that operate in a functional multiparty political system which initiates, manages and implements policy based reforms</p>	<p>Democratic societies in which the rule of law is observed and the public good fostered; and which are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free and fair electoral processes; • respect of basic civil and political rights; and • the provision of accountability mechanism.

- **Parties have limited capacity to identify, aggregate and articulate interests of the electorate;**
 - **Parties are weakly institutionalized; and**
 - **The link between parties and grassroots groups (civil society) and other relevant Non State Actors is weak.**
- of decision-making procedures.

Evaluation framework:

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions
Relevance	<p>To what extent did NIMD's direct party assistance approaches respond adequately to the specific needs of the political parties of the programme countries over the 2002-2012 period, given countries' specific political-economy context? More specifically, have parties' policy capacity and institutional development been limited? If yes:</p> <p>Has the objective of "strengthening parties' policy capacity and institutional development" been owned by the supported parties?</p> <p>Have NIMD's direct party assistance approaches been appropriate, given the specific causes that can explain parties' limited policy capacity and institutional development?</p> <p>How necessary has NIMD's direct party assistance been given parties' needs, the support provided by other relevant actors (donors, civil society organizations), and NIMD's overall objective to foster multiparty democracy?</p> <p>To what extent have the elements of NIMD's direct party assistance approaches been rationale and consistent given NIMD's goal to promote multiparty democracy?</p> <p>To what extent have NIMD's direct party assistance approaches been aligned and harmonized with the activities of other relevant stakeholders such as other donors and civil society organizations?</p> <p>To what extent have NIMD's direct party assistance approaches been relevant for, and complementary and consistent with, NIMD's support to inter party dialogue and improved interaction between political and civil society?</p>
Efficiency	<p>To what extent have the different direct party assistance approaches been conducive to an efficient implementation of the program?</p> <p>More specifically, what different approaches have been applied for the implementation and management of the direct party assistance and what are the advantages and disadvantages of these various approaches in terms of efficiency?</p> <p>How do the outputs of the direct party assistance approaches relate to the inputs (NIMD's allocated financial, human and material resources)?</p> <p>To what extent have the chosen outputs supported the achievement of outcomes (= technical efficiency)?</p> <p>To what extent has the governance and organizational structure of NIMD and its partners been conducive to an efficient implementation of the direct party assistance approaches?</p> <p>To what extent have the human resources and technical capacity of NIMD and its partners been available and conducive to an efficient implementation of the direct party assistance approaches?</p> <p>To what extent have NIMD's guidelines and communications with partners been conducive to an efficient implementation of the direct assistance approaches?</p> <p>To what extent have adequate financial accountability mechanisms and controls been in place? How have these been adapted throughout the years to increase accountability?</p> <p>To what extent is an adequate monitoring and evaluation system in place and has appropriate qualitative and quantitative monitoring taken place that has informed the implementation of the direct party assistance approaches?</p>
Effectiveness	<p>Were the planned objectives (as formulated in the multiannual and annual plans) of the direct party assistance in the programme countries achieved over the 2002-2012 period?</p>

	<p>What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?</p> <p>More specifically:</p> <p>On policy capacity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Has the design and implementation process of parties' manifestos/programmes improved since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, to what extent has NIMD contributed to any improvements? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Are there any clear differences concerning the way the party manifesto was designed compared to the situation before NIMD support was provided? If yes, what are the key differences? What has caused these differences? What have been the effects of these differences? Has NIMD's support contributed to these differences? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect? b) Are there any clear differences concerning the way parties' manifestos/programmes were communicated and used during election campaigns compared to the situation before NIMD support was provided? If yes, what are the key differences? What has caused these differences? What have been the effects of these differences? Has NIMD's support contributed to these differences? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect? c) Have the election campaigns become more policy-centred compared since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect? d) Have parties' manifestos/programmes increasingly become the basis for party representatives' priorities and for how they will vote in the public office arenas since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how and with what effect? e) Have parties' manifestos/programmes more often been used by Civil Society Organisations, the Media, academics and citizens to hold political parties to account compared to the situation before NIMD support was provided? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect? <p>On institutional development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Has the organizational strength of parties increased since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, to what extent has NIMD contributed to any improvements? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Has parties' access to human and financial resources increased and become more sufficient and reliable since NIMD's direct party assistance support? b) Are parties' resources more transparent and rationally being managed since NIMD's direct party assistance support? c) Are parties better organized at the national, regional and local levels since NIMD's direct party assistance support? <p>If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports these statements? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> 3) Has the provision and upholding of parties' members' rights –concerning, for example, their participation in the parties' affairs and their opportunity to hold leaders
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	<p>accountable- improved since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>4) Have party members' opportunities to meet and submit their inputs to party organs improved since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>5) Has the opportunity for party members to take part in the selection of the parties' leadership and in the nomination of candidates running for public office improved since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>6) Has the functioning of parties become more formalized since NIMD's direct party assistance support?; i.e. are the parties now functioning more according to established rules and procedures and is decision-making based on parties' statutes and current laws compared to the situation before NIMD support was provided? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>7) Has parties' political identity become stronger since NIMD's direct party assistance support?; i.e. are the ideals, policies and practices of party members more similar since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>8) Has party defection decreased compared to the situation before NIMD support was provided? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>9) Have parties' constituencies become more stable compared to the situation before NIMD support was provided? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>10) Has the extent to which a party's parliamentary group votes together on issues increased compared to the situation before NIMD support was provided? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>11) Has parties' access to financial and human resources to organize and implement election campaigns improved since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p> <p>12) Have parties' procedures, and their implementation, for selecting and exposing party candidates improved since NIMD's direct party assistance support?? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of these changes? Has NIMD's support contributed to these changes? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p>
	<p>To what extent have the different direct party assistance approaches been effective in achieving the planned objectives? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the various approaches of direct party assistance implemented in terms of effectiveness? To what extent has the application of NIMD's principles of ownership and inclusivity been necessary and instrumental for achieving the objectives aimed at?</p>

	<p>To what extent are the activities under the direct party assistance programme (pillar 2) linked to activities under NIMD's pillar 1 (inter-party dialogue) and 3 (relation political-civil society) in the different NIMD programmes, if at all, and what has been the effect thereof?</p> <p>To what extent has direct party support proven to be an effective instrument to attract and engage political parties in multiparty dialogue?</p>
Impact	<p>What are the positive and negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended, long-term effects produced by NIMD's direct party assistance?</p> <p>Has multi-party democracy been strengthened in the programme countries since NIMD's direct party assistance support? If yes, what kind of evidence is available that supports this statement? What are the causes of this improvement? Has NIMD's support contributed to this improvement? If yes, how, to what degree, and with what effect?</p>
Sustainability	<p>What is the likelihood that the achieved outputs, outcomes and impact will be sustained?</p> <p>To what extent is NIMD implementing appropriate strategies to help ensure sustainability? Are exit-strategies an integrated part of direct party assistance?</p>
<p>Recommendations/lessons learned:</p> <p>What are the main lessons to be learned from the first decade of implementing various direct party assistance approaches?</p> <p>How, if at all, should NIMD's direct party assistance programmes be modified in order to maximize their efficiency, effectiveness and likely impact?</p> <p>How, if at all, can the interlinkages between NIMD's efforts in the area of direct political party assistance and the two other pillars be enhanced?</p> <p>What is to be recommended when formulating an overall general framework for providing customized direct party assistance within NIMD country programmes in order for it to be effective, accountable and ethical?</p>	

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Appendix 4. Evaluation of NIMD's direct party assistance approach 2002-2012: Case study report Georgia¹⁴¹

Lydeke Schakel and Lars Svåsand

Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of the field visit to Georgia, which was conducted as part of the evaluation of NIMD's direct party assistance in the period 2002-2012. The field visit focused on the direct party assistance activities undertaken between 2007-2012. The aim of the field visit was not to evaluate all the activities, and functioning, of the field office in Georgia, but instead to gather information on, and assess, their specific activities that fall within the category "direct party assistance".

The term "direct party assistance" has not been clearly defined by NIMD. Based on the review of the various relevant NIMD documents the evaluators have reconstructed its meaning and defined it as: "the support that is provided to political parties through the specific allocation of financial funds for the bilateral programme with these parties, whereby the parties can receive a share of these funds based on their annual plans/project proposals". It does not include *all* NIMD activities that aim to strengthen political parties (like trainings on financial management in a multiparty setting), nor all the activities whereby (part of) the activities are implemented in a direct relation with a party and the NIMD (like individual policy development support for parties in preparation for a VoteMatch project). In short, only the support that is provided via the process of allocating specific funds for the bilateral programme, which parties can access through the submission of annual plans/project proposals, do the evaluators qualify as "direct party assistance".

For Georgia, this means that especially the activities undertaken under the "Political Party Assistance Program – Strategic Planning¹⁴²" are of interest to this evaluation. This programme has, however, not been implemented in isolation and the NIMD Georgia office has undertaken many different activities aimed at supporting the development of political parties in Georgia. While the other activities are not directly the objective of the evaluation, they are strongly linked to NIMD's direct party assistance support and will, therefore, also briefly be dealt with in this report.

¹⁴¹This is a revised and expanded version of the preliminary report submitted on 14. Dec. 2013. We thank Kati Piri and Levan Tsutskiridze for constructive comments and Bakur Kvashilava for contributing to the earlier version of the report.

¹⁴² NIMD (2013), The evolution of NIMD's political party development work in Georgia; Collection of reports, publications, tools and background material the NIMD applied in the framework of its political party development work in Georgia, p. 5.

The report is based on the various documents received by the NIMD offices in Tbilisi and the Hague, interviews with representatives of the seven parties, interviews with representatives of the national parliament, interviews with the Central Electoral Commission and with the former chair of the commission, with the consultants involved in the strategic planning exercise, with representatives of the donor community and with staff members of the NIMD office in Tbilisi and the Hague.

Description of NIMD Support

NIMD has supported multiparty-democracy in Georgia from 2005 onwards. In 2004, NIMD concluded a joint agreement with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE / ODIHR) for a longer-term joint programme in Georgia. The programme began with a one-year interactive assessment, managed by NIMD, aimed at producing a concise analysis of the political institutions in Georgia and at drafting a set of practical recommendations to support and strengthen democratic political institutions.¹⁴³ In 2006, the assessment was finalized, approved by the political parties and published. In addition, arrangements for the 2006-2008 programme were concluded. This programme was to focus on building the capacity of political parties at the local level and developing a multiparty facility to systematically analyse political parties and the political system in Georgia and facilitate multiparty debates.¹⁴⁴

In 2007, a “train the trainers” programme was developed for the future trainers of political parties. A group of 30 party trainers were trained in skills like strategic planning and negotiation techniques. The trainings took place in a multiparty setting, which encouraged the parties to discuss their common problems, build mutual understanding and enhance cooperation. Next to the training programme, an internal VoteMatch (an interactive tool to develop political party programmes) project was implemented in Georgia from 2007-2008. The aim of this project was to strengthen the programmatic capacities of political parties and to assist them in developing party programmes. Internal party workshops were provided to the six participating parties who had engaged in a process of providing answers and motivations to a list of 117 political statements and submitting the same statements to a large number of party members. A strategic electoral analysis and an internal party analysis of the party’s main political priorities, and of the

¹⁴³ NIMD (2005). Annual report 2004, p. 7.; NIMD (2006). Annual report 2005, p. 46.

¹⁴⁴ NIMD (2007). Annual report 2006, p. 61.

correlation between the viewpoints of the party leadership and other party members, were also conducted. The party representatives of all six parties involved, indicated that this exercise had reinforced their party profile and agenda, it stimulated inter-party programmatic discussions and brought to the front existing differences in opinion between rank and file members and party leaders.

In 2008, the programme was halted due to the August war with Russia and ultimately cancelled after the OSCE/ODIHR withdrew its support.¹⁴⁵

At the end of 2009, NIMD decided to establish a field office in Georgia to manage its operations in Georgia more effectively.¹⁴⁶ This office has implemented a range of activities focused on supporting multi-party democracy in Georgia. It funded, for example, Regional Debates on Constitutional Reform, commissioned the study “Georgian Constitutional Reform in the Eyes of the Public”, commissioned research on public views of political parties, organized a conference on political party funding and women in politics and created the informational web portal: www.partiebi.ge (a website that enables the public to read and compare policy programs of major political parties).¹⁴⁷

Of particular relevance to the evaluation of NIMD’s direct party assistance in the period 2002-2012, is the Political Party Assistance Program. The aim of this programme is to “strengthen Georgian political parties by supporting their institutional development through helping them create strategic plans”¹⁴⁸. Technical assistance was provided to enable political parties to review their vision and mission, conduct a SWOT analysis and create an actionable strategic/organizational development plan.

It was decided that NIMD could not possibly support all the parties that were active in Georgia – if this were the case NIMD support would be inadequate and meaningless because of resource limitations. In fact, there were more than 150 parties registered in Georgia at that time, while only about 30 of them were politically active. To assure genuine inclusivity without spreading the resources too thin it was decided that parliamentary parties and extra-parliamentary parties

¹⁴⁵ Source: NIMD (2008), Annual Report 2007, p. 55; NIMD (2009), Annual Report 2008; Approved by the Board on 25 June 2009, p. 119-120.

¹⁴⁶ NIMD (2013), The evolution of NIMD’s political party development work in Georgia; Collection of reports, publications, tools and background material the NIMD applied in the framework of its political party development work in Georgia, p. 4.

¹⁴⁷ A complete overview of all activities can be found in: NIMD (2013), The evolution of NIMD’s political party development work in Georgia; Collection of reports, publications, tools and background material the NIMD applied in the framework of its political party development work in Georgia

¹⁴⁸ NIMD (2013), The evolution of NIMD’s political party development work in Georgia; Collection of reports, publications, tools and background material the NIMD applied in the framework of its political party development work in Georgia, p. 5-6.

who had gathered more than 8% of the votes during the 2010 local elections would be targeted with the support.¹⁴⁹ Consequently, seven political parties qualified and participated: the United National Movement (UNM), New Rights (NR), Republican Party (RP), Free Democrats (FD), Labor Party (LP), Christian Democratic Movement (CDM), and Georgia's Way (GW).

Based on the initial assessment by NIMD Georgia it turned out that the Georgian parties regularly received various trainings by other international organizations active in the country. At the same time, it was revealed that most of these trainings were concentrated on short-term issues or general topics, such as discussions about the election code, proper understanding of liberal values and democratic procedure, elections and campaigning. NIMD decided to offer to the parties something entirely different – Strategic Plan Development. This effort differed from most other donor support in two significant ways: First, it focused on the long-term institutional development of political parties, and second, it was party specific rather than issue specific.

In 2010, the methodology for this strategic planning exercise was created, which included *“an extensive package of materials on organisational structures, intervention logic, scripts and guidelines for implementation. It provided suggestions for both the planning guidelines and implementation logistics (and logic) - as well as other important aspects that need to be considered when engaging in strategic planning. In addition, a general outline for the work in 2011 was created and political commitments for participation from seven major political parties affirmed.”*¹⁵⁰

The strategic planning exercise was not fully demand-driven. While some of the parties were interested in the exercise from the beginning, others had to be persuaded. The main problem was that although the project addressed parties' organizational underdevelopment, the parties themselves were more focused upon, and interested in, obtaining support in elections and campaign related matters. NIMD Georgia staff, however, met each party leadership individually, explained the new project to them, and was able to convince them of the value-added of participation and secured their agreement to initiate the activities.

To implement the project NIMD selected five experts that were to work with the parties individually and made sure the parties had no objections to any one of them. The experts were selected from various fields: business management, political science, economics, human rights, and psychology. NIMD Georgia invited a Dutch trainer who had previous experience with similar

¹⁴⁹ NIMD (2013), The evolution of NIMD's political party development work in Georgia; Collection of reports, publications, tools and background material the NIMD applied in the framework of its political party development work in Georgia, p. 6.

¹⁵⁰ Idem.

projects to provide a 2-3 day intensive training for the selected local experts. During these trainings the local experts were introduced to the strategic Planning Tool (tool) to be used during the training. The tool was modified based on the discussions by the local and international expert as well as NIMD Georgia representatives and was adopted as a mechanism to be used by the local experts with the parties. The Strategic Plan Development support lasted around one year and generally followed this uniform schedule:

1. Introduction of the program to the specific party by NIMD and establishment of the first training session. After this meeting the parties were to designate the working group (7-10 members) that would work with the trainers. This would take about a month.
2. The first two-day training session took place in NIMD office where the trainers explained the 1st half of the tool to the party. Consequently, the parties had two months to work on the strategic plan, and send it to the trainers. Then the trainers would send back their comments, and NIMD would set the date for the 2nd session.
3. The second session took place outside the capital city so as to provide the party working groups a secluded environment. The logistics were the same as for the first session.
4. The third session took place outside the capital city as well, but this time without the participation of trainers. Here, the party identified several strategic issues and specific action plans to address before them presenting them to NIMD Georgia.
5. NIMD Georgia identified the action plans that it could provide support for and worked with the party to implement them.¹⁵¹

In 2011, all of the seven parties finalized their respective strategic plan. Based on these plans, partnership concepts were created that contained general views of how NIMD-political party partnerships would develop. Based on the strategic planning exercise parties' needs for policy capacity and institutional development support could be easily identified. While it had never been the idea from the start that NIMD would support the parties with all their needs, the parties now had obtained a good insight into their strengths and weaknesses and their needs for institutional and policy capacity support. They could use these insights, summarized in the strategic plan, in their negotiations with donors for requesting support. NIMD also engaged in discussions with individual parties to agree on the type of support it could provide.

Based on the strategic planning exercise, the New Rights Party, for example, requested NIMD's support in 2011 for building their policy development capacities in various thematic fields like healthcare, local self-governance and agriculture. The NIMD provided this support through

¹⁵¹ Source: this description was provided by one of the local consultants that participated in the project.

training sessions, consultant advice and the joint drafting of policy papers/party programs.¹⁵² Another example is the training of the members from the Christian Democratic Movement that NIMD supported in 2012. It aimed at informing the party members of the values, principles and policy positions of the CDM.

The total budget for the Political party assistance programme was €82,420,- (39% of the total NIMD Georgia budget) in 2011, and €165,860,- (34% of the total NIMD Georgia budget) in 2012. Of this budget around 75% in 2011 and 77% in 2012 was allocated to the financing of individual party activities (bilateral activities). The remaining budget was mostly allocated to the strategic planning exercise (including its publication and reviewing sessions). In 2012, most of the bilateral activities focused on the financing of trainings and workshops for individual parties on leadership, interparty democracy, improving local democracy and political management development.

The allocation of the resources spent on the individual parties is decided upon by the local NIMD office based on their assessment of parties' needs, the discussions with the individual parties, and parties' shown commitment to institutional development. For 2012, this resulted in an allocation whereby 2 parties were allocated around €9000,-, 2 parties between €10,000,- - €20,000,-, and 3 parties between €20,000,- - €30,000,-.¹⁵³¹⁵⁴

The context of NIMD support

Since the start-up of NIMD's support in Georgia, the political context has changed dramatically in at least three ways: the electoral process has been improved, the party system with one dominant party (from 2003) has been replaced by a new configuration of parties, and the electoral outcomes have led to a peaceful hand-over of power.

¹⁵² NIMD (2009). Annual Report 2008; Approved by the Board on 25 June 2009, p. 65; NIMD (2013), The evolution of NIMD's political party development work in Georgia; Collection of reports, publications, tools and background material the NIMD applied in the framework of its political party development work in Georgia, p. 5-15; interviews with political parties and staff of the NIMD office in Georgia.

¹⁵³ Source: Financial information provided by NIMD Georgia

¹⁵⁴ Although the above described support differs very much from the approach to direct party assistance that NIMD has followed in other countries, whereby the allocation to parties is transparent, based on a pre-defined allocation rule, and linked to the submission of annual plans/project proposals, the support is still regarded by the evaluators to constitute "direct party assistance" as it is still based on the format that a specific amount of funds is available for projects with individual parties based on a specific plan (in this case the strategic plan and partnership concepts).

Although elections following the 2003 'rose revolution' adhered to a regular schedule, they did not conform very well with international norms. However, a major improvement process started with the Local Elections in 2010. According to the OSCE the elections "...marked evident progress towards meeting OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections." (p. 3).¹⁵⁵ Further improvements in the framework and in the implementation of the electoral process were noted in the monitoring reports on the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2012 and 2013¹⁵⁶, respectively. Contrary to the polarized atmosphere in the 2012 parliamentary elections, the 2013 election ".....took place in an amicable and constructive environment. During the election campaign, fundamental freedoms of expression, movement, and assembly were respected and candidates were able to campaign without restriction. The media was less polarized than during the 2012 elections and presented a broad range of viewpoints. On election day, voters were able to express their choice freely" (p. 3).

Across the elections the structure of the party system also changed dramatically. The opposition lost in almost all districts during the local elections in 2010 despite the initial lead in the polls several months' before the election date. Thus, it was therefore a 'game changer' when the billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili one year before the parliamentary election in 2012 launched his Georgia Dream (GD) party, which in an alliance with five other parties, was able to defeat the incumbent United National Movement (UNM). This outcome was totally unexpected by most political observers at the time. GD's presidential candidate went also on to win the presidency in the first round in the elections in 2013.

These electoral defeats by the incumbent party were accepted and a peaceful handover of the offices took place. Such turnover is frequently seen as an important milestone in the democratic consolidation process.

Assessment of the direct party assistance

In this section, we provide our assessment of the direct party assistance, or more specifically of the strategic planning exercise and the subsequent bilateral activities that have been supported by NIMD. It is important to stress that NIMD Georgia has undertaken a lot more activities than the ones that are assessed below. Many of these activities are of importance for the strengthening of political parties and their policy capacity. An example is the creation of the web portal: www.partiebi.ge. This portal was created in the run-up to the parliamentary elections of

¹⁵⁵ http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/georgia/municipal_2010

¹⁵⁶ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/91896>, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/105003>

October 2011. NIMD invited the political parties to respond to 21 policy related questions that NIMD thought were relevant and important. Individual parties were supported in the development of their policies and the answers were structured into policy programs that were published on the website, which is available in Armenian, Azerbaijani, English and Georgian. The website was visited by more than 18,000 unique visitors and had more than 80,000 page views.

While the evaluators acknowledge the importance of these type of policy capacity development activities, they do not fall within the scope of this evaluation and are, therefore, not included in the assessment.

Based on our assessment, our overall conclusion is that *NIMD's direct party assistance has positively contributed to parties' institutional development process, which may in turn lead to a more institutionalised party system.* It is an important achievement that NIMD succeeded in engaging with all the parties that were invited to participate in the project, and particularly that the leadership in the parties became engaged. It is the unanimous opinion of the parties that NIMD's support has been of great importance. Some of the political parties participating in the program, such as RP and LP have been in existence for decades, while others, such as GW and GD, have recently been established. It is premature to assert that all of the parties have become more institutionalized, and many parties are still focused on personalities rather than policies, a first step in that direction has nevertheless been taken. The parties perceive the development of the strategic plan as a change towards a more long-term view and see the need to engage a wider group of participants in party processes. For the strategic plans to have this effect, parties need to be engaged by NIMD in implementing their plans and for such implementation to be followed-up by NIMD.

More detailed information on our assessment related to the specific OECD-DAC evaluation criteria is provided below. The OECD-DAC evaluation criteria used are:

- Relevance: "The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies."
- Efficiency: "A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results."
- Effectiveness: "The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance."
- Impact: "Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended."

- Sustainability: “The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time”¹⁵⁷

Relevance

The strategic planning exercise was relevant to the needs of the involved political parties. Interviewees of all the involved parties claimed that it responded to their needs as, apart from the United National Movement, the parties did not yet have a strategic plan and strategic planning was considered to be important for their parties’ institutional development. In addition, parties claimed to lack the capacity to engage in such an exercise themselves and since no other actor –e.g. international development partners and civil society organizations– provided this type of support, the support of NIMD Georgia was highly valued. Ownership of the exercise has, in general, been high.

The strategic planning exercise was, moreover, in line with NIMD’s aim to foster parties’ policy seeking capacity and institutional development. It is a logical and relevant activity to be undertaken to improve parties’ institutional development. The party selection criterion used, in addition, allowed NIMD to focus on those parties that had proved to play a relevant role in Georgia’s political arena.

Based on the strategic plans, NIMD Georgia agreed on partnership concepts with the political parties. These partnership concepts defined activities to be supported by NIMD in order to assist parties with the implementation of their strategic plans. Based on parties’ requests several support activities have been provided by NIMD Georgia, including policy analysis capacity building activities for the New Rights Party and the training of the members of the Christian Democratic Movement on the values, principles, and policy positions of the party. These activities were in line with parties’ own demands and identified needs and are likely to have contributed to NIMDs’ objectives of strengthening parties’ policy seeking capacity and institutional development. The selection of these follow-up activities has, it seems, not been based on a clear strategy of how NIMD’s objectives could be best achieved. Instead, the selection of activities was based on discussions between the NIMD office and the individual parties on the basis of the strategic plans, without an available strategy and/or policy guideline that could support the NIMD office in strategically selecting the activities. The lack of strategic and policy

¹⁵⁷ OECD (2002). Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management.

guidelines does *not exclude* that the most appropriate activities for achieving NIMD's objectives are chosen, but it does make the likelihood higher that relevant but perhaps not the most appropriate activities for contributing to the achievement of NIMD's objectives are selected, simply due to the fact that the discussions were not guided by a clear underlying strategy focused on achieving NIMD's objectives.

In 2012 a strategic review was undertaken, to see how the old strategic plans should be adapted to the new political reality. This exercise was relevant from the perspective that parties indicated a need for revising the plan and the process itself helped with building parties' strategic planning capacity. In addition, it showed that parties had internalized the strategic planning exercise and saw its added-value.

However, when party representatives were asked about how they had followed-up their old strategic plan, all indicated that hardly any follow-up activities had been undertaken as the plans had to be revised and/or the involved people had left the party. Many parties indicated that they had not implemented their strategic plan as changes in the political environment made it irrelevant. 'Uncertainty' was a term used by many parties to describe the turbulence of politics and the rapid changes that affected them. The outcome of the parliamentary election in 2012 was a complete surprise to most observers. Parties that had been marginal actors in politics suddenly became part of the government, while the incumbent party unexpectedly found itself out of office.

A strategic plan that is focused on addressing the institutional weaknesses of a party in the long-term, needs, of course, to be regularly updated and especially after such turbulent affairs. Nevertheless, since it is focused on party's institutional and organisational development, and on addressing structural weaknesses, it should still be able to, at least to some degree, inform parties' institutional development process in the medium term. The fact that all party representatives indicated during the interviews that hardly any follow-up was given to their plans seem to indicate a weakness in the strategic planning process, which has negatively affected the relevance of the strategic plans for parties' institutional development processes.

Efficiency

The strategic planning exercise was an important first step in supporting political parties with strengthening their institutional and policy capacity. In fact, the strategic planning support in Georgia was a novelty. Despite hesitations from some parties in the beginning of the process, NIMD Georgia succeeded to get the parties involved in, and committed to, the strategic planning

exercise and was able to establish very good relationships with the parties. This in itself is a major accomplishment, especially given the fact that the resources spent on direct party assistance have been relatively modest. Valuable innovative work has thus been undertaken that seems to have been well worth the total amount of resources spent.

Nevertheless, since the strategic planning exercise 2010/2011 has hardly benefitted from any follow-up activities, in terms of its implementation, as was claimed by the various party representatives interviewed, the strategic planning exercise cannot overall be judged to have been highly efficient. The exercise would have been more efficient if it had resulted in concrete implementation activities before it had to be reviewed in 2012.

For the strategic plans to contribute to NIMD's overall objective, a better follow-up process would be beneficial, such as agreeing with the political parties on an implementation plan with clear roles and responsibilities to specific actors within the parties to ensure organizational embedment of the implementation exercise. In addition, it would be advisable to indicate specific milestones (performance criteria) that would need to be achieved before the next phase of support by NIMD Georgia will be provided. A combination of ensuring organizational embedment, monitoring the achievement of clear milestones, and providing incentives to achieve the milestones by linking these to concrete support activities, can increase the use and follow-up of the strategic plans and in turn their contribution to the achievement of NIMD's objectives.

Finally, some notes about the way direct party assistance has been monitored and evaluated by NIMD Georgia. No formal M&E system has been in place that has guided the implementation of direct party assistance in Georgia. While at the level of activities and outputs regular review meetings have taken place, NIMD Georgia has not systematically collected data that would have supported the office in monitoring the effectiveness and impact of their activities over time. This has limited the possibility to assess the effectiveness and impact of their direct party assistance and the ability of the office to review whether they have been on track with respect to achieving NIMD's objectives and make adjustments where necessary. Especially given the fact that direct party assistance requires a tailor-made approach and involves a process of trial and error, it is essential to have a sound information system in place that allows NIMD to track the developments in the supported parties' institutional and policy capacity, the wider political system and link these in turn to the support provided and NIMD's overall objectives. It would have been beneficial if the local office could have benefitted from concrete M&E guidelines that could have fostered the systematic data collection that NIMD as a whole needs for assessing the effectiveness of, and learning from the experiences with, direct party assistance.

Effectiveness and impact

With its support, NIMD has aimed to improve parties' policy seeking capacity and institutional development. This includes, among other things, improving parties' organisational strength, internal democracy, political identity, and improving the design process and implementation of parties' manifestos/programmes. The direct party assistance in Georgia, and more specifically the strategic planning exercise, sought to contribute to improved organizational capacity and internal democracy of political parties.

As no (baseline) data has been collected on, for example, the level of parties' organisational strength, internal democracy, political identity etc. it is not possible to precisely assess how effective direct party assistance has been and what kind of impact has been realized. In addition, given the short time period of direct party assistance support in Georgia, achievements at the level of outcomes are not yet to be expected. Nevertheless, it is possible, based on the qualitative information collected during the field mission, to at least review whether steps have been taken in the right direction that are likely to support the achievement of the outcomes aimed at.

When asked about the development of parties' institutional and policy building capacity over time, many party interviewees claimed that their respective party has become more inclusive when nominating candidates and developing party policy. In addition, it was stated that parties are moving away from personality based politics towards issue based politics. Moreover, many claimed that parties now have increased skills to engage in, for example, strategic planning processes.

When asked about the results of the strategic planning exercise, two main results have been identified by parties. The first one is increased capacity to engage in strategic planning. The process was seen as important as the plan itself. The second one, which applied to small parties like Georgia's Way, is contribution of the exercise to the survival of their respective parties.

The strategic planning exercise has clearly been an appropriate first step to achieve the outcomes aimed at. The available data and the short time period, however, do not make it possible to say that any of NIMD's outcomes have already been achieved, but it is clear that a step in the right direction has been taken. While parties claim that positive developments have taken place concerning policy development and internal democracy, these developments have not been linked, by the party representatives interviewed, to NIMD's direct party assistance support. The main result that has been achieved and can be linked to NIMD's support is the

increased capacity to engage in strategic planning. This result can, but does not necessarily need to, significantly contribute to strengthened institutionalization and policy development capacity.

The implementation phase of the strategic plan during the 2010-2012 period was, however, weak, which has negatively affected the effectiveness of the 2010/2011 strategic planning exercise. Hardly any follow-up had been given to the individual plans during this period. For some parties, the interviewees were even unable to tell anything about the strategic plan as the involved persons had left the party and knowledge about it had not been institutionalized. This can be explained by the fact that while in most of the parties the process was very inclusive and engaged the top party leadership as well as a broader group of participants, in two parties, namely the LP and UNM, the process was far less inclusive and the outcome was not broadly shared within the party. Both LP and UNM interviewees had only very limited knowledge about the process and results of the strategic planning exercise, which indicates the weak embedment of the plan within the wider party. In these cases, effectiveness could have been higher if the exercise had been more inclusive and the plan had been better embedded within the party as a whole.

It appears that no general strategy and policy guidelines exist that can support the NIMD office in Georgia with its allocation decisions and operations. The Georgia office has considerable scope to provide the direct party assistance in the way it thinks it is best given the specific political context and parties' situation. While such a tailored-made approach is very appropriate, there are risks with this approach that need to be dealt with. A major risk is that the effectiveness of the programme is completely dependent on specific staff members of the local office in Georgia. While the evaluators have a very favourable view of the competence and the efficiency of the Georgia office, the direct party assistance support is extremely dependent on the local staff. If some key staff would leave the office, this might have severe consequences for the future effectiveness of the programme. This is due to the fact that the knowledge on the programme is not sufficiently institutionalized –lack of systematic data collection and reporting– and, as mentioned before, no strategy/policy guidelines exist.

Sustainability

The outcome of strengthened party members' capacity in engaging in strategic planning exercises is sustainable on an individual level and partly sustainable at the level of the party. This is the case in Georgia as party defection is relatively high which decreases the sustainability of the capacity building results at the party level.

With respect to the sustainability of the strategic planning exercise, if the review of the strategic plans, which has been undertaken in 2012/2013, will be followed by a process of carefully planned and monitored implementation, whereby the implementation of the plan is embedded in the institutional organization of the parties, a sustainable contribution to the strengthening of parties' institutionalization can be achieved. This requires a clear and broad-based commitment and involvement of the parties to implement the plan.

Recommendations

- Design clear plans to implement the strategic plans. Roles and responsibilities should be assigned to specific actors within the parties to ensure the organizational embedment of the implementation exercise. In addition, specific milestones should be agreed upon with the parties, which need to be achieved before the next phase of support by NIMD Georgia can be provided;
- Ensure that the support NIMD Georgia provides to the parties is guided by a clear intervention strategy that allows the office to select/target the most appropriate activities/outputs given NIMD's outcomes and overall objective;
- Implement a sound information system and ensure that data is regularly collected and reported concerning key indicators that measure the level of party institutionalisation and policy development capacity, the wider political system, the link between these developments and the support provided, and the link between these developments, the support provided and NIMD's overall objectives.

Appendix 5. Evaluation of NIMD's direct party assistance approach 2002-2012: Case study report Malawi

Lydeke Schakel and Lars Svåsand

Introduction

Malawi was one of the first countries that NIMD became involved in and one of the countries where NIMD has been for the longest time, with 2012 as the last year. The total budget for Malawi peaked in 2007 at more than Eur. 600.00, while the last budget (2012) was Eur. 464.000.

Direct party support has been one of the two main pillars of the support for political parties, with the establishment of the Center for Multiparty Democracy (CMD-M) in 2005 as the other main pillar.

In the following we first present the context for direct party support. The historical background, the structure of political institutions as well as the socio-economic conditions in Malawi impact on the development of political parties as institutions.

We then describe the organization of direct party support and provide examples of the type of projects that have been supported over time, for the 'old' parties as well as for newer parties. We discuss the extent to which direct party support has contributed to the improvement of the capacity of the political parties. The key indicators for this are the relevance, effectiveness and impact indicators as outlined in the evaluation framework (Annex 2)

We have had available project data (applications, appraisals and reports) for the political parties from 2008-2011. We also carried out a field visit to Malawi 2-5. December 2013 where we met with representatives of three parties AFORD, MAFUNDE, UDF¹⁵⁸ and MCP, interviews with civil society organizations involved in politics¹⁵⁹ and with the UNDP Governance Office. We have also discussed the program with staff members of NIMD-HQ.

Where relevant, we draw on additional information available in the research literature on political party development in Malawi.

¹⁵⁸ A second scheduled interview a former UDF administrator was cancelled.

¹⁵⁹ CCPJ: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, MESN: Malawi Electoral Support Network

The context.

NIMD's involvement in Malawi came a decade after the transition to multiparty democracy. In 1993 the one-party regime of Kamuzu Banda and his Malawi Congress Party (MCP), one of the most authoritarian regimes in Southern Africa, was rejected by the Malawian voters in a referendum, with 63 per cent voting in favour of (re)-introducing a multiparty system. In the first multiparty election in 1994 the opposition movement, United Democratic Front (UDF), won the presidency and became the largest party in parliament – although without a parliamentary majority. A new Constitution was drafted and adopted by parliament in 1995¹⁶⁰. Freedom to establish political parties, freedom of expression and freedom to engage in political activities, the organization of fair and competitive elections and an independent judiciary were the main changes from the past; *de jure* as well as *de facto*. However, in terms of *structure* of the formal political institutions, that is, the presidency and the parliament, there has been less change.

The most important political institution is the presidency.¹⁶¹ The president – and vice president – is elected by simple majority in a nation-wide vote for a five-year term, with a limit of two terms for the same person. The Constitution also provides for a second vice-president, appointed by the elected president. However, appointment of the second vice-president is an *option* available to the president, there is no requirement to have a second-vice president. If a second vice-president is appointed, he/she must be from a different party than the elected president and vice-president. This Constitutional provision was introduced to accommodate a coalition between the UDF and AFORD (Alliance for Democracy), the party based in the Northern Region.

The single-chamber Parliament is elected at the same time as the president and for the same five-year term in single-member constituencies by simple majority, but the powers of the parliament are clearly secondary to those of the president. Parliament for instance does not control its own budget or agenda.

¹⁶⁰ Several amendments have been made to the Constitution since its adoption. A constitutional review commission submitted a draft for a comprehensive revised constitution in 2007 but no action has been taken.

¹⁶¹ Malawi scored 0.38 on the power of the legislature index (See main report, section 3), compared to parliamentary democracies, like the Netherlands with 0.78.

The Constitution also contains provisions for local elections, to be held one year after national elections. The first local election was held in 2000, but when the term of office for the councillors expired in 2005, new elections were not held. Several times new local elections have been announced, but were postponed each time for various reasons, some of which are related to the state of political parties. Local elections will now be held simultaneous with the presidential and parliamentary elections on 20. May 2014.

The Constitution provides for basic democratic rights, like forming political parties. These regulations are very liberal. Only one hundred signatures are needed for registering a new party¹⁶². A registered party remains on the register until de-registered by the party itself, following its own statutory rule; there is no requirement for any activity. The ease with which parties can be registered has contributed to the increasing number of parties; from three in 1994 to 53 in 2014.

Table 1. Percentage of seats for the major party alternatives, 1994-2009.

	MCP	UDF	AFORD	Ind.	RP	PPM	NDA	Others ¹⁶³	DPP	
1994	31.6	48.0	20.3	0						
1999	34.2	48.7	15.0	2.1						
2004	31.5	26.7	3.2	20.9	8.0	3.7	4.3	1.6		
2009	14.5	8.8	0.5	17.4				1.0	58.5	

While the three ‘old’ parties won all seats in 1994 and almost 98% of the seats in 1999, ten years later their share of seats had fallen to slightly more than a quarter of all seats. A major problem for many parties is their inability to solve internal conflicts, particularly disputes over the party leadership’s lack of following the party constitution or procedures. Such disputes trigger defections and party splits, while aggrieved actors take their cases to the courts.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² However, under DPP’s rule there were attempts to refuse to register new parties which were perceived to be competitors to the incumbent party (Svåsand, L. (2014). "Regulation of political parties and party functions in Malawi: Incentive structures and the selective application of the rules." *International Political Science Review* 35(3).

¹⁶³ 2004: CONU (Congress for National Unity), MCODE, PETRA
2009: MAFUNDE, MPP

¹⁶⁴ Almost by the day there were reports of such incidents. Some examples: On 12. Dec. 2013 the High Court granted the former minister of Justice, Mr. Kasambra, an injunction preventing the PP from suspending him as

The formation of new parties has caused the party system to become both more fragmented and more turbulent, as displayed in the table on electoral volatility.

Table 2. Net electoral volatility rates 1994-2011 for votes and seats*.

	1999-1994	2004-1999	2009-2004
Votes	9	31	36
Seats	5	37	40

*Sources: 2009: (Ott and Kanyongolo 2010), other years: (Bakken 2005)

The powers of the president, combined with the use of simple majority for election to the office and the first-past-the-post method also for parliament, are two factors which normally are not conducive to the building of strong political parties.¹⁶⁵ Section 65 of the Constitution, is meant to discourage MPs from leaving the party they were elected to represent. If they do, they are supposed to re-contest their seats. In practice, Section 65 has only been applied in a few cases. MP's are therefore tempted to defect in favour of (although not exclusively so) to the incumbent party (Young 2014). Jumping ship may advance their own career, but may also attract more resources for their constituency. But the failure to consistently uphold Section 65 has undermined the consolidation of the parliamentary party caucuses.

A further institutional factor working against stronger party organizations is that there have been no elected offices at the local level after 2005, when the electoral term expired for local councillors elected in 2000. Thus, parties have had no opportunity to develop and maintain a locally elected group of councillors; another factor which would have been conducive to develop political parties. Thus, there are many factors that *together* are unfavourable to the

National Director of Legal Affairs and as a member of the party. A week earlier on 5. Dec. the High Court in Mzusu gave newly elected chairperson, Mr. Chihana, seven days to defend his election victory, after opposition members obtained an injunction preventing him from exercising the functions of the office, citing irregularities in the elections. (A court ruling later recognized Mr. Chihana as the legitimately elected leader)

¹⁶⁵ See section 3 in the main report.

development of parties as institutions. In addition, the first decades were characterized by deep mistrust between actors in the previous opposition movement and the MCP.

The social and economic conditions in Malawi are also problematic for party development. Widespread poverty, a largely rural based population and difficult communication infrastructure, are all factors that make the building of national, voluntary associations difficult, particularly in terms of raising resources needed to sustain an organisation and for the various parts in the organization to communicate with each other.

It is against this combination of problematic conditions for party development that support to strengthen political party organizations must be seen.

Direct party assistance.

From the start in 2003 NIMD has provided direct party support for various projects, such partial funding for a national convention (MCP), supporting the process of candidate nomination (AFORD), training of party cadres (MAFUNDE) (NIMD 2003) (p. 21).

Later, from 2006: “The focus in the bilateral programme shifted from projects (often without clearly linked activities) to an approach based on annual plans linked to strategic plans. All parties developed strategic plans and annual plans targeting specific areas in their strategic plans. Most concentrated on strengthening their party structures” (NIMD 2006) (p. 21).

We have not had access to the strategic plans, but some parties referred in the first years after 2006 to their strategic plan when applying for funds for various projects. The projects that parties applied for were as varied as earlier, but now apparently embedded in a long-term perspective.

The budget for direct party support in 2008 was € 200,000. 50% of the total allocation was shared equally among all the parties and the remaining 50% to be shared on a *pro rata* basis, considering the number of parliamentary seats for each party. In 2009 NIMD decided to cut all bilateral funding in country programmes. The budget was therefore cut to € 100,000. This sum was also retained for the following years. At the same time, the distribution formula was changed: 85 % was shared equally between the parties and the remaining 15% proportionally divided based on the parties’ share of the parliamentary seats¹⁶⁶. As of 2011, 15% of the

¹⁶⁶ The decision on the formula was negotiated between the parties in the CMD-M board, after the 2009 elections NIMD and the CMD-M secretariat consulted the parties to see if a more equitable distribution of the

project costs could be used by the parties to cover general administrative expenses for running the projects.

Table 3. Direct party support 2008-2012, allocation pr. Party*

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AFORD	18.452	14.261	14.261	14.261	14.355
MCP	57.341	16.085	16.619	16.603	16.619
UDF	46.500		15.676	15.676	15.676**
DPP	18.425		24.728	24.728	24.728**
PPM***	18.452				
RP***	25.020				
MAFUNDE		14.261	14.261	14.261	14.261
MPP		14.261	14.261	14.259	14.261**

* Source: Sums based on available contracts

** Party not eligible due to reporting failures.

*** Parties no longer eligible after 2009 elections (no representation in parliament)

The process.

There were several steps for each project:

- Application,
- Appraisal,
- Monitoring, and
- Reporting.

Individual parties applied for projects to NIMD, after CMD-M had first assessed the feasibility of the projects.

NIMD appraised each individual project against the standard assessment form. In several instances the appraisal of the proposals called for revisions, either because it was unclear what

budget was possible and the parties subsequently negotiated this new formula. (Information provided by NIMD)

the intention was with the proposal or it was unclear how it would be executed, or it violated some financial conditions.

Once accepted, the execution of the proposal by the parties was monitored in several ways. CMD-M observed some of the events and commented on the interim report prepared by the parties, before this was forwarded to NIMD- HQ.

At the end of the project period, the parties supplied a financial and a narrative report. As was the case for proposals, several reports had to be resubmitted before they were accepted, as they failed to comply with some of the reporting requirements which had been communicated to the parties before the project started. NIMD had also monitoring visits to Malawi twice a year, during which the NIMD delegation and CMD-M secretariat would meet the parties bilaterally to discuss the situation in their party and the planning and implementation of their projects. This was aimed at (amongst others) ensuring that the bilateral programme activities were in line with the priorities and circumstances of the parties and to foster a logical continuation of the programme over the years (so that activities would try to build on results achieved in the previous year) and an effective programme. In addition, each annual report was audited (project audit) by an accountants firm that produced a report on the quality of the financial report and financial management of the project, with findings and recommendations on which the parties had to give a written response and which were taken into account in the planning for the subsequent year.

Thus, NIMD has had in place routines aimed at fostering the selection of relevant and realistic proposals. Procedures to ensure the proper implementation of the projects have also been in place. These routines revealed that the parties sometimes had problems complying with the requirements of reporting and documenting the activities. The most frequent problem was inadequate financial reports and failure to deliver reports on time; in spite of the explicit requirements in the contract, follow-up meetings and communications with the parties. In three cases, MPP, UDF and DPP, the parties were not eligible to receive support because of failure to comply with the reporting requirements for the 2011 grants.

Assessment of the projects: relevance, effectiveness and impacts.

As direct party assistance has been provided for almost a decade in Malawi, it gives us an opportunity to evaluate the impacts on two different groups of parties.

First, when NIMD became involved in Malawi in 2003, the party system was dominated by three parties only: AFORD in the North, MCP in the Central region and UDF in the South. There were hardly any independent candidates running in the two first parliamentary elections in 1994-1999. Thus, the parties had a firm grip of one of the key functions of parties in a democracy: the nomination of candidates.

Second, as has been documented in several publications, the party system in Malawi started to fractionalize in front of the 2004 election (Rakner, Svåsand et al. 2007). The fractionalization led to the establishment of many more parties. A few of the newly formed parties won some seats, and in addition the DPP was formed in 2005, *after* the election and became the governing parties. The DPP went on to win a landslide in 2009. For the first time since the re-introduction of multiparty system, the same party won the presidency and a majority of the seats in parliament.

To what has direct party assistance contributed to the objectives of party support for the older and the newly formed political parties?

The objectives of direct party support were to contribute to the strengthening of the individual parties. Although the specification of the sub-elements of this objective has varied over time, a monitoring report outlines the following objectives, with reference to the multiannual plan:

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Institutional Capacity of political parties

1. Organizational capacity and skills strengthened of political parties
2. Finance and administration strengthened
3. Internal democracy established
4. Programmatic and policy capacity increased and identity enhanced
5. Accountable and professional leadership
6. Communication and media strategies and skills developed
7. Networking and cooperation between likeminded parties improved
8. Organizational and programmatic capacity of parties on sub national level enhanced
9. Strategic plan of party established and implemented

This breakdown of capacities exemplifies how institution building consists of multiple organizational aspects. Thus, it is possible that change may be detected in some, but not necessarily all of these capacities. For some of these capacities it is possible from the reports

¹⁶⁷ See document: 090326 Checklist final report AFORD annual plan 2008.doc

to gain an understanding of the extent to which the projects have been carried out and how they have been assessed by the parties. For other elements the information is scarce, or as in the case of item 7 missing.

The orientation of direct party support to a wide range of projects that the parties have identified themselves as important has been important in developing *ownership* among the parties to projects. All of the projects that the parties have applied for can in some ways be deemed as *relevant* for the overall objective of strengthening the capacity of the individual parties. At the same time it is difficult from each individual project to understand how their *cumulative* effect leads to stronger party organizations, which was also confirmed by the interviewed parties. However, there are projects that have worked better than others, which we return to later in the report.

We can first deal with *Item 9, Strategic plans*, which has been common to all parties. Although we have not had the strategic plans available, we understand that this item was completed for all of the parties, and some parties do refer to the strategic plan, particularly in the early years of direct party support. But applications for projects later in the time period do not refer to these plans so it is unclear what status the plan has had for each of the parties for the later years.

For the other items, there are more variations in how the parties have developed.

Item 1. Organizational capacity and skills strengthened of political parties.

What ‘capacity and skills’ include can be many different things. But an important indicator of the *capacity* of political parties is the ability of a party to nominate candidates. Due to the costs of running a national campaign, it is not surprising that there are few presidential candidates. For other elections the number of nominated candidates can be a proxy indicator for organizational capacity. Competing in election is one of the key functions of political parties.

The three established parties each nominated candidates for the presidency in all elections. However, UDF’s candidate in 2009 (Mr. Mulizi) was blocked by the Malawi Electoral

Commission from running, due to the two-term limitation for presidential office-holders.

Several of the smaller parties have also at times had a presidential candidate.¹⁶⁸

The two larger parties, MCP and UDF, have also been able to nominate candidates in almost all of the constituencies in every election (see table 4). AFORD, traditionally a party with a stronghold in the Northern region, has decreased in ability to field candidates. In the first election it had candidates in 159 constituencies but in 2009 only 29.

Table 3. Registered parliamentary candidates, 1994-2009.

Party	YEAR OF ELECTION			
	1994	1999	2004	2009
AFORD	159	75	39	29
CODE				12
CONU		5	2	1
DPP				193
CSU	6			
Independents	12	114	362	487
MAFUNDE			21	1
MCP	177	187	172	134
MDP	29	24	9	1
MDU	2	7		
MGODE			22	
MMYG		1		

¹⁶⁸ See f.i. <http://africanelections.tripod.com/mw.html>

MNDP	10			
MPP				11
NARC				35
NCD			21	
NDA			185	
NPF		4		1
NRP				25
NSM			1	
NUP			9	1
PETRA			18	19
PFP			2	1
PPM			110	51
RP			109	7
SDP		10		
SNDP		2		
UDF	177	191	164	171
UFMD	36			
Total no. of candidates	608	620	1246	1182
Total no. of constituencies	177	193	193	193

Sources: (Magolowondo and Svåsand 2010)

Moreover, the total number of candidates running for parliament has expanded from 608 to 1182. A significant part of this increase has occurred because of controversies over nomination processes in the parties, particularly in UDF. In many cases, aspiring candidates who failed to win the party's nomination decided to run as independent, citing claims of irregularities in the organizing of the nomination procedure.

Thus, both the nomination of Muluji as presidential candidate in 2009, in spite of the likelihood of his candidature being blocked, and the many independent candidates indicate that at least for UDF, its capacity to function as an organization with established and accepted routines, has declined, as has happened with AFORD. Again, MCP appears as the more solidly organized party, suffering fewer controversies and upholding the number of nominated candidates; although with a dip in 2009.

Newer parties

As a result of the fragmentation of the party system in front of the 2004 election, several new parties won seats: among them PPM, PETRA and RP. Two additional parties, MPP and MAFUNDE became eligible for support after the 2009 election. As new parties, they identified their priorities as building a more solid organization. PETRA for instance applied for funds to strengthen the party's structure. It reported in 2008 that "So far the party has established about 75 constituency committees out of a total 193 constituencies in the country, representing 38.8 %. The party's objective is to establish committees in all constituencies. Thus this objective has been partially achieved. Also originally the party had intended to field 100 parliamentary candidates in selected constituencies, but identified only 60"¹⁶⁹. However, for the parliamentary election in 2009 it nominated only 19 candidates for parliament; less than the third of identified 60 and only a fifth of the intended target of 100. There can of course be many explanations for this, but the party itself noted that prospective candidates had defected in favor of better opportunities.

PPM had developed a strategic plan and applied for projects to strengthen its new structures. It reported on the establishment of 51 constituency offices and had transferred some funds for

¹⁶⁹ P E T R A . NARRATIVE REPORT, JUNE 2008 TO 31ST JANUARY, 2009

their operations. (This is the exact number of candidates nominated in 2009). The party had several goals for the development of the organization, but was also realistic about the challenges facing the party. The party did not succeed in winning seats in 2009 and there was no longer eligible for direct party support. However, the party has survived as an organization and when interviewed, the party attributes its survival to the support it did benefit from during the previous parliamentary term.

The RP faced internal problems from 2004 to 2006 when the party leader tried unilaterally to de-register the party. It applied for funding for 2008 to rebuild the party structures, but it nominated only candidates in 17 constituencies in 2009 in contrast to the 108 competing in 2004. But it may well be that in the event of a total absence of direct party support, that even this reduced capacity might not have been achieved.

However, in general, the lack of a baseline and a series of indicators against which progress could be measured it is hard to draw conclusions about the cumulative effects on party strengthening. The 2006 Annual Report noted that “..performance-based criteria was not achieved in 2006. Parties need time to adjust and the required institutionalised structures of CMD-M are not yet in place. In 2007, performance-based criteria will be on the agenda again, with the aim of laying a solid foundation for partnerships in 2008.”(NIMD 2006) (p. 21), but a monitoring report for 2010 noted that in one case “. MCP failed to come up with proper indicators of the outputs and this made it difficult to measure the outcomes”. The monitoring report for AFORD in 2008 pointed out that “The activity contributed very positively to the objective, and the achieved results were in tandem with the planned results.....In terms of indicators for this activity, firstly, these were not adequate for the various implementation stages. Secondly, even the given indicator for this activity is yet to be realized, because there are still some processes to be undertaken.”¹⁷⁰

When interviewed, the party officials could not identify how the direct party support had changed their party.

Item 2: Finance and administration strengthened.

Financial support for communication equipment and for participation in seminars to enhance administrative competences, are examples of projects contributing to improve the quality of parties as organizations. But the cases of MCP and UDF indicate fragility with respect to the

¹⁷⁰ NIMD-checklist for final report AFORD year plan 2008. Annex Monitoring report

relationship between the individual administrator and the party. When the former MCP General Secretary passed away, the *party* did not have access to the information needed for the reporting, and when UDF split in 2011, the officer in charge of the reporting was among those that defected to the Peoples Party. Apparently, access to the documents – and control of the funds – remained with the person and not with the party. The failure of UDF to comply with the reporting requirements meant that it was not eligible for support the following year. These cases may be unique, but may also indicate a serious problem with how individual actors in the parties function. Also AFORD failed to report adequately in several instances, even in the most recent years.

Countervailing measures were taken by requesting parties to nominate a project team responsible for implementation (to ensure that it would not be one person in charge).

Thus, even in the three ‘old’ parties, which have had a long time to develop proper administrative routines there have been problems of maintaining standard routines.

Whether these three parties are stronger financially today than in the past is impossible to know, as there is no public information about the financial status of the parties, but it seems that UDF continued to be totally dependent on Mr. Muluzi’s bank-rolling of the party¹⁷¹. If the claim by AFORD’s chairperson for 2009 (see f.n. 10) is correct, also that party depends heavily on the leader. One of AFORD’s recent projects was an attempt to break this dependency by selling membership cards to the public. But when interviewed in December 2013, Mr. Msiska confirmed that this had not been effective.¹⁷²

The relative importance of the financial support is also put into perspective by why some parties disqualified themselves from further funding by not fulfilling the reporting requirements. One should think that for parties which cannot rely on membership contributions and where public subsidies are only available for parties with more than 10% of the seats, that direct party support would be significant resources¹⁷³. However, both in the

¹⁷¹ Mr. Muluzi contributed more than Kw. 13 mill. of the total costs of Kw. 22 mill. for the national convention of the party in 2008. (Svåsand, L. (2008). Internal party democracy: The case of the United Democratic Front in Malawi. Tromsø, Nordic Political Science Association Convention.

¹⁷² Recently, the newly elected president of MCP has also called for membership contribution.

¹⁷³ In 2011 this amounted to ca. Kw 40.000 pr. MP, but it is not known how these contributions functions, if they strengthen the party as such or if it is an additional resource in the hands of the party leader. (Based on calculations from article “UDF stopped from getting parliamentary funding” Karen Msiska, Daily Times, 22. October 2011)

case of DPP and MPP (Maravi People's Party) in 2010 they failed to fulfill the reporting requirements and were therefore informed that they would be disqualified for future funding. In the case of the incumbent party at the time, DPP, it could be that the direct party support did not matter financially (EUR ca. 25.000), but MPP is a much smaller party, with only one MP, and it might have been expected that support would be more significant for such a party.

The lack of an extensive mobilization of membership contributions is not only because most Malawians are poor, but also that the very idea of party membership has a negative ring to it. Under the one-party state *all* Malawian citizens were forced to contribute to the MCP. Thus, the parties today are hesitant about embarking on a regular membership mobilization because such an activity reminds the electorate of the past regime.

AFORD's and UDF's financial and administrative capacity does not seem to have improved much. Only the MCP's administration appears more solid, perhaps because of its much longer continuity both as an organization.

Item 3. Procedures meant to ensure internal democracy figure in the parties' constitutions.

But, empirically, it has proved notoriously hard for party analysts to study internal party democracy. Nevertheless, the most recent CMD-UNDP strategic plan refers to the lack of internal party democracy as one of the key weaknesses of the parties in Malawi. That there are frequent cases where party officials or party activists have taken their own party to court indicates at least that the rules, or the application of them, are not accepted among members. Both the UDF and MCP have new leaders claiming to change their parties, but it remains to be seen if the parties will improve. (See also on Items 4 & 5 below).

Item 4. Programmatic and policy capacity increased and identity enhanced.

All of the Malawian parties have electoral manifestos, although the manifestos do not differ very much from each other (Mpesi 2011). This, however, is not a particular characteristic of Malawi as the same is found for parties in many countries, in Africa as well as in other regions (Gonzalez-Acosta 2009, Conroy-Krutz and Lewis 2011).

With the exception of AFORD little is known of how the parties go about developing the manifestos. When interviewed party officials explain that a committee is established by the party leader and that the committee consults with stakeholders in the regions. The final draft

is prepared by the national executive committees. The national conventions may formally adopt it, but this is more of a formality.

AFORD, however, had policy development as its key project for 2008 and the report outlines a detailed planning process that also attempted to be inclusive. The report describes a process that is fully consistent with how a routinized, well planned, and inclusive process should be. In this case there is a clear link between direct party support and improved process of policy development. It also received support for printing copies of the manifesto.

Item 5. Accountable and professional leadership.

The role of the party leaders has been the most controversial issue in Malawian politics and it is leadership issues that have triggered most of the conflicts, causing party splits in MCP, UDF and AFORD. AFORD has been almost paralyzed as a party following the death of the party founder, Chihana, with the controversy over who is the legitimate leader circulating in the courts until recently. In UDF, when Muluzi resigned as party president in 2008, the procedures, as spelled out in the party constitution were not followed. The interim solution caused havoc in the party, involved court cases and ended with a split in the party. Similarly, since the resignation of Hastings Banda in MCP in 2003, the struggle for control of the leadership of MCP caused two splits. When there were calls for the resignation of the party leader in the wake of the electoral setback in 2009, such criticism caused the critics to be expelled from the party. When the incumbent party president term expired in 2013 he first attempted to change the party constitution in order to remain in office.

It is a sign of progress in MCP that delegates voted to retain the party constitution.

Only in the PPM did an orderly transfer of leadership take place when Aleke Banda resigned in 2007. But in general: Leadership issues have until today been the Achilles heel of the parties and combined with the centralization in the parties a key obstacle to further institutionalization.

Item 7. Communication and media strategies and skills developed.

Such topics have been the subject for several training sessions, and in the case of AFORD there was also a project to develop and sell a newsletter. Although some issues were printed and distributed, the project has fizzled out. A newsletter is clearly an element that is relevant for the improvement of communications, but according to the party it has not been sustained.

Item 8. Organizational and programmatic capacity of parties on sub national level enhanced

Many of the projects that the parties applied for involve seminars or training sessions for party activists at sub-national levels, particularly trainings for election monitors. But in the absence of local elections, there is little information available on sub-national party organizations. A recent study by Chinsinga (Chinsinga 2011) with the purpose of examining the functions of eight political parties at the sub-national level concluded that this could only be done for DPP, UDF and MCP which had “.. somewhat functional structures at the regional, district and local levels.” The problem of functional structure is also evident when parties nominate candidates for public office (Item 1).

An important element of institutionalization is that an organization’s existence becomes independent of the actors in it. An institutionalized party does not depend on the particular individuals in the party. But this seems to be precisely the problem in many of the Malawian parties, as the fragmentation of the party system indicates: the ‘leadership fixation’ as Ihonvbere (Ihonvbere 1998) called it. AFORD’s post-election troubles highlight its troubled relationship between the party as such and the role of the party leader.¹⁷⁴ But AFORD is by no means alone in having experienced leadership problems, as similar problems have occurred in all of the major parties. The heavy dependence on party leaders, particularly their financial contributions to the running of the parties, clearly has limited the impacts of the direct party assistance mechanism. Already in 2006, NIMD’s Annual Report had noted that “ It proved difficult to actively engage the top leadership of all parties with CMD-M.”(NIMD 2006) (p. 21). But since the financial status of the individual parties is unknown, it is impossible to say how important the direct party support has been. The cases of failures to report adequately, and therefore be cut-off from further direct party support, *may* indicate that some of the parties have other types of funding available to them.

¹⁷⁴ “Lack of inclusiveness, institution identity, networking and fundraising activities were some of the factors highlighted in the presentation. Most of the reasons presented that lead to the party’s poor performance were attributed to the leadership of the party. Participants debated mostly in agreement to the findings and this made the leadership including the president to defend and justify their actions. AFORD party funded by an individual and in the end taken as a personal entity came to the limelight. The president revealed that he almost funded all the aspiring candidates from personal money. He tried to justify why he did not go around to campaign for aspiring candidates.” (MONITORING REPORT: AFORD. Performance assessment of AFORD participation in the 2009 General Elections.

Assessment.

A complete assessment of the relevance, effectiveness and impacts of direct party assistance would require a more extensive range of data and indicators than available for this evaluation. There is hardly data on the state of the parties prior to the introduction of direct party support. More detailed information on our assessment related to the specific OECD-DAC evaluation criteria is provided below. The OECD-DAC evaluation criteria used are:

- Relevance: “The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.”
- Efficiency: “A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.”
- Effectiveness: “The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.”
- Impact: “Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.”
- Sustainability: “The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time”¹⁷⁵

- *Relevance.*

The formulation of the strategic plans have and the range of projects that parties could apply for, provide for strong ownership of the direct party assistance mechanism. Parties therefore had an opportunity to select projects that they considered to be valuable for them. As the elements of institutional capacity referred to above indicate, very many different kinds of projects can be seen as relevant for building party capacity.

- *Efficiency.*

NIMD has had in place a system for appraising, monitoring and reporting each project. Such routines have contributed to foster the implementation of the projects. However, as the reports reveal there are several examples where parties have failed to comply with the contracts. These cases involve both older and new political parties. Political parties have, as we have seen, faced several constraints in their operations. Among them, the examples referred to above indicate that there sometimes have been unclear relationships between the roles that individuals perform and the party organization as such.

¹⁷⁵ OECD (2002). Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management.

The strategic plans for the parties should also improve efficiency by providing a road-map for which activities would be best suited. The extent to which such strategic plans has been used is unclear.

- *Effectiveness and impact.*

Although each project proposal is relevant for one or several elements of institutional capacity building, it is not always clear from the reports how these projects *together* have impacted on the parties. There are many examples in the reports of projects that are clearly relevant to various efforts to improve capacity from an organizational point of view and many projects have also been implemented according to the proposals, but in the absence of a series of indicators, it is problematic to evaluate the cumulative effects of the projects. The many cases where party activists and/or individuals in leadership positions, take their party to court indicate a lack of ability in the parties to solve conflicts. Moreover, the frequent defection of MPs from one party to the other, indicate shallow party identification. The older parties hardly appear more institutionalized today they were at the start of the multiparty system. These problems are also recognized by the UNDP- CMD-M, which in the strategic plan for 2013-2016 points out that “Wide-ranging weaknesses in the organizational structure of political parties play a significant role in hampering the developmentsThere is little democratic culture within and between parties.....absolute disregard of their respective constitutions and rules.....over-reliance on party leaders”¹⁷⁶ Thus, according to the UNDP- CMD/M strategic plan serious deficiencies persist in the most central aspects of political parties as organizations.

- *Sustainability.*

In the case of Malawi, sustainability of the political parties’ organization is ambiguous. On the one hand, the ‘old’ political parties have survived, but, on the other, appears as leadership dependent as before. This also seems to be the case with new parties like DDP and PP. In the absence of information on the parties’ total financial status, it is not possible to know if they will be able to carry on as before. Direct party assistance has, according to some interviewees, had a strong impact on smaller parties. Direct party assistance is credited with helping such parties to survive.

Summary

¹⁷⁶ UNDP-CMD Strengthening Political Parties Project Malawi, 2013-2016. p. 2, (See also Chinsinga, B. (2011). Benchmarking Core Capacities and Capacities of Political Parties in Malawi. Lilongwe, Centre for Multiparty Democracy.

Why is it, then, that almost a decade of party building support has not yielded clearer signs of progress as regards the larger and more established parties and for many new parties? The projects supported through direct party assistance have to a large extent been defined by the parties themselves, and NIMD has had in place procedures for assessing and monitoring the projects. It has also been communicated to the parties, in documents as well as in meetings, what the complying requirements include.

As noted in the introduction, the institutional and socio-economic environments in Malawi are not favorable to the development of strong party organizations. But for party building efforts to be successful several conditions must be fulfilled. A primary condition is that the party leader is committed to the process, that there is a long-term perspective and a shared understanding in the party of what the goals of the party building process should be. Already in 2006, NIMD's Annual Report pointed out that *"It proved difficult to actively engage the top leadership of all parties with CMD-M. This will require an extra effort in 2007. The NIMD may make use of a high-level mission to attract such involvement"* (NIMD 2006) (p. 21). It could be that the strategic plans that were developed early on in the process reflect such shared understanding, but that the dominance of the party leader and the incentives for other senior figures in the parties to defect undermined these efforts. As the many defections of senior people in the parties indicate, a shared commitment and identification with the parties are lacking, and even among party founders there are examples of defections from the parties they themselves took the initiative to create.¹⁷⁷

Many of the parties are very much based on individuals, not on common identification with political objectives, and direct party support has not been able to change this. The gap between what the parties – as organizations – apply for, and the policies pursued by the leadership of parties – is illustrated by the DPP and the MCP. In 2008 DPP applied for various projects to develop its local structures and emphasized its democratic aspirations: "The party has agreed on new directions, new structures, new institutions and a new political framework by which Malawi can strengthen and consolidate its democracy and foster prosperity".¹⁷⁸ Yet, as a governing party it introduced several measures widely condemned for restraining democratic rights. It also expelled party members perceived to be opposed to or challenge the party leader. MCP motivated its 2008 application for funds to organize a national convention as part of the efforts to improve internal democracy. Although a convention did take place, members challenging the party leader in the aftermath of the conventions were summarily expelled, in

¹⁷⁷ B.J. Mpanganjira established the NDA (National Democratic Alliance) in 2004. The party was disbanded shortly after the 2004 election when Mpanganjira was offered a cabinet position in the DPP government. Chakwamba established the Republican Party also at that time and immediately tried to de-register it when offered a cabinet position in the DPP government.

¹⁷⁸ DPP Annual Plan 2008, p. 2

total disregard for their rights as party members, and had to take their cases to the courts to be re-admitted to the party.

These examples illustrate a fundamental problem of, on one hand, the relationship between the *parties* as formal entities relating to NIMD, and, on the other hand, the role of the individual *party leader* in the party organization. These problems are likely to have limited the direct party assistance from contributing successfully to the objectives.

Nevertheless, parties did value the support and considered it to be relevant for their own objectives. In addition, interviewees have argued that it was also relevant, at least in the first years, as a tool for fostering parties' engagement with NIMD's interparty dialogue activities. While it cannot be determined whether direct party assistance support was indeed necessary for securing parties' engagement with the interparty dialogue activities, it is very likely that even if this had been the case in the first years, it was no longer necessary after the CMD had proven its added-value to the parties.

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Appendix 6. Evaluation of NIMD's direct party assistance approach 2002-2012: Case study report Uganda

Lars Svåsand¹⁷⁹

The IPOD – the interparty organization for dialogue – was launched on 5. Feb. 2010. This was a breakthrough as it was the first time ever that the opposition parties (with seats in parliament) and the incumbent party, NRM-O, met with a commitment to participate in regular meetings. From 2011 NIMD-Uganda has contributed with direct funding to the political parties. This support has primarily been targeted to improve the policy development capacity of the political parties, which has included assistance to various parts of organizational development. The targeting is in line with NIMD's overall strategy to support the development of political parties as institution, as formulated in NIMD's strategic plans. Three objectives have been highlighted in these plans: improving the functioning of the multiparty political systems, assisting the institutional development of political parties, and improving the relationship between political parties and civil society organizations.¹⁸⁰ Among the objectives are: improving the political parties' institutionalization, policy development and ability to solve problems. Developing and implementing party program is a part of these objectives. The motivation for supporting this specific party activity is twofold. First, «As indicated in the Outcome definition, the NIMD program aims specifically to improve the policy function of parties, which also contributes to the weak performance of parties on other objectives».¹⁸¹ Second, it is argued that through improved policy development the electorate will have a clearer choice between political alternatives. Thus, NIMD's objectives seek to address the weaknesses of political parties in new democracies which is often seen as an obstacle to democratic consolidation (Doherty 2001, Resnick 2013).

This report provides first a brief historical background to the current state of politics in Uganda and outlines some key political characteristics of Uganda. It is important to see direct party assistance in light of the environment of the parties as these are likely to shape the

¹⁷⁹ This is an expanded and revised report originally by Fred Golooba-Mutebi and Lars Svåsand, 04.10.13.

¹⁸⁰ NIMD (2007). Political parties: Pillars of democracy. Multi-annual plan 2007-2010. den Haag, NIMD.

¹⁸¹ NIMD (2012). Multi Annual Plan. den Haag, NIMD.
p. 12-13

attitudes and actions of political actors. There are numerous challenges to the building of institutionalized political parties.

Following this section I outline the scope and types of direct party assistance 2010-2013 and summarize how the political parties have used this type of support. This is followed by a brief discussion of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the party assistance, structured according to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria:

- Relevance: “The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.”
- Efficiency: “A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.”
- Effectiveness: “The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.”
- Impact: “Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.”
- Sustainability: “The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time”¹⁸²

The impact of direct party assistance in Uganda cannot be assessed properly, primarily because of the program has been in existence for only a few years. There are several ways one could analyze if the policy development of political parties has been improved or not, but such data are not available. A prime example would be the identification of *change* in the way the parties develop their electoral manifesto. Some efforts were made towards this objective in 2010-2011, but probably too short time in advance of the 2011-election to have a clear effect. Thus, if this type of support is maintained until the next general election in 2016, it should be easier to identify if there are changes in the parties’ approaches. Similarly, the argument in favor of policy developments is to increase the relevance of policy issues in electoral campaigns. Another example would be analysis of party activity in parliament, the kind of proposals parties present and how MPs vote. Such data could be collected but have not been available for this report.

¹⁸² OECD (2002). Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management.

The empirical basis for the report consists of the project applications and reports by the political parties and interviews with party officials (see Appendix 1), meetings with NIMD officials in Uganda and at NIMD-HQ, and meetings with academics at Makerere University (Appendix).

Where relevant I relate the information and findings to other reports and studies.

The political landscape in Uganda.

Uganda has had a volatile and violent history as an independent state. Initially it was a multi-party system, but became a de facto one-party state in 1966, led by Milton Obote. In 1971 Obote was deposed by the army that under the leadership of General Idi Amin established one of Africa's most brutal dictatorships. The economy collapsed as a result of corruption and the forced emigration of the Indian business community. Eight years later (in 1979) Amin was overthrown by a rebel army, supported by Tanzania and a small contingent of Ugandan troops. Elections in the following year returned Obote to power, but his rule triggered more armed resistance. He was deposed in a military coup in 1985, which in turn was defeated in 1986 when the National Resistance Army (NRA), led by Yoweri Museveni, captured the capital.

During the guerrilla war against the second Obote government, the National Resistance Army (NRA) established resistance councils (RC) in the villages under its control. When NRA took power in 1986 and established itself as the National Resistance Movement (NRM) it aimed to spread the organization nation-wide as a basis of its administration. NRM's rule was initially based on the legitimacy it had earned as the ouster of the Obote regime. Legal Notice No. 1 of 1986 provided an initial legal basis for the new government, but it took several years before the RC structures that had been developed from the start of the movement regime, were incorporated in the legal and constitutional framework. This was done with the adoption of the Constitution in 1995 and the Movement Act of 1997. The movement system that was introduced in Uganda when the NRM came to power was based on the principles of participatory democracy and a major feature of the system was the establishment of Resistance Councils

(RCs) in every village. Renamed Local Councils in the 1995 Constitution, the local councils are part of a five-tier structure that starts at the village level (LCI) and progresses from parish, sub-county, county and finally the district level (LC V). Political parties were allowed to exist, but their activities were subject to strict limitations that prohibited delegates' conferences and the sponsoring of candidates for elections (Barya 2000, Carbone 2003). Until the February 2006 elections, all elected representatives in the LCs and the national legislature – a total of 945,351 seats - were elected on the principle of 'individual merit.'

The institutional framework.

A question that increasingly manifested itself in the debates around the 1995 Constitution was whether the movement system was to be regarded as a permanent or transitional system pending the day when Uganda could become a multiparty democracy. A referendum in 2000 confirmed the no-party system, but the elections in 2001 revealed significant divisions within NRM. The Movement Act and the Constitution did not differentiate between the State of Uganda and the Movement as an organization separate from the state. NRM did not have a formal structure until May 2003 and the movement was directly funded by the Ugandan state until February 2006. A combination of internal processes in the NRM, demands from the political opposition, and from the international community led to a referendum in 2005 re-introducing the multi-party system (Makara, Rakner et al. 2009). As part of this transition, the constitution was changed, removing the term-limitation for the presidency. Thus, President Museveni could run again for the office he had occupied since 1986; in a formal electoral sense since 1995. It was only after the repeal of the Political Parties and Organizations act and the registration of NRM as a party, officially called NRM-Organization (NRM-O) that a party constitution was adopted. As a result, for many years there were no rules for how the Movement should be governed as opposed to how Uganda should be governed. Thus, from a complete fusion between movement and state, the NRM was gradually made more distinct as an organization, but not completely separated from the state. This was to have a major impact on the outcome of the 2006 and the 2011 elections as it is widely perceived that the incumbent party made use of state resources for its campaigns, particularly its control of public radio (Makara, Rakner et al. 2008, Izama and Wilkerson 2011).

The Presidency is by far the most significant political institution. (The Fish-Kroenig index for Uganda is 0.44). The President is elected for a five year term. To be elected a candidate needs an absolute majority of the votes. In case no candidate obtain an absolute majority a run-off

between the two top candidates are held later, but this scenario has never materialized so far in Uganda. The Parliamentary election is held simultaneously with presidential election in a combination of districts: constituency districts (215 in 2006, 238 in 2011) and district seats contested by women candidates only (69 in 2005, 112 in 2011). Elections for the constituencies and the districts are by plurality votes. In addition to the directly elected seats, parliament also has 25 members indirectly elected to represent specially defined categories: youth, women, people with disabilities and the armed forces. All of the indirectly elected representatives have so far been NRM affiliated.

Uganda has the most elaborate sub-national structure in Africa, with five levels below the national, all governed by elected office-holders. However, most of the resources for these units are transferred from the national government, so it is unclear how much autonomy the decision-makers enjoy. The highest sub-national unit is the district, which also doubles as constituencies for the election of women representatives to the national parliament.¹⁸³

The elections 2006-2011.

When multiparty elections were re-introduced in 2006, it led to a re-surfacing of some of the old political parties, primarily DP (Democratic Party) and UPC (Uganda People's Congress), but also to the establishment of new parties, with FDC (Forum for Democratic Change) as the leading competitor to the NRM. FDC's leader was the former ally of President Museveni, Kiiza Besigye. There were more political parties contesting the parliamentary elections in 2011, but as in 2006 most of the parties were not able to penetrate the territory with candidates. The opposition parties had limited electoral success (Table 2), but the electoral outcome may have been strongly affected by the incumbent party's use of state resources.

The largest opposition parties from the 2006 elections were partly able to take advantage of the increasing number of constituencies by expanding their number of candidates (Table 1). But the number of candidates running as independents doubled, mostly reflecting the many controversial nominations in the NRM.

¹⁸³ According to Green, the increasing number of districts is part of the patronage system developed by Museveni. Green, E. (2010). "Patronage, District Creation, and Reform in Uganda." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 45: 83-103.

Table 1. No. of nominated parliamentary candidates 2006 and 2011 elections¹⁸⁴.

	2006	2011
NRM	215	237
FDC	139	188
UPC	76	102
DP	68	86
CP	5	7
JP	6	12
Indep.	294	530
UGF		53
PPP		26
Others	6	28
Toal no.		
Of cand.	811	1269
Total no. of const.	215	237

NRM's dominance as an organization is even more strongly reflected in nomination of candidates to the various local offices. In 2006 NRM had 4,873 candidates nominated for sub county/town/municipal divisions councilors (the lowest level of elected office holders), while the largest opposition party, FDC, had 1,261. NRM had more candidates running for all elected offices alone, 12,616, than all other parties and independents together. In 2011 the pattern was very much the same. NRM had 7,092 candidates for the lowest elected level, while FDC, the largest opposition party, were able to field 2,570 candidates. JEEMA and CP were almost completely absent as political alternatives in the sub-national elections. Although there are nine different types of offices with thousands of seats to compete for, these two parties had only 48 and 38 candidates, respectively. Even the two old parties, DP and UPC,

¹⁸⁴ Uganda Electoral Commission Reports for the 2006 and the 2011 elections.

were not able to nominate half as many candidates as the FDC. More candidates chose to compete as independent, then running as candidates for the opposition parties.

A decentralized system of government is often seen as an opportunity for opposition parties to establish a network of organizations at the grass-root, which can be used to develop a competitive party also at the national level. However, in Uganda, the extensive number of local councils at several levels is an organizational challenge for the organizationally weak opposition parties.

Table 2 Election results 2006

	NRM	FDC	DP	UPC	Indep.	Other ¹⁸⁵ parties
Presidential Candidate (% votes)	59.3	37.4	1.6	0.8	1.0	-
No. of parliamentary seats ¹⁸⁶	205	37	8	9	37	2
Perc. of seats	66.3	12.0	2.6	2.9	12.0	0.6

Thus, when IPOD was launched in 2010 it was against the back-drop of years of NRM rule and with the fresh experience of a controversial election in mind.

The 2011 (Table 3) election reinforced the results from 2006. Rather than becoming more competitive, NRM's dominance was enhanced further. Were these results to be repeated in the next election in 2016, Uganda would be clearly a dominant party system.

Table 3 Election results 2011

¹⁸⁵ Conservative Party and Justice Forum each 1 seat

¹⁸⁶ Total number of seats in parliament increased to 374 which included 238 constituency seats and the previously indirectly elected seats, while the number of district seats contested by women candidates only had been increased to 112. Source: <http://africanelections.tripod.com/ug.html> (Accessed 19.12.13)

	NRM	FDC	DP	UPC	Indep.	other ¹⁸⁷ parties
Presidential ¹⁸⁸ Candidate (% votes)	68.4	26.01	1.86	1.58		4.16
No. of parliamentary seats ¹⁸⁹	250	34	12	10	41	2
Perc. of seats	78.3	3.4	0.4	0.3	12.9	0.1

Thus, the multiparty setting in Uganda today must be understood against the back drop of a violent history and in the current climate where the incumbent party dominates politically. Internal division in the UPC emerged almost as soon as the multiparty system was re-introduced in 2005, following the death of Milton Obote who had managed the party for two decades in exile in Zambia. The leadership succession issue has been a source of instability in the party. The FDC was from initially a loose coalition, which only later was organized as a political party. Also here, the resignation of Bessigye from the leadership after the 2011 election has triggered internal frictions.

The environment for the development of strong institutionalized parties is not the best in Uganda. It has a violent history and several decades of 'no-party system'. The presidency is the most powerful institution. Nevertheless, several analysts argue that the two last parliaments have been more forceful institutions in holding the government to account than previous parliaments. The elaborate sub-national structure, which in theory could provide strongholds for various parties, is however, under almost complete control of the NRM and where few political actors see the benefit of not being part of the movement system¹⁹⁰. Uganda also has several ethnic and religious divisions that intersect with the party system. The Constitution recognizes 65 indigenous ethnic groups and is one of the worlds' most

¹⁸⁷ Conservative Party and Justice Forum each 1 seat

¹⁸⁸ NRM-O: Y. Museveni, FDC: K.Bessigye; DP: J.S. Kizito; UPC: M.Obote; Indep.: A. Bwanika

¹⁸⁹ Total number of seats in parliament were 319, which included all 215 constituency seats, 69 district seats contested by women candidates only, five seats each for women, youth, and people with disabilities. In addition: 10 seats for UPDF (Uganda People's Defense Force) and 10 Ex-officio members. Source: Electoral Commission: Report on the 2005/2006 General Election, August 2006 (<http://www.ec.or.ug/pub.html>) (Accessed Oct. 13 2006)

¹⁹⁰ See Muriaas, R. L. (2009). "Reintroducing a local-level multiparty system in Uganda: Why be in opposition? ." *Government and Opposition* **44**(1): 91-112.

ethnically fractionalized states (Green 2010). The social and economic conditions are poor: Uganda was ranked as 163 out of 187 on the UNDP HDI.

The institutional context, the historical background, the ethnic diversity, the dominance of the incumbent party, and the difficult social and economic conditions represent together a group of conditions that usually are not conducive for the development of strong political parties. It is therefore likely that international assistance to promote an institutionalized, competitive party system.

The parties and direct party support.

The parties which are represented in parliament and participate in IPOD are eligible for direct party support:

- NRM: National Resistance Movement
- DP: Democratic Party
- UPC: Uganda Peoples' Congress
- CP: Conservative Party
- FDC: Forum for Democratic Change
- JEEMA: Justice Forum

The contract signed between the parties and NIMD-Uganda contains specifications for the purposes the funds can be used for and, application documents for the employment of the policy analyst, documentation for the spending of the funds, monthly report of the activities as well as summary report for the policy analyst during the contract period and financial and narrative report for all funding activities with appropriate documentations.

Table 4: Direct party support for 2010-2013

	2010	2011	2012**	2013
CP	19.500**	40.100	20.000	20.000
DP		40.100	20.000	30.369
FDC	12.000*	40.100	20.000	30.369

JEEMA		40.100	20.000	30.369
NRM	12.000	12.000	12.000	12.000
UPC	19.500**	40.100	20.000	30.369

Sources: Contracts or party reports for various years.

2010: *NRM*: only policy analyst

*FDC**: policy analyst and hardware/software to be provided and advice on developing fund management capacity of *FDC* to a standard that may enable future funding of activities

UPC : policy analyst, regional conference, national policy conference, (in addition funding for IT).

** Estimate based on *UPC* report of 6. June 2011 and *CP* report for Feb. 2010-March 2011.

2011: *FDC, JEEMA, UPC*: covers 4 regional policy workshops (10.000), printing of party program (5.000), post-election workshop (5.000), policy support package (policy analyst, policy research fund, IT connection)(20.100)

2012 ** estimate based on party reports. *CP, DP, JEEMA, UPC*: policy analyst, IT-connection, training of trainers, support for regional offices

2013: Policy analyst (12.000), IT connection (4.457), 6 policy forum meetings (5.200), strategic planning workshop (2.301) (In addition 6.681 for party district level structure, pending agreement)

The main emphasis for direct party support has been policy development and the operationalization of this objective has been to support political parties to engage a policy analyst. For the first year funds were made available for the acquisition of computer hardware, while for later years similar funds have covered internet rent. In addition, costs for organizing meetings with sub-national party organizations for the discussion of policy issues and in 2012 and 2013 also for strengthening party structures; through selected district offices.

IT support.

With the exception of *NRM*, all parties applied for IT-support. *NRM* declined the opportunity because it already had sufficient capacity. All parties report that the IT support had improved the communication capacity with the environment as well as with some of the sub-national units that also became the beneficiary of such support.

CP reported that two laptop computers provided to the party disappeared when the officials carrying out tasks for the party were suspended.

Policy conferences and manifesto developments.

NIMD initiated several activities to assist parties in developing party manifestos. In 2010 workshops for developing manifestos were conducted for the parties. NIMD also had several other initiatives in this field. It made available comparative manifestos for easy comparison of parties policies. These were A3 pullouts inserted in popular newspapers and NIMD also made available electronic manifestos. These were recorded policy messages on a CD where the party spokesperson on specific issues (eg. health) elucidated the party policy on the issue. Each party did this. The CD on health was then distributed to radio stations throughout the country. The same was the case with other policy issues. IPOD also produced an election song which was played before the e-manifestos were aired on radio. It was also played on radio throughout the election. The song called on people to vote and vote on the basis of the best policies.

In addition, the regional policy conferences were done in the run-up to the election as input to the development of the party manifestos and also part of distributing policy to the grassroots members who would be engaging in spreading this policy during the elections¹⁹¹.

All the opposition parties made use of the funding opportunity to organized policy conferences, including regional meetings. Below is a brief account of how the various parties explained the process of developing a party manifesto.

JEEMA explained that NIMD's support for policy development was provided rather late with respect to how the process of developing the party manifesto should ideally be organized. The manifesto was finally adopted at the national delegates' convention in early October 2010. A team consisting of members from the central party leadership had prepared the manifesto. For quite a number of years (since 1996?) the party has had a number of policy committees. These provided input into the work of the committee. About a month's time before the delegates' convention the team submitted a draft report to the NEC. Some changes were made and the

¹⁹¹ NIMD has also followed up with assisting in policy-making in-between elections. In this regard, in 2013 NIMD initiated a policy forum for each party. These allow for policy issues to be discussed by the party leadership with MPs in attendance and the party analyst reporting on IPOD-related issues (I thank NIMD's Kampala office for this information).

final draft adopted by the national convention. The time constraints at the national convention meant that no further changes were made to the program draft.

For the future, the support provided for six policy forums will provide better organizational input to the next electoral manifesto. JEEMA has organized six policy workshops: women health, human rights, oil and gas, security and defense, youth unemployment, electoral reform/proportional representation. Each of these forums has had 10-15 participants. A policy specialist, identified by the NEC, provided an introductory analysis of each of the topics. The selection of the participants was partly done by the central leadership group, but there was also opportunity for individual party members to sign up for a group with a theme of their interest. This was done by means of a 'registration list' in the headquarters, but also the opportunity had been provided to members elsewhere through communications from the hq. JEEMA envisages that such policy forums can provide a more comprehensive input of proposals for the 2016 manifesto. The manifesto was printed in 5,000 copies which were distributed to the candidates for the parliamentary elections (JEEMA was in coalition with other parties for the presidential election).

A summary of the main positions was included in the newspaper insert prepared by NIMD. Copies of the manifesto were distributed to the regional party organizations and from there to other party units and to individuals. The individual candidates would also prepare a pamphlet/flyer for their own election campaign. (JEEMA hq contributed financially to this). One experiment that was reported was in the constituency where JEEMA won a seat. Here, groups of citizens/supporters were encouraged to submit proposals for the platform of the candidate. Thus, NIMD's support for policy development came too late to have an impact on the 2011 manifesto, hence the process was very much top-down. If further support for policy forums is available, the manifesto process may be more strongly embedded in the party structures. Although the party in principle is favoring a more open approach to party strengthening, it was acknowledged that it sometimes is a good thing to have a "compulsory push" towards a particular party aspect.

In the UPC the electoral manifesto was developed by a technical committee, with a varying number of members as the process went along, but starting with 10-15. The committee was appointed by the party leadership in August 2010. In the beginning it met frequently, almost every day, later more infrequent. The committee consisted of some MPs, some policy experts and outside consultants. Ideally the committee should have reported the draft to the national

council. But because of conflicts in the party as well as the problems of financing, the whole process was delayed. The final draft was therefore discussed by the national executive committee, which made the final decision. The process was not very different from the 2006 process. At that time the UPC had no real structures at the ground that could be consulted for this process. Basically, the situation in 2010 was the same. The party therefore needed to improvise, hence the technical committee. Leadership issues also delayed the whole process, so the final manifesto was not completed until December 2010 when the campaign was already in full play. The technical committee's work was also affected by the election campaign for parliamentary seats by some members of the committee. The technical committee did start its work using the 2006 manifesto, which was found to be too detailed, too inaccessible to most voters. The new manifesto was made shorter, but also with more general statements; although the fundamental value orientations of the party was maintained. When completed the manifesto was printed in 20-25.000 copies. These were distributed to all UCP candidates. It was the expectation that the manifesto must be referred to during the campaigns, but also allowing for the significance of local issues. The party also made a summary of the draft program that was distributed to the sub-national level and extracted chapters of particular issues. The party argues that the manifesto was used by the parliamentary candidates in the campaign to explain the policies of the party, although acknowledging that voters would have scarce knowledge of the manifesto itself. However, if a party did not produce a manifesto it would have been 'laughed out of the campaign. The Secretary General also claimed that the manifesto was important for him when the caucus discussed policy issues in parliament. Relationship with the party outside of parliament was maintained because of his function as both MP and SG, in addition to being the whip for the party caucus. Even in the absence of this overlapping membership, the party constitution would have provided for a link between the two arms of the party.

When FDC developed its manifesto in 2006, the emphasis was on political rights and governance issues. The manifesto was more of a series of pamphlets than a single document. Prior to the 2011 election the standing executive committee appointed a program management committee of 20+ members. This committee met five-six times during a six month period. Sixteen regional conferences were organized and the discussions there provided inputs to the preparation of the final document which addressed a wider set of issues. That the manifesto in 2011 is more comprehensive and included more inputs from sub-national level is not so much a consequence of NIMD's support as it is a consequence of FDC's own institutional

development, according to the FDC officials interviewed. The manifesto was printed in 5,000 copies, distributed mainly to the district organizations for further distribution. The manifesto was intended for the presidential campaign, although MP candidates were also expected to refer to it. Nevertheless, MP campaigns tended to be dominated by local issues. The party itself doubts if the manifesto influenced voter decisions.

Following the election there are regular meetings between the parliamentary caucus and the party. The chair of the caucus is a member of the executive committee and several committee members are also MPs. The parliamentary caucus submits a report for each NEC meeting.

In the case of DP, the manifesto was developed by a manifesto committee generated which developed a draft submitted to the National Executive Committee (NEC). NEC offered amendments before approving a version which the National Council approved finally. Apparently this is a new approach in the sense that it was participatory and not merely the product of the party leadership. In the past manifestos were developed by people from outside the party, while currently policy committees interact with people across the country about ideas. The aggregated ideas are then put to the party executive. On thousand copies of the manifesto were printed. It was meant to be translated into local languages but there were no resources to fund that. Distribution of the party manifesto to the wider electorate was 'indirect'; it reached the voters via 'opinion leaders'. According to DP, it is common practice, however, for parties to print manifestos for only presidential elections. Parliamentary elections are much more focused on local issues.

Finally, CP claimed that their program development had been through their grassroots contacts. They informed the party what people wanted. Also funding for workshops has been important in mobilising the youth and women. Their participation has been critical. That also made it easy for the party to recruit candidates for elections. This is also how they seen the 2016 manifesto. Grassroots leaders are identifying problems. Sub-national leaders will eventually come together at regional level and discuss regional priorities. The manifesto will be developed through that process. A document is first developed within the National Council whose members include district leaders, members of the NEC, and life members (founder members).

The incumbent party has a more structured process of manifesto development. NRM's manifesto was prepared by a task force, appointed by the party chairman, President Museveni, and led by the Secretary-General. It had 15 members who were selected on the basis of their

technical expertise and support for the party. They were selected 3 months before the campaigns started. They prepared a draft proposal for the Central Executive Committee, which scrutinised it and forwarded it to the National Executive Committee. Once NEC approved it, it became the manifesto. NEC consists of 700 people from across the country. When they approve something, their approval is considered as representative of popular opinion in the party. The significance of the manifesto for the campaign was limited, at least for the parliamentary elections. It was argued that the individual merit hangover remains very strong. When a parliamentary candidate goes to address a campaign rally and they start talking about what is in the party manifesto, people say “that is for the party. What do you plan to do for us?” The electorate apparently want candidates to sell themselves as individuals as well as their individual agendas as candidates. Therefore the importance of the manifesto is theoretical for the most part.

The common element among the parties is that the formulation of the manifesto is leadership dominated, but, according to the interviewees, also with consultations with sub-national actors. However, it is not possible to know the extent to which sub-national actors had any impact on the manifesto, either in terms of priorities or issues that should be covered by the manifesto. There appears also to be a dis-connect between the claims that the sub-national levels have been consulted and the claim made in other contexts that the parties have so few structures on the ground.

Policy analyst

The tasks that the policy analysts carried out varied between parties. NRM’s policy analyst has been mostly concerned with analyzing the organization and policies of the party’s parliamentary caucus. Why, for example, do the party’s MPs sometimes drift away from party positions? It is also important to know whether caucus decisions have any influence on how the government works. There is also the phenomenon of independent MPs who are not really independent, as some are clearly NRM-leaning while others are inclined towards the opposition. Usually NRM MPs who oppose party policy try to ally with opposition-leaning independents in a bid to galvanise opposition.

Opposition parties have spent the funding of the policy analyst in combination with funds to organize policy forums with participation from sub-national levels and to develop various

policy issue oriented papers. Judging from the summary reports by the parties the activities of the policy analyst cover a range of task, such as: writing policy reports, communicating with sub-national levels in the parties, advising on the election campaigns and liaising with the members of parliament.¹⁹² As an example of how funding for the policy analyst was applied, FCD negotiated with NIMD to hire two staff using the money meant to pay the salary of the policy analyst. The 1000 Euro salary was more than anyone was being paid. Splitting it would allow the policy analyst to have an assistant. Funding for a policy analyst position was therefore split by FDC to include also an assistant. The policy analyst work(ed) under the instruction of the party leader, but the policy analyst/assistant has also attended to other issues than policy, such as human rights concerns, as he was also the party's legal officer. Although the financial support it limited, it is nevertheless a good contribution allowing the party to operate.

According to the CP the policy analyst conducts research at the grassroots levels and "helps package the manifesto building". But with only one policy analyst, it is only possible to cover so much. More support is therefore needed. According to the SG, "we look at targets where the government has failed".

UPC was a special case as the report for 2011 notes that the appointment of the policy analyst was irregularly made and both the activities of the policy analyst as well as documentations and records disappeared from the party¹⁹³.

Relevance.

The support for policy development is motivated by the need for political parties to represent alternative policy perspectives. This will enable voters to make a more informed choice whom to vote for and will also make it clearer which parties will pursue which policies. It is also a motivation to make the process more inclusive in the party. To gain a broader consensus about the political profile of the party, and therefore a more shared vision, the process of developing the party's policies should be inclusive. Such processes require a minimum level of organizational capacity. The operationalization of direct party assistance in Uganda is

¹⁹² The summary reports often to more extensive reports for special projects, such as policy forums and the post-election review conferences.

¹⁹³ On the other hand, UPC is reported to have had an elaborate policy-making process, resulting in policy positions in several areas. The former policy analyst is reported to have been part of the opposition to the current leadership in the UPC, which may have affected the quality of the information that was provided to us.

relevant in these respects. The provision of IT-equipment and connection has enabled party headquarters to communicate, externally and internally. Such communication capacity is essential for organizational developments, including the objective of an inclusive policy formulation process. Provision for the employment of a policy analyst is also a way for parties to prioritize, at least in theory, this function. In practice, the parties have had some autonomy with regard to the specific tasks that the policy analyst has carried out. Similarly, regional conferences and policy forums have contributed to the twin objectives: policy formulation and inclusiveness.

When interviewed political party representatives emphasised their priorities in the future was the strengthening of party structures at the sub-national level. This view was shared also by the incumbent party.

Efficiency.

NIMD-Uganda has in place a number of mechanisms to ensure proper implementation of projects. The contract signed between the parties and NIMD-Uganda contains specifications for the purposes the funds can be used for and, require proper documents for the employment of the policy analyst, documentation for the spending of the funds, monthly report of the activities as well as summary report for the policy analyst during the contract period and financial and narrative report for all funding activities with appropriate documentations.

At least some of the parties are weakly organized, as is illustrated by reports from two of the parties; CP and UPC. Apart from the two laptops that disappeared from the CP, the party also reported for its first grant that “There are some internal problems in the ...party that prevent submission of the report of this workshop (the policy conference). In UPC, the problems with respect to the policy analyst showed serious malfunctions in the central party office.

According to the report, the Secretary General of the Party had acted alone, and without informing the party leadership, in appointing a policy analyst and press secretary, there were various financial irregularities and misleading communications from the party to NIMD. UPC took steps to prevent such irregularities for the future.

The cases of CP and UPC are relevant to consider in general, because they may indicate organizational problems at the very *center* of the parties. The problems involved individuals with trusted positions and seriously questions whether or not the parties operate as *organizations* or if they are simply vehicles for individuals.

Effectiveness and impacts.

The support for the IT-equipment has improved the communication capacity of the parties. It has strengthened the headquarters of the parties and partly also selected sub-national levels.

The policy forums have provided opportunities for interaction between the central leadership and the sub-national levels, but it is not always possible to identify how the participants at these events have been selected and what role they have in the party structures. Therefore, it is hard to draw conclusions about how effective these meetings have been in terms establishing a more permanent communication pattern inside the parties.

Whether or not the support will lead to a more inclusive process in developing the next electoral manifesto is an open question. Perhaps inevitably, the consequence of weak organization was that the development of the party manifesto tended to be dominated by the party at the national level. It was not always clear how the manifesto was developed, but in most cases the party leadership appointed a task force, or a committee (10-20 participants), consisting of people with expertise in various policy sectors and who were long time party members. Direct party funding had enabled the parties to organize regional policy conferences on various issues. These had provided some inputs into the manifesto development.

Although it is premature to conclude about the long-term impact of direct party assistance in Uganda a first step has been taken towards a more inclusive process¹⁹⁴. Senior party officials recognize the need to be more inclusive. The regional conferences have enabled the central leadership to hear the views of, and to communicate its own views to, activists at the sub-national level. However, we do not know exactly how this meetings functioned, whether they were dominated by the central leaders' view or how many of the 'locals' that raised their own concerns. It is a general problem in the study of manifesto development in almost all parties, in established as well as in new democracies, to what extent the development of manifestos will be informed by sub-national actors.

¹⁹⁴According to Wild and Golooba-Mutebi many of the donor support programs focusing on technical assistance and exchange visits are perceived by the Ugandan parties as not very relevant in terms of building capacity of the parties. The focus on policy development is an alternative approach that may yield clearer results in the future. (Review of international assistance to political party and party system development. Case study report: Uganda, London, ODI, 2010)

Two parties (UPC and FDC) had experienced internal conflicts over leadership succession which had a negative effect also on broadening participation in policy development. Such conflicts spilled over into the party organizations which failed to comply with the reporting requirements

The manifesto was primarily developed for use in the presidential campaign, but the parties claimed that also candidates running for parliamentary seats used the manifesto. However, they often also developed their own ‘constituency manifesto’. There are no data to draw conclusion about the claims about the use of the manifesto as it requires an analysis of how campaigns are carried out. Also the claim that parties consulted the grass-roots for the manifesto development is not documented. Because of the timing for the release of the funds for direct party support and the electoral process, its impact on manifesto development was limited for the 2011 election.

Sustainability

A challenge for further institutionalization of political parties is the mobilization of resources which will make it possible for parties to sustain a party organization maintaining a network of branches and carrying out functions such as policy formulation, nominations and campaigning. As several parties pointed out, direct party support may not have improved the capacity as much as it had enabled the parties to survive. Some parties are making some attempts to mobilize resources, also at the sub-national level so that organizations at this level are not completely dependent on transfers from the national level.

One opposition party argued that while in principle parties should be able to mobilize enough resources for their maintenance, in practice there are many factors working against it. They blamed the NRM government for promoting a kind of centrally focused dependency. People believe that everything comes from the top. Even in opposition parties leaders feel they have to emulate the model where the party leader dishes out cash.

The opposition faces several problems, particularly in rural areas. One party questioned how safe is for citizens to belong to opposition parties. It claimed that public officials in the regions and districts portray opposition parties partly as being foreign agents, while advocacy of alternative policies and criticism of the governments is being presented as ‘national treason’. Occasional detention of party leaders and activists for no particular reasons are used

to create uncertainty in the population. The change from the no-party system to the multiparty system has still not changed people's mind set.

To the extent that nomination of candidates for various elected offices is an indicator of organizational capacity, most of the opposition parties face serious challenges as they appear to have shallow roots in the Ugandan society. The many candidates running as independents reveal that there are competitors to NRM, but that it is not seen as an advantage to be associated with the opposition parties.

However, in Uganda there is a better informed starting point for party support than in several other countries as under the Deepening Democracy Program (DDP) the parties established a baseline against which to 'measure' progress. The Wild and Golooba-Mutebi report referred to earlier also notes the importance of the long-term engagements that enables both donors and parties to arrive at a common understanding of the challenges facing the parties. The DDP and NIMD approaches have been seen as more suitable for measuring the impact of the support, compared to the other approaches that Wild and Golooba-Mutebi examined. The emphasis on policy development in political parties is also shared with other analysts and donors (Keefer 2011, IIDEA 2014).

One of the problems with the DDP was that the incumbent party, NRM, was not engaged in the process. It is a major achievement of NIMD/IPOD that NRM is a participant in IPOD program and also make some use of the opportunity for direct party assistance, although an unintended consequence is that the dominant party may become even more dominant. This, however, is price to be paid against the benefits of having the incumbent party on-board.

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Interviews.

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