

WELCOMING NEW ALTERNATIVES

COMMITTED TO DEMOCRACY,
FLEXIBLE IN APPROACH

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy



2021

ANNUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to NIMD's Annual Report 2021, which looks back at our work and achievements over the previous year and reflects on the challenges we faced, while also looking forward to the important work that lies ahead.

2021 was a landmark year, firstly as it was the inaugural year of NIMD's new Multi-Annual Strategy 2021-2025. In keeping with our new strategic vision, this Annual Report will examine NIMD's work both at the country level and across the five thematic areas in which we work: Dialogue, Democracy Education, Women's Political Participation, Youth & Inclusivity, and Strengthening Democratic Infrastructure.

Last year also marked the first year of implementation of major programmes under our two new Consortia funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They are LEAP4Peace with the Burundi Leadership Training Program, the Gender Equality Network Myanmar, and Gender Action for Peace and Security; and the Power of Dialogue, with the Gorée Institute of Senegal, Akina Mama wa Afrika, and Centre des Études Méditerranéennes Internationales (Tunisia).

There are no doubt great challenges ahead in the field of democracy support. But by working together and adhering to our core principles of impartiality, inclusiveness, long term commitment, local ownership, and flexibility, NIMD looks forward to another fruitful year of collaboration and consensus-building to help foster a more peaceful and democratic world.





MESSAGE FROM THIJS BERMAN NIMD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Democracy has been backsliding globally for more than five years, both in the quality of democracies and in the number of full democracies.

Of the 16 countries where NIMD was present in 2021, two have been confronted by military coups: in Myanmar, the democratic institutions have been suspended, while in Mali an ongoing process of transition from military to civilian rule faces many hurdles.

Only in a few countries have we observed positive developments, such as in Honduras, which held peaceful elections at the end of 2021.

A DIFFICULT GLOBAL CONTEXT

COVID-related restrictions have continued to have an impact. While our staff and partners have rapidly and successfully adapted to the necessary safety measures, the quality of democracy worldwide has suffered. The pandemic has threatened parliamentary oversight and the direct exchange between political actors in many countries. This is particularly pronounced in the poorest countries, where many people felt excluded from the dialogue with their political leaders and representatives.

We present our 2021 Annual Report at a particularly grim moment. Since 24 February 2022, Russia has been waging a cruel, devastating and unprovoked war against its sovereign and democratic neighbour Ukraine. It is both a war against a people, and a war against the choice Ukrainians made to strengthen their democratic state and their open society. This brutal attack demonstrates the urgency of continuing and increasing support to democracy by organizations such as NIMD, funded by states, multilateral organizations, and private donors.

DEFENDING DEMOCRACY

This difficult global context strengthens our resolve to defend and support democracy. Because we know it is the only system capable of respecting the political rights of every individual, enshrined in national legislations as well as in international treaties, conventions and declarations. Democracy is also the only system capable of finding peaceful solutions to the daunting global challenges we face, from climate change to natural resource management and social justice.

In many countries where we work, people are disappointed in their elected politicians. They feel that they have failed to respect the social contract and deliver in terms of social justice, equal rights and a fair chance for all. An overwhelming majority continues to express its confidence in democracy as the preferred system. Yet that confidence is eroding. In some countries, high levels of mistrust – not in democracy itself, but in the national political leaders – have even led to popular support for a coup d'état. In part, this development is spurred by propaganda and disinformation campaigns by autocratic regimes and movements.

RESTORING TRUST THROUGH DIALOGUE

At NIMD, it is our priority to help restore the confidence between people and their politicians. This is why dialogue between political actors and the population is at the heart of our activities, and we have responded to the difficult political environment by deploying our expertise and flexibility, as detailed in this report.

As in previous years, we have been fortunate to work with deeply motivated young and aspiring politicians and elected politicians in all our programmes and projects worldwide. Their dedication and ambition are a great source of inspiration, and equally inspiring is the dedication of all colleagues, at our country offices and at partner organizations.

So despite the many global challenges we face, we look ahead to 2022 with an optimism that, with courage and determination from individuals, governments, politicians, and multilateral organizations, truly inclusive democracy can recover and thrive.



NIMD IN 2021

In 2021, NIMD worked in 16 countries across Africa, Latin America, the MENA Region and Southeast Asia.



Burkina Faso

In 2021, the NIMD office in Burkina Faso focused on the political participation of young people. NIMD and its partners set up training and capacity building sessions in the capital Ouagadougou, as well as in the cities of Manga and Koudougou. At our Democracy Schools, 40 people from across the country were trained in democratic skills, practices, and values. Dialogue activities also began under the Café Politique framework. These informal gatherings brought together political actors, researchers, civil society representatives and citizens to discuss the political participation of youth and women as well as democratic processes in the face of persistent institutional and security crises.

Burundi

NIMD saw significant progress in its efforts to promote the political participation of women in politics in Burundi in 2021, with 248 women trained in advocacy, civil and political rights, democracy and good governance. The students came from across society, including from political parties, the National Women's Forum, the police, and civil society organizations. Our partner in Burundi, the Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP), also engaged with several national and community media outlets to create broadcasting time for women politicians, using this platform to address prejudice around women's political participation.

Colombia

Our Democracy Schools in Colombia continued to thrive, offering vital skills training and networking opportunities to young people from across the country. NIMD Colombia was delighted that 50 out of the 238 women graduates in 2021 expressed an interest in running for elected office in seats ranging from the Senate to Municipal Youth Councils. Efforts to promote inclusivity in politics also continued, with NIMD liaising with the Social Party of National Unity and the Liberal Party to advance the implementation of the [Roadmap for Inclusive Political Parties](#). In addition, NIMD supported municipal councils of three departments of Colombia to create and strengthen the Legal Commissions for Women's Equity. (See [case study: page 13](#))

El Salvador

There has been global concern about democratic backsliding in El Salvador in recent years, with the replacement of the constitutional chamber and the independent attorney general. However, NIMD El Salvador continued to work with political actors throughout the country in 2021, and our Democracy Schools for politicians and civil society representatives have helped young people acquire the skills to promote democracy in a challenging environment. With legislative elections in February 2021, NIMD El Salvador also assisted in the transparency of the process with an observation mission to monitor the actions of political parties, and authored a number of analytical reports for the international community.

Ethiopia

While 2021 was a difficult year in Ethiopia, with a conflict in the Tigray region, NIMD Ethiopia remained committed to strengthening the democratic institutions in the country and training a new generation of political actors to ensure long-lasting collaboration and trust. Ahead of elections in 2021, we assisted the National Election Board of Ethiopia in setting up dialogue sessions with political parties and civil society organizations, while also providing training for members of the national Parliament and the legislative council of the Oromia regional state. The Ethiopian Democracy Academy (EDAC), set up by NIMD in 2020, also continued to train young aspiring political actors, with a renewed focus on alumni activities to ensure cross-party networks continued to thrive. (See [case study: page 13](#))

Guatemala

NIMD Guatemala organized a series of 15 multiparty dialogue sessions between youth representatives of Guatemalan political parties, to discuss issues related to citizen participation, youth leadership, political communication and access to public information. In parallel, we worked with local civil society organizations to develop a roadmap for the political participation of indigenous women. Furthermore, we started to support the implementation of the roadmap in partnership with the Mayan women's organization Moloj, facilitating dialogue sessions between MPs and indigenous women at national and sub-national level. This marks the beginning of an advocacy campaign for legislative change ahead of the 2023 elections ([see case study, page 15](#)).



Honduras

Much of NIMD Honduras' work throughout 2021 was in preparation for the general elections in November, and NIMD was proud to have helped lay the groundwork for electoral reform and provide training and technical support to newly established electoral bodies. Promoting inclusivity in the elections was also a top priority, with NIMD Honduras collaborating on an online platform to highlight the campaigns of people from underrepresented groups (See case study, page 19). In addition to our work on the elections, NIMD Honduras trained political actors in a number of Democracy Schools around the country. These included Democracy Schools for deputies and representatives of parties from across the political spectrum from all around the country.

Iraq

NIMD teamed up with the Women Empowerment Organization (WEO) to launch our first Democracy School in Iraq in 2021. The pilot project saw 25 aspiring politicians, most of them under the age of 35, gather in Baghdad for six workshops on democratic knowledge and skills. The young men and women from all over Iraq worked with local and overseas trainers to develop their understanding of the political system in Iraq, and develop their practical leadership and organizational skills. The hope is that this will develop into a network of democrats that can make a real change in Iraq in the future, and the pilot proved so successful that more NIMD Democracy Schools have been scheduled in 2022. (See case study: page 13)

Jordan

In 2021, NIMD Jordan's interventions targeted young people who wished to participate in the political landscape. The Jordan School of Politics continued to equip aspiring political actors – with a particular focus on young women – with the relevant skills and knowledge for political engagement. There were 118 graduates in 2021, some of whom were able to present their initiatives for political reform to the Secretary Generals of political parties, and former and current MPs at dialogue sessions facilitated by NIMD Jordan. Eight dialogue meetings took place, including an expert roundtable in collaboration with the Politics and Society Institute, organized in response to the royal call for political and administrative reforms.

Kenya

In 2021, NIMD released the Kenya Cost of Politics report, developed in partnership with the [Westminster Foundation for Democracy](#). The report found that the cost of getting elected to the Kenyan National Assembly is 245% of the average annual salary of an MP. It highlights a number of consequences of this high cost, including weak oversight and the exclusion of otherwise capable candidates. As follow-up initiatives, NIMD's partner Mzalendo Trust organized a series of events on Women in Politics and Media, where the findings of the Cost of Politics report were disseminated and issues related to campaign financing were discussed. In addition, Mzalendo conducted a social media campaign on campaign financing, with special focus on how high campaign costs impact the political participation of women.

Mali

The transition from military to civilian rule after a 2020 coup dominated the political discussion in Mali in 2021. NIMD Mali helped broaden the debate through our continued partnership with the blogging platform Benbere for the #MaTransition social media campaign. This campaign aimed to elevate the voices of ordinary Malians in the transition process (see case study, page 17). Our Democracy Schools also continued to equip the next generation of Malians with skills, knowledge and networks to prepare them for a career in politics or civil society. School alumni participated in dialogue initiatives, where they strengthened their knowledge on rebuilding Malian democracy, particularly regarding political and institutional reform.

Mozambique

NIMD's partner, the Institute for Multiparty Democracy Mozambique, organized dialogue sessions in the provinces of Nampula, Beira and Gaza, to discuss how political actors could improve the participation of women, both within political parties and as elected representatives. (see case study, page 11). The dialogue sessions were attended by the three parliamentary political parties, representatives of the women's leagues of political parties, civil society organizations, academics, university students and religious entities that are members of the Christian Council of Mozambique. The sessions also served as a way to advocate for the involvement of women in the Peace and National Reconciliation processes.



Myanmar

Upheaval came to Myanmar in 2021, when the military seized control of the country in February, stalling a gradual process of democratic reform. NIMD Myanmar had until that point been hosting regular training and dialogue sessions through the Myanmar School of Politics. Those sessions were suspended after the coup pending review. As an organization that is part of the LEAP4Peace Consortium, NIMD Myanmar's commitment to the women's peace and security agenda in Myanmar continued in collaboration with the Gender Equality Network Myanmar and Gender Action for Peace and Security. Throughout 2021, we have been exploring ways to continue our engagement with political and civic actors in Myanmar, and hope to see the results of this review in 2022.

Niger

NIMD's programme in Niger included training 16 young people on democratic principles at our Democracy School. While plans to roll out further training were delayed by operational and COVID-related issues, the training will resume in 2022. We also welcomed 41 elected officials, including 29 women, to a workshop evaluating the Inter-Parliamentary Union study on gender-based violence in parliament. The *Café Politique* dialogue sessions also proved an opportunity to explore crucial topics for the future of the country, such as the challenges of increased youth participation in public life. These exchanges were followed live by thousands of people through social networks and a radio broadcast, and broadcast by three television channels with wide national coverage.

Uganda

Much of NIMD's work in Uganda in 2021 focused on engaging young leaders. This included sessions across the country aimed at improving the civic responsibility and professional ethics of young leaders. Through the training, NIMD Uganda helped build the capacity of these leaders by equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively engage with decision makers to influence policies. Topics included lobby and advocacy and building social movements. Efforts to build a dialogue between different political actors in Uganda continued, through the Interparty Organization for Dialogue (IPOD). The IPOD summit of political leaders took place, with results including an agreement to organize an inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue that will include new parties elected in January 2021.

Venezuela

While political and economic turmoil continued to affect Venezuela, NIMD was proud to launch a full programme in the country in 2021, and produced a number of reports into the political participation of women. Understanding the barriers to women's participation is crucial to forging the solutions, and two papers by NIMD in 2021 examined overall [participation of women in politics in Venezuela](#), and the participation of women in the regional and municipal elections in November 2021. We also laid the groundwork for a Democracy School focusing on amplifying women's voices in the peacebuilding process, which was due to launch in 2022.





DIALOGUE

At NIMD, we believe that democracy starts with dialogue. We know from experience that when different political groups come together in dialogue – with each other, with civil society, or with their population in general – a country has a much greater chance of implementing reform, forging lasting peace, and cultivating a thriving inclusive democracy.

Through our dialogue initiatives, we aim to build trust, collaboration and consensus between political parties and other political actors, forming the foundation of a respectful democratic culture.

But 2021 has been a challenging year for democracy and inclusive dialogue, with increasing authoritarianism and shrinking democratic space around the world.

RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES

The 2021 report by the [International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance](#) (International IDEA) found that, for the fifth consecutive year, the number of countries moving in an authoritarian direction exceeded the number of countries moving in a democratic direction.

Some of the countries where NIMD implements dialogue work suffered setbacks in the democratic space in 2021. This is most notable in Myanmar, where years of trust building and dialogue investments had led to a well-running inter-party dialogue platform with promising results. But in February, the military seized control of the country, stalling a gradual process of democratization.

MOVING FORWARD WITH THE PAST IN MIND

Our approach to dialogue has evolved in response to the changing political environment, and we were delighted to articulate our new approach to dialogue in the report, “[Just Talk?](#)” which evaluated five years of NIMD political dialogues from 2015-2020. By looking back at the successes and challenges of the past five years, we were able to formulate a vision for moving forward with our dialogue interventions in a manner that takes into account the challenging global context.



DIALOGUE IN NUMBERS

184 political parties participating

218 civil society organizations

405 dialogue meetings held

67 legislative proposals developed



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FIVE SIGNATURE DIALOGUE INTERVENTIONS

Our new approach focuses on responding to the unique situations in the countries where we work, with five possible dialogue interventions:

- **Political Party Dialogue**, in which we facilitate a safe space for dialogue between representatives of political parties
- **Political Actor Dialogue**, in which the dialogue is broadened to include other people involved in politics such as parliamentarians, government officials, or local government figures
- **Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue**, which goes beyond the people directly involved in the political process to gather diverse groups in society that have a stake in those process such as unions, advocacy groups, and protest movements
- **Informal Dialogue**, when NIMD can facilitate informal gatherings for political or civic actors to exchange ideas and build trust in a non-confrontational environment
- **Dialogue Assistance**, in which NIMD can provide technical, logistical and thematic support and expertise to help in the success of existing initiatives

THE POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE

Dialogue has the potential to help societies overcome polarization, and to encourage respectful and productive collaboration between politicians and civil society. NIMD is now excited to move ahead with these five signature dialogue initiatives, which will provide the flexibility needed to adapt to different political circumstances.

Whether we are working to bring together politicians in an informal setting, or assisting with a formal consultation between government and civil society, we aim to build trust, collaboration and consensus, forming the foundation of a respectful political culture.



DIALOGUE IN ACTION

USING DIALOGUE TO FORGE CROSS-PARTY CONNECTIONS FOR INCLUSIVE POLITICS IN MOZAMBIQUE

In March 2021, NIMD's partner in Mozambique, the Institute for Multiparty Democracy Mozambique (IMD), hosted a multi-stakeholder dialogue for the women and youth members of political parties, as well as Members of Parliament, and representatives from civil society and academia.

Thirty three people attended the session, which aimed to discuss the factors hindering the participation of women and young people in politics, and use this knowledge to forge new strategies for increasing the political participation of traditionally underrepresented groups.

FOCUSING ON THE COMMON GOOD

All of Mozambique's main political parties sent delegates. By bringing together representatives of the women and youth leagues from across the political spectrum, IMD helped facilitate a discussion that transcended ideological divides and focused on the common good of all women and young people in the country.

One issue that came up was the differing approaches among the political parties to quotas for female and youth participation in candidate lists, and the desire to standardize best practices across all parties. Participants also argued that not enough was being done to promote the inclusion of young people in politics, and that political parties should focus on training members on proactive measures to try to improve inclusivity in future.

POSITIVE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The dialogue session ended with a pledge from participants to pursue future strategic partnerships both across party lines and with civil society, in order to push for greater influence on the legislative process. They agreed to push ahead with more regular multi-stakeholder dialogue sessions in 2022 to further non-partisan cooperation in the crucial field of inclusion.





DEMOCRACY EDUCATION

NIMD's renowned Democracy Schools continued to contribute to developing the skills, knowledge and networks of established leaders and aspiring politicians, with Democracy Schools taking place in 12 countries in the NIMD network in 2021.

While we tailor each school to the specific needs of a country, the curricula always aim to equip participants with the skills to become responsive political or social leaders, and instil the core values and concepts of inclusive democracy.

The benefits of our Democracy Schools do not end when the participant graduates or the training finishes. By bringing participants together from across the political and ideological spectrum, we foster lasting networks and connections that bridge divides and help combat polarization in future. In 2021, we worked with Democracy School alumni across the network, assisting them in organizing alumni events and setting up dialogue platforms.

NEW SCHOOLS IN CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTS

In 2021, we were proud to launch new Democracy Schools [in Iraq](#) and Mali, two nations that have faced significant security challenges and political turmoil. In both countries, most of the Democracy School graduates were young people. The schools are therefore empowering a new generation of leaders with the skills to navigate the complicated political landscape and work together on building a better future.

Alumni from our Democracy Schools also continued to thrive in political life, with graduates going on to stand in elections and win seats in parliament and at local government level. In elections in Honduras in November 2021, for example, 75 NIMD Democracy School graduates stood for office, including many from underrepresented groups, and 12 were elected to the National Congress.



DEMOCRACY EDUCATION IN NUMBERS

12 countries with Democracy Schools

1,721 graduates

67% of graduates female



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DEMOCRACY EDUCATION IN ACTION

Meet three 2021 Democracy School graduates from across the NIMD Network:

COLOMBIA; MATTEO BULLONES ROJAS

Matteo Bullones Rojas, 20, lives in the far northern region of La Guajira, one of most volatile regions in Colombia, where activists frequently face violence and abuse.

Matteo is from neighbouring Venezuela, and fled political and economic uncertainty in 2017. As a trans man, he was also searching for a more tolerant and open society, and his personal experiences of prejudice inspired Matteo to become a community leader for fellow trans people in La Guajira.

In February 2021, Matteo attended NIMD Colombia's Dialogue, Innovation and Leadership School. Students from different ethnic backgrounds and political affiliations came together to realize the strength of working together, and Matteo was inspired to pass on this knowledge to other aspiring political activists.

"I want to help young people become leaders themselves," he says. "One of my goals is to train other groups from the LGBTQI community so they can support each other. This country needs leaders who support an inclusive society in Colombia. That is how we prevent violence and reduce prejudice."



IRAQ; INTISSAR AL-MAYALI

Intissar Al-Mayali is passionate about fighting corruption, and has been a vocal supporter of reform in Iraq. A long-time human rights activist and advocate for women's rights, she joined the first NIMD Democracy School in Iraq in March 2021 to broaden her skills and network – and to share in the enthusiasm of the young students.

As one of the more politically experienced students, 48-year-old Intissar was able to both find inspiration in the energy and passion of the younger students, and pass on her own knowledge to people who were taking their first steps into politics.

"It has been a wonderful and distinctive experience, rich in young and promising energies," she says. "Although some of them have no political experience, they have visions that contribute to building democracy and support the political participation of young people."

Reflecting on the situation in Iraq, she sees hope among the young aspiring politicians she studied with, who see beyond old divides and polarization and look ahead to a more inclusive future."

"My country will not be able to rise unless it begins educating young people to think critically and respect different points of view," she says. "I have great confidence that young people in Iraq will play a distinguished role in building democracy in its proper form."

ETHIOPIA; BIRMADUMA NEME BEKANA

Birmaduma Neme Bekana is the Deputy Head of the Youth League of the Oromo Federalist Congress party in Ethiopia. He graduated from NIMD's Ethiopian Democracy Academy in May 2021.

The training helped the 34-year-old broaden his understanding of the tensions affecting his country – and made him determined to be part of the solution.

"We don't solve political crises by thinking about losing or winning – problems must be solved by deliberation, and I want to play my role as a citizen," he says.

As well as equipping students with knowledge and skills, the Academy fosters cross-party connections that help lessen polarization and promote future peace and collaboration. Having these networks in place means people are able to mobilize quickly when a country faces crisis. Later in 2021, as a conflict engulfed Ethiopia's Tigray region, NIMD Ethiopia activated the alumni network so that former students could come together across political and ethnic lines to discuss the importance of dialogue.

Birmaduma attended, and gained insight into complexity of the conflict: *"I understood the depth of the conflict and the security crisis we face as a country, and the prejudices that can develop among different ethnic groups."*



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WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Promoting the political participation of women has always been a key goal in NIMD's programming. In 2021, we were delighted to further our work in this field with new collaborations and projects both raising awareness of the barriers to participation and actively empowering women to exercise their right to play a meaningful role in political life.

2021 marked the first year of the new LEAP4Peace Consortium, in which we teamed up with three other organizations sharing similar goals: Gender Action for Peace and Security, the Gender Equality Network Myanmar, and the Burundi Leadership Training Program. By combining our skills, expertise and networks, we are better able to support women to achieve full and meaningful inclusion in politics in Burundi, Colombia and Myanmar.

CONTRIBUTING TO MEANINGFUL CHANGE

The role of women in peace and security was a key focus in many of our programme countries in 2021, with training sessions, mentoring, dialogue platforms, and advocacy work taking place across our network to support women's political participation.

Our 2021 report 'Women, Peace and Security: Pillars for Peace' gathered practical examples of different approaches to inclusion across different countries. These cases studies formed the basis for a number of specific recommendations that national governments, political parties, civil society and the international community can take to increase representation.



FINDING THE WOMEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our report launch and panel discussion in December 2021 saw fascinating speakers from all over the world come together to discuss these vital themes, and agree that efforts to include women in peacebuilding and reconciliation must move beyond tokenistic gestures and recognize the fundamental right of women to participate.

Ensuring women from all sectors of society have the opportunity to realize their political ambition is key to a genuinely inclusive democracy, and many of NIMD's programmes in 2021 reached beyond national politics and into the communities where women are making a difference. In Jordan, we ran special training sessions for women seeking positions in local administration, while in Guatemala we supported women from indigenous communities to connect and build their skills and networks.



**WOMEN'S
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
IN NUMBERS**

67% female graduates of
our Democracy Schools

2,908 women
trained in political skills



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ESTAMOS A TIEMP

De incluir a más mujeres en puestos de toma de decisión.



WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ACTION

CHALLENGING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN POLITICS IN GUATEMALA

One of the key barriers women in politics face is violence and abuse in public life. This can range from abuse on social media, a combative political environment typified by the “machismo” of politics in Latin America, to physical and sexual violence aimed at intimidating women who are seeking public office.

In 2021, NIMD Guatemala – working with the organization *Mujeres Transformando el Mundo* (Women Transforming the World) – launched *Estamos A Tiempo* (We Are on Time), a campaign aimed at raising awareness and generating debate around this crucial issue.

Running in November and December 2021, *Estamos A Tiempo* included short videos and banners on social

media in which women voiced their hopes for the future and raised their concerns about the current situation.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR INCLUSIVE ELECTIONS

One of the goals of the action was to push for reform ahead of elections in 2023, and we assisted women’s organizations in their lobbying for greater political participation of women from the Mayan, Mestizo, Garifuna and Xinca communities, and for reforms to the Electoral and Political Parties Law.

With the social media campaign reaching more than 10,000 people across different platforms, the movement was a great first step in sparking dialogue and laying the groundwork for further work to ensure that the 2023 elections will be as inclusive as possible.



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YOUTH & INCLUSIVITY

NIMD works in some of the countries with the youngest populations in the world, and increasingly our focus is on empowering those young people and equipping them with the skills to ensure that their voices are heard in the political arena.

Many of our Democracy Schools focus on young and aspiring politicians, while we are also constantly innovating and seeking new ways to connect to the younger generation.

DEMANDING A BETTER FUTURE

We have seen how vital a role young people play in advocating for change. In pro-democracy movements all over the world in 2021, young people have been at the forefront, demanding a better future. Harnessing that political potential and promoting the participation of young people at every level of the decision-making process is crucial if states are to ensure that policies address the key challenges facing young people today.

In 2021, we stepped up our work in the Sahel region, with new projects launched in Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso – all of which feature in the top 10 youngest countries in the world. These included new Democracy Schools and alumni events, to ensure that young people can develop networks bridging ideological divides, which will help foster greater cooperation in future.

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

NIMD works towards the inclusion of all under-represented groups, with our programming reaching out to groups including LGBTQI+ people, ethnic and religious minorities, indigenous communities, people living with disabilities, and people from lower socio-economic and rural backgrounds. Initiatives in 2021 included [the launch of a platform in Honduras](#) to amplify the voices and policies of people from under-represented groups who were standing for election.

Understanding the barriers to participation of traditionally under-represented groups is also key and, to help further our understanding, NIMD was delighted to team up with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) in 2021 for a series of reports on the [Cost of Politics](#). These reports – including on a number of NIMD programme countries like Kenya, Mali and Uganda – examined how the rising cost of standing for office was a barrier to inclusion, and set out a series of recommendations to try to break down the cost barriers and open the political sphere to all.



YOUTH & INCLUSIVITY IN ACTION

ENSURING A TRANSITION FOR EVERYONE WITH #MATRANSITION IN MALI

Mali has one of the youngest populations in the world, with more than half of its citizens under the age of 18. It is also a nation undergoing a transition from military to civilian rule after a coup in 2020. That's why NIMD Mali teamed up with the Malian blogging platform Benbere for the #MaTransition social media campaign that started in 2020 and continued in 2021.

We know what a powerful tool social media can be in reaching segments of the population who may feel disconnected from traditional power structures, and #MaTransition became a hashtag for young people across the country to contribute their voice to the transition process.

Posing questions on Twitter, such as “what are the values of Mali’s democratic system?” the campaign gathered input from across the country, and was an extraordinary success, reaching 1.5 million Malians and getting exposure in the world media.

The challenge in 2021 was finding ways to translate the input into formal submissions to the authorities behind the transition process. That work that will continue into 2022, as Mali faces further security and stability challenges, making it even more crucial that its future is an inclusive one.



Les partis politiques sont devenus des instruments de prédation. On va conquérir le pouvoir non pas pour mettre en application une vision, un projet politique, mais plutôt pour contrôler les ressources : créer des commerçants, octroyer des marchés, prendre des postes dans la douane, dans les impôts, etc

Nouhoum Sarr

#MATRANSITION



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STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC INFRASTRUCTURE

All of NIMD's global programmes aim to empower political actors to cooperate in a constructive manner on issues that affect them, their country, and the broader region, helping them reach out to citizens and truly listen to their needs.

This should all take place within a democratic infrastructure that supports and encourages inclusive democracy, and work is needed to ensure a truly responsive political landscape.

In 2021, NIMD worked with political actors around the world to help build this responsive environment.

THE CORNERSTONE OF DEMOCRACY

Elections are a cornerstone of any democracy, and a number of our programme countries held general elections in 2021 – Uganda, Ethiopia, Honduras and Niger – while other were laying the groundwork for elections in 2022.

NIMD's assistance ahead of elections includes tailored training programmes for election officials, party agents, and

local observers. Dialogue is also a crucial aspect of our electoral support initiatives. Creating and maintaining a safe and trusting environment for elections is important for long-lasting peace, and NIMD works to achieve this by organizing dialogue platforms between political parties throughout the election cycle.

Reform of electoral legislation to promote the inclusion of under-represented groups is another area where we help political actors mobilize and develop the networks needed to lobby for much-needed change.

RESPONSIVE POLITICAL ACTORS

Our work with political parties also continued in 2021. But shrinking democratic space and pressure on opposition in some of the countries where we worked made it necessary for us to deploy our flexibility, and find new methods for working in fact-changing environments. This included switching our focus from national politics to local politics in some countries, and incorporating civil society organizations into our programming.

The challenges will continue, but NIMD remains committed to our goal of helping political parties develop the appropriate skill set to contribute to well-functioning democracy.



STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN NUMBERS

97 political parties trained



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STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN ACTION

A CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE PEACE AND INCLUSIVITY IN THE HONDURAN GENERAL ELECTIONS

Laying the groundwork for inclusive elections is a long-term commitment, and NIMD Honduras' work on reform began long before their latest general elections took place on 28 November 2021. This included providing support, guidance and training to three new electoral bodies, as detailed in our [2020 Annual Report](#), and working with all political actors and the electoral bodies to increase the participation of women in elections.

Ahead of polling day, NIMD Honduras stepped up its efforts to ensure the elections were as peaceful and inclusive as possible. Initiatives included the documentation of instances of political violence against women, to raise awareness and create a crucial record of such events. We also collaborated on Honduras nos Convoca (www.hondurasnosconvoca.hn), an online platform that amplified the voices and policies of people from under-represented groups who were standing for office.

A POSITIVE RESULT

As well as efforts to promote inclusivity, NIMD Honduras also offered practical support, collaborating on a virtual classroom for election officials, with courses on democratic values, women's participation and preventing political violence.

We also helped mobilize and train young people throughout the country so they could assist with swift dissemination of results, and supported the National Election Committee with development of the technical arrangements for the vote.

We were delighted to witness the results of our efforts in 2021, when Honduras experienced a largely peaceful and fair election, the result of which was the election of Xiomara Castro, Honduras' first female President.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

INCOME

In 2021, NIMD received income from 23 different donors. These grants brought our total annual income to €11.2 million. This is lower than NIMD's income of €13.2 million in 2020, but is in line with NIMD's expectations and provides a solid basis to continue our work in the coming years. NIMD has also invested part of its income in funding diversification, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization and our programmes around the world. This investment has resulted in a solid base of donor contracts. In 2021, NIMD had a total of 36 different contracts, compared to 23 in 2020.

EXPENDITURE

NIMD's overall expenditure in 2021 was €11.2 million, about 15% lower than in 2020 (€13.1 million). This figure is also 10% lower than our annual budget for 2021 (€12.4 million). Of NIMD's total €11.2 million expenditure, 88% (€9.9 million) was spent on programmes. These included country and regional programmes, and thematic programmes (knowledge, innovation and positioning). The remaining 12% was dedicated to non-direct human resources and office running costs (management and accounting costs).

RESULTS

Overall, NIMD achieved a positive result of €0.06 million in 2021. Like in previous years, this will be added to NIMD's continuity reserve, which now stands at €1.85 million. The positive result in 2021 is due to the income generated from funding contracts, and is in line with our ambition to steadily increase our reserves.



Donor	Programme	Country	Income 2021 (€)
DEMO Finland	Myanmar School of Politics	Myanmar	53.747
Democratic Governance Facility (DGF - multidonor basket fund)	Enhancing Democracy through inclusive dialogue and capacity development of political parties in Uganda	Uganda	123.678
Embassy of the Netherlands Benin	Leadership féminin en politique au niveau local	Benin	194.734
Embassy of the Netherlands El Salvador	Fortaleciendo la incidencia política de organizaciones defensoras de derechos humanos en El Salvador y Honduras	El Salvador and Honduras	49.225
Embassy of the Netherlands Iraq	Democratic Skills and Gender Politics Training for Iraqi Parliamentarians	Iraq	89.566
Embassy of the Netherlands Venezuela	Elas también participan	Venezuela	28.970
European Union	Renforcement de la culture démocratique des acteurs politiques	Burundi	322.554
European Union	Organizaciones y medios de comunicación populares, comunitarios, alternativos e independientes en defensa de la libertad de expresión y los derechos humanos	El Salvador	23.531
European Union	Supporting the Ethiopian Political Parties Dialogue for political reform	Ethiopia	871.891
European Union	Pro-DEMOS: Partidos políticos hondureños más inclusivos, transparentes y democráticos	Honduras	427.570
European Union	PREFODEP UE - Ecoles de formation démocratique et politique	Mali	228.740
European Union (via ECES)	Enhanced support to Democratic Governance in Jordan	Jordan	58.094
European Union (via EPD)	Djuntu pa igualdade! A participatory response to gender-based violence in Cape Verde	Cape Verde	20.722
European Union (via International IDEA)	STEP2 Democracy - Support to Electoral Processes and Democracy in Myanmar phase II	Myanmar	110.171
European Union (via Misión de observación Electoral)	Protección de liderazgos para una democracia incluyente	Colombia	128.360
Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Improving the oversight role of the Mozambican Parliament and Provincial Assemblies in extractive industries sector	Mozambique	31.433
Fundación Carvajal	School for Dialogue, Innovation and Leadership in the municipality of Buenaventura	Colombia	12.422
Knowledge Platform Security and the Rule of Law	Subsidiarity relationship and managing power imbalance: NIMD network	The Netherlands	17.999
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Dialogue for Stability - Inclusive politics in fragile settings	Dialogue for Stability	64.880
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Strategic Partnership - Conducive environments for effective policy influencing: the role of political parties and parliaments	Strategic Partnership	76.115
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	LEAP4Peace	LEAP4Peace	827.536
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Power of Dialogue	Power of Dialogue	5.560.129
UN Women	Mujeres organizadas impulsan acciones para el cumplimiento de la legislación, políticas y planes que garanticen el derecho a una vida libre de violencia para las mujeres y niñas	El Salvador	47.710
Open Society Policy Center	Support the NIMD's work on democracy in El Salvador,	El Salvador	131.856
Open Society Policy Center	Support the NIMD's work on citizen participation in Guatemala	Guatemala	90.307
Plan International	Contrato de prestación de servicios profesionales por diseño, validación y facilitación de curso virtual sobre influencia y liderazgo a jóvenes de la región de El Salvador, Guatemala y Perú	El Salvador	11.304
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	Promoting Inclusive Democracy in Central America	El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala	61.648
Smurfit Kappa Foundation	School for Dialogue, Innovation and Leadership in the municipality of Yumbo	Colombia	10.394
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)	Quorum: women and youth innovating democracy	Colombia	190.532
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)	Jovenes + D. Youth Democratic Participation	Guatemala	1.037.898
UN Peace Building Fund (PBF) (via UNDP)	Juventudes salvadoreñas construyendo paz y resiliencia: Derecho a ciudadanía participativa e incidencia en los municipios de Jiquilisco y Tecoluca	El Salvador	130.071
UN Peace Building Fund (PBF) (via UNDP)	Democracy School	Iraq	83.880
UN Peace Building Fund (PBF) (via UNDP)	Political Economy Analysis - mission and report	Liberia	15.604
United Nations Women	Mujer, Política y Construcción de Paz: Juntas y revueltas	Honduras	54.025
United Nations Women	Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund Rapid Response Window	Women, Peace, Humanitarian Fund	10.083
Different Donors	Latin America debate October 2021	The Netherlands	12.000
Other smaller donors (< 10k)		Various countries	27.359
Total			11.236.737

Democracy starts with dialogue.