



LAYING THE  
GROUNDWORK  
FOR INCLUSIVE  
DEMOCRACY

2022  
annual report

Netherlands Institute for  
**Multiparty Democracy**

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## MESSAGE FROM THIJS BERMAN NIMD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to NIMD's Annual Report for 2022. It explores how we evolved, adapted and grew as we worked towards our ambition of contributing to a more peaceful future in which the values of democracy and inclusiveness underpin political systems across the globe. Our activities to further this ambition are the theme of this year report, which offers a good and necessary opportunity to reflect on our results. The urgency of our work has increased since Russia's illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine, and in the light of the stagnation observed on the state of democracy worldwide.

It might be easy to be despondent in the face of such acts of aggression and continued democratic decline in many countries. But patient and continued investment in democracy is more crucial now than ever.

The vast majority of the world's population wants to live in a democracy, where they can freely elect their decision-makers, and choose to trust or criticize them just as freely. This is their (human) right, and they are correct. Democracies serve the interests of their citizens better.

Research has shown that democracies are more equipped to tackle the important challenges of our time. Democracies perform better on gender equality, access to education and climate action, among others. And democracies are at much lower risk of conflict and instability. Only in democracy, can solutions be agreed to address conflicting interests without violence or oppression.

In this annual report, we explore how our investment in democracy pays off in practice through two case studies of NIMD's work in 2022. We also look at developments and achievements in each of NIMD's partner countries and in our core thematic areas – Dialogue, Democracy Education, Women's Political Participation, Youth Political Participation, and Strengthening Democratic Infrastructure.

We at NIMD have been focused on constantly evaluating and evolving to ensure our programming is flexible in the face of challenging circumstances, while always staying true to the key values of democracy – trust, inclusion and dialogue. It is only by upholding these values and by building truly inclusive democracies that we can work towards lasting peace in the long term. When there is dialogue between politicians, political parties, civil society and citizens, then there is a chance for trust and respect to replace tension and conflict.

With ambitious partnerships, expanding geographical reach, and a growing interest in our vision and approach, we are confident that our long-term commitment to embedding democratic values in political structures puts us on the right path towards greater peace and stability in the future.

On behalf of all colleagues, I wish to express our deep gratitude to all who make our work possible, and to all who work with us and inspire us in our shared conviction that democracy will prevail.

Thijs Berman  
Executive Director NIMD



# NIMD IN 2022

In 2022, NIMD implemented 19 programmes across Africa, Latin America, the MENA Region, the Dutch Carriibbean and Southeast Asia.



## Benin

In the months before Benin's January 2023 legislative elections, NIMD's partner in Benin, the *Institut pour la Gouvernance Démocratique* (IGD), supported political parties to register to run in the elections. IGD provided information, and access to an IT tool which helped to verify that all documents to be submitted conformed to requirements. As a result, seven out of the eight parties that applied were authorized to run in the elections, a massive increase on the previous elections, where only two out of seven applications were approved. The parties affirmed their commitment to peace, by signing a joint charter ahead of the elections.

## Burkina Faso

Following a training workshop organized by NIMD Burkina Faso and our partner, the *Coalition burkinabè pour les droits de la femme* (CBDF – Burkina Faso Coalition for Women's Rights), political women leaders in the Tenkodogo department have kicked off a mentoring scheme to provide support and advice to young women wishing to enter politics. Through a WhatsApp group, the cross-generational group of political leaders and aspiring politicians have daily contact in a bid to strengthen their political participation and share experiences. NIMD will continue to support this mentorship process as it develops.

## Burundi

NIMD's EU-funded project "Strengthening the democratic culture of political actors", implemented in partnership with the *Burundi Leadership Training Program* (BLTP), ended in 2022. A key outcome was defused political tensions, and increased trust and respect amongst the 10 major parties, evidenced in the inclusion of all 33 political parties in the Permanent Forum for Political Party Dialogue. BLTP's work has continued through the LEAP4Peace Consortium. Meanwhile, NIMD negotiated new funding to sustain our work, especially in view of upcoming elections in 2025 and 2027. Plans are to open a country office to strengthen and consolidate our presence in the country.

## Colombia

In the run-up to Colombia's presidential elections in May 2022, NIMD Colombia and partners launched the "Occupy Politics" project. The objective was to provide training and support for candidates, particularly those from traditionally under-represented groups. These candidates were selected based on their outstanding profiles and potential, and their existing commitment to inclusive democracy. As well as sharing campaigning skills, the training focused on innovative ways to increase transparency, accountability and citizen participation, knowledge that the successful candidates could take forward into their new decision-making roles. Of the 81 people trained, 23 were elected to Parliament.

▶ Read more

## El Salvador

NIMD El Salvador's *#SoyParte* ("I Belong") initiative came to a close in 2022. The 20-month long project provided in-depth training, skills development and networking opportunities to young people from diverse backgrounds, reaching more than 2,400 young people across three municipalities. In addition to the training, NIMD organized dialogues between the participants and established politicians. These dialogue and advocacy events produced policy proposals at the municipal level. Local government representatives committed to including these proposals in future public policies and to generating greater space for dialogue with young people.

## Ethiopia

Seizing on the collective mood on the need for increased reconciliation and dialogue processes in 2022, NIMD Ethiopia held a series of intergenerational dialogues between established political actors and young aspiring politicians from NIMD's Ethiopian Democracy Academy. These dialogue sessions provide a rare opportunity for the participants to step out of their comfort zones and begin to engage civilly—and unreservedly—with their peers on sensitive political matters such as the Tigray conflict. The Democracy Academy alumni can build their network and share their perspectives with established politicians, as well as developing common visions on peace and nation building.



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## Guatemala

NIMD Guatemala supported the Congress' Legislative Committee of Indigenous Peoples to undertake an investigation on any gaps in compliance with the Peace Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The report identifies limited institutional progress, breaches in terms of progress on human rights, and a small number of setbacks which substantially affect the quality of life and opportunities for indigenous peoples. The final document is now available, and will be presented to the Committee, for their further action to rectify these gaps.

## Honduras

NIMD Honduras celebrated its 10 year anniversary in 2022. With many years of impartial work under its belt, NIMD is known and trusted by Honduran political institutions. For example, the Electoral Affairs Committee of Congress approached NIMD Honduras for support with gathering input from the population on two electoral reform bills. Through assistance with methodology and analysis, NIMD contributed to a series of inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogues, where diverse groups in various regions of Honduras could discuss the reforms. In addition, the team developed a set of recommendations resulting from the dialogues, to be presented to the Committee.

## Iraq

Following our successful Democracy School pilot in 2021, NIMD worked with the Dutch Embassy in Iraq to plan the official launch of the new School. Together with our partner, [Women Empowerment Organization](#), we will welcome 50 new young Democracy School students in 2023. Building a cross-party network and developing new connections is one of the greatest benefits of the Democracy School, and a renewed focus will be placed on organizing alumni events for all the Iraqi graduates, where they can consolidate and further develop those relationships.

## Jordan

In 2022, NIMD Jordan continued to provide democratic and political education to politically active young women and men through the [Jordan School of Politics](#). As well as building knowledge and skills that will help them to enhance their political participation, the 27 graduates had the opportunity to develop policy papers on topics related to women's political participation, political action in universities, and democratic education in schools, among other issues. The graduates were able to present their policy papers to a number of politicians, experts, and guests at a high-level graduation ceremony.

## Kenya

Responding to low voter registration among young people, NIMD's partner [Mzalendo](#) ran a [campaign](#) to persuade youth to vote in Kenya's 2022 general elections. Using the hashtag [#Gtokeze](#) ("Show Up"), Mzalendo worked with community influencers to engage young people online. The campaign also targeted misinformation around elections, providing a place for young people to access relevant impartial data.

Late 2022 also saw the opening of NIMD's new office in Kenya. NIMD Kenya will run a Democracy Academy, bringing together newly elected politicians from across the political spectrum.

## Mali

In 2019, NIMD Mali set up a cross-party electoral reform advisory board, the *Comité de Plaidoyer et de Suivi des Réformes Électorales* (CPSRE). In 2022, this committee worked with the political parties, civil society and authorities to ensure that an electoral law reform would increase inclusivity in the Malian political landscape and instill democratic values. The new electoral bill, adopted by the National Transition Council in June, contained three recommendations from the CPSRE, including the creation of an independent electoral management body in Mali.

[▶ Read more](#)



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## Mozambique

NIMD's partner, the [Institute for Multiparty Democracy \(IMD Mozambique\)](#), worked to promote women's participation at the highest level within political parties. Through its Women's Academy, IMD worked with the MDM, RENAMO and FRELIMO parties, holding training and dialogue sessions with the parties' leaders and women's leagues. As part of this, the Academy used NIMD's Gender Roadmap for Inclusive Political Parties to support the parties to enhance inclusiveness within their structures. In April, MDM became the first party in Mozambique's history to nominate a woman as Secretary General. This was closely followed by RENAMO and Nova Democracia. Also following this example, the Government – led by Frelimo – achieved gender parity in 2022.

## Myanmar

2022 was an important year for NIMD Myanmar. Following the coup in 2021, NIMD maintained its commitment to democratic values. In the face of heightened political volatility, the Myanmar programme re-launched virtual and in-person Democracy School trainings for youth, women and ethnic leaders from Myanmar, and organized a successful networking event for women political leaders. In addition, the team launched the [MyDemocracy School app](#), a mobile and web-based application that aims to provide online and offline accessible, comprehensive democracy education materials to marginalized groups in Myanmar.

## Niger

In 2022, NIMD Niger launched the [Présimetre project](#), a system of collecting feedback on the policies of the President of Niger. Alongside an online survey, NIMD Niger trains young Accountability Ambassadors to carry out face-to-face surveys across all of Niger's regions, also reaching people without internet access. The project culminates in interactive Accountability Platforms, a space where citizen representatives can meet in person with their elected representatives to discuss the implementation of public policies and how these uphold the population's rights.

## Sint Eustatius

In late 2022, following a series of [training sessions](#) for the island's current political leaders and for young aspiring political leaders, NIMD launched our political actor dialogue platform in Sint Eustatius. The platform will provide a safe space for an impartially facilitated dialogue for the political actors on the island, including the Sint Eustatius local representatives and representatives of the Dutch Government. NIMD hopes that the platform will provide an important channel for respectful dialogue, and will enable the participants to work together in the common interest of improving Sint Eustatius' future.

## Somaliland

Following an in-depth analysis of the prevailing political and economic processes in Somaliland, NIMD's programme kicked off in September 2022. The NIMD Somaliland office was consequently set up. Based on the results of the political economy analysis, the new team will work to reduce tensions and conflict by supporting reconciliation and trust-building among the different political actors and groups. Our activities will bring together politicians from across the political spectrum in the spirit of dialogue and consensus.

## Uganda

2022 saw the launch of a new Multiparty Youth Forum in Uganda, a dialogue platform for cross-party collaboration to address issues affecting youth. The platform was created by young political leaders from party youth wings, the National Youth Council, the Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs and the Uganda National Students' Association, following a series of meetings and a multiparty youth retreat, organized by NIMD Uganda. The youth platform will be supported by NIMD Uganda, and is a strong vehicle for young civil and political leaders to effectively lobby and advocate for policy issues and champion the meaningful participation of young people in politics.



# Venezuela

In 2022, NIMD Venezuela launched the third edition of its Democracy School, focused on amplifying women's voices in the peacebuilding process. We welcomed 35 women leaders - including electoral candidates, party leaders, local elected representatives and civil society leaders. The main objective was to stimulate and strengthen women's participation, in order to enhance their contribution in decision making spaces. Alongside the School, NIMD Venezuela organized various face-to-face practical workshops and meetings to increase the capacities of women leaders to make impact in their social and political environment.





## Our work in action

# Towards trust and inclusiveness in Mali



A transition to democracy is a delicate process with competing interests and expectations. Investing in building trust and establishing commonalities between different political actors – and between the state and its citizens – is crucial if this process is to have a chance of success.

In 2022, NIMD Mali worked on multiple levels to try to build these bonds of trust as Mali moves from a 2021 coup towards elections scheduled for 2024. Working in volatile environments – the country also faces a jihadist insurgency – means inevitable setbacks and challenges, but NIMD understands that it takes time and commitment to make a lasting shift towards peace and stability.

### Forging trust and advocating for inclusive reform

Having been active in the country since 2002, NIMD had already laid the groundwork for collaboration, helping establish a cross-party electoral reform advisory board, the *Comité de Plaidoyer et de Suivi des Réformes Électorales* (CPSRE), in 2019. The committee is made up of 24 influential individuals from political parties, civil society and academia, with the mission to advocate for the policies at the heart of any reform to reflect the needs of Malian people.

This meant, when political turmoil arrived, there was already a framework for collaboration.

In 2022, the CPSRE worked with the authorities to ensure that the upcoming

electoral law reform would increase inclusivity in the Malian political landscape and instill democratic values. The new electoral bill, adopted by the National Transition Council in June, contained three recommendations from the CPSRE, including the creation of an independent electoral management body in Mali.

There was also renewed focus on developing a new constitution, a contentious process that divides opinion, with many groups opposed to the new charter and much discord over its contents.

To help the opposing sides find common ground, NIMD and the CPSRE organized dialogue sessions between political parties, traditional and religious groups, and the authorities.

*“The committee is working with different groups to try and find where there are blocks and red lines in the communication, but also convergences where they can work towards consensus,”* says Célia D’Almeida, Country Director for NIMD Mali. *“While there were disagreements, simply getting different parties in the room to talk and find some areas of agreement was an achievement.”*



## Connecting political actors and the population

This work will continue in 2023, as Mali moves towards a referendum on the constitution – a process Célia hopes will lead to a public consultation because, while striving for commonalities between political actors is crucial, trust must also be forged between the political actors and the population.

*“If Malian people can really find themselves in the constitution, that will help avoid future crises,”* she says.

NIMD Mali has a history of connecting political actors and citizens, and for two years we have been gathering citizen input on the democratic transition via innovative online and in-person fora across the country. More than 20,000 people took part in consultations reaching every corner of Mali, and in 2022, we continued to liaise with the transitional authorities to ensure the voices of diverse groups are considered. *“We can see there has been a lot of inspiration from our recommendations in the framework for reforms,”* says Célia.

## Investing in youth

Another crucial pillar in preparing a country for a better future is working with the next generation of politicians and leaders to build cross-party networks early in a person’s political career.

NIMD Mali launched its first Democracy School in 2021, and in 2022 there were 210 new graduates, 40% of whom were women. But investment in Mali’s youth doesn’t end with the graduation. Alumni activities are paramount in maintaining those networks across political, social and cultural divides, laying the groundwork for peaceful and consensus-based politics in the future.

In 2022, these activities included a trip by 14 Mali Democracy School alumni to the Netherlands and Belgium. A group of alumni also came together to establish a new youth organization, where they will use training and civic education programmes will pass on their new knowledge and skills to other young and aspiring leaders.

*“Our students leave the Democracy Schools with more democratic values and human values, and with the opportunity to increase their influence in politics,”* says Célia *“From their new positions, they will be able to slowly shift the boundaries, changing the system over time.”*

*“It’s not something that will happen overnight. It might be 10 or 20 years. But something will change because our students have a new way of doing politics. They work based on the principles of integrity and accountability, and they will be able to work towards that change.”*



# NIMD: Our Themes

At NIMD, our programming aims to strengthen the political infrastructure and embed democratic traditions, building the resilience and flexibility in political systems that will help foster long term stability and prevent conflict and polarization.

At the heart of all our work is the principle of inclusiveness: we strive to equip people from all parts of society with the skills, knowledge and networks to meaningfully participate in politics. Democracy can only thrive when all voices are heard, and inclusive and respectful dialogue between politicians, political parties, civil society and citizens is crucial to achieving that goal.

NIMD's work broadly falls into five categories – **Dialogue, Democracy Education, Women's Political Participation, Youth Political Participation** and **Strengthening Democratic Infrastructure**. The guiding principle of inclusiveness cuts across these five thematic areas, and we are proud to present our highlights from 2022 for each of these categories.



## Our Approach

At NIMD, we believe that democracy starts with dialogue; that dialogue has the power to foster the trust, collaboration and consensus that form the foundation of a respectful democratic culture. Through our five signature dialogue interventions, we facilitate a range of initiatives, from political party dialogues to multi-stakeholder dialogues that gather diverse groups with a stake in the political process. Each of these aims at bringing people together across divides to work towards the common good of the country.

Find out more about our approach to dialogue at <https://nimd.org/what-we-do/dialogue/>

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*“After assessing our dialogue work in the 2021 Just Talk report, we were delighted to see our interventions being put into practice in 2022. While there is a lot of work to do, we are confident that we are laying the groundwork for more collaborative political interactions in future.”*

*Violet Benneker, NIMD Learning and Innovation Advisor and Dialogue Thematic Lead*

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# Dialogue

## Our work in 2022

Long-term commitment is one of our guiding principles at NIMD. We know that it takes time to contribute to political transformation, and that the resources and energy invested during challenging times lay the foundations for greater stability, security, and meaningful change.

For NIMD, that meant stepping back from some of our dialogue initiatives in 2021, as shrinking democratic space and a growing disconnect between voters and politicians made working directly with political parties more challenging in many countries. We needed to re-evaluate our objectives, so we took stock of our work over the previous five years. The result was our *Just Talk* report; a framework for moving forward with our dialogue interventions in a manner that takes into account the fast-changing global context.

While, in the past, we had focused on dialogue between political parties, we recognized that changing circumstances meant more voices needed to be heard, including civil society and other political actors. We were pleased to see this approach bear fruit in 2022, with new programmes and initiatives consolidating our approach to dialogue. Here are some highlights from 2022:

- A number of countries implemented new dialogue initiatives that helped promote NIMD’s guiding principle of inclusiveness. When it comes to building trust, it is vital that our work reaches not only across political barriers, but also cultural, economic and social divides. Our new dialogue initiatives included a multi-stakeholder dialogue in Guatemala in which women from grassroots indigenous groups connected with indigenous women in the national parliament, helping amplify their voices and concerns at the highest level. And in Uganda, a multi-stakeholder dialogue brought female political and civil society leaders together to discuss measures to ensure that women from across Uganda’s political landscape take part in elections for the National Women’s Council.



## Dialogue in numbers:

Number of political parties  
participating:

**216**

Number of dialogue  
meetings held:

**321**

Number of civil society  
organizations:

**275**

Number of legislative  
proposals developed:

**48**

## Our work in 2022

- NIMD started dialogue work in a territory of the Netherlands for the first time, launching a political actor dialogue platform in the Dutch Caribbean island of Sint Eustatius. Read more [here](#).
- When countries are going through periods of political uncertainty, it is vital that the actors working to promote democratic values share knowledge and experiences with others in a similar situation. NIMD helped facilitate that dialogue in 2022 with two events. In Tunisia, NIMD country representatives from the Sahel region came together with our partner organization CEMI to discuss how to set up dialogue platforms in volatile contexts, sharing practical solutions to the challenges this presents. And, in Senegal, NIMD and the Gorée Institute held a [regional multi-stakeholder dialogue forum](#), bringing together members of civil society, political actors, and representatives of state and non-state institutions from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal. With the countries in the Sahel region experiencing common political, economic and security problems, finding joint solutions to regional challenges is of the utmost importance. The dialogue session ended with participants preparing a joint statement of recommendations for the Economic Community of West African States and their countries' transitional authorities.

As we look ahead to 2023, NIMD is excited to be building on our successes of 2022 with more innovative initiatives. Our planned work in 2023 includes:

- Providing a safe space for political actors in Somaliland to build trust ahead of elections
- Launching a multi-stakeholder conflict prevention dialogue platform in Benin
- Assessing the potential for dialogue between politicians and young people ahead of expected elections in Burkina Faso in 2024
- Bringing together anglophone country directors from our African country offices for an expert exchange on dialogue
- Developing a training module for dialogue facilitators



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## Our Approach

At NIMD, we support politicians and aspiring politicians to develop their skills and knowledge through a variety of training programmes, courses and initiatives, including our renowned Democracy Schools. By bringing participants together from across the political and ideological spectrum, these initiatives ensure lasting networks and connections that bridge divides and build trust, helping combat polarization and ensuring democratic values have a chance to thrive.

Find out more about our approach to Democracy Education at <https://nimd.org/what-we-do/democracy-education/>

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*“In 2022, we took stock of our progress in Democracy Education. Moving forward, we want to really invest in our alumni networks and create more interactions between young political actors at the regional level, so they can see that they have the same challenges and joint agendas.”*

*Reem Judeh, Senior Programme & Knowledge Advisor and  
Democracy Education Thematic Lead*

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# Democracy Education

## Our work in 2022

NIMD’s Democracy Schools are at the heart of our forward-thinking vision. Only by building a basis of trust between actors from across political and social divides can we hope to solve the challenges facing societies today, and our focus on training young people early in their political careers means investing in respectful and collaborative politics in the future.

We are proud of our commitment to supporting the democrats of the future, but we know that we must keep assessing and innovating to ensure our programmes meet the changing needs and contexts in the countries we work in.

This impetus guided our work on Democracy Education in 2022, as we assessed our existing strategies and gauged our responses. Here are some highlights from our work in 2022:

- Our schools in the Sahel region grew in reputation and reach, as we sought out politically motivated young people determined to have a positive impact in Mali, Burkina Faso and Benin, where prolonged security crises have dominated the political landscape. In Autumn 2022, 14 alumni from the Mali Democracy School visited the Netherlands on a fact-finding mission, resulting in new connections with like-minded organizations and individuals in Europe, and a broadening of understanding of the common challenges young people in politics face around the world.



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## Democracy Education in numbers:

Number of graduates in 2022:

**2136**

Number of countries with  
Democracy Schools:

**12**

Percentage female graduates:

**63%**

## Our work in 2022

- To assess the impact of our Democracy Schools, NIMD commissioned a Tracer Report examining five years of Democracy Schools, the results of which will inform the curriculum and approach going forward. There were some very promising results, including a significant reported improvement in the skills and knowledge of participants following the training, and a huge increase in respect for people with different values and opinions. We are proud of the fact that graduates absorbed these key values of inclusive democracy. Moving forward, we want to consolidate that learning and invest in our connection with alumni through a continued focus on alumni networks and activities.
- NIMD has been investing in transforming the mindsets and attitudes of Ethiopia's emerging and current political leaders through the Ethiopian Democracy Academy (EDAC). In 2022, the NIMD Ethiopia team worked to continue providing opportunities for its alumni network, through holistic programming. Through a series of intergenerational dialogues, alumni had the chance to build their network and share their perspectives with established politicians, developing common visions on peace and nation building.

Drawing on the knowledge gleaned during our assessments in 2022, NIMD is looking forward to a number of new initiatives in Democracy Education in 2023. These include:

- Launching new Democracy Schools in existing programme countries, Uganda and Kenya
- Starting the first Democracy Schools in our new partner country, Somaliland
- Coordinating a regional approach to our Democracy Schools in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, to ensure connections and knowledge-sharing over borders



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## Our Approach

At NIMD, we know that the inclusion of women in political processes is a key to the functioning of democracy. Women, in all their diversity, must have the chance to exercise their political rights and participate in all political decision-making. To achieve our goals, we work with political and civil society actors to foster an open political culture.

Find out more about our approach to Women's Political Participation at <https://nimd.org/what-we-do/womens-political-participation/>.

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*"In 2022, we remained dedicated to strengthening women's political participation in our programmes, but also within our own organization, because we must also look inward if we want to uphold the values of women's empowerment, women's leadership and gender equality."*

*Jimena Durán, Grants Coordinator and Thematic Lead for Women's Political Participation*

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# Women's Political Participation

## Our work in 2022

At NIMD, we have long been committed to promoting the participation of women in peace and reconciliation processes around the world. When women play a meaningful role in conflict resolution and long-term peacebuilding, countries have a greater chance of lasting stability.

As a signatory to the 1325 National Action Plan of the Netherlands, NIMD is committed to Women, Peace and Security. In 2021, we launched our [LEAP4Peace Consortium](#) to promote women's participation in political and decision-making processes as a means of sustaining peace in Colombia, Burundi and Myanmar.

2022 saw real results for the LEAP4Peace programme, as well as heightened visibility for Women, Peace and Security, and increased consolidation of our Consortium partnership. Here are some highlights from our work in 2022:

- In 2020, NIMD brought together a network of state and civil society actors in Colombia to form the [Observatory on Violence against Women in Politics](#). In 2022, Colombia's National Council for Political and Social Policy awarded the Observatory an official role in shaping public policy, with the responsibility of producing biennial national studies on violence against women in politics, as direct input for lawmakers. In addition, the Observatory successfully influenced a bill on the prevention, protection and response to violence against women in politics. NIMD Colombia also provided support to the team of MPs working on the development of this bill, which has been approved during a second debate in Congress.



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## Women's Political Participation in numbers:

Number of women trained in political skills:

**2395**

## Our work in 2022

- In 2022, as a partner of the Rapid Response Window of the UN's Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, we supported civil society organizations who promote women's participation in peace processes in Mozambique, Colombia, Venezuela and Guatemala. We know that organizations working directly in diverse communities are best placed to assess the specific needs of women in those communities. However, these organizations often lack the resources needed to maximize their impact. By ensuring access to key UN funding, we hope to address this major barrier to their work.
- We also worked to consolidate the partnership between the different members of the LEAP4Peace Consortium, through increased collaboration and joint initiatives, including the organization of a joint advocacy event during the UN's Women's Peace and Security Week, highlighting the experiences of women peacebuilders in Myanmar and Colombia.
- Toward the end of 2022, NIMD commissioned an internal gender audit, as a means of assessing what can be improved in our internal processes and ways of working. The audit was carried out by feminist network organization [Akina Mama wa Afrika](#), our partner under the [Power of Dialogue](#) programme. The results showed progress on NIMD's work to support Women's Political Participation in our programme countries, as well as identifying opportunities to improve internal learning. It created a new energy within the organization to ensure that we meet the highest possible standards when it comes to implementing gender-advancing policies. [More on the gender audit here.](#)

NIMD is looking forward to acting on the results of our gender audit and ensuring continued commitment to women's political participation in 2023. Some specific upcoming projects include:

- Instigating a Women's Leadership Programme in Somaliland
- Ensuring the participation of women leaders from Burundi, Colombia and Myanmar in the UN Security Council's Women, Peace and Security Week. By sharing their experiences, these leaders will have a chance to shape the implementation of the Women Peace and Security agenda in coming years
- Facilitating exchange of learning between the LEAP4Peace Consortium Partners



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## Our Approach

Promoting the political potential of young people at every level of the decision-making process is crucial if states are to address the huge challenges facing the world in the future. At NIMD, youth participation is playing an increasingly central role in our programming, and we strive to find innovative ways to connect to a new generation of decision makers.

Find out more about our approach to Youth Political Participation at <https://nimd.org/what-we-do/youth-political-participation/>

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*“In 2022, we gathered knowledge on what we do and how we do it. While continuing to build on this knowledge, we really want to think about how to take the next step and critically look at our interventions and set up more programmes with a youth lens.”*

*Roxanne van der Bliëk, Programme Support and Knowledge Officer  
with a focus on Youth*

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# Youth Political Participation

## Our work in 2022

The political participation of young people is playing an increasingly central role in our programming at NIMD. While we have worked closely with young and aspiring political actors for many years, in 2022 we were determined to formalize our approach by assessing our past interventions and articulating our priorities and future strategy.

We know that the participation of young people is vital for democracy to be inclusive and representative, and for the political stability and security of a country. That is why we put a renewed focus on our youth work in 2022. Some highlights from this year include:

- To gain insight into our experiences with the political participation of young people, NIMD undertook an in-depth evaluation of our programming from the last five years through a youth lens. The result of this assessment was a set of internal documents laying out our definition of youth and our approach to working with young people across NIMD's different thematic areas. With this institutional knowledge, NIMD can now move ahead with a more formalized approach to youth political participation, ensuring that the perspectives of young people are built into all the relevant interventions.
- In Guatemala, the participants of NIMD's Youth+D initiative, aimed at elevating young voices, were able to access to decision-making structures and directly influence government policy. The programme supported young people by strengthening their dialogue and presentation skills and providing them the opportunity to influence and co-create youth policies at both the national and municipal levels.



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## Youth Political Participation in numbers:

Percentage of Democracy School  
graduates under 35:

**79%**

## Our work in 2022

- Planning began in 2022 on the new European Union-funded Women and Youth in Democracy (WYDE) initiative, in which NIMD will have a key role in implementing programmes for youth in political parties. As part of a consortium led by the European Partnership for Democracy, NIMD will create the space to enhance the role of young people in political parties in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia via Democracy Schools and alumni networks. The initiative allows NIMD to set up youth-specific programming on a regional scale for the first time.

Having consolidated our knowledge and strategy on Youth Political Participation in 2022, NIMD is now looking forward to exciting new projects in 2023. These include:

- Kicking off the WYDE programme with the European Partnership for Democracy.
- Creating a framework for NIMD's work on intergenerational dialogue.





## Our Approach

At NIMD, we help politicians and political actors connect with and strengthen all the pillars of society and government that implement and improve the checks and balances of democracies. Across all our work, we aim to ensure that democratic institutions function effectively, and political actors can respond to the needs and interest of the population. With these requirements in place, countries can build a strong and resilient infrastructure that lays the foundation for truly inclusive and responsive democracy.

Find out more about our approach to Strengthening Democratic Infrastructure at <https://nimd.org/what-we-do/strengthening-democratic-infrastructure/>

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*“Everything we do at NIMD is geared towards making political actors more responsive, whether it is dialogue, Democracy Schools, or capacity building for political parties – it’s about strengthening that link between political actors and civil society and the population.”*

*Tayuh Ngenge, Programme & Knowledge Advisor  
and Thematic Lead*

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# Strengthening Democratic Infrastructure

## Our work in 2022

In 2022, NIMD worked with our partners in two programme countries – Kenya and Colombia – to lay the groundwork for multi-party cooperation and inclusive participation ahead of general elections.

But we also know that connecting people and politicians in an accountable, open, and inclusive way is a long-term commitment that should not be determined by election cycles. Trust between politicians and the people they are meant to represent is the cornerstone on which democracies are built. If we can support political actors and civil society in building those bonds of trust and accountability, there will be less space for conflict and misunderstanding to undermine democracy.

In 2022, NIMD took stock of how we support this responsive exchange across our network, so we can ensure that the work of political actors goes beyond words on a page and translates into real connections that have a meaningful impact.

Here are some highlights from our work in 2022:

- Understanding the different ways in which NIMD supports political actors in their efforts to be more responsive to citizens is key if we want to pursue a coherent and meaningful strategy. In 2022, we undertook a comprehensive review of more than two decades of various initiatives across the NIMD network to better understand the meaning, scope and content of our work in this field. This resulted in a conceptual paper which consolidates NIMD’s institutional knowledge, and allows for greater coordination, knowledge sharing and lesson-learning among all our partners.



World map



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## Strengthening Democratic Infrastructure in numbers:

Number of political parties trained:

# 125

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## Our work in 2022

- Accountability is one of the areas in which NIMD supports the connection between political actors and citizens, and in 2022 NIMD Niger teamed up with youth organization the Pan-African Network for Peace, Democracy and Development to support the launch of [Présimètre](#). This project collects feedback from citizens on the policies of the President of Niger, reaching into remote areas of the country which traditionally have been excluded from political processes. By increasing this social accountability, the Présimètre project provides an opportunity for interactive dialogue and exchange between politicians, citizen representatives, civil society and universities, building trust for future stability.
- Kenya held general elections in August last year, and NIMD's partner in the country [Mzalendo](#) held a number of initiatives to encourage participation of traditionally marginalized groups. This included a social media campaign working with community influencers to engage young people and [spread the message of the importance of voting](#). It also deployed infographics and other innovative tools to combat disinformation and ensure a campaign in which accountability and transparency took centre stage.

Moving forward with the knowledge gathered in 2022, NIMD is looking forward to:

- Disseminating the knowledge from the review of our work in the field of responsive political actors to our partners through workshops and presentations.
- Working with partners in NIMD programme countries holding elections next year – Mali, Guatemala and Myanmar – to explore ways to invest in the people and process to support efforts to help democratic traditions take root.



# Our work in action

## Adapting to changing contexts in Colombia



Helping maintain peace and stability through investment in democracy is a long-term commitment requiring effort on multiple fronts, as well as perseverance and flexibility as challenges arise and political winds change. In countries with a recent history of conflict, this process can be particularly volatile, and great sensitivity is needed to help a country remain on the right course.

NIMD has been working in Colombia since 2010 and has played a key role in supporting the promotion of peace since a landmark 2016 agreement that ended a protracted conflict.

In the intervening years, NIMD Colombia has been dedicated to laying the groundwork for a peaceful future, and we are proud of a number of successful initiatives in 2022 in fields including gender inclusivity, dialogue, and the training of electoral candidates.

But the journey to these successes has been a challenging one, revealing both the complexities of navigating changing political circumstances – and the rewards of staying the course.

Ángela Rodríguez, the Country Director of NIMD Colombia, says assisting with the peace accords was one of the “greatest moments” for the office. But work at the national level became more difficult after elections in 2018. The incoming government put less emphasis on the peace process, meaning shrinking space for cooperation at that level.

NIMD Colombia had to deploy flexibility to identify the opportunities for change, and this meant doubling down on their commitment to foster democratic values at the local level, where the impact of the long conflict had been most intense, and mistrust remained high.

*“The local leaderships were the most affected by the violence after the signing of the peace agreement, so we felt that we had more to contribute,”* says Ángela. One such project is the local dialogue initiatives, in which NIMD facilitates the coming together of decision-makers, politicians and local civil society leaders to co-create solutions to challenges identified by citizens themselves. The methodology has been a great success in bolstering people’s faith in the decision-making process, and we were pleased to see this recognized by the OECD as an outstanding initiative in 2022.

*“At the local level we can directly help change the way people see democracy and politics, and as an organization, we now have a broader perspective working on both levels,”* says Ángela.

Ensuring a safe space for diverse groups of people to enter and practice politics is also crucial to ensuring all are heard in the democratic process, and NIMD Colombia has been dedicated to highlighting the violence women face when pursuing a career in politics. We helped establish the [Observatory on Violence against Women in Politics](#), a network of state and civil society actors who gather and disseminate data and lobby for policy change.



Years of campaigning paid off in 2022 when the National Planning Department accepted our proposal to conduct a biennial study on violence against women in politics, with the research helping lawmakers craft appropriate policies to address the issue.

*"We are really proud because it was something that was not discussed in Colombia five or six years ago, and now everyone is talking about it,"* says Ángela.

Democracy education is also a central plank of our efforts to prepare the country for sustainable and peaceful future, and we held targeted training for electoral candidates in 2022. For this "Occupy Politics" initiative, the candidates were trained both in inclusive leadership values and practical campaigning skills.

*"It's a leadership incubator for people we feel are going to make a change in the system,"* says Ángela.



Of the 81 people trained by NIMD, 23 were elected to office in the 2022 elections, including young people and people from the LGBTQI+ community, bringing those values of inclusive democracy to the heart of government.

Following the elections in 2022, which brought a record number of women to Congress, the new government has renewed its commitment to the peace process. NIMD Colombia has already identified opportunities to resume its work on the national level, including assisting with a new transparency plan and working with the Government to protect social leaders.

But we will also remain committed to projects around the country, because we know it is this holistic approach and long-term commitment that has made NIMD a trusted organization known for impartiality and driving results, even in the most challenging times.



# Our organization: NIMD's commitment to equality, integrity and our people

## Gender and diversity

*"Without gender equality, there is no democracy. Gender equality is part of the wider objective of inclusive democracy: to respect equal rights and chances for all people. This is one of the main values driving NIMD's work, and we want to make sure our internal culture also reflects this."* Thijs Berman, Executive Director NIMD

In 2022, NIMD conducted an external gender audit to assess the extent to which our way of working, programming and internal policies are gender sensitive. The audit evaluated how well our systems, policies, management and staff are equipped and able to implement gender-responsive programmes.

The audit found that NIMD has made progress in its commitment to promote gender equality by putting a robust [integrity system](#) in place. This includes a Gender Policy, Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy, and Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Sexual Harassment policy.

The audit also showed that there can be improvements in implementation, in terms of addressing gaps in the institutional culture and way of working; policies and processes; and resources and capacity. As result of the gender audit, an action plan has been defined to address these gaps and recommendations in the course of 2023 and 2024. We will continue to work to deepen understanding and awareness of gender equality across our organization among all staff and management. Concretely, we will include training of staff to increase our capacity to mainstream gender equality and address women's specific needs and priorities in our work, among other actions, in 2023.

## Integrity

NIMD is committed to safeguarding and promoting integrity. We expect all employees to display an open and respectful attitude towards each other, respect and embrace differences, and be honest and accountable, thus promoting a healthy and safe working environment for our employees and the partners with whom we work. We do this by ensuring that all employees, at all levels of the organization, take responsibility for integrity. We share our [Integrity Policy and Code of Conduct](#) at the start of any working relation. The Integrity Policy, approved in 2019, underlines the principle that every person working for and with NIMD will be treated with respect and dignity at all times.

In 2022, NIMD continued to promote integrity by encouraging lively discussions on the topic. We held an Integrity Rollercoaster, a day dedicated to discussing and addressing hypothetical integrity dilemmas and talking openly about knowledge of our Integrity Policy.

NIMD has two Confidential Counsellors available at Headquarters (an internal and an external counsellor) and a network of three Confidential Counsellors for NIMD country offices. In general terms, the Confidential Counsellors guide and support employees with questions and complaints related to unwanted behaviour such as sexual intimidation, aggression and violence, bullying and discrimination.





In 2022, there were a total of 20 reports: 16 reports to the Confidential Counsellor network in NIMD programme countries, and 4 reports to the Confidential Counsellors at Headquarters. Of these reports, most were handled internally, with one complaint investigated by an external committee. In this instance, all involved parties subscribed to the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the resulting report, and the complaint was closed in 2022.

At NIMD, we value and learn from our mistakes; that is how we maintain our commitment to integrity. We exchange and work together with integrity specialists and learn from the practices of other organizations, through the [Partos platform](#).

## People & leadership

With the start of our decentralization process in 2021, NIMD established the Global Directors Council. This council is a space for NIMD Country Directors from around the world to regularly connect, and share information, ideas and thoughts, and In 2022, the council really took off, meeting twice a month online, with a rotating chair. In October of 2022 we invited all Country Directors to The Hague for a physical meeting. Alongside practical challenges (like safety and security), we also discussed situational leadership and what it entails to be a Director.

In 2023 our focus is to further harmonize our HR policies across the network and make further investments in leadership. We will also redesign the orientation process for new staff to make sure everyone receives a warm welcome and has the chance to align with our culture as a caring organization.

In 2022, NIMD Headquarters saw a larger than average staff turnover. In similar organizations we observe the same trend, with many people changing jobs as things opened up in the Netherlands after COVID-19 restrictions. At NIMD Headquarters, a total of 11 people joined our team of 33 people, and 8 people left in 2022. To encourage colleagues to reconnect after COVID-19 restrictions, NIMD's Management Team in The Hague decided to promote and monitor a culture of coming into the office a few times per week, as part of our new hybrid working arrangements.



# OUR FUNDING PARTNERS IN 2022

- Demo Finland
- Democratic Governance Facility
- European Union
- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, UK (FCDO)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX)
- Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law
- Luminare
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
- Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations of the Netherlands
- Municipality of The Hague
- Open Society Initiative for West Africa
- Open Society Policy Center
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- Smurfit Kappa Foundation
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
- UN Women
- USAID

## Financial information

NIMD's audited financial figures for 2022 – including income, expenditure and results – will be available as of August 2023 in our Financial Report 2022 at [www.nimd.org](http://www.nimd.org).



**Democracy starts with dialogue.**