

**THE PROMISE OF
DEMOCRACY**

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy

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

2020



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MESSAGE FROM THIJS BERMAN NIMD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2020 was a year that no-one expected. A surreal year and a tragic year, which brought the world to a standstill and resulted in so many lives lost.

And let's make no mistake: It was also a hard year for democracy.

According to The Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index, government-imposed lockdowns and other pandemic-related measures caused an unprecedented rollback of democratic freedoms in 2020. As we all know, elections have been postponed in many countries. And parliamentary oversight over government decisions - one of the major roles of any parliament - has often been put on the backburner, with the urgency of the fight against the virus serving as a shallow excuse.

Glimmers of hope

So, democracy has not been immune to the pandemic. But there is also room for hope.

Perhaps, in the long term, some good may also come from this crisis. Perhaps, based on everything we have seen, our societies will start to call for more inclusion and equality. And some might even see the key role democracy can play in this, as the only political system where every individual counts.

In some ways, the pandemic has shone a harsh spotlight on the inequalities within our societies. We have seen, first hand, the unequal toll COVID-19 has taken on the poorest and most vulnerable in our societies.

Faced with a global health threat, we have realized how much we all depend on each other. We have seen that, when some groups are left out of the solution, it affects everyone. So, in the end, no-one is safe from COVID-19 until everyone is.

There is hope that, as we slowly emerge from the pandemic, our experiences will shape the way we talk about democracy as a society and our determination to leave no-one behind.



The people who inspire us

Part of NIMD's sense of optimism comes from our work, and the people it puts us into contact with. These are people who feel compelled to create change, even under difficult circumstances.

From our colleagues in country offices, to the political change-makers they work with, these people share NIMD's belief in dialogue; in a more peaceful, inclusive and stable world, where the voices of underrepresented groups are heard and taken into account.

When we see the work that these people are doing, sometimes at great personal risk, we see hope and endless possibilities for change. These are people who drive us. And we are inspired by their resilience.

Democracy: Key to a healthier world

We need these people because our work is becoming more important than ever.

Democracy and inclusion are, without a doubt, the key to a safer and healthier world.

It's still unclear how the pandemic will play out, but one thing is certain: we won't stop it unless everyone, in all corners of every country, has access to the right treatment and, ultimately, to a vaccination. Democracy will be crucial in ensuring the level of inclusiveness that can make this possible.

Up to the job

More than ever, this is a task that I believe the NIMD network is up to. We have emerged from this challenging year more resilient and more connected than before.

2020 required us to grow and learn. We have had to find new ways of working; staying connected as a network; and continuing to bring together political actors and citizens, in a world where chances to meet face-to-face are all too rare.

As a network, we have been constantly adapting our work to the changing restrictions and demands of the world around us. This ranges from ensuring [continued citizen oversight during the pandemic in Kenya](#); to providing people with advice and guidance on [how to spot fake Coronavirus news in El Salvador](#); to our new online [DemoLab in Colombia](#), which helps Bogota city council increase transparency and involve citizens in policymaking.

We're also working to provide knowledge and resources to counter the rollback of democratic freedoms. Our studies on Closing Democratic Space across a number of our programme countries, for example, set out the different tactics used to decrease citizen's opportunities to make their voices heard and exercise their democratic rights. Based on these, we have been able to draw conclusions and put forward recommendations for democratic institutions and civil society.



A stronger network

Adapting to the shifts around us has also opened up new ways to connect and bridge the geographical distance between the partners and offices that make up our NIMD network. We are more adept now at coming together online to share our ideas and experiences.

We're stronger in other ways too. We have a new [Multi-Annual Strategy for 2021-25](#), entitled "The Promise of Democracy".

And our office in the Netherlands is evolving towards a Hub for knowledge and support, as we gradually devolve the design of programmes - and decisions on how to implement them - to NIMD's country offices and partners. To start this process, we've made changes to the structure of our office in The Hague, with a new focus on knowledge creation and advisory functions.

Lastly, following for our successful funding applications with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2020, our network has been further strengthened by the introduction of new partners in our two new Consortia.

In 2021, we will start working – through our Power of Dialogue programme – towards more inclusive and sustainable democracies in 13 countries.

We're excited to start this Consortium with [Akina Mama wa Afrika](#), [Gorée Institute](#) and our long-term partner [Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales](#) (CEMI).

Second, our LEAP4Peace Consortium is made up of [Gender Equality Network](#) (GEN) Myanmar, [Gender Action for Peace and Security](#) (GAPS) and Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP), with our country partners NIMD Myanmar and [NIMD Colombia](#).

This Consortium will contribute to women's full and meaningful inclusion in political and decision-making processes, as a means of sustaining peace in Burundi, Colombia and Myanmar.

Each of our new Consortium Partners brings unique knowledge, networks and skills. And these will be key to our collective ambition for the next five years: We will contribute to strengthening democracies worldwide, and we will support women and youth, (the two largest of all underrepresented groups) to take up their legitimate place in their democracies.

We're proud and grateful to have found so much trust and strength in both Consortia, and between all our partners. We go into 2021 as a stronger network, reconnected and reinvigorated in our capacity to make real and lasting changes towards inclusive democracy.



NIMD IN 2020

IN 2020, NIMD worked in 21 countries across Africa, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia.



Legend

- ▶ Programme countries
- ▶ Featured countries

Benin

Benin's political party landscape changed dramatically in 2019. In 2020, NIMD Benin launched a digital platform to bridge the gap between political parties and citizens in Benin and offer information about the newly registered parties. The Political Party Portal provides the parties with a space to communicate their programmes and key policies to the general population. The platform also brings citizens, political parties and elected politicians closer by making official texts on the party system and Beninese elections readily available to the public.

NIMD Benin

Burkina Faso

NIMD started work in Burkina Faso in 2020. In its first year, the office supported the launch of a Democracy School. The school brings together young and promising political parties and civil society representatives to gain democratic knowledge and skills. Through the focus on group activities, the participants shared experiences and started to build a network. NIMD hopes this network will expand and thrive in coming years, through regular informal meetings (*cafés politiques*) between all alumni. In addition, by keeping track of alumni's progress and the barriers they face, NIMD can better respond their long-term needs, as we continue to strengthen the curriculum.

Burkina antenna of the NIMD Sahel Regional Office

Burundi

Our partner, BLTP, organized a series of meetings to allow young people to present their plans on setting up community development projects. Held in six of Burundi's provinces, the meetings brought together the young people with different provincial stakeholders. These included provincial administrators (police, army, justice); provincial party presidents; leaders of catalyst groups, trained at the provincial level; and civil society organizations. The young people had been able to design their community development plans through previous BLTP trainings on youth entrepreneurship, self-employment and political positioning.

Partner: Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP)

Colombia

NIMD Colombia has been working with [EXTITUTO](#) to provide new tools to help Bogotá City Council involve citizens in decision making. Through our [DemoLab](#), NIMD helped set up a platform to give citizens a voice on pertinent issues using proposals, rankings and surveys. In the platform's first activity, citizens ranked proposals on topics including security during COVID-19; wetlands policy; mental health; and economic recovery. The virtual consultation was open for two days and 897 citizens participated. The winning proposal was to hold a debate to scrutinize Bogota Government's wetlands policy. This debate was held in December 2020.

NIMD Colombia

El Salvador

NIMD El Salvador developed an online course on communication and transparent campaign financing for electoral candidates. The course targeted young people and women set to run in the 2021 Legislative Elections. Specifically, the 29 participants (who represented six political parties) were selected because they showed real potential to win a seat. As well as providing the candidates with knowledge and skills to feed into their campaigns, the course was able to promote trustbuilding and networking between the participants from different parties. It is hoped that these participants will therefore advocate for cooperation and interparty dialogue in parliament.

NIMD El Salvador

Ethiopia

NIMD and the Regional Parliament Caffee Oromiya commissioned a study paper on the impact of COVID-19 in the Oromia region. The study revealed that COVID-induced economic stress is fueling discontent within the population. The research was presented in a seminar attended by the leadership of the Regional Parliament and other high-ranking regional government officials. The recommendation on the urgent need to supporting low income groups affected by the pandemic was adopted by the Parliament. This includes provision of subsidized basic supplies at government-run shops and tax havens for small-scale businesses.

NIMD Ethiopia

Read more



Guatemala

NIMD Guatemala carried out a participative process to draft a bill on the preservation of drainage basin of Lake Atitlán. The process included meetings with representatives of the municipality and indigenous groups of San Pedro la Laguna - a village located on the shore of Lake Atitlán - to identify their needs and concerns. The main aim of the initiative was to include representatives of indigenous groups in decision-making on this issue; as well as to obtain the perspectives of the different stakeholders. On that basis, the new bill was drafted in 2020. In 2021, NIMD will create a plan with political and social actors to present this bill to Congress.

NIMD Guatemala

Honduras

[Read more](#)

Since 2016, NIMD has been engaged in a long-term process to help to prepare the country's institutions for much-needed reforms. In 2020, we supported the National Congress's multiparty Technical Committee to develop a bill for a new Electoral Law. As part of this, we submitted an analysis of the current electoral legislation, including recommendations. The Technical Committee has now submitted the bill to Congress; it includes reinforcement of the gender quota and fairer registration for political parties, among other amendments. We are working with political parties to support the approval of this bill, ahead of Honduras's 2021 elections.

NIMD Honduras

Indonesia

In 2020, Kemitraan formulated five policy documents, which it presented to policy-makers to inform future bills. One of these covered personal data protection legislation. To inform this document, Kemitraan facilitated 11 independent journalists to investigate corrupt practices surrounding data protection in different regions. Among the proposals in the policy document, Kemitraan recommends that Indonesia's Personal Data Protection Authority should be independent from the Ministry of Communication and Information. Four party factions in the People's Representative Council of Indonesia have adopted the different proposals contained in the policy document, and it is due to be brought forward as a bill in 2021.

Partner: Kemitraan

Iraq

In 2020, NIMD and WEO Iraq set the foundations for the new School of Democracy, launched in April 2021. This process involved consultations with youth, politicians, academia and civil society to identify youth needs and test our approach. Based on this input, we designed the programme, and established the main objective of the school: To build the capacities of young and aspiring leaders, and provide leadership skills, knowledge and the chance to form a network. NIMD supported WEO to interview and select the school's participants. Lastly, with support from our partner in Tunisia, CEMI, we interviewed, selected, coached and trained local experts to design the curriculum for (and deliver) the training.

Partner: Women Empowerment Organization (WEO)

Jordan

NIMD Jordan organized a series of political debates in the lead-up to the 2020 parliamentary elections, in partnership with two of the leading alternative radio stations and streaming sites in Jordan, *Amman Net* and *AL-Balad Radio*. A total of six debates between different candidates running for the parliamentary elections took place in the Amman and Zarqa governorates. The candidates covered topics like the environment, health, gender, education, and public transport. This gave the population a valuable opportunity to compare the viewpoints and policy positions of the candidates before casting their vote.

NIMD Jordan

Kenya

NIMD's partner, Mzalendo, developed two parliamentary monitoring tools to track the impact of COVID-19 on governance, and to document the pace and nature of legislation being put in place. The tools aimed to provide a resource for learning from the response to the crisis, but also to make key information on the COVID-19 response easily available to the public. This is in line with Mzalendo's mission to facilitate and enhance public participation in law-making and parliamentary oversight. The tool on governance informed a media round table convened by Kenya Television Network at the end of 2020.

Partner: Mzalendo



Mali

Following the establishment of Mali's transitional government, NIMD lent its support to the [#MaTransition](#) campaign by online blogger platform [Benbere](#). [#MaTransition](#) calls on Malians to share their views, democratic values and hopes for the transition. It reached almost 1.5 million people, from regular citizens to politicians. Following the campaign, NIMD and Benbere used the public input to write a series of recommendations for the transition and post-transition authorities. Via the Benbere platform, the recommendations have found their way back into the public debate. NIMD is now also translating the recommendations into concrete policy proposals, which will feed into political debates on Mali's transitional reforms.

NIMD Sahel Regional Office

Mozambique

IMD Mozambique supported a public consultation process carried out by the National Parliament's Constitutional Affairs, Human Rights and Legality Committee, and the Public Administration and Local Government Committee, both responsible for electoral legislation. These consultations contributed to making the electoral reform agenda more inclusive, through the active input of different actors. IMD Mozambique helped the committees to carry out public consultation in each of Mozambique's provincial capitals, collecting input from civil society, political parties, Electoral Management Bodies, religious actors, police, courts, the attorney general's office and representatives of the provincial assemblies.

Partner: Instituto para Democracia Multipartidária (IMD Mozambique)

Myanmar

Following a careful analysis of the safety and security issues around different types of online activity, MySoP committed to continuing its multiparty dialogue activities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This decision was based on the long-term trust which had been built between the participants over the years of dialogue together. Once the dialogue platform was taken online, its 12 members from across Myanmar's political spectrum, worked to promote the sustainability of the platform after the 2021 elections. Together, they formulated a transition plan, to capture their journey and pass on the spirit and the practicalities of the dialogue to their successors after the elections.

Partners: DEMO Finland, NIMD Myanmar, also known as the Myanmar School of Politics (MySoP)

Niger

Since its establishment in 2020, NIMD's Niger office has rolled out a campaign on money in politics, in partnership with the NGO [SoS Civisme Niger](#). The campaign targeted different groups. To raise awareness among the public, NIMD supported a poetry slammer to release a video on money in politics. We also engaged civil society and youth, often through interactive activities around sport tournaments. And we brought political actors together to discuss how to promote a more inclusive way to do politics. Political party representatives from across the political spectrum jointly drew up an action plan, which will serve as a basis for NIMD's future work.

Niger antenna of the NIMD Sahel Regional Office

Tunisia

Read more

To complement its work with Tunisia's MPs through the Parliamentary Academy, our partner CEMI piloted a class for Parliamentary Assistants. This training targeted one alumni of CEMI's Tunis School of Politics from each political party. These alumni had been formally placed by their parties as Parliamentary Assistants for their respective parliamentary groups. They took part in eight training sessions on topics such as parliamentary procedures, the functioning of parliamentary committees, drafting reports and drafting amendments. The Parliamentary Assistants are now better equipped to assist the MPs, through their political groups, in performing their function.

Partner: Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales (CEMI)

Uganda

In the run-up to the January 2021 general elections, in the context of rising tensions between parties and reports of political violence, NIMD Uganda launched the [#IChoosePeace](#) social media campaign, which called for peaceful conduct throughout the electoral process. [#IChoosePeace](#) called on all actors at every level of Ugandan political life - including government, security forces, political parties, candidates, and the electorate itself - to shun violence, and respect and acknowledge international and national laws and regulations, including respecting the right of opposition parties.

NIMD Uganda

Ukraine

Despite many challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our partner EECMD was able to adapt to the new reality and continue to promote democratic participation in Ukraine. EECMD's Democracy Schools in five Ukrainian cities continued through an alternative online training format. This new curriculum integrated topics such as "COVID-19 Crisis Management", and the political, social and economic challenges of the crisis. 130 young and aspiring leaders graduated with new democratic knowledge and skills in 2020.

Partner: Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD)

Venezuela

NIMD launched the first edition of its Venezuelan Democracy School in 2020. The new school brought together young representatives from six major political parties in three municipalities of Caracas. The curriculum focused on negotiation skills and highlighted the importance of local-level leadership as a fundamental axis for the development of the country. Based on the training, the participants recognized the need for dialogue and collaboration between political actors in order to increase responsiveness to the needs of their community. The participants also understood the great importance of local/municipal leadership in a country where democratic space is closing significantly at the national level.

NIMD Venezuela

Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwe Institute organized a workshop for the Women's Caucus of the National Parliament as follow up to the Women's Manifesto launched in 2018. The workshop aimed to inform the Caucus's strategy on achieving better political representation for women. The workshop provided a platform for the MPs to come together and jointly come up with a strategy that included a lobby for legislation to ensure all political parties who seek to contest in an election have equal representation of women and men; and steps to identify male champions in Parliament to assist with a motion of equal representation.

Partner: Zimbabwe Institute

[Read more](#)

REACH4Democracy

2020 marked the end of the EU-funded "REACH for Democracy" pilot programme. The overall aim of this programme was to connect young leaders from across the political spectrum in Tunisia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Morocco and Benin. In 2020, the programme held online core mediation trainings, multiparty dialogue meetings and networking events to continue to capacitate a diverse network of youth to contribute to the consolidation of democratic values in their countries.

Partners: European Partnership for Democracy, Centre des Etudes Mediterranees et Internationales, Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy

THE TUNIS SCHOOL OF POLITICS

A LIFELONG CONNECTION



Before 2011, Nabil Hajji had never been involved in politics.

But the Jasmine Revolution changed that. Following the overthrow of Ben Ali's regime, he saw his fellow Tunisians start to dream. They dreamed of a better country; a democratic country with social justice.

His belief in this dream led him to become an election observer in the 2011 elections, Tunisia's first free and fair elections since the country's independence in 1956.

"To finally have successful elections, we had to try to create a new experience. I still remember the queues outside the polling booths. People stood in line for 4-5 hours to vote. I wanted to be part of this celebration of democracy."

Shortly after, he joined the Congress for the Republic, the party of the transition President, Moncef Marzouki. And his political career began in earnest.

The seeds of disillusionment

But Nabil's enthusiasm for Tunisia's new future was soon tainted.

After a few weeks, he started to see opposition parties vie for power. The new Government started to include former ministers from the old regime.

"My dream turned into frustration. You can't go through regime change if you let the same people back into power. I felt like the democratic transition had started to slip".

After six months, Nabil quit his political party. Its values, he feels, did not represent him. And he was disappointed by what he saw as a focus on marketing rather than defending democratic principles.

Far from deterring him from politics, Nabil's experience only served to spur him on. In early 2013, he joined a group of about 100 people to launch a new political party: Democratic Current (Attayar).

To Nabil, the party was an attempt to bring new values to the political party scene in Tunisia. He wanted to present voters with a new choice, a social democratic party based on the values of honesty and independence from financial lobby.



The Tunis School of Politics

In 2015, Nabil first took part in the Tunis School of Politics (TSoP). TSoP is a platform for young politicians, run by our long-term partner in Tunisia, the [Centre des Études Méditerranéennes et Internationales](#) (CEMI), with support from NIMD and [Demo Finland](#).

The school was set up in 2012 as space for politicians to work together in a multiparty setting. Politicians can learn skills and knowledge to help them in their political careers. By learning together across party lines, the participants get to know and trust each other.

Nabil did not know much about TSoP when he decided to participate. But he was immediately impressed by the multiparty setting.

"We felt like a unified group rather than a set of individual students, because all the major parties were represented. Working together allowed us to connect on a human level, despite our political differences."

Nabil also found the practical skills training provided by TSoP very beneficial. He enjoyed the quality of the training on debating techniques, media, and political communication, among other topics.

This was particularly valuable for Nabil, who campaigned in the 2019 parliamentary elections. He feels that the training on media and political communication helped him to communicate his political views and connect with voters during the campaign. And his ability to talk to the media continues to help him even now in his career.

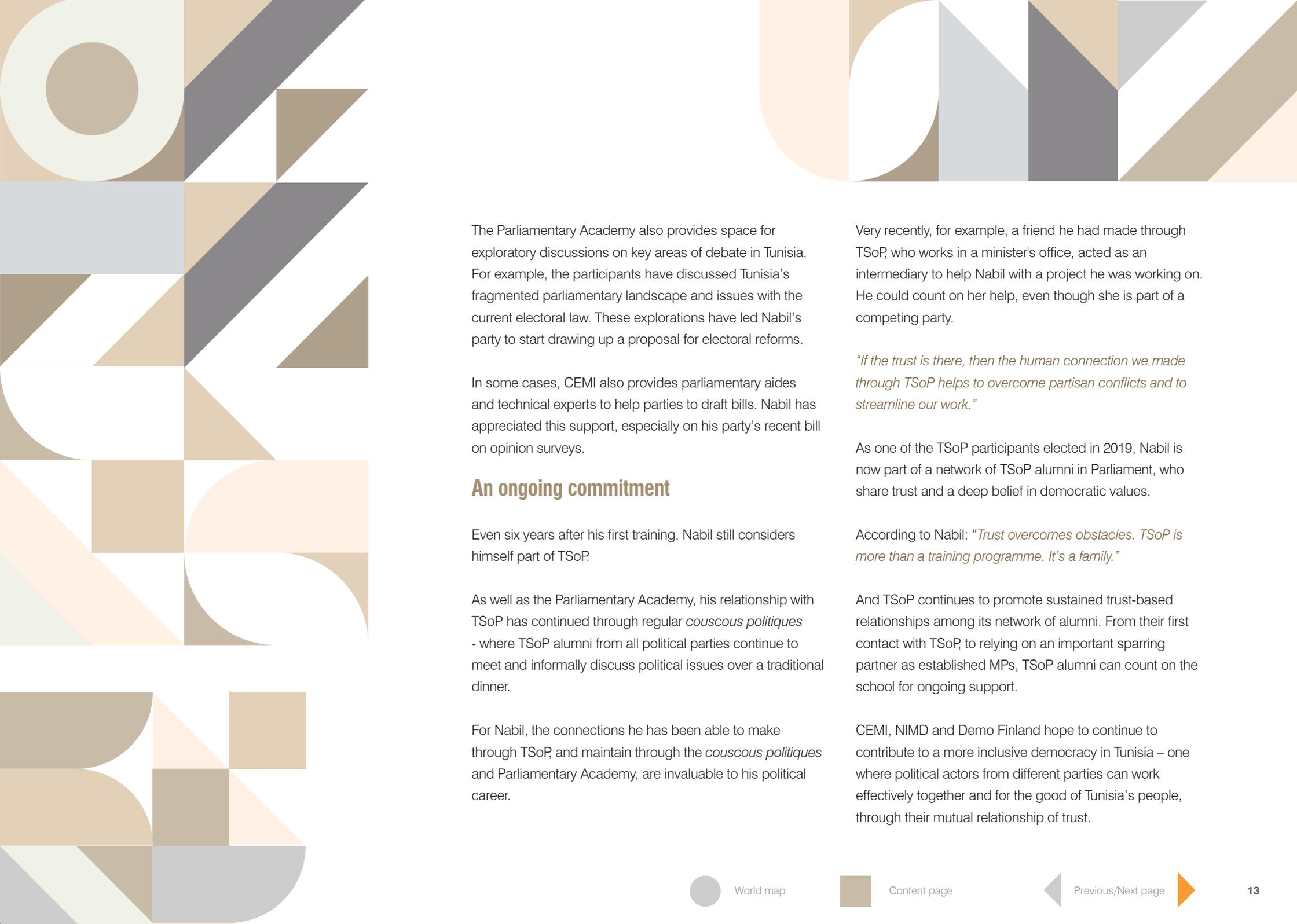
Based on his newly improved campaigning skills, and the high esteem his party held him in, Nabil was one of 53 TSoP alumni to be elected to parliament.

The Parliamentary Academy

TSoP's commitment to Nabil's development and democratic values did not come to an end once he took up his parliamentary seat.

CEMI also provides ongoing practical support to TSoP alumni, and promotes cooperation across party lines, through a Parliamentary Academy.

Nabil explains that the Academy helps to set a constructive tone for heated debates. Within Parliament, these debates can be fueled by partisan conflicts and rivalries. But, in the context of the Academy, the MPs are more relaxed and the dialogue is more constructive. Together, the MPs can put aside traditional rivalries and work on joint solutions.



The Parliamentary Academy also provides space for exploratory discussions on key areas of debate in Tunisia. For example, the participants have discussed Tunisia's fragmented parliamentary landscape and issues with the current electoral law. These explorations have led Nabil's party to start drawing up a proposal for electoral reforms.

In some cases, CEMI also provides parliamentary aides and technical experts to help parties to draft bills. Nabil has appreciated this support, especially on his party's recent bill on opinion surveys.

An ongoing commitment

Even six years after his first training, Nabil still considers himself part of TSoP.

As well as the Parliamentary Academy, his relationship with TSoP has continued through regular *couscous politiques* - where TSoP alumni from all political parties continue to meet and informally discuss political issues over a traditional dinner.

For Nabil, the connections he has been able to make through TSoP, and maintain through the *couscous politiques* and Parliamentary Academy, are invaluable to his political career.

Very recently, for example, a friend he had made through TSoP, who works in a minister's office, acted as an intermediary to help Nabil with a project he was working on. He could count on her help, even though she is part of a competing party.

"If the trust is there, then the human connection we made through TSoP helps to overcome partisan conflicts and to streamline our work."

As one of the TSoP participants elected in 2019, Nabil is now part of a network of TSoP alumni in Parliament, who share trust and a deep belief in democratic values.

According to Nabil: *"Trust overcomes obstacles. TSoP is more than a training programme. It's a family."*

And TSoP continues to promote sustained trust-based relationships among its network of alumni. From their first contact with TSoP, to relying on an important sparring partner as established MPs, TSoP alumni can count on the school for ongoing support.

CEMI, NIMD and Demo Finland hope to continue to contribute to a more inclusive democracy in Tunisia – one where political actors from different parties can work effectively together and for the good of Tunisia's people, through their mutual relationship of trust.



OUR DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE IN 2020

SOME TOPICS COVERED:

CAMPAIGNING

DEBATING

SPEECHWRITING

POLITICAL
THEORY

PROGRAMMATIC
PARTIES



11 COUNTRIES WITH
DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS



3,753 GRADUATES



World map



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TOWARDS ELECTORAL REFORM IN HONDURAS

A TIMELINE

Electoral reforms are deeply needed in Honduras.

In both 2013 and 2017, elections in the country were tainted by concerns of fraud, violent intimidation and widespread irregularities. Following the 2017 elections, violent protests and a crackdown by security forces led to the deaths of 22 civilians and one police officer.

But there is hope for change in Honduras. New electoral organizations and electoral reforms could hold the key to more inclusive, transparent and representative elections.

A process which improves people's trust in elections will reduce feelings of marginalization from the politics. And inclusive reforms could make it more possible for politically under-represented groups to get involved.

NIMD has been working with electoral institutions since 2016. We are engaged in a long-term process to help to

prepare Honduras's institutions for much-needed reforms.

By supporting and upholding electoral reforms, we hope to contribute to their success. But more than that, we have been working directly with new electoral institutions to help them become stronger, more effective and more transparent. This is in line with the recommendations of the Electoral Observation Missions (EOM) of the EU and the Organization of American States.

Setting the scene for electoral reform

NIMD's work towards electoral reform started in 2016. As the country started to contemplate the need to strengthen electoral institutions, NIMD Honduras made steps to create a favourable environment for this process. We held bilateral meetings with both electoral institutions and political parties, as well as trainings to empower political actors to enact electoral legislation and reform proposals.

The importance of this work became clear in the lead-up to the 2017 elections. Voter irregularities in the primary elections give rise to a national debate on the effectiveness of the national ID card and the National Registry of Persons.

The elections themselves made the need for reform even

clearer. The decision of Honduras's Judicial power to allow for the re-election of Juan Orlando Hernández despite a Constitutional ban caused a lack of trust among the electorate. The elections were tarnished by irregularities, electoral violence and unrest.

Calls for profound electoral reforms were made by civil society, the churches and the international community.

Between 2017 and 2019, as a result of these calls and NIMD's lobby efforts, three new electoral bodies were established: the Clean Politics Unit (2017), the Electoral Court (2019) and the National Electoral Court (2019).

This is when our work with electoral bodies in Honduras began in earnest.

Since 2017, we have provided the new electoral bodies with support and guidance in their path to become strong, trusted and effective organizations. We have also helped existing electoral bodies to restructure and increase their effectiveness.



CONTEXT IN HONDURAS

We support:

- Clean Politics Unit
- Electoral Court
- National Electoral Council
- National Registry of Persons
- National Congress (support on electoral and political party reform)

The National Register of Persons introduces a new, more effective biometric ID card for voters. This provides a much clearer system for voting and registration, which will reduce voter irregularities in future.

Congress approves a law requiring electoral lists to have gender parity and alternation of men and women candidates.

This means that men can no longer hold all the top positions on party lists.

2021 general elections loom

In the 2021 primaries, the number of women in eligible positions rose from 21% to 28%.

The National Congress's Technical Committee submits the new draft Electoral Law to Congress.

The law includes reforms to increase inclusion, transparency and trust in Honduras's elections.

228 of the 318 articles have been approved.

We hope the remaining articles will be approved by this May, ahead of the elections in November.

2017-2020

2018-2020

2020

2020-2021

NIMD provides technical, financial and logistical support to new and existing electoral institutions and helps them to become stronger and more effective.

We support each body to develop Communications and Visibility Strategies; increase their transparency and visibility; and foster public trust.

NIMD gives training and supports the National Register on how to roll out the new ID card.

We also help the Register to evaluate and reform its internal systems and procedures.

Together with the Electoral Court, NIMD launches a campaign to encourage political parties to include under-represented groups on their electoral lists.

NIMD supports this by:

- Working with the Forum for Women in Politics to develop the proposal.
- Supporting the Commission of Gender Equality through dialogue and capacity building.

NIMD supports the National Congress's Technical Committee – a multiparty group tasked with developing the bill for the new Electoral Law.

As part of this, we submit an analysis of the current electoral legislation, including recommendations.

We work with political parties to support the approval of the law.

Changes include:

- Reinforcement of the gender quota.
- Changes to financing for political parties.
- Fairer registration for political parties.

NIMD continues to support the debate on the outstanding articles.

We run awareness-raising campaigns on the elections and reach out to political parties to test/influence their approval of the bill.

NIMD CONTRIBUTION

2021 onward

In 2021, general elections will take place. Not all the problems of the past have been resolved. Designing new institutions is one step, but it takes time for them to become organized and operational.

But a lot has been achieved since 2016. Honduras will enter the 2021 elections with new and strengthened electoral institutions. And there is strong hope that the new electoral legislation will also be in place.

In addition, there are new mechanisms to ensure more women have access to politics. There is a new ID and registration system to help keep track of who has voted. And the new electoral bodies, formed between 2017 and 2019, have a strong basis. They have made their first steps towards more transparency and inclusion in Honduras's elections. These developments have the potential to start the process of

re-establishing trust in elections. The achievements we have made are part of this longer process, towards more inclusive, transparent and representative elections in Honduras. Therefore, NIMD is set to continue to support the electoral organizations and facilitate debate between political parties, and between political actors and civil society, on outstanding electoral reform for inclusive democracy.

OUR WORK ON CAPACITY STRENGTHENING WORLDWIDE IN 2020

SOME TOPICS COVERED:

NON-VIOLENT
COMMUNICATION

INTERPARTY
DIALOGUE SKILLS

STRATEGIC
PLANNING



FINANCE AND
BUDGETING

POLITICAL
COMMUNICATIONS



287 POLITICAL
PARTIES TRAINED

293 POLITICAL PARTIES
PARTICIPATING IN DIALOGUE
PLATFORMS



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NOT A ZERO-SUM GAME

BRINGING TOGETHER ETHIOPIA'S POLITICAL PARTIES THROUGH DIALOGUE

Dr. Rahel Baffie has spent much of her life forging a career in politics.

From joining the Ethiopian Social Democratic Party in 1992, she has taken up the successive roles of Secretary, Vice-chair and Head of Finance and Admin within the party.

Today, as Vice-Chair of her party and Chair of the Ethiopian Political Parties' Joint Council, she is a strong advocate of multiparty dialogue as a way to make a difference to the lives of ordinary Ethiopians.

Dr. Rahel's drive to enter politics is fueled by the inequalities she saw around her in her childhood. She is from a region blessed with fertile ground, but in which she saw a serious lack of infrastructural investment.

This put a huge burden on the community, especially on women, who needed to carry heavy loads on their back and walk long hours to get water and go to the market.

Dr. Rahel also feels blessed to have had access to education as a child, unlike many others she grew up with. Aside from her political career, she has also gone on to achieve a PhD and set up a local NGO called "Safe Mother and Childhood" in her community.

That is why Dr. Rahel has dedicated time to politics. She believes that making the political system more effective and inclusive is an important first step towards opening up such opportunities for others.

A first experience with NIMD

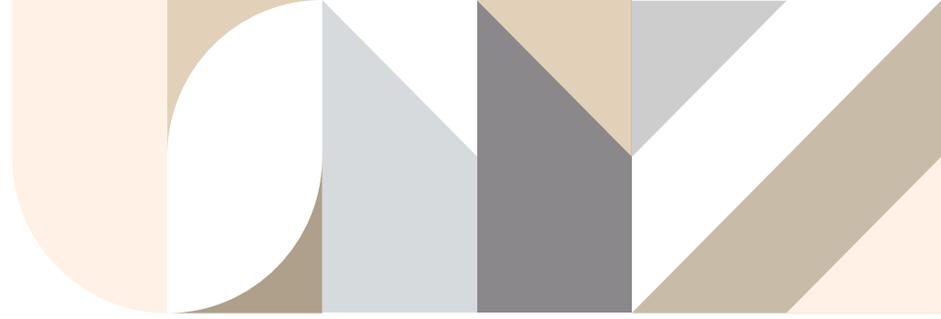
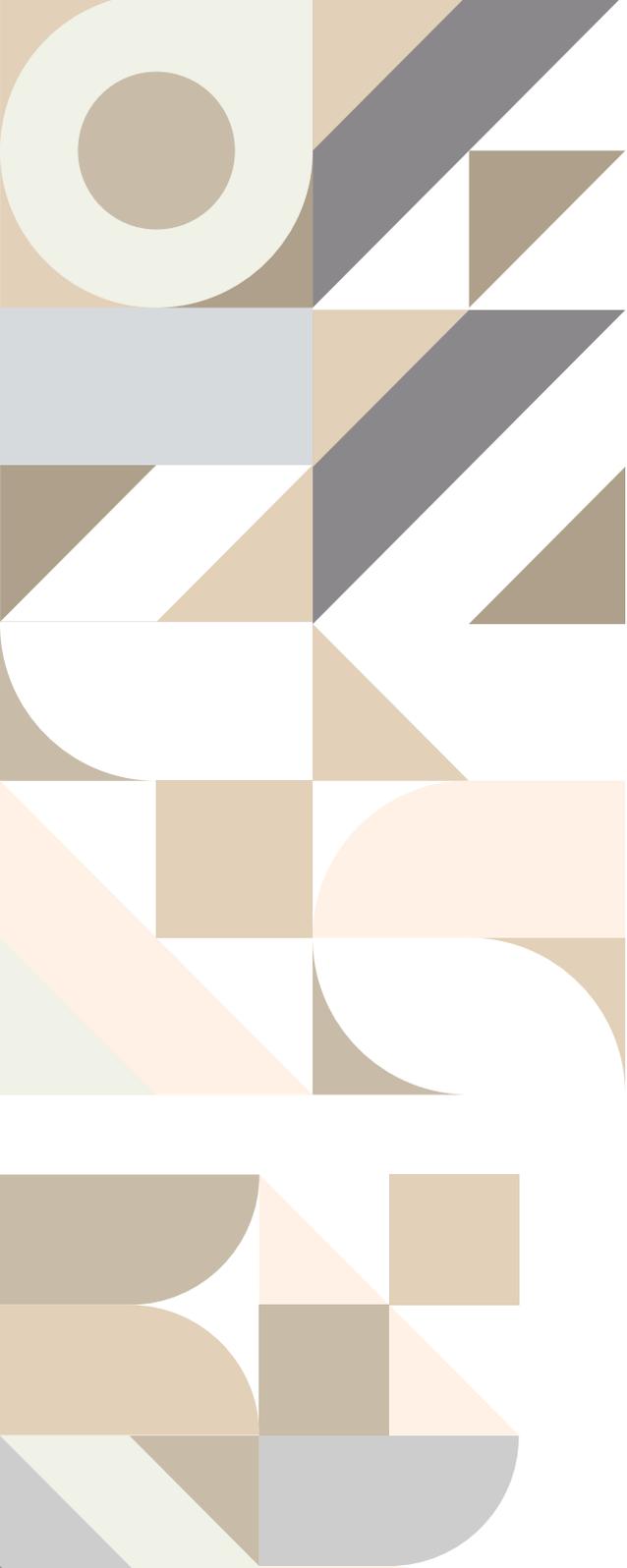
Dr. Rahel first came into contact with NIMD when she went on an NIMD-organized exchange visit to Tunisia in 2017. There, she met inspiring women politicians from across the globe.

From these women, she heard stories of political success and hardship. Many of the politicians had faced harassment, imprisonment and even exile to have careers in politics.

"It gave me a lot of encouragement to stick to my goals and not to give up."

Upon returning to Ethiopia, and with a renewed drive to dedicate her life to politics, Dr. Rahel became involved in the Ethiopian Political Parties Dialogue (EPPD), facilitated by the National Election Board of Ethiopia.





The EPPD platform was supported by NIMD from January 2019 onwards. Our aim was to create a unique space where all political parties could come together to reach consensus on major political issues and push for reforms. At its core lies the conviction that real meaningful change can only be achieved by engaging with all parties.

More than 95% of Ethiopia's then 107 political parties and political groups took part in the dialogue with an equal voice.

A new way to engage in dialogue

For Dr. Rahel, the chance to engage with all parties on national issues was eye opening. First, it changed her impression of the other political parties. She was able to listen to views from parties from across the political spectrum, and work closely with the others on a shared roadmap for the country.

Slowly, Dr. Rahel started to feel her preconceptions being challenged.

For example, she had gone into the dialogue expecting some parties to show resistance. But things could not have been more different. In fact, she and her colleagues were able to meet different party leaders and slowly got to know them on a personal level.

Gradually, they built a relationship of trust. When the mother of one party leader died, the participants went to his house to show they shared his pain. Not as political rivals, but as supportive colleagues.

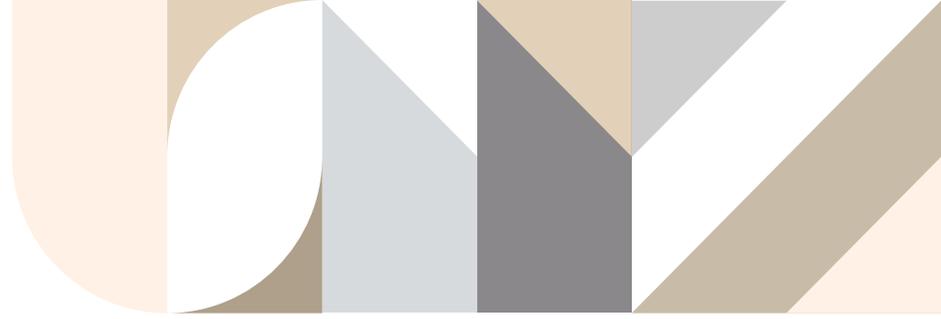
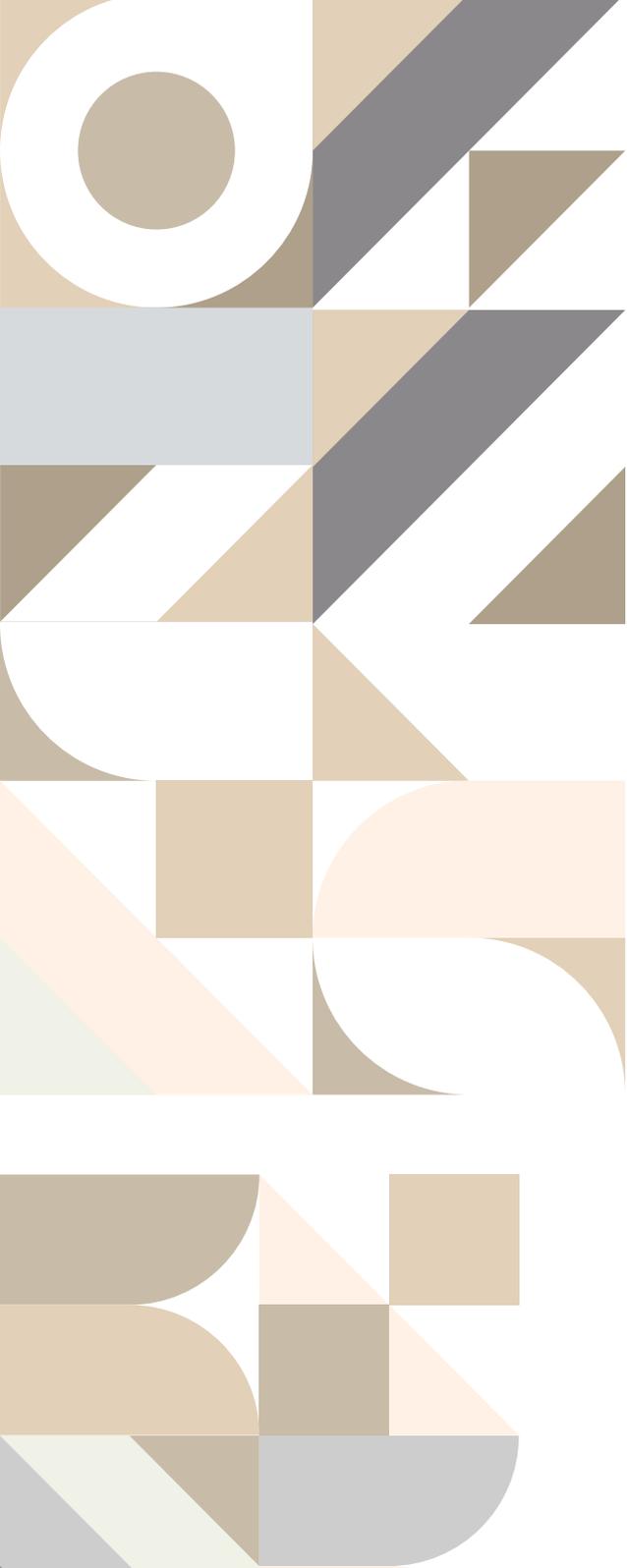
So, Dr. Rahel started to forge trusting personal relationships with people she had previously seen as competitors. She saw how this change also made it easier to work together as political parties.

“Rather than a competitive outlook, the parties now search for win-win solutions. And it no longer feels like a zero-sum game.”

This change also had practical benefits for Dr. Rahel. She recalls that, before the dialogue platform, she and other political party members were very hesitant to exchange phone numbers. It had not occurred to her how easy it could be to meet and phone politicians from other political parties.

Now, her network has widened. She can pick up the phone and get information or advice from a whole network of politicians from across Ethiopia's political spectrum.





Committing to an even playing field

The first big result of the dialogue platform came in March 2019. Through the inclusive dialogue and consensus building, all the participating parties were able to agree on a Code of Conduct, which sets out the rules of engagement for Ethiopian parties in the coming years.

Over 100 party leaders, including Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed of the ruling EPRDF (now the Prosperity Party), signed the Code of Conduct.

By signing, each party committed to supporting an even playing field, following the rules of the game and working together to further strengthen Ethiopia's political party system.

Dr. Rahel is proud of having been part of the dialogue on this Code of Conduct. While she recognizes that this is just the start of a long process, being able to work together with different parties on a joint vision brings her hope. There is power in collaboration, and by putting their political rivalries aside, parties will have more energy and resources to build joint legislation to support inclusion and equality in Ethiopia

The EPPJC: A new body for arbitration and collaboration

The Code of Conduct was not the only result to come out of the dialogue. The parties also decided to set up a new Council together. The Ethiopian Political Parties Joint Council (EPPJC) was directly established through the Code of Conduct.

This Council is tasked with supporting continuous dialogue on common political party issues and resolving their differences amicably. The EPPJC organizes long-term dialogue between parties, and even acts as an arbiter when issues come up between parties. By keeping this smooth collaboration going, the Council hopes to become a long-term platform for joint decision-making between parties.

Throughout 2019 and 2020, NIMD has provided technical, logistical and financial support to the Council. For example, we helped the EPPJC to set up a physical office, which is open to all political parties who are looking for assistance or help with arbitration.





Taking forward the spirit of dialogue

Following her active participation in the dialogue and her party's signing of the Code of Conduct, Dr. Rahel was elected as Chair of the EPPJC in January 2021.

She believes her work with NIMD and her dedication to collaboration prepared her for this position:

"If they had given me this position in 2015, I would not have been able to put myself in the shoes of the other parties. This change makes me more confident now to take up this role and serve all political parties equally."

She is excited to take the EPPJC forward, and use her skills and experience to promote and strengthen multiparty cooperation.

And, ultimately, for Dr. Rahel, the future has no limits.

"I want to be the first female Prime Minister of Ethiopia, because I want to break the political culture of "yegulbet hail" (power/force and zero-sum game) and move towards a culture where political parties engage in dialogue and compete in elections based on ideas to solve Ethiopia's problems."

As a powerful and experienced politician, Dr. Rahel feels equipped to lead this change. At NIMD, we are excited to support her and the EPPJC as they continue to strengthen collaboration and trust between Ethiopia's parties.

OUR WORK TO FACILITATE DIALOGUE WORLDWIDE IN 2020

SOME TOPICS COVERED:

POLITICAL
PARTY FINANCING

GENDER
EQUALITY

ELECTORAL
REFORM

DEVOLUTION AND
DECENTRALIZATION

CONSTITUTIONAL
REFORMS

14 COUNTRIES WITH
DIALOGUE PLATFORMS

464 INTERPARTY AND
MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE
PLATFORM MEETINGS HELD

83 CONSENSUS-BASED
DECISIONS TAKEN BY
THE PLATFORMS

26 PROPOSALS SUBMITTED
TO PARLIAMENT



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REACH FOR DEMOCRACY

LEARNING ACROSS POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND NATIONAL DIVIDES

Victoria Streach is constantly striving to learn and improve.

Her commitment to learning started when she first attended courses at university. Through her experience, she realized that nothing is more important for young people than practice and opportunities.

“I realized that there isn’t a final point, where you can stop and be satisfied with yourself or with everything you’ve accomplished. There are always many other opportunities and ways to improve your skills and to develop new ones, but also so many interesting people to discuss and share experiences with.”

That’s why, in the 10 years since she started university, Victoria has attended courses and training, as well as seeking out chances to gain real world experiences. In a bid to go beyond traditional academic and workplace learning, she has done a lot of volunteer work, and has enjoyed coming into contact with people from different countries and cultures.

As part of this, Victoria took up an active role within the Youth Wing of the Democratic Party of Moldova in 2011. By 2016, she was the Youth Wing’s Deputy International Secretary. This role brings her both practical and theoretical knowledge, as well as the opportunity to meet other inspirational young people every day.

REACH for Democracy

In 2019, Victoria had the chance to widen her network of inspiring young people further, when she was selected to participate in our EU-funded REACH for Democracy pilot programme.

The REACH programme was a collaboration, running from 2018 to 2020, between NIMD and its partners [Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales \(CEMI\)](#), the [Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy \(EECMD\)](#) and the [European Partnership for Democracy \(EPD\)](#).





The programme, whose full name is “Regional Engagement to Advance the Creation of Hubs for Democracy” aimed to create an international network of young democrats from across the political spectrum. It provided them with the skills they needed to work together to make their political systems more plural and inclusive.

In Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, Benin, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Morocco and Tunisia, promising young politicians took part in comprehensive and intensive training. Through international meetings and exchanges, these participants also had the chance to create a network of other young and promising democracy advocates from within their countries and beyond.

Pushing boundaries and gaining new skills

Victoria was pleased to be able to take part in two regional REACH for Democracy activities in 2019. These brought together young people from Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Georgia.

For three full weeks (two weeks in Georgia, and one week in Moldova), she participated in a jam-packed schedule of activities, from theoretical trainings on democracy, to political skills development, to interactive get-to-know-you sessions with the other participants.

Victoria was impressed by the depth, range and quality of the training, particularly the balance between theory and practical skills.

ourselves in real time. There were so many group exercises that tested our abilities, but also our patience, tolerance and democratic values.”

It was also a chance to push her boundaries. Victoria recalls being a team leader during one of the interactive games. It was her task to create a friendly and productive environment in her team. For her, the challenge was to understand everyone’s position and values, and to negotiate between the team members so that everyone felt included and satisfied with the team decisions. To Victoria’s surprise, she took to the challenge, and showed real leadership, ultimately winning the game with her team.

As well as honing her leadership skills for the future, Victoria really enjoyed the focus on negotiation and mediation during the training in Moldova.

For her, it was eye-opening to learn about the power of negotiation and mediation within all types of communities – from families to whole societies. And it occurred to her how many issues, both in Moldova and internationally, could be quickly resolved through real cooperation.

“I saw that many things could be done differently if negotiation was improved at all levels and if there was an appropriate dialogue, where people could listen to each other.”



Learning across borders

Victoria learned a lot from the activities and training. But perhaps she learned the most from the other participants, whom she found interesting and motivated.

“Everyone came with a different background and experience, also with different values and understandings of what a democracy is and how it works. It was very interesting to find out about everyone’s personality and way of thinking.”

While she was already relatively familiar with what was happening in Moldova’s neighbouring country Ukraine, she enjoyed discovering many things about political and social life in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan.

Over the course of the training, the participants started to get to know each other and building long-lasting relationships. They are still in touch via a chat on Facebook, and Victoria feels pleased to know that she can call on her new network for ideas, advice or joint initiative in the future.

The next steps

Victoria was inspired by the training to start passing on the knowledge and skills she had learned to other young leaders. For her, it was important to be able to use the course to provide opportunities to the young people around her.

In 2020, she started discussions with other REACH participants from her Youth Wing.



Together, they set out a strategy to pass on their learnings to the younger generation. Their idea is to set up an Academy for youth training. This would start within Youth Wing of the Democratic Party of Moldova, but would gradually be expanded to other youth organizations. Eventually, the plan is to expand this to create a platform where young people from across the political spectrum could meet and share experiences regularly.

Based on this strategy, Victoria has also reached out to the other REACH participants from across the different political parties in Moldova. Together, they have started coming to a common understanding on how the strategy could work for each party.

Since this planning phase, major changes within Victoria’s party and Coronavirus-related restrictions have made it difficult to bring these plans to fruition.

However, Victoria is still in touch with the REACH participants to regularly discuss their ideas. Once it becomes possible to meet in person, and dedicate time and resources to the plans, she is excited to start making concrete steps to give more opportunities to other young leaders in Moldova.

For NIMD and our partners within the REACH programme, this is a positive step. While the end of the programme in 2020 marked the end of REACH, we are leaving behind a whole network of high-potential young leaders, like Victoria. They are now empowered to pass on their new knowledge and skills to others around them. Our participants can continue expand their network, by collaborating across party lines to help other young people to become drivers of change towards a more plural and inclusive political system.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

INCOME

In 2020, NIMD received income from 18 different donors. These grants brought our total annual income to €13.3 million. This is slightly lower than NIMD's income of €13.6 million in 2019. However, the 2020 income is roughly in line with NIMD's expectations, and provides a solid basis to continue NIMD's work for the coming years. NIMD has also been able to invest part of its income in further funding diversification, in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization and its programmes around the world. This investment has resulted in a solid base of donor contracts. In 2020, NIMD had a total of 23 different contracts (compared to 25 in 2019).

EXPENDITURE

NIMD's overall expenditure in 2020 was €13.1 million, about 2% lower than in 2019 (€13.3 million). This figure is also 3% lower than our annual budget for 2020 (€13.4 million). Of NIMD's total €13.1 million expenditure, 92% (€12,0 million) was spent on programmes. These included country and regional programmes, and thematic programmes (knowledge, innovation and positioning). The remaining 8% was dedicated to non-direct human resources and office running costs (management and accounting costs).

RESULT

Overall, NIMD achieved a positive result of €0.16 million in 2020. Like in previous years, part of this (€0,14 million) will be added to NIMD's continuity reserve, which now stands at €1.70 million. The remaining €0.02 million will be added to an appropriated reserve for our Project Management System. The positive result in 2020 is due to the income generated from funding contracts, and is in line with our ambition to steadily increase our reserves.



World map



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Donor	Programme	Country	Income in 2020 (€)
DEMO Finland	Myanmar School of Politics	Myanmar	99,000
Democratic Governance Facility (DGF - multidonor basket fund)	Enhancing democracy through inclusive dialogue and capacity development of political parties in Uganda	Uganda	494,944
Embassy of the Netherlands Guatemala (in Costa Rica)	New players in Guatemala; strengthening youth civil society organizations for inclusive democracy	Guatemala	43,218
European Union	Projet d'appui à l'Assemblée Nationale du Bénin pour la promotion de la gouvernance participative et les droits de l'homme	Benin	153,414
European Union	Renforcement de la culture démocratique des acteurs politiques	Burundi	456,353
European Union	Supporting the Ethiopian Political Parties Dialogue for political reform	Ethiopia	692,158
European Union	Pro-DEMOS: Partidos políticos hondureños más inclusivos, transparentes y democráticos	Honduras	306,464
European Union	REACH for Democracy	Multiple	93,247
European Union (via ECES)	Enhanced support to democratic governance in Jordan	Jordan	197,697
European Union (via International IDEA)	STEP2 Democracy - Support to electoral processes and democracy in Myanmar phase II	Myanmar	455,696
Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Improving the oversight role of the Mozambican Parliament and Provincial Assemblies in extractive industries sector	Mozambique	17,458
Global Human Rights Fund	Instituto 25A	Guatemala	2,459
Global Partnership for Multiparty Democracy (GPMD)	Secretariat services for GPMD	International lobby and advocacy	1,069
Instituto para Democracia Multipartidária (IMD Mozambique)	Reimbursement costs visit	Mozambique	10,581
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands	Dialogue for Stability - Inclusive politics in fragile settings	Multiple	3,008,762
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	Strategic Partnership - Conducive environments for effective policy influencing: the role of political parties and parliaments	Multiple	6,537,632
Misión de observación Electoral	Protección de liderazgos para una democracia incluyente	Colombia	45,753
ONU Mujeres	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	8,332
Open Society Policy Center	Support the NIMD's work in El Salvador	El Salvador	10,732
Open Society Policy Center	Support the NIMD's work on citizen participation in Guatemala	Guatemala	38,848
Plan Internacional	Servicios profesionales por diseño, validación y facilitación de curso virtual sobre influencia y liderazgo a jóvenes en El Salvador, Guatemala y Perú	El Salvador	3,148
Foundation Pluralism	Training politician leaders of Guatemala	Guatemala	54,705
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	Open Parliament Project	Guatemala	458,705
UN Peace Building Fund (PBF) (via UNDP)	Youth LAB (Leaders politiques pour l'avenir du Burundi): Empowering Young women and men to participate in Burundi's political parties	Burundi	150,715
Total			13,295,142

