Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy

Annual Report 2020

Dialogue for Stability (DfS) Programme

June 2021

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1. Introduction

This document presents the 2020 Annual Report for the programme 'Dialogue for Stability: Inclusive politics in fragile settings' (DfS), which aims to contribute to open and accessible political systems, and the legitimacy and responsiveness of political actors in Burundi, Ukraine, Tunisia, Jordan and Colombia, with pilot programmes in the MENA region (since 2019) and Venezuela (2020). In addition, the programme invests in deepening NIMD's knowledge base, skill set and capacity on: working in fragile and conflict-affected settings; interparty dialogue; capacity strengthening; political culture; and gender equality and inclusion. Furthermore, the programme aims to stimulate new thinking about participatory democracy; explore programmatic and political innovation in programme countries; and further diversify NIMD's funding base.

The year 2020 was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought programme implementation to a near-complete stop during the second quarter. At the request of the MFA, NIMD embarked on a programme-wide analysis of the direct effects of the crisis on the political contexts in which we work, and on the interests, incentives and power relations of the actors we work with.

As part of NIMD's internal Mid-Year Review 2020, we therefore asked all the country teams (NIMD country offices and local partners) taking part in the DfS programme to conduct a COVID-19 crisis analysis. The objective was to: (i) understand the impact of the crisis on the political contexts in all programme countries; and (ii) review the impact on the programme's current pathways of change for the programme and assess what results we could still realistically achieve in 2020. The analysis conducted resulted, to a large extent, in the confirmation that the results could still be met, provided some minor adjustments be made to the Annual Plan for the remainder of the programme. These adjustments were approved by the MFA in October 2020.

This report presents a selection of programme country highlights, based on interventions implemented by NIMD country offices and partners in 2020 (Section 2). It also provides an overview of the interventions implemented under the programme's Knowledge & Innovation agenda (Section 3), as well as Organizational Development (Section 4), including Fundraising & Position and Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation.

As 2020 is the final year of the DfS programme, this report also summarizes the findings of the Final Evaluation of the programme, conducted by Ecorys in the first half of 2021. It further analyses the contribution of the programme to the overall objectives identified in the Theory of Change (ToC) during the five-year period, and reflects on the main challenges and lessons learned (Section 5).

Finally, this report provides a brief financial overview (Section 6), the detailed Financial Report being presented in Annex A. The final measurements of intermediate outcome indicators and outcome indicators are also presented in Annexes B and C. Human Interest Stories on Colombia and Tunisia are presented in Annex D.

2. Country Programmes

2.1 Burundi

The political context in Burundi was characterized by the preparation and organization of the General Elections (municipal, parliamentary and presidential), held on 20 May 2020. The space for civil society organizations to contribute to the organization and monitoring of the 2020 elections was drastically limited by the Electoral Commission (CENI). As a result, the planning of NIMD's partner, the Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP) around the electoral process had to be adjusted, focusing mainly on consultations and monitoring visits.

Despite these difficulties, BLTP was able to work at sub-national level, for instance by organizing a series of multi-actor meetings, bringing together the various stakeholders at subnational level, within six provinces of the country. The participants were provincial administrators (police, army, justice), provincial party leaders, leaders of catalyst groups trained at provincial level, civil society organizations and young people trained under the YOUTH LAB project. The meetings served as a platform for young people to present and discuss their plans on setting up community development projects. These plans were devised as a result of previous trainings organized by BLTP on youth entrepreneurship, the economic aspects of self-employment and how to strengthen political positioning.

2.2 Colombia

In 2020, NIMD Colombia continued to advocate for political and electoral reforms. For example, NIMD Colombia supported a debate on the Electoral Act, to discuss the adoption of parity and universality in electoral lists. This contribution started with an evaluation of the results from previous reforms, which led to the conclusion that they have not achieved their purposes in terms of equality. In the same way, NIMD supported the Political Reform debate on the adoption of Parity, Alternation and Universality in all electoral lists

To prevent and mitigate political violence in Colombia, NIMD launched the report "A Country without leaders is not a Country" which shines a spotlight on the violence that the country is going through, especially violence perpetrated against political, social, and communal leaders. The report emphasizes the impact of this violence on both communities and the country, especially in rural zones. It also contains recommendations for the Government, including adopting the necessary measures to ensure protection mechanisms are extended beyond individuals to communities; promoting work networks to share good practices and experiences of leadership; and training, and education for the communities in the most affected territories, among others.

NIMD Colombia also promoted the participation of citizens in decision-making structures. One example is a platform for citizen dialogue with Bogota Council. This platform promotes citizen participation through proposals, votes, prioritization of issues, support for causes, and surveys around pertinent issues for citizens. The first time it was implemented, citizens had the chance to rank proposals, choosing from topics such as security in public transportation, security during the pandemic, wetlands policy, mental health during the pandemic, economic recovery and unemployment, among others. The virtual consultation was open for two days and 897 citizens participated. The winning proposal was to hold a debate to scrutinize Bogota Council's wetlands policy. .

2.3 Tunisia

In a difficult political context, notably marked by the resignation of the Prime Minister and the establishment of a new Government in the second semester of the year, NIMD's partner, the *Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales* (CEMI), faced difficulties in conveying its Multiparty Dialogue Platform on a regular basis. However, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 related restrictions, CEMI was able to fully roll-out the curriculum of the Tunis School of Politics (TSoP), including the two levels of classes for young political party representatives, as well as TSoP's course for executive members of political parties.

In order to complement its work with Tunisia's MPs through the Parliamentary Academy, CEMI piloted a new class for Parliamentary Assistants in 2020. This class targeted alumni of CEMI's Tunis School of Politics from all the political parties represented in Tunisia's National Parliament. The Parliamentary Assistants participated in a series of eight training sessions on various topics, such as parliamentary procedures, the functioning of parliamentary committees, and drafting reports and amendments. The Parliamentary Assistants are now better equipped to assist the MPs, through their political groups, in performing their function.

2.4 Ukraine

As a result of the five-year democracy education programme in Ukraine, NIMD and its partner the Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD) succeeded in establishing a strong foothold in the country, gaining recognition with local stakeholders as a credible actor in democracy support. This was achieved by implementing five Democracy Schools in Kyiv, Odesa, Poltava, Dnipro and Lviv. These schools aimed to improve the democratic capacities and skills of activists on a regional level.

Amid the global health crisis and the suspension of face-to-face activities, EECMD was able to continue carrying out Democracy School activities across Ukraine in a timely manner. Using the best online tools available, EECMD swiftly transitioned all its activities to the online modality in the second half of the year. The organization adjusted the 2020 Democracy School's Second Round Cycle to a digital learning format, as well as organizing multiple webinars, online discussions and roundtables involving Democracy School students and graduates, local political parties, civil society actors and activists. By the end of the 2020 study cycle, another 130 students had graduated from an EECMD Democracy School.

2.5 Jordan

Through the Jordan School of Politics (JSoP), NIMD organized a total of 15 training sessions for a targeted group of politically motivated youth. JSoP provides young people from across Jordan's political spectrum with knowledge and skills to enhance their political participation. It is about sharing knowledge between aspiring young politicians in the country and helping them to learn from each other's experiences. As part of their training, participants prepared a number of policy papers, which show the advocacy skills they have developed. These skills will help them to empower youth

participation to express their views. This booklet (in Arabic) contains the best six papers, selected by a panel of judges, on various topics such as decentralization and political party financing.

NIMD Jordan organized a series of political debates in the lead-up to the 2020 parliamentary elections, in partnership with one 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 parliamentary elections took place in Amman and Zarqa governorates. The candidates covered topics like the environment, health, unemployment, gender, education and public transport.

2.6 MENA Region

Building on the success of the MENA regional programme in 2019, a second edition of the programme was held in 2020, with young politicians from Jordan and Tunisia. The programme included three main components: A Jordan module focusing on Knowledge, a Tunisia module focusing on skills, and a Netherlands module with a combination of both. This last module was organized online due to COVID-19 travel restrictions: participants from Jordan and Tunisia were able to interact with representatives from the City Council of Delft on their role and responsibilities, discuss the transition from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy in the Netherlands with experts, and attend a training workshop on negotiation skills.

2.7 Venezuela

NIMD organized the first edition of the Venezuelan Democracy School in 2020, held virtually. The curriculum focused on the municipal level, involving young political party representatives from three different municipalities of the Caracas metropolitan area (Chacao, Baruta and El Hatillo).

The training modules aimed to provide negotiation skills to participants, and highlight the importance of leadership at the local level as a fundamental axis for Venezuela's development. The Democracy School resulted in a change in perspective of the participants, with deepened recognition of the need for dialogue and understanding between the different actors of the political system (political parties, civil society, municipal councils, mayors, etc.) in order to improve responsiveness to the needs of their community. Participants understood the great importance of taking on the challenge of local/municipal leadership in the context of a country that has faced a serious closing of democratic space at the national level.

3. Knowledge & Innovation

Throughout the last five years, the DfS programme has supported the knowledge and innovation components of NIMD significantly. This has allowed not only NIMD The Hague but also the wider network of both DfS country programmes and other NIMD programming to benefit from increased knowledge production, exchange visits and mutual learning.

The knowledge component aimed to enhance knowledge specifically on fragile settings as well as providing overall knowledge support for inclusive democracies, based on NIMD's approach, which targets system-, actor- and, culture-level change. The original plans under this component were highly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Several of the knowledge and learning events or exchanges that had been planned to bring together the 'working in fragile and conflict affected settings' agenda could not take place. On the other hand, the rapid development of country scans on

the impact of Corona-related measures on democracy and our programming, is indicative of the way NIMD responded to the new situation. The new reality also led to several online training moments and expert sessions on, for example, the core theme related to dialogue and trust-building. This allowed the knowledge and innovation programming to deliver some key outputs contributing to the long-term outcome described below. Also, since a lot of time and effort were put into developing the proposals for the new 'Power of Voices' civil society framework, the year served as a bridge. It was an opportunity to take stock of key lessons and gaps and to take these along in the new programme development.

3.1 Knowledge in fragile settings

As one of the last international visits of the year, in early 2020, NIMD and IMD Mozambique organized an exchange visit, whereby RENAMO, the former-rebel–group-turned-political-party in Mozambique, visited Colombia to learn from the country's Peace Process. A focus was placed on Colombia's experience surrounding the conversion of the FARC from an armed movement to a civic political party. One of the similarities between RENAMO and the FARC is that, in addition to their political wing, they are both still struggling with an armed wing intent on taking up arms again. The exchange led to the development of a new programme component to support RENAMO's successful conversion to a fully civic political party by focusing on strengthening dialogue skills among the party's leadership. This will contribute to shaping a new programme with political parties in Mozambique, in the new context of the new Peace Agreement signed in August 2019. The new Power of Dialogue partnership programme will continue to build on this.

Regarding the 'trust-building between political rivals' theme, we organized a training course on Conflict Resolution and Mediation for staff around the world, in partnership with international experts Result Mediation. In addition, we held a training on inclusive political dialogue based on NIMD staff's experiences. In addition, several online events around dialogue were held, including presentations by the Dialogue Advisory Group, and by NIMD programme staff and experts, for the benefit of the wider network. All these insights and exchanges were subsequently used in the drafting process for the new Power of Dialogue programme, where NIMD is the thematic lead on this subject in the consortium.

3.2 Knowledge & Innovation

The main knowledge agenda for NIMD relates to the three change levels of the ToC (system, actor, culture). These, in turn, relate to the main instruments of dialogue, capacity support and democracy education respectively, although the relationship is multidimensional and not simply linear as for instance the process of facilitating a dialogue, also contributes to a political culture that works on the basis of democratic values.

In addition to the trust-building work described above, a thematic paper on NIMD's approach to dialogue and trust-building was produced, along with a related how-to note. This supported knowledge uptake for all partners using online presentations and the Knowledge Hub. This also supported the joint development (co-creation) process in the consortium for the new Power of Dialogue programme.

The planned work on supporting policy-based parties through strategic planning could not take place, but there was an interesting online learning event around the '*MonElu*' app to connect citizens and elected council members in Mali. This was based on the experiences with this app during the innovation pilot in one of the city areas of Bamako (Commune V).

The programming of Democracy Schools around the world had to be adapted, with a new focus on assisting all schools to adjust to an online teaching approach. Although part of the objective of our Democracy Schools is to build interpersonal trust, which is difficult to achieve via online sessions, the shift by most ongoing schools to an online platform ensured basic knowledge and skills, at least, could be transferred just as basic interactions between participants.

One of the key deliverables from recent years of DfS programming is the new Political Economy Analysis (PEA) approach. In order to facilitate the uptake of the new approach by all NIMD country programmes during the inception phases of the new cycle, a Process Guide and visual support document were developed. These explain the approach and ensure quality adherence. At the start of the new programming cycle and Multi-Annual Plan 2020-2025, this PEA approach will be applied in all NIMD country programmes.

3.3 Gender equality and inclusion

On the theme of women's political participation, the Gender Roadmap for Inclusive Political Parties (GRIP) has been the main product designed to complement NIMD's approach. The GRIP is a method to allow political parties to become aware of any barriers that limit women's participation within their own party, and offers ways to pull down these barriers. The GRIP offers concrete steps for parties to engage party cadres in a self-assessment of the inclusiveness of internal procedures; promote ownership of the resulting analysis and the process of addressing the identified barriers; and provide executive leadership with a structured pathway to overcome these barriers. It is now part of both the LEAP4Peace approach under the Women, Peace and Security framework, as well as the Power of Dialogue approach on a country level.

NIMD itself updated and rolled-out the new Gender Policy for all our offices. The policy address the core values and minimal standards related to gender equality both in our work as well as in our institutional set-up.

3.4 COVID response

Several knowledge initiatives were undertaken to adapt to the new situation and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. These included online expert sessions on interparty dialogue during COVID; experience-sharing sessions on crisis responses in the NIMD network; and the development of a COVID crisis response analysis tool that examined the key variables affecting political actors and systems across all programme countries. Based on these analyses we conducted the Mid-Year Review process and presented the findings at online events.

As for facilitating the debate on the linkages between democracy and government measures around the world, we launched a #NeverLockdownDemocracy web series and hashtag. This series of online articles featured voices from across the NIMD network, who explored how to respond to the pandemic while continuing our work to protect democracy. A total of 20 articles (blogs, opinion pieces and statements) were published as part of this series. The articles have performed well. Most of them appeared among the most-viewed website content of the year.

4. Organizational Development

4.1 Fundraising & Positioning

Specific positioning activities included the development of a Vice Versa Democracy Special Edition magazine and related launch event. In this special publication, we looked at the fundamentals of democracy, showing why it deserves our constant attention. Around 100 participants registered for the follow-up event in The Hague in February 2020. In addition, we invested in relations with the Swedish MFA and Swedish ambassador in the Netherland who presented Sweden's Drive for Democracy approach. Outreach to the Dutch Ministry of the Interior led to explorations and a project in St. Eustatius, to be expanded in 2021. By becoming member of the Breed Mensenrechten Overleg (BMO), we enlarged relations within the Dutch MFA, as well as with Parliament by meeting with members of the foreign affairs committee and by inviting an MP for a lecture.

NIMD participated in the online RightsCon conference, a global high-level event, where we organised a break-out session on the challenges for democracy in Central America.

In addition to this, NIMD issued statements on the importance of key democratic principles during and after the COVID-19 outbreak (April 2020), on the situation in Belarus and related to the #NeverLockdownDemocracy series described above (see section 3.3).

In June 2020, NIMD joined forces with more than 500 political and civil leaders, Nobel Laureates and pro-democracy institutions to sign an open letter to #DefendDemocracy. The global media impact was high, including reports by Reuters, the French global News Agency (AFP), New York Times, El País, Politico, CNN, Al Jazeera, Le Monde, Le Figaro, Hindustan Times, Jakarta Post, la Nación and Voice of America. In the Netherlands, the initiative was covered by NRC, NOS and Radio 4.

As part of the European Partnership of Democracy, NIMD and other democracy support organizations from around the world set out four different possible political scenarios after COVID-19. These scenarios are based on current observations and trends. We are using the analysis in our engagements with civil society groups, government administrations, citizens, academics and journalists, in order to establish long-term recommendations for democracy support in the future. NIMD organized a round table for policymakers at the MFA to present and discuss these different scenarios.

At the end of the year, we kicked off research into how our stakeholders and target audiences perceive NIMD and our work. A long list of international counterparts were asked to complete a survey, followed by in-depth interviews. The aim is to get insight in NIMD's image around the world, among donors and peers alike, and understand whether investments in positioning over recent years have indeed contributed to increasing the organization's standing. We expect the final results to be delivered in the coming weeks and will also organize a session to present them to the MFA.

As for fundraising, of course, most energy went into obtaining and expanding on the full proposals for the MFA contracts under the Power of Voices framework. But, in addition, we managed to attract new funding in Mali (EU), El Salvador (OSF, UN PBF), Honduras (EU), Colombia (SIDA), Iraq (NL Embassy and UNDP), and bridge funding for the Venezuela programme (NDI). There was also a proposal developed for the National Postcode Lottery (rejected) and for the UN Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund – Rapid Response Window (awarded). The investment in fundraising support in The Hague, the

development of new strategic relations, and more close synchronization with positioning efforts, directly contributed to the increased share of new funding.

4.2 Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

In 2020, NIMD's PME team focused on further operationalizing the recommendations from the programme's Mid-Term Review, including working with actor-based pathways of change, adding quality dimensions to our results framework, and using Outcome Harvesting as a monitoring and evaluation method. In addition, NIMD conducted regular indicator-based results monitoring, collected human interest stories and provided capacity support to NIMD's in-country partners. PME's main activities were:

1. <u>Continued capacity building for partners and country offices</u>

NIMD's PME team provided support for data collection, data analysis and reporting of the end-of-programme outcome indicator measurements. These end-term measurements allowed insight into the progress made on the outcome level since the start of the programme. In addition, the team continued to consolidate intermediate outcome indicator measurements, using harmonized compulsory indicators that can be aggregated across countries. Support was also provided to NIMD's country teams to further operationalize and review the actor-based pathways of change for (strategic) programme planning.

2. <u>Innovative approaches to result measurement</u>

In 2020, NIMD continued to identify and collect human interest stories, further refining the methodology by linking these to the new actor-based pathways of change and Outcome Harvests, triangulating the stories told, and further extending the media platforms for communication so that broader audiences can be reached.

NIMD also continued the process, started in 2018, of developing indicators and tools for measuring the level of trust within an interparty dialogue. The research, carried out in Myanmar in 2019, informed the development of a model for measuring interparty trust. The model was refined in 2020, while operational and measurement tools were also tested.

Finally, Outcome Harvesting was rolled out as a monitoring approach to capture the early signs of change in NIMD's country programmes more effectively.

3. <u>Institutional PME strengthening</u>

The NIMD PME team developed and implemented templates and standards for reporting activities. These are designed to better capture aspects of our work in accordance with the recommendations of the programme's Mid-Term Review and gender-mainstreaming study. This improved the indicator measurements and enabled us to demonstrate the effectiveness of our work in more detail and on a more qualitative level.

4. <u>End-of-programme outcome measurement</u>

During the second half of 2020, all DfS country teams carried out end-term outcome indicator measurements. The PME team assessed the progress of the programme on the outcome level by comparing baseline, mid-term and end-term measurements (see Annexes B and C).

5. Overall programme results

5.1 Final evaluation

After the DfS programme ended in 2020, NIMD commissioned Ecorys at the beginning of 2021 to conduct an external final evaluation to assess the effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency of the programme, and the robustness of its ToC. Additionally, the evaluation looked into three other key characteristics of the programme: the implementation of the Knowledge and Innovation agenda; NIMD's strategy on fundraising and positioning, as described in the DfS programme document; and various aspects related to adaptive programming and internal learning. The final evaluation report will be delivered to DSH before 1 July – and we can already highlight some of the draft findings and conclusions here.

The evaluation concludes that the DfS programme has been effective overall in achieving results that are linked to the outcome areas identified in programme documents. Interventions aimed at facilitating interparty and multi-stakeholder dialogue were found to be effective in fostering relationships between representatives of opposing parties, and promoting dialogue and peaceful resolution methods. Training and capacity-building activities have been effective in strengthening parties' organizational capacities, with some differences identified between programme countries,. Finally, the Democracy Schools, implemented across DfS programme countries have been effective in enhancing participants' understanding and knowledge of political systems; transmitting the values of dialogue and peaceful coexistence; and fostering increased interaction across party lines, as well as with other relevant actors in the political ecosystem. The DfS programme has also provided an effective opportunity to learn more about which approaches do and do not work in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS), and draw cross-country comparisons on the enabling and inhibiting factors for success for each type of intervention implemented by NIMD. Contextual challenges linked to working in FCAS, and the related use of adaptive programming by NIMD, have meant that the outcomes originally planned have not always been achieved.

The evaluation also found that more can be done to systematically incorporate gender in NIMD's interventions. There is general attention paid to including gender quotas for participation in Democracy Schools; including elements of gender and inclusivity in the curricula; and highlighting success stories of women. However, limited steps are taken to ensure meaningful (i.e. impactful) participation of women in activities. More can be also be done to ensure overarching learning by NIMD on gender, including gender approaches in FCAS.

5.2 Programme results

The evaluation found that, overall, the DfS programme has been effective in achieving the outcomes formulated in the ToC. More specifically, the following results have been recorded on the system, actor and culture levels.

System level

Interventions aimed at facilitating interparty and multi-stakeholder dialogues were found to be effective in establishing and fostering relationships between representatives of opposing parties;

promoting conflict mediation and dialogue skills; and promoting peaceful conflict-resolution methods. In some cases, the dialogues facilitated have led to the formulation of joint policy statements, or the adoption of relevant legislative acts, therefore contributing to more inclusive policy development. Electoral reforms for more inclusive and just elections is another planned system level outcome of the DfS programme.

For example, between 2016 and 2020, member parties of the dialogue platform in Tunisia signed: a joint statement on the need to accelerate the ratification of the law on decentralization (2017); the journal of local communities and a charter on the electoral climate for local elections (2018), both submitted to Parliament; a highly praised charter for loyal electoral competition (2019).

Actor level

Training and capacity-building activities with political parties have been effective in strengthening the organizational capacities of parties, with some differences identified between programme countries. Differences in the level of effectiveness across countries are also dependent on the respective political systems, as systems which remain closed (e.g. Jordan and Burundi) prevent the effective functioning of parties, even when their capacities have been strengthened. The trainings have also been found to contribute to improving parties' understanding of their national political system and of their role and positioning within that system.

NIMD Colombia provided support to an innovative initiative to strengthen transparency within political parties. . An app entitled 'Transparent political organizations: Step-by-step' was developed and launched at a multiparty event. This app aims to facilitate the implementation of Law on Transparency and Information Access. By using the self-assessment tool included in the app, and attending three NIMD workshops, the *Alianza Verde* party was able to formulate a transparency improvement plan. The self-assessment was later carried out by six other political parties as part of workshops on transparency organized by NIMD. As a result, the participating parties agreed to produce improvement plans, building on the recommendations received. Out of these six parties, NIMD Colombia, reports that four have continued to improve their information-management practices.

Culture level

The Democracy Schools implemented across DfS programme countries have been effective in enhancing participants' understanding and knowledge of political systems, including their national system; strengthening soft skills and transmitting the values of dialogue and peaceful coexistence; and fostering increased interaction across party lines, as well as with other relevant actors in the political ecosystem (e.g. civic actors). In some cases, the schools have led to the establishment of groups of alumni who take the lead in the implementation of their own projects and activities; in other cases, alumni have felt encouraged and enabled to run in local or national elections, often with success.

 Examples of these results can be found across all DfS programme countries. For instance, in Tunisia, the 2018 Municipal Elections saw 61 of the 400 alumni running as candidates, out of which 27 were elected; in the parliamentary elections of 2019, 20 political parties included alumni in their lists, and one presidential candidate was also a TSoP graduate. Amongst the alumni elected as MPs, those interviewed as part of the TSoP final evaluation indicated that participation in the schools had strengthened their election campaigns. Overall, participants reported a better understanding of

politics – both in general and in relation to the Tunisian context; strengthening of soft skills; and increased interaction across party lines and with civil society.

In Ukraine, Democracy School students initiated a number of projects, including promoting women's empowerment in politics, encouraging young people to vote, conducting training on democratization issues, and creating study programmes on politics in Ukraine. Four alumni of the Odesa and Poltava Democracy Schools also succeeded in running for the 2020 local elections and became deputies of their *Hromadas* (communities).

5.3 Challenges & lessons learned

A number a challenges and lessons learned are identified in the final evaluation. To name just two here:

1. To ensure increased effectiveness of interventions, NIMD (country staff and local partners) should better take into account election cycles and the related challenges (limited availability of political parties, etc) so that these are factored into the planning and leveraged as opportunities to promote NIMD's work. Also, the programmes should work more towards ensuring a) participation of the ruling party; and b) participation of the correct target group (i.e. party leadership and not regular members) in activities, including through the maintenance of formal (e.g. establishment of focal points within institutions) and informal contacts (regular bilateral conversations). In cases where formal platforms for dialogue are established, NIMD should continue to foster interaction outside the platform as well, with a view to ensuring the sustainability of results.

2. With regards to NIMD's internal learning, the evaluation recommends better placing internal learning as an organization-wide priority for further organizational development. NIMD's Knowledge and Strategic Relations team must lead the work towards formalising the learning process. Support from NIMD leadership and management is paramount for these efforts to be successful. As part of formalizing the learning process, the evaluation recommends specifying the following components or steps in this process: establish a clear mandate on organizational learning; develop a learning agenda; define the (annual) learning programme; implement learning initiatives; communicate learning outcomes.

6 Financial overview

The Financial report (Annex A) shows a total budget expenditure of **€3,073,643** against the total approved budget of €4,159,268 leading to a budget depletion of **74%**, with a total underspending of **€1,085,625.**

As the underspending of previous years is brought forward each year, this means the overall cumulative underspending is also €1,085,379. This means an underspending of **7.2%** based on the total budget (2016-2020) of €15,001,230.

	Budget	Actuals		
2016	€ 2.843.469	€ 2.073.743		
2017	€ 2.919.429	€ 2.631.699		
2018	€ 2.990.188	€ 2.836.477		
2019	€ 3.224.185	€ 3.300.043		
2020	€ 3.023.959	€ 3.073.643		
Total	€ 15.001.230	€ 13.915.605	€ 1.085.625	7,2%

In the last column of the Financial Report (Annex A), explanations are provided for deviations of more than 10% in country programmes and cross-cutting programmes, as compared to the approved 2020 budget. Explanations are also included for budget-line-level deviations of more than 25%.

Annex A - Financial Report
Annex B - Overview of intermediate indicator measurements
Annex C – Overview of outcome indicator measurements
Annex D - Human Interest Stories (Tunisia and Colombia)