Evaluation of Dutch support to Capacity Development

The case of the Netherlands Institute

for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

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Preface

'Development always, somewhere, assumes a preferred culture or value system, or way of doing things. This is implied in the very notion of intervening in others' processes. We can mitigate this, but we will never get rid of it entirely, even when we operate out of an alternative development paradigm'.
Allan Kaplan, *The Development of Capacity*

This observation by Allan Kaplan takes us to the heart of the matter addressed in this evaluation, i.e. can outsiders promote the rule of law by supporting the development of multiparty democracy? In the Netherlands, support for political parties in the context of international cooperation dates back to the mid-1990s. In that period, it was first argued that the multi-party system in the Netherlands could be of major relevance to the strengthening of democracy in developing countries. Subsequently, in 2000, the majority of Dutch political parties established the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Good governance and multi-party democracy were recognized as crucial factors for social development and, ultimately, poverty reduction.

The present evaluation aims to provide insights into the operations of NIMD and the results achieved by its Southern partners. The research for this evaluation was conducted in a manner that was different from the standard methodological approach, which would have been to take NIMD's policy and its implementation as a starting point. Instead, it was decided to start from the processes and results at the level of the partners, and only then to assess these realities against NIMD's policy theory.

The evaluation methodology was based on the theoretical framework developed by Baser and Morgan (2008), which allowed us to identify elements of capacity change and to indicate the extent to which these elements help to achieve development objectives. It has been particularly challenging to take elements from this framework and to operationalize them from the specific viewpoints of the partner organizations. In fact, this has been a process of trial and error. It proved far from straightforward, for the Southern partners and other parties involved, to assume an independent position and to take their own insights, targets and approaches as the starting points.

This evaluation of NIMD, which covers the period between 2006 and 2010, was one of seven studies carried out in the broader context of an extensive evaluation of the effects of capacity development activities financed through Dutch development organizations. The synthesis report of this study will be published in early 2011. In the context of the NIMD evaluation, an additional institutional evaluation was conducted, as required in the funding agreement. Thus the purposes of this evaluation were twofold: to provide information about and to account for the activities carried out by NIMD using public funds, and to draw lessons that could contribute to future policy development in this highly complex field.

The evaluation shows that changes to a political system take a long time and that external capacity strengthening efforts can play only a modest role in this process. Most changes can be attributed to internal circumstances and developments. Nevertheless, external support occasionally produces significant effects that the political parties involved consider relevant.

On behalf of IOB, Hans Slot was responsible for this evaluation, in cooperation with the members of the IOB evaluation team, Piet de Lange, Rafaëla Feddes and Eric Kamphuis. The evaluation's principal researcher was Stan Bartholomeeussen of the Belgian research institute ACE Europe. For the case studies institutional development, Guatemala, Kenya and Mali, he was assisted by Corina Dhaene, Luis Samandu, An Vranckx, George William Kasumba and Augustin Loada, respectively. Reports on these individual case studies are available on request from IOB.

The study was supervised by an external reference group consisting of three independent experts, Stephen Ellis (African Studies Centre, Leiden), Thomas Carothers (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) and Kees Biekart (International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague) in addition to NIMD and the policy department of the Ministry (DMH). IOB evaluators Rita Tesselaar and Paul de Nooijer acted as internal advisors.

The report could not have been produced without the commitment of both the Southern 'political factions' and NIMD to cooperate with the evaluation team. Their efforts are highly appreciated. Final responsibility for the content of this report rests solely with IOB.

Prof. Ruerd Ruben
Director, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department

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Acronyms

ANC	Agenda Nacional Compartida
CC	core capability
CCAD	Central American Commission for Environment and Development (Guatemala)
CD	capacity development
CMD	centre for multiparty democracy
CMDID	Centre Malien pour le dialogue inter-partis et la démocratie
CMD-K	Centre for Multiparty Democracy Kenya
CSO	civil society organization
DGIS	Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPD	European Partnership for Democracy Support
FPPP	Foro Permanente de Partidos Politicos (Guatemala)
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IEA	Institute for Economic Affairs (Ghana)
IMEP	Instituto Multipartidario para la Educación Politica
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MENA	Middle East and North Africa Programme (NIMD)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	non-governmental organization
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)
NiZA	Stichting voor het Nieuwe Zuid-Afrika
OAS	Organization of American States
PACO	polical advisor
PSRP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
ToR	terms of reference
TMF	Theme-based Co-financing Regulation (the Netherlands)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WARPP	West African Regional Programme of Political Parties

Summary

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the contributions of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) to develop the capacity of its partners, and the main conclusions of the institutional evaluation of the organization.

Following an institutional evaluation in 2005, NIMD agreed with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs that a second institutional evaluation would be conducted in the course of 2009. This evaluation of NIMD is one of seven evaluations of Dutch support for capacity development, based on evidence from case studies, conducted in 2009–10. The conclusions of this and the six other evaluations will contribute to a better understanding of capacity development processes, and assist the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Dutch NGOs in the formulation of policies on capacity development in the future.

The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

The NIMD was established in 2000 by seven Dutch political parties. These parties are involved in the NIMD's governance structures (the board and advisory council), second staff to NIMD to function as political advisors and to liaise with their parties, and provide general support and technical and political expertise to the programmes.

NIMD's mandate is formulated in its statutes as follows: *'the mission of the NIMD as an organization of Dutch political parties is to support the process of democratization in young democracies by strengthening political parties as the pillars of parliamentary democracy in order to help create a well-functioning, sustainable, pluralistic system of party politics'*. NIMD has translated this mandate into four objectives:
- strengthening multiparty political systems;
- supporting the institutional development of political parties;
- improving the relationship between political parties and civil society organizations; and
- supporting local centres for multiparty democracy (CMDs).

In its multi-annual plan 2007–10, NIMD added three institutional objectives:
- expanding the institutional knowledge and capacity of NIMD and make it accessible to a wider public;
- increasing public support and improving external communication; and
- extending strategic networks and partnership agreements in the programme countries.

NIMD is currently carrying out its second multi-annual programme, and is preparing for a third (2011–15). With an annual budget of approximately €10 million, NIMD currently runs programmes in 17 countries and also manages three regional programmes. NIMD has two local offices (in Guatemala and in Mozambique) and employs around 32 staff members, with a management team of six people. Programme officers with development expertise work together with political advisors in regional teams, supported by junior policy officers and a unit of finance officers. NIMD has established a Communication and Knowledge Centre to promote communication and education.

Evaluation setup

This evaluation aimed to answer the following five questions:
• What changes have taken place in the capacities of NIMD's Southern partners?
• What have been the effects of these changes in the capacity of NIMD's partners on the realization of their development objectives?
• How effective have NIMD's interventions been in strengthening the capacities of its partners?
• What factors explain the level of effectiveness of NIMD's interventions? What lessons can be learned?
• What are the added value of NIMD's mandate, the appropriateness of NIMD's methodology and the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional framework within which the mandate is implemented?

The evaluation questions can be summarized as follows: did the evaluation yield evidence of changes in the capacity of NIMD's Southern partners that have brought them closer to realizing a well-functioning, pluralist system of party politics? How effective has NIMD been in strengthening capacities and realizing its objectives, and what factors have played a role in its success? What lessons have been learned?

Fundamental to the evaluation was its evidence-based approach, taking as a starting point the changes in capabilities as experienced by the Southern partners. The evaluators therefore worked with localized indicators for assessment and defined the unit of analysis in consultation with the Southern partners.

The Southern partners in question are political parties that have received direct support from NIMD through its bilateral programmes and indirect support from NIMD through their involvement in the centres for multiparty democracy (CMDs) in their respective countries. The CMDs are also regarded as Southern partners. Although these centres were established within the framework of the NIMD country programmes, they are local institutions, constituted and owned by the political parties.

This report presents four case studies of NIMD's Southern partners in Guatemala, Mali and Kenya, and the partners involved in the West African Regional Programme of Political Parties (WARPP). The case studies were conducted by a team of consultants (one EU and one regional consultant) during field missions. These are followed by a reconstruction of NIMD's policy on capacity development, and a summary of the findings of the institutional evaluation. The institutional evaluation involved various activities: a desk study of documents relating to the country programmes in Bolivia, Georgia and Mozambique, group and individual interviews with staff members, observations of meetings of NIMD's governance structures and the management team, visits to political parties, Skype interviews with peers, and an e-questionnaire. During the implementation of the evaluation, several feedback sessions were organized involving stakeholders from NIMD and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Main findings

Effectiveness

1) *NIMD's support has been essential for the establishment and evolution of the centres for multiparty democracy (CMDs) in Kenya and Mali. The CMDs are, in turn, crucially important for the development of multiparty democracy in the two countries. The Instituto holandés in Guatemala, although officially an NIMD country office, functions as a CMD and plays an equally important role. Efforts must be made to ensure the sustainability of the CMDs and the Instituto holandés.*

The CMDs and the Instituto holandés are newly established institutions that embody the concept of multiparty dialogue. They are unique, as they function as platforms for political and cross-party dialogue and are privileged interlocutors of the political parties in their process of professionalizing and shaping the democratization processes in the three countries.

The CMDs/Instituto (1) support political parties in developing their institutional capacity, including intra- and inter-party functional capacity, (2) promote multiparty dialogue, and (3) target shortcomings in the political system in order to create an environment in which political parties can operate. With their multi-faceted approach, the CMDs and the Instituto target political parties and parliaments in order to help them to do 'what they are supposed to do', and support their interaction and involvement in political processes. The Instituto holandés in Guatemala, and in particular the CMD in Kenya, also involve civil society organizations.

Since their inception, the CMDs and the Instituto holandés have evolved into reasonably strong organizations owned by political parties. They have, naturally, very strong relations with political parties, they are able to respond in a flexible way to their requests for support, and their programmes are relevant. One of their strengths is their sensitivity to the socio-political climate. One of their weaknesses is that they are not clear about the way their inputs (training, exchange, joint reflection and action) are effective in bringing about change within political parties.

The capability of the CMDs and the Instituto to achieve coherence is under pressure, since they need to attract additional funds that might change their focus. This risk is particularly prominent because the CMDs and the Instituto have not formulated a strategic vision of their longer-term institutional development, or strategies for engaging with civil society or for interacting with other actors in the development community. This lack of strategies complicates their efforts to shift away from their current *ad hoc* approach (seizing opportunities as they arise and focusing on political drivers of change) towards an approach aimed at addressing the ultimate challenge: to bring about political change.

2) Changes at the level of political parties are emerging but fragile, and are observed mainly in relation to their capabilities to deliver on development objectives and to relate.

Many political parties have been able to improve their setup and thus increase their efficiency, but they have also experienced great difficulties in putting new insights into practice. Their contributions to the democratic process are limited. In addition, their financial resource base remains weak and their human resources are inadequate. Political parties that have improved their organizations have advanced the most and have shown a greater readiness and capacity to absorb inputs.

Obviously, it is more difficult to realize change within political parties as they touch the heart of power. NIMD's direct financial support for political parties has been essential for their professionalization. In many cases, this was the first serious institutional support they have received, and it has boosted their confidence. However, NIMD's direct support for political parties has been insufficiently monitored in the past, making it difficult to account for results. Nevertheless, NIMD's support has had little effect on achieving the structural changes within the political parties that are needed to transform them into reliable intermediaries acting between the public, civil society and the state.

Since political parties will not be able to generate their own income, any increases in their capabilities will remain dependent on NIMD support, unless other donors join in (but many are reluctant to fund political parties directly) or existing national funding schemes are extended.

3) Both the CMDs and political parties have been able to contribute to the emergence of multiparty dialogue that has affected national democratic reform processes. Achieving a well-functioning, pluralist system of party politics will take many years, and will depend on a large number of factors over which the parties have no control.

The presence of the CMDs and the Instituto and, in particular, the realization of multiparty dialogue, have resulted in the creation of a multiparty identity in each of the three countries. This identity is beginning to take shape around a common ground for addressing crucial national issues. In Guatemala in particular, it was noticed how working groups are now able to function as laboratories for developing, testing and reconfiguring a new political culture. The common ground approach has fostered meaningful contributions to national reform processes in the three countries.

The contributions made by political parties are less obvious. Increased knowledge, improved setup, and their growing capacity to engage with other parties have resulted in the formulation of strategic plans, more efficient approaches to the functioning of parliament and, occasionally, better articulation of positions. Clear structural changes at the level of political parties, allowing them to become reliable acting between the public, civil society and the state, have not yet been realized. The ideological position of many parties remains unclear, which negatively affects their internal cohesion. Unity is mainly built around personalities or along ethnic lines, and links with wider society remain fragile.

Most parties (except for the left-wing parties in Guatemala) lack a stable social base. Politics still has a public image problem and citizens are not motivated to participate in the public political arena. We can conclude that, in general, the role of political parties as actors in shaping legislative processes remains weak, particularly in Mali and Kenya.

4) NIMD's financial inputs and the local leadership of the CMDs/Instituto have been crucial factors in achieving results.

The changes at the level of the CMDs and political parties can be explained by several factors: (1) financial inputs from NIMD, which is long term and flexible at the programme level, and (2) strong local leadership identified and supported by NIMD, which has a good eye for opportunities to promote change. Other factors that explain NIMD's effectiveness include (3) its general approach, which acknowledges the importance of endogenous capacity development, and its principles of ownership, inclusivity and creating space for local development processes partly explain the positive results of the country programmes, and (4) the favourable context and NIMD's international linkages with peers and other donors. The latter can not be underestimated, as it is essential for the transformation of the traditional sector of democracy support, and for promoting the model of the CMDs as hubs for channelling donor funds.

As a result of all these factors, NIMD has been able to deliver on development objectives that are visible and appreciated both in the field and by external stakeholders. NIMD is genuinely demand driven, dares to take risks, is flexible and respectful of its partners and has adopted an approach that allows space for local actors to manage the processes of change. Generally, NIMD's approach has allowed for the development of home-grown agendas for change in the countries where it works.

NIMD's potential to promote change from a position in the background is real, but its capacity to do this varies, and is depended on the quality of staff and their ability to engage in strategic discussions. This can be noted in the reform of the Mali programme and the actions taken by staff during the post-election violence in Kenya. In general, the capacity of NIMD staff to engage in dialogue with partners is not always guaranteed: they are expected to act as advisors but there is no strategy to support them by developing their advisory skills. The capacity for critical dialogue is particularly important in cases where the local leadership is weak or is not aligned with NIMD's main objectives.

The evaluation found little evidence of the added value of deploying experts from political parties in the Netherlands or other countries.

In recent years, NIMD has paid attention to professionalizing its own programme management. This has put stress on its partners who criticize the growing bureaucracy and the lack of strategic interactions. It will be a challenge for NIMD to achieve an adequate balance between the need for professional project management and for engaging in constructive and critical dialogue with its partners.

5) NIMD's mandate is clear, but this has not been translated into a clear theory of change.

NIMD's mandate has been translated into multi-annual plans that include several objectives. Plans are further detailed in annual plans and contextualized in the country programmes. NIMD has not drawn up specific and explicit policy documents explaining NIMD's view of (1) capacity development, (2) the relations between political society and civil society, or (3) the link between development and support for political parties. Thus, a documented and clear theory of change is not available. This makes it difficult for NIMD staff to manage and monitor programmes with view to higher objectives and in critical dialogue with the CMDs and political parties. Another consequence is that the multi-annual programmes with their numerous objectives are difficult to monitor and results are sometimes difficult to demonstrate.

Efficiency

6) Governance and management issues are putting pressure on NIMD's efficiency.

Even though the results achieved in the three countries suggest that weaker aspects of the operations of NIMD The Hague have not necessarily hampered the partners' ability to function successfully, a number of serious concerns require attention to avoid this happening in the near future.

Information provided to the board for strategic decision making is currently inadequate.
NIMD's current decision-making framework, including its governance structures, executive and deputy director and management, is under pressure and under review. The main challenge is to strengthen the connection between governance and management by improving the provision of information for strategic decision making. This is not to suggest that the hybrid setup of NIMD should change. The hybrid structure is still relevant. It is owned by Dutch political parties that are represented in the governance structure, who provide access to political expertise, and second political advisors to the NIMD office. However, regarding the effectiveness with which Dutch party expertise is mobilized, there is room for improvement. This point has recently been addressed within the organization.

NIMD's coherence is under pressure.
The management of the 17 country programmes requires clear operational guidelines, and staff at the NIMD office in The Hague have indicated that strategic guidance and clear direction are currently insufficient.

NIMD's capacity to learn requires improvement.
The absence of a theory of change, guidelines and operating principles is a serious complication for staff involved in developing and managing the country programmes. The fact that the further development of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system started late is also a major concern in the process of professionalizing the programme management. The establishment of regional teams (2007) and of a communication and knowledge centre have facilitated the dissemination of knowledge to a certain extent,

and examples of learning experiences have been noted. Still, it is questionable whether the learning needs of staff members and of the organization are well covered.

NIMD has demonstrated its capability to adapt, mainly in response to external triggers. However, there is a downside to its sensitivity to external triggers. NIMD has failed to conclude clearly on a number of internal reflection processes, such as on the institutionalization of the CMDs, strategic partnerships and gender policy. In addition, NIMD failed to establish synergy between its various support modalities, ways of operating and the country programmes. NIMD is strong in developing new ideas and programmes, but has found it difficult to deepen existing initiatives, maintain quality control and build up its knowledge base. More adequate responses to internal triggers are needed to enable HQ staff and management to further improve country programme management. An additional concern is the availability of staff who are able to engage in critical dialogue with partners, and challenge them with regard to NIMD's long-term objectives. Staff do not receive adequate training or support to assume an advisory role.

The NIMD lobby to secure more donor funds requires further effort.
NIMD has taken important steps to assist its partners in their efforts to mobilize financial resources from various donors, and to promote cooperation and alliances with international and Dutch NGOs. So far, however, NIMD has not succeeded in mobilizing additional external resources from other donors, many of whom prefer to avoid the risks involved in investing in programmes that provide direct support to political parties.

Lessons learned

Although NIMD has elaborated valid operational plans, this evaluation makes clear that it has not translated its mandate into a theory of change. In practice, implicit strategies do exist, but they have been developed by those involved as they go along in the process. As these implicit strategies are not systematized, they cannot serve as inputs to modify NIMD's overall strategic framework. The systematization of implicit intervention strategies would also make it easier to plan what capacities are needed, and at which specific phase in a process. Effective strategic thinking on how to encourage multiparty democracy is crucial for future programming. The CMDs must be assisted to distinguish clearly between the things they are doing and the things they should be doing.

The formulation of a clear theory of change would make many things easier for NIMD. First, it would ease the process of formulating the multi-annual plans. Some elements of these plans could easily be upgraded to become part of a theory of change. Second, it would make it easier for NIMD to distinguish between policy and strategic processes, and operational processes (implementation of the country programmes), and this is likely to clarify the role of the NIMD board (focusing on priorities and on the theory of change). Third, it would provide a firm basis for the development of clear staff guidelines on how to respond to new opportunities and how to improve country programmes. Finally, it would help to clarify the relationship between democracy support through political parties and development processes.

The following lessons should be considered as inputs in the discussion about NIMD's theory of change and its next multi-annual plan.

Objectives, outcomes and results

1) The effects of external support for political parties are limited.

One cannot reasonably expect far-reaching and quick results. Working with political parties and political systems concerns the heart of power structures, and these tend to have their own and unique mechanisms. This means that reform programmes, even if they are locally owned, will not quickly yield results. Most changes will be contingent on internal forces. Development of political parties is therefore basically an endogenous process to which external support is just one, albeit potentially crucial, input.

2) NIMD's results should be expressed in terms of its contribution to outcomes realized.

It would not be correct to claim that NIMD's programmes have achieved results (outcomes) in terms of specific legislation, such as the Law on Femicide that was approved by the Guatemalan Congress in 2008. Such laws are milestones that are reached after long and complex processes involving many different actors and factors. It is therefore impossible to attribute them directly and exclusively to the activities or other forms of capacity development support provided by NIMD. Furthermore, the terms in which NIMD's objectives are framed do not include the requirement that NIMD as such claim it initiated a specific law. Instead, results should be sought in the extent to which NIMD has supported a number of local protagonists and enabled them to participate in complex processes, ultimately helping them to extend the 'democratic level' of a particular political process.

Strategy

3) An integrated strategy that aims to strengthen a political system as a whole, as well as political parties, still requires specific support to strengthen individual parties.

The effectiveness of NIMD's approach is due to the fact it targets a system with many integrated dimensions: efforts to strengthen political parties cannot be disconnected from the need to also strengthen the system in which political parties operate, as well as the relations between the parties and their constituencies and with society at large. This synergy between complementary components is fundamental to any effort to promote change processes in political parties and political systems. This evaluation has made it clear that the multiparty space can achieve progress more convincingly than individual parties. Still, the dynamics of the latter remain decisive. Bilateral support for individual parties therefore continues to be the evident scenario, as it is most effective in solving problems and promoting the process of change.

NIMD must develop ideas on how to reduce the gap between political parties and wider society (civil society organizations and other societal actors) in most of the programme countries, based, for example, on lessons learned from the best practices in countries such as Kenya. This will certainly generate parallel discussions about the approach of supporting 'political actors of change' and/or 'actors for political change'.

4) Multiparty dialogue: innovation and a demand-driven approach go hand in hand.

With its concept of multiparty dialogue, NIMD has helped to bring innovation to the sector of democracy assistance. NIMD promotes the concept because it embodies the spirit of multiparty democracy and because it is an effective way of encouraging political parties to become more involved in democratic reform processes in their country. Typically, innovation is not on the list of demands of local actors and its introduction as such is therefore not demand driven. However, it provides a solid framework in which endogenous capacity development processes can develop. In Kenya and Mali, NIMD succeeded in creating local ownership of the concept. Its strategy involved supporting strong local leadership and allowing partners to adapt the concept of innovation to their local contexts. Thus far, the institutionalization of multiparty dialogue through the CMDs appears to have worked in different contexts. The main challenge will be to ensure transparency and accountability of the CMDs, in addition to strong local leadership.

5) The 'how' of capacity development is crucial.

The way a donor supports capacity development in partner organizations ('how') is just as important as the kind of intervention it delivers ('what'). Especially for political parties, a broad definition of the concept of capacity development, which goes beyond simply providing training and material support, is required. Participating in training programmes is not enough. Political parties need the capacity to implement the skills they acquire, which requires significant effort. In the three countries visited this still poses a challenge: capacity attained by training cadres, party activists and MPs remains fragile.

6) Dealing with caudillos (individual political party leaders) is crucial.

NIMD's Guatemala programme, as well as those in Mali and Kenya, offer interesting lessons in what can be achieved in contexts that are determined by one-person style politics. This style was recognized as determining in different cases the existing party structure. Although the NIMD programme tended to advocate that politics would be better off without such individuals, they did not insist on or impose change in that direction. The programmes maintained operational relations with these leaders, but adopted a strategy to promote a political environment in which there is increasingly less room for parties led by such personalities, such as by introducing a Political Party Act or registration requirements.

Operation

7) Relationships between NIMD and its mature partners.

In anticipation of their disconnection from NIMD, mature partners (represented, for example, by the executive directors or chairpersons of established CMDs) might be asked to join a worldwide NIMD strategic think-tank.[1] The purpose of this think-tank would be to regularly reflect on long-term strategies to be implemented by the broad multiparty democratic movement that exists around NIMD. It would be valuable if such senior partners were able to share their experiences and views in the context of such a think-tank, advising the NIMD board and management on strategic issues and their long-term vision.

8) Monitoring.

A more sophisticated monitoring system is required in the short term, integrating both the accountability and the learning functions of NIMD and its partners.

Resources

9) Funding for political parties is the weakest aspect of NIMD's approach, and the greatest challenge.

Funding for political parties is crucial and should be provided through home-grown financing schemes. Those lobbying for such schemes must focus on the need to rationalize the political party landscape, which implies that the number of parties may need to be reduced to a level at which national funding schemes can be more effective.

NIMD can be a strategic partner in the ongoing search for home-grown funding through two possible channels: 1) public funding by changing the existing laws on public funding of political parties, and 2) membership resource mobilization, which first and foremost requires the capacity to set up effective systems for mobilizing party members. Political parties therefore need to be able to sell themselves to the public, which is impossible unless they have an identity, an ideology, a society project, a development programme addressing the interests of citizens, a democratic governance structure, etc. In fact, a complete set of new outputs is required, which would strengthen the parties in many ways.

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[1] This think-tank should not replace the NIMD's Partnership Days, which are organized every two years for a group of partners to discuss important issues related to the country programmes. However, the think-tank could certainly be a good forum to prepare for the Partnership Days.

1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Capacity development occupies a prominent place in international development cooperation. The substantial amount of support provided, however, has often not resulted in significant increases in capacity, particularly capacity geared to poverty reduction. This fact was acknowledged in the Accra Agenda for Action of September 2008, which aimed to deepen the implementation of the Paris Declaration and respond to emerging aid effectiveness issues. It confirmed that developing countries need robust capacity – strong institutions, systems and local expertise – if they are to fully own and manage their development processes and to achieve their economic, social and environmental goals.

Capacity development also occupies a prominent place in the implementation of Dutch development cooperation. However, during a consultation organized by IOB in preparation for this evaluation, policy officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dutch NGOs and the private sector commented that there is a lack of clarity about what capacity means and how capacity development works. The Ministry has not issued a policy document outlining a vision of the capacity issue or a manual to guide decisions on capacity development strategies, or approving the funding of programmes and projects. Many Dutch NGOs that focus on capacity development also lack coherent guidance.

The purpose of this evaluation is to respond to the need of the Ministry, Dutch NGOs and their partners in developing countries for information and insights that will contribute to further policy development. Because the Ministry, Dutch NGOs and their partners intend to gain a better understanding of how, and under what circumstances, capacity development support can be effective, this evaluation has focused on understanding and identifying the factors that explain the results of external support.

One single evaluation would not do justice to the wide range of support activities and their diverse contexts. It was therefore decided to adopt a programmatic approach and to ask Dutch NGOs and departments of the Ministry to participate in the evaluation. Consequently, seven separate evaluations have been conducted by the NGOs and the Ministry's Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB). One of these focused on the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD).

1.2 The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

NIMD was founded in 2000 by seven political parties represented in the Dutch Parliament. The organization started with a limited number of activities in 2001 and became operational in 2002. NIMD staff include a mixture of development professionals and party political staff on secondment to and contracted by NIMD. As the owners of NIMD, these political parties also participate in the governance of NIMD (at board and the supervisory council levels) and in the implementation of programmes through the mobilization of party experts.

NIMD evolved from the Stichting voor het Nieuwe Zuid-Afrika (NiZA), which was established by eight Dutch political parties as an innovative funding mechanism for supporting the democratization process in South Africa, in particular by strengthening the country's political parties. The experiences and skills acquired by NiZA played a significant role in the development of NIMD's first multi-annual programme 2003–6, 'Without democracy nobody fares well', funded under the Theme-based Co-financing Regulation (TMF) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For the period 2007–10, the Ministry again funded NIMD's multi-annual programme, 'Political Parties: Pillars of Democracy'. This last funding derives from a new subsidy arrangement decided by the Minister for Development Cooperation on 7 July 2006, 'Political and Parliamentary Cooperation'. Relations with NIMD are managed by the policy department (DMH) of the Ministry. NIMD is currently involved in 17 country programmes and three regional programmes (the Latin American, Eurasia & New Regions and African Regional Programmes). Its annual budget is around €10 million.

1.3   The purposes of the evaluation

Each year, NIMD conducts evaluations of two of its country programmes, and every four years commissions an external institutional evaluation, in line with formal requirements of the subsidy framework, to take stock of progress achieved and to measure (emerging) patterns of impact. As the second institutional evaluation of NIMD, in 2009, coincided with IOB's evaluation of Dutch support for capacity development, NIMD agreed to integrate them into one joint evaluation. To accommodate the objectives of NIMD and those of the Ministry's policy department (DMH) to conduct a full institutional evaluation, IOB agreed to complement the terms of reference for its capacity development evaluation with a number of specific questions related to NIMD's mandate, relevance and organizational structure and functioning. With the integration of the two evaluations, the purposes were twofold: to provide insight into and account for results achieved, and to draw lessons that could inform future policy development.

The learning aspect has been an important objective of this evaluation. Thus, at various stages in the process, the IOB team shared their preliminary findings with staff of NIMD and the policy department of the Ministry in several feedback and joint reflection meetings. The involvement of NIMD board and staff in the process was seen as crucial to ensure the necessary 'buy-in' for the implementation of the expected recommendations, formulated as lessons learned from the evaluation.

1.4   Objectives, key issues and evaluation questions

Capacity development evidence-based evaluation
The general objective of this evaluation is to gain insight into the effectiveness of NIMD's support, to understand how and under what circumstances capacities are developed and how NIMD can provide its support for capacity development more effectively. Through country studies in Guatemala, Mali and Kenya, the evaluators gathered evidence on what is

required to sustain changes in capacity and in outputs and outcomes, as perceived by the partners and local stakeholders. The main questions to be answered were:
- What changes have taken place in the capacity of NIMD's Southern partners?[2]
- What have been the effects of these changes in the capacity of NIMD's partners on the realization of their development objectives, defined as the 'creation of a well-functioning, pluralist system of party politics'?
- How effective have NIMD's interventions been in strengthening the capacity of their partners?
- What factors explain the level of effectiveness of NIMD's interventions? What lessons can be learned?

Institutional evaluation
As mentioned above, a fifth question was added to the ToR for this evaluation, related to the programmatic and institutional development of NIMD over the period 2006–8,[3] drafted as follows: *What is the added value of NIMD's mandate, the appropriateness of its methodology and the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional framework in which this mandate is implemented?*

To ensure alignment with the capacity development evaluation, the evaluators used the same approach for the institutional evaluation (see further below).

1.5 Methodology

Efforts to study the concept of capacity are not often based on the notion of organizations as open systems.[4] This evaluation has applied an open systems approach, which means that capacity development is understood as an endogenous, nonlinear process that is strongly influenced by a range of internal and external factors, of which donor support is just one. Changes in an organization's capacity influence, or interact with, changes at output and outcome levels. An analysis of location-specific circumstances and external and internal factors therefore formed a substantial part of this evaluation: in practice, it meant that for each country/case study, the evaluation framework was adapted to reflect the partners' views of and understanding of capacity and capacity development.

For analytical purposes, the broad concept of capacity can be subdivided into five core capabilities,[5] each of which is, by itself, not sufficient to create capacity. All five core capabilities are strongly interrelated. They provide a basis for assessing a particular situation

[2] For the purposes of this evaluation, NIMD's Southern partners are defined as the centres for multiparty democracy (CMDs) and political parties, local stakeholders and civil society, other donors and Netherlands embassies. NIMD's peers are defined as other party-financing institutions.
[3] Although the TOR define the period for the institutional evaluation from 2006 to 2008, the evaluators also took into account trends and key activities in 2009, in order to have a more complete evaluation report.
[4] European Commission, Europe Aid (2005) *Institutional Assessment and Capacity Development: Why, what and how?*
[5] The capabilities to act and commit, to deliver on development objectives, to relate to external stakeholders, to adapt and self-renew and to achieve coherence.

at a given moment, after which changes in capabilities can be tracked over time in order to analyze how they have developed.

Figure 1 shows the approach that was used both for tracking and discussing changes in capacity and as a framework for the evaluations. Annex 6 of the ToR for this evaluation describes the indicators that define these core capabilities in more detail. Most of these indicators are qualitative in nature, which implies some degree of subjectivity. To try to avoid this subjectivity, the indicators used in the inception report were discussed and calibrated with local stakeholders at start-off workshops in the three countries.
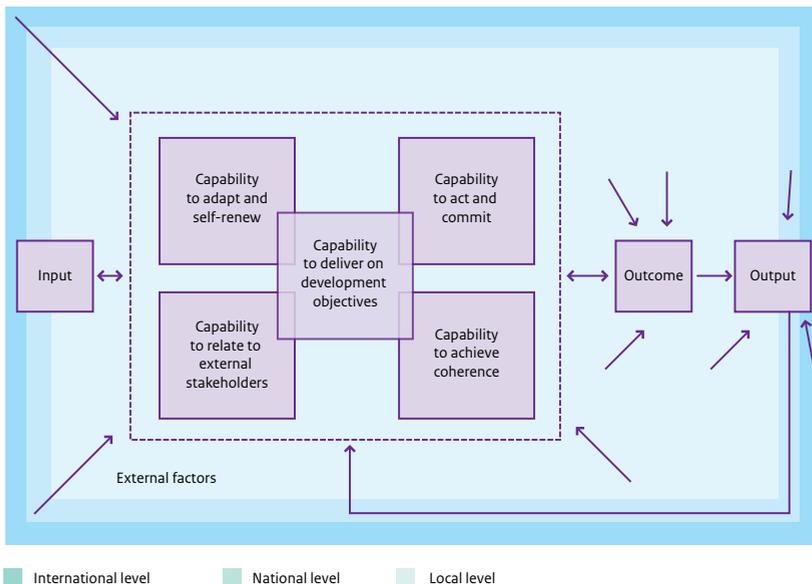
Figure 1. Analytical framework for capacity development.
(Adapted from de Lange, Capacity.org 37, 2009).

The evaluation activities included the following:
- interviews with NIMD staff, members of NIMD's board and supervisory council, representatives of the political parties that constitute NIMD, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NIMD partners and stakeholders in three programme countries (Guatemala, Mali and Kenya);
- focus group discussions with NIMD staff, observations on internal meetings and e-questionnaire surveys among stakeholders;
- interviews with a selection of NIMD's peers;
- desk studies of available documentation, including desk studies of three country programmes (Georgia, Bolivia and Mozambique);
- case studies in three selected countries representing NIMD's partner countries in Africa (French- and English-speaking) and Latin America; and
- visits to partners and stakeholders in the West African Regional Programme (WARP), including visits to Ghana, Mali and Togo to develop this as an additional case study.

Focus and limitations

NIMD was established in 2000, but began its most important activities after 2003. This evaluation therefore focused on the two funding periods 2003–6 and the first years of the period 2007–10, and not the early years. The institutional evaluation examined the period 2006–9, in order to follow up on the first institutional evaluation (2005) and to identify lessons learned.

The evaluators did not take fully on board some of the questions suggested in the ToR, because they would have required much more detailed study. However, they did suggest changes, which were accepted by the reference group (see below), to three questions proposed in the inception report:

- 'What is the balance between programmatic content and financial management within the regional teams? What lessons can be learned?' The institutional evaluation touches upon the division of tasks, roles and responsibilities related to the hybrid structure, but does not deal specifically with the balance between content and financial management within the regional teams.
- 'What are the prospects for broadening and diversifying NIMD's financial base, and those of NIMD's partners, in terms of securing funding from other sources?' The evaluators looked at NIMD's ability to mobilize resources for the implementation of its own programme, and the extent to which it has been able to support its partners in finding other sources of funding.
- 'What is the potential for the programmes supported by NIMD to become mainstreamed in national reform/development programmes and budgets (such as PRSPs or other national reform frameworks)? What obstacles need to be overcome?' This question was not dealt with as it would have required an in-depth analysis of democracy assistance as a somewhat different element of the larger domain of development.

1.6   Organization of the evaluation

Evaluation team, team leader, local researchers
The evaluation team leader was Stan Bartholomeeussen (ACE Europe), who was supported by Corina Dhaene (senior consultant, ACE Europe) and An Vranckx (lecturer on Latin American politics, University of Ghent, Belgium). Stan Bartholomeeussen led the field missions to Kenya and Mali, including three days in Accra, Ghana, for the WARP programme. An Vranckx led the mission to Guatemala. The following three independent consultants worked in collaboration with Bartholomeeussen and Vranckx:

- Kenya: Mr George Kasumba (independent consultant, Uganda);
- Mali: Mr Augustin Marie-Gervais Loada (independent consultant, Burkina Faso); and
- Guatemala: Mr Luis Eduardo Samandu (independent consultant, Costa Rica).

Reference group members

The evaluation was supported by a reference group with following members:

- Mr Kees Biekart (International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague).
- Mr Thomas Carothers (vice-president, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace).
- Mr Stephen Ellis (African Studies Centre, Leiden).
- Ms Ruth Emmerink (DMH, Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
- Mr Jasper Veen, member of NIMD management team.
- Mr Roel von Meijenfeldt – director of NIMD.
- Mr Henri Jorritsma – deputy director of IOB (chair).

Ms Ester Sprangers, PM&E officer at NIMD, facilitated the evaluation on behalf of NIMD until December 2009, when she was replaced by Ms Karijn de Jong, senior programme officer.

1.7   Conduct of the evaluation

The country missions consisted of three phases:

(i)   An exploratory phase of one week, during which the team leader and regional consultant interviewed local partners – the centres for multiparty democracy (CMDs) and political parties – and key national and international stakeholders. A start-up workshop was also held to explain the purpose of the evaluation to the participating organizations and to customize the study indicators.[6]

(ii)   A data collection and triangulation phase, and the preparation of a draft report by the regional consultant.

(iii)   Obtaining feedback from the organizations involved and preparation of the final report by the team leader and the regional consultant.

The partner organizations implementing the NIMD programmes in the three countries (CMDID in Mali, CMD-K in Kenya and the NIMD office in Guatemala, Instituto holandés) were well informed about the evaluation, its objectives and approach, and provided organizational support for the missions. In the regional programme, WARPP, the partners in Ghana and Togo were less well prepared for the visits. Although in some cases the political parties had not received adequate information, all the partners were very cooperative.

The two team leaders held interviews at three levels, including one-day interviews at NIMD headquarters in The Hague prior to the field visits; interviews with partners in the three

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[6]   In Guatemala, capabilities were identified during interviews with stakeholders rather than during a start-up workshop. The interviewees provided an inventory of structural weaknesses and shortcomings that they expected could be overcome in the medium to long term, and an inventory of the capabilities, capacities and competencies that NIMD was helping to develop.
        The information from the stakeholder interviews was thus seen as providing a baseline, against which the evaluators would be able to measure changes that had taken place since NIMD started in Guatemala, and the extent to which these changes were believed to be sustainable.

countries and in the West African Regional Programme; and interviews with donors and collaborating agencies in all countries. Most time was spent on the second and third levels.

Reviews of reports and other documents
The teams studied documents provided by NIMD, the CMDs, NIMD Guatemala, political parties, partner organizations and other sources. The annual work plans and reports (including available evaluation reports) were of particular interest, as they gave detailed information on the performance history of the organizations and how inputs and outputs have changed overtime. Lists of the reference documents consulted during the evaluation are provided in the bibliography of each case study.

Initial interviews
During the exploratory phase, the national consultant and the team leader conducted a series of interviews. They also attended many meetings with CMD staff, board members, political parties, the Royal Netherlands Embassies (RNEs), state agencies and other donors, to discuss the concept of capacity development and how it is perceived in the national contexts.

Start-up workshops
In each country, a start-up workshop was held to review, refine and calibrate the evaluation indicators proposed in the inception report to the local context assess capacity development in the NIMD programme. The participants also reviewed the timeline of developments, milestones and capacity development interventions in the political/governance sector that constituted significant events worthy of consideration in the evaluation. The participants also discussed the future long-term (15 years) impacts that envisioned for their country.

Individual interviews and focus group discussions
The regional consultants conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders – the CMDs and the NIMD office in Guatemala, political parties, peer organizations, donors, collaborating organizations and other civil society organizations. The objectives of the interviews were to gain insights into changes in the five core capabilities; to solicit opinions on the factors that have contributed to capacity development, including on the effectiveness of external support; to assess the outputs and outcomes of the programmes; and to discuss external support for capacity development in general, and NIMD's contribution in particular. This round of interviews and focus discussions was more focused on the five core capabilities than those during the exploratory phase.

During the data-gathering phase, it became clear that many representatives of political parties had insufficient knowledge to reply to specific questions related to the institutional evaluation of NIMD. Only the technical staff of the CMD was more at ease with answering questions on this issue.

Feedback
Towards the end of the evaluation, workshops were organized in the case study countries and in The Hague to obtain feedback on the draft report and to collect further inputs.

1.8 Outline of this report

Chapter 2 presents the findings of the case studies in Guatemala, Mali and Kenya and the West African Regional Programme of Political Parties (WARPP). Each case study describes the evidence from the individual reports[7] of outcomes realized, changes in capabilities and lessons learned. Specific issues related to the evaluation questions are discussed in each case.

Based on this evidence, Chapter 3 presents the understanding of NIMD's policy and operations concerning capacity development. Why, how and when did NIMD take responsibility for supporting the capacity development of its partners, and what has that entailed (intervention theory, strategy and approach)? Is NIMD equipped to provide that support in a professional manner (core products and processes)?

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the institutional evaluation, and discusses the answers to evaluation question 5.

[7]   The three case study reports and the institutional evaluation report are available on request from IOB.

The case of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

2

The case studies

2.1   Case study I: Guatemala

2.1.1   The NIMD programme in Guatemala

The NIMD programme in Guatemala is implemented through a local NIMD office rather than a centre for multiparty democracy (CMD), as in Kenya and Mali. A multiparty platform operates in Guatemala but its functions are not the same as those of the CMDs. The functions of the NIMD office in Guatemala, known as the Instituto holandés, are similar to those of the CMDs in Kenya and in Mali. It is a hybrid construction: it is perceived locally as an autonomous civil society organization, formally registered in March 2002, and employs two senior NIMD staff members as NIMD's representatives.

Since 2000, NIMD has undertaken several missions to Guatemala, in concert with bilateral, multilateral and private initiatives to support the political system, including the UNDP programme to foster democratic dialogue and the Organization of American States (OAS) programme to promote democratic values and public management. NIMD joined forces with the OAS to establish a forum of political parties, the Foro Permanent de Partidos Políticos (FPPP), in 2002. As part of the alliance with UNDP, NIMD was involved in negotiations on a shared national agenda (Agenda Nacional Compartida, ANC), concluded in 2003, that has guided the Guatemalan political agenda since then.

When NIMD began its Guatemala programme in 2002, it described the situation as follows: 'Guatemala's political panorama was complex, with parties that were too weak to function as intermediaries between citizens and the State. There was insufficient space for dialogue or for pluralist concertation among these parties and civil society. The indigenous population, youth and women hardly participated in parties or other political groups'.[8]

Some 15 months into the programme, an external evaluation[9] concluded that 'the value-added of NIMD lies in its complementary support to the two cross-party programmes and in its 'multiparty' focus, rather than in its support to individual political parties'. Bilateral cooperation with individual parties was phased out, in favour of multiparty work at the FPPP and support for parliamentary activity in the Guatemalan Congress.

Programme resources: budget and staff

NIMD's annual budget for the Guatemala programme peaked at €750,000 in 2007 (then the largest NIMD country budget). This was then reduced to €650,000 in 2008 (€50,000 less than budgeted in NIMD's multi-annual plan, but topped up with €95,000 non-NIMD resources), and €500,000 in 2009 (€100,000 less than budgeted). The Instituto holandés obtained additional non-NIMD funding, including from the European Union through a joint programme on decentralization with the Italian cooperation agency, COPI.

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[8]   Translated from *El Diálogo Multipartidario y la construcción de la Agenda Nacional Compartida. La experiencia de Guatemala en la construcción de un pensamiento estratégico. Breve sistematización del proceso metodológico*. NIMD (not dated), p.3.

[9]   Mónica Jimenez, Tom Carothers, Kees Biekhart and Rachel Zelaya (2003) *Report on the Evaluation of the NIMD Programme in Guatemala 2002–2003*. NIMD, p.43.

The Instituto holandés employs 10 staff members (as of late 2009), including Guatemalan citizens who are or were politicians early in their careers and have played a key role in political processes in the past 30 years. They are therefore familiar with the dynamics that determine political parties and Parliament and can provide expertise that is relevant for actors in this field.

Defining the system boundary

For the Guatemala case, the unit of analysis for the evaluation was delineated slightly differently from those in the other cases. The NIMD office, Instituto holandés, operates as more than just an 'extended arm of NIMD in Guatemala'. It is recognized as a local actor (not simply an external one) that aims to catalyze democratization processes without working through local partner organizations. Its activities target and involve a variety of local actors, including political parties and parliamentary commissions, which are supported as individual organizations to participate in specific platforms for dialogue.[10]

Thus, the boundary of the system is defined not by one local partner organization, but by the platforms for dialogue where different actors interact while receiving NIMD support. The change of capabilities at the level of these key actors was assessed on the basis of evidence provided by respondents recognized to speak for these platforms. The evaluators focused on the capabilities most respondents recognized to have changed through interactions within the different platforms for dialogue that NIMD seeks to encourage.

Each platform for dialogue involves a specific set of actors, although some actors may be involved in more than one of the platforms where NIMD seeks to develop capacities (see Table 1).

Table 1	Guatemala – the platforms for dialogue and the actors involved.
Platforms for dialogue	**Actors**
Political parties	• Party organs (executive committees, party secretariats for specific themes, such as women, youth, etc.) • Elected members of parliament and local decision-making bodies • Mayors Some of these actors meet and interact with their counterparts from other political parties in the FPPP and Parliament.

[10] Ambit in Spanish.

Platforms for dialogue	Actors
Foro Permanente de Partidos Políticos (FPPP)	• Assembly of the different political parties' secretaries-general • Assembly of representatives of the different political parties • Working groups (11, thematic) • Regional FPPPs in Chimaltenango and Alta Verapaz The secretary general of each party assigns members to working committees, who are also often involved in their party's secretariat on the theme addressed by this FPPP working committee. Party members interact with their counterparts from other parties, parliamentary committees, and PARLACEN[11], and with the regional FPPPs and local civil society groups.
Parliament	• Technical support committee • Parliamentary Commission on Finances • Legislative commissions • Parliamentary commissions interact with FPPP's thematic groups, e.g. when discussing legislation relevant to each theme.
Civil society – political party interaction at Centros de Activación Ciudadana (CAC)	• Local (municipal) civil society organizations • Local representatives of larger civil society organizations • Mayors Municipal development boards (consejo municipal de desarrollo) Local priorities, defined in municipal shared agendas, set the agenda for public auditing activities and lobbying work.
Social & Economic Council (SEC)	The Council will bring together representatives of the business community, cooperatives and workers' unions to help define social policies.

Each of the platforms for dialogue where NIMD contributes to develop capabilities through the Instituto holandés is recognized as part of the process of institutionalizing political parties, (social) dialogue or multiparty politics. The social and political actors involved in each platform for dialogue interact and may move from one to another when performing different roles (fluid system). These actors are protagonists in a process that seeks to consolidate Guatemala's democracy.

Vision, mission and methods

NIMD's Guatemala programme has developed along three strategic lines: supporting the political party system; strengthening political parties at national, departmental and municipal levels; and boosting the participation and leadership of women, youth and members of indigenous groups in the political parties.

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[11]   PARLACEN is the Parliament of Central America, based in Guatemala

The Instituto holandés introduced its intervention strategies in three phases:
- 2002–3, focusing on establishing a multiparty forum and the formulation of the ANC.
- 2004–5, ensuring that political parties incorporate the ANC in their parliamentary activities.
- Since 2006, complementing all of these efforts by (i) strengthening the national Parliament; (ii) creating platforms for debate outside the capital where local civil society groups can interact with party representatives; and (iii) promoting the creation of a Social and Economic Council (SEC).

Objectives and outcomes of the Instituto holandés

NIMD's broad objective is to help to improve the quality of the legislative process in Guatemala and to ensure that it furthers the country's development by addressing its most pressing problems. To that general end, the capacity development efforts of the Instituto holandés target various key actors in the political system to help them do what they are supposed to do. These efforts entail strengthening institutions, organizations and individuals, including members of political parties and staff of parliamentary support commissions to perform the tasks they have set themselves.

The different actors have their own specific objectives, including:

- to help develop and consolidate political parties that are able to mediate effectively between their constituencies and those in power;
- to help ensure that elected MPs and parliamentary commissions are adequately supported to perform their tasks, such as by ensuring they have access to relevant information, equipment and the services of the parliamentary technical support commission;
- to encourage multiparty dialogue and provide other support for the activities of the FPPP and its thematic working groups, so that participating political parties can present their standpoints on specific issues, that these standpoints are taken into account in the slow process of building consensus, and that individual participants in the FPPP Assembly and working groups 'bring home' the outcomes of multiparty dialogue to their respective constituencies and parties, including – if applicable – elected party officers in Parliament and local authorities;
- to promote the expansion of multiparty political activities to areas outside the capital; and
- to help prepare the ground for the creation of a Social and Economic Council, to become a recognized and respected contributor to social and economic policy, and ultimately to conclude a 'social pact'.

Political parties
The Instituto holandés has been instrumental in arranging training and coaching of political parties to help them prepare their political programmes. In the 2007 elections, many more parties had developed such programmes than in previous elections. While this may be seen as a positive result at the outcome level, it must be taken into account that some parties had received support from other donors, including German political foundations.

Parliament

At various times, the Instituto holandés has worked with other donors and actors in consortia to promote capacity development, as was the case with the parliamentary technical commission. Such consortia mean that it is difficult to attribute the current technical support capacity available to parliament directly to the Instituto holandés. Although such consortia must be taken into account, here we can point to the fact that the Instituto holandés has sought to 'recuperate' the fruits of earlier, broader international support, in order to prevent such efforts coming to naught if major donors pull out. In several activities, the Instituto has advocated legislation to strengthen political parties and amendments to the Electoral Law and Internal Law of Congress. The parliamentary agenda of 2009 is widely reported to have been the most ambitious, productive and resulting in the highest-quality legislative work in Guatemalan history. This success can not be attributed to the Instituto holandés alone, even if its efforts were particularly relevant, especially in recent years.

FPPP

Similar caution is needed when attributing FPPP outcomes entirely to NIMD's activities and funding, or the support of the Instituto holandés. The Foro's major achievement, the National Shared Agenda that political parties concluded in 2003, cannot be claimed by the Instituto holandés as such, but it has been one of the two important facilitators of the process. It is beyond doubt that the Instituto allowed the FPPP to continue its work after the OAS pulled out, and that as its sole remaining international donor, the Instituto keeps reminding FPPP participants and their respective parties of what they agreed to in 2003. With respect to the continued development and expansion of the multiparty dialogue platform after OAS pulled out, many FPPP working group participants expressed their appreciation of the 'discrete' and respectful attitude of the Instituto holandés, which they compared favourably with the 'dirigisme' of the OAS in earlier days.

The Instituto holandés' view of capacity development

From the above, it is clear that the Instituto's view of capacity development involves providing training, expert advice, basic materials and facilities such as meeting rooms, examples of good practice, contacts, ideas and other information, as well as establishing general preconditions such as trust and a network for exchanging knowledge, all of which enable local actors to perform the tasks they have set themselves.

The Instituto is appreciated for its pragmatism, often following 'the nose' of the members of its Advisory Council, making the best use of opportunities that arise. It is able to increase pressure when appropriate, and to adjust course midway, thereby proving to be flexible and able to adapt to changing conditions, rather than proceeding entirely 'as planned', if detailed plans are drafted at all.

2.1.2 Changes in the capabilities of actors and their effects

This section describes the changes in capabilities, and their effects, of each platform for dialogue and the actors involved.

Political parties

At the level of *political parties*, both party members and others (international organizations, members of the Advisory Council of the Instituto) reported stronger capabilities, particularly with respect to providing training for party officials, the use of planning instruments, the importance given to preparing party programmes, and including demographic 'sectors' (such as youth and women) that until recently had not participated in political activities. While these may be modest changes on average, for the more established parties with greater institutional capacity to absorb them, they have been significant.

FPPP

The respondents reported that there have been major changes in the *multiparty scene* (FPPP) where the contribution of the Instituto holandés is beyond doubt. Some FPPP working groups have emerged as laboratories for developing, testing and reconfiguring a new political culture.

The FPPP's new capabilities and their influence on outputs and outcomes include the following:
- The capacity to engage in dialogue 'over' diverging positions, search for agreement and reach decisions. These skills have been fundamental in helping to move forward law-making projects on several delicate issues. The conditions for these achievements, which the Instituto helped create and provided financial and technical support, were cleverly used by FPPP working groups to move forward projects that they conceived, initiated and propelled (endogenous processes), and have contributed to the strengthening of the political system as a whole.
- In interviews, members of the FPPP working groups testified that 'multiparty identity' is beginning to take shape around common ground. Party political limits are being transcended – at least within the closed space of the FPPP. These cases of learning must be consolidated further, but are already being utilized by the FPPP working group protagonists.
- Not all interviewees reported equally smooth development processes. Some groups are unclear about the way they are going for their theme. In the case of the Instituto Multipartidario para la Educación Politica(IMEP) working group, political parties have agreed on the project, but progress has been slow due to uncertainties in areas such as legal issues, financial sustainability, etc. The dynamism of the working groups is also seen to depend on their leadership. Highly motivated leaders appear to be more willing to apply the capabilities that are available within the groups. The lack of orientation is currently paralyzing the FPPP as a whole, but remedial steps are being taken to reinvent it as a valuable meeting space that is unique in the Guatemalan context.
- The shared national agenda (ANC) that came out of the FPPP is now recognized as a strategic agenda for Guatemala. The FPPP is the place where political parties first learned to sit around the same table, resumed their discussion of what had been substantial in reaching the peace agreements and put that substance into the ANC.

- The debates and inter-party pre-agreements on crucial national issues that are prepared in the FPPP have smoothed the processing of the relevant laws in Parliament.
- Several party militants who took their first steps in the FPPP have now taken up important posts in government or Parliament, bringing with them their experience with multiparty dialogue, and their familiarity with the method of prospective analysis.
- Political parties now have more trust in each other. They are able to bridge what once appeared to be intractable positions and appreciate that the FPPP offers neutral ground where it is easier to identify points of convergence than it is in Parliament, where many representatives of alleged stakeholders sit in a 'metaphorical parliamentary tribune' calling for shorter-term goals.
- The most dynamic FPPP working groups involve women and young party militants, who are also reported to have had an impact in influencing the course of their respective parties, and are seen to be the most active in reaching out to peripheral departments.

The lack of strategy for the Assembly of Representatives (Asamblea de Representantes) was identified as an evident weakness of the FPPP, to which the parties' secretaries-general have paid too little attention. A negative effect of this has been the much reduced involvement of the governing party, which used to be very active in the FPPP before its election victory, because of the scarcity of trained party officers, all of whom now occupy positions in government.

Parliament
In Parliament, the Instituto holandés provides information to MPs to enable them to make objective analyses of problems that require legislation. It has also supported the drafting of a strategic agenda on ways to increase transparency, in order to improve the quality of legislative activity. However, the sustainability of these changes will depend on whether they are incorporated into the new Ley Orgánica (Organic Law), which is currently under discussion. Several amendments have already been made to ensure the separation of the political and administrative functions of Congress.

Others
Fewer changes could be identified in *peripheral departments*, where the Instituto holandés has developed projects as part of coalitions with actors that are less focused on political capacity development. This modest effectiveness can be attributed to the parties' lack of interest in participating once the elections are over.

The Instituto facilitated the formulation of amendments to the Political Party and Electoral Law to include provisions for increasing public funding for parties, creating a civic education institute within the Electoral Tribunal and establishing a multiparty institute for political parties.

Finally, the *Social and Economic Council* that the Instituto holandés is attempting to constitute has already provided some strategic benefits. Even though this platform is still in formation, it is expected to contribute significantly to the development of social dialogue.

2.1.3 Effectiveness of the Instituto holandés' interventions in strengthening capabilities

The Instituto holandés has been effective in supporting the democratization process by positioning itself as an actor that encourages interactions between political (and civil society) actors, and supports them in doing what they are supposed to do or in participating in the various platforms for dialogue. The quality of the local team, the way it operates and its efforts to form strategic alliances have been key to achieving results. Its wide range of activities, stakeholder groups and allies have enabled the Instituto to have tangible impacts on the political system.

Within the environment in which the Instituto holandés operates, there is broad recognition of the inherent value of the team, and its vast experience in and knowledge of processes that engender political change in Guatemala. As explained above, the team includes former politicians who can offer relevant expertise, and are ready to contribute in a flexible way 'when called for'.

The process in which the Instituto holandés is appreciated to perform in a particular way, illustrates a quality that case studies around the world have shown is correlated with effectiveness: organizational capacities that were developed successfully 'do not necessarily result from any purposeful or planned intervention, but rather have emerged from complex and difficult-to-chart processes of organizational learning and adaptation'.[12] The Instituto is capable of managing processes such as designing and delivering capacity development through experimentation and learning, rather than predetermined activities, and is thus developing and strengthening capacities 'on demand', in response to the particular dynamics of each platform for dialogue.

These qualities allow the Instituto holandés to do more than identify the demands of given actors at a particular time, but also to anticipate what further demands are likely to follow in a process. This informs NIMD what aspects need to be encouraged even before a partner expresses them.[13]

Apart from the quality and relevance of the team, the effectiveness of the Instituto holandés' capacity development work is also seen to derive from its efforts to form strategic alliances with other (often far larger) entities. In this respect, the Instituto has been described as 'atypical' in comparison with many other international cooperation efforts that have a tendency to become dispersed. Since its early days, the Instituto holandés has stepped into existing processes and joined coalitions that enabled the multiplication of effects and impacts. Its success in teaming up and working with a broad range of actors and peers is also seen to correlate with its prestige in the Guatemalan context. The Instituto is

[12] Tony Land (2009) Organism or machine? *Capacity.org*, September 2009, p.7.
[13] For example, members of the advisory board of El Instituto holandés felt that the time was right to establish a socio-economic council and contacted several people to prepare the ground. Also, a staff member of the Instituto was asked to give advice on the financial problems of the parliament and suggested the separation of administrative and political management. Although at the time the idea was taboo, one year later this was done.

much appreciated for being adventurous in entering new fields, and for covering a wide range of issues.

2.1.4 Factors explaining the level of effectiveness of the Instituto holandés' interventions

Some elements that can be assumed to have contributed to the success of the Instituto holandés emanate from the way it has implemented the programme, its professional ability to use space effectively, and in particular the flexibility provided by the programme and NIMD headquarters in The Hague. Other factors related to context are described in the following.

a) The Guatemalan democratization process
NIMD's Guatemala programme is set in a social and political process that is geared to achieving consensus. After signing peace agreements in 1996, international organizations kept up the pressure to ensure rapid progress in building an inclusive democratic system. Never before had the country been exposed to so many platforms for dialogue, commissions and coordination efforts, all of which contributed to a climate that was receptive to the Instituto's proposals. An important contributor to the democratization process was the 2004 reform of the Electoral Law, which recognized the need to invest in the institutional development of political parties at national and local levels.

b) A tradition of cooperating of external organizations with political parties
Another factor that the evaluators feel confident to recognize as contributing to the effectiveness of NIMD's programme is that this is not the first to cooperate with political parties in Guatemala. Forms of such cooperation had been on that ground since 1962, when the first of several German foundations opened shop. NIMD was able to build on the experiences of some of its stakeholders by entering into strategic alliances with these well established and other cooperation organizations.

c) The strategic framework of NIMD's Guatemala programme
Even if the Instituto holandés' strategic framework pervades all of its actions, it is not automatically followed. The programme NIMD proposed to put in place had the virtue that it encompassed a system with several integrated dimensions; the need to strengthen political parties as such was not disconnected from the need to strengthen the system where political parties play a prominent role, and to improve relations with their constituencies and society at large. The NIMD country programme provided flexibility, and this was effectively used by the Instituto holandés team, which enjoyed considerable freedom from NIMD The Hague in implementing the programme. The decision to invest in training young party officials and female militants is now recognized as a strategy for renewal that will contribute to the internal democratization of political parties.

d) Quality and attitude of the team in Guatemala
In defining what actions to take, and when, the Instituto team offers broad and rich experience in many fields of political and social activity. The team members are well informed, and so are able to perceive changes in the context, which allows them to

optimize their interventions, and to generate the best possible impact for stakeholders. NIMD's Guatemala director has succeeded in transforming what began as an external intervention strategy into an endogenous process. By attracting and contracting top quality human resources with high prestige in political circles, the Instituto holandés has been able to position itself as a facilitator of processes, while carefully avoiding the role of protagonist in its own right.

E) Effective implementation
The way the Guatemala programme has been implemented has allowed the Instituto to work in a politically fragmented and polarized context and to promote the institutionalization of politics. It has demonstrated that it is possible to work successfully in an environment marred by political fragmentation and strong personal leadership. In this endeavour, the Instituto team is appreciated for keeping a healthy distance from the internal scheming of the programme's stakeholders, allowing them to build on their own endogenous capacity development processes. The partners also appreciate the Instituto's impartiality in its relationships with different political ideologies. By positioning itself at a safe distance from each of Guatemala's political parties, the Instituto has won the respect and recognition of their leadership. This has in turn proved essential for generating a common space where it is possible to engage in dialogue, negotiation and consensus building. On the other hand, the multiparty forum, FPPP, is promoted in a way that encourages the commitment of parties to become actively involved in the forum and its various working groups.

The Instituto's staff are candid about weaknesses and gaps in the political system, especially the corruption and clientelism among political parties. In this context, they have opted to strengthen and consolidate the institutionalization of politics by strengthening political parties, consolidating multiparty platforms for dialogue, and offering means to professionalize parliamentary activities. The political system and the separation of powers have serious shortcomings that can not be cured in isolation. The strategic answer, therefore, is to strengthen the system as a whole, in the awareness that it is very likely to continue receiving new blows caused by the endemic weakness of the state and of political power as such.

2.2   Case study II: Mali

2.2.1   Introduction

At a conference in 1991, the nation's opinion leaders laid the foundations of the Third Republic in Mali. A new constitution that formally enshrined multiparty democracy was adopted, and multiparty presidential and legislative elections were held in 1992. Although many efforts are still needed to consolidate democracy, Mali is today seen as a model of democratic construction in West Africa. It is against this favourable political background that NIMD launched its intervention in Mali in 2003. In the early years, NIMD provided modest support for a limited number of parties. The programme is currently implemented through Centre Malien pour le dialogue inter-partis et la démocratie (CMDID).

Budget

In 2008, the programme budget was €556,848, of which 67.7% was spent on capacity development activities, 6% on investments, 8% on running costs and 18% on human resources. The 2007 budget was higher, €703,269, of which 69% was spent on capacity development activities, 4% on investments, 10% on running costs and 15% on human resources.[14] Thus, two-thirds of the annual budget is used for capacity development activities.

Defining the system boundary

The evaluation of the case in Mali hinges on three units of analysis: the foundation CMDID, a number of political parties, seven parliamentary groups and a group of non-parliamentary parties.

The *foundation CMDID* constitutes the main unit of analysis. The CMDID was created in 2008 by 54 political parties and is organized at three levels: (i) the general meeting composed of the heads of the member political parties; (ii) the board of directors composed of ten members; and (iii) the staff. NIMD's policy to provide support for the democratization process and to promote the emergence of an efficient, lasting and pluralist multiparty democratic system in Mali, is being implemented gradually, and that process has been studded with difficulties related to the institutional ownership of the programme. To establish solid partnerships with the political parties, the model of a centre for multiparty democracy was chosen as an effective formal framework for mobilizing and engaging political parties and to ensure their ownership of the processes of democracy building.

The *political parties* constitute the second unit of analysis. The five largest parties represented in the National Assembly, and 39 others not represented in the Assembly and grouped in a coalition called 'C39', benefit from bilateral projects funded by NIMD. In addition to private funding, the political parties' charter enshrines the principle of public funding for political parties, which today amounts to more than CFA 1 billion (almost €2 million), or 0.2% of Mali's tax revenues.

Parliamentary groups constitute the third unit of analysis. There are seven such groups (five individual parties and two coalitions), the two main ones being ADEMA and URD, which constitute the parliamentary majority.

Civil society has not been selected as a unit of analysis for this evaluation, because there are no strategic links in the Mali programme between the civil society and the political parties or the CMDID.

CMDID's vision, mission, strategy and policy

In Mali, democracy and good governance are seen as indispensable for taking up the challenge of development. Although political parties claim that they hold the key to the problems of underdevelopment and poverty, they are seen by many stakeholders as part of

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[14]   Source: NIMD action plans 2008 and 2009.

the problem, in particular because of their capacity deficits and poor image in society, and the fact that few of them have a clear plan or ideology.

Aware of the need to defend and safeguard the attainment of multiparty democracy in Mali, and recognizing the crucial role of political parties in strengthening these attainments, but also their weaknesses, CMDID undertakes various activities to boost their capacities, according to principles and values such as inter-party dialogue, partnership, consensus, respect and non-discrimination (based on gender, ethnic origin or religion), participation in free, transparent and credible elections, good governance and transparency, the preservation of national peace and cohesion.

CMDID's vision is to contribute, through its interventions, to the construction of a democratic society in Mali, where the different actors, and in particular political parties, are aware of their roles and assume them for the benefit of the general good. From this perspective, the political parties are seen as intermediaries or channels through which CMDID will realize its vision. The main missions assigned to the foundation's programme are: (i) to strengthen the capacities of political actors through training on topics on which they have indicated they need support, and by supporting party administrative functions and the linkages between party militants and citizens;[15] (ii) to strengthen the partnerships between the political parties in Mali and the sub-region through reconciliation within and outside Mali; (iii) to promote dialogue between the parties in Mali through discussions and exchanges on topics of national and sub-regional political interest; and (iv) to promote individual and collective initiatives so that political parties can function better through specific support.

The CMDID's strategy to develop the capacities of the parties and the party system takes into account the changes that have occurred in Mali and the demands of its beneficiaries. The strategic plan for the period 2008–12 includes initiating reforms for strengthening democracy and good governance, and developing the identities and organizational, structural and functional capacities of the political parties in order to position them better as promoters of democracy and development.

Outcome statement of CMDID regarding CD
The general objective of the CMDID is to promote multiparty democracy in the Republic of Mali so as to contribute to national unity and cohesion. This contribution should lead to the following outcomes:
- political parties engaging in dialogue on democracy issues;
- the consolidation of democracy thanks to an adequate overall framework; and
- political parties with strong institutional and organizational capacities, which are able to contribute effectively to parliamentary work and maintain cordial relations with each other, thanks to CMDID being positioned as a mediator in managing conflicts.

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[15]   This is complementary to the bilateral programme where NIMD provides political parties with direct financial support for capacity development.

To achieve these outcomes, the CMDID undertakes the following:
- initiates and organizes training through seminars and workshops;
- supports political parties in developing activities for and with their regional and local branches;[16]
- organizes and promotes exchanges between the political parties, and between them and the people; and
- publishes studies on the socio-political development of the country so as to improve understanding of the overall framework for democracy.

2.2.2 Changes in the capabilities of the partners

An earlier evaluation, in 2005, observed several changes in the capacity of the political parties, including improvements in the design of their programmes, in their organization and functioning, in their management of financial resources, in communicating information, and in internal conflict management.

This evaluation noted the following further changes: the institutional embedding of the NIMD programme following the creation of the CMDID foundation in 2008, and greater ownership of the programme by the parties through the board of directors whose members include with high-level political personalities. CMDID has positioned itself as a platform for concerted action and dialogue, improving the financial management of the parties, and increasing the number of parties eligible for state subsidies.

Political parties

The changes in the capabilities of Malian political parties to deliver on development objectives and to commit and act can be gauged from their participation in regional debates and their involvement in the reform process led by the Diawara Commission, facilitated by CMDID. However, their capability to deliver on development objectives remains limited due to insufficient financial resources, forcing them to concentrate their activities in the capital, often to the detriment of the local level. Also the lack of access to sources of information (documentation centre, multimedia, etc.) is sorely felt.

With regard to coherence, the parties recognize that difficulties arise when putting theory and principles into practice. Therefore, their capability to achieve coherence remains weak, and has been put to the test by internal crises caused by defections, dissidents and 'unnatural' political alliances. However, they are now better able to manage internal conflicts of interest and to limit the effects of these crises to help ensure coherence in the future.

Their capability to relate is only emerging: they still lack credibility in the eyes of the public. Communication skills are inadequate and they are only now starting to establish society projects, a programme and an identity, although implementation remains problematic. Civil society is not really part of the NIMD programme in Mali, and relations between the

[16] The evaluators can confirm that political parties have paid specific attention to providing inputs to their local branches. NIMD The Hague informed the evaluators that in 2010 the parties represented in CMDID decided that 50% of bilateral funds should be used to support local and regional branches.

parties and civil society are not ideal. Citizen participation is still limited. Although some improvements in their capacities can be observed, the political parties remain weak.

Parliamentary groups
The capability of parliamentary groups to deliver on development objectives has been strengthened through improvements in MPs' working conditions, training and equipment.

CMDID
The CMDID has a clear remit, vision and strategy, with adequate facilities. Strategic partnerships and relations with other agencies and donors remain limited. Financial resources are limited, although together with NIMD during field missions, CMDID has made efforts to liaise with the donor community. The absence of participatory monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is a serious shortcoming, although roundtables, organized by NIMD and support by external consultants, have provided opportunities to start to work on this issue.

2.2.3   Effects of these changes on outputs and outcomes
CMDID's outputs include training workshops, a code of conduct for political parties, exchange visits, press conferences, work on election management, policy debates at national and regional levels, workshops on the inclusion of women in political parties (including coaching for elected women), development of strategic plans, etc.[17] However, political parties do not always make effective use of these outputs; some appear to regard them as ends in themselves. E.g. the outputs related to the political identity of the parties are not always fully integrated or used by party activists and cadres. Some parties, however, have been able to use some of the outputs to improve their electoral campaigns, to explain the party and its specific features, to secure the loyalty of activists and attract new members. In general, parties have improved their way of working: one has compiled a reliable file of activists, and sees this as a way to verifying that activists and sympathizers have registered to vote. The financial management of the parties has improved, and many are now eligible to receive public funding.

The most visible outcome of the CMDID has been the institutionalization of cross-party dialogue, leading to growing trust and mutual understanding, and encouraging the parties to develop alliances (PARENA/SADI, ADEMA/URD, Coalition 39). For example, no electoral violence was recorded during the municipal elections in 2009. By strengthening their headquarters (logistics and staff), the parties were able to improve their electoral performance and their eligibility to receive state subsidies (amounting to CFA 1.2 billion).

As yet, however, the political parties have not assumed sufficiently their role of providing civic and moral education for the public. Although their society projects have taken shape, with the support of NIMD, they nonetheless remain unknown to the population, who expect strategies and responses to the major challenges facing Malian society.

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[17]   For a more exhaustive list of outputs, see the case study report (English), table 1, p.13.

2.2.4 Effectiveness of NIMD's interventions in strengthening capabilities

Interventions to support the system
NIMD's interventions have helped to strengthen the multiparty democratic system based on cross-party dialogue, although the achievements are fragile, as NIMD is practically the only partner. Through its country programme and discussions with CMDID and its stakeholders, NIMD has also influenced the national political agenda (e.g. gender strategy, the Diawara Commission, code of conduct, etc.). By contributing to the training of party representatives at polling stations, NIMD has indirectly helped to improve the voting process and prevent electoral fraud.

Support to the capability to commit and act
NIMD's interventions have brought about changes particularly in the capability of the Malian partners to act and commit: CMDID has an action plan, each of the five supported political parties adopted an action plan for 2009, approved and financed by NIMD, and the same applies to the two parliamentary groups. All of these action plans are based on the needs identified by the actors themselves. The NIMD programme invited them to reflect upon their needs and to formulate a joint programme for CMDID (ensuring their ownership of the centre).

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Support to the capability to deliver on development objectives
Thanks to the (financial) support provided by NIMD, the parties have acquired materials, organized training courses and introduced strategic planning and management tools, making them more efficient. The sharing of experiences with other countries and technical advice from NIMD have helped to strengthen local expertise in various fields (governance, political parties, gender, etc.).

At the level of the parliamentary groups, NIMD's support has led to improvements in MPs' working conditions, visibility (press conferences) and efficiency. The support included equipment and training, as well as funding for visits to other countries to share experiences, and to their constituencies to report back to voters (thus enhancing their legitimacy. Opposition parliamentary groups in particular state that support from NIMD has enabled them to strengthen their role, thanks to parliamentary research assistants who gather information that enables MPs to call the government to account on issues of concern to the people of Mali.

Support to other capabilities
With regard to the capability to relate to other partners, NIMD has helped its Malian partners, in particular the CMDID, to mobilize a network of experts in the region but also in the Netherlands. As such, CMDID has become an appreciated actor in the sector of democracy support. NIMD has helped to raise political awareness and promote cross-party dialogue which has enabled the political parties to understand each other better. However, the capabilities of the political parties and the CMDID to relate to civil society and other donors do not seem to have been strengthened.

2.2.5   Factors explaining the level of effectiveness of NIMD's interventions

a) The institutionalization of multiparty dialogue through the CMDID
The plethora of political parties, and the animosity between some of them have increased the need for concerted action, exchange and dialogue. NIMD has taken up this challenge by creating forums for democratic dialogue among political actors. Initially NIMD tended to impose things, although this is no longer the case as the parties themselves have assumed leadership through the CMDID. Another important aspect of the partnership with NIMD is its impartiality towards the parties.

b) Position of NIMD as a facilitator
Regular visits to the field as well as roundtables appear to be valuable means to promote dialogue, to enable the partners understand each other, to keep all the parties informed, and thus to ensure the transparency and circulation of information and to harmonize their points of view. The roundtables in particular make it possible to plan future activities, but also to conduct interim evaluations, identify lessons learned and make adjustments where necessary. The Malian partners consider that the roundtables could nonetheless be improved by involving civil society and other donors. Through the roundtables, NIMD facilitates exchanges of experts and South–South exchanges.

c) Promoting a results-based approach
NIMD is guided by its concern for results, and the Malian partners are required to produce results in the execution of their action plans. Through the introduction of strategic planning in the political parties, the presence of NIMD representatives in their activities, the monitoring of those activities by consultants recruited by NIMD, and evaluating the plans of the parties, NIMD tries to ensure that expected results are realized. This pressure is often felt as bureaucratic by the partners. Providing manuals or a 'menu of options' for the year to come is an effective way to enable the partners to plan their actions, and to define outcomes and outputs. But, it remains a challenge to reconcile this approach with NIMD's intention to stimulate ownership.

d) Attention to local contexts
Over the years, NIMD has learned how to intervene in a French-speaking country with extensive political fragmentation. NIMD has aligned itself with the vision of the Malian partners, and this has been appreciated: the programme is demand-driven, unlike those of many other donors (according to the political parties) who finance only their own programmes. The parties point out that NIMD's interventions are characterized by dialogue and availability. According to some political parties, NIMD should, under certain conditions, be willing to finance unplanned activities (such as allowing them the flexibility to change their annual action plans, although within the limits of the multi-annual strategic plans). The partners state that NIMD's interventions provide added value because NIMD funds programmes and not piecemeal projects directly to CMDID, political parties and the parliamentary groups. The partners assume ownership and NIMD limits itself to providing the resources and technical support the partners need.

e) Weaker links with the democratization agenda
On the other hand, despite NIMD's efforts to establish networks for cooperation among the partners, there is still little coherence between the democratization agenda and strategies/ plans to reduce poverty. This weakness is reflected in CMDID's difficulty in establishing relations with civil society. NIMD and CMDID claim to be working towards it, but acknowledge that this will be a long process.

2.3   Case study III: Kenya

2.3.1   Introduction

NIMD is supporting the consolidation of multiparty democracy in Kenya via the Centre for Multiparty Democracy of Kenya (CMD-K) and political parties. Between 2004 and 2007, NIMD provided direct funding to CMD-K and 16 political parties, based on individual Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). Since 2008 direct funding has been limited to CMD-K only.[18]

Budget

Table 2 gives an overview of the funding provided by NIMD to the political parties and CMD-K over the period 2004–9 (for further details see the Kenya case study report, tables 1 and 2). Between 2004 and 2009, CMD-K received a total of €3,441,086 from external sources, of which €3,058,871 was provided by NIMD. In 2008, when the direct external funding of political parties was prohibited, CMD-K became NIMD's only formal partner, although the parties are still the key beneficiaries of CMD-K's programmes (training, coaching, etc.).

Table 2	NIMD funding for political parties in Kenya.	
	Political parties	**CMD-K**
2004	€90,000	€224,139
2005	€250,000	€565,521
2006	€250,000	€776,310
2007	€250,000	€607,978
2008		€454,403
2009		€430,520
Total	**€840,000**	**€3,058,871**

Defining the system boundary

CMD-K was founded in 2004 by a group of ten registered political parties to support the evolution of effective multiparty democracy. Legally, CMD-K is registered as a trust. CMD-K is an open organization with freedom of entry for parties that meet certain criteria – they must have at least one Member of Parliament (MP), or five elected local councillors. Political parties that do not meet these criteria can also join CMD-K via a so-called 'forum' (of small non-parliamentary parties) provided they subscribe to its memorandum of understanding. CMD-K's institutional governance and management structure includes a general meeting, an oversight board and a steering committee of nine members selected from the oversight

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[18]   The Political Parties Act (2007) prohibited direct external grants to political parties.

board to coordinate the organization's management. There are also a number of subcommittees that handle specific tasks.

Day-to-day operations of the organization are carried out by the management and staff at the secretariat under the supervision of an executive director and a deputy executive director. The executive director is also the (part-time) NIMD representative in Kenya.

The relationship between CMD-K and political parties is supportive. Both sides appreciate the role played by each other. According to respondents, the political parties look to CMD-K to:
- mobilize resources to enable the parties to establish themselves institutionally;
- convene cross-party dialogue and facilitate inter-party collaboration;
- advocate for party rights, roles and protection by the law; and
- provide information and technical guidance to enable them to respond to national governance issues.

Political parties
The Political Parties Act (PPA) of 2007 regulates the registration, operations and funding of political parties. At present, there are 47 registered parties. When CMD-K was created in 2004, 10 trustees signed up, all drawn from political parties; this number grew to 16 in 2005 and to 33 in 2008.

The re-introduction of multiparty politics in 1992 was a milestone in Kenya's democratic development, opening up opportunities for the formation of political parties. However, this resulted in a proliferation of parties, which has made politics very fluid. According to the parties themselves, they face the following challenges:
- they do not represent strong constituencies;
- they are not driven by ideology or a social agenda;
- they have very weak organizational and institutional structures;
- they lack internal democracy;
- they are merely used as election machinery to bring politicians to power; and
- they have a very weak financial resource base, and are dependent on individual donations.

The NIMD programme has also involved a number of civil society organizations (CSOs) and other partners that have collaborated with CMD-K in implementing specific programme activities. Since these CSOs and partners do not have direct relationships with NIMD they were not included in the unit of analysis, although the evaluators regard them as important stakeholders in the programme and consulted them during the mission.

Vision and mission of CMD-K and the political parties

The vision of CMD-K is to realize 'institutionalized, vibrant and democratic political parties capable of enhancing and perpetuating multiparty democracy in Kenya'. This long-term vision underpins its mission to 'facilitate the growth of and perpetuate multiparty democracy through capacity building of member political parties'.[19]

[19]   Adapted from a CMD-K information brochure.

CMD-K believes that strengthening the capacity of political parties is a prerequisite for attaining democratic governance. To achieve this objective, interviews with staff revealed, the organization has adopted a two-pronged approach. First, it supports institutional capacity development for political parties, including intra- and inter-party functional capacity. Thus the organization promotes the growth of strong parties that can support the evolution of effective multiparty democracy. The organization is driven by the perception that effective multiparty politics does not merely mean having many parties, but rather that parties reflect and promote equity, representation and democracy, starting with their own internal structures and systems. CMD-K's second approach is to tackle shortcomings in the system to create an environment in which political parties can operate. This is based on the argument that even with increased internal capacity, political parties can not be effective in bringing about democracy unless the harsh conditions in the political environment are addressed.

Among the *political parties*, there was no single vision, although their strategic plans revealed similar ambitions, in particular their desire to establish constitutional governance; to promote the rule of law, human rights, civil liberties and poverty alleviation; and to become strong political organizations with sustainable institutional capacity and effective grass-roots representation.

The political parties' aspirations for capacity development were largely inward-looking. They hoped to become functional institutions with genuine membership, with mature internal democratic practices; equitable representation of all groups in society (including women and marginalized groups); promoting social (and not personal) agendas; and based on a clear ideology rather than ethnicity. The parties were also keen to promote and protect their unique identity although many also favoured collaboration with other parties to augment their capacity.

Objectives and outcomes of CMD-K and the political parties

CMD-K works with political parties and strategic partners to achieve the following general objectives:

- to strengthen the capacity of political parties to be effective in deepening and consolidating democratic governance;
- to engage in advocacy and civic education in order to create a level playing field for all political parties;
- to facilitate the development and enforcement of codes of conduct and other ethical standards to ensure internal party democracy, mutual respect and participatory decision making;
- to be a platform for dialogue and to build consensus among parties on important national issues;
- to support the efforts of the Electoral Commission and election monitors to ensure free and fair party elections, general elections, by-elections, and other elections to public office;
- to become familiar with all published bills and discuss them with political parties before they are debated and enacted;

- to promote good governance, transparency and accountability within and among political parties; and
- to empower political parties to mobilize resources for their activities.

In its first six years, CMD-K's key outcomes, according to staff and stakeholders, included the following:
- an organization run by a skilled and highly motivated team of leaders and staff;
- a platform for cross-party dialogue on diverse political party agendas;
- a minimum level of institutional capacity developed within parties that are members of CMD-K;
- national dialogue and reconciliation processes facilitated in response to the 2007 post-election violence;
- a platform for dialogue and interaction between political parties and CSOs on specific political/governance issues;
- a framework for minority political parties to communicate their views on issues of national governance on an ad hoc basis; and
- initiatives to enhance the inclusion and participation of women, youths and other minority groups in multiparty politics.

Objectives at the level of *political parties* varied considerably, although there was some agreement on what they should strive to achieve in the medium term. At the start-off workshop, for example, they agreed on a number capacity-related objectives to be achieved by 2015:
- institutionalized political parties exercising internal democracy and accountability and operating according to clear ideologies;
- political parties with strong functional capacity evidenced by strong national secretariats and branches and sustainable funding mechanisms;
- parties with strong membership and representing genuine community interests; and
- parties able to reflect gender parity in their structures and functions.

These objectives should contribute to the following outcomes:
- parties able to contribute to improving governance through constructive interactions among themselves and with other actors; and
- an enlightened civil society that takes an interest and participates constructively in governance issues.

The political parties and CMD-K's view of capacity development
The stakeholders consulted agreed that political parties have a crucial role to play in the country's democratization process, and listed three conditions that effective parties in a multiparty political system must meet:
- they need to be structurally and functionally relevant to their constituencies;
- they should represent clear ideologies, which should relate to a popular cause; and
- they should have a strong capacity to deliver on their mandates.

These conditions imply that stakeholders in the programme for enhancing effective multiparty democracy take a broad view of capacity development. Party officials agreed that political parties should demonstrate the following capacities:
- to understand and appreciate their roles in the country's political process;
- to organize and mobilize popular ideologies and agendas;
- to exist as legitimate organizations with effective membership;
- to develop adequate human and other resources and systems in order to deliver on their mandates;
- to mobilize the financial resources needed to maintain their own structures and to execute their core business by undertaking research to identify sponsors, etc.; and
- to contribute to the system of public governance by influencing public policy and management, and by holding the government to account.

Neither CMD-K nor its partner political parties has an explicit strategy for developing these capacities. The entire programme is perceived to be about assisting the parties to become better structured, stronger and better organized. All the strategies in CMD-K's strategic plan target capacity development for both the organization and political parties.

CMD-K recognizes the positive role that external support has played in facilitating capacity development within itself and political parties. Both donors and CSOs are valued as key stakeholders, not only for financing but also for contributing their knowledge and skills. In particular, CMD-K management referred to the intense and much appreciated strategic political dialogue with the director of NIMD during the post-election violence in 2007. They also recognized that such dialogue has weakened considerably in recent years, mainly because more junior and less experienced staff were put in charge, and there were fewer opportunities for strategic dialogue.

2.3.2 Changes in the five core capabilities
The findings of this evaluation confirmed that all five core capabilities that comprise the evaluation framework are relevant and present in the NIMD partner organizations (CMD-K and political parties).

CMDK
CMDK's *capability to commit* and act has grown significantly. Since 2004, the organization has gradually matured (staffing, organizational structures, funding, rules and procedures, etc.). However, the political parties' ownership of the organization is not yet sufficiently developed, and their commitment to contribute to CMD-K's funding is low.

Most stakeholders believe that CMD-K has been *effective in delivering* results (a platform for dialogue, inputs to the political reform process, an inclusive programme, institutional capacity development within political parties, etc.). This capability to deliver development objectives has been possible through collaborations with numerous CSOs, the media, multinational agencies, as well as semi-government agencies in Kenya. CMD-K has also shown a strong *capability to relate* to other actors in the political/governance sector as a participant in policy reform activities and as a convenor of dialogues. It is also appreciated

for its performance in response to the post-election violence 2007, working in coalitions, and in establishing a framework for reaching and dealing with political parties, etc.

Several partners referred to CMD-K's understanding and appreciation of the rapidly changing political context as one of its strongest qualities. However, the lack of a monitoring unit has limited its ability to analyze and draw lessons from performance reports, and to trace the impacts of its capacity development interventions on political parties. Looking at the evolution of CMD-K reveals that its *capability to achieve coherence* has improved over time. The organization's mandate, vision and strategies are clearly stipulated, and were reinforced in the second strategic plan (2009) by a set of core values that now guide its work. Operating guidelines (financial management manual, staff manual, procedures manual, etc.) have gradually been introduced as the organization has evolved.

Political parties

On the side of the political parties, the *capability to act and commit* is very weak (limited financial and human resources), although some positive results can be observed, such as the existence of modest secretariats and the emergence of a systematic planning culture that is a precondition for parties' institutionalization. Thanks to the financial grants from NIMD, a number of parties now have headquarters, facilities, staff, and have drawn up strategic plans, etc. However, their *capability to deliver on development objectives* and/or to contribute effectively to the democratic process remains limited.

Political parties were also found to have the minimum conditions they require to relate with other players in the governance sector. This *capability to relate* improved significantly for many parties in 2007–8 as part of the re-registration exercise under the new legislation. For example, parties had to review and to reorganize their structures to ensure a minimum level of national representation, refine their constitutions, rules and regulations, and introduce basic financial management procedures.

Overall, most political parties are in their formative stages. Hence, *their capability to adapt and self-renew* is yet to be tested. Although most parties are structurally too weak to exploit opportunities and incentives in the external environment, they believe that they are better able to respond to emerging political events as a result of the cross-party dialogue facilitated by CMD-K.

Very few political parties have clear operating principles or strong leadership that is committed to achieving *organizational coherence*. However, like for all other capabilities, some aspects have improved. For example, most parties redefined their mandates, visions and missions around the time of re-registration in 2007/8.

Overall, changes in the capabilities of CMD-K were more pronounced than those of political parties, partly because it has received more NIMD inputs (financial, organizational and strategic).

2.3.3   Effects of these changes on outputs and outcomes

There is a direct relationship between changes in the capabilities of CMD-K and in its outputs and outcomes. Key *outputs* emerging from changes in organizational capacity include: organizational and institutional frameworks for CMD-K and political parties; platforms for cross-party dialogue; policy advocacy campaigns; strategic and annual plans; training for political parties (in various fields); and outreach programmes.

Based on these outputs, CMD-K has realized a number of *outcomes*:
- political parties able to make coordinated, high-quality contributions to national political/constitutional reform processes (including minority parties);
- better informed parties on matters of national importance;
- improved legislation governing political parties;
- improved party knowledge and commitment to professionalism in political parties;
- improved institutionalization of political parties with basic facilities, structures and rules and regulations;
- increased gender representation within political parties; and
- increased capacity to mobilize resources.

On the side of the *political parties*, it was not possible to relate changes in capabilities to clear outputs and outcomes.

2.3.4   Effectiveness of NIMD's interventions in strengthening capabilities

The evaluation confirmed that NIMD has influenced the changes in almost all of the five core capabilities of the political parties and CMD-K, although the role of other actors was also recognized. NIMD has actively promoted the emergence of these capabilities in CMD-K and to a lesser extent in the political parties, and has made long-term commitments to sustain them, but at the same time, it has supported reforms in the political environment to ensure that these capabilities can be effective on the ground.

On the other hand, NIMD's policy on capacity development was not widely known by its partners in Kenya, although they made a number of observations on NIMD's support:
- NIMD's role in the CMD-K identification process was felt to be highly professional, involving balanced inputs from both NIMD and local political actors (confidence building prior to direct programme funding);
- NIMD supported CMD-K in identifying and designing capacity development activities that adequately responded to its needs;
- NIMD's services and funding had been effective in establishing a basic institutional framework for CMD-K; and
- NIMD has facilitated roundtables and annual meetings to allow learning among peers, and has funded study visits to promote South–South learning.

Throughout this evaluation, however, it was repeatedly noted that capacity development of both CMD-K and political parties is a long-term process where the major driving factors are endogenous rather than exogenous. Internally, CMD-K has a clear vision, motivated, professional and committed staff and leadership, flexibility, a strong belief in the principles

of democratic governance, and a high regard for collaboration. The capacity development process is highly dependent on and susceptible to exogenous factors such as Kenya's social-political climate. Since capacity needs can change rapidly, it is crucial that these needs are regularly and systematically assessed and that capacity development programmes are able to respond. This will remain an ongoing challenge.

2.3.5 Factors explaining the level of effectiveness of NIMD's interventions

A number of factors explain the level of effectiveness of NIMD's interventions:

- Local leadership: right from the start the process has been led by Kenyan actors.
- Local ownership: right from the start NIMD identified and worked with local political parties in designing programme interventions (ownership is, however, not fully complete; see elsewhere).
- Programme results have been influenced by NIMD's guidance to local partners, especially in the initial processes and during the post-election violence (2007); how a donor supports capacity development in a partner organization is just as important as the content of the interventions it delivers.
- NIMD's flexible financial support has been a key factor in the emergence of the capabilities to act and commit and to produce results.
- NIMD's long-term commitment and programme flexibility have allowed CMD-K and the political parties to take more responsibility in selecting and setting priorities; the effectiveness of external support to capacity development in partner organizations is highly influenced by the balance between programme delivery and organizational development objectives.
- NIMD's collaboration with other organizations has contributed to the creation of a critical mass for change and capacity development. Examples of organizations that have played important roles in the democratization campaign in Kenya include the Institute for Education in Democracy, the National Civil Society Congress, the International Commission of Jurists – Kenya Chapter, National Youth Groups, Association of People with Disabilities, the Kenya Human Rights Commission, individual media houses, etc.
- Achieving, sustaining and progressively growing effective capacity within political parties will require a stable and strong income base. The PPA offered a starting point, but its effects are still in doubt due the many political parties that share it. The rationalization of political parties in Kenya will therefore remain a key priority.

2.4 Case study IV: The West African Regional Programme of Political Parties (WARPP)

2.4.1 The start of the NIMD programme

The emergence of the West African Regional Programme of Political Parties (WARPP) is linked to the success and the impact of the NIMD programme in Ghana. Togo and the Ivory Coast had requested NIMD to assist the democratization process. In August 2005, NIMD carried out a mission in the Ivory Coast, which was then in a deep political and military crisis. The mission concluded with the possibility of assistance, albeit indirect, as part of a regional programme to ensure a more sustainable impact. In parallel, Togo had requested NIMD to facilitate a dialogue between the government and the opposition following the contested elections of 2005. WARPP aimed to bring together representatives of the major political parties within the Economic Community of 15 West African States (ECOWAS) to develop a regional democratic agenda. Its objectives were to promote democratic dialogue and share experiences and best practices; to build and enhance the institutional capacities of the political parties and to work to secure peace and stability as preconditions for economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated poverty reduction.

NIMD's approach to this regional programme was supposed to be gradual, based on the acquisition of expertise on the political systems of the different countries, scrupulous respect for NIMD's niche of support with a clear long-term impact that would avoid duplications.

The main activities implemented under WARPP are bilateral meetings and regional conferences. The partner in charge of implementing the programme, the Ghana-based Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA) was to work closely with the CMDID programme in Mali. However, WARPP was de facto run by Ghana, which elaborated the strategic plan and received the funds, with little Malian involvement, leading the Malians to develop their own vision. The Malians pleaded, but without success, that the large international conferences organized by WARPP should be replaced by bilateral meetings as a more effective way to examine and resolve specific problems.

Budget

The budget for West African Regional Programme of Political Parties (WARPP) was €500,000 in 2007, and €600,000 in 2008.

2.4.2 Changes in the capabilities of partners and the effects on outputs and outcomes

The WARPP programme has targeted political parties at bilateral meetings, often ice-breaker meetings, or at regional conferences on various topics (such as party funding, women and politics, etc.). The programme was initially an idea of the IEA, which received support from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Ghana, and then from NIMD, which seems to have acted as a donor rather than a technical/strategic partner. NIMD contributed to the founding network conference and network structure, as well as to missions of Dutch politicians to

some of the WARPP countries to prepare the ground. All in all, it is difficult to assess what capabilities have been strengthened by this programme. At most, the capabilities of the political parties involved in the programme to relate and to achieve results might have been strengthened through their involvement in inter-party dialogue, exchanges of experiences on party funding and/or the participation of women in the political process.

In Togo, the evaluators met several party officials who appreciated IEA's initiative to invite Togolese political parties to Accra to engage in dialogue, because tensions between the parties in power and in opposition were high. Throughout these meetings, the officials were staying at the same hotel, had an opportunity to fraternize. In this case, the most tangible result of WARPP seems to have been that it enabled the Togolese political parties to establish relations. But it also laid the foundation for inter-party dialogue, which is essential for the promotion of democracy, and for the resumption of international cooperation with Togo, whose isolation has long deterred economic and social development.

For some participants, Accra then facilitated a national dialogue, which led to a political agreement signed in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Other parties are more qualified on the issue, but nonetheless admit that Accra made it possible to propose setting up a permanent framework for dialogue and concerted action, which was enshrined in the Ouagadougou agreement, even if it was subsequently led astray by the powers that be, as some opposition officials believe.

Although eight countries are partners in WARPP, the programme was implemented only in Ghana and Mali, the two countries where NIMD country programmes exist. Consequently, WARPP does not appear to have been monitored closely, so that doubts persist as to the effectiveness and efficiency of the conferences organized under the programme. The IEA's lack of time to mobilize technical and financial support from ECOWAS, the African Union and other partners – owing to the presidential elections in Ghana, according to officials – has created a sustainability problem for the programme. Its relevance is nonetheless not questioned by local actors, who have capitalized on the South-South exchanges.

Before its strategic plan 2008–12 was drafted (by IEA), WARPP seemed to lack a strategic vision, in as much as it consisted essentially of a series of events not based on a regional analysis. There has been no follow up on the conferences, the participants, or the impact and sustainability of the conferences, which were intended to establish networks for cooperation and dialogue between the leaders of parties in the sub-region afflicted by conflicts. The programme has so far produced no tangible effects in terms of reducing conflict, apart from the reduced tension in Togo thanks to the Ouagadougou agreement, which cannot be attributed to WARPP alone, according to political party officials interviewed in Togo.

2.4.3 Effectiveness of NIMD's interventions in strengthening capacities
With regard to the relations between NIMD and IEA, the point of departure seems to have been their willingness to share the Ghanaian experience in the sub-region through IEA.

NIMD's role was to monitor the programme to ensure that planned activities were carried out and that resources were properly used. The IEA, created more than 20 years ago, already had certain capacities and practical knowledge. According to IEA officials, the added value of NIMD in strengthening its capacities was low. It played a more important role in identifying high-level policy makers, for instance, who have been involved in the activities of the programme and in sharing experiences. Thus, in the case of the WARPP, NIMD was demand oriented.

NIMD's partners, the IEA in Ghana and the CMDID in Mali, were supposed to establish a secretariat for the programme. One of the core missions of this secretariat was to forge new strategic partnerships and mobilize funding from other donors to take over from NIMD, which ceased providing funding in 2009. This result has not been attained to date. Furthermore, there is in theory a WARPP steering committee – composed of representatives of opposition and ruling parties in Benin, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo – which was expected to play a role in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the programme. There is no evidence that it functioned in practice. Moreover, the absence of a focal point in six of the eight member countries was a major weakness of the programme.

2.4.4 Factors explaining the level of effectiveness of NIMD's interventions

The geographic coverage of the programme was too vast for efficient implementation, given the lack of institutional mechanisms, and the human and the limited financial resources mobilized. Therefore, when NIMD took the unilateral decision to merge the regional programmes for East Africa and for West Africa into one Africa programme, without consulting the local partners, this contributed to the deterioration of the situation. Not only was the IEA not in favour of having a single African programme (deemed too ambitious), but the institutional mechanisms introduced for this new pan-African programme were not functional. Only one meeting has taken place so far, without an explicit agenda. The director of NIMD, on behalf of NIMD's management, however, defends the merger as an inclusive Africa approach and the only solution (for the time being) given NIMD's budget constraints.

All stakeholders recognize that mobilizing resources for the WARPP programme is a major problem. ECOWAS, which was supposed to replace NIMD's funding, is not yet willing to play the role of donor. As a consequence, the WARPP has not yet managed to mobilize resources additional to those provided by NIMD, which has supported the programme hoping it would become self-reliant through other sources of funding. Beyond the programme's lack of financial sustainability, the weak points of the WARPP include the failure to follow up on the lessons and conclusions of the meetings, and the fact that the steering committee was not operational. NIMD's abrupt decision to stop funding the WARPP showed, according to IEA officials, that the partnership was not sufficiently tight for the partners to be able to discuss the question of an exit strategy.

During the implementation of the WARPP programme, the Togolese parties stated that they had received information from the IEA, but none been forthcoming for the last two years,

according to one official. Furthermore, few of the officials interviewed seemed to be really informed about the contents of the programme, which suggests insufficient communication. Admittedly, the poor organization and lack of information available to the parties might also be the cause of poor knowledge about the programme.

2.5   Analysis of the case studies

Changes in capacity and capabilities can be recognized at two levels: at the level of the CMDs established with NIMD's support, and at the level of the political parties supported by the CMDs in Kenya and Mali, and the NIMD office, the Instituto Holandés in Guatemala, and (in some cases) through direct bilateral support from NIMD The Hague.

2.5.1   Changes in the capabilities of Southern partners

Centres for multiparty democracy (CMDs)

The CMDs in Mali and in Kenya are newly established institutions[20] that embody the concept of multiparty dialogue, and have evolved into reasonably strong organizations owned by the political parties. They function as platforms for political and cross-party dialogue and are privileged interlocutors of the political parties in the process of professionalizing and shaping the democratization process in each country. Table 3 summarizes the main changes in capabilities observed at the level of the CMDs.

Table 3	Changes in capabilities at the level of CMDs in Kenya and Mali
Capability	**Remarks**
Act and commit	There is evidence that the CMDs have a vision, a mission and functional boards of political parties (although with weaker ownership in Kenya). Highly dependent on financial support from NIMD, although less so in Kenya (increased capacity to manage funds and the interest of donors after good performance during the ethnic violence in 2007).
Deliver on development objectives	Evidence of capacity to develop relevant programmes aimed at political parties and the political system (and civil society in Guatemala and in particular in Kenya). Functioning as centres for developing the capacities of political parties. Evidence of sensitivity to context (analysis of environment, policies and socio-political climate).

[20]   There is no real CMD in Guatemala. NIMD did not create one because of the existence of the Foro Permanente de Partidos Politicos (FPPP), and its initial concern to ensure ownership of the Foro initiative by the political parties. An internal evaluation in March 2009 identified some serious weaknesses related to the Foro: it is politically less relevant than it was at its inception, it has no clear political project and it has met only a few objectives. The NIMD is now promoting the establishment of a CMD (see above).

Capability	Remarks
Relate to stakeholders	With political parties: ability to respond flexibly to requests for support from political parties. With civil society: very different in the two countries, and particularly weak in Mali (not yet ready to relate to civil society in a structured way). With other donors supporting democracy: capacity to attract other funds is developing (mixed results and better performance in Kenya). With other stakeholders: mixed results and generally weak links with the development community with a view to influencing the development agenda.
Adapt and self-renew	M&E frameworks are emerging. Efforts to promote learning are emerging: reflection is encouraged mainly within the framework of programme formulation and in dialogue with NIMD in The Hague.
Achieve coherence	Under pressure due to the need to attract additional funds that might change the focus of the CMDs; this is a clear risk in Kenya. Strategic funding plans have been developed. Strong leadership of the CMDs. Key strategies not yet developed, including strategic visions of long-term institutional development (beyond the current medium-term strategies), and strategies for engaging with civil society and for linking with other development actors.

Political parties

At the level of political parties, the main changes were observed in relation to the capabilities to deliver on development objectives and to relate. It was not possible to identify changes in the capabilities of the political parties involved in WARPP because of the nature of the programme (see section 2.4).

When looking at the present situation, it can be concluded that political parties have advanced but remain weak and are finding it particularly difficult to put into practice new insights gained through advice, study visits, training or exchange meetings, etc. Stronger political parties have advanced the most, and have shown a greater readiness and capacity to absorb further inputs. Some of them have established headquarters, recruited basic staff and have acquired basic facilities.

It should also be noted that capacities of certain protagonists (individuals) have been developed to that they can take up their/a role in 'politics in action'. This was particularly noticeable in Guatemala, where the NIMD programme has supported and enabled some protagonists to participate in complex processes or in multiparty dialogue to the best of their capacities, and this ultimately helped to extend the 'democratic scope' of those political processes. Table 4 summarizes the main changes in capabilities at the level of political parties.

Table 4	Summary of changes in capabilities at the level of political parties in Mali, Kenya and Guatemala.
Capability	**Remarks**
Act and commit	The conditions for efficient setup in place, including materials, secretariats and administrative functions. Internal systems for financial management are in place, e.g. more parties are now eligible for state subsidies (Kenya and Mali).[21] Internal democracy is still weak. Weak financial resource base and inadequate human resources. Formulation of programme and identity: emerging, but not (yet) driven by an ideology or social agenda.
Deliver on development objectives	Progress in professionalization remains weak (and thus also the weight of political parties as actors in shaping legislation, e.g. advocacy campaigns in Mali related to the family code). There is evidence of : • improved knowledge of issues of national interest and expertise in areas such as governance, gender, inclusion of women and youth, etc.; • more effective parliamentary work (Guatemala and Mali); and • greater ability to articulate their positions (at press conferences, effectively playing opposition role), which is enhancing their visibility (and impacting on the capability to relate).
Relate to stakeholders	Relations with other parties: developing skills for engaging in dialogue over diverging positions. Relations with civil society: • dependent on historical factors; • some good examples of cooperation in Guatemala and in Kenya (mainly through CMD-K); and • absence of a strategic view of cooperation. Relations with the public: • weak credibility; • inadequate communication; and • little evidence of societal projects.
Adapt and self-renew	Overall, the capability of most political parties to adapt and self-renew is still to be tested. They are structurally too weak to exploit opportunities and incentives in their environment (responsive to external triggers or able to trigger inputs from within their parties). Multiparty dialogue, study visits and exchanges between peers have encouraged some self-reflection although among protagonists.
Achieve coherence	Most political parties have redefined their mandates, vision and mission in connection with the allocation of bilateral funds and multiparty dialogue. However, very few have clear operating principles, or strong leadership that is committed to achieving organizational coherence.

[21] The capacities of political parties to relate changed significantly due to external (contextual) factors. In particular, in response the legal requirement to re-register in Kenya or to register for public funding in Mali, parties had to review and to reorganize their structures to this end.

2.5.2 Effect of changes on the capability to deliver on development objectives

The CMDs and the political parties share the same development objective, which is to create a well-functioning, pluralist system of party politics.

The changes in the capabilities of the CMDs have resulted in the formulation and implementation of cross-party programmes and activities to support political parties in their professional growth, in their involvement in cross-party dialogue and in relation to democratic reform processes (outputs).

The evaluators observed a number of changes in the relationship between capacity and outputs, although mainly at the level of the CMDs, as follows:
- The institutionalization of multiparty dialogue (through the CMDs and, to a lesser extent the Foro in Guatemala) and ownership by the political parties was the most important output (resulting from the increased capability to act and commit).
- A number of political party officials were trained in various fields (political party affairs and issues of national interest), initiatives were undertaken to increase the participation of women and, to a lesser extent, youth and marginalized groups in politics, shared agendas for reform were jointly formulated, and joint policy advocacy campaigns provided inputs into democratic reform processes (resulting from the increased capability to deliver on development objectives).
- Discourse between different political parties was established and maintained, and exposure to CSOs in programme activities and in networking with political parties was realized to a limited extent (resulting from the growing capability to relate to stakeholders).

Both the CMDs and political parties have been able to contribute to the emergence of multiparty dialogue, and so to influence national democratic reform processes through which the system where political parties play their roles can be changed.

At the outcome level, changes in the capabilities of the CMDs and in particular the realization of multiparty dialogue have helped to create a multiparty identity. This identity is beginning to take shape around common ground and in relation to crucial national issues. In particular, in Guatemala, some Foro working groups have emerged as laboratories for developing, testing and reconfiguring a new political culture. The common approach has enabled the CMDs to make meaningful contributions to national reform processes in the three countries.

The changes in capabilities at the level of individual political parties have produced fewer results at the output and outcome levels. Their increased knowledge, improved setup and ability to engage with other parties have resulted in more strategic plans, more effective approaches to parliamentary work and, in some cases, better articulated positions. Clearly, structural changes at the level of political parties to transform them to become reliable intermediaries between the public, civil society and the state have not yet been realized. Their ideological positions are often unclear, with negative effects on internal cohesion. Unity is often built around personalities or along ethnic lines, their links with wider society

remain fragile, and many parties (except for the left-wing parties in Guatemala) lack a stable social base. Politics still has a public image problem, and citizens are not encouraged to participate in the public arena.

In general, the evaluators conclude that the importance of political parties in shaping legislative processes remains weak, particularly in Mali and in Kenya.

2.5.3   Effectiveness of NIMD's approach

To assess the effectiveness of NIMD's approach, it is important to look at the way of working of the CMDs and the Instituto holandés on the one hand, and the approach and professionalism of NIMD on the other. As the CMDs have been established with NIMD's support and facilitation, their approaches are similar, reflecting to a large extent the organization's overall policy (see below). This section describes the evidence related to the approach, and the external and internal factors that explain its effectiveness.

CMDs and Instituto holandés and their interactions with political parties

The partners implementing the NIMD programmes, the CMDs in Mali and in Kenya and the Instituto holandés in Guatemala (which functions as a CMD), do not have explicit strategies regarding capacity development. Their entire programmes (the NIMD's country programmes) are perceived to be about assisting political parties, MPs and other actors to become stronger, better structured and organized, and better able to relate and to participate in dialogue. In Mali and Kenya, the CMDs organize joint planning meetings to formulate common reform agendas (for political parties and the political system) and to identify the most appropriate actions/support measures to be undertaken in the year ahead.

The two CMDs support political parties in developing their institutional capacity, including intra- and inter-party functional capacity, promote multiparty dialogue and target shortcomings in the political environment to enable political parties to operate effectively. The Instituto holandés in Guatemala is quite advanced in applying the combined approach: it targets key actors – political parties, parliament, the Foro Permanente de Partidos Politicos (FPPP), civil society organizations (CSOs), etc. – to help them to do 'what they are supposed to do' and supports their interaction and involvement in political processes. Stakeholders recognize that the broad setup of the NIMD programme in Guatemala has helped to improve the quality of the legislative process and to ensure that it contributes to the country's development and addresses its most pressing problems.

With regard to strategic cooperation between political parties and CSOs in the three countries, no strategic vision has been developed. Although there were some good examples of cooperation with CSOs in Guatemala and Kenya, collaboration between them still limited due to long-standing suspicion and mistrust. There is also no strategic vision/ policy on how to relate to the development scene.

The partners implementing the NIMD programmes have proved able to monitor political processes and to act upon them. They are developing their capacity to manage the tensions between 'what is needed' in each context (and the pace of democratization and political

development), and what political actors demand. This tension, which was particularly evident in Kenya, puts pressure on the parties' ownership of the CMDs.[22]

Political parties expressed their appreciation for the CMDs' support. In Mali, for example, party officials stated that they had become more efficient thanks to the support provided by the CMDID to acquire materials, organize training courses and the introduction of strategic planning and management tools. The opposition parliamentary groups in particular state that the CMDID's support has enabled them to strengthen their role, thanks to parliamentary research assistants who have acquired information that has enabled MPs to call the government to account on issues of public concern. In Guatemala, most political parties testified that they are now better able to respond to emerging political events as a result of the cross-party dialogue in which they were involved via the Instituto holandés and the Foro. Generally, the parties recognized that the support received from the CMDs/Instituto holandés had contributed directly to a number of outcomes:

- improved frameworks for multiparty democracy: political parties with basic facilities, structures and rules and regulations, more parties eligible for state subsidies; improved legislation governing political parties;
- improved awareness of the need for and commitment to the professionalization of political parties;
- improved contributions of political parties to national reform processes; and
- improved concerted actions and inter- and/or cross-party cooperation.

However, some political parties and other stakeholders were critical of some training courses, and the fact that too little time and effort was invested in follow-up. For example, being trained in how to mobilize party members does not necessarily mean that the party will be capable of setting up an effective structure for doing so, since many parties lack the resources and/or capacities needed to translate new skills into practice.

From the summaries of changes in capabilities presented above, it is clear that the inputs from the CMDs have not yet been effective in bringing about the structural changes at the level of political parties that are required to transform them to become reliable intermediaries between the public, civil society and the state.

Factors explaining the level of effectiveness of the CMDs at the level of political parties include the following (the last three are related to context):

- The creation of the CMDs/Foro as platforms for multiparty dialogue has had some influence on reform and legislative processes, in particular because the parties on their own cannot provide the critical mass of support that is needed to influence political processes.
- The fact that political parties take responsibility as co-founders and board members of the CMDs (ownership) and its programmes has enabled the CMDs to play their role in

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22   There is a concern within political parties in Kenya that the CMD-K/NIMD is devoting more attention to emerging political issues than on its core mandate to develop the capacities of political parties. Finding the right balance is a challenge. On the other hand, the ability of these parties to respond to political events has been greatly enhanced by the cross-party dialogue.

encouraging multiparty democracy and to guarantee some level of sustainability. The challenges in this are clear for CMD-K in Kenya and the Foro in Guatemala.

- The combination of working with political parties and with the political/democratic system explains why reform and change have not been realized in the short-term. To be effective, this approach requires mechanisms to firmly connect inter- and intra-party dialogue to the official decision-making frameworks in each country. This can be noticed in the Guatemala programme, but only to a lesser extent in Kenya and in Mali.
- The quality of local leaders of the CMDs and the Instituto is key to their effectiveness: they are seen by Southern actors to have a 'nose' for what steps are possible, and when, and how to make optimal use of circumstances and opportunities. The CMDs/Foro demonstrate a high level of understanding and appreciation of the rapidly changing political context. Some respondents even felt that the CMDs' capability to adapt and self-renew as one of their strongest features. For political actors, such capabilities can also be developed through a process of experimentation and learning, rather by executing predetermined activities (this was particularly noticeable in Guatemala).
- The choice of relevant methodologies for developing capacity and encouraging learning is key. Peer learning, especially through roundtables, regional meetings and South–South study visits prompted exchanges and reflection (eye-openers). Training courses were much less effective in getting political parties to change their ways of working. Because of the lack of explicit capacity development strategies, little attention has been paid to what political parties need in order to translate theory into practice.
- The CMDs and the political parties themselves acknowledge the importance of building a critical mass of educated citizens who are genuinely motivated to become engaged in multiparty political system. The evaluation team noted that in Kenya and Guatemala, the interactions between the CMDs/Instituto holandés and civil society actors have strengthened the impacts of their activities.

NIMD The Hague and its inputs to partners in the South

The main processes through which NIMD delivers capacity development assistance to its partners in the South are the following:

- initiating, facilitating and institutionalizing multiparty dialogue (including establishing CMDs);
- backstopping for the CMDs (by NIMD The Hague staff), in the form of programme management, advice and building alliances, has played an important role in the country programmes at various times (e.g. the preparations leading to the creation of the CMDID in Mali in 2008). NIMD staff regularly visit the countries to meet with the partners and to gauge (new) decisive elements of the context, as well as to influence certain circumstances;
- joint planning of the country programmes with partners and target groups (political parties) through semi-annual roundtables organized by and with the CMDs;
- facilitating agendas for reform or initiatives with political parties to be formulated/ take shape through the CMDs; and
- providing bilateral programme funding for political parties.

NIMD The Hague provides most direct inputs to the CMDs. The most important input for political parties is financial support through the bilateral programme. In Guatemala, the direct inputs were larger because its local office, el Instituto holandés functions as a CMD and the relations between it and the Foro cannot be easily compared with those between NIMD The Hague and the CMDs. The following paragraphs describe the interactions between NIMD and the CMDs and between NIMD and the political parties.

NIMD The Hague and the CMDs

As initiator and main donor, NIMD is crucial in improving the effectiveness and further evolution of the CMDs (but also the other way around: the CMDs are essential for realizing changes at the level of political systems). NIMD has been supportive in providing the conditions that will allow different capabilities within the CMDs to emerge. For example:

- NIMD was instrumental in the discussions and preparations that led to the creation of the CMDs;
- NIMD supported the CMDs in developing their initial strategic plans, defining legal instruments and organizational structures;
- NIMD's financial and human resources have been key in kick-starting the development of capacities within the CMDs;
- NIMD provided advice and support to the CMDs in programme and financial management (backstopping); and
- NIMD identified experts from other countries in each region and politicians in the Netherlands, whose inputs allowed peer exchanges on issues related to party politics and management or to support reform processes.

According to most respondents, NIMD's interventions have influenced many of the changes in the five core capabilities of the CMDs examined in this evaluation. The evaluators broadly conclude that this influence has taken three forms: (i) facilitating the emergence of capacity; (ii) enabling capacity nourishment and growth; and (iii) facilitating capacity functionality/application. This influence was not supported by a particular policy on capacity development, but was enhanced by NIMD's sensitivity to local political contexts and the demands of its partners. The inputs of Dutch politicians were not explicitly mentioned by the CMDs (or by the political parties) as meaningful or as having provided added value.

In recent years NIMD's programme management practices have raised questions, particularly in Kenya, about its 'micro-management' of programme planning, budgeting and budget controls. In this respect, NIMD has been seen to frustrate the further development of endogenous capacity.

The summary and the above observations reveal a number of weak aspects of the CMDs. First, the CMDs depend largely on NIMD funding and diversifying their sources of funding remains a challenge. Second, the CMDs still need to develop long-term strategies for institutional development, and for strengthening their relations with civil society and development actors.

Finally, the mature NIMD partners expressed their growing concerns in relation to the effectiveness of NIMD's current services. They deplored NIMD's tendency to act as a donor (with rigid reporting and budgeting formats) rather than as a strategic support partner. They feel that communication and interactions with NIMD have increasingly focused on administrative and reporting issues, and less on technical/strategic matters regarding the development of multiparty democracy in their country. One CMD staff member (in Kenya) even felt that NIMD The Hague was recently disconnecting from them, in contrast with the strategic interaction during the post-electoral violence in 2007.

Factors explaining the level of effectiveness of NIMD's approach when looking at its interaction with the CMDs:
- In the case study countries, the political environments have been favourable (see above): after signing peace agreements or other major democratic initiatives, these countries have been exposed to many platforms for dialogue and/or a large number of initiatives by different donors. Building blocks to consensus-making frameworks have been put in place. All of these factors have contributed to a climate that is receptive to what NIMD proposes through its country programmes and implementing partners.
- NIMD's careful preparations for the inception process, followed by direction and guidance (backstopping), helped the CMDs to focus on specific goals. Signs of weakened dialogue in recent years are critical in this respect. The evaluators can refer to the mobilization of younger staff without the capacity and seniority to initiate and conduct dialogue on the course of the programmes.
- NIMD's pragmatic approach when facilitating processes in the countries where it works explains why clearly outlined, longer-term strategies for the CMDs are not yet available.
- The links between the democratization agendas and poverty reduction strategies have not yet been spelled out in the strategy/country programmes. NIMD staff argue that one cannot link CMDs and political parties to the development agenda if the environment is not yet ready, and that its partners have not yet reached the stage that they can take up this challenge.[23]
- NIMD's strategic partnerships and coalitions with various actors/donors had contributed to the integration of the CMDs in existing programmes (and trying to link the CMDs and NIMD programmes to others supporting democratization), and to the diversification of funding for programmes, particularly in Kenya.
- The evaluators acknowledge that there is a greater need for professional project management because of the increased control from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also because the CMDs need to pay more attention to monitoring and evaluation. The challenge is to find the right balance between increased bureaucracy and working in such a way that lessons can be drawn from experience.

NIMD The Hague and its interactions with political parties
NIMD's direct inputs to political parties consisted of financial support (through the bilateral programme) and support from NIMD staff (backstopping, advice, reflection and discussion) during missions, e.g. as participants in multiparty and party meetings, annual country and regional meetings (within the CMD programmes).

[23]   NIMD's comments on the IOB evaluation (no date).

The financial support provided by NIMD has increased the political parties' capability to deliver on development objectives. In many ways, the bilateral programme is the first serious institutional support to be given to political parties and this boosted their confidence. Political parties in Guatemala and in Kenya believe that if NIMD were to reduce its direct financial support, this would be a key factor in slowing down the pace of capacity development. Unless the parties have access to stable, home-grown financing schemes, they will remain dependent on NIMD's support.

Despite its concern about results and demonstrating results, NIMD has shown some general weaknesses in verifying to what extent bilateral funding for political parties was linked to their strategic objectives, and whether the funds were used appropriately. NIMD was rather 'unconditional' with regard to activities proposed by the parties, and did not check whether their proposals were really helpful (the downside of the pragmatic approach).[24] Reports presented by the political parties rarely showed their performance in relation to indicators designated in an original plan (if included at all). In the absence of a sound baseline, it is therefore difficult to assess the performance of these partners.[25]

Factors that explain the level of effectiveness when looking at the political parties (bilateral programme):
- NIMD has positioned itself at a large distance from each of the political parties it supports. Through this, it has gained the respect and recognition of party leaders, which in turn have provided the conditions necessary to generate a common space where it was possible to engage in dialogue and negotiations and build consensus. NIMD recognizes the specifics of each political system and is reaching out to the entire spectrum of ideologies, offering financial support (direct or cross-party).
- NIMD's decision to work through the CMDs has been key in enabling the political parties to develop their own home-grown agendas. This decision entailed (i) facilitating the creation of locally owned CMDs/foundations/organizations (including the Instituto Holandés, which was allowed space to position itself as a local actor); (ii) identifying strong leadership for the CMDs/Instituto; and (iii) supporting the process of developing the capacities of the CMDs (as a goal in itself) to allow them to position themselves as local hubs for multiparty dialogue and centres for capacity development.
- The bilateral programme has not been able to achieve genuine change at the level of political parties. It proved very difficult to monitor the results of these programmes, since that would have required a level of dialogue sufficient to challenge the partners on what they want to achieve and how they are trying to realize it. The question is whether this type of programme can be managed from a distance (NIMD The Hague).

[24] NIMD (2010), Memo on NIMD party support strategy 2011–14, 1-2. The approach in Guatemala was different. Political parties could request assistance based on an action plan that was discussed with the Instituto beforehand. The Instituto was able to respond quickly to requests for assistance and advice (e.g. by contracting experts as trouble-shooters), but did not provide funding for political parties.
[25] Ibid.

NIMD's interactions with Southern partners

With regard to monitoring and evaluation in general, capacity needs can change rapidly, so that regular and systematic assessments of these needs is crucial as well as capacity development programmes that are responsive to changing circumstances. The semi-annual roundtables in particular, instituted in 2008, make it possible to plan the activities for the year to come, but also to conduct interim evaluations, draw lessons and make adjustments as and when necessary. But in absence of proper M&E systems in the three countries (in the period covered by this evaluation) concrete results were difficult to measure. The evaluators identified shortcomings in the way NIMD monitored the processes in which it intervened (although some initiatives were taken to remedy this, e.g. in Guatemala), as well as in the systematization of reflections on its multiple interventions.

The CMDs and representatives of political parties suggested several reasons why NIMD support has added value. It finances programmes and not *ad hoc* or piecemeal projects. Its programmes are demand-driven and its methods are respectful of local partners. Finally, the partners assume ownership (e.g. of the CMDs, although to different degrees) and NIMD is able to respond in a flexible way to demands by providing the resources and technical support the partners need. The partners appreciate the way NIMD has aligned itself with their vision, while the political parties point out that NIMD's interventions are characterized by dialogue and availability.

Several factors can explain the level of effectiveness of NIMD's programmes in general:
- The combination of long-term and flexible financing with technical backstopping is a strong point in the NIMD programmes and ensures sufficient buy-in from local partners.
- NIMD's programmes can be said to be demand driven and demonstrates the ability to apply a pragmatic approach and flexibility on the ground. NIMD allows the parties time to express what it is they want; in other words, it does not impose a preconceived programme on them. This approach requires effective ownership of the entire process by local stakeholders. And local ownership is a crucial factor in maintaining the momentum for capacity growth and sustainability. In this respect, it is essential that the programmes work to achieve and sustain effective buy-in by the political parties (successfully in Mali, but less so in Kenya).
- The space within the NIMD programmes to deliver support to 'political parties in action' in an open system and multi-stakeholder approach (very much noticeable in Guatemala) and in this (generally) avoiding the pitfalls of supporting political parties, as noticed in programmes for democracy assistance (such as providing mainly training or high-profile meetings, as the limited success of the WARPP programme demonstrates).

WARPP

Finally, with regard to the West African Regional Programme of Political Parties (WARPP), section 3.4 noted that changes in the capacities of local parties could not be identified. The WARPP programme was implemented by the Institute for Economic Affairs, a Ghanaian partner of NIMD. The programme seemed to lack a strategic vision, and its capacity development approach was not clear, and consisted mainly in supporting regional conferences (and the involvement of political parties) as a means to promote (the instru-

ment of) cross-party dialogue, and providing opportunities for members of political parties to meet representatives of other parties. The biggest shortcomings of WARPP were that it did not manage to mobilize resources in addition to those provided by the NIMD, which stopped in 2008. There was no close monitoring or follow-up in the eight participating countries (except for Mali and Ghana where NIMD is implementing country programmes). Better and more efficient results can be obtained by peer learning and bilateral study visits between countries, as was clearly shown in the case studies, e.g. the exchange visits between Mali and Benin in 2009, a study tour for a Malawian delegation to Kenya in 2008, and youth study visits to Ghana and Tanzania in 2007.

2.5.4 Conclusions

What changes have taken place in the capacity of the CMDs?

The CMDs in Kenya and Mali have been established and have evolved into reasonably strong organizations. A particular strength of the CMDs is their ability to respond in a flexible way to requests for support from political parties and opportunities for change in the national political context. Financially, the CMDs still depend almost entirely on NIMD and are thus not yet sustainable. Their relations with civil society depend on the context of the country; in Guatemala and in Kenya they have been quite effective. The CMDs are guided by strong leadership, although the development of key strategies and a vision of their long-term institutional development require further attention.

What changes have taken place in the capacity of the political parties?

Changes at the level of political parties are emerging but fragile, and can be observed mainly in relation to the capabilities to deliver on development objectives and to relate. Many parties have been able to improve their setup and thus function more efficiently, although some have experienced particular difficulties in putting new insights into practice. Further to this, their financial resource base is still weak and human resources are inadequate. Already well organized political parties have advanced the most and have shown a greater readiness and capacity to absorb further inputs.

How have changes in the capacity of CMDs and political parties affected the realization of their development objectives (creation of a well-functioning, multiparty political system)?

The changes in the capacities of the CMDs have resulted in cross-party programmes and in activities to support political parties in their professional growth, their involvement in cross-party dialogue and in relation to democratic reform processes (outputs).

Both the CMDs and political parties have been able to contribute to the emergence of multiparty dialogue, enabling them to influence national democratic reform processes, through which the system in which they play their roles can be changed (outcome). As the political parties remain weak, they can not yet function as actors weighing considerably on legislative reform processes.

How effective has NIMD support been in terms of strengthening the capacity of the CMDs?

As initiator and main donor, NIMD has been critical for the establishment and evolution of the CMDs. Both CMDs and representatives of political parties state that NIMD support has provided added value for several reasons: NIMD finances programmes and not ad hoc and piecemeal projects. Its programmes are demand-driven and its methods are respectful of local partners. Finally, it encourages the partners to assume ownership (e.g. of the CMDs, although to different degrees) and is able to respond in a flexible way to demands by providing the resources and technical support the partners need. Clearly, NIMD has focused on the first steps and not on the development of longer-term strategies, which should receive more attention in the future.

How effective has NIMD support been in strengthening the capacity of political parties?

It is concluded that the capability of political parties to deliver on development objectives or to contribute effectively to the democratic process is limited. NIMD's direct financial support (through the bilateral programme) has been essential for the professionalization of the parties. In many cases, this has been the first serious institutional support they have received, and this has boosted their confidence. However, NIMD's support has had little effect on achieving structural changes within the political parties that are needed to transform them into reliable intermediaries acting between the public, civil society and the state. Since political parties are unable to generate their own income, any increases in capabilities will remain directly dependent on NIMD support, unless other donors come in (but many are not keen to fund political parties) or national funding schemes are extended.

What factors explain the level of effectiveness of NIMD's interventions?

Factors that explain the effectiveness of NIMD's interventions are mainly related to the financial inputs to the CMDs and political parties, and the local leadership identified and supported by NIMD in the various countries. NIMD made the right choice to work through the CMDs (owned by political parties) although this might make it more difficult for NIMD to influence changes at the level of political parties. The evaluation raises the question to what extent direct bilateral support can be effective and can be monitored without a local NIMD office. Weaknesses in NIMD's policies are reflected at the level of the CMDs, such as the failure to link the support to political parties and development, the lack of an explicit capacity development strategy for political parties, etc.

The case of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

3

Policy reconstruction

3.1   NIMD's overall policy[26]

Mandate and objectives

NIMD's mandate as formulated in its statutes is as following: 'The mission of the NIMD as an organization of Dutch political parties is to support the process of democratization in young democracies by strengthening political parties as the pillars of parliamentary democracy in order to help create a well-functioning, sustainable, pluralistic system of party politics'.

The mandate has been translated into three (**programmatic**) objectives through NIMD's multi-annual plans:
- strengthening multiparty political systems;
- supporting the institutional development of political parties; and
- improving the relationship between political parties and civil society organizations.

The last multi-annual plan (2007–10, 'Political parties, pillars of democracy') added four **interrelated objectives**:
- reducing polarization, increase social and political cohesion;
- reducing fragmentation, increase stability and predictability in the political system;
- enhancing the institutionalization of political parties, peaceful conflict resolution and policy development within the multiparty political system; and
- increasing the participation of women, young people and marginalized groups in the political process.

The multi-annual plan then formulated five '**spearheads**':
- establishing an NIMD knowledge centre (as part of the Knowledge and Communication Department);
- promoting the inclusion of all marginalized groups;
- mainstreaming networking and strategic partnerships;
- ensuring the sustainability of the programmes; and
- encouraging public support and commitment.

Three **institutional objectives** were also integrated into the 2007–10 plan:
- expanding the institutional knowledge and capacity of NIMD and making it accessible to a wider public;
- increasing public support and improving external communication; and
- extending strategic networks and partnership agreements in the programme countries.

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[26]   Information on NIMD's policy is scattered over different documents. The most important documents consulted in relation to this evaluation include the statutes of NIMD (in which the mandate is formulated), the multi-annual plans and the document on partnership policy.

Vision of development[27]

There is no separate policy document describing the interrelationship between NIMD's programmes and development. Information on the issue can be found in the NIMD Partnership Charter (2005), which formulates the link as follows: 'This goal (of partnership) takes as its foundation the link between democracy and development; believing them to be two sides of the same coin. Democracy contributes to development and without development, democracy can have only limited significance … Thus the programme's main goal is to strengthen political parties in order to build and consolidate democracy and promote development as a necessary corollary'. The link seems to be made by specifying an important objective of NIMD's partnerships, namely, 'To facilitate and encourage the inclusion of marginalized groups, especially women, youth and the disabled in the programme, the parties and in our societies.

NIMD recognizes that putting political parties in the centre of the programmes poses a risk. Political parties are the least trusted institutions in societies all over the world. Especially in developing countries, parties have very little credibility or integrity. But because 'political parties are the heart and soul of a democracy',[28] NIMD argues that this risk should be taken.

In the different countries where NIMD is active, the aim is to set a joint agenda for democratic reform with and through the political parties, 'in close connection with broader agendas for development', such as PRSPs.[29] NIMD therefore strives to connect political parties with the traditional development scene. The importance of the political dimension for effective cooperation is increasingly recognized by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other players in the international community, and is supported by independent academic research.

3.2 NIMD's intervention theory regarding capacity development

Capacity development and values

There is no separate policy document that clearly explains NIMD's vision and policies related to capacity development. However, NIMD considers this an integral part of its overall intervention strategy,[30] aiming at (i) the capacities of political parties and actors of political society (as organizations); (ii) the capacities of political systems to embrace/

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[27] To the understanding of the evaluators, NIMD tries to combine a political and a development approach to democracy support, but this is not concrete. The difference between these approaches is explained in Carothers, T. (2009) Democracy assistance: political vs. developmental?. *Journal of Democracy* 20(1): 5–19.. Together with the Eduardo Frei Stichting (EFS/CDA), NIMD published a document on the 3 D's (Development, Defence and Diplomacy) and a 4th D, democracy (Pleidooi voor democratiebevordering. Over de Dijk, 2008). This document links democracy to development in broad terms.

[28] Introduction to NIMD's multi-annual programme, 2003–6: 'Without democracy, nobody fares well'.

[29] NIMD, Strategic Partnership Policy Paper, 2, draft version 2007.

[30] See also the inception report of this evaluation.

enhance the model of multiparty democracy; and (iii) finally, the capacities of implementing partners managing the country programmes, when needed, and (in general) more aimed at operational capacities.

Capacity development is seen within the framework of partnerships between NIMD and its partner organizations (existing or newly established, such as the CMDs). These partnerships are considered crucial in sustaining the results of capacity development.

With regard to NIMD's support for actors from political society, three guiding principles can be identified:[31]

1   *Ownership*: The political parties are in the driving seat when it comes to broadening or deepening democratic reforms (home-grown reform agendas) and so bear responsibility for the success of these reforms. To support this ownership, NIMD allows its country programmes to be demand driven to the extent possible. The principle of ownership was described in an NIMD memo for discussion (2005): *'ownership means reasserting control over the analysis of the problems or challenges that political parties encounter, over the agenda to address these matters and over the activities to implement the agenda and over managing the relations with the international partners. … [This] implies principally the choice for a facilitation and not an implementing role … [and investing in] a partnership relation with local counterparts'*. To achieve this, NIMD facilitates interactions between political parties aiming at the formulation of a joint reform agenda (e.g. through roundtables) and supports the institutionalization of structured political dialogue (see CMDs).

2   *Inclusion*: NIMD's programmes are open to all political parties in the countries where it is active. Derived from this principle is the principle of balanced representation when looking at the operational modalities. At the level of the main partners, the CMDs, this means the following: *'Leadership of CMD should reflect political reality … governance structures [should] provide a balanced and equal representation of government and opposition parties and a modality for non-parliamentary representation (where applicable) …'*.[32] NIMD signs MoUs with its partners in which adherence to inclusive processes and financial accountability are two essential conditions.

3   *Creating space*: In the institutional evaluation, combined with the field missions and desk studies, the principle of 'space' emerged as a key feature of NIMD's way of working. Space means: creating space for exchange, space for developing capacities at the rhythm appropriate to the political society in each country. In Guatemala, this principle led to a shift from a programme that dealt with different groups and partners, to one that supports 'areas of dialogue' in which different groups are involved.

According to NIMD, the application of its principles will lead to trust between actors in political society, which is necessary for political parties to work together on the formulation of national reform agendas or of new policies.

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[31]   Other principles and values are closely connected to the ideal vision of multiparty democracy and are mentioned in the MoUs with partners in the countries where NIMD is active.

[32]   Format MoU, 2007, 5.

In realizing its mandate, NIMD's capacity development approach involves the following:

- The political actors/parties should be functioning organizations. This supposes a certain level of performance in five areas: having a party programme (built on an ideology) and a certain degree of internal democracy, developing a political identity, building internal unity and having electioneering capacity. Political parties should evolve to become *'programmatic and policy-oriented institutions with democratic and transparent internal rules and regulations and adequate levels of capacity'*.[33]
- The multiparty system should be effective: this means addressing fragmentation (number of political parties), the presence of a constitution and legal framework that is conducive to the development of political parties and allowing democratic processes to take place in a constructive way (i.e. allow for policies to be built on consultation rather than on conflict).
- The political parties should be able to engage in relations with civil society organizations and the media. The focus here is on civic education, which is understood to be key in creating a shared political culture among those who formulate policies to solve problems and those who demand them.

For NIMD, the centres for multiparty democracy are instrumental in this approach to capacity development, so that the institutionalization of the CMDs has become an objective in itself. From the MoUs, the aim of capacity development is to strengthen each CMD to become *'a credible and autonomous institute, leading on policy influencing and transformational reform to deepen democracy and to strengthen its political party landscape'*. The CMDs are unique institutions in the sector of democracy support. They are managed by the leadership of political parties, with professional staff who facilitate programme implementation and support consensus-oriented dialogue between governing and opposition parties on political reform challenges/ agendas. The CMDs are envisaged to be the main catalyst for reasserting the commitment of political parties to entrench accountable and representative democracy. As impartial and inclusive platforms for multiparty dialogue, the CMDs can be expected to become credible partners in development processes in their country.

Outcome and impact

According to the evaluators, outcome and impact was more or less specified through the second multi-annual programme, under the so-called 'interrelated objectives':

- to reduce polarization, increase social and political cohesion;
- to reduce fragmentation, increase stability and predictability of the political system;
- to enhance peaceful conflict resolution and policy development within the multiparty political system; and
- to increase the participation of women, young people and marginalized groups in political processes.

These objectives were not translated into SMART indicators, but appear as outcomes in the so-called 'menu of options' used by NIMD staff when preparing the annual plans with the partners. Strengthening the voice of political parties in development debates was not

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[33]   Format MoU, 2007, 4.

mentioned among those interrelated objectives, although it clearly appears as an anticipated outcome in the partnership charter and in the strategic partnership policy paper, and it is mentioned in the text of the multi-annual plan: *'all three (programmatic) objectives impact positively on greater accountability, on governance in the NIMD programme countries, on more stability within countries and on better conditions for sustainable development'*. The memo on ownership (2005) also refers to building the *'social capital that is required for democracy to function in substance'*.

3.3 NIMD's strategy and approach to capacity development

Target group
The main target group for capacity development are the political parties in the programme countries. In each country, NIMD works with the parties, in particular those that are officially registered and/or are represented in parliament/local councils.[34] Within them, NIMD focuses on the party leadership, future party officials and (to a lesser extent) party members at central and decentralized levels.

Over the years, the CMDs or forums of political parties that manage NIMD's programmes (mostly in Africa) have received more attention as specific target groups.[35] Most of the capacity building for partners in the field of ICTs (e.g. creating websites) and programme management (including programme formulation, M&E, financial and other reporting) is provided by programme officers from NIMD HQ.

Main partners
Implementing partners. The organizations/institutions that implement the country programmes are the most important partners in realizing NIMD's mandate. They are able to identify and mobilize stakeholders, strategic partners and donors, and to widen support for NIMD's vision. As argued above, the CMDs are both partners and the target group. The partnership policy is formulated in the NIMD partnership charter (2005), which was a product of the NIMD Partnership Conference. The watchwords of partnership are mutual respect, shared ownership, joint decision making, dialogue and exchange. A local NIMD office is obviously not regarded as a partner, although the Instituto holandés in Guatemala is an exception, in that it is a hybrid structure that both represents NIMD and is recognized as a local actor that is supported by an advisory board of 'wise' people with strong political/local roots.

Strategic partners. Other donors that can contribute to achieving the goal of institutionalized inter-party cooperation can be regarded as strategic partners. The main reason for engaging

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[34] In countries where political parties have not yet had the opportunity to develop, contacts are made with political groups preparing to form and/or to become recognized as a political party. Exceptions exist in some countries (such as Indonesia and Suriname), where individuals (also outside of political parties and groups) with the potential to take up a role in political society are addressed through schools of democracy.

[35] Note on 'Centres for Multiparty Democracy (CMD) in a nutshell', draft version 2006.

in strategic partnerships is to secure a solid and sustainable financial base for NIMD and its partner CMDs, as well as to improve quality and ensure results and impact.[36] The role of strategic partners in developing the capacity of the target group is not explicit.

NIMD envisaged three types of strategic partnership relations: (i) to provide co-financing for CMD programmes; (ii) to influence the decision-making processes of local strategic partners; and (iii) to engage in active diplomacy for channelling of funds to the CMDs. The strategic partners could be intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, bilateral donors, international NGOs or national organizations. The Netherlands embassies are also seen as important strategic partners in supporting multiparty dialogue.

Other partners. Other key stakeholders in each country could include the ministries or agencies responsible for recognizing and regulating political parties, institutions responsible for registering political parties, national electoral commissions, relevant civil society organizations, academic bodies and policy institutes. Their role in capacity development is not explicit.

Finally, it should be noted that the Dutch political parties do not feature in this picture of partners. NIMD documents do not describe them as 'partners', but as founders who support NIMD's vision and provide experts for missions. From this, one could argue that Dutch political parties are also 'partners' (see also the discussion on the involvement of Dutch political parties in Chapter 4) who play an explicit role in capacity development.

Strategy
NIMD provides support for capacity development by and/or through its bilateral programmes and through the cross-party programmes managed by the implementing partners, with the assistance of outside experts through service contracts and/or experts from (Dutch) political parties (although to a lesser extent).

Individual political parties in the programme countries can request support for a particular activity (currently only in a few countries under the label 'bilateral programmes') in the framework of their capacity development plan, such as in Bolivia, Mali, Guatemala and Kenya.[37]

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[36] In 2007, NIMD developed a (draft) policy paper that justified its decision to work through strategic partners. The regional teams (NIMD The Hague) play an important role in identifying and realizing strategic partners; in each region it was planned to draft a tailor-made strategy for obtaining 25% of the programme budget through such partnerships. Although these regional plans did not materialize, at the level of CMDs plans for obtaining strategic funding have been developed.

[37] To qualify for direct funding, political parties are invited to undertake internal strategic planning exercises, resulting in an annual action programme that identifies the strategic reforms and investments needed to develop the party in the direction it wants to go. This allows NIMD to allocate funds and other resources to priorities determined by the parties themselves, whereas the strategic plans provide milestones so that the parties can monitor progress made towards their set objectives. The parties' performance is monitored using two criteria: whether they have delivered annual financial and other reports on time, and whether they have achieved the objectives defined in their strategic plan.

NIMD has chosen not to be an implementing agency but to facilitate a framework for implementation. One of its roles is to identify experts from its network of consultants/party members (in the North and the South) to support capacity development. This is essentially the task of NIMD's political advisors and/or programme officers (in consultation with partners). For NIMD, its facilitating role includes the *'provision of timely funding, training of skills in project administration, sharing of comparative knowledge, of advice about process management and of forms of mediation or mentoring'* (Memo on ownership, 2005).

NIMD's implementing partners play a central role in identifying capacity gaps (e.g. through roundtables where country programmes are evaluated and planned) and enjoy some freedom in formulating responses in consultation with NIMD The Hague and within the limitations of the country programmes. They can also engage local consultants or organizations to provide capacity development services.

3.4   Core products and processes

For NIMD, the processes through which its assistance is delivered and programmes are developed are as important as the results that are pursued. These processes include:

- initiating, facilitating and institutionalizing multiparty and inter-party dialogue (including establishing CMDs);
- backstopping support for the CMDs (by NIMD The Hague staff): programme management, advice and alliance building in each country;
- joint planning with main partners and target groups (political parties) through annual roundtables;
- formulating reform agendas, sharing knowledge on issues within the reform agendas and/or initiatives with political parties;
- bilateral programme funding schemes and the process of allocating funds; and
- civic education (in some countries).

Planning, implementation and monitoring of support services

NIMD's support services to political parties are planned at semi-annual roundtables (or as the need arises) and organized with the implementing partners. The purpose of these meetings is to: (i) collectively assess past performance; (ii) provide a platform for policy debate on topical reform and specific issues; and (iii) discuss and agree a joint agenda (look forward). Planning and implementation of the support services to the CMDs/partners is based on consultations between NIMD (political advisors and programme officers) and the CMD. Such planning is not always evident, however. On the one hand, the political systems in the partner countries are in constant evolution and sometimes require support that was not anticipated; on the other, it is crucial to identify the relevant expertise (which might depend on the availability of experts/ politicians) and/or tools to deliver support.

NIMD does not monitor and evaluate the specific/separate support services at the level of political parties and/or the CMDs. In relation to the CMDs, it was planned that the CMDs and NIMD would jointly define and agree on a roadmap and parameters for the institutio-

nalization process, on the basis of which roles and responsibilities related to the bilateral programme could be transferred over time,[38] but this has not yet happened.

Since 2009, NIMD has developed a more comprehensive M&E system to follow up on the results of the country programmes (prior to 2009, there were some separate initiatives in the framework of each programme). In cooperation with the Dutch organization PSO, NIMD has started a specific M&E trajectory (end of 2009) to assist its implementing partners in Indonesia, Malawi and Guatemala in monitoring the country programmes in order to identify lessons learned in the development of locally adapted M&E systems. NIMD and its partners have entered into service contracts with local audit firms to meet NIMD's financial and audit requirements.

Budget

There is no separate budget line for capacity development. NIMD's annual budget is around €9 million (including management costs of about €900,000). In the three years 2007 to 2009, the budget fluctuated between €9.8 million and €9.3 million, of which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributed between €9.1 million and €8.8 million.

3.5 Present policy in perspective

NIMD was founded in 2000 by seven political parties represented in the Dutch parliament. Inspired by the positive experiences of its predecessor, NiZA, NIMD gradually started developing programmes to support democratization processes in young democracies with a focus on strengthening political parties. Following preparatory studies, identification missions and consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, NIMD selected 11 countries in which to initiate cooperation agreements.

In preparing its programmes, NIMD's policy was (and still is) to invest a great deal of time and attention in building mutual confidence and initiating dialogues with (potential) partners and target groups, on the principle that they themselves would formulate their own priorities and support modalities. Since then, NIMD has formulated two multi-annual programmes: 'Without democracy nobody fares well', 2003–6, and 'Political parties, pillars of democracy', 2007–10. The changes in the policies of NIMD in relation to its programmes are summarized in Table 5.

[38] Format MoU, 2007, 6.

Table 5	Overview of changes in NIMD's policies.
Date and factors influencing change	**Change**
2002 External factor: donor requirements and pressure to demonstrate results	Formulation of multi-annual plans since 2002 at the level of NIMD, followed by multi-annual plans at the level of country programmes
2006 Internal factor: consequences of the demand-driven approach	The ending of the approach one (Dutch) party, one country (in the South): Dutch party officials and experts can still be involved in the programme and they tend to pay more attention to those countries where their political advisor is involved, but the general idea is that the Dutch political parties are committed to strengthening democracy in general.
2007 Internal factor: following the link between democratization and development External factor: specific request of the Minister for Development Cooperation to highlight accountability	Growing attention to relations between politics and civil society in the multi-annual plan 2007–10
2007 External factor: donor requirements related to reporting	The formalization of partner relations since 2007 following the introduction of stricter rules on programme management, execution and reporting
2008 Internal factor: following the principle of ownership	Introduction of more participatory planning through the semi-annual roundtables with the partners since 2008. [39]
2008 External factor: performance of political parties	The curbing of bilateral programmes (external factor: political parties not being able to report on the use of money and an external factor such as the PPA in Kenya)
2009 External factor: 2005 evaluation pointed to the need for more systematic follow-up and capacity to demonstrate results achieved, and donor requirements	Initiative to develop a more systematic approach in monitoring and evaluation (growing attention to separate measures was noticeable from 2007 onwards)

We can conclude that the relationship between NIMD and its main donor, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has clearly impacted the policy changes described above. Partners of NIMD in the South (interviewed during the field missions) did not point to particular or major changes in NIMD's policy, but they did note the formalization of their relations with NIMD, and NIMD's growing attention to outputs in the framework of the bilateral programmes (see also the case studies).

[39] Already proposed in an internal discussion note in 2006, 'Institutionalization of CMD's in Africa: Options for decentralised management'.

3.6 Conclusions on the policy reconstruction

The main findings from the reconstruction of the policy are as follows:
- NIMD has a clear mandate that has been translated into many different objectives.
- NIMD has no explicit policy with regard to capacity development: information on the approach is to be found in various documents and could not be easily reconstructed by the evaluators. For NIMD and the implementing organizations, the country programmes are aimed at capacity development.[40]
- The link between democracy support and development processes is recognized, but not spelled out, and is weakly developed in the approach.
- NIMD's approach clearly recognizes the importance of endogenous factors in developing the capacity of political actors.
- Strengthening the CMDs/implementing partners has become an objective in itself, although this is not mentioned as such in the multi-annual plans.
- Most of the changes in NIMD's policy were introduced in the new multi-annual plan 2007–10 and are related to operational issues and results-based programme management.

[40] See also section 1.1 on the general lack of strategic guidance on capacity development at the level of the Ministry and Dutch NGOs.

The case of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

4

Institutional setup: summary of the institutional evaluation

This chapter presents the findings of the evaluation on the fifth question: 'What is the added value of NIMD's mandate, the appropriateness of NIMD's methodology and the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional framework in which the mandate is implemented?'

The evaluators first refer to the findings of the 2005 institutional evaluation, and then describe the findings with regard to the three subquestions:
1) What is the added value of NIMD's mandate in the sector of democracy support? Under this heading, the evaluators looked at NIMD's *capabilities to adapt and self-renew and to achieve coherence*.
2) To what extent are NIMD's methodology and institutional setup appropriate to its task? Under this heading, the evaluators assessed NIMD's *capability to act and commit*.
3) To what extent are NIMD's institutional framework and modus operandi effective and efficient? Under this heading, the evaluators assessed NIMD's *capabilities to deliver on development objectives and to relate*.

4.1 Follow-up to the 2005 evaluation

The 2005 evaluation lauded NIMD's approach and recommended a number of specific actions that the organization could take to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

NIMD's approach
The evaluation developed a theoretical scheme to grasp the essence of NIMD's approach and to identify its unique selling point. This unique selling point was seen to lie in NIMD's capacity to combine complementary identities (related to a distinct set of competencies and objectives): political, developmental and institutional.[41] The theoretical scheme was intended to guide NIMD in consolidating its achievements and to ensure impact in its future programmes. As will become clear in the following, the proposed scheme has not functioned as such and the link between NIMD's approach and development issues was not really developed beyond the objective in the multi-annual plan of creating links between political parties and civil society (see also Chapter 4, which notes that the link with wider development processes was clearly anticipated, but was not clearly defined nor realized in practice.

The hybrid institutional setup of NIMD was seen by the evaluation to support its unique selling point in two ways. First, its staff include a mixture of development professionals employed by NIMD and party-political staff seconded by Dutch political parties, referred to here as political advisors or PACOs. Second, Dutch political parties participate in NIMD's governance through its board and advisory council and participate in programme implementation by mobilizing party experts and 'ambassadors' (high-profile politicians).

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[41] ECDPM (2005) *Institutional evaluation of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD)*, p.10.

Necessary actions for improved efficiency and effectiveness

The 2005 evaluation proposed a number of actions that NIMD needed to take, including (i) deepening its knowledge base, (ii) establishing an advisory board of external experts, (iii) taking time for consolidation, (iv) considering the establishment of local NIMD offices to ensure better follow-up of the processes in the countries where it works, and (v) professionalizing the programme management.

NIMD responded to the recommendations (and proposed actions) by accepting a change programme, the '10 punten programma' in December 2005 (detailed in a document dated March 2006, with 68 points seriously considering the recommendations of the evaluation and endorsed by the board). The NIMD board opted almost immediately not to invest in establishing additional local offices (other than those in Mozambique and in Guatemala), the main reasons being the fear that local NIMD offices would jeopardize local ownership and that they would be too expensive.

Execution of changes

In the execution of its actions for change, NIMD demonstrated its priorities. The evaluation concludes that some lessons learned from the 2005 evaluation proved difficult for NIMD to realize and internalize.[42]

After 2005, NIMD's priorities were to enhance and promote:
- The visibility of NIMD as a portal to knowledge on the practice of supporting democracy through political parties. This was done by creating a Knowledge and Communication Centre,[43] which in practice focused on external communications rather than on building up the institution's knowledge base (despite efforts to engage staff in physical learning platforms).[44] Organizational learning is emerging only within the regional teams that were established in 2007 to promote a more coherent approach, following another recommendation by ECDPM.
- The profile of NIMD as an organization strictly owned by political parties. As such NIMD did not establish an advisory board with experts/professionals, but involved experts in various initiatives of the Knowledge and Communication Centre and through expert meetings.
- The broader unique selling point, *'door politieke partijen voor politieke partijen'*. The concept of the three identities (as defined in the 2005 evaluation) as means to further explore the uniqueness of NIMD was not applied.

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[42] Integrating lessons learned from an evaluation is clearly a quite challenging task, see Burnell, P. Ed. (2007). *Evaluation Democracy Support: Methods and Experiences*. The report (p.38) notes that '*In fact one of the most frequently encountered findings of democracy support evaluations is that the institutional capacity for learning is defective even in organizations that show interest in conducting evaluations and are judged to perform well in other terms too. The NIMD, whose approach to democracy support was commend as innovative and a potential 'best-seller' is an example.*'

[43] In the multi-annual plan 2007–10, the budget for the Knowledge and Communication Centre was €450,000. Expenditures in 2007 were €128,513, and have remained below the original intended amount.

[44] NIMD argues that the focus has been on both sides, but that the process of integrating the Knowledge and Communication Centre with the newly formed teams took longer than was hoped (NIMD's comments on the evaluation, July 2010).

- The growth of NIMD, rather than taking time to consolidate and deepen the substance of the country programmes. From a document prepared for the new multi-annual programme 2007–10, it is clear that an expansion from 2007 onwards was already anticipated in the course of 2006.[45]
- The need to professionalize the programme management was taken to heart, albeit at a moderate speed, through the formulation of job descriptions, setting new requirements for the capacities of political advisors (PACOs), providing training in financial aspects of programme management, harmonizing procedures (in parallel with the formalization of relations with the implementing partners), developing a monitoring and evaluation system from 2009 onwards, etc.

It should be noted that the process of integrating the lessons from the 2005 evaluation was affected by a number of setbacks in the years 2006–9:

1) In 2007, NIMD was confronted with a high turnover of a substantial number of its staff (14 people). This turnover was related to (and needed for) the further professionalization of the organization, such as the need for more skilled political advisors. The turnover coincided with many other changes in the organization, at a time when the institutional knowledge base was not yet fully established.[46]

2) NIMD had to put much more effort than anticipated into identifying external sources of funding, since the requested funding from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not granted (€37.5 million, instead of the €50 million requested).

3) Last, but not least, in early 2008 NIMD was informed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the accounts for the year 2006 would not be accepted because they lacked justification. NIMD did not accept the Ministry's point of view. This started a long and cumbersome process of negotiation to settle the situation, which has still not been resolved (as of April 2010).

[45] In its Voorbereidingsdocument 2de meerjarenplan, November 2005, p.1, NIMD noted that 'It has been agreed that 2006 shall be a year of consolidation and transition for implementing the outcome of the institutional evaluation and in preparation for the new-multi-annual programme. From 2007, the assumption is that the reinforcement will allow IMD to continue to grow in response to the increasing demands for our kind of partnership'.

[46] With the institutional knowledge base, ACE Europe refers to the 2005 evaluation (p.37): 'what is at stake is to some extent a cultural change within NIMD whereby the drive 'to do things' is better balanced with a structured concern, at all levels of the organization, to reflect upon and learn within the organization and with outside partners, to take more time and structured opportunities for inter-programme exchange and for establishing stronger connections between the many diverse programmes'.

4.2 Subquestion 1: What is the added value of NIMD's mandate in the sector of democracy support?

To answer this question, the evaluation framework required the evaluators to look into the uniqueness of NIMD, how NIMD communicated its unique selling point, and its capabilities to adapt and self-renew and to remain coherence. The ToR did not request a study of the sector of democracy support.

Uniqueness of NIMD

This evaluation concludes that the uniqueness of NIMD lies not in its mandate (see Chapter 4). The mandate to support political parties is not 100% unique; other organizations in democracy support can be observed to be strengthening the capacity of political parties to function within democratic systems. Rather, the uniqueness of NIMD lies in its setup and operational modalities, in particular:

- the cooperation between ruling and opposition Dutch parties in NIMD;
- NIMD's capacity to combine different instruments and modalities (with a genuine concern to adapt them to the context of a particular country and to be demand driven), thereby avoiding the pitfalls of traditional party support (such as organizing subsequent training instead of promoting multiparty dialogue); and
- last, but not least, the fact that NIMD does not shy away from maintaining operational relations with political parties, while being impartial and operating in an inclusive way, and acknowledging the risks of the approach while trying to manage them.

NIMD's mandate – or better, its way of working – clearly adds value to the sector of democracy support. This finding is supported by various (research) reports that have taken NIMD's experience as a reference point in dealing with support for democratization and political parties.[47] It is also supported by the fact that the concept of strengthening multiparty democracy appeals to others, and has been adopted by the governments of Denmark, Finland and Canada. NIMD's way of working, in combination with other factors such as strong leadership at the level of the implementing partners, explains the concrete results achieved in different countries (highlighted in the case studies in Chapter 2).

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[47] Wild, L. and Hudson, A. (2009) *UK Support for Political Parties: A Stock-Take*, prepared for DFID and the FCO, ODI; Hudson, A. (2009) *Aid and Domestic Accountability*, revised background paper, DAC network on governance (GOVNET); and several articles by Carothers, T., vice-president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Different stakeholders value other aspects of NIMD's way of working

NIMD's staff and board members, peers and other organizations, and political parties all value different aspects of NIMD's way of working.

Staff and founding members of NIMD. When asked about the uniqueness of NIMD, staff and board members often use the phrase: 'Van politieke partijen voor politieke partijen' ('By political parties for political parties'), referring to the origins and the institutional setup of the organization. There is much less consensus and clarity about the operational principles that should/can be derived from this, beyond the fact that political parties are represented in the governance structures and second political staff to work at NIMD.

Peers, Dutch CSOs, experts and respondents from embassies. For these respondents the fact that NIMD was established by seven political parties (majority/ruling and opposition), and that it demonstrates cooperation across party lines, stands out as a unique feature of the institute.[48] They value this uniqueness of NIMD, since it allows the institute to explore opportunities in young democracies to diminish destructive competition e.g. between ruling and opposition parties (and potentially reduce disruptive conflicts), while preserving the dynamics of party politics and allowing a vibrant 'democracy at work' to emerge.

Political parties. For the political parties in Guatemala, Mali and Kenya, other characteristics of NIMD stand out as unique. These include (i) the principle of ownership, with local parties setting the agenda for programming within the boundaries of the multi-annual plan, and (ii) NIMD's flexibility and the opportunities it offers the parties to access funds for institutional development. From the field missions to Mali, Kenya and Guatemala it can be concluded that there is a strong demand from the political parties for funds that will enable them to play a more significant role in political processes.

The 2005 evaluation. As explained above, the 2005 evaluation reconstructed the uniqueness of NIMD in a different way, highlighting its potential to offer innovative democracy support and thus to influence development processes. However, this potential/uniqueness was not recognized by 90% of NIMD's stakeholders interviewed or questioned through the e-questionnaire. For most of them, it was not an aspiration, which might explain NIMD's lower ambitions with regard to influencing development processes in the country programmes, despite a limited number of examples where NIMD succeeded in ensuring this link (e.g. in the Ghana country programme).[49]

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[48] Unfortunately, two parties represented in parliament after the 2007 elections chose not to be part of NIMD, thus weakening the unique feature of NIMD; some opposition parties do not support NIMD.

[49] NIMD argues that the lower ambition is related to the evolution of the reform agendas and the capacities of its partners. The evaluators argue that this does not exclude having a strategy on how to realize this in the long term.

Communication of the unique selling point

NIMD has developed a broad set of products to support its external communication, such as articles, website, annual reports, videos, publications on research or reflection meetings, etc. These products highlight various aspects of NIMD's mandate and unique selling point:

- The website presents NIMD as an institution that focuses on political parties, and supports their common initiatives and institutional strengthening using expertise from Dutch local political parties (which is in practice quite limited).
- The list of available publications shows that NIMD pays attention to (political) systems in a country (election systems, constitution).
- New types of communication product (such as blogs and videos) portray NIMD as an institution that is able to influence minds and attitudes of individual (political) people.

It is concluded that NIMD has been successful in being visible and communicating its approach in general terms. Depending on which product is consulted, other/different aspects of NIMD are highlighted. One point requires attention: many external stakeholders/respondents were unable to name any of NIMD 'knowledge' products.

Capability to achieve coherence

Several elements in the evaluation suggest that NIMD's capability to achieve coherence is under pressure. We highlight three elements in the following.

The majority of NIMD staff responsible for managing the country programmes stated that the multi-annual plans (with their numerous objectives) are not sufficient in providing the necessary guidelines for their work pursuing their higher objectives, which include being responsive to particular contexts and to be demand driven, to take into account new trends and changes in democracy support, to decide on what to focus, what to avoid, how to do things (based on previous practice, for example), and when and how to challenge partners and political parties with regard to NIMD's mandate and its anticipated impact on development processes.[50]

Staff point to a gap between NIMD's mandate and practice/execution. They need more strategic direction, explicit guidelines and support in designing country programmes and engaging with partners. A first step towards this has been taken, with the creation of regional teams, but staff indicate that NIMD's leadership/management need to provide better strategic guidance.

Further to this, NIMD has not yet described its theory of change. Elements of a theory are scattered over various documents, which may partly explain the lack of guidance experienced by staff. From the findings of the electronic survey, it appears that decision making is informed by different documents, so it is important to ensure that such documents are consistent, and that they are all derived from a shared and accepted theory of change.

[50] A 2008 analysis of the multi-annual plan 2007–10 by the consultancy firm Avance is in line with this finding.

Capability to adapt and self-renew

That NIMD is able to adapt is demonstrated by its initiatives to explore new contexts (Afghanistan, Burundi, countries of the Middle East and North Africa), to start working on its professional capacity, to change the setup of a country programme completely if needed (e.g. Mali and more recently Mozambique), and to change its modalities for supporting capacity development (e.g. to allow support to decentralized activities involving civil society in Guatemala), etc.

The evaluation has looked into the following issues: what triggers adaptation, and what space is available for strategic reflection?

Adaptation triggered by external factors
Most adaptations are triggered by external factors (and then sustained by internal decisions) such as requests from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, questions raised by partners or peers, donors that pull out of programmes in a country, and the lack of ownership of the programme in another country. NIMD is generally very sensitive to such external triggers – and rightly so, because this sensitivity has put the institution on the map of democracy support. The sensitivity is in most cases combined with an open attitude to inputs from other actors/stakeholders – as was apparent from interviews with external stakeholders – allowing other approaches and experiences to feed into operations within the NIMD country programmes.

On the basis of interviews with NIMD staff, the evaluation concludes that NIMD's sensitivity to external triggers tends to overshadow the attention by management to internal triggers such as issues, questions, dilemmas, etc., raised by NIMD staff. This fact, in combination with the lack of direction (see above) creates frustration within the organization and puts pressure on internal communication.

While the large majority of staff remain committed to the mandate and the work of NIMD, there is considerable criticism about the openness and space for dialogue within the organization and the quality of internal communication. The management and directors are aware of these problems and have taken important steps to remedy the situation, such as by organizing 'brown-bag' lunches, sharing information on the NIMD intranet, consultations with staff representatives, and organizing a *tevredenheidsonderzoek* (satisfaction survey) among staff.[51]

Space for strategic reflection
Another aspect of the capability to adapt and self-renew is the space for strategic reflection. There is definitely room for strategic reflection: NIMD is engaging in different spaces at international level (with peers and experts and, over the years, with noticeable more involvement from staff besides its executive director), at country level (with partners), within the Netherlands (with Dutch knowledge institutes related or unrelated to political parties), with staff (during annual meetings such as retreats, or *heidagen*) and within the board (although discussions about the dispute between NIMD and the Ministry have received disproportionate attention in recent years).

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[51]   The results of this research have not been shared with ACE Europe.

There is, however, little synergy between all these initiatives and efforts to improve strategic reflection. Linking the outputs of these separate efforts in a systematic way to the multi-annual plans and at a strategic level (across the different country programmes) is still a challenge.[52]

The most important factor that is currently hampering strategic reflection and learning within NIMD is the approach to (organizational) learning, which has concentrated on the development of knowledge products on particular themes (the 'what') to serve various actors involved in democracy support. The development of products that would support the work of staff on the ground (the 'how') has received much less attention in practice.

4.3 Subquestion 2: To what extent are NIMD's methodology and institutional setup appropriate to its task?

To answer the question regarding the appropriateness of NIMD's methodology and institutional setup, and the capability to act and commit in general, the evaluators looked at the following issues: (i) NIMD's strategy and the theory of change underpinning the approach/methodology; (ii) the decision-making framework; (iii) the involvement of Dutch political parties and their added value; (iv) the M&E system; and (v) the mobilization of resources.

NIMD's strategy
The consecutive multi-annual plans are regarded as reflecting NIMD's strategy. NIMD has a mandate (which is ready for an update because of shifts that have occurred) and it has a multi-annual plan, but in between them there is a gap. Over the years, NIMD has taken up new focus areas (such as post-conflict countries, decentralization, etc.) that deserve to be clearly situated in relation to the mandate and the multi-annual plan. The complex process of formulating the multi-annual plan (with six objectives, four interrelated objectives and five spearheads) clearly demonstrates this gap. Adding angles and volume to the multi-annual plan has not been helpful in providing a clear picture of what NIMD is trying to achieve (and what it is not), why and where (not), or presented in such a way that the theory of change and the 'how' of NIMD's approach is clear not only to the evaluators but also to staff, partners and stakeholders.

A similar remark was made by the 2005 evaluation, but NIMD has made fairly little progress in this area: few explicit strategies were developed and capacity development was simply 'done' more than that it was a structured concern to reflect upon.[53] For example, the relationship between democracy support through political parties and development processes is not clear, and there is no real consensus about this link within NIMD according

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[52]   NIMD regularly commissions country evaluations, and the lessons learned are shared with partners and provide feedback for the country work programmes.

[53]   ECDPM (2005) *Institutional evaluation of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)*, p.37.

to the e-questionnaire respondents.[54] In the Latin America team, the link with development processes is felt as natural, while in the Africa team there has been some reflection.[55] In interviews, some staff, especially the Latin America team members, gave several examples of how programmes in that part of the world address development issues. In Bolivia, for example, where 'development' is a prime issue for all members of society and in the political arena, it is hard to see how political capacity development could fail to consider development issues, either indirectly or even quite explicitly.[56] The Mali case study highlighted the fact that NIMD is expecting indirect spillovers from its approach to party strengthening on the (realization of the) development agenda.[57]

Framework for decision making

In 2003, addressing a growing organization, the NIMD board decided to cease its day-to-day hands-on management and instead govern NIMD at a distance. While the board takes decisions on multi-annual programmes, new countries, annual plans and reports, recommendations of evaluations and relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other strategic partners, responsibility for implementation and the accountability for implementation rests with management.

In 2005, the board delegated most of its tasks to the executive director in the framework of the professionalization of the management of the organization. In 2007 a deputy director was recruited and a management team was installed. This team comprises the director and deputy director, the coordinators of the newly established regional teams, the coordinator of the Knowledge and Communication Centre and the controller.

A change in governance structure was decided by adapting the statutes in November 2009, e.g. the *raad van toezicht* (oversight committee) was renamed an advisory council (which advises the board) and a new position of independent financial expert within the board has been created to strengthen professional oversight of NIMD's finances. New changes are upcoming: in the course of 2009, the political parties (through the board) expressed their wish for an in-depth review of the governance structures, for two main reasons: (i) the need to remove any (even unjustified) suspicion of conflicts of interest between NIMD governance and active politicians in the Board, and (ii) the need to understand better/be more

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54 In the electronic survey, only 34% of respondents recognized that NIMD combines political, institutional (OD) and development work; 38% thought that it focuses only on political work. Most respondents (66%) did not want to change the focus, while 17% did want change.

55 See suggestions for changing the bilateral programme in the memo on party support strategy 2011–14. This reflection is very recent (emerging in 2009, consolidated in 2010), and demonstrates a shift in the regional team for Africa. The idea is to pay more attention to the role of political parties in society and to promote a more pro-active approach based on a clear NIMD agenda on bilateral party financing. This change is based on learning from the Mali case study, where bilateral party funding is still ongoing.

56 Such appreciation was confirmed by the evaluators' scrutiny of recent (co)publications in which the Bolivian Foundation for Multiparty Democracy (fBDM) was involved, which effectively illustrate that development angle.

57 NIMD's focus on political parties is justified with regard to cost-effectiveness, but it limits the capacity of the NIMD to achieve its higher objectives related to development.

involved in the work of NIMD (how it is done, what the strategic issues are and what results are being achieved).[58]

Recently, several issues have emerged that have put more pressure on the current decision-making framework: (i) the provision of information at the level of the board and advisory council; (ii) the circuit of preparing and influencing decisions taken by the board; and (iii) the strong feeling at various levels within NIMD that they are restricted by decisions over which they have control. For example, the executive director and deputy director vis-à-vis the management of their dossier by the Ministry, from the members of the management team vis-à-vis the executive director and deputy director, because they are there not to take decisions but to advise.

The first two issues point to the real risk of a disconnect between the board/advisory council and the operational side of NIMD. Typically, there is a tension between those at the receiving end of information (board and council members) and those who have an information advantage (NIMD's executive director and deputy director). Respondents clearly indicated (in interviews and in comments recorded in the minutes of several meetings) that this tension was not always very well managed: they sometimes feel caught out by initiatives taken by NIMD's executive director, and/or point to the fact that they do not receive appropriate information.

In 2008, measures were proposed within the board (in the frame of *draagvlak*), in consultation with the executive and deputy director, to enhance the members' involvement in and understanding of NIMD's work on the ground. PACOs were explicitly assigned to go through all board documents in order to prepare meetings with representatives of their respective political parties in the NIMD board.[59] Lengthy progress reports are produced for each board meeting; each agenda comes with a one-page document detailing the decisions the board is requested to make. Large documents have been complemented with special readers summarizing the key issues. To date, the political parties do not consider this a satisfactory solution, although they agree that part of the responsibility for the problem lies with them as well. Board members from several parties feel that the information they receive for meetings could be improved: the information comes in bulk, but it is not what they 'need to know', but information that is 'good to know'. There is too much focus on how important NIMD is, and too little on substance or concrete results.

With regard to the circuit for decision making, involving PACOs to enhance the involvement of board members, has had the negative side effect that it is disturbing the agreed/formal mechanisms for decision making. In practice, a parallel system was created where PACOs

[58] Discussions are ongoing based on a proposal from two members of the advisory council (*raad van advies*). The political parties have requested the management to develop different scenarios and outline their respective advantages and possible risks. A first decision has been taken to rename the *raad van toezicht* an advisory council (as it had already been functioning as an advisory rather than a controlling body) and to have an independent treasurer (*penningmeester*) who does not speak for or represent any political party.

[59] Report on '*draagvlak*', in the documents for the board meeting of February 2008.

sometimes think (they can act) as board members, which has in some cases created a distance between them other staff. On the other hand, decisions have sometimes been prepared through direct contacts between NIMD management and party members from parliament outside the board, which tends to create confusion within the parties.

Involvement of Dutch political parties

Political parties in the Netherlands are committed to NIMD and are involved in various ways: (i) participating in the governance structures; (ii) providing inputs as advisors/experts or ambassadors to the country programmes (to a limited extent); and (iii) seconding party staff as PACOs to NIMD.

Given the challenging context of democracy support and following NIMD's demand-driven approach, the evaluators find that NIMD has made the right choice not to focus its support on the development of bilateral relations between political parties[60] and to identify and develop other forms of involvement, such as the roles of experts or ambassadors. From practice, however, what role Dutch politicians can play in the country programmes is not clear; the conditions for success are quite difficult to fulfil, and good examples are limited. NIMD staff are aware of this challenge. Clearly, the main added value of involving Dutch politicians in the programmes is to open doors and to create a space of trust in the multiparty dialogue by involving peers who have proven to be able to interact with their adversaries in a constructive and nonviolent manner. Within NIMD (and the Africa team in particular) new ideas are currently emerging on how to better involve Dutch politicians, such as by linking them to a country programme for longer periods. The evaluators can support these steps as relevant.

The most obvious added value of the PACOs lies in the opportunities, offered and realized, for NIMD to tap into existing networks of Dutch political parties and to maintain operational relations with political parties, which is part of the uniqueness of NIMD, as argued above. However, there is no evidence that the function of PACOs automatically guarantees good quality political analyses, as some respondents noted.

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[60] This choice became increasingly clear from 2006 onwards. There is another funding programme, the MATRA programme, that allows for this kind of cooperation: MATRA funds from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs allow political parties to establish direct cooperation relations with their counterparts in countries in Eastern Europe and central Asia. The Dutch political parties have no access to funds for liaising with parties in the South. Since 2006, NIMD has been engaged in the MATRA forum for consultation, which was established at the request of the MATRA foundations linked to the political parties. This consultation is intended to promote information exchange rather than synergy and communication, and is generally considered useful by stakeholders (according to an internal evaluation in 2008).

M&E system

Following the 2005 evaluation, NIMD was urged to pay more attention to monitoring and evaluation. In 2009, a good but late start was made with the recruitment of an M&E officer to design an M&E system.[61] Since 2007 some *ad hoc* and separate initiatives have been undertaken, including an analysis of existing formats and tools for reporting in 2009. In addition, the activities of a working group on the issue have informed the preparation of the new multi-annual plan (2011–15).

NIMD is currently still in the process of setting up of a comprehensive M&E system and is in search of the best way to monitor its operations and evaluate the results achieved. This search has not gone unnoticed by other actors in the field; a recent report by the UK's Overseas Development Institute, for example, suggests that NIMD is ahead of other institutes dealing with democracy support.[62]

The evaluation observed a number of substantial challenges:
- Clearly concluding on conclusions and recommendations from evaluations; discussion on the conclusions is common practice within NIMD but these processes are not always clearly concluded (or integrated NIMD-wide).
- Harmonizing and standardizing the various M&E tools and formats.
- Conducting proper baseline studies, focusing on the state of affairs with respect to those areas that the programme aims to improve (also very relevant for the bilateral programmes).
- Combining accountability with a learning process (learning on the basis of practice and results achieved means linking the findings with the overall programme and strategy, and with the stakeholders and beneficiaries (vertical feedback).[63] Currently such links are not yet always made.
- Developing an NIMD-wide policy on internal and external evaluations. In accordance with the current financial framework, NIMD carries out evaluations of two country programmes per year (by teams of external/independent consultants)[64] and an institutional evaluation every four years.

Addressing these challenges should allow NIMD to design an M&E system that is adapted to the kinds of outcome that NIMD hopes to achieve. Some experience with monitoring has been built up in a number of country programmes (Georgia and Guatemala) that could be relevant for others.

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[61] Unfortunately, the M&E officer left NIMD before the end of 2009 and has not yet been replaced (as of April 2010).

[62] Wild, L. and Hudson, A. (2009) *UK support for Political Parties: A Stock-Take*, p.26: '*The NIMD appears to be a leader in this field, having developed indicator-based frameworks for assessing impact in three areas: institutional development criteria, political party-party system nexus and party-civil society relationship*'.

[63] See the report of the Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, WRR (2010) *Minder pretentie, meer ambitie. Ontwikkelingshulp die het verschil maakt*, p.213.

[64] During the period under review, six country programmes have been evaluated by external consultants (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Nicaragua, Suriname and Ecuador) and one by an internal evaluation team (Georgia).

Effective resource mobilization

NIMD is highly dependent on the financial support of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This entails some challenges for the mobilization of human and financial resources.

Human resources
NIMD employs 32 staff (as of 2010), of which 18 staff in The Hague deal with the country programmes: two regional team coordinators, eight PACOs, three junior policy officers and five policy officers). Some PACOs request a strict division of tasks between them and policy officers (with PACOs focusing on political analysis and sharing programme formulation with the policy officer), but this is not always observed in practice. The number of people and country programmes clearly requires the flexible and cost-effective use of resources and this creates tension around job descriptions.

The evaluators identified a number of factors that seem to hamper the efficient mobilization of human resources (HR): (i) the country programmes are still key in the division of tasks (whereas the regional setup of NIMD is the framework); and (ii) the mobilization of HR is not based on competences needed to do the job, but on the division of tasks between PACOs and policy officers. It seems that the Latin America team is more flexible in this respect: the small size of team forced the team members to look for alternative ways of managing programmes and achieving common objectives.

NIMD has invested in improving the financial skills of its policy officers, and has paid more attention to managerial skills in recruiting new staff. The evaluators note, however, that there is no plan to develop the advisory capacities of PACOs and policy officers; although most of them are not recruited as advisors, they are expected to engage with partners (confirmed by interviewees).

Financial resources
As noted at the beginning of this report, NIMD wanted to access funding from sources/donors outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It established a specific multilateral programme unit (the MP Unit, later integrated into the regional teams), which was assigned to develop programmes to be financed by new donors, and drew up a draft policy on strategic partnerships to this end (although the draft was not finalized). One of the main tasks of the regional team coordinators is to identify additional sources of funding.

NIMD has not been able to realize this ambition. The multi-annual plan 2007–10 mentioned a budget of €44 million, which means that €6.5 million needed to be sourced from external funds. At the end of 2009 it was projected that NIMD would be able to obtain (only) €3 million in additional funds. The policy on strategic partnerships helped NIMD to find additional money for the partners and their projects, but not for NIMD programmes. An explanatory factor is that the donor community tends to be reluctant to put money into

programmes that directly support political parties (risk avoidance).[65] Staff also believe that NIMD should put in more effort into equipping and supporting them in writing funding proposals.

4.4 Subquestion 3: To what extent are the institutional framework and modus operandi effective and efficient?

To answer this question the evaluators looked at NIMD's capabilities to deliver on development objectives and to relate. First, to assess NIMD's capability to deliver on development objectives, the evaluators analyzed: (i) emerging patterns of impact; (ii) modalities for execution; and (iii) the relevance and alignment of policies and links with aid effectiveness, including context sensitivity. The section concludes with a discussion of NIMD's capability to relate.

Emerging patterns of impact

Based on the field missions, interviews and desk studies carried out for the institutional part of the evaluation, it can be concluded that NIMD has delivered results at the output and outcome levels, as summarized in table 6.

Some observations in relation to the determination of results:
- Desk studies alone do not provide sufficient information on which to base a conclusive impact assessment. The studies of NIMD's country programmes in Guatemala, Kenya and Mali provide more information.
- In each of NIMD's country programmes, the pace of implementation, and the focus (on the areas/objectives defined in the multi-annual plan) depend on the context (context-specific).
- It is very difficult to attribute changes in capabilities to NIMD's inputs, since the 'how' of interventions is insufficiently documented by NIMD. A start with capitalizing on the 'how' is made with the case studies. The factors that explain these results are highlighted in Chapter 2.

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[65] NIMD points to other difficulties related to the way that bilateral donors are organized. Within the EU, for example, thinking has not yet evolved to allow for the Spanish cooperation agency to fund a Dutch institute.

Table 6	Overview of results achieved by NIMD's programmes.		
Multiparty system	**Political parties**	**Relations with civil society**	**Networking**
Outputs			
Space (for dialogue) joint policy advocacy actions Improved functioning of parliamentary groups	Provision of (demand-driven) technical assistance and support Strengthened organizational development	Creation of/ support for platforms for interaction facilitation of the setup of mechanisms for interaction (e.g. The socio-economic council in Guatemala) Support for civic education programmes (democracy schools)	Strong multi-actor approach (e.g. Guatemala) Alliances between the implementing partners and international donors/ agencies Lobbying (mainly from Europe) for an EU alternative to democracy assistance Advocacy for donor coordination (promoting partners and CMDs as hubs)
Outcomes			
Institutionalized and owned spaces for cross-party dialogue New/amended laws allowing more robust multiparty political systems Less confrontational political environment (in dealing with proposals for reforms)	Coordinated contributions by political parties to policies/law making Emerging space for party members other than leaders	not yet visible	Resource mobilization on the ground is taking place

Relevance and alignment

In general, NIMD is well aware of the need to align with government policies (Dutch and local). While there is no explicit policy on alignment, several documents and activities related to the country programmes refer to NIMD's concern to link its programmes to the activities and policies of governments and donors, while also respecting the demand-driven character of its programmes. NIMD has always argued (and is supported in this by researchers) that its programmes should be adapted to the context of a particular country.

To ensure alignment, NIMD invests in the analysis of context and liaises with important stakeholders during missions/work visits. To understand the context, NIMD staff rely on their implementing partners in each country, and on in-house political advisors. Overall, it can be concluded that NIMD staff in general have access to reliable information.

In 2008, NIMD introduced a format for context analysis that included questions to serve the political analysis. This led to improvements in the quality of context analyses in recent years, at least for some countries (this was also recognized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its comments on NIMD reports). However, the Ministry argues that there is still too much description/narrative and too little analysis (this was confirmed by several NIMD staff members). Political analysis is at times seen to be disconnected from (readily available) socio-economic data.

Follow-up on the quality of (bilateral) programmes

There is evidence from the case studies that NIMD's relations with its partners have evolved to more (multi-annual) programmatic partner relations that allow home-grown agendas for democratic reform to develop which create space for genuine policy dialogue and deeper partnerships and ownership.

With this evolution towards programmatic partner relations, however, new challenges have emerged:

- The role of the CMDs. In 2006, NIMD began seriously reconsidering the role of CMDs, in view of the many changes in local contexts, and the new challenges that emerged). It has already influenced partner relations (see the Kenya case study report).
- Direct funding for political parties. In 2007, NIMD introduced a performance-based scheme for allocating resources to political parties (bilateral programmes). Funding is possible for political parties on the basis of plans/projects submitted, and follow-up is ensured by monitoring and evaluation and audits. There are different funding modalities, including direct funding and reimbursement of the costs of activities or of providing technical assistance/expertise at the request of the political party. In most countries, direct funding has been halted because many recipients were unable to account for the money received. The Africa regional team has recently developed a new strategy that takes into account the learned lessons from these experiences.[66]

These challenges require NIMD staff to have good management skills, including the ability to enter into dialogue with partners (at different levels), to enhance cohesion, to resolve conflicts, to negotiate and to mediate. The evaluation concludes that there is considerable room for improvement in these areas: the lack of clear guidelines and of a policy for improving the competences of staff (in their role as advisors and facilitators) is currently hampering to various degrees the capacity of staff to engage in critical dialogue with the partners.

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[66]   Although NIMD has invested a lot in helping its partners to report regularly in a transparent way, the M&E function of programme management is still weakly developed at the level of partners and political parties in the bilateral programmes. The general conclusion in the NIMD document, and supported by this evaluation, is that although there are examples of good and effective activities, NIMD is not really able to assess and draw lessons from the performance of the political parties in relation to the objectives they have set for themselves.

Capability to relate

As mentioned above, NIMD is a visible participant in EU and international forums, in networks of other players in the sector of democracy support, and in networks.[67] It also interacts with a number of Dutch institutes for training, debate, research and execution of programmes. The latter include institutes related to political parties, as well as development NGOs such as Hivos or Cordaid (e.g. in the framework of the development of the MENA programme and, most recently, for cooperation in the Malawi country programme).

External stakeholders understand that NIMD works directly with political parties, and is recognized for its integrity and credibility among peers, donors and embassies. NIMD has also interested other donors in allowing partners to access additional funds. The country programmes in Georgia (desk study) and in Ecuador (where NIMD is working with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IDEA) provide proof that NIMD is capable of working together in programmes financed by third parties.

Through its policy on strategic partnerships, NIMD has tried to secure more donor funds for its partners and their programmes, as described above. NIMD understands that more could and should be done in this area. Hence, its engagement in changing the EU sector of democracy assistance was quite far-reaching (mainly through the executive director) and has resulted in the formulation of a European Agenda and in the creation of the European Partnership for Democracy (EDP) lobby office in Brussels.[68] NIMD has not yet succeeded in mainstreaming its approach in the donor agenda, and it is realistic to expect that this might take some years. On the one hand, the international networks in which NIMD is engaged are too loose to be able to leverage power, and on the other, the traditional and bigger players in the sector of democracy support strongly defend their vested interests.

The relations between NIMD and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs suffered following the dispute on the use of funds in 2006. NIMD sees itself as a partner of the Ministry (and the embassies) and not just as a recipient of government funding. Responsibility for the lack of success of this 'partnering' in recent years lies with both the Ministry and NIMD, although NIMD has established good relations with embassies within the framework of the country programmes. The evaluators note that many of the Ministry's questions about the content of the programmes (in order to understand NIMD's aims) are relevant, and can be related to the vagueness of NIMD's theory of change.

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[67] Networks such as the World Movement for Democracy, the Community of Democracy and the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD).

[68] ACE Europe did not examine the activities of EPD and its involvement/interaction with NIMD. ACE Europe understands that there is some competition between EPD and ENOP (the organization created by the German foundations for democracy support) but is unable say more about this in relation to NIMD's capability to relate.

4.5　Conclusions on the institutional evaluation

Added value
NIMD's way of working (rather than its mandate) adds value to the sector of democracy support. The uniqueness of the organization is apparent in its operational setup and execution. The evaluators can refer to (i) the thought given to the combination of a set of instruments and intervention modalities (such as the support for institutionalizing multiparty dialogue); (ii) the cooperation within NIMD between ruling and opposition parties in the Netherlands; and (iii) NIMD's explicit choice to maintain operational relations with political parties (even in difficult circumstances). Elements of this uniqueness have been recognized by external stakeholders and are portrayed in various communication products. It should be noted that the political parties (in the countries visited) value in particular the opportunity to have direct access to funds that enable them to function.

Capability to adapt and self-renew
As an institution, NIMD has demonstrated its capability to adapt, although mainly in response to external triggers. Over the years, NIMD has focused on new areas that have not been well situated in relation to its mandate. The sensitivity to external triggers clearly has its positive sides: (i) it has made NIMD highly visible (in international circles) and even inspiring as a model for similar initiatives in other countries; (ii) it has allowed NIMD to adapt its approaches (as in Mali); and (iii) it has enhanced NIMD's credibility with partners and external stakeholders. In the countries visited, NIMD's sensitivity (to local demands) is highly valued by partners/ stakeholders. NIMD is thus seen to give space for home-grown agendas to be articulated and owned by actors from political society (mainly political parties).

But this sensitivity to external triggers has its downsides. NIMD has failed to (i) conclude clearly on some internal reflection processes (or needs articulated by staff at NIMD The Hague), e.g. on the institutionalization of the CMDs, strategic partnerships, developing knowledge tools for internal use and developing a gender policy; and (ii) to find synergy in various modalities, ways of operating and the contents of the country programmes. NIMD is strong in developing new ideas and programmes, but less attentive to deepening existing initiatives, striving for quality and building the knowledge of NIMD and its staff. The attention to internal triggers for change within NIMD The Hague has been weak over the years and calls for efforts to ensure that staff and management further improve the management of the country programmes.

The establishment of regional teams in 2007 has allowed for learning on the basis of experience, but as yet there is little organizational learning (focusing on the 'how' of supporting learning that meets the needs of staff and not only on the 'what' for external use).

Capability to achieve coherence

NIMD's coherence is under pressure. The management of 17 country programmes requires clear operational guidelines and staff at NIMD HQ have indicated that strategic guidance and clear direction are currently insufficient.

Capability to act and commit

The current decision making framework (governance structures, executive and deputy directors and management) is under pressure and under review. Respondents from political parties that are members of NIMD have confirmed that this was still the case in April 2010. The main challenge is to strengthen the connection between governance/political parties and management by improving the provision of information for strategic decision making. The evaluators do not suggest that the hybrid setup of NIMD should change, as it clearly adds value, but there is room for improvement in how NIMD mobilizes Dutch party expertise in a more effective way. This point has recently been addressed in the organization.

Several weaknesses limit the NIMD's capability to act and commit. First, a general weakness is linked to the fact that NIMD views the dispute with the Ministry as an external factor that is hampering its performance, whereas the case is that of shared responsibility. A second element is NIMD's difficulty in mobilizing additional external resources, although it should be recognized that donors tend to fear putting money into programmes that directly support political parties (risk avoidance). Finally, NIMD has not formulated and documented an explicit theory of change that can guide decisions and function as a basis for clear guidelines and operational principles to serve staff in developing and managing country programmes. One point that requires attention in the future is the further development of an M&E system, which was started late in the process of professionalizing the programme management.

Capability to deliver on development objectives

NIMD has taken important steps to improve its capability to deliver on development objectives. Between 2005 and 2010, NIMD The Hague made progress in addressing a number of important issues, including: multi-annual programming, starting the standardization of internal processes (such as M&E), exchanges of experiences within the country teams (learning is improving); external communication and branding; formalizing its relations with partners (including stricter reporting criteria to improve accountability); assisting partners in mobilizing financial resources from other donors; and cooperating and forming alliances with donors and Dutch and international NGOs.

Points that require attention are related to the capacity of NIMD staff to engage in critical dialogue with partners, to conduct context analyses and to follow up on the quality of the bilateral programmes, as well as the organization of the division of tasks within and beyond the regional teams. (i) The evaluation concludes that the capacity of NIMD staff to engage with partners and to challenge them on the longer-term objectives of NIMD in order to ensure and/or clarify the (anticipated) effects and impacts of their work is not always readily available. Staff are not trained or supported to take up advisory roles. (ii) NIMD's capacity to

conduct context analyses (not only political but also socio-economic) is not yet fully developed. (iii) NIMD is currently exploring a new approach for determining and following up on the quality of bilateral programmes, which is a step forward. (iv) Finally, the division of tasks within and beyond the regional teams still raises a lot of questions. Clearly, this is also linked to the formulation of a theory of change,[69] and the balance between the political and development expertise that is needed to address and manage challenges in each region and country programme.

Capability to relate

The majority of respondents (outside NIMD) appreciate the organization for its professional interactions with third parties and its way of working. NIMD is quite visible at EU and international forums and its voice is being heard. Its efforts to influence the EU agenda for democracy support are laudable and important.

The NIMD's lobbying to secure additional donor funds to support political parties and the acceptance of the CMDs (and other partners) as trustworthy channels for donor funding to promote and sustain multiparty dialogue clearly requires further effort.

The above conclusions lead to the following answers to question 5 in the ToR:

'What is the added value of NIMD's mandate, the appropriateness of NIMD's methodology and the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional frame-work in which the mandate is implemented?'

It is NIMD's way of working rather than its mandate that adds value to the sector of democracy support. In particular, the concept of multiparty dialogue, the efforts to institutionalize it and the explicit choice of NIMD to maintain operational relations with all political parties add value. NIMD's methodology is based on the principles of ownership, inclusivity and creating space for local processes to develop. The application of these principles is ensured and partly explains the results of the country programmes. NIMD is thus capable of delivering results that are visible and are appreciated in the field and by external stakeholders. NIMD is genuinely demand driven, dares to take risks, is flexible and respectful of its partners and its approach creates space for local actors to manage the processes of change. The results have generally allowed the development of home-grown agendas for change in the countries where NIMD is active (with different degrees of success, depending on the local context).

The hybrid structure of NIMD is still relevant. It is owned by Dutch political parties who are members of the governance structures, provide access to political expertise and propose political advisors to work in NIMD's office. Some challenges to efficiency and effectiveness

[69] In fact, different theories of change can be reconstructed from various documents and from interviews with several staff members. This is causing different types of problems: the development of an effective M&E system (the multi-annual programme is overloaded with information that could be taken out to allow monitoring to be more effective), and the process of formulating a new multi-annual plan is cumbersome (as reported by various respondents), etc.

are clear, such as the division of tasks between political advisors and programme officers, and the effectiveness of inputs of Dutch party experts to NIMD's programmes, which are currently under revision. Further to this, the evaluation concludes that the provision of information to the board for strategic decision making is currently inadequate.

NIMD has invested in the professionalization of its operations, although the further development of a coherent M&E system, context analyses of regions and countries and the development of an adapted internal system of learning require further attention. Finally, the organization needs to formulate a theory of change in order to enhance the efficiency, coherence and effectiveness of its operations. Such a theory of change could make some things easier for NIMD:
- It would ease the process of formulating multi-annual plans: a number of things in the plan could be easily upgraded to provide elements of a theory of change, and so avoid unnecessarily overloading the operational plans.
- It would help to distinguish between policy/strategic and operational processes (execution of the country programmes), and this might clarify where the NIMD board should come in (steering on main points and according to the theory of change).
- It would provide a firm basis for developing clear guidelines for staff on how to deal with new opportunities and how to deepen the country programmes.
- It can/should clarify the relationship between democracy support through political parties and development processes.

Annexes

Annex 1 About IOB

Objectives

The objective of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) is to increase insight into the implementation and effects of Dutch foreign policy. IOB meets the need for independent evaluation of policy and operations in all policy fields falling under the Homogeneous Budget for International Cooperation (HGIS). IOB also advises on the planning and implementation of the evaluations for which policy departments and embassies are responsible. Its evaluations enable the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation to account to parliament for policy and the allocation of resources. In addition, the evaluations aim to derive lessons for the future.

Efforts are accordingly made to incorporate the findings of evaluations into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' policy cycle. Evaluation reports are used to provide targeted feedback, with a view to improving both policy intentions and
implementation. Insight into the outcome of implemented policy allows policy makers to devise measures that are more effective and focused.

Approach and methodology

IOB has a staff of experienced evaluators and its own budget. When carrying out evaluations, it calls on the assistance of external experts with specialized knowledge of the topic under investigation. To monitor its own quality, it sets up a reference group for each evaluation, which includes not only external experts but also interested parties from within the Ministry.

Programme

The evaluation programme of IOB is part of the programmed evaluations annex of the explanatory memorandum to the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

An organisation in development

Since IOB was established in 1977, major shifts have taken place in its approach, areas of focus and responsibilities. In its early years, its activities took the form of separate project evaluations for the Minister for Development Cooperation. Around 1985, evaluations became more comprehensive, taking in sectors, themes and countries. Moreover, IOB's reports were submitted to parliament, and thus entered the public domain.

The year 1996 saw a review of foreign policy and a reorganization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, IOB's mandate was extended to include evaluations of the Dutch government's entire foreign policy. In recent years, it has extended its partnerships with similar departments in other countries, for instance, through joint evaluations.

Finally, IOB also aims to expand its methodological repertoire. This includes placing greater emphasis on statistical methods of impact evaluation. Since 2007 IOB has undertaken policy reviews as a type of evaluation.

Annex 2 Overview of the reports

De Lange, P. & Feddes, R. (2008). *General Terms of Reference, 'Evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development' Evidence-based case studies on how to support organisational development effectively.*

Bartholomeeussen, S., Molen, N. & Dhaene, C. (2009). *Inception report NIMD of the Institutional- and Capacity development evaluation.*

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Samandu, L. & Vrankckx, A. (2009). *Evidence-based case study of NIMD's country programme in Guatemala.*

Kasumba, G. & Bartholomeeussen, S. (2010). *Evidence-based case study: support to the centre for multiparty democracy (CMD-K) and political parties in Kenya.*

Dhaene, C. & Vranckx, A. (2010). *NIMD (2006–2009) Institutional evaluation.*

For the names of all individuals consulted during the three country visits (Guatemala, Mali and Kenya) and during the visit to the regional WARPP programme (Ghana and Togo), please see the lists included in the individual case study reports.

Similarly, for the names of individuals consulted in relation to the institutional evaluation, see the lists included in the institutional evaluation report and/or the inception report.

The documents consulted are listed in the individual case study reports and the institutional evaluation report.

All reports are available upon request from IOB.

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Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, WRR (2010). *Minder pretentie, meer ambitie. Ontwikkelingshulp die het verschil maakt*, p.213. Den Haag: WRR.

Wild, L. & Hudson, A. (2009). *UK Support for Political Parties: A Stock-Take*. Prepared for DFID and the FCO. London: ODI.

Annex 4 Feedback on the methodology

The evaluation team offers the following comments on the evaluation methodology:

1 Core capabilities are complex concepts that require the participants to have a high level of analytical competence to be able to understand and appreciate them. In the case studies we were dealing with people with different academic backgrounds and hence in many ways the concepts were difficult to understand by some respondents.

2 The participatory approach worked well as a means of gathering collective views and consensus from participating actors and in enabling stakeholders to learn about the evaluation methodology. The challenge was that a large number of organizations were involved. So, due to lack of time, only one participatory discussion was possible for each of the organizations in the sample. Therefore, the evaluation questions could not be covered exhaustively in one focus group discussion.

3 Despite the efforts of the evaluation team to explain the purpose of the evaluation mission to the participating organizations, most of them did not fully understand the difference between a programmatic evaluation and a conventional project performance evaluation. In fact, many of the political parties misunderstood the purpose of the evaluation, thinking that it had a bearing on future allocation of NIMD funding to political parties. Therefore, in a way, this affected how they responded to the evaluation questions and their appreciation of the process.

4 For some of the capacity indicators – such as the adequacy of organizational facilities; operational credibility/reliability of organizations; leadership commitment to achieving coherence of the organizations, etc. – it was very difficult to find empirical data in the context of a political/governance sector. In many ways, the conclusions are based on the respondents' views, which varied widely. Therefore, in the end, we made generalizations based on non-similar qualitative arguments in constructing our overall findings, especially on the situation of political parties. This is a major challenge to the scientific quality of the evaluation methodology.

5 Similarly, impacts were difficult to ascertain and evaluate, given the qualitative nature of the outputs and outcomes of the organizations and the limited scope of the evaluation process. In many ways, outcomes were a function of other factors outside the influence of the organizations that we were evaluating, but it was very difficult to separate these external influences in the given timeframe.

Evaluation Studies published by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) 2005-2010

Evaluation studies published before 2005 can be found on the IOB website: www.minbuza.nl/iob

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Support for capacity development has long been an important aspect of Netherlands development cooperation. This evaluation aims to provide insights into the support of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) and its success in strengthening multiparty systems in developing countries. This one of seven studies is carried out in the context of an extensive evaluation of the impacts of capacity development activities financed through Dutch development organizations. The research for the NIMD evaluation began by examining the processes and results at the level of the partners of NIMD, and then assessed these findings against NIMD's theory of change. The evaluation is based on case studies of NIMD's work in Guatemala, Kenya and Mali and an institutional evaluation of NIMD itself.