



DIPD PROGRAMME REPORT 2018-2021

COUNTERING DEMOCRATIC DECLINE

DIPD
DANISH INSTITUTE FOR
PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY



DIPD Programme Report for 2018-2021

This publication reports on the January 2018-June 2021 DIPD Programme Phase. The 2018-2021 vision of the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy was to contribute to the development of well-functioning democratic political parties and multiparty systems in strong democratic cultures in emerging democracies.

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FOREWORD

COUNTERING DEMOCRATIC DECLINE

In the last four years, the world has faced unforeseen challenges. From the accelerating decline of global democracy and the rise of autocratisation to the wide-ranging effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Democracy is under pressure and the need for democratic political parties to protect democracy is dire.

9 November 2019 the world marked the 30-year anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. While the demolition of the Berlin Wall highlighted the symbolic end of history and the rise of a free and democratic world, the anniversary offered an alarming reminder that democracy can never be taken for granted. 30 years down the road, the global progress made by liberal democracy has been lost, and the level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen is back to the level found around 1990.

Within this context, the COVID-19 pandemic has added further challenges for parties, movements and activists fighting for democracy around the globe. These challenges are just as prevalent amongst the countries where both DIPD and Danish political parties offer democracy support.



“ The COVID-19 pandemic has added further challenges for parties and activists fighting for democracy around the globe

In Myanmar, the military brought the slow but ongoing process of democratisation to an abrupt end in February 2021. 10 years after the military ordered the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, she was again arrested as part of a coup d'état, so the country has returned to square one. In those 10 years, DIPD assisted Myanmar to take its first democratic steps, by building the capacity of young and female party members and by facilitating dialogue and cooperation between the growing number of political parties.

In Kenya, the Danish Liberal Party's partnership with the Centre for Multiparty Democracy has continued its support for a more inclusive and peaceful political culture. In a country that continues to struggle with political and ethnic animosity, the insistence on peaceful political dialogue and the leadership of the People's Dialogue Festival are strong contributions to the continued development of Kenya's democracy.

In Colombia, the Red-Green Alliance's partnership with the Marcha Patriótica movement seeks to create

unity and compliance in the complicated implementation of the 2016 peace agreement. After many years of armed conflict, building a new democratic order in Colombia will take time and through this partnership a few valuable building blocks are already being formed.

In September 2020, DIPD celebrated its 10-year anniversary. It has been an exciting – and sometimes bumpy – road to travel, which has given both partners and the Danish political parties in DIPD plenty of appetite to develop strong and effective partnerships.

DIPD marked the anniversary with the development of a new multi-annual strategy, which takes stock of the efforts and achievements from over 10 years of partnerships and of a dramatically altered world. With its new strategy, DIPD together with Denmark's political parties will seek to offer our partners stronger support to counter democratic decline. Through trust, dialogue, and collaboration we will provide hope for the many struggling for democracy every day.




Lisbeth Pilegaard,
Executive Director




Kasper Sand Kjær,
Chair of the Board



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 'The Youth Island' outside Copenhagen the Danish political parties joined forces to host a gathering of youth politicians from partner-countries to team up in debates on politics and exchange of know-how.

Looking back at the Programme period 2018-2021, DIPD has pursued strengthening democratic political parties and well-functioning multiparty systems through:

- Building on the capacity of political parties to function in a more democratic manner through sharing ideas and expertise on how to run, develop and operate in an accountable and representative manner.
- Enhancing multiparty dialogue and collaboration. The focus so far has been on bringing political parties around the same table to engage in dialogue on issues of joint or national concern.

DIPD partnerships have started new initiatives, such as democracy festivals in Nepal and Kenya, which have contributed to stabilising democracy; these initiatives afforded political parties the opportunity to expand national dialogues on pressing issues, such as governance deficits.

Danish political parties have strengthened their engagement in democracy projects through partnerships with other political parties, where they provide unique peer-to-peer learning. This includes experience sharing on the inner workings of Danish political parties, on electoral processes and on promotional measures to involve women and youth in politics. Other types of engagement include political mentoring for women and dialogue sessions for policy reform and technical briefings.

THEMATIC FOCUS

Lessons learnt from 2018-2021 especially revolve around political party support under four programmatic themes: women's representation, youth representation, intra-party organisation, and multiparty dialogue.

DIPD's work has strengthened inclusive structures for women in political parties and has contributed to strengthening policies that enable women to overcome the challenges of gaining representation.

Many DIPD interventions have reinforced youth representation by applying working methods in political party support such as mentoring, advocacy, and reform of party policies and structures.

DIPD's work on strengthening inclusive political parties has often focused on involving local party branches in policy formulation to secure co-development and ownership of policies. The policies are adapted to local conditions and involve a range of themes e.g., health and education.

Multiparty dialogue processes supported by DIPD include political parties improving their working relationships on important constitutional issues. Multiparty dialogue processes have also brought political parties together to promote dialogue and strengthen their representation of women and young people in politics.



LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ACTORS

DANISH POLITICAL PARTIES

	A	The Alternative
	CPP	The Conservative People's Party
	DLDP/LP	Danish Liberal Democracy Programme/The Liberal Party
		
	RGL	The Red-Green Alliance
	SDP	The Social Democratic Party
	SLP	The Social Liberal Party
	SPP	The Socialist People's Party

POLITICAL PARTIES AND OTHER ACTORS

AMS-OSC	Organisation Articulacion de Movimientos Sociales y Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil (Nicaragua)
BCMD	Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy
BDD	Bhutan Democracy Dialogue
BNEW	Bhutan Network Empowering Women
CCM	Chama Cha Mapinduzi (Tanzania)
CDD	The Center for Democratic Governance (Ghana)

CDIP-BF	Inter-Party Dialogue Framework in Burkina Faso
CGD	Center for Multiparty Governance (Burkina Faso)
CHADEMA	The Party for Democracy and Progress (Tanzania)
CMD-K	Centre for Multiparty Democracy Kenya
CPP	The Convention People's Party (Ghana)
CPRH	The Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Myanmar)
DA	The Democratic Alliance (South Africa)
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
DNT	Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa (Bhutan)
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party (Malawi)
EAGF	Eastern Africa Green Federation
EECMD	Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (Georgia)
FARC-EP	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army
FIDA	Palestinian Democratic Union
FSLN	The Sandinista National Liberation Front (Nicaragua)
HDP	Peoples' Democratic Party (Turkey)
IDEG	The Institute for Democratic Governance (Ghana)

JOMPOPS	Joint Mechanism for Political Party Strengthening (Nepal)
MAPA	Marcha Patriótica (Colombia)
MAS-IPSP	Movement for Socialism in Bolivia
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MPP	The People's Movement for Progress (Burkina Faso)
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children (Bhutan)
NLD	National League for Democracy (Myanmar)
NUG	National Unity Government (Myanmar)
PDF	People Dialogue Festival (Kenya)
PNC	The People's National Convention (Ghana)
PP	People's Party (Malawi)
PPP	Palestinian People's Party
SWADEPA	Swazi Democratic Party (Swaziland/Eswatini)
UCP	United Democratic Front (Malawi)
UNAB	Blue and White National Unity group (Nicaragua)
UNAMOS	Unión Democrática Renovadora (Nicaragua)



People Dialogue Festival 2020 in Kenya

GLOBAL OVERVIEW

The Danish political parties and DIPD have been active in 19 countries during 2018-21. This map provides an overview of the countries in which DIPD and the political parties have been working.

- A** The Social Democratic Party
- B** The Social Liberal Party
- C** The Conservative People's Party
- SF** The Socialist People's Party
- V** The Liberal Party
- Ø** The Red-Green Alliance
- A** The Alternative

⇒ NICARAGUA Ø

⇒ COLOMBIA Ø

⇒ BOLIVIA SF





KEY EVENTS

During 2018-21 several events, both external and internal, have had a significant impact on the partnerships funded by DIPD. Some of the most impactful events both positive and negative for the partnerships, are highlighted in this section. These go to show that strengthening democracy involves a long and complicated process with opportunities and challenges along the way.



AUGUST 2018

SWAZILAND (ESWATINI) – NATIONAL ELECTION

Elections in Swaziland (Eswatini) took place in August and September 2018. The election resulted in SWADEPA, the partner to the Social Democratic Party, losing all its seats in parliament, which meant that many of the planned activities for elected officials, could not be meaningfully implemented. Instead SWADEPA had to analyse the loss, adjust and find a new strategy going forward with the partnership in 2019-2020. The decision was to focus on strengthening the organisation at the local and national level and improve communication and inclusion of women and youth.



SEPTEMBER 2018

BHUTAN – NATIONAL ELECTIONS

During the 3rd Parliamentary Elections held in Bhutan, the highest ever number of 12 women were elected as MPs of the two houses of parliament. All five women candidates fielded by the ruling party, Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa (DNT), were elected. The Upper House/National Council saw two women elected in 2018; thus, bringing the total number of elected women MPs up to ten, enhanced further by two women Eminent Members appointed by the King. Therefore, 15.3% of Bhutan's 2018 parliamentary intake were women, which represents the highest figure in the country's history. However, this is still far below the regional and global averages of 19% and 24 % of women in parliaments respectively.

SOUTH AFRICA - ELECTIONS ROCKED THE OPPOSITION BOAT



APRIL 2018

In April 2018 Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP) entered a new partnership with Democratic Alliance (DA). DA is the biggest opposition party in South Africa. Both DA and the Liberal Party are members of Liberal International. A year into the cooperation, South Africans went to the polls in national and provincial elections. DA had been used to progressive better results since the first democratic election in the country in 1994. However, the party went down a few percent points in the elections in May 2019. DA has its roots in the white resistance against apartheid and is struggling to be a party for the entire population in South Africa. The modest decrease in the votes resulted in quite some soul-searching within the party. The leader of DA, Mmusi Maimane, resigned. Eventually, John Steenhuisen was elected as the new leader of Democratic Alliance.





MALAWI - YOUTH WORKSHOP

In 2018, the Danish political parties, the Socialist Peoples' Party and the Liberal Party arranged a youth workshop for Malawian political parties Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Malawi Congress Party (MCP), People's Party (PP), and United Democratic Front (UDF) to bring key youth politicians together and to discuss ways forward for youth representation. While the youth wings of these Malawian political parties have come a long way in setting up youth departments and wings in their respective parties, electoral processes and campaigns are still marred by violence between the youth of different parties. Also, the youth wings still lack actual influence and access to important information from their own parties. Over two full days of workshop activity, the youth representatives of the Socialist People's Party's convened all the key Malawian youth politicians to identify steps ahead and how to enhance cooperation between the youth in the different parties. The Malawian participants discussed how they could all campaign together to enhance youth participation in the upcoming Malawian elections irrespective of their political affiliations and identified key steps to achieving this.



NEPAL - DEMOCRACY FAIR

From 20-22 September 2018 the Democracy Fair took place in the heart of Kathmandu with participation from all the major Nepalese parties, who put up their stalls in the historic Basantapur Plaza, interacted with citizens and their respective party followers from across the political spectrum. Tens of thousands of Nepalese people passed through the fair and over two hundred members of parliament – national and provincial – as well as other important leaders attended various events at the fair.



TANZANIA - AMENDMENTS OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES ACT

In 2019, the Tanzanian parliament amended The Political Parties Act. The Bill gives powers to the Registrar of Political Parties to request any information from a political party, a party leader, or any party member. It empowers the Registrar to approve or disapprove the dissemination of civic education and capacity-building programmes, for which the organisers are required to seek prior permission from the political parties. The Registrar is given the final word on whether to approve or block the training. The amendments give the Registrar powers to de-register parties. Opposition leaders said the legislative changes would effectively criminalize political activity and turn Tanzania into "a de facto one-party state".

Drawing by Mdogo



MARCH 2019

KENYA - WHAT'S IN A HANDSHAKE

In March 2019, the first edition of the People Dialogue Festival (PDF) took place in the gardens of the National Museum in Nairobi. Initially, PDF was inspired by the "Democracy Festival" a political festival, which takes place every year on the Danish Island of Bornholm. The first version of the festival contained, amongst many other things, a small exhibition of political cartoons. One of the cartoons showed the president, Uhuru Kenyatta, shaking hands with the then leader of the opposition, Raila Odinga.

"The Handshake," which happened in March 2018, was an important event in the political life of Kenya. Prior to the handshake, relations between Kenya's main political parties were dysfunctional. In the beginning, the handshake had a positive effect, demonstrating that the two leaders could see eye to eye again. It also had a positive impact on the dialogue work organised by the Centre for Multiparty Democracy Kenya. The first PDF was organised to mark the one-year anniversary of the famous handshake. However, as it can be seen in the cartoon itself, many important issues were swept under the rug. Now, nearly four years after the handshake, one can question if Raila Odinga is really in opposition and how much dialogue the handshake led to in the Kenyan society. Nevertheless, both the handshake and PDF can be seen as both a large and a small step in the political development leading up to the elections in August 2022.

DENMARK - POLITICAL YOUTH CAMP

The approach of working hand in hand with a broad spectrum of political parties from the Danish Parliament produced a Political Youth Camp with approximately 80 representatives from Swaziland (Eswatini), Philippines, Nepal, Tanzania, Kenya, Myanmar and Burkina Faso arriving in the late summer of 2019 to exchange know-how and ideas for the future at 'The Youth Island' just outside Copenhagen. Here young politicians and campaigners from the Danish political parties engaged directly with their international counterparts. The Political Youth Camp inspired the youth politicians to tackle democratic and political problems they face using new skills, tools and ideas.



SEPTEMBER 2019

TANZANIA - LOCAL AND GENERAL ELECTIONS



NOVEMBER 2019

The local elections in 2019 and general elections in 2020 were contested by the opposition. All the major opposition parties decided to boycott the local elections, because 90% of their candidates were rejected. The official result of the general election was that the incumbent President won by the highest margin ever, resulting in the ruling party winning 256 constituencies out of 264. All the prominent opposition politicians lost their constituency seats. However, serious doubts must be cast regarding the legitimacy of these results. During the election there was a lack of approval for voter agents, reports of voter agents being prevented from entering polling stations, and reports that the military started showing up at the end of the polling day to intimidate voter agents into leaving polling stations before votes could be counted; they were also responsible for shutting down social media and the internet in general.

Some opposition leaders have left the country for safety reasons, and the chairman of CHADEMA, the leader of the opposition, was arrested.



GHANA – THE CALLING-OFF OF THE 2019 REFERENDUM TO STRENGTHEN GHANA'S MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY

In 2019 there was an opportunity for the joint amendment of Articles 55(3) and 243(1) for reforms to strengthen Ghana's multiparty democracy. However, the national referendum scheduled for 17 December 2019 was called off on 1 December and the constitutional amendment bills were withdrawn. The President abrogated the amendment for lack of consensus on the amendment. While some groups supported the amendment, others pushed back against it. Amongst the groups that resisted the amendment were the main opposition party the National Democratic Congress (NDC), some smaller parties, some local chiefs, some civil society organisations and ordinary citizens.



DECEMBER 2019



OCTOBER 2020

NICARAGUA – REPRESSIVE LAWS

In the last part of 2020 and in the beginning of 2021 several repressive laws were adopted by the Nicaraguan parliament, dominated by the government party, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, FSLN. These laws affect political parties as well as social movements and civil society organisations in opposition to the regime. The laws are seen by the united opposition as a strong threat to freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the possibility to defend human rights and build a democratic country.



FEBRUARY 2020

BHUTAN - GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

The government endorsed the Gender Equality Policy presented by the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), which is a great achievement for advancing the gender agenda in every sphere of governance. The Bhutan Women Parliamentary Caucus action plan of spring 2021 incorporated the agenda to push for an amendment in the Election Act which adopts a mandatory precondition whereby 30% of potential candidates for political office must be women in the candidates lists submitted by political parties registering to contest national elections.



NOVEMBER 2020

BURKINA FASO - NATIONAL ELECTION

Despite Burkina Faso's election being overshadowed by terrorism, the country went to the polls on Sunday 22 November 2020. President Roch Kaboré was re-elected for a second five-year term, with 57.87% of the votes. The election result confirms that Roch Kaboré and the governing party, MPP, continue to have great popular support. However, the growing insecurity and threats from terrorist groups along with protests over elections shows that there is still a long road to reach stability in terms of achieving peace and a firm rooting of democracy in Burkina Faso.



FEBRUARY
2021

MYANMAR – MILITARY COUP

On 1 February 2021, the military seized power from the civilian government in a coup d'état prior to the convening of the newly elected Parliament. Many senior National League for Democracy (NLD) members and officials were arrested, and a military-backed government was appointed. Political parties are split between the pro-democracy camp and the military rulers. The security situation has deteriorated significantly, leading to violence and conflict across the country. Access to the internet has been restricted by the military and in many instances completely severed. The NLD lawmakers formed the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) and later the National Unity Government (NUG). Newly formed armed groups, several of which are affiliated to the NUG, declared armed resistance. Hence, explosions and random and targeted shootings have now become commonplace.



MAY
2021

COLOMBIA – SEATS IN CONGRESS FOR VICTIMS OF THE CONFLICT

After a long struggle, the victims of the conflict in Colombia will finally be represented in the Congress of Colombia. After continuous mobilisation, public debate and a legal complaint led by members of the social and political movement Marcha Patriótica, the constitutional court obligated the government to implement circumscriptions in 16 zones for the March 2022 congressional elections. This was part of the peace agreement signed in 2016 between the Colombian government and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP). Only victims of the conflict who have not run for traditional parties can present themselves with these circumscriptions in place, which have corresponded to 16 new seats in Congress.

NICARAGUA – IMPRISONMENT OF OPPOSITION LEADERS AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Several opposition leaders and presidential candidates have been imprisoned since June 2021, being blocked from participating in the general elections held in Nicaragua on 7 November 2021. The opposition considers these actions to be kidnappings as they were done at random without due process and without any formal charges being made. Several of the imprisoned are in isolation and their first contact with the outside world was three months after their arrest, when they were finally given the opportunity to receive visits from their families and proper contact with their lawyers.



JUNE
2021



WHERE WE WORK



ASIA

(The Philippines, Nepal, Myanmar)

Social Democratic Party

The aim of the partnership between the Social Democratic Party in Denmark (SDP) and The Network for Social Democracy in Asia (SocDem Asia), which consists of like-minded organisations and parties from 13 Asian countries, has been to strengthen SocDem Asia by building and promoting social democratic thinking and social democratic alternatives at the regional level. The partnership has strengthened the inclusive development of national social welfare policies in the three focus countries (Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines), which will serve as inspiration at the regional level.

Throughout the partnership, members of SocDem Asia and SDP have shared experiences, practices and ideas in the areas of health and education. Practices of inclusive policy development have also been shared in order to ensure that the work of SocDem Asia is rooted at the national level by members of the network.

In each of the three countries, thematic consultations related to each of the sectoral policy-areas were held in 2019, after the countries had identified their respective national policy focuses: universal healthcare implementation, maternal health and access to quality education. The consultations were held in an effort to ensure an inclusive policy approach with the aim of developing better policies and ensuring ownership and support for these policies.



A study visit to Denmark was held in September 2018, where the focus was on the history of the Social Democratic Party of Denmark and the development and current challenges of the Danish welfare model.

Proposing national social welfare policies

At the national level, member parties of SocDem Asia in Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines have proposed national social welfare policies. Building on a decade-long advocacy and electoral promise, the Filipino party Akbayan, successfully campaigned for the passage of a Universal Health Care Law in 2019. Akbayan has focused on popularising this legislation for the remainder of the project.

At the end of 2019, a Regional Conference on inclusive policy making was held in Jakarta. At the conference, 80 country representatives and members of Parliament from SocDem Asia and SDP shared their experiences and approaches with developing inclusive policies for wider use amongst members of the network. The culmination of the conference was the launching of the SocDem Asia Parliamentarians' Caucus in the Indonesian Parliament with the Jakarta Declaration. The Declaration outlines the parties' and parliamentarians' commitment to promoting social welfare policies in



their respective countries, focusing on greater access to affordable and quality healthcare, quality education, decent work for all, progressive taxation and sustainable development and promotion of social cities. Alongside the Parliamentarians' Caucus Launching, the Declaration provides the cornerstone for a regional campaign for reimagining an Asian social welfare model.

Two study visits to Denmark also took place during the partnership, including a visit focused on the history and development of social democracy and the social welfare system in Denmark, as well as a youth leaders exchange (Political Youth Camp) and a study visit to Denmark for advocacy campaign training.

During the project period, SocDem Asia also published three major publications and has held courses on promoting social democratic thinking and social democratic alternatives in order to reach a broader audience.

BHUTAN



DIPD

Socialist People's Party and DIPD

DIPD continued its work in Bhutan from 2018-2021 supporting three partner organisations. The Danish Socialist People's Party (SPP) was involved in various of these activities. In the project period, each partner organisation has undertaken several activities:

Bhutan Network Empowering Women (BNEW)

DIPD has supported BNEW, which is a non-partisan, apolitical organisation that works to strengthen women's participation and representation in politics, governance, and leadership. The project has sought to contribute to a representative political leadership in Bhutan that would increasingly reflect the composition of the population in Bhutan. Thus far, Bhutan's political leadership has been highly male dominated. Through initiatives such as the Bhutan Women Parliamentary Caucus (BWPC), BNEW has pushed for an amendment in the Election Act for the adoption of a minimum threshold of 30% female candidates for the candidate lists of any political party registering to contest national elections, as a mandatory pre-condition. Furthermore, by increasing the number of role models and well performing elected women leaders, BNEW has helped to enhance the confidence in women's leadership in society as well as organising workshops on gender-sensitive scrutiny of legislation and policy. By October 2021 more than 7,000 women had been enrolled and trained compared to 3,000 in 2018.

Bhutan Democracy Dialogue (BDD)

DIPD's partnership with BDD served to strengthen multiparty dialogue, cooperation and partnership on promoting a vibrant democracy in Bhutan. Training on leadership skills, empowering women and encouraging youth to take part in elections (as members of political parties) were undertaken to build confidence and encourage inclusive political participation. These trainings have equipped members of political parties (especially, women and youth) to gain a better understanding of elections and democracy.

Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy (BCMD)

DIPD's support to BCMD has contributed to promoting citizen engagement and enabling citizen voices, including different political parties, women and youth through forums. It has also led to resource publications and starting conversations on topics that are pertinent to understanding and deepening democracy in the country. Over the course of the project period, BCMD was able to organise three democracy dialogues on i) The state of Bhutan's democracy, ii) Democracy: A path to good governance, and iii) Being apolitical in Bhutan's democracy. The outcomes of the forums were distributed at various events and the proceedings were filmed and aired on the national news channel.



The project also supported the publication of two issues of The Druk Journal on themes of national importance – *Educating Bhutan* (Spring 2019) and *Tourism in Bhutan* (Autumn 2019) – providing an equal, non-partisan and safe space for all political actors including women politicians and parliamentarians to be heard and to engage in moderated discussion on topics of national interest.



BOLIVIA

The Socialist People's Party

The Danish Socialist People's Party (SPP) has worked together with the Movement for Socialism in Bolivia (MAS-IPSP) since 2014 and completed the final activities in this partnership in 2019. It has been a partnership with a focus on the capacity building of MAS-IPSP and the final part of the partnership was focused on conflict management.

Conflict management to foster political dialogue

In an effort to mitigate a political culture where political disagreements often lead to confrontations, MAS-IPSP had a wish to strengthen its ability to handle internal conflicts to avoid regular confrontations. This resulted in the final activities in the partnership with SPP where the activities revolved around educating conflict facilitators. 22 people were trained to be conflict facilitators at a local level through workshops in different regions. Learning material was developed for the trainings as well as for the future sessions after the partnership with SPP ended.

The trainers all said that it had become easier to manage conflict and avoid confrontation both on a personal and professional level. An important result in changing the deep-rooted culture both at a party but also country level is that many of the facilitators moved on to high-level positions in the state and other important institutions, where they were able to draw on their skills. In the end, the skills learnt in the



trainings were passed on by the facilitators, enabling future political dialogue.

Leadership involvement and general capacity increase

One of the successes of the conflict management component in the partnership was getting the leadership of MAS-IPSP to buy in and support the initiative. SPP has inspired their partners through the different workshops and activities where they have supported MAS-IPSP with their competence in conflict management. This has led to a general increase in the capacity of the movement when focusing on handling conflicts and has consolidated the results from the previous parts of the partnership.



Political situation

After the partnership ended in mid-2019, the country was thrown into political unrest following the election in October 2019. This meant that MAS-IPSP had to go underground, and the leaders went into exile. This also meant that it was not possible for MAS-IPSP to work with conflict management in the way that it had planned through the activities in the partnership. But as MAS-IPSP is getting back on its feet, it is resuming its work with conflict management, which has had an impact on the party leadership locally, regionally, and nationally.



BURKINA FASO



The Social Democratic Party

The partnership between the Danish Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the centre-left government party, People's Movement for Progress (MPP) has been structured around two overall aims: to strengthen MPP at its leadership level to push for a strong social democratic future, and to strengthen MPP's female representation and involvement, especially future women leaders.

Since MPP is the ruling party in Burkina Faso, it has an established organisational set-up and widespread support. The partnership has aimed to contribute to a wider strengthening of democratic culture not only within the party but also in the country at large.



Delegation visit from political party MPP in Burkina Faso to the Social Democratic Party in Denmark

In November 2018, a study visit to Denmark and related information activities were conducted. The delegation for the visit was composed of four delegates from the MPP parliamentary group. The objective of the study visit was to inspire dialogue on social democracy and policy development on a range of topics, including health, taxation, sustainable development, education and gender equality. The visit was carried out for the delegation to bring home new contributions to MPP's discussions on what policy areas to focus on in the later stages of the project

Relationship with local constituency and handling of media issues

A visit to Burkina Faso was conducted in February 2019, where a workshop was held for the MPP parliamentary group. 33 parliamentarians participated in the workshop, which resulted in fruitful reflections on the ideas and values that guide the development of social democratic policies. The two parties also had important discussions on how to improve the internal functioning of MPP. The workshop highlighted the duties and responsibilities of deputies, their relationship to their local constituency, the handling of media issues, and the relationship between deputies, ministers and the National Executive Bureau.

A women's workshop was also held during the visit, which led to the selection of 50 women to participate in the Women in Leadership training as part of the partnership between SDP and MPP. The workshop focused on the capacity building of women in areas such as social democracy, campaign skills and leadership skills. During the workshop, the women began the work of defining the role of the women's

union of MPP vis-à-vis the mother party with the aim of strengthening women's leadership within both the party and parliament, whilst simultaneously empowering women leaders to take up the issue of gender equality at a political and party level.

In November 2019, a MPP visit to Denmark took place, where the focus was on the challenges within the partnership and how to move forward during 2020. There were also discussions on the aspirations and challenges of SDP being in government in Denmark, which served as inspiration to the policy development of MPP.

A visit to Burkina Faso was planned to take place in the spring of 2020, but due to the COVID-19 situation and subsequently the national elections, it was not possible to hold any of the activities planned for 2020.



BURKINA FASO DIPD

DIPD

DIPD has facilitated a multiparty partnership in Burkina Faso with their partner Center for Multiparty Governance (CGD). The main focus of this collaboration has been on creating dialogue between the political parties in Burkina Faso. This has resulted in a dialogue platform where all political parties in the National Assembly take part in discussing national topics. The multiparty platform has enabled political parties to interact and enter dialogues in relation to current challenges and possible solutions. The project has, for example, increased the parties' awareness of the importance of women occupying political positions, including better placement of female candidates on the electoral lists and of contributing to political initiatives that strengthen the role of women in politics. Also, a series of political dialogues on various themes of national interest were carried out. Subsequently, joint reform initiatives were adopted, such as reform of the electoral commission, a joint declaration on the prevention of political violence during elections and the drafting and adoption of a pact of good conduct for the elections.

Important exchange visits to Denmark

In order to create multiparty dialogue, it has been important to build trust between the different parties. A step forward in doing this has been drawing on inspiration from Denmark, which has included exchange



Multiparty Delegation visit to President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré in November 2019

visits to Denmark as well as Danish politicians visiting Burkina Faso. This trust building has made it possible to foster dialogue between both the governing and opposition parties. An important driver for the success of the partnership has been the buy in from high-level members and leaders of all parties as well as the dialogue that takes place on a regular basis. This has contributed to strengthening the political climate and the foundation for the success of the Inter-Party Dialogue Framework in Burkina Faso (CDIP-BF). The strategy for dialogue has been transparency, inclusion, and participation.



Empowering women and youth

To ensure inclusion on different levels, important effort has been made towards empowering women and youth to participate in politics. 774 youth and 387 women have taken part in different educational activities, delivered by CGD, which has given them the tools and skills to take part in politics. It has been necessary to inform both women and youth what politics entail and provide them the capacity to influence decision-making processes. There is still a way to go but one of the positive results has been the newly established political parties driven by youth. The established parties have created secretariats for youth and youth representatives, but they still need to take further steps to include them at higher levels. At a national level both youth and women's representation have seen a decrease but in the local elections the results were more favourable, which shows positive signs for the future.

COLOMBIA

The Red-Green Alliance

The Danish political party the Red-Green Alliance cooperates with the social movement Marcha Patriótica (MAPA) in Colombia because of its essential work for peace and social justice in a context of political violence and restricted democracy.

Colombia has suffered a longstanding social, political and armed conflict. The conflicts roots lie in the extremely unequal distribution of wealth and resources and the lack of space for political participation. In 2016, a peace agreement was made between the government and the left-wing guerrilla organisation the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP). This agreement generated hope for change as it includes rural reform and promotes political participation of groups who have been previously excluded from political life.

However, the implementation of the peace agreement has been limited, mainly as a result of the election of the right-wing government in 2018, which is essentially opposed to the agreement. For example, there has been an almost total lack of implementation of the rural reform and the government has not offered security guarantees for the opposition, resulting in 393 social leaders and 91 ex-combatants being killed in 2020 and the first half of 2021.

A new political conscience has emerged

Despite the lack of implementation of the peace agree-



ment, a democratic opening and a new political conscience has emerged amongst the broader population as the people do not accept the government discourse that stigmatises all left-wing activities as guerrilla related. This has resulted in massive mobilisation in 2020 and especially in 2021 demanding social change and implementation of the peace agreement. The left is also strengthened, and a new coalition called Pacto Histórico gives hope for a new progressive government for the congressional and presidential elections to be held in the first half of 2022.

Marcha Patriótica has worked tirelessly to defend the peace agreement, and a very important consequence has been the implementation of the Special Territorial Electoral Circumscriptions for Peace (a model to enhance the democratic participation of the rural victims of the conflict). Congress first blocked the legislation of the circumscriptions but with the protests and the legal demands led by members of MAPA, the constitutional court obliged the government to implement them. Now the victims of the conflict will be able to elect 16 representatives directly to Congress in 16 zones affected by the conflict.

During the project, MAPA held 24 local, regional and online schools and strategic seminars for political activists and candidates to analyse the political situation, the role of the social movement, how and to make strategies for political participation and how

to communicate when promoting peace and human rights and the defence of the territories.

The Red-Green Alliance has visited MAPA in Colombia several times. The visit in 2021 was particularly impactful, as the Red-Green Alliance got first-hand experience of the mobilisation for social change, getting an idea of its strength and diversity. The Red-Green Alliance's representatives saw with their own eyes how the police attacked peaceful demonstrations with disproportionate brutality. During the protests, there were reportedly 3,486 cases of police violence with 75 protesters killed, 45 of whom were allegedly killed by the police forces, 83 people suffered eye injuries and 28 were sexually violated.

Overall, these activities constitute important steppingstones towards the democratisation of Colombian society with broader political participation.



GEORGIA **B**

The Social Liberal Party

The aim of the partnership between the Danish Social Liberal Party (SLP) and the Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD) in Georgia has been to strengthen the multiparty system by supporting pro-democracy start-ups and political parties in creating a viable political alternative to the current political system. Throughout the project implementation period, SLP and EECMD worked with five political parties in Georgia (Aleko Elisashvili–Citizens, Lelo for Georgia, For Justice, Free Democrats and the Republican Party of Georgia). They worked with these parties to enhance their organisational capacity, advance their policy-making skills and improve their communication and engagement with voters.

Online decision-making software developed

EECMD customised and introduced an online decision-making software, CONSUL, to the participating political parties. Consul is a comprehensive digital tool for citizen participation, enabling an open, transparent, and democratic government. More specifically, the project activities empowered recipient political parties in policy and organisational terms. Through the capacity-building activities, they gained new policymaking and organisational skills to be more resilient actors in Georgia's democratic transformation and better represent the interests of the Georgian public through consistent organisational and poli-

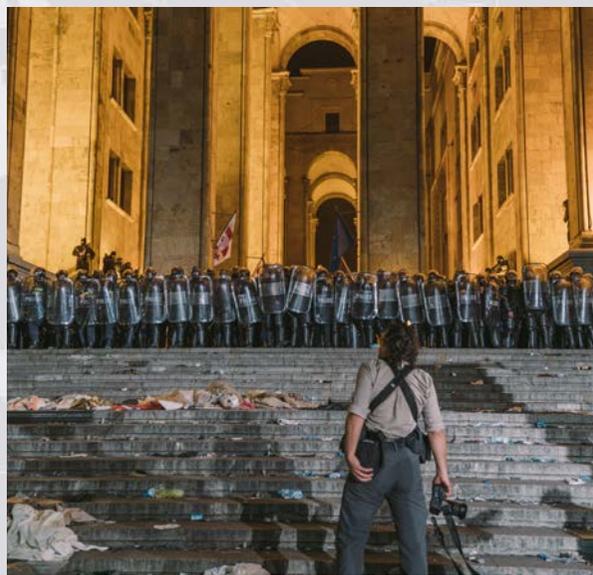


Photo by Tbel Abuseridze on Unsplash

cy processes. Moreover, the project helped political parties articulate their approaches and interact with diverse stakeholders to better perform their roles in society by engaging with more voters.

Both EECMD and SLP provided practical assistance to the above-mentioned political parties to develop individual anti-crisis plans on how to better address the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the project successfully organised multiparty dialogue platforms and created a trustworthy working environment on political leadership and middle management levels in five Georgian cities (Tbilisi, Batumi, Gori, Kutaisi, and Telavi). Thematic discussions, networking events, innovative solutions, such as CONSUL, and a research paper on the “Interparty Democracy Index” significantly improved the political parties’ policy-making skills and organisational capacity.



The participating political parties also actively encouraged their members from the youth wings and women’s organisations to participate in each of the project activities. As a result, young women leaders were identified who would like to be more active in electoral cycles and become front runners in the upcoming elections.

As a result of the project implementation strategy, policies of recipient political parties became more customised to local needs. Particularly to the needs of citizens representing Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, Telavi and Gori. These political parties can now better articulate their approaches and are able to interact with different and diverse groups of stakeholders. Based on the positive experiences with both EECMD and working in Georgia, the Social Liberal Party wishes to continue their partnership with EECMD.

Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP), the Social Democratic Party, the Conservative People's Party and DIPD



feasibility study proposed and facilitated by the DIPD secretariat.

A duopoly between the two largest parties

Through 2019 and 2020, the DIPD secretariat and several political parties explored the feasibility of engagement in Ghana. As the President had announced that a referendum should be held on allowing political parties to contest for local government across the country. Following the 1992 Constitution and the implementation of a multiparty democracy at the national level, a first-past-the-post electoral system was introduced for national elections. While local municipalities would be partly appointed by the President and partly elected on a non-political platform. Over the last few decades, the country's political system has become a duopoly between the two largest parties while other smaller parties have been marginalised.

In 2019, DIPD initiated a partnership with two of the leading democratic institutions in Ghana: the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) and the Center for Democratic Governance (CDD). This partnership was focused on strengthening local multiparty democracy before, during and after the 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana.

Since 2020, the Danish Socialist Peoples' Party, the Danish Liberal Party, the Danish Social Democratic Party and the Danish Conservative party have all been involved in these efforts. They have been involved both bilaterally and in a new multiparty approach developed in 2019, where the value of cross-sectoral cooperation was tested with a joint



Introducing elections at the local level would enhance the influence of smaller parties and it would allow for more accountability and transparency. Since there is a very low voter turnout at the local level, open political contestation could engage and mobilise voters. Therefore, Danish political parties were keen to support this historical change of the electoral system and carried out joint assessment missions. Unfortunately, the President cancelled the referendum in 2019, but it could still be held at a later point. The Danish parties may consider engaging again at such a time.

Pursuing peace promotion campaigns

Elections and their related activities are characterised by bitter struggles over access to state resources. CDD has therefore worked and facilitated platforms amongst the Ghanaian political parties, especially the political parties' youth leaders and youth wings in three select hotspot constituencies. As a result of a boot camp, the youth leaders from these constituencies saw the value in cooperation and dialogue on election related issues instead of violence. Instead of being seen and used as instruments for instigating violence, the political party youth instead harnessed their mobilisation capacity to pursue peace promotion campaigns which hitherto had not been the case in their respective constituencies. The youth groups from the two main parties in the project's implementation constituencies also refused to be used by politicians to engage in violent activities. This was as a result of the knowledge they gained from sensitisation to the ACT 999, the Vigilantism and Related Offences ACT to disband vigilante groups and the stiff punishment prescribed in it for offenders. Given that



violence happens on a local level, ahead of the 2020 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections IDEG and its partners brought together the major political parties to work together to promote peace before, during and after the 2020 elections. The IDEG designed a peace pact in collaboration with the Office of the National Chief Imam, the National Peace Council (NPC) and the National House of Chiefs; together they organised the Presidential Elections Peace Pact 2020.

In addition, going into the December 2020 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, it was critical for elections stakeholders, including civil society organisations (CSOs), independent governmental institutions, such as the National Peace Council, the National Commission for Civic Education and the Ghana

Police Service, to collaborate with the political parties at all levels to create the necessary conditions that facilitate inter-party dialogue, build political consensus, and design other interventions that facilitate peaceful co-existence, cordiality and peacebuilding.

The project further facilitated engagements for the promotion of consensus building and developing a more positive working relationship amongst the parties in parliament. The post-election workshop with parties has improved knowledge and shaped understanding of how the parties can work together to make a positive impact. This was significant in the context of the split in the 8th parliament, where for the first time the two main parties had the same number of seats, each with one independent candidate.



KENYA DLDP V DIPD

The Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP) and DIPD

The Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP) has been a partner of Centre for Multiparty Democracy Kenya (CMD-K) since 2011. CMD-K is an umbrella organisation for nearly 30 political parties in Kenya. From 2018 to 2021 CMD-K and DLDP/LP were engaged in an “integrated project,” which also involved DIPD. The project aimed to promote constructive involvement of young people in politics as well as to improve dialogue between the political parties in Kenya.

More young people in key positions

The project has resulted in an increase in the number of young people playing an influential role in decision making in political parties and occupying key positions with the power to influence policy formulation.

An increased number of political parties benefited from the project and it has provided an opportunity for at least one youth representative to be part of their party’s National Executive Council. This has been enabled by the change in mindset of their senior peers who have a high regard for the potential, innovation, and contribution of youth towards the growth of political parties. The intergenerational engagements that were organised across the 3 years have diffused the narrative that existed where senior peers were regarded as rigid and not open to the

younger generation because the youth were regarded as politically naïve, undisciplined, uncommitted, and susceptible to financial manipulation.

A festival where people and politicians are in dialogue

Dialogue has diffused tension amongst political parties and has given prominence to collaboration, as opposed to unhealthy competition, when pursuing matters of interest to political parties. The dialogue platform offered by the People Dialogue Festival has opened the space for other actors who are not political in nature to be a part of the national conversation on governance, and this has created the perception that political parties are crucial partners in all national conversations. Additionally, embracing dialogue has helped political parties have peer-to-peer learning on the strategies that are best when addressing conflict at an intraparty and interparty level thus creating a conducive and cohesive political environment.

The impact of the project is that young people are now able to take up leadership positions in political parties and champion democratic ideals and principles that will help the country become a stable and thriving democracy. This will aid in the continuous institutionalisation of political parties in Kenya with lessons and experience gained from the political par-



ties in Denmark, with the Liberal party serving as an educational model.

Out of the deep freezer

In the beginning of 2018, when this project began, the dialogue between the government and the opposition in Kenya was in a metaphorical deep freezer. A famous handshake between the president and the then leader of the opposition in March 2018 enabled dialogue to begin again. Something CMD-K and their work with the political parties have benefited from. However, looking at 2022, (an election year in Kenya) the political weather forecast is ‘erratic weather’. The CMD-K and the partnership with Denmark have contributed to developing dialogue between the political parties in Kenya, but there is still work to be done at the national level as well as at the county level.

The Socialist People’s Party (SPP), Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP) and DIPD

The Danish Socialist People’s Party (SPP), Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP) and DIPD partnered with the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD) in Malawi to implement the project titled “Enhancing Meaningful Participation of Women and Youth in Malawian Politics and Political Parties”. The project had two components, one focusing on women and the other focusing on the youth. While results and impact of this type of project take time to register, there are some early signs of the project having had an effect. In the Spring of 2019, the Socialist People’s Party in partnership with other international partners of CMD, including UNDP and Danish Church Aid, initiated a forensic audit to investigate potential irregularities. SPP proceeded to suspend all activities with CMD during this period. The investigation pointed to weaknesses in CMD but did not provide conclusive evidence of fraud; subsequently, the suspension was lifted, and the project continued.

Increased women’s participation in political leadership

The component focusing on women had the objective of enhancing the confidence of women to take part in elections at all levels and increase their knowledge about the electoral system. One of the main activities has been a mentorship programme pairing up young aspiring women politicians with experienced women

politicians. 25 of the participating mentees later ran for office at a local or national level. At the same time, more women have taken up leadership roles through competitive party conventions.

Generally, women have gained the courage to lobby by their party leaderships for more equality and have gained the skills through gender equality training. This training also focused on how to better organise women’s wings of political parties and has resulted in the women’s wings of political parties in Malawi becoming more independent. Another important result is that the project succeeded in getting the party leaderships of all Malawian political parties to acknowledge the potential of increasing gender equality and on limiting barriers for women’s political representation. The project has thus had significant impact on the 50:50 agenda in Malawi.

More politically confident youth

The youth wings of Malawian political parties have gained more confidence as they have increased their organisational skills. In strengthening the youth wings of political parties the Malawian youth politicians have gotten inspiration through the exchange with Denmark. The Malawian youth politicians saw how the Danish youth wings of political parties were not afraid of taking issues up with their leaderships and how independent they were. The Malawian youth also saw how their Danish counterparts shun violence and instead focus on running successful youth parties and being relevant.

Based on the training and exchanges the aspiring



youth politicians in Malawi have been more motivated to contest leadership positions; in 2019 23% of the candidates in the parliamentary election were youths. Apart from focusing on strengthening the youth parties there has also been a focus on making party gatekeepers ensure that parties acknowledge the necessity for youth inclusion. As such, the project aimed to change the mind-sets of party leaders through engagement meetings. Through these meetings, adult leaders committed to acting to enhance youth participation in politics. The leaders of all targeted parties expressed a new understanding of the benefits of increased involvement of youth in party decision-making.

These results have also benefited Malawi as a nation in its fight to promote active participation of youth in decision-making processes in both the private and the public sector, since 70% of the country’s population are young.



MYANMAR

The Danish Social Democratic Party, the Danish Liberal Party/Danish Liberal Democracy Programme, the Danish Socialist People's Party and DIPD

DIPD has worked with the Danish Socialist People's Party (SPP), the Danish Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Danish Liberal Party to support the democratic transition in Myanmar. The main focus has been on increasing the participation of youth and women in politics as well as supporting multiparty dialogue. However, the political situation in Myanmar changed drastically in February 2021, when the military seized power from the civilian government and announced a one year "state of emergency." Many officials and members of the ruling party were arrested, and political parties are now split between the pro-democracy camp and the military rulers. Unfortunately, many of the gains described below have been undone by the military coup and due to security risks.

Women in politics

DIPD organised three training sessions on female leadership and women's wings in elections targeting the senior women's wing representatives of the National League for Democracy (NLD) party. The participants shared their knowledge and skills with their fellow women's wing colleagues, which meant that a total of 4,941 women indirectly benefitted from the activity. In the 2020 general election, 20% of the NLD candidates were women (compared to 13% in 2015) and 18 women politicians, who attended the trainings, won their seats in the election and were elected

as MPs – breaking Myanmar's record of both number of female candidates and number of women elected to national and state/regional assemblies. Additionally, the training created a forum for the members of the women's wings across states and regions where they could meet and discuss party programmes.

Also, the Danish Social Democratic Party organised the training Practical Campaign Management Skills in 2020 to assist potential women candidates and campaign managers from 13 political parties to campaign in elections. The participants gave positive feedback, claiming that the training made participants more equipped to reach out to voters.

Youth in politics

In order to increase youth participation in politics, DIPD and the Danish Liberal Party focused on building the capacity of political party youth representatives to be effective party leaders and decision-makers, as well as supporting internal party reforms that remove obstacles to youth participation. This strategy proved to be very successful. The targeted parties have either established or strengthened their youth wings and youth participation has become a priority in many parties. Through parliamentary internship programmes, youths were actively involved in party activities and engaged in the electoral process. Many of the interns have continued to work closely with



their MPs and almost all have been given key positions within their parties after the completion of their internship programmes.

Multiparty dialogue

In the run up to the 2020 election, DIPD supported electoral stakeholder consultation meetings and facilitated a nationwide series of 14 dialogues between parties and sub-election commission representatives at the state/region level, where they could share information and discuss issues relevant to the election. In total, more than 500 members of political parties and election commissions attended the sessions. Additionally, DIPD organised social media and human rights training.

NEPAL **B** DIPD

The Social Liberal Party and DIPD

Political development in Nepal has been fast paced since DIPD and the multiparty platform Joint Mechanism for Political Party Strengthening (JOMPOPS) first entered their partnership in 2012. The aim of the partnership is to promote multiparty collaboration in Nepal, supporting its democratic transition. Despite an intensely polarised political climate, multiparty collaboration between the political parties is getting stronger and increasingly more sustainable at the local level.

During this phase, 2018-2021, JOMPOPS undertook a number of multiparty initiatives such as joint campaigns to prevent the spread of COVID-19, multiparty collaboration on different issues including promotion of youth in political parties, and initiation of a democracy fair. These initiatives have helped to further strengthen the bonds between parties and have paved the way for joint action on issues such as COVID-19, climate change and electoral reforms. New multiparty campaigns on climate change have benefitted parliamentarians and JOMPOPS members alike, as well as the youth politicians, and resulted in a “Multiparty Sustainability Declaration” with the participating politicians vowing to build a common political agenda on the issue. Furthermore, JOMPOPS has also organised a series of multiparty discussions on electoral reforms which have led to joint recommendations submitted to the Election Commission, which particularly focuses on curbing excessive electioneering expenditures.



Highlights

The largest achievement during this period was the implementation of the Nepalese Democracy Fair, first held in September 2018. Inspired by the Danish People’s Meeting at Bornholm, this was the first democracy fair held outside of Europe. The event attracted around one hundred thousand Nepalese and thousands of local political party members, creating a forum for multiparty dialogue and the promotion of democracy in a festive atmosphere. Due to COVID-19, it was not possible to hold the Democracy Fair in 2020. Instead, the Parliament of Nepal, which was JOMPOP’s official partner for the Democracy Fair in 2018, organised a webinar on democracy in September 2020 and a seminar on “legislative openness” took place in September 2021 in order to keep the fair ‘alive’ until an in-person Democracy Fair can be held.

In this project period a renewed focus on promoting women and youth in politics has also been implemented. The trainings, mostly aimed at newly elected MPs, have benefited close to 100 female members and many more local women politicians. Many of the women who attended the training have since reached influential decision-making positions and are of the



opinion that the training helped them improve their leadership-skills. The project has also contributed to policy changes in favour of promoting gender equality inside Nepal’s political parties, particularly by engaging top leaders on gender-equality campaigns and using gender audit as a tool.

The skills and capacity of youth have also been advanced. Through a series of youth-related initiatives such as orientation on democratic practices and gender-equality, the project engaged more than 2300 youths at the local level. Moreover, youth politicians attended courses on the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change. According to the participants, the courses provided a much-needed foreground for tackling climate change on a local level. The fact that JOMPOPS parties have agreed to promote and groom much younger politicians and implement a “catch them young” idea is nothing short of revolutionary in Nepal’s context.

NICARAGUA

The Red-Green Alliance



Nicaragua has seen a steady deterioration of democracy for the last decade or so. This has been further accelerated after democratic forces rose up against the current regime in 2018. Since then, the Ortega/Murillo regime has used the state apparatus to commit violence and foster a climate of intimidation to quell protests and ensure its grip on power.

The Danish political party the Red-Green Alliance has partnered the left-wing party Unión Democrática Renovadora (UNAMOS) and the umbrella organisation Articulacion de Movimientos Sociales y Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil (AMS-OSC) in an effort to support a push for a progressive and democratic alternative to the Ortega Government. The focus is to build the institutional capacity of the two organisations locally as well as nationally. Furthermore, the Red-Green Alliance also supports strengthening the partners' ability to convey political messages.

A democratic progressive force

In the partnership the work on empowering the institutional capacity of the partners is done through work on communication strategies, inclusion of women, youth, and Nicaraguans in exile and through the strengthening of political and organisational skills. The most important results of the project are:

- Supporting UNAMOS in local areas and in their work mobilising exiled Nicaraguans and the capacity of the party to cooperate with other actors
- To strengthen UNAMOS as a democratic, progressive force, which can be seen as an alternative to the government
- UNAMOS has been made into an important party in the opposition alliances Blue and White National Unity Group (UNAB) and Coalición Nacional
- AMS-OSC has been strengthened strategically, e.g., in the improvement of their communication strategy and general action plan, as well as the development of local action plans
- AMS-OSC has gained further influence in the democracy movement



PALESTINE

The Red-Green Alliance

The project stems from the Danish Red-Green Alliance's commitment to a just peace in the decades-long conflict. The main focus of the project is the strengthening of the cooperation and unity of the Palestinian Left through cooperation with the youth wings of the three Palestinian left parties, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestinian Democratic Union (FIDA) and the Palestinian People's Party (PPP). These activities have contributed to the empowerment and capacity building capabilities of youth to strengthen a democratic alternative in Palestinian society. The Swedish partners in the project, Left International Forum/the Left Party, Sweden (VIF) decided early on to focus on empowering the young women of the project.

Consolidation of the youth forum

In 2019-2021 the main result has been to maintain and consolidate the youth forum that was established in 2016 by DFLP and FIDA. The first step was the integration of PPP at the youth forum congress in February 2019, which included an amendment of the youth forum statutes and a change of name to "Almuntada". In order to have better outreach a plan was put forward to establish local committees in the northern, central and southern areas of the West Bank. The plan was successfully achieved in the northern area of the West Bank in 2019. The Youth Forum has increased its work



The joint youth wing for the Palestinian left-wing parties has been successful at organising a plethora of demonstrations for civic rights, this one protesting violence against women.

on human rights and is very committed to increasing gender equality. The board of the Forum is committed to working on gender equality and has a woman as Chairwoman. Feminist self-defence is used as a tool for the empowerment of young women to deal with gender-based oppression. During 2019, Almuntada produced a training for trainers of feminist self-defence and expanded the self-defence courses towards new target groups in high schools and primary schools.

Combating violence against women

The capacities of the targeted youth have generally been enhanced and the roles of young men and women have increased in the decision-making bodies of the political parties. The project has also managed to include the women's blocs of the three parties in a two-week joint campaign in the autumn of 2019 focused on



combating violence against women, as well as offering theatre training and a play.

In 2020 the activities were halted due to the COVID-19 restrictions and internal difficulties in the project's management with the three Palestinian left parties. However, the youth forum was kept as a coordinating body so that the youth of the left parties could reflect on the situation. In spring 2021 activities were restarted with workshops on feminist self-defence.

The project has strengthened cooperation amongst the youth in a situation where the parties on the left continue to be divided over differences in political orientation.

A contributing factor aggravating the situation is of course that young people are deeply affected by deteriorating political developments - both the divide between the Palestinian left parties and the negative consequences of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank.

SOUTH AFRICA DLDP V

Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP)

The Democratic Alliance (DA) is the largest opposition party in South Africa. DA and DLDP/LP were working together from April 2018 to June 2021 on the project “Ready to govern locally”.

No longer just an opposition political party

Especially after the local elections in South Africa in 2016, DA at a local level moved from leading the opposition to leading local governments in a growing number of municipalities and local councils. DA is a strong and well-established political party, however DA's experience of actual governance at a local level is still limited to only a few municipalities and one province. DA is involved in coalitions in quite a few councils and assemblies. The Danish Liberal Party, on the other hand, has many decades of experience of taking charge in government – also at the local level – and very often in coalitions.

The two sister parties, which are both members of Liberal International, decided to enter into a new partnership in 2018. The two partners wanted to combine one of the clear comparative advantages of the Liberal Party with the clear need in DA for local governance knowledge under the headline: Ready to govern locally.

Ready to govern locally

The overall objective of the new project was to develop the capacity of DA to take responsibility in local

and provincial governments in South Africa. That was to be done in two ways: firstly, the project aimed to develop the institutional capacity of DA to support their representatives in taking up government responsibility in municipalities and provinces. Secondly, relevant actors in DA were to be enabled to form, participate in and maintain coalitions in local and provincial politics.

When the cooperation between DA and DLDP/LP commenced in 2018, the partners were unable to foresee that internal and external events would significantly challenge the partnership and the ability of the partners to create results. Firstly, an unexpected but modest decline in the support for DA in the national and provincial elections in May 2019 caused a severe internal crisis in DA leading to changes in many leadership positions. Consequently, DA was not able to implement project activities in the better part of 2019, first due to campaigning before the election and then due to the leadership crisis following the election.

At the beginning of 2020, the partners were ready with very good plans for project activities in general and exchanges between DA and the Liberal Party in particular were positive. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world soon after. Unfortunately, South Africa is one of the countries which experienced a high number of COVID-19 cases as well as very severe lock downs.



Results and willingness to continue

Despite the considerable challenges mentioned above, the project has contributed robustly to the capacity building of local mayors, politicians and candidates within DA. This has been done through training courses, the development of online resources as well as study tours to and exchanges with Denmark. On the other hand, it has not been completely possible to live up to the initial ambition of building the capacity of DA to develop its politicians. The same goes for the coalition aspect of the project, which was reflected in its activities. Nevertheless, both partners agree this deserves more attention in any future partnership in the coming years.

DA and DLDP/LP agree that they would like to continue and develop this cooperation. The partners will still focus on local government but are also interested in learning from each other within other fields and developing more links between DA and the Liberal Party.

SWAZILAND (ESWATINI)

Social Democratic Party

The partnership between the Danish Social Democratic Party (SDP) and SWADEPA has been aimed at strengthening SWADEPA as a vehicle for multiparty democracy in Swaziland (Eswatini), Africa's last absolute monarchy, currently reigned over by King Mswati III.

SWADEPA, which was formed in 2011, strives to bring democratic change to Swaziland (Eswatini) by acting as a channel for democratic participation, mobilising different layers of society and providing leadership and political alternatives for the Swazi people.

Narrow political space through repressive control

In spite of Swaziland (Eswatini) signing the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance in 2018, the government has not taken the initiative to ratify or implement it. On the contrary, the regime continues to narrow the political space through its repressive control. This has led to waves of pro-democracy demonstration around the kingdom, with the people calling for democratic reforms. Throughout the partnership, the oppression by the regime has imposed constraints on the operation of SWADEPA and the democratic forces in Swaziland (Eswatini), with several SWADEPA affiliates being arrested, including the now deceased president of SWADEPA.

Strengthened youth engagement

Special attention is put on the efforts of SWADEPA to engage the youth of Swaziland (Eswatini) in its activities, so the next generation can see themselves reflected in the party. SWADEPA took a major step in the right direction in 2019 when the youth wing of the party hosted its first ever congress and formally elected its leadership.

To put external pressure on the regime, SWADEPA has built alliances in the democracy movement of Swaziland (Eswatini), which has historically been fragmented. In the framework of the partnership, SWADEPA has hosted several civil society dinners and seminars with other political parties to coordinate efforts and strategies against the regime. In 2019, these activities gave birth to the Political Party Assembly, uniting most of the political parties in Swaziland (Eswatini) across political ideologies.

Another key focus of the partnership has been helping SWADEPA reach the wider Swazi population through awareness campaigns. A major achievement took place on 12 April 2019, when SWADEPA led the first official party-organised, pro-democracy demonstration in Swaziland (Eswatini) since 1973. Several organisations and other political parties joined the rally, and the 12 April march has since become a template for other rallies.

Harvesting the outcomes

In February 2020, SDP and DIDP had a successful visit to Swaziland (Eswatini). As part of the visit, SWADEPA members were invited to take part in an Outcome Harvesting Workshop, where they shared their views and opinions and reflected on their political efforts. During the visit, SDP and SWADEPA also hosted a leadership workshop, which focused on developing a collective understanding of the challenges facing SWADEPA, what future SWADEPA wants to see, what the leadership needs to do and how it should be organised in order to help push for this change.

Even though there is still a long way to go for the democracy movement in Swaziland (Eswatini), and despite a repressive regime trying to fight it, change can be seen; the people have gone to the streets openly protesting the regime and demanding democratic change.



TANZANIA

The Conservative People's Party

The Danish Conservative People's Party has cooperated with the largest opposition party in Tanzania, CHADEMA, since 2012. Both parties are members of the International Union of Centre-right Parties (IDU). What motivates this cooperation is both parties' commitment to democracy and instituting a true multiparty democracy in Tanzania, so there may be a realistic possibility of a change in power. A prerequisite for this is that the opposition is organised in all parts of the country.

During the cooperation CHADEMA undertook a major party building exercise that has expanded its presence and operations to all parts of Tanzania. The Danish Conservative People's Party has contributed to this work by focusing on structures and training programmes for the political party's youth wing and women's wing from the hamlet to the national level. The leadership training programme for youth and women, the CHADEMA Leadership Award, has proven to be especially successful.

The activities in 2018-2021 were a logical next step to consolidating the results that had already been obtained. Capacitating and training members and leaders in a political organisation is an continual process. This led to establishing a permanent training facility: the CHADEMA ACADEMY, which aims to train CHADEMA members of all levels and backgrounds in terms of party values, political posi-

tions as well as organisation and mobilisation skills. CHADEMA managed to establish the basic training organisation with a training coordinator, a database for the training modules, materials, trainers, trainees, the training of 120 key trainers and the subsequent training of women and youth leaders all over the country.

Increase in women representation

As a result of CHADEMA's efforts more women have shown interest in taking part in politics, both in the organisational work and in the running for political positions at the local and national level. An increased number of women and youth members won party leadership positions in the 2019 internal party elections, and an increased number of women and youth members won party nominations allowing them to contest the 2019 local elections and 2020 general election.

Tanzania was a one-party socialist republic until 1992 with Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) as the only legal political party; CCM continues to control and influence, the police, the army, the judiciary, etc. The stronger the opposition the more repressive the ruling party becomes. In every election since 1992, CCM has tightened its grip on the opposition. This culminated with the local elections in 2019 and the general elections in 2020 being marred with exten-

sive irregularities comparable to those recently seen in Belarus and Russia. The opposition parties were crushed, and CHADEMA's chairman is now under arrest with charges for terrorism levelled against them.

A conclusion might be drawn that the project has not achieved more freedom and democracy in Tanzania, but there is a strong belief that this is only a short-term set back. CHADEMA is now a well-established political force with an issue-based party programme and an organisational structure with a member base and supporters all over the country. So, even though the situation looks very challenging, the party continues its work with much enthusiasm. This project has contributed to this enthusiasm.



TURKEY

The Red-Green Alliance

Since Turkish authorities are clamping down further on both journalists and the political opposition, working to promote democratic change is proving increasingly difficult.

The current Erdogan government, in a series of autocratic moves, has been seeking to completely marginalise the political opposition, using strategies including through censorship and imprisonment.

The Danish Red-Green Alliance Party established a formal partnership with the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) in 2019. The HDP, which has a strong focus on pro-minority rights within the country, has been one of the main targets of government repression.

While hundreds of party members, elected officials and activists have been imprisoned, the HDP continues to put pressure on the Turkish government, pushing for transparent elections, freedom of speech and the inclusion of women and minorities.

Securing strategic victories for the opposition

Since the party was founded, the HDP has pioneered initiatives to secure the inclusion of women, such as the party's co-chair system, in which men and women govern together at all levels. The party has also been very successful in mobilising youth members on a large scale and in building coalitions and bridging political divisions, for instance in the 2019 local elections, in which the party secured strategic victories for the



Delegation visit from political party HDP to the Red-Green Alliance in Denmark

opposition by effectively withdrawing from contested areas such as Ankara and Istanbul.

It is particularly in the areas of inclusion of women, mobilisation of youth members and campaigning that these two political parties have been seeking to share experiences and learn from each other. Since 2020, the parties have organised online-meetings, in which e.g., representatives of the parties' women's committees have been able to exchange experiences.

Establishing international networks in support of HDP

Another important step has been the establishment of a network of Scandinavian leftist parties in support of the HDP. Together with sister parties in Norway and Sweden, and through the DIPD programme, the Red-Green Alliance is in the process of uncovering how best to create value through joint coordination of activities and exchange of ideas. Since 2019, this collaboration has so far resulted in joint meetings in Copenhagen,



Stockholm and Istanbul, where the parties have been able to exchange ideas and practices and coordinate activities.

Establishing an international network is one of the main focus areas for the collaboration project with HDP in Turkey and has been a very valuable experience for all parties involved. These activities have meant that solidarity initiatives, meetings and campaigns involving Scandinavian parties and HDP are becoming collaborative to a much larger extent.

With repressive measures against the political party becoming more and more severe, the HDP is seeking to have its voice heard both nationally and internationally. Going forward, the Danish Red-Green Alliance, together with its sister parties in Scandinavia, is hoping to help raise awareness about the political situation in Turkey and to assist the HDP in promoting democratic change.

EAST AFRICA



(Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda)

The Alternative

Building partnerships beyond Danish borders is a core vision of the Danish political party The Alternative. In this project the Alternative have decided to partner with the Eastern Africa Green Federation (EAGF) committing themselves to capacitating and strengthening EAGF's four national green parties in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. By internally strengthening young, small, and green opposition parties in East Africa, the partnership has enhanced EAGF's ability to achieve successful results in the next set of elections in their respective countries. Supporting the few parties aimed at bringing forward the green agenda in the continent that will be hardest hit by climate change, constitutes an intrinsic democratic move.

Green ideology and advocacy

As greens, EAGF's political parties are founded in the green ideology. This project provided training on how to advocate against plastic pollution in the East African region and organised an actual advocacy practice where EAGF members travelled to several lakes and rivers in the region to engage with local communities and pick up some plastic from the polluted water. This outcome is extremely relevant for EAGF political parties because without experience in green advocacy and without having scientific evidence on this very concerning topic, they will not be able to communicate their political proposals with confidence to their



The Alternative Party partner EAGF removing plastic waste from Lake Victoria in Uganda in February 2020.

voters. Receiving experience in green advocacy has encouraged EAGF political parties to learn how to define their audience and identify the affected communities, the people responsible for the pollution and the regulators who should intervene to stop this crisis.

Establishing a Green Economic Institute

An essential outcome of this project has been the registration of EAGF as a legal entity acquiring autonomy and capability to engage in relations with other stakeholders. Furthermore, EAGF is currently working on the establishment of a Green Economic Institute that aims to attract professionals who will have the opportunity to conduct research on green matters, to organise conferences and to enhance EAGF's visibility, network and influence amongst regional decision-makers. Moreover, by expanding EAGF, more forces will be gathered to push for the green agenda in the region putting electoral reforms, social justice and pacifism at the top of the priorities list for legislators. EAGF political parties have acknowledged that they



operate in one of the world's youngest regions where the young account for almost 70% of the population. This has led them to concentrating their efforts in attracting young people to their political activities and placing them at the front of their decision-making. This change has been very relevant because it has helped to enhance the understanding of the youngest minds of the electorate and to incorporate their priorities into party profiles. Quoting one of the interviewees, the reason why this is an essential change is that "as a political party in East Africa if you do not involve the youth, you are a dead party."

Both EAGF and the Alternative are impressed by the positive results and feedback from interviewees, and even though they are now putting their united initiatives on a hold, they have a strong desire to be able to restart their DIPD financed collaboration on these important issues soon.

DIPD AND COVID-19



DIPD AND COVID-19



Photo by Chris Montgomery on Unsplash

In the programme period from January 2018 to June 2021 the greatest unforeseen challenge has been COVID-19. Many of the partnerships have been based on the opportunity for exchanges and knowledge sharing between politicians and political parties in Denmark and politicians or aspiring politicians in the partner countries. The pandemic forced many of the partnerships to rethink activities and modes of operation. But being forced to think creatively created new opportunities and have left both DIPD, the political parties and partners with new skills and capacity to utilize the digital platforms more efficiently.

Building Online Capacity

The level of digital capacity differs globally, which has meant that ensuring virtual meetings could be carried out between the partners was one of the first steps taken as the pandemic took its hold. In several partnerships this meant supporting partners in acquiring the necessary equipment. It was not only a case of having the right equipment as everyone needed some time to become educated on how to use the different, new online tools. In Nicaragua the Danish political party the Red-Green Alliance saw their partners and themselves gain more capacity in using online tools for everything from communication to strategising and planning. They learnt that even though it might not replace physical meetings, using online tools for sharing experience is a useful alternative.

In the SocDem Asia partnership the Danish Social Democratic Party saw that the online tools created made it possible to stay connected during the difficult times. But when it came to creating more inclusion and participation it was more challenging. The partnership focused on creating webinars that could increase the capacity of network members to use online tools as they found that the digital skills varied greatly.

At the same time, thinking in terms of online meetings and conferences presents the possibility for politicians to find room more easily in their calendars

for the meetings, fostering more high-level exchange both internally in the countries and externally. In Kenya, DIPD and DLDP/LPs partner CMD-Kenya were able to arrange nine high-level conferences in 2020 and 2021 bringing together parliamentarians, government agencies and civil society organisations.

As COVID-19 has affected all countries similar politicians have been faced with identical challenges and opportunities. Using online tools created opportunity for politicians to discuss issues at hand across borders. In Nepal, the DIPD partner JOMPOPS initiated dialogue with stakeholders in Bhutan, to discuss how to handle the challenges ahead and learn from each other during difficult times.

Moving forward in a world that is still heavily impacted by the global pandemic, DIPD is building on knowledge gained that will be utilised in the partnerships ahead. There is still a great need for physical meetings and interaction, but online tools offer a significant advantage and can create possibilities not envisaged earlier. Being able to gather people from all over the world in an online room presents a unique possibility to share experiences in a safe and affordable manner. Acknowledging, that digital access is not equal distributed new digital platforms can provide engagement among previously less represented groups.

PLEASE UNMUTE THE PARTNERSHIP SO THAT WE CAN HEAR YOU

Covid-19 made it difficult for the Danish political parties and their partners to implement their planned activities and to maintain their crucial personal contacts. But our new habit and ability to hold online meetings has also provided new opportunities for developing partnerships.

By Bent Nicolajsen, Programme Manager, Danish Liberal Democracy Programme (DLDP)

“Please unmute yourself, we cannot hear you”

“OK, that is better. We can also see you now”

Cape Town, Caracas, Manila, Brussels and Copenhagen are connected. Leading opposition politicians from South Africa, Venezuela and the Philippines are sharing challenges facing opposition parties in countries with authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes during a global pandemic.

It is September 2020, the International Day of Democracy. In the times of Corona, the day is not marked with a physical event in Brussels as it used to be the case. This time around, Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP) has been involved in organising an online panel debate arching over four time zones. Together with their social democratic and conservative European colleagues, DLDP/LP has mobilised prominent politicians from three continents in the

global South. These political leaders engaged in an interesting dialogue, which shows that despite their political differences, they see many similarities in their challenges as opposition parties. Likewise different kinds of regimes saw the pandemic as a welcome opportunity to be harsh on civil society and opposition groups.

It is unlikely that such a debate would have happened a few years ago. If it had happened, it would definitely not have been with that level of representation from three interesting corners of the world. In the old days – a couple of years ago – we thought that meetings were a physical thing involving a lot of planning, traveling, expenses, CO2 and time. Now Covid-19 has taught us something else.

The European coordinated exchange between liberal, conservative, and social democratic politicians from three time zones has not been the only innovative use of online meetings in 2020 and 2021. Other examples are:

- An online conflict management and dialogue course for representatives of Kenyan political parties with facilitators placed in Denmark
- Exchanges between leading figures from the Danish Liberal Party and Democratic Alliance from South Africa on how to be a liberal opposition during times of Corona. In the audience were ordinary members of the Danish Liberal Party from different parts of Denmark
- The presentation of a paper on the state of multiparty democracy in Kenya by a researcher of political science. Kenyan political parties attended the event which also contained contributions from the two multiparty platforms from Ghana as well as from the 1st deputy speaker of the Danish parliament

The above are just examples. DLDP/LP's partners in Kenya and South Africa have both been quick and innovative in bringing their activities online. Most likely, DLDP/LP and its partners will continue to have online events when Corona eventually is under control. Since online meetings will not be able to fully replace physical meetings, DLDP/LP will continue to blend the two kinds of meetings in new ways in the coming years.



DIPD'S THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION

FEMALE POLITICIANS TRAINED:
8,973

Ensuring women's representation at all levels of government continues to be a struggle globally. According to UN Women, only 25% of the seats in national parliaments are held by women. The Danish political parties and DIPD are working to strengthen women's representation specifically through partnerships in Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine and Tanzania.

INCREASED WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION AT THE BALLOT BOX

One focus area is to ensure women's representation at the ballot box, a process that starts at the party level. In **Burkina Faso** a quota for women's representation on the party lists on the ballots has been implemented, but the quota is mostly not upheld by political parties in Burkina Faso. The Danish Social Democratic Party (SDP) worked with their partner People's Movement for Progress (MPP) to ensure a higher level of representation of women on the party lists both at the provincial and national level by going through the lists and figuring out ways to include more women leading up to the election in 2020. At the same time, both the SDP's and DIPD's partner Centre for Democratic Governance (CGD) undertook capacity building training for women, which resulted in several of the participating women being elected to office and one woman becoming a minister.

HIGH LEVEL REPRESENTATION

The increase in representation of women at the highest level has not only been seen in Burkina Faso. In this project period, we have also seen women rising to the top in **Nepal**. The first female Chief Minister was elected after many years of being a part of the DIPD partnership regarding the multiparty platform, the Joint Mechanism for Political Party Support. Four other women have been elected as ministers and many more were elected to higher offices. In Nepal DIPD has focused on strengthening women's leadership skills while at the same time working to promote gender equality policies. A multi-pronged strategy that has resulted in several Nepalese parties conducting gender audits and women feeling more secure in running for leadership positions.

COURAGE TO RUN FOR OFFICE

Empowering women to run for political office is essential in strengthening women's representation. In **Bhutan**, the DIPD partner Bhutan Network for Empowering Women (BNEW) has succeeded in training more female role models and in increasing the support for female leadership. This has been undertaken to counter the gender stereotypes women face and

to convince the general population that women should run for office as

much as men. In the campaign to make women more visible there has also been intense work done to ensure that journalists are being educated and made aware of gender perspectives.

Increasing the representation of women by educating role models has also been at the core of the work in **Tanzania**. The Danish Conservative Party has worked with CHADEMA, their partner, to empower women and give them concrete tools and skills for their political leadership journey; this has worked to greatly increase the number of women contesting the 2020 election as CHADEMA candidates. In 2020, 69 women stood in the general election as CHADEMA candidates, whereas in 2015 there were only 12 CHADEMA women candidates.

Still, making sure that women can run for office is not always easy. In times of insecurity or in times of a pandemic the space for women to participate in politics shrinks and for some political parties it then becomes less of a priority to focus on women's representation. Gender equality remains a problem, but small steps are being made to ensure equal representation. Therefore, it is important to maintain the focus on political parties and their role in ensuring gender equality; the first step is getting more women on the ballot paper.

WOMEN CHANGING THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN BHUTAN

DIPD's long-time partner, the Bhutan Network for Empowering Women (BNEW) has worked tirelessly since 2012 on enhancing and strengthening the participation and representation of women in governance, leadership, and politics in Bhutan at national and local level. As a young democratic nation, Bhutan struggles with gender stereotyping of roles and responsibilities, as a result politics and leadership positions are highly male dominated.

First female gup in Bhutan

At the 1st local government (LG) elections in 2011, when Namgay Pelden made it into the highly contested, well regarded and prestigious club of 205 elected "Gups" (Chairpersons of the 205 local governments across Bhutan); she made history by becoming the lone female elected Gup at the start of the Bhutan's democratic governance at the local level.

Namgay Pelden was working as a non-formal education instructor in her village of Namchila in Tashiding geog. She had no knowledge of politics, leadership nor computers etc, and speaking in public always made her nervous. After participating in various capacity building initiatives organised by BNEW she gained the necessary confidence to be able to speak up. She was re-elected to continue her service as their Gup once more from 2016-2021. In fact, in the neighbouring Geog of Gesarling another woman was also successful

in this election. Gup Pema Wangmo Tamang was elected to join Gup Namgay from 2016-2021, bringing the number of women Gups from 1 to 2 out of the pool of 205 elected Gups across the country.

Changing public perception

During the interview with DIPD, Gup Namgay said that BNEW helped her and all the other elected and potential women candidates by facilitating dialogue across the 20 districts, creating capacity building workshops before and after elections to make them more confident in campaigns and effective as leaders once elected. For example, after visiting Denmark during the municipality elections in November 2017, Namgay and her colleagues picked up many ideas on conducting their campaigns better as well as learning about transparency, advocacy and awareness.

Namgay Pelden and BNEW are using various tools for advocacy and awareness raising on a wider scale to work on shifting and transforming the gender stereotyped norms, attitudes and mindsets in society so that it becomes far more supportive and accepting of women leadership. Numerous radio interviews, radio jingles and video clips of women leaders have been aired on national television, print media and other major strategic events were carried out to advocate for the benefits of empowering women so that they can



become leaders, especially via the political route which is faster and more effective for reaching our goal on gender equality in leadership.

Today Namgay is contesting again for the 3rd local government election in the fall of 2021 using the same advocacy and awareness tools she has observed in Denmark. BNEW as of October 2021 has trained more than 7,000 women, which is an enhancement of more than 100% compared to the 3,000 in 2018. BNEW reports that almost all journalists have been gender sensitised and media coverage of the elections has improved significantly over the years. Although a lot remains to be desired in terms of achieving gender equality in politics and leadership in Bhutan, both Namgay and BNEW have assured and confirmed that, in general, the public perception of women in leadership and politics seems to be shifting and changing for the positive, albeit gradually.

STRENGTHENING YOUTH REPRESENTATION

DIPD has given specific attention to youth inclusion in political life. DIPD partnerships have focused on increasing the participation of youth in many different contexts, including Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Swaziland (Eswatini) and Tanzania. This work has led to many positive outcomes and even impacted institutional and system-level dynamics.

HELPING YOUTH NAVIGATE POLITICS

Significant achievements amongst youth were present in **Kenya**, where the partnerships contributed to increasing youth representation in decision-making bodies within political parties and their involvement in political party processes. Between 2019 and 2021, several political parties in Kenya, which had previously deliberately not given attention to their young members, were at that point including more young people, in their governing bodies and in their party's programmes. Concretely, the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD), DLDP/LP and DIPD's partner in Kenya helped youth see how to navigate in the political environment.

Gaining more confidence and capacity is essential to taking on active roles in decision-making processes. Exchange visits between Danish youths and youth in **Malawi** have had an important im-

pact on the capacity building of youth. It was noted that after the exchange visits, Malawian youths were inspired by the level of independence of Danish youth and how active their peers in Denmark were throughout the electoral cycle. As a result, the Malawian youths also initiated talks with their party leaders to seek independence and turn away from violence but rather focus on developing their skills to become more relevant and run their youth wings successfully.

CREATING INITIATIVES FOR ENGAGEMENT

During the 2019 Youth Congress, SWADEPA Youth in **Swaziland (Eswatini)** formalised the launch of the Youth League by hosting its very first youth congress where the youth leadership was formally elected, and policies and a constitution were officially adopted. This has resulted in more cohesion in the Youth League and has strengthened the youth position in the overall party structures. The Youth League is both more visible and respected as a semi-autonomous entity. This helps in the mobilisation of young people who feel they will be able to influence the direction of their party, whilst keeping SWADEPA a united entity.

POLITICIANS PARTICIPATING IN MENTOR SCHEMES:

440

YOUTH POLITICIANS TRAINED:

10,311

POLITICAL YOUTH CAMP

Furthermore, the approach of working hand in hand with a broad spectrum of political parties from the Danish Parliament produced a Political Youth Camp held in September 2019 with approximately 80 representatives from Swaziland (Eswatini), Philippines, Nepal, Tanzania, Kenya, Myanmar and Burkina Faso. In the Political Youth Camp young politicians and campaigners from the Danish political parties engaged directly with their international counterparts to exchange knowhow and ideas for the future. The Political Youth Camp inspired the youth politicians to tackle democratic and political problems they face using new skills, tools and ideas.

DIPD sees great potential in the partnerships for inclusivity to be prioritised in all projects, especially for groups who are generally under-represented, such as youth. Initiatives to support the establishment of youth leagues and youth congresses that give youth a platform and a space to engage in politics is paving the way for the future.

BEING AN ELECTED YOUTH MP IN MYANMAR

Sai Aok Ka attended the Myanmar Parliamentary Internship Programme (MPIP) organised by DIPD. This gave him the opportunity to be actively engaged in his internship period, to be nominated as a youth candidate in the 2020 election and to be elected for his political party, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) and to be an MP in the Lower House (Pyithu Hluttaw).

Sai Aok Kas's reason for standing for election in 2020 was that he would like to be engaged in community development, to enhance equal rights and promote youth engagement in politics. Before the election, he conducted voter education training and followed the rules and regulations of the Union Election Commission.

Sai Aok Ka faced some challenges reaching out to voters, due to the voters' lack of awareness about the electoral process, obstruction of his planned mass campaign due to COVID-19 prevention laws, and the rainy season making transportation complicated, especially when reaching out to remote villages. However, the MPIP enabled him to receive valuable experience, such as how to collaborate with an election team, how to better understand people and community needs and how to communicate with multi-ethnic groups.

Sai Aok Ka's plans to be engaged for the coming years will be to follow his party's guidance on constitution amendment, collaborate with party and hluttaw committees for law reform, collaborate with civil society organisation for community development, enhance communication channels between public and government department offices and to enhance youth participation and leading roles in politics. Sai Aok Ka found the DIPD internship training very useful because he was able to become more familiar with how Myanmar's parliament operates, which is important for elections. Furthermore, he suggested that the internship programme should put more emphasis on field visit opportunities for interns and the data collecting process in constituencies.





Rosa Wangu Kariuki is deputy Youth Leader at Narc-Kenya Party and has been selected by her party as a board member of CMD-Kenya representing the youth. Through CMD-Kenya's partnership with Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP), she has benefitted from training and meetings organised by CMD-Kenya including taking part in intergenerational dialogue sessions, cross-party youth meetings and the People Dialogue Festival, (2019 and 2020).

Rosa says: *"Because of the CMD Kenya youth activities, the political youth groups in political parties are now listening with the aim of understanding each other and are being tolerant to each other. We are now able to discuss issues that affect the Kenyan youth as they cut across"*

Of particular high value to Rosa are the Intergenerational dialogues organised by CMD Kenya, as Rosa says: *"They have been helpful to us youth because they have enabled us to relate with the party leadership in cordial discussions where we are able to disagree respectfully*

WE ARE NOW READY FOR ISSUE-BASED CAMPAIGNING

when need be. This has given confidence to the youth to even take over leadership positions and engage in party activities and has also raised the expectations that we will be getting free and fair nominations in the party primaries happening in 2022. It is important to ensure political party nomination fees are fairer to young people, women and to people with disabilities"

"The intergenerational dialogues have also helped the youth and women on how to deal with bullying on social media spaces. A space that has discouraged a lot of youth and women from vying for political positions or even engaging in politics"

"Youth and women safety during campaigns is also of paramount importance. Youth and women experience assault and sexual violence. These cases are reported to the required institutions/authorities and no action is taken against the perpetrators and no protection offered to the victims. The dialogues help the youth and women on how to maintain body integrity and dignity"

We are now ready for issue-based campaigning

CMD Kenya training on communication and how to relate to Kenya voters and publicity (media) has been very helpful. Rosa mentions: *"Most of the time the Kenyan media is biased. It is unfortunate that most of the media houses are owned by individuals and so they will give a huge coverage to their preferred candidates but for the few times we get coverage I am now able to be confident*

and have eloquent conversations in front of the camera and develop content for social media. We are now better equipped to campaign on important issues such as corruption, unemployment, food security, personal and property security and health related concerns"

"In the Kenyan society, youth and women are often adversely affected by corruption, which is one of the reasons for the high unemployment rates among the youth and women. We need to speak out on gender inequality which our Kenya Constitution 2010 has addressed"

People Dialogue Festival

Rose Kariuki has been grateful for the possibilities presented by the CMD Kenya organised People Dialogue Festival (PDF), particularly those it has brought for youth organisations. Rosa says:

"This has enabled us to better interact with other youth organizations. And because of the PDF, we have been able to register more young people into the party, learn more about other political parties and youth related organizations. Have more open discussions among party members on issues such as Integrity, corruption, and fair political conversation on various political platforms"

Rosa Kariuki has plans to vie for a political position in 2027. In the meantime, she will concentrate on finishing her law school studies in Nairobi and help candidates develop a winning strategy for their campaigns.

CAPACITY-BUILDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES

DIPDs work on strengthening the organisation of political parties is visible in a number of DIPD countries. This was for instance evident in the social democratic party project in **Swaziland (Eswatini)** where a strengthened capacity and the improved democratic culture of SWADEPA during the partnership was assessed to be very high. The organisation of SWADEPA was formalised and the statutes consolidated and applied to the entire organisation. Furthermore, SWADEPA's communication infrastructure and capabilities on social media were strengthened during this time. This was confirmed by interviewed resource persons and volunteers. The strengthening of SWADEPAs organisation supported the organisation in being able to successfully challenge a proposed Act on Public Order, which according to several international observers was deemed to be undemocratic, and paved way for the right to assembly.

ENHANCED DEMOCRATIC INTERNAL PROCESSES IN POLITICAL PARTIES

In **Kenya** Danish Liberal Democracy Programme and the Danish Liberal Party (DLDP/LP) and DIPD partner CMD Kenya has facilitated interparty dialogue sessions for party youth leaders which has led to a revision of internal guidelines and regulations to strengthen youth leagues as active drivers of change within political parties.

Furthermore, CMD Kenya has initiated and supported a national online campaign that has led to the promotion of open governance standards where citizens are invited to participate, as well as demand transparency and accountability from decision makers. This has been further strengthened through the convening of virtual cross-party meetings by party youth leaders, which has led them to understanding and using the principles of open governance in the implementation of COVID-19 interventions by the national government.

In **Georgia**, the Danish Social Liberal Party's partner EECMD has customised and introduced an online decision-making software - Consul to the participating political parties. The software - Consul is a comprehensive digital tool for citizen participation, which political parties have used to enable open, transparent, and democratic initiatives such as citizens' proposals, debates, participatory budgeting, collaborative legislation, interviews and surveys.

In the **East Africa region**, the East African Green Federation (EAGF) with support from the Danish Alternative Party, has provided trainings to political parties on how to advocate against plastic pollution in the East African region and the partnership has also organised an actual advocacy practice where EAGF members travelled to several lakes and rivers in the region to engage with local communities and pick up

LOCAL
GOVERNANCE
TRAINING COURSES:

349

PEER-TO-PEER
VISITS FROM
DANISH POLITICIANS
TO OPERATING
COUNTRIES:

122

POLICY
DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOPS HELD:

338

plastics from the polluted water. Furthermore, this collective pick up of plastics on Earth Day 2021, attracted much media attention in the four countries represented by the EAGF. There was a consensus amongst the interviewees that there had not been any previous activity that had given them that much visibility. This outcome is extremely relevant for EAGF political parties because without experience in how to advocate and without getting scientific evidence on this very concerning topic, they will not be able to communicate their political proposals with confidence to their voters.

BOTTOM-UP-APPROACH TO STRENGTHEN DECENTRALISATION

In Colombia, the Danish Red-Green Alliance's project with MAPA has organised political schools that have given the participants space to analyse problems in the implementation of the 2016 peace agreement, as well as the opportunity and tools to push for better compliance of the many sub-agreements, including the agreement on increased political participation.

The schools as well as seminars have strengthened MAPA organisationally by tying the many regional organisations together better and strengthening their joint analysis and the alignment of their strategy. This has enabled MAPA to work towards the

implementation of the peace agreement, to promote democratic culture, and to participate in electoral actions.

INCREASED CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES

At the national level, in three countries, **Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines**, member parties of SocDem Asia have proposed national social welfare policies. These have been developed through bottom-up and inclusive policy development processes: from issue analysis and agenda setting, sectoral and geographical consultations to public fora. Building on a decade long advocacy and electoral promise to deliver Universal Healthcare (UHC), Akbayan in the Philippines successfully campaigned for the passage of UHC Law in 2019. Akbayan has focused the remainder of the project on popularising the aforementioned legislation at the local level. The Nepali Congress has conducted the broadest possible consultation at the grassroots level and with various stakeholders, primarily students and teachers' associations, on a proposed National Policy on Critical Education Reforms. The Democratic Party for a New Society (DPNS) and the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) navigated the process of policymaking in their (then) newly democratising country and came up with a



proposed National Policy to Reduce Maternal and Child Mortality, which is the worst in the region. Furthermore, in the 2020 National Election, both DPNS and SNLD included this proposed social welfare policy in their campaign manifestos, which were conventionally limited to political reforms in the country. However, the pandemic prevented activities to popularise these policies in Nepal (severely affected by the Delta variant surge) and Myanmar, which completely closed after the military coup in February 2021.



RE-IMAGINING AN 'ASIAN SOCIAL WELFARE MODEL'

Sai Sam Phoon Seng, 35 years old and already Deputy General Secretary in the political party, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, (SNLD) in Myanmar, says: *"We have come a long way since the SocDem Asia project started. Through our engagement in SocDem Asia and in our cooperation with SDP, we have been inspired to move from an ethnic based party to a principle and programme-based party. We have now begun to take on social welfare as a key element in our election platform in the 2020 national elections. This was very significant in the context of Myanmar and in the context of our party modernising. Unfortunately, the coup happened in 2021, which has set us back."*

SNLD in Myanmar has navigated the process of policy making and came up with a proposed National Policy to Reduce Maternal and Child Mortality. This was relevant because Maternal and Child Mortality rates for Myanmar, according to reports of UN health agencies is amongst the highest in the region in Asia. Furthermore, in the 2020 National Election, SNLD included a proposed social welfare policy in their campaign manifesto, which before this conventionally was limited to only proposing political reforms in the country.

The project between the Danish Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the regional network SocDem Asia succeeded in strengthening SocDem Asia and its member parties ideologically in promoting social democratic thinking and social democratic alternatives at the regional level and in developing national social welfare policies. This has happened in three specific countries: Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines where inclusive social democratic political programmes have been developed.

At the regional level, SocDem Asia member parties have collectively started the process of re-imagining an 'Asian social welfare model' by tracing the roots and development of social democracy in the region and in their countries. They have done this by mapping existing social welfare policies related to health, education and progressive taxation, and by discussing strategies to promote social welfare policies in the region.

At the national level, in three countries (Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines), member parties of SocDem Asia have proposed national social welfare policies. This was done through bottom-up and inclusive policy development processes: from issue analysis and agenda setting, sectoral and geographical consultations to public fora.

Sai Sam Phoon Seng is responsible for policy development in SNLD. He has appreciated the joint activities with SDP and particularly mentions the impact of participating in the regional SocDem Asia Conference on Health, a study visit to Denmark on building a welfare state and a training on inclusive policy formulation.

He adds: *"We are not familiar with policy development, and those activities opened up for us a new level of understanding. The dual method of including a bottom-up approach to policy making being used within a party as SDP was an eye opener."*

The SNLD policy to reduce maternal and child mortality was supposed to have been raised in parliament, as Sai Sam Phoon Seng notes: *"But then the COVID-19 pandemic happened, and the parliament could not convene. And then you had the coup d'état in beginning of 2021, so that the parliament could not convene. This was a setback, but nevertheless our political party has definitely benefitted from being a partner in the SocDem Asia project. Because engaging in welfare state policy processes within Myanmar was not normal when the project started – most political parties in our fragile democracy instead engaged mostly in whether to change the 2008 constitution and move the military out of politics and of course the peace process. Services to the people of Myanmar was not discussed, which is of course also a very important issue."*

MULTIPARTY DIALOGUE

STRENGTHENED DEMOCRATIC CULTURE AND DIALOGUE

In **Myanmar** bilateral projects to strengthen internal and programmatic capacity was carried out with the five largest parliamentary parties. While some parties used the support to organise intraparty meetings focused on collective creation of party programmes, resource mobilisation and organisational development skills, other parties used the support to strengthen their capacity to use research and policy development to increase their chances of winning in the 2020 elections.

DIPD also organised social media trainings targeting the members of sub-election commissions. These trainings were facilitated by experts from Facebook and focused on the skills necessary for effective and responsible use of Facebook in the context of the 2020 elections.

Furthermore, DIPD organised human rights trainings for five political parties who were equipped with basic human rights knowledge and the importance of human rights to protect and uphold a democratic society. According to Free Expression Myanmar, four out of five political parties that DIPD partnered with for this activity made commitments to human rights in their party's 2020 campaign manifestos.

Through these various interventions, relation-

ships between different parties and stakeholders in the democratic process were improved. The dialogue meetings also allowed for the parties and other stakeholders to share information and discuss contentious issues within the democratisation process. It is important to note that these results were achieved prior to the military coup. Many of these achievements sadly became irrelevant in a context of armed conflict and political turmoil.

DIALOGUE ON AMENDMENT OF NATIONAL LEGISLATION

In **Nepal** a series of multiparty discussions on electoral reforms have led to joint recommendations submitted by the multiparty platform Joint Mechanism for Political Party Strengthening (JOMPOPS) to the Election Commission, which particularly focuses on curbing excessive electioneering expenditures. JOMPOPS also conducted a series of multiparty discussions regarding the issues of the marginalised Dalit women which led to formulation of joint recommen-

dations, which were then submitted to the Nepalese Parliament.

Furthermore, JOMPOPS conducted multiparty orientation workshops on sustainable development goals with the Sustainable Development and Good Governance Committee and the Legislative Management Committee of Nepal's parliament, benefitting many parliamentarians, and it held a series of other

DIALOGUE PLATFORMS HELD FOR POLITICAL PARTIES:

278

POLITICAL PARTIES INVOLVED IN PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

292

DEMOCRACY FESTIVALS HELD:

4

POLITICIANS GOING TO DENMARK ON STUDY VISITS:

170

orientation sessions benefiting 937 members from all JOMPOPS parties. The above instances of advocacy can be considered as the project's contributions to the policy changes in Nepal through multiparty collaboration.

In **Ghana** in 2019, the partners the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) and the Centre for Democratic Governance (CDD) built consensus between the two major political parties in Ghana, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) on the amendment of Articles 55(3) and 243(1) for multiparty local democracy to be established in Ghana. This was a major achievement because previously there had been disagreement between the two parties. Through the project, consensus was achieved between the leadership of the two political parties, for the process to move forward to the level where the date for the referendum was fixed without litigation.

However, the main opposition party, NDC, later withdrew its support for the amendment and asked that some conditions be met for it to support the amendment, which did not happen. Subsequently the president called off the referendum.

STABILISING DEMOCRACIES

In **Kenya**, the organisation of the People Dialogue Festival (PDF) was a major achievement to stabilising the democracy as political parties now were afforded the possibility to demonstrate their readiness to conduct politics differently through informal dialogue platforms. Taking place against the backdrop of in-

creasing demand for expanded national dialogue to address governance deficits, political and other civic actors taking part in the PDF appreciated that solutions to the country's challenges must come collectively from both political and opinion leaders. This was also validated during the Outcome Harvesting workshop by political party actors who affirmed that the PDF in 2019 and 2020 were instrumental to them in that it gave them an avenue to do politics differently.

Similarly in **Nepal** the DIPD organised the Democracy Fair in 2018, the first such event held outside Europe, which was a major achievement. This event benefitted around one hundred thousand common Nepalese and thousands of local political party members through a series of seminars, workshops, discussions and open forums on the issues of promoting multiparty democracy in a festive atmosphere.

In **Burkina Faso** the building of trust amongst political actors, which began during a delegation visit to Copenhagen with representatives from all the political parties in May 2018, was strengthened throughout the programme. Indeed, the programme enabled the establishment of an inclusive political dialogue framework with both the majority and opposition parties, where major political issues were discussed before they were put on the agenda in the public space. A series of political dialogues on themes of national interest were carried out. Subsequently, joint reform initiatives were adopted, such as reform of the electoral commission, a joint declaration on the prevention of political violence during elections and the drafting and adoption of a pact of good conduct for the elections.

"It is thanks to this programme that I set foot for the first time in the headquarters of an opposing party, although we have no fundamental differences," said a political party official.

DIALOGUE ON PEACE PROCESSES

In **Ghana**, IDEG organised a broad consultation with the leadership of the main political parties and their presidential candidates, the Peace Council, the National House of Chiefs, Religious Leaders, the Chief Justice, amongst others. Based on the consultation, the political parties worked together to promote peace before, during and after the 2020 elections following the 2020 Presidential Elections Peace Pact organised by IDEG and partners. The peace pact calmed tensions ahead of the elections and post-elections, and when there was disagreement on the election results, the peace pact was used as a reference for the parties to take the appropriate steps as instructed by the peace pact to address the disagreement.

A NEPALESE YOUTH LEADER'S MULTIPARTY JOURNEY

When Shyam Bihari Sah Kesari, on the prompting of his party seniors, enrolled into a multiparty leadership Training of Trainers organised by DIPD's long-time Nepal partner Joint Mechanism for Political Party Strengthening (JOMPOPS) and the Danish Social Liberal Party (SLP) in July 2019, it was the first time he was attending such a training and he hoped the journey to and the trouble of finding a place to stay in Kathmandu would be worthwhile.

"It was a wholesome training, that taught knowledge and skills required to be a good leader, the importance of youth politics and the question of why politics need multiparty cooperation and collaboration. The nurturing of the trainees subsequently was consistent, and hands-on, and therefore, continually beneficial", says Shyam, reflecting on his multi-year experience of YoungLead, (as the SLP-assisted project was aptly named) a journey at the start of which he had a good, enriching multiparty training, and subsequently participated in other events, including a political youth camp in Denmark in September 2019.

"Though I had some experience as a teacher/trainer, the training, and nurturing afterwards, helped me a lot to develop as a confident trainer equipped with rich training materials and as a wiser youth politician, and allowed me knowledge and tools to help my party," says Shyam, who has a Master's in Education.

Up the Leadership Ladder

Since then, he has moved up the party leadership ladder to become a central spokesperson of the students' wing of his party, where he is also now the party in-charge of the area where he lives in Kalaiya city, in the Bara district. Livelihood-wise and professionally, he is, since September 2020, Head of the Training Department of Ram Raja Multiple College, an old, reputed college in his district.

Shyam had an early taste of multiparty camaraderie forged during the first Young Lead multiparty training, when he was invited in December 2020 by a fellow-trainer (and a fellow-traveller to Denmark) from another party to visit Janakpur, to jointly undertake different sessions on environmental sustainability, the climate crisis, democratic and political leadership and gender equality for the benefit of some 400 youth leaders in that district, Dhanusha.

"Respect for other's views' is a democratic value that I heard frequently and internalised during the multiparty trainings, and during my Denmark tour, as a main highlight of principles and values of democracy that Denmark practices", recalls Shyam. *"With efforts at valuing others' opinions, I find that unhealthy rivalry amongst party workers lessens a lot."*



Youths for Youths

By that token, following the principle of "youth for youths", Shyam and his party colleagues and youth politicians from other parties have come around to the view that they should jointly "do something" about helping to promote IT and effective social media use amongst the youths in their province, considered one of the most disadvantaged in Nepal.

All in all, the YoungLead experience for him, in terms of his political career and ability as a trainer, has been, he says, "life-changing".

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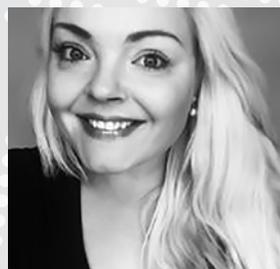
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