



STRATEGY

2021 – 2025

DIPD

DANISH INSTITUTE FOR PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY

DEMOCRACY TAKES TIME

A well-functioning multiparty democracy is not built in one day. It is a long, complicated process. This is true for Denmark where, 170 years after the adoption of the Constitution, we are still improving and refining our democracy. This is also true for many developing countries where DIPD supports processes of democratization.

2020 marks the 10-year anniversary of the founding of DIPD. During these ten years, we have worked determinedly to ensure that democracies have a better chance of flourishing, and that political parties play a decisive role in this. We have done so on the basis of the democratic experience that is deeply rooted in the parties of the Danish Parliament. We will continue to do so over the next ten years – while adjusting for developments in the global state of democracy.

The world is changing, and we as an organization must keep up. Based on this strategy, we will learn from the first ten years of experience and develop the way we work. This applies to our understanding of the work we do in collaboration with our partners. It also applies to the preconditions for the political partnerships specific to DIPD's mandate, to thrive and provide democracy worldwide with much needed support.

We look forward to using this strategy to continue the important work of strengthening democracy



Kasper Sand Kjær, Chairman



Lisbeth Pilegaard, Executive Director

ABOUT THE STRATEGY

This strategy is based on the experience that has been built up during the first ten years of DIPD – in the board, in the organization, among partners and among the many dedicated members and employees of the Danish parliamentary parties who contribute every day to making the DIPD a vibrant and inclusive organization.

The starting point for the strategy is our understanding of the global state of democracy and the way in which political parties contribute to and play a role in the development of democracy. There are significant challenges, but we also see that the demand and need for democracy is growing all over the world.

DIPD wishes to be relevant and current in our work with political parties. This requires us to continuously relate to the outside world and the political currents. Based on this strategy, DIPD will develop so that we are better equipped to support our partners in the democratic work. In order to do so, we have to strengthen DIPD's work within knowledge and learning, continue to develop solid forms of partnership and professional methods, and not least have the courage and curiosity to renew our work.

This also means that the strategy must be organic and adaptable to a changing world. The board will evaluate the strategy on a continuing basis in order to ensure that DIPD's initiatives fit the changeable reality in which we operate.

With this strategy, the board of DIPD kicks off a series of innovations of DIPD's working methods and of the organization supporting the work.

ABOUT DIPD

DIPD is an independent public institution, established by law in May 2010. DIPD was founded with the purpose of strengthening Danish democracy assistance, particularly the support for the development of democratic political parties and multiparty systems in developing countries. DIPD was set up by the political parties and offers them the possibility of entering into partnerships alone or jointly, for the benefit of democratic political parties and multiparty systems in developing countries.

DIPD is a community of Danish parliamentary parties, believing that together and individually, we can make a difference in the world. The fundamental idea behind DIPD is that through collaboration, exchange of experience and a joint organization, we can support political parties and multiparty systems.

Under the auspices of DIPD, Danish parties form partnerships with parties or other relevant actors working to promote multiparty systems and democratic culture in developing countries. These partnerships can be direct party-to-actor collaborations, or they can be organized as multiparty collaborations where several Danish parties join together in the partnership with specific actors.



THE BASIS FOR THE STRATEGY

Well-functioning and democratic political parties are a prerequisite for the development of well-functioning, representative multiparty democracies. Democratic political parties are the best guarantee of freedom, prosperity, stability, equality and peace.

This was the basis on which DIPD was founded, and it still is. Working with political parties as central players in the development of well-functioning multiparty democracies is and always will be DIPD's primary purpose.

In 2010, there was widespread optimism about the growth and development of democracy worldwide. The subsequent years saw the Democratic Spring and a blossoming of hope, especially in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Protest movements challenged undemocratic regimes and new political movements and parties emerged, ready to lead the democratic transition.

Ten years later, the optimism is in many ways replaced by anxiety about the future of democracy. The democratic spring sensations are replaced by new conflicts and challenges, also in the most well-established democracies. Even within the EU, illiberal systems are challenging democratic rights.

New communication technologies present democracy with some crucial dilemmas. For example, while social media have opened up new platforms for political mobilization and participation of groups that are otherwise marginalised, they have also increased the risk of surveillance and persecution. All over the world, elections are affected by various degrees of disinformation, and repressive regimes can use technology to monitor citizens and control power.

This is also evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has thrown the whole world into a state of emergency and strengthened the hold that repressive regimes have on both power and opposition.

At the same time, we see a development in certain countries where, instead of being organizations that engage and mobilize citizens and give them a voice, political parties are becoming personality-driven campaign machines, that primarily mobilize citizens when they are needed at the ballot boxes. Ethical and geographical conflicts overshadow the development of long-lasting political solutions, and populist parties seem to have secured a permanent foothold. Both women, young people and vulnerable social groups remain under-represented both in positions of trust in the parties and at all levels of elected office.

The challenges are well documented. For example, the V-Dem Institute reports that in 2020, for the first time in 20 years, there are more autocracies than democracies in the world. Likewise, Freedom House reported, for the 14th year running, a global decline in freedom in 2020. And International IDEA documents that the quality of both new and old democracies is deteriorating.

But there is also reason for hope. Since the Second World War, democracy – both as a form of government and a way of life – has been making headway. Protest movements are growing out of the continued oppression seen in many repressive regimes, and the climate crisis is inspiring a new democratic commitment worldwide. Especially young people are re-engaging in democracy and politics. People all over the world want freedom, equality and justice, and they are willing to take to the streets and fight for it. At the same time, the MeToo movement is pushing the agenda for an increased focus on equality and the distribution of power - also internally in the political parties.

Therefore, DIPD has an important role to play. Denmark also faces challenges when it comes to trust in politicians and the media, public involvement in representative democracy as well as gender equality in the parties, but we are standing on solid ground. With our 170 years of democratic history and with important democratic experience anchored in the political parties – new and old – DIPD can offer inspiration, ideas and support for political parties, movements and other actors on the world stage who contribute to develop democracy. By supporting the development of democratic political parties and a democratic culture, we support the development of democracy.

Danish democracy and the history of Danish political parties underscore the fact that democracy is just as much a way of life as it is a form of government. The right to vote and choose between several parties at an election does not in itself create democracy. A strong and viable democracy presupposes that citizens are included and involved in the democratic conversation and the formulation of political solutions.

We believe that DIPD can make a real difference to the democratic development in the world by supporting the development of, as well as the development within, political parties and multiparty democracies. We have ten years of experience on which to build. With this strategy, we take the next steps towards making an even greater difference for democracy.

VISION

DIPD's vision is to have strong and well-functioning multiparty democracies with representative parties, ensuring the social, economic and political rights and influence of all people.

MISSION

DIPD works in developing countries through partnerships with political parties, civil society and other relevant players. Our work generates mutual inspiration, learning and change so that political parties become more inclusive and more politically and organizationally efficient.

PRINCIPLES

In order to fulfil our vision and our mission, our work is based on four principles:



WE WORK FOR DEMOCRATIC, INCLUSIVE PARTIES

DIPD's understanding of democracy is based on the Danish political model: a representative multiparty democracy in which political parties are strongly rooted in the community, and work together to ensure long-term, sustainable political solutions. We strive for democracies built on the rule of law and good governance. We understand the rule of law as respect for the three branches of government and for democratically adopted legislation to control the state, market and society. We define good governance as transparent, inclusive and efficient administration.

DIPD sees political parties as key players in a democracy. The parties must represent the people and ensure that democracy provides solutions that will benefit the individual as well as society overall. This is true for all stages of democratic development. In this context, DIPD prioritizes timeliness, flexibility and patience. When democracy is under pressure, DIPD supports hope and solidarity.

DIPD acknowledges the fact that politics and the development of representative democracies hold fundamental contrasts and conflicts of interest. In this regard, DIPD works on a broad scale to advance a democratic culture which respects majority decisions and minority views.

DIPD works to further political participation through voluntary engagement in political parties. Voluntary participation is the foundation of the political parties and should be maintained, supported and expanded.



WE WORK IN PARTNERSHIPS

DIPD's work is based on partnerships. We therefore carry out most of our work in collaboration with partners in developing countries. We also cooperate with other democracy support organizations because this helps bolster the international work.

In DIPD, we insist on equality in the partnerships. All parties contribute to the partnership with knowledge, experience and resources, and the aims and purposes of the partnership, are always formulated in cooperation.

DIPD respects the partner organizations, their independence and the political and social context in which they operate. Contexts are dynamic conditions that often change; this requires flexibility, trust and openness in the relationship between the partners.

DIPD's partnerships are anchored in the active participation by members of political parties. This is why DIPD works to strengthen party members' active participation in the partnerships.



WE WORK FOR RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Democracy presupposes human rights. DIPD takes a rights-based approach and works for the political parties and partnerships to purposefully strengthen and protect human rights.

DIPD wishes to contribute to attaining the UN Sustainable Development Goals for which political parties have a special role and a special responsibility. We work towards the SDGs to leave no one behind, and promote economic, social and environmental sustainability.

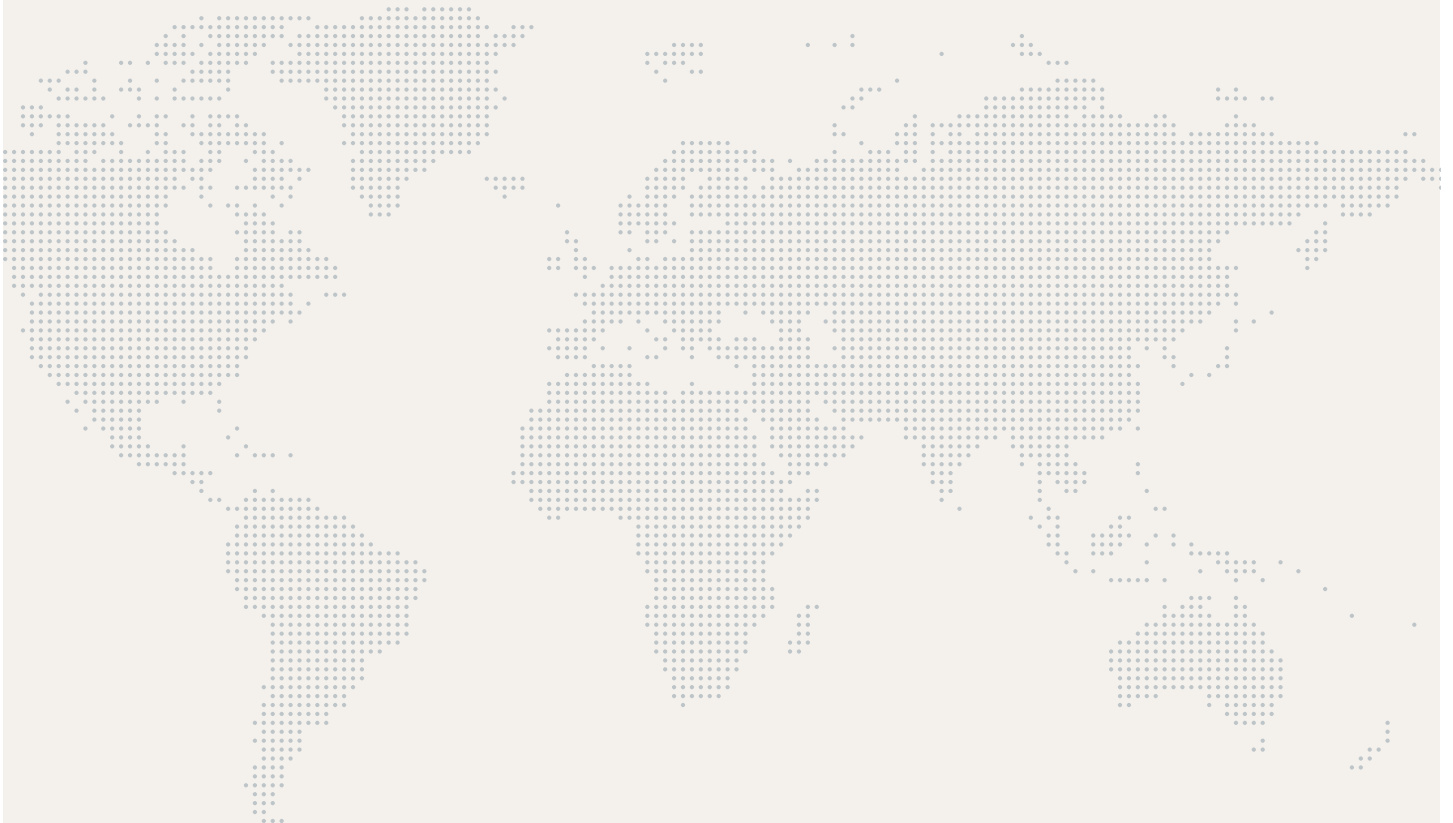
DIPD works for equality and fights all forms of violence and harassment in the political arena, especially violations against women and young people.

DIPD has a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of corruption; we have an institutionalized anti-corruption policy and a whistle-blower scheme.



WE WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND WOMEN TO BE RECOGNISED AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

To truly succeed in generating change and development, we know that all groups must be heard and offered a seat at the table. Young people and women are systematically under-represented when decisions are made. This means that not only half the population, but those whose future is being decided, are excluded from influence. DIPD therefore focuses on ensuring that young people and women are heard, represented and offered a seat at the table in political parties.



GOALS

Five overall goals will govern DIPD's work in the strategy period:



POLITICAL PARTIES FORMULATE AND COMMUNICATE POLITICAL SOLUTIONS

DIPD will work to ensure that political parties in developing countries formulate political solutions to significant challenges, and that they communicate their policies and engage in dialogue with citizens. Formulating political solutions to significant social challenges is a core task for political parties, and DIPD will strengthen their capacity to develop relevant policies and support equitable political dialogues.



POLITICAL PARTIES ARE INCLUSIVE AND ENGAGING ORGANIZATIONS

DIPD will work for more inclusive and engaging political parties. Engaging citizens and securing political influence is a core task for political parties, and DIPD supports democratic representation through political parties. This is done, among other things, by working determinedly with gender equality and young people in politics, as well as ethnic and geographical representation.



POLITICAL PARTIES ARE DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATIONS

DIPD will work to ensure that political parties in developing countries are well-organized, transparent and internally democratic, fostering inclusive and active member participation at the local and national levels. Political parties being well-functioning organizations is a prerequisite for members to be able to involve themselves and gain influence, and for the organizations not to become personality-driven and opaque.



POLITICAL PARTIES PARTICIPATE IN CROSS-PARTY COOPERATION AND DIALOGUE

DIPD will work to promote cross-party cooperation and dialogue between political parties in developing countries and between these and Danish parliamentary parties, in order to contribute to well-functioning multiparty democracies. Through cross-party cooperation, DIPD will support, for example, constitutional and decentralization processes as well as a larger emphasis on gender equality and youth policies.



DIPD WILL LEARN FROM AND DOCUMENT OUR RESULTS

In support of the first four goals, DIPD will base our work on learning, relevant knowledge and research. We will systematically document and communicate our results, facilitate cross-party learning and support exchange of experience across partnerships and with our international partners.

RESULTS

To achieve the goals, DIPD will work towards achieving the following overall results during the strategy period:

DIPD HAS CONTRIBUTED TO parties in developing countries developing and updating policy programmes and political solutions to significant social challenges to a higher degree, and to the parties increasingly communicating their policies to and with the public.

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DIPD HAS CONTRIBUTED TO parties in developing countries having developed into more democratic and efficient political organizations with more responsible leadership, more transparent structures and stronger involvement of members, including a higher degree of voluntary engagement.

DIPD HAS CONTRIBUTED TO parties in developing countries increasingly entering into formal and informal dialogue and cooperation, thereby contributing to cross-party compromises and the development of a more democratic political culture.

DIPD IS A LEARNING ORGANIZATION where experience creates a foundation for reflection and learning across partnerships. DIPD has developed an objective-to-result system, supporting strategic planning, learning and analysis. This also implies that DIPD has contributed to national and international knowledge sharing and made our results available for research into democratization and the role of political parties when this is anchored in the partnerships. Finally, this means that DIPD will incorporate and communicate knowledge at all levels in order to strengthen our work in the partnerships.

HOW WE WILL REACH OUR GOALS

DIPD collaborates first and foremost with political parties and cross-party platforms.

The framework for these collaborations is DIPD's partnership approach. As an organization, DIPD houses both the bilateral and the cross-party partnerships of the Danish parliamentary parties. Under the auspices of DIPD, the parties are included in and contribute to the development of multiparty democracy in developing countries. The partnership approach means that each partnership will formulate its focus and define its goals within the DIPD strategy. Specifically, this means that the initiatives presented below are contents and methods that the partnerships may choose to use, depending on what they determine to be the best option in their specific context.

Fundamentally, DIPD works in the following ways:



DIPD EXCHANGES IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES

DIPD facilitates the exchange of ideas, experience and practices between Danish parties and partners in developing countries, as well as between partner organizations. This is done through political delegations visiting Denmark and the partner organizations in developing countries. It is done through physical and virtual meetings, seminars and conferences in Denmark and in the partner countries. And it is done through supporting political networks and building relations between political parties in Denmark and in developing countries.

The political meeting and exchange are cardinal elements in DIPD's partnerships across borders. It is through the exchange of ideas, experience and practices that education, learning and political dialogue is facilitated, and it is through meetings, seminars and conferences that new knowledge and experiences is shared and put into perspective.



DIPD TRAINS FUTURE LEADERS

DIPD supports training of members of political parties in developing countries. DIPD's contribution is based on the democratic experiences anchored in the Danish parliamentary parties, and it contributes to the development of the political and organizational capacity of the partner organizations. Some training courses are run by Danish party members, while others are held by the partner organizations with support from DIPD.

Through training and education, DIPD helps strengthen political leadership at all levels, and helps strengthen the political involvement and commitment of under-represented groups, thereby making them better equipped to carry out political duties internally in the party and in public office.



DIPD CONTRIBUTES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

DIPD works to develop democratic political parties through strengthening internal decision making, political leadership, membership structures and financial sustainability. This is done on the basis of a historic understanding of political parties as member-based organizations. Organizational development support uses the partner organization's own objectives as the starting point, and emphasizes the importance of transparency, responsibility and efficiency. Examples include, among other things, management development, political organizing, arranging party conferences and congresses, designing membership systems, fundraising and support for financial management.

Combined, this contributes to the development of well-functioning and democratic political parties that are able to carry out their core functions in an efficient and transparent way.



DIPD SUPPORTS DIALOGUE AND CROSS-PARTY COOPERATION

DIPD works to promote political dialogue and cooperation. Based on the Danish experience of developing a cooperative democracy where cross-party dialogue, binding cooperation and political compromises contribute to democratic stability, DIPD supports and facilitates processes of political dialogue and cooperation, both in developing countries and with international partners visiting Denmark. This includes, for example, cross-party dialogue meetings, conferences and democracy festivals.

This contributes to the development of well-functioning and politically stable multiparty democracies, which find long-term solutions to significant social challenges.



DIPD SUPPORTS POLITICAL NETWORKS AND RELATIONSHIPS

DIPD focuses on building and supporting cross-party networks and relations between political parties in Denmark and in developing countries. In addition to setting up partnerships, DIPD also facilitates contacts between Danish political parties and political parties in developing countries, and among parties from different countries.

Sometimes, DIPD's contribution will begin and end with the mediation of a contact, while at other times this will mark the beginning of a partnership or a collaboration.



DIPD GATHERS AND SHARES KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

DIPD supports the work of political parties and cross-party platforms by cooperating with universities, democracy research institutes, think tanks, networks of democracy support organisations and other relevant knowledge institutions. DIPD contributes to research and knowledge building in Denmark and abroad, concerning political parties and democratization in an international context, providing specific experiences from its partnerships. DIPD's work is knowledge-based and prioritizes documentation and learning as important foundations for professional growth.

FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

Using this strategy as its starting point, DIPD will work resolutely with our partners to improve the conditions for democracy in developing countries. The most important tool will be the development of our work on partnerships. Democratic development is a lengthy and demanding process. Therefore, we are moving from projects to partnerships in order to strengthen and support long-term relationships with our partners. By developing more suitable and flexible frameworks for the partnerships, we can improve our response to new and urgent needs for support. At the same time, we will work to strengthen the involvement of the Danish parliamentary parties and their ownership of the cross-party partnerships.

We will strengthen our understanding of how to develop well-functioning multiparty democracies through support of political parties. We will be bold and curious, trying out approaches and strategies and building a culture of learning and reflection.

We will simplify administration, ensuring an efficient and transparent organization, and we will offer relevant and needs-oriented advice.

With this strategy, we define the new organization and working methods of DIPD in order to focus the institute's work towards strong and well-functioning multiparty democracies.

DIPD Strategy 2021-2025

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