



DANISH INSTITUTE FOR
PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY

YOUTH IN POLITICS

DIPD EVALUATION 2016

RESPONSE BY THE BOARD

ADOPTED AT THE BOARD MEETING, 7TH DECEMBER 2016

1. BACKGROUND

DIPD has initiated the first independent evaluation of our work with a focus on Youth in Politics. Discussions have shown that there is great interest in focusing DIPD's work on "Youth in Political Parties and Politics". The choice of this focus for the evaluation also took note of the following:

- *DIPD has both party and multi-party projects with a focus on youth;*
- *Several countries and democratic contexts will be captured through this focus;*
- *DIPD has previously produced a DIPD guide related to youth in politics;*
- *Increased political representation (of youth) is a major objective in the DIPD strategy;*
- *Other actors in democracy support as well as our partners are interested in this.*

In line with DIPD's Evaluation Policy, the evaluation was intended to serve the purposes of both accountability and learning, with emphasis on the latter, and in particular linked to an assessment of key elements in DIPD's strategy 2014-2017. The specific objective was to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of political party and multiparty partnerships in light of DIPD's and through a thematic focus on the engagement in furthering *youth in politics*.

Following a restricted tender process, we engaged with Jørn Holm-Hansen and Marit Haug, NIBR, on the evaluation. An evaluation committee with representatives from the political parties was established, and after in-country visits, a political party seminar, and a range of consultations, the draft report was presented by the Jørn Holm-Hansen and discussed at the DIPD Board Meeting in October 2016. Following this, the final report was drafted.

2. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Below is the management response to the main conclusions and recommendations presented in the final report. This response will show which steps and measures DIPD will take to address the issues raised, and to implement the recommendations presented. The management response is endorsed by the Board and outlines efforts, steps and commitments on the part of the political parties, on the secretariat and on the Board to address the recommendations presented in the report. The structure of the response will be as follows:

1. The DIPD Board response to the analysis and conclusions of the evaluation report;
2. The DIPD Board response to recommendations and actions suggested.

3. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Board of DIPD is pleased to note that the overall conclusions of the report are positive. This confirms that the overall strategic directions agreed upon by the Board in May 2014 and expressed in the 2014-17 strategy called "*Ideas that can inspire*" are sound and useful. It also confirms that the operational methods applied by the institute are sound.

In particular, the Board has noted the following observations from the Norwegian team that has undertaken the evaluation (quoted from the report):

- *DIPD's strategic targeting of young, politically active people is a relevant measure to reach the overall objectives. It targets a segment of the politically active population that may be able to make use of skills and insights acquired through the projects.*
- *The change paths envisaged in the project are logical and generally realistic, because they are based on prior analyses of conditions in the countries. Timing of project initiation and selection of parties to work with make DIPD strongly dependent on good analyses of opportunities (enabling situations), motives and change management capacities, for which DIPD has developed a well-thought-out methodology.*
- *Objectives indicated in the Results Framework are realistic and closely linked to project activities. The change paths are well adapted to what DIPD and partners know about the contextual circumstances at the outset. The analyses of possible obstacles and barriers made prior to project start-up are good, but projects would benefit from more knowledge about the formal structures of the parties, power issues within the parties, and the actual function of the partner party and parties in general in the project country.*
- *DIPD has been able to skilfully identify and make use of opportunities that open up, such as in Egypt or Myanmar. The projects have already led to viable networks, youth forums, civic education platforms and the emergence of youth policy programmes. In Palestine, two of the three youth organizations involved have set up a joint youth forum and are cooperating in various political actions.*
- *Most successful in terms of results are the multi-party projects aiming at preparing the ground for the development of mutual respect among political adversaries and capacities to communicate across party lines. The DIPD methodology of bringing young people together for training and trips has created networks that already produce outcomes and may continue to do so going forward.*
- *The efforts of DIPD and the individual Danish parties to inspire partners to peaceful cooperation between rivaling political parties is of great value, and an example of DIPD's "inspiration method" at work. At the same time, it illustrates the potential limits of the method. The fact that Danish political parties are able to co-exist peacefully can be attributed to structural reasons that go beyond mere wishes. Nonetheless, in combination with other elements in DIPD's strategic mix of project activities, the inspirational method may lead to the desired outcomes.*
- *Given the strong role of peer-to-peer thinking in the design of the party-to-party projects, one might have expected more intense interfaces between the Danish parties and their partner parties.*
- *Through working with political party support, Danish political parties have acquired a closer insight into the practicalities and challenges related to development aid. While preparing study visits and presentations for the partners from the South, the involved Danish party members have become more aware of the specificities and preconditions of Danish party democracy. The opportunities offered by DIPD have reanimated the global commitment of some parties that may have concentrated on the European party scene for the last decades. For parties where international engagement is a mainstay and a basis for recruiting members, DIPD has offered excellent opportunities to turn engagement into practice.*

In particular, the Board appreciates that the evaluation report in a very good manner grasps the political nature of DIPD's work, the importance of the youth work, the uniqueness of DIPD's approach and methods of work, the necessity of flexible approaches, risk willingness and boldness in finding avenues for positive changes.

However, the Board is also mindful of what the report refers to on several occasions: DIPD is still at an early point in the process of rolling out its programmes, and it remains to be seen what is waiting at the end of the road. This means that there is no room for complacency, and the Board

intends to use the opportunity given when the strategy will be revised in 2017, to clarify and strengthen the direction and the methodologies wherever necessary.

DIPD will distribute the report and Board response widely and ensure that the findings and recommendations are discussed both in Denmark and in partner countries, as it is an important potential change-maker in itself.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

As evidenced by the detailed overview on the following pages, most of the recommendations presented by the evaluation team are seen to be in line with DIPD's current thinking and planned measures of improvement. All the recommendations labelled **Agree!** are examples of this. A few recommendations are labelled **Partial agreement!** for reasons explained in the matrix. Often because they are too specific or with questionable justification or reasoning, making it difficult to present a clear operational management response to these recommendations. Finally, the Board would have wished that the evaluation had offered more ideas and suggestions in areas like:

- *How to move our youth engagement forward?*
- *How the strategic objective of enhancing accountability and transparency of political parties can be better promoted?*
- *The scale and scope of our projects, considering that the Norwegian evaluation pointed to projects being too small to make a difference?*

REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS	DIPD RESPONSE & ACTIONS
1. STRATEGY	
<p>1.1. CONTINUITY</p> <p>The core objectives in DIPD's current strategy go to the core of what makes political parties potential cornerstones for democracy and should be continued into the next strategy period. The development of methodology should build on what has been achieved under the current strategy. DIPD's multi-level, integrated strategic mix of project activities should be given particular attention as a way to link outputs to outcomes and impacts. In this regard, contextual insights will have to be emphasized.</p> <p>DIPD's work on youth is timely and relevant and should be continued and developed. Youth constitute a very high share of the population in most countries in the South; many have been mobilized through student politics and street protests, and they are potentially a volatile segment of the population. At the same time, youth are highly under-represented in political parties and elected bodies.</p>	<p>Agree!</p> <p><i>The Board agrees with this recommendation and expects to continue the current focus on youth in the revised strategy which will be developed in the first part of 2017, to cover the funding period of 2018-20.</i></p> <p><i>Moreover, in light of the positive conclusions on the youth work we will maintain and further develop our strategic cocktail of methods within Youth in Political Parties.</i></p> <p><i>All the Danish political parties with experience from working with youth will be involved, as will the partners.</i></p>
<p>1.2 PARTY-TO-PARTY AND MULTI-PARTY</p> <p>The combination of party-to-party and multi-party projects should be maintained. The creation of multi-party arenas for dialogue has worked well, and DIPD should continue its work in this area, and be careful to ensure its sustainability.</p> <p>Youth networks should be explored further as platforms for sharing of experiences, for promoting youth issues on the national policy agenda, and for exploring alliances with other youth platforms.</p> <p>Bilateral cooperation is needed when the objectives are to strengthen the position of youth within parties, such as by creating youth wings and formulating youth friendly policies. Such efforts require a more detailed assessment of internal party dynamics and a long-term commitment from the Danish party.</p>	<p>Agree!</p> <p><i>The Board is in agreement with this recommendation and will continue the combination of party-to-party and multiparty as envisaged in the law.</i></p> <p><i>DIPD will also be on the outlook for ways to strengthen youth networks.</i></p>

1.3 NORDIC COOPERATION

DIPD should consider systematic Nordic cooperation. The shrinking space, the limited funds and the considerations of partner needs and improved impact, all point in the direction of seeking more Nordic joint initiatives, both at the Nordic level, and at country level in the cooperation countries.

Agree!

This recommendation directly mirrors the conclusions of the recent Nordic Meeting on Utøya, and the Board is committed to pursuing this even further where it is possible and meaningful.

In 2013, DIPD took the initiative to the first Nordic Meeting and in 2017, DIPD will be the host of the 4th Meeting, where an increase in cooperation and alliance projects will also be on the agenda.

2. THE PARTNERSHIPS: SELECTION AND APPROACHES

2.1 WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY

The selection of partners based on democratic windows of opportunity should continue, and DIPD's recognition of the need to take risks is commendable. The approach has potentially significant benefits, illustrated in the case of Myanmar where MMDP has established itself as an important convener across parties.

However, windows of opportunity may also narrow as in Egypt, although Danish parties have retained an important foothold there despite the limited political space available.

Agree!

No specific action required, but the identification and selection of partners will be addressed in future work on the partnership approach.

It has already decided to develop a phase-out concept note as part of the new strategy phase for 2018-20.

2.2 OLD VERSUS NEW PARTIES

The selection of partners involves trade-offs. On the one hand, parties that represent new and innovative approaches and that could emerge as new models for parties in the South are attractive due to their potential for creating change.

Nevertheless, there are often huge barriers to the entry of new parties in established democracies, so careful assessments of the viability of new parties are needed. On the other hand, the potential benefits of effecting even a small change in a dominant, large and traditional party are substantial.

Agree!

This will be addressed in discussions on partnership identification as well as in deliberations on working with governing parties and opposition parties.

Together, the Danish parties and the platforms have a portfolio of both old and newer parties, and a seminar of sharing would be useful.

2.3 PARTY POLICIES?

DIPD needs to discuss whether democracy can be supported through assistance to political parties that are, and apparently remain, without clear policies on immediate political challenges related to, for example, the economy, education or infrastructure.

Although such parties may have a function in designing peaceful multi-tribal or multi-ethnic co-existence, they do not offer voters coherent alternatives to choose between, and fail to fulfil the core functions of parties in a democracy. In selection, preference should be given to parties that are issue-based or on their way to formulating policy alternatives.

Partial agreement.

This will be addressed in our partnership approach. Also, it will be addressed in our template for appraisal of party partners, where we will stress more focus on the political (or policy) profile of the parties.

However, we should approach the debate on 'programmatic' parties with some caution.

2.4 TYPOLOGY OF PARTIES

For bilateral cooperation, a more detailed analysis should be made of the partner parties, with a view to developing a typology of parties. This typology should be the basis for developing a theory of change adapted to each partnership and the characteristics of the partner party. For example, strategies would differ depending on whether the partner is an issue-based or an ethnically-based party, a small or a large party, a democratic or an authoritarian party.

Partial agreement.

Typologies of political parties in developing countries already exist.

For DIPD, the task ahead is to use existing knowledge on political parties in our design of specific partnerships with partner parties and reflecting their particular challenges.

The ability of the partner party to be a pro-democracy change maker is also to be more in focus.

2.5 THEORY OF CHANGE

A more detailed theory of change for each partnership should be developed as part of a mid-term review when the Danish partner has gained insight into the internal working of the partner party, and has identified the key actors involved in youth politics in the respective country.

Partial agreement.

The periodic status reports already provide for revisiting the change theory and the results matrix, and DIPD will encourage more in-depth stocktaking in preparing for the next phase.

2.6 CLEAR MOU

The partnership should be based on a clear Memorandum of Understanding listing the objectives and the resources that each party shall commit in order to avoid the partnership turning into an NGO-like project.

Partial agreement.

The partnership agreements based on the project document already cover the contribution and engagement of both parties in the cooperation.

It is to be considered how leadership commitment and voluntary engagement on both sides should be better reflected in project documents.

2.7 PERMANENT INTERFACES

Broadening the interface between the Danish parties and the parties in partner countries should be considered. The projects, not only the youth projects, need to secure a better link between individual capacity-building and effects on the party. Knowledge and skills must be channeled from the individual project beneficiary to the organization. This goes for the partners in both Denmark and the South.

More targeted peer-to-peer methodology could be applied on an individual level between peers with similar responsibilities in Denmark and the South. This will make transfer of knowledge from the beneficiary to the party more likely to happen than for more general and vaguely targeted training.

The Danish peers could be experienced people no longer holding the position in question. The task could be to develop specific projects on urgent issues that need to be solved in the partner party in the South, such as registration of members, how to plan annual general meetings arrange a congress, prepare a local election campaign and the like.

Agree!

This has been a constant focus of the Board and an ongoing effort of the DIPD secretariat and party coordinators to encourage and facilitate more interface. Several promotional measures have been employed to this effect. However, the resource constraint also limit the scope of interface.

Moreover, the structural constraint remains that domestic politics take most of the attention of Danish parties and the human and financial resources are limited in the parties and within the DIPD projects.

Longer-term advisory postings will be appraised with the parties.

2.8 INVOLVE YOUTH PARTIES

DIPD could consider matching and creating partnerships between youth parties in cases where the partner in the South has a youth wing, to tap into the energy, time and skills available to youth. This would also ensure that the Danish party has a stronger footprint in the South.

Agree!

The Board has encouraged the Danish Parties to involve the Youth Parties and in the multiparty projects there is involvement and increasingly also so in the party-to-party projects. Collaboration with Danish Youth Council, DUF, will also continue.

3. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

3.1 PRIORITY TO STUDY VISITS IN DK

The exchange visits were perceived not only as inspirational but also as responding better to the need for technical skills. Exchange visits to Denmark are highly appreciated and effective, and ways and means of expanding them in a low cost way should be explored.

Prioritization of visits by delegations from the South to Denmark, and Danish delegations to the South needs to be discussed given the limited footprint of Danish delegations in the South.

Partial Agreement.

The evaluation happened to cover countries where the benefit of in-country visits of Danish Peers perhaps was less marked. In-country visits reach a much wider audience, tap in to and spark local change processes.

This is evident in Myanmar where both Danish Politicians and southern directors of multiparty platforms help local discourse and agreements to mature. And the training reaches up to 100 participants.

3.2 SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

South-South collaboration should be strengthened through e.g. an exploration of South-South exchange visits, and through the use of their experiences of learning materials.

Agree!

DIPD actively supports south-south exchange. In the multiparty projects, exchange visits to other countries on multiparty dialogue, constitutional reform and women in politics have been supported. DIPD has a regional Women in Politics Component covering Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan. In the regional project of the Socialdemocrats south- south exchange is also prominent.

3.3 LEARNING PLATFORMS

The DIPD networks perform well nationally, but there is a potential for **cross-country sharing** that has not been exploited.

DIPD projects should find ways of using social media for the exchange of experiences among Danish partner parties across countries in the North and South through sharing and learning platforms.

Partial Agreement.

Social media can certainly be more explored. DIPD has supported the setting up of a global electronic learning and knowledge platform under the Global Political Party Peer Network that we and our partners could use. Unfortunately, it had to be concluded that this was not feasible at present.

3.4 PARTY CAPACITY FOR COOPERATION

There is still a need for more competence in the parties to run projects. The party-to-party projects are demanding for the individual parties involved. Measures to secure stronger continuity among project coordinators should be taken.

Agree!

The Board has already implemented a plan for capacity development of the Danish Political parties. However, this plan has itself experienced the catch-22 that there is limited up-take and resources to engage in the promotional measures.

The Board will continue to encourage the political parties to prioritize continuation and thus avoid too heavy dependence on student assistants, who by definition is short term.

4. ENHANCEMENT OF RESULTS

4.1 NETWORKS OF PARTICIPANTS

The parties may consider including former DIPD programme participants as alumni who could serve as resource persons for current participants, along the lines of what has been done in Egypt.

Moreover, DIPD may consider using its good offices to set up an international network of youth participants, linked up through Facebook or another platform that may allow for exchange of information and sharing of experiences.

Another route forward may be for DIPD or the parties to facilitate linkages with youth parties in other countries to allow for the exchange of experiences.

Partial Agreement.

The most relevant networks may not always be among actors that happen to be partners of DIPD and many on-line networks die a quick death. But in some other projects like in Palestine, networking is a key focus.

The linking up between youth parties are already taking place and DIPD holds thematic exchange of experiences. But, we will actively consider how we can enhance results through the methods we employ.

4.2 IN-COUNTRY MENTORSHIP SCHEMES

The second key result is the election of youth representatives to national and sub-national elected bodies. Elected representatives who are former participants in DIPD-funded programmes should be seen as "allied insiders" and wheel turners in pushing the youth agenda forward. For instance, the work to promote the election of even more youth representatives could be strengthened through the use of in-country mentorship schemes, e.g. by drawing on the resources of elected representatives/the alumni association and shadowing and internships in Denmark.

Agree!

The multiparty projects has piloted the political mentoring in Women in Political Parties and this also to a large extent cover young women. It could be explored in the party-to-party also.

4.3 DIPD AS KNOWLEDGE-CENTRE

Democracy support through the engagement with political parties is an important and independent area of work within development cooperation. DIPD should continue fulfilling the function of knowledge node in this area of work in Denmark.

In addition, and in order to increase effects in Denmark, DIPD can establish itself as a source of inside and down-to-earth information about the political life and parties in its countries of operation and on party politics in general. As a knowledge centre on democracy and parties, DIPD could increase its relevance to the Danish political dialogue culture.

During elections or crises in its countries of operation, DIPD and the individual Danish parties should offer mass media access to their partners in the South for comments and also deliver analyses itself.

Agree!

The Board already focus on our relevance and results in DK and recent discussion at the Board confirmed the vision of profiling DIPD more as the Knowledge Center on Democracy and Parties.

The Secretariat has created the hashtag: "Developing Democracy". The Secretariat and Parties will take measures to enhance our communication efforts in this field and also map and enhance our expertise in this field.

The Secretariat will finalize the expert-data base that is currently being developed and will find ways to launch this in a smart manner.

The DIPD communication strategy underlines that the press centres of the political parties are the main channels of communication and press contact.

In the updating of the Strategy the Board will revisit our investment and strategy on communication and on DIPD as knowledge center on democracy and political parties.