



Evaluation of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support 2002-2009

Report 1/2010 – Evaluation



Norad

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Photos:

Large picture: People queue up in their hundreds to vote in the 2007 general elections in Kenya, 27 December 2007. Thousands of Kenyans showed up for voting. Photo: Allan Gichigi/IRIN

Small picture: Sudanese children in the southern capital of Juba take part in the efforts to promote ongoing voter registration for April 2010 elections. Photo: Peter Martell/IRIN

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NIBR

Preface

This report, prepared at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presents the evaluation of one of the more controversial parts of Norwegian development cooperation, the institutions and arrangements for channelling support to political parties in partner countries. After very critical press reports about a year ago, and the subsequent closing of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support (NDS) by the Minister of Environment and Development, it comes as no surprise that the overall conclusions on the arrangements are negative. In fact, the main purpose of the evaluation has been to draw lessons from activities and programmes, including experience of programmes with similar purpose in other countries.

Still, the findings are not very encouraging. The evaluators find few indications that NDS has had major lasting impact on partner organisations in promoting democracy. This does not prevent the report from presenting programmes that have actually achieved quite a lot, for instance with benefits for a thousand party workers in Nepal or even rebirth of a vibrant women's organisation in Kenya that the team characterises as impressive. And it should be added that to identify lasting effects of such activities is quite ambitious.

Most damning is the report about the institutional model and the party assistance arrangements. The Centre never functioned as an arena for collective learning and exchange of experience, as was the intention. The decision-making structure – built on an unwanted compromise – had major weaknesses, with obvious danger of conflicts of interest. The secretariat was not given the necessary authority. The story of the failure of NDS is, according to the report, the story of the political parties becoming “gradually isolated from the influence of other stakeholders”, some representatives taking pride in not being part of the development community.

The evaluation is not an audit report. But still a comfort is that the team has not been made aware of instances of misuse of funds or extravagant spending by Norwegian party representatives in connection with NDS projects. According to the report the issue has more been the failure to engage systematically with discussions about the uses of the democratic competency of Norwegian parties than any misuse of public funds by politicians for travels to tropical locations.

The report sums up experience from other countries' with similar objectives, and presents a number of ideas and suggestions for a new arrangement to foster cooperation between Norwegian political parties and parties in the South. Whichever model is chosen, one thing is certain: this report cries out for clarity in responsibilities and for professionalism.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized initials 'AE' followed by a horizontal line.

Asbjørn Eidhammer
Director of Evaluation

Acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR). The NIBR evaluation team consisted of:

- *Einar Braathen* who was the team leader
- *Erik Henningsen* who carried out research in Kenya and was the lead author of the evaluation report
- *David Jordhus Lier* who carried out research in Nepal
- *Jørn Holm-Hansen* who carried out research on schemes of party assistance in Sweden, the Netherlands, the U.K. and Germany

In Nepal and Kenya the evaluation team from NIBR was assisted by:

- *Mr. Raghav Raj Regmi*
- *Mr. Mudasia Kadasia*

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Contents

Preface	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Contents	vii
List of Acronyms	ix
Executive Summary	xiii
1. Introduction	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Organisation of NDS	4
1.3 International party assistance	5
1.4 Outline of the report	5
2. Methodology	6
3. Transferring the Norwegian experience in democracy	9
3.1 The democracy challenge	9
3.2 The “NDS approach”	10
3.2.1 The standard method	11
3.2.2 The primacy of the practitioner	11
3.2.3 Diverging paths	12
3.3 Size, location and party distribution of NDS projects	14
3.4 Project management	17
3.5 Project experience	18
3.6 Case study I: SV’s project in Nepal	19
3.6.1 Findings	20
3.6.2 Discussion	22
3.7 Case study II: KRF projects in Kenya	22
3.7.1 Findings	23
3.7.2 Discussion	24
3.8 Conclusion	24
4. The unsettled institutional model	29
4.1 The unwanted compromise	30
4.1.1 The killing of the multi-party initiative	31
4.2 Blurred roles and responsibilities	32
4.3 The reorganisation of NDS in 2006	33
4.4 Decision making processes in the NDS Board	35
4.4.1 From consensus to competition	35
4.4.2 Quality assurance in the Council/Board	37

4.5	NDS as an arena for learning	38
4.6	Extended test period?	39
4.7	Conclusion	40
5.	NDS compared with other European schemes	43
5.1	What is international party assistance a part of?	43
5.2	What resources do they have?	44
5.3	How is party assistance organised?	44
5.4	How are decisions made?	46
5.5	Multi-party or sister party?	47
5.6	Types of activities	48
5.7	Conclusion	48
6.	Recommendations	50
	Annex 1 List of NDS projects 2002-2009	55
	Annex 2 List of interviewees and interview guides	58
	Annex 3 Case studies:	68
	Other European schemes of party assistance	68
	Case study: Nepal	81
	Case study: Kenya	88
	Annex 4 Terms of Reference	94
	References	101
	Figures	
	Figure 3.1 Number of pre-projects and cooperation projects, political parties	15
	Figure 3.2 NDS project profile 2002-2009, target group	17

List of Acronyms

AUF	<i>Arbeidernes ungdomsfylking</i> . The Norwegian Labour Party Youth
AP	<i>Arbeiderpartiet</i> . The Norwegian Labour Party
APK	<i>Arbeiderpartiets kvinnebevegelse</i> . The Norwegian Labour Party Women
CCM	<i>Chama Cha Mapinduzi</i> . The ruling political party of Tanzania
Centre Youth	<i>Senterungdommen</i> . The Centre Youth of the Norwegian Centre Party
CHADEMA	<i>Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo</i> . A conservative political party in Tanzania
CMD	Centre for Multiparty Democracy. NGO founded by political parties in Kenya
CMI	The Christian Michelsen Institute
CUF	Civic United Front. A opposition party in Tanzania
DfID	Department for International Development
DNA	<i>Det norske Arbeiderparti</i> . The Norwegian Labour Party
DNYF	Democratic National Youth Federation. UML-aligned youth organisation in Nepal
EU	The European Union
EUR	Euro
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FES	<i>Friedrich Ebert Stiftung</i> . Social Democratic party-associated foundation in Germany
Fida	Palestinian Federation of Women Action
FK	<i>Fredskorpset</i> . A Norwegian government-funded body coordinating organisational partnering and exchange programmes
FKWL	FORD-Kenya's Women League
FKY	FORD-Kenya Youth
FORD-Kenya	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy–Kenya. Kenyan opposition party
FRP	<i>Fremskrittspartiet</i> . The Progress Party of Norway
GPB	British pounds
GEFONT	The General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions
H	<i>Høyre</i> . The Conservative Party of Norway
IDEA International	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IED	Institute for Education in Democracy. Kenyan NGO involved in party assistance
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
IRI	International Republican Institute. US international party-assistance institution associated with the Republican Party, funded by the US federal budget

KAS	<i>Konrad Adenauer Stiftung</i> . CDU-associated Conservative party-associated foundation in Germany.
KRF	<i>Kristelig Folkeparti</i> . The Norwegian Christian Democratic Party
KRF-K	<i>Kristelig Folkepartis Kvinner</i> . The Norwegian Christian Democratic Party Women
KRFU	<i>Kristelig Folkepartis Ungdom</i> . The Norwegian Christian Democratic Party Youth
KS	<i>Kommunenes sentralforbund</i> . The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MFA	The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MP	Member of Parliament
MPPP	Matra Political Parties Programme
NARC	“National Rainbow Coalition. Coalition of parties in power in Kenya from 2002 to 2005
NC	Nepali Congress. A centrist party in Nepal
NCG	Nordic Consulting Group
NEC	National Executive Committee
NDI	National Democratic Institute. US international party-assistance institution associated with the Democratic Party, funded by the US federal budget
NDS	<i>Norsk senter for demokratistøtte</i> . The Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support
NEC	National Election Commission
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIBR	<i>Norsk institutt for by- og regionforskning</i> . The Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
NOK	Norwegian <i>kroner</i>
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NUPI	<i>Norsk utenrikspolitisk institutt</i> . The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
PAO	Party-associated organisation/ <i>partianknuten organisation</i>
PNU	Party of National Unity. Multi-party alliance in Kenya
SADEV	Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation
SEK	Swedish <i>krona</i>
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMR	<i>Norsk senter for menneskerettigheter</i> . The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
SP	<i>Senterpartiet</i> . The Norwegian Centre Party
SV	<i>Sosialistisk Venstreparti</i> . Socialist Left Party of Norway
ToT	Training of Trainers
UCPN(M)	Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
UHL	<i>Unge Høyres Landsforbund</i> . Norwegian Young Conservatives
UML	Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist-Leninist
V	<i>Venstre</i> . The Liberal Party of Norway
WFD	Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Executive Summary



Executive Summary

The Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support (NDS) was established in October 2002 as a forum for cooperation between the political parties represented in the Norwegian Parliament (the *Storting*). The goal for the organisation was to support the development of democracy in new and unstable democracies in the South. From 2002 to 2006, NDS was a test arrangement under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). In 2006, NDS was established as an independent umbrella organisation for the political parties. The main role of the NDS was the financing of democracy development projects initiated by the political parties represented in the parliament. Activities that were carried out with funding from NDS consisted mainly of cooperation projects between Norwegian political parties and political parties in the South and focussed on transfer of knowledge and exchange of experience. NDS was shut down in May 2009. In accordance with the will of the *Storting*, a new scheme for Norwegian party assistance will be established in the near future.

In May 2009, the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) was commissioned by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) to carry out an evaluation of NDS. The main purpose of the evaluation, as specified in the Terms of Reference, is to draw lessons from the activities and experiences of NDS and other donor schemes with similar objectives that can be fed into the process of planning and implementing a new Norwegian organisation or programme to provide support to political parties in the South. Research for the evaluation was carried out in June-September 2009, and consisted of personal interviews and focus group interviews with NDS stakeholders and review of relevant documents. Case studies of NDS projects were carried out in Nepal and Kenya. In addition, interviews have been carried out with representatives of other European schemes of party assistance.

As shown in Chapter 3 of the report, the project activities of NDS consist for the most part of seminar training. In this connection, party representatives placed strong emphasis on their practical knowledge of party work and the “democratic competencies” of Norwegian political parties. The report highlights the Norwegian political parties’ different approaches to party assistance among. Some of the parties seek to model these activities as ideologically neutral democracy aid and prefer multi-party projects. Other parties emphasise the political nature of party assistance and prefer bilateral projects. The parties differ as well with regards to the roles they take on in projects of party assistance. In this connection the report distinguishes between the *educator*, *role model* and *sponsor* approaches to party assistance activities.

From 2002 to 2009 NDS made a total of 100 annual project allocations. Funding has been provided for 33 pre-projects and 17 cooperation projects. The average size of annual allocations to bilateral cooperation projects is NOK 322 000. Pre-projects and cooperation projects have been implemented in 17 countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Thematic focus on the political participation of women and youth was important in NDS projects. Nine per cent of the cooperation projects were implemented by women's political organisations and 18 per cent by youth organisations.

Previous evaluations of NDS projects in Palestine and Tanzania highlight problems of communication and continuity and show that projects that employ training of trainers (ToT) or similar decentralised methodologies have failed to realise the "snowballing" effect for which the approaches aim. A similar observation is made in the case study that was carried out for this evaluation in Nepal of the cooperation project between the Socialist Left Party (SV) and the Unified Marxists-Leninists (UML). The cooperation project was based on a ToT course programme, to be conducted both at a central level and in selected districts. The ToT model was largely designed by the Nepalese partner, and funded and facilitated by SV. Between 900 and 1000 participants have directly benefited from participation in the district level seminars, and it is highly likely that a considerably higher number of people have benefited indirectly. The ToT model could potentially have made local level party cadres directly responsible for education in the party. However, the evaluation team found that the ToT participants played a minimal role as trainers in the district level seminars. As a result, district level seminars were coordinated and run by central party officials. Another finding is that the SV-UML cooperation has been hampered by insufficient levels of communication.

The case study in Kenya focuses on cooperation projects between the Christian Democratic Party (KRF) and the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy Kenya (FORD-Kenya) and cooperation projects between the youth and women's organisations of KRF and their counterparts in FORD-Kenya. The three KRF projects have consisted of seminars in Kenya and exchange trips to Norway for the Kenyan partners, and have targeted the central level of the party and the party leadership specifically. The central idea in all three projects was to provide Kenyan counterparts with models or examples that could serve as inspiration for change. The evaluation team found that the projects have contributed to instigate processes of change in FORD-Kenya. Most impressively, the projects led to the rebirth of a vibrant women's organisation at the central level of FORD-Kenya. Another finding is that FORD-Kenya is completely dependant on support from NGOs to sustain its core functions. This calls the sustainability of the projects into question. While the thematic focus of the KRF projects are closely attuned to the wishes of FORD-Kenya, the relevance of KRFs role model approach is debatable when considering the political system and power structures which shape Kenyan party politics.

Based on reviews of half of NDS portfolio of cooperation projects the report concludes that there are few indications that NDS has had major lasting effects on partner organisations with respect to the goal of promoting democracy in new and unstable democracies. It is also noted that NDS never managed to establish an

operational multi-party project throughout its existence. One explanation for the limited results of NDS projects is found in the lack of a strategy of partnerships on the part of NDS. In this connection the report suggests that, to improve the effectiveness of projects in terms of promoting democracy, partnerships should be based on the actual or potential representativeness of partner organisations. A second factor that explains the limited results is the small size of projects and their spread over a large number of countries. A third reason is the political parties reliance on the seminar training approach, which is convenient, but not necessarily an effective way of contributing to democratisation of partner organisations.

Another source of explanations for the lack of significant results from NDS' activities is found in the internal affairs of the organisation. Chapter 4 of the report focuses on the institutional make-up of NDS, and the interaction between the political parties and the administrative and scholarly stakeholders of the organisation. In this connection, it is noted that NDS was characterised by a tension between the political parties with respect to the requirements that projects should be "politically neutral" and that the parties should participate in multi-party projects. There was also disagreement between the parties with regard to the geographical restriction of projects to countries that receive development aid from Norway. As a consequence of this, NDS evolved in a situation where the parties with the greatest will to develop the organisation were the ones with little capacity for international engagements, while the parties with the greatest capacity for such engagements have been only modestly interested in the organisation or superficially committed to its ideals and objectives.

The reorganisation of NDS in 2006 aimed to solve the problem of state interventionism which ensued from the arrangement of the centre as part of the MFA. The reorganisation created a more clear-cut division of roles and responsibilities between the NDS and the MFA, but failed to resolve the tension between the political parties with respect to the requirement of participation in multi-party projects. The reorganisation also increased the administrative burden on the NDS secretariat and accentuated the problems of governance that adhered to the centre. The practice in NDS of parties granting project funding to themselves was a reason that the organisation was viewed externally as illegitimate.

After 2006 decision making in the NDS Board about project funding took on a competitive character at the cost of considerations about the quality of project applications. In 2002 three representatives of Norwegian research institutions were appointed as members of the NDS Council to contribute to the quality assurance of projects. The role of the researchers in NDS tended to be of an *ad hoc* nature, and they all eventually resigned from the Council. The new group of experts that were appointed as members of the NDS Board in 2006 had a peripheral role in the centre. Contrary to the intentions behind NDS, the centre has *not* functioned as an arena for collective learning and exchange of experience on issues relating to party assistance among the political parties.

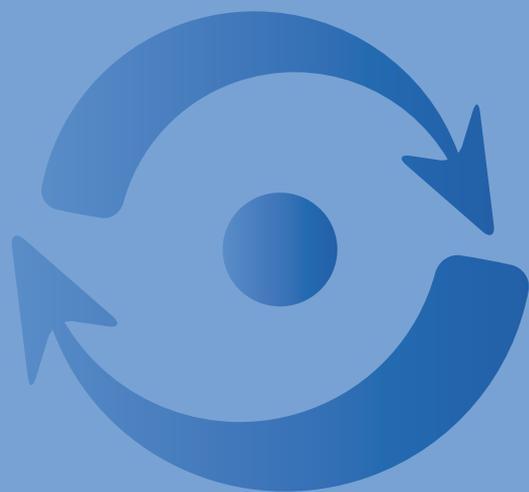
Chapter 5 of the report describes party assistance schemes in Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany, and accounts for differences between the

countries with regard to the organisation of party assistance as well as to approaches to project activities. The Norwegian scheme differs from the other European schemes in two important respects: it was narrowly confined to developing countries and it was endowed with far fewer resources than was the case in the other countries. Despite differences in scope and volume, the NDS share recurrent themes and tensions with the other European schemes.

The final chapter 6 of the report makes the following recommendations for the new Norwegian scheme of party assistance:

- i) Project activities should be concentrated in fewer countries.
- ii) Partnerships should be based on assessments of actual or potential representativeness of the partner organisations.
- iii) The political parties must engage in systematic reflection on the relevance of various aspects of the experience and skills of Norwegian political parties to partner organisations in emerging democracies.
- iv) The political parties must engage in systematic reflection on the methodological challenges involved in the transferral of skills and knowledge to partner organisations in emerging democracies.
- v) Binding arrangements of cooperation between the political parties and scholarly expertise must be established about the design and content of activities of party assistance.
- vi) Participation in multi-party projects should be optional to the political parties. A part of the total budget for party assistance should be reserved for multi-party projects.
- vii) Party assistance should be delinked from the goal of poverty reduction and recognised as a field of development cooperation in its own right.
- viii) Project activities should not be confined to countries that receive development aid from Norway.
- ix) Project funding should be provided in the form of a basic grant to all the political parties. In addition, the political parties should receive grants according to the number of seats they hold in the Storting.
- x) Party assistance is provided by a new and independent public agency.
- xi) The party assistance agency should be headed by a competent executive director. It should have a board of non-partisan governors, representing different types of relevant practical-political and scholarly knowledge. In addition, there should be a Council of Representatives consisting of the political parties, which will make decisions on matters of policy.
- xii) The party assistance agency must be served by a professional secretariat with greater resources than NDS. The secretariat must find ways to facilitate mutual learning among the parties and integrate scholarly expertise. It will need to link up with specific country- and region knowledge, and it must endeavour to harmonise with other donors and actors in the party assistance field.
- xiii) The allocation of funding for party assistance should see a substantial and phased expansion.

Main Report



1. Introduction

In May 2009, the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) was commissioned by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) to carry out an evaluation of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support (NDS). The main purpose of the evaluation, as specified in the Terms of Reference for the assignment, is to draw lessons from the activities and experiences of NDS and other donor schemes with similar objectives that can feed into the process of planning and implementing a new Norwegian organisation or programme to provide support to political parties in the South. This report presents the findings of NIBR's evaluation team and recommendations for the future Norwegian arrangement of international party assistance.

1.1 Background

NDS was established in October 2002 as a forum for cooperation between the political parties represented in the Norwegian Parliament (*Stortinget*) on support for democratic development in countries in the South. Preparations for the Norwegian arrangement began in the late 1990s at the initiative of the Christian Democratic Party (KRF). The initiative was kept warm under the Stoltenberg government, and brought to life with the return of the KRF to government in 2001. The goal of NDS, as it was defined in the organisation's guidelines from 2006, was to support the development of democracy in new and unstable democracies/to promote the development of representative multi-party democracies in the South.¹ Public statements by the Minister for International Development and by the party leaders of the Socialist Left Party (SV), the Labour Party (AP), the Centre Party (SP), the Liberal Party (V), the Christian Democratic Party (KRF), the Conservative Party (H) and the Progress Party (FRP) in connection with the establishing of NDS, revolve around two assertions:

- i) The promotion of democracy in developing countries is a means of poverty alleviation.
- ii) Norwegian political parties have important contributions to make concerning democratic development in countries in the South.

Unlike state-funded international party assistance providers in other European countries, which in most cases were established to support democratic transition processes in Eastern-Europe, NDS was from the start linked to Norway's main-stream agenda of international development, and the outreach activities of the centre have been restricted geographically to Norway's cooperating countries in the

1 In the 2002 guidelines, the goal of NDS is defined as to strengthen the development of representative multiparty democracies and free elections.

South. The role ascribed to Norwegian political parties in the design of NDS is as experts in the practice of running democratic political organisations. Public statements about NDS and internal planning documents of the MFA highlight the “competencies in democratic processes” possessed by the political parties and their role as “democratic actors” rather than as “party-political actors”.²

The main role of the centre was the financing of democracy development projects initiated by the political parties in parliament. Activities which were carried out with funding from NDS consist mainly of cooperation projects between Norwegian political parties and political parties in the South and focussed on transfer of knowledge and exchange of experience. The NDS guidelines point to projects that focus on capacity building, organisation development and institution development as a priority of the centre, and emphasise activities that aim to promote the political participation of women and youth. An additional emphasis is put on cross-party projects of cooperation between the Norwegian parties and several parties in cooperating countries (hereinafter called “multi-party projects”). NDS funded 18 cooperation projects and 34 pre-projects from 2002 until the organisation was shut down in May 2009.

1.2 Organisation of NDS

From 2002 to 2006, NDS was a test arrangement under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and organisationally and physically located at *Fredskorpset* (FK). The secretariat initially consisted of one person and was enlarged to two full-time positions in 2005. The role of the secretariat, as it is specified in the 2002 guidelines, was to support the political parties with respect to project applications and project reporting and to facilitate the initiation and implementation of multi-party projects. In this period, project applications were submitted to the NDS Council, which was an advisory body for the MFA, which made the final decisions about the approval of applications. The Council was made up of representatives from the seven member-parties and representatives of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), the Christian Michelsen Institute (CMI) and the Centre for Human Rights (SMR). In 2006, NDS was established as an independent umbrella organisation for the political parties and relocated from FK. From 2006, the highest governing organ of NDS was the Council, which was made up of the general secretaries and two representatives from each member party. The Council convened every two years to make decisions on matters of organisational policy. The NDS Board convened two to four times annually to make decisions with respect to project application approvals, and consisted of representatives from the seven parties, an independent expert and experts from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS). After the reorganisation of NDS, the organisation’s budget was raised from NOK 5 million, which was the annual budget limit during the 2002-2006 period, to NOK 7 million. The funding was provided as annual grants from the *Storting*.

² The Minister for International Development’s speech at the launching of NDS on 13 August 2003, *Sammen for folkestyret*, *Dagbladet* 13 August 2003, MFA note 18 October 2002 on the external council members’ role in the Council for the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support

1.3 International party assistance

In view of its activity profile, NDS belongs to the subfield of democracy assistance that is referred to as party assistance. According to Mathias Caton, party assistance is defined as “any type of international assistance geared toward individual parties or the party system as a whole, with the purpose of strengthening democracy in a country” (Caton, 2007:6). Among the most well-known party assistance providers are the U.S. party-affiliated NGOs the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI), German party foundations such as the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Swedish party-associated organisations (PAO) such as the Olof Palme International Centre (OPI), the Dutch multi-party NGO the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) and the UK Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD). All of these organisations operate on budgets far exceeding that of NDS’. They differ with respect to organisation, the scope of their activities and the role they assign to political parties in outreach activities.

Despite growing interest among donors over the last two decades, international party assistance can still be described as an emerging field of development cooperation. Party assistance has been to only a slight degree subject to monitoring and evaluation or to academic research. Apart from the overarching goal of promoting democracy, there is no agreed general framework among the actors operating in this field about what party assistance is supposed to achieve and how it should be implemented (Caton 2007). As explained below in Chapter 4, one of the intentions in the establishment of NDS was to strengthen institutional capacity for democracy assistance, which was widely considered to be weakly developed in Norway by the political parties and other stakeholders of NDS.

1.4 Outline of the report

The next chapter describes the methodology employed in the study and provides an overview of the empirical material we base the report on. In chapter 3, we consider experiences from NDS projects. Included in the chapter are accounts of case studies from Nepal and Kenya and presentations of previous evaluations of NDS. An important background for the understanding of successes and failures in the outreach activities of NDS is found in processes that are internal to the organisation and its Norwegian stakeholders. This we turn to in chapter 4. Chapter 5 accounts for the comparative review of schemes of international party assistance in other European countries that was carried out for the evaluation. In chapter 6, we present our recommendations for a new Norwegian arrangement of international party assistance.

2. Methodology

According to the Terms of Reference, there are five main questions to be addressed in the evaluation:

1. What has been the value added at the activity level, in terms of promotion of the practice of democratic principles and processes in the political organisation in the target countries of NDS?
2. How effective has the NDS been as a working model for donor engagement in political development in the partner countries?
3. Outline lessons that can be useful to the design and implementation of a future result-oriented model, replacing NDS, for promoting democratic principles in the political processes in partner countries.
4. Outline lessons from similar schemes by other donors.
5. Assess the models of political party support in relevant donor countries. Identify features in the organisation of these models that may be relevant for a new Norwegian model.

The evaluation team responded to these tasks by dividing the study into two parts. The first part of the study is an evaluation of NDS' activities from 2002 to 2009. In this regard, we have sought to elucidate the strengths and weaknesses of projects that have been carried out with funding from NDS and the feasibility of the way in which the centre was organised. Here, our discussions of findings are based on the evaluation criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and relevance. The use of the different evaluation criteria is specified in the chapters of the report that account for the findings of the evaluation. The second part of the study is a comparative review of donor schemes for party assistance in other European countries. The main purpose of this study is to draw lessons from the experience of other donor schemes of party assistance of relevance to the design of a new model for Norwegian party assistance.

Apart from comparison, the evaluation team has relied on case studies and programme theory analysis as analytical strategies. Programme theory analysis is a tool for identifying strengths and weaknesses as well as inconsistencies within a programme. In this regard, we seek to explain how project activities are assumed to produce effects by the actors involved. These assumptions are often not explicitly stated, and in many cases actors involved in the same project operate with diverging notions of how intervention contributes to produce results. To triangulate the documentation provided by NDS and other Norwegian stakeholders about projects, the evaluation team carried out explorative case studies of NDS projects in Nepal and Kenya. Our reason for choosing these countries for the case studies is that

NDS had a considerable engagement in the countries, that no evaluation of NDS projects have been carried out there previously and that the political situation in the two countries differs in important respects.

Fieldwork was carried out with assistance from local partners in Nepal and Kenya in August 2009. The duration of each visit was eight days, and the work carried out consisted of personal interviews and focus group interviews with project beneficiaries at various organisational levels of political parties. In Kenya, participation in NDS projects has been restricted to the national and regional leadership of cooperating parties. Here, the fieldwork focused on the central level of the party organisation. The local project assistant arranged meetings with interviewees and informed them about the objectives of the research and the questions that would be discussed in the interviews. All interviews were carried out in English. In Nepal, the NDS project that was focused on had a decentralised structure with 15 districts targeted for seminar activities. The fieldwork included trips to three of these districts: Saptari, Sunsari and Lalitpur. Here, party secretaries and seminar participants were interviewed in focus groups.

Apart from interviews with party representatives, the fieldworks included interviews with representatives from the Norwegian Embassies in Kathmandu and Nairobi and representatives from other international party assistance providers at the two locations. We also carried out interviews with independent experts and civil society representatives in Nepal and Kenya as a means of contextualising research findings. The study of the European party assistance schemes made use of semi-structured interviews with those involved in the main political parties, in the centres and with ministerial desk officers in charge. Document studies were also carried out.

The techniques of data collection employed in the study include personal interviews, focus group interviews, document reviews and an electronic survey. A total of 121 personal interviews and focus group interviews were carried out for the study. The personal interviews and focus group interviews had the form of semi-structured conversations based on interview guides. (Interview guides and a list of interviewees are included in Appendix 2 of the report.) In most cases, interview guides were distributed to the interviewees in advance of the meetings. In addition to the interviews in Nepal and Kenya, the evaluation team carried out interviews with representatives of all the stakeholders in Norway. Three interview guides for project leaders, NDS Board members and NDS Council members were used for the interviews in Norway. Modified versions of the interview guides were used in interviews in Nepal and Kenya. For the comparative study, interviews were carried out with representatives of party assistance providers, political parties and the government in Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK.

Another important source of information for the study was reviews of relevant documents. The evaluation team was given access to the physical and electronic files of NDS, and reviewed documents from the MFA files as well. We have integrated findings from previous external evaluations of NDS projects into the present study. When counting projects covered in previous evaluations, nine cooperation projects – half of the NDS cooperation project portfolio – have been examined in

this study. In July 2009, we distributed an electronic survey to contact persons in NDS partner organisations in the global South. Contact persons for nine pre-projects and 17 cooperation projects were identified for the survey. Out of these only seven respondents completed or partially completed the survey. Given the low rate of response, the evaluation has not relied on the survey other than as an additional source of information.

3. Transferring the Norwegian experience in democracy

The stated objective of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support (NDS) was to use the democratic skills knowledge and expertise of Norwegian political parties to promote the development of representative multi-party democracies in new and unstable democracies in the South. What this engagement amounted to, one might say, is an attempted “export” of the political culture embodied by Norwegian political parties, and as such it falls in line with the broader trend of international engagements of the Norwegian government to expose the “Norwegian model” to other parts of the world. In this chapter, we consider projects that have been implemented in various countries with funding from the NDS. The first part of the chapter describes and analyses the programme theoretical basis of the activities, that is, the assumptions and beliefs held by stakeholders about the ways in which the activities produce effects. In this regard, our aim is to elucidate the structures of assumptions that underlie the “NDS approach” and point to its inherent limitations. We then move on to a mapping of the NDS project portfolio with respect to the distribution of projects among the political parties, budget size and geographical location. Two case studies of NDS activities in Kenya and Nepal have been carried out for this evaluation. In the sections that account for the case studies, we consider effectiveness of the projects with respect to achieving project goals, and their sustainability, efficiency and relevance. In this regard, special emphasis is placed on relevance. Commentators on international party assistance note how these activities generally tend to be supply driven rather than based on contextualised understandings of the role and needs of political parties in the countries to which the assistance is directed (Amundsen 2007, Caton 2007, Kumar 2004, Power 2008). With this in mind, we ask whether the thematic content and design of project activities reflect the interest and needs of partner organisations as they define it, but we also take relevance to mean the extent to which projects address fundamental problems of democracy in the socio-political settings into which they are inserted.

3.1 The democracy challenge

What are the basic challenges of democratisation in the countries in which NDS has operated? Ongoing scholarly debates about the state of democracy in so-called “Third Wave” countries are set against experience of numerous setbacks and a general stagnation in processes of democratisation in the global South (Carothers 2007, Diamond 2008, Fukuyama and McFaul 2007, Mansfield and Snyder 2007). While many of these countries carry out competitive elections on a regular basis and provide people with basic freedoms, they hardly qualify to be described as democracies other than in a minimalist sense of the concept. In some countries,

there has been a fallback to dictatorial rule, and in others the democratic transition has been accompanied by temporary breakdowns in public order, as recently witnessed in Kenya. This has fuelled a debate among scholars on the need for “sequencing”, i.e. about whether or not it is necessary or feasible to have a structure of state institutions, and in particular those supporting the rule of law, in place before a country can manage the tensions produced by multi-party elections. As Törnquist (2009) points out, the participants in this debate depart from an understanding of democracy that is largely restricted to freedoms and fair elections. The root cause of the democratic deficit in the global South, he argues, is rather one of flawed representation, emanating from elitist institution building and fragmented citizen participation. While the combined process of political and economical liberalisation that has taken place in the “new democracies” has produced gains in terms of, for instance, freedom of expression and freedom of association, the majority of the population tend to be cut off from opportunities to exert influence on public affairs, as formal political arenas are monopolised by elite actors.

This debate is not about political parties specifically, but it is highly relevant to an understanding of political parties in the countries where NDS operated. As Carothers (2006) notes, in spite of numerous contextual differences there are some striking similarities in the characteristics exhibited by political parties in the post-communist and developing countries. They tend to be leader-centric and centralised; to be pervaded by corruption; to be in lack of strong ties to a defined constituency; to have weak capacity for organisational development; to have poorly defined ideologies and party programmes; and to have limited ability to formulate and implement policy. When it comes to the development of democracy, Carothers contends, the most serious negative consequence of these attributes of political parties is inadequate representation of citizens’ interest. As this serves to emphasise, the fundamental problem of political parties as well as of democracy in the countries where NDS operated is a problem of popular political representation. A crucial reference point when assessing the relevance of NDS projects must accordingly be the extent to which they address such issues in a political party context.

3.2 The “NDS approach”

Is there an approach or method distinctive to the NDS that may be discerned in the project activities of the Norwegian political parties? To the extent that it signals the existence of a unified method, the title of this section might be said to be misleading. Given the flexibility of NDS project policy, and the many actual differences in the projects which have been implemented by political parties, it is perhaps more reasonable to point to the diversity of project philosophies as the defining characteristic of the “NDS approach”. In part, this flexibility reflects the conscious design that was given to the NDS from the outset, but, as we shall see, it can also be attributed to a lack of cooperation and exchange of experience between the parties on how to solve the strategic and methodological challenges involved in international party assistance. To a considerable extent, it has been left to the individual parties themselves to define the form and content of their projects. With these precautions in mind, one may nevertheless point to a structure of shared assumptions on which the projects of the political parties are premised. In the sections that follow, we highlight the idealistic conception of politics that NDS projects depart

from, the emphasis on the practical experience of party work which is shared among party representatives and the attempted export of the Norwegian democratic culture to which they commit. We then proceed to point to variations in the approaches employed by the parties.

3.2.1 The standard method

One such shared premise is linked to the parties' adherence to what Carothers (2006) terms the "standard method" of party assistance, which, in short, consists of the provision of training in seminars for partner organisations. Party assistance, Carothers say, is a "sea of training", and as such it can be seen to entail a range of assumptions about the responsiveness of partner organisations to knowledge inputs, which are seldom made explicit and scrutinised by party assistance providers. When it comes to organisational development, which was the focus area for NDS projects, Carothers notes that the stated or unstated theory that guides party aid providers is made up of the following core assumptions:

- Exposing top party officials to the need for change and the ways of accomplishing it will lead them to believe in the need for and possibility of reforms and put them into practice.
- Training up-and-coming young and mid-level party cadres will turn them into agents of change within the parties who over time will find ways to make reforms come about in their parties.
- Identifying and training reform-oriented local leaders and cadres within a party will help them to make use of their distance from the party's central hierarchy to try out important reforms and then over time to push these reforms "upstream" to the party's main organisation (Carothers 2006: 187-8).

In our experience, this quotation accurately sums up the basic presuppositions on which various NDS projects are founded, and as such, it brings to the fore the idealistic conception of politics which runs through these activities. Most project activities of NDS hinge on a well-developed optimism with respect to the power of knowledge transfer, reasoned arguments, moral examples, awareness raising, sensitisation etc. to bring about changes in the conduct of political actors in cooperating countries. Another presupposition that can be derived from this is that the "problems" of partner organisations and of political systems in cooperating countries are viewed as problems deriving from lack of knowledge and understanding, or at least this is what the projects address with their "solutions". This programme theory may prove valid in some socio-political contexts and less valid in others. In other contexts again, it is probably misdirected as a programmatic basis for party assistance activities. In the next chapter, we describe NDS' failure as a learning arena. One of the reasons for lamenting this failure is that it represents a lost opportunity to stimulate a process of reflection among the political parties about the inherent limitations of their basic approach to party assistance, and where and under what circumstances this approach might be relevant.

3.2.2 The primacy of the practitioner

We have already noted that an emphasis on the "competencies" of Norwegian political parties was ingrained in the official justifications for the establishing of NDS. Party representatives we interviewed unite in a strong emphasis on direct

experience from political party work as an essential qualification for international party assistance. A striking feature of our interviews is how party representatives, almost without exception, placed their claims to expertise in an adversarial relationship to academic or technocratic expertise, e.g. by emphasising their advantages when compared to knowledge possessed by “professors”. These claims to expertise are backed by several types of arguments. First, interviewees point to advantages in terms of access to key politicians in cooperating countries. In this connection for instance, it was pointed out that high-level politicians in Kenya are very interested in meeting a former minister from Norway to exchange of experience, but much less so when it comes to a Norwegian professor or technocrat. Second, party representatives emphasise the value of peer-to-peer exchange of experience as a mode of learning which is superior to instruction by experts. Third, it is emphasised that partnerships between political parties can establish an atmosphere of trust, making it possible to reflect openly about problematic issues the parties normally would not share with other development actors. A fourth argument is that the party representatives’ intimate knowledge of party work imbues their contributions with a superior relevance. Closely related to party representatives’ claim to expertise as practitioners is the argument that Norwegian/Nordic political parties have important contributions to offer partners in the South, which to a lesser degree can be provided by political parties from other Western countries. In this connection, party representatives point to the high level of mutual trust and cooperation between political parties as a distinguishing feature of the Norwegian political culture. More specifically, interviewees highlight the political participation of women, youth and the grassroots membership of political parties as elements of this culture worthy of export to other countries.

There are good reasons to attach weight to these arguments. Given the unusually high degree of stability and popular representation that has characterised the Norwegian political system for more than a century, it must surely contain lessons of importance to emerging democracies in other parts of the world. As practitioners of this tradition, representatives of Norwegian parties are no doubt well positioned to take on the role as transmitters of the historical experience contained in it. As we shall see below, the party representatives’ claims with respect to the advantages of their experience in terms of trust, access and peer exchange are confirmed by partner organisations. It is worth noting, however, that this should not relieve the parties of the burden of developing a well-thought-out methodological foundation for their activities. In our interviews, party representatives often simply affirmed their first hand experience of “party work” or “organisational/political processes” as self-explanatory proof of their qualifications as party assistance providers – as the bearers of a Norwegian democratic organisational culture, they tend to see themselves as naturally qualified to educate others on its virtues.

3.2.3 Diverging paths

The political parties have different preferences when it comes to the modality of party assistance activities. Some of the parties, and in particular the Christian Democratic Party (KRF) and the Centre Party (SP), want to operate in accordance with the non-partisan approach, that is, by modelling party assistance as ideologically neutral democracy aid, and have a preference for cooperative projects involv-

ing all the Norwegian parties and several parties in the collaborating country (hereinafter called “multi-party projects”). Other parties, like AP and the Conservative Party rather want to model the assistance on the fraternal approach, that is, on relations of solidarity between political parties with similar ideologies, and prefer bilateral partnerships. In the last case, party assistance activities often overlap the regular international networking activities, but to construe these differences as a division between, on the one hand, actors that are committed to the promotion of multi-party democracy, and on the other, those that aim for the global promulgation of certain types of political ideologies, would be an undue simplification. Based on our interviews with the parties, it seems that this is a disagreement between actors who consider democracy aid in the form of party assistance to be inseparably linked to the political-ideological engagement of those who participate in the activities, and actors who believe that it is possible to extract and isolate the democratic competencies of political parties from their other engagements, and utilise these as a form of technical aid similar to any other type of development aid.

Another dimension of the variation in the programmatic thinking of the political parties has to do with the change-inducing roles they ascribe to themselves as implementers of project activities. These roles can ideal-typically be described as educators, role models and sponsors. In the case of *educators*, the Norwegian party offers its partners a menu of teaching components which is regularly used for the training of its own members, and which may or may not have been modified to be relevant in a foreign context. The knowledge and techniques that are imparted to participants at seminars mainly consist of the “tools” of party work, i.e. discrete sets of “how to” knowledge, for instance on recruitment, how to organise a congress or how women can become more assertive in public meetings. Here, the emphasis is on inserting useful knowledge from the Norwegian partner into the partner in the South. From our review of NDS project activities, it appears that AP and the Conservative Party are clear exponents of this approach.

As *role models*, the Norwegian parties’ emphasis is not so much on the inserting of tools of party work into their foreign partners, but rather on providing them with moral examples or models. A recurring theme in our interviews with party representatives was anecdotes about the perceived strong impact the experience of seeing a woman or a young person taking on a leading role in the Norwegian party had on members of partner organisations. In line with this thinking, party representatives emphasise how projects provide project partners with inspiration – by “opening their eyes” to new ways of doing politics, by giving women or youth the “courage” to vie for political positions etc. – to bring about changes in the party organisation. This role is logically tied to a notion of learning through events rather than long-term processes, as the emphasis is on subjective changes brought about in and through personal encounters between members of the Norwegian party and their partner organisations. Several party-representatives emphasised the “inspirational” effects of their projects as important, but the most clearly pronounced promoter of this approach is the KRF.

The third change-inducing role of *sponsor* is most clearly developed in the case of the Socialist Left Party’s (SV) cooperation project with the Communist Party of

Nepal – Unified Marxists-Leninist (UML) in Nepal and in SP's cooperation project with the local branches of three political parties in Tanzania. Here, it is to a considerable extent left to the partner organisations to define the teaching content of the projects, and the main role of the Norwegian parties is to provide financial and technical support for the training schemes. This directs us in turn to another dimension of variation: the differences in how parties envisage what can be referred to as the project spaces in which they operate. In the case of SP and SV projects, the emphasis is on the grounding of the projects at a local branch level of the partner organisation and on the extension of projects in time through continuous training activities. In the majority of the NDS projects, the project space is restricted to seminar activities where the Norwegian parties interact directly with their foreign partners at a central level of organisation. This is seen in a tendency displayed by party representatives to narrow their focus to occurrences observed in seminar situations, e.g. that there was a good discussion or that participants were inspired when they were asked to describe the impact of projects. The same tendency is seen in the project reporting to NDS by some of the political parties.

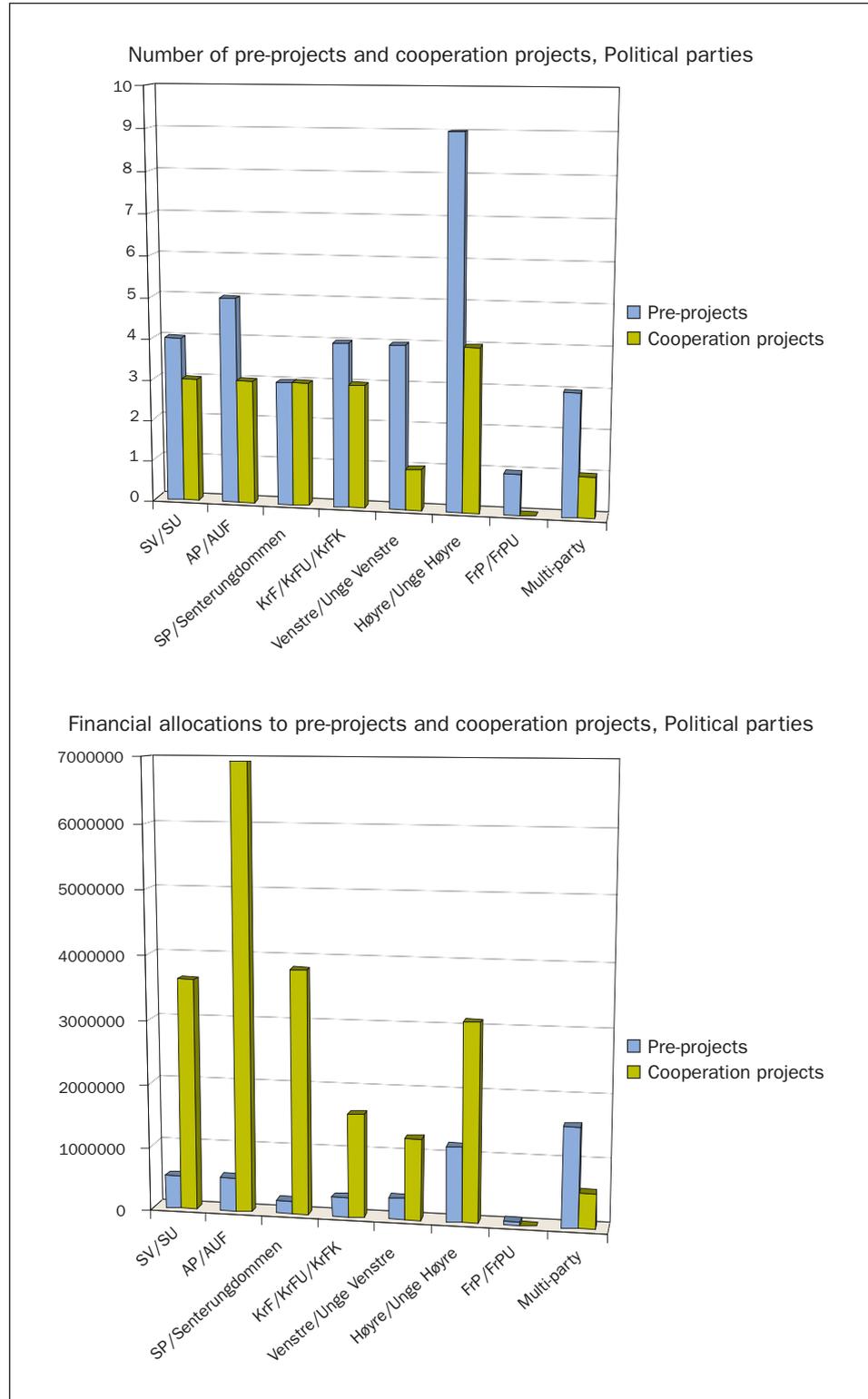
Among the parties with projects that are limited to seminars, a further distinction can be made between those that aim to achieve a high degree of context sensitivity in the design of seminar activities and those that follow a "one-size-fits-all" approach. As we shall see below, the KRF's projects in Kenya placed emphasis on flexible adjustment of seminar content to make them relevant to the local political situation and the specificities of their partner organisation. By contrast, the Conservative Party offer their project partners a standardised training scheme, and leave it to the partners to appropriate the contents of the seminars and make it relevant to the local context.

3.3 Size, location and party distribution of NDS projects

From 2002 to 2009, NDS made a total of 100 annual project allocations in response to applications from the Norwegian political parties. NDS has funded 33 pre-projects, out of which 18 developed into cooperation projects that received annual grants from the centre.³ As this indicates, a substantial amount of the NDS project funding has been spent on pre-projects that never developed into cooperation projects. On the whole, nearly one out of every five *kroner* in project allocations has been spent on pre-projects. Two thirds of this amount has been spent on the multi-party pre-projects.

³ A complete list of NDS pre-projects and cooperation projects is provided in Annex 1

Figure 3.1 Number of pre-projects and cooperation projects, political parties



As can be seen in graphs above, the Conservative Party/Norwegian Young Conservatives stands out clearly as the party with the highest number of project engagements. At the other end of the scale is FRP, whose engagement was limited

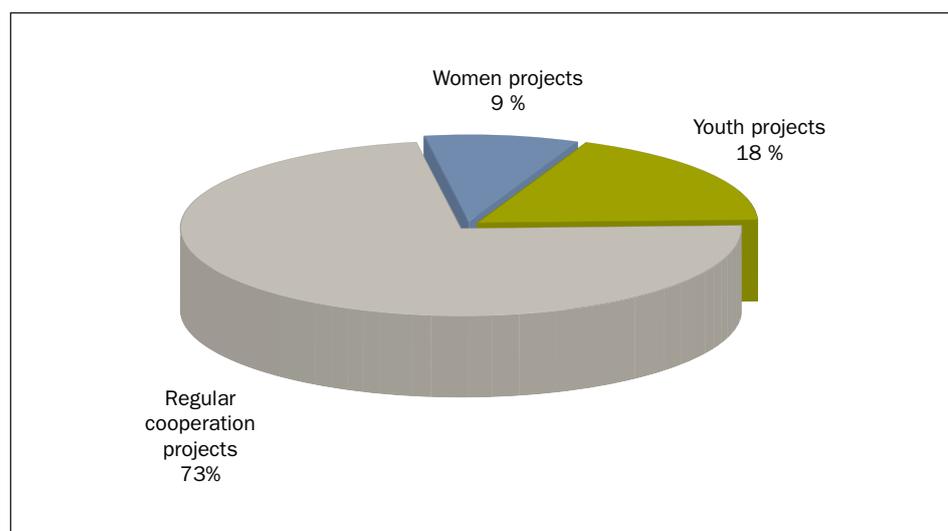
to one pre-project. This picture changes when it comes to the volume of the project grants that has been allocated to the political parties. In this sense, AP has the biggest portfolio by far and is followed by SP and SV.

The average budget size of the bilateral pre-projects is NOK 101 000. In addition, NDS has made five allocations of funds to multi-party pre-projects, with an average size of NOK 392 000. Bilateral cooperation projects have received 65 allocations from NDS, at an average size of NOK 322 000. The cooperation project SP implemented in Tanzania stands out from the rest of the NDS projects as the by far largest in this regard. At most this project received an annual grant of NOK 725 000. The typical NDS project is in other words of a very modest size in terms of its annual budget. The NDS project portfolio is widespread when it comes to the geographical location of projects. NDS funded pre-projects and cooperation projects have been implemented in a total of 18 countries in Africa (Zambia, Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Sudan), Asia (Palestine, Kazakhstan, Indonesia and Nepal) and the Americas (Nicaragua, Guatemala, Bolivia, Cuba and El Salvador). An additional grant for a pre-project in Iraq was repaid to NDS when AP decided to call off the initiative.

When asked to comment on the high number of pre-projects and the many small cooperation projects in the NDS project portfolio, most party representatives explained that this did not reflect a consciously held policy on the part of the NDS Board, but was rather a result of “how things have turned out”. As noted above, some of the parties are critical to the pattern of supporting many small project engagements. Other parties defend their use of pre-projects and small-sized projects in ways that make it reasonable to describe this as a working method. An interviewee from KRFK highlighted the advantages of small projects in terms of the low number of people and the small amounts of money involved in them. In this way, a high degree of transparency is ensured in the projects, it was pointed out. A representative of the Conservative Party emphasised that small project engagements allow for a high degree of flexibility on the part of NDS. The small engagements make it easy for the party to pull out of a project if they discover that the project partner is not serious. It has also made it possible for the party to rapidly expand its knowledge of various regions, the interviewee explained.

Another feature characterising the NDS portfolio is the emphasis on women and youth issues in project activities. While this is a mainstreamed aspect of NDS' international activities, several of the NDS projects are explicitly categorised as women or youth projects.

Figure 3.2 NDS project profile 2002-2009, target group



Developing potent women and youth wings was upheld as a key skill of Norwegian political parties, by party representatives we interviewed. Judging from our interviews, it is safe to say that the promotion of youth and women's political participation are the thematic priorities of NDS which the political parties most easily can agree on. While the results of projects partnering women's and youth organisations have been mixed in the case of the NDS, survey findings indicate that the thematic emphasis on inclusion of women and youth represents one of the most promising areas of influence of Norwegian democracy support.

3.4 Project management

The political parties were responsible for the implementation of project activities and for the financial management of NDS projects. Financial support to projects was granted by NDS on the basis of project applications and reports from the parties. After the reorganisation of NDS in 2006 the secretariat developed an application and reporting system based on the Logical Framework Approach (LFA). Project applications were to include baseline studies and to discuss the design, relevance and sustainability of projects. Project reports with audit statements were to be submitted to NDS within six months after the completion of projects. In the case of projects that ran over several years, the payment of grants from NDS was not to be made until annual project reports had been submitted by the parties.

Based on the present and previous evaluations of NDS projects, it seems that in most cases the Norwegian project partners have had the financial responsibility for the projects.⁴ In SVs projects in Nepal and Palestine large shares of the project budgets have been transferred to the partner organisations. Here, the local partners were given the task of accounting for the use of these resources and audits were carried out locally. A substantial part of the project budget was transferred to the local partner in APs project in Palestine as well, but in this case AP was responsible

⁴ The evaluation team has not been able to systematically analyse the documentation concerning financial management of the entire project portfolio in the NDS archive for the following reasons: documentation from each specific project is not complete, and the available information is not presented in a way which allows for comparison.

for the project accounts and documentation of project expenses was forwarded to the Norwegian partner. In other NDS projects that have been evaluated, only small amounts of money have been transferred to partner organisations. Here, accounting has been done by the Norwegian partners and audits have been carried out in Norway.

3.5 Project experience

Before we turn to the case studies from Nepal and Kenya, we will look at some of the main findings in two external evaluations of NDS projects that were previously carried out. In 2007-08, Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) evaluated NDS projects implemented in Palestine by the Norwegian Labour Party Women (APK) in cooperation with the Fateh party and by the Women's Committee of SV in cooperation with Palestinian Federation of Women Action (Fida) (Kjøstvedt, Abdel-Salam, Ingdal and Younis 2008). The focus of the APK Fateh project was on the training of trainers (ToT) in the empowerment tool "Women can do it". With respect to the result of the project, the evaluation found that individual women who had received training considered that they had gained self-confidence, but that the "Women can do it" model had not been replicated in the Fateh organisation as intended. In this regard, the evaluation points to inadequate follow up from the Norwegian trainers, and a lack of democratic structures in the Fateh organisation as explanations for the failure to realise the potential of the ToT scheme.

While the APK-Fateh project relied on a standardised training scheme and most of the budget was spent on the expenses of the Norwegian trainers, the SV-Fida project consisted to a greater extent of support for activities initiated by Fida, and nearly half of the project budget was transferred to the Palestinian partner. The SV-Fida project focussed on the promotion of women's rights locally, through leadership training and media training of Fida members, and a cultural exchange between the North and South by means of exchange visits to Norway. The evaluation showed that the ownership to the project among Fida members was greater than was the case in the APK-Fateh project, and that interviewees among the 130 women who had received training in the project considered that they had gained valuable knowledge and skills. The evaluation points to major weaknesses in the management of the project, especially on the side of the Norwegian partner who lacked an overview of the activities carried out by Fida. The common approach of the two projects of training women in order to mobilise them for political participation is found to be highly relevant with respect to the goal of promoting democracy. The general lessons learnt from the two projects that were highlighted in the evaluation focus on problems of communication and continuity in the implementation of the projects and how the projects' dependency on a few key persons creates vulnerability.

In 2008-09, NIBR carried out an evaluation of NDS projects in Tanzania (Henningesen and Braathen 2009). Two of the projects considered in the evaluation were implemented in the Magu district in the Northwestern part of the country, by SP and the party branches of *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM), *Chama Cha Maendeleo* (CHADEMA) and Civic United Front (CUF) and by the youth wing of SP (Centre Youth) and the youth wings of the same three party branches. The central aim of

the two projects was to employ study circle methodology to empower the grassroots membership of the three political parties in Magu by imparting knowledge about rights and democracy. As a part of the projects, 160 persons received training to facilitate study circle groups that operate on a continuous basis in various local communities. Project participants that were interviewed for the evaluation reported that they had gained confidence to participate in politics and that the working relations between the three parties had improved as a result of the project. The evaluation found the study circle approach and the grassroots focus of the two projects to be highly relevant responses to the challenges of democratisation in Tanzania, but it was critical to the ways in which the projects were implemented. In this regard, the evaluation points to a strong reliance on seminar inputs from the Norwegian partners, which is contrary to the idea of study circle groups as a decentralised and low-cost tool of empowerment and to how processes related to the issues of per diem payment at seminars and exchange trips to Norway work to subvert project objectives. The evaluation further points out that it is likely that the projects were used as a form of patronage by a local political leader.

The third project considered in the evaluation was a bilateral cooperation project between the Conservative Party and CHADEMA at the central level of the party organisation. The goal of the project was to help CHADEMA become an effective opposition party and more specifically to encourage women and young party members to seek leadership positions in the party. The project activities have consisted of seminars and exchange trips to Norway. At the seminars, the Conservative Party employed a standardised training scheme which focuses on recruitment skills, communication skills, campaign skills and SWOT analysis. Project participants interviewed for the evaluation reported that the knowledge conveyed at the seminars was useful, that the seminars were important occasions for networking in the party, and that international partnerships enhances CHADEMA's prestige and voter appeal. A major challenge in the project was the lack of continuous communication between the partners. As a result of this, seminars have tended to be of an *ad hoc* nature and to take on the character of a series of events rather than a cumulative learning process in the party. The evaluation is critical to the use of exchange trips as a means of strengthening the party. At a general level, the evaluation questions the relevance of the Conservative Party's strategy of supporting the growth of a single party, which is assumed to be ideologically related to the Conservative Party, as a means of promoting democracy in the country.

3.6 Case study I: SV's project in Nepal⁵

Since 1990, when Nepal became a constitutional monarchy, the country has faced many challenges to democratisation, highlighted by the Maoist insurgency from 1996. A democracy movement sweeping across the country in 2006 ended the power of the monarchy and resulted in a peace accord. Moreover, the 2008 national elections signalled the Maoists' transformation from a revolutionary movement to a parliamentary party. Democracy remains on a tightrope with armed elements of the Maoists and other political formations posing a threat to a stable government and the ongoing process of constitution drafting. The democratic

⁵ A more detailed account of the case study is provided in Annex 3

capabilities of Nepalese political parties are a crucial factor. They must be able to establish internal democratic processes, overcome elite capture and factionalism in the party organisation, achieve social inclusion of ethnic minorities, low caste members and women, formulate and promote policies from all levels of the party organisation, and improve their ability to work constructively as members of the Constituent Assembly and as coalition partners in government. The democratic deficit is particularly evident at the level of local government, where no elections have been held since 1999. The electoral system in Nepal is a mixed design where the first-past-the-post system is balanced by a system of proportional representation and (to a much lesser degree) nomination.

In 2004, the Socialist Left Party (SV) carried out a pre-project in Nepal with funds from the NDS. SV had already established links with the Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxists-Leninists (UML), through the Swedish Left Party's ongoing collaboration with the UML-affiliated trade union GEFONT. Building on exchange visits between UML and SV representatives in 2004 and 2005, an application for a cooperation project was submitted and approved in 2005. The cooperation project was based on a so-called 'Training of Trainers' (ToT) course programme, to be conducted at both a central level and in selected districts. Due to the political crisis in Nepal at the time, the programme was put on hold for the 2005-2006 period. When some degree of political stability had been re-established in Nepal, the project was revived in the 2007-2009 period. A 3-day central level ToT seminar and 15 district seminars were organised during the latter part of 2007. SV and UML also co-hosted an evaluation seminar in Kathmandu in November 2008. While the intention was to extend the project to cover 37 districts, the operative part of the project has been put on hold since 2007 due to other priorities of the Nepalese partner and closure of the NDS.

SV has a long tradition of solidarity projects with leftwing parties and organisations across the global South (particularly in Latin America). SV's concept of international solidarity is political by nature, and multi-party democracy is but one of many important motivations for engaging in such activities, which also include gender equality, class struggle and the empowerment of oppressed groups. Local ownership and grassroots involvement are valued, and they emphasise that their cooperation partners are perceived on an equal footing and that the learning outcome is a two-way process. The ToT model was therefore largely to be designed by the Nepalese partner, and facilitated and funded by SV. The above-mentioned *sponsor* role is therefore a relevant description of SV's approach to their Nepal project.

3.6.1 Findings

The main idea behind the ToT design was that by training district representatives centrally, these would receive the necessary knowledge and organising skills to be able to run similar projects in the districts. If the district seminar participants could replicate similar initiatives in their own villages, the impact of this project could potentially extend far beyond the 25 ToT participants and the approximately 1000 district level participants. This 'snowballing' would have positive effects on the need for strengthening local party structures, and also be a way of reaching many without direct involvement on the part of SV or the UML central organisation.

The SV-UML project has had significant impact at the local level. Between 900 and 1000 participants have directly benefited from participation in the district seminars, and it is highly likely that a considerably higher number of people have benefited indirectly – through unofficial participation at the district events, through participating in village and community-level events in the wake of the district seminars, or through reading the booklet that was produced. Activities at village level reportedly attracted people from beyond the UML party ranks, in particular women. Crucially, the seminars were held at a decisive stage in Nepal's democratisation process, with Constituent Assembly elections taking place in August 2008, UML arranging their party congress in February 2009 and amidst ongoing efforts by the UML to contribute to the Constitution-drafting process.

The ToT model could potentially have made district level party cadres directly responsible for education in the party. Here, however, SV has a long way to go to achieve this ambition. A significant finding by the Evaluation Team is that the central level ToT participants played a minimal role (if any) as trainers in the district seminars. As a result, district seminars were coordinated and run by central party officials. When confronted with this lack of local empowerment, party leaders explained that the central level ToT seminar did not provide participants with sufficient knowledge of the various topics, nor the capacity to organise district events. Some criticism was also raised during the 2009 Evaluation seminar that not enough emphasis had been placed on personal capacities in the selection of ToT participants.

One issue that was promoted quite actively from SV's side was that of gender equality and women's issues. The project succeeded in ensuring high levels of female representation in seminars. But while SV communicated clearly to UML that these issues should be included in the coursework, the section on women is the briefest in the booklet and does not deal with the basic concept of gender equality. A more active, hands-on approach from SV's side – where there is an in-depth expertise on this issue – could arguably have led to a more informative and critical presentation of the gender issue. This being said, district participants claimed that the seminars were the first occasion on which the issue of gender had been discussed in a party context.

In line with previous evaluations findings (see Kjølsvedt, Abdel-Salam, Ingdal and Younis 2008), SV's Nepal project has been hampered by insufficient levels of communication. Partly, this can be explained by the political situation since 2004, resulting in occasional arrests, power struggles, and many pressing priorities for the UML leadership. Still, a telling example of the lack of communication was that when funding was transferred for additional district level training, UML only found out when it was too late to make use of the funds. Coordination and quality control of the project could also have been improved. As neither SV nor NDS had any representatives or other activities in Nepal, one would expect a higher level of coordination with other Nepal-based democracy support actors – e.g. embassies and international development agencies – than has been the case.

The project places great financial responsibilities on UML in managing the resources. The logistics and financial management of the programmes are carried out by the party central office in some districts, with regional office bearers and (in some cases) district committee members given limited responsibilities. The books of accounts and expenditure records have been kept by the secretary of the finance committee. The main expenses of the training programmes were lodging, food and the travel expenses of participants, venue costs and equipment, remunerations and the travel cost of the central resource persons, as well as stationary/printing costs.

3.6.2 Discussion

The main objectives of the SV project have been achieved at a district level – with regard to education and participation – although level of the involvement by local party structures in running the seminars was disappointingly low. Given the democratic deficits and lack of social inclusion in Nepalese political parties, and taking into account the positive steps an organisation such as the UML have made in recent years, SV's engagement in Nepal could be characterised as strategically relevant. Issues of elections, constitution-making, social inclusion and gender equality are all of critical importance in the democratisation process in Nepal. However, without a concomitant focus on democratisation and political education in the powerful and not-yet-demobilised UCPN(M), as well as on party-building amongst the Madhesi political organisations in the Terai, such an intervention fails to address the major political challenges in Nepal.

3.7 Case study II: KRF projects in Kenya⁶

The Kenyan political system is characterised by a strong presidency and generally conforms to a neo-patrimonial pattern. In line with Mueller (2008), the multi-party period in Kenya can be said to be characterised by three factors: deliberately weakened state institutions overridden by a personalised and centralised executive, the gradual loss of the State's monopoly of legitimate violence and non-programmatic political parties. After the reintroduction of multi-party elections, political parties in Kenya have increasingly fit the description as pure election vehicles for elite actors. In the time leading up to the elections in 1992, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) was a vibrant pro-democracy movement. Since then, the party has undergone several fissures as aspiring leaders have left to form their own parties. While remaining one of the smaller parties represented in Parliament, FORD-Kenya has increasingly come to rely on voter support from an ethnic community in Western Kenya. In the run up to the 2007 elections, FORD-Kenya joined the Party of National Unity (PNU) alliance headed by President Mwai Kibaki, for which it was severely punished by the voters and the party was reduced from twenty-two to seven MPs.

In 2004, the Christian Democratic Party (KRF) carried out a pre-project in Kenya to assess the possibilities for a cooperation project with FORD-Kenya. The cooperation project commenced the next year and continued until the autumn of 2008. In 2006, the women's organisation of KRF, Kristelig Folkepartis Kvinner (KRFK), initiated a cooperation project with the FORD-Kenya Women's Congress that

6 A more detailed account of the case study is provided in Annex 3

commenced the following year, when the Kenyan partner was renamed FORD-Kenya Women's League (FKWL). In 2005 KRF's youth organisation, Kristelig Folkepartis Ungdom (KRFU) carried out a pre-project to establish a partnership with its youth counterpart in FORD-Kenya. The following year KRFU was granted project support by NDS for continued cooperation with FORD-Kenya Youth (FKY). The three KRF projects have consisted of seminars in Kenya and exchange trips to Norway for the Kenyan partners, and have targeted the central level of the party and the party leadership specifically. The budgets of the three projects have been spent on travel, accommodation and seminar costs in connection with seminars in Kenya and exchange trips to Norway. All NDS projects in Kenya have been initiated and carried out in close cooperation with the Kenya office of the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

KRF's reasons for choosing FORD-Kenya as project partner are linked to the party's commitment to the non-partisan approach. In this connection, it was emphasised that FORD-Kenya occupy a position in Kenyan politics which is structurally similar KRF's in Norway, in the sense of being a relatively small party that has taken on a key role as the binding force in coalition governments. Interviewees from KRF, KRFK and KRFU were consistent in their emphasis on how they applied what we described above as a role model approach in their projects in Kenya. The central idea in all three projects was to provide Kenyan counterparts with models or examples that could serve as inspiration for change. To gain access to the top leadership of FORD-Kenya, KRF has used Norwegian politicians of prominent status as resource persons in project seminars. The value of open-ended peer-to-peer exchanges between politicians from different countries was emphasised by KRF representatives, as well as the importance of flexibility and context sensitivity when it comes to the choice of the thematic contents of seminars.

3.7.1 Findings

With regard to coordination of project activities, the cooperation with NDI has been of vital importance. Apart from providing practical assistance, NDI has been an important advisor for KRF on matters ranging from how to adapt to cultural codes to the choice of relevant seminar topics. From NDI's side it was emphasised that the KRF projects complemented its own programmes of party assistance. In interviews, FORD-Kenya representatives affirmed their appreciation of the open-ended communicative exchanges they had with their Norwegian counterparts at seminars and the Norwegian resource person's "practical" take on seminar issues. True to the assumptions of the Norwegian project partners, one of the main effects of the projects, as reported by FORD-Kenya representatives, has been to act as an inspiration for change in the party. In this regard, the KRF project has provided inputs and inspiration to FORD-Kenya to contribute to national policy developments as a government partner. With respect to organisational development in FORD-Kenya, interviewees pointed in particular to coalition building and a plan for the structuring of the national secretariat as areas in which KRF has provided important inputs. The most impressive result of the cooperation is that it led to the rebirth of a vibrant women's organisation at the central level of FORD-Kenya. According to interviewees, this is in part a direct result of the project activities that were implemented by KRFK and FKWL. More importantly, this process was set in motion by

the party leadership's decision to initiate the project. A related process has occurred with respect to the formation of the FKY. Again, it seems that the cooperation with KRF at the party leadership level provided inspiration for this development. The results of the cooperation project between the two youth parties are uncertain however. At the time of our fieldwork in Kenya in 2009, the FKY was in a state of dissolution.

In spite of the facilitation from NDI, communication and continuity has proved to be a challenge in the projects, and in particular in the KRFU-FKY project. Another challenge has been to adjust expectations aroused in FORD-Kenya for material support and campaign support to the realities of the partnership. While FORD-Kenya representatives express their satisfaction with the KRF seminars, they also made it clear that they would have preferred to see the project activities brought "out of the hotels". In connection with seminar activities, KRF has financed the transport and living costs of gathering the members of central party organs of FORD-Kenya in Nairobi. On such occasions, the party representatives would usually meet for a seminar with KRF on the first day, and the following day the party organs would convene for regular meetings. This extra benefit of the project activities was emphasised by interviewees from FORD-Kenya to the extent that it is relevant to ask whether it was seen as a secondary or primary outcome of the project. FORD-Kenya partners with several other international party assistance providers, and is said to be completely dependant on this NGO support to sustain its core functions, such as the running of the national secretariat and the convening of party organs. If FORD-Kenya is completely dependant on support from Western funded NGOs to sustain its party structures, this calls into question the party's capacity for autonomous generation of ideology and policy formulation, and hence the sustainability of the projects.

3.7.2 Discussion

While the thematic profile of project activities is closely attuned to the interest of the partners, there are nevertheless reasons to question the relevance of the projects. Kenyan political parties have been the targets of considerable amounts of donor support since the 1990s, but results of these activities by way of the emergence of programmatic parties with actual representative functions are meagre. One reason may be that the political system of the country, which includes a powerful presidency and a first-past-the-post electoral arrangement, acts as a major disincentive for the development of political parties as channels for popular political representation. The problems addressed in the KRF projects are broadly speaking problems deriving from lack of knowledge and understanding. There is much to suggest that when it comes to the democratic development of the country, the most pressing problems of Kenyan political parties are not a lack of knowledge and understanding, but rather that they are controlled by powerful economic interests. It is debatable whether the role-model approach is an appropriate response to these challenges.

3.8 Conclusion

Based on the review of NDS projects above, this section is devoted to considerations of overriding issues in the centre's outreach activities. The present and

previous evaluations cover nine out of the total of 18 cooperation projects that have been carried out with funding from NDS, and projects of five of the seven member-parties. The project engagements of the two remaining parties (the Liberal Party, the Progress Party) are small. This should provide a solid empirical basis for assessment of the success and failure of NDS outreach activity. We have seen that the programmatic basis for NDS project is centred on the skills, knowledge and expertise of Norwegian political parties as practitioners of party work and that it is largely confined to activities of knowledge transfer. Within this framework, there is considerable variation in the approaches Norwegian political parties employ in their cooperation projects. The NDS project portfolio is predominately made up of projects of a small budget volume and is geographically dispersed. The gender and youth perspectives, we have seen, are well catered for in the project portfolio and have a prominent role in the projects covered in the present and previous evaluations. As our interviews indicate, these are focus areas that have cross-cutting appeal among the Norwegian political parties. Out of the nine projects reviewed in the evaluations three are cooperation projects between political women's organisation and two are cooperation projects between youth parties. In the remaining four projects participation of youth and women are central thematic foci in project activities, and criteria for project participation. At the same time, it can be noted that the evaluation of youth party projects in Tanzania and Kenya shows that these projects have faced challenges with respect to, among other things, turnover of contact persons in the North and South. In the future Norwegian arrangement of party assistance it is advisable that a more elaborate follow-up structure is established for the projects of youth organisations. In chapter 1, we noted that the goal of initiating multi-party projects was high on the agenda in the establishing phase of NDS. The issue of multi-party projects will be addressed in chapter 4. For now, it suffices to say that no operational multi-party cooperation project was established during NDS' existence. In this respect, the organisation has clearly failed.

When it comes to the effectiveness of NDS with respect to the overarching goal of promoting democracy, we have seen that the projects have instigated processes of organisational development and that they have contributed to the empowerment of individuals from partner organisations in the South. However, there is little evidence to suggest that NDS projects have had major lasting impacts on democratic development in partner organisations, not to mention at a societal level, in the countries where they have been implemented. In light of what is generally known about international party assistance, this should come as no surprise. As Carothers (2006) shows, with the exception of campaign training programmes, there are few indications that any donor-supported programmes of international party assistance have had transformative impacts on political parties or party systems. This serves to put the findings of our review of NDS projects in perspective, but the failure of other party assistance providers to achieve results is not a satisfactory explanation – or excuse – for the shortcomings of the Norwegian projects. One important source of explanations for the lack of significant results achieved in the NDS projects is found in the internal affairs of the organisation and its failure as an arena for learning and knowledge generation. This will be addressed in chapter 4.

With regards to the efficiency of the NDS projects, we have noted that the projects are small in budget volume and that the rate of pre-projects that were never made into cooperation projects is high. It is also worthy of notice that the rate of administration which NDS allowed for (15%) is higher than what is the norm in publicly financed development projects. In this regard, party representatives pointed to the small size of the projects, the difficulty of differentiating administrative and project costs and that expenses which could have been accounted for as project cost were included in the 15%.

The evaluation team has not been made aware of instances of misuse of funds or extravagant spending by Norwegian party representatives in connection with NDS projects. It is our impression that in the projects that have been considered in the present evaluation, the use of resources have been reasonable. While it is difficult to make a comprehensive analysis of the structure of expenses in the NDS project portfolio, it is clear that a substantial part of the project grants have been used on travel and accommodation for Norwegian party representatives. In projects where the main objective is to bring Norwegian party representatives and members of partner organisations together for seminar trainings or exchange of experience this is hardly remarkable. Another question is if this is an efficient way of spending resources with regards to the goal of promoting democracy. An alternative approach which can – potentially – yield more “value for money” in terms of transfer of skills and the number of party members that receive training, is found in projects based on the training of trainers (ToT) approach or similar decentralised methodologies. As we have seen, several NDS projects did in fact employ such decentralised approaches, but as the present and previous evaluations indicate, these projects have failed to realise the sought for “snowballing” effect. The evaluation of SPs projects in Tanzania questioned the budgetary spending on costs related to the Norwegian project partners’ participation in seminar activities in Tanzania (Henningsen and Braathen 2009).

In what remains of this chapter, we will outline general lessons learned from the review of NDS projects that are of direct relevance to the future arrangement of Norwegian party assistance. *First*, our review of projects of Norwegian political parties demonstrates the lack of a strategy of partnerships on the part of NDS. The projects in Palestine, Tanzania, Nepal and Kenya target different types of political party organisations, ranging from dominant government parties to small opposition parties, at different levels of organisation and in different types of political systems. One project is a cooperation between a Norwegian party, the government party and two opposition parties at the local branch level in Tanzania; another constellation of projects targets the “mother party” and the women’s and youth parties at a central level of organisation in Kenya; a third project is confined to a cooperation between a Norwegian and a Palestinian political women’s organisations; and so on. To achieve more significant results in terms of democratic development would probably require the incorporation of several of these strategies into a single comprehensive approach as well as the widening of the scope of projects beyond that of party-to-party cooperation. Such a widening of the scope of activities, it can be noted, would be consistent with the Norwegian experience in democracy, which is very much about the forging of ties and alliances between political parties, popular

movements and civil society actors. While this is a favourable strategy from an analytical point of view, our interviews with stakeholders suggest that it might not be a realistic option for the future arrangement of party assistance. At the outset of this chapter we emphasised that the fundamental problem of democratic development in the countries where NDS operated is a problem of inadequate popular political representation. If the new arrangement of Norwegian party assistance is to focus narrowly on party cooperation, it is advisable that it adopts a strategy whereby actual or potential representativeness is made into a criterion for project partnerships. In this case, it would be necessary to assess whether, for instance, a party like FORD-Kenya is a likely candidate to become a channel for popular political representation with assistance from a Norwegian political party, or if a democratisation of UML's party structures can realistically be achieved through a cooperation project with a Norwegian political party, before partnerships are formed. This would narrow the scope of potential partner organisations, but at the same time increase the chances of achieving significant results. The assessments would have to include considerations of the political system and the political climate in which potential partner organisations operate. To take as examples Nepal and Kenya, such an assessment exercise might conclude that in view of the country's system of proportional representation and the existence of ideologically committed political parties with elaborate organisational structures, conditions are more conducive for projects of party assistance in Nepal than in Kenya. In this regard, it would be essential to establish dialogue between political parties and scholarly expertise in the planning of party assistance projects.

A *second* lesson that may be drawn from our review of NDS projects has to do with the logistics of project implementation. The NDS project portfolio consists mainly of small projects that are dispersed over many countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas. A recurring theme in our case studies and in previous evaluations of NDS projects is problems of communication and continuity. Most of the projects we have considered were hampered as a result of the difficulties of long distance communication and an overreliance on a few key persons. We have also seen that coordination of the Norwegian political parties' project activities with local institutions can be a major asset in projects. It can be assumed that in the future arrangement of Norwegian party assistance, project efficiency can be improved by means of a geographical concentration of activities to fewer countries. Assuming that the Norwegian political parties cooperate, this could allow for a continuous or near to continuous presence by NDS in the countries. Apart from improvements in communication and coordination with local actors, this would probably improve the Norwegian project partners' contextual understanding of the political situation in the countries in which they operate.

The *third* lesson has to do with the technical or methodological side of NDS projects. Previous evaluations of NDS projects highlight the limitations of the standard method of seminar training that the political parties employ in their projects. Seminar training tends to take the form of singular events, or "hotel meetings" as they were referred to by Kenyan politicians, which are easily forgotten by the participants. Previous evaluations also highlight how projects can be subverted by processes related to per diem payment for seminar participation and how

seminars can be used as a form patronage by political leaders. These observations are echoed in literature that comments on international party assistance (Kumar 2004). As Carothers (2006) notes, a commonplace but probably important reason that party assistance providers cling to the seminar approach in spite of its obvious shortcomings, is that it is a convenient way of implementing projects. In this regard, one can point to two roads to improvement. One is to refine the standard method through decentralised ToT training concepts. We have noted the failure of NDS projects to realise the “snowballing” potential such projects hold. How to make decentralised projects work in practice should be an important topic for exchange of experience between the Norwegian political parties in the future. Again, it is advisable that a close dialogue is established between political parties and scholarly expertise on such matters of methodology. Another road to improvement would be to explore alternative methods within the training paradigm, such as exchange programmes, or to go beyond this by means of the use of material support. The last suggestion might sound radical, but less so when taking into consideration that seminar training is welcomed for the same reasons.

4. The unsettled institutional model

In this chapter, the workings of the institutional arrangement of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support will be examined from the time of its establishment in 2002 until it was closed in 2009. The overall efficiency of the organisation and its effectiveness will be considered with respect to the legitimacy of its structures for decision making, quality assurance of projects and the institutional build up of expertise on democracy aid. While the stakeholders of NDS in Norway have diverging assessments of various aspects of the organisation, there is basic agreement among them that with respect to these matters it has been far from successful. In light of this, and given the limited space available for analysis in this report, the chapter moves directly to questions of “What went wrong?”. The media criticism that preceded the Minister of International Development’s decision to shut down NDS in March 2009 focussed in particular on the organisation’s lack of in-built checks and balances in decision-making processes for the allocation of funding to projects. Most stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation agree that the practice whereby “the parties grant money to themselves” was untenable, but this is by no means the only or even the most significant contributing factor to the situation which one interviewee referred to as the “institutional fiasco” of NDS.

To understand the organisation’s performance in the abovementioned domains, we focus on the dynamics of interaction between the principal stakeholders of NDS on the Norwegian side: the political parties, the NDS secretariat, the civil service of the MFA and the expert Board/Council members. These can be seen as instances of the three actor-types: practitioners, administrators and scholars, and as such, bearers of distinctively different outlooks. In our interviews of party representatives, who count as practitioners in this scheme, it was repeatedly emphasised that their first-hand experience of political party work, and knowledge of “what works in practice” give them a take on the activity of party assistance that is superior to that of technocratic or academic experts. As Carothers (2006: 125) observes, political party assistance representatives often take pride in not being part of the developmentalist community, viewing themselves as “a different type of aid actor – more political, direct, and action-oriented”. Party assistance actors, he notes, are often imbued with a “missionary spirit”, based on a belief in the inherent value and goodness of their work, that may lead to a paucity of reflective and analytical assessments of the activities in which they engage. As administrators, the civil service of the MFA and the NDS secretariat can be assumed to be the bearers of a perspective which is geared towards ensuring bureaucratic accountability, and hence by a concern with the procedural correctness of decision-making processes and of the activities that are the output of the organisation. More specifically, it can

be assumed that the perspective of these actors reflects a concern to prevent conduct that may spark negative media attention. The expert Board/Council members from the research institutes represent the category of scholars, and as such an outlook that is oriented toward universally valid knowledge rather than practical efficacy and to the analytic dissection of bureaucratic common sense rather than the devising of administrative categories.

Interaction and exchanges between these actors are bound to produce tension, but given the complexity of the tasks party assistance organisations face, it can be assumed that the forging of synergetic relations between them and the different types of competencies they represent is a crucial prerequisite for success. However, as we shall see in the pages that follow, NDS has largely failed to establish a functioning division of roles and responsibility between these types of actors. More specifically, it is argued that the organisation has suffered from a lack of capacity and will among the political parties to back up the Norwegian engagement in international party assistance.

4.1 The unwanted compromise

Since NDS' planning stage, cooperation between the parties has been characterised by disagreements about the preferred modality of party assistance activities and about the choice of institutional model for the Norwegian engagement of party assistance. The parties that subscribe to the non-partisan/multi-party approach are in favour of an institutional arrangement where the parties pool resources and competence in a joint organisation. KRF has been the main proponent of this position, and it has been the party with the greatest ownership and prestige invested in NDS. As noted above, the initiative for a Norwegian scheme of party assistance emerged in KRF circles in the late 1990s, and it was put into practice with the return of Hilde Frafjord Johnson to the position of Minister for International Development in 2002. Judging from interviews with representatives of KRF, it seems that the party envisioned the establishment of NDS as the instigation of a process that would build up institutional capacity on democracy aid in Norway, in parallel to that which has occurred in the field of human rights. Included in the planning process for NDS were study trips to party assistance organisations in other European countries, among them the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). An interviewee from KRF pointed out how the NIMD office entered into the "KRF vision" of the Norwegian democracy aid organisation, as a place staffed by a professional secretariat where party representatives who are partially employed by the organisation can spend time to enhance their competencies on democracy aid. The notion of NDS as an arena for the exchange of experience between Norwegian parties was central in this vision of a "centre of expertise".

KRF has been followed by SP, the Liberal Party and SV in defending this institutional model (although when it comes to the party's own projects, SV clearly leans towards the fraternal approach). Apart from their principled adherence to the notion of democracy aid and multi-party activities, these smaller parties have an obvious practical interest in a joint venture organisation. As was pointed out in interviews, the international secretariats/committees of the parties that have been assigned responsibility for NDS, are short on capacity and often find it difficult to legitimise

time spent on this engagement *vis à vis* the party leadership. Generally, NDS has been low on the top leadership's agenda in all the political parties involved in the organisation.

It is noteworthy in this regard that the institutional model which was selected for NDS in 2002 is actually more reminiscent of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) than of the NIMD, which is the main reference point for the "KRF vision" described above. It caters for both bilateral and multi-party projects and it assigns a prominent role to the political parties as implementers of projects. Interviewees point to this as a "compromise" or "hybrid" solution intended to accommodate the diverging interests of, in particular, KRF and AP in this domain. AP, which has the strongest tradition of international engagement and probably the greatest capacity for this type of work among the Norwegian parties, has from the planning stage of NDS made it clear that it primarily wants to operate on a fraternal basis, and that it prefers an arrangement whereby public funding is channelled directly to parties or to separate party-affiliated organisations. AP has also objected to the geographical restrictions of the NDS policy. Labour Party representatives explained that while the party has been dissatisfied with the institutional model of NDS from the very beginning, it has gone along with it as a test arrangement. The party has carried out bilateral projects with NDS funding and participated in multi-party projects. Even though NDS allowed for bilateral projects, the emphasis on multi-party projects and the restrictions it imposed on project activities served to curb the interest for engagement in the party organisation, Labour Party representatives pointed out, noting further that the institutional make-up of NDS underestimated the degree to which this type of activity is contingent upon active commitment from the membership of the political parties. As a result, NDS has come to be regarded as irrelevant by AP, which has sought other sources of finance for their international engagements.

While NDS has been an important stimulus for the international engagement of the Conservative Party, which has gradually enlarged its project portfolio and established an international committee, the party shares AP's dissatisfaction with the institutional model of the organisation. The Conservative Party prefers to have funding channelled directly to parties and has expressed its opposition to the NDS requirement of participation in multi-party projects. Bilateral projects the Conservative Party have implemented with its partner organisations have leaned towards campaign support and were therefore pushing the limits of acceptability of the NDS project policy. It is notable in this regard that respondents to the survey carried out among project partners classified projects implemented by SV and AUF as campaign training activities. According to the NDS guidelines, projects should not provide support for election campaigning or material support to political parties. The third party that can be assumed to have high capacity for this type of engagement, the Progress Party, has participated in NDS Board and Council meetings and in multi-party projects, but only to a small extent has had project activities of its own.

4.1.1 The killing of the multi-party initiative

As this indicates, NDS has evolved in a situation where the parties with the greatest will to develop the organisation are the ones which can be assumed to have little

capacity for international engagements, while the parties with the greatest capacity for such engagements have been either modestly interested in the organisation or interested but superficially committed to its ideals and objectives. The effects of this are illustrated in the outcome of the initiatives for multi-party projects that have emerged in NDS. As noted, the multi-party approach featured prominently in the establishing phase of NDS. In the guidelines from 2002 and in the job instructions for the head of the secretariat, it is specified that a principal task of the secretariat is to initiate multi-party projects. Yet in spite of these provisions, NDS never managed to establish a functioning multi-party project during its time of existence. In 2004, preparations for a multi-party project in Malawi were begun. The pre-project activities continued over the next year, but did not result in a regular project, and by 2006, project activities had faded out. The reason most often cited for cancelling the project was that the instability of the political situation in Malawi made it impossible to implement the planned activities. According to interviewees, another contributing cause was lack of interest and enthusiasm for the project among the Norwegian political parties.

Another initiative for a multi-party project in Kenya was launched by NDS in 2007, and a project group with representatives from the parties was formed. Again, the pace at which the preparations progressed was slow. As most stakeholders testify, multi-party projects pose challenges of coordination, with respect to both the Norwegian parties and the parties in the cooperating country, of quite a different magnitude than bilateral projects, and, due to a lack of capacity, the NDS secretariat failed to provide the leadership necessary to push the project forward. A major hindrance to the project, we were told, was the variable attendance of party representatives at project meetings. According to a representative from KRF, the meetings were at times attended only by himself and representatives of one or two other parties. As a result of this, decisions that were made by the project group had to be renegotiated at a later point in time when the group was in full attendance, and this served to inhibit project progress considerably. It was suggested by interviewees that this was a deliberate strategy employed by certain parties to kill the project initiative.

In 2008, the project group carried out a pre-project, which included a study trip to Kenya and a seminar in Norway. The driving force behind these activities was a volunteer from AP, who joined the project group the same year. It is telling in this regard that when this person dropped out of the project for health reasons in 2009, the project came to a halt, and by the time the planning of a seminar in Kenya commenced under the directions of the secretariat, NDS was shut down. Stakeholders expressed varying assessments of the Kenya project's progression in interviews. While some interviewees emphasised that the groundwork done for the project was good, and viewed it as being on a promising track, others saw it as on its way to suffer the same fate as the Malawi project.

4.2 Blurred roles and responsibilities

From the outset, NDS has been widely perceived as an enterprise of political parties and politicians, and generated little sense of ownership in the civil service organisation. The party representatives we interviewed often pointed to what they

perceive as a general scepticism toward NDS – as a potential source of embarrassment – in the civil service organisation of the MFA and a disinclination to get involved with the centre’s activities. In some ways, these comments find resonance in our interviews with MFA representatives, who emphasised that they have kept a “low profile” in relation to NDS. How to deal with an organisation that is made up of the political parties is clearly a delicate matter for civil service organisations, given the potential mix-up of roles on the side of the politicians with organisational and collegial ties to parliament and the ministerial leadership. An evaluation of the Swedish party associated organisations (PAO) highlights the sensitivity of the task of examining the activities of parliamentary parties for state agencies whose funding is ultimately provided by parliament. The report notes how the funding agency Sida tended toward having a legitimising function only in relation to the PAOs, as it never turned down their applications (Öhman et al. 2005).

A related situation prevailed for NDS from 2002 to 2006, while it was a part of the MFA and organisationally and physically located at Fredskorpset (FK). During this period, the formal role of the NDS Council was restricted to that of an advisory body and the formal decisions about approval of applications were made by the MFA. In practice however, the processing from MFAs side was restricted to a checking of the applications, and only in rare cases, based on concerns about the security of the project partners, did it decide against the recommendations of the NDS Council (Statskonsult 2005). In spite of this, there was frustration among the party representatives about the time that lapsed for what some felt to be a “double processing” on the MFA side, which is said to have placed the daily running of the NDS office in a critical situation at times, since it was financed through the project grants. Here and in other connections, interviewees point out, party representatives from NDS have displayed a tendency to bypass the civil service and utilise their lines of contact to lobby their cause directly to the ministerial leadership, a situation that can be assumed to have put strains on the relationship with the civil service.

A more palpable situation of blurred roles and responsibilities characterised the relation between NDS and FK. As the host organisation of the centre, FK was the employer of the NDS secretariat and was formally responsible for managing the funds granted to NDS by the MFA. In practice however, FK exerted minimal influence over either of these functions. It was not represented in the NDS Council and was hence without influence over decisions about project funding, and it lacked capacity to follow up on the financial management of projects. The recruitment of staff to the secretariat, and follow up activities on staff in connection with sick leave, was in practice taken care of by the NDS Council.

4.3 The reorganisation of NDS in 2006

The 2002 guidelines stated that NDS was to be evaluated after a three-year period to inform the decision about whether or not to establish the centre on a permanent basis. In 2005, Statskonsult carried out a review of NDS activities from 2002 to 2005, which recommended the continued operation of the centre and that it should be made into a legal entity separate from the MFA and relocated from the FK (Statskonsult 2005). The report notes the above mentioned ambiguities as to the division of roles and responsibilities between NDS, FK and MFA in the manage-

ment of the funding for the centre, and how the MFA at times has communicated directly with the parties rather than through the NDS office. It further argues that the close association of NDS with the MFA is problematic, as the centre's activities in countries abroad may be perceived as interventions by the Norwegian state and therefore in violation of the principle of non-interference in national affairs. With respect to the effectiveness of the organisation, the report states that the cooperation between the parties in NDS probably represents added value, pointing to the interest for international work that has been created among political parties that were new to this type of engagement and to the opportunities for multi-party projects and exchange of experience the centre has created, but that there was a need to improve the quality of projects.

Another report, based on consultations with the Norwegian stakeholders, which specifically discusses alternatives for the future organisation of NDS, was prepared by Statskonsult in 2006. Here it is recommended that NDS be made into an umbrella organisation whose budget is decided by the Storting and distributed as a yearly grant by the MFA for which NDS is legally responsible. In this way, the report argues, NDS is distanced from the state and the administrative control over the organisations funding would be improved by providing the MFA as well as the National audit service with a single "contact point". The proposed model is close to the suggestions put forward in hearing statements by KRF, SV and SP. AP and the Conservative Party made it clear in hearing statements that they preferred funding directly to the parties, but that they could accept an umbrella organisation as a secondary solution. Eventually the MFA opted for a decision that is more or less identical with Statskonsult's proposal. Many of the organisation's policies for project activities were retained through the reorganisation, including the provisions that projects should focus on democratic organisational development and that the parties should carry out collaborative multi-party projects.

An immediate effect of the reorganisation was a drastic increase in the administrative burden on the NDS secretariat, which was said to have become consumed by this type of tasks. Prior to this, the secretariat had been enlarged from one to two full time positions, but due to unforeseen circumstances (long term sick leave, maternity leave) it has in practice been staffed by only one person for most of the time during the organisation's existence. Another effect of the reorganisation was that the tension between the parties over the institutional model was heightened. In an interview with Labour Party representatives, they pointed to the organisational model decided in 2006 as a compromise solution which "nobody really wanted", and expressed their regrets about not having "taken the fight" over the arrangement at the time. In a similar vein, a representative of the Conservative Party asserted that Statskonsult and the MFA had done a poor job in designing the party assistance arrangement. The dissatisfaction of AP and the Conservative Party with the arrangement devised by the MFA seems to have grown to the point where, according to other stakeholders, it was obvious by 2008 that the two parties no longer wanted to contribute to the development of the organisation.⁷

⁷ In a comment from a NDS stakeholder to a draft version of this report, it was pointed out that party assistance was described in the state budget and that the *Storting* therefore had opportunity to make changes in the arrangement.

4.4 Decision making processes in the NDS Board

One of the stated intentions for the reorganisation of NDS in 2006 was to solve the problem of state interventionism that adhered to the centres activities. The reorganisation achieved an organisational separation of NDS from the MFA, but the actual or perceived autonomy of the centre from the State, and the extent to which it can reasonably be classified as a “non-governmental” organisation, is debatable. The very fact that the Minister for International Development publicly decided to shut down NDS in 2009 and that, even though he was not formally mandated to make the decision, it proved effective, points in the opposite direction.⁸ Another intention behind the reorganisation was to improve the administrative control over resources channelled to the centre. From 2006 onwards, the division of responsibilities and lines of contact between the MFA and NDS were of a more clear-cut nature. The MFA disbursed the annual grant from parliament to NDS for which the organisation had to provide a yearly revision report. The MFA was included in the NDS Board with a representative with observer status. Apart from this, there were few routine dealings between the two organisations. It is probable as well that the informal ties between the organisations were reduced in the same period. The reorganisation thus contributed to solving problems of governance pertaining to the relation between the MFA and NDS, but at the same time, NDS was cut off from important administrative resources. In the aftermath of the reorganisation, other problems were magnified; in particular those relating to the internal governance structures of the organisation.

4.4.1 From consensus to competition

A point of debate in the reorganisation process in 2006 was the decision-making procedures in NDS. In a hearing statement from SP it is emphasised that the party finds the practice of parties “granting funding to their own projects” unacceptable. There are two aspects to the criticism that is levelled against this arrangement by stakeholders. Firstly, they point to the obvious problems of conflict of interest which attaches to the decision making structure. The Council/Board members who had the right to vote in NDS were representatives of the seven parties and the three expert members. In many cases, the party representatives in the Council/Board were the same persons who were responsible for implementing the projects. According to the NDS Rules of procedure, Council/Board members are prevented from voting in decisions about projects in which they themselves or their parties have an interest. As a matter of practice however, the representatives were usually present in the meeting room when their “own” applications were under discussion. The external illegitimacy of this arrangement, which can be seen as a freeway for a collegial grouping to award themselves with project funding, was an important reason for the shutting down of the centre.

Secondly, it was pointed out by party representatives that the arrangement fosters “dishonesty” in the decision-making process. In this connection, it is worth noting that the decision-making structure was perceived as less problematic by stakeholders in the 2002-06 period than in the 2006-09 period. In the first period, the NDS

⁸ Several party representatives from the NDS Council and Board attested in interviews that, even though many stakeholders had been of the opinion that changes had to be made in NDS for some time, the Minister’s decision at a meeting with the general secretaries of the political parties with the media present came as a surprise to them and had not been cleared with the political parties in advance.

Council was formally only an advisory body, and therefore not responsible for decisions about financial matters. At the time, there was little competition between the parties over available funding, as witnessed by the fact that the project expenditure of NDS never reached the annual budget limit. It is notable as well that during the first period of NDS' existence, the Council lived up to what was later a provision of the Rules of procedure of being a forum where decisions are reached by consensus, and at the time, the parties are said to have taken an active interest in each other's projects. The chairperson and deputy chairperson of the Council formed a management committee together with the head of the secretariat, which is said to have been well working.

After the reorganisation of NDS, a new leadership was elected for the Board. The chairperson of the Board did not see the formation of a management committee as part of his assignment and there was minimal communication between the Board chairperson and the deputy chairperson. While NDS' budget was expanded in this period, so was the competition between parties for project funding; and along with this, the *modus operandi* of the Board is said to have changed from a consensus-orientation to competitive voting. In Board meetings, interviewees explain, they were faced with the dilemma that "if we give money to this project, there will be nothing left for our own". Considerations about how to secure funding for one's own projects, e.g. through strategising and alliance-building, may thereby have come to be placed higher on the Board members' agenda than those pertaining to the nature and content of the projects. As a result of this, interviewees point out, applications with an obvious "cut-and-paste" character were sometimes approved by the Board, against the recommendations of the secretariat and contrary to the guidelines' stipulation that project funding should be based on the quality of the applications. In this connection, stakeholders emphasise that the NDS secretariat did not carry sufficient weight *vis à vis* the party representatives to ensure that the stipulations of the guidelines were adhered to. In part, this is attributed to a lack of necessary authority to deal with the politicians who sit on the Board – the employees of the secretariat were young of age and relatively inexperienced as professionals. Interviewees also point to a lack of a formal mandate for the secretariat to ensure that projects were designed in accordance with NDS' project policy and furthermore to a lack of clarity in the division of roles and responsibilities between the Board chairperson and the other Board members. According to several interviewees, the Board chairperson made requests of the secretariat that exceeded his mandate. Stakeholders also point to incidents where the Board chairperson overstepped his mandate in relation to the Board.⁹

Over time, the NDS Board evolved from a consensus forum committed to the official principles and ideals of the organisation, to an arena where parties fought for shares of the available resources and where the NDS project policies had diminishing bearing on decision-making. In the Statskonsult report from 2005, the

⁹ According to a representative of the NDS-secretariat, the Board leader requested that the secretariat should place the applications from his own party at the "top of the bunch" of project applications in the Board meeting agenda. Board member we interviewed, react to the Board leaders decision not to publicly announce for a replacement for the secretariat leader in 2008 without having consulted all the Board members

potential value added from the cooperation between the political parties in NDS is cited as a main reason for carrying the engagement onwards in the form of an umbrella organisation. After NDS was made into an independent organisation, it moved in the opposite direction, and in the process, decision making took on the character of a zero-sum game.

4.4.2 Quality assurance in the Council/Board

In the original set-up of the NDS, the Council members from NUPI, CMI and SMR were thought to play an important role of quality assurance in the centre's activities. In our interviews with stakeholders it was suggested that the inclusion of the researchers in decision-making processes in NDS tended to be of an *ad hoc* nature. Party representatives we interviewed indicated in this connection that they found the contributions of the independent Council members of varying relevance. It was emphasised by party representatives that there is a lack of relevant expertise in Norway when it comes to party assistance.

A former Council member from a research institute explained in an interview that his involvement in the process of developing and assessing projects was restricted to participation in discussions at Council meetings only. He was not expected to participate at a preparatory stage in project formulations or to make any contributions in writing to the organisation. At the Council meetings, the party representatives repeatedly chose to ignore serious objections that were raised against projects by the researchers. Given his lack of influence over the project activities, he declined to pose as a professional alibi for the organisation and resigned from the Council. During the 2004-2006 period all the researchers resigned from the Council, and along with this the cooperation between NDS and the research institutions they represented ceased to exist.

In its recommendations for the future operation of NDS, the Statskonsult report emphasised the need for a better utilisation of the expertise of the researchers, and that assessments and advice from these or other experts should be an integral part of the process of developing projects and financed through the project budgets. These considerations are reflected in the departmental instructions in connection with the establishment of NDS as an independent organisation in 2006, and in the Regulations adopted by the Council meeting the same year. In this connection, three new experts were appointed to the NDS Board. With respect to these representatives, the description "party-independent" no longer applies as two of them have a well-known affiliation to the Conservative Party. Judging from interviews with stakeholders, the competency profile of the new group of experts was more attuned to the wishes of the party representatives. While several interviewees describe the contributions of the new group of expert members as positive, communication with them has been limited and often confined to e-mail correspondence. In the 2006-09 period, the expert members rarely participated in Board meetings, mainly for practical reasons we were informed.

Thus while the independent Council members had an unclear role in the 2002-06 period, the role of the expert Board members after the reorganisation of NDS in 2006 ranged from peripheral to non-existent. This adds weight to the perception of

NDS as an arena where parties are free to grant money to themselves and hence to the external illegitimacy of the organisation. More importantly perhaps, the disappearance of the expert Board members represents a suspension of one of the few clearly demarcated instances of quality assurance in the Board and in the NDS system as a whole.

4.5 NDS as an arena for learning

Above we noted how NDS from the outset was invested with expectations of building up of institutional capacity with respect to democracy aid in Norway. In accordance with the “KRF vision”, NDS was to take on the role of a centre of expertise for the political parties. From 2006, the secretariat devoted much of its energy to the professionalization of the NDS project reporting system through the development of a set of application and reporting forms based on the Logical Framework Approach. While most party representatives we interviewed attested that the system has enhanced their competency in project management, opinions nevertheless vary with respect to its usefulness. Some party representatives describe the supportive dialogue they entered into with the secretariat in connection with the implementation of the reporting system as an important learning process, which has benefitted their projects directly. Other parties report that they have had few dealings with the secretariat and object to the rigidity of the reporting system. In this connection, it can be noted that after the reorganisation of the centre, it initiated what was supposed to be a yearly external evaluation of project activities. In the wake of the NCG evaluation in 2008, the secretariat started a process of sensitising the political parties to issues raised in the report.

When it comes to substantive matters of democracy aid and country specific knowledge, most of the parties have turned to sources external to NDS in order to enhance their competency. Over the years, NDS has held seminars with national and international experts on issues of democracy aid. Judging from our interviews, these events have been successful, but with variable attendance from persons who are key to the NDS engagement of the different parties. The Board meetings, we were informed, had functioned in a diminishing degree as an arena for reflections on such matters, as there was hardly time for anything but the processing of project applications. According to stakeholders, exchange of project experience between the political parties has been minimal in the NDS system. Even in cases where the political parties operate in the same countries, such as with AP and SV in Palestine, or with the same party, such as with SP and the Conservative Party in Tanzania or AUF and the Conservative Party in Uganda, there has been little communication between the parties about project experience. On the whole NDS has engendered little in the way of a cumulative collective reflection on the strategic and methodological aspects of its project activities. One would, for instance, expect the parties to have entered into a dialogue about tactics for how to deal with demands for per diem payment at seminars, which can reasonably be assumed to be a pressing challenge in many of the countries where NDS operated. We have seen that there was a lack of strategy with respect to the choice of countries and partner organisations. The general impression from our review of NDS projects is that, in many cases, choices of partner organisations made by the Norwegian political parties have been based on pre-existing personal contacts, rather than on strategic consid-

erations about where in the world contributions by the political parties might produce the greatest effect. Given the importance that was placed on exchange of experience and competency building in the design of NDS, these evasions are remarkable.

It is remarkable as well that NDS has not instigated a joint process among its members of systematic reflection on the codification, transferability and relevance of the practical knowledge possessed by Norwegian political parties. We have noted how party representatives attach a premium importance to their experiential knowledge of party work and to the notion of themselves as the bearers of a Nordic democratic organisational culture. The belief in the “democratic competency” of Norwegian parties can indeed be said to be the very premise on which the Norwegian engagement in party assistance is founded. In light of this, it is natural to expect that the organisation should have stimulated conceptual and methodological discussions about the uses of this competency. Stakeholders we interviewed were at pains to explain why this never occurred. If there is a scandal buried in the history of NDS, it has more to do with the failure to engage systematically with these matters than with any problems of misuse of public funds by politicians for travels to tropical locations.

4.6 Extended test period?

When asked to make a general assessment of NDS, a party representative we interviewed attested that “if seen as a test arrangement it worked okay”. It is telling that the interviewee became a member of the Board after the reorganisation in 2006. While this served to establish NDS as an independent organisation it makes good sense to say that it nevertheless retained its test-character until it was shut down in 2009, and particularly so in view of its budget. After the reorganisation, the budget was raised from NOK 5 million to NOK 7 million, but in spite of this, the budget can at best be characterised as modest. By contrast, the total budget for the Swedish party support scheme amounts to about NOK 70 million in the same period. It is interesting to note as well that in the period August 2006 through December 2007 the Norwegian MFA supported NDI’s Kenya office with NOK 10 million for projects of party assistance (Sundet and Mmuya 2009), as this suggests that NDS might not even be the major outlet for Norwegian engagement in international party assistance.

Given the NDS’ low budget volume, interviewees pointed out, it is inevitable that the “travel agency” etiquette will be attached to the centre, as the activity level of the projects are bound to be restricted to a few seminars or so annually. In the continuation of this point, interviewees also noted that the limited budget frame and scope of each project, coupled with what was perceived as comprehensive reporting and evaluation requirements (incl. LFA methodology), contributed to sustain the impression of NDS as “merely a bureaucracy”. It is worth noticing as well that, assuming that its organisational structure and project policy remains unchanged, the efficiency of the organisation is bound to be low with a budget volume of this size.

	2005 (in NOK)	2007
Administrative expenses	1 303 575	1 336 023
Project-related expenses	3 616 730	4 823 387
Sum	4 920 305	6 159 410
Adm. Percentage	26,49 %	21,69 %

Adding to this picture is the fact that out of the project-related expenses, interviewees confirmed that between 8 and 15 per cent of NDS allocations went to project administration. This is considerably higher than the norm for Norwegian development cooperation projects. In sum, therefore, the limited resources have circumscribed the efficiency of the centre.

Was there a lack of political will to entrust NDS with the necessary resources? In many stakeholders' opinion, the Norwegian government needs to make up its mind about whether or not it is serious about its engagement in international party assistance. If Norway is to carry on with the engagement, they say, it must be backed up with resources of a different magnitude than what has been the case up until now.

4.7 Conclusion

At the start of this chapter, we emphasised the importance of integrating the competencies of different types of actors to ensure the successful operation of party assistance organisations. From the design which was given to NDS at the outset, it is clear that the centre was meant to be owned and run by the political parties, but that their role was to be complemented and balanced by other types of actors. However, as we have seen in the preceding pages, NDS has largely failed to integrate practitioners, administrators and scholars into a well-functioning structure of roles and this circumstance can in turn account for the organisation's poor performance in the domains we have touched on above. The story of the failure of NDS is a story of how the political parties have gradually become isolated from the influence of other stakeholders, and taken it upon themselves to fill the roles of all these actor types. In part, this situation can be attributed to ambiguities and laxity in the organisational structures of NDS, which has assumed rather than produced a functional division of roles and responsibilities among the stakeholders. It can be inferred as well from the preceding pages that in its design, NDS assumed the existence of a shared cooperative spirit and will to develop the organisation among its key stakeholders – the political parties. This assumption, we have shown, has not corresponded to the realities of the situation in which the centre has evolved. The political parties have never come to agreement about which specific purposes NDS was to serve, and as a result of this, the institutional model that was devised for the centre has remained unsettled throughout its period of existence.

From the observations made in this chapter several lessons of relevance to the design of a new arrangement of Norwegian party assistance can be outlined. *First*, we have seen that the decision-making structure in NDS had major weaknesses. A new arrangement of party assistance must obviously avoid these governance problems. Decisions about the allocation of funding to projects should not be left to

the political parties themselves, but must rather be made by an independent instance and in accordance with a set of criteria that are agreed upon by the stakeholders.

Second, we have seen that many of the deficiencies of NDS as an organisation can be attributed to what we have termed the unwanted institutional compromise and that the reorganisation of the centre in 2006 failed to bridge the basic differences in priorities between its founding members. In the devising of a new arrangement of party assistance, it is essential to tackle important questions that were evaded in 2006. One such question is whether the party assistance arrangement should continue to be linked to the mainstream development aid agenda, and hence geographically limited to “Norad countries”, or rather recognised as a field of development interventions in its own right, which could potentially warrant a different geographical focus. Another question that must be addressed is the positioning of the multi-party approach and the bilateral approach in the new arrangement of party assistance. We have seen that the provision requiring all parties to participate in multi-party projects was an important reason for dissatisfaction with the NDS among the political parties and that that lack of interest for these projects among the parties posed a major challenge in terms of their implementation. We have noted that multi-party projects are demanding in terms of coordination and communication. Given that the parties that are most committed to the multi-party approach have low capacity for international engagements, a continued running of such projects would require a secretariat with the resources necessary to act as a driving force in the implementation of the projects. Most importantly, a choice must be made with respect to the continued cooperation between the political parties on the party assistance arrangement. Here, the concern for an institutional build-up of skills, knowledge and expertise on democracy assistance and party assistance in Norway comes up against the reality of a lack of will to cooperate among the political parties. We will return to these questions in the concluding chapter of the report.

A *third* lesson has to do with NDS’ failure to develop into a centre of expertise on democracy assistance. We have noted the lack of institutional capacity in the specific domains of party assistance and democracy assistance in Norway. The cooperation between the political parties about the running of NDS, we have seen, was no guarantee for the instigation and sustenance of processes of exchange of experience from their projects. Nor did the appointing of scholarly experts to decision making forums in NDS by itself constitute a quality assurance mechanism. Regardless of the institutional model that is chosen for the future arrangement of party assistance, it must establish binding structures of exchange of experience and learning among the political parties. It must also ensure that the competency of scholarly expertise is integrated in the process of initiation, planning and – if called for – implementation of projects in ways that are complementary to the contributions of the political parties.

A *fourth* lesson that can be drawn from our account is that, due to an insufficient mandate and lack of capacity, the NDS secretariat was unable to act as a counterweight to the political parties when it came to quality assurance of projects. The

secretariat only partly took on a role as a centre of expertise for the political parties. If the future arrangement of party assistance is to include a centre, foundation or some other type of independent organisation, it must be equipped with a professional secretariat with greater resources than was previously the case with NDS to function as a nexus for the generation and dissemination of knowledge on this subject.

5. NDS compared with other European schemes

Norway is not the only European country with a party assistance scheme. In fact, starting up in 2002 Norway was ten years behind countries like Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. This chapter highlights the aspects of the Swedish, Dutch, British and German schemes with most relevance for our findings regarding the Norwegian system. We recommend a look at Appendix 3 for a more detailed account.

5.1 What is international party assistance a part of?

The Norwegian party assistance scheme is narrowly confined to developing countries, operating within the confines of Norad's geographical range and referring to the general agenda of developmental cooperation more than the democratisation agenda per se. How is this in other European countries?

Although, Sweden's and the UK's party assistance schemes also cover countries in the South, they have their roots in the early 1990s and post-Soviet Eurasia. They resulted from the opportunities opened up by what looked like a democratisation wave following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Quite intense support was received by political parties in the Baltic and Central European countries for more than a decade until the EU enlargement in 2003. After the EU enlargement, the focus has shifted towards post-Soviet successor states, such as the Ukraine and Georgia. In other words, the schemes in the two countries have their roots in support to post-communist transition and democratisation. The countries in focus were selected according to criteria referring to their needs and potentials for democratisation, and also their geopolitical importance. The traditional themes of developmental cooperation, like poverty reduction, sustainable development etc. played a minor role if any role at all. Like NDS, the Swedish party assistance scheme is under the sector of developmental cooperation, whereas the UK scheme is under the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The Dutch party assistance is divided in two: Matra Political Parties Programme – MPPP and the Netherland Institute for Multiparty Democracy - NIMD. MPPP is under the Minister of Foreign Affairs whereas NIMD is under the Minister of Development. MPPP covers the EU's Eastern and Southern neighbourhood, among other countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, Croatia, Turkey, Serbia, Albania, Russia, Belarus, Armenia, and Ukraine. MPPP relates its party assistance to transition and integration in the EU neighbourhood after having been occupied for a decade after 1994 assisting Central European and Baltic countries approaching European standards. The NIMD on the other hand places its activities within the field of

developmental cooperation in the South, but with a heavy emphasis on multi-party democracy.

The German party-associated Stiftungen are only partly, and at times not at all, engaged in party assistance. When Stiftungen actually engage in party assistance, they do so within a political, rather than a developmental, framework. The German Stiftungen themselves were established to strengthen democracy in Germany, and have served in this role twice (after the reintroduction of democracy in 1945 and after the reunification in 1990). The Stiftungen submit their programme proposals to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

5.2 What resources do they have?

We have seen that the NDS distributed less than EUR 1 million annually at most. Other European party assistance schemes received considerably more to spend. Sweden saw a dramatic increase (almost a redoubling) of the funds allocated for party assistance in 2007, and these now reach almost EUR 7.8 million. The Swedes have some 145 projects in 36 countries. In addition, there are regional and global projects that reach out to even more countries. The total number of projects is 173. The average budget per project is EUR 34,000 annually. The Dutch NIMD's budget is about EUR 10 million. It is currently working with more than 150 political parties from 17 programme countries. A NIMD fully matured country programme on average costs EUR 525,000 annually. Programmes in a developmental stage and regional programmes are somewhat cheaper. Therefore, the average for all NIMD programmes amounts to EUR 480,000.

The UK's WFD receives an annual funding of EUR 4.6 million from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. During 2007-2008 the WFD supported democracy-strengthening activities to a total value of GBP 3,234,000 (covered by grant-in-aid and third-party sources) of which GBP 1.4 million went to the eight programme countries. The average party project is between GBP 10,000 and 30,000. The German foundations receive funds according to their electoral performance in the latest four general elections, and the two biggest receive around EUR 100 each. Given the wide range of activities of the Stiftungen it is difficult to assess the party assistance share of the total portfolio.

5.3 How is party assistance organised?

This evaluation sums up NDS as an institutional fiasco. Among other things, the decision making structure had major weaknesses. Furthermore, the NDS secretariat proved unable to prevail against the political parties when it came to quality assurance of projects. In Sweden, there is no equivalent to NDS. In stead, each party has an organisation that handles party assistance. In most cases, these are the so-called Party Associated Organisations (PAOs) that are formally independent from their political party. The Conservatives, the Liberals, The Christian Democrats and the Centre Party have set up PAOs for the purpose. To manage the party assistance funds, the Green Party has set up a "fund-raising foundation", the Green Forum. The Left Party has an International Forum, which unlike the standard PAOs is directly under the party. However, the Forum's activity plan does not have to be approved by the party's central board. The Social Democrats asked the well-

established Olof Palme Centre to act as PAO, which it accepted. Party assistance constitutes about ten percent of the Centre's annual budgets. The PAOs and fora have between 2 and 5 employees.

The dual Dutch system consists of the MPPP for the EU's neighbourhood and NIMD, mainly for the South. The MPPP scheme is very similar to the Swedish model. The Dutch Stichtingen (foundations) are almost identical to the Swedish PAOs. The programme was evaluated in 2006 (Verheije et al.). One of the findings was that the autonomy of the political foundations hindered efficient quality control of the activities on the part of the MFA. In the Norwegian party assistance community, NIMD is often referred to with interest. NIMD was established in 2000, six years after the MPPP. Seven of the ten political parties currently represented in the Second Chamber (Tweede Kamer) in the Dutch Parliament - Staten-Generaal - own the NIMD. The three parties that have chosen not to be members of the NIMD (Socialistische Partij, Partij voor de Vrijheid and Partij voor de Dieren) represent almost one of four voters in the last general elections.

In several of the countries where NIMD operates, political parties have established Centres for Multiparty Democracy. These centres provide a neutral setting where political adversaries have the opportunity to discuss how they can work together to strengthen democracy. These centres are now operating relatively autonomously from NIMD, NIMD being one among several international organisations that support them.

The British Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) is a "non-departmental public body", which means that although it is sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, WFD is not an integral part of a government department and carries out its work at arm's length from Ministers. Nonetheless, the Ministers are responsible to Parliament for the activities of the non-departmental public bodies.

The WFD is a "hybrid" that covers British political parties' democracy support (50 percent of the funds from the FCO) involving the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, and the Liberal Democrats as well as smaller parties, like the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru on a proportional basis. The remaining 50 percent of the funds is spent on work carried out by national and international organisations in line with WFD's priorities. The 50/50 distribution has remained intact since WFD was established, and enables a mix of partisan and non-partisan projects.

The German system differs considerably from that of the other three countries. Although there is a similarity in the fact that the activities are carried out through party-affiliated foundations, the German foundations are huge educational and project-making machines in their own right; emanating from the German tradition of politische Bildung. In Sweden and the Netherlands, the foundations are tiny organisations set up for the purpose of managing party assistance in a narrow sense. A future Norwegian party assistance scheme will probably have a lot to learn from Germany on a project level, but the German organisational model is so much linked to German specificities that it is impossible to emulate.

5.4 How are decisions made?

The decision-making structure caused much of NDS's weakness. It was a problem that decisions about the allocation of funding were left to the political parties themselves, instead of being left to an independent instance. How is this done in other European countries? The Swedish PAOs are relatively autonomous, which is a result of the fact that they, unlike e.g. the NGOs receiving grants through Sida, receive a pre-defined amount of money. The competition for scarce funds that sometimes may force NGOs to go to great lengths to comply with the wishes of the funding agency does not affect the PAOs, which behave with a higher degree of self-assertion. One PAO said that Sida "has no right to make political assessments, influence partners or how the project is carried out". The PAO reserves the right to at its own discretion choose countries to work in and parties to cooperate with. The parties govern the country on one hand, and through the PAOs they operate as developmental agents relating to Sida's procedures and requirements. The PAOs have a good deal of power and the channels through which to convey their wishes to the decision makers at levels above Sida, which as an institution is not considered to be a very heavy actor. This might discourage Sida from being contentious with the PAOs.

The Dutch NIMD is governed by its member parties. The NIMD Board is the institution's supreme decision-making body. The Board is composed of an independent chairperson and one member from each of the seven participating political parties. The Board meets every two months. The Supervisory Council, which advises the Board on all policy issues on the NIMD agenda, consists of representatives from NIMD's member parties. The Council meets twice a year and always deals with one of the NIMD programmes in-depth, using the external evaluations available.

NIMD is independent. The Ministry reads NIMD's plans carefully, and twice a year there is a formal policy dialogue. The Ministry is supportive of the NIMD's change of focus from political parties as such to the parties' relations to other institutions and to each other. In doing this NIMD's board is taking note of the MFA's focus but does not necessarily have to focus on the countries emphasised by the Dutch MFA. Cooperation with parties in the South takes place in the context of a "basic agreement", where parties commit to democratic values and to the avoidance ethnic hatred. Addressing the political level in a country with projects easily leads to allegations of interference. Therefore, the Dutch MFA drew the conclusion that total openness and transparency was necessary. As a consequence, all correspondence and all meetings between the Dutch MFA and NIMD are in writing, even working meetings.

In the United Kingdom, political parties taking part in the scheme have a large degree of autonomy, and may choose what countries to work in as long as the activities fall within the framework of the WFD. All participating parties must submit quarterly reports. An arm's length distance is kept, however, in order to distinguish WFD-supported activities from official UK policies. The Foreign Secretary's Ministerial Statement from March 2006 explains: "The arms-length approach brings value-added benefit that could not be achieved by Government". The freedom

allowed to the parties is regarded as “seed-corn money”, links and contacts are established that in some cases will be useful in the future.

5.5 Multi-party or sister party?

The Norwegian discussion among involved parties and experts has revolved around the issues of multi-party versus sister party approaches. The first approach holds that Norwegian parties should together promote the essence of multi-party democracy. Since there is consensus among Norwegian parties regarding the benefits of that system, cooperation across party lines should be feasible. The latter approach, on the other hand, holds politics to be basically competitive, and at times purely zero-sum (the voter support in percentages has to be taken from another party, unless of course the aim of the election is to increase voter turnout). Therefore, party assistance is at its best when sister parties help each other win elections, or strengthen themselves to prepare for future electoral campaigns. Not surprisingly, this debate was not invented in Norway. In fact, interviews with people involved in party assistance in other European countries spoke of identical lines of conflict.

Interestingly, the distribution of parties along the lines of conflict followed the same pattern from country to country. The parties with strong “Internationals”, such as the social democrats, the Christian democrats/conservatives and the liberals, were strongly in favour of sister party cooperation. The Swedish and German Liberals and the Swedish Conservatives are particularly “self-assertive” and uncomfortable with the prevailing consensus ideology within the party assistance schemes. The social democrats with their strong international family of parties all around the world also have strong preferences for party-to-party approaches. Less ideological parties in the political centre, such as the Swedish Agrarian Party (Centern), the Norwegian Christian Democrats (KRF) and the Norwegian Agrarians (SP) were oriented towards multi-party approaches. However, ideologically profiled parties such as the German Greens and the Swedish Left Party also tended towards multi-party approaches because they hardly found sister parties in the South, or only in certain regions in the South.

How is the issue of multi-party approaches versus party-to-party approaches being dealt with institutionally in other European countries? As a result of input from the PAOs to the Reference Group (the Deputy Minister for Developmental Cooperation, all PAOs, mother parties, representatives of the MFA and Sida), from 2009 the system was changed from requiring joint applications, which was difficult to achieve, to a system whereby five per cent of the total grant was earmarked for multi-party projects. Prior to 2009, there was an SEK 11 million pot for multi-party projects, but it proved to be difficult to get projects established. In order to be classified as multi-party, a project must involve at least two Swedish parties and preferably at least to foreign parties.

In the Netherlands, MPPP and NIMD apply diametrically opposite working methods. Twinning is the core method of Matra as a whole. Twinning consists in “matchmaking” between Dutch organisations and like-minded “agents of transformation”, and MPPP applies pure party-to-party approaches. NIMD on the other hand is purely multi-party, and commits its member parties to work “together in a collective team”. The NIMD has a staff of 34 people, including one political advisor from each

of the participating parties (the larger parties may have two). Interestingly, the political advisors, who are seconded from the parties, are not supposed to serve as representatives of their respective parties. They are formally employed by NIMD and are committed to working “multi-party-wise”. The profile abroad is “NIMD and the Dutch parties”, with a low profile of the individual parties taking part.

In the UK, the WFD’s Board has 14 Governors constituted on a cross-party basis. Eight Governors are nominated by the Westminster political parties – three from the Conservative Party, three from the Labour Party, one Liberal Democrat, and one representative of the smaller parties. Five non-partisan Governors are also appointed, mainly to follow up non-partisan projects. The German Stiftungen, when involved in party assistance, tend to apply a partisan approach, but most of the time they work with other actors and organisations. Irrespective of how party assistance is organised, all countries experience tensions between adherents of partisan twinning versus adherents of “wall-to-wall” approaches across party lines.

5.6 Types of activities

This evaluation has showed that the Norwegian party assistance scheme based itself on an idealistic approach. Most project activities of NDS were based on a strong belief in knowledge transfer, reasoned arguments, moral examples, awareness raising, sensitisation and the like to bring about change. Alternatives to this approach could consist in support to the institutions in which parties operate. There is also a distinction between skills transfer (practical workshops) and intellectual stimulation (round tables, books).

The preferred type of activities between the Swedish and Eastern/Southern parties is seminars and work-shops. The typically Nordic method of competence and awareness-building through so-called study circles is also being used. Swedish expertise is being made use of, from professional media experts and consultants to party activists with positions of trust at local or regional level.

The Dutch NIMD primarily works with expert networks in the South. MPPP tends to carry out training whereas NIMD often carries out conferences and provides meeting-places. Doing this NIMD includes parties in power and the opposition as well as between critical civic organisations and political life. The British WFD emphasise practical skills very much in their party assistance, and arrange training in areas like the development of policies, organisational aspects of party work, elaboration of party programmes and use of the media.

5.7 Conclusion

The Norwegian party assistance scheme stands out in contrast to the other European schemes on two main points. Firstly, it is characterised by being narrowly confined to developing countries, even to the extent of borrowing the ultimate aim of “poverty reduction” from the sector of developmental cooperation. Secondly, it has had far less resources to draw on than the other European schemes. This combination of working with the smallest amount of funds in what probably are the most difficult countries has made the Norwegian operation more challenging than that of the other Europeans presented in this chapter.

Although the size of each project might not differ much between Norway and the other European countries, the considerably larger total amount of grants enable more projects in each country, and a considerably stronger follow-up through PAOs and centres.

As this chapter has shown, European countries have chosen different organisational solutions for the task, or rather different combinations of similar elements. Nonetheless, they confront the very same challenges and dilemmas, and share these with the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support. This gives reason to warn against too great an expectation of the potential inherent in administrative reorganisation without addressing some of the more fundamental questions regarding party assistance. It is necessary to solve the two problems of small funds and ill-suited country focus, mentioned above, but this alone certainly does not provide sufficient preconditions for making a successful scheme.

There are recurrent themes and tensions in all the national schemes studied, including the Norwegian one, some of them being:

- Partisan twinning versus wall-to-wall approach across party lines
- Parties with ideological Internationals (fraternal party-to-party) versus ideologically local parties (often proponents of multi-party projects)
- Support directly to parties versus support to institutions in which parties operate
- Distinctly political approach versus an approach linking party assistance to other issues
- Developmental cooperation versus democracy support
- The a-political, “sociological” and technological character of developmental cooperation versus the purely political, competitive, zero-sum game character of much of the party assistance
- Autonomy of the parties involved versus the “national interest”
- Arm’s length distance between parties/centres and the funding authorities versus assurance that funds are spent on activities in line with the overall objectives
- Skills transfer (practical workshops) versus intellectual stimulation (round tables, books)
- Multi-party centres versus party-associated organisations as the main repository of knowledge and responsibility

The experience from the other European schemes is that these tensions exist irrespective of how the schemes are set up. For a future Norwegian scheme, it will be important to be able to face these tensions and live with them. In fact, the wide variety of approaches represented in the bullet points above, can be used to tailor good projects. For instance, party-to-party projects consisting of technical training are useful in countries where parties play a role as a channel of popular representation, and where the institutional framework allows the parties to operate. In less fortunate countries, where parties play no role or have become tools of clientelistic networks or ethnic groups, the multi-party approach, addressing intellectuals through discussions or publications of books on relevant key issues may be more appropriate.

6. Recommendations

The *Storting* has decided that a Norwegian scheme of international party assistance is to be re-launched in the near future. Based on the conclusions we have drawn in the previous chapters, the remaining pages of this report are devoted to recommendations for the design of the future Norwegian arrangement of party assistance at the operational and institutional level of activity.

We have seen that the effectiveness of NDS projects with respect to the goal of supporting the development of democracy in countries in the South was limited. One factor that explains this situation is the scale of NDS' operations. The projects of the Norwegian political parties have been small and often limited to a few seminars annually. With a total budget of NOK 5-7 million, the rate of administrative expenses in the running of the centre was bound to be high. Another explanatory factor is the spread of NDS projects over a large number of countries on three continents. A third explanation for the modest results is the lack of a well thought-out strategy with respect to the types of organisations Norwegian political parties should partner with. We have argued that Norwegian party assistance should focus on the promotion of popular political representation, and that, to ensure the effectiveness of projects of party assistance, actual or potential representativeness of partner organisations should be made a criterion for partnerships. In light of this, it is recommended that in the future arrangement for Norwegian party assistance:

- i) Project activities should be concentrated in fewer countries
- ii) Partnerships should be based on assessments of actual or potential representativeness of the partner organisations

We have shown that a major weakness of NDS was the lack of collective learning and exchange of experience between the political parties on issues relating to party assistance. NDS was founded on the assumption that Norwegian political parties are in possession of "democratic competencies" which are relevant to emerging democracies in the South. The Norwegian/Nordic experience of democracy differs from the Continental and Anglo-American experience, and may as such contain important lessons to be disseminated to emerging democracies. We have seen that the Norwegian political parties unite in an emphasis on political participation of women and youth as areas where they have valuable lessons to teach to others. However, this is by no means the only element of the Norwegian democratic tradition that might be of relevance when it comes to international party assistance. NDS has generated little in the way of collective reflection on which aspects of the Norwegian party experience should be transferred to partners in the South and on

how this can be done. In the future arrangement of Norwegian party assistance it is essential that the political parties engage in:

- iii) Systematic reflection on the relevance of various aspects of the experience and skills of Norwegian political parties to partner organisations in emerging democracies
- iv) Systematic reflection on the methodological challenges involved in the transfer of skills and knowledge to partner organisations in emerging democracies
- v) Binding arrangements of cooperation with scholarly expertise about the design and content of activities of party assistance

We have shown that the cooperation between the political parties in NDS was founded on an “unwanted compromise” with respect to the issue of multi-party vs. bilateral project activities, and that the reorganisation in 2006 served to accentuate rather than to resolve this tension. Given the dissatisfaction with the requirement of participation in multi-party projects among some of the political parties and the commitment to this approach among others, it is necessary to devise a different type of compromise along the lines adopted in the Swedish arrangement of party assistance.

- vi) Participation in multi-party projects should be optional to the political parties. A part of the total budget for party assistance should be reserved for multi-party projects

Another source of tension in NDS was the geographical restriction of projects to “Norad countries”. In this regard, it is worth noting that the goal of contributing to poverty reduction had little direct bearing on the project activities of NDS. With a few exceptions, the goal of NDS projects was restricted to democratisation of partner organisations. We have also noticed the opinion held by party representatives that party assistance differs in nature from regular development aid. In line with the requirement that projects should be based on the representativeness of partner organisation, it would be feasible to implement projects of party assistance in countries with a higher level of income than was the case with NDS. In some of the least developed countries, it is difficult to find political parties that fulfil the criterion of representativeness. Here, it is probably more productive to channel resources to other types of democracy support, such as support for civil society or support for constitutional processes. Alternatively, Norwegian political parties could partner with civil society groupings that have representative functions, to assist them on the path of becoming political parties. In light of this, it is recommended that:

- vii) Party assistance should be delinked from the goal of poverty reduction and recognised as a field of development cooperation in its own right
- viii) Project activities should not be confined to countries that receive development aid from Norway

We have noted as well the governance problems that adhered to NDS. There is agreement between the stakeholders that in the future arrangement of party assistance, decisions about the funding of projects should not be made by the political parties. Again, it is advisable to design the arrangement on the model of the Swedish scheme for party assistance:

- ix) Project funding should be provided in the form of a basic grant to all the political parties represented in parliament. In addition, the political parties should receive grants according to the number of seats they hold in the *Storting*.

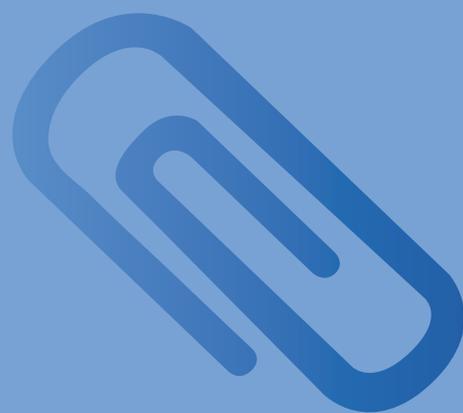
This leaves the question of an institutional model for the future arrangement of Norwegian party assistance. An obvious requirement for a publicly financed arrangement of party assistance is that its activities must be knowledge-based and professional. In this respect, it is worth reiterating the point we have made about the lack of institutional capacity in Norway on democracy aid and party assistance specifically. One of the intentions of establishing NDS was precisely to create a “centre of expertise” on party assistance. As we have seen, NDS was a clear failure in this respect. In part, this is explained by the lack of resources and a clear mandate for the NDS secretariat. In part, it is explained by a lack of will and capacity to develop the organisation among the political parties. We have noted that some of the parties prefer to have project funding channelled directly to the parties or to separate party foundations. In light of the “institutional fiasco” of NDS described in a previous chapter, this might seem the obvious solution for a new arrangement of Norwegian party assistance. However, given the requirement for professionalism and knowledge generation, this solution is far from optimal. If the political parties are relieved of the task of decision-making with respect to project funding and not required to participate in multi-party projects (c.f. points vi and ix above) important obstacles for cooperation on exchange of experience and methodological development are removed. Therefore, it is recommended that:

- x) Party assistance is provided by a new and independent public agency
- xi) The party assistance agency should be headed by a competent executive director. It should have a board of non-partisan governors, representing different types of relevant practical-political and scholarly knowledge. In addition, there should be a Council of Representatives consisting of the political parties, which will make decisions on matters of policy.
- xii) The party assistance agency must be served by a professional secretariat with greater resources than NDS. The secretariat must find ways to facilitate mutual learning among the parties and integrate scholarly expertise. It will need to link up with specific knowledge about the country and region, and it must endeavour to harmonise with other donors and actors in the party assistance field.

Finally, it should be pointed out that if these recommendations are brought to bear on the new arrangement of Norwegian party assistance, it must warrant a budget of a different magnitude than was the case with the NDS.

- xiii) The allocation of funding for party assistance should see a substantial and phased expansion

Annexes



Annex 1

List of NDS projects 2002-2009

Nor. partner	South partner	Country	Type	Duration	Evaluation
SV	Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG)	Guatemala	Pre-project only	-	
SV	Movimiento Al Socialismo (MAS)	Bolivia	Pre-project only	-	
Senterpartiet	Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	Tanzania	Pre-project only	2002	NIBR Evaluation (Henningsen and Braathen 2009:16)
SV	Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN)/URNG	El Salvador, Guatemala	Regular cooperation project	2002-07	
AUF	Fatah Youth	Palestina	Youth project	2003-	
DNA	Fatah	Palestina	Women project	2003-	NCG Evaluation (Kjøstvedt et al. 2008)
Senterpartiet	CCM/CUF/ CHADEMA	Tanzania	Regular cooperation project	2003-	NIBR Evaluation (Henningsen and Braathen 2009:16)
SV	Palestinian Federation of Women's Action (PFWA)	Palestina	Women project	2003-	NCG Evaluation (Kjøstvedt et al. 2008)
Multi-party project		Malawi	Pre-project only	2003-04	
DNA	Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)	Zimbabwe	Regular cooperation project	2003-05	
SV	Communist Party of Nepal - Unified Marxist-Leninists (UML)	Nepal	Regular cooperation project	2004-	NIBR Case study of this evaluation (Henningsen et al. 2009)
Høyre	Democratic Party (DP-Kenya)	Kenya	Pre-project only	2004	NIBR Case study of this evaluation (Henningsen et al. 2009)

Nor. partner	South partner	Country	Type	Duration	Evaluation
KRF	FORD-Kenya	Kenya	Regular cooperation project	2004-07	NIBR Case study of this evaluation (Henningsen et al. 2009)
Multi-party project		Madagaskar	Pre-project only	2005	
SU (Sosialistisk Ungdom)	IYU	Palestina	Youth project - pre-project only	2005	
KRFU	FORD-Kenya	Kenya	Youth project	2005-07	NIBR Case study of this evaluation (Henningsen et al. 2009)
Høyre	CHADEMA	Tanzania	Regular cooperation project	2005-08	NIBR Evaluation (Henningsen and Braathen 2009:16)
Høyre	Partido Conservador	Nicaragua	Regular cooperation project	2005-08	
KRF-K	FORD-Kenya	Kenya	Women project	2005-08	NIBR Case study (Henningsen et al. 2009)
Centre Youth (Senter-ungdommen)	CCM/CUF/CHADEMA	Tanzania	Youth project	2006-	NIBR Evaluation (Henningsen and Braathen 2009:16)
Venstre	Civic United Front (CUF)	Tanzania	Regular cooperation project	2006-	
Høyre	Democratic Party (Uganda)	Uganda	Regular cooperation project	2006-07	
Høyre	Golkar	Indonesia	Regular cooperation project	2006-08	

Nor. partner	South partner	Country	Type	Duration	Evaluation
AUF	Uganda Young Democrats	Uganda	Youth project	2007-	
DNA	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)	Irak	Pre-project only	2007	
FRP		Kasakhstan	Pre-project only	2007	
Høyre	Podemos	Bolivia	Pre-project only	2007	
Høyre	Patriotic Union	Guatemala	Regular cooperation project	2007-08	
Multi-party project		Kenya	Pre-project only	2007-08	
KRF	Movimiento Cristiano Liberación (MCL)	Cuba	Regular cooperation project	2008-	
DNA	Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)	Sudan	Pre-project only	2008	
Høyre	New Patriotic Party (NPP)	Ghana	Pre-project only	2008	
UHL (Unge Høyre)	Juventud Conservadora (PC-JC)	Nicaragua	Youth project - pre-project only	2008	
Venstre	Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)	Zambia	Pre-project only	2008	

Annex 2

List of interviewees and interview guides

Name	Position and organisation	Date	Location
Geir Løkken	<i>Deputy director, MFA</i>	17.06.2009	MFA, Oslo
David Hansen	<i>Former political advisor, MFA and NDS Council member</i>	19.06.2009	Torshov, Oslo
Lene Aure Hansen	<i>International secretary, SV and NDS Board member, SV</i>	24.06.2009	Akersgata, Oslo
Kathrine Raadim	<i>NDS Board member, AP</i>	25.06.2009	Youngstorget, Oslo
María Hevzy	<i>NDS Board member, AP</i>	25.06.2009	Youngstorget, Oslo
Henning Kloster Jensen	<i>NDS Board member, Liberal Party</i>	25.06.2009	Stortinget, Oslo
Eva Høili	<i>Project coordinator, KRFK</i>	26.06.2009	Oslo
Per Kristian Nielsen	<i>International secretary, KRF</i>	29.06.2009	Akersgata, Oslo
Martin Kolberg	<i>Party secretary, AP</i>	30.06.2009	Stortinget, Oslo
Eva Langslet	<i>NDS secretariat member</i>	30.06.2009	NIBR, Oslo
Gjermund Skaar	<i>Project coordinator, SV</i>	30.06.2009	NIBR, Oslo
Helga Ervik	<i>Deputy director, MFA</i>	30.06.2009	MFA, Oslo
Erlend Fuglum	<i>Leader, Studieforbundet, SP</i>	01.07.2009	Akersgata, Oslo
Helene Bank	<i>Former NDS Board vice chairman, SP</i>	01.07.2009	Fagforbundet, Oslo
Ivar Egeberg	<i>Party secretary, SP and NDS Council member, SP</i>	01.07.2009	Akersgata, Oslo
Julian Farner-Calvert	<i>Secretary general, KRFU and project manager, KRFU</i>	02.07.2009	Akersgata, Oslo
Per Kristian Nielsen	<i>International secretary, KRF</i>	02.07.2009	Akersgata, Oslo

Anja Riiser	<i>Former NDS secretariat member</i>	06.07.2009	NIBR, Oslo
Asbjørn Løvbræk	<i>Senior advisor, Norad (former senior advisor MFA)</i>	08.07.2009	Norad, Oslo
Samuel Muyizzi	<i>Secretary general, Uganda Young Democrats (UYD)</i>	13.07.2009	Youngstorget, Oslo
Nalule Kevynne Mbaziira	<i>Leader, Women's League, UYD University Branch</i>	13.07.2009	Youngstorget, Oslo
Åsmund Aukrust	<i>Board member, AUF</i>	13.07.2009	Youngstorget, Oslo
Torstein Tvedt Solberg	<i>International advisor, AUF</i>	13.07.2009	Youngstorget, Oslo
Elisabeth Jacobsen	<i>Ambassador, Norwegian Embassy, Nairobi</i>	30.07.2009	Vika terrasse, Oslo
Bjarte Tørå	<i>IDEA International (and former NDI Kenya rep)</i>	03.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Felix Ohdiambo	<i>NDI Kenya</i>	06.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Kennedy Masime	<i>CGD</i>	06.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Kristian Norheim	<i>NDS Board member, FRP</i>	07.08.2009	Stortinget, Oslo
Karuti Kanyinga	<i>South consultants, Prof. in Political Science</i>	07.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Mukhisa Kituyi	<i>Kenya Institute of Governance (former FORD-Kenya chairman)</i>	07.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Monika Andersen	<i>Former International secretary, SV and NDS Board member, SV</i>	07.08.2009	Sagene, Oslo
Jon Inge Løvdal	<i>NDI Kenya (and former NDS Board member)</i>	08.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Christian Angell	<i>NDS Board chairperson, Conservative Party</i>	09.08.2009	Høyres Hus, Oslo
Joel Ruhu	<i>Vice chairman, FORD-Kenya</i>	10.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Reuben Ameli	<i>National director, FORD-Kenya Youth League</i>	10.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Jacknelson Wamboka	<i>Secretary general, FORD-Kenya Youth League, member NEC FORD-Kenya</i>	10.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Stephen Namsuyle	<i>Executive director, FORD-Kenya</i>	10.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya

Terje Vigtel	<i>Director of Civil Society Section, Norad</i>	10.08.2009	Norad, Oslo
Vibeke Sørum	<i>Advisor, Norad</i>	10.08.2009	Norad, Oslo
Taabu O W Daniels	<i>Executive director, NARC Kenya</i>	11.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Danson B Mungatana	<i>Secretary general, NARC Kenya</i>	11.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Beatrice Wasike Kituyi	<i>Permanent secretary, Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development, Former chairperson of FORD-Kenya WL</i>	12.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
John Githongo	<i>Civil society activist</i>	12.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Musikaro Kombo	<i>Chairman, FORD-Kenya</i>	12.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Regina Wandera	<i>Chair, FORD-Kenya WL</i>	12.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Nasri Sahla	<i>First organising secretary, FORD-Kenya WL</i>	12.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Susy Wandera	<i>FORD-Kenya WL</i>	12.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Kepta Ombati	<i>Program coordinator, FORD-Kenya Youth</i>	13.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Okong'o Omogeni	<i>President, Law Society of Kenya</i>	13.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Ramandan Juma	<i>Formerly Democratic Party of Kenya representative</i>	13.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Kingwa Kamenchu	<i>FKYL secretary</i>	14.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Vegard Holmelid	<i>Norwegian Embassy, Nairobi</i>	14.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Julia Ojiambo	<i>Chairperson, Labour Party of Kenya</i>	14.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Joseph Misoi	<i>Commissioner electoral board ODM</i>	14.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Mohammed Munyanya	<i>Labour Party of Kenya</i>	14.08.2009	Nairobi, Kenya
Vidar Helgesen	<i>NDS independent Board member; Secretary-General IDEA (and former political advisor, MFA)</i>	20.08.2009	NIBR, Oslo
Ishwor Pokharel	<i>General Secretary, UML</i>	20.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Dag Nagoda	<i>Political advisor, Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu</i>	20.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal

Focus group with 10-15 participants from Sunsari UML		20.08.2009	Inaruwa, Nepal
Focus group with 15-20 participants from Saptari UML		21.08.2009	Rajbiraj, Nepal
Binda Pandey	<i>UML staff</i>	22.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Yuba Raj Gyawali	<i>UML staff</i>	22.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Khem Raj Paudel	<i>UML staff</i>	22.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Udaya Raj Pandey	<i>UML staff</i>	22.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Manohar Prasad Bhattarai	<i>Acting secretary general, Constituent Assembly of Nepal</i>	23.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Halle Jørn Hanssen	<i>Former Secretary-General, Norwegian People's Aid; NDS Kenya advisor</i>	24.08.2009	Youngstorget, Oslo
Siv Ramell Westberg	<i>Secretary general, Centerns Internationella Stiftelse</i>	24.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Lennart Karlsson	<i>Programme manager, Centerns Internationella Stiftelse</i>	24.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Anita Persson	<i>Board member, Vänsterns Internationella Forum</i>	24.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Eva Bjørklund	<i>Board member, Vänsterns Internationella Forum</i>	24.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Ann-Margarethe Livh	<i>Board member, Vänsterns Internationella Forum</i>	24.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Johan Sammanson	<i>Staff member, Vänsterns Internationella Forum</i>	24.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Bimalendra Nidhi	<i>Secretary general, Nepali Congress</i>	24.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Johanna Poutanen	<i>Coordinator, Nepal, Demo (Finland)</i>	24.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Sherrie Wolf	<i>Country director Nepal, NDI</i>	24.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Leena Rikkilä Tamang	<i>Head of Mission, International IDEA Nepal</i>	24.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal

Darren Nance	<i>Chief of Party, IFES Nepal</i>	24.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Dev Raj Dahal	<i>Director, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Nepal</i>	24.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Dag Nagoda	<i>Political advisor, Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu</i>	24.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Michael Otto	<i>Consultant, SIDA</i>	25.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Anna Sundström	<i>Division Coordinator, Olof Palme International Center</i>	25.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Kajsa Eriksson	<i>Programme Manager, Olof Palme International Center</i>	25.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
K P Oli	<i>Foreign Department Chief UML</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Bhim Rawal	<i>Minister of Home Affairs</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Neel Kantha Uprety	<i>National Election Commissioner</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Dinesh Tripathi	<i>Tripathi Law House</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Bishwa K Mainali	<i>President, Nepal Bar Association</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Subodh Raj Pyakurel	<i>Chairperson, Informal Sector Service Centre</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
C K Lal	<i>Political activist and writer</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Dr Dwarika Nath Dungal	<i>Senior Researcher, Institute for Integrated Development Studies</i>	25.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Suresh Kumar Ale Magar	<i>UCPN(Maoist) member and CA representative</i>	27.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Amrit Bohara	<i>Chairman, UML</i>	27.08.2009	Kathmandu, Nepal
Tomas Brundin	<i>MFA, Sweden</i>	28.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Eva Gustavsson	<i>Managing director, Jarl Hjalmarssons Stiftelsen</i>	28.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Jens Ahl	<i>Deputy director, Jarl Hjalmarssons Stiftelsen</i>	28.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden
Evelina Lorentzon	<i>Senior project manager, Jarl Hjalmarssons Stiftelsen</i>	28.08.2009	Stockholm, Sweden

Helge Espe	<i>Acting director, Fredskorpset</i>	01.09.2009	Oslo, Norway
Lucie Wigboldus	<i>Programme officer, Haya van Someren Stichting (VVD)</i>	03.09.2009	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Ole Heil	<i>Programme officer, Haya van Someren Stichting (VVD)</i>	03.09.2009	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Ruth Emmerink	<i>NIMD consultant, MFA, Netherlands</i>	03.09.2009	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Martin van Vliet	<i>Political advisor, CDA Regional Team for Africa, NIMD</i>	03.09.2009	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Roel von Meijefeldt	<i>Executive director, NIMD</i>	03.09.2009	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Arjen Berkvens	<i>Director, Alfred Mozer Stichting (PvdA)</i>	04.09.2009	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Axel Borchgrevink	<i>Senior researcher, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI).</i>	04.09.2009	NUPI, Oslo
Thomas Johansen	<i>Project coordinator, SV</i>	09.09.2009	NIBR, Oslo
Nabila Sattar	<i>International projects manager, Labour</i>	15.09.2009	London, UK
Jemima Gordonduff	<i>Foreign and Commonwealth Office</i>	15.09.2009	London, UK
Philippa Broom	<i>Director International Office, Conservatives</i>	15.09.2009	London, UK
Linda Duffield	<i>Chief Executive, Westminster Foundation for Democracy</i>	16.09.2009	London, UK
Sian Dixon	<i>Business Planning and Development Manager</i>	16.09.2009	London, UK
Paul Speller	<i>Head of International Department, Liberal Democrats</i>	16.09.2009	London, UK
Harald Klein	<i>Head of department International Politics, Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung</i>	17.09.2009	Potsdam, Germany
Jost Pachaly	<i>Department head Democracy Support, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung</i>	18.09.2009	Berlin, Germany
Jürgen Stetten	<i>Head of Department, Global Policy and Development, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</i>	18.09.2009	Berlin, Germany

Michèle Auga	<i>Head of Africa Department, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</i>	18.09.2009	Berlin, Germany
Florian Dähne,	<i>Head of East Africa desk, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</i>	18.09.2009	Berlin, Germany
Daniel Reichart	<i>Head of Department for Asia and the Pacific, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</i>	18.09.2009	Berlin, Germany
Dr Gero Erdmann	<i>Head of GIGA Research Programme</i>	18.09.2009	Berlin, Germany
Dr Karsten Grabow	<i>Head of department for international cooperation, Konrad-Adenauewr-Stiftung</i>	18.09.2009	Berlin, Germany

Interview guide - NDS project leaders

Questions/themes for discussion:

Background

- How was the project initiated?
- Norwegian partners experience/knowledge of cooperating country
- Criteria/reasons for choice of project partner

Project design

- Role of South partner in the design of the project?
- How did the NDS secretariat contribute to the design of the project?
- Did the project benefit from experiences of other NDS projects?
- Scope of project

Project operation

- Choice of on the ground project activities
- Norwegian partner involved at what organisational level
- South partner involved at what organisational level?
- Gender profile
- Support from NDS secretariat
- Cooperation with other party/democracy assistance providers?
- Financial management of project

Programme theory

- What is the potential contribution of Norwegian political parties to the promotion of democracy in the cooperating country
- Norwegian partners understanding of political situation in cooperating country
- Which specific needs/situation does the project address?
- What are the project goals?

- Goals are to be realised through which on the ground activities in the cooperating country (e.g. training)
- What are the immediate effects of the project activities
- How do the activities affect the party organisation of South partner
- How do the activities bring about changes in political situation/promotion of democracy

Documented results, positive/negative

- Anticipated
- Unexpected

Learning

- Why was the project terminated?
- What are the main achievements of the project?
- What were the main obstacles?

Interview guide - NDS Board members

Questions/themes for discussion:

General

- Basic assessment of the success of NDS
- What did (political party) want to achieve with NDS?
- Potential contribution of Norwegian political parties to the promotion of democracy in other countries

Involvement of (political party) in NDS

- How would you characterize the role of your party in relation to NDS?
- At what level of organisation
- Capacity and capability for international party assistance
- Interest of party leadership
- Effect on party membership

NDS Board

- Role of the board
- Climate of cooperation
- Decision making, conflicts of interest (habilitet)
- Contribution of independent experts to the NDS Board
- Relation NDS – MFA

NDS secretariat

- Role of secretariat
- Competence
- Sufficient resources

Competence building

- Exchange of experience between projects/political parties
- Routines of evaluation
- Use of experts
- Relevance of strategy plan

Project policy

- Choice of countries/regions
- Choice of bilateral/multilateral projects
- Scale of projects
- Choice of project activities

Financial management

- Policy of budgetary spending in projects
- Transparency of economic management
- External auditing

Future scheme of Norwegian party assistance

- Most important lessons learnt
- How should a future scheme of Norwegian party assistance be organised?

Interview guide - NDS Council members**Questions/themes for discussion:****General**

- Basic assessment of the success of NDS
- What did (political party) want to achieve with NDS?
- How did you want to achieve this – how did you envisage change to come about?
- Potential contribution of Norwegian political parties to the promotion of democracy in other countries

Involvement of (political party) in NDS

- At what level of organisation
- Capacity and capability for international party assistance
- Interest of party leadership
- Effect on party membership

NDS Council

- Role of Council in NDS
- Relation NDS – MFA

NDS Board

- Climate of cooperation
- Decision making, conflicts of interest (habilitet)
- Contribution of independent experts to the NDS Board

NDS secretariat

- Role of secretariat
- Competence
- Sufficient resources

Competence building

- Exchange of experience between projects/political parties
- Routines of evaluation
- Use of experts
- Relevance of strategy plan

Project policy

- Choice of countries/regions
- Choice of bilateral/multilateral projects
- Scale of projects
- Choice of project activities

Financial management

- Policy of budgetary spending in projects
- Transparency of economic management
- External auditing

Future scheme of Norwegian party assistance

- Lessons learnt from NDS
- How should a future scheme of Norwegian party assistance be organised?

Annex 3

Case studies

Other European schemes of party assistance

As outlined in chapter six, a future Norwegian party assistance scheme could draw on the experience of other European countries that have been doing this for a relatively long time, to a large degree in other countries as well as in other types of countries and with more substantial funding, that among other things has allowed for a more elaborate apparatus to maintain the activities. In this Appendix the party assistance schemes in Sweden, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Germany are presented in some detail.

SWEDEN

Background

The Swedish scheme for party assistance dates back to the early 1990s when new opportunities opened up for democracy promotion in the former one-party states of Eastern Europe. The seven political parties represented in the parliament – Riksdagen – were offered funds to carry out projects in the East and the South. The Swedish parties engaged themselves to varying degrees – although altogether quite massively – in supporting sister parties in the countries that would join the EU in 2004. After 2004, party assistance has moved eastwards to the former Soviet republics and southwards to the recipient countries of developmental cooperation. The party assistance scheme is handled administratively by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency – Sida, which unlike its Norwegian homologue Norad, also covers the Western Balkans and former Soviet republics.

The current centre-right government of Sweden tends to be quite positive to democracy support and party assistance, which was reflected in almost a redoubling of the funds allocated for the purpose in 2007 (SEK 64 million for single-party activities and SEK 11 million for multiparty projects). The Minister of Development Cooperation is a member of the Conservative Party, which has been sceptical to traditional developmental cooperation, and might see party support as an element in an alternative approach. Thorough evaluations of the Swedish party assistance schemes have been carried out (Uggla et al. 2000; Öhman et al. 2005). An ongoing evaluation by Sadev, the Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation, is focusing on results.

Scope

An annual total of approximately SEK 70 million (as compared to Norway's NOK 7 million) is distributed to the parties represented in the Riksdagen. The funds re-

served for party assistance are channelled through so-called PAOs (party-associated organisations). Although not all parties have established PAOs, relying instead on fora and groups (the Left Party and the Greens), we will include in references to PAOs all the organisational varieties of the bodies handling the party assistance.

Each party receives a basic grant plus a fixed sum per member of the Riksdagen. A basic grant of SEK 650,000 is given to the PAOs and fora, and in addition SEK 170,000 is given per seat in the Diet. Since 2009, at least five percent of each PAO's grant is to be spent on multi-party projects. Prior to 2009, there was an SEK 11 million pot for multi-party projects. In order to be classified as multi-party, a project must involve at least two Swedish parties and preferably at least to foreign parties.

The Swedish PAOs have altogether 145 projects in 36 countries. In addition, there are regional and global projects that reach out to even more countries. The total number of projects is 173. The average budget per project is SEK 350,000 annually. The individual PAO's budget varies between SEK 175,000 and 1,400,000 annually. Despite the fact that the funds provided are considerably larger amounts than is the case in Norway, allowing the political parties to set up their own organisations for the purpose of strengthening parties abroad, it is still difficult to point to transformative impacts in the countries of operation.

Documents and objectives

In the government communication (skrivelse) 2008/09:11, Frihet från förtryck - skrivelse om Sveriges demokratibistånd (Swedish Government 2008), the role of the political parties and party-to-party cooperation are emphasised. It calls for a more context-sensitive approach than hitherto in order to take into account the change factors affecting the parties' breadth and diversity. Likewise, the government encourages the inclusion into the party assistance scheme of actors in civil society who are developing and assuming broader responsibilities, especially in countries where existing parties are not representative or responsive to voters' preferences.

The concrete PAO activities must follow the Guidelines (Riktlinerna) and the Instructions (Anvisningarna) inferred from them by Sida (SIDA 2006). The aims as stated in the Guidelines (revised and made more clear in 2006) is to contribute to and to support the development of a well-functioning party system, political participation and democratic political system in developing countries as well as the countries of the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe. Measures to make political parties more democratic in their internal organisation and in their policies will be supported. A representative political system that represents the will of the people is the ultimate goal.

Organisation

The PAOs are independent of the political parties, but still very closely linked to them. All PAOs communicate closely with their party's international committee. The Conservatives (moderaterna), the Liberals (Folkpartiet), The Christian Democrats (kristdemokraterna) and the Centre Party have set up PAOs for the purpose. To

manage party assistance funds, the Green Party has set up a “fund-raising foundation”, the Green Forum. The Left Party has an International Forum, which unlike the standard PAO is directly under the party. However, the Forum’s activity plan does not have to be approved by the party’s central board. The Social Democrats (socialdemokraterna) asked the well-established Olof Palme Centre to act as PAO, which it accepted. The centre covers a wide range of activities; party assistance constitutes a mere ten percent of the Centre’s annual budget. This enables the social democrats to link the party assistance to other activities in a given country. The Olof Palme Centre recently reorganised its party assistance work. From operating as a separate PAO team, the PAO activities are now integrated in the other activities of the centre at country level. This way it is easier to achieve the aims of linking party assistance to work with movements and civil society. The PAOs and fora have between 2 and 5 employees.

Activities

The preferred type of activities carried out by the Swedish and Eastern/Southern parties is seminars and workshops. Some of these are regional, i.e. engaging participants from several neighbouring countries, e.g. in The Middle East, Western Balkans or Central America. Also the typically Nordic method of competence- and awareness-building through so-called study circles is being used. Swedish expertise is being made use of, from professional media experts and consultants to party activists with positions of trust at local or regional levels. For instance, the Conservative Party tends to make use of professional people who are members or sympathisers with the party. In fact, more than 100 people volunteer for the Conservative PAO. The two Swedish parties characterised by traditionally having a large and active membership rooted in popular movements (the Agrarian Centre Party and the Social Democrats) tend to make more use of local and regional party apparatuses than do the other parties. Some parties, like the Liberals and the Conservatives focus quite strictly on political parties, most often sister parties. Others, like the Centre Party, the Greens and the Left Party at times make use of the opportunities offered in the Guidelines to support movements.

Multiparty projects have not been equally popular among all parties. Parties with strong and clearly defined “Internationals” tend to be least positive. As a result of input from the PAOs to the Reference Group, the system was changed from requiring joint applications, which was difficult to achieve, to a system that required five percent of the total grant to be earmarked for multiparty projects. This may serve to make multiparty projects less controversial. The strong degree of autonomy that the PAOs enjoy in what they do, where they do it and how they organise themselves may unleash energy (from the Left Party’s facilitation of cooperation among popular movements in Latin America to the Conservatives’ streamlined training of sister parties and the Social Democrats’ broad approach combining sister party and civil society engagements).

Decision-making

The PAOs are relatively autonomous, which is a result of the fact that they, unlike e.g. NGOs receiving grants through Sida, receive a pre-defined amount of money. There is a competition for scarce funds that sometimes may force NGOs to go to

great lengths to comply with the wishes of the funding agency. The PAOs, however, are in a better position to assert themselves. One of the PAOs stated that Sida “has no right to make political assessments, influence partners or tell us how the project should be carried out”. The PAO reserves the right to at its own discretion choose countries to work in and parties to cooperate with. The parties are governing the country on the one hand, and through the PAOs they operate as developmental agents relating to Sida’s procedures and requirements. The PAOs have a good deal of power and the channels through which to convey their wishes to the decision makers at levels above Sida, which as an institution is not considered to be a very heavy actor. This might discourage Sida from being contentious with the PAOs.

Learning and competence building

A reference group including the Deputy Minister for Developmental Cooperation, representatives from all the PAOs and their mother parties as well as representatives of the MFA and Sida meet at least twice a year for dialogue and exchange of information and experience. The reference group controls quality and makes sure the party assistance is harmonised with other Swedish support schemes. Another meeting point is the competence building seminars that are also being made use of by the PAOs to air their points of view with Sida.

One of Sida’s tasks is to build skills knowledge and expertise in the PAOs, which puts Sida in an awkward position when criticising the PAOs for insufficient capacities. There is a quite marked lack of trust between Sida and the PAOs. Sida finds the PAOs to be weak on the important technicalities of developmental cooperation, such as reporting on results and sustainability. On the other hand, some PAOs tend to complain that Sida is unable to grasp distinctively political issues, finding the MFA to be more understanding and knowledgeable in this field, and would like the scheme to be administered directly by the MFA. Since Sida is co-responsible for building competencies in the PAOs, this distrust makes learning and competence building difficult. It should be noticed, however, that at least one, large PAO was in favour of having Sida administer the party assistance scheme as this facilitates coordination with other developmental activities locally.

Coordination, monitoring and quality control

Sida’s role is to control the conformity of the PAOs plans with the Guidelines and Instructions that are wide enough to allow quite divergent approaches. Although it occurs only rarely, Sida will return plans and reports to the PAO with requests for clarification. In most cases, these clarifications are of a formal character. The dialogue between Sida and the PAOs takes place on the project level with respect to details related to results, indicators and sustainability, and not on a more overarching programme level. There are complaints from some of the parties that Sida is not familiar with supporting actors that openly compete for power in what at times has to be a zero-sum game.

At least on one occasion, a project idea was turned down on the grounds that it was considered not conducive to the overall goals of the party assistance scheme. In some cases, PAO projects are being classified as secret in order not to harm bilateral relations between Sweden and the country in which the PAO is operating.

Interestingly, despite the relatively easy process of acquiring funds through the party assistance scheme, the PAOs hand in very detailed annual plans, between 500 and 150 pages. All items in the template are described in detail. The contextual “chapters” are of varying quality, but tend to improve with the PAOs increased focus on project-relevant aspects of the context, according to interviewees from some of the PAOs.

Sida is reducing the number of countries in which it is active and the party assistance scheme is on the way to narrowing its geographical scope as well, although voluntarily. This, however, is controversial as it infringes upon the PAO’s autonomy.

The PAOs themselves meet informally on a relatively regular basis; about once a month to discuss common challenges and signals from Sida.

THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands has two almost diametrically opposite schemes for democracy support. Whereas the Swedish scheme covers “East” and “South” together, the Dutch scheme is divided in two. On one hand the Dutch run a scheme (Matra Political Parties Programme - MPPP) for the EU neighbourhood in which the approach is purely party-to-party (through party foundations on the Dutch side). On the other hand, there is a scheme for the developing world that is purely multi-party and managed by an Institute (NIMD) set up for the purpose.

Scope

The MPPP applies a system that is very much like the Swedish party assistance scheme, i.e. granting a basic sum to each of the foundations and a certain sum per seat in the National Assembly. The Matra PPP projects are generally very small. Interestingly, Matra’s core working instrument is twinning.

The NIMD’s budget is about ten million euro. It is currently working with more than 150 political parties from 17 programme countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe (Georgia being the only overlap with MPPP). A fully-matured NIMD country programme costs on average EUR 525,000 annually. Programmes in a developmental stage and regional programmes are somewhat cheaper. Therefore, the average for all NIMD programmes amounts to EUR 480,000.

Documents and objectives

On 13 September 2007, Bert Koenders, Minister for Development Cooperation, made a speech (Ministerie 2007) that outlines the main objectives of the Dutch democracy support. Mr Koenders called for a joining of forces among those promoting development and those promoting democracy. Moreover, he recommended a more political concept of good governance.

Organisation

The scheme for the EU neighbourhood is under the Minister of Foreign Affairs whereas the NIMD is under the Minister for Developmental Cooperation. The MPPP scheme for party assistance is a sub-programme under the larger Matra programme run by the Dutch MFA. Matra covers the following categories of countries:

- The candidate countries (Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey)
- The two new members (Romania and Bulgaria, being phased out)
- The “potential candidate countries” (Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia)
- The “Eastern neighbours” (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Ukraine, Moldavia, Georgia)
- The “Southern neighbours” (Algeria, Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Tunisia)

The MPPP allows for substantial party-to-party activities through the party foundations (Stichtingen), which are very like the Swedish PAOs. The programme was evaluated in 2006 (Verheije et al.). One of the findings was that the autonomy of the political foundations hindered efficient quality control of the activities on the part of the MFA.

The other scheme, that for party support to the developing world, is organised through the Netherlands Institute for Multi-party Democracy (NIMD), which was established in 2000. Seven of the ten political parties currently represented in the Second Chamber (Tweede Kamer) in the Dutch Parliament - Staten-Generaal - own the NIMD. Today's Tweede Kamer has three parties that have chosen not to be members of the NIMD. These are the left-wing Socialistische Partij (16.6 per cent in the 2006 general elections), the “anti-Islamic” Partij voor de Vrijheid (5.9 per cent) and the animal welfare Partij voor de Dieren (1.8 per cent). As a purely multi-party NIMD, is frequently referred to in the literature on party assistance. The parties in NIMD are committed to working “together in a collective team”. The NIMD has a staff of 34 people, including one political advisor from each of the participating parties (bigger parties may have two). Interestingly, the political advisors, who are seconded from the parties, are not supposed to serve as representatives of their respective parties. They are formally employed by NIMD and are committed to working “multi-party-wise”.

NIMD operates with four-year programmes and annual plans (these latter have 5-6 objectives, cover 225 pages, and include budget and criteria for success). NIMD operates in 17 countries and cooperates with more than 150 political parties. The profile abroad is “NIMD and the Dutch parties”, with a low profile of the individual parties taking part. NIMD works closely with the Dutch and other embassies and has regular meetings with the regional desks in the MFA. Communication with the MFA partly consists of policy dialogue, partly control. There is a certain tension here. NIMD meets with the MFA twice a month.

In several of the countries where NIMD operates, political parties have established Centres for Multiparty Democracy. These centres provide a neutral setting where political adversaries have the opportunity to discuss how they can work together to strengthen democracy. These centres are now operating relatively autonomously from NIMD, NIMD being one among several international organisations that support them.

Activities

As in the other countries, the large Dutch parties tend to prefer party-to-party work to multi-party approaches. The argument is that twinning with like-minded parties evokes the particular dynamics of a party, which in essence is partisan and competitive. People with an operative background from a political party know how to distinguish between the official and the unofficial in a political process, they understand how factions function and they are able to analyse how the struggle around political issues evolves. Whereas Matra's main working method is twinning, NIMD strictly avoids twinning and relies exclusively on "collective" approaches. MPPP makes extensive use of Dutch party members whereas NIMD primarily works with expert networks in the South. MPPP tends to carry out training whereas NIMD tends to carry out conferences and provide meeting places.

Matra is based on the philosophy of institution building by developing and strengthening twinning networks between the Netherlands and the Matra target countries, i.e. "matchmaking" between Dutch organisations and like-minded "agents of transformation", among them political parties. Under the MPPP, the Dutch party foundations have been set up as part of this programme, and carry out projects with sister parties or like-minded parties. In some countries, the party-to-party model is difficult to apply simply because Dutch parties and local parties do not match. However, although the twinning method is very much accentuated in the MPPP, Dutch parties are allowed to cooperate with NGOs and scientific organisations as well. Just like the MPPP, NIMD draws on the expertise of political practitioners; however, in the latter case the activities are not carried out on a party-to-party basis. On the contrary, NIMD activities involve more than one party and the political advisers in NIMD work more with representatives from other parties than with their own. The activities can be grouped in:

- Joint initiatives by parties to improve the democratic system in their countries
- Institutional development of political parties
- Efforts to improve the relations between political parties, civil society and the media

NIMD creates meeting places between parties in power and the opposition as well as between critical civic organisations and political life. Much attention is paid to making political leaders meet to develop ideology and avoid political personalism. More specific issues are also addressed, such as the relationship between constituencies and political parties. Here, project activities have consisted in making platforms from which people can raise concerns with their politicians. Internal accountability routines have been a theme in the project, with the result that leaders have been questioned. Many countries have adopted the colonial power's electoral system, often majoritarian electoral systems (first-past-the-post). In the South, democracy has often been equated with the winner-takes-all, whereas in reality most European democracies apply systems of proportional representation. This allows for the power-sharing mechanisms. NIMD emphasises that one important element of a democracy is its ability to accommodate various points of view.

Decision making

NIMD is governed by its member parties. The NIMD Board is the institution's supreme decision-making body. The Board is composed of an independent chairperson and one member from each of the seven participating political parties. The Board meets every two months. The Supervisory Council, which advises the Board on all policy issues on the NIMD agenda, consists of representatives from NIMD's member parties. The Council meets twice a year and always deals with one of the NIMD programmes in-depth, using the external evaluations available.

NIMD is independent. Still it is in an intense dialogue with the MFA. The Ministry reads NIMD's plans carefully, and twice a year there is a formal policy dialogue. The Ministry is supportive of the NIMD's change of focus from political parties as such to the parties' relations to other institutions and to each other. In doing this NIMD is taking note of the MFA's focus but does not necessarily have to focus on the countries emphasised by the Dutch MFA. NIMD's Board makes its own assessments and decides what countries to focus on. Cooperation with parties in the South takes place in the context of a "basic agreement", where parties commit to democratic values and to the avoidance of ethnic hatred. Addressing the political level in a country with projects easily leads to allegations of interference. Therefore, the Dutch MFA drew the conclusion that total openness and transparency was necessary. As a consequence, all correspondence and all meetings between the Dutch MFA and NIMD are in writing, even working meetings.

Learning and competence building

NIMD is following an action plan for improvements, among other things based on the institutional evaluation carried out by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (2005). NIMD is moving from a generic model to more country-specific models. The country-specific knowledge is nurtured by working in teams covering 2-3 countries. Much time is spent in the countries and experts are invited to seminars. Systematic reading, of evaluations among other things, is prioritised. NIMD commissions two country evaluations annually.

Coordination, monitoring and quality control

The MFA has asked NIMD to provide better analyses and avoid mere descriptions of events. NIMD has been asked to report more on:

- Voice ("is it heard?")
- Accountability
- State-society relations

NIMD is evaluated every 4 years. For the time being three evaluations are ongoing (items 1 and 2 below are going to be integrated):

- Evaluation on capacity development. This is a comprehensive evaluation in which NIMD is one of several cases of institutions receiving funds from the MFA
- Regular institutional evaluation (made every 4 years as part of the "subsidy agreement")
- Study of the financial management of NIMD (response to questions asked in Parliament)

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The UK scheme is explicitly based on the principle of arms length distance between the funding agency, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) on one hand and between WFD and the political parties on the other. The idea is that the WFD and the political parties can do things that the Government cannot, but implicitly would like to see done. If activities at times are unconcentrated and provide few results, they may prove to be useful in future, as links have been forged with actors that may become important at a later stage. The dual character of the British scheme allows the political parties to take out their potential for partisan twinning and the experts to arrange broader democracy support.

Background

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) is the core institution in British democracy support. It was established in 1992 during the international democratisation wave. WFD covers “East” and “South”(Europe; Middle East and Northern Africa; Africa and the rest of the World). WFD operates with eight programme countries, i.e. Serbia, Macedonia, Ukraine, Lebanon, Egypt, Kenya, Uganda, and Sierra Leone. The WFD is an “non-departmental public body”, which means that although it is sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, WFD is not an integral part of a government department and carries out its work at arm’s length from Ministers. Nonetheless, Ministers are responsible to Parliament for the activities of the non-departmental public bodies.

The WFD is a “hybrid” that covers British political parties’ democracy support (50 per cent of the funds from the FCO) involving the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, and the Liberal Democrats as well as smaller parties, such as the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru, on a proportional basis. The remaining 50 per cent of the funds is spent on work carried out by national and international organisations in line with WFD’s priorities. The 50/50 distribution has remained intact since WFD was established. In addition, the WFD applies for funds elsewhere, from for example the EU and DfID. Together with six other organisations, WFD forms part of the Westminster Consortium for Parliaments and Democracy whose activities are funded by DfID.

Scope

The WFD receives an annual funding of GBP 4.1 million from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The involved parties receive a fixed share. During 2007-2008, the WFD supported democracy-strengthening activities to the total value of GBP 3, 234,000 (covered by grant-in-aid and third-party sources) of which GBP 1.4 million went to the eight programme countries. The average party project is between GBP 10,000 and 30,000. Labour and the Conservatives receive GBP 700,000 each annually, the Liberal democrats receive GBP 260,000 and the smaller parties GBP 65,000 each.

Documents and objectives

The overall objective of WFD is to achieve sustainable political change in “emerging democracies” through specialising in support to a) parliaments and b) political

parties. WFD works at central as well as local levels. The Ministerial Statement on WFD by Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, March 2006 and “Building better democracies – why political parties matter” (Burnell 2004) are two of the guiding documents.

Organisation

The WFD’s Board has 14 Governors constituted on a cross-party basis. It is independent, but appointed by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. Eight Governors are nominated by the Westminster political parties – three from the Conservative Party, three from the Labour Party, one Liberal Democrat, and one representative of the smaller parties. Five non-partisan Governors are also appointed, mainly to follow up non-partisan projects. In order to anchor the activities on a high political level, WFD has nine so-called Patrons, who are the leaders of the main political parties plus the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Activities

WFD’s main activities are: development of policies, e.g. on education or health; development of political manifestos; recruitment and retaining of party members; media training; campaigning; organisational aspects of party work; regional seminars for political parties; and the parties’ press and PR work. The WFD aims to reduce grant making to the benefit of strengthening its own project delivery. Likewise, it aims at identifying projects where it can make a change. Party staff is being used as well as former members of staff and MPs. The parties tend to prefer party-to-party work where their particular skills are put to use: “We are election machines that exist because we want to win the elections. NGOs are not political animals, and therefore not as efficient in democracy support”. Motivation is another key word. For politically engaged people it is far more motivating to support like-minded parties abroad than to support a well-functioning party system on a more general level, the argument goes. The political parties want to work with parties acknowledging that the parties are the building blocks on which e.g. parliamentary systems rest. The parties find multi-party approaches relevant in countries where no natural sister parties exist and in countries where parties are not “ripe”. The British parties have had substantial multi-party activities in Sierra Leone on such grounds.

Decision making

The political parties taking part in the scheme have a large degree of autonomy, and choose what countries to work in as long as the activities fall within the framework of the WFD. All participating parties have to submit quarterly reports. An arm’s length distance is kept, however, in order to distinguish WFD-supported activities from official British policies. As explained in the Foreign Secretary’s Ministerial Statement from March 2006: “The arms-length approach brings value-added benefit that could not be achieved by Government”. The freedom allowed to the parties is regarded as “seed-corn money”, links and contacts are established that in some cases will be useful in the future.

Learning and competence building

A review of WFD was carried out in 2004 and followed up by improved operating methods to enhance accountability and transparency. Stronger mechanisms for appraising, monitoring and evaluating projects, reflected in annual contractual arrangements between the foundation and the UK political parties were introduced. The focus on results was sharpened.

Coordination, monitoring and quality control

The WFD agrees their business plan (3 year cycles) with the FCO, and FCO approves the WFD Board of Governors, including the Governors from the political parties. In cases of disagreement over the activities of a WFD political party, a small group of Governors is asked to get together to sort it out. The FCO sits on the Project Committee that considers all project proposals, from the parties as well as from WFD. It cannot veto decisions, but it can ask questions and give advice. In addition, FCO can ask questions ahead of the quarterly instalments. Then WFD sends a statement of needs and the FCO can ask questions on the correspondence between expenditures and activities.

GERMANY

Background

The German scheme differs from the other schemes analysed in this chapter because of the relatively small share of the party foundations' international work that is aimed at democracy support through party and parliament assistance. The liberal Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung is the strongest proponent of party assistance, whereas the die Linke's Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung reported they had no elements of party assistance in their portfolio. Nonetheless, Germany offers an interesting case due to the role of its Stiftungen, or foundations. The party foundations have played an important role in the politische Bildung, or political training of the population of the federal republic. They have been central actors in two waves of democratisation at home, after 1945 and after 1989. Their main field of work is at home in Germany, but they all carry out extensive work abroad, mainly financed by the MFA and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The Stiftungen do not only focus on countries in need. In fact, all the six Stiftungen have offices in Washington, Brussels, Moscow and South Africa. The Stiftungen are strong enough to carry out thorough debates on, e.g. democracy support, as the social democratic Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung did in September 2009 in a one-day seminar on the challenges for democracy support that gathered German practical and academic expertise (Neue Herausforderungen für die Demokratieförderung). Another example is the Christian Democrat foundation that issued the 400-page Democracy Report in 2007 (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung 2007).

Scope

The foundations receive funds according to their electoral performance in the latest four general elections. The Stiftungen are extremely resourceful compared to the Dutch Stichtingen operating the Matra political parties' programme, or the Swedish PAOs. To illustrate the case: the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung is associated with one of the smaller parties, the Liberal Party (FDP) that has had an average 9.5 per cent of the votes in the last four general elections. It spends EUR 23 million annually on

international activities that take place in 60 project countries, through seven regional offices and 44 project offices and no less than 250 employees (of which 30 Germans) work internationally.

Organisation

The party-associated foundations are not controlled by the parties although the top positions in the foundations are approved by party organs.

Activities

The Christian Democrat Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) has party-related programmes in 95 countries, most of them indirect, addressing framework conditions. Like FES, KAS has extensive capacity for analysis.

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) cooperates closely with the trade unions in the countries where it is active, i.e. in more than 100 countries. FES sees the positive sides of party-to-party work because it allows for frank communication and trust. In some cases, e.g. in Nepal, FES finds it more relevant to be a facilitator for communication between political parties (the members of the 7-party coalition) even though the Nepali Congress Party is a member of the Socialist International.

Die Grünen's Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung is doing very little sister party work in the East and South, among other reasons because there are very few green parties in the South and East that share die Grünen's outlook, and the Stiftung does not want to "create" parties from outside. Therefore, they prefer to apply a multi-party approach in activities on, e.g. climate change or gender issues. The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung has 27 offices abroad and is changing its approach from one consisting of funding local partner organisations to having the offices carry out more of the projects themselves (workshops, seminars, publishing, consulting). The foundation considers itself a political organisation, not a donor like e.g. the Ford Foundation.

The liberal Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung's assists fraternal parties with political consultancy, political programme making, strategic planning, media training and support to regional networks. The foundation offered personal assistance to one liberal member of government in Guatemala, assisting him in the restructuring of the ministry. According to the foundation, this was possible because of the specific confidence that grows out of a sister party relationship. The liberal foundation is clearly more involved in fraternal party work than the other foundations. In fact, the other foundations are reluctant to work with only one political party in a country.

Die Linke's Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung has five offices abroad (Tel Aviv, Moscow, Ciudad de Mexico, São Paulo, Warsaw) and is building up several more. Their counterparts are trade unions, women's organisations, academic institutions, think tanks and intellectual groups; but to a very small degree parties.

Decision making

The Stiftungen must submit programme proposals to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. They work with two of the Ministry's departments, the thematic department for governance and democracy promotion

and the department in charge of funding Stiftungen and churches (for administrative matters). The foundations have a great deal of freedom in choosing how and where to work. There used to be a certain scepticism on the part of the authorities regarding party assistance abroad, but this has reportedly changed.

Learning and competence building

The Ministry writes papers on specific countries on a regular basis, and the Stiftungen active in the given country are invited to comment.

Coordination, monitoring and quality control

Interestingly, the discussion at the seminar arranged by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung mentioned above showed that there is a demand from experts and Stiftungen alike for more coordination and guidance. One person put it like this: “We need a principal”. Moreover, the lack of a commonly accepted framework for what democracy support is, and how it works, was lamented.

Case study: Nepal

In 2004, the Socialist Left Party (SV) of Norway applied for and received NOK 154 000 in pre-project funds from NDS to carry out a pre-project in Nepal. SV had already established links with the Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxists-Leninists (UML), through the Swedish Left Party's ongoing collaboration with the UML-affiliated trade union GEFONT.

SV sent two delegations to Nepal in 2004 and 2005, and UML visited SV in Norway in November 2004. On the basis of this initial contact, an application for a cooperation project was submitted and approved in 2005. The cooperation project was based on a so-called 'Training of Trainers' (ToT) course programme, to be conducted both at a central level and in 25 selected districts in Nepal. In November 2005, SV received NOK 329 000 from NDS to carry out their programme, but due to the political crisis in Nepal at the time, the programme was put on hold for the 2005-2006 period and the funds were returned to NDS. When some degree of political stability had been re-established in Nepal, the project was revived in the 2007-2009 period. A new application submitted in 2007, and the NDS board decided to allocate NOK 599 000 to the project. A 3-day central level ToT seminar and 15 district level seminars (2- and 3-day events) were organised during the latter part of 2007. SV and UML also co-hosted an evaluation seminar in Kathmandu in November 2008. While both SV and UML intend to extend the district level seminars to 37 districts, the operative part of the project has been put on hold since 2007 due to other priorities of the Nepalese partner and the closure of the NDS. Funds for the planned 2008 activities are still in UML's account, waiting to be returned to the MFA.

The country study team conducted a 10-day fieldwork to Nepal in August 2009. The fieldwork included trips to three of districts where training had taken place: Saptari, Sunsari and Lalitpur (see map below). Here, party secretaries and seminar participants were interviewed in focus groups.



SV's programme theory: solidarity cooperation

SV is not a member of a global political network like the Socialist International. Still, they have a long tradition of solidarity projects with leftwing parties and organisations across the global South (particularly in Latin America). For SV, the notion of 'solidarity' is an ideologically based motivating factor for their international cooperation – described by one SV informant as “an extended form of self-interest”. Local ownership and grassroots involvement are key to their projects, and they emphasise that their cooperation partners are perceived on an equal footing and that the learning outcome is a two-way process. While individual party representatives can report positive experience with NDS' multi-party initiatives, SV's project portfolio is based on party-to-party support schemes rather than multi-party and/or general democracy support projects. For them, international solidarity is political by nature, and multi-party democracy is one of many important motivations for engaging in such activities, along with: gender equality, class struggle, empowerment of oppressed groups.

The political backdrop

Since 1990, when Nepal became a constitutional monarchy, the country has faced many setbacks in its democratisation attempts, highlighted by the Maoist insurgency from 1996 and culminating in King Gyanendra's despotic take-over in 2005. A democracy movement sweeping across the country in 2006 forced the King to relinquish sovereign power and resulted in a peace accord. Moreover, the 2008 national elections signalled the Maoists' transformation from a revolutionary movement to a parliamentary party. Still, Nepalese democratisation remains a tightrope with armed elements of the Maoists and other political formations posing a threat to a stable government and the ongoing process of constitution drafting. The democratic capabilities of the political parties remain a key success factor in the following contexts. Nepalese parties must be able to establish internal democratic processes, overcome elite capture and factionalism in the party organisation, achieve social inclusion of ethnic minorities, low caste members and women, formulate and promote policies from all levels of the party organisation, and improve their ability to work constructively as members of the Constituent Assembly

and as coalition partners in government. The democratic deficit is particularly evident at the level of local government, where no elections have been held since 1999 and where all-party mechanisms have secured the influence of the main political parties at a local level without granting local political structures democratic legitimacy. The electoral system in Nepal is a mixed design where the first-past-the-post system is balanced by a system of proportional representation and (to a much lesser degree) nomination. Electoral education in local party structures will therefore have a greater potential for encouraging the facilitation of meaningful popular representation than many other political contexts. A proposed move towards federalism in the near future, however, means that the political context of any democracy support intervention will have to be flexible and adaptive.

Project design

The ToT design, and the content of the courses, was mainly initiated by UML. The main idea behind the ToT design was that by training district representatives centrally, these would receive the necessary knowledge and organising skills to be able to run similar projects in the districts. If the district level seminar participants could replicate similar initiatives in their own villages, the potential impact of this project could potentially extend far beyond the 25 ToT participants and the approximately 1000 district level participants. This 'cascading modality' would have positive effects on the need for strengthening local party structures, and also be an efficient way of reaching many party representatives without an extensive involvement from SV or the UML central organisation.

As far as the content of the coursework is concerned, SV gave some input to UML during a meeting in Oslo in 2005, particularly focussing on gender issues and multi-party democracy. But in the main, the ToT was a means for UML to run educational projects in the districts for party cadres to prepare these for national elections, the constitution-making process, new social inclusion measures in the party organisation and the party's ideology. In short, the SV-UML took place in the wider context of UML's 'party schooling'. But certain aspects of the ToT project were certainly influenced by the Norwegian partner and the fact that this project was subject to NDS principles and reporting requirements. In particular, the representation of women, *dalits* (low caste) and indigenous people in the seminars was promoted. UML also produced a booklet for the district level courses that also could be distributed to other districts than the ones selected for the project. The ToT project would also be complemented by exchange visits between SV and UML representatives – to ensure two-way learning – and an evaluation component after the first phase of central and district level events.

Findings

A NIBR Team visited Nepal in August 2009, and interviews were conducted in Kathmandu with central party representatives and other relevant informants from other political parties, civil society, international democracy support organisations and members of the Election Commission and the Secretariat of the Constituent Assembly. Three districts where the SV-UML project had been implemented were also visited: Saptari, Sunsari and Lalitpur (see map below). Here, party secretaries and seminar participants were interviewed in focus groups. The Team could docu-

ment that 25 representatives had been trained in a central level ToT seminar in Kathmandu, 17-19 September 2007. 15 district level seminars took place between 14 November and 24 December 2007 (see Map and Figure). An evaluation seminar had been arranged in Kathmandu 14-15 November 2008. Below are the main findings of the evaluation team concerning the relevance of the SV-UML project and various aspects of the management and modality of party support.

Educational programme

The Evaluation Team found that, even if the project had only been partially implemented according to the original plan, the SV-UML project has had significant impact at the local level. Between 900 and 1000 participants have directly benefited from participation in the district level seminars, and it is highly likely that a considerably higher number of people have benefited indirectly – through unofficial participation at the district level events, through participating in village and community-level events in the wake of the district seminars, or through reading the booklet. Several participants noted that the activities at a village and community level attracted people from beyond the UML party ranks, in particular women. The project was implemented at a crucial stage in Nepal's democratisation process, with national elections for the Constituent Assembly taking place in August 2008, UML arranging their party congress in February 2009 and amidst ongoing efforts by the UML to contribute to the Constitution-drafting process. There is an acute need for education and knowledge about these processes at all levels of the party organisation. The SV-UML cooperation seems to have had a positive, albeit very limited, effect on all these processes. If the educational aspects of the project are seen in isolation, it can therefore be argued that the project is highly relevant.

Internal democratisation of party structures

The ToT design also held a potential for contributing to an internal democratisation process in the UML – widely regarded to be of critical importance if UML is to continue play a role as a legitimate political actor in a Nepalese democracy. If the 'cascading modality' lived up to its potential, district level party cadres would be directly responsible for education in the party which would transfer some authority and responsibility to local party structures. On this level, the programme has a long way to go to achieve its ambitions, particularly those relating to the *empowerment of local party structures*. The UML is, as are other Nepalese political parties, a highly centralised organisation where decision-making, policy-making and educational programmes are controlled by the central party leadership. As a result, the SV-UML cooperation was firmly coordinated by the central party leadership. A significant finding by the Evaluation Team is that the central level ToT participants played a minimal role (if any) as trainers in the district level seminars. The ToT participants were not selected by the district offices and their relationship to the district party organisation was weak. As a result, district level seminars were coordinated and run by central party officials. This means that the intended synergy effect between central and district level training was lacking. The 'cascading modality', therefore, did not work. When confronted with this finding, party leaders explained that the central level ToT seminar did not give participants sufficient knowledge of the various topics, nor the capacity to organise district level events. Some criticism was also raised during the 2009 Evaluation seminar that not enough

emphasis had been placed on personal capacities in the selection of ToT participants.

Still, it is likely that the project has had a positive effect on those aspects of internal democratisation relating to *working methods and meeting culture*. District level participants described the seminars as much more interactive than the UML's traditional educational activities. One representative said that party schooling in the UML had evolved "from monologue, to dialogue, to real interaction". Another aspect of the party's internal democratisation process – and indeed one which is central to the political process in the entire country – is that of *social inclusion*. UML's party organisation is symptomatic of Nepalese party politics in that it has a low gender, low caste and indigenous representation. The support of the Maoists amongst these groups indicates that the traditional political parties face a stern test in increasing their legitimacy vis-à-vis marginalised groups in the country. Again, it was noted by several respondents that the district level seminars had contributed to explaining the rationale for social inclusion. An understanding of these issues is instrumental in generating accept among the party's local leaders for introducing quota mechanisms and other measures to increase the representation of marginalised groups. The party congress in February 2009 was characterised as a huge step forward on social inclusion issues, and while this success hardly can be attributed to the SV-UML cooperation, it is an additional justification for the relevance of the project.

Communication and coordination

In line with the findings of the evaluation of SV's NDS project in Palestine (see Kjølsvedt, Abdel-Salam, Ingdal and Younis 2008), the SV-UML cooperation has been hampered by insufficient levels of communication between SV and UML. Partly, this can be explained by the fact that the political situation in Nepal has undergone dramatic shifts since 2004, resulting in occasional arrests, elections and other power struggles, new positions for party leaders and many pressing priorities for the UML leadership. The UML's tradition of locating responsibility at a very high level of the party organisation means a few individuals have had to manage the project while handling many other organisational and political processes simultaneously. Due to the political situation, the project was understandably put on hold during 2006. But even when the project was resumed in 2007 and 2008, UML's attention was on the election and its own congress – to the extent that the party decided to delay implementation of the project. The most telling example of lack of communication was that when additional funding was transferred from SV to UML for additional district level training, the relevant people in UML remained unaware of the fact that they had funding for follow-up seminars. By the time this was detected, the congress was looming and the party did not have capacity to implement the project before the deadline set by SV.

Another related aspect is that of coordination and quality control of the project. It is understandable that SV can only play a limited part in this, as neither SV nor NDS has any representatives or other activities in Nepal. But there are a number of international NGOs, embassies and development agencies which are involved in democracy support activities in Nepal. The Norwegian Embassy is involved in a

dialogue and policy-making effort between political youth wings in the country, Demo Finland and IDEA International are running a dialogue and capacity-building project with the political parties, and National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a major player in the training of parliamentarians. While all of these could represent potential support mechanisms for SV, NDS and UML, they have not been drawn upon in this project. Representatives from these organisations commented that while both the Embassy and the INGOs have a cautious approach concerning the neutrality aspects of involving with a single party, they increasingly see the need for party support (and the higher level of trust created in a party-to-party cooperation) and could be open to coordinating their activities with NDS-like projects. The fact that no coordination efforts have been made between SV's cooperation UML and the Embassy's promising multi-party project with the UML youth wing, the Democratic National Youth Federation (DNYF), is symptomatic. However, the SV-UML project has benefited from coordinating activities with the Swedish Left Party-GEFONT cooperation.

Thematic content

A review of the booklet that was produced as part of the project, and the interviews conducted as part of this evaluation, suggest that the main topics of the project were as follows: the role of the Constituent Assembly; the restructuring of the state (social inclusion and federalism); the peace process; women's issues; and the UML's ideology of multi-party democracy. Most of these issues can be described as very relevant given the political context and situation. The role of ideological education is perhaps on the fringes of an NDS mandate, but the Evaluation Team found that the way in which the ideological content of UML's 'party schooling' was coupled with a focus on democracy issues might have allowed the latter to reach further down the party ranks than would have been the case in a more 'externally imposed' educational programme.

One issue that was promoted quite actively from SV's side was that of gender equality and women's issues. This was reflected in high ambitions with respect to representation in seminars, and SV as much as communicated to UML that this should be included in the coursework. The section on women's issues is the briefest in the booklet, however, and does not deal with the basic concept of gender equality. A more active and grounded approach from SV's side – where there is an in-depth expertise on this issue – could arguably have led to a more informative and critical presentation of the gender issue in the project. This being said, district level participants commented that the seminars were the first occasion on which the issue of gender had been discussed in a party context.

Management of resources

The SV-UML cooperation places great responsibilities on UML by being one of the NDS projects where the partner organisation manages the brunt of the financial resources. The logistics and financial management of the project were centrally controlled. The logistics and financial management of the programmes are carried out by the party central office in some districts, with regional office bearers and (in some cases) district committee members given limited responsibilities. The main expenses of the training programmes were lodging, food and the travel expenses of

participants, cost of the training venue and equipment, remunerations and the travel cost of the central resource persons, as well as stationary/printing costs. The books of accounts and expenditure records have been kept by the secretary of the finance committee.

Discussion

The SV-UML project can be characterised as highly relevant, in terms of the relevance of the activities, its thematic content and strategic relevance – given the challenges facing the Nepalese democratisation process in general and the UML party in particular.

The outcome at a district level is most impressive in terms of the educational role it has played in local party structures and on a village level. The fact that many of the key project goals – grassroots mobilisation and political education of members – seem to have been achieved, suggests that the effectiveness of the project is satisfactory. The main weaknesses documented by the Evaluation Team, are to be found in the design and implementation of the ToT model: there was little or no evidence that the training of trainers at a central level facilitated the district level activities. By failing to achieve this ‘cascading modality’, the project missed out on an opportunity to empower and transfer logistical and educational responsibilities to the local party structures. The Team could also document that the project suffered from a lack of communication between SV and UML at critical stages of the design and implementation of the project. While this can be partially attributed to the volatile political context, it is also related to the capacity of SV and NDS to follow up a single project in one country without making use of other partners on the ground.

Issues of elections, constitution-making, social inclusion and gender equality and internal party democracy are all key themes in the project, and of critical importance in the democratisation process in Nepal. While SV has managed to put the issue of gender firmly on the table in this project, the hands-off approach of the Norwegian party resulted in a superficial treatment of the gender issue in the course material. The question of strategic relevance warrants a deeper discussion than is allowed in this report. Given the democratic deficits and lack of social inclusion in Nepalese political parties, and taking into account the positive steps an organisation such as the UML have made in recent years, SV’s engagement in Nepal could be characterised as strategically relevant. However, it should be noted that without a concomitant focus on democratisation and political education in the powerful UCPN(M), which recently made the transition from guerrilla movement to parliamentary party, as well as on party-building amongst the Madhesi political parties and organisations in the Terai, such an intervention fails to address the major political challenges in Nepal. On this final note, it is also worth noting that representatives from the other major political parties in Nepal expressed an interest to the Evaluation Team in engaging in party-building cooperation with Norwegian partners.

Case study: Kenya

In 2004, the Christian Democratic Party (KRF) carried out a pre-project in Kenya to assess the possibilities for a cooperation project with Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Kenya (FORD-Kenya). The cooperation project commenced the next year and continued until the autumn 2008. The 2005-2006 budget of the project was NOK 292 000, out of which NOK 245 000 was spent, and in 2007 the project spending amounted to NOK 139 000. Two other NDS projects were born out of the original KRF-FORD-Kenya project. In 2006, KRF's women's organisation, Kristelig Folkepartis Kvinner (KRFK) put together a pre-project, with a budget of NOK 165 000, to initiate a cooperation project with the FORD-Kenya Women's Congress that commenced the following year, when the Kenyan partner was renamed FORD-Kenya Women's League (FKWL). In 2005, NDS granted KRF's youth organisation, Kristelig Folkepartis Ungdom (KRFU) funding for a pre-project to establish a partnership with its youth counterpart in FORD-Kenya. In 2006, KRFU carried out project activities in Kenya with spending that amounted to NOK 181 000. The following year KRFU was granted NOK 239 000 by NDS for continued cooperation with FORD-Kenya Youth (FKY), only some of which was spent. The budgets of the three projects have been spent on travel, accommodation and seminar costs in connection with seminars in Kenya and exchange trips to Norway.

All NDS projects in Kenya have been initiated and carried out in close cooperation with the Kenya office of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), which until recently was headed by a former international secretary of KRF and which later employed this person's successor as international secretary of KRF and the deputy leader of the NDS Board. In addition to the KRF projects, two pre-projects have been carried out in Kenya with funding from NDS. One was between the Conservative Party and the Democratic Party in 2004 and the other was a multi-party initiative in 2008. In the pages that follow, we will briefly touch on these.

KRF's programme theory: the Norwegian example

Interviewees from KRF, KRFK and KRFU were consistent in their emphasis on how they applied what we described above as a role model approach in their projects in Kenya. The central idea in all three projects was to provide Kenyan counterparts with models or examples that could serve as inspiration for change. To this end, KRF has brought former ministers and party leaders from its own ranks to seminars in Kenya as resource persons and embodiments of the "Norwegian example". The value of open-ended peer-to-peer exchanges between politicians from different countries was emphasised by KRF representatives, as well as the importance of flexibility and context sensitivity when it comes to the choice the thematic contents

of seminars. The use of Norwegian politicians of prominent status is also considered an important means of gaining access to the top leadership of FORD-Kenya. KRF's reasons for choosing FORD-Kenya as project partner are linked to the party's commitment to the non-partisan approach. In this connection, it was emphasised that FORD-Kenya occupy a position in Kenyan politics which is structurally similar to KRF's in Norway, in the sense of being a relatively small party that has taken on a key role as the binding force in coalition governments.

The political backdrop

The Kenyan political system is characterised by a strong presidency and generally conforms to a neo-patrimonial pattern. Since the time of its inception, the post-colonial State has been the principal dispenser of patronage and the entry point for private accumulation in Kenya, and capturing the State has therefore been the central preoccupation of political actors. This is no less true of the time after the constitutional reform that reintroduced multi-party elections to the country in 1991 than of the preceding one-party era. In line with Mueller (2008), the multi-party period in Kenya can be said to be characterised by three factors: deliberately weakened state institutions overridden by a personalised and centralised executive; the gradual loss of the State's monopoly of legitimate violence, which has found its most virulent manifestations in the mass-scale militia violence in connection with the elections in 1992, 1997 and 2007; and non-programmatic political parties, driven by ethnic clientelism and a winner-take-all view of politics. After the reintroduction of multi-party elections, political parties in Kenya have increasingly fit the description as pure election vehicles for elite actors. While parties are flooded with money in election times, their finances run dry in the intervening periods, making it difficult to sustain party branches and national secretariats. The political parties also display a high degree of fluidity as unsuccessful contenders for leadership positions frequently defect to other parties with their followers.

This is well illustrated in the development trajectory of FORD-Kenya. In the time leading up to the elections in 1992 the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) was a vibrant pro-democracy movement which brought together many of Kenya's most prolific radical political activists. Immediately after elections were called, a struggle among its leaders for the position of presidential candidate led to the split up of the party into FORD-Kenya and FORD-Asili. Since then, the party has undergone several fissures as aspiring leaders have left to form their own parties. While remaining one of the smaller parties represented in Parliament, FORD-Kenya has increasingly come to rely on voter support from an ethnic community in Western Kenya. FORD-Kenya was a part of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), which gained power in the 2002 elections. In the run up to the 2007 elections, FORD-Kenya joined the Party of National Unity (PNU) alliance headed by President Mwai Kibaki, for which it was severely punished by the voters and the party was reduced from twenty-two to seven MPs.

Project design

The three KRF projects have consisted of seminars in Kenya and exchange trips to Norway for the Kenyan partners. The projects targeted the central level of the party and the party leadership specifically. Most of KRF's seminars have been held with

the Management Committee of the party and the regional representatives in the National Executive Committee (NEC). The thematic focus of the project has been on coalition-building, political principles in decision making and organisational development. The KRFK-FKWL project consisted of a seminar in Nairobi with regional representatives of FKWL and had the specific intent of developing a strategic plan for the organisation. The thematic focus of the KRFU-FKY project was on organisational development, relations between youth party and mother party and cultural exchange. In 2006, KRFU carried out seminar activities with a student network associated with FORD-Kenya, and meetings with the interim leadership of FKY, which was formally established later the same year. In 2007, a group of FKY representatives visited KRFU in Norway and attended KRF's National Convention. All project activities in Kenya have been facilitated by NDI.

Findings

The FORD-Kenya representatives we interviewed affirmed their appreciation of the open-ended nature of the communicative exchanges they had with their Norwegian counterparts at seminars and the Norwegian resource person's "practical" take on seminar issues. FORD-Kenya representatives also affirmed their appreciation of the "Norwegian example", which was a well-established phenomenon among Kenyan political parties prior to the KRF projects resulting from NDI's frequent use of Norwegian ex-politicians, such as Kjell Magne Bondevik, as resource persons in their projects. True to the assumptions of the Norwegian project partners, one of the main effects of the projects, as reported by FORD-Kenya representatives, has been to act as an inspiration for change in the party. In this regard, the KRF project has provided inputs and inspiration to FORD-Kenya to contribute to national policy developments as a government partner, such as the newly enacted legislation on political parties (previously known as the "Kombo bill" in reference to the national chairman of FORD-Kenya, Musikaro Kombo). With respect to organisational development in FORD-Kenya, interviewees pointed in particular to coalition building and a plan for the structuring of the national secretariat as areas in which KRF has provided important inputs. Interviewees from FORD-Kenya also emphasised that the KRF projects have conferred prestige on the party, and in particular on the party leadership. The use of Norwegian political dignitaries adds a "national dimension" to the project, it was pointed out, and as a result of this, the political community now views the national chairman of FORD-Kenya as the link through which contacts with Norway must go.

The most impressive result of the cooperation is that it led to the rebirth of a vibrant women's organisation at the central level of FORD-Kenya. According to interviewees, this is in part a direct result of the project activities that were implemented by KRFK and FKWL. More importantly, this process was set in motion by the party leadership's simple decision to initiate the project. In this connection, a centrally placed female politician of the party was appointed head of the national steering committee of the women's congress and this person is said to have reinvigorated the organisation in preparation for the meetings with the Norwegians. At the seminar with KRFK in 2007, the regional representatives of FKWL successfully drafted a strategic plan for the organisation. However, FKWL representatives were regretful that it proved impossible to secure the necessary funding for the comple-

tion, printing and dissemination of the plan in time for the elections in 2007. At this point, the project funding from NDS had been spent and the party leadership of FORD-Kenya was unwilling to provide the necessary means. FKWL contacted NDI and other NGOs on the matter, but none of these were willing to support the completion of another donor's project.

A related process has occurred with respect to the formation of the FKY, which has been officially recognised in FORD-Kenya's constitution since 2006. Again, it seems that the cooperation with KRF at the party leadership level provided inspiration for this development. The results of the cooperation project between the two youth parties are uncertain however. The original group of youth with whom KRFU carried out project activities in 2006 is said to have been associated with an MP who later left FORD-Kenya. Few of these youth were included in the officially elected leadership of FKY, which rather consisted of persons loyal to the national chairman, and apart from the study trip to Norway for four FKY representatives, little seems to have come out of the cooperation. At the time we visited Kenya in 2009, the FKY was in a state of dissolution.

Coordination of project activities

Given the challenges of communication involved in the projects and the KRF representatives' limited capacity for keeping themselves updated on the political situation in Kenya and developments within FORD-Kenya specifically, the cooperation with NDI has been of vital importance. Apart from providing practical assistance, NDI has been an important advisor for KRF on matters ranging from how to adapt to cultural codes to the choice of relevant seminar topics. From NDI's side it was emphasised that the KRF projects complemented its own programmes of party assistance, as KRF could go into terrains of policy-development that NDI was prevented from entering with a single party, because of its commitment to the multi-party agenda.

Killing two birds with one stone

One interviewee described the project activities as a matter of "killing two birds with one stone" with reference to KRF's financing of the transport and living costs of gathering the Management Committee and the NEC for seminars in Nairobi. On such occasions, the party representatives would usually meet for a seminar with KRF on the first day, and the day after the Management Committee or the NEC would convene for a regular meeting and attend to the party's business. This extra benefit of the project activities was emphasised by interviewees from FORD-Kenya to the extent that it is relevant to ask whether it was seen as a secondary or primary outcome of the project. As was pointed out by interviewees, the costs of convening party organs such as the NEC are considerable for FORD-Kenya. While KRF's contribution in this regard is a highly welcomed tangible outcome of the projects, it raises questions about the sustainability of the partnership. This point becomes salient when taking into consideration that KRF is by no means the only party assistance provider with which FORD-Kenya partners. Apart from KRF and NDI, FORD-Kenya is supported by the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Friedrich Ebert foundation (FES), the Konrad Adenauer foundation (KAS), the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD) and the Institute for Education in Democracy

(IED).¹⁰ According to FORD-Kenya representatives, the party is completely dependant on this NGO support to sustain its core functions, such as the running of the national secretariat and the convening of party organs.

Diverging priorities

According to an interviewee who was key to the cooperation between KRF and FORD-Kenya on the Kenyan side, a major challenge of the project has been to adjust the expectations it aroused in the party for material support and campaign support to the realities of the partnership. While FORD-Kenya representatives express their satisfaction with the KRF seminars, they also made it clear that they would have preferred to see the project activities brought “out of the hotels”, to the local branch membership of the party. The FKWL representatives we spoke to emphasised that their priority when entering into the partnership with KRFK was not to conduct a seminar in Nairobi, but rather to carry out activities to empower women members of the party economically, e.g. through training in craft production or the establishing of revolving funds. Only in this way, it was pointed out, can women at the grassroot level be enabled to participate in party politics.

Lack of participatory budgeting

We have noted FKWL's disappointment with not being able to bring the process of producing a strategic plan to completion. Given that the strategic plan remained unfinished because of a lack of finance, the FKWL representative was interested to know the portions of the project budget that were spent to on the ground activities in Kenya relative to the costs of travel by the Norwegian project partners. The FKWL representative found the reality of the partnership with KRFK questionable due to the lack of participatory budgeting. While FKWL participated in decisions about the thematic content of the seminar, it had little bearing on the project budget. According to the interviewee FKWL was informed about the total figure, but was never shown an itemised project budget.

Communication and continuity

In spite of the facilitation from NDI's side, communication and continuity has proved to be a challenge in the NDS projects in Kenya, and in particular in the KRFU-FKY project. The party leadership of FORD-Kenya and of the youth organisation expressed frustration that the project had been channelled through personal relations rather than through official channels. In 2008 KRF decided to end the bilateral cooperation project and continue the cooperation with FORD-Kenya instead through the NDS multi-party project in Kenya. In response to this KRFU decided to call off its cooperation project with FKY and KRFK put the cooperation project with FKWL “on hold”. As was pointed out by a KRF representative, the decision to shift the cooperation to the multi-party project was communicated to FORD-Kenya in 2008, but at the time of our fieldwork the leadership of the three Kenyan partner organisations were bewildered with regards to the status of the projects.

¹⁰ The last two NGOs mentioned are Kenyan. CMD is run by the Kenyan political parties with funding from NIMD.

Discussion

We have seen that the KRF projects have served to instigate processes of policy and organisational development in FORD-Kenya. Given their modest budget volume, the achievements of the projects in terms of realising the project goals are considerable. With respect to the efficiency of the projects, we have seen that the coordination of the KRF projects with NDI's programme of party assistance has been critically important to KRF. Among other things, this has eased communication between KRF and the Kenyan partners and allowed for a context-sensitive approach on the part of KRF. The initiation of cooperation projects between the youth and women organisation as direct follow up of the main project also can be assumed to have enhanced the efficiency of the project engagements. Given that one of the main benefits of the projects to FORD-Kenya was indirect material support, this raises questions about the reality of KRF's non-partisan approach. We have noted as well the problem of sustainability this raises. If FORD-Kenya is completely dependant on support from Western funded NGOs to sustain its party structures, this calls into question the party's capacity for autonomous generation of ideology and policy formulation.

While the thematic profile of project activities is closely attuned to the interest of the partners, there are nevertheless reasons to question the relevance of the projects. The project could have been strengthened if the central-level activities had been supplemented with decentralised activities. At a more fundamental level still, one may question the relevance of the basic approach employed in the KRF projects when viewed against the backdrop of the Kenyan political situation. Kenyan political parties have been the targets of considerable amounts of donor support since the 1990s, but results of these activities in the way of the emergence of programmatic parties with actual representative functions are meagre. One reason may be that the political system of the country, which includes a powerful presidency and a first-past-the-post electoral arrangement, acts as a major disincentive for the development of political parties as channels for popular political representation. This situation might change in the near future however, as a result of ongoing constitutional processes and the newly enacted political parties act. Another reason may be that party assistance providers operate on the basis of an inadequate programme theory. The problems addressed in the KRF projects are broadly speaking problems deriving from lack of knowledge and understanding. There is much to suggest that when it comes to the democratic development of the country, the most pressing problems of Kenyan political parties are not a lack of knowledge and understanding, but rather that they are controlled by powerful economic interests. It is doubtful that the role-model approach is an appropriate response to these challenges.

Annex 4

Terms of Reference

Evaluation of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support

1. Background

The Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support (NDS) was established in 2002 by the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) as a politically neutral, non-profit organisation. The purpose of NDS was to strengthen one of the primary goals of Norwegian foreign policy, namely to secure good governance through promoting representative multi-party democracies and free elections. NDS was established mainly to facilitate the utilization of the long experience and competence of Norwegian political parties in the development of strong and stable democracies in other parts of the world. All parties represented in the Parliament were members of NDS. NOK 47 mill were allocated for NDS in the period 2002-2008. In 2007 the portfolio consisted of 16 cooperation projects and 5 pilot projects, with a budget of NOK 7 million (approximately USD 1.1 million). The political parties were responsible for the implementation of the bilateral projects.

NDS was the first model for Norwegian development cooperation to support the collaboration between Norwegian political parties and political parties in the south. There was limited experience among the Norwegian authorities and the political parties in organizing such collaboration. Other European countries, Sweden, the Netherlands, UK and Germany, have longer and more comprehensive experience in providing support for their political parties to collaborate and assist political parties in the south. Important lessons that are relevant for future Norwegian aid in this area can be learnt from these experiences.

Following intensive press criticism of NDS the Ministry of Environment and Development decided in March 2009 to close down the NDS. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other involved parties will consider the best way of organizing activities with the same purpose in the future. This evaluation will feed into that process.

2. Purpose of the evaluation

The main purpose of this evaluation is to draw lessons from the activities and experiences of NDS as well as of other donor schemes with similar objectives in order to provide evidence and ideas which can feed into the process of planning and implementing a new Norwegian organisation or programme to provide support to political parties in the south.

The evaluation will assess the contributions of NDS to promote democratic and free elections in its countries of engagement comparative to the contributions of at least three or four similar schemes by other donors. The strength and weaknesses of NDS as a model for promotion of such objectives shall be analysed in comparison with the same similar schemes by other donors.

3. User groups of the evaluation

The main users of the findings of the evaluations will be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), other stakeholders who have direct or indirect interest in the operations of the new organisation replacing NDS, and the beneficiaries in the partner countries. In this context, *Ministry of Foreign of Affairs* refers to its political leadership, its officials, the Norwegian Embassies and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Norad. The *stakeholders* include Norwegian political parties, and non-governmental organisations NGOs and their counterparts in the South. *Beneficiaries* include individuals, communities, and relevant local and national political organisations that benefit directly or indirectly from the interventions.

4. Objectives and scope

The five main questions posed in this evaluation are:

1. What has been the value-added at the *activity level*, in terms of promotion of the practice of democratic principles and processes in the political organisation in the target countries of NDS?
2. How effective has the NDS been as a working-model for donor engagement in political development in the partner countries?
3. Outline *lessons* that can be useful in design and implementation of future result-oriented model, replacing NDS, for promoting democratic principles in the political processes in partner countries.
4. Outline lessons from similar schemes by other donors
5. Assess the models of organisation of political party support in relevant donor countries. Identify features in the organisation of these models that may be relevant for a new Norwegian model.

5. Scope, evaluation criteria and questions

5.1. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with the prevailing DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. The evaluation shall make use of following **four criteria** - relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in the assessment of the NDS.

Relevance

Assess the **relevance** of the NDS plans and operations with respect to the needs to achieve good governance through promoting representative multi-party democracies and free elections in the partner countries.

Where possible, assess to what extent the activities have mainstreamed cross-cutting issues such as gender and good governance.

Analyse the participation of the parties in the South in development of the activities and examine the extent to which their priorities and strategies for democratization are addressed in the activities.

Do both women and men benefit from the program?

In particular what specific efforts have been made to ensure that women benefit from the program?

Effectiveness

Assess the **effectiveness** of the NDS activities in terms of current and perceived results with respect to the achievement of NDS objectives.

Describe the extent and duration of the collaboration between the Norwegian political parties and their partners in the south. For how long has the collaboration normally gone on? How many meetings, seminars and courses have been conducted? What can realistically be expected to be the results of such interventions?

What were the major factors influencing the contribution to the achievement or the non-achievement of the objectives of NDS?

Assess the competence of NDS and the Norwegian political parties to make relevant plans and to implement these plans.

Describe and assess the model in which the Norwegian political parties jointly collaborate in order to support political parties in the south and compare this model to the bilateral party to party assistance.

Efficiency

Were the activities of NDS carried out efficiently and at reasonable costs?

How were the costs of the program documented in terms of accounts and audits in Norway and among the political parties in the south? How was the quality of the accounts and audits reports and who were the actors that were involved in the accounts and audits?

How were the activities of NDS reported upon, monitored and evaluated? What was the quality of these reports and who were the actors that have been involved in monitoring and evaluations?

Sustainability

Assess the extent to which results of NDS will be preserved over time in the absence of NDS support. Of particular importance is an assessment of the contribution of NDS to strengthening the will and the ability of the partners in the South to further the practice of democracy in its internal organisation, and external relations with other political parties.

What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme?

It is expected, that the evaluation will provide a brief analysis of different *political, social and institutional contexts* in the major areas in which the NDS programs operate. In particular, the evaluation will document the *performance of the Norwegian partners, the partners in the South and the MFA* where it is considered as a decisive factor in results identified in this study.

5.2. Other questions

Other donors involved with support to political parties in the south

Which other donor organisations provide similar support to their political parties in order for them to assist and collaborate with political parties in the south? Based on existing reviews and evaluations how does their support compare and complement with the support of the Norwegian political parties?

Describe the most relevant organisations in the north, their objectives, size of budget, number of staff and their competence, that provide support to political parties in the south.

On the basis of the experiences of the other donors, identify *lessons learnt* and propose ways in which these lessons can be made relevant for the new Norwegian model of collaboration between Norwegian political parties and political parties in the south.

NDS

On the basis of the experiences of NDS from 2002 to 2008:

Describe who took initiative to the various projects supported by NDS? Who defined the content of the projects? What was the justification used for proposing the projects?

What were the decision-making procedures in connection with projects proposals? Was the decision-making process transparent and participatory? Were there checks and balances in the decision-making system concerning the activities of NDS?

What was the role of the political parties in the south in proposing activities for the NDS support?

Did NDS and the Norwegian political parties have the necessary competence and experience to assess project requests, and to follow up the projects they support?

Discuss whether the projects in a new model should be geographically concentrated.

Discuss whether the political party collaboration with other countries, more similar to the Norwegian political system (i.e Eastern Europe, West Balkans), would be more effective with regard to results and impact.

Discuss the focus of the collaboration: Should a new model for political party collaboration continue with more or less random bilateral party-to-party assistance, or should one put more emphasis a broader approach targeting the party system in the south as a whole?

6. The wider context of the NDS program

An important part of this evaluation is to understand and assess the context and nature of many of the political parties in the south. This context varies greatly in south. In Africa were many of the projects of NDS have taken place, there are few political parties that are able to fulfil the democratic role and functions that the political parties in the north perform. There are many reasons for this: Many countries in Africa have a long history of authoritarianism and one-party rule. The ruling party can use state resources to obstruct the development of rival and opposition parties. The ruling party will often pursue a clientelist politics (politics based on power networks of allies and family) which make the role of “opposition” parties very difficult and different from the political processes taking place among political parties in the north. The financial basis for a political party in the Africa largely depends on it being in such power or not. There is often a lack of organisation and absence of internal democracy in political parties. The support and development cooperation between political parties in the north and political parties in Africa must be viewed in a context where the above mentioned issues, in addition to many other features in the political party landscape will influence the outcome of the intervention. For other countries on other continents in the south the context will be different, but may share some of the features of many African countries. The evaluation will make a brief discussion and analysis of the various contexts in which the major part of the activities of NDS took place.

7. Methodological Comments

The NDS program has been a subject of reviews and evaluations in earlier reports and studies. This evaluation will avoid duplication of work, and the discussion of the previous reviews and evaluations will be limited to a brief comparative overview of the main finding of the earlier studies.

Another important methodological issue is the choice of metric – what is to be measured? There is no single indicator for measuring political development and development of good governance. The consultant will define suitable *impact indicators* keeping in view the limited dimensions and short periods of many of the interventions by NDS and the Norwegian political parties.

The other important methodological decision is related the type of *inference* that may be drawn from empirical observations. How confident can one be that observed changes are in fact due to the evaluated program? Given the complexities of measuring the outputs and outcomes of the NDS interventions, this evaluation will at the minimum provide adequacy assessments of the impacts. In this context, *adequacy* assessment is mainly concerned with identification of an actual change in an indicator. The assessment can be made with reference to a predefined standard, or it may be cross-sectional or across time. The value of an adequacy assessment is that it reflects on whether or not the objectives are being realised. No attempt is

made to establish a causal link between program activities to observed changes. The consultants may examine causal links provided robust data can be compiled for such an analysis.

On the basis of literature review and interviews the consultant will propose a few case studies for closer scrutiny with the purpose of distilling relevant “lessons learned”. These proposed case studies will be presented in the Inception report and later discussed with MFA and Norad. In connection with the case studies a brief contextual analysis at national level should be made. An assessment of how this context has influenced the constraints and opportunities of the operation of the political parties in the south should be made. The case studies will involve field trips to one or two countries in the south. The review of some of the programmes of donors will be based on desk-studies.

No preferred methodology is specified for this evaluation. The evaluation team will outline a well formed research strategy and propose an appropriate methodology to ensure an objective, transparent and impartial assessment of the issues to be analysed in this evaluation. The evaluation team will make use of empirical methods such as document analysis, questionnaire surveys, interviews, focus groups, case studies, and data/literature surveys to collect data, which will be analysed using well specified judgement criteria and suitably defined qualitative and quantitative indicators.

8. Evaluation team

All members of the evaluation team are expected to have relevant academic qualifications and evaluation experience. In addition, the evaluation team shall cover the following competencies:

Competence	Team Leader	At least one member
Academic	Higher relevant degree M.Phil, PhD	
Discipline	Relevant disciplines	political science/sociology, social anthropology, economics and history
Evaluation	Leading multi disciplinary evaluations	
Sector	Political Development	Political party organisation, accounts and auditing
Development Cooperation	Yes	Political participation in South, governance issues. Familiarity with international and Norwegian development cooperation policies and instruments
Country/region	Developing countries	Africa, Asia

Competence	Team Leader	At least one member
Other		Some knowledge of financial management, audit and accounts of development programmes
Language fluency		
English	Written, Reading, Spoken	
Norwegian		Reading, Spoken
Others		

The composition of the evaluation team should as far as possible, reflect a balance between international and local consultants from the South.

Quality assurance shall be provided by the company delivering the consultancy services. This shall be done by a person that is external to the evaluation team.

9. Budget and deliverables

The project is **budgeted** with a maximum input of **24 person weeks**. The **Deliverables** in the consultancy consist of following outputs:

Work-in-progress reporting **workshops** (maximum 2) in Oslo, arranged by the EVAL on need basis.

Inception Report not exceeding 20 pages shall be prepared in accordance with EVAL's guidelines given in *Annex A-3 Guidelines for Reports* of this document. It will be discussed with the team and the project reference group before approval by EVAL.

Draft Final Report for feedback from the reference group, stakeholders and EVAL. The feedback will include comments on structure, facts, content, and conclusions.

Final Evaluation Report prepared in accordance with EVAL's guidelines given in *Annex A-3 Guidelines for Report* of this document. The report produced shall be no more than 40 pages excluding annexes.

Seminar for dissemination of the final report in Oslo or in the case countries, to be arranged by EVAL. Direct travel-cost related to dissemination in the case countries will be covered separately by EVAL on need basis, and are not to be included in the budget.

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- 3.97 Evaluation of Decentralisation and Development
4.97 Evaluation of Norwegian Assistance to Peace, Reconciliation and Rehabilitation in Mozambique
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4.99 Evaluation of the Tanzania-Norway Development Cooperation 1994–1997
5.99 Building African Consulting Capacity
6.99 Aid and Conditionality
7.99 Policies and Strategies for Poverty Reduction in Norwegian Development Aid
8.99 Aid Coordination and Aid Effectiveness
9.99 Evaluation of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
10.99 Evaluation of AWEPA, The Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa, and AEI, The African European Institute
- 1.00 Review of Norwegian Health-related Development Cooperation 1988–1997
2.00 Norwegian Support to the Education Sector. Overview of Policies and Trends 1988–1998
3.00 The Project "Training for Peace in Southern Africa"
4.00 En kartlegging av erfaringer med norsk bistand gjennom frivillige organisasjoner 1987–1999
5.00 Evaluation of the NUFU programme
6.00 Making Government Smaller and More Efficient. The Botswana Case
7.00 Evaluation of the Norwegian Plan of Action for Nuclear Safety Priorities, Organisation, Implementation
8.00 Evaluation of the Norwegian Mixed Credits Programme
9.00 "Norwegians? Who needs Norwegians?" Explaining the Oslo Back Channel: Norway's Political Past in the Middle East
10.00 Taken for Granted? An Evaluation of Norway's Special Grant for the Environment
- 1.01 Evaluation of the Norwegian Human Rights Fund
2.01 Economic Impacts on the Least Developed Countries of the Elimination of Import Tariffs on their Products
3.01 Evaluation of the Public Support to the Norwegian NGOs Working in Nicaragua 1994–1999
3A.01 Evaluación del Apoyo Público a las ONGs Noruegas que Trabajan en Nicaragua 1994–1999
4.01 The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Cooperation on Poverty Reduction
5.01 Evaluation of Development Co-operation between Bangladesh and Norway, 1995–2000
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7.01 Reconciliation Among Young People in the Balkans An Evaluation of the Post Pessimist Network
- 1.02 Evaluation of the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM)
2.02 Evaluation of the International Humanitarian Assistance of the Norwegian Red Cross
3.02 Evaluation of ACOPAMA ILO program for "Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives" in Western Africa 1978 – 1999
3A.02 Évaluation du programme ACOPAMA Un programme du BIT sur l'« Appui associatif et coopératif aux Initiatives de Développement à la Base » en Afrique de l'Ouest de 1978 à 1999
- 4.02 Legal Aid Against the Odds Evaluation of the Civil Rights Project (CRP) of the Norwegian Refugee Council in former Yugoslavia
1.03 Evaluation of the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund)
2.03 Evaluation of the Norwegian Education Trust Fund for Africa in the World Bank
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