

# NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE

# NDI

*Working for democracy and making democracy work*



*Voter in South Sudan*

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that responds to the aspirations of people around the world to live in democratic societies with open and multiparty political systems that recognize and promote basic human rights.

Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to establish and strengthen democratic institutions and practices around the world by building political and civic organizations, safeguarding elections, and promoting citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. With staff members and volunteer

political practitioners from more than 100 nations, NDI brings together individuals and groups to share ideas, knowledge, experiences and expertise. Partners receive broad exposure to best practices in international democratic development that can be adapted to the needs of their own countries. NDI's multinational approach reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies.

The Institute's work upholds the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also promotes the development of institutionalized channels of communication among citizens, political institutions and elected officials, and strengthens their ability to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

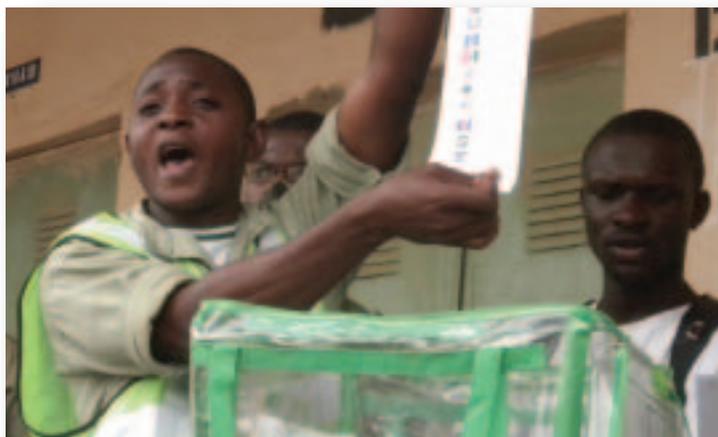
*“Democracy is inseparable from  
human dignity and peace.”*

– Madeleine K. Albright, NDI Chairman

# REPORTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

NDI's story is best told through its programs and accomplishments in the 130 countries where it has worked since its founding in 1983. The Institute puts a priority on long-term institution building, which is central to achieving democratic governance, stability and prosperity. Here are some examples:

After **Nigeria** returned to civilian rule in 1999, each election was more fraud-ridden than the last – until 2011 when presidential and parliamentary polls were deemed the most credible ever held. Voting stations generally functioned properly, there was greater transparency in counting and the polls were considered to reflect the will of the people. Helping to raise citizens' confidence was Project Swift Count (PSC), a coalition of Nigerian election observation groups, formed with NDI assistance to deter fraud and restore public trust. PSC deployed nearly 20,000 observers who conducted a parallel vote tabulation, a statistics-based citizens' tool that assessed the integrity of voting and counting, and verified the accuracy of official results.



*Counting ballots in Nigeria*

Residents of **Pakistan's** Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), often considered a haven for extremists, lack the same basic legal and political rights as the rest of the country. Starting in 2008, more than 300 tribal representatives and party leaders attended meetings organized by NDI and its partner, the Shaheed Bhutto Foundation. They agreed that democracy and rule of law were essential to peace and stability in the areas. Presentation of their recommendations to President Asif Ali Zardari contributed to his adoption of a package of reforms, including extending the mainstream political parties law to the region. "It may appear a small step to some," he said, but the reforms represent "a quantum jump for the people of FATA in their quest for freedoms, liberties, human rights and political participation."

In **Haiti**, where many were still living in tents a year after a 2010 earthquake, 71 percent of residents tuned in to a presidential debate organized by Groupe d'Intervention en Affaires Publiques, an NDI partner. Candidates urged countrymen to cast ballots peacefully, important in an environment where election disputes can be settled in the streets. The event reflected a worldwide trend to use debates to help voters make informed choices, reduce violence and encourage candidates to focus on issues, not personalities or ethnic loyalties. NDI

and the U.S.-based Commission on Presidential Debates have, since 1994, helped debate organizers in more than 30 countries. Their efforts include co-founding the 16-country International Debates Network, through which debate groups help each other produce live national TV broadcasts, manage debates with dozens of candidates, and handle other organizational and production challenges.

In **Kenya**, serious conflict after the 2007 elections led to more than 1,000 deaths and 600,000 displaced people. To address the causes of the politically-motivated violence, NDI has supported efforts by political parties to build consensus on a new constitution and formalize inter-party dialogue with the Election Commission. Kenya's first Inter-Party Youth Forum has engaged more than 1,400 young people on peaceful political participation. Civic leaders have created a new Election Observation Group, which organized a nationwide campaign to monitor the 2010 constitutional referendum; and more than 1,200 aspirants, many from under-represented groups, were trained as candidates. Political parties have trained more than 8,000 local officials on a wide range of governance skills.



*Candidates debate in Bosnia-Herzegovina*

Emerging from 42 years of authoritarian rule, **Libya** had no tradition of civil society, political parties or democratic elections. As the 2011 revolution led to a gradual political transition, NDI worked with civil society and political parties to build the foundation for a democratic multiparty system. Banned under the former regime, newly-created political parties banded together with NDI's assistance to successfully negotiate changes to the country's draft electoral law in favor of more transparent, inclusive elections. With NDI's support, Libyan civic organizations from across the country formed a network to observe the 2012 elections for a constituent assembly, the country's first vote in more than four decades.



*Libyan Independence Day* ★



The Women's Discussion Club of **Kyrgyzstan** has become one of the leading advocates for women in Central Asia. Founded in 2006 with NDI support, the club backed a 30 percent quota for women candidates that led to the election to parliament of 52 women – nearly a quarter of all MPs. The club brings together women from diverse backgrounds to advocate for women's rights and equality in legislation. It convened the first coalition of political party women's organizations, representing eight major parties, dedicated to promoting women's leadership in politics and involvement in party activities. In March 2012, the club received NDI's Madeleine K. Albright grant for its work.

Unprecedented anti-discrimination legislation signed by the president of **Colombia** in 2011 highlights the work of NDI and its partners to improve the human rights of underrepresented minorities and increase their political participation. NDI focuses on promoting increased participation among women, internally displaced persons and Afro-Colombians in the conflict-prone Chocó and post-conflict Montes de María regions situated along the country's coast. The Institute also works closely with political parties and national election monitoring groups to increase transparency in campaign financing. With Institute support, Transparency for Colombia, a chapter of Transparency International, created software for election campaigns that increased compliance with financial reporting rules.

Initiatives to promote political participation by Europe's nearly 10 million **Roma**, the continent's largest ethnic minority, include increasing elected representation, securing human rights and changing public attitudes. An historic step forward came in 2012 when longtime NDI partner Peter Pollak was elected to Slovakia's parliament, the first Roma citizen ever to win nationwide office. His victory culminates a decade-long journey of grassroots organizing, coalition building and near-victories in prior elections. Pollak used NDI training throughout to improve his political skills and continues to work with the Institute as a new legislator.



*Pollak on the stump*

In **Yemen**, where tribal conflicts have disrupted development and fueled extremism for decades, a two-year program with young people from different tribes has made headway to mitigate violent conflict. Through NDI's Cross Tribal Youth Council Program, 500 students and parents were trained in conflict prevention and mitigation, while awareness campaigns to counter conflict reached over 2,000 students and parents. Council members from the Marib and Shabwah governorates visited schools to discuss the causes of student disputes and trained students in peer mediation and conflict resolution. As a result, peer mediation teams were established in 26 schools, reducing reports of student conflict by 75 percent in Marib alone. The project helped resolve at least 12 broader tribal conflicts.

## POLITICAL PARTY BUILDING

NDI works with its partners on political party building – from internal democratic procedures and candidate selection to polling, platform development and public outreach. It assists parties with long-term development, codes of conduct, enhancing involvement in elections, mitigating political conflict and participating constructively in government. The Institute also works to promote dialogue across party lines.

NDI is a nonpartisan organization that draws proudly on the traditions of the U.S. Democratic Party. Its programs seek to advance universal values and support all democratic systems of governance rather than particular parties or ideologies. NDI is the only organization that enjoys official standing in the international groupings of Social Democratic, Liberal and Centrist Democratic political parties. Together, the three “internationals” represent approximately 350 parties in 150 countries.

## DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

In addition to multiparty competition at the ballot box, democracies require effective democratic governance between elections. NDI has been a leader in promoting democratic standards for parliaments. It works on parliamentary strengthening, local governance, rule of law, public integrity, constitutional and political legal reform, and political management of economic development and poverty reduction. With legislatures around the world, NDI supports committee strengthening, executive-legislative relations, caucus management, parliamentary transparency and constituency outreach. The Institute also supports the efforts of citizen groups to monitor parliaments and support democratic parliamentary reform, and is working with more than 60 parliamentary monitoring organizations (PMOs) internationally to share good practices and promote parliamentary openness. The Institute also helps ministries, prime ministers’ and presidents’ offices, and local governments function more efficiently, improve public outreach and make democracy deliver.

## WOMEN IN POLITICS

The equitable participation of women in politics and government is essential to building and sustaining democracy. NDI works to support the aspirations of women around the world to be equal and active partners in shaping and leading democratic societies. The Institute employs a wide range of innovative strategies to increase

### NDI BY THE NUMBERS

Through the years, NDI has:

- Worked in 130 countries, territories and other areas around the world
- Helped train and deploy over two million domestic election observers and helped nonpartisan monitors conduct more than 100 parallel vote tabulations (PVTs) in 38 countries
- Supported the efforts of:
  - 13,000 civic organizations
  - 720 political parties and organizations
  - 10,000 legislators
  - 1,300 women’s organizations
- Developed a corps of 1,000 expert pro bono volunteers

NDI has 65 field offices. Its staff represents 96 nationalities.

the number of elected women and strengthen their leadership in government, political parties and civil society through initiatives that enhance their skills, improve the perception of women in political life and advance equality. NDI’s long-term efforts with parties and government institutions include increasing internal party transparency and considering gender issues in budgeting.

## ELECTIONS

NDI encourages citizen participation and electoral integrity through its work on electoral law reform and election monitoring with hundreds of political parties and civic organizations. The Institute has worked in 75 countries with more than 300 citizen groups and coalitions that have mobilized more than two million election monitors, and it has organized more than 150 international election observation delegations around the world. It has also played a leading role in establishing standards for international and citizen election observation through the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations launched at the United Nations in 2005 and 2012 respectively.



*Election observation in Lebanon*

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Technology such as cell phones, the Internet, SMS messaging, Twitter and Facebook are helping citizens engage in politics in increasingly innovative and participatory ways. Recognized as one of "The Top 10 Who Are Changing the World of the Internet and Politics," NDI adapts new technology to the political challenges facing developing democracies. For political parties and civil society groups, information technologies can improve organization, aid mobilization, expand political space, hold those in power accountable and promote human rights. Technology also helps governments communicate with and respond to citizens.

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Making democracy work requires informed and active citizens who understand how to voice their interests, act collectively and hold public officials accountable. NDI’s citizen participation programs – including support for civic and voter education, get-out-the-vote efforts, issue organizing and advocacy, budget oversight and government monitoring – help citizens engage actively in the political process and create an appropriate relationship with government. NDI works to foster the political inclusion of many segments of civil society, including people with disabilities, young people and other underrepresented groups.

*“We may not know where and when  
brave people will claim their rights next,  
but it’s a safe bet that NDI is there now,  
because freedom knows no better champion.”*

– Hillary Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State



*Albright and Desmond Tutu*

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION FOR DEMOCRACY ADVOCATES

NDI annually presents its **W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award** to an individual or organization that has demonstrated a sustained commitment to democracy and human rights. Past recipients have included Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa; Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai of Zimbabwe; Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto; UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan; the eight political party leaders who negotiated the Northern Ireland peace agreement; Varela Project leader Oswaldo Payá of Cuba; Burmese democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi; Czech Republic President Václav Havel; Polish Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek; East Timor President Xanana Gusmão; Chile's 1988 Free Election Movement; Georgian Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania; Presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter; Vice President Walter Mondale; Senators Joseph Biden, Richard Lugar, George Mitchell and Edward Kennedy; AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland; and then-UN Ambassador Madeleine K. Albright. Three champions of democracy – U.S. Representative and vice presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro, diplomat Richard Holbrooke, and ambassador and NDI founder Charles Manatt – received the award posthumously in 2011.

Established in 2005, the **Madeleine K. Albright Grant** builds on NDI's Win With Women Initiative to honor organizations that exhibit exceptional promise in creating a greater role for women in political and civic life. The \$25,000 grant supports specific initiatives to further women's political participation. Past recipients have included the Women's Discussion Club of Kyrgyzstan, the Egyptian group Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development, the Departmental Network of Chocó Women of Colombia, the Women's League of Burma, the 50/50 Group of Sierra Leone, the Mostar Women's Citizen Initiative and the Women's Political Caucus of Indonesia.

In 2007, NDI established the **Andi Parhamovich Fellowship**, named in honor of NDI staff member Andi Parhamovich who was killed on January 17, 2007, while working in Baghdad. Each year, the fellowship brings to Washington, D.C., a young woman dedicated to advancing democracy and the political participation of women in her own country. Past recipients have included women from Iraq, Liberia, Nepal and Kosovo.

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## ADVANCING DEMOCRACY THROUGH SHARED INFORMATION

With its main focus on people, NDI brings together individuals and groups to share ideas, knowledge, experiences and expertise to strengthen and improve the responsiveness and effectiveness of governance. As part of that effort, the Institute has created a number of websites and portals, including the *Political Party Network* (PPN), [www.redpartidos.org](http://www.redpartidos.org), which supports political party reform in Latin America; *Aswat*, [www.aswat.com](http://www.aswat.com), which promotes dialogue among activists in the Middle East and North Africa; *Agora*, [www.agora-parl.org](http://www.agora-parl.org), a portal for parliamentary development; *GNDEM*, [www.gndem.org](http://www.gndem.org), the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors; and *iKNOW Politics*, [www.iknowpolitics.org](http://www.iknowpolitics.org), developed to advance women's political participation in partnership with the UN Development Programme, UN Women, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The Institute also maintains an extensive electronic collection of documents, reports and studies on democratic development. These and other information gathered from the five continents on which NDI works can be found on the Institute's website, [www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org).

