35TH ANNIVERSARY REPORT

Working for Democracy,

Making Democracy Work

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When NDI opened its doors in 1983, programs to support democratic development essentially did not exist. Given a mission but not a roadmap, the Institute built its practice from scratch, creating a unique international network of political practitioners dedicated to sharing their democratic experiences and ideas with other nascent democracies.

NDI has become a leader in the democracy field by prioritizing creativity and innovation, and crafting programs that account for the unique context of each country. NDI promoted democratic reform in the Philippines and Chile in the 1980s; in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall; and across Africa, Asia and Latin America in the 1990s following the end of the Cold War. We began programming on the inclusion of traditionally marginalized populations such as women, youth and the disabled in the 2000s. More recently, NDI has supported activists whose homegrown efforts inspired the Arab Spring in 2011, the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity in 2014, and other democracy movements in newly formed and fragile states.

We have found over the past 35 years that, whatever its shortfalls, democracy works. Through transparent processes that affirm basic human dignity, democracy allows nations to settle their internal differences peacefully through elections, open debate, accountable governance, and rule of law. It is the only form of government that allows for peaceful self-correction. The alliance of democratic nations, and the rules-based system they created 70 years ago, led to the greatest period of sustained global development in human history.

“Democracy is inseparable from human dignity and peace.”

Madeleine K. Albright, NDI Chairman
Translating democracy’s promise into a better life for all can be frustratingly slow and difficult. Traditional mindsets refuse to die. Intolerance and demagoguery can overwhelm the capacity of new democratic institutions to withstand and resist. Authoritarians who have long used oppression to silence voices at home now learn from and cooperate with one another. They use new technologies to spread division and disinformation farther and faster than ever before.

Nonetheless, alongside brave local partners, NDI has helped nurture the seeds of democracy in some of the toughest places on earth. While democracy’s success is neither inevitable nor irreversible, NDI knows from first-hand experience over more than three decades that free people in every corner of the world continue to yearn for the promise of democracy. We are privileged to work with exceptional women and men whose tireless efforts on behalf of human dignity in their countries – and beyond – seek to make the world a more just, secure and prosperous place.

A century ago, Woodrow Wilson urged us to build a world safe for democracy. Today, we strive for democracy to keep our world safe. The challenges of our time only reinforce why the work of NDI remains as essential as ever.
NDI by the **Numbers**

Over the course of the last **35** years, NDI has:

**Worked in:**
- **156** countries and territories around the world.

**Fielded over:**
- **200** international election observer missions in **67** countries.

**Supported the efforts of:**
- **16,000** civic organizations
- **925** political parties
- **10,000** legislators
- **1,300** women’s organizations

**Helped:**
- **300** citizen election monitoring organizations train and deploy
- **4,000,000** election observers
- **350** elections and referenda in **85** countries

**Helped partner groups organize more than:**
- **400** candidate debates in more than **35** countries

**Trained more than:**
- **600,000** Party poll-watchers in more than **50** countries
Our Mission

The human desire for freedom is universal. NDI works to fulfill the demand for democracy by promoting inclusive, participatory, transparent and accountable governance. As a nonpartisan, non-governmental organization, NDI responds to the aspirations of people around the globe to live in democratic societies that are open and free. Our mission is to promote the development and safeguard the integrity of open government, free speech, and democratic processes and institutions worldwide – in other words, to work for democracy and make democracy work.

How We Work

Since its founding, NDI has worked with local partners in 156 countries and territories, bringing together individuals and groups across partisan affiliations and national borders to share best practices in international democratic development. Partners include governments, legislatures, political parties, civic organizations, and citizens, who are exposed to the newest and most effective ideas in democratic development that can then be adapted to the needs of their own countries. The Institute’s multinational and nonpartisan approach reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies. The principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights remain our guidepost.
Where We Work

NDI has promoted democratic development across five continents. Currently, the Institute has more than 50 field offices and programming in more than 70 countries.
Democracy is a process, not an event.
Democracy takes time, and its legitimacy depends on more than one election or citizen protest. Every democracy, no matter how developed, is a work in progress that requires courageous, determined citizens who are eternally vigilant and committed to safeguarding democratic norms, processes, and rights.

Democracy must deliver.
Fragile democracies often struggle to overcome corruption, poverty, insecurity and ethnic divisions inherited from previous regimes. Democratic governments must meet popular expectations and show results – particularly in improving living standards – if democracy is to be successful.

Building a culture of democracy is as important as developing institutions and processes.
Constructing a political culture of dialogue, compromise, inclusion, and respect for law is essential to sustaining democracy and resisting autocratic drift. Absent adherence to such norms, democratic institutions and processes can wither, and democracy become a matter of form, not fact.

International networks are essential.
When international actors share their democratic experiences with those undergoing similar challenges, it helps nations in transition recognize they are not alone and that obstacles can be overcome.

Democratic societies must be inclusive.
As NDI Chairman Madeleine Albright has said, “Success without democracy is improbable. Democracy without women is impossible.” When women are engaged in politics, democracy is more resilient, development is more sustainable, compromise is more likely, and peace agreements tend to last longer. Democracy is more likely to thrive when all segments of society – including youth, people with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities and LGBTI communities – can participate freely without bias or reprisal.
**Credible elections are the foundation of democratic development.**
Elections become credible when citizens are informed and participate without fear, political candidates and media compete freely, and election authorities and the judiciary act impartially and transparently. Credible elections lead to legitimate governance.

**Democracies have been slow to recognize the disruptive impact of digital technology.**
Technology and social media can empower citizens and contribute to democracy’s success. But autocrats and unscrupulous politicians can also manipulate political outcomes through disinformation, especially during elections. When information is monopolized – and technology is used to sow confusion, division and social alienation – democracy itself is undermined.

**Democracy must take account of spoilers.**
Autocracies protect themselves by exporting their repressive models and by undermining democratic values and norms both at home and abroad. Democracies must remain vigilant, and recognize that democratic values and effective governance are their greatest strengths.

**Democratic development is cost-effective.**
If, as Benjamin Franklin said, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, democratic development is cost-effective in the extreme. Whether measured in terms of averting war, humanitarian crises, refugee flows, economic destruction, or violent extremism, democratic development pays for itself many times over.

**Relationships are everything.**
NDI’s effectiveness depends on its relationships of trust and confidence with governments and people around the world. Building and sustaining these relationships are at the heart of the Institute’s work to support the democratic aspirations, rights and dignity of people.
Autocrats and the Fallacy of False Equivalence

Autocrats often assert a false equivalence between NDI’s transparent activities to support accountable governance and democratic dialogue, and their own shadowy efforts to subvert other countries’ elections and internal politics. In contrast to authoritarians, NDI conducts its work in response to requests from governments, parliaments, political parties, civic groups and election administrators. The Institute promotes open, inclusive and fair processes – not specific political outcomes. The difference between the work of NDI, and the interference of authoritarian leaders to distort and manipulate political results, could not be greater.

“(The Russian dissident movement was) … a handful of people whose only weapon was their word, which in the end, proved stronger than a mighty totalitarian system with the world’s most developed machine of oppression.”

Vladimir V. Karva-Murza
Democracy Activist and Opposition Leader, Russia
NDI 2018 Rising Democracy Leader
Our Impact: Working for Democracy and Making Democracy Work

**Mobilizing Citizen Participation**

Informed and active citizens who voice their interests, act collectively and hold public officials accountable are essential elements of democracy. NDI programs empower citizens to engage in the political process – on election day and in the years between – through civic and voter education, get-out-the-vote efforts, issue organizing and advocacy campaigns, and oversight of government activities. Civil society organizations bring citizens together to aggregate their interests. Since 1983, NDI has given technical and financial assistance to more than 15,000 civic organizations across the globe.

“Door-to-door campaigning is a very unique thing in Ukraine. But after I campaigned and was elected, I realized it really works. Now I travel all over the country persuading people about it.”

Yuriy, trainer

**Ukraine.** The Ukrainian people face internal threats from economic disruption and corruption, as well as external threats from Russia – which has occupied Crimea and is waging a military conflict in the country’s eastern territories. Despite the Kremlin’s persistent, “hybrid” campaign to undermine its neighbor’s sovereignty and democratic aspirations, NDI polling consistently shows that over 80 percent of Ukraine’s population supports democracy, including in Ukraine’s east and south. With the Institute’s assistance, Ukrainians can point to concrete progress in their efforts to achieve democratic reform. Using knowledge gained in NDI’s campaign schools, citizens without prior political experience are now participating in decision-making, and women are running for political office in record numbers. Through parliamentary assistance, parties are overcoming fragmentation to build consensus around important political and anti-corruption reforms. Citizens are safeguarding critical processes, building public confidence, and advancing reforms through election monitoring.

**Haiti.**
In the Sahel, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger share porous borders that are frequently exploited by terrorists and human traffickers. At a time of rising extremism, citizen security is a pressing concern and public trust in the armed forces is severely lacking. NDI's work in the Sahel focuses on increasing civilian oversight of the security sector in order to improve relationships between citizens and security forces to deter extremism. In Burkina Faso, members of parliament visited army units to better understand the conditions in which troops operate, their equipment needs and their level of training, thereby deepening understanding and trust between legislators and the military. In Niger, NDI worked with the General Directorate of the National Police to update its code of ethics and professional conduct, and train the police force on the code’s implementation. In Mali, NDI helped mobilize citizen watch committees to monitor the provision of security in five major population centers. In all three countries, improved civilian oversight has increased accountability, enhanced citizen confidence and strengthened the resilience of each nascent democracy against extremism.

Ensuring Electoral Integrity

“Elections are the indispensable root of democracy... When the electorate believes that elections have been free and fair, they can be a powerful catalyst for better governance, greater security and human development.”

Kofi Annan
1938 - 2018
Former Secretary-General of the United Nations

There is more to democracy than elections. But without credible elections a country cannot be democratic. Credibility depends on the political environment – not just on election day, but both before and after. Citizens must be able to participate without fear or obstruction so they can make informed choices. Political parties and candidates must compete freely and responsibly. The media must inform objectively. Electoral officials must be impartial and proficient. An independent judiciary must address disputes fairly and expeditiously. NDI promotes the integrity of the electoral process through citizen monitoring and advocacy that is based on international standards the Institute was instrumental in developing. This work helps ensure the integrity of elections, strengthens citizen confidence, improves the acceptance of outcomes by the contestants, and promotes governmental accountability over the long term.
NDI innovation helped create parallel vote tabulations (PVT) – a proven, statistically-based methodology to evaluate the quality of election-day processes and verify results. A PVT provides an independent check on the accuracy of official election results. This can build public trust, prevent violence, expose fraud or pinpoint election-related problems to address. NDI has helped citizen election observers in more than 50 countries successfully perform PVTs.

NDI has organized more than 250 international observer delegations to over 65 countries, and played a leading role in developing the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation that has been endorsed by over 50 international organizations. The Institute has supported nonpartisan citizen election monitoring around the globe, and helped found the Global Network for Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM), which assists more than 250 citizen-run monitoring organizations in 87 countries to share knowledge and develop best practices. More than 4 million citizen election monitors have deployed in scores of elections as a result of these NDI partnerships.

Another NDI-led initiative, the Open Election Data Initiative (OEDI), has equipped civil society groups, election administrators and technology experts with tools to make election data more transparent, which is essential to electoral integrity. Through its Votes Without Violence toolkit and related website, NDI has also led the development of observation guidance for domestic and international observers that focuses on preventing and mitigating election-related violence against women.
In 2018, NDI engaged in the following election-related activities:

**Election Observation.** In 2018, NDI sent international election observation missions to assess the pre-election environment and election day process in Bangladesh, Georgia, Lebanon, Moldova, Nigeria, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe. The joint NDI/IRI (International Republican Institute) observation mission in Zimbabwe, which was led by two African women former heads of state, provided vital accountability and transparency to the country’s first elections since Robert Mugabe’s removal from power after 37 years. The mission worked with other international and citizen observers to expose flaws, demand respect for the rule of law and offer key reports and recommendations. NDI also partnered with nonpartisan citizen organizations in Afghanistan, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Burma/Myanmar, Cote d’Ivoire, El Salvador, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Macedonia, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Serbia, Tunisia, Timor Leste and Zimbabwe, to enable them to monitor their own elections.

**Exposing Disinformation in Elections.** Disinformation in traditional media has often been used to manipulate public opinion around elections. However, an urgent new threat has emerged from authoritarian regimes using artificial intelligence and automated “bots” to tilt election outcomes by amplifying ethnic division, xenophobic prejudices and disillusionment with democracy. In 2018, NDI convened 15 citizen election monitoring organizations from 11 countries in Belgrade, Serbia, to develop strategies to expose digital disinformation. It also addressed the topic at international forums in Asia, Latin America, before the European Parliament and with two global commissions One of the best ways to combat this new form of disinformation is for election commissions and observers to make election data transparent and accessible. With that in mind, NDI developed Scrape the Vote and Rapid Data Digitization tools to help citizen groups quickly capture and convert content from handwritten forms, such as tally sheets, into analyzable data that can help verify the accuracy of officially-reported results and statistics. Other NDI initiatives include monitoring traditional and social media for evidence of disinformation, using public opinion research to counter it, and supporting network fact-checkers, journalists and civic tech activists to expose it.
International Debates Network

Debates help voters make informed choices by focusing on policy prescriptions instead of personality, religion or ethnic loyalties. Debates offer voters the opportunity to distinguish among candidates as they offer competing visions for the country’s future. Through debates, voters can benefit from clarity on pressing issues, and hold elected leaders accountable for their campaign promises. NDI partners with the U.S.-based Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) and the 38-country Debates International network to help debate organizers design engaging formats, select moderators, negotiate with candidates, and produce live TV broadcasts. NDI and CPD have assisted partners in organizing more than 400 debates in 35 countries for candidates ranging from mayors and legislators to prime ministers and presidents.
Democracy must deliver. NDI governance programs work with legislatures, executive branch offices, local governments, and good governance advocates to foster transparency, accountability, and connectivity between governments and their citizens. NDI views the development of effective, responsive governing institutions as a critical component for the sustainability of democratic reform. In a rapidly changing world, democratic institutions must also become more innovative in adapting to the challenges and opportunities of new technologies and in meeting citizen expectations.

NDI has been a leader in promoting democratic standards for parliaments. As co-chair of the Legislative Openness Working Group of the Open Government Partnership, NDI helps parliaments become more open and accountable to voters. NDI participates in the OpeningParliament.org civil society network, made up of 180 organizations in more than 80 countries. NDI is also a supporter of Code for All, an international network of civic tech organizations that uses digital technology to improve government functioning and offer new channels for citizens to engage with their government.

Kosovo. NDI’s public opinion research in Kosovo found that more than 80 percent of respondents “rarely” have the opportunity to meet elected representatives and discuss their issues and concerns. Members of parliament do not have constituency offices in local municipalities and often lack staff who can help them organize routine meetings with citizens. As a result, citizens of Kosovo often perceive their MPs as detached and isolated from the people they represent. With the support of NDI, the Kosovo Assembly has worked to put the Declaration on Parliamentary Openness into action. MPs are now holding town hall-style Assembly Days in municipalities throughout the country, creating a forum for hundreds of citizens to engage directly with their elected representatives.

Indonesia: NDI works with cities in Indonesia to expand cooperation with citizens to promote greater transparency by publishing open data on government activities. When citizens learn what their government is doing on their behalf, it builds confidence in institutions. Likewise, when citizens understand the plans of their government, they can have more input – thereby creating a virtuous cycle. During Open Government Week, in which 96 countries hosted more than 700 events worldwide, NDI collaborated with the Indonesian president’s office, citizens and technology experts to help the public sector better understand new opportunities for transparency. Ideas have included an infographic design competition for universities, and citizen reports that create compelling visual representations of government data.

“The siren song of autocrats will always find an audience, particularly during times of fear and insecurity … But democracy remains the only viable path to true peace and security.”

Derek Mitchell, NDI President
Disinformation vs. Democracy

Disinformation in politics – particularly during elections – is a critical threat to democracy. While authoritarians have always sought to control citizen access to information, the rise of social media platforms, artificial intelligence and machine learning provide new opportunities to manipulate public opinion and disrupt the domestic politics of geopolitical adversaries. In response to this increasing threat, NDI developed INFO/tegrity, a global initiative to identify and counter disinformation in democratic politics. The initiative supports opinion research to better understand which populations are most vulnerable to disinformation, strengthens the ability of election observers to monitor for disinformation, works with political parties to set ground rules for online campaign conduct, and develops techniques to detect and counter disinformation. Supported by NDI and involving more than a dozen international partners, the Design 4 Democracy Coalition facilitates collaboration and mutual support among organizations dedicated to countering disinformation and promoting democracy-friendly digital platforms and policies. The D4D Coalition provides a direct line of communication with major technology platforms to address urgent issues of disinformation.

Rappler CEO Maria Ressa receives NDI’s Democracy Award from NDI Chair Madeleine K. Albright, together with Margo Gontar (Ukraine), and Philip Howard (United Kingdom). Maria Ressa was named one of TIME’s Person of the Year in 2018. Credit: Margot Schulman
Renewing Political Parties for the 21st Century

Political parties are an essential building block of democracy, providing a forum for voters to organize around common interests, choose political leaders and influence government policy. In too many developing countries, however, political parties are weak institutions that are organized around personalities, rather than policies, and engage voters only at election time.

NDI supports the development of vibrant, accountable and inclusive multiparty systems that offer citizens meaningful choices. NDI’s 21st Century Parties’ Party Renewal Initiative and its Blueprint for 21st Century Parties provide parties with practical tools to modernize their operations, and become more inclusive and responsive to voters. The Institute fosters peer-to-peer exchanges, facilitates productive dialogue between parties and civil society, and works to expand participation of marginalized groups.

The 21st Century Parties blog features insights from party practitioners and scholars to help parties respond to new political and technological challenges. NDI has launched a website — “Technology: A Planning Guide for Political Parties” — to help political parties use technology to improve their operations. The website also provides case studies to demonstrate how technology has revolutionized the political process.

Regional Party Networks. In Latin America, through Red Innovación (Innovation Network), NDI brought together 10 political leaders from 10 countries to discuss methods parties can use to promote healthy competition, strengthen coalitions, resolve differences and build effective party discipline while preserving party members’ ability to vote their conscience. In Southern Africa, NDI brought together senior leaders from 20 ruling and opposition parties in seven countries for the third Political Party Strengthening Institute (PPSI) to build more inclusive, responsive and representative parties in their home countries.

The Balkans. As countries in the Balkan region work to stabilize their democratic systems and take steps toward becoming members of the European Union, all eyes have turned to political parties to drive sweeping political reforms. Citizens have voiced their frustration with parties in public demonstrations in Macedonia, Romania, Montenegro and Serbia to protest government and electoral corruption. Activists across the region criticise political parties for not being transparent about funding sources, not responding to citizens’ concerns like health care and education, and not acknowledging women and youth who want to be more involved in politics. To meet these challenges, representatives from more than 30 parties in the Balkans – including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia – came together to design their own solutions with help from NDI and several political party experts from Western Europe. Participants collaborated on ways to seek wider input from those at all levels within their parties, to tackle transparency in party and campaign finance, and to use social media platforms to share progress on reforms with citizens in real time.
Harnessing Digital Technology for Democracy

Harnessing Digital Technology for Democracy

Digital technology is transforming democracy in fundamental ways. While technology has enabled more open government, and empowered citizens to amplify their voices and hold governments accountable, such as during the Arab Spring and the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine, it has also been used to inhibit participation, exacerbate social divisions, and cause citizens to become more disconnected from politics and government. Through its office in Silicon Valley, NDI is working with digital technology companies to help them design for democracy and mitigate harm their platforms may cause. (See Governance section for more details.)

NDI created DemTools, a suite of technology software, to help democracy activists apply 21st century solutions to the common challenges they face, such as collecting and analyzing election data, tracking constituent concerns, managing citizen contacts, and organizing petition drives.

Tech Innovation in the Middle East and North Africa. In partnership with Stanford University, the Institute for Representative Government and the Aspen Institute, NDI has helped innovators in the Middle East to overcome traditional barriers to develop ‘civic tech’ ideas to improve their communities. The program began with Stanford Online’s first bilingual English-Arabic open course, the Technology for Accountability Lab, which attracted more than 3,450 students from 120 countries, and enabled virtual teams to initiate more than 50 project ideas. Ultimately, these civic tech initiatives produced an online platform to combat disinformation in election campaigns, an app to support Arabic-speaking victims of domestic violence and a blockchain-based system to secure and protect property ownership rights.

“Youth need to act in order to see positive social change. Someone has to start these civic projects. Now, I believe that I can really execute a civic tech project in my local community. I can be that person!”

Myriam Echeikh, program participant from Tunisia

Cybersecurity Campaign Playbook. In 2018, NDI and its sister organization, the International Republican Institute (IRI), joined the Defending Digital Democracy Project (D3P) at Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center to publicly launch an international edition of the Cybersecurity Campaign Playbook. Written by a multi-partisan and international team of experts in cybersecurity, politics and law, the playbook provides simple, actionable ways of countering growing cyber threats. NDI has introduced cybersecurity preparedness concepts to political parties in Southern Africa, and conducted in-depth trainings with partners in Ukraine — a country on the front lines of sophisticated cyber-attacks from Russia. NDI has also been working with industry leaders in the cybersecurity space, including Microsoft, Google and others, to provide democracy organizations, political parties and democracy activists with training, security keys, and advanced security features and assessment tools.
Overcoming Barriers to Women’s Political Participation

When women participate in politics, the results can be socially and economically transformative. Today, women comprise 22 percent of legislative bodies and 17 percent of executive branch ministers worldwide. Despite significant progress in women’s political participation, there is still substantial resistance. At current rates, political parity for women will not be reached until 2080. Equality in politics remains one of the highest hurdles that democracy still faces.

NDI supports the efforts of women to overcome barriers to political involvement. Violence against women in politics is a pervasive deterrent to their political participation. NDI’s #NotTheCost initiative helps stop violence by raising women’s awareness, collecting data on the threats and mitigating its impact with local partners. The Institute’s online incident reporting form collects examples and testimonies from women political leaders to highlight the global prevalence of violence. Our work with the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls is helping raise awareness and build the case for more global action.

In 2018, NDI updated the Win With Women political party strengthening initiative by adding a focus on ending violence against women party members. In addition, NDI launched think10, a groundbreaking safety planning tool to help women in politics around the world identify their personal and professional vulnerabilities so they can enhance their safety.

“And let the word go forth that, as women, we are not asking for our rights. We were born with our rights. We do not need anyone’s permission to practice them. If you attack one of us, you attack all of us; but if you stand with us, we can – and we will – make the world freer, more peaceful and more just than it has ever been.”

Madeleine Albright, NDI Chairman 2018 Madeleine K. Albright Luncheon

Tunisia. Women have made significant advances in Tunisian politics, and their representation in the national legislature is one of the highest in the region. NDI’s work in Tunisia shows how the Institute builds the inclusion of women into program design to ensure that women are in the room, featured in the discussion, and included when decisions are made. In 2017, Tunisia’s Assembly of People’s Representatives unanimously passed groundbreaking legislation focused on eliminating violence against women. The new law increases penalties for perpetrators of violence, and creates both a hotline for at-risk women and a special police unit dedicated to investigating gender-based crime. NDI assisted in development of the law, which set an important benchmark for the safety and rights of women in Tunisia. NDI also works with parliamentary partners to explore and address issues of concern to women, including through focus group research.
The **Women** Mayors’ Network (WoMN)

By 2030, more than 75 percent of the world’s population will live in cities. However, women’s perspectives are significantly underrepresented in urban leadership. Women make up less than five percent of mayors globally. WoMN is an international, nonpartisan, peer network that supports women who are running governments at the urban level. WoMN offers members an opportunity to network, and a platform to share experiences, exchange innovative policy ideas, and engage in cross-regional collaboration.

**Iraq.** NDI is working with women in Iraq’s battle-scarred regions of Anbar, Salahaddin, Kirkuk and Ninewa, on cross-sectarian cooperation and inclusive development. Far from seeing themselves as victims, many women who lived under ISIS occupation have now become key players to build bridges across sectarian divides and promote inclusion and reconciliation.

With support from NDI, they organized the [Women in Peacebuilding Symposium](https://www.womeninpeacebuilding.org), a gathering of more than 200 representatives from government, civil society, and international organizations, to share ideas. The symposium produced [A Strategy for Peace in Iraq: A Gender-Sensitive National Reconciliation Platform](https://www.womeninpeacebuilding.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/WomeninPeacebuilding-Iraq.pdf) — a comprehensive policy document the women are now promoting to decision-makers across the country. They have held over 880 meetings with community leaders and solicited the input and buy-in of an estimated 7,400 citizens. These women are now using their newfound power to help other Iraqi women engage in the reconciliation process.

“We were separated for a long time but through you [NDI] we were able to come together. You [NDI] brought the organizations, the women, and the friendship back across provinces.”

- A participant from Salahaddin, Iraq

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Malala Yousufzai, then 13 years old, participates in an NDI program in Pakistan with Serish Nasim, a future Andi Parhamovich Fellowship recipient.
Inspiring the Next Generation of Youth Leadership

The new ways in which young people communicate, engage with government, and organize around social and political issues are impacting every nation. Despite comprising more than half of the population in many countries — particularly in Africa, the Middle East and Asia — young people often struggle to gain the respect of public officials and party leaders. Their exclusion from decision making can leave them frustrated with politics and vulnerable to extremism. The youth bulge in much of the world offers both a challenge and a critical opportunity for democracy.

NDI helps young people channel their energy, creativity and aspirations so they can become political leaders and activists. Programs build young people’s skills, while helping them find their voice, cultivate relationships with political leaders, and break down sociocultural and institutional barriers to participation. NDI offers resources such as the Youth Political Participation Programming Guide and the Change My Community platform to help strengthen youth political participation.

**Jordan.** With 60 percent of the population under age 30, unemployment rates twice the global average, and few available outlets for political activity, the underlying dynamics that sparked the Arab Spring in the Middle East and North Africa still exist. Nonetheless, NDI’s Ana Usharek (I Engage) program in Jordan provides one successful model for civic education in the region. Reaching more than 27,000 students from 25 universities and 330 public schools across the country, the program enables students to learn about democratic values and civic responsibility, and then apply their newly-gained knowledge to increase transparency and improve citizen engagement with the Jordanian government. Participants compete in weekly, nationally-televised debates about current events, policies and government action. When youth are invested in their country’s future through Ana Usharek, they are less likely to succumb to radical ideologies and activities.

“Ana Usharek was an amazing experience. It enhanced our skills in advocating for a cause and developed our personalities. Through the program we realized our true potential as youth leaders and as active citizens serving our society.”

Alaa Thalgy, Hashemite University, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Nigeria. Despite comprising almost half the Nigerian population — and 60 percent of Africa, making the continent the world’s youngest — youth have been historically marginalized from entering politics at both federal and local levels. To increase youth participation in Nigerian politics, NDI partnered in the “Not Too Young To Run” (NTYTR) campaign to lower the age requirement to 35 years old for presidential candidates, to 30 for gubernatorial and senatorial candidates, and to 25 for federal and state level representatives. Samson Itodo, Convener of the NTYTR Campaign, was honored at NDI’s 35th Anniversary Gala as a rising political leader for his groundbreaking work with Nigerian youth.

“What young people did was to look in the face of anger, disenchantment and loss of faith in political institutions. We resolved to say it is enough … What young people did was renew their faith in democracy.”

Samson Itodo
Convener, #NotTooYoungToRun, Nigeria
NDI 2018 Rising Democracy Leader
Including People with Disabilities, LGBTI Communities and Other Marginalized Groups

Democracy is more likely to endure when all segments of society are free to participate without suffering discrimination or reprisal. Yet in many new and emerging democracies, discrimination based on age, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity and religion is common. More than 80 percent of people with disabilities live in developing and post-conflict countries, where achieving equality can be difficult. Discriminatory legal barriers can prevent lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals from accessing public services, gaining employment and engaging in political life. Additionally, marginalized groups are often targets of physical and psychological violence. NDI polling across six Western Balkans countries, for instance, revealed that one-third of LGBTI people experienced physical violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Roma. Roma constitute the largest ethnic minority in Europe, but they routinely live in isolated settlements that lack water, sanitation and other basic services, and are denied basic rights and access to education, healthcare and employment. Anti-Roma discrimination and vigilante violence have escalated in recent years, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and exclusion for the 10 million Roma who live in the region. Fifteen years ago, NDI began helping Roma communities use the political process to claim their rights as citizens. With NDI support, the Roma community in Slovakia now boasts 42 mayors and nearly 500 local council members. Currently, an NDI program alumnus is serving as the second ever Roma member of parliament since Slovakia gained independence.

In Central America’s Northern Triangle, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador have inherited a legacy of brutality, corruption and fragile institutions from devastating civil wars that wracked their countries in the 1980s. Today, criminal networks and gangs remain a day-to-day source of murder, rape and other forms of violence. Rates of femicide in Honduras and Guatemala are among the highest in the world, presenting a major challenge to women’s political engagement. NDI has helped indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups in those countries, such as LGBTI communities, increase political participation and develop tools to counter violence.

Inclusion in election observation and issue advocacy helps marginalized communities gain greater visibility, power and influence. NDI has helped representatives from these groups run for political office, advocate for legal reforms, and pressure governments to implement international agreements such as the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. This support is a crucial aspect of building inclusive and sustainable democracy, which depends on the broad protection of human rights.
“When we talk about democracy, it’s really always about the role of the majority, but the thing is, it is also the obligation of the majority to give a voice to the minority ... those people that are voiceless in our democracy.”

Jose Andres
Professional Chef, NDI Leadership Award Recipient
Promoting Democratic Practice in Conflict Zones and Closed Societies

For over three decades, NDI has supported democracy in closed societies and countries ravaged by conflict in the most challenging places in the world, including Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, Northern Ireland, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and the Northern Triangle in Central America. Cooperation, inclusion, and nonviolence lie at the heart of democracy. Failure to resolve disputes through peaceful, democratic means often results in fractured communities and institutions, discrimination and political exclusion of certain groups, and potentially devastating violence that can lead to large-scale internal and external migration. In conflict or post-conflict environments, NDI convenes political and civic leaders across divisions to strengthen their commitment to peaceful politics, build mutual trust, discover shared interests, and cooperate in service of citizen needs and priorities. In closed societies, NDI works with those seeking to build their political capacity as a foundation for the moment when a more open, democratic society becomes possible.

Syria. Against all odds, and in the face of war and barrel bomb chemical attacks by the Assad regime, democratic values and processes are still making progress in Syria. The armed conflict has left more than 400,000 dead, caused the internal displacement of over 6 million people and forced another 5 million refugees to flee the country. However, Syrians in opposition-held areas are using democratic practices to forge solutions to their communities’ most pressing problems, including violence against women that is exacerbated in areas of military conflict. Since 2013, NDI has organized more than 1,000 civic education sessions — reaching 10,000 Syrians — on topics such as political pluralism, women’s rights, local governance, democratic elections and the rule of law. The Institute has also conducted thousands of consultations and trained more than 2,300 local council members to improve service delivery and governance. Working together across sectarian lines, local councils are creating models of diversity and tolerance that can be a powerful example for future political leaders once the conflict subsides. Successful governance by these civic groups and councils has helped thwart extremist groups from seizing control and establishing parallel governing structures in these areas.

North Korea. Ranks among the world’s worst human rights abusers, as strict government control over all aspects of society silences dissent. NDI has worked to amplify the voices of North Korean defectors to promote transparency, accountability and transitional justice should political change occur. NDI has helped the Transitional Justice Working Group (TJWG) based in Seoul, South Korea understand the need to collect evidence of human rights violations, and apply geographic mapping technology to identify mass graves in the North critical for holding human rights abusers accountable.
“As a woman, your presence, your existence means you are a true fighter for democracy in Iran...When I came here [to the U.S.] I found NDI...and after that, I found a global audience...”

Masih Alinejad
Author, “The Wind in My Hair: My Fight for Freedom in Modern Iran”
NDI 2018 Rising Democracy Leader
NDI Historical Timeline

“History has proved both optimists and pessimists wrong about democracy. Future events will probably do the same ... [History] does not sail ahead in a straight line, but when skilled and determined leaders are at the helm, it does move forward.”

Dr. Samuel Huntington
“Third Wave of Democratization”, 1991

1982 President Reagan’s Democracy Speech at Westminster
1983 NDI and National Endowment for Democracy are created
1984 International political leaders hosted at U.S. Democratic Convention
1985 Regional democracy conferences held in Africa and Latin America

1986 Corazon Aquino of Philippines Becomes Asia’s First Female President
1986 Philippines welcomes first NDI-IRI election observation mission
1986 First NDI Democracy Award is given to Senator Thomas F. Eagleton

1987 Taiwan Lifts Martial Law After Four Decades
1987 NDI assists in development of political parties in Korea and Taiwan

1988 Pinochet Dictatorship Ends
1988 “Vote NO” coalition ensures credible plebiscite in Chile with NDI support
1988 NDI hosts first international women’s conference

1989 Fall of Berlin Wall; Protests in China’s Tiananmen Square
1989 NDI supported citizen monitors in Panama expose fraud by Noriega
“NDI has done what no Yugoslav institution could have done – you have brought together people who under other circumstances would never have consented to be in the same room together.”

Yugoslav participant of NDI-sponsored conference

1991 Soviet Union Dissolves; Breakup of Yugoslavia Begins

1991 South African civic education partners develop “Project Vote!” with NDI help
1991 Africa’s first parallel vote tabulation occurs in Zambia elections with NDI support
1993 NDI supports UN-conducted multiparty elections in Cambodia
1994 NDI mission exposes fraudulent elections in Dominican Republic
1997 Northern Ireland and South Africa political leaders share ideas on national reconciliation in NDI-sponsored exchange

“Not a day went by in the [Northern Ireland] talks that a reference was not made to the South Africa experience. It was a turning point in our lives.”

Signer of the Good Friday Peace Agreement about an NDI-supported gathering with South African political leaders to share common experiences
1998 **Transitions Toward Democracy Occur in Indonesia, Nigeria and Slovakia**
- **1998** After Suharto dictatorship ends, NDI supports elections in Indonesia
- **1999** Sixteen emerging democracies issue “Sana’a Declaration” that emphasizes the importance of economic growth to democracy
- **2000** NDI international election observers and citizen monitors expose fraud in Perú
- **2000** Three major international party networks join NDI in a commitment to support party development

2001 **9/11 Attacks**
- **2002** NDI begins work in Afghanistan
- **2003** NDI conducts first-ever nationwide public opinion survey in Iraq
- **2003** “Congress of Democrats in the Islamic World” is convened with NDI support to develop governance principles in predominantly Muslim countries
- **2003** NDI begins work with Roma, Europe’s largest ethnic minority
- **2004** Madeleine Albright launches Win With Women Global Action Plan

2005 **Liberia Elects Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa’s first female president**
- **2005** African Statesmen Initiative with 17 former presidents is formed to assist political transitions on the continent
- **2005** NDI plays leading role in establishing global principles for international election observation
- **2005** NDI partners with leading academics to launch studies on political party development
- **2005** First Madeleine K. Albright Award for women’s political participation

2007-8 **Global Financial Crisis**
- **2009** NDI and international partners create Global Network for Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM) to support citizen election monitoring
- **2009** Debates International Network is co-founded by NDI

2011 **Arab Spring Protests**
- **2011** NDI observes successful constituent assembly elections in Tunisia
- **2012** NDI helps draft declarations of principles for parliamentary openness and for citizen election observation
- **2013** Red Innovación: Spanish-language democracy platform is created
- **2013** Silicon Valley presence established to facilitate technology support for democracy activists and local partners
This timeline is dedicated to the thousands of democracy activists and local partners who inspire us every day with their amazing courage, commitment and indomitable spirit. NDI is very grateful for the support of our donors.
Harriman Democracy Award

Recipients

Leadership Award Recipients

2018 - Jose Andres, United States
2016 - Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Denmark

Democracy Award Recipients

2017 - StopFake.org, Ukraine
2017 - Rappler, Philippines
2017 - Oxford Internet Institute, United Kingdom
2015 - Barbara Mikulski, United States
2015 - António Guterres, Portugal
2015 - Yassine Brahim, Tunisia
2015 - Rafik Halouani, Tunisia
2015 - Wafa Makhlouf, Tunisia
2015 - Sayida Ounissi, Tunisia
2014 - Hanna Hopko, Ukraine
2014 - Serhiy Leshchenko, Ukraine
2014 - Oleksandr Solontay, Ukraine
2013 - The “Civic Innovators”
2011 - Geraldine Ferraro, United States
2011 - Richard Holbrooke, United States
2011 - Charles Manatt, United States
2010 - Morgan Tsvangirai, Zimbabwe
2008 - Archbishop Desmond Tutu, South Africa
2007 - Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia
2004 - Joseph R. Biden, Jr., United States
2004 - Richard G. Lugar, United States
2004 - Abdoulaye Wade, Senegal
2004 - Xanana Gusmão, Timor-Leste
2004 - Zurab Zhvania, Georgia
2004 - Corazon Cojuangco Aquino, Philippines
2004 - José Miguel Insulza, Chile
2004 - Amat Al-Aleem Alswa, Yemen
2004 - Bronislaw Geremek, Poland
2002 - Organization of American States
2002 - Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, Cuba
2001 - Peter and Linda Biehl, United States
2001 - Kofi A. Annan, United Nations
1999 - Hillary Rodham Clinton, United States
1999 - Eduard Shevardnadze, Georgia
1998 - William Jefferson Clinton, United States
1998 - David Trimble, Northern Ireland
1998 - John Hume, Northern Ireland
1998 - Gerry Adams, Northern Ireland
1998 - Lord Alderdice, Northern Ireland
1998 - David Ervine, Northern Ireland
1998 - Monica McWilliams, Northern Ireland
1998 - Gary McMichael, Northern Ireland
1998 - Malachi Curran, Northern Ireland
1997 - Edward M. Kennedy, United States
1997 - Selim Beslagic, Bosnia-Herzegovina
1997 - Zlatko Kramaric, Croatia
1997 - Vesna Pesic, Serbia
1996 - Walter F. Mondale, United States
1996 - Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma
1995 - Madeleine K. Albright, United States
1995 - Thabo Mbeki, South Africa
1993 - George J. Mitchell, United States
1993 - Kim Young Sam, Korea
1992 - Jimmy Carter, United States
1992 - Anatoly Sobchak, Russia
1991 - Lane Kirkland, United States
1991 - Vaclav Havel, Czechoslovakia
1989 - Thomas S. Foley, United States
1989 - Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan
1988 - Paul G. Kirk, Jr., United States
1988 - Movement for Free Elections, Chile
1987 - Raul Alfonsin, Argentina
1986 - Thomas F. Eagleton, United States
NDI Board Members

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Chairmen Emeriti
Rachelle Horowitz, Ex Officio
Paul G. Kirk, Jr.
Walter F. Mondale
Charles T. Manatt (1936-2011)

Alumni Group Advisory Council

The Alumni Group Advisory Council provides strategic support in connecting NDI with its alumni, contractors and volunteers around the world.

Chair
Laura Abrahams Schulz

Kathy Gest
Kate Head
Nicole Mlade

Chairman’s Council

The Chairman’s Council brings together leaders from corporate, philanthropic, and academia sectors to provide expertise, counsel and resources to help NDI meet evolving challenges.

R. Hunter Biden
Anna M. Chavez
Frank F. Islam
Omar Kader

Herbert C. Klein
Sharon Nazarian
Carol Sharer
Ambassadors Circle

The Ambassadors Circle utilizes the valuable perspectives and practical experience of former ambassadors, and their country and regional expertise helps NDI promote democratic institutions and practices around the globe in innovative ways.

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Charles Rivkin,  
Former U.S. Ambassador to France

John V. Roos,  
Former U.S. Ambassador to Japan

Alan D. Solomont,  
Former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and Principality of Andorra

Louis B. Susman,  
Former U.S. to the United Kingdom

Equal Voices for Democracy

Founded in 2017, Equal Voices is focused on advancing the political inclusion of LGBTI people around the world. It is based on the belief that LGBTI people should never fear for their lives because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and should have access to a full and equal spectrum of civil and political rights to engage with their government.

Chair and Co-Founder
Bob J. Satawake

Co-Founder
Paul Boskind  
Kip Bright

Clayton Bond  
Bruce Bonn, MD  
Tamerlin Godley  
Richard Holt

Jack Lanza  
W. Gerald McElroy  
Katie Rosson  
Steve Russell  
Judy and Dennis Shepard  
Jill Walters
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