



WFD

Executive
Non-Departmental Public
Body sponsored by



Foreign Commonwealth
& Development Office

Strengthening democracy around the world

Annual Review 2019-2020



Cover photo: Ashura Michael was the first deaf Speaker elected at the East African Youth Parliament, in November 2019 in Tanzania. Youth Parliaments like this one, which WFD supports, give young people a platform to have their say and get involved in politics - and ultimately, use their energy to change society for the better.

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The first virtual Prime Minister's Questions
in the UK House of Commons, in April 2020.
Photograph: Jessica Taylor / House of Commons



Foreword

Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP

Speaker of the House of Commons and Patron of WFD

When I became Speaker, in November last year, I spoke of the importance of making sure that those on the benches of the House of Commons have the right to question and hold to account whoever is in power.

This resonates strongly with the work that Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) undertakes in supporting parliaments, civil society, and other institutions in becoming more representative, accountable and a safe place to work for MPs and staff.

WFD has a close partnership with the House of Commons and by drawing on the expertise of MPs and staff alike, it helps countries navigate the path to being more resilient and representative democracies.

From making politics in East Africa more inclusive, to conducting pioneering research into the challenges to democracy in the Western Balkans - WFD has helped foster democratic traditions and build fairer political systems across the world.

In the UK, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic - and thanks to the ingenuity and talent of our House of Commons staff - we ensured that our strong democratic tradition could continue throughout lockdown as we moved to a virtual parliament. WFD's work supporting other countries to do the same should be commended.

When my esteemed predecessor Baroness Boothroyd wrote the foreword to WFD's first annual report almost 30 years ago, I am sure she imagined a very different world than the one we face now. Challenges such as authoritarianism and environmental and public health emergencies are pushing democracy to the brink and testing it like never before. In the wake of this adversity, WFD's work strengthening democracies is more important than ever.

I am honoured to support WFD in these endeavours as its Patron - and wish it well for the year ahead.

Richard Graham MP speaks at WFD's roundtable during the British-Canadian conference on media freedom in July 2019.





Introduction from the Chair

Richard Graham MP

Chair of WFD's Board of Governors

The core values of Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) – the rule of law, tolerance and freedom – lie at the heart of British democracy, and our work around the world reinforces our fundamental belief that power lies with the people through the ballot box.

At the end of a year when there was much progress on the ground to celebrate, the COVID-19 pandemic has cast a long shadow on democratic institutions and practice. But WFD was still able to help partners in tackling new challenges: in Nepal, WFD supported the relevant committee in parliament in reviewing the 57-year-old Infectious Disease Act that the government invoked to tackle COVID-19.

In Kosovo, on the back of an initiative led by WFD, three out of five of the main political parties excluded candidates with criminal indictments or sentences from their election lists in the 2019 snap elections.

In Jordan, WFD helped develop a new e-voting system in the House of Representatives, to make voting more efficient and transparent.

These successes are built upon the strength of our local staff, some of whom I met when visiting WFD's offices in North Macedonia and Indonesia.

What also always strikes me on visits are the relationships and goodwill – with parliaments, political parties, and civil society organisations – fostered by WFD and the British political parties who run projects agreed with us.

Last year, for example, WFD brought together an expert panel of government ministers from Indonesia and Malaysia, along with senior journalists, to discuss media freedom in south-east Asia at the joint British-Canadian conference on media freedom.

This was one example of practical steps to support UK government priorities to address the root causes of conflict, corruption and human rights abuses.

These relationships will be vital in maintaining progress in countries where emergency legislation and social distancing threaten vibrant scrutiny and democratic challenge.

We face new threats as the world tries to return to normal – but I am confident that WFD staff and partners will again find creative solutions. In a year when the Economist's Democracy Index turned negative for the first time in 30 years, there is much to do.

Anthony Smith and Talat Xhaferi, President of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia at the opening of the Parliamentary Budget Office in North Macedonia.





Chief Executive's report

Anthony Smith CMG

Chief Executive Officer of WFD

Among the lessons of the past, remarkable, twelve months, one that has stuck with me is the importance of resilience. This applies at so many levels – as individuals in the face of isolation or injustice, as communities as we mourn the loss of friends and family, and as democracies as we seek to build or win the rights and freedoms that enable us to live our lives as fully as we deserve.

The challenges that we have faced and the ones ahead – whether they come from our relationship with the natural world, like COVID-19 or climate breakdown, or from our relationships with each other, like the criminal injustice suffered by minorities and women – have one thing in common.

That common thread is that our response depends on the quality of our political systems. All parts of our societies need a voice and the ability to participate in political life. We need to debate these challenges openly and with respect and understanding. Our justice systems need to operate fairly and apply equally to all. And we need to have confidence in our democratic institutions.

The challenges we face are shared. Women and young people are leading the response and building the resilience of democratic governance or, all too often, working to restore it after a long period of decline.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy is honoured to support that leadership and help democratic institutions to better protect and address the needs of the most vulnerable in society.

Chief Executive's report

This year, inclusion has been at the heart of many of our key achievements:

- In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, and Nepal, we have worked with women parliamentarians and councillors to hone their leadership skills and support them as they prepare for elections. In Sudan, we provided women political leaders with negotiation training to strengthen their role in the peace process.
- We have made sure that the needs of persons with disabilities are properly taken into account in political decision making, by supporting new laws which ensure persons with disabilities in three Kenyan counties have the same rights and access as other members of society; training new MPs in Sierra Leone on disability inclusion; and facilitating the President of Mozambique's commitment to new laws, policies and strategies to improve inclusion.
- Through our Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy programme WFD worked with young people to ensure they are included in political decision making. In Ghana, we trained 3,000 student leaders on parliamentary ethics, while in East Africa, we worked with young people to secure the support of political leaders for a regional commitment to good governance.
- In the Western Balkans, we launched the Human Rights and Gender Network (HUGEN) to enable parliaments to better promote gender equality in politics and across society and enshrine international standards of human rights in law through sharing lessons and experiences.
- WFD continued to support the Arab League and the Coalition of Women MPs from Arab Countries in drafting the first ever regional agreement to tackle gender-based violence. In Lebanon, we also assisted a parliamentary committee in amending the Lebanese Penal Code to criminalise sexual harassment and extend the definition of rape – this will serve to reduce the impunity of perpetrators of violence against women.

The international development work of the UK political parties has also generated some important results this year:

- The Conservative Party's WFD programme is supporting aims to eradicate violence against women in politics in Honduras by working with the Union of Latin American Parties to present bills in the local Congress on this important topic.
- The Labour Party's WFD programme supported the Women's Academy for Africa (WAFA) in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment across the region. This year, the party organised a workshop to train women leaders from 13 African countries on how to run their own workshops on fundraising skills and building a campaign profile.
- The Scottish National Party's WFD programme collaborated with the Committee of Voters of Ukraine to host a series of roundtable discussions around Ukraine aimed at developing a cross-sector strategy and a guide for citizens to identify and combat Russian disinformation in advance of presidential and parliamentary elections.
- Other parties represented in Westminster implemented a range of programmes, including one which collaborated with the Conservative Party of Georgia to help them play a lead role in the government's response to tackling fake news and disinformation ahead of elections in 2020. WFD later provided technical support to the first ever parliamentary inquiry on disinformation.

These are just some of our achievements from this year and you will find many more in this report. These achievements were identified through the information that was gathered in our new Evidence and Impact Hub which evaluates the impact of our programmes against our intended and expected outcomes. By gathering data from our local offices, we are building an evidence base for what we do, which in turn improves the overall quality of our democracy assistance work.

This evidence also feeds into our research, with new findings and analysis being published this year on election observation missions, anti-corruption, women on parliamentary committees, and more. Through our partnership with the International Development Department of the University of Birmingham, we continue to build a greater understanding of democratic governance and use that knowledge to improve the design of our activities.

We are also aided in our endeavours by other partnerships, such as those with the UK's political parties. By working closely with the parties and their sister party networks, we can engage parties around the world to strengthen accountability, gender representation, and accessibility to persons with disabilities.

As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, WFD adapted its programmes as the needs of our partners changed and donors re-assessed priorities. The pandemic affected all the countries in which we work but also reinforced the importance of democratic institutions such as parliaments in providing accountability when measures to address a public health emergency are introduced but used to curtail civil liberties.

WFD's mission - to support legitimate and effective, multi-party, representative democracy - is more relevant than ever in the context of the pandemic. The world has changed radically in the past year but, in the face of new challenges, we believe that inclusion, equality, and political participation remain the foundation for sustained progress.

WFD's achievements this year would not have been possible without the resilience shown by all our staff and partners and the excellent work they have done on a daily basis. This report is a testament to the breadth of their efforts to support democracy around the world, in all its forms.

In the following sections, you will find a review of the year and how the organisation has adapted, a breakdown of our work in each region of the world, and a summary of what we have achieved through our partnership with the UK political parties. I hope you enjoy reading them.



Anthony Smith CMG

Chief Executive Officer of WFD

The year in review

Throughout the year, we have continued to improve our systems, refine our methodology, expand our expertise, and extend our operations. As a democracy-supporting organisation, we have over 150 people employed across our headquarters and 32 country offices.

Programmes

In 2019-20, WFD ran 81 programmes in 47 countries. We launched new programmes in countries such as Sudan, where we trained women political leaders in negotiating to help them play an important role in the peace process. While in the Maldives, we are working with parliament and its committees to make it more inclusive, gender-responsive and accountable. Many of our existing programmes, including strengthening accountability and inclusion in the Union parliament in Myanmar were extended.

Across our network, we organised over 1,000 activities and employed nearly 300 experts to create tailor-made approaches, capable of addressing local challenges to democratic governance.

Supporting the UK's global role

As the UK redefines its international role, WFD continues to play an important part in promoting British democratic values and supporting the UK's foreign and development policy.

As a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO, formerly FCO), WFD partners with the UK government and supports its priorities, while also building collaborative relationships with other leading governments, international, regional and local organisations:

- WFD is a key part of Global Britain and strengthens relationships between party and institutional leaders in over 30 countries and their UK counterparts.
- WFD represents the face of UK democracy assistance worldwide, and is increasingly influencing global efforts through its participation in networks such as the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, the Open Government Partnership (OGP), and the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC).
- WFD develops strategic and working level links with other leading international democracy assistance organisations and donors - including the European Partnership for Democracy, International IDEA, UNDP, National Democratic Institute, International Republican Institute, and a range of Commonwealth organisations - to help extend the reach and impact of our work.
- WFD builds platforms for increased security and prosperity by addressing the root causes of conflict, corruption, human rights abuses, poor governance, and insufficient political inclusion, particularly of women.
- WFD empowers individuals and groups to exercise their democratic rights, as we believe that effective, accountable and inclusive institutions provide the groundwork for all democratic and liberal societies. Our support for parliaments and political parties enables them to play an active role in: defending the rights of women, the LGBT+ community, and persons with disabilities; strengthening human rights committees; promoting legislative reform; and working with parties to formulate progressive pro-poor and inclusive policies.
- We support the UK Government on specific initiatives in our field, such as defending media freedom. WFD hosted a panel discussion on South-East Asia at the joint UK-Canadian conference on media freedom. We also support this work on the ground, for example in Georgia, where we have provided journalists with training to help them better understand how parliament works and ensure their news reports are accurate. This in turn increases public interest in parliamentary work and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we trained parliamentary staff in communicating to the country's 84 million citizens.
- By employing local and expert staff in our network of offices in 32 countries outside the UK, we can provide UK Government departments and embassies with quick, accurate and in-depth political analysis.



Young people from East Africa gathered for the second session of the East African Youth Parliament, organised by Faraja Africa Foundation with support from WFD, in November 2019.



WFD staff receiving training on our new finance system, which we introduced this year.

Investing in new ways of working and better safeguards

In this reporting year, we have made significant improvements in our systems and strengthened the way in which we support our people and manage our programmes:

- We have provided additional training to staff across all our teams on safeguarding, while renewing efforts to ensure contracting and risk management procedures are complied with across WFD. This is to meet our commitment to safeguard all staff and beneficiaries from sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.
- We are ensuring inclusion is a core component across our programmes. We continued to develop capacity internally to better support women and other marginalised groups.
- We continued to improve a new online platform for monitoring and evaluating programmes regularly and consistently: the WFD Evidence and Impact Hub. This enabled us to monitor and analyse the latest data on programmes which is collected more quickly.

We have also introduced a new finance system. As well as helping our staff save time, this helps us maintain the necessary rigour in ensuring our work represents value for money and is spent in the public's interest.

The year in brief

As part of an international observation team, we sent an election observer to help monitor presidential, parliamentary and regional elections which all took place on 17 April in Indonesia. This is the world's third-largest democracy with an electorate of about 193 million voters. 245,000 candidates competed for approximately 22,000 places with the election spread over an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, spanning three time zones.

In Myanmar, we provided mentors (former MPs) to parliamentary committees and trained committee members in developing their skills of conducting inquiries. On the back of this training, the first ever public hearings were held in parliament, a significant milestone for transparency and accountability. During the same month, a delegation from the education committee visited South Africa to learn more about how education policy can be used to alleviate poverty and build inclusive societies.



We hosted a regional conference in Yangon, Myanmar, on how parliaments in Asia are taking action to monitor the implementation of new legislation and review existing laws. The event gathered over 700 legislators, civil servants and researchers. Examples of the legislation being reviewed on the back of this conference include: the law which was invoked in Nepal to tackle COVID-19; a review of the Microfinance law in Myanmar which enabled WFD to provide a platform for start-ups to get greater financial assistance (include businesses drying rice for farmers, which is profitable as dried rice is worth more than wet rice); and discrimination and human rights abuses in local legislation in Indonesia.

April

June



May

Under our flagship 'Western Balkans Democracy Initiative', we published research on the cost of youth emigration to Western Balkan economies. Widely reported findings from Serbia revealed 80% of young people are actively considering leaving the country. WFD is now working with political parties, institutions and civil society to identify policy responses. Sister reports covering Montenegro, North Macedonia and Albania followed later in the year.

We delivered
more than
1,182
activities.

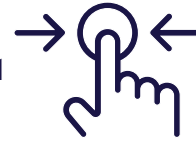




We launched

56

new programmes.



We organised a roundtable on media freedom in South-East Asia as part of the UK and Canadian Governments' conference on defending media freedom, with a guest panel including: His Excellency Mr Gobind Singh Deo (former Minister of Communications and Multimedia, Malaysia), H.E. Mr Rudiantara (Minister of Communication Information Technology, Indonesia), Ms Maria Ressa (Chief Executive, Rappler online news organisation (Philippines) and CNN journalist), Mr Myat (Sonny) Swe (founder of news outlet Frontier, Myanmar) and Ms Daw Tin Htar Swe OBE (former Editor, BBC Burmese Service). The discussion was opened by Richard Graham MP.

We supported the Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs as it committed the National Youth Moot Parliament to improving the participation of persons living with disabilities in politics. This resulted in proposals to amend the National Youth Council Act (2010) to include representation of young people with a disability at all levels and to provide for a national youth MP to represent this constituency.

July

September

August

We organised a conference in Ghana for activists and legislators from 14 Commonwealth countries on women's political leadership. This informed research we are undertaking in partnership with the International Development Department at the University of Birmingham on women in African parliaments and their influence on policymaking.



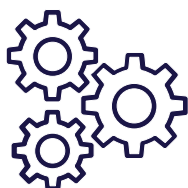
We implemented

81

programmes in

47

countries



We launched the Human Rights and Gender Network (HUGEN) in the Western Balkans. This brings together parliamentary committees from the region to support progressive action on human rights and equality. The programme follows the model of the Regional Network of Parliamentary Committees for Economy and Finance, which WFD reconstituted in 2012 to support political and institutional reform in the Western Balkans.

In Sierra Leone, we supported the Parliament as it launched a mobile app to improve transparency and citizens' political engagement. The app has been downloaded over 1,000 times, with an average user rating of 4.5 out of 5.

In Mozambique, we supported the presidency as it organised a dialogue with hundreds of persons living with disabilities. The event secured a commitment from the President to enact new laws and promote executive action on socio-economic and political inclusion.

In Kosovo, WFD led an initiative to tackle corruption and promote fairer politics ahead of the 2019 elections, which resulted in three out of five of the main political parties excluding candidates with criminal indictments or sentences from their election lists.



Across two cities in Kyrgyzstan, Tokmok and Bishkek, we organised training for 59 women councillors on electoral campaign strategy and how to prepare for upcoming elections, while in Sudan, we provided women political leaders with training to improve their negotiation skills ahead of sensitive talks for the peace process.

October

December



November

In Kenya, powers are being devolved to the county level, which is why WFD has been aiding organisations for persons living with disabilities in lobbying for greater and equal access to politics, leading to the passing of inclusive disability laws in counties around the country. Following extensive engagement with local civil society organisations, Disability Bills were introduced in local counties such as Kakamega and Homa Bay that enshrined this equality in law.

In Tanzania, WFD supported the largest youth leadership gathering in East Africa, the YouLead Summit. Over 300 young people from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, South Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi came from hundreds of miles away to discuss common issues faced by young people all over the region and how they can help their countries with implementing the region's sustainable development goals.

We deployed

280

experts to train and advise partners. 20% of them were from the UK and 80% from other countries. 38% of them were women.



As part of our new programme, we facilitated meetings between the leadership of the Maldives Parliament (the Majlis), the UK House of Commons and the Welsh Parliament to share best practice on standards of conduct in public life and on public and civil society engagement.



We hosted the closing conference for the 2018-2020 Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D). The event took place at the Royal Academy, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and UK Parliament. It saw over 200 delegates from 14 Commonwealth countries convene in London to share solutions to foster inclusion and accountability in politics.

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic took hold across much of the world, our teams started working to adapt our programmes in partnership with donors and help mitigate the risks the pandemic poses to democratic progress.

January

March



February

The Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D), a partnership programme managed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and implemented by WFD, hosted 17 participants from nine Asian countries. This included current and former parliamentarians and leading civil society activists, and a closed-door roundtable in a South-East Asian country to discuss nationally-appropriate ways to advance the rights of LGBT+ people in Asia.



We authored

235

original studies, policy briefs, guidance documents and multimedia products to inform policymaking and share best practice.



Parliaments and Civil Society



Programmes

Why we work with parliaments

Legislatures are the cornerstones of democratic governance. They check and challenge the work of government, make and amend laws and debate important issues.

Parliaments serve as a central gateway for all citizens to actively participate in public life. They also play a critical role in conflict-affected states, bringing together divergent interests and fostering relationships among their members and the groups they represent.

WFD works with parliaments to promote inclusive and effective governance that strengthens policy making, holds government to account and represents people's interests.



Representatives of civil society organisations speaking about inclusive politics at our Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy conference in March 2020. Kenyan disability expert Faith Odidi addresses the audience.

Freda Liu from BFM, a radio station in Malaysia, speaks at the Women Who Lead conference.



Why we work with civil society

Democracy is about engaging people in the decisions that impact on their lives, whether in traditional ways or virtually with technology, as many institutions are doing as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The ability of citizens to interact with political institutions is critical to the future of democratic systems.

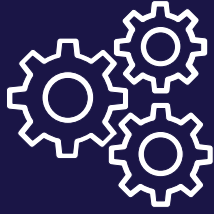
While parliaments and political parties are important for effective democracy, civil society organisations provide an alternative channel to engage constructively with government to ensure adequate services are provided and evidence-based policies are adopted.

Civil society organisations are independent and often rely on volunteers from their communities. They range from small community-based organisations to larger non-governmental organisations and they often campaign and advocate for better human rights standards.

Engaging civil society is part of many WFD programmes, and we are proud to support these organisations in building inclusive societies and holding democratic institutions to account.

Sub-Saharan Africa

In Africa, WFD worked with parliaments at national and sub-national levels, as well as with civil society organisations and independent institutions, to consolidate and strengthen democracy. During 2019-20, we made progress on supporting more inclusive political processes and assisting people that are often poorly represented (including women, persons with disabilities, and young people) as they become more active in politics.



20

active programmes



299

activities



65

experts engaged



25

conferences



19

public facing campaigns,
such as the campaign to end
gender-based violence in Nigeria

Giving young people a voice

Uganda

In Uganda, where 78% of the population is below the age of 30, we worked with Parliament, the youth parliament, young politicians, and youth groups to support the representation and inclusion of young people.

A robust legal and policy framework for young people's representation in governance exists, but it has done little to address the limited opportunities for them to influence national policies. This problem has been amplified by the fact that it has been difficult to create meaningful legislation which is responsive to the social, economic and political needs and aspirations of young people in Uganda.

Over the past two years, WFD has worked with Members of Parliament who belong to the Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs (UPFYA) to help them turn key decision makers into allies. Our work has also assisted our partners as they sought to influence Parliament's legislative agenda, ensuring all laws take young people's needs into account.

For example, an entire session of the National Youth Moot Parliament was dedicated to increasing the participation of persons with disabilities in politics. This in turn resulted in proposals to amend the National Youth Council Act (2010) to ensure young people with a disability are represented at all levels and to provide for a national youth Member of Parliament to represent them.

In November 2019, WFD supported the YouLead summit which took place in Arusha, Tanzania. This was the largest youth leadership gathering in East Africa, with over 300 young people from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, South Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi arriving from hundreds of miles away on a series of buses and other modes of transport, to discuss common issues faced by young people all over the region. The summit's objective was to enable young people to be more meaningfully involved in the implementation and tracking of the region's sustainable development goals. The summit this year was combined with the East African Youth Parliament, where 150 young people elected Ashura Michael, a deaf youth activist from Kenya, as a Speaker for their Youth Parliament. The session was organised by the Faraja Africa Foundation with support from WFD, Action Aid, the YouLead Summit, and the International Republican Institute.



Participants during the East African Youth Parliament and YouLead Summit in Arusha, Tanzania, November 2019.





Inclusion of Young People in Governance and Decision Making

THEME:

STATE YOUTH AGENDA SET FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

Date: 19th - 21st June 2019

Participants in a session on setting state youth agendas that advocate for things that are important to young Nigerians, in June 2019.

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Nigeria

Nigeria is expected to be the world's third most populous country by 2050, with 400 million inhabitants (according to UN estimates). Nearly 70% of Nigerians are under the age of 35. However, a limited proportion of these people are represented in any level of government.

Over recent years, Nigeria has made welcome advances on this front. Notably, in May 2018, Parliament passed legislation to lower the minimum age necessary to run for office from 35 to 30 years in the Senate, and 30 to 25 years in the House of Representatives and State House of Assembly. Known as the 'Not Too Young to Run' bill, the change started to address the generational divide entrenched in the Nigerian body politic.

In 2019-20, WFD Nigeria, through its 'Inclusive and Accountable Politics' programme funded by DFID, continued to develop young political leaders. Importantly, it helped establish a new activist network: Young Persons in Politics with Values. This aims to advocate for increased opportunities for young people in politics. It also underpins, through monitoring and evaluation, the work carried out by members of the National Assembly who are part of the Young Parliamentarian Forum (YPF) caucus. Activities included supporting preparatory meetings, network events and courses on value-based advocacy.

In June 2019, the local WFD team brought together 26 grass-roots youth representatives in Lagos and 21 in Enugu State to develop local government agendas for youth inclusion and good governance in a participatory way. Each document is an advocacy tool, which will form the basis for continuous engagement between young people and elected representatives at local level. Activists envisage these documents will be a useful reference to measure progress against objectives in the years to come.

Between June and August 2019, WFD Nigeria, in partnership with the Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice and the Government of Edo State, promoted local initiatives inspired by the Open Government Partnership, an international forum for 79 countries committed to making their governments more open and accountable.

These included an introductory workshop for over 70 government officials and civil society leaders and a three-day retreat to develop an Edo State Action Plan. Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki, welcomed the effort and pledged support for actions promoting greater transparency, accountability and citizen participation.

In October 2019, WFD Nigeria launched the #PoliticsWithValues campaign at an event attended by Hon. Babajide Obanikoro, Nigerian musician and politician Mr Olubankole 'Banky W' Wellington, and others. The campaign launch included training for all members of the Politics with Values Network, and an additional 40 activists, on a 'Politics with Values Scorecard'. This will be used to assess the performance of young legislators based on set criteria (such as how effective they are at representing their constituents) and flag opportunities for development.

WFD is also supporting marginalised groups (including young people, women and persons with disabilities) to get involved in elections through the #OurVoteCountsNG project, with the backing of the European Union's Support to Democratic Governance programme in Nigeria (EU-SDGN). As part of the project, WFD set up a peer network for young people in three pilot states: Imo, Osun, and the Federal Capital Territory, to reach out to other young people to shift and improve perceptions around the importance of elections.

The outreach was designed to increase young people's desire to engage in elections and was held under the supervision of the Independent National Electoral Commission and National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).

WFD's internal evaluation of the programme revealed that these activities formed part of a wider shift which helped reduce electoral violence and the number of voided votes in Osun State (voided votes fell from 48,000 recorded during the governorship elections in September 2018 to 17,000 in the presidential elections in February 2019).

In December 2019, WFD Nigeria promoted a social media creative contest in support of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Members of the National Youth Service Corps in Imo State, Osun State and the Federal Capital Territory were encouraged to participate by submitting creative videos, images and write-ups advocating against gender-based violence.

The initiative aimed at increasing the awareness of gender-based violence among NYSC members and the general public and eliciting collective efforts towards prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls. The contest reached over 50,000 users on social media.

Botswana

As part of the WFD-led Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D), WFD supported civil society organisations in exploring new ways to eliminate barriers to the participation of underrepresented groups, including young people, women and persons with disabilities, in national politics. In November 2019, WFD organised a training session for local civil society organisations on how to build coalitions and manage effective campaigns.

Building inclusive democracies

Kenya

In 2013, Kenyans voted to decentralise government, ushering in a new era of leadership with 47 governors and their teams taking up the reins of power in newly-created counties.

Having encountered political, fiscal and administrative challenges, the devolution of powers to counties now enters a critical stage. It is against this background that WFD Kenya is supporting marginalised communities such as persons with disabilities in ensuring they have equal opportunities to access public education, health and employment services – all of which have been devolved to county level.

In 2019-20, WFD Kenya supported local persons with disabilities and their organisations in lobbying for greater access to the political sphere, leading to the passing of inclusive disability laws at county level.

As a result of activities sponsored by WFD, disabled persons' organisations and allies have achieved significant policy changes, thanks to sustained engagement of elected members of county assemblies in Kakamega, Kisumu and Homa Bay.

Over several months, WFD provided training on communication and advocacy, and helped activist groups submit representations to county legislative assemblies on legislation required to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

Coordinated campaigns supported by WFD helped influence County Assemblies in Kakamega and Homa Bay, leading to the passing of new legislation. The bills focused on ensuring that marginalised groups have access to and play an active role in parliamentary and political processes.

Our Kenya programme also helped local government in Kisumu implement provisions from its Disability Act which, though enacted, had been sitting unapplied since its passing over three years earlier.

In focus: how the Kakamega Disability Bill fostered more inclusive politics

'We did not have any policy document to advance the persons with disabilities agenda until this programme' said the Hon. Timothy Aseka, a member of Kakamega County Assembly and Kakamega Disability Caucus. Stressing the importance of the bill, he explained how, thanks to support from WFD, over 900 persons with disabilities have now been employed using bursaries.

There are also now sign language interpreters in all general hospitals across Kakamega county, as well as ramps and elevators to access the public gallery and the Office of the Governor in the county's main administrative building.

Another example of the bill's positive effect on inclusion comes from Lucy Mulombi, who has been appointed to a committee to represent the issues facing persons with disabilities, on the back of WFD's work.

'I was a simple rural teacher, who was not recognised in the community until this programme. I am now a member of the Kakamega county budgetary economic forum that comprises of 11 non-state actors and 11 county committee members, chaired by the Governor himself,' she explained.

Lucy's story shows how important governance is to ordinary people. WFD is proud to have played a part in her journey to represent persons with disabilities at the county level through our work with the Kakamega County Assembly, which first established county caucuses, integrated them within the County Assembly structures and created a stronger platform for disabled persons' organisations. WFD also helped build disabled persons' organisations' capacity to influence and participate in policymaking. Lucy has so far secured 36 bursary awards for children with disabilities.

Uganda

Through supporting a local civil society organisation, the Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA), in better engaging Parliament, WFD has helped to nurture gender equality in many aspects of Ugandan society.

This year, WFD has continued to train MPs with new skills for policy advocacy, lobbying and communications, and on their financial oversight role. Equipped with these skills, WFD has assisted MPs in improving their capacity to influence the pro-women, gender equality and pro-youth agenda. Over the past two years, WFD has provided training on these tools for over 280 MPs.

Ghana

In August 2019, over 75 political party and community leaders from 14 Commonwealth countries gathered in Ghana at an event co-organised by WFD and the Parliament of Ghana under the UK's 2018-20 Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D), to address the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions across Africa.

Participants explored challenges women face in office, such as male predominance in family matters, misinformation about women's ability to stand as candidates and dealing with widespread online abuse and considered context-appropriate solutions.

The conference informed research WFD published in June 2019 in partnership with the University of Birmingham on women in African parliaments and how they can influence policymaking (see the Research section of this report for more information).

South Africa

South Africa's most marginalised communities face major obstacles in accessing elected representatives to seek support. Civil society organisations play a vital role in supporting communities to engage with the democratic process. In areas of public health and public safety, it is often these organisations, rather than politicians, that connect citizen demands and local government agencies.

Starting in 2018, WFD and the European Union supported the Johannesburg-based Democracy Works Foundation, which works to improve engagement on matters of public health and safety between communities and provincial legislatures. In 2019-20, activities included training for civil society organisations on how to engage with local legislators effectively (May 2019) and a meeting between staff from the Limpopo provincial legislature and civil society representatives to im-

prove mutual understanding, priorities and ways of working (October 2019).

By upskilling civil society representatives to interact effectively with local government through making submissions to elected provincial councils and drafting community petitions, and by teaching them how to use local TV and radio to lobby for change, the programme is starting to make a difference to people's lives.

For example, in Limpopo, three local organisations, the Treatment Action Campaign, BETA and Ritavi Victim Empowerment Programme, lodged public petitions successfully. This included demanding the local authority received them, despite the Petitions Officer not being available. This is something they did based on their new knowledge of the law and their new confidence in the process.

In another example, the Optimystic Bikers Against Abuse, a not-for-profit bike club which helps survivors of abuse, used consistent presence in radio programmes to raise awareness about their campaigns. They clocked an impressive 702 mentions in local shows in 12 months, leading to a significant increase in support for petitions.

Sierra Leone

With an estimated 450,000 persons with disabilities in Sierra Leone (in a population of 7.5 million), the WFD Sierra Leone programme developed specialist expertise in disabilities programming.

In January 2020, the local WFD Sierra Leone team launched a #PoliticsWithValues campaign in partnership with organisations representing persons with disabilities. The campaign included a panel discussion with the University of Makeni on how citizens can enhance inclusive and accountable politics. The event attracted 629 participants, including students, members of the community, politicians, civil society representatives, the media and academia.

In 2018, WFD Sierra Leone, with funding from UK Aid through the Standing Together for Democracy Consortium, supported the Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues (SLUDI) in developing a national agenda to enhance the political participation of persons with disabilities and ensure they have the same access to infrastructure and support as everyone else in society.

In December 2019, building on that platform, WFD supported SLUDI in holding advocacy events to get more persons with disabilities involved in politics in 10 locations across the country. The outreach effort was linked to events marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

A session on having an online presence and tackling online abuse in progress at the CP4D Women Who Lead conference in Ghana in August 2019.



Promoting transparency and improving government accountability

Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, WFD worked to promote inclusive and accountable politics by supporting the operationalisation of government commitments on openness and transparency. The project supports the Parliament of Sierra Leone's use of the Open Government Partnership (an international forum for 79 countries committed to making their governments more open and accountable) as a tool to promote openness, transparency, and inclusion. It started in 2018 and will end in March 2021.

The Sierra Leone team's achievements in this reporting year included the development of a free mobile app called 'Sierra Leone Parliament'. The aim of the app is to improve the Parliament's openness and transparency and enable citizens to follow parliamentary proceedings and get more involved in politics (see 'In Focus' below).

Starting in August 2019, WFD has supported the National Council for Civic Education and Development and relevant parliamentary clerk in making sure that Parliament fulfils its explicit role in implementing transparency commitments as part of the Open Government Partnership.

In focus: there's an app for that

In 2019, in partnership with the Parliament of Sierra Leone, WFD created a free mobile app called 'Sierra Leone Parliament' to improve the Parliament's openness and transparency and enable citizens to follow parliamentary activity and get involved in politics and the legislative process.

The app does this by creating a new way for Parliament and citizens to interact. Users can find information about Members of Parliament, read press releases, access legislation and consult the parliamentary calendar. Soon, they will also be able to watch live sessions. WFD Sierra Leone is exploring ways to enable citizens to give feedback on new laws using the platform.

The app has been downloaded over 1,000 times from the Google Play Store, with an average rating of 4.5 from 24 reviews.



Using the Sierra Leone Parliament App whilst on the walls of the Parliament of Sierra Leone.



Participants in a seminar on inclusive representation in the Gambia, part of our Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) programme.



Supporting new legislatures

Several of our partner parliaments underwent elections in 2019-20. WFD supported the arrival and professional training of newly-elected parliamentarians in Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and continued to support the fledgling democracy in the National Assembly of The Gambia.

The Gambia

Unlike many of its West African neighbours, The Gambia has not experienced long periods of conflict since its independence in 1965. However, the country underwent 22 years of authoritarian rule, and The Gambia held its first elections in 2016. Whilst a constitutional crisis after the election threatened to embroil the country in a civil war, The Gambia has since emerged as a relatively stable new democracy under President Adama Barrow.

In this context, WFD continued to support The Gambia's National Assembly in partnership with the British High Commission in Banjul. In 2019-20, our work included implementing local programmes under WFD's FCO-funded Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) and DFID-funded Inclusive and Accountable Politics global initiative. Activities included establishing a Research and Library Unit to conduct research and support evidence-based debates. To date, the new unit has produced a series of research briefs for elected representatives on a range of policies including education, health, tourism, taxation, and international relations, in addition to products which aid members in using the research such as a handbook, service charter and guidelines. The unit is now embedded into parliamentary practice and receives regular commissions from Members of the National Assembly. WFD has also supported the digitalisation of parliamentary records and provided training to newly inducted Members on how to use the unit.

In September 2019, WFD organised an event to mark the International Day of Democracy in the National Assembly. This launched a national consultation on democracy and saw 150 people, including representatives from the United Nations, civil society, political parties and members of the National Assembly attend an inspiring event on the benefits of democracy. British High Commissioner Sharon Wardle also attended, and the event was streamed live on YouTube.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a vast country with immense natural resources but its recent history has been marred by disease, widespread corruption and a civil war which claimed an estimated six million lives.

In 2019, following a parliamentary election whose results were contested, WFD began working with first-time legislators, helping to induct new representatives, and developing their skills as parliamentarians. The activity built on WFD's work in the run up to the 2018 elections which included publishing an assessment of voting machines, as well as voter education activities.

In November 2019, WFD organised training for newly elected legislators. The programme covered the role of lawmakers in a democratic and open society, how laws are made, the role of political parties in parliament, and the role of civil society in policy development and monitoring. The activity included testimonies and sessions by legislators from Benin, Canada and the UK, as well as by local legislative and parliamentary experts.

In addition, during the same month WFD provided training for CENCO (Conférence Episcopale Nationale du Congo), a leading civil society organisation, in advocating their causes to the national parliament. With our support, an expert from a Kenyan parliamentary monitoring organisation delivered training in Kinshasa on new approaches to parliamentary monitoring and engagement.

In March 2020, WFD delivered communications training to the parliamentary communications staff from both houses of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Parliament. Communication professionals from both the Senate and the National Assembly attended a series of workshops on principles of strategic communication - including identifying different audiences and tailoring information to meet their needs - and digital communication best practice, including how to engage citizens through social media. The programme also delivered technical assessments of Parliament's communication functions and digital communications.

Mozambique

In 2019-20, WFD supported the Mozambican Association of Disabled People (ADEMO) and the Forum of Disabled People's Organisations (FAROD) to ensure the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities ahead of, and after, the 2019 elections. This work was undertaken through the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy programme. Working with these leading disabled persons' organisations, WFD worked with the Parliament of Mozambique to develop a national agenda on disability. This was complemented by work with Mozambican political parties as they developed inclusive electoral political party manifestos.

In October 2019, WFD facilitated a meeting between hundreds of persons with disabilities and the Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi. They secured his commitment to new laws, policies and strategies to improve the socio-economic and political inclusion of persons with disabilities in the country. WFD also undertook in-depth research into existing barriers to effective inclusion and how to overcome them.

Under WFD's DFID-funded Inclusive and Accountable Politics programme, our local Mozambique team co-organised a policy dialogue event with the Joaquim Chissano Foundation, named after and chaired by the former president. The event brought together policy- and decision-makers, parliamentarians, organisations, civil society and political party representatives from across Mozambique to discuss leading policy issues and topics related to inclusive governance. The event was widely reported on national radio and television, contributing to raising awareness of policy issues faced by persons with disabilities.

A Mozambican civil society representative at the launch of WFD's report on the barriers to effective inclusion of persons with disabilities in Mozambique, in December 2019.

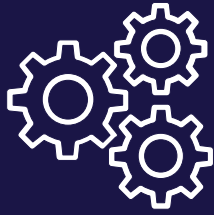


Middle East and North Africa

According to the 2018 Arab Barometer, 80% of people living in the Arab world believe democracy is the best form of government. Throughout much of 2019, we saw a new wave of protests emerging across the region. Whether that will translate into political change and what lasting effects it will have on regional stability remain to be seen. It was against this backdrop of regional instability that WFD's work in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) took place.

During 2019-20, WFD focused on ending gender-based discrimination and violence, promoting openness and accountability, and supporting parliaments in reviewing laws and policies.

Our support to national parliaments, civil society organisations and other institutions has been tailored to address emerging challenges to security and political and economic stability, while ensuring our engagement is sustainable and effective.



15
programmes



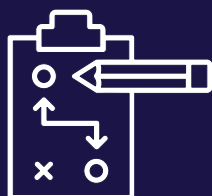
103
activities



36
experts engaged



19
conferences



3
institutional plans developed

Supporting gender equality

Morocco

Morocco's 2011 constitutional reform included the principle of equality. Although women make up a significant proportion of elected legislators, women leaders are yet to be afforded their fair share of positions of influence. This may explain why the development of policies to address equality and inclusion issues has been generally slow.

Through training throughout the year, WFD shared methods of best practice for reviewing laws with the Working Group on Parity and Equity and the House of Councillors. As a result, working group members used these tools and formulated a memo with suggested amendments to the Family Code (adopted in 2004) on topics such as birth, marriage and inheritance issues. The aim was to improve the law while ensuring it is still compatible with Islamic law and overcoming any possible implementation issues.

In March 2020, 35 women MPs participated in a three-day workshop on leadership organised by WFD and the Working Group on Parity and Equity at the House of Representatives. Experts from the Canadian School of Public Administration and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Quebec facilitated the workshop, providing the opportunity for women MPs to share individual experiences and enhance their capacity for leadership by learning from their peers.

Lebanon

Through WFD's new programme, which began in 2019 with support from British Embassy Beirut, we assisted the Lebanese Parliament's Women and Children Committee as it adopted new priorities and planned its future work, which consists of embedding principles of gender equality in law. This included developing a three-year work plan for the committee.

We believe with the additional strategic planning, the new approach will increase the effectiveness of the committee's legislative scrutiny, executive oversight, and representative roles. It is the first plan of its kind to be developed by a parliamentary committee in Lebanon.

WFD also provided legal support to assist the Chair of the Women and Children Committee in ensuring any new bills which are introduced are assessed for impact on the protection of women and children. WFD's legal advisory expert and the wider Lebanon office were also deeply involved in supporting the Committee in drafting a new bill to help ensure alcohol isn't illegally obtained, and making amendments to the electronic transaction and data protection law to protect minors from unsuitable content and potential abuse online.

WFD also provided extensive legal support to the Committee for amendments to clauses in the Lebanese Penal Code which criminalise sexual harassment and extend the definition of rape in the penal code and domestic violence law (to include political violence in the definition of violence in article 2/ law 293). The purpose of these amendments is to help reduce the impunity of perpetrators of violence against women.

Through a team of experts, WFD revised and analysed several bills related to anti-corruption (stolen assets, anti-money laundering, and anti-corruption bills). WFD also revised a law which requires parliamentary staff and MPs to disclose their assets and any conflicts of interest) and human rights (the persons with disabilities law, drug law, data protection law, and revising the amnesty bill and whistleblowing medical law).

WFD has supported the Parliament in developing a new strategy to better communicate to Lebanese citizens across different parts of society. By developing a communication strategy and outreach plan for the Parliament, which included an online public consultation and the design of a new website that is more inclusive and interactive, the Parliament will soon be better equipped for its communication outreach. The strategy is expected to be implemented in the next financial year.

A separate strand of WFD Lebanon's new programme supports the Digital Transformation Network, a civil society organisation which seeks to support the Lebanese parliament and government in empowering people in Lebanon to further develop their technological skills and support job creation in a growing tech sector. In its first year of operation, the Network has achieved several milestones including establishing a close relationship with Parliament and incorporating lessons learned on an exchange visit to Estonia in February 2019. The Network has supported several MPs by advocating for bills which support these aims - for example, the Network started an online petition to support Edgar Traboulsi MP's draft bill on remote learning in universities.

The online petition gained a lot of attention and signatures from other MPs, civil society organisations, and members of the public. The Network also collaborated with the parliamentary committee of technology and information and other committees which request its advice. The Network signed a memorandum of understanding with the Lebanese University in June 2020 to increase cooperation in technology and e-governance, as well as to provide employment opportunities for students in this area.

Women MPs and staff at the Moroccan Parliament participating in the Women Leadership Workshop organised by WFD in March 2020.



Sudan

During late 2019, WFD started working in Sudan with the interim government, the Transitional Sovereignty Council, and local civil society organisations, to support a peaceful transition towards a multi-party democracy in which women have an active role.

Under this high-level objective, WFD organised for a delegation from the Sudanese interim government to visit Tunisia in February 2020, to learn about the experience of transitioning to democracy. The delegation met current and former politicians who contributed or are currently contributing to Tunisia's democratic transition, and with experts who followed or scrutinised the transition.

The delegation learned about the mechanisms that enabled Tunisia's successful democratic transition, how they avoided deviations towards violence or steps back toward dictatorship, and the role women played in achieving success.

In November 2019, WFD helped provide negotiation training to women nominated by different parties involved in the peace process, to prepare them for the next stage of Sudan peace negotiations: the second round that began in December 2019.

In focus: supporting women MPs from Arab Countries in combatting violence against women

The programme aims to support parliaments, women leaders, regional institutions, and civil society organisations across the MENA region in becoming more effective advocates for the rights of women and girls and protecting them from violence. This is done through increasing public debate, developing legislation which affords better safeguards, improved parliamentary oversight, and stronger political representation and leadership on a national and regional level.

WFD continued to support the Arab League and the Coalition of Women MPs from Arab Countries in drafting the first ever regional agreement to counter gender-based violence. Known as the Arab Convention to Combat Violence Against Women and Girls, the international treaty is designed to respond to the unique challenges women and girls in Arab countries face, both in peace time and during conflict and to prevent violence.

The Convention has been discussed by the Arab League's Women Committee (which represents the governments of 22 Arab countries) since 2017. A review of the fourth version concluded in Saudi Arabia in mid-February 2020. The Convention will undergo a further review before being presented to the Council of the Arab League in late 2020 or 2021 for formal adoption.

WFD helped provide negotiation training to women nominated by different parties involved in the peace process, to prepare them for the next stage of Sudan's peace negotiations.





Parliamentary researchers from Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Lebanon, and Jordan gathered for a regional research conference in April 2019 in Amman, Jordan.

Improving transparency and strengthening parliamentary oversight

Jordan

Despite regional security crises and a deteriorating economy, Jordan has remained largely stable in part due to efforts to build the country's resilience through difficult times of austerity. WFD is an implementing partner on a programme funded by the European Union: EU Support to Jordanian Democratic Institutions and Development (EU-JDID). The partnership supports political reforms in the country. WFD's role is to support Parliament in becoming more modern, open and inclusive and ultimately more capable of improving the lives of ordinary Jordanians.

Over the course of 2019-20, WFD introduced a much-anticipated Electronic Conference and Voting System in the House of Representatives. The infrastructure and technology training project required over a thousand hours of work by nearly 50 engineers and experts, and the training of 129 MPs on the new system and its operating procedures. Since installation, the new system has proved popular with legislators and staff and it has been selected as the preferred voting method in the revised parliamentary Rules of Procedure.

The new system allows for transparency in voting, as it provides instant voting results that are readily available to the public. Also, as there is no longer need for the manual casting and counting of ballots, results will be more accurate. The system will soon provide the Jordanian public with a full breakdown of votes, allowing them to hold their representatives accountable for their voting records. Stringent individual identification requirements also mean it is not possible to vote on behalf of, or in the place of other legislators, malpractice which was possible under the old system.

In 2019-20, WFD also supported the Jordanian parliament as it developed and started to implement a new strategic plan, which was formally adopted in early 2020. The plan was prepared by a working group of senior managers, chaired by the Secretary General of the House of Representatives, and supported by a WFD human resources expert.

The WFD Jordan team began preparations for conducting the first ever Gender Sensitivity Audit at the House of Representatives. Promoting gender equality is key to strengthening democracy and fostering a tolerant political culture. The audit will result in a written report with practical recommendations on how to make the House of Representatives more sensitive to gender in its work and refer to best practice from other parliaments as adapted to the Jordanian context. WFD also assisted the House of Representatives with reviewing the Decentralization Law to ensure it was working as intended – using a method known as post-legislative scrutiny. With the support of WFD experts, the responsible parliamentary committee produced a report evaluating the law with recommendations on how to improve it. This was submitted by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to the government for approval. The government submitted amendments to the law, which are being discussed in Parliament.

Through EU-JDID, WFD ran 11 youth workshops in all the Jordanian governorates outside the capital, Amman. Each workshop gathered around 70 participants between the ages of 18 and 25 years. WFD facilitated discussion between MPs and these young Jordanian citizens about the challenges facing young people in Jordan. Young citizens are under-represented in political and economic life in Jordan, even though more than two thirds of the Jordanian population are below the age of 30. A final report is now being prepared with recommendations on how to tackle the challenges that young people face.

In implementing this programme, WFD has drawn from expertise across the region and internationally, including secondments from the Dutch and UK parliaments which facilitate long-term mentoring, experience sharing, and building peer-to-peer relationships.

Morocco

In Morocco, WFD supports the Moroccan Parliament (House of Representatives) as it implements the 2012 strategic plan which WFD helped introduce in 2018. A key tenet of the plan is to improve communication and engagement with citizens – especially young people – through social media. The WFD Morocco team have been partnering with the Parliament's communications team to adopt new communication tools such as a new website, which was introduced in January 2020 and offers a wide range of options to enhance parliamentary communications with citizens.

The Moroccan House of Representatives was the first Arab parliament to join the Open Government Partnership (OGP), an international forum for 79 countries committed to making their governments more open and accountable. Since 2019, WFD has supported the Parliament in fulfilling its OGP commitments such as submitting its action plan to adhere to the OGP's international transparency requirements. The action plan has been approved and published on the OGP website in September 2019 and will help the Moroccan Parliament abide by its international obligations and improve its transparency standards.

In February 2020, the House of Councillors organised a workshop on reviewing laws (post-legislative scrutiny) in partnership with WFD that brought together different national and international experts, including Lord Alan Beith from the UK's House of Lords, and helped to increase the Moroccan parliament's capacity for implementing legislation.

WFD has been working closely with the Upper House on monitoring and overseeing the implementation of all national human rights commitments, in line with international obligations. This year, WFD worked closely with the leadership of the Upper House on the role it plays in overseeing the implementation of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which is led by the UN's Human Rights Council and involves a review of the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States. In December, the Upper House – in partnership with WFD – considered this topic in Parliament on Human Rights Day, leading to revised by-laws which specifically reference the role of Parliament in implementing the UPR, responding to human rights treaty obligations and tracking parliamentary action. As a result, in March 2020, the Parliament published its new by-laws that included sections about human rights and the Upper House's commitment to protecting them. Morocco is one of the first countries in the MENA region to put the key role of parliament in this process into law.

Tunisia

During 2019-20, the delivery of our programme in Tunisia was limited by political developments in the country. Elections took place at the end of 2019, but a political crisis constrained parliamentary work for around four months until the end of February 2020, when a new coalition was formed. Unfortunately, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic reached Tunisia shortly after this, further inhibiting our local team's ability to effectively deliver activities.

The work of our office in Tunis focused on supporting the openness of the Parliament and civil society organisations' engagement in policymaking. As result, the Tunisian Parliament signed a written commitment to join the Open Government Partnership, in order to be more open and transparent and to promote role of civil society organisations in legislation and policymaking.

Tunisia has large reserves of natural phosphates which can be extracted, with phosphates accounting for about 10% of Tunisia's exports before 2011. While phosphate exports shrank after the Arab Spring, it is still an important sector for the Tunisian economy. WFD's support for a coalition of civil society organisations contributed to achieving a major change in Tunisian policy in terms of transparency in the management of mines and energy production, including phosphates. On the back of this engagement, the Minister of Industries declared that Tunisia would join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), an international standard for openness around the management of revenues from natural resources. It is designed to improve accountability and public trust for the revenues paid and received for a country's oil, gas, and mineral resources.

Throughout the year, WFD continued to support new MPs and their staff with technical advice on key procedural and parliamentary issues. This helped ensure that the Financial Oversight Committee, which is similar to the UK Parliament's Public Accounts Committee, was maintained in the by-laws of the Parliament. Its activity and discussion by MPs in the media and on social media show that it will very likely be maintained in any amendment of the rules of procedures (an amendment is expected to take place shortly in the next financial year). The Financial Oversight Committee also continued to follow the same practices that were established by the previous committee (during the 2014 to 2019 mandate). These practices are mostly derived from an international model of best practice, based on WFD's technical advice.

Furthermore, the committee in charge of reforming parliamentary practices considered several written proposals of reform which aim to improve parliamentary processes and practices. This will be followed up through our technical support in the next financial year.

Algeria

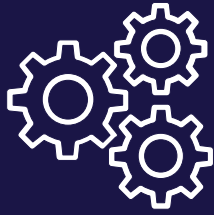
In Algeria, WFD's parliamentary programme aims to promote greater transparency in the functioning of the Algerian Parliament, and to contribute to pre- and post-legislative scrutiny on key issues, in particular economic legislation and policies, review of public budget and follow up on its execution and a more effective citizen involvement. The programme aims to support the two chambers of the Algerian Parliament through providing training and capacity building to both elected and administrative staff and organising study visits to share experience with their counterparts in the UK and other countries.

WFD organised a series of workshops in the Parliament on drafting legislation, with a view towards creating a guide of best practice for parliamentarians to follow. As part of the workshops, directors of legislative departments approved the new legislative guide, which included recommendations from WFD on how to draft laws in a more effective and efficient way. Other areas of progress have been the improvements to the Parliament's online presence, MPs' communications skills, and relations with media and citizens.

The WFD Algeria team has also actively engaged the work done by the Coalition of Women Parliamentarians from Arab Countries to Combat Violence Against Women on discrimination based on gender. Four women MPs (among them the Vice President of the Upper House) joined platform activities. Talks about Algeria officially joining the coalition have also started and we expect to see further developments in the next financial year.

Europe and Central Asia

This year, WFD has supported the development of democratic practices in countries across Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia. By working with parliaments in countries that are transitioning to democracy, WFD is helping them make democratic institutions more approachable and relevant to the people, contributing to better governance, delivering for citizens on public services and protecting their fundamental rights. Our work with civil society organisations and political parties is also helping improve the quality of democratic oversight and marginalised groups' ability to actively participate in politics.



25

active programmes



507

activities



116

experts engaged



301

training activities



51

mentoring or learning placements

Western Balkans

WFD has been supporting the development of democratic practices in the Western Balkans – a region which has deep-rooted and wide-ranging political and governance challenges – since the early 1990s. Across the region, we have seen parliamentary and election boycotts and mass public protests on the streets – clear evidence of civic dissatisfaction and democratic backsliding. Looking ahead, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will pose challenges to planned elections and other aspects of good governance practice.

It is against this background that WFD's Western Balkans Democracy Initiative (WBDI) continues to partner with public institutions, political parties, and civil society organisations across the six Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia). Our aim is to improve the quality of democratic oversight, support political parties to effectively represent citizens, and increase the meaningful participation of women, young people and persons with disabilities in political decisions and policies that impact on their lives.

WFD offices in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia work at the national level to improve democracy across the region.

During 2019-20, our work focused on researching the structural challenges to democracy, laying the groundwork for future activities which will use the results of this research to help consolidate democracy in each of the countries we work in. Due to the pandemic, our aim to support inclusive and accountable politics is even more relevant and pressing than when the programme was originally designed. Many of the underrepresented groups we are supporting are at the coalface of political marginalisation and are likely to feel the pinch of the current crisis – politically, socially and economically – even more keenly.

Funded by the UK Government's Conflict Security and Stability Fund, the initiative was announced by Foreign Office Minister Alan Duncan in July 2018.

Serbia

Using novel research to identify ways to improve young people's lives

In May 2019, we began to publish our research on the cost to Western Balkan economies of youth emigration. We started by releasing results from Serbia in partnership with the Serbian Institute for Development and Innovation. These revealed four out of five young Serbs consider emigrating and that youth emigration could cost Serbia up to 1.2 billion euros per year. In response to this challenge, WFD is rallying government representatives, businesses, education professionals, and civil society organisations to create alliances for change. The aim is to formulate policies capable of offering prospects for young people. Research on the same topic in Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Albania followed later in 2019 and revealed similar trends.

Serbia has one of the highest youth emigration levels in the Balkan region. While the main reasons for leaving are economic, WFD research found correlation with political engagement, as the same number that want to leave also expressed no interest in politics. Young people perceive their concerns as not being heard or addressed by those in power. This is why we are encouraging politicians, and the institutions they belong to, to respond. Research findings will be used in 2020-21 to instigate political action and address the structural factors that contribute to unsustainable levels of youth emigration.

Across the country, WFD also works with local youth organisations, political parties, state institutions, businesses, and the media to explore solutions to this problem. For example, in March 2019, WFD helped establish an 'Academy for Political Education' in partnership with the University of Belgrade. To date, this has trained 50 political sciences students so they can help educate first-time voters in high schools around the country on how democracy works. Since the initial training, these 50 academy graduates have started to run education activities in high schools across the country.

A Western Balkans Democracy Initiative activity in North Macedonia: the Political Academy for Equal Participation gave space to engaged activists and individuals with disabilities to develop their skills for political participation.



A WFD mentoring session for women's political leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



North Macedonia

Putting persons with disabilities' needs at the top of the policy agenda

In North Macedonia, WFD is working with persons with disabilities (PWDs), one of the most marginalised groups in society, to ensure their needs are at the top of the policy agenda. We are working with groups that support PWDs to create an alliance for change and to engage other actors who can contribute to reform.

We are working with a cross-party group of MPs from the Assembly of North Macedonia who spent time with PWDs and engaged in discussions on the challenges they face every day. The 2020 presidential election showed an increased awareness of the need to include communication methods and specific tools to engage PWDs. The programme aims to establish this as a standard practice in the country's political life.

In North Macedonia, we have also worked towards more effective and efficient public spending by setting up new ways to make state institutions more transparent and increasing the level of scrutiny over public spending. In one initiative, the Assembly is setting up a Parliamentary Budget Office to provide independent and impartial information, analysis and advice on all aspects of public spending to legislators. We believe this will lead to a higher level of trust among citizens in key state institutions' capabilities and more effective delivery of public services.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Enhancing women's representation in politics

Despite political parties having an obligatory 40% gender quota for candidates in Bosnia and Herzegovina, women's representation remains low across all levels of government. The WFD programme is working to improve opportunities for women to engage in politics.

Building on the launch of a women's political leadership programme 'More than a quota' in February 2019, our activities have engaged women politicians from 10 political parties, with topics ranging from grassroots policy development through to political campaigning.

Almost 50% of women and girls over the age of 15 in Bosnia and Herzegovina have experienced some form of violence. That is why we prepared the first dedicated study in the country on violence against women in politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our aim was to further our understanding of gender-based pressures faced by women politicians. 60% of the participants revealed that they had experienced some form of violence during their political careers.

Albania

Ensuring everyone can run for office

In September 2019, WFD and the Albanian Enterprise Institute published a study on Albania which outlined and analysed the costs that are currently incurred by party candidates.

The 'cost of politics' is made up of the costs that a political party or a candidate faces from the moment when they decide to run for office until the moment votes are counted. These costs include money spent on organising meetings and renting offices, as well as food and refreshments for staff, transportation costs, and printing posters and leaflets.

Our study revealed the barriers which citizens in Albania face when they decide to run for office. Currently, the average monthly wage in Albania is 227 euros. However, many MPs have publicly said that the costs they faced during elections were as high as 500,000 euros – almost 100 years of average income in Albania. These costs can deter citizens from running for election.

Montenegro

Identifying how young people can have their voice heard at the top

Young people in Montenegro are underrepresented in political decision-making and decision makers often do not listen to their voices and needs. For that reason, in 2019, WFD conducted a 'Survey on Youth Perceptions and Attitudes towards Politics in Montenegro', to better understand the barriers they face and look for ways to overcome them.

The main goal of the survey was to explore how young people perceive politics in Montenegro and discover how they form their political attitudes. The findings have shown that young people (aged 16-28 years) are less involved with politics than their older counterparts (aged 55 and older). The survey has also pointed to some worrying data: 70% of Montenegrin young people think about leaving the country, 55% agree that individual human rights and liberties are not respected, while 49% of them feel that politicians are not addressing their concerns.

WFD organised an Academy for Active Youth Cooperation that provided training modules and mentorship to young people from nine parliamentary political parties and ten civil society organisations dealing with issues affecting young people. The main result of this approach was the formation of an informal network, ATOM (Active Youth in Montenegro), which represents an innovative approach to working with youth in Montenegro.

Kosovo

Strengthening political parties' embrace of democracy and inclusion

In Kosovo, WFD continued to support strengthening democracy and accountable political governance by supporting political parties from across the political spectrum. Our work focused on embracing democratic and inclusive principles such as the rule of law, transparency and inclusion, and encouraged them to profile themselves according to their respective ideologies. With the assistance of WFD, political parties developed policy papers and improved their internal and external communication procedures, enabling them to better profile themselves. By fostering relations between political parties in Kosovo with their sister parties in the UK, parties in Kosovo were able to learn from their peers, leading to more distinguished and accountable parties.

A WFD-led initiative resulted in three out of five main political parties excluding candidates with criminal indictments or sentences from their election lists in the 2019 snap elections. This increased the integrity of political parties and their respective institutions. A WFD report on criminality in politics, and our work to enhance public discourse on the topic, were well received by political parties, partners, and citizens in general.

Furthermore, a WFD-led campaign combining research, data, and activities to promote public discourse contributed to an increase in votes for women candidates in the snap elections and the average age of an MP in the Parliament being lowered. Political parties currently have a quota for the number of women candidates they must field in an election, but this alone did not promote high political representation of women MPs. However, as a result of the WFD-led campaign, the number of women who entered Parliament who were not part of the quota increased from 21 in the 2017 elections (when 17 entered as part of the quota) to 29 in the 2019 elections (when 10 entered as part of the quota). In addition, the number of elected MPs under the age of 34 increased from 17 (out of a total of 120 MPs) in 2017 elections to 22 in the 2019 elections.

Regional

Enhancing human rights and gender equality

In October 2019, across the Western Balkans, WFD established the Human Rights and Gender Network of MPs (HUGEN) to support parliaments across the region in reaching international standards for human rights and gender equality. This has created a peer network of parliamentary committees for parliaments in the six Western Balkan countries. HUGEN enhances human rights and gender equality by facilitating peer-to-peer learning, sharing best practice, and improving parliaments' oversight of the implementation of laws and policies related to gender and human rights.

Speaking at the launch event, the Vice-President of the Parliament of Montenegro, Mr. Genci Nimanbegu said:

'The problem of past conflicts between the countries should be overcome through projects such as HUGEN, where WFD is supporting a closer cooperation between countries especially in the areas of human rights and gender equality.'

Nearly 40 participants from eight parliaments in the Western Balkans gathered to launch the network at a conference in Montenegro, alongside academics, journalists and our network of partners. They discussed regional cooperation to support efforts to improve governance, political institutions, rule of law, gender equality, and post-conflict reconciliation. WFD is working with six parliaments to assess the impact and effects of selected laws. Parliaments have selected different pieces of legislation which refer to persons with disabilities, access to education for persons with disabilities, gender-based violence, and other human rights and gender-related issues.

The practice of official or unofficial boycotts of legislatures, the main representative institution for citizens, has become the norm within political life in the region. In recent years - and decades in some cases - parliamentary boycotts have taken place in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Serbia. From boycotting a single vote to avoiding parliament for an extended period, the tactic is being used in different ways.

To better understand the phenomenon and its potential implications for democracy in the Western Balkans, WFD commissioned a research study on the causes and effects of boycotting parliament. The study found that the boycotts contributed to political and electoral crises in Western Balkan countries.

To improve the political parties' work in the region, throughout 2019-20 WFD worked with them on developing a Political Party Transparency Index and ran a pilot to test the indicators and methodology, ready for the Index to be rolled out in the coming year.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Strengthening parliament's capacity to help citizens

Ukraine

Since implementing our first programme in Ukraine in 1992, WFD developed an excellent understanding of the political context and established strong working relationships within the Verkhovna Rada (parliament) and beyond. Ukrainian stakeholders value and respect WFD's expertise and insight, and we work closely with them to help foster more inclusive and accountable politics.

WFD's work is helping parliament strengthen its role in holding government to account. This includes ensuring progress is being made on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, improving accountability for legislative and financial matters, and making politics more inclusive of women and underrepresented groups.

By making the parliament more accountable to Ukrainian citizens, WFD is helping to ensure there is robust scrutiny of government policy and performance. This accountability has been strengthened by helping the parliament to set up better internal oversight practices, particularly supporting the parliament to introduce new mechanisms to conduct post-legislative scrutiny, a practice of reviewing laws to ensure they are working as intended. WFD worked with many different sections of the parliament, and engaging staff on relevant committees and the parliament's lawyers to support introducing these new ways of working, with activities and training taking place between April and December 2019.

Gender equality is central to all our activities, and we focus on ensuring that women, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups have greater and equal access to formal and informal ways to participate in politics. To achieve this, WFD implemented a series of workshops and training between September and October 2019 focusing on how public spending can lead to a gender pay gap if funds are not appropriately allocated.

Working with colleagues in the EU and UN sponsored Parliamentary Reform Office, we have started to undertake a thorough review of the parliament's structures and functions. We started the review in December 2019 and it is expected to be completed in 2020. This functional analysis makes 56 recommendations intended to support the functioning and strategic structural development of the parliament. The analysis is currently being considered by the parliament's leadership ahead of them beginning their strategic planning for the months ahead.

Armenia

Following the 'Velvet Revolution' and elections of 2018, WFD has been working in partnership with local and international implementers to increase support to Armenian institutions – principally the National Assembly. WFD has led on assessing the needs of parliament and designing a substantial new package of support to be delivered for the United Nations Development Programme. The 'Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia' (MAP) programme has come online in 2020-21, and will provide support to the parliament across the breadth of its responsibilities including enhancing its oversight work, developing strategic communications, and increasing openness.

Georgia

As Georgia continues its journey towards Euro-Atlantic integration and seeks membership of institutions such as NATO and the European Union, it will be required to make deep and wide-ranging democratic reforms.

WFD has been a key partner in the UNDP/EU programme, 'Strengthening the System of Parliamentary Democracy in Georgia' since 2014. In 2019, WFD entered the third phase (2019-21) of the programme to strengthen the Parliament of Georgia, working with legislators, parliamentary committees, civil servants, local civil society organisations and the media.

Our work aims to increase parliamentary committees' capacity to conduct thematic inquiries and review laws using post-legislative scrutiny through a long-term training programme. With WFD's assistance, committees such as the Environment Committee have been looking into critical topics such as environmental protection. For example, an inquiry by the Environment Committee has helped manage waste electricity and old batteries from electric cars, as after reviewing the law which permits a tax reduction for importing electric vehicles into the country, the committee found gaps in the legislation which it then addressed.

In addition to this work, WFD provide training and a small grants facility for civil society organisations throughout the country to expand their understanding of new parliamentary tools and promote their participation. Likewise, our work with journalists helps promote parliamentary understanding and ensures that their news reports are accurate, to help increase public interest in parliamentary work and fight disinformation.

Charles Garrett OBE, the British Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, and WFD's Senior Gender and Politics Adviser, Shannon O'Connell, provided training for women candidates running for local office in Kyrgyzstan in December 2019.



Training for women candidates in local elections in Kyrgyzstan.





Uzbekistan

Since Uzbekistan's presidential transition in 2016, wide-ranging and rapid governance reforms are steadily being realised. The results of elections held in December 2019 offer a renewed opportunity to continue and bolster this trend. WFD has supported the reform agenda in Uzbekistan through strengthening the capacity of the Oliy Majlis (parliament). The project seeks to complement the parliament's existing reform efforts and builds on recommendations from WFD's assessment of parliamentary structures and practices, finalised in March 2019.

WFD supported the parliament in its internal reform, strengthening its capacity to hold the government to account and aiding the development of areas such as human resources management and the induction of new members of parliament.

Our work, in partnership with UK NGO MySociety, has helped the parliament assess new ways of working through digital technology, including making parliamentary information - such as agendas and tracking legislation - available to the public, and engaging with constituents online. These interventions gained new significance in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. A report of our assessment is available in English, Russian and Uzbek languages.

This year, WFD has also provided support to the recently established Office on State Budget, a parliamentary budget office (PBO) within the Oliy Majlis. The office seeks to provide independent, impartial and professional advice and analysis to parliamentarians on matters related to budget scrutiny, public finances and the economy. Our work has included supporting the PBO to develop its mandate, providing exposure to international best practices and standards, and facilitating a development partnership with the National Assembly Budget Office of South Korea.

Through increasing the capacity of the parliament to fulfil its role as a public institution, Uzbekistan's governance reform process is being enhanced, bringing it closer to its citizens and making it better able to reflect society's needs.

Putting gender equality at the heart of politics

Kyrgyzstan

Following decades of Soviet rule and two revolutions, the Kyrgyz Republic is the only parliamentary democracy in Central Asia.

WFD's team in Kyrgyzstan supports public institutions – particularly local self-government bodies – to interact more with citizens and enhance inclusive participation in decision-making and oversight. By strengthening the local self-government institutions and their elected representatives to build their oversight capacity, our programmes seek to improve accountability and increase and improve interaction between authorities, civil society and communities. The programme is implemented in four partner cities and is in partnership with the State Agency on Local Self-Governance and Inter-Ethnic relations, supporting a new Code on Local Self-Government and disseminating practice nationwide.

In 2019-20, WFD worked with women councillors and election candidates in our four partner cities to enhance their meaningful participation in decision making processes through creating a network of women local councillors. Through this vehicle we have provided support to build capacity and practice new skills. This is expected to lead women councillors to grow in their roles, increase their meaningful participation, and build their political capital to be re-elected in the next local election. Direct support has been provided to women candidates ahead of that contest, with training on how to create an electoral campaign strategy. Additionally, radio programmes through our partner Radio Salam in Batken have contributed to challenging the negative dominant discourse about women's participation in decision-making processes and have increased public support for women candidates.

In December 2019, WFD began implementing a programme to support reforming the media to help tackle disinformation and prevent conflict around elections, as part of the consortium of European NGOs. WFD works with political parties and the Electoral Commission to support efforts to eradicate hate speech and disinformation during election campaigns.

In focus: Empowering local councils to address local problems

In Kyrgyzstan, the media, citizens, and parliamentarians tend to evaluate parliament's performance by the quantity of bills passed, not their quality. As a result of these priorities, 20,000 laws have been passed since 1991 - without full consideration of their implications or what is required for them to be implemented.

Local councils offer a powerful opportunity to address this problem from a new angle as they are responsible for implementing laws and providing services that are closest to the lives and interests of citizens. They are therefore directly impacted by laws - both local and national - that fail to deliver on the objectives they were written for, and they have an incentive to solve these problems.

What is more, local councils often have more established practices of citizen engagement than the National Assembly. This enables them to conduct post-legislative scrutiny with better access to evidence. However, local councils lacked the knowledge and skills required to check up on how laws are being implemented and what their consequences are in a systematic way.

In order to empower several local councils to conduct their own oversight activities to solve local problems and enable them to share this method of best practice with other councils around the country, WFD supported three local Kyrgyz councils to scrutinise activities for the first time, in work which began in the summer of 2019. This provided locally driven oversight for citizens.

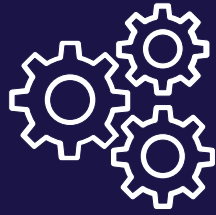
For example, in Karakol, the council addressed issues highlighted by complaints from parents, regarding maintenance and food provision in schools. Through an open, consultative process with citizens and community groups, the council established a case of misuse of public funds, and consequently dismissed the director of the educational department. To prevent similar problems in the future, the council decided to set up monitoring groups at each school, made up of children and parents.

Meanwhile in Balykchy, the council conducted an extensive citizen survey and consultation about a recent oil tank leak. This allowed the council to make informed decisions on which measures to take to restore the environment and respond to citizens' concerns. It is now actioning the recommendations by seeking resources for physical damage reparation and aims to make environmental matters the legal competency of local councils.

Asia

In Asia, we saw political and electoral change in the last financial year, reflecting both the consolidation of power of new political mandates, such as in Pakistan and Maldives, and the change of governments in a rejection of new political mandates (via the ballot box and via parliamentary processes), such as in Malaysia. WFD continued to work with parliaments as they sought to make democratic institutions more approachable and relevant to people. This year, through the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) programme and the Inclusive and Accountable Politics programme, our work in the region had two overarching aims.

Firstly, we aimed to improve parliaments' capacity to function effectively as institutions. Secondly, we sought to address the processes and structures of parliamentary inquiry and information-gathering to make them more inclusive of those that are directly impacted by policies and legislation. In doing so, we are also working to better connect civil society with decision-makers.



15

active programmes



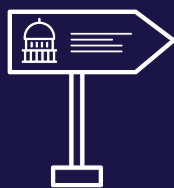
211

activities



57

experts engaged



21

study visits organised



50

activities proving technical support to
parliamentary proceedings

Making societies more inclusive

Pakistan

In Pakistan, Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party won the highest number of seats in parliamentary elections in July 2018, and Khan took office as Prime Minister the following month. It was the second consecutive constitutional transfer of power, further consolidating multi-party democracy on the back of previous federal elections. The country has now enjoyed the longest period of civilian rule since independence. Consequently, there are greater demands and expectations for federal and provincial legislatures to deliver.

One of the key achievements under WFD's Inclusive and Accountable Politics programme was to help devise a strategic plan for the 15th National Assembly which integrated inclusivity as part of its objectives. WFD has strengthened the parliament's capacity for financial oversight by working with the public accounts committees (PAC), building on work which began after the elections in 2018. This started with a nationwide conference on the role of PACs that benefited from international experience. Following this, PACs of the provincial assemblies recognised that their practices are not as well established as in the federal parliament and peer-to-peer engagement would help close that gap. Within the Senate, WFD shared its approach to reviewing laws (post-legislative scrutiny) with the Committee on Delegated Legislation.

WFD also worked with the National Assembly to support and train their communications team in using social media more effectively.

As a result of our support, the National Assembly's social media platforms have undertaken a more engaging approach, resulting in a marked increase in the engagement rate for the National Assembly and key stakeholders such as Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS). Work in this area has helped professionalise the communication office of the National Assembly, while also making it more inclusive by increasing the number of citizens and civil society organisations who are engaging with the parliament.

By enhancing the visibility of women parliamentarians and helping them develop their leadership capabilities, they in turn are seen as role models and can encourage more women to be politically active and voice their concerns. This represents a strong foundation for change towards a more inclusive institutional culture.

Maldives

In Maldives, the 2019 parliamentary elections gave an overwhelming majority to the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) thereby reconfirming the Maldivian desire for change after MDP unexpectedly won the presidency in 2018. The new government has embarked on an ambitious programme of reform and rejoined the Commonwealth in February 2019.

WFD started working in Maldives in January 2019, following in-depth consultations held with political parties, parliament, independent institutions, and civil society on a variety of reform options to build an inclusive, more representative democracy. The consultations were facilitated by the British High Commission in Sri Lanka.

Our programme in Maldives has two main focus areas: working with parliamentary committees to strengthen their role in promoting accountability and scrutiny of laws; and working with the Parliament to help it introduce new internal procedures which will make it a more inclusive, gender-responsive and accountable institution. WFD's work in Maldives supports MPs, parliamentary staff and civil society organisations through exposure, technical assistance, and capacity-building opportunities. WFD has also collaborated with the Welsh Parliament, as it is a relatively new legislature which is a similar size to the Parliament of Maldives, and like the Parliament of Maldives, its committees scrutinise both bills and policy, due to capacity restraints related to its size. In October 2019, an expert from the Welsh Parliament visited Maldives to share some of the challenges faced by legislatures in drafting new legislature. Support has also been provided at other intervals throughout the year and additional training sessions are being held throughout 2020.



17-18 June 2019
Academic Conference
on Post-Legislative Scrutiny



The conference offered representatives a chance to discuss their insights into how parliaments work, to find better ways of reviewing laws in the future.

First time women MPs in Nepal take part in an event to celebrate International Day of Democracy.



In focus: How reviewing legislation is helping establish compliance and address the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic

WFD worked with parliamentarians and staff on the Legislative Management Committee (LMC) in Nepal's National Assembly to help them develop their own skills in reviewing laws – a process known as post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) – learning from international best practice. The Committee launched the first post-legislative scrutiny exercise in October 2019.

For the pilot scheme, the Committee chose the Social Practices (Reform) Act 1976 which regulates social practices such as marriage and traditional Hindu coming-of-age ceremonies. Some of the Act's clauses legitimise the practice of paying a dowry and restrict weddings to a maximum of 51 guests.

Since the Act was introduced, societal norms have changed in Nepal. Given the improvement in living standards and the expansion of the urban population, festivities and parties have become bigger and more expensive. Even the most modest wedding ceremony is now likely to see more than 51 people participating, and the Act is regularly flouted.

As part of the PLS inquiry, the committee assessed how public attitudes to these practices have changed by undertaking expert and public consultations.

Based on fresh evidence it gathered and recognising widespread non-compliance of the law which, in turn, has contributed to undermine the rule of law in Nepal, the Committee was finalising its recommendations before the COVID-19 pandemic hampered regular parliamentary business.

The committee, led by the Chair who is an experienced and dynamic parliamentarian, has proven that this new parliamentary practice useful and sustainable as it has already started a second, more urgent, post-legislative scrutiny investigation, utilising skills gained during previous inquiry, into the 57-year-old Infectious Disease Act that the government invoked to fight the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The fact that the Committee held urgent meetings, including with the Health Minister who received the Committee's pressing recommendations on handling the COVID crisis, even during the national lockdown as part of its second PLS inquiry, suggests the rationale and practice of legislative oversight seems to have bedded in locally.

Nepal

Nepal's bicameral parliament completed its second full year in 2019-20. While there is some optimism for democratic transition following the National Assembly elections in January 2020, challenges remain around freedom of expression and transitional justice, particularly in relation to the perpetrators of crimes in the conflict which ended in 2006.

The 2015 Nepali Constitution guarantees inclusivity in terms of gender, minorities and disadvantaged groups. There is a requirement that one third of MPs are women. This is achieved by a proportional representation (PR) system meaning all but six women MPs have entered the House of Representatives through party lists. The list MPs sit alongside the MPs who are directly elected through the first-past-the-post system.

Although list MPs and directly elected MPs play the same role in law-making, lack of access to Constituency Development Funds by list MPs means they are at a disadvantage. WFD devised a programme to support a small group of women list MPs with their parliamentary work and constituency outreach efforts. As part of its support, WFD also organised interactive learning sessions to help the MPs overcome the additional challenges they face due to, among others, gender bias.

Malaysia

Starting in February 2020, a political crisis occurred in Malaysia which resulted in the collapse of the ruling coalition government of Pakatan Harapan and a new coalition government, Perikatan Nasional, being ushered in later that month. At the end of the reporting period in March 2020, the parliament had not been formally reconvened.

Before the change of government, WFD led on a parliamentary advocacy programme for the newly elected MPs, following elections in May 2018 which brought the first change of government in Malaysia after 61 years. Through our office in Kuala Lumpur, WFD also supported the parliamentary leadership on considerations to embed institutional reform.

These reforms were designed to strengthen Parliament's role at the nexus of the country's political life and make it relevant to the people it serves. The reform-focused interventions of WFD include enhancing capacity of the parliamentary staff to support members of parliaments, providing technical support and guidance to the newly formed parliamentary committees and establishing accountable and inclusive parliamentary processes and systems.

WFD Malaysia has also supported women's participation in politics during 2019-20. As part of the broader Commonwealth Partnership for Development (CP4D) initiative, WFD worked with a local civil society organisation to promote gender equality in Sabah, a state of Malaysia in northern Borneo in which only 10% of seats in the State Legislative Assembly are held by women. WFD has assisted the civil society organisation in creating links with other organisations as they develop advocacy strategies to raise awareness about gender issues.

Thailand

An opportunity arose in Thailand this year to partner with a local organisation, the Gender and Development Research Institute (GDRI), to deliver a small project funded by the UK Embassy in Bangkok. The project aimed to set up a multi-stakeholder policy analysis working group comprising MPs, party politicians, women's rights organisations and other civil society groups to analyse the extent to which the government's policies would be better.

With WFD's support, the group started to make sure the group's core research and analysis took into account the needs of women in society and was gender equal. WFD conducted two activities to introduce the group to concepts and tools to undertake a gender analysis and to then build the group members' capacity to use these tools.

There remains a lot of work to be done to have an impact on inclusive and gender-responsive policymaking in Thailand. This project was successful in initiating the process of moving towards this desired change and WFD will continue to look for opportunities to progress this work.

Promoting LGBT+ rights in Asia

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other (LGBT+) rights in Asia are limited in comparison to many other areas of the world. Same-sex sexual activity is outlawed in at least twenty Asian countries, while only eight countries have enacted protections for LGBT+ people. It is against this background that WFD sought to explore new ways to help promote the rights of LGBT+ people in Asia and tackle the challenges they face. As part of the FCO-funded Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy programme, in February 2020 WFD hosted current and former parliamentarians and leading civil society activists at a closed-door roundtable in a South-East Asia country to discuss nationally-appropriate ways to advance the rights of the LGBT+ community across Asia.

17 participants from nine countries in Asia attended the discussion. See Commonwealth of Nations section for more details on the other achievements of the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy.



Zila Fawzi of the Sabah Women Action Group (SAWO) in Malaysia speaks at the CP4D conference in London, in March 2020.

Making Parliament more accountable

Sri Lanka

In 2019, the political situation in Sri Lanka changed significantly following the Easter Sunday bombings which resulted in the death of nearly 270 people. Parliament's response was to establish a special committee to investigate lapses in security. The committee was widely acknowledged to have undertaken its task in a way which defused heightened communal tensions in the immediate aftermath of the bombings. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) won the presidential election in November 2019 and won a two-thirds majority in parliamentary elections held in August.

Institutionally, WFD worked closely with the Secretariat of the Parliament to develop guidance material for deputising presiding officers. The materials are inspired by best practice in Westminster but adapted to the Sri Lankan context. The draft manual will be an important tool for the new parliament as it will guide presiding officers, who deputise for the Speaker in the plenary and in business committees.

Throughout the year, WFD continued to facilitate and increase cross-party engagement in the tense political environment. As part of our work to enhance national unity, in February 2020, Lord Malcolm Bruce met with the Foreign and Defence Ministers as well with government and opposition parties from across the political spectrum to discuss parliament's role in strengthening national security.

In October 2019, committee clerks undertook a study visit to Westminster in partnership with the UK branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA-UK) and under our joint CP4D Commonwealth programme (see Commonwealth of Nations). This complemented previous missions by the Chairs of the new Sectoral Oversight Committees (SOCs) to increase their understanding of how select committees worked in the House of Commons, as the SOCs' model is heavily based on how Select Committees operate. Engaging both the Members and parliamentary officials has helped foster a mutual understanding of the oversight and scrutiny roles of the SOCs.

In addition, in partnership with British High Commission Colombo, we trained officials at the Auditor General's Office on how to be rigorous when conducting forensic accounting. We also provided technical assistance to the National Audit Office of Sri Lanka to support anti-corruption initiatives.

WFD's approach to all its activities is gender-responsive and inclusive. As part of our work in this area, our office in Colombo is exploring the role and responsibilities of parliament in fostering racial and religious harmony and reconciliation, following the civil war which ended in 2009.



Our panel at the British-Canadian conference on media freedom featured speakers from across the Asia region, including H. E. Mr Gobind Singh Deo, who was then Minister of Communications and Multimedia, Malaysia and Mr. Rudiantara, Communication and Information Technology Minister, Indonesia.

Myanmar

WFD continued to support Myanmar's Union Parliament (Hluttaw) for a fourth consecutive year following the 2015 general election and the transition to the National League for Democracy's government.

In 2019, WFD launched a second phase of the Strengthening Governance and Accountability in Myanmar programme, implemented in partnership with the UK House of Commons and the British Council. The programme is due to run until July 2021 and focuses on building the capacity of Myanmar's Hluttaw to make legislation, oversee the government, and represent the peoples of Myanmar.

Building on the first phase of the programme which focused on strengthening parliament as an institution, the second phase of the programme is geared towards supporting Hluttaw committees. Our work will help them influence and shape the policy and legislative agendas as well as enhancing the relationship and channels for engagement between the parliament and civil society.

WFD has focused on promoting accountability and better policy outcomes through expanding our work with sectoral committees and the mentorship programme. This began in phase one of the programme, which pairs Hluttaw committees with former committee chairs from the UK and the region. In 2019-20, WFD supported committees (on education, health, natural resources, and the environment, women and children's rights, and fundamental rights) in launching inquiries and conducting oversight of the government in key policy areas. Through their informal and formal inquiries, committees have gathered evidence, conducted fact-finding visits and public hearings, and presented their committee reports and recommendations in plenary.

We have prioritised education in 2019-20, as reform in this sector is critically important to Myanmar's future generations, especially after decades of mismanagement. WFD supported the education committees of the upper and lower houses of Myanmar's parliament in conducting an inquiry into Myanmar's education curriculum and teacher training frameworks, a process accompanied by UK education experts and which saw the first ever public hearings in Myanmar's Union Parliament. This was a significant move by Hluttaw towards opening its work to citizens. The committees also visited South Africa as part of their inquiry to learn about the challenges the country has faced reforming its education system over the last few decades as the apartheid system was dismantled. During this visit, the committees also learnt about the role that national and provincial parliaments in South Africa have played in the process.

We have also redoubled our focus on supporting committees to reach out to and address the concerns of some of the most marginalised communities and vulnerable groups in Myanmar, which historically have had less engagement from central government. This has included supporting the Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee on a fact-finding mission to the jade mines of Myanmar's northernmost Kachin State in October 2019 (see In focus).

The fisheries sector in Myanmar accounts for over half of local government revenue. Following widespread reports of potential human rights abuses of fisheries workers, our office in Nay Pyi Taw supported a mission by the Fundamental Rights Committee to examine the situation and visit the southern tip of the country, in the Tanintharyi region, to consider potential policy solutions.

Another highlight of the year was the regional conference on post-legislative scrutiny - a method of reviewing laws to assess any unintended effects - that WFD hosted in Yangon in June 2019. The summit was attended by over 700 legislators, senior civil servants, and experts in democracy from 21 countries. They came together to share insights on how parliaments in Asia and around the world are monitoring and reviewing laws to ensure they work effectively for citizens. The conference was held in partnership with the University of Jember (Indonesia) and the University of Yangon (Myanmar), and was opened by H.E. Dr Than Win, the chair of the international relations committee.

WFD's work in this area has helped the government provide better financial assistance to entrepreneurs, typically in rural areas, who are a growing part of the Burmese economy. Through conducting a review of the Microfinance law (2019), WFD was able to provide a platform to help start-ups such as a business drying rice for farmers, which is profitable as dried rice is worth more than wet rice.

Speaking at the conference in Yangon on improving how parliaments review laws, Benjamin Powis from the UK Department for International Development said:

'UK Aid recognises the fundamental role that the Hluttaw has to play in driving forward Myanmar's development - and this conference provides an opportunity to share experience from across the region on the transition towards more accountable and effective democratic institutions.'

A speaker at the regional conference on post-legislative scrutiny in Myanmar, June 2019.





Members of the Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee of Myanmar's Upper House on a fact-finding mission to a jade mine in October 2019.



In focus: Regulating the world's most valuable jade mines in Myanmar

Forming the southern tip of the Himalayas, Kachin state in the far north of Myanmar is home to some of the richest mines in the world. Kachin's abundant natural resources – gold, amber, jade, copper, and rubies – have fuelled a long-running civil war and fighting continues to afflict communities in resource-rich mining areas.

Myanmar produces 70% of the world's jade, which can be worth more than gold, generating billions of dollars annually. Yet government revenues capture only a fraction of this value, and most citizens do not share in the potential benefits.

Even though the government suspended issuing mining licenses until it had crafted a more equitable system for awarding them, regulation of the mining sector is opaque and enforcing the laws is difficult. On the ground, poor regulation jeopardises the safety of workers and, all too often, leads to preventable deaths in the mines.

The legal framework is recognised as part of the problem, with key legislation such as the Myanmar Mining Law and Myanmar Gemstone Law currently unable to establish a robust system of accountability. Densely technical, it is also a difficult sector for lawmakers to understand and change the way that regulation works.

Supported by WFD, in October 2019, the Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee of Myanmar's Upper House – the Amyotha Hluttaw – conducted a week-long fact-finding mission to several sites in Kachin State, including the world's largest jade mine at Hpakant, in order to better understand the challenges around mining in Kachin State and the effects potential reforms could have.

During the visit, the members met with local authorities, mining companies, jewellers, mine workers, civil society organisations, and the local community – the first time these groups had come together to meet members.

The committee collected information from these groups and will use the evidence as part of a quick legislative impact assessment. There are concerns that the current regulations are not working as intended, which is why the committee is looking into how they encourage better secondary legislation to improve implementation.

Indonesia

More than twenty years since Indonesia's political transition started, the country stands as an example of democratic progress in Asia. Indonesia is the world's third largest democracy with 192 million voters, and its simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections in April 2019 were a significant achievement, as they were the fifth democratic election since the country's transition started two decades ago and the largest single-day election on record.

Yet, while Indonesia has achieved impressive democratic consolidation, there remain challenges to inclusive and accountable governance across the different levels of Indonesia's still young democracy.

Over the past five years, WFD has worked with Indonesia's national and subnational legislatures as well as civil society from across the country to advance more open governance, robust parliamentary scrutiny, and better laws that protect citizens' rights.

In 2019-20, WFD continued to focus on supporting parliaments to protect human rights by working with local legislators to help bring their laws in line with international human rights obligations, as part of our three-year programme which began in 2018.

Indonesia was the first country in the region to ensure there was a focus on parliaments when it comes to transparency and accountability. As part of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), an international forum for 79 countries committed to making their governments more open and accountable, the Indonesian parliament has committed to being more transparent by using new technology. In most of the 79 OGP member countries, parliaments are not involved at the national level with implementation. Indonesia bucks this trend. In April 2019, WFD organised a roundtable on this important topic in Bali, Indonesia. 40 members of parliament and civil society organisations from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka came together to discuss what a commitment to transparency and openness means for parliaments and legislators.

WFD also coordinated training events throughout the year for technical and expert staff, such as the workshop with the Public Accounts Committee (Badan Akuntabilitas Keuangan Negara) in February 2020 on enhancing accountability of public spending, budgeting, and financial reporting.

WFD helped local and national government to apply innovative techniques to review laws intended to combat discrimination and human rights violations in local regulations, to make sure they are achieving their intended outcome (post-legislative scrutiny). This built on WFD's previous support for the House

of Representatives as they helped bring new counter-terrorism legislation into line with international human rights principles.

Laos

While Laos remains a one-party state and political change in the country is a piecemeal and carefully managed process, there have been encouraging signs for reform over the past several years. WFD has worked in Laos since 2016 to help strengthen the capacity of members and staff of the National Assembly of Laos and the People's Provincial Assemblies, through a programme supported by the British Embassy in Vientiane.

Our work with the Law Committee of the National Assembly continued to focus on developing core legislative review and scrutiny skills, including by introducing a better approach to reviewing laws. The Law Committee has actively engaged in the development of a tailored manual on post-legislative scrutiny (PLS), a process supported by WFD, throughout 2019-20. With the manual nearing completion, the next step will be for WFD to support the Committee in piloting the practice of conducting PLS for the first time. We also worked with the Law Committee and the Women's Caucus of the National Assembly to help make new laws more inclusive and facilitate the input of citizens, particularly women, into the legislative process. We organised a consultation workshop focused on reviewing the Gender Equality Bill, proposed by the Laos Women's Union (LWU), with stakeholders. The bill was finalised in early 2020 and enacted as the national Gender Equality Law, which aims to protect women's rights.

We also continued to support the National Assembly's Justice Committee to improve its petitions handling system and enable it to manage a large amount of public submissions more efficiently. Members reported that the Justice Committee is functioning more effectively thanks to WFD's ongoing support. Clear guidance on the petition handling process is now in place and 5,000 copies of petition brochures were printed and circulated to citizens to enhance their understanding on the petitions process this year. Committee staff report that they have improved capacity on both technical and soft skills to better support the Committee on handling and analysing public petitions and producing more concise committee reports.

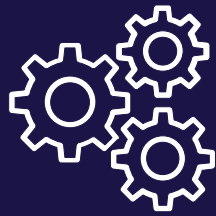
Another highlight of the year was an exchange visit to the UK by the leadership of the National Assembly and People's Provincial Assemblies in February 2020, which featured trips to London and Belfast for senior members and officials of Laos' legislatures to learn from counterparts at Westminster and Stormont.



A speaker from Indonesia at our regional conference on post-legislative scrutiny in June 2019.

Latin America

In 2019-20 WFD delivered initiatives in several Latin American countries including Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Venezuela. Venezuela continues to host WFD's only full-scale programme and permanent office in the region, building upon work that began in April 2016.



3
programmes



36
activities

Venezuela

Over the course of the year, Venezuela's economic and social crisis continued, with an increasing demand for international humanitarian aid to relieve the crisis affecting the population. Furthermore, the country is still involved in a political crisis that sees the executive faced with an interim government named by the National Assembly and backed by a number of countries that did not recognise the presidential elections of 2018 as legitimate. The situation has led to EU and US sanctions on individuals and more recently to US sanctions on Venezuelan state institutions controlled by President Maduro.

In this challenging context, WFD has continued its work with the National Assembly by supporting it to implement a modernisation strategy. This year, we supported the National Assembly with policy briefings on gender equality and helped familiarise legislators and staff about its importance to help mainstream this value across the institution. We also delivered a workshop tailored for and targeted at women MPs to further strengthen their position within parliament.

Also, the WFD Venezuela team undertook programming in regions of Venezuela outside Caracas for the first time, organising eight regional encounters between MPs and local civil society organisations. WFD helped ensure that the meetings were as diverse as possible, and included a range of entrepreneurs, farmers, academics, workers, indigenous representatives and NGOs.

Across the region

In April 2019, WFD worked in Mexico with the Supreme Audit Institution and the Chamber of Deputies to deliver an event that focused on financial accountability and the role of parliaments. In November, WFD delivered an MP induction programme in the Congress of Guatemala, with contributions from a House of Commons research specialist, a former MP from Chile and an expert in transparency and financial accountability from Mexico. This enabled a wide range of practices to be shared from three different country contexts, including the role of an MP, parliamentary research practices, financial accountability, citizen engagement, and gender equality.

In February 2020, WFD also delivered a post-legislative scrutiny workshop in Ecuador, working with staff and MPs from their newly established Parliamentary Unit, to share good practice examples and regional knowledge from the Congress of Guanajuato in Mexico.

During the same month in Bolivia, in the wake of the annulled elections, a scoping mission was undertaken by an expert team to assess opportunities for WFD to support in the future. While in La Paz, the team was able to contribute to the British Embassy's '40 under 40' event which was successful in bringing together different young actors from a wide range of sectors in Bolivian society, to consider options for resolving political and social tensions, at a challenging time in the country's political history.



WFD worked in Mexico with the Supreme Audit Institution and the Chamber of Deputies to deliver an event that focused on Financial Accountability and the role of parliaments.



Commonwealth of Nations

Starting shortly after the London Commonwealth Summit of 2018 and over the last two financial years, the UK Government has helped advance inclusion and accountability across the Commonwealth through the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy programme (CP4D), which worked with parliaments and local governments in 18 Commonwealth Member States to improve the representation of women, young people, persons with disabilities and the LGBT+ community in democratic processes.



CP4D has been managed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and implemented by WFD in partnership with Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Headquarters (CPA), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK) and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF).

Together, the partnership:

- Supported the enactment of legislation to include persons with disabilities in three Kenyan counties and trained new MPs in Sierra Leone on disability inclusion.
- Updated the only Commonwealth-wide standards for parliaments, known as the CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures, so they align with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 16 and helped 11 parliaments to self-assess against these benchmarks.
- Advanced women's political leadership in India by helping local mentors address the barriers to entering politics for women contesting local elections, and in Africa and Asia by bringing together hundreds of women political leaders to build their skills to better carry out their work.
- Shared insights from the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees across the Commonwealth amongst committee chairs, members and clerks, to help them improve their skills in exercising their oversight function.
- Trained 3,000 student leaders in Ghana on parliamentary ethics and practices.
- Helped young people to secure the support of key political leaders in East Africa for the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) and promote youth inclusion in politics.
- Supported LGBT+ rights by hosting parliamentarians, activists and others at a regional roundtable in a South-East Asian country in February 2020 to facilitate dialogue on ways to advance equality and inclusion for LGBT+ persons.
- Advanced parliamentary standards and oversight of Commonwealth governments, partnering with parliaments in Sri Lanka and Malawi to share experiences between their own parliamentary committees and counterparts in the UK, helping to strengthen parliamentary oversight.

The Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy came at a critical time as the global landscape is changing dramatically, with traditional democratic structures and alliances being challenged in new ways.

The Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy was announced in London by then Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2018, building on the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting's Communique 'Towards a Common Future' which was agreed by Commonwealth Heads of State.

The partnership was implemented over the two years in which the UK chaired the Commonwealth. It closed on 31 March 2020. To ensure the programme had a lasting legacy for inclusive and accountable politics, we invited parliamentarians from across the political spectrum, civil society organisations, experts in democracy, and parliamentary staff and Speakers from parliaments across the Commonwealth to come together in London at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for a three-day conference to share lessons which were learnt over the last two years. At the conference, guests called for inclusion and accountability to be put high on the agenda for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Rwanda in June 2020, although the meeting was later postponed.



'When our leaders met in 2018, they recognised that if sustainable development is to flourish, we need effective, accountable & inclusive national institutions. We need the full social, economic & political participation of all our citizens.'

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister of State at the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office

15

Number of parliaments in Commonwealth countries engaged

Percentage of implementing partners that believe CP4D programmes have raised the standards for inclusion and/or accountability

100%

12

Parliaments that completed a facilitated self-assessment

Local partners surveyed stating that outcomes from their programme(s) are likely or very likely to be sustained

96%

3,000+

Student leaders trained in Ghana

PWD appointed to a National Cabinet position in Mozambique

1

500

Indian women committed to running in upcoming local elections

3

Disability bills passed in Kenya



Political Parties



Why we work with political parties

Parties that are inclusive, policy-oriented, and staffed by competent professionals can act as the strongest constraint on the executive and are essential for the proper functioning of democracy.

Political parties build support among broad coalitions of citizens and interest groups. They integrate conflicting views and demands into coherent ideologies and manifestos, providing voters with a choice of leaders and policy programmes.

Parties select and train legislative candidates and political leaders and, following elections, organise the business of government and formal opposition. In between elections, political parties can build stronger relationships with voters and improve their internal capacity to develop policy ideas that address citizens' needs.

WFD's unique approach to political party assistance has helped many political parties over the last 28 years, from individual parties to party networks, both regionally and internationally.

We have supported political parties to develop and present platforms and policies with coherent ideology and that respond to the challenges that societies face and voters prioritise. WFD has worked with parties to adopt more inclusive practices; women, young people, and vulnerable groups such as minorities, the LGBT+ community, and persons with disabilities have become more empowered and their needs served as a result of the reforms our party partners have made.

The UK parties continue to be the critical engines of international party networks, as well as leading the way in developing party networks in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and MENA. Through 'sister party' work, the UK parties are a vital partner to build relationships of trust with parties that are in the same political family, as well as with other parties that want to tap into UK party skills even if ideological positions do not coincide.

WFD sponsors the international work of UK political parties represented in the UK House of Commons. In 2019-20, WFD supported four offices and programmes:

- the Conservative WFD Programme
- the Labour Party WFD Programme
- the SNP WFD Programme
- the WFD Multi-Party Office (a shared facility supporting the work of the Liberal Democrats, Democratic Unionist Party of Northern Ireland, Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales, and the Green Party)

ika Memenuhi Kebutuhan Dana Kampanye Pemilihan
2019: Studi Kasus Daerah Pemilihan DKI Jakarta
Jan 2019, 20 Februari 2019

Melani Leimena Suharli MP pledges her commitment to getting more women into the Indonesian House of Representatives during an activity organised by the Conservative WFD Programme which worked with local partners on tackling barriers to women's political participation in Indonesia.





The Conservative Party WFD Programme



'The Westminster Foundation for Democracy's work to help parliaments respond effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic and adjust to new ways of working is hugely important. This is all whilst continuing to strengthen democracy and boost human rights around the world. I am proud of the Conservative Party's support for WFD and our work with our sister parties across the globe.'

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP

Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party



The Conservative Party is a British centre-right political party and it has been the leading party of government in the UK since 2010.

The Conservative Party's WFD Programme is an expression of the Prime Minister's vision for a truly global Britain and it is underpinned by the Conservative Party's values of promoting freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The Conservative WFD Programme delivers support to sister parties, focusing on capacity building and on fostering the mutually beneficial sharing of best practices bilaterally and through regional and international political networks.

In 2019-20, the Conservative WFD Programme's portfolio focused on the themes of empowering women in politics; promoting youth political participation; facilitating the development of evidence-based policies; training political parties on how to be more inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities; and sharing best practices through north-south and south-south collaborative approaches.

The use of online technologies for training sister parties through webinars, online workshops and e-discussions was an integral part of this year's programme delivery. This meant that the Conservative WFD Programme had a wider global reach and that it could readily adapt to the delivery challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Encouraging the political participation of underrepresented communities in Africa

In Africa, the Conservative WFD Programme has been encouraging women's political participation by facilitating capacity building training. As a result, one of the programme's beneficiaries from Tanzania was elected to the Board of the International Women's Democrat Union (IWDU). Moreover, in Namibia, a participant of our programme was elected as an MP, becoming the youngest woman parliamentarian in Namibia.

The programme also trains political parties on how to reach underrepresented groups, including through training on how to communicate with minorities and illiterate voters. This encourages political parties to be inclusive and diverse, as well as facilitating citizen participation.

Building capacity in the Caribbean

In 2019-20 the Conservative Party worked to build the capacity of the Caribbean Democrat Union (CDU) and of its member parties at all levels. Expert training to the CDU's youth network resulted in the development of the #LetsVote initiative - a social media campaign to encourage youth voter engagement and increase election turnout among young voters. At the beginning of 2019, the Conservative WFD Programme started developing a CDU Training Hub which will become the network's focal point for training in political campaigning and strategic communications, candidate preparedness and institutional strengthening.

Advancing women's political leadership in Latin America

In Latin America, the Conservative WFD Programme works to advance women's political leadership through supporting the Women's Network within the Union of Latin American Parties. Some of the highlights brought about by our programme in 2019-20 included:

- Development and presentation of bills that seek to punish and eradicate violence against women in politics in the Congress of Honduras and in the Central American Parliament.
- Establishment of a new Women's Secretariat within the structure of a party from the Dominican Republic.
- Election of a network member to the Board of the International Women's Democrat Union.

The Caribbean Young Democrat Union (CYDU) discuss the #LetsVote Campaign.



Participants at a regional conference on calling out violence against women in politics in the Western Balkans.



Instagram



CallOutVAWP
Western Balkans



3,286 likes

Identifying causes and finding solutions to end violence against women in politics (VAWP), together.
[#MoreWomenBetterPolitics](#) [#endVAWP](#) [#CallOutVAWP](#)



#CountMeIn in the Western Balkans

In the Western Balkans, the Programme works regionally to promote inclusion by encouraging the participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in political processes.

- Through our #AskHerToStand campaign, we championed the participation and representation of women in politics. As a result, a sister party in Bosnia and Herzegovina altered its party statute and granted a vote to the Women's Forum in its party board.
- Through the #NotMyStyle campaign, we engaged young people to encourage cross ethnic cooperation, which is vital to sustaining peace and stability in the Western Balkans.
- As part of the #CountMeIn campaign, in partnership with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, we facilitated training for political parties on how to be more accessible to persons with disabilities.

Promoting inclusive and accountable politics in Indonesia

The Conservative WFD Programme worked with local partners on tackling barriers to women's political participation in Indonesia. We assessed current funding challenges to women's parliamentary candidacies and developed proposals for effectively addressing them. The proposals were used by women's caucuses to advocate for political funding models that facilitate the upskilling of women candidates and foster a more efficient allocation of funding to their parliamentary campaigns.

In addition, the project helped four political parties strengthen their policy development processes. Parties turned their manifestos into more accessible documents that can be used by their parliamentarians, ministers and activists alike as the guiding document underpinning their policy agenda.



Image credit: UK Parliament

The Labour Party WFD Programme



'For over 25 years the Westminster Foundation for Democracy has played a vital role in supporting democracy and human rights across the world.

I am honoured to lead the Labour Party and excited to continue our work with the WFD to help improve people's lives by promoting more open and fairer political systems.

At a time when international cooperation is needed more than ever we must continue to build alliances and work together to champion democracy and promote our common values.'

Sir Keir Starmer MP

Leader of the Labour Party



The Labour Party is a centre-left party in the UK, made up of over half a million members, and an alliance of social democrats, democratic socialists and trade unionists. The Labour Party has a long history of international work and established links with many parties around the world. Our international links help us support the Labour Party's progressive international policy agenda and share best practices with other parties.

Labour's WFD programme supports political parties and networks in new, fragile and emerging democracies. The Labour Party's values of social justice, human rights and challenging inequality underpin our work.

During the year, Labour put gender equality and political representation at the centre of its programme activities. The emphasis has been on supporting future leaders to overcome barriers to participation in political selections and policymaking. This is delivered in practice through fostering cooperation and networks with Labour's sister party family across Eastern European, Western Balkans, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa regions.

Europe and Central Asia

In Europe and Central Asia, the Labour Party's work focused on gender equality and inclusion within policymaking.

The Labour Party organised a Progressive Alliance Activist Academy in Vienna in October 2019, which delivered training on modern party organisation and communication work in the context of political campaigns and how to engage in online and social media debates.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, our work continues to support Social Democratic MPs build their capacity to navigate the legislative processes, increase the political participation of youth leaders through a mentoring scheme and to develop elected women to lead public discussions on key policy issues. Social Democratic women MPs became the most prominent voices on policy issues around social protection and transparency.

Through a series of focus groups in Serbia (in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš), our partners in the Western Balkans, the Centre for Modern Skills and Youth for Exchange and Understanding International, strengthened the policy-making process by devising mechanisms for inclusive, regional policymaking. Regional focus groups were organised on topics including migration, social welfare and tackling youth unemployment. In North Macedonia, the groups analysed proposed government policy to address the migration and demographic crises. The focus group in Bosnia and Herzegovina in February 2020 examined and reviewed policies already in place to deal with outward migration (in this case, to what extent maternity benefits influence people's desire to emigrate), while in other countries focus was on both analysis of current policy and devising new ideas. In total, the focus groups engaged 265 people across the Western Balkans, a clear demonstration of the willingness to engage with policy development.

Activities to mark International Women's Day played a prominent role in capacity building and the increased engagement of women in Ukraine. A series of workshops on social democratic theory and practice on gender equality, women's rights, support for women's spaces and their ability to influence the political process proved vital for identifying ways to improve women's political representation. Our partners organised and mobilised huge levels of participation for the International Women's Day march, which also helped them build new partnerships and engage and exchange ideas with civil society groups on strategies for change.

In December 2019, our partners in Montenegro, Ninimedia kliping doo, started their new programme in three municipalities (Bijelo Polje, Podgorica and Bar) to support the development of activists and members through a Political Academy that will provide training on party organisation, effective campaigning, diverse communication methods, policy development and member mobilisation. There are 25 young and promising political activists and potential parliamentarians now engaged in the Academy. We encouraged our young alumni, especially those from Eastern Europe, to lead trainings for young activists within their regions.



Labour's sister party partners learnt about best practice for election campaigning in the 2019 UK general election.



Election best practice - Labour's sister-party partners sharing campaigning experience.

Middle East and North Africa

Across the Middle East and North Africa, the Labour Party continued to support Tha'era, the Arab Women's network, to advocate for women in leadership and eliminating violence against women. The programme supported the development of an advocacy manual on eliminating violence against women, which has been shared with women across the region. The Labour Party helped build a programme of workshops to deliver training on how to use the manual and implemented activities within it. In Egypt, our partners the Popular Socialist Alliance party and Tha'era, the Arab Women's network, prepared and delivered training in October-November 2019. The training was attended by over 50 members of the party in Upper Egypt's governorates. The session provided advocacy techniques on how members might organise a national campaign on the issue of violence against women. As a direct result, there is now new and improved draft legislation to combat violence against women awaiting approval in the Egyptian Parliament.

In Tunisia, a young participant of our Future Leaders' Programme, which supports political partners in the MENA region to develop the campaigns and communication of young leaders, was selected to stand in their parliamentary elections.

In Jordan, through its WFD programme, the Labour Party worked on a party-to-party basis to enhance collaboration with trade unions, union members and party leadership. This took the form of education activities to raise awareness of trade unions and their importance in developing legislation to defend workers' rights. Training workshops were prepared and delivered in September 2019 to promote increased and active participation in the trade union sector. These meetings had the benefit of high-level engagement from the Secretary General of the Jordanian Social Democratic Party and a Member of Parliament, Jameel Al-Nimri, who engaged with civil society, beyond his peers, to advance outreach initiatives and address common challenges.

Sub-Saharan Africa

The Labour programme has been supporting the Women's Academy for Africa (WAFA) to promote gender equality, empowerment, and the political advancement of women across the region for nearly a decade. The network brings together women from 13 countries across Central, East, Southern and West Africa. Representatives from WAFA identified the lack of access to and control over resources and political party practices as significant barriers to being selected as candidates in elections. WAFA has challenged this by providing political fundraising skills. Building on the previous training on women's representation, a 'train the trainers' workshop was organised in September 2019 to train participants to run national workshops across the region, focusing on building fundraising skills and building a campaign profile. So far, 95 women have engaged with these workshops in Sao Tome e Principe, Uganda, and Mozambique. On a bilateral level, work with our sister parties continued to focus on their needs by fostering dialogue between parties, with civil society, on human rights and equalities.



The Scottish National Party WFD programme

'The Westminster Foundation brings political parties together to promote and strengthen democracies throughout the world. This is important work, based on the values of human rights, justice and fairness for all.'

Nicola Sturgeon

Leader of the Scottish National Party and First Minister of Scotland



The Scottish National Party (SNP) is a progressive, left-of-centre party with an internationalist outlook. The SNP has been in government in the Scottish Parliament since 2007 and has been the third largest party in the UK Parliament since 2015.

This unique position allows the SNP to share experience of devolution and the experience of being simultaneously in government and opposition. The SNP's international work funded by WFD focuses on select projects on cross-party, thematic bases, to maximise depth of intervention and use limited funding effectively.

The SNP's approach to representation and equality, particularly with regards to women's political representation, is at the heart of our international democracy support. With a female party leader, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, and the UK's first gender-balanced Cabinet, our programming shares good practice with partners moving closer to gender equality.

MENA: Arab Women Parliamentarians' Network for Equality (Ra'edat)

Ra'edat is a network of 400 women who are current or former legislators from 14 countries across the Middle East and North Africa. In 2019-20, the SNP WFD programme supported the network in hosting country-level conferences to adapt a regional policy on gender equality to national contexts. The conferences demonstrated strong engagement between the network and civil society across the MENA region, as well as cross-party collaboration. The SNP WFD programme then supported the network as they conducted a research study and developed a policy paper on violence against women in politics, the first of its kind in the Arab world.

Malawi: Parliamentary Women's Caucus

The SNP WFD programme continues to partner with a local NGO in Malawi, the Centre for Civil Society Strengthening. The NGO hosts the programme's full-time Lilongwe-based Project Officer, allowing for regular stakeholder collaboration, engagement with the caucus and representation in meetings. Work in 2019-20 was affected by the context of the May 2019 election. In the lead-up to the election, the SNP WFD programme supported the existing 32 female MPs in maintaining visibility as a united caucus through their campaign, and shared messaging about the importance of female political representation. 45 women were elected in May 2019, and the office in Malawi continues to work with the new caucus on combating violence against women in politics, creating positive visibility in the media, developing ongoing campaign strategies and maintaining constituency engagement. They have reported that the SNP WFD programme is the only organisation to work with the caucus through the electoral cycle, rather than just in the lead-up to elections. This programme was supported by DFID through its Inclusive and Accountable Politics programme.

Ukraine: Elections and disinformation

In 2019-20, the SNP WFD programme collaborated with the Committee of Voters of Ukraine (CVU) to develop a guide for voters on how to recognise and avoid the disinformation surrounding elections, which was shared via video presentation and social media channels. The academic Dr Yevhan Mahda was commissioned to publish a research paper on the findings from both elections. Additionally, through 2019, CVU hosted a series of roundtable discussions in different regions of Ukraine with local stakeholders to develop a cross-sector cohesive policy strategy to identify and combat Russian disinformation in the country in advance of the presidential and parliamentary elections. This culminated in a final event in January 2020 with participants from Scotland, several former Soviet Union states, and Ukraine.



WWW.PARLIAMENT.SCOT/FESTIVAL

Women MPs from Malawi visit the Scottish Parliament as part of the SNP WFD programme.



The WFD Multi-Party Office

'I'm hugely supportive of the work that the Westminster Foundation for Democracy do to promote inclusive politics and women's empowerment.

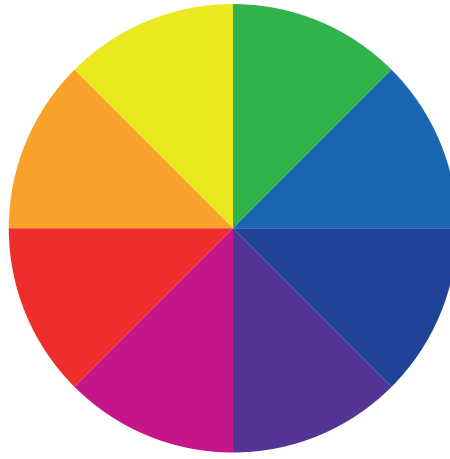
The Liberal Democrats are proud of the role that we take, alongside the Africa Liberal Network, in ensuring that women have the skills to win elections.

I am delighted that last year we were able to work with women from across Africa, as part of the Women's Leadership Programme, and that all of them will be standing in elections in the next two years.

We maintain our commitment to both campaign training and mentoring with our liberal sister parties as we strive to promote women's full political participation.'

Ed Davey MP

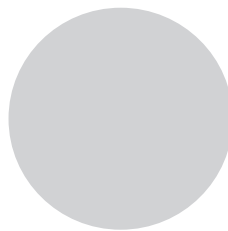
Leader of the Liberal Democrats.



WFD's Multi-Party Office (MPO) works with a group of UK political parties, including the Liberal Democrats, the Democratic Unionist Party, Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales, and the Green Party of England and Wales, to undertake international engagement and development programmes around the world.

By partnering with smaller and opposition parties in countries dominated by one or two major political parties, WFD Multi-Party Office projects help to build truly multi-party democracies that offer citizens alternative choices and represent a range of views, issues and groups. Through its activities, the MPO shares political experience that is relatable and can be adapted to the local context by minority political parties campaigning on specific issues or representing a certain region or group.

The WFD MPO's projects support UK parties in their work with sister parties and regional networks to enhance internal party rules and procedures, strengthen party branches, run effective political campaigns, improve membership outreach practices, adopt evidence-based and inclusive policy development processes, and increase opportunities for participation by historically marginalised groups.





Liberal Democrats: **Supporting women standing for election**

The Liberal Democrats have supported the Africa Liberal Network for over 10 years. Most recently, this has involved partnering to launch and run the ALN Women's Leadership Programme, a regional initiative aiming to improve the representation and participation of women within the network and within its member parties. The programme provides training and support for women planning to stand for election in the following two years and includes three regional workshops, along with remote political mentoring.

In 2019, fourteen participants from nine different countries completed the programme, with training workshops held in Morocco, Ethiopia, and South Africa. In March 2020, the first workshop of the programme's second year took place in Kenya, with a new group of fourteen participants representing eleven different parties and ten different countries across the continent.



Democratic Unionist Party: **Tackling disinformation in Georgia**

Building on work that began in early 2019, the Democratic Unionist Party continued their collaboration with the Conservative Party of Georgia, supporting the party to play a leading role in the Georgian government's response to the issue of disinformation. As part of this, WFD's Multi-Party Office provided technical support to the first ever parliamentary inquiry by the Georgian Foreign Affairs Committee on Disinformation and Propaganda, and arranged a study visit to the UK for committee members to meet and exchange with UK Parliament committee staff and experts on disinformation. The final inquiry report was published in early 2020, receiving wide media attention.

Following this, a delegation from the Conservative Party of Georgia also visited Belfast and London in March 2020 for several meetings with DUP staff and leadership to discuss and provide support on different elements of the party's campaign preparations ahead of the Georgian parliamentary elections in October 2020.

The Georgian Foreign Affairs Committee on Disinformation and Propaganda on a study visit to the UK for committee members to meet and exchange with UK Parliament committee staff and experts on disinformation.





The youth wing of the Democratic Renewal of Macedonia party taking part in the Green Academy training programme.



Plaid Cymru:

Helping their sister party develop a credible and informed policy programme in Kosovo

Plaid Cymru continued their partnership with Alternativa, their sister party in Kosovo, through supporting them to develop a credible and informed policy programme in preparation for the country's parliamentary elections held in October 2019. Following a series of consultations with party members and policy experts, Alternativa developed policies in five priority areas, including economic development, education and youth, environment, health and social welfare, and the rule of law. The project also supported Alternativa to organise several public outreach meetings across Kosovo to raise awareness of their new policy programme.



Green Party of England and Wales:

Helping the leaders of tomorrow promote democracy

In spring 2019 the Green Party of England and Wales launched the Green Talent Accelerator in partnership with the Eastern Africa Greens Federation (EAGF), a network of parties they have been supporting since 2013. The programme identifies and provides tailored support to emerging leaders within member parties seeking to hold public office, promote democratic values, and contribute to the advancement of their parties and the network. Participant programmes included shadowing senior women within the Green Party of England and Wales; in-person and remote coaching on public speaking, messaging and communication; and the development of an election campaign plan.

The Young Greens of England and Wales also developed the Green Academy in North Macedonia with the youth wing of the Democratic Renewal of Macedonia, MODOM. Drawing on the Young Greens' own experience of their '30 Under 30' youth training initiative, they worked with MODOM to develop a seven month programme open to young people interested in Green politics from across the country. The programme focused on political activism, campaigning, and public speaking skills and included sessions on LGBT+ issues and environmental sustainability led by representatives from the Young Greens and local civil society organisations.



Elections

WFD is the public body responsible for the recruitment and selection of UK election observers for overseas missions and believes that free, fair and credible elections are a key pillar of an effective and representative democratic state.

During 2019-20, WFD continued to expand its work in the field of elections using the integrated electoral cycle approach which it adopted the previous year to support the integrity of electoral processes. The approach centres on engaging political parties, parliaments, civil society organisations, and electoral bodies before, during, and after elections, instead of solely engaging during the election itself. It promotes the integration of electoral topics into governance work to help bolster democratic governance.

In addition to a long- and short-term election observation training held in May 2019, which expanded the UK's election observation database, WFD sent UK election observers to participate in three election observation missions: in Malawi, Tunisia and Kosovo.



Reforming elections

Reforming elections is the most meaningful way to combine a long-term perspective with strong stakeholder engagement in areas of governance which enhance electoral integrity. As the process of reforming elections often suffers from a lack of transparency and consultation, which leads to a negative impact, WFD began its work in this area during 2018-19 with a clear focus on transparency and supporting long-term consultation mechanisms. It is WFD's goal to enable relevant stakeholders to engage with the reforms in an active and meaningful way.

To this end WFD conducted detailed research on implementing baseline recommendations for reforming elections. We developed a Guide for Political Party Representatives which we published internally and shared with partners in February 2020 to foster long-term monitoring of electoral reforms. With these first steps, WFD will continue to develop a strong support programme on reforming elections in the coming year.

Helping women overcome barriers to selection

This year, WFD has also delved into researching how to overcome the biggest challenges faced by women who want to get elected: selection (as party candidates) and election (to public office). We know from extensive research that the most significant barrier to women's participation in formal politics is political parties and the way they operate. With both the programmes we run directly, and in coordination with the UK political parties and their WFD programmes, we have been making headway on this using a twin-track approach that engages both decision makers within political parties and provides technical support to the women who are ready to take on these political competitions.

A roundtable discussion on the security concerns facing national and municipal elections in Libya in February 2020.



Research

WFD research and expertise has helped build an evidence base for improving the quality of our work and that of our partners in supporting democracies around the world.

This year, research by our in-house team of experts, independent experts, and through our long-standing partnership with the University of Birmingham, has included new research on women's political leadership, anti-corruption and election observation missions.

Women political leaders on parliamentary committees in Africa

A growing body of evidence shows that women have a substantive impact when they are included in legislatures, particularly when it comes to health. Yet, our understanding of how women in parliament achieve this impact remains poor. The policy paper we published in June 2019 helps to fill this gap by examining the extent to which parliamentary committees provide women in African parliaments with an avenue for influencing laws and policies in the health sector. It maps the inclusion of women in parliamentary committees across sub-Saharan Africa and presents a case study of Malawi, where in 2017 female legislators made use of parliamentary committees to influence a new law on HIV and AIDS – an issue of vital importance to women.

Regulating referenda: an international survey of democracies

Our survey of 34 countries' regulation of referenda, which was published in March 2020, shows that worldwide, regulation of referenda is minimal and open to abuse.

The paper argues that countries' institutions everywhere need urgent reforms of how they incorporate direct democracy. The paper covers issues around online campaign regulation, campaign spending limits, limits on government spending, and the role of the media and marginalised groups.

Addressing structural challenges to democracy in the Western Balkans

In the Western Balkans, we have published novel research throughout the year, including on the cost of youth emigration to national economies and why boycotting parliament is undermining democracy in the region. These papers have helped to illuminate the structural challenges to democratic governance in new ways. See the Western Balkans section for additional information.

Implementing election observation recommendations in sub-Saharan Africa

International election observers invest significant time and energy in making recommendations which are designed to improve the integrity and credibility of future elections. Yet, observers do not always have the opportunity to monitor the implementation of their recommendations over time, nor the capacity to conduct in-depth research into why certain recommendations may be successfully implemented while others are not. WFD and the University of Birmingham tracked the implementation of observers' recommendations across five countries in sub-Saharan Africa: Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, and Uganda. Our analysis revealed significant variation in terms of which recommendations are implemented.

A conference attendee examines an infographic of WFD's research.



British Ambassador to North Macedonia, Rachel Galloway reads WFD's research on the socio-political participation of young people at a conference to present its findings.



Accountability and anti-corruption

In collaboration with Phil Mason, the former senior anti-corruption adviser at the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), our in-house team of experts produced new research on anti-corruption agencies and how they interact with parliament. The framework included an update on WFD's approach to programming in this area and case studies from across Europe and Asia.

In March 2020, WFD launched a new publication on independent oversight institutions, which offered a global and country-specific analysis of parliaments' relationships with the institutions which audit public funds, tackle anti-corruption, and support human rights. The publication, which was supported by a parliamentary guide and related education materials, has been used extensively throughout country teams' programming in this area.

Women's political leadership

In spring 2020, WFD formed a partnership with the Global Institute for Women's Leadership and Kings College London to commission a literature review on what supports and sustains women's political careers. This unique piece of work brings together 500 different pieces of research on this topic and was published in July 2020.

We also initiated a meeting for donors and organisations like us who implement programmes, on applying new ways of thinking about gender, politics (thinking and working politically), and fragile and conflict-affected situations to our work. The group identified challenges to working holistically and consistently with these lenses and produced several recommendations that we will follow up on next year.

Key risks and uncertainties

Working on political governance abroad is complex and often delicate. WFD acts to reduce, avoid, transfer or tolerate risks as appropriate. The Board acknowledges that accepting a degree of risk is a characteristic of WFD's work when setting its risk appetite. Without this it would not be possible for WFD to carry out programme work in several of the jurisdictions in which we operate.

WFD has in place a risk management policy and procedures to identify and to manage risks at the corporate level and programme-by-programme. Key risks and uncertainties are those that could have a material impact on WFD in carrying out its work. During the year, eight strategic risks were monitored and managed as part of a Corporate Risk Register reviewed monthly by the Executive Management Committee and quarterly by the Board. The outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) towards the end of the reporting period has impacted on the risk ratings and mitigation activities of several strategic risks.

Risk management and key risks are reported in more detail on pages 84 and 89.

Western Balkans Democracy Initiative

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This photo was taken as part of our programme in the Western Balkans, a region where WFD has been supporting the development of democratic practices since the early 1990s. For more information on what the programme achieved this year, see the Western Balkans section.

Communication and engagement

73,275 Visitors to our website (www.wfd.org)

Countries and territories where
website traffic came from

211

1409 New Twitter followers gained

Total Twitter followers

5562

97,000 People reached on average via our
posts in the last 6 months

Subscribers to our email newsletter

4648

4707

Followers on Facebook

LinkedIn followers to end
the year

4406

10

Top countries visiting the website:

UK, US, North Macedonia, Myanmar, Serbia, Nigeria, Bosnia
and Herzegovina, Albania, Kenya, Uganda



HENRY BRANDON
CRENSHAW SPEAKER IN
1822 1828 & 1830-36
CREATED A.C.B.N. 1836
THE ENGLISH HANDBOOK
ON MARCH 4TH 1881
IN THE FORTY SEVENTH
YEAR OF THE REIGN
OF QUEEN VICTORIA



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Speaking at our annual parliamentary reception in July 2019, then Secretary of State for International Development, Rory Stewart, delivered a speech expressing words of encouragement for WFD's work on democracy assistance: 'It is with humility and a sense of genuine partnership and mutual learning that we will tackle the global challenges of democracy today.'



WFD

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About WFD

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) is a non-departmental public body of the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office. It was established as a UK public body in 1992 to support the development of democracy around the world, independently from Government and in a transparent manner. Initially, we supported new democratic institutions, political parties and independent media by awarding grants.

Currently, we design and deliver long-term programmes directly all over the world, using UK and international experts, through a network of national offices in 33 countries which are based in or near the parliaments of partner countries. All employ local staff.

Operating at country, regional and global level, we:

- Provide technical advice and training to partners on policy, legislation, elections and engagement;
- Support the creation of partnerships, coalitions and peer networks;
- Share the diverse range of UK parliamentary, political and institutional experience.

We are committed to working in a responsible, transparent and innovative way. All our international cooperation programmes are designed and adapted based on local knowledge and priorities, and benefit from best-in-class monitoring, evaluation and learning practice.

WFD also supports the international development activities of political parties represented in the UK House of Commons, and we are responsible for recruiting, training and deploying UK nationals to serve in international election observation missions.



Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth, opened our Commonwealth conference in March 2020. For more details about the programme's achievements, see the Commonwealth of Nations section.

Reference and administrative details

Westminster Foundation for Democracy

An Executive Non-Departmental Public Body of the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and the Treasury Solicitor are the two named subscribers to the Company's Memorandum of Association. The Secretary of State has formal powers of appointment to WFD's Board of Governors but the Board operates independently and at arm's length from Government.

WFD receives grant-in-aid from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office provided out of monies voted by Parliament to enable it to achieve agreed objectives.

Domiciled in the United Kingdom

WFD is a company limited by guarantee and therefore does not have a share capital

Company registration: 2693163

Registered office: 8th Floor Artillery House, 11-19 Artillery Row, London, SW19 1RT

Principal bank: HSBC Bank, West End Business Banking Centre, 2nd Floor, 16 Kings Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 8JF

Auditors: National Audit Office, 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria, London, SW1W 9SP

For more information

Website: www.wfd.org

Twitter @WFD_Democracy

Facebook @WestminsterFoundation

Have a question or feedback?

Tel: +44 (0)20 7799 1311

Email: info@wfd.org



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