EBA

03
2014

INTERNATIONAL PARTY ASSISTANCE - WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE EFFECTS?

Lars Svåsand

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what do we know about the effects?

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"Building effective party structures is an endless task. Healthy organizations can and will adapt to changing circumstances"

National Democratic Institute on twitter (accessed 07.10.14)

This report can be downloaded free of charge at www.eba.se

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Preface

Sweden has a long tradition of providing development cooperation with the aim of strengthening democracy and the respect for human rights. Democratic development has been a thematic priority for many years, and democracy support constitutes one of the largest parts of Swedish aid. Given the strong focus on democracy support in Swedish aid over the past years, EBA finds it motivated to take a closer look at this kind of aid based on current knowledge.

Democracy support includes a wide range of support mechanisms aiming at developing and strengthening democratic institutions, processes and actors. It is a broad field with many different kinds of interventions. In this report, focus is on one specific sub-category, support to political parties and party systems. Sweden has provided support for these purposes through party affiliated organizations (PAO) since 1995. The provision is guided by a special government strategy for the period 2011-2015. Currently support amounts to some 80 million SEK annually.

In 2015, the future of Swedish international assistance to political parties will be on the government agenda; a new strategy is to be drafted and decided upon. In light of this, EBA invited Lars Svåsand, professor in Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen, to carry out a study on international party assistance. The point of departure for the study is to answer the question, what do we know about the effects of international assistance to political parties in new democracies, and to reflect upon implications for Swedish aid in this field.

The author has made a review of the literature on research in this field as well as of evaluations of donor interventions and programs. He concludes that there are no clear results. There seem to be limited effects of international party assistance, and rarely any transformative impact, even though there are examples of positive outcomes. However, as the report highlights there is a number of methodological difficulties in assessing the effects. The author recognizes the contextual challenges of carrying out support to parties and party systems in new democracies, and underlines the need of being realistic about what to expect from party assistance, given the relatively scarce resources that are allocated. In addition, he points at the need for a reasonable time perspective when assessing the results of specific interventions.

International party assistance is often considered controversial, not only because of the difficulties to show positive results but also from the point of view that the development of parties and party systems is a highly political and sensitive issue connected to sovereignty. At the same time, given the key functions that political parties have in a democracy, a number of donors still find it motivated to engage in the development of well-functioning parties and/or party systems.

In the concluding reflections, the author provides arguments for continued international party assistance - primarily interventions with a cross-party orientation. As to the key factors that donors need to consider, he underlines that ownership and commitment seems to be necessary for success. In addition, contextual factors are very important, and support must be "tailored-made" in order to contribute to the higher goal of democratic consolidation.

We hope that this study will contribute to the coming discussions and decisions on the focus, scale and mode of Swedish support in this field. The study has been conducted in dialogue with a reference group led by Ms Eva Lindström, former vice chair of the EBA. The responsibility for the content of the report rests fully with the author.

Stockholm, February 2015

Lars Heikensten

Chair

Sammanfattning

Internationellt stöd till politiska partier (IPA)[1] kan definieras som "organiserade insatser för att stödja utvecklingen av demokratiska politiska partier, en god samverkan mellan partier, samt de politiska och legala förutsättningar som krävs för demokratiska politiska partier" (fritt översatt från definition av Burnell & Gerritts, 2010:1068).

IPA har blivit en del av de internationella insatserna för att stärka nya demokratier och utgör därmed en del av det internationella demokratibiståndet. Välfungerande partisystem och politiska partier anses ha stor betydelse för ett lands demokratiska utveckling. Poliska partier har grundläggande funktioner i ett demokratiskt system och utgör en betydelsefull kanal för organisering och förmedling av medborgarnas åsikter. Trots utmaningar och brister anses politiska partier ha flera fördelar jämfört med andra sätt att organisera politiska ståndpunkter och ansvarsutkrävande. Det finns t.ex. ingen annan organisationsform som både kan kanalisera intressen och anta rollen som regeringsmakt respektive opposition. Det civila samhället är också en viktig kanal för organisering och åsiktsmobilisering men de kan inte fullt ut anta de uppgifter som politiska partier har i ett demokratiskt system. Givet betydelsen av ett stabilt och välfungerande partisystem, och det faktum att man i flera nya demokratier arbetar med att forma ett demokratiskt system och att utveckla dessa institutioner, menar många att det finns motiv för internationellt stöd.

Samtidigt uppfattas internationellt stöd till politiska partier ofta som kontroversiellt. Det handlar bl.a. om huruvida det i grunden är rätt att internationella biståndsgivare engagerar sig i nationella processer som påverkar hur politiska partier utvecklas och samspelar med andra partier i ett visst sammanhang. Hur politiska partier organiseras ses ofta som känsliga och högst nationella frågor. En annan fråga i sammanhanget handlar om huruvida stödet ger någon effekt. Det förefaller svårt att påvisa positiva effekter, även om det finns exempel där stödinsatser har gett resultat i enlighet med uppställda målsättningar. I sammanhanget bör dock noteras att det finns en rad metodmässiga utmaningar med att påvisa ett samband mellan insatser som syftar till att stödja partier och partisystem och

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[1] Forkortningen IPA kommer från engelskans International Party Assistance.

förändringar i dessa institutioner. Det handlar bl.a. om problem med tillgång på information och data, såväl före som efter införandet av stödet. Därtill påverkas utvecklingen av politiska partier i hög grad av andra institutionella förändringar, såsom lagstiftningen avseende valprocesser och politiska partier, vilket i sin tur påverkar huruvida det internationella stödet bidrar till någon effekt eller inte.

Internationellt stöd till politiska partier utgör ett verktyg i arbetet med att främja demokratisk konsolidering. Den övergripande målsättningen omsätts på många olika sätt. Det finns ingen standardmodell för hur IPA organiseras och genomförs. I denna studie görs ett försök att beskriva de variationer som finns inom ramen för internationellt stöd till politiska partier i form av en diskussion kring sex olika dimensioner. Dimensionerna handlar om syfte och inriktning av stödet, organisationsmodell för att kanalisera stödet, den finansiella omfattningen av stödet och hur det fördelas, vilka stödformer som används, tidpunkt för stödinsatser samt geografiskt fokus. Exempelvis inriktas vissa insatser på enskilda partier i syfte att bidra till partiers institutionalisering, samtidigt som andra stödinsatser syftar till att stärka partisystemet i stort. Andra målsättningar handlar om att stödja särskilda grupper av aktörer som har marginaliserats i de politiska processerna. Det kan t.ex. handla om ungdomar och kvinnor. Det är dock inte alltid tydligt hur sådana insatser bidrar till att befästa ett demokratiskt system som helhet. Sammantaget, visar redogörelsen av olika dimensioner att det finns stora variationer inom ramen för de insatser som klassas som stöd till politiska partier, något som i sig har en betydelse för hur väl internationellt stöd bidrar till det övergripande målet om demokratisk konsolidering.

Det internationella stödet har förändrats över tid. Det finns en trend från att det är en stödform med huvudsakligt fokus på enskilda partier/systerpartier till mer av partiöverskridande stöd och ansatser. Det finns också en trend från direkt partistöd till mer indirekt stöd, dvs. insatser som inriktas mot institutioner och processer som påverkar partiers möjligheter att fungera på ett bra sätt på såväl kort som lång sikt. Det handlar exempelvis om stöd till funktioner som hänger samman med parlament, och processer som handlar om planering och genomförande av val. Denna förändring indikerar att IPA bör kunna kopplas närmare till andra former av bistånd.

Både forskningslitteraturen och utvärderingar av olika givares stöd till politiska partier visar på ett antal faktorer som är av avgörande

betydelse för framgång. Det handlar bl.a. om betydelsen av ägarskap och ett tydligt åtagande hos mottagarna. Därtill framhålls vikten av att den institutionella och politiska miljön är gynnsam.

Vilka implikationer har då de iakttagelser och slutsatser som finns i denna översikt för det framtida stödet till politiska partier? Av litteraturöversikten är det tydligt att stödets effekter bedöms vara begränsade. Frågan är om det är skäl för att inte ge något stöd eller om bristen på resultat delvis handlar om de metodmässiga svårigheterna med att mäta och identifiera resultat. En närliggande fråga är om förväntningarna om vad som kan åstadkommas med relativt begränsade resurser är realistiska. Samtidigt som det finns begränsningar vad gäller stödets effekter är det av grundläggande vikt att få till stånd fungerande partier och partisystem vilket är ett starkt motiv för fortsatt stöd. Det finns även motiv för att mindre länder engagerar sig i denna typ av bistånd då de kan bidra med erfarenheter som kompletterar större givarländer på området.

I valet av inriktning finns det mycket som talar för ett större fokus på partisystem och samverkan mellan partier. Vidare finns det ett antal faktorer som särskilt bör beaktas för att öka möjligheterna att lyckas med biståndsinsatserna. Som med många andra typer av bistånd, handlar det om betydelsen av ett starkt ägarskap och institutionellt engagemang hos mottagarna. Andra aspekter att beakta handlar om tidpunkten för insatserna, insatsernas omfattning och huruvida det finns processer för uppföljning, utvärdering och möjlighet till anpassning utifrån erfarenheter under resans gång. En mycket viktig faktor inför alla typer av insatser är att orientera sig om huruvida den politiska miljön och de socio-ekonomiska och kulturella förutsättningarna är gynnsamma eller inte. Avslutningsvis är det också viktigt att se möjligheterna med att samordna med andra demokratiinsatser och att låta stödet till politiska partier ingå i bredare demokratistöd.

Summary

International party assistance (IPA) is defined as: "The organizational effort to support democratic political parties, to promote a peaceful interaction between parties, and to strengthen the democratic political and legal environment for political parties" (Burnell & Gerritts, 2010:1068)

IPA has become part of the international efforts to assist new democracies, andhence part of international democracy assistance. Well-functioning parties and party-systems are considered to perform essential functions in democratic systems. Political parties are important means for organizing and channelling the views of citizens. Despite many challenges and limitations, parties have advantages over other ways of organizing accountability in democracies. No other organization performs the critical functions of interest aggregation and the organization of government and opposition alternatives. While civil society organizations also are necessary in democracies, they perform different functions from those of parties. Given the importance of a stable and well-functioning party system, and the fact that many new democracies struggle with developing these institutions, many find it motivated to provide international assistance.

IPA is nevertheless controversial for several reasons. It is a normative issue if it is correct for donor institutions to be involved in processes that shape the nature of political parties. The types of and the organization of political parties are among the most 'national' sensitive issues in politics. IPA has also been controversial because it has proved hard to demonstrate that it has positive effects. Many studies of IPA concluded that there are limited effects. But there are also examples where IPA has functioned according to specified objectives.

There is a wide range of methodological challenges in detecting the relationship between efforts to assist parties and party systems, and changes in these institutions. The issues here involve problems of access to data on several time points; prior to and after the introduction of IPA. Party developments are also strongly embedded in a wider setting of institutional environments, such as electoral processes and legal regulations that impact on political parties;

institutions which also are recipients of democracy assistance. IPA's effects are likely to be influenced by these environments.

IPA is an instrument in assisting new democracies to consolidate. This overall objective is operationalized in diverse ways. There is no standard model for how IPA is organized and implemented. The paper discusses six dimensions of IPA: the objectives of IPA, the organizational model, the financial scale of intervention, the modes of intervention, the timing of intervention, and the geographic focus for IPA. Each of these represents groups of variables that may influence how IPA can contribute to the overarching goal of democratic consolidation. Some IPA projects targets individual parties, where the objective is party institutionalization, but at the same time another objective is to assist the development of a *stable party system*, which has different properties from those of individual parties. An additional objective in IPA has been to support particular groups of actors, such as youth and women, who have been marginalized in the political processes. The different ways of organizing IPA reflect these dualities, and it is not always clear how each contribute to the consolidation of democracy as a whole.

Across time there is a trend away from party-to-party linkages towards more cross-party approaches. There is also trend away from a concentration on direct party support to indirect party support; that is IPA programs reach beyond parties to institutions and processes that impact parties in the short or long run, such as support for parliamentary institutions, electoral management bodies and civil society organizations. This change indicates that IPA programs should be closer linked to other forms of development assistance. Both the research literature and the evaluations of IPA programs indicate that critical factors that influence the 'success rate' of IPA are, first, the 'ownership' issue, such as when IPA programs establish trust among the participants and where the recipient parties are committed to change, and second, the institutional and political environment in which IPA is situated.

What are the implications of the findings and conclusions in this reviw for future assistance to political parties? From the literature review, it is clear that the effects of IPA are considered to be limited. Does this imply that assistance should not be provided, or is the lack of effects mainly a matter of methodological difficulties in measuring and identifying results? A related issue is whether the expectations on what should be achieved are realistic given the relatively limited

resources. Even though, there are limitations in terms of effects of IPA, it is still essential to develop stable parties and party systems, which is a strong motive for continued support. There are also arguments for why smaller states should be involved in this field as a complement to some of the major donors, When choosing direction it seems motivated for donors to focus more on party-systems and interparty dialogue. If IPA is continued there are several factors that should be observed to increase the likelihood that IPA programs succeed. These are partly characteristics of IPA programs themselves such as: ownership, institutional commitment, the time dimension of projects, the financial scale projects, ensuring monitoring, evaluation and adjustments. However, IPA programs must also take into account contextual factors such as unfavorable political environments and unfavorable socio-economic and cultural conditions. IPA should also be part of a broader democracy assistance agenda which calls for coordination with other programs.

1. Introduction

An increasing number of countries have introduced programs in support of political parties in new democracies. International party assistance (IPA hereafter) has been defined as: *"The organizational effort to support democratic political parties, to promote a peaceful interaction between parties, and to strengthen the democratic political and legal environment for political parties"*(Burnell & Gerritts, 2010:1068). IPA is, just as development aid in general, nevertheless controversial, mainly because of the normative question if this is something external actors should become involved in at all, but also because one does not know if IPA has the intended effects or not, or if there are significant unintended effects.

The purpose of this study is to review the findings of research on this topic and evaluation reports of donor institutions. Hence, the aim of the paper is to provide an answer to the question: *What do we know about the effects of international assistance to political parties in new democracies?* And, as a follow-up to that question: which steps should IPA take if it is to be pursued in the future? The study will also include description of different dimensions of IPA, and how some different donors channel their support.

There are other, relevant questions to pose regarding IPA which I deal only briefly with. First, there is the normative issue: *should* states and multilateral institutions that provide development aid be involved in this field at all? This is an important debate, worthy of a study in itself. I briefly discuss this issue, as the question is relevant for the way in which IPA has been organized, and return to the normative issue in the conclusion. A second issue concerns the effects of IPA on parties in the donor countries that are involved. IPA can have various consequences for donor parties. A positive impact of IPA is that it may increase awareness and understanding of democratization processes. Party activists participating in IPA projects may therefore be better informed about development issues in general. But it is also possible that IPA could contribute to centralization inside the donor parties, unless IPA is properly anchored and the projects shared in the donor party organization. Although the impact on the donor parties is interesting and worth to study, a discussion of this topic would require data that, as far as I know, are not available.

1.1 Democracy assistance and party assistance

Democracy assistance has grown considerably since the early 1990s (Cornell, 2013) and reflects the understanding of democracy as a multidimensional concept and composed of different types of institutions. Although there is no single definition of what a democracy is, most analysts would agree that a democracy includes some elements that are *necessary*, but *not sufficient* for a system to be called a 'democracy'[2]. Democracies include some form of *vertical* and *horizontal* delegation of authority. Vertical delegation is the selection of a group of representatives, among a set of candidates competing on a level playing field, while horizontal accountability involves a division of power among several institutions (Bergman, Muller, & Strøm, 2000; Schedler, 1999). A democracy also has judicial framework guaranteeing the rights of individuals and groups.

Significant efforts in democracy assistance have been directed to improve the electoral process (Darnolf, 2011; Kelly, 2012; Kuncic, 2011; Lean, 2007). Other programs have sought to strengthen the judiciary (Risse, Magen, & McFaul, 2009), the parliament (Burnell, 2009; Hudson & Wren, 2007; Power, 2008), the government administration (Fritz & Menocal, 2007), civil society (Hearn, 1999), mass media (Kumar, 2006) or promoted decentralization (Romeo, 2003).

With some variation, the main bilateral and multilateral donors assisting the development of democracy have concentrated their attention on three principle areas: improving electoral processes, strengthening institutions, such as parliaments and the judiciary, and civil society. Support for political parties as such was added to the democracy assistance agenda late, primarily because support for political parties was seen as interference in the domestic politics of the recipient states.

Democracy assistance focused initially on strengthening civil society, also considered to be vital for democratic consolidation. However, strengthening civil society needed to be balanced by strengthening political parties (Doherty, 2001). On the one hand, many civil society organizations (CSO hereafter) did not see themselves as political actors, therefore political parties needed to fill a

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[2] See (Dahl, 1971)

void. But on the other hand, a strong civil society could potentially increase the 'demand' side in the political system. Improvement of political parties would be necessary to take care of interest aggregation and policy coordination. Only political parties perform these two functions in political systems.

1.2 Method, material and limitations

The findings and conclusions of this paper are based on a desk review of the current knowledgebase for international party assistance.

A main source of information for this paper is the evaluation reports that the IPA institutions have commissioned from independent experts as well as the growing research literature on party assistance. There are an increasing number of actors involved in IPA (see list of acronyms). Some institutions have been active since the 1960's while others were formed during the last years. The availability of information and evaluations varies enormously, both between institutions as well as over time for the individual institution. Some IPA donors, like NIMD (The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy) has a long series of evaluation reports. Other IPA donors, like the British Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the two American institutions, National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI) have some evaluation reports, while no evaluation reports are available for the German foundations even if they are among the largest and oldest IPA institutions. It is, in some respects, a skewed sample where those institutions that have made available reports in English are clearly overrepresented.

Geographically, there is an overrepresentation of reports on Africa and the former Communist governed countries, but these regions are also among the top beneficiaries of IPA. The geographical skewedness may impact on what general conclusions that may be drawn, but this is in any case problematic because of the significant impact of *the context* for IPA projects. The context refers both to the timing of IPA projects, that is *when* IPA projects are introduced (prior to, or during, or after the transition to democracy) as well as the particular configuration of environmental factors, such as the structure of political institutions in the recipient countries, and more general socio-economic conditions. To some extent every context is unique.

Nevertheless, the types of IPA donor institutions and their activities that are discussed also identify several issues that re-appear across the reports which indicate that there are some factors that are important when drawing conclusions about what works or not.

IPA has not been a subject of great concern among political scientists, but there is a growing interest in it. Peter Burnell (Burnell, 2006; Burnell & Gerrits, 2010) and Tom Carothers (Carothers, 2005, 2006) have spearheaded the research in this field and to some extent the research literature has compensated for the lack of evaluation reports by the German IPA actors (Erdmann, 2006; Weissenbach, 2010, 2013, 2014). Research on IPA covers new democracies in all parts of the world, but a majority deals with the former Communist bloc and Sub-Saharan Africa.

1.3 Outline

I first outline *why* IPA has become part of the democracy assistance agenda and tie this discussion to the perception of parties as necessary institutions in democracies. This is followed by a discussion of some of the problems confronting IPA, particularly that the types of parties emerging in many new democracies are fundamentally different from those in established democracies. After that I discuss six dimensions of IPA programs; the objectives of IPA, the organizational model, the financial scale of intervention, the modes of intervention, the timing of intervention, and the geographic focus for IPA, There is no standard model for how IPA is structured. Different donors have focused and organized their assistance in different ways.

In the following section I discuss the key question of this study, i.e. findings on the effects of IPA, A main problem in the study of IPA is to identify if IPA has the effects it is supposed to have. I therefore first discuss the methodological difficulties in analyzing IPA's contribution to democratic consolidation and after that I present and comment upon what we know from the literature on parties and evaluation reports of IPA programs.

The final part of the paper returns to the normative issue and arguments are presented for why IPA should be continued; in spite of the problems in detecting clear effects. I summarize what I see as critical factors that should be taken into account in the design of IPA programs.

2. International Party Assistance – motivation and challenges

2.1 The necessity of parties in democracies and the background for IPA

The dominant view in political science is undoubtedly that political parties are 'indispensible' institutions in a democracy (Russel J. Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002; Lipset, 2000; S.C. Stokes, 1999). This is an opinion held not only by political scientists, but also by citizens in general. Although citizens in established democracies have become increasingly critical of their parties, they nevertheless - to an overwhelming degree - support the *principle* that political parties are necessary in a democracy (Russel J. Dalton & Weldon, 2005).

The 'necessity' of political parties is also reflected in various public policies. The introduction of public subsidies for parties in established democracies has been justified, among other reasons, because these institutions were seen as essential for the functioning of the democratic system. Aid to political parties has also been integrated into international programs aimed at strengthening democratic governing institutions and processes in newly democratised states because, as one of the donor institutions puts it, political parties are "…*a cornerstone of representative democracy and serve a function like no other institution*" (NDI, 2008b).

There are several reasons for the claim of a link between parties and democracy.

First, there is an empirical justification in the sense that there exists no fully fledged democracy today that does not have political part*ies.* Since the 'third wave of democratization' there are more political systems that can be called 'democratic' today than at any other time and the number of political parties has never been higher. But parties in newer democracies are characterized by instability, leadership fixation, and weak capacity to perform the functions associated with parties in democracy.

Second, although there is a range of additional ways of organizing the political process in democracies, such as referenda, citizen-initiatives, consultation forums, deliberative polls, recalls etc, (Russell

J. Dalton, Cain, & Scarrow, 2006; Smith, 2009), all of these are *supplementary* alternatives to the representative democracy in which political parties have a dominant role, not *substitutes* for them. There does not seem to be any alternative that can substitute what parties do, particularly regarding coordination of decision-making in parliaments and the need for 'interest aggregation' (Muller, 2000).

Third, there is also an argument for political parties based on democratic theory. Regardless of whether parties are *necessary* or not, they nevertheless will exist in a democracy because of the right of individuals in a democracy to freely form and join organisations; including political parties. Because citizens can freely form and join political parties, the political party has emerged as superior to other ways of solving collective-action problems (Aldrich, 1995). In all political systems it is necessary to delegate power from the citizens to a small group of representatives, also known as 'vertical accountability' (Przeworski, Stokes, & Manin, 1999; Schedler, 1999). Political parties are seen to provide better ways of ensuring vertical accountability than any other alternative. This is because it is easier for voters to be informed about the views of candidates running as candidates for political parties that appear in several elections across time, than to be informed about the political views of a range of individual, non-partisan candidates (Mitchell, 2000).

Political parties also have an advantage in creating lasting alliances of representatives that form the basis for government and opposition, in contrast to the ad-hoc creation of groups which would be necessary in a parliament consisting only of non-partisans. The political party, as an organization, is also likely to endure over time, independent of the specific individuals in the organization. Thus, by appearing in several elections, voters are better equipped to evaluate to what extent representatives of political parties have delivered what they promised or are likely to continue to do so or not. Political scientists further explain the prevalence of parties in democracies by the type of functions they perform, particularly interest aggregation and forming the basis for government, alternatively opposition. It is the performance of these functions which make them necessary institutions in a democracy.

The 'inevitability' of a link between political parties and democracy has been derived from the analysis of how the political party gradually became an important collective actor in the development of Western democracies. The significance of political parties in established

democracies was linked to the 'passing of thresholds'(Rokkan, 1970), such as the right to opposition, freedom of the press, the widening of the suffrage, extension of representation through proportional electoral systems and finally the introduction of parliamentary government. Most of the literature sees political party development in tandem with democratization in general, particularly the extension of the suffrage (Duverger, 1967), while the structure of the party system was impacted by the politicization of cleavages (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967) and by institutional arrangements, particularly the choice of electoral system (Colomer, 2005). True, there were also break-downs in the process (Germany, Italy, Austria, Spain), but most countries developed gradually towards some form of consolidated democracy. Thus, political parties were partly the cause of improvements in democracies, as in the fight for suffrage extension, partly the consequences of the extension of democratic rights. A dominant view explaining the emergence of stable party systems in what is now established democracies is that the politicisation of cleavages in society (along territorial, economic and cultural cleavage lines) generated political parties reflecting such cleavages and thereby incorporated large segments of the population into the political process (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967).

Nevertheless, in spite of the strong and widespread claim of the importance of parties in democracies, it is primarily still a *claim,* but hardly demonstrated (Biezen, 2003). Parties alone cannot prevent democratic regress or collapse. Parties function alongside a network of political institutions and in a social, cultural and economic context. Some scholars, such as Schmitter for instance, is rather pessimistic concerning the state of parties in new democracies: "one of the major reasons that I am so convinced of the basic weakness of parties in these neodemocracies is that *virtually all the difficulties that they have been experiencing are also being experienced by contemporary parties in achaeodemocracies*"[3] (Schmitter, 2001:84).

In contrast to the (mainly) gradual democratization in Western Europe, the transition towards democratic governance in the "Third wave"[4] was often compressed into a very short time period. In many

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[3] Ithalics in the original.
[4] «The Third wave" refers to Huntington's distinction between major periods of democratization: First wave,1828-1926, Second wave 1943-62, Third wave: 1974-, starting with the transition in Portugal (Huntington, 1991)

countries the transition resulted in uneven progress and subsequent variations in the extent of democracy, as exemplified in the various scales of democracy, such as Freedom House scores, and in various categories, such 'liberal democracies' and 'electoral democracies'. Analysts of non-European areas point out that party developments in other regions are likely to be different: "The European experience is not a yardstick of 'normal' political development" (Rodan, 2012: 313). It would be surprising if the status and nature of political parties in new democracies were not affected by the way democratization happened, by the speed of democratization, and by the radically different cultural, economic and other contextual factors. The linkage between democratization and other processes of change in many new democracies are fundamentally different, coined by Rose and Shin as "democratization backwards" (Rose & Shin, 2001). Elites and masses in new democracies have not had the same opportunity as their counterparts in Europe to gradually adapt to changing political institutions and social and economic processes. Instead, political transitions have been compressed in time and occurred simultaneously with economic transformations, technological changes and a strong impact of international events, actors and processes.

In sharp contrast to the democratization in what is now established democracies international factors have come to be seen as important explanatory factors for the emergence of the new democratic regimes in general (Brinks & Coppedge, 2006; Levitsky & Way, 2005; Levitsky & Way, 2010; Resnieck & Walle, 2013), and for the development of political parties, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig, 2011b; Pridham, 1990; Stewart, 2009). It is against this back-drop that IPA has been introduced.

2.2 The challenges of parties and party systems in new democracies

There are usually two objectives for party assistance programs: to strengthen *political parties* and to assist in the development of a functioning *party system*. In both cases, there are a number of challenges in new democracies. A political party is a complex institution and the party system is more than the sum of the individual parties. Both individual parties and the party system interact with other institutions and processes.

Political Parties

Political parties, as they are structured in established democracies, are institutions with multiple levels and multiple organizational units. The party organization is a hierarchy with units at the local and regional levels connected to the national level. Parties vary in how extensive they have been able to penetrate the territory with organizational units. In addition to the party organization proper, there are often auxiliary organizations for students, women, youth, and senior citizens. At each level there are also groups of party representatives in local, regional and national representative institutions. The relationships between these units, horizontally as well as vertically, do not follow a standard format, but is a mixture of party history and constitutional features.

Political parties in democracies depend on a level playing field, an impartial administration of the electoral process as well as on the availability of multiple mass media channels. A judiciary able to uphold the constitution and the legal acts affecting political parties, civil society, elections and the media has a positive impact on political actors. As political parties are the prime actors in elections, the balance between political institutions with party representatives, such as local and regional bodies, parliament, government and president, also impact on the internal dynamics of the political parties.

An important component of an institutionalized party is that the party operates according to a set of statutes which structures how the party carries out the standard 'functions' of parties, such as nomination of candidates, leadership selection and policy formulation.

Implicit in the concept of party institutionalization is that the participants in the party share common political perspectives, an ideological orientation for short, which is why the participants are in a particular party and not with just any party. It is assumed that in an institutionalized party the participants share identification with the party and that therefore party elites, in particular, tend to be loyal participants in the party over a long period, advancing from regular grass-root members to leadership positions. Yet, what specific characteristics institutionalized parties have are not always clear, even in established democracies. Take the contrast between the Democratic and the Republican parties in the United States vs. the Social democrats in Sweden and in Norway. The two US parties are obviously institutionalized in the sense of having long-lasting

organizations, as are the two major parties in the two Scandinavian countries. Yet, in terms of organizational characteristics there are as many dis-similarities as similarities between the US parties and the Swedish and Norwegian examples[5].

Thus, while there are significant variations among parties in established democracies, the notion of 'party' is more or less understood. This conception of party is not prevalent in many new democracies (Svåsand, 2013) and this has been raised as a criticism against IPA as a whole. IPA has been criticized for promoting an 'ideal' model of a party that does not exist anywhere (Carothers, 2006), least of all in many new democracies. IPA is based on an (implicit) assumption that political actors are united in parties that advocate collective interests, such as for social classes, religious, linguistic or territorial groups, or mobilize support for the promotion of particular values or issues. For this type of parties, actors are assumed to *identify* with their parties' ideas and that they have an interest in pursuing party building in the long run.

However, a frequent critique of parties in new democracies is that many of them are created by political entrepreneurs for their own and their families' benefit and dominated by a small group of leaders who are not interested in party building[6]. That a certain type of organization has been chosen because it serves the interests of ambitious politicians has figured prominently in the study of Russia. Stoner-Weiss, for instance, argues that "Under the conditions of dual, simultaneous economic and political transitions, elites do not necessarily flock to the safety and predictability of political parties. Rather, they may prefer an equilibrium of political under-institutionalization to preserve their early winnings from the economic transition" (Stoner-Weiss, 2001). Hale argues similarly: "creating or building parties is a choice if they are considered better instruments than other substitutes for winning office(Hale, 2007), and to McFaul "..parties are weak in Russia because the most powerful politicians have made choices to make them weak"(McFaul, 2001:1160). Parties dependent on individuals and/or their close

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[5] The title of Richard Katz and Robin Kolodny's (R. S. Katz & Kolodny, 1994)chapter on American parties in a comparative volume on party organizations, is indicative: "Party organizations as an empty vessel: Parties in American politics" .

[6] It would be incorrect that *all* parties in new democracies are of this kind. Some have grown out of liberation movements. However, see (Hyden, 2006) for arguments for why such movement based parties have not made the transition to democratic organizations.

relatives also flourish in other regions, such as in Korea: ":… the political parties of the three Kims were nothing but screens to hide the informal patron-client links between politicians and voters", according to Hellman (Hellmann, 2011:476), while in the Philippines Aceron calls parties temporary political alliances, or 'fan clubs of politicians' (Aceron, 2009:5). Some analysts of Nepal argue that all political forces "continued to be overshadowed by the individual personalities of the upper-class coterie dominating party politics. In terms of political favor, the expectation (and reality) is that politicians will give priority to vested interests, looking after their immediate family, then their close friends, then the local community, and lastly the people in general" (Thapa & Sharma, 2009:216).

Thus, while democracy may have become 'the only game in town' (Linz & Stepan, 1996), it does not imply that even if election is the only means to gain control of the government, it will be preceded by – or followed by - extensive party building.

Many parties in new democracies are characterized as being top-heavy with weak internal democracy. One of the objectives of IPA has been to improve – and to change - party organizations, including internal party democracy. The reports from individual donor organizations all identify this issue as one of the most difficult to work on: *"…advancing internal party democracy is frought with potential pitfalls"* (IRI, 2010: 25) This is not only because it is difficult to document change in internal democracy[7], but primarily because increased internal party democracy is seen as a challenge to the position of established elites. These obstacles are another reason why IPA donors have expanded their targets towards civil society organization and young political activists in order to encourage the development of an alternative political leadership in the future.

Parties for this type of leaders are *vehicles* for advancements of personal interests and can therefore be abandoned if the actors believe that jumping to other parties will be more advantageous[8]. For IPA to succeed in building strong party *organizations* one needs to understand what the incentives are likely to be for actors to have a long term view. Both IPA and democracy assistance in general – and evaluations of

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[7] See (Berge, Poguntke, Obert, & Tipei, 2013) for how this could be identified.
[8] Defection among parliamentarians from the party they were elected to represent to other parties is a big problem in many new democracies. See for example (Ames & Power, 2010:204-205) for Brazil and (Young, 2014) for Malawi.

such programs - need to have a realistic view of what it is possible to achieve, given the context for the assistance and the available means.

Party Systems

IPA can also seek to improve the party *system*. The qualities of the party system are such as: the interaction pattern between parties, the number of relevant parties, the ideological polarization of the parties and the relative size of the parties. The reason why IPA is targeting the party system is because it is not the *individual* parties that are crucial for democratic consolidation but the nature of the party system. It is widely recognized that the development of a functioning party system is an 'Achilles heel' in new democracies.

Nevertheless, it is not obvious which qualities of the party system are most conducive for democracy. Although multiple parties are necessary for a democracy, it does not follow that the more parties there are, the better. At some stage, too many, almost equally sized parties, combined with ideological polarisation[9], are deemed to be negative for democratic governance. When the number of relevant parties, those needed either for coalition building, or which has blackmail potential, exceeds five, which Sartori classifies as a highly fragmented party system and when ideological division is one of polarization, the prospect for democratic survival diminishes (Sartori, 1976). His comment on Chile in the run-up to the 1973 election is worth quoting: "On the sole ground of the acceleration of its centre-fleeing polarisation, it was an easy prediction that all the conditions of democratic governance were rapidly dwindling. And the fact that this very obvious point escaped not only the actors but also the observers represent an ominous symptom"[10] (p.144). This argument is shared by Peeler (1998) who in his summary of ten elements impacting on democratization in Latin America states: "Party systems that are institutionalized and characterized by moderate pluralism are most conducive to liberal democratic stability…. Conversely, a party system with a proliferation of short-lived parties representing only ambitious

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[9] As Dalton has shown, 'fragmentation' and 'polarization' are two separate characteristics of party systems that do not necessarily correlate (Russel J. Dalton, 2008)
[10] However, he also identifies other variables for countries that experienced democratic breakdown (Weimar, the French 4th Republic, Spain and Italy in the interwar period) such as constitutional and economic variables.

elites and with few popular roots, is a recipe for un-governability"
(Peeler, 1998: 192).

Thus, highly fragmented party systems may lead to difficulties in establishing governments able to decide and to implement policies. The result could be political instability and ultimately to problems in sustaining democracy under problematic conditions. Similarly, polarized party systems lead to lack of continuity in policies and creating an adversarial political atmosphere which may lead to democratic collapse. However, it is also argued that the opposite of a polarized party system, one in which there is no significant differences between parties, is equally harmful to democracies. In such systems, the electorate is not able to understand what policy alternatives the parties offer. Lack of policy differences may lead to politicians to defect from one party to another in search for personal advantages and hence, breed distrust among voters and elites. Lack of programmatic differences between parties is associated with other types of linkages with voters, such as clientelism and corruption (IIDEA, 2014b; Keefer, 2005)

Another quality of the party system, which might be a hazard to democracy, is the development of a dominant party system. This is the case if one party wins a supermajority of the parliamentary seats and/or the presidency in at least three consecutive elections (Bogaards, 2004). Although there are several examples of democracies that have been governed by dominant parties (Sweden, Japan and Italy) it has been argued that in developing countries the new democracies lack some of the qualities of established democracies, such as a constrained executive power, effective expression of minority interests and a secure electoral process where the outcome of the electoral process is uncertain (Giliomee & Simkins, 1999). Thus, in a new democracy, such as in South Africa, the rise of a dominant party system is seen as ominous sign for democratic consolidation (Southall, 2001). A possible countervailing factor could be decentralization which will allow opposition parties at the national level to control parts of the political system and be able to develop a competitive capacity.

Thus, as regards the party system and democratic stability, or consolidation, there are at least three characteristics that should be avoided:

- a high level of fragmentation; meaning more than five relevant parties represented in parliament,

- a high level of ideological polarization, particularly between the largest party alternatives,

- a dominant party system in a political system combined with weak institutional restraints on the executive power.

The structure of the electoral system, the management of elections and the nature of electoral campaign impact on the representation of parties. The parties, through policy orientation, can choose to engage in compromises and cooperation patterns with each other. Hence, changes in the party system are partly a consequence of actions taken by the parties, and partly an effect of the environment and changes in the environment.

3. Dimensions of International Party Assistance

There is no 'standard format' for how IPA has been organized and implemented. In the following section I outline what I see as the main dimensions of IPA programs. Within each dimension I highlight the characteristics of IPA donors and in the end discuss the extent to which their objectives have been reached. The information under each dimension is extracted from evaluation reports of donor institutions. In appendix B, I provide an extensive summary of such reports which contains also specific references to the findings.

IPA varies along several dimensions:

- objectives of IPA,

- organizational model,

- financial model and scale of intervention

- modes of intervention

- timing of intervention,

- geographic focus,

The first three concern the IPA programs as such, the fourth one – modes of intervention is partly linked to the two first, but also impacted by the latter two which relate to the *context* for IPA interventions. I believe it is because IPA varies along all these dimensions that it is difficult to demonstrate that one 'model' is superior to other models or to assume that what works in one setting will also work in other settings.

3.1 Objectives of IPA

A key issue in IPA is to identify what IPA is meant for. The legitimation for why IPA has been introduced is the view that parties are necessary institutions in a democracy. IPA is therefore supposed to contribute to democratic consolidation. The decision to establish and to organize IPA in a certain way is taken by political actors in the donor countries in order to achieve certain goals. IPA has been

pursued with at least five objectives, which in various ways, it has been argued, all contribute to democratic consolidation:

- securing a particular political outcome,

- strengthening single parties,

- support for multiple parties,

- strengthening the party system, and

- targeting sub-groups of political actors.

Securing a political outcome

In some cases IPA has had an explicit *political purpose:* IPA has been meant to result in a specific political outcome. The American NDI and IRI institutes, for example, were actively promoting the opposition parties in Serbia at the end of the 1990's. The objective was to bring the Milosovic-regime to an end. This effort has been referred to as "….one of the great success stories of political party assistance and democracy assistance generally" (NRC, 2007:37)[11]. Another example is the long term assistance to ANC in South Africa and to SWAPO in Namibia, by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES); the party foundation of the Social democratic party in Germany (Vinnai, 2007: Ch. 7). These efforts have been justified because of the *higher goal*, promoting a democratic system. Implicitly at least, similar goals are part of many other IPA programs. In Uganda for example, several donors have coalesced in joint programs; first in the Deepening Democracy Program (DDP) 2008-2011, and since then in a new program, Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). While the programs are nominally neutrally formulated, a motivation among the donors has been to improve the state of the opposition parties; to make the party system more competitive. In other words: to reduce the dominance of the incumbent party, the NRM-O.[12]

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[11] See also (Spoerri, 2010)
[12] See (Power & Coleman, 2011:31ff)

Strengthening single parties

More common though, are IPA programs that seek to improve specific *individual* political parties. This is often called 'the sister party model', and is a main element in the Danish, Swedish and British IPA. But the term 'sister party' model is increasingly a misnomer. Originally, it referred to IPA programs in which partnerships were established between parties that belong to the same ideological family. But as IPA programs have expanded geographically from Central and Eastern Europe, where the cleavage pattern is often similar to Western Europe and into non-European new democracies, it is not always possible to identify parties in the same way. Party-to-party approach is a more appropriate label. Party-to-party cooperation is a significant part of IPA in the three mentioned countries. In Sweden 70% of the funding for IPA is allocated to such projects, while the corresponding share in UK and Denmark is 50 and 40%, respectively. Other donor institutions, such as the two American and the German foundations are prohibited from their financial sponsors to support a particular party[13]. The essence of this approach is that partner parties are chosen by the donor parties themselves (within certain broad constraints, such as parties' democratic orientation). One of the arguments in favor of this model is that it makes a distinction between IPA programs and the foreign policy institutions of the donor country. But as the evaluation reports for the Swedish IPA program shows, there are many challenges for party foundations to manage such programs, although improvements have also been made as the foundations have become more routinized.

There are two other issues that the party-to-party party model has struggled with. First, it is not evident that the partners that donor parties choose are linked to the overall aim of party system consolidation or to democratic consolidation.[14] Second, an increasing concern among donors is the linkage between party support and other types of democracy assistance. Party-to-party support may become disconnected from other types of democracy assistance, or development assistance in general[15]. In Denmark, for example, the parties cooperating in DIPD have projects in 14 countries (Bhutan,

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[13] The German foundations were originally focused on sister parties. Although this is the general rule in the US, USAid sometimes waves this requirement.
[14] See the reports on Swedish IPA in appendix B.
[15] A critique found in many, but not all, of the evaluations of Swedish IPA.

Bolivia, Egypt, Ghana, Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe), but there is minimal overlap with countries receiving most of Danish ODA. Only three countries, Bolivia, Tanzania and Zambia, are among the 14 most prioritized countries for ODA(DIPD, 2013:15)[16]. Sweden is an outlier in this regard, compared to other major donor countries. The share devoted in party-to-party project has been higher than elsewhere, but over time, the multiparty share has increased.

Support for multiple parties

Strengthening individual political parties is usually also part of the objectives for IPA. A goal for United States democracy assistance to '*establish viable democratic parties*' (United States Agency for International Development) (USAID 2003), while the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) have projects in "*support for institutional development of political parties*" (NIMD, 2012).

For multilateral institutions involved in party assistance, such as IIDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) and UNDP (United Nations Development Program), it is almost by definition that their orientation is towards assistance for multiple parties, but this is, as we saw above, also increasingly the case for national donor organizations, including those that have also a party-to-party component (such as the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) in Denmark, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in the UK, and the Swedish PAOs).

All of the major IPA institutions include several parties. The argument for this approach is that it avoids associating the donor institution with taking sides in the domestic political process in the recipient country. It takes the existing configuration of parties as a point of departure and provides opportunities and resources that in principle are available to' all' parties. 'All', however, does not necessarily mean every party that is registered. IPA donors select parties by means of various criteria, such as parliamentary representation, or electoral support in local or national elections. In

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[16] The others being Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Vietnam.

practice, the field offices of the donor institution have some autonomy in choosing which parties to include. The inclusion of several parties means that IPA does not express a preference for one or the other party; not explicitly at least.

Nevertheless, there are also problems with this approach. The principle in NIMDs approach is that all parties with parliamentary representation are invited to participate in so-called inter-party for a (see below on modes on intervention). This includes obviously the incumbent party. In dominant party systems, as in Uganda, the inclusion of the ruling National Resistance Movement-Organization (NRM-O), may actually help entrench the dominant party in its position, and thus delay the emergence of a more competitive party system. (In both Mozambique and in Georgia prior to the election of 2012[17] the party alternatives to the incumbent party have been so weak that other actors, civil society groups and minor parties have had to be included in the programs). When the International Republican Institute (IRI) tried a similar approach in Azerbaijan it backfired as the opposition parties could not accept that IRI also helped the party they were struggling against. However, by excluding the incumbent party an IPA donor risks alienating the regime which may brand opposition parties as 'foreign agents'.

Strengthening the party system

Strengthening the party system, rather than only individual parties is usually also part of the objectives of IPA actors. Thus the initial Swedish IPA program sought to "….*contribute to the development of a well-functioning and pluralistic party system and democratic societies in developing countries and in Central and Eastern Europe[18]*" (cited in (Uggla et al., 2000: 3-4), or as formulated by the Dutch NIMD : "*Supporting the process of democratization in young democracies by strengthening political parties and political groups as bearers of democracy in order to create a well-functioning, sustainable pluralist political party system.*" (NIMD, 2007)[19] The argument in favor of a focus on the

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[17] The 2012 election overturned completely the dominance of the United National Movement
[18] This, and other quotations from the report, is my own translation
[19] NIMD also has a third objective: Improving the relationships between civil society and political parties(NIMD, 2007: 7)

party *system* is the perception that a stable party system is linked to the consolidation of democracy. Reducing electoral volatility and structuring the interaction between parties are important features of party system institutionalization.[20] Strengthening the party system includes, but is not limited to, strengthening the individual parties. The most explicit focus on the party system is that of NIMD where the inter-party forum is a mechanism to facilitate inter-party dialogue, but also other donors organize arenas for multiple parties to discuss issues. Only NIMD, however, has established such an arena as an institution.

Given the properties of a party system (number of parties, relative size of parties, ideological polarization of parties, and the interaction pattern between parties), efforts to strengthen the party system inevitably have to look beyond the parties themselves. This includes efforts to reform and improve the electoral management system in order to have a level playing field for parties and candidates, reform of the legal regulations of parties, and the structuring of public subsidy schemes for political parties. These fields have been of particular concern to multilateral institutions like IIDEA and UNDP.

It is recognized that the structure of the party system can have a direct impact on how the political system functions. But to impact on the party system, IPA must also consider elements outside of the parties.

Targeting sub-groups in parties

Finally, IPA- institutions, both multilateral and national donors, also target sub-groups of party organizations or groups of political activists. In particular, there has been an emphasis on programs seeking to increase the recruitment of young people and women in politics, two groups severely underrepresented in political institutions.

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[20] Casal Bertoa (Bertoa, 2014) has shown in a study of 60 European democratic regimes between 1848 and 2013 that stabilization of the *party system* is important for democratic consolidation, while *party* institutionalization is not. Whether or not this relationship also holds for political systems in other world regions is yet to be seen. But his study includes also the new democracies in post-communist Europe that were recipients of IPA. IPA however, is not a variable in his study. The study is nevertheless relevant for IPA as it argues that party system institutionalization is a more important factor in democratic consolidation than party institutionalization.

Many IPA donors have turned their activities away from, or least as supplement to, projects targeting the party organizations directly. The German Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) in Malawi for example started a so-called Young Politicians Union (YPU) in 2004. The purpose was to provide an organization recruiting young political activists from different parties for work on joint projects. By targeting this group, the initiative avoided the problem that party elites could act as a brake on projects aiming to democratize political parties. At the same time, it signaled that change in the parties and party system would be more likely if the next generation of political leaders had developed skills and motivations in favor of change. It is also an example of how IPA donors do not expect immediate change: change can happen with generational change.[21]

Unequal gender representation has both symbolic and substantive consequences for how democracies work. Severe gender imbalance in political institutions diminishes the representative nature of such institutions, and moreover, it leads to underrepresentation of political interests. Significant efforts have therefore been made to increase the number of women running for – and winning – office (Domingo & et.al, 2012; Gouzou, Sanou, & Vedsted, 2014; UNDP/NDI, 2012) (Kandawasvika-Nhundu, 2013; Roza, Llanos, & Roza, 2012). As table 2 displays the recruitment of women to political institutions (in this case the lower house of parliament) shows consistent improvements across all non-European regions.

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[21] However, KAS closed its office in Malawi in 2012 due to a strategic shift of attention towards North Africa. The YPU project has received - particularly ahead of the 2014 elections - funding from NDI and the NICE programme (National Initiative for Civic Education, formerly funded by the Eu and the German GTZ/GIZ).(Source: Communication from KAS, 03.12.14)

Table 1 Women MPs as share (%) of total no. of members of lower house, by geographic region (outside Europe)

Year*	1997	2006	2014
Americas**	12,6	19,7	25,6
Asia***	13,6	16,4	18,8
Sub-Saharan Africa	10,6	17,0	22,6
Pacific****	10,8	12,3	13,4
Arab States	3,6	8,2	17,8

* Year refers to info by 10.11.1997, 30.09.2006, 01.09.2014,**Incl. US and Canada

*** Incl. Japan and India, ****Incl. Australia and New Zealand

Source: Compiled from figures available at http://ipu.org/wmn-e/world-arc.htm (Accessed 01.10.14, NB Not all of the countries included in the table are new democracies and therefore not recipients of IPA).

While it is possible that the many programs organized by donor institutions have contributed to this development, there are also many other factors that explain this change[22]. Practically all donor institutions involved in democracy assistance, work in this field and multilateral organizations like the UN and IIDEA have had this as a prioritized area. Gender issues have become integrated into the development policy in general (OECD, 2012).

The increase in the number of women in parliaments is an example of the interaction between various types of democracy assistance programs. While some of the increase may have been the result of changes in parties nominating more women candidates, in several countries there has been a change in legislation which requires parties to introduce quotas for women candidates in order to qualify to be on the electoral ballot, or special seats have been introduced where only women candidates may contest, such as in Uganda. Donor institutions have also organized training for women candidates, whether belonging parties or not (Muriaas, Tønnessen, & Wang, 2013). Economic and educational opportunities, two variables known to impact political recruitment, may also have improved for women and thereby increased the number of female candidates. Thus, support for parties alone cannot explain the increase in women's representation, but political parties in most countries is the main channel for recruitment to political offices.

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[22] See for example (Irvine, 2013).

Improvement of women representation in politics is partly dependent on political parties, but is as much dependent on changes in the environment, as in legislation, and in improvement of socio-structural conditions. Thus, such objectives benefit from IPA programs that look beyond parties themselves and relate the efforts to other forms of democracy assistance and to development assistance in general.

3.2 Organizational models for IPA

The implementation of IPA takes the form of a chain of delegation. In the donor country there is usually one major financial source, such as the country's foreign office, ministry of developmental affairs or an agency charged with handling such issues, such as Sida in Sweden. The next link in the chain involves the units that organize IPA.

Donor countries have organized IPA along different models.[23] These vary between *party affiliated institutions*, as in Sweden and Germany, and *inter-party institutions* as in The Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Denmark.

Party affiliated institutions are organizational units established by political parties to handle IPA, as in Sweden and in Germany. In the German case these institutions perform research and information activities, both domestically and internationally. Each of the major parties has its own foundation. Originally they worked exclusively with sister parties in recipient countries, but this is now prohibited. Hence, they have turned to cross-party activities and to many projects involving non-party actors[24]. The two American institutions, IRI and NDI are officially independent of the two respective parties in the US, but widely seen as linked to either of them, such as by the

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[23] In this section I deal with nationally organized IPA. Other actors providing IPA is *multilateral organizations*, such as the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). These organizations work, by definition on a cross-party basis, and often develop handbooks, information materials, organize seminars and provide analysis of topics that can be used by parties (IIDEA, 2014b; Power & Coleman, 2011) (UNDP, 2005, 2006).

[24] The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Christian Democratic Union – CDU) Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Social Democratic Party - SDP), Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Freedom Party – FPD), Hanns Seidel Foundation Christian Social Union of Bavaria – CSU), Heinrich Böll Foundation (the Alliance 90/The Green Party) and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (The Left party).

composition of the board. Also these institutions are obliged to work with several parties.

Inter-party institutions are organizational units established by acts of parliaments, but with different ways of implementing party assistance projects. The UK and Denmark for example has at the national level a joint IPA unit for democracy assistance programs. The Westminster Foundation for Democracy and the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy combine a sister-party approach with multiparty projects. The implementation of the projects is partly executed through the parties themselves, partly by the inter-party institution. The now dissolved Norwegian Centre for Democracy was also an inter-party institution, but the implementation of the project was entirely controlled by the parties. The Dutch NIMD is quite different from the other IPA donors in that it has a joint organization at the national level which is also the main actor implementing the IPA projects[25].

The reach of IPA institutions is obviously a function of its size, combined with its geographical reach. The two American Institutions claim to have, or to have had, offices in more than 100 countries, while the two largest German 'Stiftungen' have a presence in more than 80 countries. NIMD is present in 20 countries.

In the recipient countries the operation of the IPA projects can be executed through local offices of the donor organization, as is the case with the German and American IPA organizations, or through a locally organized NGO, as is often the case with the Dutch model, or in partnership with other donors.

Staffing of the national offices varies between locally recruited leaders, such as for NIMD, or nationals of the donor countries, as practiced by the American and German IPAs. Many party affiliated IPA donors lack a permanent representation in the recipient countries but depend on ad hoc, or regular but infrequent, communications with the recipient parties.

Although it cannot be proven that donors with country offices achieve better results, there are several arguments in favor. A continuous local presence obviously improves the possibility of

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[25] NIMD was originally closely connected to the parties in the Dutch parliament. The parties had program officers working at NIMD and the board consisted of representatives for the parties. NIMD is now organized separate from the parties.

continuously monitoring the implementation of programs, compared to ad hoc presence, and adjustments can easier be made. A local presence may also improve the exchange of information between donors and facilitate the coordination with other IPA projects and link IPA to other forms of democracy assistance. Party-to-party projects can compensate for the lack of field offices by concentrating their efforts geographically which would reduce the transaction costs.

3.3 Financial model and scale of intervention

The financial model of Sweden, Denmark and Britain has in common that the funding for the party affiliated institutions is determined by the electoral support that each of the parties receive in national elections. The parties enjoy significant autonomy in choosing which parties to cooperate with in new democracies. At least from a resource perspective, IPA in these countries can in principle be disconnected from other development programs. This model helps separate IPA projects from the official foreign policy of the donor countries, but also risks de-coupling IPA from other types of democracy support and from developmental efforts generally.

The scale of intervention refers to the amount of funds available for IPA. Although there is no automatic link between the amount of funds that are spent on IPA and the outcomes, most studies and evaluation reports are critical of very small projects, particularly if judged against the more macro-defined goal of improving democracy.

Funding for democracy assistance has increased in general, but it is problematic to track the development of IPA for many donor institutions. The scale of IPA is problematic to assess for four reasons. First, donor organizations do not always provide publicly available information about their financial resources. Secondly, as most IPA donors also are involved in other types of democracy assistance, it is problematic to distinguish IPA funding from other types of funding. Third, publicly available data do not provide information about *individual* IPA projects and finally, we often have no information about how significant IPA finances are for the recipient parties. Party finance is a closely guarded secret. It is therefore impossible to know if IPA funding is so significant that it offers an incentive for parties to change. This is particularly thru for incumbent parties which have access to resources that the opposition is denied. For minor parties

IPA funding may be more critical because these will rarely attract funding from wealthy donors.

Donor institutions that work almost exclusively with political parties are the Swedish PAOs, the Danish DIPD and the Dutch NIMD (table 2). In addition, WFD specifies the share of total funding allocated to party assistance. Sweden is a major IPA provider compared to DIPD and WFD, but slightly less than NIMD.

Table 2 Donor institutions and IPA funds (million EUR)

Donors	Year(s)	Funding/ year
Sweden: PAO	2011-2014	8.8
Denmark: DIPD	2011-2013	3.4
UK: WFD	2013-2014	2.6
The Netherlands: NIMD	2013	10.3

Sources: (Sida, 2014a:1), (DIPD, 2013:122): (WFD, 2013b:8): (NIMD, 2014a:18)

Sweden's IPA program started in 1995 1.54 million Euro. For the current 2011-2014 period slightly more than 8.6 million Euro are available annually. The Danish program, which is not totally devoted to party support, has available 3.4 million Euro annually[26]. WFD spends 2.6 million Euro on party related programs. NIMD works almost exclusively with political parties. NIMDs total budget has increased from ca.2.2 million Euro from its start in 2002 (NIMD, 2003:9) to more than 10 million Euro in 2013. The two largest German donors, KAS and FES (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung), have increased their total budget for international cooperation from approximately 55 million Euro in 2006 to 60 million Euro in 2011, and from 60 to75 million Euro, respectively (Weissenbach, 2014: 9-10)

But even if there has been a notable increase in funding for IPA, many donor institutions have also increased the number of projects. It is not possible in this report to estimate how much funds that are allocated to individual projects. There are many projects that are co-financed by several donors, although it is unclear how extensive such cooperation is compared to the total funds available. Thus, although

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[26] In addition to these donor institutions Norwegian IPA funding for 2011 (the latest published figures) was ca. 0.5 mill EUR, ca. half of the funding available to the dissolved Norwegian Center for Democracy Support.
(http://www.norad.no/no/tilskudd/tildelinger/norads-tilskudd-til-politiske-partier-2011) (Accessed 12.03.14).

funding for IPA has been increasing and the number of projects have increased, IPA is small compared to development assistance in general and to other targets for democracy assistance (Rakner & Svåsand, 2011:43).

The financing of Swedish PAOs has been based on the respective parties' share of the seats in the Riksdag, plus a basic grant irrespective of the party size. In 2012 party assistance was more clearly differentiated into a) support for sister parties and related political organizations and movements (70% of the budget) and b) support for multiparty projects (30% of the budget). The former is based on program proposals for a three year period and funding for these are based on the PAO-parties representation in the Riksdag. The latter objective is supported based on competitive applications to SIDA (SIPU, 2011).

A similar model is applied in Denmark where the budget is split 40% for bilateral projects for the parties and 40% for multiparty projects. The former is run by the individual parties, while DIPD runs the multiparty projects (DIPD, 2013). Of the funds for bilateral projects, one third is shared equally between the parties represented in the Folketing[27] and two thirds split according to the parties' share of the seats. The British WFD allocates almost half of the total budget to the parties (£2.1 million), with ca. 41 % each for Labor and Conservatives, 14% for the Liberals and the remainder (4%) for the smaller parties.

3.4 Modes of intervention

Modes of intervention refer to the methods used by donors to implement IPA. IPA projects cover many different modes. UNDP distinguishes between *direct* and *indirect support* for parties. Direct support targets parties as such, while indirect support is for institutions or processes that parties also are part of or affected by. Direct support, such as cash transfer to political parties for particular projects is only one of several modes or the provision of services and goods directly to political parties. The so-called 'standard' method of IPA (Carothers, 2006: 113) is the organization of seminars or training sessions, jointly for several parties or organized for one party at the

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[27] One of the eight parties did not apply for any IPA funds.

time. Several donor institutions also sponsor exchange visits to neighboring states or to their home countries.

Indirect support is for example efforts to strengthen the parliament and parliamentary groups, or the electoral process. Indirect support has increased among IPA donors. This is because donors realize that parties are strongly affected by the institutional environment. Strengthening the parliament, including the party groups, is seen as a way to improve horizontal accountability in the political system and to improve parliament's oversight functions. Improving the parliamentary arm of the parties without simultaneously improving the quality of the extra-parliamentary party organization, may on the other hand tilt the power balance internally in the parties more in the favor of the elites. Strengthening parliament is also an argument for why IPA should be closer linked to other forms of democracy assistance.

A critical issue in the provision of direct party support is the question of what *relevance* a particular type of support has for the objective of IPA. Relevance cannot be defined in the abstract, detached from the recipient parties. Thus, a key element in IPA is that the recipient parties see the projects as relevant and acceptable. Therefore trust among donors and parties is one of the most important factors influencing whether an IPA project works or not. Both the literature on IPA and the evaluation reports document frequent examples of failed projects because of resistance to projects among the key personnel in the recipient parties. Although many projects are relevant, it does not mean they have impact. An example of relevant projects could be seminars to train party officials in organizational routines. One could easily document the outputs of such projects: how much that was spent and how many that participated in seminars. It is more problematic to document the impact; strengthening party organization. While the individuals who participate in seminars could benefit it does not follow that the party organization would change in the desired direction.

The German foundations and the American institutes cover much more than party assistance. NIMD has chosen a rather unique approach for party and party system assistance. In most countries where NIMD is operating it has established a locally organized NGO where parties with parliamentary representation are members, usually referred to as Center for Multiparty Democracy (CMD). Only parties that participate in the CMD are eligible to apply for project funding

directly from NIMD. This is an attempt to link two of the objectives for NIMD: improving inter-party dialogue *and* improving party organizations.

3.5 Timing and endurance of IPA projects

IPA is meant to contribute to the development of a democratic political system. As we have seen some IPA programs are motivated to bring an *end* to an authoritarian regime, while others seek to influence the *transition* process itself. But most IPA programs are introduced after the transition in order to contribute to *democratic consolidation.*

IPA programs *prior to* the transition to a (more) democratic state in a country often have electoral victory for opposition groups or parties as a main objective in the short run, while IPA programs running *after a transition* phase are more concerned with party system and party institutionalization. Party system institutionalization and individual party institutionalization take time. There is no clear end point for institutionalization and institutionalization can also be reversed. The *longevity* of IPA programs is therefore vital. IPA programs differ therefore widely in both when they start and how long they last. A frequent critique in evaluation reports is that many IPA projects have a short time-horizon and are without clear ideas about follow-up projects. Because institutionalization is a long-term process, one can expect that IPAs can have a stronger impact if there is continuity, rather than if projects are organized ad hoc.

Once a donor has started IPA in a country, there are strong incentives to continue. There are 'sunk costs' and if at least some progress has been made, everything could be lost if the actor withdraws[28]. Moreover, it takes time for actors, individual parties as well as multi-party institutions, to develop contacts, establish trust with recipient parties and accumulate knowledge of the cases. There are therefore good reasons for the continuity of projects even if it is not possible to identify clear progress in the short run. Although NIMD, for example, has been active in Mozambique since 2002, it can be argued that not much have changed, either in terms of individual parties or the party system as such. Mozambique continues to be a

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[28] See (Brown, 2011) for a discussion of democracy promotion arguments used among donor institutions in spite of the absence of visible progress.

dominant party system and neither the quality of elections or the state of opposition party organizations seems, to some observers, not to have improved very much (Manning, 2010; Sumich, 2010).

When an IPA donor exits from countries it is rarely because it concludes to have reached the objectives. NIMD terminated its programs in Tanzania and in Malawi because of the change in Dutch development aid policy, but the programs were continued by other institutions, such as the UNDP and DIPD. Likewise, FES, the foundation of the German Social Democratic party, shifted its focus towards the former Communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe and the Balkans as Africa "….retreated from the view of the Social democratic party and the leadership of FES" (Vinnai, 2007: 89). Similarly, the United States scaled back its democracy support (including party support) in Central and Eastern Europe when EU-membership became a possibility for countries in that region and it was assumed that EU donors would replace the American donors. The need for IPA has also been reduced in many of the new democracies in this region as parties have come under the umbrella of EU-parliamentary groups and European party federations, but also because they have introduced public subsidies for parties (IIDEA, 2014a: Ch. 8).

In some cases a donor has abandoned programs because of problems with project implementation. In Zambia in 2010 and in Bolivia in 2013 NIMD ceased its activities because of problems with its local partner institutions (NIMD, 2011, 2014b).

The time dimension of IPA is crucial. All documents published by donor organizations, whether multilateral or national, emphasize that both party institutionalization and party system consolidation are not achieved overnight. In light of this argument it is not surprising that it has been difficult to demonstrate the effects of IPA.

3.6 Geographic focus

The great expansion in democracy assistance in general, and in IPA, followed in the wake of the Third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991), and particularly after the fall of the Berlin wall. Hence, with the exception of the long-running German party foundations, most IPA programs were focused on the former

Communist regimes and East and Central Europe and the states emerging from the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The two largest German foundations, KAS and FES have ca. 80 field offices and work in more than 100 countries, with FNS, the Liberal party foundation, being represented in far fewer countries. (Involvement in IPA is only one of their activities). Likewise, the two American democracy assisting institutions have a world-wide spread.

Table 3 No. of new democracies 2014*with representation for the three largest German foundations, the two US foundations, NIMD, WFD and project countries for Swedish PAO

Donor institution	KAS	FES	FNS	NDI	IRI	NIMD	WFD**	Swedish PAO
Africa	10	19	5	20	9	9	4	24
Latin-America	12	20	2	8	9	5		3
Asia	11	19	10	13	11	2	1	8
Eurasia	2	8	9	9	6	1	1	6
Middle East	6	10	10	16	8	1	4	5
Balkan	5	7	7	5	3	-	1	5

Acronyms: See appendix. *Sources*: The foundations' web-sites. (Not all web-sites are updated and no. of countries may therefore deviate from the actual no. of countries with programs currently). Excluding offices in established democracies and regional programs. For Swedish PAOs: Dokument Sida/INTEM DEMO (JN) 2014-04-05 (not all country programs shown in the document).

** No. of countries refers to WFD operated programs, not those by individual parties.

Compared to the 'big five', NIMD and WFD which both work with multiple parties are smaller and have a greater concentration on Africa. Most projects such as the Swedish PAOs, where targeting parties in Central and Eastern Europe in the beginning of the programs. In the early years of the program 4/5 of the funding went to projects in Eastern and Central Europe (with the Baltic states topping the list of recipient countries), with 1/3 going to developing countries, but shifted more towards African countries.

The change in geographic location is partly a result of increased funding for IPA so that donor institutions can spread their projects. However, it also reflects changing opportunities and needs. As the wave of democratization led to the end of one-party states or military

rule in Africa, Asia and Latin-America, donors turned their attention to new democracies in these regions. When many of the former Communist-ruled countries gained European Union membership there was a further shift towards non-European countries.

As most bilateral IPA programs depend either on the official development policy of the donor countries, as for example is the case for NIMD, or on the preferences of the individual parties, it means that in some countries there can be several donors active at the same time, while in other countries there is only one donor, or one donor dominates. Even when there are several donors in a country, most donors operate their own projects, although they are often informed of each other's work. It is a big unknown in the study of IPA what the effects are of several IPA projects operating simultaneously, but uncoordinated. It is possible that the cumulative effects will contribute to the overall objectives, but it also possible that projects will pull in different directions.

3.7 Summary

The dimensions of IPA that relate to the objectives, organization and modes of intervention depict clear contrasts between donor institutions and across time.

Sweden in particular, together with Denmark and the UK, is leaving much more of the IPA field to individual parties. This concerns both the funding mode and with whom to cooperate. NIMD represents almost the opposite. Although some Dutch parties have foundations for IPA, the dominant actor in the Netherlands is NIMD. The choice of countries is closely linked to Dutch development policy and the mode of intervention is inclusive as regards the parties. But NIMD share with the other countries a strong focus on parties as such.

In between these positions are the German foundations and American institutes. They share with NIMD the inclusion of multiple parties, but they differ from NIMD in having several other targets for their work. Across time, there is a clear shift in democracy assistance away from a party-to-party approach and concentration on parties per se, towards the institutional environment of parties and towards the rule of law.

There are pros and cons of multiparty approaches and party-to-party approaches. If the objective is to assist in democratic development, then multiparty approaches, including inter-party approaches, seem more likely to contribute to this objective than party-to-party approaches. Multi-party approaches avoid the potential problem of taking sides in internal political affairs. Party-to-party program can, however, contribute to the institutionalization of the recipient parties.

4. Assessing the effects of IPA

Studies of IPA often raise the question: Does IPA have effects that correspond to its motivation? To answer this question, we must first address some methodological issues.

4.1 Challenges in assessing the effects of IPA

IPA is an instrument used in pursuit of several objectives. IPA actors work in different kinds of political systems, at different stages of democratic transition and consolidation, and for shorter or longer time periods. IPA programs differ also in terms of approaches and with different budgets. Because of the variations among IPA programs they are likely to have diverse effects. It is anyway recognized that it is hard to prove what the impacts of IPA are. The problem of analyzing effects of party assistance is primarily methodological, related to the availability of adequate information. In general, the purposes of IPA are to promote *change* in a desired direction; such as towards more stable party systems or towards more institutionalized political parties. These changes are assumed to contribute to democratic consolidation. The forms and the scope of IPA are *independent* variables that are assumed to have a positive impact on one or more *dependent* variables (stable party system or institutionalized political parties)

In general, to speak of a cause having a particular effect requires that several conditions are fulfilled: 1) there must be a mechanism linking a variable (for example modes of party support) and the outcome, 2) the cause (party support) must come before the observed change in the dependent variable, 3) the two variables must have co-variation. We must be able to observe that change in independent variable (cause) corresponds to observed changes in dependent variable (effect). 4) Alternative explanations must be accounted for and rejected.

Two caveats are relevant to any findings of effects. First, a 'cause' can have an effect as aimed for, but also unintended effects, or in the worst of circumstance, primarily unintended effects. An example would be if the prospect of international party support triggered the formation of new parties, rather than the consolidation of existing ones. Second, observed effects may be caused by other factors than

IPA, such as implementation of legislation on party finance or regulation on the defection of parliamentarians from one party to another. In addition, even if IPA can be credited with having a desired effect, the relationship may be contingent on specific circumstances. IPA is one of several ways democracy assistance is being provided, including support for parliaments, electoral processes, decentralization, and media and civil society. Political parties are institutions that are connected to, or impacted by, all of these other targets for democracy assistance. Thus it may not be possible to isolate the effects of IPA from changes in other institutions which interact with political parties[29].

In addition, in some countries there is only one donor, or one dominant donor, while in other countries there are several donor institutions each with many small projects. Each individual IPA project may be too small to have an impact on macro-level developments, but where there are several donor institutions it is possible that the IPA projects cumulatively have contributed to stronger parties, even though it may not be possible to specify the contribution of each individual donor organization.

Moreover, even if it is possible to conclude that the causal variable, IPA, has had a positive effect on party developments in a particular country, it does not follow that similar effects will be found when the same way of implementing IPA is transferred to other contexts, or used in the same way over longer time periods. The call for context sensitivity is repeated throughout the literature on democracy assistance, including IPA. Context refers not only to geography, but also to the time dimension within each geographic context. Thus, an effective way of organizing IPA prior to a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime need not be similarly relevant once a new regime is being established.

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[29] The impact of party assistance cannot for instance be gauged by field experimental methods using randomization. This methodology has been increasingly applied in studies of developmental assistance in general, but also in the study of democracy and governance assistance programs (Moehler, 2010)

The reason why this method has not been suitable for the study of party assistance is that randomization requires a high number of units of analysis and is therefore primarily applied in studies of lower-level units, such villages and municipalities. However, political parties are institutions functioning at the macro-level. Although it is conceivable that randomized field experiments could be used to study variation within a given political party, the *party system* cannot be disaggregated into sub-national units

It is also a challenge in all studies to have a clear specification of what the 'causal variable' is supposed to change. There are at least two issues to consider here. First, to reiterate: the overarching goal of IPA is to contribute to democratic consolidation, or improvement of democracy. Democracy is a multi-dimensional concept, but primarily a macro-level characteristic; a quality of the political system as such. The mechanisms of IPA target political parties, which are units functioning between individuals and the political system, so-called meso-level units. Thus, through IPA one hopes that by changing the characteristics of the meso-level units, improvements at the macro-level will follow[30]. But, as discussed initially, change towards more, or better, democracy at the macro-level depends on multiple factors. Second, attempts to measure the impact of IPA require data observations for at least two time points; prior to and after the introduction of the causal variable. Data that are needed vary with what the objectives of IPA are. For example, if the objective is to contribute to the consolidation of the party system, there are a number indices available that capture key indicators of party system characteristics; such as party fragmentation, electoral volatility or the extent of party representation in the parliaments (Lijphart, 1994). Party system characteristics are generated from official electoral data at the macro-level. While such indicators do not tell the whole story of party system consolidation, they do provide some means of assessing change over time in what is usually considered to be important qualities of party systems which may affect the quality or stability of democracies (Russel J. Dalton, 2008; Wang, 2014; Xezonakis, 2012).

Assessments of whether IPA contributes or not to democratization in general must take into account both the particular empirical context in which IPA functions as well as the institutional environment of IPA programs. Support for political parties in authoritarian countries cannot be structured and implemented in the same way as in in countries where civil liberties like freedom of the press and freedom of association are generally respected. When the electoral playing field is strongly tilted in favor of the incumbent party, the functioning of the parties during the election campaign will

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[30] The relationship between the qualities of political parties and the qualities of democracies has been a controversial point in the party literature since the early 1900's (Michels, 1965; Ostrogorski, 1964; Schattschneider, 1942). See also (Assarson, 1993; Teorell, 1999) for a discussion of whether parties *should be* internally democratic.

obviously be different than in a system with fair and free elections. In countries with a dominant incumbent party the needs of the opposition party/parties will be different than in a system of competitive parties.

There are few agreed upon indicators regarding party organizations, but several proposals identifying key characteristics of party organizations have been developed (Basedau & Stroh, 2008; NIMD, 2004b; Poguntke, Obert, & Tipei, 2013). The problem however, is primarily access to information that can be used. For example, membership figures are often considered a key indicator of the strength of party organization. Yet, in many new democracies membership figures are not available, or are considered unreliable. Another indicator is party finance, where again data are often not available or not trustworthy. Therefore, assessment of change in the state of party organizations is much more problematic than change in party systems.

The time perspective for detecting changes caused by the independent variable complicates the study of effects. It may not be possible to see any effect of an independent variable until after several years of support. International party assistance is recognized to be of this kind[31]. Even if a change can be observed after a short time, there is no way of knowing if the effect is lasting or fades out in the long run. Party institutionalization does not have an end-point from which it cannot be reversed.

In general, a big problem in assessing the impact of IPA is the availability of information on IPA projects: who gets how much, how long, in what way and for what? The public information that is available on the donors' websites and in published reports covers, at best, the total amount of funds budgeted for a country. However, this includes usually also the funds needed to operate the donor organisation's branch in the country, cross-party activities and activities not specifically targeting political parties. The financing of individual party projects is usually not available. Moreover, it is impossible to know how significant IPA programs are for the recipient parties as party finance is a well-kept secret.

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[31] «Political party assistance can take years to bear fruit» (UNDP, 2006:80)

The total amount of democracy assistance is miniscule compared to ODA in general. It is therefore needed to have realistic expectations to what IPA projects individually and collectively can achieve in the short run. In general it is a big unknown what the financial significance of IPA is for the individual parties. For example, the ANC in South Africa and the NRM-O in Uganda have been in office for a very long time, two decades in the case of ANC, almost three decades in the case of NRM-O. The two also have extensive organizational resources, while their opponents often lack resources. For these two parties participation in IPA programs may be important politically, but it is not likely that it matters very much economically. Thus, the leverage that donors can exert is probably minimal in such cases. On the other hand, for smaller parties, even small projects can be vital to keep the organization alive and to institutionalize. Whether this is an objective for IPA is a different matter.

4.2. Does IPA work or not?

In order to be able to answer the question if IPA works or not, a considerable amount of data must be available. Ideally, we should have data across time and across countries. We should have data on individual IPA projects as well as macro-level data comprising all IPA efforts in a country. It is beyond the scope of this paper to conduct such an empirical investigation, but as a first step I have tried to summarize information from research literature and evaluations from some of the IPA donor institutions.

Research on IPA

There is a growing research literature dealing with international party assistance, but highly varied in terms of focus and methodology, as well as in terms of time perspective, timing and geographic focus. Some studies are focusing on individual countries while others have a comparative approach. Tom Carother's volume "Confronting the Weakest Link. Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies" (Carothers, 2006) is the most comprehensive study of IPA. The essence of his study has been summarized in the formulation that "It rarely has transformative impact, despite the hopes and sometimes belief of its providers" (Carothers, 2006:160). The reasons for this is

that "the main determinants of the make-up and methods of parties in the recipient countries are an array of underlying economic, political, social, and cultural conditions that are largely beyond its ambit" (Carothers, 2006: 214-215). Transformative effects are, for Carothers when recipient parties "substantially ameliorate the central organizational or functional characteristics that the aid providers seek to address"(Carothers, 2006: 163). An example of this would be if leadership fixated party without a grass-root organization was transformed into a membership based organization with internal democracy. Carothers find that there are some examples of change due to IPA, most notably in campaign methods There are also cases of small organizational changes, as when a party that has not held a national convention actually do so. "The hard question is whether the small positive steps will deepen over time and cumulate in major organizational changes" (Carothers, 2006: 187). There are more examples of projects that have failed to achieve their objectives. Attempts to induce parties to change are met with opposition from party leaders who fear they will lose control of the parties. In other cases the environment, both the institutional (for example the role of the monarch in a polity) or economic (such as wide spread poverty) works against efforts to create well- structured parties.

The edited volume by Burnell and Gerritt (2010) is the most recent *compilation* of research on IPA. A single source summarizing the effects of IPA has not been made since Carothers' book. The articles cover assistance programs in the Balkans, Central Asia, Latin-America, countries in the Middle East and in Sub-Saharan Africa. But the empirical material for these studies is very diverse. Some of these articles conclude that IPA does not work, or that IPA has unintended effects, while others argue that there are some examples of positive outcomes.

In sum, the main finding from this research is largely confirming Carothers study from 2006, and some are very critical as is evident in Baader's study "Party politics in Georgia and Ukraine and the failure of Western assistance" (Bader, 2010. But in two areas it is argued that IPA *has* made a difference. The first is IPA efforts to contribute to *regime change*. Studies of Serbia identify IPA projects as contributing to the defeat of Milosovic regime and support for ANC in South Africa contributed to overturning the Apartheid regime as well providing strong support for the new democracy. A second area is in the *recruitment of women* into politics in Croatia and Serbia Here, it is

argued that IPA projects were a major factor in improving women candidates' electoral chances.

But no study is able to argue that IPA has had a transformative effect; that is changing the fundamental structure of the party organizations or the party system. Studies from Zambia and Malawi, for example conclude that *relationship* between political parties has improved as the parties with representation in parliament agreed to meet regularly in the inter-party dialogue forum, which was a requirement in order to apply for support for individual party projects. However, such projects do not seem to have strengthened party organizations and party fragmentation has continued. This finding echoes that of studies of Morocco and Kenya where it is difficult to find indications of fundamental party change. A common explanation for why IPA has not succeeded better is that the established elites are not interested in party reform. There are also institutional factors that restrain the impact of IPA, such as role of the king in Morocco, and the structure of the electoral system in Bosnia-Herzegovina which has reinforced the parties' mobilization of particular ethnic groups while the ambition of the donors have been multi-ethnic parties. Several of the studies blame the IPA donors for failing to grasp the essence of the local context, as much as the recipient parties.

This research literature is nevertheless very scattered. Few published studies have followed IPA projects over longer periods, and in most cases, the studies focus on the efforts of one particular donor, but not the total IPA funding that has been made available in a country.

For more detailed information on research literature see Annex A.

Evaluations of IPA

As indicated in the introduction to this report, a main source of information on IPA is available the evaluation reports commissioned by donor institutions, but the use of and structure of evaluation reports differs a lot between the donors.

Some reports examine a single donor institution in a particular country, for example (Dijkstra & Kumado, 2004) which studied NIMD's program in Ghana for the years 2000 to 2003. In contrast,

the American National Research Council's report (NRC, 2007) covered the whole field of democracy assistance supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), where party support is one of several activities, The first two evaluation reports of the Swedish PAO (Uggla et al., 2000; Öhman, Öberg, Holmström, Wockelberg, & Åberg, 2004) paid a lot of attention to the organization of IPA in Sweden, whereas the third evaluation included three country cases.

Another challenge with using evaluation reports relates to timing and the fact that some of them are conducted shortly after a program has been started. An example is the evaluation of the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD). The institute was organized in 2011, but already two years after an evaluation report was commissioned (MFA, 2013). The report therefore has more to say about the organization of DIPD than about the impacts of the party

Evaluation reports rely on several sources of information. The point of departure is usually the policy documents of the donor institution, such as plans for IPA, decisions about goal formulation, budgetary data, implementation plans and monitoring and evaluation routines. Documentary evidence is supplemented with interviews with staff members, both at the donor headquarter and in the field. Most evaluation reports also include short term field visits to a few of the countries where the donor institution has been active. A prime purpose of the field visits is to collect information from the recipients of IPA through interviews with actors in the political parties, but often with other actors as well, such electoral management bodies and civil society organizations working on elections. But apart from interviews with recipient party representatives evaluation teams rarely collect data independently. Evaluations are carried out by different types of experts. It is common to engage independent companies that specialize in evaluations, but they may not necessarily be country specialist. Often, academics who are either area specialists or who have analysed relevant topics (elections, parties, democracy) are included in evaluation teams. All of these aspects of evaluation reports obviously affect the comparability of their findings.

IPA projects vary along several dimensions: geographic focus, objectives, organizational model, financial resources, modes of intervention, and the timing of intervention. (Of these dimensions, there is less systematic data on financial resources on the project level, than for the other dimensions)

The first thing to note about the evaluation reports, even for the same IPA actor, is the variation in success rates. Projects that are found have succeeded or failed are scattered across many countries. It is the *specific country* context, more than geography as such that is important. However, it is possible to detect a *regime effect* on IPA projects. In states that are semi-authoritarian, as in the Post-Soviet Caucasus states, efforts to strengthen parties have largely failed and programs have been re-oriented towards civil society or to environmental factors, such as the media structure. IPA efforts have also largely ceased in Eastern European states after these states gained membership in the European Union which exerts strong influence on the party systems.

The objectives of IPA have partly been to contribute to democratic transitions, partly to improve individual parties and partly to contribute towards stabilization of the party system. The first objective was met in cases like Serbia, where NDI and IRIR supported the opposition movements, including civil society organizations. But most IPA projects are focused on democratic consolidation. The main finding from evaluation reports is that the *organizational* model of the IPA actor does not appear to be consistently related to successful vs. unsuccessful outcomes of projects. Regardless of whether or not an IPA actor operates along the same model as the Swedish PAOs or as the Dutch NIMD, one finds some cases of success and others where the projects cannot show any significant results. For example, some projects by Swedish PAO's in Colombia to strengthen individual parties were found to have succeeded in their objectives, while other similar projects by other PAOs, also in Colombia, failed in doing so. A key finding in the evaluation reports is the enormous variations in 'success' when IPA projects are organized by individual political parties in the donor countries. Naturally, individual political parties vary in their capacity to organize and implement projects. In general, the evaluation reports for WFD, DIDP and the Swedish PAOs find that party-to-party projects do not have *party system* effects, which is not surprising given the organizational model, but there nevertheless is a gap between the overall objectives of democracy assistance and its implementation.

The Dutch NIMD objectives are partly to improve *inter-party dialogue* and partly to strengthen individual parties. Inter-party dialogue has been the most successful element of NIMD's programs. But there is more variation in efforts to strengthen the party

organizations. In Ghana and in Mali, evaluations found positive outcomes in both objectives, but in Zambia, Tanzania and Malawi, it is difficult to detect strengthened individual parties. Efforts to *stabilize* the party system, or efforts to improve *competitiveness* in dominant party systems have been less successful, for NIMD as well as for all other IPA actors.

A common experience across IPA donors is that where donors meet resistance against change among incumbent party elites, efforts to strengthen party organizations often fail. In some countries IPA seems to have succeeded better for several parties, such as in Ghana and in Romania, where the socio-economic environmental conditions are more favorable compared to some of the surrounding states.

Another finding is that donors working on democracy assistance in general (NDI, IRI, WFD), rather than with parties specifically, are better situated to adjust their projects towards other objectives, such as working with civil society organizations or focusing on improvements in the environments of the parties, such parliaments and the media structure.

All evaluation reports also questions the sustainability of what has been achieved and call for more continuous projects, rather than single events and for follow-up activities.

The evaluation reports arrive at many of the same conclusions as the research on IPA. There are some cases of successful projects at the party level and some improvements of the inter-party relationship. However, fundamental change cannot be detected. The environmental factors, both in terms of the political institutions with which parties interact, and the resource availability, impact on the chances for IPA projects to succeed

For more detailed information on donor evaluations, see Annex B.

5. Concluding reflections

Based on the literature on parties and on evaluation reports of IPA programs it is hard to draw conclusions about their effects. There are many examples of positive outcomes. Failures may occur because of the way the projects have been designed or implemented, but could also be a consequence of the environment in which projects are implemented. It is also necessary to be realistic about what IPA can be expected to achieve, given the scarce resources that are allocated to IPA and the need for a long-term perspective. Carothers formulates this quite succinctly: "*The effects of party aid also tend to be quite limited because the main determinants of the make-up and methods of parties in the recipient countries are an array of underlying economic, political, social, and cultural conditions that are largely beyond its ambit*". (Carothers, 2006: 214-215).

5.1 A new IPA agenda?

One can notice a shift in emphasis over time in IPA. IPA has been criticized for attempting to export a party model that does not any longer exist, even in established democracies. It has also become clear that strengthening parties and party system is strongly impacted by the environment which comprises both legal and institutional environments, as well as the socio-structural context.

More recent policy documents by IPA donors are less concerned with party organizations than with party *functions*, particularly policy development. Programmatic parties provide the electorate with different policy packages. Donors have been concerned with the lack of programmatic parties for several reasons. Parties in new democracies have been seen as dominated by individuals rather than with ideological perspectives, and elections have been fought between individuals rather than between policy alternatives. Another problem has been that parties have mobilized particular ethnic and/or religious groups, rather than having an agenda for the nation as a whole. Both donor institutions (NIMD, 2012) and policy analysts argue that programmatic parties increase the quality of the democratic process (Gonzalez-Acosta, 2009; Keefer, 2011, 2013). Delivery, or failure to deliver on electoral promises, allows voters at future elections to hold their representatives to account. Programmatic parties are focusing on

collective goods, either for the whole electorate or for larger groups in the electorate.

In contrast, in the absence of programmatic parties, elections are dominated by clientelistic appeals to smaller groups of voters which are 'rewarded' , but the political system does not benefit from more comprehensive and developmental policies (Keefer, 2005, 2011). Clientelistic practices *preserve* the status quo, while according to Keefer "… preliminary evidence indicates that parties able to convey a programmatic policy stance or to discipline party leaders are associated with significantly different policy choices across countries, in both democracies and non-democracies" (Keefer, 2011:3). However, programmatic orientation should not become a straightjacket blocking compromises between parties. In many political systems there is a need for either coalition governments or compromises between institutions, such as is the case when one party holds the presidential office without having a majority of the seats in parliament. 'Extreme' commitments to programmatic orientations may in such cases lead to gridlock, or in the worst case to democratic breakdown[32].

Thus for international donors improving the policy-making capacity of political parties is only *one* of several ways parties can be expected to function better. It is expected that its programmatic orientation will have a positive impact on social and political development (IIDEA, 2014b), but this is also likely to be impacted by the degree of trust between parties. The factors that impede programmatic orientation are to be found, partly in the political parties themselves, partly in the environment of the parties. To the extent that the factors the IIDEA report and the articles by Keefer et.al point to indeed are the ones that influence the development of programmatic parties, international party assistance can contribute to changing some of these factors, while others are clearly in the 'periphery' of what we can expect international party assistance to change.

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[32] See also Stokes for why in some cases elected office holders defect from their programmatic commitments: "Politicians who switch (policies) are representative; within the bounds of what they know and believe, they are attempting to serve the interests of citizens as best they can. Because they anticipate that voters' beliefs are inaccurate, and hence the their (induced) preferences over policies will change, politicians violate mandate responsiveness *in order to act* as good representatives" (Susan C. Stokes, 1999: 103) (Ithalics in the original).

It seems likely that some coordination of IPA with other democracy assistance programs would enhance also the policy development of political parties. For example, for parties to pursue their electoral platform or to coalesce with other parties, it will be an advantage if parliamentary procedures allowed standing committees with adequate time to scrutinize governmental proposals and available resources for parliamentarians to exercise their control function. In such a case, support for parliamentary reform could go hand in hand with support for political parties (Burnell, 2009).

5.2 Should IPA be maintained?

I have only briefly referred to some of the normative issues concerning IPA, but I believe it is necessary to reflect on why IPA should be maintained or not, particularly as it is difficult to prove that large IPA programs that involve millions of Euros actually contribute to complex objectives such as institutionalization of the party system, and ultimately of democratic consolidation. There are important arguments *against* IPA. IPA involves external actors more or less directly in political processes that are essentially *domestic* affairs. The development of what of kind of political parties, how they look like, which political objectives they have and who the actors should be are important elements of sovereign states. [33] Moreover, as has been shown in research and evaluations of IPA it is sometimes unclear what it is that IPA seeks to achieve and under what circumstances IPA is successful. If it cannot be demonstrated that IPA works, why should it be pursued?

Nevertheless, in spite of the lack of 'hard evidence' of the effects of IPA programs, there are also some arguments that speak in favor of maintaining (and expanding) IPA.

First, there are no democratic political systems that operate without political parties. This observation is not an argument in itself for IPA, but invites a reflection of why it is that modern democratic polities have parties. The argument for the continuation of IPA is that in democracies no other institution combines the functions of representation, formation of government and opposition and interest

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[33] See (Agne, 2014) for a discussion of the relationship between democracy promotion vs. how democracy is defined.

aggregation. All large scale communities must delegate to a smaller group of representatives the authority to make decisions. The party label of candidates seeking to be elected as representatives can tell the voters something of the expected behavior of representatives. It is important to underline can, as there are a number of conditions that apply for the party label to provide that information. However, in the absence of the party label, there is no way voters can be informed about the political views of all competing candidates unless devoting an extraordinary amount of time and resources.

The second function is related to the first. Once elected, unless there are political parties, the establishment of groups supporting vs. opposing the government will have to be constructed ad hoc, or informally. Again, this undermines the electorate's information about what political alternatives there are to the current government. The lack of an institutionalized party system prevents voters from holding groups of representatives to account and limit the electorate's possibility of making informed choices for the next election.

Finally, elected representatives have the responsibility of taking a holistic view of policy making, so-called interest aggregation. And this point is perhaps one of the strongest arguments for why IPA should be maintained.

Democracy assistance has for many years focused on support for civil society organizations (CSO) – which are also perceived to be central to democracies. CSOs can act as 'watch-dogs' towards political authorities. But the support for CSO can also have side-effects that are not beneficial for democratic developments[34]. On the one hand CSO support can lead to a mushrooming of CSOs which can although benign, also result in increased demands on the political system. In the worst case there can be organizations that do not really have a base in the society but are dominated by a leader. CSOs that are heavily dependent foreign funding may become more accountable to external actors than to their members[35]. More importantly, however, is that there may be a (potentially) unintended consequence of a strong civil society: an imbalance between the capacity in society to raise demands vs the ability of the political system to prioritize among the competing

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[34] See (Hahn-Fuhr & Worschech, 2014) for a very critical assessment of civil society promotion to Post-Soviet States and (Edwards & Hulme, 1996) for a similar cautioning concerning NGO support in general.
[35] This can also be a problem for political parties lacking domestic financial resources.

demands. CSOs are not accountable to the electorate, when they have members and if they have internal democratic procedures. CSOs are also concerned with segments of public policy – environmental protection, promotion of religion, care for vulnerable groups, provision of health and social services, or primarily for the advancement of group interests, such as is the case for unions or farmers. But CSOs have no responsibilities for balancing various interests against each other and for the distribution of scarce public resources. This is the essence of interest aggregation and policy choices: only political parties offer a collective instrument for this. It may therefore be argued that it is necessary to strengthen political parties as a counter-weight to a strong civil society, but also that political parties and civil society *together* can lead to more robust democracy in which elites and citizens are linked through multiple channels.

There is also an additional argument for why Sweden, and other smaller democracies, should maintain IPA programs. As discussed earlier in the report, the goals of IPA have been defined by political authorities and when looking at the history and scope of IPA, democracy assistance has partly been tied to assist a transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes, partly to the consolidation once the transition has taken place. Smaller democracies, like the Netherlands and the Nordic countries, represent a different way of organizing democratic governments than some of the larger countries involved in IPA. Knowledge about the functioning and structuring of the Nordic polities, including inter-party relationships, and the difficult art of coalition-building, can provide a counter-weight to the party system models of some of the larger IPA donor countries. This is not to argue that the Nordic 'model', is *necessarily* better suited to assist democratic consolidation in all cases. Nordic party politics function within an institutional setting of proportional representation, parliamentarism, and extensive local government, while many new democracies have presidential systems and operate with majority elections and limited local government. But the consensual model of politics frequently associated with Nordic and Dutch politics emphasize cooperation, inclusiveness and compromise as means to achieve political stability.

5.3 If IPA is maintained: what should be done?

There is a need to be clear about what IPA is supposed to contribute to. IPA is usually part of the overarching goal of assisting a process of democratic consolidation. A sub-goal of this is often formulated as assisting the development of a functioning party system. The overarching goal calls for coordination of IPA programs with other democracy assisting programs as democratic consolidation depends on multiple institutions and processes. The sub-goal, a functioning party system, calls for a cross-party, or an inter-party orientation. Bilateral programs, where parties in donor countries assist selected (sister) parties in recipient countries can contribute to the overarching goals, but will not by automatically do so. But there are also positive impacts of bilateral programs. Parties that are being harassed by authorities can gain international support, and therefore survive. Parties without sufficient domestic resources can institutionalize with assistance. Party-to-party support may also increase the legitimacy of IPA in general in the donor countries. The main issue, however, remains: how can it be argued that bilateral programs are indeed linked to the wider goals of party system consolidation and to the overarching goal of democratic development?

Just like 'democratic consolidation' does not have an end-point, party and party system institutionalization are continuous processes. IPA is motivated not for political parties own sake, but because parties are assumed to be essential for democratic political systems. Whether the objective of IPA is defined as improvement of individual parties or party systems, the ultimate goal is to make parties and party system self-sustainable so that IPA becomes superfluous[36]. At what point in the development of a new democracy this stage is reached cannot be specified. Even if political parties seem well-established and have every indication of being institutionalized, both as individual parties and as a party system, they may also become de-institutionalized. Venezuela was seen to have a competitive party system in which two main parties appeared to be well institutionalized (Myers, 1990). Nevertheless, to

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[36] This is not to argue that parties do not need international linkages. Transnational federations, like Socialist International (SI), the International Democrat Union (IDU), which organizes Conservative parties, and Liberal International (LI) are important promoters of norms for parties in democracies, engage in the development of political skills, diffusion of information and may also assist in protection parties against harassments by political authorities. Transnational party federations in the European Union are particularly important as they are linked to transnational party groups in the European Parliament.

the surprise of political scientists this party system collapsed (Morgan, 2011)[37]. In Mainwaring's words: "The classic literature on parties never contemplated the possibility that a highly institutionalized system might collapse" (Mainwaring, 2012). Italy also is an important reminder that even in well-established democracies, the party system is not immune from collapse (Pasquino, 2006).

There are several examples, as we have seen that IPA donors have withdrawn from countries in which they became involved. Exit was chosen for a variety of reasons. IPA has in some cases been tied to the donor country's official development assistance (ODA), and when official ODA priorities shift between countries, IPA has been discontinued or greatly reduced. In other cases, funding has been available for only a specified number of years and the projects have therefore ceased at the end of the period. There are also examples where the political environment has made it impossible to work with political parties, as has happened in authoritarian states. Finally, IPA projects have also ended because evaluation reports found them to be inadequately organized or implemented.

The closest one comes to the choice of 'exit' because a state of 'self-sustainability' had been reached is in the former East-Central European countries which have become integrated into the EU. In these cases party assistance has been greatly scaled back. After an initial period of fluid party system with weak institutionalization (Lewis, 2000; Wyman, White, Miller, & Heywood, 1995) several authors now have pointed out that political parties in the new democracies in East and Central Europe do not differ substantially from those in the established democracies in terms of ideological orientations, strength of the respective party families (Bardi et al., 2010; Hlousek & Kopecek, 2010) or in terms of organizational style (Biezen, 2005)[38]. But the multidimensional nature of EU integration has no counterpart in other new democracies. Other new democracies are of course also partly involved in international networks and benefit from ODA contributions in many fields, but the *comprehensiveness* of EU-integration has no parallel in other regions. The attractiveness of EU membership provided both 'linkage' and 'leverage' mechanisms in

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[37] According to (Lupu, 2014) between 1978 and 2007 a quarter of the established parties in Latin America became uncompetitive for national executive office.
[38] But see (Powell & Tucker, 2014; Sikk, 2005) for a more nuanced view of party system stability.

EU's democracy promotion (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig, 2011a). In addition, the new EU states also have considerably better socio-economic conditions than what is found in most non-EU new democracies.

Few donor reports or academic studies find clear effects of IPA. But is this finding the result of the methods used to investigate the issue? Practically all evaluation reports call for a more systematic collection of data in order to compare the state of the parties or party system *prior* to the introduction of IPA and *after* the IPA has been running for several years. But it is equally important to look at the individual IPA actor in a wider perspective. In many countries, there are several IPA donors. Although they most of the time work independently of each other, there could be cumulative effects. Yet, most studies of IPA's, and this goes particularly for evaluation reports, concern the contributions that a *particular* IPA institution has made. It is not obvious that there will be positive impacts when several actors are involved, but it is *possible* that there will be. More important is that IPA is one of several forms of democracy assistance. Studies of IPA should therefore consider possible interaction effects across programs. Given the problem of data availability these types of analysis call for case studies or studies with a few numbers of cases.

5.4 Key factors to consider

The review of the findings from evaluation reports and research on IPA has identified a number of factors that may undermine a positive outcome of IPA. Success or not is of course also contingent on the standards against which IPA is measured and what the objectives of the individual projects are.

On the one hand success of IPA projects depends partly on the environmental factors, , and partly on the projects themselves. Some of these factors, such as ownership, seem to be *necessary* for successful IPA projects, others may be *conducive* for positive impacts, but neither of the factors are *necessary and sufficient* alone. Thus, the listing of the factors should be read as hypotheses for their potential impact, not statements about actual findings.. The factors listed below indicate some of the variables that both evaluation reports and the research literature have identified as important, but their *relative* significance is more problematic to assess.

Contextual factors

Political and institutional environments

Countries that lack freedom of information, where the authorities harass opposition politicians and civil society activists, and where there is a biased legal framework and political interference in the application of the law, efforts to promote party and party system institutionalization face greater challenges. One cannot expect that support for (opposition) parties in such circumstance will yield positive change in the short term. Resistance from political authorities in such systems is likely to delay positive outcomes and therefore call for long term engagements. In such cases support for CSOs may even be more efficient than working directly with political parties.

But also the structure of political institutions may be more or less favorable to IPA. Presidential systems, it is argued, are less favorable to building strong party organizations than parliamentary systems (Samuels & Shugart, 2010; Shugart, 1998). The combination of strong presidencies without the possibility for re-election, is a particularly bad combination which discourages political actors from adopting a long-term perspective on organizational development, as in the case of the Philippines (Hicken, 2009). Thus, because of the significance of the institutional context van Cranenburgh argues that "… if the systemic incentives toward personalism and one party rule inherent in presidentialism are not addressed, these efforts (that is IPA) will not have great impact" (Cranenburgh, 2011:454).

It is unlikely that IPA could have significant effects under such institutional circumstances. In contrast, in parliamentary systems the executive emanates from the legislature and depends on the legislature for its functioning, which stimulates long-term cooperation among MPs.

The electoral system also impacts on the need for party organization, and is therefore likely to impact on IPA projects. Proportional electoral system requires coordination, at least at the regional/constituency level, but single member constituencies and plurality elections do not. If in the latter case nomination procedures are decentralized to the constituency level, are unclear or only rudimentary implemented, the hurdles against party building is considerable. It is of course, the legitimate right of individual

countries to choose whatever form of government (presidential, semi-presidential, parliamentary) or whatever type of electoral system, it prefers, but this should be taken into account when IPA projects are designed and implemented. Such factors limit what it is reasonable to expect IPA projects to achieve.

In addition to the formal institutions of governments, also other institutions in the environment of parties, particularly mass media, and electoral management bodies as well as the legal foundations for political parties, constitute important constraints on how parties organize and work. IPA projects should therefore be coordinated with other democracy assistance projects because the prospects of a predictable and level playing field constitute important incentives party actors. Such environmental factors mean that IPA projects must be 'tailored made' to the individual contexts in order to contribute to the higher goal of democratic consolidation.

Socio-economic and cultural conditions

Creating and sustaining party organizations require lots of resources, at the societal level as well as at the state level. Low level of education tends to work against the building of strong formal organizations. Low economic development and widespread poverty mean that there are few economic resources that can be mobilized to sustain complex organizations, while the combination of dispersed population settlements and multiple culturally based cleavage lines (religious, linguistically and ethnic) are barriers against effective communication and mobilization, which parties depend on to function. To build sustainable party organizations require mobilization of resources. Deep conflicts along ethnic, religious and linguistic cleavage lines are impediments against the building of national party organizations. IPA projects alone cannot overcome such hurdles, but such factors need to be incorporated into the calculation of what the expectations of IPA projects should be. An unintended consequence of IPA in such circumstances could be to create a dependency on foreign donors, as it often alleged to be the case for civil society support. To alleviate such challenges it is pertinent to ask if parties have strategies for mobilizing resources? Should public subsidies for parties be introduced, and if so, how?

Project factors

Ownership

IPA is a form of cooperation between donor(s) and recipient(s). Cooperation requires commitments from both sides. The evaluation reports and party analysis are quite consistent in pointing out that IPA projects are not likely to succeed without the recipient parties perceiving the IPA project as something worthy of pursuing. Yet, IPA projects often find themselves in a paradoxical situation. The motivation behind IPA is to contribute to change, but IPA projects often have to work with political elites that benefit from the status quo and may therefore not be interested in change. Even if the target for an IPA project is not the elites in the central party organization, but for example parties at the local level or the youth organization, the implementation of projects must be accepted by the party leadership. Initiation of IPA projects without the *commitment* of decision-makers, particularly in the recipient party/parties therefore often run into a barrier. It is therefore important that those actors who can be considered as 'veto players' in the parties are actually committed to working towards the objectives of the projects.

Institutional commitment

IPA programs embedded in the organization, both among the donor and the recipient party/parties, is more likely to succeed than if the IPA project primarily relies on individual actors and not on organizations. It is of great value to any projects that there are individuals who are strongly committed. But reliance solely on individual persons may make projects more vulnerable when there is turnover among persons in the party organizations. The involvement of several actors may provide better opportunities for the sharing of information and provide opportunity for the mobilization of different types of skills. Thus, cooperating parties should have routines for dissemination internally in the parties of what the IPA project is about and involve several actors.

Comprehensive approach vs. short term projects

It seems to be the unanimous opinion among donors that party assistance takes a long time to have any effect. Individual projects should therefore be embedded in more comprehensive programs and short term projects or single event projects should consider how follow-ups can be organized.

Pending on what the objectives are, it is not possible to identify if small projects impact on overarching goals, such as party system stabilization, but smaller projects can contribute to clearly specified goals. It is also possible that the *cumulative* benefits of smaller projects can be positive for overall goals if they are all pulling in the same direction. This, however, requires coordination and it is a challenge in IPA projects to know *how* significant IPA funds are compared to other funds. An additional challenge for small projects is that the administrative costs of running the project may take a large share of the available funds.

Coordination

IPA is one of several types of efforts to assist democratization processes, which in turn is part of a more general developmental agenda. The institutionalization of individual political parties and of the party system is strongly impacted by institutions and processes in the political system, such as the organization of elections, the legal regulations of parties and elections, the strength of the parliament and the judicial system. It could therefore be argued that IPA projects whose objectives it is to contribute to the overarching goals of democratic stability or party system institutionalization, should be linked to, or coordinated with development assistance projects that target factors in the environment relevant for parties.

Monitoring, evaluation and adjustments

All development efforts are in some ways a form of trial-and-error. This may particularly be the case in models based on party-to-party projects which involve actors that have IPA as a side activity. It is also understandable that in the early phases of an IPA donor's existence, there is a search for methods that may work. But unless there is a

system for monitoring and evaluation of projects there is no basis for making necessary adjustments. In such cases donor institutions and recipient parties would lack necessary information to adjust the programs. Therefore, IPA should start with the collection of benchmark data prior to the introduction of the programs. Such information should be collected continuously throughout the project period. But such information requires a common understanding between donors and recipients; hence the importance of trust among the participating organizations and individuals. While projects may end after a certain period, even when successful, it is important that an institution, for example the funding agency or, has in place a system for continuous monitoring for some time after the end of the project. This is necessary in order to assess the sustainability of what IPA projects have achieved.

Reflections

All of the factors above can be considered *variables* that impact on whether IPA works or not, but apart from the issue of ownership, it is unclear how each of these variables affect the success of IPA projects. This is because the objectives of IPA are at different levels – from the meso-level, improving particular parties, improving all parties, to the macro-level improving the party systems, and improving democratic consolidation. There are fundamental gaps in our knowledge how the seven factors are connected but also generally a shortage of information. A further finding is that many of the objectives of IPA are strongly impacted by the institutional and socio-economic environments, which call for greater coordination between IPA and other democracy assistance efforts and also for the need to be flexible as to the targets of IPA projects.

Appendix A: Findings from research literature on IPA

Tom Carother's volume "Confronting the Weakest Link. Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies" (Carothers, 2006) is the most comprehensive study of IPA. The essence of his study has been summarized in the formulation that "It rarely has transformative impact, despite the hopes and sometimes belief of its providers" (Carothers, 2006:160). The reasons for this is that "the main determinants of the make-up and methods of parties in the recipient countries are an array of underlying economic, political, social, and cultural conditions that are largely beyond its ambit" (Carothers, 2006: 214-215). Transformative effects are, for Carothers when recipient parties "substantially ameliorate the central organizational or functional characteristics that the aid providers seek to address"(Carothers, 2006: 163). An example of this would be if leadership fixated party without a grass-root organization was transformed into a membership based organization with internal democracy. Carothers find that there are some examples of change due to IPA, most notably in campaign methods There are also cases of small organizational changes, as when a party that has not held a national convention actually do so. "The hard question is whether the small positive steps will deepen over time and cumulate in major organizational changes" (Carothers, 2006: 187). There are more examples of projects that have failed to achieve their objectives. Attempts to induce parties to change are met with opposition from party leaders who fear they will lose control of the parties. In other cases the environment, both the institutional (for example the role of the monarch in a polity) or economic (such as wide spread poverty) works against efforts to create well- structured parties.

Since Carother's book was published, there have been several studies, primarily of individual countries or comparisons of party developments in some countries. Have these studies confirmed Carother's finding or do they arrive at different conclusions?

Case-studies and comparative studies of IPA

The edited volume by Burnell and Gerritt (2010) is the most recent compilation of research on IPA. The articles cover assistance

programs in the Balkans, Central Asia, Latin-America, countries in the Middle East and in Sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, the IPA programs in these countries have been provided by a variety of donor organizations and for different time periods. The programs also vary according to the objectives, although strengthening the party system and individual party organizations figure most prominently. Most of these articles conclude that IPA does not work, or that IPA has unintended effects, while others argue that there are some examples of positive outcomes. Although this is the most recent compilation of IPA studies, political developments since they were written may indicate whether or not their conclusions are still valid.

The title of Bader's (2010) article – "Party politics in Georgia and Ukraine and the failure of Western assistance" - sums up his view. He argues that in these two countries party assistance has failed to stabilize the party system and also failed in promoting party institutionalization. He characterizes the parties as 'notoriously undemocratic concerning their inner functioning' (Bader, 2010: 1097). Parties included in the assistance programs have not been able to survive. The inclusion of parties in assistance programs 'have been driven by misguided perceptions of those parties' (Bader, 2010: 1098) Developments in these countries since Bader's analysis was conducted have confirmed the fluent nature of the party system, but it also shows that conclusions based on IPA prior to 2012 may not necessarily be applicable to developments after 2012. In the case of Georgia, the changes have been dramatic. The decision by Georgia's richest business man, Bidzina Ivanishvili, to form his own party, Georgia Dream, shortly before the parliamentary election in 2012 overturned the political landscape. The outcome of the parliamentary election that year (and the presidential election the following year) was a complete surprise (Waal, 2012). However, given the short time that has elapsed since the most recent elections, it is impossible to estimate whether the new party system will prove more stable or the parties be more internally democratic, than in the pre-2012 era. Nevertheless, there is at least one example – the Republican Party - that appears to be both more internally democratic and institutionalized. The reason why Bader is so critical of assistance program is that the recipient parties – that is the party leaders – are not interested in developing a democratic organization. Many of the parties that received assistance were not likely to survive, but the donor's seemed unconcerned with selecting

parties that were *likely* to survive. (This would in any case be hard to predict).

A somewhat similar negative conclusion is also offered by Hulsey and Nenadovic, who have studied the international community's efforts to strengthen multi-ethnic and non-nationalist parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina. (Hulsey, 2010). This type of parties is assumed to be better suited for national integration than the ethnic and nationalist parties. Yet, there is little to indicate that this type of support has had much success; quite the opposite. The reason for this Hulsey argues, is that the electoral system encourages political actors to mobilize as much support as possible within 'their own' ethnic group. Nenadovic argues that the international community has failed to transpose its democratic norms to the local elites: "the local political elites seem to have had more success in 'socializing' the international administration officials to 'the local ways of doing things' than the latter have had in making the local elites more democratic and accountable in their work" (Nenadović, 2010:1168).

Spoerri (2010), on the other hand, finds a clear effect of party assistance – but not one that is desirable! She examines the IPA programs in Serbia in the post-Milosovic period and base her analysis of 150 interviews with representatives from the donor community and the recipient parties, as well as documents made available by the donor organizations. The argument in the article is that IPA in Serbia has not been directed toward stabilizing the party system or seeking to improve the internal democracy in parties, but rather to achieve a particular political outcome. In the post-Milosovic period the main goal for the donor community was to prevent parties associated with the old regime of winning elections; regardless of any changes that might have taken place in those parties. She argues that donors viewed the parties through the same lenses (democratic vs. anti-democratic) as during the Milosovic reign and failed to adjust their strategies to a changing political landscape. Thus, in her view external actors meddled in domestic processes, exacerbated political polarization and created a culture of dependency. Although it is impossible to demonstrate that it was donor contributions to particular parties that determined the outcome of the elections, the objectives of the donors were precisely that. Whether or not the recipient parties contributed to democratic consolidation, a stable party system or internally democratic parties were beyond the donors' concern.

Bolleyer and Storm are similarly hesitant about the efforts to promote parties, in their case in Morocco (Bolleyer & Storm, 2010). They studied how the two American party assistance providers, NDI and IRI, and the multilateral UNDP, had worked during a decade-long period. They identified nine potential targets of individual party change, and 11 potential party system or inter-party relations targets. The former included such items as institutional characteristics of the parties, party offices, training of party officers, regulations of intra party relations and the latter party access to state funding, electoral rules, policy orientation and communications between parties and citizens. The types of change that IPA could potentially lead to were grouped into three main categories: a) change in formal-legal incentive structures, b) the functioning of institutions, and c) societal relations. Thus, donor efforts to promote party developments covered an extensive range of topics. However, in spite of the efforts by the three donor institutions (and in addition three German party foundations are also involved) "..there are not many positive implications of these organizations spreading themselves so thinly"(Bolleyer & Storm, 2010: 1213). The spread of efforts on so many activities is one of the reasons why so little progress has been made. A more concentrated program would be better because of the need to overcome two basic impediments to party building: the incumbent party elites and the executive monarchy.

Moroccan party elites are not really interested in developing parties towards some form of a European mass party model, they argue, because it is not election results that determine the elites' access to power. What counts in Morocco is the executive power controlled by the monarch. Elections are held, but the monarch decides who gets access to what. Morocco has made some changes in recent years away from a traditional, authoritarian system, but the monarchy is interested in *stability*, not in change. The authors dismiss these changes as 'cosmetic' (Bolleyer & Storm, 2010: 1216). Party elites are very motivated to take part in the donor programs, "…but largely for the wrong reasons"(Bolleyer & Storm, 2010: 1215) . The incumbent elites are strengthened by the influx of resources. This situation has left the Moroccan electorate greatly dissatisfied with political parties. The authors therefore argue for a concentration of party promotion on developing links between parties and civil society. In the *long-run* this may generate grass-root demands for genuine democratization – but precisely because of this, donor agents may be hesitant in getting

involved, particularly in a state considered to be a stable ally of Western governments.

In the same volume, Kristian Weissenbach analyzes the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)[39] activities in Kenya and South Africa (Weissenbach, 2010). The objectives of FES changed over time. In the period prior to democratization, FES worked to identify and assist pro-democracy actors, whereas after the democratic transition (in Kenya 1992 and in South Africa 1994), the objective was to strengthen political parties. Weissenbach identifies seven criteria of party institutionalization: 1) level of organization, 2) internal party democracy, 3) programmatic, 4) autonomy, 5) roots in society, 6) coherence, 7) regional and international integration ((Weissenbach, 2010: 1230). To measure these criteria she applies Basedau and Stroh's operationalization of the framework outlined by Randall and Svåsand (Basedau & Stroh, 2008; Randall & Svåsand, 2002). The purpose is to study how FES' approach to party cooperation varies along these seven criteria. The research is based on extensive field work in the two countries, particularly interviews of the resident representatives of the German party foundations and with representatives of the recipient parties.

Prior to the end of the Apartheid regime in South-Africa, FES had supported ANC (African National Congress) for decades. This cooperation continued after 1994 and FES saw the ANC as an ideological sister party. FES was in particular, instrumental with regard to the 7 criteria: improving ANC's acceptance in the Western hemisphere. While ANC is clearly institutionalized in several of the criteria, it does not score as well in terms of internal democracy. But it is not so clear what FES can do to change ANC in this respect.

And, while ANC is clearly institutionalized, many donors and analysts of South African democracy are more concerned with the structure of the *party system*. South Africa is a prime example of a dominant party system (Southall, 2001).[40]

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[39] FES is the research foundation of the German Social Democratic party.

[40] It should not be assumed that a dominant party system is by definition negative for democracy. Sweden, Norway, Japan and Italy have all been through periods of as a dominant party system, but few would argue that these countries were less democratic than countries with alternations of parties in government. There were, however, counterwailing forces (extensive local democracy, corporatism (Sweden and Norway) that limited the impact of national government. In South Africa elements of federalism may have a similar restraining effect of the national government.

In the case of Kenya FES worked with KANU (Kenyan Africa National Unity) in the 1980's. The cooperation was extensive. FES provided campaign material, built a party headquarters and supplied infrastructure support. Nevertheless, FES was unable to change KANU into a more *democratic organization* and was not able to find proper cooperating partners within KANU. As a consequence, FES withdrew from the cooperation and from party assistance in general in Kenya. It is only in the recent years that the organization again initiated support for several of the new parties. In contrast to the South African case it has not been possible for FES to identify a similar ideological sister party in Kenya. Hence, a multiparty approach has been seen as more relevant. FES has worked with five parties. However, all of them score very low on the indicators of institutionalization. It is not possible to conclude that the lack of institutionalization is because of the short time that has elapsed since IPA was re-started, or because of the 'personalistic' nature of the Kenyan parties.

Also Rakner and Svåsand find limited effects of NIMD's activities in Malawi and in Zambia (Rakner & Svåsand, 2010). As outlined earlier in the report, NIMD has three main objectives: improving inter-party dialogue, improving party institutionalization, and improving party-civil society relationships. In the case of Malawi and Zambia, the first objective has been achieved in the sense that parties with representation in parliament have agreed to participate in a multiparty dialogue forum. The long-term objective of such fora is to improve the relationships between competing parties. As such the fora have succeeded by bringing together parties that otherwise do not interact with each other. Nevertheless, inter-party dialogue has not lead to the stabilization of the party system, as in both countries party fragmentation has continued and party elites defect from one party to the other or form their own party.

Participation in inter party fora is a requirement for parties to receive direct support to develop their party organizations. In this respect there is less clear effects of IPA. Parties in both Malawi and Zambia are heavily dominated by the central party leadership and are still lacking in establishing routinized procedures for basic party functions, like nomination of candidates for parliamentary offices and for arranging regular meetings of the units in the party organization. In several cases Zambian and Malawian parties also failed to comply with the reporting requirements for receiving direct party support,

which indicate poor administrative routines. In the end, NIMD withdrew from Zambia after the failures of the inter-party dialogue forum to function as well. (In Malawi cooperation continued until 2013, when Dutch development aid no longer targeted Malawi). As in the case of Morocco, the impediments against party building are partly the party elites themselves, partly the incentive structure in the political system. Party elites benefit from the existing nature of the parties, hence have no interest in developing a large organization which allows grass-roots to exercise control over the party leadership. Moreover, in both countries the presidency is by far the most important political office and in both cases the president is elected by a plurality of the votes in a national election. It is simple to register new political parties. Hence, ambitious politicians with their eyes focused on winning the presidency will form their own party if they are not nominated as presidential candidate in the party they belong to, developments which have continued until this day. Party fragmentation continues, with Malawi having more than 50 parties in 2014. The two last presidents have both come from parties caused by fragmentation of existing parties. New – and some of the old – parties suffer from incomplete organizational procedures. Hence, candidate nominations for parliament have been chaotic in several parties (Svåsand, 2014). In the Malawian case, only the old party of the one party state, Malawi Congress Party, has a consolidated organization, although still heavily leadership dominated.

Research on democratization where IPA is one of several factors

Glenn analyzed how the broad popular movements that were central in the transition process in Czechoslovakia were replaced by regular political parties. The 'party system' in the first election was dominated by broad popular *movements*, rather than by party organizations Competing actors inside the movements favored the development of separate parties and IPA had a strong impact on the structure of the emerging party system. (Glenn, 2000). Glenn found that the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) was the dominant foreign donor during the transition in 1990 and accounted for almost 40% of the total sums spent on democracy promotion. By far, most of the money was spent in what was to become the Czech republic. NDI in particular responded rapidly to requests from the newly elected president, Vaclav Havel. Glenn concludes that assistance during such

transition years "…can have disproportionally large consequences because the institutional arrangements created in this period can structure the medium-term allocation of resources among political contenders"(Glenn, 2000:175). After 1990 there was a sharp decline of NED's funding for Central and Eastern Europe and international finance for parties was partly replaced by public subsidies for parties.

Irvine (2013) study how women become better represented politically in Croatia and in Serbia. She credits international assistance, particularly American, with having had a major role in this change. US initiatives helped oust authoritarian leaders in Croatia and in Serbia because of its 'investment' in 'cooperation among opposition parties and between political parties and civil society' (Irvine, 2013:248), including supporting women's groups with leadership training and organizational capacity. In Serbia alone the Americans spent 50 million USD in 2000 for democracy promotion in general, most of which went to an alliance of opposition movement (Irvine, 2013:249). However, she argues that the parties themselves were not very forthcoming on this issue. It was mainly due to strong mobilization among women NGOs that increased female representation was possible. Parties were more of an obstacle than a driving force.

Appendix B: IPA donors and findings from evaluations

Below is an overview of a select number of IPA donors, their models for IPA support and findings from some evaluation reports. The selection of evaluation reports do not claim to cover all donors, or to be a representative sample. IPA is organized in different ways and implemented in different ways.

The selection is heavily influenced by the fact that IPA donors have different practices concerning the publication of evaluation reports, as well as by my own field of competence. NIMD (The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy) is the most transparent IPA donor organization. They have a long series of evaluation reports, both covering NIMD as an organization and evaluation of NIMD's country programs (www.nimd.org). Other IPA donors have less systematic practices, but nevertheless have some evaluation reports the British Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the two American institutions, National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI). There are also some reports for the more recent IPA institutions in Denmark and Finland. Swedish IPA programs have been evaluated three times (SADEV, 2009; Uggla et al., 2000; Öhman et al., 2004) and is currently again evaluated. The German Stiftungen are the least transparent. No evaluation reports similar to that of other IPA donors are available.

The evaluation reports summarized below represent IPA donors that vary along several dimensions: *organization*, *objectives*, *funding*, *countries where they work (or have worked), and for how long they have worked.* Moreover, the evaluations have also been done at quite different time points. Some have been executed a few years after the establishment of an IPA donors, others evaluated projects that been running for several years. But taken together there are several findings that cut across the different models and therefore can be useful in identifying the problems involved in IPA and the factors that may contribute to IPAs efforts vs. those that obstruct them.

I start with summarizing the findings to previous evaluation reports of the Swedish PAOs. Are the results for the Swedish PAO similar to, or different from projects organized by other donors that

also use the party-to-party principle, such as the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD), or the Norwegian Center for Democracy Support, which existed between 2005 and 2009?

Compared with the this approach to party-to-party assistance, what are the conclusions from evaluations of donors that primarily is based on a multiparty approach, such as the two American institutions, the British, and the Dutch IPA donor.

Sweden: support through party-affiliated organizations

Swedish IPA started in 1995 as a temporary measure which was made permanent in 2001. IPA is an element in Swedish democracy assistance. The overarching aim is: "Democratic development and increased respect for human rights in developing countries"(Regjeringen, 2010:1). As part of this goal the aim of IPA in the initial phase was to "contribute to the development of a well-functioning and pluralistic party system and democratic societies in developing countries and in Central and Eastern Europe41" (cited in (Uggla et al., 2000:3-4).

IPA in Sweden has been based on 'the sister party model'. Parties with representation in the Riksdag have established foundations handling IPA, so-called PAO (partianknytna organisationer). The financing of PAOs has been based on the respective parties' share of the seats in the Riksdag, plus a basic grant irrespective of the party size. Thus, it is not the priorities of Swedish development policies, or the needs assessments of recipients that determine the funding pattern across PAOs, but the preferences of the Swedish electorate. In 2012, party assistance was more clearly differentiated into a) support for sister parties and b) support for multiparty projects. The former is based on program proposals for a three year period and funding for these are based on the PAO-parties representation in the Riksdag. The latter objective is supported based on competitive applications to SIDA (SIPU, 2011).

Swedish IPA has been evaluated several times. The evaluations have covered the initial period 1995-1999 (Uggla et.al, 2000), the period

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[41] This, and other quotations from the report, is my own translation

2001-2004 (Öhman et al., 2004) and the years 2007-2008 ((SADEV, 2009).

Evaluation of Swedish support in 2000

The main analysis of the PAO report concerns the relationship between input (regulations and structure of the support), outputs (the specific activities funded) and outcome (whether or not the projects contributed to the stated objectives).

As for the first, the PAO were autonomous in choosing whom to support and how. Consequently, a wide variety of projects, and reporting of such, existed between the PAOs. The report notes that funding had nothing to do with how projects were chosen or executed, as the funding was tied to the mother parties' electoral performance in Sweden. Most of the outputs concern support for policy and ideological developments, candidate recruitment and the strengthening of party organizations. Linkages between parties and civil society ranked low in priority. Recipient parties appreciated the cooperative nature of the support and local ownership was high.

According to the evaluation, the projects had contributed to strengthening the recipient parties as organizations[42], but there was little concern among the participants for the second objective of IPA, improving the party system. The evaluators indicated that given the sister party model it would be difficult to expect the IPA to contribute to strengthening the party system and the fact that a large share of the support went to small parties, the opposite – fragmentation of the party system – might be an unintended effect. The autonomous nature of the PAO meant that selection of projects and parties depended to a great extent on established contacts. Hence, support for parties was allocated to countries without an assessment of where the need for support was strongest.

As the parties' enjoyed significant autonomy in deciding on projects, and given the sister party model, the report found 45% of the total funding was spent on parties receiving less than 10% of the votes in the previous elections. Thus, the funding model, given several small parties in Sweden, *could* mean that IPA contributed to fragmentation

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[42] However, there are no examples or data about what it is that has changed as a result of the IPA.

in the recipient countries (Uggla et al., 2000:23). Geographically, for the whole period under evaluation 2/3 of IPA's funding was allocated to projects in Eastern and Central Europe (with the Baltic states topping the list of recipient countries), with 1/3 going to developing countries. This geographical bias was almost 4/5 in the first years.

In addition, the evaluators pointed out some administrative challenges. There was little expertise in this field in the PAO which were more "..characterized by party political competence than development competence" (p. 21). There were also discrepancies between the budgeting for projects and the actual implementation of projects. Administration consumed almost 25% of the funds.

Evaluation of Swedish support in 2004

In the second report (Öhman et al., 2004) the evaluation team was particularly concerned with how party assistance was administered and with the linkages between the individual PAO projects and the overall goal of the program ":..contributing to the development of a functioning party system[43]". While arguing in favor of allowing PAO autonomy in choosing project partners and projects, the committee also recommended more coordination. Autonomy was important to avoid that party support became too closely connected to official Swedish development policy. On the other hand, the way party support was conducted did not ensure a linkage with the overall aim of strengthening the party system. Increased communication and information sharing between PAO, SIDA and other relevant institutions were proposed as ways to encourage greater cooperation and also to increase the linkage between party support and other forms of democracy assistance. There was also a need to increase the budget allocated to cross-party activities, without reducing the individual PAO share[44]. Concerns were also expressed about the spread of PAO projects across 50 countries in 2004 (Öhman et al., 2004:29).

As was the case with evaluation reports for other countries (see below) the evaluation team also called for a development of more systematic assessments of the impacts of the projects.

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[43] «partivasende» in Swedish, in contrast to the 2002 term «partisystem».
[44] At the time of the report the cross-party share was 8%.

Evaluation of Swedish support in 2009, including three cases

The third report (SADEV, 2009) covered the 2007-2008 period. It consists of an overall study of the 157 projects conducted in 39 countries in this period, but also of three case studies: Uganda, Colombia and Ukraine. Some of the concerns expressed in the earlier reports are repeated in this one: while most projects are conducted according to the expectations, there are weak linkages between the projects, which are for the most part targeting sister parties, and the overall aim of strengthening the *party system*. And, as in the earlier reports, this one also noted that the level of information and coordination between various actors could have been better. Moreover, the report argues that the number of projects and countries was too high compared to the available funds. The three case studies reveal contrasting results.

Colombia: The report concluded that at the project level the party support had been successful (to the extent that the data allows for a conclusion) but "..it is not possible to trace any impact at the party system level" (Peck, Rudqvist, & Ramos, 2009:6). Colombia illustrated also, according to the report, how individual projects could be successful at the output level without contributing higher-level goals. The report notes, for example, the lack of linkages between the overall Swedish development policy and the projects organized by the PAO. Another example of problematic assistance is the fact that two Swedish PAO supported different factions of the same party. Thus, this may have exacerbated intra-party divisions, while the party that was best positioned to challenge the incumbent party in Colombian politics, however, did not receive any support at all. There were also several problems related to project management. Most projects were small (financially) and were lacking in a long-term perspective, weakly institutionalized because they were heavily linked to individual actors, and with weak information sharing with the Swedish embassy. Weak information sharing contributed to the lack of coordination.

The evaluation report found some projects to be functioning quite well according to the objectives, while others had significant failures. The support for the Columbian Communist party (PC), at the time a part of the new united leftist group, was deemed highly successful as it had contributed to maintaining and strengthening an institutionalized party that challenged the concentration of power in the presidential office. At the other extreme is the Green party's involvement which

was found to be lacking in focus and with weak connection to the overall objectives of party assistance. Many of the projects suffered from inadequate planning, execution, and reporting. (These problems were also present to some extent in other more successful support arrangements).

The report on the PAO in Colombia identified a number of challenges and therefore variations in how successful the projects were. A major problem that runs across (almost) all projects is the weak or non-existent linkage between the projects and the overall objective of strengthening the party system. In many cases project formulations were vague or changing over time and lack in attempts to document how the projects had contributed to the stated goals. Lack of information and knowledge of the political context was also common and only in a few cases did projects have a close follow-up from the Swedish PAO. The report questions to what extent the support was sustainable. Few cases existed where follow-up projects had been planned. To some extent, the lack of outcome were the result of changing political circumstances which were beyond the projects control, but the major weakness was in project design and implementation.

Uganda: Another country report covers the PAO's involvement in Uganda, 2007-2008 (Kjellström, Makara, & Sjöberg, 2009). This involvement followed a completely different model. Four of the PAO's were engaged in a joint project working with five Ugandan opposition parties. In addition, one of the PAO's (KIC) worked with the American organization NDI in a cross-party project targeting young politicians. The former project was deemed partly successful because it helped to promote communication and trust between political competitors and it was largely successful due to its implementation via a local NGO. Communication between this project and the Swedish embassy was also good. The creation of the IPC (Inter Party Committee) was seen as an instrument to unite the opposition parties in front of the general elections in 2011. The ambition was to agree on a joint presidential candidate and coordinate the nomination of MPs. A drawback however, was that the projects did not have any plans for the post-2011 years and the evaluation team therefore questioned the sustainability of the arrangement. Later developments proved the evaluation team right. The opposition parties were not able to unite behind a common presidential candidate and the coordination of MP nomination was equally unsuccessful.

However, inter-party cooperation continued; not because the IPC survived, but because of the creation of IPOD (Inter party organization for democracy); an outfit under the umbrella of the Dutch NIMD, but now enjoying multinational support.

Ukraine: The findings of the Ukraine-report point to the paradox of the PAO model in finding relevant partners and the structure and challenges of the Ukrainian party system. The Swedish PAOs identified parties (and in one case an NGO) that were seen as ideological sister parties. However, these parties were fairly marginal in the Ukrainian party system and the future of some of them uncertain. On the other hand the Ukrainian party system was strongly in need of consolidation, both as a system and for each of the parties as organizations. The evaluation report noted that although participants in the activities appreciated the support programs it was not possible for some of the activities to see how participation had improved the party organizations. There appeared in some cases, to be no links between the programs and what went on in the parties. No project evaluations had been carried out and follow-up plans did not exist. The report notes that reliance on information and knowledge as a major stimulus for change ignored that established elites may benefit from things being the way they were (Peck, Kjellström, Kuzio, & Sjöberg, 2009: 7-8).

In general, because of the Swedish model, based on PAOs seeking to support relevant cooperating parties, the main problems in the structure of the Ukrainian party system – fragmentation, lack of internal democracy, corruption and defections by party representatives from one party to another – were not addressed. (As noted above, the Uggla-team did warn against the party-to-party focus already in its 2000-report.)

Concluding reflections: The three country reports reveal varied degree of success, within countries as well as between them. Thus, it would be incorrect to conclude that the PAO model is always successful, nor is always un-successful. Even within one country, some PAO activities were found to be more successful than others. A general problem identified by the country reports is the lack of linkages between what the PAOs do and the overall objective of the IPA programs: to improve the functioning of the party system. This lack of linkage seems to originate in the strong preference in the program for PAOs' own identification of partners and specific projects. However, the projects themselves often seemed to lack clear

ideas of what their objectives should be and how to 'measure' progress towards those objectives. Several problems were also identified in the implementation and reports of the projects, partly resulting from lack of knowledge, insufficient communication with the stakeholders and the absence of continuous representation in the countries. The Uganda experience was, on the whole, more promising than the two other countries. Here, the PAOs worked together and the recipient parties did also cooperate[45].

In all three cases, success - or lack of such - should be seen against the back drop of the local political context and the scale of the Swedish support. The legal and institutional environments are factors beyond the influence of the PAO model. Swedish support is one of several types of IPA and it is a big unknown how much IPA in general account for the parties' total finances. Moreover, the evaluation reports cover a short time span in each country and as pointed out, in many cases it is not possible to conclude that projects have had an impact or not. Outputs, such as activities can be documented, but the linkage between output and effectiveness cannot be assessed.

It should be noted that several of the criticisms in the 2009 SADEV reports have since been addressed by Sida. There is more emphasis on cross-party initiatives and the quality of the applications has improved.[46] Project objectives are more clearly specified, with relevant indicators. At the same time, the main model for organizing IPA is on party-to-party assistance and less on party system developments. The variations found in how successful projects have

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[45] In Uganda, Sweden, together with several other donors (Austria, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, the UK and the Delegation of the European Union in Uganda) has joined in basket funds. Nevertheless, there is little that indicates the program has been successful in the sense that Uganda's political system has become more competitive. The opposition parties continue to be fragmented. There were more political parties contesting the parliamentary elections in 2011, but as in 2006 most of the parties were not able to penetrate the territory with candidates. The 2011 election reinforced the results from 2006 .Rather than becoming more competitive, NRM's dominance was enhanced further. Were these results to be repeated in the next election in 2016, Uganda would be clearly a dominant party system. Uganda scored worse on Freehom House political rights (6) in 2013 than in earlier years (5). The context for a stable party system is unfavourable. Uganda has several ethnic and religious divisions that intersect with the party system. The Constitution recognizes 65 indigenous ethnic groups and is one of the worlds' most ethnically fractionalized states (Green 2010).The social and economic conditions are poor: Uganda was ranked as 163 out of 187 on the UNDP Human Development Index.

[46] Sida, 2014a, 2014b.

been in terms of strengthening party developments is partly resulting from the design and the implementation of the individual projects, but local contextual developments can also undermine the best of intentions. The environments of parties in new democracies, such as the legal regulation of parties, the quality of elections and the structure of political institutions are largely outside of the PAO's activities but nevertheless influence their success.

As the following review of other IPA models reveal, the Swedish experience, and other IPA donor working with the party-to-party approach, is not unique. Successful and less successful examples of IPA can be found, regardless of organizational models as can be seen from the evaluations of the American, British and Dutch donors.

Denmark: The Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy

Although Denmark is a major development donor, Denmark has not until recently become involved in IPA. The DIDP (Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy) was established in 2010 and is funded by a three year grant (DK 75 mill.) by the Danish state budget. The budget is split 40% for bilateral projects for the parties and 40% for multiparty projects. The former is run by the individual parties, while DIPD runs the multiparty projects (DIPD, 2013). Of the funds for bilateral projects, one third is shared equally between the parties represented in the Folketing[47] and two thirds split according to the parties' share of the seats. As we have seen in the reviews of Swedish IPA there have been calls for closer links to other elements of Swedish development policy. In the Danish case there are 14 countries where DIPD is active, Bhutan, Bolivia, Egypt, Ghana, Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, but minimal overlap with countries receiving most of Danish ODA. But it is only three countries, Bolivia, Tanzania and Zambia, that are also among the 14 most prioritized countries for ODA(DIPD, 2013) (p. 15)[48].

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[47] One of the eight parties did not apply for any IPA funds.
[48] The others being Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Vietnam.

The division of the budget between multiparty and party-to-party projects is a consequence of the purpose of the institutions: "The vision of the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy is to contribute to the development of well-functioning political parties and multiparty systems in a democratic culture, in support of the aspirations for freedom and human development of citizens in developing countries"(DIPD, 2013).

Evaluation of Danish support in 2013

DIPD was reviewed in 2013 (MFA, 2013). In seven countries (Tanzania, Malawi, Myanmar, Bhutan, Nepal, Egypt, and Zimbabwe) DIPD runs multiparty projects, in the two last countries in partnership with NIMD. The party-to-party projects are only in a few cases in the same countries where DIPD runs multiparty projects and where they are in the same countries there seems to be little interaction between the party-to-party projects and the multiparty project. The individual parties run projects in a range of countries: "The Danish Liberal Party is working in Kenya with the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD)[49], and in Zambia with the small opposition party, the National Restoration Party (NAREP), in Tanzania, the Conservatives and the Social Liberal Party have partnered with the two largest opposition parties, CHADEMA and CUF respectively, the Social Democrats have developed party-to-party programmes in Ghana, with the National Democratic Congress (NDC), in Swaziland with Swazi Democratic Party (SWADEPA), and in Egypt, with the Egyptian Social Democratic Party (ESDP). In Honduras, the Red-Green Alliance is training party members through its programme with the National Popular Resistance Front (FNRP). In Bolivia, the Socialist People's Party entered into partnership with a hybrid political party, Movimento al Socialismo (MAS), to work on organisational development and youth participation. The Liberal Alliance has also been collaborating with the small and new opposition party, Verdad y Democracia Social (VERDES), as part of its appraisal to identify a party-to-party partner in the country"(DIPD, 2013:45). The geographical spread on so many countries with a rather small budget caused the evaluation report to advice for more concentration in the future.

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[49] An institution created by the NIMD Kenya program.

Norway: The Norwegian Center for Democracy

Also Norway has experimented with IPA. In 2002 the Norwegian Center for Democracy (NDS) was created as an institution to assist new democracies and particularly the development of political parties, roughly similar to the WFD model. However, it never succeeded in establishing good organizational routines and after critical newspaper reports of its activities, the Ministry of Development dissolved the center in 2009. Party assistance has since been brought under NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation). The decision to close down the center is rather unique, compared to other state sponsored institutions in general and to other IPA donor organizations and precisely therefore it is relevant for this paper. So, what went wrong?

Evaluation of Norwegian support in 2010[50]

The evaluation report (NORAD, 2010) argued that Norwegian political parties demonstrated lack of a strategy of partnerships on the part of NDS. Most of the parties were interested in bi-lateral projects, few in cross-party activities intended to strengthen the party system. Knowledge of the context for party cooperation was lacking. Most of the projects were small and dispersed over many countries. A recurrent problem was communication and continuity. Institutional ownership was low; personal ownership high. Most projects involved training seminars and exchange visits; as other IPA projects often use. But there appeared to be no follow-up of such events. The evaluation report concluded that "…..there is little evidence to suggest that NDS projects have had major lasting impacts on democratic development in partner organizations, not to mention at a societal level, in the countries where they have been implemented"(NORAD, 2010:25). But, as the authors of the report pointed out; that is also the case with most other types of IPA and can hardly be used as an argument against the NDS. Seven years would in any case probably be too short a period to expect to see major changes. The time perspective is mentioned in almost all evaluation reports and documents on IPA. However, important reasons for failure in the case of NDS were at the

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[50] A new evaluation reports has just been published (Braathen & Holm-Hansen, 2014) but too late to incorporate the findings in this report.

organizational level and "….its failure as an arena for learning and knowledge generation" (NORAD, 2010:25).

Ability to adjust IPA programs as the actors gain experience is a point raised by several evaluation reports.

US institutions

There are two US institutions engaged in IPA; the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute which were established in 1983, when the National Endowment for Democracy was organized (NRC, 2007). Both institutes work with several parties, which is a requirement by USAID, one of the major financial contributors (NRC, 2007). The other main financial contributor is NED, but other American and international institutions also support their projects.

The American IPA actors have been active longer than most IPA donor organizations and have had available considerable financial resources. It is therefore highly relevant to look at how they see their own experiences and what evaluation reports tell us about their work. The two American party affiliations, The National Democratic

The **International Republican Institute** (IRI)´s mission is advancing "…freedom and democracy worldwide by helping political parties to become more issue-based and responsive, assisting citizens to participate in government planning, and working to increase the role of marginalized groups in the political process – including women and youth"51

IRI has had programs in more than 100 countries. Current budget figures are hard to collect, but in 2008 its budget was about $ 78 mill.52

The **National Democratic Institute** (NDI)'s long-term goal "..is to foster a competitive multiparty system by building a range of parties' abilities to effectively campaign, represent the public, and develop and implement effective policies (NDI, 2008a: 7). Like its counterpart, IRI, NDI's activities concern democracy assistance in general, where

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51 http://www.iri.org/learn-more-about-iri/mission
52 http://rightweb.irc-online.org/profile/International_Republican_Institute#_edn15.
(Accessed August 20 2014)

support for political parties is one of several types of areas. Its long-term goal for assistance to political parties "is to foster a competitive multiparty system, rather than advance a particular ideological position» (NDI, 2008a:4). NDI has since its founding in 1983 been involved in more than 132 countries.

Evaluation of the American IPA programs have in part been carried out by USAID, one of the major funders of IPA projects, party by the donor organizations themselves.

Evaluation of US support in 2007

The USAID report from 2007 (USAID, 2007) assessed the work of the American efforts to improve political parties in new democracies and in particularly examined the study of party assistance to Georgia, Romania, Serbia and Kyrgyzstan. Party assistance is a part of American foreign aid in general and a component of its democratic governance program. Assistance focuses on three areas: enhancing *electoral competitiveness*, improving *internal party organization* and helping parties in *governance*. Each of these areas has several components. Electoral competitiveness includes campaigning skills, media relations, voter mobilization and fundraising. Party organizational improvement include, among other aspects, building an extensive organizational network, the development of party statutes, platform development, membership recruitment, leadership selection and internal democracy, while governance capacity covers legislative work, inter-party relationships, communication with the public and involvement in national, regional and local governments. The report does not contain an overview of the total financial resources that have been available for the institutes for the purposes, nor does it cover the total number of countries or the total time period the institutes have been engaged in the various countries.

The report notes the academic literature's findings of variations in how successful international party assistance has been. Three variables seem to affect the level of success: 1) Structural factors: the environment in which party assistance takes place (geography, history, economic development political culture, political institutions), 2) Strategy: the approach chosen to support parties, and 3) The role of the Actors: the donor as well as the recipients (USAID, 2007:9). The survey of the literature also indicates that the *timing* of the various

forms of assistance can also be critical for its success or not. In the early phase after the transition to a democratic form of government it is particularly important to assist with institutional engineering; the creation of a legitimate electoral process and a fair judicial framework, rather than on focusing on political parties per se.

Romania provided the most favorable environment of the four countries studied in the report. Economic conditions were better there, Romania was 'surrounded' by other countries that had transited to democracy and had the prospect of becoming an EU member. Moreover, the inter-war period had included a brief period with a multi-party system. At the other extreme are countries like Kyrgyzstan and Georgia which have been worse off than Romania on all structural factors, with Serbia somewhat between. In the report party building efforts in Romania and Serbia are seen as more successful than in the two other countries. In Romania and Serbia the two institutes have work to improve party organizations, particularly assisting in the establishment of local and regional party organizations. These efforts have been crucial in building the capacity of the opposition parties which later succeeded in winning national elections. Similar efforts did not succeed in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan. Here, incumbent elites could not be convinced of the value of building party organizations. Parties, particularly in Kyrgyzstan are "…..largely devoid in ideology and meaning" (44). Thus, efforts to increase participation of women and youth (which are other priorities of US assistance) became meaningless.

NDI and IRI work with several, but not all, political parties in the recipient countries. In some cases, particularly in transition cases when several weaker opposition parties faced an entrenched and dominant party representing the authoritarian regime, US support was given to the opposition parties. In later periods, all relevant parties, as long as they were perceived to support democracy, became eligible for support. The two institutes establish a local office, staffed by US citizens, but also often work with – or help establish - a local NGO involved in democracy promotion. But unless the key domestic actors can be convinced of the need for strong parties, no international effort can succeed. The report calls this attitude "..the greatest impediment to success: the tendency among even once reform-minded elites to reject democratic rules of the game so as to maintain power" (p.13). Therefore, in the committee's view it becomes critical to identify the elite's incentive structures in the society where the donors operate.

The report notes that assistance programs have not been very successful in promoting internal party democracy, policy development or linkages between parties and civil society.

As in other evaluation reports the time perspective is important when assessing the impact of party assistance. In most cases, it will take a long time to ensure party developments. Increasing electioneering capacity of the parties is 'easier' than building enduring party organizations. The report argues that the institutes have been less successful in developing internal party democracy and in improving linkages between parties and civil society (p. 44).

Evaluation of NDI-support in 2010: the case of Kenya

Indirectly, NDI's work in Kenya has been evaluated in (NORAD, 2010), which evaluates Norwegian funding of NDI projects. NORAD contributed to NDI's project "Pre-election party strengthening in Kenya", which ran from 2006 to 2008. NORAD contributed to the financing of projects before and after the 2007-elections. Pre-election efforts were directed to building coalitions between opposition parties, while post-election projects aimed at strengthening the party structures at the grass-root level, communication between levels in the party structure, the nomination process in the parties and communication and interaction between political parties (NORAD, 2010) (p. 6). While coalition-building efforts did take place with negotiations between the main parties: "…the message clearly came across that the main purpose of coalition-building was more to gain access to power for personal enrichment than to gain acceptance for key policies" (p. 9). While the post-election effort to strengthen grass root structure made progress, the task is also so formidable that much more needed to be done. Inter-party relationships were improved by the creation of dialogues through province level party committees. However, these seemed to be operating in isolation as national politicians were unaware of their existence. In spite of the positive review of NDI's activities the basic weakness of parties in Kenya persisted: personality oriented politics, weak internal structures and democracy and party fragmentation. Clearly, NDI's work needed to be continued.

Evaluation of IRI-support in 2010

More recently, IRI published in 2010 a report (IRI, 2010) summarizing its programs in eight countries; Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Macedonia, Mongolia, Peru, Slovakia and Ukraine. These eight countries represent quite diverse cases in terms of democratization. Indonesia, Mongolia and Slovakia have made considerable progress. Indonesia went from bad to worse until the end of the 1990s when it changed markedly towards a more democratic regime. Particularly after 2004, Indonesia has at times been classified as 'free'. Mongolia was ranked at the bottom of the Freedom House democracy scale in 1990 but has since made a consistent climb into the 'Free' category. Slovakia oscillated between 'Free' and 'Partly free' in the early years after the transition to democracy, but has since 1998 consistently scored 'Free'. Peru's status has improved from 'Partly free' to 'Free' in 2000, while Macedonia has been stuck in the 'Partly free' category since the records started in 1992-93. Ukraine' scores have mostly oscillated between 2 and 4. Azerbaijan has not made any improvement at all since ratings started in 1991 and have even regressed from the meager progress in civil rights that were registered in the late 1990s Cambodia is also firmly stuck in the 'Not free' category.

Are IRI's efforts to strengthen political parties linked to the differences in democratic trajectory? IRI's evaluation report looks at IPA's contribution to 'six principles of successful political party development: party organization, party identity, message development and delivery, party competition, governance, and strengthening of legal system" (IRI, 2010:11). [53]

The report relied on interviews with IRI staff at headquarters and in the field offices as well as with party representatives in the respective countries. The report is quite blunt about the failure of the party program in Azerbaijan:"…six years of party program work had not lead to notable improvement in the political party development" (IRI, 2010:17). Hence, the program switched towards CSOs. Leaders in CSO's could be potential political leaders in the future.

But as regards the six principles against which party assistance could be 'measured' the report is much like many of the other

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[53] It is not clear from the report how these principles have been operationalized and used in analyzing the country projects.

evaluation reports, for IRI as well as for other donor organizations. The report mentions examples of successful programs aimed at one or several of the six principles, but is quite scarce with respect to documenting what has improved and why it has worked in some circumstances but not in others. Nor are there clearly operationalized indicators for each of the principles.

However, it is repeated throughout the report the significance of leadership acceptance of IPA programs. One of the reasons projects fail is the resistance among party leaders to implement projects they see as a threat to their own position. This applied to the opposition parties as well as to the incumbent party. When IPA projects failed to yield positive results, IRI re-oriented projects partly to CSOs, as mentioned above, but also to support independent radio stations and encouraged reforms of legislation relevant for parties. Support for independent radio stations have increased the opportunity of opposition parties to communicate their views to the electorate, by-passing the incumbent party's control with state media institutions. Indirectly therefore, such projects have improved the competitiveness in the party system. Reforms of the electoral law and of the party laws have likewise contributed to levelling the playing field.

UK: The Westminster Foundation for Democracy

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) was established in 1992, is an organization for the British parties, mainly financed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (50% of total revenues 2012-2013) and DFID (Department of Foreign International Development), 42%. Some projects are also supported by EU and other agencies. The total budget for 2013-2014 was £7.08m (WFD, 2013a).

Support for political parties is one of several programs. WFD works mainly through the three largest parties, Labour, Conservatives and Liberals, but also supports projects by the smaller parties in the UK. The main parties' activities are primarily, but not exclusively, oriented towards their sister parties in the recipient countries. Among the topics for party support are: party building and organization development, development of party campaigning and communications, message and policy formulation, regional co-

operation and supporting the capacity of elected representatives at all levels in political parties.

In the recent business plan (WFD, 2013a) four outputs are identified, two of which are directly related to political parties[54]: "Minimum of 10 political parties in countries selected by WFD have strengthened internal structures and external networks, enabling them to formulate, communicate and campaign on policy based messages that offer a genuine choice to citizens, and enhanced strategic focus and strengthened co-ordination, including party-to-party, parliamentary and cross-party work; deepened WFD's technical expertise and professionalism; reformed WFD structure and governance arrangements" (p. 3).

Out of a total of £ 5.21 million allocated to the four output areas, 39% is allocated to party support. Of this sum, 30% is spent in Africa and 33% in Europe. The parties themselves are allocated £2.1 million, with ca. 41 % each for Labor and Conservatives, 14% for the Liberals and the remainder (4%) for the smaller parties. All of WFD's programs, including the party projects, are in countries that are eligible for official development aid (WFD, 2013a:49-50).

Overview and evaluation of UK-support in 2009

Whether or not WFD is successful in its work is somewhat disputed. A 2009 report provided an overview of the British efforts to support political parties (Wild & Hudson, 2009). It identified party-to-party support as the main part of the activities, but also with some cross-party initiatives. According to the report WFD did not have a systematic procedure for evaluating the projects it funded, for example "There was no evidence.....of the development of common indicators or standards for measuring the effectiveness of support for political parties across countries" (Wild & Hudson, 2009:22).

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[54] The two other targets are: a) Parliamentarians, including female parliamentarians, in 10 legislatures undertake their key legislative, oversight, financial security and representative roles and b) Civil society organisations in five countries, and women's groups in three countries, engage effectively with parliaments, parties and other stakeholders.

This overview was later followed by an evaluation of WFD (GPA, 2010). It identified several organizational challenges, particularly the division between party-to-party activities vs. another objective, strengthening parliaments, and the overall objective of strengthening democracy: ".. the purpose of party support - strictly defined – is not to show demonstrable improvements in the functioning of democracy. The parties engage in an overtly political set of activities, designed to help their ideological counterparts in other countries." Moreover, as is the case with many evaluation reports, also this report concluded that ".. we could find no sources which demonstrated the long-term impact and effect of political party support. Most party-led projects are short-term, with reports submitted immediately after events; we were not shown any reports which attempted to gauge the longer term impact of projects. ……..reports tended to be based on descriptions of activities that took place, rather than assessing impact against clear indicators of success" (GPA, 2010: 11-13).[55]

Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy

The most *comprehensive* approach to IPA is probably that organized by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). It is comprehensive because it includes support for a wide range of parties and for many different types of activities. NIMD originated as a common institution for the six major parties represented in the Dutch parliament. It derives almost all its funding from the Dutch foreign ministry. Its uniqueness among IPA donors is that it is the dominant actor in Dutch IPA, even if some of the individual parties also have a foundation which include party assistance. While the British WFD is somewhat similar to NIMD at home, abroad the WFD-parties operate partly individually.

NIMD has been engaged in party assistance programs since 2002 and is now present in 25 countries. NIMD's vision has been formulated as contributing to: "Democratic societies in which the rule of law is observed and the public good fostered". The vision is operationalized in three types of programs: 1) promoting inter-party

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[55] The lack of systematic evaluation and monitoring has since been corrected. The current business plan refers to a monitoring and evaluation plan with principles and guidelines applicable for all programs, but a recently conducted evaluation has not yet been made available to the public (WFD, 2013a).

dialogue, 2) support for institutional development of political parties and 3) strengthening party – civil society relationship. Of the three components for NIMD's objectives, the third – strengthening party civil society partnerships – has been the least developed. The two other objectives are strongly connected.

NIMD has also the most comprehensive system for evaluation, not only of its own organization, but also for each of the countries in which NIMD has been operating[56].

The model that NIMD operates with is that individual political parties can apply for funds *only* if they participate in the inter-party dialogue. In general, NIMD supports parties that succeed in winning at least one seat in parliament. These parties are invited to establish an inter-party forum, usually established as an NGO, as for example the Center for Multiparty Democracy in Malawi (CMD-M). CMD-M is organized with a board consisting of all parliamentary parties having two board members, regardless of the size of the party. The chairmanship rotates between the member parties. If a party fails to win a seat in a parliamentary election, it loose its membership and therefore also the possibilities for qualifying for individual funds. Funding from NIMD is provided to the CMD for running the secretariat and for funding cross-party activities. The secretariat is staffed by locally recruited individuals. Each of the member parties may apply to NIMD centrally for funds to improve their own organization. Such projects are in principle embedded in a party's strategic plan for development where priorities have been established by the parties' themselves. Although NIMD centrally decides on the total funds available for both cross-party and individual projects, the CMD arrives on an agreement on the formula for how the funds should be divided. An example is that all parties can receive a basic fund and additional funds are distributed according the parties' share of the seats in parliament.

There are several important distinction from the sister part model. In the NIMD model *all* parties with parliamentary representation qualify for support as long as they participate in the inter-party dialogue. Thus, the incumbent party is treated in the same way as opposition parties. The idea is that NIMD should not be seen as an actor taking sides in the internal politics of the country and that

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[56] All evaluation reports can be found at www.nimd.org

dialogue has priority over individual party projects. NIMD's financial support for parties is not to be used for electioneering purposes. Usually, NIMD's annual support ceases during election years, or is greatly reduced during those years. NIMD's support is also 'policy blind' in the sense that it does not matter which political orientation recipient parties have – as long as they are committed to upholding a democratic political system.

CMD's have been created in several of the countries in which NIMD is, or has been, operating: Malawi, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Honduras, and Guatemala. But the local context influences how NIMD operates. For a CMD to function there must be a reasonably functioning multiparty system. Thus, in Mozambique where FRELIMO has been totally dominating there is no CMD. The local partner office of NIMD supports FRELIMO and the opposition parties individually. In Georgia, the situation was somewhat similar, prior to the 2012 parliamentary election. Because of this, the criteria for including political parties in funding schemes, party performance in local elections was added as criteria. The structure of the party system was so unstable that no center for multiparty democracy could be established. Therefore, NIMD's office for the Caucasus engaged individual parties, including UNM, in developing strategic plans. The office also sponsors cross-party activities, as for example the interactive web-site for policy issues[57], and seminars aiming to improve the situation for women in politics, organized jointly with other donors.

There are also differences across time in how individual party projects have been structured. In Tanzania and in Malawi NIMD left it to the parties themselves to identify priorities by first developing strategic plans, as in the recent program in Georgia. In Uganda NIMD has a more targeted objective. Its direct support for parties contributes mainly to 'policy development'. All participating parties could apply for funds to engage a policy coordinator. The motivation for supporting this specific party activity is twofold. NIMD's strategic plan states that through improvement of the policy function also other weaknesses of the parties can be improved: «*As indicated in the Outcome definition, the NIMD program aims specifically to improve the policy function of parties, which also contributes to the weak performance*

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[57] See http://www.prezidenti.ge/index.php?lang=eng for NIMD's project in Georgia in assisting parties and candidates to formulate statements on different policy areas

of parties on other objectives"(NIMD, 2012:12-13)*. Through improved policy development the electorate will have a clearer choice between political alternatives.

Thus, NIMD has a long track-record of IPA and has accumulated considerable knowledge of implementation of programs. Several of NIMD's staff members have worked continuously in the organization for many years and accumulated in depth country expertise.

Evaluations of Dutch support – three country cases

Evaluation reports show that also among NIMD's projects not all can be seen as successful, in the sense of improving the party system, improving party institutionalization and improving the relationships between civil-society and political parties. The following are examples of cases (Tanzania, Mali and Ghana) which demonstrate how varied the results of IPA can be, even when implemented by the same actor (NIMD).

Tanzania: In Tanzania, NIMD was active from 2002 until 2012.The evaluation report by Whitehead and Killian (Whitehead & Killian, 2012) provides a generally very positive view of the activities of the forum for interparty dialogue TCD (Tanzania Center for Democracy). TCD provided an opportunity for parties to meet and facilitated debates during elections. Inter party dialogue was perceived to be so successful that it was recommended also to be used more systematically at regional and lower levels. But three problems were noted:

Participation in TCD may have been primarily motivated because it is a condition for direct party support. Nevertheless, there may have been positive consequences in terms of inter-party communication.

Opposition parties felt that the incumbent CCM did not take TCD so seriously, indicated by CCM sending lower level officials to TCD meetings and sometime also not participating at all in seminars and meetings where all parties were supposed to participate, In spite of the dialogue among parties at the top, the prevalence of violence in the 2010 election indicates that there is a limited trickle down-effect inside the parties.

The authors also noted that the impact of parties participating in TCD has been quite limited on two key objectives of the programs:

internal party democracy and policy based election campaigns. Election campaigns are still dominated by general promises and on personalities. Also bilateral partnerships have made little progress in this respect. Bilateral programs have first of all been used for various training seminars, but also for more specific organizational purposes, such as developing strategic plans, developing party constitutions and printing party documents (p 30). The two main opposition parties, CHADEMA and CUF, emphasized the positive local "ownership" of the bilateral programs. Nevertheless, lack of internal democracy was reported as a problem in all parties ((Whitehead & Killian, 2012:33), but also that it is very difficult to measure internal party democracy.

Civil society linkage was problematic to evaluate as it is expressly forbidden in Tanzania for civil society organizations to engage with political parties. Not much can be said about the impact of TCD in this respect. In general, civil society organizations do not trust political parties.

Thus, among the three objectives inter-party dialogue was seen as successful, strengthening party institutionalization less so, and civil society-party linkages difficult to handle, at least due to the national legislation.

Mali: In the case of Mali the program, evaluated by Loada and Bartholomeussen (Loada & Bartolemeeussen, 2009) had three components: inter-party dialogue, regional cooperation and bilateral support for the individual parties (Loada & Bartolemeeussen, 2009:10). The latter aimed at:

- "strengthening the functioning and internal democracy of the parties,

- their capacity to manage conflicts and financial aspects,

- to strengthen the rules governing how the parties function etc."

Although there in the first years were some positive results of the financing of political parties, the report nevertheless concluded that many severe problems remained. One of them is the lack of skilled personnel both in the headquarters and local structures of the parties. The parties themselves reported on progress on party building efforts, but the report noted that party organizations were internally weak, dominated by personalization of politics and lack of institutional developments. However, as of 2008 the development of strategic plans

for parties (and parliamentary groups) has professionalized the parties and made management of the organizations more efficient: "Many policymakers have said that the NIMD's actions have helped improve the capacities of the parties to commit and to act, and have cited various arguments in support of such statements" (Loada & Bartolemeeussen, 2009:29). Improvements included better preparations for and conduct of election campaigns. Nevertheless, many (smaller) parties have failed to improve and parties are held in low regards by the public. The improvement that can be seen in the individual parties is to some extent due to the improvement in the running of the center for multiparty democracy (CMDID). At the same time, the report cautions against believing parties' ability to change and adapt should be taken for granted.

The improvement of CMDID has gone hand in hand with improved management of the larger political parties. It seems that it is the development of and close monitoring and following up of the strategic plans that had this 'transformative' effect at the level of party organizations, even if there is still more to be done with respect to parties' relationship with the electorate.

A very interesting aspect of the Mali-evaluation report is the attempt to find explanatory factors for the positive developments. The report identifies the presidential initiative to organize the Diawara Commission[58] "forced the parties and the CMDID to commit themselves in a process of reflecting on multi-party democracy, which has repercussions on their capacities" (Loada & Bartolemeeussen, 2009:32). NIMD's support enabled the parties to respond to the initiative. However, 'joining' the presidential consensus in some ways blurred the distinctive roles of opposition vs. government parties. Parties that later took a more oppositional role found themselves with fewer access to governmental resources. The blurring of the government-opposition boundary is also seen as an explanatory factor for the increase in the number of independent candidates. The feeling of local ownership of CMDID and support from the public authorities has improved the performance of CMDID, as has the agreement on a set of criteria for party support. The report is clear about the importance of NIMD's program for what has been achieved, regarding CMDID as well as the political parties.

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[58] A committee appointed by the President for the study of consolidation of democracy.

Comparing the Tanzania and the Mali report reveals some interesting relationship between direct party support and inter-party dialogue. In the Tanzanian case, the TCD is generally perceived to be functioning well, but direct support not so well. In the case of Mali the two go together: improvements in CMDID did lead to positive developments for the parties.

The two countries are similar with respect to NIMD's third objective: strengthening the parties' relationship with civil society. In both Mali and Tanzania civil society organizations (CSO) tend not to trust parties, and CSO's are expressly forbidden to be linked to political parties. Even though other components of the Mali program is evaluated positively the report notes that the electorate hold the parties in low regards, similar to the situation in Tanzania. However, we should bear in mind that this is the case throughout many countries, and may have little to do with the NIMD program as such.

Ghana: Ghana is generally considered to be one of the most successful examples of democratic consolidation in Sub-Saharan Africa. The electoral process has gradually become well institutionalized and managed and when the incumbent party has lost, it has accepted the outcome, even in very closely fought elections and there has been a peaceful handover of governmental power. NIMD has been active in Ghana since 2001 (Dijkstra & Kumado, 2004). As in most other countries there has been a forum for interparty dialogue, combined with direct support for individual parties. In Ghana, the four main political parties committed themselves to a country program that focused on parties' role in consolidating constitutional democracy. A long term strategy was formulated by the parties –a Joint Action Plan- to achieve this aim. Next to various cross-party activities, the program included a bilateral support component that was focused on the strengthening of parties' organizational and institutional capacity and linked to the objectives outlined in the Joint Action Plan (NIMD, 2004a:14-15). The bilateral support component of the program was thus clearly linked to and guided by the multiparty dialogue process.

NIMD's activities in Ghana have run in parallel to, if not caused, the democratic progress in the country and the Ghanian case is seen as an example to be followed for parties in other African countries. There are of course many explanations for why Ghana has become a successful case of democratic progress, and some scholars, argue that democracy assistance has been of marginal importance (E.Gyimah-

Boadi & Yaka, 2013). In any case, even if there has been an impact of democracy assistance, Ghana's case also illustrates what scholars of democratization processes have argued are the most important: the socio-economic and institutional contexts. On these factors Ghana is scoring better than most other African countries on, for example, the Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2014) ; a summary indicator of socio-economic conditions. Ghana's parliament, also considered to be a favorable factor for party building, has more power than some other African countries where NIMD is active (Fish & Kroenig, 2009).[59]

In contrast to the Swedish model where the PAO chose in which countries to work, NIMD's work is strongly linked to official Dutch development policy. Tanzania and Malawi both received substantial IPA until 2012 via NIMD, but the two countries are no longer part of the Dutch government's priorities. Therefore, NIMD has withdrawn from the two countries but the local CMD's continue.[60]

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[59] The Kenyan legislature has been further strengthened as a result of the constitution enacted in 2010.
[60] In Tanzania the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy has replaced NIMD and in the case of Malawi, UNDP and CMD-M together are seeking new funding partners.

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