



**THE LABOUR PARTY'S  
WESTMINSTER FOUNDATION  
FOR DEMOCRACY PROGRAMME**

# Annual Review 2021-22

 **Labour**

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**For more information on Labour's WFD programme, please visit**  
[www.labourwfd.org.uk/](http://www.labourwfd.org.uk/)

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## Introduction



**Figure 2:** Participants at the Women's Academy for Africa National Workshop, Congo Brazzaville (February 2022)

**The Labour Party supports political parties in new and emerging democracies around the world through its Westminster Foundation for Democracy Programme – a key component of Labour's international strategy.**

We work together to ensure the values of democracy, freedom, justice and human rights are shared across the world.

As one of the oldest and most established social democratic parties in the world, Labour has long sought to share experiences and build alliances with like-minded parties across regions.

We do this by supporting bilateral programmes with other parties and by building regional and thematic networks. Throughout, we focus on working with women and young people, two groups that are often overlooked and marginalised in the political process.

**This document gives a summary of the projects we completed in the financial year 2021-22 and focuses on the changes brought about through this support.**

## How we're funded

**The Labour Party receives funds from the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) – an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).**

WFD builds the capacity of parliaments and political parties; delivering parliamentary work itself whilst resources are provided to Westminster based parties to work directly with partners overseas.

The funding from WFD enables the Labour Party to deliver programmes with political parties and regional networks designed around their specific needs and in line with our international strategy.

For more information on WFD's work, please visit  
[www.wfd.org.uk](http://www.wfd.org.uk)





Figure 3: Training Academy, Montenegro (March 2022)

## Section 1: Yearly overview

**Our projects are designed in accordance with the relevant political context and tailored to meet specific needs of political parties, particularly our sister parties across the regions experiencing both challenges and opportunities within their respective political environments.**

This year, the world crisis and the implications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic finally started to ease, making it possible for activities to resume in person and international travel was again permitted. However, this was still a test for democracies everywhere. Workplaces re-adjusted to working from offices, people experienced the easing of lockdown restrictions and the impact of the pandemic and how this has shaped the world has since been analysed.

Although our programmes continued to experience some delays and alterations to activities due to the pandemic, most of our partners were able to continue to plan activities whilst using a different timeline and delivered activities in person.



**Figure 4:** Participants at the Women's Academy for Africa National Workshop, D.R.C Congo Workshop (January 2022)

## Section 2: Outcomes and highlights

**The overall goal of the Labour Party's WFD Programme is to create stronger social democratic parties and actors to enable them to function and participate in a multi-party political system and provide a choice to the electorate.**

The programme also aims to build strong regional networks through the sharing of best practice and skills training. For example, we have supported political actors on human rights and equalities through our work on women's political leadership, political participation of youth and LGBTQ+ rights.

Despite the ongoing challenges this year of COVID-19, we were pleased to be able to proceed with activities and are able to report the following outcomes and achievements for the 2021-2022 financial year:

## Africa

This year, the Women's Academy for Africa (WAFA) supported social democratic women to enter politics through training opportunities throughout the Africa region. WAFA is a regional network with aims to change the face of politics and policy by identifying, training and empowering women in Africa.

*I was elected a member of WAFA Youth Coordination in Maputo; this position projected me into limelight in our party to become Vice President of my party's Youth Wing.*

**Mary Yeboah Asantewaa**  
WAFA Programme

Factors such as patriarchy, gender stereotyping, and socio-economic barriers are among the reasons why women struggle to enter into the political arena. The programme has been integral in identifying women candidates whom seek elected positions and express an interest in standing for public office, and providing them with access to resources and best practice for competing.

*I would like to extend my gratitude to WAFA for granting us such an amazing opportunity to gather here and learn and be imparted [with] such knowledge. So far this is the most relevant and knowledgeable workshop I have attended with trainers who [have the] burden of seeing women [rise] up the ranks defying all odds.*

**Kudazi Dzombe**

**Participant**

Following programme activities this year, our partners in Congo Brazzaville carried out a workshop for 30 female participants. This resulted in discussions on increasing the quota for female candidates in order to promote gender balance. Furthermore, they agreed to advocate for women to be appointed to senior positions within the party to further this agenda. Several other workshops were also completed in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe. These workshops resulted in participants gaining skills and knowledge in advocacy that will help them to put themselves forward for candidate selections in their party. Moreover, participants were also trained and equipped with a variety of skills, such as advocacy, which can be used to share knowledge with women in less politically participating rural areas.

Furthermore, the participants were trained in fundraising techniques in order to raise funds that in turn would help them towards

their election campaign and standing. Thus, this programme has been successful in bringing women together amidst recovering from an ongoing pandemic, to share their political experiences, educate and empower each other to engage actively in the political process, and work together to be better prepared to face challenges in testing circumstances and develop resilience.

Labour WFD also provided support to our partners in Botswana, building on previous programmes. This programme supported the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) to organise its 12<sup>th</sup> elective conference virtually, for over 1,400 delegates from across the country. Members discussed the state of the party and its long- term goals as well as party delegates having the opportunity to vote for their party leader.

This activity achieved the improvement of transparency of party structures and finances, helping to ensure accountability to its members. It is due to the support of this programme that the BCP was the first political party to hold a conference since the start of the pandemic. This has demonstrated the party's commitment to being transparent and accountable to both members and voters, work which the party plans to continue in the future.





**Figure 5:** Women's Political Leadership Regional Meeting, Tha'era (March 2022)

### **Middle East and North Africa**

Tha'era organised a webinar to discuss the findings of a regional study that was conducted on the response of countries in the MENA region to gender based violence during the pandemic. Over fifty-five participants successfully attended it from several Arab countries. A recommendation was put forward to undertake a similar regional study on gender based violence in public places due to the success and insight of the first study. This is a substantial outcome for the work that we have been doing with Tha'era on how to achieve social justice and gender equality where both women and men, have equal shares of political power, full citizenship rights and the right to personal liberties and freedom from violence.

In March 2022, twenty participants from five countries- Lebanon, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt and Morocco, met for the Regional Evaluation Meeting held in Istanbul, Turkey. The meeting assessed the progress of the political participation of women as well as the success, challenges and lessons learned of Tha'era and its impact since the inception of the network. Participants shared the achievements of Tha'era in each of the six political parties and the influence this work has had regionally, indicating great perseverance and sustainability despite the limited resources over many years. This has been evidenced through the achievements made in parliamentary elections and local municipalities with some members attaining leading positions within government such as gender advisors to ministers.

The members also agreed on the finalisation of the documentation study on the Tha'era network, which highlighted the ways in which it promotes the protection and solidarity of women with a view to maintaining the capacity and knowledge building in order to effect progressive political and societal change.

### **Eastern Europe and South East Europe (SEE)**

This financial year, the Labour WFD programme began work in Armenia to support partners with the establishment of a new youth training academy that provides training on social democracy, political processes, campaigning, political technologies and communication. In November 2021, the programme was launched with 26 students enrolled in to the political academy. The academy delivered fantastic results, as our partners were able to deliver a total of 36 courses within 3 months, and the students were able to gain a better understanding of the working process of the party and communicate and network with party members. As a result of the programme, the students gained in-depth knowledge and skills that they will be able to use in future involvement regarding political processes.

Prior to the start of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, our partners successfully carried out a regional training programme for thirty-five participants to identify organisational issues after the pandemic to strengthen their communication skills through media training. The programme provided experience in advocating for initiatives at the local level, including in the context of involving local deputies and relevant officials. A key indicator of success was the decision to create a new team of regional activists to recruit for the Social Democratic Platform in new regions, maintaining its reputation as one of the left leading movements in Ukraine.

With Labour WFD support, the SD Platform has continued to provide informative publications for distribution on their social networks. This has been essential in building their policy platform. Our partners have produced new video content for their campaign as well as creating a promotional video and as a result, social media reach has increased by 30 per cent. These outputs have helped to support the SD platform capacity to campaign effectively and remobilise its members.

### **Western Balkans**

In the Western Balkans, we worked with the Foundation Max van der Stoel (FMS) to facilitate further cooperation on LGBTQ+ rights among political parties in the region. Our programme of activities included National Capacity Building Trainings, Training of

the trainers, Support of Local Campaign Initiatives and Study with Focus Groups. Despite the challenges caused by Covid-19, the Training of the Trainers successfully took place in Belgrade, which raised the capacity of 14 participants on training techniques and offering participants the chance to develop their knowledge on LGBTQ+ issues and how to train other members of their parties on this topic. The range of methodology including lectures, workshops, group work and seminars proved to be incredibly useful as the participants were thoroughly engaged and keen to impart their knowledge on their parties and members of the parties.

Through support from our programme, our regional partners conducted three Focus Groups where members were diverse in age, gender, education and their role within the political party. Participants focused on the recognition of the existing prejudices towards members of the LGBTQ+ community, highlighting the need for further education and awareness on this topic. In light of this, our partners successfully drafted recommendations for policies to improve the position of the LGBTQ+ community. Significantly, these recommendations will also aim to improve party structures to encourage better representation for members of the LGBTQ+ community. A key recommendation formed because of the focus group discussions is to develop a supportive atmosphere and create a space for LGBTQ+ members to take an active part in the development of policies and activities within political parties.

Despite the setbacks imposed by the pandemic, in February and March 2022, all of the national training activities were organised in person. These activities took place in Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia. The training sessions proved to be incredibly efficacious with participants gaining a deeper understanding of human rights of vulnerable groups in their respective countries. The training on LGBTQ+ rights brought about a unique chance of an open discussion on the challenges faced.

We continued to provide our partners in Montenegro with bilateral support to increase youth participation in politics. Our partners in the SDP Montenegro successfully delivered five Training Academies within five months, covering several topics, such as: What is politics, Political Communication, Human Rights as an essence of democracy, Crisis Management and Future of politics. Given the challenges our partners have faced due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the crisis management module proved to be one of the most advantageous. Current and former country officials were invited to engage in discussion with the participants.

Despite setbacks caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, our partners were able to organise and deliver the academy within 6 months to an exceptionally high standard, providing both the political development and development of skills for the participants, and establishing a dedicated political academy for activists, members and supporters.



**Figure 7:** Training Academy on Human Rights as the essence of democracy, Montenegro (February 2022)

We also worked with partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim to reduce the different forms of inequality within society that are especially affecting young people, women and children. Through the implementation of this project, our partners had significant results reflected through the establishment of Councillors and MP's Representatives Support Office. Two public policies were also developed and are the basis for parliamentary action and referral of the law and initiatives regarding inequality.

The activities undertaken by our partners generated strong public interest. Analysis and reports have since shown that the work completed during the programme noticeably engaged the public, evidenced through the delivery of documents proposing changes to the law.

This programme provided the opportunity for participants to strengthen the capacities of MPs and decision makers by enhancing their skills in legislative writing and advocacy for the systematic implementation of policy proposals. Consequently, this has increased public scrutiny of government policy and contributed towards detecting inequality issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Section 3: Resources

Our projects are funded through an annual grant from the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. The charts below show the breakdown of expenditure in 2021-22 according to region and then by three key areas.



