



The Labour Party's
Westminster Foundation
for Democracy
Programme

Annual Review 2018/2019



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Figure 1: Participants at the annual Summer Academy in Ukraine (July 2018)

Introduction

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 projects 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. An increased emphasis of our work has been on inclusiveness and equalities, *A World for the Many, Not the Few*.

How we're funded

Labour receives funds from the **Westminster Foundation for Democracy** (WFD) - a public body sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with additional funding from the Department for International Development.

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 Labour to deliver projects with political parties and regional networks designed around their specific needs and in line with our international WFD strategy.

This document gives a summary of the projects we completed in the financial year 2018-19 and focuses primarily on what changes came about as a result of this support.

For more information, please visit our website <http://www.labourwfd.org.uk/>

Section 1: Yearly Overview

The closing of political space, the rise in populist rhetoric, domestic developments and a series of contentious elections abroad have resulted in a number of challenges for our sister parties across the regions.

Political instability has continued to affect work in the Middle East and North Africa but support has continued in the region. Placing gender equality high on party agendas and convincing party leaders of the value of gender equality in democracy development has been pushed by Tha'era, a network of women from the Middle East and North Africa.



Figure 2: Workshop in Tunisia on building relationships with civil society organisations (June 2018)

In the Western Balkans, we have worked with political parties to develop their policy making processes, trained women standing for public office and election observers. In Montenegro our sister party made a historic impact by fielding the first ever woman Presidential candidate in the country, demonstrating the fruits of our

programme on 'Women in Action'. This also set a country level change paving the way for women, regardless of political affiliation, to seek the Presidency of the country.

Similarly, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we have seen the election of women at either Federation, cantonal, regional or municipality board levels.

Hostile political environments, electoral irregularities and the unfair distribution of resources continue to be a challenge for some of our sister parties across Africa, particularly for women candidates and activists. However, through our work with the Women's Academy for Africa (WAFA) and sister parties in the region, our partners aim to overcome these challenges and promote women and youth representation in the region.

Section 2: Outcomes and Highlights



Figure 3: Labour Party Women's Conference (February 2019)

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, youth and LGBTI. We are therefore pleased to report the following outcomes from 2018-19 in this section of the review.

Africa

This year, members and beneficiaries of WAFA met in Gaborone, Botswana for an evaluation meeting. They were joined by young women representatives from each of the member parties to discuss women's political representation across Africa. The meeting included a review of WAFA

in supporting women's representation and lessons learnt acknowledging ongoing challenges women face in politics, as well as potential opportunities for future development. Significantly, an outcome of this meeting was the election of a youth representative on the Executive Board of WAFA, recognising that young

women have a role to play in shaping the future of their societies.

The Women's Academy for Africa is a regional network that seeks to improve the skills and confidence of women activists from social democratic parties in Africa.



Figure 4: Wafa meeting in Botswana (February 2019)

A social media and communications workshop took place this year in Botswana to support the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) to increase its capacity. This activity was particularly successful in engaging with youth members, and establishing next steps regarding their campaign and communications strategies, particularly in terms of reaching out to young voters.

Eastern Europe

The ninth annual political Summer Academy for young social democrats from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus took place this year in Kyiv, Ukraine. The academy offered skills training on a range of issues including policy exchanges, campaign strategies

and communication methods. The programme also included a train-the-trainers element that passed on the skills and knowledge to cascade trainings in their respective parties.

The networks established through events such as this help strengthen social democracy throughout the region.



Figure 5: Annual Summer Academy (July 2018)

Middle East and North Africa

Tha'era set out an action plan and developed an advocacy manual on combatting violence against women. The manual is a key tool which lays out information for training grassroots members of the various political parties. Advocacy skills gained by women in political parties may lead male leaders of political parties to put combating violence against women high on their parties' agenda and publicly make statements in their meetings with parliamentarians, media and other parties about the need to collaborate to end violence against women.

Women attending Tha'era meetings have been able to exchange experiences and expertise about the various challenges facing them, and the group's Facebook page has done much to continue this conversation. The network has also expanded its reach this year by welcoming representatives from Jordan.



Figure 6: Tha'era meeting in Tunis (January 2019)

"In building Tha'era capacity to skill its members in political participation, the support of the Labour Party resulted in an increasing number of Tha'era members and participants occupying decision making positions in their parties, in being elected as members of local councils in their countries and in running in candidacy of parliamentary and local elections "- Tha'era

In Africa and the MENA region, our women's networks success has meant that both are now looking at expansion as more parties are approaching them for support. Uniquely, some members of these networks have also reached out to women across the political divide to mobilise them on issues such as violence. This in turn compliments the

significant cross-party initiatives led by UK parties on combatting violence against women in politics, recognising that as well as developing the capacity of our partners on this issue, we also need to mobilise women across the political spectrum to maximise the impact on governments to tackle this issue.

Western Balkans

The regional policy making programme in the Western Balkans has evidenced co-operation between the parties with all partners organising a joint event on the same day and at the same time in their respective capitals. These events were to encourage citizen's participation in policies. For instance, in Montenegro the focus was on providing employment opportunities for young people and as this launch was not during a campaign period, people were less sceptical and more engaged in the process. Similarly, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia also launched policy initiatives. In the latter, a Facebook campaign was launched and authors were invited on a talk show on TV to discuss this work. This all culminated in a conference between the parties in December 2018, which further embedded co-operation.



Figure 7: Launch of policy initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina (October 2018)

“Long-lasting support coming through the WFD has proven true partnership among the Labour Party and sister parties in the region. Throughout numerous carried out activities, the partners in Western Balkans have achieved significant impact in the creation of sustainable mechanisms for strategic communication with the voters, together with strengthening their party structures with continuous capacity building of their prominent activists and leaders.” – Democratic Party, Serbia

As mentioned in the previous section, in Montenegro the ‘Women in Action’ and ‘Youth in Action’ programme saw our partner create history and set a precedent in the country by fielding the first ever woman Presidential candidate. The youth programme saw an increase in the number of young people standing as candidates for the municipal elections. Our partners also noted the investment in previous programmes, which overtime have led to significant improvements in their structures and organisational capacity, enabling them to run these campaigns.

“After more than a decade of continuous political and practical support the Labour Party remains the strongest supporter of progressive development of left oriented parties in the Western Balkans”- Social Democratic Party of Montenegro

Human rights and LGBTI training seminars have taken place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Montenegro to develop a strategy to incorporate LGBTI issues within party work. These seminars have resulted in sister parties across the region recognising LGBTI rights as human rights. An outcome has been that ahead of the first Pride Parade in Sarajevo in 2019, our sister party in Bosnia and Herzegovina has issued a statement condemning hate speech, discrimination and threats of violence in connection with the organization of the event.

Regional and Cross Regional Activities

The Labour Party launched, in coordination with the Foundation Max Van der Stoep (FMS), a Training Academy this year for young activists from our sister parties in Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. This academy will now be housed in the Progressive Alliance, providing a structured forum for future exchanges on political activism.



Figure 8: Launch of Youth Activist Academy (July 2018)

A best practice programme for sister party representatives took place alongside Labour's Women's Conference. During the Conference, young women from Africa were invited to share the platform for a panel on *'The Struggle for Liberation: A global look at the rights for women'*, giving a voice to youth from the region. This highlighted the global need for women to continue to work together to promote women's rights and representation.

The Labour Party's contribution to democratic development has been recognised this year through a research paper by the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity on how sister parties, working multi-laterally, have assisted the transformation of progressive movements in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans.

Alongside the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), a visit was organised on equalities to bring in partners from Africa on support for LGBTI rights. Working with trade

unions, a programme was organised on the equalities agenda. This recognised that for some of the represented countries, significant challenges remain in advancing LGBTI rights.



Figure 9: Local Government and Equalities Best Practice Programme (April 2018)

During our 2018 Annual Conference, a fringe panel discussion was led by the Rt Hon Emily Thornberry MP, Shadow Foreign Secretary, on building women's political representation internationally and how female activism and gender equality can be promoted globally. The panel included participants who had been trained through Wafa or bi-lateral programmes, therefore providing them with a key platform to utilise the skills and highlight developments happening in their regions.



Figure 10: Annual Conference Best Practice Programme (September 2018)

Cross Party Programmes

Representatives from the Labour Party's sister parties attended the Women MP's of the World Conference in the House of Commons in November. This was an initiative of the Mother of Parliament, the Rt. Hon Harriet Harman QC MP, and was an historic event that brought together women parliamentarians from around the world to celebrate their achievements, discuss how to

strengthen visibility, and further empower them to continue to drive change nationally and internationally.

The Labour Party played a leading role in this event working with WFD, the British Council, FCO, DFID and other government departments on this initiative. More information about the event can be found at

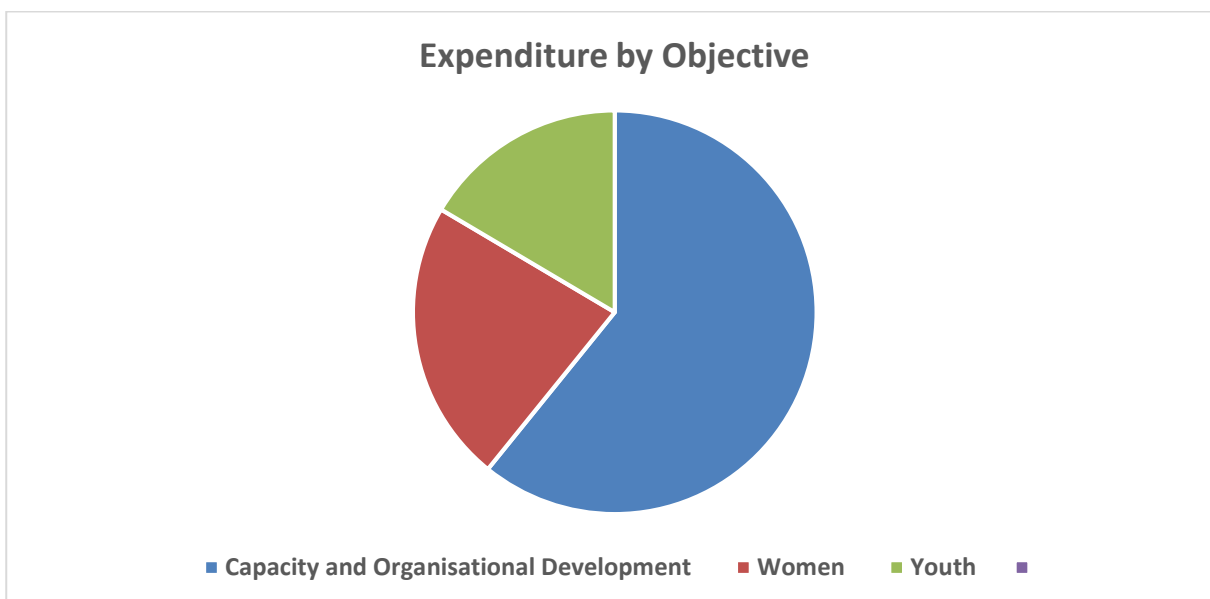
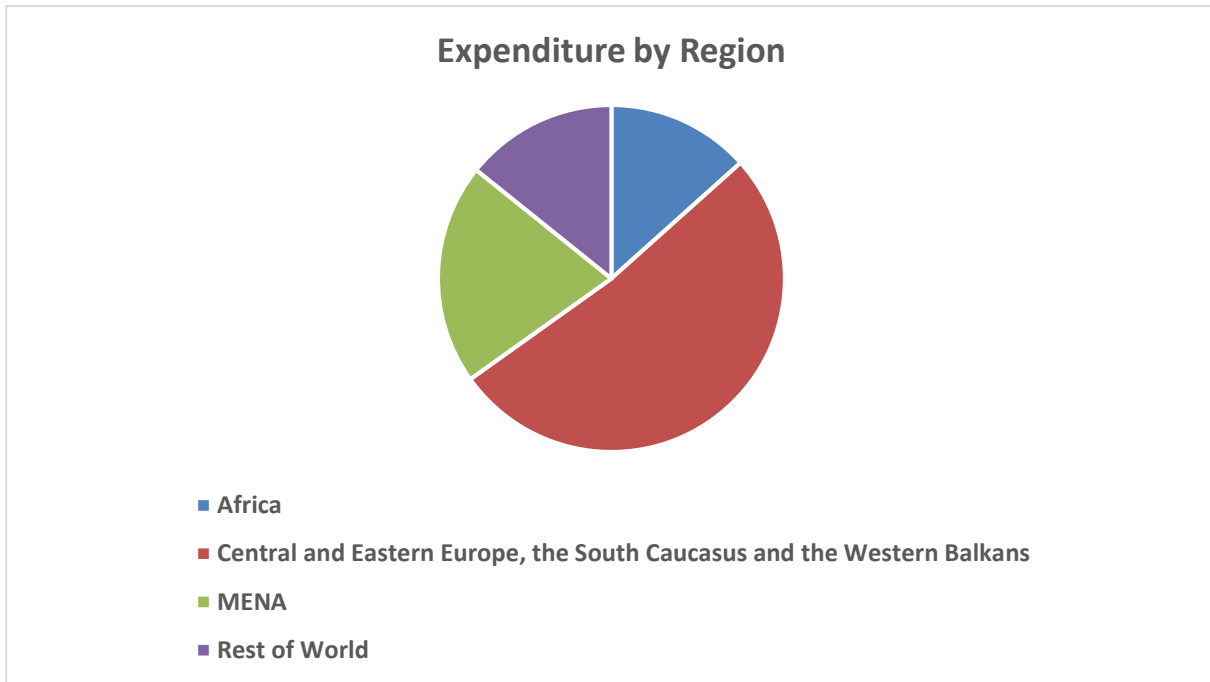
<https://www.wfd.org/2018/11/29/women-mps-world-westminster/>



Figure 11: Women MP's of the World Conference (November 2018). Picture credited to Jessica Taylor/UK Parliament

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 2018-19 according to region and then by three key areas.



Annex 1: Full list of projects supported in 2018-19

Region	Country/ Network	Project Title
Africa	Botswana	Party Capacity Building
	WAFA	Women's Academy for Africa
	Youth Academy for Africa	Youth Academy for Africa
Eastern Europe	Ukraine	Organisation and Youth Capacity Building
	Various	Summer Academy
MENA	Jordan	Youth Capacity Building
	Tunisia	Party Capacity Building
	Tha'era	Arab Women's Network
Western Balkans	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Policy Development
		Training for Electoral Observers
	Serbia	Party Capacity Building
	Various	LGBTI Rights in the Western Balkans
	Various	Western Balkans Capacity Building
	Various	Regional Policy Making
Worldwide	Various	Annual Conference Best Practice Programme
	Various	Elections Best Practice Programme
	Various	Fact Finding Visits
	Various	Social Democratic Women in Politics

Annex 2: List of acronyms

CHOGM	The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
WAFA	Women's Academy for Africa

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