

Annual Report 2025

May 2026

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***Empowering People. Strengthening
Democracy. Building Peace.***

Letter from the Managing Director

In a world marked by growing conflict, shrinking civic space, climate insecurity, and increasing political polarisation, the work of building peaceful, inclusive and democratic societies has never been more important—or more challenging. Yet, throughout 2025, we have also seen countless examples of courage, leadership and resilience from the people and partners we have the privilege to work alongside.

At elbarlament, we believe that sustainable peace and democracy cannot be imposed from the outside. They are built by people who choose dialogue over division, participation over exclusion, and cooperation over confrontation. Our role is to support these efforts by creating spaces for learning, strengthening institutions, amplifying the voices of marginalised groups, and connecting actors who are committed to positive change.

This annual report reflects that commitment. Across Iraq, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe and beyond, our team worked with governments, civil society organisations, youth leaders, women's rights advocates and international partners to strengthen democratic governance, advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and develop innovative responses to the interconnected challenges of conflict, climate change and social exclusion.

While the projects described in these pages differ in scope and geography, they share a common purpose: empowering people to shape more inclusive, just and peaceful societies. Whether supporting civic education in Iraq, strengthening the leadership skills of young women peacebuilders, advising European democracy initiatives, or developing practical tools for strengthening the capacities of civil society organisations, our work is grounded in local ownership, evidence, partnership and long-term engagement.

This year also demonstrated the value of collaboration. The continued trust placed in elbarlament by our partners enabled us to deepen existing relationships and contribute our expertise to increasingly complex international processes and challenging local political and security contexts. We are grateful to the organisations, institutions and communities who continue to place their confidence in us, and to our dedicated team whose professionalism, creativity and commitment make this work possible.

The challenges facing democracy and peacebuilding remain significant. But every dialogue facilitated, every young leader supported, every institution strengthened and every partnership built represents another step towards more resilient and inclusive societies.

We hope this report provides not only an overview of our work during the past year, but also a reminder that meaningful change can be achieved through sustained cooperation, mutual trust and the determination of people working together across borders and communities.

Thank you for your interest in our work and for being part of this journey.

Sebastian Bloching, Managing Director, elbarlament

ABOUT ELBARLAMENT

Elbarlament is a peacebuilding and democracy support organisation, with a strong focus on empowering women and youth. Its work is focussed on three thematic areas: Inclusive Political Participation; Women, Peace and Security (WPS); and the Gender – Climate – Security nexus. Through its projects, elbarlament supports public institutions and civil society actors in designing and implementing initiatives that promote peaceful coexistence, foster democratic norms and practices, and develop integrated solutions to address the impacts of climate change.

The organisation follows a conflict-sensitive and gender-transformative approach in supporting locally owned reform agendas through capacity development, dialogue facilitation, policy analysis, arts-based approaches, and technical assistance.

Elbarlament operates under two separate legal identities: a limited liability company (elbarlament GmbH) and a non-profit association (elbarlament e.V.). The two legal entities share the same vision and mission.

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY ELBARLAMENT E.V.

Democracy needs civic education: a civic education platform in Iraq

- **Country:** Iraq
- **Project duration:** February 2023 – February 2025
- **Project objective:** To contribute to a democratic, cohesive and peaceful Iraqi society through an increased social and political engagement of civil society, especially youth, at the local, regional and national level.
- **Main activities in 2025:**
 - Wrapping up the project, writing final report
- **Funded by:** German Federal Foreign Office



Civic education is used to describe the democratic competencies of citizens to participate in social and political processes. It is a way to promote peaceful nation-building and reconciliation, including dialogue between Iraqis of different tribes, religions, ethnicity, etc. The project's key component was the creation of a coherent political education offer in the form of a digital civic education platform. The Ouraq platform provides interested Iraqis and others access to a range of resources, including articles, videos, and interactive materials designed to facilitate learning and engagement. The platform also promotes the visibility of Iraqi organisations active in the field of civic education.

More information:

- [Project page](#) on the elbarlament website
- Digital Platform [Ouraq](#)
- Youtube [playlist](#)

Women Taking the Lead

- **Country:** Iraq
- **Project duration:** October 2024 – March 2026 (an extension is foreseen)
- **Project objective:** Enhance women's participation in governance and strengthen implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in Iraq.
- **Main activities in 2025:**
 - Training for Ministry of Environment (MoE) in January 2025 in Baghdad
 - Training for Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) in January 2025 in Baghdad
 - Online interactive training for members of the Environmental Justice Group (EJG) and the MENA Feminist Task Force (FTF), in March and April 2025
 - Training workshop on WPS-Climate Nexus for the Ministry of Justice in April 2025 in Erbil.
 - Regional Network Meeting on WPS-Climate Nexus for civil society actors from across the MENA region in April 2025 in Erbil
 - Training workshop on the WPS-Climate Nexus for the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior in October 2025 in Baghdad.
 - Joint ministerial training workshop on the WPS-Climate Nexus in December 2025 in Baghdad.
- **Funded by:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)



More information:

- [Project page](#) on the elbarlament website
- Social media channels of the project: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)

Women and Youth in Democracy (WYDE) Civic Engagement

- **Country:** Sub-Saharan countries
- **Project duration:** January 2022 – August 2026
- **Project objective:** The overall objective of the WYDE project is to fund and implement national and transnational projects in support of youth civic engagement and participation in the decision-making processes across the Sub-Saharan Countries.



Main activities in 2025:

- Supported Accountability Lab Nepal in facilitating an inclusive and participatory policy dialogue on youth political participation in Nepal, including a participatory policy assessment and dialogue meetings involving representatives of student unions, youth wings of political parties, the National Youth Council and civil society organisations
- **Funded by:** European Union

From 2022 – 2026 elbarlament is implementing activities within the EU funded WYDE Civic Engagement project as a member of the [EPD network](#). WYDE Civic Engagement aims to improve the enfranchisement, empowerment, and inclusion of youth in all levels of democratic participation at the national, regional and global scales. WYDE Civic Engagement's approach is informed by the need for youth engagement and inclusion not only at national level, but beyond and above it. With half of the world's population being under 30, the continued survival of democracy is highly dependent on buy-in and support among its youth. The overall objective of the WYDE project is therefore to fund and implement national and transnational projects in support of youth civic engagement and participation in the decision-making processes across the Sub-Saharan Countries.

More information:

- [Project page](#) on the elbarlament website
- [EPD page](#) on the project

PATH : Peace Advocacy Training Hub

- **Country:** Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Libya (Online)
- **Project duration:** September 2025 – January 2026
- **Project objective:** Strengthening the leadership and advocacy capacities of young women peacebuilders from Libya, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen.
- **Main activities in 2025:**
 - Delivered a structured **online training programme** in Arabic, combining leadership, peacebuilding, negotiation, advocacy, and digital communications.
 - Facilitated **mentoring and peer exchange** with regional experts in research, storytelling, creative media, and digital campaigning.
 - Supported participants in developing **joint advocacy and storytelling initiatives** to amplify women's voices in peace and political reform processes.



- Provided funding for a short [research paper](#) that enters the national and international debate on reparations and transitional justice following the genocide committed by the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) against the Yazidi community in August 2014.
- **Funded by:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

More information:

- [Interview](#) by one of the participants
- [Webpage](#) on elbarlament website

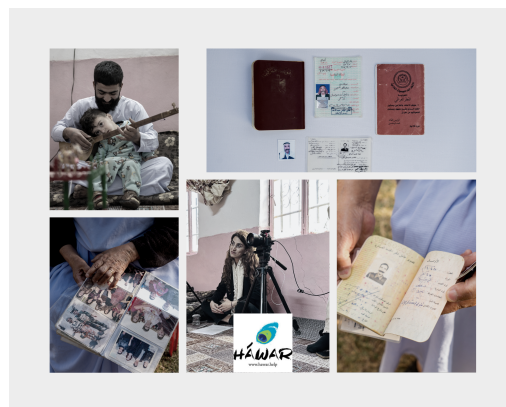
PROJECTS AND CONSULTANCIES IMPLEMENTED BY ELBARLAMENT GMBH

Policy briefs for “Women4Peace” GIZ project

- **Country:** Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Libya
- **Project duration:** November 2024 – May 2025
- **Project objective:** Write policy briefs for Iraq, Yemen, Syria and Libya informing policy makers and partners alike about gaps in the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (Women, Peace and Security Agenda).
- **Main activities in 2025:**
 - Research, drafting and publication of the policy briefs (the one on Syria is not publicly available)
 - [Iraq](#)
 - [Yemen](#)
 - [Libya](#)
- **Commissioned by:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Archiving the Yezidi culture

- **Country:** Iraq
- **Project duration:** December 2024 – March 2025
- **Project objective:** Support the organisation HÁWAR.help in building an archive for Yezidi culture Iraq
- **Main activities in 2025:**
 - Research on site in Iraq: interviews, video and photo documentation
 - Supported exhibition in Berlin, Germany and Brussels, Belgium
- **Commissioned by:** HÁWAR.help



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Training on Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

- **Country:** Yemen
- **Project duration:** October 2025 – August 2026
- **Project objective:** To develop and deliver a training program for women in civil society, the private sector, and public administration in Yemen, focusing on issues like technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), digital security, and self-protection.
- **Main activities in 2025:**
 - Setting up the project, identifying the participants and developing training and mentorship concepts
- **Commissioned by:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Technical support to Team Europe Democracy (TED) Initiative

Countries: Worldwide

Project duration: April 2024 to December 2026

Project objective: To strengthen European coordination and expertise in democracy support worldwide by facilitating research, dialogue, and knowledge exchange within the Team Europe Democracy Network.

The Team Europe Democracy (TED) Initiative, launched in 2021 by the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), brings together the European Union and 14 EU Member States to strengthen and defend democracy worldwide in response to rising autocratisation. Built on collaboration, evidence, and expertise, TED promotes democratic governance, civic participation, media freedom, and the rule of law through three pillars: research and knowledge sharing, a Europe-wide network of EU institutions, Member States, civil society, and experts, and tailored country-level technical support. Its Secretariat, staffed by GIZ and Enabel, coordinates learning and strategic action across

thematic working groups focusing on rule of law, justice, and anti-corruption; political and civic participation; and media freedom and digital democracy. Within this framework, elbarlament supports the implementation of TED Working Groups—particularly WG1 and WG3—through a GIZ-funded service contract, providing research and analysis, stakeholder engagement, knowledge development, event facilitation, and expert advice on democracy, human rights, and digital governance. By fostering cooperation among European actors and translating shared values into practical action, TED strengthens accountability, transparency, and inclusive governance, contributing to a global environment where democracy and human rights can thrive.

Commissioned by: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Framework contracts with Belgian Development Agency Enabel

- **Country:** Worldwide
- **Project duration:** January 2025-December 2028

In January 2025, elbarlament GmbH signed three framework agreements with Enabel, the [Belgian Development Agency](#) for providing technical expertise under three lots:

- Lot 1: civic and political participation
- Lot 2: technical expertise on European Union-Member State coordination in support of democratic governance in the intervention countries
- Lot 3: capacity-building services for institutional actors and civil society at global level and in the intervention countries

The following projects were implemented through these framework contracts in 2025:

1. Enabel framework contract - Lot 1: Mappings, Analysis and Knowledge Product Development on Civic Space and Local Democratic Governance

- **Country:** European Union (Team Europe Democracy Network)
- **Project duration:** February 2025-December 2025
- **Project objective:** To enhance mutual learning, improve the effectiveness of democratic support programming and strengthen coordination among the EU and its Member States by mapping ongoing and planned initiatives focused on supporting civic space (online/digital and offline) and local democratic governance.

The project delivered a comprehensive mapping and analysis of initiatives across both online and offline civic space and local democratic governance, led by EU institutions and the 14 Team Europe Democracy (TED) Member States.

The work systematically identified ongoing and planned actions by DG INTPA, DG NEAR, the EEAS and selected EU Delegations, highlighting best practices, fostering mutual learning, and pinpointing concrete opportunities for stronger coordination and joint action across Team Europe.

Building on this mapping, the project developed a high-value knowledge product that synthesises the findings with existing work from TED Working Group 2 (Political and civic participation), including reports and webinars. Together, these outputs translate evidence into actionable insights, helping Team Europe actors align strategies, amplify impact, and more effectively support democratic actors on the ground.

Key deliverables included:

- A detailed internal mapping report for EU and Member State stakeholders
- An accessible knowledge product designed to inform, inspire and guide a broader audience

2. Enabel framework contract - Lot 1: WG2 Strategic Advisory Briefs

- **Country:** European Union (Team Europe Democracy Network)
- **Project duration:** October 2025 – January 2026
- **Project objective:** To strengthen civic space and local democratic governance by mapping Team Europe initiatives, fostering coordination, and generating actionable knowledge for democracy support programming.

Under the Team Europe Democracy (TED) Framework Agreement, this assignment supported Working Group 2 (WG2) on Political and Civic Participation in developing strategic advisory briefs on the role of civic and political participation in two key policy areas: responsible investment and the Global Gateway agenda, and the evolving human security and defence landscape. The project aimed to strengthen evidence-based democratic governance programming by identifying opportunities, challenges, and practical recommendations for Team Europe actors and democracy support practitioners.

3. Enabel framework contract - Lot 3: Strengthening Democratic Support: Needs Assessment and Trainings

- **Country:** European Union (Team Europe Democracy Network)
- **Project duration:** May 2025 – December 2026
- **Project objective:** To enhance the effectiveness, coherence and impact of European democracy support programming through evidence-based capacity development, cross-sectoral learning and strengthened collaboration among EU institutions, Member States and Team Europe Democracy Network partners.

In this assignment, we are supporting Team Europe Democracy (TED) in strengthening coordinated European approaches to democracy support through a comprehensive needs assessment and capacity-building programme. Working with EU institutions, Member States and TED Network members, our experts mapped existing knowledge resources and training opportunities, identifying gaps and emerging priorities, and analysing how democracy support can be adapted to today's rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.

Based on these findings, they are designing and delivering a series of tailored online trainings covering themes such as Building Democratic Resilience, Mainstreaming Democratic Governance, and Innovations in Democracy Support. The programme aims to enhance collaboration, strengthen evidence-based and inclusive approaches, and support more effective and joined-up democracy programming in EU partner countries.

4. Enabel framework contract - Lot 3: Facilitation Services for TED Network Annual Meeting - WG2

- **Country:** European Union (Team Europe Democracy Network)
- **Project duration:** July–October 2025
- **Project objective:** To design, facilitate and document the Working Group 2 (Political and Civic Participation) workshop at the 2025 TED Network Annual Meeting in Brussels, helping members translate lessons learned and expertise into concrete priorities and actions for future Team Europe democracy support initiatives.

Elbarlament supported the TED Secretariat in the preparation and facilitation of an interactive workshop bringing together European institutions, member states, bilateral cooperation agencies, civil society and democracy practitioners. The assignment included workshop design, moderation of a “Speed Dating with WG2” format, stakeholder engagement, and the production of an outcome report with recommendations to strengthen coordination and future Team Europe programming on political and civic participation.

5. Enabel framework contract - Lot 3: Empowering CSOs and Local Dialogue Frameworks in Burundi

- **Country:** Burundi
- **Project duration:** March - December 2025
- **Project objective:** To strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) and improve dialogue between citizens and public authorities at the local level.
- **Main activities in 2025:**
 - Conducted a detailed needs assessment based on focus groups in Burundi to identify CSO capacity-building priorities.
 - Developed a comprehensive capacity-building framework covering internal governance, project management, advocacy, partnerships, gender inclusion, and CSO networking.

- Produced practical training resources, including guides, thematic modules, trainer/participant manuals, planning tools, and monitoring & evaluation instruments.
- Strengthened long-term support through mentor training, mentoring plans, pedagogical guidance, and a complete mentor toolkit.
- Organised dialogue workshops bringing together CSOs and local authorities, supported by awareness materials and follow-up action plans.

SKBoWa – Peaceful and Resilient Borderlands in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Mali (EU co-financed programme)

- **Countries:** Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Mali (West Africa / Sahel region)
- **Project duration:** July 2025 to January 2026
- **Project objective:** To support the strategic revision of the SKBoWa regional cross-border cooperation programme by developing an updated Description of the Action (DoA) and Logical framework for the European Union.

The assignment aimed to strengthen the programme’s focus on infrastructure and investment, improve the integration of regional institutions and organisations, and enhance synergies between cross-border development initiatives in the border regions of Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Mali. This included stakeholder consultations and the drafting of an updated EU Description of the Action (DoA). Activities included methodological preparation, briefing of GIZ staff, coordination and documentation of consultations, and formulation of a revised programme framework to strengthen regional cooperation, infrastructure investments, and institutional integration across the border regions of Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Mali.

Commissioned by: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH