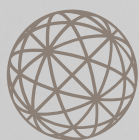


THE COST OF POLITICS IN GHANA



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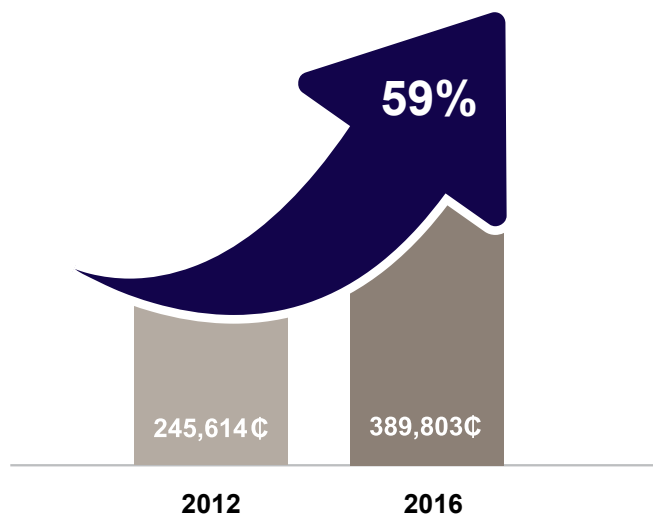
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ghana has held six elections since returning to multiparty democracy in 1992 with three turnovers of power including, in 2016, the first defeat of a sitting incumbent. But multiparty elections are costly affairs for aspiring and current parliamentarians as this cost of politics research illustrates. Between 2012 and 2016 the cost of running for political office increased 59%.



On average candidates needed to raise GH¢389,803 (approx. US\$85,000) to secure the party primary nomination and compete in the parliamentary election in their constituency. If the cost of politics rises to unaffordable levels the danger is that politics becomes the domain of the elite and wealthy, and that the motivation and incentives of MPs move from serving the public to recovering their own investment.

This study breaks down the various costs involved in seeking public office in Ghana. To do this over 250 aspirants, candidates and sitting MPs were surveyed about their experiences in the 2012 and 2016 elections. These findings were triangulated with key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Four key areas of election expenditure - campaigns, payment of party workers, media and advertisement and donations - are analysed in detail at both the party primary level and during parliamentary election campaigns. They paint a picture of an environment where male candidates

outspend female ones; where the greatest costs incurred are by candidates standing in municipal areas; where party primaries, particularly those of Ghana's two main political parties (the NDC and NPP) are very costly affairs; and where an ability to spend the most money is, by and large, a critical factor in successfully winning a seat in elected office.

The drivers of these costs are explored through a myriad of social and political forces ranging from party foot-soldiers and traditional leaders to community development organisations and youth associations. The nuanced picture that emerges illustrates that these various interest groups benefit at different stages of the electoral cycle. During the party primaries candidates seek to respond to the demands of community interest groups whilst during the parliamentary poll, these groups are ignored in favour of party officials, foot-soldiers and needy individuals. For those who successfully win a seat as an MP those dynamics change again. What is consistent is the expectations of citizens that elected officials, or those seeking elected office, are the ones to provide for them. This can be through cash payments, lobbying for constituency projects in parliament and by "in-kind" rewards.

And where does all this money come from? One of the striking findings of this research is that the most common source of revenue is personal income. Political parties do still provide some financial assistance to candidates but the picture that emerges is that of a funding structure much more reliant on personal relationships; one that may have implications for personal debt amongst politicians and consequentially corruption, in Ghanaian politics.

Increased opportunities for corruption is one of the three themes explored as to what these findings might mean for politics in Ghana. When money becomes so intrinsically linked with politics, corruption becomes a norm rather than an aberration. The financial demands on MPs, whether incurred as part of the election campaign or as part of constituency services, create perverse incentives for MPs to focus on individual interests over public ones. A second theme is that individuals

and groups, predominantly women and youth, increasingly feel unable to compete and therefore excluded from politics. The 2016 parliament is comprised of 85% men. Finally, it is argued that rising costs are fostering a general disillusionment with politics, not just from those on the outside looking in, but with those participating in it. When the selection of candidates becomes more about their ability to raise resources than their competence and ability to serve constituents a change in state-citizen relations is also likely to ensue.



Photo: Andrew Moore. Election Campaign poster from the 2012 general election in Ghana.

Recommendations

To address these negative trends WFD and CDD-Ghana recommends the following measures:

- Initiation of a national dialogue among political parties, electoral institutions, and civil society to deliberate on the impact of money on politics and the expectations citizens and politicians have in terms of its regulation
- More rigorous enforcement of existing political party finance legislation
- Further efforts, through both formal and informal channels, to increase the transparency of election spending, including requiring candidates and parties to be more open about the costs they incur
- A return to the discussion about state funding for political parties
- Greater engagement with citizens about the negative implications of making direct financial demands on their MP
- Further research to explore whether there is a collective action problem regarding change to the system and to look at ways in which candidates develop credibility beyond money, i.e. social capital
- Further research into the intersection of political finance and the gender political representation gap in Ghanaian politics
- Create greater clarity and differentiation between the party's limitations, role and responsibilities and the individual candidate's limitation, roles and responsibilities in campaign spend.
- Introduce practices and incentives that support parties to build loyal memberships and long term financial planning for elections (possibly linked to state funding).
- Provide guidance and protection for Ghanaian private sector to transparently support political parties with the Electoral Commission (EC).
- Support engagement between the EC, media and political parties to address the cost of media during elections.

INTRODUCTION

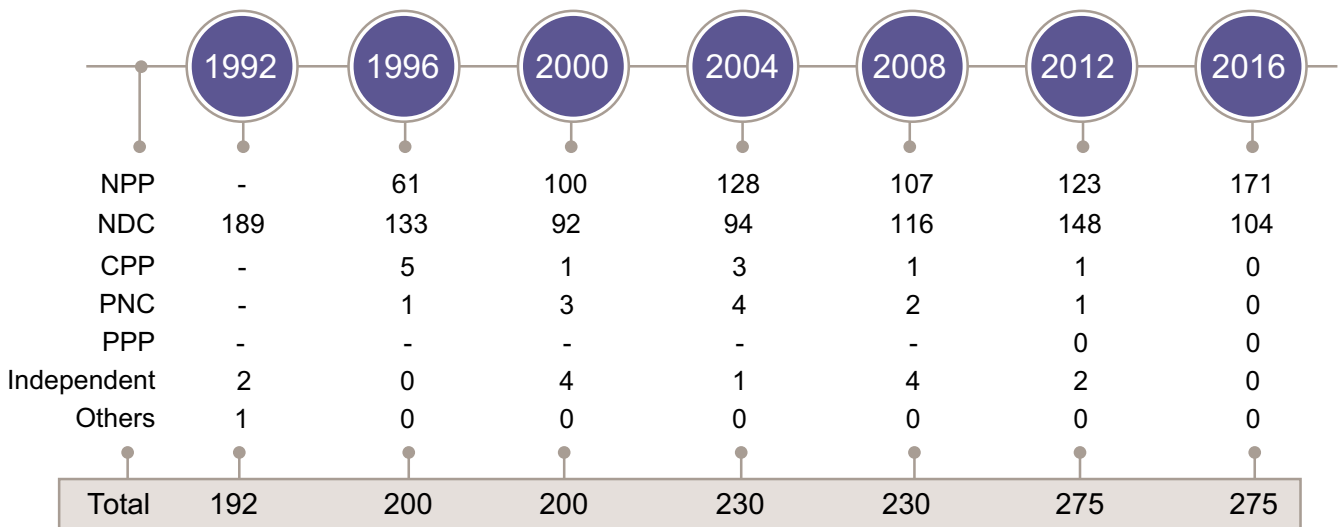
Ghana made a successful transition from authoritarian to democratic rule with the adoption of a liberal constitution and holding of multiparty elections in 1992, which brought to an end a sustained period of military rule. Since then, Ghana has held six competitive multiparty elections with three turnovers of power - including the first of a sitting incumbent in 2016 - suggesting it has consolidated democracy¹.

Over 20 registered political parties have participated in these elections, but two the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) dominate the political and electoral landscape. The three changes of power have occurred between

parliamentary elections and except in 1992, when the opposition parties boycotted the parliamentary polls, elections have been extremely competitive (see Table 1). Turnover rates have remained constant - at around 30% - but in each vote since 1996 'entrenched incumbents' have been dislodged by political newcomers.

Candidates contesting the primaries and parliamentary elections have engaged in vibrant campaign activities aimed at securing the support of the electorate in their constituencies. But the parties, and their candidates, ability to carry out successful campaigns has largely been dependent on financial resources. Money remains the lifeblood

Table 1: Seat distribution in parliament by political party (1992-2016)



Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, November 2017.

the NPP and NDC. Smaller parties such as the People's National Convention (PNC), Convention People's Party (CPP) and Progressive People's Party (PPP) have struggled to provide the organisational structures that would allow them to win parliamentary seats. There is frequent holding of primaries to nominate candidates to contest

that has sustained the momentum of the candidates' electoral campaigns, and the oil that greases the wheel of their electoral successes². Money is key to understanding how candidates campaign for public office. It influences the behaviour of voters who ultimately decide whether politicians will stay in office³.

¹ See Appendix 2 for a detailed explanation on the sampling methodology.

² The Economist. 2000. Campaign finance: The money machine - The Economist www.economist.com/node/380706 (Accessed November 23 2017).

³ Saffu, Yaw. (2003). The Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns in Africa. In: Austin, Reginald and Tjernstrom, Maja (Eds.) Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns: Handbook Series. Stockholm, Sweden. IDEA, pp. 21 – 29.

Recent public discourse in Ghana shows a growing popular dissatisfaction with the emerging culture of money in the body politic⁴. As a result, a corrosive public debate has arisen over the vexed question of political financing. The perception is that the misuse of money in politics, particularly when it reflects corrupt practices, could jeopardise democratic norms and values such as equal justice and fair representation. Civil society and think-tanks have raised concerns that campaign funds are directly linked to political corruption and patronage in government. An argument reinforced by recent media reports that have sought to interrogate the ways which politicians create opportunities for vulnerable groups, including unemployed youth and the poor, to ensure they become economically dependent on them⁵.

These debates are not new, but the level of 'monetisation of party politics' has worsened to the extent that well-qualified prospective candidates are being alienated from the contest on the basis of cost. Ghana has weak political party finance regulations, which allow politicians to draw money from a wide array of sources, giving private donors access to exert considerable influence on the democratic process⁶. The impacts are not just being felt during campaigns. There is the speculation that due to increased levels of campaign debts, MP's are awarding contracts to suppliers who are willing to pay kickbacks⁷.

This study investigates how politicians fund their campaign activities and provides insight into the cost dynamics that have shaped electoral processes and the dangers they pose to democratic consolidation in Ghana. The policy recommendations and lessons drawn from the study provide suggestions to policymakers, development partners, academics and civil society on ways to advocate and improve the country's electoral environment.

⁴ GhanaWeb. (2017). "MPs spend an average of GH¢2 million during campaigns". Available at <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/politics/MPs-spend-an-average-of-GH-2million-during-campaigns-Alban-Bagbin-605869>

⁵ Cheeseman, Nic et al. (2016). Ghana shows a troubling willingness to accept political corruption. Washington Post. Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/12/21/yes-ghana-had-a-peaceful-transfer-of-power-but-its-citizens-accept-some-troubling-practices-as-part-of-democracy/?utm_term=.7d831e6ff4a5

⁶ Debrah, E. (2015). Intra-Party Democracy in Ghana's Fourth Republic: The case of the New Patriotic Party and National Democratic Congress. *Journal of Power, Politics & Governance* 2 (4), 1-23.

⁷ Sagoe-Moses, L. (2017) "How to Unmask Corruption in Ghana". New York Times Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/25/opinion/how-to-unmask-corruption-in-ghana.html>

DEFINING THE COST OF POLITICS

The cost of politics refers to the costs faced by individual candidates from the moment they decide to run to the point they become a MP. It includes not just the campaign, but their time in elected office should they be successful. The cost of politics should always be understood in the context of national economic indicators, as this allows us to judge affordability for an average citizen. It also needs to look at the sources of income to understand how realistic raising and repaying the required resources is. If the cost of politics rises to unaffordable levels the danger is that politics becomes the domain of the elite and wealthy, and that the motivation and incentives of MPs move from serving the public to recovering their investment.

In the Ghanaian context the cost of politics refers to:

1. The cost of winning the party primaries within a constituency to become the party's electoral flag bearer
2. The cost of winning the parliamentary elections in a constituency
3. The costs incurred once elected to a term of office.

This comprehensive study seeks answers to four key questions:

1. What are the various types of expenditure associated with winning primary and parliamentary elections in Ghana?
2. Do these costs differ by location, gender, political party and other demographic data?
3. What are the drivers of these rising cost?
4. How do aspirants, candidates and sitting MPs fund their expenditures?



Ghanaian citizens queue to vote following an extensive election campaign in 2016.

METHODOLOGY⁸

This study is based on survey, as well as in depth interview with key informants and focus group discussions. For the survey, four groups of primary respondents were targeted:

- successful parliamentary candidates in the 2016 elections (i.e. “*successful parliamentary candidates*”)
- unsuccessful parliamentary candidates (i.e. “*unsuccessful parliamentary candidates*”)
- contestants who were unsuccessful in their political party primaries (i.e. “*lost political party primaries*”)
- parliamentarians in the last parliament who never contested their party primaries because they had no intention of seeking re-election (i.e. “*sitting MPs who never contested party primaries*”)

To create a sample size that would yield a margin of error of about $\pm 6.0\%$ at the 95% confidence level, a total of 300 respondents were targeted for interview. They were allocated to the four categories in the following manner: 150 “*successful parliamentary candidates*”; 100 “*unsuccessful parliamentary candidates*”; 30 “*candidates who lost political party primaries*”; and 20 “*sitting MPs who never contested party primaries*”. A stratified sampling technique was used to distribute the allocated respondents in the “*successful parliamentary candidates*” and “*unsuccessful parliamentary candidates*” categories across regions and gender to ensure national representation. The process involved splitting the sampling frames for the two categories of respondents into regional lists. Each regional list was subsequently divided by gender.

A simple random sampling technique was applied in selecting the number of male and female respondents as determined by the stratification procedure for each of the categories to constitute the regional sample. For the “*sitting MPs who never contested party primaries*”, we deliberately

selected 20 from the two main political parties - NPP and NDC - because the previous parliament comprised mainly parliamentarians affiliated to these two political parties. For the “*candidates who lost political party primaries*”, we used a mixture of sampling techniques (e.g. purposive, snowballing etc.) to identify 30 individuals across five political parties: the NPP, NDC, PPP, CPP and PNC.

Given the nature of the study, it was evident that data from the survey of respondents in the four categories alone would not provide a fair picture of the cost of politics in Ghana. Efforts to capture “other costs” were undertaken but methodological challenges meant that the data was not included in the final analysis. Whilst some respondents provided vague details as to what these costs might be (the giving of gifts and “expressions of gratitude” were the most common) and how much money they had spent on them, others assigned all election costs to this category - claiming that they had no detail breakdown of campaign expenditure. In and of itself an interesting revelation. Further research into expenditure of “other costs” would be useful to shed light on this area, as the data collected in this survey indicated that it could consume a sizeable portion of electoral cycle costs.

The data was also triangulated by conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 45 individuals. These included traditional rulers, officials from five political parties (NPP, NDC, PPP, CPP and PNC), and experts from civil society (CSO) and community-based organisations (CBOs). Two focus group discussions were organised, each with at most 15 participants who were either winners or losers in the 2016 parliamentary election; losers in political party primaries; former MPs who never contested their political party primaries; political party officials from the five political parties, traditional leaders and representatives of key CSOs/CBOs in Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo Region on 9 August 2017 and Accra in the Greater Accra Region on 29 August 2017.

⁸ See Appendix 2 for a detailed explanation on the sampling methodology.

Prior to the study being undertaken, a pilot was carried out between 24-28 February 2017 to determine the efficiency of the survey questionnaire and in-depth interview guide in collecting the right information. The pilot was a challenging experience for the five trained research assistants, who despite arranging and rescheduling meetings or replacing target respondents, were unable to secure many of the interviews due to the unavailability of respondents. This gave the team of researchers insights into what to expect during the full survey. As a result of these challenges, the total number of survey respondents was 253 and those interviewed 37. Although short of the target of 300 and 45 respectively this did not affect the error margin in any significant way.



Photo: Carsten Ten Brink. NDC campaign billboard, Mion constituency 2016.

COST BY NUMBERS

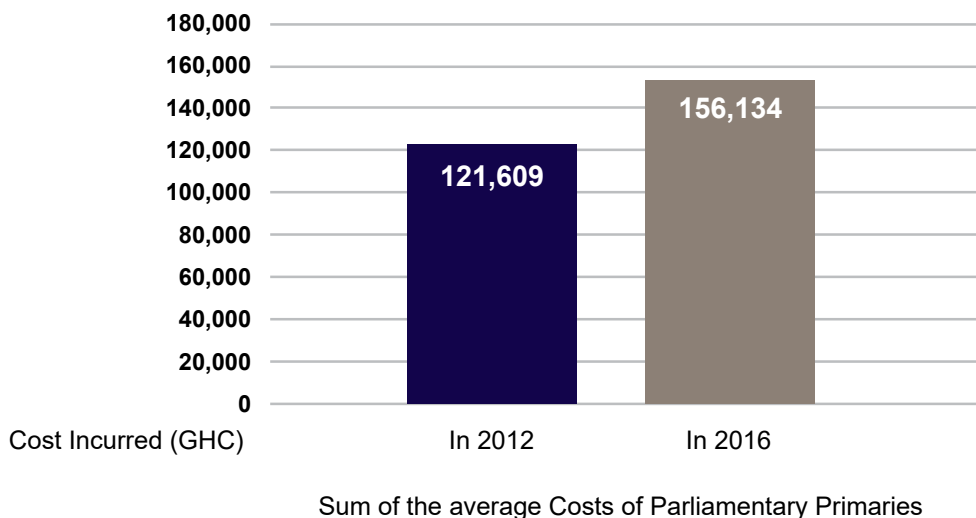
The costly nature of multiparty politics is not in dispute. Political scientists, politicians and donors agree that substantial funds are always necessary to undertake campaign activities. All respondents affirmed the conventional view that electoral politics in Ghana has become a capital-intensive venture. Candidates contesting any of the seven elections that have been held since the return to multiparty democracy in Ghana have invested huge funds to carry out their political programs. This expenditure starts as they seek to secure their parties nominations. As one respondent rightly explained, “when it comes to intra-party primaries and parliamentary elections, one can only talk about big money rather than petty cash because the expenditures involved run into millions of Ghana cedis”⁹.

Expenditures in the Primaries

There are two rounds in the primaries. The first involves securing the party’s approval to contest. This is normally done through an application that is then vetted, as to the aspirant’s suitability, by the party. The second is to secure the party’s nomination as a parliamentary candidate. Both have significant associated costs. Multiparty politics in Ghana has exuded internal party competition to the extent that competition between candidates is intense. Incumbents face competition from other prospective candidates some of who are debutants, some have previously contested and lost, and some have previously experienced parliament before losing their seat. In order to succeed in such a competitive environment, candidates have to mobilise significant funds to run their campaigns.

The survey data shows that a candidate who competed in both the 2012 and 2016 party primaries incurred a cumulative average cost of 275,743 Ghana cedis (GH¢). On average candidates spent GH¢121,609 in 2012 on the party primaries contest alone; a figure that rose to GH¢154,134 in 2016. Given the income levels among public servants in Ghana, which range from GH¢150,000-200,000 per annum, the outlay is significant.

Figure 1: Average candidate expenditure for parliamentary primaries (2012 & 2016)



⁹ Current exchange rate of GHC to USD - 4.51 GHC to 1 USD at time of writing (19 Dec)

Spending in the Parliamentary Election

Generally, expenditure for parliamentary elections are higher than in party primaries, due to the increased geographical size of the constituency, the demands of the electorate and the closer proximity to elected office. In the past two parliamentary elections (2012 and 2016), the total amount, on average, disbursed

by a candidate participating in both the primary and parliamentary election is **GH¢359,674**. Here the increased costs are more visible with the average spend having risen from **GH¢124,005** in 2012 to **GH¢235,669** in 2016 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Average candidate expenditure for parliamentary elections (2012 & 2016)

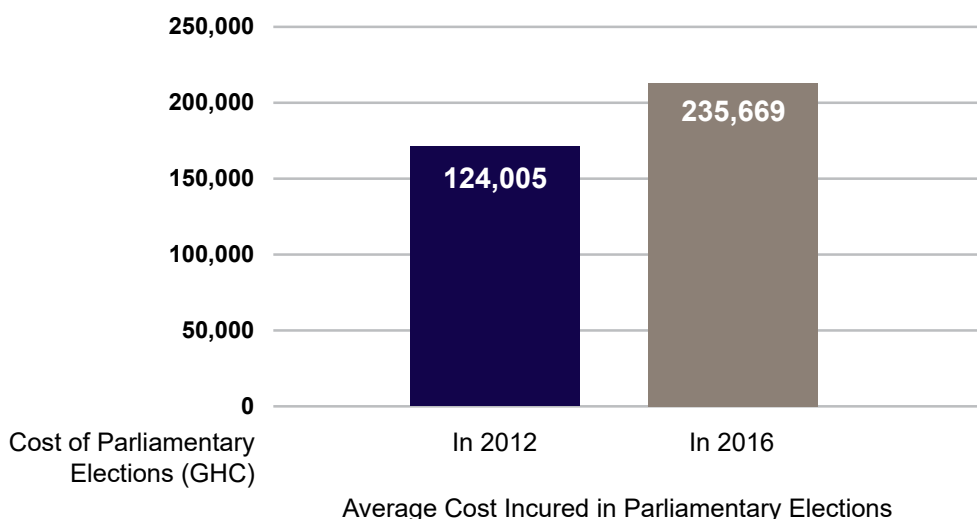


Table 2: Percentage increase in cost of politics in Ghana 2012 to 2016

	2012	2016	% Increase
Average Expenditure Party Primaries	GHC 121,609	GHC 154,134	27%
Average Expenditure Parliamentary Election	GHC 124,005	GHC 235,669	90%
Total cumulative cost of elections	GHC 245,614	GHC 389,803	59%

Affordability of the elections

Although the 2016 election was 59% more expensive, parliamentary campaign expenditure dropped 34% when looked at in US dollars; from an average of US\$129,000 in 2012, it was just US\$85,000 in 2016. It appears that the 59% rise in the cost of competing for a seat in parliament in Ghana is linked to the 140% drop in the value of the Ghana Cedi between 2012 and 2016¹⁰. It is worth noting that salaries for most Ghanaians have not kept up with the inflation and therefore affordability should be seen with this economic reality in mind. This finding also points to an area for future research. It suggests that access to capital from outside of the country can be advantageous for reducing election costs. Diaspora fundraising, along with a growing number of candidates who return from careers abroad with accumulated capital to seek public office, will be an area to watch in future elections. Particularly as the right to vote is set to be extended to this constituency in 2020.

In Ghana a sitting MP earns GH¢233,000 annually. Therefore, a successful election campaign on average costs them the equivalent of almost two years' salary, illustrating how much of a barrier to entry the cost of politics can have on ordinary Ghanaians who are keen to seek political office but lack substantial sponsorship.

¹⁰ Mustapha, Suleiman. (2017). The 10 year bumpy journey of Ghana Cedi. Graphic Online. Available at <https://www.graphic.com.gh/features/the-10-year-bumpy-journey-of-ghana-cedi.html>

SPENDING MONEY: WHAT COUNTS

National campaigns, which are largely populated by high-profile party leaders and political celebrities posing as front runners for their parties, rely on the mass media, political advertisements and large-scale rallies as the primary means of communication with the electorate. On the other hand, local campaigns that are usually conducted by candidates seeking a direct mandate in a constituency often involve meeting potential voters face-to-face at market squares, social events, or simply, by knocking at their front doors¹¹. This is often labelled as individualised campaigns directed by electoral incentives. All respondents admitted to having outlaid some capital on campaigning, party paraphernalia, paying party workers, the media or advertisements, donations to groups and important entities, and to pay the obligatory filing fees for both the party primaries and parliamentary elections.

Party Primaries

Surveyed candidates carried out various activities during the 2012 and 2016 parliamentary primaries. Each of these important political and electoral activities attracted expenditure:

CAMPAIGNING

All respondents reported spending the majority of their resources in carrying out campaign activities. Whereas in the 2012 primaries candidates disbursed an average of **GH¢40,702**, they spent an average of **GH¢59,812** in 2016. The highest expenditure incurred on campaigns in 2012 during the primaries stood at **GH¢195,000** compared to **GH¢345,000** in 2016.

PARTY WORKERS

Elsewhere on the continent, party volunteers may not charge or expect a reward from aspirants for rendering electoral services, this study however shows that in Ghana, candidates pay attention to party workers and spend resources on their

activities. In the 2012 and 2016 party primaries, the candidates expended an average of **GH¢42,310** and **GH¢34,781** on those who worked for them as 'volunteers' respectively.

MEDIA AND ADVERTISEMENT

Advertisement remains a central component of a candidate's electoral activities. Respondents insisted that the media was one of the most important instruments for achieving message dissemination even though most candidates spent less on it (14%) than they did for other activities (see Figure 4). In 2012 for instance, **GH¢11,855**, equal to just over a quarter of the amount spent on party workers, was disbursed on media (see Figure 3). To understand this, it is important to remember that majority of constituencies in Ghana are rural, where levels of media penetration are low. Candidates predominantly favoured local radio stations which remain the primary source of political and social information for most citizens. The average amount spent on media in 2012 (**GH¢11,855**) and 2016 (**GH¢21,148**) was the smallest outlay in comparative terms.



Photo: Andrew Moore. CPP campaign posters from 2012 elections.

DONATIONS

Candidates in Ghana are expected to give an assortment of donations to orphanages, money to churches and mosques and contribute to

¹¹ Ohman, Magnus. (2014). Introduction to Political Finance. In: Falguera, Elin., Jones, Samuel & Ohman, Magnus (Eds.) Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns: A Handbook on Political Finance. Stockholm, Sweden. IDEA, pp. 1 – 12.

educational funds. During the 2016 primaries, donations accounted for 25% of spent resources. Figure 5 shows how this differs amongst political parties in 2016, it also reflects the continuing high costs allocated to donations. Indicating the centrality of donations to the candidates' election spending items, candidates spent anywhere between **GH¢200** to **GH¢450,000** on donations in 2016, with an average spend of **GH¢38,393**.

“OTHER COSTS”

It is instructive to note that the figures quoted for the items above do not account for all the 'soft' money raised and spent by the candidates in the parliamentary primaries. According to one candidate respondent, tracking how much a candidate spent in any contest is an extremely difficult exercise: “it is

a fact that there are so many items we spent money on, which cannot be accounted for in our election budgets”.

Efforts to capture these costs in this survey were undertaken but methodological challenges meant that the data was not included in the final analysis. Whilst some respondents provided vague details as to what these costs might be (the giving of gifts and “expressions of gratitude” were the most common) and how much money they had spent on them, others assigned all election costs to this category - claiming that they had no detail breakdown of campaign expenditure. In and of itself an interesting revelation. Further research into expenditure of “other costs” would be useful to shed light on this area, as the data collected in this survey suggests it can consume a sizeable portion of electoral cycle costs.

Figure 3: Breakdown of expenditure for parliamentary primaries

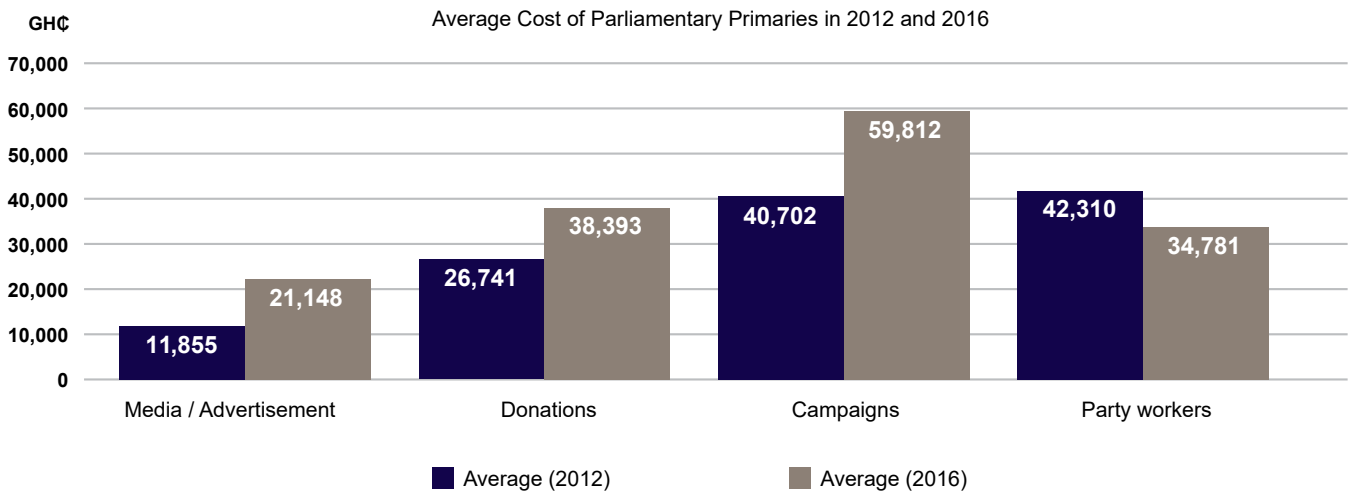
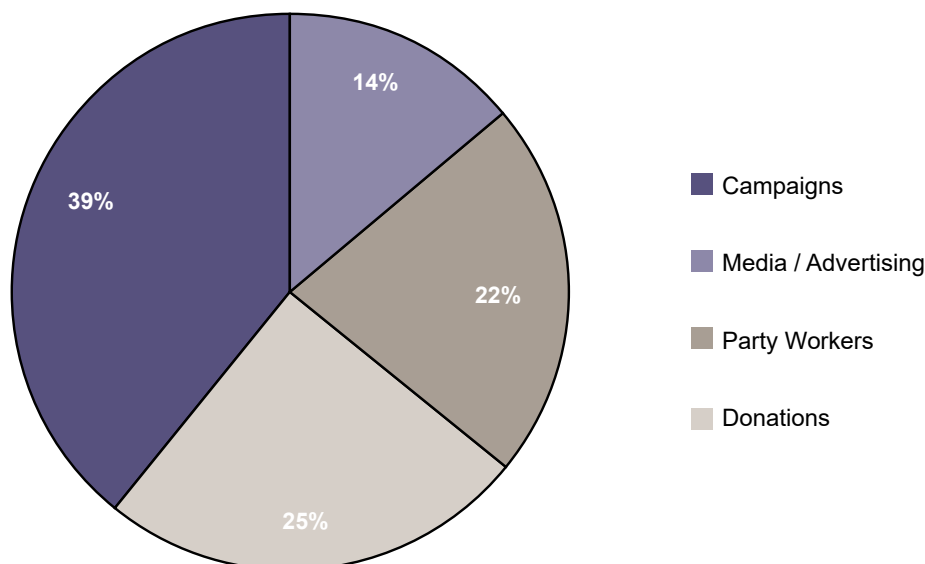


Figure 4: Average distribution of expenditure by candidates - 2016 primaries



SOCIAL AND GEOGRAPHIC DIFFERENTIALS

Demographic, geographical as well as political factors prevailing in a particular jurisdiction can influence the extent to which candidates spend financial resources to achieve their political ambitions.

Location

Our 2016 survey data shows that the geographical location of a candidate determines how much is spent during electoral contests. Those who engage in politics in municipal areas consistently spend more during the parliamentary elections than those who contest in cities or rural settlements (**see Table 3**). This could be explained by the fact they fall between more developed areas (cities) - that boast a more vibrant economic environment, better educated residents and are already home to a level of quality social services - and rural areas (districts) - where the cost of living, and therefore campaigning, is cheaper.

Table 3: Cost incurred in the 2016 parliamentary elections by location

Items on which cost was incurred (GH¢)	Q1. Is your constituency located with a Metropolitan, Municipal or District Assembly?		
	Metropolitan	Municipality	District
CAMPAIGNS	86650	194782	90526
PARTY WORKERS	22117	63141	36813
MEDIA/ADVERTS	9250	38020	35549
DONATIONS	57117	61257	47149
Total cumulative cost of elections	GHC 175,134	GHC 357,200	GHC 210,037

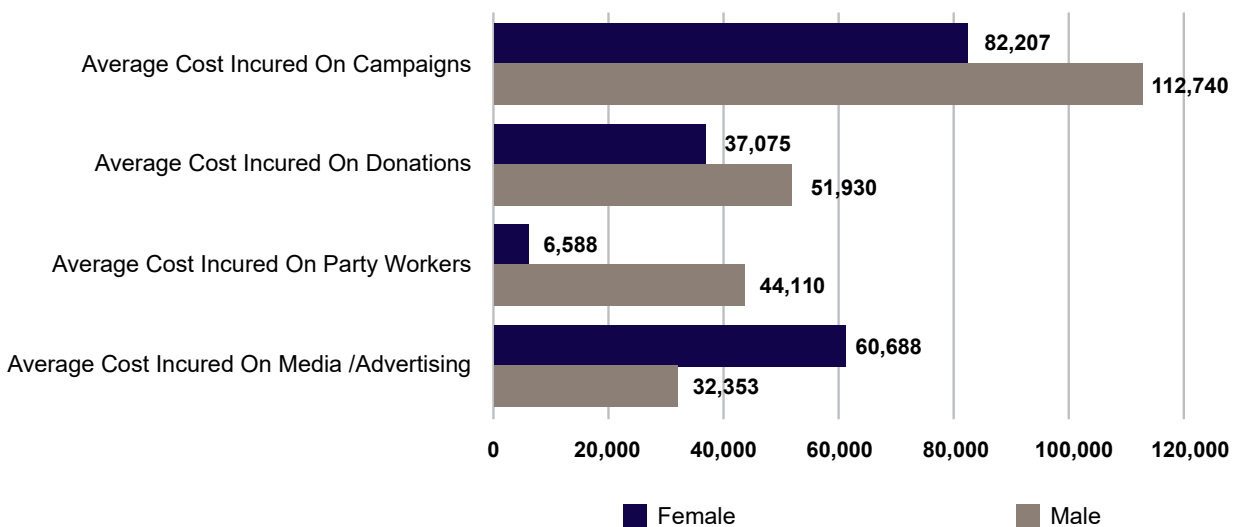
Gender

The question of representation by gender in politics has been a dominant theme in efforts to understand Africa’s democratisation since the early 1990s.¹² One concern has centred on whether funding requirements have hindered women’s access to political office.¹³ The findings of this study support the argument that men have the upper hand when it comes to accessing campaigning funding. **Figure 5** shows that, women candidates were unable to match the spending of male competitors in three of the four areas - campaigning, paying party workers and donations during the 2016 parliamentary election. However, women’s spending on media and advertisement was on average **GH¢28,335** higher than male counterparts. Nonetheless, overall men outspent women on average by more than **GH¢50,000**.



Women queue to cast their vote in the 2016 general election. The cost of politics has raised concerns about whether women’s access to political office has been hindered.

Figure 5: Expenditure variations by gender: 2016 parliamentary election



¹² Kayuni, Happy. M. & Muriaas, Ragnhild. L (2014) Alternatives to Gender Quotas: Electoral Financing of Women Candidates in Malawi, *Representation* 50 (3), 393-404.

¹³ Krook, Mona Iena, Joni Lovenduski and Judith Squires. (2009). Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship. *British Journal of Political Science* 39 (4), 781–803 & Lawless, Jennifer and Pearson, Kathryn. 2008. The primary reason for women’s underrepresentation? Reevaluating the conventional wisdom. *Journal of Politics* 70 (1), 67–82.

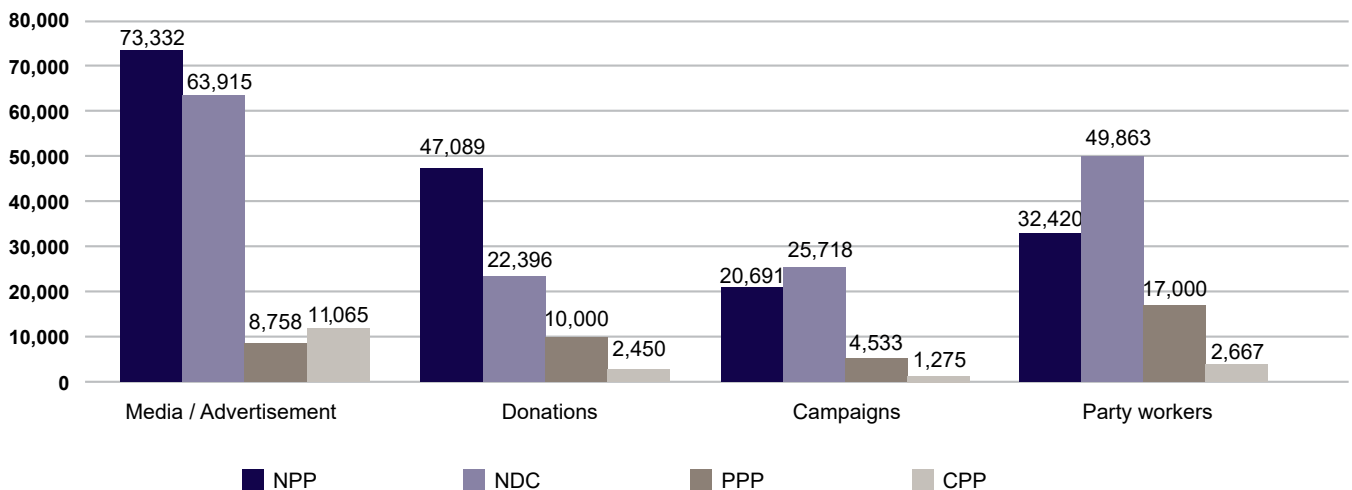
Political Party

Candidates who belong to parties that have greater chances of winning more votes at the national and local level, tend to spend more on elections than those from the smaller parties. **Figure 6** illustrates that candidates of the NPP and NDC - the two parties that have alternated power since 1992 - spend the most in the parliamentary primaries. In many constituencies in Ghana securing the party nomination is as fiercely contested, and expensive, as the parliamentary election itself. It is therefore interesting to note that in the 2016 primaries NDC candidates, perhaps hoping to benefit from the party's incumbency, spent more overall, and in three of the four categories, than their NPP counterparts to win the right to contest the election on that ticket.



Photo: BBC World Service. Campaign billboards of the two parties who have alternated power since 1992 (NDC and NPP).

Figure 6: Costs by Political Parties: 2016 parliamentary primaries



Incumbents vs newcomers: successful and not

To win an election in Ghana you need to spend money (**see Table 4**). It demonstrates this by comparing the expenditure of successful and unsuccessful candidates during both primary and parliamentary elections. Only unsuccessful sitting MP's break the trend, spending the most on the election campaign of any of the groups in the dataset. This could be explained by a realisation that their seat may be under threat as their expenditure rises dramatically after the primaries are complete and the parliamentary campaign begins. Perhaps driven by desperation, and with the benefits that come with incumbency, they spend more than their rivals only to lose.

The data indicates that the more experienced the candidate the better they become at allocating resources during the party primary process and in order win with less. **Table 4** suggests that for a debutant candidate to win at the parliamentary level, they need to spend big at the primary contest. Those who do not win a seat, perhaps struggle because they have not done enough to convince the party of the merits of their candidacy and the depth of their pockets.



Photo: Erik Cleves Kristensen. Ballots are collected from the Volta region during the 2004 election.

¹⁴ CUSDI. 2015. Why are sitting members of Congress almost always re-elected? Available at <https://cusdi.org/faq/why-are-sitting-members-of-congress-almost-always-reelected/>

¹⁵ Terry, Chris. 2017. Penny for your vote? Counting the cost of an unfair electoral system. Electoral Reform Society. Available at <https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Penny-for-your-vote-costs-of-fptp.pdf>

Table 4: Incumbents vs Debutants: The cost of success & failure in 2016 elections

	[LOST PRIMARIES]: Non-sitting MP who contested in the primaries for the second time or more but lost once again	[LOST PRIMARIES]: A sitting MP at the time who contested in the primaries but lost	UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES: Non-sitting MP who contested in the parliamentary elections for the first time and lost	UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES: Non-sitting MP who contested in the parliamentary elections for the second time or more but lost	UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES: A sitting MP at the time who contested in the parliamentary elections but lost	SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES: Non-sitting MP who contested in the parliamentary elections for the first time and won	SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES: Non-sitting MP who contested in the parliamentary elections for the second time or more and won	SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES: A sitting MP at the time who contested in the parliamentary elections and won
2016 Party Primaries								
CAMPAIGNS	50000	71035	30946	37094	128167	95017	51417	59076
PARTY WORKERS	67500	22181	16404	8440	14250	33606	34800	76925
MEDIA/ADVERTS	3000	10000	12274	17417	34167	34569	10667	17558
DONATIONS	8000	10500	18750	19000	29167	62629	34500	42566
Sub-Total	128,500	113,716	78,374	81,701	205,751	225,821	131,384	196,125
2016 Parliamentary Elections								
CAMPAIGNS	-	-	89733	40837	157550	156353	103167	152995
PARTY WORKERS	-	-	24513	15767	52500	47243	44500	85444
MEDIA/ADVERTS	-	-	41213	28682	30833	42037	22125	20341
DONATIONS	-	-	35273	48150	102125	71187	31667	56675
Sub-Total	-	-	190,732	133,436	343,008	316,820	201,459	315,455
Overall Costs	128,500	113,716	269,106	215,143	548,759	542,641	332,843	511,580

Is cost rising?

Since democratic renewal more than two decades ago, complaints have been growing about politics in Ghana becoming more expensive and exclusionary for candidates, particularly young, talented but less affluent individuals. **Figure 3** illustrates the increase in candidates' expenses for primaries from 2012 to 2016. Similarly, trends in the expenditure pattern of sitting MPs seeking re-election reveal a marked increase. While spending on party workers rose by 10% and donations, 20%, the increase on campaigns and media/advertisement witnessed a sharp rise of between 50-70%.

Another trend that shows the increase in the cost of political activities of candidates and MPs is the mean spending. For instance, whereas 'campaign' costs for a candidate to run in 2012 parliamentary election were **GHC46,411**, the equivalent spent in 2016 was more than double at **GHC109,717**. And overall costs to compete in primary and parliamentary election rose, on average **GHC144,189** in the same time period. A figure almost four times the average total spend by a PPP candidate. A statistic that further reinforces the level of dominance enjoyed by Ghana's two main political parties; the NDC and NPP.

While expenditures for legislative primaries among competing candidates differ by party, gender and location, the variation in cost may be a function of the type of candidates contesting the election. In highly professionalised legislatures, campaigns involving long-serving incumbent MPs' tend to be associated with higher costs as challengers must overcome the inherent fundraising advantage of the sitting member.¹⁴ Spending differences among candidates may also occur based on whether the seat being contested is open (swing) or safe, with swing seats incurring greater costs.¹⁵ For the candidates the surge in electoral expenditure is an everyday political reality but the concern is that it could lead to a financial arms race among politicians and a forgetting of the need to also represent constituents when in office.

COST DRIVERS

Candidates and MPs’ political activities are largely influenced by a myriad of social and political forces. Each of these groups affect the candidates spending in different ways. The survey data provides further insights into these dynamics.

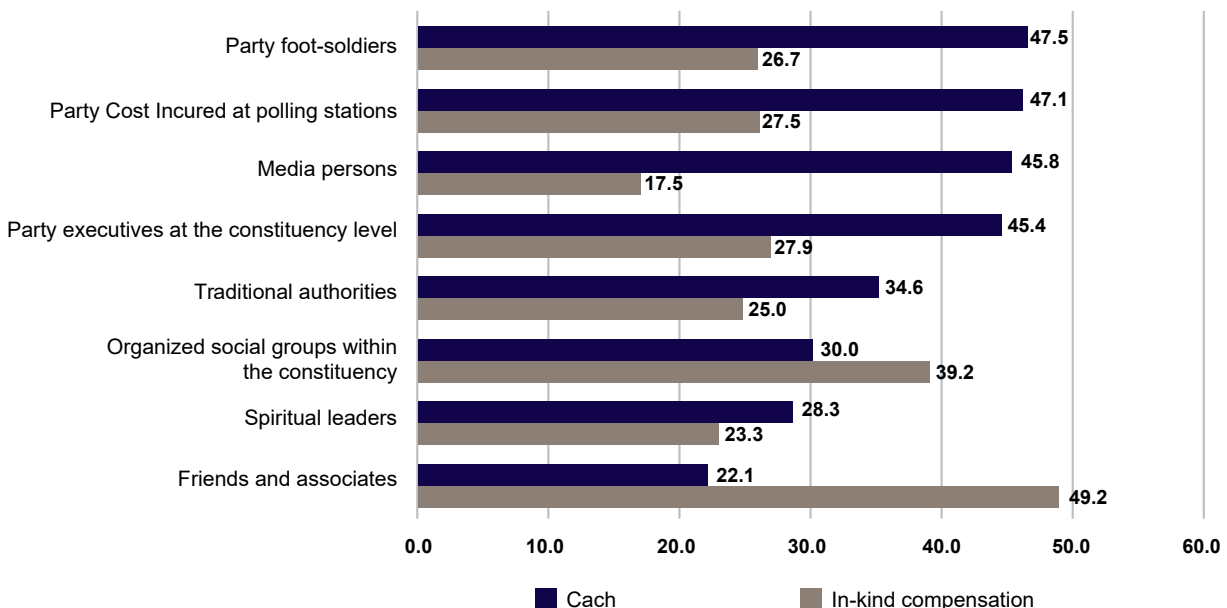
Key local influencers

Contesting primaries and parliamentary elections involves detailed planning of electoral activities that require both candidates and important groups. Those who work closely with candidates tend to influence the cost component of the electoral programmes. Survey respondents noted many groups that they worked with during the conduct of the primaries and parliamentary elections. Top among the groups and individuals respondents worked with the most were organised groups in local constituencies (13.3%); followed by party executives at the polling station level (13%). Party foot-soldiers, party executives at the constituency level and friends and associates all ranged between 12-13%. Further down the list of importance were media anchors, traditional authorities, spiritual leaders and last, with 5.7%, the party’s presidential candidate.

Rewarding influence

Candidates are expected to provide rewards or show gratitude to each of these groups of local influencers for offering assistance to them during the contest of the primaries and parliamentary elections. This was done either in cash or in-kind. The survey findings show that majority of the groups preferred cash to in-kind compensation (Figure 7). For instance, in the primaries, close to half of respondents (45.4%) said the constituency party executives received their rewards in cash while 27.9% indicated having administered in-kind with 26.7% making no response to the question. Party executives at the various polling stations who formed part of the Electoral College to elect candidates in the parties’ primaries were rewarded in cash (47.1%) and in-kind (27.5%).

Figure 7: Rewards for key influencers during 2016 party primaries: Cash vs In-kind

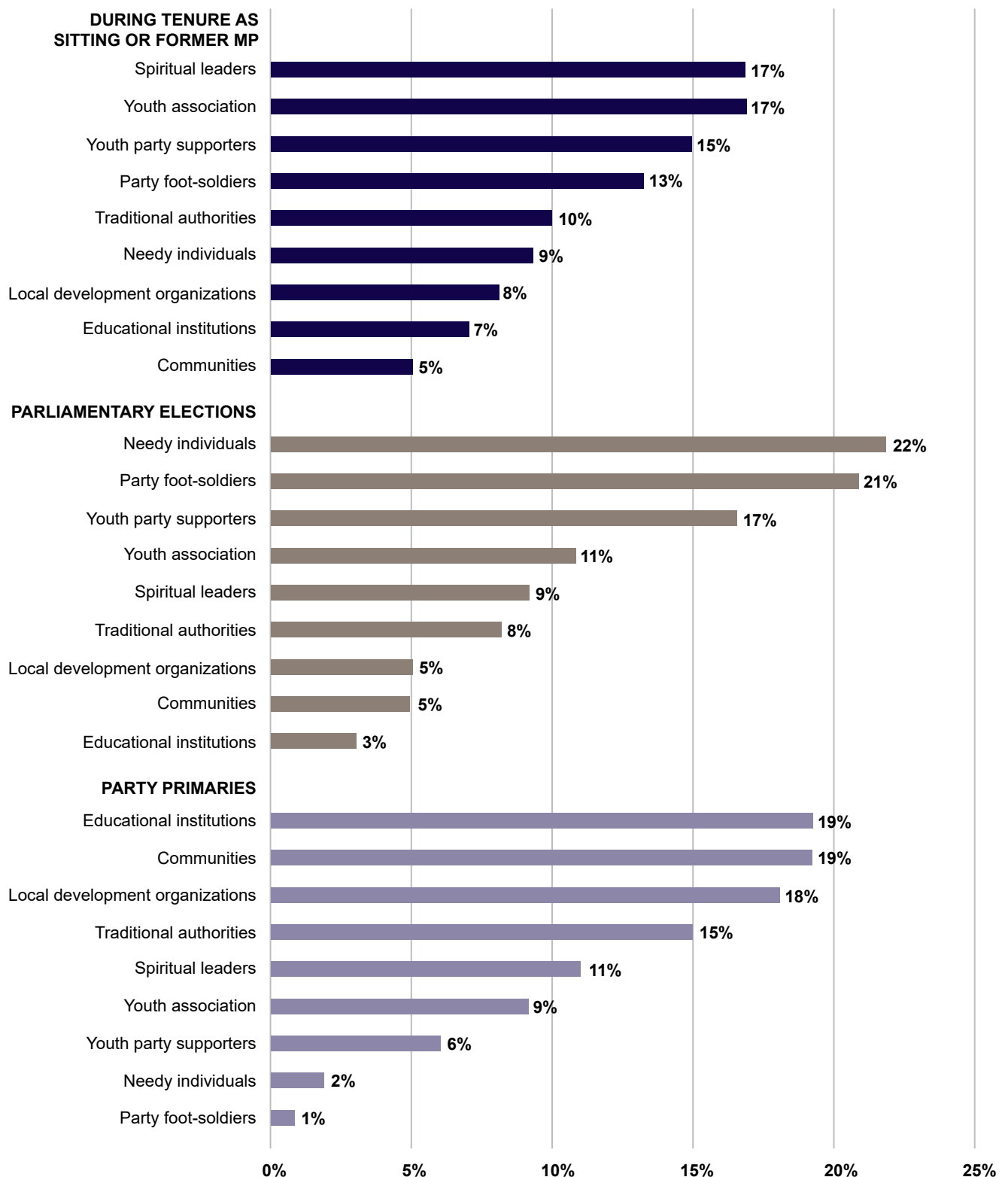


N.B. Where the total does not equal 100% this is due to some respondents not answering the survey question

Battling for attention

A wide array of groups made incessant demands on respondents during the primaries, parliamentary election campaign and even when the elected official is in office.

Figure 8: Who makes demands at primary, parliamentary and office levels?



Demands on candidates during party primaries

According to 19% of respondents, those who made the most demands on them during the party primaries were educational institutions in their constituencies. They also reported that 19% of the pressure for financial support came from communities in their constituencies, with community-based local development organisations just behind with 18% (**Figure 8**). Surprisingly, only 6% of respondents said party supporters brought their financial demands to them. What this data clearly shows is that the investments made during the primaries are focused on gaining community support and building up social capital and goodwill.

Demands on candidates during parliamentary elections

During the parliamentary elections the dynamics shift. 22% responded that “needy persons” in the constituencies make the most demands at this juncture (**see Figure 8**). Indeed, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, particularly in rural areas, look to politicians to provide remedies to their economic hardship. The parliamentary election offers the opportunity for party foot-soldiers to secure financial rewards for their efforts with 21% of respondents mentioning this as a group which they have to reward. Youth are also a key consideration at this stage with 17% of respondents agreeing that they would seek to provide financial assistance to young party supporters and a further 11% noting the importance of youth associations. In a reversal of the approach to party primaries respondents mentioned community-based/local development organisations, communities themselves and educational institutions, 5.4%, 4.8% and 2.6% of the time. The data shows an understandable prioritisation of the electoral campaign, realised through the rewarding of key supporters.

Demands on sitting MP's

Sitting MPs continue to receive ‘applications’ and demands from their constituents when in elected office. 17% of respondents indicated that those who demanded the most were youth associations, followed by spiritual leaders (**see Figure 8**). The case of the youths, it may not be surprising to many observers. Their dynamism is duly exploited by politicians: they form the bulk of the campaign volunteers for candidates, who encourage them to undertake electoral tasks. It is therefore not a surprise that they seek ‘repayment’ for the services rendered to getting the MP into office. The logic also applies to spiritual leaders, who are key supporters for any campaign, and seek to utilise their importance when candidates successfully obtained elected office. The least likely to make demands of sitting MPs according to the survey data were communities in the MP’s constituency who were mentioned just 4.6% of the time.

NATURE OF DEMANDS ON MPS

Spending on the primaries and parliamentary election is one phase of the costs involved in doing politics in Ghana. Having spent huge sums of money to win the parliamentary seat, MPs still face a sizeable financial burden whilst in office. In order to meet these expectations most MPs draw on personal finances and many carry additional financial burdens. Respondents indicated that the top four expectations of MPs in office by order of importance are:

1. Lobby for development projects for their constituencies
2. Offer financial support to constituents, such as donations, for school fees and hospital bills
3. Make good laws for the country
4. Provide their constituencies with social infrastructure such as schools, roads and clinics.

This suggests that MPs believe that citizens view them principally as providers of social development and charity as opposed to elected representatives tasked with legislating, oversight and representation.

Public development goods

Social and economic infrastructure is in acute situation in the country. Therefore, it is not surprising that educational institutions such as schools in the constituencies would go to MPs for help. Our survey data reveals that, according to MPs, 19% of educational institutions in their constituencies pushed for community development goods. Respondents, 18.8% and 17.6%, further mentioned that communities in their constituencies and local development organisations did the same (see **Table 5**). The demand from the communities for development is well understood in the Ghanaian context as most rural communities in the country lack social amenities. Therefore, going to the MPs who perceive themselves as both legislators, agents of rural and community development, and providers of a constituencies social infrastructure is logical. For groups like party-foot soldiers, party officials and needy individuals the approach is quite different.

Personal Needs

Of all the demands constituents make on MPs, requests for money are the most draining on their resources. The majority of respondents, 21.7% mentioned needy individuals in the constituencies as the group which made the biggest demands (see **Table 5**). The high demands coming from this group reflect a growing incidence of poverty. In rural areas, the poor often find look to MPs to ameliorate their suffering. Other key groups who make monetary demands on MPs, were party foot-soldiers (20.4%) and party supporters (16.7%). Unlike legislators in some of the advanced democracies whose primary responsibility lies with the passages of legislations and holding the executive arm of government accountability to the electorate, MPs in Ghana are inundated with financial demands from their parties' foot-soldiers and supporters.

In-kind favours

Apart from placing demands for community goods and money, the social and political forces in the constituencies were interested in other favours. This means that the groups and individuals' efforts were appreciated through in-kind favours. The majority of the respondents named youth associations and spiritual leaders as the main outlet for these payments. Suggesting that these groups placed in-kind favours over monetary and community development goods. This was also the case for party supporters and party foot-soldiers (see **Table 5**). The findings confirm a popular perception about how party activists seek to claim political rewards for services rendered to politicians. Instead of lobbying MPs for community development projects, they are focused on securing money and goods for their own needs.

Table 5: Expectations on sitting MPs to provide for constituents: How and for whom

	Party foot soldiers	Needy individuals	Community groups	Traditional authorities	Educational institutions	Youth associations	Youth party supporters	Locally based organisations	Spiritual leaders
Public Goods (%)	1.8	1.7	18.8	15.2	19	9.4	6	17.6	10.5
Money (%)	20.4	21.7	4.8	8.4	2.7	11.2	16.7	5.4	8.8
In-Kind (%)	12.6	9.1	4.6	10.2	7.2	17.1	14.5	7.6	17.1

MP RESPONSES

Although all these groups helped candidates in the conduct of their electoral activities, MPs tended to place different weights on their political importance. 29.2% of respondents recognised demands from the communities as the most critical. The prioritisation of community needs in the constituency suggests that the overarching objective of every politician is to satisfy the developmental needs of their communities.

Foot-soldiers' concerns also have a high significant placed on them by politicians. 21.7% paid particular attention to their overall demands, aware of the untrammelled influence they have on the political and electoral processes at constituency level. Foot-soldiers have become prominent in the political calculations of MPs because they are indispensable to their electoral mobilisation efforts. Indeed, given the competitive nature of electoral politics in the country, it is unimaginable for a candidate to win a parliamentary election without the active support of party foot-soldiers.¹⁶

Increasingly needy groups seem to be more empowered, perhaps by the work of domestic civil society to raise awareness around human rights, to step forward and express their demands. This study reveals that they are gradually receiving more attention from politicians and policymakers. Government has rolled out social intervention programmes such as the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty - where households receive monthly cash stipends to mitigate their suffering). A Zongo (deprived) Community Development Fund bill passed into law on 10 November 2017, seeks to set aside a special fund to close the gap between deprivation and squalor in inner-city and urban settlements.

Despite only 11.1% of respondents admitting to attaching prominence to the demands of the needy in their constituencies, it represents a shift from the past where little was heard about politicians' political commitments to these types of groups. Similarly, youth associations and party supporters have attracted the attention of politicians. Almost 10% of respondents admitted to prioritising the demands of the youths and party supporters. Given that these groups are key to the running of a successful campaign it is not altogether surprising that MPs treat them with a good deal of care and attention. At the bottom of the list of priorities are the concerns of traditional rulers (2.4%), local development organisations (1.6%) and spiritual leaders (0.4%). Does this survey data indicate a dwindling influence of traditional and spiritual authorities in the way politics works in Ghana? Or are these groups prioritised in other ways that are not financial?



Photo: Carsten Ten Brink. Campaign posters fill every possible space in the run up to the 2012 election.

¹⁶ Bob-Milliar, GM. (September, 2014). "Party Youth Activists and Low-Intensity Electoral Violence in Ghana: A Qualitative Study of Party Foot-Soldiers' Activism," *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 125-152.

RAISING THE FUNDS TO RUN

With the recognition that the cost of politics in Ghana is high and contains many variables how do individuals raise sufficient capital to compete in local and nationwide polls? The survey data shows the most frequent source of funds to run political and electoral activities is individuals' personal incomes (see **Figure 9**). What makes the situation precarious is that the bulk of their personal income comes from their monthly salaries and bank savings. The prominence of personal income among the sources of candidates' political funds reflects an emerging phenomenon in Ghana where candidates are at the centre of their own campaign fund mobilisation. **Figure 9** also reveals the extent of support politicians receive from friends and associates; 17.5% cited this group as a key source of revenue mobilisation. The findings of this study confirm the old adage that, 'a friend in need is a friend indeed'.

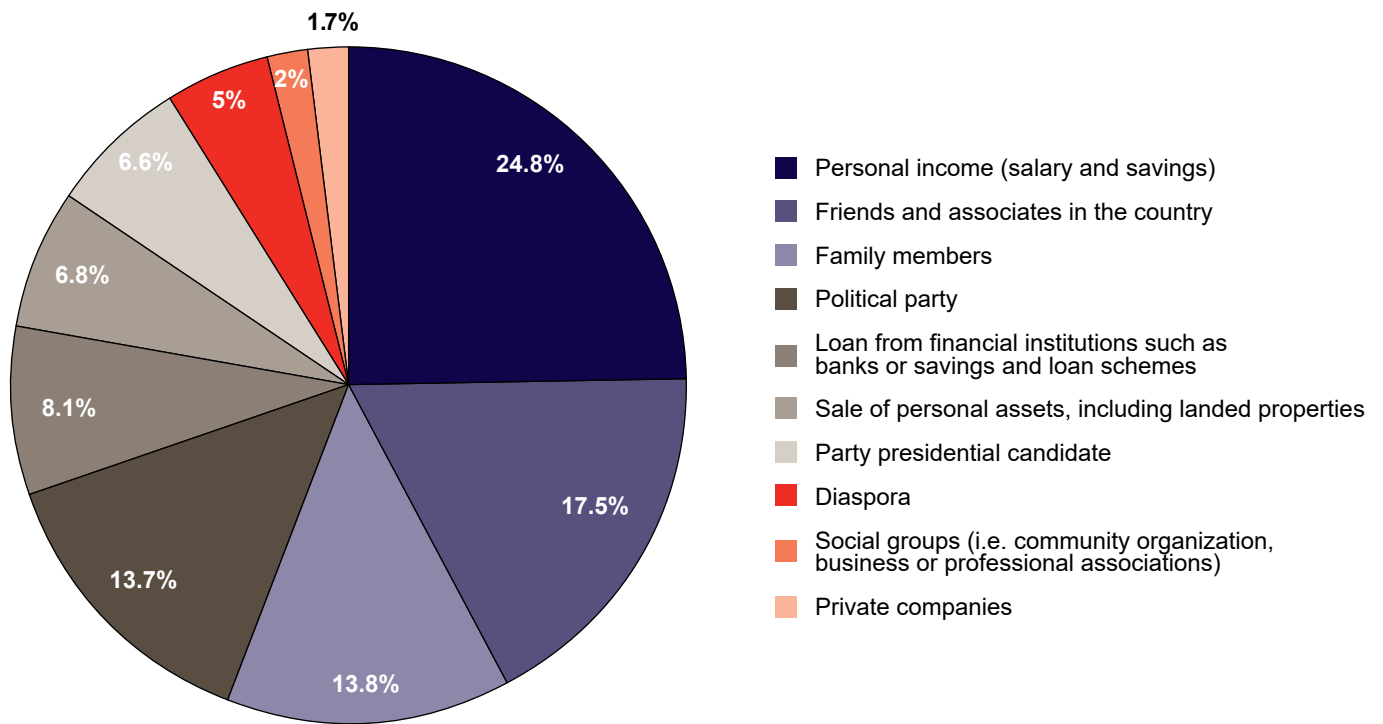
That contributions from friends and associated were cited as the second most common source of funds for political campaigns is an important development in Ghanaian politics. The increasing support politicians are getting from their families, is in contrast to previous decades. In the early post-independence era the popular held view was that politics was a dirty enterprise and those who announced their intention to 'play the game', did so knowing they would receive a hostile response from their families. The evidence from this survey indicates that prospective politicians now rely much more on their families' backing.

Figure 9 shows that intra-party and parliamentary contests are more often than not self-financed. The only two major exceptions being the financial support from the political party on whose ticket they are running (13.7%) and contributions for that party's presidential candidates campaign (6.6%). Until fairly recently, the principal source of MPs' political funds was the national branch of the political party and the party machinery was the principal vehicle for mobilising political funds. This survey shows that prominence to be in decline.

Campaign funds are also drawn from bank loans, the sale of personal assets and from supporters in the diaspora. Diaspora support is currently quite minimal - 5% of respondents mentioned them - but they become an important source in 2020 as they have the vote for the first time. Their importance is also linked to the type of capital they have access to. As the data shows, the performance of the Ghana Cedi since 2012 means that the cost of campaigning has actually got cheaper in US dollar terms. Access to foreign capital, through the diaspora, is proportionally more valuable. Both presidential candidates in the 2016 election went on fundraising tours of the US and Europe, for example, and there are very active "overseas branches" of both NPP and NDC that do a lot of fundraising.

Donations from the private sector used to be a critical source of funding for politicians. Previously, companies that had direct association with individual politicians, particularly, those of the ruling party gave large sums of money to support their political activities. However, this study indicates a dwindling of donations from companies with only 1.7% of respondents claiming they had received corporate donations. This withdrawal may be due to the fear of suffering from the fallout if their chosen candidate does not win. Conspicuously absent from the list of sources of funding is public subsidies. In Ghana, the debate about public funding of political parties remains divisive. Generally, the ruling party at the time, pushes back against state funding whilst the opposition gives strong support for its implementation.

Figure 9: Dominant funding source for election campaigns



IMPLICATIONS OF RISING COST OF POLITICS

In addition to investigating the costs associated with politics in Ghana and their drivers, the research also asked respondents' opinions as to the implications of rising costs of running for and maintaining public office. Those sampled were given a variety of statements and asked to note the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with them, as well as some open, qualitative questions to allow for greater specificity. Three key themes emerged: exclusion, disillusionment, and corruption.

Exclusion

Among the most direct forms of exclusion arising from an increasingly expensive political system relates to wealth. The research shows a clear perception among those sampled that Ghanaian politics is now largely the preserve of the rich. Asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement "the high cost of politics has made it quite impossible for the average person to seek political office," nearly 85% of the respondents agreed, with almost 50% strongly agreeing.

This belief was echoed in the qualitative answers provided in the survey. Several suggested that it was "difficult for qualified but not rich people to contest" or that "politics was for the rich only." One respondent went so far as to say that "the rich will go and recoup their investment; it's dangerous for our democracy!"

This finding is consistent with other research done on the cost of politics elsewhere. The Westminster Foundation for Democracy's report on politics in Ukraine, for instance, found that "many influential positions in the government of Ukraine are reported to go to the wealthier MPs, not to those who do not have significant personal financial resources".¹⁷ Having documented the increasing concentration of power in the hands of a wealthy few through

six case studies, the WFD report concludes: "a parliament made up of an élite, particularly when it is perceived to be a wealthy, self-selecting and self-interested élite, is likely to struggle to maintain its legitimacy within wider society".¹⁸

Exclusion, however, takes many forms. One that is particularly pertinent to Ghana and indeed the broader sub-Saharan African context is the relative under-representation of youth in politics. Assuming that younger candidates are less likely to have access to the resources needed to compete in a higher cost political environment, the research asked our sample whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement: "young people are excluded from the onset simply because they cannot mobilize resources for the high costs involved." 65% of the respondents agreed, 30% strongly so. While less emphatic than when queried regarding wealth, the data still suggests a strong belief that the youth are disproportionately affected by the cost of politics rising. A number of respondents interviewed for the qualitative component of this study chose to highlight this issue as the most important consequence of an increasing cost of politics moving forward. One complained that "the high cost of politics discourages the youth from actively taking part in the decision-making process, as well as vying for electoral positions."

WFD's background research in Nigeria corroborates this linkage between rising costs and declining opportunities for youth. There are a handful of younger MPs in Nigeria, but they tend to be wealthy young people. It is unlikely that the cost of politics is being manipulated to deliberately exclude the youth, but as it increases, the drop-off in youth participation is a clear by-product. Just 12% of respondents surveyed for this study were under the age of 35.

Another marginalised demographic are women. They too bear the brunt of rising costs in politics.

¹⁷ Wardle, Peter. 2016. Cost of Politics: Synthesis Report. Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Generally, with less access to financial and political capital than their male competitors, female candidates find themselves at a disadvantage when money is a deciding factor. Out of 275 MPs, there are only 35 female MPs from both the majority and minority sides, representing 13% of the total.

However, only 49% of those sampled agreed with the statement: “the financial cost of engaging in politics makes it difficult for females to seek political office.” There was also significant disagreement with the idea that a “female seeking political office spends more than a male seeking similar office.” Over 62% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, belying the assumption, at least in this sample, that women must spend more to compete with their male counterparts. Or it might be interpreted as acceptance of the fact that women are not generally capable of outspending their male competitors, even should they wish to.

Nevertheless, the deviation in the responses from those seen in both wealth and youth factors suggests several points for analysis. The first is that there may be an element of misogyny in the politics of Ghana as there is, in far too many countries around the world. This may also, however, be related to our sample, of which only 10% were women (as our criteria prioritised electoral position over demographics). With a sample skewed toward men, it is perhaps not surprising that the respondents were more empathetic towards less wealthy individuals and younger candidates than they were towards women.

A final possible hypothesis, related to the 10% representation of women in our sample, is that women are self-selecting out of politics at an earlier stage. They are simply choosing not to run as MPs in large numbers. Their lack of candidacy is perceived not as being constrained by lack of resources but by choice. Those women who do pursue a career in politics are perhaps those with the resources to compete and therefore are not perceived to be limited by rising costs of politics.

This data on women in politics and its relation to cost of politics is an understudied area and one that deserves more attention. Any form of exclusion is detrimental to democracy, but issues that affect

well over 50% of the population can be particularly damaging. As Peter Wardle writes in the WFD report, exclusion “does not make for a diverse legislature that represents a cross-section of the population; which in turn leads to the alienation of groups in society who are not adequately represented in parliament”.¹⁹

Disillusionment

A second theme that emerged from the research was a growing disillusionment with politics, even among those who are active in it. This waning faith in politics took several forms, including those who worried that the exclusion described above was too deeply entrenched and that politics, and democracy, were poorer for lacking adequate representation of all groups. The most prominent critique of the Ghanaian political system, however, focused on how the cost of politics impacted the competence of politicians and their relationship with their constituencies.

Foremost in many of those surveyed was the extent to which rising cost of politics was inversely related with the capabilities of those elected. When asked whether “many Ghanaians hold the view that the country’s democracy has become very expensive with leadership roles going to the highest bidder”, 87% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. This perception persisted in the qualitative section of the survey and in the focus groups where respondents expressed fears that: “competent people are mostly not elected” and “incompetent people with enough money will find themselves in politics.”

This phenomenon is not isolated to Ghanaian politics, but it is worrisome for the long-term prospects of the democratic system. As much as respondents were anxious that the wrong kind of people would enter politics, they were concerned that the country would ‘lose the competent people,’ to the detriment of its political institutions and decision-making. When the selection of candidates becomes more about their ability to pay than their ability to serve, negative consequences are likely to ensue.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The second principal cause for disillusionment among those sampled was the changing relationship between the constituent and his or her MP, specifically the extent to which it was creating a negative, self-perpetuating, loop that will drive up the costs of politics. There was broad consensus among the respondents that citizens were becoming more demanding and the form of these demands was increasingly financial or in-kind benefits: reinforcing the concept of transactional politics, where elections start to lose their meaning as part of an ongoing democratic process in which voters hold politicians to account for the success or failure of their policies.²⁰ And where a choice between competing visions for the future of the country are replaced by an auction of votes to the highest bidder, with heightened cynicism around the idea that the political process can deliver change in the interests of citizens.

This finding manifested itself in many ways. Asked whether “expectations citizens’ hold of their elected representatives in parliament changed or remained the same overtime,” 53% agreed with over 35% strongly agreeing that expectations had changed. The main reason cited by those who responded this way was ‘increasing demands of constituents.’ So, we are finding here a slight divergence here in the lived experience between those who have won and held office and those who have not.

Sitting MPs bear the brunt of these demands as opposed to challengers whose main costs, as we saw in the previous section, were on intermediaries during the election period. As one respondent put it: “It has changed because at first people didn’t know the value of a MP. Now they see them to be rich, so they pursue them and make demands.” This response suggests that Ghanaian politics is becoming more clientelistic rather than less over time, but it does not necessarily explain the role played by the cost of politics.²¹

Are citizens really the source of demand that is driving the rising cost of politics? Many respondents in the survey seem to believe so. “Now people make financial demands from you when contesting any election. Before, it was not so”, said one respondent. If true, it would naturally follow, that the highest reported costs incurred by politicians are

in the form of direct campaigning efforts towards voters, either in the form of straight-up vote-buying or other forms of inducements. But the findings in the previous section do not support this.

Rather they point to intermediaries such as party foot soldiers, local officials, and traditional leaders as being the recipients of much of the increased expenditures during elections. So, again, the picture may be more nuanced than we initially believed. It is perhaps more likely that voters are becoming more aware of the increasing outlays being made to these intermediaries and the commensurate incomes MPs require to meet these expenses. They are in turn raising their demands, certainly of incumbents, in reaction to the rising cost of politics rather precipitating that rise on their own.

Candidates challenging for a sitting MP’s seat face a different set of voter incentives. If the likelihood of victory is low, voters would rationally extract their compensation during the election period, as the candidate has no guarantee of access to resources once the campaign finishes. They may not expect as much of the challenger as they would of the incumbent, but the demands will be far more concentrated. In both cases, the voters become part of a negative cycle of rising costs, in which the emphasis falls more on the wealth of the individual than his or her politics.

Corruption

Politics is often accompanied by corruption, and in the context of a political system where the costs of gaining and retaining political office are increasing, the risk of corruption grows exponentially. The findings from this research offer some intriguing clues as to why.

Based on the answers discussed above, where the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the Ghanaian political system and the way rising costs were excluding segments of the population, bringing in incompetence, and breeding transactional politics, one might think that they would be interested in leaving politics behind and finding other livelihoods to pursue. This was

²⁰ See Lindberg, S. 2003. “It’s Our Time to “Chop””: Do Elections in Africa Feed Neo-Patrimonialism rather than Counter-Act It?” *Democratization* Vol. 10, Iss. 2.

²¹ For more on local democratic practices in Ghana see Paller, J. W & Awal, M. 2016. “Who really governs urban Ghana?” Africa Research Institute

emphatically not the case. While some of the older politicians expressed an inclination to retire before the 2020 elections, over 70% of those sampled said they would likely compete again.

The reasons offered varied. Some felt they had an obligation or a mission to serve their people. Others felt they had something unique to offer the country. But a significant portion of respondents offered very selfish rationales for running for public office. They described politics as almost like an addiction; once you are in, you can't get out. One went so far as to say: "my motivation is not about money, but it is about status. When you become an MP, you become part of a political class and you get used to the attention and do not want to let go."

In this instance, money is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. One spends money to 'feed the addiction' rather than to accumulate more money. This contrasts with the conventional interpretation of opportunistic candidates whose interest in becoming an MP may be less about a desire to contribute to the future direction of the country, or to hold the executive to account; and more about the opportunity to benefit from the immunity from prosecution that may be available to MPs, or influence over the award of public contracts. This tendency – closely linked to the high cost of parliamentary politics – brings with it the clear risk of corruption.

This rationale was also in evidence, although no one directly espoused it in the research. In addressing the implication of the increasing cost of politics in Ghana, one respondent answered that "many people come in with the intention of investing and gaining through means that will end up with massive corruption." Clearly, not all MPs are entering parliament just for the adulation or for the sake of service.

Indeed, those surveyed showed remarkably permissive attitudes to the influence of money in politics, irrespective of their belief that it damaged the system and the country's democracy. For instance, 83% expressed support for 'rewarding loyal supporters for their electoral support during previous election (i.e. political patronage).' This is interesting, given their exasperation with the demands of voters discussed previously. If politicians

wanted to discourage voters from demanding patronage, should they not first acknowledge that it is a bad idea?

But, perhaps, politicians are more comfortable with rewarding those who they know have been loyal, while they object to providing goods and services to those who only might vote for them. In reality, respondents were broadly supportive of that as well. 76% of them approved or strongly approved of 'providing individuals and communities with goods and services for political support (i.e. clientelism).' These numbers suggest that the vast majority of our sample have accepted that these practices are part of the 'rules of the game' in Ghanaian politics. While they may complain about them driving up costs, they simultaneously approve of their use as part of a comprehensive electoral campaign.

This acceptance has huge implications in the context of rising cost of politics. The high costs involved in entering parliament – and the fact that these costs are often met at considerable personal cost to candidates - leave MPs under huge pressure to find ways to recoup or repay these costs. This leads to a range of unwelcome consequences. It may involve moves to ensure that MPs' pay and allowances are as generous – and as non-transparent – as possible. It may involve intense efforts to obtain, through unswerving loyalty to political leaders, government appointments offering access to higher pay or to wider state resources. It may lead to unchecked corruption.

Some members of our sample raised these concerns. One of those surveyed as to the main implication of increasing costs of running for political office put it succinctly: "Corruption. As you spend so much, you have to get all you can to repay your debts. Corruption is first because people spend a lot of money before going to parliament, hence they would find ways and means to recoup all those monies." The financial demands on MPs whether incurred as part of the election campaign or as part of constituency service create perverse incentives for MPs to focus on individual interests over public ones. It makes them susceptible to influence from those who can pay and puts money and fund-raising at the centre of political life. When money becomes so intrinsically linked with politics, corruption becomes a norm rather than an aberration.

RESPONSES TO INCREASING COST OF POLITICS

Given these three negative themes emerging from and/or perpetuating the rising cost of politics in Ghana, what kinds of options are available to counter the trend or mitigate its impact? The research presented respondents with several 'good practice' solutions that have been implemented elsewhere in attempts to limit the growth of political finance. The responses reveal interesting examples of collective action problems and cognitive dissonance.

First, those surveyed expressed mostly strong support for remedies that affected other institutions or groups. For instance, 80% supported laws that requires balanced media coverage during elections. 88% supported civic education programmes that encourage voters to stop making financial demands on candidates or MPs.

The sample also broadly supported interventions that would likely benefit them personally, whether financially or indirectly. 85% supported a reduction in filing fees imposed on candidates by the electoral commission or political parties.²² This has been a particular large growth area for political costs as parties have come to realise the potential rents to be gained from extracted significant fees from their candidates.²³ 79% were also in favour of regulations prohibiting direct vote-buying, again preventing voters from pressing financial demands, while 66% believed that state funding for political parties and candidates was a good idea, reducing personal exposure to financial risk.

There was far less support, however, for regulations that restricted their own ability to operate within campaigns. Just 50% favoured a cap on spending for electoral campaigns, while only 56% supported a similar cap on how much candidates could spend

on media advertising. These kinds of caps have a somewhat chequered history in sub-Saharan Africa, so the resistance may not be entirely self-serving, but the distinction is intriguing.

Political party financing regulation does already exist in Ghana (**see Appendix 1**), but despite the legislation, rarely do candidates and their parties comply with the detailed legal requirements. Reports indicate that the parties and their candidates have often failed to submit their audited accounts to the Electoral Commission (EC) within the stipulated time as demanded by Act 574.¹⁴ The general infractions on the law have continued for many years without any candidate or party facing consequences. There has been no occasion where the EC invoked the law to discipline candidates and parties overly breaches. Candidates are free to mobilise as much funding as much as possible without submitting to accountability.

Lastly, and perhaps most interestingly in light of the permissive attitudes discussed above, over 72% of the respondents expressed support for sanctions against those who engage in political patronage. Given that 83% of these same respondents declared their approval of political patronage, this juxtaposition strengthens the hypothesis that most political actors would like to see the system change (and the costs reduce) but few to none feel they can make that change on their own.

Instead, they accept the rules of the game as they are while expressing support for certain changes that might eventually shift them. Further research should explore this collective action problem and the effect this cognitive dissonance has on efforts to catalyse political finance reform in Ghana.

²² Gadugah, Nathan. 2016. "Filing Fees: EC unmoved by tears from political parties", Joy Online. Available at <http://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2016/september-13th/filing-fees-ec-unmoved-by-tears-from-political-parties.php>

²³ Pen Plus Bytes. 2016. "AEP Explainer: The phenomenon of filing fees in Ghana". Available at http://www.africanelections.org/ghana/news_detail.php?nws=7345&t=AEP%20Explainer:%20The%20Phenomenon%20if%20Filing%20Fees%20in%20Ghana

²⁴ Examples of media coverage: EC chases political parties for audited accounts. Today Newspaper - <http://www.todaygh.com/political-parties-given-may-31-deadline-submit-details-audited-account/>; Political parties given May 31 deadline to submit details of audited. Joy Online - <https://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2016/april-6th/political-parties-given-may-31-deadline-to-submit-details-of-audited-account.php>; Group demands audited accounts and asserts of political parties from EC. Ghana Web - <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Group-demands-audited-accounts-and-asserts-of-political-parties-from-EC-529213>

RECOMMENDATIONS

What is clear is that to enter into public office requires significant capital relative to the average income of most Ghanaians. Another 59% rise between 2016 and 2020 would see average campaign expenditure rise to GH¢618,000 providing a significant obstacle to entry and entrenching the idea that politics is a domain for the elite in society. Measures are needed to strengthen and better enforce existing party financing regulation as set out in Article 55 (14-25) of the 1992 Constitution and to continuously improve citizen understandings of electoral politics.

A growing disillusionment with politics in Ghana, even from those active in it, is a key theme that emerged from the WFD/CDD report. Heightened cynicism around the idea that political processes can deliver citizen led change is increasingly making political campaigns an “auction of votes to the highest bidder” and less about competing visions for the future of the country. This phenomenon is not isolated to Ghanaian politics, but it does raise concerns about the long-term prospects of its democratic system.

To address these negative trends WFD and CDD-Ghana recommends the following measures:

- Initiation of a national dialogue among political parties, electoral institutions, and civil society to deliberate on the impact of money on politics and the expectations citizens and politicians have in terms of its regulation
- More rigorous enforcement of existing political party finance legislation
- Further efforts, through both formal and informal channels, to increase the transparency of election spending, including requiring candidates and parties to be more open about the costs they incur
- A return to the discussion about state funding for political parties
- Greater engagement with citizens about the negative implications of making direct financial demands on their MP
- Further research to explore whether there is a collective action problem regarding change to the system and to look at ways in which candidates develop credibility beyond money, i.e. social capital
- Further research into the intersection of political finance and the gender political representation gap in Ghanaian politics
- Create greater clarity and differentiation between the party’s limitations, role and responsibilities and the individual candidate’s limitation, roles and responsibilities in campaign spend.
- Introduce practices and incentives that support parties to build loyal memberships and long term financial planning for elections (possibly linked to state funding).
- Provide guidance and protection for Ghanaian private sector to transparently support political parties with the Electoral Commission (EC).
- Support engagement between the EC, media and political parties to address the cost of media during elections.

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APPENDIX 1: PARTY FINANCING REGULATIONS

Ghana has a codified party financing laws. Article 55 (14-25) of the 1992 Constitution indicates that:

- Only a citizen may contribute in cash or in kind to the funds of a political party.
- A firm, partnership, or enterprise owned by a citizen or a company registered under the laws of the Republic at least seventy-five percent of whose capital is owned by a citizen is for the purposes of this Act a citizen.

The Constitution bars non-Ghanaians from making financial contribution to a party:

- A non-citizen shall not directly or indirectly make a contribution or donation or loan whether in cash or in kind to the funds held by or for the benefit of a political party and no political party or person acting for or on behalf of a political party shall demand or accept a contribution donation or loan from a non-citizen (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

There are stringent sanctions for breaching the law:

- Where any person contravenes section 23 or 24, in addition to any penalty that may be imposed under this Act, any amount whether in cash or in kind paid in contravention of the section shall be forfeited to the State and the amount shall be recovered from the political party as debt owed to the State. The political party or person in whose custody the amount is for the time being held shall pay it to the State (Republic of Ghana, 1992).
- A non-citizen found guilty of contravention of section 24 shall be deemed to be a prohibited immigrant and liable to deportation under the Aliens Act, 1963 (Act 160).
- The provisions of sections 23 and 24 do not preclude a government of any country or a non-governmental organization from providing assistance in cash or in kind to the Commission for use by the Commission for the collective benefit of registered political parties (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

APPENDIX 2: COMPREHENSIVE SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The nature of the study meant information had to be sourced from different stakeholder groups (a sort of data triangulation approach) to obtain a fair picture of the situation in Ghana. The primary respondents targeted for the study were therefore categorised into three groups, namely, successful parliamentary candidates in the 2016 elections (i.e. successful parliamentary candidates), the unsuccessful candidates (i.e. unsuccessful parliamentary candidates) and contestants who were unsuccessful in their political party primaries (i.e. lost political party primaries). Parliamentarians in the last parliament who never contested their party primaries because they had no intention of seeking re-election (i.e. *Sitting MPs who never contested party primaries*) were another category of respondents targeted for the study. These individuals were believed to have a worth of information to share. Across these four groups, a total of 300 respondents were targeted.

Other components of the study, which is largely qualitative in nature is the in-depth study with traditional rulers, political party officials and civil society and community-based organizations (CSOs and CBOs) as respondents as well as a number of focus group discussions (FGDs), which provided useful context to the understanding of the findings of the survey and in-depth interviews.

Construction of sampling frames

To distribute the targeted number of respondents across the categories above, the construction of various sampling frames was crucial. In developing the sampling frame, it was observed that spreading the sample elements across all political parties and independent candidates would make the sampling procedure very cumbersome. As such a decision was taken to limit it to five political parties - the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the Progressive People's Party (PPP), the Convention People's Party (CPP) and the People's National Convention (PNC).

For a sampling frame of successful and unsuccessful parliamentary candidates, we procured the list of contestants in the 2016 parliamentary election from the Electoral Commission (EC). This list has 1,007 contestants of which 275 won the parliamentary seats, while the remaining 732 lost the contest. With respect to the frame of individuals who contested the political party primaries of the five political parties and lost, we observed that it will be quite difficult to generate a comprehensive list because some of the political parties do not keep accurate records on contestants and where records do exist, the parties feel reluctant sharing them with the public.

Moreover, the primaries of three of the political parties targeted - PPP, CPP and PNC were not formalised like those of the NDC and NPP. Consequently, we decided to target only individuals who contested the NDC and NPP primaries for "lost political party primaries" category. Constructing an exhaustive sampling frame of sitting parliamentarians who never contested their party primaries because they were not seeking re-election in 2016 was not so difficult because the NDC and NPP dominated the last parliament - the two parties together held 99% of seats - and a large number also got re-elected in 2016.

Allocation interview quotas to respondent categories

With proponents of the project thinking of using stratified random sampling technique to distribute the 300 respondents targeted by the study to each category, we observed that going by that approach will skew the sample in favour the 'lost political party primaries' and 'unsuccessful parliamentary candidates' categories, respectively. Conversely, the 'successful parliamentary candidates' and 'sitting MPs who never contested party primaries' categories, who could provide deeper insight on the issue being addressed by the study will be disadvantaged resulting in the loss of comprehensive information from the two categories. As a solution, we purposively allocated interview quotas to the four respondent categories as shown in the table below.

Distribution of successful and unsuccessful parliamentary candidates' quotas across regions and gender.

To ensure national representation, the stratified sampling procedure was used in distributing the quotas allocated to the 'successful parliamentary candidates' and 'unsuccessful parliamentary candidates' categories across regions and gender. In the case of the 'successful parliamentary candidates', at the first level, the stratification procedure was used to determine the percentage

share of each of the ten regions in the total number of MPs (see column 3 of Table 2). At the second level, for a given region, the stratification process was again used to determine the percentage shares of male and female MPs in that region (see columns 5 & 7 of Table 2).

Next, the regional percentage shares derived in Table 2 above were used to determine the number of successful parliamentarians to be polled for each region (see column 5 of Table 3). Similarly, the male-female percentage shares for each region were used to split the allocated number of parliamentarians to be interviewed between males and female (see column 5 of Table 3).

The procedure discussed above was again used to distribute the 100 'unsuccessful parliamentary candidates' targeted of across regions and the male-female divide, this time round based on the total number of failed parliamentary candidates in the 2016 elections (see Tables 4 & 5).

The last stage of the sampling process for 'successful parliamentary candidates' and 'unsuccessful parliamentary candidates' categories involved the splitting of the sampling frame for the two groups into regional lists. Each regional list was further divided into the male and female lists. A simple random sampling procedure was thereafter used to select the required number of male and female successful and unsuccessful parliamentary candidates, respectively, to constitute the regional sample.

Table 1: Allocation of quota to the four categories of respondents

Category	Total	Purposive Allocation	Percentage of Total
Successful parliamentary candidates	275	150	54.5%
Unsuccessful parliamentary candidates	732	100	13.7%
Lost political party primaries	--	30	--
Sitting MPs who never contested party primaries	--	20	--
Total	1,007	300	--

Table 2: Successful parliamentary candidates distribution | Region and gender stratification

	Total number of MPs	% share in Total MPs	Male MPs	% share of Male MPs	Female MPs	% share of Female MPs
Western	26	0.09	24	0.92	2	0.08
Central	23	0.08	17	0.74	6	0.26
Greater Accra	34	0.12	24	0.71	10	0.29
Volta	26	0.09	21	0.81	5	0.19
Eastern	33	0.12	28	0.85	5	0.15
Ashanti	47	0.17	42	0.89	5	0.11
Brong Ahafo	29	0.11	27	0.93	2	0.07
Northern	31	0.11	30	0.97	1	0.03
Upper East	15	0.05	14	0.93	1	0.07
Upper West	11	0.04	11	1.00	0	0.00
Total	275	100.0	238	0.87	37	0.13

Table 3: Successful parliamentary candidates distribution | Regional and gender allocation

	% share in Total MPs	% share of Male MPs	% share of Female MPs	No. of MPs allocated	Adj. No. of MPs allocated	No. of Male MPs allocated	No. of Female MPs allocated
Western	0.09	0.92	0.08	14	14	13	1
Central	0.08	0.74	0.26	13	13	10	3
Greater Accra	0.12	0.71	0.29	19	18	13	5
Volta	0.09	0.81	0.19	14	14	11	3
Eastern	0.12	0.85	0.15	18	18	15	3
Ashanti	0.17	0.89	0.11	26	26	23	3
Brong Ahafo	0.11	0.93	0.07	16	16	15	1
Northern	0.11	0.97	0.03	17	17	16	1
Upper East	0.05	0.93	0.07	8	8	7	1
Upper West	0.04	1.00	0.00	6	6	6	0
Total	1.00	0.87	0.13	151	150	130	20

Note: Greater Accra allocation was adjusted downward by one MP to avoid having a total of 151 MPs.

Table 4: Unsuccessful parliamentary candidates distribution | Region and gender stratification

	Total number of failed MPs	% share of failed MPs	Failed male MPs	% share of failed male MPs	Failed female MPs	% share of failed female MPs
Western	69	0.09	63	0.91	6	0.09
Central	64	0.09	55	0.86	9	0.14
Greater Accra	93	0.13	75	0.81	18	0.19
Volta	62	0.08	61	0.98	1	0.02
Eastern	67	0.09	57	0.85	10	0.15
Ashanti	136	0.19	116	0.85	20	0.15
Brong Ahafo	85	0.12	76	0.89	9	0.11
Northern	87	0.12	81	0.93	6	0.07
Upper East	40	0.05	35	0.88	5	0.13
Upper West	29	0.04	27	0.93	2	0.07
Total	732	1.00	646	0.88	86	0.12

Table 5: Unsuccessful parliamentary candidates distribution | Regional and gender allocation

	% share in failed MPs	% share in failed male MPs	% share in failed female MPs	No. of failed MPs allocated	No. of failed male MPs allocated	No. of failed female MPs allocated
Western	0.09	0.91	0.09	9	8	1
Central	0.09	0.86	0.14	9	8	1
Greater Accra	0.13	0.81	0.19	13	10	3
Volta	0.08	0.98	0.02	8	8	0
Eastern	0.09	0.85	0.15	9	8	1
Ashanti	0.19	0.85	0.15	19	16	3
Brong Ahafo	0.12	0.89	0.11	12	11	1
Northern	0.12	0.93	0.07	12	11	1
Upper East	0.05	0.88	0.13	5	4	1
Upper West	0.04	0.93	0.07	4	4	0
Total	1.00	0.88	0.12	100	88	12

Allocation interview quotas to respondent categories

As noted earlier, creating sampling frames for 'sitting MPs who never contested party primaries' category was not difficult because they were mainly former parliamentarians affiliated to the NDC and NPP. For the 'lost political party primaries' category was somewhat difficult. For the first category (i.e. 'sitting MPs who never contested party primaries'), which were quite few in number, we purposively selected 20 from the two main political parties - the NDC and NPP - to constitute our sample. For the second group (i.e. 'lost political party primaries'), we used a mixture of various sampling techniques (e.g. purposive, snowballing etc.) to identify 30 individuals across the five political parties mentioned above who fall in this category to constitute the sample (see section titled 'construction of sampling frames').

Allocation and distribution of interview quotas to in-depth interview respondent categories

In-depth interviews were conducted with a total of 45 individuals from the following stakeholder groups: traditional rulers; political party officials from the NPP, NDC, PPP, CPP and PNC; and experts from civil society and community-based organizations (CSOs and CBOs) as shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Distribution of in-depth study interview respondents

Category	Allocation	Distribution
Traditional rulers	20 respondents	2 per each of the 10 regional house of chiefs
Political party officials	10 respondents	NPP: 2 National officers; 2 Regional/constituency officers
		NDC: 1 National officer; 2 Regional/constituency officers
		PPP: 1 National officer
		CPP: 1 National officer
		PNC: 1 National officer
CSOs / CBOs	15 respondents	
Total	45 respondents	

The focus group discussions participants

Two focus group discussions (FGDs) were held in Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo Region on 9 August 2017 and Accra in the Greater Accra Region on 29 August 2017 to complement the survey data. Each FGD has at most 15 participants comprising some winners and losers in the 2016 parliamentary election, some who lost their political party primaries, sitting MPs who never contested party primaries, political party officials from the five political parties, traditional leaders and representatives of key CSOs/CBOs (see distribution in **Table 7**).

Table 7: Allocation of quota to the focus group discussion

Category	Allocation	Distribution
Successful parliamentary candidates	2 respondents	2 MPs from NPP and NDC
Unsuccessful parliamentary candidates	1 respondent	1 MP for either PPP, CPP or PNC
Lost political party primaries	1 respondent	1 MP from NDC
Sitting MPs who never contested party primaries	1 respondent	1 MP from NPP
Political party representatives	5 respondents	1 National officer of NPP
		1 National officer of NDC
		1 National officer of PPP
		1 National officer of CPP
		1 National officer of PNC
Traditional leaders	2 respondents	2 Reps from Regional House of Chiefs
CSOs/CBOs	3 respondents	3 Reps from CSOs and CBOs
Total	15 respondents	

Pilot test prior to the fielding of study

To ensure that the survey questionnaire and in-depth interview guide were efficient enough to gather the right information for analysis, five field enumerators were recruited, trained on February 22 and 24, 2017 and deployed to test the study questionnaire and data collection protocols on 28 February 2017. To avoid giving persons selected for the actual study prior knowledge, the pilot field enumerators interviewed only people who are

either not part of those targeted for the actual study (see **Table 8** for the types of respondents targeted).

At the end of the pilot test period, only one successful interview had been recorded though all the field enumerators managed to arrange a meeting with their potential respondents. However, the busy schedules of these respondents made it impossible for them to honour the agreed meetings. These interviews were either re-scheduled or potential respondents replaced till enumerators had a substantive sample number. This gave the project management team at CDD-Ghana a glimpse of the potential difficulties awaiting enumerators during the main survey.

Table 8: Distribution of interviews for pilot test

Interviewers	Category assigned
Enumerator 1	Successful parliamentary candidates: 1 interview
	Lost political party primaries: 1 interview
Enumerator 2	Unsuccessful parliamentary candidates: 1 interview
	Sitting MPs who never contested party primaries: 1 interview
Enumerator 3	Political party representatives: 2 interviews
Enumerator 4	Traditional leaders: 2 interviews per region for ten regions
Enumerator 5	CSOs/CBOs: 2 interviews

Data collection challenges and the effect on sample size

The survey part of the study had numerous challenges. First, enumerators had difficulties meeting with target respondents, particularly the sitting parliamentarians (MPs) because it was the beginning of the new parliament and they were engaged with orientation for members and setting up and assigning members to the various parliamentary committees. In addition, some sitting MPs were also lobbying for ministerial positions.

It was challenging for enumerators to get some respondents who contested the parliamentary election and lost because they are not resident in the constituency where they contested and means of contacting them never worked.

Regarding the in-depth interviews, the target respondents, according to the enumerators were

quite responsive and willingly granted interviews. Nonetheless, meeting with traditional leaders came with associated demands for exchange of the traditional drinks as is the norm in most traditional areas. Enumerators also reported that some officials of civil society groups made similar demands.

Aside these difficulties, field enumerators reported that most of the targeted survey respondents complained about the size of the questionnaire and invariably, the time spent responding to all the items; it took between 60 to 90 minutes to complete an interview.

These difficulties led to a reduction in the targeted number of respondents for the opinion survey from 300 to 253. The distribution of the achieved number of interviews in the opinion survey by category, region and sex are depicted in **Tables 9, 10 and 11**.

Similarly, the enumerators were able to conduct thirty-seven (37) in-depth interviews (eight less than the 45 targeted). The distribution of the achieved in-depth interviews is shown in **Table 12**.

Table 9: Achieved interviews at the end of the survey | by respondent category

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Successful parliamentary candidates	128	50.6%
Unsuccessful parliamentary candidates	105	41.5%
Lost political party primaries	13	5.1%
Sitting MPs who never contested party primaries	7	2.8%
Total	253	100.0%

Table 10: Achieved interviews at the end of the survey | by region

Region	Frequency	Percent	Region	Frequency	Percent
Western	27	10.7%	Ashanti	44	17.4%
Central	24	9.5%	Brong Ahafo	22	8.7%
Greater Accra	37	14.6%	Northern	31	12.3%
Volta	17	6.7%	Upper East	12	4.7%
Eastern	29	11.5%	Upper West	10	4.0%

Table 11: Achieved interviews at the end of the survey | by sex

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	229	91.0%
Female	24	9.0%
Total	253	100.0%

Table 12: Achieved in-depth study interviews at the end of the survey

Category	Allocation
Traditional rulers	15 respondents
Political party officials	7 respondents
CSOs / CBOs	15 respondents
Total	37 respondents

