Campaign Financing in Tanzania and Uganda

Moses Khisa, Jamal Msami and Ole Therkildsen

Abstract

This article contributes to debates on political financing and democratisation in Africa using a political settlements perspective on campaign financing to understand the political economy of money in elections in Tanzania and Uganda. These two countries experienced economic and political liberalisation in the 1990s, which created two simultaneous imperatives for ruling elites: the need for more money to build and maintain ruling coalitions in the context of multiparty elections and growing political competition. Further, governance reforms and conditionalities by foreign donors are increasingly denying ruling parties recourse to state budgets and state-owned enterprises for money to run election campaigns. Consequently, the most important source of political financing is now the private sector – especially large domestic companies and individual businesspersons. Based on a survey of incumbent Members of Parliament about the two elections of the 2010s, we find that MP expenditures have grown significantly – especially in Uganda; incumbent party members are much better funded than the opposition; women candidates, surprisingly, spend more than males; and the private sector contributes almost three-fourths of all campaign finances.

Introduction

Money plays a larger role in African politics now than during the era of one-party rule on the continent, and elections have become more costly.[1] However, comparative research on campaign financing is limited,[2] hampered by a general lack of reliable and comparable information about actual sources and spending by African parties and political candidates. This article is the first comparative study of campaign financing in Tanzania and Uganda. It analyses the dynamics of political financing.

There are two ways to view the rising cost of election campaigns. On the one hand, parties are situated between society and the state, thus their key function (especially capitalist) is to channel organised and corporate interests into the political process.[3] This requires financing. Without money, political parties cannot interact with voters and interest groups to develop their policy ideas; cannot inform the electorate about these ideas and how they differ from those of other parties; cannot train and support party cadres to disseminate messages and mobilise voters; and cannot run the party organisations that underpin such activities. From this perspective, therefore, growing political financing can be a sign of healthy and vibrant political competition and participation.[4]

On the other hand, money in politics can be harmful for both emerging and so-called mature democracies. ‘One person, one vote’ squares badly with the political influence that some individuals and corporations can buy with money.[5] World over, including in poor African countries, money in politics is often associated with corruption, with undue access to rents and influence over government policies by powerful economic interests, and with the outright buying of votes. Too much money in politics can therefore delegitimise the democratic system and distort the policymaking process in favour of those who donate political finance – or are rich enough to run their own campaigns, thus buying themselves into power. Such concerns are a common theme in research on political financing in both rich and poor countries.[6]

This article analyses campaign financing for Members of Parliament (MPs) in Tanzania and Uganda. We define campaign financing as money and other resources used by candidates during primary and general elections for the purposes of securing a party's nomination and/or contesting a general election. Both Tanzania and Uganda operate a first-past-the-post electoral system with individualised campaigns, which tend to result in relatively high campaign costs.[7] These two are arguably representative of electoral politics in Africa's low-income countries where elections have become routinized and regularised.

We proceed in two main steps. First, we develop a demand-supply perspective on analysing campaign financing with inspiration from political settlements theory.[8] Next, we present comparative estimates of costs and major sources of parliamentary election campaigns financing for the 2010s' cycles in both Tanzania and Uganda. Our data draw from a combination of interviews and a questionnaire survey of a total of 171 randomly selected members of parliament who contested and won seats in Tanzania (2010 and 2015) and in Uganda (in 2011 and 2016).

We emphasise four main findings. First, while intra- and inter-party competition for office has increased in both countries since the political liberalisation of the 1990s and early 2000s, the regulation of election funding is deficient, and enforcement of campaign finance laws is. Political actors, particularly ruling parties, easily disregard extant laws partly because of conflicted interests of enforcement agencies. Secondly, consistent with findings by other scholars,[9] the ruling party parliamentary candidates in both countries generally outspend the opposition by a significant margin, pointing to an unlevelled electoral playing field and a huge incumbency advantage in funding campaigns.

Thirdly, contrary to conventional wisdom on gender inequalities in Africa,[10] female candidates generally spend more on parliamentary election campaigning than male candidates. Indeed, in Uganda's primary elections, female candidates spend much more than male candidates. This contradicts a common proposition that women and minorities are often excluded from participating in politics due to lack of access to political funding.[11] Fourthly, the supply of plutocratic financing by larger, mainly domestic, private companies to ruling parties in Tanzania and Uganda has grown in tandem with economic liberalisation. This has enhanced the importance of rent-seeking by firms for profits and survival. This source of campaign financing is highly discreet and smacks of collusion between politicians and business entities. There is a possible quid-pro-quo between political actors and business players.

The rest of this article is structured in five sections. A theoretical perspective on the demand and supply of campaign financing is presented next, followed with a brief analysis of the political and economic factors that drive campaign financing. In the subsequent sections we present the methods for data collection and the empirical results on campaign costs and the major sources of campaign funds. Finally, we offer some tentative conclusions and broader reflections.

Demand-Supply for Campaign Financing

A demand-supply perspective helps us understand the political dynamics driving MP-candidates to raise campaign money (demand) and the motivations of donors to provide such funds (supply). The focus here is on funds originating from the private sector (i.e., money from companies, businesses and one's wealth or personal sources) because these make up a large proportion of MPs campaign funds as shown later and can have significant influence on democratisation processes.[12] The demand-supply perspective is based on the proposition that with economic and political liberalisation, the demand by political parties and politicians for campaign financing grows as political competition increases. Supply of campaign financing also expands as the capitalist market incentivises private providers of political financing to pay themselves into favourable bargaining positions with regards to state policy, access to rents and especially taxation issues.

Political settlements theory helps in understanding the dynamic interactions between the demand and supply of campaign finance as these interactions depend on the distribution of power among groups and institutions in a society. Ruling elites seek to create and maintain a political settlement based on coalitions of different key political factions that can keep them in political office.[13] Money is needed to build and maintain such coalitions and forms a basis for mutual interests between ruling elites, capitalists and wealthy individuals, who are typically among the main donors of political finance. Such funding gives donors 'holding power' and influence to affect government policy and rents for their own benefit. That power is enhanced if they also create jobs in the economy and are important sources of government revenue and/or foreign exchange.[14]

Inter- and intra-party competition are key drivers of the demand for campaign financing for parliamentary candidates.[15] During the 2010s, the period investigated in this article, parliamentary general elections in Tanzania and Uganda became more competitive as did intra-party competition among candidates. Nevertheless, Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and the National Resistance Movement (NRM) – the respective incumbent parties – maintained their dominant positions and are still the 'party of choice' for political entrepreneurs seeking political office. This means that rewards of a ruling party nomination are greater than those of running on an opposition ticket. Consequently, the cost for aspiring politicians of winning ruling party nomination increases.

It is not only the power and prestige of office and the possibility of shaping policies, promoting ideological beliefs and patriotic causes that are attractive. Legally sanctioned material benefits have also become ever more generous: hefty remunerations to politicians;[16] housing and transport benefits; access to discretionary spending (e.g., constituency funding), etc. Finally, entry into politics can be a profitable business strategy, an opportunity for development of business networks and an important career step. Often powerful politicians simultaneously double in lucrative business ventures.[17] In the context of political and economic liberalisation, these demands and power trappings have driven inter- and intra-party competition for political office as well as the costs of running election campaigns, as we explain below.

The supply of campaign financing for MP candidates has gone together with increased political competition. With specific reference to sub-Saharan Africa, Arriola[18] states that the onset of multiparty competition, if anything, has underscored the political importance of the private resources in the hands of entrepreneurs. Money certainly plays a larger role in African politics now than during the era of one-party rule. Private sector growth since economic liberalisation started in the 1980s has helped to concentrate income and wealth in relatively few companies and individuals.

Here it is important to distinguish between small and large campaign contributions. The latter typically originate from trade unions or other interest groups, corporations, and wealthy individuals – what Nassmacher called plutocratic funding.[19] The emerging evidence is that plutocratic funding is becoming of much greater importance.[20] Political settlements theory identifies mutual interests between (factions of) the ruling political elite and economic entrepreneurs as central to understanding dynamics of political financing. Such mutual interests are based on the exchange of policy influence and industry or firm-specific rents, for example, in return for financing the election campaigns of the ruling coalition.[21] Developing mutual interests is especially important for domestic capitalists in poor countries that for historical reasons typically have limited capabilities and access to capital. Consequently, they are especially dependent on state-provided rents and favourable policies (including tax regimes) to survive and prosper in newly liberalised and more competitive economies.

The Context of Increased Political Competition and Private Sector Influence

The demand-supply analyses must be put in an empirical context because campaign finance, political parties, and the private sector change according to the society and state they influence, and are part of and linked to.[22] Here, we underscore two driving forces of campaign financing identified above as they have evolved in Tanzania and Uganda: political competition and economic change. We also stress the country differences in the legal framework for campaign financing and its enforcement.

The Importance of the Double Transition

In Tanzania and Uganda, the double transition of economic and political liberalisation in the 1990s created two simultaneous imperatives for ruling elites. First, they needed more money to build and maintain ruling coalitions in the context of multiparty elections and growing political competition, even in Tanzania where the ruling party won elections by a wide margin. Moreover, due to governance reforms and conditionalities by foreign aid donors, the ruling parties could no longer rely as much on state budgets and state-owned enterprises as they did in the past to provide them with money to run political activities, especially election campaigns. This twin-imperative compelled ruling elites to seek financing from private businesses. At the same time, politicians could use their positions in public office to start and expand their own businesses or businesses allied with the ruling coalition. Similar dynamics have also been set in motion in other African countries by this double transition.[23]

From a political settlements perspective, this double transition reconfigured the political landscape, making the ruling parties in both Tanzania and Uganda more clientelist. As central control of the party erodes, consensus about the party line becomes more difficult, and life as a politician more uncertain and precarious, competition for political power within and between parties increases. Consequently, ruling elites become more vulnerable. This increases the need for political financing to keep incumbent parties in power. Some private (sector) campaign finance donors may therefore be motivated to fund the ruling party to maintain a political and economic status quo that serves their business interests.

With increased intraparty competition, lower-level factions gained strength in the ruling coalitions of both Tanzania and Uganda since political liberalisation in the 1990s and early 2000s. In Tanzania, local party members and leaders mobilise votes for CCM because winning elections at all levels with large margins is important to keep CCM as the 'party of choice'. A similar trend occurs in Uganda where the NRM seeks to maintain an aura of invincibility and the ultimate vehicle to political office. The introduction of regular elections in 1996 under the Movement (no-party) system followed by the reintroduction of multiparty competition in 2005, coupled with increasing tensions within the NRM, contributed to fragmenting the ruling coalition making the financing of lower-level factions more important for winning elections. Thus, maintaining the status of 'party of choice' in both countries required increasingly more money for voter mobilisation and campaigning as well as building and maintaining the ruling coalitions.

Inter- and Intraparty Competition

Tanzania and Uganda are electoral autocracies that grew more authoritarian during the 2010s even as their elections became more competitive. In the 2010 elections in Tanzania, the ruling CCM won 75 percent of the 343 contested seats (excluding appointive seats) for parliament, and 63 percent of the presidential vote. This winning margin for parliamentary seats was less than in the 2000 and 2005 elections. In 2015, the CCM won 55 percent of the contested seats – its narrowest majority ever – and John Magufuli won 58.5 percent of the presidential vote, the lowest margin for a CCM presidential candidate since the return of multi-party elections in 1995. The European Union election observers concluded that 'the emergence of an opposition coalition helped the competitiveness of the electoral campaign'.[24]

In Uganda, the NRM controversially won 66 percent of the contested seats in parliament in 2006 and 69 percent in 2016. Incumbent Yoweri Museveni won the presidential race in 1996 with 76 percent of the popular vote but got only 59 percent in 2006, 68 percent in 2011 and was down to 61 percent in the disputed 2016 elections.[25] The 2016 election was arguably 'the most competitive general elections in the history of Uganda's democracy'.[26] Intra-party competition among candidates has also increased.[27] There are two key drivers of intraparty competition: the incumbent party as a 'party of choice' and growing party fragmentation. The CCM's and NRM's continuing dominant positions have maintained their 'party of choice' status for political entrepreneurs seeking political office.

Intra-party competition in Tanzania is reflected in a 67 percent overall turnover of MPs between the 2010 and 2015 elections.[28] This dynamic is both symbolic of the CCM's allure as the 'party of choice' for candidates and illustrative of the increasing party fragmentation. As the 'party of choice', aspiring politicians flock to CCM on account of its mobilisation capabilities and grip on power, despite falling returns at the polls since 2010. Intra-party competition has also been encouraged by increasing internal fragmentation that has pitted increasingly well organised and financed factions against each other in quest for party control.

Like the CCM, but for very different reasons, the NRM has established a hegemonic grip on the multiparty scene in Uganda, yet faces fragmentation and factionalism, in fact far worse than CCM's. Factional contests are more pronounced at the lower levels, and clientelism is an overarching feature of the NRM political settlement.[29] What is more, the party system in Uganda is less institutionalised than Tanzania's, thus allowing individual politicians, especially members of parliament, considerable independence and leverage with implications for campaign finance sourcing.[30]

Overall, competition for Parliament in Uganda has been intense across party lines, with a very high MP turnover of more than 60 percent since 2006. NRM party primaries are characterized by intense competition, especially in constituencies where NRM candidates in general elections are almost assured of victory, thus contributing to stiff competition in primary elections and ultimately violence.[31] Party primaries are often chaotic and reveal the NRM's organisational weaknesses. By contrast, there is limited intra-party competition in opposition parties in part because chances of winning the general election as an opposition candidate are limited – more so in rural constituencies, where state structures are fused with the ruling party and heavily used against opposition candidates.

The intra-party competition in both countries is generally managed through the party's primary elections because nomination to run in national elections normally requires a successful run in the party's primary election. In Tanzania, independent candidates are not allowed. Both the CCM and CHADEMA (Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo), the main opposition party, have institutionalised competitive selection processes within the party. For CCM, these involve prospective candidates campaigning for votes among their local constituencies, followed by elections in which only registered local party members are allowed to participate.[32] Despite the decentralised nature of the candidate selection processes, the central committees of the CCM and CHADEMA retain considerable control over the primary election process through various procedures for vetting candidates and have been known to annul election results and impose candidates of their own choosing on local party constituencies.[33]

In Uganda, only the NRM held countrywide primary elections in 2015 for the 2016 general elections.[34] However, NRM procedures for selecting candidates are rather lax. In the 2011 elections, for example, five NRM ministers ran as independents after losing party primaries. Indeed, a total of 30 independents won parliamentary seats – more than all opposition parties except the Forum for Democratic Change, FDC.[35] In any case, at least for the ruling party candidates in Uganda, some of their primary election campaigns were more expensive than campaigns for the inter-party elections for parliament.

In Tanzania, there is often limited competition for 'special seats' in parliament. These are allocated through a quota-linked seat appointment such as special seats for women, youth, etc., subject to a party attaining a five percent threshold of presidential votes in the general elections. In 2015, 29 percent of all parliamentary seats (113 out of 393) were quota-based. Prospective candidates may lobby for such seats and spend money in the process. Women's special seats are typically 'awarded' to prominent or favourite female members of the two main parties.[36] In Uganda no seats are allocated in this way. Instead, women candidates compete for female-reserved district-level seats, approximately one third of all parliamentary seats. Other special interest seats for youth, people with disabilities, the army, workers and elderly are decided through electoral colleges for those respective groups. The ruling NRM tends to take almost all these special interest seats and has used them to assure its supermajority in parliament.

Private Sector Supply of Campaign Financing

Private sector growth since economic liberalisation started in the 1980s has helped to concentrate income and wealth in relatively few companies and individuals. Both countries experienced comparatively rapid growth starting in the mid-1990s. Foreign direct investment grew significantly, and several larger domestic firms – some with close ties to the ruling party – especially in Tanzania emerged.[37] Such firms and wealthy individuals are among the main donors of campaign finance to the ruling party and by far the most important generators of government revenues. In Tanzania in

2005, for example, just 286 large taxpayers accounted for almost 70 percent of domestic revenue.[38] By 2008, around 400 large taxpayers accounted for 80 percent of revenue.[39]

It is even more remarkable that among these large taxpayers, just a handful of firms contribute a disproportionally large share of the revenues. The top 15 taxpayers in Uganda contributed more than half of total corporate taxes in 2011.[40] In Tanzania, the top 15 corporate taxpayers accounted for half of all total corporate taxes in 2011,[41] and are therefore a very important source of revenue collection – also because their activities generate substantial volumes of other taxes, such as VAT, income tax from employees, various forms of excise taxes and royalties. The bottom line is that the two governments are very dependent on a limited number of companies for the total tax revenue needed to pay for the goods and services that the ruling political elites rely on to sway voters.[42]

Methodology

We used a range of data sources for the two election cycles in Tanzania and Uganda during the 2010s. We reviewed official party documents and newspaper materials, and conducted interviews with both active and retired politicians as well as people in academia, the media, and civil society – especially those engaged in election monitoring. These key informants were purposely selected based on their knowledge of the subject matter. Between 2017 and 2020, we conducted more than 50 formal and informal key informant interviews in both countries. These interviews provided useful contextual and anecdotal information and a broader picture of the dynamics of political financing.

Further, we administered a generic questionnaire between May and October 2017 to a total of 171 randomly selected MPs who had contested the last two election cycles in the two countries. We adopted a common guideline in both countries to code answers to the estimated direct cost of campaigns, which we defined as ‘monetary expenses incurred by a candidate for the purposes of securing a party’s nomination or/and contesting an election in a given constituency’. This includes expenses directly incurred in advertising; printing or hiring of campaign materials (e.g., leaflets, banners, posters, apparel, entertainment and public announcement systems, stage platforms); transportation of campaign-related resources – both people and equipment; fees (including statutory fees, such as those for nomination or registration of candidacy) and allowances paid to staffers, agents, volunteers, landlords, etc.

The survey sample was randomly drawn from the official directory of MPs in each country. In Tanzania, a total of 85 MPs (16 females) responded to the survey, out of 100 who were contacted. In Uganda, a total of 86 MPs (34 females) responded to the questionnaire, out of 120 who were contacted. The campaign cost figures presented later are weighted to reflect the actual composition of parliament.

In administering the survey, respondents were assured of confidentiality to encourage them to be truthful, yet it is likely that some MPs under-reported what they spent. Interviewees were especially reluctant to provide information about the sources of their campaign funds. Additionally, information about the first election may be affected by the fairly long recall-period (2010 and 2011) as most MPs do not keep consistent records of their campaign-related expenses and funding sources. To partly get around this, we have made use of other available studies that provide both campaign cost estimates and information about possible sources.

In sum, there are several methodological limitations to our study, especially because the data of interest are sensitive (such limitations also affect other similar surveys/analyses). In both countries, a great part of the public discussion openly links political financing to corruption. Thus, even with the promise of confidentiality, some MPs did not want to reveal information that they suspected could implicate them. Moreover, the expenditures by individual parliamentary candidates do not capture funds spent by presidential candidates during campaigning for their favoured parliamentary candidates. In addition, it is obviously difficult to quantify the value of support that ruling party candidates get from the spoils of office and the range of incumbency advantages.

Also, a conceptual challenge should be acknowledged. To separate 'money for electioneering' from routine party organisation expenses is difficult.[43] In this article, we strictly deal with money directly spent on seeking election or re-election; that is, expenditure incurred during electioneering time, and which relates directly to the competition to win an electoral contest. These limitations mean that – everything else equal – we probably underestimate the magnitude of political funding for ruling party parliamentary candidates. However, we are confident that the orders of magnitude presented here are relatively accurate and our conclusions are arguably valid.

Campaign Finance Estimates

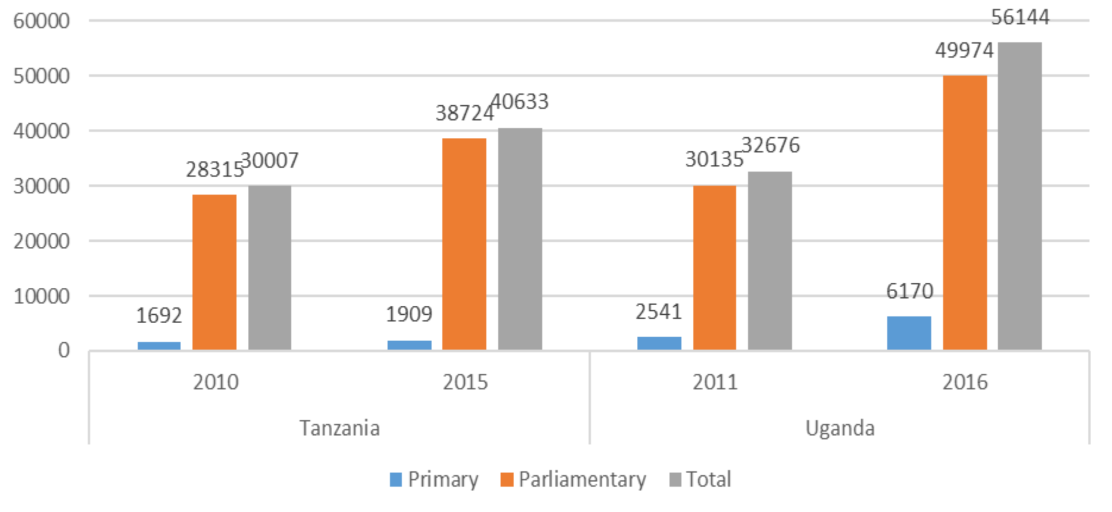
Our fieldwork shows a consensus among interviewees that the amount of money expended in campaigns has shot up in recent election cycles in both countries. Respondents also underlined the role of both demand and supply factors. A Ugandan minister, who was the government chief whip at the time of collecting data, summarized the situation this way: 'The money is obscene. Somebody tells you that he used 2 billion [shillings] to win a parliamentary election and you are like what? Even 1 billion, 800 million [shillings] in a small constituency. Why? You have to hire motorcycles, buy this, and print T-Shirts'.[44]

Below, we present some aggregate findings from interviews with MPs and key informants. The two key areas of focus are the cost of running for office and the major sources of campaign funds. We also compare our findings with analyses of other African countries to assess the extent to which campaign financing in Tanzania and Uganda is typical.

Costs of Primary and General Elections Campaigns

Tanzania’s 2015 elections and Uganda’s 2016 were the most expensive heretofore based on the self-reported estimates of MPs. Figure 1 summarises the growth in the average campaign cost per elected member for primary and parliamentary elections during the 2010s: these rose from some US dollars 30,000 to 41,000 in Tanzania, and from some US dollars 33,000 to 56,000 in Uganda.

Figure 1. Campaign cost per elected member in the Tanzania and Uganda elections of the 2010s. Primaries, parliamentary and total (USD).



Accounting for inflation, Figure 2 shows that the growth in constant 2010 US dollars was more than three times greater in Uganda (72 percent) than in Tanzania (22 percent). However, in both countries the campaign financing grew faster than the per capita income.

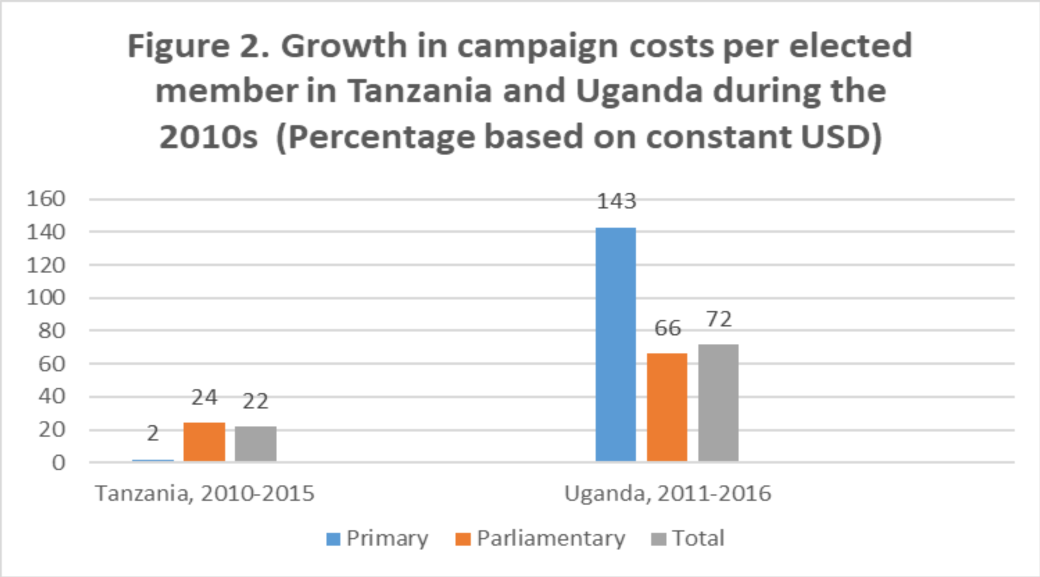


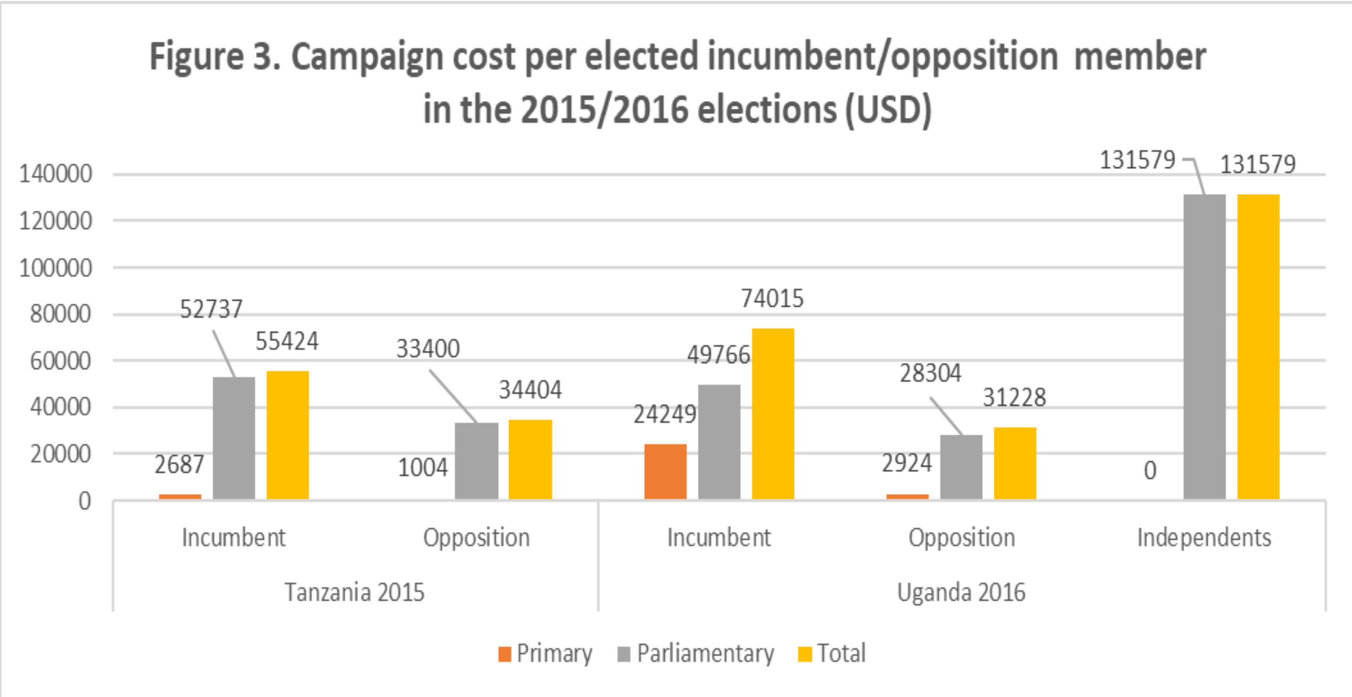
Figure 2 also shows that primary election costs grew much faster in Uganda (143 percent) than in Tanzania (2 percent) between the two elections. The modest rise in Tanzania reflects increasing scrutiny of spending and irregularities in primaries by the main political parties, particularly the CCM, which had been forced to improve transparency, integrity and compliance of its internal processes in the wake of an increasingly popular opposition challenger – CHADEMA. To underline its commitment to due process, the CCM leadership annulled the results of five primaries, two involving sitting cabinet ministers, in August 2015 following concerns over bribery and excessive spending.[45]

In Uganda, by contrast, there was a dramatic explosion in primary election costs between 2011 and 2016 cycles. This is partly because of the NRM less institutionalisation as a political party, compared to the CCM, but also the surge in competitiveness and high stakes in many constituencies where winning the NRM primaries is almost a guarantee for winning the general election. In other words, the real contest is at the party primary level. But the stiff competition in primaries does not mean general election expenditure is not high – quite to the contrary: we also see a dramatic growth in general election expenditure between 2011 and 2016.

It is also noteworthy that the estimates for Tanzania significantly exceed the parliamentary expenditure ceiling defined by Tanzania's 2015 Electoral Expenses Act, underscoring the ineffectiveness of electoral expense laws in contexts of limited enforcement capacity,[46] political will to use them and limited statutory disclosure of accounts. In Uganda, there is no legal ceiling for expenditure by parties, rather a prohibition on soliciting and receiving funding from foreign sources. However, the latter cannot be enforced since there is no transparency as parties and politicians do not make explicit their funding sources by filing financial reports to the Electoral Commission as required by law.

There have been attempts by other scholars to make quantitative estimates of campaign finances in Tanzania. For Uganda, ACFIM found in a survey of 113 MPs that the average spending per candidate was US dollars 64,300 for the 2016 elections.[47] Golooba-Mutebi found that the costs of 'electioneering' ranged from US dollars 43,000 to 143,000 in the 2016 elections, based on a very small sample of only 10 winning as well as losing candidates.[48] According to Kitamirike and Kisaakye, the average for Uganda's 2016 elections was US dollars 136,084 per candidate;[49] however, they used a more encompassing definition of campaign financing than ours, namely a 'comprehensive notion of the cost of politics that considered use of money by political actors throughout the whole electoral cycle including the pre-campaign, the campaign itself, polling day expenses and costs in its aftermath to maintain office for elected representatives'. It is therefore prudent to conclude that our campaign cost figures for Uganda are clearly within the bounds of findings by other studies.

Comparing our campaign cost figures with those from neighbouring countries, the conclusion is also that Tanzania and Uganda – despite the significant differences between them – do fall within the range of costs found in other African countries. Using a definition like ours, Wahman found that the average cost of primary and parliamentary elections for candidates winning more than 20 percent of the vote in Malawi's 2019 elections was US dollars 36,700 (and 20,200 for all candidates – including the losing candidates).[50] Mboya uses a similar encompassing definition of political financing for Kenya's 2017 elections to Kitamirike and Kisaakye's for Uganda, thus arriving at quite high estimates: '[a]t the more conservative end of the spectrum, respondents felt it would cost a minimum of [Kenya Shillings] 20 million (US dollars 196,000) to run an effective campaign across both the primary and campaign phase. At the higher end of the spectrum, respondents felt that it could cost [Kenya Shillings] 35 million (US dollars 343,000) or more'.[51]



Another key feature of campaign costs in Tanzania and Uganda during the 2010s is shown in Figure 3: incumbent party members (CCM and NRM respectively) were much better funded than opposition. In Tanzania, elected incumbent party members spent some 60 percent more (US dollars 55,400) than elected opposition members (US dollars 34,400) in the 2015 elections. The spending power of incumbents is ostensibly boosted by gratuities received by MPs at the end of their term in parliament as well as subsidies received by political parties, amounting to 2% of the national yearly budget according to their number of elected MPs, local councillors, and presidential vote share.

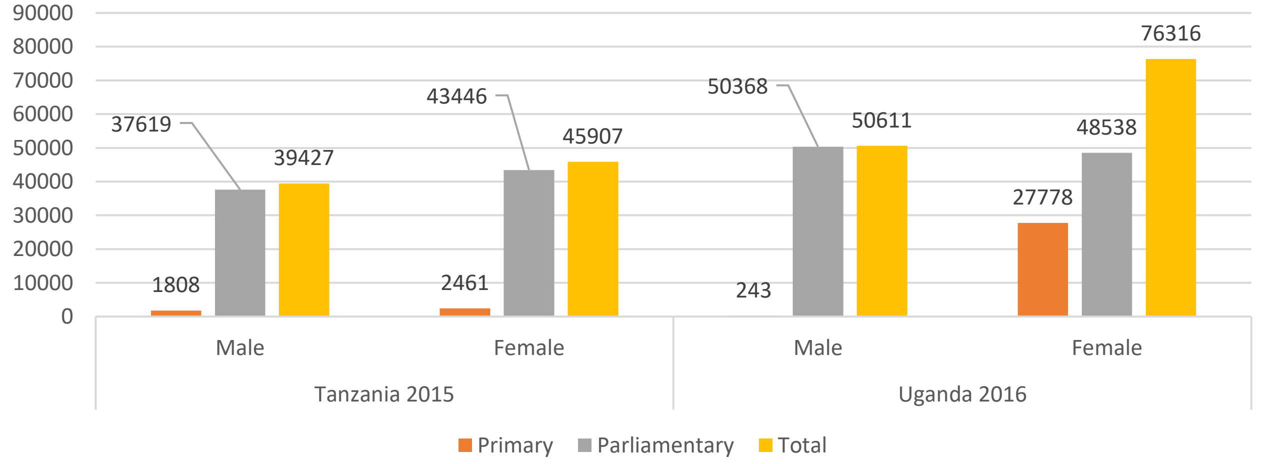
In Uganda, the difference in the 2016 elections is much higher (some 140 percent). This could be because NRM candidates benefit from official and unofficial support from the president, whose campaigns often include campaigning for MPs and extending part of his campaign war chest to his party's candidates. Additionally, private funders are more likely to fund NRM candidates, who have a higher chance of winning, than opposition challengers. Also worth noting is that independent candidates in Uganda stand out as spending more than the NRM and opposition – almost two times as much as NRM members. This is likely because independent candidates do not have the benefit of a party infrastructure (which is essentially the state for NRM candidates) and thus end up spending more because they are running their campaigns on their own.

That the incumbent party candidates spend more on campaigns than do opposition members is a pattern also found by other researchers – for example in Kenya's 2017 elections and in Malawi in 2019.[52] Ghana is an interesting case in this regard. Asante and Kunnath note that 'Money remains the lifeblood of the NPP and NDC' – the two parties that compete for power. [53] In 2016, the NPP spent slightly more on the primary elections (7 percent) than the incumbent NDC, which lost the elections. Both parties spent 75 percent or more on conducting their primary elections than smaller parties. Thus, in Ghana there appears to be parity of campaign finance for the two dominant parties regardless of which one is in power and in opposition.

A final important feature of the campaign costs in 2015/2016 is that, on average, female elected candidates to parliament spent more money on elections than elected male candidates did – more so in Uganda than in Tanzania (see Figure 4). In Tanzania, electoral politics, party membership and leadership remain dominated by men, with limited opportunities for women beyond affirmative action. What is more, the affirmative action seats reserved for women are decided based on the share of the popular vote a party garners, and parties internally select their representatives for the special seats allotted to them. This provision of appointive seats often means that Tanzanian parties (CCM and opposition) deprioritise gender in their selection of candidates for competitive seats opting for candidates with the better chances of winning with their own campaign funds than relying on the ruling party. Therefore, in practice parties (s)elect the most well-resourced candidates (financially or politically or both) capable of campaigning with little recourse to party support to run in constituency elections.

In Uganda, the difference between female and male campaign expenditures is very high because female candidates compete in districts that are often larger than the regular parliamentary constituencies where men compete. Kampala district, for example, has eight constituencies, all represented by men, but only one women-seat, and female candidates have to campaign across the entire district and reach all voters, both men and women. The women candidates competing in Kampala district therefore cover the equivalent of eight constituencies where men (and some women candidates too) compete. In addition to running in seats reserved for women, female candidates in Uganda also compete in constituencies against male opponents.

Figure 4. Campaign cost per elected member in the 2015/2016 elections by gender (USD).



Our findings on the financing of female candidates generally differ from that of other scholars. For example, according to IDEA, ‘Women’s lower socio-economic positions in most countries mean that they may lack economic independence to pursue a political career’.[54] Further, that ‘[g]ender socialisation roles, which position men as the “breadwinners,” mean that men are more accustomed to raising funds for their own use, while women have been traditionally relegated to the private sphere. Women also lack access to moneyed networks and credit and political clientelism.’ Similarly, Wang notes that the ‘cost of politics’ is ‘gendered’… ‘in the sense that the implications of the high cost of running for office are typically different for male and female candidates, with women – who are likely to have fewer resources and less access to resources – more likely to be deterred from standing’.[55] To this, Wang and Yoon add with respect to Uganda that ‘women are financially disadvantaged, compared with their male counterparts, in terms of access to patronage and independent resources’.[56] Our findings contradict these explanations and point to the need for more research on this issue.

Finally, it is instructive to underline the estimated total costs of campaigning in Tanzania and Uganda, which for all 263 directly elected parliamentary members in Tanzania was US dollars 10.7 million in 2015 and US dollars 16.2 million for Uganda’s 289 directly elected MPs for the 2016 election. Moreover, to get the full picture of the money spent on elections, the cost incurred by unsuccessful candidates should be included, but we do not have information on these figures. Based on our general knowledge of the elections, we believe that the total campaign cost for all candidates (winners and losers) was likely twice the cost of those elected: that is, some 22 million US dollars in Tanzania in 2015, and 32 million in Uganda in 2016. These figures do not include expenditures done directly by political parties during campaigns, which are much higher, nor do they include expenses incurred by presidential candidates in assisting their party MP candidates.

Sources of Campaign Financing

Our fieldwork shows that funding political campaigns increasingly draws from the domestic private sector. In Tanzania, a CCM Secretary General noted that since at least the 2005 elections, prominent local businessmen started entering politics, helped by money derived from lucrative joint ventures with multinationals.[57] As elections have become competitive and costly, the dynamics of sources too have evolved and become complex. In Uganda a ruling party chief whip summarised the situation as follows:[58]

> I have attended meetings here where politicians who have made it or failed to make it to parliament and are asking the president to be assisted financially and the president does not enjoy the pressure. Those who have failed come to him because they are in debts, those who have won come expecting money, but the money is not there, they bounce back to the president and say salary alone is not enough or all our salary is mortgaged, and we are getting zero money to push us.

Our survey data reflects these observations. In Tanzania's 2015 parliamentary elections, the most important source of campaign money was 'personal savings' while 'donations from supporters' were the main source in Uganda's 2016 elections. Private sources[59] made up more than 70 percent of campaign finances for successful MPs contestants in both Tanzanian and Uganda. They include donations from wealthy individuals or companies, although in our interviews the respondents were unwilling to divulge this due to the relatively sensitive nature of the issue, the increasingly repressive post-election political climate and overt actions by state institutions against private firms and businesses.[60]

In contrast, while private sources are dominant in both countries, Ugandan MPs are much more dependent on 'supporters contributions' and on the 'party' than Tanzanian MPs, which is rather surprising because the CCM is a more established and stronger party than the NRM resonating with research that suggests that the re-election of incumbent MPs is strongly influenced by party institutions.[61] Moreover, as seen in Figure 3, the Ugandan independent MPs outspent MPs of both the ruling party and the opposition, pointing to the observation that campaign money sources are primarily personal and that independents do not have access to the non-monetary and indirect campaign benefits from the state which ruling party candidates enjoy.

Finally, it is worth noting that party-funding became a significant source in Uganda following the 2015 introduction of government subsidies to all political parties with representation in parliament. Party subsidies were also introduced in Tanzania and, just as in Uganda, based on the parties' respective proportions of parliamentary seats. Prior to the 2015 elections, it is estimated that the ruling CCM party received up to 80 percent of all government subventions to political parties in Tanzania.[62] Recipient parties need to win at least 5 percent of the presidential vote to be eligible, a requirement which excludes minority parties from state support.

Although respondents indicated that they mainly self-funded through personal savings, contributions and loans, our interviews with independent observers and analysts revealed that the privatisation of state enterprises in both countries led to the shift of sources of campaign financing from state businesses to the private sector. In both countries, the business community is interested in election outcomes, and its members thus provide funding to individual MPs and parties, including the opposition. For example, prominent Ugandan businessman, Hassan Basajjabalaba who has served as head of the 'entrepreneurial league' of the ruling party, directly funds NRM parliamentary candidates in western Uganda, especially in his home sub-region of Bushenyi. In turn, he has been a routine beneficiary of preferential treatment on financial matters both by parliament and its oversight committees and the executive, especially the state house on matters of taxation and access to state rents.

Similarly in Tanzania, prominent entrepreneurs including Rostam Aziz and Nazir Karamagi have occupied key leadership positions within the CCM responsible for coordinating party finances. Aziz served as the CCM treasurer between 2005 and 2007 while Karamagi has recently been elected a provincial party chair. Both have served in the CCM's powerful decision-making organ, the National Executive Council. In turn, both have been recipients of commercial benefits associated with preferential treatment from the Executive.

The general picture of campaign finance sources that emerges from this study is that access to funds depends much on the political candidates themselves: their own wealth and income plus their networks to private sector (primarily domestically owned) companies, even in Tanzania, where respondents indicated 'private sources' as the largest source, and with the smaller role of financial support from the party. This corresponds with other research on Kenya, and on Ghana, where '[p]olitical 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'.[63] This implies that the sources of finance for campaigns are in flux and differ across countries but largely converge on private sources. Tanzania and Uganda illustrate this very well.

Conclusions

While there is more to campaigning than money, the estimates presented in this article show that the demand for financing electoral politics has accelerated in both countries since the economic and political liberalisation of the 1990s/early 2000s. The full picture of how expensive electioneering has become remains difficult to pin down precisely, but the evidence gathered in this study suggests that Tanzania's and Uganda's 2015 and 2016 elections were the most expensive ever, spurred by the expected benefits of holding political office, and by increased inter- and intra-party competition for votes.

However, the democratic playing field is not level, and opposition parties tend to be disadvantaged. Money sometimes speaks louder than votes. Large and rising amounts are spent by especially the ruling parties in both countries, though more so in Uganda than in Tanzania. There are two possible explanations why Ugandan MPs spend more than their Tanzanian counterparts. First, the CCM is more institutionalised, well-established and has a robust party structure than the NRM. Its party machinery is extensive and rooted across the country, making campaigning cheaper, despite rise in competitiveness. Second, while Tanzania's limits on campaign financing is not rigorously enforced and the regulatory system is ineffective, the limits nevertheless make a difference compared to Uganda where there are no statutory limits on campaign expenditure and the ruling party never submits books of account to the electoral commission as required by law. In Tanzania, statutory requirements to submit accounts to an executive-appointed auditor general further reinforces the need to comply with funding legislation over fears of sanctions, often at the discretion of another executive-appointed official, the political parties' registrar.

One last takeaway is that women MPs spend more than men. In Tanzania, one important reason is that parties believe voters are prejudiced against female candidates and thus additional efforts are required to secure votes. This bias also derives from the special seats system which excludes men, with the unintended consequence of raising the costs of female participation in open competition as the latter is treated as encroachment onto already limited spaces for men. In Uganda, the districts in which women run are larger (and therefore more costly to campaign in) than the regular constituencies where men compete. This said, following the money into differences in campaign financing for men and women requires more research – as does the important issue of the sources of campaign finance and the implications for democratisation of the increasing importance of private finance in politics in African countries.

Notes

[1] McNamee, Hamukoma and Mwanawasa, *Elections in Africa.*

[2] Kulick and Nassmacher, "Do Parties Spend"; Sule et.al, "Issues and Regulations".

[3] Bardi, Bartolini and Treschel, 'Party Adaptation and Change'.

[4] Ham and Lindberg, "Vote Buying Is".

[5] Mendilow, *Money, Corruption.*

[6] E.g., Arriola, *Multiethnic Coalitions*; Butler, *Paying for Politics*; Mendilow, *Money*, *Corruption*; Bleck and van de Walle, *Electoral Politics in Africa*; Hasen, *Plutocrats United*; Norris, Van Es, and Fennis, *Checkbook Elections*; OECD, *Financing Democracy.*

[7] Murray, Muriaas and Wang, "Editorial Introduction".

[8] Kjær, Ulriksen and Bak, "Unpacking Revenue Bargaining".

[9] E.g., Arriola, *Multiethnic Coalitions;* Bleck and van de Walle, *Electoral Politics in Africa*.

[10] Kabeer, "Gender Equality"; Murray, Muriaas and Wang, "Editorial Introduction".

[11] Falguera, Jones, and Ohman, *Funding of Political Parties.*

[12] Other sources of campaign funding are therefore not included in our demand-supply perspective: government subsidies, grassroot financing, income from graft, government spending favouring the ruling party, etc. However, these sources are included in the survey results.

[13] Khan, "Political Settlements"; Kjær, Ulriksen and Bak, "Unpacking Revenue Bargaining".

[14] Whitfield et al., *The Politics of African,* 290.

[15] Destri, "No Money, No Party"; Ichino and Nathan, "Do Primaries Improve".

[16] Valentine, "Rewards for High Public"; Khisa, "Inclusive Co-optation".

[17] Andreoni and Sial, *Not Business as usual*; Tangri and Mwenda, *The Politics of Elite Corruption.*

[18] Arriola, *Multiethnic Coalitions*, 138.

[19] Nassmacher, "Introduction: Political Parties", 8.

[20] Hasen, *Plutocrats United*; Therkildsen, "Plutocratic Funding of Politics".

[21] Whitfield et al., *The Politics of African.*

[22] See, generally, Bardi, Bartolini and Treschel, "Party Adaptation and Change"; Hasen, *Plutocrats United*; Bryan and Baer, *Money in Politics*; Lindberg, "It's our Time to 'Chop'".

[23] Nilsson, "The Instrumentalization of CSR"; Whitfield et al., *The Politics of African.*

[24] European Union, *United Republic of Tanzania,* 24.

[25] Khisa and Rwengabo, "Beyond Legal Reform".

[26] EISA, *Election Observer Mission Report,* 57; see also Collord, "From the Electoral Battleground", endnote 23.

[27] Kjær and Katusiimeh, "Nomination Violence in Uganda's"; Kjær and Katusiimeh, "Growing but not Transforming"; Collord, "From the Electoral Battleground".

[28] Warren, "An Uphill Battle", Table A3.

[29] Kjær and Katusiimeh, "Growing but not Transforming"; Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey, "Investigating the Links"; Vokes and Wilkins, Party, patronage and coercion".

[30] Collord, "From the Electoral Battleground".

[31] Kjær and Katusiimeh, "Nomination Violence in Uganda's".

[32] The Commonwealth Observer Group, *Tanzania General Elections.*

[33] Komba, *The Electoral Process*; The Citizen, "Dk Khamis Kigwangala".

[34] ACFIM, *Extended Study of Campaign*, 13.

[35] Faller, "The System Matters", 435-6.

[36] Mørck, *The United Republic of Tanzania*; Yoon, "Special Seats for Women".

[37] Andreoni and Sial, *Not Business as usual.*

[38] Fjeldstad and Moore, "Tax Reform and State-Building", 256.

[39] African Development Bank, *Domestic Resource Mobilisation,* 247.

[40] Uganda Revenue Authority, *Revenue and Trade Performance Report,* Table 1.

[41] URT, *The Tanzania Five Year.*

[42] Therkildsen, "Plutocratic Funding of Politics", 17.

[43] Nassmacher, "Introduction: Political Parties", 34.

[44] Interview with Ruth Nankabirwa, Minister of Energy, November 2017, Kampala. She was Government Chief Whip and Woman MP for Kiboga District at the time of the interview. One billion shillings was approximately US dollars 280,000 in 2017.

[45] Mwananchi, "CCM yatengua matokeo".

[46] TEMCO, *The 2015 Tanzania General Elections.*

[47] ACFIM, *Extended Study of Campaign*.

[48] Golooba-Mutebi, *The Cost of Politics in Uganda,* 3.

[49] Kitamirike and Kisaakye, "Impact of the Cost of Politics", 11.

[50] Wahman, "The Costs of Politics", 1.

[51] Mboya, "The Cost of Parliamentary Politics", 9.

[52] Wahman, "The Costs of Politics"; Ibid.

[53] Asante and Kunnath, "The Cost of Politics in Ghana", 7. The NPP is New Patriotic Party and NDC the National Democratic Congress, the two dominant parties in Ghana's Fourth Republic since 1992.

[54] IDEA, *Women's Political Participation,* 101.

[55] Wang, "Funding Demands and Gender", 6.

[56] Wang and Yoon, "Recruitment Mechanisms for Reserved Seats", 314.

[57] Interview with Bashiru Ally, CCM Secretary General, 5 July 2017, Dar es Salaam. (Note: The interview took place before he was appointed to this position, which he has since left.)

[58] Interview with Ruth Nankabirwa (see footnote 4).

[59] That is: money from own business, loans, personal savings and other sources, and sold property.

[60] Beaumont, "Tanzania President Magufuli Condemned"; Paget, *The Rally-Intensive Ground Campaign*; Reuter, "Illicit Financial Flows and Governance"; Wangwe and Bourguignon, *An Institutional Diagnostic of Tanzania*.

[61] Warren, "An Uphill Battle"; Collord, *Political Finance and Authoritarian Party.*

[62] Magolowondo, Falguera and Matsimbe, *Regulating Political Party Financing.*

[63] Mboya, "The Cost of Parliamentary Politics", 9; Asante and Kunnath, "The Cost of Politics in Ghana", 6.

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