

The sustainability of Electoral Campaigns Financing

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Baseline Assumptions

- *Money is required for a healthy/competitive democracy*
- Funds can allow contestants to reach the electorate with their messages.
- Funds are needed to establish a campaign office, hire staff, do polling, get the campaign message out
- Cost of Campaign
- *Preferential treatment*
- what do contributors get in return?
- political parties and candidates are increasingly absorbed by the issue of raising funds losing touch with the electorate, corrupting policies
- **low-income voters have less and less capacity to influence political outcomes and policy in their interest in the long run**
- *Diminishes trust in the process*

RISKS associated to unregulated electoral campaigns

- ***Uneven playing field, the risk that large sums of money in politics give undue advantage over others and constrains competition***
- Access to television, print media, billboards, rally venues. Muting rival the messages
- ruling party controls the government apparatus and uses it to its own advantages
- *Unequal access to office – the risk that certain sectors of a population lacking money are prevented from running for office or getting meaningful representation*
- ***Co-opted politicians – the risk that those who donate funds will control the politicians they finance***
- ***Tainted politics – the risk that dirty or illicit money will corrupt the system and undermine the rule of law.***
- *Investing in politics is a natural step for an industry that requires weak law enforcement and a measure of control over crucial public institutions*

How to diminish the costs and the risks

- ***Contribution limits***
- ***Contribution bans***
- This approach prohibits donations from certain groups and individuals, usually foreign nationals, corporations and unions
- ***Spending limits***
- A popular approaches that has the intent to a) restrain cost of political campaigns and b) establish an even playing field
- an infringement of freedom of expression (court cases)
- In non-democratic regimes, imposing low and strict limits on campaign expenditure might marginalize opposition
- Election campaigns constrained by such a low spending limit are insufficient to provide voters with adequate information about candidates and policies
- ***Campaign time limits***

Public Funding

- In most cases where public funding is provided, the aim is both to enhance the positive role played by political parties and to help curb some of the excesses of money in politics.
- ***What are then the goals that public funding systems are commonly hoped to fulfill?***
- Increase capacity of political parties and candidates to reach the electorate -informed choices (shorter term)
- Level the playing field
- Increase institutionalization of political parties
- Reduce dependence on influential donors
- ***Who should receive funds?***
- *All registered parties/fragmentation but will reduce the dominance of larger parties , proportional to past support/does not allow for changes,*
- **Positive - Reform through public finance**

Disclosure/Transparency

- No consensus exists on what constitutes best practice. There are broad international obligations The United Nations Convention Against Corruption, and regional organizations. The Council of Europe, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the African Union (AU), they, all urge their members to adopt guidelines for political finance within their national legislations.
- What is clear is that is that limits and prohibition can only work if there are adequate rules for disclosure.
- Disclosure allows the government and the public to keep score on the amounts, sources and destinations of money in electoral campaigns
- The risk of harassment as a result of disclosure is more pronounced in post-conflict states
- Transparency may not be the most important priority in the most unfree countries. Prioritize competitiveness over transparency?

Enforcement of campaign finance laws

- Such a body should have the power not only to monitor parties' accounts and investigate potential political finance violations but also to impose stringent sanctions
- Global experience clearly indicates that regulation and monitoring by government agencies is not sufficient, an active civil society and vigilant media is necessary if effective oversight is to be achieved.
- Bearable requirements

Conclusions - recommendations

- Money is necessary for democratic politics, and political parties must have access to funds to play their part in the political process. Regulation must not curb healthy competition.
- regulation is desirable
- The context and political culture must be taken into account when devising strategies for controlling money in politics
- Effective regulation and disclosure can help to control adverse effects of the role of money in politics.
- Effective oversight depends on activities in interaction by several stakeholders (such as regulators, civil society and the media) and based on transparency



THANK YOU