



GHANA CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

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Press Release

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CDD-Ghana Calls for Collaborative, Evidence-Based Reform to Regulate Political Financing in Ghana

The Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) has taken note of public reactions to recent incidents of vote buying reported during the New Patriotic Party (NPP) presidential primaries and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) parliamentary primary in the Ayawaso East Constituency.

CDD-Ghana further notes the actions taken by the NDC National Executives, the Majority Caucus in Parliament, and the President in response to the Ayawaso East constituency incident, as well as the public commentary from Members of Parliament, civil society organizations, the media, and citizens. The Center welcomes the renewed public interest in addressing the monetization of Ghana's electoral politics. We also acknowledge emerging reform proposals, including the [Private Member's Bill](#) introduced by the Member of Parliament for Asante Akim North Constituency, and [reform advocacy](#) by Occupy Ghana.

While these developments reflect an important moment of national concern, CDD-Ghana emphasizes that any effort to regulate political and campaign financing must be guided by empirical evidence, built through inclusive stakeholder consultations, and aligned with global best practices.

CDD-Ghana's Longstanding Concern About Money in Ghanaian Politics

Since 2004, under the Fourth Republic, CDD-Ghana has consistently raised concerns about the growing influence of money in Ghana's politics. The high cost of elections, opaque fundraising practices, and weak enforcement of existing rules have heightened the risks of corruption and undue influence of wealthy interests, thereby undermining democratic competition, representation, accountability, and public trust. Since 2017, CDD-Ghana has intensified research and advocacy efforts on political and campaign financing, documenting rising campaign costs and increasing dependence on opaque and potentially illicit funding sources.

A [2018 study](#) conducted by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and CDD-Ghana found that the cost of contesting parliamentary elections increased by 59 percent between 2012 and 2016, with candidates spending an average of GHS 389,803 (US\$85,000).

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A [follow-up study](#) in 2020, led by CDD-Ghana with support from Adam Smith International (ASI), confirmed a sharp upward trend in campaign expenditure, with costs rising to as much as GHS 4 million on the average. This estimate includes spending related to “nurturing the constituency” in the two years preceding a candidate’s filing to participate in the parliamentary primaries. The study also found that a significant share of campaign financing originated from opaque and potentially illicit sources, including funds linked to organized criminal activity.

The Center, working through its collaborative initiative with media, **Corruption Watch**, has undertaken a number of investigative journalistic work focused on generating empirical data on the influence of money during parliamentary primaries, elections of party executives from polling station level to national, as well as tracking abuse of incumbency during presidential elections.

These findings and works underscore the urgency of comprehensive political finance reform to improve transparency, accountability, and the integrity of Ghana's electoral process.

CDD-Ghana’s Ongoing Reform Work

Working with a 25-member multi-stakeholder group since 2022, the Center developed a road map for policy and legal reform in 2023. The roadmap informed the drafting of a model law on political financing for Ghana, which was reviewed by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). The model law has been shared with the Attorney General for consideration and potential adoption by the government.

With the support of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom, the Center has begun consultation on the proposed model law. Preliminary engagements were held with political parties and the private sector in 2025. As part of its continuing public education and reform advocacy, CDD-Ghana will, in the coming weeks, convene ten (10) regional fora to discuss political finance reform proposals, including those previously recommended by the Constitution Review Commission (CRC) and other stakeholders. These forums will provide an opportunity for citizens, political actors, institutions, and experts to deliberate on practical reforms that can command national legitimacy and bipartisan support.

A Call for Coherent Legislative Reform

CDD-Ghana urges Members of Parliament, key stakeholders and the public to pursue reform through a coherent and comprehensive legislative approach. This requires close collaboration with the Attorney-General’s Department to develop legislation that addresses the systemic drivers of vote buying and political corruption.

Several reform pathways have been proposed, including:

- the enactment of a standalone Political Finance Law;
- amendments to the Political Parties Act, 2000 (Act 574) to strengthen disclosure, enforcement, and sanctions;
- revisions to relevant electoral regulations, including PNDCL 284, to expressly bring internal party processes under the ambit of the law and review evidential burden for enforcement.

CDD-Ghana stresses that reforms will be insufficient unless they comprehensively address the broader political finance system, including party and candidate financing, candidate expenditure, third-party financing, disclosure requirements, abuse of incumbency and enforcement capacity.

CDD-Ghana's Commitment

CDD-Ghana will continue to work with the Government, Parliament, political parties, citizens and all stakeholders to advance an evidence-based and enforceable political finance reform agenda that strengthens and consolidates Ghana's democracy and promotes inclusive development.

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About CDD-Ghana

Established in 1998, Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) is an independent not-for-profit think-and-do-tank that works through research, policy engagement, thought leadership, and civic dialogue and partnerships to promote and strengthen democracy, good governance, and inclusive development in Ghana and the rest of Africa. A founding Core Partner (and Ghana National Partner) of Afrobarometer, CDD-Ghana is also the convener and secretariat for the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), West Africa Election Observers Network (WAEON), and West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network (WADEMOS).

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