

The Economics of Elections in Somaliland

The financing of political parties and candidates



ALY VERJEE, ADAN Y. ABOKOR,
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COVER: Women voting in Somaliland, 28 November 2012.

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Map 1. Somalia

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Acknowledgements

This report presents the findings of an independent study on the economics of elections in Somaliland. The study was conducted by a team of researchers from the Rift Valley Institute (RVI) in collaboration with the Academy for Peace and Development (APD), with fieldwork undertaken in 2013 and early 2014 in Somaliland and Kenya. The research coordinator was Aly Verjee. The study forms part of the research programme of the Nairobi Forum for Research, Policy and Local Knowledge, and was funded by the UK Department for International Development.

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Executive summary

1 East African Globe. 'Somaliland upper parliament postpones the 2015 elections for 22 months', 11 May 2015.

2 Translation by Ibrahim Hashi Jama of Article 9, Constitution of Somaliland (2000); online at http://www.somalilandlaw.com/Somaliland_Constitution/body_somaliland_constitution.htm.

3 Translation by Ibrahim Hashi Jama of Article 6(5), Political Associations and Parties Law (2011); online at http://www.somalilandlaw.com/xeerka_xisbiyadda.htm

4 Translation by Ibrahim Hashi Jama of Article 24, Political Associations and Parties Law (2011); see also Ibrahim Hashi Jama, 'Consolidation of the Regulation of Political Associations and Parties Law 2011 and its Amendments', *Somalilandlaw.com*, 2012.

On 28 November 2012, Somaliland conducted its second local council elections since its independence was declared in May 1991. Councils—district and municipal—are the lowest elected level of public administration in Somaliland. This was the fifth election held since the first local council elections in 2002. Presidential elections had been held in 2003 and 2010, and parliamentary in 2005. The next parliamentary and presidential elections, due in 2015, were rescheduled to 2017 in May 2015.¹ The 2012 elections saw a record number of candidates compete and the highest ever voter turnout recorded in a Somaliland election.

Somaliland's electoral laws allows new political associations (*urur*) to be formed once every ten years in advance of local council elections, while its constitution limits the number of legally registered political parties (*xisbi*) to three at any one time. Associations then compete for the right to become political parties through local council elections.² The United Peoples' Democratic Party (UDUB), the Justice and Welfare Party (UCID), and Kulmiye became the three legal parties in 2002 by winning the most votes in that election.³

Consequently, the 2012 local council election had two outcomes: the vote determined both which individual candidates would win and which political associations would become parties, or which existing parties would retain legal status. If a candidate from an unsuccessful association was elected, he or she would be required to affiliate with a new, legal party.⁴ This requirement to affiliate to an official party applies to all levels of government; theoretically, the president of Somaliland would have had to join a new party had his party not retained its official status, or else continue in office as an independent.

Fifteen political associations filed applications for the right to contest the local elections alongside Kulmiye (the governing party since 2010), and UDUB (the governing party from 2002 to 2010), and UCID. Of the 15 prospective associations, six met the

statutory requirements and, ultimately, five fielded candidates. UDUB did not stand in the election, thus losing its status as a legal party.

Despite the process of democratization, the country's electoral system remains vulnerable on multiple fronts. In the aftermath of the 2012 elections, concerns about the way the system was working—including concerns about election financing—were openly expressed by voters, politicians and parties alike. Relative to previous polls, the November 2012 electoral process appeared to show a sharp increase in spending on individual electoral campaigns as reported by candidates, political parties and political associations.

Little attention has so far been paid to the role of campaign finance in analyses of Somaliland's electoral processes. This study aims to partially address this gap by assessing and mapping the sources of income and the principal expenditure made by candidates and political parties in Somaliland's 2005 parliamentary and 2012 local council elections.⁵

The study finds that in the 2012 local council elections as much as USD 50 million may have been mobilized for election campaign expenses. These costs far exceed those of administering the election, and amount to almost half of the country's entire national annual budget for 2012.

In part, increased spending in 2012 can be attributed to the election's additional significance in determining which political parties would retain official party status for the next ten years, or lose out to newly formed political associations. In 2011, Somaliland's national assembly adopted an open list system of proportional representation for the local council elections. Open lists allow voters to choose a candidate regardless of the order in which they appear on the party or association list. In a closed list, by contrast, a voter only chooses a party or association, and candidates are selected in order of their ranking on the list.

The choice of an open list electoral system encouraged intense individual competition between candidates, and consequently increased expenditure as candidates were forced to compete against both their rivals from other parties and against candidates on their own party or association's list. But the political

⁵ This is not to suggest that no attention had been paid to the issue before the 2012 polls; SONSAF notably observed in its pre-election report: 'Political parties generally spend huge amounts of money to create and re-create supporters': Somaliland Non State Actors Forum (SONSAF), 'Citizens' Dialogue: Pre-Election Consultation Forums on Upcoming Local Council Elections', Hargeysa, 2012.

system only partly explains the increase in campaign spending in 2012. Other factors include numbers—there were more candidates contesting than in previous elections—and the intensity of the local council elections, which were more competitive because they were about local politics as well as national; the political and economic stakes in Somaliland were higher, as government has become more established, the economy has grown and new industries such as prospecting for hydrocarbons have developed; and investments by the members of the diaspora in Somaliland have increased since 2002. Furthermore, elections appear to be playing an important role in economic redistribution in Somaliland society, with spending by candidates motivated, too, by societal norms and expectations, peer pressure amongst candidates, and low levels of voter loyalty.

The need and ability to raise funds for electoral purposes has significantly altered elector and candidate behaviour in Somaliland, even giving rise to a whole new set of expressions about election-related activity (see Table 7). In 2012, with reported campaign expenditures many times the salary or allowance elected council members could expect to receive in office, winning candidates reported a preoccupation with finding ways to recoup their costs (thus implying the possible need to resort to illicit behaviour in office). Many unsuccessful candidates from both 2005 and 2012 reported having substantial amounts of debt, and often said they were unable to repay them.

By far the majority of candidates and representatives of political parties and political associations interviewed said they thought that increased spending on elections was a negative development for Somaliland. Most candidates had not expected the election campaign would be as expensive as it was and described the experience of running for office negatively. When asked, most said they would not run again. Women candidates cited particular difficulties in raising funds to compete in elections; social norms worked against their ability to raise funds and this contributed towards few women being elected.

The study finds that Somaliland's electoral democracy does share characteristics with other developing democracies, but also demonstrates significant divergences. One area of similarity is

that personal and family financial resources are the leading source of candidate finance in Somaliland, as in many other democracies in sub-Saharan Africa. One area of divergence is in the purchase of the recreational narcotic *qat*⁶ as the biggest single campaign expense reported by candidates. The proportion of expenditure on it appears to far exceed the comparable category of expense made in other sub-Saharan African countries in terms of money or other direct benefits to voters. Grown on shrubs by smallholders, mostly in highland areas of Ethiopia, Yemen and Kenya, and transported by air and road to consumers in urban and lowland areas, in many Somali communities the chewing of *qat* has evolved from a social or ceremonial pastime into an expensive daily habit.

Although the ubiquitous and high level of expenditure on *qat* implies that it is a necessary campaign expenditure, candidates were split in their feelings over whether spending on *qat* is an effective way of securing votes. Some voters said it is not necessarily effective—people often admitted they would take whatever *qat* was on offer but it would not affect their vote. Other significant expenses for candidates included transportation and fuel, party rallies and voters' clubs—social venues where supporters would meet—and money spent on vote brokers, who have emerged as an important way of mobilizing support for individual candidates.

The study shows that political party and candidate financing are distinct and draw on different sources. Funding from the diaspora, while reported by some candidates, was not significant for most of them. The diaspora's support was significant for political parties and associations, but only a small proportion of these funds found their way to individual candidates. Political parties also obtained significant support from businesses, but there is limited transparency in these relationships, and it is unclear whether such support was premised on the expectations of these financiers, and what those expectations were.

Vote buying was commonly reported and expenditure by candidates suggests it was more widespread than first realized. Many electors reported that they had been paid to vote multiple times, and sometimes explained that multiple voting allowed for differing social obligations to be fulfilled: one could vote both for the voter's preferred candidate and the rival candidate who

7 SONSAF, 'Press Statement: Local Council Election Held on Nov. 28, 2012', Hargeysa, 2012. Michael Walls and Steve Kibble, 'Somaliland: Change and Continuity. Report by International Election Observers on the June 2010 Presidential Elections in Somaliland', Progressio, London, 2011; Steve Kibble and Michael Walls, 'Swerves on the Road: Report by International Election Observers on the 2012 Local Elections in Somaliland', Progressio, London, 2013.

had offered an incentive to the voter. There are suggestions that social controls that once limited the scope of electoral fraud and malpractice have weakened over time; the increased monetization of elections appears to have exacerbated a problem of voter fraud. In this light, the record voter turnout, ordinarily a statistic to be commended, is a much more suspect achievement.

While Somaliland's 2012 elections were conducted successfully and continue to distinguish Somaliland's polity from others in the Horn of Africa, significant challenges remain. Independent, national, and international observers broadly endorsed the election as successful—as they had previous polls—but noted their concerns over voter registration and apparent multiple voting on polling day.⁷ Other issues, too, hold significance for future elections in Somaliland, neighbouring Puntland and Somalia. Laws to regulate campaign finance exist, but are largely unimplemented, and work to address issues related to campaign finance should be considered part of any process of electoral reform, particularly with both parliamentary and presidential elections due in the near future.

1. Overview of the study

A decade of elections

In the aftermath of the overthrow of Siyad Barre in Somalia in early 1991, people of northern Somalia established the independent state of Somaliland. However, while Somaliland has a national flag, a national anthem, effective government institutions, its own currency, a police force, and has conducted frequent elections, its independence has been recognised by no government or international body: most continue to treat Somaliland as a region of Somalia, albeit an autonomous one.

A constitutional referendum was held in Somaliland in 2001. This introduced a multi-party electoral system of government, in which the number of official political parties is restricted to three. The following year, the first nationwide elections were held for district and municipal local councils. These elections were contested by political associations, of which the three with the largest number of votes became official parties: UDUB, Kulmiye and UCID. Since the first local council elections, polls have been organised to elect the Somaliland president (2003, 2010) and parliament (2005). The presidential election of 2003 was won narrowly by Dahir Riyale Kahin of UDUB, who served for seven years. His successor, the incumbent President Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud ‘Silanyo’—a veteran minister of both Somali and Somaliland governments—was elected in 2010. The next presidential poll is due in 2015.

The Somaliland parliament has two chambers: a House of Representatives (82 members) and a House of Elders (also 82 members, made up of traditional leaders). In the last parliamentary elections in 2005, UDUB secured 33 seats, Kulmiye 28, and UCID came third with 21. The next parliamentary poll is also due in 2015, as part of a general election.

At the lowest elected level of public administration in Somaliland, the local council elections in 2012—the subject of

8 Control of eastern Sanaag is contested by neighbouring Puntland.

9 Shari Bryan and Denise Baer (eds.), 'Money in Politics: A Study of Party Financing Practices in 22 Countries', National Democratic Institute of International Affairs, Washington, D.C., 2005; John Ishiyama, Anne Batta, and Angela Sortor, 'Political Parties, Independents and the Electoral Market in Sub-Saharan Africa', *Party Politics* 19/5 (2011): 695–712.

10 Jeff Conroy-Krutz and Carolyn Logan, 'Museveni and the 2011 Ugandan Election: Did the Money Matter?', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 50/4 (2012): 625–55; Michael Bratton, 'Vote Buying and Violence in Nigerian Election Campaigns', *Electoral Studies* 27 (2008): 621–32; Paul Collier and Pedro Vicente, 'Violence, Bribery, and Fraud: The Political Economy of Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa', *Public Choice* 153/2 (2011): 117–47; Nubia Evertsson, 'Political Corruption and Electoral Funding: A Cross-National Analysis', *International Criminal Justice Review* 23/1 (2013): 75–94; Staffan Lindberg, "'It's Our Time to 'Chop'": Do Elections in Africa Feed Neo-Patrimonialism rather than Counteract it?', *Democratization* 10/2 (2003): 121–40.

this paper—were the first held in ten years. Taking place on 28 November 2012, the local council elections saw a record number of candidates compete and the highest ever voter turnout recorded in a Somaliland election.

Methodology

The research team used a combination of individual interviews and focus group discussions. The study surveyed 93 candidates, 29 from the 2005 parliamentary elections (11.8 per cent of the 246 candidates in the election), and 64 from the 2012 local council elections (2.7 per cent of the 2,368 candidates in the election). Of those questioned, 66 per cent were candidates elected in 2005, and 56 per cent were candidates elected in 2012. Most respondents came from one of the political parties, Kulmiye, UCID and Waddani, which had contested the 2012 elections, the former political party UDUB, as well as the four other political associations allowed to run (see Table 1). Candidates from five of the six regions of Somaliland were interviewed: from Maroodi-Jeex, Saaxil, Togdheer, Awdal and Sanaag.⁸

TABLE 1. CANDIDATES SURVEYED BY POLITICAL PARTY AND ASSOCIATION

<i>Party/ association</i>	<i>Elected candidates</i>	<i>Unelected candidates</i>	<i>Total</i>
UDUB	7	2	9
Kulmiye	12	9	21
UCID	13	9	22
Waddani	6	3	9
Ummada	6	7	13
Rays	5	4	9
Xaqsoor	3	2	5
Dalsan	3	2	5
	55	38	93

In addition to interviewing elected and not-elected political party candidates, senior members of political parties and associations were surveyed to help identify common sources of political

party finance and look at various categories of party expenditure, and reach an understanding of what support parties and associations had provided to candidates.

The research team also interviewed voters, vote brokers, business people and members of the diaspora, as well as representatives of Somaliland's National Electoral Commission (NEC), the Registration and Approval Committee (RAC), which determined the eligibility of political parties and associations to compete for official party status, and the Ministry of the Interior.

Comparative costs of Somaliland elections

Political parties and associations, individual candidates, clans, the diaspora and businesses, all raise and spend considerable sums of money in the run up to, and during, elections in Somaliland, in addition to the costs of electoral administration. Few studies, however, have analysed electoral campaign finance in new democracies, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.⁹ What scholarship does exist on the subject tends to focus on electoral fraud and corruption.¹⁰ Consequently, the Somaliland study draws on limited comparative experience, particularly in the Horn of Africa.

Anecdotal evidence from the 2012 local council election suggests that questions of campaign finance are of increasing concern, relative to past polls.¹¹ While the political dimensions of elections in Somaliland have begun to be documented, the economics of elections have not been properly researched.¹² It is important for people in any democracy to understand this, because the need to raise funds can favour the participation of some political parties, clans, and individuals, while excluding others. The latter is particularly significant for women.

Rising costs of elections in Somaliland

The cost of administering elections in Somaliland has steadily increased since the first elections for local councils were held in 2002.¹³ Table 2 shows this trend continued in 2012, demonstrating a marked increase in cost per voter compared to presidential elections held in 2010.

In part, the increased cost of the 2012 elections can be attributed to the lengthy delay these polls suffered.¹⁴ The vote had

¹¹ Social Research and Development Institute (SORADI), 'Reflections and Lessons of Somaliland's Two Decades of Sustained Peace, Statebuilding and Democratization'. SORADI, Hargeysa, 2012.

¹² Mark Bradbury, Adan Yussuf Abokor, and Haroon Yusuf, 'Somaliland: Choosing Politics over Violence', *Review Of African Political Economy* 30/97 (2003): 455–78; Adan Yussuf Abokor et al., 'Further Steps to Democracy: The Somaliland Parliamentary Elections, September 2005', Progressio, London, 2006; Mark Bradbury, *Becoming Somaliland*. Oxford: James Currey/Progressio, 2008; Walls and Kibble, 'Somaliland: Change and Continuity. Report by International Election Observers on the June 2010 Presidential Elections in Somaliland'.

¹³ Mark Bradbury et al., 'An Evaluation of Donor Assistance to the Somaliland Democratization Process'. Rift Valley Institute, London, 2011.

¹⁴ Kibble and Walls, 'Swerves on the Road: Report by International Election Observers.

¹⁵ Department for International Development (DFID), 'Business Case: 18 month Cost Extension of the Somaliland Election Programme (SEP)', London, 2012.

been originally planned for 2011, and the protracted election cycle makes the increased fixed operational costs, somewhat anomalous compared to past polls.¹⁵

TABLE 2. COMPARATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF FOUR ELECTIONS IN SOMALILAND, 2002–2012 (US DOLLARS)

<i>Expenditure type</i>	<i>Local council election 2002</i>	<i>Parliamentary election 2005</i>	<i>Presidential election 2010</i>	<i>Local council election 2012</i>
Donor expenditure	750,000	1,672,705	3,070,113	8,826,480
Government contribution (approximate)	346,982	500,000	1,145,000	2,200,000
Total cost (approximate)	1,096,982	2,172,705	4,215,113	11,026,480
Total votes	440,067	670,328	538,246	820,160
Cost per vote	2.49	3.24	7.83	13.44

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2. Electoral campaign finance in Somaliland

The cost of administering elections, however, appears to be dwarfed by the amount of money spent by candidates on their election campaigns, particularly in 2012. As Table 3 shows, candidates spent sizeable sums of money in 2012 trying to get themselves elected into positions of public office that are very modestly paid, and in some cases even unpaid.¹⁶

If average expenditures in the 2012 election are extrapolated to account for all 175 candidates in Hargeysa, plus the 2,193 candidates who ran for office elsewhere in the country, then the total amount spent by individual candidates on campaigning alone may have been in excess of USD 50 million.

TABLE 3. COMPARISON OF CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN EXPENSES, 2012
LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS (US DOLLARS)

Area	Avg. reported expenses for successful candidates	Highest reported expense for successful candidates	Avg. reported expenses for unsuccessful candidates	Highest reported expense for unsuccessful candidates
Hargeysa	58,750	120,000	29,714	73,000
Rest of the country	24,817	68,000	16,078	29,000

.....

Such figures raise several questions: where did the money come from? What was it spent on? And why did candidates spend so much? The following section of this report examines these questions and profiles campaign strategies and candidates' experiences.

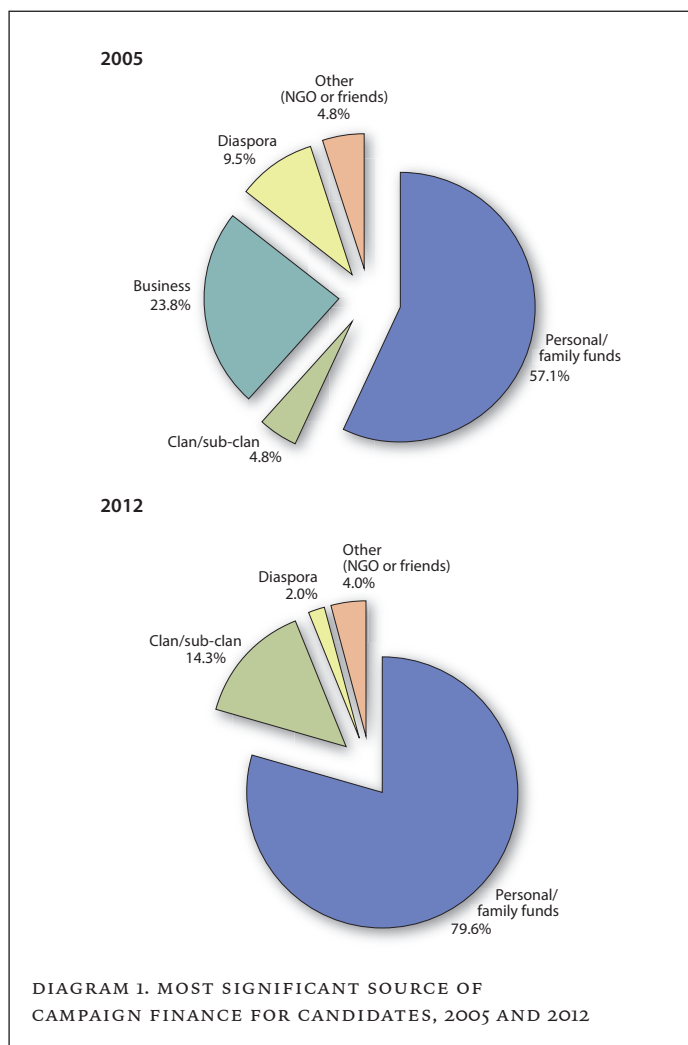
Assessing the data: Sources of finance

Candidates in Somaliland say that they largely finance their own campaigns. As Diagram 1 shows, by far the most significant source of funds for the majority of candidates is personal and familial financial resources. Most candidates say they hoped to run

¹⁶ Councillors in Hargeysa, the best remunerated in the country, are reported to receive allowances of 3 million Somaliland shillings (SLShs) per month (approximately USD 400). Allowances for other councils are considerably lower.

effective campaigns using personal funds and the support of their extended family, friends, and their sub-clan members.

The significance of personal resources—both personal savings and family resources—was more marked in the 2012 elections, possibly because of the much larger number of candidates contesting the polls and the nature of elections contested on a local basis between families from within the same communities.



This also suggests, however, that the cost of electoral campaigns has been rising over time.

While clan and sub-clan members, business figures, and members of the diaspora, all contributed some funds, they were not the most significant sources of finance. Nor were political parties and associations, which appeared to play a supporting, rather than a primary, role in raising money for candidates.

Because most candidates were self-financed, respondents expressed concern that elections might become increasingly dominated by three types of politicians: wealthy individuals seeking public office to represent their own business interests; individuals financed by a wealthy benefactor to whom they would then be beholden; and individuals who might take on personal debts, usually from private business owners, in order to finance their campaign. Repeatedly, stories were told of individuals who had run for office, selling land, losing their businesses, or going bankrupt in the process.

TABLE 4. PROPORTION OF CANDIDATES WHO REPORTED TAKING LOANS TO FINANCE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, 2005 AND 2012

2005 Parliamentary election	42.9%
2012 Local council election	71.4%

Table 4 suggests that the trend of taking out loans to finance electoral campaigns has become more prevalent since the 2005 parliamentary elections. While this increase could again be attributed to the larger number of candidates competing for election—and for the finite pool of funds on offer for them—this alone does not explain the sharp rise in the taking out of personal loans, though the larger numbers of youth competing might also help explain this as they had no personal resources to draw on. Once more, election campaigns seem to be becoming more expensive. Many candidates who had lost at the polls said they were unable to repay their loans and/or did not intend to try to repay them. Winning candidates often said they thought they would be able to service their loans through the access to public resources that elected office would afford them.

17 Adapted from Bryan and Baer, 'Money in Politics': 32–140.

The tendency to rely on personal and family financial resources is by no means unique to Somaliland, but the relative significance of this source of financing is more important than reported in other electoral democracies in sub-Saharan Africa. Table 5 adapts the findings of a 2005 study and shows that, in 2012, Somaliland topped the list of ten African states in terms of the significance of personal and family funds as the most significant source of candidate funds.¹⁷

TABLE 5. PROPORTION OF CANDIDATES REPORTING PERSONAL/FAMILY FUNDS AS MOST SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF CANDIDATE FINANCE IN TEN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

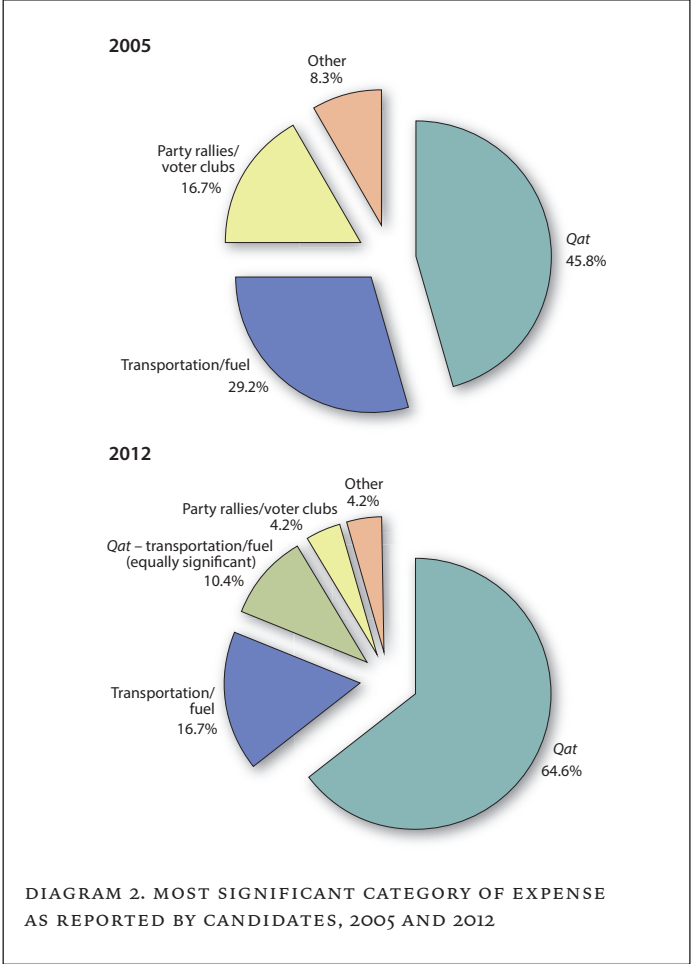
<i>Somaliland (2012)</i>	80%
Nigeria	65%
Uganda	63%
Benin	63%
Tanzania	58%
<i>Somaliland (2005)</i>	57%
Kenya	55%
Senegal	53%
Zambia	52%
Malawi	51%
Ghana	41%

Assessing the data: Categories of expenditure

Most respondents confirmed that most of their campaign funds were spent on things generally considered a legitimate part of political campaigning in Somaliland, including the provision of *qat*, transport and food for voters, campaign materials such as posters and stickers, direct voter contact through the establishing of voters' clubs, and the holding of rallies and other political events. Campaign expenditure on *qat* is especially notable. The chewing of *qat*, which is grown mostly in highland areas of Ethiopia, Yemen and Kenya, and transported by air and road to Somali consumers, has evolved from a ceremonial pastime into an expensive daily

social habit in many Somali communities. In both 2005 and 2012, candidates reported the purchase of *qat* for distribution to voters had comprised a significant and seemingly necessary campaign expense. Diagram 2 shows that almost 65 per cent of candidates in 2012 estimated it to have been their largest expense.

Many candidates felt that purchasing *qat* was an indicator of the seriousness of a candidate, even if it did not directly ensure voter loyalty. A candidate who did not buy *qat* did so at his/her own peril. Most candidates saw *qat* as a voter expectation, an incentive necessary to get votes. One successful parliamentary



candidate voiced a commonly held sentiment: 'There was no free vote as there was a lot of indirect spending on voters, especially by buying *qat* for male voters.'

Spending on *qat* dominated other areas of campaign activity. Candidates who rented premises as campaign offices were in fact largely financing *mafrish* (venues for *qat* chewing). A group of usually about a dozen men would sit in the office all week and chew *qat*, showing the candidate had support. A candidate would be expected to buy them *qat*, provide nourishment such as food and drink, and meet other incidental costs.

Money was also spent on *qat* during rallies, when a candidate's popularity was on show. One way to impress voters was by hiring buses and filling them with young people chanting pro-party and pro-candidate songs and sayings. In this case, *qat* was used as a lure or incentive: the more supporters mustered, the more *qat* there would be distributed once the rally was over.

Despite this, candidates had mixed views about the value and effectiveness of *qat* in securing them votes. While many said they felt buying *qat* for voters was a very effective way of obtaining votes, this was far from a uniform view. Some candidates felt that money spent on *qat* was wasted and if they could go back and change their campaign strategy, they would spend far less on it. 'Though I spent countless sums on *qat*, I found out later on that it didn't bring any votes,' said one unsuccessful candidate; '*qat* chewers can never be loyal.'

As Staffan Lindberg has observed, though, an impoverished electorate may think of elections as opportunities for redistribution and economic gain.¹⁸ The Somaliland voter's hope of receiving *qat*, even if not in return for voter loyalty, can be seen in this context. At the very minimum, during campaigning for elections, *qat* appears to play an important social role in demonstrating a candidate's credibility, in satisfying existing social obligations, and in serving as a form of voter incentive.

Expenditure on *qat* during election campaigns in Somaliland exceeds the comparable proportion of expenditure on direct benefits to voters in other African states. Table 6 shows that, in the 2012 local council elections, Somaliland topped the list—by a wide margin—of countries in which candidates said their largest

campaign expense was money spent directly on voters. The percentage of campaign funds spent on *qat* in 2012 had also risen considerably from the parliamentary elections in 2005.

19 Adapted from Bryan and Baer, 'Money in Politics': 32–140.
20 Kibble and Walls, 'Swerves on the Road': 26.

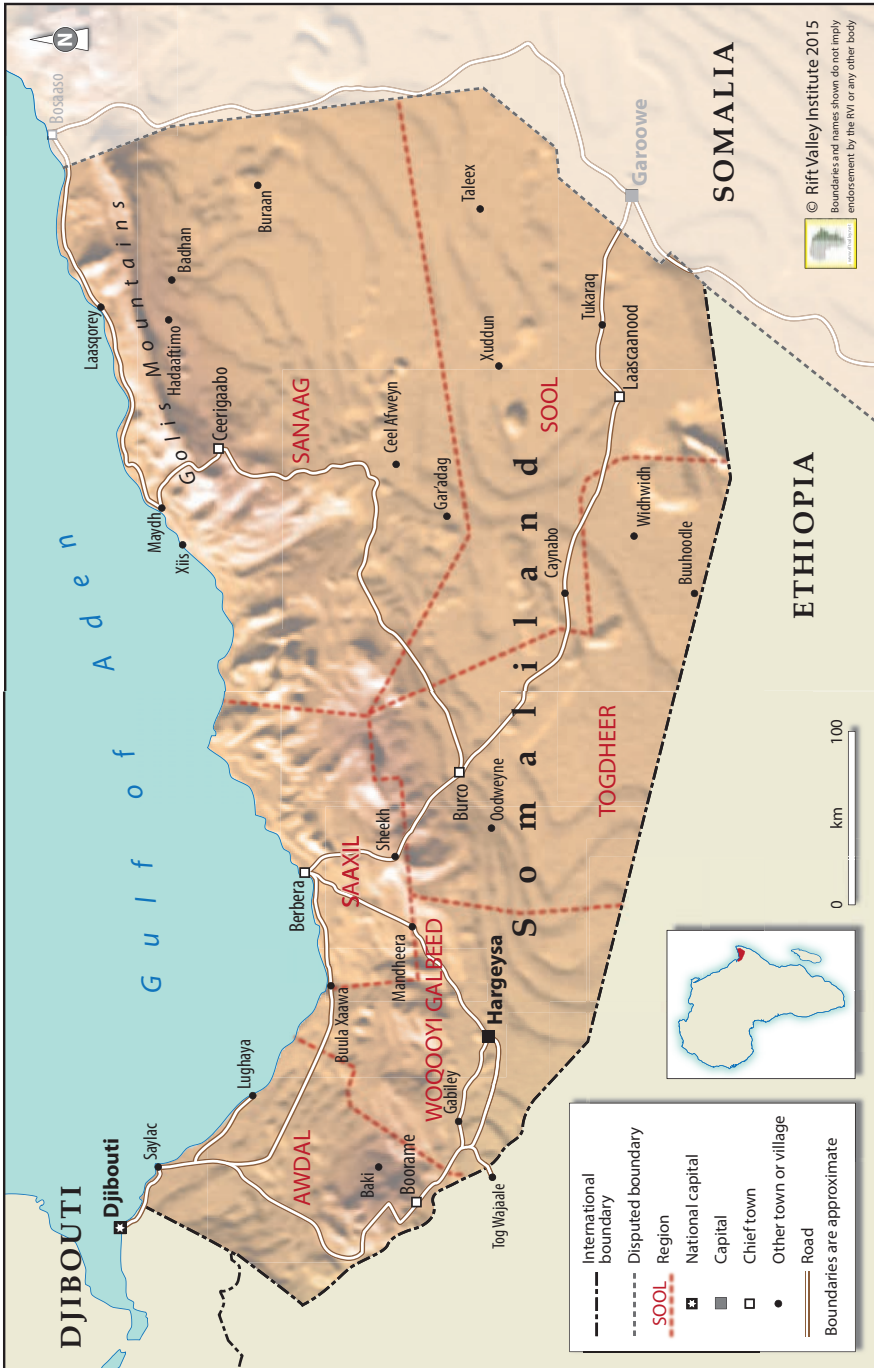
TABLE 6. MOST SIGNIFICANT CAMPAIGN EXPENSES IN TEN AFRICAN COUNTRIES¹⁹

<i>Somaliland (2012)</i>	<i>Direct benefits/qat (75%)</i>
Nigeria	Money and direct benefits (50%)
<i>Somaliland (2005)</i>	<i>Direct benefits/qat (46%)</i>
Kenya	Money and direct benefits (43%)
Benin	Money and direct benefits (42%)
Uganda	Travel (38%)
Tanzania	Rallies and events (38%)
Senegal	Travel, money and direct benefits (36%)
Malawi	Money and direct benefits (36%)
Ghana	Rallies and events (33%)
Zambia	Travel (30%)

Transportation and costs associated with it (fuel, vehicle rental and the cost of drivers) were the second highest expenses reported by candidates in both the 2005 and 2012 elections. These were incurred prior to and on election day. On election day itself, the main cost was transporting voters to polling stations, an activity frequently reported by election observers, but one that contravenes Somaliland’s electoral regulations.²⁰

In a country lacking a nationwide network of reliable roads and other infrastructure, candidates spent a lot on voter outreach and moving rural voters to polling stations, though most candidates would not admit that paying for transport may also have made multiple voting (one person voting more than once) easier.

Expenditure on the media and publicity were not generally large costs for candidates in Somaliland, with the exception of those standing for election in the capital, Hargeysa. Media outreach is more critical during national campaigns, particularly for a political party and its presidential candidate. But, when candidates run for local office or for constituencies in which one



Map 2. Somaliland

person will be elected out of the many running, their efforts are often focused on a geographic region inaccessible to the media, and more easily reached through direct voter contact.

In general, individual candidates in Somaliland shoulder the burden of finding the money needed to finance their campaigns. According to a parliamentarian from Hargeysa:

For the nomination, as much as 90 per cent may come from your own personal money. And, in order to campaign effectively, you have to spend your lifetime savings, sell properties, maybe take a loan ... and if you lose the nomination, you'll be struggling for a very long time. Candidates often end up selling their houses, cars, and other assets in order to pay debts incurred while campaigning.

3. Candidates speak: The electoral experience

Most candidates reported their motivation for running for office as personal political ambition, or the wish to carry out the basic functions of elected office, usually in conjunction with a wish to represent one's clan or sub-clan and protect its interests. A number of respondents said their main motivation in running for election was gaining power and amassing money, reaping the rewards of public office. Some candidates, already well off, said they wanted to protect and promote their business interests. An elder in Ceerigaabo echoed their sentiments: 'The government—and its offices—is seen by all as the milking cow.'

On top of spending large sums of money directly on voters in order to secure their votes, candidates also spent a sizeable amount of money winning over influential leaders of their sub-clan such as elders who have the power to influence voter choice. This was particularly the case when there was more than one candidate standing from the sub-clan. Sub-clan leaders also reported that one factor they considered in deciding who to back was a candidate's willingness and ability to distribute funds.

When it came to getting votes, candidates perceived voters as lacking loyalty and behaving dishonestly. Believing they would get most of their votes from their respective clans, they had concentrated their campaigning on their clan constituencies. Clan loyalty alone, however, was not enough, and they also felt they had to hold on to voters by giving them incentives of one form or another for fear of losing them to competing candidates.

As a result, the relationship between voter and candidate in Somaliland was (and is) characterized by mistrust. A member of parliament said: 'Once they get into parliament or [the] local council, politicians know that they have no obligation to the electorate and act without consideration for their welfare.' A member of Hargeysa's municipal council described how he had given out money and other donations almost daily in response

BOX 1. CASE STUDY: AN UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE FROM TOGDHEER

As a first time candidate, I was a complete novice to the process. Some challenges I overcame easily, but others were more difficult. The greatest challenges I faced were finance-related, clan-related, and [the challenge of] voter dishonesty.

My sources of money were, in order of significance: clan support, personal resources, diaspora support (money from friends), and contributions from the political party. I contributed USD 4,000 myself. Altogether, I raised USD 20,000 and spent USD 29,000. I took out USD 9,000 worth of loans. I did not know I could even raise USD 20,000; under normal circumstances no one would ever give me such funds if I wasn't running in elections. [The donations] exceeded my expectations.

I spent most of my money on *qat* and transportation. These were the most effective methods for getting votes. I lost by 200 votes; if I had transported 50 persons to four different polling stations, I would have won. Therefore, I should have invested more in transporting rural voters from one polling station to another and from one location to another.

to his constituents' requests. He said he was 'constantly torn' between wanting to do something [for them] and the limits of his own resources.

One concern expressed consistently by respondents was that the financial burden on the individual candidate began a cycle that led to corruption and undermined the ability of competent candidates or would-be reformers to compete successfully. The rising cost of election campaigns was seen to have exacerbated this.

Finally, and irrespective of their own patterns of expenditure or fund raising, most candidates believed that a spike in economic activity during elections was bad for Somaliland, consuming resources that were scarce, and resulting in a trade imbalance, with more money flowing outside the country to pay for *qat* imports than usual.

None of this fully explains why people risked spending their life savings on the uncertain outcome of electoral campaigns. Most candidates said that, for both financial and political reasons, the experience of running as a candidate has been largely negative. With hindsight, many candidates actually expressed their regret at spending so much money on the elections. Indeed, most claimed that, if given the choice, they would not run again. Interestingly, as explained below, their data suggests that much of their spending had not been directly tied to electoral outcomes so much as motivated by societal norms, peer pressure, sub-clan competition, and trying to offset low levels of voter loyalty.

Candidate challenges

The challenges reported by candidates can be split into two categories: those concerning electoral organization and cost, and those concerning their perception of voters' opinions and attitudes.

The increasing cost of election campaigns was a key concern, particularly amongst candidates who stood for the local council elections in 2012. This was fuelled by their belief that voters expected financial incentives or rewards. Candidates also reported that, in a clan-influenced environment, a lack of real communication and trust existed between candidates and voters; that a largely uninformed, poorly educated citizenry had a weak grasp of democratic principles; and that their campaigns suffered from shortages of financial and human resources, including weak organization and skills.

Many candidates felt that most voters did not understand party politics and that political parties faced a lack of legitimacy because of ineffective communication and an inability to articulate policies and platforms—beyond that of clan affiliation—that resonated with citizens. High levels of poverty had resulted in voters' expectations that politicians should support them financially and otherwise; candidates also said that voters felt politicians only approached them when their votes were needed.

Candidate strategies: Political rallies

Apart from distributing *qat*, most candidates cited the expense of organizing political rallies as a key campaign activity. In these,

**BOX 2. CASE STUDY: AN ELECTED MALE CANDIDATE
FROM EASTERN SOMALILAND**

Rural supporters—men—were greedy and very demanding. The funds I had were very limited. Therefore, these two competing priorities—keeping the support of these men and at the same time minimizing my expenditures—were my main challenges.

My main sources of funds were personal savings, money contributed by the clan, and some funds contributed by politicians from other parties who wanted us to succeed in elections in the region. I raised USD 9,000 (excluding loans) and spent USD 12,000, taking out USD 3,000 worth of loans.

If I had to change my expenditure strategy, next time I would minimize expenses allocated to the voters in the rural areas because rural voters cannot tolerate to remain in very long queues due to other competing priorities and therefore are less likely to vote.

candidates would typically hire buses decorated with their picture and their election symbol (or number), and try to fill them with supporters. Supporters were given flags, scarves, caps, and banners to wave.

Candidates were, however, aware that those who gathered on rally days were not necessarily supporting them. Young people came out for every candidate and every party or association as a form of entertainment, giving rise to a particular expression: *waan ka xaraabaysanaya* ('I am not serious, but only came out for entertainment'). Table 7 presents more sayings coined in Somaliland on election-related activity and behaviour, drawn from the interviews conducted for this study. That so many vivid expressions have developed in relation to elections demonstrates how socially embedded elections in Somaliland have become. The negative connotation of many of these expressions suggests perceptions of democratic practice as being inherently good are far from certain.

Often, the same people would come out on different days for different rallies, regardless of which candidate, party or association was organizing it, and no matter what they had on offer. There was even a story of participants suddenly swapping party

TABLE 7. NEW ELECTION SPEAK IN SOMALILAND

<i>Expression</i>	<i>Literal translation</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Ka cun oo ka codee</i>	Take from him and vote against him	If a candidate is willing to offer you something, take it and then vote for whomever you want to vote for. The saying also has the connotation that the candidate supports the voter who he thinks supports him
<i>Jeeb iyo Calool baa mabda' lagu Jeheeyaa</i>	Money in the pocket and food in the stomach are the means to an end	
<i>Footkuna waa meel, calooshuna waa meel</i>	The stomach takes from anyone who gives, but the vote is partial to the favourite one	
<i>Daaqada ayuu iga dalacday</i>	He closed the car window after he saw me	Voters describing the reaction of candidates after securing the elector's support
<i>Buur ahow ama buur ku tiirsanow</i>	Be a mountain or lean against a mountain	Be from a large clan and have its approval, or have money to secure another clan's support
<i>Waa bilaa caano</i>	He cannot provide milk	There is nothing to gain in supporting him
<i>Daawaha ayuu kuwadaa</i>	A car driver who decides to continue the journey with a burst tyre because he has no spare	Describes the situation when a candidate cannot finance his campaign because he does not have money
<i>Doorasho daar lagama dhiso, saarse way dumisaa</i>	You cannot build a new house by running in elections, but you can lose an existing one	There are no gains in running in elections and, overall, it is economically negative
<i>Dadka kale riig ayay wax ku waraabinayeen aniguna dawlis yar ayaan wax ku waraabinayay</i>	Other parties/people/candidates were like watering livestock from a huge well (with a pump), whereas I was watering livestock with a small bucket	

<i>Expression</i>	<i>Literal translation</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Waan ka xaraabaysanaya</i>	I am not serious but only came out for entertainment	
<i>Jeebkaaga la sug maalmaha danbe</i>	Keep your pocket for the last days of the election	
<i>xayraan</i>	Bankrupt and infuriated	Someone who doesn't have anything; a candidate who is bankrupt, upset, angry, won't get anything from anyone
<i>Waraba u taag</i>	To scare the hyena (scarecrow)	Candidates who have no substance, but have entered the contest as an opportunity to raise money
<i>Faro dufan leh ayaa wax duuga</i>	Greasy hands can massage well	

symbols and flags, creating a situation in which the bus drivers no longer knew which candidate would be paying them.

Candidate strategies: The emergence of vote brokers

The 2012 elections saw the emergence of a seemingly new category of professional: *dilalal dorasho*, or vote broker. These people served different purposes. Their speciality was to mediate, negotiate, fix and arrange prices for the commodities existing between buyers and sellers, in this case, candidates and voters. They then received a commission for the service rendered. Brokers also served as middlemen, or *dilaal vood*, between candidates and influential people, such as sub-clan elders and businessmen, as well as between competing candidates, parties or associations.

Brokers were often elders, opinion makers or mobilizers. Usually, they had a good grasp of the set-up within the sub-clan, and were eloquent and persuasive. Often, they appear to have tried to exploit the vulnerabilities of candidates and of sub-clans, sometimes bargaining on a sub-clan's behalf without its consent. Many of these brokers took the initiative of offering their services rather than waiting to be approached by candidates looking for help. This was particularly the case within those sub-clans where competition between individual candidates existed. As such, it

BOX 3. A BROKER SPEAKS

In 2012, a member of my sub-clan, who wanted to run for the local council election, asked me to help him generate support from the various sections of the sub-clan. So I asked him how much he thought it would cost to bring these people on board successfully. We finally came to a figure of USD 6,000. He handed me this amount and I then began to contact, lobby and negotiate with the main traditional leaders and other influential opinion makers of the sub-clan. I distributed money to eight main personalities; the amounts ranged from USD 300 to minor figures to USD 2,000 to high-level traditional leaders. These people have to sign endorsement letters for the candidate, publicly announce their support, and actively campaign for him. My candidate eventually lost due to a number of reasons, which may include the fact that a candidate and a broker with better resources may have erased most of our arrangements.

became a source of income benefiting small groups of people, groups of youth, and the (otherwise) unemployed.

Challenges for women candidates in 2012

Relatively few women candidates had stood for parliamentary election in 2005. In 2012, a record 140 women candidates stood for office; only ten were elected. All the women candidates interviewed confirmed that their experience of candidacy was negative because of the economic burden placed on them. Many women complained of having had limited resources at their disposal in comparison with their male counterparts.

Younger female candidates found it more difficult to access resources for their campaigns than older ones, some of whom said they had managed to raise more than their male competitors. On the whole, though, a shortage of funds and resources was a common feature of the experience of women candidates.

In both urban and rural areas, women faced the challenge of securing their clan's support. One woman said she had secured the support of some members of the smallest segment of her clan, the *jilib*, but it was more common for women to report encountering

hostility from leaders of their clan.²¹ To better understand the challenges women candidates face in elections in Somaliland, the extent to which they have been able to draw support from beyond their *jilib* deserves further research.

Like men, women candidates named—as their primary sources of finance—their own money and money from close family

BOX 4. CASE STUDY: A WOMEN CANDIDATE FROM MAROODI-JEEX

My candidacy caused a split in our clan, as there were some youth who were supporting another candidate from the clan. These youth said it is not good for the reputation of the clan to have a woman candidate.

To finance my campaign I sold a plot of land I owned in Hargeysa. Some of my immediate family members gave me money. A couple of friends in the diaspora also sent me contributions.

I thought I would spend around USD 10,000, but ended-up spending three times as much. This did not meet my expectation. By the time I realized the high costs of the elections, it was too late to withdraw.

My main expenditures were on *qat* and fuel. Around 60 per cent went towards buying *qat*, which I saw as my most effective expenditure. If I could change things, I would never again spend so much money, and I would leave everything to the last week of the campaign.

Age matters: with age, you get to know more people and you have more chances. As far as being a woman, it depends—some women have more chances than others. However, within the clan, men are supported more.

Overall, I see increased economic activity during elections as absolutely negative. It would have been better if candidates did not use all this money. The problem is that candidates start spending all this money on voters. Each candidate feels that if he or she does not spend money, the other candidates will spend the money anyway, so why not spend also?

²¹ *Jilib* is the smallest stable socio-political unit within a clan, consisting of a number of families whose alliances are based on the security needs of the member families, loosely connected to higher levels of clan lineage, and bound to pay or receive blood compensation in cases of crime or murder. Also known as *diya*-paying group, *diya* (or *mag*) referring to blood compensation paid in feuds. See Ken Menkhaus, 'Traditional conflict management in contemporary Somalia'. In *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African Conflict "Medicine"*. Ed. W.I. Zartman. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000.

members and friends. (An exception was a candidate who named a close elder from her sub-clan as a key mobilizer of funds.) Some successful women attributed their success to having had support from women's non-governmental organizations, including Nagaad, which actively sought to support and train women candidates in the 2012 elections. Other women reported selling their gold jewellery to help finance their election campaigns.

Overall, however, resistance from their own clan undermined women's abilities to fundraise. Female candidates complained specifically about the lack of financial support from their birth clan, making their reliance on personal resources even more critical.

4. The economics of vote buying and electoral fraud

While many respondents said candidates had spent a significant proportion of their campaign funds ‘illegally influencing’ voters or buying votes, few respondents stated that illegal or corrupt practices had formed a major part of their campaign expenditure. On the basis of survey responses, however, electoral fraud (though largely undetected by the NEC and by observers) appears to have been a feature of Somaliland’s recent elections. The survey reveals practices ranging from direct cash payments made to voters, to institutional corruption on the part of the electoral administration at the polling station level.²²

The range of conduct or malpractice alluded to in the survey that candidates either admitted to having happened, or alleged to know had been carried out, included:

- Paying anything from USD 5 to USD 30 per vote to voters, particularly on the night before polling;
- ‘Buying’ the remaining, unused, ballot papers at polling stations by paying the polling station managers;
- Paying brokers to organize voters to deliver a given number, usually between 40 and 100 voters, at any given polling station;
- Organizing a team of the same voters, usually youth, to move from one polling station to another to cast as many ballots as possible.

As one 2009 study of African elections observed, vote buying may be a substitute for the provision of public services, particularly given the limited return that local councillors or parliamentarians may be able to offer in their constituencies.²³

Parties and candidates were not, however, certain that paying voters would secure their votes. Some candidates said that as the ballot was secret, there was no real way of verifying that voters would comply with what they had been asked to do. They might

²² For further discussion of the definition of vote buying see Jeff Conroy-Krutz, ‘The Price of a Vote’, research prospectus prepared for Midwest Working Group in African Political Economy, 2011.

²³ Pedro Vicente and Leonard Wantchekon, ‘Clientelism and Vote Buying: Lessons from Field Experiments in African Elections’, *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 25/2 (2009): 292–305.

BOX 5. CANDIDATES ADMIT TO BUYING VOTES

Q. Did you pay people to vote for you/ buy votes in the election?

A. 'Yes, I spent USD 400 on buying votes and I got not more than three voters.'

'Uncountable times, I did it, and yes of course it was more than once or twice.'

'Fifty per cent of the population lives in abject poverty without enough to eat. It doesn't matter how idealistic you are; you must buy votes and there is no value in discussing policy.'

'Yes, my campaigners did. That is true. They were paid to vote as much as they could possibly do. I am not sure if everyone did vote for me more than once but I am sure that at least some voters did.'

'It is difficult to buy individual votes but there are other systems of making money... For example, a self-appointed promoter will organize and collect a number of voters in a location. Then he will approach parties or candidates to buy the votes of this lot. Another way of buying votes is by buying a whole ballot box in a very remote polling station.'

vote for their choice or their conscience instead regardless of what incentives they had been offered.

Indirect forms of vote buying were also reported. These included money for local brokers and sub-clan leaders in order to gain support in a particular community or village. The case for electoral irregularity here is less clear cut, as some practices are in keeping with traditional customs, where visitors seeking consultation are expected to organize feasts, slaughtering goats and providing qat after a meal.

While the scope of this study did not permit for the widespread surveying of individual voters, following the disclosure by many candidates of the prevalence of multiple voting in recent elections in Somaliland, the research team convened a number of voter focus groups to assess the opinion of voters on this important subject.

While unsurprisingly, voters surveyed did not always readily admit to the illegal behaviour of voting more than once in a single

election, a significant number admitted that they had done so. Multiple voting was usually motivated by an incentive offered to the voter.

The expectation of the research team was that a person who admitted to multiple voting would have cast all ballots for the same candidate, particularly if the process of multiple voting had been incentivized by direct benefit to the voter. However, numerous respondents explained that multiple voting was not necessarily about benefiting a single candidate, but could instead serve as a way to meet competing obligations to different individuals. Receiving an incentive or being paid to vote for a particular candidate would not necessarily preclude casting a ballot for the candidate a voter wanted to win: at the first visit to the polling booth, a ballot could be cast for the preferred candidate, and on the second (or later) return, a ballot could be cast for the candidate offering the incentive.

The practice of multiple voting in Somaliland may therefore be more morally ambiguous than would first appear, and that standard electoral processes dictates. Elections play multiple roles in Somaliland; conceiving of them as only democratic exercises may ignore a broader social and economic reality. Further investigation and research of this practice is needed to better understand how elections interplay with social reality.

5. Party finance in Somaliland

Experiences of political parties and associations

Like the candidates themselves, political parties and political associations reported that they had spent much more on election campaigns than they had expected to at the outset.

Political party and other leaders interviewed for this study agreed that party expenses had steadily increased over time. They explained the increase by pointing to several factors, including inflation, the greater number of candidates competing in the local council elections (compared to previous parliamentary and presidential polls), and intense competition between candidates, political parties and associations.

They also pointed to an increase in the sophistication of voters, with voters taking advantage of the election process. One respondent told researchers:

In 2002, people had no experience in multi-party elections. The candidate list was put together by the political parties and some candidates did not even know that they were in the list. The campaigning was done along party lines. But the political parties were also clan based. Candidates did not spend much on their campaigns. But after that things have changed a lot.

In 2012, the open list electoral system—where candidates competed both between parties and within them—meant the political party system itself was weakened. Parties and associations also had limited funds to provide their candidates. With candidates incurring greater expenses themselves, the incentives for pooling their campaign efforts were reduced. As a result, political parties maintained only a limited amount of control over party candidates who had only a limited amount of loyalty to their political parties.

In 2012, campaign spending reported by political parties and associations ranged from several hundred thousand US dollars

to about USD 3 million. In the latter case, the political association concerned had expected to spend about one sixth of what it did spend, about USD 500,000. The main source of financing was reported to be contributions by political party or association members, either locally or from the diaspora, and mainly founders or people from the party's central committee. 'Our chairman was basically spending his own money to fund the party. I think he probably contributed 70 per cent of the campaign funds,' said one respondent. Another chairman said he spent more than USD 750,000 of his own money on his association's organizational costs.

While Somaliland's government contributes to the officially registered political parties—prior to 2012, Kulmiye, UCID, and UDUB—all three dismissed the government's contribution as insignificant. Waddani, only a registered party since 2012, claimed the government had covered less than 15 per cent of its administrative costs, although there was no official contribution from government to political associations. Some of those interviewed for this report expressed a suspicion that the government had unofficially supported some associations but our researchers were unable to establish the credibility of such allegations.

Like their candidates, almost all party and association respondents said the heavy expenditure on the local council elections was a negative development for Somaliland. As one candidate said, 'There is no trace of the money spent by everyone, including the government, donors, candidates, parties and people. It has damaged the democratization processes and culture. It corrupted people... Even those who do not chew *qat*, started chewing because it was provided freely.'

Expenses incurred by parties/associations

In terms of the breakdown of campaign expenditure, most of the money spent by political parties and associations was on direct voter contact through rallies, meetings, and political events. Related costs, such as transportation, food and *qat*, and the production of campaign materials, were also cited. Nor was spending on campaigning through the media as insignificant in 2012 as might otherwise have been thought for local elections. 'We

spent USD 200,000 on TV spots in the 2012 election, USD 50,000 on one TV station alone,' said one party representative. In 2005, the opportunity for media campaigning had been far more limited.

While the burden of campaign finance fell largely on individual candidates, political parties and associations did appear to play a role. Respondents suggested the ability of a party to support its candidates largely depended on whether it was in power. Incumbents, or former incumbents, such as UDUB and Kulmiye were said to have had more success raising funds from powerful business interests and individuals, and also the ability to exploit state resources, either directly or indirectly.

One area where most party and associations said they had supported candidates was by paying their deposits for registration. One association said it had paid deposits for 80 per cent of its candidates, though most said they paid deposits for fewer than that. Parties and associations suggested it was necessary to pay deposits to make sure their candidates did not defect.

The majority of respondents felt that some parties and associations had offered candidates an incentive to either change their affiliation or withdraw from the election. Such accusations were mostly levelled at the incumbent party, Kulmiye, which was accused of spending large amounts of money to attract candidates from other parties and/or to weaken other associations during the campaign. 'Some candidates were offered government positions and others cash,' said a member of a rival party. Kulmiye appears to have recruited the close relatives of some of the more important rival candidates in order to weaken them. 'Luckily, it did not work, but their strategy was to weaken the target candidates' voting constituencies.'

Members of political parties reported they felt they had faced a dilemma—they had wanted to limit their expenditure while ensuring an effective campaign: 'We were hoping that most candidates would spend their own money but we had to support many of them. We had to compete with the ruling party.'

Political parties bemoaned the fact that both candidates and voters saw them as a source of income. During the campaign, there was the expectation that parties and associations should pay to maintain their candidates' popularity and support. As one

senior party official explained: 'This was the biggest challenge to the party, each and everybody were asking for resources. Some people will gather members of their *diya*-paying group in a house and claim that he has so many votes [which need to be incentivised].' A representative from another party noted: 'Party activists in the regions continue to claim that they spend money on our behalf and are still maintaining that case. Fuel, transport, *qat*, food are still being claimed by some.'

Political associations said they had neither planned nor budgeted for voter education, ostensibly due to a scarcity of funds. All three registered parties, however, reported ending-up spending time and resources on voter education, mostly defining it as casting a ballot correctly for the party in question.

The role of business and the diaspora

Respondents confirmed that contributions from the business community and diaspora were crucial in terms of financing the central operations of political parties and associations, and were second only in importance to contributions from party founders and key party individuals. Businesses were usually more reluctant to formally disclose their support. One senior member of a political association explained:

Businesses' contribution is significant and complicated because it is not transparent. It is largely based on clan/sub-clan basis and also interest of the businessmen who expect returns in the future. Nobody knows how much they contribute since it is not done in daylight.

Another senior figure in a different political party added:

Businesses usually do not announce or publicize their political contributions, because to be linked with a political faction is not good for business. Therefore, their contributions are under the table ... though everybody knows that they do invest in both candidates and political parties.

More research is needed to fully understand the role business plays in Somaliland's financing of political activity. Our research

team attempted to interview representatives of the biggest businesses operating in Somaliland but they were reluctant to participate formally in the study, refusing to confirm or deny any support they provided in the 2012 or earlier elections.

Measuring the contributions made from the diaspora was also a challenge. The *xisbi*, or legally registered political parties, since 2012—Kulmiye, UCID and Waddani—suggested that diaspora funding was of greater significance to them than it was to the unsuccessful political associations, given the parties' existing institutional structures and ability to mobilize support from abroad. A representative of the governing party, Kulmiye, explained:

Kulmiye is well organized as far as funders and supporters abroad are concerned. For example, in [the] UK we have in London a chairman, executive committee and branches of the committee in each major city. These branches meet to discuss party issues. The branches are also useful during fundraising. They provided 60 per cent of Kulmiye's budget during the presidential elections and during other elections to provide candidates 50 per cent of what they spend. The same was true for other European countries like Sweden, Norway, USA, and Canada.

6. Conclusion

Somaliland has been rightly lauded for its democratic achievements, marked by the periodic conduct of free elections since 2001. However, the increasing monetization of elections, and the unprecedented sums spent in the 2012 local council polls, in what remains one of the poorest countries in the world, risks tarnishing Somaliland's enviable democratic record.

The 2012 local council vote saw many candidates spend huge amounts for uncertain gains, and suggests that some may resort to malpractice in public office to recoup their investments. The single most significant expense for individual candidates was the purchase and distribution of *qat*, which many saw as a negative development for Somaliland society. Further, vote buying was commonly reported and expenditure by candidates suggests it was more widespread than first realized. The record voter turnout achieved in these elections must thus be qualified.

A finding from this study is that the practice of multiple voting in Somaliland may serve a more complex function than increasing the number of votes for a single candidate. Voters may cast votes for several candidates in order to meet competing obligations. Elections play multiple roles in Somaliland and conceiving of them solely as democratic exercises ignores a broader social and economic reality. Further research is needed to better understand the social and economic role of elections.

Regulation of campaign finance may seem a secondary issue in the consolidation of democratization in Somaliland. But without addressing this subject, future electoral processes may be similarly compromised, and diminish both national and international confidence in Somaliland's elections.

Glossary of words and acronyms

DFID	Department for International Development
<i>dilalal dorasho</i>	vote broker
<i>dilaal vood</i>	middleman between candidates and influential people and between competing candidates, parties or associations
<i>diya</i>	(<i>Arabic</i>) blood, referring to blood compensation paid in feuds
GoSL	Government of Somaliland
<i>jilib</i>	small sub-section of clan
<i>mafrish</i>	venues for chewing of <i>qat</i> (q.v.)
<i>mag</i>	(<i>Somali</i>) blood, see <i>diya</i>
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEC	National Electoral Commission
<i>qat</i>	mildly narcotic plant widely consumed in Somaliland
RAC	Registration and Approval Committee
SLSHs	Somaliland Shillings
UCID	Justice and Welfare Party
UDUB	United People's Democratic Party
<i>urur</i>	political associations
USD	United States Dollar
<i>xisbi</i>	legally registered political parties

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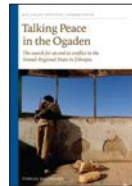
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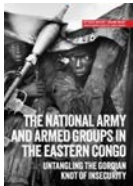
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ركز النقاش الدائر حول السودانين، الشمالي والجنوبي، على مسألة أين يمر خط الحدود بينهما. ويفحص التقرير موضوعاً آخر هو: الأثر المحتمل للحدود الجديدة على سكان الاراضي الحدودية.

When Boundaries Become Borders is also available in English.

'The information in the report is accurate and 'spot on' ... there is a lot to learn from this important issue.'

—Suad Ibrahim Abdi, Progressio, Somaliland

'The study is unique in the research questions it raises and, more importantly, in the relevance and significance of its findings. It is one of the best studies of elections in Somaliland in more than ten years. It deals comprehensively with most issues pertaining to the electoral landscape in Somaliland. The paper can be seen as a reflective mirror for the Somaliland community in general to look back and reflect on their achievements of the past decade. I believe this research will contribute to the development of Somaliland's democracy and multi-party system in general, and the elections and electoral process in particular, in the years to come.'

—Adam Haji-Ali Ahmed, University of Hargeysa, Somaliland

Since multi-party democracy was introduced in Somaliland in 2002, elections have successfully ushered in peaceful transfers of power. But questions have been raised about election financing. This study argues that in Somaliland, as elsewhere, elections should be understood not just as political processes, but also as economic events in which parties, and candidates and their supporters make investments with no guarantee of return. *The Economics of Elections in Somaliland* examines candidates' expenditure and sources of income in the 2005 parliamentary and 2012 local council elections. To compete, candidates need to commit significant funds, often resorting to loans to fund their campaigns. The elections have given rise to a new language of electoral politics and new professions, such as vote broker. The study concludes that conceiving of elections solely as exercises in democratic representation ignores a broader social and economic reality. The lack of a regulatory system for campaign finances may compromise future electoral processes in Somaliland, and diminish both national and international confidence in them.



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