

## CONCEPT NOTE

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### **CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS: Is East Africa Ready to Curb Monetized Politics?**

#### **Background**

Democratic processes in the East African Community (EAC) countries suffer from monetized politics. Whereas Tanzania and Kenya developed laws to regulate money in election campaigns, the issue is enforcement. In Kenya citizens are in court to challenge the legality of a decision by Parliament to render the Campaign Finance Act, 2013, unenforceable. In Uganda is reluctant to develop standard laws that regulate money in elections. Highly monetized campaigns, defeats the foundation tenet of elections being a free expression of the will of the electors. Instead, it becomes an expression of the power of money.

Reports from election observers in some East African countries have pointed to the finding that candidates and political parties use money have controlled the consent of voters by offering money and other forms of inducements including clientelism, to procure voter support. Inducements and clientelism compromise the will, conscience and rationality of electorate hence according undue advantage to the big spenders.

It is against this backdrop that Alliance for Finance Monitoring (ACFIM) has organized a high-level Regional Webinar on money-in-politics in East Africa.

#### **Purpose**

The cardinal object of the webinar is to engage policy makers, leaders of political parties, political analysts, the academia, civil society and the media, in a discussion about key issues relating to campaign finance laws in the region. It is hoped that the discourse will provide lessons and experiences that will trigger policy shifts and provoke debate for campaign finance laws in EAC electoral jurisdictions.

#### **Timing and Theme**

The high-level regional webinar on money-in-politics is scheduled to take on February 24, 2022 (thursday) at 14.00-16.00 hours (EAT) for two hours.

The theme of webinar is: **Campaign Finance laws - Is East Africa ready to curb monetized politics?** The subthemes are:

1. Experiences with Kenya Campaign Finance Act 2013.
2. Money Controlling voter consent – Experiences from Uganda
3. Running an election campaign in a commercialized context-Experiences from a woman politician.
4. Experiences with implementing the Election Expenses Act, 2010 of Tanzania
5. Campaign finance legislation in Rwanda: Issues and Challenges

#### **Methodology**

The webinar will have a panel of four key speakers who will address different sub-themes. The panel presentations will be followed by a plenary session. The event will be streamed live on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Together we can raise awareness and seeking solutions to the challenges of monetized politics in East Africa.