Peaceful *Pilkada*, Dubious Democracy

Aceh's Post-Conflict Elections and their Implications

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The papers in the series are works in progress. The emphasis is on generating discussion amongst different stakeholders—including government, civil society, and international institutions—rather than offering absolute conclusions. It is hoped that they will stimulate further discussions of the questions they seek to answer, the hypotheses they test, and the recommendations they prescribe.

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Cover photo: *Suasana Kampanye* (Campaign Atmosphere) by Marzuki Harun.

Executive Summary

This paper analyzes Aceh's post-conflict direct local executive elections or *pilkada*. Elections for the Governor and 19 heads of district (*kabupaten* and *kotamadya*) were held in December 2006 and early 2007, just 16 months after the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) ended the 30-year conflict in Aceh. This paper argues that beyond the local elections' short-term goal of including rebels from GAM (the Free Aceh Movement) in sub-national political processes—which was a key step in the peace process—they also potentially had two key roles to play in building longer-term peace: managing political competition amongst Aceh's local elites, and providing the basis for good governance and effective development policy in Aceh. The objective of the paper is to assess the extent to which Aceh's *pilkada* fulfilled those roles, and to consider the immediate and longer-term implications of how democracy was practiced during the Aceh *pilkada*.

Understanding the extent to which Aceh's post-conflict elections contributed to the management of political competition and to improved governance requires an analytical approach that goes beyond an assessment of whether the elections were 'free and fair'. Specifically, it requires taking a closer look at: (i) the institutional implementation of the elections; (ii) candidate campaign and mobilization strategies; and (iii) voter behavior. Findings relating to these factors are subsequently discussed in light of current post-election political dynamics.

While experience shows that post-conflict elections rarely lead immediately to good governance, analysis of electoral practices and the ways that they have affected political competition and governance in the first year after the elections can help in the development of approaches that consolidate peaceful democracy in Aceh. The findings of the paper have relevance both for preparation for the 2009 national and local legislative elections, and for those aiming to design successful development programs and policies in Aceh.

This paper draws on in-depth qualitative fieldwork carried out in eight districts and newspaper monitoring of violent and non-violent election-related conflict. Fieldwork was conducted during the early preparatory stages of the election (September 2006), during the campaign period (November 2006), on the main polling day (December 11th 2006), immediately after the elections (January 2007), and in the early post-election period (November 2007). The paper covers both the provincial (gubernatorial) and district level (district head) elections but much of the analysis focuses on the latter.

Aceh's Post-Conflict Elections: Looking beyond 'Free and Fair'

The paper argues that although Aceh's post-conflict elections were indeed successful—in that they were largely free, fair, and peaceful—they also demonstrated political practices that are likely to undermine the management of political competition amongst local elites and the establishment of an accountable and responsive government in the medium to long term.

Institutional Implementation

There were low levels of violence associated with Aceh's local elections. Given that Aceh has just emerged from 30 years of violent conflict, this is an admirable achievement. However, the *pilkada* also saw high levels of non-violent conflict and contestation, and high involvement of state institutions in these disputes as parties to conflict or perpetrators of electoral infractions. In investigating these problems, we identified significant weaknesses in the institutional implementation of the elections: election oversight was poor; investigation of electoral disputes and infractions was extremely ineffective; there were indications of partisan electoral officials; and some key procedures were simply ignored, most notably those for monitoring campaign finances.

These weaknesses will impact on the ways in which political conflict is managed in the future and the prospects for improving governance in Aceh. Although no widespread manipulation took place, the many electoral infractions, and the failure of the electoral institutions to effectively resolve these, has generated grievances amongst elite factions and has reduced the legitimacy of winning candidates. Furthermore, the woeful implementation of campaign finance regulations has deprived the public and civil society of a powerful tool for holding incoming governments to account in the future. This may impact on the prospects for improving governance and decision-making.

Candidate Campaign and Mobilization Strategies

Policies, platforms, and parties did not significantly shape candidates' campaign strategies in the Aceh *pilkada*. Rather, other campaign and mobilization strategies were more prominent, such as forging pragmatic alliances through *tim sukses* (campaign teams), and spreading patronage and promises. Candidates competed for the favor of influential community members, deployed (or employed) political entrepreneurs who sold their mobilization services to the highest bidder, or, in the case of GAM-affiliated candidates, utilized the extensive networks of the former pro-independence movement.

Through these campaigning strategies, many provincial and district level candidates incurred debts, both social and financial, which will need to be repaid in the future. Winning candidates will face significant pressure to repay through political favors that are likely to compromise principles of good governance. This applies to GAM as well as other groups. On the other hand, failing to satisfy these debts may lead to increased political conflict amongst local elites as past supporters seek to retaliate for not benefiting.

Voter Behavior

Voter behavior was rarely determined by synchronicity between the policy preferences of voters and candidates. Rather, voters chose candidates based on other factors. First, some voted for a candidate with whom their village had some kind of established affiliation that could potentially facilitate future access to state resources. Second, in the absence of affiliations, villagers sometimes attempted to associate themselves with a candidate who was likely to win, in a bid to forge a connection with them which might be repaid with benefits later. Third, voting in Aceh was often communal. Village leaders were often influential in determining how villagers voted, and leaders could sway large proportions of their village to vote for a particular candidate. Finally, some

instances of intimidation in GAM controlled areas occurred, although this was less prevalent than one would expect in a post-conflict environment.

These patterns of voter behavior show a citizenry that is skeptical that government can deliver development and policy reform, but which at the same time expects the distribution of benefits via clientelistic networks and personal favors. The simultaneous mix of disillusionment towards the state and expectation of benefits could potentially provide the basis for future disputes and group mobilization, raising the potential for outbreaks of violence.

Early Impacts on Political Competition and Governance

Analysis of the post-election period shows early signs that electoral practices have indeed compromised the extent to which political competition was managed in ways that provide a strong basis for good governance and policy-making. Four developments in the early post-election period stand out.

First, weaknesses in electoral implementation led to post-election challenges and ongoing grievances. This shows that the elections have failed to install broadly accepted winners in many districts, and have fuelled unhealthy political competition amongst elites. Indeed, this has shut down one district's administration and has led to the brokering of shady conciliatory deals in others.

Second, campaign and mobilization methods have established clientelistic relationships that encourage the distribution of government power and resources along patronage lines, thereby perpetuating the cycle of corrupt governance. This behavior is already generating conflict amongst local elites competing for favor. Indications suggest that this will continue to deeply compromise governance in Aceh.

Third, the elections and their results have placed additional pressure on GAM-affiliated candidates to distribute state resources between local factions of the former independence movement. In addition to the negative impacts on governance, this pressure is leading to new splits within GAM ranks and the exacerbation of old ones. While it is not yet clear to what extent GAM leadership will manage to limit the harm caused by these, it is clear that intra-GAM splits will remain a potential source of conflict as the 2009 elections approach.

Finally, there are some early signs that patronage networks established during the *pilkada* will be used to mobilize grievances at the village level. Such mobilization can be used to achieve village level political goals, but can also feed in to and exacerbate district level political conflicts.

The political practices and implementation weaknesses described here have much in common with what has been described by electoral observers and academic researchers for other parts of Indonesia. If the major challenges for Aceh's democracy are now similar to the challenges faced by the rest of the country, this is a considerable achievement. However, Aceh faces more significant and more varied challenges than other parts of the country, given its history of conflict, its traumatized population, the unique dynamic of former rebels now ruling the province, the high levels of poverty and corruption, ethnic tensions, and movements to split the province.

Aceh's political context thus magnifies the danger inherent in these dubious political practices. The patterns described above suggest that the grievances about resources and government performance that have in the past fuelled the separatist conflict will continue to exist. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that while large-scale violence has ended with the MoU, political conflict between local elites remains common, and that a failure of local administrations to deliver on their promises may exacerbate these conflicts and grievances. To be sure, political commitment to the peace process remains strong on both sides. However, if local politics continues to be run along patronage lines, this will necessarily prevent large portions of the population from enjoying the benefits of development. Thus both the underlying grievances that provide the basis for mobilization, as well as the incentives for elites to mobilize, will remain. This suggests that there is a pressing need for Aceh to further build democratic-style politics if it is to achieve a lasting peace.

Recommendations

Tackling these challenges requires taking both a short- and longer-term perspective. Short-term interventions can address the problems of electoral implementation, which is vital as the 2009 legislative elections approach. Other longer-term interventions will also be necessary.

Short-Term: Improving the 2009 Elections

The overall aim of these recommendations is to strengthen institutional implementation of elections and to reduce the potential for violence.

1. Remove the dependency of local electoral institutions on local parliaments.
2. Clarify the relationship between national, provincial and district level election authorities.
3. Increase the power of *Panwas* (Election Oversight Committees) vis-à-vis KIP (Independent Election Commission).
4. Improve dispute resolution by clarifying sanctions for dropping cases and by increasing the transparency of reported cases.
5. Close loopholes in campaign finance regulations and create more effective procedures for monitoring campaign funds.
6. Build civil society capacity to monitor campaign finance.
7. Clarify the definition of money politics and disseminate it to the public.
8. Monitor the neutrality of government officials more closely, and enact sanctions for partisanship.
9. Increase policy discussions during the campaign period.
10. Facilitate well-researched evaluations of candidates' 'track records'.
11. Organize high-profile good governance and policy pledges for politicians, as well as voter pledges to demand and vote for good governance.
12. Prioritize programs to address unemployment of former combatants and other youth.

Longer-Term: Strengthening Democracy

The overall aim of these recommendations is to facilitate the underlying conditions for a healthy democracy.

1. Undertake research to better understand how political leaders distribute patronage.
2. Establish a 'contract watch' organization.
3. Facilitate stronger transparency in and oversight of those processes where patronage is distributed.
4. Facilitate civil society monitoring of patronage networks.
5. Expand the distribution of information and communication media.
6. Support independent investigative journalism.
7. Facilitate more active discussion on governance issues, and mandate community consultations in the development of local government policy and priorities.
8. Strengthen the technical capacity of local and national political parties to develop and articulate social and economic policy.
9. Establish provisions for new leaders to retain campaign strategists as policy advisors.

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Glossary

Agara	Aceh Tenggara, Southeast Aceh
AMM	Aceh Monitoring Mission
AMPG	*Angkatan Muda Partai Golkar*, youth wing of the Golkar party
BRR	*Badan Rekonstruksi dan Rehabilitasi*, Aceh's post-tsunami Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency
Bupati	District Head
C59	A group of 59 contractors active in Aceh Barat Daya province
Camat	Sub-district Head
CoSA	Committee on Security Arrangements
DPRA	*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Aceh*, Aceh Provincial Parliament
DPRK	*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Kabupaten*, District Parliament
EU-EOM	European Union Election Observation Mission
FORKAB	*Forum Komunikasi Anak Bangsa*, Youth of the Nation Forum
GAM	*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, former pro-independence Free Aceh Movement
GEMPAR	*Gerakan Pembaharuan Nagan Raya*, Movement for Reform of Nagan Raya
Geuchik	Village Head
Golkar	*Partai Golongan Karya*, Functional Groups Party
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
JPAD	*Jaringan Pilkada Aceh Damai*, Aceh Peaceful Election Alliance
Kabupaten	District
KDP	Kecamatan Development Program
KIP Kab	*Komisi Independen Pemilihan Kabupaten*, district level KIP
KIP	*Komisi Independen Pemilihan*, Independent Election Commission
KIP NAD	*Komisi Independen Pemilihan Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam*, provincial level KIP
Kotamadya	Municipality
KPA	*Komite Peralihan Aceh*, Aceh Transitional Committee, a new organization representing former GAM members
KPK	*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi*, Corruption Eradication Commission
KPPS	*Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara*, Voting Station Committee
KPU	*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*, General Election Commission
Linmas	*Perlindungan Masyarakat*, People's Protection, a civilian militia
LoGA	Law on Governing Aceh, Law 22, 2006
MoU	The Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding, signed August 15, 2005 by the Government of Indonesia and GAM
Mukim	Traditional leader (between the village and sub-district levels in Aceh)
Musyawarah	Collective decision-making through discussion and consensus
NAD	*Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam*
PAN	*Partai Amanat Rakyat*, National Mandate Party
Panwaslih	*Panitia Pengawasan Pemilihan*, Regional Election Supervisory Committee
Panwaslu	*Panitia Pengawasan Pemilu*, National Election Supervisory Committee
PBB	*Partai Bintang Bulan*, Crescent Moon and Star Party

PBR	*Partai Bintang Reformasi*, Star Reform Party
PDIP	*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle
PETA	*Pembela Tanah Air*, the Defenders of the Homeland (a pro-Indonesia militia group)
Pilkada	*Pemilihan Kepala Daerah*, election for local government heads
Pilkadasung	*Pemilihan Kepala Daerah Langsung*, direct election for local government heads
PKB	*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*, National Awakening Party
PKPI	*Partai Keadilan dan Persatuan Indonesia*, Indonesian Justice and Unity Party
PPG	*Panitia Pemilihan Gampong*, Village level Election Committee
PPK	*Panitia Pemilihan Kecamatan*, Sub-district level Election Committee
PPNUI	*Partai Persatuan Nahdlatul Ummah Indonesia*, Indonesian Nahdlatul Community Party
PPP	*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, United Development Party
PTUN	*Pengadilan Tata Usaha Negara*, National Administration Court
Qanun	Provincial level laws created by Aceh's parliament
RASKIN	*Beras Miskin*, Rice for the Poor Program
Silaturrahmi	Social visits to foster good relationships
SIRA	*Sentral Informasi Referendum Aceh*, the Aceh Information Center for a Referendum
SMUR	*Solidaritas Mahasiswa Untuk Rakyat*, Student Solidarity for the People
Teuku	Acehnese aristocratic title (can be shortened to 'T.')
Teungku	Acehnese title signifying Islamic knowledge (can be shortened to 'Tgk.')
Tim sukses	Campaign success team
TPS	*Tempat Pemungutan Suara*, Polling Station
Ulama	Muslim religious teacher

I. Introduction

Direct executive elections or *pilkada* for the positions of governor and heads of all 21 rural and urban districts (*kabupaten* and *kotamadya*) were held in Aceh between December 2006 and January 2008. They were widely seen as a success. There was little political violence, the results were largely accepted both in Aceh and Jakarta, and the elections received positive coverage from Indonesian and international monitoring groups. Given the context in which the elections occurred—less than two years after the Helsinki peace process ended 30 years of protracted violent conflict—this is an impressive achievement.

Yet while Aceh's post-conflict elections were successful in being largely free, fair, and peaceful, they were less effective in contributing to the management of political competition amongst local elites and in laying the longer-term foundations for an accountable and responsive local government. As the national and regional 2009 legislative elections approach, it is particularly important to understand the way democracy functions in Aceh in order to inform project and policy responses and advocacy strategies that can help ensure that the upcoming elections play an effective role in consolidating democracy and peace in Aceh.

The objective of the paper is to assess the extent to which Aceh's *pilkada* have contributed to the effective management of political competition and to ensuring a strong basis for good governance and policy-making. This, we suggest, necessitates an analytical approach that goes beyond an assessment of whether the elections were 'free and fair'. Specifically, it requires taking a closer look at: (i) the institutional practices involved in implementing the elections; (ii) candidate campaign and mobilization strategies; and (iii) voter behavior. Findings relating to these factors are subsequently discussed in light of current post-election political dynamics.

The data for the analysis is based on two main research methods: fieldwork and newspaper monitoring. Fieldwork was conducted at various stages of the elections in a number of districts. The first three rounds of fieldwork focused on election implementation and campaign strategies. These were conducted during the early preparatory stages (September 2006) in twelve districts, at the campaign stage (November 2006) in four districts, Aceh Jaya, Aceh Barat, Nagan Raya, and Pidie, and over election day (December 11th 2006) in two districts, Aceh Barat and Nagan Raya. A fourth round focused on voter behavior and involved in-depth village studies in two districts, Pidie and Nagan Raya, in January 2007. Finally, a follow-up round to explore post-election political competition and governance issues was conducted in November 2007 in Aceh Barat Daya, Aceh Timur, Aceh Tenggara, and Bireuen. The study also utilized two newspaper datasets that monitored conflict generally and election-related conflict specifically.[1] This data was particularly useful for investigating political competition and election implementation dynamics.

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[1] The Aceh Conflict Dataset tracks all conflict incidents as reported in two regional newspapers (Aceh Kita and Serambi). These are published regularly as Aceh Conflict Monitoring Updates and are available on-line at www.conflictanddevelopment.org. The *Pilkada* Aceh Conflict Dataset tracked all incidents of election-related conflict as reported in four newspapers (Aceh Kita, Rakyat Aceh, Serambi, and Waspada) from 1 July 2006 to 28 February 2007. For more on the newspaper methodology, including its limitations, see Barron and Sharpe (2005).

The paper covers both the gubernatorial and district level (which includes both rural *bupati* and urban *walikota*) elections, but much of the analysis focuses on the district elections. There are three reasons for this. District elections are also vital to maintaining peace, improving service delivery and development, and enhancing governance, yet have received relatively little coverage. The district level of government has most immediate contact with citizens. Second, many interesting dynamics in Acehnese democracy were also more visible in the district than in the gubernatorial races. For example, patronage-based political behavior was more noticeable in the district elections, which were less ideologically driven than the gubernatorial contest. Finally, while the fact that a GAM-affiliated candidate successfully acceded to the governor position, and that losing candidates largely did not contest the results, indicates to many that the elections were free and fair, this was not the case in the district races. Many district results were heavily disputed, and although some grievances were opportunistic, they reveal much about local political practices and weaknesses in electoral implementation.

The paper is divided into seven sections. The next section provides background showing the importance of Aceh's post-conflict elections and proposes a simple framework for analyzing their implications for political competition, governance and development in Aceh. The following three sections focus on electoral dynamics: Section III focuses on institutional arrangements; Section IV looks at candidate campaign and mobilization strategies; and Section V concentrates on voter behavior. Together these three sections present our findings on the practice of electoral democracy in Aceh. Section VI turns to the post-election period, and investigates some of the impacts of these practices on political competition and governance in Aceh. Section VII concludes and provides recommendations.

II. Background and Analytical Framework

Aceh's main problem lies less in policy emanating from Jakarta than in a pattern of local government that is as deeply rooted in Aceh as it is elsewhere in Indonesia. When government is run along the lines of personalized elite favoritism—technically known as neo-patrimonialism—the resulting nepotism clashes so fundamentally with what people have a right to expect from the modern state that protest is almost unavoidable.

Sulaiman and van Klinken (2007, p. 226)

1. The Importance of Aceh's Post-Conflict Elections

Elections have become a crucial element of most contemporary peace processes. This has been the case since the 'third wave' of democratization in the 1970s, and was sped by the ending of Cold War. Since then, the United Nations and others have adopted a conflict-ending formula of negotiated peace agreements closely followed by competitive elections (Barnes 2001). In such contexts, elections are typically expected to advance a number of aims, including the introduction of new democratic rules of political competition, the legitimization of a new government, and the provision of a democratic basis for ensuring good governance and policy making (Ottaway 2002; Lyons 2002; Lyons 2004).

Map 1: Timing of the District Elections

These goals indeed applied in the case of the Aceh post-conflict elections. Post-conflict elections constitute a crucial component of the Helsinki peace process. The Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) states that the parties will create conditions for "fair and democratic" government (Preamble) and that direct local elections—referred to in Indonesian as *pilkada*[2]— be held shortly after the peace agreement was signed (Clause 1.2.2).[3] Although delayed, direct elections for the provincial governor and 19 of 21 district heads[4] were held less than two years after the peace agreement was signed, in December

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[2] Actually *pilkada* stands for 'elections of local government heads' (*pemilihan kepala daerah*), whereas *pilkadasung* stands for 'direct elections of local government heads' (*pemilihan kepala daerah langsung*). However, in practice, after the elections became direct, people continued to refer to them simply as *pilkada*.

[3] It also stipulates a number of changes to the electoral system, establishing that independent candidates may contest the 2006 elections (Clause 1.2.2), that local political parties will be allowed to contest legislative elections from 2009 onwards (Clause 1.2.1), and that there will be full transparency in campaign funds (Clause 1.2.8).

[4] We use the term 'district head' to refer to both *bupati* (the head of a rural district, or *kabupaten*) and *walikota* (the head of a municipality or *kotamadya*). Sabang, Banda Aceh, Lhokseumawe, and Langsa are *kotamadya*, while the other districts in Aceh are *kabupaten*.

2006. Candidates had to get over 25 percent of the vote to win out-right; if no candidate achieved this, a second round of voting would be held. This was required in only three districts—Aceh Barat, Aceh Barat Daya, and Aceh Tamiang—where a second round of voting was held in early 2007. Elections in the remaining two districts (Bireuen and Aceh Selatan) were held in June and November 2007 respectively.[5] Map 1 depicts the timing of the district elections. Results of the elections are shown in Tables 1 and 2 in Section V below.

Aceh's first post-conflict elections were important for two reasons. First, they were crucial for the role they played in managing political competition amongst Aceh's political elites. In the past, the dynamics of political competition amongst Aceh's local elites has shaped the nature of both local and center-periphery conflict in the province. Established elites such as nobles and *ulama* (Muslim religious teachers) have been overtaken by newer elites including high-ranking government officials, GAM and civil society counter-elites, and wealthy contractors. How political differences were handled, and how power was distributed both between and amongst these groups, will have implications for relations between Jakarta and Aceh, and thus for the peace process. The success of the elections in managing political competition between elites depended on a range of factors explored in more detail below.

Second, Aceh's post-conflict elections were important for the role they played in establishing the political allegiances and policy priorities that will shape governance and policy making in the province and districts. Elections are intended to signal the needs and preferences of citizens, and ensure that those competing for office are responsive to these and accountable for their future fulfilment. In Aceh's recent past, political practices have undermined local governance and development, encouraging corruption and the distribution of state resources based on patronage rather than policy goals. Both these governance practices and poorly managed political competition amongst Aceh's elites present potential threats to sustainable peace in Aceh.

Of course, it is rare that post-conflict elections are without weaknesses. Nevertheless, while recognizing the success of the Aceh *pilkada* in terms of being largely free, fair, and peaceful, it is also important to take stock of how the *pilkada* fared on these other measures, in order to better understand how to support ongoing democratization, and consequently longer term peace, in Aceh. Furthermore, it is against such measures, rather than just short-term goals, that future elections in Aceh (and the rest of Indonesia) should be increasingly assessed.

2.   Local Political Competition and Conflict in Aceh

Elites in Aceh have competed over political power and control of resources for centuries, and the dynamics of their competition have shaped the nature of conflict in Aceh. In the seventeenth century, power and resources were shared between the Sultan, who controlled foreign trade, and the wealthy merchant-officials (known as *orangkaya*) who mediated and controlled local producers' access to markets (Reid 2005, pp. 99-100). Relations between these groups tended to be particularly unstable during periods of sultanate transition and political upheaval. As agricultural trade became more important in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the Sultan's power and authority declined in favor of the *ulèëbalang*, a class of hereditary local rulers who controlled agricultural production (Hing 2006; Hurgronje 1960 in Reid 2005, p. 140).

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[5]   Aceh Selatan also required a second round, which was held in January 2008.

In the 1870s the Dutch sent a military force to Aceh to bring the territory under Dutch control; armed resistance by Acehnese continued for the next 30 years. During this time the Dutch solidified their control by co-opting the *ulèëbalang*, setting them up as powerful feudal lords in return for loyalty; the *ulama* (Islamic teachers), on the other hand, maintained resistance in the interior regions, leading guerilla attacks on the Dutch (Reid 2006). Many Acehnese resented the willingness of the *ulèëbalang* to collaborate with the Dutch, as well as their monopolization of economic opportunities during this period.

World War II and the sudden collapse of the Japanese military government provided an opportunity to act on these grievances. In many parts of Indonesia, local *ulama* and their followers responded to the political vacuum resulting from the sudden departure of the Japanese by leading local revolutions against co-opted native elites (Anderson 1972). Following this pattern, shortly after the Japanese withdrew the *ulama* violently overpowered the *ulèëbalang* and gained control of the Acehnese administration (Aspinall 2006). In other parts of Indonesia, once the co-opted elites were overthrown, the *ulama* were generally content to install new local elites with bureaucratic experience and to withdraw from politics (Anderson 1972). In Aceh, however, the *ulama* were intent on ensuring that the Indonesian Republic adopted certain Islamic principles, and that Islam's role in Acehnese social affairs was protected. The secular-inclined Republican Government, for its part, was not content to rule indirectly through the *ulama*, as the Dutch had been content to use the *ulèëbalang* (McGibbon 2006, p. 319). These differences eventually resulted in a rebellion against Indonesia in the 1950s, led by Daud Beureueh, the head of one of the main *ulama* groups.

Since the establishment of the Republic of Indonesia, four new groups of local elites have risen to prominence in Aceh. A new educated and secular-oriented administrative elite arose as the Indonesian state expanded its presence at the regional level in the late 1960s and 1970s. Many see this bureaucratic and academic elite—also called the 'technocrats' (McGibbon 2006)—as occupying a similar role to the *ulèëbalang*, with their interests more aligned to those of the external power (Jakarta) than to ordinary Acehnese. Indeed, for this reason they are often referred to as the 'new *ulèëbalang*' (Morris 1983; Brown 1994).

Partially in response to the perceived collusion between local elites and Jakarta, in December 1976 Hasan di Tiro declared the formation of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and Aceh's independence from Indonesia. GAM built upon the grievances of the many Acehnese who had failed to benefit from the discovery and development of massive natural gas fields off the east coast of the province. The movement grew in size in the 1980s and some fighters were trained in Libya. The Indonesian military, in a number of campaigns, sought to destroy the movement with force. However brutality and abuses, especially during the time Aceh was designated as a 'Military Operations Area' (1989-1998), strengthened GAM and its image amongst the population. During Indonesia's economic and political crisis in the late 1990s GAM expanded and this more recent recruitment of fighters is partially responsible for the generational and ideological split within the movement (Schulze 2004).

GAM's popularity was strongest in rural areas. In the towns and cities, an educated dissident elite also arose, sharing GAM's anti-Jakarta sentiment. This group, often referred to as the 'counter-elite', consisted mostly of student and civil society activists and formed strong networks, especially in the post-1998 *reformasi* period (McGibbon 2006).

A fourth important group consists of the contractors and businessmen that worked closely with the bureaucratic elites. State control over Aceh's abundant natural resources, including the natural gas and oil discovered in the 1970s, combined with prevalent corruption, has led to the rise of an economic class of contractors dependent on securing contracts and exploitation licenses through political connections with both the local and national governments.

In the lead-up to the 2006 *pilkada*, these four groups of elites were all prominent: the technocrats, wealthy and well-connected contractors, GAM, and civil society counter-elites. Traditional elites such as the *ulama* and the descendants of the *ulèëbalang* played a lesser role, with the former having become fragmented and conservative (McGibbon 2006, p. 329), and the latter still suffering from a tarnished reputation due to past collaboration with the Dutch. Relations between these groups of elites have for the past decades been driven by the political exigencies of the conflict, with the technocrats and contractors pitted against GAM and civil society counter-elites. However, this simple dichotomy masks significant divisions and opposing interests within these different groups.

Indonesia's democratization after the fall of Suharto in 1998 and, more fundamentally, the cessation of the center-periphery conflict[6] through the signing of the Helsinki MoU in 2005, has changed the political environment in which competition between elites has taken place. The introduction of direct elections, independent candidates, and (for 2009) local political parties, have dramatically altered the 'rules of engagement' as well as the comparative advantages of each group. Given that the conflict in part stemmed from a "mass dissatisfaction with the ruling elite" (McGibbon 2006, p. 349), Aceh's post-conflict elections are crucial for the role they will play in managing political competition within and between these various elite groups.

3. Governance and Development in Aceh

Past electoral and political practices in Aceh have undermined local governance and development in the province. This has not only contributed to high levels of poverty but has also generated grievances that formed the basis of the violent center-periphery conflict. Aceh's recent elections had the potential to play a crucial role in ensuring that policies and practices concerning the distribution of state resources are aligned with the needs and preferences of ordinary Acehnese. The upcoming 2009 elections will also be important in this respect. In the absence of such alignment, such grievances will continue, providing a groundswell of anti-government sentiment that could be mobilized to create further outbreaks of conflict.

Aceh has rich natural resources but also has one of the highest rates of poverty in Indonesia. Aceh is the third richest province in Indonesia in terms of public revenue per capita, behind only Papua and East Kalimantan (World Bank 2006, p. xiii). However, the poverty rate is estimated at 26.5 percent of the population, over one million people, almost twice the national average (World Bank 2008a). Aceh's three-decade conflict has enabled corrupt and incompetent management of government funds and programs to persist, compounding the grievances that drove the conflict in the first place (McGibbon 2006, p. 339).

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[6]   The term 'conflict' is used in several different senses in this paper. The context should render it clear whether the term is referring to the 30-year long violent conflict between GAM and the Indonesian government, or to ongoing low-level political conflict (i.e. disputes, rivalries, etc.) in the post-MoU period, which appears in either violent or non-violent forms.

The need for better local governance to ensure the effective distribution of government funds is particularly urgent in Aceh today, where the sums managed by local government are rising rapidly. The December 2004 tsunami swept the shores of Aceh and led to a massive reconstruction effort. The Aceh Reintegration Agency (*Badan Rekonstruksi dan Rehabilitasi* or BRR), set up under a Presidential instruction and reporting to the cabinet in Jakarta, was formed to lead and coordinate the reconstruction effort. This was ostensibly an effort to bypass local government agencies that were viewed as corrupt and lacking capacity.[7] However, BRR's mandate will expire in 2009 and reconstruction and redevelopment responsibilities will be transferred to the local Aceh government. Local agencies will also take charge of the allocation and distribution of massive post-conflict autonomy funds, mandated by the MoU and the LoGA, the Law on Governing Aceh, which implements many of the MoU arrangements (World Bank 2006).

How government allocates resources is intimately tied to local politics and elections. Moves towards giving local governments more control over funds and policies are based on the belief that local governments are closer to the people and therefore more cognizant of local needs and aspirations (Tendler 2000; Mehler 2002; Hadenius 2003). However, if decentralization and regional elections simply create new opportunities for local political elites to manipulate government programming and to capture state resources then it is unlikely to result in its theorized benefits (Barron and Clark 2006). Aceh's local politics will thus become increasingly important for reconstruction and development, with direct implications for the robustness of the peace in Aceh.

In Aceh, the link between local politics, elections and governance was evident during the governorship of Abdullah Puteh, 2000-2004.[8] At that time the Governor was chosen not by popular vote but by the provincial parliament. Large investment was needed, since candidates would deploy *tim sukses* (campaign teams) to lobby parliamentarians for their vote, often giving direct bribes.[9] Once elected, Puteh was no doubt eager to recoup his and his supporters' investments. There were two key mechanisms for returning favours and distributing the 'bounty of the state' to followers: the distribution of powerful positions in the provincial administration; and through the distribution of government funds, particularly via the allocation of government contracts. Among numerous suspected cases, one eventually landed him in jail: the purchase of a helicopter for government use. Reports indicate that the price was marked up by four times market value (McGibbon 2006, p. 340), costing the public an extra Rp. 12 billion (US$ 1.3 million) (Saraswati 2004).

4. An Analytical Framework for Looking Beyond 'Free and Fair'

The importance of managing political competition and improving governance in Aceh suggests that evaluations of the success of the elections should not only focus on whether they were 'free and fair' but also on the extent to which they contribute to these longer-run outcomes. This section thus outlines a framework for understanding Aceh's recent elections and their implications for local political competition, governance and development, and, ultimately, the prospects for continued peace in Aceh.

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[7] The BRR has itself not been immune from accusations of corruption and collusion. See Kompas (2007).
[8] This section on Abdullah Puteh is based on the illuminating article by Sulaiman and van Klinken (2007).
[9] Sulaiman and van Klinken (2007, p. 231) suggest that each success team handed out Rp. 50-150 million per parliament member (US$ 5,500-16,000), although it is difficult to be certain since the payments were understandably clouded in secrecy.

Post-conflict and post-authoritarian elections are often accompanied by efforts to assess the extent to which they were 'free and fair'. The main purpose of determining whether an election is free and fair is to judge the degree to which the government elected reflects the genuine will of the people (Goodwin 2006, p. viii). Thus sophisticated (and objective) criteria and standards have been developed for assessing whether citizens have been provided with an opportunity to freely express their will. Common criteria for an election to be considered free and fair include universal suffrage, freedom to vote, freedom of speech for candidates and political parties, lack of intimidation, secret ballots, and impartial vote counting (Goodwin 2006). In this way, 'free and fair' approaches to the analysis of elections can be characterized by their focus on institutional processes and short-term outcomes.

There are a number of advantages of this approach to electoral analysis. First, it can relatively quickly ascertain the legitimacy of the elections and forecast the likelihood that the losing candidates will accept the results. In post-conflict contexts it can help predict whether political violence will take place in the election's aftermath. Second, the oversight that such an assessment requires—the EU mission in Aceh involved 88 observers scattered across the province—can provide a strong and much needed incentive to maintain high electoral standards and to discourage electoral fraud. Third, since standards for a free and fair election are relatively objective, they can be used in a range of political and institutional contexts, and can generate general recommendations on how to improve future elections.

The 'free and fair' approach, however, also suffers from significant limitations. A relatively rapid decision on whether an election is free and fair precludes analysis of its longer-term outcomes on processes such as political competition and governance, two factors identified above as being vital in Aceh. Such an approach is also unable to provide contextually sophisticated recommendations on how to improve elections and political practices beyond the standard recipes for elections such as ensuring 'equal campaigning opportunities' or 'improving oversight of vote counting'. Thus while assessments of whether elections are free and fair remain important, deeper analysis is needed in order to understand the longer-run implications of elections. This is especially true in Indonesia where electoral reforms and 'free and fair' elections have failed to deliver the expected improvements in governance and development (Hadiz 2003; McLeod and MacIntyre 2007; Hidayat 2007; MacDougall 2007).

Alternative analytical lenses are needed. One approach retains the focus on electoral processes and procedures but suggests a more in-depth and sophisticated institutional analysis (McLeod and MacIntyre 2007). Such an approach might, for instance, focus on the actual practices of electoral institutional actors in order to uncover incentives that undermine or negate their efforts to implement procedures properly.

Another approach broadens the analysis to focus on 'secondary institutions'. These include the courts, political parties, the military, and civil society, all of which play a role in managing the political environment in which elections take place, and which encourage politicians to remain accountable and responsive to voters after elections. In this vein, Buehler and Tan (2007) researched party-candidate relations in Indonesia, finding that parties are relatively uninstitutionalized, with family dynasties and patronage networks being much more influential (see also Mietzner 2007a).

A third approach, what some call the 'developmentalist perspective', moves away from institutions and focuses on political and democratic practices more broadly. There is an emphasis on the role of economic and social development in determining political and democratic practices. Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007) have postulated that development may in fact drive democracy rather than the other way around. Others focus on the role of political cultures and past political practices (Bastion and Luckham 2002), emphasizing the need to understand how these interact with institutional rules and procedures as well as the incentives of politicians and citizens. Such approaches suggest paying attention to such topics as voter behavior and campaigning styles.

Together the literature thus suggests meaningful ways to go beyond the 'free and fair' paradigm in assessing the longer-term impacts of the elections. This paper draws on these approaches to investigate three elements of the Aceh elections: (1) electoral implementation, including the practices of electoral institutions and key secondary institutions; (2) the campaign and mobilization strategies of politicians; and (3) the voting behaviour of citizens.

Electoral Institutions and Implementation

Institutional arrangements and their implementation play a crucial role in determining short-term outcomes such as the immediate legitimacy of elections. They also shape longer-run outcomes such as whether rivals are likely to hold grudges and the degree to which inappropriate financing of campaigns can prejudice future governance. Key institutions responsible for electoral implementation in Aceh include the Independent Election Commission (KIP), the Election Oversight Committee (Panwaslih), the police, and the courts (see Box 1 below). Regulations concerning, for example, campaign finance, electoral infractions, or candidate nomination may be implemented in a partial or biased manner, especially if oversight is lacking. In the analysis that follows, attention will be paid to the incentives that shape *actual* institutional practice. This facilitates a more sophisticated analysis of how institutions function and therefore how they can be improved.

Candidate Campaign and Mobilization Strategies

It is often assumed that in a democratic election candidates will base their campaigning strategies on the preferences of citizens, and that after the elections, winning candidates will attempt to fulfil their election promises or will be voted out at the next election. However, in reality a host of alternative strategies may be used to mobilize supporters, including clientelism and patronage relations, charismatic appeals, identity politics, or even force or the threat of violence. The paper investigates the campaign and mobilization strategies utilized by candidates in Aceh's *pilkada*. This approach illuminates some of the promises, debts and relationships that will influence the incoming government's approach to governance and the distribution of state resources. It will also shed light on the nature of interactions and competition amongst Aceh's political elite.

Voter Behavior

Although it is commonly assumed that citizens allocate their vote based on an understanding of the policy platforms of the various candidates, in practice a host of other factors play a role in determining voter behaviour. Voters may select a candidate based on their impression of his

religious merit or ancestry; they may vote based on short-term material rewards (e.g. bribes) or on expected longer-term personal benefits (e.g. promises of patronage); they may vote for someone who comes from a village near their own; they may vote for someone out of fear; or they may allow someone else (such as their parents or local leaders) to determine their vote for them. Different forms of voter behavior bring with them different yardsticks for measuring future government performance. Understanding voter behavior is thus important for understanding the future constraints on the winning candidates. It also deepens our understanding of the nature and substance of competition between political elites.

III. Institutional Implementation and Practices

The institutions responsible for the Aceh *pilkada* managed to ensure a relatively peaceful and free election with a high voter turnout and low percentage of spoiled ballots. However, if longer-run impacts on political competition and governance are considered, institutions were less effective. Our analysis indicates that electoral institutions were focused on managing political competition in the short-term so as to ensure a 'peaceful *pilkada*'. This is understandable given the fragile post-conflict context. However, this short-term focus has undercut the ability of the elections to provide a strong basis for positive modes of political competition, good governance and development in the longer-run. Many electoral infractions were inadequately dealt with, creating grievances that reduced the legitimacy of the winners and that have the potential to contribute to political infighting. Certain procedures vital for future government accountability, such as those regarding campaign funding, were insufficiently enacted, negating the positive effect on governance which they are intended to exert.

Implementation of Aceh's post-elections was the responsibility of a number of 'primary' and 'secondary' institutions. Primary institutions include the Independent Election Commission (KIP) and the Election Supervisory Committee (Panwaslih). Secondary institutions, whose tasks were crucial but not directly related to the electoral process, include the police, the courts, the local parliaments (DPRA at the provincial level, and DPRK in the districts), and the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM). Box 1 below outlines the key institutional responsibilities for the elections, including such tasks as candidate nomination, campaigning, voting, security, monitoring and oversight, and dispute processing.

Box 1: Institutions responsible for Aceh's elections

Independent Election Commission (KIP)

The Independent Election Commission has the main responsibility for conducting elections in Aceh. The provincial-level KIP (KIP NAD) is responsible for implementing the gubernatorial elections, and the district-level KIPs (KIP Kab) the district head elections. Both are under the authority of the national-level General Elections Commission (KPU).[10] KIP NAD consisted of 13 members, while each KIP Kabupaten had five members, appointed for five-year terms by the local parliament. A secretariat of civil servants at each KIP assisted with administrative and logistical needs. The key tasks of both the provincial and district-level KIPs are to establish the procedures for the elections in accordance with national and provincial election laws, to establish the schedule, to verify candidates' nominations, to manage the logistics of printing and distributing voter cards, ballots, and ballot boxes, to organize polling day, to count votes, and to announce results. KIP at both levels is also responsible for ruling on electoral infractions of a procedural or administrative nature. To implement its tasks, KIP established Election Committees at the sub-district level (PPK) and at the village level (PPG). These committees established a Voting Station Committee (KPPS) for each polling station (TPS).

Election Supervisory Committee (Panwaslih)

The Election Supervisory Committee is an ad hoc institution established for the duration of the electoral process. Panwaslih were formed at the provincial and district levels, and the district Panwaslih formed sub-district satellite offices. Each Panwaslih was composed of five members at the provincial and district-level consisting of one each from the police, the prosecutor's office, the media, academia, and the general public. The main responsibility of Panwaslih is to

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[10] *Qanun* No. 7, article 1.8.

monitor the electoral process, including voter registration, candidate nomination, campaigning, voting, vote counting, and tabulation. Panwaslih is also responsible for receiving, investigating and mediating complaints relating to the election. It cannot, however, rule on these complaints and violations. Administrative infractions are passed to KIP for a ruling, while criminal infractions are given to the police for investigation and prosecution.

Police

The police have primary responsibility for maintaining the security environment during the campaign period and on election day. The police are required to maintain a presence near, but not at, each polling station, with civilian guards (Linmas) at the actual stations. The police also have responsibility for investigating electoral infractions of a criminal nature and for passing the results of their investigations to the state prosecutor's office.

Courts

According to the Law on Governing Aceh (LoGA), only the Supreme Court in Jakarta has the authority to annul election results. However, this contradicts Supreme Court rulings that grant jurisdiction to the provincial-level High Courts to rule on disputes relating to district elections. The district courts hear election violations brought to it by the prosecutor's office.

Local Parliaments

Provincial parliament was responsible for passing provincial laws (called qanun in Aceh) providing the legal framework for the election. Local parliaments at both the provincial and district level provided the budgets for the KIP and Panwaslih offices at their level. At provincial and district levels, a parliamentary committee nominated members for KIP and Panwaslih. The local parliament also receives notification of the results from KIP and must write to the Department of Home Affairs to request that they issue a letter of appointment for the new leaders.

Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM)

The Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) was established to monitor the implementation of the Helsinki peace agreement as set out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Government of Indonesia and GAM. This included the demobilization and reintegration of former GAM combatants, the withdrawal of 'non-organic' Indonesian military and police, general security conditions, human rights abuses, and the codification of the MoU in national legislation. The initial mandate was for six months beginning September 15th 2005, but was extended to last until December 15th 2006 in order to cover the first round of elections. The AMM's mandate, though, did not include monitoring elections, which was the primary purview of the EU Election Observation Mission.

This section does not evaluate all of these institutional arrangements and the quality of their implementation. Rather, it focuses on arrangements and implementation practices that stood out either for their strong performance or for important weaknesses. The election conflict database was instrumental in helping to identify the major strengths and weaknesses discussed here.

1. Security Arrangements and the Mitigation of Violent Election-related Conflict

Perhaps the most significant and surprising finding was the overall peacefulness of the elections. The newspaper dataset recorded a total of only 28 violent election-related incidents,[11] 11 percent of the 259 election-related incidents recorded between the beginning of July 2006 and the end

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[11] Conflict here refers to violent clashes as well as minor disputes and complaints in which two parties are in a struggle to obtain (what are perceived as) mutually exclusive goals. Violent events were defined as those where physical force or serious intimidation was used against people, or property damaged. Verbal threats and low level intimidation were considered non-violent.

of February 2007. This rate of violence is low considering that over this same period 73 violent local level conflicts were recorded in the Aceh Conflict Monitoring Updates.[12] This low level of election-related violence is comparable with that seen in recent elections in non-conflict provinces of Indonesia. A study of the 2004 legislative elections in four other provinces found a similar number of cases of election conflict with approximately 11 percent resulting in violence (Barron, Nathan and Welsh 2005). In the sole post-conflict province in that study, Maluku, 20 percent of electoral conflict incidents were violent, higher than the rate in Aceh.[13]

There were three types of violent election-related conflict in Aceh: the destruction of party attributes; intimidation and violent threats aimed at supporters, campaign teams (*tim sukses*), election officials, and sometimes village heads; and, most worrying, physical attacks on candidates or their campaign teams. In Aceh Selatan, for example, two incidents involving serious intimidation of village heads were reported. In Pidie the local head of the Youth of the Nation Forum (FORKAB)—an organization that participated in anti-separatist activities in the conflict period—was kidnapped; he was also a member of the Golkar party's *tim sukses*. The latter incident shows how pre-MoU tensions could re-emerge in the form of violent election conflict, a phenomenon that was thankfully infrequent.

The lack of political violence during the election and the muted effect of pre-MoU tensions were extremely positive developments given that the majority of these elections were held just 16 months after the peace agreement. Many elections in post-conflict contexts are accompanied by electoral violence involving the parties to the peace process.[14] These findings suggest that effective institutional arrangements were in place to ensure that GAM and the Government could not only participate but also articulate their views within the electoral process. Our research suggests that four institutional arrangements played an important role in limiting violence.

Most importantly, the LoGA stipulation that allowed independent candidates in the *pilkada* enabled GAM to contest the elections without needing to work through national political parties.[15] On this legal basis, GAM, other previously disenfranchised elites (including civil society counter-elites), and their supporters were able to genuinely participate in the elections.

Second, the MoU-stipulated withdrawal of 'non-organic' security personnel, and the seemingly successful disarmament and demobilization of GAM combatants, played an important role in

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[12] The term 'local level conflicts' refers to various small conflicts about local issues, distinct from larger conflicts such as the GAM rebellion against the government. The difference suggested by these figures is more remarkable, given that the Aceh Conflict Monitoring Updates recorded conflicts reported in only two newspapers (Aceh Kita and Serambi), while the election conflict mapping used four local newspapers. The Aceh Conflict Monitoring Updates are available at: www.conflictanddevelopment. org.

[13] Comparing the number of cases is difficult because of the differences in timeframe (two months for the 2004 study, eight months for our Aceh study) and the nature of the election (national legislative elections versus *pilkada* in Aceh). We thus use the percentage of violent incidents for comparisons.

[14] See, for example, Ottaway (1998) who focuses on Angola's failed elections in 1992.

[15] The MoU paved the way for the inclusion of independent candidates (Clause 1.2.2) although initially there was some disagreement as to whether the MoU actually mandated GAM's participation in the elections. This was resolved through dialogue and then the Law on Governing Aceh (LoGA), which allowed independent candidates for the 2006 elections only and local political parties for 2009. In Indonesian *pilkada* before 2008, only political parties with at least 15 percent of seats in the local parliament could nominate candidates. For the Aceh *pilkada*, candidates could run without party nomination as long as they submitted the supporting signatures of three percent of the population (of the district or province). Notably, beginning in 2008 independent candidates could contest *pilkada* throughout Indonesia following a Constitutional Court ruling.

ensuring GAM-Government conflict was minimized, particularly at the local level.[16] Although GAM's transition from a military to civilian organization is only partially accomplished,[17] the disarmament ceremonies held across the province played an important role in signaling this transition and in leading to the empowerment of 'civilian GAM' rather than its military wing.

A third factor was the AMM's innovative facilitation of regular security meetings between GAM, the military, and the civilian government both in the lead-up to, and, to a lesser extent, during the election period. These regular Commission on Security Arrangements (or CoSA) meetings were held at the provincial and district levels, and created effective institutional spaces for joint information sharing, trust building, and problem solving. These forums provided a strong incentive for the military to genuinely avoid political involvement and for GAM to refrain from intimidation. Most importantly, the CoSA meetings provided an institutional forum for quickly addressing tensions and security issues when they occurred during the election period.

Finally, electoral institutions played an important role in promoting a 'peaceful *pilkada*' (*pilkada damai* in Indonesian) through a socialization campaign and the sponsoring of 'peace statements' by all candidates. In many districts both KIP and the police got all candidates together to promise to abide by the rules, avoid intimidation and violence, and accept defeat gracefully. These materials and statements spread the theme of 'peaceful *pilkada*', sending a strong message to all factions that electoral violence could threaten the fragile peace in Aceh, and was to be avoided at all costs.

These institutional arrangements meant that political competition was managed successfully enough to produce a peaceful *pilkada*, although of course other factors were also important including the kinds of campaigns run by candidates (see Section IV). However, other aspects of institutional implementation were not managed as well.

2. Oversight, Dispute Management and Non-violent Election-related Conflict

In contrast to the low levels of electoral violence, there was significant non-violent political conflict during the election period. The newspaper database recorded a total of 231 non-violent election-related conflict incidents from July 2006 to February 2007. Figure 1 shows the number of violent and non-violent election-related incidents over time, and Figure 2 shows the total number of incidents by region. The majority of these non-violent incidents involved accusations of violations of electoral processes and procedures. The subject of these disputes varied over the course of the election period. In the lead-up to the campaign period they mostly involved disputes over the selection of electoral officials and the verification of candidates. During the campaign period disputes focused on violations of campaigning rules. On and immediately after polling day disputes focused on voting problems and vote counting irregularities. Most of these disputes took the form of collective protests, demonstrations, or intimidating confrontations. Box 2 gives examples of these types of non-violent electoral conflict.

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[16] The MoU uses the distinction between 'organic' and 'non-organic' troops which is common in Indonesia. Organic troops are those whose base (and usually ethnic origin) are in their location of duty, whereas non-organic troops are from units based elsewhere, and are perceived as being more brutal towards the populace.

[17] GAM officially ceased to exist after the MoU, and most former GAM members joined the new Aceh Transitional Committee (KPA), formed to represent their interests in post-MoU Aceh.

Figure 1: The Timing of Election-related Conflict (bi-weekly from July 2006-February 2007)

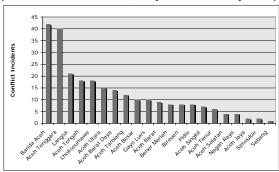|	Jul_1	Jul_2	Aug_1	Aug_2	Sep_1	Sep_2	Oct_1	Oct_2	Nov_1	Nov_2	Dec_1	Dec_2	Jan_1	Jan_2	Feb_1	Feb_2
Non-violent	2	0	2	5	8	9	20	8	18	19	60	22	18	21	8	11
Violent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	12	1	2	1	0	0

Jul_1 is first half of July, Jul_2 second half

Source: Pilkada Conflict Dataset

Figure 2: Election-related Conflict Incidents by District (violent and non-violent, July 2006-February 2007)

Source: Pilkada Conflict Dataset

Box 2: Examples of non-violent electoral conflict

- ***Candidate verification: failing the Qur'an test***
  Provincial election laws stated that all candidates had to be able to chant the *Qur'an* and KIP organized tests as a part of candidate verification. The test caused significant tensions in Aceh Utara when it was announced that two *bupati* candidates, one of whom was the GAM-affiliated candidate, had failed. This resulted in several conflict incidents between various civil society groups and KIP. Two groups accused KIP of political interference, claiming that the wrong grading system had been used.[18] In a compromise solution, the GAM candidate was disqualified but GAM was given the opportunity to field a new candidate, who subsequently passed the *Qur'an* reading test (and who won the election).

- ***Campaigning: allegations of bribing voters***
  On December 9th 2006, two days before the poll, a group of villagers from Bun-bun Alas and Bun-bun Indah villages, Aceh Tenggara, reported to Panwaslih that government officials had been bribing voters in their village to vote for the incumbent. They alleged that a group of a dozen people arriving in three cars, including the camat (sub-district head) and several members of the Aceh Tenggara parliament, had given out Rp. 50,000 (US$ 5) per person at a coffee shop to voters who agreed to support the Golkar-backed incumbent, Armen Desky. [19]

- ***Vote counting: tampering leads to rejection of results***
  There were a number of post-election disputes over the implementation of elections in Kejuruan Muda, Aceh Tamiang. The first incident occurred on the day of the election when a number of election officials opened some of the vote boxes without the presence of all witnesses. A KPA member protested angrily and a scuffle almost broke out. The heads of the district KIP and Panwaslih were called to resolve the matter. Nothing was done and two days later on December 13th hundreds of supporters of the GAM-affiliated candidate held a demonstration in front of the KIP and Panwaslih offices. On December 18th over a thousand demonstrated. On December 21st five of six losing candidate pairs publicly rejected the results.

The vast majority of the non-violent electoral conflicts implicated state actors, particularly KIP and Panwaslih, as parties to the conflict or perpetrators of electoral violations. The conflict database

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[18] Protestors claimed that the foundation charged with grading the test (the Tilawatil Qur'an Development Foundation) had broken KIP's regulations by using the *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an* system for grading the candidates instead of the stipulated *Murattal* system. The two systems involved different standards of evaluation of an applicant's reading ability.

[19] *Rakyat Aceh*, January 4th 2007.

indicates that 52 percent of election-related conflict was between parties/individuals and the state, and a further 20 percent were between state institutions. Together, the state was implicated in over 70 percent of election-related conflict. The actor involved in the highest number of electoral conflicts was KIP, which was implicated in 142 cases or 55 percent of all incidents. These percentages are high compared to other elections. A study of elections in fourteen countries in 2002 by IFES, for example, concluded that on average only 14 percent of election cases involve conflict with the state (Fischer 2002). For Indonesia, though, these high levels of state involvement in electoral conflict are not uncommon. A study of the 2004 legislative elections found several provinces where the state was implicated in 57 percent to 86 percent of election-related conflicts (Barron, Nathan, and Welsh 2004, p. 6).

The high levels of non-violent conflict, and prominent involvement of the state and particularly the electoral institutions, suggest significant institutional weaknesses in the implementation of the elections. It also suggests that citizens were willing to come forward with these complaints, a positive development, although this does not guarantee that complaints are dealt with fairly or satisfactorily.[20] Our research suggests that two institutional weaknesses were most important in contributing to these high numbers of disputes: poor electoral oversight, and poor dispute management.

The Oversight of Electoral Implementation

Panwaslih had a mandate to oversee all aspects of the election's implementation, but in every district visited Panwaslih was viewed as underperforming or biased. This not only led to many protests of KIP's actions, but also undermined the legitimacy of the elections in the eyes of the losing candidates and their supporters. Our research indicates four main reasons for Panwaslih's lack of effectiveness: their small budget and its late arrival; their funding source which compromised neutrality; their lack of authority; and political pressure and intimidation.

Many Panwaslih officials stated that their operational budgets were insufficient to allow them to do their job. Field visits to remote regions were expensive. Panwaslih technically had three officials at the sub-district level but they had none at the village level, and in practice oversight activities were only undertaken by the district level and above. This meant that there was little oversight outside of district capitals. The EU Election Observation Mission made a similar observation (EU-EOM 2007, p. 11).

Not only were Panwaslih budgets small, they were often delivered late. A rapid survey implemented in September 2007 indicated that in nine of thirteen districts Panwaslih was still awaiting funds from their local parliament. This meant that by the time the district Panwaslih was active, voter registration and candidate verification processes were largely finished, therefore providing no opportunity to oversee the candidate health examinations, the *Qur'an* chanting tests, and the verification of independent candidate's supporting signatures.

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[20] Some of the complaints may not have been based on genuine grievances. However, our fieldwork suggests that while court cases protesting the announcement of results were sometimes opportunistically inspired, the host of smaller complaints brought before election day were less likely to be.

The source of Panwaslih's operational budget also compromised its performance. Whereas in the 2004 elections, KPU (the national version of KIP) was responsible for Panwaslu's budget, in the Aceh *pilkada* local parliaments at the district and provincial level were to provide funding for the district and provincial bodies respectively. Although perhaps an improvement on 2004, when Panwaslu was beholden for funds from the institution it was meant to oversee, there were indications that the local parliaments' control over Panwaslih's budget also compromised its independence and adversely affected its incentives to rigorously oversee the elections.

Compromised independence could be seen in a number of disputes where Panwaslih officials were alleged to be biased. Charges of bias were sometimes, but not always, related to the Panwaslih selection process. According to *Qanun* No. 7 district-level Panwaslih officials should be appointed by the national oversight committee (Panwaslu) after receiving proposals from the district parliaments (DPRK). In practice, the process was surrendered entirely to the district parliaments.[21] The neutrality of Panwaslih (and KIP) officials was questioned in most districts visited; most often they were seen as pro-incumbent. Box 3 describes several allegations of inappropriate selection or bias of Panwaslih officials.

Box 3: Allegations of bias amongst Panwaslih officials

In Aceh Barat, a coalition of eleven civil society groups called JPAD (the Aceh Peaceful Elections Alliance) protested the selection of Panwaslih members on the basis that two were on the board of political parties, a violation of Panwaslih regulations. One Panwaslih member subsequently resigned his party membership, claiming his appointment as party secretary was made without his knowledge, whereas the other claimed that his party membership had expired in 2002. Neither was removed from Panwaslih, although JPAD continued to protest. Panwaslih was seen as ineffective and pro-incumbent by many local informants.

In another district, allegations also emerged that some Panwaslih members were not neutral and were aligned to the incumbent *bupati*. These allegations emerged not during the selection process but later, once the work of Panwaslih had begun. After the election, which the incumbent won, losing candidates expressed disappointment with Panwaslih's performance, saying that their complaints had not been investigated. One Panwaslih member told us that other members had been neutral upon appointment, but had subsequently been courted by particular candidates and their performance suffered as a result. A further factor, he explained, was that Panwaslih members selected the police representative to be the head of Panwaslih in a bid to forestall intimidation by candidates' supporters. As time passed, it turned out that rather than improving Panwaslih's performance, this arrangement rendered Panwaslih less effective and less neutral, as the Panwaslih head did not share information with the other members and summarily dropped cases involving the incumbent.

These examples flag two important issues. First, the local parliaments often failed to appoint neutral Panwaslih members, sometimes ignoring regulations on eligibility. In the Aceh Barat case, only four of seven members of the DPRK Commission A participated in nominating Panwaslih members, and two of the four were themselves *pilkada* candidates. More generally, local parliaments across Aceh reflected pre-Helsinki political interests and hence were closer to the status quo (i.e. incumbents). Second, even where neutral Panwaslih members were selected, their neutrality was

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[21] This ambiguity was highlighted in a *Forum Bersama* policy note on the elections. See UNDP and World Bank (2006a, 2006b).

at times eroded after approaches by powerful interests. Without effective media and civil society oversight of Panwaslih performance, built on free access to information, this kind of co-optation is difficult to prevent.

Panwaslih's performance also suffered due to their lack of authority. Panwaslih could only investigate and make recommendations, passing administrative cases to KIP for rulings, and criminal cases to the police for investigation (see next section). Almost no public attention was paid to how many of these cases KIP or the police actually acted on. Most Panwaslih members spoken to described how cases they referred were often simply ignored. The toothlessness of Panwaslih acted as a significant disincentive for them to act on their mandate rigorously, especially as their small budget limited their activities. Panwaslih officials explained their poor performance, or from their perspective their reluctance to be 'pro-active' in their duties, was because they felt it was unlikely their efforts would amount to anything.

Finally, political pressure and intimidation contributed to Panwaslih's poor performance. That Panwaslih members were not physically attacked reflects less the strength of Indonesian democracy and more Panwaslih's generally compliant and passive performance, avoiding their duties instead of placing themselves in danger by carrying out their tasks rigorously. Often reports of infractions were only pursued if there were indications that more intimidation would result from ignoring the case than from processing it (see below). Many political elites retain connections with youth gangs or criminal groups (*preman*). These links often deterred Panwaslih officials from challenging electoral behavior: "If I did my work properly, I would be disappeared", in the words of one Panwaslih official.[22] The extent of political intimidation became clear during a post-election challenge in Aceh Tengah, when the local Panwaslih head went into hiding, reportedly due to death threats made in connection with the protests.[23]

In summary, the incentives in place generally led Panwaslih to carry out their role in a partial and ineffective manner. Political intimidation combined with small budgets and a lack of authority limited Panwaslih's utility, and a lack of oversight of their performance meant that there were no penalties for inactivity. These problems were not unique to the Aceh *pilkada*. State-funded electoral oversight committees were used in Indonesia's legislative and presidential elections in 2004 and were criticized as being ineffective (Barron, Nathan, and Welsh 2005) for many of the same reasons: the lack of funds, personnel, neutrality, and authority (Carter Center 2005). While ineffective oversight did not prevent the implementation of 'peaceful *pilkada*' (in terms of the lack of violence), it did create conflict and erode the legitimacy of the winners in the eyes of rival elites.

The Investigation of Infractions and Complaints

Many of the non-violent conflicts that implicated electoral institutions were related to reports of infractions inadequately dealt with by these bodies. The general approach of the election implementing bodies towards infractions and complaints was avoidance. This attitude was linked to the factors explained in the previous section: intimidation, plus the lack of funds, authority, and

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[22] Interview with district level Panwaslih official, February 20th, 2007.
[23] *Serambi Indonesia*, January 6th, 2007.

accountability. Adequate handling of complaints of electoral infractions, reported by the general public or by rival candidates, is vital to the legitimacy of election results.

Four bodies were entrusted with responsibilities for managing disputes arising from the electoral process: Panwaslih, KIP, the police, and the courts. Grievances were to be reported to Panwaslih, who would refer cases to KIP or the police, as indicated above. If Panwaslih found no strong evidence of a violation, then Panwaslih was to mediate the dispute using *musyawarah* (consensus through communal debate). Agencies charged with investigating or processing complaints all had specified time limits, but there were no sanctions or alternate procedures specified if those time limits were not met.

With these strong disincentives to act—intimidation, low budgets, weak authority, and a lack of accountability—Panwaslih often ignored complaints, and when they did process them and pass them on to KIP or the police, they often disappeared with no trace. Candidates and the general public reported high levels of frustration with this ineffective handling of disputes.

> *"We will only investigate incidents if candidates report them to us. We're not going to pro-actively investigate incidents we hear of unless it is causing problems."*
>
> Head of Panwaslih, Aceh Jaya

> *"We took the violations to Panwaslih, but it stopped there. We also tried going straight to the police…the prosecutor's office is another alternative. But they don't want to follow through. They're all [the incumbent's] friends. So we've decided to report to the governor and the KPK [Corruption Eradication Commission]."*
>
> Losing Candidate, Nagan Raya

Many officials interviewed acknowledged that they did not deal with complaints completely or uniformly, but justified their approach as promoting '*pilkada damai*'. This reveals an assumption that pro-active investigation of disputes would generate more conflict than it would resolve. Others adopted a 'level playing field' philosophy, arguing that since all candidates were committing election infractions, they would only investigate those disputes that might particularly disadvantage a particular candidate. Observations in the field suggested that election officials would only investigate infractions if significant political pressure—in the form of elite support and/or 'street power'—was involved. Box 4 shows what it took to have a dispute properly investigated and addressed.

The resolution of this case was contingent upon the converging of two key factors. First, those who complained happened to meet a Panwaslih member who genuinely investigated their complaint; apparently many other such complaints were turned away. In Nagan Raya, election officials were widely accused of partisanship; the head of KIP was eventually sued for his failure to properly deal with electoral infractions. Second, the KPA members making the complaint came in a group and applied the threat of violence in insisting on the resolution of their complaint. This show of force reminded the electoral institutions of KPA's 'street power' and pressured them to act. Across Aceh, complaints reported without either political backing or the threat of violence were simply ignored.

Box 4: A struggle for justice in Nagan Raya

After the election, a Nagan Raya Panwaslih member explained that he felt real justice had been done in only a single incident handled by his institution. In this case local KPA members filed a grievance with Panwaslih the night before the December 11th poll, alleging that in one village 58 residents had made it on to the voter list despite having moved to the region after the cut-off date for eligibility. In order to be eligible to vote, an individual must have been living in the constituency for a minimum of six months prior to the closing date for voter registration. The initial confrontation at Panwaslih was heated. After investigation, Panwaslih took the protestors to KIP to pursue the complaint. KIP did not respond eagerly but was eventually pressured into visiting the village to verify the situation. During the late night visit to the village, KIP was noncommittal, but a large group of KPA members displayed their anger and went so far as to threaten to disrupt village polling the next day if the matter was not addressed.[24] Finally at four o'clock in the morning, and after much questioning and argument, the residents in question were removed from the voter list.

The notion that electoral officials investigating grievances should attempt to do so without exacerbating conflict or endangering the peace process has merit. Some grievances may be opportunistic or of minimal importance, when weighed against the possibility that strict sanctions, such as the disqualification of candidates, could lead to violence. However, this reasoning was at times used an excuse for inactivity or partisan enforcement of rules. The evidence from the field suggests that electoral officials were often focused more on ensuring their own personal safety than on protecting the peace process. Claims of protecting the peace were used to justify both politically motivated partial implementation and plain laziness. There remains a strong perception that in many cases of electoral violations, justice was denied.

3. Campaign Finance Regulations and Future Governance

The failure to implement campaign finance regulations in the *pilkada* is likely to seriously compromise future governance in Aceh. The Aceh elections had requirements for reporting, publicizing, and auditing candidates' campaign finances. However, these requirements were carried out in a partial and therefore ineffective manner. Little is known about how candidates financed their campaigns, and hence there is little opportunity for the public to use this information to monitor successful candidates' decisions once in power. Although this did not lead to protests and conflicts during the election period and its immediate aftermath, it has compromised the potential of the elections to install leaders who are not predisposed to poor governance due to illicit funding of their campaigns.

In most democratic countries election campaigns are funded from a combination of personal savings and party funds, the latter of which comes from both donations and state subsidies. Subsidies to Indonesian parties were cut in 2005. Now, instead of parties funding candidates in order to further their policies through election victories, candidates must pay parties to support them through the nomination process (Mietzner 2007a).[25] For example, one candidate for Jakarta governor in 2006 was believed to have paid a party significantly more than US$ 1 million to nominate him (Meitzner 2007a, p. 252). Our fieldwork in Aceh also found cases of candidates paying parties.

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[24] The KPA members apparently felt that the 58 voters in question would likely support the Golkar incumbent. They were Javanese and had come to work on an electricity plant owned by Surya Paloh, a powerful national Golkar politician. Indeed many Javanese in Nagan Raya openly supported the Golkar incumbent (see Section VI).
[25] In Indonesia, parties in 2004 received Rp. 1,000 (US$ 0.11) of state funding per 1999 vote (Mietzner 2007a, p. 243).

Candidates spent huge amounts on election campaigns, needing money to purchase a party nomination, to print materials and advertise, to fund a team of assistants, and to spread patronage benefits through networks of supporters (see Section IV). Candidates who do not possess private fortunes had to access funds through their social networks, sometimes running with a wealthy vice-*bupati* candidate, or enlisting the assistance of wealthy *tim sukses* to bankroll their campaign in return for favors should they win. Although much is spent on *pilkada* campaigns, ignorance of the sources of these funds is a common feature of democracy in post-Suharto Indonesia. In the 2005 *pilkada* in Gowa district, South Sulawesi, for example, one candidate's campaign coordinator privately acknowledged spending over US$ 400,000, even though only US$ 14,330 in campaign donations was reported to the elections commission (Buehler and Tan 2007, p. 11).

Our fieldwork uncovered various signs of funding-for-favors deals. For example, a local timber tycoon allegedly backed one district head candidate in Aceh Barat. Informants suggested that this backer expected timber concessions and impunity over illegal logging should his 'horse' win. In Aceh Barat Daya, reports indicated that wealthy contractors had donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to campaigns and expected specific favors in return. On a smaller scale, one contractor cum *tim sukses* member at the sub-district level in Nagan Raya indicated that he had contributed Rp. 15-20 million (US$ 1,600-2,200) of his own money to local campaign efforts. The biggest case broke just before election day, when a man alleged to be the adjutant of the winning candidate in Nagan Raya was caught in Medan withdrawing over US$ 1 million from fraudulent bank accounts. It was alleged that the funds were campaign contributions from Nagan Raya contractors—who admitted that it was their money but denied that it was for campaign donations.

Some of these funding deals were said to be accompanied by signed political contracts laying out exactly what benefits the candidate would provide if he or she were to win office. In other cases there were verbal agreements. Contractors invariably expected lucrative government construction contracts with scant financial oversight. They also realized that if their candidate lost, they would be highly unlikely to receive any such contracts.

The potential for and dangers of illicit campaign funding were so well recognized that it was discussed in the Helsinki MoU. Clause 1.2.8 states that "There will be full transparency in campaign funds". Subsequently, Aceh's electoral laws provided a framework for monitoring campaign finances. *Qanun* No. 2 and 3 on the elections state that candidates are required to use a designated bank account for all campaign donations and expenditures, to only accept donations below certain thresholds from individuals and businesses, and to report all donations and expenditures to KIP.[26] KIP is required to audit and verify these reports within ten days of the election[27] and to publish the reports in local newspapers.

These procedures are similar to the regulations used in previous Indonesian elections, which fail to specify sanctions for not submitting reports or for not complying with the election regulations (Indonesian Corruption Watch n.d., pp. 4-5). As a result, campaign finance regulations have in the past been simply ignored (see Mietzner 2007a, p. 254). For example, in 2004 only one of 128

[26] See *Qanun* No. 2 (2004), articles 48-49, and *Qanun* No. 3 (2005), article 50. The maximum donation from individuals was Rp. 50 million (US$ 5,500) for governor candidates and Rp. 25 million (US$ 2,750) for district level candidates. Contributions from private companies could be twice those amounts.
[27] *Qanun* No. 7 (2006) article 9(1)(a).

regional parliament members and 13 of 24 parties submitted their campaign finance reports (Carter Center 2005).

Compliance with campaign finance regulations in the Aceh *pilkada* was similarly low. Many candidates did not submit their campaign finance reports after the election—especially those candidates who lost. In Bener Meriah, only the winner submitted his report, whereas in Aceh Barat Daya only the two candidates in the run-off election submitted reports. There is also no evidence that campaign bank accounts were used exclusively or at all, or that banks assisted in the verification of campaign fund transactions. In Nagan Raya, one Panwaslih official reported that he had been unable to obtain the numbers of candidates' campaign accounts, except for one that, upon verification, was empty. It appears that candidates were merely asked to fill in a form declaring their campaign funds and total expenditures.

When submitted, campaign finance reports were of doubtful accuracy. According to the International Crisis Group (2007, p. 4), a member of gubernatorial candidate Azwar Abubakar's *tim sukses* admitted spending at least four times what was reported to KIP. Our interviews found similar indications. Furthermore, there are no signs that the promised audits actually took place, with campaign officers indicating that no one had contacted them for further information or to verify any information from their report. The clear conclusion is that the electoral institutions were either unable or unwilling to monitor campaign funding in order to minimize funding-for-favors deals and other arrangements. This could have negative consequences for future governance and the distribution of state resources.

Campaign finance verification is a tool that political opposition, the media, civil society groups, and the general public can use to hold winning candidates accountable. In order to be effective as such, a host of supporting conditions need to be met, including public support for efforts to investigate campaign finance, a political opposition or civil society willing to investigate and apply pressure to resolve infractions, and continued efforts to monitor corruption in government and the relationship between government decisions and campaign contributions. The effective implementation of campaign finance regulations is thus important in ensuring that elections set a path towards good governance.

IV. Campaign and Voter Mobilization Strategies

Our research suggests that in the Aceh *pilkada*, campaigns and mobilization strategies did not effectively signal the policy priorities of politicians and ensure that politicians were responsive to the needs and priorities of ordinary citizens. Instead of policy dialogue and grassroots mobilization around voters' priorities, candidates—especially those in district races—relied heavily on spreading patronage, the co-optation of village leaders, money politics, and displays of pomp and status. This section analyses these campaign and mobilization practices and briefly considers the implications of such strategies.

Four groups of Acehnese leaders described earlier were prominent as candidates in the elections: 'technocrats' (bureaucrats and academics), GAM leaders, civil society 'counter-elites', and contractors:

- *Technocrat candidates* were usually incumbents, legislators (most commonly the head of the legislature), bureaucrats (often department heads), military officers, or party leaders, and represented national parties rather than running as independents.
- *GAM-affiliated candidates* ran in 15 districts, and were generally drawn from the ranks of 'civil GAM'.[28] Most ran as independent candidates, with the notable exception of vice-governor candidate Hasbi Abdullah who ran on the PPP party ticket with Humam Hamid.
- *Civil society candidates*, prominent amongst which were those associated with SIRA, some of whom ran as independents (often with GAM running mates) or on party tickets.[29]
- *Contractors* often ran as vice-*bupati* candidates, presumably providing the financial backing for the more well known figure who ran as *bupati*.

Ulama (Muslim religious teachers) did not emerge as candidates but did in some cases publicly endorse candidates. Neither were descendants of *ulèëbalang*, identifiable by the title '*Teuku*' used with their name, prominent amongst candidates, nor amongst winners; only one successful candidate was a *Teuku* (see below). Box 5 gives three examples of candidates and what were seen as the qualities that rendered them suitable.

How did the various candidates campaign for leadership of Aceh? Generally, GAM-affiliated independent candidates had little funding but relied upon their existing grassroots support, particularly amongst poorer and rural voters, with the message being spread by KPA's large network of supporters. Candidates with a technocrat or contractor background, in contrast, tended to rely upon more opportunistic patronage networks (as opposed to GAM's more ideological networks), and high profile (and expensive) media campaigns to reach voters.

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[28] GAM had both military and non-military members, the latter of which are referred to in Aceh as 'civil GAM' *(GAM sipil)*.
[29] SIRA, the Aceh Information Center for a Referendum, organized huge rallies in 1999 and 2000 in Banda Aceh, gathering hundreds of thousands of supporters to express their desire for a referendum on Aceh's independence. SIRA has its roots in the student movement, and its leader, Muhammad Nazar, ran with Irwandi Yusuf as a vice-governor candidate (and won).

Box 5: *Pilkada* candidates

- **A successful businessman in Pidie**
  Khairul Basyar, known as the 'Swiftlet King' for his success trading swiftlet nests, ran for *bupati* in Pidie, supported by a coalition of small parties. His reputation assisted his campaign greatly; he was known as someone who had achieved success (as a businessman), who was new (i.e. not corrupted by direct experience in local politics), wealthy (and thus, supporters argued, less likely to commit corruption if elected), and a philanthropist (with a history of helping build mosques and giving to the poor). His campaign was well funded out of his own pocket and he won in several sub-districts. However, in the end he could not overcome the support for the GAM-affiliated candidate, and came second.

- ***A well-placed incumbent in Nagan Raya***
  In Nagan Raya, the incumbent district head *Teuku* Zulkarnaini had many things going for him as a candidate. First, he was a bureaucrat who had been assigned to the post of *bupati* of the new district of Nagan Raya in 2003. This had reportedly allowed him to build a network of loyalists in the bureaucracy and other local institutions; rumours abounded of nepotistic appointments and patronage distribution. Second, he was descended from the King of Beutong, a traditional region now a sub-district of Nagan Raya, and this continued to induce loyalty from some residents. Finally, he was a grandson of Abu Plekong, a high status *ulama* and leader whose descendants still commanded almost fanatical support. All of these factors may have helped. He won the election by a clear margin.

- ***A largely unknown but successful GAM candidate in Aceh Utara***
  Ilyas Pasee was the GAM-affiliated candidate in Aceh Utara. The initial choice, Amni Ahmad Marzuki, failed his *Qur'an* reading test. After tense negotiations, KPA was allowed to nominate a replacement for him. Ilyas Pasee had been the deputy regional commander and political coordinator for the GAM region which contained Aceh Utara (and three other districts) (International Crisis Group 2007). Even though he was not well known in some parts of the district, he won the election due to his association with GAM.

This section will expand upon four features of the campaigning strategies of candidates:

- The lack of clear policy platforms and the prevalence of promises;
- The reliance on leadership outreach and networking;
- The distribution of donations, 'care packets', and bribes (money politics), often in connection with *silaturrahmi* (visits to foster good relationship) and campaign rallies;
- The display of power through the strategic use of pomp rallies and the 'branding' of regions as 'belonging' to one or another candidate.

These strategies have negative implications for governance, since candidates formed patron-client relationships and made patronage commitments that will require an illicit flow of goods and services to maintain.[30] These practices also have negative implications for political competition since they involve the mobilization of 'clients' to work on behalf of their political patrons, not through debate and policy statements but through personal approaches, illicit payments, and shows of force. This can set the stage for the generation and escalation of future grievances.

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[30] Patron-client relationships are abiding hierarchical connections between two parties. Typically the patron provides employment, protection, or other benefits while the client provides labour or political support. A political system built upon long term relationships such as these can be called 'patrimonial'.

1. Platforms and Promises

> *"Campaigning is done through simple slogans…no candidates have clear platforms."*
>
> NGO worker, Aceh Barat

Campaigns for the Aceh elections did not contain detailed explanation of policy platforms. At campaign rallies, usually held in sub-district capitals, candidates put forward vacuous platitudes promising to "help the poor", "prioritize farmers", "create jobs", "improve the economy", "maintain the peace", or "stamp out corruption". Generally absent was any sophisticated discussion of policy innovations or budgetary trade-offs. This was as much applicable to the provincial as to the district candidates. In the absence of such discussion, candidates were associated with broad ideological positions on the basis of party or GAM background. Secular parties were seen to represent a nationalist ideology, Islamic parties a nationalist-focused Islamic ideology, and GAM-affiliated candidates an ideology of change, regional Acehnese identity, and a pro-poor stance.

Political ideology did not sharply distinguish the national parties. GAM-affiliated candidates, in contrast, took every opportunity to emphasize their ideological credentials. Posing in traditional Acehnese dress for the photos that later appeared on the ballots was a key strategy in cultivating an Acehnese image, and contrasted them sharply and visibly from candidates backed by national political parties.[31] Unlike other local parties in post-conflict contexts, though, GAM-affiliated candidates tended not to overly emphasize their role in achieving autonomy (see Hohe 2002).

> *"Said Mahdi only promises that if he wins he'll build a village meeting hall, so that's all I promise to the villagers, and that's all I know of his 'mission and vision'."*
>
> *Tim sukses* member, Beutong, Nagan Raya

Rather than articulating either party or personal policies and programs, candidates generally attempted to garner support by making specific promises to particular villages or groups of villages. One candidate might promise to develop the road to a village, or to repair the mosque, while another might promise an agricultural aid program. In the past when regional leaders were chosen by the local legislatures, candidates focused their patronage efforts on the members of legislature and other elite supporters (see Sulaiman and van Klinken 2007). However, with direct elections candidates focused their patronage efforts on the general public.

It has been argued that elections exert a particularly strong 'downward distributive pressure' through patronage networks in direct elections that are occurring amidst political, economic and social change, especially where ideologies do not significantly determine voting decisions (Scott 1972).[32] All these conditions were present in Aceh. Voters were generally not ideologically bound to candidates (except in the case of GAM), and numerous promises were made by candidates to bolster grassroots support. During our fieldwork, voters described the kinds of concrete promises that candidates made to particular villages: to develop mosques, *balai desa* (village halls), flood retainer walls, and access roads.

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[31] This strategy was deemed such a success that *all* candidates in the June 2007 Bireuen election, not just those affiliated with GAM, followed suit.

[32] Scott's (1972) four conditions were: when citizens directly select candidates (as in Aceh, with direct elections); when political power is unstable (in Aceh, the post-MoU upheavals including the inclusion of independent candidates); when socio-economic change is extensive (such as in post-tsunami and post-conflict Aceh); and when candidates cannot rely on ideological underpinnings (as in Aceh, where citizens were disillusioned with national parties and the technocrats).

2. Leadership Outreach and Networking: The Importance of *Tim Sukses*

"The tim sukses *are made up of different types of people… public figures, contractors … but their methods are the same."*

Local NGO Director, Aceh Barat

Leadership outreach and networking was a primary campaign and mobilization strategy for candidates. The direct nature of the elections forced candidates to reach down to the grassroots level but most candidates lacked these connections—especially those not affiliated with GAM. Candidates generally attempted to build connections with villagers through the use of local leaders and by drawing upon their local networks and influence. *Tim sukses* were formed at the provincial (for the gubernatorial election), district, sub-district, and even village level for this purpose. *Tim sukses* were selected from candidate's existing networks where possible, and augmented by newcomers, all of whom would then attempt to influence local leaders around them to publicly support their candidate.

GAM already possessed strong networks and extensive village-level support. GAM-affiliated candidates made use of the KPA structure to spread the word, mostly informally, in coffee shops and casual meetings, rather than through explicit home visits or speeches in public forums. GAM supporters sometimes just asked a (former) GAM member which of the candidates is '*uroeng tanyoe*' (Acehnese for 'one of us' or 'our man').[33] This kind of campaigning did not involve in-depth discussion, and many GAM supporters professed very minimal knowledge of the candidates, merely knowing that if you support *uroeng tanyoe* then you need to pick candidate number 5 (for example) on polling day. Those GAM-affiliated candidates who partnered with SIRA vice-candidates also benefited from the strong positive reputation of SIRA as an organization that was distinctly Acehnese and active during the struggle against the central government.

The vast majority of candidates, however, had to rely on the rapid formation and deployment of hierarchical *tim sukses* networks, with district-level *tim sukses* selecting sub-district level *tim sukses* and so on. The key to the formation of a successful *tim sukses* was to identify and garner the support of individuals and organizations with their own networks and influence. For example, the incumbent district head in Pidie managed to form a *tim sukses* consisting of contractors, businessmen, parliamentarians, community figures, *ulama* and *ulama* associations, *santri* associations, and youth groups. Box 6 describes the key characteristics that make a *tim sukses* member successful.

Box 6: Characteristics of a successful *tim sukses* member

- ***Broad and strong networks***
  Tim sukses members should have broad social connections with large numbers of people, either through membership of organizations, strong patron-client networks, or informal social networks. Since support was garnered not through spreading information but by exerting influence, it was more effective to use existing social relationships rather than create new ones. Networks were especially useful if they bridged the district and village levels, rather than connecting

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[33] The phrasing 'our man' here is of particular interest. Certainly many felt that candidates from national parties did not represent their interests, but this phrasing suggests that *all* non-GAM candidates were seen as outsiders.

district elites to sub-district elites. A *tim sukses* member who also had a close relationship to the candidate was more likely to be able convince voters that promised benefits would indeed be delivered to the village.

- **Social status and legitimacy**
  Since *tim sukses* members peddle influence rather than just information, their status is vital. Social status in Aceh depends on birth (nobility and family prominence), age, gender, religious reputation, education, wealth, and other factors. In social settings, not everyone's opinions are equal, and social norms prevent low-status villagers from speaking frequently in large gatherings. In the field it was observed that low status *tim sukses* members tended to be ineffective and inactive, whereas those of high status could speak at public forums and their opinions were taken more seriously.

- **Personality**
  Tim sukses members needed to be charismatic, articulate, and energetic in order to successfully influence a large number of people. People with these qualities would have more success in convincing villagers to support their candidates and in building larger networks of influence.

- **Trust**
  Trust is critical given that candidates often channel funds to *tim sukses* members in order to implement campaign activities. Depending on new relationships is risky, and there are many stories of *tim sukses* members corrupting or misusing campaign funds; some of these duplicitous or ineffective members found their funds eventually cut off. It is safer to work through existing, proven political alliances. Political networks between people who had been members of *tim sukses* in the 2004 national elections were reactivated for the *pilkada*.

Although some *tim sukses* members were party cadres, and some were attracted to a candidate for ideological reasons, many were in fact 'political entrepreneurs', selling their skills. Some would offer their services to a number of candidates in order to procure the best deal for themselves. The view of *tim sukses* as political entrepreneurs is supported by the prevalence amongst them of contractors and businessmen, people who were already enmeshed in neo-patrimonial networks with government figures, and used to pragmatic deal-making.[34] Box 7 describes three *tim sukses* members active in district elections.

Box 7: Three examples of *tim sukses* members

- A model **tim sukses** member from a village in Pidie
  Although the district of Pidie elected the GAM-affiliated candidate as district head, in this village Khairul Basyar, known as the 'Swiftlet King' (see Box 5 above), won the most votes—and he won in the sub-district also. This success was partially due to well chosen *tim sukses* and successful utilization of existing political networks to channel funds and ensure influence. The success of the Swiftlet King's *tim sukses* member, Ramli [35], in this sub-district can be attributed to several factors:
  - Ramli's brother was a contractor in Sigli and had acted as a political entrepreneur during a previous election campaign. Ramli was thus well connected to political figures in the district capital.

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[34] *Neo*-patrimonialism refers to more recent political systems where patron-client relations are of a more opportunistic and short-term nature. See Scott (1972), Eisenstadt (1973) and Brown (1994).
[35] Names in this box have been changed.

- Ramli's father had high standing in the village, carrying the aristocratic title of *teuku*, and was considered to have a 'big name' in the area. This bolstered Ramli's high status amongst villagers.
- Ramli was charismatic, energetic, intelligent and articulate.
- Ramli had successfully worked on the 2004 legislative elections, in support of a politician who succeeded in being elected to the district legislature.

- **A political entrepreneur in Pidie**
  Husin lived in a remote village in Pidie where GAM support was strong. He had been active for Golkar in the 2004 elections. He had a coffee shop and was articulate and confident. In the lead-up to the *pilkada* he approached Irwandi Yusuf's *tim sukses* at the district level, proposing to become a village level *tim sukses* member. He did not manage to obtain funds from them, though, so he switched his energies to the district race and the Swiftlet King. Even though he was officially a *tim sukses* member for the Swiftlet King, he explained that his real loyalties (and his vote) remained with Irwandi Yusuf and Mirza Ismail, the main GAM candidates in the provincial and district elections. It appears that he campaigned very little for the Swiftlet King, instead merely collecting whatever resources he could from the *tim sukses* higher up.

- **Self-funded *tim sukses* member in Nagan Raya**
  In one sub-district in Nagan Raya, Mustafa, the head of the *tim sukses* for the Golkar *bupati* candidate, was a wealthy contractor. Mustafa had prior political experience, having run as a candidate for the Partai Patriot Pancasila, and was reportedly approached personally by the Golkar candidate to be his *tim sukses* member for the sub-district. Despite not have a previous relationship with the candidate, Mustafa claimed to have put approximately Rp. 17 million of his own money into the campaign. His local influence was linked to his wealth and patronage; he operated a number of trucks and tsunami projects in Aceh Barat, and brought the labor for these projects from his home sub-district. It was clear that Mustafa hoped his investment of time and money would bring dividends in terms of material benefits and political favors if his candidate were successful.

Tim sukses carried out a variety of activities, depending on their own strategy as well as the resources that were channeled to them. This included distributing campaign materials (posters, stickers, T-shirts), influencing villagers in day-to-day conversations at the coffee shop, attempting to obtain the endorsement of influential village leaders, and organizing transportation for villagers to attend campaign rallies. If a *tim sukses* did not have networks in a particular village, they often approached the *geuchik* (village head). While it is appropriate to report one's presence to the *geuchik* on arrival, many claimed that various *tim sukses* actively tried to recruit *geuchik* as (unofficial) local *tim sukses*. Box 8 describes some of these activities.

> *"If my candidate wins, I won't necessarily be given a job, but if I bring some kind of proposal, it will be easier to have it heard."*
>
> KDP village facilitator and local *tim sukses* member

What motivated *tim sukses* members? Wealthy or well-funded candidates could distribute funds through their trusted *tim sukses*, but many *tim sukses* worked without receiving funds from above. From contractors funding candidates' campaigns at the district level to sub-district and village level *tim sukses* members investing their own money in campaign activities, *tim sukses* hoped that their assistance would be repaid by political or material favors. That is, they were entering into neo-patrimonial relationships with candidates in expectation of payment at a later date rather than

a wage for hours spent working. Expected benefits ranged from gifts of motorcycles and cars, if they delivered enough votes, to jobs in the future, lucrative construction contracts, or, on a smaller scale, just the 'ear' of the candidate if he became *bupati* as in the quote above. Even if *tim sukses* members did not benefit individually, their closeness with the winning candidate might enable them to ensure that their village received a promised development project, in which case their social status and influence amongst villagers would increase.

Box 8: Candidates and *tim sukses* target *geuchik*

Reports from the field indicated that incumbent *bupati* on occasions attempted to mobilize *camat* (sub-district heads) and *geuchik* to support their candidacy. One *geuchik* told us how he was summoned to the office of the *camat* along with other *geuchik*, and instructed to support the Golkar incumbent. This *geuchik* claimed that as it would have been dangerous to refuse the *camat* to his face, he chose instead to just not implement the order. Charges that incumbents utilized the state apparatus as *tim sukses* arose in several districts. Other *geuchik* reported recruitment attempts by other candidates. Our fieldwork uncovered cases where it appeared that *geuchik* had been successfully recruited. One *geuchik* was relatively open about his support for a particular candidate, and justified his 'political entrepreneurial' activities by complaining about his low wage from the government. There were many allegations of partisan *geuchik* but little accountability—Panwaslih was virtually non-existent below the district level—meaning that as long as *geuchik* acted in a low profile manner (and were not formally listed as *tim sukses* members), they had freedom to operate as they wished.

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3. *Silaturrahmi*, Donations and 'Money Politics'

Stories abounded of *tim sukses* directly paying voters small amounts of cash (Rp. 20,000-50,000, the equivalent of US$ 2-5) to vote for a particular candidate. However, few cases made it to court. Candidates also provided meals and 'transportation money' if villagers attended their rallies. Before the official campaign period began, candidates used *silaturrahmi* (social visits to villages, often based around a meal, prayer, and discussion) to reach villagers, and these meetings invariably involved the distribution of donations, care packets, and/or foodstuffs. Specifically, three practices were identified that appeared to violate campaign laws.

First, when visiting villages, candidates and *tim sukses* would often make donations to the mosque fund or to social groups such as women's *Qur'an* study groups or young people's sports teams. These donations demonstrated that the candidate cared and would take concrete action to improve the lives of villagers.[36] One *mukim* (traditional leader of a cluster of villages) acknowledged that such 'donation campaigns' (*kampanye amal*) were the most effective way to acquire votes. *Tim sukses* members also acknowledged that this was standard practice, even for GAM-affiliated candidates:

> *"If we go to the village and we see a mosque that is not in adequate condition, we need to give a donation. Or people ask us for copies of the Qur'an."*
>
> KPA member and *tim sukses* member

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[36] An important quality of leadership in Indonesia is the ability to offer service *(jasa)* to the community. One must distribute resources if one is to be seen as a powerful and effective leader (Antlöv 2004, p. 132). During the campaign period, candidates were evaluated partly on the basis of such 'service'.

Second, a common form of money politics occurred at campaign rallies, where candidates and their *tim sukses* would distribute either packages containing clothing or foodstuffs, or cash payments to cover 'transportation costs'. In these situations, villagers generally had little ideological attachment to candidates, other than to GAM-affiliated ones, and would not have attended if they had to pay for their own food and transportation. Thus many *tim sukses* felt that it was necessary to provide a good meal, some transportation money and perhaps other goods in order to attract participants to rallies. Many villagers would thus attend any rally that was being held, rather than only rallies for candidates that they supported.

> *"If you don't have the funds to 'buy people coffee', then don't bother getting into politics."*
>
> DPRD member and *tim sukses* member

A third prevalent strategy involved using money to strengthen a candidates' networks with local leaders—including efforts to bribe *geuchik* with payments or promises. *Tim sukses* had to select the most effective ways to spend available campaign funds: disseminating campaign messages (through posters, etc.), holding rallies, giving goods to individual voters, or paying key actors at the village-level. Candidates are permitted to hire *tim sukses* in villages and pay them, but *geuchik* were supposed to be neutral. Although some *geuchik* may have refused bribes and remained neutral, many people reported that *geuchik*, similarly to voters themselves, eagerly accepted whatever was offered to them.

> *"The* tim sukses *seek out the* geuchik*, negotiate with them, offer them programs. Many cars (of* tim sukses*) are coming and going now. The* geuchik *accept everything. They say to the* tim sukses*: 'don't just talk about programs, where's the money?'"*
>
> Village resident and KDP staff, Aceh Barat

There is a stark contrast between, on the one hand, the widespread acknowledgement among the public that money politics is not just frequent but standard practice in Indonesian elections, and on the other hand, the very low number of cases of money politics that make it to the courts. One explanation for this apparent contradiction is the fuzzy legal definition of money politics (see Box 9). Another is the challenge of collecting evidence; in most cases villagers would prefer to keep the gifts rather than report them. Reporting any crime to the police is perceived as a difficult and risky process,[37] and cases that are reported are often sabotaged institutionally before reaching the courts, or dismissed by the courts on the basis of weak evidence or time limits on reporting. A third explanation is weak electoral oversight (see Section III above).

Interestingly, although money politics persists, its practice and forms have undergone changes in recent years. In the 1999 elections, perpetrators of money politics were mostly bureaucrats, whereas in the 2004 elections the perpetrators were mostly party representatives, candidates, and *tim sukses* (ICW n.d.). In 2006, our fieldwork indicated that the latter model—particularly the use of *tim sukses*—continued in the Aceh elections.[38]

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[37] Witnesses to crimes are classified as *saksi* (witness) but in practice witnesses often subsequently become *tersangka* (suspects); this is one factor that discourages citizens from reporting crimes. Another is the widespread belief that justice is not to be had unless one brings influence and funds. A third is the belief that if you are reporting crimes by powerful people than you can expect to be subject to intimidation in various forms, and it becomes even less likely that justice will be served by the police and the courts.

[38] Some evidence of money politics comes from surveys of voter attitudes. An IFES survey found that 4 percent of respondents reported that a candidate or party representatives offered money to a relative or acquaintance in order to vote for that candidate (IFES 2007). Given the pressures not to admit such vote-buying, real figures are likely to be significantly higher.

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Box 9: The legal definition of money politics

According to National Laws No. 12 (2003) and No. 23 (2003), money politics is: "to promise and/or give money or other goods in order to influence voters" (ICW n.d., p. 8). It can be difficult to prove that cash or goods were given *in order to* influence voters; those delivering funds often disguise them as 'donations' or 'gas money' not intended to influence voters. This lack of clarity in the definition of money politics makes prosecutions difficult over matters such as the distribution of goods and cash during campaigning (*ibid.*, p. 3). In addition, many citizens are themselves not clear on the definition of money politics, for example whether it is acceptable for candidates to donate goods to voters, to donate funds to mosques or *Qur'an* study groups, or to give money to cover transportation costs at rallies.

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Interestingly, although money politics persists, its practice and forms have undergone changes in recent years. In the 1999 elections, perpetrators of money politics were mostly bureaucrats, whereas in the 2004 elections the perpetrators were mostly party representatives, candidates, and *tim sukses* (ICW n.d.). In 2006, our fieldwork indicated that the latter model—particularly the use of *tim sukses*—continued in the Aceh elections.[39]

But did these sorts of money politics actually influence the results and consequences of the *pilkada*? We consider voters' reactions to these donations, gifts and bribes in Section V below. However, even if voters are not swayed money politics threatens the democratic system in several ways. When candidates win through bribery of voters, they do not need to have clear policy platforms, they do not need to implement those platforms in order to retain legitimacy, and they may engage in corruption in order to recoup the funds that they outlaid during the election. Losing candidates who are in bureaucratic posts may also seek to illicitly regain their campaign outlays through corruption. Perhaps if voters show themselves immune to money politics the process will decline over time. But in the short term the existence of money politics continues to prejudice future governance by introducing strong motives for corruption.

4. Displays of Power: Pomp Rallies and Village 'Branding'

Campaign rallies often act as a kind of show of force to convince voters that the candidate in question stands a strong chance of winning. It thus becomes important to give the impression that one has many supporters by, for example, bussing in as many supporters as one's budget allows. This in turn increases the vote for that candidate, since many voters wish to maximize their potential patronage payoffs by aligning themselves with whoever is likely to win (see Section V). Such 'pomp rallies' require large budgets for transportation, catering and entertainment, and are thus a primary method through which campaign funds can make an impact. It is in the candidate's interest to overstate their popularity at every opportunity, since such prophecies could become self-fulfilling.[40] Large pomp rallies are one method of accomplishing this.[41]

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[39] Some evidence of money politics comes from surveys of voter attitudes. An IFES survey found that 4 percent of respondents reported that a candidate or party representatives offered money to a relative or acquaintance in order to vote for that candidate (IFES 2007). Given the pressures not to admit such vote-buying, real figures are likely to be significantly higher.

[40] According to Clifford Geertz (1980), in traditional polities in the archipelago pomp was not just a reflection of power already achieved, but in fact was how power was achieved. Extravagant rituals convince the people that the leader remains in control of the natural and political forces in the kingdom. Similarly, the extravagant campaign rallies described here can help to convince voters that the candidate is powerful, increasing their vote take and thus helping them to achieve political power.

[41] Other factors also encouraged large rallies. Campaign rules tended to limit the number of rallies that each candidate could hold, and to separate them in time and place from one another in order to avoid clashes between supporters. The sparse schedule for rallies encouraged candidates to make them as big as they could, and the timing meant voters did not have to choose between concurrent rallies.

Candidates and *tim sukses* continually evaluate their level of support in different villages and sub-districts, and have a tendency to speak of areas as 'belonging to' this or that candidate. Thus a particular candidate might claim that villages X and Y are 'his' while villages A and B 'belong to' an opponent.[42] When the Aceh Jaya GAM-affiliated *bupati* candidate (and subsequent winner) was interviewed, he discussed which areas were his and which belonged to another candidate. Whether or not the regions actually voted as they were branded, the phenomenon was widespread and has implications for campaigning strategies and the potential for conflict.

Branding affects the allocation of campaign resources, since candidates tend to devote their energies to areas where they already possess some support, rather than attempting to make in-roads in new areas. This relates to the momentum factor mentioned earlier; in areas where they have significant support, candidates can portray themselves as the winner and seek to further increase their support. Candidates seem to feel that it costs fewer resources (and carries less risk) to increase their support from, say, 50 percent to 80 percent in a region where they are known rather than from zero percent to 30 percent where they are largely unknown.

The practice of branding also impacts upon political competition and the potential for conflict. When villages are branded (whether or not their voters prove the claim on polling day), candidates and supporters imagine unofficial territorial boundaries between their regions and those of their rivals, although some areas remain mixed. Candidates are generally wary of intruding into the territory of a rival, since this might be seen as an act of aggression and could lead to conflict.[43] Indeed there were cases of supporters of a locally dominant candidate destroying campaign materials of rivals, and many candidates expressed reluctance to enter GAM strongholds. In Sabang, the GAM candidate mostly campaigned in rural areas while the Golkar candidate mostly kept to urban areas, in a kind of informal turf division (International Crisis Group 2007). While avoidance of direct political competition might be useful in a new democracy, especially in a post-conflict context, for longer-term political stability competition (at close quarters) must be managed rather than avoided.

Another problem associated with 'branding' is that a village's reputation for supporting a particular candidate is often retained into the post-election period. New political leaders are expected to feel indebted to their areas of support. Representatives from those sub-districts, and especially *tim sukses* members, will attempt to claim benefits from the new government, by virtue of their service to the election winner.

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[42]   This kind of 'owning', where regions belong to a leader's sphere of influence rather than being his possessions as such, is discussed in various political histories of Southeast Asia (see Reid 1993; Anderson 1990).

[43]   Although this wariness was generally the case, GAM were an important exception. GAM-affiliated candidates were generally able to campaign outside of their primary areas of support. In fact, according to the International Crisis Group (2007, p. 11), this was one of the key factors in GAM's success in the *pilkada*, and distinguished them from other candidates who only ran campaigns in areas they were confident of winning.

V. Voter Behavior

"People decide how to vote by just following others, or because a candidate comes from the same region as them, or because they were given money."

<div align="right">NGO worker, Aceh Barat</div>

This section describes some of the ways in which Aceh voters determined who to vote for. Understanding voter behavior is important as it sheds light on the priorities of ordinary voters, on their expectations of candidates generally and of the incoming government in particular, on the nature of the legitimacy of elected leaders, and on the relationships that the elections generated between elites and citizens. These factors can help us to understand post-*pilkada* modes of political competition as elites continue to seek support from the voting public, and of governance, as various pressures on winning candidates become clear.

Many observers were surprised by the *pilkada* results, especially the high level of support for GAM-affiliated candidates. The Irwandi Yusuf-Muhammad Nazar ticket won the gubernatorial election in the first round with 38 percent of the vote, far ahead of the next candidate pair of Human Hamid-Hasbi Abdullah (16 percent) (see Table 1). In the 21 district races, nine were won by GAM-affiliated independent candidates, six by Golkar-backed candidates, and the other six by candidates backed by other parties, amongst which Islamic parties were prominent, although these parties were less successful than some had predicted. Table 2 summarizes the results of district races and district support for Gubernatorial candidates.

That GAM-affiliated candidates without significant funding had such success in the *pilkada* is related to several different priorities amongst voters: support for their pre-MoU struggle; enthusiasm for their pro-poor, pro-Aceh image; widespread disillusionment with national political parties and local bureaucrats; and a desire for change. Support for GAM candidates was found throughout Aceh, but variations in support occurred at each administrative level. That is, the strongholds of the east coast firmly supported GAM candidates for both governor and *bupati*, as did Aceh Jaya, Aceh Barat, and Sabang.[44] Within many districts there were sub-districts that were known as being pro-GAM—often more isolated and conflict-affected—and this was often borne out in voting tallies. For example in Aceh Barat, some sub-districts supported the GAM candidate clearly (50-75 percent of votes in the first round) while others did not (10-20 percent). Similarly, many poor and remote villages voted strongly for GAM-affiliated candidates, reflecting both the appeal of its pro-poor message and the fact that isolated villages experienced higher degrees of military oppression during the conflict (Barron, Clark, and Daud 2005).

Several patterns evident in voting results raise questions about voter behavior. First, the results indicate that voters approached the gubernatorial and the *bupati* elections quite differently. There were many examples where, in a particular village or in entire districts, the highest vote tally went to a GAM-affiliated candidate in the gubernatorial race, but the local Golkar candidate—either the incumbent or a bureaucrat or legislator—in the district race. This occurred in Nagan

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[44] Interestingly, the highest level of support for Irwandi was in Aceh Jaya and Aceh Selatan, both on the west coast, as well as Bireuen on the east coast.

Raya, Simeulue, Gayo Lues, and Kota Langsa, which all chose Irwandi as governor and a Golkar candidate as *bupati*. Irwandi even won in Aceh Tenggara, which had little GAM presence during the conflict. Why did this occur? Our fieldwork suggested that voters tended to make their gubernatorial selection along more ideological lines, whereas pragmatic considerations—such as patronage and affiliations—were more important in their *bupati* choice.

Table 1: Results of the Gubernatorial Election

No.	Candidates	Party	Result
1	Irwandi Yusuf-Muhammad Nazar	Independent (GAM)	38.2%
2	Human Hamid-Hasbi Abdullah	PPP	16.6%
3	Malik Raden-Said Fuad Zakaria	Golkar, PDIP, PKPI	13.9%
4	Azwar Abubakar-M. Nasir Djamil	PAN, PKS	10.6%
5	Ghazali Abbas Adan-Shalahuddin Alfata	Independent	7.8%
6	Iskandar Hoesin-M. Saleh Manaf	PBB	5.5%
7	Tamlicha Ali-Tgk Harmen Nuriqmar	PBR, PPNUI, PKB	3.9%
8	M. Djali Yusuf-RA Syauqas Rahmatillah	Independent	3.2%

Table 2: Results of the District and Gubernatorial Elections, by district

No.	District	District Victor	Status	Winning Margin	Leading Gov Candidate
1	Lhokseumawe	GAM	New	39%	Irwandi 40%
2	Sabang	GAM	New	36%	Irwandi 41%
3	Pidie	GAM	New	56%	Humam 50%
4	Aceh Utara	GAM	New	67%	Irwandi 61%
5	Aceh Jaya	GAM	New	63%	Irwandi 71%
6	Aceh Timur	GAM	New	36%	Irwandi 49%
7	Aceh Barat	GAM (2nd rd)	New	24.6% (1st rd) / 76% (2nd rd)	Irwandi 41%
8	Bireuen	GAM	New	62%	Irwandi 62%
9	Aceh Selatan	GAM (2nd rd)	New	19% (1st rd) / 54% (2nd rd)	Irwandi 62%
10	Simeulue	Golkar*	Incumbent	37%	Irwandi 34%
11	Nagan Raya	Golkar*	Incumbent	31%	Irwandi 32%
12	Bener Meriah	Golkar*	POB	34%	Malik Raden 33%
13	Gayo Lues	Golkar*	POB	58%	Irwandi 39%
14	Aceh Singkil	Golkar	Incumbent	37%	Malik Raden 33%
15	Kota Langsa	Golkar	POB	41%	Irwandi 27%
16	Banda Aceh	PPP/PBR /PD*	Incumbent	33%	Humam 22%, Azwar A. 21% Malik R. 18% Irwandi 15%
17	Aceh Besar	PAN/PBR	New	26%	Irwandi 30%
18	Aceh Tengah	PPP/PAN /PBR*	Incumbent	39%	Malik Raden 33%
19	Aceh Tamiang	PAN/PKS (2nd rd)	POB	20% (1st rd) / 50.5% (2nd rd)	Malik Raden 20% Irwandi 19%
20	Aceh Barat Daya	PAN (2nd rd)	New	22% (1st rd) / 57% (2nd rd)	Irwandi 50%
21	Aceh Tenggara	PDIP/PKB*	POB	29%	Irwandi 41%

* Denotes a coalition with small parties   'POB' denotes a previous office bearer, such as DPRD member

Second, villages often voted overwhelmingly for one candidate, especially in the district elections. A single *bupati* candidate often managed to garner a percentage of the village vote much higher than his overall percentage of the district tally. Villagers referred to this as voting '*kompak*', or in solidarity with their neighbors.

Third, all over the province, neighboring villages often voted markedly differently to each other, each relatively *kompak* in their support for a particular candidate. One might have expected that, given similar local conditions, nearby villages might vote similarly, but this was often not the case.

In order to better understand these patterns, and other aspects of voter behavior, in-depth fieldwork was conducted shortly after the December 2006 voting. Five key factors that influenced voters' decisions were identified:

- Fear, intimidation and voting for peace;
- The track record of candidates;
- Personal affiliation with the candidate, which could be through village of origin or could be built up through visits to the village;
- Picking a winner, or the hope of aligning oneself or the village as a whole to the strongest candidate, in order to obtain benefits;
- Communal voting and following the advice of leaders.

1. Fear, Intimidation and 'Voting for Peace'

In any post-conflict election it must be asked to what extent fear influenced voting choices. Although the level of election-related violence in Aceh was extremely low, some cases of intimidation did emerge. There were reports of intimidation of voters in GAM-controlled regions, and indications that some people voted for GAM-affiliated candidates out of fear of reprisals being directed against them if GAM did not win in their village or sub-district. Conversely, in some areas voters reported being afraid to vote for GAM-affiliated candidates out of fear of retribution against their village or sub-district.[45]

Some voters also described voting for a particular candidate not out of fear for their own personal safety but in the hope that peace would be maintained in Aceh. Although no candidates campaigned on a platform that might threaten the peace, some people indicated that they voted for GAM-affiliated candidates to give them a chance to rule rather than rebel.[46] In other words, some voters felt that the peace would best be maintained by voting GAM—even if they were not GAM supporters and did not feel that GAM would govern well.

This attitude of voting for personal safety sometimes took on an ethnic dimension. One example is described in Box 10.

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[45] Because votes were to be tallied directly at the polling booth, voters knew that vote tallies for their village, and sub-district, would be publicly known. In some post-conflict elections, votes are counted only at higher levels of administration (district or province) precisely to avoid the potential for retribution against villages that vote a certain way.
[46] This kind of 'voting for peace' is common in post-conflict situations (Lyons 2004, p. 39).

Box 10: Javanese vote for the incumbent and front-runner

Nagan Raya has a large ethnic Javanese population, and one *bupati* candidate paired with a Javanese vice-*bupati* candidate to appeal to these Javanese voters. Instead, however, the Javanese voters tended to prefer the incumbent Golkar *Bupati* T. Zulkarnaini, who ended up winning the election. Before the election some Javanese villages in Nagan Raya were already proclaiming themselves "90 percent Zulkarnaini supporters". They felt that under the incumbent *bupati*, they had been well protected in Nagan Raya. His position as frontrunner strengthened their support. One election official put it like this: "*the Javanese, to be safe, support the king or whoever is strong.*" In the case of one village we visited, there was an additional incentive at play. The village head told us that his villagers were honor-bound to vote for the incumbent because of payments already received for their votes.

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2. Comparing Candidates' Track Records

Candidates who had served in government positions in the past were evaluated on the basis of their perceived performance in those roles. Most often this worked against the candidates, since amongst most voters there was an overwhelmingly negative evaluation of the performance of bureaucrats and legislators, who are generally seen to be corrupt, nepotistic, and indifferent to the needs of the people (Box 11). Widespread disillusionment with politicians, government officials, and national parties was found not just in GAM regions but across Aceh.

On the other hand, the track record of some candidates did earn them votes. Some had particular projects or achievements associated with their name while in office, and others were considered good if they were seen as "not very corrupt". In Pidie, for example, one district candidate who had been vice-*bupati* was perceived to have a positive track record despite being part of an administration popularly seen as corrupt. If a candidate did not have a bad reputation serving as bureaucrat, the name recognition alone could garner him some votes.

Box 11: Political poetry

In Nagan Raya, a local radio station aired an Acehnese *panton* poem about the *pilkada*, in which leaders are criticized as corrupt and full of empty promises at election time. This excerpt shows a deep sense of cynicism about the morality of leaders:

> But now the people understand
> Don't just speak with a sweet voice
> At first they speak of money to villagers
> Afterwards all we get is dry banana leaves

There was a strong subjective element to assessing a candidate's track record; a candidate could have a positive track record in one village and negative record nearby. Voters evaluated candidates in terms of the impact the candidate had had on their own village. Thus villagers tended to consider the attention their village received (including projects, aid, etc.) under a particular district head and ascribed responsibility for such attention to the personal intervention of the district head or senior official. Furthermore, voters were making their assessments in a low information environment, relying on word of mouth more than other information sources. Subjective evaluations of track record might partially explain how nearby villages had such different voting patterns.

3. Personal Affiliations, Relationships, and Connections

People often voted for a candidate with whom their village had some kind of established affiliation. This affiliation might be based on origin (the candidate or the running mate came from that village), demonstrated connection (the candidate or representatives had visited or provided assistance to the village), or through other connections or networks (such as if an important political player close to the candidate came from the village). Box 12 describes some examples.

Box 12: Affiliations

- *Origin: the home village factor*
  One common reason for anomalous voting results between villages was that a candidate originated from one of the villages, and this village voted strongly for that candidate. In Beutong sub-district in Nagan Raya, the winning candidate T. Zulkarnaini won the vote in 26 of 29 villages. Of the three exceptions, two were the home villages of other candidates. This kind of pattern occurred throughout Aceh, in the native villages of both *bupati* and gubernatorial candidates.

- *Prior connection*
  In one village in Nagan Raya, villagers explained that one of the main reasons they voted for T. Zulkarnaini was that when they had faced calamities in the past few years (floods, forced displacement due to conflict), they had received assistance from T. Zulkarnaini as *bupati*. Villagers stressed that their village was 'known' to T. Zulkarnaini, and that unlike other villages, they could approach him directly to ask for assistance. Thus their votes were not merely in gratitude for earlier assistance, or in approval of an incumbent who had good disaster assistance programs, but were based on the idea that they would have easy access to the *bupati* in the future.

- *Connections through networks*
  In one isolated village in Pidie, GAM sympathies were deep, and indeed the GAM-affiliated *bupati* candidate won in the village. However, an anomalously high number of villagers voted for the PAN candidate, in stark contrast to neighboring villages. It was later explained to us that one respected villager was a powerful politician in PAN in the district capital, and that he had visited the village before the *pilkada* and 'spread some assistance'. Thus some villagers not only received benefits but also felt that there might be more to come if PAN won.

A couple of assumptions underlie affiliation-based voting behavior. One is that government programs are not distributed equitably or according to objective considerations, and that personal connections or affiliations with particular leaders are influential in obtaining such benefits. This is not an unreasonable assumption to make in Aceh, or indeed in any part of Indonesia. Another is that when a village votes strongly for a particular candidate in the election, that candidate will be indebted to the village and will remember their support. These assumptions together describe a neo-patrimonial political system; patron-client relations are built where the clients supply political support while the patrons supply resources, such as cash or programs.[47]

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[47] A similar pattern of favoritism has been observed in connection with ethnic affiliations: "One facet of neo-patrimonial favoritism is the practice of ethnic bias, in which the leader gives preferential treatment to those of his own regional, cultural, religious or language group in the belief, which may or may not be valid, that such individuals will exhibit greater loyalty" (Brown 1994, p. 126). See Sulaiman and van Klinken (2007) for more on Aceh's neo-patrimonial political system.

Affiliation-style voting helps to explain the anomalous voting patterns mentioned earlier. Given that each village often has or forms different affiliations with different candidates, it becomes less surprising that in many cases neighboring villages voted very differently to each other.

4. Picking a Winner

Even in the absence of existing affiliations a village can attempt to generate an affiliation or neo-patrimonial relationship by strongly supporting a particular candidate: they can attempt to 'pick a winner'. As long as a village returns a clear winner in their voting tallies, if that candidate wins the election then the villagers will expect to have better access when they approach him with requests in the future (Box 13 describes one example).[48] Of course, in many countries, voters might consider whether a candidate was likely to win before deciding who to vote for, so as to ensure their vote was not wasted. The picking a winner strategy differs from this in two important ways: one, it is based on the assumption that direct material reward will flow from their support of the candidate (i.e. the assumption of preferential treatment); and, two, it depends on the village vote results clearly supporting one candidate, as the village could only claim a reward if the vote tallies identify them as a supporting village.

Box 13: The 'picking a winner' strategy

In one village in Pidie, a *tim sukses* member for a *bupati* candidate (who eventually placed second) spread word of the candidate's good qualities and argued that access would be easy later: "*it will be easy to ask for support from him later if we vote for him now*". The candidate was not known in the village and did not visit before the election, but received 53 percent of the village vote, as voters seemingly considered him a strong contender and hoped to benefit from patronage flows after the election if he won.

The picking a winner style of voter behavior matches with the show of force campaigns described in the previous section; candidates attempted to convince voters that they are likely to win, in order to pick up these pick a winner votes. Staged pomp and bussed-in supporters served this purpose better than open debates about policy.

This behavior may also help to explain some otherwise confusing voting patterns, such as surprising mismatches between a village's *bupati* votes and its gubernatorial votes. If votes were based on party platforms and ideology, it would be surprising that Irwandi won the gubernatorial vote in so many districts where a Golkar candidate won the district race (many villages voted strongly for a Golkar *bupati* candidate but for Irwandi in the gubernatorial race). Where picking a winner voting prevails, though, voters are attempting to establish neo-patrimonial deals with candidates. These deals are easier to form at the district level where local government is closer, in more frequent direct contact with the village, more likely to remember villages which supported and those which did not, and, ultimately, more likely to deliver benefits. Voters may therefore be more inclined to pick a winner in the district race but choose a gubernatorial candidate based on other considerations, such as pro-poor ideology or GAM allegiance.

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[48] Antlöv describes something like the picking a winner concept in West Java, where it is referred to as *'nanglu'*; he also describes the assumption of preferential treatment as a leftover from New Order elections (2003, p. 56).

5. Communal Voting and the Influence of Local Leaders

In many parts of Aceh, village leaders played an influential role in people's voting decisions. Villagers often sought their opinions when deciding who to vote for, as they would seek their opinion on other important decisions. Generally, this influence was not coercive but advisory; in village discussions about the election, the voiced opinions of the high status members of society carried influence. Lacking information about the candidates and experience with democratic elections, many voters reported that they were strongly guided by the opinions of neighbors and especially the guidance of village elders.

Many villages hoped to secure benefits from visibly supporting a particular candidate, as described above. In order to do this, though, they had to vote '*kompak*', that is, with sufficient uniformity to indicate support for a particular candidate. Villagers often spoke of whether their village voting was *kompak* as a sign of unity and cohesion. Voting *kompak* was seen as positive both because it signaled a lack of political divisions in the village, and because the villagers would then have a more powerful bargaining position in seeking favors. Since it was in the village's interests to vote *kompak*, village leaders were often consulted as to how the village should vote. Commenting on vote tallies in a particular village, one leader told us "*if [that candidate] got a lot of votes there, there must have been a community leader promoting him*".

A leader of an IDP barrack was interviewed who declared that the barrack would be voting as a unit, and explained: "*it's like we are all in one boat together. If we [the barrack leaders] say to vote for X, then it's X for all of us. If someone doesn't get on the boat with us…then they die.*" This leader needed to ensure voters would follow his orders, so that he could deliver support to a candidate who had promised a deal. Voters in some villages were content to 'consign' their votes to a local leader in the hope that his deal-making paid off for them. This puts pressure on the local leader, who needed to deliver benefits to the village, or his status and power in the community would diminish.

The local leaders that played a role in advising villagers varied from place to place. Generally, they would include village officials (*geuchik*, the village secretary, or other functionaries), the elders or wise old men of the village, those with strong religious credentials, or local villagers who were civil servants, relatively wealthy, or highly educated.[49] Of these, the *geuchik* were very influential in many cases. Box 14 describes the various ways *geuchik* played roles in influencing the village vote.

Communal voting, as far as it is consensual, does not present the same problem for democracy as voter intimidation. However, there is risk that candidates co-opt local leaders (and hence communities) through appealing to their individual interests which may not actually benefit the community. In this case co-opted leaders act as covert *tim sukses* members, abusing the trust of villagers by pursuing personal goals. It is for good reason that government-paid *geuchik* were supposed to be neutral. A second risk is that communal decisions enable neo-patrimonial deal-

[49] By comparison, Tjen Silalahi (1977, in Brown 1994, p. 120). studied voter behavior in the 1977 Indonesian national elections, finding that villagers were most influenced by three types of local leaders: government-appointed leaders, traditional aristocrats, and religious leaders.

making, which perpetuates the system of corrupt governance (when deals are honored by winning candidates) and leads to disappointment and potential conflict (when they are not).[50]

Box 14: *Geuchik* influence on voting

- In many villages where the *geuchik* and other leaders were united in their choice of candidates, voters voted *kompak* for that candidate. In Pidie, one *geuchik* was strongly in favour of a particular candidate, and did not go to much trouble to hide this fact; 53 percent of the village voted with him. In the neighboring village, the *geuchik* and other leaders were divided in who they supported, and the village vote turned out to be split also.

- In several districts, including Aceh Tengah and Nagan Raya, complaints were lodged with Panwaslih about former *bupati* using their networks to enlist *camat* and *geuchik* to their campaigns. In Beutong sub-district, Nagan Raya, most *geuchik* were solidly in support of the former *bupati* and eventual winner, T. Zulkarnaini. 26 of 29 villages chose him, often with wide margins.

- In another village in Pidie, 91 percent of voters chose Mirza Ismail, the GAM candidate. A villager explained, "here the village leaders are for Mirza, so all the people follow."

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6. Money Politics and Voters' Reactions

Although there were claims that some voters did feel compelled to vote for candidates who paid them, this was rare, and the most common reaction to money politics was to accept the money but vote for whomever one wished. This was observable all over Aceh. As one voter put it (in English) on polling day, "*money OK, vote no!*"

In fact some villagers said that although they accepted the money offered, this was a reason *not* to vote for that candidate since he would have to recoup his losses through corruption if he were to be elected. *Tim sukses* who did not want to or did not have the funds to give cash to voters actively encouraged this attitude—especially cash-strapped KPA members who supported GAM-affiliated candidates:

> "It is very difficult to change the old paradigm. Of course [money politics] continues. We know it is difficult to change. The success team [also] gives out sarongs, and says 'remember, ok?' We tell people, go ahead and accept the money, but your vote is up to you. Vote according to your heart, not because of money."
>
> <div align="right">KPA Representative to AMM, Aceh Barat</div>

Voter reaction to money politics suggests that individual payments to voters may not have had a large effect on election results. This is a sign of the increasing sophistication of voters, and if indeed they no longer vote according to payments received, candidates will catch on and this form of money politics will decline. In the shorter term, however, the fact that some candidates using patrimonial tactics did win election means that voters are complicit and to some degree share responsibility for the governance shortcomings which will likely result.

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[50] The connection between communalism and the politics of a neo-patrimonial state is well known; some say they are inseparable (Heeger 1974).

VI. Post-Election Dynamics:
Problems with Political Competition and Governance

This section discusses some worrying post-election developments, which are related to the electoral issues and political practices identified earlier in the paper. Our purpose here is to highlight connections between electoral dynamics and subsequent modes of political competition and practices of governance, in order to try to identify what might be done to further strengthen the positive (and peace-building) impact of elections.

Four key post-election developments, which relate to issues of healthy political competition, governance and development policy, are discussed here:

- The widespread contestation of district election results;
- Political conflict and violence over the distribution of political positions, contracts, and other 'spoils of state';
- Ongoing intra-GAM fragmentation and tensions;
- Village level political dynamics.

1. Contestation of Election Results

Weaknesses in electoral implementation, compounded by poor handling of protests and complaints about infractions, resulted in a high number of post-election challenges to the results. Some of these were minor, such as allegations of isolated ballot box tampering, cases of intimidation, and allegations of money politics; such incidents occurred in the majority of districts. But quite a number were serious, involving rejections of the overall results and of the declared winners. This occurred in at least eight districts, but was most severe in Aceh Tengah and Aceh Tenggara.

Figure 3: Election-related Conflict Post-Pilkada, by District

Losing candidates usually led the rejection of results; often these rejections began as smaller protests against infractions, but escalated 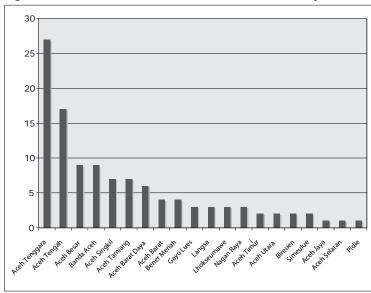when complaints were not handled effectively. In at least eight districts, court cases were launched to challenge the official election results. Figure 3 shows election-related conflict by district in the two months immediately following the elections (December 12th, 2006–February 28th, 2007). Table 3 summarizes the major challenges to district election results (adapted from World Bank and UNDP 2006c).

Table 3: Summary of District Challenges

District	Summary	Result of Protest
Aceh Barat Daya	KPA/GAM protested various administrative anomalies. The losing candidates demanded a repeat election and disqualification of the winning candidate due to money politics.	None.
Aceh Singkil	One candidate filed a protest with KIP relating to insufficient provision of voting ballots in certain locations and approximately 1000 participated in a rally held by the Democratic Concern Forum.	None.
Aceh Tamiang	Separate demonstrations with backing from different losing candidates demanded that KIP repeat the election due to vote buying and campaign irregularities as well as ballot box tampering in a number of sub-districts. Losing candidates launched a legal challenge to the results.	Instead of re-elections, the second round was delayed in the hopes that protests would peter out, which over time they did.
Aceh Tengah	Seven candidates jointly rejected the results of the district elections and demanded that another election be held within six months. Losing candidates launched a legal challenge to the results.	Delay of the announcement of results, but no change.
Aceh Tenggara	All six losing candidates rejected the results. They demanded a repeat election and claimed electoral irregularities including bias on the part of the local police, vote buying, intimidation, and corruption implicating KIP officials in the printing of ballot papers. Losing incumbent launched several legal challenges to the results.	Ongoing legal challenges to the results continuing into 2008. All court cases failed to overturn the results.
Bener Meriah	The second and third-placed candidates refused to endorse the results and demanded that no official announcement of the results be made until police investigated allegations of money politics. Losing candidates launched a legal challenge to the results.	None.
Langsa	Five losing candidates signed a joint declaration demanding a repeat election on the basis that at least 29,000 voters were unable to vote because electoral officials failed to distribute notification letters. Losing candidates launched a legal challenge to the results.	None.
Nagan Raya	All seven losing candidates registered their rejection of the result, claiming money politics and violations committed by the winning candidate, and launched a legal challenge.	None.
Simeulue	Supporters of five losing candidates demanded that KIP conduct a repeat election and that Panwaslih investigate six allegations of money politics and ballot tampering. A threatened week-long protest ended after one day. Losing candidates launched a legal challenge to the results.	None.

All major legal challenges to the results eventually failed in court. The legal cases were denied for a number of reasons: lack of evidence, incorrect jurisdiction, or lateness in bringing the case to court. Some of these cases were quite possibly opportunistic bids by losing candidates to overturn results. The fact that these cases failed probably contributed to political stability, since disqualifying winners and overturning results may have led to violence. However, it remains true that weaknesses in electoral implementation enabled a series of grievances, which in turn became the basis for rejection of the results, contributed to unhealthy political competition between elites, and led to tensions on the ground.

The post-election disputes in Aceh Tengah, Aceh Tenggara and Nagan Raya provide instructive examples of different trajectories in post-election challenges. All three cases began with protests about issues such as money politics, voter intimidation, voter registration problems, or biased or inactive election officials—issues highlighted in Section III. These cases, the different means

that were used to challenge the results, and the different trajectories of the cases, illustrate the dangers of weak electoral implementation and poor handling of disputes, and also illuminate some dynamics of elite competition in a clientelist system.

Aceh Tengah

In Aceh Tengah tensions were high even before the election, as the Golkar-backed challenger hinted that there would be trouble if he did not win. After the incumbent (backed by the PAN party) won the *pilkada*, the Golkar challenger, who was previously the local parliament head and leader of the local anti-separatist front, led a coalition of protesting candidates and resorted to his significant 'street power' to force electoral officials to not officially announce the results (see Box 15 below). Allegations that bureaucrats and government institutions were biased in favor of the incumbent were rife. Eventually these protests faded, but tensions remained high in the district for some time after the elections.

Box 15: Tensions mount after polling day in Aceh Tengah

Although polling ran relatively quietly, by the end of the day the losing seven candidates had determined to join forces to contest the results, in which it appeared that the incumbent had won. They alleged significant irregularities throughout the electoral process. These included allegations that 11 of 14 *camat* (sub-district heads) were partisan, that government officials had intimidated candidates, that money politics was rife, and that there were some pre-marked voting cards. The protests were driven primarily by the losing Golkar hopeful, who came second and thus stood to gain if the winner was disqualified. He was also the most powerful of the losing candidates and thus had the networks and funds necessary to create widespread protest. He had the support of youth organizations such as *Pemuda Pancasila (Pancasila* Youth) and AMPG (Golkar's youth wing), as well as a substantial portion of the anti-separatist front (PETA) in Aceh Tengah. He was said to have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on his campaign, and had earlier warned that his supporters would "react strongly" if he lost.

For one week after the elections, the seven losing candidates and their supporters held public demonstrations outside KIP, Panwaslih and the local parliament. They demanded that the results not be announced and that a repeat election be held within six months. As a result, in the first two weeks following polling day, no results were displayed in sub-district electoral offices and neither KIP nor Panwaslih officials in Aceh Tengah dared comment on the situation. The district parliament decided that there was no budget available for a repeat election. After intensive consultation involving KIP NAD and the Governor, KIP NAD ruled on December 20th that the winning candidate would be disqualified if police could find evidence of irregularities, but there would be no repeat election. Given allegations of police bias in favour of the incumbent, this did little to assuage the other candidates, who warned that their supporters would "react".

The next twist to the tale was the disappearance on the same day of the head of Panwaslih Aceh Tengah, who probably fled the scene in the wake of death threats via phone and text messages. The KIP Aceh Tengah office was subsequently burned to the ground, and shortly thereafter all KIP staff fled the district to avoid "pressure from losing candidates". Further violence did not break out, though, and some months later the Panwaslih head returned. Eventually two KIP staff were arrested for the arson of the KIP office, and were found guilty. Their alleged motive was to cover up misuse of Rp. 10 billion (US$ 1.1 million) in election funds.

Adapted from World Bank and UNDP (2006c).

Aceh Tenggara

In Aceh Tenggara the Golkar incumbent lost the election, although the tally itself was not announced until eight months after the poll. Much of this time was taken up with wrangling between various government institutions, with most district-level institutions, such as KIP, Panwaslih, State Courts and the district parliament, supporting the incumbent as the "real" winner (Box 16). When these institutional methods of protest had failed, and after provincial-level intervention managed to establish the challenger as the winner, street power was exerted in support of the Golkar incumbent, with arson and rioting accompanying the inauguration of the new *bupati*. In Aceh Tenggara much ill-feeling remains between elite factions and between citizens who found themselves on opposite side of this messy and protracted dispute.

Box 16: Protracted institutional wrangling in Aceh Tenggara

The first post-election incident occurred on December 14th 2006, when a group of approximately one hundred held a demonstration in front of the district police office, beginning over a year of protracted political and institutional wrangling. The police had allegedly displayed a copy of the results, in which Hasanuddin beat Golkar incumbent Armen Desky. Protests began by claiming that the entire campaign had been marked by intimidation, money politics, incompetence, and bias of electoral institutions. Three days later all six losing candidates rejected the entire electoral process and stated their intention to file legal action. On December 20th thousands of supporters of the six candidates held a demonstration in front of the local parliament. On December 25th both KIP and Panwaslih, with support from the local parliament, issued decisions to repeat the election.

Time passed and the district-level KIP (KIP Aceh Tenggara, shortened to KIP Agara) refused to announce the results, renewing its calls for a second election. KIP NAD issued a statement rejecting KIP Agara's decision to repeat the election, noting that only the Supreme or High Court can decide to repeat district elections. In response, KIP Agara sued KIP NAD for Rp. 1 billion (US$ 110,000) for "interfering in its affairs", and a month later KIP NAD counter-sued for Rp. 10 billion (US$ 1.1 million). The Ministry of Home Affairs, the national KPU office, and the Aceh provincial parliament concurred that KIP Agara's decision to repeat the election was illegal. Refusing to back down, KIP Agara took the matter to the Aceh Tenggara District Court which produced a decision demanding a repeat election. On February 13th the High Court in Banda Aceh questioned the decision of the District Court, explaining to the media that only the High Court could rule on district elections and the Supreme Court on provincial elections.

After additional wrangling between KIP NAD and KIP Agara, KIP Agara was dismissed by KIP NAD. In response, the members of the now defunct KIP Agara travelled outside of Aceh, to the city of Medan, where they held a press conference announcing the winner of the election to be the Golkar incumbent Armen Desky. On July 30th 2007, the Department of Home Affairs announced that Hasanuddin had won the election. Tensions rose to a new high as Governor Irwandi Yusuf prepared to inaugurate Hasanuddin on September 1st. August saw a bomb go off at the parliament building, a grenade thrown at the house of the acting *bupati*, and arson attacks on several *camat* offices. Demonstrations occurred in Jakarta and in Aceh Tenggara, and the 20 of 25 district parliament members loyal to Desky announced that they would no longer attend parliamentary sessions if Hasanuddin was inaugurated.

Inaugurated he was, although the event was marred by a riot in which Desky's youth group supporters were said to be prominent. In December 2007, Desky remained defiant, the district parliament was still refusing to meet, and the new

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government was barely able to function. Desky and his KIP Agara allies had taken their case to both the Constitutional Court and the Administrative Court (PTUN), giving continuing hope to Desky supporters. Villages throughout Aceh Tenggara were riven by divisions between Desky supporters and Hasanuddin supporters. In some villages, supporters of one refused to serve their rivals at shops, attend their wedding celebrations, or pray in the same mosques. Businesses lost contracts if they were on the other side. On a positive note, widespread violence had not broken out, and the Desky side states that if the court cases fail they will give up their struggle. On March 11ᵗʰ 2008, the Constitutional Court turned down Desky's case on the basis that it was not within their jurisdiction. However, the longer-term effects of these divisions amongst the bureaucracy, legislative, and the population remain to be seen.

World Bank (2007a, 2007b, 2007d)

Nagan Raya

In Nagan Raya the Golkar incumbent won, and although allegations of biased institutions and electoral infractions were also rife, the losing candidates possessed neither significant street power nor control over local institutions with which to effectively protest (Box 17). Here the post-election challenge fizzled out as KIP, Panwaslih, the police, and the local courts, all viewed as allies of the winning incumbent, did little to assist. This case makes the important point that districts where protest were not noticeable are not necessarily without grievances. In the Nagan Raya case, these latent grievances surfaced a year later.

Box 17: Silenced dissent in Nagan Raya

The Golkar-backed incumbent T. Zulkarnaini won the Nagan Raya district race by a comfortable margin. Fieldwork indicated that there were numerous grievances about electoral infractions and biased electoral institutions, as well as widespread perceptions of nepotistic and corrupt practices by the incumbent government. This dissatisfaction did not, however, lead to either institutional wrangling (as in Aceh Tenggara) or street-level disturbances and tensions (as in Aceh Tengah). Institutions from KIP and Panwaslih to the police and local courts were perceived by many as being biased towards the incumbent, and thus not cooperative in investigating complaints. One Panwaslih official admitted that this was the case. Local informants also suggested that student-driven demonstrations had been silenced through bribery and threats. Losing candidates launched a court case challenging the results (which failed), before the protests petered out.

Shortly after election day, a money laundering case involving a man alleged to be a former adjutant of T. Zulkarnaini threatened to focus attention on illegal campaign donations to the election winner. Various allegations of corruption against the incumbent from his previous term were also raised but not fully investigated. Tensions only heightened in November 2007 when a coalition of civil society groups called 'Gempar' (People's Movement for the Reform of Nagan Raya) demonstrated in Banda Aceh for T. Zulkarnaini's removal on the basis of the money laundering and corruption. On December 8ᵗʰ, the coordinator of Gempar—who is also the head of KPA for Nagan Raya—was attacked by a group. Two days later the Gempar coordinator held a demonstration gathering thousands, and threatened to "overthrow" the *bupati*. Tensions and demonstrations continued into the new year.

World Bank (2007d, 2007e)

The post-election challenges, and particularly the serious cases described above, highlight how weak institutional implementation of the elections provided a basis for challenging the results,

and contributed to serious political conflict in the post-election period. Even though many of the disputes have been at least formally resolved, in many districts there remain deep grievances between local political elites. These conflicts show that the elections failed to manage political competition effectively. Election winners in many cases do not enjoy strong legitimacy from others in the elite, and these grievances may continue to drive future political conflict.

2. Distributing the Spoils of State

The important role of patronage deals and longer-term neo-patrimonial relationships in the *pilkada* campaigns has led to political and economic debts and expectations that are generating conflicts amongst local elites and encouraging the inefficient distribution of state resources and power. *Tim sukses* members expected that their efforts (and sometimes personal funds) would be rewarded after the elections. So did GAM members, who, in addition to their campaigning efforts, also often felt an entitlement born of their long struggle, which they argue led to Aceh's autonomy and increased budget. In order to highlight the implications of such clientelistic relationships, three cases are discussed that demonstrate various ways in which winning candidates have attempted to either satisfy or resist demands from supporters.

Each of these disputes stemmed from governance-related issues: bureaucratic appointments, allocation of contracts, land distribution, and technical advice and decision-making. But how each has played out has demonstrated negative forms of political competition. In Bireuen, some KPA leaders have been struggling to have more influence over government decisions, and have threatened to withdraw their support and foment more opposition. In this case internal GAM tensions, between west and east Bireuen, related to the distribution of contracts, have fed in to the conflict. In Aceh Barat Daya, political elites have tried to get their piece of the pie, and upon being disappointed, mobilized support to bring down the *bupati*. Seemingly opportunistic local splits over reintegration benefits in GAM/KPA have fed into and exacerbated this problem. In the Aceh Timur case, payback to *tim sukses* may align with getting good policy advice, but earlier splits in local civil society have reappeared and are worsening tensions between the *bupati* and vice-*bupati*. In a broad sense, these cases offer additional evidence that neo-patrimonial political systems are inherently unstable and can result in dangerous political competition (Brown 1994).

Bireuen

The Bireuen case involves discord between the new GAM-affiliated *bupati* and factions within KPA Bireuen. The issue at hand is the degree to which GAM is entitled to access to and influence over the new district government. The new *bupati* spent the last years of the conflict in Australia but was called back to run as GAM's candidate in the Bireuen *pilkada*. Although some local GAM factions opposed his nomination, he is widely viewed as capable, and is attempting to push a reformist agenda. However, his victory is seen by some as purely the result of GAM endorsement, which has generated expectations among many local GAM leaders of access to, and influence over, the new 'GAM government'. This has led to conflict (Box 18).

Box 18: Local GAM factions in Bireuen demand influence over government decisions

The district election in Bireuen was held in June 2007. Tensions within GAM were clear from the start with conflict over the selection of the GAM candidate. Initially Bireuen commander Teungku Batee was selected, but he withdrew after an attack on his car. This incident reflected intra-GAM tensions although it is unclear whether it was a direct rejection of Teungku Batee's candidature or more closely linked to a dispute about the division of construction contracts between various GAM factions in Bireuen. Teungku Batee was then replaced by Teungku Nurdin, who was requested to return from Australia to run. Nurdin has legitimate GAM credentials, having been imprisoned on three occasions, and is highly educated. GAM leaders did not, however, unanimously support him, and one, Teungku Cagee, backed a party-sponsored *bupati* candidate who allegedly promised to support GAM ex-combatant livelihoods if elected.

Nurdin and his deputy, Busmadar, won the election with 62.3 percent of the vote. Initially the relationship between Nurdin and GAM/KPA was amiable. Nurdin asked GAM leaders to select 32 ex-combatants to provide security at the *bupati* residence, replacing the standard police guard. Relations broke down, however, over the selection of the district secretary, a powerful position with control over the allocation of lucrative government contracts. It became clear that Nurdin had his own ideas on governance and was not prepared to accommodate GAM's demands. This breakdown in relations resulted in a number of violent incidents. On September 27th 2007, the vice-*bupati* was attacked, and on October 3rd 2007, GAM's preferred candidate for the secretary position was attacked.

Nurdin's choice was Nasrullah, a civil servant who had been working in Aceh Utara. GAM preferred the previous first assistant to the Bireuen *bupati*, Azhari Usman. Reports indicate that Nurdin maintains strong clean governance aspirations and believes Nasrullah to be the more able candidate. Azhari, on the other hand, is said to be close to certain local GAM leaders, and to have used his position to direct contracts to them. Regional divisions within GAM are reportedly also a factor. Nurdin and Busmadar are both from the east of Bireuen, whereas Azhari was previously a *camat* in the west and is thus closer to GAM leaders there. Eventually Nasrullah was appointed, but this conflict brought to the fore the disagreement between Nurdin and GAM on GAM's role in Nurdin's government. GAM, who ensured Nurdin's win through their endorsement and network, believe they should be consulted on all government matters, whereas Nurdin reportedly believes that GAM's role in government should be limited. As one local GAM leader sympathetic to Nurdin put it, "*What [some] GAM need to realize is that the* bupati *is from GAM, by GAM, for the people; not from GAM, by GAM, for GAM.*"

World Bank (2007b, 2007c, 2007e)

Aceh Barat Daya

Similar dynamics are evident in the case of Aceh Barat Daya, with supporters demanding payback from the new government, being disappointed, and creating conflict. Here, though, post-*pilkada* developments involve a number of different parties, including *tim sukses*, parliament members, GAM and disaffected bureaucrats (Box 19). A *bupati* who pays off supporters can face attempts to remove him based on charges of corruption or collusion brought by his rivals, whereas a *bupati* who does not pay off his supporters can face attempts to remove him driven by disgruntled former supporters.

Box 19: Aceh Barat Daya: *tim sukses* and contractors attempt to unseat the new *bupati*

Akmal Ibrahim, the PAN candidate and a former newspaper editor, won the Aceh Barat Daya *pilkada*. Protests about the election's implementation occurred, including allegations against Akmal of money politics, but came to nothing. Akmal had a large *tim sukses* network reaching from the district to the village level, many of whom were contractors. One of Akmal's promises was to assist conflict victims with a Rp. 5 million (US$ 550) payment and villages with a Rp. 500 million (US$ 55,000) grant through a community-driven mechanism. Many villages saw this as a good reason to vote for Akmal. *Tim sukses* members claim that Akmal made a host of promises to them which he has not honored. Akmal has faced a series of protests against his leadership, demonstrating the dangers of either delivering or failing to deliver on promises of benefits.

One source of political conflict has been the case of the palm oil plantation company PT. Babahrot Agro Lestari (PT. BAL), to which Governor Irwandi signed over 5,000 hectares of land in Aceh Barat Daya in April 2007. Akmal decided instead to allocate the land to nearby villages, at two hectares per household—this was allegedly one of his campaign promises. On August 4th 2007, thousands of villagers opposed to the Governor's permit demonstrated, but were blocked by hundreds of people supporting PT. BAL. Reflecting divisions within GAM that stretch back to the distribution of reintegration benefits, GAM/KPA members were prominent on both sides of the demonstration, and rioting was only narrowly avoided. Demonstrations continued in September, demanding that Akmal be removed from office, and asserting that some of the PT. BAL land was coveted by Akmal and members of his *tim sukses* to compensate for their political support.

Protests against Akmal's leadership gained momentum. In October, C59, a group of 59 contractors, blocked access to parliament for four days claiming that Akmal's government was not following proper procurement guidelines for contracts, and demanded a thorough investigation. In November 2007 various groups joined under the banner of the Gempa Coalition, and thousands demonstrated, demanding Akmal's removal. Elements of this coalition included C59, various NGOs and community groups, disgruntled former Akmal supporters, and long-time Akmal rivals. Reports indicate that several elite backers of Akmal's campaign have now turned against him due to disappointment at not receiving sufficient benefits from the new government. This reportedly includes a local contractor who is said to have contributed Rp. 4 billion (US$ 440,000) to Akmal's campaign, an agricultural entrepreneur who wishes to get his hands on some of the PT. BAL land, and a former GAM commander who claims to hold a 'political contract' with Akmal laying out the terms of their alliance, which Akmal has not lived up to. Akmal, for his part, alleges that the demonstrations were driven by elite machinations, that one of the contractors paid the demonstrators, that two losing candidates in the *pilkada* are pushing the protests, and that the contractors are upset because contracts are now allocated through legitimate processes rather than through patronage.

World Bank (2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2007d)

Aceh Timur

A dispute in Aceh Timur, while much smaller in scale, demonstrates different links between *pilkada* processes and current governance challenges. Here, the GAM-affiliated candidate Muslem Hasballah won the *pilkada*, but had little administrative experience and only a primary school education (this is against regulations but reportedly only came to attention of the election officials after the election). He has formed a 'team of experts' to provide him with sound policy advice, but this move has led to a conflict with the vice-*bupati*, and charges that well-paid positions on the team of experts were distributed to loyal members of his *tim sukses*. Box 20 describes the case in more detail.

Box 20: *Bupati*'s 'team of experts' meets resistance in Aceh Timur

The Aceh Timur *pilkada* was contested by two different GAM candidates, after disputes within GAM about who the candidate should be. Muslem Hasballah, one of the candidates, paired with Nasruddin Abubakar, from SIRA, and won the election. From the beginning their pairing was opportunistic rather than ideological, and relations between them soured over who should be on their team of experts. Muslem, being a GAM combatant rather than 'civil GAM', had little administrative experience, and his minimal education came from some time spent at a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). Nasruddin, in contrast, has a university degree as well as substantial experience in civil society through his work with SIRA. Recognizing his lack of experience in government affairs, Muslem was eager to appoint a team of experts to help him, and BRR (the Aceh Reconstruction Agency), perhaps seeing an opportunity to become involved in local governance reform, offered to pay the salaries of the team.

Initial tensions between Muslem and Nasruddin over the team of experts focused on the high salaries of the nine member team. But attention quickly turned to the *bupati's* increasing reliance on the expert team, which left the vice-*bupati* and the bureaucracy feeling sidelined. Although many reports indicate that the experts are indeed competent, many resented their dominance in meetings and in policy decisions. Relations between the *bupati* and vice-*bupati* broke down. This dispute had its roots in a pre-*pilkada* ideological split between SIRA and another civil society group, SMUR (Student Solidarity for the People), from whose ranks many of the experts came. The waters are further muddied by the fact that many of these SMUR people were key members of Muslem's *tim sukses,* suggesting that he has placed them in these lucrative positions partly as a way of repaying their political support. Protests over the expert team continued into February 2008.

World Bank (2007b)

3. Continuing Factionalism and Fragmentation within GAM/KPA

A third important post-election dynamic is the continuing factionalization and fragmentation within GAM. This will likely continue to be one of the foremost sources of political conflict as Aceh attempts to build a lasting peace. The ongoing internal GAM dispute that pits the 'old guard' against the 'young turks' (International Crisis Group 2006; Mietzner 2007b) has not been resolved. Intra-GAM tensions before the *pilkada* were successfully contained, so that GAM-affiliated candidates experienced great success in the elections. However, tensions continue at both the provincial and district level. The focus here is on two sources of ongoing intra-GAM tension: disputes over the control of the GAM name and symbols; and jostling for access to local government resources.

Intra-GAM power relations shifted after Irwandi Yusuf (a 'young turk') won the governorship over the Malik Mahmud-backed Humam-Hasbi ticket, which represented GAM's 'old guard'. Tensions continued and during the last months of 2007 focused on a dispute over whether the GAM flag and name could be used by the local 'GAM Party' led by Malik Mahmud. Intra-GAM dimensions to this dispute were not emphasized, with the dispute focused on whether Jakarta would legalize the party (World Bank 2007c). The connection with intra-GAM divisions is clear though, as the importance of the GAM flag and name lie in the attempt to monopolize the movement's political capital for the 2009 legislative elections in Aceh. GAM factions realize that the GAM symbols are extremely important brands, especially after the power of symbols was demonstrated in the

pilkada by the success of Aceh traditional garb which GAM-affiliated candidates wore in their ballot photos. Meanwhile Jakarta and the national parties also realize the importance that such symbols could have in the 2009 legislative elections in Aceh. They wanted them banned for being "against the spirit of the MoU". In February 2008 tensions were defused when the GAM Party agreed not to use the GAM flag, and changed the acronym GAM in their party name to mean '*Gerakan Aceh Mandiri*' (Aceh 'Self-Sufficient' Movement) rather than '*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*' (Free Aceh Movement) (see World Bank 2008b). Under pressure from Jakarta, in May the name was changed again to Partai Aceh, to avoid use of the word '*gerakan*' (movement) (see World Bank 2008c). Nevertheless the struggle to monopolize GAM's political capital will continue and likely increase as the 2009 elections approach, especially if GAM's identification with Acehnese identity and proto-nationalism remains strong.

Intra-GAM tensions also continue to create and exacerbate conflicts in the districts, as shown in the examples from Aceh Barat Daya and Bireuen. GAM leaders, and the rank and file, have a sense of entitlement and expect the government to provide benefits to them and consult them on policies.[51] Some GAM leaders do not agree, and worry that such intervention will quickly tarnish the movement's reputation with disastrous consequences for prospects for success in the 2009 elections.

These tensions are present in many other districts as well. GAM's inclusion in the Aceh *pilkada* has, interestingly, generated as much tension within the organization as it has between GAM and GoI. The neo-patrimonial system in which GAM now finds itself an important player places intense pressures on the organization: on the one hand they have an opportunity to improve governance in Aceh in order to deliver benefits to the poor and to help improve their chances of election in 2009; on the other, they face great demands from their ranks to deliver economic benefits to GAM members. Competition for government contracts drives intra-GAM factionalism, suggesting that as long as governments are able to direct state resources for political advantage, unhealthy political competition will continue.

4. Village-level Political Dynamics

The Aceh *pilkada* represented a new level of political involvement for villagers: their first opportunity to directly elect district and provincial leaders. The elections generated new expectations amongst villagers and established new networks and relationships reaching from the district political elite down to the village level. Although these expectations and relationships potentially provide a basis for accountability, they also provide mechanisms to channel discontent and for mobilization should candidates fail to deliver on villagers' expectations. At the end of 2007, most villagers seemed content to give the new government time. But our fieldwork did identify a number of examples of how these expectations and relationships can play out in ways which, tellingly, prioritize elite interests over those of the wider community.

The political divisions in the Aceh Tenggara post-*pilkada* dispute reached down to the village level, as described in Box 16. Divisions between supporters of Hasanuddin and Armen Desky also

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[51]   On the sense of entitlement among GAM members, see Mietzner (2007b, p. 34). Aspinall (2007) has argued that GAM's organizational structure is well suited to patrimonialism.

appear to have had an immediate impact on village politics, with Hasanuddin's supporters utilizing their candidate's victory to oust local Desky supporters from positions of power. An example from the village of Rambung Teldak illustrates how partisan politics and poor governance coincide in village level political struggles (Box 21). It is likely that similar village level disputes are playing out all over Aceh Tenggara, and that *pilkada* results have fuelled local political rivalries all over Aceh.

Box 21: Trickle-down effects on village politics, Aceh Tenggara

In Rambung Teldak village, the election win by Hasanuddin fuelled efforts by villagers to remove the village head, who had supported Armen Desky in the *pilkada*. The villagers were split, with slightly more having voted for Hasanuddin, but the village head was known as a longtime Desky follower (and a member of the Pancasila Youth, one of the organizations which Desky controlled). After Hasanuddin's inauguration, his supporters in Rambung Teldak met, drafting a letter detailing complaints against the village head and demanding his removal. Complaints included the construction of a BRR-funded village office on his own property and the theft of *raskin*—subsidised rice for the poor. The letter also specified who his replacement should be: the head of the village's *tim sukses* for Hasanuddin, himself (not coincidentally) a failed candidate for village head in the latest election. This letter was delivered to the *camat* by a delegation of Hasanuddin's supporters. The protest is likely to be looked on favorably, since the *camat* himself had been newly appointed after the previous *camat* was fired for being pro-Desky. Before Hasanuddin's inauguration, 15 of 16 *camat* in Aceh Tenggara travelled to Jakarta to support Desky's claim to have won the election. All of this group was subsequently fired for leaving their posts without permission. In this way a district level election victory filters down to the sub-district and then village level, with supporters using easy to find charges of corruption and mismanagement to claim political power at the expense of their rivals.

Tim sukses members who supported the winning candidate may enjoy benefits from above, but they also face pressure from below. After villagers grant their votes according to the wishes of the *tim sukses*, they want to know when their benefits will arrive. One village-level *tim sukses* member for Akmal in Aceh Barat Daya told us how he was in an awkward position, with villagers expecting him to begin channelling resources to them now that Akmal had won:

> *"I want Akmal to come and explain to the people here that he has not yet given me anything, because the people here assume that I have kept the money for myself, especially when they see the new kiosk I have just opened..."*
>
> Member of *tim sukses* for Akmal, Aceh Barat Daya

A second case, also from Aceh Barat Daya, sheds light on how partisan village heads can mobilize villagers to contribute to district level political disputes, and underlines how government spoils, such as contracts, are never far from the agenda (Box 22).

Together, these cases highlight the importance and impacts of the relationships that are formed during the election campaign. It is ultimately these chains of personal connections that generate change at the village level in a patronage democracy. These cases also highlight the effects that these new relationships and new expectations can have on political competition and governance at both the village level and the district level. The relationships enable mobilization, the expectations lead to grievances, and political competition plays out through mobilization around grievances.

This has led to shifts in political power from the village level up. Such networks reaching down to village level can provide the basis for mass mobilization. We can predict that as both ordinary villagers and disgruntled *tim sukses* members become disappointed with the broken promises of those they supported, they will become increasingly susceptible to mobilization by similarly disenfranchised district elites.

Box 22: Elite mobilization of villagers, Aceh Barat Daya

Some time after Akmal's installation as *bupati*, the village head of Pulo Kayee became disappointed in his leadership, and mobilized his villagers to join the anti-Akmal protests in Blang Pidie. This village head is also a contractor, and he explained why he was now demanding Akmal be removed: *"Akmal promised to distribute projects to us, but since he became* bupati *we haven't been able to win any tenders. He made the tender process confusing and difficult, because he and his* tim sukses *actually decide who will get the contracts."* Although this village head has managed to mobilize some of his villagers to take part in demonstrations, villagers are generally cynical and aware that the demonstrations are based on elite machinations rather than genuine grassroots aspirations. As one villager explained after going to a demonstration, *"we were told that it was to be a prayer meeting, but when we got there it was a demonstration."* Another villager clarified that the demonstrations are not what they seem *"it's only those that are seeking projects who demonstrate."*

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5. Implications for Peace in Aceh

The management of political competition amongst Aceh's elites and the establishment of good governance are crucial to maintaining long term peace in Aceh (Barron and Clark 2006). Aceh's post-conflict elections provided a key institutional framework for working towards those goals. Our analysis of electoral processes and post-election dynamics suggests, however, that much remains to be done.

First, weaknesses in election implementation led to post-election challenges and ongoing grievances that indicate that the elections have failed to install broadly legitimate local elites in many districts. These grievances have also fuelled unhealthy political competition amongst elites. This has shut down whole administrations in one district and likely led to conciliatory bribery and collusion in others in order to silence critics.

Second, reliance on *tim sukses* to conduct campaigns and provide funds has established clientelistic relationship which in turn have encouraged the distribution of government power and resources along patronage lines. All indications suggest that this will continue to deeply compromise governance in Aceh and to generate conflict amongst elites. These relationships also lead to strong resistance against those in power wishing to pursue a clean governance agenda.

Third, the elections and their results have placed additional pressure on GAM, leading to new splits within its ranks and the exacerbation of old ones. While it is not yet clear to what extent GAM leadership will limit the harm caused by these splits, this will remain a vital issue and a potential source of conflict as the 2009 elections approach. It is clear that in the short term, GAM splits, as with competition between GAM and other elites, will continue to play out through district level political struggles over resources.

Finally, patronage networks established during the *pilkada* reach down to village level and enable mobilization of villagers around grievances. Such mobilization can be used to achieve village level political goals, but can also feed in to district level political conflicts.

These factors together suggest that some of the kinds of grievances that have in the past fuelled the separatist conflict will continue to exist as long as local governments fail to deliver on their promises, and as long as electoral or other processes poorly manage political competition amongst local elites. This, given Aceh's post-conflict context, raises the specter of further outbreaks of violence. Maintaining peace in the long run depends on building better governance and healthier modes of political competition. To be sure, political commitment to the peace process remains strong on both sides, and in the short term there are no signs that center-periphery conflict is about to re-emerge. If Aceh's abundant new financial resources and political autonomy are squandered, however, by the establishment of a 'regular' Indonesian-style kleptocracy, and if local politics continue to be run along patronage lines, which necessarily exclude large portions of the population from enjoying the benefits of development, then the chances of maintaining a permanent peace will be slim.

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Aceh's first post-conflict elections were largely peaceful, free, and fair, and were thus widely cited as a success. Conflicting political groups and interests were accommodated; GAM and the military generally refrained from acts of intimidation; the police ensured citizens could vote in a secure environment; campaign behavior was generally peaceful; KIP mostly managed the logistical challenges, achieving a high rate of electoral participation; and it is safe to say that large-scale ballot fraud did not occur.

However, our field research uncovered a number of problems surrounding the elections. These issues together reveal a different side to the success story above: a story involving weak and partial enforcement of election procedures; deficiencies in the management of grievances and election disputes; an almost total lack of policy dialogue; mobilization through patron-client networks; citizens voting in the hope of obtaining personal favors or benefits for their village; and woefully inadequate implementation of campaign finance regulations.

These weaknesses substantially reduced the ability of Aceh's first post-conflict elections to establish effective modes of political competition and the basis for clean governance, both vital for building sustainable peace in Aceh. Analysis of the early post-election period in 2007 demonstrated the existence of dynamics that support our argument. Aceh largely remains a patronage democracy, where political competition takes place through patronage-based hierarchies and shows of strength from rival bands of loyal supporters, rather than reflecting the policy preferences of citizens. Government decisions cause controversy as supporters demand preferential treatment as payback for political support, disappointed supporters launch political attacks on leaders, and excluded others protest what they see as the unfair allocation of government resources. Large numbers of unemployed youth, including ex-combatants, mean that the potential for such political conflicts to become violent remains high.

To the extent that government practices remain (or are seen as) neo-patrimonial, corrupt, and nepotistic, then voter behavior will remain geared towards securing the personalized favour of particular candidates. Electoral campaigning, in turn, aims to attract voters through promises of patronage, which current modes of electoral implementation largely fail to prevent. In this way, leaders are elected under conditions that predispose them to corrupt governance. In order to disrupt this cycle, aspects of democratization—freedom of information, education, political participation, better electoral oversight—must be deepened alongside simultaneous initiatives to improve governance.

Tackling these challenges to building a democratic Aceh will require taking both a short- and longer-term perspective. Immediate interventions can be applied in particular to the problems of electoral implementation. This is vital as the 2009 legislative elections approach since they may otherwise repeat many of the weaknesses of the 2006 and 2007 *pilkada*. But other changes will require much more time, such as the development of more democratic (and less patronage-based) interactions between citizens and voters, and the creation of state governance structures and organizational cultures more amenable to democratic politics. A number of recommendations are proposed for

tackling these practices. The short-term recommendations are mainly directed at those institutions and organizations involved in the implementation of elections in Indonesia, including both state and civil society actors. The longer-term recommendations are directed at a broader audience, including government, civil society, academia, as well as development agencies.

1. The Short-Term: Improving Elections for 2009

The overall aims of these recommendations are to strengthen the institutional implementation of elections, to alter the incentives that currently maintain patronage-based campaign strategies and voter behavior, to encourage the articulation of policy positions among both candidates and voters, and to mitigate the potential for violent political conflicts by addressing the needs of former combatants and other youth.

1. *Remove the dependency of local electoral institutions on local parliaments.* This applies at both the district and provincial level. When district level electoral institutions (KIP and Panwaslih) are funded by the local parliament, and their members are selected, or even short listed, by the local parliament, there is a high likelihood that partisan considerations will impact on their neutrality. KIP and Panwaslih members should be selected and paid for from outside the district. One option is for local KIP offices to be funded and selected by KIP at the next level up, and for higher level Panwaslih to hire and pay local Panwaslih.

2. *Clarify the relationship between national, provincial and district level election authorities.* Unclear jurisdictions between district KIP and KIP NAD, and unclear sanctions once duties are abrogated, played an important role in the post-election conflict in Aceh Tenggara. What happens when district KIP does not announce the results by the deadline? Can KIP NAD take over? This was not clear, and led to cases reaching the Supreme and the Constitutional Courts. Clearly, the institutional responsibilities between these administrative levels needs to be clarified, including procedures for removing members who do not fulfil their responsibilities or who are found in contravention of selection requirements.

3. *Increase the power of Panwas vis-à-vis KIP.* The fact that Panwaslih lacked decision-making authority meant that its referrals and recommendations were largely ignored. In order for Panwaslih (and Panwaslu, for general elections) to be able to provide effective, non-partisan electoral oversight, it requires both additional and a more independent source of funding, and increased decision-making authority.

4. *Improve dispute resolution by clarifying sanctions for dropping cases and by increasing the transparency of reported cases.* Sanctions for non-compliance, with deadlines for investigation and processing, need to be made explicit and must be implemented. The institutions should be obliged to publicize accurate data on how many cases have been reported to them and their subsequent processing. This will enable the parties involved and civil society to monitor violations and their investigation.

5. *Close loopholes in campaign finance regulation, and create more effective procedures for the monitoring of campaign funds.* The system of monitoring finances needs to be

specified much more carefully. Sanctions for failing to observe these regulations, for using funds outside of official campaign bank accounts, or for accepting illegal contributions, must be made clear. Panwaslih officials should actively estimate campaign expenditures through systematic data collection, comparing this expenditure with campaign bank account activity. All candidates, not just those who win, should be required to report campaign finances, and complete information on sources of funding for each candidate should be made available to the public. Independent audits are mandated already, but need significant improvement.

6. ***Build civil society capacity to monitor campaign finance.*** As with other governance programs, demand must be created whereby citizens themselves become active in monitoring the campaign finances of candidates. This will require supporting NGOs implementing political participation programs, and providing more specific training on how to systematically collect data and estimate campaign expenditures. Beyond monitoring infractions, civil society should also track legitimate contributions and determine whether political concessions have been handed out improperly to campaign supporters.

7. ***Clarify the definition of money politics and disseminate it to the public.*** This should be accompanied by education on the implications of money politics for future governance. Panwaslih should have sufficient funding to be able to visit villages and pro-actively investigate cases of money politics.

8. ***Monitor the neutrality of government officials more closely, and enact sanctions for partisanship.*** We found many reports of partisanship and even direct involvement in campaigns by government officials, such as *geuchik* (village heads) and *camat* (sub-district heads). Clear sanctions are necessary, and villagers need to be empowered to know how and where to report partisan officials.

9. ***Increase policy discussions during the campaign period.*** On the demand side, donors could support local civil society groups to host village, sub-district and district-level meetings, to help facilitate the articulation and aggregation of priorities of ordinary villages. On the supply side, donors could, again through local organizations, facilitate the holding of campaign debates, where candidates would be encouraged to concretely respond to local priorities.

10. ***Facilitate well researched evaluations of candidates' track records.*** The compilation and dissemination of well researched briefs would assist voters in assessing candidates' track records. This might include information on their business careers, or their performance in the bureaucracy or legislative branches.

11. ***Organize high-profile good governance and policy pledges, as well as voter pledges to demand and vote for good governance.*** Forums can be organized where candidates publicly sign such pledges. These should contain specific commitments on how candidates plan to improve governance, rather than only vague reassurances. Voters can also be encouraged to sign pledges to demand and vote for good governance as a way to highlight their crucial role in voting for reformist candidates.

*12. **Prioritize programs to address unemployment of former combatants and other youth.*** In the absence of jobs, former combatants and other youth often rely on patron-client networks in order to obtain benefits, but such networks can be utilized to mobilize them for violence. The chance of political conflicts turning violent will likely fall if employment figures for youth and former combatants rise. This should thus be seen as a vital priority for the development of democracy as well as for a sustainable peace in Aceh.

2. Longer-term: Building the Foundations for a Healthy Democracy

The overall aims of these recommendations are to introduce incentives that make it more difficult to make governance decisions based on patronage distribution, to increase community awareness about governance issues, to increase the demand for good governance, and to increase the capacity of politicians and parties to articulate policy issues.

*1. **Undertake research to better understand how political leaders distribute patronage.*** Some of the main methods of distributing patronage are already known: distributing lucrative government construction contracts; hiring particular individuals as civil servants; granting licences for exploration of natural resources; and direct cash payments. But there may be many other ways of distributing patronage which compromise good governance, and it is necessary to know them in order to combat them.

*2. **Establish a contract watch organization.*** A common method for distributing patronage is to mark-up government contracts. An independent 'contract watch' organization should be established, and equipped to monitor all government contracts, including procurement processes, and to determine whether contracts have been carried out adequately.

*3. **Facilitate stronger transparency in, and oversight of, those processes where patronage is distributed.*** For instance, civil society auditing of the process of recruiting civil servants should be instituted, including monitoring the personal wealth of decision-making bureaucrats and their families, and extensive interviewing with both successful and failed applicants. Other research has found that successful applicants often admit to having to pay large bribes. Procurement processes for government contracts should also be independently audited, opened to public scrutiny, and decision-makers should be subject to wealth checks. Attention also needs to be paid to how recipient villages of government development projects are selected. Sanctions must be swift and severe for those found to be committing crimes in their bureaucratic positions.

*4. **Facilitate civil society monitoring of patronage networks.*** Local NGOs often possess much knowledge about local political figures and the connections they have with various businessmen and other elite figures. Mapping of such connections would improve efforts to monitor patronage relationships once elected leaders take power.

*5. **Expand the distribution of information and communication media (i.e. newspapers, radio, TV).*** Many voters in the Aceh election knew very little about the candidates and the electoral process. This can be gradually improved through a continuous program of widely targeted political education through the mass media.

6. ***Support independent investigative journalism.*** Media in Aceh played some role in reporting of problems in the Aceh *pilkada*, but much more can be done. Investigative journalism is rare at the provincial level and non-existent at lower levels. Journalists are enmeshed in patronage relations with elites. Countering this will require supporting improvements in journalism standards, editorial policy including choice of articles and editing/reviewing processes, and investigative techniques.

7. ***Facilitate more active discussion on governance issues and mandate community consultations in the development of local government policy and priorities.*** As it is, most villagers know little about how policy decisions are taken, and simply wait to see whether their village will receive development projects. In order to increase real participation in governance decisions, citizens need to have a better understanding of how programs are developed and distributed. This is a long-term process. One way to start is with mandatory consultations.

8. ***Strengthen the technical capacity of local and national political parties to develop and articulate social and economic policy.*** This might include assistance in conducting voter polling, identifying key voter issues, campaign strategies, and so on.

9. ***Establish provisions for new leaders to retain campaign strategists as policy advisors.*** The controversy over expert teams was due in part to the fact that there was no existing provision for doing this. However, allowing leaders to hire these people would not only reduce their need to provide other (illegal) forms of payback to them, but would also enable greater continuity between political campaigns and post-election policies.

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