



***You, Me,  
Our Country***



This book is published by the Electoral Office of the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission.

P. O. Box 1500

Vavaya Ridge

Honiara

PH | 21463 / 20149

Hotline 7222200 (Available only Nov 2018 - March 2019)



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations



EUROPEAN UNION



***Published with the support of SECSIP II*** - Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project II (SECSIP II) is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC). It receives financial assistance from the European Union, the Government of Australia and UNDP.



# What is Democracy?

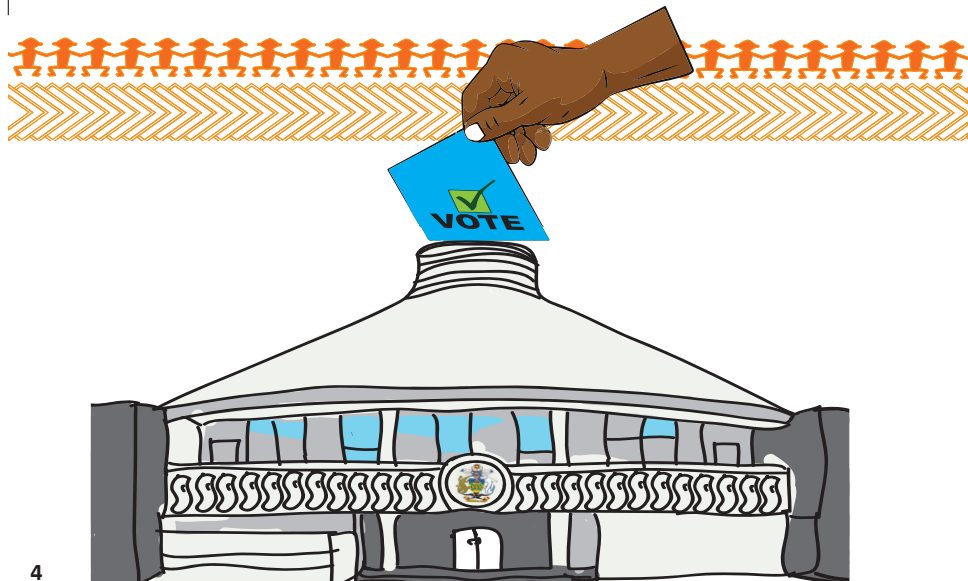
A democracy is a system of government whereby the people elect their representatives.

*In a democracy, the power is in the hands of the people.*

A famous president of the United States of America Abraham Lincoln gave the best explanation:

*A democracy is a government of the people, by the people and for the people.*









# What is the Constitution?

The Constitution is the Supreme law or Mother law for the nation.  
The Government runs the country according to the Constitution.

On 7 July 1978 Solomon Islands became an independent country.

Our Constitution says:

*"We the people of Solomon Islands, proud of the wisdom and the worthy customs of our ancestors, mindful of our common and diverse heritage and conscious of our common destiny, do now under the guiding hands of God, establish the sovereign democratic state of Solomon Islands as a basis of our united nations".*



# Solomon Islands and Democracy

**In Solomon Islands there are three official arms of power as stated in our Constitution.**

The three arms are independent of each other. One should not be more powerful than the other or try to influence the other.

## LEGISLATURE

These are our Members of Parliament who have the power to make the laws of the country because they have been elected by the citizens.

## JUDICIARY

These are the courts, lawyers, magistrates and judges who interpret the laws of the country.

## EXECUTIVE

This is the arm that puts into practice the laws and policies of the government. The executive is made up of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet (the Ministers), which form the government.



# Civil Society and Media

**In addition to these three arms, CIVIL SOCIETY plays an important role.** Civil society is made up of people working together as a group. It includes Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and associations like church groups, groups representing women, youth, people with disabilities (PWD) and members of the private sector (businesses). Citizens can raise their voices and become active as members of civil society.

**The MEDIA (radio, newspapers and Social Media like Facebook)** has also an important role in a democratic society because the media can ask questions and inform the people of the actions of the Government.

Civil society and media can help make sure that there is transparency and accountability. This means watching whether the government is doing good things for the citizens. This includes for example better schools, transport, health, employment and economic opportunities. If both the government and the citizens are accountable for what they do, then democracy is being actively exercised in the country.

# CIVIL SOCIETY



# What is the Parliament?

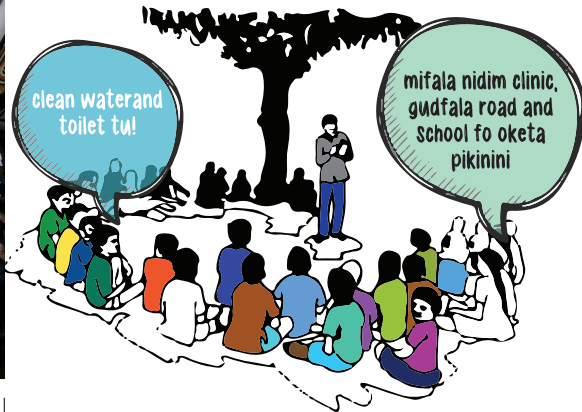
- The National Parliament is made up of 50 members. They are called Members of Parliament or MPs for short. They become Members of Parliament when they win an election because the people have voted for them.
- Each of the 50 MPs in Parliament represent one of the 50 constituencies in Solomon Islands.
- A constituency is one area of the country that one member of Parliament looks after.
- The MPs meet in the Parliament House in Honiara. MPs are elected every four years.

# What is the Parliament?



## What is the work of Member of Parliament?

The Members of Parliament make laws of the country. The Parliament has been granted by the citizens the power to make laws for the peace, order, and the good governing of the country.



A member of Parliament represents the people of his or her constituency. He or she should be aware of the needs and priorities of the people in the constituency.

Regular meetings and discussions with the people in the constituency help the MP to know what are their most important development needs such as clinics, roads, schools, water and sanitation and income generating activities.

## What is the work of Member of Parliament?

***People have the right to ask their MP about the Constituency Development Plan and how this will improve their lives.***

If the MP is not doing what the people ask him or her to do, they have the chance to vote for another person in the next election.

***MPs should work to provide basic services for everyone.***





**IMPROVE  
HEALTH AND  
CLINIC CARE**

**CREATE  
WORK  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**ELECTRICITY  
AND WATER**

**IMPROVE  
EDUCATION  
SERVICES**

**UPHOLD  
DEMOCRACY & LAWS**

**SUPPORT  
ECONOMIC  
GROWTH**



# What is an Election?

*An election is a time when the people choose who they want to be their representative.*

**In Solomon Islands there are several types of elections:**

- National General Election to choose the members of parliament.
- Provincial Elections to choose the members of Provincial Assemblies
- In Honiara, there is an election for the City Council. The members are called Counsellors.

**On election day, people go to their polling station and cast their vote for their preferred candidate.**



# What is an Election?



## What is a Candidate?

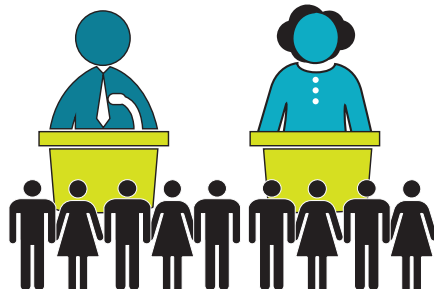
A CANDIDATE is a woman or a man or who wants to represent the people in the constituency and thinks they can do good things for them.

Any person who is a citizen of Solomon Islands can become a candidate as long as she or he is 21 years of age at the time of the nominations period. He or she must be a registered as a voter. The nominations period is when people apply to become a candidate in an election.

## What is a Programme?

A candidate tells voters what her or his vision is for the community and what plans they have for development. A candidate should explain to the people what she or he will do to help the community. This is called the PROGRAMME.

A candidate campaigns to explain and promote his or her programme.



# What is an Electoral Campaign?

**Once the Governor General sets the date of the election, the ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN starts.** During the electoral campaign the candidate explains and promotes his or her programme. They organize rallies and speeches. They advertise in newspapers, radio and TV and explain why people should vote for them. They can also hand out campaign materials such as posters, leaflets and T-shirts.

The campaign ends 24 hours before election day.

People should ask the candidates questions to make sure the person they vote for is someone who will work for the best common interest of the constituency and the country, not just respond to the needs of individual people.

# What is a Voter?

A VOTER is a person who goes to the POLLING STATION on election day and puts his or her ballot paper in the ballot box. In this way, the voter chooses the candidate she or he believes will best represent them.

In order to vote, you must be registered before the election.  
Registration usually takes place during official voter registration periods.

A law was passed in late 2018 saying that everyone who is above the age of 17 and is a citizen of the SI can register and they will be able to vote if have turned 18 on the date of the election.

You can only vote if your name is on the final Voter List. You can only vote once.

Every voter is assigned to a Polling Station. That is the place where a voter goes to vote.

Remember:

- Every voter has the right to choose freely who they want to vote for.
- Your vote is secret. You do not have to tell anyone who you vote for if you don't want to.



# What is a Ballot Paper?

This is the special paper that the voter puts into the ballot box. It has the list of the candidates for your constituency. From the list you must choose the candidate you believe will best represent you.

On the ballot paper you will see:

- The name of the candidate
- The photo of the candidate
- The symbol of the candidate so you can find him or her easily

Candidates who belong to a political party will have the symbol of that party next to their name.

There is an empty box next to the photo, name and symbol of each candidate. This is the box where you must place a tick or mark to show this is the candidate you want to vote for.

The vote is secret. Do not include any marks or writing that can show who you are.

## VOTE BLO IU!

After everyone has voted, the ballot papers are counted and the candidate who has the most papers with marks next to his or her name wins. In a General Election, the candidate who wins is elected and becomes your member of parliament for the next four years.









SAMPLE

## BALLOT PAPER

### CONSTITUENCY OF ISLANDERS

PUT A MARK IN THE BOX OF YOUR CHOICE

Vote For **One** Candidate Only

Name of Candidate Political Party/Independent	Photo of Candidate	Symbol of Candidate	Mark ✓
Lisa Cathy <b>Green Party</b>			
Ronaldo Philips <b>Purple Party</b>			
Alex Beckham <b>Pink Party</b>			



**Vote blo iu, Voice blo iu**

**Teiti, Western Province**

My village needs good roads and water supply, and solar power for people in my community.

**I am voting because....**



**Vote blo iu, Voice blo iu**

**Clifton, Malaita Province**

I want a leader who will support youth activities such as sports, to keep young people away from kwaso and drugs.

**I am voting because....**

# What is an Electoral Offence?



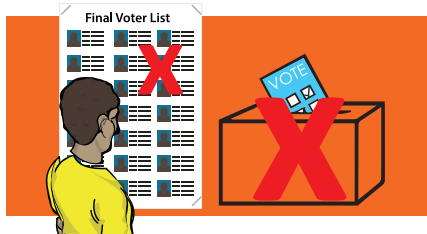
**An offence is when someone does something that is against the law.**

**An offence can also be if someone avoids doing something that is required by the law. This is called an omission.**

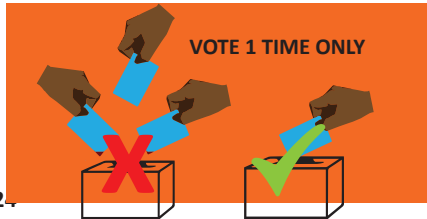
At election time, the Electoral Act explains the type of conduct (action and omission) that is considered an electoral offence.

***Offences are punished by fines or by imprisonment or both.***

# Examples of Electoral Offences



- Voting if you do not have the right to vote: this means trying to vote when your name is not on the Voter List or trying to vote in a place where you are not registered



- Voting more than once: in an election, you are only allowed to vote one time in one place. This must be in the constituency where you are registered.

# Examples of Electoral Offences

- Giving false answers when you are asked questions by the person giving out the ballot papers: it is an offence to lie to the electoral officials who give out the ballot papers.
- Damage, destroy or try to copy a ballot paper: you must not intentionally ruin or spoil or copy a ballot paper. It is also wrong to write anything on the ballot paper except the tick mark you use to choose the candidate you want to vote for.
- Taking a ballot paper out of the polling station: you must never take a ballot paper out of the polling station.
- Interfering with another voter when he or she is going to vote: it is wrong to prevent a person from going to vote or to tell them who they should vote for. Everyone has the right to choose who they want to vote for. It is not right to force someone to tell you who they voted for if they do not want to tell you.



VOTE BLO IU,  
VOICE BLO IU  
NO BLO ANY WAN MOA

# Examples of Electoral Offences

- **Bribing:** this means making promises, offers or giving a benefit to a person to:

- Persuade them to vote or not to vote, or to do so in a particular way
- Influence a third person to do any of the above

- *Also giving food, drinks (treating) to someone to make them vote for a particular candidate or to persuade them not to vote.*

- **Undue Influence:** this means making attempts to influence other person to vote against their free will. It can involve threats, violence or intimidation to force someone to vote for a particular candidate. It is also wrong to do something to prevent a person from voting.

# Bribery is an Electoral Offence!



It is wrong for anyone to give bribes, treats or promises. It is also wrong to accept bribes treats and promises in exchange for your vote.





## *No campaigning outside campaign period*

ino taem blong campaign bat hem gohet nao! Hemi wrong yia!



- No campaigning outside campaign period.

The campaign period is from the date the Governor General announces the election day to 24 hours before the polls are open.

# Campaign Activities & Materials

***There are rules about what candidates and their agents are allowed or not allowed to do:***

- All electoral campaign activities must stop 24 hours before election day.
- Candidates are not allowed to make speeches or gather a crowd near a polling station on election day.
- It is against the law to bring posters, banners or symbols of a candidate or a political party close to the polling station on election day.
- Do not wear a t-shirt that indicates support for a candidate or political party 24 hours before polling day or on election day.

## Be Responsible and Report!



All these offences will be punished by fines which can go from **\$10,000** or imprisonment from **2 to 15 years or both**.



This is our country and our future. If you see any of these offences happening, you must do the right thing and report it to the Police or the Electoral Commission.



# Vote!

It is your right and your responsibility  
Vote for the future of your community  
Vote for the future of your country

**Vote** blo iu, **Voice** blo iu