

ELECTION 2007

The Shift to Limited Preferential Voting in Papua New Guinea

Edited by R.J. May • Ray Anere

Nicole Haley • Katherine Wheen

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Foreword and Acknowledgements

Every general election in Papua New Guinea, since 1964, has been the subject of a comprehensive collaborative study by Papua New Guinean and foreign scholars. And every study (with the exception, to date, of 2002) has been published. This volume continues a longstanding tradition.

The election of 2007, however, generated particular interest: not only did it follow what has been described as Papua New Guinea's worst election ever, in 2002 (in which elections in six of the country's 109 electorates were declared to be 'failed elections'), it was the first general election to be held under a new limited preferential voting (LPV) system; it also followed the first full parliamentary term under the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates*, which had been introduced in 2001 in an attempt to strengthen political parties and create a greater degree of stability in the National Parliament, and was the first to embrace a 'whole-of-government' approach to electoral administration, through the Inter-departmental Election Committee.

Moves to set up a coordinated study of the 2007 election were initiated within the National Research Institute in 2005. Subsequently, the Registrar of Political Parties requested a Domestic Observation of the election by Papua New Guinean scholars and civil society organizations, and the Australian Agency for International Development-funded Electoral Support Program (ESP) also commissioned a monitoring of the election. These three initiatives converged. An ESP-funded Domestic Observation was organized through the National Research Institute, under the joint leadership of Dr Ray Anere of the National Research Institute and Dr Nicole Haley of the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program of The Australian National University, focusing on the administration and outcome of the election. The report of the Domestic Observation was submitted to the Inter-departmental Election Committee, and to the ESP, in 2008 and was published by the National Research Institute in 2009. This volume draws heavily from the Domestic Observation (a number of whose team leaders have contributed chapters to this volume), but attempts, like the studies of earlier Papua New Guinea elections, to look at broader issue of electoral politics at both the national level and within selected electorates.

As always, the tasks of pulling together a number of contributors and obtaining accurate electoral data have not been easy (as at May 2011 results were still not available for all electorates and the Electoral Commissioner's report had not been tabled in parliament). This is reflected in the time it has taken to achieve publication.

We are indebted to those who have facilitated the study and its publication; in particular we acknowledge the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission, the Australian Agency for International Development, the Inter-departmental Election Committee (IDEC), and the Electoral Support Program Phase 2 (ESP2).

We take this opportunity to thank the authors of the chapters, especially Mr Andrew Trawen, Chief Electoral Commissioner, and Mr Paul Bengo, formally the Chair of IDEC. We thank certain individuals who have been instrumental to the publication of this volume: Dr Bill Standish, Dr Thomas Webster, Dr Musawe Sinebare, John Kalamorah, Sue Rider, Jim Robins, Tracy Harwood, Jenny Parina and Siling Geatulu.

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Part 1: Issues

1. An Overview of the 2007 Election in Papua New Guinea

Andrew S. Trawen MBE, Chief Electoral Commissioner

When I was invited to provide an introductory overview of the 2007 general election from the perspective of the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) I was pleased to accept, given the past working relationship between the National Research Institute, The Australian National University and the PNGEC. What I present is a brief analysis from the PNGEC's viewpoint, outlining the challenges and presenting a road map for the PNGEC to follow as it strives to achieve greater efficiency in electoral administration and conduct.

The election schedule

Let me begin with the important dates for the national election. They are:

- issue of writs, 4 May 2007
- close of nominations, 10 May 2007
- commencement of polling, 30 June 2007
- completion of polling, 10 July 2007
- return of writs, 30 July 2007.

Polling in parts of the country was slightly behind schedule due to prevailing circumstances beyond the control of the PNGEC, mainly to do with weather conditions, sudden changes in air transport schedules during the polling period, and numerous court injunctions. This was mainly in the Highlands Region and parts of the Southern and Momase Regions. Section 82A of the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* gives flexibility to the PNGEC to determine the timeframe for the elections and this worked very well in the 2007 election.

Election statistics

A total of 2759 candidates nominated for the 109 seats; just over half of these (1478) contested as independents. There were 2658 male candidates and 103 female candidates.

The electoral roll had 3,938,839 registered voters. The highest number of candidates in any electorate was 69, the lowest 7. There were 34 registered political parties.

Over 9000 polling places were established, with 4550 polling teams and approximately 27,500 polling officials. The number of ballot papers that were printed was 9,096,100, of which 8,519,200 were distributed.

The voting system

Papua New Guinea used the limited preferential voting (LPV) system for the first time in a post-independence general election, shifting away from the old first-past-the-post system. Candidates and their supporters cooperated during the election, unlike the past where violence was the norm. The new voting system increased the percentage of popular support for members of parliament to over 50 percent of the electorate. Early indications suggest the LPV system is user-friendly. It is my firm view that the new LPV system was a success.

My estimate of formal votes cast is over 85 percent, and I think that with better understanding of the system the percentage of informal votes will decrease. I believe we witnessed a high level of support for the LPV system.

The electoral roll

A complete review of the 2002 general election revealed that the electoral roll used was heavily inflated and absolutely corrupted.

I made the decision in 2005, after being appointed commissioner, to completely discard the 2002 electoral roll. The mammoth task of creating the new 2007 roll began immediately and enumerators across the country went from door to door. In a number of instances, they were not well received by households. This, as well as blatant refusal to enrol by some eligible voters, resulted in names not being on the 2007 electoral roll.

By 18 June 2007, the PNGEC had processed all completed eligible voter registration forms. Upon completion, the 2007 electoral roll registered a total of 3,938,839 voters throughout the country, compared to about five million in 2002. The truth is that in Papua New Guinea it is difficult to remove names from the electoral roll, and it is also hard to counter the culture of getting as many names as possible on the roll.

The electoral rolls were for the first time done at local-level government (LLG) ward level so they could be easily managed. Although there were problems in accommodating voters from other wards or LLGs voting in the same electorate, the PNGEC was able to control the movement of people to prevent voting twice or three times in the same electorate.

Logistics

Papua New Guinea is sparsely populated, with limited or poor road and sea transport infrastructure. This meant that delivery of important election materials to polling locations within tight time frames was extremely difficult. The majority of critical supplies, such as ballot papers, electoral rolls, candidate posters, voting forms, labels and seals were dispatched by air transport. Large items were sent by sea freight where time permitted. In 2007, certain transport companies slowed down the election process by not delivering critical supplies to destinations on time.

Awareness and education

A voter awareness campaign was slow to start but picked up momentum as elections drew near, though there were complaints of insufficient awareness and education. Comprehensive awareness education on the voting process, using radio, television and the press, did not reach certain more remote parts of the country simply because the services were not available. It seems the PNGEC will always struggle in this area because of poor communications infrastructure.

The Australian Government-funded Electoral Support Program assisted considerably in the awareness process, through the use of civil society organizations.

Security

Security is always a major concern, especially in the Highlands Region. Polling was conducted over a shorter period in the Highlands instead of the full 11 days of polling. This was done to allow security forces to focus their limited resources on 'hot spots'. The strategy worked well and general feedback suggests that security was generally considered to have been a success.

Finances

A new financial management system was introduced by PNGEC for the control, monitoring and expending of funds allocated by the national government.

PNGEC submitted a financial estimate of K130 million to Treasury Department for election administration. However parliament appropriated a total of K130 million for the election, of which security consumed K50 million, leaving only K80 million for actual election administration. The amount was insufficient, and the PNGEC incurred further costs after the July election. An additional K15 million was requested in the government's supplementary budget towards the end of 2007. This was appropriated and the Commission managed to settle most of its outstanding debts. However, claims were still coming in from the provinces early in 2008 and there is a possibility of additional costs of up to K3 million.

Election petitions

The intensity of court petitions after the return of writs for a general election is a recurring issue of concern in Papua New Guinea. The number of election disputes reflects on the degree of success or failure of any general election. Fifty-five petitions were filed with the Court of Disputed Returns in 2007. This compares with 98 cases filed in the aftermath of the 2002 elections.

This is a significant decline, which may be attributed to the new LPV system and the stringent imposition of court rules that determine the validity and merit of cases filed by losing candidates.

Challenges

I have given you a brief overview of the 2007 general election in Papua New Guinea. As a young developing nation in this part of the world, we are still in aggressive pursuit of that perfect election model which we ourselves believe is the right one. We are open to critics and will take the opportunity to receive and digest comments.

We went through several reviews immediately after the 2007 election and we know our strengths and weaknesses. Our immediate challenge is to address issues identified in the various election review workshops as 'lessons learnt' and to incorporate them into our electoral management system for practical application.

Challenges facing the PNGEC come from all facets of election administration and conduct. There are problems in voting, electoral rolls, counting and scrutiny, finance, transportation, communications, security, training and recruitment, and awareness and education.

There have always been problems with elections in Papua New Guinea, since the first general election in 1977. The general election in 2007 took a more positive twist with the introduction of the 'whole-of-government' approach. The national election steering committee known as the Inter-departmental Electoral Committee (IDEC) was formed. Its primary role was to coordinate all state agencies to effectively assist the PNGEC conduct the general elections. The Chairman of IDEC was the registrar of political parties, Mr Paul Bengo, a veteran civil servant and one of Papua New Guinea's senior statesmen. The setting up of IDEC was a step in the right direction and I am proud to say that much has been achieved in 2007. Our focus now is to strengthen and legitimize IDEC to enable it to become more effective in its role.

Primary tasks awaiting the PNGEC's attention are to:

- continue to improve the integrity of the electoral roll and foster the 'whole-of-government' approach to elections
- increase LPV awareness
- improve on electoral procedures in relation to administration and conduct of elections
- review the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* and its Regulations.

2. IDEC: The 2007 General Election through a Whole-of-Government Approach

Paul B.B. Bengo

The concept

The staging and the conduct of the 2007 general election in Papua New Guinea was a success story as a result of effective cooperation and coordination among the relevant state organizations at national and provincial levels.

This effective cooperation and coordination was forged and fostered by the electoral commissioner, who insisted on the need for a whole-of-government approach in the planning, staging, and conduct of the general election.

Implementation and achievements

In the implementation of this initiative an Inter-departmental Electoral Committee (IDEC) was established at the national level while provincial election steering committees were established in the provinces, chaired by provincial administrators.

Through the operation of IDEC and provincial election steering committees it was possible to achieve a number of significant administrative and management outcomes. Among these five stand out.

- In the staging and conduct of the election, there was compliance with nearly all constitutional and legal requirements, such as the general provisions of the Constitution, the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections*, the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates*, and the *Criminal Code*.
- An extensive and effective public awareness was conducted covering voter enrolment and registration, the limited preferential voting system, voter turnout at polling venues, the need for respect and orderliness in the electoral process, etc.

- An effectively coordinated security plan was drawn up among the disciplined forces for a free and fair election.
- There was a well-coordinated government effort with support from international governments and donor agencies.
- Superb teamwork mounted at the national level and supported by disciplined and dedicated members of staff from the provincial governments and their respective administrations succeeded in mobilizing and coordinating the resources at the disposal of governments.

Through these administrative and management strategies we were able to bring greater integrity and transparency to the entire electoral process. A number of Papua New Guinean authors will address some of these issues.

Let me deal specifically with the provisions of the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* relating to the election.

Section 27 of the organic law allows only registered political parties to endorse or nominate and participate in elections. As required by Section 40, the registrar published in the *National Gazette* (3 May 2007) the necessary details of registered political parties.

Section 63 of the organic law obliges the electoral commissioner, upon the return of writs for the general election, to officially advise the head of state on important matters relating to the staging and conduct of the election (*National Gazette* 3 May 2007).

The advice indicated to the head of state which registered political party had the greatest number of candidates declared elected. Based on this advice the head of state issued an invitation to the National Alliance to form government (*National Gazette* 10 August 2007).

With regard to the whole-of-government approach, the government of Papua New Guinea has recognized the initiative of the electoral commissioner and has now funded IDEC and the provincial steering committees to continue on a permanent basis. (IDEC was convened later in 2007 to coordinate arrangements for local-level government elections.)

It is the intention of the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission and myself to institutionalize the IDEC initiative so that it can be an effective administrative mechanism to assist the commission to plan, stage and conduct elections in Papua New Guinea at both national and provincial levels.

3. Background to the 2007 Election: Political Developments

R.J. May and Ray Anere

Papua New Guinea's sixth post-independence election in 2002 was widely described as the worst in the country's history (see Siaguru in *Post-Courier* 28 June 2003; Chin 2003; Gelu 2003; May 2003; Standish 2003). It was marked by inaccurate—often grossly inaccurate—electoral rolls, widespread voting irregularities and manipulation (sometimes by electoral officials), intimidation of voters, hijacking of ballot boxes, and violence among rival candidates and their supporters and in a few instances against polling officials. There were a number of election-related deaths. In Enga Province, ballot boxes held for safekeeping in a metal container outside a police station were bombed with drums of aviation fuel, and in Southern Highlands Province, elections in six of the province's nine electorates were declared 'failed elections' when officials became unable to control the election. The problems were concentrated in the volatile highlands provinces, but were not confined to the highlands.

The 2002 election was also the first to be held under the new *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* (OLIPPAC) and the last to be held under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting system, which had replaced an optional preferential system under the colonial administration. The introduction of the OLIPPAC—which was intended to strengthen political parties and give greater stability to government—and amendment of the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* to effect a shift from FPTP to limited preferential voting (LPV) were among measures which had been introduced by the government of Sir Mekere Morauta (1999–2002), in a bid to 'to restore integrity to our great institutions of state'.

Despite the turbulence of the 2002 election, results were declared in 103 electorates, and in August 2002 the national parliament met and Sir Michael Somare, as the leader of the party with the largest number of endorsed candidates—the National Alliance (NA), with 19 members of parliament (MPs)—was invited to form a government. Somare was duly elected as prime minister, securing 88 votes to nil (with 14 abstentions). He headed a coalition of 13 parties and 20 independents. Morauta became leader of the relatively small opposition coalition.

A legacy of the electoral difficulties of 2002 was a determination by the government and donors—specifically the Australian Agency for International

Development (AusAID)—to ensure that the capacity of the government to run free and fair elections was strengthened before 2007. As part of this, in 2005 phase 2 of an AusAID-funded Electoral Support Program was mobilized to assist the Electoral Commission and help undertake electoral awareness, and in 2006 the government established an Inter-departmental Electoral Committee to coordinate the government's efforts across all relevant departments and agencies (see chapters 1, 2, 4 and 5).

Parliamentary politics 2002–2007

Under the OLIPPAC, measures were introduced to counter the fluidity of parliamentary politics which had marked the previous two decades. Popularly known as 'yo-yo politics', this had been characterized by constant shifting of MPs between parties, frequent shifts of parties in and out of coalitions, and regular motions of no confidence in the government of the day. In an attempt to promote greater political stability, the OLIPPAC provided for the registration and public funding of political parties and introduced measures to restrict 'party hopping'.¹ These provisions, together with the numerical dominance of the Somare-led coalition, appeared to put the incoming government in a very strong position—and in fact the Somare government of 2002–2007 went on to become the first, since the Somare government of 1972–1977, to survive a full term in office. But neither the legislature nor the executive was particularly stable.

As early as June 2003, amid rumours of faction fighting within the coalition and even within the NA, there were changes in cabinet, with seven portfolios changing hands, and this was followed in August by a more substantial reshuffle.

Nor was fractiousness confined to the government: in December 2002, after Morauta had sought to change the name of the People's Democratic Movement (PDM), PDM deputy leader and member for Bulolo Open, John Muingnepe,

¹ Under the organic law, a member of parliament elected as a party-endorsed candidate may not withdraw or resign from that party during the life of the parliament (unless he/she can establish that the party or an executive of the party has committed a serious breach of the party's constitution or that the party has been adjudged insolvent), and cannot vote against a resolution of the party concerning a vote of no confidence, the election of a prime minister, approval of the national budget, or a constitutional amendment (a member may, however, abstain from voting). Contravention of this provision is regarded as resignation from the party and sets in motion a series of procedures which may culminate in the member having to reimburse the party for all campaign and other expenses received from the party, exclusion from appointment as a minister or committee chair, or dismissal from parliament. A member elected as an independent may join a party after the initial vote for prime minister, and then incurs the same obligations to the party as a party-endorsed candidate. A member elected as an independent who remains independent, but supported a particular candidate in the vote for prime minister, must not vote against that candidate or his/her government in a subsequent vote of no confidence, nor against a budget brought down by that government, nor against a constitutional amendment proposed by that government.

announced that Morauta had been dismissed from the leadership of the party, in favour of its founder Paias Wingti, and that he, Muingnepe, was now leader of the parliamentary opposition. Morauta disputed this and called on the registrar of political parties and the Ombudsman Commission to investigate Muingnepe's actions. The registrar of political parties subsequently ruled in favour of Morauta.

Then, towards the end of 2003, Prime Minister Somare sought, ostensibly in the interests of furthering parliamentary stability, to extend the grace period after an election, during which a prime minister could not be subjected to a vote of no confidence, from 18 months (already extended in 1991 from an original six months) to 36 months. A bill to make the required amendment to s. 145 of the constitution passed a first reading in the national parliament in September 2003, but on the eve of the decisive second reading of the bill, Morauta announced that the opposition would vote against the amendment, which he said had not been adequately scrutinized. The parliamentary leader of the People's Progress Party (PPP) and deputy prime minister, Allan Marat, was also opposed to the amendment. In October, as a result of differences within the PPP, Marat was removed from the PPP parliamentary leadership by the party caucus (an action which he challenged unsuccessfully in the National Court), and having been confirmed as deputy prime minister by Prime Minister Somare in October he was removed from the position the following month. Marat's successor as PPP leader, Andrew Baing, became deputy prime minister in November 2003.

In the days prior to this there had been a burst of activity among the smaller parties. The United Resources Party (URP), which had one member (Sam Akoitai) after the 2002 elections, had increased its number to 14 (mostly through the absorption of the 'Kimbe Group' of independents led by Milne Bay Governor Tim Neville—who became the party's new leader in November—but also through amalgamation with two smaller parties, the Pan Melanesian Congress (with two members) and the Advance PNG Party (with one). The URP, now the second largest party in the coalition, had reportedly signed a 'declaration of partnership' with four other parties to form a coalition within the governing coalition. While the group spoke in terms of unity and stability, however, it was clear that there was among them some opposition to the s. 145 amendment. In the event, when the parliamentary vote was taken in late November, three parties (URP, PPP and People's Labour Party [PLP]) split on the issue, and the government narrowly fell short of the two-thirds majority (73 votes) needed to pass the bill.

Andrew Baing, who had voted against the amendment, was sacked from the deputy prime ministership. He was replaced by People's Action Party leader Moses Maladina, who became the third deputy prime minister in a month. Several other ministers lost portfolios.

A second vote in December 2003 again failed, and in May 2004 Somare announced he would not pursue the amendment.

In accordance with the OLIPPAC, the speaker disallowed the votes of those members who were deemed to have voted against their parties' resolutions, and notified the registrar of political parties that they 'may have contravened' s. 65(1) of the OLIPPAC. On advice from the attorney general and private lawyers, the registrar of political parties subsequently referred the members, who were 'deemed to have resigned' from their respective parties, to the Ombudsman Commission for investigation. But there was no further action on the matter.²

With the grace period coming to an end in February 2004, and several parties split (in addition to the URP,³ PPP⁴ and PLP, Pangu⁵ and even the two-MP Christian Democratic Party had fractured), there was talk in late 2003 of a vote of no confidence against Somare. In response, in January 2004, soon after parliament had resumed after the Christmas break, the government adjourned parliament to 29 June. The Ombudsman Commission, describing the government's action as 'dangerous' and a 'bad example', told the government that if it did not recall parliament by mid March the commission would initiate a court challenge—which it subsequently did. (In the event, the parliament met briefly in April to receive nominations for the election of the governor-general.) January 2004 also saw a minor cabinet reshuffle.

2 As explained by the Registrar of Political Parties, Paul Bengo, since the government rescinded the second reading of the bill before a vote was actually taken, no misconduct had occurred (see *Post-Courier* 22 January 2004). However, in May 2004 the Ombudsman Commission was said to be investigating eight MPs who had voted against party resolutions.

3 In January 2004 Bengo ruled that Akoitai was the only parliamentary member of the URP—the later joiners not having paid party fees—and voided Neville's leadership. This view was upheld in a ruling by the acting speaker of parliament, Jeffrey Nape, in July, leaving Neville and the other MPs who had joined URP after the election, and were in the opposition, as 'effectively independent MPs' (*Post-Courier* 27 July 2004). Confusingly, however, in November it was reported that Bengo had ruled that Neville was the leader of the URP.

4 In December 2003, five PPP members, including deputy party leader Paul Tiensten and former party leader Marat, voted for the s. 145 amendment. Baing, as party leader, served a summons on the five for voting against a party resolution. The five countered by electing Tiensten as party leader. The PPP national executive promptly expelled Tiensten. However, Nape recognized Tiensten as party leader. Shortly after this, in January 2004, Baing was referred to the Ombudsman Commission for alleged misconduct in office. Two months later Nape called on the prime minister to dismiss Bengo for his 'indecisiveness' in the handling of the PPP leadership dispute issue. In November 2004 Bengo reportedly confirmed Baing's leadership, but in June 2005 Nape ruled in favour of Tiensten. The dispute continued up till June 2006, when Baing was suspended pending the outcome of a Leadership Tribunal inquiry (which subsequently recommended Baing's dismissal). Byron Chan, son of PPP founder Sir Julius Chan, took over the parliamentary leadership.

5 One faction, led by Sir Rabbie Namaliu, supported Somare; the other, smaller, faction, led by Chris Haiveta, was in opposition. In February 2004 the Namaliu faction announced that Namaliu had been elected party leader; this was refuted by Haiveta who claimed that Namaliu and his supporters had been expelled from the party. Both the registrar of political parties and the speaker recognized Namaliu as party leader, but the matter was referred to the National Court, which in October 2004 ruled in favour of Haiveta.

Tensions also became apparent about this time within the People's National Congress (PNC), the party established by former prime minister Sir William Skate. In February, Skate confirmed that the PNC supported Somare, but there were reports of a leadership challenge coming from Peter O'Neill, whose one-MP People's Solidarity Party had merged with the PNC in 2002.

In early May 2004, 14 opposition MPs, led by Neville and Wingti, voted to remove Morauta as opposition leader in favour of Andrew Baing. The registrar of political parties promptly released a statement recognizing Morauta as leader of the opposition, pending a ruling by the speaker, but in mid May Morauta and the majority of his Papua New Guinea Party (PNGP) joined the government, effectively ruling out a successful vote of no confidence. Three days later parliament was adjourned again and in another major reshuffle Maladina was dropped as deputy prime minister and the PNC was expelled from the ruling coalition. Prime Minister Somare also announced the creation of several additional ministerial and vice ministerial positions, a move which was challenged by Wingti, who called on the Ombudsman Commission to investigate the 'rogue Prime Minister'. In April the People's Action Party (PAP) and the NA had confirmed their partnership, but the following month some members of PAP reportedly joined an opposition group meeting in Alotau. Parliament resumed briefly in late May to re-elect a governor-general (see below), and voted to remove Skate as speaker and elect Jeffrey Nape (unopposed) as his replacement. A challenge by Skate was dismissed by the Supreme Court.

When parliament eventually resumed in late June 2004 it was clear that a motion of no confidence was forthcoming, even though the ombudsman, Ila Geno, urged 'the registered political party executives, various lobbyists and parliamentary leaders of political parties to exercise restraint from getting into the habit of luring members of parliament with material promises and/or benefits' (*Post-Courier* 5 July 2004). There were reports of a 'groundswell of numbers' within the opposition, and of individual MPs crossing the floor in apparent disregard of the OLIPPAC. The leader of government business, Patrick Pruaitch, was quoted as saying, 'Opposition MPs are carrying on as if the Organic Law on [the Integrity of] Political Parties and Candidates does not exist' (*Post-Courier* 6 July 2004). The opposition camp in Alotau claimed about 40 MPs including four government ministers, prompting the leader of the pro-government faction of PPP, Paul Tiensten, to complain that MPs were being 'hijacked', contrary to s. 74 of the OLIPPAC, and that by not intervening the registrar of political parties was not doing his job (*Post-Courier* 12 July 2004). The recently appointed opposition leader Baing having been referred to the Ombudsman Commission in January, the opposition caucus voted to nominate

Paias Wingti as alternative prime minister in a vote of no confidence, but it was not a popular choice, and Wingti subsequently stepped down in favour of Peter O'Neill.

On 7 July, the opposition submitted notice of its motion of no confidence, only to have it rejected, on a technicality, by the government-dominated Parliamentary Private Business Committee.⁶ The opposition amended and resubmitted the notice, and filed the Supreme Court for a reference to validate the notice; however, the government again suspended parliament, till 26 July. A frustrated and angry O'Neill declared that the opposition would boycott parliament until Somare and Nape were removed from office. Meanwhile, with MPs continuing to cross the floor, the registrar of political parties complained that, 'The majority of the members of Parliament do not understand the provisions of the Organic Law' and said that parties 'continuing to cause headaches' could be recommended for deregistration (*Post-Courier* 19 July 2004).

After meeting for a few days at the end of July, and amid claims that some MPs had carried firearms into the national parliament, parliament was again adjourned, from 3 August to 2 November 2004, thereby again forestalling a vote of no confidence, though the chief ombudsman threatened court action against the parliament, which he said was breaching the constitution by failing to meet for the required 63 days in the parliamentary year. Opposition leader O'Neill accused Somare of attempting to establish an Indonesian-style 'guided democracy' in Papua New Guinea (*The National* 6 August 2004). It was also reported that the Ombudsman Commission would look into the membership of the Parliamentary Private Business Committee following its rejection of two motions of no confidence (see *Post-Courier* 2 August 2004).

Following the adjournment of parliament, Somare removed PAP leader Maladina (who had been sacked in April but had subsequently been reappointed) as deputy prime minister, accusing him of plotting against the government. Maladina had said he would resign from government because the PAP was not happy with 'a lack regard for our standing within the coalition'.

When parliament met again in November 2004, the opposition vowed to pursue its vote of no confidence, but there were also talks between government and opposition leaders about the possible formation of a 'grand coalition'. In the event, the grand coalition did not eventuate, nor did the no confidence motion proceed, and in late November, after passing the budget, the house adjourned again, this time for three months.

⁶ In July Somare had removed all opposition MPs from the Parliamentary Private Business Committee, effectively enabling the government to block motions of no confidence.

Meanwhile, MPs continued to switch parties and cross the floor with apparent impunity, and most parties remained split. In late October 2004, the National Court ruled that opposition-aligned Chris Haiveta was the parliamentary leader of Pangu, but that the expulsion of former prime minister Rabbie Namaliu, and two other pro-government Pangu MPs was invalid; this reversed earlier decisions by both the registrar of political parties and Speaker Nape who recognized Namaliu as leader. Pangu's MPs were directed to meet and elect a new leader. The National Court also expressed concern that a number of party constitutions (such as Pangu's) did not conform to the OLIPPAC.

In November 2004, Southern Highlands Governor Hami Yawari moved to the government ranks, bringing the number of PNGP members in government to seven, with two remaining in opposition. The two-member opposition-aligned Christian Democratic Party had also split, with Banare Bun joining the PNGP in government. Within the PAP, following his removal from the deputy prime ministership Maladina was reported to have been replaced by Brian Pulayasi (*Post-Courier* 4 August 2004). In 2007 Maladina stood for re-election as the leader of a new party, the Rural Development Party (RDP). In the PNC there was talk of a split between party founder Skate and newcomer O'Neill, but the party held together, with Skate moving to the middle benches early in February 2005. Skate subsequently left the party, without objection from either the party or the registrar of political parties. O'Neill took over the party leadership. Skate died in January 2006. Rumours of a 'planned merger' of Pangu, PNGP and the Melanesian Alliance did not eventuate.

For several months after the August 2004 removal of Maladina there was no deputy prime minister. In May 2005, following an appeal to the National Court by Morobe Governor Luther Wenge, the Supreme Court directed the prime minister to fill the position. The following month Sir Moi Avei, parliamentary leader of the Melanesian Alliance, became the fourth deputy prime minister since 2002; four months later he was suspended from office pending the outcome of a Leadership Tribunal. He was replaced by Don Polye, in an apparent attempt to attract Highlands support for the government as it approached the 2007 election.

Amid continuing rumours of a possible split within the NA, in early 2006 there was a falling out between Somare and Bart Philemon. Philemon, as minister for finance, had been a major architect of the government's improved fiscal management, but his disciplined approach had not always been welcomed by MPs seeking funds to appease their electorates. In 2006, Philemon lost the finance portfolio, which was given to Namaliu, and Philemon and Somare clashed over the issue of succession to the NA party leadership. Philemon went on to form his own party, the New Generation Party (NGP), and contested the election under this banner, strongly opposing the NA (see chapter 9).

In August 2006, the registrar of political parties announced that 14 parties were to be deregistered for failing to submit financial returns and lists of members. By this time, however, new parties were beginning to emerge, among them the Melanesian Liberal Party led by former PPP leader Allan Marat, the PNG Conservative Party founded by former PNGP member Hami Yawari, Maladina's RDP, and Philemon's NGP. (A detailed discussion of political parties in the 2007 election will be found in chapter 9).

In the final run-up to the 2007 election, OLIPPAC notwithstanding, there was continuing evidence of party fluidity: in May 2007 former PNG National Party leader Melchior Pep defected from the party and joined the RDP, and PNGP leader Morauta claimed that three candidates registered and endorsed as PNGP members had nominated under other party banners, prompting Bengo to warn that the election of party-hopping candidates could be declared null and void.

When parliament rose in May 2007 the Somare government had survived a full term. But arguably this was achieved at a cost to parliamentary performance. Lengthy adjournments of parliament did not begin with the Somare government, but they were certainly exploited to avoid votes of no confidence during the seventh parliament 2002–2007. And the large majority which Somare had obtained in the vote for prime minister in 2002, notwithstanding the limited effect of the OLIPPAC on the stability of political parties during the parliamentary term, put the executive in a strong position to dominate parliamentary outcomes. As a result, (apart from the opposition boycott in 2004) MPs commonly missed sittings, the legislative output of the parliament was poor, and what legislation was passed was often not subjected to due scrutiny.⁷

By-elections

Between 2003 and 2006, 10 by-elections were held to fill seats which became vacant through the death or dismissal of sitting MPs.⁸ All these by-elections were conducted under the new LPV system.

The first, in Abau Open in 2003, followed a successful appeal against the election in 2002 of Puka Temu (see chapter 15). Temu won the by-election on a distribution of preferences, having secured 49 percent the primary vote. In 2004, there were a further five by-elections. In Angalimp-South Wahgi Open, a by-election following the death of the recently elected MP Paul Wai was won

⁷ For a comment on parliamentary performance see, for example, *Post-Courier* 25 April 2006.

⁸ In two other instances, in 2003 the Supreme Court overturned National Court decisions in favour of appeals against sitting members (Ben Semri in Middle Ramu and Robert Kopaol in Nipa-Kutubu), reversing the declaration in favour of the petitioner in the first instance and quashing the order for a by-election in the latter.

by PNG Country Party leader, Jamie Maxtone-Graham, who came from behind after the first preference count, in which he gathered less than 9 percent of the vote. (After being elected, Maxtone-Graham applied to join PAP but was rejected by PAP MPs and subsequently joined the PPP.) In Chimbu Provincial, the death of the sitting member and governor, Father Louis Ambane, led to a by-election which was won by Peter Launa, who was endorsed by the URP. In Yangoru-Saussia, Bernard Hagoria lost his seat after being found guilty of misapplying public funds; the subsequent by-election was won by Peter Waranaka, an NA candidate. In Moresby North-East Open, the sitting member, Casper Wollom lost his seat as the result of a successful dispute but regained it on a preference count in a by-election in which he secured 16 percent of the primary vote. Wollom contested as a PDM candidate in 2002 but stood in 2004 for the PNC and, having been elected, defected from the PNC and joined the government. Similarly, in Wabag Open Sam Abal, son of former MP Sir Tei Abal and an NA candidate, was returned after a court of disputed returns had voided his win in the 2002 election. Abal secured 38 percent of first preferences. In 2006 four by-elections were held. In Bougainville Provincial there was a by-election following the resignation of the sitting member John Momis to contest the Bougainville Autonomous Government election; the by-election was won by former Bougainville separatist leader Leo Hannett, who stood as an independent and gained 38 percent of the primary vote. In the National Capital District a by-election for the seat left vacant following the death of Sir William Skate was won, controversially, by Port Moresby businessman Wari Vele of the NA, who defeated Janet Sape and Powes Parkop. In Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open a petition against the election of the sitting member, Petrus Thomas, was eventually upheld and in the ensuing by-election independent John Kekeno was successful. And in Chuave Open, Jim Nomane was elected as an independent following a successful dispute against the election of David Anggo.

Though polling in the 10 by-elections was not without incident, they were generally seen as having been conducted successfully (see Institute of Policy Studies et al. 2004; Standish 2006), confirming the workability of the LPV system, despite some lengthy delays in the counting of preferences.

Political issues and policy context 2002–2007

Continuing public sector reform

On coming to office in 2002, Prime Minister Somare quickly made clear his intention to maintain the previous government's commitment to policies of recovery and public sector reform. In August 2002, faced with a deteriorating

fiscal situation, the government introduced a Program for Recovery and Development which identified as its three main objectives: 'good governance; export-driven economic growth; and rural development, poverty reduction and empowerment through human resource development'. As a framework within which to pursue this program, and after extensive discussion, the government presented a revised Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) for 2003–2007 to replace the MTDS 1997–2002. This was subsequently replaced by an MTDS 2005–2010. The government also announced a Strategic Plan for Supporting Public Sector Reform in Papua New Guinea 2003–2007, which superseded the Morauta government's Medium Term Plan of Action for Public Sector Reform. In presenting the 2004 budget, the then minister for finance and treasury, Bart Philemon, announced that the government's reform agenda would be supplemented by a new focus on improving the management and control of public sector employment and expenditures; restoring the integrity of budget institutions and systems to improve budgetary discipline; and reviewing the role, functions, and outputs of each spending agency to achieve improved allocative and technical efficiencies in public expenditure. Among new measures described by the minister were a performance management system for departmental heads, a medium-term budget framework, an integrated financial management system, and the creation of a budget screening committee.⁹ The government's procurement processes were centralized under a Central Supply and Tenders Board.

Reforms in public administration, however, failed to overcome a number of problems of poor governance, including recurring financial mismanagement, politicization of the public service (there were frequent complaints of a 'Sepik tsunami' among senior appointments), and a high turnover in senior public service positions. In 2006 Public Service Minister Sinai Brown lost his portfolio after removing three departmental heads (from finance, personnel management, and national planning and monitoring), as well as the acting provincial administrator of the Southern Highlands, without cabinet approval. Brown's decisions were reversed, but there was further turnover of senior appointments, several under controversial circumstances.

It is tempting to suggest that these reform initiatives were stronger in rhetoric than in delivery, but, assisted by more favourable external conditions, the commitment to improving public sector performance helped to restore confidence in the government's economic management and from 2005 there was a new inflow of foreign investment.

⁹ For a more detailed discussion and assessment of the Somare government's public sector reforms see Kua (2006) and May (2006).

The economy

Despite the economic recovery measures introduced by the Morauta government, the incoming Somare government inherited a bleak economic situation. Mining operations at Ok Tedi and Porgera had been temporarily closed down, due to drought which made the Fly River unnavigable in the Ok Tedi case and clashes with landowners in the case of Porgera. A proposed gas pipeline between Papua New Guinea and Queensland, on which economic hopes had been largely pinned, suffered a setback when the biggest Australian potential customer pulled out (the project was later abandoned), and mining and petroleum exploration were at an all time low. Commodity prices had slumped and the international value of the kina sunk to a record low point of US\$0.19 in November 2002. The Somare government, faced with a growing deficit and substantial public debt, responded with a supplementary budget which initiated severe budget cuts in 2003.

After three years of negative growth (2000–2002), gross domestic product (GDP) growth rates were positive in 2003 and 2004 (averaging 2.5 percent), and with a surge in mineral exploration and revenues—including the announcement of Chinese investment in the US\$650 million Ramu Nickel project and start-ups at the Kainantu, Hidden Valley and Wafi gold and copper mines—GDP rose 3.9 percent in 2005, 2.3 percent in 2006 and an estimated 7.2 percent in 2007. By 2004 the kina had recovered to US\$0.31.

Then in 2007 came news that a multi-billion-dollar liquefied natural gas project, drawing on proven reserves in the Southern Highlands and Western Provinces, was being planned, with construction likely to commence in 2009–2010 and production to come on stream in 2014. The development was said to have the potential to double Papua New Guinea's GDP.

As the 2007 election approached, perceptions of Papua New Guinea's economic prospects were thus improving dramatically—though a few commentators were warning of the need for realistic expectations and responsible financial management.

Electing the governor-general

In September 2003, Sir Albert Kipalan was voted in as the country's new governor-general. However, the assistant clerk of the national parliament was reported as saying that the vote was procedurally flawed, and the Ombudsman Commission announced it would look into the election and might refer the issue to the Supreme Court; the Ombudsman Commission was supported in this by the state solicitor. In November, the speaker of the parliament announced that Kipalan was to be sworn in, but a week later the Supreme Court declared the

election void. In a new vote, Sir Pato Kakaraya was elected, defeating Kipalan and Sir Paulius Matane, and his name was passed on to Buckingham Palace. The election result was contested by Kipalan, who claimed there had been a breach of voting procedures and undue influence on some MPs (at least one MP alleged that attempts had been made to bribe him). In March 2004 the Supreme Court ruled that the nomination process had been flawed and voided Kakaraya's election. Finally, in May a further election was held and this was won by Matane, who was duly sworn in. A challenge by Kakaraya was dismissed by the Supreme Court in December 2004.

As speaker of the national parliament, Skate became acting governor-general in October 2003, and remained in that position throughout the subsequent deliberations. However, in May 2004 he announced that he was stepping down to resume the speakership, precipitating what was described at the time as a 'constitutional crisis'. In the event this situation was resolved by the election of Matane.

Bougainville

Under the Bougainville Peace Agreement of 2001, progress was made towards reconciliation and reconstruction, and in December 2004, after a controversial challenge by the attorney general, Francis Damen, the draft Bougainville Constitution was approved by the NEC. Preparations began for the first election to the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) in May 2005. John Momis, the Bougainville Provincial member, resigned after 33 years in the national parliament to contest the election. Before his death in July 2005, Me'ekamui leader Francis Ona opposed the ABG election, but in the event some Me'ekamui supporters took part and the election was conducted peacefully. The successful candidate was former North Solomons provincial premier and president of the separatist Bougainville Interim Government Joseph Kabui. Momis subsequently became Papua New Guinea's ambassador to China.

Privatization

The controversial privatization of state enterprises, supported by the World Bank and pursued under the Morauta government, had led to the sale of a 75 percent interest in the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation to the Bank of South Pacific and the divesting of the government's interest in Orogen Minerals Ltd (a public company floated in 1996 which took over a substantial part of the government's equity in mining and petroleum companies operating in Papua New Guinea). In the face of widespread popular opposition to privatization, the incoming government suspended the policy, calling off a nearly completed sale of Telikom PNG to Fiji's privatized telecommunications corporation and

refusing an offer from a Zimbabwean company, and suspending moves to sell off Air Niugini and the PNG Harbours Board. A commission of inquiry into the sale of the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation to the Bank of South Pacific was initiated; in July it reported, raising questions about the adequacy of procedures surrounding the sale.

Under the Somare government, privatization was to be maintained as part of the public sector reform program, but 'on the basis of a public-private partnership approach' geared to 'the long-term interests of the Papua New Guinean community' rather than 'the short-term financing requirements of the National Budget'. The Independent Public Business Corporation (IPBC) established by the Morauta government to implement privatization policy was to be maintained, but as a 'long-term asset manager' with the task of seeing that state-owned assets were rehabilitated and service levels improved, and an Independent Consumer and Competition Commission was created to regulate public utility services and prices. The activities of the IPBC were not without controversy during 2002–2007, but the privatization issue was defused and some turnaround was achieved in the performance of the corporatized commercial statutory authorities.

The entry of Digicel to the telecommunications sector, under the newly announced policy of competition, notwithstanding some government obstruction, saw a rapid expansion of mobile phone use which not only boosted GDP but also impacted on electoral behaviour in 2007.

Forestry

The forestry industry was again a source of controversy in 2002–2007. In 2003 a World Bank-supported Forestry and Conservation Project, initiated in 2001 and involving a World Bank loan of US\$17 million and grants from the Global Environment Facility amounting to a further US\$17 million, was suspended by the World Bank after the Papua New Guinea Government failed to comply with conditions concerning sustainable harvesting and social and infrastructure obligations to customary landowners. In 2005, the World Bank's requirements not having been satisfactorily addressed, the project funding was withdrawn.

The same year, proposed amendments to the *Forestry Act 1991*, which had been opposed by environmental and landowner groups, failed to go through parliament. The amendments would have given the National Forest Board power to suspend provincial forest management committees and revoke mandatory consultations between the National Forest Board and customary landowners and provincial governments.

Police

Security problems during the 2002 election highlighted ongoing issues of capacity and morale within the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC). In February 2004, the minister for Police and Internal Security, Bire Kimisopa, initiated a review of RPNGC operations and management. The review, headed by the president of the Police Association, Robert Ali, reported in November 2004, concluding that 'policing was close to total collapse' in many parts of the country and identifying an 'almost total failure of discipline'. It made a number of recommendations, including a shift to community policing, but follow-up action was initially largely overtaken by the arrival, and subsequent departure, of Australian police officers deployed under the Enhanced Cooperation Program (see below). However, in early 2005 Kimisopa warned senior RPNGC management against failure to implement the recommendations of the review. Kimisopa himself was under fire in the national parliament for proposing to disband police mobile units and tactical and rapid response units, as recommended by the review.

In August 2006, it was reported that the police commissioner, Sam Inguba, was under scrutiny over allegations that he had blocked an investigation by the police Serious Crimes Unit. Despite support for Inguba from the Police Association and the minister for Internal Security, his contract was not renewed and charges were laid against him (but subsequently withdrawn). Deputy Commissioner Tom Kulunga was appointed acting commissioner, but he was removed soon after in the wake of the 'Moti affair' (discussed below), though he appealed his dismissal to the National Court. Deputy Commissioner Gari Baki, who had been controlling the state of emergency in the Southern Highlands, was also charged, with 'spreading disaffection within the force', and suspended. Assistant Commissioner Fred Sheekiot became the new acting commissioner, but he too was removed when suspended by acting deputy commissioner Tony Wagambie. Finally, in December Baki was appointed as commissioner, and remained in the position to oversee the 2007 election.

Instability was not confined to the position of commissioner. In April 2006, Kimisopa lost the Internal Security portfolio, in what was generally seen as a demotion. His place was taken by Alphonse Willie, but shortly after, Willie was also removed—a casualty of the Moti affair.

On becoming commissioner, Baki moved to set up an operation to investigate allegations of involvement in corrupt practices and links to Asian crime by senior police officers and personnel in other government agencies, including the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Internal Revenue Commission.

The bitter factional infighting and obvious politicization of the police commissioner's position did nothing to strengthen the RPNGC's capabilities or raise police morale as they faced the daunting task of delivering a peaceful election—especially after the chair of the Parliamentary Permanent Committee on Law and Order announced that his committee would recommend deferring elections for 12 months due to the worsening situation in the Highlands.

Southern Highlands Province

The failure of elections in six of the Southern Highlands Province's nine electorates in 2002 was symptomatic of the general breakdown of law, order and governance in most parts of the province which had been ongoing for several years (see Haley and May 2007). An independent audit of the provincial government's finances in 2003 confirmed the extent of the breakdown of governance, but there was little follow-up and no prosecutions at that time. Crime and political violence often prevented the delivery of government services, drove businesses away, and threatened the viability of the oil and gas projects from which the province, and the nation, hoped to derive wealth but which in fact had brought escalating inter-group competition for royalties and compensation. Teachers and other public servants were leaving their positions and public facilities had closed down. Police, for the most part, were outnumbered and outgunned and 'warlords' controlled large parts of the province. Elected leaders often spent more time in Port Moresby than in their electorates.

Prime Minister Somare's repeated promise to create a new Hela Province within the Southern Highlands Province—a move strongly opposed by the man elected as governor in 2003, Hami Yawari—created additional tensions in the province.

In June 2006, the Ombudsman Commission referred Governor Yawari to the public prosecutor for alleged breaches of the Leadership Code (specifically, misappropriation of public funds), and with the governor suspended, on 1 August the national government declared a state of emergency in the Southern Highlands. Most Southern Highlands MPs supported the declaration, particularly opposition leader Peter O'Neill (the member for Ialibu-Pangia), who had earlier expressed concern at the build-up of weapons in the pre-election period. Yawari, on the other hand, condemned the move and threatened to block the proposed gas pipeline to Queensland.

With the state of emergency in place, and some 760 police and Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel brought into the province, a degree of order was imposed: stolen government vehicles were recovered and illegal residents evicted from government housing; several provincial officials were at last prosecuted (though Southern Highlanders observed that the guilty bigmen avoided prosecution), and some weapons were surrendered. A member

of the parliamentary committee overseeing the state of emergency said that the committee had uncovered 'a jungle of corruption never seen before' (*Post-Courier* 19 October 2006). The successes of the operation were marred, however, by poor logistics and frequent lack of discipline on the part of police and soldiers.

The state of emergency was extended by the national parliament several times but lapsed in January 2007, and Yawari resumed his governorship. The charges against him were subsequently dismissed for 'lack of evidence', but a new provincial administrator, William Powi—a senior bureaucrat with experience in Waigani—was appointed by the NEC to replace Yawari's appointee. (For an account of the special police operations in the Southern Highlands during the 2007 election see chapter 6.)

Decentralization

By 2002 there seems to have been general agreement that the decentralization 'reforms' embodied in the 1995 *Organic Law on Provincial Governments and Local-level Governments* (OLPGLLG) had not delivered the intended benefits. In a foreword to the *Medium Term Development Strategy 2005–2010* the then Minister for National Planning and Monitoring, Sir Moi Avei, suggested that deficiencies in the design and implementation of the OLPGLLG had been 'a major factor impeding service delivery' and referred to 'the dysfunctional system of service delivery' that had arisen after 1995. There was confusion over the distribution of functional and financial responsibilities between the different levels of government, a shift of service delivery functions to sub-national level had not been matched by a reallocation of financial resources, and administrative capacity at provincial, district and local level was generally weak. The critical role of national MPs in the allocation of funds, through the joint district planning and budget priority committees (and specifically through district support grants—popularly known as 'slush funds'), had contributed to the weakening of provincial and local-level governments and the politicization of service delivery.

In 2003 a study of the distribution of responsibilities across the different levels of government was undertaken, and in 2002 the National Economic and Fiscal Commission presented the first of a series of reports on the intergovernmental financial system, describing arrangements as 'very unfair, with some Provincial Governments ... having less than one-third of funding they needed to meet their service delivery responsibilities'. Critical reforms in these areas, however, did not come until after the 2007 election.

Meanwhile, in 2005 a *District Authorities Act*, introduced by Peter O'Neill, was passed, to authorize the establishment of 89 district authorities as the basic

units of sub-national governance. Although there was significant support for O'Neill's initiative, the act—whose compatibility with the OLPGLLG was not clear—was not debated, and though it was passed it was never certified and thus lapsed. A move to reintroduce the bill in 2006 did not gain support.

Promises, dating back to 2003, to create two new provinces—Hela, to be formed from within the Southern Highlands Province, and Jiwaka from within the Western Highlands Province—were reiterated by the Somare government as late as 2006 but when parliament rose in May 2007 the necessary amendments to the *Organic Law on Provincial Boundaries* had not been presented.

Relations with Australia and the 'Moti Affair'

Relations between the Somare government and the Australian Government of John Howard were already strained in 2002 after members of the Australian Government had made clear their preference for a Morauta government to emerge from the national election that year. Relations were exacerbated by comments by Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer in the context of a review of Australian aid to Papua New Guinea and by the Australian Government's repeated reference to Papua New Guinea as a failing or fragile state.

There was consequently some reservation on Papua New Guinea's part about Australia's offer to increase development assistance to Papua New Guinea by AUD\$805 million over four years, in part through the placing of Australian police and administrative support personnel in line positions. Nevertheless an Enhanced Cooperation Agreement was signed in June 2004 and some 260 police and specialist advisers began to arrive in Papua New Guinea. Disputes arose, however, over the Australian Government's insistence that Australian personnel be granted immunity from Papua New Guinea laws. Legislation to give effect to the Enhanced Cooperation Program (ECP) was passed in July but was challenged by Morobe Governor Luther Wenge and subsequently ruled to be unconstitutional. The ECP was set aside, though some civilian personnel stayed in the country in advisory positions, and at the end of the year an Enhanced Defence Partnership Agreement was signed with Australia.

In 2005 tensions were again raised by an incident at Brisbane airport in which Prime Minister Somare was required to remove his sandals for an airport security check, an incident for which Australian Foreign Minister Downer was conspicuously unapologetic.

Then in 2006 a dispute between Australia and the Solomon Islands government spread to Papua New Guinea when the Australian Government took exception to the appointment of Fiji-born Australian citizen Julian Moti as attorney

general of Solomon Islands, with responsibility for setting up an inquiry into riots which followed the 2005 election in Solomon Islands. The Australian Government anticipated that Moti, who had close associations with Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, would divert blame for the riots onto the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands and sought to block Moti's appointment by reviving allegations of a child sex offence by Moti in Vanuatu in 1997. The Australian Federal Police sought Moti's extradition to Australia.

In a series of somewhat bizarre developments, while in transit in Papua New Guinea in September Moti was arrested, released on bail, and secretly flown out of Moresby on a PNGDF aircraft to a small airfield in Solomon Islands. After two internal reports—one initiated by the chief secretary and one by the commander of the PNGDF—had been rejected, a Defence Board of Inquiry, headed by Justice Gibbs Salika, identified a litany of violations of laws and regulations, including: no flight plan had been lodged with civil aviation authorities, no proper clearance had been obtained for the use of the aircraft (which had been officially grounded since 2002 pending a major service), and the removal of Moti contravened domestic and international laws. Investigation of the funding of the operation also uncovered a record of gross financial mismanagement, fraud, nepotism and intimidation within the Defence Department. More seriously, the inquiry was unable to establish who had authorized the flight, with contradictory evidence implicating the director general of the Office of National Security Coordination and Assessment, the chief secretary, the prime minister's chief of staff, and the prime minister himself (who denied giving the order but declined to appear before the Board of Inquiry). Counsel assisting Justice Salika commented that some of the witnesses 'would have qualified for Olympic gold medals for lying' (quoted in *The National* 22 January 2007). Meanwhile, the chief secretary, the acting police commissioner and the commander of the PNGDF, Commodore Ilau, and his chief of staff were all briefly suspended, with rumours of a potential mutiny if Commodore Ilau were sacked.

Several attempts were made to terminate the inquiry, which the prime minister and the defence secretary accused of exceeding its powers. These attempts included an unsuccessful application to the National Court to have the proceedings of the inquiry declared void. The defence minister, Martin Aini (a Pangu Pati MP), was instructed by the prime minister to stop the inquiry and in February 2007 was relieved of his portfolio, which was taken over by the prime minister. Somare later refused to release the report, which recommended legal action against some of those involved (the report was leaked to the Australian media, however, and became available online).¹⁰ Somare's attempts to suppress the report of the Defence Board of Enquiry were widely criticized in Papua New

¹⁰ <http://media.theaustralian.com.au/pdf/070802-pngrz.pdf>

Guinea and Australia. The Australian high commissioner in Papua New Guinea was recalled briefly and the Australian Government placed a temporary ban on visits to Australia by Papua New Guinean MPs and called off a scheduled bilateral ministerial meeting. Papua New Guinea's high commissioner in Australia was also recalled.

The Moti affair marked a low point in relations between the two countries but it also reflected poorly on the management of the PNGDF and on the behaviour of the Somare government (as well as on the behaviour of the Australian Government, which in effect had precipitated the crisis). In the event it probably had little impact on the 2007 election, but occurring on the eve of the election, and receiving widespread media coverage, it contributed to a growing cynicism about the government's style of governance.

Deteriorating relations with Australia also encouraged Papua New Guinea to look towards its northern neighbours. In 2003 a high-level delegation from China had visited Papua New Guinea, and in 2007 Somare said that if Australia withdrew its aid from Papua New Guinea, 'we are prepared', and he observed that the large-scale Chinese investment in the Ramu mine was a 'big step' for Papua New Guinea.

Corruption and misconduct

Corruption featured as a major issue in election campaigns in 2002, but notwithstanding the election rhetoric, during the life of the 2002–2007 parliament corruption and misconduct remained core issues.

In 2003 Yangoru-Saussia MP Bernard Hagoria (who had entered parliament in a by-election brought about by the dismissal of his predecessor for a similar offence) was found guilty of misapplying public funds and dismissed from office. Mendi MP Michael Nali was also before a Leadership Tribunal in 2003 and stepped down from office; he was subsequently found guilty of misappropriation and it was later reported that a warrant had been issued for his arrest. However, in March 2006 the Supreme Court surprisingly quashed the guilty verdict, freeing Nali to re-contest in 2007.

Towards the end of 2003 the report of an inquiry into the National Provident Fund was tabled in parliament. The inquiry had been set up in 2000 to look into the loss of some K170 million of public superannuation funds, through financial mismanagement and in some cases fraudulent transactions. It found widespread abuse of responsibilities by senior National Provident Fund officers

and board members, including criminal acts, and recommended that a number of people—including current MPs O'Neill, Skate and Haiveta—be referred to the Ombudsman Commission or police.

In 2004–2005 a number of MPs were referred to the Ombudsman Commission under the Leadership Code and subsequently passed on to the public prosecutor—though in August 2004, the chief ombudsman expressed frustration at his commission's inability to charge leaders who breached the Leadership Code. Those referred included: the member for Angoram, Arthur Somare (referred to the public prosecutor 2006 on charges of misconduct in office, but found not guilty and reinstated as a minister); the member for Aitape-Lumi, Patrick Pruaitch (referred to the Ombudsman Commission over allegations of misconduct in office, but still a minister at the end of the seventh parliament); NCD Governor Bill Skate (cleared of charges); Milne Bay Governor Tim Neville (charges dismissed); Enga Governor Peter Ipatas (found guilty on 16 misconduct charges, fined, and resumed office); the member for Wosera-Gau, Gallus Yumbui (suspended in 2005 and recommended for dismissal in 2007); Usino-Bundi member Peter Yama (who initially pleaded guilty to 7 of 34 charges but changed his plea to not guilty and was subsequently found guilty on three charges and recommended for dismissal; in 2005 the National Court overturned this decision and Yama remained in office); Manus MP Charlie Benjamin (found guilty on 19 misconduct charges and attempted bribery of the Leadership Tribunal and dismissed from office); the member for Maprik, Gabriel Kapris (found guilty on two misconduct charges in 2006, fined but remained in office); the member for Abau, Puka Temu (found guilty of failure to file returns under the Leadership Code, fined, and returned to office); and the member for Markham, Andrew Baing (referred to the Ombudsman Commission in January 2004, appeared before a committal court in September 2005 on charges of misconduct in applying district support grants to his own use and suspended in June 2006 pending a Leadership Tribunal inquiry, which in December 2006 recommended his dismissal).

The saga continued in 2006, with the member for Dei, Melchior Pep found guilty of three misconduct charges (for which he was fined and allowed to stay in office), Southern Highlands Governor Hami Yawari (misappropriation charges being dismissed for 'lack of evidence'); the member for Bulolo, John Muingnepe (suspended pending the outcome of a Leadership Tribunal, which had not made a ruling before parliament rose), and the member for Kairuku-Hiri, Sir Moi Avei (found guilty of five misconduct charges and recommended for dismissal in May 2007). In early 2007, Gulf Governor Chris Haiveta was suspended but the Leadership Tribunal set up to hear charges against him was adjourned until after the election, and the acting public prosecutor requested the chief justice to

set up a Leadership Tribunal to investigate allegations against Finschhafen MP Guao Zurenouc relating to his term as secretary of the Department of Lands and Physical Planning from 2000 to 2002.

In addition, the member for Madang Open, Alois Kingsley, was charged in 2003 with assault and damage over an incident at a Port Moresby club, but was acquitted; the member for Ialibu-Pangia Peter O'Neill was in court in 2005, facing eight charges of misappropriation and conspiracy stemming from the inquiry into the National Provident Fund, but escaped prosecution; the member for Rai Coast, James Yali was charged with rape in 2006 and sentenced to gaol for 12 years (in 2007 Yali was appealing the sentence and permitted to stand for re-election, but he lost the appeal, and his seat, shortly after the election), and the member for South Fly, Conrad Haoda, was sentenced to two months gaol for contempt of court.

Misconduct was not confined to MPs. In 2003–2004 the auditor general, Mark Wari was found guilty of 33 misconduct charges under the Leadership Code and dismissed; the managing director of the National Forest Authority, Molean Chapau, (whose appointment reportedly had led to the suspension of a loan by the Asian Development Bank) was suspended pending investigation into alleged financial mismanagement, and Trade and Industry Secretary Jonathan Soten was suspended over allegations of misconduct and incompetence. Clerk of parliament Ano Pala was referred to the Ombudsman Commission in 2005 but was not prosecuted (Pala was elected to the National parliament in 2007 and subsequently became attorney general). In 2005, amid recurring allegations of corruption within the Department of Finance, finance secretary Thaddeus Kambani was sacked and the following year a major inquiry into the Finance Department was launched. The inquiry had not been completed in 2007: the commission of inquiry subsequently complained that there had been active opposition to its work—the commission was suspended and re-established five times between August 2006 and September 2008—and that senior officers of the department, including the incoming secretary Gabriel Yer, 'have at all times been difficult even combative with the Commission' (Commission of Inquiry 2009:8, 57). Its report, finally presented in 2009, was damning. Also damning was an audit report on the Southern Highlands Province, presented by the minister for Inter-governmental Relations, Sir Peter Barter in 2003 (see above).

Notwithstanding claims by its chairman that the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee was being threatened, the committee undertook a number of inquiries into government departments and agencies, including Air Niugini, Telekom, the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC), the Department of Lands and Physical Planning, the National Housing Commission, the Public Service Commission, and the Department of National Planning and Monitoring and Office

of Rural Development. Some of these, notably those into the NCDC, Department of Lands, National Housing Commission, and Department of National Planning, were scathing in their criticisms of the management of the agencies concerned.

Papua New Guinea on the eve of the 2007 election

When the seventh parliament finally rose in May 2007, the Somare government had survived a full term, the first government to do so since independence. The provisions of the OLIPPAC had contributed to this, but so also had political manoeuvring within the national parliament. Despite the OLIPPAC provisions designed to achieve political party stability, parties had split and members had crossed the floor with apparent impunity. A partisan speaker, the stacking of the parliamentary Private Business Committee, frequent adjournments of the parliament, and several cabinet reshuffles had all been elements of a strategy to keep the government in power, leading to widespread complaints, inside and outside the parliament, of underperformance by MPs and executive dominance which threatened Papua New Guinea's democratic tradition.

As against this, there had been a marked improvement in the county's economic circumstances and prospects, and notwithstanding continuing problems of poor service delivery, weak governance and corruption, the Somare government was generally seen as having achieved a good record in its term of office.

As the election approached, there were growing concerns about electoral preparations—especially in relation to the electoral roll and last-minute changes to the format of ballot papers—and about the potential for election-related violence; there were even calls for the election to be postponed. But overall Papua New Guinea was probably in a stronger position than it had been for some years.

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4. The Voter Education Program: Growing a Demand for Good Governance

Susan Ferguson¹

Introduction

Participation in voter education changed the lives of many people who ran voter awareness projects for the 2007 general elections in Papua New Guinea. It changed the voting behaviour of a proportion of those who took part in the program. This account of the voter education program through civil society organizations (CSOs) is a personal account from a participant in the process, since the key to electoral awareness lay in its participatory nature. My account is backed up by an evaluation of the program, but is essentially a subjective diary of what we did.

In March 2006 I was appointed as the communications adviser within the Electoral Support Program. The Electoral Support Program was, at the time, a three-year program funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). The overall aim of the program was to support the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) run free and fair elections. I was specifically responsible for implementing a component of the program which aimed to improve awareness and understanding of the electoral system by voters and the community as a whole. Although my official role was capacity building within the PNGEC to run community awareness, the reality was that the program had a generous budget to fund CSOs to run voter education across the country. Inevitably I was drawn into running and managing an extensive grants program, which took me away from hands-on capacity building within the PNGEC itself. Since this grants program was not to be ongoing, nor considered core work of the PNGEC, there was no necessity to build the PNGEC's capacity to run such a program, yet there was a necessity under the design of the Electoral Support Program to deliver the grants to run voter education.

¹ As coordinator of the voter education awareness program I worked closely with Esmie Sinapa, the Electoral Support Program activity manager, and Daisy Taylor, who was contracted to develop a range of electoral awareness materials. This paper draws on my experience working within the Information and Community Awareness Division of the Electoral Commission and on an evaluation of the voter education process led by Stephen Gari. Other members of the team included Michael Unage, Suzette Holm and Pastor Solomon Minga. I am grateful for the work they did and acknowledge their contribution to this story.

Within the PNGEC, I worked alongside the director of the Information and Community Awareness Division to develop a communication strategy that guided the process of community awareness across the country. The strategy was called *Election News! Election Sivarai! Eleksen Toksave!* It included media awareness, development of electoral awareness materials, and the creation of partnerships within government and beyond, including the civil society aspect of the electoral awareness.

This paper provides an account of the communication strategy, concentrating on the innovative grants program—innovative because, for the first time since the early 1970s, the commission was involved in trying to grow a demand for better elections across the country, rather than simply providing information about the logistics of elections. It talks about what worked and what didn't work.

Background

It is well documented that Papua New Guinean elections suffer from a range of damaging voter behaviour entrenched within the public. This behaviour includes accepting bribes to vote for certain candidates, discarding the electoral roll in favour of 'line up' voting, voting more than once and in some cases many times, underage voting, and intimidation of voters by candidate supporters (especially intimidation of women, older people and illiterate voters). One aspect of behaviour which is damaging to the running of free and fair elections in the country is public collusion in the development of a fraudulent electoral roll. The basis of much of the illegal activity around elections is a fraudulent roll. For example, a vastly inflated roll means that certain wards will be allocated too many ballot papers; this allows for multiple voting.

Much of this behaviour cannot be controlled during elections by presiding officers at polling stations, or by police or the army. It is too widespread. Although there are quite tough penalties for some offences, such as six months imprisonment for putting a ballot paper not your own into a ballot box, they are rarely enforced due to the extent of the behaviour (in some parts of the country, it would be necessary to charge 90 percent of the voting population) and the general acceptance of such behaviour by the public.

A report commissioned by the Electoral Support Program to assess baseline voter education issues revealed that:

voters and candidates have their own picture about the purpose of elections, as well as the 'real rules' of how elections are actually carried out—this picture varies across the country in its compliance with formal

rules and violence ... there is a widespread view that elections are there to be won, by whatever means. Voters do not understand and accept core standards of voting, fairness, tolerance, and the connection to the wider democratic system (Ladley and Williams 2007, quoted in Gari, Holm and Ferguson 2008:189).

The baseline study points out that research around the world suggests that the single most important factor in running viable elections that follow the official rules is voter compliance. Most voters must know the rules, accept the rules, and follow the rules in order for democratic elections to function. At least two things must be in place for this acceptance and compliance to occur. The first is knowledge of and agreement with the system: What is a democracy? Why do we have elections? What can we expect from leaders? What is the role of government? Why is our vote important? What is the purpose of actually voting? The second is faith in the system: If we follow the rules, will everyone else? Will our leaders represent us if we vote for them? Can we trust them?

The voter education program that we ran with CSOs attempted to increase knowledge and understanding of the democratic system and to begin to grow a demand for properly run elections that produced trustworthy candidates.

The baseline study also showed that the most effective voter education programs have three elements: general civics education that provides people with information about the broad democratic system; governance education that gives people information about how the government system runs; and electoral information that educates people about how to vote and what to expect during elections.

In the past, the PNGEC's communication strategies had only seriously addressed the third of these. The design of the Electoral Support Program allowed for the other two as well. The communication strategy that the PNGEC agreed to reflected all three elements of voter education.

There were three outcome areas within the communication strategy, *Election News! Election Sivarai! Eleksen Toksave!* The first was to improve awareness about the recently introduced limited preferential voting (LPV) system and the electoral process in the community. The aim of this was to enable free and fair elections through increased understanding of the electoral system and equal public participation. The second was to strengthen partnerships with stakeholders to deliver to the community awareness of LPV and the electoral process. The aim of the third was to design materials with strategic partners that had specific messages for different groups, recognizing the diversity within Papua New Guinea.

The agreed principles of the strategy were:

- elections are everybody's business, so the Electoral Commission will need to work with everybody to get the messages out
- messages need to be clear and effective
- all messages will be politically neutral
- coordination across different groups with an interest in elections will make the communication strategy more effective
- Papua New Guinea is very diverse so there will need to be many different ways of getting the messages to different groups—one size does not fit all.

The PNGEC's communication strategy was the backbone of the civil society awareness work. Every two or three months, a communication advisory committee, chaired by the director of Information and Community Awareness Division within the commission, met to overview the communication strategy, with particular emphasis on civil society awareness. In this way, civil society awareness was very much a part of the PNGEC's concerns. But despite this, there were ongoing problems of ownership of the process. This problem is discussed below.

There were other reasons to run an extensive new process of community awareness for the 2007 elections. LPV was new to most of the country and it was imperative that as many people as possible understood how to mark their ballot papers effectively under the new system.

In addition, the PNGEC itself did not have the resources available to reach into the remote areas of the country with electoral information. Educating the public in Papua New Guinea is a real challenge due to the inaccessible terrain and lack of road transport systems into much of the country, the numerous languages and cultural differences among target audiences, and the low levels of access to the media. This is compounded by low literacy, particularly among women and older people.

In the past, the commission had relied principally on the mass media and publication of written materials which were distributed through the provincial electoral offices. It had also run a LPV awareness campaign through the provincial election managers. The idea was that managers would work through district and local-level government officials to spread the word across the country. This process was not evaluated formally but its impact appears to have been mixed. In areas where there was a better-functioning local-level government system, such as Milne Bay and East New Britain provinces, the results were better. In areas where local- and district-level officials were closely aligned with candidates, the process did not work at all and was in fact used to reinforce corrupt voting practices in favour of preferred candidates.

The awareness process through the local-level government system was linked to the roll enumeration. Officials were trained in LPV at the same time as they received training on how to enumerate the roll, and they were supposed to run awareness campaigns at the same time as gathering names for the new roll. It may be assumed, therefore, that where the roll enumeration did not work (most of the Highlands provinces and National Capital District, for example), neither did the electoral awareness. Feedback from election managers themselves was that the election awareness took a backseat to the roll. This was because of the high interest in manipulation of the roll and because people were desperate to get their names on the roll. Feedback from community members about the roll enumeration process also suggests that in many cases election officials did not go beyond the end of road to collect names; it can be assumed that very little awareness went beyond the end of the road either.

This is another reason that the civil society electoral awareness was considered important: we assumed that locally based members of community organizations would be better able to take the message back to their local areas.

We also assumed that community civil society workers would be able to use their local networks and languages to deliver election messages. With the high level of illiteracy, we hoped that CSOs would pass on messages verbally rather than use primarily written materials. Use of the media and development of print materials is also expensive; funding local people was much more cost-effective.

Finally, CSOs and non-government organizations *wanted* to be involved. We did not formally advertise the grants through the Electoral Support Program but we were inundated with applications just the same. There was a huge demand from CSOs across the country to be involved in running electoral awareness programs. There seemed to be the beginnings of a nationwide movement; local groups wanted to educate people about the basics of a democratic system and the role of good leaders, as well as how to fill in a ballot paper correctly. It was opportune that the Electoral Support Program could nurture some of this energy to grow a demand for free and fair elections.

The campaign

Administration

First, we set up the Communications Advisory Group (CAG), chaired by the director of the Information and Community Awareness Division. Some key CSOs were represented, including Caritas, Transparency International (TI) and Papua Hahine. Government departments and community police were also represented,

as was the Community Development Scheme, a large AusAID-funded program providing resources for community groups across the country. The media was represented through the National Broadcasting Corporation.

Initially the role of the CAG was to oversee civil society funding, but subsequently the group was given responsibility for overseeing the whole of the communications strategy. When this happened, the CAG still made ultimate decisions about who should receive funding but each reported under the three outcome areas of the PNGEC's communication strategy. The CAG became more a participative group than an administrative one. The idea was to enable the CAG to have a voice within the PNGEC on voter education as a whole.

Under the overall communication strategy, the PNGEC spent just over K588,000 on 13 launches of LPV awareness materials. A further K2.3 million was spent on awareness materials for radio, TV and newspapers. (After the election, there was still over K93,000 in outstanding claims from the media.) Under the Electoral Support Program K5.2 million was spent on funding CSOs and a further K1.5 million on media awareness and the development and production of awareness materials such as posters, pamphlets, and T-shirts.

Forty-five groups were funded to run electoral awareness; five were de-funded because of mismanagement. Incomplete records show that electoral awareness community teams contacted at least 750,000 people personally. About one-third of these were women. This represents an expenditure of K7.4 per person contacted.

The largest amount of money (K785,125) was given to TI, which used this mainly to develop some excellent materials on governance which were used throughout the campaign by other CSOs and by the PNGEC itself. (In fact, due to the delay in production of official awareness materials, the PNGEC often had only the TI or Caritas materials for their electoral awareness launches in the regions.) The smallest amount (K10,830) was given to *Meri i Kirap Sapotim* to fund electoral awareness for the Chuave by-election of 2006.

The Electoral Support Program funded over six million pieces of educational material or media events which carried the message to the public, at a cost of K1.03 per person nationally. Difficulty of access in the rural areas resulted in urban people having twice as much money spent on them. We tried to equalize this by ensuring that the majority of CSOs funded were in rural and remote areas or in high-risk areas such as Port Moresby and Lae.

Unfortunately, the PNGEC did not allocate funds to assess the effectiveness of the program funded through the commission itself, so much of this paper relies on information received from the evaluation of the Electoral Support Program component of electoral awareness.

Within the program, all expressions of interest and applications were assessed against rigid criteria, which included:

- the capacity of groups to run the program
- the inclusion of cross cutting issues such as participation of women, and HIV/AIDS prevention
- the degree of election risk
- population—we tried to make the grants correspond to population numbers across the country (more people live in the Highlands so more money was spent there)
- the kind of program groups wanted to run (preference was given to face-to-face, grassroots processes after a while, as we began to see that these were far more effective)
- the budget (was it overblown or did it look legitimate?)
- involvement of election managers in development of the activity application.

Later on in the program, once a number of groups had been funded, gaps were identified across the country, and proposed projects within those gap areas were given priority. Once the assessment of the hundreds of applications was complete, recommendations were presented to the CAG. There was lively debate within the group, which provided a forum for sensible and informed decision-making.

The capacity of groups was not taken into account in the first round of funding. Consequently, some of the first groups to receive funds needed major assistance to deliver their programs. Some rang the office five times a day for advice on anything from the content of their election awareness campaign to acquittal of funds. We could not sustain this level of contact, and in the end had to assess the capacity of groups to run their projects.

The program officer, Esmie Sinapa, had the job of running initial project training for each group. Once groups had been deemed successful by the CAG, she visited them on site to assess whether they were bona fide groups, and spent up to two days helping them draft activity plans and realistic budgets. We were not so much interested in saving money as in giving groups the right amount of money to run a viable activity. Budgets often changed once the activity plans had been written.

The program officer always alerted election managers to her travel plans and invited them to the meetings with the group, but they rarely accepted the opportunity. Some felt the process of selection bypassed them and that groups should be vetted by election managers first and selected within the province. Others disagreed with the whole funding program because they felt the money should have gone to them to run election awareness. There was a strong resistance

to changing the way in which voter education had always been done; it was seen as the territory of public servants, even though very few public servants were interested in going beyond the end of the road to educate people. This kind of competition undermined the process throughout. Nevertheless, three or four election managers saw the funding as beneficial. They understood that working with CSOs could greatly extend the reach of community awareness and therefore alleviate their workload. They participated actively throughout the program and the CSOs in their regions benefited from their technical expertise in election matters.

Once groups had undergone the project management training, they had to attend our electoral awareness training.

Everybody's Business: Awareness training for civil society

I developed a three-day course, entitled *Everybody's Business*. This became necessary because every group we funded, except TI, Caritas and *Meri i Kirap Sapotim* (the only three groups in the 45 who understood elections at all) expected us to train them before they went off to run their program. The program had not foreseen this need.

The first training I ran was in the first two weeks of my arrival in Papua New Guinea. I went with my counterpart and another electoral official to observe them training district officials in Milne Bay for the roll enumeration and electoral awareness roll-out. The Electoral Support Program had funded the Milne Bay Theatre Troop to develop and perform a play on electoral issues primarily to educate remote communities.

My only preparation was reading the material about LPV provided by the PNGEC for district officials, and reviewing potential training material TI had begun to develop. In this material, TI described a 'paperless' voting process in which the audience nominate candidates, who make 'policy speeches', and then the audience lines up behind their preferred candidate; a count is done; if no candidate reaches 50 percent plus one of the votes, the candidate with the smallest number of supporters is knocked out and the people standing behind that candidate go and join the line behind their second preference, and so on.

We met the theatre troop in the village, where the team leader attempted to explain the counting procedure on a whiteboard. He was met with blank stares; no one could understand the process. We conferred and agreed to run the paperless voting process. It was a great success, and gave me my first hint

that participation in voting procedures was the best way of understanding how things worked. We returned two days later to view the performance; it was shaky but had potential.

From this experience, I developed a one-day course on LPV and trialled it with the Salvation Army. The course covered what the old first-past-the-post system was, how it differed from the new one, how the new LPV system worked, and why the roll was so important. Each exercise was participatory and involved lots of role playing. People enjoyed the course but wanted more background information: Why did Papua New Guinea have a democratic system? What exactly was this, and what could be done about encouraging people to vote for leaders who were not corrupt?

I developed a second day of additional material about what the system meant and how government works in Papua New Guinea, including what the role of elected representatives was and what kind of person made a good leader. The additional day included quiz shows and other ways of getting people moving around, and was enjoyed by all. I was indebted to *Meri i Kirap Sapotim* and TI for the use of some of their good governance training material in this second day of training.

We trialled the revised training with Central Besena Mauri Ihatabuna and then the Young Women's Christian Association. Women's issues were mainstreamed into each exercise. But I also wanted to include HIV/AIDS issues. By this time I had been in the country for several months, and concerns about elections being an enabling mechanism for the spread of HIV infection had become clear. There would be more than 36,000 male election officials with money moving around the country during elections. Men, mobility and money are three key factors in the spread of AIDS. As well, some of the cultural conventions that had grown up around campaigning in the Highlands and in Port Moresby and Lae were a worry—in particular, 'campaign houses', meeting places built for candidates to gather with supporters. Risky sexual behaviour was rumoured to occur in these venues, which were an inherent element of the party atmosphere of elections in some places (see, for example, 12).

I therefore wanted to include something specific about women and elections and about HIV and elections. Another day was added to cover these areas. The women's section took the form of story about a day in the life of a woman trying to vote for the person she wanted to vote for, rather than the person for whom her husband said she should vote. The HIV section borrowed heavily from the National AIDS Council Secretariat training manuals about the spread of AIDS.

I also included three surveys in our training manual (see below) to assess the level of understanding of LPV and electoral roll-related behaviour; to assess how the training had affected people's understanding of the system, and to assess the level of interest in changing some of their existing behaviour.

Finally, I added a code of conduct (based on one given to me by the Community Development Scheme) that stipulated that all CSOs should refrain from using their project to support particular candidates, should treat everyone (men and women) with respect, and should avoid risking transmission of HIV. The teams themselves became a risk of spreading the infection. This code of conduct became an important management tool; we came back to it several times during the program to enforce political neutrality. It was carefully explained during training, and everyone signed it and kept a copy.

I trialled the training course successfully with about five other groups. No one understood LPV before the course but afterwards all did. All sorts of electoral roll-related behaviour were uncovered, which at least some people were keen to correct. Almost all felt they had enough technical knowledge of elections, along with some practical methods of imparting that knowledge through using the exercises they went through in the training.

We prepared a training manual, entitled *The Electoral System: Everybody's Business*, which included training exercises and other material required by trainers, and also the code of conduct. The manual was universally liked and used while people were out in the field. In hindsight, it should have been waterproof, with laminated posters and mock ballot papers, so that people did not have to photocopy new material every time they went bush. A daypack would also have made it easier for people take the package with them with a small portable whiteboard. Another day could have been added to cover how to plan and run an election awareness project and how to manage the project cycle; many people struggled with these management issues.

Once the program was complete and the manual printed, it was appropriate to contract the training out to Papua New Guinean trainers, who could run the training in Tokpisin rather than English.

Ideally, there would have been four training teams: one in each region. However, as with almost everything else about this program, we had to hit the ground running. There was a backlog of about 10 groups waiting for training before going out.² A lengthy selection process was not possible. Instead, *Meri i Kirap Sapotim* was invited to submit a proposal to run the training (I had reviewed

² After seeing the huge need for the training, we made it mandatory for groups to complete it before starting their project so we knew they had the technical expertise to give the public correct information. The training thus became a mechanism for quality control as well.

the training material they had created for their members and had seen they had training skills. I also wanted to have a gender balance of trainers). This organization was set up by women and their supporters to help women wanting to run for election; it subsequently broadened into general election awareness for women and men across the Highlands. The group had competent, confident women trainers who understood elections and gender equity. I wanted them to bring this to the training and to show other women that elections truly were everybody's business. As most groups we funded were based in the Highlands, it also made sense to contract a local group from that region.

Although more than 3500 people were trained, we have evaluations from only 459. The others were trained by CSO members who attended our official training first. The evaluations showed that people had the skills they needed to run their projects after participating in the training.

When asked what three things worked best about the training, 98 people said 'the trainers'; 92 said something about the content (such as, 'the training was the best ever because it was just in time to equip us to cast our votes for the right people and in the long run, this will have a great impact on the lives of the people'); 87 people said the thing they liked best was learning how to train others. People particularly liked the mock election exercises (both with and without paper votes). Seventy people said they liked the training manual itself and the other information given to them.

The things they most liked learning about were LPV (299 responses), governance (151), HIV/AIDS (101), electoral processes like polling, the roll, etc. (100), democracy (97), vote counting (85), and women's issues (56).

Things people wanted were more role playing, longer training, and better training on HIV. The HIV/AIDS section should have been done by special HIV trainers; our trainers did not feel very comfortable running this section. Again, lack of time precluded coordination with provincial AIDS trainers.

What happened?

Much of this section draws on the evaluation we commissioned. 1071 people were consulted in the evaluation process, before elections, during elections and afterwards. There were also 10 site visits to five case study projects—five before the elections and five after. Case studies were chosen to represent a range of important parts of the awareness process: a national project that did grassroots awareness as well as development of poster awareness materials (Caritas); a provincial project which showed innovative partnerships (Chimbu community policing project, which linked with a range of CSOs to run awareness across

the province); a foot patrol project in a high-risk area (by Ima Kelo, whose members walked across five of the electorates that failed in the 2002 election in the Southern Highlands Province, over a period of seven months); a women's project (Papua Hahine, based in the Southern Region, which also ran awareness for potential women candidates); and Morobe Theatre Troop, based in and around Lae and closely coordinated with the election manager's office in the province.

In addition, the evaluation team talked by phone with every project manager and ran a number of pre- and post-polling focus group discussions with teams running awareness. At the end of the evaluation, 62 people attended a workshop in Port Moresby to verify or challenge the findings. All election managers attended this workshop and were invited to focus group discussions throughout the evaluation process.

The team also sought feedback about materials developed by CSOs, from those who used them, as well as from other CSOs and the Electoral Commission.

A major literature review was done of documents about voter awareness in general (see Gari, Holm and Ferguson 2008). The reviewer, Suzette Holm, also read the reports submitted by CSOs at the end of each funding tranche to ascertain progress, collate numbers of people reached, and generally monitor progress.

The evaluation sought to answer two questions: Was funding CSOs to run election awareness efficient and effective? How did voter knowledge, attitudes and behaviour change as a result of civil society electoral awareness processes?

Of 45 groups funded, five were de-funded, due to either deliberate mismanagement of funds or breaking the code of conduct through obvious involvement with candidates. Election managers were particularly concerned about this last—which is interesting, as many brought their own very clear biases to the workplace. Involvement with candidates was often used by election managers to support the argument that CSOs should not be trusted and that funding should revert to the Electoral Commission.

In total, the time spent on electoral awareness by CSOs in the nine months preceding the election amounted to 230 months—almost 19 person years. Group reports showed that 750,000 people were contacted personally, though this is an underestimation as many groups neglected to collect such statistics regularly. About one-third of those contacted were women, demonstrating that public awareness processes were not equally accessible to women and men. The total cost of the process was K5.2 million.

Over six million units of electoral awareness materials were developed, including T-shirts, matchboxes with voting messages, posters, media announcements, talkback radio shows, TV advertisements, and newspaper articles. A further K1.5 million was spent on this. Although this is an impressive number of media units, it was limited largely to urban areas. Few people in rural areas saw or heard any of this information. Posters and T-shirts used by CSOs when they went out in the field were the exception. The evaluation showed that the materials developed were of a high quality and people liked them, but they were not an effective method of voter awareness when used as a stand-alone method; to really be effective, they needed to be used as part of an educative dialogue.

A major problem in development of voter materials was the legislative changes to the format of the ballot paper. The materials that had been developed showed the ballot paper with 1, 2 and 3 against candidates' pictures; suddenly, the ballot paper changed to having boxes in which people were required to write candidates numbers and/or names. As a result, most materials were not produced until after January 2007, although electoral awareness teams were in the field much earlier and needed materials showing the new format.

Important ingredients of success in voter awareness were participation, and the use of relationships. Small group discussions were more likely to increase voter awareness than large market gatherings. Large market gatherings were effective in spreading the word about LPV and the mechanics of elections, but more complicated information about governance was mostly lost in such settings.

The evaluation revealed that the Electoral Support Program itself lacked capacity to run the program smoothly. A major problem was that tranche payments were often late, leading to delays in CSO projects, and much angst. This lateness was a mix of insufficient staff and too much work, combined with delays in receiving funds from AusAID. Added to this was the fact that we seriously misjudged the ability of many groups to run basic projects. The first activities funded required a huge amount of support to keep them running. This led to the subsequent inclusion of existing capacity as one of the selection criteria for successful applicants. Pleas to the program team leader to increase staff levels brought no action. Full-time administrative support was needed to run such a grants program; instead, we had a series of ineffective accountants.

The Electoral Commission itself lacked capacity to recognize the value of the program and use it to their advantage. A number of power brokers within the commission saw the program as being in direct competition for funds. It ran against the culture of working only with public servants on election matters. Many provincial election managers resented the fact that final decisions about which activities should be funded came from the advisory committee, rather than themselves. The difficulty of turning over decision-making to election

managers was that many would have used the program as a way of furthering their own connections with candidates. We could not be sure that final decisions would be fair and useful. Perhaps they felt the same.

If funding of the program were to be a long-term part of the commission's work, we would have had to facilitate a process that did not necessarily involve the community's participation. As it was, the program was a short-term donor-funded initiative which had a much wider focus than the PNGEC's usual work. It was about support beyond government to grow a demand in the community for free and fair elections. This was a legitimate aim in itself, yet poorly placed within the commission, whose mandate was not that broad. Many of the PNGEC's staff did not understand the concept of good governance, or what democracy was about. They saw their role as running an election—churning people through polling stations and getting all the ballot papers collected and counted. This is the main reason the evaluation recommended that CSO awareness should continue, but that it should sit within an independent body. A conflict between the objectives of voter education and those of the commission was a sore point throughout the program and risked any beneficial outcome. Some powerful elements within the commission denigrated the work of the program.

One of the advantages of the program was that, for the first time, the public had a way of raising their concerns directly with the commission. CSOs regularly fed information back to the PNGEC about what they saw in the field: where the roll was particularly bad; where the trouble spots were; the performance of election officials in the field; what women were saying about wanting to be included. However, very little of this information was used within electoral operations, because of the resistance towards and distrust of CSOs within the commission.

The design of the Electoral Support Program exacerbated these problems, as advisers were slotted into pigeon holes across the commission rather than being able to relate directly across the commission's staff. I could only pass on information from the community to my counterpart or other advisers, and it depended on their levels of interest and power as to whether they effectively raised the issues with others. My counterpart, the director of the Information and Community Awareness Division, had her own interests to protect within the commission and this at times inhibited what she could pursue. On the one hand, she was excited about the work and the success of the Communication Strategy; but on the other, she shared some of the misgivings of other PNGEC staff about broadening electoral matters beyond the public service. Changing the way things were done was a challenge, and required unceasing leadership on her part.

The evaluation also revealed a severe lack of capacity within CSOs at various levels. I remember on my first trip to work with the Milne Bay Theatre Troop

realizing suddenly that the leader of the troop could not add up basic figures. I tried to teach him using the receipts he had already kept but became acutely aware that our project management expectations were far too ambitious for someone in his position, yet he would still need to acquit tens of thousands of kina in grant money. To his credit, he did, but it was a very trying process for him and for us in the Electoral Strengthening Project (ESP). Lack of skill in running projects was an almost universal problem, except for the larger, more experienced CSOs. Many groups did not understand what we expected of them, even after several days of explaining and training.

As well, many CSOs were difficult to manage. During funding rounds, when groups were waiting to hear whether their applications had been successful, we had to employ a security guard to stay inside the office with us. Many groups used standover tactics in an effort to get their way if they had been unsuccessful. We worried about our safety during these times.

We also needed to be constantly on the lookout for financial 'sleights of hand'. In most cases this was due more to lack of skill than to corrupt behaviour. In some cases, though, groups had to be investigated and de-funded. The code of conduct was invoked several times when we heard that members of CSOs we had funded were going to run for election. We did not want to stop them running, we just did not want our project used in campaigning.

Groups used a range of strategies: some worked in schools to educate students; some went on foot patrols across their regions, or hired boats to get to remote locations, some made up plays or used singsings. Almost all ran mock elections in market places or other public spots. Some even ran sessions while travelling on public motor vehicles.

People risked their lives doing this work. There were stories of flash floods and people being swept downstream from their campsite by the river. I visited some teams who were using vehicles that were barely holding together, slithering around muddy mountain roads. On one occasion, in the Chimbu police project, when a massive spring snapped in the utility vehicle a member of the team walked back to town and got a replacement, weighing over 80 kilograms, which he carried on his back for five kilometres. The Chimbu police team leader got a leech in his eye and had to put up with this for two days on patrol. People got stranded for long periods of time in remote locations due to mechanical problems with small planes or the weather. They had to create their own bridges out of bits of corrugated iron, or trees they chopped down. They endured hostility from villages who felt angry about lack of representation of their needs in parliament and, not having access to their local member, hurled abuse at awareness teams.

Very few people on foot patrols had decent equipment. They had not thought to ask for boots, raincoats, torches, etc. They expected so little. Once we realized this was the case, we remedied it, but many people took their messages to the people on bare feet, enduring lack of food and having slept in the open for many nights.

If anything bad had befallen anyone on the program, apart from the horror of the actual event, there could have been a slew of compensation claims, not just against the Electoral Support Program but also against the commission, and others in the awareness teams. One of the recommendations of the evaluation was therefore that before any similar program is undertaken, insurance needs to be sorted out.

Growing a demand for better governance

As argued earlier, personal interaction was the most effective ingredient of successful voter education. The awareness changed voter behaviour; it helped voters know how to vote, for one thing, but, more importantly, some people on the awareness teams changed their voting behaviour from culturally acceptable but negative use of the system (accepting bribes from candidates, getting their names on the roll as many times as possible, and so on) to commitment to free and fair elections.

For example, the subject of one of the case studies in the evaluation was Ima Kelo, a local CSO based at Lake Kapiago, which worked in partnership with The Australian National University. It was funded to run grassroots election awareness across the five open electorates which produced failed elections in the Southern Highlands in 2002. The elections failed in 2002 due to massive fraud and use of violence. Despite the new roll there were still major problems: the rolls were grossly inflated yet many people were still not listed. This group reached out to over 100,000 people in their project. They walked, carrying portable whiteboards to run mock elections. They ran awareness sessions from public motor vehicles for workers along the side of the road; in fact, they ran sessions wherever they could get a group together. They calculated they had covered at least 50 percent of the voters in the province. Ima Kelo partnered with other local CSOs across the region. Core members were trained in Lake Kapiago by our trainers who stayed on to support the process. Men and women worked together doing this work.

In the past, Ima Kelo members had been actively involved in typical electoral fraud and corruption. One team member had been the first to use guns in elections in his electorate. However, during the electoral awareness process people in this team convinced voters living in South Koroba to clean their roll.

Members of the awareness team sat with the community over a period of days and went through every name on the roll, verifying or filling in the necessary paperwork to alter the entries. They managed to reduce the numbers on the roll from 19,000 to 10,000, though they received threats from the supporters of one candidate who was disadvantaged by the corrections.

Running daily awareness sessions in difficult conditions over eight months somehow changed them. Perhaps it was because repeating the messages raised their awareness about the need for free and fair elections. Maybe the sacrifices involved in months of walking the province made them determined to see some changes. The team suffered in the process: they were away from their families for months at a time and on their return many were physically exhausted. Their efforts illustrate the massive commitment ordinary people in Papua New Guinea made to run the education process.

In Chimbu, the group running the community policing CSO partnership showed similar commitment and results. This project was coordinated by a local inspector of police (see chapter 7). His job was head of prosecutions, not community policing, but most criminal activity in 2007 was going to be associated with elections, so it was best to try and prevent such offences before they occurred. The Electoral Support Program had funded a range of CSOs in Chimbu: *Meri i Kirap Sapotim*, Community Development Scheme Core Group, Tribal Arts, and the national projects, Young Women's Christian Association and Caritas. The inspector brought all groups together and worked out how to cover the province with a broken-down police vehicle and on foot. Teams worked with local leaders to arrange times to run awareness. They set up mock polling stations and showed how elections should be run. They worked with HIV trainers to give information about the risks of catching the disease through election-related activities. They also conducted role plays demonstrating acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They spoke to over 60,000 people across the province, sometimes in areas where local communities had rarely seen government officials. Women went on foot patrols too and participated alongside men. They were able to do this partly because they had police protection, but also because the team leader allocated special allowances (called 'family allowances') which were intended as a sweetener for their men staying at home—the whole family benefited directly if the women participated. As with Ima Kelo, some members of the team took it on their shoulders to try and clean their local rolls by taking copies to local meetings and urging people to check their names.

After the election, some members of this team continued community policing, unpaid. One extraordinary woman, Pauline Kenna, a lawyer, using the contacts she had made with the police, went back to her electorate to consult with her people about what they saw as their key problems. People responded that the use of marijuana and homemade liquor were a major source of violence in the

region. She and police she could trust set up a community policing project; 250 people have now attended human rights training run by Pauline and the police and are working with the community to uproot marijuana plants and bring about more lasting peace.

The team leader of this project also made valuable links with communities that he was able to use beneficially after the election. He established good connections with local leaders and knew where trouble was likely to occur. When tribal fights broke out due to disgruntled losing candidates, he went in with police and was able to broker peace, probably saving many lives.

This project also brought significant wider changes. Women involved in electoral awareness were able to lobby the Electoral Commission to run separate polling booths for women as a way of reducing intimidation of women voters. This demand came from women voters across the Highlands. Due to the confidence of the women involved in electoral awareness, the PNGEC finally heard their demands and agreed to give the idea a go.³

As well, in Chimbu there was a significant decrease in the use of campaign houses. In one electorate there were only three, and these were used by our awareness teams warning people of the dangers of catching HIV/AIDS in such venues. The use of campaign houses went down in every Highlands province except Enga, where there was a gap in CSO electoral awareness.

Also noticeable in Chimbu was that a number of candidates used some of the good governance slogans from the awareness teams in their own campaigning. Indeed, the governor and two open candidates were elected without evidence of money politics—an outcome attributed to the layered approach to electoral awareness and a critical mass of people beginning to absorb its message. One of the key CSO people was put in charge of counting for the Chimbu regional seat, and he and others from the awareness campaign refused several large bribes (in his case K100,000) from candidates to rig the counting. He quoted the governance messages from the campaign as the key reason that he would not accept the bribe.

Another project we funded, the Lower Unggai Community Development Foundation, provided a different outcome. This project was run by a capable woman, Sallyn Lomutopa. She organized and trained a number of local people using the ESP training process, then ran awareness across the region. In the course of this awareness, she was approached many times by residents asking

³ Unfortunately, it was not particularly successful due to poor organization on the part of the PNGEC (for example, not providing enough polling booths to allow for it), or because it was not enforced by polling officials. Many women in remote areas are illiterate and candidate supporters were still able to force themselves into polling places and convince women voters to write down what they wanted them to.

her to run in the election. After the project had finished, she decided she would do so. Without involvement in the awareness, she felt she would not have had either the technical skills or the confidence to try, especially in her Highlands electorate where few women would attempt to run.

Involvement in the process also changed those electoral managers willing to work with CSO members. The electoral manager in Chimbu told an Electoral Commission forum to discuss the local-level government elections in 2008 that elections had run smoothly because of the voter education process in 2007. Communities knew what to expect and were more willing to cooperate with the PNGEC than in previous elections. He was able to find people across the communities who understood elections and could run polling stations.

It was not all good news though. CSOs were often male-dominated and fewer women attended electoral awareness sessions than men. Electoral awareness did not change the situation for many women voters, who continued to have their votes controlled by male clan members. It also did little to increase the vote for women candidates; only one woman was elected to parliament and she was a sitting member who had to fight for her seat in 2007. At ESP, we tried to ensure that CSOs reached out to women voters by not paying the next tranche of funding unless groups could demonstrate they had educated women. This had some impact, but, as noted above, only one-third of those contacted in the education campaign were women.

Some CSOs exhausted themselves in the process. *Meri i Kirap Sapotim* fell apart during the course of the awareness. We funded them to run train-the-trainer sessions, developing groups of interested people across the Highlands. They completed this complicated task very well and emerged as a group with a great deal of capacity. Therefore, we asked them to run our training for us. Again, they did this well, although at one stage I had to insist they stick to our training manual rather than reverting to theirs. Running the training gave them a great sense of ownership over it, which was good but began to blur the boundaries between our responsibilities at ESP and theirs as consultants running our training course. We topped up their funding to continue regional awareness across the Highlands but their capacity became overstretched and the organization started to implode from stress. Personal rifts grew stronger and became destructive, leading to the eventual collapse of the organization—a classic case of donors overusing capacity within CSOs. We needed the organization as they knew what they were doing and kept delivering, and they wanted our funds to make them sustainable. Sadly, this combination of needs became damaging. I do not think that our funding was responsible for their demise, but it probably exacerbated existing tensions.

Conclusion

The successful mix in voter education seems to have been a critical mass of awareness, as in Chimbu where a layered approach worked well, together with a substantial coverage of the province so people heard the messages over and over again in different ways. Involvement of Electoral Commission officials was important. In Morobe, the election manager's staff coordinated and funded the Morobe Theatre Troop, so that troop members had official support during their work rather than having to establish their legitimacy, as in some provinces like Gulf where election officials actually heckled the awareness team and tried to undermine their work publicly.

There were also unintended consequences of the awareness. Some longer-term partnerships developed between unlikely groups that have continued beyond the project, such as the police and CSOs in Chimbu. One outcome of this has been the establishment of a women and children's desk within the police station to handle domestic violence complaints.

Running awareness projects increased CSO capacity in project management, which should improve their ability to access further funding and make their organizations more sustainable. The awareness exercise also left a pool of trained people around the country who understand how polling stations should be run and how counting should be done; this provides an excellent resource for the PNGEC in the future.⁴

The process also mobilized hundreds of ordinary citizens to observe the election process. Their desire was twofold: they wanted to check whether their awareness had worked and they felt a responsibility to witness elections as concerned citizens, believing that their presence might go some way towards encouraging better voting behaviour. Being involved in running voter education nurtured a demand for better governance and free and fair elections across the country. This was perhaps the most important outcome of the process: many of those who participated in running electoral awareness changed their own behaviour and wanted to help change others. Without this growing desire, elections in Papua New Guinea cannot be run democratically.

The forces behind some of the fraudulent election behaviour are strong, especially the win-at-all-costs mentality of candidates and supporters. Poverty affects the running of elections: for many people, election time is the only time they can get cash, mostly through payments from candidates. Lack of education

4 Before the 2007 national election, over 36,000 people were recruited to staff polling stations. The commission tried to provide training for all these people but observation suggested that training was often substandard or non-existent. It is an almost impossible task to train such a vast number of people in the few months before elections.

is another factor in poor behaviour during elections. Many people simply do not know why elections are run. They have not been taught what elections mean, what the role of parliament is, or indeed what their local members should be expected to do for them. In remote areas, the level of illiteracy is very high. In highly populated remote areas, our groups estimated that nearly 90 percent of voters were illiterate, especially women and older people. This provides a huge opportunity for supporters to manipulate people's votes: if you cannot read your ballot paper, you have to rely on others helping you; at each polling station there are swarms of candidate supporters ready to step up and fill in peoples' ballot papers for them. Illiteracy affects more women than men and contributes to the lack of power that women have in public affairs, including the election process. Women's votes are more likely to be co-opted and lack of literacy enables further abuse of power.

In the face of these entrenched societal problems, voter education which encourages a sense of community responsibility for free and fair elections is the key to positive change. We found that the election awareness training, combined with active participation in voter education, led to significant changes in the behaviour of some educators, and helped to create a widespread desire for good leaders.

It remains to be seen whether this movement will continue to grow and become more effective in changing electoral culture for the better. Such a development will require long-term funding and support and a commitment from government to listen to the wishes of the people and allow them to participate beyond filling in their ballot papers.

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5. Electoral Administration

Nicole Haley

This chapter, which provides an overview of electoral administration in the 2007 election, draws heavily upon the findings from the *2007 Domestic Observation Report* (Haley and Anere 2009). It finds that Papua New Guinea's 2007 general election was better managed and more peaceful than the 2002 polls, which were marred by electoral irregularities and widespread violence across the Highlands, and were generally regarded as the worst elections in Papua New Guinea's history. In short, all the seats were declared, MPs in the new parliament were elected with larger mandates, government was formed, and for the first time in many years concerted electoral and civic education was undertaken in the lead-up to polling. There were also appreciable gains with respect to electoral administration—so much so that the elections ran smoothly in many provinces, particularly in the New Guinea Islands Region. Nevertheless there is room for further improvement. Specifically, electoral fraud and malpractice continue to be problematic in the Highlands, and problems with the accuracy of the electoral roll persist, as do complaints about the untimely release of funds, delayed delivery of election materials and inadequate training of election officials. These issues will require attention in the lead-up to the 2012 election.

Observation and monitoring

In 2007, for the first time in Papua New Guinea's history, domestic observers were mobilized to monitor and review the election. The exercise involved a partnership between academics and civil society and was jointly coordinated by myself and Dr Ray Anere from the National Research Institute. It was funded by the Australian Agency for International Development through the Electoral Support Program, Phase 2 (ESP 2). In total some 150 observers took part in the domestic observation, the purpose of which was to generate and analyse quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide an impartial and accurate assessment of the 2007 election, which might in turn be used by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) and other government agencies critical to the conduct of elections, to further improve the operational planning and delivery of future elections.



Figure 5.1: Wilson Hauke conducting awareness at Pori, January 2007

The 2007 Domestic Observation comprised 18 observer teams, each covering a single open or provincial electorate. Typically, the teams consisted of an academic team leader (many of whom have contributed chapters to this volume) and six to 10 civil society observers, depending on the type of electorate. Individual observers were engaged for up to 28 days over a two-month period and were given the task of making observations during the campaign, pre-poll, polling and counting periods. To assist them in this task, observers undertook a day-long training program and were given an observer journal to complete. The journal was designed to record individual observations in a systematic way so that key aspects of electoral administration might be assessed. In most cases observers were able to observe the elections unhindered and in many cases received support and assistance from the security forces deployed to assist with the smooth running of the election. Given the length of time observers spent ‘in the field’ in the lead-up to and during the elections, detailed observations about electoral administration can be made.

The new electoral roll

Perhaps the most significant ongoing administrative challenge the PNGEC faces is the production of an accurate electoral roll. Indeed, political commentators have long been aware of problems with the electoral roll. It is well documented that enrolled voters have, for more than a decade now, far exceeded the number of eligible citizens in the Highlands electorates (Standish 2002, 2003; Haley 2004:20, 2002; Gibbs 2006). Recognizing this, a decision was made to do away with the old common rolls following the 2002 election. The PNGEC then embarked upon a nationwide re-registration exercise. This was a mammoth task, and one that began too late in the election cycle.

On the face of it, the new electoral roll, the result of a re-registration exercise which commenced in late 2005/early 2006, appears more accurate than those used in 1997 and 2002 in that the number enrolled is considerably smaller. The new roll, containing the names of 3,938,839 registered voters, had 1.4 million fewer names than the 2002 roll. This was certainly an achievement, although as Ladley, Holtved and Kantha (2010:vii) note, the current Papua New Guinea electoral roll 'does not provide a credible link between eligible electors and the votes counted during an election'.

In 2007, observers around the country received complaints from people who claimed that they were not on the roll, and many reported seeing voters turned away from polling stations on polling day. Collectively, domestic observers in the Highlands noted major faults with the voter re-registration and verification exercises, reporting duplications and ghost names as well as omissions. Specifically, they reported less than 25 percent of adults surveyed in pre-polling and post-polling surveys in the Highlands had completed a Claim for Enrolment form. Observations with respect to the rest of the country varied.

The enrolment process

The enrolment process, which was overseen by election managers in each province, was undertaken by district officials engaged and funded by the PNGEC. A common criticism repeated across the country concerned the partisanship of the local officials engaged to undertake this task (see Haley and Anere 2009; Ladley, Holtved and Kantha 2010:vii, and chapters 18 and 23 in this volume) and the hurried nature of the exercise. Observers in the Highlands were particularly critical of the process, noting that enrolment teams did not travel to the wards but instead completed the forms themselves (see chapters 19 and 21).

By contrast, the re-enrolment exercise seemingly took place satisfactorily in the Islands Region and in urban areas. For example, survey work undertaken by the Madang and National Capital District (NCD) observer teams revealed that enrolment teams in these urban areas did go door-to-door in an effort to ensure all eligible citizens were enrolled. Observers in Bougainville and Gazelle likewise reported that enrolment teams visited each ward.

Verification

Each of the nine Highlands observation teams reported deficiencies with the verification exercise. Verification rolls were not displayed in the districts and wards and, in most cases, were not seen prior to polling day. In the Southern Highlands and Western Highlands, they were displayed only in the provincial headquarters and then only for a matter of days. A similar process was reported for Oro Province (see chapter 16). Gibbs (chapter 19) further reports that the verification rolls arrived in Enga in June—just one month before the election. As such there was little time for final checking.

Where verification took place it seems to have been undertaken by individuals—many of the same people involved in the enrolment process. As a consequence there was little opportunity for public scrutiny of the roll. There were also claims of political interference at the verification stage. Certainly in the Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate, enrolments in some of the previously over-enrolled wards increased further during the verification phase (see chapter 21 and Haley and Anere 2009:24). The Pacific Islands Forum Election Observer Team also noted suspicion that sitting members were inflating the roll in their districts, and observed in one sitting member's village that the roll went from 2800 names to 10,000 (Commonwealth Pacific Islands Forum Election Assessment Team 2007:8).

Despite the fact that less than a quarter of adults surveyed by observers in the Highlands had enrolled to vote, electoral rolls in the Highlands continue to be highly inflated. Detailed analysis undertaken by the Wabag and Koroba-Lake Kopiago observer teams, for instance, indicates that the Southern Highlands electoral roll is twice the size it should be (see chapter 21; Haley 2006, 2004; 2002) while the Enga roll looks to be inflated by 45 percent (see chapter 19).

Under-enrolment was also a significant problem in some parts of the Southern Highlands. In some cases this seems to have been due to administrative errors but in other cases because enterprising candidates successfully managed to ensure that their opponents' supporters were disenfranchised. In the Southern Highlands, observers identified whole families and clans which were disenfranchised by being placed in the wrong wards or by being left off the roll completely (see chapters 20 and 21). They also collected information from

a variety of sources—including assistant returning officers—which suggested that supporters of particular candidates had difficulty gaining access to Claim for Enrolment forms, giving rise to widespread speculation and claims of bribery, mismanagement and corruption in several Southern Highlands electorates—namely Koroba-Lake Kopiago, Tari-Pori, Imbonggu and Kagua-Erave.

Throughout the Highlands, observers repeatedly heard the complaint that ‘not enough forms were sent out’ during the roll re-registration exercise. Clearly sufficient forms were in fact sent out as evidenced by the highly inflated roll. However, it is the case that they were used inappropriately and in fraudulent ways (to enrol children and people who were already deceased), causing eligible citizens to be left off the new roll.

Where claim forms were completed and signed on behalf of children, dead people or those long absent from the electorate—people who did not meet the legislatively proscribed residency requirement—correct procedures were not followed. For example, an official witnessing a Claim for Enrolment is legislatively required, by section 56 of the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections*, to satisfy himself or herself that the statements made and information provided in the claim are true.¹ In most cases the local village enumerators and witnesses—councillors and village recorders in most cases—would most likely have known which of the would-be voters were underage, deceased or non-resident.

A key factor concerning the problems associated with the roll is the absence of community ownership of the roll. Community participation in voter verification and roll cleansing is therefore vital for ownership of the roll. The present methods of voter verification and roll cleansing do not encourage community ownership of the roll. As such the roll is vulnerable to blatant manipulation by self-interested individuals. So as to mitigate this, verification rolls should, in future, be publicly displayed at both the district and ward level. Public readings of the electoral roll, in the presence of community scrutineers, the ward councillor and village recorder might also be incorporated into the roll cleansing and verification exercise, as a means of producing more accurate rolls. This would also help generate community ownership of the roll.

Without a doubt, the ongoing problems associated with the roll have the potential to undermine public confidence in the PNGEC as well as in the principle of political equality between citizens as called for under section 50 of the national

¹ This requirement is clearly spelled out on page 8, paragraph 3.3.6, of the *Electoral Roll Training Manual*, which states, ‘You are signing to verify that you saw the elector sign the enrolment form *and you are satisfied the information contained on the enrolment form is true* (my emphasis)’.

constitution. Attention must be given to the electoral roll as a matter of urgency, in order to: ensure political equality between citizens; restore confidence in the PNGEC; and ensure that the elections have integrity.

Administration and planning

At the national level, electoral administration and planning was enhanced by the adoption of a whole-of-government approach and in particular the establishment of the Inter-departmental Electoral Committee (IDEC) (see chapter 2). IDEC was set up by an act of parliament in 2006. It comprised key government stakeholders including the PNGEC, ESP 2, Department of Finance, Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF), Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs, Office of the Chief Secretary, and the registrar of political parties. The membership and participation of senior government officials, including the chief secretary, secretary of the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs, the electoral commissioner, the chief executive officer of the National Broadcasting Corporation, and the registrar of political parties, not only lent weight to IDEC but also to the decisions it made. For example, the 2007 Domestic Observation would not have been possible had it not been for the support of these senior government officials through IDEC.

Improved communication at the national level did not, however, necessarily result in better administration at the provincial and district level (see chapter 8). There is still considerable room for improvement in terms of operationalizing national level plans. For example, despite high-level support for the domestic observation and the whole-of-government approach to the 2007 election, there was surprisingly little knowledge about the presence of domestic observers. Several observer teams found that key electoral officials and security personnel were unaware a domestic observation was being undertaken,² and as a result experienced obstruction in the first instance—for example, the Mt Hagen Open observers were initially denied access to the Western Highlands counting centre, and one of the Southern Highlands Provincial observers was beaten by security personnel when he tried to observe a training session for polling officials. Thankfully the problems experienced tended to be quickly resolved, and in fact many teams reported receiving valuable assistance, from the security personnel in particular.

2 The first version of the security booklet prepared by the RPNGC (2007a), and issued to police, defence and Correctional Services personnel, deployed under the National Elections Operation (NATEL) did not include anything about the domestic observation. A second version of the booklet, entitled *Election Handbook 2007* (RPNGC 2007b), which was printed in June 2007, did include a section on observers, but unfortunately was issued too late to be distributed to security personnel already in the field.

Election management

Only two of the 18 observer teams deployed as part of the 2007 Domestic Observation commended the performance of the key electoral personnel in their province and/or electorate (Haley and Anere 2009:19). The others reported poor performance on the part of provincial election managers, and/or returning officers and assistant returning officers, observing that they were difficult to locate and did not demonstrate a good understanding of their roles. It was also noted that many election managers and returning officers were conveniently absent when administrative issues, problems and complaints arose and, even when present, proved ineffectual.

Observers in several electorates also reported concerns that key electoral personnel were partisan, that they failed to properly train polling and counting officials, and that the appointment of assistant returning officers, presiding officers, and other polling officials was subject to political interference.

The three Southern Highlands observer teams and Wabag Open observer team reported that key electoral personnel were changed several times in the lead-up to the election. In the Southern Highlands the constant appointment, revocation and reappointment of personnel, on the advice of the Southern Highlands Provincial steering committee, hampered election preparations, and resulted in pre-polling and post-polling disputes. The appointment of the assistant returning officer for Lake Kapiago Local-Level Government is a case in point (see chapter 21).

The confusion about appointments in the Southern Highlands was exacerbated by a tussle between William Powi and Alphonse Hayabe over the provincial administrator's position. After being confirmed as acting administrator by the National Court on 13 April 2007, Hayabe sought to have key election officials recommended by his predecessor replaced. Specifically he wrote to the PNGEC deputy commissioner of operations on 16 April 2007 in his capacity as chairman of the provincial steering committee, recommending, among other appointments, the appointment of a new provincial returning officer. These recommendations were subsequently overturned by Powi once his position as provincial administrator was confirmed by the Supreme Court. Needless to say, returning officers and assistant returning officers should be appointed early in the election cycle.

The new ballot paper

Election 2007 saw candidate photographs removed from the new ballot paper and the introduction of separate candidate posters. This change was effected very late in the election cycle, being certified by the speaker of the National

Parliament in September 2006—nine months out from the election. Despite concerted civil-society-led awareness campaigning concerning the changes, many voters were not aware of the new arrangements.

The changes were not insignificant. The way people were required to vote in 2007 was markedly different from previous elections. Rather than marking their ballot papers with an X, as they had in recent general elections, or with 1, 2, 3, as they had done in the limited preferential voting (LPV) by-elections, voters were required to write three two-digit code numbers and/or the names of their preferred candidates on both the provincial and open electorate ballot papers. This proved very slow, especially when voters marked their own papers.

The voting process was further complicated by the fact that the open and provincial ballot papers were very similar in appearance, being differentiated only by a pale blue or pale pink band at the bottom of the ballot paper. Voters found it difficult to differentiate between them—and this was used by presiding officers to justify the high levels of assistance in many areas. Many of the informal votes identified in counting rooms across the country arose because voters mixed up the forms, writing their open seat preferences on the provincial ballot paper and vice versa. There may well have been many more papers marked in error than were identified as informal. For this reason voters and polling officials around the country were universally critical of the new ballot papers; many have since called for the reintegration of photographs on the ballot papers, others have insisted that bolder colours should be used in the future or that the papers should be markedly different in size or shape.

Despite the confusion wrought by the new ballot paper, the informal vote remained very low. This was due, in no small part, to the high level of assisted voting witnessed around the country. In the Highlands the vast majority of voters were assisted, either by polling officials, police, campaign managers, candidates' scrutineers or family members. Given low literacy levels, especially in remote rural areas, assistance proved necessary in many cases. Often, however, assistance was forced. It was observed too that completed papers were often checked as well. As a result very few voters were afforded a secret ballot.

Worryingly, where 'assistance' was given the voters' wishes were not always adhered to. In the Southern Highlands observers witnessed several instances where presiding officers marked ballot papers in a manner contrary to the voter's wishes. Observers in the Southern Highlands also noted that polling officials at several polling stations had pre-marked the first preference prior to issuing ballot papers.

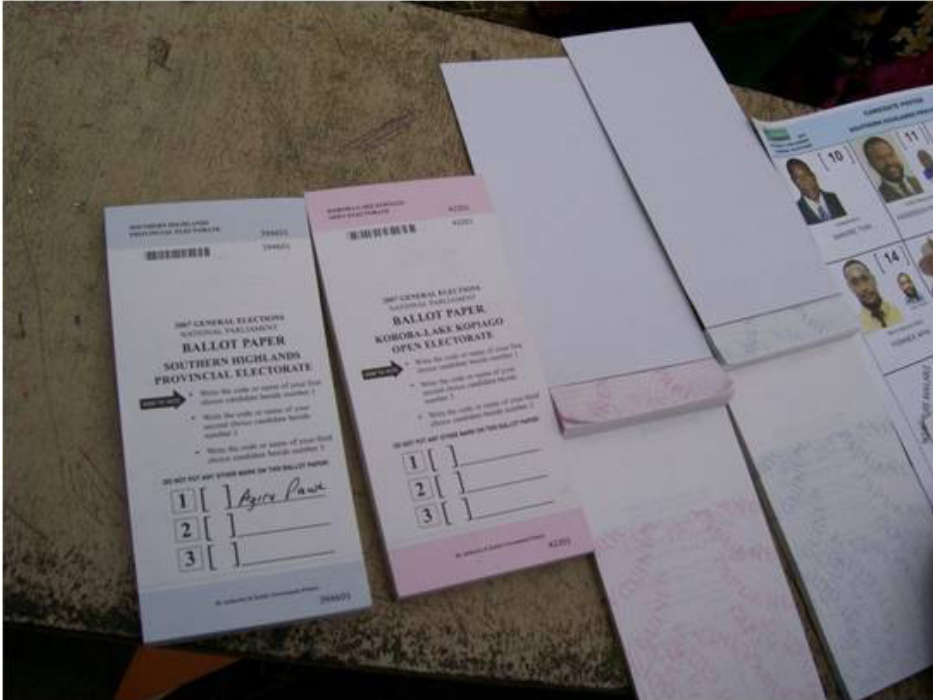


Figure 5.2: Pre-marked ballot paper

It is difficult to ascertain just how widespread this practice was, but observers in counting rooms around the country observed that many ballot papers in various boxes were completed by more than one person. For example the first preference was marked in one pen while the second and third preferences were marked in a different coloured pen and/or different handwriting.

Awareness

Efforts to create community awareness about the new voting system commenced late in the election cycle, due to the fact that the legislative changes introducing the new ballot paper and separate candidate posters were certified by the speaker of the National Parliament only nine months prior to the election. Voters and candidates around the country were critical of the late change. This problem was beyond the control of the PNGEC.

Bearing in mind the narrow window for awareness, the PNGEC focussed its awareness campaign on television, radio and print media initiatives, supplemented by face-to-face awareness by election managers and returning officers. The media awareness proved most effective in urban areas. Observers across the country reported that the awareness conducted by the PNGEC teams was limited and in most cases delivered very late, due mainly to the fact that PNGEC funding for awareness was released only after the close of nominations.



Figure 5.3: Domestic observer Justin Wandi at Koroba, 28 June 2007

In the main, face-to-face awareness was undertaken by civil society groups, many of which were funded under ESP 2 (see chapter 4). The awareness provided by these groups was observed to be generally comprehensive. Pre-polling and post-polling surveys conducted by individual observer teams revealed it to be particularly effective, especially in the Highlands, where five times as many people reported having attended civil-society-run LPV/civic awareness as had attended awareness conducted by the PNGEC.

Despite the extensive civil society awareness campaign, irregularities of various kinds were noted by observers on polling day, and many voters reported they found the new voting system confusing and had needed assistance when voting. Ongoing awareness is therefore needed.

Pre-polling

The findings of individual observer teams varied considerably in respect of pre-polling administration. The NCD teams, for example, reported that electoral administration was much improved, being better than both the 2002 general election and the 2006 NCD by-election. Observations from other parts of the country, particularly the Highlands, were nowhere near as positive. Only six of the 18 observer teams (NCD Provincial, Port Moresby South Open, Goroka Open, Wabag Open, Mt Hagen Open and Gazelle Open) reported that essential election supplies, including candidate posters, ballot papers, and ballot box seals, were received on time in advance of polling. The remaining teams reported delays with regard to the release of funds and the delivery of essential materials.

In the Southern Highlands funds that should have been released prior to polling were not received until after the polling was complete. In the absence of these funds the PNGDF arranged for and funded the insertion and extraction of polling teams (see chapter 8). The funding shortfall also resulted in reduced payments to polling officials, which in turn gave rise to much discontent and saw the majority of returning officers from Koroba-Lake Kapiago and Kagua-Erave withhold their returns and refuse to attend the count.

Training

Training of polling officials was not consistent. Lists of polling officials were finalised early in some areas (for example NCD, Bougainville, Western Highlands and the Eastern Highlands) and reasonably comprehensive training was provided. In Southern Highlands and Enga, however, polling officials were appointed on the eve of polling or on polling day itself, and the training was observed to be inadequate.

Polling

For the most part polling in the 2007 election proceeded peacefully, though the conduct of polling varied greatly across the country. Observers in the Islands, Momase and Southern regions reported that polling was generally well organized

and managed and polling places set up in the recommended manner. For the most part polling stations opened on time and few disturbances or irregularities were noted. Nonetheless gender-segregated polling, which was official policy in 2007, was not observed except in NCD, Ijivitari Open and Madang Provincial seats.

By contrast, voting in the Highlands—particularly the Southern Highlands and Enga—remained generally chaotic. One-day polling proved unworkable, except in urban areas, and significant irregularities were identified in each of the highland's provinces, particularly in relation to the conduct of polling. Other problems noted in the Southern Highlands included the relocation of polling stations from their gazetted locations and movement of polling stations from their historical locations.

Inclement weather and a shortage of vehicles and air transport meant polling in the Southern Highlands, where the polling began, was delayed for several days in some areas. In Enga and Chimbu delays to polling were also experienced, and in both provinces it took a full week for polling to be completed. This had flow-on effects across the rest of the Highlands. The delays also meant that the security forces were spread very thinly in many areas, and in some cases redeployed before the completion of polling, which may have contributed to some of the irregularities and malpractice witnessed.

In terms of the conduct of polling, a wide array of voting practices was noted in each of the Highlands provinces. In Enga people tended to vote in family groups, with papers issued en masse to family heads (see chapter 18), although in some parts line-up voting was also employed, such that names were not called but marked off when people entered the polling place. Similar practices were noted at polling stations throughout the Eastern Highlands (including Goroka Open), Southern Highlands and Chimbu.

In some places, particularly Chimbu, *man-meri* voting and 'next' voting were employed. In these cases names were not called, but rather the gender of registered voters in the order that they appeared, or when one person had finished the polling officials simply called out 'Next' (Chuave Open, Goroka Open, EHP Provincial, Koroba-Lake Kopiago team reports). In other cases, the roll was completely disregarded, serving only as the basis to issue a certain number of ballot papers. This was so in the more remote parts of Eastern Highlands and much of Southern Highlands—with several observers noting that polling officials in many polling booths did not check the roll at all.

Voting irregularities

Cheating and voting irregularities were reported across the country, but were certainly widespread and most pronounced in the Highlands. Outside the Highlands, irregularities such as underage voting and multiple voting were observed to be isolated rather than the norm.

Underage voting, multiple voting, 'line-up' voting, serial voting, 'outside' voting and proxy voting were all commonplace in the Highlands. Voting took place publicly and there was no secret ballot. The indelible ink was not used or was used randomly and excess ballot papers were used in many cases.

Bloc voting was also observed throughout the Highlands, especially in open electorates. In some cases this appears to have been the result of genuine group consensus (a group choosing to vote for their clan/local candidate) but in other areas it resulted from coercion, intimidation or outright malpractice. In many wards in Southern Highlands, Enga, Chimbu and Eastern Highlands polling officials were observed to do away with the pretext of individual voters casting their votes. This was particularly so in Enga. In many cases people in Enga voted in family groups, and in others ballot papers were simply filled out by scrutineers or candidate representatives. In some parts of Enga the majority of people played no part in the voting process. Similar observations were made in parts of Southern Highlands, where ballot papers were pre-marked or filled out by teams of young men or supporters.

Observers in six of the nine Highlands electorates (Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open, Kagua-Erave Open, Southern Highlands Provincial, Eastern Highlands Provincial, Chuave Open and Wabag Open) also witnessed bribery and intimidation on the part of candidates and their key supporters. Their observations were confirmed by post-polling surveys in Southern Highlands (see chapter 20) and Enga, where 38 percent of male voters and 58 percent of female voters surveyed reported that they had experienced intimidation when casting their vote. The same post-polling surveys revealed that just over 40 percent of voters surveyed (41 percent in Southern Highlands and 43 percent in Enga) felt that the 2007 election was worse than 2002. Certainly many voters in the Southern Highlands felt that this election had failed, as it had in 2002 (see chapters 20 and 21).

Two key factors contributed to and facilitated the cheating and malpractice (underage voting, double and multiple voting, serial voting and outside voting) observed on polling day: first, the integrity of the new electoral roll in the Highlands, which can be shown to include children, deceased people, people from neighbouring electorates, and several thousand duplicate entries, and, secondly, the location and positioning of polling stations, many of which were moved from their gazetted locations to facilitate ease of movement between

polling stations. At Pureni, in the South Koroba local government area, four polling stations (Tumbite, Pubulumu 1, Pubulumu 2 and Tangimapu) were set up on Tumbite airstrip. Three of the four polling stations were moved from their gazetted locations on grounds of alleged security threats, although the assistant returning officer later conceded that the polling stations were moved to 'make it easier for voters to move between polling stations'.

Post-polling

Post-polling arrangements around the country proved for the most part to be quite good, with observers reporting that ballot boxes were transported under security escort and properly secured in preparation for counting. Problems were, however, evident in the Southern Highlands, where observers noted that returns were completed after the fact, as was polling-day paperwork. Few returning officers and assistant returning officers were observed to keep a register of unused ballot papers. There were also problems with the movement of ballot boxes from Tari to Mendi. The Hela people wanted their boxes counted in Tari and blockaded the Tari police station where the boxes had been temporarily secured. As a result, the transportation of the boxes to the counting centre in Mendi was delayed by 10 days, and was only effected after an eleventh-hour intervention on the part of the deputy electoral commissioner, who entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Hela candidates.

Counting

Counting is a fundamental part of election administration. Counting in 2007 was generally well organized, though slow. As a result, the deadline for the return of writs needed to be extended by a week. For the most part, irregularities in counting were identified by the checks and balances that were employed. Observers in most electorates reported that individual ballot box counts were checked against the returns and serious anomalies were investigated and often gave rise to recounts.

Significant anomalies were, however, identified in the NCD Provincial, Eastern Highlands Provincial and Southern Highlands Provincial counts. Specifically, the NCD Provincial results reveal that Powes Parkop was declared without having obtained an absolute majority and without the final distribution of preferences taking place, while the Eastern Highlands Provincial results make evident that, despite a thorough two-day recheck count, figures during the elimination phase did not balance with those made earlier. Additional informal papers were identified, as were 1438 additional papers that seemingly had not been counted

in either the primary count or recheck count. A total of 3848 previously counted and rechecked ballot papers could not be located or accounted for during the elimination phase.

In most provinces counting took place at a central location—often the provincial headquarters. In most cases, security was tight with a heavy police and PNGDF presence. Overall counting was conducted in an open and transparent manner and was well managed. For the most part, used and unused papers were reconciled, individual ballot box counts were reconciled against the ballots issued and the presiding officers' returns, and checks and balances picked up papers that had been wrongly allocated in the first instance.

Counting in all the Highlands provinces was centralized in the provincial headquarters. Procedurally it varied—within provinces and between them—but overall tended to be well organized, with varying degrees of transparency. In Chimbu, ballot papers were subject to the highest level of scrutiny, with individual counting rooms set up in such a way that scrutineers could properly view the counting process, and in particular the sorting process. Ballot papers were checked for formality, sorted, rechecked, counted and recounted before being tallied. Importantly, the open and provincial papers were consistently reconciled as well, meaning that the vast majority of errors were picked up during the primary count.

By contrast, few checks and balances were employed in the Southern Highlands Provincial seat counting room, and little or no effort was made to balance results against returns from individual polling stations. Similarly, little concern was shown when the number of open papers did not match the number of provincial papers. It is not known how often this occurred, because it has not been possible to obtain the full Southern Highlands Provincial results. A major problem with respect to electoral administration across the whole country has been the lack of completed returns.

Counting for the Southern Highlands Provincial seat also proved very slow, taking a month to complete. The primary or first preference count commenced on 7 July and continued through till 28 July. Counting was then suspended following a court challenge by four of the provincial candidates, namely Hami Yawari, Bob Marley Undi Nande, Dickson Pena Tasi and Michael Nali. These candidates claimed the ballot boxes from the Hela region had been tampered with and should be excluded from the count, and that the memorandum of understanding entered into by the deputy commissioner should be declared null and void. The National Court dismissed the proceedings and ordered a recheck count prior to the distribution of preferences. Counting resumed at around midday on 4 August, with the recheck count. Although it had taken some three weeks to sort and count the first preferences, the recheck count,

which involved the rechecking of close to 384,000 ballot papers, was completed in less than five hours. Observers felt the recheck was cursory and that few cross checks were employed.

The eliminations phase of the Southern Highlands Provincial count commenced at 5.15 pm on 4 August, and continued through the night and into the following day, with the declaration being made exactly 24 hours after the eliminations commenced. It was observed that the eliminations were rushed and that countless mistakes were made, especially in relation to the last five eliminations. Specifically, observers noted that the distribution of preferences took place 'in a split second' and there was no checking of the redistributed or exhausted ballot papers. Observers felt many papers were wrongly allocated. By way of comparison, the elimination phase of the Tari-Pori Open seat count took five days to complete, and involved only 37,000 ballot papers, one tenth the number of papers in the Southern Highlands Provincial count.

Training

As was the case with training for polling officials, there was much variability with respect to the training provided for counting officials. Counting officials in the Islands, Momase and NCD were all provided with one or two days training, and observers reported that counting officials appeared well versed in all aspects of the count. By contrast, observers across the Highlands described the training provided to counting officials as inadequate. The Eastern Highlands Provincial team reported that only 200 of the 700 counting officials received training and those that did received only one hour's training prior to the commencement of the count. Observers in Chimbu similarly felt the training provided to counting officials was inadequate and some observers were asked to provide additional training for counting officials during the early phases of the count.

In the Southern Highlands, counting officials and scrutineers were provided with anything from an hour to a day's training (depending on the counting room) immediately prior to the commencement of count. Observers described the training as confusing and noted that counting officials and scrutineers often appeared out of their depth and seemed confused about procedural matters. As counting progressed it also became evident that new counting officials were being appointed and admitted to some counting rooms, such as the Southern Highlands Provincial counting room. Those counting officials appointed after the commencement of the count did not receive any training and were observed to make many mistakes.

Security

The 2007 general election was considerably less violent than other recent elections. How much this improvement can be attributed to LPV will become clearer over ensuing elections. Certainly it had been felt that LPV would contribute to improved security, and observers around the country did report that campaigning in the 2007 General Elections was generally quieter, far more relaxed and more accommodative than in past elections (see chapter 13). They also noted there was little or no violence in the Islands, Momase and Southern region seats, and overall levels of violence in the Highlands seats were substantially reduced. That said, there was a huge investment in security, especially in the Highlands.

In Southern Highlands, where polling commenced, the special police operations security force, consisting of 200 regular police and 150 PNGDF personnel, was boosted by 2500 additional NATEL (National Election) security personnel (2000 police—mostly auxiliary and community police—and 500 PNGDF personnel). Despite the large security presence, one-day polling meant that the security personnel were still thinly spread, given that there were 862 polling stations, and the fact that many security personnel remained in Mendi and other key distribution points in the districts. Unarmed police provided the security at most polling stations, while armed PNGDF provided security at more high risk locations and acted as response units.

One factor which contributed to the good security situation witnessed was the pre-deployment of NATEL forces a full two weeks prior to polling. The early deployment of these troops meant they were in a position to undertake detailed reconnaissance and attend to security threats well in advance of polling (see chapter 8). Importantly, they were also observed to undertake election and security related awareness, and to contribute to logistics and the conduct of elections. In some places it was only through their interventions that polling took place (see chapters 7, 20, and 21).

Despite the overall good performance of the security personnel, they were observed to be unwilling or incapable of intervening to deter voting irregularities. This was possibly due to the fact that they were unarmed and in many cases poorly trained. Security personnel across the Highlands, but most particularly the PNGDF contingent, reported that they had received no pre-deployment training, and many seemed unclear about their role in general, and about electoral processes and electoral offences more specifically. The small handbook prepared for police (RPNGC 2007b) was an excellent innovation.

Communications

Communications proved problematic across much of the country, but especially in the more remote areas where communications infrastructure is weakest. Observers consistently noted that electoral personnel—returning officers, assistant returning officers and presiding officers in the field (that is, outside the urban areas and larger towns)—tended to be without communication, while the security personnel had either field radios which allowed them to communicate with headquarters (in the case of the PNGDF) or handheld radios which could communicate over short distances (in the case of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary).

In the main, security personnel in the field were observed to experience considerable difficulty communicating with those coordinating the security operations in the provincial headquarters, and with the security personnel inserted with polling teams, and they were reliant on third parties relaying requests for helicopter support or security backup. In the Highlands, electoral and security personnel were observed to rely heavily on mobile phones; however, there were major network outages during the polling and counting periods. This was particularly so in the Southern Highlands and Enga, where the network repeatedly went down for days at a time.

The lack of radios and an effective joint communications strategy also meant that there was no communication between election officials in the field and those in the provincial election office. The lack of communication was particularly evident at polling stations.

Communications at the counting centres around the country, by contrast, proved to be very good. With a few exceptions, the crowds gathered outside counting centres were kept well informed at all times, with progressive tallies being broadcast throughout the day, and recorded on a huge purpose-built tally boards. Progressive tallies were also faxed to PNGEC headquarters in Port Moresby on a regular basis.

Inter-agency coordination

Inter-agency coordination appeared greatly improved, although hampered to some extent by a lack of effective communications equipment (see previous section). The improved inter-agency coordination appeared to result from the adoption of a whole-of-government approach to the planning, staging and conduct of the 2007 election. At the national level the whole-of-government

approach was evidenced by the establishment of IDEC, chaired by the registrar of political parties, and at the provincial level by the establishment of provincial election steering committees—chaired by provincial administrators.

The extent to which the provincial election steering committees proved effective varied greatly, however. Many were established very late in the election cycle. Several committees were viewed as partisan, and in at least four provinces attempted to influence key appointments, for example by seeking to remove key returning officers and assistant returning officers and to make their own appointments. This caused much confusion on the ground and hampered election preparations.

Overall assessment

Papua New Guinea's 2007 general election was better managed and more peaceful than the 2002 poll. Specifically, there were appreciable gains with respect to electoral administration. Nevertheless there is room for further improvement. The electoral roll needs further verification and cleansing, training needs to be prioritized and financial management needs improvement, so as to ensure that funds are available when needed and that essential election supplies reach all provinces on time.

Electoral fraud and malpractice continue to pose problems in the Highlands, facilitated in part by the poor state of the new electoral roll. Accurate electoral rolls are the administrative basis for free and fair elections. Problems with the electoral roll need to be addressed as a matter of urgency if the 2012 elections are to have integrity. More accurate rolls will also give rise to less costly elections.

Once again, one-day polling in the Highlands proved impossible. Recognizing that it took a full week to complete polling in at least three of the Highlands provinces, it could well prove better to stage future elections in the Highlands over several days in each province. Alternately, other polling modes—such as the use of mobile polling teams—might be considered. This would reduce the total number of polling officials needed, make training easier, and see the security forces utilized more effectively.

Finally, civic awareness should continue and be expanded in order to generate and foster demand for good elections. Such awareness should, among other things, seek to educate voters about the electoral roll, the function it serves, and differences between the electoral roll and the census. It should also seek to educate voters about electoral laws and electoral offences, as well as voter rights and responsibilities. Such awareness will only work if it is coupled with the confidence that other parts of the electoral process will work. For this reason

every effort should be made to ensure that good, honest and reliable staff are engaged to conduct the 2012 elections and that they are properly trained and supported.

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6. Security in Southern Highlands Province

Siale Diro

This chapter is intended to give a background to the security situation in Southern Highlands Province (SHP) and to outline the security mission for the 2007 election and its objectives. In so doing, it will look at the security force composition, its pre-election operations, the conduct of the election, and post-election operations. Finally, it will reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the security operations in the province and make some recommendations for the future.

The study is based on my observations and experience as commander of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) contingent in SHP and deputy commander of special police operations.

Background

Any analysis of the election in SHP must be cast against a background of the particular challenges that the province as a whole poses for security operations. SHP is the largest Highlands province and has the biggest population—approximately 700,000 people. The province is rich in resources and contributes over 40 percent of the national economy, with the Kutubu District alone producing K11 million per day.

At the same time, SHP has the highest number of illegal weapons in the country and has experienced major breakdowns in law and order.

In the 2002 election, ‘failed elections’ were declared in six of the open electorates, requiring supplementary elections in 2003. By 2006 the generalized breakdown in law and order, combined with corrupt governance, saw the declaration by the national government of a state of emergency (SOE) in SHP on 15 August 2006. Subsequent court action was taken by the then provincial governor, Hami Yawari, which led to the Supreme Court nullifying the SOE in February 2007.

In the lead-up to the election, primarily due to the economic and security issues, there were grave concerns for the conduct of the election in SHP. The nation could not afford another failed election in 2007. Consequently, the national

government introduced special police operations (SPO) in SHP on 1 March 2007 to maintain the progress made by the SOE and prepare the province for the elections.

In 2007 the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) took the important step of 'front loading' what were seen as likely problem areas for the 2007 election. This involved scheduling SHP to be the first province to go to the polls.

The special police operations mission

The mission statement for the SPO was to assist the electoral commission by providing security for NATEL 07 (National Election 2007), in order for the national government to conduct a peaceful, fair and successful national election.

The objectives were:

- security, peace and good order, removal of illegal weapons
- restoration of government services in SHP
- peaceful and successful conduct of national elections in SHP
- post-election stability in SHP.

In the pre-election period the force was composed of 200 regular police men and women and 150 PNGDF personnel, comprising 90 infantry (security), 40 engineers with plant and equipment (restoration), and 20 support staff (medics, military police, communications personnel, etc). During the polling period this presence was bolstered by the concentration of security forces from other Highlands provinces, including some 2000 police and 500 PNGDF personnel. For the counting period in SHP the security presence reverted back to pre-election strength, providing a smaller contribution to polling in other Highlands provinces so as to maintain a high level of presence.

Conduct and rules of engagement

As this was a small force with limited resources, operations required strict adherence to the rules of engagement, backed by strong discipline. Its operations were based on a high level of public law and order awareness conducted through the media, and an effective command and control mechanism. This was supported by a dedicated public relations strategy and, importantly, effective inter-agency cooperation.

It was a 'balanced force' with appropriate posture (graduated response), intended to provide a firm but fair and neutral approach, remembering that the trust and confidence of the people is the centre of gravity.

Pre-election operations

Pre-election operations had a major focus on two aspects: security and restoration. Improving the security climate involved:

- physical patrols and a show of presence throughout the province
- law and order awareness in the media
- swift and decisive action and discipline—or 'zero tolerance'—towards crime.

This was successful in facilitating greater freedom of movement throughout the province. As a result, business and economic activity picked up and public confidence was boosted. It was also evident that the new limited preferential voting system had relieved the tension. The end result was that during the pre-election period, the physical conditions were set for a peaceful election.

The restoration aspect of pre-election operations involved PNGDF engineers and others working to restore:

- the Kiburu to Mendi road
- the Mendi airport fencing
- culverts and earthworks for churches
- Momei oval counting centre fencing.

This period also saw engineer reconnaissance in Nipa, Upper Mendi and Kagua.

The pre-election period involved coordination with the provincial election steering committee which was chaired by the provincial administrator, Mr William Powi. That committee consisted of the electoral commission, police, Defence, Correctional Services, and church, business and community leaders. The committee commenced regular meetings in April 2007 and was very effective in coordinating the inter-agency effort, in line with the 'whole-of-government' approach to national elections. The committee made many critical decisions, such as centralizing counting in Mendi.

Finally, these measures required spiritual support. Southern Highlands Province has an extensive Christian network, with more than 30 Christian denominations. The people of SHP are tired of violence and corruption and it was considered time to encourage the spiritual community to take the lead in asking God to bring peace into the province.

The spiritual measures commenced with a prayer breakfast with the SHP 'Body of Christ' in Mendi on 12 May. It culminated with a spiritual rally to invite the Holy Spirit into SHP. This rally was held under the theme of 'peaceful elections' and the security force provided logistic support (including transport, fuel, rations, etc.) and combined youth worship groups from the PNGDF's Taurama and Igam Barracks. The rally was held across SHP from 28 May to 3 June 2007 and thousands attended in Tari, Nipa, Ialibu and Mendi.

Conduct of elections: The polling period

SHP was the first Highlands province in the country to vote when the polls opened on 30 July. At that time, 2500 security forces personnel were deployed (the force was moved to Enga after polling in SHP was complete).

With 862 polling sites, the election was always going to be a logistics nightmare. This, combined with the fact that SHP is a vast province with rugged terrain and bad weather, compounded the challenges faced by the security forces.

Police and Correctional Services provided security for polling teams, while Defence and police mobile squads provided patrols, escorts and vital asset protection. The whole operation required extensive inter-agency liaison and coordination.

Due to bad weather, polling had to be extended in some parts and in this respect the electoral commissioner reacted in timely manner to extend the polling period.

Despite late arrival of polling materials, and the challenges noted above, polling generally went well and the province was peaceful during polling. In suspected trouble spots such as Nipa and Upper Mendi, people exercised their democratic right free of violence.

Conduct of the election: The count

As stated above, counting for the province was centralized at the Momei Oval counting centre in Mendi. The PNGDF maintained an inner cordon, which protected the ballot boxes between the airport and the counting centre, and police and CIS maintained an outer cordon of road blocks and crowd control. Security was very tight and was successful in keeping the threat off-balance. The centre was designed for maximum transparency and counting was conducted in a peaceful manner in what was almost a festive atmosphere.

Strict discipline ensured that security forces stuck to their designated roles and did not interfere with the electoral process. The SPO command was detached from the counting centre.

By 29 July 2007 the people of SHP had peacefully elected their nine members into the eighth national parliament.

Post-election operations

At the end of July, the SPO was ordered to withdraw by mid August. This decision had a significant impact on operations, as people of SHP were expecting us to stay until 31 August. In response, the SPO conducted immediate awareness across the province to alleviate people's fears and set the conditions for withdrawal. The decision brought forward strategic lift and extraction plans.

The SPO formal presence culminated in a farewell parade which was held on the 11 August 2007 in Mendi. At this event the people were encouraged to maintain peace and a general warning was communicated to potential troublemakers. The farewell also involved a weapons destruction ceremony at which PNGDF engineers destroyed five Mag 58s, nine SLRs, eleven M16s, fifteen AR15s, 86 factory-made shot guns, and 161 homemade weapons. The destroyed weapons were sealed in drums, taken to Lae, and dumped at sea.

The public took part in the ceremony, which was a symbolic gesture of a new future for SHP, safe and free of guns. The event also involved a prayer luncheon in a gathering with the provincial Body of Christ. Those at the luncheon thanked God for his blessings. It was a fitting spiritual closure to the SPO. By 15 August, all Defence personnel were withdrawn from SHP and soon after, all SPO police were withdrawn.

On 29 August, SHP Governor, Anderson Agiru and the eight SHP Open members—James Marabe, Isaac Joseph, Francis Potape, Philemon Embel, John Kekeno Kelewa, Peter O'Neill, James Lagea and Francis Awesa—walked together from the airport to Momei Oval, where they addressed the people of SHP.

Assessing the SPO

Strengths

It was clearly apparent that the new limited preferential voting system played a role in significantly reducing the security contingency. This, the whole-of-

government approach, a strong national will towards fairness, and excellent inter-agency cooperation through the provincial election steering committee, were all major strengths in the 2007 election in SHP.

Public relations, spiritual linkage, and awareness to develop the 'trust and confidence of the people', created an important enabling environment.

From a logistic and administrative perspective, the timely allocation of troops' allowances was also a strength, as was the flexibility of the force. This permitted 'front loading' in problem areas and allowed for economy of effort and concentration of force.

The presence of the PNGEC's legal adviser, Professor John Nonggorr, on location provided enhanced situational awareness. The improved command, control and cooperation of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary was also a contributing factor.

Some of these strengths resulted directly from difficult PNGDF reform decisions, in line with the commander's vision of a smarter and operationally focused force. Through Joint Forces Headquarters, the PNGDF's air, sea and land assets were deployed extensively to support the elections, and command and control of operations was far more effective and responsive than in the past. There was also '24/7' monitoring. The PNGDF has now commenced the 'build-up phase' of its reform process and the success in 2007 justifies continued support for the reforms.

Weaknesses

There were, however, weaknesses that hindered the success of the operation and need to be addressed in the future. These were mostly in the areas of:

- communications
- riot control equipment
- postal voting
- the common roll
- delivery of election materials and payment of election officials' entitlements.

To address these weaknesses the following recommendations are put forward to improve the security mobilization at the next election:

- extend security pre-deployment to problem areas
- formalize whole-of-government and inter-agency arrangements (training, etc)
- improve communications

- 'front load' problem areas
- purchase appropriate equipment (specifically riot gear).

Overall, however, the whole-of-government approach and strong national will created the resource and psychological platform for improved security in SHP during the 2007 election.

7. Policing the Elections in Chimbu Province

Thomson Fafungian

National elections in Papua New Guinea, particularly the Highlands Region, are something that people look forward to—the educated elite, community leaders, churches, businessmen and village people alike. Elections are a time when money, pork and beer flow into the province and everyone wants to participate. This gifting culture started on a large scale in the 1982 national election in Chimbu Province when Sir Iambakey Okuk bought 34 pallets (3400 cartoons) of beer from the SP Brewery for the Simbu people to consume as part of his election campaign. During this drinking spree people ran amok in the town and there was total chaos. The police arrested so many people the police cells were full, yet Kundiawa town was still full of drunkards who caused considerable violence, and the police could not do much. The 1982 election was a learning experience for the police, and since then they have sought to make thorough preparations for elections. The extent of gifting in Chimbu has meant elections are not fair or free, but are characterized by corruption, bribery, threats, and false promises by desperate candidates hungry for fame, power and glory. Campaign houses built by candidates to distribute food and money and conduct all sorts of illegal activities have proliferated throughout the Highlands Region. This kind of corruption reached its peak in the 2002 election.

This chapter is based on my personal involvement and experience during the 2007 election. It covers the pre-election, polling and post-polling periods. It does not necessarily represent the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary's view on the management and running of the election but is my own personal assessment as someone involved in all aspects of election security.

The Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC) saw this event as a major operation for the constabulary. As set down in the commissioner's mission statement, all the provincial police commanders (PPCs) were responsible for ensuring 'a safe, secure, fair, democratic election' and for planning and executing the RPNGC's mission in their provinces. In Chimbu Province, the PPC, Superintendent Joseph Tondop, was the man responsible.

In Chimbu Province police were involved in the preparation, polling, counting and post-election phases. The PPC's planning was complemented by my proposal to secure Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) funding through the Electoral Support Program (ESP) and consolidate a partnership with

civil society groups, churches, the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) and the Provincial AIDS Council in carrying out civic, HIV/AIDS, and law and order awareness in preparation for the election. The planning and security in the pre-polling operations and the counting involved Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel and Correctional Services members. The post-election management of tribal fights and disruption of government services in the districts as a direct result of election-related violence was included in the plan.

Civic and law and order awareness

Chimbu Province has had its share of violence and disorder during past elections. Violence has occurred in all six districts. The scars are visible from the roadside. For example, as one drives into Migendi Catholic Mission Station one can see the valley extending towards the Wahgi River: what was once a flourishing valley was destroyed during post-election violence between supporters of two losing candidates in the 1997 election, Peter Kuman and John Nopro. Across the province thousands of kina worth of property have been destroyed, villages have completely disappeared, food and coffee gardens have been destroyed, and people killed and injured, including innocent women and children. Indeed, past elections have taken such a toll that thousands of displaced people are now living in informal settlements in and around Kundiawa or have moved to other provinces because their homes and livelihoods have been destroyed by election-related violence.

Police security during elections has typically been focused on the polling days only, with the greater part of the police effort put into ensuring adequate logistics and manpower at polling locations. Our main focus has been the security of ballot papers. This has meant that once polling was completed the police would move out with the papers, leaving innocent men, women and children to suffer at the hands of losing candidates and their supporters. In my experience, the violence usually starts after polling, and in many cases after the counting is complete. The release of the final results often triggers the violence. Unfortunately, with limited resources police cannot be in the villages at all times, and cannot ensure the security of the people in the post-election period. The police do not have the capacity to contain violence when it occurs on a large scale throughout the province, and this often happens once the declarations are made.

In the lead-up to the 2007 election, however, the PPC at the time, Superintendent Jimmy Onopia, resolved to take a more proactive approach in the hope of reducing the level of violence in the province. This involved drug reduction awareness and law and order awareness. He knew very well that the reactive

policing measures typically employed did not achieve much when there was widespread violence. Police in other provinces shared the PPC's concerns and had similar intentions but were constrained in implementing their ideas by funding and procedures.

Police in Papua New Guinea are faced with financial constraints at the best of times; the pressures of a general election exacerbate this. There was, for example, no money allocated to community policing for awareness before the 2007 election. Realizing this, I put forward a community policing proposal to the ESP Phase 2 and fortunately my application was approved. I also thought that community awareness about elections might help make the job of policing elections easier, as the community itself needed to start taking on board the laws designed to make elections free and fair. I was assisted and advised by Dr Nicole Haley (research fellow, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program, The Australian National University) whom I met during the Koroba-Lake Kopiago by-election in 2006 when I was deployed as security contingent commander for polling in the Kopiago Local-Level Government (LLG) area, and by Ms Susan Ferguson (communication adviser, ESP).

The law and order awareness program came under the community awareness component of the AusAID-funded ESP, but because it was trying to make strategic links with police it was moved into the planning and operations area of ESP, where it was supported by Peter Pascoe, the police liaison adviser. Susan Ferguson maintained links with the program since, as a pilot project, it had implications across the entire awareness program. The proposal was approved for funding in late December 2006.

I put forward the proposal for community policing as I believed it could reduce election-related violence and make for a fair and peaceful election and demonstrate how the community, the PNGEC, civil society groups, and the police could work in partnership to carry out an awareness campaign and enable the people to claim ownership of the election. The ESP was interested in working with the police, since the police are an important part of the election process—and sometimes part of the problem.

I organized a team of people to run the project, selected from police and civil society organizations. These included *Meri I Kirap Sapotim*, the Community Development Scheme, the Provincial AIDS Council, community leaders from all around the Chimbu Province, as well as the PNGEC. The team was made up of 50 police personnel (47 men and 3 women) from across the province, 12 Chimbu-based *Meri I Kirap Sapotim* members (5 men and 7 women), 8 Community Development Scheme members (7 men and 1 woman), 4 provincial AIDS educators (2 men and 2 women), 18 community leaders (all men) and 3 returning officers (all men). In all, some 95 personnel were involved. The

partnership was coordinated and managed by me with the assistance of Pauline Kenna, a human rights lawyer. Her involvement in this project earned her the Papua New Guinea Woman of the Year for 2007 and a major Westpac prize. Other civil society organization members, such as Steven Gari, James Kalyale and Pastor Solomon Minga, gave technical advice.

Before the teams were sent out to run awareness in the districts, all the members attended a week-long ESP training course. The training was conducted using the ESP training manual. I wrote extra material for the police about election-related law and their role in enforcing the law. I also wrote material for them concerning police conduct, particularly what was expected of them during the election. Further to this, all members of the team agreed to abide by a code of conduct during the training. The code of conduct made clear the kind of behaviour expected of everyone.

Civics education was vital as it informed the team members about the laws concerning the illegal practices that were common in all voting places. It told the police about their role during the election and called on them to display a high level of discipline and to be firm and fair in providing election security. It educated the public about the rights of women to vote freely and safely. The people were taught about the new limited preferential voting (LPV) system and how to vote correctly on the polling day. The awareness promoted democracy and the importance of a good and accurate electoral roll for people when voting. It also informed people about the risk of HIV/AIDS infection during elections.

All the police who attended the training responded favourably. Many wished they had had this civic and governance education a long time ago. Importantly, I observed that it gave them both the motivation to go out into the field and the skills and knowledge to run the awareness.

Our awareness started with an official launching in Kundiawa (the main town of Chimbu Province). Following this, messages were sent out to all the districts for the people to prepare to meet the team. The launch attracted about 2000 people and was a good way to demonstrate to the people that the police and other leaders thought this was important.

During the awareness, the teams went far and wide, covering all corners of the province, reaching about 80,000 people. Sixty candidates attended our awareness, as did thousands of people who are illiterate and have no access to schools or media. In Karamui alone, 70 percent are illiterate.

The awareness ended before the writs were open as it was too dangerous to run such awareness during the campaign period. It was conducted for three months commencing February and ending March 2007. Its aim was to prepare people to think and act properly and not get misled by candidates.

Establishing the partnership helped in the sharing of resources and expertise. Police allocated a full-time vehicle; the Provincial AIDS Council provided AIDS educators and materials; civil society groups provided skilled personnel and material, and the PNGEC provided awareness materials.

We carried out awareness district by district and managed to cover all ward areas. To do this we divided into four teams. All teams had police personnel, civil society personnel, AIDS educators and community leaders, as well as a mix of men and women to ensure better gender participation. Each of the partners had its own networks in the districts and these were used to reach out to the people.

As might be expected, there were many logistical difficulties in running a project of this kind, including bad weather, poor communications, poor roads, and remoteness. The weather presented many difficulties in that there was a lot of rain in the early part of the year. The majority of the awareness was undertaken by foot patrols, which walked long distances under frequently difficult conditions. All personnel were paid the same rate of allowance, regardless of whether they were public servants or volunteers. Protective clothing, boots, and sleeping bags were provided for them.

Our teams sought to educate the people on the law and order aspects of elections, particularly electoral offences and their penalties; much attention was given to illegal practices such as under-age voting, threatening or offensive behaviour at polling stations, intimidation, and hijacking of ballot papers. As regards governance, we focused on the roles and responsibilities of elected members of parliament, how to elect a good leader, the separation of powers, bribery and inducement by candidates and supporters, and the rights and responsibilities of voters on polling day. We also conducted HIV/AIDS awareness and informed people about election-related activities that might increase the risk of HIV transmission. We hoped that if people were better informed they would make better decisions during the campaign and polling periods. Generally, our awareness was very well received throughout the province. People in the remote districts claimed that they had never before seen police or public servants in their area; some even expressed resentment and said they would not to vote in the election. A similar protest occurred during the 2004 Chimbu Provincial by-election, when the Haia people of Karamui-Nomane electorate refused to vote and their ballot papers were sent back unused.

Election security

For the overall planning of the election, security was coordinated from the police headquarters in Kundiawa, in consultation with the PNGEC. PPCs provided

intelligence briefings on their respective provinces. The management was particularly cautious after the failings of the 2002 national election. The 2002 election was very violent and was generally regarded as Papua New Guinea's worst election yet. People used every kind of fraud, voter intimidation, theft of ballot boxes, and violence, including rape, destruction of properties and murder. These actions marred the election in some parts of the country; the polls were declared failed in six electoral districts in the Southern Highlands. New elections in those electorates were held successfully in May 2003, with very little violence. Australia gave about K60 million for these supplementary elections. In part, the smooth running of the supplementary elections can be attributed to the huge security presence.

The purpose of the election security was to ensure that polling was conducted democratically, such that people could freely cast their votes without fear, intimidation or any form of threats by any person. It was to ensure that the ballot boxes and ballot papers were conveyed safely into polling locations and returned back safely to the designated lockup, protected at all times by armed security force personnel. Finally, the security was to ensure that counting was conducted transparently and legally, resulting in the declaration of a winner.

Security planning

The security planning for the province involved five stages. The planning process was at the critical stage of planning and implementation when the incumbent PPC, Superintendent Jimmy Onopia, was charged and suspended from duty. He was replaced by Superintendent Joseph Tondop two weeks before polling commenced, and it was under Tondop's command and control that planning was carried out and executed.

The first stage was intelligence gathering prior to the election. This was conducted by police intelligence officers. They gathered data from sources all around the province concerning arms build-up, people planning to hijack ballot boxes or destroy ballot papers, and destruction of road infrastructure into the districts. This enabled police to identify areas of high risk and low risk.

The second stage was the pre-election operation, which focused on high risk areas to create a safe environment for polling to be conducted fairly and democratically. The pre-election operation was carried out two weeks prior to the polling date in all districts. It focused on the intelligence gathered, and was a combined operation involving the police response unit and PNGDF personnel. Raids and searches were conducted in areas of known arms build-up around the province. Several successful operations were undertaken. In one, the home of Mathew Siune, the then sitting member for Kundiawa-Gembogl, was raided

and searched. A rifle with full magazine and 400 SLR rounds was found and confiscated, and the then member was charged for possession of an unlicensed firearm and ammunition.¹

The third planning stage concerned the deployment of response units and polling security. The response units consisted of the PNGDF and police mobile units. The deployment of security personal to polling booths for the six electorates of Chimbu Province was detailed from the main operation order prepared by the election management team in police headquarters. The response units, pre-deployed to the province a full two weeks prior to polling, came under the command of the PPC, who was the operations commander for the election. He decided where and when they were to be deployed. The PPC chose to deploy the response units to problematic and high risk areas. Their deployment to pre-election operations enabled them to crack down on arms build-up areas for a trouble free election on the polling day. By contrast, deployment to general polling security came late: because there were not enough personnel to cover all provinces at once, they were rolled over from province to province and came into Chimbu Province after completion of polling in Southern Highlands, Enga and Western Highlands provinces.

The fourth planning stage covered security for the counting. This sensitive and high risk responsibility was given to the response units as it was considered that desperate candidates and their supporters could disrupt the counting by unlawful acts. The response units were to monitor the perimeters, inside and outside of the counting venue. They had to search counting officials, including the returning officers, before they entered the counting venue to make sure they were free of anything that might affect the counting. Armed personnel were to escort ballot boxes from the storage place into the counting venue. Local police personnel were barred from involvement in any duties close to the counting venue. This was strongly supported by the people of Chimbu, as local policemen were believed to have ties with certain candidates within the province. However, police managers such as the PPC and I were permitted access to the counting centre so that we could supervise the security operation.

The fifth planning stage concerned post-election operations, which were a major concern for the Highlands provinces. Response units and local units were put on standby so as to attend to any election-related violence. Hired helicopters were meant to be available to transport security personnel into remote locations not accessible except by air; however, after polling the helicopters were gone and security personnel found it difficult to get into these areas to address post-election violence.

¹ Siune was later acquitted by Kundiawa Magistrate's Court, even though the firearm and ammunition were found in his possession.

Command structure

Election security in Chimbu involved a combined effort by the RPNGC, the PNGDF, and the Correctional Services, but the police were responsible for the command structure.

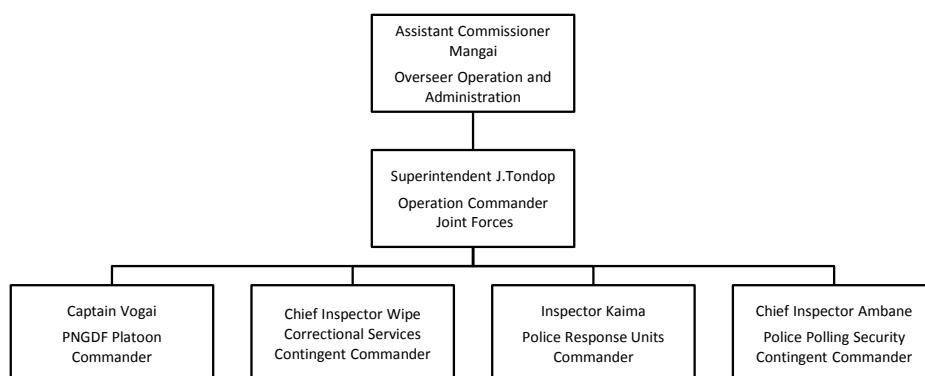


Figure 7.1: Command structure—Chimbu Province election security

Assistant Commissioner Mangae oversaw the entire election operation, while the Chimbu PPC, Joseph Tondop, commanded operations on the ground, issuing directions and orders to all subordinate officers. The PPC also headed the Provincial Election Steering Committee, which had an advisory and support role in facilitating the smooth flow of the election process and maintaining a positive working relationship with the provincial election manager, the Chimbu provincial administration and the joint forces commanders. The contingent commanders (police, PNGDF and Correctional Services) took charge of their respective districts in deployment and prioritizing command and control, reporting to the PPC for direction and assistance.

Deployment of security

The security units deployed to Chimbu Province, and their roles and responsibilities, are detailed in Tables 7.1 and 7.2. In total, 898 security personnel, including approximately 60–70 female officers were deployed.

I was security commander for Salt and Nomane LLG areas and took charge of one section of a PNGDF platoon (10 men), one section of a police mobile unit (10 men), 64 men Correctional Services personnel (including 6 women) and 10 police for polling security.

The area was categorized as high risk due to the build-up of firearms. Inserting my personnel proved problematic, due to remoteness and poor road conditions.

The polling security were dropped off at Sinasina District and had to walk about 10 kilometres into Salt as none of the hired PNGEC vehicles was roadworthy. The response units were meant to be inserted by helicopter with the ballot papers, and waited at Kundiawa; unfortunately the helicopter was delayed for two days due to the rollover (it was extracting personnel from Western Highlands) and as a result the ballot papers and response units were left waiting in Kundiawa.

Table 7.1: Deployed security units and their roles and responsibilities

Units (type)	Number deployed
Response units (armed units)	
Three police mobile squads	90 men (30 men per squad)
One platoon of PNGDF	35 men
Polling security	
PNG Correctional Services	142 personnel, including some women officers
Western Highlands provincial police polling contingent	142 personnel, including about 10 women
National Capital District police reserve unit	140 personnel, including about 8 women
Bomana police polling contingent	172 personnel, including about 30 women
East Sepik police auxiliary	172 personnel
Simbu provincial police polling contingent	130 personnel, including about 6 women

Table 7.2: District of deployment and responsibilities

District	Security contingent/unit	Roles and responsibilities
Kerowagi	Bomana police contingent	polling security
	squad of police mobile	deter violence
	section of PNGDF	deter violence
Chuave	East Sepik auxiliary police	polling security
	squad of police mobile	deter violence
	section of PNGDF	deter violence
Kundiawa-Gembogl	Western Highlands police	polling security
	squad of police mobile	deter violence
	section of PNGDF	deter violence
Gumine	Western Highlands/Simbu police	polling security
	squad of police mobile	deter violence
	section of PNGDF	deter violence
Sinasina-Yongomugl	NCD reserve police	polling security
	squad of police mobile	deter violence
	platoon of PNGDF (from Mt Hagen)	deter violence
Karamui-Nomane	PNG CS contingent	polling security
	section of police mobile	deter violence
	section of PNGDF	deter violence

As Salt LLG is closest to Kundiawa, and thus most accessible, it was selected as the location for the command post to cover both Salt and Nomane LLG areas. There I observed the candidates discussing with the two assistant returning officers where polling locations were to be. The returning officers proved unable to make a firm decision in accordance with set procedures and gazettal. I stepped in and made a decision for them to avoid complications. Candidates and supporters issued threats and caused problems. One candidate, Michael Korry (who is owner of a security business in Port Moresby), rammed his vehicle into the security and polling command post at the Doliba High School, knowing that the response units were still in Kundiawa. However, the situation was under control when the response units arrived. I directed the response units to round up the troublesome candidates. They were brought over and I sternly warned them that if they caused any more problems, they would be arrested when they came into Kundiawa for counting. We wanted to charge Michael Korry for damaging the school gate but the school principal requested payment instead.

There were insufficient numbers of response units to cover both LLG areas on the same day, so polling was conducted in Salt on the first day and Nomane on the second. Polling was conducted without any disruption; however, we witnessed widespread multiple voting due to inflated electoral rolls.

Management issues

The PPC provided the overall leadership of the combined forces during the election. It is at times difficult to manage a joint force of different disciplinary forces. In one instance, there was an armed confrontation between the PNGDF platoon and the local police personnel, when the PNGDF suspected that the local police were collaborating with some local candidates. Shots were fired by the PNGDF at the police and the general public and the situation looked tense. Fortunately, the PPC acted quickly and effectively and good working relations were restored. The PNGDF operation commander, Colonel Mae, and police operation commander Assistant Commissioner S. Kauba, were very supportive of the PPC who warned both the local police and the PNGDF that he would take disciplinary action against them if they failed to work together. He reiterated to both forces that he was the ultimate authority and that they were not to take matters into their own hands. The mutual working relationship was restored then and there.

What worked well and what did not

While the overall security of the election process under police leadership depended heavily on the planning and deployment of security forces and polling staff, and the acquisition and distribution of equipment, the success of the 2007 national election could best be measured by the cooperative efforts of all agencies in achieving an outcome that has been acclaimed as ‘successful’ and ‘better than 2002’—despite the many difficulties and criticisms, and complaints about the electoral roll, the number of polling places, poor communications, problems with finance and other issues.

Although there were some instances of bad behaviour or lack of action on the part of security forces, and incompetence or corruption in polling and counting situations, often attributable to lack of training, when looking at the deployment of some 1200 troops and up to 3000 election officials one might suggest that these incidents were isolated and that the cooperative partnership in fact contributed to a safe election.

The following security aspects of the election worked well:

- Cooperation between all agencies was very much improved.
- Planning, deployment and extraction of a large contingency of men and women into Chimbu Province was achieved despite lack of transport (helicopters and reliable vehicles).
- A better organized force with commitment to the elections and to the community was achieved.
- Election awareness was improved (although much more is needed in some provinces).
- The Provincial Steering Committee was coordinated well.
- Timely payment of allowances to police eliminated risks.
- Morale and discipline were high.
- Planning and delivery of fuel for air operations in the province was good.
- The use of provincial treasuries for the disbursement of funds by the PPC worked well.
- Counting was well conducted by PNGEC officials and security forces.

The following security aspects did not work well:

- Planning was done at headquarters in Port Moresby without considering the local setting of Chimbu Province.
- At times there was a lack of inter-agency communication on logistics.

- An eleventh-hour request for air transport by the PNGEC to move people and election materials caused delays in operations.
- Post-election operations lacked manpower and funding.
- Finance was inadequate and too late.
- Provinces were unable to meet budgets, particularly in securing logistics.
- Road infrastructure into districts was really poor.
- Communication was a major problem at provincial level: there were no networks or integration; there were insufficient handheld radios where polling security was deployed, and without handheld radios no ground-to-air contact; there had been no maintenance of police equipment, including repeaters, for 12 years.
- The cost of hire vehicles, which were often unsuitable and unreliable, was excessive.
- There was inadequate provincial funding to secure local transport: police fleets were run down, with no replacements for up to 15 years.
- Field uniforms: there was only one pair to each police officer so we could not get changed when it got wet.
- No protective clothing or equipment was provided for wet conditions, which prevailed in many areas.
- Training: many security personnel were unaware of their roles and responsibilities; further training was needed on election offences, and arrest and prosecution procedures.
- Many Correctional Services personnel were unaware of the LPV system.

The following electoral matters did not work well:

- The electoral roll was inflated or deflated and largely unused, with line-up voting widespread.
- Polling materials arrived late.
- There were delays in polling.
- Too many polling places in close proximity promoted multiple voting and caused problems with deployment of security.
- Polling places were moved against the advice of security forces, due to community pressure.
- Election officials and police were involved with candidates.
- PNGEC officials were not paid allowances, causing delays to the election process.
- There was a lack of awareness and training for polling officials.
- Returning officers and assistant returning officers lacked capacity to deal with electoral problems.

- Widespread money politics was practiced by candidates.
- One-day polling in the Highlands did not work.

One of the major issues which affected both security and polling personnel was the exceptionally bad weather across the whole of Chimbu Province. As a result, polling places which had been deemed accessible by road during the planning phase were rendered accessible only by air. Further delays in some districts were caused because helicopters were busy extracting polling security from Western Highlands Province and were not available to insert personnel into Chimbu Province for polling to start on time. Moreover, when the helicopters became available there were further delays in some districts because the helicopters could not get off the ground due to the weather. This hampered the insertion of polling security and polling officials.

Local issues which affect law and order at election time

Compounding the existing law and order problems are local issues that come into play in the Highlands provinces at election time. These issues, which are deeply entrenched in the local political cultures, need to be critically addressed by government.

The *haus lain* (clan) has assumed paramount importance in local political culture, so much so that there is often consensus to corrupt the electoral process. Candidates think that it is their ultimate right to get all the votes from their own council ward. Individuals face intense pressure to vote along clan lines and the majority of voters think it is wrong to give their votes to candidates outside their clan. This is a part of Simbu political culture that the law cannot override. Unfortunately, though, it deprives people of their free will to vote for a candidate of their choice and denies their democratic right to a free and fair election.

Under LPV, candidates sought to control their own ward areas during polling so as to secure the first preference vote. At most of the polling booths I went to, candidates or their campaign managers were physically present to ensure that they got all the first preferences.

Many candidates also sought to influence polling by trying to shift gazetted polling locations to ungazetted locations in order to control the way people voted. Although this practice is illegal, polling stations in some parts of Chimbu were moved when presiding officers collaborated with the candidates. It was difficult for security personnel to stop this. Under law, the presiding officer is the designated authority at the polling station. Moreover, when security personnel

attempt to intervene they put their safety at risk. The biggest deterrent to this sort of behaviour is a large security presence, and in locations where there was an adequate security presence, candidates and voters were controlled and this allowed for good polling. This corrupt and unacceptable behaviour needs to be addressed.

Though police are authorized to make arrests at election time, they are often powerless against local populations which are heavily armed. This is a serious constraint for the law-enforcing body. I personally encountered instances where illegal firearms were being carried around freely—particularly in the Salt and Nomane LLG areas—but felt unable to arrest people without risking my life.

During the polling I, and the security personnel under my command, witnessed numerous instances of multiple voting, candidates controlling polling booths, and other violations around polling areas, in all the districts of the province. For the most part, the security personnel deployed to polling stations were unarmed and so could not do much. We were also conscious of the need to avoid decisions that might put polling officials' and security personnel's lives at risk. Geography was a major concern, as most of the locations were remote and we knew it would be difficult for more security personnel to get in and assist if the situation got out of hand. Offences were committed by people who took advantage of the situation, knowing that we could not arrest them all. In Salt-Nomane multiple voting using inflated rolls was observed during polling. The response units were unable to contain the situation. We closed down only one polling station, at Ward 4, Salt LLG, and confiscated 200 ballot paper as all the eligible voters had voted. We arrested six people and took them to the command post where they admitted to multiple voting. But the location was remote and there was no transport to take them into Kundiawa to lay charges against them, so the suspects were cautioned and released back to the village.

Aftermath of election violence

For the most part, polling and counting in Chimbu was completed despite minor disturbances, two murders, and much multiple voting made possible by the inflated electoral roll. The 2007 election was widely seen to be a better election than previous national elections: no ballot boxes were destroyed, no polling booths over-run and no polling stations hijacked, as had happened in the past.

In part this can be attributed to LPV. Candidates and supporters did not want to endanger the ballot boxes and hence no ballot box was destroyed or disputed. Their concern was that if a ballot box was hijacked their opponent might well lose all 1st preferences but they might lose 2nd and 3rd preferences. This

was one way in which the LPV system produced a better election. LPV also contributed to a more peaceful campaign period as there was more cooperation between candidates.

All around the province the people were happy that there was less violence during the campaign and polling periods. Nevertheless, violence erupted as the counting proceeded to its final stages for all the six electorates of Simbu and after the declaration of the open seats there was violence throughout the province. Losing candidates and their supporters or tribesmen started attacking innocent men, women and children who had not voted for them. They complained that they had paid voters but had not received promised support. Public servants and community leaders who had helped ensure a peaceful election process were also attacked and their property destroyed. One notable example was the burning down of Kaima and Munuma villages in Gumine District by a losing candidate and his supporters. Not only did they burn down houses, they destroyed food gardens and livestock.

School children were prevented from attending school, health centres were closed, and people were fearful of travelling into town, concerned that they might get attacked along the way. In Salt and Nomane where I had been stationed, bridges were dismantled and for four months people could not get into Kundiawa or Goroka.

These provocative acts by losing candidates and supporters angered people from opposing clans giving rise to full-scale tribal fights, which resulted in damage to local infrastructure and disrupted normal service delivery to the districts. Added to this, there were constant road blocks on all district roads and harassment of the travelling public by criminal elements taking advantage of the situation. Bridges were destroyed, depriving people of access to schools, health services, and police assistance. Government employees could not perform normal duties as a result of high tension and violence. The costs were immense.

Police in Papua New Guinea are often criticized for their slowness to respond when security incidents arise. Sometimes these complaints are warranted. But in Chimbu the Corrective Services personnel, reserve police, and auxiliary police from East Sepik were withdrawn after the completion of polling and the armed units (PNGDF and police mobile units) were withdrawn a week after counting, leaving only the provincial police to attend to the post-election violence. Thus, despite the huge security presence during polling there was limited capacity to respond to post-election violence. With limited personnel and resources at his disposal, and given the remoteness of some of the locations at which fighting broke out, the PPC focused on mediation processes in an effort restore peace to the warring communities. Provincial peace mediators (gazetted peace mediators that solve conflicts through a mediation process) and police personnel went into

fighting zones and camped out, negotiating with tribal leaders for peace. All parties agreed to mediation, and those involved in the fighting were asked to lay down their weapons and let peace and normalcy prevail in their communities. The mediation process proved successful, as people realized that fighting would only cause pain and misery for themselves. They recognized, too, that the candidates who had incited the violence had returned to Moresby or other centres and were not the ones suffering. The success of mediation processes was an advance on the use of force previously relied upon by police.

The police mobile squads were originally established in the Highlands to respond to tribal fights. Over the years, however, they have lost their effectiveness, so that the use of force by police to stop tribal fighting has little impact in present-day Chimbu. In part this is because the public is equally or better armed. Instead, the police are now using restorative mediation approaches to solve tribal fights. These are proving far more successful. Mediation involving police, peace mediators, community leaders and representatives of warring tribes has been able to bring an end to tribal fights in Sinasina, Salt and Nomane. Table 7.3 provides some information on the tribal fights around Chimbu during the post-election period.

Table 7.3: Outcome of tribal fights in Chimbu Province

District	Number of tribal fights	Dead	Police action
Kerowagi	5	4	Peace mediation stopped all the fights
Sinasina-Yongomugl	1	4	Peace mediation stopped all the fights
Chuave	1	2	Peace mediation stopped all the fights
Gumine	4	4	Peace mediation stopped all the fights
Karamui-Nomane	2	6	Peace mediation stopped all the fights
Kundiawa-Gembogl	1	3	Peace mediation stopped all the fights (2 killed by police in self defence)

Simbu administration and police actions to end violence

The Chimbu police sought to involve the provincial administration in addressing the violence that emerged in the aftermath of the 2007 election. This proved difficult, compounded by the fact that the new government was not yet in place and public servants were not performing to expectations.

Some districts helped fund police operations in mediating peace. However, funding was delayed for more than a week; this hampered efforts in as much as police and mediation officials found it difficult to get into the fighting zones. In some of the districts, particularly Salt, Nomane and Karamui public servants did

not help the police or involve themselves in the peace mediation process, which was undertaken by community leaders, peace mediators, and police. Generally, people in the communities involved in the peace process were frustrated at not being able to air their grievances to community leaders and government officials. They felt it was important to see government officials, church and community leaders, and police working hand-in-hand to address law and order issues in the communities and commended us for using community policing rather than heavy-handed tactics. The government should assist the people in restoring peace and order.

Prior to the 2007 election, people in Chimbu had come to see election violence as a normal part of their lives in the five-year election cycle. They had also come to expect that the police would respond to post-election violence with force. The 2007 election in Chimbu marks a watershed in police–community relations in that, despite limited manpower, the police responded effectively to post-election violence, opening dialogue and restoring peace and normalcy in the province. Tribal fighting has now stopped and the people have started to reclaim their lives.

Community involvement in the election and election aftermath

In the two years I have been working in Chimbu, I have found the people understanding and easy to negotiate with. They responded well to the awareness we provided and this helped in dealing with problems during and after the election. Community leaders and elders took the initiative in helping to organize their people and find solutions to their problems.

During the awareness period, local leaders helped to gather their constituents together to ensure a good attendance at every awareness session conducted—the awareness covered 80,000 people in three months. During the polling the leaders in most communities assisted by giving pre-polling speeches appealing for peace and calm during the polling in their respective ward areas. I am of the view that the election awareness helped create this beneficial partnership, because the police and leaders had had the opportunity to work together in the lead-up to the election. In some of the more remote areas people could not remember the last time police had visited.

In the aftermath of the election, police manpower was strained. Only four to six police personnel were deployed into each fighting zone to address the tribal conflict. In many cases the police deployed were the same police who had been involved in the pre-election awareness. Again, the community leaders

and people welcomed us, listened to what we had to say, and helped restore peace and normalcy. For example, in Salt LLG area, where I had conducted awareness and was deployed as contingent commander, two tribes at Yobai were in the middle of a tribal fight when two policemen and I came into the area. We walked in unarmed, and were pleasantly surprised to find that the combatants laid down their weapons and withdrew back to their comfort zones. Personally, I was amazed. We visited both warring tribes and saw that they were still armed with weapons ranging from a semi automatic rifle and Bushmaster shotgun, to bows and arrows. Community leaders from the surrounding tribes came in to assist us in the peace negotiation, and the leaders from the warring clans controlled their men, paving the way for a peace settlement.

The people saw the law as a neutral body working for peace. They recognized that we were not there to support either of the conflicting parties. We chose to go into the war zone unarmed so as to indicate to the warring tribes that the police were there to help mediate peace.

Conclusion

Election 2007 has shown that partnerships between the police and the community are the way forward if we are to solve lawlessness in the Highlands. Community policing produces a win-win situation: it saves police time and resources and allows communities the space to give their views on how they want to make peace. As the communities know the root cause of the problems, they can suggest alternative ways to make peace in accordance with their traditional ways of solving conflicts. They are the people who will live in the communities and they want to see peace prevail for a long time for the good of their families.

The awareness we conducted yielded some impressive results. It reduced police work. It also resulted in fewer campaign houses and less corruption in some areas. Relationships built between police and community members helped in resolving problems during elections and in the post-election period. Understanding of the geography, through walking across the province doing awareness, proved invaluable for police when making logistical arrangements (especially as PNGEC officials did not always have this knowledge themselves). Much greater trust of police by community members, built through the awareness campaign, increased community respect for police and helped police sort out problems with the community during the election. Knowledge gained by the police through the ESP training and through the awareness, coupled with their past election experiences, helped individual officers in taking the initiative to step in when PNGEC officials were out of their depth. What Election 2007

has shown is that joint electoral awareness is both essential and invaluable. The PNGEC needs support and good leadership to conduct elections and this can be provided in part by the security forces and the wider community.

In my view, the 2007 election in Chimbu was an improvement on past elections. But we must not rest on our laurels. Further civic and law and order awareness is needed and must be undertaken on an ongoing basis. We must look into the difficulties of enforcing election laws and further clarify the role of the police.

Security units, including mobile squads and the PNGDF, need to stay longer after elections to help respond to tribal fights. In Chimbu we were lucky because the good relations we had established in the lead-up to the election meant that post-election fighting could be brought under control quickly. Sadly this has not been the case in other parts of the Highlands.

8. Conducting and Securing Elections in a High-Risk Setting: The Koroba-Lake Kopiago Experience

Chris Kenny and Nicole Haley

This chapter offers a security perspective on the elections in Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate during the 2007 general election. It looks specifically at the challenges of conducting and securing elections in a volatile high-risk setting. It finds that the 2007 election was considerably less violent than recent general elections and this was attributable in no small part to the huge investment in security. It also finds that there is considerable room for improvement with respect to inter-agency coordination and electoral administration, and that the role of the security forces should be clarified and pre-deployment training provided to all security personnel prior to the 2012 elections.

Background

Koroba-Lake Kopiago is a large electorate comprising four rural local-level governments (LLGs). It is situated in the far north-western corner of Southern Highlands Province (SHP), and is one of eight open electorates in the province. There is very little by the way of government service delivery and armed conflict is commonplace, as are illegal weapons (see Haley and Muggah 2006). Indeed the district is awash with weapons. Despite this there are only six regular Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC) police stationed in the district (all at Koroba Station) and no properly functioning village courts. Political leaders (including many of the ward councillors) spend little time in the district and vast majority of public servants are also absent. It is politicians and candidates who are largely responsible for the proliferation of small arms in the electorate.

In the decade or so leading up to 2007, elections in Koroba-Lake Kopiago had become increasingly violent, so much so that that the elections had failed in 2002 due to widespread violence and electoral malpractice on a scale never before seen in Papua New Guinea elections. Dozens of people (including police) were killed; a high-profile candidate was kidnapped and held for ransom; all airstrips in the western end of the province were closed following threats that planes would be shot out of the sky, and people throughout the province were threatened and intimidated by wealthy candidates and their supporters, often armed with high-powered weapons (Haley 2004). The failure of the 2002 election

saw the national government assume authority in the province and the greater part of the province's population were without political representation for some 10 months, until supplementary elections were held in April/May 2003.

Post 2002, elections in SHP have been secured by huge investments in security. The 2003 supplementary elections, for example were conducted under a national call-out with the assistance of 2000 additional police, soldiers and prison warders; the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kapiago by-election involved over 800 police and Defence Force personnel, and the 2007 general election in SHP involved both the special police operations (SPO) security force, consisting of 200 regular police and 150 Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel, and 2500 additional national elections (NATEL) security personnel.

In the months leading up to the 2007 elections SHP had been subject to a state of emergency (SOE) from August 2006 to February 2007 and thereafter SPO which remained in force until 14 August 2007, by which time the 2007 election had been completed. When announcing the SOE, which was subsequently declared to be unconstitutional, Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare advised that the executive government had taken this step as part of its ongoing efforts 'to restore governance, security and public administration in the province' and in an effort to 'avoid at all costs a repetition of the events of 2002 where the national elections were declared illegal due to the use of arms by competing parties'.

The SOE was accompanied by a gun amnesty, which had very limited success. Only a handful of the estimated 2500 factory-made weapons thought to be in civilian hands in SHP (Alpers 2005) were recovered and less than 300 firearms in total. Like past weapons collection initiatives it yielded mainly home-made weapons (see Chapter 6). In reality the SOE and SPO had little impact in Koroba-Lake Kapiago. This was because none of the SOE troops were stationed in the electorate, being deployed instead to the major urban centres and key locales on the Highlands Highway and major trunk roads. In the case of Koroba-Lake Kapiago, much of the electorate is accessible only by road.

NATEL 07

In contrast to the SOE/SPO, a PNGDF platoon was deployed to Koroba District during the national elections security operations, NATEL 07. Lieutenant Chris Kenny commanded the security operations in the electorate. That troops were deployed to Koroba-Lake Kapiago as part of the national elections security operations was hardly surprising, as the electorate was deemed to be high risk,

being one of the five open electorates in which the 2002 national elections had failed. What was surprising was that it had not been a focus of the SOE/SPO operations. Taskings under NATEL Ops 07 were to:

- create an environment conducive to good elections
- foster community support
- conduct awareness
- gather intelligence
- identify and contain security threats
- oversee the conduct of polling
- conduct post-election operations.

Given the events of 2002, SHP was assessed as being a likely problem area with respect to the 2007 elections. On this basis the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) decided that SHP would poll first and on a single day, 30 June 2007. For the most part, pre-polling operations in the Highlands were focused on SHP, with insertion scheduled for 18–19 June, pre-polling operations 20–29 June, polling 30 June, post-election operations 1–31 July and withdrawal 1 August. The decision to deploy security personnel to SHP well in advance of polling was prudent, particularly in Koroba-Lake Kapiago, given the absence of SOE/SPO operations in the lead-up to the elections.

In terms of threats, we expected to find and have to deal with:

- illegal weapons
- unresolved election-related issues
- candidates and supporters
- criminal elements
- organized syndicates.

Pre-polling operations focused on minimizing these threats. Being deployed two weeks prior to the scheduled commencement of polling meant we were in a position to undertake detailed reconnaissance and attend to security threats well in advance of polling. It also enabled the security forces to make informed decisions about where best to deploy our limited security resources on polling day. Importantly, the pre-deployment of security personnel meant we were also able to undertake election and security related awareness, and this contributed to the good security situation observed on polling day (see Figure 8.1). Unfortunately, however, the security personnel were not well supported during this period, having limited rations, poor communication, and a shortage of vehicles and fuel.



Figure 8.1: Lieutenant Kenny leading awareness at Koroba

What the security personnel had not expected to encounter were chaotic preparations on the part of the PNGEC. Nor did we expect that we would effectively have to conduct the elections. Certainly we were not trained to run the elections and in fact, unlike the police, did not receive election-related pre-deployment training. Instead we were merely issued with a little security booklet (RPNGC 2007a), with which we were expected to familiarize ourselves.

Much of the NATEL 07 PNGDF contingent, who as it turned out were given special police powers and deployed to the most high-risk settings, were unclear about their role in general, and about electoral processes and electoral offences more specifically.

Another thing we did not expect to encounter were international and domestic observers. The security booklet we were issued with did not include anything about the domestic observation. An updated version of the booklet, *Election Handbook 2007* (RPNGC 2007b), printed in June 2007, did include a section of observers but was unfortunately issued too late and as a consequence could not be distributed to security personnel already in the field.

Election preparedness

It will, of course, always be difficult to conduct elections in remote rural electorates that lack basic infrastructure and are accessible for the most part only by air, but that said the planning, organization, administration and preparedness for the elections in Koroba-Lake Kapiago was woefully inadequate. Logistics, administration and planning were hampered by the fact that the key electoral officials, namely the returning officer, Denny Hongai, and assistant returning officers, Don Piru and Haddick Sakopa, were absent much of the time—especially in the lead-up to polling. For instance, when the security personnel arrived in the electorate the returning officer was absent. He was reportedly in Mendi, the provincial headquarters, collecting his election materials. He arrived in the electorate, with his electoral supplies, approximately 36 hours ahead of the commencement of polling, claiming to have been delayed in Mendi waiting for pre-polling allowances and materials.

Communications proved extremely problematic throughout the election period for both the election officials and the security personnel. A lack of radios and failure of the joint communications strategy meant that there was no communication between the election manager, returning officer and assistant returning officers once in the electorate and that it was difficult for those in the field to get accurate information about the movement of air transport. For much of the election period the returning officer had no idea what was going on outside his immediate purview. And his purview was limited indeed, as he chose to remain safely ensconced within the security of the Koroba hospital grounds where the security operations were based. The assistant returning officers for North Koroba and South Koroba LLG areas likewise chose to base themselves within the secured hospital compound and they proved as ineffectual as the returning officer.

Communications for security forces were not ideal either, in that mobile phones, which worked and upon which we relied in other parts of the Highlands, did

not work anywhere in Koroba-Lake Kapiago electorate. The PNGDF-issued radio also proved problematic. It enabled radio contact with headquarters in Port Moresby but could not be used to contact senior officers at the provincial headquarters in Mendi. Likewise, it did not permit contact with the police who were commanding the security operations in the province, who were operating on a separate radio system. Fortunately the domestic observers had a satellite phone and made it available to both the security and electoral personnel. Even with the phone, it proved impossible to contact the SHP election manager, and so desperate pleas for ballot box seals (see below) and later for air transport to insert polling teams into polling places that were accessible only by air, had to be relayed directly to the electoral commissioner and operations manager via advisers attached to the Electoral Support Program in Port Moresby.

The day before polling was due to commence the security personnel and observers gathered in the hospital grounds to witness the distribution of ballot papers and election materials. Neither the returning officer nor assistant returning officers were interested in undertaking this important task, the latter being more interested in finalizing the lists of polling officials, which seemingly involved meeting with delegations representing key candidates and an endless stream of would-be election officials. As the day progressed several thousand people gathered outside the hospital fence, wanting to know the composition of polling teams, and who was to be engaged to conduct the elections.

Around mid-morning it became evident that the key electoral officials, namely the returning officer and the assistant returning officers for North and South Koroba, were unwilling or unable to make the necessary election preparations. It was also evident to observers and security personnel that the returning officer and assistant returning officers were supporting different candidates, which was detrimentally impacting upon their performance. Accordingly security personnel, under the eye of the domestic observers, stepped in and sorted and distributed all the essential election supplies such as the ward rolls, pens, rulers, candidate posters, ballot papers and T-shirts.

One of the most critical aspects of the election preparations took place without the active involvement of the election officials, namely the distribution of ballot papers. This was done by Lieutenant Kenny and his section commanders, with guidance from the domestic observers who advised that the number of papers issued to each ward should match the enrolments in that ward and that each ward should be allocated only five additional papers. The observers and the security commander (but no electoral officials) kept a register of papers issued to each polling station. Several of the candidates subsequently became aware of this and wrote to the returning officer on 7 July 2007 seeking clarification about the total number of ballot papers issued to each polling place. In the same letter they also alleged that unnamed candidates had printed extra ballot papers.



Figure 8.2: Papua New Guinea Defence Force distributing election materials



Figure 8.3: Lieutenant Kenny distributing ballot papers

As the day progressed it became evident that the returning officer had given no real thought to the logistics of inserting the 51 polling teams he was responsible for. He reported that he had not received his pre-polling advance and so was not in a position to hire vehicles and/or purchase fuel. Key operational and logistical matters had been left to the last minute, and were dependent on the availability of funds. In the absence of these, the returning officer appeared completely paralysed. He spent much of the day before polling trying to make contact with the election manager and SHP finance officer seeking to enquire about his pre-polling funds, instead of undertaking the final election preparations. In his stead the PNGDF arranged for and funded the insertion and extraction of polling teams. They achieved this by using PNGDF vehicles and fuel and by commandeering local vehicles and or local fuel supplies for use during the election. Without this action the election would not have proceeded.

Similar observations were made in Kagua-Erave Open electorate where the security forces were likewise relied upon to transport ballot boxes and polling teams because funds that should have been released prior to polling were not received until after the polling was complete (see Chapter 20). The pre-polling advance the returning officer had been expecting was meant to cover pre-polling expenses, including the purchase of fuel to insert polling teams, hiring of drivers and security, polling team advances, and incidental allowances for polling officials. It was not received until two days after the commencement of polling and then the amount received was less than half of what had been expected. When the funds arrived, the returning officer requested that both authors witness and record the counting of the money, reporting that in the past he had received less than the full amount indicated on the paperwork he was expected to sign. In this instance, the paperwork accompanying the 'advance' indicated that K99,869 should have been received, although we confirmed that only K43,500 was received. Similar observations were made by the Nicole Haley during the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kapiago by-election, where official paperwork indicated that payments had been made to phantom polling officials. While we understand that delays in the release of funds, in this case, were in part due to the late appropriation from Treasury, this does not explain the missing money.

In Koroba the lists of polling officials were finalized at dusk (5.45pm) on the eve of polling and were still being read out and argued over as night fell (see Figure 8.2). Polling teams were instructed to return at first light on polling day for training. In the end, only presiding officers were offered training and this was very cursory, lasting only 20 minutes with no opportunity for questions. The training was cut short when polling officials tried to ask about their polling allowances and raised complaints about outstanding payments dating back to the 2003 supplementary elections and the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kapiago by-election. At Kapiago, polling officials received no training. Throughout the electorate polling officials were critical of this lack of training. Training manuals were not used during the training session at Koroba and were not issued to polling officials anywhere in the Koroba-Lake Kapiago electorate.



Figure 8.4: Lieutenant Kenny reading out polling officials' names

Around 3.30pm on the eve of polling an additional 60 unarmed police arrived to supplement the 31 Defence Force personnel deployed to oversee the elections in Koroba-Lake Kapiago electorate. Collectively we were expected to secure 51 polling stations against a potentially well-armed populous in an electorate where the 2002 general elections had failed. By way of comparison, the 2006

Koroba-Lake Kapiago by-election, which had taken place some 11 months earlier in July 2006, had involved a security force of over 800 police and Defence Force personnel.

Knowing the history of the electorate, specifically that a police officer had been killed at Koroba during the 2002 elections and that there had been further election-related deaths in the lead-up to the 2007 elections, several of the unarmed police refused to be deployed with polling teams. They were redeployed to Enga Province before polling was complete in SHP.

Polling

In SHP, where polling commenced, the provincial police contingent was boosted by 2500 additional NATEL security personnel (2000 police—mostly auxiliary and community police—and 500 PNGDF personnel). Despite the large security presence, security remained thin on the ground. Typically one or two unarmed police provided the security at most polling stations, while armed PNGDF provided security at more high-risk locations and acted as response units. That said, we are aware of several wards where polling proceeded in the absence of polling security. The Yatemali polling station is a case in point (see below).

One-day polling, scheduled for 30 June, proved unworkable in Koroba-Lake Kapiago due to poor planning and infrastructure, the late release of funds, and a lack of vehicles and air transport. Polling was delayed by up to two days in those areas where polling teams needed to be inserted by air. In total it took five days to complete the polling.

In terms of the conduct of polling, voting irregularities were the norm rather than the exception in Koroba-Lake Kapiago. Security personnel and observers alike witnessed rampant cheating and malpractice, including underage voting, multiple voting, 'line-up' voting, and serial voting. There was no secret ballot and excess ballot papers were used at many polling stations. Assisted voting, much of it seemingly forced, was commonplace and at several polling stations polling officials were observed to be issuing pre-marked ballot papers. At other polling stations groups of young men were issued with entire books of ballot papers, which they were observed to be complete en masse (Figure 8.5).

In two cases where pre-marked ballot papers were being issued by polling officials and candidate scrutineers, security personnel stepped in and insisted that the polling station be closed down mid-afternoon. The presiding officers from both polling stations, namely Ereiba 1 and Ereiba 2, subsequently complained to the assistant returning officer and to domestic observers, including Nicole Haley, insisting that voting had been 'going well', that 'people were voting for the

candidate of their choice’ and that the ‘votes were being shared by all of the candidates’. They subsequently wrote to the returning officer requesting that polling be resumed on 1 July 2007. The request was denied. As it turned out, over 80 percent of first preference votes in these two boxes went to the former MP, Herowa Agiwa.



Figure 8.5: Block voting at Tumbite, 30 June 2007

The location and positioning of polling stations clearly contributed to and facilitated the widespread malpractice observed. For example, there were seven polling places at Koroba Station (Teria 1, Teria 2, Pandu, Andiria 1, Andiria 2, Koroba Station and Kereneba Part 2). These were all set up within five minutes walk of each other, and voters were observed moving backwards and forwards between them. Three of these polling stations were moved, the returning officer explained, from their gazetted locations to ‘make it easier for voters to move between polling stations’. At Pureni, in South Koroba LLG area, four polling stations (Tumbite, Pubulumu 1, Pubulumu 2 and Tangimapu) were set up on Tumbite airstrip. Three of the four polling stations had been moved from their gazetted locations on grounds of alleged security threats, although it should be noted that no such threats were reported to the security personnel. It is also worth noting that this is one of the locations where the most blatant fraud was observed, in that a group of approximately 30 young men sitting at desks and in small groups under tarpaulins completed close to 6000 ballot papers in

the space of six hours. Tumbite and Pubulumu are also two of the key areas in which enrolments in already over-enrolled wards increased further during the verification stage, so much so that at the time of the 2007 election enrolments were three to four times greater than they should have been (see Chapter 21).

In the immediate post-polling period, security personnel who had witnessed such irregularities reported confusion about the true nature of their role. They questioned whether they were there merely to secure the election process as tainted as it was, or whether they should have done more to prevent or deter voting irregularities, and whether they should have shut down the polling stations. Their questions evidenced the fact that they lacked a clear understanding of proper electoral practice and electoral offences more specifically, and that pre-deployment training needs to be more comprehensive. Some were clearly of the opinion that the law was being broken and that electoral offences were being committed but they remained unsure about their powers to intervene. Their uncertainty was compounded by the fact they were never officially sworn in.

Post-polling operations

Past elections in Koroba-Lake Kopyago have seen ballot boxes hijacked at the close of polling. A key task for the security personnel on polling day was the safe transportation of ballot boxes back to secure distribution points. In this case, all boxes were safely returned to Koroba, although there was at least one well planned attempt to intercept some of the North Koroba ballot boxes. It was successfully thwarted by Lieutenant Kenny. The attempted ruse involved a fake mobile squad vehicle, and supporters of an SHP regional candidate dressed in mobile squad uniforms attempting to 'collect' ballot boxes at the close of polling. The same group was later reported to have made concerted attempts to intercept ballot boxes in Tari-Pori electorate as well, and somewhat incredibly was observed to fire upon the crowd gathered outside the Tari police station (see Chapter 20).

As polling teams returned to Koroba at the close of polling, it was evident that many of the presiding officers were incapable of completing their returns due to poor literacy and numeracy. Without exception returns and polling day paperwork were completed after the fact over several days. Many presiding officers sought and requested assistance from the security personnel and observers when completing their returns. They did so because the returning officer had failed to keep a record of ballot papers issued, or a register of unused ballot papers. Few presiding officers knew how many ballot papers they had been issued with. As presiding officers completed their returns, many 'found' books of completed ballot papers that had not been cast on polling day. Some

went as far as to assert that boxes which had been sealed in the presence of observers and security personnel at the close of polling had in fact been sealed prematurely and that the boxes (which were sealed only with padlocks) should be reopened to allow the additional papers to be inserted.

One such case, was that of Yatemali, where the presiding officer lost control of the polling station, including the ballot box and papers, after a fight broke out. The box was taken off into the bush by candidate supporters but was subsequently returned when a PNGDF rapid response unit turned up. The ballot box was returned with 212 completed ballot papers inside. Security personnel also demanded the return of the remaining 685 ballot papers issued to that polling station. Initially these were not forthcoming and on this basis the presiding officer requested fresh polling on 1 July 2007. In his written request he alleged that the returning officer and assistant returning officer had 'deliberately failed to protect the polling' by 'failing to provide essential security'. The request for fresh polling was denied. In the face of this, the missing papers were returned to the presiding officer the following day, with the instruction that they 'must be counted'. The papers were evidently returned completed. Both the presiding officer and returning officer were quite insistent that the security personnel should open the ballot box so that the returned ballots might be counted. They claimed that they had both received death threats and that their lives were in danger if the ballots were not allowed. Security personnel refused to open the box, and although it was transported to Mendi for counting, the box was set aside and not counted.

The delayed release of pre-polling funds, coupled with the funding shortfall detailed above resulted in reduced payments to polling officials, which in turn gave rise to much discontent and saw the majority of returning officers withhold their returns and refuse to attend the count. It also saw polling officials, candidates, and their supporters initially block the transport of ballot boxes to Tari. A full day's mediation on the part of the security personnel was needed in order to gain community consent to transport the ballot boxes to the counting centre. Once consent had been gained the ballot boxes were transported to Tari under security escort without incident. The boxes, along with those from the rest of Hela region, were held in Tari, at the Tari police station, while the Huli candidates argued with the electoral commission over the location of the count. The Hela people had wanted 'their boxes' counted in Tari and not in the provincial headquarters where counting for the entire province was centralized. As a demonstration of their resolve they blockaded the Tari police station where the ballot boxes were being held. As a result, the transportation of the boxes to the counting centre in Mendi was delayed by 10 days.

The observers and security personnel who had overseen the transportation of the ballot boxes to Tari spent several days in Tari waiting for a decision on the

counting venue. This was completely unexpected and presented huge logistical difficulties in that all the local guest-houses were fully booked and being used by the electoral staff and security personnel who were deployed to Tari for the elections. Eventually the observers managed to secure the use of a three-bedroom Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea mission house at Halenguali. It was subsequently used to lodge the 31 PNGDF security personnel who had been stationed at Koroba and 10 domestic observers.

Accommodation was not the only difficulty faced. Extended delays in both Koroba and Tari meant that the security personnel had exhausted their rations and allowances. Thankfully, the Porgera Joint Venture community affairs staff, based in Tari, assisted by providing additional rations. They later assisted with fuel as well, when the NATEL forces who had been based in Koroba-Lake Kapiago were redeployed to Enga Province. Indeed, fuel became a real issue when George Tagobe, a candidate for Tari-Pori Open electorate and the operator of Hela Fuel Distributors, the sole commercial fuel distributor in town, refused to sell fuel to the PNGDF and observer team claiming outstanding debts against both the PNGDF and PNGEC dating back to the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kapiago by-election and the SOE operations.¹

From Tari, the PNGDF platoon that had been based at Koroba-Lake Kapiago was redeployed to Wabag as part of the 1020-strong NATEL security force that oversaw polling and counting in Enga Province. They remained in Wabag after the polling, to secure the count and to respond to post-election violence, but were subsequently deployed back to SHP to respond to post-election fighting in Kagua-Erave electorate.

Conclusions

This chapter has explored the challenges of conducting and securing elections in a high-risk setting. It has highlighted a raft of administrative deficiencies in respect of administration and planning on the part of the PNGEC. It has also identified aspects of the security operations that might be improved. These include more comprehensive pre-deployment training for PNGDF personnel, and improved communications so that there is secure reliable communication between all key stakeholders. The chapter finds that security in the Highlands

1 A fortnight or so before the issue of writs, Alphonse (2007) had reported that there were likely to be disruptions to the elections due to the 'non-payment of outstanding monies for services and goods provided during the state of emergency operations'. He specifically warned that Hela Fuel Distributors managing director, George Tagobe, was refusing to supply fuel to both security personnel and electoral commission staff on account of K100,000 in outstanding invoices.

during the election period was much improved, and that a factor which contributed to the good security situation was the pre-deployment of NATEL forces a full two weeks prior to polling.

Over the course of the election period, the security personnel worked very long hours, with little rest. Throughout the country they were observed to be better behaved than in past elections and to have conducted themselves professionally in the main (Haley and Anere 2009:47). They were observed to use mediation and community policing to quell disputes and diffuse potentially volatile situations and were rarely seen to exercise any unnecessary force. Although it was not their role, they also stepped in to ensure the smooth running of the elections, contributing to both awareness and logistics. Indeed in several places the security forces not only contained potentially volatile situations, but effectively ran the elections (see Chapters 7, 20 and 21). Were it not for their intervention it is likely the elections would have again failed.

Although they performed well overall and made a significant contribution to the conduct of elections, the security personnel found it difficult to deter voting irregularities. This was possibly due to the fact that many were unarmed and most poorly trained. Those in the PNGDF contingent deployed to Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorate reported that they had received no pre-deployment training. As a consequence many seemed unclear about their role in general, and about electoral processes and electoral offences more specifically. Clearly, the role of the security forces needs to be clarified and pre-deployment training provided to all security personnel prior to the 2012 elections, so that they are not seen to be securing a process tainted by fraud, malpractice and significant irregularities (cf. Institute of Policy Studies 2004:26) and so that they might make a significant contribution to electoral governance. This is particularly important given the role the security forces play at election time and the fact that elections are now a whole-of-government exercise. Clearly the RPNGC, PNGDF and Correctional Services personnel deployed during elections need specific and consistent, as opposed to ad hoc, training on electoral procedures and electoral offences, guidance on when to intervene, and the extent of their special constable powers under a national call-out. Finally we recommend that electoral officials and security personnel charged with the responsibility to run and secure elections in known trouble spots and high-risk settings be better supported. Left to their own devices without effective communication or adequate funding they are deeply compromised.

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9. Political Parties and the 2007 National Election: Alignment to Reform?

Alphonse Gelu

Introduction

Papua New Guinea's parliamentary democracy took a new turn in the period 2002–2007, by maintaining continuity in the political regime. This was probably attributable to an important reform that was instituted by the Morauta government in 2001, namely the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* (OLIPPAC). While this is a significant development, some sceptics are not comfortable with several aspects of the reform, such as the provisions for the formation of government and the continued success of independent candidates in the elections.

The 2007 election was the second in Papua New Guinea to be conducted under the OLIPPAC, and the parliament of 2002–2007 was the first in which a post-independence government served a full term in office. In 2007 the incumbent prime minister, Sir Michael Somare, as leader of the National Alliance party, was returned to office.

This chapter asks: what role did the ambitious political reforms, aimed at strengthening political parties, play in delivering this result? And how have Papua New Guinea's loosely knit and flexible political parties changed under the new institutional arrangements?

There is a substantial literature on the role of political parties in Papua New Guinea (Wolfers 1970; Stephen 1972; Hegarty 1979; King 1989; May 1984, 2002, 2006; Reilly 1999; Anere 2000; Okole 2006) and a general agreement that political parties are highly fragmented and have remained weak in terms of ideology and organization. They are essentially parliamentary factions and have not provided a link between government and society.

Papua New Guinea has always had a multi-party system, with a record of 43 political parties contesting the 2002 national elections and 34 contesting in 2007. From 1977 to 2002, the number of parties contesting the elections was between five and ten. Despite the proliferation, parties remain detached from the

people. Like parties in mature democracies such as Australia and New Zealand, Papua New Guinea parties develop policy platforms, endorse candidates, and campaign to attract support for their candidates. However, their support base is limited and the large number of independents winning seats is an indication that the people do not vote along party lines.

Political parties in the 2007 election

A total of 2759 candidates contested the 2007 election with 1478 standing as independents and 1281 endorsed by political parties. A total of 34 parties contested the 2007 elections. This number was a decrease from the 2002 elections. The number of candidates endorsed by parties ranged from 91 by the National Alliance to 1 by the National Front Party. Those which endorsed more than 50 candidates were National Alliance (91), New Generation Party (90), Pangu (84), People's Progress Party (72), PNG Party (61) and Peoples National Congress (51). People's Action Party endorsed 48.

Campaign styles by political parties

As in the previous elections, political parties began their preparations early, in 2006. The process started with the different parties formulating their policies and holding party conventions to sort out internal matters relating to leadership, membership and party policies.

The campaign in 2007 was not as intense as those of past elections. There was less of the fanfare and feasting that was characteristic of previous elections, though attempts were made to buy the loyalty of voters through the distribution of money and goods, especially in the Highlands. Sir Michael Somare was accused of giving out K600 million for infrastructure projects in his electorate (East Sepik Provincial). The OLIPPAC authorizes the payment of K10,000 for each party-endorsed MP before the end of the parliamentary term and this favours the larger parties. It is generally accepted, also, that the parties in government enjoy greater access to funding for local projects, giving those parties a further advantage.

However, the outlay of money did not guarantee success. A notable example was in the Western Highlands Provincial contest, where 25 candidates stood against the sitting member, Paias Wingti, a former prime minister once named as the richest man in the Pacific. They included a young unknown candidate, Tom Olga, a former student at the University of Papua New Guinea. Olga started his campaign soon after the 2002 election. With a very small budget, he walked from village to village, sleeping in the villages and talking with the people. His

style of campaigning made him popular, and despite Wingti's strong showing in the first preference count, Olga took the lead in the count of preferences and he was eventually declared the winner. Several high-profile candidates, including Bart Philemon in Lae Open, Sir Joe Tauvasa in West New Britain Provincial and Powes Parkop in National Capital District, also ran relatively low-cost campaigns, with mixed results. Philemon won his seat but Tauvasa, despite an early lead, came second to National Alliance candidate Peter Humphreys, who spent thousands of kina on his campaign. For Parkop, it was a tough battle against the incumbent, Wari Vele, governor of National Capital District who had won the seat in a controversial by-election in 2006. Vele, a successful businessman, ran an expensive campaign with advertisements on television and a theme song performed by popular artist Moses Tau, which referred to Vele as 'lightning and thunder'. Parkop told the people he had no money to spend but encouraged them to vote for good leadership. He won comfortably.

Several candidates campaigned on a platform of good leadership, integrity, and promotion of good governance through transparency, accountability and maintenance of the rule of law. The election of Parkop, and the re-election of Dame Carol Kidu in Moresby South and Sir Mekere Morauta in Moresby North-East, suggested that, at least in the national capital, such a platform had some appeal to voters in 2007.

The lower intensity of campaigning might be ascribed to the use of limited preferential voting, which encourages alliances between the different parties and candidates. In some electorates, communities invited parties and candidates to come together and present their policies in a combined rally. Candidates and parties carried out more extensive campaigns than in the past, in order to collect preference votes. Candidates ventured into enemy territories, something that seldom happened in previous elections.

Radio was the most common means of transmitting information about parties and candidates. Newspapers were also used by parties which could meet the high cost of printing campaign materials. Television was used by a few parties.

Most of the political party campaigns kicked off soon after their party conventions. The first political party to use the media in its campaign was Pangu Pati, whose parliamentary leader, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, announced the four main policy pillars of the party. This was followed by the ruling National Alliance party, whose campaign preparations were interrupted by a struggle over the party's leadership. This was settled when Bart Philemon, the deputy leader of the party, was expelled, allowing Sir Michael Somare to continue his leadership of the party. Soon after his expulsion (which was formally announced in April 2007), Philemon began preparations for the launch of a new party, the New Generation Party.

The New Generation Party staged a strong campaign against the ruling National Alliance, with Philemon pushing for policies that were different from those of the National Alliance. Philemon, who was a minister in the Somare government of 2002–2007, was not happy with some of the decisions made by the government, especially with regard to financial management; he referred specifically to a ‘US bond issue’, which he had refused to endorse as treasurer because he felt that the transaction would not be in the best interests of the country (see *Post-Courier* 13 March 2007).

Other parties also criticized decisions and actions of the National Alliance-led government, including the PNG Party headed by Sir Mekere Morauta, the People’s Party headed by Peter Ipatas, the People’s Progress Party led by Byron Chan, and the People’s Labour Party headed by Peter Yama. Yama declared an all-out war against the National Alliance; however, he lost the Madang Provincial seat, which was won by Sir Arnold Amet, a National Alliance candidate.

The 2007 campaign became personal when the parliamentary leader of the PNG Country Party, Jamie Maxtone-Graham, was publicly accused by the president of the National Alliance, Simon Kaiwi, of not having land, or ‘even a toilet’, in the electorate that he represented. This represented a new style of campaigning in Papua New Guinea, where parties and their executives have seldom said personal things against one another in the media.

During the campaign period, the New Generation Party was to have launched its campaign in Wewak, the provincial capital of East Sepik Province, the prime minister’s electorate, but was told by the police that they did not have authorization to do so. This was another shift in campaigning style.

Alliances between the different parties slowly emerged during the campaign period of March to June. The most salient was that between the PNG Party and the New Generation Party, whose leaders, Sir Mekere Morauta and Bart Philemon, respectively, publicly announced their alliance and commented on the need for like-minded parties to come together to form a coalition government. The National Alliance and its coalition partners also maintained their commitment to each other going into the election. Some parties that remained broadly neutral, such as the People’s National Congress headed by Peter O’Neill, People’s Party headed by Peter Ipatas, People’s Democratic Movement headed by Paias Wingti, Rural Development Party headed by Moses Maladina, and Melanesia Liberal Party headed by Dr Allan Marat, eventually joined the National Alliance after the election, despite being dumped at some stage as coalition partners in the 2002–2007 parliament. Marat, O’Neill and Maladina were all deputy prime ministers at some point in the Somare government of 2002–2007 and all decided to join Somare after the 2007 election. This was criticized by Sir Julius Chan, who made a comeback in 2007. Sir Julius decried the continuous breaking of

coalition agreements between the National Alliance party and its partners: 'We helped put Somare in the highest office of the land each time with a clear coalition pact, sadly each time we signed the memorandum of understanding, it was broken before the ink got dry'. He vowed the People's Progress Party would not get into bed with parties it was not comfortable with, echoing sentiments New Generation Party leader Philemon had expressed (*Post-Courier* 10 April 2007).

Pangu Pati was the only major party that made no commitment going into the 2007 election. As a coalition partner in the Somare-led government of 2002–2007, it was envisaged that it would go with the National Alliance; however, there were also signs that its parliamentary leader, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, was talking with Sir Mekere Morauta and Bart Philemon. Namaliu made a public statement that Pangu would go with like-minded parties—language that was also used by Morauta and Philemon.

To maintain alliances between the parties, agreements were made in some electorates not to put up candidates against sitting members of coalition partners. This was evident in East Sepik Regional, for example, where a number of parties decided not to put up candidates against Sir Michael Somare. However, this arrangement looked suspect in some electorates, where parties that gave an undertaking not to put up candidates allegedly supported independent candidates. One such example was in Kokopo, where a number of parties decided not to put up candidates against Sir Rabbie Namaliu, but it was later revealed that the eventual winner was supported by the National Alliance. Namaliu, who calmly accepted his defeat, later expressed his disappointment to the media. The practice of putting up 'undercover' candidates also contravenes the spirit of OLIPPAC, specifically s. 55, which states that parties should not endorse more than one candidate in an electorate—though this is very likely to happen where parties agree not to contest against sitting members who are vulnerable to defeat.

Leaders of various parties travelled the country campaigning for their candidates. Sir Michael Somare, leader of the National Alliance, toured almost all of the provinces, hiring helicopters to travel to very remote areas. Peter Yama, leader of the People's Labour Party, also toured widely, having declared war against the ruling National Alliance, which he said he would 'kill' in the election. (Yama, the sitting member for Usino-Bundi, decided to contest the Madang Provincial seat in 2007, but was defeated by former chief justice Sir Arnold Amet, a National Alliance candidate.) Pangu leader Sir Rabbie Namaliu, PNG Party leader Sir Mekere Morauta, Peter Ipatas, leader of the People's Party, and Bart Philemon, leader of the New Generation Party also travelled the country campaigning for their party candidates. Political rallies were organized in the

towns and districts they visited and promises were made. Attacks were made on other parties; the National Alliance was at the receiving end of most criticism, as was to be expected since it was the leading party in the coalition government.

Party politics

With a large number of parties contesting, it was anticipated that there would be a wide range of policies from which voters could choose. However, looking at the policies in areas such as education, the economy, law and order, infrastructure, and resource development, many of the parties tend to agree on what they would do if they were in government. Nevertheless, some party policies were quite comprehensive and there was a number of differences. This was an interesting development since in the past parties have been criticized for the similarity of their policies.

In an initiative carried out by the National Research Institute (NRI) in partnership with the various media organizations, a public seminar series was organized in early 2007 to allow political parties to present their policies.¹ The NRI initiative was an attempt to break the tradition of voting along tribal lines and encourage voters to elect candidates on party policies (*Post-Courier* 7 March 2007). Despite the popularity of the program, only eight of the 34 parties responded and presented their policies.² Five of the eight were either new parties or old parties attempting a comeback.³

In addition to the seminar series, the NRI offered to assist political parties who requested help in framing their policies. Only two parties responded, Pangu and the People's Party. As a result, these two parties had coherent policies and outlined clearly what they wanted to achieve if they were in government.

The seminar series demonstrated that despite some similarities, party policies have become more detailed and comprehensive. This is an encouraging new development.

Pangu, which was the first party to start its campaign and announce its policies, placed emphasis on income generation for the rural population, good

1 The presentations were recorded and broadcast by the Karai Radio of the National Broadcasting Corporation, which was a key partner in the seminar series.

2 These included Pangu Pati, New Generation Party, Melanesian Liberal Party, National Party, PNG Country Party, People's Freedom Party, PNG Party, and People's National Congress. The presentation of policies was made by the party leaders, except in the case of Pangu, which was represented by its general secretary, Moses Taian.

3 Two parties, the Country Party and the National Party, were formed in the 1970s and were trying to make a comeback in the 2007 election. Between them, they won only two seats and both were in the camp that eventually formed the government.

governance with zero tolerance of corruption, and infrastructure development. It also wanted to increase the size of the defence force (*Post-Courier* 23 March 2007). The last of these was initiated by former Papua New Guinea Defence Force commander, Jerry Singirok,⁴ who contested the Sumkar Open seat (in which he was runner-up). As the oldest party in the country, Pangu sought to project itself as a new party with new ideas, policies and leadership. This emphasis was important for Pangu because many people have come to regard it as an old party with outdated policies.

The New Generation Party, formed shortly before the election, presented a detailed list of policies. Its emphasis was on good economic management, public sector reform, and a shift in foreign policy. According to Bart Philemon, 'Anybody who talks about doing away with overseas aid at the moment doesn't really understand; they are kidding themselves' (*Post-Courier* 30 March 2007). The party was accused of being a friend to Australia; its foreign policy was in sharp contrast to that of the National Alliance, which displayed anti-Australian sentiments in many of its public engagements. The New Generation Party put forward a sound plan for governance reform, which included the establishment of a commission to fight corruption, audit of units in all government agencies, a performance-based management system for departmental heads, and a strict code of professional ethics for public office holders. The New Generation Party took a strong stance against corruption and graft at all levels of government and civil society and advocated for transparency and accountability in all aspects of public administration (*Post-Courier* 19 February 2007). Party policy specifically outlined how this was to be achieved.

The PNG Party, under the leadership of Sir Mekere Morauta, emphasized sound economic management, good governance, prudent leadership, and service delivery to the people. The PNG Party has attracted many educated Papua New Guineans. Morauta has had a record for instituting processes of good governance and he campaigned on this record in the 2007 election. He also proposed contracting out services, such as pharmaceuticals distribution which has been heavily affected by corruption. His lone fight in parliament to amend the National Capital District Commission Act to get rid of corruption was admired by many and the fact that he retained his seat by a big margin was an indication that voters in his electorate supported his fight against corruption. Morauta accused the National Alliance-led government of doing virtually nothing (*Post-Courier* 5 March 2007). The PNG Party was also the only party that acknowledged the dangers posed by HIV/AIDS and pledged to fight the epidemic.

4 Singirok, a retired general, was a key figure in the Sandline Crisis of 1997.

The People's National Congress, under the leadership of Peter O'Neill, also emphasized good economic management and called for a review of foreign policy. It advocated the abolition of provincial governments and the establishment of district authorities, reducing government to two tiers instead of three, and called for a bicameral legislature.

Of the smaller parties, the Country Party under Jamie Maxtone-Graham emphasized rural development through alternative means of transportation, agriculture, and income generation. The Melanesian Liberal Party, led by Dr Allan Marat, called for the use of Christian principles in governing the country, as well as supporting the creation of microfinance credit schemes to assist the rural people to develop small agricultural projects; but the Melanesian Liberal Party's most radical policy was a proposal to give 100 percent ownership to the landowners of all the mining, forestry and fisheries projects in the country. The People's Freedom Party, under Moses Murray, emphasized justice and technical education for the young; party policy was that leaders convicted under the Leadership Code should be banned from politics for life. The People's Freedom Party proposed a similar scheme to the National Party's national youth scheme. The National Party proposed to reintroduce the Village Services Scheme and improve service delivery. The People's Party of Enga governor, Peter Ipatas, stated that the law and order situation must be a priority for any government; tribal fights and other law and order problems had hampered development and if elected to government he would apply zero tolerance of violence and would improve the conditions of the police by addressing issues of wages and housing.

The National Alliance, as the ruling party, campaigned on its track record in office. According to the party, it had achieved a lot in the five years since 2002. When it assumed office, the currency was at an all-time low; foreign reserves were at a low K200 million; government infrastructure (roads, bridges, health centres and hospitals)⁵ were in poor state; state businesses such as PNG Power, Post PNG, Telikom and Air Niugini were on the brink of collapse. All these were because of poor government decisions and overspending by preceding governments. Since the National Alliance had come into office, the kina had climbed back up to 31 cents against the US dollar, foreign reserves had gone up to K5 billion, government infrastructure was undergoing major rehabilitation, and state enterprises were posting huge profits, and people were seeing real economic growth (*Post-Courier* 5 March 2007). On its campaign trail, Somare's National Alliance reportedly distributed millions of kina to provinces for various projects. This was criticized by other parties as a tactic to gain support.

5 Despite boasting about improvements in hospitals, between 2002 and 2007 the Angau Hospital in Lae faced closure several times due to lack of drugs and maintenance, and the Boram Hospital in Sir Michael's electorate faced severe drug shortages.

The other parties in the National Alliance-led government, such as the People's Action Party, United Party, United Resources Party and Melanesian Alliance, also based their policies and campaigns on their record in government.

Results of the 2007 election

After the first declaration, in Manus, it quickly became apparent that the National Alliance would outperform the other parties. The National Alliance was not only winning seats through its endorsed candidates but was picking up independent candidates who were declared winners in their electorates (see Table 9.1). The National Alliance was criticized in the media especially for the use of the government owned Kumul Aircraft to collect winning candidates throughout the country (*Post-Courier* 31 July 2007, letter to the editor).

The success of the National Alliance may be attributed, first, to the popularity and experience of its leader, Sir Michael Somare. Despite his age, Sir Michael was at the centre of the campaign for his party and his popularity was evident throughout the country. Huge turnouts greeted him wherever he spoke. Secondly, the party's organization was better than that of other parties. Wherever Somare travelled, he was accompanied by the deputy party leader of the region and this proved effective in the election. The success of the National Alliance was shared by its coalition partners; a good number of ministers from the National Alliance and its coalition partners retained their seats. The exceptions were Bire Kimisopa in Goroka Open and Sam Akoitai in Central Bougainville Open.

The losers in the 2007 election were Pangu Pati and the New Generation Party. The leaders of these two parties are from the generation after Sir Michael Somare. Despite the parties endorsing 174 candidates between them (Pangu 84 and New Generation Party 90), Pangu managed to win only five seats and New Generation Party four with one independent candidate joining the party later. It became even worse for Pangu when its leader, Namaliu, lost his seat in Kokopo.

Of the 34 parties contesting, only 21 won seats. Many of these were new and small and did not have an established party organization or any clear policies; some of them were single-issue parties.

Eight party leaders lost their seats. The most notable (and to most, surprising) of these was Sir Rabbie Namaliu, leader of Pangu Pati and a former prime minister. Another former prime minister, Paias Wingti, also lost his seat. Other party leaders to lose their seats included Hami Yawari (Conservative Party), Michael Mas Kal (National Party), Moi Avei (Melanesian Alliance), Peter Yama (People's Labour Party), Bire Kimisopa (United Party), and Sam Akoitai (United Resources Party).

Table 9.1: Political parties in the 2007 election

Name of party	Parliamentary party leader (pre-election)	Number of candidates endorsed	Number of seats won	Independent candidates joining parties
Pangu Pati	Sir Rabbie Namaliu	84	5	–
PNG Labour Party	Bob Danaya	14	1	–
People's Progress Party	Byron Chan	72	4	1
People's National Congress	Peter O'Neill	51	5	1
PNG Country Party	Jamie Maxtone-Graham	41	2	–
People's Labour Party	Peter Yama	46	2	–
United Party	Bire Kimisopa	45	2	–
National Alliance	Sir Michael Somare	91	27	13
PNG National Party	Michael Mas Kal	49	1	–
PNG Party	Sir Mekere Morauta	61	8	–
Christian Democratic Party	Dr Bahanare Bun	22	–	–
United Resources Party	Sam Akoitai	25	5	1
People's Action Party	Gabriel Kapris	48	6	–
People's Freedom Party	na	10	–	–
People's First Party	Luther Wenge	23	1	–
PNG First Party	na	25	–	–
PNG Green Party	na	3	–	–
Yumi Reform Party	na	18	–	–
People's Heritage Party	Clement Nakmai	9	–	–
National Front Party	na	1	–	–
People's Resources Awareness Party	na	10	–	–
Melanesian Alliance	Sir Moi Avei	23	1	–
Melanesian Liberal Party	Dr Allan Marat	17	2	–
People's Democratic Movement	Paias Wingti	54	5	–
New Generation Party	Bart Philemon	90	4	1
Star Alliance Party	na	72	–	–
People's Party	Peter Ipatas	67	3	–
Rural Development Party	Moses Maladina	56	3	–
PNG Conservative Party	Hami Yawari	59	1	–
Mapal Levites Party	na	8	–	–
True Party	na	21	–	–
Pan Melanesian Congress	unknown	9	–	–
National Conservative Party	na	10	–	–
National Advance Party	na	47	1	–
Independents ^a	na	1478	20	3
Total		2759	109	20

a From the total of 20 independent candidates, only three remained independent. One of these three, James Yali, a former National Alliance MP (who was serving a gaol sentence at the time of the election but was appealing against the conviction) had his win annulled soon after the election. The seat is now held by a member of the National Alliance.

It is not uncommon in Papua New Guinea elections for leaders to lose their seats, and parties often disappear when their leaders lose. After the election, the National Advance Party amalgamated with People's Action Party. Amalgamation is allowed under the OLIPPAC, and it can bring like-minded parties together.

The Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates

The 2007 election was the second to be held after the passage of the OLIPPAC and the first following a full parliamentary term under OLIPPAC. The new law was intended primarily to develop and strengthen the party system in Papua New Guinea. It makes it a legal requirement to register parties as legal entities under the *Associations Incorporation Act* and with the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties, and authorizes limited public funding for political parties.

It also lays down conditions to maintain discipline within the party system. It has been well documented that in Papua New Guinea lack of party discipline and loyalty had led to instability within the parliamentary system. The existence of a 'yo-yo' culture, with members changing political party affiliation and parties changing coalition partners, contributed to the fall of governments through votes of no confidence.

By limiting the ways MPs can vote on important measures, and imposing penalties if they transgress (ss. 77–80), the OLIPPAC makes it difficult for MPs to withdraw their support from a party. This helped Sir Michael Somare and his government stay in office for the full five years from 2002 to 2007.

Formation of government

Under the OLIPPAC, 'the Electoral Commission shall advise the Head of State of the registered political party which has endorsed the greatest number of candidates declared elected in the election, and the Head of State, acting with, and in accordance with, the advice of the Electoral Commission, shall invite that registered political party to form the government in accordance with this section' (s. 63(1)).

The National Alliance won the most seats (27) and was accordingly invited to form government. Since the National Alliance lacked an absolute majority, however, as in previous post-election situations, a process of coalition formation began.

In the expectation of forming government, the National Alliance and its partners met in Kokopo to put a coalition together by courting other parties and, most importantly, independent candidates,⁶ with offers of ministerial posts, appointments to parliamentary committees and other rewards. Of the 20 successful independent candidates, 13 joined the National Alliance bringing the party's total number of MPs to 40. The parties in the Kokopo camp signed a pledge to remain loyal to the National Alliance and its leadership.

Although the OLIPPAC rules out multiple endorsement of candidates by a party in the same electorate, there were allegations of multiple or 'hidden' endorsements (generally referred to as 'undercover candidates'), but this was difficult to prove. Such a practice was probably inevitable where parties had agreed not to put up candidates against coalition partners, but were not confident the endorsed candidates would be returned.

In the weeks leading up to the election of the prime minister, a rival camp emerged, headed by Bart Philemon and Sir Mekere Morauta, at the Hideaway Hotel in Port Moresby and an open invitation was sent out to other parties and independent candidates to join the camp (*Post-Courier* 26 July 2007). In media statements, both the Kokopo camp and the Hideaway camp expressed confidence in their ability to form government (*Post-Courier* 2 August 2007).⁷ The Hideaway camp teamed up with the People's Progress Party and nominated Sir Julius Chan as its candidate for prime minister.

On 6 August, the National Alliance was formally invited by the governor-general to form government and a week later, on 13 August, 86 MPs voted for Somare as prime minister (three fewer than in 2002). Apart from his National Alliance, Somare was supported by 13 other parties from the Kokopo camp. The Hideaway camp managed only 21 MPs. The election of Somare made him the first MP to occupy the office of prime minister on four separate occasions (1975–1980, 1982–1985, 2002–2007, and 2007–).

Independent candidates

The OLIPPAC does not encourage candidates to remain independent: there are no financial benefits for independent MPs and under s. 86(1) independent candidates can seek membership of parties once they are elected into parliament.

6 Section 69(2) of the OLIPPAC states: 'A Member of Parliament elected at a general election without endorsement by a registered political party may join a registered political party at any time after the return of the writs and before the first election by the Parliament of a Speaker following the date of the return of the writs in that general election provided that that registered political party had endorsed candidates at that general election'.

7 Sections 63(7), (8) provide that in the event that the party that is invited by the governor-general to form the government cannot muster a simple majority, then the Standing Orders of parliament will be applied and another vote taken.

The success of independent candidates compared to party-endorsed candidates is still high. The National Alliance won 27 seats, but independent candidates won 20, compared with the next most successful party, PNG Party, with 8. Independent candidates have come to play a central role in the formation of the government, with the National Alliance picking up 13 additional MPs after they were declared. In 2007 only three remained independent.

Elsewhere I have recommended a review of the OLIPPAC to impose guidelines on independent candidates (see Gelu in *Post-Courier* 15 August 2007). Independent candidates should remain independent throughout their term in parliament and should not take any part in the formation of government. The formation of the government should be left to parties; this would encourage parties to work hard to get more votes and more seats in elections. All efforts should now focus on how the party system can be strengthened.

'One-man' parties

After the passing of the OLIPPAC, political parties proliferated. Forty-three contested in 2002 and 34 in 2007. In the 2007 election, however, seven parties endorsed fewer than 10 candidates, with one endorsing three candidates and another only one. When the outcome of the election had been decided, 10 of the 21 successful parties had only one or two MPs (four had two MPs, six had one); 13 parties were without parliamentary representation, but still exist outside parliament. Many of the latter lack genuine platforms and have no support base or financial resources to carry out successful campaigns. Some commentators believe that the OLIPPAC has led to an increase in the number of parties and that it should now find ways to limit the number of parties contesting the election.

MPs who have been expelled from a party may form new parties (s. 62 of the OLIPPAC). In 2007 Dr Allan Marat, formerly the leader of People's Progress Party, after being expelled from the party, formed the Melanesian Liberal Party and was re-elected. The Rural Development Party of Moses Maladina (who was expelled from the People's Action Party), and the PNG Conservative Party of Hami Yawari provide examples of one-man parties formed to contest the 2007 election. This is another aspect of the OLIPPAC that needs to be reviewed.

Conclusion

The campaigns undertaken by parties in 2007 were intense but low key; this was probably due to the introduction of limited preferential voting. The bigger parties took the need to attract support seriously, and contested among themselves. But the time has come for parties to take another step by allowing

party leaders to debate their policies in public forums. This would allow people to make informed decisions about whom to support. The majority of voters in Papua New Guinea are 'undecided voters'; they respond to the offer of material goods from the candidates. If this can be replaced by a focus on the policies of parties then elections might produce better outcomes.

The OLIPPAC was clearly observed in the formal requirements concerning endorsed and non-endorsed candidates and in the formation of government.⁸ But arguably the OLIPPAC has done little to strengthen the party system. There is still a large number of very small parties, most of which lack organization, funding, a coherent policy platform and mass support. Independent candidates still play a major role in the formation of government, and 'undercover' candidates make a mockery of the requirement that parties endorse only one candidate per electorate. Women's participation as candidates in the election, and more especially as elected MPs in the parliament, is minimal. There is a serious need to revisit the OLIPPAC to find ways in which the legislation may further strengthen the party system in the country.

Despite the fact that parties have become part of the political landscape in Papua New Guinea, there is no meaningful relationship between them and the voters. This has led to suggestions that the number of political parties in Papua New Guinea should be limited, to make parties more meaningful.

One suggestion is to tie parties to specific interests in society, such as class or workers' interests, gender, youth, farmers' or landowner interests, and so forth. This would enable the parties to develop coherent policies to cater for the interests that they represent. A party that does not represent any broad interests could be deregistered.

A second alternative is set a minimum number of votes to be received during the election (identified by the Electoral Commission) and any party that fails to reach the cut-off point would be deregistered. If any of its candidates win a seat, they would be asked to join one of the larger parties.

A third alternative is to set a minimum number of seats and deregister any party going below than the required number.

The provisions for deregistration of parties would have to be incorporated into the OLIPPAC.

Any of the above options would decrease the number of parties and make the parties stronger in terms of membership both in parliament and outside it, encouraging parties to provide the vital link between themselves and the people.

⁸ More than 12 months after the election, however, not one party had submitted the statement of contributions and expenditures required under the OLIPPAC.

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10. Women as Candidates and Voters: Gender Issues and the Kerema Open Electorate

Orovu Sepoe

Introduction

The 2007 national election in Papua New Guinea was expected to produce some pronounced changes in terms of its administration and conduct, and in the final outcome, particularly as a result of the introduction of a limited preferential voting (LPV) system. Certainly, a lot more work and higher costs were involved in administering the election, partly due to the lengthy counting process associated with LPV. In terms of its outcomes, the winners obtained a larger mandate from the voters than in previous elections. While some observers commented that electoral violence was quelled as a result of LPV, others posited that a heavy deployment of security forces was primarily responsible for the more peaceful election.

From a gender perspective, it was anticipated that women candidates would have far greater chance of success at the polls given the element of preference trading implicit in LPV and the widely accepted view that LPV could be anybody's game. This, however, did not eventuate. It is important to understand why the 2007 election outcome, like all other elections in the past, did not prove to be advantageous for women. The main objective of this study is therefore to examine women as candidates and voters, with specific reference to gender issues in the Kerema Open electorate.

The discussion and analysis here are based on personal observations of campaigning and polling as well as election information made available by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC), in particular the final election results. In addition to media coverage, four local research assistants based in the Gulf Province through all phases of the election provided invaluable information about the election.

The chapter is presented in three parts. The first briefly outlines the conceptual basis for the study. The second gives an overview of women's participation and gender issues in the 2007 national election. The final part is a discussion of women as candidates and voters, and analysis of gender issues, in Kerema Open.

Conceptual framework

The discussion and analysis in this study is premised on several theoretical and conceptual tools relevant to the gender and feminist perspective.

First, the public/private split in social, economic and political realms of life infiltrates the entire electoral process. The prevailing cultural perceptions of men as the decision-makers results in the continuing domination of public leadership positions and roles by men. The large number of male candidates compared to female candidates not only demonstrates this perception but also reinforces it. The domination of political parties by men, and the relatively low endorsement of women candidates compared to men, further supports this view. The prevailing trend is for women candidates not to be taken seriously by political parties. Women's role in cooking and hospitality during campaign rallies and feasts supports prevailing gender norms and division of labour. As voters, women's choices are mostly determined or dictated by men.

Secondly, the concepts of structure and agency allow us to understand women's position relative to men as the dominant players while also accounting for women's empowerment in a male-dominated system. The persistent view of electoral politics as a male preserve is reflected, for example, in the number of guns in the hands of 'warlord' candidates, and in access to and control over resources such as money and labour. 'Bigman' leadership style sends a clear message that women cannot be 'bigmen'. However, it is important not to lose sight of the ever-increasing number of women contesting as candidates in Papua New Guinea elections, even standing against sitting MPs who are apparently well established and well resourced (Elizabeth Simogun Bade's challenge to Sir Michael Somare in the East Sepik Provincial seat recalls the biblical story of David and Goliath). The evidence of women's participation in politics demonstrates the empowerment of increasing numbers of women courageous and confident enough to challenge male candidates in a male-dominated sphere.

Thirdly, the idea of the state as a masculine entity entails an appreciation of the implications of women's entry to the electoral process, which poses immense challenges and difficulties for women as candidates and voters. These include the heavy presence and involvement of security forces; electoral violence and intimidation, whose perpetrators are mostly men; the expenses associated with security during the election, which is essentially money spent on problems created by men; and the predominance of money politics, which illustrates male control of public and private resources.

Fourthly, the issue of women's rights as human rights requires appreciation of the fact that the Constitution of Papua New Guinea grants women the right to vote and stand for public office. Questions need to be asked: how is the electoral

process ensuring that women's rights are exercised? What is the role of the state (specifically the PNGEC and the security forces) and of civil society in defending the rights of women? Is the cultural context supportive of women's rights? Is the political environment conducive for women to exercise their rights, especially with widespread corruption, bribery, violence and intimidation?

Finally, analyses of women's participation in politics have to acknowledge the concepts of difference, diversity and commonality. Women are divided by religion, culture, age, education, socio-economic class, rural–urban divide, and so on. This could explain why women voters are not voting for women candidates, or are even contesting against each other.

Gender issues in the 2007 national election

Women as candidates

A total of 103 women candidates contested the 2007 national election (3.7 percent of the total of 2759 candidates), showing an upward trend in numbers of women candidates in most post-independence elections (Table 10.1). A list of women candidates, showing the electorate contested and party affiliation in 2007, is given in Table 10.8 in the appendix at the end of this chapter. Of these, 39 (37.9 percent) were nominated by political parties while 64 nominated as independents—fewer than in 2002, when 49 claimed party affiliation. It is highly likely that some of the independents in 2007 were in fact pro-party candidates, a practice quite common in Papua New Guinea politics.¹

Table 10.1: Women in national elections, 1972–2007

Year	Total candidates	Number of female candidates	Percent of female candidates	Female candidates with party affiliation	Female candidates elected
1972	608	4	0.7	na	1
1977	879	10	1.1	1	3
1982	1124	17	1.5	0	1
1987	1515	18	1.3	7	0
1992	1655	16	1.0	0	0
1997	2372	55	2.3	12	2
2002	2870	71	2.5	49	1
2007	2759	103	3.7	39	1

¹ Personal communication (December 2007) with two female candidates who nominated as independents but received some financial support from a political party.

Some provinces had more women candidates than others, the highest (12 women) being Eastern Highlands and the lowest (one woman) Bougainville and West New Britain (Table 10.2). For the first time in history, all 20 provinces had women contesting the national election.

Table 10.2: Provincial distribution of women candidates, 2007 election

	Rank	Province	Number of candidates
Highest number of women candidates	1	Eastern Highlands	13
	2	Oro	11
	3	Milne Bay	9
	3	Central	9
Lowest number of women candidates	18	East New Britain	2
	19	Bougainville	1
	19	West New Britain	1

On a regional basis, the Southern Region had the highest number of women candidates (45), followed by the Highlands Region (27), Momase (22) and the Islands Region (9). Generally, the peaceful nature of elections in the Southern Region has encouraged women to contest. However, the Highlands Region, by far the most volatile and high-risk region, was ranked second. This may be largely explained by the work of civil society organizations in promoting principles of good governance and democracy, including rights of women, peace, and law and order.²

Of the 34 registered political parties, 22 endorsed women candidates. The number of party-endorsed women candidates, however, fell from 49 in 2002 to 39 in 2007. The largest number was recorded by People's Action Party (5 candidates) and the Melanesian Alliance (4 candidates). The Pan Melanesian Congress, New Generation Party and National Alliance endorsed 3 women candidates each. Three political parties endorsed 2 women candidates each while 14 other political parties endorsed 1 candidate each. These figures are low, and suggest that parties have yet to consider women seriously. The fact that the People's Action Party (of which Janet Sape is deputy president) and the Melanesian Alliance (of which Dame Carol Kidu is parliamentary leader) endorsed the largest number of women candidates also illustrates the importance of having women actively involved in political parties to exert influence in decisions about candidate selection.

The *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* (OLIPPAC) appears to have done little so far to encourage political parties to endorse female

² In this regard, the work of Kup Women for Peace (see chapter 11), *Meri i Kirap Sapotim* and other non-government organizations carrying out election awareness is acknowledged.

candidates. Political parties are fixed on getting the 'strongest', most 'popular' candidates, mostly men, though these are not necessarily the best candidates, and often poll poorly.

In relation to policies, women candidates generally focused on social, welfare, family, good governance and rights issues.³ They did not necessarily reflect party policies, even for women endorsed by political parties. This was partly to do with the fact that party endorsements were slow in coming and that preparations for campaigning, including policy platforms, were finalized well before party endorsements were confirmed. It also illustrates the nature of party affiliation: parties and candidates do not necessarily have long-term relationships, a reflection of the weak party system in Papua New Guinea. Many of the female candidates endorsed by parties, like male candidates, neither were members nor had long-term affiliation with those parties.

Some women candidates had experience as community leaders (civil society organizations/non-government organizations) and professionals (in both the private and public sectors). 'Money politics' and corruption, however, deny women candidates a level playing field.

Women as voters

Women voters appeared to exercise free choice in Kerema, though their preferences were mostly predetermined. Elsewhere, intimidation of women voters ranged from obvious, through subtle to non-existent.

However, just as the OLIPPAC seems to have had little impact on the mindset of political parties, LPV did little or nothing to change the perception and mindset of women voters, who seem (at least on the basis of observation in Kerema) to have generally preferred male leadership. The cultural and social environment remains largely unchanged.

³ This became apparent in a post-election diagnostic workshop for women candidates held at UPNG, 19–22 November 2007, sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme.

Gender issues and the election in Kerema Open electorate

Women as candidates

Three women candidates contested the Kerema Open seat, two from coastal areas and one from inland—the latter an historical first. One of the three had contested the seat in 2002. Two of the women had non-government organization leadership experience; the other was a primary school teacher.

Two of the women stood as party-endorsed candidates—though lacking any long-term political party affiliation—and one stood as an independent.⁴ None of the women candidates undertook electorate-wide campaigning, campaign activities being essentially restricted to their own language and cultural areas for both coastal and inland candidates. One candidate could barely meet her election expenses. After a frantic search for funds from women's organizations,⁵ her nomination fee was provided by her son just before the close of nomination, and she was hard pressed to make it to Kerema in time to nominate.

One of the women (who had contested in 2002) had lost her husband close to nomination. Some people said: 'She is a widow; doesn't she respect her husband?' Because her husband was from another province, it was suggested that her allegiance should be to her husband's people.

Resource constraints were encountered by all women candidates. In comparison to some of the male candidates, mobility was restricted; without access to private transport (motorized dinghies or vehicles) all three campaigned mostly on foot. No candidate posters for the women were seen in villages or along roadsides or main travel routes. There was no money for feasting or to bribe voters. However, it was alleged that one woman candidate had accessed donor funding for LPV awareness and used it to her advantage in carrying out awareness about her candidacy.

Women as voters

Voters' general attitude towards women candidates was one of indifference. None of the women candidates was considered popular in the electorate, though a few voters considered that one of the three women was more qualified than

4 This candidate was in fact a pro-party candidate (personal communication with the candidate, December 2007).

5 I am aware that she approached Papua Hahine Social Action Forum and Women in National Government Strategy for Change during the polling period.

most of the male candidates. There was little awareness of notions of ‘women’s rights’ or ‘gender equality’. Rural voters in Kerema Open have little time for such principles—indeed, the identity of women candidates was challenged by ordinary village women, who saw their lifestyle as far removed from those of rural women. Some voters expressed the view that the candidates needed to be on the ground to experience villagers’ hardships and understand their lives (a comment equally applicable to male candidates). But most were simply not aware of women’s candidacy.

In Kerema women voters generally follow the dictates of their husband or male relatives; failure to stick by the family choice could result in rejection and conflicts (post-election events attest to this, where family relations have soured as a result of election choices). Cultural norms are still strong and women are not taken seriously as leaders who can represent their people in parliament. In some cases, ‘money politics’ compelled voters, including women, to vote for men.

On the other hand, women performed their gender roles as hosts, feeding campaign teams, and wives and female relatives of male candidates were actively involved in rallying support, especially for husbands from a different cultural area. Family networks were revived to build and draw voter support; every family connection was utilized and, in this respect, women were key linkages through marriage.

Women also had much influence on how resources—especially food—were distributed: how much to whom? Who to look after? Elections are a time to eat and drink, and women at the fireplaces had much more than they would normally consume. Women also received cash rewards for their efforts.

However, there is evidence of changing perceptions, and some women and men are supporting women candidates, acknowledging that the quality of some male candidates was poor compared to women candidates.

Election outcome for women candidates in Kerema Open

Tables 10.3 to 10.6 show the election results for women candidates in Kerema Open. Table 10.3 suggests that all female candidates received their primary votes from their respective ethnic communities (as represented by local-level government [LLG] areas)—though this is not confined to female candidates, as most male candidates also received most of their votes from their respective ethnic (LLG) communities.

Table 10.4 shows primary and final votes for the women candidates, their respective placing and when they were eliminated from the count. Table 10.9 in the appendix to this chapter shows the same for all candidates, indicating voter support for men in comparison to women candidates.

It is apparent from Tables 10.4 and 10.5 that women as voters did not give their primary votes to female candidates, either from choice or because their votes were predetermined by male kin.

Informal votes for the inland LLG areas, Kaintiba and Kotidanga, where illiteracy rates are very high, were, paradoxically, very low (at 0.8 and 0.7 percent respectively). By comparison, the informal votes registered in the coastal LLG areas were between 2 and 5 percent (Table 10.6). This may be attributed to the abuse of 'assisted voting', where the bulk of ballot papers were marked by 'helpers'.⁶

Table 10.3: Female candidates' and selected male candidates' primary votes and percentages by local-level government areas, Kerema Open electorate, 2007

No.	Candidate name	Total and percentage of primary votes received in each local-level government area						Total
		KU	CK	EK	K	KOTI	TL	
12	Kathy Karapa Tom	4	23	3	6	2	5	43
		9.3	53.5	7.0	14.0	4.7	11.6	100.0
19	Pricilla Opa Kare	3	581	6	0	5	35	630
		0.5	92.2	1.0	0.0	0.8	5.6	100.0
35	Josephine W Morova	4	9	3	191	1105	136	1448
		0.3	0.6	0.2	13.2	76.3	9.4	100.0
16	Pittom Titus Bombom	91	39	21	3427	74	122	3774
		2.4	1.0	0.6	90.8	2.0	3.2	100.0
51	George Mero	235	370	2221	17	183	303	3329
		7.1	11.1	66.7	0.5	5.5	9.1	100.0
20	Dan F P Maravila	352	104	10	0	2	43	511
		68.9	20.4	2.0	0.	0.4	8.4	100.0
55	Nixon Forova	26	19	435	0	1	8	489
		5.3	3.9	89.0	0.0	0.2	1.6	100.0
28	Richard Panama	16	9	1	178	1779	137	2120
		0.8	0.4	0.0	8.4	83.9	6.5	100.0
14	Sivore Lakou	5	24	45	0	4	686	764
		0.7	3.1	5.9	0.0	0.5	89.8	100.0

Key: Kerema Urban (KU), Central Kerema (CK), East Kerema (EK), Kaintiba (K), Kotidanga (KOTI), Tauri Lakekamu (TL)

⁶ At the time of writing, a petition was before the Court of Disputed Returns relating to allegations that the 'helpers' were supporters of the winner.

Table 10.4: Female candidates, votes, placing and elimination, Kerema Open electorate, 2007

No.	Candidate name	Primary votes	Primary placing	Final votes	Final placing	Elimination
12	Kathy Karapa Tom	43	47	43	47	5th
19	Priscilla Opa Kare	630	16	1190	13	39th
5	Josephine W Morova	1448	5	3614	4	48th

Table 10.5: Eligible voters by local-level government area, Kerema Open electorate, 2007

LLGs	Male	Female	Total	Total on roll
Kerema Urban	855	865	1,720	2,800
Central Kerema	3,410	3,090	6,500	8,300
East Kerema	3,622	3,084	6,706	9,400
Kaintiba	2,799	2,235	5,034	6,700
Kotidanga	3,523	3,063	6,586	9,300
Tauri Lakekamu	2,493	1,990	4,483	7,700
Total eligible voters	16,702	14,327	31,029	44,200

Table 10.6: Total formal and informal votes by local-level government area, Kerema Open electorate, 2007

Ballot papers	KU	CK	EK	K	KOTI	TL	Total
Total formal votes	1,648	6,296	6,540	5,087	6,584	4,384	30,539
Total informal votes	72	206	194	39	45	116	672
Total votes	1,720	6,502	6,734	5,126	6,629	4,500	31,211
Percent informal votes	(4.2)	(3.2)	(2.9)	(0.8)	(0.7)	(2.6)	(2.2)

Key: Kerema Urban (KU), Central Kerema (CK), East Kerema (EK), Kaintiba (K), Kotidanga (KOTI), Tauri Lakekamu (TL)

Conclusion

The 2007 national election saw many more women contesting than in the 2002 election, continuing the upward trend observed since the first post-independence election in 1977.

However, money politics, as well as entrenched cultural perceptions and practices, effectively ruled out any chance of free and fair electoral competition for women candidates. Support for increased women's entry into parliament is not ingrained in the mindset of voters, men or women. Reforms, such as the OLIPPAC and the change to LPV, appear to have done little, if anything, to change this.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes women performed their gender roles, hosting campaign teams and utilizing family connections and linkages through marriage to rally support for husbands and male relatives.

References

Post-Election Diagnostic Workshop for Women Candidates, University of PNG, November 2007. UNDP, UNIFEM Pacific and AusAID in partnership with Department of Community Development and National Council of Women.

Appendix

Table 10.7: Voting statistics for Kerema Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	42,160	
Total votes cast	31,205	
Informal votes	508	(1.6% of total votes cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	30,697	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	11,428	
Total votes distributed	23,594	
Exhausted ballot papers	19,269	(62.8% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	5,715	

Table 10.8: Female candidates in the 2007 election

Name	Province	Electorate	Party affiliation
Odelia Virua	East New Britain	Gazelle Open	Independent
Rosemary Vartuam Swek	East New Britain	Rabaul Open	Independent
Ruth Mandra Kuma	Manus	Manus Open	Independent
Cathy Lee Graham	New Ireland	Kavieng Open	Independent
Helen Fong Seeto	New Ireland	Kavieng Open	Independent
Monica Maleigua	New Ireland	Kavieng Open	Independent
Anna Ofu	Central	Kairuku-Hiri Open	Independent
Lady Rita Kipalan	Central	Kairuku-Hiri Open	Independent
Maria Andrew Laut	Central	Goilala Open	Independent
Philomena Kassman	Central	Central Provincial	Independent
Veronica Aawa Bera	Central	Kairuku-Hiri Open	Independent
Waila Koloa	Central	Rigo Open	Independent
Cathy Karapa Tom	Gulf	Kerema Open	Independent
Susan Ila Apopo	Gulf	Kikori Open	Independent
Dinah Halstead	Milne Bay	Alotau Open	Independent
Judy Kauadi	Milne Bay	Samarai-Murua Open	Independent

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Name	Province	Electorate	Party affiliation
Leah Sharp	Milne Bay	Milne Bay Provincial	Independent
Matilda May Pilacapio	Milne Bay	Alotau Open	Independent
Selina Elijah	Milne Bay	Kiriwina Goodenough Open	Independent
Helen Robert	National Capital District	Moresby North East Open	Independent
Margaret Kliawi	National Capital District	Moresby North West Open	Independent
Margret Morris	National Capital District	Moresby North East Open	Independent
Mary J Karo	National Capital District	Moresby South Open	Independent
Anita Yapuso	Oro	Oro Provincial	Independent
Clare Embahe Nenai	Oro	Oro Provincial	Independent
Deborah Eupu Emboge	Oro	Ijivitari Open	Independent
Josephine M Abajah	Oro	Sohe Open	Independent
Oliva Aripa Bunari	Oro	Oro Provincial	Independent
Shirley Otto Jipori	Oro	Oro Provincial	Independent
Ageda Mili	Western	Middle Fly Open	Independent
Naomi Kamai	Western	North Fly Open	Independent
Julie Trasis Kuri	Chimbu	Chimbu Provincial	Independent
Miriam Waie Kia	Chimbu	Karamui-Nomane Open	Independent
Rhonda Gande Baru	Chimbu	Karamui-Nomane Open	Independent
Botty Usima	Eastern Highlands	Bura-Wonenara Open	Independent
Ellen Hamena	Eastern Highlands	Lufa Open	Independent
Esta Siru Joshua	Eastern Highlands	Kainantu Open	Independent
Florence Jaukae	Eastern Highlands	Goroka Open	Independent
Julie Soso Akeke	Eastern Highlands	Eastern Highlands Provincial	Independent
Linet Mofeno	Eastern Highlands	Henganofi Open	Independent
Rhonda Morris Risepe	Eastern Highlands	Kainantu Open	Independent
Robyn Belari nenda	Eastern Highlands	Daulo Open	Independent
Susan Sam Fima	Eastern Highlands	Henganofi Open	Independent
Maryanne Tokome Amu	Enga	Wapenamanda Open	Independent
Auana Janet Koriama	Southern Highlands	Tari Open	Independent
Anna Nepa	Western Highlands	Western Highlands Provincial	Independent
Doris K Kentz	Western Highlands	Jimi Open	Independent
Elizabeth Simogun Bade	East Sepik	East Sepik Provincial	Independent
Evangeline Kaima	East Sepik	Wewak Open	Independent
Jennifa Bowie	East Sepik	Wewak Open	Independent

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Name	Province	Electorate	Party affiliation
Josepha Namsu Kiris	East Sepik	Wewak Open	Independent
Margretha Apakia	East Sepik	Wosera Gawi Open	Independent
Betty Rugei Higgins	Madang	Usino Bundi Open	Independent
Cecilia Pakule	Madang	Madang Open	Independent
Margaret Yusam	Madang	Usino Bundi Open	Independent
Mary Kamang	Madang	Madang Provincial	Independent
Delilah Kelly	Morobe	Tewae-Siaso Open	Independent
Gusu Tuhiana	Morobe	Finschaffan Open	Independent
Julie Kandi	Morobe	Nawae Open	Independent
Loujaya Toni	Morobe	Lae Open	Independent
Coretta Lema Naig	West Sepik	Vanimo-Green River Open	Independent
Lena Miroi Napmuku	West Sepik	West Sepik Provincial	Independent
Lespina Pupuwes	West Sepik	Vanimo-Green River Open	Independent
Marry Tarp Lene	West Sepik	Telefomin Open	Independent
Rita Jonah	Oro	Sohe Open	Christian Party
Anne Karo Karafae	Eastern Highlands	Henganofi Open	Mapai Levites Party
Elizeberth Mary Sipos	Manus	Manus Open	Melanesian Alliance
Hilda Timan Kakawi	West New Britain	Talasea Open	Melanesian Alliance
Dame Carol Kidu	National Capital District	Moresby South Open	Melanesian Alliance
Lilias Erepa Klapat	Oro	Sohe Open	Melanesian Alliance
Matilda Tagu Koma	Central	Goilala Open	Melanesian Liberal Party
Maureen Ambo	Oro	Ijivitari Open	National Alliance
Laottie Miriam Laurie	Eastern Highlands	Kainantu Open	National Alliance
Agatha Yama	Madang	Madang Open	National Alliance
Priscilla Opa Kare	Gulf	Kerema Open	National Conservative Party
Jollyn Ambo Warome	Eastern Highlands	Eastern Highlands Provincial	National Conservative Party
Monica Abia Aitsi	Central	Central Provincial	New Generation Party
Maggie Wilson	Western Highlands	Hagen Open	New Generation Party
Donna Harvey Hall	Morobe	Bulolo Open	New Generation Party
Goini Doilegu Loko	Milne Bay	Alotau Open	Pan Melanesian Congress

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Name	Province	Electorate	Party affiliation
Margaret Bacca	Milne Bay	Esa'ala Open	Pan Melanesian Congress
Kruo Martha Kaiun	Chimbu	Kerowagi Open	Pan Melanesian Congress
Damarise Buaga	Oro	Oro Provincial	Papua and New Guinea Unity Party
Erigere Singin	Morobe	Nawae Open	Papua and New Guinea Unity Party
Ruffina Peter	Central	Goilala Open	Papua New Guinea Party
Martha Kala	Gulf	Kikori Open	People's Action Party
Sahara Douglas	Milne Bay	Alotau Open	People's Action Party
Janet Sape	National Capital District	NCD Provincial	People's Action Party
Julie Moide	Western	North Fly Open	People's Action Party
Dr Donna Plamnok Bikainbo	West Sepik	Telefomin Open	People's Action Party
Susan Trose Mati	Eastern Highlands	Kainantu Open	People's Democratic Movement
Margret Kawa	Southern Highlands	Ialibu-Pangia Open	People's First Party
Maria Micjeal Menap	Western	North Fly Open	People's Freedom Party
Lynette Ona	Bougainville	Central Bougainville Open	People's Party
Bella Eari Ameu	Oro	Sohe Open	People's Progress Party
Edna Kathy Kakaraya	Enga	Enga Provincial	People's Progress Party
Regina Aiarak	Western	North Fly Open	People's Resources Awareness Party
Rhonda Gaiosi Anakapa	Milne Bay	Alotau Open	PNG Conservative Party
Julie Daniel	Enga	Wabag Open	PNG First Party
Monica Hasimani	East Sepik	Yangoru-Saussia Open	PNG Labour Party
Epiya Janet Kang Nisa	Southern Highlands	Ialibu-Pangia Open	Star Alliance Party
Josephine Wasi Morova	Gulf	Kerema Open	United Party
Theresia Noglai	Chimbu	Kerowagi Open	Yumi Reform Party

Table 10.9: Kerema Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	Percent		Number	Percent				
16	Pitom Bombom	M	Independent	3,774	12.3	1	2061	35.3		5835	19.0	51.1
51	George Mero	M	Independent	3,329	10.8	2	2264	40.5		5593	18.2	48.9
28	Richard Panama	M	Independent	2,120	6.9	3	2908	57.8	49	5028	16.4	
35	Josephine Morova	F	United Party	1,448	4.7	5	2166	59.9	48	3614	11.8	
40	Ivan Hullah	M	PNG Labour Party	1,981	6.5	4	821	29.3	47	2802	9.1	
45	Robert Paiva	M	Independent	1,360	4.4	6	1142	45.6	46	2502	8.2	
30	Tai Sape	M	People's Action Party	1,261	4.1	8	855	40.4	45	2116	6.9	
23	Lemek Kum	M	PNG Party	1,319	4.3	7	762	36.6	44	2081	6.8	
56	Terry Maraka	M	People's Party	853	2.8	11	1054	55.3	43	1907	6.2	
14	Sivore Lakou	M	Independent	764	2.5	12	708	48.1	42	1472	4.8	
29	Jessy Bimalo	M	Independent	984	3.2	10	441	30.9	41	1425	4.6	
37	Joel Paito	M	Independent	1,241	4.0	9	82	6.2	40	1323	4.3	
19	Priscilla Kare	F	National Conservative Party	630	2.1	17	560	47.1	39	1190	3.9	
47	Ekis Ropenu	M	People's Labour Party	723	2.4	13	389	35.0	38	1112	3.6	

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Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	Percent		Number	Percent				
53	Edward Elap	M	Independent	704	2.3	14	312	30.7	37	1016	3.3	
25	Paul Apio	M	PANGU Party	687	2.2	15	98	12.5	36	785	2.6	
31	Sevesoa Maso	M	Independent	530	1.7	18	197	27.1	35	727	2.4	
20	Dan Maravila	M	Independent	511	1.7	19	182	26.3	34	693	2.3	
15	Daniel Iltu	M	Independent	648	2.1	16	62	8.7	33	710	2.3	
55	Nixon Forova	M	National Advance Party	489	1.6	20	141	22.4	32	630	2.1	
32	Jacob Ivaroa	M	New Generation Party	356	1.2	24	224	38.6	31	580	1.9	
11	Joe Mesa	M	Independent	298	1.0	28	220	42.5	30	518	1.7	
39	Oavita Eapo	M	Independent	425	1.4	21	54	11.3	29	479	1.6	
18	John Dio	M	Independent	406	1.3	22	19	4.5	28	425	1.4	
44	Chris Hova	M	Independent	352	1.1	25	71	16.8	27	423	1.4	
46	Harold Farapo	M	Independent	351	1.1	26	44	11.1	26	395	1.3	
52	Peter Eka	M	Rural Development Party	345	1.1	27	33	8.7	25	378	1.2	
34	Fred Eovo	M	PNG Country Party	279	0.9	29	88	24.0	24	367	1.2	
48	Peter Sevara	M	People's Democratic Movement	360	1.2	23	1	0.3	23	361	1.2	
21	Moses Kaipu	M	Stars Alliance Party	250	0.8	30	30	10.7	22	280	0.9	

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	Percent		Number	Percent				
17	Tony Kaipu	M	Independent	227	0.7	31	16	6.6	21	243	0.8	0.8
36	Tom Toutore	M	Christian Democratic Party	172	0.6	33	63	26.8	20	235	0.8	0.8
42	Gabriel Ivei	M	PNG National Party	214	0.7	32	7	3.2	19	221	0.7	0.7
33	Fred Airi	M	Independent	149	0.5	34	49	24.7	18	198	0.6	0.6
22	Michael Maera	M	Independent	129	0.4	35	37	22.3	17	166	0.5	0.5
38	Matthew Pok	M	Independent	112	0.4	37	25	18.2	16	137	0.4	0.4
10	Kahi Vila	M	Independent	121	0.4	36	7	5.5	15	128	0.4	0.4
26	Kevin Miakari	M	Independent	102	0.3	38	7	6.4	14	109	0.4	0.4
58	Jobu Mako	M	Independent	97	0.3	39	10	9.3	13	107	0.3	0.3
49	Peter Siuwen	M	Independent	70	0.2	40	7	9.1	12	77	0.3	0.3
41	Ross Miva	M	Independent	66	0.2	41	4	5.7	11	70	0.2	0.2
57	Koraea Kapera	M	Independent	64	0.2	42	3	4.5	10	67	0.2	0.2
54	Jackson Pari	M	People's National Congress Party	64	0.2	43	0	0.0	9	64	0.2	0.2
27	Foster Harava	M	Independent	59	0.2	44	0	0.0	8	59	0.2	0.2
24	Jim Mainoni	M	Independent	46	0.1	45	3	6.1	7	49	0.2	0.2
13	Taisi Mie	M	Independent	47	0.2	46	0	0.0	6	47	0.2	0.2
12	Kathy Tom	F	Independent	43	0.1	47	0	0.0	5	43	0.1	0.1
59	Maupua Ovasuru	M	Independent	43	0.1	48	0	0.0	4	43	0.1	0.1

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Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	Percent		Number	Percent				
50	Aike Avosa	M	Independent	41	0.1	49	0	0.0	3	41	0.1	
43	Rodney Tom	M	Independent	31	0.1	50	0	0.0	2	31	0.1	
60	Opa Kavora	M	Independent	22	0.1	51	0	0.0	1	22	0.1	

11. The Kup Women for Peace: A Localized and Innovative Approach to Free, Fair and Peaceful Elections

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Despite the longevity and success of some non-government organizations (NGOs) in Papua New Guinea, civil society is in its early days and is limited in its scope (Pelto 2007). However, in the absence of a strong state, civil society groups that have developed within a context of conflict are responding to issues of violence in their communities. Small-scale, localized interventions that focus on human rights and human security issues and develop their own strategies for violence reduction are seeing positive law and justice outcomes. A strong feature of the 2007 national election in Papua New Guinea was the involvement of civil society and NGO groups working in conflict areas. These groups were seen as instrumental to the drive for a free, fair and peaceful election.

National elections in Papua New Guinea are keenly observed and well documented. The literature of the last decade has provided a thorough examination of electoral processes and systems (Standish 1996, 2002a, 2002b, 2006, 2007; May 2003; Gibbs, Haley and McLeod 2004), the participation of women (McLeod 2002; Sepoe 2002; Kidu and Setae 2002) and the role of elections in contemporary conflict (Weiner, McLeod and Yala 2002; Dinnen 1996). However, as McLeod (2004) asserts, the voices of those attempting to counter problematic trends and processes in Papua New Guinea's electoral politics are given little space to be heard. The following discussion attempts to fill this gap.

This chapter, based on interviews with men and women from Kup communities, examines a unique approach by a community-based organization, Kup Women for Peace (KWP), during the election period in Chimbu Province. KWP developed its own comprehensive and localized strategy, based on their peace-building work, and engaged the local community. Their approach sought not only to prevent election-related violence but also improve the electoral process and ensure a free and fair election. KWP applied new and creative practices, which developed outside the normal paradigms utilized by government and official bodies.

Kup Women for Peace

KWP is a local non-government organization from Kup, a sub-district of Kerowagi District in Chimbu Province in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. Kup sub-district has a population of 24,000, dispersed across many small, isolated communities, many of which are inaccessible by vehicle and lack access to basic services. Although remoteness plays a part, the impact of two decades of tribal warfare in Kup has contributed significantly to a lack of social and economic growth in the area.

The first tribal fight was recorded in Kup in the early 1970s, and although the major fights between tribes ended in 1990, fights between sub-clans continued, motivated in part by election violence (Garap 2004). Kup experienced a downward spiral in social order, laying the foundation for *raskol* activities, frustration, and limited social and infrastructure development. The court system, the police and other law-enforcement agencies of the central government declined in effectiveness, negatively impacting on livelihoods and contributing to the escalation of violence. The cumulative effects of tribal warfare resulted in social disruption, internal displacement and lack of access to government services, all significantly impacting on the lives of women and children.

KWP was formed in 1999 by women who had experienced the negative impacts of two decades of tribal warfare and who mobilized women from opposing sides to put pressure on traditional leadership to stop the fighting. Now with representation and a strong collective presence throughout the entire sub-district, the organization has become a powerful force for peace and human rights in local communities. The primary objective of KWP is to reduce conflict and build peace through the cessation of tribal violence. They have had notable success in stopping tribal fighting in the Kup area and in promoting peaceful development. Specific to their work is an emphasis on community empowerment and encouraging men and women to take control of their own development in the absence of government support and infrastructure.

KWP takes a collective and human rights-based approach to reinforce peace. Through capacity building and training, the aim is to increase respect and awareness of human rights and reduce gender violence. Restorative justice processes and partnerships are integral to their approach, as well as providing young men in particular with productive alternatives to crime. KWP mediate disputes to prevent outbreaks of tribal fighting and engage with groups across the conflict divide. They negotiate for communities to receive basic social services (such as health, water supply, education and police), and these are used to reinforce community unity and peace. KWP is also committed to strengthening their organizational capacity with a view to delivering more

responsive training and improved peace facilitation. KWP receives widespread support throughout the sub-district and there is a realization that the relatively peaceful situation in Kup now needs to be consolidated through the further provision and strengthening of basic services and development initiatives.

Election-related violence was widespread during the 2007 election in Chimbu Province, resulting in multiple deaths (*The National* 8 August 2007), destruction of houses, displacement of communities (*The National* 8, 31 August 2007), and women prohibited from accessing basic maternal health services (*The National* 13, 25 July 2007). Some high-powered weapons were seized (*Post-Courier* 6 July 2007; *The National* 13, 25 July 2007) but guns were used during election-related tribal clashes (*Post-Courier* 20 July 2007; *The National* 21 August 2007). Kup sub-district, however, presents a unique case for consideration. This rural community, widely known for its large-scale conflict and tribal violence, has been displaying a significant improvement in law and order due to the work of KWP. The success of the group's work in communities was particularly evident during the recent election in Kup. This case study provides an insight into the dynamics of a grassroots organization working to improve election practices and processes and sustain peace in communities where governmental processes have proved insufficient.

Previous election experiences in Kup

Election-related violence and flawed democratic processes were prevalent in Chimbu Province during past elections (Standish 1989, 1996; Dika 2003). For example, during the 1997 election two candidates and their supporters in Kundiawa threatened voters with high-powered weapons during polling and counting. In Sinasina, ballot papers were stolen and sold for K1.00 each, after the presiding officer was forced to sign them. In another example, a candidate (a former police officer) allegedly arranged the kidnapping of another candidate's supporter and demanded that they withdraw from the contest. The escalation of violence resulted in the deterioration of basic services, the destruction of property and restrictions on movement (Dika 2003).

Violence between supporters in Kup erupted during the 1997 and 2002 elections, mainly related to vote-splitting, inconsistent support for a candidate, restrictions on campaigning, bloc voting, and ballot papers being stolen or destroyed. It was rare for women to vote, as a result of men voting on their behalf or women feeling too afraid or intimidated. There was a strong presence of guns and limited freedom to cast a vote of choice. As a KWP member recalled, 'There is always lots of pushing and shoving. And people bring guns to the voting stations so we feel afraid to go and vote under the threat of a gun'. A large police

contingent was always present in preparation for outbreaks of violence. KWP were determined to prevent similar violence from erupting over what was seen as a short and unsustainable period of 'election fever', which would inevitably reverse the results of their 'hard work'.

Pre-election activities

As with past elections, the 2007 national election was assessed for its security threat and potential to fuel violence, particularly in areas of the Highlands Region marked by serious outbreaks of inter-group conflict (*Post-Courier* 10 May, 26 June, 10 July 2007; *The National* 11 May 2007). In contrast to the national media discussion, which focused on the 'peaceful' component of the Electoral Commission's campaign, KWP took practical steps to ensure the validity of the electoral process and in turn create conditions for peace. Their aim was not simply to police the elections but to ensure a fair and free process. Working in a context of long-term conflict, KWP are well aware of the danger of prioritizing a well-policed election to the neglect of a legitimate and valid electoral process.

KWP decided on a three-pronged strategy: cohesive voter education, the launching of the Livelihoods Programme, and a Violence-Free Election campaign. Program and in-kind assistance was used to support these activities, with no specific funding support from the Electoral Support Program. Voter education was conducted over a two week period, throughout the entire Kup sub-district, and covered issues including limited preferential voting (LPV), the purpose and process of the election, voters' rights, choice and definition of a good leader, and the purpose of political representation. KWP received positive feedback from their outreach activities and men and women made clear the type of leaders they wanted, such as a person who was committed to their community and moved beyond their own self-interest.

Although candidates distributed cash throughout the sub-district, community members were resistant to vote-buying; as a KWP member claimed:

Ol i no save tingim mipela, na ol i save go bildim "own castle" bilong ol, na ol save paulim mipela wantaim K10 or K50 long poket bilong mipela na mipela save strong long sapatim ol! Tasol nau nogat

(They don't remember us and they go and build their own castle and they simply confuse us with K10, K50 to fill our pockets and for that we support them! But not any more).

During voter awareness it became clear, however, that there was much confusion about the LPV system and about how preferences could be used. KWP members

believe this was related to the delayed and rushed national electoral awareness campaign. Had the campaign been initiated earlier, undertaken over a longer period, and completed well ahead of the campaign period, understanding of LPV processes may have been dramatically improved. As a result, LPV awareness received specific attention during KWP voter education activities. Booklets were also delivered to campaign houses for candidates to discuss with people during the evenings. The KWP HIV coordinator also conducted awareness in campaign houses during the campaign period.

The second component targeted youth as part of KWP's Sustainable Livelihoods Programme. Fifty-four youth groups received project materials, including goats, rabbits, chickens, pigs, cement bags, and pipes for fish ponds, and the project was expected to directly benefit 3000 to 4000 people. Some of the youth had been part of a 2003 gun surrender organized by KWP yet were perceived to still have the potential to instigate violence. KWP's intention in targeting youth was to 'settle the youth down and keep them busy' to reduce the propensity for election-related violence. By committing themselves to livelihood activities, the hope was that the youth would become responsible for their own development and wellbeing.

The third component was more direct in its targeting of intending candidates. In conjunction with the launching of the Livelihoods Programme, KWP advocated a Violence-Free Election 2007. The rationale for combining the two occasions was that young men often take the lead to fuel violence during political campaigns, supported by political candidates. The candidates, who thought they were attending the Livelihoods Programme launching, were asked to commit themselves to a violence-free election and sign an agreement in public. Of the 14 candidates invited, 11 attended and all gave assurances to the community that they would support a violence-free and gun-free election, and not encourage young men to fight. Of the three that did not attend, one shot and killed a man in Kup during an election-related dispute, and a second attempted to intimidate polling officials prior to the ballot papers being distributed to polling booths in Kup Station.

Polling day: 9 July 2007

The KWP response to illegitimate electoral practices and the threat of election-related violence on the day of polling was marked by innovation and adaptability. KWP understood the context and what was necessary to ensure a valid political process and fair outcome in the sub-district. KWP sometimes

took an unconventional approach, but the group saw their actions as completely justified and necessary given the experiences of past elections in the area. Two examples are provided below.

Several KWP members had received training from the Electoral Commission to work as polling officials in their area. When a member was organizing her ballot boxes and materials for delivery to Kup she became aware of three candidates driving with their supporters in what she perceived to be an attempt to hijack the ballot papers on route to Kup. In response, she waved down a passing car and the local leader inside agreed to take a message to the Kerowagi District Office to ensure an alternative road or transport was used. As she said: 'I stood in the middle of the road to stop the car, I had no choice. They could have had guns'. As a result of her intervention, the papers were delivered by helicopter to Kup.

Secondly, a large crowd had gathered to witness the ballot papers being delivered. The returning officer and presiding officer stepped from the helicopter, carrying a small bag and a large briefcase respectively. Because of the size of his bag, the crowd assumed the presiding officer had the papers and proceeded to follow him, while at the suggestion of two KWP members the smaller bag containing the ballot papers was taken by the returning officer and the police officer and kept in the care of the two KWP members for the entire evening. The story continues:

At night everyone was hunting the presiding officer down. One man came and brought his gun and was making accusations that people wanted to sign the ballot papers. The presiding officer told everyone to leave him alone as he had the ballot papers and he didn't want to fail in his duty. No one in the area where the presiding officer was staying or surrounding villages slept during the night. They were alert and awake and provided security for the ballot papers until dawn. We were relaxing! They wanted to take the police officer who was with us as well but we said it was late, and he needs to rest as the only one supervising the elections tomorrow. The presiding officer came to the centre with his briefcase the following morning. We fell about laughing on the grass. We couldn't stop laughing. The presiding officer said, 'all this time they think I have been carrying the ballot papers. I am such an actor! It was hard work!'

An unconventional approach was seen as the only alternative to prevent the ballot papers being stolen as was usual practice in past elections. KWP feel strongly that their actions assured people of the right and opportunity to make their own voting choices. As a KWP member said, 'Who knows what other people would have done if they got the papers but we know that we looked

after them, they were protected by us'. Further, when sorting the ballot papers according to ballot stations, a Kup candidate wearing a long coat (which could have concealed something), attempted to intimidate the KWP members and the presiding officer to reduce the number of voting stations in the Kup Station area from three to one. They refused to give in to his demands, reinforcing the need to follow due process. They gained strength from the fact that they too were from Kup, with their own support network. 'What could he do to us?', one of the KWP members present at the time asked.

With the assistance of polling officials and one police officer for the entire sub-district, KWP set up the polling booths and controlled the voting process. This included enforcing separate lines for men and women, the equal representation of male and female voters, and privacy to vote. Knowledge and understanding of the area was paramount, such as what clans were present, or who had to be watched as a security threat. If a man voted, a woman would follow. Tally sheets were crucial in ensuring due process and a balanced gender representation. If the tally sheets showed men were five ahead, five women were called to vote. KWP members were clear and forthright about the process that was to be followed, and open communication was seen as fundamental to the outcome. If some of the young men started to push or attempted to vote twice they were reprimanded, and in some cases voting was suspended until the issue was resolved. Again, being from the area was regarded as safety net, 'I am from here too, so what can they do?' (*'Ol as ples, mi as ples tu, bai ol wokim wanem?'*), a female KWP member said.

However, the capacity to control the voting process went beyond KWP members simply being from the area. Respect was shown by the community to KWP members throughout the election period, especially the women who were founding members and had shown their commitment to peace-work in their communities. '*Ol mama wok na larim ol wokim long wanem we ol laikim'* ('It is our mothers controlling it [the voting] so let them do it the way they want to'), was a comment regularly heard. As one of the KWP members commented:

For us, over the years we have been working we have seen a marked difference in our community. We have respect and when we ran the election they respected us, we gave education, we told them about changes in the law so they heard it and came to vote peacefully. Towards the end they wanted to rush to get the papers but we told them that they couldn't ruin it, we had done so well to that point.

Discrepancies in the common roll and insufficient numbers of ballot papers assigned to the voting population were common problems throughout the Kup sub-district. Dissatisfaction was expressed by those who did not vote, as they saw it as a chance missed to participate in an election that was well controlled,

fair and open to all. Satisfied, however, with what was seen as a legitimate and locally controlled voting process, everyone clapped as the last ballot paper was signed, and voters as well as candidates and scrutineers dispersed. The ballot boxes were locked and, unlike previous elections, left unguarded until the Defence Force arrived to pick up the boxes late in the afternoon.

A local response to local issues

KWP utilized their extensive network, built on widespread voter education and the launching of the Violence-Free Election campaign, to create an alternative election practice. KWP members and KWP community police were present at every voting station and it was the responsibility of KWP members who were working everyday on the ground to be alert and respond to problems in their community as they arose. Not one of the candidates who signed the agreement with KWP was involved in any election-related problems, and voter education combined with the Livelihoods Programme was seen as critical to keeping candidates from stimulating or sustaining conflict. Not one tribal fight occurred in Kup during or following the election period. No guns were present during voting and any pressure by young men to persuade voters to choose a specific candidate was immediately condemned. No ballot papers were stolen or signed prior to or following polling. There was a marked improvement in the representation of women. Female voters were excited by the opportunity to vote, as the following comment by a female community member highlights: 'Every election, I have had candidates I liked but I couldn't vote for them, now I voted for who I wanted'.

Much is being said in Chimbu about the non-violent election in Kup, compared with other parts of Chimbu where election-related violence was widespread. As one male community member noted, 'In Simbu people think that, *em nau, taim bilong eleksin na bai mipela lukim namba wan paia long Kup na ol bai kukim haus bikos ol save mekim olsem long ol yia i kam so ol bai wokim*' ('it's election time, we will see the first fire burning in Kup, they will set houses alight because that is what has always happened in the previous elections'). It was ironic that KWP community police were 'camping out' in Kerowagi in an attempt to prevent a tribal fight from erupting in response to an election-related death. Unlike previous years, only one police officer was delegated to the entire Kup sub-district on the day of polling.

The pride and confidence shown by KWP members for the part they played in ensuring a violence-free and fair election is immeasurable. Their success is seen as a 'dream come true' and the 'first of its kind in Kup history'. KWP is a women's organization that has broken the barrier of male dominance, and men

are showing respect for and confidence in the members of the organization and their activities. After many years of hard work 'sweating, talking, sleeping out, lighting lamps to walk in the dark, in the rain', and in the face of some criticism by community members for the lack of practical change in communities, KWP believe the result is indisputable. KWP members welcome the opportunity to oversee the 2012 elections in Kup.

This is not to say there were no election-related problems in Kup. Campaign houses, for example, were identified as a cause of conflict prior to polling, a drain on resources for both supporters and candidates, and, due to the increased movement of men and women at night, a determinant of domestic violence, unwanted pregnancies, rape and the spread of HIV. The role of campaign houses in Kup during the 2012 elections is being seriously questioned by some KWP members. Also, three men were shot by a candidate in Kup, one of whom died. The community reacted positively to the incident and requests were made to KWP to intervene and mediate the conflict. There is widespread recognition of the peace-building work of KWP throughout the sub-district and with it a realization that KWP can be depended on to support and assist with conflict resolution. KWP members accompanied the victims to hospital and liaised with police over the matter. Due to KWP's mediation and associated activities, the community was able to remain fairly peaceful, when in the past such an incident would have erupted into tribal violence.

Three of the four executive members of KWP had immediate family standing for election. Differing political preferences have proven to be a divisive factor in Papua New Guinea politics and a contributor to disputes and intra- and inter-clan conflict. However, the KWP executive continued their commitment to peace-building throughout the election period. Open communication and respect for individual preferences also helped to negate political divisions and the organization remained united and strong. Inherent in their work is an understanding that despite some differences KWP members must be unified in their approach and provide a positive role model for the community.

Lessons to be learned

The peace-building activities of KWP over the seven years to 2007, combined with widespread voter education, the Livelihoods Programme and the Violence-Free Election campaign, had a twofold effect. First, corrupt election practices were strongly rejected in favour of a legitimate and fair process. Secondly, by targeting what have in past elections been the underlying causes of conflict, there was a reduction in election-related disputes and violence. KWP applied practical measures to ensure a valid electoral process and in turn create conditions

for peace. The two aspects are self-supporting. This must be recognized if we are to see a transformation in political trends and national approaches to electoral processes in Papua New Guinea.

Voter education was more than awareness at a marketplace or displaying posters. Being from the community meant KWP members immersed themselves at the grassroots level, eating and sleeping with the community and talking over the issues at night. KWP feel strongly that people are less responsive to awareness in towns or at the market as people are there to conduct their own business. Complex political concepts such as LPV and voters' rights require time for discussion and clarification. In contrast, KWP believes the messages conveyed during their voter awareness were adopted and well understood by many members of the community in Kup. A KWP member clarified this point:

You have to walk inside, where cars can't go, and sleep in the *haus man* and talk to them in their house. We sleep in the community and at night we talk; next day we go to another place and from this we have seen success. Money doesn't matter. We slept, got up, ate with the community. We work in a localized way but we see big achievements.

The system of LPV voting was seen as exclusive and a potential source of conflict. It lacked simplicity, English was prioritized over a *Tokpisin* translation and even when an illiterate voter asserted his/her choice, there was still ample opportunity for those assisting the voter to mark the ballot for their own candidate.

Throughout many parts of Papua New Guinea, polling officials working in their own communities were ineffective and unable to prevent illegitimate and unfair election practices from occurring. Much can be learned from the activities of KWP during the election period. The significance of engaging the local community and political candidates, combined with the influence of a strong and well-respected local organization, resulted in a non-violent election and an impressive improvement in voting rights, practices and processes. Despite this, the negative influence of a flawed common roll had the potential to undermine much of the positive work of KWP. The process of drawing up the roll, which is out of the hands of groups working on the ground, remains a serious potential trigger for conflict in future elections.

Conclusion

This chapter provides a snapshot of KWP's unique role in the 2007 national election and offers insights and lessons for reducing opportunities for violence. An organic women's organization, in partnership with the community, took

ownership of the electoral process to ensure a free and largely non-violent election period. The underlying determinants of electoral conflict were targeted in an attempt to create a legitimate process and to reduce the likelihood of election-related disputes. The strategy of voter education, launching the Livelihoods Programme and the Violence-Free Election campaign were localized responses. The 'gunpoint democracy' of past elections (Standish 1996; Gibbs 2004) was rejected and individual rights and values promoted in its place.

The success of KWP lay in its tailored and holistic approach and the attention that was given to issues that were contextually relevant and locally determined. Rather than a 'one size fits all' response, KWP identified overlooked problems and gaps, such as the poor representation of female voters, and developed their own solutions. A homegrown organization, KWP had the capacity to facilitate dialogue with those who were beyond the reach of government. Their responses to potential security threats were often spontaneous, unconventional and improvised but their capacity and confidence to respond lay in their commitment to free not only their own lives but also those of their families and communities from the devastating effects of conflict. KWP's ownership of the election process was an attempt to challenge dominant and detrimental trends in current Papua New Guinea politics.

It is encouraging that a grassroots organization could identify and implement innovative and appropriate strategies and as part of their peace-building activities create an environment in which corrupt electoral practices, violence and discrimination had little weight. Community-based approaches offer alternative options and fresh perspectives to addressing community-based issues such as poor governance, undemocratic electoral processes, and the disenfranchisement of women. The challenge is to ensure that these approaches are recognized, encouraged and supported by national and donor agencies.

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12. The Context of HIV Transmission During the 2007 Election in Enga Province

Philip Gibbs and Marie Mondu¹

A team of civil society observers was commissioned by the National Research Institute to observe and study the 2007 election in Enga Province. One of the issues to consider was the impact of the election on the spread of HIV in the province. Arriving in Enga at the beginning of the nomination period, the writers found a widespread opinion that there was heightened sexual activity in the province during the election period.

We chose a number of ways to look for trends in both protected and unprotected sexual behaviour. These included comparison of birth rates for the 2002 election year and the year following that election; sexually transmitted infection (STI) figures around the time of the 1997, 2002 and 2007 elections; condom distribution and sale rates before and during the elections; money flow during and outside election time; the amount of time people stayed away from home campaigning during the election period compared to other times; the way and the extent to which candidates referred to HIV or AIDS in their election campaign speeches; the experience of 'campaign houses'; and, more generally, attitudes of people towards sex and the HIV epidemic.

Much of the information about sexual attitudes and behaviour was gathered in conversations with friends and *wantok*. When visiting Wabag Hospital and the nearby Yampu Health Centre to check birth and STI records we spoke with health workers there. We also observed what took place at night markets, at gambling places, in villages, and on the streets in Wabag town.

What follows is an account of those aspects of the electoral context that may impact on the transmission of HIV among the people of the Enga Province.

¹ We wish to acknowledge the National Research Institute, AusAID, the Electoral Support Program, the Research Advisory Committee of the National AIDS Council Secretariat, Caritas Australia, members of the Electoral Commission, particularly those in Wabag, the Enga domestic observer team, and all those people in Enga and elsewhere who assisted in any way in the research for this paper.

Risk occasions

The National HIV/AIDS Support Project (NHASP) Social Mapping Project for Enga (2005:17) notes how elections are a 'risk occasion' in Enga (along with 'church crusades'). As an occasion that affects the lives of the whole population over a number of months every five years, why is it so 'risky'? The mapping report notes that there are many rape cases associated with elections. This paper will show how the risk is far more complex than that.

The Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) also recognized that elections can be risky occasions and commissioned Jane Cousins to help mainstream HIV and AIDS in the PNGEC and to develop strategies to counter what was perceived as an increased risk of infection at election time. The PNG National Elections 2007 HIV Prevention Intervention program produced a number of initiatives, including education workshops for returning and assistant returning officers, awareness materials, screening of a film on national television, cartoon strip messages in the national newspapers, and distribution of HIV and AIDS 'kits' containing posters, pamphlets, latex gloves and condoms.

Our initial enquiries with a variety of people in Enga also revealed a general opinion that there is an increase in sexual activity during the election period and that this could lead to increased spread of STIs, including HIV.

The challenge facing us as researchers was to develop methodologies to measure and assess the veracity of that opinion.

Method

We realize that there is little point in studying HIV rates given the limited timeframe for our study. There is no set time between exposure to the virus and a person getting tested and clinically diagnosed. A person might get infected during the elections but find out after many years. It is also possible for someone to be infected in one place, such as Port Moresby, and be tested in another, such as Wabag. With these limitations we looked for other measures indicating sexual behaviour that might lead to HIV transmission.

With no quantitative baseline study outside of election time, the researcher is faced with a number of challenges. One can document behaviour that appears to enhance risk and contributes to an increase in HIV transmission, but without a baseline it is hard to know if there is a difference in behaviour more generally in the population or in particular groups outside or within the election period. This difficulty influenced our use of indicators in the study. For example, consider

an obvious indicator—condom sales. Condom sales give no clear indication of condom use, and increased condom distribution could possibly indicate increased sexual activity, though there is no direct link. Moreover, increased condom use has no direct relationship to increased or decreased risk of the spread of HIV since it does not tell us if there was more unprotected sex.

The indicators we chose do not supply proof in themselves; however, taken together they contribute to a picture of sexual activity and its context. Where possible, we tried to gather diachronic data—for example, STI rates in clinic records over a number of years.

We chose the following five markers for quantitative data:

- birth rates—we presume that an increase in the birth rate indicates an increase in unprotected sex some nine months previously
- rates of STIs—we presume that an increase in a biomarker such as the monthly STI rates at hospital clinics indicates an increase in unprotected sex in the previous month or two; this is compounded by the fact that there are various types of STIs, some being asymptomatic
- condom distribution and sales—increased distribution and sales is presumed to indicate a desire for protected sex
- cash flow—some link poverty to sex, others link excess cash; our presumption is that more available cash may lead to more opportunities to buy or sell sex; though, as we will show, cash is not the only commodity in transactional sex
- mobility—we presume that when people live away from home there is more chance of engaging in new sexual liaisons (this would most probably mean less opportunity for sex with one's regular partner).

As may be seen from the above discussion, it is difficult to show how elections 'actually' increase HIV transmission. Indicators at best show trends, but do not provide proof. Qualitative methods help us to interpret the meaning of quantitative markers and help illustrate why and how there may be an enhanced potential for HIV transmission in the context of an election. Some of the questions for which we sought answers were:

- Why do people think the elections may have an impact on increased HIV transmission?
- Is changing sexual terminology over the last three decades also a sign of changing attitudes and behaviour?
- Are there new dynamics influencing multiple sexual partnering during the election period?
- Given the risks, why are men and women prepared to engage in unprotected sex?

- What interventions have been tried and to what effect?

Campaign houses are reputedly places associated with sexual activity. We felt that attending the nightly sessions in such houses would compromise our political neutrality. So, information about these houses was obtained from discussion with friends and other persons who did attend. We also asked several people who had extensive experience of campaign houses in 2002 and 2007 to give a firsthand account of life at those houses. Additionally, we observed what took place at night markets, gambling places, villages, and streets in Wabag.

Principal findings

Birth rates

Birth rates are obviously linked to unprotected sex. For this purpose, births at Wabag General Hospital in 2002 were compared with those of 2003 (Figure 12.1). Births in the first months of 2003 were significantly higher than in 2002, indicating that more conceptions took place in May–July 2002 (the election period) than in the previous non-election year 2001. Comparing births in 2008 with those of 2007 (Figure 12.2), one can see a general trend of higher numbers of births in the first half of 2008 with a significant increase in April, just nine months after the election.

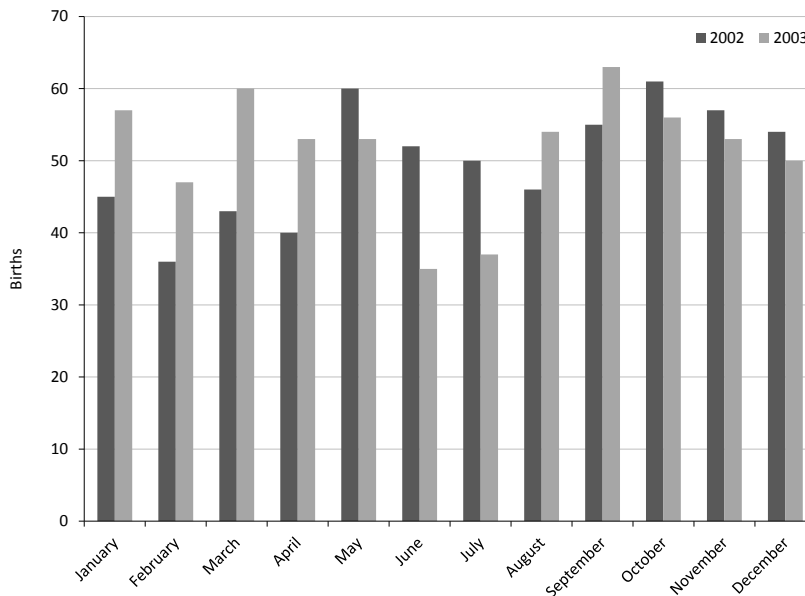


Figure 12.1: Monthly births at Wabag General Hospital, 2002 and 2003

12. The Context of HIV Transmission During the 2007 Election in Enga Province

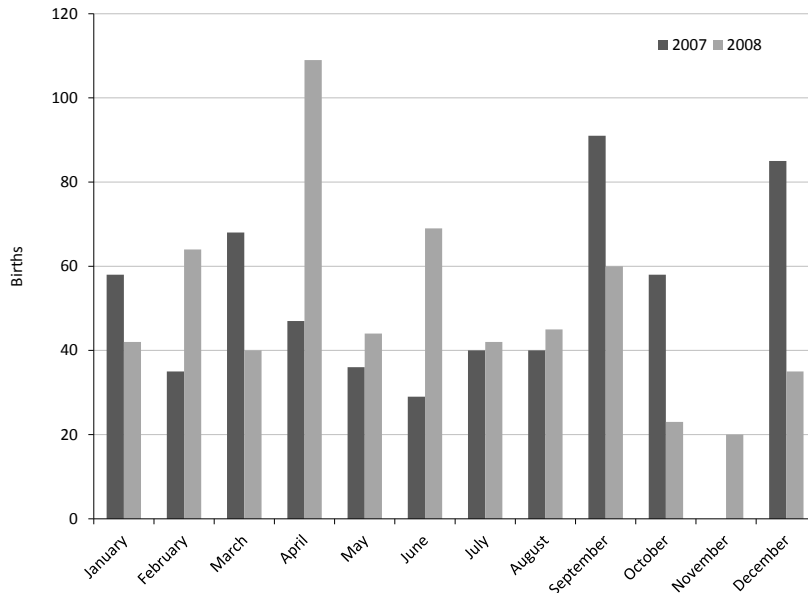


Figure 12.2: Monthly births at Wabag General Hospital, 2007 and 2008

Source: Birth records, Wabag General Hospital

HIV and AIDS awareness education and public response

As part of our election observation for Wabag Open, 24 campaign speeches were recorded, transcribed and analysed. Very few candidates mentioned HIV and AIDS. Exceptions to this were Maryanne Amu (who is a health worker by profession), Bart Philemon (who came to support his New Generation Party candidates) and Father Paul Kanda. The latter two did not focus on the HIV epidemic; rather, their focus was on corruption, and they used AIDS simply as an example of a problem with a negative effect on the community. On the basis of candidate posters, none of the contesting candidates had policies which addressed the HIV epidemic. As far as public campaigning went, HIV and AIDS appeared to be a non-issue.

We also looked at some of the awareness strategies used during the election process, either by the Provincial AIDS Committee (PAC) or by civil society, noting strengths and weaknesses of the different strategies. Table 12.1 summarizes our findings.

Table 12.1: Strengths and weaknesses of awareness strategies

Approach	Organization	Weakness	Strength	Comment
Theatre or drama group	Mambisanda Theatre Group, Sari Youth Group	Performances not widespread. Taken as entertainment	Use of local language. Engaged community	The group experienced logistic problems, limiting the scope of their activities
Training of returning officers and election officials	PAC	1 day for 2 hours only as opposed to a full day	17 participants attended and materials distributed	Many were not interested and left the room one by one (report by attendee)
Information education communication materials and condom distribution	PNGEC 2007 Election HIV Response Program and Enga PAC	Late delivery; no follow up education	Condoms and other materials available to the public	Distribution began only on polling day. When asked, many people seemed not to know how to interpret the posters. Some obtained the colourful posters to decorate the walls of their houses. Others took condoms to sell.
Mass media	PNGEC 2007 Election HIV Response Program	Local public radio (NBC) not on air prior to election. Majority has no access to TV and print media		NBC resumed broadcasting during the counting period, reporting full time on election results

STI rates

Most STI infections show symptoms within a few weeks of sexual contact. Hence data for the months of June, July and August of election years might give an indication of unprotected sex during the campaign period, normally the months of April and May. Data from the Wabag STI clinic records do not show any clear trends for 2002; however, the data for 2007 shows a remarkable increase in people going for STI treatment in the months following the election (Figure 12.3).

Apart from statistics, verbal opinions of clinic staff were noted. Staff of Wabag STI clinic confirmed an increased number of patients after the campaigning months (May–June 2007). Mr Joel Mosek, who heads the clinic, made the following remarks on STI infections for election years:

After the elections, I am expecting more patients. In every election, the number of STI patients is usually higher than normal days. And I believe more people will come in for treatment after this election (STI clinic, Wabag, 13 July 2007).

The high STI rate in Papua New Guinea has direct implications for HIV transmission. STIs are a sensitive marker of unprotected sexual behaviour that put people at risk of HIV infection, and are co-factors increasing the probability of HIV infection (Jenkins and Buchanan-Aruwafu 2007:79). Dr William Waro from the Wabag General Hospital, basing his comments on the National AIDS Council Secretariat *Quarterly Report* (December 2006), stated that Enga ranked second highest in the country on HIV infection by province. A total of 643 Engans were identified as HIV-positive at different testing centres in the country in 2006. The level of stigma and discrimination is extremely high, resulting in many infected individuals travelling out of the province to be tested elsewhere—producing a lower detection rate in the Enga Province. The impact of the 2007 election remains to be seen.

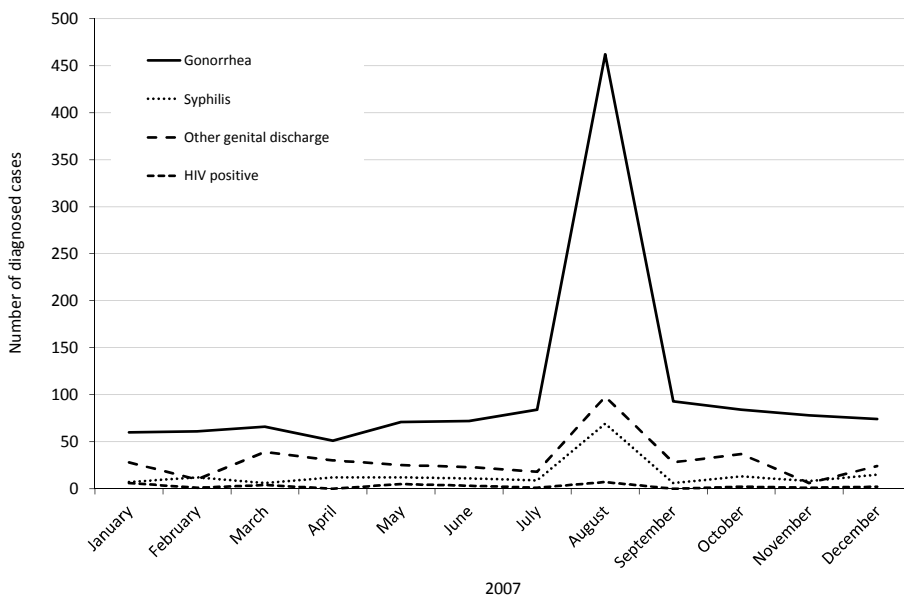


Figure 12.3: Total sexually transmitted infection cases diagnosed at Wabag STI clinic, 2007

Source: STI clinic, Wabag General Hospital

Condoms

We sought data on condom distribution in order to assess availability and whether or not protected sex was common during elections. We found that condoms generally were available from the Enga PAC, shops, street sellers and local groups engaged in awareness activities. However, we have also identified attitudes affecting people's inability or unwillingness to use condoms despite their availability.

HIV/AIDS response program 2007 national elections

A total of 175 cartons containing information education communication (IEC) materials were received by Enga PAC two weeks before the campaign period. Distribution of these materials, however, came into effect two weeks after polling; thus polling teams did not receive the 'HIV kit' as planned. The delay was due to limited human resources at the PAC headquarters in Wabag. On polling day HIV/AIDS posters were given out to voters in some polling places. There was also a theatre group from Mambisanda that helped distribute IEC materials to campaign houses during the campaign period, and the assistant election manager obtained five boxes of male condoms from the PAC for provision to election officials.

Groups and individual advocates visited the PAC office occasionally, from the beginning of the campaign period through to the time of counting, to obtain supplies of IEC materials (personal communication, Mr James Balos, Coordinator of Enga PAC). Corporate houses and targeted workforce groups such as the Defence Force and Guard Dog Security personnel were supplied with IEC materials. Villages, schools and health facilities alongside the highway towards both Mount Hagen and Porgera were given similar packages, mostly during the counting period.

Local distributors

Local distributors comprise mainly local men and women who collect boxes or packets of condoms from health clinics, during awareness campaigns or directly from the PAC office. Local distributors sold condoms for 50 toea per packet. When the demand is high, a packet goes for K2. Selling of condoms provides a means of income for local distributors as well. One distributor said he was saving lives and making a little pocket money besides.

Reporting on sales during the elections, one vendor told us that usually on normal days, before elections, he sells half to one box of condoms per day (a box contains 12 condoms). During the campaigning period he sold four to five

boxes per day (50–60 condoms) as he moved from one “animal” [campaign house] to another. However, when asked if he used condoms with his girlfriend, he denied it, claiming his girlfriend was a *wapra* [prostitute]. Through some sort of strange logic he expressed fear that condoms have holes in them and he could easily get infected, so he doesn’t use them with her. An example like this indicates knowledge gaps about condoms as a preventative measure.

Shops and retail outlets

Apart from street sellers, retail outlets in town sell condoms. Two Asian-owned shops were observed. One was selling male lubricated condoms that were commonly supplied by the National AIDS Council Secretariat. The shop assistant reported that the condom boxes were usually bought from the PAC office for K2.50 per box. Each condom was then sold for 30 toea. The second was selling imported condoms and claimed to have had many more customers purchasing condoms during the election period.

A tradestore keeper at Yampu near Wabag said that just before the issue of writs a health extension officer gave 15 cartons of condoms (each containing 12 boxes of 12 packets of condoms) to groups of young men in the area. Hence there was little need for people to buy them again, though he had customers from further afield. Before the election period he sold 10 to 12 condoms per week, but during the campaign period he was selling at the rate of about 70 condoms per week. Another tradestore keeper in the vicinity of a campaign house near Wabag said that during 2006 he sold about two boxes of condoms per month. In 2007 he was selling two boxes per week, and during the campaign period the demand increased to three to four boxes (36–48 condoms) per week. After the campaign period and voting, the demand went down again to one or two boxes per week.

Condom use

A large volume of condoms distributed does not mean that they are used by everybody. It seems that both male and female condoms were used. A local condom seller reported that before the election she sold to only three female relatives but during the election period word got around and many people came buying both female and male condoms. Women would say, ‘In case the men do not have condoms we will use our condom’.

However, on a number of occasions we heard comments such as:

I don’t like using condom because skin to skin is very nice and [more] satisfying than using this plastic called condom. It disturbs my sexual enjoyment (19-year-old male).

I don't use condom because using condom does not satisfy my sexual desires. When I don't use condom I am well satisfied (25-year-old male).

I don't use condoms because it disturbs my sexual interactions with the ladies and does not satisfy my sexual desires. Skin to skin is the best way to satisfy me (29-year-old male).

I don't use condoms because most times I'm dead drunk. My attitude has changed. Usually before the elections I take alcohol and don't engage in sexual activities. During the elections, there were surplus of ladies around so I took the opportunity. Whichever campaign house I visit I hit it (had sex) *Mi save paitim yet*. I had at least one or two ladies a day (Male leader at his local church).

A woman who frequented campaign houses made the following comments:

I don't have to carry condoms around. That's men's responsibility. I don't care if they use condom or not. It's not only me who is going to be infected they will be infected too. So I don't worry too much about using condoms during sex.

To the extent that such attitudes are commonly held, despite distribution of condoms a considerable number of people are at risk of becoming infected.

Cash flow

Money was chosen as an indicator because cash is associated with sex and the spread of STI infections.

There is a trend toward a very high cash flow within the province at the time of election. Contesting candidates and their supporters used huge sums of cash to pay for votes, ranging from K5 to K100 per head, and time spent on gambling increased. Shop managers were interviewed and financial reports for the months of April, May, June and July 2007 were sighted. In all cases income had increased during the election period. Shop assistants confirmed that the election period was a peak period for business operations—one commented that the shop she was working in closed around 6pm during the election time—an hour beyond the usual closing time.

With a ban on the open sale of alcohol in the province, Coca Cola often substitutes as a medium of exchange (along with money and pigs) at campaign rallies and other gatherings. It is difficult to obtain data on the amount of cash or the number of pigs exchanged. However, taking Coca Cola sales as a surrogate variable for cash flow, one can see from Figure 12.4 how sales increased almost seven-fold during the election period.

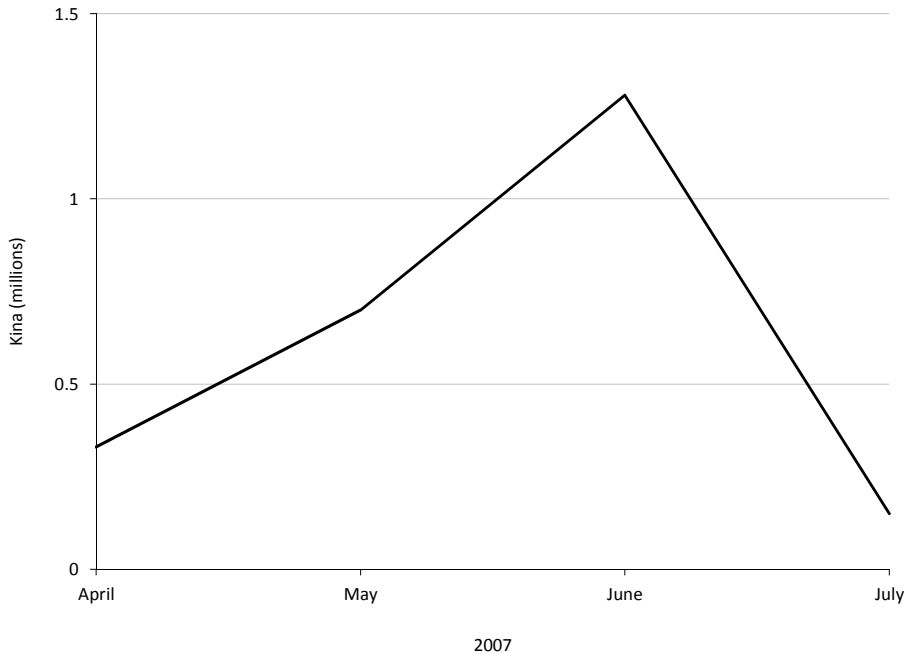


Figure 12.4: Wabag Coca Cola depot income, April–July 2007

Source: Interview with manager, Wabag Coca Cola depot, Wabag, July 2007

Mobility

One of our field assistants lives very close to a campaign house and made enquiries with people that he knew there. This was done verbally in the third week of June 2007 (part way through the election period) with a purposive sample of 10 males and 10 females who frequented campaign houses. He found that some people stayed away (campaigning) for long periods of time during the election. (We do not know their pattern of behaviour before or after the elections, but the presumption is that mobility enables people to encounter new sexual partners and that without the campaign house they might stay at home more often.)

For many of these people, time away from home was an opportunity for liaisons involving premarital and extramarital sex (see below).

Mobility is not only about people moving between campaign houses but also about people moving between provinces. One woman said that before the campaign period she used to go around with one or two elderly men. However,

during the campaign period she had a lot of clients including visiting Defence Force and police personnel. She claims that she had 5 to 6 clients a day and made good money during the elections.

Table 12.2: Number of days people stayed away from their homes

Participant	Day/s out	Marital status
Female		
A	since issue of writs ^a	divorced
B	since issue of writs	divorced
C	4 weeks	single
D	4 weeks	single
E	4 weeks	single
F	4 weeks	single
G	8 days	married
H	12 days	married
I	6 days	married woman with children
J	many days	married woman with children
Male		
A	1 week	married man with children
B	15 days	married man with children
C	many days	married
D	many days	married
E	since issue of writs	single
F	12 days	married
G	since issue of writs	single
H	since issue of writs	single
I	since issue of writs	single
J	since issue of writs	single

^a Writs were issued on 4 April 2007

Experience of campaign houses

Campaign houses, or as they are commonly known 'animal houses', are purposely built to house and gather supporters of a particular candidate during the campaign period. The term 'animal house' comes from the reputation campaign houses developed over the years: a lot of people who frequent them seem to act like animals, not thinking sensibly like human beings. During singsings or *tanim het*, members of opposite sexes whisper to each other and make arrangements to meet outside. A married woman commented, 'Who is to stop them? They have a lot of freedom at that time'.

Campaigning in Enga, like other Highlands provinces, usually involves generous hospitality and where possible distribution of large sums of cash (Standish 2006). With the introduced limited preferential voting system voters were not restricted to one campaign house but had three or more avenues. Seizing the opportunity of enjoying candidates' free handouts, they moved from one campaign house to another, and if engaging in unprotected sex, posing a greater risk of STI and HIV transmission. Free beverage and food, dusk-to-dawn gambling, and night entertainment are examples of election spoils from campaign houses. There have been reports of a good deal of sexual activity associated with campaign houses, aided by free alcoholic beverages, drugs and home brew, money, political pressure to win votes, as well as erotic songs sung during the *tanim het* courting rituals.

Table 12.3: Risky activities and activities leading to people's vulnerability

Risky activities	Activities leading to people's vulnerability
Premarital and extramarital sex	Singsing, <i>tanim het</i>
Sex to win votes	Gambling (cards)
Transactional sex	Alcohol and drug abuse
Fights resulting in bloodshed	Money
	Political pressure

A few examples are given here from local people who witnessed activities in campaign houses.

Extramarital sex

One person reported that during the campaign period, some husbands and wives were no longer seen as married couples. The husband freed himself and so did the wife. If the husband went out to animal houses, the wife went out too. They claimed to have to fight hard to win votes for their candidates.

Another person noted, 'The men said to their wives to free themselves and campaign. No man or woman was to say anything. After the election we would return to our homes and be husbands and wives. Now the women went their own way and the men went their own way during the campaign season. A woman who tried to complain couldn't go on because no one would listen. All complaints would be heard after the election' (35-year-old married woman).

One woman went to an animal house to claim her husband but the man swore at her and told her to wait in their house till the campaign was over and she could claim her husband. She wept and went home.

Although adultery is ordinarily discouraged, some married couples use the elections as a chance to have extramarital affairs. Some married people claim to

be a *yukupae*, a local term which means a man or woman who is unattached or separated and therefore available for sex with another *yukupae*. The 10 men and 10 women from Table 12.2 were asked how many sexual partners they had in the seven weeks from the issue of writs on 4 April 2007. Three women claimed to have had more than 20 different sexual partners over the seven-week period (Figure 12.5).

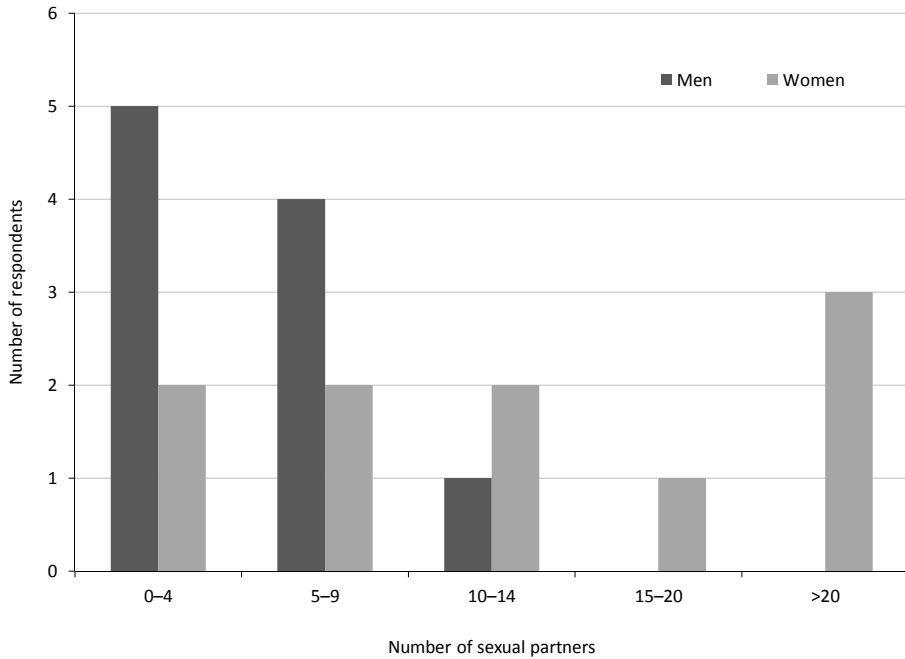


Figure 12.5: Number of sexual partners since issue of the writs

Source: Interviews at marketplace near Wabag, June 2007

Sex for votes

Women often play a significant role in attracting and entertaining male supporters: young female helpers in campaign houses were sometimes pressured into entertaining males sexually as a way of gaining votes.

... one man came and complained that the girls in there were stubborn and ignorant; she (guardian) got angry with the girls and swore at them saying, '*Yupela stap long plastic o?* (meaning, are you virgins?). Why didn't you talk with them at least even if you didn't want to sleep with them?' Then she told them not to come to the animal house because they were useless (from a written account of experience at campaign houses during the 2002 national elections).

One of the reasons men have multiple sexual partners is to seduce females into voting for their candidate. Some would make false marriage plans with a number of girlfriends. Girls with this type of commitment in mind were easily talked into sex and gave their votes to candidates they did not initially support.

... I want to sex many women or girls in different places so that [a] woman can vote for my candidate with her close relatives and families so that they are convinced that I am going to marry her (married 29-year-old male from near Wabag, 26 May 2007).

Violence

Physical violence poses a risk of HIV transmission if a wounded and bleeding person is infected. There were a number of election-related deaths and casualties observed in 2007. Dr William Waro from Wabag General Hospital reported one death and two election-related casualties brought to that hospital and the sister in charge at Yampu Health Centre reported 11 men being brought in, some with gunshot and bushknife wounds. These figures do not include a number of post-election casualties.

There is a direct link between engendered sexual violence and HIV transmission (National AIDS Council of Papua New Guinea 2006:18). Stories of rapes associated with campaign houses were reported in past elections, and 2007 was no exception. For example, a woman described a planned rape that occurred at the animal house where she was staying:

One of these girls didn't know that her boyfriend was also at the animal house. When he saw her, she acted shy pretending to hide so he came over to her and asked how she came in. She admitted she came with another guy. She forgot who she came with and joined her old friend. When night came they ate their dinners and started their programs, singing and *tanim het*. While this was going on, the boyfriend planned the rape of his ex-girlfriend. He told the boys that his girlfriend came in with another guy and he hated her so why don't the guys rape her. This man went into the animal house and asked her if she wanted to chew betel nut and she agreed and decided to come out and chew. They were sitting under a big tree and the man stood up and moved a little way to pee. Then a crowd of men came and carried her away through the *kaukau* [sweet potato] gardens and they raped her. After they had raped her, they sent her to the animal house and threatened her, telling her to shut up and just sleep. In the morning, the boys contributed K7.00 and gave it to her for her bus fare home.

Gambling

Participants of a peer education exercise conducted with the Catholic youth of Sari were asked to identify driving forces behind the HIV epidemic within their communities. Card games were listed among the popular risk practices linked to direct transmission. The youth further explained that when all money is lost in gambling it is possible that people can sell sex. In campaign houses card games were the common entertainment enjoyed by all. At some point sexual terms and phrases were exchanged to signal sex for money. For instance, '*Nyoto dii*' ('Give and you'll get it') or 'lay it (card) down! I'll beat it', (meaning lay yourself down and I'll pay for you to continue the game).

Attitudes of people towards sex

Cultural beliefs and taboos in the past had a strong hold on sexual expression in Enga. For instance, males were instilled with great fear of losing their masculinity through eating food prepared by a female undergoing menstruation. Anthropologist Mervyn Meggitt, writing in the early 1960s, labels Mae Enga men's attitudes to women as the 'anxiety of prudes' trying to protect themselves from contamination by women (Meggitt 1964:222). The resultant distance between the sexes thus naturally delayed sexual exploration at an early age for many, and suppressed promiscuity. Sex was seldom spoken of openly and women had very little say in sexual decision making, though they could be very assertive at times (Kyakas and Wiessner 1992). Women's primary sexual function was that of child bearers.

The social context influencing attitudes and behaviour described by Meggitt has changed dramatically. People in the 30–45 age group have developed new gender-based terminology for sexual matters. Females, for instance, might refer to their sexual organs as 'passbook' (a bank transaction booklet). Phrases such as, 'I can sign my withdrawal slip at any time because I possess a passbook' have been used commonly by females, meaning women have the power to say yes or no to sex for cash. From such sexual terminology one can see a new trend emerging. Women are participating more openly in sexual decision making and there is a more open acknowledgment of transactional sex.

The younger generation speak of sex as a game or a sport, keeping scores and using phrases such as, '*Nambame kanguingi*' ('I have broken it', referring to the loss of virginity). Some sexually active people are referred to as 'training centre' or 'service providers'. Youngsters are developing new forms of sexual slang as they experience more freedom in expressing their sexuality.

Unprotected sex

Many of the males we spoke with prefer 'skin to skin' sex and have more than one partner. Some sexually active individuals appear careless despite the availability of condoms. A male who claimed to have had six sexual partners during the election period, when asked if he used condoms made the following remarks.

I know most of them are good so I did not use a condom but I used a condom on one. When I tried to use a condom with X, she refused and told me to remove the condom. I knew she was going around with other men but I had to remove the condom and do it because we were both naked and I could not control myself. I am still frightened but I pray that I don't get infected (he is a leader in his church and says that the election has 'spoilt' him).

Multiple sex partners

The election brought a sense of sexual liberation for many. Some married couples agreed to be 'free' during the campaign period. Males, for boastful reasons, kept tallies of bedded females thus seizing the moment to expand their territories. The following were responses of sexually active males who said they preferred multiple partners as opposed to just one.

... Because I feel tired or fed up of having sex with the same girl or woman and I feel useless.

... I want to keep a record of how many I have sexual intercourse with in order to outnumber other boys/men.

... I like different flavours from different age groups. I like very young girls or virgins because I enjoy sex ... very sweet and much better than older women.

... I want to have many sexual partners in different places so that whenever I am stranded they may accommodate me in their homes.

... I like convincing and sexing many girls/women by telling them that I will marry them so that they can vote for the candidate I support.

... I want to sex many girls or women to marry them so that my brother in laws can support me or my clansmen whenever tribal fighting arises.

... It is useless just sexing the same girl over and over again.

... Sex is my game, my favourite game.

Groups of sexually active woman displayed similar attitudes to men but their reasons for multiple partnering were either money related or sex for fun. One said that she normally had sex with men or boys behind her husband's back before the election period. During the campaigning period, the limited preferential voting system gave her the opportunity to skip from one campaign house to another, totalling seven campaign houses. She looked for men with money and did not really care about protective measures like condoms.

Another woman said that she used to be a faithful wife but started to go out with multiple sex partners during the election period. She did this to earn money in order to return her husband's brideprice when he returns, as she plans to divorce her husband.

Some women just enjoy the opportunity for new sexual relationships. One divorced woman reported to our field assistant, 'There is no secret in this. I have made deals for other men and girls to have sex. I did it too'. When asked how often she was doing it, she said, 'I did not miss a chance because, you know, every time I am asked I have to go for it. That way I have money for smoke, betel nut and gambling. If I don't go nobody is going to give me anything'.

Viral load and HIV infection

The infectiousness of people with HIV, which is related to the amount of virus present in the body, varies with the stage of infection (San Francisco AIDS Foundation 2007:1). Immediately after HIV infection, before the immune system produces antibodies in response to its presence, HIV multiplies rapidly. It can take two or more months for the body to produce antibodies to the virus.² People at this stage have a high viral load and the probability of infecting others through unprotected sex is significantly higher than when the viral load is lower. One research study estimated the risk of infection to be 20 times higher (AIDS.org Fact Sheet 2007:2).

Studies have also shown that the rate of infection in communities varies according to whether people tend to have serial partners (one sexual relationship is followed by another, but a person has only one partner at any one time) or concurrent relationships (a number of regular steady relationships at the same time). In the latter case the chance of infection spreading rapidly is greatly increased (Epstein 2007).

The situation in Enga during the elections differed from both these scenarios. In Enga, many campaign houses were open during the three months of the election period, a time, as this research shows, of significantly heightened sexual

2 Elizabeth Reid, personal communication, 7 February 2008, Canberra.

activity for both men and women. These factors could lead to a considerable amplification of the epidemic. If people were to become newly infected during this time period, they could pass the infection on to a number of their sexual partners who, unaware that they are infected, would themselves move into a period of increased infectiousness and in turn transmit the infection to their sexual partners. For example, a young man may become infected and in the following weeks visit a number of campaign houses and have unprotected sex with several partners at each of those houses. In the week or two after being infected he will carry a high viral load and if a condom is not used there is a high chance that he will pass on the virus to his partners. These partners in turn will be highly infectious in the weeks following and pass the virus on to their partners. With the election period extending over two or three months, there is time for the cycle to be repeated a number of times, leading to a very high rate of transmission of the HIV virus in the community. This is what makes the election period a particularly high-risk event.

Conclusion

We chose a number of indicators to help us learn about trends in sexual behaviour, particularly during the election period. Our data suggest that despite the lack of baseline studies for comparison, election time is a period of increased freedom, including sexual freedom. In this context many people seem unable or unwilling to protect themselves from HIV infection because of personal, cultural or other forces. There is an urgent need for further study on vulnerability to HIV and the interrelationships between attitudes, behaviour, culture, contexts, ideologies, norms and values (UNAIDS 1998). The extensive multi-partnering over a short period of time can fuel what Jenkins calls a widespread 'hot' epidemic which puts many people at risk (Jenkins and Buchanan-Aruwafu 2007:53).

This study has raised the important issue of viral load and HIV infection in the context of heightened sexual activity over a limited period of time during the election event. Mobility, money and sexual freedom could well mean a period of increased infectiousness as people transmit the virus to their multiple sexual partners during their rounds of campaign houses and other venues. It is not only high-risk groups that one should be concerned about, but also high-risk 'events'. In Enga, elections are a high-risk event.

Hopefully, lessons can be learned from this study. For example, the Sari Youth Drama Group played a limited but significant role in awareness during the election period, performing short 3–5 minute long plays on stigma and discrimination, violence against women, and general risk activities. A lot more could be done to develop participatory methods for designing educational

messages, and behaviour change programs. Ways to deliver care and treatment need to be adapted to local conditions and concepts. In the months following the elections, local leaders came with large numbers of their communities to be tested for HIV at the Yampu Health Centre near Wabag. People were saying: 'We vote in groups and we want to be tested in groups'. Admittedly the power of the group can have undesirable consequences, as in pack rape. How then can group solidarity be utilized to ensure the wellbeing and the survival of families and clans?

Community mobilization may be one of the most effective means of minimizing further spread of HIV. A good example during the elections was the response of the people of Par in the Ambum-Kompam electorate. This Tambukini community of 6000 people decided not to host a single campaign house in their area during the 2007 election period. When asked why, a community leader said, 'Because of lessons learnt as we realized there are so many problems brewing from campaign houses'. This, however, did not stop some people from moving to campaign houses in other areas.

Traditional values surrounding sex and sexuality have little relevance to new options at the level of imagination and practice, particularly with the freedom of the election period. It is crucial that key community persons with political insight identify needs and advocate solutions that will empower communities to develop a safer sexual culture. This requires not simply focusing on elections, money, goods and services, but taking into account the whole of people's lives and the way in which values, particularly community cultural values, relate to sexuality. Baseline studies need to be conducted in preparation for more comprehensive research during the next election.

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13. Assessing the Shift to Limited Preferential Voting

R.J. May, Katherine When and Nicole Haley¹

As part of a package of economic and political reforms, the Morauta government of 1999–2002 amended the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* to replace the existing first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting system to one of limited preferential voting (LPV).² This did not come into effect in the national election of 2002, but was used in 10 by-elections between 2002 and 2007.

Under the new LPV system voters were required to express three preferences.³ Once transferred, second and third preferences carried the same weight as a first preference. Failure to express three preferences constituted an invalid vote.

A number of reasons was given for the decision to change to LPV.⁴ First and foremost, there had been growing concern that, with increasing numbers of candidates contesting successive elections (in 2002 the average number of candidates per electorate had risen to 26, with a record of 62 in Oro Provincial), and a weak party vote, members were being elected with increasingly small shares of the vote. In 2002, 22 MPs (20 percent) were elected with less than 10 percent of the vote and 62 MPs (57 percent) with less than 20 percent, the lowest winning vote being 6 percent in Oro Provincial; the average winning vote was 19.7 percent.⁵ This meant that MPs could be said to have only a ‘small mandate’ (Somare once referred to the national parliament as a ‘house of rejects’ (quoted in *Post-Courier* 7 September 1999). Because LPV would produce what was commonly referred to as an ‘absolute majority’, and thus ‘promote the election of more broadly supported candidates’ (Reilly 2006:189), it was argued that LPV

1 The authors gratefully acknowledge Bill Standish’s comments on a draft of this paper.

2 Prior to independence in 1975 there had been an optional preferential voting system, though most voters had opted not to exercise their preferences beyond the primary vote.

3 In the 10 by-elections, candidates were required to mark their ballot papers, which listed all candidates with accompanying photographs, with the numbers 1, 2 and 3 alongside their preferred candidates. In 2007 the format of the ballot paper was changed; posters showing the list of numbered candidates were displayed in all polling booths and voters were given ballot papers with three spaces, numbered 1, 2, 3, against which they had to write the numbers and/or names of their preferred candidates.

4 For a more detailed discussion see Standish (2006). A major proponent of this ‘social engineering’ was The Australian National University academic Ben Reilly (see Reilly 1996, 2001a, 2002, 2004, 2006). More sceptical views were expressed by May (2000) and Standish (2002), as well as by the former electoral commissioner, Reuben Kaiulo (Kaiulo 2002:179).

5 Calculated from the official results of the 2002 election, released by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission. Results were available for 103 seats only, with the 6 failed election results excluded.

would yield better MPs with a 'stronger mandate'.⁶ It was not generally made clear, however, that what LPV produced was a majority—50 percent + 1—of live votes at the final count after eliminations, which, as will be seen below, may be well below 50 percent of the total number of valid votes cast. Secondly, in many electorates, especially in Highlands open electorates, the distribution of votes between a large number of candidates meant that a candidate who could hold together a relatively small clan or 'base' vote could have enough votes to win.⁷ This encouraged such malpractices as voter intimidation, enforced bloc voting, and discouraging outsiders from campaigning in a candidate's home area—which in turn resulted in confrontational and often violent behaviour. LPV, it was widely believed, would lead to more accommodative behaviour, partly through preference-swapping alliances between candidates, particularly candidates from across regional, clan or 'ethnic' boundaries, and thus more orderly and peaceful elections. Thirdly, the fact that voters could express a preference for three candidates meant that voters who were under pressure from family, clan or others to vote for a candidate not of their choosing might be able to meet this obligation but then allocate their second and third preferences to candidates of their choice. This was particularly relevant for women, who were often obliged to vote as their husbands or male relatives dictated, and was seen as likely to benefit women candidates. Some people suggested that LPV would bring about a reduction in the number of candidates—though it was never explained why that would happen—and that it would strengthen political parties by encouraging electoral alliances between parties. In short, in the words of Electoral Commissioner Andrew Trawen, 'LPV voting, we hope, will change the mindset of our people' (Trawen 2006:3).

Between 2003 and 2006 ten by-elections under LPV were held, in Abau (2003), Angalimp-South Wahgi, Chimbu Provincial, Yangoru-Saussia, Moresby Northeast, Wabag (all 2004), Bougainville Provincial, NCD Provincial, Koroba-Lake Kapiago and Chuave (all 2006). An audit of three by-elections in mid-2004 (Angalimp-South Wahgi, Chimbu Provincial and Yangoru-Saussia) concluded that, despite some problems, particularly due to inflated electoral rolls, the by-elections were generally peaceful, though this may have had more to do with heavy security than with the new voting procedures (Institute of Policy Studies et al. 2004). A subsequent analysis by Bill Standish of the first six by-elections (these three plus Abau, Moresby Northeast and Wabag) sought to identify 'some early lessons' from the LPV experience. Among Standish's conclusions were:

6 As May (2000) has pointed out, however, the largest mandate ever received by a Papua New Guinean MP—83 percent of the vote—was that received by cult leader Mathias Yaliwan in Yangoru-Saussia in 1972, but Yaliwan subsequently lost his seat for not attending parliament—scarcely an endorsement for large mandates!

7 For example, in an electorate of say 30,000 voters with say 40 candidates, a contest could theoretically be won with as few as 751 votes.

- ‘Many candidates had limited understanding of the significance of preferences, and most only campaigned locally, just as they had under FPTP’
- ‘... not all candidates had the ability to direct preferences towards allies ... some candidates directed their supporters to give their preferences to minor candidates’
- ‘Campaigning was much more relaxed and accommodative’
- the ‘polls were less violent ... [and] the levels of intimidation were greatly reduced compared with 2002’ (noting, however, ‘the strong police presence’ and that, as mid-term by-elections, ‘the stakes [were] not as high’)
- voters spoke ‘enthusiastically about having a “free” second and third choice’ (though ‘in certain areas the primary vote was filled out by the presiding polling official’)
- ‘For women, voting is more free under LPV, at least for second and third preferences’, though in Abau women said ‘they had followed family decisions on how to allocate preferences’, and the primary vote for women candidates remained very low
- the ‘overall mandates’ (primary votes plus preferences as a percentage of total valid votes in the initial count) of the new MPs were nearly doubled; nonetheless, in four cases the mandates ranged from 22 to 29 percent—the count being drawn out till the third last candidate was eliminated—and in the other two were ‘around 50 percent’.

Standish also noted that there were fewer candidates in the by-elections (though still, on average, more than 20) but that this was normal for by-elections, and that there was little sign that the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* had changed people’s voting behaviour towards political parties. Overall, his evaluation was that ‘LPV has had some real success ... [but] has not achieved the exaggerated hopes of its proponents’. (See Standish 2006.)

LPV in 2007

Awareness and training of polling and counting officials

Apart from those electorates in which by-elections were held under LPV, there were relatively few voters who would have retained a memory of optional preferential voting before 1975. Thus, in the lead-up to the election, electoral awareness campaigns were mounted, by both the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) and civil society organizations, to prepare voters and candidates for the introduction of the new voting system in 2007. (The AusAID-

funded voter education program is discussed specifically in chapter 4.) While these campaigns gave some attention to broader aspects of the election, such as the need for voters to choose candidates who possessed good leadership qualities, they were directed essentially at the more technical aspects of LPV, specifically how to cast a valid vote. And for the most part their coverage seldom reached to the more remote parts of electorates. Subsequently, during campaigning most candidates helped to educate voters about LPV, but again the focus was on making sure that potential supporters' votes counted rather than on how preferences might be effectively used. Notwithstanding this, some candidates seem to have had a poor understanding of how LPV worked: observers reported cases in which candidates were under the apparent impression that all three preferences of all voters were totalled to give a final vote, and one candidate who should have known better complained, 'As the rule had it, elimination began immediately after the conclusion of the count on first preferences. This immediately rendered the secondary and third preferences of the eliminated candidates useless—exhausted votes' (Digim'Rina 2007:34).

Training was also conducted for polling officials and counting officials to familiarize them with LPV procedures. The reports of observers involved in the Domestic Observer exercise suggest that in several instances this training was not adequate, but in general there seems to have been a good understanding of the technical aspects of the poll, and in most electorates the distribution of preferences seems to have proceeded fairly smoothly. Some commentators have cited, as an indicator of the administrative success in introducing LPV, the generally low informal vote (for the 102 electorates for which data was available at December 2010, the national average was 2.1 percent); as others have pointed out, however, low informal voting might also be explained by the prevalence, especially in Highlands electorates, of bloc voting (or 'controlled voting') and assisted voting. While assistance was often needed to enable illiterate or confused voters to cast their vote, candidate supporters (including, in some instances, polling officials) sometimes used this to deprive voters of their free choice. Thus, informal voting was lowest in the remote Kandep and Jimi open electorates (0.3 percent) and averaged 1.3 in the Highlands Region, but was 3.3 percent in the relatively well-educated Islands Region and highest in the National Capital District (5.7 percent) (Anere and Wheen 2009:27).

These aspects of the election are discussed in more detail elsewhere in this volume and in the *Domestic Observation Report* (Haley and Anere 2009:33–36).

LPV and candidate strategies

One of the most common arguments put forward in support of LPV was that, because candidates would need to secure preferences outside their base support areas, it would encourage cooperative behaviour among candidates, and thereby reduce tensions associated with electoral competition. FPTP voting, it was argued, was a highly competitive process and encouraged behaviour of the type that had characterized earlier elections in some parts of Papua New Guinea, particularly in the Highlands, where candidates or their supporters had blocked roads, fired on helicopters, and taken other extreme measures to prevent rival candidates from entering the candidate's 'support base', not to mention hijacking ballot boxes from the home areas of rival candidates. In fact, under FPTP it was not uncommon for stronger candidates to put up 'dummy candidates' in the home areas of rival candidates to split their vote—which might be described as a form of 'cooperative' behaviour, albeit a negative one. The expectation was, however, that with the introduction of LPV, candidates would form cooperative alliances to exchange preferences with other candidates of similar interests but (usually) different support bases, and in this way reduce confrontational behaviour and promote more peaceful elections.

Reporting on Abau in 2007, Anere observes that 'candidates saw the need to exchange second and third preferences and in some instances campaigned for each other in areas that were not their strongholds', though 'most ran their campaigns independently of each other'. Generally, however, there was not much evidence of cooperative preference swapping. In Oro (where there was a strong 'Oro for Oro' campaign) and Madang there were reports of 'ethnic' alliances among local groups seeking to resist the influence of candidates whose origins lay outside the province ('outsiders') (see chapters 15 and 21), and there may have been similar ethnic cooperation among candidates in parts of several other electorates (see, for example, Sepoe [chapter 10] on inland versus coastal voting in Kerema Open, and Kinkin [chapter 25] on Baining versus Tolai voting in Gazelle Open), and among 'outsider' groups in provinces like Madang and Oro. There were also instances (including East Sepik and East New Britain provincial electorates) in which several candidates 'ganged up' against a sitting member (as has occurred in elections prior to the introduction of LPV). But where such cooperation did take place it appears to have been mostly unorganized and informal and did not involve formal exchanges of preferences (over which candidates had little control anyhow).

In Australia's preferential voting system it is customary for most parties to hand out to voters a 'how-to-vote card', which indicates where the candidate—who generally represents a party—recommends preferences should go, in accordance with (party) strategy. But in Papua New Guinea this would be a

dangerous strategy. Since the party system is poorly developed and voting is significantly localized and personalized, and given that in most electorates there is a large number of candidates, candidates are unlikely to risk alienating voters by telling them how they should allocate their preferences. Rather, if a candidate is campaigning in a place (typically a village or settlement) where he/she expects to get strong support he/she will usually ask for the first preference but not presume to tell voters where their other preference should go; if he/she is campaigning in a place where he/she knows that voters are likely to vote for another candidate, he/she will generally acknowledge that, and modestly ask for voters' second or third preferences. The candidate's strategy will thus vary according to the local situation; a generalized how-to-vote approach is not appropriate.⁸ This was evidenced in the candidates' posters which were on display on buildings and trees in villages and towns: the great majority urged voters to 'Vote 1' for the candidate, but indicated no second or third preferences. Even in an electorate like East Sepik Provincial, where coalition partners had resolved not to endorse candidates against Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare and the 10 other candidates were all broadly 'anti-Somare', there was some collaboration between candidates opposing the sitting member, and a natural flow of preferences among the 10, but no coherent strategy of preference swapping.

In most electorates, indeed, observers reported that when pressed on the question of preference strategies most candidates with an expectation of election told voters to give them the first preference (or second if there was a favoured local son or daughter) and give the other preferences to minor candidates (or *rabis* candidates) who were not likely to threaten the candidate's chance of election. (This was, of course, more of a 'spoiling tactic' than a rational strategy, since so long as the candidate remained in contention his/her second and third preferences were irrelevant.)

There were suggestions, however, that in those electorates which had experienced by-elections under LPV, voters tended to act more 'strategically', directing their votes to candidates with a broader support base. The primary evidence for this was a lower proportion of exhausted ballots. (This is discussed further below.)

The impact of LPV on the election

It is difficult to say how the impact of LPV should be measured.

⁸ Indeed, there have been instances in Australian elections in which parties have distributed different how-to-vote cards in different parts of an electorate.

One obvious approach is to look at the candidates who were leading on first preferences—and who might therefore have won under FPTP voting—and see how many of these were eventually successful when preferences had been distributed. As at December 2010, complete results were not available, but for the 102 electorates for which data was available,⁹ 80 candidates who were in front on first preferences maintained their lead to become eventual winners. Of these 40 (half) were sitting members. Of the remaining 22 candidates who gained the largest share of first preference votes but subsequently lost on preferences, 7 were sitting members. They included former prime minister and Pangu Pati leader in 2007 Sir Rabbie Namaliu, who lost his seat in Kokopo, and former prime minister and People’s Democratic Movement leader Paias Wingti, who had lost his seat in 1997 but had been re-elected in 2002. Wingti was leading the count up till the last distribution of preferences but lost by a narrow margin when his rival, Tom Olga, received the bulk of the preferences. This result, also, was subsequently challenged, and was not resolved until after a second recount in 2010, which confirmed Olga’s victory.

In several other instances, sitting members who were leading on the primary count held on to win, but saw a strong movement of preferences against them. For example, Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare received a healthy 36 percent of the primary vote in East Sepik Provincial, well ahead of his nearest rival, who received 16 percent, but facing a virtual ‘anti-Somare’ coalition he received only 14 percent of preference votes compared to the runner-up, Moses Murray, who received 39 percent (see chapter 25, Table 25.1). In Moresby South, Dame Carol Kidu saw her lead of 1877 on first preferences whittled away by Pangu Pati challenger Justin Tkatchenko as preferences were tallied, but held on to win.

According to preliminary figures supplied to the National Research Institute by the PNGEC, only four candidates (William Duma [Hagen Open], Don Polye [Kandep Open], Patrick Pruaitch [Aitape-Lumi Open] and Peter O’Neill [Ialibu-Pangia Open]) won an absolute majority of first preferences. In Kandep, Polye, the sitting member, was declared winner with 69 percent of the primary vote, but soon after the declaration an electoral official in Kandep was charged with offences under the Organic Law, and the election result was disputed by the runner-up, Alfred Manase. A by-election was held in November 2009 but in the face of local violence voting did not take place in three polling places and counting was moved out of the province due to security concerns. Polye was eventually returned, winning 53 percent of first preference vote.

Perhaps the strongest reason given in support of LPV was that it would ‘increase the mandate’ of elected MPs. Much was made, over the period 2002–2007, of the

⁹ The following analysis uses both figures supplied by the PNGEC and, where official figures were not available, unofficial figures collected by domestic observers. Some of the data remains provisional.

claim that under LPV all elected MPs would have at least '50 percent + 1' of the vote. This claim, made by the PNGEC among others, was, of course, misleading. While it is true that under LPV successful candidates must receive a majority of the 'live votes', with only three preferences and a large number of candidates it was inevitable that a proportion of the ballot papers would become 'exhausted' before a final result emerged, that is, there would be ballot papers with votes for three candidates all of whom had been eliminated relatively early in the count. A more meaningful measure of a successful candidate's 'mandate' is the total of first, second and third preferences received by the candidate, expressed as a percentage of the total allowable ballots cast. When these figures are examined, it is evident that while a majority of candidates won with between 20 and 40 percent of the total votes, and some with less, the national average mandate (for the 102 seats for which data was available) was 33 percent. Given that LPV is bound to give a larger 'mandate' than a FPTP simple majority, this result was seen as a marked improvement on 2002 outcomes under FPTP (20.5 percent)—though still well short of 50 percent.

Interestingly, figures of primary votes also show fewer candidates leading with small first preference totals in 2007 compared to the totals of winning candidates under FPTP in 2002: 10 percent won the primary vote in their seats with less than 10 percent of the primary vote in 2007 compared to 21 percent winning with less than 10 percent in 2002, and 54 percent won the primary vote with less than 20 percent in 2007 compared to 60 percent in 2002.¹⁰

Analysis of 'mandates' and percentages of exhausted ballot papers by electorate and region, reveals some variation across the country. For the 102 electorates for which data was available, the regional average mandate was, perhaps predictably, highest in the Islands Region (40 percent) but surprisingly uniform in the other three regions (31 percent in both Momase and the Highlands and 32 percent in the Southern Region). The average proportion of exhausted ballot papers was high throughout the Highlands, Southern and Momase regions (44, 43 and 42 percent respectively) and lowest in the Islands (26 percent).¹¹ These rankings roughly correlated with the regional average numbers of candidates: 28 in Highlands, 29 in Southern, 25 in Momase, and a relatively low 14 in the Islands. Further evidence of a the link between the number of candidates and the number of exhausted ballots was shown in the fact that in the 22 electorates with more than 60 percent of exhausted ballot papers there were on average 41 candidates, whereas in the 22 electorates with less than 20 percent of exhausted ballots the

10 The average share of the primary vote of those leading on the primary vote (but not necessarily winning the seat) in 2007 was 22.5 percent; the average share of the primary vote of the eventual winners (some of whom were behind on the first preference count) was slightly less at 21.9 percent. This compares with the average winning vote in 2002, of 20.5 percent.

11 Sixteen electorates recorded in excess of 50 percent exhausted ballot papers; half of these were in the Highlands Region.

average number of candidates was 13. Mandates were higher and exhausted ballots lower in provincial seats (41 percent and 26 percent respectively) than in open seats (30 percent and 43 percent). There is some evidence that those electorates which had experienced by-elections under LPV produced winners with larger mandates (and larger proportions of the primary vote) and fewer candidates than those which had not, but the evidence is weak: six of the ten did, four did not.

Table 13.1: Limited preferential voting comparison between by-elections and general elections

Electorate	LPV by-election			2007 general election		
	Number of candidates	Primary vote (%) ^a	Mandate ^b (%)	Number of candidates	Primary vote (%) ^a	Mandate (%)
Chimbu Provincial	31	13 (1st)	21	19	18 (1st)	39
NCD Provincial	23	23 (1st)	38	7	41 (1st)	49
Bougainville Provincial	6	38 (1st)	55	8	27 (1st)	46
Chuave Open	24	13 (2nd)	20	29	16 (1st)	32
Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open	20	12 (3rd)	30	17	18 (1st)	37
Wabag Open	19	38 (1st)	48	19	34 (1st)	45
Angalimp- South Wahgi Open	30	na		24	na	
Moresby North-East Open	22	16 (1st)	28	31	13 (1st)	24
Yangoru-Saussia Open	18	19 (1st)	30	15	25 (1st)	33
Abau Open	6	49 (1st)	50	12	43 (1st)	49

na = not available

^a The 1st, 2nd or 3rd in parentheses refers to the candidate's placing after the primary vote

^b 'Mandate' refers to winning candidate's percent of allowable papers

Source: Adapted from Haley and Anere (2009:71–77) with additional data from PNGEC results tables

A particular question raised by the shift to LPV was whether the new system would benefit female candidates, since women voters who were constrained by customary obligation or intimidation to vote for a male candidate might be able to give second or third preference to a female candidate. The data is inconclusive. In East Sepik Provincial, Elizabeth Simogun Bade secured a good preference vote, almost certainly reflecting preferences from women voters, but did not poll strongly enough in the primary count to take advantage of this (a pattern already seen in the earlier by-elections in Angalimp-South Wahgi and Yangoru-Saussia). On the other hand, in Moresby South Dame Carol Kidu, who

had a clear lead on first preferences, received significantly fewer second and third preferences than her nearest, male, rival. In Kerema, where three women candidates stood, there was no evidence that women candidates attempted to direct preferences towards the other women candidates, or even that women voters supported women candidates (see, for example, chapters 10, 22 and 27).

Overall, a number of candidates, voters and observers did express the view that the 2007 election under LPV was a 'more friendly election' than those of 2002 and 1997, that candidates felt more free to move around the electorate without harassment and on occasion share a platform with rival candidates, and that LPV gave electors 'more choice', particularly significant in places where voters (especially women voters) were under pressure to support a communally chosen candidate.¹² There appears to have been less election-related violence in 2007 than there was in 2002—especially in the Southern Highlands, where elections in six electorates had been declared 'failed elections' in 2002 but things went relatively peacefully in 2007—although this was almost certainly due in large part to the heavy and well-coordinated presence of the security forces in 2007 (see chapters 6, 7 and 8). Nevertheless, in Chimbu there were at least three polling-day murders and almost as many post-election deaths as in 2002—19 compared with about 25 (Bill Standish, personal communication September 2009).

With regard to the other hoped-for benefits from the shift to LPV, there was little evidence that LPV reduced the number of candidates (which was slightly smaller in 2007 than in 2002, but still high, at 2759), or that it did anything to strengthen parties (see chapter 9).

Conclusion

To the extent that almost a quarter of candidates leading on first preferences subsequently lost, it appears that LPV did produce different outcomes from what would have been produced by a FPTP contest. This was an implicit aim of the shift to LPV, but it was not overwhelmingly welcomed, particularly after Namaliu lost his seat on the preference count, prompting some observers to question the assumption that LPV, with its 'stronger mandate', necessarily produced 'better' MPs. In 2008, the then registrar of political parties, Paul Bengo, voiced

¹² Bill Standish, however, suggests that in the Highlands most people followed group decisions about preferences as well as primary votes, and that ballots were frequently checked or 'controlled' by 'helpers' at the polling booths (personal communication, September 2009).

some disappointment at the outcomes in some seats, and suggested that perhaps thought should be given to a weighted preference system, in which second and, *a fortiori*, third preferences should count for less than a first preference vote.¹³

The general consensus seems to be that LPV has been a qualified success, though it has not, at this stage, done much to change deeply rooted patterns of behaviour in much of the country. LPV offered more choice, though this was frequently compromised by the lack of a genuinely secret ballot. Campaigning was generally more accommodative—but with ‘no distinctive evidence of any successful strategic alliances’ (Anere and Wheen 2009:21)—and less violent, though this may be due more to the more extensive security operation than to the new voting system. Mandates increased, as was to be expected of the new electoral arithmetic, though it remains to be seen whether this will yield better MPs. Otherwise, there was slight evidence that LPV had benefited women (at least 10 women received more than 10 percent of the primary vote [after redistribution of preferences], compared to one in 2002), and little to support the beliefs that it would reduce the number of candidates or strengthen political parties. Undoubtedly, as former electoral commissioner Reuben Kaiulo observed in 1997 (Kaiulo 2002:179), preferential voting is more complex than FPTP, and poor understanding of the system in some electorates resulted in errors in counting and delays in finalizing results.

More dramatic improvements in electoral performance will require not just changes in electoral procedures, important though these may be, but radical shifts in deeply rooted patterns of behaviour. As Standish warned in 2006, ‘we should not expect revolutionary changes overnight’ (2006:202). In its analysis of LPV in the 2007 election, a National Research Institute report concluded, ‘Electoral engineering is not a silver bullet to governance problems. The system alone is only going to have a limited impact on improving the quality of candidates, the reasons why voters make their choices, and the quality of the MPs who are elected, in the context of the high-stakes political culture in PNG’ (Anere and Wheen 2009:20).

¹³ Such a system—the Borda count, named after the eighteenth-century French mathematician, Jean-Charles de Borda, who first proposed it—has been used in Nauru. See Reilly (2001b).

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Part 2: Electorates

14. The Abau Open Electorate: A Second Go at LPV

Ray Anere

The electorate

The Abau Open electorate lies about 200 kilometres east of Port Moresby and at the 2000 census was home to some 38,378 people (National Statistical Office 2000:13).

There are three local-level governments (LLGs) in the Abau electorate: Aroma Rural LLG, with a population in 2000 of 20,677; Amazon Bay Rural LLG with 8099 people; and Cloudy Bay Rural LLG with 9602 (Figure 14.1). The fact that Aroma has more eligible voters than Amazon Bay and Cloudy Bay combined impacted on the conduct of the 2007 elections in terms of both the campaign strategies of the candidates and the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission's (PNGEC's) conduct of the elections. Of the 12 candidates that contested the Abau seat, 10 were from the Aroma Rural LLG area.

Historically, Abau was the first to trial the new limited preferential voting (LPV) system, in a 2003 by-election. The system was successfully used in that by-election, with around 1.9 percent of informal ballots suggesting that most voters had understood the system and voted correctly. Dr Puka Temu, who had been elected in 2002 but lost the seat following an appeal,¹ re-contested the seat and again won with 49.0 percent of first preferences, needing less than 2 percent of second preferences for an absolute majority. Only two eliminations took place before Temu won the seat with 50.1 percent of the total live votes. There were no exhausted ballot papers (Standish et al. 2004:28–29).

Figures of estimated adult population and eligible voters in the Abau District developed by Standish et al. (2004:5) suggest that the rolls in 2002 and 2003 were grossly inflated, with the number of 'eligible voters' (34,905 in 2003) exceeding the estimated adult population by 82 percent (and by 92 percent in the Aroma Rural LLG area). After the new roll had been drawn up, the number of eligible voters was 29,652—a reduction of 15 percent but still excessive relative to

¹ Temu, who had recently stood down as Health secretary in 2002, took delivery of an ambulance for the Amazon Bay LLG during the campaign, and rival candidate Kilroy Genia successfully objected that this amounted to 'treating'. The matter was taken to the Court of Disputed Returns which upheld the appeal and therefore ordered a by-election.

estimated adult population. In 2007 the total number of votes cast was 22,037, giving an apparent turnout of 74.3 percent. In 2002 about 60 percent of those enrolled voted; in the 2003 by-election the figure was 53.1 percent (PNGEC, *Voter Enrolment in Abau*, 5 November 2009).

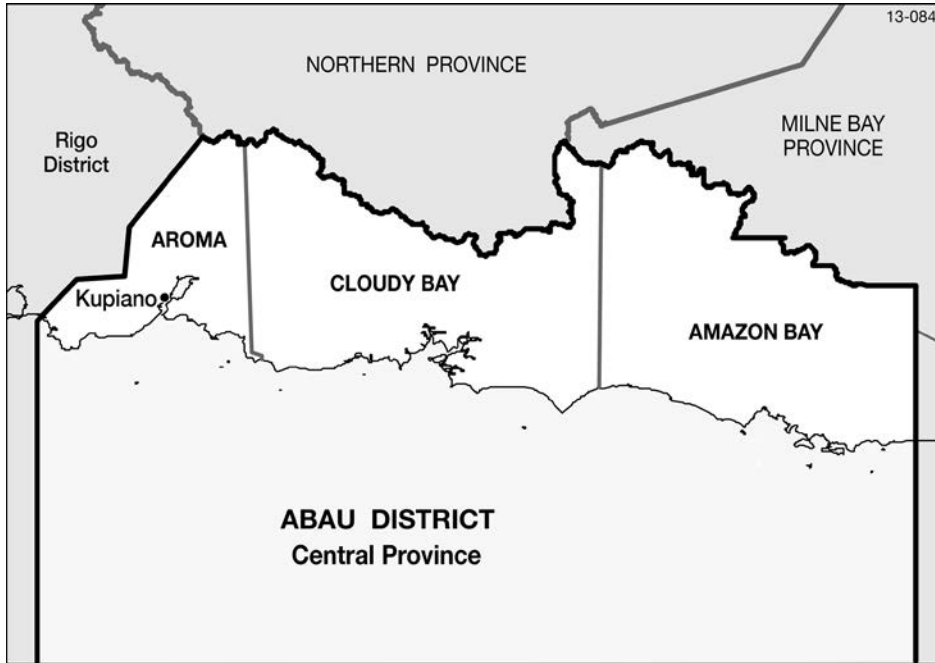


Figure 14.1: Abau District

The Abau electorate has gained prominence at the national level. Since 1987, the voters have elected leaders who have become senior ministers in the national government—the late Jack Genia, his brother Kilroy Genia, and Deputy Prime Minister Puka Temu. Electoral competition has been intense, with 18 candidates in 1987, 21 in 2002, 6 in the 2003 by-election, and 12 in the 2007 election.

Most candidates in previous elections have come from the Aroma Rural LLG area. In the 2003 by-election, for example, all six candidates—Vagi Mae, Puka Temu, Onea Thavala, Desmond Baira, Gideon Aruai and Kilroy Genia—were from the Aroma coast (Standish et al. 2004:6). The race narrowed to a contest between Temu and Baira. Tension rose between their supporters, who exchanged insults and gunfire. Standish et al. (2004) reported that the police opened fire in an attempt to quell the situation and a young man was shot dead. The conflict between Temu and Baira divided the electorate, and was evident again in the 2007 election.

Nominations

Twelve candidates contested the Abau electorate in 2007, six of whom had contested the by-election in 2003. Eight of them (including the six who contested in 2003) were from the Aroma coast. There were no women candidates.

Temu was a National Alliance candidate. In 2002 he was elected, as a National Alliance candidate, with 29.6 percent of the vote under the first-past-the-post system. He was appointed minister for the Public Service but was ousted through a successful appeal to the Court of Disputed Returns by Kilroy Genia (see footnote 1). Temu, a medical doctor and former secretary of the Health Department, is from Viriolo village at the eastern end of the Aroma coast and has a grandfather from Wanigela village, with links to Waiori village, both in Marshall Lagoon.

Kilroy Genia contested the 2003 by-election as People's Action Party candidate. He entered parliament in a 1994 by-election after the death of his brother, Jack Genia, who was a previous MP and Pangu Pati leader. Between 1994 and 1997 he served as minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration. Kilroy won again in 1997 and in 2002 he stood as a People's Democratic Movement candidate and came third with 19.2 percent of the vote. His father is from Domara village in the Cloudy Bay while his mother is from Lalaura village in Aroma. He has family ties in the Amazon Bay area.

Desmond Baira stood in the 2003 by-election as a People's Labour Party candidate. In 2002, he contested the Abau seat as a People's Action Party candidate and came second with 23.7 percent of the vote. He also contested the seat in 1992, 1994 and 1997. He is a Port Moresby-based contractor and is from Wanigela village. He also has links to Waioro village in the Marshall Lagoon area.

Reuben Kaiulo is a former electoral commissioner, and was commissioner when first-past-the-post voting was used for the last time in 2002. In his report on the 1997 election he was critical of proposals to introduce preferential voting (see Kaiulo 2002:179). After his term of office expired in 2005 he was self-employed. He had not contested any previous election. He was endorsed by Pangu. Kaiulo is from Lalaura in the Aroma coast and received most of his support from voters there.

All candidates nominated at the district office at Kupiano. The idea of holding nominations at Kupiano came from the PNGEC. The PNGEC was of the view that by having the nominations at the local district centre, with which people identify, the people would take ownership of the election. Each candidate gave a speech before their crowd of supporters, as it was important for the supporters

to know what kinds of services the candidate would bring to their localities, and for the candidates to know that they could count on the votes of their supporters.

The election manager, provincial returning officer, and assistant returning officer were present at Kupiano during the nomination period. All nominations complied with the necessary requirements, and the process was orderly. The returning officer conducted the order of draw for the candidates, who were generally satisfied with the nomination process.

LPV awareness

Voters in Abau were not new to LPV as they had voted under the LPV system in the 2003 by-election. Turnout was higher in 2007 than in the by-election.

Initial LPV awareness involved organizing public servants into teams and senior district officials became assistant returning officers. Coloured LPV posters and stickers for vehicles ('LPV, 1, 2, 3—Now That's Fair!') were used as aids in carrying out the awareness. Voters generally understood that '1', '2' and '3' stood for the order of preferences, and understood that they had to write a candidate's name or code number against each of the three preferences in order to make their ballot formal.

Mock polls were undertaken by awareness teams in some places to give voters a taste of the real election. Some community members missed out on awareness sessions, however, due to lack of forewarning. Many voters listened to FM 100 and FM Central radio services to get information on LPV prior to the polling. Port Moresby-based residents travelling back to Abau were another source of information.

One civil society group, the Amazon Bay HIV/AIDS Committee, was involved in LPV and HIV/AIDS awareness in the Amazon Bay local government area, under the Electoral Support Program LPV awareness program. Committee members Freda Magini, Lahui Magini, Esau Frank and Fred Mae undertook six weeks of LPV awareness in various wards in the Amazon Bay area from May to June 2007. The wards included Borebo, Sabiribo and Aroana.

The LPV awareness covered the following topics: LPV 1st, 2nd and 3rd preferences; voting under LPV; counting under LPV; mock elections; election offences; good governance; HIV/AIDS and elections; and, women and elections. The good governance component covered leadership, democracy, and democratic elections.

The LPV awareness activities undertaken by the committee were generally considered successful. Evaluation forms filled out by people in the wards covered showed that people understood what LPV was all about; how to vote in terms of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd preferences; the equal importance of all three preferences; and the meaning of '50 % plus 1' of total allowable votes. Many people indicated that they were satisfied with the awareness undertaken by the committee. The Electoral Support Program was also satisfied with the committee's performance in carrying out the LPV awareness.

In the villages of Duramu, Domara, Moreguina and Baramata Number 4, in the Cloudy Bay local government area, no LPV or civic awareness activity was undertaken. However, in Aroma, LPV awareness was conducted by PNGEC staff and candidates in the Kapari-Viriolo ward. Mock elections were carried out using local citizens as candidates and counting officials. Several informants said that the mock elections involving local people were very beneficial in enhancing the people's understanding of the LPV system.

LPV and civic awareness, however, were not carried out in all wards in each local government area. Kapari, in the Aroma area, is the home of the sitting member, Puka Temu. As his support base, it was important for him to conduct LPV awareness there. Other wards in Aroma were not visited by LPV or civic awareness teams.

The success of LPV awareness in Abau is suggested by the fact that there were only 328 informal ballot papers, a mere 1.5 percent of the total allowable ballot papers for the Abau electorate. In 2003 there had been 345 informal ballots. However, the low level of informal ballots could also be attributed to the way assisted voting is conducted (see below).

HIV/AIDS awareness

Most election observers reported that HIV/AIDS was not a prominent election issue. References were made to HIV/AIDS as a social and development issue in some of the candidates' campaign speeches, but it was not a significant factor in the calculus of the voters. The only HIV/AIDS materials sighted were in aidpost buildings.

With one exception, candidates for the Abau electorate were not members of provincial or district AIDS Committees and they were not engaged at the policy level and so had no clear strategies for addressing the effects of HIV/AIDS on the people of Abau. The exception was Dr Puka Temu, a former Health secretary and a member of the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS. Temu was involved in

decision-making on strategies to deal with HIV/AIDS at the national, provincial and district/LLG levels, and campaigned on HIV/AIDS issues throughout the electorate.

No materials on HIV/AIDS testing or voluntary counselling were seen in the Aroma LLG area. The awareness situation was different in Amazon Bay. Freda Magini, Lahui Magini and Fred Mae, who were members of the Amazon Bay HIV/AIDS Committee, conducted election observations in Amazon Bay and reported that male and female condoms were distributed by them, in their roles as the HIV/AIDS Committee members and as implementers of election awareness, during the campaign period. According to Mae, both men and women openly accepted the condoms.

Random interviews conducted with individual voters in Kupiano, Viriolo, Kapari and Lalaura wards suggest that development projects that enhance the delivery of basic services and generate income were considered directly beneficial in improving people's living standards. While HIV/AIDS was seen as a significant issue among the people, it was not seen as being directly linked to people's incomes.

Drugs such as marijuana were not used during campaigning, and there were no '6-to-6 discos' or prostitution during the election period to warrant concern about election-related activities that could contribute to the spread of HIV/AIDS. The team did not see evidence of weapons of any sort in the hands of supporters or citizens.²

The churches, through leadership of the elders, have a strong influence in Abau and this was a major factor in explaining why drugs and other unacceptable social behaviour were not evident during the election period.

The campaign

The campaign period lasted eight weeks, from 4 May to 29 June 2007. This timeframe was generally considered adequate, as a longer period would have exhausted the energies and resources of the candidates and their supporters.

The campaign was generally peaceful; there were no reported instances of threats, violence or disruptions. LPV had some influence on the way campaigning was done: candidates saw the need to exchange second and third preferences and in some instances candidates campaigned for each other in areas that were not

² The prevalence of general peace and order across the electorate throughout the election period was noted in all team members' election journals.

their strongholds. Candidates were generally free to move around (as they did in Abau in 2002 under the first-past-the-post system) and most candidates ran their campaigns independently of each other.

Only five candidates campaigned in the Amazon Bay LLG area (in the eastern part of the Abau electorate). They included Puka Temu, Kilroy Genia and Reuben Kaiulo. Freda Magini, Lahui Magini and Fred Mae concluded that this was due to financial and logistic constraints, as well as limited networks for some of the candidates.

The candidates' campaign strategies included public speeches, handing out T-shirts, and the display of posters on public motor vehicles, house walls and trees. Only a few, including Temu and Genia, held public rallies. Most campaigned in their local LLG wards, though Temu, Genia and Kaiulo campaigned across the Abau electorate. These three sought any preferences, but expected to get first preferences from their local strongholds and second and third preferences from wards which they knew were the strongholds of their rivals. Other candidates campaigned in their local areas mostly for first preferences.

Campaign rallies were organized for Temu and Genia. The Enara family organized a rally for Temu at Maopa One, Paramana, in the Aroma LLG, at which Temu was the only candidate to speak. A National Alliance official, Tau Po'o, was present to give support. Temu talked about health and education services, economic development projects, good governance, women's rights and HIV/AIDS issues. He campaigned for first preferences only, probably because he felt that the voters he was addressing were his strong supporters.

The audience was made up of a good cross-section of the community—men, women, youth and children. Although the rally was open to all, it was mostly men who spoke, on various issues. At one stage, supporters of rival candidates attempted to disrupt the rally, which went on into the night.

Genia staged a peaceful rally at Lalaura village/ward, where he was the only candidate to address the audience. Like Temu, he talked about better health services, free education, and development projects that would generate income for the people, and good governance. He did not talk about women's issues, nor did he talk about HIV/AIDS. Genia considered the ward that hosted the rally as a stronghold and accordingly did not campaign for second and third preferences; he asked only for first preferences and informed voters how to allocate their preferences at the time of polling. He did not talk negatively about any of the other candidates.

However, most candidates relied primarily on their campaign managers and committees, and the use of campaign posters. One candidate (Desmond Baira) made an effort to transport truckloads of supporters from the Wanigela

settlement at Koki (Port Moresby) to Wanigela in the Aroma LLG area, as he had in the 2003 by-election. Some of the Koki-based Wanigela voters subsequently revealed that they had voted more than once while at Aroma. Election observers in Abau were of the view that voters had access to the ward roll prior to polling and were therefore aware of the names of deceased voters and voters who had moved residence and were no longer living at Wanigela at the time of polling.

One candidate—Vagi Mae, from Maopa in the western part of the Aroma LLG—was seen as a vote splitter, so that Temu and Kaiulo would be denied votes in western Aroma. The counting of votes from ballot boxes in western Aroma showed, however, that his candidacy did not have a significant impact, as Temu picked up a significant number of votes in those wards.

Political parties

Seven political parties endorsed candidates for the Abau seat. Puka Temu was endorsed by National Alliance, Kilroy Genia by PNG Party, Desmond Baira by People's Labour Party, and Reuben Kaiulo by Pangu Pati. The National Advance Party, the People's Resources Awareness Party, and the People's Progress Party also endorsed candidates. The remaining five stood as independents.

National Alliance's endorsement of Temu did not come as a surprise. He was a popular candidate in the 2002 election and again in the 2003 by-election. He had also established a strong following among the voters in the Amazon Bay, Cloudy Bay and Aroma Coast LLG areas. Among the development projects he had initiated were a rural market in Kapari-Viriolo village and the sealing of 10 kilometres of the Magi Highway from Omen Bridge in Eastern Rigo to Bukuku Junction in the Abau area. The sealing was carried out by Global Construction, a local construction company. Temu was also responsible for the introduction of a cassava ethanol project in Cape Rodney as well as collaboration with the National Agricultural Research Institute to render advice and other assistance to farmers in the Abau District. He had used his electoral funds to purchase water tanks for communities in Amazon Bay, dinghies for communities in the Aroma and Cloudy Bay areas, and a tractor for communities in the Cloudy Bay area. Temu had other development projects in mind in the ecotourism and forestry sectors as part of his vision for the development of Abau. He had proven his ability to deliver vital services and to adapt himself to the needs of the people of his electorate.

Kilroy Genia first entered parliament in a 1994 by-election following the death of his brother and Pangu Pati leader, Jack Genia. He contested the seat as a Pangu candidate and won again in 1997. In 2002, he re-contested the seat as a People's Democratic Movement candidate and came third with 19 percent of the

vote. In the 2003 by-election, he contested as a People's Action Party candidate, gaining 20 percent of the primary vote plus preferences. Aside from his party hopping, Abau District had not seen major improvements in services between 1994 and 2002 during Genia's term as MP, which may have eroded his popularity and explain his performance in the 2002 and 2007 elections. In 2007 he was endorsed by the PNG Party, though he received little support from the party.

Desmond Baira was endorsed by the People's Labour Party, headed by Madang businessman Peter Yama. Baira had contested the seat in 2002, endorsed by the People's Action Party, coming second with 23.7 percent of the vote. He had also stood for the seat in 1992, 1994 and 1997.

Reuben Kaiulo, the former electoral commissioner, was endorsed by the Pangu Pati, but received little support from the party.

Of the parties that endorsed candidates, the leaders of the National Alliance and People's Labour Party campaigned in support of their candidates within the electorate. National Alliance leader, Sir Michael Somare, was in Kupiano to inform people about the party's development policies and to campaign for Temu. He emphasized that Temu had solid public service experience, proven leadership ability, and a track record of delivering tangible services during his last term of office from 2003 to 2007. According to Somare, Temu was the best choice for the people of Abau and National Alliance was privileged to endorse him.

People's Labour Party leader Peter Yama came to Wanigela to campaign for Baira, who had been a strong contender in previous elections. Although Yama recognized that Baira had no prior political leadership experience, he drew attention to his business skills and practical experience which Yama felt were necessary for the delivery of basic services.

Overall, political parties did not have a strong presence in the Abau electorate during the elections, which may partly explain why voters still vote predominantly along personal and clan lines. Parties do not have much relevance to voters.

Gender issues

Women voters throughout the electorate generally understood the LPV system and most voted freely throughout the polling period.³ Some candidates, for example Temu, campaigned explicitly on women's issues in a bid to secure

³ In the Kupiano, Kapari and Lalaura wards where I observed polling, women were generally free to vote. Peace and order were maintained throughout the entire electorate in 2007.

women's votes. Notable topics were the lack of women in politics; discrimination against women; women's employment, especially in managerial positions; and HIV/AIDS and sexual health issues. There appears to be a growing concern for such issues among people throughout the electorate, but despite this no women candidates contested the Abau seat in 2007 and none of the candidates was an active member of civil society groups within the electorate.

Women in Abau were generally not a subject of much interest to candidates, party officials, campaign managers, supporters, electoral officials or police. Women's issues, such as gender empowerment, women's participation in the informal economy and increased enrolment for girls in community schools, did not figure prominently in candidates' campaigns. Observers noted that while some candidates made reference to gender issues, there was lack of specific policy platforms, even for those who made reference to women's issues. By implication, most women voted for candidates on the basis of proposed income generation projects and vague references to health, education and other basic services. Candidates were aware of issues that had an electorate-wide appeal and those that would appeal to a segment of the voting population or to a specific locality. They focused on collective and local issues and avoided issues that would fragment the vote.

An exception was the Amazon Bay HIV/AIDS Committee, which carried out awareness on gender issues, covering women and the elections in Abau, lack of women in politics, women's voting rights, discrimination against women, and HIV/AIDS and women.

Some women campaigned publicly for Temu, otherwise most women were involved in cooking food and providing hospitality. There was no intimidation of women during nominations, campaigning, polling or counting periods.

Polling

There were 29 polling teams. Most officials were men. Cooperation between the polling officials and the Abau observer team was good. Polling officials did not always arrive on time (8 am) to commence voting. In Paramana, for example, polling started one day at 1:50 pm. Late polling was also observed in the Lalaura ward, where it continued into the second day. In Amazon Bay, polling commenced late due to bad weather and the consequent late arrival of ballot boxes and materials.

In Kapari and Lalaura wards, there was no gender segregated voting. Moreover, the polling compartments were not always positioned to screen the voter from

observation, and thus did not ensure a secret ballot. In many polling stations in Aroma, and also in Cloudy Bay and Amazon Bay, there was only one ballot box for both the provincial and open seats.

Scrutineers were instructed by polling officials to stay 10 metres away from the polling area to prevent any kind of undue influence on voters. They were generally well behaved.

The PNGEC's candidate posters for Abau Open and Central Provincial electorates were displayed in public places, as well as in the polling compartments. This allowed voters to think about their choices and decide how to allocate their first, second and third preferences. Presiding officers explained the polling procedures to the voters before they proceeded to the polling compartment, though nobody explained the procedures for gender segregated voting.

Prior to polling, the ballot boxes were opened by the presiding officer in the presence of scrutineers, voters and police, and shown to be empty. At the end of polling, the boxes were fastened with a numbered inner tag and outer seal.

If a voter required assistance to vote, he/she could request a family member or policeman to assist. Practices varied from polling station to polling station. In Kapari ward, for example, family members were used most of the time when voters needed assistance; over two days 221 women were assisted. In Amazon Bay, Freda Magini noted that in one polling station, a police officer was used more than 50 times to help voters who needed assistance. Observers reported that assisted voting was sometimes abused, particularly when women and older non-literate voters were assisted by male supporters of particular candidates.

Polling was generally peaceful and orderly. Voters generally formed queues and voted in order of arrival. Their fingers were checked for ink as they entered the polling area, and ink was applied before they proceeded to vote. In a few polling places, voters' names were called alphabetically from the electoral roll. Polling officials had little difficulty locating names on the alphabetical electoral roll, though in some instances, legitimate voters were denied the right to vote due to misspelling of names, two voters' having the same name, or because their names were not on the roll.

There were reports, notably from some polling stations in the Amazon Bay area that supporters gave out candidate posters and bio-data to voters while they were on the queue waiting to vote, and told the voters (especially women voters) to vote for particular candidates, but on the whole the atmosphere was voter friendly and conducive to voting.

Voter turnout was generally good in all polling stations. Over 74 percent of the 29,652 people enrolled turned out to vote.

Electoral roll

The rolls, based on LLG wards, were generally satisfactory, but certainly not perfect. In a number of instances, voters could not find their names on the roll. One observer noted that in Paramana as many as 50 voters were turned away, and in Amazon Bay 11 voters were turned away because their names were not on the ward roll. In the Wanigela ward, Aroma, where, as noted above, Port Moresby-based voters were allowed to vote in their place or origin, there were instances of multiple voting through the use of other people's names. At the Magarida polling station, in Amazon Bay, a number of underage persons were allowed to vote as their names were on the ward roll. A school teacher at the Magarida High School confirmed that the persons who voted were in fact school students under the age of 18.

Personnel, security and inter-agency communication

Police personnel arrived in the electorate four days prior to polling and were deployed to the appropriate LLGs on polling day. As usually happens, police had received their allowances before being deployed for polling. However, the deployment was delayed by the non-payment of allowances for electoral officials, and delayed payment for land and sea transport. There was no air transport to move police personnel to location for security duties. Once at their respective LLGs, police were properly accommodated in local guest houses and with local families.

Communication between police and the PNGEC was good in the pre-polling and polling periods, and police and polling officials were seen working together at the polling places. Each polling team had about four police personnel to provide security.

Security was generally good throughout the Abau electorate. Voters and police cooperated with one another, ensuring the safety of the ballot boxes, ballot papers, and polling officials. The general peace and order was widely considered to be an improvement on that in 2002 and was a major factor in the integrity of the election in Abau. Voters were not intimidated. Guns were generally not carried around by police, and police made no arrests.

Counting

Because of disruptions to counting in the 2003 by-election, counting for Abau Open was moved to Murray Barracks in the National Capital District, just as in 2003 when the count was conducted at the Institute of Public Administration Hall, National Capital District. It took about 10 days, from 13 to 23 July, 2007, to complete the count. Counting was suspended mid-way into the week as scrutineers did not want the returning officer to be present in the counting room, lest he influence the course of counting. They argued that the returning officer was associated with a particular candidate. The scrutineers stood their ground, forcing the counting officials to liaise with PNGEC, whose lawyer intervened to sort out the matter. A consensus was reached and counting resumed on the condition that while the returning officer would be present in the counting room, the provincial returning officer would be responsible for the counting.

The counting room was spacious and there was a heavy police and army presence around the clock. Scrutineers and observers were allowed into the room to observe all phases of the counting. The progressive tallies were put up on a tally board at the back and front of the room; the figures were clear enough for all to see.

At the start of count for each box, the provincial returning officer announced the presiding officer who was responsible for the box. The presiding officer gave a brief account of events in the ward(s) concerned. A policeman who had accompanied the team then opened the box and emptied the ballot papers onto a sorting table. Sorters (a number of whom were women) were then called to sort out the provincial from the open ballot papers. Provincial ballot papers were then transferred, under police guard, to the other side of Murray Barracks where counting for the Central Provincial seat was going on.

A second set of sorters then sorted the open ballot papers by first preferences, which were then counted. Although Puka Temu led from the beginning he did not secure an absolute majority of the first preferences, so losing candidates were eliminated and their preferences distributed.

Security in the counting room was excellent and the scrutineers were well behaved throughout the counting and accepted the final outcome.

The outcome

Twelve candidates contested the Abau Open seat. When counting began, the top four contenders were Puka Temu, Kilroy Genia, Desmond Baira and Reuben

Kaiulo. After the count of first preferences, Gideon Aruai with 50 votes was eliminated and his voters' preferences distributed. The second exclusion was John Maru, with 93 votes. David Rakilea was the third to be eliminated, with 133 votes. There followed Vagi Mae (163 votes), Stephen Mera (364 votes), John Holland (546 votes), Gavu Lama (752 votes) and Onea Thavala (978 votes). Reuben Kaiulo was ninth exclusion, with 3517 votes.

At the ninth exclusion, 9698 became the absolute majority of the total 'live' remaining votes. At this point, Temu, having led all the way, had secured 10,772. His closest rivals were Desmond Baira with 4328 votes and Kilroy Genia with 4295 votes. Temu was therefore declared the winner by the provincial returning officer.

Temu led comfortably from the start, with 9578 first preferences (43.5 percent of the total allowable votes) compared to his nearest rival, Baira, with 3395 (15.4 percent), and led all the way to the declaration. Temu was popular across the across the electorate, picking up 1194 preferences (to give him a total of 48.9 percent of the total allowable votes). Baira was the eventual runner-up, collecting 933 preference votes (mostly from the eighth and ninth exclusions). Genia picked up 1078 preferences to finish third, and Kaiulo, with 483 preferences came in fourth. These four candidates consistently gained a good share of the preferences from eliminated candidates.

Exhausted ballot papers (2640) represented about 12 percent of the total allowable ballots at the ninth exclusion, which was a reasonably low level of exhausted ballots.

Temu's victory can be attributed to a number of factors. During the elections, he campaigned in almost every ward in the Aroma, Cloudy Bay and Amazon Bay LLG areas. Visiting, meeting and talking to people, and shaking hands with voters, is very important for any candidate, and Temu was able to do that quite effectively. His campaign gatherings drew huge crowds of men, women and youth. Even those who were not his supporters, in all three LLG areas, were eager to hear how he would bring basic services to their communities. For the people of Abau, Temu had proven that he could deliver vital services. They also knew that he had a vision for the electorate. None of the other candidates had a comparable track record of achievements and proven leadership ability.

Temu's popularity goes back to 2002, when he first contested the Abau seat under the first-past-the-post voting system. Despite a court ruling nullifying his election victory, his popularity continued in the 2003 by-election. Standish et al. (2004:2) observe that 'most candidates only had strong local support in certain concentrations. The exception was Dr Temu who had campaigned widely and had strong support across the three rural local level governments (RLLG)

council areas in the electorate'. In the 2003 by-election, Temu collected 8911 first preferences (48.79 percent of the primary votes), and 9113 (50.09 percent) of the final count. He has had a consistent level of popularity among the people in all the three LLG areas since 2002.

Temu, Genia, Baira and Kaiulo are all from the Aroma LLG area. All four are well educated and experienced in administration and politics. Aroma thus continued to dominate Abau electoral politics in terms of both candidate numbers and election outcomes, as it did in 1997, 2002 and 2003.

Conclusion

Temu had a commanding lead in the primary vote and continued to lead in the count of preferences up till the declaration. He was popular across the Abau electorate. Voter participation was high, suggesting that Abau people valued the election as well as their participation and the need to elect a capable leader. Having the nominations done at the district office in Kupiano may have stimulated community interest (as in the by-election in 2003). Informal ballot papers were less than 2 percent, suggesting that the awareness had improved voters' understanding of how to vote correctly, though 'abuse' of assisted voting may have played a part in the low informal vote. This was evident in 2003, where every one of the 3865 votes collected from the Wanigela village were 'assisted' by the 'helpers' provided by candidates—even the local candidate. Exhausted ballot papers were around 12 percent of the total, the relatively low figure linked to the small number of candidates.

Candidates and voters need to realize that elections provide opportunities for political and civic education including awareness. There is, briefly, an intense interaction between candidates and voters, in which candidates are eager to talk about policies and issues while voters are eager to listen, learn and choose their candidates. In this context, it is important for candidates to address important issues such as HIV/AIDS and women's empowerment.

There was limited collaborative and cooperative campaigning between candidates with a view to exchanging preferences, as was expected to happen under LPV. Aside from financial and logistical constraints, some candidates did not address strategic campaign matters such as establishing committees in other LLG areas which could plan and organize their campaign activities.

Certain groups engage in multiple voting through abuse of the electoral roll. The roll needs improvement in terms of eliminating multiple entries of voters' names, names of under-aged persons and other irregularities. Public display of the roll during the verification stage, prior to polling, could help people take

ownership of the roll. This was not done at the Kupiano district headquarters. Assisted voting was sometimes abused to ensure that voters voted for certain candidates. Electoral and civic awareness could make voters aware of their rights to a secret ballot.

On the whole, well-managed security operations in all aspects of the election in Abau, from nomination to counting, combined with cooperation between the people, candidates, supporters and polling officials, led to a peaceful, orderly election and an undisputed declaration of Temu as Abau's duly elected MP.

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Appendix

Table 14.1: Voting statistics for Abau Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	29,804
Total votes cast	22,365
Informal votes	328 (1.5% of total votes cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	22,037
Total ballot papers remaining in count	19,395
Total votes distributed	9,064
Exhausted ballot papers	2,642 (12% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	9,699

Table 14.2: Abau Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate ^a	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
			Number	%		Number	%				
14	Puka Temu	National Alliance	9,578	43.5	1	1,194	11.1		10,772	48.9	55.5
19	Desmond Baira	Peoples Labor Party	3,395	15.4	2	933	21.6		4,328	19.6	22.3
13	Kilroy Genia	PNG Party	3,217	14.6	3	1,078	25.1		4,295	19.5	22.1
12	Reuben Kaiulo	PANGU	3,034	13.8	4	483	13.7	9	3,517	16.0	
16	Onea Thavala	National Advance Party	922	4.2	5	267	22.5	8	1,189	5.4	
18	Gavu Mari Lama	People's Progress Party	668	3.0	6	92	12.1	7	760	3.4	
10	John Holland	Independent	450	2.0	7	96	17.6	6	546	2.5	
11	Stephen Ian Mera	Independent	346	1.6	8	25	6.7	5	371	1.7	
17	Vagi Mae	People's Resources Awareness Party	158	0.7	9	5	3.1	4	163	0.7	
21	David Iabei Rakilea	Independent	126	0.6	10	15	10.6	3	141	0.6	
20	John Wagi Maru	Independent	93	0.4	11	3	3.1	2	96	0.4	
15	Gideon Aruai Augerega	Independent	50	0.2	12	0	0.0	1	50	0.2	

^a All candidates were male

15. The Ijivitari Open Electorate: Women's Participation as Candidates and Voters

Dixon Susub

Introduction

The general assumption is that women have always had a lower status than men in Papua New Guinea societies. This assumption is reflected in social indicators such as inadequate health services, resulting in extremely high maternal and infant mortality rates; low life expectancy; a high incidence of HIV/AIDS; vulnerability to abuse and violence; and low literacy rates.

The political sphere is no different, but low status is reinforced by the small numbers of women in high decision-making jobs in both public and private sectors, and more especially in political leadership roles.

While these indicators are common to most Third World countries, the dilemma of gender bias in political leadership can be traced back to the earliest form of democratic governance—Athenian democracy, in which women were not regarded as citizens and therefore excluded from the decision-making arena, as well as from holding public office.

Papua New Guinea has had extensive contact with Western liberal democratic countries since the 1880s, and adopted a liberal democratic system of government at independence, along with the structures and laws that are deemed to be gender non-discriminatory.

Although some may argue that traditionally women have always been subordinate to men in political decision-making and leadership roles in Papua New Guinea societies, this is not entirely true across all of Papua New Guinea. Modern politics and governance, however, has encouraged men, effectively segregating women from the political arena. For example, in matrilineal societies such as in parts of Milne Bay and some New Guinea Islands provinces, women were the custodians of land and therefore featured prominently in decision-making processes and leadership roles. But records show that colonial administrations never took time

to determine where power lay or to involve women in the administration of their colonies. Rather, they created governance structures that co-opted males, thus weakening female status within local societies.

Feminist theorists have been quick to point out misconceptions in regarding women as a homogeneous group in politics, given the many differences in social and cultural spheres such as equality, opportunity, standard of living, and education.

Non-gender-sensitive laws, governance structures and mechanisms, the emergence of the 'bigman' culture, alienation, and unbalanced growth in Papua New Guinea have all further led to the suppression of women's participation in 'high' politics.

Oro Province provides a typical example. However, in setting out to study how women fared in the 2007 general election, Oro was chosen for two main reasons. First, it has fielded a large number of candidates for the one provincial and two open seats for two consecutive elections. As a result, under first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting the winners won with very low proportions of the total number of votes. Secondly, of the total of 102 women contesting the 2007 election, Oro had the second largest number (10) of contestants; Eastern Highlands Province had the largest number (12). Given the rigid patriarchal society, with its male stereotype cultures, the sudden increase in female candidates was interesting, raising questions as to whether this represented a shift in social and cultural perceptions among voters, or whether it could be attributed to the new limited preferential voting (LPV) system. Of the two open electorates in Oro Province, Ijivitari was given special prominence in the study as it includes the township of Popondetta (the provincial capital) thus providing an insight into the dynamics of the cultural mix among the population of Popondetta township.

General background

Oro Province is a coastal province situated to the north of the Owen Stanley Ranges and towards the eastern tip of the Papua New Guinea mainland, covering a total land area of 22,800 square kilometres. At the 2000 census Oro had a total population of 133,065, which represents a very sparse density of 5.8 persons per square kilometres. Some 81,367 people were registered on the electoral roll; however, this figure may be misleading as the common roll was not properly updated before the commencement of the election.¹

1 For more detail see my report in the 2007 Election Observation.

Of the two open electorates, Ijivitari is made up of four local-level government (LLG) areas (Figure 15.1) and 88 wards, with a total of 41,210 registered eligible voters; Sohe has four LLG areas and 74 wards, with 40,157 registered eligible voters.

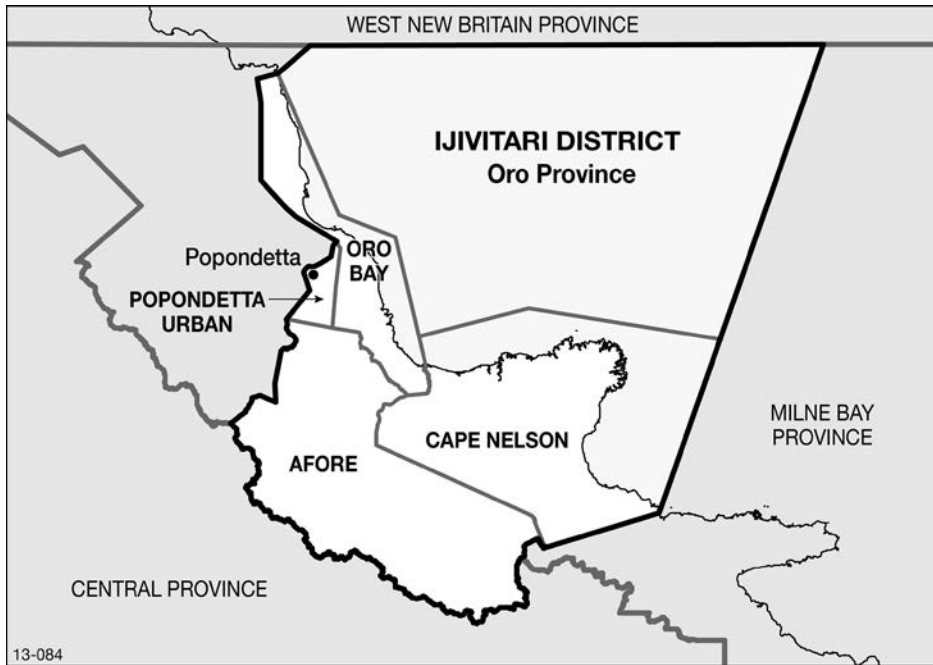


Figure 15.1: Ijivitari District

Oro is one of the least developed provinces in the country, despite the fact that it has huge marine resource potential and vast arable lands, including rich volcanic soils as a result of the 1951 Mt Lamington eruptions. Successive governments have failed to turn this potential into tangible economic benefits for the people of Oro. Lack of skilled manpower, finance and infrastructure has produced a lacklustre provincial bureaucracy. The sorry situation of the province and its bureaucracy makes it susceptible to corruption, which, to quote Sir Mekere Morauta, is 'endemic'. Deteriorating infrastructure, lack of basic service delivery, and ineffective governance mechanisms as a result of misappropriation, corruption and discriminatory behaviour by successive members of parliament (MPs) and line managers, have all contributed to a stagnant provincial economy.

The only major economic activity in the province is the Higaturu oil palm industry. This is a very lucrative industry stretching from the Oro Bay LLG area to Kokoda and parts of Mamba. However, due to factors described above, the provincial government has not been able to participate meaningfully in the venture. Landowner participation is through smallholder schemes, while

outsiders (both from within the province and from other parts of the country) are being lured either to work in the plantations or to settle in Oro Province under 'oil palm settler' schemes. This has resulted in social and cultural problems associated with the growth of illegal settlements within and on the fringes of Popondetta township.

Tourism is a potential income earner for the province. The famous Kokoda Trail, the Buna landing site and other World War II sites and relics, the unique Tufi fjords and diving sites, and the Queen Alexandra birdwing butterfly (the biggest butterfly in the world) could attract tourist dollars to the province. However, to date tourism has contributed little to the provincial economy.

Over the past three decades, Oro has contributed to national leadership by having MPs with ministerial portfolios. But the benefits from this have not trickled down to the provincial and district levels.

The dynamics of electoral politics in Oro Province

In the past two elections, the people of Oro have gone to the polls with mixed feelings. The varying sentiments expressed in the lead-up to this election can be categorized into four groups. First, there were those who expressed the desire to find a true and charismatic leader who would stand above the rest in resurrecting the province. They further believed that given the many social and cultural cleavages as well as endemic corruption, such a leader could come only from the churches. The different church groups were thus powerful political lobbyists in the electoral politics of Oro. This can be seen in the fact that the current governor of the province, Suckling Tamanabe, is a pastor of the Covenant Praise Ministries Church, a revival church group he founded, while his predecessor, the late Bani Hoivo, was a pastor of the Christian Revival Crusade church in Popondetta.

Secondly, there were those that felt that they had to elect one of their own kin if they were to benefit at all. The group based its sentiments on the fact that successive members have set a precedent of assisting only their own districts and areas where their vote-bases lay. This group (which had the largest following) had a profound impact on electoral politics in the province: it encouraged bloc voting, which resulted in a large number of contestants for the three seats in two consecutive elections. With a large number of candidates, all one had to do to have a good chance of winning, in the last two elections using FPTP voting, was to consolidate his/her own voter base while letting others split their vote. Hence

the winning vote for candidates in the two open seats in the last three elections has averaged between 3000 and 4000, representing only a small portion of the electorate.

The third sentiment expressed (which had a big following among the people of Oro in the 2007 election) was the fear of becoming bystanders in their own province should 'outsiders' be voted in as MPs representing Oro. Growing illegal squatter settlements on government and customary lands as a result of the influx of people from other provinces were already becoming a burden on the meagre resources of the provincial government and were causing social and cultural problems. The fear was that an outsider, if voted in, would not be sensitive to the needs, traditions and cultures of the Oro people but would concentrate on the outsiders at the expense of the traditional inhabitants of the province.

In 2002 and 2007 candidates of Morobe, Madang, Sepik, Highlands and Central origins contested the elections. The winner of the Sohe Open seat in the 2002 election (Peter Oresi) hails from the Highlands, while a former governor (Bani Hoivo) had mixed parentage. The 2002 election showed that the growing number of outsiders, when effectively mobilized, could determine the outcome of the election. The preferential treatment exercised by 'outsider' MPs during the 2002–2007 parliament reinforced the fear Oro people had of becoming bystanders in their own land. As a result, most candidates of Oro origins went to the 2007 election with extremist sentiments that were translated into slogans such as 'Oro for Oro'. This created tensions which thankfully did not escalate into violence, due to a heavy police presence.

Finally, there were those who had no interest in the proceedings as they had given up hope of any government support. Knowing that government service delivery correlated with the origins of MPs and that none of the contesting candidates was kin or from the same area—or even if they were did not command enough support to have any real chance of winning—this group simply gave up and had no desire to participate. Such sentiment was expressed mainly by people from outlying districts. Some even confided to me that, 'Services like education, which is ours by right, are below standard if they exist at all, so why bother sending children to school when in the end they have no hope of getting anywhere and will return home anyway? ... Government has forgotten us so why bother to participate in something that does not touch our lives'.² One effect of this attitude was that people were susceptible to 'gifting' and vote buying, as they were interested only in the tangible gains from the election process and not so much the outcome.

2 From abstracts of interviews with people of Safia and Tufi LLGs.

In the past, elections have always been low key, and the cost to intending candidates minimal. When elections in Oro were contested by the people of Oro themselves, the principal modus operandi was rallies organized by candidates and their supporters in each village or at public venues where one or more candidates presented their campaign speeches; others preferred 'door-to-door' campaigning. The major costs were for the feasts organized by candidates and their supporters to lure more supporters to their camps and the logistic costs of moving around to campaign.

Things changed during the 2002 and 2007 elections, however, when people from other provinces residing in Oro decided to run for political office. With them came the 'high cost' campaign style which involved 'patron-client' relationships and the expectations that went along with that. Gifting was not only accepted, but became expected. One candidate who had contested the Ijivitari Open seat three times consecutively lamented, 'Gone are the days when candidates would travel with empty hands and campaign on empty stomachs and expect the villagers to feed them ... this may be the last time I will contest as I cannot keep up with the big spenders'.³ On the other hand, a candidate for the Oro Provincial seat boasted of spending close to K3 million for the 2007 election. When asked why, he replied that since he was not from the province, this was the only sure way of breaking through the strongholds of other candidates.

This may have been true for the 2002 election. However, the results of the 2007 election show otherwise: none of the big spenders in Oro was elected into parliament, showing that the sentiments on the ground had more influence on the outcome than voter inducement. Nevertheless, the political landscape has been changed with the entry of money politics in the two elections.

Gender issues in Oro Province

Oro prides itself on being one province that closely observes and maintains its traditional customs and practices. Comprising patriarchal societies, Oro exhibits a clear demarcation between the roles and responsibilities of males and females in society, which are culturally entrenched. One such norm is the exclusion of women from the public realm which deals with 'high politics' (decision-making, chieftaincy, wars, and so on). Although Oro women have now broken some of these shackles, and some now hold down top jobs in both the public and private sectors, politics and political leadership are still seen as the male domain. This rigid male dominance of politics has resulted in a lack of women candidates in elections in the province prior to the 2007 election.

³ Interview with intending candidate. Examples of gifting during the 2007 election in Oro are documented in the Election Observation Report.

Many theories have been put forward to explain the recent surge in women aspiring for political office. Some say it is because women believe their chances of winning have increased (marginally) with the introduction of the LPV system, while others argue that there is need for alternative leadership—after all, more than three decades of male dominance of politics has left Oro Province no better off (and maybe worse off) than it was. The fact that 10 women stood as candidates in a male-dominated society is in itself worth noting.

The 2007 election: Women as candidates

Although only one out of 102 female candidates contesting throughout Papua New Guinea was elected into parliament, women candidates in Oro Province did well, better indeed than a number of male candidates. Of the total allowable votes cast, women in Oro scored votes ranging from 0.2 percent to 12.7 percent (the lowest among male candidates for the three seats was 0.01 percent). However, this was not enough to see any of them win a seat. Apart from the obvious constraint of the rigid traditional mindset of the Oro people (including women voters), there were other impediments to their success.

Political party endorsement

The record of political party endorsement of female candidacy was very poor. An interview with a party representative confirmed suspicions that parties were only interested in winning as many seats as possible in order to have the numbers necessary to form government. To be considered for endorsement, women candidates would have had to have been prominent people in their societies and electorates or prominent in either the public or private sectors, with high chances of winning. High officeholders would not only be appropriately educated, and therefore have been exercising leadership roles within their electorates, and thus have experience, status and respect, but would also have access to resources, public and private, to ensure their win. Given the shortage of women meeting these criteria, women candidates had difficulty securing party endorsement.

Political parties in Papua New Guinea are generally seen as either exclusive clubs or loose structures with no clear objectives other than to get as many MPs as possible in order to form government. Parties are removed from the masses, and do not have long-term member affiliations, nor are they vehicles for training and grooming future leaders. The great majority of the candidates seeking party endorsement are non-members looking for financial assistance to fund their campaigns. Women candidates had little chance of getting party support for their campaigns.

The laws governing political parties are not gender sensitive: there are no provisions obliging political parties to take on female candidates (though the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* does include provision for compensating political parties for the campaign expenses of women gaining 10 percent or more of the total vote). Of the 102 female candidates only 37 were endorsed by political parties. In Oro, only four of the 10 were endorsed by parties. Even then, the support given to endorsed women candidates was minimal, typically covering a small cash donation for campaign expenses. There was no actual campaigning by party officials for women candidates in Oro Province.

The absence of free and fair competition

The perception of the 'bigman' culture has taken on a new meaning in the Papua New Guinea political context, which encourages a 'patron-client' relationship between intending candidates and potential voters. This makes elections in Papua New Guinea a very expensive exercise, as it raises the expectations of voters about receiving money and goods in return for votes. Oro became part of this pattern during the 2002 election, as a result of outsiders' influence. Women candidates in Oro were seriously outdone in trying to keep up with the big spenders during the 2007 election, as none of them was financially well off.

'Money politics' also fosters corruption, bribery, inducement, intimidation and violence, the perpetrators of which are mostly men. Their control over public resources, including transportation and security, give them a head start over women candidates. Land and sea transport were either too expensive for women to utilize effectively to cover the length and breadth of their electorates, or were commandeered by male candidates and their supporters for the duration of the campaign period, using bribes, threats, and their positions in the public and private sectors.

The failure of relevant agencies to enforce electoral laws on bribery, gifting, and other forms of election-related corruption, as well as the traditionally rigid mindset of the people of Oro, creates a very uneven playing field for women contestants in the province.

Campaign activities, strategies and issues

Most women candidates interviewed expressed the view that the eight-week campaign period was insufficient to cover their respective electorates. The high expenses involved as a result of 'money politics', as well as security considerations, were also cited as reasons for adopting certain campaign strategies.

Some arranged low-key gatherings (without the hype and the feasting) in villages to deliver their campaign speeches, others conducted door-to-door campaigns. In both cases, the area of the electorate covered was restricted, mainly to the town and its environs, and the immediate vicinity of the candidate's own village. Most villagers preferred to invite or accept requests for campaigns in their village by candidates who were willing to distribute gifts and fund feasts during their campaigns; one candidate was actually observed telling people to organize themselves and host rallies in their villages so he could go and donate goods and money as part of his campaign strategy.

In terms of security, there were areas where male candidates and their supporters went where female candidates could not go, such as the strongholds of rival candidates, settlement areas, mountainous and rugged terrain, and remote outlying districts. Some villages in the central Kaiva area were charging 'rent' for candidates wishing to campaign in their villages, as a result of the non-delivery on election promises of successive MPs. The threat of violence and intimidation made female candidates avoid those places. Candidates Rita Jonah (of Madang) and Josephine Abajiah (who was born in Oro but spent much of her early life in Milne Bay) had to contend additionally with the 'Oro for Oro' campaign by people of Oro descent, thus considerably hampering their campaign activities.

In response to a question I posed to a woman candidate in the Ijivitari electorate, on the kind of support she expected from female voters, I was told, 'Women will not vote for us women candidates unless we take our campaign right to their doorsteps'. Personal appeal through physical presence was seen as a sure way to break through the traditional, imposed stereotypical view that 'politics is no place for women' and that 'women cannot make good leaders. Further, attempt was made to appeal to the maternal instincts of women voters, on the basis that three decades of male dominance of politics in Papua New Guinea had not brought development for the Oro people and that it was time for women to set this right for the benefit of their children.

In terms of issues covered in campaigns, all the women candidates in Oro built in gender components to their speeches, appealing to voters to set aside their gender-stereotype mentality and opt for a change in leadership through women.

Voter support base

With the exception of Maureen Ambo (a candidate for Ijivitari Open) women did poorly in the primary vote (all below 2.5 percent) and did not receive many preferences (though in Oro Provincial Claire Embahe's preferences were almost

three times the number of her meagre 44 first preferences, and in Ijivitari Deboa Emboge more than doubled her vote by the addition of preferences before her early exclusion).

Female candidates in Oro relied mainly on their kinship ties and voters in the immediate vicinity of their village as their support bases. The low number of preferential votes distributed to women suggests that female voters in Oro did not support female candidates. Possible reasons for this are discussed below.

Campaign alliances

Women candidates contesting the 2007 elections in Oro generally did not form alliances for preference sharing or alliances of provincial and open candidates to share supporters. This may be because they lacked understanding of the LPV system and therefore did not strategize appropriately, or because other candidates were reluctant to form alliances with them, perhaps thinking that female candidates did not command enough support to make alliance useful.

Maureen Ambo

Eliminated on the 35th count in a field of 38 candidates, the 6.2 percent of preference votes amassed by Maureen Ambo was one of the highest. This was a reflection of the 'voter sharing' alliance she formed with Suckling Tamanabe, the successful candidate in the provincial seat.

The alliance between Ambo and Tamanabe demonstrated the power wielded by church-based groups. Several combined churches crusades were organized at public venues in Popondetta, Oro Bay, and other parts of the province just before the writs were issued. The crusades preached the need for Oro Province to vote for 'Godly leaders'. At the forefront of these crusades were the Covenant Praise Ministries Church, led by its founder and pastor, Tamanabe, and the Fo-Gave church group (a 'cultist' group) led by former Anglican bishop, George Ambo, Maurine Ambo's father-in-law. Pledges were made by Maureen Ambo's supporters in the Ijivitari electorate to give all their votes for the provincial seat to Suckling Tamanabe, who reciprocated by urging all his followers to give their votes to Maureen Ambo in the Ijivitari seat.

The success of this alliance can be seen in the exceptional performances of the two first-time candidates, one of whom led all the way in the provincial count while the other came fourth in a field of 38 contestants.

Women as voters

The absence of free and fair competition

Decades of suppression and alienation from 'high politics' as a result of strict adherence to traditional norms and practices in a largely patriarchal society has made women in Oro passive participants in the electoral process. The concept of village-, clan- or tribal-based consensus—mainly male consensus—results in bloc voting, which women are obliged to follow. Intimidation and violence (or the threat of violence) involved in electoral politics does not give women voters the freedom to choose as they please. Several women voters interviewed expressed their support for the LPV system since, according to them, they could now use the first preference vote to satisfy their traditional obligations, voting for their husband's or clan's first choice, while reserving the second and third preferences for their own choices. However, these preferences were not reserved exclusively for female candidates, as the results show.

Support for female candidates/gender appeal

With the exception of Maureen Ambo, women candidates in Oro Province did not command support from the wider society, including women voters. This can be seen from the distribution of preferences after the primary count for the three seats.

One of the main reasons for this lack of appeal was that inaction by successive governments over the years had resulted in low levels of development, which demanded strong and charismatic leaders, appropriately educated and knowledgeable in governance issues, who commanded respect from their electorates. Unfortunately, my interviews with women voters suggested that the women candidates were not seen as meeting the criteria and did not command respect through their personal charisma. Although some were activists on gender and social issues, such activities were mainly conducted in the town area and district headquarters and had little impact on the majority in the rural areas. As a result, they stood as effectively unknowns. As noted, Maureen Ambo rose above this by aligning herself with powerful church-based political lobbyists and exposing herself to the wider society through the strategically organized Christian crusades prior to the issue of writs.

Campaign activities

The roles women play during campaigns, for example, preparing meals and organizing venues for males to sit and talk high politics, although important, are often seen as peripheral, thus further diminishing women candidates' appeal to women voters as alternative choices for political leadership.

For the first time in Oro, women candidates appointed other women as campaign managers in certain areas and encouraged women lobbyists to deliver campaign speeches in a bid to appeal to women voters. This was a break from the peripheral activities that gender-biased cultures have imposed on them. Women voters were also observed openly discussing candidates both within small groups and during political rallies.

The confidence, and in some instances daring, shown by women voters can perhaps be attributed to the fact that 10 of their own gender were openly challenging male dominance in political leadership roles. However, this was not widespread, being confined to the Popondetta town area and the female candidates' own bases. Women in other areas, especially outlying rural areas and male candidates' support base areas, did not take up the call to openly campaign for female candidates.

General analysis and LPV assumptions in Oro

The change from FPTP voting to LPV was largely intended to encourage more free and fair elections in the country and encourage a less confrontational style of politics among MPs. In this, Oro Province had mixed results. While the election in general was a success and without major incidents, certain issues still need to be addressed. Major remaining issues of contention concerning the technicalities of the LPV system are listed below.

Bloc voting

Bloc voting has always been a feature of the electoral system in Oro Province, especially in the last two elections. Given the large number of candidates and the relatively small population this practice has yielded winners with very low numbers of votes (averaging between 3000 and 3500—less than 10 percent of the total population of the respective electorates). The results of this have been a lack of serious commitment by MPs to the overall development of their electorates, a 'don't care' attitude to their duties, roles and responsibilities as

MPs, and their indulgence in corrupt practices. The view has been that as long as the small proportion of the population which made up their voter support base was satisfied, MPs were assured of retaining their seats.

The assumption of the shift to LPV was that having three preferences would encourage candidates to take a more holistic approach to elections, with greater awareness of the entire electorate, since support would be needed from the whole electorate to reach the absolute majority needed to win.

However, the 2007 election results for the three seats in Oro Province suggest that voters have not shifted far from the FPTP mentality. For example, after the first preference count, the eventual winner in Ijivitari Open, David Arore, was placed third, while Benson Garui from the Afore area—the same area as Arore, and a relative—was placed first. The preferential counts that followed saw Arore still hovering around third and fourth place while Garui fell to fourth and fifth place. The margin between the frontrunner and the third placed candidate was maintained at between 400 and 600 votes. This changed when Garui was eliminated at the thirty-fourth count: almost 90 percent of his preferential votes went to Arore, dramatically elevating him to first place with a lead of close to 1000 votes. This was maintained in the final two eliminations and Arore was declared elected.

On the other hand, Tufi District alone had seven candidates contesting. When boxes from the Tufi District were counted, almost 90 percent of the votes were distributed among these seven candidates.

Exhausted votes and absolute majority

Of the total of 28,506 allowable ballot papers, 18,079 (63.4 percent) were exhausted before the final count. As the Tufi example shows, the large number of exhausted ballot papers may be attributed to the large number of candidates (38) vying for the votes of a relatively small electorate in Ijivitari. The large proportion of exhausted ballots may also have reflected the behaviour of voters with little interest in proceedings (see above), who gave all three preferences to candidates with little chance of winning.

It was popularly believed that LPV would ensure that winning candidates would have an 'absolute majority' (50 percent + 1 of the total votes), as opposed to FPTP, which gave victory on the basis of a 'simple majority'—the largest number of votes. This, of course, failed to account of exhausted ballots. In Ijivitari, with a total of 30,066 ballot papers issued, the absolute majority was 15,034. However, the high incidence of informal votes (1560), and the large number of ballot papers exhausted, resulted in the absolute majority at the first redistribution dropping to a low 5400. David Arore surpassed this figure with a

total of 5478 votes, to be declared the winner, but his winning vote represented only 18 percent of the total votes cast and therefore brings into question the whole concept of fair representation of the electorate.

Conclusion

The Ijivitari case suggests that women candidates have a chance of winning elections in Papua New Guinea; however, the current status quo of electoral politics stacks the odds heavily against them.

Apart from going against a male-dominated society with all its rigid cultural and traditional forms, women candidates in Oro Province had to contend with structural inequalities in the system. The fact that 10 women candidates contested the 2007 elections and that, at least in some areas, women participated openly in politics where previously none dared to venture, provides evidence of a mellowing in cultural constraints placed on women, especially in the realm of 'high politics'.

Although this is encouraging, more participation alone is not enough. Structural issues in the system have to be addressed in order to bring about real opportunities for women contestants. Drawing on the Ijivitari experience, the following are some suggestions for removing obstacles to free, fair and equal participation of women in high politics.

Awareness

There has to be a whole-of-government approach to gender awareness throughout Papua New Guinea not just in easily accessible urban areas, as was the case in Ijivitari. Both males and females should participate in these programs as advocates and recipients. Awareness programs should focus on women's rights, including the right to hold public office and participate in high politics. There is also a need to increase awareness about the LPV process, as the 2007 election in Oro displayed a lack of real understanding of the system by candidates and voters alike.

Civil society organizations and government agencies should be encouraged to establish networks reaching to the far and isolated corners of the country. Through these, information should be disseminated not only to make people aware, but to encourage their full participation in democratic processes and governance. In Oro Province, a thorough awareness program would probably contribute to lowering the numbers contesting elections.

Election-related laws and policies

Election-related laws and policies need to be revisited in order to make them more gender sensitive, while laws relating to bribery, vote buying, gifting and other forms of inducement and corruption in the electoral process should be strictly enforced.

Creation of seats exclusively for women

The above suggestions will take time to implement, given decades of inaction. An alternative would be for parliament to legislate for a seat reserved for women in each province. This seat could either be voted on by everyone or by women voters only. One suggestion under discussion is to replace provincial seats with a seat in each province reserved for women.

Such measures might assist in reducing non-democratic practices in Papua New Guinea's electoral system and enhancing women's participation.

Appendix

Table 15.1: Voting statistics for Ijivitari Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	41,826	
Total votes cast	30,065	
Informal votes	1,561	(5.2% of total votes cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	28,504	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	10,419	
Total votes distributed	23,727	
Exhausted ballot papers	18,085	(63.4% of total allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	5,211	

Table 15.2: Ijivitari Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary vote		Position after primary vote	Preferential vote		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
36	David Arore	M	Independent	2474	8.7	3	3004	54.8		5478	19.2	52.6
41	John Warison	M	People's Party	2303	8.1	4	2638	53.4		4941	17.3	47.4
26	George King Baure	M	Independent	2483	8.7	2	1756	41.4	36	4239	14.9	
30	Maureen Ambo	F	National Alliance	1913	6.7	5	1706	47.1	35	3619	12.7	
10	Benson Kavia Garui	M	People's National Congress Party	2699	9.5	1	663	19.7	34	3362	11.8	
17	Nehemiah T. Iewa	M	PNG Party	1641	5.8	6	1428	46.5	33	3069	10.8	
16	Solomon Kimai	M	People's Action Party	1575	5.5	7	849	35.0	32	2424	8.5	
39	Cecil King Doruba	M	PANGU	1552	5.4	8	510	24.7	31	2062	7.2	
47	Andrew Borita	M	Independent	737	2.6	10	817	52.6	30	1554	5.5	
12	Hudson Arek	M	People's Progress Party	472	1.7	19	691	59.4	29	1163	4.1	
31	Fredrick Embi	M	Independent	683	2.4	11	444	39.4	28	1127	4.0	
20	John Taylor Sovera	M	Independent	630	2.2	14	407	39.2	27	1037	3.6	
28	Gilford Avenoma	M	People's Democratic Movement	766	2.7	9	167	17.9	26	933	3.3	
14	Reginald Seiyari	M	Independent	589	2.1	15	316	34.9	25	905	3.2	
35	Newby M. Cuthbert	M	Independent	443	1.6	20	401	47.5	24	844	3.0	
44	John Kova	M	Yumi Reform Party	671	2.4	12	154	18.7	23	825	2.9	
32	Karl Varika	M	Stars Alliance Party	557	2.0	16	184	24.8	22	741	2.6	
25	Bobby S. Samani	M	United Party	667	2.3	13	35	5.0	21	702	2.5	
38	Gerald Albert	M	Independent	533	1.9	17	144	21.3	20	677	2.4	

15. The Ijivitari Open Electorate: Women's Participation as Candidates and Voters

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary vote		Position after primary vote	Preferential vote		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
23	David Dandio	M	Independent	432	1.5	21	144	25.0	19	576	2.0	
22	Simon Sieveba Sipo	M	Melanesian Alliance	490	1.7	18	73	13.0	18	563	2.0	
27	Jaf Taua Durea	M	Independent	383	1.3	25	105	21.5	17	488	1.7	
21	Andrew B. Kaiai	M	Independent	389	1.4	23	80	17.1	16	469	1.6	
24	George Kasawa	M	Independent	380	1.3	26	70	15.6	15	450	1.6	
18	Micah Mas	M	Independent	431	1.5	22	14	3.1	14	445	1.6	
29	Wellington Geroro	M	Independent	384	1.3	24	29	7.0	13	413	1.4	
45	Beiden Sisino	M	Independent	318	1.1	27	30	8.6	12	348	1.2	
15	William Caxton Ajedo	M	Independent	277	1.0	28	45	14.0	11	322	1.1	
13	Henry A. V. Mamaie	M	PNG Conservative Party	263	0.9	29	23	8.0	10	286	1.0	
46	Wilfred E. Gabuba	M	People's Labour Party	260	0.9	30	16	5.8	9	276	1.0	
42	Joel Siembo	M	Independent	217	0.8	31	10	4.4	8	227	0.8	
19	Deborah E. Emboge	F	Independent	197	0.7	32	20	9.2	7	217	0.8	
37	Raymond Gill Joino	M	Independent	191	0.7	33	7	3.5	6	198	0.7	
33	Wellington Kaboro	M	Christian Democratic Party	145	0.5	34	2	1.4	5	147	0.5	
11	Bray Sisire	M	Papua New Guinea National Party	119	0.4	35	2	1.7	4	121	0.4	
40	David Beu	M	Independent	117	0.4	36	1	0.8	3	118	0.4	
43	Austin Tuwagera Edo	M	Independent	93	0.3	37	0	0.0	2	93	0.3	
34	David Andaripa	M	Independent	30	0.1	38	0	0.0	1	30	0.1	

16. Communication, Logistics and Inter-Agency Partnerships in the Eastern Highlands Provincial Electorate

Michael Unage

With the introduction of limited preferential voting (LPV), and the late legislative change to voting procedures in November 2006, many predicted that the 2007 general election would be a failure. Nonetheless, there was general satisfaction with the election outcome, with election-related violence in the Highlands down significantly from 2002 levels. Among factors contributing to electoral success, communications, logistics and inter-agency partnership were critical. This paper examines issues of communications, logistics and inter-agency partnership in the Eastern Highlands provincial electorate.

Background

Eastern Highlands is one of the 19 provincial electorates in the country. It shares borders with Morobe, Madang, Simbu and Gulf provinces. Eastern Highlands has eight open electorates—Daulo, Goroka, Unggai-Bena, Lufa, Henganofi, Okapa, Kainantu and Obura-Wonenara (Figure 16.1). At the 2000 census, Eastern Highlands had a population of 432,972. In 2007 the total number of votes polled in the provincial electorate was 354,495.

There are 24 local-level governments (LLGs) in the province: two urban LLGs (Goroka Urban and Kainantu Urban) and 22 rural LLGs. Population is concentrated in the flat lands around Kainantu and Goroka, reflecting the gravitation of people towards the urban areas. Goroka town was established in 1939 and became the major administrative and commercial centre of the province.

The province has rich temperate valleys and ridges, which attracted the attention of early gold prospectors such as Mick Dwyer and Mick Leahy and now support a thriving arabica coffee industry. Coffee, 'the money that grows on trees', is the lifeblood of Eastern Highlands Province.



Figure 16.1: Eastern Highlands Province open electorates

Data for the study of the Eastern Highlands provincial electorate was gathered through unstructured interviews with candidates, polling officials and voters. The interviews specifically sought both qualitative and quantitative information on communication, logistics and inter-agency partnerships.

LPV awareness

Though there was preference voting in Papua New Guinea before independence, most eligible voters were not familiar with the LPV system. It was therefore essential to conduct an awareness campaign before the commencement of polling. Several agencies were involved in this.

The National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in Goroka did an outstanding job in communicating electoral information through its radio network. Time was allocated for election awareness at 7.15 pm every Tuesday and Thursday, which was considered prime time. In the program, electoral officers explained in detail what people needed to know about the LPV system, and answered queries people had about their right to vote without undue influence from candidates, supporters or political parties. The Australian Agency for International Development also funded a radio commentary and a drama program on elections

and HIV/AIDS (respectively '*Autim tok na Tingting*' and 'If to You'), as well as 'HIV/AIDS spots' at least 12 times a day. These were broadcast from late February till the end of August 2007.

The Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC), with the help of local public servants, did three lots of LPV awareness throughout Eastern Highlands Province. Election materials, produced by the PNGEC, were distributed by teams which visited rural areas. Mock elections were conducted. In a few electorates, the returning officers conducted training of trainers for LPV awareness.

A few civil society groups, funded under the Electoral Support Program, did LPV awareness in the Eastern Highlands. These included the Goroka Community Development Agency, Women in Agriculture, Pamusa Community Development Assistance, and Lower Unggai Community Development. Though the scope of the activity was limited, they managed to get the message across to people who might not otherwise have been reached.

It was also reported that many of the candidates took up the responsibility for educating voters on the LPV system, out of fear that their votes might otherwise be informal.

Observers reported that residents of Goroka and Kainantu towns had the opportunity to attend LPV awareness carried out by civil society groups, but LPV awareness did not penetrate many rural areas of the provincial electorate despite requests from rural voters. Those who carried out LPV awareness said that they were not adequately resourced by the PNGEC to carry out informative awareness.

Few candidates appear to have talked about HIV/AIDS as part of civic awareness. In many polling places, there was no display of HIV/AIDS materials.

Electoral roll

The most important activity leading up to the 2007 general election was the electoral roll update. The update was done in two phases. First, four enumerators, accompanied by local councillors, went from village to village enrolling people over 18 years of age. The enrolment was then checked by the district supervisors and sent to Port Moresby for the printing of preliminary rolls. The preliminary rolls were given to returning officers for checking and sent back to the PNGEC's head office. Secondly, in early 2007, the electoral roll was sent out for verification and update, a process which was controlled by

returning officers. The verified forms were then sent to Port Moresby for the final printout, which arrived before the start of polling. Civil society groups were not involved in the update of the electoral roll.

Many voters did not register their names on the electoral roll out of ignorance or because the enrolment teams did not visit all residential areas at the ward level. Moreover, observers reported that many eligible voters did not fill in the claim for enrolment form when enumerators did visit their village. Consequently many voters were unable to cast their votes and people raised concerns that the electoral roll did not have a complete listing of people. On the other hand, in some newly created polling places there were said to be 'ghost' names on the rolls.

Some observers claimed that the electoral roll was hijacked by greedy politicians, councillors, and candidates who did what they could to ensure the roll served their interests. The fact that candidates had tampered with the electoral roll suggests that politics in the province continues to be aggressively competitive. Concentrations of voters residing in Goroka and Kainantu towns means that clan loyalty has been somewhat weakened. Candidates now have to rely on cross-ethnic votes if they are to win. Abuse of the electoral roll is seen as one way of ensuring a win.

Training

In the 2007 election, training was especially important because of the new voting system. Training was conducted by returning officers in their respective electorates in the lead-up to the election. At least five training sessions were conducted, namely: a two-day session for presiding officers, which included setting up polling places and holding mock elections; a day's training for polling clerks, doorkeepers, and ballot box guards; briefing of scrutineers on LPV and counting; a workshop for candidates; and a two-day training session for counting officials.

Training of polling officials by the PNGEC, however, was generally seen as inadequate. Consequently, delays and confusion were experienced in counting. The Obura-Wonenara electorate did poorly in the regional count, delaying the counting by a day or so as papers were rechecked. The team supervisor had only had a two-hour training session. He stated that he did not know exactly what was expected of him. Only 200 of 700 counting officials (28 percent) received training in the counting and elimination aspects of the LPV, which rendered the integrity of the elections vulnerable to challenge.

Transport

Some 240 hired vehicles, and six fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters from the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF), the police, the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and commercial contractors, were employed to transport election materials and personnel. Bad weather and the late arrival of helicopters caused a few delays. Some polling officials had to walk for days to reach remote polling areas. One polling team was picked up on the Madang Highway when a helicopter failed to pick them up from a remote polling place.

The placement of aviation fuel at strategic points curtailed unnecessary trips to Goroka for refuelling of helicopters, and the availability of the Summer Institute of Linguistics's aircraft assisted in accessing remote polling places.

Security

In addition to regular police from the Eastern Highlands, two mobile squad units (from Kerowagi and Laiagam) were deployed to the Eastern Highlands in advance to polling, and other police contingents from Port Moresby were deployed in time for polling. Besides the police, the PNGDF's A Company from Lae was deployed during and after polling, and members of the Correctional Services from Bomana provided security assistance. Casual security personnel were also employed at the counting centre.

However, police logistics were often a problem during polling. Police did not accompany polling teams to all polling places, and not all polling stations had a police presence. Especially in the towns, a heavy security presence provided some control over the voting, but in remote places the security presence was inadequate to guarantee voters' security and free choice. Instead, village court officials took responsibility for security in many remote polling places.

Notwithstanding these constraints, there was general peace and order, and no weapons were seen in the hands of civilians during the campaign or at polling.

Electoral costs

The cost of conducting the election in the Eastern Highlands has been estimated at around K3.8 million (Table 16.1).

Table 16.1: Election costs in Eastern Highlands Province^a

Expenditure item	Cost (K'000)
Security	202
Transport	1124
Communication (mainly payments to NBC and Telikom)	26
Printing of electoral roll	36
Logistics (hire of premises, electricity, etc.)	195
Wages and allowances	1766
Activity grant to electorates (for awareness, training etc.)	453
Total	3802

a These may not be final figures in all cases. The costs of the electoral roll update are not included, but were probably in the order of K300,000.

Polling

Officially, polling in the Eastern Highlands commenced on 9 July, though in a few remote areas, polling began some days later due to transport difficulties and bad weather. Polling was not conducted in a few places, due to fighting unrelated to the election.

There were 663 polling teams, with 663 ballot boxes each for the provincial electorate and the open electorates. Ballot boxes for each electorate were colour-coded, in an attempt by the provincial election manager to remove any suspicion that election officials were allowing candidates to produce their own ballot boxes and ballot papers.

Polling was generally orderly, though at many polling stations polling and security officials gave into the demands of the voters and did not confirm names on the roll before allowing voters to cast their votes. In some polling places, there were reports of multiple voting and some underage voting. Frequently people were not able to cast their votes freely, because voting compartments were controlled by youths who told voters to vote for certain candidates; the security presence was inadequate to prevent this. In many places polling became disorderly towards afternoon.

Counting

Counting for all electorates in the Eastern Highlands was conducted at the National Sports Institute. Stalls were constructed for each electorate, and the

regional stall comprised eight compartments for the primary count. All tally rooms had phone connections. Ballot boxes were taken to the counting centre on designated vehicles, and kept under close scrutiny.

Security arrangements at the counting centre were exceptional, with PNGDF personnel, police mobile squads, local police from Goroka, and casual security personnel providing security. Meticulous checks were conducted at the entrance to the counting centre, even for counting officials. Mobile phones were confiscated at the gate. Scrutineers had a good view of the counting process. No scope was left for election fraud. Indeed no one would have dared to hijack the process, even at gunpoint. There were, however, complaints that security was excessive and that many electoral officials were treated with disrespect.

Despite the recent introduction of the LPV system, the counting process was generally good, though some problems emerged. The primary count was fairly straightforward except for Obura-Wonenara, which delayed the provincial count by a day while papers were rechecked. As the count proceeded, however, the scrutineers and campaign officials of losing candidates tried to freeze the counting, organizing informal protest meetings outside the counting venue. Sitting member Malcolm Kela Smith led from the start by a big margin, which created strong suspicion among other candidates and their supporters and scrutineers.

Presiding officers sometimes failed to provide polling summaries. Consequently, figures were not available for verification. One presiding officer was questioned by police for holding on to returns. Counting was continually disrupted by scrutineers because of discrepancies between the totals on the counting board and those on the presiding officers' returns.

A number of ballot papers were found in the wrong boxes (in most electorates, some ballot papers for open electorates were mistakenly put in the boxes meant for provincial electorates, and those for provincial electorates in the boxes meant for open electorates). These were sorted out and accepted, but took up time and effort. Further, about a third of the counting officials were laid off before the elimination counts, prompting complaints from them that they had been contracted for 21 days to do the counting. Checking of ballot papers took at least two days, during which more informal ballot papers were discovered.

There were also miscounts of ballot papers, and miscalculation of figures. Discrepancies emerged between the final figures at the end of each exclusion and the total number of ballot papers per box, such that adjustments had to be made on nearly every exclusion. Informal ballot papers and unaccounted ballot papers continued to surface.

Communication

Communication between the election manager for Eastern Highlands Province and the returning officer was good; directions and instructions were received by the returning officer without any major difficulty. As a result the entire election process—from nominations to counting—was relatively peaceful and orderly. The chain of communication to assistant returning officers was also good. At the Lopi polling station, for example, all voters who turned up to vote were able to vote in secrecy and there was no multiple voting.

Polling officials understood their respective roles. Presiding officers allowed those voters who were still on a queue between 5 pm and 6 pm to cast their votes; this brought satisfaction to the voters, whose patience had not been in vain.

Election results were promptly communicated by the election manager to the PNGEC headquarters and the Media Centre in Port Moresby. There was generally good communication between the election manager and the returning officer and police, and between police and the PNGDF. Landline phones and faxes were available for all agencies to use according to their needs.

Logistics

Transport and security arrangements were generally in place for the protection of ballot boxes and papers, and for their prompt transport to the appropriate LLG distribution points or police stations. Police were on hand to provide escort for the vehicles carrying the ballot boxes and papers; polling officials and scrutineers usually accompanied the ballot boxes. The returning officers took custody of any unused ballot papers, which were then transported with police escort to the appropriate LLG distribution point or police station.

Inter-agency partnership

Partnerships at the national level were well in place through the Inter-departmental Electoral Committee (IDEC), chaired by the Registrar of Political Parties. Through IDEC, directions filtered down to the election managers at the provincial level. Partnerships between PNGEC officials, police, PNGDF, LLGs, ward councillors, civil society, and local communities in the Eastern Highlands can be described as cooperative, friendly, and conducive to peaceful elections.

Information necessary for the sound conduct of duties for each agency was duly conveyed, allowing for the effective carrying out of activities at each stage of the election process.

In consequence, most voters in the Eastern Highlands were pleased with the relative peace and order of the elections and the freedom to move around as well as exercise their democratic right to vote.

Electoral outcomes

The results

Thirty-five candidates stood for the Eastern Highlands provincial electorate, of whom eight were endorsed by political parties (see Table 16.2 at the end of this chapter).

Malcolm Kela Smith, the sitting member led in the primary count, with 77,254 votes, and eventually won with a final tally of 130,427 which was 37.7 percent of total formal votes. The runner-up, both in the primary and final tally, former member of parliament Barry Holloway, scored 25,790 and 72,219 respectively. John Yogio came third with a primary vote of 22,511 and a final vote of 55,755. Julie Soso Akeke, the only female candidate contesting the regional electorate, polled 16,651 votes, placing her in eighth position in the primary count; she was eliminated in the thirtieth count, with a total vote of 34,164.

In the primary count of the Eastern Highland Regional seat, 355,203 ballot papers were cast, of which only 8860 (2.5 percent) were informal. It appears, therefore, that the introduction of LPV voting, in the Eastern Highlands at least, did not result in a significant informal vote.

At the thirty-second elimination, the remaining 'live' ballot papers numbered 258,401;¹ that is, only 25.4 percent of formal votes had been exhausted. This suggests that voters in the Eastern Highland directed their preferences strongly towards the top three candidates—unlike other electorates that saw more than 50 percent of ballot papers exhausted. Thus, we might infer that people in the Eastern Highlands have understood the intention of the preferential voting system by distributing preferences among the stronger candidates.

¹ The figure for total ballot papers remaining in count on the official form 66B was 261,146; however, this is not the correct sum of the three remaining candidates' votes. We have used the recalculated figure because the former would not have Malcolm Kela Smith winning with an absolute majority.

Disputed election results imply malpractice and election anomalies. In the Eastern Highlands in 2007, though six election petitions were registered, only two went for pre-trial, the other four being dismissed by the court. The implication would seem to be that the elections were accepted as generally fair.

Since there was no significant election-related violence, we can surmise that people were generally content with the way election was conducted; the LPV system may have contributed to this.

Assessing the outcomes

The change from first-past-the-post to limited preferential voting

The shift to a LPV system had a major impact on election outcomes. The general peace in the Eastern Highlands during the elections can probably be attributed to the LPV system. Clan boundaries opened up for other candidates to enter, and parochial candidates were encouraged to go to other clans to campaign for preference votes. Intense negotiation and vote trading was evident everywhere. Voters felt free to move from one candidate's domain to another's, and the hijacking of ballot papers was uncommon in 2007. The general consensus was that the 2007 election was better than that in 2002 and that LPV contributed to this.

LPV likewise made electoral logistics easier, as polling places were more peaceful and foul play at the counting centres was reduced—it was reported that several counting officials rejected bribes to rig the process, knowing that it would be difficult if not impossible to do so. LPV helped people in the electoral process do the right thing.

Planning, consultation and participation

Consultation and involvement of people was evident in the work of the provincial steering committee and the participation of key stakeholders in the electoral process. The Eastern Highlands election manager had long experience with the PNGEC, and took the initiative when needed. When funds were not forthcoming, he personally travelled to PNGEC headquarters requesting their release. The election manager enlisted a group of first-time returning officers whose enthusiasm and motivation to prove their worth contributed to the effective execution of election plans.

The electoral steering committee was chaired by the deputy provincial administrator who was also responsible for the discipline of local public servants. Thus professional conduct was maintained and electoral fraud by public servants minimized.

Key local stakeholders were members of the provincial steering committee, and the involvement of civil society in governance education and LPV awareness may have contributed to the successful outcome.

There was also evidence of a change in people's participation; with less feasting and campaigning, they took the time to educate themselves about the electoral process, especially the LPV system.

Wider dissemination of information, increased popular understanding of the electoral process, and improved communications

The NBC in Goroka took an active role in the electoral awareness campaign and in disseminating information to the local people. The PNGEC also promoted LPV awareness, and many candidates took on the responsibility of educating voters about the new electoral process. During the election, the accessibility of a satellite phone for all returning officers facilitated communication with the election manager.

Better logistic support

For the first time, provincial treasuries were used to process cheques, making disbursement of funds to election tasks more convenient. Other notable successes in logistics in the Eastern Highlands were the separate ballot boxes for the regional and the open electorates, making counting less tedious, and the colour coding of the ballot boxes which reduced the level of suspicion of foul play. The set-up of the counting centre was another remarkable achievement: it provided full transparency in the counting of ballots. Bad weather and delays in other highland provinces caused minor disruption to the transportation of polling teams; otherwise transport arrangements were excellent.

But despite some remarkable successes, election management needs to be improved in several areas.

The electoral roll

A disjunction was observed between the intention and the practice of the electoral roll. Ethnic bloc voting frequently replaced the electoral roll, and voters felt that calling and checking names was time consuming (and LPV voting needed time). Hence, as reported by domestic observers, a majority of the polling places in the Eastern Highlands did not utilize the electoral roll. This needs to be examined.

Limited preferential voting awareness

Despite the efforts of those communicating the LPV message, most observers reported that LPV awareness did not penetrate into many rural communities, where few people own radios and many people are illiterate. Patrols on foot by existing community groups may be more effective.

Assisting illiterate voters

Given the number of illiterate voters, one might be surprised at the low informal vote. The explanation is that illiterate voters were frequently assisted by educated people. However, it was noted by observers that in some polling places a few people marked the ballot papers for all the voters. And when votes were counted it was noted that in a few ballot boxes papers appeared to have been marked by the same hand. Perhaps this is an indication that many of the illiterate voters did not exercise a completely free choice.

Ballot papers

The fact that the provincial and open ballot papers looked alike caused some problems, with voters marking their choices for provincial candidates on open ballot papers and vice versa, or putting correctly marked ballot papers in the wrong ballot box. This might be fixed by using differently coloured ballot papers for open and provincial electorates.

Training

Training for counting officials was not adequate and this resulted in a slow start to counting. Some officials were briefed for less than one hour before counting commenced. This particularly affected the distribution of preferences. There were discrepancies in the count where figures did not balance and had to be reworked. Partly because of this, counting was continually disturbed by scrutineers. Two days of checking revealed more informal ballot papers, miscounts of ballot papers, and miscalculation of figures. Adjustments were consequently made on each exclusion. The official final count of the PNGEC differs somewhat from the records kept by domestic observers.

Security arrangements

Despite the heavy security presence in Goroka and in the district headquarters, security was inadequate to guarantee voters' security and free choice in remote rural polling places. There were several reasons for this: the security concerns in Southern Highlands and Enga provinces meant that less consideration was given to Eastern Highlands Province where election violence is comparatively low; the election-related problems in the four other Highlands provinces delayed

the arrival of police in time for polling in the Eastern Highlands; for the first time, police logistics for the provinces were drawn up in Port Moresby, which resulted in a lack of proper implementation in the provinces; and some lack of communication between police and returning officers posed problems for the movement of ballot papers during polling.

Management and disbursement of funds

Allegations of misappropriation of funds for election purposes recur in Papua New Guinea elections. Eastern Highlands in 2007 was no exception. Long after the election many people and organizations who had provided goods and services claimed they had not been paid, including police personnel engaged in the election who claimed not to have received due allowances.

Regionalizing electoral responsibilities

The planning of electoral operations at headquarters in Port Moresby seems to result in delays and frustration at the provincial level. Frequent trips to Port Moresby by the provincial election manager, to sort out logistic problems, and his consequent absence from the province, affected the planning of the election in Eastern Highlands. There is perhaps scope for a greater decentralization of electoral responsibilities in the interests of efficiency. This might include the appointment of a full-time electoral official in each electorate.

Obstacles to electoral administration

No matter how much planning and resources are put into making elections a success, two factors in particular continue to hinder free and fair elections in the Eastern Highlands (and other parts of Papua New Guinea): clan politics and corruption.

Clan politics

In many parts of Papua New Guinea the pressures stemming from clan solidarity outweigh consideration of individual rights. Electorally, this is manifested in ethnic bloc voting and 'line up' voting; in manipulation of the electoral roll; in double or multiple voting; in insisting that voters give their first preference to a parochial candidate, and in inducing fear and intimidation. These were in evidence in the Eastern Highlands in 2007. The problem requires a broad response, including governance and human rights education conducted by civil society groups, giving special consideration to the Highlands Region, strict

enforcement of the secrecy of the vote, with village courts having jurisdiction to prosecute offenders, and an increased police presence, in conjunction with community security arrangements, during elections.

Corruption

Not only has money been used increasingly to buy people's votes, more disturbing is an emerging tendency for candidates and their supporters to attempt to buy out the election process, or bribe electoral officials to rig the process. Many cases of bribery were reported in the 2007 election by domestic observers. A statement by the acting provincial returning officer of Eastern Highland confirmed this: 'The 2007 general election', he said, 'was a success; however, we cannot ascertain that it was a free and fair election'.² Severe penalties must be imposed on candidates offering bribes and on polling officials accepting bribes.

Conclusion

The 2007 elections were generally seen as being better than the 2002 elections in Eastern Highlands Province.

The legislative change from first-past-the-post to LPV appears to have resulted in a shift in attitude and election practice, and, as such, improved election outcomes in 2007, though minor legislative changes may be needed to close some loopholes.

Efficient communications and logistics, and effective inter-agency partnerships at the national and provincial levels are an integral part of electoral governance. Although the election in the Eastern Highlands in 2007 was not perfect, communication between the PNGEC headquarters in Port Moresby and the provincial election manager in Eastern Highlands Province, and between the election manager and polling officials, contributed significantly to the success of the election in the province. Aside from efficiently coordinated logistics, an effective partnership between all relevant agencies and civil society and community groups is important for sound elections; people must take ownership of the election and, in the process, understand the meaning of voting, and why it is important to elect good leaders. The pre-polling, polling and post-polling periods were relatively peaceful in Eastern Highlands Province, the latter an indication that people have accepted the outcome.

2 Interview with Kusindel Kalowai, acting provincial returning officer of Eastern Highlands Province.

Appendix

Table 16.2: Voting statistics for Eastern Highlands Province, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	383,471	
Total ballots cast	355,203	
Informal votes	8,860	(2.5% of ballots cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	346,343	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	258,401	
Total votes distributed	220,788	
Exhausted ballot papers	87,942	(25.4% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	129,202	

Table 16.3: Eastern Highlands provincial electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
36	Malcolm Kela Smith	M	Independent	77,254	22.3	1	53,173	40.8		130,427	37.7	50.5
10	Barry Holloway	M	PANGU	25,790	7.4	2	46,429	64.3		72,219	20.9	27.9
42	Jon Yogio	M	Independent	22,511	6.5	5	33,244	59.6		55,755	16.1	21.6
33	Stanley Harry Gotatha	M	Independent	25,599	7.4	3	18,385	41.8	32	43,984	12.7	
13	Samuel Si-i	M	Independent	22,616	6.5	4	13,713	37.7	31	36,329	10.5	
27	Julie Soso Akeke	F	Independent	16,651	4.8	8	17,513	51.3	30	34,164	9.9	
30	Peti Lafanama	M	Independent	21,248	6.1	6	8,119	27.6	29	29,367	8.5	
25	Captain Danny Fezamo	M	People's Democratic Movement	17,028	4.9	7	4,999	22.7	28	22,027	6.4	
12	Terry Umolo	M	Independent	13,963	4.0	9	3,701	21.0	27	17,664	5.1	
19	Tangil Iambakey Okuk	M	Independent	9,800	2.8	11	4,260	30.3	26	14,060	4.1	
11	Dick Steven	M	Independent	10,696	3.1	10	2,171	16.9	25	12,867	3.7	
21	Michael Loia Apie'e	M	Rural Development Party	8,162	2.4	12	1,649	16.8	24	9,811	2.8	
32	Sota Kalabe Yabaimanta	M	Independent	7,138	2.1	14	2,236	23.9	23	9,374	2.7	
41	Brian Wai	M	People's Progress Party	7,173	2.1	13	1,622	18.4	22	8,795	2.5	
18	Moses Namagilesio	M	Independent	6,274	1.8	15	1,335	17.5	21	7,609	2.2	
24	Leslie Hoffman Aize	M	People's Party	5,665	1.6	16	947	14.3	20	6,612	1.9	
40	Enoch Asineha	M	Independent	4,826	1.4	18	1,116	18.8	19	5,942	1.7	
34	Gabriel Waime	M	Star's Alliance Party	5,182	1.5	17	358	6.5	18	5,540	1.6	

16. Communication, Logistics and Inter-Agency Partnerships in the Eastern Highlands Provincial Electorate

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
37	Tepi Ya'apo	M	Independent	4,325	1.2	19	568	11.6	17	4,893	1.4	
43	Tebani Tewa Onopika	M	Independent	4,249	1.2	20	265	5.9	16	4,514	1.3	
17	Manus Kotave	M	Independent	4,123	1.2	21	359	8.0	15	4,482	1.3	
44	Aita Ivarato	M	National Advance Party	3,715	1.1	22	573	13.4	14	4,288	1.2	
29	Biosi Gunure	M	Independent	3,335	1.0	23	277	7.7	13	3,612	1.0	
23	Apo Mathias	M	Independent	2,993	0.9	24	298	9.1	12	3,291	1.0	
26	Job Eri Eha	M	Independent	2,913	0.8	25	72	2.4	11	2,985	0.9	
38	Uncle Dawa	M	PNG First Party	2,785	0.8	26	94	3.3	10	2,879	0.8	
31	Peter Aeno Prior	M	Independent	2,220	0.6	27	77	3.4	9	2,297	0.7	
15	Anlaki Neke Hafosa	M	Independent	2,036	0.6	28	81	3.8	8	2,117	0.6	
16	Don. K. Upisa	M	Independent	1,051	0.3	29	94	8.2	7	1,145	0.3	
14	Sandy Negerove	M	Independent	1,041	0.3	30	27	2.5	6	1,068	0.3	
20	Jeffrey Masi Laki	M	Independent	989	0.3	31	16	1.6	5	1,005	0.3	
39	Ian Busman Singkepe	M	Independent	929	0.3	32	5	0.5	4	934	0.3	
28	Branson Korovie Tomani	M	Independent	821	0.2	33	1	0.1	3	822	0.2	
22	James Moliiki	M	Independent	719	0.2	34	6	0.8	2	725	0.2	
35	Justin W. Okena	M	Independent	523	0.2	35	0	0.0	1	523	0.2	

Note: The figure for total ballot papers remaining in count on form 66B was 261,146. This figure is not the true total of the three remaining candidates' votes, which was 25,841. The recalculated figure is used here because the former would not have Kela Smith winning with an absolute majority. On this basis, exhausted votes have also been recalculated from the 85,197 on form 66B to 87,942.

17. The Election in Chuave Open Electorate

William Steven Gari Kaupa

The 2007 election for Chuave Open in Simbu Province, which closely followed by-elections in Chuave Open in August 2006 and Simbu Provincial in 2004, was quieter than previous general elections. In 2002 (and 1997) many candidates had been prevented from travelling widely to campaign, and there was a great deal of intimidation of voters and 'forcing' of the vote.

The Chuave people have a high level of tribal contestation and also ample experience of preferential voting, so they knew how to exploit limited preferential voting (LPV) to their advantage. However, initial good impressions need to be re-examined in evaluating this election. Most candidates promoted good governance messages and discouraged corrupt practices in their opening campaign speeches, but the same candidates engaged in unscrupulous campaign gifting, exploiting customary practices and thereby displaying double standards. The administration of the election and the security environment were good, but in many places the polling could not be properly administered because polling officials and security personnel were powerless against community pressure.

The member of parliament (MP) elected under the LPV system gained a greatly increased mandate compared with previous MPs. Yet observers' findings reflect the underlying influence of Melanesian culture and the power of community consensus in influencing voting in the election. Voting was not free and fair; this had not changed much from 2002. In each polling place the LPV outcome was essentially the same as under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, in that community consensus overrode the secrecy of the ballot. A second major finding is that there was little impact from the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates*, which was designed to strengthen political parties, create legislative stability, and promote national interests rather than parochialism. People voted in the hope of gaining community projects and meeting their local aspirations, rather than for the policies and candidates of political parties.

This chapter draws on the journals used by seven domestic observers at six polling places. Team members were asked to fill in 18 sections of the journal, covering topics from election administration, through candidates' tactics in campaigning and public reactions, to security responses, within a structured questionnaire.¹

¹ The questionnaire was prepared by Dr Nicole Haley from The Australian National University and Dr Ray Anere from the National Research Institute. The seven domestic observers were Margaret Melton from

The electorate

Chuave Open electorate is in the east of Simbu Province bordering the Eastern Highlands. Within Simbu it abuts Karimui-Nomane Open electorate to the south and Sinasina-Yonggamugl to the west (Figure 17.1). The principal cash crop is smallholder coffee. A total of 30,876 eligible voters were registered for the poll. The Chuave electorate has three local-level governments (LLGs): Chuave, Elimbari and Siane. Chuave LLG has 13 wards with 10,077 registered voters, Elimbari has 16 wards with 10,794 registered voters, and Siane has 27 wards with 10,004 registered voters. Some 69 polling sites were gazetted across the total of 56 LLG wards for the 9 July poll. Multiple voting in Simbu Province by Eastern Highlanders, which caused the 2006 by-election, is still very much in evidence across Siane LLG area. Border crossing is also a problem in Chuave LLG, in the north at Mangiro and in the west at the border with Sinasina-Yonggamugl.

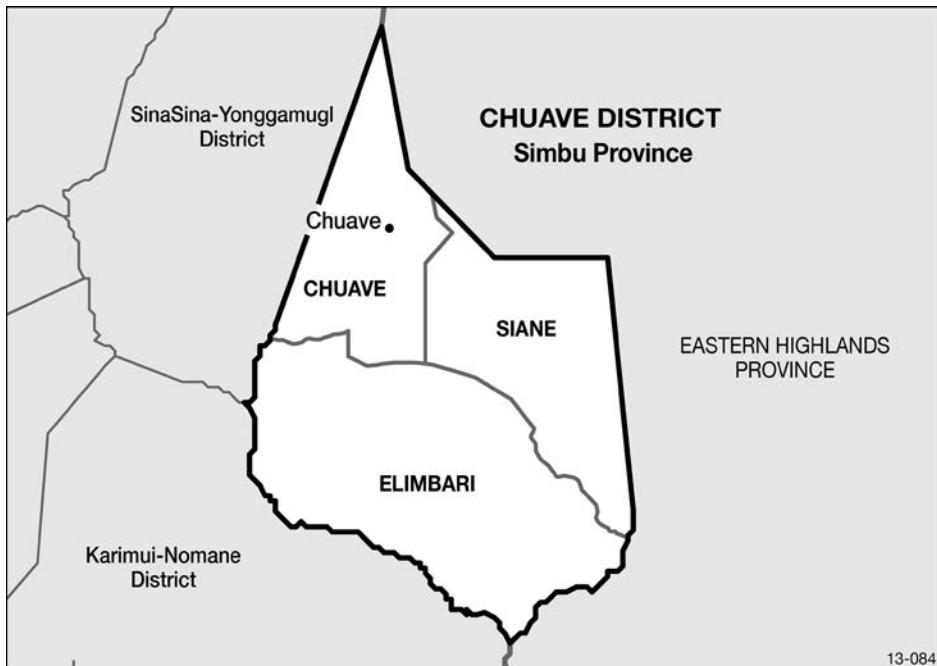


Figure 17.1: Chuave District

Chuave, Doreen Ale from Kundiawa, Boney Waine from Gumine, Eric Uba from Sinasina, Matthias Kin from Karimui-Nomane, Kamane Kiage from Chuave and Limbia Tiagoba from Tari Pori in the Southern Highlands.

Electoral awareness and civil society organization engagement

Chuave people have good access to radio broadcasts and newspapers as the electorate is closer to Goroka and Kundiawa than other Simbu electorates. The findings from our questionnaire indicate that people had heard the radio advertisements from the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC). They also mentioned that the LPV system was clearly explained by the *Meri I Kirap Sapotim* civil society organization and Simbu-based police during the awareness campaign.

The voter survey

140 voters (70 male and 70 female), most between the ages of 25 and 55, from around the Chuave electorate were interviewed on various aspects of the election. 40 percent said that they did not know that there was a new electoral roll. Fifteen percent indicated that they had filled out a claim-for-enrolment form while 40 percent stated that they thought they were enrolled. Forty-one percent of respondents said they had seen the verification teams in their areas, but only 14 percent reported that they had actually checked their names on the new roll.

Eighty-three percent of respondents stated that they were aware of the new LPV voting system and 54 percent said that they felt that they knew how to vote properly under LPV. Forty-three percent had attended LPV and civic awareness prior to the election, and of these 70 percent indicated that the LPV awareness would change the way they voted, especially in terms of the distribution of preferences. Sixty-eight percent had seen, read, or heard of, the PNGEC election advertisements on EMTV, radio, and in the newspapers. Seventy-one percent indicated they would be able to vote more freely than in the 2002 election. Twenty-three percent had heard about the new procedures for gender segregation at the time of polling. Seventy percent of respondents also said that they were now more aware of the dangers of unsafe sex and other consequences of being unfaithful in their marriages. Those interviewed spoke highly of *Meri I Kirap Sapotim* as an effective medium of communication and awareness, and praised the Simbu police for a job well done in ensuring security during the elections.

On the whole, the voter survey suggested that LPV and HIV/AIDS awareness were well conducted in the Chuave Open electorate, such that the majority of voters cast valid votes under the LPV system, and many understood the dangers of unsafe sex during the election.

After the poll, 46 percent of people interviewed said that the awareness had changed the way they voted, but as revealed during the counting, local candidates still scored most votes. The awareness thus does not seem to have had much impact on voters' attitudes and behaviour (see below). Voter education and awareness has to be a long-term program and not one started just months before the issue of the writs. Part of the process must be that people become aware of the need to get on the electoral roll to participate in a free and fair electoral process.

The new electoral roll

A new roll was prepared for Chuave in late 2005; it was amended before the 2006 by-election and again before the 2007 general election. The 2002 common roll for Chuave Open carried 53,125 names, and 49,971 votes were used. The estimated adult population (projected from the 2000 census, which was itself inflated) was 23,156, so that 215 percent of eligible citizens voted in 2002. That would have included many under-age voters. In the May 2004 Simbu Provincial by-election the number of ballot papers distributed was arbitrarily reduced by 10 percent and some 44,375 votes were collected. In order to correct such anomalies, what was intended to be a completely new roll was constructed in October–November 2005, which reduced the roll size by 36 percent, leaving 34,115 names on the preliminary roll, 137 percent of the estimated adult population. In 2006, some 32,837 votes were collected (about 8000 more than the adult population). Only 1623 ballot papers (4.7 percent) were unused (Standish and Kaupa 2006:18–20). In practice, the so-called 'new electoral roll' had been based upon the previous common roll. In 2007 some 30,136 formal ballot papers were collected.

In contrast with the apparent success of the voter awareness program, there was little participation in voter registration. Only 15 percent of the 140 respondents to the questionnaire said they had completed their own enrolment claim forms, and only 14 percent had checked to verify their enrolment status. The rest of the people failed to understand the importance of electoral registration. The general assumption was that the *kiap* (government officials) and councillors would do the roll work for them.

The local observers reported that during the enrolment, forms had been filled in by ward councillors and *kiap*, not by the people. The *kiap* and councillors also did the verification of the new electoral roll. Most people said that the *kiap* and councillors who did the update did so according to their affiliations to candidates and their local interests. Most people never asked for an enrolment form or even gave their consent for the councillors or *kiap* to register their

names on their behalf, and never bothered to verify their names on the new roll. The verification was done at Chuave District headquarters and the Kundiawa electoral office—both of which require quite an effort to get to.

The electoral roll was thus still problematic. However, the Chuave people, having experienced the 2006 by-election with the new alphabetical electoral roll, knew how they would vote, deviating from official procedures such as roll calls of listed names. People all over the electorate complained about the alphabetical layout of the roll, saying that in future the roll should be structured in accordance with how the community is organized through sub-clans and the lineage system. Unless that is done there is little chance of regulating voting and preventing fraud, because a poor roll leads to double voting, conflict over leftover papers, and other problems. The electoral roll updating should use the existing LLG ward structures. Screening committees are needed to enable the appointment of enrolment officials with integrity (weaknesses in the roll are further discussed below).

Nomination and candidate information

A total of 29 candidates nominated (compared with 24 in the 2006 by-election), of whom 13 were new candidates (Table 17.1). Chuave LLG and Elimbari LLG each had 10 candidates and Siane LLG had 9, so all LLGs' votes were fragmented. One candidate, Ananias Popo, died during the campaign period while in Wabag. Two former members of parliament, David Mai and David Anggo, contested along with the incumbent Jim Nomane. No women contested, although one had stood in 2002.

Table 17.1: Candidate information, Chuave Open electorate

Ballot order	Candidate	Previously contested	LLG	Education/occupation	Party
10	George King Yauwe		Siane	UPNG; public servant	Peoples Congress Party
11	Supa Tony Tabie	2006	Elimbari	Educator	Independent
12	Jack G. Kaupa	2006	Siane		Independent
13	Bomai Philip Tonari		Elimbari		Independent
14	Jim J. Nomane Sitting MP	Several times	Siane	Unitech; Engineer	PNG Kantri Pati
15	Peter Iori Moorewer	2006	Elimbari	UPNG	Independent
16	Alfred Rongo	Several times	Siane	UOG	National Party
17	Abraham Gene Tisa		Chuave	Unitech	Independent
18	Songan Julius K. Famundi		Siane	UPNG; Clergyman	Independent

Ballot order	Candidate	Previously contested	LLG	Education/occupation	Party
19	David Mori	2006	Chuave	Secondary school teacher	United Party
20	George Supa	Several times	Chuave	Policeman	
21	Jacob Bongi Kai		Chuave	Unitech	Independent
22	Tony DinDongo Keago		Elimbari		Independent
23	Goerge Goi Mume	Several times	Elimbari	UPNG	Yumi Reform Parti
24	David Goro Mai ex-MP	Several times	Elimbari	UPNG; lawyer	Independent
25	Barex Goro Bandi		Elimbari	UOG; educator	Independent
26	James Digal Supa	2002	Elimbari		Independent
27	Samuel Tine		Elimbari	Primary school teacher	Independent
28	David Anggo ex-MP	Several times	Siane	Diplomat	New Generation Party
29	Huruena Copland Nomane	Once before	Siane		Independent
30	Goro Stone Arigae	2002	Chuave	UPNG; food technologist	Independent
31	Ananias Popo		Siane	Educator	
32	John Garua		Chuave	Secondary school teacher	Independent
33	Joe Amu Eremugo		Chuave	Unitech	Star Alliance
34	Francis Kaupa		Siane	Unitech; mine engineer	National Alliance
35	Simeon Gene	2006	Chuave	PMV owner	Independent
36	Temai Timothy Komane	Several times	Elimbari	Unitech; agriculturalist	People's National Congress
37	Gunua Gene	2006	Chuave	Unitech	Independent
38	Paul Gerry Gomia		Chuave	Secondary school teacher	People's Democratic Movement

The campaign: Peaceful and more accommodative

Compared to 2002, the campaigning under LPV in 2007 was more accommodative and peaceful, as in the 2006 by-election. Candidates were able to move freely across the electorate seeking necessary preferences from within each other's base vote areas, and voters also moved freely, a contrast with the blocking of

candidates' territories in elections up until 2006. There was only one Chuave candidate in the 2004 Simbu by-election, and his supporters blocked other candidates and voters leaving from Chuave District.

The LPV system encourages a degree of cooperation between some candidates, if not all, and avoidance of loud confrontations. Freedom of speech and access to rival ethnic territories encouraged quieter behaviour. Candidates knew very well that primary votes were predetermined for local candidates, and made their public speeches diplomatically. At the same time, many unscrupulously facilitated large-scale campaign gifting. Vote buying and enticement in various forms was widespread, both directly and openly or capitalizing on custom. Candidates could not resist political double standards, as when they made speeches on good governance and yet participated actively in political gifting. Voters went around, sometimes with more than three candidates, accepting gifts from all and then turned around to vote their own clan's man. Voters sought and accepted campaign gifting thankfully, solemnly claiming that being Christians they would repay in votes what they gained by selling their freedom of choice.

After the by-elections and awareness, the public had some knowledge of how the LPV system would operate in the counting process. Candidates and voters knew the importance of preferences. There were several public awareness sessions on good governance which emphasized problems like corruption, and highlighted the characteristics of good leaders. The candidates publicly supported good governance and good leaders at rallies but hypocrisy was rife as some renowned candidates dished out cash openly and covertly.

Elections in Simbu are usually times of great excitement. People were accustomed to election festivities and fever, and some complained that this election was getting boring. 'Once campaign gifting is stopped then elections in the future will have no flavour', one said. Campaign gifting has become an accepted norm. The good governance awareness program pointed out that, 'Candidates who do political gifting are abusing people's freedom of choice and the process contributes to corruption'. It is probable that this awareness impacted in the distribution of preferences at the poll, and some 46 percent of those interviewed said it had changed the way they voted. However, this did not stop candidates trying to sway voters with their generosity. Campaign gifting by candidates was widespread, but the results revealed that the practice was expensive and had little or no benefit. Thus, there are signs that the LPV system may eventually reduce political gifting if the awareness continues to change the mindset of people and if candidates come to see it as a waste of resources.

The Chuave election was not entirely trouble free, however. There were a few incidents during campaigning and polling of candidates being in possession

of illegal firearms while their supporters controlled voters. One person was reported killed in Siane during voting. After the poll there was a tribal clash as an aftermath of the election at Gogo and Wangoi in Elimbari LLG.

Some of the observers stated that supporters of two Siane candidates, Francis Kaupa (former head of the Mineral Resources Development Company, and a National Alliance candidate) and Jim Nomane (MP, Country Party), had violently attacked each other. However, before the poll at Chuave police station the two sorted out their differences. Police later arrested Francis Kaupa for being in possession of firearms without a licence. The press gave front page coverage to the incident. When I interviewed Francis Kaupa he stated that money elections are becoming part of the culture; he himself spent 'a fair bit' during the campaign.

Some supporters were seen with bush knives and axes and one was even seen with a home-made gun. Nevertheless, campaigning in the 2007 election was generally accommodative and peaceful.

Campaign rallies

There were no colourful party and nomination rallies as there were in previous elections. Only two campaign rallies were observed. The first, held in Chuave township, was organized by *Meri I Kirap Sapotim*, the good governance and women's advancement advocacy non-government organization. The second was held at Gogo village, organized by the people of Elimbari. *Meri I Kirap Sapotim* had been requested to facilitate another rally at Gogo but declined as they were doing domestic observation.

Most candidates who attended the rallies worked together for a peaceful and educated debate. The discussion focused on corruption and good governance at the two rallies. Another issue was the call to stop 'campaign houses' (see below). The candidates also stressed the importance of LPV and the use of preferences. According to the observers, a total of 1200 males, 600 females and 250 children witnessed the two rallies.

Political party campaigning had no significant effect. Political parties mattered little to the people, though party leaders such as Sir Julius Chan and Peter O'Neill visited Chuave electorate.

Security

Additional security personnel were deployed to Simbu on 16 June, weeks before the commencement of ballot paper distribution and polling.

Ballot papers and other polling necessities were escorted by polling officials and security personnel to designated areas. After the polling all the papers were returned to the police station under heavy security.

The security provided by police and soldiers was commendable. The high levels of discipline shown by Defence Force personnel contrasted with previous deployments, which were marked by immorality and brutality. Community resentment of security forces changed to acceptance and morale in the security forces was high. Cooperation between the security forces and the returning officer was good. The security force radio provided an effective means of communication. The police with field radios were in control of entire polling teams but referred matters to the returning officer.

There were a few instances where the security forces had to use force as deterrence to troublemakers, and mobile police squads defused some tense situations. Security forces contained most of the election-related violence until after the declaration of the result, but some violence erupted after the declaration, when the additional security forces had left. In one tribal clash in the aftermath of the election the West Elimbari people fought East Elimbari people, resulting in two deaths.

HIV/AIDS and gender

The many social gatherings associated with elections pose a threat of the spread of HIV/AIDS at election times. Activities are often centred on 'campaign houses', where reportedly women were sometimes used to gather support and collect votes. It is not clear whether the women were acting voluntarily. Security personnel were on their best behaviour ensuring that women were not abused by candidates or their male supporters. Campaign houses were watched to ensure that if there was any abuse of women it was kept to a minimum. Before the poll 65 percent of the 140 people interviewed said that they had attended election-related HIV/AIDS awareness sessions.

All candidates had women supporting them. Women openly spoke their minds, contributed through cooking, dancing and singing, and took control of hospitality. Five of the seven observers stated that on average 30 percent of the population that attended day-time rallies and campaigns were women and

17 percent were young girls. They also reported that on average 38 percent of the population attending campaign houses at night were women and 24 percent young girls. In this context, it is notable that Defence Force soldiers were well behaved during the 2007 general election, compared with previous experiences.

Observers reported that women were confident that they would be able to vote freely. In 2007 women were given the long overdue chance to cast their votes separately. At most polling stations there were separate voting compartments for female and male voters. Before voting, about one-quarter of those interviewed said that they had heard about the new procedures for gender segregation during polling; after voting, 91 percent said that they appreciated the gender-segregated voting.

More women voted and more took part as polling officials than in the 2006 by-election, and there were many women counting officials. In Kerowagi at least 80 polling officials were women. Gradually, male dominance in election culture is changing.

Polling

Polling took place over two days, 11–12 July, after two days' delay because the security forces were unable to turn up on schedule. There were 69 polling teams, 27 in Siane, 21 in Elimbari and 21 in Chuave.

In the few months prior to polling the weather was dry, so accessibility was tolerable despite the dreadful road conditions. But the week before polling teams moved out was marked by downpours of heavy rain which delayed polling. Only three of the 26 hired vehicles were able to traverse the slippery roads.

At polling places, the administration of voting was often difficult to manage because of the communities' determination to corrupt the processes to help their local candidates. Polling officials and the few security personnel at each polling place were quite outnumbered and presiding officers and the police were powerless to prevent electoral malpractice. The Defence Force personnel were constantly on the move, checking potential trouble spots with small teams, and not able to deal with routine polling administration.

Nevertheless administration of the election was generally successful because of prudent forward planning by the experienced returning officer. Poor administrative support and lack of consistent funding from headquarters for polling preparation did not have much impact since in Chuave most officials and the public knew the routine and basic LPV requirements as a result of the by-election in August 2006.

As expected, voting was peaceful, because ‘community consent’ was paramount at most polling places—in other words, community members had little choice but to vote as a bloc. ‘Community consensus’ corrupts the election as an expression of citizen’s individual choice; voting may seem secret but it was ‘transparent’ in that everybody knew for whom each individual was voting. Voting was a community issue not a personal choice. If individuals wanted secret, personal voting they would have to answer to the community. Breaking the law for the benefit of the community was seen as heroic and mandatory. The community was driven to vote to the last registered voter on the roll, using all available ballot papers. Multiple voting was needed to keep their local candidate in the race. The principle of ‘one citizen, one vote’, and secret ballot were not applicable.

Chuave people, unlike their western neighbours, do not prolong ethnic clashes, perhaps because they have a different clan and tribal structure. However, they have strong clans and are a deeply divided society. This is shown in the common expressions: ‘G for G’ or ‘K for K’ (meaning ‘Gomia for Gomia’ and ‘Kamare for Kamare’). Clan and tribal affiliation results in community consensus which is manifested in controlled bloc voting. The poll results confirmed the practice of bloc votes, in that local candidates scored more than 90 percent of first preferences in ballot boxes used at single polling places. ‘Outside’ tribal or clan candidates who had strong connections shared the other preferences in the box. Under LPV the election is accommodative to a limited extent; however, voter intimidation and bloc voting were still prevalent in 2007.

The roll was not used to identify voters. At all polling stations, the voters formed two lines—one for *man* and one for *meri*—or a single line with both sexes queuing up to vote. Names were called in some places but mostly just ‘Next!’ or ‘Meri!’ or ‘Man!’. The indelible ink intended to prevent cheating was of no use because it can be erased.²

Among 120 voters interviewed after the poll, 97.5 percent had voted, and more than 60 percent said that they had known how to vote properly. However, 42 percent said that they had found the new voting system confusing and a third said that they had required assistance in voting. Twenty-one percent reported that they had experienced intimidation while voting. However, the great majority (93 percent) felt that the 2007 election was much better than 2002 election conducted under FPTP voting.

According to the observers at six polling places, on average 9 percent of those who voted were clearly under the legal voting age of 18. Of the 14 percent who said they had filled in an enrolment claim, 97 percent had voted. Some

2 The efficacy of indelible ink is also discussed in chapter 27.

40 percent thought their names were on the roll. This information does not correlate, but many people registered the names of others, including under-aged people, and multiple voters voted on behalf of others. Of those interviewed after voting, 33 percent admitted that they voted more than once. The extent of electoral fraud suggests that citizens did not have a fair and equal vote, and often not a free vote.

The 2007 election introduced a new ballot paper, which was different from that used in the 2004 and 2007 LPV by-elections. Candidates' pictures and party details were listed on posters, and each candidate was allocated a number. Using these posters, voters had to write the numbers or names of three candidates onto the ballot paper in order to vote formally, and do the same for both Open and Provincial seats. However, candidate posters were issued very late and were very small and confusing to most of the voters. It took about three to six minutes for old and illiterate voters to vote. This helped justify the existing practice in Chuave (and the Highlands generally) of local men 'assisting' voters who needed help, when there were insufficient polling officials to perform this task. These people, often the agents of candidates, then also checked each ballot paper for formality before it was deposited in the ballot box. Incorrectly marked ballot papers were deemed informal and removed from the count. In 2007, the informal vote was 0.7 percent of the total vote, up from the 0.4 percent informal vote in 2006. This is a very low informal vote, and can only be explained by the high number of assisted voters, who happened to ensure that the community consensus was followed.

The public seemed to regard these flaws in electoral administration as acceptable, because 93 percent of the respondents said that the 2007 election was a good outcome and better than previous elections.

Counting

The scrutiny of votes took place at Dixon's Oval, Kundiawa, about 30 kilometres west of Chuave. The counting centre was open and accessible to everybody. The scrutineers stood outside the makeshift shelter during the counting period and had a good view of the whole process. The candidates were allocated seats outside the counting fence, enabling them to watch but not take part.

There was good liaison between the many parties involved during the counting—the provincial election manager, returning officers, counting officials, security forces, observers, candidates, scrutineers and the PNGEC headquarters in Port Moresby. Most of the parties communicated verbally; some used mobile phones.

The observers noted that the security forces were very strict. There were four checkpoints with fully armed personnel doing thorough checks of bags, folders, wallets, shoes and the entire person to prevent any counting fraud with extra ballot papers or bribery of counting staff. Any suspected person, including counting officials arriving late, were punished on the spot and forced to do push-ups or sit-ups, or were kicked or belted, and most of the security personnel swore at the offenders. There were no serious offenders, as in previous elections, that warranted charges.

Some of the observers reported that most of the counting officials were not fully trained and had little prior knowledge of LPV counting processes. Most of the scrutineers were ill prepared and did not fully understand the LPV counting process. This led to some confusion and delay in the early stages of the count. Nevertheless, despite some re-counts during the primary count to make sure figures were accurate, the counting process went well.

About half the counting officials in the Simbu provincial counting centre were women, following a pattern established in 2004. Women seem to be regarded as less likely than men to commit fraud in elections.

Results

The count by the Chuave team was more efficient than that in other open electorates and was the first completed. This was due to the selection of some senior experienced officers and the use of excellent management practices at the counting centre. Rotating of counting officials and appointment of supervisors for each shift helped make the counting efficient. Having an open and transparent process by double checking and allowing scrutineers to understand and witness every step reduced suspicion, and collaboration speeded up what was a complex process.

The winner in Chuave was declared on the 25 July. The sitting MP, Jim J. Nomane from Siane, was declared with 56 percent of votes in the final count. The runner-up, Temai Timothy Komane from Kureri village, Elimbari, collected 44 percent. Looking at the mandate as a proportion of total allowable votes, however, the winner scored only 31.6 percent of total votes while the runner-up scored 24.8 percent; exhausted ballot papers—those eliminated from the count—totalled 12,867, 43.6 percent of the 30,611 allowable ballot papers.

Nomane led on first preferences with 4931 votes (16.1 percent of allowable votes), while the runner-up scored 3296 first preferences. The winner collected 4740 preferences (49.0 percent of his final tally) and so won with a wide spread of support, as he had in 2006. The runner-up, Komane, scored 3296 primary

votes and gained 4301 second and third preferences, which was fewer than the winner but 56.6 percent of his final tally. (See Table 17.3 in the appendix at the end of this chapter.)

Compared to the 2006 by-election, the 2007 election showed a reduction in the proportion of ballot papers exhausted during the eliminations, which suggests that voters directed their preferences towards stronger candidates, and that fewer preferences were 'wasted' on minor candidates. In 2006 some 20,381 of 32,691 votes (62 percent) were exhausted; that meant the 'absolute majority' was reached from only 39 percent of the allowable ballot papers. In 2007 the corresponding figure was 56.4 percent.

With two previous experiences of LPV, the Chuave voters had clearly learnt how to use their votes more effectively. In 2007, with 29 candidates, five more candidates than in 2006, Nomane received a higher primary vote (16.1 percent of the allowable first preference votes) than in 2006 (13 percent).

A more dramatic change is shown by comparison with 2002, when there were 37 candidates, nine more than 2007. In 2002 the winner, David Anggo, received 4495 votes and his mandate under FPTP was 9 percent of the 49,909 votes counted. In 2002 Jim Nomane was the runner-up receiving 4403 votes (8 percent). His mandate thus increased considerably in 2006 and 2007.

There is always a problem determining causation, and LPV was not the only factor which had changed Chuave politics by 2007, another being that 37 percent fewer votes were allowed in the count. Nomane and Anggo both come from the Siane LLG, where the local political balance had changed. Nomane, the younger man, had created a stronger base than Anggo, as analysed in our 2006 report (Standish and Kaupa 2006). In 2007 Nomane doubled his primary vote while Anggo lost more than half his vote, dropping to 2075 (7 percent). Nomane's increased final tally in 2007 derived mainly from the receipt of 53 percent of preferences active in the final count. Given these major changes, Nomane's 32 percent mandate in 2007 is not directly comparable to Anggo's 9 percent mandate in 2002.

An overview of outcomes

The 2007 election was an improvement on previous Chuave elections. The security forces sought public cooperation, rather than intimidating people. Their behaviour was professional and disciplined compared to behaviour observed previously. The heightened security probably deterred overt intimidation and the open use of firearms at polling booths, but the limited size of security forces in the communities meant that they had little effect on the actual polling,

because they were outnumbered by highly motivated people determined to cheat to help their candidates. Voters managed their own polling places in their own way. Electoral officials empowered to manage polling were powerless at the polling sites. Political parties were regarded as insignificant by voters. How, then, was the 2007 election in Chuave more peaceful, accommodative and better than the 2002 election?

Rather than challenging each other aggressively, as in previous elections, the candidates debated publicly, addressing neutral common issues such as corruption and the need to promote good governance, though they displayed double standards when they sought to exploit the customary ethic of reciprocity ('give and take') by practising modern political gifting. Campaigning for the LPV election was expected to be more accommodative than under FPTP, and it was—although it seemed that the price of access was more widespread generosity by candidates in order to get a hearing and obtain pledges of primary votes or preferences. The LPV system allowed village people to accommodate their *wantok* and friends in distributing preferences while voting. Yet strong affiliations for local candidates predetermined the distribution of preferences. Paradoxically, voter intimidation, multiple voting and under-age voting enabled polling within local communities to be peaceful, with voters required to follow their community's consensus.

Compared with 2002, there were fewer campaign houses and feasting was less evident. No loud party rallies were held, and candidates attended only two public rallies on designated neutral locations to debate good governance and corruption issues. The winning candidate received a stronger mandate than in the 2006 by-election. Campaign gifting had worked in the 2006 by-election but not in 2007. Local communities overrode important election procedures. Nonetheless more women were seen voting freely and participating in the electoral process.

All these good indicators failed to override the element of bloc voting. From observing the count, it was clear that primary votes and preferences were shared according to local affiliations, and local candidates scored more than 90 percent in many polling places. The results from individual boxes from the 69 polling locations showed that results were still influenced by community consensus, with widespread bloc voting; preferences are controlled by local candidates and their supporters. In this sense, for voters in their villages, the LPV election was seen as much the same as the FPTP system.

The LPV system provides scope for a greatly increased mandate, but in Chuave in 2007 the elected member still received less than half the votes in the electorate. The bulk of each candidate's votes and preferences came from specific

sections of the electorate; as in previous elections, community consensus was overwhelming. The change from FPTP to LPV has not, to date, helped create 'people's rule'.

The first full use of the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* seems to have had little or no influence at the community level, in terms of mobilizing people to vote for political parties. In Chuave the outcome of the election was much the same as in the previous elections, in that local factors were of primary importance.

In the Highlands it will probably take a while before the people participate in a truly national election.

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Appendix

Table 17.2: Voting statistics for Chuave Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	31,034	
Total votes cast	30,838	
Informal votes	227	(0.7% of total ballots cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	30,611	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	17,268	
Total votes distributed	22,384	
Exhausted ballot papers	13,343	(43.6% of total allowable papers)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	8,635	

Table 17.3: Chuave Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
14	Jim J. Nomane	M	PNG Country Party	4931	16.1	1	4740	49.0		9671	31.6	56.0
36	Teimeimai Timothy Komane	M	People's National Congress Party	3296	10.8	2	4301	56.6		7597	24.8	44.0
19	David Mori	M	United Party	2473	8.1	4	2278	47.9	27	4751	15.5	
24	David Goro Mai	M	People's Progress Party	2596	8.5	3	1425	35.4	26	4021	13.1	
28	David Anggo	M	New Generation Party	2077	6.8	5	1486	41.7	25	3563	11.6	
11	Suba Tony Tabie	M	People's Party	1260	4.1	8	1267	50.1	24	2527	8.3	
16	Alfred Rongo	M	Papua New Guinea National Party	1283	4.2	7	1027	44.5	23	2310	7.5	
26	James Digal Supa	M	PNG First Party	1460	4.8	6	351	19.4	22	1811	5.9	
34	Francis Kaupa	M	National Alliance	1087	3.6	12	651	37.5	21	1738	5.7	
33	Joel Amu Eremugo	M	Stars Alliance Party	1140	3.7	10	479	29.6	20	1619	5.3	
37	Gunua Gene	M	National Advance Party	849	2.8	13	694	45.0	19	1543	5.0	
23	George Goi Mume	M	Yumi Reform Party	1259	4.1	9	166	11.6	18	1425	4.7	
10	George King Yauwe	M	PNG Conservative Party	1124	3.7	11	227	16.8	17	1351	4.4	
21	Jacob Bongji Kai	M	Independent	773	2.5	15	262	25.3	16	1035	3.4	
30	Goro Stone Arigae	M	Independent	762	2.5	16	114	13.0	15	876	2.9	
35	Simeon Gene	M	Independent	759	2.5	17	108	12.5	14	867	2.8	
15	Peter Iori Moorower	M	Independent	774	2.5	14	24	3.0	13	798	2.6	
20	George Supa	M	Independent	686	2.2	18	49	6.7	12	735	2.4	

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
38	Paul Gerry Gomia	M	People's Democratic Movement	587	1.9	19	9	1.5	11	596	1.9	
32	John Garua	M	Independent	533	1.7	20	58	9.8	10	591	1.9	
18	Songan Julius K. Famudi	M	Independent	316	1.0	21	1	0.3	9	317	1.0	
22	Tony Dinogo Keago	M	Rural Development Party	260	0.8	22	1	0.4	8	261	0.9	
13	Bomai Philip Tonari	M	National Conservative Party	158	0.5	23	5	3.1	7	163	0.5	
25	Barex Goro Bandi	M	Independent	88	0.3	24	0	0.0	6	88	0.3	
17	Abraham Gene Tisa	M	Independent	35	0.1	25	0	0.0	5	35	0.1	
29	Hurena Copland Nomane	M	Independent	26	0.1	26	0	0.0	4	26	0.1	
12	Jack G. Kaupa	M	Independent	13	0.0	27	0	0.0	3	13	0.0	
27	Samual Teine	M	Mapai Levites Party	4	0.0	28	0	0.0	2	4	0.0	
31	Ananias Popo	M	Independent	2	0.0	29	0	0.0	1	2	0.0	

18. Limited Preferential Voting in Enga: The Wabag Open Electorate

Philip Gibbs¹

Politics in Enga Province is known for its intensity and sometimes violence. I have written previously about the 'political culture' that has emerged (Gibbs 2004, 2006). It is a culture which draws on traditions, but adapts to modern realities.

The previous election in 2002 did not go well in Enga. The polling began a week later than planned and was drawn out for two weeks in a drama involving hijacked ballot boxes, the bombing of voting papers in containers beside the Wabag Police Station, and fatal shootings at one polling place (*The National* 12–14 July 2002:1–2; *Independent* 1 August 2002:2).

Following the 2002 election, Daniel Kapi successfully challenged Samuel Abal's win in the Wabag Open seat in the national and supreme courts. The ensuing 2004 by-election was the first in Enga to use the limited preferential voting (LPV) system, though the focus throughout the by-election remained on first preferences. Technically, Samuel Tei Abal won using preferences. However, he was well ahead across most of the electorate with the (38 percent) first preference vote and the primary vote lead ensured his victory (Gibbs 2006).

After a comparison with previous elections, this paper will consider issues from the campaign period, polling, and counting in the Wabag Open electorate (Figure 18.1) in the 2007 general election. Voting patterns and reasons behind those patterns will be treated in detail, followed by reflection on the implications for democracy in Enga. Of particular interest is how the LPV system has functioned, and how Enga political culture is managing the LPV system.

Data came from a study of the content of election campaign speeches, interviews with key persons and people 'on the street', observation of campaigning and polling, and the collation and analysis of polling results.

¹ I wish to acknowledge the coordination of the National Research Institute and funding by AusAID through the Electoral Support Program, members of the Electoral Commission, particularly those in Wabag, the domestic observer team, and all those people in Enga and elsewhere who assisted in any way in the research for this paper.

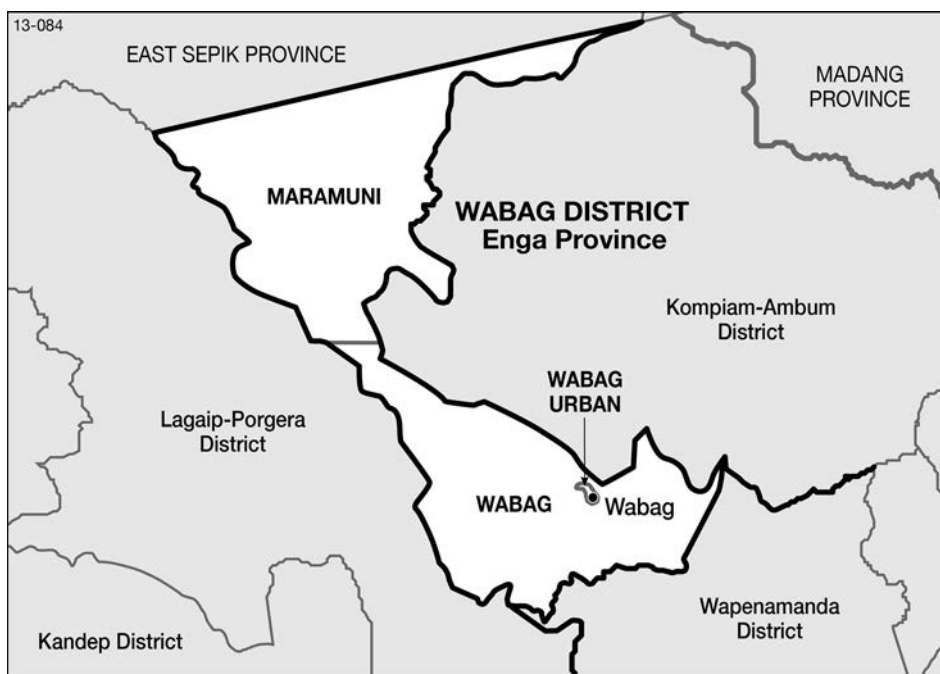


Figure 18.1: Wabag District

Comparison with previous elections

In the Wabag Open electorate in 2007 there were 19 candidates compared with 25 candidates five years previously. Of those 19, six had stood in the 2002 election and five in the 2004 by-election. Only two of these had stood before in both the 2002 and 2004 elections.

The election in 2007 saw a radical drop in the number of papers issued compared to 2002 and 2004 (Table 18.1), largely due to the creation of a new electoral roll. Also, in both 2004 and 2007, almost all ballot boxes were counted, unlike the situation in 2002 when containers at the Wabag Police Station were bombed.

Table 18.1: Wabag Open electorate: comparison 2002, 2004 and 2007

Issue	2002	2004	2007
Number of candidates	25	19	19
Number of polling places	72	64	66
Ballot papers issued to polling places	67,832	71,000	47,798
Ballot papers counted	51,002	53,867	44,689
Ballot papers unused and returned or burned by officials	4,178	17,133	3,109
Ballot boxes destroyed or disputed and not counted	13	0	1

Despite the changes, the electoral roll in Enga still had serious deficiencies. In most cases the enrolment teams did not bring enrolment forms to the people, but filled in the forms themselves for both the initial enrolment and the verification. This meant that some people missed out. For example, my checking of the roll for the Lakemanda ward revealed that the names of 289 eligible voters were not on the roll. Nearly all these people thought their names were on the roll, and when it came to polling day and their names were absent there was a great deal of anger—so much so that they told the polling officials to take the ballot box back to Wabag and to return with a correct roll. Police and Papua New Guinea Defence Force personnel convinced them to vote the following day, but only with a lot of disruption from disgruntled clan members.

Despite the fact that some people claimed their names were not included, there was still a major inflation of the roll compared to projected figures from the year 2000 census (Table 18.2). Some names were missing, while at the same time inaccuracies inflated the roll, particularly names duplicated in different wards—for example, a woman whose name is recorded both with her husband's clan and also in another ward with her family of origin.

The late arrival of the electoral rolls in the last week of June meant that there was no time for last minute changes or corrections, since polling started on 3 July.

Table 18.2: Comparison of enrolment numbers over three elections in Enga

District name (Open seat)	1997 enrolled	2000 census 18+	2002 enrolled	Estimated 2007 eligible voters	2007 enrolled
Kandep		25,058	49,122	28,500	42,318
Kompjam-Ambum		25,445	74,171	28,500	39,486
Lagaip-Porgera		51,206	135,587	57,500	95,006
Wabag		34,657	72,759	39,000	47,798
Wapenamanda		2,892	79,564	36,000	49,785
Enga total	267,728	169,258	411,203	189,500	*274,393

a 45 percent over census estimate

Campaign period

The campaign period in Enga in 2007 was quieter than that of the 2002 election. There were few large rallies with public addresses, and candidates seemed to prefer smaller clan-level gatherings. The focus of our enquiry at this time was on the 19 candidates for the Wabag Open electorate. Except for the murder of

a 'Rambo' (renowned gunman) at an election rally at Lenki (though the murder itself was not necessarily election-related) and a shooting incident at a rally on 9 June in Kandep (*The National* 19 June 2007:1–2) the campaign period was relatively peaceful in Enga. Bushknives and axes were seen at the rallies and during the campaign period, but not guns.

Generally, there was freedom of movement in the province during the campaign period. However, there was some disruption of roads. For example, people from the Piyao clan at Tole organized a rally for Samuel Tei Abal, but some of Daniel Kapi's supporters dug a drain across the road which stopped Abal from attending the rally and caused the rally to be postponed for several days. There was a lot of bad feeling about this in the clan. Some roads such as the Wabag to Sakarip highway were closed at times by people demanding the sitting members of parliament pay them for upgrading the roads.

Rallies

Election rallies are events where supporters of candidates can congregate to see how much support each candidate has. Rallies are organized by 'hot' candidates so as to see their supporters from different parts of the electorate in a procession to the grandstand. Rallies are also a time when 'local scientist' interpreters look for signs and interpret these signs to predict the future for the candidates involved.

In past elections, rallies were being held from the time campaigning started to the end of the campaigning period. In 2007, in the Wabag Open electorate there were only six rallies during the whole period. The change is probably an effect of the LPV voting system. Candidates fear that if they organize rallies, those voters who are planning to give their second and third preferences will come along with the ones who are coming to give their first preference and they will find it hard to distinguish how many first votes they will collect from the supporters. Many think it is a waste of resources to organize a rally just to get a few first preferences and more second and third preferences.

Popular themes in rally speeches were corruption and the use of public funds, lack of development in the province, and law and order. Candidates seldom mentioned the LPV system other than asking for first preferences (or in the case of Philip Neri, second preferences if people had already made up their minds about their first preference).

Some of the speeches were on topics that run quite contrary to the spirit of a free vote in a preferential voting system. For example, Pato Potane, in a rally at Lenki (22 June 2007) encouraged clan bloc voting: 'If any Dep, Lipin and

Yakain votes for somebody else, that shows that you are insane. We can get this member because the governor is giving it to us and why not. Before we, the Yakains campaigned hard for governor and he won and now he formed the new party and he is going away to form the next government and he wants me to become caretaker for Enga’.

At another rally at Kamas (26 June 2007) Pato Potane, referring to family ties, encouraged people to vote along family lines. His wife comes from there, so in addressing his in-laws he said that this was a chance for them to vote for their ‘sister’ (meaning to vote for him who was married to their sister). He reinforced this argument with the following image: ‘No fathers forsake their daughters and favour their sons. This is my land and thank you all my brothers and sisters-in-law. I want to assure you that I have base votes from the Yakain, Lipin and Dep and I am sure I will win this election and become the acting governor so all my in-laws, please vote for me’.

Samuel Tei Abal in his campaigning focused less on tribal ties and more on party politics for gaining first preferences. At Kopen (26 June 2007) he praised the Somare government: ‘The Somare government is likely to return to parliament and will take over the governing role again so I don’t want to be left out. I am unlikely to join Ipatas because I don’t want to be regarded as a yoyo by the people. I have a great interest in NA [the National Alliance party] and I encourage you to vote for me because I have done a lot for the electorate as well as the nation. Somare has accumulated funds of about K1.7 billion to save the country in the next five years, so I will be able to bring back to the people whatever portion of that amount would be given to me in terms of development’.

Some of the speech-making typically used metaphorical language which is fascinating yet hard to pin down to an exact meaning. For example, Philip Nere at Sari (25 June 2007) warned the Yapokon and Kalepetae clans that in listening to Daniel Kapi, ‘You are swinging in a wild man’s string bag’ (meaning that they might vote for a person who would come to take their votes and disappear like a stranger). In an allusion to the darker side of politics he continued, ‘I’ll stay with you to do the marking and in the night I’ll come and check the list with 1st and 2nd votes or else I’ll press a button ...’

Through such speeches candidates try to attract votes using various strategies. Maintaining a ‘base’ vote with one’s own clansmen and women is still essential. But with the LPV system, even more than before, it is important to exploit the opportunity for alliances. In some cases alliances based on links with clans who have more young warriors with high-powered firearms, or clans who have more members employed in the public and private sectors, overshadow traditional alliances maintained through intermarriage or pig exchange.

Awareness

Election awareness by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission was limited and late. Materials, including candidate posters, arrived only a week before polling. In previous elections, awareness was taken up by civil society groups, particularly by Caritas through the Catholic Church network. This time, because a (suspended) Catholic priest was standing for the provincial seat, the Caritas awareness in Enga was very low key, since they were concerned that they might be seen as supporting the priest candidate. Of the awareness that was conducted, either by the electoral commission or civil society groups, the focus was on the mechanics of the new way of voting rather than on issues of governance or civics (rights and the meaning of democracy).

One of our observers commented, 'People hear about democratic elections but they don't really know what it means'. In fact, many leaders in Enga seem not interested in promoting a system of secret individual voting, as they stand to gain from the public group voting system which has become the norm in Enga electoral politics. If a few leaders decide who will receive the first preference of the clan as a whole, then what is the point of making people aware of an alternative system with individual secret voting?

Parties and OLIPPAC

It is hard to assess the impact of the electoral reforms: the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* (OLIPPAC), 2003, and the new form of LPV introduced in the August 2006 amendments to the *Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections*.

OLIPPAC was supposed to strengthen political parties in election campaigning, voting and ultimately in the parliament and cabinet, in order to improve stability in governance. Parties did have a higher profile in the 2007 elections than in 2002. Support or opposition to the National Alliance party (NA) was significant, with supporters of Governor Peter Ipatas's People's Party opposing NA. It seemed that NA was well funded. The sitting member for Wabag Open had access to over a million kina through District Support Grant funds. Though a party could legally only endorse one candidate in each electorate, it was common knowledge that there were independents with close links to certain parties; for example, Maso Samai, who stood as an independent, was known to be an NA supporter.

LPV is designed to encourage candidates to seek preferences in each other's base areas, leading to more collaborative campaigning, and ultimately to the election

of members of parliament with wider popular mandates. This was the case in Enga, though as will be shown below, the people generally did not appreciate the significance of second and third preferences, and in many cases did not have a chance to utilize those preferences anyway because of group rather than individual voting.

Bribery and treating prior to polling

Elections are a 'business' in Enga. Candidates with money go around or send some of their supporters around with money to buy first votes from clans and families. We heard of only a few candidates or their supporters buying second or third preferences—at least until the night before the polling. The night before polling, near Wabag, first preferences were selling for K100, and second or third preferences for K30 or K20. Money would go to individuals or, more often, to councillors or clan leaders.

There are various ways to gain favour other than with cash. Candidates also assisted with cars, food and drink, transporting bodies of the dead and contributing to funerary feasts. The sitting member for Wabag told people to 'clean' roads and then paid money for it through the District Roads Improvement Program (DRIP).

There does not appear to have been any policing of these practices during the 2007 election, despite police (and civil society) warnings about bribery. How would one distinguish between genuine assistance and unacceptable treating? Bribery and treating appear to be well embedded in Enga political culture; such practice is called *maiyo neo* (give and eat) according to the principle of reciprocity. After the 2002 election, those who supported losing candidates were called *nanenge* or 'non-eaters' (Gibbs and Lakane 2003). It seems that such gifting has a coercive dimension. When people found they could not vote at Lakemanda because their names were not on the roll, their complaints were not based on issues of franchise or democracy, but rather on the fact that they had taken money from a candidate and eaten his food and so were required to demonstrate on polling day that they were indeed giving their votes to him. In fact, LPV allows both candidates and voters to trade for three votes instead of only one.

Polling

Polling began on 3 July as planned. In most places polling commenced only in the afternoon of that day, so continued into 4 July, and for some outlying areas

served by helicopters, such as Maramuni, it continued through to 9 July. There seemed to be a lot of confusion about transport and there was a bottleneck at the Wabag Primary School distribution centre with only one truck being allowed in at a time, thus further delaying the deployment of teams.

Individual secret voting was a rarity in Enga. In some cases people did fill in their own ballot papers, but seldom alone or in secret. In many cases people voted in family groups, with the head of a family claiming ballot papers for his or her 'family' and then a small group of family members filling in the papers. In other cases, papers were filled in by scrutineers or representatives of candidates. Throughout Maramuni the common practice was for clan leaders to recruit a few literate young men to mark all the ballot papers according to what the leaders decided, while the majority of the population had no part in the voting.

There was some serial voting—where people voted at different polling places (this is quite possible when there is 'split' voting for a ward, with copies of the same roll being used for several polling places, as happened at a number of locations in the Wabag Open electorate). People who voted more than once might also have had their names enrolled in two or more rest houses or voted on behalf of absentees.

At Tole, a candidate and his supporters had guns and controlled the voting so there was little say for the majority of the people of that resthouse. This practice was not acceptable to many members of the community. A person from Tole commented as follows:

I heard three gun shots in the morning of the polling day. X fired again during the midst of the signing of the ballot papers ... Actual polling took place on the next day and we tried to force him to leave the ballot papers and we would have secret polling but he never wanted to do so. Supporters of Potane, Kopamo and Sam got so mad that they marched in with bush knives and threatened to fight so he gave 250 to Kopamo, 30 to Potane and 30 to Sam. Ever since he started to contest in election, the Tole people have never exercised their democratic rights to vote a candidate. He has taken our rights away totally at gunpoint. He will never win any election because he robs his own people. All of us were looking forward to vote in the LPV system but it's a sad thing that we never did. This is injustice! How are we going to choose good leaders when a gunman robs us off our democratic rights. We don't want guns to rule this nation. Justice must prevail if we are to have good leaders.

One wonders why no armed security personnel were stationed at Tole in 2007 when it was common knowledge that guns had affected polling at Tole in previous elections.

At Tumbilyam supporters of the local candidate came and took the box at gunpoint. The presiding officer was offered K250 if he would present the box for counting but he refused, so that box was 'lost' and was never presented at the counting centre.

The box for Ainumanda was brought to Wakumare (Wabag Secondary School) because of fighting in the gazetted place. A candidate suspecting foul play brought security personnel who arrested the polling officials. The box was then taken to Wabag for polling, but after only 50 votes had been cast officials closed the polling after a commotion when it became apparent that anybody was able to come and vote there, not just people from Ainumanda.

The electoral roll caused confusion in many places with whole families and subclans missing. Many of these people claimed to have given their names for the new roll and were incensed when the Electoral Commission claimed that it was their fault that their names did not appear on the roll. In some places, such as Maramuni, the roll was not used at all.

In the Wabag electorate the returning officer used a method whereby several boxes shared the one ward-level electoral roll. These were referred to as 'split' boxes (more correctly it would be a 'split roll'). Thus, for one ward there might be two or even three boxes positioned in different places within a ward, catering for people from different clans or *hauslain*. The returning officer claimed that this was fairer for smaller clans to vote separately rather than risk being intimidated by a larger and more powerful clan. There were 16 'split' boxes in the Wabag Open electorate. The idea has its merits, but does open up the risk of double voting. When it came time for counting, 'split' boxes from the same ward were opened and counted together as if they came from one box or one polling place.

Use of the roll

Use of the rolls varied. In some places the names were called from the roll and a person answering to that name would go into the enclosure to collect voting papers. In other places names were not called, but simply marked off as people entered the polling enclosure. In other places names of a 'family' would be called and a small group would come to collect the papers for the whole family. In some places the roll was not used at all; in this case the roll merely served as a licence to receive a certain number of ballot papers.

Table 18.7 in the appendix at the end of this chapter shows the number of papers issued according to the roll, along with the number of marked papers returned for counting. An excess of papers presented for counting is regarded by the returning officer as a 'miscount' when papers were distributed in the

pre-polling preparations the night before polling began. For the Wabag Open electorate there was no miscount greater than +8, indicating that boxes were not 'stuffed' with more papers than were allowed for that box.

There was some under-age voting, but this was not common, particularly when there was 'family' or 'clan' voting. With such voting a few senior family members collect and fill in voting papers for all the family members on the roll and there is no way of knowing if the name of the person called from the roll is underage, a 'ghost', or not present at all.

In many polling places fingers were not marked with ink and there appeared to be little attempt to prevent double or multiple voting. One woman told us that she had voted 25 times by going to get voting papers when names of people who were underage or absent were called.

Polling and limited preferential voting

The LPV system was generally ignored in Enga in 2007. In the Wabag Open electorate, the 2004 by-election, using LPV, was essentially a race between two candidates, where the winner was leading all the way. In that by-election people did not see how LPV could affect the outcome of the elections. In the 2007 election, most people were concerned only for their first choice and demonstrated little concern for the second and third choices. Sam Tei Abal was the favourite and many people thought that he could not be eliminated, so why bother about the other preferences? In this case, their prediction was right.

Some election awareness had been conducted in the province, mostly by civil society groups at schools and churches. People were shown an example of a voting paper and told that they would have three preferences, but it appeared that the awareness had little influence on the majority of the Enga populace with their strongly held practice of group voting for certain prominent candidates. Because of the group voting practice it is unclear whether LPV allowed women more freedom to vote.

How then did those marking papers choose the second and third preferences? Our team asked 10 people at each polling place and received a number of different responses. Some chose 'hot' candidates so that at least one of their choices would win. Some chose candidates who they were sure would lose so that the second and third choices would not possibly support a candidate who might compete seriously with the candidate of their first choice. Others said that they simply looked at the poster with the names and numbers of candidates and selected the second and third preferences at random. In a few cases, people traded second or third preferences as political credit for future alliances. Some

traded second or third preferences for money. One man who had been chosen to fill in all the papers for his clan said: 'I was so worried about first preference [I] didn't care much about the second and third preferences'.

A woman who filled in many ballot papers said, 'I was very conscious and careful when I distributed the second and third preferences. If I gave the second and third preferences to the 'hot candidates' then it was like I was supporting them too and my first preferences would be a total waste. So what I did was that I had distributed the second and third preferences to the weak candidates. I did that purposely so that the weak candidates would be the first ones to be eliminated and my second and third preferences would become waste'.

One person added, 'This system is giving weak candidates chances to pick up during the counting process. It's really hurting the ones who were in the lead'.

In the minority of locations where people did actually vote, there were usually several helpers in the polling places and some would check all ballot papers before they went into the ballot box, perhaps checking for formality but also the direction of both votes and preferences.

Comments by observers include the following:

- Supporters were given ballot papers by family reps to mark. Women and older people had no chance of voting.
- A wife of a certain regional candidate grabbed some ballot papers and marked them for her husband. The son came in later and did the same.
- Children voted in the parents' names. Parents were too late to collect or mark ballot papers. Officials ignored the older voters.
- A family I know well voted in three different polling places in two different electorates.
- The polling officials had no control over the entire polling. They were forced to sit and sign the ballot papers.
- To gain more votes, those who updated the common roll listed names of in-laws, cousins, ex-wives and deceased friends.
- Voters who seemed unsure were asked if they could accept money.
- A supporter said to voters in a whisper that anyone who has no choices of voting should see him.
- An old man only gave his first preference to a scrutineer to mark. When asked why, he replied, 'There was a fight about to erupt and I was scared!'

Someone said, 'The LPV system is good but it's anybody's game! Anyone could win and this would create problems for us supporters if we have given first preferences to someone else.'

Perhaps the most telling comment heard was the following: 'I did not practice my democratic rights. Someone else did on my behalf!'

Women and polling

In the 2007 polling, there were supposed to be separate voting compartments for women, with women helpers (2007 General Election Bulletin No. 8). One would think that this would be culturally acceptable in Enga considering the separation of the sexes in many aspects of life, including in church. However, it seems that cultural separation does not count when it comes to the public realm and sharing power, so there was no separate voting of men and women in Enga. We observed one polling place with notices showing separate voting compartments for women, but this was not followed in practice. The rest of the notices remained in their original cartons in the Electoral Commission office in Wabag.

Rights of women and gender issues were non-issues in the Enga elections. There were three women candidates in the province. At rallies, women were relied on for cooking food and for offering hospitality to those who came. Sometimes they would lead in singing. An Engan woman from Wabag wrote:

In most polling areas women have never voted themselves. When will the separate polling for women and men take place? We the females want to mark our leaders with our two fingers. I am frustrated to learn that separate polling never took place.

Another woman commented:

I am an LPV advocator in the province. I was proudly telling the female participants that we will have separate polling area for men and women. I am very sad that this never happened. When will this country start to recognize the potential of women? They think politics is men's game and women have no part to play ... There is an Enga saying: *yana kuli nakandenge, mena kuli nakandenge*, meaning you don't see dogs or pigs bones. This is applied to women. The figurative meaning is that pigs and dogs have no history in the community. When they die that's the end of them. Women are regarded as pigs' bones and dogs' bones because when they get married, they leave and go away to develop their husband's place. With this mentality, they reckon women are unfit in the decision making body ...

In this current election, very few of the females voted without intimidation. Most of us never voted through a democratic process.

The big men have taken our rights away completely. The informal rate will be very low because certain individuals marked the papers. This is injustice to the female community. As a mother, I am very concerned for where my son's future lies. Are the leaders driving this nation in the right direction? I hope the leaders are not acting the *Titanic* movie in PNG.

Counting

During the counting there was a problem with crossover voting—that is, people mixing the candidate numbers from open seats and provincial seats, writing the numbers or names of provincial candidates on open ballot papers and vice versa. This contributed to most of the informal papers. It is not obvious unless the voter writes names from the 'wrong' list or the numbers are obviously not valid numbers for that seat. It would help if voting papers for provincial and open seats were in obviously different colours. Despite the crossover voting, the number of informal votes was very low (293 informal votes from 44,673 votes cast in the whole electorate [0.7 percent]), perhaps reflecting the manner of group voting done by just a few experienced people. It is notable that from the isolated Maramuni there are some boxes with no informal votes at all.

Counting for the Wabag Open electorate went quickly and relatively calmly. There was tension and a lot of delays with disputed boxes in other electorates. The way the disputes were dealt with—in many cases, telling them to take the case to the Court of Disputed Returns—left many people with a feeling that bold candidates and their supporters can get away with hijacking or tampering with ballot boxes; this may adversely affect the next election.

After counting and notification of the results, in most cases people are able to see which group voted for whom and this has consequences, both immediate and long term. A doctor at Wabag Hospital, when confronted by election-related casualties coming in for treatment, commented:

Probably after the counting we might have some casualties because some people claimed to be supporters and not have cast their votes. Moreover, they are not just counting the ballot boxes but stating the names of the places where voting took place. So then the candidates would know exactly where the votes are coming from. And if they know that they are going to get certain votes from some area, and if they don't get those votes as they have used a lot of resources on campaign, that is when trouble will actually come (Dr William Waro, Wabag Hospital, 13 July 2007).

Distribution of preferences

Table 18.3 shows how preferences were distributed during the exclusions for the Wabag Open electorate in 2007.² Entries of particular interest are shown in bold. In the seventh exclusion only 21 percent of preferences went to the top three candidates. That eight preferences (17 percent of the preferences) went to Marinki is understandable as both Perano and Marinki are from Maramuni. However, the 12 preferences (26 percent) that went to Samuel Kopamo, and a further 11 (24 percent) to Jonnes Kuringin are more difficult to explain.

The fact that the majority of Kyangali's preferences (tenth exclusion) went to Potane is probably because he comes from Birip which has close alliances with Potane's base vote area. Besides, Kyangali's candidature helped to split votes to disadvantage Abal.

The majority of Samuel Kopamo's preferences (twelfth exclusion) went to Daniel Kapi. They are from the same rest house. Also, despite Philip Nere's strong opposition to Daniel Kapi in the 2007 election, he used to be a manager with Kapi in the past and still has alliances with the same support base.

It is notable that 77.5 percent of the formal votes were still live at the end of the final count and one can see that the first round leaders continued to lead with the top three candidates gaining 86 percent of the preferences, indicating how the Wabag Open race was essentially a race between these three. Table 18.4 shows how over the past three elections Daniel Kapi appears to have gradually lost support (from 20 percent of the primary vote in 2002 to 13 percent in 2007), while Pato Potane has gained in popularity (from 9 percent in 2002 to 18 percent in 2007). Pato Potane also gained the most from distribution of preferences. Samuel Abel has maintained his popularity, with 24 percent of first preferences in 2002, 37 percent in 2004 (when there were only two serious contenders), and 34 percent in 2007 (when there were three principal contenders to share the first preferences). The winner won 58 percent of the live votes after exclusions, but 44.8 percent of the total valid votes. The results are summarised in Table 18.8 in the appendix of this chapter.

² The figures for first preferences in Table 18.3 and in the appendix were taken from photos from the original tally sheets. Some figures for first preferences were changed as a result of scrutiny of votes as found in the official returns.

Table 18.3: Distribution of preferences, Wabag Open electorate, 2007 election

Exclusions		Primary vote	Number of preferences distributed	Abal	Potane	Kapi	Preferences going to the three (%)
1	David Kandi Kaiti	1	1	–	–	1	100
2	Wialo Sakatao	5	5	2	2	1	100
3	Julie Daniel	11	11	4	2	–	55
4	John Kapi	11	11	4	2	1	64
5	Simon Robert	22	22	3	6	3	55
6	Micros Nea Apak	43	41	5	7	7	46
7	Irai Isaac Perano	46	47	3	2	1	21
8	Jonnes Kuringin	253	251	70	59	37	66
9	Sakarawan Lomas Samuel Tulipet	357	323	103	56	67	70
10	Kandato Kyagali	872	867	21	256	79	41
11	Minal Keoa Marinki	969	944	337	61	153	58
12	Samuel Kopamo	1,005	1,045	219	138	355	68
13	A1 Anton Wangae	1,363	1,381	433	561	239	89
14	Philip Nere	1,455	1,362	554	186	319	78
15	Maso Samai	2,353	1,984	577	501	622	86
16	Malipu Yakali	6,546	5,200	1,582	2,274	1,344	100
17	Daniel Don Kapi	5,914	2,995	765	2,230	100	
18	Pato Potane	8,106					
19	Samuel Tei Abal	15,065					
Votes gained through preferences			16,490	4,682	6,343	3,229	14,254
				28%	38%	20%	86%

Table 18.4: Distribution of first preferences to the top three candidates

	2002		2004				2007			
	Votes	%	First preferences		Final count		First preferences		Final count	
			Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Abal	12,438	24.7	20,230	37.9	25,754	53.2	15,065	33.9	19,939	58.0
Potane	4,438	8.8	–	–	–	–	8,106	18.3	14,449	42.0
Kapi	10,234	20.3	15,922	29.8	22,661	46.8	5,914	13.3	–	–
Total	27,110	53.8	36,152	67.7	48,415	100.0	29,085	65.5	34,388	100.0

Factors influencing voting patterns

Table 18.5 details some voting patterns in the Wabag Open electorate. A selection of seven of the 66 polling places is included here.

The seven polling places illustrate trends occurring throughout the electorate. One may see how people show solidarity in voting for certain candidates and also how they divide their votes to keep candidates and their supporters happy and to ensure their (the voters') security. The following five factors emerge as the most significant factors influencing voting patterns:

- Base vote. The candidate identifies with this place, and people consider him as 'their' candidate (see Aipanda and Teremanda).
- Clan and tribal alliances. This might rely on traditional links such as blood ties or exchange of valuables, but may also include modern features such as fighting men with guns or public servants with influential jobs and regular salaries (see Rakamanda and Imi).
- Intermarriage and relatives, either through men such as a brother and his relations through marriage, or through women such as one's mother, sister or wife and their family (see Sopas, Lakayoko, and Teremanda).
- Cash or projects—for roadwork, schools, health facilities. The link then is through the councillor who exerts influence on the voters of his ward (see Sopas and Kaiap).
- Alliances with an influential person, for example with Governor Peter Ipatas, former Member Sir Albert Kipalan, or leading businessmen (see Teremanda).

Other factors influencing voting patterns include the following:

- Party influence (for example, the NA had a strong positive influence at Kaiap and a negative influence at Tumbilyam).
- Compensation—where a candidate has assisted with compensation to settle inter-clan violence, people feel an obligation towards that candidate. (See Sopas, Rakamanda and Pasalagus above).
- Violence, real or potential (see Tumbilyam and Kaiap above).
- '*Tanim tebol*'—where leaders agree to give all the votes or almost all the votes to one candidate (see Aipanda and Pasalagus above).

Table 18.5: Results from Wabag Open electorate with possible reasons for voter choice

Polling station	Roll	Votes allowed	Major recipients	Comments
Aipanda Tumbilyam	1462	950 512	Yakali 508 Nere 3	Yakali is from Aipanda. The Tumbilyam box went missing when the polling team was attacked by Yakale's supporters. The Councillor at Tumbilyam is pro Sam Abal due to NA party links. Philip Nere has some relatives living at Tumbilyam.
Sopas Lakayoko	970	630 340	Abal 259 Samai 218 Kapi 112	Abal had contributed a large sum of money from his District Support Grant funds for renovation and re-opening of Sopas Hospital. He also promised compensation for a man who had been killed in 2002. Samai is from nearby Kiwi, but from the same big-tribe Malipini and his second wife is from Sopas. Kapi had many strong supporters from earlier times. His sister is married at Lakayoko, which is in the same council ward as Sopas.
Kaiap	976		Abal 720 Kapi 108 Potane 87	Abal is an NA candidate and the councillor from Kaiap is NA party president in the province. Abal also gave funds from the District Roads Improvement Program to the councillor to distribute to the Kaimanawan people at Kaiap. Kapi has family ties and students gave votes to secure their road as they have to pass through Kapi's territory to go to school. Potane's wife's grandmother is from Kaiap.
Teremanda -Yaumanda -Lepetenges -Kwimas	2441	947 548 946	Nere 798 Abal 720 Kapi 336	Nere is from here (Yaumanda and Taitengis). Abal has strong ties with influential men Roy Kipalan and Salan Ere (Kwimas). Kapi's mother is from here. The governor's mother comes from here as she is Kapi's mother's sister.
Rakamanda	598		Potane 284 Abal 252 Yakali 22	Potane is from the neighbouring Paliu clan. Refugees from a tribal fight at Rakamanda have been staying with Potane's clan. Abal played a part in bringing peace to the area and assisted with compensation payments. Yakali's brother is married at Rakamanda.

Polling station	Roll	Votes allowed	Major recipients	Comments
Imi	899		Potane 461	Potane's clan (Paliu) and the Lyipini clan border each other at Makapumanda. Pato Potane's grandmother comes from here.
-Naputes		495	Abal 163	
-Makapumanda		404	Kapi 85	Abal helped with road maintenance on the Wee- Naputesa road. This used to be a Kapi stronghold after he helped build a bridge here during the time when he was member of parliament.
Pasalagus	915		Abal 885 Potane 13 Marinki 9	Abal is said to have given a sum of money to a leader of the Pasalagus community to help them pay compensation for the death of a health worker at Birip near Wabag, killed by a person from Maramuni. Giving him most of the votes was a way of paying him back for his assistance.

Another pattern evident from the data in the appendix is seen in the number of ballot papers not used or returned. Table 18.6 gives details of the seven polling places where significant numbers of papers were lost or destroyed. It shows a definite improvement over 2002, when 13 boxes were either destroyed or disputed and not counted. However, it still shows evidence of problems due to thuggery, violence or potential violence at the polls.

Table 18.6: Polling places where large numbers of papers were lost or destroyed

Polling station	Place	Number of papers lost or destroyed	Explanation
2	Tumbilyam	950	The box was hijacked by the supporters of one particular candidate. The polling officer would not accept a bribe and the box was never returned for scrutiny.
17	Taitengis	324	There was a commotion because some people wanted to give regional votes to one particular candidate. Because of the tension, electoral officials ended polling prematurely and destroyed the remaining papers.
19	Sakalis	257	The box was accidentally exchanged with the Sangurap box resulting in Sakalis having extra papers. (The presiding officer at Sakalis sent the leftover papers back with the polling box and they were burned in front of the counting centre.)
22	Lenki	211	Time ran out and it was getting dark at Lenki so the unused papers were burned at the polling booth in the presence of security personnel.
23	Ainumanda	455	Due to an ongoing tribal conflict at Ainumanda, the box was brought to Wabag Secondary School at Wakumare. Security personnel assumed the box had been hijacked and after arresting the election officials brought the box to Wabag. Voting in Wabag the next day ended prematurely after a commotion erupted and ballot papers, tables and chairs were damaged or destroyed.

Polling station	Place	Number of papers lost or destroyed	Explanation
28	Birip	391	Ballot papers were burned because the supporters of a candidate from the area wanted to take and mark the papers.
37	Premier Hill and Hidden Valley	116	Ballot papers were burned because of a commotion in which supporters of regional candidates demanded that votes go to their candidates instead of giving people a choice.

These are the places where there was official notification of papers being lost or destroyed. The writer observed one polling place where 100 papers were left after everyone had voted and leaders, in the presence of security personnel, dealt out those papers, which were marked for the candidate of their choice.

Implications

How did the LPV system function in the 2007 election, and what are the implications for democracy in Enga? I have noted above that there was little effective awareness provided about the LPV system, but more significantly there was even less political will among public servants and community leaders that such awareness take place. Some people voted as individuals (though not in secret). Most voted in groups: as family groups, or even as clan groups. Political parties had an influence, but generally people dealt out their votes with the prime consideration being the wellbeing of their clan. Moreover, in the Wabag Open electorate the focus was on first preferences with little importance given to second and third preferences.

The focus on first preferences emerges from an Enga political culture which relies on the patronage of an influential 'bigman' who can attract projects and bring services to the area. Thus, campaign strategies in Enga extend over the five years between elections and are not limited to the few weeks of official campaigning prior to polling. Elections are a form of investment, with successful candidates rewarding their supporters and disregarding others. This is the importance of strategic alliances. Money, guns, and employment in both the public and private sectors contribute to both continuities and innovations on the traditional Enga systems of forming alliances, particularly for warfare and for the *tee* pig exchange. The LPV system may provide new avenues for forming alliances, and linking voters and candidates; however, this is still at an early stage, and the traditional bigman system still predominates.

The system that is emerging has distinct disadvantages. Attempts to establish bloc voting within a clan can provoke anger within the community. Winners will

often favour supportive clans by funding their projects and providing services to their area while others miss out. Relationships soured during the elections do not mend easily. We are not aware of anyone having died in election-related violence in the Wabag electorate. However, at least five people have died in election-related violence in the adjacent Ambum-Kompiani electorate. The lack of post-election tribal conflict in the Wabag electorate is an indication that the election result was generally accepted.

Can we call such a system democratic? Democratic principles call for freedom of the individual to vote and, to ensure this, some form of confidentiality. A considerable number of people in Enga had no freedom to vote because others voted in their place, and it seems that there was little confidentiality, if any.

Conclusion

Compared with the 2002 election, Enga in 2007 experienced relatively peaceful voting, largely due to the presence of over 1200 security personnel. In some cases there was community-based calm. In other places the apparent 'law and order' was more a form of control under a new form of gunpoint democracy (with the guns in the hands of the security forces).

Enga political culture is managing the LPV system by importing it into a political culture where there is little individual freedom of choice, limited freedom to vote for women, and where the confidentiality of individual voters' choices is not available to the majority of voters.

For the situation to change, some hard issues will have to be faced. There is an urgent need to improve the electoral roll. There is also a need to convince people that everyone has a right to vote and that group voting has serious disadvantages. Also, there must be checks to counter political patronage and cronyism at all levels of the provincial administration, and better ways to deal with disputed returns so that justice may be done but also be seen to be done. These issues should not be taken in isolation but treated in an integrated way.

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Appendix

Table 18.7: Voting statistics for Wabag Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	49,633
Total votes cast	44,690
Informal votes	293 (0.7% of ballots)
Total allowable ballot papers	44,397
Total ballot papers remaining in count	34,388
Total votes distributed	21,226
Exhausted ballot papers	10,009 (22.5% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	17,195

Table 18.8: Wabag Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
24	Samuel Tei Abal	M	National Alliance	15,065	33.9	1	4,874	24.4		19,939	44.9	58.0
13	Pato Potane	M	People's Party	8,106	18.2	2	6,343	43.9		14,449	32.5	42.0
27	Daniel Don Kapi	M	PANGU Party	5,914	13.3	4	3,210	35.2	17	9,124	20.6	
25	Malipu Yakali	M	New Generation Party	6,546	14.7	3	1,071	14.1	16	7,617	17.2	
12	Maso Samai	M	Independent	2,353	5.3	5	366	13.5	15	2,719	6.1	
16	Philip Nere	M	Independent	1,455	3.3	6	335	18.7	14	1,790	4.0	
14	A1 Anton Wangae	M	National Advance Party	1,363	3.1	7	98	6.7	13	1,461	3.3	
10	Sakarawan Lomas Samuel Tulipet	M	Independent	357	0.8	11	1,104	75.6	12	1,461	3.3	
11	Samuel Kopamo	M	People's Heritage Party	1,005	2.3	8	106	9.5	11	1,111	2.5	
19	Minal Keoa Marinki	M	Independent	969	2.2	9	27	2.7	10	996	2.2	
20	Kandato Kyagali	M	Independent	872	2.0	10	7	0.8	9	879	2.0	
23	Johannah Jonnes Kuringin	M	Independent	253	0.6	12	12	4.5	8	265	0.6	
26	Irai Isaac Perano	M	Independent	46	0.1	13	1	2.1	7	47	0.1	
17	Micros Nea Apak	M	Stars Alliance Party	43	0.1	14	0	0.0	6	43	0.1	
15	Simon Robert	M	Independent	22	0.0	15	0	0.0	5	22	0.0	
22	John Kapi	M	PNG National Party	11	0.0	16	0	0.0	4	11	0.0	
28	Julie Daniel	F	PNG First Party	11	0.0	17	0	0.0	3	11	0.0	
21	Wialo Sakatao	M	Independent	5	0.0	18	0	0.0	2	5	0.0	
18	David Kandiu Kaiti	M	Independent	1	0.0	19	0	0.0	1	1	0.0	

Table 18.9: Used and unused ballot papers in Wabag Open electorate, 2007 election

Polling station	Station number	Ballot box number	Ballots sent (roll)	Ballots counted	Informal	Difference ^a
Tukusenda	1	0209	998	999	–	+ 1
Aipanda	2	0207	512	511	1	-950
Tumbilyam		0208	950			
Tambitanis	4	0206	949	944	5	0
Lakolama	5	0205	1168	1157	10	–1
Kubalis	6	0204	337	921	7	–36
Yakananda		0170	627			
Nandi	7	0203	991	988	2	+ 1
Sakarip	8	0202	826	818	6	–2
Sopas	9	0201	630	959	3	–8
Lakayoko		0158	340			
Kiwi	10	0200	1109	1103	7	+ 1
Kaiap	11	0199	976	971	1	–4
Kamas	12	0198	1053	1031	7	–15
Kopen	13	0197	549	548	1	0
Sari	14	0196	1292	1277	15	0
Tole	15	0195	1887	1870	17	0
Yaumanda, Lepatenges and Kwimas	16	0194 0167 0174	2441 (947/548/ 946)	2405	20	–16
Taitenges	17	0193	1235	908	3	–324
Lakemanda Waipu	18	0192 0157	1308 (458/850)	1243	4	–61
Sakalis Sangurap	19	0191 0159	1446 (868/578)	1187	2	–257
Keas	20	0190	2015	2008	8	+ 1
Irelya Aipus	21	0189 0161	2922 (1753/1169)	2917	4	–1
Lenki and Pipi	22	0188 0162	1758 (914/844)	1544	3	–211
Ainumanda	23	0187	505	50	–	–455
Rakamanda	24	0186	598	596	3	+ 1
Yokomanda Double Bridge	25	0185 0163	689 (378/311)	686	4	+ 1
Imi (Naputes, Makapumanda)	26	0184 0164	899 (495/404)	894	2	-3
Wee and Yokota	27	0183 0165	655 (393/262)	616	2	–37
Birip and Birip Community School	28	0182 0166	2458 (1229/1229)	2061	6	–391
Akom and Kapamale	29	0181 0169	580 (464/116)	577	3	0

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Polling station	Station number	Ballot box number	Ballots sent (roll)	Ballots counted	Informal	Difference ^a
Lukitap	30	0180	773	769	5	+1
Waimalemanda and Takandu	31	0179 0168	764 (464/300)	765	–	+1
Kerepusmanda	32	0178	598	542	57	+1
Yailengis (Sirunki)	33	0177	572	572	1	+1
Beat St & Wabag 2nd	34	0176	487	488	7	+8
Police Barracks	35	0175 ^b	407	333	2	–72
Premier Hill & Langress	37	0173	734	603	15	–116
Hidden Valley	38	0172	329	329		
Newtown–Aipus	39	0171	337	335	2	0
Yakananda	40	0170	(627)			
Kepamale	41	0169	(116)			
Takandu	42	0168	(464)			
Kwimas	43	0167	(946)			
Birip C. School	44	0166	(1229)			
Yakota	45	0165	(262)			
Makepumanda	46	0164	(404)			
Double Bridge	47	0163	(311)			
Pipi	48	0162	(914)			
Aipus	49	0161	(1169)			
Waipu	50	0160	(458)			
Sangurap	51	0159	(578)			
Lakayoko	52	0158	(630)			
Biako & Pai	53	0223	(720)			
Pai	54	0222	(129)			
Pokale Malandu	55	0221	1128	1129	3	+4
Pasalagus	56	0220	915	912	3	0
Wailep	57	0219	641	606	38	+3
Tongori	58	0218	436	436	–	0
Kaimatok	59	0217	615	614	2	+1
Wangalongen	60	0216	481	482	–	+1
Neliyaku	61	0215	625	618	7	0
Ilya	62	0214	474	470	1	-3
Poreaki	63	0213	545	546	–	+1
Warakom	64	0212	813	813	1	+1
Penale	65	0211	253	253	3	+3
Net	66	0210	219	220	–	+1

^a Difference indicates the number of ballot papers lost or destroyed.

^b Box 0175 does not appear in the official returns (form 66F) and in the returns the figures for boxes 0173 and 0172 are changed to make up the difference due to the absence of box 0175.

19. Religion, Politics and the Election in the Southern Highlands

Richard Eves

This chapter looks at the issue of religion and politics in the 2007 election in the Southern Highlands, focusing specifically on the Kagua-Erave Open electorate (Figure 19.1).

The great diversity in forms of religion in Papua New Guinea means that it is unwise to attempt to generalize about the effects of religion on politics. Although almost everybody in the country today identifies as Christian, the churches are very large in number and are widely divergent in beliefs and policies.¹ Further, each denomination has its own local character, influenced in part by the many popular local religions drawn from traditional beliefs which remain extremely potent. In some areas, Christianity and local religion have been drawn on to produce elaborate syncretic forms of religion which are highly influential and some of which take great interest in the political arena.

In this analysis I focus on Christianity, since it is this element of religion that appears to be having the widest and most visible effect on politics in Papua New Guinea. The mainstream churches—Lutheran, Catholic, United and Anglican—have a long history and remain by far the largest Christian grouping. However, the most spectacular growth in the last decade or so has been in converts to the ‘born again’ evangelical, charismatic and Pentecostal churches, which have such appeal that they are making rapid inroads on the traditionally large congregations of the mainstream churches. I focus mainly on these more recent forms of religious expression, partly because they are increasingly dominating the religious landscape but also for the more practical reason that it was these groups that I encountered in the area where I was working during the 2007 election.

¹ According to Operation World, 97.28 percent of the population is Christian today (2008).

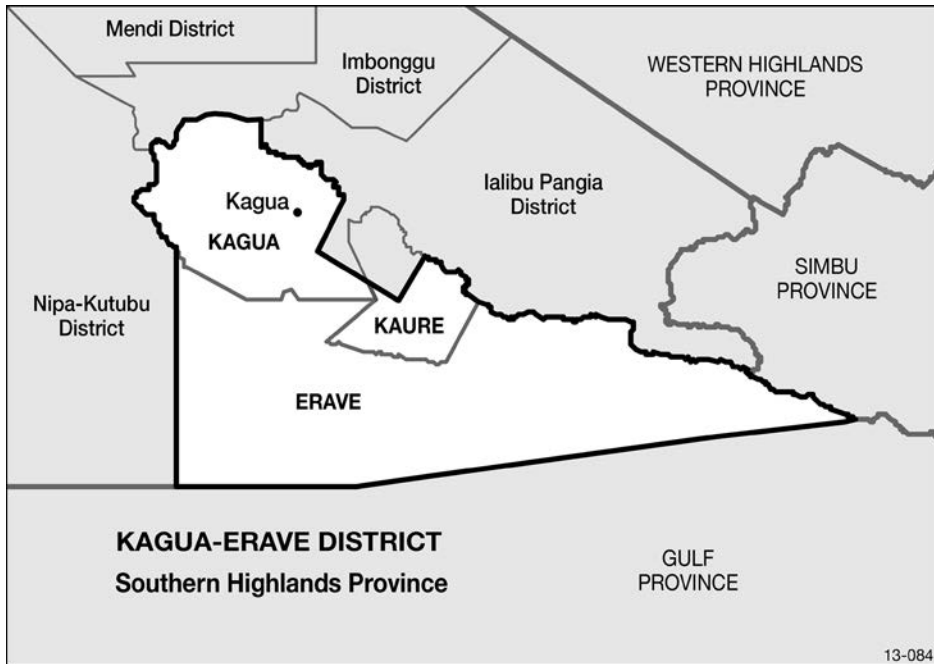


Figure 19.1: Kagua-Erave District

Most of the new evangelical, charismatic and Pentecostal churches are fundamentalist, since they read the Bible literally and take an extremely dualist view of the world, as a dire struggle between good and evil. They shun active involvement in politics, avoiding engagement with the state in both civil society and electoral affairs (see Hauck, Mandie-Filer and Bolger 2005:22; Gibbs 2005:17).² This general aloofness towards politics has been described as ‘political acquiescence’ (Schoffeleers 1991:89)³ and indeed some of these churches do endorse the belief that people should accept the authority of the government of the day (Gibbs 2004:4, 2005:18; Hauck, Mandie-Filer and Bolger 2005:22).⁴ This does not mean that they do not have what Ireland refers to as, ‘critical citizenship’—a critique of the social and political economies of the country in which they live (1995:136). Indeed these churches often articulate trenchant criticism of the corruption and the inability of the Papua New Guinea state to deliver services. Much of this criticism is cloaked in a particular kind of conspiratorial and apocalyptic language, as evident in the discussions with local pastors I describe below. These critiques rarely generate political activism;

2 Much diversity characterizes the approach of conservative Protestants around the world to involvement in politics. A considerable literature explores the issue.

3 How ‘political acquiescence’ is defined can present something of a problem, according to Schoffeleers, since what seems like acquiescence to one party may be described by another as a subtle form of resistance, or as the best a church can manage in a situation (1991:90). He concludes that a church is ‘acquiescent’, when its policy is to avoid political activism of a critical nature.

4 Romans 13:1–7 is usually invoked in this context (Gibbs 2005:18 and 2004:4).

rather they are reactive, expressing an emotional feeling of moral outrage towards those responsible for corruption and poor governance. These problems are seen as evidence that people are not living Christian lives, and the remedy is for people to become good Christians, the emphasis being on individual moral reform rather than broader social reform, and to pray for God's intervention for a good election result (Gifford 1991:18). Some commentators argue that such Christians are not passive spectators in political affairs since they use prayer in the hope of influencing outcomes. Sometimes this is framed in terms of 'spiritual warfare', conceived as an active challenge to Satan's power through aggressive prayer (Jorgensen 2005:446). However, while it is true that this activity reveals the existence of interest in outcomes, it is hardly effective action.

This chapter describes specific aspects of the 2007 election to show how politics and religion were interrelated. It is divided into two sections: the first deals initially with the national context and then with the Southern Highlands; the second section moves in to look more closely at the Kagua-Erave Open electorate, to examine the perspectives of a local candidate and several pastors from the village where he was based.

The 2007 election

The 2007 election bore some similarities to previous elections and also significant differences. Discussing the relationship between politics, religion and churches in the 2002 election, Philip Gibbs suggests there was a blurring between the sacred and the secular, with political discourse and symbolism laced with Biblical and other Christian imagery. This involved candidates assiduously seeking to present themselves as 'God-fearing' people who could be trusted. The Saviour was also a common figure and Gibbs cites several examples of candidates comparing themselves to Moses leading the exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land.

Also in the 2002 election, some candidates made extravagant promises to Christians to secure their vote. Peter Yama, the candidate for Usino-Bundi Open, declared that he would 'ensure that 10% of the annual national budget is given to God', proposing a tithing policy which would distribute 10 percent of Papua New Guinea's total earnings to churches through the Home Affairs Department (cited Gibbs 2004:7; see also 2005:3).⁵ In 2007, the People's Freedom Party made

5 This is not the first time this has been raised. Gibbs cites a case from 1987 in which the member for Alotau, Iairo Lasaro, quoting from the Old Testament prophet Malachi (3:7–12), stated in parliament, 'I believe if this nation makes the first move to allow 10 percent of its budget to God, this country according to the word, God himself will open the windows of heaven and pour out more blessings in this nation. Law and order, tribal fights, natural disasters and all other problems, I can assure this Government that God will guarantee the total security of this nation' (Hansard 20 November 1987:22–24 cited in Gibbs 2005).

similar promises, advocating support for the churches and non-government organizations by voluntary tithing of 10 percent of the tax revenue. However, none of this party's eight candidates succeeded in winning a seat. Other political parties and candidates were more restrained in their promises on this issue, simply saying they would support the work of the churches.

Christian rhetoric was a persistent theme in the People's Freedom Party statement that appeared in the *Post-Courier*. They considered it very important that the question of leadership be addressed before problems of development: leaders must be 'truly repentant and resolved towards the God Almighty, oneself, family and community' (*Post-Courier*, Election Special, June 2007). Leaders must also be physically fit, possibly a reference to the widespread idea that bodily health, especially outward appearance, is an indication of moral health (see Eves 1998:28–29, 1996). In the same paper, other Christians upheld Jesus as the model of leadership, defined in terms of 'shepherd-ship, servant-ship and sacrifice' (ibid.). The Pangu Pati's policy platform included creating a ministry of religion: 'Pangu acknowledges the role of the church in promoting Christian values, and in social, economic, and spiritual development, and proposes to create a Ministry of Religion to improve government-church cooperation' (ibid.).

A significant difference between the election of 2007 and earlier ones was the absence of a nationwide campaign like 'Operation *Brukim Skru*', which had featured in the lead-up to the 1997 election (see Schmid 1999; Gibbs 2005; Jorgensen 2005). Literally meaning to bend the knee, but conveying connotations of kneeling down to pray or seeking forgiveness, *Brukim Skru* was initiated at Government House in November 1996 by the governor-general of the time, Sir Wiwa Korowi. *Brukim Skru* aimed 'to bring PNG before God for his divine intervention for the evils of our time' (Asia Pacific Network 1997).⁶ A large number of churches was involved in this campaign, though Gibbs suggests that the initiative came mostly from the conservative evangelical and Pentecostal churches (2005:14). One plan, which evidently had the support of the Electoral Commissioner but which did not quite get off the ground, was to provide 'prayer cover' to keep corruption and evil spirits away during polling.⁷

Operation *Brukim Skru* also involved local events, such as 'crusades', including a 'Mega Prayer Crusade' at the University of Papua New Guinea, organized by the Tertiary Student's Christian Fellowship, which involved students praying for good government. As the president of the Tertiary Student's Christian Fellowship, Bill Koim, commented at the time:

6 He was refuting claims by the National Intelligence Organisation that members of *Brukim Skru* were involved in the Sandline crisis which brought down the government of the day.

7 The original plan was to have 20,000 Christian volunteers in this role, but when polling began only a few hundred offered their services (Gibbs 2005:15; see also Jorgensen 2005:449).

We have been praying for a good government and honest leadership, and we have not been surprised to see a lot of the established leaders fall. We are not saying that they were bad leaders, but we are thankful because these are God's own doings (*The National* 9 July 1997, cited in Schmid 1999:20).

He added that the underlying theme of the crusade was that politicians needed the strength of God to perform well in the new government, human strength and wisdom being only secondary (ibid.:21). Since the country had lost its way, only divine intervention could help it to follow the right path.

The 2007 election had no nationwide campaign like *Brukim Skru* but prayer was still considered a useful strategy. This occurred at the local level but it was also widely advocated in the national discourse, with correspondents to the newspapers urging people to pray for the right leaders to be elected.

We want God-fearing leaders

In 2007, as in 2002, a common campaign theme noted by Gibbs was the image of the God-fearing leader (see Figure 19.2). Indeed, the need for God-fearing candidates and elected members was echoed constantly in popular discourse. It was aired on the faith page of the *National* newspaper when it reported on a radio talkback show involving several church pastors who warned voters to choose God-fearing leaders and to be wary of those candidates who hardly ever attend church but who now, during the election campaign, carry Bibles and speak in Biblical terms. Such people, they warned, were not true leaders but were merely 'switching to become "holy now" in order to lure voters' (*The National* 5 July 2007). By contrast, the most appropriate leaders were those who maintained their integrity, honesty, loyalty and righteousness (ibid.).⁸

The meaning of God-fearing was often unspecified but it was not simply synonymous with Christian; one person interviewed by the *Post-Courier* seeing them as two quite different things (*Post-Courier*, Election Special, June 2007). A young student from the National Capital District, who was actually too young to vote, thought that a 'leader should be responsible, transparent and one who promotes people's interests'. Such a leader should be God-fearing meaning that he would be dependent on God's wisdom and guidance, which would prevent him from being corrupt (ibid.). Another student, eligible to vote, commented that she would not be voting for wantok and would cast her vote for a God-fearing, 'hardworking' and 'reliable' leader. Another saw God-fearing as describing a person who abides by the principles of the Bible and

⁸ These pastors commended the prime minister for dedicating the nation to God during a Prayer Day ceremony during the year (*The National* 5 July 2007).

'therefore has the heart to serve the people' (ibid.). Others saw God-fearing in terms of 'honesty', 'transparency' and 'trustworthiness'. God-fearing conveys connotations of being fearful of God, putting the idea of a retributive God who punishes those who do not behave in a Christian manner. Others did not take up the God-fearing terminology, seeing the need simply for a Christian, particularly one with high Christian values and principles, since a person like this would 'most likely conduct himself according to Biblical principles' (ibid.).



Figure 19.2: 'We want God-fearing leaders in Southern Highlands Province'

The view from the Southern Highlands

Christianity featured less prominently in the Southern Highlands than it did nationally. With some exceptions, most Southern Highlands Province candidates avoided direct reference to their religious affiliation or beliefs.⁹ While some mentioned the need for God-fearing leaders and some used Christian imagery, religion did not predominate as it has in the past. Posters, in particular, focused almost entirely on secular and factual matters. Although a few election posters did give details of a broader policy agenda, they were very sketchy on the whole, presenting only basic details, such as a photograph with the name of the candidate, and asking for people's votes. For example, the election poster of Dickson Pena Tasi, a regional candidate, displayed no policies and no slogans, featuring only his name, his picture (complete with cowboy hat decorated with bird of paradise feathers) and a request for voters to write his name or number in box 1, 2 or 3.

Only one of the 20 or so posters displayed outside the largest Mendi store invoked the image of a 'God-fearing leader'. This one, promoting Paru Hagnai, standing for the Tari-Pori Open seat and endorsed by the Papua New Guinea Labour Party, announced that he stood for 'God-fearing leadership', 'justice for the people', 'transparency/accountability for the people' and 'economic prosperity for the people'.

I saw no images of Jesus on election posters or billboards in the Southern Highlands, as was reported elsewhere during the 1997 election (Gibbs 2005:7), although a few featured more subtle Christian allusions. One striking example of this was provided by Anderson Agiru, the successful candidate for the Southern Highlands Provincial seat or governorship, who used several slogans with a Christian resonance. Declaring that it was time to '*kirapim*' (resurrect) the province, he announced that it was the 'Dawn of a New Future', an image which echoes the evangelic rhetoric of being born again. On another poster, he presented himself as a humble Christian, saying, 'My best is not enough, Lord Almighty!'. Since Agiru was aiming to be governor for the second time, his publicity was replete with suggestions of resurrection and veiled allusions to the second coming. One of his billboards, placed prominently in Mendi, showed him in shirt and tie, with raised fist, looking very much like a Bible-thumping preacher (see Figure 19.3).

⁹ Pastor David Ongol Paki, an independent for the SHP Provincial seat, for example, gave his policies as: '1. Spiritual Development 2. Free Education 3. Health Services 4. Infrastructure Development 5. Agriculture and Livestock Development 6. Justice, Fairness and Equality' (campaign poster).

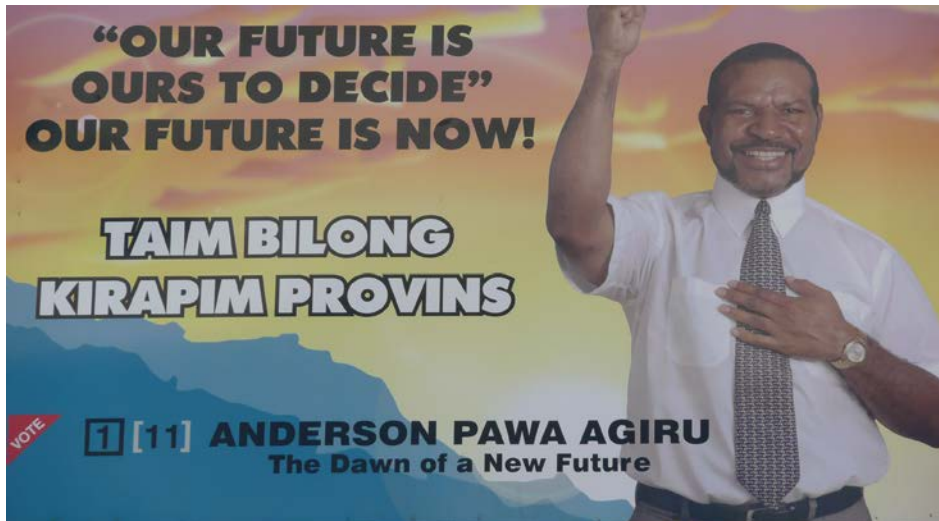


Figure 19.3: Anderson Agiru billboard, Mendi

This recourse to Christian imagery surpassed even those church leaders who stood as candidates, whose slogans were comparatively straightforward and not nearly as cleverly crafted as Agiru's. One pastor invoked a saying from Proverbs, declaring on his poster that: 'Righteousness exalts a nation' (while omitting the second clause which says 'but sin is a reproach to any people') (Proverbs 14:34). Pastor Francis Apurel, standing for the SHP Provincial seat with Agiru, simply announced that he was for 'Progress and development—God's way'. In the extensive policy platform on his poster, Thomas Handolwa, though not a pastor or preacher, wanted to reinforce church activities, and also included promoting community development, agriculture and tourism. Makire Tom (independent, standing for the provincial seat) produced the only poster to mention AIDS, although this is a major calamity confronting Papua New Guinea. He construed this as a question of Christian morality, advocating the promotion of good ways to avoid AIDS ('HIV/AIDS—*Promotim ol Gutpela Pasin bilong Abrusim Sik AIDS*'), with its obvious reference to abstinence and faithfulness.

It was noticeable that those candidates who did articulate some Christian discourse rarely identified themselves with any particular denomination, except for the candidates who were pastors or priests, who usually gave their clerical title. This suggests not only that, due to the overwhelmingly dominance of Christianity in Papua New Guinea, Christian identity is being taken for granted, but also that, with the increasing fragmentation of the mainstream churches and the proliferation of smaller churches, it is expedient to direct appeals to the generic Christian. The introduction of limited preferential voting, which has brought the need to garner preferences more widely, has added to this impetus.

The election in Kagua-Erave

In terms of organization and procedures during the election, media claims of 'successful polling' in the Southern Highlands Province were far from true for Kagua-Erave. The overwhelming consensus of those present, including voters, candidates, security personnel and even electoral officials, was that the election was a huge failure because the election was so poorly organized. People were dismayed at the inadequate electoral rolls, which omitted a great many residents' names. Also, some voters had been unable to vote because ballot papers or electoral rolls did not arrive.¹⁰ One ward, for example, received rolls and ballot papers for only four constituencies, and these were actually from another electorate. A fairly common comment was: *'Em failed eleksen, em bagarap tru'*. One assistant returning officer's comment was that the electoral commission has 'failed miserably', a claim echoed by many. Another polling official commented, 'the running of the election in Kagua-Erave was very poor. The commission as a whole has failed'. Some people considered themselves in mourning, with one man from Kumbianda, who was unable to vote, commenting that: *'mipela stap long haus kra'*, meaning that he and others in his village were in mourning over their disenfranchisement. Some even commented that the election failure was worse than the 2002 election. This is a damning indictment, given that the 2007 election was fairly peaceful compared with 2002, when people stormed the Kagua police station, disarmed police, forced down the police helicopter and stole and destroyed ballot boxes and papers.

As one candidate remarked, the limited preferential voting system had changed people's behaviour: 'Before, the people ruined the process, but now it is the government'. Another man expressed his disappointment in the following way: 'The people are very quiet but the system is killing us'. Others, especially those whose names were omitted from the common roll, asked rhetorically which country they belong to now, since the government has rejected them: *'Gavman i rejectim mipela, mipela stap long wanem kantri nau?' ('The government has rejected us, which country do we live in now?')*¹¹

¹⁰ The ballot box for Mungaro (Aliya local-level government [LLG]) held four ballot papers (the four names on the roll were from another electorate, Imbonggu), and that for Waro (Erave LLG) held three. Pawabi (Aliya LLG), Pobu Worok 2 (Erave LLG) and Pawabi 2 (Erave LLG) all received neither ward rolls nor ballot papers. The following wards had ward rolls but no ballot papers Mendo 2 (Aliya LLG), Mapuanda (Aliya LLG), Kumbianda (Aliya LLG), Muguri (Aliya LLG) and Suiyaibu (Aliya LLG). It was not possible to vote at two polling stations in Erave LLG (Sirigi and Sopise) because the ballot papers and boxes could not be delivered before polling lapsed.

¹¹ Unfortunately, the failure of the Electoral Commission to carry out its mandated role nourishes the profound disenchantment with the Papua New Guinea nation-state widely felt in rural communities and cities alike. Many people responded to these failings by suggesting that Australia, through institutions like AusAID, should not only run elections, but take over the governing of Papua New Guinea, since the state institutions were totally incapable of doing so. Some people even wanted the electoral commissioner to be replaced by an Australian, since they had utterly lost confidence in the ability of the current commissioner to run an election.

Despite being a feature of some parties' policy statements at the national level, few candidates in Kagua-Erave overtly identified as Christian, except in the most general terms. In none of the election speeches I heard did candidates specify their church affiliation or articulate any specifically Christian themes. Probably in the interests of garnering votes from as wide a spectrum as possible, their election posters were similarly noncommittal. Neither did religion loom large in debate in the council ward where I was based during the election. Overwhelmingly, campaigning there focused on how little development there had been in the electorate and what development the candidate would bring. This is unsurprising given that the Southern Highlands is one of the least developed and most impoverished provinces in Papua New Guinea, despite having several large resource projects that generate revenue for the national and provincial governments (Haley and May 2008; Lewis 2008). Little of this revenue appears to be returned to the people of the province. The failure of development in the electorate of Kagua-Erave was largely blamed on the local member, people often commenting that they did not see any signs of his work (*'mipela no lukim wanpela mak bilong memba i stap long hia'*). Neither had people seen any sign of him in the electorate, except during the nomination and campaign period when he was seen firing a high-powered automatic weapon during a conflict with the supporters of a rival at the district headquarters of Kagua.¹² Indeed, it was a popular view that once a candidate is elected he will not be seen in the electorate for another five years, preferring to live in Port Moresby and administer the electorate by 'remote control' as it is sometimes described.

Because of inadequate government services, there is extensive pessimism about the politics and government of Papua New Guinea throughout the electorate and doubtless the whole province. The view is also widely held that many of the candidates cannot be trusted, being motivated only by self-interest. 'Politics in PNG is no good, lots of liars are involved' (*'Politiks long PNG em i no gut, plenti giaman i stap insait'*). It is also widely held that independence has been a failure, with many people longing nostalgically for a return to the Australian colonial government.

As in the wider province, Kagua-Erave candidates' election posters gave little information about policies, relying largely on empty slogans. For example, one candidate alluded to his past political career to claim he was: 'For Genuine, Strong and Proven Leadership', and another, standing as a Papua New Guinea Country Party candidate, proclaimed: 'We have the Answers'. One of the most elaborate posters was produced by the Pangu Pati candidate, Lalepa Patapu, who had once been chairman of the Defence Force Retirement Benefits Fund and more recently the church development officer for the Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea. He utilized the metaphor of a hand-mark to emphasize that

12 Some people were not even able to identify him when shown a photograph I had taken.

he had already made his mark elsewhere in Papua New Guinea and now wanted to do so for Kagua-Erave (*'Nau mi laik putim han mak long Kagua-Erave'*). His poster featured three photographs of separate buildings, the last with his hand superimposed, as a reference to his work in the superannuation industry and their investments around the country. He did list some policies, overlaying one on each finger of the large image of a hand, including church, women and youth, law and order and health. Donald Yaki Rambua, standing as an independent, had a brief policy list on his poster, one of which was to support the work of the churches in Papua New Guinea.

During the campaign period, I was based in the village of Ibia, in Ibia council ward, Aiya in Kagua-Erave electorate. Here, the face of Christianity is changing and churches of different denominations are proliferating, as is happening throughout Papua New Guinea. In the past each village would have a single church of the denomination that had established Christianity in the region during the colonial period. With a population of about one thousand people, Ibia council ward has several newer churches besides the first-established Catholic Church, including the Assemblies of God, the Bible Missionary Church, the Church of God, the United Pentecostal Church, the New Apostolic Church, the Church of Christ and the Lutheran Church. Also, some residents were members of other churches, such as Seventh-day Adventist, Revival Churches of PNG or the United Church situated in a nearby village.

This council ward was typical of many in the Southern Highlands, not only for its religious diversity but also for the distinct absence of the 'hand of the government', as people say (see also Haley 2008). The aid post at Ibia was derelict and had not been staffed for several years, though more recently it had received boxes of supplies from AusAID, which appeared to have been distributed by a self-proclaimed 'doctor' with no medical training.¹³ The local primary school also had an erratic existence and appeared to have been closed for a number of years, largely due to the failure of the so-called 'free education' policy, which has seen supplies to schools consist of dusters and chalk and not much else. Though it is currently open and has more than 400 students, it is severely understaffed, having only four teachers instead of the eight it should have. These are supplemented by three teachers' assistants, adolescents who have attained a year 10 education, but who have no training. The teachers run two classes simultaneously, moving between the two to spend half a period in one and half a period in the other. The bush-material buildings have galvanised iron roofs, funded by a local council grant, but overall the facilities are very basic, with rough hewn desks and chairs and a library with no books.

13 It was difficult to arrive at a definitive date, since people had a vested interest in presenting their situation as particularly hard. The date of 2001 was given by the local councillor, though others claimed it was of the order of 10 years or more.

Though many hoped that their local candidate would be elected and that some services would be delivered, pessimism about the prospects of improvement in the local conditions was widespread. While the failures of the state cause much of this feeling that adversity is inevitable, the kinds of Christianity espoused also encourage it, especially the newer churches, as I shall explain later.

John Yano

The village of Ibia was the home of one of the candidates for Kagua-Erave electorate, John Japhet Yano (see Figure 19.4), and so I was able to observe his campaign first-hand, and to interview him about his background and opinions. He was related to the powerful local leader, (Captain) Randa, who actively and financially supported his campaign.¹⁴ John was a 30-year-old married man with one child, and formerly a primary school teacher at Imena Primary School (2004–2006) in the Sugu Valley, the district of his wife and the sitting member, David Basua. It was his first time as a candidate and would probably be his last, as the campaign was very costly for someone who did not have a large resource base.



Figure 19.4: John Yano, PNG Party candidate for Kagua-Erave

John was a devout Christian, a member and leader of the Church of Christ or *Lokal Sios*, as it is called. Like the other ‘born again’ churches, this church opposed the participation of leaders in the electoral process. He was therefore suspended from his role as church leader and forbidden to preach or even initiate

¹⁴ Ibia Council ward comprised Ibia 1 and Ibia 2. Ibia 1 consisted of the following villages: Mai, Wokuma, Maribit, Molonda, Rakenda, Ibia, Arepe, Koi, Rendenasu, Petame and Kerelum. Ibia 2 consisted of Mutulum, Alalu, Wariputi, Yamerika, Mambu, Umbu Mapalu and Asala.

the singing in church, reduced, as he termed it, to being a '*kristian nating*', who had to sit with the rest of the congregation. After the election, if not elected, he would be 'disciplined' for a further two to three months, after which he would have to kill a pig or organize a feast to which the leaders of the other 26 *lokal sios* in the Southern Highlands would be invited. There, they would pray over him and 'release him', allowing him to resume his leadership role in the church.

Somewhat contradictorily, it was largely at the behest of the church that he had stood as a candidate. This exemplifies the general ambivalence towards politics displayed by many of the 'born again' churches. On the one hand, they object to their members taking an active role in the electoral process, but on the other hand, they are acutely aware of failings of the current politicians and the need for better political leaders. Motivated by a church member's dream, in which God expressed his wish for a member who could bring services to the people of the electorate, the church leaders decided that it would be good for John to stand as a candidate. In their discussions, they turned to the Bible and saw the story of Moses leading the people to the promised land as a sign that God would single out a leader in difficult times. They told John that if God wanted to raise him in this way and give him this kind of power, it was something that God could do. They also compared John to David in his struggle with Goliath.

Despite these Biblical allusions, Christianity did not feature much at all in John's campaign. As noted above, this was generally the case for other candidates. John did advocate a tithing policy of 10 percent, which would go to small 'born again' churches such as his own, mainly to help purchase musical instruments, lamps and kerosene for use at rallies, camps and crusades. This was less ambitious than another PNG Party candidate (for the Imbonngu Open seat) who promised to supply electricity to all the churches in the electorate, a very ambitious task given the lack of infrastructure in the area and the proliferation of small churches, many of whose assets consist of little more than a bush-material house and a congregation no bigger than an extended family.

John would undoubtedly have been considered one of the 'God-fearing' candidates that public discourse sees as desirable leaders, even though his Christian identity and beliefs were rarely mentioned in his campaign. In interviews about broader issues, he and his church appeared very fundamentalist in outlook, with the usual strong emphasis on being born again, repudiating one's past life and a belief that good Christians would be whisked away in the Rapture prior to the Last Days. Also, as is usual, these Christians placed great emphasis on personal morality and were required to forsake many practices, ranging from drinking to playing sport. The maintenance of strict sexual morality was also considered important, particularly marital fidelity. A man was required to marry a Christian, preferably from within the same church, and polygamy and divorce were not permitted.

Like some of the candidates standing in other electorates, John presented himself as a village man (*'man bilong ples'*) or as he termed it, *'manki bilong bus tasol'*,—that is, as a person who did not have money or vested interests at stake and who could truly represent the wishes and aspirations of the villagers. Further, as a teacher who had worked in a remote rural community school, he believed he was aware of the needs of the rural villagers he sought to represent. Despite his identification as a 'grassroots' man, he could hold his own with other more educated and worldly candidates in public speaking.

John owned one of the few cars in Aiya local-level government area (five for a population of approximately 21,000), given to him by his brother who works at Ok Tedi, and bought second-hand for K35,000. Like the other vehicles, it was unregistered and unroadworthy. Usually severely overloaded with his supporters, it barely staggered up the local hills and occasionally didn't. The campaign was reputed to have cost approximately K50,000. As a member of Mekere Morautu's PNG Party, John received a little funding from the party, enough to print one thousand campaign posters. Mainly, his funding was garnered from his relatives, local support base, and another PNG Party member, Francis Awesa, a wealthy businessman, and owner of Global Construction, a major road-building company in Papua New Guinea.

Like many candidates, John used the rhetoric of anti-corruption, good governance and anti-gifting, but was nevertheless forced to play the politics of gifting to secure the support of wavering voters. This involved making contributions to the sponsors of grandstands when he attended campaign rallies, and also handing out small amounts of cash to individuals and dispersing pigs. His priorities if elected were similar to those of other candidates: to bring development and services (*sevis*) to the electorate. This is an obligatory promise in Papua New Guinea electoral politics, having irrefutable appeal since nobody would contest the need for better roads, schools and hospitals. In Kagua-Erave electorate he saw road services as the greatest need, followed by schools, aid posts and then the development of plantations to utilize the large labour pool in the electorate. Well informed of the number of voters in each council ward and of how much support they had, John's close supporters were convinced of victory, with all the confidence of cargo cultists that the goods would be delivered. Three weeks before polling, John confidently predicted that he had the support of 16 out of 24 council wards in the local-level government area, a confidence buoyed by the dreams of many supporters. Reputedly there had been 101 dreams predicting his victory. However, the predicted support did not eventuate and he was not successful in winning the seat, though he was fourth in the contest with nearly 10 percent of the first preference vote.

Local churches and politics

Prior to the polling, I also interviewed a number of the pastors of the newer churches in Ibia to ascertain their broad religious outlook and their attitude to politics, electoral politics in particular. I met with pastors of the Church of God, the Assemblies of God, the Bible Missionary Church, and a previous member of the Christian Revival Centres of Papua New Guinea.

All of these churches put great stress on the radical conversion experience of *'tanim bel'* or being born again, with its emphasis on personal morality and bodily purity. To attain this purity, these churches prohibit many forms of behaviour besides the usual Biblically named sins. While there is some minor variation, particularly in relation to some aspects of local custom, such as mortuary rites and bride-wealth payments, the churches are broadly similar in their proscriptions, which include smoking, drinking alcohol, chewing betel nut, card-playing and sport. The latter is often associated with pride, but is also banned because the clothing worn during games exposes the body to the view of the opposite sex. Polygamy and divorce are not allowed, since family life is considered a mainstay of the church community. It is forbidden for a husband to beat his wife and in some churches married couples are counselled if conflicts occur. All of these churches can properly be called fundamentalist, seeing the world essentially as a crucial struggle between Satan and Christ. Some are Pentecostal and recognise that baptism by the Holy Spirit can bring miraculous gifts, such as healing and prophecy.

Most of these churches held similar views on involvement in electoral politics, banning it and suspending members and leaders who broke the prohibition. The Church of God forbade all members to stand for election and for the pastor to support any candidate. According to their pastor, John Kuma, while a pastor had the right to vote as he wanted, he was not allowed to speak publicly in favour of a particular candidate. In Pastor Kuma's view, politics is associated with candidates' desire to increase their own prestige and renown (*apim biknem bilong yu iet*) and consequently they made many promises that they would not fulfil when elected. Like other Christians avoiding direct involvement in politics, members of this church placed much faith in prayer, asking God to show them a leader who would look to the needs of all Christians and provide them with much needed schools, roads and bridges. Pastor Kuma felt that electoral politics in Papua New Guinea was characterized by many lies and much trickery, in contrast to Australia and America, where he believed politicians were trustworthy and elections valid. He was sceptical about the ability of elected members to bring development to their communities and, indeed, he thought that before long the nation of Papua New Guinea would collapse completely

and another country would take over. He would not suggest which country this might be, but he did say that many people believe that preparations for a takeover are currently under way.

The Christian Revival Centres also eschew involvement in politics. Contesting a seat in the elections is forbidden and any member choosing to do so is suspended. If a church leader contests an election, he is also suspended from church membership and is required to work his way back up to any leadership role following suspension. Neither can a member actively support a candidate by participating in campaign activities. The church refuses to accept donations from politicians and candidates or associate with other churches that do. Indeed, it was said that they would not attend the peace march and rally in Mendi for this reason. This eschewal of politics was explained in terms of politics and God's word being contradictory: 'You cannot preach God's word, you cannot be a Christian and do politics at the same time'. On another occasion this informant described this as being like light and darkness, which are opposites and cannot mix.

The Assemblies of God took a similar radically dualist position. A member of this church was contesting the Mendi Open seat, and since this was not permissible, he was suspended from church membership. The pastor, Roki Awepe, said that although a candidate for Kagua-Erave (John Yano) was his 'brother', he was not permitted to accompany or assist him in the campaign, which, for him, would mean breaking the laws of the Bible. As a Christian, he must think only of God and God's word. Involvement in electoral politics would conflict with Christianity, since the kinds of thought involved were mutually opposed. Faith, he said, requires one hundred percent commitment not partial or competing commitments. Moreover, he believed that involvement in politics was corrupting, as earthly thoughts would inevitably arise, destroying his Christian life and leading him astray from Jesus.

This pastor considered that much as the year 2000 was a 'Year of God', so too was 2007. Therefore, it was desirable that 2007 should be a peaceful time. Since the electorate of Kagua-Erave was not a good place and was full of greedy people, when members were elected in the past, they just consumed the money and didn't bring any services to the electorate. Pastor Awepe instituted a program of prayer to be followed by his congregation which sought to ensure that the election was not characterized by 'trouble'. He hoped God would remove any bad leaders and ensure that only good leaders were elected. Personally, he was going to seek guidance from God about who to vote for, and if his spirit spoke to him he would follow this guidance.

Pastor Awepe thought that in this Year of God they should be looking for signs of the end times. Like Pastor John Kuma of the Church of God, Pastor Awepe

thought that a takeover of Papua New Guinea was imminent and would occur after the election. While on first reflection it may appear that he was alluding to the kinds of interventions into fragile and failing states that have occurred in recent years, such as the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands or the Enhanced Cooperation Program intervention in Papua New Guinea, his reference was decidedly Christian. Satan was behind this ‘take-over’ and he believed that following the election Satan’s distinctive number 666 would be visible in Papua New Guinea. As he remarked:

The one world mission, one world government, all these kinds of things they have prepared them and they are ready but they are waiting for this government, all the new members to go to parliament and form a new government and administration. OK, after this they will declare it and they will start to use this number and start to use the new law of the one world mission and one world government.

He went on to say that ‘they’ had already recorded where everybody lives and that as part of the new order, members of the Catholic Church were singled out to receive projects from the pope. As all Catholics are registered and their names recorded on a computer, they were eligible to receive the projects they wished for—small-scale development projects such as sawmills and farms. Though he did not say so, such stories usually mention that supporters of Satan have the number 666 tattooed on their foreheads and hands, and that those who do not wish to join with him are beheaded.

The Bible Missionary Church has much the same policies towards elections as the churches described above. Members are forbidden to stand for election or be involved in politics and are suspended if they do so. The pastor, Simon Ewa, also believed that candidates in elections do not always tell the truth, a patently unchristian behaviour. He saw his role as giving guidance to his congregation, giving them good thoughts, so that they would remain good Christians and live the life needed to get them to Heaven. He encouraged the congregation to pray for guidance from God on whom to vote for and for help in choosing the right leader. Members of this church also subscribed to beliefs about the end times and the idea that this would be marked by the ascendancy of the one world mission, one world government and the number 666. Pastor Ewa believed that this apocalyptic scenario was set out in the Bible, though it also appears that his beliefs were influenced by foreign missionaries from his church, as well as rumours and stories. Like the Assemblies of God pastor, he believed that this would all be revealed after the election.

We are waiting for the government to go inside [parliament] and OK the 666 number. It is all ready and is just waiting for the next elected

government to go to parliament and sign the necessary papers. The number has arrived and is waiting. Once the politicians have signed the papers, the number will be revealed.

Although he believed that this new world order would be controlled by one man, he did not connect it to the Catholic Church, as some do, suggesting that the Bible is not clear on who this man is.¹⁵ People would be under the control of this man and they would bear the number on their forehead or body. If this man said that they must go to church they would go to church. If he said that they must do nothing, they would do nothing. If he told them to do some kind of work they would carry out the order.

These kinds of belief are characteristic of many of the fundamentalist evangelical, charismatic and Pentecostal churches,¹⁶ many of which are premillennialist.¹⁷ Premillennialism predicts that Christ will return to rule over the earth for a thousand years. This will be preceded by the end times, a period of widespread social and economic disintegration, climatic changes and natural disasters (Boyer 1992; Weber 1987; Eves 2000).¹⁸ Many adherents see the present as just such a time of disintegration and disaster, pointing to the increasing levels of corruption, raskolism and the AIDS epidemic as clear signs of the end times. One aspect of this rather pessimistic view is the prophecy that Satan or the Anti-Christ will take over the world for a period, before being defeated by Christ, and the allusions by some of the pastors referred to above to the 'one world mission' and 'one world government' are examples of this.

As most premillennialists believe Christ's return is imminent they await it anxiously (though if good Christians they are spared the tyranny of the Anti-Christ's rule, since they are whisked away in the Rapture), conducting their lives in perpetual readiness, keeping themselves sin free and evangelizing zealously. In obedience to Christ's request to spread the Word to all nations, called the Great Commission, they believe it imperative to convert as many people as possible before the end times. Some believers seek to spread the gospel in the belief that Jesus will return when all nations have been evangelized (Brouwer, Gifford and Rose 1996:18).

15 When I suggested that some people single out the pope he refuted this, saying God would not '*bagarap*' another man.

16 Especially in Pentecostal churches, and those mainstream churches influenced by Pentecostalism.

17 Seventh-day Adventists also subscribe to premillennialism and put great stress on the end times scenario set out in the Book of Revelation.

18 This contrasts with the more optimistic postmillennialists who believe that it is possible through human effort to bring on the reign of Christ and who expect the conversion of all nations to Christianity prior to Christ's return (see Erickson 1977:55; Ammerman 1991:7; Wessinger 1997:49).

Conclusion

As events unfolded following the election, it is clear that the predictions of a post-election takeover of Papua New Guinea have not taken place. How Christians such as these pastors have made sense of this, and what effect it has had on their premillennial ideas, cannot be answered here.

It is difficult to judge how widely these kinds of beliefs about the post-election takeover of Papua New Guinea are embraced by the general population. Such beliefs became apparent to me as a consequence of rather lengthy interviews with Christian leaders and it is unlikely that they would be conveyed in everyday casual discussions. Moreover, church leaders have a much fuller understanding of Biblical prophecy than their congregations, so it is likely that the knowledge of others is more fragmentary. Certainly, these ideas are not nearly as elaborated in the Southern Highlands as I have found elsewhere in Papua New Guinea. In New Ireland, for example, there is a much more developed understanding and interpretation of these Biblical prophecies (see Eves 2000, 2003). This is probably a consequence of the longer history of Christianity there, as well as the higher levels of literacy and the greater availability of Christian literature that details these predictions.

Even in their nascent and fragmentary state, the taking up of these ideas indicates a profound disenchantment with political processes and governance in Papua New Guinea. Moreover, the failings of the government in running the 2007 election in the Southern Highlands has undoubtedly reinforced the widespread disenchantment with the governance of Papua New Guinea. It is inevitable that the state's incapacity to deliver services will be seen as proof of the validity of the end times scenarios described above.

The relationship between politics and religion in Papua New Guinea could perhaps best be described as thorny. On the one hand, their general aversion to politics leads many of the newer evangelical, charismatic and Pentecostal churches to shun active involvement in the electoral process and in politics more generally. On the other hand, these Christians often voice sharp criticisms of the failings of the government, longing for better governance, and especially the delivery of services. Although people are longing for better times and their criticisms are generally legitimate, due to their firm belief in the Biblical prophecies of the end times, they actually anticipate that the situation in Papua New Guinea (and elsewhere) will get progressively worse rather than better. In other words, rather than basing their critique on analysis of the social and structural factors which have led to the creation of inequality in Papua New Guinea, and the devastating failure of services, the Christians see these occurrences as part of the inevitable unfolding of God's plan. This means

that human intervention attempting to change the course of events is futile. As Gifford argues, this actively disempowers adherents, promoting a 'passive acceptance of disasters, misfortune and a lack of social responsibility' (1991:9). Rather than political activism, premillennialism stresses personal salvation, evangelism and prayer which are all that can be done within the compass of its beliefs.

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20. Guns, Money and Sex: Assessing the Impact of Electoral System Reform on Political Culture in Southern Highlands Province

Nicole Haley and Ben Dierikx

Overview

Papua New Guinea's 2007 general election offered the first nationwide test of the new limited preferential voting (LPV) system, which replaced the first-past-the-post system, under which all previous post-independence elections had been conducted. In this chapter we make some observations about recent electoral reform in Papua New Guinea, particularly the impact of reforms on the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections*, which saw the introduction of LPV after the 2002 election. The chapter seeks to explore the extent to which electoral system reform, in particular the introduction of LPV, has influenced the conduct of elections and political culture in the Southern Highlands. The chapter draws on the reports of domestic observers in the Koroba-Lake Kapiago and Kagua-Erave open electorates and Southern Highlands provincial electorate (Figure 20.1) as part of the 2007 Domestic Observation (see chapter 5). It finds that although the 2007 election was considerably less violent than other recent elections, contestation has not diminished, as evidenced by the widespread fraud and malpractice witnessed.

It also finds that voting irregularities and money politics were more pervasive than in previous elections; individual voters were observed to have greater access to cash and were more mobile than in past elections, so they were better positioned to seek out transactional extra-marital sexual relations. The chapter finds that the 2007 election provided a context for heightened sexual activity, which has important implications with respect to HIV transmission.

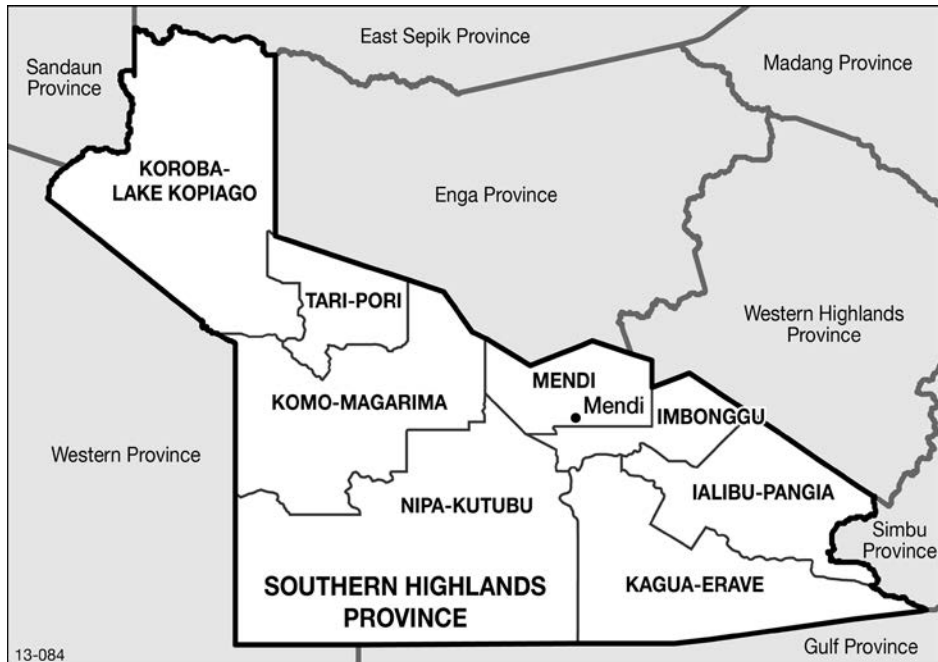


Figure 20.1: Southern Highlands Province open electorates

Background

Changes to the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* were in part a response to the proliferation of candidate numbers. Elections in Papua New Guinea have typically attracted large numbers of candidates and are fiercely contested. With each general election prior to 2007 candidate numbers had increased and, as a consequence, members of parliament (MPs) had, over time, been elected with smaller and smaller mandates. In recent elections single constituencies have been contested, on average, by upwards of 25 candidates, and in some cases by as many as 50–60 candidates, and in the three general elections prior to 2007 the majority of candidates were elected with less than 20 percent of the vote and many (16/103 in 2002) with less than 10 percent of the vote. Concerned by this trend, the Morauta government (1999–2002) embarked on a program of electoral reform which saw the introduction of LPV and legislation aimed at strengthening political parties.

With the introduction of LPV it was hoped that the 2007 election would be more peaceful and would see the election of MPs with wider and more representative

mandates.¹ According to the then electoral commissioner, Reuben Kaiulo, the reintroduction of preferential voting was 'premised on the need to reduce the number of candidates to ensure that the MP has a wider basis for support and endorsement, and also to promote collaboration among candidates and counter the surge in violence' (PNGEC 1997:13).

Assessing the impact of limited preferential voting

We do not seek to offer a comprehensive assessment of the impact of LPV in this chapter, but instead seek to explore some aspects of changing political culture in the Southern Highlands, particularly those that seem to be linked to the introduction of LPV. (Chapter 13 tests some of the more general claims and presumptions about LPV.)

Without a doubt, the 2007 general election in Southern Highlands Province (SHP) was less violent than either the 1997 or 2002 elections. How much this improvement can be attributed to LPV and how much to the huge investment in security (see chapters 6, 7 and 8) will become clearer over ensuing elections. Certainly it had been felt that LPV would contribute to improved security, and observers around the country reported that campaigning in 2007 was generally quieter, far more relaxed, and more accommodative than in past elections and that overall levels of violence, particularly in the Highlands, were substantially reduced (Haley and Anere 2009).

Compared to 2002, there was only a handful of election-related deaths, no airstrips were closed for security reasons, and there were few road closures. One exception was the Tangi road, between Koroba and Lake Kapiago, which was closed for extended periods due to election-related violence which saw a young man (the brother of one of the SHP domestic observers) killed and the threat of payback killings. For the most part, campaigning was more accommodative, with candidates in the Southern Highlands able to move around freely and campaign more widely than they had been able to in the earlier first-past-the-post elections something that had also been observed in the various LPV by-elections (Standish 2006:200; Haley 2006). That said, there were individual candidates (for example, Ben Peri in Koroba-Lake Kapiago and David Basua in Kagua-Erave) whose freedom of movement was curtailed due

¹ Standish (2006) provides a detailed exposition of the reasons for and claims used to promote preferential voting.

to unresolved disputes from previous elections, and there was certainly less freedom to campaign across ethnic boundaries in the Koroba-Lake Kapiago case, as compared with campaigning during the 2006 by-election (see chapter 21).

While candidates were generally able to travel around more freely, they tended to campaign in much the same way as they had under the old first-past-the-post system—that is, by concentrating their efforts on areas where they believed they had base support. There was little concerted collaboration and no serious evidence of widespread preference swapping either between parties or between individual candidates, although Ben Peri and Matthew Magaye did enter into a formal preference-swapping agreement (see chapter 21).

Even though there was less overt violence overall in the 2007 election in the Southern Highlands, intra-provincial regionalism which resulted in a fair degree of pre-polling tension and post-election-related violence remained evident (cf. Ballard 1989; Haley 2007a). Ethnicity and regionalism were also observed to play a huge part in campaigning in the Kagua-Erave and Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorates and were reflected in the way people allocated their preferences. In both electorates ethnically closed campaigning was the norm with candidates and voters alike espousing the view that preferences should be retained within the one cultural, linguistic or ethnic area.

In the Koroba-Lake Kapiago case, this is particularly noteworthy because the 2006 LPV by-election had seen candidates move about freely and successfully campaign across the ethnic divide—something that had not happened in either the 1997 and 2002 General Elections or the 2003 supplementary elections (see Haley 2002; 2004; 2007a). The return to ethnically closed campaigning is significant and signals the need to rethink the assumption that LPV will enable candidates and elected MPs to develop cross-electorate support bases.

While the 2007 election was generally more peaceful than previous elections, it remained highly competitive, as evidenced by widespread fraud and malpractice (see chapters 5, 8, 20 and 21). Observers across the Southern Highlands also witnessed bribery and intimidation on the part of candidates and their supporters. That intimidation was commonplace was also reflected in post-polling surveys. In a survey of 400 Southern Highlands voters (200 men and 200 women), 73 men (37 percent) and 97 women (49 percent) reported that they experienced intimidation when casting their vote, and a similar proportion felt that the 2007 election was worse than 2002 (see chapter 5). Many even felt that the election had failed (see chapter 20).

Influence of guns

Guns did not feature as extensively in this election as they had in the 1997 and 2002 polls, although they were present in the Southern Highlands in significant numbers despite the imposition of a 10-month state of emergency/special police operation in the lead-up to the election. Members of the SHP Provincial, Kagua-Erave Open and Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open observer teams all reported seeing firearms during nominations, the campaign period, in the lead-up to the poll, and even on polling day, but these and other weapons such as bush knives, axes and bows and arrows tended not to be openly displayed at polling places or used to intimidate and/or influence the vote, as they had been in the past.

During the campaign period, in particular, observers throughout the Southern Highlands reported seeing homemade weapons and a variety of high-powered weapons, including M16s, AR15s, self-loading rifles and an Ultimax 100 in civilian hands. They also noted the presence of black market ammunition in the province in the lead-up to polling. Observers reported that ammunition costs ranged from as low as K5–7 per M16/AR15 (5.56 × 45 mm) round to as high as K25 as one moved from west to east across the province. Shotgun cartridges varied between K10 and K20 per cartridge and observers reported that the price of self-loading rifle ammunition was consistently around K25 per (7.62 × 51 mm) round. This is consistent with pre-state-of-emergency pricing (see Haley and Muggah 2006) and suggests that there was no shortage of ammunition at the time of the election despite the fact that the Southern Highlands had been under a state of emergency since August 2006. The variation in prices reflects the geographical location of the observers in relation to supply sources, rather than any artificial inflation or deflation due to the campaign or election.

Key candidates in the Southern Highlands were also reputed to have armed their own militia. One sitting MP even provided police uniforms to his militia. These were distributed on 31 January 2007 in the presence of an observer, who photographed the distribution. Another sitting MP had a fake mobile squad vehicle kitted out in Port Moresby, shipped to Lae and then transported to the Highlands. Observers saw this vehicle being loaded at the wharf in Moresby and photographed it in SHP. On polling day the occupants of this vehicle made several unsuccessful attempts to intercept ballot boxes known to contain votes for an opposing candidate (see chapter 8). Their attempts were thwarted by conscientious polling officials and the Papua New Guinea Defence Force. There was also another incident, which observers caught on film, in which the occupants of this same vehicle fired upon the crowd in Tari after they were denied access to the Tari police station where the ballot boxes for the Hela region were being held.

During the campaign period observers repeatedly witnessed armed police travelling with or in the company of high-profile candidates and electoral staff. Uniformed mobile squad officers were seen providing security to the MP for Mendi, Michael Nali, while uniformed general duty police were seen providing security to the then Tari-Pori MP (Tom Tomiabe), Koroba-Lake Kapiago MP (John Kekeno) and Kagua-Erave MP (David Basua). Auxiliary or reserve police were seen with Francis Potape (the current MP for Komo-Magarima) and Alfred Kaiyabe (the former Komo-Magarima MP).

While the overall visibility of guns and other weapons remained low throughout the campaigning and polling period, threats of violence did overhang the election in some places. For the most part these threats tended to be successfully contained by the deployment of armed security forces, although there was significant and ongoing post-election violence in Kagua-Erave Open electorate, following the withdrawal of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force in early August 2007.

Influence of 'money politics', vote buying and gifting

Although guns played a less significant role in this election, 'money politics' was more significant than ever before. During the campaign period huge amounts of money and gifts of various kinds were observed to change hands and many candidates (winning and losing alike) were reputed to have spent upwards of K1 million. The then sitting member for Kagua-Erave, David Basua, for instance, was widely reported to have distributed K300,000 to men and women at Kagua station in the week leading up to the poll (Eves 2008), while the then governor, Hami Yawari, was observed to be distributing both cash and cheques at a rally in Tari late in the campaign period. In the Southern Highlands voters and observers alike asserted that LPV had contributed to the proliferation of 'money politics' in that candidates were able to move around more freely, but having done so were under pressure to reward people for pledged support.

Observations made by domestic observers during the 2007 election indicate a shift in gifting and vote buying culture in the Southern Highlands, and suggest that LPV has ushered in a new era of opportunism with respect to vote buying in particular. Under LPV voters have three preferences to allocate. Many voters made the most of this by courting and promising support to several candidates in return for modest cash payments. The amount being paid by individual candidates to individual voters was observed to vary from place to place and candidate to candidate, although typical payment configurations were K100, K50, K20 (Tari-Pori); K50, K25, K10 (Nipa-Kutubu; Tari-Pori) and K20, K10, K5 (Koroba-Lake Kapiago) for 1st, 2nd and 3rd preferences respectively. On the eve of polling one particular SHP candidate was observed to pay K1000 per

person to voters willing to commit their first preference to him. By contrast, an observer based in Ialibu-Pangia reported that a flat rate of K20 was being paid per vote, regardless of preference.

Payments to individual voters were much less common in past elections. Indeed where vote buying occurred it typically took the form of a single payment to a local leader or household head in respect of a certain number of promised/guaranteed votes. Such payments were made on the basis of name lists provided to candidates or their campaign managers. LPV of course provides the opportunity for multiple payments, and for multiple configurations of voting preferences, which seems to have diminished the role of local leaders in vote buying/selling while enhancing individual agency.

The movement of voters across ward and electorate boundaries also seems to have increased with the introduction of LPV. In SHP thousands of people were seen capitalizing on the new opportunities LPV presented by moving across electoral boundaries, to sell their votes to other candidates, turning three payments into up to 12 payments per person. This was particularly so in the Hela region² where many Huli voters were witnessed or reported to have voted in the Komo-Magarima, Tari-Pori and Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorates as well as for the provincial seat. Similar movements and voting practices were observed in the eastern end of the province, with many voters voting in both the Ialibu-Pangia and Imbonggu electorates.

On an even larger scale some particularly enterprising voters (mostly men) capitalized on the rolling elections in the Highlands by voting in several provinces. Mt Hagen youth, observed voting in Koroba, reported that they had accepted payments from candidates in three provinces and that they had promised to vote in SHP, in their home province of the Western Highlands, and then again in Chimbu.

Grandstands and opening ceremonies also served as money-making ventures during this election. They were erected and organized by clans, church congregations, youth and women's groups, and school committees as an innovative means of generating funds. As noted above, campaigning in the 2007 election was far more accommodative than in the past. Candidates travelled in each other's company, were for the most part permitted access to each other's base areas, and were present in large numbers at rallies, sports events and opening ceremonies in previously unprecedented ways (see Figure 20.2). Groups

2 The people occupying the western end of SHP, namely the Duna, Huli and Bogaia, along with their Paiela neighbours in Enga Province, share the view that they descend from a common ancestor, Hela. On the basis of this connection they have been pushing for more than three decades for a separate Hela province, which would incorporate the Koroba-Lake Kapiago, Tari-Pori and Komo-Magarima electorates. Collectively these electorates/districts are referred to as the Hela region (see Haley 2007a).

that had erected a grandstand were observed to send out invitations to both the open and provincial candidates inviting them to speak at their event, whether it be a church opening, the opening of a new classroom or teacher's house, a youth or church rally, or a women's group meeting. Invited speakers were expected to pay for the privilege. Observers confirmed that hire rates ranged between K100 and several thousand kina per speaker, and that some events netted upwards of K20,000 (see chapter 21). In addition there were unconfirmed reports of candidates paying as much as K30,000–40,000 for the privilege of using a grandstand to campaign in Kagua-Erave (Eves 2008). It seems that this particular enterprise has been made possible by the introduction of LPV, in that what candidates were clearly vying for at such rallies were second and third preferences.



Figure 20.2: Candidates at a rally in Koroba

Giftng was also observed throughout the Southern Highlands and manifest in a multitude of ways. Some candidates financed people's travel home, paying for air fares, chartering planes and hiring public motor vehicles for days on end. Others gave road clearing and/or road, bridge and airstrip maintenance contracts, while others offered inducements in the form of food and drink, pigs, building materials and household items such as blankets, spades, bush knives,

stereos and even cars. Several candidates were also reputed to have assisted with the transporting of dead bodies, while contributions to funerary feasts were common.

Although not widely reported, some observers in the Southern Highlands reported credible accounts of women, but more particularly young girls, being gifted to candidates, campaign managers, electoral officials, police and Defence Force personnel during the election period.

While vote buying and gifting assumed some novel forms in the 2007 election in the Southern Highlands, one thing that remained the same was the element of implied or explicit coercion that the acceptance of money carries. For example, the then sitting MP for Tari, Tom Tomiape, was seen by one observer travelling from church to church visiting congregations and making donations to support church activities. He was also observed to be making congregation members sign an oath to the effect that they would vote for him in return for his donation. In another case, voters were warned that 'God would strike them down' if they failed to honor their commitments. Similar such threats have been used by candidates in the Southern Highlands in the past (see Robinson 2002).

Throughout SHP people expressed dismay about the amounts of money that had changed hands during the election, saying they had seen 'nothing like it before'. Many people interviewed claimed to have voted for, or to have given preferences to 'the money candidates' out of fear—not because they had received money but because the candidates concerned were clearly 'connected'. It is evident then that money was not merely used to buy votes or to display prestige, but to generate fear. In some parts of SHP money took the place of guns in this regard.

It is not merely the huge amounts of cash distributed that set the 2007 election apart from earlier elections in SHP, but the way it was used. We have noted the declining use of name lists in favour of cash payments to individual voters, and the increased mobility of voters seeking out inducements for pledged support. It is also evident that candidates are now having to rely on larger and larger networks in order to finance their campaigns, and that wealthy individuals (businessmen and community leaders) are financing or contributing towards candidates' campaigns in order to create indebtedness and to ensure that the candidate is beholden to them should they win. Indeed it is not uncommon to hear talk of 'backing' candidates. This happens at the local level as well. Instead of candidates hosting huge campaign rallies and supplying voters with pigs and beer, as was common in the past, voters themselves are now killing the pigs as a show of support for their preferred candidate as well. Supporters who provide financial or other assistance to candidates expect to see their investments repaid with interest.

Over the course of the last election cycle, then, cash has seemingly begun to be used differently. Although it continues to play a central role in SHP politics, it is not so much a case of cashed-up candidates coming home once every five years to distribute largesse as a means of securing votes; rather, money or support in kind is now being used by voters, willingly or otherwise, to secure a share of the much sought-after spoils of public office. A Kopiago woman in her early thirties complained bitterly about this. She summed up the shift by explaining that in 1997 her local candidate had paid her K900 for a large pig that was killed at one of his many campaign rallies; in 2002 he had paid her K400 for a similar such pig and had promised the balance of the payment upon election; in 2003 he had killed one of her pigs entirely on credit; and in the 2006 by-election he had returned, seeking yet another of her pigs. In both 2006 and 2007 she was expected to provide a pig gratis as demonstration of her ongoing support. From her perspective, she had no choice but to give the pigs, as she felt she needed as much as anything to protect her earlier investments, in the event that the candidate in question proved lucky on this occasion. Elsewhere in the Southern Highlands, voters told of contributing to their local/preferred candidate's campaign so that he might bribe the polling officials, security personnel and counting officials to his advantage.

The inflationary aspect of elections seems to be of particular concern to candidates in the Southern Highlands, with several complaining that LPV has inflated voter expectations. Several candidates expressed concern that the incredibly large amounts of money now being spent on electioneering would mean that the winning candidate's discretionary funds would be unlikely to suffice when repaying the debts incurred in financing a Highlands-style election campaign. Late in the campaign period, Ben Peri, who was contesting Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open for the seventh time, lamented that even if he won, he would never be able to repay the debts incurred over seven elections. He further asserted that he would have been a much wealthier man if he had never entered politics, and that the expectation to contest is crippling. In so much as standing for election can increase individual and group prestige, not standing can diminish one's standing within the community.

Women's participation

In the lead-up to the 2007 election there had been concerted electoral and civic awareness in the five SHP open electorates in which the 2002 elections had failed (Figures 20.3, 20.4 and 20.5; see also chapter 4). This was conducted by the Ima Kelo Group under Nicole Haley's coordination. In total 104,163 individuals (men, women and children) attended 343 awareness sessions conducted over a six-month period (November 2006 to April 2007). Bearing in mind the extent to which the SHP's electoral rolls are inflated (see chapter 21), we estimate

conservatively that 50 percent of the eligible citizens in the activity area were reached. Of more than 100,000 people who attended the awareness sessions, 36,951 were women of voting age (Haley 2007b:7).



Figure 20.3: LPV awareness at Waneke, November 2006



Figure 20.4: Civic awareness at Lake Kopiago



Figure 20.5: LPV awareness at Lake Kopiago

Observations made during the campaigning and polling periods suggest reasonable levels of awareness regarding the new voting system among women voters in the Southern Highlands. Observers throughout the Southern Highlands also reported a mood of optimism among women voters and particularly high voter turnout of women on polling day. At many polling stations in SHP women appeared to outnumber men two to one. We attribute this to two things: the awareness and the large security presence. Many women interviewed on polling day expressed optimism that they would be able to vote freely, although for many this proved not to be the case. As noted above, 97 of the 200 women voters (49 percent) interviewed in post-polling surveys in SHP reported some form of intimidation when casting their vote.

Of the 201 candidates who contested the 2007 elections in SHP only three were women, namely Margret Kawa (Imbonggu Open), Epiya Janet Kang Nisa (Mendi Open) and Janet Koriama (Tari Open). Observations made across the province reveal that very few candidates explicitly discussed gender issues or sought to secure women's votes, although some strong assertions by women of their rights and opinions were observed during the campaigning and polling periods. Only two SHP candidates consistently raised women's issues, these being Joseph

Warai and Janet Koriama, both of whom contested Tari-Pori Open electorate. Janet Koriama was observed to campaign on issues of women in politics, women's rights, development and services, and good governance.

2007 saw the official introduction of separate voting compartments intended to allow for gender segregated polling. These were meant to ensure women more freedom of choice when exercising their vote. In the Southern Highlands this policy change was met with outright opposition. Awareness teams attempting to convey the policy change were confronted by angry men opposed to the changes. One observer in Tari-Pori Open electorate reported being confronted by a group of men who were yelling 'we do not support women's rights to vote separately from men as we have already paid the bride price of pigs and money, they are ours, and we own them'. The asserted ownership of women clearly extended not only to their votes but to their names. Indeed some observers reported widespread consternation about the notion that women should be afforded the opportunity to exercise their own choices. They further reported that if women were permitted choice they might choose to vote for candidates other than those their husbands and brothers might be supporting and this meant men would lose some of the 'sure votes' they were seeking to claim. At Koroba, election officials went further, asserting that the policy change was a cultural affront inflicted upon them by outsiders from other countries. Interestingly, the policy change came about after intense lobbying from women and civil society groups in Chimbu, particularly *Meri I Kirap Sapotim*.

On the campaign trail only two candidates, Joseph Warai and James Marabe, were seen to have engaged women campaign managers. Both candidates contested Tari-Pori Open electorate. Across the province observers noted that women tended to play mainly support roles during the campaign period—cooking food, providing hospitality and entertaining guests. Accounts of women attending rallies varied somewhat and were dependent on both the time of day and location as well as the role women were playing at the particular rally. Upper estimates suggest that between 40 and 50 percent of participants at rallies during daylight hours were women, while lower-end estimates suggest only 20 percent of participants were women during the evenings. Young girls were also observed to attend rallies in significant numbers. The majority of women at rallies were reported to be either observing or participating in singing and dancing or in a logistically more supportive role such as providing hospitality or cooking. In one instance a group of beautifully dressed young women claimed prominence at a large rally at Koroba airstrip, by mounting a silent protest, weaving their way through the crowd carrying blood-red knives bearing the name of a young man who had been killed in election-related violence in the lead-up to polling (Figure 20.6). These women were seeking to provoke their menfolk into avenging his death.



Figure 20.6: Women protesting at Koroba, 28 June 2007

HIV/AIDS and the 2007 election in SHP

The 2007 election revealed that HIV/AIDS is not a pressing electoral issue in SHP, with very few candidates making mention of it at rallies or elsewhere. This is consistent with observations made elsewhere in the country (see Haley and Anere 2009:63) and not particularly surprising, because what voters want of their political leaders are basic services—roads, schools, medical supplies, police and magisterial services, not policy statements and prevention strategies. That said, observers across the Southern Highlands noted that HIV and AIDS had a higher profile in the 2007 election than in earlier elections. Indeed as documented elsewhere (Haley 2008), the HIV/AIDS epidemic had not figured at all in campaigning in either the 2002 general election or the 2003 supplementary elections in SHP.

Those observed to explicitly raise the issue of HIV/AIDS included Joesph Warai and Janet Koriama (Tari-Pori Open), Petrus Thomas (Koroba-Lake Kapiago), and Jacob Sekewa (SHP Provincial). Warai was a member of the provincial HIV/AIDS committee and former director of the Community Based Health Care Program in Tari, while Janet Koriama was head of the Tari women's association. Both had established histories of community engagement.

Although the electoral and civic awareness undertaken in the lead-up to the election had included material on HIV and elections (see Figure 20.7), HIV/AIDS awareness materials were largely absent during the campaigning and polling periods. Observers in SHP reported the presence of awareness materials at only three polling stations visited. This represents a lost opportunity because, although HIV/AIDS awareness is not a core electoral commission function, elections provide the opportunity to conduct HIV/AIDS awareness in areas that are generally beyond the reach of the state and lack the formal infrastructure (due to the breakdown of essential services) through which awareness messages might ordinarily be channelled. Election-related HIV/AIDS awareness is also important because experiences from Africa have shown that HIV/AIDS impacts on the costs of running elections because by-elections brought about through the death of the incumbent MP are increasingly commonplace.

While HIV/AIDS awareness in SHP was limited during the election period, there was widespread evidence of behavior that appears to enhance the risk of HIV transmission and strong evidence to suggest that elections provide a context for heightened sexual activity (see also chapter 12), which further increases the likelihood of HIV transmission. Specifically, individual voters were observed to have greater access to cash and were more mobile than in past elections (see above, concerning groups of young men travelling from province to province under the sponsorship of candidates), so that they were better positioned to seek

out transactional and extra-marital sexual relations, both by increased fiscal capacity and by the greater geographical opportunities afforded by increased mobility. Coupled with this, observers in SHP reported that campaign houses and discos featured significantly in campaigning and politicking in SHP and that both were popular meeting places. Individuals were reported to frequent multiple campaign houses seeking out inducements from candidates.



Figure 20.7: HIV awareness at Pakule, Ialibu, 22 April 2007

Across the region campaign house opening hours varied widely, with some observers in Tari-Pori noting that one campaign house was open only during daylight hours. Others in the same area were observed to be open 24 hours a day. In the first instance no women were seen frequenting the campaign house, although they were observed to be patronizing other campaign houses in the same area. Generally, observers noted not only the presence of local sex workers but also of young girls and married women engaging in transactional sex. Observations made at some night-time events suggested that young unmarried girls accounted for around a fifth of all the night-time attendees at campaign houses.

Typically, observers reported cannabis use, the consumption of free food and alcohol, and evidence of transactional sex along with political campaigning and strategizing at campaign houses. They also observed that many establishments, particularly discos, did not charge women a gate fee, as a means of encouraging

women's attendance, and that there seemed to be less surveillance of women's sexual activity during the election period. Some observers and local leaders specifically reported that women who did not ordinarily engage in transactional sex were seen to be doing so in the context of the election. This is consistent with Gibbs and Mondu's detailed findings in respect of campaign houses in Wabag (see chapter 12).

Conclusion

The introduction of LPV has influenced the conduct of elections in the Southern Highlands and brought with it some significant changes to SHP political culture that have important ramifications for future elections. Of these, local innovations in respect of gifting, vote buying and money politics have seen the quantity of money and gifts being made available increase markedly in the face of voters' ability and willingness to pledge support to multiple candidates. LPV also saw record numbers of women voters at polling booths, although observer accounts reveal that women's experiences of the elections were somewhat less positive than initially hoped for. Indeed early optimism that women would have more freedom of choice under LPV proved unfounded in that men continued to assert their rights over those of women, insisting that women remain their property and should therefore vote in accordance with their wishes.

The proliferation of money politics, which we see as related to the introduction of LPV, gives cause for concern for a number of reasons, not least because it seems to have inflated the cost of elections and facilitated the heightened sexual activity reported during the election period. The changes to SHP political culture witnessed at the 2007 election thus warrant closer attention in terms of how they might be implicated in the epidemiology of the burgeoning HIV epidemic, especially as similar patterns have been noted as contributors to the spread of the pandemic in Southeast Asia in the early 1990s.³

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21. Results at any Cost? The Legacy of 2002 in Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open Electorate

Nicole Haley

In June 2007, the people of Koroba-Lake Kopiago went to the polls for the fourth time in five years. The election was of particular interest because Koroba-Lake Kopiago was one of the six open electorates in which the 2002 general election had been deemed to have failed, and was one of the 10 electorates around the country that had had a limited preferential voting (LPV) by-election prior to the general election. It is also an electorate that has been subject to election studies in the past (see Haley 2002, 2004, 2006 and Robinson 2002) and for which there is consequently a great deal of comparative longitudinal data. This chapter draws upon observations and findings of both the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kopiago by-election observation team (Haley 2006) and the 2007 Koroba-Lake Kopiago domestic observation team.¹ It finds that the election was anything but fair, yet despite fraud and malpractice on a scale never before seen the election was widely held to have been successful and a significant improvement on 2002. It further suggests that the national government and Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) were willing to accept results at any cost in order to avoid a repetition of the events of 2002 (Somare 2006:5), and advocates a more honest assessment of future elections. The integrity of elections cannot merely be asserted but must be demonstrated.

Background

Koroba-Lake Kopiago is one of eight open electorates in Southern Highlands Province (Figure 20.1). It is a large ethnically divided electorate situated in the far north-western corner of the province, sharing boundaries with Enga, Sandaun, East Sepik and Western provinces (Figure 21.1). The district comprises four local-level governments (LLGs) for census purposes—North Koroba LLG

¹ The by-election observation team included Richard Alo, Kenny Kendoli, Philip Moya, Ben Randa and Susan Ferguson, while the 2007 domestic observation team included Anna Alo, Susan Alo, Jenny Lundape, Kipu Piaro, Saki Alo, Rodney Aporia, Mex Bibila, Kenny Kendoli, Petrus Kilapa, David Lundape, Jim Siape, Justin Wandu and Eka Wek. Both teams were led by Nicole Haley. Given the prevailing security situation in the electorate in 2007 several of the team positions were split. The four local women, for instance, shared a position and made observations in their home areas where their personal security could be more likely guaranteed.

(26 wards), South Koroba LLG (23 wards), Lake Kopiago LLG (19 wards) and Auwi-Pori LLG (27 wards)—and three and a half LLGs for electoral purposes. Like several other LLGs in Southern Highlands Province, Auwi-Pori LLG is split between two open electorates, namely Koroba-Lake Kopiago and Tari-Pori Open.² This has proved to be an ongoing source of confusion to voters and electoral officials alike.

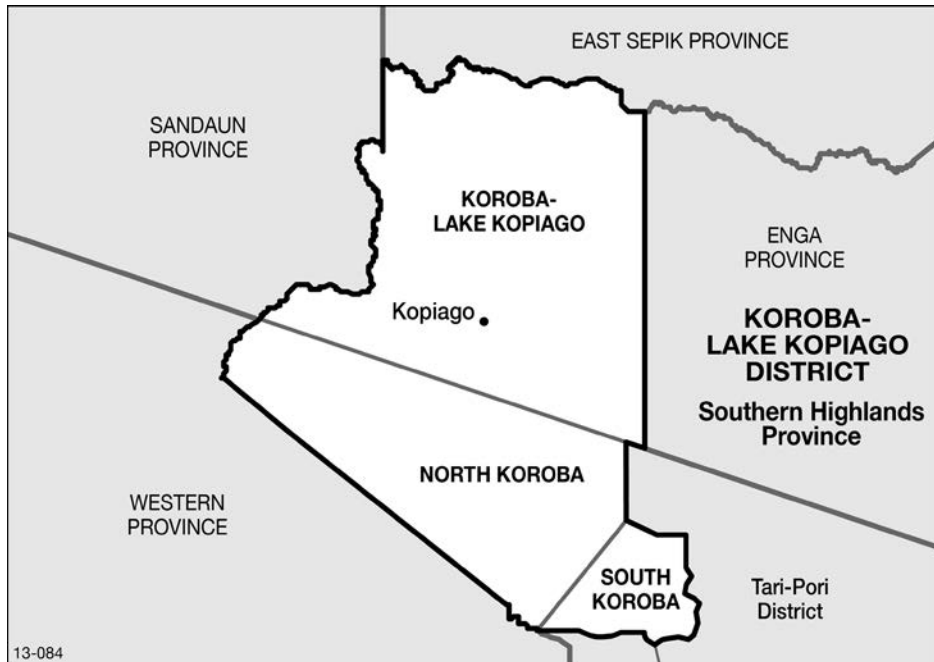


Figure 21.1: Koroba-Lake Kopiago District

Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate extends northwest from Koroba and Mogorofugwa—two densely populated wetland basins inhabited by Huli speakers—towards the Strickland–Lagaip river junction, thereby taking in the country of the Duna, Hewa, Bogaia and Awi peoples. Much of the electorate (especially the northwest) is accessible only by air, or several days walking with hazardous river crossings. Political leaders (including many of the ward councillors) spend little, if any, time in the district and vast majority of public servants are also absent. As a consequence there is little by the way of government service delivery and armed conflict is commonplace, as are illegal weapons (see Haley and Muggah 2006).

² Auwi-Pori LLG comprises 27 wards. Thirteen wards vote in Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate and 14 wards in Tari-Pori Open electorate. The Auwi-Pori LLG headquarters are at Tugu, which is in the Pori sub-district.

As at the 2007 election, the electorate was home to around 55,000 people,³ although there were in fact over 48,700 names on the new electoral roll. Of the electorate's residents approximately 33,500 (61 percent) primarily identify as Huli, 18,065 (33 percent) as Duna, 2926 (5 percent) as Hewa, 425 as Febi, 335 as Bogaia, and 226 as Awi speakers. This ethnic mix has made for fiercely contested parliamentary elections in the past, with all the past candidates being of either Huli or Duna extraction. Except for the periods 1977–1982 and 2003–2004 the sitting member has always been Huli. This is not altogether surprising as the Huli outnumber the Duna 2:1 and as such command a huge electoral advantage within the electorate.

A history of violence

Since 1997, when guns were first used to menace voters in Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorate (Robinson 2002), violence and intimidation have figured prominently in elections in this part of the Southern Highlands (see also Haley 2002, 2004). In 1997 for instance, guns were used to influence electoral outcomes by controlling the voting at particular polling stations and a helicopter carrying the then sitting member, Herowa Agiwa, was fired upon by supporters of an opposing candidate during the campaign period. The latter incident resulted in over US\$300,000 damage to the Hevilift helicopter (Haley 2004:19).

By 2002 guns and violence were widespread: election-related deaths were reported during the campaign period and in the aftermath of the elections; Ben Peri (a high profile Duna candidate) was kidnapped and held for ransom; another candidate armed his own militia; all air traffic was suspended following threats that planes would be shot out of the sky; and voters throughout the electorate were threatened and intimidated by candidates and their supporters (Haley 2004). These factors contributed to the failure of the 2002 elections.

Post 2002, elections in Koroba-Lake Kapiago have involved huge investments in security. Two thousand additional security personnel were deployed under a national call-out during the 2003 supplementary elections, 800 additional police and Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel were engaged during the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kapiago by-election security operations (Haley 2006), and an additional 2500 security personnel were deployed to the Southern Highlands in 2007. Despite the huge security presence and the imposition of a state of emergency followed by special police operations in the 10 months leading up to the elections, guns remained present in the electorate in significant numbers.

³ This figure has been calculated from the 1990 census figures using the national population growth rate of 2.7 percent per annum. The 2000 national census figures for the Southern Highlands are highly suspect, having been grossly inflated (see Haley 2004).

Indeed, members of the Koroba-Lake Kapiago observer team reported seeing both high-powered and homemade weapons throughout the electorate and a relative abundance of black market ammunition at pre-state-of-emergency prices (see chapter 8 and Haley and Muggah 2006). They also reported road closures, intermittent election-related violence; and an election-related death in the lead-up to polling at Koroba. One observer was threatened and warned away from a polling station at Harereke by men armed with bush knives, and the brother of another observer was killed at Koroba. That said, there were few overt displays of weapons at polling places, and guns were not openly used to intimidate and influence the vote as they had been in 1997 and 2002.

A history of fraud and malpractice

I have documented in considerable detail the fraudulent electoral practices that have characterized elections in the Koroba-Lake Kapiago electorate over the past decade (Haley 2002, 2004 and 2006). The 2007 election, like those of the past decade, lacked integrity and was marred by widespread cheating, fraud and malpractice. Key strategies effectively utilized in the past were once again employed. These included inflating the electoral roll, having electoral officials removed and replaced, diverting and impounding ballot boxes, using excess ballot papers, pre-marking ballot papers, and voting multiple times. Much of the malpractice witnessed in 2007, which is detailed in the following sections of this chapter, can be attributed to the poor state of the new electoral roll.

Key electoral personnel

One of the ways candidates sought to control election outcomes in 2007 was through control of key election officials. This proved to be a particularly ineffective strategy as in-fighting between key election officials detrimentally impacted upon their performance and saw them effectively paralysed at key junctures. As a consequence, the security personnel stepped in, assuming responsibility for critical aspects of the election preparations (see chapter 8).

Without exception, observers were critical of the key electoral personnel engaged to conduct the elections in Koroba-Lake Kapiago electorate. They were particularly critical of the Southern Highlands election manager, David Wakias, considering him to be both ineffectual and partisan. They observed that he could rarely be found in his office, 'spent most of his time roaming around in his hire car' and seemed 'happy to let the politically appointed provincial returning officer—Charles Ipa—run the show'. Another observer had this to say: 'He is a

good man, good at making excuses and delaying things. For example he didn't allow people to check their names on the electoral roll to see whether they were enrolled or not'.

Observers were equally critical of the returning officer and assistant returning officers. They too were considered partisan, politically compromised, and unfit to undertake their appointed rolls. The returning officer, Denny Hongai, and the assistant returning officers for North Koroba (Haddick Apiako/Sakopa), South Koroba (Don Piru/Palabu) and Awi/Lokayu (Jackson Kenamu) had all held their positions since 2006, and in particular had run the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kopiago by-election. On this basis, one might have assumed a degree of confidence and the knowledge, skills and competency to run an election. Unfortunately this proved not to be the case.

There were problems too at Lake Kopiago. In the lead-up to the election the assistant returning officer's position changed hands several times. Steven Pauwini, the former council executive officer, had held the position during 2006. Following poor performance during the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kopiago by-election he was replaced. Richard Bei/Pelaku took over the position of assistant returning officer for Lake Kopiago in early 2007—and was observed to be far more competent than his predecessor. On 23 March 2007, however, Bei's appointment was revoked and Jackson Hewape was appointed in his place (*National Gazette* No. G63, 19 April 2007). Hewape's appointment was subsequently revoked, and on 14 May 2007, Bei was reappointed to the position. There were rumours that Hewape was again reappointed to the position in mid-June, but no evidence of this could be found in the *National Gazette*. In any event both men continued to argue that they were the duly appointed assistant returning officer, both accompanied the ballot boxes and ballot papers to Lake Kopiago, both sought to direct polling operations at Lake Kopiago on polling day, and both were present in the counting room. It is understood that in the week before polling the election manager instructed both men to work together, and that he appointed Jackson Hewape as assistant to the Lake Kopiago assistant returning officer. Needless to say this caused much confusion in the electorate and hampered planning and performance. It also caused considerable consternation in the counting room, resulting in much discussion about the integrity of the 19 Lake Kopiago ballot boxes, and saw scrutineers for the various Huli candidates seek to have the boxes excluded from the count.

Electoral rolls (past and present)

In the wake of the 2002 election, new electoral rolls were created for each of Papua New Guinea's 109 electorates. On the face of it the new Koroba-Lake

Kopiago electoral roll, which resulted from a re-registration exercise undertaken in late 2005, appears more accurate than those used in 1997, 2002, and 2003. The new roll, for instance, has only 48,739 names as compared with the 2002 roll which listed 60,300 enrolled voters. Appearances can be deceptive though. In the Koroba-Lake Kopiago case the electoral roll is grossly inaccurate, with many more enrolled voters than eligible citizens (Table 21.1).

Table 21.1: Comparison of electoral rolls and votes cast in Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate, 1992 to 2007

Election	Total population	Expected enrolments ^a	Actual enrolments	Votes cast	Votes as percent of expected enrolments
1992	36,920	18,460	na	14,264	77
1997	42,180	21,090	40,127	32,874	156
2003	49,490	24,745	60,300	42,595	172
2006	53,610	26,800	48,778	41,029	153
2007	55,060	27,530	48,739	45,020	164

^a The expected enrolment is held to be 50 percent of the total projected electorate population, calculated from the 1990 census figures using the national population growth rate of 2.7 percent per annum.

As outlined in Table 21.1, enrolled voters have far exceeded the number of eligible citizens in the Koroba-Lake Kopiago electorate for more than a decade now (see Haley 2002, 2004), with the original inflation of the roll dating back to the 1997 elections. In 1992 14,264 votes were counted. In 1997 there was a twofold increase in the number of ballots cast, with 32,724 votes allowed (Haley 2002:134). Since then, over 40,000 votes have been cast at each election.

Based on population figures projected from the 1990 census, and confirmed in many wards by a household census conducted in 1997 (Haley and Robinson 1998; Robinson and Haley 1998a, 1998b) it is estimated that there should have been no more than 27,500 eligible voters in the Koroba-Lake Kopiago electorate in 2007. The common roll created for the 2007 election, however, contained 48,739 names, and is replete with gross irregularities, including highly inflated voter numbers in at least one-quarter of proclaimed wards; thousands of eligible citizens disenfranchised and not on the roll or allocated to the wrong wards; thousands of under-age voters, enrolled by virtue of fictitious birth dates; and thousands of duplicate entries.⁴

In order to get a fuller sense of the problems associated with the new electoral roll, the Koroba-Lake Kopiago observer team undertook a careful analysis of

⁴ For specific examples refer to the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kopiago by-election observation report (Haley 2006). Many of the irregularities identified therein were not rectified prior to the 2007 election. For the most part this had to do with the poorly implemented verification exercise, which saw a net reduction of only 39 names from the 2006 by-election roll.

ward rolls within the Lake Kopiago LLG area.⁵ This was done using census material collected in the past (Haley and Robinson 1998; Robinson and Haley 1998a, 1998b), on the basis of our own knowledge, and in consultation with community leaders. This close examination of the ward rolls for the 19 wards within Lake Kopiago LLG—one of four LLGs within Koroba-Lake Kopiago electorate—revealed that only half (50.2 percent) of the 10,351 enrolled voters were actually eligible to enrol. Examination of the ward rolls for Lake Kopiago also revealed the following irregularities:

- highly inflated voter numbers in many wards
- entire villages and hamlets assigned to the wrong wards
- 2426 (23.4 percent) enrolled voters who were not known in the ward
- 1197 (11.6 percent) under-age voters enrolled with fictitious birth dates
- 744 (7.2 percent) enrolled voters who did not meet residency requirement
- 664 (6.4 percent) duplicate entries
- 243 (2.3 percent) deceased voters who miraculously re-registered
- at least 735 eligible citizens who do not appear on the new electoral roll.

Put simply, there are gross irregularities with the electoral roll across the entire electorate. As well as wards in which enrolments are highly inflated, there are wards which are under-enrolled, and over-enrolled wards which are missing significant numbers of eligible citizens. In some cases this seems to have been due to administrative errors but in other cases because enterprising candidates successfully managed to ensure that their opponents' supporters were disenfranchised. In Koroba-Lake Kopiago, and indeed elsewhere in the Southern Highlands, observers identified whole families and clans which were disenfranchised by being placed in the wrong wards or by being left off the roll completely. These irregularities meant that while some people were not included on the roll at all, others were included from two to six times.

Based on the above analysis the Lake Kopiago LLG roll should have included some 6000 names: the 5196 correctly enrolled people (50.2 percent of 10,351) plus the 735+ eligible citizens who were missing altogether. If one takes the 1990 census population for Lake Kopiago LLG, which is predominantly Duna speaking, and projects forward to 2007 using the national population growth rate, an eligible voting population of 6200 should have been expected. On this basis the LLG was over-enrolled by 67 percent at the time of the 2007 election. Using the same methodology, the North Koroba and South Koroba LLGs, which are

⁵ In all there are 19 wards in the Lake Kopiago LLG. One ward comprises Bogaia speakers, another comprises Awi speakers, four could be considered ethnically Hewa and the remaining 13 are Duna wards.

ethnically Huli, were over-enrolled by 79 percent and 84 percent respectively,⁶ while Auwi-Pori LLG, where voters are Duna speaking, was over-enrolled by 71 percent. Overall, the Duna-speaking parts of the electorate are over-enrolled by 68 percent while the Huli-speaking parts of the electorate were over-enrolled by 82 percent. This amplifies the electoral advantage the Huli command, and delivers to them nearly 15,000 additional ballot papers/votes, as compared to the 6400 additional ballot papers/votes available to the Duna.

Both the enrolment and verification exercises were highly problematic in the Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate. Very few people actually saw the enrolment teams and even fewer filled out a claim for enrolment form. Correct procedure dictates that eligible citizens should have completed and signed a claim for enrolment form, in order to re-enrol. Observers across the electorate reported that teams of local men were employed to complete, sign and witness the forms on behalf of the wider community. In doing so these enumerators knowingly witnessed and signed off on thousands of forms in which false claims or declarations had been made. In the vast majority of cases there was no excuse for witnessing false declarations as the local men employed as village enumerators were from the wards in which they undertook the enrolment exercise and would have known who was under-age, who was long absent from the electorate (that is, those who did not meet the legislatively proscribed residency requirements),⁷ and which of the would-be electors were actually dead.

Across the electorate claims of political interference in the enrolment process, and claims that not enough forms were sent out were regularly encountered. There is seemingly some merit in these allegations in that there is huge over-enrolment in some wards and significant under-enrolment in others. Haredege ward, one of the most-populous wards in Lake Kopiago LLG is a case in point. Based on the 1990 census, a voting population of 463 was expected in 2007; however, the 2007 ward roll contained only 158 names, thus two-thirds of eligible voters in the ward were disenfranchised.

Observations made during the 2007 domestic observation reveal that the wider community was not complicit in the fraud that saw them placed on the roll multiple times. Indeed the vast majority of people did not personally place

6 Expected enrolments in North Koroba and South Koroba were 8186 and 9922 respectively, while actual enrolments were 14,654 and 18,228.

7 Section 55(1) of the *Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections* requires that a person making a claim for enrolment must have 'resided in the area of an electorate for a period of not less than six months immediately preceding the date of his [or her] claim for enrolment' (s. 51(1)(a)). This means that clan members residing outside the electorate in the six months leading up to the enrolment exercise were not eligible to be enrolled. Linked to this, electors were required to be present at the time of enrolment. Page 7 of the Electoral Roll Training Manual outlines this aspect of the enrolment procedure in bold font, saying, 'The elector must sign the enrolment form personally, or make their mark. An enrolment form cannot be signed by another person on behalf of the elector'. Where this did not happen procedure was clearly breached.

themselves on the roll, and prior to the civic and electoral awareness undertaken by Ima Kelo between November 2006 and April 2007 (see chapter 20) many were not even aware that new rolls had been created. Of the 12 domestic observers who live in the Koroba-Lake Kopiago electorate and were eligible to enrol, only one had completed a claim for enrolment form, yet they were all enrolled—and most were enrolled multiple times. At least three of the domestic observers appeared on the roll three separate times. A survey of 200 voters, undertaken during the campaign period, further revealed that only 12 people (seven men and five women), 6 percent of the survey respondents, had actually completed a ‘claim for enrolment’ form.

Like the enrolment exercise, the verification exercise was highly problematic. The rolls were not publicly displayed in the wards or in Kopiago sub-district. Our Koroba observers reported that the rolls were on display at Koroba district office but they disagree over how long for—reports ranging from one to seven days. In Mendi, the provincial headquarters, the rolls went on public display only 48 hours before the issue of writs—so that there was only a very small window of opportunity for voters to check whether their name appeared on the roll. For those who managed to check the roll, the exercise proved futile, because amendments made during the 48-hour window were not reflected on the final rolls. One of the observers, Kenny Kendoli, travelled to Mendi and sought to have his multiple entries removed. He annotated the verification roll in the presence of the election manager, and the observation coordinator, yet he still appeared on the electoral roll in three places. At the same time, he sought to have his four under-age children removed from the roll, by annotating their entries to the effect that they were under-age. All four children remained on the roll. They were included on the roll without their parents’ knowledge or consent, and all appear with fictitious birthdates (Table 21.2).

Table 21.2: Examples of under-age voters with fictitious birth dates, Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate

Ward name	Elector ID	Last name	First name	Sex	Birth date on roll	Occupation	Actual birth date	Age
Hirane	76014203	Yuwi	Rodney	M	1 Dec 1983	Student	02 Nov 1989	17
Hirane	76014262	Yuwi	Jassin	M	12 Feb 1985	Student	20 Sept 1992	14
Hirane	76014314	Yuwi	Melo ^a	M	5 Oct 1987	Student	19 Oct 1995	11
Hirane	76000459	Kenny	Mero	M	10 Feb	Student	19 Oct 1995	11
Hirane	76014377	Yuwi	Bonica	F	6 May 1989	Student	?? Oct 1999	7

a Melo, the youngest son, is included on the roll twice, under two different spellings of his name, and under both his father’s birth name and Christian name.

Source: Electoral roll made up to May 2007

Two other observers collectively made several hundred corrections to various Lake Kapiago rolls on display in Mendi, in order to move disenfranchised voters to their correct wards. Similarly, these amendments were not reflected on the final rolls.

Despite the fact that the rolls were not publicly displayed as they should have been, the assistant returning officers, with assistance from local enumerators, undertook a roll-cleansing exercise of sorts. In the Kapiago and Awi/Logayu LLG areas this saw enrolments decrease substantially, and in South Koroba it saw enrolments increase (Table 21.3).

Table 21.3: Summary of enrolments, Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorate, 2006 and 2007

LLG area	2006 By-election roll, (verification roll) 22 June 2006	2007 Electoral roll, (final roll) May 2007	Variation
Kapiago	11,038	10,351	6% decrease
Auwi-Pori	6,962	5,506	21% decrease
North Koroba	14,824	14,654	1% decrease
South Koroba	15,954	18,228	14% increase
Total	48,778	48,739	

The assistant returning officers for Kapiago and Awi/Logayu alleged a conspiracy on the part of the returning officer, claiming that while the North and South Koroba assistant returning officers were given plenty of forms, they got only a handful and so were not able to enrol missing voters during the verification exercise.

Table 21.4 compares actual enrolments with expected enrolments, at the ward level, based on the 1990 census.⁸ It shows significant over-enrolment in a large number of Huli-speaking wards, and makes evident that enrolments in several already over-enrolled wards increased even further during the verification process, which took place between the 2006 by-election and the 2007 general election. Enrolments in Tumbite ward, for example, increased from 1299 in 2006 to 2586 in 2007, while enrolments in Pubulumu 1 and 2 increased from 796 to 2485. At Tumbite inflation of the roll was achieved by duplication using different but similar spellings of the same name and by giving different birth years for

⁸ The table is based on an investigative approach developed by Thelma Oberdorf, a specialist roll adviser from the Australian Electoral Commission, to help election managers identify and prioritise ward rolls that required cleaning. Oberdorf's approach involved comparing expected ward enrolments, calculated using the age data contained within the 2000 census, with actual ward enrolments. Given that the 2000 census figures for Southern Highlands Province are generally regarded as highly suspect, I have based my calculations on the 1990 census figures.

each entry (see Table 21.13 in the appendix of this chapter for examples). Among the Huli, 'K' and 'G', 'P' and 'B' and 'Y' and 'J' are often used interchangeably. These regular variations form the basis of the duplication identified.

Table 21.4: Comparison of over-enrolled wards in North Koroba and South Koroba, Koroba-Lake Kopia Open electorate

Ward(s)	LLG	Census 1990	Expected ward enrolmt ^a	Ward enrolmt 2006	Ward percent 2006	Ward enrolmt 2007	Ward percent 2007	Votes cast 2007
Tumbite	Sth Koroba	877	690	1299	188	2586	375	2583
Teria 1&2	Nth Koroba	488	384	1289	336	1419	370	888
Pubulumu 1&2	Sth Koroba	1182	930	796	86	2485	267	^b 2499
Betege 1&2	Nth Koroba	670	527	1099	209	1171	222	1190
Andiria 1&2	Sth Koroba	619	487	1175	241	1025	210	979
Maria	Sth Koroba	720	566	1022	181	1161	205	1061
Ereiba 1&2	Nth Koroba	819	644	1441	224	1312	204	881
Gunu 1&2	Sth Koroba	671	528	1172	222	1056	200	890
Topi	Nth Koroba	156	123	250	203	238	193	243
Aiyenda	Nth Koroba	372	293	619	211	549	187	531
Kenamo	Nth Koroba	261	205	416	203	382	186	386
Kagoma	Nth Koroba	577	454	739	163	829	183	797
Humburu 1&2	Sth Koroba	746	587	1099	187	1068	182	1079
Magara 1&2	Sth Koroba	946	744	1567	211	1252	168	1264
Hujanoma 1&2	Nth Koroba	962	757	993	131	1241	164	1254
Kakarene 1&2	Sth Koroba	1250	983	1616	164	1495	152	1298
Pandu	Sth Koroba	603	474	599	126	721	152	612
Hedemari 1&2	Sth Koroba	914	719	1148	160	1080	150	1084
Mbuli	Sth Koroba	974	766	1191	155	1141	149	1143
Levani	Nth Koroba	716	563	848	151	834	148	839
Piagonga 1&2	Nth Koroba	685	539	799	148	769	143	778
Tangimapu	Sth Koroba	763	600	878	146	854	142	859
Yatimali	Nth Koroba	816	642	895	139	892	139	nil
Kelabo 1&2	Nth Koroba	702	552	948	172	749	136	691
Hauwinda	Nth Koroba	326	256	348	136	338	132	346
Erebo	Sth Koroba	673	530	668	126	649	122	653
Jaguabi	Nth Koroba	605	476	636	134	578	121	576
Warukumu	Nth Koroba	620	468	569	117	567	121	564

^a The expected ward enrolment in this case was held to be 50 percent of the total projected population and was calculated from the 1990 census figures using the national population growth rate of 2.7 percent per annum.

^b This represents four more papers than were collectively issued to these two polling stations, although in fact nine additional ballot papers found their way into the Pumbulumu 1 ballot box.

Based on the age data in the 2000 census and projections from the 1990 census, there should be no more than 600–700 eligible voters in Tumbite and around 900 voters in Pubulumu 1 and 2 combined. In 2007, enrolments at Tumbite and Pubulumu were three to four times greater than they should have been. These three wards formed the core of Father Matthias Olape's base vote. Indeed, he picked up 5008 of the 7978 first preference votes he received from these three wards alone. Olape was the National Alliance endorsed candidate in 2006 and People's Party endorsed candidate in the 2007.⁹

Exceptionally high enrolments were also found in the base votes of the sitting member of parliament (MP) (John Kekeno) and the former MP (Herowa Agiwa), and these likewise increased in the 12 months between the 2006 by-election and the 2007 election. Perhaps not surprisingly, it is the most over-enrolled wards that demonstrated the highest degree of voting solidarity, with more than 90 percent of the votes cast typically going to a single candidate. This suggests that inflation of the roll in these wards was deliberate and intended to benefit particular candidates (Table 21.5). A consideration of enrolments over time seemingly confirms this. Over-enrolments in individual wards can be shown to be linked to the presence of a strong local candidate. For example, when Petrus Thomas contested the 2003 supplementary elections, enrolments at Aiyuguni and Wagia-Pogolaia, his mother's and father's home areas respectively, went up from 540 (1997 roll) to over 1300 (in 2003), and from 336 (1997 roll) to 582 (in 2006). Similarly when John Kekeno contested the 2006 by-election, enrolments at Warukumu (Warukumu and Kenamu) went up from 599 to 911. When he ran again in 2007 they increased further, rising to 945.

Similar patterns are evident elsewhere in the electorate. For example, enrolments at Maria and Humburu rose significantly when Matiabe contested the 2006 by-election: enrolments at Maria rose from 883 in 1997 to 1018 in 2006 and 1161 in 2007, while those at Humburu increased from 840 in 1997 to 1092 in 2006. The inflation of the Pubulumu roll likewise coincided with Olape contesting the seat. Pre-Olape, the enrolment for Pubulumu totalled 1062 in 1997; in 2003 it rose to over 1200 and then to 2485 in 2007.

⁹ Throughout the electorate voters consistently alleged that the assistant returning officer for South Koroba was a diehard Father Matthias supporter.

Table 21.5: Candidates benefiting from over-enrolled wards, Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate

Ward(s)	LLG	Expected ward enrolment	Ward enrolment 2007	Benefiting candidate	Total votes cast	Votes received	Percent of votes received
Tumbite	Sth Koroba	690	2586	Matthias Olape	2586	2554	99
Pubulumu 1&2	Sth Koroba	930	2485	Matthias Olape	2499	2454	98
Betege 1&2	Nth Koroba	527	1171	Herowa Agiwa	1190	1162	98
Maria	Sth Koroba	566	1161	Isaac Matiabe	1061	1003	95
Ereiba 1&2	Nth Koroba	644	1312	Herowa Agiwa	881	822	93
Topi	Nth Koroba	123	238	John Kekenno	243	228	94
Kenamo	Nth Koroba	205	382	John Kekenno	386	376	97
Kagama	Nth Koroba	454	829	John Kekenno	797	767	96
Humburu 1&2	Sth Koroba	587	1068	Isaac Matiabe	1079	973	90
Hujanoma 1&2	Nth Koroba	757	1241	Herowa Agiwa	1254	1191	95
Mbuli	Sth Koroba	766	1141	Isaac Matiabe	1143	1079	94
Piagonga 1	Nth Koroba	270	426	John Kekenno	432	424	98
Tangimapu	Sth Koroba	600	854	Matthias Olape	859	809	94
Warukumu	Nth Koroba	488	567	John Kekenno	564	562	100
Kereniba	Nth Koroba	700	1051	Herowa Agiwa	957	900	94
Aiyukuni	Kopiago	390	633	Petrus Thomas	638	634	99
Hirane	Kopiago	448	890	Ben Peri	845	844	100
Wagia	Kopiago	242	540	Petrus Thomas	539	526	98

Another common practice the Huli have employed to boost their enrolments concerns splitting old census units into two separate wards. Over the past decade, 15 locally constituted communities were split in this way. Such paired wards typically bear the same name. In North Koroba these paired wards include Betege 1 & 2, Ereiba 1 & 2, Hujanoma 1 & 2, Kelabo 1 & 2, Kereniba 1 & 2, Piagonga 1 & 2, and Teria 1 & 2, and in South Koroba they include Andiria 1 & 2, Gunu 1 & 2, Hedemari 1 & 2, Humburu 1 & 2, Kakarene 1 & 2, Magara 1 & 2, and Pabulumu 1 & 2. In each of these paired wards enrolments are significantly inflated, with many individuals appearing on both ward rolls. In 2006 and 2007 the polling places for these paired wards were set up side by side and voters were repeatedly observed to move between polling stations, and to vote at both, often multiple times.

The 2007 candidates and their alliances

Seventeen candidates contested the Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open seat in 2007. This was a smaller field than in 2002, when 19 candidates contested, and a smaller field than the 2006 by-election, which had been contested by a record 20 candidates. Of the 17 candidates, 11 had contested this seat previously, and nine had contested the 2006 by-election, which had been conducted under LPV. No women contested the seat. For the first time ever, there were more Duna candidates than Huli candidates (Table 21.6), and as in 1997 and 2002 cultural identity and ethnicity figured importantly in campaigning.

Table 21.6: Ethnicity of candidates, Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate, 1997 to 2007

Election	1997	2002	2003	2006	2007
Total candidates	13	19	12	20	17
Huli candidates	7	13	10	12	8
Duna candidates	6	6	2	8	9

Table 21.7 provides summary information concerning the 17 candidates who contested the 2007 election. Of these, six were serious contenders, namely: the sitting MP John Keken (MP 2006–2007), Petrus Thomas (MP 2003–2004), Ben Peri (runner-up 2003 and 2006), Father Mathias Olape, Herowa Agiwa (MP 1992–2002) and Isaac Matiabe—brother of the late Aruru Matiabe (MP 1982–1992).

Table 21.7: Candidate summary, Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorate

No.	Candidate	Ethnicity	Area	LLG	Previous elections contested
10	Paul Pora Wasdok	Huli	Koroba	Sth Koroba	
11	Dokta Philip Pakalu	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	1992
12	Thomas Tupia Ape	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	
13	Herowa Agiwa	Huli	Fugua	Nth Koroba	Successful 1992, 1994, 1997 Contested 2002, 2003, 2006
14	Agiru Hole	Huli	Tangi	Nth Koroba	
15	Allan Limbawi Mone	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	
16	Nane Petrus Thomas	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	2002, 2003, 2006 Successful 2003
17	Daniel Mapira	Huli	Koroba	Sth Koroba	1982, 2006
18	Ben Epe Peri	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	1992, 1994, 1997, 2002 Runner-up in 2003 & 2006
19	Paiyale Elo	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1994, 1997, 2002. Successful 1977
20	Isaac Matiabe	Huli	Maria	Sth Koroba	1994, 2006
21	Waa Alfred Akope	Huli	Koroba	Nth Koroba	
22	Ronald Kendopa Kulakua	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	2006
23	Mcneke Mai Paiale Elo	Duna	Kopiago	Kopiago	
24	Matthew Magaye	Duna	Auwi	Awi Logaiyu	1992, 1997, 2002, 2006 Runner-up in 1992 & 1997
25	John Kekenno Kelewa	Huli	Tangi	Nth Koroba	Successful in 2006
26	Mathias Olape	Huli	Pureni	Sth Koroba	2002, 2003, 2006

All six candidates scored over 4500 first preference votes and were the last six candidates left in the race. The same six had filled the top six positions in the 2006 by-election, and Thomas, Peri, Olape and Agiwa had filled the top four positions in the 2003 supplementary elections. All six candidates benefited, to some extent, from the over-enrolments detailed in the last section (see Table 21.5), although some more than others.

Agreements and alliances were formed between several candidates, with some, namely Ben Peri and Matthew Magaye, and Paiele Elo and Ronald Kulakua, agreeing to share preferences, and others, particularly the weaker candidates, apparently standing to split the votes of stronger candidates. The reputed alliances and shared histories of the candidates are summarised in Table 21.8.

Table 21.8: Reputed alliances and shared histories, Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate

Candidate	Alliances and shared histories
Paul Pora Wasdok	no known alliances with other candidates campaigning only for minor preferences and to be known for 2012
Phillip Dokta Pakalu	no known alliances with other candidates contested in 2007, because his wife had contested the 2006 by-election
Thomas Tupia Ape	close friend of Matthew Magaye thought to be standing to split Ben Peri and Petrus Thomas' vote and to capture preferences for Magaye
Herowa Urape Agiwa	former member (1992–2002) former patron of John Kekeno, although reputed to have fallen out longstanding political opponent of Ben Peri reputed to have orchestrated Ben Peri's kidnapping in 2002 had supported Matthew Magaye in 1997 to split Peri's vote
Agiru Hole	widely reputed to have been funded by Ben Peri thought to be standing to split John Kekeno's vote
Allen Limbawi Mone	a career public servant/administrator former brother-in-law to Ben Peri, with whom he has been in dispute over non-payment of bride-price key supporter of Matthew Magaye in 1992 and 1997 refused political appointment from Agiwa following 1992 elections key supporter of Petrus Thomas in 2003
Nane Petrus Thomas	former member (2003–2004) related to but a political opponent of Ben Peri related to Ronald Kendopa Kulakua previously supported by Matthew Magaye and Alen Mone in 2003
Daniel Mapiria	former chairman of the National Gaming Board no known alliances with other candidates
Ben Epe Peri	closely related to, but a political opponent of, Petrus Thomas related to Ronald Kendopa Kulakua signed a memorandum of understanding with Matthew Magaye to exchange preferences classmate of Isaac Matiabe; the two were said to have an alliance close associate of Anderson Agiru, President of the United Resources Party and former Southern Highlands Province governor (1997–2002)
Paiele Elo	former member (1977–1982) widely reputed to have been funded by John Kekeno thought to be standing to split Ben Peri's and Petrus Thomas's votes encouraged supporters to give their preferences to Kulukua closely aligned with the former Southern Highlands Province governor, Hami Yawari

Candidate	Alliances and shared histories
Isaac Aruru Matiabe	brother of the former MP Aruru Matiabe (1982–1992) classmate of Ben Peri; the two were said to have an alliance
Waa Alfred Akope	no known alliances with other candidates
Ronald Kendopa Kulukua	reputed to have been funded by Kekeno to split Peri's and Thomas's votes related to both Ben Peri and Petrus Thomas encouraged supporters to give their preferences to Paiiele Elo publicly stated that he would work with Petrus Thomas, if he won
McEnene Mai Elo	son of Paiiele Elo, Member for Koroba-Lake Kapiago (1977–1982)
Matthew Magaye	stood down in favour of Petrus Thomas in 2003 signed a memorandum of understanding with Ben Peri to exchange preferences closely aligned with the former Southern Highlands Province governor, Hami Yawari
John Kekeno Kelewa	sitting member (2006–2007) former secretary to and business associate of Herowa Agiwa
Mattias Olape	Catholic Priest—appealed to Catholics for support strongest polling Huli candidate in 2003 supplementary elections no known alliances with other candidates

At least four minor 'vote-splitting' candidates were reported to be receiving financial support from the more serious candidates.¹⁰ Specifically, it was widely asserted that Agiru Hole was funded by Ben Peri to split John Kekeno's base vote, and that Paiiele Elo, Ronald Kulakua and McEnene Mai Paiale Elo were all sponsored by and/or receiving support from John Kekeno to split Ben Peri's and Petrus Thomas's votes. Thomas Tupia was also considered a vote-splitter and was widely held to be working with Matthew Magaye to split the Kapiago vote, which was expected to go to Peri and Thomas. It was not clear whether Tupia was receiving financial support from Magaye.

In the lead-up to the election Matthew Magaye, who had contested the seat on four previous occasions, being runner-up in 1992 and 1997, was acknowledged to have strong support in Auwi-Logaiyu. He was the sole candidate from that LLG area. However, the 2006 by-election had shown that he lacked the ability to draw preferences from elsewhere in the electorate, and that his support was on the wane. Indeed in 1997, Magaye had gained 6582 votes, yet in the 2006 by-election he had picked up only 4449 first preference votes. Magaye sought to address his diminishing popularity by having Tupia stand to split the Kapiago vote and by seeking to capture preferences which might otherwise have flowed to the Kapiago candidates. He sought to achieve the latter by entering into a memorandum of understanding with Ben Peri to exchange preferences.

¹⁰ This strategy has been successfully employed in past elections in this electorate (see Haley 2002, 2004).

Both strategies failed as only 18 of Tupia's 810 votes flowed to Magaye upon elimination (most flowed to Peri and Thomas) and Magaye himself was eliminated before Peri.¹¹

Not all the weaker candidates were merely vote splitters—some were standing to increase their profile in the electorate. Paul Pora Wasdok, for instance, was reputed to be standing so people 'would know him in 2012' while Kulakua was contesting to improve his standing for the LLG elections. In his case this proved an effective strategy, as he was elected Lake Kopiago LLG president in 2008. Phillip Pakalu's reason for contesting was the most unusual. Evidently he was contesting because his wife, Lucy Pakalu, had contested the seat during the 2006 by-election, gaining 66 first preference votes, finishing 16th in a field of 20 candidates. Apparently she had challenged him to contest to demonstrate whether he could pull more votes than she had. Phillip who had previously contested the 1992 elections, gaining only a handful of votes, pulled only 47 first preference votes and finished 15 in a field of 17.

Campaigning in 2007

As expected, campaigning in the 2007 general election was generally accommodative, with candidates being able to campaign more widely and move around more freely than they had in either the 2002 national elections or the 2003 supplementary elections—something that had also been observed in previous LPV by-elections (Standish 2006:8; Haley 2006:24). That said, candidates did not move around as freely as they had in the 2006 by-election, and few campaigned across ethnic boundaries. Indeed, 2007 saw the return of ethnically closed campaigning (cf. Haley 2002; 2004; 2007), with Huli candidates campaigning in North Koroba and South Koroba—the Huli-speaking parts of the electorate—and Duna candidates campaigning at Kopiago and in Auwi-Logaiyy—the predominantly Duna-speaking parts of the electorate. Petrus Thomas proved to be the only real exception to this in that he spent several weeks at a time in the electorate, campaigning in both Duna- and Huli-speaking areas (Figure 21.2). None of the Huli candidates campaigned at Kopiago this time around, although several, including Matthias Olape and Isaac Matiabe, had during the 2006 by-election.

11 In the 2006 by-election Ben Peri had in fact entered into an alliance with, and had reportedly provided financial support to, Auwi-Logaiyu candidate Geoffery Kara, in an effort to split Matthew Magaye's vote and that of Petrus Thomas. Thomas had picked up most of the Auwi-Logaiyu votes in 2003. The strategy was only partially successful in that only 147 of Kara's 575 votes flowed to Peri on elimination. Of the remaining votes 193 flowed to Thomas, 145 to Magaye and 51 were shared between a further seven candidates.



Figure 21.2: Petrus Thomas on the campaign trail in Tari, 23 June 2007

Compared with previous elections, including the 2006 by-election, campaigning was a much more low-key affair. Few of the candidates spent much time campaigning in the electorate, relying instead on campaign managers and diehard supporters to campaign on their behalf. Active campaigning by candidates was confined to the later stages of the campaign period. Generally, candidates were observed to concentrate their campaign efforts on areas where they believed they had base support, and on attending rallies and opening ceremonies in areas where preferences were deemed to be on offer (see chapter 20).

While it was evident from the way many of the not-so-strong candidates campaigned that they did not fully appreciate the importance of preferences, the top six candidates clearly did. All campaigned strategically, seeking first preferences in their home areas and minor preferences elsewhere, whereas the not so serious candidates campaigned mostly for minor preferences. Overall there was little concerted collaboration between candidates and no serious evidence of widespread preference swapping between parties or individual candidates, although compared with 2006 there was certainly more cooperation between candidates, which suggests a growing awareness about the way LPV works. For example, Ben Peri and Matthew Magaye entered into a memorandum of understanding to exchange preferences, while Paele Elo and Ronald Kulaka were

observed to encourage their supporters to preference each other. Importantly, these latter agreements also reflected the widespread view that preferences should be retained within the same cultural, linguistic or ethnic group.

It was also suggested that this was the reason John Kekeno provided support to three Duna candidates, in that he recognised that 'Duna' votes were unlikely to flow to him in the form of preferences but was keen to see them exhausted so as to prevent them from flowing to the two strong Duna candidates—Peri and Thomas. If this was indeed his strategy, it did not prove particularly effective, as candidates have little control over the way their supporters allocate preferences. For instance, when Paiele Elo Ronald Kulakua and McEnene Mai Elo were eliminated, half of their votes were distributed to other Duna candidates, particularly Thomas and Peri.

As in previous elections, candidates offered incentives of one kind or another—cash and promises of projects and future support—in order to secure votes. Several of the candidates gave out road maintenance and grass cutting contracts, while some funded or made arrangements for people living outside the electorate to travel home in order to cast their votes. Indeed in the days prior to polling there were constant streams of public motor vehicles, reputedly hired by Ben Peri, Petrus Thomas, John Kekeno and Herowa Agiwa, ferrying voters into the electorate. The stronger candidates also put considerable effort into inflating electoral rolls in areas where they enjoyed base support, and into influencing key electoral officials. Much effort was also put into attempts to have key electoral officials removed and replaced at the eleventh hour—a strategy successfully employed in past elections (see Haley 2004:20).

Influence of political parties

As has been noted by observers of previous Papua New Guinea elections, including the LPV by-elections conducted under the *Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections 2002*, party endorsement, where it occurs, often means very little on the ground (Standish 2006:10; see also Haley 2004:18). Gibbs (2006:13), for example, notes that in the 2004 Wabag by-election, only two candidates had party endorsement and that party affiliation 'was not a very significant factor in voting patterns'. Standish et al. (2004:6) also note that party policies are seldom discussed and that party politics is 'largely decorative', being confined to 'impressive nomination rallies' and the occasional fleeting visit by party leaders or prominent ministers. Such statements ring true in the Koroba-Lake Kapiago context.

In the 2007 general election, 10 of the 17 candidates contesting the Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open seat had party endorsement. More particularly, the six top candidates—John Kekeno (People's Action Party), Father Mathias Olape

(People's Party), Ben Peri (Pangu), Herowa Agiwa (PNG Country Party), Petrus Thomas (National Alliance) and Isaac Matiabe (New Generation Party) all had party endorsement.

In the Papua New Guinea context, though, party endorsement in one election does not signal long-term association with a particular party. Instead it is viewed as a temporary alliance entered into for the purpose of the election in order to gain funding and logistical support. For example, Petrus Thomas, the National Alliance endorsed candidate in 2007, had contested the 2006 by-election as a People's National Congress candidate, and was elected to parliament in 2003 after running as a People's Progress Party candidate. Herowa Agiwa, the former MP (1992–2002), has similarly shifted party affiliation several times. He had stood as a People's Democratic Movement candidate in 2002, a Pangu candidate in 2003, an independent in 2006, and was endorsed by the PNG Country Party in 2007. Likewise, Father Mathias Olape was endorsed by the People's Action Party in 2002, National Alliance in 2006 and the People's Party in 2007. Even Ben Peri, who had contested the last three elections under the United Resources Party banner, changed allegiance in 2007, this time running with Pangu.

As in earlier elections there was no evidence to suggest that party affiliation signalled an endorsement of particular political views or positions. Indeed all Koroba-Lake Kopiago candidates, party endorsed and independent alike, campaigned on similar platforms, asserting that they would be a good leader and would bring goods and services. Collectively they promised to support church, youth and women's groups; to bring development; to ensure roads and airstrips were maintained; and to ensure that schools and health services were properly staffed and funded.

Seemingly, party affiliation had little influence on voters. This is not to suggest that parties are completely irrelevant. To the contrary, strong candidates sought and were able to gain party endorsement, and those with party endorsement generally polled quite well. This is because parties seek to endorse likely winners, or those with a real chance of success. In the Koroba-Lake Kopiago context, party endorsement is viewed as part of the candidate's broader deportment, which itself is seen to reflect their inner worth and likelihood of success at the polls (see Haley 2008, 2004). For this reason, Phillip Pakalu's failure to gain party endorsement from Star Alliance gave rise to much discussion in the electorate and was seen to signal that his campaign was doomed to fail.

In the final analysis, six of the ten party-endorsed candidates were the top-polling candidates at the end of the first preference count and the final six candidates in the race. This, I suggest, had more to do with the overall popularity of those candidates than their party affiliations as such. Where candidates had

party endorsement, this typically translated into some level of support with campaign expenses—such as candidate posters and voter cards, and in some cases vehicle hire.

Influence of guns

Guns did not feature in this election to anywhere near the extent they had in 1997 and 2002. They were, however, still out there. In fact, members of the observer team saw firearms during nominations, the campaign period, in the lead-up to the poll, and even on polling day, but these and other weapons such as bush knives tended not to be openly displayed at polling places (except at Kopiago—see below), or used to influence the vote, as they had been in the past. It should be noted, though, that weapons were close to hand at several polling places, having been hidden in the nearby bush should they be needed.

At Koroba, where there was a strong security presence—notably armed PNGDF personnel (see chapter 8)—no weapons were seen at polling places, although several observers reported seeing candidates and supporters brandishing homemade weapons during the campaign period. Several high-powered weapons including AR15s, M16s and an Ultimax 100 were also seen (see chapter 8). At Kopiago, however, where the security forces were unarmed, several observers reported the presence of guns, bush knives and axes at polling places. Not surprisingly these observers felt that the security situation was similar to that of the failed 2002 elections. The majority, however, felt that the security situation was significantly better, attributing this to the PNGDF presence.

Influence of ‘money politics’

While guns played less of a role in this election, ‘money politics’ was more significant than ever. Several candidates spent huge amounts of money offering material incentives to voters, and two were rumoured to have spent as much as K2 million on their respective campaigns. Voters in Koroba-Lake Kopiago electorate capitalized on the huge amount of money available by courting multiple candidates and promising support in return for modest cash payments of up to K100. They also erected grandstands and conducted opening ceremonies as a means of generating money (see chapter 20). These rallies/opening ceremonies were organized by clans, church congregations, youth and women’s groups and school committees as a means of generating funds. Candidates were invited to speak at these events and were expected to pay for the privilege. Observers reported that hire rates ranged between K100 and several thousand kina per speaking engagement. One rally at Guala, a week prior to the polls, netted K24,500 for the local Christian Brethren Church (CBC) community. Of this the sitting MP, John Kekeno, ‘donated’ K7000 to the CBC community school, K9000

to the CBC headquarters, K3000 to the CBC youth and K2000 to the CBC women's group. Seven candidates attended and spoke at this rally. A separate rally had been organized by the Guala youth a fortnight prior to this rally. It was attended by four candidates.

Observers also witnessed candidates and their supporters actually bribing or attempting to bribe voters with cash on polling day, and two observers witnessed vote-buying-related fights at polling stations. At Kakarene 1, a fight was observed to have erupted after a voter accepted payment from two separate candidates, while at Gunu 1 a fight erupted after a young man accepted money from a campaign manager then gave his first vote to a different candidate. At the same polling station a campaign manager seeking to gain votes for the sitting MP was seen to be promising blankets, stereos and spades in return for a first preference vote.

Somewhat ironically, several candidates also complained to the observer team about the inflationary aspect of elections, saying that the large amounts of cash being splashed around would inflate people's expectations in coming elections. Indeed it is evident that candidates are now having to rely on larger and larger networks in order to finance their campaigns, and that wealthy individuals (businessmen and community leaders) are financing and/or contributing towards candidates' campaigns in order to create indebtedness and to ensure that the candidate is beholden to them should they win.

Polling

Since 1997 voter turnout in Koroba-Lake Kapiago has always been high, with votes cast being significantly higher than the number of eligible citizens (see Table 21.1), something facilitated by the poor state of the electoral roll. In this respect the 2007 election was no different from earlier elections. As noted earlier in this chapter, the 2007 Koroba-Lake Kapiago electoral roll, which was heavily inflated, contained 48,739 names. At the close of polling some 45,020 votes had been cast, and of these 44,473 were determined to be allowable ballots. This represents around 17,000 more votes than there are eligible citizens in the electorate.

Polling in the 2007 elections was far more peaceful than in recent elections, due in no small part to the huge security presence (see chapter 8). It remained generally chaotic, however, and was marred by widespread irregularities. Examples of election fraud and malpractice emerging out of the 2007 elections are both plentiful and diverse and demonstrate continuities with voter and candidate behaviour in the 1997 and 2002/2003 elections.

Under-age voting (very small children, even babies, were seen voting or having votes cast on their behalf), multiple voting, 'line-up' voting, serial voting (that is, voting at different polling stations), 'outside' voting (voters from neighbouring electorates) and proxy voting were all commonplace. Almost without exception, voting took place publicly and there was no secret ballot. The indelible ink was not used or was used randomly, and excess ballot papers were used in many cases. Assisted voting, much of it seemingly forced, was commonplace (Figure 21.3) and at several polling stations polling officials were observed to be issuing pre-marked ballot papers. In most cases, the electoral roll was not used properly, if at all, and at some polling stations (such as Tumbite, Pumbulumu 1 and Pumbulumu 2) groups of young men were issued with entire books of ballot papers, which were completed en masse.



Figure 21.3: Assisted voting at Koroba, 30 June 2007

More than half (50/82)¹² of all polling stations were set up within easy walking distance of another (less than 500 metres apart) and many were set up literally side by side. At Lake Kapiago, for instance, the Kapiago Station and Ayukuni (Alukuni) polling stations were about 500 metres from each other and people were

¹² In addition to the 36 wards which have paired names (such as Teria 1 and 2, Andiria 1 and 2, Hedemari 1 and 2 etc.) there were an additional 14 wards which were paired on polling day, namely Mbuli and Maria, Kapiago Station and Aiyuguni, Ayenda and Kagoma, Hauwinda and Kudiebi, Kenamu and Walukumu, Pandu and Koroba Station, and Tumbite and Tangimapu.

observed walking back and forth voting at each of them, sometimes many times. More extreme examples included four polling stations (Tumbite, Pubulumu 1, Pubulumu 2 and Tangimapu) being set up side by side on Tumbite airstrip at Pureni, and seven polling stations being set up on Koroba Government Station (Teria 1, Teria 2, Pandu, Andiria 1, Andiria 2, Koroba Station and Kereneiba Part 2). These seven polling stations were set up within metres of each other, and voters were observed moving backwards and forwards between them (Figure 21.4). Voters were similarly observed to move between Maria and Mbuli polling stations. There a relatively small number of people (approximately 300 voters) managed to cast 2204 votes, of which 2082 went to a single candidate, Isaac Matiabe, while at Tumbite an amazing 5941 votes were cast with 5813 of them going to Father Mathias Olape.



Figure 21.4: Seven polling stations in close proximity at Koroba Station

Despite the many irregularities, there is also considerable evidence that people at the majority of polling places actually got to vote. Indeed men, women and children alike were observed to be lined up, in a reasonably orderly fashion, waiting for the opportunity to vote, and few reported being denied a vote. In fact many who wanted to were afforded the opportunity to vote several times. At Wurukumu, for instance, voters lined up, gave their names and then proceeded to the voting compartment where whole books of ballot papers were located.

There they were permitted to fill out as many ballot papers as they liked, until the papers ran out. At this particular polling place all 562 votes went to the sitting MP, John Kekeno.

In a post-polling survey of 200 voters (100 men and 100 women) at different locations throughout the electorate, 46 men and 12 women admitted to having voted more than once. Observations made on polling day suggest that the proportion of voters voting more than once was significantly higher. As part of the same post-polling survey 32 men and 34 women (one-third of all respondents) reported having experienced intimidation while voting, while 20 men and 29 women (one-quarter of all respondents) felt that the 2007 election was worse than the failed elections of 2002.

In spite of the intimidation experienced by a significant number of voters, the spread of votes at individual polling places suggests that a good number of voters were permitted to exercise choice when voting. At 25 of the 80 polling places (31 percent) the candidate that secured the most votes gained less than 50 percent of the votes cast, and at a further nine polling places (11 percent) the top-polling candidate gained between 51 and 60 percent of the vote. At these polling places votes were typically shared between several candidates, suggesting voters were afforded genuine choice when casting their votes. That said, there were also 15 polling places (19 percent) at which the top-polling candidate gained more than 96 percent of the votes cast, and a further eight polling places (10 percent) where the top-polling candidate gained 91–95 percent of the votes cast. In some cases (for instance Hirane, Aiyukuni, Kakoma and Walukumu) this can be explained in terms of a base vote and we can assume a fair degree of community consensus (although I doubt total consensus), but in others (such as Tumbite, Pumbulumu 1, Pumbulumu 2 and Tobi) it represents a forced, coerced or controlled vote. At places such as Tumbite and Pumbulumu where the vote was forced, individuals were denied the opportunity to mark their own papers. Not surprisingly the places where block votes and controlled votes were registered were all heavily over-enrolled and in fact tended to coincide with the wards that were most over-enrolled (see Tables 21.4 and 21.5).

Table 21.9 compares the top-polling candidates' shares of the votes by ballot box in 2003, 2006 and 2007. It reveals a significant increase in bloc voting and a decrease in the number of polling places where votes were genuinely shared between candidates. Specifically, Table 21.9 shows a three-fold increase in the number of boxes in which the top-polling candidate gained more than 90 percent of the votes cast and an almost four-fold increase in boxes where the leading candidate gained between 96 and 100 percent of the votes cast.

Table 21.9: Comparison of leading candidates' share of the vote in 2003, 2006 and 2007, by ballot box

Leading candidates' share of the vote (percent)	2003		2006		2007	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
96-100	4	5.0	7	8.5	15	19.0
91-95	3	4.0	7	8.5	8	10.0
81-90	6	7.5	7	8.5	6	8.0
71-80	2	2.5	7	8.5	9	11.0
61-70	14	17.5	8	10.0	8	10.0
51-60	21	26.0	11	13.0	9	11.0
<50	30	37.5	35	43.0	25	31.0

That voters were afforded real choice at many polling stations can be demonstrated by comparing the way votes were allocated at Koroba Station (Table 21.10) and within Kapiago Basin (Table 21.11). Table 21.10 shows that the votes cast at the seven Koroba Station polling places were shared between six main candidates.

Table 21.10: Summary of polling at the seven Koroba Station polling places, 2007

Candidate	Teria 1	Teria 2	Pandu	Andiria 1	Andiria 2	Koroba Station	Kereneiba Part 2
Ben Peri	13	24	16	12	2	11	14
John Kekeno	142	75	116	131	33	67	19
Mathias Olape	6	46	74	46	3	64	1
Herowa Agiwa	66	214	89	66	4	51	336
Isaac Matiabe	2	29	182	27	15	28	2
Waa Akope	220	34	90	157	458	11	1
Others	2	4	5	9	3	5	2
Total	451	435	417	457	518	237	375

Table 21.11: Summary of polling at the eight Kapiago Basin polling places, 2007

Candidate	Hirane	Aiyukuni	Kapiago Station	Suwaka	Dolowa	Wagia/Pongolaia	Peragoia/Mbatane	Dilini
Ben Peri	844	2	115	446	407	0	55	116
Petrus Thomas	0	634	95	60	71	526	40	22
Thomas Tupia	0	1	161	63	19	0	24	1
Ronald Kulakua	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
John Kekeno	0	75	16	35	1	7	18	4
Others	0	4	15	34	22	2	0	26
Total	844	637	403	638	520	535	138	169

The results

The official election results are shown in Table 21.16 in the appendix to this chapter. They reveal that the incumbent, John Kekeno, was returned, having gained 18 percent of first preference votes and 37 percent of the allowable ballot. By comparison, he had gained only 12 percent of first preference votes and 30 percent of the allowable ballot in the 2006 Koroba-Lake Kapiago by-election (see Table 21.14 in the appendix to this chapter). Despite the gain in popularity, Kekeno still received a smaller overall percentage of the vote than Petrus Thomas did in 2003, the last election to be conducted under the first-past-the-post system. Indeed in 2003 Thomas, who was one of only two Duna candidates running against 10 Huli candidates, gained 39 percent of the allowable ballot (16,401 of the 42,595 votes cast).

This is particularly noteworthy as it had been expected that with the introduction of LPV, the 2007 election would be more peaceful and see the election of MPs with wider and more representative mandates (Standish 2006:197; Reilly 2006:189; PNGEC 1997:13). It was also suggested that LPV would reduce the number of candidates contesting elections and improve the chances of women being elected. The later proved unfounded in that men in Koroba-Lake Kapiago continued to assert their rights over those of women, insisting that women remain their property and should therefore vote in accordance with their husband's wishes.

Generally speaking, LPV has delivered larger mandates (see Anere and When 2009:22–26). Nearly two-thirds of the parliamentarians elected to the national parliament in 2002 received less than 20 percent of the vote under the first-past-the-post system. The 2002 election also saw the mean percentage of the vote required to win a seat down from 18 percent in 1997 to only 16 percent (Reilly 2006:189). Yet in 2007, under LPV, only 16 MPs (15 percent) were elected with less than 20 percent of the vote (Anere and When 2009:23).

Under LPV the average overall mandate typically doubled, with winning candidates receiving 35–36 percent of the total allowable ballot after the distribution of preferences (see Haley and Anere 2009:60; Anere and When 2009).¹³ In this respect, the Koroba-Lake Kapiago results are consistent with those elsewhere around the country. However, the Koroba-Lake Kapiago case also demonstrates that the total number of candidates and where they are from plays a key role in determining the winning candidate's overall mandate, as evident from the 2003 results.

13 The mandates for provincial seats were typically higher than those for open seats. Indeed, successful candidates in provincial seats gained on average 41 percent of the allowable ballot, while successful candidates in open seats gained only 30 percent of allowable ballots.

It is arguably still too early to judge whether LPV will deliver larger mandates and more broadly supported candidates in the longer term, for this will largely depend upon two things: first, whether LPV attracts fewer candidates or gives rise to a proliferation of candidates, and, secondly, whether voters choose to make their votes count.

The early indications from Koroba-Lake Kapiago are mixed. For instance, the 2006 by-election, conducted under LPV, attracted the largest field ever, and the 2007 general election saw a record number of Duna candidates contest the seat. It also saw a return to ethnically closed campaigning, and this contributed in part to the proliferation of Duna candidates, in that John Kekeno (who is ethnically Huli) sponsored and gave support to three Duna candidates in order to split the vote of the two very strong Duna candidates and in an attempt to exhaust a significant proportion of Duna votes. Given that this strategy proved somewhat successful, it may well be adopted by other candidates in future elections, thereby contributing to candidate proliferation.

What the Koroba-Lake Kapiago results do reveal is that a significant proportion of voters chose to make their votes count, by using their preferences far more strategically and effectively than they had in the 2006 by-election. In 2007, 68 percent of the formal votes remained live at the completion of the final count, while 85 percent were still live immediately prior to the final exclusion. This shows that voters allocated their preferences to strong candidates with a likelihood of success, rather than to minor local candidates. By contrast, the 2006 by-election had seen 44 percent of votes exhausted. On average, in 2007, across all 105 electorates for which there are election results, 40 percent of votes were exhausted (Anere and Wheen 2009:23). That a smaller proportion of votes was exhausted in Koroba-Lake Kapiago in 2007 will have contributed to the larger mandates witnessed by both the winning candidate and the runner-up, as compared with the 2006 by-election.

The Koroba-Lake Kapiago results also reveal that candidates have little control over the way their supporters allocate preferences. In short, preference deals did not work. Indeed, although Ben Peri and Matthew Magaye entered into a memorandum of understanding to exchange preferences, only 166 of the 1252 votes Magaye gained flowed to Peri on Magaye's elimination. By contrast, 461 flowed across the ethnic divide to the sitting MP John Kekeno, while 408 flowed to Peri's key rival Petrus Thomas. Similarly, only 18 of Thomas Tupia's 810 votes flowed to Matthew Magaye upon elimination. Instead the vast majority went to Petrus Thomas (288) and Ben Peri (279) and a good number (140) to John Kekeno.

In both of these cases some votes initially captured by a Duna candidate flowed to a Huli candidate. Despite the widespread rhetoric that preferences should

be retained within the same cultural, ethnic or linguistic group, a significant proportion of votes flowed across the ethnic divide with each and every elimination (Table 21.12). Overall, some 44 percent of the Duna votes distributed as the first nine Duna candidates were eliminated flowed to Huli candidates. This suggests that for a significant proportion of voters enmities between rival candidates within the same ethnic group or the pulling power of money proved stronger than calls for ethnic unity.

Either way, strong candidates (Huli and Duna alike) managed to gain a spread of votes and preferences across the electorate (cf. May 2006:118). John Kekeno, the winning candidate, picked up votes in 73 of 80 ballot boxes, and was the top-polling candidate at 19 polling places and the second-highest polling candidate at 19 others. Peri and Thomas, the top-polling Duna candidates both picked up votes in more than three-quarters of all boxes—61 boxes in Peri's case and 66 boxes in Thomas's case. This is particularly noteworthy as only 26 of the 80 wards are Duna speaking. These results are consistent with the 2006 by-election results, where Kekeno picked up votes in 74 boxes, while Peri and Thomas picked up votes in 72 and 65 boxes respectively.

Table 21.12: Flow of preferences with each elimination

No.	Candidate	Ethnicity	Total votes received	Votes to Huli candidate	Votes to Duna candidate	Votes exhausted	Votes to other ethnic group (%)
19	Paiyale Elo	Duna	10	3	7	0	30
22	Ronald K. Kulakua	Duna	46	21	25	0	46
11	Dokta Philip Pakalu	Duna	48	16	31	1	34
14	Agiru Hole	Huli	130	98	32	0	25
23	McNene Mai Elo	Duna	142	76	65	1	54
10	Paul Pora Wasdok	Huli	663	454	208	1	31
12	Thomas Tupia Ape	Duna	810	211	594	5	26
15	Allan Mone	Duna	1,097	289	801	7	27
21	Waa Alfred Akope	Huli	1,168	1,056	110	2	9
24	Matthew Magaye	Duna	1,252	732	474	46	61
17	Daniel Mapiria	Huli	3,086	2,499	493	94	16
20	Isaac Matiabe	Huli	5,776	3,348	1,363	1,065	29
16	Petrus Thomas	Duna	6,642	2,093	2,332	2,217	47
13	Herowa Agiwa	Huli	8,215	3,939	845	3,431	18
18	Ben Epe Peri	Duna	10,619	3,082	0	7,537	100

The garnering of broad-based support cannot, in the Koroba-Lake Kapiago case, be attributed to LPV. Indeed it predates the switch to preferential voting. In 2003 the winning candidate, Petrus Thomas, gained votes from 64 polling places. He polled particularly well at half of all polling stations, ranking first in respect of 23 ballot boxes and second in respect of a further 17 ballot boxes. The runner-up, Ben Peri, had arguably even broader support, picking up votes in all but four ballot boxes. He gained the largest or second largest vote in just over half the ballot boxes (43/80)—being the top-polling candidate at 16 polling places and second-highest ranked candidate at a further 27 polling places.

Conclusion

In 2007, fraud, malpractice and money triumphed yet again in the Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorate. As a consequence, the election results lack integrity. Had the election been the least bit fair, the outcome would most likely have been very different. Certainly there would have been far fewer votes. It is worth noting, too, that during the 2003 supplementary elections the total number of votes cast in North Koroba and South Koroba was 16,385. This was because there was a huge security presence, and because the security forces did not allow multiple and under-age voting. Based on projections from the 1990 census the expected enrolment for these two LLG areas at that time was 16,280. In 2007, the expected enrolments for North Koroba and South Koroba were 18,110, yet 30,288 votes were cast. These additional votes were surely enough to have changed the order in which candidates were eliminated, which in turn would have changed the flow of preferences and most likely the overall outcome.

Two key factors contributed to and facilitated the cheating and malpractice (under-age voting, double and multiple voting, serial voting and outside voting) observed on polling day. The first was the poor state of the new electoral roll, which included children, dead people, and people from neighbouring electorates (particularly the Tari electorate), as well as thousands of duplicates, and the second was the location and positioning of polling stations. As noted above, polling places were often set up side by side to facilitate voter movement between polling stations.

It is also worth noting that LPV affected the results in only one-fifth of all electorates (Anere and Wheen 2009:27), and that, in 80 percent of cases, the candidate who led at the end of the first preference count went on to win the seat. In other words, preferences affected few outcomes. And yet in terms of electoral administration, LPV is more certainly costly and more difficult to administer. Overall the introduction of LPV has required a lot of effort and expense for very little gain, and it may be that in the longer term the negative consequences, such as the proliferation of money politics, will far outweigh any benefits.

In the meantime, it is evident that the PNGEC was willing to turn a blind eye to the rampant fraud and malpractice witnessed in Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate in 2007. Indeed there was a clear resolve, which came direct from the prime minister himself, to avoid a repetition of the events of 2002, and as a consequence the elections in Southern Highlands Province drew little scrutiny. Seemingly there was a willingness to accept the election results 'no matter what transpired'; this is the legacy of 2002. It is hoped that the electoral environment in 2012 will make for more honest assessments of future elections and that the PNGEC will not be scared to fail elections that should clearly be deemed to have failed. With development of the liquefied natural gas project well under way, the stakes are much higher than ever before and this only serves to further fuel the win-at-all-costs mentality the has emerged over the last decade or so.

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Appendix

Table 21.13: Example of duplicate entries on the Tumbite ward roll

Elector ID	Last name	First name	Sex	Birth date on roll	Occupation
76056181	Abraham	Aluyas	M	1966	Subsistence farmer
76008551	Abarama	Aluya	M	1987	Student
76056508	Abuhaya	Ege	M	1964	Subsistence farmer
76008323	Abuhaya	Ege	M	1959	Subsistence farmer
76056535	Abuhaya	Albert	M	1970	Subsistence farmer
76056538	Abuhaya	Hebert	M	1968	Subsistence farmer
76056513	Abuhaya	Abraham	M	1972	Subsistence farmer
76008506	Abuhaya	Abarama	M	1966	Pastor
76056525	Abuhaya	Joseph	M	1983	Student
76008642	Abuhaya	Joseph	M	1966	Subsistence farmer
76056523	Abuhaya	Issac	M	1984	Student
76008600	Abuhaya	Asiac	M	1964	Subsistence farmer
76056511	Abuhaya	Manabule	M	1950	Self employed
76008349	Abuhaya	Manabule	M	1966	Worker
76008307	Agobe	Timbame	F	1962	Household duties
76056345	Agobe	Timbame	F	1958	Household duties
76008414	Agobe	Wagili	F	1967	Household duties
76056386	Agobe	Wagili	F	1962	Household duties
76006858	Agobe	Wayama	F	1980	Household duties
76056294	Agobe	Wayama	F	1964	Household duties
76008324	Akobe	Helen	F	1967	Household duties
76056347	Agobe	Helen	F	1952	Household duties
76008400	Akobe	Anna	F	1967	Household duties
76056355	Agope	Anna	F	1973	Household duties
76007865	Akope	Mekeme	F	1972	Household duties
76056290	Akobe	Mekeme	F	1965	Household duties
76007855	Akope	Warali	F	1974	Household duties
76056292	Akobe	Warali	F	1974	Household duties
76056690	Alembo	Mbatai	F	1952	Household duties
76009491	Alembo	Mbatai	F	1948	Household duties
76010727	Alembo	Makondo	M	1956	Magistrate
76056487	Alembo	Makondo	M	1952	Committee member
76009577	Alembo	Yakapi	F	1980	Household duties
76056700	Alembo	Yakabi	F	1967	Household duties

Table 21.14: Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorate results, 2006 by-election

No.	Candidate name	Party ^a	First prefs	First pref. %	Final total at elim'n	Prefs % of final total	Final total	Final %	% of allow. votes
3	John Kekeno Kelewa	PAP	4702	11.5		62.0	12,388	54.1	30.3
1	Ben Epe Peri	URP	5978	14.6		43.2	10,525	45.9	25.8
7	Nane Petrus Thomas	PNC	5226	12.8	8423	38.0	Excl 18	0	20.6
8	Mathias Olape	NA	4497	11.0	7992	43.7	Excl 17	0	19.6
12	Issaac Aruru Matiabew	Ind.	3764	9.2	6290	40.2	Excl 16	0	15.4
13	Mathew Magaye	Ind.	4449	10.9	5485	18.9	Excl 15	0	13.4
9	Herowa Agiwa	Ind.	3238	7.9	4740	31.7	Excl 14	0	11.6
6	Daniel Mapiria	Ind.	2880	7.1	3453	16.6	Excl 13	0	8.5
4	Benny Putari	Ind.	2288	5.6	2388	4.2	Excl 12	0	5.9
11	Anubi Herowa Ben	Ind.	1086	2.7	1149	5.5	Excl 11	0	2.8
18	Ronald Kulakua	Ind.	983	2.4	1034	4.9	Excl 10	0	2.5
10	David Kelo Kikabu	Ind.	659	1.6	683	3.5	Excl 9	0	1.7
2	Walapi Kara Geoffrey	Ind.	574	1.4	575	0.2	Excl 8	0	1.4
5	Simon Haguale Gawa	Ind.	235	0.6	246	4.5	Excl 7	0	0.6
16	Johnson Balu Wangale	Ind.	88	0.2	89	1.1	Excl 6	0	0.2
19	Lucy Pakalu	Ind.	66	0.2	67	1.5	Excl 5	0	0.2
14	Ambu Michael Sone	Ind.	50	0.1	50	0.0	Excl 4	0	0.1
20	Kenwa Ikila	Ind.	42	0.1	42	0.0	Excl 3	0	0.1
17	Peter J. Harape Nagiria	Ind.	37	0.1	37	0.0	Excl 2	0	0.1
15	Anderson Andalu Wabira	Ind.	0	0.0	0	0.0	Excl 1	0	0.0
Total ballots remaining in count			22,913						
Absolute majority			11,457						
Exhausted ballot papers			17,929 (43.9 of total allowable ballots)						
Total allowable ballot papers			40,842						
Informal votes			187 (0.5 of total votes cast)						
Total votes cast			41,029						

^a Ind. = Independent; NA = National Alliance; PAP = People's Action Party; PNC = People's National Congress; URP = United Resources Party

Source: Adapted from results at www.pn gec.gov.pg and from form 66B

Table 21.15: Voting statistics for Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	50,876	
Total votes cast	45,020	
Informal votes	547	(1.2% of total votes cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	44,473	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	30,066	
Total votes distributed	28,656	
Exhausted ballot papers	14,407	(32.4% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	15,034	

Table 21.16: Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate ^a	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
			Number	%		Number	%				
25	John Kekeno Kelewa	People's Action Party	7,978	17.9	1	8,338	51.1		16,316	36.7	54.3
26	Father Mathias Olape	People's Party	7,839	17.6	2	5,911	43.0		13,750	30.9	45.7
18	Ben Peri Loya	Pangu Pati	5,317	12.0	4	5,302	49.9	15	10,619	23.9	
13	Herowa Agiwa	PNG Country Party	6,044	13.6	3	2,171	26.4	14	8,215	18.5	
16	Nane Petrus Thomas	National Alliance	4,551	10.2	6	2,091	31.5	13	6,642	14.9	
20	Issaac Matiabe	New Generation Party	4,601	10.3	5	1,175	20.3	12	5,776	13.0	
17	Daniel Mapira	Independent	2,896	6.5	7	190	6.2	11	3,086	6.9	
24	Mathew Magaye	PNG's Conservative Party	1,207	2.7	8	45	3.6	10	1,252	2.8	
21	Waa Alfred Piawiya	Independent	1,141	2.6	9	27	2.3	9	1,168	2.6	
15	Alan Limbawe Mone	Stars Alliance Party	1,081	2.4	10	16	1.5	8	1,097	2.5	
12	Thomas Tupia Ape	People's Democratic Party	788	1.8	11	22	2.7	7	810	1.8	
10	Paul Pora Wasdok	Independent	659	1.5	12	4	0.6	6	663	1.5	
23	McEnene Mai Eio	Independent	140	0.3	13	2	1.4	5	142	0.3	
14	Agiru Hole	Rural Development Party	129	0.3	14	1	0.8	4	130	0.3	
11	Dokta Philip Pakalu	Independent	47	0.1	15	1	2.1	3	48	0.1	
22	Iba Kendopa Kulakua	Independent	45	0.1	16	1	2.2	2	46	0.1	
19	Paiyale Eio	Independent	10	0.0	17	0	0.0	1	10	0.0	

^a All candidates were male

22. Elections and Corruption: The 'Highlandization' of Voting in the Madang Open and Provincial Electorates

Patrick Matbob

Introduction

Elections in the coastal areas of Papua New Guinea are generally free, fair and orderly compared to the Highlands provinces. This was again observed during the 2007 election, in which almost all coastal provinces experienced smooth and orderly conduct of elections. However, while most of the seats were declared before the return of writs, Madang was the only coastal province that could not declare its Provincial seat because of a court injunction taken out by some candidates. The return of writs had to be deferred by a week until the court had ruled on the case, subsequently allowing the declaration of Sir Arnold Amet. The court dispute that delayed the declaration of the Madang Provincial seat is symptomatic of the influence that is coming into the province and is affecting local politics.

In the past decade an increasing number of candidates originally from the Highlands provinces have been contesting the Madang Open and Madang Provincial electorates (Figures 22.1 and 22.2). These candidates have brought with them the style of politics that is widely practised in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. Standish (2002b:2) reports discussion of Highlands-style politics experienced in some coastal electorates in 2002. Madang has recently been experiencing this Highlands style of politics which has affected the electoral process. It includes massive inflation of the electoral roll, multiple voting, the use of large sums of money, and, in some cases, firearms. The so-called 'highlandisation of coastal politics' (Standish 2003:131) is created by candidates who are determined to gain public office at all cost and by whatever means. And if they are unsuccessful, they try to disrupt the process and challenge the duly elected member.

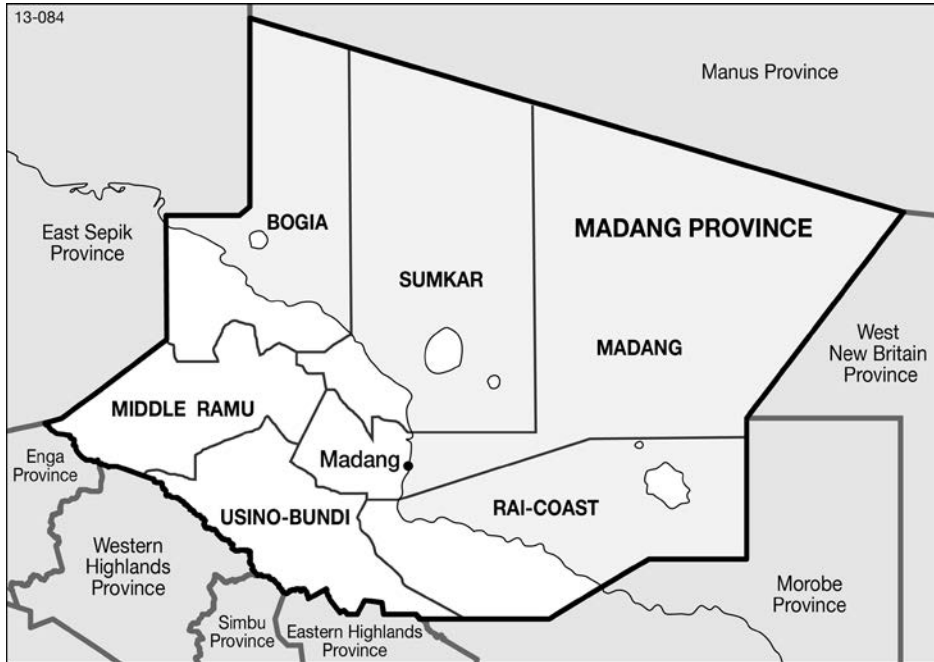


Figure 22.1: Madang Province open electorates

Standish describes a similar situation in Simbu as an ‘ethics-free zone’ where ‘candidates will do whatever it takes in attempting to grab state power’ (Standish 2002a:28). This has little to do with representing the interests of the people or following legitimate political processes to gain office, although this is the rhetoric that is publicly expounded. Money is a key issue, and usually if one is rich enough one can buy one’s way to power and pay off rivals and challengers to silence them (see Sinclair 2006:366). And if one has spent a lot of money only to lose, then one continues the challenge until there is a compromise with the winner and some cost is recovered. The study of Madang Open and Madang Provincial electorates in 2007 looks at some of these issues.

Background to the Madang Provincial and Madang Open seats

Madang Province

The Madang Provincial seat was won by Jason Garrett in 1968 (Table 22.1). He later lost to cattle rancher Bruce Jephcott, who held the seat for two consecutive terms (1972–1982). A Madang man, Tom Pais, won the seat in 1982. Melchior Kasap originally won the seat in 1987 but was replaced by Tom Pais following

a court decision in 1988. Pais was succeeded by Sir Peter Barter in 1992, Jim Kas in 1997, and Sir Peter Barter again in 2002. Evidently, those who succeeded in the Provincial seat were the 'better known' candidates, either because they were businessmen like Barter who had the resources to campaign widely, or people like Melchior Kasap, whose job in Catholic Church education enabled him to have wide contact with the people in the province. Madang's diverse geography has meant that to cover all parts of the electorate one needed to travel by air, sea and land, and that made it too expensive for many candidates to campaign widely.

Although regional/provincial members have represented Madang since 1968, after independence they did not have much influence in the province. The provincial governments introduced after independence became the centres of power and diminished the role and mandate of the national parliamentarians—in particular the backbenchers. This eventually led to the call for provincial government reforms (Gupta and Ivarature 1996; May and Regan 1997).

Table 22.1: Members for Madang Provincial and Madang Open, 1968 to 2007

Madang Provincial		Madang Open	
1968	Jason Garrett	1968	John Middleton
1972	Bruce Jephcott	1972	Angmai Bilas
1978	Bruce Jephcott	1978	Angmai Bilas
1982	Tom Pais	1982	Paul Kamod
1987	Tom Pais	1987	Paul Kamod
1992	Sir Peter Barter	1992	Stanley Pil
1997	Jim Kas	1997	Jacob Wama
2002	Sir Peter Barter	2002	Alois Kingsley
2007	Sir Arnold Amet	2007	Buka Malai

From 1978 Madang had in place an active provincial government system headed by the first premier, Bato Bultin. Bultin was succeeded by Max Moeder, Andrew Ariako and Mathew Gubag respectively. On 19 July 1995, provincial government reforms were certified, taking full effect on 16 October 1997. One of the changes was to replace the office of the premier with a governor. Unfortunately, for Madang the reform had a negative effect, especially with the quality of leadership displayed by governors, which caused widespread embarrassment and disillusionment among the voters. Regional member, Sir Peter Barter, who became governor immediately after the reform, was the ideal people's choice; however, he had to relinquish the post when he became Minister for Inter-Government Relations, and the governor's position went to Usino-Bundi member of parliament (MP) George Wan.

In 1997, Jim Kas defeated Sir Peter Barter and became the governor of the province. A university graduate from Simbai, Kas worked as a provincial government officer before entering politics and epitomized the emergence of the new breed of well-educated young leaders in Papua New Guinea. However, the promise was short lived; barely a year later Kas was gaoled for four years for 'endangering the free and safe use of an aircraft at Madang Airport' (Sinclair 2005:371). Deputy Governor Pengau Nengo took over as acting governor until 1999 when Kas was released. Despite opposition from the provincial assembly, who wanted him removed as governor, Kas was able to resume his position. Soon he was in trouble again, this time being involved in a road accident in which a person was killed. Although Kas's conviction over the airport incident was set aside by the Supreme Court, he was convicted of a serious breach of Papua New Guinea's Leadership Code and was removed from the office of governor. Pengau Nengo took over as acting governor. There followed a struggle between former governor George Wan and Rai Coast MP Stahl Musa for the governor's post, with Musa eventually emerging as the governor. He remained in the position until 2002.

Sir Peter Barter won back the governor's seat in the 2002 election but again opted for a ministry in the national government, and was replaced by the new member for Rai Coast, James Yali. Yali, the adopted son of the late cargo cult leader Yali Singina, became a controversial figure and did not last long. In January 2006 he was convicted and sentenced to 12 years imprisonment for raping his sister-in-law (see *The State v James Yali*, 2005). The province was again under the care of an acting governor, Bunag Kiup, up until the 2007 national elections. The behaviour of the governors since the reforms, and also of other Madang MPs such as Jacob Wama, who was jailed for eight years in 2002 for misappropriating K150,000 of public funds (*The State v Jacob Wama Kelewaki*, 2001), tarnished the image of leaders in Madang. People viewed the political leadership with cynicism, and there was even a belief that the governor's seat had become cursed.

Madang Open

The Madang town electorate is divided into three local-level government (LLG) areas: Madang Urban, Ambenob and Transgogol (Figure 22.2). Madang Urban caters for the town and some of the Bell people in the islands and around the town; Ambenob covers Amele, the rest of the Bell, and the north coast as far as Vidar; Transgogol covers further south and extends into the hinterland of Madang.

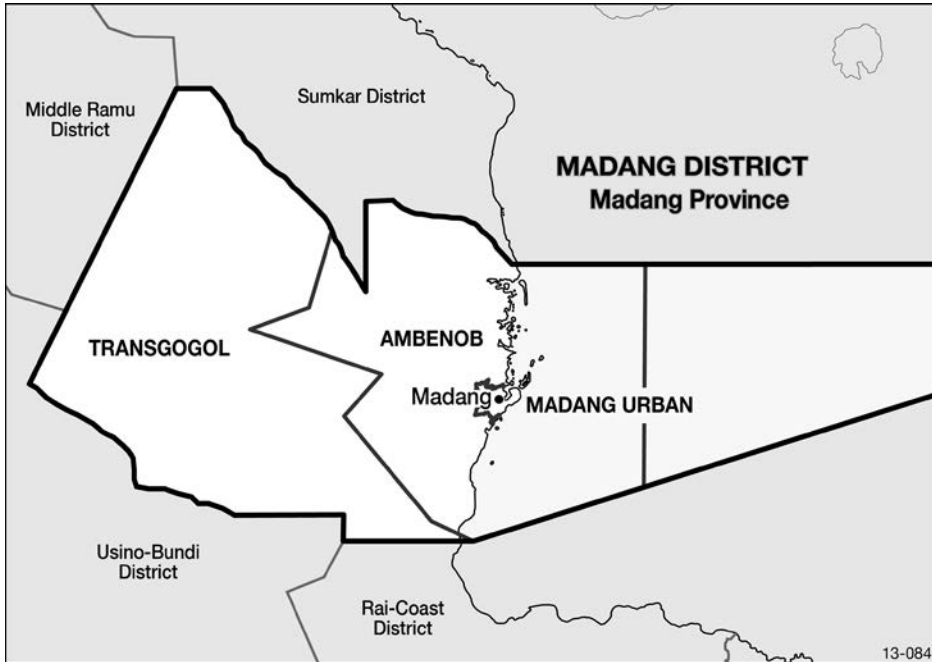


Figure 22.2: Madang District

The large number of languages (164) in the province is also an indication of the fragmentation of ethnic groups (SIL 2009). This has caused factionalism during elections, with villagers splitting up their votes. The candidates with a wider appeal tend to do better. Since 1992 MPs for Madang Open have been people from other provinces residing in the town who have had support from both the urban and rural areas of the electorate.

When explaining the misconceptions of ethnicity, Nelson (2006) writes that while a large number of languages indicates diversity, it does not 'justify the slide from language groups to ethnic fragmentation and explanations of political process'.

What confounds democracy in most electorates is not ethnicity, but smaller groups, often called clans and formed by people who have or assume a common ancestry (Nelson 2006:10).

Nelson uses an example from the Highlands to show that in contemporary politics there is a link between voting blocs and groups that form alliances in defence and aggression. However, the coastal Madang people have enjoyed a peaceful existence well before the arrival of European explorers. Alliances for tribal warfare, or even against colonial invaders, are generally unknown. Candidates in Madang, however, face the same problems that those in the Highlands encounter, which is to maintain the support base of their home clan or

tribe (Gibbs, cited in Nelson 2006:10). The limited number of voters in clan and language groups also means that for candidates to do well they have to attract support beyond their support base.¹ Therefore, those who can appeal beyond their base votes have done well in the national elections since independence. Successful candidates have also been endowed with characteristics that Nelson (ibid.) has highlighted, such as personality, the capacity to bring material benefits, and religious appeal. Of course, those who have succeeded were also known to have given handouts in cash and kind to villagers and community groups.

Voters in Madang are generally free to choose who to vote for without pressure from family or clan members. The choice may, however, be limited by lack of knowledge of candidates, which is why those who campaign widely tend to do well. Sometimes family or clan groups may consult and agree to vote for certain candidates. The choice of candidates increased in the recent election because of limited preferential voting (LPV).

Issues influencing the outcome of the 2007 election

Madang Province is made up of diverse groups of people living along the coast, on the islands, and in the highlands of Usino-Bundi and Middle Ramu electorates, which border East Sepik, Enga, Western Highlands, Simbu and Eastern Highlands provinces. Those living in the highlands of Madang are ethnically related to people in Simbu, Western Highlands and Eastern Highlands, while those furthest north have ties with East Sepik people. Cross-border relationships also exist for southern coastal people with Morobe and West New Britain. Similarities were reported in the style of politics displayed in the highlands of Madang to the politics of the Highlands Region—for example, in Usino-Bundi candidates built ‘election houses’.

Land and squatters

It was the Russian naturalist Mihlouho-Maclay who called the Madang coastal region which is part of Madang Open, the ‘Archipelago of Contented People’ (Sinclair 2005:8). Those who have followed have found the description to be generally accurate. The people living in the area have had a peaceful existence with their neighbours, trading clay pots, garden produce and seafood, and traditional artifacts and ornaments, within and beyond the boundaries of the

¹ Similarly, see May (2006).

present-day Madang electorate. European explorers and colonial administrators have found the people of Madang generally willing to accept outsiders and share their homeland.

In recent times, though, there has been growing discontent among the local people over land issues in Madang town and the influx of squatter settlers, leading to evictions. While these issues have existed in the past, the people affected by them had lived in fragmented groups and were not able to collectively voice their concerns. The Madang town land issue is a complex one dating back to the era of German colonial administration and concerns the manner in which large tracts of land within the present-day Madang Open electorate were 'purchased' without the knowledge or consent of the local people (Sinclair 2005:19). As a result, there have been disputes ever since between the colonial administration and the local people and also among the landowners themselves.

Further, with the growth of Madang town, migrants from within Madang Province and from neighbouring provinces, mainly East Sepik, have moved into Madang town and settled on vacant state land. The squatter population was estimated at 8120 in 2005, of whom 6000 were from East Sepik. They occupy portions of state land that are needed for development purposes (Sinclair 2005:375).

Initially, land issues and eviction were left to the provincial government and the police to deal with as a law and order problem. However, recently landowners and different ethnic groups in Transgogol and Ambenob have begun collaborating to deal with the issues, resulting in a protest march in support of evictions in 2003. One of the key leaders advocating the eviction of squatters was Morris Ban, a candidate for Madang Open in 2007. Issues of land and eviction have become a unifying factor for the fragmented groups of Madang people—primarily from South Ambenob, Madang Urban and parts of North Ambenob LLGs—and their actions ultimately had an effect on the 2007 election.

Kam man versus asples

In Madang, the Tokpisin term used to describe a squatter settler or someone not originally from Madang is *kam man*, literally a person who has come from outside the local area or province. The term *asples* refers to a landowner or a person originally from Madang. *Asples* and *kam man* became key words in the discourse leading up to and during the election.

The Madang Open and Madang Provincial electorates have been contested by *kam man* candidates, especially those originally from the Highlands, for more

than a decade. In fact, the Madang Open seat has been held by a *kam man* since 1992 (Jacob Wama, originally from East Sepik, Stanley Pil from Western Highlands, and Alois Kingsley from Southern Highlands).

There has been a growing discontent among the *asples* people about the *kam man* MPs who have been voted in since 1992 and who the people felt had not really represented their interests. First, the fact that no *asples* candidate was able to win the seat for three terms of parliament was a blow to the pride of the local people. Then, the actions and behaviour of MPs angered the local voters. As noted above, Jacob Wama (1997–2002) was gaoled for misappropriating funds meant for local projects, while poor public behaviour by Alois Kingsley (2002–2007) was the subject of adverse media reports on several occasions. Governors Kas (1997–2002) and Yali (2002–2007) were also in trouble with the law at the time.

The domination of the Open seat by the *kam man* became an issue in the 2007 elections. The different ethnic groups within Madang began to express a united voice, which became the *votim asples* campaign (vote for the local Madang person rather than the *kam man*). LPV's feature of encouraging cooperation among candidates seems to have helped in enabling the local Madang candidates to unite against the outsiders. The *votim asples* feeling was strong among locals, although a number of villagers still chose to back the *kam man* candidates or vote along party lines because of benefits they have been receiving. The *votim asples* campaign was mainly championed by candidates and voters of the Transgogol and South Ambenob areas, while those in Madang Urban LLG and North Ambenob displayed a more tolerant attitude. There were, however, North Ambenob candidates who urged people to vote for an *asples* leader. The *votim asples* campaign was, however, up against some well-funded candidates who were determined to buy their way to victory.

Highlandization of coastal politics

In talking about the 'Highlandization' of coastal politics, (Standish 2003:131) identifies 'the mass inflation of the electoral roll, multiple voting and the use of large sums of money and, in some cases, firearms'. In Madang there has been growing evidence of the Highlands style of politics creeping into the province. This is not surprising since Madang is one of only two coastal provinces connected to the Highlands by road. As a result there has been an influx of highlanders into the province, encouraged by the betel nut trade as well as markets for fresh Highlands vegetables. There are also employment and business opportunities in the province because of the development of resource projects.

The aggressive behaviour of highlanders seeking to participate in business, and in obtaining property and land, has alarmed the people of Madang who suspect that some of the highlanders' activities have not been transparent.

Evidence of Highlands-style politics in Madang has included incidents of bloc voting, roll stacking, multiple voting, large sums of money, and the use of firearms. While the incidents in Madang are isolated and insignificant in comparison with more dramatic events in Highlands elections, nevertheless they have been notable in the quieter politics of Madang. For example, as will be discussed below, an attempt was made to inflate the roll in Ward 5 by a *kam man* candidate originally from the Highlands. Instances of multiple voting in Madang have been reported in the media. The distribution of large sums of money by candidates was also noted before and during the campaigns, and the use of firearms in the election became a concern when certain candidates and their supporters, mainly from the Highlands provinces, tried to use weapons to influence the outcome of the elections.

In Madang early observation suggests that the creation of a new roll based on the local government council wards effectively controlled the possibilities of roll inflation. However, the Madang Open and Madang Provincial seats cover the urban area where there are large numbers of people. With the constant movement of people in and out of town, it is difficult to identify the exact number of people living in the wards. Assistant returning officer of the Madang Urban LLG, Laki Tonngi, saw this as a problem and said the urban wards' census books should be updated every six months and that full-time recorders were needed. Currently, ward recorders are on a K40 monthly allowance which, he said, was not sufficient; anybody could come and enrol and it would be hard to verify their residential status.

The study of the 2007 election in Madang

This study draws on direct observation of the 2007 election in parts of the Madang Open, Madang Provincial and Sumkar Open electorates, from enrolment up to the return of writs. A mini questionnaire survey was also distributed to Divine Word University and Madang Technical College students to obtain data on student voter behaviour, and random interviews were done with voters in Sumkar electorate (the home electorate of the candidate who was the favourite for the Provincial seat, Sir Arnold Amet).

The student questionnaire (of which only 42 were returned) was distributed after it was learnt that certain *kam man* candidates were trying to mobilize students' support and were offering them inducements in cash and kind.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts, dealing with enrolment, campaigning, and the polling period. The findings of the study are summarized below.

Votim asples campaign

The *votim asples* campaign was carried out by a group of candidates mainly from South Ambenob LLG on the outskirts of Madang town. There was a strong feeling against *kam man* candidates among both the Madang villagers and people from other provinces residing in Madang, who questioned the character and intentions of some of the candidates and were of the view that local politics should remain in the hands of the *asples* people.

The Transgogol candidates campaigned throughout the electorate and their message was that while the *kam man* were welcome to live and work in Madang, they should stay away from politics which was only for the *asples*. At the close of nominations in May, at Madang Bates Oval there was a confrontation between the South Ambenob group of *asples* candidates led by former police officer Jim Namora and a former Madang MP, Stanley Pil—a *kam man*. The former MP turned up at the oval but did not proceed to the nearby Madang District Office to nominate. Instead, he summoned the Madang District Returning Officer, Gol Damud, to his rally to nominate him in front of his supporters, who were mainly settlers from the Gav Stoa area. This angered the Transgogol group who moved their supporters up next to the former MP's gathering and disrupted his campaign. Open anger was expressed by the South Ambenob group, who said that outsiders who came into Madang for business or work, or were married to local women should stay away from local politics. The confrontation resulted in the former MP being led away by his supporters to another part of the oval.

The campaign of the South Ambenob group continued throughout the campaign period. Morris Ban, a Madang Open candidate and member of the Transgogol group, told me that they would not tolerate *kam man* candidates and barred them from campaigning in South Ambenob and Transgogol areas. Although I had no opportunity to visit that part of the electorate, people from the area confirmed that *kam man* candidates did not campaign there. A journalist from the National Broadcasting Corporation told me that during the nomination period, a big-name *kam man* candidate's campaign at the popular Four-Mile market in South Ambenob was disrupted when the local people pelted the campaigners with objects and chased them back to town.

Campaign against vote buying

There were civil society and candidate campaigns against vote buying and voters were asked to ignore candidates who attempted to bribe voters with cash, food and other goods. Candidate Jim Kas told voters that although food and money would be given to them, people should vote, using their heads, for an *asples* candidate. Similar sentiments were expressed by candidate Sam Aloï, who criticized the voters who were going after food and money because it was not the 'custom' of the Madang people. Aloï was also the only person who campaigned on the dangers of HIV/AIDS. Candidate Tony Birra told voters that they should not expect handouts from him because it was not the local custom. He said according to 'custom' people are rewarded with a celebration after an achievement—in this case an election victory. The irony of this was that some *asples* candidates were also guilty of offering inducements for votes.

Deals over preferences

Deals were most apparent among candidates and voters from South Ambenob. The group not only campaigned together and asked voters to share their preferences among them, but also campaigned against *kam man* candidates. A notable development was the series of meetings held among the *asples* candidates to reduce their numbers in order to increase their chances of winning. A local leader told me that at least three public meetings were held in South Ambenob and Transgogol and some candidates, including Catherine Mal, the only female and a popular *asples* candidate, stepped down as a result. However, Catherine subsequently supported a *kam man* candidate whom her people were campaigning against. It was obvious that the *kam man* was trying to attract Catherine's supporters in South Ambenob and Transgogol.

Inducement to win votes

A number of candidates within Madang Open, Madang Provincial and Sumkar used inducements in cash and kind to win votes. As usual in the period leading up to the elections, candidates sponsored sports teams, community groups, and events such as sports tournaments. One candidate even set up youth organizations called Youth-link. Various amounts of cash were dished out just before polling began at villages such as Yabob, Riwo, Siar and along the north coast. This was obvious at Divine Word University campus, which had some 800 eligible voters; students were the target of certain *kam man* candidates who distributed cash and promised benefits. The mini survey conducted among 42 students (23 females and 19 males) revealed that 23 of them had accepted

inducements offered by *kam man* candidates, who asked for their vote. The inducements included cash amounts of from K2 to K600 and other benefits such as alcohol and free entry to dances.

Students enrolled by candidate

Of the 42 students surveyed, 29 were enrolled to vote; however, 12 said that they did not enrol themselves. Of the 12, nine said they were enrolled by a Highlands candidate while three said they had no idea how their names got on to the list. One said he had already enrolled himself but later found someone had re-enrolled him using incorrect data for his birth date. Some students said they did not want to vote in Madang and therefore had not enrolled, but were surprised to find their names on the roll. In fact, a check through the ward roll revealed more than 104 entries repeated, some more than three times. Other ward rolls in Madang did not show any multiple entries. Under the electoral law, those qualified to vote must complete and sign an enrolment form for their names to be included on the ward roll in their electorate of residence. This did not happen in Ward 5; the Highlands candidate collaborated with the ward recorder to enrol the students. A student who is a provincial group leader told me that a particular Highlands candidate had invited her and other group leaders to his residence for a meeting and asked them to give him a list of their student members so that he could enroll them. She said this is how the names of students were obtained. She said in return the student leaders were offered free entry to the candidate's nightclub. Cash and liquor were also offered. Most of the students interviewed accepted the inducements and said that they were poor and needed the cash and benefits. They said it was an opportunity not to be missed.

Eviction threat

Madang's population of settlers, mainly from East Sepik, again became a target in the campaigns of *kam man*, who promised that there would be no evictions should *kam man* candidates win. The night before polling, one confident campaigner told the settlers at Gav Stoa that he wanted their second preferences only and asked them to sell their first preference votes to the highest bidder. He promised them that after he had won the election and become governor he would ensure that they would not be evicted from their current location. (Plans had been made to demolish the Gav Stoa settlement in order to make way for a Maritime College.)

Limited preferential voting and female candidates

The *votim asples* campaign seems to have overshadowed any vote-for-women campaigns in the Madang Provincial and Madang Open electorates. As noted, Catherine Mal, a candidate who was runner up in 1997 election, stood down after a meeting of Ambenob and Transgogol candidates. Two other women contested the Open seat: Agatha Yama, wife of People's Labour Party leader Peter Yama, and Dr Cecilia Pakule. Both women's main vote base was in Madang Urban, which was shared by many candidates. They were further disadvantaged by not being *asples*, so the *votim asples* campaign went against them. In the Provincial seat Mary Kamang seemed a strong candidate because of her position as the president of the Provincial Council of Women. She was also an *asples* from Yabob village on the edge of the town. Kamang was relying on the women's vote and also hoped to capture preference votes. However, she was up against a field of strong candidates and did well to manage fourth place.

Multiple voting

Multiple voting is a common problem in the Highlands provinces but occurs in coastal provinces as well. A policeman providing security at a polling booth in Madang confided that he had voted more than once—most likely in collaboration with other polling officials. In parts of Madang Urban electorate scrutineers were on the lookout for people trying to vote more than once, especially by impersonating others. Two female students were caught and arrested by police (*The National* 5 July 2007), but generally there were few instances of multiple voting in Madang Open and Madang Provincial electorates, where scrutineers were vigilant and secret ballot voting was enforced. At Sisiak, a suburb noted at times for its lawlessness, scrutineers were actively monitoring every single voter and challenging those whom they suspected. After some minor disturbances during the day involving Highlands voters trying to pressure polling officials, there was a heavy police presence and, we were told, police locked up a number of people trying to cause trouble.

Use of firearms

During polling in Madang Urban, supporters of a prominent Highlands candidate discharged firearms at the popular Machine Gun beach, assaulted a polling official, and kidnapped a policeman. The kidnapped policeman later said he did not see any firearms in the vehicle in which he was transported but had seen bush knives, axes and other weapons. An open confrontation between the police and the candidate's supporters was averted and a security force contingent from Lae was brought in to maintain law and order. Police also reported that

supporters of the same candidate were seen along the Ramu River, dressed in police and army uniforms, waiting to intercept ballot boxes coming down the Ramu River. However, when they realized that a policeman was escorting the ballot boxes, they jumped into the vehicle and fled. A candidate also told me that the same group of people tried to forcibly take a ballot box after polling in a remote location in Bogia but the presiding officer and an unarmed policeman guarding the polling booth prevented them.

Assessing the outcome

The introduction of LPV, according to Standish (2006:196–198) was intended primarily to address the declining mandates held by members of parliament elected under first-past-the-post voting. Its introduction was an attempt at political engineering to ‘change people’s electoral behaviour or political culture, and in particular to break down the intense localism found in most areas of Papua New Guinea’. He also listed other arguments for LPV, such as making campaigning more accommodative and less confrontational, lessening violence, easing tensions, giving women candidates a better chance of election, and allowing MPs to be elected with an absolute majority (though only a majority of the live votes at the final count).

Observations of the Madang Open and Madang Provincial seats revealed that some of these changes have taken place. There have been changes in people’s electoral behaviour and in the political culture, especially in allowing preference sharing by candidates and their supporters. Winning candidates can also claim a majority victory. However, there has been no indication of reduced tension; indeed, the ‘highlandization’ of politics seems to have increased tensions somewhat in Madang, with the assault of polling officials and use of firearms on the Madang waterfront.

Women’s chances have not improved at all. The *votim asples* campaign seems to have worked against voting for women.

Candidates who are up against a strong and popular opponent sometimes resort to smear campaigns in the hope of increasing their chances of winning. A candidate campaigning at a settlement in Madang town described his opponent, Sir Arnold Amet, as a *waitman in blak skin* who did not understand *pasin Madang* (a ‘white’ Papua New Guinean who did not understand the Madang culture). This unfortunate slur was used against Sir Arnold throughout Madang by his opponents. Sir Arnold was well aware of it and referred to it when giving his inauguration address after his win. However, there was popular support for the former chief justice, especially in his home electorate of Sumkar.

People had confidence that he could use his professional skills and experience in government to bring change to Madang. Compared to Sir Arnold, the other candidates had little to offer.

Addressing problems

The issue of 'highlandization of coastal politics' can only be effectively addressed when voters become aware of what is actually going on. Some awareness took place in Madang in 2007 and candidates have used the avenues provided by LPV, such as preference sharing, to unite in addressing the issue. The *asples* campaign for the Madang Open and Madang Provincial seats succeeded in getting local candidates elected. There has been some grumbling among the *asples* candidates themselves over the eventual winner of Madang Open, whom they did not see as someone particular endowed with leadership qualities, but people will have to live with their choice.

On the other hand, there is general satisfaction with the election of Sir Arnold Amet, who many thought was the ideal candidate for the governor's position. Even his opponents acknowledge that he has brought stability to the troubled Madang governor's seat. But there is a challenge to his victory from one of the losing candidates, citing bribery, undue influence, intimidation, and errors and omissions by counting officials. Among the accusations against Amet is that more than 3000 ballot papers marked for Peter Yama were found at Meiro dump near the town. Prior to 2002 interference with ballot papers was a problem largely confined to Highlands electorates, but a similar incident occurred in Madang in 2002. The same candidate has been involved on both occasions; it was also his supporters who were involved in the attempts to hijack ballot boxes along the Ramu River and inland of Bogia in 2007. These matters need to be investigated and dealt with appropriately. The election-related use of firearms is still limited and effective police operations and the peaceful nature of the Madang people ensured that this remained the case.

Ward recorders and voters have generally worked together to avoid inflation of rolls, but the attempt to inflate the roll in Ward 5 by multiple entries of names of students at Divine Word University must be dealt with before the next election. There were attempts at multiple voting in Madang in 2007, but incidents were few and mostly controlled by the introduction of ward rolls which are easier to administer and easier for scrutineers to monitor. Proposals for permanent ward recorders to regularly update the rolls should be considered. An accurate ward roll is crucial for elections and useful for ward development and administration.

Some candidates in Madang Open and Madang Provincial seats spent large sums of money on their campaigns; this is reflected in the disputes that have

occurred after the election. While money is an important factor, it did not seem to influence the outcome of the elections in Madang. The tendency of Madang people to vote *asples* candidates, and the opposition to the 'highlandization' of Madang politics, had a major influence on the election in Madang in 2007.

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Appendix

Table 22.2: Voting statistics for Madang Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	53,851
Total votes cast	36,053
Informal votes	931 (2.6 % of total votes cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	35,122
Total ballot papers remaining in count	15,751
Total votes distributed	21,659
Exhausted ballot papers	19,371 (55.2% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	17,562

Table 22.3: Voting statistics for Madang Provincial electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	224,303
Total votes cast	157,371
Informal votes	5,111 (3.2 % of total votes cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	152,260
Total ballot papers remaining in count	95,169
Total votes distributed	na
Exhausted ballot papers	57,091 (37.5% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	47,586

Table 22.4: Madang Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
39	Buka Malai	M	Independent	4579	13.0	1	3933	46.2		8512	24.2	54.0
29	Nixon Philip Duban	M	People's National Congress	3652	10.4	2	3587	49.6		7239	20.6	46.0
41	Jim Namora	M	Independent	2619	7.5	3	2543	49.3	42	5162	14.7	
13	Stanley Pili	M	People's Party	1872	5.3	5	1938	50.9	41	3810	10.8	
11	Salam Malagun	M	Independent	2585	7.4	4	944	26.7	40	3529	10.0	
10	Morris Ban	M	Independent	1775	5.1	6	1172	39.8	39	2947	8.4	
31	Brian Kramer	M	Independent	1021	2.9	11	1631	61.5	38	2652	7.6	
30	Sir Kubulan Los	M	People's Labour Party	1437	4.1	7	981	40.6	37	2418	6.9	
34	Joe Tari Tipaija	M	Independent	1283	3.7	8	768	37.4	36	2051	5.8	
26	Hud Kassar Lambu	M	United Party	1189	3.4	9	628	34.6	35	1817	5.2	
23	Agatha Yama	F	National Alliance	890	2.5	13	604	40.4	34	1494	4.3	
44	Samuel Alooi	M	PANGU	976	2.8	12	426	30.4	33	1402	4.0	
53	Clant Alok	M	PNG Party	1068	3.0	10	303	22.1	32	1371	3.9	
18	Cecilia Pakule	F	Independent	829	2.4	15	426	33.9	31	1255	3.6	
36	Gerd Litz	M	New Generation Party	838	2.4	14	235	21.9	30	1073	3.1	
47	Joe Jeffery	M	Independent	574	1.6	18	228	28.4	29	802	2.3	
35	Bunag Kuip	M	Independent	685	2.0	16	85	11.0	28	770	2.2	
12	Alphonse Tipin	M	Independent	646	1.8	17	102	13.6	27	748	2.1	
28	Mandos Pileng	M	Independent	507	1.4	20	213	29.6	26	720	2.0	
20	Jonny Aila	M	Independent	506	1.4	21	144	22.2	25	650	1.9	
46	Joe Balim	M	Yumi Reform Party	489	1.4	22	130	21.0	24	619	1.8	
15	David Las	M	Independent	527	1.5	19	73	12.2	23	600	1.7	

22. Elections and Corruption: The 'Highlandization' of Voting in the Madang Open and Provincial Electorates

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
27	John C. Patrick	M	Independent	404	1.2	25	133	24.8	22	537	1.5	
49	Saun Dambui	M	Stars Alliance Party	421	1.2	24	73	14.8	21	494	1.4	
42	Simon Mulugi Kabal	M	People's Progress Party	429	1.2	23	44	9.3	20	473	1.3	
19	Paul Ropra	M	People's Action Party	384	1.1	26	44	10.3	19	428	1.2	
16	John Simbai	M	Independent	312	0.9	27	25	7.4	18	337	1.0	
37	Florian S. Bahin	M	Independent	212	0.6	33	96	31.2	17	308	0.9	
24	Taman S. Kim	M	People's First Party	224	0.6	30	76	25.3	16	300	0.9	
25	Benjamin M. Kabig	M	Independent	259	0.7	28	9	3.4	15	268	0.8	
17	Essau Wareh	M	Independent	249	0.7	29	13	5.0	14	262	0.7	
48	Aung Kumal	M	Independent	218	0.6	31	25	10.3	13	243	0.7	
52	Peter Livab	M	Independent	216	0.6	32	3	1.4	12	219	0.6	
33	Hais Wasel	M	Christian Democratic Party	208	0.6	34	10	4.6	11	218	0.6	
22	Godfrey Yombon Kuno	M	Rural Development Party	207	0.6	35	4	1.9	10	211	0.6	
38	Ivan Mullul	M	Independent	160	0.5	36	0	0.0	9	160	0.5	
14	Tamlong Tab	M	Independent	146	0.4	37	3	2.0	8	149	0.4	
21	Paul Erur	M	Independent	141	0.4	38	1	0.7	7	142	0.4	
40	Walol Mosob	M	Independent	131	0.4	39	1	0.8	6	132	0.4	
51	Peter Hamadi	M	Independent	75	0.2	40	3	3.8	5	78	0.2	
50	Andrew Mapio	M	Independent	64	0.2	41	2	3.0	4	66	0.2	
32	Umsa Bande	M	Independent	40	0.1	42	0	0.0	3	40	0.1	
43	Moses Luluaki	M	Independent	39	0.1	43	0	0.0	2	39	0.1	
45	Terry Sibanganei	M	Independent	36	0.1	44	0	0.0	1	36	0.1	

Table 22.5: Madang Provincial electorate results, 2007 election^a

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
27	Arnold Amet	M	National Alliance	31,171	20.5	1	24,765	44.3		55,936	36.7	58.8
26	Jim Kas	M	Independent	25,612	16.8	2	13,620	34.7		39,232	25.8	41.2
11	Peter Yama	M	People's Labour Party	18,989	12.5	3	12,039	38.8	21	31,028	20.4	
16	Mary Kaman	F	Independent	11,339	7.4	4	11,381	50.1	20	22,720	14.9	
29	Tony Birra	M	New Generation Party	7,807	5.1	5	7,091	47.6	19	14,898	9.8	
32	Alois Kingsley	M	Independent	6,480	4.3	6	3,208	33.1	18	9,688	6.4	
21	Wesley Sanarup	M	Independent	6,170	4.1	7						
24	Daniel Muturam	M	People's Action Party	5,937	3.9	8						
25	Mike Kamo	M	Independent	4,988	3.3	9						
28	Steven Adambo	M	Yumi Reform Party	4,608	3.0	10						
20	Taba Silau	M	Independent	4,195	2.8	11						
14	Don Titus	M	Independent	3,636	2.4	12						
23	Zebedee Kalup	M	PANGU	3,145	2.1	13						
13	Michael Tatakai	M	National Advance Party	2,627	1.7	14						
30	Peter Gabu	M	Independent	2,460	1.6	15						
31	Nallon Derr	M	People's Party	2,441	1.6	16						
17	Joe Poga	M	Independent	2,084	1.4	17						
10	John Gig	M	Independent	1,817	1.2	18						
22	John Buri	M	Rural Development Party	1,813	1.2	19						

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Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
19	Fridoling Malangen	M	Independent	1,544	1.0	20						
15	Ujan Taul	M	Independent	1,322	0.9	21						
12	John Bossi	M	Independent	1,081	0.7	22						
18	Max Dowai	M	PNG National Party	996	0.7	23						

a Regrettably the available results for Madang Provincial electorate are incomplete.

23. What is Holding them Back? Reflections on one Woman's Loss at the Polls: Usino-Bundi Open

Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi

Women's struggles for equity continue to be frustrated in Papua New Guinea and other Pacific island nations (Dickerson-Putman and Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1994; Macintyre 1998). Issues such as gender violence are largely ignored by male politicians (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1997d; Bradley 1998; Dinnen 2000; Human Rights Watch 2005) and everywhere women suffer political setbacks (Kidu 2006). In Papua New Guinea, only three women served in parliament concurrently in the decade following independence in 1975. From 1987 to 1997, there were no women in parliament and few in provincial offices. In 1997, two women were elected to the 109-member parliament, with one—the white widow of Sir Buri Kidu—staying on to represent one of the national capital electorates (Moresby South) for a second term. Lady Carol Kidu was recently re-elected for a third term, once again as the only female member of Papua New Guinea's national parliament.

As Papua New Guinea women bear many of the burdens of development, their virtual absence in politics is troubling. At a World Bank conference in Madang in 2006, it was noted that mining is not gender neutral and that women are rarely included in plans to encourage sustainable development or given equal access to justice, education, health care or economic resources. In surveys at the Ramu Nickel project in 1995 and 2000, I observed that men routinely left women out of genealogical data which might qualify the women as landowners. The same men expected their wives and unmarried sons and daughters to maintain newly made gardens and house sites in the sparsely populated rainforest while they—the husbands—were in town using land compensation monies to buy second wives and things of no benefit to those left behind (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 2001). In a keynote speech given at a dinner hosted by the Solomon Islands prime minister in Honiara, Lady Carol Kidu argued that, 'To waste half of the intellectual capacity of Melanesia by excluding women from our highest decision-making institutions is madness', calling for affirmative action to make Pacific parliaments more inclusive democratic institutions (Kidu 2006).

While proposals such as Lady Kidu's merit attention and it is evident that male dominance makes it difficult for female candidates, the question arises: why do not more women vote for female candidates? What congeries of factors

and circumstances prevent women—who are capable actors in most realms of life—from becoming strong political actors both as ‘women’ and as Papua New Guinea citizens?

In 2006 I received word from a friend that she intended running for parliament in the 2007 national elections. A self-made businesswoman, actively engaged in promoting small-scale rural development and helping families (that is, both men and women), my friend seemed poised for victory over most other candidates—who promised big payouts from large-scale developments they had little control over and who reeked of corruption and indifference to gender issues. Returning to Papua New Guinea in 2007, I theorized that factors such as race, class and gender might play a decisive role in Betty’s campaign and its ultimate success or failure. Previously, I had written that Papua New Guinea’s male leaders helped marginalize the national women’s movement (as well as mock women’s aspirations in their own class) by promoting a myth opposing ‘chaste and selfless’ village women with ‘promiscuous, Westernized’ women living ‘selfishly’ in town with their rich white husbands or lovers (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1993). I argued that in widening the gulf between rural and educated urban women and appealing to mass prejudice, leaders deflected attention from the interests of all women as well as their own weaknesses in representing their constituencies.

To understand better why women do not mobilize on common issues, I intended to explore further the politics of tradition and modernity as they relate to race, class and gender. In Melanesia, ‘tradition’ is associated with women and village mores while ‘modernity’ is associated more with men and Western-style business success and social endeavours (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1995). In a seminal work on race and modernity, Bashkow (2006) shows how ‘whiteness’ is a moral concept signifying (for the Orokaiva at least) both success in modern terms and failure in maintaining traditional exchange relations. ‘Whiteness’ is now separable from white people and applicable to men of a certain class. While the Orokaiva have little to say on women and ‘whiteness’, my friend has been called ‘white’ and has suffered discrimination because of her white husband and unusual business success (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1997c). Even so, in 2007 she felt sure it was the right time to run against men who lived in urban opulence and socialized more with Papua New Guinea’s international elite. Unlike her opponents, Betty spends much of her time attending to her fish farm and tourist business on Mount Wilhelm as well as other rural activities and exchanges. I was interested to see both how she would set herself apart from the other candidates on key issues such as corruption, inequality, poor rural services and health care, and how various constituencies would perceive her framing of self. Would her opponents be perceived as more ‘white’ and less moral than she? Would women and young men see her as the embodiment of culture heroine Dobume (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1997a, 1997b), who set Gende society on the right path by enabling

her brother to marry and have children (something their mythical father had overlooked)? Would ordinary women who sacrifice to see that their children prosper (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1996b; 1998) feel kinship with a woman who can easily afford better schools for her children and overseas trips? Either way, I expected my examination of the roles of race, class and gender in my friend's campaign would broaden discussion of race and modernity to include women and their political and economic situations. As it is, women are often left out of or lumped together in works on modernity and globalization (Knauff 1999). And understanding modernist dimensions of power and disempowerment is important to understanding the challenges Papua New Guinea women face.

The candidate

Betty Higgins was born in Goroka in 1958, the first child of 'houseboy' Ruge Angiva and his second wife Elizabeth. Born at a time when few migrants were accompanied by their wives and children, Betty started out life receiving much attention from her parents and those of her father's clan brothers who were part of their urban household. Often Betty's young uncles would babysit her while Betty's mother worked odd jobs for whites or gambled for money. Fluent in Pidgin, unafraid of white people and generous, Elizabeth was a focal point in the Goroka migrant community. She counselled others on the intricacies of keeping the white masters and their wives happy and used whatever earnings or handouts she received to support her husband's brothers when they arrived in town seeking their fortunes. Elizabeth was from the beginning an important role model for Betty.

When Betty was a toddler, Ruge brought her and his two pregnant wives back to his home village of Yandera to stay. With his own father near death, Ruge took over the running of his father's household. As the oldest male in his generation, Ruge received ample support from his father's younger brothers in the way of garden land and brideprice for a third wife. His uncles also paid off Elizabeth's brideprice as well as childwealth payments for Betty and her younger siblings. Investing heavily in their deceased brother's son, the uncles expected that when their own sons were of an age to marry, Ruge and his wives would be obligated to help them with brideprice pigs. Beyond that, they could also expect to receive portions of Ruge's daughters' brideprices. Being part of others' investment strategies, Betty was soon at the centre of their disputes. When Elizabeth enrolled Betty and her sister in the new boarding school at Bundi, it was against the protests of her uncles, who feared the consequences of two young girls living apart from their kin and developing any kind of

independence. Ruge did not want to disagree with his uncles and so stood by while Elizabeth undertook the weekly trips to Bundi to take food to her girls and to help other parents plant gardens for the school's foreign teachers.

Although many students were homesick, Betty enjoyed her studies and the camaraderie of dorm life. When her mother left her father, Betty refused to go with her. Her only support during this time came from her maternal grandmother and several farseeing women who took pity on Betty. When it came time for Betty to transfer to a high school on the coast, her father refused to pay her airfare or school fees, urging her to stay home and work in the gardens to repay the debts her mother had walked out on (Gende women are expected to repay their brideprices). Again, it was women who put together the cash for Betty's airfare. When Betty and the other children arrived at Madang airport, the headmaster discovered that Betty did not have tuition money. He arranged for Betty to earn her own school fees doing some housekeeping for two teachers.

When Betty was not busy with schoolwork and chores, she enjoyed visiting the children's ward at the Madang hospital and giving fruit and flowers to the children who seemed most lonely. Betty was herself very lonely, feeling abandoned by her parents. On one of her hospital visits, Betty passed by the open room of a middle-aged white man. Although she was afraid, she was drawn into the room by the man's sad face. Putting flowers on his bedside table, she then fled without a word. The next time she visited the hospital, the head nurse took her to the man's room where Betty's beneficiary thanked her for cheering him up on what had been his birthday. The man gave Betty candy his wife and children had sent from Australia. Overcoming her shyness, Betty told the man her story and he decided to help her. Taking her to Australia during the summer holidays, he paid her tuition and gave her a regular book and clothing allowance throughout the remainder of her high school years. When the family returned to England on leave, Betty went with them.

After graduating from high school, Betty worked at several jobs before applying for a job at Air Niugini. With her good looks, intelligence, and charm, Betty enjoyed the heady life of an Air Niugini air hostess. Travelling between Port Moresby, other parts of Papua New Guinea and various Pacific capitals, Betty developed a sophistication few men and even fewer women possess. Shopping for bargains in Singapore and Hong Kong, enjoying the night life in Brisbane and Sydney, or caught up in the international whirl of Honolulu, Betty saw and did many things. Expected to wear makeup and dress fashionably, Betty attracted male attention. Though she dated Papua New Guineans, she preferred expatriates—feeling as many air hostesses and educated women did at the time (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1993)—that Western men were kinder and more generous than their Papua New Guinean peers.

Meeting her first husband on a flight from Australia, Betty moved out of the Air Niugini flats and into the spacious home of her Australian father-in-law, a car dealer in Port Moresby. Given the run of the house and a generous budget, she turned the house into a Mecca for other Gende who were in town for short visits or looking for work. Although her husband and father-in-law were unenthusiastic about the crowds of Gende who passed through their home, they were even less prepared to deal with Betty's parents. Not long after she started work for Air Niugini, Betty had brought about her parents' reunion. Once they realized her good fortune, Elizabeth and Ruge visited Port Moresby regularly and were a source of tension in Betty's marriage. They even demanded that their son-in-law and his father pay brideprice for Betty. Betty, however, preferred 'paying for herself' and 'being her own woman' and sent her parents back to the village.

Eventually a child was born and Betty named her Lisa, after the wife of a Chinese restaurant owner in Port Moresby. Close friends, the couple often took Lisa with them on trips to Hong Kong and Singapore. Since Betty continued working for Air Niugini, she arranged for her younger sisters to babysit Lisa. Soon, however, her mother moved back with her, claiming she could better look after Lisa. Another purpose was to make better use of Betty's prosperity. As Ruge many times described his and Elizabeth's relationship with their daughter, 'Betty is our business. We helped her grow up. We did many things for her. Now it is time to reap the profits'. Back in Yandera, Ruge directed departing migrants to Betty's house, calling it 'his home'. The irony of Ruge's expecting to control Betty's resources when he had contributed little to her education was not lost on Betty. She, however, chose to indulge him as long as he treated her mother fairly and because her father had become a very important bigman who could, if he wished, jeopardize Betty's plans to one day return home to the village to stay.

Meanwhile, disenchanted with her husband because of his substance abuse, Betty moved back to the Air Niugini flats. For several years she dated a succession of men. To her mother's disappointment, Betty refused the proposals of well-to-do Papua New Guineans in favour of another Australian, this time a man with several grown children from a previous marriage. An engineer at the Yonki dam site in Eastern Highlands Province, Ken was soon popular with his in-laws because of his generosity and his support of Betty's plans to return to Yandera to start a business and to raise her children away from the crime of Port Moresby. A dry-weather road had recently linked the Gende to urban markets in the Highlands and north coast. Investing her own and her husband's savings in a new pickup truck, a generator, freezer, and stereo and video equipment, Betty hoped to build a large coffee-buying business and other income-generating activities for herself and her relatives. Within a few months of her return in early 1986, Betty was buying coffee and transporting the beans

to distant markets, selling beer and other alcoholic beverages in the village club she built, and charging villagers admission to weekend discos and video shows. Plans to sell vegetables to town markets did not materialize but Betty did open a well-stocked tradestore at one end of the five room log cabin she and her family lived in. With the generator she was able to keep and sell frozen meats along with a regular supply of fresh eggs from the chickens she penned up beneath her house.

For as long as they continued, Betty's business operations brought a measure of prosperity to Yandera village. Betty paid her father for the use of the land on which she built her home. She paid her father and other villagers K5000 for the materials and labour they put into building her house and the drinking club. Her mother ran the tradestore and kept most of the profits. Some two dozen women and children earned cash for carrying bags of coffee from Yandera to where the new road ended. And Betty hired two men as regular drivers and mechanics for the day-long trips to town. She made it easier than ever for villagers to sell their coffee. And there were more children enrolled in the local school as result of their being able to earn their own school fees doing small jobs for Betty.

The good times were soon over, however. Betty was giving out more than she was earning. She was, in fact, subsidizing village 'development' and getting nothing in return for her K30,000 investment. The causes of her failure were Betty's unfulfilled expectation that villagers would reciprocate her generosity and help build her business empire, and the Catholic mission's apparent opposition to any attempt to break their monopoly of business opportunities in the Gende area. Having to pay even close relatives to keep her supplied with such necessities as clean drinking water, Betty learned that villagers do not feel compelled to achieve a balance of exchange in their relations with more prosperous migrants. Village sentiment was summed up by one woman: 'When Betty and her husband stay in town they spend over K100 a night for a room in the Bird of Paradise Hotel. That is more money than most of us have in a year's time'. Competing with the mission, Betty paid villagers the same price per kilo of coffee even though she had the added cost of paying cartage to where her truck was parked (a charge villagers did not make against the more distant mission tradeposts). The foreign worker who did most of the coffee buying for the mission and was in charge of all government-funded work in the area, compounded Betty's difficulties by stopping work on the road into Yandera until after Betty had given up on her local business aspirations. A church catechist in Yandera was instrumental in closing down Betty's village pub.

After leaving Yandera, Betty and her husband purchased land on the slopes of Mount Wilhelm that is near enough to an all-weather road to make the sale of fresh vegetables, a vineyard, and other agricultural projects feasible money-makers. By 1989 and 1990, Betty was supplying fresh vegetables to Anderson's

Foodland stores in Lae and Rabaul and by 1994 she was raising trout and chickens as well as considering the possibility of raising rabbits for meat. The land was near enough to Gende territory that Betty's relatives could work for her and still maintain gardens and other village-based enterprises but far enough away that they did not control vital aspects of Betty's business operations such as land, labour, and road access. For several years Betty's father (until his death in 1991) and mother helped oversee her business while Betty divided her time between Yonki and the farm. By 1994 Betty and her family were living at the farm fulltime.

Still angered by the Catholic mission's lack of support for local entrepreneurs in her homeland, in 1989 Betty ran an unsuccessful political campaign for a seat in the Madang provincial government. As the first Gende woman to run for high office, Betty encountered prejudice from both men and women for acting 'like a man' and putting herself too much in the public eye. Nevertheless, many villagers considered her a serious candidate and those persons who had jeopardized her earlier coffee-buying business by their heavy demands now supported her election bid in the hope that she would bring more government funds and development projects to Yandera and other Gende villages. That she did not win was the result of the fragmentation that characterizes Papua New Guinea politics: people tending to vote for candidates who are related to them on the assumption that the winning candidates will reward wantok before passing on largesse to more distant associates. The most votes Betty received were from her own clan and village. She did, however, receive other votes and some were given precisely because she is a woman who is generous towards all Gende, regardless of kin affiliation and because she appears to be genuinely interested in promoting others' welfare. Far from giving up her political ambitions, Betty bided her time, building up both her business ventures (including a tourist lodge on her Mount Wilhelm property) and the trust and support of many persons. She continued to run her business operations in ways that benefitted many Gende and she has continued to be her own woman—beholden to no one and generous to all. And therein, ironically, may be one of the very reasons she suffered a second political loss in 2007.

Her nomination and campaign

I arrived in Papua New Guinea on 9 April 2007 for the first of two stints of fieldwork. In addition to wanting to observe Betty's campaign for Usino-Bundi Open, I had two other ongoing projects to attend to. At the start it was difficult to locate Betty. She had left a garbled message on my home phone while I was flying across the Pacific and now none of the contact numbers she had given me earlier was working. For several days I tried unsuccessfully to connect with her

via her mobile phone, her email address, her second home at Mount Hagen, and the farm. On 12 April I received a hurried call from her saying all the phones up at the farm (and 'The Lodge') had been out for two months, that she could call out but no one could call in, that she was calling from Mount Hagen but on her way back to the farm, and that she would come down to Madang to get her mother and travel up to Yandera with me. I flew up to Madang the next morning. As it turned out she did not come down (some tourists showed up wanting to climb Mount Wilhelm) and I went up to Yandera to work on another project. Returning to Madang after a week, I waited for Betty's next call, knowing that the 'bush telegraph' would keep both Betty and me informed of one another's whereabouts. There were many Gende moving about because of the upcoming elections and I received almost daily news when I ran into them on the streets of Madang or they sought me out.

Betty's next call was on 25 April. Betty was now planning to walk down from Mount Wilhelm through the Gende homeland to the Ramu, where her son would meet her with her truck and they could then come into Madang to begin the nomination process. Her idea was to do some politicking along the way. The next day I ran into her mother, Elizabeth on the street on her way to 'find' me. For over a week, Elizabeth and I hung out together (and with other Gende), discussing the upcoming election, the candidates and their chances of winning (or not), and when exactly Betty would show up. Finally, we heard she was coming on Sunday, 6 May. Elizabeth rushed off to prepare a special meal for her but Betty didn't show up until late in the evening, too late for me to join the meal. The next morning, around 7:30 am, Betty and her entourage showed up at the house where I was staying. I had only a few minutes to throw my camera and a few other things in my backpack. Then we all crammed into her truck and drove around town getting money out of the bank for her nomination fee, buying phone cards for her mobile phone, shopping for supplies and sleeping bags for her campaign trail, picking up nomination paperwork, and all the time running into potential supporters. No matter how rushed we were—Betty intended driving up to Brahmin by nightfall to gather female supporters to go with us the next day to her nomination at the district headquarters in Walium—she stopped to discuss her platform. A number of listeners (including me) gave Betty cash contributions and Elizabeth bought a fancy bullhorn for her daughter.

At the bank we ran into Agatha Yama, who was planning to run for the Madang Open seat. I was talking with Agatha when a bank customer she knew walked up to her and gave her a check for K1000 saying he hoped she would win. Yama said her campaign was running on providence; that she had no money to live on and support her children as her husband had struck her name off their bank accounts. When we left the bank, Betty said the woman's husband

was a bad man with several wives who was violent with Agatha. Both women were appealing to women on women's issues, but Betty said she was appealing less on issues of domestic violence than on the power of women as mothers and community members; women as faithful, caring, forgiving, concerned citizens who rarely drink and harm their families and who always think of their children's wellbeing.

As the day wore on, excitement mounted as different convoys of nominating candidates and their supporters drove through the streets and the crowds swelled. It seemed that everyone—or at least most of the men—had come down from the villages. Elizabeth began berating Betty for not giving cash handouts to the voters, saying that they would otherwise never vote for her. Betty, however, was intent on running a clean campaign, free of 'bribes' and 'corruption'. In the past, several important Gende politicians had made personal use of funds reserved by the big Ramu Nickel project for 'landowners', giving large sums of cash to those who supported them and failing to distribute the funds to other, legitimate 'landowners'. The misappropriated funds were said to be in the millions of kina. Betty preferred the more generalized and 'clean' hosting of small feasts to which everyone—men, women, and children—would be invited. Betty argued that giving bribes and relying on the wantok system was a thing of the past; that corruption started in the village because the people were poor and everyone wanted bribes for their votes. Clearly, her mother did not see eye to eye with her daughter and her hectoring continued.

While Elizabeth kept pushing the virtues of 'investing' in the voters so they might reciprocate with their votes, Betty received a phone call from Lae inviting her to attend the Agricultural Innovation Show and the 10th Celebration of the Papua New Guinea National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) in two days' time. As a founding member of NARI, Betty's travel expenses were being covered and she was to pick up her ticket that day. As we rushed around with yet another set of tasks to accomplish I was reminded of how important Betty has been as both a role model for women in business and as an innovator (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1996a). Betty was the first Papua New Guinean to farm-raise trout, at her Mount Wilhelm farm back in the mid 1990s, taking huge financial risks but travelling to Japan and other locations to learn about the process and to order her first fingerlings (baby trout). Betty's trout are sold in restaurants all over Papua New Guinea. Elizabeth was unimpressed, however, and kept haranguing her daughter until finally Betty ordered her out of the truck. As her mother walked away and we headed off to Brahmin, Betty remembered all her mother had done for her and her sisters, how she had basically raised them on her own and how her father had hurt her mother and his other wives so many times. We turned back to get Elizabeth and it was near dark when we finally arrived at the 'Pukpuk' bridge at the Ramu crossing.

Along the way, there had been much talk among the truck's occupants—Betty, her son and mother, me, and several men and women who worked for her at the farm and who were going to assist her on her campaign trail. Several issues predominated: corruption, the virtues of female candidates, and the pros and cons of old and new ways. Throughout, the discussion was grounded in issues of race, class, and gender. Betty, a member of the educated elite, saw corruption as originating in villagers' poverty and misconceptions of how Western business worked. Others saw the corruption as pure greed and the trickery of educated Papua New Guineans who allegedly worked on their behalf but in fact made deals with outsiders and stole from their own kin. Betty's son, the product of privilege and his mother's marriage with a white Australian, argued that anyone who gave bribes for votes was stupid and that Papua New Guineans must follow the ways of the 'whites' who didn't allow sympathy or extortionist demands for bribes effect their choices and behaviour. Expanding upon the topic of corruption it was agreed by all in the truck that women are far more moral than men, putting their children and family above their own needs, and that they would never waste development funds on drinking and chasing the opposite sex. A male school teacher railed against old customs arguing that brideprice was a trap for women and villagers' constant feasting and demands for exchange payments for land rights and death and so much else were a drain on townsmen's limited resources. In the midst of all this talk, Elizabeth fell asleep muttering 'you must give them money' for their votes.

It was dusk when we arrived at the bridge and the gate was locked. Erected by the missionaries after floods had washed away part of the bridge, the gate prevented cars and trucks from crossing the bridge at night when it would be difficult to navigate what was left of the bridge. As no one was around to unlock the gate, two of Betty's party and myself hopped over the gate and walked to the mission several kilometres away. A man was sent back with the key and the rest of the group arrived at the mission, quickly dispersing to nearby houses to spend the night and prepare for the next day's nomination ceremony. In the morning, Betty set about renting several vehicles to help carry men and women to Walium. In the meantime, her son ferried people from the meeting spot at Brahmin to the Pukpuk bridge where we all waited for the convoy to begin. Once again the conversation turned to matters of race, class, and gender. Betty's son reiterated that 'white men think you are stupid if you vote for corrupt politicians'. Betty distanced herself from townsmen and male politicians by focusing on how she lived in a rural area and often visited her home village ('*mi meri bilong ples*'), and that like all 'good women' she worked for the betterment of her family and community ('*mi meri wok long famili*').

When over a hundred supporters had gathered at the bridge, the convoy of three trucks took off for Walium. When we arrived, we all got out and waited

near a store for others to join us. Women decorated themselves with leaves and flowers, painting their faces—some half white, half black—and talking among themselves about why they were supporting Betty. Their rhetoric centred on how it was their time now (*'em taim bilong yumi'*) and how women concentrate on service and not self. Some of the younger women were made up to look more like men with beards, shouting *'mipela kam up man'* ('we are men now'). When the group finally took off by foot to the district office with Betty in the lead, there was much singing and dancing by the women. When the procession came to a halt outside the district office, their refrain was picked up by Betty who repeated that she was a woman of the people, who lived off the land and whose only purpose was to work for her family and community, local development projects, education, better health and social services, and stronger families.

After another long wait, it was finally Betty's turn to sign the nomination papers. Only a few of us were allowed in to the office with Betty; the rest were glued to the open windows watching their candidate sign in. The moment was affecting. Having followed Betty's accomplishments for 25 years, I fumbled with my camera, my eyes misty (Betty, too, shed a tear). Elizabeth stood erect behind her daughter, dry-eyed but never more proud. On either side of Betty were a man and woman: the man a former local government counsellor and 'brother' of her deceased father; the woman one of the women who had long ago helped pay Betty's school fees.

Her loss and its analysis

After returning to Madang, Betty hurriedly bought some new shoes and clothes to wear to the NARI event and then rushed to catch a plane to Lae. Her son took the truck back to Mount Hagen and arranged to have election posters made up. Her mother and other Gende women, some visiting town for the nomination festivities, met to plan a big feast for Betty when she began her campaign in the villages. I continued with other research and then moved on to Port Moresby and Canberra before flying back to the United States at the end of May. I returned to Papua New Guinea in July and August to carry out a census and survey in Yandera village. Betty's mother Elizabeth assisted me and the other four members of my team (all from Papua New Guinea but none of Gende background) and I had daily opportunities to talk with Elizabeth and other villagers (and later, migrants in Madang and Port Moresby) about the outcome of the election. Betty herself was busy with work up at the farm and Lodge, and after an exhausting campaign walking from village to village in the mountainous terrain and then losing the election, disinclined to come down to the village to participate in the survey in person or to talk about the election. With over 200 families to survey I never found the time to go up to Mt Wilhelm

myself. But in gathering her mother's testimony and that of other Gende (in addition to the testimony of some of her workers who came down to participate in the survey), I feel I have a solid enough perspective on the causes of her loss as well as what it meant to her and others in the wider Gende community.

When the Electoral Commission posted the election results as of 25 July, the winner of Usino-Bundi Open was Samson Kuli with 2535 first preference votes (11.9 percent) and 5263 votes (62.0 percent) after 34 counts. The runner-up was a distant second with only 1200 first preference votes (5.7 percent) and 3223 second and third preference votes (38.0 percent). Betty was excluded in the 14th count with 371 first preference votes (1.8 percent). While she fell into the 23rd place in a race that ended up with 36 candidates pulling in first preference votes, Betty did hold her own against the only other female candidate, Margaret Yagum Sawi from Ramu Sugar who pulled in only 87 first preference votes (0.4 percent). Her brother-in-law and staunch competitor for Gende votes, David Duavu Tigavu, pulled in 944 votes (4.5 percent) and was not excluded until the 27th count, but Betty did beat fellow Gende and well-known writer Joe Koroma who received only 110 first preference votes and was excluded in the 9th count.

The election results generally produced a sense of gloom among the Gende. Peter Yama, the former Usino-Bundi member lost his race for the Madang Provincial seat to Sir Arnold Amet and was said by many Gende to be holing up in Australia and plotting revenge against those Gende who did not reciprocate his 'generosity' with votes. Some townsmen had fled back to their home villages and garden settlements for that very reason. Agatha Yama did not win the Madang Open. And David Tigavu, allegedly holding millions of kina for the Ramu Nickel landowners, did not win the Usino-Bundi seat. With no Gende in the national government, the Gende were in a weak position in any negotiations they might consider with the two big mineral resource projects (Ramu Nickel and Marengo Mining in Yandera) now in their midst. The most frequent comment about the election was that the Gende had wasted their votes by dividing them and voting for too many different candidates. Many voters were angry, with themselves and with the candidates. Candidates were accused of not combining their efforts to produce one or two strong candidates who might have stemmed the Ramu flood. Voters berated themselves as 'stupid' bush people who gave their votes away for a few kina or a piece of cooked pork. A number of men and women brought up the notion of forming two or three main parties rather than the many that now enter uneasy alliances in order to form a national government. Others felt that tribalism and the wantok system stood in the way of Papua New Guinea becoming more like Western nations. For her part, Betty's mother continued to complain about Betty wasting her money (and others' pigs) on small feasts instead of making direct cash handouts to voters. She excoriated those who had eaten at the feasts as '*ol i kaikai nating*' ('all ate

without reciprocating') and bemoaned the rubbish customs of today's young people who allowed their children to stuff themselves at the feasts and then gave their votes to other candidates.

When I asked about Betty's campaign strategies and what people did or did not like about her as a potential member of parliament, no one expressed concern about the race of her husband or her mixed-race children. While race may have played a part in their judgements of Betty in the past (when she lived in Port Moresby), the facts that she and her family were committed to rural development and that Betty was a frequent visitor to the villages (unlike many educated migrants who have become soft and prefer their urban comforts) made her a true *meri bilong ples* in their eyes. Neither did people seem offended by her class—again, for the same reason: that she was willing to use her knowledge and extensive contacts to better the lives of local people. What did seem to matter was gender related. Some of those villagers who admitted they did not vote for her, and others who did, asserted that the primary reasons she lost were her lack of political experience and her failure to develop political ties with other politicians and local leaders. Most felt she was too individualistic in her style, focusing on her many accomplishments and intentions but lacking the networks of political influence necessary to be an effective leader whether traditionally or in the contemporary context of national politics. To be fair, many did admit that most other candidates had also run individual, divided campaigns. But Betty was a woman and women, according to some voters, do not cooperate well in political settings. More recently, in 2009, two of Betty's male political opponents—Anton Yagama (who came in second after the winner Samson Kuli) and her brother-in-law David Tigavu (who came in tenth)—and former Usino-Bundi member Theo Tuya commented to me that Betty lost because politics is a 'man's world' and that she did not exhibit the necessary networking skills. This sentiment, while difficult to justify in light of Betty's business successes and her friendliness, was widely expressed to me by both men and women in the years since she lost the 2007 election.

Conclusion: Women as political actors

While the aforementioned comment would appear sexist, there may be a grain or two of truth in considering Papua New Guinean women as political actors in both traditional and contemporary settings. It is indeed true that long-term co-wives often cooperate with one another to promote the polygynous household's overall political and social wellbeing as a means of also promoting their own and their natal families' interests (see Zimmer 1985; Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1997a). But virilocality (the most common post-marital residence in Papua New Guinea) and the absence of bonding, much less structured bonding, of women in female

initiations (as opposed to male initiation practices) does not support groups of politically united women. There are well-known incidents of women coming together to fight for certain issues: the thousands of women who took to the streets in Port Moresby to protest the rape of an expatriate woman, and the *Wok Meri* movement in the Highlands, in which market women from different language groups created a network of 'savings associations that allowed them to invest in various businesses but as importantly 'showed men' how they too should be investing their money (Sexton 1986). On a smaller scale, Gende women have in the past joined together to end a development that did not benefit their interests (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1996b). While some individual Gende women have achieved great influence as a result of hard work and investments in others, few (except individuals like Betty and Elizabeth) dare stand up and speak to large crowds. Although there have been the exceptional women in parliament (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1993), most Papua New Guinea women do not participate in overtly political groupings. Given this situation, proposals such as Lady Kidu's to affirmatively set aside a certain number of seats in parliament exclusively for women may be a necessary part of a more comprehensive plan to enable more women to learn the rules of the game and at the same time attend to the interests of half the population. Women would still have to run against one another for these seats and it is to be presumed that the more politically savvy would indeed win, thereby providing models and incentives for those coming up the ladder.

A different but related issue has to do with women's campaign rhetoric and goals. For the most part, Betty ran on a service platform, focusing on caring for family and community and small-scale developments. Few persons brought this up as a reason they didn't vote for Betty, but the few who did felt that it wasn't necessary to have a member in parliament to benefit from or invest in small-scale development but that it was necessary to maximize benefits from massive projects such as Ramu Nickel or to argue the need for road-building and extensive electrification projects. While Betty is admired for her business successes, her vocal indifference to the success or failure of Ramu Nickel and Marengo's nascent project alarms some men who are relying on the success of these two projects to provide them with the money needed to pay off the exchange debts they are incurring as they make multiple marriage and land deals with one another (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 2001, 2004, 2007). Also, many migrants are returning to the villages and rural areas to find work at these two large-scale developments. Given these broader interests of the voters, it would be wise if the affirmative action did not limit female politicians to so-called 'women's issues' and that both women and men be educated in the importance of all forms of development and services to every man, woman, and child in Papua New Guinea (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 2008). De-gendering the work of parliament at the same time as women are affirmatively brought into the fold will take a massive

education program in how what happens to one part of a community directly affects for good or ill all the other parts. Should Papua New Guinea decide to take on such an innovative restructuring of its political system, it would stand above most other nations—certainly not an impossibility for a nation that has managed to survive quite a few challenges already. In the meantime, the Gende need to achieve a separate electorate from the Ramu half of the Usino-Bundi seat given that the two mining operations—if they continue to live up to their promise—will one day be providing major amounts of income to the national government and the Gende will deserve to see some of that income stream provide services that they greatly lack. This issue is one that Gende men and women are increasingly concerned about.

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Note to chapter: The full results for Usino-Bundi Open electorate were not available. Summary results can be found at the end of this book.

24. Organization Takes the Spoils: The Election in Yangoru-Saussia

Leo Yat Paol and Patrick Gesch

Those writing for the newspapers do not understand the realities of village elections. You can't win without *komiti* and they need a reward. It is hard work (Peter Waranaka, Hwarapia, 29 May 2007).

The above words of the governor of the East Sepik Province were programmatic for his election campaign in the Yangoru-Saussia electorate in the 2007 election. He had his *komiti*; they got their rewards; it was definitely hard work, and quite expensive, for him to satisfy the demands of the village voters. The outcome for the governor was a contentious return to the national parliament. In April 2008 a petition by the losing candidate, who accused the governor of bribing voters during the campaign, was upheld; however, Waranaka appealed the decision and in March 2009 was reinstated (see below). The question remains: did Waranaka in 2007 accurately describe the realities of village campaigning? Is there any other way to come out on top in national elections?

The Yangoru-Saussia electorate lies along the south side of the coastal mountain range leading north of Wewak. The mountains are as densely populated as any area in Papua New Guinea, giving the resulting settlement pattern of hamlets dispersed throughout the bush with few major gathering centres in villages. The terrain is continuously mountainous and flat areas are found only in the less-populated *kunai* grass plains leading down to the Sepik River. There are four local-level government (LLG) areas: Numbo, Sausso, East Yangoru and West Yangoru (Figure 24.1). The returning officer for Yangoru-Saussia was recruited from the public service in Yangoru, and the four assisting returning officers were based in the LLG offices.

For the 2002 elections, East Sepik Province had 193,276 voters according to estimates based on the 2000 national census, but there were 286,716 names on the 2002 electoral roll.¹ The new electoral roll for the 2007 elections had 237,070 voters, of whom 37,020 were enrolled for Yangoru-Saussia. The total number of votes cast in Yangoru-Saussia in 2007 was 26,332—71 percent of those enrolled. The electorate does not cover a big area, and although the roads are in poor condition, it was possible to cover most centres with the use of a four-wheel-drive Suzuki. The bitumen road through the middle of the electorate, the

1 John Nonggorr, 'Challenges of the electoral roll', *Post-Courier* 27 March 2007, p. 12.

common language in about 80 percent of the electorate, and the nearness of this area to the urban centre of Wewak all go to make for an electorate which can be considered quite manageable by Papua New Guinea standards.



Figure 24.1: Yangoru-Saussia District

Fifteen candidates contested the Yangoru-Saussia seat in 2007, six of whom had contested a by-election for the seat in 2004 after the sitting member, Bernard Hagoria, had been found guilty of misusing public funds and dismissed from the national parliament. The candidates included three former members of parliament (Gabriel Dusava, Hagoria and John Jaminan) as well as the sitting member, Waranaka.

The Yangoru-Saussia election was full of compromises with what might be thought of as legally free and fair elections. Is this simply the reality of applying universalizing systems to the separate universes of the Papua New Guinea rural village? Some people say that we have come a long way from a concern whether we are applying the Westminster system to Papua New Guinea, the land of a thousand villages.² How could it be otherwise? How much compromise should be institutionalized now to be able to shepherd future electoral developments along the ways of freedom and fairness?

2 'PNG presents not as a state struggling to adjust "tradition" to "alien concepts", but as a developing country adapting to its own governance, by its people, for its people. The issues are no longer (if ever they were) about whether 'Westminster democracy' was an appropriate import, but about how Papua New Guineans are building their own relationships between each other, and especially between citizen and authority. Whilst each place, province, electorate has its own pace in that process, the stories follow the same themes. Elections, in other words, are now part of the culture in PNG' (Institute of Policy Studies et al. 2004, Sec. 8, p. 30).

In what follows we will consider five issues that emerged from our observation of the election in Yangoru-Saussia.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the election was the use of gifts, giving and demanding. The question arises: when was it just the social tradition, as claimed, and when did it constitute undue influence?

The Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) clearly had difficulties in getting an electoral roll prepared on time and catering for all the needs of the electoral process. Allowances for officials seemed to become a bottomless source of expectations.

Voter behaviour was another cause for concern, with brawling, under-age voting, and no scope given for secret balloting.

With few exceptions political parties were used as labels to help the legitimacy of candidates but with little commitment to policies. Few parties formed lasting alliances. In this atmosphere parties barely disguised the independent stand of so many candidates. Although general approval was expressed for the new limited preferential voting system, it was not used to any effect in Yangoru-Saussia, where effort was spent more to void the power of preferences than to employ them.

The counting of the Yangoru-Saussia votes involved a great waste of time, taking about four full working days in a 14-day working period to produce a result from only 27,000 votes. This dispute-ridden process was barely kept on the rails, and some major clarification of the role of candidates' scrutineers is needed.

Voting inducements

Yangoru has seldom seen a festival like the nomination of Governor Peter Wararu Waranaka³ on 9 May 2007. A solid stage had been built on the old airstrip and the district administration building was decorated with an assortment of flowers and palms inside and out. The returning officer and his assistants were ready for the arrival of the dignitaries. Although the candidate Patrick Harricknen was also nominating at Yangoru on this the last day of nominations, his *singsing* group was soon swallowed up by the groups coming in to support the National Alliance. A number of police cars arrived from Angoram with Arthur Somare and Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare and his wife Veronica, and about 25 auxiliary police from Angoram. They accompanied the governor to the

³ We are told Wararu is Peter's personal name, while Waranaka is a name taken from his forefathers. The change for the new election did not seem troublesome to anyone.

stand for speeches, where he acknowledged the epithet 'Minister for Transport and Funeral Services' because he had given as many as 25 expensive cars to various agencies in Yangoru, and had always made generous contributions to families when their loved ones had died. We recognised among the thousands congregated on the airstrip, people who had walked more than three hours from the Numbo side and five hours from the *kunai* plains for the day's celebrations. Peter Waranaka nominated, and Arthur Somare gave a data-filled election speech for National Alliance before Sir Michael departed by the waiting helicopter. There was no doubting where the strength lay on nomination day.

A few days after the nomination celebration, there followed a bizarre incident on the Sepik Highway. On 12 May Waranaka became involved in car smashing and insult hurling incidents between Passam and Munji on the Sepik Highway when his relative, senior reporter for the *National* newspaper, Yehiura Hriehwazi, was challenging Waranaka's secretary and other relative, Joe Kiliawi, with electoral questions and corruption charges (*Post-Courier* 18 May 2007, p. 6). One of Hriehwazi's group ended up seriously injured in hospital. However, the maternal kin (*wawenku*) of Waranaka were outraged on Waranaka's behalf,⁴ and made a customary presentation to him of two pigs, said to be worth K1200 and K1500. Waranaka was obliged to return double the cost to his uncles with food and beer above that. K40,000 was demanded from Hriehwazi's group to pay for the car damage. This event was exploited for all its potential as a campaign event for the next couple of weeks, as part of the '*taim bilong fri kaikai*' (time for eating free, a widely acknowledged term for the election period).

There were general complaints from the supporters of other candidates that Waranaka was distributing money and 5000 mobile telephones as part of his early campaign. When he took delivery of his election posters on 29 May, a large crowd gathered at his home hamlet in Hwarapia Village. Waranaka arrived very much stressed from Wewak, and declared that there would be no campaigning that day, as it was simply a day to get the list of *komiti* correct, and to distribute the candidate posters. Five men and women *komiti* from every village in the Yangoru neighbourhood then approached the table together with other witnesses from their village in order to ascertain that the typed list was correct. Beside every name on the computer list, there was the amount K100 in the next column. Waranaka announced that part of this money was to complete the payment due from the previous election for which only K20 per person had been paid to this date. The rest was for tea night gatherings and as reward for the task of 'guarding the poster' in the villages. There was intent to pay

4 An explanatory example goes like this: a man cut off the tip of his finger in the garden and his mother's brother was there to see the accident. The injured man paid his uncle K50 because it was his mother's blood that had been spilled. Although it sounds like adding insult to injury, this is all part of the lifelong significance of the mother's brideprice, as was Waranaka's visible social injury. The mother's brothers always give food, and the sister's son always returns money or valuables.

more when it became possible. Also as part of his public statement Waranaka expressed his disappointment that people were distorting his intentions about giving out the 5000 mobile telephones. This was being done because he was the local member; the new relay broadcast tower had just been completed on the top of nearby Mount Turu, and Michael Somare had urged him to roll out the service utilization that would make the facility active. It was a distortion to call this voter inducement. The fact that the road past Waranaka's hamlet was being graded all that day by a newly acquired second-hand grader did not get a mention.

Then followed the distribution of money, K100 each to five *komiti* per village from all of the Yangoru villages. I asked Waranaka whether this meant that we had K13,000 with us in the village at this moment. He agreed, and said that a similar amount had been distributed in Wewak earlier this morning to the Numbo and Sausso people.

A reliable witness informed me two weeks later that their village in the Wilaru area had received K5000 from the National Alliance campaigners during this same period. A young man saw his mother holding K100 and told her as she hid the money, '*Oh mama, em i braibim yu nau*'. There were persistent stories that Waranaka's campaigners would visit villages such as Sima, Kworabri and Malimbanja the night before the polling took place and give money. One Dusava supporter said that an old lady in Malimbanja sat looking at her K10. She had wanted to vote for Dusava but now felt she was compelled to vote for Waranaka.

This then, would seem to be the substance of what Waranaka meant by the realities of village campaigning. During polling time, it was understood that he had ceased the distribution of mobile phones, because the gift was being misinterpreted as voting inducement. He continued to be dogged by violence during the campaign period. One of his electoral cars ran off the road resulting in the deaths of four men. A young man in his hamlet committed an apparent suicide. This was all put down to *sanguma* attacks that a bigman must suffer together with his people. A family member told me, 'In Church we are always being urged to pray for a good leader. Now one is given to us, and no one recognises him'.

Waranaka was not the only candidate to spend money on the campaign. David Nelson told us that he would reimburse coffee nights by his supporters, often in excess of K100 each time. He was also seeking to give villagers a source of income and for this he distributed black polythene bags together with cocoa seedlings to promote their self-reliance. He estimated that this venture cost him about half a million kina at election time.

It seemed a matter of necessity that candidates provide food at their rallies. This action was usually in the hands of their supporters, and we do not know how many of these supporters were later reimbursed by the candidates. Greg Maisen, the New Generation Party's Provincial candidate, threw a large final rally for his party, including Godfrey Raushem of Yangoru-Saussia, where many pigs and much food were distributed; other candidates, too, could count a few pigs that they had funded. A number of candidates refused to do any large-scale feeding of supporters, saying they could not afford it, although plates of food would be supplied at their homes. Former long-term member of parliament John Jaminan solved the problem of *fri kaikai* by keeping always on the move. He would walk alone the back roads of Yangoru and through Wewak, with only a loud hailer over his shoulder, and proclaim his message to whoever might listen.

Waranaka was not the only candidate who claimed to have a *komiti* system. Vitus Wafi was confident that his delegates were active throughout the Numpo and Sausso LLG areas, but in fact his votes were limited to his home area. David Nelson made similar claims about his organization, but received votes only from his broader home area. The two leading candidates, Waranaka and Dusava, were the only ones to score evenly across the entire electorate, and were the only ones likely to have had a truly effective village campaign structure.

How are we to evaluate the bestowal of gifts during the election period against the proposal that there is a culture of gifts and reciprocity in Papua New Guinea, which is all but impossible to avoid? Yangoru-Saussia is an area with a long history of cargo cults (Gesch 1985:115–126) in which the material element of social interchange was a key to the hermeneutic of the meeting of cultures that was involved: 'If you love me, then give me something to show it'. But of course the gift entails a return obligation and this is understood in a simple way without any feeling of cunning or deceit. A Gaikorobi man explained this to me during election time: 'If a big man gives me a *kakaruk* for no reason, I wait to hear what he wants from me'. More explicitly, another Sepik man explained: '*Olsem kalsa bilong mipela stret: man i givim yu kakaruk, bai yu mas bihainim dispela kakaruk stret na givim vot long dispela man, no ken givim long narapela man*' ('If someone gives you a chicken you must do what the chicken leads you to, you must give your vote to this man and no other'). The problem becomes, how to shake your hands free of the gift or erase the record, which is easier for an individual than for a community.

A Madang statement on this is: 'Gifts were and are exchanged and/or reciprocated in order to maintain, enhance, mend, or initiate relationships. The kind of gifts offered/exchanged would include food and cultural valuables. Kinship ties, tribal and clan alliances, and trade partnerships were and still are the network through which gifts were exchanged. Tribal survival, continuity and security were three significant purposes for such exchanges'. In the light of

this thinking, voter inducements are more than just the buying of votes. They imply patronage of the bigman and his group. The candidate has to maintain the solidarity of his own group and they must relate to others as larger groupings within villages. The elected member is in a relationship to the voters, and is not just a representative in a technical sense.

Electoral Commission difficulties

Although it was impressive that the PNGEC was able to respond to recommendations for radical changes, the resulting difficulties with untested procedures occurred on all sides. It was a marvel that the PNGEC could simply decide to abandon the previous common roll and draw up a new electoral roll for the whole country. The farcical statistics for the Chimbu by-election in 2004 made such action the only reasonable way to go. In that election, best estimates from the 2000 census put the voting population in Chimbu at 170,425 but the enrolled voters numbered 451,775—almost triple the real number; it was almost impossible to make sense of polling results tainted by such fraud and deception.

The change in the form of ballot papers also seemed an incredible move at such short notice. The reasoning was convincing: how do illiterate voters make sense of a ballot paper for Wewak Open, say, with 43 photos of people they have never seen before and then assign three preferences among these 43 candidates. How much extra handling would be necessary with such papers? However, the idea that an electorate with many illiterate people could be counted on to write numbers or names on the new shorter ballot papers seemed incredible. These mandated changes worked somehow, but with many of the difficulties that could be expected to occur.

We took delivery of an East Sepik Province electoral roll on CD (costing K150 for some unknown reason), which yielded 237,070 names. We obtained this in Port Moresby only 10 days before polling was due to commence and were able to print off the enrolment lists for three villages, from Numbo, Sausso, and East Yangoru. The villagers who checked these lists found them largely reliable, with only three or four dead people still on the list and as many again known to be underage. The remote village of Komotogu, included in the Kিনিambu village list, had more than a dozen names declared to be dead, but with such an out-of-the-way place, there was no reason to consider deception lay behind this. Hwarapia roll recorded one person twice—the governor, as Waranaka and Wararu, but electoral officials told us, ‘It’s OK. We know his face’. Spot checking other electorates gave the impression that there were a lot of double

names recorded—two names from the same place, with the same occupation and about the same age; but this appeared to be over-reporting by the PNGEC rather than intentional deceit.

The new electoral roll came too late for any but the most astute to be able to view a copy before the elections. In Baimuru village, the councillor held up voting for hours at the start of the day's polling because he had found six names missing from the village roll. He said he had previously pursued this with the returning officer on earlier drafts of the roll and had been told it would be fixed up. But in the final copy it was not fixed. It turned out that there was a story behind these six people: they were connected with the Finance Department investigation in the East Sepik Province, and the leader of the group says his name was kept off the roll by the returning officer because this leader had exposed systemic misdirection of funds by the leaders of the province.

Other domestic observers in our group were present in villages where the electoral roll was hotly disputed. The villagers felt the problems could have been overcome if a member of the village had been in the recording team: spelling was misleading and married women were recorded in place of birth as well as place of marriage.

In the event the ballot papers arrived in the nearest LLG office, Tangori, on 30 June when polling should have been starting. In the presence of police and many bystanders, the ballots were sent out to the other LLG. In Yangoru the ballot papers were distributed the next day, Sunday, in cellophane packed bundles. There was a story going around that the voting could not begin on Saturday because the Seventh-day Adventist church could not participate on that day, but the actual situation was that the papers were late. It was at Tangori on 30 June, also, that the electoral roll appeared in hard copy for the first time. At Tangori a couple of days earlier, we had seen the first real candidate posters on the door of the LLG.

Other delays were also laid at the feet of the PNGEC. The returning officer said it was not possible to do voter education much before June because he was expecting money from the provincial electoral office. The provincial election manager denied that any such money was needed. It was said that Yangoru-Saussia people were already familiar with limited preferential voting through the 2004 by-election, though in fact they had not seen the new ballot papers, and few could follow the counting and elimination rules. Counting of ballots was also delayed because no trainers of electoral officials had come to Wewak five days after voting had finished. There was also doubt about the venue for counting votes, with no arrangements for telephones, security and power in

firm place. However, the failure of these arrangements was attributed to the Provincial Steering Committee, who, in hotly debated scenes in the Wewak Electoral Office, were told that they had no legal status.

Voter behaviour

The voting period in Yangoru-Saussia was marked by a certain amount of problematic behaviour, but only once did this go so far as the safeguarding/hijacking of a ballot box. There was frequent fighting, under-age voting, wagering on the results, and an almost complete lack of secret voting. In response to questionnaires, voters said that they had received education about HIV/AIDS but could not see any relevance to the voting process, and none was evident to us.

At Baimuru the National Alliance supporters were accused of having voted in Wewak before coming home to the village. This turned into a punch-up for a while, with the auxiliary police ignoring the fight and forming a ring around the ballot boxes. Voting was resumed. The day ended with the smashing of a truck window, which was said to be an internal dispute of the Waranaka camp.

Under-age voting was visible and in Kworabri our observers counted 42 school boys and girls blatantly casting votes. Few people seemed to be disturbed at this matter; as one father said of his daughter, 'It is not her fault that her name is on the electoral roll, and besides, she is only abiding by the Constitution in casting her vote, given that her name is on the roll'. One 14-year-old we observed barely touched his ballot paper as a guardian took it from his hands, filled it in and deposited it in the ballot box before sending the boy away. In other places boys were sent forward when the names of the dead or the absent were called. Occasionally some under-age would-be voters were stopped by the electoral officials and sent away.

There were a few cases of people caught out double voting. One woman we observed seemed genuinely confused whether she could vote at home as well as in her marital village, since her name was called again the second day. Another was caught removing the indelible ink from her finger with what was termed 'PNG lime' (probably *Citrus acida*).⁵ In Gwinyingi two voters were observed

⁵ Ron May put this to the test and could not see that the indelible ink was being removed (personal communication, Port Moresby 11 April 2008). This evidence is not likely to affect the widespread belief that lime juice takes the mark away. My own experiment was inconclusive: within 15 minutes of being inked and resorting to lemon juice and soap scouring, I could wash most of the ink away from my white skin; however, eight hours later it was visible.

being allowed to vote although their names were not on the electoral roll, because the councillor identified the people as genuine villagers and the polling officer allowed them to go ahead.

The biggest loss in the voting process was in relation to secret balloting. Although it was possible for strong young men and women to go directly and vote alone, almost everybody consented to a 'witness'. This term was chosen in preference to 'helper'. In one village the witness was a young pastor who was summoned by name by many voters. In other villages the witness was a party official who was there to bear witness to the party that this voter had done what he or she promised. The end result in Kwahwie was lists of voters' names we saw who were known with certainty to have voted for the National Alliance, and would therefore share in the benefits that were to come. In Boem Sara two village men stood one meter behind the voters all day long, but in other villages either police or electoral officials were hovering over the booths the whole day. The motives seem to have been: to be sure who the party member voted for; to help illiterates; to make sure other villagers were clear on what to do; and just generally, to see what anybody was doing. No more than 5 percent of citizens voted alone. Some women expressed their resentment at this afterwards.

Even with all of this assistance, 44 Open ballots were put into Provincial boxes. But the total number of informal ballots was only 74 for the whole electorate—surely a very positive result. The Open and Provincial ballots were much too similar to each other. One was lightly printed pink and the other lightly printed blue. The ballot boxes were similar, and it is a wonder that a lot more cross balloting did not take place.

Despite regular newspaper advertisements listing electoral offences from the *Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* Part XVII, in which the penalty for wagering on an election result was set at K400,⁶ the laying of bets played a role in Yangoru-Saussia voting. Immediately voting ceased at Suandogum a bystander raised some hundreds of kina and asked, 'Who will hold our bet?' The police told him to go away. In Kworabri the issue became more dramatic. Voting ended with the cry, 'Let's bet'. The National Alliance people quickly found K1000 and asked the Dusava people to meet that bet. As dusk fell in Yangoru two tightly knit chanting groups with loud slaps on the earth went past bringing a total of K1200 each to a local storekeeper, and to the police to hold as witnesses to the wager.

⁶ See, for example, *The National*, 26 June 2007, p. 10.

Political parties

There is not a whole lot to be said about political parties in the Yangoru-Saussia election. Twelve of the 15 candidates were listed as having party endorsement, but parties were only as strong as the candidates themselves, apart from the National Alliance. Gabriel Dusava was a leading candidate, but appeared initially in the official biodata as an independent. Towards the end of the campaign period the PNGEC clarified that he had enrolled as a People's National Congress candidate, although this name did not appear on his poster. Another candidate said he had tried one party only to be put off by corruption issues, while his second attempt collapsed because promised millions from overseas were not forthcoming, and his final choice of party yielded none of the election posters he had been expecting from them.

Among the few candidates to feature their party allegiance was Godfrey Raushem of the New Generation Party. But even Raushem wryly admitted, while on the stage of the final New Generation rally of Provincial candidate, Greg Maisen, that Maisen could barely afford to be seen on the same platform as Raushem because of continuing charges made of Raushem by rumour that he was either convicted for stealing money, or was escaping bail from a court case—all of which he explicitly denied. Patrick Harricknen stood for the People's Freedom Party and campaigned with fellow lawyer and People's Freedom Party leader Moses Murray, a candidate in the Provincial contest.

Much on people's minds was the history of failed elections and lengthy court challenges in Yangoru-Saussia. Everyone was unanimous: 'We don't want another by-election'. Starting in 1972 Mathias Yaliwan had lost his seat when he found that the House of Assembly was unwilling to acknowledge his essentially God-given mandate as one-person '*Gavman*' of Papua New Guinea, and failed to attend parliamentary sittings, thus forfeiting his 83 percent polling majority (see Winnett and May 1983). His lacklustre deputy, Linus Hepau, replaced him in a by-election. In 1987 John Jaminan, the sitting member since 1977, was dismissed from parliament when convicted of a rape charge and sent to prison. He was later pardoned and returned in the 1992 election. In 2000 Gabriel Dusava lost his seat on a recount of the 1997 votes, and Bernard Hagoria was sworn in without a by-election.⁷ Dusava's conviction in 1996 of misuse of funds while Secretary for Foreign Affairs was finally confirmed by the courts in 2000 (Geno 2005: Annexure 4, p. 3). Hagoria himself was dismissed in 2003 for mishandling of funds and Peter Wararu Waranaka won the by-election in 2004 (*ibid.* p. 4).

A number of candidates (Raushem, Dusava, Hagoria) faced as first comment in their campaign rallies the question, 'If you win, will the Ombudsman

⁷ <http://www.paclii.org/pg/cases/PGLT/2003/1.html>

Commission hold you?'. Hagoria had a letter of clearance from the Ombudsman Commission on the basis of the lapse of three years since conviction. However, unfairly, when the commission wrote at the end of the letter that it was unable to comment on any other challenge or charges, villagers took this as a sign that there were indeed hidden charges. Waranaka also said that his method of campaigning had been challenged in the Wewak local courts, and he had been cleared. Two candidates (Jaminan and Parapi) walking along to Waranaka's big poster event commented, 'Yes, about 75 percent of us stand to be challenged by the Ombudsman Commission if we win'.

Counting the votes

The delay from a Saturday to a Monday in starting the polling affected three out of the four LLG areas adversely. The assistant returning officers from the three areas decided to skip the most distant places, which had been listed first for voting, and to go ahead with the schedule as planned for the remaining days. There were 19 polling teams with one Open and one Provincial ballot box each, meant to cover five or six polling places (which embraced from one to four villages or centres each) in as many days. That meant that the most distant places had to be handled last and in isolation using helicopters to minimize the long and difficult trips out and back. This left some uncertainty about the return of ballot boxes into the following week. Probably one of the distinctive features of East Sepik balloting was that all polling teams were accompanied by sets of six or so police, made up of regular, reserve and auxiliary police. These also had to be moved out to the bush. Auxiliary police have become so significant in East Sepik Province that 300 of them were sent to the Highlands to help elections up there.

Nevertheless it was announced that all the ballot boxes would be taken from Yangoru to Wewak in a grand public procession for counting on the last allowable day of polling. In fact they were delivered a couple of days earlier in a manner that alarmed many candidates.

As mentioned earlier, the Provincial Steering Committee was in charge of making arrangements for the counting of votes in Wewak. When there was a change of venue from the army barracks at Moem to the golf course, an angry crowd challenged the committee at the electoral office. The provincial administrator reversed the decision, but still some days had to be spent on the training of those counting the votes and general preparation of the counting venue. It was generally acknowledged that security was better at Moem, and the army imposed their own rules as well as those of the police. At this stage the provincial election manager was very hard to find. The story was that serious

threats had been made against him and he had retired to his home village on Kairiru Island. The Yangoru-Saussia returning officer scorned that idea, saying that he also had received threats on his life, and the election manager was just being lazy.

Once started, the counting of votes went rapidly: informal votes were identified and votes meant for the Provincial box were taken out. Checking for the signature of the polling officer was done thoroughly. However, after the boxes were opened and ballot papers were distributed by the officials to the 15 candidate trays, very little further checking of the ballot papers was done. As officials counted the number of ballots that had been put in the tray under their supervision, they often counted while looking at the reverse side only, and no scrutineers asked to see the face of the ballots. We saw one first preference marked '[1] Peter' which lay unquestioned in Peter Waranaka's box. Only Waranaka's scrutineers were looking at that tray. We wanted to question whether votes marked [22] were going into box [23] but it all went too quickly to question.

Scrutineers told us throughout the voting process that they had full control. Voting and counting could only begin and go ahead when they decided so. The electoral officials clearly thought otherwise and sought to manage the scrutineers as best they could. Scrutineers began making loud complaints on the third day of counting, taking up a complaint from the Provincial counting at Kaindi, in Wewak town. They said they had numbers from the field for votes in boxes which differed by 178 and 222 from the total number of votes that had been counted from specified boxes on the previous days. They also claimed that the number of ballots in Open boxes in Moem and in parallel Provincial boxes in Kaindi were different, which indicated tampering with a number of votes. The returning officer disallowed all these objections, telling us that the total number of ballots used on any voting day had to be kept secret; there was no way anyone could know the total number of ballots that ought to be in a box. An electoral official in Kaindi apparently did not know about this secrecy rule, and was announcing the total number of votes in ballot boxes. One scrutineer making a loud fuss admitted that he did not understand, but needed to be seen to be making a statement on behalf of his candidate.

A bottleneck occurred in the counting when all the Open boxes had been counted, and a number of misplaced Provincial votes were on hand. Clearly an equivalent number of Open votes could be expected to be in the Provincial boxes, but the voting was going much slower in Kaindi. Everyone was dismissed for a number of days until the 44 Open ballots were brought along. Then the primary vote could be completed, and the elimination rounds begin. These were completed in a day and a half.

In the event, Waranaka was the declared winner with 8633 votes, ahead of Dusava on 7916. Harriknien (4752) came in third, Raushem (4087) fourth, and Hagoria (3490) fifth. Jaminan (923) was a distant eighth.

Conclusion

Our judgement is that the Yangoru-Saussia election was for the larger part free and fair. Concerns must be voiced about a verifiable electoral roll, prepared in time; about the demise of the secret ballot; and most of all about the distribution of voter inducements. However, the electoral officials were sufficiently neutral and business-like to ensure that the process could go ahead as planned. The police presence was convincing enough to allow the presiding officers to take charge of the village voting, and there were always many people on hand to be sure that the transfer of votes and boxes proceeded in an orderly manner. A speeding Landcruiser on the river road to Yangoru with all lights flashing convinced us to clear the way before the transfer of votes at the end of the day. We were welcomed as domestic observers and given a good reception by all candidates. Given the good number of talented candidates, concerned about the welfare of Papua New Guinea and their electorate, the first part of the political legitimization process went well.

The winning candidate received 32.8 percent of the votes cast, which is 23.3 percent of enrolled voters in Yangoru-Saussia.⁸ He got 2128 of his final votes from preferences, which was 123 fewer preference votes than the runner-up, who received 30.0 percent of votes cast. Clearly preferences had little influence on this election. The woman candidate who had been assured that she had many preference votes waiting for her in the 2004 by-election was eliminated in fifth place, by which time she had gained only 20 preference votes. The winner gained votes from all over the electorate apart from Bernard Hagoria's base. It seems no one understood better than he how to organize the village vote.

Postscript

At the end of March 2008 the National Court in Wewak started hearing an election petition filed against Waranaka by Gabriel Dusava (*The National* 28 March 2008, p. 5). Five instances of bribery were alleged: K2000 presentation to Oscar Manihau for an auxiliary police station opening; K3800 to Alois Maniura of Soli

⁸ These results can be compared with the results from the by-election in 2004 where Wararu gained 4524 primary votes (19.0 percent of the votes cast) and won the election after preferences with 7073 votes (51.2 percent of the votes cast) with Dusava trailing by much the same margin as in 2007 (www.pn gec.gov.pg accessed February 2007).

Warahembe; K50 to Markus Paringu of Wamaiang village; another K50 plus an election poster to Noah Kukune of Niakandogum, and promise made to deposit K5000 into a passbook account of a women's group of Niakandogum village (*The National* 4 April 2008, p. 7).

Waranaka's defence was that these people were his supporters and voted for him, therefore they could not be said to have been bribed. He said that 'all monies given out were approved by the joint district planning and budget priority committee and that he had nothing to hide' (*The National* 31 March 2008, p. 4). It was the third of these charges which was sustained. The outcome of the court case was proclaimed on the front page of both daily newspapers: 'K50 bribe costs MP Parlt seat' (*Post-Courier* 24 April 2008, p. 1). It was reported that Waranaka drove a government vehicle to Wamaian village. 'There he saw Paringu. He drove closer to him to converse with him, then moved closer to him and slipped a K50 note into his hand, and said: "Yu holim dispela moni na tingim mi"' (you take this money and think of me). He showed the money to others who were there, and then instructed his son, daughter and wife to vote for Wararu' (*The National* 24 April 2008, p. 1f). Waranaka's election was thus declared null and void, but Waranaka 'told his supporters it was only one allegation of K50 that had ended his election as Member and he would be instructing his lawyers to appeal that decision' (*Post-Courier* 24 April 2008, p. 8). In March 2009 the Supreme Court, in a unanimous decision, overturned the National Court ruling, arguing that 'the trial judge failed to establish the intent of the K50 and erred in his judgement' (*Post-Courier* 6 March 2009), and Waranaka was reinstated as the member for Yangoru-Saussia and provincial governor.

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Appendix

Table 24.1: Voting statistics for Yangoru-Saussia Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	36,861
Total votes cast	26,406
Informal votes	74 (0.3% of ballots cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	26,332
Total ballot papers remaining in count	16,549
Total votes distributed	14,162
Exhausted ballot papers	9,783 (37.2% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	8,276

Table 24.2: Yangoru-Saussia Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
23	Peter Waranaka	M	National Alliance	6505	24.7	1	2128	24.6		8633	32.8	52.2
19	Gabriel Dusava	M	People's National Congress	5665	21.5	2	2251	28.4		7916	30.1	47.8
10	Patrick Harrickhen	M	People's Freedom Party	3146	11.9	3	1606	33.8	13	4752	18.0	
13	Godfrey Raushem	M	New Generation	2974	11.3	4	1113	27.2	12	4087	15.5	
20	Bernard Hagoria	M	PNG Party	2907	11.0	5	583	16.7	11	3490	13.3	
22	Wilson Kawas	M	People's Party	1223	4.6	6	785	39.1	10	2008	7.6	
11	David Nelson	M	Pangu	981	3.7	7	180	15.5	9	1161	4.4	
21	John Jamenan	M	Independent	784	3.0	8	139	15.1	8	923	3.5	
17	Vitus Wohiengu	M	PNG Conservative	557	2.1	9	127	18.6	7	684	2.6	
12	Thompson Benguma	M	United	543	2.1	10	53	8.9	6	596	2.3	
14	Monica Hasimani	F	PNG Labour	289	1.1	11	20	6.5	5	309	1.2	
18	Arnold Parapi	M	PNG National	243	0.9	12	1	0.4	4	244	0.9	
24	Alois Simi	M	Independent	196	0.7	13	24	10.9	3	220	0.8	
15	J. Sombaray	M	Stars Alliance	188	0.7	14	1	0.5	2	189	0.7	
16	P. FERIA	M	Independent	131	0.5	15	0	0.0	1	131	0.5	

25. The Return of the Chief: East Sepik Provincial

R.J. May

In 2007 the East Sepik Provincial seat was held by the prime minister, Sir Michael Somare. In fact, Sir Michael had held the seat since 1968, for 19 of those 40 years as prime minister. In 2007 most observers expected Somare to be re-elected, but within the province there appeared to be some groundswell of anti-Somare sentiment, fuelled by a belief that although East Sepik had provided the country's prime minister, and a good share of its cabinet ministers, for much of the post-independence period, the province had fallen behind other parts of the country in terms of economic and social development. Somare's home base in the Murik Lakes of the lower Sepik was said to be divided over its support for the National Alliance. In 2002, Somare had been opposed by 17 candidates, including a young businessman from the populous Wosera area, Allan Bird, who had promoted the introduction of vanilla as a cash crop during the boom in vanilla prices. At one stage of the count in 2002 Bird was actually ahead in the polling, having outvoted Somare in the populous Ambunti-Dreikikir, Maprik, Wosera-Gau, and Yangoru-Saussia open electorate areas. Somare was re-elected in 2002, but his share of the first-past-the-post vote dropped from 61 percent in 1997 to 23 percent in 2002. Bird did not stand in 2007, but 10 other candidates stood, and with the introduction of limited preferential voting (LPV) there was some speculation that preferential voting might bring a change. It was not to be.

The electorate

East Sepik Provincial is one of the country's largest electorates. At over 44,000 square kilometres, East Sepik is, by area, the second biggest province in Papua New Guinea. The electorate's boundaries extend along the north coast from just below the mouth of the Sepik River to a point about 70 kilometres west of the provincial capital, Wewak, including the islands of Mushu, Kairiru, Walis, Tarawai and the Schouten group and reach back south to the foothills of the central Highlands and west along the Sepik River to within about 35 kilometres of the border with Indonesia. Geographically, the electorate is dominated by the Sepik River and its major southern tributaries, the Keram, Yuat and Karawari. Between the river and the coastline lie the Prince Alexander and the Torricelli ranges, which to the north are thickly covered in rainforest but whose southern

foothills give way to secondary forest and grasslands that merge with the Sepik floodplain to the southeast (May 1997:230). The size and geography of the electorate pose problems for electoral administration and campaigning.

Most of the province's population—an estimated 341,583 at the 2000 census—is concentrated in the southern foothills of the Prince Alexander Range and along the north coast, although there is a sizeable population in the grasslands south of Angoram and along the Keram and Yuat rivers and in a few big Sepik River villages. The Maprik District accounts for over 40 percent of the province's population, with population densities of more than 50 persons per square kilometre in the Wosera area. In contrast, much of the Ambunti district and parts of the Angoram district are sparsely populated.

Within East Sepik there are six Open electorates: Ambunti-Dreikikir, Angoram, Maprik, Wewak, Wosera-Gaui and Yangoru-Saussia (Figure 25.1). Prior to the election in 2007, two of these seats were held by National Alliance members (Angoram by Sir Michael Somare's son, Arthur), two by the Peoples Action Party, one by the Pan Melanesian Congress, and one by the National Transformation Party.

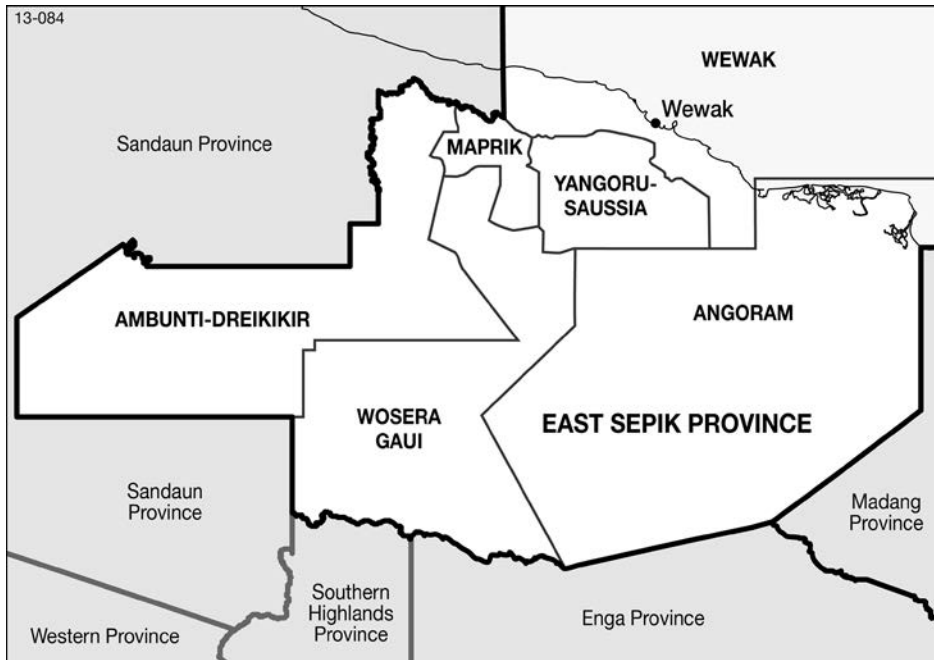


Figure 25.1: East Sepik open electorates

The candidates

Eleven candidates contested the East Sepik Provincial seat. Apart from Somare, four (Maisen, Murray, Kemaken and Samban) had stood in 2002.

Greg Maisen, aged about 47, with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Papua New Guinea, was formerly deputy provincial premier under Bruce Samban. From Miamboru village in West Yangoru, Maprik District, Maisen expected to receive strong support in the populous areas of Maprik, Wosera, Dreikikir and Yangoru-Saussia as well as through his membership of the New Apostolic Church. Maisen had stood for the Provincial seat in 1997 and 2002 and in the Yangoru-Saussia by-election of 2004, as endorsed People's Progress Party candidate. In 2007 he was approached by People's Progress Party (and also, he said, by the PNG Party), but decided instead to stand as a New Generation Party candidate.

Elizabeth Simogun Bade, aged 59, was the sole woman candidate in East Sepik Provincial.¹ The daughter of a famous Sepik leader from the Boiken-Dagua (west coast) area, Elizabeth Simogun Bade was herself a distinguished public servant before resigning to contest the 2002 national election in Central Province. She returned to Wewak in 2003. Like the majority of East Sepik candidates, Simogun Bade was a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and was also associated with the National and East Sepik Councils of Women (currently as executive officer of the latter) and with Help Resources (a local non-government organization). She had stood unsuccessfully for the East Sepik provincial electorate in 1987 and in the Kairuku-Hiri (Central Province) electorate in the national elections of 2002; in 2007 she stood as an independent, hoping to poll well along the west coast and to attract the women's vote—fully aware, however, that women do not always support a female candidate. Simogun Bade was assisted as campaign manager by her half-sister, a former policewoman, and did some joint campaigning with Greg Maisen and Alfred Jambran.

Peter Bimare, aged 46, is a former journalist with the Wewak-based Wantok newspaper, and had founded a local paper, Toktok. He is from Magopim village on the west coast near Dagua.

Samuel Lamin, aged 42, followed a grade 10 education with a diploma in religious studies, and trained for a while with the Capuchin fathers. He described himself in 2007 as a storekeeper and street vendor and was also a village court magistrate. He had contested council elections in Wewak Town in 1997, unsuccessfully. Lamin was born at Yangimangua in Wosera-Gauai electorate

¹ Five other women contested in East Sepik: three in Wewak Open and one each in Wosera-Gauai and Yangoru-Saussia.

but lives in the Wewak village of Nuigo. His wife is from Maprik. He sought, but was declined, endorsement from People's Democratic Movement and stood as an independent, expecting to get support from Nuigo and, through his wife's connections, Maprik and Wosera. His campaign, such as it was, was linked to those of Francis Kemaken and Alfred Jambran.

Alfred Jambran, aged 38 and described as self-employed, was the sole candidate from the populous Dreikikir area to the west of Maprik where he was involved in vanilla growing and buying. He had stood unsuccessfully in the Ambunti-Dreikikir electorate in 2002.

Gabriel Laku, from the large Sepik River village of Timbunke, heads the local branch of Redress Association International (which pursues compensation for victims of Japanese occupation during the Second World War) and used this network to mobilize votes. He was endorsed by the People's Resources Awareness Party.

Moses Murray, 53, is a Port Moresby-based private lawyer with a degree from the University of Papua New Guinea. He comes from Kairiru Island, off the coast from Wewak, but spent part of his early life in Maprik, and is married to a woman from Passam village, outside Wewak. Murray had contested the East Sepik provincial electorate, as an independent, in 2002, coming third behind Somare and Bird. In 2007 he stood as leader of the People's Freedom Party, and claimed to be in alliance with Greg Maisen, Elizabeth Simogun Bade and Alfred Jambran. His campaign was linked with that of Patrick Harriksen, another lawyer and People's Freedom Party-endorsed candidate contesting Yangoru-Saussia. A number of voters, however, regarded Murray as a 'Moresby man'.

Silas Suagu, 54, is from Kinaguie village in East Yangoru. He was endorsed by the Stars Alliance Party, but I did not catch up with him during the campaign and no other information was available.

Sir Michael Somare, aged 71 in 2007, had been the member for East Sepik Regional/Provincial since 1968. He had become chief minister in 1972 and led the country to independence in 1975 as prime minister. Somare's home village is Karau, at the mouth of the Sepik River in the Angoram electorate, of which his son, Arthur, is the sitting member. Somare was a foundation member of Pangu Pati but following a dispute within the party formed the National Alliance in 1997 and has been its parliamentary leader since its foundation. With the introduction of a local honours system in 2005, Somare became Grand Chief.

Francis Kemaken, aged 45, with secondary education and diplomas in religious studies and mission foundation from the Philippines, is a social worker with the Roman Catholic Church in Wewak, and a member of Caritas PNG, Help Resources, the East Sepik Council of Women, and the East Sepik Land and

Environment Foundation. He stood unsuccessfully for East Sepik Provincial in 2002. Kemaken is from Chambri on the Sepik River but lives in Wewak and expected most of his support to come from Wewak town, where there is a large Chambri community. He was campaigning (on a modest scale), as an independent, with two other candidates, Samuel Lamin and Alfred Jambran, who had agreed to direct preferences to one another.

Bruce Samban was a last-minute nomination (having initially thought about standing in Wewak Open). Samban, aged 52 and with a grade 10 education, was a National Broadcasting Corporation announcer before becoming provincial premier in 1987. In 1991 his government was suspended; subsequently the provincial headquarters building was burned down, and Samban spent three years in the Boram Corrective Institution. Born in Kaminabit on the Sepik River, Samban lives in Wewak but has strong links, through a second wife, to the west coast (where he is related, by marriage, to another Provincial candidate, Elizabeth Simogun Bade). Samban stood unsuccessfully for the Provincial seat in 2002, with endorsement (but no financial assistance) from the People's Labour Party. He is a member of the Roman Catholic Church and a founder of the locally based Sepik Solidarity, a group which describes itself as being committed to exposing corruption in the province. Samban stood as an independent.

The parties

In the lead-up to the election, the coalition parties resolved that they would not endorse candidates against Somare in East Sepik, and there was no apparent evidence that any of them supported 'undercover candidates' in the provincial electorate. Of the 11 candidates who stood, five (Somare, National Alliance; Maisen, New Generation Party; Laku, People's Resource Awareness Party; Murray, People's Freedom Party, and Suagu, Stars Alliance Party) had party endorsement; two (Somare and Murray) were party leaders.

The National Alliance had its headquarters in a modest building near the airport, which served as a meeting place for candidates and scrutineers as the election got under way, though Somare conducted his campaign from his home in Wewak.

Bart Philemon visited Wewak early in the campaign to support Maisen and the six New Generation Party candidates standing in Open electorates in East Sepik. He also visited Somare's home base of Karau, in the lower Sepik, and planned to hold a rally on the Prince Charles Oval in Wewak to launch the East Sepik branch of the New Generation Party, but was told by police that he had no authorization to do so and would be arrested if he proceeded; the rally was cancelled. Many people, even National Alliance supporters, felt that the police

reaction was inappropriate—an editorial in the *Post-Courier* described it as ‘shameful’—and that it was evidence of the National Alliance’s undue influence over public officials in the province. The prime minister and the National Alliance, however, denied any involvement and condemned ‘a few unruly people’ who had disrupted the New Generation Party’s activities in Wewak. (See *Post-Courier* and *The National* 9, 10 January 2007.)

Otherwise, apart from a few posters there was little evidence of party activity. Maisen said he had received K30,000 and some posters from the New Generation Party, and that the New Generation Party and People’s Freedom Party were waging an ‘aggressive’ campaign against Somare, but it appeared to be low key. Murray, like the independents, was self-funded.

The campaign

The campaign in East Sepik in 2007 was fairly subdued. Posters were on display on buildings around Wewak and in the various district headquarters, and in some villages, and candidates were moving around the province, mostly addressing small rallies or village meetings arranged by their supporters. Elizabeth Bade probably travelled most widely, assisted by her son, a helicopter pilot. As the only woman candidate, and with associations with both the National and the East Sepik Councils of Women, Simogun Bade hoped to be able to mobilize a ‘women’s vote’, and several observers suggested that some mobilization did take place, especially in the Wewak islands, but Simogun Bade herself had modest expectations. According to some observers, however, she alienated voters by her aggressive criticism of Sir Michael Somare. Maisen, and to a lesser extent, Murray, Samban, and Suagu covered a good part of the province, mostly by vehicle, and had networks of supporters, including Open candidates and in Samban’s case former Provincial members, campaigning on their behalf. Somare travelled within the province by vehicle and helicopter, sometimes in the company of his son, the member for Angoram, but seemed to be running a somewhat low-key campaign. A planned National Alliance rally in Wewak a week or so before polling commenced did not eventuate. There were allegations that the National Alliance was handing out funds, and specific reference to the release of K600 million for special infrastructure projects in the province (see *Sydney Morning Herald* 19 March 2007; *Post-Courier* 4 May 2007), but I saw no evidence of handouts—indeed at one point National Alliance supporters staged a brief demonstration outside campaign headquarters protesting that they had not received food. There seemed to be none of the candidates’ vehicles covered in posters and equipped with loudspeakers that characterized earlier elections. Five candidates (Bimare, Lamin, Laku, Kemakin and Jambran) seem to have made little attempt to campaign at all outside their immediate support base.

At the few rallies I attended there was the usual talk about why East Sepik Province had fallen behind in development (in 2002 the same complaints were made, though the province was at the time enjoying a vanilla boom), and complaints about declining service delivery and corruption. Most candidates promised local development. Somare spoke about prospective development projects in the province, including large-scale sago processing, and extensions to the Wewak wharf and airstrip. Samban, campaigning along the west coast, pointed to local roads that had been constructed during his term as premier but had been allowed to deteriorate by subsequent administrations and promised to address the question of local service provision. The one mention I heard of HIV/AIDS was from a candidate who dismissed HIV/AIDS as a 'lifestyle issue' which was not relevant to village people in the Sepik, who would rather see money spent on 'development'; he was warmly supported in this view.

A topic of common concern was the growing Asian influence in the province (and nationally). A number of voters suggested that the Somare government (and indeed the Somare family) was too closely associated with Asian interests. One candidate in the Wewak Open electorate, a local businessman of Malaysian Chinese origin (married to a niece of Somare), was said to be an 'undercover candidate' for the National Alliance; when votes were counted and preferences distributed, he was placed third in a field of 43 candidates. Another alleged National Alliance 'undercover candidate', who subsequently won the Wewak seat and promptly joined the National Alliance, was rumoured to be receiving financial support from a local 'Chinese' business—which some voters described as '*namba 2 benk bilong dispela gavman*'. The sitting members for Maprik (a minister in the outgoing coalition government) and Ambunti-Dreikikir were also said to be receiving support from a local Asian enterprise.² The resentment towards Asians was directed less towards those with a long history in the province, however, than towards recent arrivals from mainland China who generally displayed little sensitivity to local culture or society.

Although the election was generally quiet, a supporter of the sitting member for Wewak Open was killed by supporters of a rival candidate when he attempted to campaign in their village outside Wewak, and there were at least two separate incidents in the Maprik electorate, in which a young man allegedly disrupting voting was shot in the leg by police and a police vehicle was damaged when villagers accused its driver of acting on behalf of the sitting (coalition) member. Paol and Gesch (chapter 24) also describe some relatively minor confrontations between candidates and their supporters in Yangoru-Saussia.

Several of the Provincial candidates campaigned in association with sympathetic Open candidates as they moved around the province, and there was some talk about exchange of preferences between Provincial candidates (Bade–Maisen;

2 Both businesses were actually owned by ethnic Chinese families from Indonesia.

Jambran–Bade; Maisen–Bade–Bimare;³ Murray–Bade–Jambran;⁴ Kemaken–Lamin–Jambran, and perhaps others), but there does not seem to have been much discussion of preferences during campaigning—even though six of the candidates (Bimare, Lamin, Jambran, Suagu, Kemaken and Samban) shared membership of Sepik Solidarity, an anti-corruption (and in effect anti-National Alliance) alliance. Most candidates asked for first preferences, or second preferences if they were in villages where there was known to be a favoured local candidate. When pressed on the question of preference strategies, most candidates or campaign managers admitted that their general advice to voters was to ‘vote 1’ for them and to give the second and third preferences to minor (or *rabis*) candidates. But while candidates adjusted their advice on preferences according to their audience, candidates’ posters mostly showed the candidate’s number and/or name against the ‘1’ but left the spaces beside ‘2’ and ‘3’ blank, a practice which some observers feared might cause confusion and lead to a high informal vote.

Electoral administration

Awareness

Prior to the election, an awareness campaign was conducted in the province, primarily by electoral officials. Civil society organizations played a minor role. A limited survey, conducted as part of the Domestic Monitoring exercise, suggested that most people in Wewak had had some exposure to the awareness campaign, which focused on the technical aspects of LPV, and felt fairly confident in their understanding of the new system and their ability to cast a valid vote, but that the campaign had not reached the more remote parts of the province. In the Yangoru-Saussia electorate voters had already experienced LPV, through a by-election in 2004, and seemed to be generally more confident. During the election campaign, most candidates tried to explain the LPV system to prospective voters, perhaps to make sure that potential support was not wasted in informal votes. Although the awareness campaign appears to have had limited impact, informal voting was fairly low (overall 2.3 percent).

Training of electoral officials

According to the provincial electoral manager, training of electoral officials had been conducted satisfactorily, though the release of funds from the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission headquarters was somewhat tardy. The polling

3 Maisen said he was happy to swap preferences with anyone except Somare, Suagu and Murray.

4 Bade said she made an approach to Murray about preference swapping but got no response.

officials, who comprised about 50 percent women in Wewak and a smaller number in rural polling stations, certainly conducted a thoroughly professional operation, not without some problems as it became apparent that a number of voters' names were not on the roll (see below). There was a little apprehension on the eve of counting, and the training consultant was brought up to Wewak to give a refresher briefing to officials on the eve of counting. The counting I witnessed (of Wewak Open and East Sepik Provincial ballot papers in Wewak) was well set up, transparent and orderly; officials again showed a good deal of professionalism and patience as losing candidates tried to disrupt the counting (see below).

Logistics

Preparations for the election seem to have been generally good, though some of the polling materials arrived only a day or two before polling was due to start. East Sepik Provincial is a large electorate with a number of remote polling places, and transport can be difficult, especially when the Sepik River is low, as it was in June–July 2007. Consequently, helicopters were used and some polling officials had to walk in to polling places. On the eve of polling, the helicopter company sub-contracted by the principal company contracted by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission informed a meeting of the provincial coordinating committee that aviation fuel, provided by the contractor, had only just been loaded onto a ship for transportation from Lae and would not be available to start operations on time. Fortunately, the subcontractor, previously unaware of this arrangement, had already deposited fuel at strategic points, but was reluctant to begin operations without a guarantee of payment for the fuel it provided. This potential crisis was resolved in time for polling officials and materials to be lifted out to their destinations with only a minor delay, but there were conspiracy theories that since Sir Julius Chan was a director of the principal contractor, the fuel issue was an attempt to disrupt the election in the prime minister's province. A fuel shortage in Wewak also threatened to affect road transport, though any impact seems to have been minimal. Otherwise, things seemed to go fairly smoothly, except that the day polling commenced the electoral manager, whose home village was on Kairiru, disappeared to Kairiru and did not return until counting was nearly completed (he later claimed he had been 'threatened'). In his absence, the provincial returning officer had to take effective charge of the election and resolve disputes that arose.

As usual in Papua New Guinea elections, after polling, some electoral officials claimed they had not received their full allowances, but in at least one instance this appeared to rest on a misunderstanding.⁵

⁵ In Wewak polling took place on one day (with a carryover to a second day at one or two polling stations); officials were paid for four days, but claimed they were entitled to allowances for 14 days, and staged a protest outside the provincial electoral office.

The roll, and polling

As in other provinces, new rolls had been drawn up prior to the election and sent out for verification. In East Sepik the number of names on the roll was reduced significantly, from 286,716 in 2002 to 237,070 in 2007. In the limited survey conducted as part of the Domestic Monitoring exercise, most respondents said they had registered to vote and had verified their names on the preliminary roll sent around before polling (though there was anecdotal evidence that in some villages people refused to register). When it came to voting, however, a number of people who claimed to have enrolled (around 10 percent of voters at polling places surveyed in Wewak but up to 20 percent in some rural polling places) were unable to find their names on the ward rolls. In some cases it was discovered that individual names had been put in the wrong village, or villages in the wrong ward, and with some effort people were able to vote. In one district, the returning officer reverted to the preliminary roll, which was more accurate.

Despite this, voting in the province was generally peaceful and orderly, and what grievances arose were handled mostly without rancour, though disgruntled would-be voters in Wewak at one stage during the counting threatened to burn down the Wewak council chambers which was serving as the local media centre.

In Wewak, people queued up to vote throughout the day, and at a few locations polling was extended till around 6 pm or resumed the next day, to ensure that voters were not denied their vote. In many rural villages voting was conducted by having the presiding officer call out the names from the roll, and also any nominated 'assist' and 'witness' (who in many cases were young women) for voters requiring an assisted vote. Voters then came forward, had their fingers checked to make sure they had not voted already, and were given ballot papers. This made the whole process quite transparent and any attempt at cheating would have been fairly obvious. Nevertheless there were some reports of underage voting and multiple voting at different polling stations. The requirement of separate polling compartments for women and men was not observed in East Sepik, but no one seemed to object to this. In some communities people said they had discussed how they should vote and would vote as a bloc, but I saw no evidence of voters being pressured on how to vote (though some observers believed that 'witnesses' were often checking, on behalf of candidates, on how people voted).

Security

Security for the election was provided by the regular police force stationed in East Sepik and several hundred community police. Moem Barracks in Wewak is home to the Papua New Guinea Defence Force's 2nd Battalion RPIR,

and the defence force was represented on the provincial election coordinating committee, but defence force personnel were not deployed during the election in East Sepik, except as security when counting took place for the Wewak and Yangoru-Saussia open electorates at Moem Barracks. Police accompanied polling teams (two police to an eight-person polling team) and there were generally several community police on hand at polling stations. Relations between police and polling officials, and with voters, seemed to be generally good, and I saw none of the heavy-handedness which reportedly marked the police presence at some Highlands polling stations.

The elections in East Sepik were expected to proceed peacefully in the province, but a few places were identified as potential trouble spots, including the area along the East Sepik–Enga border (where groups from Enga have regularly sought to cast votes in East Sepik), some villages along the Biwat River (a southern tributary of the Sepik), around Yangoru, and along the Dagua–west coast. In the event, there were no major problems.

Counting

As voting proceeded, there was an intensified debate about where to do the counting. Several venues discussed as counting places were later dropped due to non-availability or concerns by some candidates about security. Eventually it was decided to count the Wewak votes at Moem Barracks, where security was tight, and to count the Provincial ballots at the Divine Word University campus (formerly St Benedict’s Teachers’ College) at Kaindi, on the outskirts of Wewak.

Counting was scheduled to commence on Saturday but did not get under way until 7.45 pm on the Monday. The counting room was well laid out, security was strict, the counting officials were competent and the whole process was transparent. Figures were carefully balanced and as each ballot box was counted the figures were displayed on a large blackboard, relayed to Port Moresby, and subsequently put on display outside the local media centre.

In a few cases figures did not balance and had to be recounted. Most of the Provincial ballot boxes contained a few ballots for the Open electorate; these were put aside and later exchanged with Provincial ballots that were found in the Open ballot boxes.

Soon after counting commenced, however, the scrutineers of some losing candidates began to raise what seemed to be rather minor objections,⁶ and walked out. The provincial returning officer felt obliged to halt counting. With

⁶ The principal objection was that the plastic seal on one of the ballot boxes was broken—as happened in a number of cases throughout the country; but there had been no objection raised when the box was brought

the election manager unavailable, the provincial returning officer reluctant to act without backing from higher up, and a legal adviser to the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission present but generally unhelpful, it eventually fell to the regional police commander from Lae (who was previously provincial commander in East Sepik and was well known and respected in the province) to order that counting recommence, which eventually it did, with some scrutineers not attending. As a result of these interruptions, counting officials sat around for long periods with nothing to do, and on a couple of occasions counting went on till 4 am. They were remarkably patient.

The result

As the first votes were counted, Somare's opponents' hopes of an upset began to fade. In the first 40 ballot boxes (all from the Wewak district) Somare was a clear winner in all but six (in which Bade, Murray, Samban and Maisen pulled in votes from their support bases), and had about 40 percent of the total vote.

When first preference votes had been counted, Somare led strongly, with 60,653 votes, almost twice the number received by his next nearest rival (Maisen on 31,460) and about 35 percent of the total allowable votes. However, it took a full elimination of candidates to decide the outcome (Table 25.1).

Table 25.1: Distribution of preferences, East Sepik provincial electorate

Excl	Candidate	Maisen	Bade	Jambram	Murray	Somare	Other	Ex'ed ballots	Total
1	Bimare	34	92	33	32	48	74	3	316
2	Lamin	107	111	260	112	103	231	2	926
3	Laku	293	372	214	507	196	261	9	1,852
4	Suagu	429	462	160	522	443	235	41	2,292
5	Samban	492	594	225	720	515	303	125	2,974
6	Kemaken	641	1,073	540	1,117	798	–	366	4,535
7	Bade	3,896	–	2,238	5,937	3,826	–	1,643	17,540
8	Jambram	7,035	–	–	10,927	3,123	–	6,482	27,567
9	Maisen	–	–	–	19,817	5,602	–	18,982	44,401
	Total	12,927	2,704	3,670	39,691	14,654	1,104	27,653	102,403

On the first elimination, Bade received the largest share (almost a third) of Bimare's meagre vote, and on the second, Jambram was by far the greatest beneficiary from Lamin's elimination, with the other four prominent candidates sharing in the remainder of his preferences. On every other preference distribution—as first

in and the broken seal explained. One scrutineer confided to me that the National Alliance had been altering the figures inside the ballot boxes; when I asked him how this could be done, he replied that (as I surely knew) it was done through *blak paua* (magic).

Labu and then Suagu, Samban, Kemaken, Bade and Maisen were eliminated—Murray gained the largest share of the growing number of preferences. On each of the third to sixth eliminations Bade got the second largest share; unfortunately for Bade, however, despite her success in winning preferences her primary vote was well below that of four other candidates and after the sixth distribution she was eliminated. Almost 6000 of Bade's preferences went to Murray, with Maisen receiving about the same number as Somare (3896 to 3826). In the last two eliminations (Jambram and Maisen) Murray received 30,744 preferences to Somare's 8725, but Somare's share was sufficient to give him a narrow victory—relative to his early lead—by 75,293 to 67,437. Of the 170,380 allowable ballots, a high 142,727 (84 percent) remained in the count up to the final elimination, a percentage which is generally regarded as indicative of a 'good' use of preferences by voters. Somare's winning vote represented 44 percent of the total allowable ballots cast.

Murray lodged an appeal, but it was dismissed because the petition had not been served within the time period required by court rules (John Nonggorr, personal communication 8 October 2009).

Subsequently, as the leader of the party with the largest number of seats Somare was invited to form a government, and when the national parliament sat in August Somare was re-elected as prime minister.

Assessment of the electoral outcome

Sir Michael Somare, the long-serving prime minister, the member for East Sepik since 1968 and the man who led his country to independence, is a popular figure in the province, though perhaps one whose popularity has been on the wane over the past few years, as many East Sepiks complain about lack of development in the province and suggest that the Somare family (Sir Michael and his son Arthur, the re-elected member for Angoram) wield too much power, provincially and nationally. Given that the contest in East Sepik Provincial was in effect a contest between Somare and 10 candidates who might be described as 'anti-Somare', it is perhaps not too surprising that preferences flowed fairly consistently away from Somare, though he eventually received enough to achieve re-election. LPV thus did not bring about a different result in the East Sepik provincial electorate from what, on the basis of first preferences, a first-past-the-post vote might have delivered, but it did reveal a growing antipathy towards the sitting member which might not have otherwise been evident.

The sole woman candidate, Elizabeth Simogun Bade, could take encouragement from her strong showing on preferences—which might have reflected a (qualified) women’s vote—but it was again demonstrated that preferences are of little use if a candidate does not do well enough in the primary vote.⁷

Several candidates expressed the view that LPV had made for a ‘more friendly’ election, though, as noted, there was little evidence that the new system produced a tendency towards strategic alliances through preference swapping.

Elsewhere in the province, four six of the sitting Open members retained their seats. After the independent Jim Simutab (Wewak Open) had joined the National Alliance, the East Sepik’s seven members of parliament comprised four National Alliance members and three People’s Action Party.

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Appendix

Table 25.2: Voting statistics for East Sepik Provincial electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	240,551	
Total votes cast	174,215	
Informal votes	3,835	(2.2% of ballots cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	170,380	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	142,730	
Total votes distributed	81,984	
Exhausted ballot papers	27,650	(16.2% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	71,366	

⁷ A similar result had been seen in the Yangoru-Saussia by-election in 2004, in which the sole woman candidate was unable to take advantage of a strong preference vote because her primary vote was relatively low.

Table 25.3: East Sepik Provincial electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
18	Michael Thomas Somare	M	National Alliance	60653	35.6	1	14640	19.4		75293	44.2	52.8
16	Moses Murray	M	People's Freedom Party	27743	16.3	3	39694	58.9		67437	39.6	47.2
10	Greg Maisen	M	New Generation Party	31460	18.5	2	12941	29.1	9	44401	26.1	
14	Alfred Jambam	M	Independent	23897	14.0	4	3670	13.3	8	27567	16.2	
11	Elizabeth Simogun Bade	F	Independent	14836	8.7	5	2704	15.4	7	17540	10.3	
19	Francis Kemaken	M	Independent	3931	2.3	6	604	13.3	6	4535	2.7	
20	Bruce Samban	M	Independent	2665	1.6	6	309	10.4	5	2974	1.7	
17	Silas Suagu	M	Stars Alliance Party	2148	1.3	7	144	6.3	4	2292	1.3	
15	Gabriel Laku	M	People's Resources Awareness Party	1819	1.1	8	33	1.8	3	1852	1.1	
13	Samuel Lamin	M	Independent	912	0.5	10	14	1.5	2	926	0.5	
12	Peter Bimari	M	Independent	316	0.2	11	0	0.0	1	316	0.2	

26. Political Parties and the Election in Gazelle

Elly B. Kinkin

Introduction

This chapter will look at the Gazelle Open electorate in the 2007 election, with a focus on political parties. The significance of political parties flows from the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* (OLIPPAC) which was enacted in 2001, with the primary objective of strengthening the political party system on the eve of the 2002 election. The OLIPPAC was later replaced with a revised version, which came into force on 15 October 2003.

The changes brought about by the OLIPPAC and the replacing of first-past-the-post voting by limited preferential voting (LPV) will be discussed together, as they tended to dominate the election in the Gazelle electorate. The OLIPPAC and LPV generated a lot of interest, anxiety and general concern among voters and candidates alike around the country and within the Gazelle. It is against this backdrop that the conduct of candidates and political parties in the Gazelle will be discussed.

The chapter begins with some background about the Gazelle seat, highlights some aspects of political parties in the electorate and how they have fared, and then looks at the 2007 election in the Gazelle in the light of data derived mainly from a survey and an exit poll undertaken to see how the preferences were distributed.

Background

The Gazelle seat is one of the largest in the country, in terms of area and population size (Figure 26.1). Geographically, it covers about a third of the Gazelle Peninsula, and at the 2000 census included 41 percent of the population (89,664); at an average annual growth of around 3 percent, the population would have increased to just over 100,000 in 2007. The other three electorates within the province account for the other 59 percent (National Statistical Office 2000). East New Britain was one of the provinces that the Boundaries Commission had recommended for redrawing of electoral boundaries and the addition of another

electorate, specifically to cater for the Bainings (John Kalamorah, personal communication, Port Moresby 2007). The national parliament, however, rejected the recommendations of the Boundaries Commission just before the 2007 election.

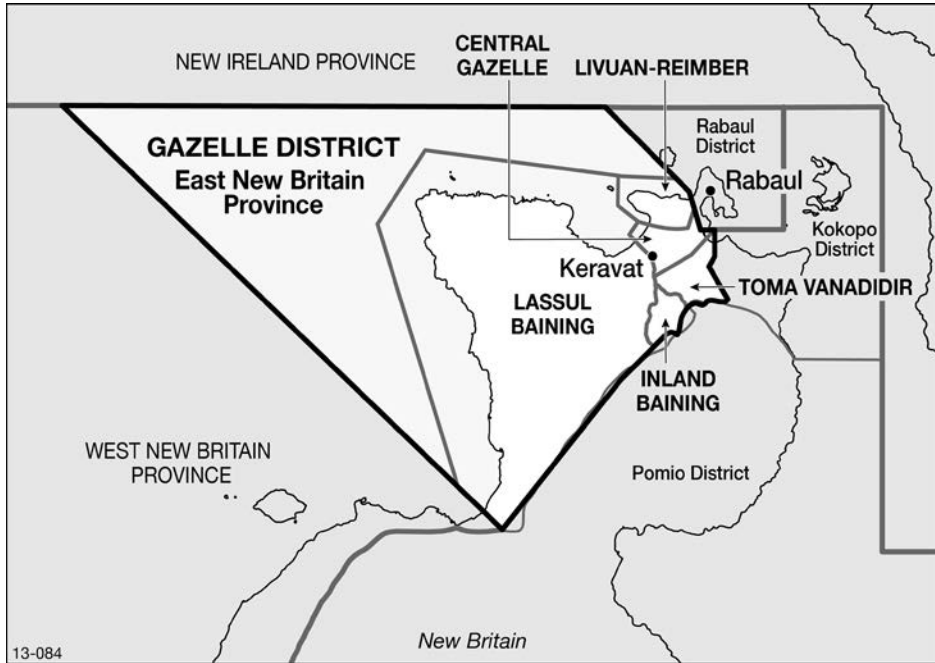


Figure 26.1: Gazelle District

The dominant ethnic groups within the Gazelle electorate continue to be the Tolais, followed by the Bainings and then other non-Tolais from other provinces who are commonly referred to in the local dialect as *vairas* (foreigners); the latter are mostly second-generation settlers and occupy pockets of land towards the inland Baining. These non-Tolais have become more politically conscious of their rights and have organized themselves to participate in the political process, voting as a bloc.

Overview of political parties

In order to better appreciate political parties in the electorate, it is necessary to trace their origins. In most democratic forms of government, parties are an important vehicle through which like-minded individuals come together to pursue common goals and objectives.

In Papua New Guinea, the Pangu Pati was formed in 1967 primarily to press for independence, while most other parties opposed it and during the period 1968–1975 political parties were polarized by the clearly different positions they took. However, after independence in 1975 political parties did not have substantive policies which differentiated them from each other. Although parties continued to exist within parliament, they tended to exist in name only; most often they were the means by which individuals gained access to the government. Parliamentary votes of no confidence characterized the later part of the 1980s and the whole of the 1990s. Members of parliament were continuously looking for opportunities to get into government. There were factions within parties and ‘party hopping’ was frequent. Party machinery was virtually non-existent; leaders were the driving force—as Hegarty (1983) observed, parties revolved around the personalities of their leaders. This continued up to the 2007 election.

While political parties were formed in the late 1960s and 1970s to pursue specific issues and purposes, ‘what was missing ... was an underlying culture to galvanize support and purpose for the parties among the voting public’ (Okole 2004:38). This is true for the Gazelle electorate, where issues have surfaced, been supported by some individuals, groups and political parties, and then allowed to die as newer issues arose and people moved on. The pattern of political party behaviour at the national level played out at the provincial level, preventing political parties from establishing firm roots in the village, and rendering their activities meaningless. Saffu (1982:261) commented:

What is clearly indisputable from observations so far is the fragility and virtual irrelevance of political parties to the operation of Papua New Guinea’s political system.

While there may not have been any political culture in the strictest sense of the term, there were characteristic features of the political system of Papua New Guinea, including a culture of reciprocity. As pointed out by Okole, ‘people vote for candidates not so much that they would be lawmakers for the country. Rather, they are to be deliverers of tangible goods and services’ (Okole 2004:34). This relationship can only be terminated if the candidates refuse the demands of the voters; however, most candidates are prepared to secure voter support at any cost. Looking at this another way, candidates once elected are bound to repay the loyalty shown by voters. The culture of reciprocity is deeply ingrained in Papua New Guinea; if there is any cultural trait that characterizes the political system, then it is reciprocity. People vote for candidates in the expectation that they will in turn be assisted by them.

Political party support base

Because political parties restrict their activities to elections and votes of no confidence and have not seriously attempted to cultivate a constituency for their policies, then it becomes difficult to gauge how they will perform in any election.

The electorate is not homogeneous but is made up of different groupings. The groups identified within the Gazelle electorate include the Tolais, the Bainings and people from other provinces (mostly in the Momase and Highlands regions);¹ church denominations; women; smallholder settlers and plantation workers; professional groups and business houses; and the working class. None of these groups appears to have been linked to any of the political parties, either in the past or in the 2007 election. Any links that might have existed probably had more to do with individual candidates or party officials than with parties. In effect, the parties lacked a support base and looked for candidates who had a support base with which to support the party.

All the political parties in the Gazelle were linked to either an individual or a family, rather than to any of the major groupings identified above. Interestingly, individuals and families previously associated with political parties have tended to move to the newer parties.

A number of observations were made concerning the support base of candidates:

- All candidates, except for three from outside the province, pegged their local areas as their support base. Of the three candidates from different provinces, at least two appealed to people from their home provinces and other 'outsiders' (*vairas*) to support them.
- Although all the candidates attempted to attend church services and mid-week fellowships around the electorate, it was the Melanesian Liberal Party candidate, Malakai Tabar, a passionate Christian, who tried to secure the Christian vote throughout the electorate.
- A number of candidates presented themselves as part of the 'new generation' and appealed to youth, calling for a change of leadership. Their slogan was, 'New times demand new leadership'.
- Three of the candidates appealed directly to the ethnic Bainings vote, which constituted a large bloc.
- The sole female candidate (Odelia Virua) did not aggressively pursue women voters, as was expected of her; she decided to focus on the Bainings group, smallholder settlers, and those sympathetic to the environment (especially non-government organizations).

¹ People from other provinces, but especially these two regions, have welfare-oriented associations.

Party-endorsed candidates since 1987

The Gazelle seat is one of a small number in the country where fewer than 10 candidates have contested at each election since independence. In 2007, 16 candidates contested. Table 26.1 shows the number of party-endorsed and independent candidates at each election since 1987. The rise in the number of party-endorsed candidates may be attributable to the introduction of the OLIPPAC in 2001.

Table 26.1: Party-endorsed candidates at elections in Gazelle Open electorate, 1987–2007

Year of election	Party-endorsed candidates	Independents	Total number of candidates
1987	3	4	7
1992	2	2	4
1997	1	5	6
2002	6	3	9
2007	10	6	16

Source: Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission

The only party that has consistently endorsed a candidate for the Gazelle seat since independence has been Pangu. Independent candidates have been a feature of every election for the seat since 1987, which is perhaps a reflection of the fact that independents could always join a party after the election and perhaps become a member of the government. There was nothing to lose by being an independent and everything to gain. As Okole et al. (2003:33) have observed:

Independent status is also more desirable since individual MPs can join parties at a later date and propel changes to party alignments that might elevate them to ministries and other coveted positions.

It is often quoted in Papua New Guinea politics that ‘Candidates do not win because they are endorsed by parties; rather parties endorse candidates who are going to win’ (Okole et al. 2003:44). In the Gazelle seat, prior to the enactment of OLIPPAC, political parties have had problems identifying potential winning candidates or convincing them to run under their party platforms.

It seems to be the case that the leadership qualities of party leaders (which include charisma) held parties together in the period from 1975 to 2002. In most instances there was a feeling of loyalty to the party leader on the part of the members. A number of the candidates who have run for the Gazelle since independence have had close ties with the party leaders.

Gazelle Open in 2007

Sixteen candidates ran for the Gazelle seat 2007. Ten were endorsed and supported by a political party. The remaining six ran as independents but four of the six had some form of association with a political party (see Table 26.7 in the appendix to this chapter).

It is important to consider the role and influence of the political parties prior to the OLIPPAC and after the OLIPPAC. In 1997 there were only six candidates with more than 10 political parties fielding candidates nationally. In 2002, with 43 registered political parties the three independents could have easily picked up endorsement from a political party. In 2007, too, with 34 political parties the six independents could have been accommodated by any of the political parties.

The relatively small number of candidates running since 1987 is indicative of the conservative nature of the electorate, which does not allow just anybody to run in the election for the sake of running, as is the case in other parts of the country. Low winning margins in other parts of the country have encouraged some individuals to try their luck. A candidate intending to run for the Gazelle seat must have standing in the community, must be supported by a good cross-section of leaders in the electorate, and must have the resources to fund his/her election.

Support from political parties

The influence of political parties in the Gazelle seat was not as strong as one might have expected given the changes to the OLIPPAC. The assistance given by political parties varied. Basic assistance ranged from the payment of the nomination fee, to posters, T-shirts, hosting of rallies, and hiring of vehicles (two of the party-endorsed candidates, Sinai Brown and Patrick Varagat, were able to provide a convoy of vehicles during the campaign period). Of all the party-endorsed candidates spoken to, only one revealed the total amount the party gave him. The rest were disappointed with their parties but refused to reveal the amount they had received.

Coordination of activities by political parties was lacking. There were no party activities. The party machinery observed in other countries to promote candidates to the voters was missing. The candidates were left on their own after nomination.

From the time nominations were opened up to the declaration of results, only five leaders from the 10 political parties visited the electorate to campaign for their candidates. While most of the political parties had regional and provincial

branches in the province, it was difficult to establish whether party executives at the national level visited their candidates in the province. Table 26.2 summarizes this data.

Table 26.2: Visits by party leaders, Gazelle Open electorate, 2007

Name	Party	Party leader	Visit by party leader?
Malakai Tabar	Melanesian Liberal	Dr Allan Marat	Yes
Sinai Brown ^a	National Alliance	Sir Michael Somare	Yes
Joseph K. Willie	Independent	–	–
John Sambie	Independent	–	–
Henry Ningo	PNG Party	Sir Mekere Morauta	No
Henry Saminga	People’s National Congress	Peter O’Neill	No
Herman Remas	Independent	–	–
Henry Kubak	People’s Progress Party	Sir Julius Chan	Yes
Dominic Rangan	United Party	Bire Kimisopa	No
Philip Kameng	Pangu Pati	Sir Rabbie Namaliu	Yes
Benroy Miliok	Rural Development Party	Moses Maladina	No
Peniel Niligur	Melanesian Alliance Party	Sir Moi Avei	No
Patrick Varagat	New Generation Party	Bart Philemon	Yes
Odelia Virua	Independent	–	–
Simon Kambiu	Independent	–	–
Abraham Yako	Independent	–	–

^a Sitting member

While it is difficult to quantify the influence of the party, the presence of the party leader in the electorate should boost the standing of candidates. Sinai Brown, the sitting member for the Gazelle seat, hosted the prime minister and senior executives of the National Alliance for several days, and they appeared on the nightly news, giving him an advantage in terms of media coverage. Dr Allan Marat, the founder and leader of the Melanesian Liberal Party, was in the province and his visits to the three electorates helped his party collect two seats (Rabaul and Gazelle). Melanesian Liberal Party candidates for the Provincial and Kokopo seats finished second and fourth respectively.

Other party leaders who visited the electorate and campaigned for their candidates included Sir Rabbie Namaliu (Pangu Pati), Sir Julius Chan (People’s Progress Party), and Bart Philemon (New Generation Party). But although their visits were marked by a lot of feasting and celebration, the support shown at rallies was not there in the tally rooms. For example, the visit by Sir Julius Chan in support of his candidate Henry Kubak was well covered by the media and well attended, but Kubak picked up only 5.6 percent of the total formal first preference votes cast. The visit of Bart Philemon, the leader of the New

Generation Party, who had declared war on the National Alliance and whose visit to the province was well attended and talked about, did little for his candidate who collected only 3.5 percent of first preference votes.

In the final analysis, the brand name of the political party, the party leader (who was potentially prime minister), party policies, campaign strategies, and the alliances that the parties entered into regarding distribution of preferences, had little impact in attracting undecided voters or securing second and third preferences.

The policies of the 10 political parties were broad and general; most were reduced to slogans. 'Free education', 'good governance', 'honest leadership', 'new leadership', 'anti-corruption', 'a time for change', 'focus on rural development', 'restoring confidence in the public service', and 'infrastructure development' were some of the catchphrases used. These phrases were good but they lacked strong supporting policies to realize the bold, broad statements.

The role played by political parties during the election was more symbolic than policy oriented. Attempts by candidates to differentiate their policies from those of other candidates and political parties did not filter down to the voters. The level of scrutiny of party policies was very low, and candidates escaped from having to explain and elaborate their policies, instead appealing to the voters' emotions on issues such as greater autonomy for the province, securing good prices for cash crops (although it was not clear how this was to be done, given that prices are dictated by world markets), reclaiming plantations from big businesses and the churches and passing them on to the people, the building of a fish cannery (put on hold by the national government), fast-tracking the upgrading of the airport to international status, and improving the deteriorating roads, to name a few.

It would have been interesting to have attempted a costing of what was promised to the people, as an indicator of how realistic the promises were. The National Research Institute, and in particular Dr Alphonse Gelu, has been pushing this idea.

Political party alliances

There was only one instance of political party alliance, namely between the PNG Party of Sir Mekere Morauta and the New Generation Party of Bart Philemon. This alliance was observed at the provincial and electorate levels, where resources, intelligence and information were shared. During polling,

supporters were encouraged to exchange preferences. It was difficult, however, to trace the preferences, in the absence of data from the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission.

However, alliances were built among the candidates, who shared a strong desire to remove the sitting member. Throughout the province candidates ganged up against the incumbents; this was clearly evident in the Kokopo, Rabaul and the Gazelle contests.

The sitting member, Sinai Brown, although collecting most first preferences (5045; 18 percent) compared to Malakai Tabar's 4612 (16 percent), eventually lost because after the fourteenth exclusion Tabar was able to collect 4161 preferences to amass a total of 8773, while Sinai Brown collected only 2634 preferences, bringing his count to 7679.

Another important feature of the 2007 election was the alliances that were built between candidates contesting Open seats and those contesting the Provincial seat. One observation was that the candidates for the Provincial seat chose not to differentiate themselves from each other on the basis of their parties but to work with Open seat candidates. For the Provincial seat candidates, it was suicidal to campaign along party lines with their counterparts from the Open seats, as Open seat candidates could retaliate by campaigning against them. The candidates running for the Provincial seat thus tended to abstain from interference in the Open seats.

Leo Dion, the National Alliance governor of the province, chose to run on his track record as governor and asked the province to judge him by his performance in the previous term. He did not regularly campaign with Sinai Brown, the sitting National Alliance member for the Gazelle, fearing a backlash if he pushed the party line. The National Alliance had not supported a fish cannery in the electorate, which was potentially a big money earner for the province as well as the company. The national government had also been slow to upgrade the provincial airport to international status. As evident from the media (especially talk-back radio shows) the people of the province were not happy that the national government, with three members from the province in the National Alliance and the support of Dr Allan Marat and Sir Rabbie Namaliu, had not fast-tracked some projects in the province.

The limited preferential voting system

LPV was part of the electoral reforms which sought to widen the representative base of winning candidates as well as secure cooperation from rival candidates and their supporters in the distribution of the second and third preferences.

As outlined by John Nonggorr, lawyer for the Electoral Commission, the LPV was meant to deal with law and order problems and to change the behaviour of candidates and supporters to ensure the success of elections (*Post-Courier* 20 March 2007:2).

The success of the various by-elections, using LPV, after the 2002 election accomplished at least two main things: there was reportedly greater cooperation among candidates and their supporters, and the introduction of preferences gave voters the opportunity to vote for more than one candidate, which reduced the level of dispute among family and community members (see Standish 2006).

The winning margin for the Gazelle seat over the past two decades has been very convincing (Table 26.3). Since 1987, the support base of the winning candidates has always come from their respective areas (for Esorom Burege and Nakikus Konga, from the north coast part of the electorate; for Sinai Brown, from the Toma area. Martin Tovadek, who held the seat from 1977 to 1987, is from the Toma area).

Table 26.3: Candidates and winning margins, Gazelle Open electorate, 1987–2007

Year ^a	Candidate	Party	Winning vote (%)
1987	Esorom Burege	People's Progress Party	26.3
1992	Nakikus Konga	Pangu Pati	39.9
1997	Nakikus Konga	Pangu Pati	48.6
2002	Sinai Brown	National Alliance	37.6
2007	Malakai Tabar	Melanesian Liberal Party	17.0 (primary vote) 53.3 (after preferences)

^a This does not include two by-elections.

Source: Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission

The winning vote was always above the 25 percent mark, while in other electorates around the country winning margins were often reduced to single-digit numbers. However, this does not deny the importance of local loyalties: the people of the north coast area have always voted for candidates from their area, while people from the Toma area have always voted for a Toma candidate; the Bainings have always voted for Bainings, and the people from other areas of the Gazelle Peninsula have done the same. When there is no candidate from their area, people have tended to support their relatives from the other areas.

Survey and exit poll

A questionnaire was administered during polling to determine the basis upon which voters gave their preferences. Two questions were asked. First, 'What was the basis for giving your first, second and third preferences?' Secondly, 'Which of your preferences did you give to the only woman candidate?'

The first question offered six possible responses:

- relatives—pressure to vote along family lines is immense; failure to do so can result in isolation (some families have been known to have stopped talking to each other for several years)
- leadership qualities—if no relatives are standing, then, according to informants, voters look for leadership qualities such as experience, charisma, educational qualifications and integrity
- churches—churches are very important institutions within the electorate and have been known to influence voters
- party affiliation—selected because it is the focus of this chapter
- business acquaintance—this does not necessarily refer to business dealings but includes social and cultural activities that bring people together, such as marriages, deaths, initiation rituals and feasts that involve villages
- others—to cover factors that have not been otherwise accounted for.

The questionnaire was drawn up after discussions the author had with a number of public servants, one local-level government (LLG) president, two councillors and a number of ordinary villagers who had been involved in past elections. The survey was conducted during the polling period, which was one week, for only one LLG within the electorate—the Toma-Vunadidir LLG; its president, David Piamia, assisted with the survey.

Preferences were not necessarily distributed among the five variables: for example, a voter with two relatives standing might allocate his or her first and second preferences under the relatives category.

The factor that accounted for most first preferences was relatives, which received 35 percent (Table 26.4). This was followed by church (27 percent) leadership qualities (18 percent), business acquaintance (7 percent), and others (10 percent). Party affiliation received the lowest, with just over 2 percent.

On second preferences, surprisingly relatives again received the largest share, with 39 percent (clearly some voters had several relatives standing as candidates). Leadership qualities followed with 20.5 percent, church 17 percent, others 11 percent, business acquaintances 9 percent, and political party affiliation again last on 3 percent.

The bulk of the third preferences, interestingly, went to others, which collected 37 percent. A possible explanation for the high percentage is that many voters met their social and cultural obligations with their first two preferences and decided to 'give away' the third preference. Church accounted for 21 percent of third preferences, relatives 16 percent, leadership qualities and party affiliation each 11.5 percent, and business acquaintance 2 percent.

Overall, relatives was the determinant of how respondents distributed their preferences, followed by church. Notwithstanding the fact that the province had gone through a number of awareness exercises which listed 'leadership qualities' as the principal criterion that voters should look for, leadership qualities was a relatively minor influence on the distribution of preferences.

To the question, 'Which of your preferences did you give to the only woman candidate?', out of the 122 respondents (39 females and 83 males) the female candidate received only eight second preferences. Six of those preferences came from female voters. One can only speculate about the basis on which voters distributed their preferences for the female candidate; it was certainly not along policy lines, as her stated policy goals were to assist the Bainings people, who are a disadvantaged group in the electorate, and to help settlers in the Keravat area obtain basic government services (such as technical and financial assistance in the agricultural sector).² The fact that she was married to a person from the Momase Region does not appear to have made a difference, though people from Momase constitute a very big segment of the population within the electorate.

It also appears that women, who constitute over 40 percent of the voting population in the electorate, did not support the sole woman candidate. She was one of the first three candidates to be eliminated. And the evidence from the survey suggests that she would have done no better if she had been endorsed by a party, since voters gave little weight to party affiliation. For a very affluent electorate, with easy access to the media and good awareness, the poor distribution of preferences to the only female candidate speaks a lot about the plight of female candidates.

² Although I did not speak to the candidate herself, I spoke to her husband who highlighted some of her policies and what she stood for.

Table 26.4: Basis for giving first, second and third preferences, by men and women

Responses	Sex	Preferences			Total
		First	Second	Third	
Relatives	M	28	34	17	79
	F	15	14	3	32
Leadership qualities	M	18	20	9	47
	F	4	5	5	14
Church	M	23	12	15	50
	F	10	9	11	30
Party affiliation	M	2	4	8	14
	F	1	0	6	7
Business acquaintance	M	5	10	3	18
	F	4	1	0	5
Others	M	5	3	31	39
	F	7	10	14	31
Total		122	122	122	

Relatives includes in-laws; kinsman; same ethnicity; cultural relations. Leadership qualities includes honesty; integrity; proven track record; education; experience. Church includes same church; Christian principles; active church member. Party Affiliation includes leader of party; party policies. Business Acquaintance includes workmates; sport and social networks; professional associates; friends of friends. Others includes pressure from spouse, relatives; sympathy vote; etc.

Comparing the 2002 and 2007 election results

Although the introduction of LPV means that the elections of 2002 and 2007 are not strictly comparable, it is worth looking at the similarities and differences.

No changes were made to the boundaries of the Gazelle seat. The number of registered voters was 27,482 in 2002, and 27,938 in 2007, an increase of 456.

Nine candidates stood for election in 2002 (Table 26.5), of whom six were endorsed by political parties. In 2007 16 candidates stood, of whom 10 were party endorsed. Party-endorsed candidates received little support from their respective parties; in general, they were no better off than the independents.

The sitting member, Sinai Brown, won the seat in 2002 with 10,107 votes (37 percent of the total). In 2007 he led on first preferences, with 5045 votes (18 of the total)—a drop of just over 50 percent on the 2002 vote—but eventually lost to Malakai Tabar, an agriculturalist and lecturer by profession.

Table 26.5: The Gazelle Open electorate, 2002

Candidate	Party	Votes polled (number)	Votes polled (%)
Sinai Brown	National Alliance	10,107	37.6
Norbert Kubak	People's Progress Party	6,606	24.6
Henry Ningo	People's Democratic Movement	3,554	13.2
Thomas Kalas	Independent	1,917	7.1
Isaac Wartovo	Independent	1,643	6.1
Elly Kinkin	Independent	1,378	5.1
James Anjo	People's Labour Party	989	3.7
Jack Sion	People's Action Party	360	1.3
John Rarau	Independent	326	1.2
Informal votes		602	
Total votes		27,482	
Formal votes		26,880	100

Source: <http://www.pnhec.gov.pg/results/Report18.html>

From the figures, it is clear that all candidates collected votes from their support bases but could not widen their appeal to other constituents. Tabar was able to collect votes from his home area, his wife's area, church groups (he is a devout Christian), the working class, and ordinary villages with whom he had daily contacts over two decades.

As noted above, all the candidates ganged up against and campaigned against the sitting member and successfully prevented the flow of preferences to him.

Conclusion

There is no party in Papua New Guinea that has anything that remotely resembles a nation-wide organization with an ideology or an image, cadres of activists and a persistent, mobilized mass support (Saffu 1982:261).

Unless and until there is a party with an ideology that guides its conduct, and deep roots within a focused political support base across the country, then it will be very difficult to talk about political parties. Political parties can only be understood within the context of a political system that interacts with them. When the personalities of candidates and members of parliament dominate the system, political parties are largely irrelevant.

In the case of the Gazelle seat, Pangu Pati, the only party which has been fielding candidates since independence, was not able to build a political base.

It might be argued that without OLIPPAC it was not possible for parties to develop, but with OLIPPAC designed to strengthen parties, and office bearers of political parties now being paid from public funds, some effort might have been made to build a party support base within the electorate. The survey and exit poll showed that while people are concerned about leadership qualities, they are not prepared to ignore their relatives or candidates from their areas, or the churches. LPV has allowed the option of accommodating their relatives and other primordial associations but at the same time voting for a good leader who will have wider support from the electorate.

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Appendix

Table 26.6: Voting statistics for Gazelle Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	52,418	
Total votes cast	28,310	
Informal votes	1,157	(4.1% of total ballots cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	27,153	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	16,452	
Total votes distributed	17,496	
Exhausted ballot papers	10,701	(39.4% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	8,227	

Table 26.7: Gazelle Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
15	Malakai Tabar	M	Melanesian Liberal Party	4612	17.0	2	4161	47.4		8773	32.3	53.3
24	Sinai Brown	M	National Alliance	5045	18.6	1	2634	34.3		7679	28.3	46.7
18	Joseph Karani Willie	M	Independent	2687	9.9	3	2118	44.1	14	4805	17.7	
14	John Sambie	M	Independent	2240	8.2	4	1855	45.3	13	4095	15.1	
10	Henry Ningo	M	PNG Party	2055	7.6	5	1377	40.1	12	3432	12.6	
13	Henry Saminga	M	People's National Congress Party	1521	5.6	7	1371	47.4	11	2892	10.7	
17	Herman Remas	M	Independent	1495	5.5	8	550	26.9	10	2045	7.5	
11	Henry Kubak	M	People's Progress Party	1585	5.8	6	297	15.8	9	1882	6.9	
19	Dominic Rangan	M	United Party	1082	4.0	11	547	33.6	8	1629	6.0	
22	Philip Vuiira Kameng	M	Pangu Pati	1176	4.3	10	207	15.0	7	1383	5.1	
21	Benroy Miliok	M	Rural Development Party	1242	4.6	9	77	5.8	6	1319	4.9	
25	Peniel Niliigur	M	Melanesian Alliance Party	1075	4.0	12	75	6.5	5	1150	4.2	
16	Patrick M. Varagat	M	New Generation Party	962	3.5	13	19	1.9	4	981	3.6	
23	Odella Virua	F	Independent	159	0.6	14	31	16.3	3	190	0.7	
12	Simon Kambiu	M	Independent	153	0.6	15	1	0.6	2	154	0.6	
20	Abraham Yako	M	Independent	64	0.2	16	0	0.0	1	64	0.2	

27. Between Eagles and Flying Foxes: Elections for the Manus Provincial and Open Seats

Steffen Dalsgaard¹

People in Manus often speak in metaphors or in tropes (Tokpisin: *tok piksa*), particularly when referring to the politics of traditional ceremonies at the village level and in wider provincial forums. One of the prevailing metaphors of the 2007 election was that of the ‘flying fox’ (*blak bokis*); this was most eloquently expressed in a speech by Dr Gabriel Kulwaum, one of the candidates for the Manus Open seat. The flying fox is a migratory fruit-eating bat. It comes when the fruits are ripe and leaves when it has eaten them. In contrast to this animal is the eagle (*tarangau*). In the context of the election the eagle represented the true leader, who does not migrate but stays and looks after its territory. When potential voters were asked what kind of leadership qualities they were looking for in a candidate, most people said, ‘looking after others’ (*lukautim ol*), that is, being generous and helping others when they are in need.

In 2007, seven candidates contested the Manus Provincial seat, while 25 nominated for the Manus Open. Several of them had tried their luck before, but many were newcomers to politics, returned to Manus from influential positions in the urban centres of Papua New Guinea. The main contenders for the Provincial seat were expected to be the incumbent, Dr Jacob Jumogot, the previous governor, Stephen Pokawin, and the Lorengau mayor, Michael Sapau. The Open seat literally seemed more open with the large number of candidates, but former member of parliament (MP) Memel Pohei and a former Lorengau mayor, Job Pomat, were the names most frequently mentioned. As usual, the Manus seats were the first ones to be declared. This happened on 14 and 15 July respectively, when Michael Sapau and Job Pomat came out victorious.

¹ I thank the people in Manus and the candidates, the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission office in Manus and the provincial administration, whose assistance was invaluable. I am also indebted to the Institute of PNG Studies and the National Research Institute in Port Moresby. The paper has benefited from comments by colleagues in the Department of Anthropology, University of Aarhus, participants in Asia–Pacific Week 2008 at The Australian National University, and the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program at The Australian National University. I also thank two of my supervisors, Ton Otto and Mark Mosko. The research was made possible by grants from Denmark, namely the Faculty of Arts at the University of Aarhus, Bikuben Fonden, Carlsbergs Mindelegat for Brygger J.C. Jacobsen, and an EliteResearch travel stipend provided by the Danish Ministry for Science, Technology and Innovation.

Political and historical background

Manus is the smallest province in Papua New Guinea both in terms of land mass (less than 2000 square kilometres) and population (approximately 52,000 people² that can be divided into roughly 30 ethnic or linguistic groups).³

Manus provides two electorates for the national parliament: Manus Provincial and Manus Open. (Manus is unique in that its Provincial electorate coincides geographically with its one Open electorate.) Administratively, this means that the provincial administration also functions as a district administration, and the province has been allocated a proportionately larger number of local-level governments (LLGs) than the other provinces—one urban LLG (Lorengau) and 11 rural LLGs (Figure 27.1).

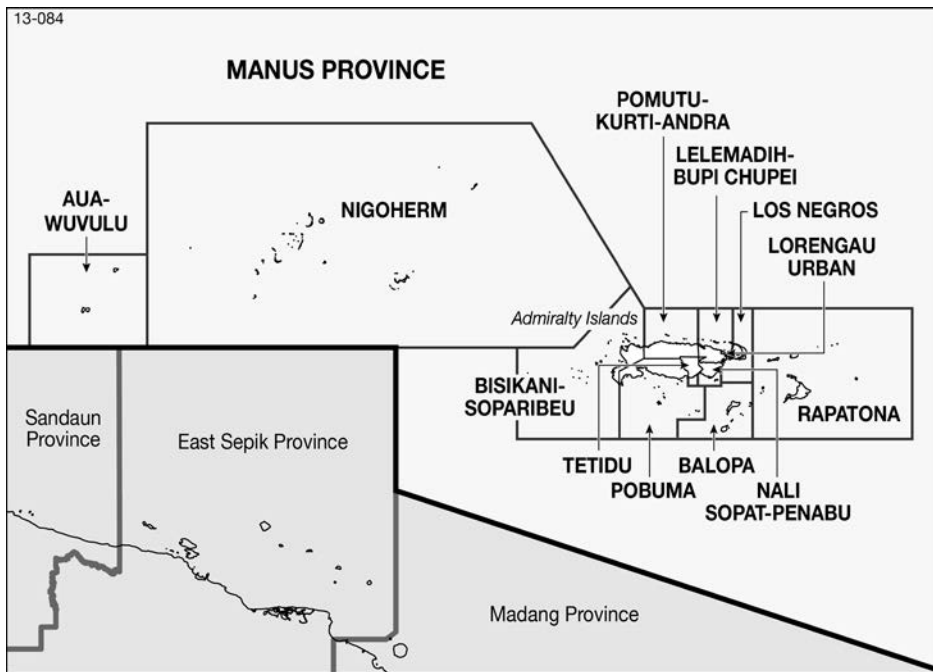


Figure 27.1: Manus Province and local-level governments

2 The 2000 census figure was 43,387. Projection of the 1980–2000 growth rate of about 2.6 percent per year gives 52,000.

3 There has been argument as to the number of groups and languages, which depends on which definition one decides to use (Carrier and Carrier 1989:34). One of the latest (local) publications states the number as 30 (Minol 2000). For the purpose of this presentation I presume the different Manus groups to be quite similar in terms of political concerns and I distinguish between groups only when referring to specific practices. For a discussion of similarities and differences between Manus groups see Schwartz (1963, 1995), who argues in favour of regarding Manus as one 'areal culture'.

Along with the other parts of what is today the New Guinea Islands Region, Manus was colonized relatively early, first by the Germans and later by the Australians. People in Manus went to the polls for the first time in 1964, when the National Assembly was established. Since then, one can discern two notable political features in national elections in Manus, which people referred to often during the course of the 2007 election. First, in every election there are people of Manus descent or people born in Manus, who have lived for a prolonged period outside of the province but return to contest the election without spending enough time to be reacquainted with the state of affairs in the province. These returnees had never been successful in contesting until 2002, where Dr Jacob Jumogot returned and defeated the incumbent provincial member and governor, Stephen Pokawin. Several well-educated emigrants seemed to have been inspired by Jumogot's win and to have judged that Manus people were now ready to vote for a returnee. Hence the popular reference to the metaphor of the flying foxes. The second feature is that Manus people have never re-elected a person once he or she has lost his/her seat, though every recent election has seen one or more attempting a comeback.

The metaphor of flying foxes also relates to the economy of Manus. Local sources of income have dwindled over the years, in part due to a devaluation of the Papua New Guinea kina, and neither copra, cocoa nor vanilla has provided the continuous returns that were originally hoped for. The most substantial economic activities in Manus today are logging, which is mostly based on the west coast, and *bêche-de-mer* harvesting, which is seasonal but in season is a bonanza for good divers. However, even though these enterprises have provided cash to villagers, they have not been enough to sustain people without supplementary access to subsistence foods (gardening or fishing). The financial capacity of the Manus provincial government is severely limited too, and tangible developments are rare. Several Manus groups therefore rely on remittances from wage-earning kin in other provinces to achieve material improvement of their lives. This funds a large part of consumption in Manus. Money from remittances is distributed in traditional exchange ceremonies (cf. Carrier and Carrier 1989), and often covers expenses such as school fees. Expensive acquisitions such as boats, motors or housing materials are rarely purchased directly from Manus, because only a few people in the province make enough money to obtain such goods.

Prologue to the election

Speculation about who would be candidates was abundant already a year before the election. A group of Manus people with access to the Internet discussed the issue vehemently in a forum on the web (www.pngscape.net.pg). Everyone was of course curious about whom they would be able to vote for, and in the

provincial capital of Lorengau one heard rumours every now and then of yet another person who had told someone that he or she would contest the election. These rumours and speculation were by no means coincidental. The candidates themselves needed to test their chances beforehand by examining their support without promising too much. Several candidates considered the response of their kin and close associates in particular to be crucial. Their close relations were the ones who were expected not only to vote for the candidate, but also the ones who would carry the campaign to their relations.

As part of these preliminary manoeuvres, some candidates tried more or less discretely to influence voters on different occasions when they had a chance to speak or act in public. Those who had left Manus to live and work elsewhere but intended to return to become candidates could every now and then be spotted at the market in Lorengau making themselves publicly visible. Others tried to deter rival candidates from contesting the election by convincing them, either directly or via mutual kin, to step down, or by spreading rumours to create cleavages between possible candidates and politically influential people who were known to be allies. Some potential candidates did step down, possibly because their chances of exercising political influence would be greater if they threw their support behind others. Several of those who had themselves been candidates in the 2002 election were thus seen as key supporters of new candidates in 2007.

The Open seat

Inspiration from Jumogot's victory as a returning migrant was not the only source of inspiration for the first-time candidates. There was much speculation that the Open seat would be up for grabs since the incumbent MP, Charlie Benjamin, was rumoured to be intending to challenge Jumogot for the Provincial seat. But six months before the election, Benjamin was found guilty by a Leadership Tribunal of having violated the Leadership Code. He was dismissed from parliament and banned from contesting elections for three years. The Open seat was thus vacant and drew 25 candidates. Two of these were women. Six had previously contested a national election. More than half of the 25 normally resided outside Manus or had recently been retrenched and moved back to their native village. Most of the candidates (including those for the Provincial seat) were well educated and had made significant achievements in their fields. Several gave up well-paid jobs to contest the election; an article in the *Post-Courier's* election special referred to the elections in Manus as 'the battle of the brains' (*Post-Courier*, Election Special June 2007).

The contest for the Open seat saw a significant increase in candidates compared to recent elections.⁴ Among the major contenders were the runners-up in the previous two elections (Job Pomat and Memel Pohei), but a couple of first-time candidates were given good chances because of their educational backgrounds and successful careers; these included Ted Sitapai, former secretary of the Department of Agriculture, and Les Roai, who had worked as a college administrator in Lae. Roai was the first serious candidate in a national election from the remote western islands. However, with the large number of candidates and the new limited preferential voting (LPV) system, many saw it as anyone's game, and there was much speculation about what would be determining factors. Most LLGs had several candidates, and it was inevitable that most candidates' base votes would be divided. The Balopa LLG had the most candidates (six) relative to its population (1342 enrolled voters), with many close relatives contesting. The north coast of Manus Island was also well represented (four candidates) as was the west coast (six), but both of these areas had larger numbers of enrolled voters.

The Provincial seat

I have noted that Manus people have never re-elected a person who has lost his/her seat. Stephen Pokawin was aware of this historical fact when he decided to challenge Jumogot, and even said during his campaign that he would see if he could be the first one to regain a Manus seat. Memel Pohei, who had contested every election since he was an MP in 1992–93, always finishing second or third, tried for the Open seat again in 2007. Another heavyweight contestant for the Provincial seat was the mayor of Lorengau and deputy governor Michael Sapau. Sapau had severely criticized the incumbent governor with whom he had had strong disagreements in the (provincial) Lapan Assembly, where he was a member as the mayor of Lorengau. He was expected to perform well because he was believed to have the support of the Catholic community, which is the largest religious denomination in Manus. Lawyer Ben Lomai, Dr Peter Sapak (a University of Papua New Guinea lecturer), Leslie Menei and Keliwin Sasa were the other four contenders. Generally, people expected the contest to be between Jumogot, Pokawin and Sapau, with Lomai and perhaps Menei as dark horses—Lomai because he was deemed to be wealthy enough to run a comprehensive campaign, and Menei because he had finished third in the 2002 election. However, since Lomai and Sapak came from the same area in Manus, their base vote would be split, and Menei's previous election promises had since been undermined by accusations that they were 'cargo cultist', because

⁴ In 2002, 12 candidates; in 1997, 15. For numbers of candidates in elections prior to 1997 see Pokawin and Rooney (1996:127).

he promised social services such as unemployment benefits. The contest for the Provincial seat thus saw a decrease in the number of candidates compared to recent elections, undoubtedly because many perceived Jumogot, Pokawin and Sapau to be very difficult to beat. Sapau, Lomai and Sapak were contesting national elections for the first time.

The characterization of the Open seat as a contest among educated 'flying foxes' applied also to the Provincial seat; only Sapau and Sasa had been living in Manus for a long period up to the election. Even the governor and Provincial member, Jumogot, had been criticized for often being away in Port Moresby rather than being close to people in Manus, listening to their requests and attending to their needs. Jumogot defended himself by saying that only in Port Moresby could he do what he was supposed to do, which was to attract resources that could develop Manus. He had criticized his predecessor Pokawin for being too much in Manus and not doing anything. After the 2002 election Pokawin had disputed the result because Jumogot allegedly had used his position as head of the Papua New Guinea Gaming Board to distribute money and thus 'buy' votes, but the case was dismissed because of lack of evidence. After losing to Jumogot, Pokawin too had been away from Manus—most of the time as general secretary of the National Alliance or as adviser to Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare.

The period from 2002 to 2007 had seen some notable physical developments in Manus. In return for letting Australia run the detention centre for asylum seekers in Lombrum, the Australian Agency for International Development had provided upgrades of some of the schools in the Los Negros LLG, from whence Jumogot came. The upgrading was carried out while Jumogot was governor, but the deal had been set in place under Pokawin.

What came to be one of the most important issues in the election campaigns of both Jumogot and Pokawin was the issue of the Manus Highway. The highway is a gravel road that runs from Lorengau inland connecting the villages of the interior of Manus Island with the provincial capital. For 20 years the road had been potholed and difficult to navigate without four-wheel drive, especially in wet conditions. However, while Pokawin was still governor the World Bank had agreed to finance reconstruction of the road against 10 percent counterpart funding by the government. No work was carried out before Jumogot became governor, though, and now they both strove to take credit for the reconstruction. Some saw the reconstruction as evidence of the delivery of government services while others, especially those without relations inland, questioned why such a large sum should be spent on the road: it would only help inland people, who were few in number compared to the coastal or island dwellers in the province, and 10 percent of the total cost was still a large proportion of the total funding available to a province with a small budget. Pokawin's campaign in the area covered by the highway may have been boosted by alliance with Pohei, who

came from the inland of Manus and was endorsed by the National Alliance, and it probably benefitted from a visit by Sir Michael Somare, who spoke to people in the village of Tingou and promised a donation to the local health centre. Jumogot located a part of his campaign launching in nearby Kawaliap, where he had several supporters. Former prime minister and leader of the People's Democratic Movement, Paias Wingti, was supposed to attend, but could not. Nevertheless, the Kawaliap people decorated Jumogot with symbols of traditional leadership, and string bands from the area created songs to honour him (including one about voting for 'white gravel', referring to the road reconstruction, which used gravel from the Los Negros LLG). This concern for demonstrating one's achievements in office was not confined to the Provincial seat. Prior to being indicted, Charlie Benjamin had bought cars for the police and the hospital with the District Support Grant at his disposal. Both of these cars carried writing on the side stating that they were 'donated by Hon. Charlie Benjamin MP member for Manus'. Prior to being convicted, Benjamin was regarded by people I spoke to in Lorengau as a good leader, for which the cars were seen as evidence.

The role of parties in Manus

Prior to the election, several candidates could be seen 'shopping around' for party endorsement. To most, this was a matter of obtaining funding to run a campaign. Rumour had it that some of the candidates expected to put this funding in their own pocket and campaign simply by talking to people at the smaller markets in Lorengau. But there were also a few faithful, who had been long-time members of their respective parties, such as Pokawin for National Alliance and Jumogot for People's Democratic Movement. Also, Ronny Knight had joined the New Generation Party for its cause rather than opportunism.

Party affiliation was not very important in peoples' voting. Only one person I talked with said that he had given one of his preferences to Ronny Knight, because he liked the New Generation Party. Otherwise I did not hear much mention of party preference. The party with the best organized campaign in Manus was the National Alliance. The two candidates appeared on a poster together, and Sir Michael Somare came to Manus to endorse them at events in Lorengau and Tingou; generally they tried to give the appearance of loyal cooperation. The other party which fielded candidates supporting each other was the New Generation Party. Bart Philemon came to endorse them and gave a speech at the Lorengau market and in two villages close to Lorengau, which seemed to impress a lot of people. Several people told me that if Philemon had contested in Manus they would have voted for him, but they were not so sure

about his candidates in Manus. People's Progress Party and People's Action Party also had candidates for each seat in Manus, but they did not seem to campaign together.

Launchings and nominations

An important part of many of the candidates' efforts were events surrounding the launching of their campaign and nomination.

Several candidates hosted large-scale launching feasts where relations (extended kin, colleagues, etc.) and neighbouring villages were invited. All participating groups brought some food as a contribution, but were also fed by the candidate—either with pork or sea turtles, which are the ceremonial meats. Groups were also given food and typically betel nuts to take home. During the launching event, invited speakers of standing would praise the candidate—his qualities as a leader, his knowledge, his experience and how they knew him.⁵ The candidate would also speak, mostly trying to be humble but also presenting some of his visions. In between the speeches, traditional dancers, string bands or choirs would entertain, the latter with songs written about the candidate to honour or praise him. These launching feasts did not resemble any traditional type of feasts in particular, but they included several elements that could be classified as strongly traditional, such as the way food was distributed. Additionally, in some cases, the event involved the cutting of a rope of betel nuts and distributing the branches—one to each participating group as a way to urge them to support the candidate. In the past, such distributions of betel nuts were seen as acts of compulsion—whoever accepted a rope of betel nut indicated that he would support the donor. Ton Otto (1992b: 275–76) has described how this was an issue of contention in 1987, since many thought that the 'ways of government' should be kept separate from the 'ways of custom'. In 2007 I witnessed no such disputes. Because of the LPV system, some people actually argued that it was all right to accept betel nuts from more than one candidate, since there were three preferences to be given. These three preferences were in fact mostly seen as three votes in their own right. One man even told me, 'A little bit of government, a little bit of tradition (*kastam*), that is all right'.

Organizing such a feast requires large resources—usually in terms of both money and a network of kin and allies who are willing to come and give support with their presence and contributions. In that regard it is comparable to the demands of traditional ceremonies (*wok kastam*), which in many places is the hallmark of the traditional (entrepreneurial) leadership (see Schwartz 1963; Otto 1991).

5 I did not witness either of the two women candidates host such an event.

Likewise, during the nomination period, almost half of the candidates came to the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission's office in Lorengau, not just with a procession of supporters, but also wearing at least some kind of traditional decoration. A couple of candidates wore 'crowns' made with shells or dog teeth, while others were followed by several hundred people carrying adornments symbolizing traditional leadership and cultural artifacts important in traditional ceremonies. Some were accompanied by a log-drum (*garamut*) ensemble on the back of a truck with a troupe of dancers escorting the candidate to the door. Some of the nomination processions displayed significant parallels to processions involved in traditional ceremonies, brideprice in particular.

All this testified to the importance of references to traditional culture, which have become increasingly visible in provincial politics over the years. On the one hand, such references can be seen in the naming of the provincial assembly, Lapan Assembly (referring to traditional leaders), in the drafting of legislation that attempts to protect traditional culture (Dalsgaard 2007), and in introducing traditional leaders as chiefs into the legislature (see Otto 2002). The latter reflects expectations of good leadership. On the other hand, such references relate to the significance of *kastam* (tradition or custom), with its plethora of meanings from mortuary rituals and ceremonies relating to marriages or births to a general set of values and institutions that one should follow to be successful and to live up to correct ethical and moral standards, or even to a domain of *kalsa* (culture) that seems to change in its emphasis on traditional practices according to a global culture of performative practices (see Dalsgaard and Otto forthcoming).

Of the candidates for the Open seat, Albert Punjimill was the paramount chief for the Nauna people, but while being a traditional leader commands respect, leadership rarely carries weight outside one's group or territory, and I did not meet anyone who voted for Punjimill because of his title. Other candidates, too, claimed to be from *lapan* lineages, but it is unclear whether this affected voters' choices, though to command the vote in a specific village it was important to be on good terms with, or at least acknowledge, the local leaders, who were expected to be able to carry votes.

Strategies of campaigning and voting

Campaigning for both seats was done in numerous ways. References to tradition and the ambiguous relationship between emigrants and those who stayed at home in the villages were two central discourses influencing the way candidates presented themselves as potential leaders. These strategies have been alluded to above, and will be referred to again in explanations of why people voted as they did.

The candidates I interviewed said that they depended on their kin to carry their campaigns, but using former or present colleagues or even old school mates was also seen as a way to mobilize support. Most candidates had a campaign coordinator. Some had a couple of regional coordinators too—for instance, one for central Manus, one for the west coast, and so on. Some of the most serious candidates had even more elaborate systems, including a campaign *komiti* for each LLG or even each village in the areas where they were strong. The task of these *komiti* was to estimate the amount of votes the candidate could expect in the local area, provide a place to stay if the candidate came on a visit, and arrange for the candidate to deliver a speech or hold a campaign meeting in the local community.

Even if they did not have a *komiti*, most candidates had contacts in all LLGs around Manus, and used these contacts to introduce them on the campaign trail. However, some voters told me that this did not always give the best impression: they were afraid that if a particular candidate won, only the local contacts(s) would benefit. Visiting a village through one's relatives, rather than openly as a candidate who would represent everyone, was seen as having a negative and clandestine aspect. Local disputes were very decisive in voters' impressions of a candidate, and a candidate who was introduced by the wrong person could impair his/her chances rather than benefit from a local contact. Not all candidates travelled though the electorate, some because of limited funding. The western islands (Wuvulu, Aua, Nigoherm group) were far away, and some candidates reportedly travelled by speedboat together (*Post-Courier* 29 June 2007). The candidates who did not have the resources to travel mostly remained in Lorengau, counting on having a name that people throughout Manus already knew, or using radio advertisements. Others campaigned in selected areas where they knew they had support and counted on winning by mobilizing this base vote.

All candidates had produced some kind of poster, leaflet and/or business card that they handed out to their campaign coordinators for distribution to potential voters. Some candidates were severely hampered, however, because Air Niugini for several weeks in a row did not have space for extra cargo and some did not get their posters before the last week of campaigning.

When speaking to people, the candidates stressed a variety of issues depending on who they were, what they had done, and who they were speaking to. Those who had stayed away from Manus for longer periods emphasized what they had learned or accomplished while away. Jumogot simply listed everything he claimed to have done as governor—a list which was also reproduced on

his campaign leaflet.⁶ Other candidates told people about their degrees, or tried to show that they were knowledgeable about the political system and the administration in Waigani. Moses Taian, for example, had been general secretary of Pangu and emphasized that Waigani too was a 'bush' that one had to know in order to find 'the food' that one needed. Peter Sindra responded to the flying fox accusations by asking who had paid for the corrugated iron roofs and the speedboats anchored at the coast. The flying fox left its droppings behind which could make things grow—in other words, Manus people who went abroad remitted money or goods to help their kin and home village, and their knowledge had effect. Some candidates felt an urgency to remind people that they were always there for those of their kin who needed help and that they were good at looking after others. Sometimes such praise for the candidate would be voiced by his or her campaign coordinator or another important person supporting the candidate. Most candidates also spoke about ideas they had for development, and how they thought Manus could be improved. A few used metaphors and symbolic expressions, but did not always get the message through.

However, claiming knowledge was not always enough. Those returnee candidates who had not put their knowledge to use by providing something for their kin or fellow villagers in Manus were regarded precisely as flying foxes. Knowledge is and has always been regarded as important in Manus (cf. Otto 1992a), but people who do not apply knowledge in practice can be seen as arrogant or even a nuisance. For example, a man who had spent three years trying to understand voting behaviour in Manus, and was the most educated of the contenders for the Provincial seat in 1992, found himself finishing last in that contest (Pokawin and Rooney 1996:140). One of the 2007 candidates, Lemen Polau, claimed to know about the functions of government, which he had learned as an LLG president and previous to that as an aide to the late Martin Thompson, former MP for Manus, but Polau also reflected a particular stance on leadership which I observed in Manus. He distinguished between a leader of knowledge (*save*) and a leader of heart. To him, the latter was preferred, and that was what he claimed to be. Generally, good leadership was referred to as having a 'heart' for people, and was sometimes associated with being a *lapan*. This kind of leader not only shared his wealth with others and 'carried their worries', but could also talk, eat and sleep with people—in other words, he did not distance himself from the grassroots person. To some, the discourse on good leadership contained references to God, and being a 'God-fearing leader'. Job Pomat was a devout

6 The leaflet claimed that he had attracted projects worth well over K500 million to Manus during his period in office, though adding together the value of each project he had listed, the amount did not even reach K100 million.

Seventh-day Adventist; Luke Polongou referred to his faith as a member of the Evangelical Church; Peter Sindra had studied to become a Catholic priest; and Michael Sapau was known for his large donations to the Catholic Church.

Since intermarriages between groups of all kinds and levels (kin, village, ethnic, religious) are frequent in Manus, people usually have relatives that speak a different *tokples*, identify with a different ethnic group, or are members of a different religious denomination. Consequently, prediction of voting based, in particular, on ethnic affiliation or LLG is at best difficult; nevertheless it can give an indication of a possible outcome, and most candidates, campaign coordinators and potential voters tried to calculate the likely result accordingly. For candidates, it was also a means of estimating their own chances and deciding where to focus their campaigning. Most ethnic groups were divided over candidates, and religious divisions seem to have been of limited significance in the Open seat. Thus, Job Pomat received support from both the former member, Charlie Benjamin, and 2002 candidate, Poruan Sapulai. Pomat, Benjamin and Sapulai are from different parts of Manus, but are all Seventh-day Adventists, and Pomat contested as a candidate for the People's National Congress, of which Benjamin was a party member. Similarly, Michael Sapau seemed to rely on a Catholic vote.

As Wanek and Wormald have noted (1989:191), elections in Manus are seen by many as a mobilization of one's extended family and a struggle for those people 'in-between' who are related to several contestants. This was a dilemma for several candidates who were fairly close relatives (in two cases, cross-cousins), and this was seen as likely to reduce their chances. The point has been put by Pokawin and Rooney (1996:137) that a candidate, in order to be a serious contestant, must first secure his or her 'base vote' (*as bilong basket* or simply *asbasket*), that is, kin, people from one's village or LLG, and in some cases (such as Michael Sapau) one's religious community. In order to win, it is also necessary to get votes outside one's own area and possibly from across Manus.

Obtaining votes is about creating relations. In traditional exchange ceremonies people position themselves in relation to those who distribute by explaining how and through which common ancestors they are related. This is referred to as finding a 'road' through the kinship network. The same applies to electoral politics. If possible, a candidate will explain to people in a village how he/she is related to them, or will find a road by appealing to other identifications such as inhabiting the same local-level government area⁷ or sharing church affiliation, or will have a friend or ally (a schoolmate or a colleague) explain to people how they knew the candidate, and thus create the link. The more formal part of

⁷ People in Manus have begun to identify with LLGs as political and administrative units, which also affects voting (see Pokawin and Rooney 1996:125–126).

candidates' speeches focuses on their achievements and ideas for development, and perhaps criticizes rivals, depending on the standing of the rivals in the village. Most candidates quickly realized that cooperation with and praising of rivals was a more fruitful strategy than criticism. When visiting each others' strongholds, candidates often praised the perceived preferred choice of the people to whom they were speaking, and then humbly asked for the voters' second or third preferences. A few candidates failed to practise this, perhaps because they had not clearly understood the consequences of the LPV, or perhaps because they took their own popularity for granted, and that may have contributed to their downfall. Jumogot and his close supporters were convinced that they would win on the first count, and he was seen by some as arrogant and immodest, because he talked only about his achievements and did not show respect for his rivals. Pokawin, on the other hand, was good at giving credit to other candidates where he thought it was due, adjusting his speeches to the audience, and emphasizing the good qualities of some of his rivals—knowing that criticism could be seen as back-stabbing or mud-slinging, and could deter voters from giving him their second or third preferences. It was generally seen as good manners if a visiting candidate told a village that their preferred candidate (if they had one) was a good man, and that the visiting candidate respected that the first preferences of the village were already spoken for.

Campaigning in Lorengau was a bit different from campaigning in the villages because audiences comprised people from all over Manus—especially at the central market. Speeches at the central market were less targeted to a specific audience and more about giving a general impression. Not all candidates went there, perhaps because there was a fee of K100 to use the venue. A non-government organization, 'Manus Development Forum',⁸ invited all candidates to debate at the market one Friday afternoon. Six candidates from the two seats accepted the invitation, presented themselves, gave their opinions on an issue related to development, and answered people's questions.

The candidates that were expected to have the best chance for the Open seat were Pomat and Pohei; both had relatively large and unchallenged base votes. Several candidates tried to split each other's base votes, or at least get their second or third preferences, and there was a focus on the LLGs that did not field candidates—Los Negros in particular. The incumbent governor, Jumogot, was from Los Negros, and several candidates for the Open seat accepted his invitation to speak to his supporters. This led to speculation that some candidates were contesting either to help others (for example, a candidate for the Open seat who tried to align himself closely with the governor and always mentioned him in his speeches), or to ruin the chances of others. One might think that vote-

⁸ Manus Development Forum was founded in January 2007 and changed its name twice before the election, which caused some confusion about the aim of the group.

splitting would be more difficult under the LPV system, perhaps needing three candidates to prevent a rival from getting the second or third preferences, but vote-splitting still seems to have occurred. Another strategy that could have come into play with the LPV system was 'vote-pulling': fielding a candidate who could pull in second preferences. Both vote-splitting and vote-pulling depend on voters supporting a specific person, and not only giving their first preference to their primary candidate but also following his or her advice on second and third preferences. It is uncertain how well that worked in Manus since the results showed that preferences were distributed among several candidates.

Finally 'giving' could be seen as an immensely important aspect of both campaigns and the impression of voters. This was evident in the discourse on flying foxes and the notion of reciprocity, and in relation to the Manus Highway, which was symbolic of government services. Typically, a good leader must be effective in attracting resources. Several candidates brought at least a rope of betel nut when they went to a village. In order not to abuse the hospitality of villagers, most travelling candidates brought food as well, or perhaps money in return for being allowed to stay overnight in the village. There were rumours of outright vote-buying, and of clans accepting money from candidates in exchange for promises of support, but it is difficult to determine the fine line between being generous and 'buying' votes, and difficult to say whether such behaviour affected the results. One candidate told me: 'Your campaign begins when you are born, and it is what you do throughout your life and what you give throughout your life that determines people's impression'. Transactions involving money must be seen in the context of demands for evidence of generosity, and such transactions are often part of long-term relationships. Generosity can be shown in many ways, such as giving feasts, feeding people, giving small sums to help people pay their school fees, or simply offering tea, scones, betel nut or other kinds of refreshment. Candidates and their supporters did their utmost to entice voters in this way until the very last minute. Particularly in Lorengau, a colourful landscape was created around the polling places by stalls representing several of the important candidates. Some candidates also used this as a way to conduct their own 'exit poll', observing which stalls voters visited. Some voters were 'educated' on how to vote by having someone write down the names of their preferred candidates on a slip of paper or on the palm of their hand.

The electoral roll, the casting of ballots and potential irregularities

Fraudulent practices, violence, and other election irregularities that have been noted especially in the Highlands—in particular in Southern Highlands

Province in 2002 (see Gibbs, Haley and McLeod 2004)—are rare in Manus. One person admitted to me that she had voted in the name of another person because she was not enrolled herself. Another person (in a south coast village) was arrested by the police and gaoled for having done the same thing, when someone recognised him. There were reports of people voting more than once. The supporters of one of the candidates for the Provincial seat were said to have enrolled both in Lorengau and in their home village in order to vote twice, but I did not speak with anyone who admitted having done that. Multiple voting should be prevented by the application of indelible ink on the little fingers of those who had voted, but a persistent, though according to Ron May (personal communication) dubious, rumour has it that it is possible to wash the ink off with a lime.

The electoral roll generally appeared to live up to expectations. Skimming the roll for those villages where I knew people, I found examples of people enrolled twice under different names, though that did not mean that they voted twice. Some people complained that they had not voted because they were not on the roll, although they claimed to have enrolled. This was also reported by several polling officials. A total of 21,312 ballots were cast for each seat, in comparison with 23,380 voters enrolled, which does not seem unrealistic although a bit low in relation to the projected population of approximately 52,000 people if one assumes that 50 percent of the population is aged 18 and above.

Several polling teams reported that the plastic seals for the ballot boxes had been cut when they had travelled between polling places. Their explanation was that the padlocks on the ballot boxes were too heavy and the seals were broken as a result of the bumpy conditions of roads, and large waves encountered when travelling in speedboats. Since this happened to several polling teams, it is likely that the seals did indeed break in this way and that polling officials did not tamper with the ballots.⁹ Besides, there were mechanisms in place to account for all ballot papers, as each paper was numbered and the numbers noted when papers were put in the box at each polling place. If polling officials were to cheat, they would have had to do so as teams, which seems unlikely, since members of polling teams often supported rival candidates.

There was some suspicion of irregularities in the counting process, since the electoral officers at the counting tables for the Open seat included kin of the candidate who won that seat. However, the runner-up (Ronny Knight) did not pursue the case.

The number of informal votes suggests that the late decision to have a poster with candidate names, photos and numbers and a separate ballot paper, had a

⁹ Experience in other parts of the country reinforces this view. [RJM, ed.]

significant impact, not so much because people had to write the numbers or names of their preferences,¹⁰ but because it was easy to mistake the two ballot papers and to write in the preferences for the Open seat on the ballot paper for the Provincial seat, and vice versa. In 2002 approximately 0.5 percent of the vote was informal (92 out of 18,780 for the Provincial and 97 out of 18,772 for the Open seat), and in 1997 between 0.6 percent and 1.1 percent (185 out of 17,113 and 108 out of 17,115 respectively). In 2007 it exploded to 904 informal votes out of 21,312 (4.2 percent) for the Provincial and 677 out of 21,312 (3.2 percent) for the Open. This was even larger than in the first national election in 1964, when the percentage of informal votes in Manus was less than 1 percent (Hughes and van der Veur 1965:420). Only in the Aua/Wuvulu and Tetidu LLGs were the percentages fairly low (1.5 and 1.1 percent for Aua/Wuvulu and 1.3 and 0.9 percent for Tetidu).¹¹ It could be that the awareness had been particularly effective in those areas, or that there had been less awareness in many of the other areas than the electoral officials claimed. The Ombudsman Commission, Transparency International and the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission conducted an election awareness workshop in Lorengau but, apart from that, all awareness was carried out by the provincial electoral office, which mostly employed public servants from the provincial or the LLG administrations. From my interviews it was clear that several voters had difficulty understanding how the vote would be counted. Some people thought that if no one had a majority after the first count, the second preferences on all ballot papers would be counted, and so on; some even thought that they had three votes rather than three preferences. A man who was a member of the provincial assembly talked about his preferences as if he thought that when the candidate who received his second preference was eliminated that preference would count as an extra vote for the first preference candidate, who was still in the race. These perceptions had an impact on voting strategies, and would help explain why some voters wanted to get rid of their second and third preferences by giving them to candidates that they expected would be eliminated quickly. Even people with an understanding of the counting procedures persisted with this strategy, because they felt that giving even a second or third preference to a rival of their first preference candidate would be a threat to him. If their first preference candidate was eliminated, they could then not be said to be voting for someone else if their second or third preferences were out the race.

What worked well in Manus was the respect for privacy in the casting of votes. I did not see anyone (scrutineers, officials or other voters) try to observe how

10 Preferential voting had been used in Manus in the past when electing the premier and Manus has a high proportion of literate people by Papua New Guinea standards. Even if illiterate themselves, most people had someone who could help them, although I was asked twice by a polling official to assist a voter, since I was the only one who was deemed to be neutral by both the officials and the voters in question.

11 I do not have the number of informal votes for each LLG for the 1997 and 2002 elections, so I cannot conduct a detailed comparison.

others voted except in those cases where illiterate people needed assistance. However, the secret ballot did create uncertainty in the exchange between voters and candidates. As mentioned above, eliciting votes from people was frequently attempted by traditional means of obliging support and reciprocity (feast-like campaign launchings, distributions of betel nut, etc.), but since the ballot was secret the candidate did not know for certain who voted for him or her, and the voter could not prove that he or she had cast a vote for a candidate as promised. Elsewhere, non-literate voters were happy to have the opportunity to bring along an assistant of their choice to the polling booth (Foster 1996:164–165).

There was no real violence, but there were a couple of reports of threats. People who were strong supporters of Peter Sapak, a west coast candidate for the Provincial seat, said that Jumogot would not be allowed to campaign in their home area, after a fight over someone switching affiliation, but I did not hear about Jumogot changing his campaign schedule because of that. Some west coast people tried to evoke a ‘west coast identity’ in order to maintain a ‘balanced Manus’ with a seat in their area, now that Charlie Benjamin (originally from a west coast village) was out. One candidate was said to have threatened that if he did not win, others would force people off their land (implying that he was the only one who could protect them from being evicted). A riot squad of non-Manusian police was present during the election, but they did not seem to be busy.

Another kind of ‘violence’ that some candidates feared was sorcery, and they employed different protective measures against it; others were reported to be using divination to predict when to go where. The most conspicuous—although non-violent—incidents occurred after it became obvious that the incumbent Provincial member had not won. People from Loniu—Jumogot’s village—attempted to block the road between Lorengau and Momote Airport with trees across the road (and also nails when Michael Sapau returned after being sworn into parliament). The police anticipated the trouble, however, and raced ahead of the convoy of government vehicles to remove the obstacles. Some Loniu people had also attempted such ‘protests’ after the 1997 election, when their candidate finished only third in the contest for the Open seat. This time the Loniu seemed to be so convinced that their candidate would successfully defend his seat that no one attempted to block the road until after the election, and then it was merely an expression of their disappointment.

Analysis of the results

When the first preferences had been counted, it was clear that there was an overlap between the distribution of votes and categories of ethnic affiliation or residency. Candidates got the largest vote in their home area (LLG). Some voters said that their village should split their vote between the most promising candidates so that whoever won, the winner would be obliged to help them because they had voted for him or her. I am not sure whether that happened, but it adds perspective to the perception of reciprocity between political leaders and their constituencies. Generally, it was my impression that people voted for candidates to whom they had a relation, but not necessarily a kinsperson if that person was not generous or did not have a good reputation. There were examples of people choosing generous non-kin over non-generous kin against whom they had a grudge.

During the counting, it also became clear that both western islands and west coast people had bloc-voted for their local candidates in both seats. For the Open seat, a very large percentage on the western islands had chosen Les Roai; among the west coast people Ted Sitapai was the preferred choice. For the Provincial seat, most west coast people preferred Peter Sapak or Ben Lomai; when Sapak was excluded, most of the vote went to Lomai. Voting in other areas of Manus was more widely spread, in part due to the larger number of candidates.

In the Open seat, Roai, Knight and Pomat seem to have appealed to voters in most LLGs. Roai, Sitapai and Pohei received strong support in their own area, but it was not sufficient; Sitapai especially got little support outside his own area, and Roai's small base in the western islands was outweighed by Knight's general popularity and by Pomat's larger base vote from the more densely inhabited area of Lelemasih-Bupichupeu LLG. Pomat eventually secured the seat.

For the Provincial seat, Jumogot and Pokawin received approximately the same amount of votes as in the 2002 election, suggesting that their bases had remained largely intact, but Sapau proved to be a more popular candidate, drawing on a base in Lorengau and the Nali area as well as among Catholics throughout Manus. The battle between Jumogot and Pokawin for credit for the reconstruction of the Manus Highway does not seem to have moved many voters. Sapau received the most votes from the areas in the proximity of the highway.

Thus it was people who had stayed in Manus for a long period of time that won. Both winners had the support of their religious communities and as a Lorengau businessman (Sapau) and an important landowner in the vicinity of Lorengau (Pomat), they both had sustained relations to a large number of people. Through business and land one can gain a reputation for looking after others, either by providing employment or giving donations or simply letting people live

on one's land. A few candidates accused of being flying foxes did well too, probably evidence of their ability to negotiate a relationship with villagers and live up to their expectations.

With regard to the impact of the LPV system, Ruth Mandrakamu was the only one to improve their relative position when preferences were allocated, jumping from 14th place after the first count to finish in 11th place—perhaps because some women did give her their second or third preferences. Some candidates made significant advances when someone from their own ethnic group, LLG or extended kin group was excluded, only to see other candidates follow suit when a candidate from their area was excluded. Judging from the first preference vote, LPV did not change the outcome significantly from what it would have been under first-past-the-post. Both winners, Pomat in the Open seat and Jugomot in the Provincial were leading on first preferences. People did not yet know how to use the system effectively; they tried to vote strategically for candidates they thought would win rather than candidates they would have liked to support. Afterwards, people were saying that they would have voted differently if they had known what the outcome would be.

The election showed that voters could relate to three candidates instead of just one. However, LPV voting is not just a matter of trade between a candidate and a voter, but also between candidates promising each other their supporters' second or third preferences as if these could be commanded by the candidates. It is not uncommon that people follow the 'advice' of traditional leaders, or in Lorengau their employers, on who to vote for. Some people wanted only one vote, and there were examples of people giving their second and third preferences to candidates considered certain losers. There was also confusion about how the counting would be done, which informed the way some people voted: some thought that all preferences would be counted—even on the ballots whose first preferences had not yet been excluded.

In the end, the result was perhaps not very surprising, given a knowledge of where each candidate was from, what each candidate was known for, how the candidates had campaigned (and how much, and where), how they had fared in previous elections, and what people 'on the street' said about them. The biggest surprise was Ronny Knight's finishing second in the race for the Open seat. Many people saw him as a dark horse. Though he claimed to have a base vote among his wife's kin from Ahus, in Lorengau, where he resided, and among the Mouk people (in Rapatona and Balopa LLGs), most believed that, as a white person, he was without a real base vote. However, it seems that several elders and traditional leaders had chosen to support him. He was well known all over Manus, and was known in several places for helping people in need. People often stressed that as a white man who had grown up in Manus, he knew what it was like to be Manusian because he had shared the same hardships as everyone

else. Rather than vote for a kinsman who could not be trusted to share the ups and downs of life, many people chose Ronny Knight because he had proven to belong. Being white, he may have been seen by some as being above the wantokism that is widely seen as dominating Papua New Guinea politics—even though some said that Knight, too, protected his own ‘boys’ when they were in trouble.¹² People may have been careful about openly stating their support for Knight, due to the expectations of various kin. Several candidates were surprised about their own poor showing, but the ‘deceit’ of pretending to support the candidate you are ‘supposed’ to support (due to kinship, exchange obligations, etc.), or at least not revealing your favourite candidate, is not uncommon in Manus (cf. Pokawin and Rooney 1996).

Another unexpected outcome was the poor showing of Simeon Malai, the former provincial administrator, in the contest for the Open seat. However, considering that he had left Manus immediately after quitting his job as provincial administrator, and returned only six months before the election, without the large retrenchment payout he was rumoured to have received, even some of his own kin referred to him as ‘the prodigal son’. Malai had worked closely with Pokawin and was in the eyes of many people still closely associated with him—which may have affected peoples’ choice.

Another candidate told me that he felt his own poor result to be a vote-of-no-confidence in him as a leader of his descent group. Several candidates had expected to do better than they did. In part this may have been due to one of the characteristics of Manus electoral politics that Pokawin and Rooney (1996) have labelled the ‘deceit of hospitality’. People in villages usually show hospitality towards all visiting candidates (unless of course they are in a direct conflict with the person or his perceived group) and having heard the candidate speak, someone will often say something that will encourage the candidate, simply to make sure that he or she is not disappointed about the meeting. Consequently, several candidates returned from village meetings believing that they had secured votes in that place. Such ‘deceit’ is practical: offending someone who might later win may cut the community off from government services (see also Pokawin and Rooney 1996:133–134). In addition, people claimed that hospitality was a tradition (*kastam*), and anyone who took up the challenge of the election deserved respect as a ‘bigman’.

¹² For comparison with another white person contesting elections in Manus, see Wanek and Wormald (1989).

The aftermath

Job Pomat, the winner of the Open seat, as a member of People's National Congress became a minister in the Somare government. Michael Sapau, the winner of the regional seat, joined the National Alliance before the formation of government. There has been some speculation that National Alliance in reality had two candidates. Different stories were circulating about why Sapau and Pokawin ended up contesting the same seat. One was that Sapau, as a financial member of National Alliance, was supposed to have been that party's candidate for the Open seat, but that he switched to the Provincial because of a grudge against Jumogot; another story was that the National Alliance party machinery had decided to endorse Pokawin, forcing Sapau to contest as an independent (see *Post-Courier* 25 July 2007). The confusion about Sapau's party affiliation, since the Rural Development Party had claimed that he was their candidate, led Jumogot to make an appeal to the court of disputed returns. The appeal was dismissed a few months after the election.

Because LLG elections were not conducted simultaneously with the national election, the terms of the members of the Lapan Assembly ran out immediately after the national election. This led Governor Sapau to appoint seven members to the Lapan Assembly in order to approve a budget for the province. These appointments are reported to have been controversial, since appointed members consequently outnumbered the elected representatives in the assembly.¹³

Despite the complaints and grievances that emerged, the election in Manus was to the best of my knowledge generally fair. There may have been slight irregularities, but these would not have changed the final outcome.

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13 See reports on NBC Radio (22 January 2008; 23 January 2008, www.nbc.com.pg).

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Appendix

Table 27.1: Voting statistics for Manus Open electorate, 2007 election

Number of registered voters	26,918	
Total votes cast	21,314	
Informal votes	679	(3.2% of total ballots cast)
Total allowable ballot papers	20,635	
Total ballot papers remaining in count	11,174	
Total votes distributed	12,639	
Exhausted ballot papers	9,461	(45.8% of allowable ballots)
Absolute majority (50% + 1)	5,588	

Full results for Manus Provincial were not available. Summary results can be found at the end of this book.

Table 27.2: Manus Open electorate results, 2007 election

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
34	Job Pomat	M	People's National Congress	2874	13.9	1	3070	51.6		5944	28.8	53.2
11	Ronny Knight	M	New Generation Party	2396	11.6	2	2834	54.2		5230	25.3	46.8
15	Leslie Roai	M	Independent	2353	11.4	3	1925	45.0	23	4278	20.7	
20	Memel Pohei		National Alliance	2078	10.1	4	1024	33.0	22	3102	15.0	
26	Ted Sitapai	M	PNG National Party	1830	8.9	5	927	33.6	21	2757	13.4	
10	Luke Polangou Misa	M	Independent	1350	6.5	6	767	36.2	20	2117	10.3	
32	Peter Haei Petsul	M	Independent	1065	5.2	7	476	30.9	19	1541	7.5	
30	Peter Sindra	M	Melanesian Liberal Party	1017	4.9	8	454	30.9	18	1471	7.1	
23	Michael Chokal Cholai	M	Independent	846	4.1	9	323	27.6	17	1169	5.7	
25	Soanin Kilangit	M	Independent	616	3.0	10	231	27.3	16	847	4.1	
19	Ruth Mandrakamu	F	Independent	475	2.3	14	242	33.8	15	717	3.5	19
24	Lemen Polau	M	Independent	538	2.6	12	133	19.8	14	671	3.3	24
13	Moses K. Tian Meta	M	Pangu Pati	543	2.6	11	63	10.4	13	606	2.9	13
12	Dokta Gabriel P. Kulwaum	M	Independent	478	2.3	13	55	10.3	12	533	2.6	12
14	Albert Punjimill PC	M	PNG Conservative Party	434	2.1	15	21	4.6	11	455	2.2	14
22	John Wakon	M	PNG Country Party	269	1.3	16	22	7.6	10	291	1.4	22
28	Silas Bomai	M	Independent	253	1.2	17	20	7.3	9	273	1.3	28

27. Between Eagles and Flying Foxes: Elections for the Manus Provincial and Open Seats

Ballot order	Candidate	Sex	Political party	Primary votes		Position after primary vote	Preferential votes		Order of exclusion	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count (%)
				Number	%		Number	%				
18	Simeon Malai	M	People's Action Party	253	1.2	17	11	4.2	8	264	1.3	18
29	Joseph Tanak Kimat	M	Rural Development Party	222	1.1	20	18	7.5	7	240	1.2	29
16	Mark Joseph Kelep	M	People's Freedom Party	224	1.1	19	5	2.2	6	229	1.1	16
27	Lemek Kuku	M	Independent	141	0.7	21	13	8.4	5	154	0.7	27
33	Peter Forova	M	Independent	110	0.5	22	3	2.7	4	113	0.5	33
17	Leonard Kaleh	M	Independent	109	0.5	23	0	0.0	3	109	0.5	17
31	Elizabeth Mary Sipos	F	Melanesian Alliance Party	85	0.4	24	2	2.3	2	87	0.4	31
21	Charles S. Pondros	M	Independent	76	0.4	25	0	0.0	1	76	0.4	21

28. Looking to 2012: Lessons from 2007 and Arising Issues

Ray Anere and Katherine When

The consensus that emerges from this volume is that the conduct of the 2007 Papua New Guinea general election was an improvement on the previous general election in 2002.

The prioritization of security, especially in the Highlands Region (chapters 6, 7 and 8), the improved whole-of-government coordination through the Inter-departmental Electoral Committee (chapters 2 and 5), and the increased recognition of the role of community engagement through electoral awareness (chapter 4) and domestic observation (chapter 5), are three stand-out improvements in 2007.

Each of these improvements clearly demonstrates that elections are multi-stakeholder events and not purely administrative exercises coordinated by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC). This recognition that electoral events require partnerships between multiple government agencies, political parties, non-government groups, churches, aspiring candidates, sitting members of parliament (MPs) and the various security forces reflects a growing maturity in the approach to elections in Papua New Guinea.

However, as chapter 5 on electoral administration explains, to be a success this thinking must be translated into much improved administration, planning, logistics and implementation. The many problems that are highlighted throughout this volume—late arrival of materials, late or inadequate training of electoral officers, partisan appointment of electoral officials, delayed release of funds, inadequate planning of polling day logistics, poor communications and transportation, and late implementation of electoral reforms (especially in relation to the creation of a new electoral roll and new ballot paper)—cut across the many agencies involved, but are felt most acutely within the PNGEC, an agency that struggles in terms of both capacity and funding.

It is not the intention of this chapter to make specific recommendations on how to improve the elections in 2012. These can be found elsewhere (Haley and Anere 2009; Anere and When 2009; Nonggorr, Sepoe and Raga 2010; and Ladley, Holtved and Kantha 2010a, 2010b). Rather, this chapter acts as a summary of the issues and themes that emerged around the 2007 election and as an update on issues that are emerging as the current political cycle unfolds.

Political reform

Chapter 3 notes that the 2007 elections followed a period of significant political reform in Papua New Guinea, the two largest reforms being the introduction of limited preferential voting (LPV) and the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* (OLIPPAC, popularly known as the integrity law).

The political will that underpinned both reforms was a very admirable desire to improve governance and political stability. But changing laws does not necessarily change behaviour. Reform at a political level if it is intended to solve complex cultural problems at a community or administrative level will always be of limited success and scope—as has been the case with LPV and OLIPPAC.

Though structural reforms have their place, the message of many authors in this volume is that emphasis must be on administrative preparedness and community engagement in elections. Both are more likely to yield longer-term gains than the perceived silver bullet of structural reform.

Introduction of limited preferential voting

LPV has proved a popular system, with members of the community frequently expressing to election observers the perception that LPV had contributed to safer and better elections (although this is impossible to measure when you consider the increased investment in election security in 2007).

The real impacts of LPV will take a long time to unfold. Certainly, it is increasing the 'mandate' of elected officials, who are winning office with a greater proportion of votes after preferences are distributed. Whether this greater 'representativeness' makes elected members more accountable to their voters remains to be seen.

What is immediately clear is that the LPV system is much more complex and this has many associated costs. It requires major ongoing investments in electoral education. Overall, there is very limited knowledge by voters and candidates of how preferences work, aside from a basic understanding of the need to make three choices instead of one.

Preference sharing agreements and/or strategies by candidates were not common, though present in a few electorates, often based on the imperative to 'use preferences to vote for locals not outsiders'. There is even less knowledge of how preferences are treated in the counting process.

Counting procedures themselves have become much more complex, lasting a number of weeks in larger provincial electorates, contributing to post-election tensions. The fact that at the time of writing (May 2011) it was still not possible to analyze full election results from 2007, suggests that much needs to be done to improve the conduct and transparency of the scrutiny process.

The new voting system, combined with the introduction of a new ballot paper (which required voters to write down a candidate name or candidate number for each preference), appears to have also contributed to even higher levels of assisted voting.

The real and/or perceived status of LPV as a 'fairer system' may indeed influence political culture in Papua New Guinea to become more accommodative over time, but it has increased, and will continue to increase, the costs of planning, counting, training and awareness. This must be factored into all future elections.

The integrity law, political parties and candidates

The new integrity law, the OLIPPAC, contained a range of measures that were intended to improve political stability. As chapter 9 describes, these measures did not totally prevent party hopping (in part due to the poor understanding and selective implementation of the new legislation by the speaker of parliament), and appear to have had no effect on post-election horse trading to form government. However, the OLIPPAC certainly improved the stability of government—leading to the Somare government lasting a full parliamentary term from 2002 to 2007 and remaining in office from 2007 to date, and creating more stability in ministerial appointments in the period up to July 2010.

However, from the moment the OLIPPAC was passed into law, a number of measures looked certain to be challenged in the courts. The most controversial were those that regulated the parliamentary behaviour of MPs, forcing them to remain a member of and vote in accordance with their respective political parties for the duration of their term. In July 2010 these sections of the OLIPPAC were ruled unconstitutional. The Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice Salamo Injia ruled that the restrictions placed on MPs were 'unheard of in any democratic country' and were 'not reasonably justifiable for the purpose for which they [had] been enacted' (*Post-Courier* 8 July 2010). This decision led almost immediately to a return to political party instability including shifting party alliances and party membership, ministerial reshuffles and prolonged adjournments of parliament to avoid votes-of-no-confidence.

Political parties in Papua New Guinea remain entities that are constituted solely for the purpose of gaining election and forming governing coalitions. They remain unstable, unrepresentative, and in many instances poorly governed (exemplified by the number of parties failing to submit financial returns—see chapter 3), despite regulations within the OLIPPAC aimed at improving party governance and transparency.

There remains only one dominant party, the National Alliance, which has been successful in selecting popular candidates to contest elections and appealing to independents, once elected. This is due in some part to the continued leadership of Sir Michael Somare. However, as this political cycle unfolds, the National Alliance will struggle to contain the competing personalities within, especially as the retirement of the prime minister appears likely (though by no means certain) in this term and potential successors position themselves accordingly.

Somare has lately been suspended from office for two weeks, after being found guilty of 13 counts of misconduct in office relating to his failure to lodge financial returns, as required under the Leadership Code, over a period of 20 years (*Post-Courier* 25 March 2011).

Large numbers of candidates contesting elections continued in 2007 with 2759 candidates contesting. These large numbers of candidates—a feature of the political culture in the Highlands and in other parts of the country—will be difficult to restrict without facing some of the same challenges as the OLIPPAC. Both issues sit on the fine line between political stability and political freedom.

New provinces and changes to electoral boundaries

One impact of the lengthy adjournments of parliament that have occurred during recent parliamentary sessions has been delayed decisions on legislation. This is certain to make a big impact on election administration and planning in the lead-up to 2012. The complex pieces of legislation, requiring multiple readings and large majorities, include the introduction of the two new provinces Hela (now part of Southern Highlands Province) and Jiwaka (now part of Western Highlands Province); the clarification of electoral boundaries and the status of provincial electorates in general; and the proposed introduction of 22 reserved seats for women.

Delays in passing legislation, and poor implementation of decisions in relation to either of these two issues—but most especially the two new provinces—have the potential to cause increased volatility in 2012 in problem areas such as the

Southern Highlands. The proposed new, oil-rich Hela Province is the home of major new liquefied natural gas developments and is for this and other cultural reasons considered a hotspot for election-related violence if the introduction of the new province is not managed smoothly (McPherson 2009). For more information on the special challenges of the Southern Highlands region see chapters 6, 19, 20 and 21.

The 2002–2007 political cycle also left some uncertainty as to the status of provincial electorates. Previously, under the Morauta government and in the early period of the Somare government, there had been a consensus (albeit temporary) to abolish provincial electorates. This was only partially achieved in terms of the required legislative changes, before the Somare government then decided to retain provincial electorates. Ensuring all the relevant legislation is now consistent with this position, and ensuring that the constitutionally required number of open electorates (currently 110–120) is consistent with the actual number (89) is an urgent task for the current government.

Although it is unlikely to be implemented in this political cycle, the problem of open electorate boundaries will remain on the political horizon. Open electorates remain significantly unequal in terms of their relative population size, yet their boundaries are very difficult to change and remain as they were at independence. This impasse is due to the vested interests of the very people that, under the Constitution, must vote to change boundaries—the elected members themselves.

Women’s participation and representation

One of the key assumptions of LPV was that it would increase the likelihood of women candidates being elected. This view was misplaced. While LPV can be seen to increase the proportion of votes that women receive after preferences are distributed, in all but one case, the low primary vote for female candidates saw them excluded early in count in 2007 before they had a chance to attract preference votes (see chapters 10, 15 and 25). Even the sole female MP elected, member for Moresby South, Dame Carol Kidu, received fewer preference votes than her nearest (male) rival.

The male-dominated political culture of Papua New Guinea, deriving from the male-dominated leadership culture of most communities, continues to make it extremely difficult for women to compete with men for political office.

To rectify this electoral imbalance after 2007, Dame Kidu initially championed the introduction of three nominated female MPs, using existing constitutional provisions. This measure failed to win the support of a great number of MPs

including the opposition. The reasons were varied but there proved to be much discomfort with the notion of having unelected MPs. Instead, a working group proposed new legislative changes to create 22 reserved, elected seats for women—one for each province. Passing these changes through the male-dominated parliament in itself will be a challenge, let alone implementing the changes around the country.

Election security

The mobilization of security, especially in the Highlands Region, was arguably the greatest success of 2007. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 record the experiences of security forces on the ground in Southern Highlands and Chimbu and describe in detail their achievements and challenges.

The pre-deployment of security two weeks before polling for reconnaissance was a particular success, as was the impressive discipline, on the whole, observed in each of the forces.

The notion of a rolling election through the Highlands Region, in order to concentrate on different highland provinces separately, also allowed greater numbers of security personnel on the ground. But as with most election logistics, this could have been much better planned and implemented. One-day polling, however, proved impossible from a security perspective.

2007 also saw the security forces becoming involved in administering polling, and not simply maintaining the security of polling and counting areas (see chapter 8). Despite the fact that many security officials willingly took on this role and stepped in where electoral officials were failing, the security officials had limited knowledge of election processes. The lesson for the future is to conduct election-specific training for, and increase the resources to, security forces in order to better perform this role. The simple fact is that security forces tend to be better disciplined, better educated, have better communications, and appear to be more impartial than many electoral officials hired in local areas.

There is a major emerging threat to security mobilization in the lead-up to 2012. The rise of the private security industry, both in the nation's capital Port Moresby, but more recently to secure massive new resource projects including liquefied natural gas project infrastructure across the country, has seen the widespread recruitment of underpaid and under-resourced police and defence force personnel. These developments have the potential to absorb much of the security capacity that needs to be deployed during the 2012 elections.

Resource development companies across the country will also have to become election stakeholders and make a contribution to election safety and security, if they want to see their current and future investments protected from the disruption of elections. How these companies might take to this proactive partnership role remains to be seen.

Inter-departmental Electoral Committee

The success of the security operations can also be attributed to the whole-of-government-approach coordinated by the Inter-departmental Electoral Committee. There is a strong sense that the whole-of-government approach encouraged cooperation, collaboration, coordination, accountability and sharing of information between the security forces, electoral commission, and other departments.

Keeping up the momentum and enthusiasm to participate in the Inter-departmental Electoral Committee by all relevant agencies will be the challenge for 2012.

The electoral roll

The creation of a new electoral roll for 2007, although an improvement on the 2002 roll, was not a success. Although the re-enrolment exercise reduced the number of names on the roll, it is clear that especially in the Highlands Region the roll 'does not provide a credible link between eligible electors and the votes counted during an election' (Ladley, Holtved and Kantha 2010a, quoted in chapter 5).

Chapters 5 overviews the major flaws in both the re-registration and verification exercises in 2006–2007 and most of the electorate-specific chapters in the second half of the book detail roll-related problems around the country, especially chapter 21 on the Koroba-Lake Kapiago Open electorate. The late commencement of the exercise was one handicap; partisan officials, poor planning, and a cultural disrespect for the roll all played their part.

As Ladley, Holtved and Kantha (2010a) have outlined in their post-election analysis of the problems with the electoral roll that 'there are no quick fixes for improving the electoral roll and voter identification in Papua New Guinea'. The employment of technological options, including photo identification and/or fingerprint systems, which had been canvassed after 2007, will only work once much groundwork is done.

Instead, good management systems at the national, provincial and ward level; enrolment, verification and updating procedures that can be depended on; and, significantly, the support of the people when registering to vote and on polling day, are all needed first. This requires a holistic approach to improving the electoral roll and much improved capacity and funding for the PNGEC (Ladley, Holtved and Kantha 2010a).

To its credit, the PNGEC has placed much greater emphasis in 2010 on building the capacity of provincial election managers in relation to management and verification of the roll, and has piloted initiatives aimed at structuring the roll to better match clan systems within communities.

However, this activity is not yet on the scale that is required for wholesale improvements to roll-related systems. What does happen between now and the election in 2012 will again occur late in the electoral cycle.

What is certain, as Haley writes in chapter 5, is that 'attention must be given to the electoral roll as a matter of urgency, in order to ensure political equality between citizens, restore confidence in the PNGEC, and ensure that the elections have integrity'.

Community engagement in elections

Community engagement and awareness is emerging as an important part of elections in Papua New Guinea. Community engagement can be understood as everything from delivering electoral education on how to vote correctly, through conducting activities to build demand in communities for fairer elections and good governance, to encouraging community participation in elections through activities like domestic observation.

As chapters 4 and 5 outlined, these activities were first implemented on a national scale in the lead-up to 2007, and significantly supported by the Australian Agency for International Development-funded Electoral Support Program Phase 2.

As with any new initiative, the community engagement programs faced a range of teething problems, particularly with encouraging traditional election actors, especially within the commission, to see non-government groups as complementary partners, rather than competitors for resources. Indeed in many respects the best community engagement towards encouraging fairer elections was done by non-government actors, who are themselves much closer to communities (see chapter 11).

This aspect of election planning relied heavily on donor support and donor coordination. In the lead-up to 2012, it will be important to enhance this aspect of elections. It will also be important for the PNGEC to take more ownership over coordinating these important partnerships and acting in closer contact with communities.

Electoral administration

Finally, what has infused much of the discussion above is the overall significance of good election administration and planning on the conduct of successful elections.

The list of areas where administration could be improved is long and includes better coordination of human resources including training, production and distribution of polling materials, communication and transportation arrangements, and timely release of funds, to name just a few.

The PNGEC and the chief electoral commissioner have the unenviable job of managing an organization that must transform from some 60 staff in normal operating periods to a nationwide organization that engages, organizes and directs thousands of officials around the country during elections.

The increased allocation of financial resources to the PNGEC in last year's budget, announced in November 2010, reflected a growing realization that the PNGEC needs to be resourced throughout an electoral cycle to make the needed improvements and conduct the necessary strategic planning to administer elections. More funding is beginning to be secured. Now it is strategies for improving the human and institutional capacity of the commission and its people around the country (but most especially in the Highlands) where the greatest emphasis should be placed in electoral reform in the lead-up to 2012 and beyond.

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Appendix: Results of the 2007 Election

Results for the 2007 Papua New Guinea election

At the time of writing (May 2011) a full set of 2007 national electoral results had not been released by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC). The results presented here have been compiled from a range of sources, both primary (forms 66a and 66b) and secondary (summary results compiled by PNGEC, results formally displayed on the PNGEC website, or results collected in the field by individual observers). This table should not be considered the 'official results' and may contain inaccuracies.

Electorates are listed in order of region—Southern, New Guinea Islands, Momase and Highlands. Provincial seats are in bold text and precede the Open electorates for each province. Notes (a) to (e) and names of political parties are listed at the end of the table.

Election 2007: The Shift to Limited Preferential Voting in Papua New Guinea

Electorate	Winner ^{a,b}	Party ^{c,d}	Cand. no.	Total allowable ballots	Position after primary vote	No. of 1st pref. votes	1st pref. votes (%)	No. of informal ballots	No. exhausted ballots	Exhausted ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Live ballots (%)	Source ^e
Southern Region															
Central	Alphonse Moroi (S)	RDP	18	97,262	1	27,347	28.1	2,565	32,087	33.0	65,175	39,634	40.7	60.8	2
Abau	Puka Temu (S)	NA	12	22,037	1	9,578	43.5	328	2,642	12.0	19,395	10,772	48.9	55.5	1
Goilala	Matthew Poia	NA	46												na
Kairuku-Hiri	Paru Aihi	PNGP	32	38,077	1	6,629	17.4	887	18,449	48.5	19,628	11,492	30.2	58.5	2
Rigo	Ano Pala	NA	33	22,519	1	3,951	17.5	456	12,036	53.4	10,483	6,208	27.6	59.2	1
Gulf	Havila Kave	PNC	29	47,896	1	6,850	14.3	1,578	23,574	49.2	24,322	14,738	30.8	60.6	1
Kerema	Pitom Titus Bombom	Ind.	51	30,539	1	3,774	12.4	518	19,116	62.6	11,423	5,835	19.1	51.1	2
Kikori	Mark Maipakai (S)	NA.	42	18,041	2	1,634	9.1	438	11,442	63.4	6,599	3,317	18.4	50.3	1
Milne Bay	John Luke	Ind.	13	88,237	1	22,156	25.1	3,942	20,693	23.5	67,544	38,934	44.1	57.6	1
Alotau	Charles Abel	Ind.	39	28,747	2	2,265	7.9	1,002	18,720	65.1	10,027	5,164	18.0	51.5	1
Esa'ala	Moses Maladina (S)	RDP	18	17,161	1	4,796	27.9	183	6,045	35.2	11,116	6,936	40.4	62.4	1
Kiriwina-Good-enough	Jack Cameron	PDM	19	24,320	3	2,492	10.2	536	11,982	49.3	12,338	6,396	26.3	51.8	1
Samarai-Murua	Gordon Wesley (S)	Ind.	14	19,875	1	4,790	24.1	370	6,993	35.2	12,882	7,713	38.8	59.9	1

Electorate	Winner ^{a,b}	Party ^{c,d}	Cand. no.	Total allowable ballots	Position after primary vote	No. of 1st pref. votes	1st pref. votes (%)	No. of informal ballots	No. exhausted ballots	Exhausted ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Live ballots (%)	Source ^e
National Capital District	Powes Parkop	Ind.	7	89,090	1	36,606	41.1	5,361	1,111	1.2	87,979	43,533	48.9	49.5	1
Moresby North East	Andrew Moid	Ind.	31	32,734	1	4,309	13.2	975	17,856	54.5	14,878	8,007	24.5	53.8	1
Moresby North West	Mekere Morauta (S)	PNGP	14	32,590	1	13,808	42.4	1,574	2,438	7.5	30,152	16,588	50.9	55.0	2
Moresby South	Carol Kidu (S)	MAP	10	26,641	1	9,475	35.6	884	3,892	14.6	22,749	11,934	44.8	52.5	1
Oro	Suckling Tamanabe	UP	69	59,188	1	6,351	10.7	1,212	42,498	71.8	16,690	9,848	16.6	59.0	2
Ijivitari	David Arore	Ind.	38	28,504	3	2,474	8.7	1,561	18,085	63.4	10,419	5,478	19.2	52.6	1
Soho	Anthony Nene (S)	PNC	48	29,026	1	3,762	13.0	1,112	18,956	65.3	10,070	6,135	21.1	60.9	2
Western	Bob Danaya (S)	PNGLP	24	58,940	1	19,706	33.4	782	9,482	16.1	49,458	25,496	43.3	51.6	2
Middle Fly	Roy Biyama (S)	URP	23	19,611	1	5,478	27.9	1,030	4,819	24.6	14,792	7,575	38.6	51.2	2
North Fly	Boka Kondra	Ind.	31	20,536	1	3,463	16.9	417	10,190	49.6	10,346	6,067	29.5	58.6	2
South Fly	Sali Subam	NA	30	19,321	1	3,581	18.5	771	10,683	55.3	8,638	4,799	24.8	55.6	2
New Guinea Islands Region															
Bougainville	Fidelis Semoso	Ind.	8	52,404	1	14,385	27.5	2,435	8,432	16.1	43,972	23,963	45.7	54.5	2
Central Bougainville	Jim Miringtoro	PDM	12	11,676	3	1,619	13.9	491	3,611	30.9	8,065	4,323	37.0	53.6	2

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North Bougainville	Michael Ogió	PDM	11	24,160	1	7,398	30.6	1,210	6,218	25.7	17,942	9,985	41.3	55.7	2
South Bougainville	Michael Laimo (S)*	NA	8	17,551	1	4,478	25.5	370	4,876	27.8	12,675	6,346	36.2	50.1	2
East New Britain	Leo Dion (S)	NA	8	72,106	1	28,484	39.5	4,201	3,488	4.8	68,618	36,748	51.0	53.6	2
Gazelle	Malakai Tabar	MLP	16	27,153	2	4,612	17.0	1,249	10,701	39.4	16,452	8,773	32.3	53.3	1
Kokopo	Patrick Tammur	Ind.	9	15,573	2	3,258	20.9	546	2,336	15.0	13,237	6,832	43.9	51.6	3
Pomio	Paul Tiensten (S)	NA	14	16,693	1	4,977	29.8	169	5,219	31.3	11,474	6,732	40.3	58.7	2
Rabaul	Allan Marat (S)	MLP	9	11,221	1	5,024	44.8	589	638	5.7	10,583	5,474	48.8	51.7	2
Manus	Michael T. Sapau	RDP	7	20,408	1	5,492	26.9	904	4,696	23.0	15,712	9,703	47.5	61.8	2
Manus	Job Pomat	PNC	25	20,635	1	2,874	13.9	679	9,461	45.8	11,174	5,944	28.8	53.2	2
New Ireland	Julius Chan	PPP	10	46,829	1	19,630	41.9	1,243	3,906	8.3	42,923	22,206	47.4	51.7	2
Kavieng	Martin Aini (S)	Pangu	19	20,397	1	3,676	18.0	518	9,275	45.5	11,122	5,867	28.8	52.8	2
Namatanai	Byron Chan (S)	PPP	12	27,469	1	10,673	38.9	910	2,785	10.1	24,684	12,498	45.5	50.6	2
West New Britain	Peter Humphreys	NA	20	68,078	3	10,771	15.8	1,959	18,709	27.5	49,369	29,030	42.6	58.8	2
Kandrian-Gloucester	Tony Puana	NGP	16	21,826	2	3,161	14.5	221	7,615	34.9	14,211	7,112	32.6	50.0	2
Talasea	Francis Marus	Pangu	32	46,627	1	6,456	13.8	1,165	24,052	51.6	22,575	11,353	24.3	50.3	2

Electorate	Winner ^{a, b}	Party ^{c, d}	Cand. no.	Total allowable ballots	Position after primary vote	No. of 1st pref. votes	1st pref. votes (%)	No. of informal ballots	No. exhausted ballots	Exhausted ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count	Total allowable ballots (%)	Live ballots (%)	Source ^e	
Momase Region															
East Sepik	Michael Thomas Somare (S)	NA	11	170,380	1	60,653	35.6	3,835	27,653	16.2	142,727	75,293	44.2	52.8	2
Ambunti-Dreikikir	Tony Waterupo Aimo (S)	PAP	12	27,205	1	7,901	29.0	203	8,993	33.1	18,212	10,210	37.5	56.1	2
Angoram	Arthur Somare (S)	NA	17	29,820	1	12,939	43.4	351	2,552	8.6	27,268	14,214	47.7	52.1	2
Maprik	Gabriel Lenny Kapris (S)	PAP	15	33,690	1	9,587	28.5	389	13,945	41.4	19,745	11,875	35.2	60.1	2
Wewak	Jim B. Simatab*	Ind.	43	28,963	1	2,992	10.3	637	17,918	61.9	11,045	5,603	19.3	50.7	2
Wosera-Gawi	Ronald Asik	PAP	28	26,498	1	3,127	11.8	388	17,471	65.9	9,027	5,222	19.7	57.8	2
Yangoru-Saussia	Peter Wararu (S)	NA	15	26,332	1	6,505	24.7	85	9,783	37.2	16,549	8,633	32.8	52.2	1
Madang	Sir Arnold Amet	NA	23	152,260	1	31,171	20.5	5,111	57,091	37.5	95,169	55,936	36.7	58.8	1
Bogia	John Tongri Hickey (S)	NA	21	23,491	1	7,945	33.8	388	4,045	17.2	19,446	10,038	42.7	51.6	2
Madang	Buka Goli Malai	Ind.	44	35,117	1	4,579	13.0	931	19,364	55.1	15,753	8,512	24.2	54.0	2
Middle Ramu	Ben Semiri (S)	PAP	21	24,175	1	5,417	22.4	122	10,480	43.4	13,695	7,333	30.3	53.5	2

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Rai Coast	James Yali (S)*	Ind.	28	23,282	1	2,568	11.0	206	14,004	60.1	9,278	4,727	20.3	50.9	3
Sumkar	Ken Fairweather	Ind.	35	27,124	3	2,888	10.6	915	15,993	59.0	11,131	5,594	20.6	50.3	1
Usino Bundi	Samson Malcom Kuli	PP	36	21,229	1	2,535	11.9	118	12,743	60.0	8,486	5,263	24.8	62.0	1
Morobe	Luther Wenge (S)	PFP	10	216,225	2	80,281	37.1	11,216	17,743	8.2	198,482	103,914	48.1	52.4	2
Bulolo	Sam Basil	PPP	34	33,713	2	4,726	14.0	739	16,320	48.4	17,393	8,772	26.0	50.4	2
Finschhafen	Theo Zibang Zurenuoc	Ind.	31	22,085	1	2,839	12.9	263	11,915	54.0	10,170	5,252	23.8	51.6	2
Huon Gulf	Sasa Zibe (S)	NA	22	26,442	1	4,825	18.2	779	12,969	49.0	13,473	7,011	26.5	52.0	1
Kabwum	Bob Dadae (S)	UP	9	19,445	1	7,771	40.0	209	3,275	16.8	16,170	9,948	51.2	61.5	2
Lae	Bart Phillemon (S)	NGP	25	23,680	1	6,316	26.7	822	7,084	29.9	16,596	8,439	35.6	50.8	1
Markham	Koni K. Iguan	PLP	23	25,076	1	5,855	23.3	515	10,688	42.6	14,388	7,934	31.6	55.1	1
Menyamyua	Benjamin Philip	RDP	21	27,054	1	3,468	12.8	232	16,173	59.8	10,881	6,157	22.8	56.6	1
Nawae	Timothy Bonga	Ind.	37	25,311	3	2,365	9.3	538	14,910	58.9	10,401	5,258	20.8	50.6	1
Tewai-Siassi	Vincent M. T. Michaels	Ind.	34	20,307	2	1,758	8.7	242	13,414	66.1	6,893	3,511	17.3	50.9	1

Electorate	Winner ^{a,b}	Party ^{c,d}	Cand. no.	Total allowable ballots	Position after primary vote	No. of 1st pref. votes	1st pref. votes (%)	No. of informal ballots	No. exhausted ballots	Exhausted ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Live ballots (%)	Source ^e
West Sepik	Simon Solo	NA	31	91,316		7,309	8.0		57,550	63.0	33,766	17,102	18.7	50.6	2
Aitape-Lumi	Patrick Pruatitch (S)	NA	18	18,339	1	9,459	51.6	672		0.0	18,339	9,459	51.6	51.6	2
Nuku	Andrew Kumbakor (S)	Pangu	18	23,995		8,016	33.4	433	6,017	25.1	17,978	9,106	37.9	50.7	2
Telefomin	Peter Welawo Iwei	PDM	23	18,787		2,007	10.7	453	10,047	53.5	8,740	4,394	23.4	50.3	2
Vanimo-Green	Belden Namah	NA	37	20,886	1	6,783	32.5	366	6,535	31.3	14,351	7,574	36.3	52.8	2
Highlands Region															
Chimbu	John Garia	PNGP	19	218,881	1	38,999	17.8	504	77,766	35.5	141,115	84,577	38.6	59.9	1
Chuave	Jim J. Nomane	PNGCP	29	30,839	1	4,931	16.0	227	13,570	44.0	17,269	9,671	31.4	56.0	1
Gumine	Dawa Lucas Dekene	NA	34	32,484	1	3,589	11.0	248	18,401	56.6	14,083	7,139	22.0	50.7	2
Karimui-Nomane	Posi Menai (S)	PAP	49	29,319	1	2,778	9.5	647	20,680	70.5	8,639	4,572	15.6	52.9	1
Kerowagi	Guma Wau	URP	42	41,414	1	2,680	6.5		28,910	69.8	12,504	6,268	15.1	50.1	1
Kundiawa	Joe Mek Teine*	PNGNP	33	51,874	1	5,819	11.2	1,429	29,208	56.3	22,666	13,364	25.8	59.0	1
Sinasina-Yonggamugl	Jeffrey Nape (S)	NA	48	36,716	1	4,389	12.0	787	22,873	62.3	13,843	7,956	21.7	57.5	1
Eastern Highlands	Malcom Kela Smith (S)	Ind.	34	346,343	1	77,254	22.3	8,860	87,942	25.4	258,401	130,427	37.7	50.5	1

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Electorate	Winner ^b	Party ^{c,d}	Cand. no.	Total allowable ballots	Position after primary vote	No. of 1st pref. votes	1st pref. votes (%)	No. of informal ballots	No. exhausted ballots	Exhausted ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Live ballots (%)	Source ^e
Daulo	NK Kondo Patrick	PLP	48	30,940	2	1,978	6.4	271	22,948	74.2	7,992	4,055	13.1	50.7	2
Goroka	Thompson Harokaqveh	Pangu	40	54,452	2	5,091	9.3	739	30,284	55.6	24,168	13,770	25.3	57.0	1
Henganofi	Ferao Orimyo	PNGP	40	40,339	3	3,068	7.6	507	25,372	62.9	14,967	7,825	19.4	52.3	2
Kainantu	Sai Sailon Besoe	PP	53	47,033	1	5,075	10.8	595	32,078	68.2	14,955	8,667	18.4	58.0	2
Lufa	Yawa Silupa (S)	NA	38	35,412	1	3,735	10.5	247	24,389	68.9	11,023	5,838	16.5	53.0	2
Obura-Wonenara	John Boito	PDM	37	47,280	1	9,406	19.9	298	25,634	54.2	21,646	13,850	29.3	64.0	2
Okapa	Bonny Oveyara	PPP	36	56,163	5	3,362	6.0	424	36,175	64.4	19,988	10,142	18.1	50.7	2
Unggai-Bena	Benny Allan (S)	URP	28	40,237	1	9,474	23.5	901	15,944	39.6	24,293	12,940	32.2	53.3	2
Enga	Peter Ipatas (S)	PP	16	246,099	1	103,932	42.2	4,325	18,928	7.7	227,171	116,246	47.2	51.2	2
Kandep	Don Polye (S)	NA	17	31,628	1	21,820	69.0	99		0.0	31,628	21,820	69.0	69.0	3
Kompiani-Ambum	John Thomas Pundari	NAP	35	36,106	1	5,907	16.4	263	17,656	48.9	18,450	11,410	31.6	61.8	1
Lagaip-Porgera	Philip Kapus Kikala	NA	35	90,264	1	9,197	10.2	608	54,786	60.7	35,478	19,054	21.1	53.7	2
Wabag	Samual Tei Abal (S)	NA	19	44,470	1	15,088	33.9	293	10,082	22.7	34,388	19,939	44.8	58.0	2

Electorate	Winner ^{a,b}	Party ^{c,d}	Cand. no.	Total allowable ballots	Position after primary vote	No. of 1st pref. votes	1st pref. votes (%)	No. of informal ballots	No. exhausted ballots	Exhausted ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Live ballots (%)	Source ^e
Wapenamanda	Yangakun Milki Kaeok (S)	NA	18	46,246	1	11,007	23.8	556	16,857	36.5	29,389	15,867	34.3	54.0	2
Southern Highlands	Anderson Pawa Agiru	URP	18	383,921	1	138,212	36.0	6,799	62,561	16.3	321,360	199,639	52.0	62.1	2
Ialibu-Pangia	Peter O'Neill (S)	PNC	7	43,383	1	22,003	50.7	357		0.0	43,383	22,003	50.7	50.7	2
Imbonggu	Francis Awesa	PNGP	20	46,497	1	6,210	13.4	1,500	20,907	45.0	25,590	13,005	28.0	50.8	3
Kagua-Erave	James Lagea	PNGCoP	24												na
Komo-Magarima	Francis Potape Mulungu	NGP	31												na
Koroba-Lake Kopiago	John Keken Kelewa (S)	PAP	17	44,473	3	7,978	17.9	481	14,407	32.4	30,066	16,316	36.7	54.3	1
Mendi	Isaac Joseph	NGP	35	59,160	1	6,035	10.2	376	37,172	62.8	21,988	12,607	21.3	57.3	3
Nipa-Kutubu	Philemon Embel	Pangu	21	63,771	1	12,183	19.1	532	26,770	42.0	37,001	18,829	29.5	50.9	3
Tari-Pori	James Marabe	NA	27	37,263	1	6,248	16.8	404	14,999	40.3	22,264	13,075	35.1	58.7	3
Western Highlands	Tom Olga	Ind.	26	411,842	2	69,275	16.8	3,449	132,215	32.1	279,627	141,286	34.3	50.5	1
Angalimp-South Wahgi	Jamie Maxtone Graham (S)	PNGCP	24	92,645	1	21,149	22.8	1,021	40,985	44.2	51,660	30,646	33.1	59.3	2

Electorate	Winner ^a b	Party ^c d	Cand. no.	Total allowable ballots	Position after primary vote	No. of 1st pref. votes	1st pref. votes (%)	No. of informal ballots	No. exhausted ballots	Exhausted ballots (%)	Ballots remaining in count	Total votes	Total allowable ballots (%)	Live ballots (%)	Source ^e
Baiyer-Mul	Sani Rambi	NA	22												na
Dei	Puri Ruing	PNGP	14	59,078	2	9,066	15.3	627	27,963	47.3	31,115	15,894	26.9	51.1	2
Hagen	William Duma (S)	URP	12	73,043	1	36,727	50.3	926			73,043	36,727	50.3	50.3	1
Jimi	Wake Goi	PNGP	28	32,900	1	5,182	15.8	94	18,957	57.6	13,943	8,085	24.6	58.0	2
North Wahgi	Benjamin Mul	PNGP	19	39,798	2	8,778	22.1	592	11,428	28.7	28,370	14,696	36.9	51.8	2
Tambul-Nebilyer	Benjamin Poponawa	Ind.	10	64,197	3	10,782	16.8	577	25,462	39.7	38,735	20,625	32.1	53.2	2

a Refers to the winner declared in 2007. An asterisk (*) denotes the winners who were initially declared but who are now no longer the sitting member, as a result of subsequent recounts, court decisions or by-elections, or the death of the sitting member.

b (S) denotes that the winner was the sitting member before the 2007 election.

c This category refers to the political party that the candidate belonged to before the 2007 election. This membership may have changed after the election.

d A list of full political party names is detailed below.

e Key to sources: 1 denotes that the source of the results are forms 66a and 66b; 2 denotes that the source is an unofficial table of results supplied to the National Research Institute in 2008 by the PNGEC; 3 denotes 'other source'—this includes results formally available on the PNGEC website but now removed, or results collected by observers in the field; na denotes not available.

List of political parties

Ind.	Independent
MAP	Melanesian Alliance Party
MLP	Melanesian Liberal Party
NA	National Alliance
NAP	National Advance Party
NGP	New Generation Party
Pangu	Pangu Pati
PAP	People's Action Party
PDM	People's Democratic Movement
PFPP	Pipol First Party
PLP	People's Labour Party
PNC	People's National Congress
PNGCP	PNG Country Party
PNGCoP	PNG Conservative Party
PNGLP	PNG Labour Party
PNGNP	PNG National Party
PNGP	PNG Party
PP	People's Party
PPP	People's Progress Party
RDP	Rural Development Party
UP	United Party
URP	United Resources Party

