

WAN SMOLBAG THEATRE

THE FORESHORE ACT

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Wan Smolbag Theatre 2023

Wan Smolbag Theatre is Core Funded By



Made Possible with Assistance and Funding From



ISBN 978-982-101-683-4



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THE FORESHORE ACT

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1

Nina and her daughter Evie are walking along the beach. Evie is very happy to be going fishing with her mum!



2

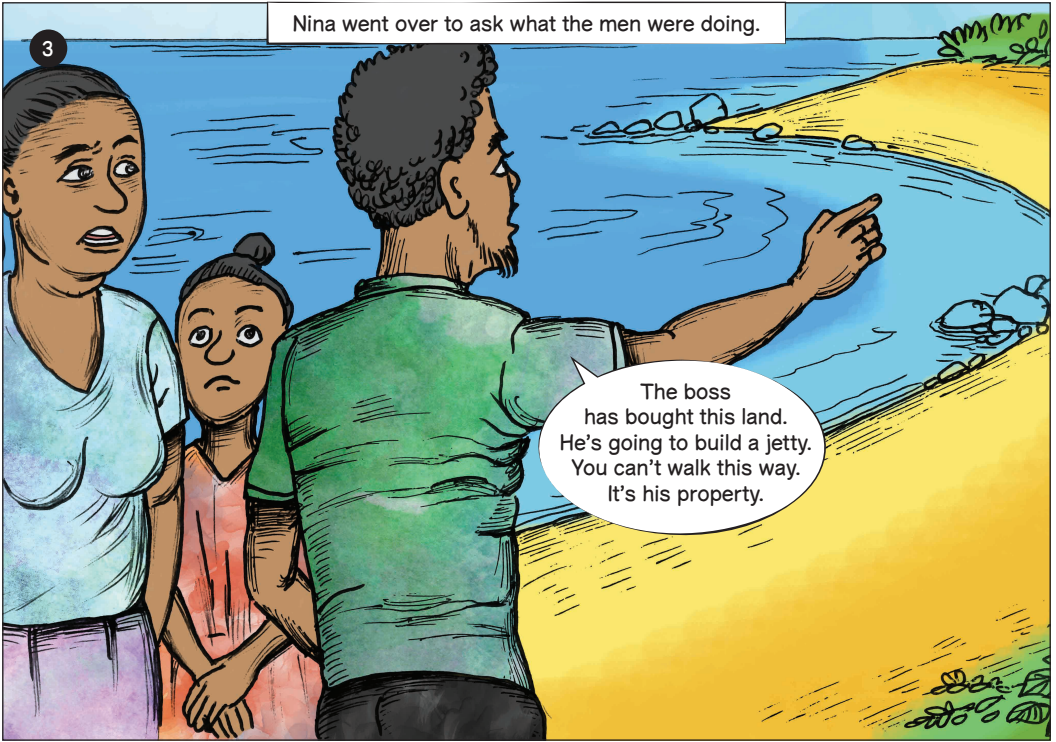
What are they doing mummy?

I don't know.



Nina went over to ask what the men were doing.

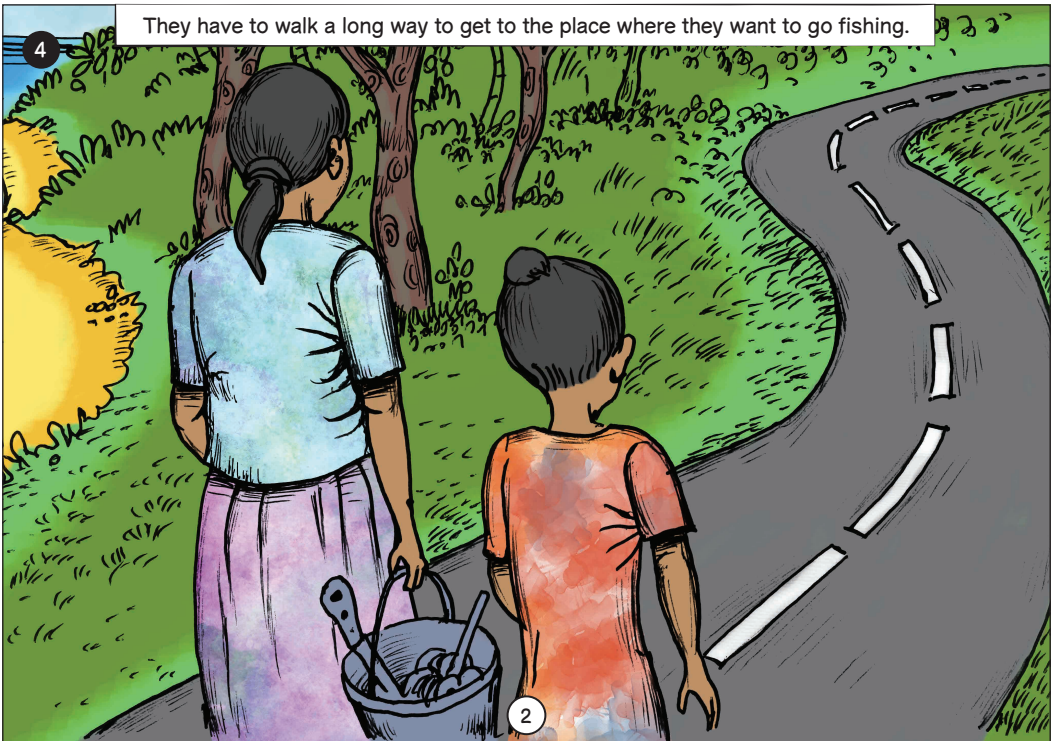
3



The boss has bought this land. He's going to build a jetty. You can't walk this way. It's his property.

They have to walk a long way to get to the place where they want to go fishing.

4



2

5



We had to walk such a long way. They've stopped people walking along the beach. Someone has bought it.

Evie's very tired

6



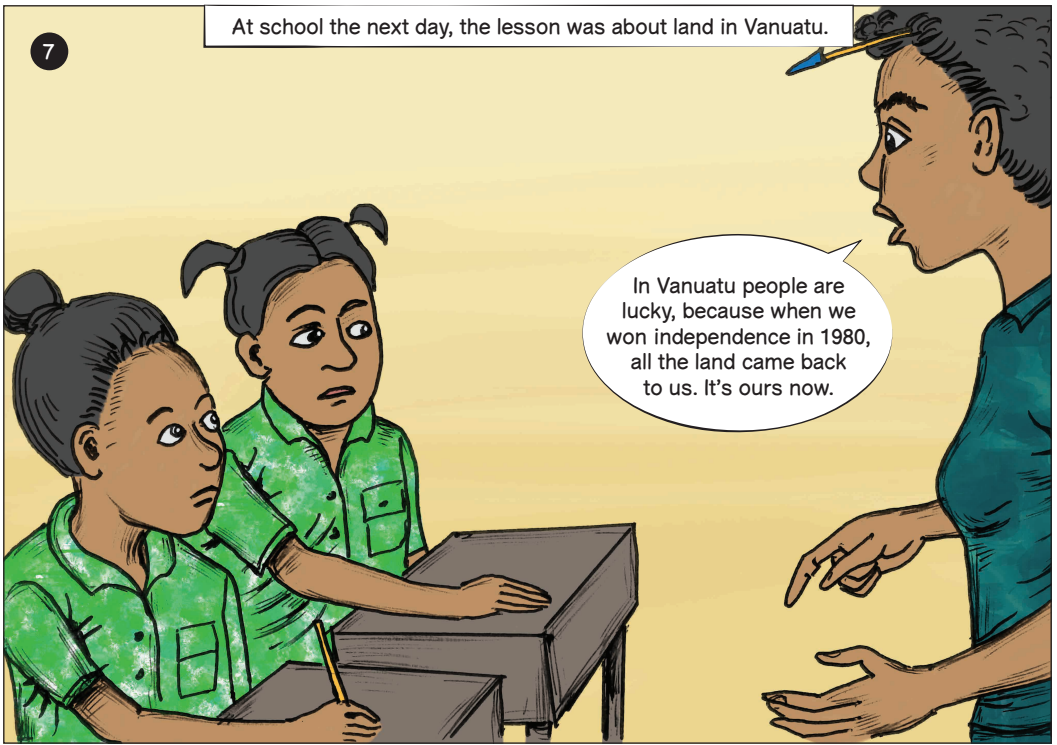
We have always walked along that beach. It doesn't seem right that we can't walk there anymore.

What can we do? It belongs to that man now.

3

At school the next day, the lesson was about land in Vanuatu.

7



In Vanuatu people are lucky, because when we won independence in 1980, all the land came back to us. It's ours now.

8



But why can they stop us walking along the beach, Teacher?

Good question Evie. I'll find out and let you know why.

4

9

The teacher went down to the Ministry of Lands to find out more information.

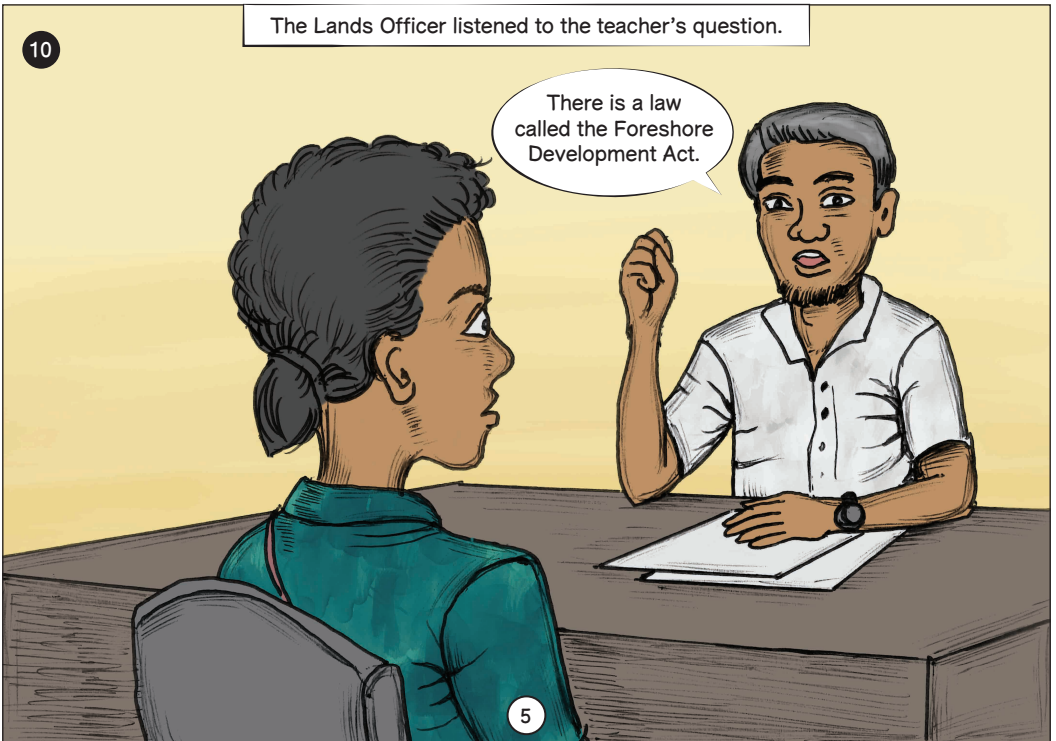
MINISTRY OF LANDS



10

The Lands Officer listened to the teacher's question.

There is a law called the Foreshore Development Act.



5

The teacher told the class what the Lands Officer had said.

11

In Vanuatu
anyone who buys
land, buys it for
75 years only.



But if they buy coastal land, they do not own the land between the
high tide and low tide mark.

12



When she got home Evie was very excited!

Mummy! Daddy!
They can't stop us
from walking along
the beach!

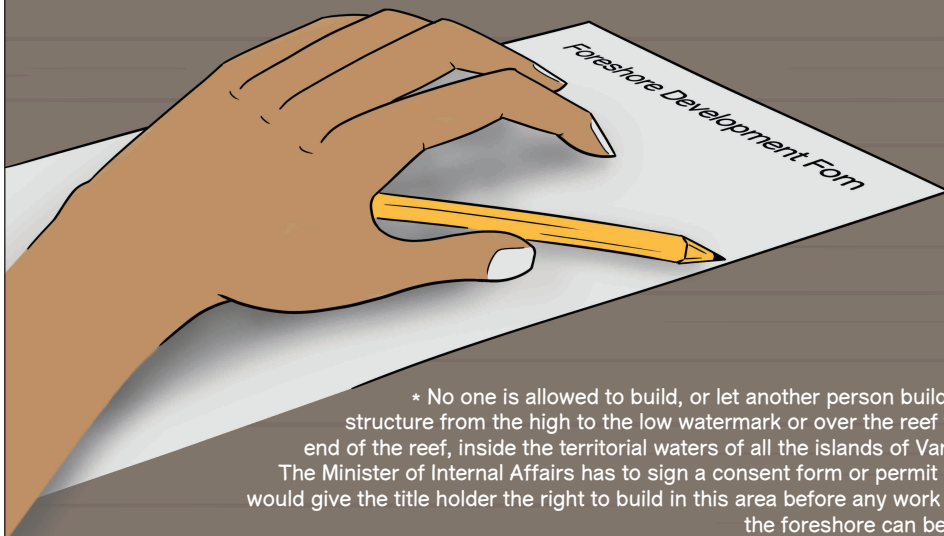


My teacher says that no one can stop people walking on the land between the high tide and the low tide mark! They can't stop you, even if they've bought the land!

But it happens a lot.

The Foreshore Act says that no one owns land from the high to the low water mark. No one can build there either if the landowner hasn't agreed.

The person who holds the title must get the consent of the landowner and then go and fill up a Foreshore Development Form. Then they must pay a fee before they can start work.



* No one is allowed to build, or let another person build, any structure from the high to the low watermark or over the reef to the end of the reef, inside the territorial waters of all the islands of Vanuatu. The Minister of Internal Affairs has to sign a consent form or permit which would give the title holder the right to build in this area before any work along the foreshore can begin. *

Evie's dad went to the nakamal that evening to find the land owner.



Uncle!
Can I have a word
with you?

Next morning they went to find the man who had bought the land.



Call your
boss! I want to
talk to him.



The place between the high and low water mark doesn't belong to you. And you didn't ask me if you could build a jetty over the reef!

I didn't know I had to ask you. Can I go on with the work?



You're destroying the reef. We depend on fish for food. I don't like what you're doing here. You can't stop people walking along the beach either. It's their right to walk along the beach between the high to the low water mark.

The investor took down the fence that went down to the reef.

20



21

Even if the land owner agrees that the investor can do the work, they still have to go to the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning and get a Foreshore Development form. The investor must fill it up and pay the fee. Then the Minister has to sign it before any work goes ahead.



11

We all have the right to walk along the beach between the high and low water marks. No one can stop us.

