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**CITIZENS ROLES IN A DEMOCRACY**

The famous definition of democracy according to Abraham Lincoln is defined as “government of the people, by the people and for the people.” In essence, they mean that: government belong to the people; governmental processes belong to the people; and elections belong to the people. There is no democracy without the engagement of citizens. Engagement is thus both a right and a responsibility of citizens in establishing. For democracy to deliver, citizens must be informed about issues that can improve their lives. They must be free to come together to express their views and preferences and work to see that government responds to citizens’ views, thus holding those in government accountable.

The term citizens has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government. Citizens have a set of rights and responsibilities, including the right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare. Citizenship of a state can be acquired either by birth or by naturalization. A man becomes a citizen of a particular state if his parents are citizens of that state or if he is born within the territory of the state.

Citizenship can be perceived to be made up of or be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. Civil citizenship refers to the right necessary to protect individual liberty. Political citizenship is associated with participation in the democratic exercise of political power, either as a member of a political community or as an individual elected by the members of such community and social citizenship embodies the claim that citizens ought to have access to those resources that allow them to live a civilized existence in accordance with the standards prevailing in society.

A right may therefore be defined as a privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group. Rights entails some duties and responsibilities on the part of every citizens. If the civil right of the citizens are invaded by another citizen or the government, he is entitled to seek redress in the court of law. Democracy is derived from a Greek word “demos meaning people and kratos meaning rule, that is ‘rule by the people’

For democracy to succeed, citizens must be active not passive because they know that the success or failure of the government is their responsibility, and no one else’s. In turn government officials understand that all citizens should be treated equally. Citizens are therefore expected to perform the following responsibilities in a democracy; a citizen in democracy should have the duty to vote, a citizen should be willing to pay taxes, since without taxes to fund a democratic government, there would be no democracy, a good citizen must obey the law, a good citizen must refrain from uttering destructive criticisms but must be prepared to offer constructive alternatives to government policies, a good citizen must refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the community and lastly, a good citizen must support public education in every way possible, through the payment of taxes, through local volunteer efforts, through according this system the respect to which it should be entitled.