

UNITED NATIONS COMMON COUNTRY ASSESSMENT KIRIBATI

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THE COMPACT DISK (distributed with the final report only)

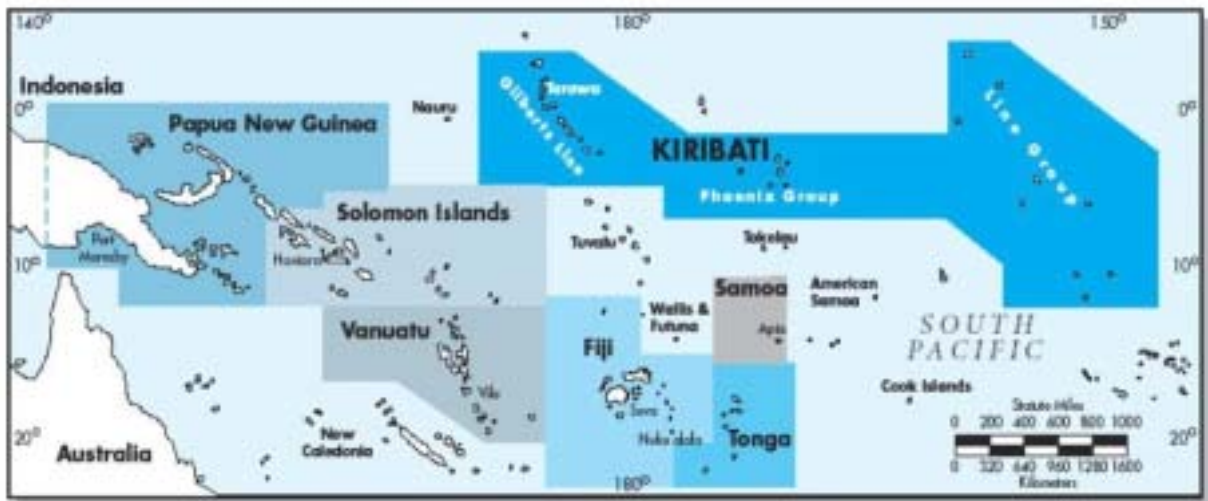
Accompanying this report is a computer-readable CD-ROM (Compact Disk – Read Only Memory) which contains the following:

- this full report including all annexes;
- a considerable number of reports on Kiribati (plus regional or global reports with information relevant to Kiribati) which were available in electronic form;
- a copy of the free software Adobe Acrobat Reader[®] which is required to access those reports which are stored as Adobe 'Portable Document Format' (PDF) files; and
- a list of the contents of the CD.

If there is no CD in a pocket attached to the inner back cover, limited numbers are available for Kiribati government officials and Civil Society Organisations from the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, UNDP, Suva, Fiji.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

The cover photograph of Tanea school (Buota, Tarawa) was taken by Dr George Slama, WHO Country Liaison Officer, Kiribati.



Map 1: Location and Vast Extent of Kiribati
 (Source: IMF, 2001)



Map 2: Tarawa
 Source: Adapted from *Kiribati Country Economic Memorandum* (World Bank 1993)

FOREWORD

The Common Country Assessment resulted from the United Nations Secretary General's reform programme approved by the General Assembly in 1997. It represents a shift towards full collaborative programming of United Nations agencies' assistance to each country. The aims of this Common Country Assessment are to:

- review and analyse the national development situation of Kiribati;
- identify key issues as a basis for advocacy and policy dialogue between the United Nations agencies and Kiribati; and
- identify areas for priority attention in meeting key development challenges by Kiribati and the development assistance community.

This common understanding among the UN partners of the key development challenges facing Kiribati will serve as the basis for developing a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). This, in turn, will identify common objectives and a common time frame for UN system action and will assist individual UN agencies in their detailed programming exercises.

During the 1990s, a series of global conferences was convened by the United Nations to address major economic, environmental and social concerns. These global conferences produced a political consensus on major development issues facing the world today, culminating in the Millennium Summit of September 2000 at which Kiribati was represented by the Head of State, HE Teburoro Tito. The global agenda that emerged from the declarations and action plans of these conferences and the Summit has created common ground for co-operation between the United Nations system and host governments, including Kiribati, on national development policies and strategies.

Having the status of a Least Developed Country, Kiribati is a priority country for UN assistance in the Pacific. There is a strong interest within the Kiribati Government to ensure that development assistance is better directed and coordinated. Better coordinated United Nations assistance will benefit the Government and people of Kiribati. This CCA and the subsequent UNDAF are expected to play strong roles in improving such coordination.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Republic of Kiribati has less than 85,000 people living on 33 widely scattered atolls (800 square kilometres of land) spread over a vast ocean area: 4200 kilometres from East to West and 2000 km North to South. Kiribati exemplifies to an extreme degree the severe development challenges facing a small, remote and resource poor island state during a period of rapid global change. Basic development indicators (for health, education, life expectancy, etc.) are among the poorest in the Pacific Islands subregion. There is a high degree of vulnerability to external events. The environment is fragile and – particularly in rapidly-growing urban South Tarawa – deteriorating. There is considerable difficulty in providing adequate basic services to its people, especially the outer island rural majority. Despite this, the I-Kiribati – the people of Kiribati – have the advantages of a strong and resilient culture, a highly egalitarian society (gender issues aside), strong democratic principles, extensive sea resources, and a record of prudent fiscal management. With well-planned, carefully-targeted and soundly implemented external assistance in support of sound government policies, the quality of life of the I-Kiribati can be expected to improve over time.

CHAPTER 1: THE PACIFIC ISLANDS CONTEXT AND COMMON PACIFIC CONCERNS

There are a number of characteristics that Kiribati shares with other Pacific Island states, particularly those, like Kiribati, classified as least-developed.

Globalisation. Adjusting to the extraordinary rate of recent global economic, social and cultural change is a tremendous challenge for remote micro-states, which strive for an “impossible trinity”: i) securing the benefits of globalisation; ii) maintaining national sovereignty, and iii) retaining flexibility to formulate economic and social policies. Among the challenges for Kiribati are to adequately protect traditional values such as communal sharing of resources and co-operative economic activity; protect land tenure, elsewhere sometimes threatened by resource investments; minimise possible social costs (e.g. increased inequality, less control of investment decisions, and worse

working conditions); deal with the erosion of preferential market access; afford the costs of joining (or not joining) the World Trade Organisation; carry out its substantial commitments to the global community summarised in the *Millennium Declaration Goals* of 2000; and capitalise on new information and communications technologies which could reduce effective isolation.

Vulnerability. Numerous studies have documented the susceptibility of small island states to external economic fluctuations and environmental shocks. A Commonwealth Secretariat* vulnerability index ranks Kiribati among the most highly vulnerable of the 111 countries it has studied. An environmental vulnerability index developed by the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) has not yet produced a Kiribati assessment but it would undoubtedly be in the highly vulnerable category.

Climate change. The 2001 synthesis report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concludes, with a ‘robust level of confidence’, that global warming is underway and likely to increase during this century at rates unprecedented in the past 10,000 years. For small islands, the IPCC warns of deteriorating coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds; major species loss; worsening water balance in atoll nations such as Kiribati; and declines in vital reef fisheries (all with medium-to-high confidence levels). For the Pacific islands, the World Bank warns of likely reductions in agricultural output, declines in ground water quantity and quality, substantial health impacts (increased diarrhoea, dengue fever and fish poisoning), extensive capital damage due to storm surges, and lost fish production. It concludes that: “managing change will be particularly critical in the area of climate change, a subject ... of immense and immediate impact on Pacific Island countries. Choosing a development path that decreases the islands’ vulnerability to climate events and maintains the quality of the social and physical environment will ... be central to the future well being of the Pacific Island people.” Kiribati is among the countries predicted to suffer the greatest impact of

* All materials or studies mentioned in this section are referenced in the chapters where the issues are more fully discussed.

climate change – including disappearance in the worst case scenario.

Managing Marine Resources. The Central West Pacific, where Kiribati is located, is the world's richest tuna fishery. However, during the 1990s the island states captured only 11% of US\$2 billion in annual landed value. Effectively managing the tuna (and later the vast mineral) resources of the Pacific will be a key challenge. Determination of sustainable maximum yields, arms length access negotiations with distant fishing nations, and assuring good economic returns and employment will require improved cooperation on a regional basis. For Kiribati, with extremely scarce land-based resources, effective use of the sea's resources is a key to future prosperity.

Limited Data. Assessing key development issues, formulating and implementing effective policies, and monitoring results require a wide range of timely, accurate and consistent data. In Kiribati and the region, however, much data is available only at national level (with limited breakdowns by sex, age, income group, geographic location, etc.), and time-series datasets tend to be both limited and inconsistent. For a tiny population, even excellent data for a specific year can be inherently misleading, particularly for rare events such as maternal mortality. Improved time series are essential for constructing meaningful development indicators and understanding development trends in microstates.

Development Assistance to Kiribati and the Pacific. Kiribati and other small Pacific island states are highly dependent on donor assistance for developing and implementing social and economic policies. It is felt within the region that donors shift emphases too frequently, leading to support which is often too short-term to produce lasting impacts. Where aid is a small percentage of GDP, the volatility of aid flows and priorities may not be a serious concern; for Kiribati and neighbouring states, it can arguably undermine development efforts.

Population Growth, Poverty and Development. Over the past decade, numerous studies have warned that

population growth may be hampering the subregion's development efforts. The Asian Development Bank recently warned of growing poverty in the Pacific islands, where 43% of the population are 'disadvantaged.' The ADB states that the following key issues affect all Pacific members: good governance; population growing faster than the economy; declining educational performance; weakness of the private sector; breakdown of traditional support systems; and an urban elite capturing most benefits of modernisation. Development challenges include: disappointing macroeconomic performance; increasing poverty; increasing environmental degradation; and limited progress in gender equality. Population growth, youth unemployment, rapid urbanisation, and other pressures are also reflected in growing disaffection among the youth who will have to address these issues in the coming years.

CHAPTER 2: KIRIBATI AND THE CCA PROCESS

Chapter 2 summarises the development issues in Kiribati, government policies and goals to address key issues, and an emerging global consensus regarding the goals of development.

The Kiribati Development Situation. Kiribati's atolls are among the planet's harshest environments: flat ribbons of sand, with scarce fresh water; supporting a limited range of vegetation; extreme geographic fragmentation making transport and communications costly and difficult; and an economy dependent on fluctuating prices for copra and fish, interest from overseas investments, remittances from I-Kiribati working abroad, licence fees for foreign-owned ships, and foreign aid. Basic development indicators are summarised in the table on the following page. Kiribati ranks 11th of 14 Pacific island countries and 129th in the world in the UNDP's Human Development Index. In terms of infant mortality and child morbidity, per capita GDP, and access to water and sanitation, Kiribati is among the lowest in the region. The incidence of HIV/AIDS has risen alarmingly and women's participation in decision-making is improving but remains relatively low.

Economic Issues and goals. Kiribati is categorised as a 'Least Developed Country' due to low per capita GDP, limited human resources and high vulnerability to external forces. A distinguishing feature of the economy is an external reserve fund for keeping foreign reserves in overseas accounts prudently managed by international brokerage firms. Its value has steadily grown to the equivalent of seven years' imports or nine times the value of GDP. Investment income is currently about a third of GDP. Because of the fund, GNP has been about 80% higher than GDP since 1995. GDP, however, has grown by an average of only 1.6% annually since 1979, well below population growth. The economy is dominated by the public service and state-owned enterprises, accounting for about 80% of all paid employment and 30% of GDP. The trade deficit has been persistently high (also about 30% of GDP) during the 1990s. However, delivery of social services has been inefficient, subsidies to state owned enterprises deny opportunities for private job creation, under 20% of the working age population is formally employed, and nearly 2/3 of all formal jobs are in the capital, South Tarawa.

Successive governments have had a consistent approach to addressing the above issues, most recently articulated in the *National Development Strategies: 2000 - 2003* and the *Action Programme for 2001 - 2010*. Key issues and goals from these documents are summarised below:

- *GDP/capita.* 2-3% growth per year.
- *Merchandise exports.* 10-15% growth per year overall; more competitive; diversified marine exports.
- *Employment.* 6-8% growth in formal jobs per year, mainly in private sector and state-owned enterprises.
- *Education.* Access to Form 3 by all; 25% higher Form 4-6 intake; improved vocational and business training.
- *Health.* Greater emphasis on outer island, primary preventative and reproductive health.
- *Tourism.* Increase visitors to Kiribati by 20% by 2003.
- *Government reform.* Reduce public sector; strengthen budgeting system; reform public commercial enterprises.
- *Governance.* Reform public service to be more transparent and accountable.

Basic Development Indicators *

Indicator	Overall	Male	Female
Population (census, 2000)	84,494	41,646	42,848
Population growth (1995-2000; %/yr)	1.7%	1.6%	1.8%
Life expectancy (1995; years)	60	59	65
(2000; years)	63	58	67
Infant mortality rate (1995)	62	68	56
(2000)	43	-	-
Child mortality, under 5; excl infants ('95)	24	28	21
Maternal mortality rate (1995-2000)	-	-	56
GDP per capita Australian \$ (2000)	A\$ 804	-	-
Aid per capita (US\$; 1997-98)	US\$194	-	-
Access to safe drinking water (1995)	47%	-	-
Access to sanitation (1995)	46%	-	-
Access to health services (1995)	95%	-	-
(2000)	100%	-	-
Adult literacy (1998)	93%	94%	91%
Human Development Index (1998)	0.515	0.493	0.517
Human Poverty Index (1998)	12.7	13.7	11.8
HIV / AIDS cases (Sept. 2001)	38	27	11
Members, House of Assembly (2002)	42	40	2
Administrators & Managers (%;'90s)	100	96	4
Legislators & senior officials (%;'00)	100	73	27

* A number of the indicators are rounded off; 2000 Census data shown in bold

- *Civil Society.* Assist NGOs provide services to remote and disadvantaged people.
- *Population.* Adopt policy addressing overall growth and South Tarawa density.
- *Poverty.* More job opportunities and better safety nets for the poor.
- *HIV/AIDS.* No specific goals.
- *Environment.* Enforce Environment Act, require impact assessment and minimise coastal and lagoon pollution.
- *International.* Develop stronger linkages; adopt 'best practices' for innovation and governance while maintaining local values.

International Development Goals.

Kiribati has entered into various international commitments. These include the goals of the Decade for Education for All; the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; the Beijing Platform of Action; the World Summit Goals for Children, and the Pacific Platform of Action on women. In 2000, governments endorsed the *Millennium Declaration* committing the United Nations to global peace and respect for equal rights regardless of race, sex, language, or religion. The Millennium Declaration includes specific national goals to be reached by 2015 which were endorsed by the world's leaders (including Kiribati). These now constitute a

driving force of the UN's work and reform process and include reductions in poverty, HIV/AIDS and hunger; and improvements in basic amenities, universal primary education, gender equality, maternal and child health, and environmental sustainability. Kiribati is likely to meet some goals whereas others are less likely to be met without a strong commitment by the government and the international development community.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIETY, GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMY

The Government, Governance and Political Culture. Democratic values in Kiribati are strong with free elections every four years by universal adult suffrage. The government combines Westminster principles and customary values, with considerable influence of the elder male. Policy formulation and decision making are relatively open, involving widespread consultation. The overall quality of public administration has improved in recent years but the government identifies the following weaknesses: i) the budgeting and budget control system including data collection and analysis; ii) sectoral planning and monitoring; and iii) a lack of focus by ministries on their core functions.

The Economy and Reforms. Only 20% of the labour force participates in the formal wage economy. 80% of paid employment is with the government or government enterprises with 64% of all cash jobs based in South Tarawa. There are great differences in living standards and cash incomes between South Tarawa and the other islands and among the outer islands. South Tarawa is far more monetised than all other islands and has far better access to health, education transport, communications and other amenities and services. The non-formal traditional economy, by redistributing monetary and other wealth along kinship lines, evens out some of these differences although cash is increasingly important. Throughout Kiribati, the traditional economy remains important for food and general livelihood security. This is likely to continue: in the 1990s the labour force grew at 4.6% per year, more than twice as fast as overall population growth. With the majority of the population aged twenty or below, high youth unemployment, and few new jobs, practical policies are needed to address improvements to the livelihoods of

the growing numbers of young I-Kiribati who will remain in the informal sector.

Population, Urbanisation & Migration.

The 2000 census counted a population of 84,494, an average growth rate of 1.7% per year from 1995-2000 with urban growth of 5.2% and rural decline of 0.6%. South Tarawa had 36,717 people or 44% of the national population compared to 37% only five years earlier. If these trends continue, South Tarawa will reach 50,000 people by 2006. Demographic trends thus underlie many of the development problems facing Kiribati: a moderately high population growth rate with increasing concentration on South Tarawa; a considerable gap in the life expectancy of males and females; a young age structure which places great demands on the provision of services and jobs; and growing – and serious – environmental problems (water quality; waste; sanitation; lagoon pollution) exacerbated by South Tarawa's congestion. Crowded and unsanitary conditions contribute to a high incidence of diarrhoeal diseases and a high death rate for young children.

Gender and disadvantage. Kiribati has a severe shortage of those skills necessary for more equitable economic growth and social development. If half of a country's talent is under-developed, under-recognised or under-utilised, everyone suffers as a result. Gaps in educational attainment – which were considerable in the early 1990s – have narrowed. The 2000 census report indicates that male and female educational attendance is about equal through junior secondary school, that females now slightly outnumber males completing some secondary schooling and that the ratio of male to female high school graduates has declined to 1.7:1. For university graduates under age 24, women now outnumber men by 38%. Nonetheless, only a few women have reached decision-making positions in society. They suffer the problems of childbirth in quick succession; inadequate nutrition, water and sanitation and inadequate access to health care. There are numerous examples of gender inequality, which the Kiribati government acknowledges. In late 2000, men held 63% of all paid jobs, 73% of legislative and senior official positions, and 49% of all professional positions.

Those who live on outer islands, members of large families, the young, the disabled, and those without access to land (at least where they live) tend to be disadvantaged. Most investment has been in South Tarawa with 'poverty of opportunity' as a result on the outer islands, contributing many migrants to the capital. Some youth issues (such as sexual behaviour and access to reproductive health information and services), meet opposition from some churches and others. In general, those most in need of assistance are least likely to receive it. The cooperatives and Village Banks, for example, tend to benefit most the more wealthy and powerful people.

CHAPTER 4: BASIC NEEDS, SAFETY NETS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Health, Nutrition, Water Supply and Sanitation. With an average life expectancy at birth of 63 years in 2000, I-Kiribati have a shorter life span than most other Pacific Islanders due to: i) high infant and child mortality from respiratory diseases and diarrhoea; and ii) high adult mortality, especially for men, from infectious and non-communicable diseases. I-Kiribati men have an average life expectancy (2000) of 58 years, nine years less than women. Child immunisation coverage (DPT3) in 1999 of 78% overall – 49% in remote areas and 89% in Tarawa – improved to 90% overall in 2000. Sanitation is poor in South Tarawa where 53% of households regularly use the beach as their toilet. Food-borne and insect or animal-borne diseases are other major causes of illness. There is only limited information available on food security and nutrition but highly processed, imported, nutrition-poor foods are quite common. Heart disease, hypertension, tuberculosis, diabetes and cancer are major public health problems. Sexually transmitted diseases are a significant health concern, particularly the rapid increase in HIV/AIDS. Of 23 medical doctors in the country, 22 are based in South Tarawa. Nonetheless all islands have access to health facilities and there has been very good progress toward meeting global health goals.

Education and Human Resource Development. As elsewhere in the Pacific, there is relatively little attention to early age education in Kiribati, although pregnancy until the time children enter school is more important in a child's learning and personality development than the time spent at

school. Kiribati has compulsory education from age 6-14 but net enrolment for this age group was only about 80% during the 1990s. Non-attendance is believed to be due largely to patterns of disadvantage on South Tarawa. The proportion of females attending school is said to be above males in all age groups below 19 years. However, less than 1% of females aged 20-24 are undergoing formal study compared with 6.5% of males. On the outer islands, provision of schooling is difficult and costly because of poor communications and transport and the expense of servicing small remote schools. However, throughout Kiribati, the quality of education remains low due to a shortage of resources in schools and poor physical facilities. Only about 25% of students reach Form 6, and 8% reach the final secondary school level, Form 7. Despite these problems, Kiribati has improved education during the past decade.

Poverty, Safety Nets and Special Protection Measures. Many I-Kiribati would be considered poor based on their cash incomes alone. However, there is little extreme poverty in Kiribati as most households are supported by gardening, fishing, carpentry and handicraft making. Together with the traditional kin-based economy, this provides an adequate basic lifestyle. Nevertheless, relative poverty is an issue of growing concern both on South Tarawa (where jobs, income and other resources are not well distributed and there is limited opportunity for subsistence agriculture); and among the disadvantaged throughout Kiribati (with little access to services and paid employment). In general, there is no strong government role in identifying relative poverty, or adequate funds or a clear strategy for addressing it.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Broad conclusions which flow from the assessment are summarised below.

The National Development Situation. Kiribati is a very small, isolated and geographically widespread atoll nation which is included among those categorised as LDCs due to low income, weak human resources, and a high degree of economic vulnerability. Although economic growth has been modest, the economy has been prudently managed, democratic principles are robust and society is relatively stable. These characteristics will be

invaluable in helping Kiribati address its challenges:

- The ADB ranks Kiribati as its most economically vulnerable Pacific island member;
- Development has been uneven between South Tarawa and other islands.
- Population growth and a young population profile strain capacity to provide adequate health, education, and other services and productive jobs. The rapid growth of South Tarawa and recent population decline in outer islands, places tremendous pressures on both.
- Kiribati is struggling to improve basic and appropriate education and training for all.
- Basic health indicators remain poor despite relatively high expenditures on health. Child diarrhoea, TB, diabetes and the rise in HIV/AIDS cases are serious concerns.
- The fragile environment of South Tarawa is deteriorating due to overcrowding, limited legal access to land, poor waste management and sanitation, and growing pollution of the water lens, lagoon and land.
- Kiribati's development strategy may not be achieved easily considering cultural norms, increased competition and globalisation of markets, the need for rapid decision-making, and difficulty in providing inexpensive, reliable and widely available communications.
- Disadvantage or relative poverty / poverty of opportunity is emerging as a national issue.
- The most intractable difficulty is to meet the aspirations of I-Kiribati for paid work and sustainable livelihoods, and to maintain a good living environment, particularly in congested South Tarawa.

Key Issues for Advocacy and Dialogue.

Kiribati has endorsed the 2015 Millennium Development Goals and a number of international treaties and conventions including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Key issues are:

- Extending full rights to women;
- Ratification of key international conventions and declarations (including those dealing with political and civil rights, elimination of racial discrimination, and rights at work) and global and regional treaties and conventions dealing with trade,

pollution, and sustainable management of ocean resources.

- The possibility that Kiribati may not meet about half of the *Millennium Declaration Goals* for 2015 without a firmer commitment and practical policies.

Key Issues for Priority Development Attention.

The international development community should assure support which does not overtax the limited implementation, administrative and monitoring capacities of the government but rather augments them. Some assistance should be provided directly through CSOs/NGOs. Specific areas for priority attention include the following:

- **Population.** Practical policies which address the carrying capacity and emerging social issues of South Tarawa and the needs of the remote island communities.
- **Safety nets.** Practical, equitable and affordable safety nets for the relatively poor and disadvantaged.
- **Sustainable livelihoods.** Policies for formal and informal employment which keep pace with, or exceed, growth in the labour force.
- **Youth.** Practical options for training and employing the bulk of Kiribati's youth and protecting youth from life-threatening risky behaviour.
- **Human resource development.** Education and human resource development policies which improve the quality, relevance and practicality of education and training at all levels with more emphasis on the essential infant and pre-school years.
- **Globalisation.** Informed consideration of globalisation, realistic options, and adapting to challenges in a manner more likely to secure its benefits, maintain national sovereignty, and retain flexibility to formulate and implement economic and social policies.
- **Data.** Better understanding, development and use of data and information for effective research, policy development, programme implementation, and analysis and monitoring of results.
- **Treaties.** Better understanding, and where appropriate ratification and implementation, of treaties and other commitments.
- **Regional action.** Identification and action on key issues which require regional or

global action rather than just a national response.

- **Vulnerability.** Better understanding of Kiribati's vulnerability, both economic and environmental.
- **Sustainable development.** Development policies which are practical, sustainable, more equitable, compatible with local cultural norms and gender sensitive.
- **Environment.** Improved management of the environmental resources of South Tarawa, sustainable management of the ocean resources, and improved pollution control and waste management
- **Worker's rights.** Improved dialogue between employers and workers to address complex issues, broaden decision-making, protect workers rights and improve conditions of employment.
- **Health.** Health policies which improve a broad range of health indicators.
- **HIV/AIDS.** Effectively addressing the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- **Reform.** A public service which is more transparent, consultative, efficient, and accountable and includes NGOs in delivering services to the disadvantaged.
- **Climate change.** Better understanding of global climate change and its likely national impacts and more effective contribution to

international dialogue and negotiations on climate change.

Several related issues are important to Kiribati and to the Pacific Island countries in general:

- **Economic reform and equity.** Studies and adaptations of practical 'best practices' which combine economic growth with equity, real poverty reduction and environmental protection.
- **Reversing brain drain** Cooperative regional strategies to retain skilled people and encourage professionals who have emigrated to return to the region.

A Summary of Broad Themes for Priority Development Attention in Kiribati.

Based on the CCA analysis, the key development issues discussed above, and deliberations of Kiribati government officials, NGOs and in-country donor representatives in Tarawa in February 2002, the key development issues facing Kiribati have been grouped into the following three broad thematic areas which will be further refined during the preparation of the UN Development Assistance Framework for Kiribati:

Theme 1: More equitable access to sustainable services and opportunities

Theme 2: Governance and human rights; and

Theme 3: Dealing effectively with economic and environmental vulnerability.

CHAPTER 1: THE PACIFIC ISLANDS CONTEXT AND COMMON PACIFIC CONCERNS

This report is one of several Common Country Assessment reports prepared for Pacific Island Countries (PICs) which are also Forum Island Countries (FICs)¹ and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). They differ considerably from each other in terms of size, resources, political stability, cultures, languages, economic diversification, development opportunities and constraints. Nonetheless,

1.1 The Vastness of the Pacific

As Figure 1.1 shows, the Pacific Ocean is vast: distances between and within countries are immense. For PICs, land mass is typically 1/3 of 1% of the area of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). For Kiribati the ratio of land to sea is 1:4,900: only 0.02% of the EEZ is land. Although the effects of this remoteness can be exaggerated (Box 1.1),

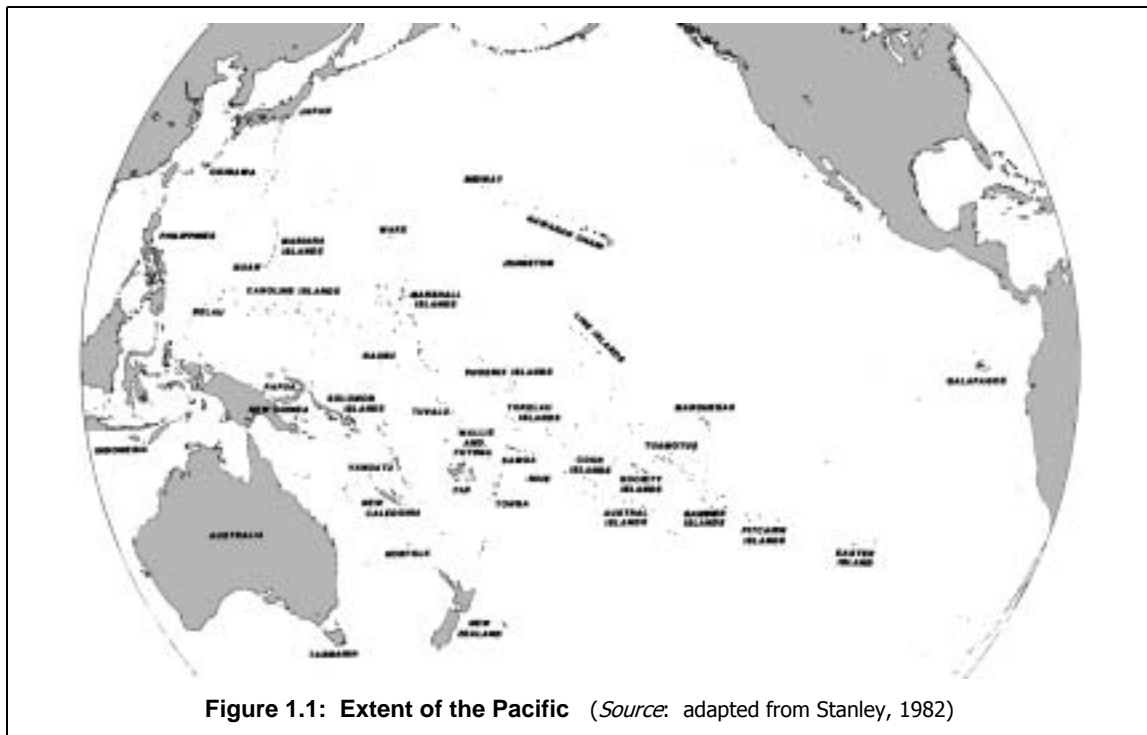


Figure 1.1: Extent of the Pacific (Source: adapted from Stanley, 1982)

they share much in common.² This introductory chapter briefly summarises the regional context and several shared issues facing the Pacific LDCs. Later chapters develop these issues further as they specifically affect Kiribati. The interlinked areas of governance, human rights, gender and land tenure are also among other shared issues in the region discussed in later chapters.

the challenges – and costs – of providing adequate services of all kinds to tiny populations spread over a huge sea are enormous, particularly for the remote outer islands of each state.

1.2 The Challenges of Globalisation

Globalisation is the process of integrating the economies of the world through global markets and a global system of production. It also has profound social and cultural impacts through the increasingly global integration of the mass media and the spread of 'western' ideas. Globalisation depends on reducing natural barriers to trade in goods, services and ideas (e.g. fast and reliable transport and open communications) and artificial barriers (e.g. reduced tariffs, quotas, foreign exchange controls). Globalisation has

¹ FICs are the island member states of the Pacific Islands Forum, whose membership also includes Australia and New Zealand. The Forum is roughly a Pacific equivalent to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

² As LDCs, they share relatively low income, human resource weaknesses, and a high degree of economic vulnerability, the three criteria used by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in 2000 for their inclusion as least developed countries.

obviously existed for centuries but is currently growing at an historically unprecedented rate. For very small remote countries such as Kiribati, adjusting to this extraordinary rate of change is a tremendous challenge. Siwatibau³ refers to the "impossible trinity" that countries should strive for: i) securing the benefits from globalisation; while ii) maintaining national sovereignty, and iii) retaining the flexibility to formulate and implement their own economic and social policies, three challenges of particular relevance to microstates such as Kiribati.

A CCA is not the appropriate place to discuss or analyse the raging debate regarding the social, cultural or economic costs and benefits of globalisation for various parties. Nonetheless, the UN system does have a genuine 'comparative advantage' in assisting the PICs in more informed debate on globalisation, better understanding of its likely impacts, considering realistic options, and adapting to its challenges. How can the PICs:⁴

- protect cultural values such as communal sharing of resources, family values and a co-operative approach to economic activity;
- protect traditional land tenure, which often comes under threat with export-based resource investments;
- minimise possible social costs (e.g. increased inequality and relative poverty, takeovers of local industry, lost markets and jobs, lower wages and worsened working conditions);
- deal effectively with the erosion of the valuable (and generally underutilised) preferential market access to the European Union, Australia and New Zealand;
- afford the high costs of joining the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and determine whether they should do so, how to negotiate entry on fair terms and whether they can afford not to;
- protect the coastal environment from further degradation and pollution which can often result from poorly regulated investment;

³ *Overview of the Impact of Globalisation on the Pacific* (workshop lecture notes; Savenaca Siwatibau, 2001).

⁴ Adapted in part from *Impact of Globalisation* (notes for CCA/UNDAF workshop; Garry Wiseman; Apia, Samoa; November 2001).

Box 1.1 – The Pacific: Small Islands in the Sea or a Sea of Islands?

Assessments of development issues within the Pacific tend to emphasise problems related to remoteness and isolation, small land areas spread over vast seas, economic vulnerability with highly open economies, environmental vulnerability with fragile ecosystems and limited human resources. These and other problems are quite real for Kiribati and are discussed within this CCA. However, Hau'ofa (USP, 1993) argues that "the universe [of Oceanic peoples] comprised not only land surfaces but the surrounding ocean as far as they could traverse and exploit it. ... Smallness is a state of mind. ... There is a gulf of difference between viewing the Pacific as 'islands in the far sea' and as 'a sea of islands.'" Large parts of the Pacific including Kiribati have been integrated through extensive and complex trading and cultural exchange for hundreds of years.

Although land resources are extremely limited, those of the sea are not. The Pacific ocean covers half the world's sea surface and the EEZ of Kiribati alone is about the same size as the entire Caribbean Sea. The fisheries resource is extensive and seabed mining has huge potential; managing the former sustainably and developing the latter in an environmentally sound manner are great challenges but also significant opportunities. Today the people of the Pacific circulate widely in increased numbers, are often educated together at the same regional university, and readily use high-tech communications and transport technologies to reduce isolation and collectively address common concerns such as more rational fisheries use, active participation in climate change negotiations and developing more intra-regional trade.

- implement the 2001 regional *Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement* (PICTA) so that it enhances regional integration, protects women workers, expands trade within the region for all participating countries (not just larger, more diverse PICs) and adequately prepares Kiribati and the other LDCs for the anticipated more-universal trade liberalisation.⁵

The changes brought about by globalisation will continue to rapidly transform international trade in goods and services in the coming decade, especially through the use of information and communications technology (ICT). As Box 1.2 illustrates, there could be opportunities for Kiribati and other PICs⁶ but the challenges are formidable.

⁵ According to UNCTAD, 2001, "Standard analysis of FTAs (free trade agreements) suggests that trade creation effects from a Forum Island Country FTA are likely to be small and that there may be a substantial risk of trade diversion. Loss of tariff revenue is a major concern, which needs to be addressed by restructuring of tax and tariff systems in some cases."

⁶ In Fiji, for example, a local company has developed up-market soaps, perfumes and other products based on local coconut oil, nicely packaged, which are very successfully marketed internationally, almost exclusively through Internet advertising. In Kiribati, only 2.6% of the population had

Box 1.2 – The Information Economy

The digital convergence of information and communication technologies (ICT) has lowered long-standing obstacles to communication delays and distance. Ever cheaper, ever more rapid, and ever more varied means of communicating vast amounts of information through the Internet (and other networks) is creating a world in which there is far greater access to information than ever before. The effects will include profound changes in the structure of global markets, organisations and patterns of economic behaviour. Barring global disaster, the onrush of information itself is irreversible. A world economy integrated in 'real time' carries with it both advantages and new sources of instability:

- Up to 5% of all service-sector jobs in industrialised countries – 12 million jobs – could readily relocate to developing countries where education and English language skills are sufficient.
- Call centres and data processing have good potential in small English-literate developing countries. These are predominantly female occupations, wages and conditions of work vary widely and the work tends not to lead to career upgrading. In the best examples, a new, informal and appealing work culture is developing; in the worst, call centres have become the "sweatshops of the digital era".
- The quality of life and work for women and men will be exposed as much to the potential for negative outcomes as positive ones.
- Good policies and appropriate institutions will be essential to direct change toward the public good. Passivity will lead to marginalisation, a serious danger for a small, already marginal economy.
- The fast pace of competition requires rapid decisions. As "time-to-market" becomes increasingly important, the organisation of work needs to adjust so that a high degree of creativity and a more rapid response to product market pressures can occur, yet the PICs tend to reach decisions slowly.
- The reliability, cost and availability of telecommunications generally determines the extent to which the Internet is used but per capita access costs are generally high in the PICs (and very high in Kiribati).
- A higher level of integration between some developing country locations and industrialised countries could increase the relative exclusion of locations that are not connected.
- Benefiting from the information economy requires a skilled, educated work force; however, outward migration of the technically skilled can result in a brain drain, depriving the PICs of these valuable skills.

Source: adopted from *World Employment Report 2001: Life at Work in the Information Economy (Overview; ILO, 2001)*

Globalisation is about the free flow of ideas, not just the spread of the market economy. These ideas are not limited to the cultural impacts of books, film or the media but also include an increasing commitment by countries worldwide, including the PICs, for concerted action across a wide range of human rights and other concerns. Many of these ideas were articulated during a series of

telephone lines in 1995 (ILO, 2001). Telecommunications infrastructure requires upgrading.

United Nations conferences and World Summits during the 1990s, culminating in various measurable and time-bound goals, which are summarised in the Millennium Declaration Goals. These are discussed in Chapter 2.

The PICs are also parties to a number of international and regional treaties, conventions and declarations. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the only such global instrument which has been ratified by essentially all PICs. As illustrated in Box 1.3, the small size and limited human resources of the PICs contribute significantly to difficulties in fully appreciating their treaty commitments and in effectively implementing those they do ratify. For example, the PICs consider PICTA – and the related *Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations* (PACER) – as important vehicles for progressively replacing aid with trade and preparing them for globalisation. However, smaller states such as Kiribati lack the resources to implement the agreements effectively for their national benefit.

Box 1.3 – Implementing International Treaties: Pressures on, and Constraints for, PICs

Regional agencies report that the PICs often feel under strong pressure to sign and ratify those legal tools or agreements which are of current concern to the global community. These are not necessarily high priorities locally, highly relevant to the island states or even always necessarily in their interests. Recently PICs have been urged to address measures against money-laundering and, since late 2001, anti-terrorism and the status of refugees. Most PICs (including Kiribati) follow the British legal system: treaties do not automatically enter into force when ratified. Entry into force requires a specific act of Parliament. PICs, particularly the LDCs, have minuscule numbers of trained and experienced lawyers in government service, very high rates of turnover, and considerable migration overseas. The ability to understand, effectively advise leaders on, legislate, and eventually implement international agreements is quite severely constrained. For example, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is important to the PICs, and has been ratified by 13 of 16 Forum Island Countries (Kiribati not among them), but most PICs have not enacted UNCLOS provisions in law due to other work pressures and priorities.

In general, and in Kiribati, PIC government legal offices cannot effectively and sustainably implement even those conventions and treaties of importance to themselves.

Source: Discussions and correspondence with PIC legal advisers and legal experts, November 2001

1.3 Vulnerability

There has been extensive documentation of the susceptibility of island states to external economic fluctuations and environmental

shocks, even minimal ones.⁷ A number of vulnerability indices have been developed which differ in detail and coverage but give broadly similar results. The Commonwealth Secretariat has developed an index which ranks 111 developing countries (34 small⁸ and 77 large for which data were available) according to measurable components of exposure and resilience to external shocks. Income growth volatility is the most apparent manifestation of vulnerability. The three most significant determinants of income volatility identified by the Commonwealth are: i) lack of diversification (measured by UNCTAD's diversification index); ii) export dependence (indicated by share of exports in GDP); and iii) the impact of natural disasters (represented by the portion of population affected, considering cumulative frequency and impact over the previous 27 years).

These measures of volatility are combined into a composite vulnerability index weighted by average GDP as a proxy for resilience (the second component of the Commonwealth index). Among the results are the following:

- Of the 28 most highly vulnerable countries, 26 (92%) are small states and 18 (64%) are island states; and
- The most highly vulnerable category includes six PICs: Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. (The smaller PICs would presumably have been included if sufficient data had been available to rank them.)

The South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) has developed a comprehensive Environmental Vulnerability Index (EVI) with 47 indicators. Provisional results⁹ for four PICs suggest that Tuvalu has a highly vulnerable natural ecosystem whereas Fiji, Samoa and possibly Vanuatu are moderately vulnerable. Other PICs have not been assessed but it seems likely that Kiribati would be in the highly vulnerable category

although it is less vulnerable than Tuvalu to tropical cyclones.

1.4 Global Climate Change

Until recently, many observers dismissed warnings of impending climate change as highly uncertain. It is increasingly evident, however, that climate change is real. Every successive report by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has shown stronger evidence and a higher degree of confidence in its predictions. The most recent IPCC synthesis report¹⁰ concludes, with a "robust level of confidence", that global warming is already underway and "is likely to increase during the 21st Century at rates unprecedented in the past 10,000 years." It does not specifically look at PICs but concludes that for small islands in general:

- "projected future climate change and sea-level rise will affect shifts in species composition and competition. It is estimated that one out of every three (30%) known threatened plants are islands endemics, while 23% of bird species are threatened. Coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds that often rely on stable environmental conditions will be adversely affected by rising air and sea temperatures and sea-level rise (*medium confidence*).
- Declines in coastal ecosystems will negatively impact reef fish and threaten reef fisheries (*medium confidence*).
- Islands with very limited water supplies are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change on the water balance (*high confidence*)."

Kiribati and Tuvalu are predicted¹¹ to suffer the greatest impact of climate change including disappearance in the worst case scenario. Although most media attention has focussed on sea level rise, the expected impacts – particularly for atolls – are likely to include reduced agricultural output (due to changing rainfall patterns and increased temperatures), a decline in ground water quantity and quality (sea level rise and possibly drought), substantial negative effects on health (increased diarrhoea, dengue fever and ciguatera or fish poisoning), extensive

⁷ See Pacific Human Development Report (UNDP, 1999), Economic Impact of Natural Disasters in the South Pacific (UNDP, 1997), Progress Toward a Global Environmental Vulnerability Index (SOPAC, 2001), and Small States: Meeting Challenges in the Global Economy (Commonwealth Secretariat/World Bank, 2000).

⁸ 'Small' states are those with under 1.5 million population, i.e. large by PIC standards and nearly twenty times the population of Kiribati.

⁹ Environmental Vulnerability Index: Development and Provisional Indices for Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (SOPAC, 2000).

¹⁰ Climate Change 2001: Synthesis Report for Policymakers (IPCC, October 2001).

¹¹ *Climate Change and Commonwealth Nations* (Australia Institute, October 2001).

capital damage (due to storm surges), and lost fish production. The World Bank¹² concludes that:

"Managing change will be particularly critical in the area of climate change, a subject ... of immense and immediate impact on Pacific Island countries. Choosing a development path that decreases the islands' vulnerability to climate events and maintains the quality of the social and physical environment will not only be central to the future well being of the Pacific Island people, but will also be a key factor in the countries' ability to attract foreign investment in an increasingly competitive global economy." (Emphasis added.)

1.5 Managing Marine Resources

The Central West Pacific is the world's richest tuna fishery, providing a third of the global catch with a landed value of US\$2,000 million annually during the 1990s. However, the PICs captured only 11% of this, the bulk of benefits accruing to distant fishing nations.¹³ Furthermore, the PICs have invested US\$200-300 million of public funds in their fisheries with negligible returns, in effect wiping out the money which has been earned through fees imposed on the distant fishing nations. Effectively managing the migratory tuna (and eventually the vast mineral) resources of the Pacific will be a key challenge for the PICs in the coming years. The determination of a sustainable maximum yield, arms length access negotiations with distant fishing nations, accurately monitoring catches, and assuring good economic returns and employment for Pacific Islanders can only be successful if done cooperatively on a regional basis. For small countries such as Kiribati, with extremely scarce land-based resources, more effective use of the sea's resources¹⁴ is a key to future prosperity.

1.6 Data as a Limitation to Effective Analysis and Monitoring

The accurate assessment of key development issues, the formulation of policies to address them, implementation of policies and

programmes, and monitoring results and impacts all require a wide range of timely, accurate and consistent data. The UN family and others have devoted considerable resources to the collection and analysis of data and improving the statistical capacities of PICs and their regional organisations. However, much of the assistance has been *ad hoc*, short term and incomplete. There are pockets of good data for most PICs sufficient for 'snapshots' which indicate reasonably well the current development situation at the national level. Often, however, for the smaller PICs for which CCAs are being prepared, much data is national; there are only limited breakdowns of available data by sex, age, income group or geographic location (by island, by province urban/rural, etc.). Another data issue for the smaller PICs is the lack of consistent and meaningful time-series datasets which allow accurate indications of trends. This is a particular issue for rare events such as maternal mortality, where some reported trends, or even data for a single year, can be inherently misleading.

UNDP¹⁵ notes that good governance is an indispensable part of good government but that in the Pacific, "social statistics are particularly hard to locate and difficult to use because they are often unreliable or outdated. ... It leaves us without critical indicators of development." Annex 2, for example, indicates reasonably accurately the current progress by Kiribati in reaching the Millennium and other global development goals. Without more disaggregation of data and better analysis of reported trends and their relevance to small populations, there is some degree of speculation regarding which issues are most serious (and require immediate attention)¹⁶ and which trends are genuinely improving.

Better data are needed in the Pacific at three levels:

- Primary, as in census surveys or health information systems;

¹² Adapting to Climate Change (Vol. 4 of Cities, Seas, and Storms: Managing Change in Pacific Island Economies (WB, 2000).

¹³ Summary Report (Vol. 1 of Cities, Seas, and Storms: Managing Change in Pacific Island Economies (WB, 2000).

¹⁴ In 1998, Kiribati earned US\$7m from tuna licenses in its EEZ, under 0.4% of the Pacific landed value.

¹⁵ Pacific Human Development Report (UNDP, Suva, 1999; p 6).

¹⁶ A recent, and possibly important, example: A meeting of climate scientists in New Zealand had access to an unprecedented level of detail on temperature changes in the Pacific from 1950-2000. It concluded that temperatures for many PICs rose by 0.5-1.0°C since 1950, compared to a global average increase of 0.6°C for the entire century. Kiribati was not among those with especially high temperature increases. (Source: PNGCR, 2001)

- secondary, for example better and more relevant tabulations and compilations; and
- tertiary, that is more and better interpretation and policy analyses.

Box 1.4 argues for an improved regional capacity to assist PICs improve the collection, analysis and use of data at national and sub-national levels.

1.7 Development Assistance to the Pacific

Unlike larger LDCs, those in the Pacific are extremely dependent on donor assistance for developing social and economic policies. Their ability to plan, and implement these plans, depends to an unusual extent on the areas in which bilateral and multilateral donor funding is available both to the countries directly and for interventions through regional organisations and the donors' own regional assistance programmes. There do not appear to be any comprehensive recent analyses of trends in aid flows to the PICs overall (or to individual LDCs such as Kiribati) in terms of quantity, sectoral concentration, thematic concentration, sources, etc.¹⁷

A commonly expressed view within the region is a perceived donor tendency toward new emphases every few years, less continuity in their programming, less willingness to support specific national efforts for a period sufficient to make much impact, sudden on-again off-again switches to specific areas of assistance, and shorter project cycles. For larger countries, where aid is a small percentage of GDP, the nature of aid flows may not be a serious concern; for the PICs, it can arguably undermine development efforts.

1.8 Population Growth, Poverty and Development

Nearly a decade ago, an ANU study¹⁸ referred to the PICs' population growth as "out of control" with potential widespread poverty, malnutrition, disease, unemployment and environmental degradation, a scenario which could be avoided with deep consideration and

appropriate actions by the countries and the development community.

Later, in 1996, an East-West Center report¹⁹ warned that "rapid population growth may be hampering the region's development efforts. ... Accommodating the additional numbers of people will pose major challenges to their governments and societies." In 2001, the Asian Development Bank²⁰ warned of growing

Box 1.4 – PIC Data Limitations as a Constraint to Analysis and Monitoring

In the mid 1990s, the difficulty of monitoring Sustainable Human Development (SHD) was assessed for Fiji (Chung 1995), which has a relatively well trained and staffed statistics office: "Although the institutional capacity for [data collection and] monitoring in Fiji is perhaps as good as anywhere in the South Pacific, official data often are unreliable or inaccurate, have important gaps or uneven coverage, are over-aggregated, and out-dated." Official statistics said little about salient SHD issues, there was little continuity in data collection, data were not timely, and data were fragmentary and scattered. In addition, there was only limited analysis of the data that do exist: "Policy requires multiple data-sets (national, community and household) but linking available data-sets is nearly impossible. ... Lousy data give lousy results."

In most other PICs, including Kiribati, capacity for data collection and analysis is even more limited. In 2000 the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting (FEMM) resolved to strengthen the collection of economic statistics in the region. By mid 2001, assessments of statistical needs were underway in several PICs (but not yet Kiribati) and the ADB was considering a Regional Technical Assistance programme (RETA) in economic statistics. In 2001, the Ministers noted the need for:

- * a coherent reform strategy for statistical operations in the region based on a systematic assessment of country needs;
- * establishing a regional capacity to coordinate and conduct and/or provide technical assistance for national censuses, and large-scale social and economic surveys (as PICs such as Kiribati are too small to justify, develop or sustain such services);
- * reducing the heavy demands of donor agencies on national statistical offices; and
- * improving the quality and coordination of the variety of regional databases.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is the regional agency with the mandate for the collection of statistical data and support to PICs but it lacks the resources to address all important PIC needs.

There is abundant information available for this Kiribati CCA but the lack of timely, complete, consistent, reliable and disaggregated data (by island, gender, age, etc.), and of trends over time, precludes more detailed analysis.

Sources: Papers from FEMM, June 2001; Chung, 1995; and Nov. 2001 discussions

¹⁷ During the preparation of the CCA, a large numbers of websites and organisations were contacted. Apparently regional and international organisations have not done such an analysis in some years.

¹⁸ *Pacific 2010: Challenging the Future* (edited by R. V. Cole, ANU, 1993).

(and in some cases 'hard core') poverty among Pacific communities, families and individuals; 43% of the population of its PIC members were considered 'disadvantaged' in 1998 as estimated by UNDP's Human Poverty Index. In the ADB's opinion, there are six key issues that affect all of its Pacific members, in approximately the order listed below:

- "difficulties in providing good governance;
- population growth outpacing economic growth;
- declining educational performance;
- weakness of the private sector;
- breakdown of traditional support systems; and
- urban elite capturing most of the benefits from modernisation."

The ADB also lists²¹ five "key development challenges" for the PICs:

- "disappointing macroeconomic and growth performance over the past decade;
- increasing poverty, particularly in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu;
- continuing reliance on large government investments ...;
- increasing environmental degradation; and
- little progress in strengthening the role of women in political, economic, and social spheres."

Population growth, alongside rapid social change, makes it difficult to provide services, can frustrate employment plans, increases pressure to migrate, affect social security, exacerbate domestic violence and generally hamper development efforts.

In some PICs, domestic violence, and particularly violence against women, has been accepted because of how society perceives women. However, recently PICs have acknowledged, and begun to deal with, spouse and child abuse. The New Zealand

government has worked in eight PICs (the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu) on domestic violence.²²

"a problem confronting every country visited [with] consistent themes across the region. For instance, there's no agreed definition of what constitutes domestic violence, no legislation and a lack of legal frameworks or consistent practice for addressing the issue. Alcohol is often an aggravating factor and many complaints are withdrawn by victims before they get to court. ... Increasingly there is an expectation among women, church and government leaders, as well as the police, that the situation must change."

Rapid population growth, youth unemployment, urbanisation, poverty and other pressures are also reflected in the growth in youth gangs and street kids in urban centres throughout the region. The issue of disaffected and unemployed youth is increasingly coming to public and government attention as an issue which must be addressed.

1.9 Some Conclusions

A number of the key national development issues facing the PICs, and the LDCs among them, will require cooperative regional or global action involving the countries themselves and the development assistance community. Among these are more effective provision and use of aid, better data and skills for the analysis and monitoring of social and economic development, understanding and effectively implementing those key treaties and international commitments to which the PICs are party, addressing the impacts of climate change, more effectively managing the resources of the vast Pacific, and addressing common key issues such as rapid population growth, increased incidence of HIV/AIDS, increasing poverty, disaffected youth, domestic violence, and limited progress in achieving gender equality.

¹⁹ Demographic and Social Change in the Island Nations of the Pacific (Dennis Ahlburg, EWC, 1996)

²⁰ Poverty: Is it an Issue in the Pacific? (ADB, Manila, 2001)

²¹ Pacific Strategy for the new Millennium (ADB, Manila, 1999)

²² *Annual Review* (NZODA 1998 & 2000)

CHAPTER 2: KIRIBATI AND THE CCA PROCESS

This chapter summarises the current development situation in Kiribati, the government's policies and goals to address key issues, and an emerging global consensus regarding the goals of development. The chapter then summarises past UN assistance and describes the selection of themes and a CCA framework to better address both Kiribati and international concerns.

2.1 The Kiribati Development Situation

Kiribati consists of 33 atolls scattered so widely across the Pacific Ocean (See Map 1) that the distance from the capital, Tarawa, to the eastern-most island of Kiritimati is approximately the same as from Los Angeles to New York. Atolls (see photo at right) are among the harshest living environments on this planet: flat ribbons of sand that support only a limited range of vegetation. A few atolls have natural underground water lenses; elsewhere a perennial shortage of fresh water constrains human habitation and use. The geographic fragmentation of Kiribati and its

location in the central Pacific Ocean makes good transport and communications both costly and difficult.



Tarawa atoll (courtesy of SOPAC)

Kiribati's economy depends primarily on ever-fluctuating world prices for copra and fish, interest earned from a 'Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund' (RERF), remittances from I-Kiribati (the indigenous people) working abroad, licence fees for foreign-owned ships registered locally, and foreign aid.

Table 2.1 provides some basic development indicators. Within UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI), Kiribati ranks 11th of 14 countries in the Pacific region and 129th in the world. In terms of infant mortality and child morbidity, per capita GDP and living conditions,

Table 2.1: Some Basic Development Indicators for Kiribati

Indicator	Overall	Males	Females	Comments
Population (census of Nov. 2000) ¹	84,494	41,646	42,848	<i>(All data in bold font from 2000 census report)</i>
Population growth (1995-2000; %/yr) ¹	1.69%	1.58%	1.79%	Urban (S Tarawa) = 5.17%; rural = - 0.63%.
Life expectancy (1995; years) ²	60.2	58.5	64.7	WB ⁶ est. overall 61.4 (1999) and 59.4 ('95); up from 48 (m) & 50 (f) in 1975 ¹² * weighted ave.; not in ref 1
(2000; years) ¹	62.8 *	58.2	67.3	
Infant mortality rate (1995) ²	62	67.5	56.3	Other data indicate overall of 53 ⁷ to 57 ⁶
(2000) ¹	43	-	-	
Child mortality, under 5; excluding infants (1995) ²	24	27.8	20.8	Estimated 72 ⁶ to 88 ¹³ for infant + under 5 yrs mortality
Maternal mortality rate (1995-2000) ¹³	-	-	56	Five year average for the period
GDP per capita Aus \$ (2000; prelim) ³	A\$804	-	-	GNP (2000) = A\$1473; GDP (1999) = A\$860
Aid per capita (US\$; 1997-98) ¹⁰	US\$ 194	-	-	This is 62% of 1991-92 level of US\$311
Access to safe drinking water (1995) ⁴	47%	-	-	Urban (South Tarawa) 82%; rural (elsewhere) 25%
Access to sanitation (1995) ²	46%	-	-	Urban 45%; rural 53% (1990) ; overall 63% in 1980
Access to health services (1995) ²	95%	-	-	22 of 23 doctors are reportedly in S Tarawa ¹¹
(2000) ¹⁵	100%	-	-	There are 84 health 'service delivery points' ¹⁵
Adult literacy (1998) ⁵	93%	94%	91%	More-or-less unchanged since early 1980s
Human Development Index (1998) ⁵	0.515	0.493	0.517	Higher is better (Kiribati is 11 th of 14 PICs ranked)
Human Poverty Index (1998) ⁵	12.7	13.7	11.8	Higher is worse (Kiribati is 10 th of 14 PICs ranked)
HIV / AIDS (cases; Sept 2001) ¹⁴	38	27	11	Up from 2 in 1994 and 36 in early 2001
Members of House of Assembly (2001) ⁹	42	40	2	37th of 49 Commonwealth members for women MPs (but best of the 7 Commonwealth PICs)
Administrators and Managers (%;1990s) ¹¹	100	96	4	Also 10 of 280 police were women in 1998 ¹⁴
Legislators and senior officials (%; 2000) ¹	100	73	27	

Sources: ¹ Kiribati Govt, Report on the 2000 Census Population (Nov. 2001); ² Kiribati Dept. Statistics & WHO (1995); ³ ADB, Key Indicators (2001); ⁴ Kiribati at a Glance (WB, 2001); ⁵ UNDP Pacific HDR (1999); ⁶ Kiribati Data Profile, (WB, 2000) ⁷ Pacific Island Country Profile UNICEF, 2001); ⁸ World Health Report (WHO, 2001); ⁹ Pacific News Bulletin (PCRC, October 2001); ¹⁰ Comsec/WB, 2000; ¹¹ Poverty Discussion Papers: Kiribati (ADB, 2001); ¹² Kiribati National Development Strategy (NDS, 2000-2003); ¹³ UNFPA Kiribati Country Brief, 2001; ¹⁴ Annual Review (NZODA; 1998); ¹⁵ Ministry of Health Report (Kiribati, 2001); ¹⁶ Official HIV/AIDS Report (Kiribati, 09/2001). Note that women outscore men in HDI because of longer life expectancy and in HPI because of greater survival to age 40.

**Box 2.1 – Challenges Facing
Pacific Island States: the Case of Kiribati**

Kiribati has a population similar to that of Andorra, but spread over an area roughly equal to that of Europe. Most of its area is ocean: the land mass is 810 km², compared to an EEZ of 3.55 million km². The geographic spread reaches 4,000 km from east to west and 2,000 km from north to south. Transport within Kiribati is extremely limited and is primarily by boat. The nearest large markets are 4,000 km away, in Honolulu and Brisbane. There are only six flights¹ a week in and out of the country. Hence distance from, and access to markets, not just externally but also internally, presents challenges of a magnitude faced by few countries.

The resource base is very narrow. The arid climate and poor soil offer little potential for agricultural development. Ocean resources are the mainstay of the economy – about 80% of households make a living or survive through fishing. The public sector dominates all spheres of economic activity. Fishing licensing fees are the major source of foreign exchange and government revenue while import duties and remittances from I-Kiribati employed in foreign shipping fleets provide significant additional government revenue and foreign exchange, respectively.

The population is concentrated in the Gilbert Islands Group, which includes Tarawa, the capital. One-third live in the South Tarawa urban centre,² with 1,610 persons per km² while the Phoenix Group is virtually uninhabited. If present trends continue, population will double within 20 years³ presenting even greater challenges to overcome environmental and health problems, particularly in Tarawa. The demographic profile is skewed to the young, placing significant strain on the Government to provide basic health and education services. Kiribati's numerous, small and low-lying islands heighten its environmental vulnerability, especially to sea-level rises; some islets and bird sanctuaries have already disappeared.

Kiribati's potential to benefit from globalisation is hampered by limited institutional and human capacity. The private sector is very small and fragmented. Privatisation has not progressed far, in part because of fears that it cannot fill the gaps, presenting challenges to the Government in determining the most appropriate pace and sequencing of policy changes in areas such as privatisation, downsizing and improving the performance of the public sector, tax and duty reforms (which would initially have negative revenue consequences), and the use of modern technologies. While embracing the global trading regime will deliver certain benefits, commodity exports will continue to be hampered by Kiribati's remote location and irregular supply routes.

Source: Adapted from Commonwealth Secretariat and World Bank, 2000

Notes:

- 1 Since the report was written in 2000, flights to Kiribati have become more irregular and reduced in frequency.
- 2 The 2000 Census shows 44% of the population now living in South Tarawa with 2300 people per km².
- 3 At present growth rates, doubling time is now only 14 years.

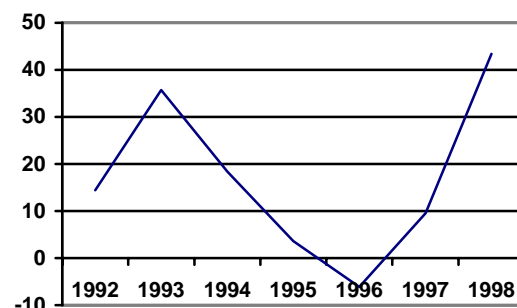
particularly water and sanitation, Kiribati's development indicators are among the lowest in the Pacific region. The incidence of HIV/AIDS has risen alarmingly. Women's participation in management and national politics is very low. Statistics, of course, tell only a part of the story (and as Chapter 1 and the rightmost column of Table 2.1 suggest), some reported data are of questionable accuracy.

Kiribati society retains strong traditional practices and values based on family relationships, the sharing of resources and incomes and a co-operative approach to economic activity. Despite evidence of increasing poverty, Kiribati remains relatively egalitarian. The government is stable and democratic institutions are strong. Some development implications of these indicators will be discussed in later sections.

2.2 Economic Trends and Issues

Kiribati's status as an LDC was reconfirmed by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (ECOSOC) in October 2000, recognising Kiribati's low per capita GDP,²³ limited human resources and its high vulnerability to external forces, described in general terms in Chapter 1 and for Kiribati in Box 2.1. For example, prices received for Kiribati's copra and seaweed exports fell dramatically in 1997, partly as a result of the East Asian financial crisis. In 1998, international prices recovered and the value of the Australian dollar (Kiribati's national currency) increased; as a result, export prices rose to record levels. Meanwhile, the prices of seafood exports to Hong Kong fell sharply. Factor income, however, more than doubled from 1996 to 1998, due to

Figure 2.1: Balance of Payments (A\$ millions)



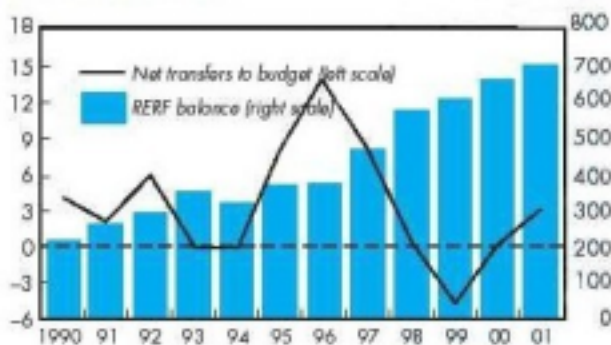
Source: Govt of Kiribati, 2001 (based on 1998 data)

²³ In 1998, Kiribati had the lowest reported GDP per capita (US\$702) of the 15 PICs listed in the *Regional Human Development Report* (UNDP, 1999).

increased revenue from fishing licences, which in turn resulted from the powerful 'El Nino' weather conditions of 1997 and early 1998.

The destabilising effect on balance of payments from 1992 to 1998 is shown in Figure 2.1. These fluctuations are beyond the control of Kiribati, but have a profound effect on its national economy and the well being of its people.

Figure 2.2: Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund



Source: adapted from IMF, 2001; data from Govt of Kiribati

The distinguishing feature of the economy is the RERF which holds foreign reserves in overseas accounts prudently managed by international brokerage firms. As shown in Figure 2.2, its value has steadily grown and is now equivalent to about 7 years' imports or nine times the value of GDP. By the end of 2000, returned investment income was equivalent to around A\$24 million as interest and dividends, equal to a third of GDP.²⁴ As a result of the RERF, Kiribati's GNP since 1995 has been about 80% higher than its GDP.²⁵

Table 2.2 summarises recent economic data including the modest growth in per capita GDP. Economic growth has averaged 1.6% since independence in 1979, failing to keep pace with population growth. The economy is dominated by the public service, accounting for about 30% of GDP. State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) pervade

all aspects of the economy resulting in an enclave of protected, well-paid and sometimes inefficient workers. The public service (including SOEs) accounts for about 80% of all paid employment in the country. Subsidies and loans to SOEs in 1996 were 30% and 70% respectively above the national expenditure on education and health.²⁶

Kiribati has practiced sound fiscal management and has maintained impressive levels of foreign reserves but there is a range of issues which are affecting development prospects:²⁷

- There is extreme government domination of the economy (with government spending about double that of other comparable small island economies);
- The trade deficit has been persistent (60% of GDP in the past decade);
- Income from exports is highly dependent on several products and is highly unstable;
- High growth of the RERF through offshore investment has effectively been at the expense of services to the outer islands and lower-income groups;
- Delivery of social services has been inefficient;
- The subsidies and loans to highly inefficient state owned enterprises are denying opportunities for the creation of private sector jobs and reducing funds available for more productive investment in such areas as education and health;
- Under 20% of working age population is formally employed, with nearly two-thirds

Table 2.2: Economic Indicators, 1995-1999 (A\$'000)

Indicator	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
GDP constant growth (%)	4.1	1.9	-3.0	4.8	0.02
GDP per capita (constant dollars)	775	790	766	803	805
Inflation rate (retail price index % change)	4.1	-1.5	2.2	4.7	0.4
Current account balance	-3,276	-20,946	752	21,536	27,203
Official external reserves (including RERF)	375,700	375,000	462,500	596,800	616,500
External debt service	100	150	200	200	200
Current expenditure	46,900	49,700	51,200	54,900	70,300
Development expenditure	19,800	24,600	26,700	39,000	24,700
Revenue (including RERF draw down)	50,800	45,400	63,500	69,200	60,900
External grants and loans	17,200	20,400	26,400	39,300	27,600
Net surplus/deficit	1,300	-8,500	12,000	14,600	-6,500

Source: National Planning Office, Kiribati, 2000

²⁴ The source is *Asian Development Outlook (ADO)* (ADB, 2001).

²⁵ GDP (gross domestic product) is the total output of goods and services for final use produced within Kiribati. GNP (gross national product) comprises GDP plus net factor income from abroad: RERF income, fishing license fees and seaman's remittances. Neither includes any measure of economic loss due to resource degradation.

²⁶ See Poverty Discussion Papers: Kiribati (ADB, 2001).

²⁷ Based on Kiribati Takes Action (IMF, 2001) and Poverty Discussion Papers: Kiribati (ADB, 2001)

- of all formal jobs based in South Tarawa;
- High per capita GNP, nearly double GDP, could possibly jeopardise Kiribati's future LDC status, reducing aid and access to concessionary loans; and
- Poor economic performance since independence, and the growth and size of the public sector, have largely been at the expense of the disadvantaged.

2.3 National Development Goals and Objectives

The Government of Kiribati is well aware of the development constraints and various issues discussed above. Successive governments have had a consistent approach to addressing these issues, recently articulated in the *National Development Strategies: 2000 - 2003* (NDS) and the Government's *Action Programme for 2001 - 2010* presented to the Third UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries in May 2001. The following key development constraints have been identified by the government (NDS, page 1):

- Limited natural resource base, especially land and fresh water for development;
- Small domestic market with little potential for economies of scale;
- Widely scattered and sparsely populated island geography;
- Access to major international markets is expensive and hard to arrange;
- Increasingly competitive international markets for tourism and investment;
- Social and cultural system with limited understanding and experience with business practices and concepts;
- Labour force lacks education and job skills needed to support economic development;
- Land and capital market development constrained by social values and traditions; and
- Low absorptive capacity for major investments.

The ADB (*Kiribati Poverty Notes*, 2001) notes that the key issue missing is "probably the most challenging one currently facing Kiribati: the rapid growth in population and hence the need to find productive employment for the workforce."

The *Vision* of the NDS, a summary statement of the most important national goals, is:

By 2005 Kiribati will have achieved a significant increase in real per capita income, along with steady growth in employment. Within the region, Kiribati will be among the leading countries in gaining improvements in education, health, environmental protection, and social indicators. Public sector reforms will have raised productivity of the civil service, together with customer service standards and managerial accountability. Through structural reform, Kiribati will have established an effective enabling environment to sustain the significant growth which it aims to achieve in private sector output and employment.

Government statements of current issues and principle goals from the current NDS and the *Action Plan* are summarised below for the period 2000-2003:²⁸

Issue:	Status:	Goals by 2003:
GDP/capita	Growth has been too low	2-3% growth per year
Merchandise exports	Concentrated on few items with volatile value	10-15% growth/year; more competitive; a diversified marine export base (e.g. pearls, seaweed)
Employment	Youth unemployment is high; cash employment is low	6-8% growth in formal employment per year, mainly in private sector and the SOEs
Education	Many jobs unfilled due to poor I-Kiribati qualifications	Access to Form 3 by all; 25% higher Form 4-6 intake; improved vocational and business training
Health	Considerably improved since 1970s but indicators remain poor	Greater emphasis on outer island, primary preventative and reproductive health
Tourism	Visitor arrivals grew 30% 1995-1999 (ave. of 6.8%/year)	Increase visitors to Kiribati by 20%; privatise govt hotels
Government reform	Public service / SOE employment up 23% and wages up 39% from 1995-99	Reduce public sector; strengthen budgeting system; reform public commercial enterprises.
Governance	Wide scale consultation is common	Reform public service: more transparent and more accountable
Civil Society	Responsive to community level needs	Assist NGOs provide services to remote and disadvantaged people

²⁸ Although the *Action Plan* covers 2001-2010, all goals and measurable targets are for 2000-2003.

Government statements and goals (continued):

Issues:	Status:	Goals by 2003:
Population	Rapid growth; South Tarawa too crowded	Adopt policy addressing overall growth and South Tarawa density
Poverty	Increasing in South Tarawa and the outer islands	More formal & informal job opportunities; better safety nets for poor
HIV/AIDS	Identified as an emerging problem	"Fairly active program" but no specific goals
Crime	Some alcohol-related abuse, especially against women and children	Strengthen social case work and probation programmes
Environment	New legislation enacted in early 2000	Enforce environment act to protect water reserves, require impact assessment and minimise coastal and lagoon pollution
International Linkages	Kiribati is active both regionally and internationally	Develop stronger linkages; adopt 'best practices' for innovation and governance while maintaining local values

2.4 International Goals of Development

An important part of the mandate of the United Nations is to advocate for – and achieve international standards in – the recognition of human rights. The Government of Kiribati has made a number of commitments to international conventions or declarations. In recent years, these have included being signatory to, or participating in, the Decade for Education for All (1991), the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994); the Beijing Platform of Action (1995); and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified in 1995). Kiribati has not yet ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) but is a signatory to the 1995 Pacific Platform of Action (on women). The main global conferences of the 1990s, and key global conventions, are described in Annex 2B and summarised in Box 2.2.²⁹ The promotion of universal human rights can be controversial. Many societies, including Kiribati, believe that few real injustices exist in their own community. The discussion of these rights is nevertheless an important part of the development process; 'culture' and 'tradition' are

²⁹ There has been one notable global conference since then: The UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS held in New York in June 2001. Among the agreed goals is development and implementation of multisectoral national strategies and financing plans (by 2003), integration of HIV/AIDS policies into mainstream national development policies (by 2003), and reduction of HIV/AIDS among 15-24 year-olds in badly affected countries by 25% (by 2010).

Box 2.2 – Major UN Conferences and Treaties

There have been 14 major international conferences convened by the United Nations during the 1990s and one in 2001:

Conference	Venue
World Summit for Children	New York 1990
World Conference on Education for All	Jomtein 1990
UN Conference on Environment and Development	Rio de Janeiro 1992
International Conference on Nutrition	Rome 1992
World Conference on Human Rights	Vienna 1993
International Conference on Population and Development	Cairo 1994
World Summit for Social Development	Copenhagen 1995
Fourth World Conference on Women	Beijing 1995
Ninth Congress on the Prevention of and Crime Treatment of Offenders	Cairo 1995
Second UN Conference on Human Settlements - Habitat II	Istanbul 1996
World Food Summit	Rome 1996
Ninth Session of the UNCTAD	Madrid 1996
UNGA - 20th Special Session on the World Drug Problem	New York 1998
Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies	Stockholm 1998
UNGASS on HIV/AIDS	New York, 2001

See Annex 2B for indicators of progress in meeting global conference goals and status for Kiribati.

There are seven major international conventions or other legal instruments in force regarding human rights. These, and action by Kiribati, are listed below:

Instrument	Kiribati Action
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	None
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right	None
Convention Against Torture	None
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	None
Convention on the Rights of the Child	Ratified
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	None
ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work	None

Source: Details, and additional treaties, provided in Annex 2C

generally not good reasons for maintaining discrimination or injustice.

In September 2000, over 150 Heads of State and of Government met for a Millennium Summit in New York to negotiate a Millennium Declaration committing the United Nations to achieving 'a just and lasting peace all over the world' and rededicating the organisation to 'respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.' The Declaration affirms that 'the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured'; and states that 'prudence must be shown in the management of all living species and natural resources, in

accordance with the precepts of sustainable development.' It calls on states to 'promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable;' 'combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;' and 'adopt in all our environmental actions a new ethic of conservation and stewardship.' Kiribati was represented by the then Head of State, HE Mr Teburoro Tito.

The various global conferences and treaties have resulted in a bewildering number of action plans and goals. The core common development goals which have emerged, and estimates of Kiribati's progress in attaining them, are shown in Annex 2B. Annex 2A lists the Millennium Declaration Goals agreed by the world's leaders. These have since become a key agenda item of the UN and a driving force of its reform process. The goals are time-based (achievement by 2015), measurable and often quite ambitious. A preliminary assessment of the likelihood of attainment by Kiribati, and the state of the national supportive environment, is attached as Annex 2A with a brief summary in Box 2.3. In some cases, available data were inconsistent or too limited to allow accurate and reasonable estimates. Nonetheless, Kiribati has the potential to meet a number of the goals whereas the attainment of others may be unlikely without a strong commitment by both the government and the development community.

There are a number of other global treaties of particular relevance to the Pacific Islands region including Kiribati (e.g. the Kyoto Protocol on limiting greenhouse gas emissions, the Convention on the Law of the Sea) and several key regional agreements among members of the Pacific Islands Forum countries. These are mainly related to trade, environmental protection and fisheries management. Their status and Kiribati's involvement are summarised in Annex 2D.

Recall, from Chapter 1 that ratification of agreements or treaties by Kiribati does not necessarily mean that they have entered into force; this may require specific legislation which in turn often requires external assistance as government legal human resources are extremely limited. Effectively implementing agreements (e.g. the regional

Box 2.3 – Millennium Goals and Kiribati

The status of achieving the goals in Kiribati, by 2015 unless noted otherwise, are summarised below. See Annex 2A for more details and an explanation.

Global Goal	Will be Met in Kiribati?		
	Probably	Maybe	Unlikely
Poverty. Halve % of people in poverty.		✓	
	poverty, esp. urban, worsening		
HIV/AIDS. Halt & begin to reverse spread of HIV/AIDS		✓	
	Cases growing rapidly; there is an incipient epidemic		
Hunger. Halve % of under-weight (under 5 yrs olds)		✓	
	Sanitation worsening; labour force growing fast; few new jobs; few fresh vegetables		
Water. Halve % without access to safe water.			✓
	Only 47% with safe water; 82% urban; 25% in rural areas)		
Primary Education. Universal completion		✓	
	Reportedly 94-97% enrolment since the 1980s		
Gender. Equal male/female access to primary & sec school (2005)		✓	
	Equal access in primary school; higher female dropout rates in secondary schools		
Maternal Health. ¾ drop in mortality ratio		✓	
	Kiribati population is too small for meaningful trends for rare events such as this.		
Child Mortality. 2/3 drop in under-five death rate		✓	
	Was 132 (1980s) improved to 62 (1999)		
Environment. Reverse environ. resource loss			✓
	Both waste mgt and sanitation are worsening on South Tarawa		

Note that I-Kiribati argue that there is little or no 'extreme poverty' in Kiribati and that child 'hunger' might more appropriately be termed 'malnutrition.'

Source: CCA/UNDAF workshop, Tarawa, 6-7 Feb. 2002.

trade agreement to help Kiribati achieve its goals for economic growth, trade growth and trade diversification; or regional and global conventions for the conservation and management of migratory fish species) also require substantial assistance at both regional and national levels for analysis, monitoring, enforcing and other support.

2.5 The Pattern of UN Assistance to Kiribati

The principal area of overall UN activity in Kiribati has been health, a main concern of WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNAIDS, but also, in its environmental aspects and development impacts, of UNDP. Other priority areas have been employment and livelihoods (UNDP, ILO and FAO) and the situation of women and children (UNICEF and UNIFEM). Formal education has been the concern of UNESCO but also of UNDP and UNICEF which also support non-formal and community education. UNICEF plays important roles in promotion of early childhood education, advocacy of child rights, and nutrition. Improving environmental

management is a common concern as it relates to health (WHO, UNICEF), the use of natural resources (UNDP, FAO) and vulnerability (UNOCHA). All UN agencies have to some extent assisted Kiribati to understand and implement the plans of action that emerged from the international conventions of the 1990s, in particular commitments to combat poverty and improve the practice of human rights.

Most UN assistance has been directed to and through government ministries, even UNDP's private sector promotion activities. Almost all projects include a capacity-building component, a continual concern as there is a high turnover of trained and experienced civil servants, a constant outflow of qualified professionals, and too few qualified candidates to fill many of the gaps. This has been particularly severe for the Ministries of Finance and Economic Planning and Health. Few NGOs have been directly involved in implementing assistance programmes, reflecting generally weak NGO capacity in Kiribati and perhaps the reluctance of the government to allow a greater role for NGOs.

The effectiveness of development assistance has long been a concern of the Kiribati Government and the public. Although Kiribati receives considerable aid *per capita*, there is a perception within the Government and among the public — shared by some donors — that too little of this has had a lasting benefit on the quality of life.

2.6 Country Assessment – Selection of Principal Themes, Organisation and a Conceptual Framework

The selection of CCA themes for Kiribati was based on:

- consultations with the government, and consideration of recent government policy documents, on key development issues of concern to Kiribati;
- discussions with civil society organisations, development agencies, and others familiar with Kiribati;
- discussions with UN agencies on those key issues facing Kiribati³⁰ which are within their mandate and could – or should – be

addressed at least in part by the UN system;

- consideration of the major development goals and targets which have emerged from key global conferences and treaties over the past decade, particularly as expressed in the Millennium Summit of 2000;
- consideration of current UN assistance and the extent to which it addresses national development needs;
- attention to cross-cutting issues or themes (gender, environment, equity of access to services, and issues specific to atoll and island developing countries); and
- consideration of regional commitments entered into by Kiribati through treaties or as articulated by the Pacific Islands Forum or other regional Action Plans endorsed by Kiribati.³¹

The Common Country Assessment process does not attempt to assess the entire gamut of development concerns. Rather, it identifies key issues as a basis for advocacy, policy dialogue with the country and preparation of the subsequent United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The UNDAF is a planning framework for the development operations of the UN system at the country level (in this case, a UN 'business plan' for Kiribati) and includes common objectives; common strategies for assistance; a common timeframe for design, delivery and follow-up; and a framework for programme resources. Accordingly the CCA focuses mainly on those areas in which the UN might best assist Kiribati with development. Two broad themes which have evolved from the process are:

- *Society, governance and the economy.* Chapter 3 deals with issues of the adequacy of Kiribati's systems of governance and public administration to develop and implement policies which lead to more sustained growth, more equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of development and a more just society in general.
- *Basic needs, safety nets and the environment.* Chapter 4 considers the

³⁰ During a CCA/UNDAF workshop in Fiji from 12-14 November 2001, UN agencies discussed an earlier (October 2000) draft of the Kiribati CCA and possible new issues to be covered.

³¹ A good example is the *Consolidated Forum Economic Action Plan* (FEMM, 2001) which includes objectives to address economic governance, social impacts of economic and fiscal policies, globalisation, environment, gender, and improved data and statistics. It also includes the Forum's principles of accountability.

provision of basic needs and development from a more sectoral perspective.

These thematic areas are, of course, intimately interrelated and could well be treated as a single overall theme of governance and the equitable distribution of the benefits and costs of development. Cross-cutting issues are considered in both chapters. These include gender and human rights, the challenges of adapting to globalisation, the difficulties posed by inadequate data and the vulnerability of small atoll states.

The process of organising and carrying out the CCA is described in Annex 3. Consultations were held with the government in late 1999, a draft CCA document was prepared in 2000 and a slightly revised version was completed in October 2000. Unfortunately, there was a hiatus from October 2000 until September 2001 as a number of early CCAs were internally assessed by the United Nations Development Group. Lessons learned were incorporated into a series of training workshops to assist UN agencies to develop more useful CCAs and incorporate better linkages to the UNDAFs. The two CCA/UNDAF training workshops for the Pacific Islands, held in Suva and Apia, could not be organised until November 2001.

Partly as a result, the updating and finalisation of the Kiribati CCA was delayed for an extended period of time. By mid 2001, the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Fiji had decided to complete the Kiribati document simultaneously with the preparation of CCAs for three other Least Developed Countries: the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. A CCA Manager was engaged to oversee the process for all countries, and to update and finalise the Kiribati CCA report by early 2002.

Conceptually, the framework for this document is built upon:

- The primacy of people-centred and equitable development;
- the recognition that Kiribati has decided upon a development path based on closer integration with the regional and global economies, expanded and diversified trade, and a larger role for the private sector and civil society;
- the knowledge that, as a nation of tiny fragile atolls, Kiribati cannot meet its development objectives without particular, and more effective, attention to protecting, conserving and managing its coasts, lagoons and marine environment;
- the understanding that reversing the deteriorating trends of access to safe water and sanitation, and improving the delivery of basic health services (particularly maternal and child health) is essential if Kiribati is to progress;
- the appreciation that many of the constraints and opportunities facing Kiribati can only be effectively addressed through cooperative action at the regional level;
- The need for well designed, pragmatic assistance which does not overwhelm the limited local administrative capacity but augments it (and includes mechanisms for effective monitoring); and
- the understanding that the UN system must work effectively and cooperatively with the wider donor community to address the issues facing Kiribati.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIETY, GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMY

3.1 The Government, Political Culture and Core Values of Democracy

The traditional system of government in Kiribati is based upon island and clan groupings. Traditionally, a council of elders (*Unimane*) or in a few cases, hereditary chiefs, controlled island affairs. Since Independence in 1979 the government has been led by an elected President (*Beretitenti*) who is both Head of Government and Head of State. The Constitution is based on the British Westminster system, with a separate Legislature, Judiciary and an Administration. Members of Parliament (the House of Assembly) are elected for four-year terms by universal adult suffrage (aged 18 and older). Each inhabited island has at least one Island Council, which is responsible for local government matters. The government has been described as “a mix of Westminster principles and customary values within a structure which still gives considerable influence to the elder male (*unimane*) of the traditional realm. ... Women have a limited role in policy formulation although substantial influence in village society.”³³

Democratic values are generally strong with government answerable to the people. For example, changes to legislation follow Westminster convention but are referred to the *uimane* for their consideration before becoming law: it is hard to enact legislation which the rural leaders oppose. Members of Parliament can be recalled, forcing a by-election, if a petition is signed by 50% of the constituency's registered voters. There has been no creation of an entrenched political elite; to the contrary there has been a consistently high turn-over of elected members. In Kiribati, basic human rights

Box 3.1 – Human Rights Practices in Kiribati

The US State Department produces an annual *Kiribati Country Report on Human Rights Practices*. The most recent report (February 2001) is summarised below. There have been no allegations of human rights violations by the Government or requests for investigations. According to the US report:

- Respect for political rights is evident in periodic free and open national elections.
- Society is fundamentally egalitarian and has no privileged classes.
- The government generally respects the rights of its citizens but traditionally women occupy a subordinate role and have limited job opportunities.
- The judiciary is independent and free of government interference; the right to a public and fair trial is provided by law and observed in practice.
- Torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment are forbidden by the Constitution but traditional practice permits corporal punishment for criminal acts and transgressions; island councils sometimes order flogging with palm fronds for public drunkenness and petty theft.
- Prisons meet international standards; family members and church representatives have access to the prisoners.
- Arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence is illegal; the government respects this.
- The government generally respects the constitutional right of free speech but has in some instances limited rights. There is a private newspaper which publishes views divergent from those of the government but a private radio station was blocked by legalistic means.
- Access to foreign media is limited by high costs of importation and high Internet access costs; there are no Government-imposed restrictions.
- There are no restrictions on forming local human-rights NGOs, although none has been formed.
- Government does not control or restrict trade unions.
- Violence against women does not appear to be a major problem* and women have full and equal access to education.
- Child abuse*, if it exists, is rare.

* Recent reports by the Kiribati government³² have more openly acknowledged abuse against women and children and the need to address this abuse.

(Boxes 3.1 & 3.2) are entrenched in the Constitution, the assumption being that human rights include female as well as male. This does not always follow in practice, largely because social norms may prevent women from fully exercising their rights. For example, the *maneaba* is still where key community and national issues are debated.

³² “There are certain customs in Kiribati ... that allow bad behaviour, such as wife beating, to proceed uninterrupted. When a husband beats a wife, it is customary for people not to intervene because they consider the affair as ‘private.’ Also excessive beatings of children... are sometimes ignored ... because the affair is considered as ‘private.’ (Source: *Women of Kiribati: A Statistical Profile*, Dept of Social Welfare, July 1997) “Between the months of May to Sept. 2000, there were four reported child rape cases, and one attempted rape case, of children under the age of 7 by members of the child’s household. ... Until then, sexual abuse was not acknowledged as a problem because people didn’t believe, or want to believe, it was happening.” (Source: *Initial CRC Report*; draft; Kiribati Govt., July 2001).

³³ Source is Stakeholder Participation in Development: Kiribati (World Bank, 1998)

Box 3.2 – Recognition of Children's and Workers' Rights

Children. The Kiribati Government has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but with a number of reservations. With its limited financial resources, the Government generally provides adequate expenditure for child welfare. Primary education is compulsory for children between the ages of 6 and 14. Child health is given attention by primary health care services. The right to life, survival and development is well recognised.

Employment of children under the age of 14 is prohibited, and children under the age of 15 cannot be employed in factories or aboard ships. Some child labour does exist (despite compulsory schooling not all children attend) but they are rarely employed outside the traditional economy. The rights of children to be protected from discrimination are recognised in some respects, such as gender equity in school enrolments, but there is little information available in Kiribati about how other types of discrimination may affect some children. Nor is there information about the extent to which the best interests of the child are upheld by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities, legislative bodies, or in customary practices. The right of children to have their views respected is not well acknowledged in Kiribati society.

Workers. The Kiribati Constitution guarantees the freedom of association; workers can organise unions and choose their representatives. The small wage sector has a relatively strong and effective trade union movement. The Kiribati Trade Union Congress (KTUC) has approximately 2,500 members, mostly from the public service and is affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

Collective bargaining is provided for under the Industrial Relations Code. The Government sets wages in the large public sector. However, in a few statutory bodies and SOEs, employees may negotiate wages and other conditions. In the private sector, individual employees also may negotiate wages with employers. Negotiations are generally non-confrontational, in keeping with tradition. Mechanisms exist for resolving any complaints of anti-union discrimination.

The ILO has been active in informing the Government, the KTUC, workers and the community about workers' rights and good labour practices. It has convened National Tripartite Seminars to promote the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; translated eight fundamental Conventions into the vernacular; and discussed ratification of ILO Conventions, including Convention 182 on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

However, in the majority of communities it is still the custom that women do not speak in the *maneaba*.

Concerns have also been expressed³⁴ by some I-Kiribati that some legal rights can be difficult to exercise in practice. For example, freedom of speech is in effect restricted because there is very limited access to the government-owned media by those with dissenting views. Similarly workers rights are

limited by the lack of real dialogue between labour unions and the government.

3.2 Governance and the Quality of Public Administration

An open, transparent and accountable government and respect throughout society for human rights are increasingly recognised as essential for achieving inclusive development and alleviating poverty. In Kiribati, policy formulation and decision making are relatively open, involving widespread consultation. The formulation of the current development strategy (*NDS 2000-2003*) included consultations with, and inputs from, line ministries and departments, churches, NGOs, island councils, the Chamber of Commerce, individuals and the SOEs. Kiribati has also endorsed the 'Eight Principles of Accountability' (Box 3.3) adopted by the Forum Secretariat to improve national levels of performance, transparency, accountability and good governance.

Information was not readily available on the extent to which these principles have been, or will be, enshrined in law. However, "there is no evidence to support allegations of corruption, ... little evidence that [politicians] have assets beyond levels accumulated by other members of the politico-bureaucratic elite, ... [and] within the Public Service, cases of fraud are regularly detected, but few involve sums of more than a few hundred dollars. ... Politicians are often under financial pressure [to be generous regarding traditional obligations] but seem to resort to indebtedness rather than corruption when faced with these pressures."³⁵

The overall quality of Kiribati's public administration has improved as better-educated young I-Kiribati have joined the public service in recent years but a number of weaknesses have been identified by the government itself for attention during the current NDS planning period:

- the budgeting and budget control system is weak, including data collection and assessment;
- sectoral planning is not sufficiently strategic, institutionalised, ongoing or monitored; and
- there is a lack of focus by ministries on their real core functions.

³⁴ These issues arose during the CCA/UNDAF national workshop held in Tarawa in February 2002.

³⁵ Ibid.

These weaknesses may be difficult to overcome and consultations are sometimes more apparent than real: "The Public Service ... explores and administers aid policy initiatives from above (ministers) and outside (aid donors) rather than developing alternatives from within. It operates hierarchically among departments, divisions and sections rather than laterally. ... [Also] the importance of the traditional domain is seen in cultural expectations which make it difficult for one individual to ask another to do something more than once, to check if an instruction has been carried out or to criticise ..." (*Stakeholder Participation in Development*, WB, 1998). Thus:³⁶

- "the expectations about inter-ministry collaboration have been disappointing;"
- "government has so far failed to deal with the basic issues of cash incomes on, and government services to, outer-islands to the satisfaction of those who live on them;"
- "the structure of I-Kiribati politics and weaknesses in public sector management and administration limit the capacity of the government to formulate policy, maintain policy stability and implement projects;" and
- "bureaucratic requirements of donors, which may well exceed the capacity of the Kiribati government, also represent a major delaying factor in implementation."

Donor efforts to improve the quality of policy, planning and administration need to carefully consider the cultural context in which their programmes operate. The economic reform process, discussed briefly below, is an example where official government policy, strongly endorsed by (and in part developed by) the donor community, may conflict to some extent with local cultural norms and thus require careful consideration.

3.3 The Economy and Reforms

Only about 20% of the Kiribati labour force participates in the formal wage economy,³⁷ the bulk of people's work now, and probably for the foreseeable future, being in the non-paid informal sector. Most paid employment is with the government and 64% of all cash

jobs³⁸ are in South Tarawa. These factors are important when considering policies and opportunities to improve the livelihoods of the majority of I-Kiribati.

The formal Kiribati economy was discussed in Chapter 2: it has been prudently managed,

Box 3.3 – The Forum's Principles of Accountability

Kiribati has endorsed the Forum Secretariat's accountability principles, summarised below from the Economic Ministers' Meeting of July 2001:

1. Budget processes, including multi-year frameworks, to ensure Parliament / Congress is sufficiently informed to understand the longer term implications of appropriation decisions.

Budget should include all details of performance including audits and evaluations, and assessed impact including key objectives previously specified.. Government should be subject to audit reports.

2. The accounts of governments, state-owned enterprises and statutory corporations to be promptly and fully audited, and the audit reports published where they can be read by the general public.

State-owned enterprises should be subject to full accounting, reporting, disclosure, and other relevant requirements of a modern regulatory framework for corporate governance.

3. Loan agreements or guarantees entered into by governments to be presented to Parliament / Congress, with sufficient information to enable Parliament/Congress to understand the longer term implications.

Should be enshrined in law. Presentations to Parliament / Congress should be timely.

4. All government and public sector contracts should be openly advertised, competitively awarded, administered and publicly reported.

Award of contracts should be reported publicly and immediately. Should be enshrined in law.

5. Contravention of financial regulations to be promptly disciplined.

Laws ... governing fiscal and financial management should be comprehensive, up-to-date and workable. Ethical standards of behaviour for public servants should be clear and well publicised. There should be ready public access to administrative laws governing access to government benefits, the application of taxes, duties, and charges, etc.

6. Public Accounts / Expenditure Committees to be empowered to require disclosure.

7. Auditor General and Ombudsman to be provided with adequate fiscal resources and independent reporting rights to Parliament / Congress.

Statutory independence should apply to the public auditor and ombudsman. The law which provides for their appointment and tenure, and deals with their functions, operations and resourcing, should accord with international best practice in specifying their independence and fully protecting their performance from being compromised.

8. Central bank with statutory responsibility for non-partisan monitoring and advice, and regular and independent publication of informative reports.

³⁶ The first example is from Kiribati Country Cooperation Framework 1997-2001: Country Assessment Report (UNDP, July 2000); the others are from Stakeholder Participation in Development: Kiribati (World Bank, 1998).

³⁷ Recent data from the 2000 Census were not yet available.

³⁸ Of 9200 cash jobs held by I-Kiribati, 5889 are in S Tarawa. Most of the 247 non-indigenous people working in Kiribati are presumably based in S Tarawa (*2000 Census Report*).

GDP per capita, has grown only slowly since independence, investment has been concentrated in South Tarawa, and the production of goods and services is dominated by the public sector. The NDS emphasises public sector reform (and 'downsizing'), decreased subsidies for SOEs, and private sector-led growth in both GDP and employment through investment and increased exports. Yet privatisation and the encouragement of individualisation of economic activity meets resistance in terms of government policy and cultural preferences: "It is one of the ironies of Kiribati's current situation that any move toward economic or public sector reform is in conflict with local perceptions of government accountability and emphasis on participatory democracy reflecting I-Kiribati cultural values" (WB, 1998). However, even total acceptance within Kiribati of the reform process would not make implementation easy, in part because of the severe challenges of globalisation for a small peripheral economy and also because of poor data for monitoring the extent of success. According to the ADB (*Reforms in the Pacific*, 1999), "a lack of reliable and timely macroeconomic data is endemic to the region," which makes it difficult for both the countries and the ADB to accurately monitor economic trends and progress in reforms.³⁹

There are great differences in living standards and cash incomes between South Tarawa and the other islands of Kiribati and among the outer islands themselves. The economy of South Tarawa, the only true urbanised population centre in the country, is far more monetised than all other islands and there is far better access to health, education and other services.

Table 3.1:
Sample Cash Income and Distribution in Kiribati, 1996

Location	Weekly income		Income Distribution
	Per hh	Per capita	
Rural (Onotoa)	A\$6.80	A\$1.20	75% earned by 10% of households
Urban (S Tarawa)	A\$ 143	A\$13.70	≈100% earned by 16% of individuals

Source: Government of Kiribati, Bureau of Statistics, 1996

A 1996 survey of incomes on Onotoa (southern Gilbert Islands), found that the 287

³⁹ This is despite the high priority both governments and the development banks place on national economic statistics which tend to be far more developed than most other national statistics.

inhabitants (51 households) had an average household cash income per week of A\$6.80. The top 10% earned 75% of all income (see Table 3.1) and the second 10% earned all of the rest. A survey on South Tarawa, also in 1996, found much higher cash incomes but a similar pattern of uneven distribution. Surveys elsewhere, with different sample sizes, or at different times, would no doubt produce somewhat different results. Nonetheless the surveys are broadly indicative of cash income differences in urban and rural Kiribati and of income distribution. In rural areas, 'te berl' and 'te taurau' (forms of credit buying) are widely used to purchase goods when households have no money.⁴⁰ The shadow traditional economy, by redistributing monetary and other wealth along kin lines, evens out some of these income differences although cash is increasingly important.

Traditional wealth redistribution is somewhat weaker on South Tarawa where demands for cash for everyday living are much higher. Only 16% of those surveyed in Tarawa had paid jobs – usually one per household – yet this was the main source of household income. A high proportion of this cash was spent on food (rice, fish, frozen meat and sugar). Throughout Kiribati, the non-formal traditional economy remains important for food and general livelihood security. This is likely to continue as the labour force in the 1990s grew at 4.6% per year, more than twice as fast as overall population growth.⁴¹ With high youth unemployment already, and few new jobs available, it is important to remain vigilant regarding children's and workers' rights (see Box 3.2).

3.4 Population, Urbanisation and Migration

In November 2000, the date of the last census, Kiribati had a population of 84,494, an annual growth rate from 1995-2000 of 1.7% with urban growth of 5.2% and rural *decline* of 0.6%. The sole urban agglomeration – South Tarawa – has reached 36,717 or 43.5% of the total national population compared to 36.5% only five years earlier. If these data are accurate⁴² and these

⁴⁰ Government of Kiribati, Bureau of Statistics, 1996.

⁴¹ Source is Education for All Assessment: 2000 Pacific Regional Report (UNESCO, 2001).

⁴² The 1995 *Population Census Report* estimated annual growth from 1990-1995 as 1.42%. Because the population was apparently undercounted, in 1998 SPC estimated a much higher AAGR of 2.2% from 1990-1995.

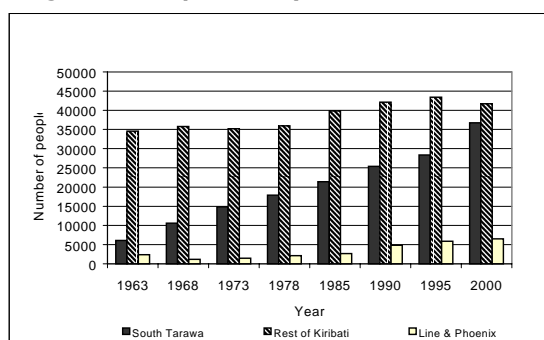
trends continue, South Tarawa could reach 50,000 people by 2006. Demographic trends underlie many of the development problems facing Kiribati:

- the moderately high rate of national population growth;
- the ever-increasing concentration of the population on South Tarawa; and
- the large, and apparently growing, gap in the life expectancy of Kiribati's male and female population.

The 1995-2000 population growth of about 1.7% is due to a high birth rate, improving longevity for women and low migration. The total fertility rate in 2000 was 4.3 (4.5 in 1995⁴³); emigration, which otherwise might dampen growth, is 0.4% per year; and life expectancy has improved by over a decade since 1975 (and 2.6 years from 1995 to 2000). The population is growing fastest on South Tarawa, both because the younger age-structure of its population contributes to relatively more births, and also because in-migration from other islands has continued unabated for several decades. Population growth in the outer Gilbert Islands since 1995 has been about 1/3 of the Tarawa rate.

Figure 3.1 shows clearly (black column) the rapid growth of South Tarawa since 1963, the modest growth of the Line and Phoenix Islands, and the recent decline in absolute numbers of the rest of Kiribati. An urban centre performs essential functions, such as accommodating government and business administration and providing a focus for economic activity. South Tarawa has thus grown in response to the economic and political forces of nation-building, particularly since it became the capital of the independent Republic of Kiribati.

Figure 3.1: Population By Location, 1963-2000

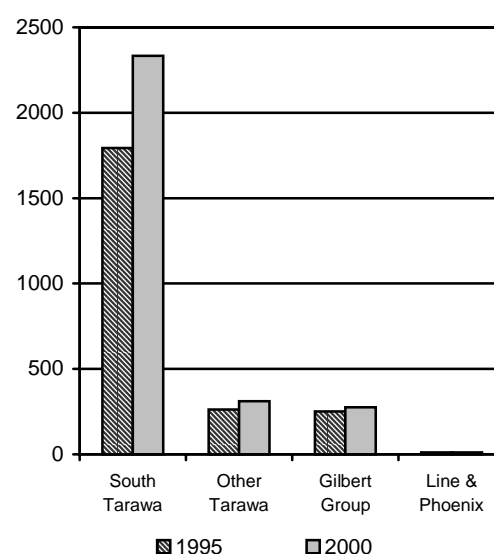


Sources: 1995 Census; 2000 from 2000 Census

⁴³ SPC, 1998.

This momentum appears to be unstoppable. The I-Kiribati population has a young age structure with a median age of 19.7 years, 40% under 15 years old and only 3% older than 65 in 2000. The population will continue to grow even if average fertility per woman declines in the near future.⁴⁴ The dependency ratio – the proportion of the economically dependent population to its productive component – increased from 81 in 1985 to 87 in 1995, declining slightly to 83 in 2000; the earlier trend of a population which has been growing younger over time appears to have recently reversed.

Figure 3.2: Population Density 1995 & 2000



Source: 2000 Census

The increased concentration of population and economic activity on South Tarawa (see Figure 3.2) is having various negative effects on people's lives on both South Tarawa itself and the relatively empty islands elsewhere. The growth and distribution of population has been of concern in Kiribati for several decades. The Government has long had in place various policy measures – outer island development, resettlement, decentralising employment and family planning programmes – to modify these population trends. Even so, South Tarawa's population will continue to grow under its own momentum for some years. The political cost of closing South Tarawa to new migrants is unthinkable. In any case, this would not stop the island's population from growing, for immigration accounts for only about half of growth

⁴⁴ Source is *Kiribati Country Brief* (UNFPA, 2001).

Table 3.2: Population Size, Growth, Distribution and Density by Island (1995 and 2000)

Island	Population		AAGR *		Land area (km ²)	Population Per sq. km.
	1995	2000	1990-95	1995-00		
Banaba	339	276	3.5	-4.1	6.3	44
Makin	1,830	1,691	0.8	-1.6	7.9	216
Butaritari	3,909	3,464	0.7	-2.4	13.5	257
Marakei	2,724	2,544	-1	-1.4	14.1	180
Abaiang	6,020	5,794	2.8	-0.8	17.5	331
North Tarawa	4,004	4,477	1.9	2.2	15.3	312
South Tarawa	28,350	36,717	2.2	5.2	15.8	2,324
TARAWA	32,354	41,194	2.2	5.0	31.1	1,334
Maiana	2,184	2,048	0	-1.3	16.7	123
Abemama	3,442	3,142	1.3	-1.8	27.4	114
Kuria	971	961	-0.4	-0.2	15.5	62
Aranuka	1,015	966	0.3	-1.0	11.6	83
Nonouti	3,042	3,176	1.6	0.9	19.9	159
N. Tabiteua	3,383	3,365	1.1	-0.1	25.8	130
S. Tabiteua	1,404	1,217	1.1	-2.9	11.9	102
Beru	2,784	2,732	-0.9	-0.4	17.7	155
Nikunau	2,009	1,733	0.1	-3.0	19.1	91
Onotoa	1,918	1,668	-1.8	-2.8	15.6	107
Tamana	1,181	962	-3.2	-4.1	4.7	200
Arorae	1,248	1,225	-2.9	-0.4	9.5	129
GILBERT GROUP	71,757	78,158	1.2	1.7	285.5	275
Teeraina	978	1,087	0.9	2.1	9.6	113
Tabuaeran	1,615	1,757	4.2	1.7	33.7	57
Kiritimati	3,225	3,431	4.8	1.2	388.4	9
Kanton	83	61	12.2	-6.2	9.2	7
Uninhabited	0	0	0	0	84.2	
LINE & PHOENIX	5,901	6,336	4.0	1.4	525	12
KIRIBATI TOTAL	77,658	84,494	1.4	1.7	810.5	105

Source: Report on the 2000 Census of Population (Vol 1; Tarawa; Nov. 2001; * AAGR = average annual growth rate

(compared to three-fourths a decade ago⁴⁵). The rest comes from local births.

As Table 3.2 shows, the average population density on South Tarawa is quite high, over 2,300 people per square kilometre in 2000 compared to about 1,800/km² five years earlier. The tiny islet of Betio (Map 2, page iii), with the government centre, a high concentration of services and numerous squatters, is particularly crowded with over 6,200 people per km².⁴⁶

The population of South Tarawa in 1998 was around 30,000.⁴⁷ Projections made during the 1990s suggested that by 2015 the population of this already crowded island would be in the range of 40,000 to 45,000.⁴⁸ However, results

from the 2000 Census show that recent growth has been even more rapid than expected; if 1995-2000 rates of growth continue, South Tarawa will double in population to over 73,000 by 2014. An essential element of Kiribati's proposed population policy is dealing effectively with the continued and rapid increase in South Tarawa's population.

Many of the pressing environmental problems in Kiribati are also linked with growing congestion on South Tarawa: of people, urban development, infrastructure such as causeways and the airport, ever more motor vehicles, and growing volumes of solid waste. Poorly planned land use and overtaxed water reticulation systems, sewage and waste disposal have serious social, environmental,

⁴⁵ Source is Towards a Settlement Strategy for South Tarawa (Chung, 1993).

⁴⁶ Demmke et al. (SPC, 1998).

⁴⁷ From *Kiribati Population Profile* based on 1995 Census (Demmke et al., SPC, 1998).

⁴⁸ Tefaghiorghis (1993) estimated a S Tarawa population of 41,000 by 2010 (39% of total population. Chung (1993)

estimated a South Tarawa population around 43,000 by 2015. SPC(1998) calculated a S Tarawa's population exceeding 30,000 in 1998, growing at 2.2%/year. If this continued, the 2015 population would be around 45,000.

and economic consequences for South Tarawa and for Kiribati overall.

Crowded, unsanitary conditions contribute to a high incidence of diarrhoeal diseases and a death rate for children that is high by Pacific standards. Key disease vectors include inadequate sanitation, domestic garbage, foraging animals and flies. Similarly, the congested living conditions contribute to social problems such as spouse and child abuse. Conversely (Table 3.2), 17 of the main 23 islands had a net population *decrease* between 1995 and 2000, exacerbating the already difficult problems of providing adequate services (education, health, power, transport, communications) and opportunities for wage employment.

3.5 Gender Issues

Gender issues do not refer to 'women's issues' but to the relationships between men and women and their broad implications for society⁴⁹ such as, for example, those concerning reproductive rights (see Box 3.4). For most levels of educational attainment, males have ranked considerably higher than females until recently. The 2000 Census Report shows that male and female enrolment is now about equal through junior secondary school, the male/female ratio of those completing some secondary schooling is 0.94/1, and the overall ratio of male/female secondary school graduates is 1.7/1. For young university graduates (those under age 24), women now outnumber men by 38%.

Nonetheless, the benefits of development in Kiribati have not yet been equally shared or distributed: only a few women have benefited through access to well paid employment, health care and improvements in living standards. For the vast majority of women, the problems of childbirth in quick succession, inadequate nutrition, unsafe drinking water, poor sanitation, ill health, shortage of wood fuel (in urban Tarawa) and inadequate access to health care are all part of everyday life. Kiribati has a population of only 85,000 and a severe shortage of those skills necessary for equitable economic growth and social

⁴⁹ "Gender describes the way men and women are raised differently to take on different responsibilities and roles. ... determined by customs, tradition, religion and education. ... Gender roles given by societies and families often lead women and men to have different expectations and experiences in life. These affect the way they see the world and the way they make decisions in the home, community and at work." (UNIFEM Pacific, 1998; definition from Forsec)

Box 3.4 – Recognition of Reproductive Rights

Reproductive rights relate not just to the right to choose the number and spacing of one's children but also the reproductive health of men and women throughout their lives. This includes reproductive health during childhood years and freedom from child sexual abuse. Through adolescence and youth, they need unrestricted access to information and services to ensure their ability to make informed choices. Rights include corresponding responsibilities: male responsibility in reproductive health and in the sharing of family duties. Within the universal declaration of human rights, reproductive rights also encompass the following:

- the right to survival / right to life.
- the right to liberty and security of the person which implies not only the right to enjoy but also the right to control one's sexual and reproductive life; this embodies the right to family planning, unrestricted access to information and services as well as the right to sexual autonomy.
- The right to attain the highest standard of health which includes access to the highest possible quality of health care, protection from harmful practices, a right to information, counselling to allow individuals to make informed decisions. It incorporates within it the different needs of individuals throughout their childhood, adolescence, reproductive years through to old age hence embracing the entire life cycle.
- The right to non-discrimination on the basis of sex.

development. If half of a country's talent is under-developed, under-recognised or under-utilised, everyone – men, women and especially children – suffers as a result. There are numerous examples of gender inequality, which the Kiribati government itself explicitly acknowledges:⁵⁰

- "For many women, development has resulted in an increased workload, diminishing sources of wood fuel, depletion and pollution of water resources, and decreasing access to, and control over traditionally inherited land;"
- "Development programs and projects are directed mainly toward men, even agriculture despite the greater role of women in this sector, thus denying women access to important knowledge and new resources. ... Consequently women have been marginalised;"
- The Kiribati Constitution (Section 3) "guarantees the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals but does not protect women from discriminatory laws. Section 159(3) does not include sex or gender in its definition of discrimination,

⁵⁰ The first four examples are from the government's *Action Programme 2001-2010* (report to UNLDC III, May 2001); the others are from the government's draft CRC report (July 2001).

which is 'affording different treatment to different persons attributable wholly or mainly to their respective description by race, place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed. ...;'

- "The government has yet to translate the contents of CEDAW into local language so that non-English speaking women can understand its contents;"
- While the roles of women are slowly beginning to change, they are still generally expected to implement rather than decide on village or community affairs. ... While all public institutions are still dominated by men, ... the setting up of women and youth organisations has encouraged a broader base of participation in decision-making processes; and
- There are "high levels of sexual violence, at least in Tarawa."

As already noted Kiribati has not ratified CEDAW but is among the 22 PICs which endorsed the *Pacific Platform of Action* for women (Box 3.5), which shares the same broad goal of gender equality.

Table 3.3, based on 2000 census data, summarises the breakdown of cash employment between men and women. Overall, men hold 63% of all paid jobs in Kiribati, 73% of legislative and senior official positions, and 49% of all professional positions. Table 3.4 provides more detail for the top decision-making category. Males are a majority in all classifications except primary school head teachers. Although not shown in Table 3.4, there is little improvement among those aged 34 and under (which are 69% male).

Table 3.3:
Cash Employment by Occupational Category (2000)

Occupation	Total	Male	Female	% Male
Legislator & senior official	622	457	165	73
Professional	2080	1013	1067	49
Technician / assoc. prof.	1413	929	484	66
Clerks	1143	371	772	32
Service workers	1718	1138	580	66
Agricultural & fisheries	201	181	20	90
Trade workers	812	601	211	74
Machine / plant operators	548	531	17	97
Labourers / elementary	663	589	74	89
<i>Total</i>	<i>9200</i>	<i>5810</i>	<i>3390</i>	<i>63</i>

Source: *Report on the 2000 Census of Population*, volume 1 (Nov. 2001)

Box 3.5 – The Pacific Platform for Action

Twenty-two island countries and territories have adopted the *Pacific Platform for Action: Rethinking Sustainable Development for Pacific Women Towards the Year 2000* (SPC, 1995), a series of commitments developed in part as a regional input to the 4th UN Global Conference on Women held in 1995 in Beijing. The platform "aims to accelerate full and equal partnership of women and men in all spheres of life, including economic and political decision-making; to protect human rights; and address all critical areas of concern, so that Pacific women and men can work together for equality, development and peace."

Thirteen interrelated areas of key issues for families were identified requiring further research, data, and action at national and regional levels: health, education and training, economic empowerment, agriculture and fishing, legal and human rights, shared decision-making, environment, culture and the family, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, violence, peace and justice, poverty and indigenous peoples' rights.

An assessment of the status of women in the region concluded (as elsewhere) that women are under-represented in education at all levels and in national politics and are a minority in professional and technical fields. Health was a cited as a major concern where high fertility rates undermine health and food security, and put pressure on education and other resources. Maternal and infant mortality rates were a particular concern. Addressing these was seen as essential in the interests of women specifically and national development in general.

Among key recommendations were:

- a reassessment of 'customary ways' to see how they affect women, families and communities (noting that traditional ways were modified considerably in the region in the post-contact period).
- As women's' health issues, particularly relating to childbirth, are neglected, there must be both a basic needs and strategic needs focus recognising that welfare is not as important as development.
- There should be careful examination of cultural, social and structural factors which influence women's' participation in education.
- The effects of all macro-economic policies on women and the family should be assessed and where necessary addressed.

Table 3.4:
Legislators and Senior Officials (2000 *)

Occupational classification	Male (total)	Female (total)	% Male (total)
Government minister	6	0	100
Member of parliament *	40	2	95
Permanent secretary *	10	3	77
Asst. secretary (govt)	21	17	55
Senior govt. official	60	55	52
Island council clerk	11	5	69
Director / CEO	22	18	55
Principal (sec school)	9	3	75
Head teacher (primary)	8	15	35
<i>Total (includes other categories)</i>	<i>457</i>	<i>165</i>	<i>73</i>

Source: *Report on the 2000 Census of Population* (volume 1, Nov 2001) except * = Govt of Kiribati verbally Feb 2002.

3.6 The Disadvantaged

Box 3.6 summarises patterns of disadvantage in Kiribati. Those who live on outer islands, members of large families, the young, the disabled, and those without access to land (at least where they live) tend to be disadvantaged. Despite a long-held national policy of outer inland development, most investment has been in South Tarawa. Health and education services tend to be poor elsewhere: "Except for seaweed production and fish exports from islands near South Tarawa, there has been little change in the structure of these islands over the past decade. Poverty of opportunity on the outer islands contributes many migrants to South Tarawa."⁵¹

Islanders who move to Tarawa for work have limited legal access to land. The fundamental reason behind urban congestion in South Tarawa is not simply population numbers, but is rooted in political, legal and cultural practices that defuse the political will to improve settlement conditions.

In assisting landless households, it is difficult to challenge both traditional and modern laws governing land tenure. Pragmatically however, some consequences of the lack of tenure can be addressed. Similarly, the issues that need to be resolved with youth, such as sexual behaviour and access to appropriate information and services, meet opposition from some sectors of the community, particularly some churches. Left to themselves, these problems usually become more intractable, and the social and economic costs of resolving them continue to grow. Similarly, those most in need of assistance such as credit are least likely to receive it: "The cooperatives and Village Banks, for example, like most credit facilities, tend to benefit most the more wealthy and powerful people. There has been no particular advocacy for the disadvantaged." (*Action Programme 2001-2010*; Kiribati Govt., 2001)

The disadvantaged landless in Tarawa have little choice but to degrade the environment. Households that have encroached onto land above the water reserve, for lack of any alternative, risk polluting the water reserves of the whole island. In this way, patterns of disadvantage, and the relative poverty of

some households, can have a corrosive effect on the living standards of everyone.

Although the broad categories of the disadvantaged are apparent, there is limited information on which to base effective policy responses. For example there is little data on:

- numbers of nutritionally disadvantaged families and their locations;
- the effect of widowhood, being part of a female headed family, desertion, or female status in general (although 20% of families are headed by women);
- the relationship between land ownership and other forms of wealth;
- the access of squatters to safe water and sanitation; and
- the relationships between children's school attendance and household income.

Box 3.6 – Patterns of Disadvantage in Kiribati

Outer islanders. Outer islands residents are disadvantaged in a general way through a 'general lack of everything': isolation, poor and irregular transport, poor communications, poor education and health facilities, and lack of resources. Despite government efforts to promote outer island development, most resources are invested in South Tarawa.

The young. The education system does not prepare youth for available jobs or the effects of rapid social change. Young people have high suicide rates. Other problems common among youth are alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, vandalism, truancy, unemployment, prostitution, low self-esteem, and a distancing from cultural norms and values.

Large families. In poor households, which tend to be large households, everyone suffers but children tend to be worse off than others. Some children miss school because fees cannot be paid, or they must look after younger siblings. Limited data (and common sense) suggest that poverty is correlated to poor nutrition, high mortality, poor sanitation, and poor housing. One reason for large households is high fertility, which can stem from traditional or religious values or poor access to family planning services and information. In South Tarawa, large households (with an average of 8.1 people in 2000 compared to 6.7 nationally) are often due to relatives who migrate from outer islands.

The disabled. The disabled are increasing in number but there is no special education or vocational assistance so employment opportunities are meagre.

Those with no land tenure. Half of South Tarawa residents were born elsewhere and have no secure land tenure on Tarawa. On Betio (the portion of S Tarawa leased by the government for offices) there is a high percentage of squatters, severe overcrowding, and congested and haphazard informal housing, all of which contribute to poor public health, social problems and inefficient land use. There are also widespread, informal (i.e. illegal) land sales with no formal title and no protection for purchasers.

Sources: Nimmo-Bell Interim Report (ADB, 2001); VSO workshop 1999; 2000 Census (Nov. 2001)

⁵¹ From *Preparing the Outer Islands Development Program* (Interim Report to ADB: Nimmo-Bell, 2001)

CHAPTER 4: BASIC NEEDS, SAFETY NETS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Health, Nutrition, Water Supply and Sanitation

With an average life expectancy at birth of 62.8 years in 2000, I-Kiribati have a shorter life span than other Pacific Islanders⁵² due to: i) high infant and child mortality from respiratory diseases and diarrhoea; and ii) high adult mortality, especially for men, from infectious and non-communicable diseases. I-Kiribati men have an average life expectancy (2000) of 58.2 years, nine years less than women. WHO⁵³ refers to a "triple [national health] burden ... with high incidence of communicable disease, a dramatic increase of noncommunicable diseases, and traffic accidents."

Child immunisation coverage (for Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus or DPT3) was 78% in 1999⁵⁴ varying widely from 49% (Southern Gilberts) to 89% (Tarawa and Banaba). In 2000, national coverage reached 90%. Respiratory diseases are a major cause of sickness and death for children. Diarrhoeal diseases are serious problems for all ages but especially for young children due partly to poor potable water supply and sanitation.

Vitamin A deficiency has long been a serious health problem within Micronesian countries. Surveys carried out in 1985 indicated a prevalence rate of nearly 15% in Kiribati. Since the mid-1990s, there has been marked improvement through high-dose Vitamin A capsules provided three times yearly to children between 6 months and 6 years and to lactating women. National coverage has been about 80%.

The main water supply for South Tarawa is piped from a subterranean water lens in the northern part of the atoll. This limited supply is over-stressed by poor reticulation to homes,⁵⁵ growing demand and illegal connections and threatened by housing encroachment onto land above the water lens and widespread use of inappropriately located

pit toilets, water-seal toilets, and (less often) septic tanks. Relatively few houses have rainwater catchment tanks. Although well water is used mainly for washing, contaminated drinking water is a common source of illness.

Box 4.1 – Nutrition and Food Security

The Government's 1999-2002 Public Health Plan includes goals by 2002 of reducing under-nutrition among children by 25%, eliminating vitamin A deficiency, reducing iron deficiency anaemia among children and pregnant women, decreasing the prevalence of obesity and non-communicable diseases in adults, increasing self-sufficiency in food and improving household food security. "This will require better coordination between Government and NGOs and the revival of the National Food and Nutrition Committee; the integration of good nutrition into all government programmes, the conducting of nutrition surveys; and public education about nutrition." Good indicators of current levels of nutrition and food security were not readily available for the CCA although food security is believed to be declining as both a cause and an effect of the growing imports of nutritionally inferior foods. Since the mid 1980s, food has accounted for a third of all imports to Kiribati; surveys suggest that 40-50% of urban and rural cash income is spent on food. The majority of women apparently suffer from poor nutrition, and in general, fresh fruits and vegetables cannot easily be grown due to the thin, nutrient-poor atoll soils (a problem which is expected to worsen over time due to climate change). Agricultural priorities for 2000-2003 include developing a strategy for a private nursery market for tree, vegetable and fruit seeds and planting materials for farmers and household gardening.

Kiribati is extremely dependent on artisanal and subsistence fishing for food security. The World Bank (based on 1999 FAO data) estimates that these account for about 9% of GDP compared to only 3.5% for commercial fishing. About 88% of households fish part time and the catch provides 67% of animal protein with a market value of US\$18 million annually in protein equivalent (38% of GDP) or US\$7 million in calorie equivalent. Expected rises in sea level temperature by 2050 could reduce the catch but also increase fish poisoning from current levels of 35-70 per thousand people to 160-430. In the near term, subsistence fishing throughout the region will often suffer from greater effort per kg of fish, high vulnerability to land- and sea-based pollution (sedimentation, erosion, fertilisers, chemicals, sewage and ship-sourced pollution), the challenges of maintaining production despite increased exploitation, population growth, and smaller stock sizes.

Sources: *Pacific Regional Economic Report* (WB, 2000); *Action Programme for the Development of the Republic of Kiribati 2001-2010* (Tarawa, 2001); *Overview of an Ocean Policy for the Pacific Islands* (S Tuqiri, 2001); *Children, Women & Youth in Kiribati* (UNICEF, draft June 2001)

⁵² Exceptions are Papua New Guinea and Nauru. Source is *Pacific Human Development Report* (UNDP, 1999).

⁵³ From WHO Representative's Annual Report for Kiribati: 1 January – 31 December 2000 (WHO, Tarawa, 2001)

⁵⁴ From *EPI Coverage Data 1996-2000* (Kiribati MoH, 2001)

⁵⁵ Water losses in the Tarawa distribution system may be as high as 50% (*Managing Pacific Towns*, Vol 2 of *Pacific Regional Economic Report* (WB, 2000). The World Bank estimates that losses could be reduced to 25-30% saving 3,000 m³ of valuable potable water daily.

Table 4.1: Water Source & Toilets, S Tarawa, 1995 & 2000

Water source	% of hh		Toilet type	% of hh	
	1995	2000		1995	2000
Rainwater tank	23	24	Flush	48	45
Piped water	55	70	Water-seal	21	27
Well	58	50	Beach (lagoon)	32	26
			Beach (ocean)	33	28
			Other	12	6

Sources: National Census, 1995 & 2000; Note: hh=households. Totals exceed 100% as some hh use several sources or types.

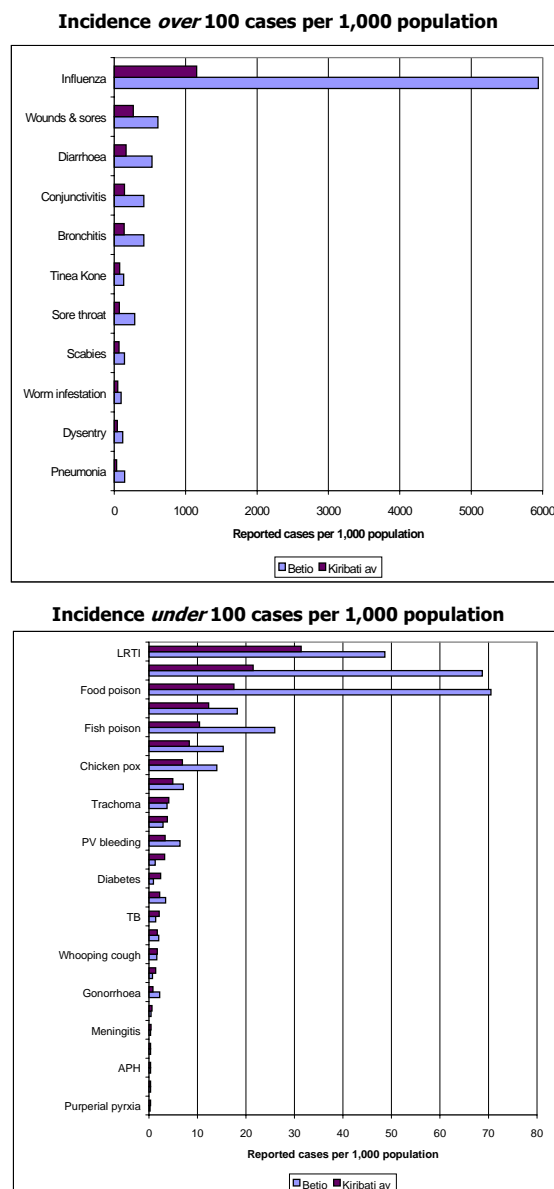
Sanitation is generally poor throughout South Tarawa, especially on the islet of Betio. Traditionally, I-Kiribati use the sea as their toilet. On the sparsely populated outer islands, this poses little public health risk. On South Tarawa, (see Table 4.1) 53% of households regularly use the ocean beach or the lagoon beach (where fresh sea water circulates much more slowly) as their toilet. This is an improvement over 1995 but continues to put health at risk. Other sanitation problems include high volumes of uncollected household garbage, the prevalence of such toxic pollutants as waste oils and chemicals, and large numbers of derelict vehicles and machinery.

Food-borne and insect or animal-borne diseases are other major causes of illness. An important source of food-borne disease, especially on South Tarawa, is shellfish from lagoon waters which have been polluted by sewage. Flies, mosquitoes, and scavenging dogs and pigs are other disease vectors. Illnesses are also associated with poor quality diets, where traditional foods have been replaced by imported low-grade refined products, such as white flour, white rice, sugar and fatty salty meats.

There is only limited information available on food security and nutrition (Box 4.1) but people have acquired a taste for highly processed foods while understanding little about associated health risks. In South Tarawa these foods are cheaper than the traditional diet. As low-income families tend to maximise quantity rather than the quality of purchased food, poor diets also tend to be associated with poverty.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ FAO's 2001 report on food insecurity, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*, covers no PIC except Papua New Guinea. However, it documents the correlation between food insecurity and poverty and (as one would expect), poor nutrition and poor health with low birth weight, stunting (short height for age) and wasting (low weight for height). Undernutrition is also strongly linked to unsafe water

Figure 4.1: Incidence of Reported Diseases in Kiribati Overall and in Betio, 1992-1996

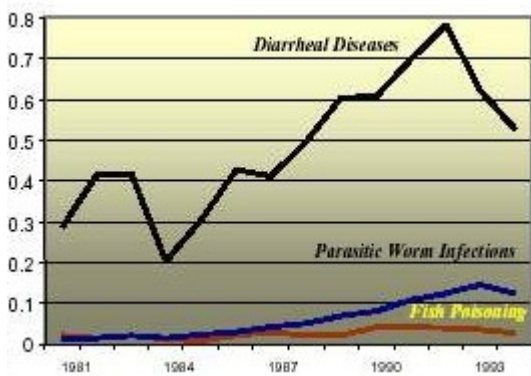


Source: WHO, 1999

The effects of over-crowding on the health of people in Kiribati are illustrated in Figure 4.1,⁵⁷ showing the high levels of disease on Betio compared to Kiribati overall. Infectious diseases such as influenza, diarrhoea and conjunctivitis are quite prevalent. Tuberculosis poses a serious public health problem. For water born disease, the increasing national trends over time (but with recent declines) are evident from Figure 4.2.

⁵⁷ WHO, 1999. Note that the top and bottom portions of Figure 4.1 use different scales, the top showing reported incidence of diseases of more than 100 cases per 1,000 population, the bottom showing less prevalent diseases.

Figure 4.2: Kiribati Water Borne Disease: 1980-94
(Occurrences per capita from hospital records)



Source: Abbott 1996 as reported in *Cities, Seas & Storms* (Vol. 3; World Bank, 2000)

Although infectious diseases are common, non-communicable diseases are also becoming more prevalent. Heart diseases, hypertension, diabetes and cancer are major public health problems. Cases of diabetes, for example, increased from 118 in 1992 to 300 in 1996, and there are many amputees⁵⁸ as a result. Lifestyles and dietary habits have been changing quickly, especially on South Tarawa. Over 80% of the adult population smokes tobacco, and alcohol consumption is high. Traffic accidents are becoming more common, especially on South Tarawa. There were 261 people involved in accidents in 1998, including 3 deaths, a high rate relative to the population. Another growing problem is mental disorders and suicides, the latter especially among young people.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are another significant health concern. Little is known about their prevalence in Kiribati as there is little surveillance, no specialist clinics, until recently little apparent official or public concern, and considerable social stigma attached to these infections.⁵⁹ One indicator of the rise of STDs is that cervical cancer (associated with the sexually transmitted Human Papilloma Virus) is now the most common form of cancer in Kiribati.⁶⁰ Currently cervical cancer is probably the most life-threatening resultant of STD, as most cases are diagnosed too late for effective treatment. There is no national programme of pap smears: women must request testing at Tungaru Central Hospital and few do so.

As shown in Box 4.2, another rapidly increasing threat to life is the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The Government and public recognise that STD and HIV/AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) prevention efforts must be accelerated to prevent widespread infection. A national strategy to counter the spread of HIV has been developed but requires better implementation. STD/HIV counselling should be more widely available and the health education system needs to communicate better to all sectors of the population. The extent of HIV in the wider community should be determined by voluntary testing of antenatal mothers and those termed commercial sex workers.

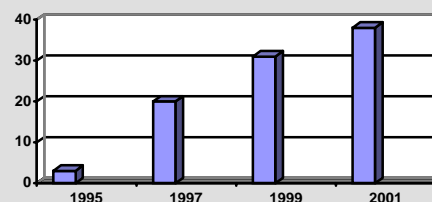
Box 4.2 – The Upsurge in HIV Cases

A recent upsurge in those reported to be HIV-positive illustrates the vulnerability of Kiribati to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and its wide ramifications. UNFPA (2001) reported that by mid 2001, 25 of 36 HIV positive cases were men; 18 cases (50% of the total) were seamen and it was likely that 72% were seamen plus their wives and children. Seventeen people have died of AIDS. Statistics are incomplete as there is no routine testing except for seamen.

Factors that contribute to this vulnerability include:

- the relatively large number of I-Kiribati men who work abroad and risk infection with STDs including HIV;
- the many people who lack sufficient employment and livelihood opportunities;
- cultural and religious restraints which limit discussions about reproductive and sexual health issues or using condoms; and
- high risk behaviour, including unprotected adolescent sexual activity and a degree of sexual violence.

As shown below, reported cases of HIV have surged from three in 1995 to 38 by September 2001.



Source: *Official HIV & AIDS Case Report* (Kiribati Govt, 2001)

⁵⁸ Diabetes data from Kiribati Ministry of Health (1999); tobacco, alcohol and traffic data from WHO, 1999.

⁵⁹ UNFPA, 1999.

⁶⁰ Ministry of Health, 1999.

In recent years, the Government has allocated 10-14% of its annual budget to health. Most public health programmes, are heavily supported by donors, with the main government contribution being staff.⁶¹ Despite considerable assistance, the health services away from South Tarawa are basic: of 23 medical doctors in the country, 22 are based in South Tarawa.⁶² Nonetheless all islands have access to health facilities and there has been good progress toward meeting global health goals, as shown in Box 4.3.

4.2 Education and Human Resource Development

There is now little gender difference in indicators of school attendance in Kiribati with gross primary enrolment being virtually identical for both sexes. The proportion of females attending school is above males in all age groups below 19 years. However, there are less than 1% of females still in formal study between ages 20-24 compared with 6.5% of males (UNFPA, 2001).

In Kiribati, the Government provides primary schooling but most secondary education is through CSOs/NGOs, mainly churches. With compulsory primary education (currently ages 6-14) in principle since the late 1970s, enrolments are relatively high, more teenagers stay at school, and the gender gap in attendance and attainment until age 19 has all but closed (Table 4.2 and Figure 4.3). As 40% of the population is under 15, there is a continuous high demand for educational services. The Kiribati Government spends approximately 20% of its total budget on education. About 45% of this is for primary and junior

Table 4.2: Primary School Efficiency, 1998

Measure	Girls	Boys	Total
Repetition rates by grade	6.0	8.1	7.1
Retention rate to Class 5	94.3	93.5	94.0
Coefficient of efficiency to Class 5	89.8	85.9	87.8
Coefficient of efficiency, primary school	74.0	72.0	73.1

Source: Ministry of Education, 1999

Note: for all of Kiribati

⁶¹ Ministry of Health, 1999a.

⁶² From Kiribati Poverty Discussion Papers (ADB, 2001)

Box 4.3 – Kiribati and the 1994 Cairo Conference Goals on Population and Development

During the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD; Cairo, 1994), over 180 nations adopted a global Programme of Action, agreeing to increase awareness of population and development issues and to formulate, implement and evaluate national activities to address population and development issues as integral parts of overall planning. Particular attention was to focus on reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health programmes. Kiribati has achieved the threshold level for meeting two of the three reproductive health indicators: the proportion of deliveries attended by trained health personnel and the proportion of the population with access to basic health services. Kiribati falls below the threshold on the contraceptive prevalence rate. However (UNFPA, 2001), there is some doubt as to the accuracy of the national Health Information System data (HIS) on actual contraceptive use, which may be lower than HIS estimates.

Goals and Indicators	Global goal ¹ by 2005	Kiribati ² achievement
Goal: Access to Reproductive Health		
Deliveries attended by trained health personnel (%)	60	72 ³
Contraceptive prevalence rate (%)	55	28
Population with access to basic health services (%)	60	100
Goal: Mortality Reduction		
Infant mortality rate (deaths/1,000 live births)	50	43 ⁴
Maternal mortality ratio (deaths/100,000 live births)	100	56 ⁵
Goal: Universal Primary Education		
Gross female enrolment rate at primary level (per 100 eligible population)	65	78
Adult female literacy rate (%)	50	91

Notes: 1) Minimum level to be achieved by 2005;
2) Most recent estimate;
3) Most of the remaining deliveries are by mostly untrained Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) some now being trained by UNICEF.
4) From 2000 Census report.
5) Average of 1995-2000 (as single year is misleading for a small population; from HIS data (UNFPA, 2001)

secondary schools and 0.4% for early childhood education.⁶³

The very small allocation of resources to pre-school education is typical of PICs yet "the greatest educational benefit comes from action at the youngest age. ... It is now known that from pregnancy until the time they go to school is a much more important period in a child's learning and personality development, than the time at school."⁶⁴ UNESCO⁶⁵ stresses the importance of early childhood education: it is important for social, physical and emotional development. UNICEF notes that investing in early child development is valuable in itself but also reduces

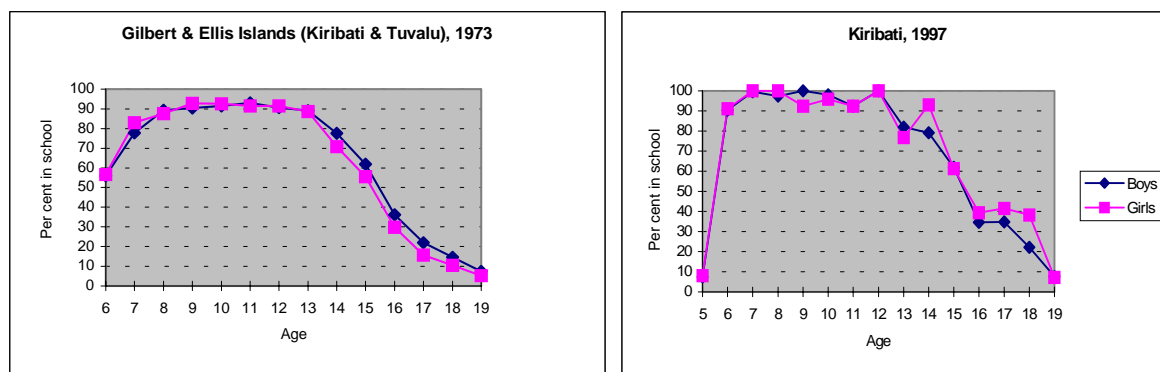
⁶³ Ministry of Education, 1999. Derived from Government expenditure figures for 1997-1999.

⁶⁴ *Enhancing Pacific Security* (prepared for Forum Secretariat by Prof. Ron Crocombe, 2000). According to UNESCO (*Education for All Assessment: 2000 Pacific Regional Report*), since 1990, there has been a sharp increase in the number of preschool centres and pupils in Kiribati. Urban enrolments jumped from around 100 in 1990 to 1800 in 1999; rural enrolments increased from zero to 2,500.

⁶⁵ *10th Biennial Consultation of Pacific Directors and Senior Education Officers* (UNESCO, Nauru, August 2000).

Figure 4.3: Growth in School Enrolments in Kiribati Over the Past 25 Years

Source: Kiribati Ministry of Education, 1999



costs to society in terms of less school repetition and lower rehabilitation needs.

The net enrolment ratio for the 6-14 age group fluctuated around 80-82% throughout the 1990s. There has since been a slight recent improvement, but about 2000 school-aged children do not attend school for varied, but undocumented, reasons.⁶⁶ Island Councils are apparently enforcing the compulsory education regulation more rigorously than Tarawa officials; Ministry of Education, Training and Technology (METT) staff believe that non-attendance relates mostly to patterns of disadvantage on Tarawa, not the outer islands.

Although school enrolments are relatively high, the quality of basic education and school facilities is not. Results of standard literacy and numeracy tests are confidential to METT but the Ministry acknowledges that results show a need for improved basic education through better teacher education, curriculum reform and improved learning conditions in Kiribati's schools.

On the outer islands – especially the sparsely populated eastern islands – provision of schooling is difficult and costly because of poor communications and transport, effects of isolation on professional development of teachers, and the expense of servicing small remote schools. To improve efficiency, the Government has been consolidating rural schools; from 1988 to 1997, their numbers declined by one third to 76. Classes in outer island schools are generally small; on Tarawa they are overcrowded. Nonetheless, from 1990 to 1995 there was a continuing drift of rural children to Tarawa where schools are

generally perceived to be better. Enrolment in urban (i.e. South Tarawa) schools increased from 22% to 37% of national enrolment, with a concomitant decline in rural enrolments. The 2000 Census report is likely to show a continuation, if not an increase, in this trend.

Throughout Kiribati, the low quality of formal education persists due to a widespread shortage of teaching resources in schools and

Box 4.4 – Kiribati and the EFA Jomtein Agreement

Kiribati is committed to the Jomtein Agreement (1990) on 'Education For All'. EFA targets (early childhood education, primary education, learning achievement, adult literacy, training in essential skills and education for better living) have been recognised and supported by successive national development plans. UNESCO has encouraged and supported progress made towards the EFA goals, under the leadership of METT.

The Jomtein Conference resolutions did not translate directly into a special EFA country action plan for Kiribati. Nonetheless, Kiribati's *EFA Assessment Report 2000* noted that the Jomtein resolutions reinforced and reinvigorated the national drive to develop an educational system that provides people of all ages 'the means to self-fulfilment'. The report describes the growth of education in Kiribati over the past decade as steady. Future progress needs to build on cooperation between Government and NGOs supplemented by donor resources. Issues that need to be addressed include consolidation of work by NGOs in early childhood development and non-formal education; urgent upgrading of the primary school curriculum, facilities, classroom resources, and teacher education; and monitoring student achievement in literacy and numeracy.

The report described key factors in Kiribati's progress to be: i) good collaboration between the Government and NGOs, in particular the churches; and ii) the leadership and management capacity of the Ministry of Education. Particular progress was made in expanding early childhood education; increasing access to secondary education by establishing a new high school on Tarawa and more junior secondary schools on outer islands; improving school facilities and resources (although not yet to the desired level); increasing the number of qualified teachers; and generally improving access to all levels of learning.

⁶⁶ Data in this section are from Kiribati Ministry of Education (1999) unless otherwise noted.

sub-standard physical facilities. In 1992, less than one-half of all primary school classrooms were permanent structures. Of all primary schools, 10% had no writing surface or chalkboard, 30% had no seats, and 70% had no toilets. There are still many untrained teachers. In 1997, 25% of primary teachers were temporary staff; of these three-fourths were untrained. Despite these problems (Box 4.4) Kiribati has improved its education during the past decade.

The Government plans to extend compulsory education by three years. Yet there is still an abrupt drop in enrolments after Class 7 (age 14) due to poor facilities, competitive examinations and high school fees. Survival rates in primary school to Class 6 have increased from 87% in 1990 to 91% in 1995. In 1995, however, less than 40% of primary students progressed to secondary school. As each cohort of students passes through three successive national secondary examinations, their number decreases on average by 30%, 26% and 51% respectively: only about 25% reach Form 6, and 8% reach the final secondary school level, Form 7. Post-secondary education is available at the University of the South Pacific (USP) Extension Centre, the Tarawa Teachers College (TTC), Tarawa Technical Institute (TTI), the Marine Training Centre, and the Tungaru Nurse Training School. TTI trebled its enrolment from 250 in 1987 to over 800 in 1998, and there is a growing demand for vocational courses. Enrolments are steadily increasing at the USP Centre. The Marine Training Centre, almost totally male, provides training for tuna fishing vessels and basic seamanship for work on ships.

Crocombe (2001), writing of PICs in general, notes a "yawning gap in levels of education between the capitals and the outer islands. ... Kiribati [however] has a policy of granting scholarships for secondary education on a population basis to each island, and giving a quota of places in the Maritime College to each island, to ensure a spread of opportunities. There is a need [elsewhere in the Pacific] for more such policies, both in relation to the rural and the urban poor, if extreme class division is not to occur."

Donors play an important role in education in Kiribati, particularly at tertiary level. Estimated donor spending during 1993-1994 was nearly A\$4 million of which 52% went on training and 23% on infrastructure. Aid funds

per student on scholarships were spent at the ratio of 1:26:994 for primary, secondary and tertiary levels respectively.⁶⁷

Providing sufficient human resources for health programmes is particularly difficult in Kiribati. Many doctors, medical assistants and nurses leave Kiribati for opportunities overseas. The Government has instituted a bonding system requiring all staff to serve the country for at least the number of years that the Government funded their training. The retirement age for doctors is 60, five years older than for other government employees. Even so, Kiribati has only 15 national doctors, of whom three are retirees. There are also 12 expatriate doctors working on South Tarawa. Almost all health personnel are government employees, about 165 nurses and 29 medical assistants.

4.3 Sustainable Livelihoods

A major development problem in Kiribati is a formal education system that fails to provide the knowledge or skills necessary for children to become productive adults. Low educational standards and limited opportunities for secondary education produce many 'drop-outs' or 'push-outs'. Church-operated rural community training centres (RTCs) cater for those who do not proceed to secondary school and for continuing adult education. However, most are barely functioning despite recent efforts by sponsors to coordinate efforts in reviving them. RTCs are constrained by shortages of funds and qualified staff and poor support from the community and students. NGOs provide various other types of short-term training, but there is no coordinated structure for teaching livelihood skills in Kiribati outside of the formal school system.

Table 4.3: Kiribati's Labour Force, 1995

Indicator	National	Male	Female
% labour force in cash employment	20.8	26.6	14.4
% of labour force in agriculture & fisheries	74.8	73.2	76
% of labour force in services	14.2	17.8	10.6
% of labour force in industry	3.6	4.3	1
% labour force (in cash sector) by status			
employer	0.07	0.07	0.07
employee	98.4	98	99
self-employed	1.5	1.7	0.1
Employment-population ratio	17.5	24.3	11.2

Source: 1995 Census; (Analysis of 200 data not yet available)

⁶⁷ Ministry of Education, 1999. More recent data were not available.

From 1985 to 1995, the Kiribati labour force (those aged 15 to 55) grew by 6,500, but paid employment increased by only 1,000. Far more people (Table 4.3) are engaged in village or unpaid work than in the formal job sector. Although more young people are staying in school and aspire to professional or technical jobs, the formal labour market in Kiribati is tightly constrained. There are few opportunities for employment outside of the government or, for men, work overseas as seafarers or fishermen. Nearly two-thirds of all cash employment is located on South Tarawa. Nationally the large semi-subsistence village economy disguises a high level of unemployment.

Projections of economic and labour force growth (Figure 4.4) suggest that formal sector employment will absorb progressively less of the work force. Simultaneously, subsistence livelihoods are under the twin pressures of growth in both population and consumption. Providing adequate livelihoods for I-Kiribati and an equitable distribution of the benefits of growth is likely to be a very serious challenge. Those with relatively poor job prospects include women (who constitute only 37% of paid workers but run the majority of informal urban businesses⁶⁸), the disabled, and young school leavers.

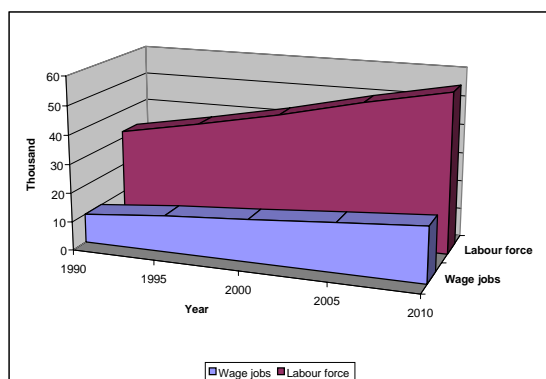


Figure 4.4: Projected Labour Force, 1990-2010

Source: *Sustaining Livelihoods* (UNDP, 1997)

The availability of small-scale credit is an important impetus for informal sector growth. Neither the Bank of Kiribati or the National Development Bank are well equipped to handle very small commercial loans or provide integrated business advisory services for the tiny enterprises that the growing informal sector might support. Sources of

micro-credit are the cooperatives, the Kiribati Credit Union League (KCUL) and the village banks. There are about 49 cooperative societies operating in Kiribati, (12 on South Tarawa) most operating retail shops. On the outer islands, many were until mid-2000 agents for copra buyers, a function since taken over by the Government-owned Copra Society.

There have been various government and donor efforts to improve skills for non-formal jobs, create opportunities for cash income, facilitate wider access to micro-credit facilities and bolster the cooperative system, mostly with limited impacts:

- UN agencies have supported agriculture and fishing initiatives including solar salt, tuna jerky and atoll gardening (UNDP); fisheries and aquaculture development (FAO); small-scale technology and industrial development projects (UNIDO); and helping local entrepreneurs to access technology for new businesses (Forum Secretariat/UNDP). Outcomes have rarely been as sustained as initially hoped but there have been important successes. Fishing and aquaculture – especially seaweed cultivation – are now well-established industries. Small-scale industrial production includes bakeries, local clothes, and various local foodstuffs.
- In the 1990s, with UN and other support,⁶⁹ the Government-owned Solar Energy Company – which has been a PIC leader in designing, installing, maintaining and managing solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity systems in remote areas – manufactured and successfully exported over 1,000 electronic PV controllers as far away as Bhutan. The adaptation and export of relatively sophisticated niche products is certainly within Kiribati's capabilities given appropriate staff within the enterprise, good training, and business support.⁷⁰
- the national Village Banks scheme is rapidly gaining strength throughout the country. Loans for small enterprises (sewing businesses, bicycles for hire,

⁶⁸ From *Managing Pacific Towns*, Vol 2 of *Pacific Regional Economic Report* (WB, 2000). The WB estimated women as 30% of paid workers. The 2000 Census revises this to 37%.

⁶⁹ I-Kiribati received extensive practical training through UNDP, the South Pacific Institute of Renewable Energy (SPIRE) in Tahiti and the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Bangkok followed by longer term advisory support through former-UN project staff.

⁷⁰ Unfortunately the venture was unsustainable due largely to unreliable air shipment services which resulted in long delays in delivery and lost shipments. This was unacceptable to buyers who expect prompt and reliable service.

small-scale trading, etc.) are being provided and repaid. Usually good financial records are kept. However, the scheme has not provided particular services to the disadvantaged.

- A review of KCUL operations⁷¹ found legislation and by-laws largely ignored; no evidence of regular meetings (board, credit committee, supervisory or annual); poor financial accounting; delinquent loans (often large) to office-bearers; and deficient staff knowledge and skills. The KCUL is almost moribund.
- Cooperatives are generally not perceived to be businesses, which may explain why Government efforts to foster the private sector do not explicitly include cooperatives. The future for cooperative societies in Kiribati is uncertain because of insufficient community support, poor business management, and increased competition. An ILO study⁷² found some promising individual cooperatives but overall the sector is in serious decline. In 1997-8, 25 of 39 cooperatives studied reported operating losses over A\$0.6 million, over half of the gross income of the cooperatives. The report recommended renewal, reform and expansion, new legislation, a Cooperatives Division shift away from solely auditing to training and development, and more cooperatives involvement in health, environmental protection, housing, education and social development.

In general, Kiribati has yet to deal effectively with the pressing issue of creating viable and sustainable opportunities for the large numbers of people in the labour force, and new entrants who are unlikely to obtain formal sector employment. Kiribati is a stable society but rapidly growing unemployment could threaten this stability.

4.4 The Physical Environment

Chapter 1 has noted the extreme vulnerability of Kiribati to environmental shocks such as the anticipated effects of climate change and sea level rise, pollution and salt-water



Mangroves in Tarawa lagoon (photo by Herbert Wade; 2001)

excursion into the subterranean fresh-water lens, pollution of the lagoons, depletion of inshore fish and marine species, and deforestation and associated coastal erosion. Surveys of the coastline of South Tarawa and Betio have shown considerable movement over a few decades, and this has important implications for the placement of physical infrastructure. Deforestation might seem to be an unlikely threat on atolls, but the few tree species that do exist are very valuable (as sources of food, medicines, dyes, oils, perfumes, fuel, compost, building materials, shade, habitats for birds, etc.) if not essential (for protection of the shoreline from erosion and storms).

Nearly a decade ago, the World Bank⁷³ warned that economic growth strategies for Kiribati "if not pursued with a clear view to environmental sustainability ... could undermine resource use patterns and destroy the fragile balance with nature that has sustained Kiribati in the past." The report summarised environmental issues in Kiribati as follows: "The major environmental issues ... arise in the Gilberts group, especially in overcrowded South Tarawa where the bulk of the nation's population lives in small, resource poor urbanised islets. The main issues in this area are: a) groundwater depletion, increased salination ... and pollution from sewage and animal excreta; b) shellfish contamination from human and other waste; c) over-fishing of reefs and lagoons; d) waste disposal; e) coastal erosion and sedimentation; f) depletion of mangrove and other tree species reflecting a shortage of fuelwood; and g) breakdown of traditional subsistence

⁷¹ R. Stephenson and L. Green, 1999.

⁷² T. Dyce (ILO, 1999)

⁷³ Growth and the Environment, chapter 6 of *Kiribati Country Economic Memorandum* (WB, 1993)



Rubbish-lined beachfront in South Tarawa
(photo by Rikke Hansen; late 2001)

production systems, resulting in malnutrition and nutrition-related diseases.”

Except for the recent broad acceptance (by the World Bank among others) of the likelihood of global climate change, these issues have not changed in the intervening decade, are recognised by the Government,⁷⁴ and have been discussed elsewhere in this report. One issue which has only been mentioned in passing is solid and chemical waste management, difficult to manage as there are few landfill sites on Tarawa which will not contaminate groundwater. In 1993, only 20% of Tarawa’s households were served by the rubbish collection service, resulting in numerous unsightly informal dumps. (See photo above.) Table 4.4, from a recent SPREP/AusAID study, lists a number of sites where land has been fouled with waste oil and bitumen products, contaminating nearby ground water which lies 1-3 metres below land. Although such contamination is

Table 4.4:
Chemical Ground Water Contamination in Kiribati

Site	Area m ²	Source and comments
Wastes, Banana (Kiritimati)	7200	Bitumen disposal at a dozen sites
Bulk fuel depot, London	?	Former British oil depot; 15 million litres
Bonriki airport	1300	100,000 l of abandoned bitumen; leaks to lagoon and nearby homes
Betio power station	800	Waste oil
Bikenibue power station	300	Waste oil
Public vehicles unit	200	Waste oil

Source: SPREP, 2000

dangerous in atolls, and regulatory powers are adequate, there is little enforcement of anti-dumping regulations.

Throughout the Pacific, generally going back to colonial days, there has been poor management of dangerous chemicals and hazardous wastes such as pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs, until recently used in electric power transformers), wood treatment chemicals and bitumen. According to the SPREP / AusAID study, there are two chemical storage sites in Tarawa with great potential for causing adverse health impacts: the old agricultural station and the AMAK women’s unit. Table 4.5 lists the worst of about 30 sites where dangerous wastes or poorly stored chemicals could have health impacts. The quantities indicated are conservative.

Table 4.5: Main Toxic Waste Sites in Kiribati

Chemical or waste	Quantity	Safe disposal	Potential dangers
Agricultural chemicals	700 kg	Ship overseas ?	Various
PCB-contaminated oil *	5500 kg	ship overseas	Rashes, genetic damage to unborn, cancers
Laboratory chemicals	2270 kg	Ship overseas	Various
Wood treatment sludge	1000 kg	Ship overseas	Headaches, poisoning, cancers
Bitumen / waste oil	7000 litres	Land fill; burial	Heavy metal poisoning

Source: SPREP, 2000

Notes: Excludes pesticides on Kanton Isl & probably elsewhere.
* = Potential (or probable) contamination

4.5 Poverty, Safety Nets and Special Protection Measures

Based on cash incomes alone, many people in Kiribati would be considered impoverished according to the World Bank criteria (less than US\$1 per capita per day). As well as cash, however, most households are supported by gardening, fishing, carpentry and handicraft making. These activities, together with the traditional kin-based economy, provide for a materially-poor but adequate lifestyle for most people. Nevertheless, poverty is an issue of growing concern, particularly:

⁷⁴ The Action Programme for 2001-2010 summarises nine government environment policy priorities for 2000-2003 which broadly try to address the same issues.

- on South Tarawa where jobs, income and other resources are not well distributed and there is limited opportunity for subsistence agriculture (due to restricted access to land) or subsistence fishing (as Tarawa lagoon and the inshore reefs are being depleted by extensive fishing and pollution); and
- among the disadvantaged (discussed in Chapter 3) throughout Kiribati with little access to paid employment.

Absolute poverty may be almost unknown; there are few, if any, starving or shelterless people. The relatively egalitarian culture provides that few people will be markedly worse off than their neighbours. 'Poverty of opportunity', however, is common, particularly among the young, women and those in the outer islands. In addition, there is evidence (ADB, 2001) of increasing prevalence of pockets of poverty. As elsewhere in the Pacific, there has been little analysis of the reasons for poverty or those at highest risk. There are no cohesive strategies to address poverty and apparently no assessments (among any PICs) of what approaches have worked best elsewhere. In general in Kiribati, poverty is not seen by the government as a serious issue and is thus not a central concern of the government, as indicated by the lack of strong roles for planning and finance officials, adequate funds, and a clear strategy for addressing it.

Beyond traditional forms of sharing and remittances from I-Kiribati working overseas,⁷⁵ there is little to provide safety nets or special protection measures for those who are at disadvantage. The government considers

economic growth (and the associated increase in paid employment) and public sector reform as the keys to poverty alleviation.

The ILO⁷⁶ has recently assessed social security programmes and administrative mechanisms in Kiribati. There is workmen's compensation specifying employer liability in case of certain injuries, illness, disability or death. The Kiribati Provident Fund provides lump sum payments or an annuity for retired workers. Medical care is in principle free for all citizens (within budgetary constraints). The ILO recommends a range of institutional strengthening changes for these services.

As the EU and UNDP note,⁷⁷ without careful policy development and implementation, the economic reform process does not necessarily address either social or environmental concerns:

"Markets, an excellent way to allocate resources *efficiently*, are all but useless when it comes to allocating resources *equitably*. What is needed for that urgent task is a set of social, environmental and institutional reforms designed to improve the living conditions and enlarge the life choices of the 20% of the world's people that globalisation has left behind. ... As currently practiced, institutions through which economic reform programmes are implemented ... often exacerbate inequities, reinforce the conditions that generate and reproduce poverty, and fuel the poverty-environmental degradation relationship in developing countries."

⁷⁵ About 22% of all I-Kiribati households receive funds from workers abroad. Of these, 70% are outer island households. (*Poverty Discussion Papers: Kiribati*, ADB, 2001).

⁷⁶ See Expanding Social Protection / Social Security in Kiribati (draft by Horacio Tempo for ILO, December 2001).

⁷⁷ See Economic Reforms, Globalisation, Poverty and the Environment (pp v-1; UNDP / EU, 1999).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The purposes of the Common Country Assessment are to: i) review and analyse the national development situation of Kiribati taking into account both national perspectives and goals and those of the United Nations system globally; ii) identify key issues as a basis for advocacy and policy dialogue between the UN agencies and Kiribati; and iii) identify areas for priority attention in development assistance. Broad conclusions which flow from the assessment are summarised below.

5.1 The National Development Situation

Kiribati is a very small, isolated and geographically widespread atoll nation which is included among those categorised as LDCs due to low income, weak human resources, and a high degree of economic vulnerability. Although economic growth has been modest, the economy (particularly foreign reserves) has been prudently managed, democratic principles are robust and society is relatively stable. These characteristics will be invaluable in helping Kiribati address its challenges:

- The ADB considers Kiribati to be the most economically vulnerable of its seven Pacific Island Member Countries. Both economic and environmental vulnerability are expected to increase due largely to changes beyond Kiribati's control: global climate change, an increasingly competitive global economy, the pending loss of special access agreements for overseas markets, and possibly continued instability in its main trading partner, Fiji.
- Development has been extremely uneven, particularly between South Tarawa and the outer islands. Considerable differences in income and material wealth are appearing, only partly smoothed out by the traditional kin-based economy.
- 59% of Kiribati's population (2000 census) is aged 24 or under; nearly 19% are youth between 15 and 24 years old. Relatively rapid population growth and a very young population structure severely strain Kiribati's capacity to provide adequate health, education, and other basic services and sufficient productive jobs for its young people.
- The rapid growth of South Tarawa, with nearly 44% of Kiribati's people, and the recent population decline in most outer islands, is placing tremendous pressures on the former and making delivery of services to the latter increasingly difficult, expensive and inefficient.
- Despite recent improvements in formal education, Kiribati is struggling to improve basic education for all, provide the practical skills needed for a modernising economy, appreciate the need for life-long skills development, and assure equal access by males and females to tertiary level training. Although there is gender equality in terms of access through secondary education, there are still over six males for every female aged 20-24 receiving tertiary level training.
- Basic health indicators remain poor despite relatively high expenditures on health. Low male life expectancy is of serious concern. There is a relatively high level of infant and child morbidity (i.e. rate of incidence of disease) and mortality (death), maternal morbidity, communicable diseases, and life-style diseases, the last suggesting poor nutrition habits and insufficient exercise. The recent rapid rise in reported cases of HIV/AIDS is a serious concern as are high rates of tuberculosis, diabetes and child deaths from diarrhoea.
- The fragile environment of South Tarawa is deteriorating due to ever more overcrowding, limited legal access to land, poor waste management and sanitation, and growing pollution of the water lens, lagoon and land. Results include poor potable water quality, poor health, lower employment / livelihood opportunities, increased inequality between the formally employed and the unemployed, and increased social tensions.
- Kiribati has chosen a development strategy based on public sector reform including 'downsizing' of the public service and rapid economic growth (and formal job creation) through the private sector and especially through State-Owned Enterprises, export expansion and export diversification. Privatisation and individualisation of

economic activity might not be achieved entirely smoothly considering local cultural norms, increased competition and globalisation of markets, the increased need for rapid decision-making, and increasingly the need for inexpensive, reliable and widely available communications including Internet access.

- Disadvantage or relative poverty and poverty of opportunity are emerging as national issues.
- The most intractable difficulties are to meet the aspirations of I-Kiribati for paid work and sustainable livelihoods, and to maintain a good living environment, particularly in congested South Tarawa.

5.2 Key Issues for Advocacy and Dialogue

Kiribati has endorsed the Millennium Development Goals for 2015 and a number of international treaties and conventions or (as for financial and political accountability and women's rights), regional near-equivalents, all with specific commitments. Key issues are:

- The need for full extension to women of the I-Kiribati cultural norm of relative egalitarianism, including the preliminary step of ratifying CEDAW and then implementing its provisions.
- Ratification by Kiribati of other key international conventions and declarations including those dealing with political and civil rights, elimination of racial discrimination, and rights at work.
- Ratification by Kiribati of a number of global and regional treaties and conventions dealing with human rights, workers' rights, trade, sustainable ocean resource management and pollution.
- The possibility that Kiribati may not meet a number of the *Millennium Declaration Goals* (i.e. the summary form) for 2015 without a firmer commitment and practical policies. These include: i) reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, ii) halving the proportion of underweight under five year olds, iii) halving those without access to safe drinking water, iv) reducing maternal mortality by three-fourths, and v) reversing the loss of environmental resources.

5.3 Issues for Priority Development Attention

Considering the expressed needs of Kiribati itself and the mandates of the United Nations, priority areas for future development assistance are likely to remain health, education, employment creation and livelihoods, reducing disadvantage, and assisting Kiribati address the observance of human rights for all. Improved transport and communications, internally and internationally, require considerable external assistance. Kiribati requires support in its reporting procedure on the follow-up to the various UN conventions and conferences, reviewing the legal context for the recognition of human rights, more attention to gender issues, and raising awareness within the global community and the UN system about Kiribati as a new UN member state.

The international development community should provide support in a form, with sufficient continuity, and for a sufficient duration, to genuinely assist Kiribati to shift progressively toward a more sustainable and equitable development path. This requires assistance efforts which are designed so they do not overtax the limited implementation, administrative and monitoring capacities of the government but rather augment them. Where appropriate, some assistance should be directly through CSOs/NGOs, not solely the public service.

Clearly the United Nations cannot assist Kiribati address all of the development issues facing the country. The UN must work in cooperation with numerous other players. Specific areas for priority donor attention, not prioritised, include the following:

- **Population.** Assist Kiribati to develop and implement practical population and broad development policies which effectively address the carrying capacity of South Tarawa (and related social issues), and the needs of remote island communities.
- **Safety nets.** Assist Kiribati to develop practical, equitable and affordable safety nets for the relatively poor and disadvantaged.
- **Sustainable livelihoods.** Assist Kiribati to develop and implement policies for formal and informal employment which keep pace with, or preferably exceed, growth in the labour force.

- **Youth.** Assist Kiribati develop practical options for improved life skills and for training and employing the majority of its youth who currently have little prospect of formal employment.
 - **Human resource development.** Assist Kiribati to develop and implement education and human resource development policies which improve the quality, relevance and practicality of education and training at all levels with more emphasis on the essential pre-school years.
 - **Globalisation.** Assist Kiribati in more informed consideration of globalisation, better understanding of its likely impacts, consideration of realistic options, and adapting to its challenges in a manner more likely to achieve the "impossible trinity" of i) securing its benefits; ii) maintaining national sovereignty; and iii) retaining flexibility to formulate and implement Kiribati's own economic and social policies.
 - **Data.** Support to Kiribati (and appropriate Pacific regional organisations) to better understand, develop and use data and information for more effective research, policy development, implementation, and analysis and monitoring of results. Poor and inconsistent data is an issue both nationally and regionally.
 - **Treaties.** Assist Kiribati and the region to understand, prioritise, assess, and where appropriate ratify and effectively implement those international and regional treaties and commitments which will assist Kiribati shift toward more sustainable development.
 - **Regional action.** Assist Kiribati to identify, and act on, those key issues which genuinely require regional or global action rather than just a national response.
 - **Vulnerability.** Assist Kiribati to understand, and more effectively mitigate, the key elements which cause vulnerability, both economic and environmental.
 - **Sustainable development.** Assist Kiribati to develop, implement and monitor development policies in a manner which is more practical, sustainable, equitable, compatible with local cultural norms and gender sensitive.
 - **Environment.** Support Kiribati's efforts to reverse the loss of environmental resources on South Tarawa, manage its ocean resources more sustainably, and improve pollution control and waste management (including human wastes).
 - **Worker's rights.** Assist Kiribati to develop effective dialogue between employers' and workers' organisations to better address complex issues, broaden decision-making, protect the rights of workers and improve the conditions of workers' employment.
 - **Health.** Assist Kiribati to develop health policies and programmes which improve a broad range of health indicators in both Tarawa and the outer islands
 - **HIV/AIDS.** Assist Kiribati to effectively address the spread of HIV/AIDS.
 - **Reform.** Support Kiribati's efforts to make the public service more transparent, consultative, efficient, and accountable and to include NGOs in delivering services to the disadvantaged.
 - **Climate Change.** Assist Kiribati to understand global climate change and its expected impacts on the country and to contribute more effectively to international dialogue and negotiations on climate change.
- There are other, related issues which are important to Kiribati but also the Pacific Island countries more generally. The international development community could help Kiribati and the PICs address the following:
- **Economic reform and equity.** Without careful thought, the recent emphasis within PICs on public sector reform, commercialisation / privatisation and economic growth through trade could be at the expense of the poor, worsen inequities and aggravate environmental degradation. Kiribati and other PICs may need assistance to study and adapt practical 'best practices' elsewhere which combine economic growth with equity, real poverty reduction and environmental protection.
 - **Reversing brain drain.** Many of the human resource development, education and sustainable livelihood policies which are necessary to compete better globally, and should improve the quality of life in Kiribati and other PICs, also produce people with skills in demand elsewhere. It is desirable for Kiribati and the PICs to develop cooperative regional strategies to

retain skilled people and encourage professionals who have emigrated to return to the region.

5.4 A Summary of Broad Themes for Priority Development Attention in Kiribati

Based on the analysis carried out during the CCA process, the key development issues indicated above, and the deliberations⁷⁸ of Kiribati government officials, CSOs/NGO representatives and in-country donor representatives in Tarawa in early February 2002, the key development issues facing Kiribati have been grouped into the following three broad thematic areas which will be further refined during the preparation of the UN Development Assistance Framework for Kiribati:

Theme 1: More equitable access to sustainable services and opportunities

- A more equitable provision of a wide range of essential services (health, education, social security, transport, communications, and employment opportunities) between Tarawa and the rest of Kiribati and among the various island groups.
- Higher quality of services in general and for disadvantaged and vulnerable people including women, youth, the disabled and the aged.
- Improved planning (and the data and information) required for planning, analysis, policy development, implementation and monitoring. *(This could be listed under all headings as it is cross-cutting.)*

Theme 2: Governance and human rights

- Assuring or maintaining a more equitable society with wide dialogue and broad shared decision-making (by geographical location within Kiribati, by gender, by government / NGO affiliation, etc.).
- Improved transparency and accountability within decision-making.
- Support for improved mechanisms and structures for decentralisation.
- Ratification and effective follow-up by Kiribati to key conventions and conferences, and national reporting on progress in meeting commitments (e.g. the *Millennium Development Goals* and the Convention on the Rights of the Child).

Theme 3: Dealing effectively with economic and environmental vulnerability

- Addressing rural-urban migration and the population issues of South Tarawa.
- Understanding and adjusting to the pressures of globalisation and economic reform.
- Improved management of solid and toxic waste and pollution of the ground and lagoon, particularly in South Tarawa.
- Improved quality of potable water (through protection of water lens) and quantity (through improved supply and distribution and better water-use practices).
- More effectively addressing climate change (both local impacts and global negotiations).
- Sustainable use and management of Kiribati's ocean resources.

⁷⁸ See the *Report of the CCA/UNDAF In-Country Consultative Meeting Held with Government, NGOs and Donor Partners at the Parliamentary Complex, Tarawa, Kiribati; 6-7 February, 2002* (UNDP, Suva, Fiji, February 2002).

ANNEXES

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ANNEX 1: INDICATORS OF DEVELOPMENT AND DATA ISSUES

Considerable data exist to indicate development progress in Kiribati but some key indicators vary widely depending on the source cited. Often reports do not cite primary sources or are ambiguous. This annex summarises indicators (**highlighting 1995 & 2000 census data**) and indicate some inconsistencies which tend to reduce the ability to analyse issues, judge trends accurately, monitor progress, etc. As noted in the main text, the lack of reliable, consistent and timely data and time-series is common in all sectors throughout the smaller PICs.

Indicator	Overall	Male	Female	Comments and Differing Data
Population:				
Population (report of, Nov. 2000 Census ¹)	84,494	41,646	42,848	
Population growth (1995-2000; %/year), census ¹	1.69%	1.58%	1.79%	Urban (S Tarawa) = + 5.17 %/year; rural = - 0.63 %/year;
Mortality:				
Life expectancy at birth (1995; years) ²	60.2	58.5	64.7	World Bank ⁶ estimated overall 59.4 (1995) and 61.4 (1999) improved from 48 (male) and 50 (female) in 1975 ¹² but primary sources not stated. * is interpolated; it is not actually reported in 2000 census report;
(2000; years) ⁸	?	60.4	64.5	
(2000, census) ¹	62.8 *	58.2	67.3	
Maternal mortality ratio (<i>but see note * below</i>)			53 ^{7,13} - 56 ¹³	UNICEF ¹⁴ & ADB ¹¹ indicate 225 (1988)
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births, 1995) ^{2, 13} (census, 2000) ¹	62, 54 ¹⁸ 43	67.5 -	56.3 -	UNFPA ¹³ est. 2nd highest in PICs after PNG. WB ⁴ est. 56 & UNICEF ¹⁴ 67
Child mortality rate (1995) ^{2, 13, 14}	24	27.8	20.8	WB ⁶ est. 72, UNCTD ¹⁵ 74 & UNICEF ¹⁴ 88 (for infant + under 5 mortality)
Economic:				
GDP per capita in Australian \$ (2000; prelim) ³	804			Some GDP/GNP data do not clearly distinguish between 'current' or 'nominal' dollars and 'real' dollars for market prices of a specified year.
Aus\$ (1999; prelim) ³	860			
Aus\$ (1998) ^{17, 3}	718 ¹⁷ , 844 ³			
GNP per capita in Australian \$ (2000; prelim) ³	1473			
Aus\$ (1999; prelim) ³	1653			
Aus\$ (1998)	1723			
Aid per capita (US\$; 1997-98) ¹⁰ but 'aid' undefined	US\$194	-	-	This is 62% ¹⁰ of 1991-92 aid of US\$311. SPC shows A\$154 (1995)
Dependency ratio, 2000 (pop {[0-14]+[65+]}/[15-64]) ¹⁷	85	-	-	UNFPA ¹³ shows 81 in 1985 & 87 in 1995, i.e. population is getting younger
Services:				
Access to safe drinking water (% , 1995)	47 ⁴ - 76 ¹⁴	-	-	Safe water: WB ⁴ est. urban 82% & rural 25% in 1995; UNICEF ⁷ urban 82% & rural 25% in 1999; and UNCTAD ¹⁵ urban 70% & rural 80% in 1998.
Access to sanitation (% , 1995)	46 ² , 48 ⁷	-	-	Source 2: urban 45%; rural 53% in 1990; Overall decline from 63% in 1980; Source 7: urban 54%; rural 44% in 1999
Access to health services (% , 1995) (% , 2000) ²¹	95 ² - 100 ¹⁴ 100	-	-	But 22 of 23 doctors are reportedly based in South Tarawa. ¹¹ There is 100% basic service with 84 health 'delivery service points'
Phone lines per 1000 people	26 ¹⁶ , 42.6 ⁶			ILO data ¹⁶ for 1995; WB ⁶ for 1998, an unlikely 18%/yr growth rate.
Development & health:				
Adult literacy (1998) ⁵	93%	94%	91%	More-or-less unchanged since early 1980s
Underweight children (% under 5 years; 1990s)	9 ¹⁴ , 13 ²⁰	-	-	Down from 15 in 1980s ¹⁴ ; UNICEF ²⁰ estimates 11% moderate-to-severe wasting and 28% moderate-to-severe stunting.
HIV / AIDS cases (End of 2000) ¹³	36	25	11	17 deaths ¹³ by end of 2000; HIV/AIDS cases up from 2 in 1991 ¹³ , 36 end of 2000 ^{13,19} and 38 by Sept. 2001
(Late 2001) ²²	38	27	11	
Hepatitis B, carrier rates (year unspecified) ⁷	20-25%	-	-	
Immunisation (DPT3 coverage, 2000) ⁷	78%	-	-	Varies widely from 48.7% (SW Kiribati) to 89.3% (Tarawa, Banaba). ¹⁸ Other PICs > 90% except Sol Isl. 79%, FSM <85%, & Marshall Isl. 86%
Human Development Index (1998) ⁵	0.515	0.493	0.517	Higher is better (Kiribati is 11 th of 14 PICs ranked)
Human Poverty Index (1998) ⁵	12.7	13.7	11.8	Higher is worse (Kiribati is 10 th of 15 PICs ranked)
Gender:				
Members of House of Assembly (2001) ⁹	41	39	2	37 th of 49 Commonwealth members for women MPs (but best of 7 PICs)
Labour force (% of total) ¹⁴ paid employment (Census, 2000) ¹	100%	52% 63%	48% 37%	SPC ¹⁷ indicates females were 54% of labour force in 1990
Legislators & senior officials (% , 2000) ¹	100%	73%	27%	ADB est. administrators & managers as 96% male & 4% female in 1990s ¹¹
Total fertility rate (2000 census) ²¹	-	-	4.3	UNICEF estimated 4.5 in 1995 ^{7,14} ; WHO ⁸ estimated 4.6 in 2000

Sources: 1) 2000 Census Report, Kiribati Govt., 2001; 2) Dept. of Statistics, Kiribati Govt. & WHO, 1995; 3) Key Indicators, ADB, 2001; 4) Kiribati at a Glance, WB, 2001; 5) Pacific HDR, UNDP 1999; 6) Kiribati Data Profile, WB, 2000; 7) Pacific Island Country Profile, UNICEF, 2001; 8) World Health Report, WHO, 2001; 9) Pacific News Bulletin, PCRC, Oct. 2000; 10) Small States, Commonwealth Secretariat/WB, 2000; 11) Poverty Discussion Papers: Kiribati, ADB, 2001; 12) Kiribati National Development Strategy 2000-2003, Kiribati Govt., 2000; 13) Kiribati Country Brief, UNFPA, 2001; 14) State of Pacific Children, UNICEF, draft of June 2001; 15) Statistical Profile of LDCs, UNCTAD, 2001; 16) World Employment Report 2001, ILO, 2001; 17) Statistics on PICs (Excel spreadsheets downloaded Oct. 2001), SPC, 2001; 18) Situation Analysis of Children, Women & Youth in Kiribati (UNICEF, draft, June 2001); 19) 2000 Annual Report of WHO Kiribati Representative (WHO, 2001); 20) UNICEF Statistics: Oceania (updated 26 Dec. 2000); 21) Kiribati Ministry of Health Report, 2001; 22) Official HIV & AIDS Report, Kiribati Govt., 5 Sept 2001

Note: * An informal UNFPA note of January 2002 indicates that absolute numbers of maternal deaths (ranging from 0 - 5 per year over past decade) are too small to show meaningful trends. A moving 3-year averages suggests a downward trend over the period 1992-1998.

ANNEX 2: KIRIBATI & THE UN'S GLOBAL AGENDA: PROGRESS IN MEETING COMMON CHALLENGES

A) THE MILLENNIUM DECLARATION GOALS (MDGs) FOR 2015: SUMMARY OF STATUS AT A GLANCE

The MDGs are global human development goals adopted by the UN in 2000 for achievement by 2015 from a 1990 baseline. The table summarises national achievements and prospects for Kiribati as estimated by the UN agencies taking into account views expressed during the national CCA/UNDAF Workshop held in Tarawa, Kiribati, from 06-07 February 2002.

Global Goals	Global Achievements	Will the Target or Goal be Met in Kiribati?			State of the Kiribati Supportive Environment			
		Probably	Potentially	Unlikely	Strong	Fair	Weak but Improving	Weak
Extreme Poverty. Halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty (or below the national poverty line). *	From 1990-98, the proportion of people living on under US\$1/day (1993 PPP) in developing countries was reduced from 29% to 24%.		√			√		
HIV/AIDS. Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	In a few countries HIV/AIDS prevalence is showing signs of decline.		√				√	
Hunger. Halve the proportion of under-weight among under- 5 year olds. *	Number of undernourished people in developing world fell by 40 million between 1990-92 and 1996-98.		√				√	
Basic Amenities. Halve the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water.	Around 80% of people in the developing world have access to improved water sources.			√				?
Universal Primary Education. Achieve universal completion of primary education.	By 1997 over 70 countries had primary net enrolment ratios over 80%. In 29 of 46 countries with data, 80% of children enrolled reach grade 5.		√			√		
Gender Equality. Achieve equal access for boys and girls to primary & secondary school <i>by 2005</i> .	By 1997 the female enrolment ratio in developing countries reached 89% of male ratio (primary level) and 82% (secondary level).		√				√	
Maternal Health. Reduce maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters. *	Only 32 countries have achieved a reported maternal mortality ratio of less than 20 per 100,000 live births.	√					√	
Child Mortality. Reduce under-five mortality rates by 2/3.	Under-five mortality was reduced from 93 per 1,000 live births to 80 in 1990-99.	√				√		
Environmental Sustainability. Reverse the loss of environmental resources.	Countries with sustainable development strategies rose from under 25 (1990) to over 50 (1997).			√				√

Notes: 1) Adapted from 'Status at a Glance', Annex 3 of *Reporting on the Millennium Goals at the Country Level* (UNDP, Oct. 2001).

2) Kiribati (and other Forum Island Country Education Ministers) have specifically endorsed these goals as part of the *Forum Basic Education Action Plan – 2001*.

3) Education information from *Education for All Assessment: 2000 Pacific Regional Report* (UNESCO, 2000).

* During the Feb. 2002 CCA/UNDAF workshop, many I-Kiribati participants felt that 'Extreme Poverty' should be rephrased as 'Relative Poverty', 'Hunger' as 'Malnutrition' and 'maternal mortality' as 'maternal morbidity' to more accurately reflect conditions within Kiribati.

B) GLOBAL CONFERENCE GOALS AND INDICATORS TO ASSESS PERFORMANCE**International conferences convened by the United Nations during the decade of the 1990s:**

1	World Summit for Children	New York 1990
2	World Conference on Education for All	Jomtein 1990
3	UN Conference on Environment and Development	Rio de Janeiro 1992
4	International Conference on Nutrition	Rome 1992
5	World Conference on Human Rights	Vienna 1993
6	International Conference on Population and Development	Cairo 1994
7	World Summit for Social Development	Copenhagen 1995
8	Fourth World Conference on Women	Beijing 1995
9	Ninth Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders	Cairo 1995
10	Second UN Conference on Human Settlements - Habitat II	Istanbul 1996
11	World Food Summit	Rome 1996
12	Ninth Session of the UNCTAD - UNCTAD IX	Madrid 1996
13	UNGA - 20th Special Session on the World Drug Problem	New York 1998
14	Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies	Stockholm 1998

A set of Core Goals and Indicators: A concept of 'People-centred Development' based on the collective findings of these conferences is emerging. There are many common development goals and objectives articulated at these conferences. Therefore, it may be useful to consider them as a group and identify those that typify the core values of the emerging concept. The following list has been prepared with this purpose in mind. Selected indicators that could be used to measure country performance in relation to each goal / objective are also suggested. Available data for Kiribati are shown in column 3.

Goal	Indicators	Kiribati during 1990s
1. Economic well being		
1.1 The proportion of people living in extreme poverty should be reduced by at least one half by 2015 (Source for rightmost column is ADB, 2000 except where noted)	a) Incidence of poverty: Population below \$1 a day b) Poverty Gap Ratio (Incidence times depth of poverty) c) Inequality: Poorest fifth's share of national consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively low poverty but emerging urban poverty (ADB, 2001) • Human Poverty Index = 12.7 (i.e. 7th of 12 PIC ADB members) • No national poverty line, food poverty line, or poverty severity index. • No Gini co-efficient for inequality measure
2. Social Development: There should be substantial progress in primary education, gender equality, basic health care and family planning as follows:		
2.1 There should be universal primary education in all countries by 2015	d) Net enrolment in primary education	d) 78% (1995) (UNICEF, 2001)
2.2 Progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women should be demonstrated by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005.	e) Children <i>not</i> reaching Grade 5 in primary school f) Literacy rate, 15 to 20-yr-olds g) Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education	e) 5% (1995-99) (UNICEF, 2001) f) 99.8% (15-24 yrs; '99) (UNESCO 2000) g) Primary about 1:1; lower secondary nearly 1:1; over 15 years about 0.87:1.0
2.3 The death rate for infants and children under the age of five years should be reduced in each developing country by two thirds of the 1990 level by 2015.	h) Ratio of literate females to males 15 to 24 year olds i) Infant mortality rate (per '000) j) Under five mortality rate k) Child malnutrition: Percentage of underweight children under 5 years	h) 8% 15 yrs+ female illiteracy (UNICEF, 2001) or identical to males (ADB, 2000) i) 43 (2000) (Govt census) j) 62 (1999) * (UNICEF, 2001) k) 13% moderate-to-severe underweight; 28% moderate-to-severely stunted (UNICEF, 2001)
2.4 The rate of maternal mortality should be reduced by three fourths between 1990 & 2015.	l) Maternal mortality ratio m) Births attended by skilled health personnel	l) 56 (est. 1995) ** (UNFPA, 2001) m) 85% (1998) (UNICEF, 2001a)

Notes * Compared to 48.5 for those developing countries which are not LDCs (UNCTAD, 2001)

** Some sources suggest that trend has worsened since 1980s when MMR was reportedly 10 (UNICEF, 2001a) compared to 225 for 1998 (UNICEF, 2000). Others (UNFPA informal note January 2002) suggest an improvement during the 1990s using 3-year moving averages. As noted in the report, MMR is a misleading and arguably meaningless statistic for very small populations.

2.5	Access should be available through primary health care system to reproductive health services for all individuals of appropriate ages, including safe and reliable family planning methods, no later than 2015.	n) Contraceptive prevalence rate o) HIV prevalence rate in 15-24 year-old pregnant women	n) 28% *** (UNICEF, 2001) o) 38 total cases in Kiribati (Govt, Min of Health & WHO 2001 up from 2 in 1994)
3. Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration			
3.1	There should be a current national strategy for sustainable development in the process of implementation in every country by 2005, so as to ensure that the current trends in the loss of environmental resources including forests, fisheries, fresh water, climate, soils, biodiversity, stratospheric ozone are effectively reversed at both global and national levels by 2015.	p) Countries with national sustainable development strategies q) Intensity of fresh-water use r) Land area protected s) GDP per unit of energy use t) Carbon dioxide emissions	p) Kiribati has a National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS) but it is dated, about ten years old q) Limited fresh water; <i>data not available</i> r) <i>Not available</i> s) <i>Not available</i> t) 0.3 tonnes/capita (1995) (UNDP, 2001) compared to 2.6 for East Asia & Pacific and 3.9 overall globally in 1997
4. Social Integration			
4.1	Nations should commit themselves to foster societies that are stable, safe and just and are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights as well as non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity and participation of all people.	u) Periodicity of free & fair elections v) Changes in government through an electoral process w) Voter participation in elections x) Recognition in law of the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly y) Effective legislative framework, law enforcement, prosecutions, legal profession in conformity with international standards	u) 4 years; last in Nov 1998 v) Yes w) Yes, free participation x) Yes (but some Govt limitations on freedom of speech & press) y) Yes (but only 1 woman in 42 member Parliament) (Source for this section is US Govt, 2001)
5. Overall Development (General Indicators)			
		z) GNP per capita (US\$) aa) Adult literacy rate (%) ab) Total fertility rate ac) Population with access to safe water (%) ad) Life expectancy (years)	z) \$1180 (1998) (ADB, 2000) aa) 92% (m94; f91) (UNICEF, 2001a) ab) 4.0 (1999) **** (WB, 2000) ac) 47% (urban 82; rural 25) (WB, 2001) but East Asia Pacific overall = 75% ad) 62.8 (2000) (Kiribati govt, census) 61 (1999); 59.4 (1995) (WB, 2001) but East Asia Pacific overall = 69 years

Notes: *** UNFPA (2001) suggests that only 17% of women in the reproductive age group were using a modern method of contraception in 1998.

**** Total fertility rate per woman of 4.5 (1995) according to UNICEF, 2001.

Sources for Kiribati are as follows::

ADB, 2000	<i>Pacific Strategy for New Millennium</i> (Office of Pacific Operations, September)
ADB, 2001	<i>Kiribati: Discussion Papers on Poverty</i> (Office of Pacific Operations; March)
Kiribati govt, 2001	<i>Report on the 2000 Census of Population</i> (volume 1; Tarawa; November)
UNCTAD, 2001	<i>Statistical Profiles of the Least Developed Countries</i>
UNDP, 2001	<i>Human Development Report 2001</i> (Internet Edition)
UNESCO, 2001	<i>Education for All Assessment: 2000 Pacific Regional Report</i> (Apia)
UNFPA, 2001	<i>Kiribati Country Brief</i> (Country Support Team, Suva, May)
UNICEF, 2001	<i>Pacific Islands Country Profile</i> (Suva, 10 October)
UNICEF, 2001a	<i>A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Kiribati</i> (draft; June)
US Govt., 2001	<i>Kiribati Country Report on Human Rights Practices, 2000</i> (February 2001)
WB, 2000	<i>Kiribati Data Profile</i> (July)
WB, 2001	<i>Kiribati at a Glance</i> (9 October)

**C) INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND DECLARATIONS:
KIRIBATI POSITION IN RELATION TO GOALS AND TARGETS**

UN treaty bodies currently operating:

Human Rights Committee (HRC)
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESR)
Committee Against Torture (CAT)

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CETRD)
Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

Monitors the implementation of:

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right
Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
Convention on the Rights of the Child
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Details of the above (and other) instruments and the status of action to implement them is summarised below as reported in late November 2001:

Name of Instrument	Content Highlights and Goals to Achieve	Status of Ratification/Signature	Remarks
1) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights			
[A: 1966, F: 1976]	<p>Rights to Self Determination (people freely determine their political status and freely choose their economic, social and cultural development), Equality of rights of men and women, Right to life, Equality before the law, Freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, slavery, compulsory labour, arbitrary arrest and detention. Right to a fair trial if accused plus several other human rights. (States which are party to the Covenant promote, protect, observe and take all other steps to this end.)</p>	No action yet by Kiribati on the covenant or its protocols	No action yet by any Pacific Island Country (PIC)
a) First Optional Protocol	Enables the Human Rights Committee set up under the Covenant (HRC) to receive and consider communications from individuals in countries which are party to the Covenant who claim HR violations after all domestic remedies of HR have been exhausted		
b) Second Optional Protocol (1989)	Abolition of the death penalty. No one within the jurisdiction of a State party to the Protocol may be executed. HRC is competent to receive and consider communications from individuals unless the State party opted out of this concession at the time of ratification		
2) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights			
[A: 1966, F: 1976]	<p>Rights to Self Determination (people freely determine their political status and their economic, social and cultural development), Equal rights of men and women. Without discrimination on any ground whatsoever enjoying the following rights among others. Right to work, just and favourable conditions of work, fair wages, decent living conditions, healthy working conditions, rest, leisure and social security. Right to form and join trade unions, to freely pursue economic, social and cultural development. States which are party to the Covenant promote, protect, observe and take all other steps to this end</p>	No action yet by Kiribati	No action yet by any PIC except the Solomon Islands

Name of Instrument	Content Highlights and Goals to Achieve	Status of Ratification/Signature	Remarks
3) Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide [1948]		No action yet by Kiribati	
4) Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees [1961]		No action yet by Kiribati (or any other PICs)	See note 1
5) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination [1965]		No action yet by Kiribati	
6) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women [1979]		No action yet by Kiribati	
7) Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment [1984]		No action by Kiribati (or other PICs)	
8) Convention on the Rights of the Child [1989]		Ratified 11 Dec 1995	See note 2
9) ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work [1998]		Not yet signed or ratified.	Kiribati only joined the ILO in January 2000
Declaration comprises the eight Conventions listed below:	All members of the ILO even if they have not ratified the conventions in question, have an obligation to respect, promote and to realise in good faith and in accordance with the constitution, the principles concerning fundamental rights which are the subject of those conventions, namely: a) Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining b) Elimination of all forms of compulsory labour c) Effective abolition of child labour d) Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation	Translation of the ILO Declaration and the eight conventions into the i-Kiribati language is nearly complete and will be used for advocacy and awareness raising. (Source: ILO, Suva, Fiji, Nov 2001)	
Convention 87 (1948)	Freedom of Association & Right to Organise		
Convention 98 (1949)	Right to Organise & Collective Bargaining		
Convention 29 (1930)	Forced Labour		
Convention 105 (1957)	Abolition of Forced Labour		
Convention 100 (1951)	Equal Remuneration for Men & Women for Equal Work (1951)		
Convention 111 (1958)	Discrimination: Employment & Occupation		
Convention 138 (1973)	Minimum Age for Work:		
Convention 182 (1999)	Worst Forms of Child Labour		
10) International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families [1990]			
	Rights and freedoms including freedom to migrate for work, Freedom from forced labour, torture, practice of any religion, unlawful arrest/ detention Right to equality before the law as citizens of the receiving country, Right against arbitrary expulsion, Right to equal pay, conditions of work, social security as citizens of receiving State, Right to transfer funds. (States which are party to the Covenant promote, protect, observe and take all other steps to this end.)	No action yet by Kiribati	Convention is not in force

- Notes:**
- 1) In late 2001, there was increased pressure on PICs to sign this (and other) conventions related to refugees following several boatloads of refugees who attempted to reach Australia. Australia has offered assistance to PICs in understanding and ratifying agreements.
 - 2) The Kiribati National Advisory Committee on Children (KNACC) was formed in late 1995 to monitor the CRC. The first Kiribati draft report was prepared in 2000 (UNICEF, Pacific Islands Country Profile, 2001).
 - 3) Kiribati has not signed CEDAW but is bound by the 1995 Platform of Action, agreed by PIC ministers, which mirrors much of the CEDAW content and goals.

D) KEY REGIONAL CONVENTIONS AND TREATIES: STATUS IN KIRIBATI

There are a number of agreements among members of the Pacific Islands Forum (16 countries plus Australia and New Zealand) and several restricted to the 14 Forum Island Countries or . The status of key agreements is summarised below. The Convention on the Law of the Sea (CLOS), the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gases are not, of course, regional agreements but these are of particular interest to the island countries.

Note that most FICs (including Kiribati) follow the British legal system: treaties do not necessarily enter into force when ratified; entry into force often requires a specific law passed by the Parliament:

“Ratification is the act of depositing an instrument of ratification certifying that the State making such a deposit is bound by the Agreement. In The British legal system, agreements are not self-executing and need to be incorporated by an Act of Parliament to have the force of law. Principles of customary international law, however, could apply as has been the case in Britain from which most of the FIC take their precedence.” (from Dec. 2001 e-mail message from Dr. Transform Aqorau, Legal Counsel, South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency)

Convention or Treaty	Status Overall	Kiribati Status
1) Trade & Economic Cooperation		
South Pacific Agreement on Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation (SPARTECA; 1980)	Entry into force: 01 January 1981 ¹	Signed 14 July 1980; Ratified 10 July 1981; In force 9 Aug 1981
Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA; 2001)	Not in force; Signed by 9 of 14 FICs and ratified by three ¹	Signed 18 August 2001
Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER; 2001)	Not in force; Signed by 13 of 16 Forum members and ratified by four ¹	Signed 18 August 2001
2) Environment & Resource Management		
South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga; 1985)	Entry into force: 11 December 1986; Signed, ratified & in force in 11 of 14 FICS and 13 of 16 Forum members ¹	Signed 06 Aug 1985; Ratified 28 Oct 1986; In force 11 Dec 1986
Convention for Protection of Natural Resources ³ a) Protocol on dumping b) Protocol on pollution emergencies	Entry into force: 22 August 1990 Entry into force: 22 August 1990 Entry into force: 22 August 1998	No action by Kiribati No action No action
Waigani Convention on Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes (1995)	Not in force; Signed by 14 Forum members and ratified by ten ¹	Signed 16 Sept 1995; Ratified 28 June 2001
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) ⁴ Agreement for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention relating to the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks	Entry into force: 16 November 1994; Ratified by 13 of 16 Forum members Entry into force: 11 December 2001	No action Only the Solomon islands is Party to the agreement
Convention for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPT, 2000)	Not yet ratified ² Signed by 15 of 16 FFA members	All PICs except Kiribati are signatories.
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 1992)	Entry into force: 21 March 1994	Kiribati (and all PICs but Palau & Tonga) have ratified.
Kyoto Protocol on Limiting Greenhouse Gas Emissions (1997)	Not in force; ratified by most Forum Island Members	Ratified

Notes and sources:

- Information from Forum Secretariat as of 28 November 2001.
- Requires ratification by three signatories north of 20° N and seven south of 20° S.
- SPREP Convention & protocols signed and ratified by most Forum members plus France, UK and USA.
- Information from Law of Sea website www.un.org/Depts/los as of 12 November 2001.
- “The difference between the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the WCPT Convention is that the former is an instrument of global application whereas the latter is regional. Further the latter is based on the former in terms of its jurisdictional scope.”

ANNEX 3: THE PROCESS OF PREPARATION OF THE CCA

The first stage in developing the Kiribati 'Common Country Assessment' was a consultative mission to Kiribati in late 1999 or early 2000. Discussions with many people within Government and other organisations on key development issues and how the CCA might help improve aid coordination in Kiribati. Following the preparation of a draft report in early 2000, further discussions were held within Kiribati and with the UN agencies on the contents and substance. A revised draft was prepared in October 2000 which incorporated numerous comments and suggestions received from a variety of parties.

During 2000/2001, a number of early CCAs were internally assessed by the United Nations Development Group. The lessons learned were incorporated into a series of training workshops to assist UN agencies to develop more useful CCAs and better link them to the follow-up programming document, the UNDAFs. For various reasons, CCA/UNDAF training workshops for the Pacific Islands could not be organised until November 2001. Partly as a result, the finalisation of the Kiribati CCA was delayed for an extended period of time.

During 2001, the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Fiji decided to complete the Kiribati CCA simultaneously with the preparation of CCAs for three other *Least Developed Countries*: the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. A CCA Manager was engaged to oversee the process for all countries, and to update and finalise the Kiribati CCA.

Although the long delay is unfortunate and regrettable, it has allowed the collection of a considerable volume of additional relevant information and further dialogue on challenges facing Kiribati with regional organisations (EPOC, Forum Secretariat, SOPAC, SPC, SPREP and USP), UN project staff, development agencies, and regional NGOs. As a result of the November 2001 CCA/UNDAF Training Workshop in Suva, the UN agencies also contributed a number of useful additional suggestions on the CCA's format and contents. Finally, the simultaneous work on four Pacific CCAs, despite considerable differences among the countries, led to the incorporation of a regional perspective, a useful addition as many challenges facing Kiribati and other PICs require a degree of cooperative regional action to be successfully addressed.

National development priorities have been clearly and consistently articulated by successive governments in Kiribati, and regularly repeated in development reports about Kiribati. The concerns and priorities expressed by the government during the 1999/2000 in-country consultations for the CCA have not changed in more recent key government reports such as the *Action Programme for the Development of the Republic Of Kiribati: 2001-2010* presented to the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in May 2001. These were key sources for the CCA regarding government views, priorities and plans.

A meeting involving UN agencies, Kiribati government officials and a Kiribati NGO representative was scheduled for December 2001 in Suva, Fiji to discuss a revised draft CCA, progress on the CCA/UNDAF process, and timing for completion. Due to airline flight cancellations, Kiribati was unable to attend. Therefore, there was no opportunity for direct discussions with government officials except for a brief meeting in late December 2001 with the office of the Kiribati High Commission to Fiji. A revised (December 2001) draft of the CCA was provided to the High Commission for comments and a copy was e-mailed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tarawa.

Throughout December 2001 and January 2002, a UN agencies' Kiribati CCA/UNDAF working group met frequently to monitor progress, review working drafts, provide additional information, and generally improve the CCA report. A final discussion draft (dated 16 January 2002) incorporating further revisions was e-mailed to Tarawa.

From 6-7 February 2002, a national CCA/UNDAF workshop was held in Tarawa involving UN agencies, Kiribati government officials, the NGO community, representatives of donors based in Tarawa and others. Over 40 people (aside from the UN agencies) participated. The CCA was again revised after the workshop, incorporating a number of suggested changes by workshop participants including UN agencies.

ANNEX 4: ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank	NDS	National Development Strategy (Kiribati)
APNGCR	Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research (New Zealand)	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
DPT3	Diphtheria, Pertussis & Tetanus Immunisation	NZODA	New Zealand Official Development Assistance
CCA	Common Country Assessment	PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN)	PANG	Pacific Network on Globalisation
CESR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN)	PCRC	Pacific Concerns Resource Centre
ComSec	Commonwealth Secretariat	PIC	Pacific Island Country
CRC	Committee on Rights of the Child (UN)	PICTA	Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific	RERF	Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	RETA	Regional Technical Assistance (ADB)
CST	Country Technical Services Team (UNFPA)	RRRT	Regional Rights Resource Team (DFID)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)	SOE	State-Owned Enterprise
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
EFA	Education for All (UNESCO)	SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
EPOC	ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre	STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN)	UNCTAD	United Nations Conference for Trade and Development
EU	European Union	UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
EVI	Environmental (or Economic) Vulnerability Index	UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
EWC	East-West Center, Hawaii	UNDG	United Nations Development Group
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FEMM	Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting	UNDSPD	United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development
FIC	Forum Island Country	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
Forsec	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
FTA	Free Trade Agreement	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
GEF	Global Environment Facility	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
GHG	Greenhouse Gas	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
GNP	Gross National Product	UNLDC III	Third UN Conference on LDCs (Brussels, May 2001)
HDR	Human Development Report (UNDP)	UNOCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	USP	University of the South Pacific
HRC	Human Rights Committee (UN)	WB	World Bank
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies	WDR	World Development Report (WB)
ILO	International Labour Organisation	WHO	World Health Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund	WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002)
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	WTO	World Trade Organisation
KCUL	Kiribati Credit Union League		
LDC	Least Developed Country		
METT	Ministry of Education, Training & Technology (Kiribati)		
MOH	Ministry of Health (Kiribati)		

ANNEX 5: REFERENCES AND SOURCES

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Asian Development Bank (ADB)	www.adb.org	Economic development; environment
Australian Aid (AusAID)	www.ausaid.gov.au	AusAID Pacific aid programmes
Australian National University (ANU)	coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVL-PacificStudies	Trade, globalisation and Pacific Islands
Basel Action Network (BAN)	www.ban.org	Toxic wastes; waste trade
Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO)	www.fao.org	Forestry; fisheries
Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)	www.ffa.int	Migratory fish
Greenpeace International	www.greenpeace.org	Toxic wastes, esp. POPs
Institute of Development Studies (IDS, UK)	www.ids.ac.uk/eldis/eldis	Miscellaneous development information
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)	www.ipcc.ch	Global climate change
International Labour Organisation	www.ilo.org ;	Labour; employment data; Information technology indicators
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	www.forumsec.org.fj	Trade; economic, etc reports on FICs
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)	www.spc.int	Various statistics
South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	www.sprep.org.ws	Environmental data; waste management
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)	www.unctad.org/en/docs	Global trade issues; data on LDC's
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	www.unicef.org	Data on youth and children
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)	www.unifem.undp.org	Gender issues
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	www.undp.org/dpa/publications	Human Development Index, miscellaneous environmental indicators
United Nations Educational and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)	www.unesco.org/whc	World Heritage convention
United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)	www.unfpa.org	Population related data
United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	www.unhchr.ch	Human rights reports
United Nations Secretariat	www.un.org/millennium	Millennium Summit
United States State Department	www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/eap	Human Rights reports
World Bank (WB)	www.worldbank.org	Economic and environmental data
World Health Organisation (WHO)	www.who.int	Health statistics (global)
WHO Western Pacific (WHO WPRO)	www.wpro.who.int	Health statistics (Pacific regional)
World Trade Organisation (WTO)	www.wto.org	Trade statistics