Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

Midterm Review Report by the Republic of Kiribati
The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country or territory or of its authorities or concerning the delimitations of its frontiers or boundaries. The designations of country groups in the text and the tables are intended solely for statistical or analytical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgment about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process. Mention of the names of firms and commercial products does not imply the endorsement of the United Nations.

Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 IGO licence (CC BY-NC IGO); https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/igo/legalcode

Under the terms of this licence, this work may be copied, redistributed and adapted for non-commercial purposes, provided that the work is appropriately cited. In any use of this work, there should be no suggestion that UNDRR endorses any specific organization, products or services.

The use of the UNDRR logo is not permitted. If a translation of this work is created, it must include the following disclaimer along with the required citation below: "This translation was not created by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). UNDRR is not responsible for the content or accuracy of this translation. The original English edition shall be the authoritative edition."

Users wishing to reuse material from this work that is attributed to a third party, such as tables, figures or images, are responsible for determining whether permission is needed for that reuse and for obtaining permission from the copyright holder. The risk of claims resulting from infringement of any third-party-owned component in the work rests solely with the user. Sales, rights and licensing.

UNDRR information products are available for non-commercial use. Requests for commercial use, rights and licensing should be submitted via: https://www.undrr.org/contact-us

This publication may be freely quoted but acknowledgement of the source is requested.

Citation: UNDRR (2023), Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: Midterm Review Report by the Republic of Kiribati.

© 2023 UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

For additional information, please contact: United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) 7bis Avenue de la Paix, CH1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, Tel: +41 22 917 89 08

Cover photo: Vyshnivskyy/Shutterstock.com

Acknowledgement

UNDRR would like to acknowledge its major core donors for their support to this publication: Sweden, Japan, Norway, Switzerland and Finland. However, the views expressed in this publication are the author’s alone and are not necessarily the views of the donors.
Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

Midterm Review Report by the Republic of Kiribati
## Contents

**Foreword** .................................................................................................. 5  
**Acknowledgement** .................................................................................... 6  
**Introduction** .............................................................................................. 7  
**Background** ................................................................................................. 8  
  - Disaster risk profile ................................................................................. 8  
  - Overview of legal, policy and institutional framework of DRM in Kiribati ............ 9  
  - Legal and regulatory framework for DRM and CCA ................................. 10  
  - Institutional framework for DRM and CCA ............................................... 11  
  - Policy framework for climate change and disaster risk management ............ 11  
**Retrospective review (2015-2022)** ........................................................... 14  
  - Thematic area: risk assessment, information and understanding ................ 14  
  - Thematic area: governance and management ........................................... 15  
  - Thematic area: investment in risk reduction and resilience ......................... 17  
  - Thematic area: disaster preparedness, response and build back better .......... 22  
**Prospective review (2023-2030)** ............................................................... 23  
  - Risk assessment, information and understanding ..................................... 23  
  - Governance and management ................................................................. 24  
  - Investment in risk reduction and resilience .............................................. 24  
  - Disaster preparedness, response and build back better ........................... 26  
  - Collaboration, partnership and cooperation ............................................. 28  
  - Upcoming projects for DRR by NGOs ...................................................... 28  
  - Community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) project ................. 28  
  - Drought response- AHP ............................................................................ 28  
  - Blood-bank partnership and initiatives on emergency needs response project ... 29  
**Conclusion and recommendations** .............................................................. 30  
  - Preserving and promoting culture and traditional knowledge .................. 30  
  - Preventing coastal erosion for low-lying atolls ....................................... 30  
  - Promoting energy security and renewable energy .................................... 31  
  - Enhancing human-health security ......................................................... 31  
  - Promoting education and community-level capacity-building ................. 31  
  - Strengthening food security, both on land and under the sea .................... 31  
  - Increasing access to clean drinking water .............................................. 32  
  - Enhancing disaster risk management and climate-change understanding ...... 32  
  - Strengthening partnerships, good governance and inclusiveness ............. 32  
**Annexes** .................................................................................................... 34  
  - Annex 1: Questionnaires for focus-group discussions .............................. 34  
  - Annex 2: Summary of workshop consultations (minutes) ......................... 37  
  - Annex 3: List of workshop participants and persons consulted .................. 42
I am pleased to present the midterm review report by Kiribati for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the progress made by Kiribati in implementing the Sendai Framework over the past eight years.

As a small island developing state in the Pacific, Kiribati is particularly vulnerable to natural hazards such as king tides, storm surges, and sea-level rise. These hazards not only threaten the lives and livelihoods of Kiribati’s people, but also pose significant challenges to the country’s sustainable development.

Recognizing the importance of disaster risk reduction in promoting resilient development, Kiribati has been working to implement the Sendai Framework since its adoption in 2015. This midterm review report provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress made, and identify areas for improvement as we work towards achieving the Sendai Framework’s targets by 2030.

Efforts to reduce risks to disasters in Kiribati were developed with the interest of all I-Kiribati at its core. It recognizes our unique culture, our resilience, and our strategic location at the centre of our shared planet. It equally recognizes that we are part of a globalized and interconnected world, where the term ‘isolated’ becomes far removed from current norms and realities.

Our policies and systems embrace the reality that we need to evolve and adapt. We have to adjust our outlook and appreciate our resilience as bestowed by our ancestors, who have lived and thrived on our beautiful islands for millennia. We have to underscore our connection with our ocean and our cultural mandate as custodians of our Blue Pacific. We have to recognize our stature as one of the largest nations within our Blue Pacific continent. We must equally challenge conceptions that define our nation and our people in smallness, vulnerability and deficits. We have to work in synergy with all our diplomatic and development partners, in areas of mutual and common interests.

Our efforts to reduce disaster risks and manage their impacts shall remain consistent with the objectives and principles enshrined under the Constitution of Kiribati, and it aligns with Te Motinnano (Policy Statement) of Tobwaan Kiribati Party (TKP), the Kiribati Development Plan 2020-2023, all Ministries’ Strategic Plans (MSP), and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Goals.

I therefore endorse this midterm review report, and commend it to all our development partners in the DRM sector, and bestow upon all who read this document, with Kiribati’s traditional blessings of Te Mauri (Good health), Te Raoi (Peace) ao Te Tabomoa (Prosperity).
Acknowledgement

This Midterm Review Report was developed by the Government of Kiribati (GoK) through a multi-stakeholder process led by the Office of The President and the Kiribati National Expert Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (KNEG).

A special thanks is accorded to all government ministries, NGOs and faith-based organizations for their cooperation and support in providing the information and data contributing to the development of this national report. The Government of Kiribati through its 20-year Vision (KV20) has embarked on ensuring that peace, security and prosperity are addressed through a whole-of-government approach towards resilient development, and the input by all stakeholders is a testament for the success of our whole-of-nation approach.

The Office of Te Beretitenti remains grateful to its core development partners and, in particular, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), for the ongoing support and partnership with the Government of Kiribati since it embarked on implementing the objectives, priorities and targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The way forward remains challenging, but there is optimism that the synergy and collaboration between government and its development partners would be paramount in strengthening the adaptive capacity and resilience of our people, and reducing the risks and adverse impacts of climate change.
The Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was convened by decision of the United Nations General Assembly from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai, Miyagi, Japan, to review the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA) and to adopt a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030\(^1\) (Sendai Framework) adopted by the Conference, were subsequently endorsed by Member States in the United Nations General Assembly, providing the framework for all-of-society and all-of-State institutions’ engagement in preventing and reducing disaster risks posed by both natural and man-made hazards and related environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks.

Recognising the dynamic interaction between development and disaster risk, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) can be considered as the blueprint for disaster risk reduction (DRR). With four main priority areas and seven global targets, the SFDRR aims to achieve substantial reduction in losses to lives, health and livelihoods in communities and countries.

Recognising that the period to 2023 marks the midpoint in implementing the Sendai Framework, as well as other related agreements, conventions and agendas, in its Resolution 75/216 of 21 December 2020\(^2\), the UN General Assembly decided to “hold a midterm review (MTR) of the implementation of the Sendai Framework in 2023 to assess progress on integrating disaster risk reduction into policies, programmes and investments at all levels.

The report begins by introducing the key concepts, frameworks, and literature that guide international and national disaster risk management (DRM). It then describes the methodology that the Kiribati adopted to conduct the review. The section then provides an overview of the findings, the progress, the gaps and the constraints that the various stakeholders have encountered in implementing the framework.

The report concludes by providing country-specific recommendations from the findings to guide and improve on the next phase of implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

---

1  A/RES/69/283
2  A/RES/75/216
Kiribati – including its exclusive economic zone, which is one of the largest in the world – covers over 3.3 million square kilometres, an area larger than India’s landmass. Kiribati’s land area, however, is proportionately miniscule. It has 33 islands, 21 of which are inhabited, spread among three archipelagos with a total land area of only 810 square kilometres. As a collection of atolls, most of Kiribati is coastal. The land area barely rises above two metres on average, reaching three metres at its highest point, and islands average a few hundred metres at their widest.

Disaster risk profile

Based on its physical geographic profile, Kiribati is recognized to be amongst the most-vulnerable nations to climate-change impacts and disaster risks. The impact of climate change, particularly sea-level rise, is not a new problem for the government of Kiribati. As early as the 1980s, when the consequences of global warming, shifting long-term weather patterns, and sea-level rise began to gain traction in political affairs globally, the threats of climate change were a concern for the government of Kiribati. The disaster risks of the peoples of small island developing states (SIDS) due to climate change have been extensively documented. These effects range from rising sea levels that can erode and inundate coastal areas, to saltwater intrusions that destroy limited freshwater resources, damage food crops, and decrease wellness and overall health of communities. These physical and social impacts are well understood by the government of Kiribati, and it has promulgated national adaptation policies to address them.

Therefore, disaster risk resilience in Kiribati is of utmost importance. The Kiribati government, with the support of development partners and civil society organizations, has been working to enhance the country’s disaster risk resilience. This includes efforts to strengthen the country’s disaster preparedness and response systems, improve early-warning and alert mechanisms, and increase community awareness and participation in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) activities.

In recent years, there has been a particular focus on building the resilience of Kiribati’s infrastructure to withstand the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. This includes efforts to strengthen coastal-protection measures, improve water and sanitation systems, and enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure such as hospitals and schools. A recent article published by the UN Office for South-South Cooperation, outlined this paradigm shift in a profile for His Excellency Beretitenti Taneti Maamau, as follows:

---

4 Countries Compared: Total area in square kilometres, NATIONMASTER, https://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Geography/Area/Total [https://perma.cc/2345-33EM] (noting that India has an area of 3.29 million square kilometers).
9 See, e.g., John P. Cauchi et al., Climate Change, Food Security and Health in Kiribati: A Narrative Review of the Literature, 12 Glob. Health Action 1 (2019).
10 For instance, the Kiribati Vision for 20 Years Plan (KV20), the KJIP KCCP, etc.
11 UN South South Champions Profile, Beretitenti Taneti Maamau: https://www.southsouth-galaxy.org/south-south-profiles/taneti-maamau/
Kiribati continues working towards mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into its national planning processes, policies, and strategies. This includes developing and implementing a National Joint Implementation Plan on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, which aims to integrate DRR and CCA into all sectors of the country's development. Overall, building disaster risk resilience in Kiribati is a complex and ongoing process that requires the involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, from national governments to local communities. The country faces numerous challenges, including limited resources and capacity, and it is essential to continue to invest in building the country's resilience to climate change and disasters.

Overview of legal, policy and institutional framework of DRM in Kiribati

Initially, the National Disaster Act 1993 and National Disaster Risk Management Plan (2012) outlined Kiribati's preparation, response, and recovery activities for DRM. Common examples of disaster management applicable to Kiribati include coordinating disaster operations, conducting damage and loss assessments following disasters and emergencies, conducting search and rescue operations at sea, and fire suppression and evacuation of disaster-affected persons. These national efforts were aligned closely with the framework, priorities, and objectives of the 2005-2015 Hyogo Framework of Action. Since the 2015 adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Kiribati has aligned its disaster management priorities and actions with the four Priorities of the Sendai Framework and its relevant global targets and indicators. The enactment of the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act, 2019, further strengthens the implementation of the SFDRR in Kiribati and recognizes the direct links between climate change and disaster risks - a characteristic that is particularly prominent for low-lying atoll nations.

“.... In 2016, when my government developed and proclaimed the Kiribati Vision for 20 Years Plan (KV 20), the nation’s first-ever long-term development strategy, it was the beginning of a paradigm shift. I proposed a plan that would see the country transform, develop, and survive. The plan advocates self-development and the establishment of innovative and strategic partnerships for Kiribati to sustainably develop and transform, amid the international political discourse dominated by misleading narratives of “sinking islands” and “disappearing nations”. In fact, the KV20 encourages the people of Kiribati to embrace its development challenges, including climate change, and turn them into opportunities. It boldly proposes that Kiribati could become a wealthy, healthy and peaceful nation through a range of transformational development projects, mostly premised on marine resources and tourism. The plan provides a strong political statement that Kiribati, as a sovereign nation, will continue to adapt and address the impacts of climate change, and encourages the importance of building “strategic partnerships”. It also brings forth the necessity for Kiribati to begin to engage with its partners in a different light - one that leverages Kiribati’s expansive ocean territory and resources, rich cultural features and heritage, and the resilience of its people, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.... The plan also highlights that Kiribati’s most important resources are its people, and that it plans to develop its human resources to allow for a prosperous future in which the people of Kiribati will continue to live on their own land, in their own homes, on their own terms. The plan was developed with the people at the heart of our development aspiration. It is informed by inclusive whole-of-island and whole-of-government consultations making it a vision for and of Kiribati and its people.....”
Legal and regulatory framework for DRM and CCA

The Kiribati Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act 2019\(^2\) and DRMCC Regulations 2022, provides a legal framework for enhancing the country’s arrangements and coordination mechanism to mitigate and adapt to, prepare for, respond to, and recover from, impacts of disaster and climate change.

The provision of the Act is cast in three ways, the first being the focus on communities, the second on government structures, and the third on aligning with international obligations and guidelines.

There are nine proposed principles, which emphasize the whole-of-nation approach, the need for simplicity, action within the framework of sustainable development, action as local as possible and as national as necessary, with communities taking ownership of steps to reduce their risks and using limited resources in the places of greatest need.

The key provisions of the Act include:

**Establishment** of a DRM and climate change governance-arrangements coordination mechanism at national and sub-national levels to coordinate disaster risk reduction efforts across government agencies and with international partners.

**Development** of a National Disaster Risk Management Plan that outlines the country's strategy for disaster risk reduction and response.

**Implementation** of early-warning systems for natural hazards, including droughts, severe storms, flooding and sea-level rise.

**Integration** of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into all sectors of the economy and applying the build-back-better principle in all recovery efforts, for improved resilience and reduced vulnerability to future disasters and climate change.

**Establishment** of a Disaster and Climate Change Response Fund for vital immediate action (impact to 72 hours post-impact) to respond to or mitigate impact of climate change and emergencies or disaster and developing a disaster-risk finance policy for operationalizing this fund.

**Promoting** public awareness and education about shared responsibility of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

**Establishment** of an emergency operations centre and standard operating procedures and guidelines for disaster preparedness and response.

The Kiribati Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change (DRMCC) Act 2019 highlights the importance of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the country’s development agenda. It provides a legal framework to guide government efforts in managing the risks associated with natural hazards and climate change, and promoting sustainable development.

Under the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act (2019), the Office of Te Beretitenti is responsible for the protection of people and places in Kiribati from disasters and climate change, acting on the advice of the Cabinet. Secretaries provide oversight and support to the Kiribati National Expert Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (KNEG), both individually and collectively through the Development Coordinating Committee (DCC), which comprises secretaries and senior officials of government ministries and agencies. More details about the DRMCC Act (2019) are outlined below in the retrospective review sections.

---

The Kiribati National Expert Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, KNEG for short, is hereby established as the primary national coordination and technical advisory body for disaster risk management and climate change. The lead ministry for climate change and disaster risk management, which is currently Office of Te Beretitenti, is responsible for administering the KNEG.

KNEG members are Directors from each government ministry plus the Ministry responsible for the administration of this Act which is the Office of Te Beretitenti, the Kiribati Meteorological Service, the Kiribati Police Service, the Kiribati Red Cross Society (KRCS), and relevant non-government entities representing vulnerable groups and others as specified in the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act 2019 Regulations.

KNEG has 14 roles in the DRMCC Act 2019, including a) Ensuring a joint national action plan for climate change and disaster risk management is in place and updated; b) Conducting regular risk and vulnerability analysis, compiled from data from various sectors and through conducting integrated vulnerability assessments and other primary research and community engagement; c) Planning and designing climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk management strategies; and m) Monitoring, reporting, and evaluating progress of implementation of climate change and disaster risk management plans and actions, including reporting to relevant parliamentary committees and international bodies;

At island level, the national DRM institutional arrangements are mirrored, with the Island Disaster Committees (IDC) serving as the primary bodies tasked with implementing national disaster risk management law and policy and act at sub-national and local levels. The National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) coordinates DRM activities throughout the islands to ensure uniformity and alignment with national priorities. At local level, NGOs, churches, the private sector, and community-based organizations play crucial roles, and in many cases are the frontline disaster managers in times of crisis. Consequently, their participation in DRR and DM planning is essential, as is their advice on mainstreaming risk reduction into local development programmes at community level.

Each IDC will be responsible for developing and maintaining a disaster risk management plan, commensurate with their hazard profile and resource capacity, as well as allocating budgets to ensure national DRM objectives are met and the local disaster plan is activated effectively. The monthly secretaries meetings serve as the forum for discussion regarding the ongoing incorporation of DRM strategy into the government’s core operations.

In addition to the legal framework, the management of disasters in Kiribati is guided by the overarching strategies and policies that include Kiribati 20-year Vision 2016-2036, the Kiribati Climate Change Policy (KCCP), the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (KJIP) 2019-2028, and the Kiribati National Development Plan (KDP) 2021-2024.

The 2018-launched Kiribati Climate Change Policy (KCCP) is the overarching strategy for implementing adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction measures. The KCCP includes goals for enhancing food, water, energy and health security, achieving coastal protection and constructing resilient infrastructure, fostering environmental resilience, and enhancing disaster risk management. The KCCP’s implementation plan is the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (KJIP) 2019–2028, which outlines a holistic approach to integrating climate change and disaster risks into all sectors, and coordinating action priorities in accordance with the Kiribati 20-Year Vision 2016–2036 (KV20) and the Kiribati Development Plan 2020–2023. Sector-specific, island-specific and hazard-specific management strategies and plans are also playing important role to management of disasters in Kiribati. These include Kiribati Red Cross Society Disaster Management Plan, Kiribati Meteorological Service Strategic Plan, Kiribati Education Sector Contingency Plan, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, National Tsunami Support Plan 2022, South Tarawa

The KJIP was created to implement the National Framework for Climate Change and Adaptation to Climate Change. The objective of the KJIP is to increase resilience to climate change and disaster risks, and promote a whole-of-nation approach by emphasizing mainstreaming and coordination across sectors and governance levels. Based on existing policies and strategies, the KJIP identifies 12 strategies and associated priority climate change and disaster risk management actions for the next nine years (2019–2028).

To build climate resilience and respond to the effects of climate change, the KJIP’s 12 strategies include: increasing water and food security with integrated and sector-specific approaches, and promoting healthy and resilient ecosystems; promoting sound infrastructure development and land management; promoting the use of sustainable renewable-energy sources and energy efficiency; and strengthening and greening the private sector, including small-scale bus transportation.

The National Framework for Climate Change and Climate Change Adaptation addresses projected and existing climate-change impacts and provides a broad framework for implementing the country’s immediate, medium-term and long-term strategic goals and objectives. The main concerns raised by the framework regarding climate change are rising sea levels, rising sea-surface temperatures and alterations in weather patterns. Under the framework, three subheadings describe Kiribati’s actions to enhance its capacity to address the challenge of climate change. These include climate change adaptation, population and resettlement, and climate change mitigation.
The review takes an interpretivist approach, and the method employed was semi-structured questionnaire-guided focus-group discussion. A semi-structured interview is a verbal exchange or conversation that allows the interviewer to guide the conversation in a standardized manner while gathering relevant information and responses. This technique was paired with a focus-group discussion in which a group of participants and a moderator guided a semi-structured interview with the purpose of eliciting and obtaining key facts and opinions.

The method yielded valuable, useful, and well-informed insights while involving the relevant parties in a given topic. Using a questionnaire (Annex 3), a series of interviews with various stakeholders will be conducted; the responses will be analysed and classified into thematic themes. As sampling methods, the review favoured purposive, subjective and snowball sampling, as these allowed the Division to select the most suitable participants for the focus-group discussions.

The review also incorporated desk research on necessary topics, documents, and journal articles; these documents aided in the comprehension of the framework and thus guided the formulation of the respective methodology.

In accordance with the Midterm Review Concept Note of the United Nations for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the questionnaire was organized on themes, and both retrospectively and prospectively considered the themes.

The formation of the focus groups was based on the existing institutional frameworks and key stakeholders, with the intent of determining the status of Sendai Framework objectives. A total of five focus groups was agreed, as follows:

- Focus group 1: KNEG
- Focus group 2: Kiribati Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and private sector
- Focus group 3: FBOs
- Focus group 4: Relevant CSOs and NGOs
- Focus group 5: Council Reps (Betio and South Tarawa).
Prior to stakeholder consultations and focus group discussions, a desk review was conducted using reports and national documents to evaluate GoK’s progress. During the consultation process, including the validation workshop, the initial desk-based research’s assumptions would be validated and verified.

**Thematic area: risk assessment, information and understanding**

Policies and practices for disaster risk management should be based on an understanding of disaster risk based on its various factors, such as vulnerability, capacity, exposure of persons and assets, hazard characteristics and the environment. However, small island states may find it challenging to collect and analyse comprehensive risk data due to the diversity and isolation of their islands, and natural hazards that emerge in these islands. Furthermore, the availability of tools and equipment for risk assessment including capacities to analyse advance risk assessment data on critical areas such as weather, health, water, agriculture, fisheries and communication can sometimes be challenging. Kiribati, in particular, has limited resources and capacity to conduct such sub-national and sector-based risk assessments, and the absence of hazard maps that would highlight vulnerable areas to different hazards such as king tides, storm surges, disease outbreak and drought, further increases the exposures and risks of I-Kiribati to disasters. With the assistance of international NGOs, data has been gathered, analysed and managed in the past, but such efforts remain reactive and ad hoc in nature. For instance, in 2015 and again in 2018, UNDP commissioned a national vulnerability profile for Kiribati that evaluated its human assets, economic vulnerability and disaster history since 1938. Data drawn from these studies include, among other things, the percentage of the population that is malnourished, infant mortality rate, economic vulnerability, and so forth, which can all be used for risk assessment. Similarly, KNEG routinely collects data as part of integrated vulnerability assessments (IVAs) across the 23 inhabited islands of Kiribati, but these assessments are normally funded by projects, and remain constrained by availability of funding. Ideally, when policies are updated and reviewed, IVAs should also be reviewed and updated to informed policy changes. But this is not practical because IVAs are costly exercises and require the deployment of KNEG members to the 23 inhabited islands, over lengthy periods. A dedicated budget to support these operations would allow a proactive approach, as opposed to the observed reactive systems in place that remain constrained to the availability of project funding.

Several quantitative and qualitative situation analyses have been undertaken through regional organizations, which can be used for risk assessment. Kiribati, along with 22 other PICs, is a member of the Pacific Regional Information System Management (PRISM), which focuses on the accessibility and user-relevance of statistical information systems and databases in all sectors, including education reports, and household income and expenditure survey (HIES) data. It is interesting to note that access by OB or Kiribati government in general, to such regional data hubs or hosting systems, is not readily available and, at times, there is no knowledge of these systems by relevant officials. It clearly identifies that these systems are driven regionally and need to be made accessible to national governments. A number of points are made on this in the prospective review section and the recommendations statement for this report.

In 2018, Kiribati was among one of the few countries that submitted its Voluntary National Report on its progress towards the SDGs. The report highlighted several accomplishments and challenges. While there are a few data-collection tools, the lack of human capacity and technical expertise in the field presents significant obstacles to the completion of additional risk assessments, monitoring and evaluation.

---

IMPACT STORY 1: Reducing disaster risks through ocean services.

The Kiribati Meteorological Services (KMS) is a critical agency responsible for providing weather and climate information to the people and government of Kiribati. Miriam, the first woman to serve as an oceanographer in Kiribati, plays a vital role in enhancing ocean services and reducing disaster risks.

The Oceanographer post was initially created by Government of Kiribati in 2022, to enhance ocean services from the Kiribati Meteorological Service office, recognizing the deep connection shared with the ocean as a source of livelihood; yet equally a source of disaster. Miriam’s position is therefore remarkable noting that it is the first of its kind in Kiribati, and one of the first across the region to be held by a woman.

As a mother of two, Miriam juggles the demands of motherhood and her passion for her job. She travels to remote island communities to educate locals on early-warning systems and how to prepare for disasters, building trust and cooperation between communities and her organization.

Miriam’s work is essential in providing critical information to stakeholders on the country’s weather patterns and ocean conditions. Her efforts have had a significant impact on the country’s fishing industry, which relies on accurate information to plan its operations.

Miriam is also focused on the impact of extreme king tides on the island nation. She has worked tirelessly to raise awareness among community members of the importance of listening to advisory announcements and taking necessary precautions to protect their homes and communities. Through her efforts, Miriam has helped to improve the overall resilience of the people of Kiribati in the face of extreme king tide events.

As a young mother herself, Miriam encourages mothers in every communities to be well-prepared and better equipped to mitigate disaster impacts and recover more quickly from the damage caused by extreme king tides.

Miriam’s work as an oceanographer is not only ground-breaking but also impactful, demonstrating the importance of gender parity in the workforce.

Thematic area: governance and management

In its efforts to strengthen national and local mechanisms on disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation, the Kiribati Government has made progress in implementing its commitments to achieving Target E of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

The first of these milestones is increasing and strengthening national and sub-national disaster risk management and climate-change governance. In 2019, the Kiribati National Disaster Act of 1993 was repealed and replaced with the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change (DRMCC) Act, which was ratified by parliament together with Cabinet’s approval of the DRMCC Regulation.

The new DRMCC Act (2019) and Regulation, which is closely aligned with our national policies, the Sendai Framework, and the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, among others, ensures that all risks are accounted for, promotes a multi-sectoral coordination approach, and is inclusive, leaving no one behind.

Moreover, these newly established policies will ensure policy coherence between disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and sustainable development, reaffirming Kiribati’s position and commitment to regional and international frameworks and agreements for disaster risk management and climate change.
To ensure effective coordination and implementation of disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation, and adaptation roles and responsibilities under these policies, the Kiribati Government’s technical advisory group, known as the Kiribati National Experts Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (KNEG), has had its Terms of Reference (TOR) recently updated to complement the mandate enacted under the DRMCC Act, and DRMCC Regulation.

Moreover, the establishment of 23 Island Disaster Committees (IDCs) and Taskforces in the dispersed islands of Kiribati, with inclusive memberships that are also formalized under the DRMCC Act, and regulation, will further strengthen the government’s efforts to provide communities with disaster risk management and climate-change support and assistance in a coordinated, effective and timely manner.

In addition, the Government of Kiribati is dedicated to improving disaster preparedness, response and recovery, investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and educating Kiribati populations on disaster risks. Importantly, this report recognizes the existence of Disaster Contingency Plans, Emergency Plans, and relevant legislation by various Ministries and NGOs, including the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information, Communication and Transport, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development, and the Kiribati Red Cross Society.

These plans are in various stages of development and while some have been approved and others are being finalized, it is important to acknowledge their existence, and make prospective plans to align with future efforts for disaster risk reduction.

Table 1: List of Disaster Contingency Plans and Emergency Plans by DRR Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry of Education</th>
<th>Kiribati education sector contingency plan (National level)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kiribati education sector contingency plan (School level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Health and Medical Services</td>
<td>Public health preparedness and emergency response plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Information, Communication &amp;Transport</td>
<td>Kiribati National Telecommunication Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development</td>
<td>Kiribati Integrated Environment Policy (KIEP)&amp; Strategic Environment Plan (SEP) 2021-2036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati Red Cross Society</td>
<td>Kiribati Red Cross Act 2021 and Kiribati Red Cross Disaster Management Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IMPACT STORY 2: Enhancing disaster risk management and gender parity in Kiribati.

Sally had always been driven by a desire to make a positive impact in her community. However, early on in her career, when she first started working as the Disaster Risk Reduction Officer, she was confronted with a harsh reality - the reactive approach in leading the Government’s Emergency Response Team response to a storm-surge disaster event that hit the islands of Tamana and Arorae and damaged private and public properties, and disrupted livelihoods, on these two islands. Responding to disaster events in the outer islands, in transportation of emergency supplies, can be very challenging. There are no pre-positioned emergency supplies on the islands and majority of the materials required to reconstruct damaged homes are sourced from the capital, Tarawa, causing delays to addressing the needs of those affected and responding to disasters effectively. Being able to witness these challenges, and understanding exposures and vulnerabilities of Kiribati communities to disasters and climate-change impacts, inspired Sally to further explore ways to enhance and build on what has been done to address these issues.

She delivered important consultative sessions with local communities in the designing of the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act 2019 and the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Regulation. These are key DRR instruments and their establishment marked a significant milestone in the evolution of disaster risk reduction in Kiribati. The Act and Regulation are comprehensive pieces and crucial instruments that aim to strengthen disaster preparedness, response and recovery, as well as promote climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. These instruments build on Kiribati’s national disaster risk management plan and represent a shift towards a more proactive approach to disaster management.

As a National Disaster Risk Reduction Officer, Sally also works tirelessly to raise awareness about the importance of disaster preparedness and prevention, and she advocated for a more proactive and inclusive approach to disaster management. She would consider concerns and issues raised by communities, incorporate them in her work and advocate these issues at national, regional and international level.

For Sally, one of the most rewarding aspects of her work was seeing the positive impact that it had on the lives of the people in Kiribati. She witnessed first-hand how communities came together to prepare for disasters, and how they were able to respond and recover more effectively when disasters did occur.

But perhaps what was most inspiring for Sally was the role that women played in disaster risk reduction. She observed that gender barriers did not exist in this field and that women played an important and equal role in managing disasters. The government’s dedicated focus on addressing vulnerabilities of women, children and persons with disabilities was a truly progressive approach, and Sally felt proud to have been a part of it.

Thematic area: investment in risk reduction and resilience

46. Like many other PICs, it is difficult to project the amount of resources that will be needed to support DRM strategies. This can be attributed to the lack of data for disaster preparedness and mitigation measures for analysis. However, a number of milestones achieved since 2015 are outlined below, demonstrating national efforts to enhance investment in disaster risk reduction for resilience and understanding disaster risks. It is important to add a caveat here, to recognize that while increase in investment remains a paramount objective for all parties to the Sendai Framework, existing development challenges needs to be equally recognized.
as a core constraint to several small island developing states, including Kiribati. This is reflected in a number of provisions under the DRMCC Act 2019, which recognize the need to invest in disaster reduction across government within recurrent budgetary allocations, but does not necessarily provide clear modalities for the disbursement of these resources, because of existing endemic financial constraints. For instance, Part 3 Section 17 (1) of the DRMCC Act 2019, which requires all government sectors to include disaster risk reduction and preparedness in their annual budget. The existing Act allows only additional, or the release of, funding once the disaster or public emergency is declared, but not to the extent that it will be distributed to the targeted communities. This points to the critical role that development partners play in investment for disaster risk management in SIDS, including relevant United Nations Agencies and developed States that are parties to the Sendai Framework. This matter is discussed in more detail in the prospective section of this midterm review report.

Through various technical assistance grants, Kiribati’s environment and infrastructure policies, including the Kiribati Integrated Environment Policy, have been revised and strengthened to promote disaster- and climate-resilient infrastructures, drawing from past disaster event experiences such as the impact of Cyclone Pam, which damaged the Nippon Causeway, flooded a hospital, and caused flooding in many parts of South Tarawa as well as some islands in the Southern part, reporting devastating impacts, disrupting livelihoods, basic social services and economic connections.

Kiribati’s duplex housing development of approximately 100 dwellings, the upgrading and construction of primary schools around South Tarawa, and piloting North Tarawa and Abaiang (Kiribati Education and Improvement Program), and the proposed masterplan for Kiribati Hospital, are examples of large development projects. All of these construction projects have elevated floor levels to lessen the risk of coastal flooding and flash floods.

To guarantee that the government’s efforts to invest in disaster risk reduction continue to be promoted at national and local levels, it is essential to raise awareness of disaster risks, and this remains a top priority in government DRR and CC programmes and activities.

Over the years, the Government of Kiribati has conducted a variety of disaster risk management and climate change awareness-raising and training, such as during the 2018, 2020 and 2022 Biennial Forum of Island Mayors, the Disaster Chaplaincy Network implemented by the Kiribati Uniting Church, the People with Disabilities Workshop held in 2022, and numerous other meetings and workshops as requested by Government sectors, NGOs, and faith-based organizations.

Complementing government’s effort in raising awareness, the non-governmental organizations such as ChildFund, the Kiribati Red Cross Society, and Live and Learn and Environmental Education Kiribati, continue to bring DRR and CC awareness programmes and activities to schools and communities throughout Kiribati.

These numerous training and awareness campaigns will guarantee that the intended audience understands national and local DRM and CC policies, disaster risks and the activities required to enhance resilience from disasters and adapt to the effects of climate change.

The Assessment of National Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015–2030 has begun. The MTR Process is vital for mapping out and assessing progress and obstacles in the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

This would imply that we would be able to identify our successes as well as our limitations in reducing disaster risks, allowing us to provide solutions that would strengthen our capacity and capability to reduce disaster risks, achieve our sustainable development goals and the Sendai Framework and, in turn, increase the resilience of our population against the effects of climate change and natural disasters.

As an area that is globally recognized as being prone to natural disasters, we expect that the reports produced by the MTR process will further strengthen and deepen our collaboration to cooperatively address the highlighted concerns and deliver real solutions for our most vulnerable populations.

In collaboration with development partners, the government has also invested in early-warning systems and disaster-response mechanisms, to improve the country’s ability to respond to natural disasters.

Additionally, the Kiribati Government has implemented measures to improve the resilience of infrastructure and communities to natural disasters. For instance, the country has adopted building codes and standards that take into account the risks of natural hazards, such as king tides, storm surges and coastal flooding. It has also invested in improving the water supply and sanitation infrastructure to ensure that communities
have access to clean water and sanitation during and after disasters. The Kiribati Government, through the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development (Geoscience Division) is taking multiple steps to protect Kiribati’s coastlines. The suspension of beach mining to combat the erosion caused is a way to strengthen coastal resilience to inundation, wave overtopping and erosion, though enforcement needs strengthening. Additionally, government has (i) established an alternative source of aggregate for construction demands on Tarawa, through the establishment of a state-owned entity (Te Atinimarawa Company Limited - TACL) that provides these resources through environmentally driven solutions, (iii) initiated a two-year sandwatch programme, involving 70 students, to change behaviour for beach monitoring and clean-ups, and (iv) investing in capacity building, technology and data collection to increase data for decision-making.

International organizations and development partners continue to provide technical assistance and financial support for the development of disaster risk reduction strategies, capacity-building for disaster management, and community-awareness programmes. A few examples of disaster risk reduction projects in Kiribati are outlined in Table 2.

Overall, investment in disaster risk reduction in Kiribati is crucial for the country’s sustainable development and resilience in the face of natural hazards. Investment in disaster risk reduction can face several challenges, a number of which are outlined in Table 3. These challenges can make it difficult to invest in disaster risk reduction, but addressing them is essential to reducing the impacts of natural hazards and building resilient communities.

---

**Table 2: Example of disaster risk reduction projects in Kiribati**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Climate-resilient infrastructure:</th>
<th>Kiribati has invested in constructing and upgrading infrastructure such as seawalls, breakwaters and road networks to better withstand the impacts of natural hazards, including sea-level rise, storm surges, and coastal flooding.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early-warning systems:</td>
<td>The Government of Kiribati, with the support of international organizations and development partners, has established and strengthened early-warning systems to alert communities of potential disasters, including tsunamis, storm surge, king tides and other hazards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based disaster risk reduction:</td>
<td>Community-based disaster risk reduction programmes aim to empower local communities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from, natural disasters. Such initiatives include training programmes on emergency response, the development of community evacuation plans, and the establishment of community disaster management committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster preparedness and response training:</td>
<td>Kiribati has invested in training programmes for disaster preparedness and response, including search-and-rescue training, first-aid training, and capacity-building for government agencies responsible for disaster management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal protection and mangrove rehabilitation:</td>
<td>The restoration and rehabilitation of mangrove forests along Kiribati’s coastline can help reduce the risk of coastal erosion, and protect communities from storm surges and flooding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and sanitation infrastructure:</td>
<td>Kiribati has invested in improving water and sanitation infrastructure to ensure that communities have access to clean water and sanitation facilities during and after disasters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food security and nutrition:</td>
<td>The Government of Kiribati, through the Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Agricultural Development, with the support of NGOs Live and Learn Environmental Education, ChildFund and Global Green Growth Institute, has been working on new climate-smart agricultural practices and methods, such as food cubes, vertical gardens and bucket irrigation systems. Such technologies aim to enhance food security and nutrition in the context of climate change and disaster risks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Challenges and constraints in Kiribati

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Limited funding</strong></th>
<th>Disaster risk reduction investment requires significant funding, which can be a challenge for countries with limited financial resources.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regionally led programmes</strong></td>
<td>Disaster risk reduction is often a long-term investment, and partners often invest in regional programmes run across many countries in the Pacific. While this increases investment, it also overlooks national priorities for those driven by regional objectives. Applying a regional lens and a ‘one size fit all’ approach has often been described by managers in Kiribati as a key deterrent to sustainability, in particular when regional projects give priority to regional objectives rather than national needs and priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of data and knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Investments in disaster risk reduction require accurate data and knowledge of local hazards, vulnerabilities and risks. However, in many cases, data may be limited, outdated or not available. In some cases, even when data is available, sharing of data between government entities is often limited and uncoordinated and this, in turn, limits accessibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of public awareness</strong></td>
<td>The public may not be aware of the risks and benefits of disaster risk reduction investments, which can make it challenging to generate public support for these initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional challenges</strong></td>
<td>Disaster risk reduction investments may require the involvement of multiple government agencies, which can lead to coordination challenges and bureaucracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uncertainty of future risks</strong></td>
<td>Future risks, such as the impact of climate change, can be uncertain and difficult to predict. This uncertainty can make it challenging to plan for and invest in disaster risk reduction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limited international support</strong></td>
<td>Smaller or low-income countries may lack the resources or technical expertise to implement effective disaster risk reduction investments, and international support may be limited.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kiribati is home to many beautiful and resilient islands, including North Tarawa. However, ongoing efforts are required to enhance national resilience and minimize the risks posed by disasters. To achieve this, there is a need to be more proactive in our efforts to reduce disaster risks. In Kiribati, the government and development partners have recommended the establishment of IDCs to ensure efficient coordination of disaster risk management efforts. IDCs play a critical role in this approach, but their establishment and operation require significant resources and support. The Mayor of North Tarawa, Mr. Kaua Francis, describes ongoing efforts led by stakeholders in the disaster risk reduction sector.

"Disasters pose significant threats to human lives, property and the environment. In many cases, these disasters occur unexpectedly, leaving communities struggling to cope with the aftermath. Disaster risk reduction efforts aim to minimize the risks and impacts of disasters on communities. Development partners and government officials worldwide have recognized the importance of coordinated disaster risk management efforts to ensure efficient response and mitigation measures. One such approach is the creation of island disaster committees (IDCs) that bring together local councils and community representatives to coordinate disaster risk management efforts. It is essential to ensure that IDCs have the necessary resources to operate effectively, including clear mandates and responsibilities. This is particularly important, given that outer island councils coordinate a number of committees, including IDCs."

"I find it challenging to observe that IDCs, as mandated under the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act 2019, lack the resources to support their establishment and operation. The current arrangements made by the Office of Te Beretitenti (OB) and the role played by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) in supporting local island council operations have made the creation of IDCs complicated and ambiguous. As such, there is a need to revise these arrangements to ensure that IDCs have a clear mandate and sufficient resources to operate effectively. It is recommended that the OB, as the NDMO, play a leading role in the management of IDCs to ensure that these committees are coordinated effectively and have the necessary resources to carry out their responsibilities. Additionally, the role of the MIA in implementing local island council operations, including those relating to disaster risk reduction, needs to be redefined to ensure clarity of responsibilities. By doing so, IDCs can coordinate disaster risk management efforts effectively at the local level and minimize the impact of disasters on communities."

"It is equally disheartening to note that regional projects implemented by CROP agencies have highlighted the importance of IDCs in disaster risk management. Still, these organizations do not prioritize investment in IDCs, despite the clear recommendations made by the government and development partners. Instead, they favour other regional priorities, despite investing in IDCs being a priority for Kiribati. This disparity highlights the need for change in the approach of regional organizations in investing in IDCs and other DRR initiatives."

Looking towards the future, it was made clear that all development partners must recall their commitment to investment in the DRR space. Investments must be country- and locally driven to ensure the effective coordination of IDCs and other disaster risk management efforts. The Mayor of North Tarawa recognizes the importance of ongoing efforts to enhance national resilience and has been working hard to seek coordination of IDCs. The review of the Sendai Framework presents an opportunity to recall collective commitments by government, development partners and local communities towards the establishment and effective operation of IDCs.
The Government of Kiribati, with the assistance of donor partners, has raised the number of weather-monitoring systems in Kiribati from six in 2017 to fourteen in 2022, and there are plans to increase the number further to better cover the broad region of Kiribati.

Through its twinning cooperation with South Australia Country Fire Services (SACFS) and the Pacific Disaster Management Alliance of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Government of Kiribati continues to enhance the Fire Response Unit. As a result of this partnership, the Government of Kiribati has received two fire trucks from SACFS and will receive two more in the near future. Spare parts for these fire trucks have also been received, and firefighting training from SACFS commenced in October 2022, since the reopening of Kiribati borders. In addition, there are plans to expand this support area to Kiritimati Island.

During the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2021 and 2022, the Government of Kiribati conducted fire drills in a number of national institutions and a primary school to boost emergency management, particularly fire response. There will be other fire drills in the near future.

In 2022, the Government of Kiribati also launched the Women’s Resilience to Disasters Program, implemented by UN Women and the Ministry of Women, Youth, Sports, and Social Affairs. The programme has a broad scope of activities to ensure the participation, protection and inclusion of women and girls in disaster preparedness, response and recovery planning and approach.

The Government of Kiribati, through the Ministry of Education (MOE), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), are working on the last phase of a tsunami project with a wide range of initiatives to improve school readiness for tsunamis. However, this project is yet to be implemented and the government is still awaiting further decisions to be made by UNDP, who initiated the programme.

The Government of Kiribati, through the Disaster Resilience Fund, has also supported coastal-protection initiatives such as seawall construction, the provision of one-tonne sandbags, the ongoing installation of desalination plant units on 10 of the most vulnerable islets in the Gilbert Group, and disaster-response support to reconstruct damaged critical and public infrastructures, churches, and village maneabas (halls).

As important as disaster preparedness, response and recovery are, we must also invest in disaster risk reduction and communicate disaster risk reduction messages to better understand disaster risks. This will ensure that not only are our people prepared for disasters, but that the impact of disasters on our people, livelihoods, critical infrastructure and economies is also reduced and understood.
Prospective review (2023-2030)

Similar to the approach taken with the retrospective review, prior to convening stakeholder consultations, a number of assumptions are made, based desktop review of a number of recent reports, including, among others, the (a) 2022 Kiribati Enhanced NDC report, (b) 2021 Universal Periodic Review of Kiribati’s Human Rights Treaties, (c) and the 2019 Disaster Risk Reduction Country Status Report for Kiribati.

Risk assessment, information and understanding

There was a clear emphasis in many national reports indicating the need to improve data and information collection, generation, analysis, management and sharing. It was apparent that this issue is a priority consideration for agencies playing key roles in disaster risk management efforts and climate change adaptation in general. It requires concerted efforts by GoK agencies to develop an integrated and up-to-date centralized digital hub structure that will make relevant information of hazards, vulnerability and risk available and accessible to all, to inform early warning and early action at different levels – communities, institutions, islands and national governments, as well as information for resilient development. This requires a cloud-based national centralized digital database system, which will certainly require significant investment and enhanced bandwidth connectivity. Upcoming plans by government to connect Kiribati through a submarine cable network is aligned with such requirements, albeit in the longer term. The Ministry Information, Communication and Transport is leading this work on enhancing ICT connectivity in Kiribati, and has created a new government agency, the Digital Transformation Office, which will spearhead this important development. This will help with addressing the need to develop holistic capacities to communicate science and best practices by developing and disseminating effective and relevant information, communication and awareness products for decision-making and awareness-raising across sectors and at all levels. Equally important is the need to equip our people with the necessary tools and equipment for risk assessment and data collection and to ensure that capacities for data collection, assessment, analysis, interpretation, monitoring and reporting are strengthened across sectors and levels.

A clear need was identified to deliver an appropriate education, training and awareness programme. This may include opportunities for Kiribati students and professionals to build local capacities to take action on adaptation along with risk reduction and coping strategies before, during and after disasters and emission mitigation. This will ensure that across the board, I-Kiribati population are well informed, and all stakeholders have access to up-to-date and accurate, contemporary and traditional information on climate change and disaster risk management. This would allow local communities to take voluntary action to reduce climate change and disaster risks. On a broader and more general scope, in line with the Human Capital Pillar of the KV20, the I-Kiribati population (inclusive of vulnerable groups) should be supported in acquiring formal and TVET forms of qualification to improve employability inside and outside of Kiribati.

Stakeholders also identified the need to improve impact-based forecasting. To enhance the effectiveness of impact-based forecasting, it is recommended to develop a sector-specific risk-assessment tool that enables all sectors to contribute to the proposed DRR system. To achieve this, it is necessary to provide training and support to sector-specific experts to use the risk-assessment tool effectively. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that the risk-assessment tool is linked to the proposed DRR system, and that the results are used to inform planning and development, including an end-to-end multi-hazard early-warning system that includes impact-based forecasting.
Governance and management

Strengthening good governance at all levels, policies, strategies and legislation remains a top priority. Inherent in this logic is a need for all policies, strategies, sector operational plans, ministry annual workplans, ministerial plans of operations, project proposals and monitoring and evaluation systems to enable the proactive and inclusive reduction of climate change and disaster risks. While this could be considered optimistic in the immediate term, it is realistic in the long term and aligns with longer-term national strategies, particularly the KV20.

There is a strong desire to put in place relevant and appropriate national and sector legislation that provides an enabling environment to enforce climate and disaster risk reduction. Similarly, there is a need to enhance coordination between climate change adaptation and disaster risk management programmes and legislation, by government departments, island councils, NGOs, faith-based organizations and the private sector in a collaborative manner across sectors, and link these to national development aspirations.

Stakeholders identified a need to strengthen the systems and resources for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) in Kiribati. Conducting an assessment of the resources needed by the government or governing body is recommended, including the Kiribati National Expert Group (KNEG), KNEG Secretariat, which is the Office of Te Beretitenti, to manage policies and plans related to DRR and CCA. Based on this assessment, a capacity-building programme should be developed to provide training and support to government officials and other stakeholders to implement and enforce policies and plans related to DRR and CCA effectively. Additionally, an internal coordination structure of DRR and CCA across individual ministries should be developed to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of related policies and plans.

Similarly, it is important to enhance collaboration with other countries across our Blue Pacific region. To promote regional cooperation and sharing knowledge in DRR and CCA, conducting a needs assessment is recommended, to identify areas where south-south collaboration and inter-country learning could be beneficial. Based on the assessment, partnerships and collaborative efforts with other Pacific island countries (PICs) should be established to share knowledge, expertise, and resources in DRR and CCA. A plan should be developed to ensure effective collaboration and coordination with other PICs, and provide guidance on how to evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships. This will facilitate cross-regional learning and enhance the implementation of DRR and CCA initiatives in the Pacific region.

Investment in risk reduction and resilience

Strengthening capacity to access finance, monitor expenditures and maintain strong partnerships remains a key priority. This includes collaboration to strengthen coordination and partnership in-country on climate finance and climate change and disaster risk management initiatives. This would ultimately increase efforts to mobilize and scale-up various sources of financing to implement climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk management needs and priorities. It is equally important to underscore the definition of climate resilience infrastructure in Kiribati and the context to which it is applied environmentally. A recognition of local traditional knowledge, and its consideration in the development of climate-resilient designs would be important prospective features. A ‘one size fits all’ approach for climate-proofing designs would be less impactful toward DRR efforts. It is suggested that climate-resilient designs need to take account of traditional knowledges and understanding of resilience within the local context.

Similarly, a number of reports have identified the need for government ministries to enhance capacities in monitoring, evaluation and performance measures of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management, including budgeting, expenditure, institutional capacity and internal systems. These capacities could be strengthened through investment in training and through MFED engagement, in its role as coordination office for climate finance through KCFD and NEPO.

There is a need to invest in activities to strengthen health-service delivery to address climate change impacts. This includes efforts to ensure the following:
The public is aware of water safety and proactively reduces the spread of vector-, water- and food-borne diseases.

Routine systems for surveillance of environmental-health hazards and climate-sensitive diseases are strengthened and the capacity of national and local health systems, institutions and personnel to manage climate change- and disaster-related health risks are enhanced.

Capacities are enhanced, and equipment provided to the MHMS Central Laboratory and Environmental Health Laboratory to test water and food, conduct vector control activities and analyse results.

I-Kiribati population’s general health status is enhanced to be more resilient to climate-related diseases and health impacts.

A national climate change, disaster risk, outbreak preparedness governance framework, response plan and a sectoral environmental-health plan, which incorporate surveillance and response to climate-sensitive diseases and disaster risks, are in place.

Strengthened support for retrofitting medical facilities and health infrastructure adversely affected by, or susceptible to, the impacts of climate change.

Enhanced chemical-waste management and alternatives to reduce contamination and pollution.

Stakeholders are able to identify areas where climate and disaster financing annual reporting can be accessed - through Climate Finance Division, KFSU

In DRR financing, stakeholders have identified the need to ensure effective financing for DRR and CCA in Kiribati. Developing a comprehensive financial mapping tool to track all financial inputs coming into the country is recommended. The tool should be compared with the national plan to identify any gaps and prioritize needs and activities. Additionally, assessing the effectiveness of external development partner support on DRR and CCA is recommended, and how it links to the resources being provided. Recommendations should be provided on how to optimize the use of resources provided by external partners to ensure alignment with national priorities.

Similarly, there is a need to increase water and food security with integrated and sector-specific approaches, and to promote healthy and resilient ecosystems. These include coordinated efforts to ensure the following:

- Communities with island councils manage and implement climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures as an integral part of their development efforts and inclusive of vulnerable groups.
- Salt-, drought-, rain- and heat-stress-resilient crops, fruit, vegetables and livestock breeds are identified and promoted, and communities preserve local food (fruit trees and seafood).
- Communities manage coastal fisheries, taking into consideration sustainability of marine resources as well as climate change and disaster risks.
- Communities have constant access to local produce and basic food commodities.
- Communities manage their water resources, including during extreme events such as drought, heavy rain and storm surges.
- Promotion of sound and reliable infrastructure development and land management.
- The livelihood of I-Kiribati is improved through public buildings, infrastructure and utilities that are well maintained and resilient to climate change and disasters (climate proofing).
- Land and marine planning and management for all islands that provide clear regulations on land development with competent planning authorities strengthened to implement and enforce land and marine use regulatory frameworks and water regulations.
- Building coastal resilience through strategic coastal protection initiatives, including, among others, soft-measures coastal protection or nature-based solutions such as mangrove, coral and seagrass restoration.
- Water reserves are protected, and communities have access to sufficient and adequate fresh water at all times (including during extreme events such as drought, heavy rain and storm surges), and to improved sanitation facilities.
- Establishing financial mechanisms to address the risks facing community and public assets (with a focus on climate-risk insurance and building on existing initiatives and programmes).
Investments in disaster risk reduction are critical for SIDS such as Kiribati to build resilience, protect lives and property, promote economic and social stability, support sustainable development, and access international support. During the workshop consultations, it was clear that Kiribati requires enhanced investment in disaster risk reduction. Ideally, investments would focus on the areas outlined below:

**Protection of lives and property:** Disaster risk reduction investments can help protect lives and property by reducing the impact of disasters. By strengthening infrastructure, improving early-warning systems, and promoting evacuation plans, Kiribati would be able to prevent the loss of life and minimize damage to property during disasters.

**Economic stability:** Disasters can have a significant impact on the economy of SIDS. Investments in DRR can help reduce the economic losses associated with disasters, such as damage to infrastructure, loss of tourism revenue and disruption of business operations.

**Social stability:** Disasters can cause social disruption, displacement, and loss of community. Investments in DRR can help promote social stability by reducing the impact of disasters on communities, promoting community resilience and enhancing social cohesion.

**Sustainable development:** DRR investments can also contribute to sustainable development by promoting environmentally friendly infrastructure, reducing the risk of disasters and ensuring that development is resilient to future disasters.

It was heartening to note that during the workshop consultations held by DRR stakeholders in Tarawa on 20-21 February 2023, the UNDRR delegation, led by the Head of the UNDRR Pacific Office, expressed support for future activities in the following areas:

1. Risk information and risk assessment needs including ‘data-maturity assessment’
2. Disaster loss and damage database piloting and roll out
3. Early-warning, early-action support – particularly in areas of risk communication and preparedness

**Disaster preparedness, response and build back better**

Increasing effectiveness and efficiency of early warnings and disaster and emergency management remains a critical priority. This includes efforts focused on strengthening disaster-risk preparedness (through innovative technology), response and recovery across all sectors, including, importantly, at island and community levels, to reduce loss of life, injuries, damage to public, private and community infrastructure and properties. It also requires collaborative efforts by government agencies to ensure that community partnerships and members of vulnerable groups are increasingly engaged in climate change and disaster risk management initiatives and their needs are addressed. This would mean that:

i. members of communities are proactively committed toward long-term partnership that is based on good governance, sustainability and empowerment.

ii. locally driven resilience programmes (in identifying issues, strength and opportunities).

iii. the community participation and engagement to address climate change and disaster risk management issues is well defined and implemented.
The Kiribati Red Cross Society plays a critical role in the disaster risk reduction sector in Kiribati. The organization is one of the main providers of disaster preparedness and response activities in the country and has been working tirelessly with the NDMO and stakeholders to reduce the impact of disasters and to assist local communities with recovery efforts.

The Kiribati Red Cross Society conducts community-based disaster risk reduction activities, including first-aid training and awareness-raising programmes, and provides essential relief supplies to those affected by disasters, as well as blood-donation recruitment to save lives. Through its community-based disaster risk reduction activities, the organization builds the capacity of local communities to prepare for, and respond to, disasters, including training and support for local volunteers who are often the first responders in times of disaster.

The organization also engages in advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the importance of disaster risk reduction and the need for greater investment in this area. Through its advocacy work, the Kiribati Red Cross Society has been able to influence policy and decision-making at national level, leading to the inclusion of disaster risk reduction measures in national development plans.

Through their disaster preparedness and response activities, the organization has been able to save lives, reduce the impact of disasters, and build the resilience of local communities. Their work is a testament to the power of community-based approaches to disaster risk reduction and serves as a model for other organizations working in this field. But success does not come without challenges.

The Secretary-General of the KRCS, Mr Depweh Kanono, describes these issues and challenges, including limited resources, inaccessibility to remote islands, limited human resources, and infrastructure and asset deficiencies. The organization’s building is significantly overcrowded, and it continues to struggle with logistical and transportation needs.

To sustain its operations and provide essential services to the local community, the KRCS depends on a combination of funding sources. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the primary source of funding for the KRCS, providing limited financial and technical assistance to aid the organization’s operations. The Kiribati government also provides some funding to the KRCS, particularly for disaster response and relief efforts. However, the organization requires increased investment to carry out proactive disaster risk reduction initiatives instead of reactive responses.

Despite these challenges, the KRCS remains committed to its mission of promoting disaster risk reduction and providing support to communities affected by disasters. The organization continues to collaborate with local communities and international partners to overcome these challenges and enhance the resilience of the Kiribati people. The KRCS serves as a model for other organizations working in this field, demonstrating the efficacy of community-based approaches to disaster risk reduction.
Collaboration, partnership and cooperation

Strengthening and greening the private sector, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) was identified as an additional priority. The focus of such collaboration would allow the following:

- Increased investment by businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises and women, in value-adding marine and agricultural products for the domestic and export niche markets, and would benefit women and men equally.
- The private sector to implement greening and risk-management initiatives (in areas such as tourism, trade, transport, import and export).
- The private sector to incorporate climate change and disaster risks into its strategic and business plans (and assesses feasibility of insurance).

Upcoming projects for DRR by NGOs

A number of projects implemented by stakeholders in the DRR sector are very useful to highlight in this report, to showcase the scope of their activities, and indulge possible collaboration in future by similar partners.

Community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) project

Live & Learn Kiribati has secured funding to implement a project aimed at community preparedness and disaster risk management across six islands endorsed by the OB: Makin, Marakei, North Tarawa, Abemama, Onotoa, and Arorae. The project objectives include engaging the community in preparedness actions such as early-warning kits, first-aid training, and COVID-19 awareness, as well as conducting community DRR/CC awareness sessions, participatory community risk analysis, and developing a community-based disaster-risk management planning pathway. The project also includes monitoring and evaluation work scheduled to end in July 2024. However, changes in Air Kiribati flight schedules could potentially affect it meeting work schedules on the outer islands. The Technical Assistant for the DRR/WASH projects would work with the Live & Learn DRR/WASH team, OB, MIA, MWYSSA, and Island Councils in developing the DRR work plan to be implemented from April 2023 to July 2024.

Drought response- AHP

Live & Learn Kiribati has received funding for a drought response project in South Tarawa. This project aims to install seven solar water systems with tanks on bricks at selected sites in South Tarawa (to be confirmed with OB), conduct climate-smart WASH education training and presentations in villages, and support the development and dissemination of IEC materials for WASH training (including radio messaging, posters and stickers). In addition, the project will provide gender and disability training in consultation with CARE experts. The monitoring and evaluation work for this project is expected to be completed by June 2023. The work plan for this project will be finalized by Live & Learn Kiribati staff in consultation with OB, DRR stakeholders, and CARE Australia.
The Kiribati Red Cross Society (KRCS) has collaborated with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to construct a dedicated blood-bank building in the KRCS subleased plot at McKenzie area in Bikenibeu, Tarawa. The primary goal of this collaboration is to reduce congestion and enhance the management of space for donors, allowing for a better flow of blood donation and daily inflow of blood to replenish the required blood types. This initiative will help close a significant gap in blood transfusion daily demands. Furthermore, KRCS is inviting expressions of interest for the development of its headquarters and branches to improve its capacity and strength, as well as transport and storage. This will enable the organization to enhance its non-food relief items for emergencies and facilitate their easier distribution in South Tarawa and outer islands.

IMPACT STORY 5:
Partnering with faith-based organizations to reduce disaster risks in Kiribati

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have a critical role to play in supporting the efforts of governments under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) in Kiribati recognizes the vital contribution of FBOs and fosters partnerships to strengthen the engagement of FBOs in disaster risk reduction.

One example of an FBO supporting disaster risk reduction in Kiribati is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) Solar Desalination Water Security Project. This initiative, regarded as the largest LDS humanitarian response project in the Pacific region, seeks to provide safe and clean drinking water to the people of Kiribati. The project involves the installation of 10 solar desalination systems on a number of outer islands identified by the Government of Kiribati (GoK), based on levels of risk and vulnerability.

The LDS project is being implemented in partnership with the Kiribati Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE) and the Disaster Risk Management Office (DRMO), and the systems are designed and built by SUEZ, a globally recognized expert firm in water-treatment solutions. The objective of the project is to enhance the government's capacity to respond to disasters and mitigate the vulnerability of the population to the impacts of climate change, which frequently lead to water scarcity in the region.

The project has been highly commended by the Kiribati government and is anticipated to benefit over 17,000 individuals in the country. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a distinguished record of humanitarian work, and the Kiribati project is a testament to the Church’s commitment to supporting vulnerable communities worldwide.

The coordination between the LDS project team and the DRM Team from the Office of Te Beretitenti (OB) has been exceptional, enabling efficient efforts to enhance the resilience of local communities by addressing water-security issues. The involvement of faith-based organizations in disaster risk reduction is crucial in attaining the objectives of the Sendai Framework. Their unique strengths and resources can complement the efforts of governments and other stakeholders, contributing to building resilient communities that are better equipped to confront disasters.
The intent of the review was to assess the progress, constraints, and gaps that the Kiribati has faced when implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and, from the Prospective review, formulate country-specific recommendations for future implementation.

The overall results have shown that efforts have been made to implement certain aspects of the framework, such as its mainstreaming into the State’s school education system and the Disaster Risk Management’s Division initiative to advocate for emergency response focal points in all government sectors.

Nonetheless, the process has shed light on various limitations and areas for improvement when it comes to the implementation of the framework. Despite various efforts, findings have indicated that there are minimal organizations and sectors that are aware of the existence of such framework, albeit having engaged with the sector under the auspices of the Sendai Framework, which highlights a critical need to enhance awareness of the Sendai Framework. During the consultations, several themes emerged that stakeholders identify as crucial to be considered by OB in its capacity as the NDMRO, to ensure that the future efforts and collaboration under the DRR sector in Kiribati remains holistic, robust and inclusive through a whole-of-nation approach. The themes are outlined below.

**Preserving and promoting culture and traditional knowledge**

Kiribati possesses a unique history, with a rich culture and traditional knowledge attuned to the environment of the Pacific. Such cultural capital has allowed communities to be resilient in the face of natural disasters, and created a unique identity to rally towards during disasters. As such, government priorities have identified the need to increase the capacity of the I-Kiribati people to contribute to their cultural heritage and to raise public awareness of the significant contribution that culture and traditional knowledge has on strengthening resilience and supporting livelihoods. Livelihoods and resilience can further be supported through culture, including through the development of sustainable ecotourism initiatives, particularly those that economically empower women.

**Preventing coastal erosion for low-lying atolls**

The low-lying atoll islands and isolated locations of communities across Kiribati, the majority of which are located along the coast, are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Government policies therefore emphasize partnering with communities to strengthen coastal resilience for islands across Kiribati. Coastal infrastructure and shorelines can be strengthened through traditional sea walls and the planting of mangroves. Government policies also call for increasing community ownership and engagement on the management of such traditional sea walls, in line with national environmental safeguard systems and national regulatory frameworks.
Promoting energy security and renewable energy

Kiribati contributes approximately 0.0002 per cent to total global carbon emissions. While Kiribati may not be ideally placed to make dramatic changes to the global total, Kiribati can demonstrate to the international community the country’s willingness and capacity to contribute towards a carbon-neutral world. Moreover, the introduction of accessible, reliable, affordable and clean energy options will promote economic growth and improve livelihoods in Kiribati, while reducing Kiribati’s dependence on imported fuel. As such, government policies encourage a transition towards renewable-energy sources and increased energy conservation and efficiency. Off-grid electrification, the use of innovative technologies and biofuels, such as coconut oils, all present potential solutions for enhancing Kiribati’s energy security.

Enhancing human-health security

The health risks associated with climate change and disasters threaten the socio-economic development of Kiribati. Without a targeted health strategy to address the adverse effects of climate change and disasters, the services offered through the health system may continue to be overwhelmed by the resulting aggravation of issues. For example, climate change may lead to an increase in vector-borne diseases. Moreover, a healthy population is inherently more resilient to a natural disaster.

Overall health security can be improved at local level through partnerships with health services, CSOs and NGOs. Community members can also be provided with the health information necessary to address the health risks of climate change, including specific information for youth, persons with disabilities and women. Health security can be further strengthened by raising awareness on gender-based violence (GBV) and mental health as a double burden of climate change on the health of women. In addition, initiatives to reduce the prevalence of risk factors for non-communicable and communicable diseases can be strengthened and the population can be more engaged in sports and in cooking more nutritional food.

Promoting education and community-level capacity-building

As outlined in the KCCP, capacity-building, public awareness and education on climate change and disaster risks are fundamental requirements for successfully adapting to the impacts of climate change. Educational material can be improved by developing updated, accurate and contextualized classroom materials and information on climate change, and by supporting diverse learning opportunities for students. Education should be inclusive and students with special needs should be supported. In addition, formal and informal capacity-building programmes can improve the skills and expertise needed to support climate change adaptation. Moreover, the development of social enterprises and community-based business ventures to diversify local incomes, particularly for women, and the empowerment of gender-focused CSOs can further improve climate change adaptation.

Strengthening food security, both on land and under the sea

Kiribati is particularly dependent on food imports and traditional food systems are declining in favour of imported food, while the number of people who preserve and apply traditional knowledge is decreasing. Limited access to employment opportunities, combined with a high dependency on imported food, increases the vulnerabilities of communities to climate change. For example, increasing ocean temperatures will have a direct negative effect on the marine ecosystem and fisheries stocks, and the increasing frequency of droughts, hotter temperatures and sea-level rise threatens agricultural output.
Government policies therefore emphasize strengthening the capacity of communities to take practical and sustainable measures to address food and nutrition security. Food availability can be increased through food preservation and storage techniques based on traditional knowledge, and planting climate-resilient crops, fruit, vegetables and livestock in line with traditional knowledge. Household-level gardening and nutritious cooking recipes represent an opportunity to include women in establishing food-secure communities. Aquaculture can be strengthened by supporting small-scale fishermen and by implementing community-based fisheries management while training women and men in traditional knowledge on fishing, navigation, and community-based enterprises focusing on agricultural and marine products. Finally, healthy lifestyles and nutrition also play an important role in promoting food security.

**Increasing access to clean drinking water**

Clean water is essential for life, and climate change can result in reduced rainfall and droughts, hotter temperatures and the disappearance of freshwater resources. Available underground water sources are also vulnerable to climate change and can be easily contaminated by saltwater intrusion, which will diminish water security and cause health and food-security problems for the rest of the population. Kiribati’s water supply is limited due to the small size of its islands and limited large storage facilities. To promote water security, communities can be engaged in safeguarding water sources, including water management during droughts. Appropriate technological measures can also be implemented to increase water quality and quantity in communities. Awareness-raising of water conservation and harvesting plays an important role in promoting water security. Finally, improving access to potable water in households, as well as improving water and sanitation services, such as handwashing facilities and school toilets, will further promote water security.

**Enhancing disaster risk management and climate-change understanding**

The aim of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation is to reduce the underlying risk and vulnerabilities of communities to slow-onset, as well as sudden- and rapid-onset disasters, and to improve their ability to prepare, respond and recover from disasters. Disaster risk management can be improved by promoting concepts of building back better when responding to, or recovering from, disasters, and through strengthened coordination between relevant partners, including NGOs and CSOs. Communication plans and messaging that have been developed in consultation with women’s groups, youth and persons with disabilities also play an important role in disaster risk management. Disaster risk management plans should engage women and vulnerable persons and address the specific needs of such persons during emergencies, including by providing training. The impacts of climate change can be better understood through data collection and vulnerability analysis, and by communicating the benefits of disaster risk management initiatives. Finally, NGOs and CSOs can improve the capacity of communities to collect, analyse, interpret and report on data in relation to disasters.

**Strengthening partnerships, good governance and inclusiveness**

The cross-cutting and country-wide impacts of climate change can be addressed effectively through a whole-of-society approach based on the interrelated themes of partnerships, good governance and inclusiveness. Moreover, good governance, which includes accountability and transparency, promotes aid effectiveness and coordination between government and NGOs in implementing CCA projects.
The Government of Kiribati recommends strengthening partnerships with NGOs and using their to develop partnerships with external organizations. Good governance can be enhanced by eliminating silos within organizations, as well as by fostering coordination, communication and transparency between all relevant partners. In-country coordination and collaboration with partners, including NGOs, can be directed towards accessing climate finance and various other resources from development partners to improve aid effectiveness.

In regard to inclusiveness, effective climate change adaptation should incorporate the needs of women and vulnerable groups as such persons face additional burdens within the context of climate change and disasters. The government also recommends facilitating the participation of children and youth in climate change adaptation projects, supporting persons with disabilities in running adaptation projects and empowering women’s community-based organizations.
Annex 1: Questionnaires for focus-group discussions

Semi-structured interview: Questionnaire

The questions were developed using the international and regional survey questionnaires for the SFDRR MTR, and follow examples of what other SIDS have used in their SFDRR MTR consultations, but specifically adapted to fit the context in Kiribati and the institutional frameworks.

Section 1: Sendai Framework retrospective review (2015 – 2022)

1. Has there been a reduction of disaster risk and the impacts of natural and man-made hazards on persons, businesses, communities and ecosystems, as a result of actions taken and approaches adopted in your country in implementing the Sendai Framework since 2015?

   Probing question: a. Identify at least one way in which actions and approaches adopted in implementing the Sendai Framework have resulted in a reduction in disaster risk.

2. What do your government and national stakeholders consider to have been the major achievements, challenges and barriers to the implementation of the Sendai Framework since 2015?

   Probing questions: In respect of: a. preventing the creation of new risk, b. reducing the existing stock of risk, c. strengthening resilience

Theme: risk assessment, information and understanding

3. What progress has been made in approaches to better understand or assess disaster risk in all its dimensions of vulnerability, exposure (persons and assets), hazard characteristics, capacity, and their inter-relationships? (Within your sector or organisation)

   Probing question: Is the systemic nature of risk addressed within your organization administrative levels and disciplines?

4. How are traditional and local knowledge and communities, in addition to scientific and technological insights, participating and guiding risk assessment and risk-informed decision making and investment?

Theme: risk governance and management

5. How has national and local public policy, legislation, planning and organization changed to align with the Sendai Framework?

   Probing question: What changes have been observed in diversity in DRR leadership since 2015, particularly in decision-making.

6. How has the guiding principle of shared responsibility between the governments and local authorities, sectors and stakeholders been applied? Describe good practices

   Probing questions: What measures has your country taken to enable integrated management of disaster risk across your institutions or relevant sectors?
Theme: investment in risk reduction and resilience

7. To what extent has your organization’s investment in resilience (through structural and non-structural measures) increased since 2015?

Probing question: a. To what purposes have such investments been directed?

8. To what extent are investments by the public (including national and local governments) and private sectors increasingly risk-informed? Describe these measures, tools and mechanisms.

Probing questions: a. What developments have been installed in fiscal instruments to integrate disaster risk reduction considerations and measures? b. What developments have been installed in financial regulatory mechanisms to integrate disaster risk reduction considerations and measures?

9. Have financial resources provided to your country for disaster risk reduction through international cooperation increased since 2015?

Probing question: a. How has technical cooperation, technology transfer and resources for capacity building increased?

Theme: disaster preparedness, response and build back better

10. How has preparedness for response, as well as for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction, changed since the adoption of the Sendai Framework? Cite good practices.

Theme: collaboration, partnership and cooperation

11. What partnerships and initiatives have been most successful in reducing disaster risk? Consider relevant partnerships that may be; local, sub-national, national, sub-regional, regional, transboundary or multi-stakeholder, civil society and public-private.

12. Probing questions:
   a. How have genuine and durable partnerships been established?
   b. How were they established and developed?
   c. How are such partnerships governed?
   d. How are they funded or resourced?
   e. What are the leadership roles and partnership evaluation methods?

13. How has cooperation and collaboration in risk reduction across national mechanisms and institutions in the implementation of relevant international agendas, frameworks and conventions evolved since the adoption of the Sendai Framework?

Theme: context shifts and emerging issues

14. What have been the major changes to the contexts within which your organization has been implementing the Framework since 2015, including emerging issues and topics of concern?

Probing questions: a. How have existing risk governance and risk management mechanisms and approaches fared in the COVID-19 pandemic?
### Section 2: Prospective review (2023 – 2030)

15. On a national basis, what deliverables, innovations, processes, or transformations would bring the greatest reduction in disaster risk and the greatest increase in the resilience of people, assets and ecosystems in the remaining period of the Sendai Framework and beyond 2030?

*Probing questions:* a. *What are the key measures that must be taken to build the resilience of critical infrastructure and basic services?* i. health systems ii. food systems iii. water and sanitation systems iv. energy systems v. financial systems.

### Theme: risk assessment, information and understanding

16. How can risk knowledge and insight be improved, including in improving understanding of the systemic and interconnected nature of risk?

*Probing question:* a. *What measures can be taken to ensure that this is systematically integrated in all decision-making?*

### Theme: risk governance and management

17. Given the systemic nature of risk, and experiences of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic (including cascading, indirect impacts), what adjustments are required in policy, regulatory and legislative frameworks, organization, investment and strategy, to be able to capitalize on opportunities, or to mitigate new or emerging threats to the achievement of the expected outcome and goal of the Sendai Framework?

*Probing questions:* a. *at the national level?* b. *at the local level?* c. *at the regional level?* d. *at the international level?*

18. The Sendai Framework states that responsibilities for disaster risk reduction are shared by central governments and relevant national authorities, sectors and stakeholders. What must be prioritized to ensure that responsibilities are shared in risk identification and reduction?

*Probing questions:* a. *What is required to promote women's empowerment and leadership in disaster risk reduction?* b. *What measures can be taken to ensure that 'no one is left behind'?* c. *What measures can be taken to ensure that 'no ecosystem is left behind'?*

19. What priority actions can be taken to empower local authorities and local partnerships to strengthen risk reducing action at the subnational and local levels?

20. What are the adjustments or key measures that must be taken to ensure that disaster risk management is no longer treated as a sector in itself, but is a practice systematically applied across all sectors and within your organization?

### Theme: investment in risk reduction and resilience

21. What measures can public institutions take at national and international levels to ensure risk is priced more accurately within all financial transactions, and not treated as an externality and discounted in public and private investment

22. What further actions are required through to 2030 to strengthen the resilience of business and industry sectors to disaster risk?

### Theme: collaboration

23. In accelerating and amplifying action pursuing the outcome and goal of the Sendai Framework:

a. What new or emerging initiatives and partnerships will need to be developed to support governments in the period to 2030?

b. In which priority areas are more partnerships required for risk-informed sustainable development to be possible?

c. How can development partners and the international community provide better support?
As part of the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) a national stakeholder workshop was convened on 21-22 February 2023. The consultation was led by staff of Office of Te Beretitenti serving as the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and supported by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Sub-regional Office in the Pacific. The workshop was joined by stakeholders primarily from the Kiribati National Expert Group (KNEG), but inclusive of government ministries, local councils, faith-based organizations, non-government organizations and community groups.

Discussions with stakeholders were conducted using interactive conversations focused on the thematic areas of the MTR questionnaires developed for Kiribati, drawing out key perspectives, views and experiences. The application of semi-structured questions during the discussion provides a platform to share diverse ideas on progress as well as issues and challenges that relevant stakeholders experienced since 2015 (retrospective review) and begin to identify solutions to gaps and challenges moving ahead beyond the MTR (prospective review). To complement the verbal discussion, a written form of conversation was also introduced through a ‘sticky note’ methodology. This simple process allowed participants to write their views, perspectives and experiences on sticky notes and add each note to a wallpaper used for relevant thematic areas. This process allowed participants who prefer written communications to express their thoughts inclusively. Table 1 outlines a compilation of these raised points.

While there were several recommendations identified in the initial desktop review, these recommendations were not discussed directly with the stakeholders and local communities, to ensure that the consultation process would remain impartial to views and lived experiences. This is envisaged to bring forth nuances of local perspectives that are not entirely pre-determined nor predisposed by the review process, to incorporate these important perspectives in the ongoing global MTR process. It is noted that applying the ‘you talk, we listen’ approach has been very useful and encompassing, and remains consistent with the semi-structured questionnaire that focuses on qualitative discussions.

The consultations were held using the local language, and subsequently translated to English. Presented below are general points and elements captured from the discussions.

### General points and elements raised by stakeholders by thematic area.

#### Retrospective review

During the consultations, participants expressed the following points, per thematic areas.

**(i) Risk information**

Sharing data is an institutional challenge as there is no agreement or coordination mechanism among different government agencies to share critical climate, disaster and other sectoral information with each other. Population census is collected every five years. Participants suggested adding questions from other sectors in the questionnaire, which will allow collection of comprehensive data on other socio-economic issues in the country.

Capacity to collect and analyse data should be strengthened. There is a need for robust and continuous investment in data management. Currently most of the data-related initiatives are short term and project-driven.
Kiribati integrated vulnerability assessment (KIBA) database is currently used by NDMO. However, KIBA is an expensive tool and requires operational support. It is still challenging and expensive to deploy the assessment team to outer islands. Island disaster committees (IDCs) in outer islands request support or assistance from NEMO during disasters. NEMO verifies the request through Kiribati Meteorological Services which has collected data on disaster since 1950.

No capacity to assess the damage and monetary value of the disaster impacts. There is no baseline on the value of the assets (houses, infrastructure) which makes it difficult to assess the monetary value of affected assets and losses associated with disasters.

(ii) Governance

Island Disaster Committees (IDCs) were established as part of the disaster risk reduction initiative at community level with the support of the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project managed by SPC. A National Disaster Management Plan from 2012 made it mandatory for all island communities to have an IDC. Five IDCs have been established, in Abaiang, Onotoa, Tamana, Arorae and North Tarawa islands. The established IDCs lack human and technical resources, financing and ongoing support to carry out DRR activities at community level. Most of them exist on paper.

It was suggested by the participants to strengthen the capacities of IDC committees through training and equipping them with tools to run the disaster preparedness drills and training at community level. IDCs need resources to incentivize them.

It was recognized that the faith-based organizations, community leaders, women's groups, and Red Cross national society play an important role in DRR, especially in disseminating risk information and critical messages before, during and after disasters. Aid distribution raises concerns and disputes among local population. It is challenging to identify the most vulnerable person or household. It requires a lot of sensitization among beneficiaries. If an anticipatory action initiative is introduced in Kiribati, it requires a lot of sensitization and consultation with community and government to explain how pre-arranged financing works.

(iii) Investment

Local NGOs and Red Cross Kiribati do not have much support from government compared to churches. There is no tax exemption. Many organizations rely on volunteers. They are struggling to run programmes financially. UNWOMEN and UNOPS are helping local women’s organizations with small grants.

Child Fund has been working with communities for many years and is familiar with the needs and priorities of families during the drought period. They run outreach programmes on access to, storage and management of water. Solar water distillation projects are also important in outer islands.

Disaster resilience funds come from China to support 50 HH. The fund is managed by NDMO and used for a variety of institutional needs including fixing bridges, levees, seawalls, and for charter boats to outer islands. More than 200 requests are under review.

(iv) Preparedness and response, build back better

Currently, NDMO has limited capacity to conduct community drills and training on disaster preparedness and early-warning systems. A fire drill in one of the schools in South Tarawa was conducted to mark the IDDRR in 2022. Radio shows and announcements, school competitions and awareness-raising campaigns were also held in Tarawa. However, these drills are not regular and do not cover outer islands.

There is a need for wider public education and awareness-raising activities at community level on disaster preparedness, especially in the outer islands. It was suggested to involve faith-based organizations in outer islands as they have a presence in each community and can reach all the groups.

It was also suggested to invest in personnel who will work with the outer islands. A paid position should be created to support IDC. This will enhance community and local DRR initiatives.

There is no engagement with the private sector, especially to provide warning messages during disasters. There is no feedback mechanism. Engagement with the private sector should be prioritized.
USAID and CARE Australia are working in partnership on CBDRR through community-awareness sessions, development of community-based response plans, risk and vulnerability assessments, only on four islands. This information was provided by a Live & Learn representative. Further verification is needed. Similarly, BSRP and other initiatives also took place in Kiribati. However, there are no follow-up activities.

Youth engagement is important in DRR as well. Participants encouraged greater engagement of youth in discussions and planning on DRR and CCA initiatives.

**Prospective review**

Participants provided valuable insights and perspectives and shared their experiences working in the DRR sector in Kiribati. Importantly, such views outlined possible ways forward as follows:

**Risk assessment, information and understanding**

There was a clear emphasis in many national reports indicating the need to improve data and information generation, management and sharing. It was apparent that this issue is a priority consideration for disaster risk management efforts and climate change adaptation in general. It requires concerted efforts by GoK agencies to develop an integrated and up-to-date national database, so all relevant information for resilient development is available and accessible for all. There is a need to develop holistic capacities to communicate science and best practices, strengthened by developing and disseminating effective and relevant information, communication and awareness products for decision-making and awareness-raising across sectors and at all levels. Equally important is the need to ensure that capacities for data collection, assessment, analysis, interpretation, monitoring and reporting are strengthened across sectors.

A clear need was identified to provide an appropriate education, training and awareness programme. This may include opportunities for Kiribati students and professionals to build local capacities to take action on adaptation along with risk reduction and coping strategies before, during and after disasters, and on emissions mitigation. This will ensure that across the board, I-Kiribati population are well informed, and all stakeholders have access to up-to-date and accurate, contemporary and traditional information on climate change and disaster risk management. This would allow local communities to take voluntary action to reduce climate change and disaster risks. On a broader and more general scope, in line with the Human Capital Pillar of the KV20, the I-Kiribati population (inclusive of vulnerable groups) should be supported in acquiring formal and TVET forms of qualification to improve employability inside and outside of Kiribati.

**Governance and management**

Strengthening good governance, policies, strategies and legislation remain a top priority. Inherent in this logic is a need for all policies, strategies, sector operational plans, ministry annual workplans, ministerial plans of operations, project proposals and monitoring and evaluation systems to enable the proactive and inclusive reduction of climate change and disaster risks. While this could be considered optimistic in the immediate term, it is realistic in the long term and aligns with longer-term national strategies, particularly the KV20. There is a strong desire to put in place relevant and appropriate national and sector legislation that provides an enabling environment to enforce climate and disaster risk reduction. Similarly, there is a need to enhance coordination between climate change adaptation and disaster risk management programmes and legislation, by government departments, island councils, NGOs, faith-based organizations and the private sector, in a collaborative manner across sectors, and link these to national development aspirations.

**Investment in risk reduction and resilience**

Strengthening capacity to access finance, monitor expenditures and maintain strong partnerships remains a key priority. This includes collaboration to strengthen coordination and partnership in-country on climate finance and climate change and disaster risk management initiatives. This would ultimately increase efforts to mobilize and scale-up various sources of financing to implement climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk management needs and priorities.

Similarly, a number of reports have identified the need for government ministries to enhance capacities in monitoring, evaluation and performance measures of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management, including
budgeting, expenditure, institutional capacity, and internal systems. These capacities could be strengthened through investment in training and through MFED engagement, in its role as coordination office for climate finance through KCFD and NEPO.

There is a need to invest in activities to strengthen health-service delivery to address climate change impacts. This includes efforts to ensure that:

- the public is aware of water safety and proactively reduces the spread of vector-, water- and food-borne diseases.
- routine systems for surveillance of environmental-health hazards and climate-sensitive diseases are strengthened, and the capacity of national and local health systems, institutions and personnel to manage climate-change- and disaster-related health risks are enhanced.
- capacities are enhanced, and equipment provided to the MHMS Central Laboratory and Environmental Health Laboratory to test water and food, conduct vector control activities and analyse results.
- I-Kiribati population’s general health status is enhanced to be more resilient to climate-related diseases and health impacts.
- a national climate change, disaster risk, outbreak preparedness governance framework, response plan and a sectoral environmental-health plan, which incorporate surveillance and response to climate-sensitive diseases and disaster risks, are in place.
- there is strengthened support for retrofitting medical facilities and health infrastructure adversely affected by, or susceptible to, the impacts of climate change.
- there are enhanced chemical waste management and alternatives to reduce contamination and pollution.

Similarly, there is a need to increase water and food security with integrated and sector-specific approaches and promoting healthy and resilient ecosystems. These include coordinated efforts to ensure that:

- communities with island councils manage and implement climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures as an integral part of their development efforts, inclusive of vulnerable groups.
- salt-, drought-, rain- and heat-stress-resilient crops, fruit, vegetables and livestock breeds are identified and promoted, and communities preserve local food (fruit trees and seafood).
- communities manage coastal fisheries, taking into consideration sustainability of marine resources as well as climate change and disaster risks.
- communities have constant access to local produce and basic food commodities.
- communities manage their water resources, including during extreme events such as drought, heavy rain and storm surges.
- sound and reliable infrastructure development and land management is promoted.
- the livelihood of I-Kiribati is improved through public buildings, infrastructure and utilities that are well maintained and resilient to climate change and disasters (climate proofing).
- here is land and marine planning and management for all islands that provides clear regulations on land development with competent planning authorities strengthened to implement and enforce land and marine use regulatory frameworks and water regulations.
- coastal resilience is built through strategic coastal protection initiatives.
- water reserves are protected, and communities have access to sufficient and adequate fresh water at all times (including during extreme events such as drought, heavy rain and storm surges) and to improved sanitation facilities.
- financial mechanisms are established to address the risks facing community and public assets (with a focus on climate risk insurance and building on existing initiatives and programmes).
Disaster preparedness, response and build back better

Increasing effectiveness and efficiency of early warnings and disaster and emergency management remains a critical priority. This includes efforts focused on strengthening disaster-risk preparedness (through innovative technology), response and recovery across all sectors including, importantly, at island and community levels to reduce loss of life, injuries and damage to infrastructure and properties. It also requires collaborative efforts by government agencies to ensure that community partnerships and members of vulnerable groups are increasingly engaged in climate change and disaster risk management initiatives and their needs are addressed. This would mean that:

- members of communities are proactively committed to long-term partnership based on good governance, sustainability and empowerment.
- locally driven resilience programmes identify issues, strength and opportunities.
- the community participation and engagement to address climate change and disaster risk management issues is well defined and implemented.

Collaboration, partnership and cooperation

Strengthening and greening the private sector, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) was identified as an additional priority. The focus of such collaboration would allow:

- increased investment by businesses, including SMEs and women, in value-adding marine and agricultural products for the domestic and export niche markets, and would benefit women and men equally.
- the private sector to implement greening and risk-management initiatives (in areas such as tourism, trade, transport, import and export).
- the private sector to incorporate climate change and disaster risks into its strategic and business plans (and assess feasibility of insurance).
Annex 3: List of workshop participants and persons consulted

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION WORKSHOP
20-21 February 2023

Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization/Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaitiro Tiroam</td>
<td>Ministry of Line and Phoenix Islands Development (MLPID)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reea Binataake</td>
<td>Ministry of Employment and Human Resources (MEHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meere Kenana</td>
<td>Ministry of Internal Affairs - Culture, Museum Division (MIA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meei Kamkeei</td>
<td>Boutokaan Inaomataia ao Mauriia Binabinainae Association (BIMBA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokoia Ruteru</td>
<td>BIMBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Kakiakia</td>
<td>ChildFund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amota Tebao</td>
<td>Kiribati Family Health Association (KFHA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabera Tenieu</td>
<td>Eita Church of Christ, Botakaan Te Tarena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quddus Tembarau</td>
<td>Baha’i Faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toaki Arinoko</td>
<td>Live and Learn - Kiribati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikarawa Karona</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ianna Mokeana</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MFED-NEPO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timereta Eria</td>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ueraoi Taniera</td>
<td>Kiribati Red Cross Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaekea Taing</td>
<td>Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development (MFMRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erimeta Barako</td>
<td>Aia Mwae Ainen Kiribati (AMAK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally Rimon</td>
<td>OB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takena Redfern</td>
<td>OB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabrielle Emery</td>
<td>Head of Pacific Subregional Office, UNDRR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazgul Borkosheva</td>
<td>UNDRR, Pacific Subregional Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tearinaki Tanielu</td>
<td>UNDRR Consultant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impact Stories Interviews

Sally Rimon, Office of Te Beretitenti (NDMO): Interview on 15 March - focus of story is on evolution of governance of DRR and progress in gender equality in the DRR sector.

Miriam Kataunati, Oceanographer, KMS: Interview on 16 March: story focuses on Miriam’s role as the one of the first oceanographers in MET services in the Pacific (another role was established in Solomon Islands but held by a male), and the first woman oceanographer in Kiribati. She shared her perspectives in providing early-warning systems for extreme king tide events and her experiences engaging with local communities for public awareness and recovery efforts in the outer islands.

Dephew Kanono, Secretary General (Red Cross): Interview on 20 March. Story on Red Cross efforts in disaster preparedness and responses. Full details to be discussed.
Ruth Cross, Welfare and Self-Reliance Officer, LDS Church: Email correspondence, 24 March: Discussed current DRR plans and strategies applied by LDS church in support of Sendai Framework and collaboration efforts with OB and GoK in general in various areas related to DRR.

Mayor (North Tarawa): (TBC). Discussed IDC progress and challenges, issues in North Tarawa.

Comments Received for MTR Report

Waqa Tikoisuva, UNICEF Country Office, Tarawa
Tukabu Teroroko, Director, Live and Learn Kiribati
Depweh Kanono, Secretary General, Kiribati Red Cross Society
Mika Bita, Program Manager, Environment and Conservation Division, MELAD
Teanibuka Tabunga, Deputy Director, Public Health, MHMS
Tabita Awerika, Land Management Division, MELAD

Validation Review by DRR Stakeholders

15 April 2023, OB Boardroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tabita Awerika</td>
<td>Land Management Division, MELAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teanibuka Tabunga</td>
<td>Public Health Division, MHMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maena Eria</td>
<td>Kiribati Met Services, OB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depweh Kanono</td>
<td>Kiribati Red Cross Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Paul</td>
<td>Geoscience Division, MFMRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaekoa Taing</td>
<td>Geoscience Division, MFMRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenether Lemuelu</td>
<td>National Statistics Office, MFED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungia Kirata</td>
<td>Environmental Health Unit, MHMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terikano Nakekea</td>
<td>Environment Conservation Division, MELAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taala Tiaeki</td>
<td>OB-NDMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally Rimon</td>
<td>OB-NDMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takena Redfern</td>
<td>OB-NMDO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tearinaki Tanielu</td>
<td>Consultant-UNDRR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>