



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

**Replies of Kiribati to the list of issues and questions in
relation to its combined initial, second and third
periodic reports***

[Date received: 31 December 2019]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. This document provides the Republic of Kiribati's responses to the list of issues and questions set out in Document: [CEDAW/C/KIR/Q/1-3](#), dated 31 July 2019.
2. All relevant stakeholders were consulted through the Kiribati National Human Rights Taskforce (KNHRT) to provide information required for this document.

Visibility of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation

3. The Ministry of Women, Youth, Sport and Social Affairs (MWYSSA) is the key provider of ongoing implementation and training activities on CEDAW specifically around women empowerment and elimination of violence against women and girls to civil societies and government bodies. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) also facilitates workshops and dialogues on Human Rights conventions including CEDAW to ensure wider visibility and understanding of women's rights to groups such as local communities, women organizations, faith-based organizations, local government officials like Mayors, Councilors, and Assistant Social Welfare Officers (ASWO). MOJ has been regularly engaged in a dialogue with Members of Parliament over a span of 2 years before each parliamentary sitting, with the technical and financial support of the Pacific Community's Human Rights Programme – the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT).

4. In country trainings to judges on CEDAW are not regular. However, there are a number of overseas trainings and workshops that local judges often attend such as Judges Conference, Chief Justices Meetings, Judicial Pacific Participation Fund Meeting and others. These meetings have been crucial in the application and implementation of conventions by Judges in court. In the Magistrates Court, some of the Magistrates have undergone trainings provided by the South Pacific Judicial Strengthening Initiative (PJSI). The training provides basic principles of being a Magistrate and Judge including rules that can be useful in applying international laws and convention that Kiribati has ratified. Since local Magistrates are "lay magistrate" in that they have no formal judicial trainings, these annual trainings are very helpful in learning crucial techniques, better understanding of court's procedures, laws and many others.

5. The Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences (DVSO) Unit of the Kiribati Police Service (KPS) provided trainings to prosecutors and police frontline officers on Gender, Human Rights, Police Powers and Duties, and *Te Rau n te Mwenga Act* 2014 which is also known as the *Family Peace Act* (FPA), to address cases of domestic violence. The Unit also has reviewed the DVSO Standard Orders and Procedures (SOP) and aligned it with other government policies on the elimination of gender-based violence (ESGBV). Moreover, a training manual has been developed and is scheduled to be implemented in 2020.

Constitutional, legislative, and institutional framework

6. Older ordinances on education and employment have been repealed and replaced to meet international human rights standards. These recent legislations include the *Education Act* 2013 and the *Employment and Industrial Relations Code* (EIRC) 2015, and amendments to sexual assault related provisions in the Penal Code. Relevant government departments continue in their effort to review and improve other ordinances that have impacts on women's rights.

7. When the FPA came into existence, it was met with negative criticism from the public. Although the FPA was enacted to criminalize domestic violence in all its forms and gives protection to all members of the family, many believed the FPA disrupts traditional family order by giving overpowering rights to women and allowing government to interfere with family affairs, doing more harm to women and girls than protecting them. Allowing women and children and basically any member of the community to report abuse, as well as giving certain powers to police officers to issue spot orders is against the cultural belief that family matters must be kept private. Government has ongoing public awareness and consultation workshops to promote and educate communities, schools, NGOs, churches and civil servants on the FPA.

8. Human rights conventions that are not yet ratified cannot be used in court, and ratified conventions that are not yet domesticated may only provide guidance but are not binding. There are few instances where Conventions such as CEDAW are applied to strengthen cases, however in most practices, laws which have had the provision of the convention domesticated are used instead, unless there are ambiguities and vagueness that need clear interpretation from the Convention. These include the FPA and the *Children, Young Persons and Family Welfare Act (CYPFW)* 2013.

Measures taken or envisaged to amend the Constitution and adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation

9. With the launching of the Gender Equality and Women Development Policy (GEWD) 2019–2021, MWYSSA aims for future improvement in achieving gender equality by reviewing the Constitution, existing legislation and policies, to see what are the gender gaps and then working toward achieving gender balance. Awareness and training on gender and sex, ESGBV programs are some of the tools to provide primary and secondary prevention where women, children and people with disability and other vulnerable groups are targeted. Programs under GEWD will work with communities, head of churches, island elders and key line ministries to oversee how these prevention programs are implemented and effective in eliminating all sorts of discrimination to vulnerable people. The GEWD was launched in March, 2018.

10. Since the ratification of the CRPD in 2013, Kiribati has continued to implement, monitor and evaluate disability related policies and framework more consistently. In 2015, the Ministry of Education (MOE) launched an Inclusive Education Policy, and disability is identified as a priority issue in the Kiribati Development Plan for 2016–2019. The Education Act stipulates that children should not be refused enrolment at a school on the basis of his or her sex, religion, race or disability. MWYSSA through the Disability Inclusive Unit (DIU) launched a Kiribati National Disability Policy and Action Plan (KNDP) 2018–2021 on the 24th September 2018.

Access to Justice

Existing legal aid scheme

11. The Office of the People’s Lawyer (OPL) which is now known as the Office of the Public Legal Service under the new Public Legal Service Act 2018, provides the only existing legal aid scheme to the public. This office’s main role is to provide free legal assistance to financially disadvantaged people who are unable to pay and engage private lawyer’s services. These include old people aged 65 years and above, persons with disabilities, family of 4 siblings, unemployed people, children and young people, criminal client cases (accused or perpetrators), female victims of domestic violence (DV) cases under the FPA.

Measures taken to provide legal assistance to women to facilitate their access to justice

12. The OPL engages with the public in their outreach program or community legal education during which they visit outer island communities and conduct public awareness on how to access justice. They also represent people in the rural communities in court and assist them in other legal matters such as negotiation, contracts, mediation and etc. Victims of domestic and sexual violence cases are prioritized by OPL and they are represented in court seeking protection orders for their safety and for their voice to be heard in court.

13. ASWOs as well as Welfare Officers have been trained to work with victims (including women and children) of DV. Social Welfare Division (SWD) has been working in collaboration with Kiribati Women and Children Support Centre (KWCS) to ensure that women and girls have access to justice. SafeNet referral pathways and child protection referral pathways have been developed, with the hope that endorsement will be made in the near future. ASWOs also provide assistance by dealing with DV cases in outer islands, however, they always refer to and seek professional assistance from SWD. One clear pathway is that they report all DV cases to the KWCS where most of the cases are taken to court.

Judiciary training on law enforcement for women's rights

14. Officers of the Judiciary are well trained in human rights and the application of women's rights in court cases such as distribution of matrimonial properties, etc. The Judiciary promotes rights of women to the public by conducting awareness programs on South Tarawa as well as in the outer islands including the Line and Phoenix Groups. The Judiciary has expanded all its resources to develop courts in the outer islands and built mobile courts in the Line and Phoenix Groups for women, children and the wider public to access justice both in the Magistrate and the High Court.

National Machinery for the advancement of women

15. Women Development Division (WDD) is the coordination body for gender mainstreaming and women development, and is currently working on the GEWD funded areas in consultation with NGOs and key line ministries to finalize the implementation plan and the printing cost at the moment. Once the GEWD implementation plan is finalized, the activities in the policy will be rolled out, nevertheless a number of the GEWD implementation plans has been initiated such as empowerment trainings, ESGBV outreach and training to South Tarawa and outer islands.

National Human Rights Institution**National institution for the promotion and protection of human rights**

16. Since the establishment of the KNHRT and the Human Rights Division (HRD) under MOJ, overdue state reports for CRC, CEDAW and CRPD have been submitted, including the Common Core Document and the 3rd UPR report.

17. A National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) Scoping Mission was requested by MOJ and carried out with the technical and financial support of RRRT in partnership with OHCHR and APF. The first part of the mission took place 2nd–10th September 2019 on South Tarawa where stakeholders from central government and the Gilbert Groups were consulted. The second part took place 23rd–30th October in Christmas Island and was attended by around stakeholders from the Line and

Phoenix Groups. Stakeholders included Mayors and ASWOs, women representatives from the rural islands, key government ministries and the Kiribati Chamber of Commerce and Industries, women and youth organizations, faith-based organizations and elders, etc. A report of the outcome of the scoping mission will be issued to MOJ for further actions.

Temporary Special Measures

18. Although there are no temporary special measures currently in place, the GEWD will help accelerate the implementation of activities aimed at achieving gender equality at the national level through policy making. One of its priority areas which is “gender mainstreaming” will cater for gender issues and will work with relevant government ministries and grassroot communities to identify gaps and solutions in addressing these gaps ensuring everyone is included especially women, children, and people with disabilities. The policy implementation plan is still in progress where consultations are being held between MWYSSA and its key stakeholders including NGOs to identify what both parties need to prioritize while ensuring inclusivity in the plan, decision making and in other areas where gender balance is not seen or avoided.

Discriminatory gender stereotypes and harmful practices

19. The MWYSSA through SWD has developed and initiated a program called YES, I DO (which stands for Young couples, Empowerment, Strategies, Inspired for Development Opportunities). Parts of the program is to train young couples on how to understand gender roles and responsibilities, how to share loads at home and so forth. Other components include gender equality and human rights. According to SWD records, since late 2018 up to November 2019, there have been 393 participants in total with 64% men and 36% women.

20. The GEWD Policy has identified its 5 priority areas which are:

(i) Gender mainstreaming where ministries are targeted to identify gender gaps and addressing those gender gaps in their policy, budget, activities and other avenues to eliminate stereotypes, disrespect and discrimination in the workforce;

(ii) Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) where women that are financially disadvantaged are empowered through trainings on how to build self-reliance and confidence in contributing to their family and community development. The WDD has trained women on Butaritari, Maiana, Tabiteuea North, Abaiang, Christmas, Tabuaeran, Marakei, Teraina, North Tarawa on life skills such as Financial Literacy, Gardening, Handicraft, Sewing and fixing sewing machines. WEE is further supported in the National Expo which was done in 2018 and another scheduled in February 2020;

(iii) Well Informed Families which focus on family members to understand the importance of cooperation and working together in unity to help each other instead of keeping to the “norms” and stereotypical gender roles where women and children suffer the most;

(iv) Leadership participation encourages women to participate in leadership roles both at the national and community level. The Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu (House of Parliament) has successfully hosted a Mock Parliament Session for women in October 2019, whereby women from all over the islands applied and the selected number came to the House of Parliament to train as, and experience being a Member of Parliament. The Mock session included trainings on Parliament procedures, how

to speak in Parliament, how to pass a Bill, and to respect each other during a Parliament session.

(v) *Eliminating Gender Based Violence* is a long-term project focused on the elimination of gender-based violence in Kiribati. Existing program within the ESGBV Project includes:

- (a) The Essential Service Providers (ESP) for providing services to victims;
- (b) Strengthening Peaceful Villages (SPV) for working with Village Activists (VAs) to promote peace in the community;
- (c) Respectful Relationship (RR) is being integrated in Year 8 & 9 Curriculum, focusing on moral education and teaching students to respect each other by using less of masculine or feminine and other stereotypical activities, as a tool to eliminate stereotypes and harassment in school environment.
- (d) The Kiribati Male Behavioral Change (KMBC) program involves working first-hand with abusive men to change their abusive behavior to a non-abusive behavior. This program has been carried out on Abaiang and Marakei, and men from the Kiribati Uniting Church in Temaiku, a village in South Tarawa;
- (e) SafeNet Program is a working committee comprising a number of organizations and government departments that may be involved in the provision of frontline services to the survivors of gender based violence and family violence, with the objectives of creating a partnership between its members ensuring consistency and best practice when working on gender based violence and family violence cases; and streamlining the referral system and to provide appropriate and timely support to survivors and their families. There are a number of active SafeNet Committees in the outer islands (Marakei, Abaiang, Maiana, Nonouti, Tabiteuea South, Beru have been visited in 2019);
- (f) Case Management is a committee that sits to discuss the status of domestic and sexual abuse cases.

Training on negative impact of discriminatory stereotypes on women's rights

21. The WDD continually participates in the Regional Training Program which is hosted annually by Fiji Women Crisis Center. The training focuses on gender and sex; gender roles; gender stereotyping; generalization and institutionalization; Basic Counseling; LGBTQI rights and issues; Disability and Albinism. A total of four staff have attended this training with an additional two to attend the same training in 2020. The training provides significant outcomes that enable WDD staff to work toward their goals in promoting women's development and gender equality in Kiribati.

22. WDD staff also participated in Gender in Theology Workshop conducted by the Kiribati Uniting Church with an objective to identify and clarify that men and women are equal; stress out the importance of respect in the family and sharing of roles between couples and; understanding women and men roles from biblical perspective.

23. The WDD staff often facilitate workshops on topics such as Gender & Sex, Gender Roles, Types of Abuse and the FPA provisions to various members of civil society and government stakeholders.

24. WDD supports and empowers women through micro-enterprises to enable them to be financially independent or contributes financially to the family as a means of gradually ending economic violence against women. Micro-enterprises give women an opportunity to utilize their traditional skills and knowledge by making and marketing local products to generate income to financially support their family. A Feasibility Study on WEE was conducted by WDD in 2018 aimed to identify what is

working mostly for women in regards to their micro-enterprises and what were the gaps and how government could assist to address these gaps. The WEE feasibility study showed that selling fish and agricultural products earnings were higher than selling local cigarette (finely cut tobacco rolled in dried pandanus leaves) and bakery. This study was conducted on Butaritari, Christmas Island and South Tarawa.

Gender-based violence against women

Challenges and successes

25. The lack of funding, and the delay thereof, by administrative processes impede the smooth implementation of the FPA by the DVSO Unit. Meeting deadlines for activities is also another challenge faced by the Unit due to the fact that Kiribati has scattered islands and transportation from the capital to the islands is very unreliable. Another cause is the unavailability of resource people to the schedule of island visits.

26. On the other hand, the Unit has noted that frontline police officers are more confident in issuing Police Safety Orders (PSO). This is the positive outcome of training police officers to better understand their role in issuing protection orders on the spot. Depending on the seriousness of the case, prosecutors lay charges using the FPA more often than the Penal code. The increase in number of reported cases indicated that people have better understanding of their rights protected under the law.

Definition of rape

27. The provision of rape and associated sexual assault offences under the Penal Code have been amended and replaced with new provisions under *the Penal Code (Amendment) Act 2017*. These amendments include incest offences, with rape and attempted rape offences being replaced by unlawful sexual intercourse, and a wider definition of sexual intercourse that is gender-neutral and broadens the traditional concept of penile penetration to include other body parts and objects. These amendments were also made to complement the broad definition of sexual assault under the FPA that forms part of the domestic violence offence.

Statistical Data

28. Although sexual offence cases occur on a considerably large scale, data on the number of cases filed and prosecuted, and the number of protection orders issued are not readily available. With the current reform in the Judiciary, there has been an ongoing discussion on the development of database to be put in place to cater for the need of disaggregated data.

29. According to WDD's ESGBV data, there is a total of 1110 reported cases in 2017, 18% of which were male victims and 82% were female victims. From that figure 53 cases were reported to the Crisis Centre – a safehouse operated by sisters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OLSH) on South Tarawa; 278 were reported to Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS); 750 reported to the Police, and 29 cases were reported to SWD. The record further showed that only 3 of the cases were economic abuse, 608 physical abuse cases, 380 instances of psychological abuse and 39 sexual abuses, with 80 cases of unknown nature. It is also noted that in 2017, 11% of the cases involved victims between 0–18 years, 35% were between 19–30 years, 40% between the ages of 31–50, 12% for ages 51–70 and 2% of victims were aged 70 and above.

30. Furthermore, the KPS Community Policing Unit's sexual offences records for 2019 showed that there were 7 female victims of rape, 8 female victims of indecent assault, 1 female victim of attempted rape and another female victim of abduction, all

under the age of 18 years. A further 705 DV cases were reported to DVSO Unit from January 2019 to December 2019.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

31. The court rarely encountered cases of trafficking and exploitation of prostitution, although there were known instances in the past, there is no existing concrete data to support the actual prevalence of trafficking and exploitation of prostitution in the country.

32. There were cases of women found boarding fishing vessels and arrested by the police. However, these were always struck out in court. The police cannot lay charges against women boarding shipping vessels as clearance by the inspection boarding party gives green light to anyone to board. To address this problem, the restriction of boarding a fishing vessel is included in the license permit issued by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development (MFMRD) to the Master or Operator of fishing vessels. The license conditioned that the Master or Operator of the ship must ensure, by recruiting a local security guard, that no one shall board the ship while in port at all times with the exception of an authorized officer defined in the *Fisheries Act 2010*.

33. The *Maritime Act 2017* stipulates that registration of foreign vessels requires the owner of the vessel to lodge a declaration in writing that the vessel will not be used for smuggling people, trafficking in people or unlawful carriage of refugees, among other conditions.

34. The EIRC 2015 establishes minimum protections for children and establishes the circumstances and ages at which children may work and confers certain rights on children and provides protection in view of their vulnerability to exploitation. It prohibits the worst forms of child labor and engagement of children in all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery; sale or trafficking of children; use and offering of a child for prostitution; as well as use or offering of a child for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.

Participation in political and public life

Steps taken or envisaged to increase women participation in political or public life

35. The Mock Parliament session for women is now the major factor to boost women interest to participate and compete in the decision-making position either at local council or at the national level. Kiribati Island Local Government Association (KILGA) provides supports through MIA to women who are running for local government leadership position and facilitates leadership training to build women leadership skills to increase their participation at government, island and community level.

Women's participation in local decision-making bodies

36. In relation to the Kiribati traditional *mwaneaba* setting, nowadays there is an obvious change in the mindset of the people and women are able to speak because of the following reasons: they are government officials visiting outer islands for official purposes and with our local context, the *mwaneaba* is the only place for meeting and gathering; they are representing their husbands in instances where either the husband is deceased, travelling or his children are too young to represent him (this is especially common if the husband has a crucial role in the maneaba like an appointed speaker or leader to lead proceedings in the *mwaneaba*). Additionally, the ever-growing influence of Christianity in the islands has allowed women to take up leading roles in

their church groups and church organizations, overseeing the need of the women in the same faith. Furthermore, with the high numbers of educated women and girls, more and more women have taken up leadership positions in various sectors, building confidence for the next generations and gradually influencing society and having their voices heard without interferences.

37. Ongoing government public awareness on gender equality and women's rights, as well as prevention programs for gender-based violence is notably another factor to have impact on people's mindset to support the notion that their daughters and sons, men and women should be treated equally.

Nationality

38. The MOJ has conducted a workshop in partnership with UNICEF and UNHCR to unpack Every Child's Right to Nationality, Statelessness and Gender Equality in Conferral of Nationality in November 2019 with the participation of the MOJ's Citizenship Unit, Civil Registration Office, HRD, the Judiciary, and ASWOs. This consultation workshop is the first of its kind to address the gap in Kiribati's Citizenship Act 1979 particularly on the right of I-Kiribati mothers who are married to foreigners to transfer their nationality to their children. This is an avenue to review and reform, where necessary, any relevant law that will achieve gender equality and to reduce the risk of children being stateless because of the gap in the law.

Education

Reducing the incidence of early pregnancy

- The Curriculum Development and Resources Centre (CDRC) has integrated topics in Junior Secondary Schools to help reduce incidences of early pregnancy; Health & PE teaches Sexual Health Risks Factors in Year 8 and Physical Growth & Development, Sexual Reproductive Health & Building safe and healthy relationships in Year 8; Moral Education covers Youth Personality, Relationships & Development in Year 7 and Personality & Relationships and Making Good Choices in Year 9.

Review of school curricula and textbooks, to remove discriminatory gender stereotypes

39. There are no elements of gender discrimination in the Kiribati school system. The new curriculum and the ongoing curriculum review have removed language that are stereotypical in nature. The developed resources for Year 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 are free of gender stereotypes as Curriculum Development Officers (CDOs) were well trained in the development of gender-neutral and inclusive resources and have applied this concept throughout the curricula.

40. UNICEF is supporting a Parental Involvement program which encourages parents and community members to eliminate gender stereotyping in homes to promote better intellectual development of the child.

Girls pursuing non-traditional courses of study, in particular those in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics

41. All students are encouraged to attain higher qualification through formal education as indicated in the Education Act. The readers and classroom activities for Year 5, 6, 7, and 8 inspire girls to take up non-traditional courses of study such as

becoming a pilot, captain, engineers, and many more by portraying girls engaging in typical male jobs such as carpentry, etc.

42. Science, Mathematics and Kiribati Community Studies (a combination of Technology, Arts and Enterprise) subjects are compulsory to all students.

43. It is evident in the current Kiribati workforce the increasing number of female doctors, marine scientists, engineers, mathematicians (teaching in schools), etc.

Integrating age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights for all levels of education

44. Sexual and reproductive health are taught in schools and they are covered in the Language readers for Year 5, 6, 7, and 8, as well as in the Healthy Living/Health & P.E subjects in the following order: Years 1 to 8 covers the WASH program; Year 6 teaches Puberty, Hygiene & Sanitation; Year 7 teaches Personal Health & Safety; Year 8 teaches Sexual Health Risk Factors and; Year 9 teaches Physical Growth & Development & Sexual Reproductive Health.

Adequate sanitation facilities and sanitary products for girls in schools

45. UNICEF is assisting in implementing the WASH Program which promotes schools to have WASH facilities (toilets, water for hand washing and brushing of teeth) in school compounds. Rehabilitated schools by DFAT are also abiding by WASH standards. The National Infrastructure Standard states that all schools must have essential WASH facilities. Currently, there are no sanitary products provided in schools as each female student is expected to provide their own.

Dropout rate among girls owing to pregnancy

46. Formal data collection is limited to enrolment of students in the education system and do not include information about students' reasons for dropping out of school. No data is available to reflect the number of adolescent mothers returning to school after giving birth. MOE is considering absorbing these variables to improve their current information system.

Indirect costs of education that may impede access for women and girls to education, in particular those living in rural areas and the outer islands, to education

47. Although this practice is declining, the traditional expectations of having young girls stay at home and assist in house chores and other family commitments still hinder the education of several young girls. However, there is no official data or evidence on why girls' education may be impeded causing them to drop out, but this is being considered as a way forward for MOE's future data collections.

Literacy and primary school completion rates among women and girls with disabilities

48. MOE's completion rate of students does not disaggregate girls by disability; all students including girls with disabilities form part of the girls' cohort.

Measures taken to guarantee accessible and inclusive education for women and girls with disabilities.

49. The Education Act under section 19 (1) states that any child with a disability and within the compulsory school age must be given the opportunity to participate in mainstream schools with other students. MOE is also partnering with DFAT to allow capable students from the Kiribati School and Centre for Children with Special Needs

(KSCCSN) to be mainstreamed into regular schools with the help of a Student Assistant who helps in the interpretation and guidance of the student in school. MOE had also trained and deployed 12 Teacher Assistants (TAs) who assist teachers in schools that have students with disabilities. Currently, there are 19 students with disabilities that have been mainstreamed.

50. The National Infrastructure Standard for schools ensures that schools must be accessible to cater for children with disabilities.

51. The KNDP 2018–2021 guarantees accessible and inclusive education for women and girls with disabilities under its Policy Area 6: Improve access to quality education and vocational training programs. The Policy commits all stakeholders in the education system to include people with disabilities in all learning resources and opportunities and to remove barriers to education and training programs continually faced by people with disabilities. MOE through the Kiribati Education Fund (KEF) and their partners are implementing the Inclusive Education Policy with an Inclusive Education Working Group monitoring its progress.

52. Furthermore, the Policy commits to strengthen the capacity of the KSCCSN which is the primary provider of education services for children and young people with disabilities in the country.

Employment

53. The current inspection tools of the Ministry of Employment and Human Resource (MEHR) consist of provisions of the EIRC relating to employment conditions. These include ensuring organizations and companies abide to minimum wage, age, hours of work, leave, contract, rest hours, etc and also observing non-discrimination practices at workplace, in terms of gender, health, ethnicity, religion etc. Companies and organizations that are found in non-compliance are given due procedural warnings before their case are brought to the police or the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) for prosecution. There have been cases reported to the police, however, the gaps identified by prosecutors has obligated the government to revise its checklist to ensure it is consistent with prosecutors' methodology. In the initial assenting of the EIRC in 2015, the government did not put in force provisions for Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), due to lack of training and experience by labor officers. However, unions and organizations are not deterred if they wish to proceed with CBA, and the government may assist with advice from OAG and ILO.

54. MEHR is still developing and updating its inspection tools with the technical assistance of ILO, and will require more capacity building for its officers to ensure effective implementation of the EIRC. With the recent signing of the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2019–2022 in Papua New Guinea, the government has indicated in its plans the need for training for labor officers and assistance by ILO technical advisors in strengthening its monitoring and implementation of the labor law in the country. These also include technical assistance by ILO for development and updating of inspection tools, regulations etc, to better equip labor inspection officers, as well as capacity building for inspection, industrial relations matter and CBA.

55. The Gender Access and Equality Policy is a policy developed and enforced by Kiribati Institute of Technology (KIT), applicable to the institution only. Likewise, the Marine Training Center (MTC) another vocational school has a policy on its own. The government currently has no specific policy or regulation in place to address gender equality in public or private sector.

Health

Antenatal

56. The Ante-Natal Clinic is the initial step to identify maternal cases with anemic problem. In most cases detected anemic maternal cases are referred immediately to the Obstetricians for further management.

Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases

57. The MHMS has a team in place that deal specifically with all NCD cases. Currently, there is an ongoing mass screening of the population targeting workplaces and communities where everyone is screened for hypertension and diabetes. Results showed that there is quite a high number of diabetes and hypertension and the team took the opportunity to encourage people to start treatment after proper counselling. For known cases, the team ensures that they continue to take their medications and undergo a regular check-up at their nearby clinics.

58. In strengthening services for NCDs' detectors and non-detectors, MHMS is currently undertaking programs namely PEN, HOPE and ECD to reduce NCDs. PEN (Package of essential Non-Communicable disease interventions) is a program implemented and strengthened to enable early detection and management of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and cancer to prevent life threatening complications, for example, heart attacks, stroke, kidney failure, amputations and blindness. HOPE (Health Outreach Program for Equity) is a program also implemented and focused on empowering the community to tackle or prevent NCDs. Part of the programs is to encourage the physical activities at workplaces and communities. ECD (Early Childhood Disability) is another program that prevent obesity in childhood. There is a number of ongoing activities with the MOE under this program.

Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescence Health Program

59. Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescence Health (RMNACH) program is implemented to address and improve the health status of maternal, neonatal, children and adolescences. It has conducted activities to address the issues around unmet needs for family planning among women and girls at the child-bearing age group. However, this is not quite successful in some aspect as the Catholic Church often condemns these modern methods because they are against their Christian values. Despite the challenges for implementing the RMNACH strategies, still the program is on-going by visiting outer islands communities to deliver services on maternal and child health.

60. MHMS has conducted reproductive health (RH) programs such as training on RH to Medical Assistants and PHN program on Family Planning methods. It is widely known that Family Planning is a very sensitive word with negative connotations in the Catholic Church, and to address this the term was changed to *Marurungin te Utu* which literary translates to "healthy family" to enable medical officials to work closely with communities in the Catholic Church and promote their healthy family program.

61. There are ongoing Child Health activities being rolled out which include measles and rubella (MR) Campaign, High Impact of Nutrition Intervention; supporting supervision through DPNO to targeted islands (Central islands, Tamana, Nikunau, Beru); IMCI Training to PHN and Medical Assistants; Infection control, No pain, Family center support, Air, Nutrition, Temperature and Support Health Literacy (INFANT); and 1000 days Nutrition.

WASH Program

62. A WASH program effectively contributed to the RMNCAH strategies in terms of introduction of safe drinking water and proper sanitation for all populations. This

program has been conducted in outer islands namely Mwakin, Abaiang, Tamana and Arorae, including South Tarawa.

63. The WASH program is currently implementing the following activities: baseline data collection; Workshop/Training to health staff; installation of manual pressure pump; production of the manual; enforcement of WASH in Health Care Policy; three staff assessment to clinics within a WASH criteria; training for installation of pump; rehabilitation of WASH facilities; Sanitation and Health Care waste and; Promotion of Hygiene.

Disabilities inclusiveness to health program

64. Persons with disabilities are included in all of the above programs such as NCD, HOPE, PEN, RMNCAH, WASH and ECD as all other services provided by MHMS.

Access of women and girls to safe water and proper sanitation.

65. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE) has in place several projects to improve water and sanitation. There is the Outer Island Solar Water Reticulated System that improves the access of water outlets for women specially to avoid fetching water from distant sources. This was done by having a shared source of water for 3 to 4 household with nearby taps. There are also in place compost toilets which does not require water for flushing and this is most helpful to women and the elderly as they no longer need to carry heavy water buckets from water sources for flushing as dead leaves/saw dust/firewood ashes are only required for this.

66. Practically all water sources require treatment prior consumption to ensure that they do not present a health risk to the user. Hence, MISE had taken measures of treatment of water prior distribution to consumers.

Economic and social benefits

67. MWYSSA has recently worked with APTC to ensure that women's full participation and involvement with Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) programs. This partnership is aimed to identify barriers that lessen women participation in the APTC programs. APTC and KIT currently offered courses on Hospitality and Health Care.

68. APTC has incorporated Financial Literacy and Agriculture in the training package. Programs like Fashion & Beauty and Day Care Center are being considered for future courses, to create more opportunity and greater benefit for women drop-outs or women aged 40 years and above to equip them with skills and knowledge that would enable them to start their own micro-enterprises after completing the said courses.

Loan Scheme to women

69. MWYSSA is progressing on establishing a Loan Scheme for women with the Development Bank of Kiribati. A committee will be formed this year as the loan scheme is scheduled to start next year 2020.

70. To encourage and support women's entrepreneurship, the WDD distributed fabric materials to communities in the outer islands to assist women to kick-start their sewing businesses who have already undertaken sewing training. These fabrics are acquired by meeting certain criteria.

Women and girls living in the outer islands and other disadvantaged groups of women

71. MISE toilet/washroom projects have to comply with building codes when they are built at public places, community areas and others. For instance, the location of women's toilet is often kept nearest to the main public access or nearest exit for security purposes and easy escapes. This project is also offering support and assistance in ensuring better access to restrooms by building units in accessible locations and installing ramps and handrails to ensure women with disabilities and elderly women are able to use the washrooms without any difficulties.

72. MISE's rainwater harvesting systems is another project provided to assist disadvantaged people who are unable to access water source outlets. Desalination Units are now located near households and communal areas for ease of access within 'safe' compounds.

73. Under the Policies, Guidelines and System of Payments for Elderly Fund all women over the age of 65, including elderly women in rural areas are benefiting from the Elderly Fund provided by SWD.

Climate change and disaster risk reduction

Gender perspective incorporated into the KJIP

74. The development of the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (KJIP) 2014–2023 and its mid-term review was driven by the Kiribati National Expert Group (KNEG) that comprises of more than 50% women. The revised KJIP incorporated gender perspective by:

(a) bringing gender champions together to identify shared understanding of and objectives around the various implications of climate change for the women of Kiribati and the need for gender inclusion in climate change adaptation plans and actions;

(b) exploring and unpacking gender and climate change issues within the framework of the GEWD Policy and findings of the NAP GN gender inclusion scoping study;

(c) increasing awareness of the KJIP among key women's organizations;

(d) identifying options for women's involvement in the KJIP review process, this will include promoting leadership and new roles amongst gender champions in KNEG;

(e) drawing on the findings of the National Adaptation Plan – Global Network's gender inclusion scoping study, identify key issues for inclusion in the KJIP and where these should be integrated.

Marriage and family relations

75. The Native Lands Ordinance stipulates how lands are to be distributed to descendants of the deceased: a father's estates and the mother's estates to her children or to their siblings. The Native Lands Ordinance is considerably old with a few provisions deemed unfair to certain members of the family; however, it reflects and recognizes certain customary practices that are still strongly in place and enforced by the Courts. The Native Lands Ordinance provides that women must have shares from both their father and mother.

76. In marriage, both husband and wife are registered together if they purchase a property or land on joint ownership, however, the husband's lands and wife's lands inherited from their respective families, that will remain as it is and could only pass on to their own children or the family if they are both issueless. When the marriage is breaking down or dissolved, the matrimonial properties should be shared equally and this is recognized under Kiribati laws. In addition to that, the children also would be affected by the dissolution of marriage by parents, the maintenance would then come forward as one of the most important things to be considered by the Court. Maintenance Ordinance comes into play and it has to be considered fairly to both parents in terms of payments, and the maintenance order is to be issued on that and both served to parents to comply with. The Maintenance Order could be varied from time to time and could also be terminated only before the court if both parties or parents wish to and also when the children attained the age of majority.

Data Collection and Analysis

77. The 2015 Kiribati Population and Housing Census was the first time that disability related questions were incorporated in the country's regular national survey. Data collection for the 2015 Kiribati Census used the Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability, which is an internationally recognized best practice for disability measurement in censuses and population surveys.

Optional Protocol to the Convention and amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention

78. The MOJ through the KNHRT and HRD has proposed a move towards further ratification of other UN Human Rights Treaties. The most recent progress is Kiribati's accession to UNCAT in July 2019, with the steady and positive outlook in ratifying the remaining ones and Optional Protocols.
