

## I-Kiribati

The Republic of Kiribati is made up of the Gilbert Islands, Banaba, Phoenix and the Line Islands. The nation became independent from the United Kingdom in 1979.

The estimated population of the Republic of Kiribati in 2009 was 112,850. The nation has 33 islands of which 21 are inhabited, spread across approximately 3.5 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean. The capital, Tarawa, is about half way between Hawaii and Australia. The terrain is mostly low-lying coral atolls surrounded by extensive reefs, with a total coastal area of 1,143 km<sup>1</sup>.

Global warming and rising sea levels fuelled significant outward migration of people to from their indigenous homeland to nations such as New Zealand, particularly in the early 21st century. The I-Kiribati population in New Zealand is thus a more recent settler group compared with Cook Island Māori, Tokelauan, Niuean, Samoan and Tongan who have more established communities and higher population numbers in Aotearoa. The main immigration pathways for I-Kiribati to New Zealand are the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme (established in 2007) which allows temporary labour migration for I-Kiribati workers, the Pacific Access Category (established between 2001 and 2002) which enables permanent migration for 75 Kiribati citizens per year, and the Skilled Migrant Scheme.<sup>2</sup>

### I-Kiribati in Aotearoa

I-Kiribati	2001	2006	2013
	645	116	2,115

In 2013, 45% of I-Kiribati lived in Auckland. There is a significant community in Warkworth north of Auckland where Kiribati is the second most spoken language<sup>3</sup>.

The median age of I-Kiribati in New Zealand in 2013 was 20.6 years. Around a third (32.8%) were born in New Zealand, and 67.2% were born overseas. The majority (77.7%) of people aged 15 years and over had a formal qualification. The median income for those aged 15 years and over was \$14,700<sup>4</sup>.

The new I-Kiribati settlers to Aotearoa are experiencing similar challenges faced by new waves of migrants into a new country. These include learning a new language (English), adjusting to new contexts, finding employment, not having adequate resources for food, housing, and other basic needs. I-Kiribati are very concerned about the potential degradation

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<sup>1</sup> Republic of Kiribati. (n.d). Rerieved 18/10/2018 from <http://www.president.gov.ki/about-kiribati/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pasefikaproud.co.nz/assets/Resources-for-download/PasefikaProudResource-Nga-Vaka-o-Kāiga-Tapu-Pacific-Framework-Kiribati.pdf>; p.7

<sup>3</sup> [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/quickstats-about-a-place.aspx?request\\_value=13174&parent\\_id=13171&tabname=&sc\\_device=pdf](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/quickstats-about-a-place.aspx?request_value=13174&parent_id=13171&tabname=&sc_device=pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Statistics New Zealand. Retrieved 18/10/2018 from [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/ethnic-profiles.aspx?request\\_value=24717&parent\\_id=24706&tabname=#24717](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/ethnic-profiles.aspx?request_value=24717&parent_id=24706&tabname=#24717)

of their culture and they strive to maintain their language, spirituality and recreational activities<sup>5</sup>.

The number of I-Kiribati children that have come to the notice of child protection or youth justice over the year to date, is not identifiable due to the limitations of the recording system of Oranga Tamariki. At the time of writing, efforts are being made to add I-Kiribati to the records management system to enable a view of this in future.

When considering a cultural approach to working with I-Kiribati families, Oranga Tamariki has sourced from *Boutokaan Te Mweeraoi*<sup>6</sup> (I-Kiribati cultural framework to address family violence) for guidance. While *Boutokaan Te Mweeraoi* is predominantly about working with adults, it signals important cultural considerations that are also relevant to work in child protection and youth offending. The cultural approach will be further developed and be more child centred as Oranga Tamariki develops knowledge and understanding about what works best when engaging with I-Kiribati children and families.

### **Traditional Kiribati Society and Structure**

*Kainga* - extended family

*Kaawa* – village

*Abwamakoro* - island

*Maneaba* - the whole of society

Males are culturally privileged over females, and hold significant power in decision making. The *unimwane* (male elders) make decisions and resolve conflicts<sup>7</sup>.

### **Wellbeing**

The fundamental aspects of *te maiu raoi* or wellbeing for I-Kiribati are:

- *Marin abara* - a healthy environment and ecology.
- *Te toronibwai* - skills of self-reliance related to subsistence and spiritual communion with nature.
- *Te katei* - customary practices distinct to I-Kiribati.
- *Te karinerine* - the demonstration of respect within *te utuu* (the family), *te kaainga* (the extended family hamlet), *te mwaneaba* (the customary hall of community governance), and *te aba* (the land and people).

### **Engagement, Assessment, Decision Making**

#### *Engagement*

- *Kaokorora ngaira aine ma mwaane* - understanding of the culturally constructed differences between men and women in Kiribati society.
- *Te tia mwakuri ae e rabakau n taetae ni Kiribati ao ni maiuakina naba te katei ni*

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<sup>5</sup> [http://presbyterian.org.nz/sites/default/files/gmo/kiribati/Kiribati\\_migration\\_to\\_New\\_Zealand.pdf](http://presbyterian.org.nz/sites/default/files/gmo/kiribati/Kiribati_migration_to_New_Zealand.pdf); p.30

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Social Development. (2015). <http://www.pasefikaproud.co.nz/assets/Resources-for-download/PasefikaProudResource-Nga-Vaka-o-Kāiga-Tapu-Pacific-Framework-Kiribati.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid; p.9

*Kiribati. Ngkana akea ao e kakaawaki bwa e na iai te tia raitaeka ae e konabwai ni itera Aikai - a practitioner who is a fluent speaker of Kiribati and well grounded in one or more versions of Kiribati culture, or ensure the provision of appropriately skilled people.*

#### Assessment

- *Te atatai i aon ara katei aika a kaineti ma aron te marooroo ke te inoonoo ma te aomata ae e kakaea buokana - having the cultural knowledge to engage respectfully with members of Kiribati communities, taking into consideration the importance of spoken and unspoken communication, and body language.*
- *Ataakin rongorongon te aomata ae e buokaki ao kakaawakin te reitaki ma ngaia bwa e na atai ma n ota ni bwaai aika a karaoaki - recognising the importance of knowing the person's background, communicates clearly with them to explain things, keeps them informed.*

#### Decision Making

- *Kakaawakin te mwakuri ni ibuobuoki bwa e na aki kauntaba ma nanon te aomata ae Buokaki - recognising the importance of consulting with the service recipient, and not assuming to know best.*
- *Ataakin tokin ana konabwai te tia mwakuri ao kakaean te buoka ae e kakoauaaki bwa te kabanea n tamaaroa - the ability to recognise one's own limitations and seek appropriate support when necessary.*

#### Practitioner traits

- Seeks to understand, listens.
- Trustworthy, respectful, maintains confidentiality.
- Has love and compassion.
- Stays impartial, recognises and manages conflicts of interest.

### Useful Words and Phrases - Kiribati

Common Greetings and Phrases <sup>8</sup>	
Mauri	Greetings
Ko na mauri (sg); Kam na mauri (pl) Kam na bane ni Mauri (crowds)	Hello
Ko uara?	How are you?
Arau ... (or) Arau ngai	My name is...
Taiaoka	Please, excuse me
Ko rab'a (or) Ko rab'a, Ko bati n rab'a	You are kind or Thank you
Tekeraoi am bong!	Have a nice day
Ti a boo (or) Ti a kaboo	Goodbye
Kabara au bure	I am sorry
Family Terms	
aine	daughter
næ/ti	son
bebi	baby
atáei	child, children
kánoanáine	a sister's child

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.trussel.com/kir/dic/find\\_s.htm](https://www.trussel.com/kir/dic/find_s.htm); <https://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/kiribati.htm>

kánoanim'aáne	a brother's child
tína	mother
Baba, táma	father
unimane	elders
útu	family, household, relatives, society, congregation