



**SPC**  
Secretariat  
of the Pacific  
Community

## Improving implementation of environmental health surveillance and response to climate sensitive health risks in Kiribati



*Opening of the refurbished Ministry of Health and Medical Services laboratory – climate change adaptation in Kiribati.*

### Project amount

€ 0.5 million (approx. AUD 0.7 million) funded by the European Union

### Project period

12 June 2013 to 30 June 2015

### Implementing agencies

Office of Te Beretitenti (President)  
Ministry of Health and Medical Services  
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)

### Partners

World Health Organization  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (New Zealand)

### Project synopsis

The 'Improving implementation of environmental health surveillance and response to climate sensitive health risks in Kiribati' project is implementing activities to improve the capacity

of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, in particular the Environmental Health Unit. It will provide equipment and training to enable Ministry of Health and Medical Services staff to monitor and respond to climate sensitive health risks in a more effective manner.

### How does this project assist climate change adaptation in Kiribati?

The objective of the project activities is to increase the population's resilience to the potential adverse effects of climate change through prevention and control of health risks that are affected by climate variability and change. These are given below.

- Water-borne diseases, including diarrhoea and giardia. Diarrheal disease is an important determinant in the high rate of childhood mortality in Kiribati.
- Food-borne illnesses resulting from the presence of bacteria and toxins in food. This includes ciguatera, or fish poisoning.
- Vector-borne diseases, particularly dengue fever and other mosquito-borne diseases.

### Key highlights of the project

- Supply Ministry of Health and Medical Services with equipment to enhance routine systems for surveillance of environmental hazards and climate sensitive health risks, including the refurbishment of two public health laboratories.
- Recruit three additional staff members for the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and build existing staff capacity through professional training and attachments.
- Support preparedness through the development of a revised health policy and a health database, using geographic information systems technology.
- Research, design and launch a climate change and health communications campaign focusing on solar disinfection (SODIS) to reduce incidences of child mortality due to poor water quality and sanitary conditions. Designed in collaboration with the local communities.

The project's focus was determined by the Government of Kiribati after widespread consultation. Kiribati is responsible for the project's implementation.



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## The Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States project in Kiribati



*Solar water disinfection (SODIS) campaign launch in Bairiki, Kiribati as part of the GCCA: PSIS project.*

The Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) project is a four-year, € 11.4 million initiative funded by the European Union. It is implemented regionally by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and involves national climate change adaptation projects in nine Pacific Island countries – Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tonga and Tuvalu.

The overall objective of the GCCA: PSIS project is to support the governments of the nine Pacific small island states in their efforts to tackle the adverse effects of climate change.

The Government of Kiribati is implementing a national climate change adaptation project (see reverse side for more information) with € 0.5 million provided by the European Union.

In addition to this project funding, Kiribati can access specialised technical assistance and

training provided through a pooled resource allocation in the regional GCCA: PSIS umbrella project. This mechanism is providing the following in Kiribati.

### Training

In-country training in:

- proposal preparation, project design and budgeting, monitoring and evaluation; and
- media training, conveying information on climate change to the public using radio, television and print media.

### National climate change mainstreaming

Mainstreaming refers to the process of embedding climate change planning in the spectrum of government ministries, and sectoral plans and activities. Relevant GCCA: PSIS activities are given below.

- A review of the extent of climate change mainstreaming in national strategic plans,

policies and budgets in Kiribati. This was conducted to inform an assessment of the country's readiness to receive international climate finance through budget support mechanisms.

- A review to update the Public Health Ordinance to better incorporate climate change adaptation and disaster risk management considerations.

### Communicating climate change at home

- Preparation of a climate change communications strategy and provision of skilled communicators.
- A short documentary, *Adapting to Climate Change in Kiribati: the Social Dimension*, was prepared and distributed as part of a regional series in 2013.
- A short video on lessons learnt about climate change adaptation in Kiribati will be available in 2015.