

TRANSFORMATION TOWARD SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT SOCIETIES: SIDS PERSPECTIVE

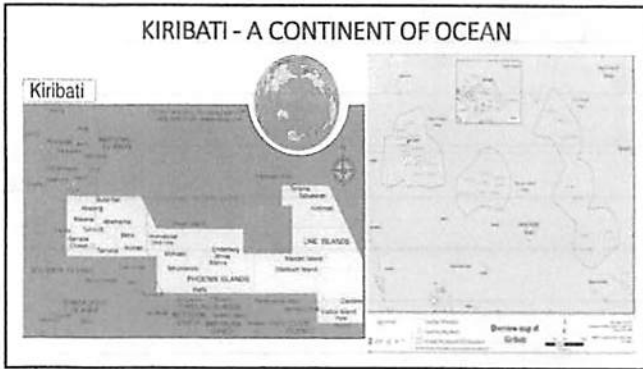
**KIRIBATI PERSPECTIVE AS SIDS & LDC
WEDNESDAY, 11 JULY 2018
CONFERENCE ROOM 4**

SDG 6: Availability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation For All

- My presentation is focused on SDG 6
- Globally, there is alarming concern that freshwater resources are increasingly scarce. There are also abundant of undrinkable water(97.3% is ocean water) compared to drinkable water
- This calls for urgent attention to give serious thinking & actions collectively without further delay to ensure availability & sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Freshwater is connected to Our Life, Our Health and Our Well Being

HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM: IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY FOR SIDS COUNTRIES TO SHARE, LEARN & A CHANCE TO BE HEARD & SEEN

- SIDS - small nations highly vulnerable to the impacts of Climate Change and ecosystems degradation, compared to bigger mainland countries
- The issue of freshwater resources in SIDS faces many of the problems experienced in other developing countries such as inadequate technical and financial resources and capacities
- I am thankful for the opportunity to participate & to share our experiences BUT importantly to learn from each other in this global high level deliberation
- SIDS smallness and remoteness for many countries including Kiribati often made us hardly heard and seen
- This opportunity also enhances the UN SDG's theme of 'No One Is To Be Left Behind'



KIRIBATI - BACKGROUND

- Atoll nation of 33 low-lying islands (2m above sea level) dispersed over 3.5 km² Total land area of Kiribati: 811 km²
- Country population is 110,000: over 50% residing on the capital island of South Tarawa
- South Tarawa: just over 15.76 km² in size & population density of over 4,900 km²
- Highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of global climate change
 - Prolonged drought (affecting the quality of the only source of freshwater lens)
 - Kiribati has been hit by the recent prolonged drought affecting the quantity and quality of the underground freshwater
 - Sea level rise/Seawater inundation of the atolls

CURRENT SITUATION IN KIRIBATI

- Brackish Freshwater resources - the foundation of life on the atolls
- BUT our main and only source of underground freshwater lens: provides very limited supply of safe & drinkable water
 - Example: Reticulated freshwater for use by South Tarawa residents - supplied from fresh groundwater reserves extracted from a total of 28 galleries in Bonriki and Buota; the total sustainable yield from the groundwater lenses is only 2,010 m³/day
 - Use of rainwater catchments (rainwater tanks) is STILL not enough to augment supplies from the reticulated system in South Tarawa, particularly during droughts
- Porous nature of atoll soils make underground water sources highly vulnerable to wastes & pollution
- Climate change & climate variability - additional threats to freshwater resources security throughout Kiribati
- Water & sanitation facilities are not sufficient
- National water policies & legislations are in place but limited to some extent

ACHIEVEMENTS THAT ENHANCE 'Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies'

- Water and sanitation improvement projects - South Tarawa Sanitation Improvement Sector Project (STSSIP); KIRIWATSANI I & II, etc
 - To improve health of communities on South Tarawa & outer islands through: i. rehabilitation of the existing sewerage and salt water flushing system; ii. rainwater harvesting systems; iii. 24/7 piped water access in 3 pilot communities on South Tarawa to address drought impacts on water resources
- IFAD Project - KOIFAWP - Kiribati Outer Island Food and Water Project
 - Major components of the project: i. Provision of rainwater harvesting systems; ii. Promoting farming and consumption of nutritious foods;
 - Important contribution of this Project: i. enabled these communities to access to clean drinking water and nutritious food; ii. a 69% decrease in diarrhea and dysentery for under 5 year old children since 2015
- National efforts to control wastes and pollution
 - Enforcement of the Environment amended Act 2007 (Pollution provision, Environment Licensing System)
 - Kiribati joined the Cleans seas campaign in 2017
 - Construction of communal rubbish collection points on South Tarawa

CHALLENGES

- Kiribati are faced with unique limitations and barriers (natural, environment, economic, and social) to water management. Some of these include:
- Geography, fragmentation, and remoteness of the islands over the vast ocean
 - Land tenure and land scarcity -- land owners encroaching on to water reserve sites which are already being leased by Government
- Enabling environment is limited in terms of policy and legislature & public support
 - Limited financial & technical resources and capacities to implement and enforce water policies and legislations
- Water related technologies (conservation, harvesting, and dissemination): expensive, inappropriate and not sustainable
- Environmental problems and issues (e.g. increased wastes & pollution) including global climate change

Conclusion/Recommendation

- Water is essential for life on earth for health and well being including economic growth & development. Water plays a vital role in achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals
- These highlight the important roles of water governance and water management which MUST at all times, be established to meet the increasing demands for water usage
- All stakeholders must have the right mindset & effective enabling environment to allow for availability & sustainable management of water and sanitation at the country levels
- The IFAD Project in Kiribati - KOIFWAP is one success story in the outer islands where community participation in harvesting and managing their water supplies from the water tanks
- Despite many limitations, challenges, and issues that undermine ongoing efforts to achieve availability & sustainable management of freshwater resources and sanitation, KIRIBATI is still working hard to achieve a sustainable and resilient society
- But we need all the help and assistance we can get now. This is prominent with the global climate change problem that respects no national jurisdictions and boundaries
- WE STRONGLY BELIEVE IN OUR 'KIRIBATI VISION IN 20 YEARS PLAN - KV20', a long term plan that provide the hope and the future of our people and our country

Kam bati n rabwa!
Thank you all for your attention!
