

**GOVERNANCE ISSUES
AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT IN KIRIBATI**

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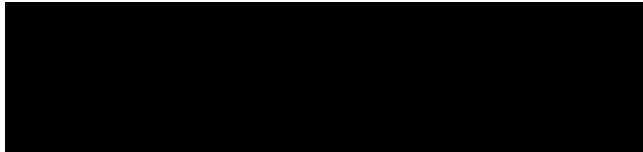
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CANDIDATE'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification. I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis and all sources used have been acknowledged in this thesis.

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the candidate's signature.

(Signature)

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Ara Bau n tainako are Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao Te Tabemoa

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine governance issues affecting development in Kiribati from the perspective of the citizens. A range of information sources were used. First an understanding of the concept of governance is established from the differing perspectives of scholars, aid donors, international, regional and non-government organisations, and the people themselves. While there are differences in the understanding of what governance is, it emerges from this study that governance in Kiribati is seen as entailing the networking of government with other stakeholders such as the private sector, non-government organisations, traditional leadership groups and the people in order to work together and solve problems and to create opportunities for the well-being of the people and the growth of the country. The adoption of a democratic form of government and the promotion of favourable socio-political conditions in the governing process which includes transparency, broad consensus, efficiency, inclusiveness and the rule of law are among the important factors for consideration in promoting good governance and the fight against corruption.

Seven sectors of governance, *public sector and human resources, education, health, non-government organisations and the people, environment, economy, and the rule of law*, were used in designing the research instrument. The two extra sectors of *government and governance* were added to emphasise the focus of the study. Two case studies were also included in order to convey the daily reality of governance issues for the I-Kiribati (people of Kiribati). One study explores the clash between the Council of *Unimwane* (old men) and the local government on Maiana Island, and the other examines modern governance and the management of fisheries in the country.

In order to elicit the views and beliefs of the I-Kiribati regarding governance issues, a fieldwork methodology consisting of questionnaires and interviews was employed on four islands, namely Tarawa, the main island, and three outer islands, Butaritari, Maiana and Onotoa. Traditional protocols such as visiting village *maneaba* (traditional halls) to conduct the survey were employed.

The major findings of the research revealed that the I-Kiribati have an understanding of governance through practising it in their traditional governance system where matters are discussed and resolved through consensus for the benefit of the people. What matters most to the people on the outer islands regarding issues of modern governance is how the delivery of services

can be enhanced for the improvement of the general well-being of the people. The people on the outer islands viewed governance issues in terms of the output from the government rather than a profound concern about the institutions and processes of governance. However, people from Tarawa, who have better access to higher education and are often employed in the public sector, viewed governance issues as being related more to the process of governing, including the need for strengthening government institutions, engaging the people in governance, promoting economic development and fighting against corruption. It was found that the differences in the views about governance issues in the country can be largely attributed to whether the people live on Tarawa or on the outer islands. Educational background, job opportunities, marital status and gender are other contributing factors which help determine the views of the people regarding issues of governance in Kiribati.

The study examines the implications of the findings for possible application in the Kiribati context and suggests that three major areas need continuous improvement: the strengthening of the democratic governance of the country; improving the performance; transparency and accountability of the government's institutions; and enhancing the government's engagement and partnership roles with the private sector, NGOs and the people. While the main political, legal and social institutions in Kiribati show resilience, the economic resource base is unavoidably fragile and climate change issues present a major cloud on the horizon.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission
ACP-EU	African Caribbean and Pacific-European Union
AusAID	Australian Aid
BPA	Broadcasting and Publication Authority
DWFNs	Distant Water Fishing Nations
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOG	Institute of Governance
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JODAC	Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter
KANGO	Kiribati Association of Non-Government Organisations
KDP	Kiribati Development Plan
KPA	Kiribati Policy Area
KTC	Kiribati Teachers' College
LOSC	Law of the Sea Convention
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFMRD	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development
MKP	Maurin Kiribati Party
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Japan)
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
NZ	New Zealand
NZAID	New Zealand Aid
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPL	Office of the People's Lawyers
PA	Palau Agreement
PIAS-DG	Pacific Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance
PIANGO	Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organisations
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PICs	Pacific Islands Countries
PIFS	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
PINA	Pacific Islands News Association
PPC	Pacific Phosphate Company
RERF	Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund
RMAT	Rongorongo Mairoun Ami Tautaeaka (meaning- News from your Government)
SPMS	South Pacific Marine Services
SPSO	South Pacific Sub-Regional Office
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TAE	Total Allowable Effort
TB	Tuberculosis
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nation Convention of the Law of the Sea
USA	United States of America

UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
USP	University of the South Pacific
VDS	Vessel Day Scheme
VMS	Vessel Monitoring Scheme
WCPFC	Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WCPO	Western Central Pacific Ocean
WWF	World Wildlife Fund