

COUNTRY YOUTH

# CALL TO ACTION 2025

APFSD Youth Forum | Feb 19-21, 2025

Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science and evidence based solutions for the 2030 agenda and its SDGs for leaving no young person behind in Asia and the Pacific



KIRIBATI

## Situational Analysis

Kiribati faces significant challenges that hinder sustainable development, particularly in health, gender equality, economic growth, marine sustainability, and international cooperation. Communities across the nation continue to struggle with their daily needs due to systemic challenges, highlighting the urgent need for greater international support in addressing them effectively.

Healthcare system in the country lacks adequate resources. Many communities, especially those in the outer islands, have difficulty obtaining quality medical care. The incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is rising, largely due to lack of health education intervention programs. Furthermore, infectious diseases continue to be a significant challenge, combined with a shortage of healthcare professionals and inadequate medical facilities.

Gender-based violence continues to be a significant issue in Kiribati, affecting individuals and families across various communities. Insufficient legal protections and a lack of accessible support services significantly hinder survivors from seeking justice and safety. Many survivors face social stigma, which discourages them from reporting incidents or pursuing help. Additionally, cultural norms may contribute to a cycle of silence and inaction, further exacerbating the problem.

Economic instability poses a major challenge as the nation's economy heavily depends on fisheries, remittances from abroad, and international aid. The declining fish stocks and global market fluctuations make the economy particularly vulnerable. Youth unemployment is rampant, and the lack of vocational training and job opportunities make many

young people migrate in search of work, leading to a significant loss of skilled workers. Many qualified nurses have been working and still applying for jobs in Australia and New Zealand because they receive higher pay in these countries compared to Kiribati.

Kiribati's marine environment is under increasing threat from pollution and climate change. Rising sea levels and coastal erosion not only jeopardize the economic livelihoods of those who depend on marine resources but also pose a direct risk to the survival of the islands themselves. The degradation of coral reefs and marine biodiversity further endangers food security and local economies that are reliant on fishing and tourism.

While there has been some improvement in coordination among government agencies and development partners, it is crucial to expand partnerships to include new international allies beyond existing collaborations. Strengthening these partnerships can facilitate resource sharing, knowledge exchange, and innovation in addressing the pressing challenges the nation faces.

## Recommendations

Our recommendations for Kiribati on selected SDGs to achieve optimum target are as follows-

### SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

- Strengthen healthcare systems by increased funding to enhance healthcare infrastructure and ensure access to vital medical services. This includes the construction of new healthcare facilities, the upgrading of existing

Co-convended by:



Youth LEAD



In collaboration:



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ones, and the provision of essential medical supplies and equipment.

- Expand community health programs to focus on the prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), early detection, and lifestyle awareness. Educational initiatives aimed at promoting healthier lifestyles, such as proper nutrition and physical activity, are critical.
- Foster international medical partnerships to provide valuable training for local healthcare providers, facilitate knowledge transfer and improve telemedicine services to bridge the gap for those in isolated regions who may otherwise lack access to specialist care.
- Increase investment and funding for youth friendly, affordable, high-quality medical facilities and services, including mental health, Sexual and reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information and services, for young people particularly in rural, and hard to reach areas.

### **SDG 5: Gender Equality**

- Prioritise addressing gender-based violence through stronger legal frameworks and support services. This can be achieved by implementing comprehensive training programs for law enforcement and judicial officials to ensure they handle cases sensitively and effectively.
- Ensure technical and financial assistance to enforce laws protecting women from violence, while also establishing accessible reporting mechanisms and shelters for survivors.
- Promote public awareness campaigns to educate communities about these resources and their rights. Ensure that survivors receive support and security to rebuild their lives for fostering a safe and inclusive society.
- Introduce and implement programs that provide counseling, job training, and legal assistance for survivors that will further empower them as they transition into safer environments.
- Implement Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), for reducing adolescent pregnancy, and VAW that disproportionately impacts the lives of women and girls.

### **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

- Strengthen economic growth and employment opportunities by promoting governmental policies that incentivize businesses to hire young people and invest in areas with high unemployment rates.
- Invest in vocational training centers tailored to the local

job market that will provide young people with the skills required for stable employment.

- Introduce apprenticeship programs that connect youth with local employers and create pathways to sustainable careers.
- Encourage sustainable industries, such as renewable energy, the digital economy, and eco-tourism to diversify the economy and create job opportunities in emerging fields.
- Foster youth entrepreneurship through mentorship and access to micro-financing that will empower young people to create job opportunities within the country, reducing dependence on overseas employment and fostering innovation.

### **SDG 14: Life Below Water**

- Protect marine resources and mitigate the impacts of climate change for the long-term sustainability of Kiribati.
- Expand support for marine conservation initiatives, including the establishment of marine protected areas, that will help sustain biodiversity and safeguard livelihoods that depend on the ocean.
- Promote community engagement in conservation efforts as local knowledge and participation can lead to more effective stewardship of marine resources.
- Provide funding for climate adaptation projects to combat rising sea levels and coastal erosion, ensuring the long-term survival of communities and ecosystems.
- Invest in resilient infrastructure, such as seawalls and elevated buildings, that will provide additional security for vulnerable areas and populations.

### **SDG 17: Partnership for Goals**

- Strengthen global partnerships to enhance sustainable development efforts by expanding international collaborations beyond current alliances that will provide new opportunities for knowledge exchange, investment, and resource-sharing.
- Engage in global forums and conferences, to attract attention to its unique challenges and advocate for necessary support.
- Support digital transformation initiatives that will improve data collection and monitoring of sustainable development projects, making it easier to assess progress and adapt strategies as needed.
- Facilitate international cooperation in technology transfer, capacity-building, and climate resilience



strategies to further empower Kiribati to adapt to its unique challenges.

- Leverage the experience and resources of other nations, to implement innovative solutions tailored to its circumstances, fostering a sustainable future for its communities.

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*The APFSD country and sub-regional briefs were developed through collective discussions and engagements between youth advocates at the APFSD Youth Forum in Bangkok on 19-21 February, 2025. The Kiribati Call to Action was drafted by Ueakeia Tofinga Tabutoa. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.*

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