



GOVERNMENT OF KIRIBATI

GoK (14) DPF (Presentation 02)

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS FORUM

Tarawa, Kiribati

13-14 March 2014

AGENDA ITEM 2: Healthy and Productive Population

Purpose

To present the Healthy and Productive Population concept and highlight priority areas of intervention for population related issues for the consideration of Development Partners

Background

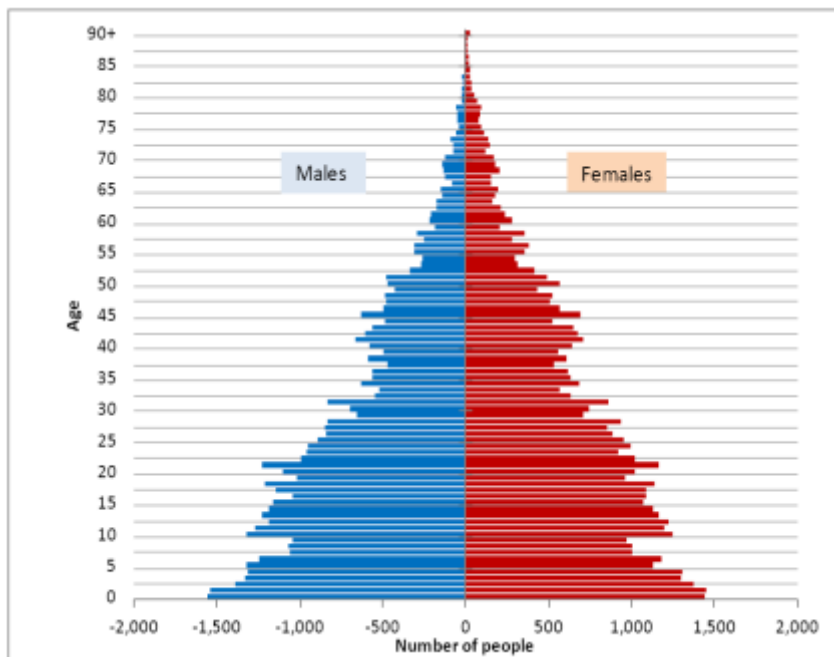
From the Kiribati Development Plan 2012-2015, Government has isolated 5 pillars and one of it is population which encompasses the many issues under the KDP. Furthermore, one of the main platforms that the present Government is working from is Climate Change. Climate Change in Kiribati is not just an environmental issue but is a people and social issue, hence the focus on population.

The thrust of Government's focus on population is a **healthy and productive population**.

Kiribati Population Structure and Growth Rate

According to the 2010 Population Census, the population of Kiribati now stands at 103,058 with a growth rate of 2.2% in 2005 – 2010. Figure 1 Kiribati Population Pyramid shows an expansive age structure or a rapidly growing population with a large percentage of young people aged less than 15 and fewer in the older age group of 60 and over. Despite any aggressive measures to controlling population, Kiribati's population will continue to grow in number, even during declines in fertility as the effect of high levels of fertility in the past sets in. The 2010 population figure is composed of 50,766 males and 52,262 females.

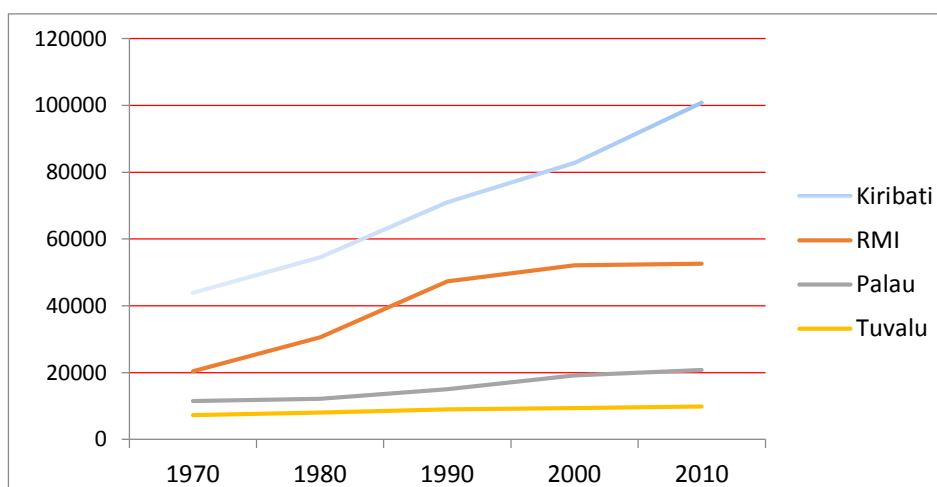
Figure 1 Kiribati Population Pyramid



Furthermore, in South Tarawa, the high birth rate coupled with migration from outer islands, results in an alarming growth rate of 4.5% between 2005 and 2010. Population pressures, combined with high urban growth have resulted in overcrowding that is straining public infrastructure and natural environment. Outbreaks of diarrhea and other diseases linked with overcrowding, inadequate water supply and sanitation are common in South Tarawa. In a diarrhoea outbreak in 2013 on South Tarawa, 500 people were affected and 5 children died.

In comparison with similar countries around the region, Kiribati's population growth rate ranks highest followed by RMI, Palau and Tuvalu. Figure 2 shows, that while growth in the other 3 countries became stagnant, population growth rate in Kiribati continues to climb at a steep rate.

Figure 2 Comparison of Population Growth Rate with Similar Countries



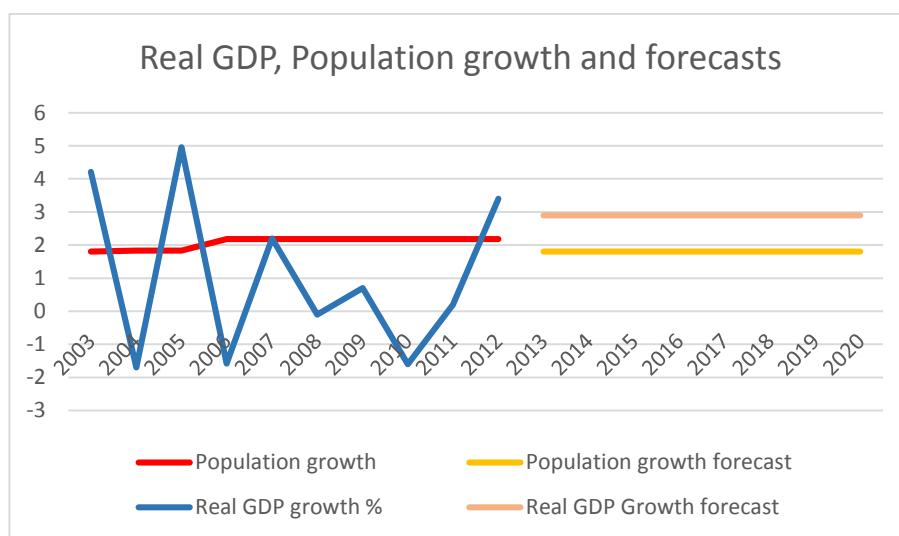
Real GDP, Population Growth and Forecasts

Figure 3 shows economic and population growths for the last 10 years and forecasted growth rates up to 2020.

Population growth rate in 2000-2005 was 1.8% and this increased to 2.2% in 2005-2010. Economic growth rate has been lower than population growth rate from 2007-2011. 2012 saw the beginning of major construction projects in Kiribati and resulted in higher economic growth of 3.4%.

The IMF forecasted growth rates of 2.9% for real GDP and 1.8% for population for 2013-2020.

Figure 3 Real GDP, Population Growth Rates and Forecasts



Smart Investments to a Healthy and Productive Population

In order to have a healthy and productive population, the Government is committed to partnering with the community and its development partners in smart investments to address health gaps and population related issues. With the increasing social and economic problems associated with population growth, there is an urgent need to address the growing magnitude of population related problems. The Population Implementation Strategy 2014-2020 sets the agreed and prioritized actions to addressing population issues through the following targets

- **Reduce population growth to 1.8% by 2020 (between 2015 and 2020 census)** through promotion of health family concepts and meeting unmet need for family planning
- **By 2020, most couples choose and plan to have 2-3 children**
- **Expand public and social services coverage of the population** – improve access to economic and social infrastructure to the outer islands to ensure that the people of Kiribati can access opportunities (nationally or internationally) regardless of where

they are in Kiribati. Expansion of services to the “unavoidable” population on South Tarawa will also be needed.

- **Productivity of our population, measured as GDP per capita, rises to \$1,750 by 2020** – indirect benefits of economic growth and increased employment as seen in more developed economies is the reduction in population growth and population related issues.
- **1,100 new jobs (including market based jobs) / training opportunities created per year** to cater the increase in working age population and new entrants to the workforce per year.
- **End the trend for people to move from rural to urban areas (zero net urban migration between 2015 and 2020 census)** - Overcrowding control through decentralization incentives to ease overcrowding. Overcrowding on South Tarawa is straining public services and the already limited natural resources which in turn impact people’s health.

Next Steps

In order to achieve the targets stated above, big impact investments will be required to build on what is being carried out by Government.

1. Creating new job and training opportunities (by 1,100 per year) as a long term option for the people of Kiribati in the face of climate change. This would also require a labour supply readily available (from urban and rural areas) upon demand. Connectivity to the outer islands and available capital for mobilisation would have to be in place for the timely response to labour demand.

There 3 major areas of overseas employment opportunities;

- Merchant and Fishing
 - Vocational and Trades Training – vocational and trades training is central to making the I-Kiribati people competitive and marketable at international labour markets. This would also involve strengthening of local and national training institutions.
 - Expansion of seasonal employment – expansion of the seasonal work schemes and move to permanent employment
2. Increased opportunities in the rural area to encourage people to live on the outer islands and ease overcrowding on South Tarawa.
 3. Preventive health measures and sports to combat NCD and CD
 4. Expand public and social coverage of the population

5. Expand provision of solar lighting in the rural areas – this extends productivity hours of people on the outer islands and allows them to work into the night.
6. Quality data management systems to assist in planning and policy formulation

Conclusion

Presented for the consideration of Development Partners.