

**ADB TA-9331 REG Kiribati: Strengthening Domestic Transport Connectivity in the Pacific - Environmental Specialist (51065-001) (2019).**

Preparation of an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF<sup>##</sup>) covering potential future investments including bridges and causeways in compliance with World Bank and Asian Development Bank safeguards policies and relevant Government procedures. Screening proposed investments for environmental and resettlement issues to assist in the decision to fund the proposals as part of the project. Completion of Initial Environmental Examinations (IEEs) for all Phase 1 subprojects on four islands. Proposal for the overall categorization of the project and engagement with the social, resettlement, gender and climate change specialists to ensure that the safeguards and gender aspects were well integrated.

The Kiribati Outer Islands Transport Infrastructure Improvement Project (KOITIIP) development Objective (PDO) was to improve the safe and resilient transport connectivity of selected outer islands in the Gilbert Islands Chain of Kiribati. In the event of an eligible crisis or emergency, to provide an immediate response through financing to facilitate hydrological surveys, aids to navigation, the repair and improvement of causeways crossing lagoons and marine access, institutional strengthening and operational support. KOITIIP focused on four islands of Abaiang, Beru, Nonouti and Tabiteuea South.

The Project responds to key elements of Kiribati's Vision 2020 and Kiribati Development Plan 2016-19 (KDP) by supporting inter-island connectivity by enhancing safety of the inter-island transport system reliant on sea services, improving intra-island transport causeways and improving access to social services, and promoting training opportunities for professional and technical staff in relevant ministries, building human resource capacity. Cofinancing combined support from International Development Association (IDA) and ADB fund resources totaling > USD 30 million.

The ESMF (2020) provided a framework to guide the environmental and social screening of project activities during project preparation and implementation ensuring potential adverse environmental and social impacts were identified such that appropriate safeguard instruments could be prepared to avoid, minimize, mitigate and offset adverse environmental and social impacts. The ESMF outlined the project components, the environmental and social context, possible environmental and social impacts, and their management with an overview of the types of subproject activities, assessment processes and safeguard instruments that needed to be prepared. Public consultation, monitoring and reporting were also addressed to ensure adherence to environmental and social safeguards. Local authorities KFSU, MISE and MICTTD had overall responsibility for ensuring safeguards were adequately addressed.

The ESMF met the requirements of the World Bank Operational Policies and laws of Kiribati and the ESMF was accepted by ADB in place of the Environmental Assessment and Review Framework (EARF) as a prerequisite of ADB Safeguards Policy Statement (SPS 2009).

The proposed project components are: (i) Safe Inter-Island Navigation (hydrographic surveying and maritime charting of the target islands); (ii) Resilient Outer Island Access Infrastructure (main civil works activities, detailed design, supervision, and enabling works and equipment to support (a) Improved Ships to Shore Transfer and navigation aids (b) Rehabilitation of Island Access Infrastructure: construction of boat ramps, port terminals to protect goods and passengers at selected locations and rehabilitation of jetties, barges and dredging and (c) Rehabilitation of Lagoon Crossings (focused on causeways, to preserve accessibility on the prioritized outer islands. Institutional Strengthening for the two implementing agencies MICTTD and MISE and Operational Support: including the Outer Islands Implementation Unit (OIIU) relevant training monitoring and evaluation and compliance monitoring of environmental and social safeguards. Because of large project area needed to be covered during implementation, the project digital technologies facilitated the implementation of project activities and the integration of sustainable citizen engagement processes.

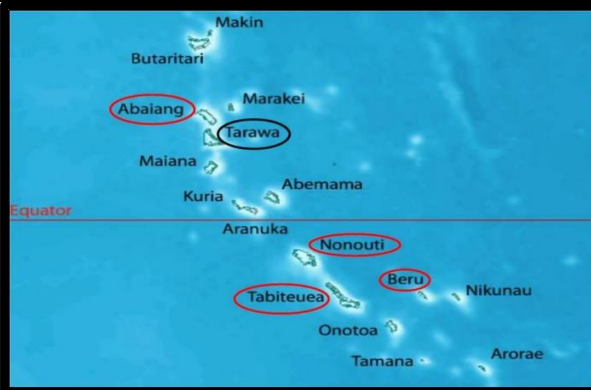
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Typical island morphology "A Chain of Islands"



Kiribati (pr. Kiri-bas - larger than USA by area)



Subject Islands in the Gilberts Group



Boat Ramp Proposals for Nonouti Island



Typical revetment and culvert



Damaged revetment. East side



Causeway assessments at Nonouti