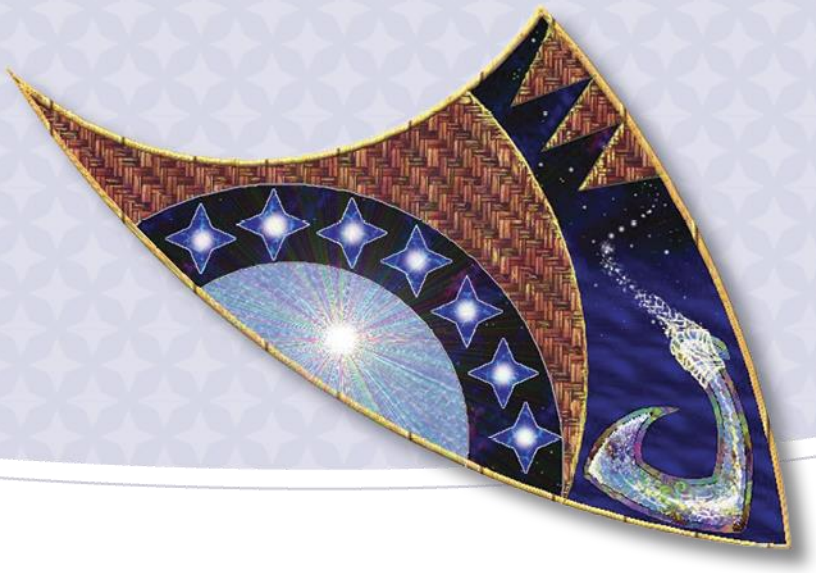
Boutokaan te mweeraoi

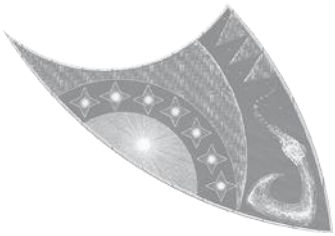
A Conceptual Framework for enhancing I-Kiribati wellbeing



July 2015

Guide on the use of the Kiribati Conceptual Framework

This document can be used for research purposes, educational activities and programmes which promote the wellbeing of our families and communities. The Working Group request that the integrity of the concepts and knowledge is maintained, and not be used in a way as to cause harm or violate relationships between people. Nor should the meanings of these values and principles be subsumed under the definitions of meanings that belong to other cultures and beliefs. The indigenous knowledge and their interpretations in this document remain the intellectual property of the Working Group and the Kiribati community in New Zealand.



La Tapu (Sacred Sail)

The basic shape is that of a Pacific canoe sail. This represents the vaka/canoe which is important in traditional Pacific navigation and exploring new horizons.

The fishhook represents sustainability as well as traditional knowledge. The fishhook colour shows the colours of the paua shell, which represents our migration to New Zealand and adapting to a new way of life while maintaining our traditions. The fishhook is linked to a spiritual cord which disappears up to the heavens. This represents our link as Pacific Islanders with our creator and the importance of our traditional and contemporary belief system. The background of the fish hook represents the sea which merges into a star filled night sky. These natural elements were the navigator's pathways to new horizons.

The triangular patterns above the fishhook is a common design motif found in all Pacific cultures. I used this pattern to represent a common thread found between the Pacific Islands.

The woven pattern represents the Kaiga (family), as a close knit unit. Each member in the Kaiga has a role and purpose in the same way each strand supports one another.

The seven stars represent the seven Pacific Island nations/groups of; Cook Islands, Niue, Sāmoa, Fiji, Tuvalu, Tonga and Tokelau. Together, they represent a collective star formation which provides support and guidance to the vulnerable. To the left of the arched 7 stars is a lagoon with a radiating light emanating outwards. The lagoon represents a safe and protected environment. The radiating light represents a new life nurtured within this safe environment while surrounded and supported by family, cultural knowledge, belief, and alofa (love).

Tiaki Fati Kirifi – Tokelau.

Note: The original design by Tiaki Fati Kirifi for La Tapu (Sacred Sail) had seven stars to represent the largest Pacific Island nations/groups by population in New Zealand. Through the publication of this Kiribati Conceptual Framework the Kiribati community can be assured that their own eighth star is rising more visibly in New Zealand.

Contents

Preface

This document is the product of a collective effort, and the first nation-wide collaboration between Kiribati communities and government in New Zealand.

Leaders from the South Island Kiribati communities were instrumental in initiating contact with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to get a Kiribati Conceptual Framework onto their agenda, and have guided the project from conception to fruition. Members of the Kiribati community from across New Zealand who helped to nominate the Working Group and recruit the facilitator included Dr. Tabwe Bio, Takeua Burnett, Charles Enoka, Rokobina Harrison, Rairaki Ioane, Tikanteiti Mackenzie, Ueaieta Namanoku, Kataua Matita and Kanikua Raman.

As facilitator, Rose Namoori-Sinclair played a crucial role in keeping the Working Group and the wider community informed about the purpose and progress of the Working Group's activities. Maria Kum-On Lucas and Rose Namoori-Sinclair also translated all communications from the MSD into Kiribati, and provided invaluable assistance with translations and editing of this document.

The Working Group's sincere and insightful exploration of the issues surrounding indigenous notions of both wellbeing and family violence during a two-day *boowi* (meeting) in February 2015 was impressive and heartening. The Working Group continued its thoughtful engagement at each stage of the drafting of the Conceptual Framework, and also in reaching out to their respective communities to keep them informed. A full list of the Working Group members is provided in Appendix A.

We gratefully acknowledge the considered feedback received on drafts of the Kiribati Conceptual Framework from communities and individuals across New Zealand and also in Kiribati. These are listed in Appendix B.

We were especially fortunate to have the Honourable Minister of Education in Kiribati, Nei Maere Tekanene, share her time to serve as external reviewer of the final draft of the Conceptual Framework. The Honourable Minister had been the lead researcher for the *Kiribati Family Health and Support Study: A Study on Violence Against Women and Children* (2010). *Ara karabwarabwa nakoim*, Nei Maere.

We are also indebted to Maiava Carmel Peteru, lead consultant on *Ngā vaka o kāiga tapu: A Pacific Conceptual Framework to address family violence in New Zealand* for her expert advice and illuminating provocations throughout the development of the Kiribati Conceptual Framework.

The Kiribati Conceptual Framework would not have come into being without the commitment of the director of the Pacific Unit at MSD, Liz Tanielu, and all her team, including Jenny Virtue, Vai Tuita'alili, with a special mention for Marie Schmidt who kept us on task: *kam rangi n bati n rabwa*.

Executive Summary

The task

The Kiribati Working Group (the Working Group) was tasked with actively informing the development of a Kiribati Conceptual Framework for our own indigenous concepts of the good life. The primary purpose of the Conceptual Framework is to help inform I-Kiribati practitioners and mainstream organisations working with I-Kiribati victims, offenders and their families and/or communities affected by family violence or *te kiriwee n te mweenga*. However, it is possible that it may be used to guide other government and non-government agencies in their provision of services to I-Kiribati communities in New Zealand. The Conceptual Framework is not a definitive piece of work but provides a way of addressing and preventing violence based on the core concepts, values and beliefs of *te katei ni Kiribati*, (the Kiribati philosophical worldview). The Working Group understands that the Conceptual Framework may need to be revised in the future so that it is relevant to the diverse realities and lived experiences of I-Kiribati families in New Zealand. The Working Group strongly advocates for approaches that are embedded in *te taetae ni Kiribati*, the Kiribati language.

Key findings

1. The Working Group asserts that *marin abara* (a healthy environment and ecology); *te toronibwai* (skills of self-reliance related to subsistence and spiritual communion with nature); *te katei* (customary practices unique to I-Kiribati); and *te karinerine* (the demonstration of respect) within *te utuu* (the family), *te kaainga* (the extended family hamlets), and *te mwaneaba* (the customary hall of community governance) are fundamental to Kiribati concepts of *te maiu raoi* or the good life.

2. The Working Group identified the following key social and cultural structures for cultivating the good life and enhancing wellbeing for I-Kiribati: *te utuu/kaainga* (the family); *te mwaneaba* (the customary hall of community governance); *ataakin ao maiuakinan te katei ni Kiribati* (maintenance of Kiribati custom); and *reiakinan te rabakau i bukin te toronibwai* (teaching and learning the skills of self-reliance required to live in harmony with the environment).

3. The Working Group considered the roles that Christianity and colonialism have played in engendering social and cultural change for I-Kiribati, and concluded that both had brought a combination of positive and negative influences on what I-Kiribati accept as either normal or ideal values and behaviours.

4. The Working Group recommended *te katei* or culturally based practice imperatives for working with I-Kiribati victims, offenders and their *utuu* and/or communities affected by different forms of family violence; these are detailed in the Framework.

Taeka n rabakau:

Kateira ma rabakaura bon kinaakira

Our culture and knowledge are our identity

Background

In 2011, seven Pacific nations came together in Auckland to develop *Nga Vaka o Kāiga Tapu. A Pacific Conceptual Framework to address family violence in New Zealand*. Kiribati was not part of this exercise. Leaders of Kiribati communities in New Zealand agreed in 2014 that it was important to develop our own Conceptual Framework for family violence. This Conceptual Framework defines and explains meanings of key concepts and principles that promote family and community wellbeing and help prevent family violence for I-Kiribati, Kiribati people.

Introduction

The independent republic of Kiribati is constituted by 33 islands with the Gilbert Islands at its core, the Phoenix and Line Islands to the east, and Banaba or Ocean Island to the west. The country's geography has several distinguishing features: with territory on both sides of the equator and on both sides of the international dateline, Kiribati sits in all four hemispheres of the globe. It has a landmass of 811 square kilometres, and ocean territory of 3.5 million square kilometres; on average, islands are about 2 metres above sea level and the highest point is 81 metres, on the island of Banaba. Of the 21 inhabited islands, 16 are atolls of the Gilbert group, with the capital on South Tarawa hosting around half of the nation's more than 111,000 inhabitants, making it one of the most densely populated urban areas in the Pacific (United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA] 2014).

Survival on these equatorial islands has historically required intelligence, prudence, discipline, fortitude and resilience. European contact, British colonialism, modernisation and more recently, climate change and sea level rise have altered the environment and ecology of Kiribati dramatically in the past 200 years. Owing to environmental stresses during the British colonial era, several I-Kiribati communities were relocated to other British colonies such as Fiji in the 1940s and Solomon Islands in the 1950s and 1960s (K Teaiwa 2014; Tabe 2011).

I-Kiribati in New Zealand

According to the 2013 Census, the population of I-Kiribati in New Zealand was 2,115. (This represents a growth rate of almost 100 percent from the population of 1,100 recorded in the 2006 Census.) Although there are established communities in both the North Island and the South Island, the majority of I-Kiribati live in Auckland, with significant communities in Hamilton, Wellington, Hawkes Bay, Taranaki, Bay of Plenty and the South Island. The community has a median age of 20.6 years with 32.8 percent born in New Zealand and 67.2 percent born overseas. About 77.7 percent of the community aged 15 years and over hold formal qualifications, while the median income is $14,700 for the same age group.

(see http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/ethnic-profiles.aspx?request_value=24717&parent_id=24706&tabname=)

While there has been no systematic research on the history of I-Kiribati or Gilbert Islanders in New Zealand, there have been three surveys of note: two were conducted in 2011, one by an I-Kiribati journalist resident in New Zealand, Taberannang Korauaba, and the other by Matt Gillard and Lisa Dyson was commissioned by the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand; the third by Ilka Fedor, was for MA research carried out through the University of

Otago's Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (Korauaba 2011; Gillard and Dyson c2011; Fedor 2012).

Gillard and Dyson's research was conducted in Auckland, and they used a combination of key-informant interviews and focus groups to gather data from 18 I-Kiribati individuals (Gillard and Dyson c2011: 5–6). Korauaba's survey covered 84 Kiribati households primarily in Auckland and Hamilton (Korauaba 2011: 12). Fedor's research focused on the South Island where 13 I-Kiribati participants and two non-I-Kiribati spouses were interviewed (Fedor 2012: 35).

None of the three studies documented I-Kiribati migration to New Zealand prior to the 1970s, but available literature tells us that Gilbertese served in the 1st New Zealand Expeditionary Force during World War I (Māhina-Tuai 2012: 139, 141). Anecdotal evidence and at least one published source tell us that small numbers of migrants from the Gilbert Islands, as well as Gilbertese and Banabans from Fiji and Solomon Islands began to settle in New Zealand in the 1960s (Shennan and Tekenimatang 2005: 119). Marriage to New Zealand citizens seems to have been one of the primary means of migration in this period. In the early 21st century, greater numbers of I-Kiribati began to take advantage of new immigration pathways to New Zealand. These included the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme established in 2007 which allows temporary labour migration for I-Kiribati workers in the horticulture and viticulture industries, and the Pacific Access Category established between 2001 and 2002 which enables permanent migration for 75 Kiribati citizens per year. The Skilled Migrant Scheme is another pathway that I-Kiribati have utilised to explore opportunities in New Zealand. A Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand report on Kiribati migration to New Zealand cited research noting that 521 I-Kiribati were granted residency in New Zealand between 2003 and 2007 (Gillard and Dyson 2011: 9).

Kiribati communities gather annually around the country to mark the anniversary of our national independence on 12 July 1979. On a more regular basis, most I-Kiribati tend to congregate in church- and faith-based communities, which also promote the preservation of the language, singing and dancing, as well as sport.

Methodology

Representatives of Kiribati communities from around the country (the Working Group) were invited to participate in a two-day *boowi* or meeting in Wellington from 12 to 13 February 2015. Altogether there were 16 participants, drawn from Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, and the South Island (see Appendix A). Among the participants were several practitioners from the social work sector. Each participant had been provided with briefing papers from the Ministry of Social Development and sent copies of the Conceptual Frameworks developed by other Pacific communities.

The first day of the *boowi* concentrated on identifying the causes of violence, and explored pre-Christian and pre-colonial indigenous concepts of wellbeing and the good life. The second day of the *boowi* discussed the impacts of Christianity and colonialism, as well as practice imperatives for promoting I-Kiribati wellbeing in New Zealand. While the academic author's presentation on the second day was made in *te taetae n I-Matang* (English) all other proceedings and discussions took place in *te taetae ni Kiribati*, the Kiribati language. At the end of each day of the *boowi*, key points of the deliberations were summarised and fed back to the participants for confirmation. The academic author conducted a literature review to substantiate and enhance the findings of the *boowi*. Sabatier's *Gilbertese-English Dictionary* (1971) was the main source for clarifying translations. In terms of orthography, we followed advice from community and academic referees on spelling. For example, we were advised that the recently resurrected Kiribati Language Board, doubles the vowels where the intonation is meant to be.

Drafts of the report were circulated first to the Working Group for review, then to the wider community as well as academic and expert referees. Feedback provided from these readers was incorporated where relevant and within the scope of the project. A list of community members and referees from whom substantive feedback was received is provided in Appendix B. Final approval for publication rested with the Ministry of Social Development.

There were many challenges involved in synthesising different viewpoints from Kiribati communities in New Zealand as well as perspectives from the literature. Not all I-Kiribati and researchers agree on what the core values or characteristics of Kiribati culture are. And if we take as a given that cultures and values evolve and change over time, it is important to recognise that what constitutes Kiribati culture is not static. Nevertheless, one cannot deny that there are strong patriarchal elements in the lived cultures of many I-Kiribati, and in fact there seems to be a widespread acceptance that violence is a common way for I-Kiribati to resolve conflict. At the same time there is a solemn recognition that I-Kiribati in New Zealand will have to adapt to the laws and norms of our new home.

Elements of the Framework[1]

The title of this Kiribati Conceptual Framework is '*Boutokaan Te Mweeraoi'*, which can be translated as the supporting beams or structures for uplifting or enhancing wellbeing in the home. '*Boutokaan*' refers to beams or posts (Sabatier 1971: 79); '*mwee*' means to raise up or lift (Sabatier 1971: 254); and '*raoi*' is a state of goodness or wellness (Sabatier 1971: 303).[2]

The Working Group highlighted the following as fundamental aspects of *te maiu raoi* or wellbeing for I-Kiribati:

Marin abara, a healthy environment and ecology.

Te toronibwai, skills of self-reliance related to subsistence and spiritual communion with nature.[3]

Te katei, customary practices distinct to I-Kiribati.

Te karinerine, the demonstration of respect within *te utuu* (the family), *te kaainga* (the extended family hamlet), *te mwaneaba* (the customary hall of community governance), and *te aba* (the land and people).

In Figure 1, *te maiu raoi*, or wellbeing, is depicted as a series of nested circles, indicating the relationships of interdependence between all four elements. *Marin abara*, or the environment and ecology, constitutes the outer circle. Inside *marin abara*, *te toronibwai*, or skills of self-reliance related to subsistence and spiritual communion with nature can be developed. Inside *te toronibwai*, *te katei* or the customary practices distinct to I-Kiribati people has evolved over time

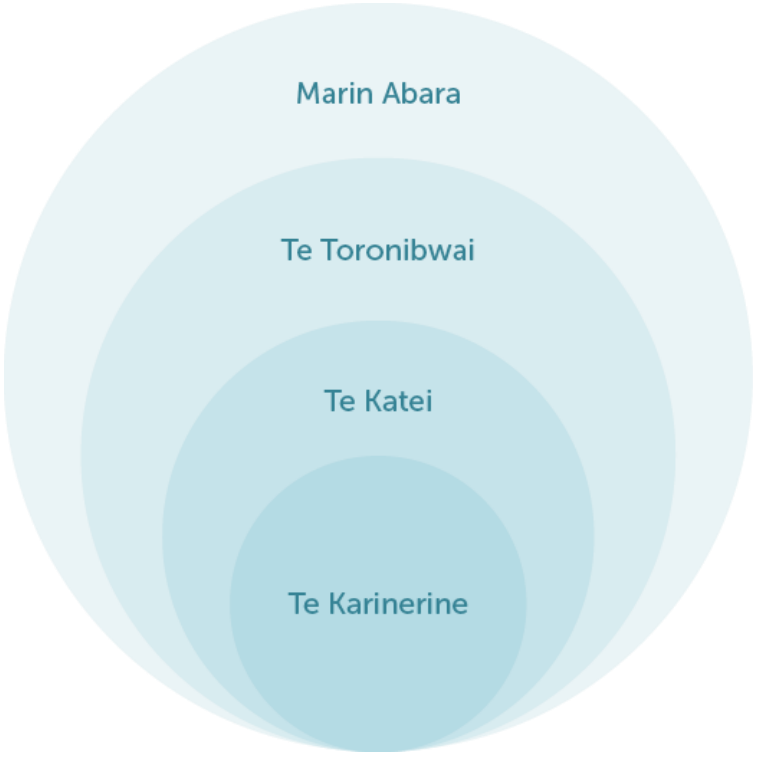
[1] In consultation on this Framework, some community members felt that *te maiu raoi* depends on the achievement of *te mweenga raoi* (a home or residence that is in a state of goodness or wellness), and that space needed to be made in the Framework for *te mweenga raoi*. The academic author felt that *te mweenga raoi* is implicitly captured in the notion of *te karinerine* in Figure 1 and *te utuu/kaainga* in Figure 2.

[2] Our external reviewer pointed out that a synonym for *te mweeraoi is te rau*, meaning peaceful, which is the concept used currently in programmes for the elimination of violence against women in Kiribati.

[3] There are always problems with translating concepts across languages and cultures. It is important to note that while we have translated *te toronibwai* as a form of self-reliance here, it is not intended to signify individualism, as might be suggested in the English. For generations, *te toronibwai* meant educating children to know how to fish, weave, work the land and preserve food in anticipation of droughts, but in more recent times, for example, our external reviewer has noted that the term refers to a family's ability to pay for their children's school fees to secure a good job in the future.

and in harmony with the environment. Within *te katei* the concept of *te karinerine*, or respect, is core.

Figure 1: Te maiu raoi



In Figure 2, *boutokaan te mweeraoi* is depicted as the process by which *te maiu raoi* is achieved. Within *te utuu/kaainga* it is important to know what your roles and responsibilities are, to listen to and obey both the male and female leaders of the family, and to have a helpful attitude. A happy family is distinguished by the joy it expresses in singing and games.

Te mwaneaba is a place for discussing the responsibilities of a community, and guards over a community. *Unimwane* (male elders) guide and lead proceedings in *te mwaneaba*, and it is generally accepted that the social organisation of space in *te mwaneaba* privileges men and marginalises women in decision-making. Some scholars, however, have suggested that everyone has a place and rights that are guaranteed in that setting (Tabokai 1993). *Te mwaneaba* is also a place where the community can celebrate through singing, dancing and feasting.

Together, *te utuu/kaainga* and *te mwaneaba* contribute to *maiuakinan te katei ni Kiribati* or the maintenance of Kiribati custom, albeit with room and scope for cultural change and evolution. *Te utuu/kaainga* and *te mwaneaba* assist this process by providing social spaces and contexts for the teaching and learning of the skills required to live in harmony with the environment, or *reiakinan te rabakau i bukin te toronibwai*. When *te utuu/kaainga* and *te mwaneaba* are able to fulfill these roles, *te maiu raoi* – the good life, or wellbeing – can be achieved.

Figure 2: Boutokaan te mweeraoi

Family violence: characteristics, causes, contemporary context

The purpose of developing this Conceptual Framework is to assist I-Kiribati families and communities in New Zealand attain our full potential and achieve our aspirations for wellbeing in this country; family violence is an obstacle to this and a symptom of socio-cultural conflict or disorientation. A further purpose of this Conceptual Framework is to inform the development of a training programme for I-Kiribati practitioners and a course for I-Kiribati communities seeking to prevent or deal with family violence.

The Working Group identified the following characteristics of violence in a Kiribati context:

- ***Te bwainikirinaki*** (abuse), including *te tautau* (rape), *te aeae* (nightcrawling), *tekaoki* (incest), *te bwaitingako* (sexual harassment)
- ***Oro*** (physical violence)
- ***Taetae*** (words/language), including *te taetae ni kamangora te aomata* (belittling or derisive language)

Causes of violence were attributable to both internal and external factors. Internal factors included the following:

- ***mwaane ni Kiribati iai mwaakaia ni karaoa te ioawaa,*** I-Kiribati males' sense of entitlement to use violence
- ***aorakin te iango***, mental illness, including *te bakabure*, suicide
- ***te aki rau ao te nakobuaka i marenaia taanga ao kain te utuu,*** instability and conflict between couples, pressures of both nuclear and extended family living, including *te kokoo* or jealousy

- ***aki kabonganaakin raoi te nakoa ni kairiri ke n tautaeka,*** wrongful use of leadership and authority within the family

- ***karaoan babaaire aika a aki eti,*** unfair decision making within the family that leads to injustice

- ***uarao,*** mischievous or untrue rumour

An important internal factor highlighted through the community consultation process was the potential for family violence to be reproduced in successive generations, and that children who experienced family violence were likely to become either victims or perpetrators of family violence as adults (see also, Secretariat of the Pacific Community [SPC] 2010: 159, 166; T Teaiwa 1995, 2007).

The Working Group and community consultations further identified several external factors contributing to family violence, such as employment difficulties, poverty, alcohol and other substance abuse (such as *kava*) and peer pressure, and influences from movies and video games. In New Zealand there are also specific pressures around racial discrimination and poor housing, especially in winter. I-Kiribati migrants in New Zealand, like many other migrant communities, may build up perceptions of our homeland that are fixed and frozen in time even as significant attitudes and cultural shifts may be taking place (see for example Macpherson 1999).

Kiribati acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 2004. Since then, the police have engaged in regional training around family violence and non-government organisations have promoted national campaigns such as 'White Ribbon Day' to raise awareness of violence against women and children (SPC 2010: 48). Nevertheless, rates of family violence in Kiribati remain high.

In a 2010 survey of 1,527 I-Kiribati women aged between 15 and 49, 47 percent said they had been in a relationship where they had experienced emotional violence from their partner; 60 percent reported experiencing physical violence; and 46 percent had experienced sexual violence (SPC 2010). Over a lifetime 68 percent of I-Kiribati women reported experiencing some form of physical or sexual violence, while in Solomon Islands the lifetime prevalence was measured at 64 percent and in Samoa at 46 percent (UNFPA 2014: 7). According to a 2014 UNFPA report, 73 percent of I-Kiribati women aged 14 to 49 years surveyed reported having experienced physical or sexual violence (UNFPA 2014: 29).

While there has been no research on I-Kiribati experiences of family violence in New Zealand, some of the same pressures that lead to family violence in Kiribati will undoubtedly carry over to New Zealand, while other new factors may also contribute to the problem as it is experienced here.

Christianity and colonialism

As part of its brief from the Ministry of Social Development, the Working Group considered the roles that Christianity and colonialism have played in engendering social and cultural change for I-Kiribati, and concluded that both had had a combination of positive and negative influences on what I-Kiribati accept as either normal or ideal values and behaviours.

Since it was introduced in the mid-19th century, Christianity has become so much a part of Kiribati culture and identity that most estimates suggest that 97 percent or more of the population are affiliated to Christian church- or faith-based organisations. And despite Kiribati's

indigenous culture having evolved over a period of close to 5,000 years, the establishment of British colonial rule over the islands for a relatively brief 87 years had a disproportionate impact.

Neither Christianity nor colonialism have had singular or uniform effects in the Pacific. Europeans have played different and sometimes conflicting roles in Kiribati's history. In theory, Christianity was a monotheistic religion, proclaiming one true God over polytheistic indigenous cosmologies and systems of ancestor worship. In practice, Christianity revealed itself to have spawned many churches and denominations – some of which engaged in bitter wars against each other in late 19th century Kiribati (Maude 1981; Sabatier 1977). In theory, Christianity was a religion introduced by *I-Matang* or foreigners, but in practice I-Kiribati have indigenised Christianity in ways that have on occasion alarmed *I-Matang*. Maude describes the 19th century religious movement on Tabiteuea known as the '*Tioba*' cult, which was an indigenous interpretation of Christianity eventually vanquished by Protestant missionaries (Maude 1981); while Uriam has documented the more recent example of the short-lived *Te Aro ae Boou* (The New Religion), started on Onotoa in June 1930 and eliminated in July of the same year by colonial administrators (Uriam 2014).

In theory, when British colonial rule was established in Kiribati between 1892 and 1916, it was meant to follow a pattern of 'indirect rule' – meaning that the British administration would rely on the collaboration of selected indigenous actors to enforce its laws and policies. In practice, individual colonial administrators greatly affected the character of colonial rule during their terms, with some being quite authoritarian, others neglectful and a few championing the cause of indigenous people (Thompson 1994).

It is crucial to understand the role that colonial administrators Arthur Grimble and Harry Maude played in shaping what is known about Kiribati history and culture. Grimble, who arrived in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony in 1913, was District Officer from 1916 to 1926 and Resident Commissioner from 1926 to 1932 (Grimble 1952). He published three influential books, and left many manuscripts and papers that his protégé and successor Maude would later build on. Maude served as a colonial administrator from 1929 to 1949 and published ten books, of which three were based on Grimble's papers. Very little academic research has been done to cross-check or verify Grimble's and Maude's work, so they continue to be unquestioned as authorities on Kiribati history and culture, and their versions, written from their own privileged white male perspectives, inevitably privilege male perspectives.

Literature on I-Kiribati women is scarce (e.g. Brewis 1992 and 2001; Mansfield 2013; Rose 2014), and work by I-Kiribati women on I-Kiribati women is scarcer. Katherine Tekanene was a pioneering voice for women's issues in Kiribati. In 1976 she attended the Pacific's first regional women's conference held in Fiji. In her contributions to the conference Tekanene described some of the key aspects of gender relations in Kiribati society. She asserted that in pre-Christian Kiribati custom, "woman was the companion of man and not his slave. She was not subjected to tasks beyond her strength but was expected to perform ordinary household duties besides helping her husband in certain kinds of fishing, in the cultivation of taro and the building and maintenance of dwellings." Tekanene acknowledged that there were inequalities between men and women and sons and daughters (in favour of men and sons) in Kiribati society around issues of inheritance and social control, but she thought it was significant that women were not treated as property to be bought in marriage by their spouses. Tekanene observed that with the advent of Christianity and colonialism, families often kept girls from attending school, and noted that even after 1945 women were not receiving a secondary education. By 1976, however, she was happy to note that the Gilbert Islands had a "woman Minister in the House of Assembly, a woman doctor, many trained nurses, religious sisters, female teachers, radio announcers, typists clerks etc" (Griffen 1976).

Changes to Kiribati culture: Christianity

With the arrival of the first foreign Christian missionaries in 1852 and the intensification of conversion processes, a number of indigenous customary practices were either abolished or eroded, such as:

- indigenous warfare and fighting
- practising *te tabunea* or magic
- polygamy or having more than one wife
- *tinaba* relationships (the adoption of a married woman by her husband's relative, usually an uncle, in exchange for land and with the purpose of securing her 'kind attention')
- public tests of women's virginity after marriage (Etekiera 1979: 62).

Other significant impacts of Christianity included the introduction of clothing, changing attitudes towards the body and ideas of cleanliness, the introduction of Western medicine, the idealisation of the nuclear family, and the introduction of literacy and schooling.

In its deliberations the Working Group found that Christianity's legacy in Kiribati had had both positive and negative aspects.

The benefits, they believed, included:

- the introduction of clothing and care for the body
- the introduction of new knowledge and the establishment of schools
- breaking the traditions of darkness, and bringing understanding of a wider world
- teaching how to love one another, even as strangers
- and bringing the good news of life after death.

The costs of Christian conversion identified by the Working Group included:

- breaking Kiribati traditions and undermining local knowledge
- discord between different Christian denominations
- adding to the financial expenses that families have to bear, e.g. tithing and fundraising for the church.

While some Protestant denominations have recently admitted women as pastors, it bears noting that the patriarchal structure of Christian churches means that men continue to hold most positions of leadership and decision-making.

Changes to Kiribati culture: colonialism

From the moment the Gilbert Islands became a British Protectorate alongside the Ellice Islands (present-day Tuvalu) in 1892, through the formalisation of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony in 1916, right up until Kiribati gained independence in 1979, even more dramatic changes were wreaked upon the indigenous society and culture.

Colonial rule meant that:

- the *kaainga* (extended family hamlet) dwelling system was reorganised into *kaawa* (village) systems
- roads were built to enable colonial administration and surveillance (Takaio 1979: 101)
- the *mwaneaba* system that had previously seen a spokesperson announcing consensus decisions was superseded by a magistrate who announced decisions based on his interpretations of the law of the government (MacDonald 2001: 78).

The impact of colonialism was so great that it:

- changed geographic boundaries
- restricted indigenous people's travel
- introduced new legal concepts and practices (such as fines and how they were distributed among magistrates and *kaubure* (village policemen), see Macdonald 2001: 79)
- introduced destructive phosphate mining on Banaba (K Teaiwa 2015)
- and resettled whole communities to the Phoenix Islands (1938–1940), Rabi (1945–1947), and from Phoenix to the Solomons (1955–1958).

Colonial rule also quashed indigenous attempts to achieve economic sovereignty, e.g. 1938 Tangitang Mronron (Hempenstall & Rutherford, 1984: 46) on one hand, yet promoted women's social and economic advancement on the other (Rose 2014).

After discussing the impacts of colonialism, the Working Group found that colonialism – like Christianity – had affected Kiribati culture in both beneficial and detrimental ways.

Colonialism had brought the following benefits to Kiribati, according to the Working Group:

- It established law and ended indigenous warfare.
- It cared for I-Kiribati wellbeing.
- It allowed I-Kiribati to meet with people from around the country as well as with foreigners.
- It recognised women's rights.
- It established schools.
- It developed Kiribati industries.

The Working Group saw some areas where the impacts of colonialism were not so positive:

- It introduced new diseases.
- It diminished the use of Kiribati customs (e.g. changing clothes, diet, working and farming the land, establishing the government in South Tarawa).
- It did not charge or pay fair prices to I-Kiribati workers, suppliers or customers.

- It changed the direction of Kiribati development and reduced I-Kiribati independence within islands (e.g. creating village structures to supplant *te kaainga* or extended family hamlets).
- It belittled Kiribati customs, knowledge and wisdom.
- It cultivated a love of and dependence on money.
- It displaced and relocated indigenous populations to foreign countries such as Fiji and Solomon Islands.
- It fostered enmity between I-Kiribati and Banabans.

Christianity and colonialism effected massive social and cultural change for I-Kiribati. Both imported Western or *I-Matang* values and beliefs into Kiribati society. Some of these enhanced and others undermined family, gender and sexual relationships. Social dislocation, economic disempowerment and cultural conflict create environments in which violence is an easy response. Experiences of migration can exacerbate such conditions.

Taeka n rabakau:

Tai ira te moan ang

Do not follow the first breeze (Do not follow the first impulse)

Prevention of family violence

Family violence is one area where the Kiribati Conceptual Framework seeks to assist with the restoration of wellbeing. Prevention is an essential part of the process of restoring and enhancing wellbeing. In a Kiribati context, the language of prevention embraces the following: *tuukan te kiriwee ma te itabararaa inanon te mweenga, kain rarikim, kain te kaawa, ao kaain bootaki n aro* (the prevention of violence and conflict in the home, among neighbours, in the village, in the church community, etc). The Working Group was tasked with exploring indigenous I-Kiribati values that might assist in identifying culturally based strategies for prevention.

Kiribati oral traditions acknowledge the ever-present threat of violence; some stories may even seem to normalise it or condone it (Koru and Sullivan 1986). A rigorous literary analysis of these oral traditions is beyond the scope of this report; however, some stories offer interpretations that point towards protective factors in Kiribati values.

In the story of *Ningoningo and Na Rerewa*, which is well known across different islands, a couple is said to have had 10 or more children. When the husband, Na Rerewa, goes out fishing for his family, his wife Ningoningo and the children are terrorised by ghosts who demand a child for their dinner. Each time Na Rerewa returns from fishing, he finds fewer and fewer children. In the version recorded by Koru and Sullivan, Na Rerewa is angry with his wife for sacrificing their children to the ghosts, but instead of taking his frustration out on her, he exchanges places with her, sending her fishing and staying home himself, and disguising himself as her. When the ghosts come to demand another child, he refuses them and when they threaten to eat the person who they think is Ningoningo, he reveals himself as a man, and slays them with his sword. (Koru and Sullivan 1986: 5–8) From a traditional perspective, Na

Rerewa can thus be understood as a man who is willing to provide for and protect his family. Through a modern lens, we might see Ningoningo as perhaps suffering from postnatal depression or the stress of having so many children, and Na Rerewa tries to alleviate some of the pressure on his wife in the process of confronting the ghosts.

In the story of *Atutababa and the Three Sisters*, a 'witch' tries to hold three sisters against their will with the intention of eating them. When the girls try to escape, the witch, Atutababa, pursues them with a vengeance. A heron comes to their rescue and flies off with the three sisters on his back, but Atutababa uses a magical incantation to cause one of the sisters to slip off his back and fall to the ground. The unfortunate girl runs for her life and finds refuge in a *mwaneaba* where a group of old men are able to use their magic to bring an end to Atutababa. While a feminist reading of this story would find the characterisation of old men as the saviours of young girls from an old woman/witch somewhat problematic, from a Kiribati perspective what is significant is the representation of the *mwaneaba* as a place of refuge and a source for the meting out of justice (Koru and Sullivan: 81–93).

In addition to stories, I-Kiribati have many *taeka n rabakau* or proverbs that contain indigenous wisdom and describe our cultural values. The Working Group identified 11 *taeka n rabakau* that give us insight into I-Kiribati imperatives and methods for preventing violence. Four of these were selected for highlighting in this report.

The first *taeka n rabakau* used to open this Kiribati Conceptual Framework on page 5 reads, ***'Kateira ma rabakaura bon kinaakira'***. Sabatier translates '*katei'* as "work, monument, sect, manners, institution, customs, methods, procedure, behaviour" (1971: 173). The suffix '*ra*' indicates first person plural possession (Sabatier 1971: 294) – i.e. our work, our monuments, our sects, our manners, our institutions, our customs, our methods, our procedures, our behaviour. '*Rabakau*' in Sabatier's dictionary is a noun that when combined with the suffix '*ra*' would mean "our science, our knowledge, our art, our cleverness, our aptitude, our experience, our instruction" (Sabatier 1971: 295). '*Kina*' translates to "to know, to recognise" and with the suffix '*ra*' indicates that "we are known, we are recognised" (Sabatier 1971: 192). Taken together the proverb literally means, 'Our customs and our knowledge are how we are recognised'; in other words, 'Our culture and our knowledge are our identity'. This proverb, therefore, directs us to ground our approach to preventing family violence in indigenous Kiribati cultures and concepts, aware as we attempt to do so that each island and indeed each clan, has knowledge and customs that might be particular or exclusive to them.

'Tai ira te moan ang' is our second *taeka n rabakau*, and precedes this section of the Kiribati Conceptual Framework on page 16. '*Tai*' is a negative imperative meaning don't! (Sabatier 1971: 341). '*Ira*' has several meanings, but in this context is, "to follow, to accompany" (Sabatier 1971: 120). '*Moan*' is "the first, the highest in…, the beginning, the commencement" (Sabatier 1971: 250) and '*ang*' refers to "wind, breeze, air, gas, breath, climate, atmosphere, direction" (Sabatier 1971: 13). The expression goes, 'Do not follow the first breeze', which can be interpreted as 'Do not follow your first impulse'. In the context of family violence, this encourages restraint, especially in relation to the temptation to lash out physically or verbally when one feels dissatisfied or disrespected.[4]

The third *taeka n rabakau* which appears on page 19 is, ***'Te mauri bwa te tautau'***. The word '*mauri*' in the Kiribati language means "good health, sound life" (Sabatier 1971: 245), but Sabatier's definition does not quite capture the ancient function of this expression as a blessing of spiritual protection from harm. In its contemporary usage, '*Mauri*' is often translated as 'hello',

[4] Our external reviewer commented that this *taeka n rabakau* is used in the Kiribati elimination of violence against women and White Ribbon campaigns, partly to recognise that perpetrators of violence may not know how to control their anger, and therefore do not know how to have a healthy relationship with their spouses.

but this dilutes its intent as 'May you be protected from harm!'[5] '*Bwa*' (or '*ba*' in the Sabatier dictionary) is a conjunction or connecting word that can mean "because, so that, as, for" (Sabatier 1971: 31). The word '*tautau*' has several meanings, including "to hold, to guide by hand", as with a canoe or cane, and "to hold, to grab, to impede from fighting" (Sabatier 1971: 366). *Tautau* is also the word for rape, which might seem alarming if the proverb is read as 'life is rape', but in this context, '*Te mauri bwa te tautau*' can best be understood as referring to the integral relationship between good health, sound life, and guidance, or the act of protecting someone from harm. In the event of a conflict between two parties (such as a married couple), a third party, (such as an elder) might step in and utter the words '*Te mauri bwa te tautau*'. The conflicting parties, especially the perpetrator of violence, would then cease any aggression immediately because they have been reminded that if they do not, their own mauri will be at risk.

'Teimatoan te maiu raoi mani babaaire aika a nikoraoi' on page 21 is our fourth and final *taeka n rabakau*. '*Teimatoan*' is made up of two root words, '*tei*', meaning "to stand, to be standing upright, etc" (Sabatier 1971: 369) and '*matoa*' which refers to "firmness, solidity, hardness, resistance" (Sabatier 1971: 243). '*Te maiu raoi*' can be translated as 'the good life', since '*maiu*' means "Life, existence, salvation, comfort" (Sabatier 1971: 214) and '*raoi*' as discussed earlier can be understood as "well, good, just, suitable, agreeable, decent". '*Babaaire*' means "to arrange, to regulate, to organize, to rule, to administer" (Sabatier 1971: 40). '*Aika*' is the plural relative pronoun, "Who, whom, of whom, that, which" (Sabatier 1971: 6). '*Nikoraoi*' has two root words: '*niko*' describes something that is "elegant of form, well done, well built, well assembled, strong and fair of form" (Sabatier 1971: 276); and '*raoi*', as we have seen before, adds emphasis that this is positive. The expression can be translated to mean, 'the maintenance of wellbeing comes from just and fair decision-making'.

Although Kiribati culture is popularly understood as patriarchal and male-dominated, we also acknowledge the belief that men have a role to protect their families from other families. Kiribati culture might seem to accept the use of violence to correct bad behavior, but the Working Group found sufficient evidence from stories and taeka n rabakau that Kiribati culture also contains values and behavioural guidelines that can provide some indigenous alternatives and solutions to the problem of family violence.

Taeka n rabakau:

Te mauri bwa te tautau

Respecting the guiding hand ensures spiritual protection

Practice imperatives

In the New Zealand context, government and non-government service providers will need to work with individuals, families and communities – as clients – to help prevent or intervene in cases of family violence. The Working Group identified the following practice imperatives for working with I-Kiribati victims, offenders, families and communities:

[5] Our external reviewer advises that the expression '*mauri*' is used for protection when venturing to new lands where one has no ancestral ties, e.g. inter-island travel within Kiribati, and also when traveling to foreign countries. If you do not respect the customs of the indigenous people of the land you are in, you put your *mauri* at risk.

- ***Te atatai i aon ara katei aika a kaineti ma aron te marooroo ke te inoonoo ma te aomata ae e kakaea buokana,*** having the cultural knowledge of *te katei* to deal respectfully with members of Kiribati communities, taking into consideration the power of spoken and unspoken words, body language, eye contact, etc.

- ***Kakaawakin te mwakuri ni ibuobuoki bwa e na aki kauntaba ma nanon te aomata ae buokaki,*** recognising the importance of consulting the client, ensuring that the practitioner does not assume that they know what is best for the client.

- ***Ataakin tokin ana konabwai te tia mwakuri ao kakaaean te buoka ae e kakoauaaki bwa te kabanea n tamaaroa,*** the ability to recognise their own limitations and seek appropriate assistance when necessary.

- ***Te tia mwakuri ae e rabakau n taetae ni Kiribati ao ni maiuakina naba te katei ni Kiribati. Ngkana akea ao e kakaawaki bwa e na iai te tia raitaeka ae e konabwai ni itera aikai,*** a practitioner who is fluent and well grounded in one or more versions of Kiribati culture and in the absence of this has an appropriately skilled translator available.

- ***Ribooti nakoia naake tabeia,*** reporting to suitable and reliable service providers.

- ***Te tia mwakuri ae e kataua bwakan inaomatana bwa irian ana mwakuri,*** a practitioner who puts aside their own personal pride in the course of helping a client.

- ***Kaokorora ngaira aine ma mwaane,*** understanding the culturally constructed differences between men and women in Kiribati society.

- ***Te tia mwakuri ae e ataa kakaawakin te kakaauongo raoi bwa e aonga n reke otana n te bwai ae riki,*** a practitioner who seeks understanding and listens well.

- ***Kawakinan te rongorongo bwa e na aki ukinako,*** maintains confidentiality.

- ***Ataakin rongorongon te aomata ae e buokaki ao kakaawakin te reitaki ma ngaia bwa e na atai ma n ota ni bwaai aika a karaoaki,*** recognising the importance of knowing the client's background, and communicates clearly with the client to explain things and to keep the client updated and informed.

The Working Group identified the following ideal characteristics of practitioners working with I-Kiribati communities on issues of family violence:

- ***Te onimakinaki,*** trustworthiness.

- ***Te tangira,*** love and compassion.

- ***E aki bwaina te inanonano,*** does not practice favouritism and knows how to recognise and manage a conflict of interest.

- ***Te karinerine,*** has a respectful attitude.

- ***E kakoaua bwa tiaki ara katei te oro ao e tabu te oro,*** accepts that physical violence is not our cultural practice and has a zero tolerance for violence.[6]

[6] In spite of the distressing evidence of high levels of family violence in Kiribati communities, there are also strong cultural beliefs about the sanctity of human dignity. As our external reviewer shared, when the results of the *Kiribati Family Health and Support Study: A Study on Violence Against Women and Children* (SPC 2010) were disseminated nationally, a Kiribati member of parliament responded by invoking his Tabiteuea island notion of '*e tabu te aomata*', meaning the person is sacred.

- ***Karinea inaomatan te aomata,*** has respect for the rights of the individual person which can also include how they define their identity, e.g. family-based identity.

- ***Nanorinano,*** humility.

- ***Te ota n ara katei ni kaineti ma te mataraa ke te mamaa,*** is skilled in managing the client's sense of culture-based shame or embarrassment.

While many of these characteristics coincide with general good practice in social work and the social service sector, practice imperatives that are sensitive to and grounded in culturally specific values, beliefs and terminology will enable successful prevention and intervention strategies for family violence in a Kiribati context.

Taeka n rabakau:

Teimatoan te maiu raoi mani babaaire aika a nikoraoi

The maintenance of wellbeing comes from just and fair decision-making

Conclusion

Kiribati culture is neither uniform nor static; it has many internal variations and is dynamic. When I-Kiribati migrate and settle in new countries, such as New Zealand, our lived cultures will inevitably adapt to our new environment while maintaining connections with our homelands. As David Gegeo has written in a Solomon Islands context, if there are changes that Pacific people want to bring about within our own societies, it may be necessary for us to use a combination of introduced and inherited knowledge (Gegeo 1998: 291).

It is the hope of the Kiribati Working Group that the Kiribati Conceptual Framework will inform the development of prevention and intervention programmes and training materials to eliminate family violence in our Kiribati communities. The Kiribati Conceptual Framework is offered as only one among a range of possible approaches to addressing family violence.

An *unimwane* (male elder) in the Wellington community, Ueaieta Namanoku, has compared this Kiribati Conceptual Framework to a canoe that has been built for the Kiribati people in New Zealand. *Te waa* needs ongoing maintenance in order to safely navigate the oceans during stormy weather. In a similar fashion, this Framework will need to be updated and improved to meet the social, cultural and numerous other challenges that I-Kiribati communities will inevitably face in this country. But for now, we look forward to working together to sail our canoe and implementing this framework to achieve our vision of '*Boutokaan Te Mweeraoi*', and enhancing the wellbeing of our people.

References

Brewis, A (1992). *Age and Infertility: An Ethnodemographic Study from Butaritari Atoll*. PhD thesis, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Brewis, A (2001). Gender conflict and co-operation in reproductive decision-making in Micronesia. *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 110(4), 391–400.

Etekiera, K (1979). Te Aro, The New Religion. *Kiribati: Aspects of History*. Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific and Ministry of Education, Training and Culture, Tarawa, 56–64.

Fedor, I (2012). *Cultural and National Identity in the Face of Climate Change: A Case Study of I-Kiribati Migrants in New Zealand*. Master degree thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin. [Online]. Available: http://otago.ourarchive.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10523/2445/FedorIlka2012MA.pdf (accessed 15 June 2015).

Gegeo, D W (1998). Indigenous knowledge and empowerment: Rural development examined from within. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 10(2), 289–316.

Gillard, M and Dyson, L (c2011). *Kiribati Migration to New Zealand: Experience, Needs and Aspirations*. Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, Auckland. Available: http://presbyterian.org.nz/sites/default/files/gmo/kiribati/Kiribati_migration_to_New_Zealand.pdf (accessed 6 March 2015)

Griffen, V (1976). *Women Speak Out! A Report of the Pacific Women's Conference, October 27–November 2*. The Pacific Women's Conference, Suva.

Grimble, A (1952). *A Pattern of Islands*. John Murray, London.

Hempenstall, P and Rutherford, N (1984). *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*. University of the South Pacific, Suva.

Kingi, V and Roguski, M (2011). *Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Programme: Update of Baseline In-Country Review, Kiribati Report*. Crime and Justice Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington.

Korauaba, T (2011). *Survey of Kiribati Households in New Zealand 2009–2010*. Pacific Micronesia Foundation, Auckland.

Koru, P K and Sullivan, G (eds) (1986). *Iango Mai Kiribati/Stories from Kiribati*. Kiribati Extension Centre, Tarawa and the Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva.

Macdonald, B (2001). *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a History of Kiribati and Tuvalu*. Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva.

Macpherson, C (1999). Will the real Samoans please stand up? Issues in diasporic Samoan identity. *New Zealand Geographer*, 55(2), 50–59.

Māhina-Tuai, K (2012). FIA (Forgotten in Action): *Pacific Islanders in the New Zealand Armed Forces. Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific*, S Mallon, K Māhina-Tuai and D Salesa (eds). Te Papa Press, Wellington, 139–160.

Mansfield, H (2013). *Discourses of Vulnerability: Kiribati, I-Kiribati Women and Forced Migration Due to Climate Change*. MA thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington.

Maude, H E (1981). Tioba and the Tabiteuean religious wars. *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 90(3), 307–336.

Rose, S (2014). *Waves for Change: The Role of the South Tarawa-Based Women's Interest Program in the Decolonisation Process of the Gilbert Islands*. PhD thesis, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.

Sabatier, E (1971). *Gilbertese-English Dictionary*. South Pacific Commission Publications Bureau, Sydney.

Sabatier, E (1977). *Astride the Equator: An Account of the Gilbert Islands*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2010). *Kiribati Family Health and Support Study: A Study on Violence Against Women and Children*. Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Noumea.

Shennan, J and Tekenimatang, M C (2005). *One and a Half Pacific Islands: Stories the Banaban People Tell of Themselves*. Victoria University Press, Wellington.

Tabe, T (2011). *Sapon Riki Ba Kain Toromon: A Study of the I-Kiribati Community in Solomon Islands*. MA portfolio, Center for Pacific Islands Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Honolulu.

Tabokai, N (1993). The maneaba system. *Atoll Politics: The Republic of Kiribati*, H Van Trease (ed). Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, the University of Canterbury, Christchurch and the Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva, 23–29.

Takaio, A (1979). Control: 'E Taku Te Kamitina'. *Kiribati: Aspects of History*. Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Tarawa and Ministry of Education, Training and Culture, Kiribati, 96–105.

Teaiwa, K M (2014). *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

Teaiwa, T (1995). 'Nei Nana' in *Searching for Nei Nim'anoa*. Suva, Fiji: Mana, South Pacific Creative Arts Society, 74–77.

Teaiwa, T (2007). Spitting images… or luck, accident and truth: Breaking the cycle of domestic violence, in *Shout Out: Women of Color Respond to Violence*, M Ochoa and B K Ige (eds). Seal Press, Emeryville, California, 323–328.

Thompson, R (1994). Britain, Germany, Australia and New Zealand in Polynesia. *Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 71–92.

United Nations Population Fund (2014). *Population and Development Profiles: Pacific Island Countries*. UNFPA Pacific Sub-Regional Office, Suva.

Uriam, K (2014). *My Coconut and My Land: Religious Paroxysm on Onotoa Island in the Defence of Identity*. Paper presented at the Pacific History Association Conference, Taitung, Taiwan.

Appendix A: Kiribati Conceptual Framework Working Group

- Caulin Bureka, Blenheim
- John Corcoran, Auckland
- Louisa Humphry, Hamilton
- Kantei Iotebatu, Auckland
- Sailosa Kabiriera, Wellington
- Fr. Tikoua Kautu, standing in for Invercargill
- Maria Kum-On Lucas, assistant boowi coordinator
- Teaoia Matatia, Hamilton
- Dr. Janet O'Connor, Auckland
- Marie Schmidt, (ex officio) Ministry of Social Development boowi coordinator
- Rose Namoori-Sinclair, facilitator
- Rereao Tabokai, Wellington
- Dr. Teresia Teaiwa, academic author
- Tom Tebuanna, Hamilton
- Kaimanga Tenanoa, Auckland
- Aari Tiaon, Wellington
- Teevi Tiim, Christchurch

Appendix B: Acknowledgment of feedback received

- Caulin Bureka, on behalf of Blenheim Kiribati community
- Hegnes and Keith Dixon, Christchurch Kiribati community
- Charles Enoka, Auckland Kiribati community
- Kaimanga Kanono, Auckland Kiribati community
- Albert Laurence, Dunedin Kiribati community

- Albany Lucas, Dunedin Kiribati community
- Maria Kum-On Lucas, Dunedin Kiribati community
- Alaric McCarthy, Dunedin Kiribati community
- Ueaieta Namanoku, Wellington Kiribati community
- Rose Namoori-Sinclair, Wellington Kiribati community
- Dr. Janet O'Connor, on behalf of Auckland Kiribati community
- Maiava Carmel Peteru, *Nga vaka o kāiga tapu: A Pacific Conceptual Framework to address family violence in New Zealand*, lead consultant
- Rereao Tabokai, Wellington Kiribati community
- Teweiariki Teaero, Kiribati
- Tom Tebuanna, Louisa Humphry and Teaoia Matatia on behalf of Hamilton Kiribati community
- Rosie Teuauaa, Invercargill Kiribati community
- Teevi Tiim, on behalf of Christchurch Kiribati community
- Herman Tokam, Invercargill Kiribati community