

Cook Islands: Summary of activities for outputs 1 and 3

Output 1: Impact analysis to strengthen national strategic planning
Output 3: Scale up resilient development measures in specific sectors



Signing of memorandum of understanding to hand over the newly constructed RO building (see photo below) to Banaba Island Council



Kiribati timeline January 2019 – June 2023

Output 1: Impact analysis to strengthen national strategic planning	
June 2023	A team from Kiribati participated in the Sub-regional workshop on applied training for the light version of the iA methodology.
Output 3: Scale up resilient development measures in specific sectors	
Planning and KRA 3: project coordination	
July 2019	1st Consultation with Kiribati National Expert Group
August 2019	Project sector selected – water security; Concept Note prepared with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE) as implementing agency .
November 2019	2nd consultation to define activities under the PDD. The project scope was to install reverse osmosis (RO) units in up to four islands in the southern Gilbert Islands.
February 2020	3rd consultation to confirm project activities with partners
May 2020	PDD (Version 1) signed with Beru Island identified as the project site
November 2020	PDD (Version 2) signed with revised schedule to accommodate COVID 19 travel restrictions
April 2021	National coordinator commences
November 2021	PDD (Version 3) signed with a changed focus to construct a fit-for-purpose facility on Banaba Island to house existing desalination and water security systems
June 2022	Project Finance Officer commences (position shared with other projects)
December 2022	Project Technical Officer commences
KRA 1: Construction of a new building to house the RO units in Banaba Island	
February 2022	Consultation with the community and engineering survey of the existing RO storage building in Banaba Island
June 2022	MOU between Banaba Island Mayor and Island Council, MISE and GCCA+ SUPA project signed
October 2022	Demolition of the existing storage building completed
June 2023	Construction of the new fit-for-purpose structure to house the RO units, solar panels, batteries, cabinets, and other accessories completed
KRA 2: Enhancing existing water security measures in Banaba Island, Kiribati	
June 2023	Additional rainwater storage systems and rain gauge installed in Banaba Island
KRA 4: Purchase of water security measures for Beru Island	
July 2022	Rapid assessment and consultation in Beru Island
April 2023	80 solar pump systems purchased by the project for Beru Island to pipe water from existing storage systems to community buildings

Kiribati highlights

The Republic of Kiribati is located in the central Pacific Ocean and is the only country that is situated within all four hemispheres. The islands are divided into three groups: Gilbert, Phoenix and Line Islands. There are 32 low-lying atolls that rise to no more than 2m above sea level, and Banaba, a raised coral island lying to the west of the Gilbert Islands with the highest point of 81m. Banaba Island has a population of 333 with 85 households in total.

The project used a consultative and people centred approach to (i) introduce the impact analysis methodology to partners in Kiribati; and (ii) enhance water security for the people of Banaba Island by constructing a fit-for-purpose building to house the existing reverse osmosis plants and adding additional water storage.

Highlights output 1

Representatives from Kiribati participated in the Sub-regional workshop and applied training for the light version of the IA methodology held in Samoa in June 2023. The purpose of this workshop was to share the “light” version of the methodology to analyse past actions and learn from their successes and failures so as to improve strategic planning in the future.

Highlights output 3

The Government of Kiribati selected water security as the focus sector for output 3. The project scope and site were revised midway through the implementation period due to COVID travel restrictions. The revised overall objective was to strengthen water security measures for remote atolls in Kiribati and the specific objective of the project is to scale up existing emergency water security measures in Banaba Island. The project had four KRAs: (1) Construction of a new building to house the RO units in Banaba Island; (2) Enhancing existing water security measures in Banaba Island, Kiribati; (3) Employment of a National Coordinator based in MISE; and (4) Purchase of water security measures for Beru Island.

The following are the output 3 highlights in Kiribati.

- The GCCA+SUPA project was presented firstly to the Kiribati National Expert Group at a consultation in June 2019. Water security in the Southern Gilbert Islands was selected as the focus sector. Two further consultations were conducted to design the activities in November 2019 and February 2020.
- The main implementing partner for the project activities was the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE), in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and the Office of Te Beretitenti (the President).
- Government stakeholders recognised the need to adopt an adaptive and flexible project management approach following the COVID 19 travel restrictions which were in place from 2020 – mid 2022. As a result the project scope and project site were changed.
- Despite having to change the scope of the project and the project site, midway through the implementation period, the GCCA+ SUPA project constructed a new, fit-for-purpose building and facility for the desalination units (originally housed in a temporary location) in Banaba Island. New pumps and water storage tanks were purchased and installed, together with additional tanks for additional rainwater storage capacity using the roof of the new building as a catchment. This was a significant achievement by the implementing agency, MISE.
- A people centred approach was used throughout the activities, with special attention paid to the participation, non-discrimination and accountability elements of the PLANET checklist. In relation to accountability, a special effort was made to explain to the Beru Mayor, Island

Council and community the reason for changing the project site to Banaba Island and requesting their suggestions for substitute activities in Beru Island. Similarly, all changes to the PDD and project scope were done in collaboration with government stakeholders.

- Community members were involved in the demolition of the old building and the construction of the new facility.
- An MOU was signed with the Banaba Mayor, Island Council and MISE to confirm responsibilities and management of the new measures.
- A rain gauge was installed on Banaba Island, one of the most remote islands in Kiribati with no regular shipping schedule. This will allow for data to be sent to the Kiribati Meteorological Services in real time and provide for improved drought management.
- 80 solar-powered pumps to pipe the water from existing storage sources directly to community buildings in Beru Island were purchased and delivered to MISE. This will complement the water tanks provided by government.

Kiribati details: output 3

The third and final version of the PDD was signed in November 2021 following a consultative phase.

Consultation and re-design

- Following the three in-country consultations, the first version of the PDD, signed in May 2020, identified the installation of desalination units in Beru Island and building national capacity in the operation and maintenance of desalination measures as the main activities.
- These activities were rescheduled in version 2 of the PDD, signed in November 2021, to accommodate the COVID 19 travel restrictions, and focus on a first phase to deliver the desalination units to South Tarawa leaving the design of the second phase dependent on how the travel restrictions eased.
- The third and final version of the PDD signed in November 2021, changed the focus to construct a fit-for-purpose facility on Banaba Island to house existing desalination and water security systems and to implement substitute small-scale activities in Beru Island.

Further details on the delivery of the KRAs in the third and final version of the PDD are presented below.

KRA 1: Construction of a new building to house the RO units in Banaba Island,

Consultation and design

- In December 2021, the GCCA+SUPA MISE project team met in Banaba with the Island Manager to officially introduce the GCCA+ SUPA activities for Banaba and the Integrated Strategic Plan. A consultation was conducted with the Island Council to understand the existing water facilities and issues.
- During the same visit, an engineering assessment was conducted of the existing water infrastructure, including the existing RO storage shed and the damaged civil infrastructure. A structural Investment report was prepared and a conceptual plan for the new facility.
- In March 2022 the full engineering design for the new facility was prepared together with the bill of quantities and other costs.
- In June 2022 an MOU was signed with the Banaba Mayor, Island Council and MISE to confirm responsibilities and management of the new measures.

Demolition of the existing RO shed and construction of the new facility

- Procurement of the materials for the demolition tools, plastic tanks, and the arrangements for the charter to Banaba Island for the demolition of the existing reverse osmosis (RO) shed was completed during the period March to June 2022.
- Charters were arranged in August 2022 and October 2022 were arranged to transport the MISE team, demolition tools, construction materials and plastic tanks to and from Banaba Island. During the time on Banaba the existing RO shed was demolished and the site cleaned, a concrete reservoir was inspected and surveyed, and the existing RO units were inspected and found to have electrical issues.
- The demolition of the RO shed was completed in October 2022.
- Procurement of the construction materials for the new facility and other plumbing supplies was completed by March 2023.
- Charters were arranged in April 2022 and June 2023 to transport the MISE team and the tools and material to and from Banaba Island.
- The construction of the new fit-for-purpose building to house the RO units, install storage tanks for desalinated water, and install additional rainwater harvesting systems was completed in June 2023. The certificate of building approval was issued in May 2023.

KRA 2: Enhancing existing water security measures in Banaba Island, Kiribati

- Additional measures under this KRA, such as the installation of additional rainwater harvesting systems have been described under KRA1.
- A rain gauge was installed in Banaba Island in April 2023. The rain gauge will assist the Kiribati Meteorological Services (KMS) to collect data in real time and allow for the planning and issuance of drought alerts.

KRA 3: Employment of a national coordinator based in MISE

- The National Coordinator, based in MISE, commenced in April 2021.
- In June 2022 a Project Finance Officer commenced. This was a shared position with other projects.
- In December 2022 a Project Technical Officer based in MISE commenced.

Key Result Area 4: Purchase of water security measures for Beru Island

- Recognising that the original project design had focused on Beru Island, a series of consultations with the Beru communities was conducted during a visit to Beru Island in June to July 2022. The reasons for the re-design were explained to the Beru Island Council, community leaders and church leaders. They were also consulted about the scope of substitute activities.
- During the visit surveys of existing community rainwater harvesting systems and existing wells were conducted.
- Following discussions with MISE, the purchase of solar powered pumps was agreed as the substitute activity for the GCCA+ SUPA project activities in Beru Island. These pumps were to pipe water from existing storage sources directly to community buildings which provide easier access for more remote households. MISE agreed to deliver and install the pumps outside of the GCCA+ SUPA project.

- Purchase of the pumps was completed in April 2023.

Challenges

- The COVID 19 travel restrictions and the uncertainty around when they would finish was a major challenge for the project in Kiribati such that three versions of the PDD were prepared to accommodate the changing situation.
- As a result, a 2-year period remained for the design of new measures and their implementation.
- Banaba Island is one of the most remote islands in Kiribati with no regular shipping schedule and charters had to be arranged for each trip to Banaba.

Lessons Learnt

- Adopting a flexible and adaptive project management approach allowed for Kiribati, and MISE in particular, to complete project activities in a short 2-year time period, despite having to re-design project scope and select a new project site.
- Application of the people centred approach allowed for all stakeholders – government agencies, island communities and island governance officers – to understand why and how project activities were changed and to participate in designing the changes.
- Sharing positions such as in-country project finance officers with other projects improves project delivery and saves costs.
- Working with very remote outer island communities requires additional funding to accommodate charter costs.
- Engagement of community members in the installation of water infrastructure and systems is important to empower communities, instil their sense of ownership in the project and provide for long term maintenance.