



Republic of Kiribati

DRAFT for Discussion

**THE NATIONAL WATER & SANITATION
COMMITTEE**

**Strengths, Proposed Mission, Aims, Terms of
Reference, Coordination, Reporting and
Composition**

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The companion document, Coordination of the Water and Sanitation Sector: Background to the Kiribati National Water and Sanitation Coordination Committee provide background information for the re-establishment of an integrated whole-of-government and community committee to coordinate, facilitate and enhance Government and community activities in the water and sanitation sector and provide advice to the Government of Kiribati and donor agencies on strategic issues concerning the sector.

The Strategic Importance of Water and the Strengths of a National Water and Sanitation Coordination Committee

Water is a vital, strategic resource that underpins human well-being, health, cultural and spiritual values, and provides development opportunities. The nature of coral islands and atolls, demographic trends, climatic variation and change and the impacts of human activities all combine to impose significant risks to water supplies for island communities and their environments. The challenges faced in the water and sanitation sector in small island states are amongst the most difficult in the world.

Infant mortality rates in Kiribati due to water-borne diseases and lack of adequate hygiene are amongst the worst in the Pacific. Water-borne diseases also have substantial social and economic costs amongst adult populations. Previous reports have identified the need for better coordination and clearer identification of roles and responsibilities in the water and sanitation sector. The Government of Kiribati Project Completion Report on the ADB Sanitation, Public Health and Environment Improvement (SAPHE) Project in March 2006 concluded that: *“There is still quite a lot of overlap in the regulatory duties of the different government departments, especially in the area of water, and there have been several instances where the departments could not agree to one common solution over the development of additional water resources.”* The life and death issues surrounding water cut across traditional government sectorial boundaries. They require a whole-of-government approach that incorporates community participation. The National Water and Sanitation Coordination Committee will provide a broadly-based coordinated approach to facilitate and enhance Government and communities activities in the sector.

The advantages of a whole-of-government and community coordination committee on water and sanitation are:

- Coordination of government agencies with responsibilities in the water and sanitation sector;
- Facilitation of the development of broadly-based policy on water and sanitation which is consistent across sectors and with other related government policies;
- Identification of mutually-agreed priorities and processes;
- Provision of broadly-based advice to government on water and sanitation;
- Improvement in administration efficiency because advice and proposals have been thoroughly discussed and vetted before they go to Cabinet;
- Increases multi-sectoral understanding of the condition of the nation’s freshwater resources, water supplies and sanitation services through coordinated monitoring and assessment;
- Increases understanding and the opportunity for community participation in water and sanitation;
- Provides a single forum for interaction and information dissemination between agencies, NGOs and the community;
- Produces coordinated and thoroughly reviewed water and sanitation proposals for the Government of Kiribati and for donor and investment organisations;
- Increases confidence of donor and investment organisations in the sector.

Proposed Mission of the National Water and Sanitation Committee

To coordinate, facilitate and enhance Government and community activities in the water and sanitation sector to ensure that communities have access to water of suitable quality and appropriate quantities and to appropriate sanitation to meet all reasonable health, environmental, and development needs.

Suggested Aims

The suggested principle aims of the Committee are to:

- 1. Promote the sustainable management, conservation and use of water and related land resources by coordinating and enhancing Government and community activities.*
- 2. Facilitate and enhance initiatives to raise the quality of life by improving the quality and availability of safe water and decreasing illness and infant mortality rates due to water-borne diseases.*
- 3. Coordinate and facilitate information gathering and assessment, policy and instrument development, and identification of other for the water and sanitation sector throughout Kiribati.*
- 4. Provide broadly-based strategic advice to the Government of Kiribati, the community, non-government and donor organisations on the nation's water resources and sanitation service and their management and use.*

Suggested Terms of Reference

It is suggested that the Committee will:

1. Coordinate and enhance the strategic activities of Government Ministries in the water and sanitation sector.
2. with broadly-based, coordinated, strategic advice, incorporating agency and community views and needs, on water and sanitation.
3. Provide a national forum for the discussion of water and sanitation-related issues.
4. Review, assess and make broadly-based recommendations to Government on water and sanitation-related policy, instruments, incentives, legislation, regulations and water plans, on priorities for water and sanitation and on water-related development opportunities.
5. Monitor the implementation of Government water and sanitation policy and regulations.
6. Provide an annual, national, island-based assessment of the quality and quantity of water resources, water consumption, rainwater harvesting and of demand for water.
7. Review and identify the personnel, training, education and communication needs for the water and sanitation sector.
8. Develop plans for development of water and sanitation services, for the nationwide protection, conservation and sustainable use of fresh water, including urban and designated growth centres, and for increasing awareness of water and sanitation issues.
9. Review and prepare water quality standards, guidelines.
10. Review and develop, where necessary, relevant building codes.
11. Undertake risk assessments of the water and sanitation sector in relation to global change and extreme events.
12. Develop ways to improve community understanding of and participation in water and sanitation management and planning and in furthering water conservation and protection.
13. Review, assess and make recommendations on proposals for water and sanitation-related projects.

Coordination and Membership of the Committee

Coordination and Reporting of the committee

The Committee will be coordinated and convened by the Office of the President (OB), with secretarial support from the Ministry of Public Works and Utilities. The Committee will report through the OB to Cabinet.

Membership of the committee

Membership of the Committee is drawn from Agencies and Organisations with significant roles and responsibilities in water, sanitation, climate and in planning and management.

Public Works Department and Public Utilities Board, Ministry of Public Works and Utilities (MPWU)

Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS)

Environment and Conservation Division, Ministry of Environment, Land and Agricultural Development (MELAD)

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MFED)

Ministry of Line and Phoenix Development (MLPD)

The Meteorology Service, Ministry of Communications, Transport and Tourism Development (MCTTD)

Rural Planning Unit, Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (MISA)

Office of the President (OB)

Important **NGO's** and commercial organisations with broad interests in water at the village and town level:

Kiribati Women Federation (AMAK)

The Kiribati Association of NGOs(KANGO)

National Council of Churches (NCC)

Chamber of Commerce (CC)

Where necessary, the Committee will form sub-committees to undertake particular tasks. For these tasks, the Committee, through OB, can co-opt expertise from additional agencies and organisations such as:

Ministry of Education Youth & Sport Development (MEYSD)

Attorney Generals Department

The Committee will liaise with other National Committees such as The *National Adaptation Steering Committee* (NASC) and the *Outer Island Project Coordination Committee* (OIPCC) and with other existing water and sanitation-related committees.

The Committee will report annually to the Cabinet through OB or as required by Cabinet.

Proposed Structure for the National Water and Sanitation Committee

