System Capacity Grant Annual Progress Report Template

Status: Accepted

Country	Grant ID	Grant Agent	Grant Effectiveness/Start Date
Kiribati	GPE0000891	SCG	03/08/2023

Grant Amount	Timeframe Examined in this Report		Date of Report Submission
1,000,000 (USD)	From Date	To Date	06/02/2026
	03/07/2024	03/06/2025	

Area(s) and activity group(s) covered by grant

Window 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact

- System diagnostics, compact development and education sector analyses
- Gender-responsive sector planning, including operational planning and budgeting
- Supporting policies and plans to identify and address multiple forms of exclusion (planning for children with disabilities, system resilience and inclusion of displaced children)
- Strengthening evidence-based diagnosis of critical implementation bottlenecks and identifying potentially scalable, transformative solutions

Window 2: Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change

- Strengthening sector coordination, including local education groups, joint sector reviews and monitoring the effectiveness of the country-level partnership

Implementation Progress

Overall Project Progress this Reporting Period

Overall progress this reporting period [1]	Previous Rating
Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)

Detailed Description including factors that lead to an upgrade/downgrade in the rating

In December 2025 MoE hosted an ESSP national dissemination forum, bringing together over 200 participants—including mayors, Island Education Coordinators (IECs), principals, head teachers, elders, and MoE officers—from all 20 outer islands. The objective was to ensure increased awareness, updates and participation in implementing the ESSP. Other dissemination activities have also taken place, including the initial launch of the ESSP and dissemination carried out in South Tarawa in 2024, but the MoE was committed to ensuring this full forum could also take place. Some of the delay in holding the forum was due to priority placed on the data collection and implementation of three thematic studies, also supported by GPE. Much time was also needed to plan for the participation of 5 members from each outer island. There were significant logistical issues for the Ministry of Education to arrange participation of this number of individuals across 20 outer islands, especially given the lack of transport from outer islands.
Field work, analysis and drafting are completed for 3 thematic studies – Learning Outcomes, Youth Skills and Pathways, and Teacher Motivation - with a high level of ownership by the MoE through co-construction of methodology and tools, and a high level of engagement in the analysis and drafting of findings and recommendations.

The Ministry of Education has completed the first review of the draft reports for three studies. The final reports are expected to be completed by the end of the 2nd quarter. The data strengthening programme of work advanced considerably, including a National Education Indicator Dataset, a new Statistics Report and a number of capacity building workshops for both technical staff (TSIMU) and a broader scope of

Ministry staff on the use of data in decision making. Planning for the intended mid-2026 Joint Sector Review has been delayed so that MoE can also incorporate the mid-term review of the Education Partnership Compact into the programme of work, potentially linked to an EPIK meeting, if feasible.

Grant Implementation Progress, by Grant Window

Grant Window	Level of Progress this Reporting Period [2]	Previous Rating
Window 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)

Detailed Description:

In December 2025 MoE hosted an ESSP national dissemination forum, bringing together over 200 participants—including mayors, Island Education Coordinators (IECs), principals, head teachers, elders, and MoE officers—from all 20 outer islands. During this week of activity on the ESSP dissemination, the MoE conducted additional targeted sessions, including inclusive education sensitization and WASH in Schools data training using the new KEMIS tablet application.

Work on the Kiribati School Quality Service Standards (KSQSS) has also continued alongside other sector developments as an important tool to guide school-level improvement and generate data through inspections, which then feeds into monitoring and planning. SQSS also benefitted from the addition of a specific review section on School Cleanliness to promote behavioral change and sustainability, and the introduction of the standards with schools in the remote Linnix group. The standards are designed not only for compliance but also to guide ongoing school improvement, helping schools identify strengths, address gaps, and monitor progress through repeated assessments and support.
Prior to the workshops, the working group finalized criteria for School Cleanliness standards and this was added as a standalone focus within Pillar 1: Health, Safety and Hygiene. This aims to ensure that priorities for School Cleanliness will be monitored and used to promote behaviour change and sustainability around school. This was piloted with the Linnix group and will be added to future KSQSS activity. During the pilot, each school's detailed inspection results were reviewed, referencing indicators across the Pillars to encourage synergies and efforts to improve their status for the next inspection cycle. The Ministry commits to revisiting the three schools annually to conduct another round of inspections to ensure they meet the KSQSS standards

The two studies referred to in the last report (Youth, Skills and Pathways and Learning Outcomes) have been completed with draft reports with the Ministry for review. A third study on teachers motivation is also underway.
The Learning Outcomes Study
-MoE had significant ownership of design, data collection and analysis of findings and recommendations in this study
-the study triangulated system, school and classroom data utilizing a desk review, focus group discussions and classroom observations.
-findings were considered through the lenses of curriculum, teaching, teacher training, and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and assessment and data.
-the recommendations consider the same areas along with improving the quality of evidence available for decision making at all levels
-the recommendations will inform the implementation of the ESSP – particularly as they relate to literacy and numeracy development and help strengthen responses to the priorities of the Education Partnership Compact and the related SCG/STG programmes of work. They will be extremely useful for the Compact MTR discussions

The Youth Skills and Pathways Study:
•this study focussed on how secondary school adolescents experience learning and skills development during secondary schooling, their options for post school pathways and the factors that influence those and what system-level adjustments could strengthen coherence, equity, and outcomes?
•the study was informed by a desk review of relevant documentation and data, surveys and focus group ''story telling''

•Findings suggest systems capacity and not student interest/motivation is the biggest barrier to transitions from school to further study/vocational training with high stakes exams a major gate keeper. Equity issues remain including gender, geography and disability. Parents have influence over subject/pathway choices
•Addressing equity through targeted support is a major recommendation along with strengthening coordination between schools and post school training providers to improve progress to higher certification levels. Improved data collection on transitions would inform future decision making for the system while structured careers guidance would support learners.

Nb the final versions of these reports will be provided with the next report.

Grant Window	**Level of Progress this Reporting Period** [2]	**Previous Rating**
Window 2: Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)

Detailed Description:
As per previous reporting, a JSR combined with an initial review of implementation progress on the new ESSP was planned for mid-2026. As MoE also wish to undertake the Mid Term Review of the Education Partnership Compact as part of this overall activity, it is expected that this will be postponed, allowing a greater degree of alignment of these review activities, as well as progress towards priorities outlined in the STG. To ensure the value add of the process, consideration is being given to aligning it with the April 2027 EPiK meeting although further discussions within the Ministry as well as with partners and GPE will take place to confirm this.

Window 3
Over the second half of 2025, the Ministry of Education focused on strengthening data management and analysis through a series of MoE based workshops with the Technology Support and Information Management Unit (TSIMU) which resulted in updated education statistics digest and a strengthened Kiribati Education Management Information Systems reporting (KEMIS). Whilst other partners, particularly EduKait are supporting KEMIS development, this area of work on evidence-based reporting and capacity development was requested to be supported under the SCG and is aligned/coordinated with other partner support. There is now a National Education Dataset and an updated Statistics Report. Issues identified during this work included having a better definition of roles and responsibilities in the data cycles and understanding/addressing the response burden of schools of the Annual School Census. A revised shorter school census form, that still allowed for calculation of all KPIs, was developed.

Continuing to strengthen the collection, analysis and use of data outside of the core TSIMU, a Data Driven Decision Making (DDDM)Workshop was held in late Feb 2026. Data-driven decision making (DDDM) is the process of using data to inform and improve educational practices and outcomes, including monitoring progress towards achieving the goals of the ESSP. The main aim of the workshop programme was to build capacity within a wider scope of MoE staff to understand, interpret and use key education indicators in the monitoring of education policy and planning. The training was focused on providing data-driven decision-making skills to HODs and EM who use statistical data and education indicators for the monitoring of the ESSP M&E framework. Participants (21) included MoE HOD and EM staff as well as staff from the National Statistics Office. Capacity building in Data Driven Decision Making is a long-term prospect as the learned data analysis skills require continual updating, especially in the use of more advanced statistics, such as inferential statistics. Also for the next training it would be very interesting to compare the STAKI results with the PILNA assessment once the latest results are available.
It is recommended that:
• Advanced training and technical assistance be provided in data analysis for TSIMU staff who are responsible for producing the Education Statistics Digest and Indicator reports.
• Refresher training in the use of data for policy monitoring provided to PPRD staff who were not able to attend the DDDM workshop.
• Repeat DDDM training for HODs who were unavailable to attend the workshop, especially covering the ESSP KPIs they need to report on.
• Further training and on-the-job mentoring provided to DDDM workshop participants who need to apply their newly acquired data analysis skills to their work area.
• Development of National Education Indicator dashboard that publishes the ESSP KPIs on the MoE website for external stakeholders

MOE also continues integrating ECCE data into the KEMIS and advocating for increased financing in the ECCE sub-sector

Lessons, innovative/promising practices

Government's ownership of studies was demonstrated through consistent participation and technical engagement of high-level Ministry officials. The use of a technical steering committee for each study, made up of MoE staff and leadership, played a significant role in ensuring this ownership and is a model that both the Ministry and UNICEF see value in using going forward. The organization, data collection, engagement with external researchers, and on- ground logistics/connection to stakeholders was very much Ministry-led.

The use of data visualization added significant value and capacity development to MoE staff in the Learning Outcomes study. Visualization supported the deeper understanding of the research team of what they were looking for in classrooms. Debriefing sessions utilized tangible objects and cultural expressions so the team could visualize the classroom and share findings. There is increased confidence and preparation of the MoE members of the research team to undertake the data collection. An important lesson learned through these thematic studies is that, while UNICEF had embedded capacity building on designing relevant research questions, ensuring robust field data collection, and jointly analyzing findings and recommendations, there may be a need for additional capacity building on more in-depth technical education topics, such as literacy and numeracy strategies. This would have helped ensure that the thematic studies' recommendations were fully understood within the context of Kiribati https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1JdK71zLkK/, while also situating the findings within the broader global evidence base on what works to improve learning.

Impact stories

MOE facebook post on data collection and press report (September)
MOE facebook post of DDM workshop
Data Driven Decision Making Workshop Report.
Nb Final versions of the thematic study reports will be available in the next report.

Tangible Outputs, Knowledge Products, Results Framework and other Supporting Documentation

#	File Name	Document Type	Description
1	Education DDDM workshop report final (002).pdf	Knowledge Product	DDDM Workshop Report

The documents listed were submitted with the progress report. If you'd like access to them, please contact the grant operations officer for your country.

Financial Reporting & Grant Management

Financial Reporting on GPE Grant

Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate

Approved Budget to Date	Cumulative Expenditure	Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate	Level of Financial Absorption
1,070,000	832,813.31	77.83	Slightly Behind

Since the financial absorption is not rated as 'on track', please provide an explanation that identifies the main activities that have been delayed and their corresponding unspent amounts, as well as reasons for the delay and steps taken to ensure that expenditure absorption gets on track in the next reporting period.

As noted above, with the remaining activities to be completed under window 2 and taking account the commitments under the grant, the financial absorption rate will significantly increase and will be fully utilised by grant expiry.

Budget Variance Analysis for the Current Reporting Period

Total Approved Budget for the Current Reporting Period
1,070,000

Total Expenditure for the Current Reporting Period
832,813.31

Explanation for underspending or overspending in excess of 10%
N/A

Management Performance

Level of management performance
Satisfactory (S)

Detailed Description
The UNICEF Kiribati Field Office continues to receive additional support from the Multi-Country Office in Suva, including oversight from the Chief of Education and regional specialists who provide technical assistance to MOE and other partners in grant implementation. UNICEF remains committed to government ownership, institutionalization, and alignment of all activities with national systems to ensure sustainability. This partnership continues to be marked by mutual respect, responsiveness, and a shared focus on results.

Financial management:
UNICEF utilizes a harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) to manage most activities funded through the SCG. It remains a relevant approach given the use of government systems, instead of parallel implementation. The junior finance officer in the Ministry of Education supported by UNICEF who commenced work towards the end of the previous reporting period has been supported to build significant capacity on financial records and timely monitoring and reporting. The officer has been supporting daily financial tracking, ensuring proper coding of expenditure, scans and archives payment vouchers, and helping maintain up-to-date records, thereby reducing future delays in disbursement. This has significantly improved tracking and management of expenditures especially given the large volume of payments/transactions that happen within MoE.

Coordination:
DFAT continues in their role as coordinating agent for the grant. LEG and EPiK meetings are on track as well as other thematic meetings (e.g. climate change, curriculum integration, implementing partner programme area meetings, etc.). This allows for better alignment and complementarity of funding/programme development in education, as well as multi-sectoral issues that touch on education (e.g. climate change).

Revisions to the grant

This period, have there been any revisions to the grant other than those submitted to the Secretariat for their approval?
No

How likely is that the grant agent will submit a request for revision to the Secretariat in the next 12 months for their approval?

Highly Unlikely

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
DCT	Direct Cash Transfer
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESPWG	Education sector planning working group
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
IEC	Island Education Coordinator
KEMIS	Kiribati's Education Management Information System
KQS	Kiribati Quality Standards
MoE	Ministry of Education
MYIOP	Multi-Year Implementation Operational Plan
KSQSS	Kiribati's Education Management Information System
TSIMU	Technical Support and Information Management Unit.

1 Highly Unsatisfactory- The grant has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory - The grant has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory - The grant has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory - The grant is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings or delays. Satisfactory – The grant is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory - The grant is expected to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.

2 Highly Unsatisfactory – The window has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory – The window has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory – The window has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings. Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.

3 tooltip