

# Partnership Compact 2024-2027 for Kiribati

29 September 2023



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AF	Accelerating Fund
ALM	Arrangement on Labour Mobility
ASC	Annual School Census
CA	Coordinating Agency
CEDAK	Church Education Directors Association in Kiribati
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [Australia]
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DP	Development Partner
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EF	Enabling Factor
EFA (1)	Education For All
EFA (2)	Enabling Factors Analysis
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
EPIK	Education Partners in Kiribati
EQAP	Education Quality Assessment Programme
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
ESPIG	Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
FE	Financial Expert
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FMU	Facility Management Unit
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GNI	Gross National Income
GoK	Government of Kiribati
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution(s)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEC	Island Education Coordinator
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning [of UNESCO]
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
JSS	Junior Secondary School
LEG	Local Education Group
KDP	Kiribati Development Plan
KEIP	Kiribati Education Improvement Programme
KEMIS	Kiribati Education Management and Information System
KIT	Kiribati Institute of Technology

KJIP	Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KQA	Kiribati Qualifications Agency
KSA	Key Strategic Area
KTC	Kiribati Teachers College
KV20	Kiribati 20-Year Vision 2016-2036
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEHR	Ministry of Employment and Human Resources
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade [New Zealand]
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MISE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy
MLPID	Ministry of Line and Phoenix Island Development
MoE	Ministry of Education
MTC	Marine Training Centre
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MYIOP	Multi-Year Implementation and Operational Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
OER	Open Educational Resources
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PacREF	Pacific Regional Education Framework
PICT	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PPP (1)	Public-Private Partnership
PPP (2)	Purchasing Power Parity
PPRD	Policy, Planning, Research & Development
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
PSO	Public Service Office
PTR	Pupil:Teacher Ratio
RE	Regional Expert
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SfEP	Skills for Employment Programme
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPC	The Pacific Community
SPWG	Sector Plan Working Group
SSS	Senior Secondary School
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TA	Technical Assistance

TES	Transforming Education Summit
TL	Team Leader
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSIMU	Technical Services & Information Management Unit
TSVD	Technical Skills and Vocational Development
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USD	United States Dollar
USP	University of the South Pacific
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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# 1 Introduction

The Partnership Compact development process was underpinned by a participatory and sustained dialogue between **partners and government counterparts**, led by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Local Education Group (LEG). Technical support was provided by the local Education Sector Working Group (ESWG). The LEG facilitated the establishment of a common vision for system transformation of quality education, particularly for disadvantaged children in Kiribati. Through the task team, MoE led all stages of the Compact development process.

The identification of priority areas for education transformation has been based on in-depth discussions with key stakeholders. **Processes and consultations** comprised the participatory drafting of the Enabling Factors Analysis (EFA) and culminated in a final validation workshop held on 5 September 2023.

Priority areas have been closely aligned with **existing policy frameworks** as reflected in the Government's *Kiribati 20 year Vision 2016-2036* (referred to as the KV20) across the four pillars of Wealth; Peace and Security; Infrastructure; and Governance, (i) the *Kiribati Education Act* (2013); (ii) the *Early Childhood Care and Education Act* (2017); (iii) the *Inclusive Education Policy* (2020); (iv) the *ICT in Education Master Plan*, aligned with the Government of Kiribati manifesto and ICT policy, to support improving education outcomes; and (v) the *Kiribati Education Sector Strategic Plan* (ESSP) 2020-2023. All of these national policy priorities need to be seen within the larger context of the Kiribati Development Plan 2020-2023, *A Wealthy, Healthy and Peaceful Nation*.

Further, together with its Pacific Islands Forum neighbours, Kiribati has committed to the Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) and the priorities identified by the Government of Kiribati (GoK) during the Transforming Education Summit (TES) (16-19 September 2022). Kiribati's subsequent National Statement of Commitment identified the transformation of the education system (strengthening inclusion and alternative learning pathways, transforming the teaching profession, renewing curricula and pedagogies, digital transformation for just and equitable learning) as one of its key priorities.

The *Education Sector Analysis* of 2020 is currently being updated, also including a specific thematic component on Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI). This Partnership Compact will also strengthen and support the implementation of the thematic area "integration of the currently disadvantaged" expected to feature in the new *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2024-2027*.

The Partnership Compact will be implemented with a view to **achieving the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4)**, with a specific focus on strengthening access to, participation in and completion of quality education, and on gender equality in pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Five of the ten targets under SDG goal four are

concerned with improving the quality of education for individual children, young people and adults, and to give them better and more relevant knowledge and skills.

Major donor partners within the Education For All/MDG/SDG movements stressed the need to harmonise and simplify efforts by multiple agencies to support education and development at the country level. Thus, the Partnership Compact specifically supports access to quality education particularly for the disadvantaged, and is targeted to yield cumulative, sustainable and compounding benefits.

A review of the status of Kiribati relative to enabling factors for system transformation was evidence-based and included consultations with partners through the LEG. The **Enabling Factors Analysis** identified three priority areas, i.e. (i) Access to Education; (ii) Quality Teaching; and (iii) Equity and Inclusion. It was found that the cross sectorial links identified to support improving access and participation, particularly for the disadvantaged including those out of school, would also be useful to building multiple pathways for students with different learning needs and home school partnerships. Addressing those would further benefit strongly from improved data management and accessibility through the use of appropriate ICT skills and equipment as a key cross-cutting issue.

## 2 Overview of the priority reform

### 2.1 Description and rationale of the selected priority reform

#### 2.1.1 Three priority areas

The selected priority reform is based on the outcomes of the Enabling Factors Analysis and the initially identified three priority areas, i.e., (i) Access and Participation; (ii) Quality Teaching; and (iii) Equity and Inclusion.

In terms of **Access and Participation**, further qualitative data around non-transitions and drop-outs would support the development of relevant strategies to address these issues, including linkages between education and the job market. The research capacity of the Ministry has been strengthened on the past and should be supported further to identify areas where a more qualitative approach would add immediate value to Ministry decision making, specifically with regard to reducing existing barriers for children and young people not yet having access to quality education.

**Quality Teaching** delivered by qualified teachers and a generally respected teaching profession would benefit from a more strategic deployment of teachers, with consideration to a more equitable allocation of teachers across the territory, including aspects of achieving adequate pupil teacher ratios. A more targeted utilisation of available data on teacher qualifications, training, professional development, and registration – including data on teacher review/inspections – would enable the realisation of a more targeted placement of

teachers (e.g. male teachers in primary schools, well qualified teachers in currently disadvantaged areas. Altogether, this would lead to an enhanced practical impact of teacher professional development, ensuring the optimal benefits for all learners.

A more focussed analysis is needed on broader **Equity and Inclusion** issues, specifically with a view to thoroughly understand and address barriers. Addressing the human resource capacity in terms of data management would ensure both consistency of data capture for disability inclusion and multiple variable analysis to better understand the specific student cohorts most at risk. A GEDSI study is foreseen as part of the process to implement the next education sector plan.

### **2.1.2 One priority reform**

The one priority reform follows discussions around the initially identified three priority areas, and combines an increased access to quality education with the reduction of existing barriers, specifically for disadvantaged children.

The reform entitled

#### ***Reducing barriers and strengthening equitable and inclusive quality education for all children***

incorporates equity and inclusion issues for the benefit all children in Kiribati, while at the same time prioritising those showing the biggest needs.

Therefore, this Partnership Compact will also strengthen and support the implementation of the thematic area “**integration of the currently disadvantaged**” expected to feature in the new Education Sector Strategic Plan 2024-2027 and in the National Education Framework 2024-2031. The NEF is a longer term framework for Education in Kiribati that will be implemented over two cycles of the ESSPs, i.e. 2024-2027 and 2028-2031 respectively.

The transformation towards a more equitable education system of higher quality for all will be accompanied by improving infrastructure and equipment, strengthening capacities of teachers and school leadership/management, and by strengthening the overall relevance of education.

Further, the reform will be supported through an enabling use of affordable and sustainable ICT tools, also with a view to strengthening KEMIS and the utilisation of KEMIS data to monitor the system reform.

This is shown in more detail in the section below:

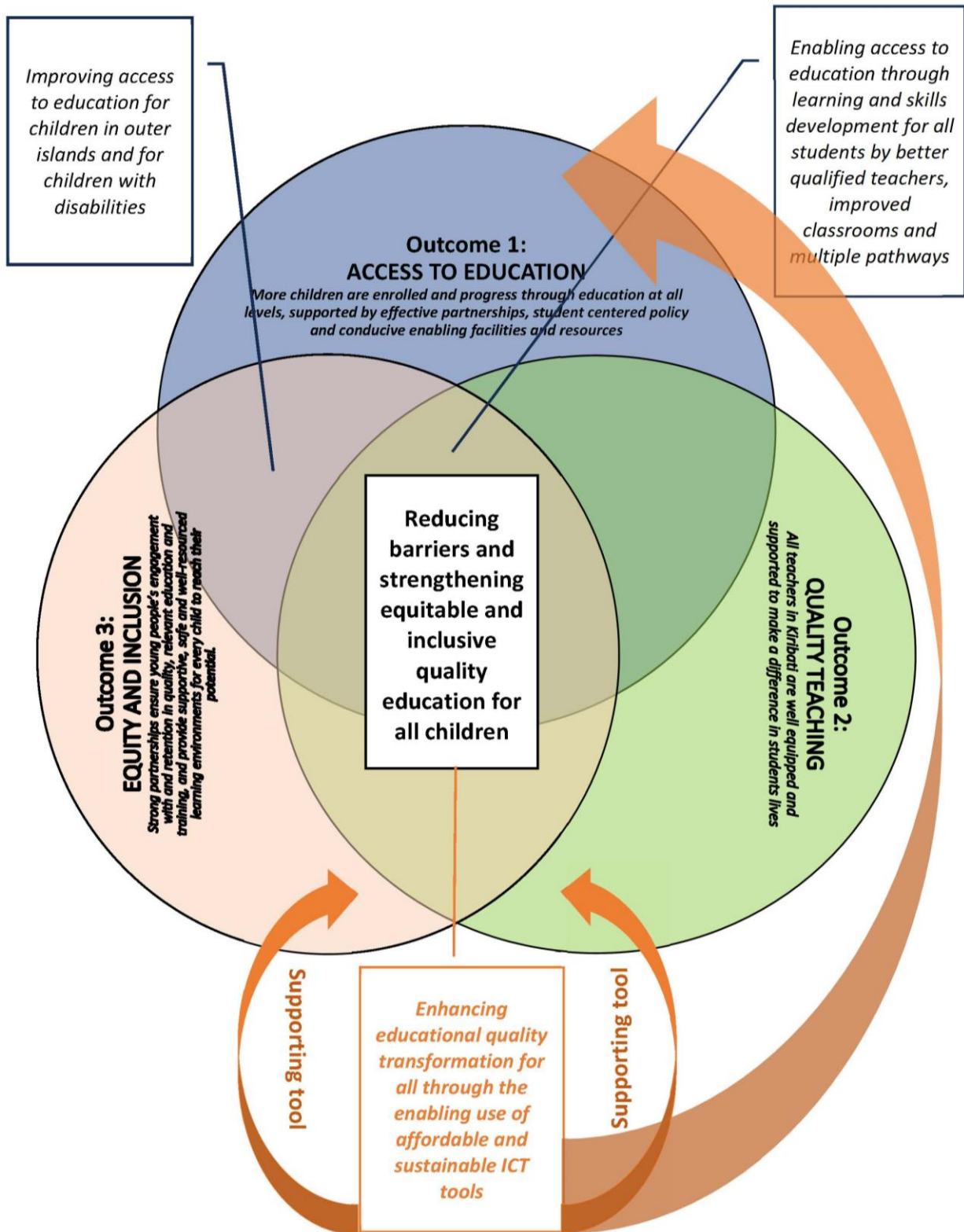


### 2.1.3 Focussed issues and priority actions under the reform

Focussed issues and priority actions under the reform			
<b>Reform:</b> Reducing barriers and strengthening equitable and inclusive quality education for all children			
<b>Focussed issues</b>	Improving <b>infrastructure and equipment</b> , and innovating to overcome barriers to access to learning	Strengthening <b>capacities of teachers and school leadership/management</b> , including encouraging innovations towards learner-centred and inclusive pedagogical approaches	Strengthening overall <b>relevance of education</b> , contributing to <b>improved learning outcomes, retention and completion rates</b>
<b>Priority actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources to support multiple learning styles</li> <li>• Resourcing for inclusive education (disability focus e.g. ramps, WASH facilities, assistive devices, teacher training)</li> <li>• Transport systems for disability / remote students</li> <li>• Islet primary schools expanded to JSS (Y1-Y9)</li> <li>• ICT enabled support to remote schools, teachers and learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ <i>Learner-centred pedagogy, including age-appropriate pedagogy for ECCE</i></li> <li>➢ <i>Use of formative assessment to inform next steps in learning</i></li> <li>➢ <i>Blended learning delivery, including through ICT (particularly for secondary level)</i></li> <li>➢ <i>Integrating ICT and Open Educational Resources (OERs) in teaching and learning and connecting with education objectives</i></li> <li>➢ <i>School quality standards and improvement planning / school leadership</i></li> <li>➢ <i>Institutionalisation of instructional leadership or Leading Leadership for Learning (LLL)</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement in schooling</li> <li>• Multiple pathways for continuing education post JSS</li> <li>• Skills development (cognitive and non-cognitive skills) from early years to post school transition</li> <li>• Strengthened use of te-Kiribati in ECCE teaching and teaching materials</li> <li>• Better linking secondary, vocational and tertiary opportunities with the labour market and economy</li> <li>• Ongoing support to curriculum review and improvement – integration of TVET, non-cognitive skills, ICT, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-cutting areas</b>	(i) Strengthening KEMIS and utilisation of KEMIS data to monitor the system reform (ii) ICT support and school connectivity for improved access, teaching and timely data		

## 2.2 Theory of Change for impact on system transformation

The underlying Theory of Change shows the desired impact on system transformation and, ultimately, leveraging large-scale change.



In pursuing the priority reform *Reducing barriers and strengthening equitable and inclusive quality education for all children*, overlaps between three general outcomes which were identified during the EFA workshop with LEG (i.e. Access to Education, Quality Teaching, Equity and Inclusion) will generate three specific reform strategies, i.e.

- Enabling access to education through learning and skills development for all students by better qualified teachers, improved teaching and multiple pathways;
- Improving access to education for children in outer islands and for children with disabilities; and
- Enhancing educational quality transformation for all through the enabling use of affordable and sustainable ICT in education.

The reform seeks to focus on a specific (smaller) target group – the disadvantaged – and eventually benefits the entire system by supporting its **transformation towards improved equity and inclusion**. **ICT is identified as a key supporting tool which will further contribute to the transformation process by** introducing affordable and sustainable ICT tools and approaches aiming to expand access to quality education delivery and improve the data system and management.

By reducing barriers for disadvantaged children to access quality education, the system eventually transforms into a more permeable state, allowing more children to benefit from quality education within a more equitable environment, supported by modern technology and enhanced management capacities.

## 3 Enabling factors

### 3.1 Overview of the four enabling factors

MoE together with their partners thoroughly analysed Kiribati’s current state of affairs against the four enabling factors, as outlined in the EFA.

#### 3.1.1 Data and Evidence

Although the *Kiribati Education Management and Information System* (KEMIS) and a process of collecting data from schools, through the annual school census, has been established for some time, challenges relating to timeliness of returns and completeness of the census forms, data validation and system and human capacity to both process and analyse data remain. There is an **emerging culture of using data**, particularly in the Ministry, however this **does not necessarily extend to schools** in terms of using data to inform learning.

Although data is available on enrolment and student flow indicators, qualitative data around non-transitions and drop-outs would support the development of relevant strategies to address these issues (including linkages between education and the job market). The **research capacity of the Ministry** has been strengthened and should be supported further to identify areas where a more qualitative approach would add immediate value to Ministry decision making.

With regards to the **teaching profession**, data is available on teacher qualifications, training, professional development, registration, and teacher review/inspections. Additional data on **teacher placement** would help more strategic deployment of teachers, particularly with regard to allocation of qualified teachers against the Pupil:Teacher Ratio (PTR), targeted placement of male teachers in primary schools, and the impact of teacher professional development against observable teaching practice.

Data on **disability** needs to be strengthened for a more focussed analysis, including broader inclusion issues, to better understand and address barriers. Addressing the human resource capacity would be specifically helpful in this area in terms of both consistency of data capture for disability inclusion and multiple variable analysis to better understand the specific student cohorts most at risk.

### **3.1.2 Gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring**

MoE is currently developing the next Education Sector Strategic Plan 2024-2027. The Ministry's *Policy, Planning and Research Division* (PPRD) is leading this work supported by UNICEF under GPE's System Capacity Grant. The division have experience and capability to ensure Kiribati ownership of both the plan and the process of its development. Operational planning by divisions is well established as is the development and presentation of annual plans and budgets. **Monitoring and Evaluation** (M&E) is improving although streamlining current processes would be more efficient and also reduce the burden put on MoE's administration.

**Curriculum** is currently under review, guided by the need to shift the current approach from the more traditional academic areas towards enhanced relevance and responsiveness to concrete learning needs of a wider range of students through all levels of education. This includes ensuring that learning resources and materials are inclusive and do not perpetuate any current gender or other social norms in relation to different groups of learners. Likewise, **GEDSI issues will be incorporated in the new ESSP 2024-2027**, and are expected to be supported by the Partnership Compact.

Generally, sector planning, policy and monitoring will be **proactive**, i.e., looking ahead towards the **contribution of the education sector to wider national level policy priorities**, e.g., ICT, Climate Change and how these present opportunities for access/participation policies and strategies for education. MoE already successfully utilised IT for student access and teacher professional development during the COVID-19 period, and those experiences could well be integrated into ongoing programmes with relevant policy support.

Although teachers are most certainly an integral part of the current ESSP, related initiatives are rather detached from other goal areas. For the next ESSP, there is the intent to ensure teachers are recognised in all planning (and normally policy) as inherent to quality outcomes. One approach being given consideration is to strengthen teacher capacity development within planning (link across education strategies) so that all new initiatives come with an aspect towards **continuous professional development** (CPD). It is also noted that the teaching

profession is highly feminised, particularly at the ECCE and primary level. Proactive, and if necessary, incentivised, programmes are needed to attract and retain male teachers.

Policy review/development is required in this area to bring a holistic approach, particularly to **inclusion**. Specific strategies (including resourcing and training) will then be included in the next sector plan. The Ministry has also identified **social and emotional well-being** as an area requiring attention including systems and support to address bullying, children at risk of dropping out (or being pushed out of the system), and further attention to **life skills**.

### 3.1.3 Sector coordination

The Education Partners in Kiribati (EPIK) is an established mechanism of working with key education stakeholders comprising development partners and stakeholders that include line Ministries and CSOs, and involving them in consultation and priority setting. However, the group is large and representation and attendance is highly dynamic. This makes it difficult to continue discussions across meetings for decision making and get clarity on strategic options. For this reason, MoE has worked with DFAT as coordinating agency to identify a smaller but more consistently engaged technical sub-group to work with EPIK delegation for operationalising coordinated actions and decision-making. This is a relatively new change and still needs to be completely embedded but is designed to support the Ministry while maintaining a close connection with partners. Civil society and teacher organisations remain represented in this smaller group.

In addition, the LEG, a sub-committee under the EPIK that involves the most active EPIK members, which was launched in 2019, has been functioning well in Kiribati. The driver for the establishment of this group was to comply with the required mechanisms of GPE's grant approvals. The LEG was used when the MoE applied for the GPE Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG) which was the grant used for the development of the ESSP 2020-2023. The same LEG was also used for the GPE Accelerating Fund (AF). The latter supported the implementation of the Ministry of Education's COVID-19 Contingency Plan. Currently LEG members meet regularly for the process of development of EFA and Partnership Compact.

With net enrolment rates (NERs) standing at 79.3% for Junior Secondary 56.5% for Senior Secondary, there are still **children and young people who are not participating in education**. Coordination with other partners also within this Partnership Compact could mitigate access challenges. For example, coordinated multi-sectoral support to **improving equitable access to ICT infrastructure and skills** would potentially also improve access and participation overall.

Sector coordination and closer more active **relationships with the teachers' association** would strengthen the relationship of teachers with the community, and lead to an improved community understanding of the teachers' profession. There are some negative perceptions of the teaching profession – particularly of younger less experienced teachers. A coordinated multi-sectoral support to improving ICT infrastructure and skills would simultaneously need

to address support to **strengthening teacher skills to use ICT as a tool for learning** as well as expanding access to multimedia teaching and professional development resources.

The cross sectorial links identified to support **improving access and participation, particularly those out of school**, would also be useful to building **multiple pathways for students with different learning needs and home school partnerships**. The Ministry is very aware of equity issues for senior secondary education and how this is a mix of both curriculum relevancy and social/family circumstances both of which could also be mitigated through **improved cross-sectorial linkages** and enhanced partnership.

### **3.1.4 Volume, equity and efficiency of domestic public expenditure on education**

The Ministry of Education enjoys sustained and significant funding levels domestically, while there is a need for a good breakdown on data of financing education to improve decision making and the efficient and effective use of budget. Further, internal and competing prioritisation and increasing expectations on budget means **equity issues** need to be strengthened in budget utilisation, possibly by ringfencing specific amounts for inclusion, and protecting such amounts from being used in other areas to respond to unknown/unplanned events.

Currently, budgets for **facilities maintenance** often reflect the lowest priority, stepping back behind learning materials or other student driven inputs. In order to save costs in the long run, regular facilities maintenance needs to be prioritised in budget allocations as a prevention mechanism to the necessity of major works occurring. Likewise, strengthened **asset management** (registers, replacement plans etc) to ensure sufficiency of resources across schools would help with both infrastructure and learning/teaching resources to support improved access and participation.

Regarding **funding for teachers**, priority issues include strategies on how (i) to incentivise teaching and school leadership (both financial and other incentives) to attract and retain a quality teacher workforce; (ii) to achieve **equity of remuneration** across levels of teaching to counteract the impacts of inequities on staffing schools with quality teachers; and (iii) to ensure the availability of domestic funding to strengthen teacher capacity development so that all new initiatives come with a teacher CPD aspect (without having to rely on development partner funding that can come with conditionalities contradicting the needs, priorities and requirements of the Ministry. Regarding budget allocation by sub-sector, **ECCE sub-sector receives only 4% of total education budget**<sup>1</sup> which mainly focuses on wages for ECCE teachers. More allocation of the recurrent budget in the ECCE sub-sector would strengthen quality dimension of ECCE.

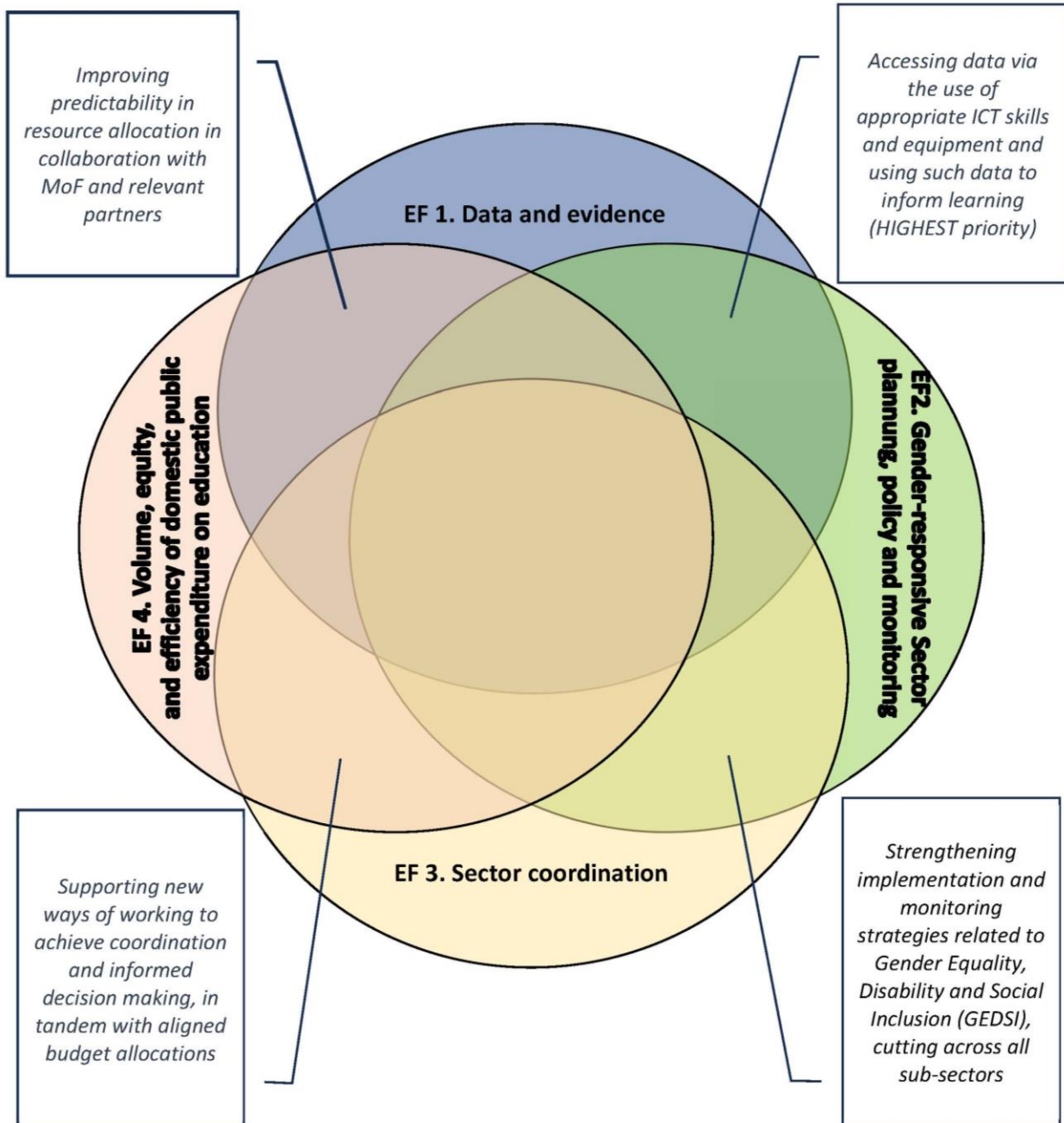
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<sup>1</sup> Digest of Education Statistics 2015-2020.



### 3.2 Actions to be taken to address possible gaps

In the interest of overall coherence, the intersections of the enabling factors have been aligned with the Theory of Change for the Policy Reform, in order to identify necessary actions to be taken to address possible gaps:



The EFA identified *Data and Evidence* as the highest priority. Based on the overlap between *Data and Evidence* and *Gender-responsive Sector planning, policy and monitoring*, such priority leads to the action of **Accessing data via the use of appropriate ICT skills and equipment and using such data to inform learning**.

In other words, the **utilisation of data** has a higher priority than the mere collection of data – likewise, strengthening **ICT is seen as a supporting tool** towards an improved sector planning on the basis of generated clear evidence, specifically through **strengthening KEMIS and utilisation of KEMIS data to monitor the system reform** with its focus on reducing barriers and strengthening equitable and inclusive quality education for all children.

Although KEMIS and a process of collecting data from schools has been established for some time, challenges relating to timeliness of returns, data validation and system and human capacity to both process and analyse data remain. There is an emerging culture of using data, particularly in the Ministry, but this does not necessarily extend to schools in terms of using data to inform learning.

**Strengthening implementation and monitoring strategies related to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)**, based on the overlap between *Gender-responsive Sector planning, policy and monitoring* and *Sector Coordination*, will continue a process initiated under EFA development, focussing more strongly on gender responsiveness and the idea of moving beyond parity, and ensuring all strategies and interventions identified in the new ESSP will have a gender lens at a formative stage.

While preparing the EFA, it was suggested that a review of access policies should be proactive rather than reactive, looking ahead towards national level policy priorities, e.g. ICT, Climate Change and how these present opportunities for access/participation policies and strategies for education. **Supporting new ways of working to achieve coordination and informed decision-making** (being the overlap between *Sector Coordination* and *Volume, equity, and efficiency of domestic public expenditure on education*) will need to be the approach for future actions, as already successfully applied during MoE’s utilisation of IT for student access and teacher professional development during the COVID-19 period. Such experiences can well be integrated into ongoing programmes with relevant policy support.

Moving towards an improved equity and inclusion, the EFA highlighted that a more holistic approach will be needed, with specific strategies to be included in the next ESSP. MoE has also identified social and emotional wellbeing as an area requiring attention including systems and support to address bullying, children at risk of dropping out (or being pushed out of the system), and further attention to life skills. This of course would all be supported by an **improved predictability in resource allocation in collaboration with MoE and relevant partners**, representing the overlap between *Volume, equity, and efficiency of domestic public expenditure on education* and *Data and Evidence*. This will be dealt with in more detail in the following section.

## 4 Delivering education system transformation

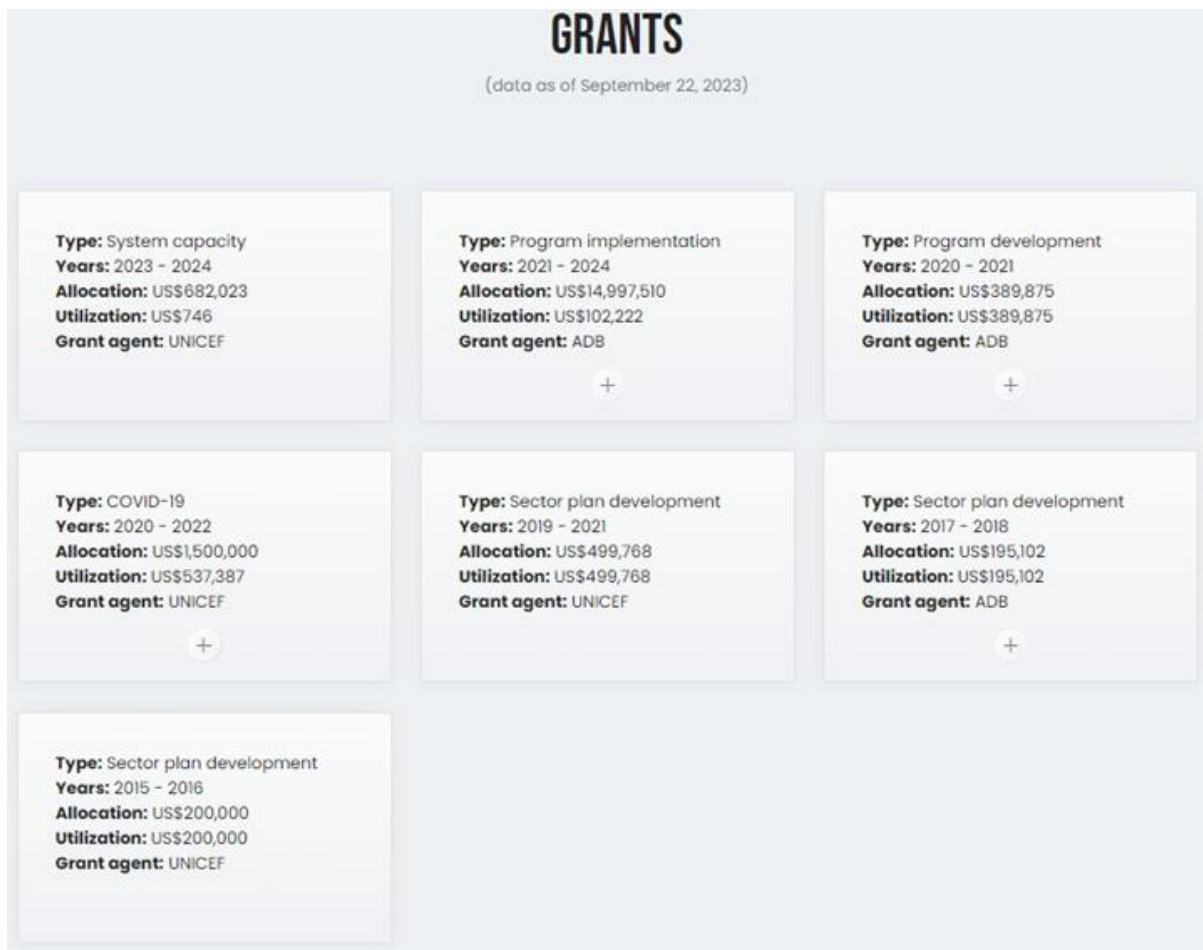
### 4.1 Alignment of partner resources and GPE support

The objectives of the Partnership Compact will also feed into the preparation of the new ESSP 2024-2027.



Recognising that inclusion and GEDSI issues should be addressed as a priority for system transformation, MoE in coordination with the LEG commits to engage a broad range of stakeholders and tools that will embed the needs of these groups and communities.

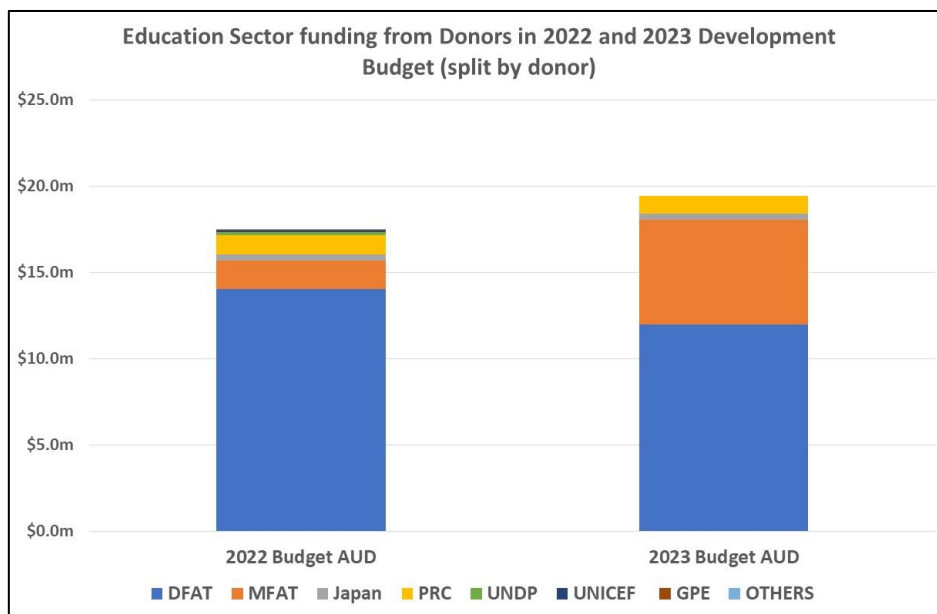
#### 4.1.1 GPE support



GPE has supported Kiribati, through country-specific grant and Pacific regional grant, since 2015, mainly in the areas of sector planning (*Education Sector Plan Development Grant* [ESPDG] for development of the ESSP 2015-2019 and ESSP 2020-2023) and COVID-19 response (Catalytic funds and Accelerated funds for COVID-19). Pacific regional grant (*Pacific Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant* [ESPIG]) was used to implement PacREF activities.

In 2023, MoE Kiribati was granted for SCG Window1 for the development of partnership COMPACT, education sector analysis as well as education sector strategic plan 2024-2027. The Partnership Compact aims at soliciting additional funding from partners in order to strengthen the implementation process towards achieving the targeted policy reform within the new ESSP 2024-2027 currently developed.

#### 4.1.2 Partner resources and focal areas of activity



Source: MFED budget books 2023<sup>2</sup>

Currently, there are multiple partners supporting the MoE through different modalities.

Australia, through their **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)**, contributed 85% of the donor funding to the Education Sector in 2022, making Australia the largest donor. New Zealand, through their **MFAT Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**, is the next largest donor with 10%. MFAT's proportion of funding increased in 2023 as can be seen in the bar graphs above.

The Australian-funded **Kiribati Education Improvement Programme (KEIP)** (AUD 100 million 2011-23) and **Skills for Employment Programme (SfEP)** (AUD 50 million 2016-26) are the leading support initiatives in the Kiribati education sector.

**KEIP** works in partnership with the Ministry of Education and focuses on improving the quality and relevance of basic education in Kiribati, aiming at ensuring that young I-Kiribati complete their basic education with the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute to a productive and resilient Kiribati community. The core areas of KEIP support include school infrastructure, strengthening curriculum, teacher development and quality, school leadership, inclusive education, and strengthening MoE policy, planning and budgeting. KEIP concludes in December 2023 and a new programme of support (design will commence in November 2023) for basic education, funded by DFAT, will commence in January 2024.

**SfEP** works in partnership with the Ministry of Employment and Human Resources and focuses on improving the quality and relevance of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Kiribati, which covers post-secondary and tertiary levels, aiming at

<sup>2</sup> UN did not provide 2023 budget estimate to MFED. 2022 data is actual budget and 2023 is an estimate.

improving the participation and outcomes of women, youth and people with disabilities in TVET and the labour market.

While both programmes support skills development and related employment opportunities in Kiribati, they target different levels of education and different ministries. Both programmes also work closely with the Kiribati Institute of Technology (KIT), being the main service provider of TVET in Kiribati.

**MFAT**'s support to the education sector includes partnerships with UNICEF to strengthen delivery of ECCE, to implement ECD priorities, and to improve WASH infrastructure at schools. MFAT has also partnered with DFID to undertake global research to determine the most effective approach to implementing ECD at scale. MFAT's contribution supports the inclusion of Kiribati in this study. MFAT has partnered with Kiribati to improve school infrastructure through an AUD 5.6m grant for MoE to implement improvements to the quality and safety of school infrastructure to over 100 existing Outer Island school facilities, and establish computer labs in five outer island schools. This support is directly aligned to the Ministry's objectives of ensuring structures are safer, more resilient, and provide conducive learning and teaching environments to enable improved learning experiences and outcomes. Further, MFAT is partnering with *ChildFund* to work with young people who are disengaged from the formal education system to re-engage with education or employment, and to contribute to society more confidently. This includes funding the construction of a dedicated youth learning centre in Betio. MFAT also supports training initiatives intended to raise professional and vocational skills, including their long-standing support for the Marine Training Centre and construction of new facilities at the KIT Betio campus.

Among other bilateral partners, the **People's Republic of China (PRC)** primarily concentrates on the upgrading of facilities and infrastructure, together with supporting student transport, student awards and students travelling to China.

**JICA** mainly provide support through a Volunteer Programme and Short-term & Long-term Training Programmes for human resource development on request from the Kiribati government.

With multilateral international organisations, the **UNICEF**-supported programme has supported diverse priorities of MoE, including quality early childhood education, school quality improvement, remote learning, evidence generation and evidence-based policy and decision making, as well as emergency response. UNICEF has supported development of the first-ever ECCE curriculum with nationwide teacher training to ensure roll-out (including targeted support to disadvantaged children), development of ECCE quality standards used to register centres and expand access to ECCE, harmonisation of quality standards from ECCE-SSS level (with ongoing piloting at SSS-level), as well as in-service teacher training in various areas. UNICEF was the leading agency that supported the education sector in Kiribati in the phase of preparedness, response and recovery from COVID-19, including the development of digital remote learning systems, such as the *Learning Passport* and radio lessons, to ensure continuous access to quality education regardless of internet connectivity or school closures,

capacity building of teachers on remote and student-led learning, and also supporting the promotion of health and hygiene practices in schools and communities through the WASH programme to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases. UNICEF's technical support also includes the development of a national education sector contingency plan as well as a guideline for the development of a school-based contingency plan and teacher training. UNICEF will continue to support inclusive education through regional review and stakeholder consultations and joint planning in the areas of inclusive education. UNICEF also has provided technical support to MoE in the development of the ESSP 2020-2023, drawing on a comprehensive Education Sector Analysis, and has supported education data through production of MICS-EAGLE, as well as the Education Statistical Digest 2015-2020. Both of the documents contributed to evidence generation for identifying the most disadvantaged groups of children through multiple disaggregation of available household and EMIS data. UNICEF will continue to support the production of the education statistical digest, including calculation of SDG4 and PacREF indicators based on EMIS data. Further, UNICEF will continue to support the EMIS data collection system through training of school leaders and island education coordinators on filling and validating annual school census forms that feed into EMIS. UNICEF is also supporting the development of the new sector plan, which is ongoing. Further, UNICEF supports child protection and safe school initiatives, including development and national rollout of child safe school policies that includes code of conduct for teachers, inter-school referral pathways as well as anti-bullying policies. UNICEF plans to support a curriculum review to incorporate child protection messaging as well as teacher training on psycho-social support. Finally, UNICEF has supported a number of activities under PacREF for Kiribati, including both regional and national-level activities (including some of the above).

**UNESCO** has been instrumental in providing technical and financial support to the GoK to develop and endorse the ***ICT in Education Master Plan 2021-2025***, which aligns with Kiribati's national ICT policy. By building a solid foundation to support technology-enabled education, the Plan aims at supporting the inclusive usage of ICT in education that upholds culturally grounded and high-quality education. It will comprise the enhancement of ICT infrastructure and connectivity, the creation of a learning environment supported by quality digital resources and pedagogy, and the enhancement of the Kiribati Education and Management System towards effective and efficient decision making. UNESCO worked with GoK and other Pacific member states in the development of the regional Learning Management Platform *Waka Moana* and its resources, in collaboration with the USP. This is enhanced by UNESCO's continued support through the *UN Joint Programme on Micronesia Digital Transformation* which involves ICT in Education policy/strategy, consolidation and access expansion on relevant Open Educational Resources (OERs) and teachers support, coupled with cross-sectoral whole of the government support for digital transformation policy and legislation environment. UNESCO's on-going PacREF support towards mainstreaming 21<sup>st</sup> century skills across curricula, teacher education and student assessments as well as building knowledge base to better support teachers in understanding and applying inclusive education fully aligns with areas of priority reform. UNESCO/UNESCO Institute of Statistics in partnership with SPC

has been supporting SDG 4 Benchmarking, education data collection and capacity strengthening..

**UNDP** provides technical assistance towards strategising inclusive ICT in education with concrete action plans including curriculum development and teacher training, strengthening the utilisation of multimedia in teaching and learning, also designing and improving online and offline teaching and learning resources.

Since 2017, **UNFPA** has taken a hands-on approach to empower the youth of the Pacific, providing Comprehensive Sexuality Education/Family Life Education (CSE/FLE) in Kiribati and surrounding Pacific Island nations. The goal is to furnish young individuals with the requisite knowledge, capabilities, and mindset to make well-informed choices regarding their sexual and reproductive health and overall well-being. This initiative is integrated into the broader Transformative Agenda, which is designed to enhance the efficiency of humanitarian efforts by fostering more predictable, accountable, responsible, and collaborative partnerships.

#### 4.1.3 Distribution of partner resources across Ministries

Donor funding is provided to four Government Ministries for the Education Sector, including MoE, Ministry of Employment and Human Resources (MEHR), Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE), and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The share that MEHR receives is even higher in 2023 which can be seen in the bar graphs below.



Source: MFED budget books 2023

MoE received 59% of the Sector funding from donors and MEHR received 35% in 2022, supporting the Kiribati Institute of Technology (KIT) and the Marine Training Centre (MTC). MIA received AUD 1 million annually from China for small scale repairs and maintenance to outer island schools, and contributions to MISE included some funding from New Zealand channelled through UNICEF (infrastructure and water quality assessment for schools),

together with additional funding provided for maintenance of schools via MIA grants to school councils. The Government of Kiribati also allocates an annual budget for the Infrastructure Maintenance Programme assisting with the maintenance work to school facilities and government offices. The coordination of this project is centralised under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MFED). In 2022 and 2023, a provision of AUD 3 million and AUD 4 million was allocated respectively to this programme of which 10% has been allocated to the Education sector. The share per ministry can increase or decrease depending on the request received and the capacity to implement the maintenance work, on an annual basis.

#### 4.1.4 Aligning ongoing partner support with the selected sector priority reform

With a view to achieving the prioritised selected policy reform, it will be important to specifically identify and utilise available partner resources which could potentially support such a process. This also refers to resources not yet available, but potentially to be secured during the implementation period of this Partnership Compact.

The following table shows how the current partner support to the education sector in Kiribati can be aligned to the selected sector reform, in order to unfold desired **synergetic effects**:

Aligning ongoing Partner support with the selected sector priority reform				
Organisation	Project name / targeted support	Start	End	Synergetic effects with the selected sector reform
DFAT Australia	Kiribati Education Improvement Programme (KEIP) (AUD 100 million)	2011	2023	Phase 3.5 has a focus on improving learning outcomes for all and sectoral management with a focus on consolidation of previous KEIP reforms in teaching and learning, school infrastructure, and supporting transition into new programme.
	New bilateral education programme KEIP (AUD 50 million)	01 Jan 2024	2033	Improving learning outcomes with a focus on English literacy across basic to senior secondary schools, including mission schools <sup>3</sup> . Additional infrastructure support will be provided to the education sector through a separate infrastructure programme, also in design.
	Skills for Employment Programme (SfEP) (Kiribati Facility)	01 Oct 2016	16 Mar 2026	Supporting the Kiribati government by providing labour market-demand driven skills development to young people who seek to work in domestic and offshore labour markets.
MFAT New Zealand	Improvements to Outer Island Schools (AUD 5.6 million)	2021	2024	Implementing urgent maintenance works for 21 Junior Secondary Schools and 83 primary schools to bring them up to a safe standard and more closely aligned to National Infrastructure Standards. Expanding classrooms and dormitories. Improving quality of learning outcomes by establishing computer labs at targeted schools.

<sup>3</sup> Subject to the new design to be developed late 2023.

Aligning ongoing Partner support with the selected sector priority reform				
Organisation	Project name / targeted support	Start	End	Synergetic effects with the selected sector reform
				Strengthening MoE's asset management practices and bringing about cost savings for GoK through decreased maintenance costs over the long term.
	THRIVE Early Childhood Development Research <sup>4</sup> (AUD 1.8 million)	2021	2025	Strengthening available evidence around the effective delivery of Early Childhood Development (ECD), particularly in low middle income countries. Ensuring the inclusion of Kiribati in the country level research, thus allowing MFAT and Pacific countries to access and inform this global research.
	WASH in schools <sup>5</sup> (AUD 3.8 million for Negotiated Partnership) <b>(Implemented by UNICEF)</b>	2021	2026	Delivering WASH, scaling-up WASH across the Outer Islands of the Gilbert Group <sup>6</sup> . WASH in school assessment and training in target island schools, as well as improvement of WASH infrastructure.
	Youth Learning Centre (AUD 3.8 million) alongside partnership with ChildFund to implement Youth Learning Programme	2021	2026	Partnership with ChildFund which includes equipping young people who have fallen out of the formal education system with confidence and life skills to take on new education or employment opportunities. Constructing a dedicated youth learning and development facility in Betio.
	Pacific Qualification Recognition (NZQA)	2018	2028	New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and the Educational Quality Assessment Programme (EQAP) are working together to deliver the Pacific Qualifications Recognition project under the PACER Plus Arrangement on Labour Mobility (ALM). The Activity seeks to enable greater recognition of quality assured qualifications and credentials across participating member countries within the Pacific region.
	ECCE access and quality improvement <b>(Implemented by UNICEF)</b>	2017	2026	Supporting development of quality standards and assessment of ECCE centres, ECCE data collection, development of ECCE curriculum and national teacher training to ensure <u>all</u> young children have access to quality inclusive pre-school education before starting formal schooling. From 2024, development of ECCE workforce strategy as well as development of teaching and learning materials, and providing support to CPD for ECCE teachers.
	Early Childhood Development <b>(Implemented by UNICEF)</b>	Ongoing		Supporting development and implementation of multi-sectoral ECD policy, as well as positive parenting and engagement strategy.

<sup>4</sup> In partnership with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

<sup>5</sup> As part of MFAT's Negotiated partnership with UNICEF New Zealand.

<sup>6</sup> Approximately 40 primary schools, 100 pre-schools, 4 junior secondary schools and 80 health care facilities will be supported.



Aligning ongoing Partner support with the selected sector priority reform				
Organisation	Project name / targeted support	Start	End	Synergetic effects with the selected sector reform
People's Republic of China (PRC)	Upgrading of school facilities, including provision of educational materials and equipment, such as textbooks, computers, and printers	2021	2024	Maintaining outer island schools made from traditional materials <sup>7</sup> .
	Supporting student transport, student awards and students travelling to China	2021	2024	Strengthening accessibility to quality education.
	Improving quality and relevance of TVET (through KIT)	2021	2024	Improving quality and relevance of TVET.
JICA	Human resource development and improving the quality of education through volunteer and training (short/long-term) programmes	On going		Trainings and volunteers can be arranged to meet needs of MoE in various areas.
UNICEF	Evidence generation (EMIS and Education statistics)	2021	2025	Supporting production of education statistics, including calculation of SDG4 and PACREF indicators and publication of education statistical digests using EMIS data, as well as training for IECs and school leaders on validation of annual school census form that fed into EMIS.
	Evidence-based education sector planning (ESA, ESSP, thematic research)	2023	2024	Supporting development of Partnership Compact Document, ESA, ESSP with a specific focus on the selected policy priority. Thematic studies to generate more qualitative evidence as well as development of education statistical digest will be also supported.
	Education sector contingency planning	2021	2025	Supporting emergency response/disaster risk management through development and implementation of (i) COVID-19 preparedness, response and recovery activities; (ii) national education sector contingency plan; and (iii) guidelines for the development of school-based contingency plans
	School quality improvement	2022	2026	Supporting school improvement planning process through development of quality standards that include school self-evaluation framework and school strategic plan, as well as national teacher training.

<sup>7</sup> AUD 1 million fund.



Aligning ongoing Partner support with the selected sector priority reform				
Organisation	Project name / targeted support	Start	End	Synergetic effects with the selected sector reform
	ICT in education (Digital Learning)	2021	2025	Supporting ICT in education, with special focus on digital learning contents generation for Learning Passport through teacher training, as well as development of the utilisation strategy for Learning Passport.
	Child protection and Safe School Initiative	2019	2026	Supporting child protection in school, including the development of safe school policy and its national rollout. Curriculum review to incorporate child protection messaging and teacher training on psychosocial support are planned to be implemented.
	Understanding risks to access and participations	2023	2025	Supporting to improve access and participation for disadvantaged students by understanding the preconditions to students not attending school through an out-of-school children (OOSC) study and creating better understanding of the roles the school, families and students at different sub-sectors through developing domains of home/school transitions.
	ECCE access and quality improvement	2017	2026	Refer to MFAT, New Zealand section above.
	Early Childhood Development	Ongoing		Refer to MFAT, New Zealand section above.
	WASH in schools	2021	2016	Refer to MFAT, New Zealand section above.
UNESCO	PacREF support	Feb 2022	Dec 2024	Identifying and agreeing definitions and concepts of 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills. Providing guidance for mainstreaming 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills across curricula, teacher education and student assessments. Generating knowledge for better understanding and support to teachers in inclusive education.
	Micronesia Digital Transformation and ICT in Education	2018	Aug 2024 (and ongoing)	Reviewing/updating ICT in Education Master Plan 2021-2025 and integrating into new ESSP Consolidating open educational resources and teacher training Providing support to digital transformation policies and strategies Regional Learning Management Platform <i>Waka Moana</i> and country and regional online resources
UNDP	Supporting implementation of the ICT Master Plan 2021-2025	20	2025	Strategising inclusive ICT in education with concrete action plans including curriculum development and teacher training. Strengthening the utilisation of multimedia in teaching and learning and improving online and offline teaching and learning resources.

## 4.2 Roles and responsibilities of country partners

The Sector Plan Working Group (SPWG) will lead the work for MoE under the overall guidance of the Senior Management Team and Secretary of Education. The SPWG is made up of senior officials from across MoE with the experience and knowledge to analyse data, think critically and ask strategic questions as well as an understanding of how that translates at school/provider level. The Local Education Group will support MoE through engaging in policy and planning dialogue and aim to coordinate development assistance to the education sector in response to these discussions. The Education Partners in Kiribati (EPIK) have appointed a sub-committee to lead on this work.

## 4.3 GPE grants and other assets to be mobilised in support of the policy reform

The Partnership Compact includes support of the priority reform implementation for three GPE grants, namely: (i) System Capacity Grant (SCG), (ii) System Transformation Grant (STG), and (iii) Multiplier Grant (MG).

### 4.3.1 System Capacity Grant

The System Capacity Grant (SCG) has a volume of USD 1.0 million and so far USD 682,023 has been granted for the **technical support** for the development of the Partnership Compact document and updating of the Education Sector Analysis (ESA), building on the existing Education Sector Analysis of September 2020, and the preparation of a costed Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for the period 2024-2027 (following on the current ESSP 2020-2023).

Further, the SCG is expected to support **capacity building** on the use of data for reporting to SDG4 (SPC-EQAP) Evaluation of Language Programmes at KTC (SPC-EQAP), the development of the ICT in Education Plan (UNESCO) and the ECE sub-sector analysis (UNICEF).

As a starting point in the sector analysis and subsequent ESSP development, the SCG will support the **utilisation of a GEDSI perspective in the planning process which recognises and promotes equality and empowerment**. The approach will also ensure that socialised gender roles and stereotypes, patriarchal attitudes and unequal power dynamics between boys and girls will be addressed.

The process to complete sector analysis and finalise, disseminate and launch implementation for the ESSP is expected to be finalised by the end of 2023. The **roadmap** which is part of the SCG application describes the core activities to conduct the education sector analysis and the development of the NEF and details the scope of processes, deliverables, timetables and funding sources. The roadmap will be used as a checklist to monitor progress of each SCG component. The roadmap further outlines the budget allocated, including GPE, MOE, UNICEF

and other partner contributions, noting that MoE and partner contributions are estimated USD equivalents. In addition to the work of the sector analysis and plan, this work will also prepare for the independent assessment of enabling factors.

#### 4.3.2 System Transformation Grant

Following the endorsement of the Partnership Compact, MoE intends to conceptualise a System Transformation Grant (STG) application with a volume of USD 2.5 million. System transformation will be achieved by **enhancing access to quality education specifically for the disadvantaged**, simultaneously benefitting from an improved data management on the basis of **strengthened ICT infrastructure** aiming at **targeted utilisation of data for policy making**.

#### 4.3.3 Multiplier Grant

In the interest of mobilising new external funding, MoE intends to seek for a Multiplier allocation with a volume of USD 5.0 million. This allocation will be utilised to target and **further strengthen the implementation and desired impact of the key priority reform** (together with its related focussed issues, priority actions and cross-cutting areas, as described in Section 3.2).

## 5 Monitoring, evaluation and learning

MoE has recently published a comprehensive statistics report for the period 2015-2020 with statistics brought up to date. This process also revised annual school census forms to ensure that, post COVID, the annual collection of data and reporting will be systemic. However, no more recent data are currently available since MoE is currently working on the Digest that covers the period 2021-2023.

As stated in the EFA, the quality of data on disability in the census was not reliable and thus disability data was removed from Education Statistical Digest 2015-2020. Broader data on students with a disability in terms of attendance, completion and learning outcomes is not collected on a regular basis. The need for better data collection and analysis for students with disabilities has been identified as an equity issue within the context of the priority reform. Both the need for and desire to use such data is present, but further work (and support) is needed for the intended practice to become a reality.

For example, the recent MICS EAGLE work has provided additional data on children with functional difficulties, including data on out-of-school rate and completion rate. While basic information is available for decision making for planning purposes, further work (and support) will be needed for embedding data firmly and reliably into existing collection systems.

Also, although KEMIS and a process of collecting data from schools has been established for some time, challenges relating to timeliness of returns, data validation and system and human

capacity to both process and analyse data remain. This of course is an element which will be addressed by the priority reform.

## 5.1 Key indicators for assessing achievement of key strategies

In the current absence of a monitoring and evaluation framework, together with practical monitoring and reporting tools, there is a lack of current monitoring and evaluation data, particularly at impact level. Consequently, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the current ESSP 2020-2023 have not been properly tracked over the past years, apart from a mere activity update against ESSP Objectives.

Since the indicators provided in the latest Kiribati Education Digest 2015-2020 (published in 2023) are rather broad and cannot really be related to monitoring a policy reform either (especially since they do not go beyond 2020), our strategy will be to **revert to the more targeted indicators from the ESSP 2020-2023**, even if that means to **establish the baselines** first before being able to agree on specific targets.

Thus, our focus will be on the following indicators mainly selected from the current ESSP 2020-2023 (likely to be continued under the new ESSP 2024-2031) if not indicated otherwise, on the understanding that **activities under this Partnership Compact will initially focus on establishing the respective baselines**:

Key indicators for assessing achievement of key strategies			
<b>Reform:</b>			
Reducing barriers and strengthening equitable and inclusive quality education for all children			
Indicator <i>(all to be disaggregated by schooling level, gender, disability, island)</i>		MoV	Frequency of data collection
<b>Strategy 1:</b> <i>Enabling access to education through learning and skills development for all students by better qualified teachers, improved teachers and multiple pathways.</i>			
KPI #1	% of teachers with at least minimum qualification	Teacher qualification records Training records HR and staffing	Annually
KPI #2	% of teachers involved in CPD	Teacher qualification records Training records HR and staffing	Annually
KPI #3	% of schools with new curricula implemented effectively	Curriculum documents Training records Qualitative survey	Annually (Qualitative survey every 2 years)

Indicator (all to be disaggregated by schooling level, gender, disability, island)		MoV	Frequency of data collection
<b>Strategy 2:</b> <i>Improving access to education for children in outer islands and for children with disabilities</i>			
KPI #4	<b>% of schools with at least 3 auxiliary and extra-curricular programmes available to students and/or the community and with a clear community engagement process in place</b>	School reporting School inspection visits KEMIS	Annually
KPI #5	<b>Number of school-aged CWDs enrolled<sup>8</sup> (a) in model inclusion schools; (b) in all schools</b>	School reporting School inspection visits KEMIS	Semi-annually
KPI #6	<b>GER/NER by schooling level, gender and island<sup>9</sup></b>	Annual school census (ASC)	Annually
<b>Strategy 3:</b> <i>Enhancing educational quality transformation for all through the enabling use of affordable and sustainable ICT tools</i>			
KPI #7	<b>% of schools with internet by school type<sup>10</sup></b>	Annual School Census (ASC)	Annually
KPI #8	<b>% of schools by level of education with access to computers to support course delivery or independent teaching and learning needs<sup>11</sup></b>	Annual School Census (ASC) Qualitative survey	Annually (Qualitative survey every 2 years)

<sup>8</sup> The original ESSP 2020-2023 indicator was phrased as “% of SEND students in mainstream education”. However, children with disabilities (CWD) in Kiribati are enrolled in 3 types of schools, i.e., (i) special school located in Tarawa; (ii) model inclusion schools located in Tarawa, with a plan of expansion to outer islands; and (iii) regular schools that do not provide specific support to CWDs. The indicator has thus been amended to allow for a better assessments against the school types (ii) and (iii), also preferring an assessment against the absolute number (instead of %).

<sup>9</sup> The original ESSP 2020-2023 indicator was phrased as “GER, NER, and Survival rates by stage, gender and school location against regional averages”. However, while enrolment figures can be collected by the School Improvement Unit every term, the annual school census for calculating GER/NER/survival rate is conducted annually.

<sup>10</sup> Current KEMIS indicator.

<sup>11</sup> SDG 4.a.1 indicator.

## 5.2 Verification strategies to generate evidence on the impact of the priority reform

**Coordination, and general strengthening of monitoring and evaluation in the MoE will be one of the priorities of the forthcoming ESSP** and will also support the assessment and verification of indicators related to this Partnership Compact.

The Kiribati Education Management and Information System (KEMIS) serves as the principal database for the Ministry of Education (MoE), also functioning as the key source for school enrolment data. Ideally, this system should enable the Ministry to identify trends and to observe patterns related to educational participation, retention rates, student mobility, and learning pathways. However, it has become clear during discussions in preparation for this document that **few of the MoE staff, who were part of the interview process, actively utilise KEMIS on a regular basis**. Some gently disregarded the system, while a substantial number did not even maintain an active KEMIS data portal account.

There are various challenges associated with KEMIS. Basically, it remains significantly underpopulated, i.e., collected data through annual school census is less than actual due to some schools not submitting the census forms. This is exacerbated by developmental partners maintaining autonomous databases. As a result, there is an absence of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework, a gap further compounded by the lack of practical monitoring and reporting tools. **Generating evidence on the impact of the policy reform would thus also be a hands-on capacity building exercise for MoE.**

The eight proposed KPIs for assessing progress and ultimate impact of the policy reform include **two types of indicators**, i.e. (i) indicators focussing on real-time delivery, collected routinely to measure the implementation of the priority reform (KPIs #1, #2, #4, #5, #6, #7); and (ii) indicators focussing on intermediate or longer-term outcomes expected from the priority reform (KPIs #3 and #8). The latter indicators will be assessed by specific qualitative surveys, evaluating the effectiveness of reforms at classroom level by generating evidence along these possible evaluation questions:

- To which degree does the implementation of curricula benefit the disadvantaged, to which degree does the curriculum reform reduce barriers to education? (KPI #3)
- To which degree does the curricula reform improve the specific learning conditions of disadvantaged children? (KPI #3)
- To which degree does the curriculum reform enhance professional perspectives on the job market, specifically for disadvantaged learners? (KPI #3)
- What are the principal benefits for children due to the strengthening of ICT provision in schools, particularly in disadvantaged environments? (KPI #8)

- To which degree are computers in schools utilised for educational purposes, who can benefit the most, who enjoys the greatest positive impact on their individual learning experience? (KPI #8)

**Qualitative surveys would be carried out in two-yearly intervals and would be integrated into joint sector review procedures with donor partners** (to be included in the monitoring and evaluation plan of the new ESSP). Such qualitative surveys could be conducted through SMS or online (to island education coordinators or schools). It is expected that Rapid-Pro SMS survey system with all school leaders will be fully established and school leaders are familiarised with online surveys.

### 5.3 Delivery pathways for the priority reform

The following diagram shows the interconnectedness between inputs and strategies, resulting desired outcomes (intermediate and long-term) and ultimately impact of the priority reform.

It also shows the envisaged ongoing technical and management support (specifically with a focus on strengthening KEMIS) and the data and evidence base for enabling assessment of the overall reform.

**Delivery pathways for the priority reform: Reducing barriers and strengthening equitable and inclusive quality education for all children**

