



KIRIBATI UNITING CHURCH WOMEN FELLOWSHIP

**REITAN AINE NI KAMATU IAON KIRIBATI
(RAK)**

KIRIBATI UNITING CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

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Universal Periodic Review

Individual Stakeholder Submission for the Review of Kiribati

RAK affiliates with Council for World Mission, Uniting Church of Australia, World Day of Prayer, Pacific Day of Prayer, Tangintebu Theological College, Kiribati Island Council of Church, Youth for Christian Living

I. BACKGROUND

1. RAK is an acronym for Reitan Aine ni Kamatu, a Kiribati Uniting Church Women Fellowship. It was first established in 1865, 30th October by Mrs Clarissa Hiram Bingham, wife of the Missionary, Rev Dr Hiram Bingham. This is one of the Christian Faith Based Organisation that runs its operation by means of RAK members' contribution.
2. With members spanning all over the 23 Kiribati Islands, an office or centre for women therefore was opened in 1961, on the capital, Tarawa, where all the women activities and programs are organised and monitored. The girls and women of the Kiribati Uniting Church are all members of the RAK. There are 3 staff members recruited for the office operations that is; RAK Coordinator, Human Resource & Program Officer and a Treasurer.
3. These are the activities that RAK has in its own Centre; it has its own Boardroom that can be hired by the Government, NGOs and other people that need a venue for a meeting or workshop. It has also a sewing unit with 5 women sewers and a catering unit with 2 women caterers. These units deal with the school uniforms for all the Church's (KUC) secondary schools, other sewn products for other people and the catering services required by Government, Church & other NGOs for their workshops and meetings. The sewers and the caterers are paid from their earnings, that is there is a certain amount that they should earn each year in order to have a certain amount of net profit after all. From the income that the RAK Centre generates, will assist in its operations and activities for the members and Kiribati Uniting Church.
4. RAK's role is to assist the Kiribati Uniting Church in the spreading of the Good News and train the RAK members & Church members to live a Godly life, so as to enable a happy, peaceful and healthy family in their homes.

II. Issue: SOCIAL MEASURES AND CHILD CARE

5. As experienced, there is likely a need to look into developing child care places for infants & toddlers. There are employees who are both parents (father and mother) who cannot look after their kids during working hours. It is common that grandmothers are mostly reliable to do a child care. If not grandmothers, it can be any female family related member who can do this. However it is clear that women are likely be the ones performing the large share of unpaid care work.
6. However in looking at this situation, it is better for government to consider this as a priority need for the children of Kiribati, not to do the caring only but should also be made as a convenient place for upbringing and educating the children from 3 to 6 years. This idea would not only benefit the children but it would also have considerable employment effect. In order to fill the gap, a budget needs to be allocated by Government to fulfil this need. More jobs would be created in child care and furthermore more parents, in particular mothers are able to work, who previously were prevented from doing so by their care obligations.

III. RECOMMENDATION:

7. Further studies made by Government on this so as to facilitate this idea of developing well facilitated child care places.
8. The competence for the regulation of child care as educational institution should be assigned to the state.
9. Introduction of nationwide quality standards and a right to child care - also outside of the children's school days.
10. Include child care funding in government budget
11. Churches may be assigned as optional accommodations for child care with Government assistance