

Equal opportunities for women and men to support the future progress of Kiribati

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Wednesday 23 September 2021 (Kiribati): Equal opportunities, equal human rights and equal access to services for women and men remains a priority for Kiribati.

This was the focus of the national Kiribati Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy and a key topic of discussion at the inaugural 2021 Annual Reflections Meeting, held on 22 September 2021.

The Annual Reflections Meeting brought together people from across Kiribati who work to improve gender equality, through projects supported by the Australian Government and its Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) program. It was hosted by the Australian High Commission in partnership with the *Pacific Women's* Support Unit.

People attending represented a wide range of grant recipients, who receive funding for their gender equality projects from Australia through *Pacific Women*.

For some project managers, this was their first opportunity to lead workshop discussions and talk about the problems and successes of their projects. This sharing of experiences across different project teams, resulted in some issues being solved along with many new ideas generated to best plan for future.

There are many leading projects in Kiribati to reduce violence against women and children, and to give women the same opportunities as men to support their families and to be leaders. These include Strengthening Peaceful Villages, the Kiribati Women and Children Support Centre, and others.

The Kiribati Annual Reflection has been particularly important given the challenging operating environment partners have had to work in, amidst the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also provided an opportunity for participants to learn more about the the Australian Government's ongoing commitment to gender equality, with its \$170million five year Pacific Women Lead program.

The meeting was held at the Ministry of Education KTC Learning Hub venue in Bikenibeu.
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Background: *Pacific Women* connects more than 170 gender equality initiatives funded by Australia and implemented by over 160 partners across 14 Pacific Island countries, including Fiji. It is one of the largest global commitments to gender equality. Providing technical, knowledge sharing and convening support to the portfolio of partners is *Pacific Women's* Support Unit.

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