

**MIGRATION, TRANSNATIONALITY, AND CLIMATE CHANGE
IN THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI**

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ABSTRACT

Set on a stage of international environmental politics, this study explores the intimate features of cultural identity in the context of small-scale global migration. Research situates itself between anthropological inquiry and real world application as the nation of Kiribati stands on the frontlines of climate change. A multi-sited approach was utilized to create a more complete picture of migration through the development of a closed comparative study. Though diaspora populations contributed to and detracted from the maintenance of the Kiribati identity, it was found that widely dispersed populations were able to maintain a virtual global homeland abroad even as their real one was being destroyed by global climate change.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABCFM	– American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
AIDS	– Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AOSIS	– Alliance of Small Island States
AUD	– Australian Dollar
AUS	– Australia
AusAID	– Australian Agency for International Development
BYU-H	– Brigham Young University at Hawaii
CC	– Climate Change
CDC	– Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COP	– Conference of Parties
CRSR	– Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
EEZ	– Exclusive Economic Zone
FJ	– Fiji
HIV	– Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IPCC	– Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KANI	– Kiribati Australian Nursing Initiative
KAP	– Kiribati Adaptation Program
KIR	– Kiribati
KIRICAN	– Kiribati/American
KIWIBAS	– Kiribati/New Zealander
KNAC	– Kiribati National AIDS Committee

KNC – Kiribati National Council

KOC – Kiribati Online Community

LDS – The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

MIRAB – Migration Remittances Aid Bureaucracy

MPA – Marine Protected Area

NGO – Non Governmental Organization

NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NZ – New Zealand

NZAID – New Zealand Agency for International Development

NZD – New Zealand Dollar

PAC – Pacific Access Category

PC – Peace Corps

PCT – Peace Corps Trainee

PCV-K – Peace Corps Volunteer Kiribati

PIPA – Phoenix Islands Protected Area

PLWHA – People Living With HIV/AIDS

PR – Permanent Resident

RSE – Recognized Seasonal Employer

SIDS – Small Island Developing States

SPC – Secretariat of the Pacific Community

TCCC – Tarawa Climate change Conference

UN – United Nations

UNGASS – United Nations General Assembly

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNAIDS – Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS

USA – United States of America

USD – United States Dollar

USP – University of the South Pacific

KIRIBATI GLOSSARY

- Aba* – Country, land, earth, world, property, a group of people
- Anga* – To give, offer, attribute or donate
- Aotearoa* – Native Maori term for New Zealand
- Aro n tana mauri* – Of divine nature, religion
- Au* – Possessive, my, mine
- Aumaiaki* – Summer solstice (March to September), dry season
- Aumeang* – Winter solstice (September to March), rainy season
- Babai* – A large tubercle, species of taro
- Batere* – Ellician dance, with rhythm beaten on box
- Bau* – A round, a loop, a crown
- Be* – Loin cloth (mat), lava-lava
- Bino* – A poetic dance which tells a story through the hands
- Botaki* – An assembly, reunion, society, group, club often gathered in an event of celebration or recognition
- Bubuti* – Request, demand, petition, supplication, prayer
- Buki* – The bottom, rear, behind
- I-Kiribati* – A person from Kiribati
- I-Matang* – A person not from Kiribati
- Kabotaeka* – An oratorical competition
- Kai Matoa* – Hard, fierce dancing
- Kain Buki* – From behind, from behind, from the outer islands

<i>Kainga</i>	– A place of residence, ancestral home
<i>Katei</i>	– Native ways, manners, customs
<i>Kaua</i>	– Land of the village
<i>Kiakia</i>	– A small hut on stilts over sea
<i>Kirikiroa</i>	– Kiribati New Zealand bootaki
<i>Nama</i>	– The lagoon
<i>Mai</i>	– From
<i>Maneaba</i>	– Assembly house, communal building, family house
<i>Marawa</i>	– Sea, ocean, deep water
<i>Matang</i>	– Above, heaven, over seas
<i>M(w)aie</i>	– Amusement, play in which many people participate, to dance in number
<i>Mwenga</i>	– Dwelling, lodging, home, habitation, residence
<i>Ngai</i>	– I, myself
<i>Ni</i>	– Coconut tree prep. For, at, in, for, to
<i>Tarawa</i>	– Government center, South Tarawa located in the Gilbert chain
<i>Te</i>	– Prep. The
<i>Te Mauri, Te Raoi, Te Tabomoa</i>	– The Health, the Peace and the Prosperity
<i>Te Mama</i>	– A shy feeling
<i>Tibuta</i>	– A smock, or loose blouse
<i>Waa</i>	– Any vehicle, any means of conveyance: canoe, boat,
<i>Waa ni kiba</i>	– Jumping vehicle, airplane

Sabatier, F. (1971). *Gilbertese English Dictionary*. Tarawa, Sydney: South Pacific Commission Publications Bureau.

MĀORI GLOSSARY

- Aotearoa* – North Island- now used as the Māori name for New Zealand.
- Marae* – Courtyard, the open area in front of the wharenuī (main building), where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often, also used to include the complex of buildings around the marae.
- Pākehā* – Individual of European descent.
- Whanāu* – Extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people – in the modern context the term is sometimes used to include friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members.

Moorefield, J. C. (2011). *Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index*. Wellington: Pearson.

SAMOAN GLOSSARY

Pālagi – A foreigner usually (but not always) in reference to individuals of European descent.

O'Meara, T. (1990). *Samoan Planters: Tradition and Economic Development in Polynesia*. Olando: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

PREFACE

I often have difficulty answering the question *where are you from?* I usually state that I was born in New York, but that includes little context about where I am really “from”. Since being born, I have lived in ten states, five countries and on six islands. I have learned so much from each one of these places that I feel as though significant parts of me are from each one of these locations. My father and mother were the only children of their Mexican-American families to leave the border town of El Paso, Texas. They did this for economic and educational opportunities from which my sister and I have benefited. Both she and I have gone to college, an opportunity that escaped most of our parents’ generation. I am the first in my family to receive an MA.

My research on migration is as much of a reflection of where my family has come from as it is where I have been. In a sense it is a continuation of my father’s footsteps set out nearly forty years ago, which led him on an unknown path, catapulting me onto a path of intellectual discovery.

My journey leading me to this investigation of *I-Kiribati* transnational migration research began with my own Peace Corps service in Kiribati. The recruiter thought that I would be a perfect fit for the Pacific region despite my expressed concerns over having unbearable sea sickness, being allergic to fish and despising hot weather. Officially, I was an elementary school teacher volunteer, but I felt more like a student than a teacher the whole time that I was there. I ventured far from my comfort zone and took a chance to help others not realizing how far I would travel or ultimately, how much I would be helped in the end.

Years later I returned “home,” according to my sister, *all weird*. I no longer felt comfortable sleeping on a bed or shopping in stores with large crowds. In these situations I mentally cringed and imagined myself back on my island, just me and the roughly 700 people who inhabited the three villages. Oddly enough, I was homesick inside of my own home. I realized as soon as the plane lifted from the island that I was homesick for my island home. I did what any right minded desperately homesick individual would do; I jumped on the internet to see if there were any *I-Kiribati* people living in the US. Google surprisingly directed me to MSN Communities. There it was! A virtual community of *I-Kiribati* living outside of Kiribati, thus my introduction to *I-Kiribati* living in the United States.

Since then, I have been back to Kiribati numerous times for academic and personal commitments. With each return, friends and family became fewer as they left for countries like Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, The United States and even Cuba. Households became less populated as more people purchased plane tickets for opportunities overseas. It may have been just as well since this was not the only thing I noticed with each return trip. It seemed that each return produced new scenery. A new breaker wall was installed at random points on causeways. Buildings which once stood on land were now surrounded by motes of sea water. Eventually entire plots of land were gone and submerged by sea water; where buildings and trees once stood, now only sea filled barren land at high tide.



Figure 1: Abarao Village 2005



Figure 2: Abarao Village 2008



Figure 3: Abarao Village 2011

In 2008, President Anote Tong declared before the United Nations General Assembly that his country would not exist within the next 50 years due to rising sea levels. In a country composed mostly of low lying land (two to three ft. above sea level) Kiribati citizens are now having new reasons to consider migration options.

Personal in-country experience began in 2000 as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Upon return from service, severe homesickness and a deep longing for a sense of familiarity in the United States drove me to search for other *I-Kiribati*. Unknowingly, this intensive search for others paved the way for my dissertation research on transnational migrants and their connections to home in new “homes” abroad.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have come to learn that people can grow only through the support of others in their lives. Those supported are forever impacted, if not indebted, for received support. Nowhere has this lesson been more evident to me than living in a tiny Pacific Island nation called Kiribati. Over the past ten years, I have learned a lot from my Kiribati family. Most importantly, they taught me that life is like a canoe's voyage.

A canoe depends on many factors in order to voyage from origin to destination safely. The haul of the canoe provides direction for the voyage. The outrigger supports and stabilizes. The sail powers the craft. All are essential for travel, and without one of these, the voyage is jeopardized. This research has been supported by many sails, outriggers, and hauls. I call these essential elements friends, families, doctors, nurses, communities, institutions and countries. Your support has allowed *I-Kiribati* voices to be heard. What some have labeled as those living on the frontlines of climate change. I cannot thank you enough for what you have done, but I can say that I will never forget your kindness and help. In the words of Kiribati,

I aki kona maninga ami tangeria ao ami akoi.

Te Mauri Te Raoi ao Te Tabomoa.

Thank You

I wish to thank New Zealand Fulbright for the amazing opportunity it presented in supporting a major portion of the research. I would be at a loss for venturing on any of this research if it were not for the Arts and Sciences Graduate Studies and benefits office at the University of Pittsburgh which has continuously supported me at home and abroad over the past several years.

I am indebted to USA based *I-Kiribati* migrant communities for their assistance: The Bakatourake group, the Northwest Kiribati Association and the Kiribati Association of California. In New Zealand, fieldwork could not have been conducted without the support of the Kirikiriroa Kiribati Cultural Society Incorporated (KKCSI).

Individual thanks go to life-long research assistants, advisors, friends and family; Rubenang Taokoriri, Kabwea Tiban, Tracey Cauldwell, Claire Anterea and Kateta Tekaa-Tagliavento. I wish to thank all of those who have been part of this voyage but not mentioned by name. Your help, kindness and friendship will never be forgotten. The time I've spent with you has immeasurably contributed positively to who I am today. I have come to realize that we are all on a voyage together and are active participants in our global village. I will forever see our communities as communities of inspiration in the face of adversity, communities of hope in the face of despondency and communities of determinism in the face of struggle.

Kiribati has taught me that all of us are like the passing freighters docking in Betio's port. We are all on our own scheduled routes; from here to there, carrying our loads, however heavy or light they may be. At times, the ocean provides easy travel and safe voyage. Other times, travel is jeopardized by rough seas and storms. Adversity challenges what once was for what now is. It is adversity that causes one to ultimately realize that a successful voyage depends not on overcoming challenges, but rather how one is changed by doing so. In this way, one's chartered plan becomes less focused while the voyage to uncertainty becomes more. – December 23, 2010

I dedicate this work to my global family.
Kam bwati n rabwa, are ieta, are ieta, ao are ieta!

DISSERTATION OUTLINE

This research explores the intimate features of cultural identity in the context of small-scale global migration set on the larger stage of global environmental politics. The uniqueness of this longitudinal multi-sited dissertation research derives from a long familiarity with the people of Kiribati which began over 13 years ago. Peace Corps service intimately tied me to a deep engagement with the people of Kiribati in Kiribati and then eventually in the United States and New Zealand. The conventional migration story of push and pull factors influencing individual movement and transnational ties are told by those who have left. However, there is an additional story that both those who remain and migrants speak of, which the world needs to hear.

The majority of Kiribati's habitable land rises only a few feet above sea level, placing *I-Kiribati* on the front lines of global climate change, they are the world's canaries in the climate change coal mine. What they have experienced (land erosion, natural resource depletion, prolonged droughts, destructive tides, and permanent land submersion) remains to be felt across the rest of the world. Their story, along with other low lying atoll nations, impels action, and poses a very strong case for amending the 1951 U.N. Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (CRSR). A label undesired by many in the nation, yet pertinent for possible future scenarios of 'Climate Change Refugees' resulting from a world that has placed global environmental politics and economic growth above sustainable environmental practices and human life.

Theoretically, research puts forth the idea of an assimilations model, which is based on the construction of virtual communities. These take the place of a geographical homeland for migrants scattered throughout the world. Current day transnational models which place an emphasis on and return to a physical *nation* aligns with research findings. Widely dispersed migrant communities

contribute to the existence of a virtual nation in place of a distant geographical homeland. However, the potential need for an assimilations approach exists as deteriorating environmental conditions in Kiribati become more pronounced. Virtual societies provide the stability and continuity of a geographical homeland, which can never be flooded.

Due to the global nature of inquiry, research expanded the traditional single sited Anthropological study into a multi-sited study. Case studies focus on the environmental, educational, social, and economic factors which contribute to the creation of *I-Kiribati* diaspora populations. Interviews from the migrant-sending nation of Kiribati highlight the worsening ecological conditions, while interviews from migrant destination highlight the challenges individuals face.

The first chapter provides background knowledge of Oceania's initial human expansion, colonial interactions, international conflicts, and nation state formation. The second chapter contextualizes current day economic, social, and environmental conditions. The chapter highlights a growing need for educational and economic opportunities not found in Kiribati. Population health implications resulting from deteriorating environmental conditions (as a result of climate change) are detailed and pose additional reasons for migration.

Chapter three introduces the research objectives and methodology. Long-term involvement with the country and study population allowed for a comparative multi-field site approach, which provides applicable knowledge for real-world implementation. Beginning with results from Kiribati and progressing through New Zealand, Australian and U.S. migrant populations, chapter four presents' quantitative and qualitative results. The last chapter synthesizes and summarizes results through a comparative analysis which is useful for future national relocation and international migration planning.

1.0 THE PACIFIC REGION

As it does in many Pacific Island societies, the act of storytelling in Micronesia encompasses much more than what is revealed on the surface. Storytelling is a way of connecting the past with the future, as is land a connection between the past and the present. It is a way of sharing secrets, power, knowledge and defining oneself. It is a symbol, expressing meaning, connection and, purpose. Listening, learning and ultimately passing on knowledge represents an intimate relationship between people, places and time.

I did not have this insight in 2004 when my host mother asked me to tell her a story. *I always wondered where we came from... and how did we get where we are today? I know we are Kiribati people, but where did we originally come from?* At that time, I was a student conducting fieldwork for a graduate degree. To her, it seemed that I would have much knowledge to share on this topic with all of my education. I remarked, *I think somewhere in south-east Asia*. Looking disappointed, in my short undetailed response our conversation quickly switched to dinner. Since then, I have learned enough to give a more informed response to her initial question.

The Pacific basin occupies one third of the Earth's surface, an area greater than all land above sea level on the Earth (Thomas, 1967). However, it is a mere fraction of what it was some 200 million years ago when the Earth's continents were then all together. Over millions of years, the Earth's conveyor belt, the East Pacific Rise pushed all continents together into a single land mass known as Pangaea. Countering this action was the Mid-Atlantic Ridge some 150 million

years ago, driving the Americas westward and overriding the Pacific Plate (McEvedy, 1998). With both geological forces pushing and pulling Earth's plates, the Atlantic Ocean with the Pacific Ring of Fire, the outer edges of the Pacific plate, were formed.

Several other tectonic plates in the Pacific region maintain the continental Pacific islands and create new oceanic islands through hot spot activity. It is this constant ebb and flow which has produced island chains we see today all over the Pacific region (Thomas, 1967). In conjunction with hot spot activity, conveyor belt-like movement created the Hawai'ian Archipelago.

Following Darwin's evolution of coral atolls theory, volcanic islands are the first stage of coral atoll evolution. These islands are large, rugged and protected by barrier reefs. In the second stage, the tall islands become weathered and decrease in size. The final stage sees weathered islands subside below the sea, leaving an enclosed lagoon surrounded by a barrier reef. Coral atolls are living islets which require sea level temperature and salinity conditions to grow. Deep troughs, volcanic islands, submerged mountains and coral atolls constitute the widely diverse Pacific basin environment, and set the scene for this study.

1.1 ISLAND HOPPING AND DISTANT VOYAGING

The exploration and settlement of the Pacific is a story filled with voyages across great lengths of time and distance. It is hypothesized that the original migration into Oceania started in Sunda. Many believe that the area of modern day Taiwan was a starting point some 50,000 to 60,000 years ago (Irwin, 2006; Macdonald, 2001; Kirch, 2002).

There were two distinct voyaging periods in this time, the first being to *Near Oceania* and the other to *Remote Oceania*. Terms originally proposed by Roger Green, *Near Oceania* includes western Pacific islands based on their close proximity to Southeast Asia (1991). Voyages into this geographical area consisted mainly of island hopping via terrestrial and water travel through Wallacea. It is thought that large islands, many visible from one to the next in short distance travel, created a voyaging corridor from Sunda to Sahul (Irwin, 2006).

Contextualizing early Pacific voyages, land travel could have been more frequent due to lower sea levels that existed during this time. But even with lower sea levels, there were always significant open-water gaps between the islands of Wallacea (Kirch, 2002: 66). Sahul provided land access from modern day Southeast Asia to Tasmania.

Travel into *Remote Oceania* occurred much later. This area lies to the east of *Near Oceania*, and consists of eastern Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Geological research suggests that travel to *Remote Oceania* was conducted around 1,200 BC (Bateman, 2006), and expeditions were much more treacherous than those to *Near Oceania*. These treks required carefully constructed canoes and near perfect navigation.

Along with the geographical distinctions between *Near* and *Remote Oceania*, there are linguistic and people distinctions. The *Austronesian* language family encompasses one-sixth of the world's languages. The wide reach of this language family is a result of extensive migration (Barker, 2004b). *Austronesians* predominantly occupy *Remote Oceania* and *Non-Austronesians* predominantly occupy *Near Oceania*.

The population movement across land and water not only raises questions of how, but also why. Some have suggested a need for trade, resources, prestige, curiosity, exile, and overpopulation (Irwin, 2006). By the time migrating populations ventured into *Remote Oceania*,

they had developed Neolithic technologies and food producing economies which was evidenced by archaeological remains (Kirch, 2002). These remains have collectively become known as the society of Lapita, named after the pottery which was developed and transported across the open sea by their populations. On New Caledonia's west coast in 1952, Edward Gifford found a distinctive stamped pottery. He recognized it as being nearly identical with shards collected by his coworker in Tonga and shards he had collected in Fiji just months prior (Summerhayes, 2001). These discoveries acted as a watershed for many other discoveries around the Pacific. Through analysis, the travels of these people have been unraveled and reveal their travels, trade and discovery.

There have been conflicting perspectives from many people on how the Pacific was settled. Proposed theories range from mythical heroes such as Rata from Tahiti and Pakhea from New Zealand (Hanson, 1989) to navigation through following animal migrations (Macdonald, 2001) to accidental voyages of no return. Archaeological evidence suggests perforated expansion, yet questions remained. Were discovery and settlement intentional or accidental?

In 1947, Thor Heyerdahl set out to prove that the populating of the Pacific was a result of accidental drift from South America and that these drifters had introduced the South American sweet potato to the islands (Heyerdahl, 1952). After three months of drifting in the South Equatorial current, he made it to the Tuamotu Archipelago. He proved that drift from the west was a possibility. However, archaeological evidence from the Lapita expansion served well in countering his argument.

Migrations were deliberate since they involved taking people, plants and animals needed to settle new environments (Taonui, 2005). Migrating from *Near Oceania* around 1500 BC, these explorers spread across the Pacific from Melanesia to Fiji and western Oceania, leaving a Lapita

trail behind. Lapita populations eventually settled Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. By 1300 AD these populations sailed onto Hawai'i, Easter Island and New Zealand (Bateman, 2006). Lapita pottery was essential in understanding settlement patterns and the presence of inter-island interaction and exchange among geographically separated areas (Summerhayes, 2001).

Three models of oceanic expansion have been developed from the different pottery styles recovered through excavation and analysis of materials. The fast train model involves a quick movement of Austronesian-speaking people out of Southeast Asia into *Remote Oceania*. The Indigenous Bismarck Archipelago Model posits Lapita Complex development within the Bismarck Archipelago, with eventual expansion. The last model sees the complex developing in the Bismarcks for an extended time period before moving into *Remote Oceania* (Summerhayes, 2001).

From Lapita analysis, radio carbon dating reveals that Micronesia was settled by 1500 BC; eastern Micronesia and eastern Polynesia were not settled until 0 AD (Kirch, 2002). As these populations traveled, they developed settlements. Populations brought with them plants for cultivation, animals and pottery. Upon arrival in Micronesia, populations found small lands with few resources. Compared with the more robust continental and high islands, coral atolls provided limited land, resources and food.

Continental islands, typically found in the western Pacific and oceanic islands, typically found in the eastern Pacific, constitute the island formations in the Pacific (McEvedy, 1998). Continental islands are partly submerged continents as seen in Australian or Papua New Guinean outliers. Oceanic islands sit on top of volcanic seamounts that rise from the oceanic floor. Oceanic islands are geographically secluded from larger land masses, and their inhabitants

reduced isolation through establishing long distant contacts with others, as seen in distant trade relationships examined by Malinowski (1922).

These navigators traveled without maps or equipment as European discoverers had, leaving debates open as to how exactly settlement of this region occurred. Under the guidance of Mau Piailug, a traditional navigator from Satawal Island in Micronesia, the Polynesian Voyaging Society of Hawai'i completed a 1976 return voyage to Tahiti in a traditional double-hauled canoe navigationally aided by stars, clouds, whales, birds, swells and winds (Low, 1983). Since its maiden voyage, the *Hōkūle'a* has completed voyages to various destinations across the Pacific and Asia.

In 1832 Dumond d'Urville classified the peoples of the Pacific Islands into three groups: Melanesians, Polynesians and Micronesians (Kirch, 2002). Migration and settlement in this region occurred much earlier than European 'discovery' of the region. Leaving much of what we know about Pacific history to be derived from late-comers (Thomas, 1967).

1.1.1 Pre-European Contact Populations

Prior to European contact, Micronesians were largely isolated from epidemic diseases and wars that effectively controlled and reduced populations in other parts of the world. New social and biological checks on population growth came with the arrival of Europeans who brought Christianity, authority and diseases. Severe depopulation occurred on many of the islands after European contact since Micronesians had little or no immunity to many diseases introduced at this time (Alkire, 1977). The most well-known case of population decline in the Pacific may be the story of Hawai'i, where once a population of 300,000 was significantly reduced after first contact (Schmitt, 1968).

First encounters with European discoverers, missionaries, whalers and traders must have come as a complete shock for Pacific Islanders who had traveled the entire Pacific without seeing anyone other than themselves. The appearance of and confrontation with white men, arriving in great vessels with billowing sails or via foot through mountains and valleys could have brought fear, confusion and disbelief to island populations. Till then, island inhabitants had no reason to suspect that there were other people who looked different than them. These were encounters not between individuals, but between cultural systems embodied in culturally organized groups of people, which had significance of enormous proportions for both Europeans and indigenous Pacific peoples (Schieffelin & Crittenden, 1991).

What, if anything, was known about the white man in many island societies stemmed from myths of creation or spirit worlds beyond the living. The Abelam of Papua New Guinea saw that their time of the ancestors was shattered dramatically by the arrival of the *Tuang*, or light-skinned people, thought at first to be spirit beings (Scaglione, 1999). Among the villagers of Gapun, in the Sepik region of Papua New Guinea, the second coming had arrived since their creation myth revolved around two brothers, one made out of dark wood and one made out of the milky-pink pith of the sago palm. It was the lighter brother who went overseas to the 'countries' and built up those nations while the darker people stayed behind in the village. The arrival of descendants from the other brother was a signal of the end of time as they knew it (Kulick, 1992). According to one set of Kiribati beliefs, *Matang* is a four-square island, peopled by white gods, unattainable by the living (Grimble, 1989). Because of these beliefs, it is not surprising that islanders from all over the region mistook Europeans for ghosts or gods.

1.1.2 European Explorer Accounts of Pacific Islander Populations

In 1642, it was Dutch commander Tasman, then working for the Dutch East India Company, in search of *Terra Australis Incognita*, the southern continent which balanced the northern hemisphere's continents (King, 2007a). The trip turned fatal when they encountered the Maori of New Zealand (King, 2007).

Captain James Cook ventured to Tahiti, New Zealand and Eastern Australia over a three year period (Price, 1971). His first of three voyages around the Pacific largely disposed of the myth of a southern continent, as recorded in his journal.

A Southern Continent I do not believe any such thing exists unless in a high latitude, but as the contrary opinion hath for many years prevailed and may yet prevail it is necessary I should say something in support of mine more than what will be directly point out by the track of this ship in those seas for from that alone it will evidently appear that there is a large space of sea extending quite to the tropic in which we were not or any other before us that we can avert for certain (Price, 1971: 60).

His interactions with the Maori were vastly different from those of Commander Tasman. He noted the similarities between the island populations (King, 2007b).

They are something above the middle size of a dark copper color with long black hair, they paint their bodies in streaks mostly red and black, their clothing consists wholly of a Guanacos skin or that of a Seal, in the same form as it came from the Animals back, the Women wear a piece of skin over their privy parts but the men observe no such decency (Price, 1971: 50).

In Papua New Guinea, it was gold that attracted white men into the Highlands in the late 1920s. In April of 1930, Michael, Daniel and James Leahy led an expedition into the mountains which was recorded made into a full length motion picture. The film shed light on the actual fear, confusion and misunderstandings which Tasman, Cook and native populations faced.

1.2 FROM FIRST CONTACT TO LONG-TERM OCCUPATION

Since the sixteenth century the Pacific Islands have been visited by a succession of European explorers, whalers, beachcombers, missionaries, traders, labor recruiters and black birders. Later, these groups of visitors were joined by writers, painters, and colonial officers (O'Meara, 1990).

One of the most transformative forces in Pacific Island societies has been Christianity. From Guam in the seventeenth century to Papua New Guinea in the twentieth century, missionaries introduced ideas and institutions that expanded the connections Pacific Islanders had with the rest of the world (Westermarck, 2004). Bruce Knauff's observations of the Gebusi during a nearly 30 year span details exceptionally well the effects Catholicism had on the population. The biggest visible change was the increased clothing coupled with new interests in activities, organization and time. To him, the Gebusi seemed far more punctual and disciplined than before.

I left for church a little ahead of time and figured that I would arrive before most of the others, but when I got close to the church, I realized I was late! The very concept had once seemed alien to the Gebusi, but the clock-watching pastor had rung the metal chime twice before the service started (2008: 98).

Anglican missionaries in other parts of the Pacific held similar social expectations of their converts. Anglican missionaries, arriving in 1890, had much less presence, power and wealth than the Catholic or Protestant missionaries at the time, which forced them to take a much lighter approach to religious conversion. However, they too made sure there was order in the village, with mission compounds placed in the center of village life (Barker, 2004a). Missionaries felt that with imposed order and higher standards of decency a new life would emerge, bringing islanders out of their age of darkness (Errington & Gewertz, 2004).

Two organizations which sought to convert the Pacific were the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) and the London Missionary Society (LMS). Formed in 1810, the ABCFM sent its first mission to Hawai'i in 1819. Many LMS missionaries ventured into the Pacific during the early 1800s (Macdonald, 2001).

On travels through the Gilberts during the latter half of the 19th century, missionaries explained their work to the paramount chief of Butaritari. They presented him with Bibles, other books, a large red blanket and a letter of introduction from Kamehameha IV of Hawai'i. The youthful chief showed polite interest in the work but then asked if Christianity would interfere with their custom of polygamy. On the basis of this brief visit, they saw the Gilberts as a promising environment for their endeavors (Macdonald, 2001). Missionaries relied heavily upon converted Pacific Islanders to act as local missionaries and pastors (Macdonald, 2001). The LMS began placing Samoan pastors in the southern Ellice Islands in 1865 (Chambers & Chambers, 2001).

In 1852, the ABCFM began its efforts in the Eastern Caroline Islands. Like their counterparts, these missionaries felt their task was as much to civilize the Micronesians as to Christianize them (Poyer, 1992). Missionary efforts expanded across the Pacific region and opened up the doors for colonial expansion.

1.2.1 Colonialism and Military Expansion in Micronesia

Colonialism in the Pacific brought great change to all Pacific Island societies. Spanning a time period of more than one hundred years, the Pacific Islands were primarily colonized for military and economic purposes. The Micronesian region's colonial history is long and complex. In 1594 the Treaty of Tordesillas gave Spain ownership of all the Micronesian Islands (Barker,

2004b). Germany purchased the Caroline and Marshall Islands from Spain in 1899, incorporating them into the German New Guinea protectorate. Japan took over the territory through a post-WWI League of Nations mandate in 1921 (Poyer, 1992). At the end of WWII, the U.S. Navy administration took over the territory as a United Nations Strategic Trust. After approximately 15 years of political status negotiations, the Marshall Islands and the U.S. redefined their political relationship through a 1983 Compact of Free Association, which was enacted in 1986 (Barker, 2004b). The Ellis and Gilbert Islands were colonized by Great Britain primarily for phosphate resources found on Banaba Island.

Banaba is a raised island located 180 kilometers east of the Gilbert Chain in the Central Pacific Ocean. With little more to than a resting point to offer sea birds, this island had little value to anyone other than the native population until Albert Ellis discovered the mineral composition of *Banaba's* land.

For a long time, I had speculated that this rock had rich deposits of lime and decided to test it... A week or so later I walked into the director's room and presented the test results. The analyst had recorded a ninety percent phosphoric acid reaction... the purest phosphate yet discovered in a natural state by man (Grimble, 1952: 15).

It was this discovery that brought about interest in Banaba from Europeans. He discovered that the island was made of the richest deposits of phosphate rock ever found up to that time and immediately negotiated a deal with the *Banabans* to mine their island for the next 999 years at £50 per annum. *Banaba* was then colonized under the auspices of 'natural resource excavation' (Sigrah & King, 2001). Eventually the land became unfit for human populations, and the *Banabans* were relocated to Rabi Island in Fiji where many suffered and died from hunger and illness upon arrival due to unfamiliar environmental conditions.

1.2.2 Resulting Pacific Island Economies

During this time, the Pacific labor trade became an integral part of colonial life. Recruits from the Gilbert Islands went to Fiji, Tahiti, Samoa and Hawai'i to work on plantations; a few went to work on plantations in Central and South America (Talu, 1984). Black birding became common across the Pacific and Kiribati's central and southern islands were frequented by these recruits (Maude, 1981). As the ships anchored in the distance, islanders ventured out with the intentions of trading materials. However, once on board, they were taken as 'labor recruits' for years (Maude, 1981). Many of those curious about the world beyond their shores willingly went (Talu, 1984).

Labor trade was much different in *Near Oceania*, where colonial powers developed work camps in or around areas of recruitment.

Virtually every single unmarried male in Gapun in his late teens or twenties spent at least a year working as a contracted laborer on plantations on the islands of New Britain or New Ireland, as ship hands, or as road-workers in the town of Lae (Kulick, 1992: 72).

In his study, Kulick points out that nearly all males of Gapun acquired prestige when returning with new material goods and abilities. A similar pattern of upward mobility occurred for the Awa of Papua New Guinea's eastern province except this work was largely centered on the budding coffee industry (Hayano, 1990). If colonial economic expansion led to the colonization and enslavement of Pacific Islanders, colonial military expansion led to their physical annihilation.

With the onset of WWII the Marshall Islands, then under Japanese control, became a fierce battle ground, resulting in the successful defeat of Japanese occupation and change of control in 1944 (Barker, 2004b). The U.S. had great interest in the islands for a covert nuclear arms

program. Since the islands were geographically isolated from the Soviets, who were themselves in competition with American nuclear weapons development and far from the American public, unnerved by the Nevada nuclear tests, the remoteness of the Marshall Islands attracted interest for conducting top secret nuclear tests.

While the Marshall Islands were still in the possession of the U.S. Navy, the United States approached the people of Bikini Atoll. Posed as an act of humanitarian interest and a path to world peace, the request for nuclear testing was approved and the island population was relocated to Rongerik Atoll (Kiste, 1974). From the Marshallese perspective, American missionaries brought God's enlightenment to the islands and American forces ended an oppressive Japanese occupation. Under these circumstances, the Marshallese trusted in the Americans and plans for world peace (Barker, 2004b).

The U.S. government would ultimately test 100 times more mega-tonnage in the Marshall Islands than it did at the Nevada test site, resulting in complete destruction of islands, permanent contamination of natural resources, forced migration, permanent cultural changes, countless deaths and long-term health consequences (Barker, 2004b; Kiste, 1974). Much like the Banabans the biggest loss felt by the Bikini population was the loss of their land. Land was the very essence of the people. If their land was taken away, their spirit soon followed (Kiste, 1974). Testing ended in 1958 after 67 atomic and thermonuclear weapons were detonated (Barker, 2004b). However, the effects of these tests largely remain present in the islands today.

Until recently, many Pacific Island countries had relatively small populations that did not face extreme poverty and starvation. However, with the introduction of western economies and remittances, cash became part of everyday life. In 1982, Tonga was one of the poorest countries in the world with a median household income of \$760USD (Small, 1997). While this amount

was well below the global poverty line, individuals lived comfortable lives. Lifestyles and ambitions of Pacific Islanders changed as cash-based economies took hold.

The modern day labor trade took on new meaning as many voluntarily left, seeking employment opportunities overseas. Remittances sustained new cash-necessitated lifestyles back home. Small highlights the importance of overseas remitters in this account of a Tongan family celebration.

It would have been a very short celebration indeed if it hadn't been for the overseas Tongans... they would have had a dance and one feast and it would have been over. They extended it because of the number of people from overseas and the amount of money they were bringing in. It would have been a poor showing if the people from overseas and their money weren't here (1997: 151).

Like Tonga, Kiribati desires to have a prosperous and vibrant economy which promotes development. However, perpetual dependence on others cannot be mistaken for development as dependency only encourages future dependency (Knapman, 1994).

Beginning in the 1980s, Kiribati seafarers sent home large remittances and returned with suitcases full of stereo equipment, VCRs, and gifts for family members. Today, *I-Kiribati* living abroad send money, computers, MP3 players and other desired objects. This exchange between migrants and family exemplifies that, in many ways, Pacific migration is not an individual pursuit. For many of these migrants, their migration was tied to the betterment of a collective group. The welfare of the extended family takes precedence and reinforces kinship ties through physical separation and economic dependency, as seen in the Tongan celebrations.

The future of Kiribati may depend on migration due to evolving ecological concerns individuals face. Kiribati and other small low-lying coral atoll nations are on the frontlines of climate change, they are our canaries in the climate change coal mine. They represent what is to

come if industrialized nations continue “business as usual” practices without concern for the environmental consequences of their profit driven actions.

While global capitalism has resulted in impressive technological innovations, including ones in biomedicine and health care delivery, it is a system fraught with contradictions, including an incessant drive for economic expansion, growing social disparities, undemocratic practices that undermine its claims of degradation (including global warming and associated climatic changes). All of these contradictions entail numerous consequences for people’s health (Baer & Singer, 2009:187).

2.0 THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI

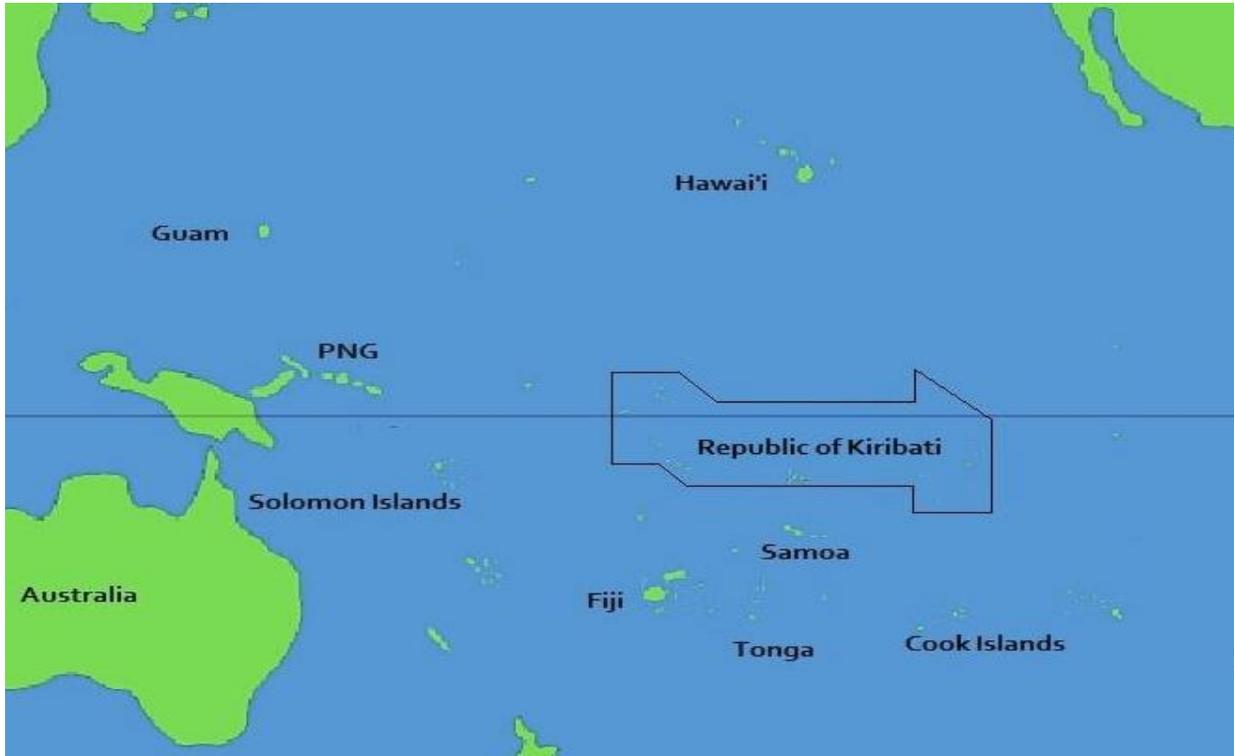


Figure 4: Republic of Kiribati, adapted from: http://www.merriam-webster.com/maps/images/maps/kiribati_map.gif.

The Republic of Kiribati became an independent nation from British rule on July 12, 1979. The nation is comprised of 32 atolls and one raised island spread out across the mid-most part of the Pacific Ocean. Separated into three distinctive island chains, the Gilberts, Line and Phoenix Islands cover 3.5 million km² of the Pacific Ocean. No other country in the world has territory in the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western hemispheres. It is one of the world's largest small nations (Tisdell, 2002).

Long-term internal migration has contributed to growing population densities on the main island. Between 1995 and 2000, there was significant migration to South Tarawa, resulting in an

urban growth of 5.2%. During this period, the national growth rate was 1.7%. At the same time, outer islands uniformly reported losses in population (Kiribati National Advisory Committee on Children, 2002). Internal migration trends continue, as South Tarawa continues to record unprecedented population densities.

In 2005 the nation's population was 92,533. Its total land area was 726.34 km². National population density was 127.4 people per km². The population density on the capital island, where 43.56% of the population resided was 2,558 people per km² (Government of Kiribati, 2007). In 2010 the nation recorded a total land area of 726 km² with a population of 103,058. The national population density increased to 142 people per km², and the population density on the capital island increased to 3,176 people per km² (Government of Kiribati, 2012).

Population density on Tarawa has long been a national concern. In 2004, an international media source highlighted the problem in Betio, South Tarawa's northernmost village. Betio was one of the most densely populated places on Earth, with 2,324 people per km² (Samisoni, 2004). In 2010, Betio's population density was 9,434 people per km² (Government of Kiribati, 2012). Many choose to live on South Tarawa as it has access to advanced communication systems, financial institutions, employment opportunities, schools and international transport.

Thirty-two out of the 33 of the nation's islands are low-lying coral atolls which rise just a few feet above sea level. The national average elevation is 2.97 meters above sea level. The nation's highest point, found on Ocean Island, is 81 meters above sea level (Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO, 2011). According to the 2010 census 90% of the total population lived in the Gilbert Chain. Of these, 53.7% lived on South Tarawa. 9,562 people lived outside of the Gilbert Chain. The easternmost island chain constituted 8.9% of the 2010 national population (Government of Kiribati, 2012).

Kanton atoll, the only inhabited island in the Phoenix Island Chain, had a total population of 31 residents in 2010. Government workers who oversaw the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) and their families constituted the entire population (Government of Kiribati, 2007). PIPA, the world's largest Marine Protected Area (MPA), quarantines over 408,250 square kilometers of oceanic area from commercial fishing activities (Government of Kiribati, 2010). Calling attention to his own country's environmental dilemma through the creation of PIPA, President Tong hoped to signal an urgent call to other nations who put his people at risk through harmful environmental practices (Butler, 2010).

2.1 CHANGING LANDS AND CHANGING LIVES

Land was once wealth to an *I-Kiribati*. It was of high value and far-reaching importance. Apart from being the basis of subsistence, it also held social, political and legal significance which bound family together (Talu, 1979: 68).

In certain cases, land was given as a gift to close friends, transferred through adoption or in other ways that carried significant meaning. Unlike societies which stress individualism over collectivism, Kiribati emulates the social patterns found across Micronesia, which are made up of extensive webs of interdependent relationships that support individuals.

Most Micronesians are aware not only of the precariousness of their place on the islands but also of the absolute interdependence necessity which makes village life possible. They understand the adaptive character of their political systems-that without many of these traditional forms of organization they simply could not survive (Petersen, 2009: 181).

In Kiribati, the health of the land, a traditional signifier of wealth and place in society, is directly connected to the social well-being of the individual, family, and larger community. In Kiribati, the foundation of social life is the *kainga* or family. Families pass land down through

succeeding generations. Individuals are born on the land, they grow up on the land and when they die they are buried in the land. Land bridges the present to the past and the past to the future. Though times have changed and wealth has shifted from land to cash in many parts of the country, every *I-Kiribati* can trace and lay a spiritual, if not physical, claim to their ancestral land. Land provides food, security, stability, and a sense of place. It is not surprising therefore that many *I-Kiribati* feel upset when thinking about leaving their ancestral lands as a result changing environmental conditions.

A village elder observed that his ancestors lived an easier life where “food was everywhere and easy to get” (KInterview.8.2, 2008). At the time, the nation was experiencing an untimely prolonged drought. As a result, he felt that he now needed to rely on money and imported foods to live the life his land once supported. With a brief pause he reaffirmed his love for his land, and stated that he wished to die on his land.

2.1.1 Kiribati’s New Economy

The core of Micronesian cultural values is the intertwined relationship between sociopolitical rank and notions about “taking care of” people. To hold high rank, or at least to be deemed worthy of holding it an individual must care for others, either within a lineage or within a community, and demonstrate continuing concern for their welfare. In practice, this entails acts of real generosity, the consistent giving of one's goods, efforts, time, and thoughts - in a word, of oneself (Petersen, 2009: 201).

A study focusing on post WWII attitudes and suicide rates of young Micronesian men concluded that social expectations of males changed drastically after the war. Increasingly, the role of provider in the subsistence economy was replaced by the role of wage earner in a new cash economy. Suicides were seen as a result of the changed economy. Males found themselves ill-

prepared to fulfill their roles as caretakers, and ultimately took their own lives instead (Rubinstein, 2002).

As in much of the Pacific today, cash has taken over traditional forms of wealth, status and prestige within Kiribati. Nowhere is this more pronounced than in the capital urban environment of South Tarawa. Here, internal migrants have fueled the shift from a subsistence to cash economy as they encourage economic growth through wage employment and formal education.

South Tarawa lifestyles and attitudes have been on the forefront of change since the 1920s, when missionary influence led to an increase in clothing use and consumption of imported foods. Dependency on flour, salt, sugar, rice and more sedentary lifestyles have contributed to higher rates of diabetes, stroke, and obesity within the country (Talu, 1984). Today, imported cell phones, foods, computers, televisions, and second-hand cars have replaced land as signifiers of prestige and wealth within South Tarawa.

These imported materials and technologies have made cash a necessary part of modern day life in Kiribati (Bataua, 1985). In 2010, 29.7% of those 15 years of and over were working and earning some kind of cash income. Of these, 34.4% worked in various government sectors (Government of Kiribati, 2012).

Underemployment stemming from a lack of opportunity within the nation is a problem in Kiribati. In 2002 the Asian Development Bank reported that only 450-500 jobs became available for roughly 1,800 school leavers that year (Asian Development Bank, 2002). This long-standing problem has far reaching consequences for youth and their families.

The boys and girls are all looking for a job, trying their luck here and there with these vacant posts advertised. It is just hopeless with the number of people applying - nearly a thousand applicants for only two or three vacancies. It is very

competitive. It is like playing a game for them but really it is very frustrating, so many unemployed youth (KInterview.8.8, 2010).

Only about one in ten *I-Kiribati* is a wage earner. Two-thirds of all wage-earning jobs in Kiribati are in public service, and 64% of these jobs are located on South Tarawa (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2009). Those fortunate to have wage earning positions are often expected to provide for the needs of many non-working extend family members.

In Tarawa everything is money, ugh. In Kiribati you have to rely on family to support you if you don't have a job (NInterview.10.12, 2010).

Much of the South Tarawa population consists of internal migrants who have no claim to native lands on which they could live freely. Frequently those living on South Tarawa are paying for the land they use and are dependent on store goods purchased with money. The lack of abundant wage-earning opportunities coupled with a growing dependency on cash within the country highlights the importance of overseas employment opportunities and remittances.

Because of Kiribati's cultural background of sharing resources amongst family members and communities, remittances have become a significant resource for family members and networks of people who indirectly benefit from these shared resources (Borovnik, 2005: 1).

The changes in Kiribati as a result of newly defined wealth are significant. Some argue that monetized trade and financial transactions within a globalized economy have weakened the traditional supportive systems centered on mutual support within the islands today (Asian Development Bank, 2002).

However, this economic change in Kiribati is not unique to Kiribati alone. Across the Pacific, those seeking jobs, educational opportunities, and better living environments have left their home countries and islands for larger nations such as New Zealand, Australia and even the United States. In 2006, 269,574 Pacific Islanders were living in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). In 2010, 540,013 Pacific Islanders were living in the United States (Humes,

Jones, & Ramirez, 2011). While many island nations retain a larger portion of their population within their own national borders, it is predictable that future migration trends as a result of climate change will lead to as many *I-Kiribati* living overseas as within.

2.1.2 Education in Kiribati

In 2010, Kiribati's youthful population, those under 17 years of age constituted 42.4% of the national population. As previously seen, the number of senior secondary school leavers outnumbers employment opportunities availed to graduates. While a small number of graduates receive scholarships to pursue tertiary studies in Fiji, Cuba, New Zealand, Australia and the United States, most remain on South Tarawa.

In 2011, Fiji's University of the South Pacific (USP) enrolled 622 students from Kiribati. Of these, 169 were sponsored by the Kiribati Government. The rest were either partially sponsored from USP or entirely self-funded (USP, 2012). Beginning in 2007, Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia, sponsored 30 students a year for up to three years of study in practical nursing. The Kiribati-Australia Nursing Initiative (KANI) was an AUSAID funded scholarship program which sought to:

...contribute to the government's efforts in addressing rapid population growth, urbanization and youth unemployment. The Scholarship program aims to provide I-Kiribati youth with an internationally recognized nursing qualification through obtaining an Australian Nursing degree (Griffith University, 2008).

The KANI program was not the only medically based scholarship opportunity for Kiribati students. Beginning in February of 2007, 20 senior secondary graduates began pre-med training at Pedro Salden Rivera College in Havana, Cuba. The following year, all 20 began medical

school. As of 2010, the program grew to 31 full time students, and 16 were expected to finish the medical degree program at the end of 2013 (Rebelde, 2010).

Many who have trouble finding employment in Kiribati and do not have the opportunity to pursue higher education, look for employment opportunities overseas.

At first, I did it to see what was out there.... the world, you know? But now I do it to help my family (KInterview.11.16., 2011).

Like many young men in Kiribati, this individual found work in the South Pacific Marine Services. This allowed him to send monthly remittance allocations home, to help out his family.

On a macro level, the number of remittances received in Kiribati has contributed to the country's recent graduation from a least-developed country (LDC). As of 2012, its gross national product rose above the \$1,000 USD threshold, due in large part to overseas remittances. From 2003 to 2007, the nation received an average of \$7M USD a year. From 2008 to 2011, the country received an average of \$8.7M USD a year (Ratha, Sanket, & Ani, 2011).

2.1.3 Employment and Remittances

The main organizing kinship group in Kiribati is the *kainga*, a small group of extended families related through a common ancestor. Prior to colonization, each *kainga* shared a piece of land on which all lived and interacted with each other (Talu, 1979). Today, extended families largely remain bound to a community and village setting in which young adults are expected to contribute to the family's well-being. With such emphasis on cash today, a family's well-being is heavily influenced by the amount of income to which they collectively have access.

The decision on how to pursue an economic earning path is made on an individual basis. However, this decision is heavily influenced by the larger family which may have an expectation

that the decision will result in upward mobility for both the individual and family (Borovnik, 2006). Fulfilling these obligations through overseas employment opportunities physically separates families, yet at the same time, brings families closer together through a developed economic dependency and tested social reciprocity over great distances and periods of time.

A Kiribati seafarer stated how he saw remittances and their role in his and his family's life.

I will spend a year or more on the ship during one contract period, all for money... for my family. It helps them (in Tarawa) here. A few years ago I made \$600 dollars a month working on the ship. Now I get more than a thousand each month. At least there is something for my baby and family at home... Maybe I will go to New Zealand and find a job there in the future. I could send money from there. I think that would be better than the ship. My cousin lives in New Zealand and maybe I live with her (KInterview.11.16., 2011).

Globally, remittances have contributed to individual household incomes. In Kiribati, remittances were used to pay for school fees, community events, church obligations and daily household items. While it was true that outer island residents needed fewer financial resources than those living in South Tarawa, money was still important for daily life. South Tarawa has increasingly become less of a barter and more of a cash economy. This, as in other Pacific Island societies, has largely influenced social and economic behavior (Bertram & Watters, 1986).

Remittances represented a significant source of income not only for seafarer families, but also for a larger network of people who indirectly benefitted through developed redistribution networks. A study conducted in 2005 revealed that seafarers remitted between 50% and 70% of their monthly salaries, which created further transactions benefitting a larger portion of society (Borovnik, 2006).

Seafarers' wages are significantly higher than the national per capita income. Wages for unskilled seafarers were \$3000 AUD per year in 2005. At the time, this was more than three

times per capita income. Skilled employees in Kiribati earned between \$12,000 and \$21,000 AUD (Borovonik, 2006) and average annual household expenditure was \$9,400 AUD (Tiroa, 2006). While remittances provided many benefits to those receiving them, dependence on fixed incomes came with significant disadvantages.

Families with only one source of income were often forced to incur debt. With the reassurance that individuals could pay off their debt with the next remittance transfer, families rapidly acquired growing debts. In the short term, remittances reduce poverty, by helping finance daily living in the islands. The 2006 National Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) listed daily living costs as the largest national household expenditure, requiring 74% of household income (Tiroa, 2006). Remittances fund this high percentage and also act as insurance against instances of family crises or natural disasters.

Additionally, small businesses are often supported by overseas relatives' financial investments. Day-to-day management is by parents, wives or other family members. Mismanagement of resources frequently occurs when stores allow too much credit to families with overseas relatives, endangering local businesses. Egalitarian values expressed through the use of the *bubuti* hinder the development of successful businesses within Kiribati (Asian Development Bank, 2002).

While it may seem beneficial to receive remittances, challenges faced by those left behind are often greatly underestimated. Life in Kiribati becomes much more challenging without young adults to tend to younger children or take care of household chores. Emotionally, a sense of general longing for those who left exists and is evidenced by their pictures prominently displayed around houses and in *maneabas*.

Unlike seafarers, permanent migrants to the United States and New Zealand incurred high daily living expenses, which deterred them from sending remittances on a regular basis. For these migrants, the further involved they became in their new lives, the less affordable it became to send money home. Individuals married, children were born and financial connection to what once was home became strained.

2.2 A NATION'S CLIMATE DILEMMA

A climate that is subject to abrupt change is fundamentally different, more variable, and less predictable, posing questions that lead to different, more difficult explanations of causes and effects (Cox, 2005: 145).

On December 22, 1987, the United Nations General Assembly recognized that climate change should be a concern for all of mankind and urged the international community to collaborate in preparations for the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change. Resolution 44/206 was brought to the attention of the General Assembly and noted the “Possible adverse effects of sea level rise on islands and coastal areas, particularly in low-lying coastal areas” (Tabai, 1994: 3).

On November 16, 1989, Honorable Babera Kirata, Minister of Home Affairs and Decentralization in Kiribati, addressed the Small States Conference on Sea Level Rise held on Male’ Island in the Maldives. He pointed out that both the Maldives and Kiribati faced similar consequences as a result of changes in their natural environments. He noted the real life consequences that these similarly ecologically composed island nations could face, if climate change was not addressed.

The ground water would easily become saline, making it impossible to obtain potable water, and agriculture would be destroyed. The plankton upon which fish live on will disappear, and the livelihood of Kiribati people who depend on fish would be seriously affected. The effect of rising in sea level, accompanied by strong winds and high waves, would be disastrous for Kiribati (Kirata, 1989: 2).

The following year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its first scientific assessment on climate change, creating many more questions than answers. However, within the report, two certainties existed. The first was that the Earth's naturally occurring greenhouse effect maintained the Earth's temperature. The second was that emissions resulting from human activity were substantially increasing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases. These factors were predicted to result in a warming of Earth's surface (IPCC, 1990). Several individuals, high ranking officials and governments were concerned over climate change early on, however an overall lack of scientific certainty and political will diminished report's importance.

By 1996, the IPCC concluded that there was a 'viable' connection between human activity and climate. However, authors continued to note uncertainty about the magnitude and patterns of climate variability, and climate system responses which prevented them from drawing stronger conclusions (IPCC, 1996). The scientific community did find evidence supporting human activity as a contributor, but was not able to state this with full confidence.

On September 14, 1999, The Republic of Kiribati became a full member of the United Nations, and in its first UNGASS statement, President Tito addressed the issue of climate change.

Globalization is advocated as the order of today, however there are adverse effects that can cause irreparable damage if no corrective action is taken immediately. Coming from a small island state like Kiribati, which is made up of narrow strips of coral atolls rising no more than 2 meters above sea level. Global warming, climate change and rising sea levels seriously threaten the basis of our existence and we sometimes feel that our days are numbered (Tito, 2000: 2).

Kiribati's subsequent president continued the call for global attention to and action on climate change. However, discussions on climate change took a semi-permanent back seat at UNGASS forums in light of global terrorism and Middle East conflicts.

On February 1, 2007, the IPCC released what many in the world considered to be a climate change game changer. Scientific evidence supported that a warming planet was real.

The warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global average sea level (IPCC, 2007: 30).

The report went on to address the significant contributions human activity has made to the proliferation of climate change.

Global atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have increased markedly as a result of human activities since 1750. Observed increases in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century are very *likely* due to the observed increases in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations (IPCC, 2007: 37).

This definitive statement by the IPCC gave leverage to the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), as it pushed for decisive action to be taken by the global community. Personal appeals from small island countries during the 2008 62nd UNGASS general debates highlighted the need for immediate action as climate change could potentially jeopardize territorial integrity and threaten the national sovereignty of many small island states.

As a small country, Kiribati places great confidence on the international community for its survival and we hope that our repeated appeals to this body in addressing this critical issue will receive stronger political support and commitment. There is no more time to debate the issue as climate is now a fact of life. It is now time to put words into action so that this living planet is protected from complete destruction and is preserved for use by our many generations to come (Kirata, 2007: 4).

With certain scientific evidence now backing climate change, AOSIS member states felt hopeful that the world would answer climate change with decisive action. However, the

international community's inaction concerned AOSIS member states, forcing many to readdress climate change during the 2008 UNGASS meeting.

Mitigation and adaptation strategies are and will continue to be integral components of our response to climate change. It would indeed be naïve to suggest otherwise. These strategies only provide short and medium-term solutions though. Ultimately, low-lying island countries like Kiribati will have to face up to the reality of their islands being unable to support life and plan accordingly. Kiribati is not a major emitter of greenhouse gasses. Its mitigation efforts would therefore be insignificant on the global climate change situation. Nevertheless we will do our part and explore appropriate renewable and efficient energy technology in our islands (Tong, 2008: 1).

That same year, in collaboration with Conservation International and the New England Aquarium the Kiribati government created the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA). At the time of its creation, it was the largest protected marine area in the world, covering over 400,000 square kilometers of the Pacific or 11% of Kiribati's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

On June 11, 2009, the UNGASS adopted Resolution A/RES/63/281, which encouraged relevant organs of the United Nations to intensify their efforts in addressing climate change, especially its security implications (United Nations, 2009: 2). Adopting the resolution was the first time that the international community drew explicit connections between climate change and peace and security. This political step forward led up to the COP 15 Conference, where many AOSIS representatives, including the president of Kiribati, Aote Tong, held great hope for change.

I now sense a strong political commitment to doing something at Copenhagen. I must say, I am much more heartened now than I was four or five years ago when nobody was listening, we welcome this change (Australian Broadcasting Company, 2009).

Copenhagen's COP 15 meeting accomplished little in carbon emission reduction, devastating those countries at greatest risk. Following this, Kiribati became one of the loudest proponents in the Pacific for climate change action in international settings.

In 2010, Kiribati held its inaugural Tarawa Climate Change Conference. The goal of the conference was to unite leaders from around the world in recognizing climate change as real and an issue that needed to be addressed. In bringing world leaders to Kiribati, it was hoped that an urgent need for immediate action would be realized. The conference produced the Ambo Declaration, a non-legally binding agreement between nations addressing climate change and was adopted by 12 of the 15 delegations. Canada, Great Britain and the United States took ‘bystander’ status.

In 2011, the *Water is Rising* production company toured across the United States, raising awareness of climate change and placing a human face on climate change for American audiences. The tour was a collaboration between UCLA and the governments of Kiribati, Tuvalu and Tokelau. Thirty six performers brought an impassioned plea for climate change action through theatrical song, dance and storytelling. That same year, Kiribati hosted UN Secretariat General, Ban Ki-moon. It was the first time a Secretariat General had visited the nation, and upon departure he vowed to bring their plight to the rest of the international community.

On September 26, 2012, President Tong again addressed the UNGASS stressing the impacts of and resulting devastation from climate change.

This is the seventh time I have had the honor to address this assembly in my nine years as President of Kiribati. Each time I have sought to convey the same message. Each time I have spoken of the real and existential threat to my nation. Each time I have reminded you of the need for urgent action to address climate change and sea level rise, to ensure the long-term survival of Kiribati. I frequently find myself watching my grandchildren and wonder what sort of a future we are leaving them. For their sake, climate change is an issue that I will continue to talk about for as long as I have breath in my body. We owe it to our children and their children’s children to act soon, so let us pray that God will give us the common sense to do the right thing for the future of humanity (Tong, 2012: 1).

Almost one month to the day after President Tong addressed the UN, its headquarters were struck by Hurricane Sandy. Over 40 individuals in the New York City area perished, and an

estimated \$50 billion in property damages occurred. It ranked it as one of the most destructive storms to hit the U.S, second only to Katrina in 2005 (Prezioso & Allen, 2012). Reaction to the storm ranged from shock to disbelief, causing many in the US to think about environmental changes. Then, New York City Mayor Bloomberg commented:

Our climate is changing. And while the increase in extreme weather around the world may or may not be the culprit of it, the risk that it might be – given this week’s devastation – should compel all elected leaders to take immediate action (Silverstine, 2012: 1).

The November 2012 *Journal of Science*’s lead article highlights the fact that an annual loss of 344 billion tons of glacial ice, accounting for 20% of current sea level rise melted five times faster than observed in 2007 (Kerr, 2012).

Many in Kiribati remain skeptical over climate change. Former President Tito felt that the government has gone too far by persistently advocating climate change action on world stages and capturing the attention of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

I think they’re overplaying it, and there’s a danger in bluffing the world... President Tong has painted a picture that people are ready to leave Kiribati, when that is not the case (RNZI, 2011).

In addition to political infighting over climate change, there is also a very strong division between scientific evidence and religious doctrine within the country. In 2005, 96% of the Kiribati population identified as Christian (Government of Kiribati, 2007). A 2007 ABC news piece highlighted a Kiribati Catholic high school principal who stated that she did not believe in climate change and light of mounting evidence supporting global warming, at the time, took comfort in God's promise to never to flood the Earth again (Weir, 2007). In the context of climate change, religious beliefs have discredited scientific findings warnings and support skeptical climate change perspectives.

2.3 CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE PACIFIC REGION

Climate change, a growing global concern, necessitates the introduction of a large scale framework that calls on all nations to actively work together in slowing the rapid progression of devastating environmental changes. In the likely event that the impact from climate change on humans will continue to worsen, concerted action involving dramatic changes in global carbon emissions and related efforts is necessary (Baer and Singer, 2001). Key to this is realization and assertive action resulting from awareness.

As early as 1990 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) argued that the greatest single impact of climate change would be seen in the increase of human migration (Brown, 2008: 8). It was clear that populations most prone to migration would be those living on or in close proximity to coastal areas. Residents of coral atolls would become the most at-risk populations. Five world states are composed solely of low lying oceanic coral atolls. Of these five, four are located in the Pacific.

The IPCC has estimated that the Pacific Islands as a whole have contributed just .0012 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions leading them to be among the lesser contributors to global warming, but they remain at the greatest risk from its impacts (Singh, 2007: 1).

Residents are adapting to the changing environment by moving away from shores, building sea walls and creating new inhabitable lands, while others are leaving the islands all together. In the nation of Kiribati, three former inhabited islets off the coast of Tarawa -Bikeman, Buariki, and Abanuea - have fallen beneath the ocean since 2000 (Williams, 2001).

Adaptation strategies have been implemented by several island communities, but ultimately, migration seems inevitable for many of these communities. Ursula Rakova, from the Carteret Islands wonders if her people would be accepted in their new Bougainville home and if

they would eventually lose their cultural identity if forced to leave their homes (Gupta, 2007). This population has been called the first climate change refugee population (Guardian News, 2005).

Tuvaluans, Marshallese and *I-Kiribati* have similar concerns. Ian Fry made a tearful plea at Copenhagen's 2009 climate change conference declaring that the fate of his country rested in the hands of international leaders, many of whom had not heard of Tuvalu (Sharma, 2009). At a 2007 international conference on climate change, Kiribati's Environment Minister stated that his fellow citizens did not want to lose their country but at the same time, did not want to become second-class citizens in other countries (Makan, 2007). One Kiribati citizen's worst fears encapsulated what some felt.

We have so many unique things-the way we dress, the way we eat, the way we speak. I don't believe we will disappear soon, but as more people move away we will lose our identity, and then we will be nothing, never to be known again in the history of the world (Williams, 2001: 1).

Aside from the social implications, climate change creates several environmental problems for *I-Kiribati*. Sea water inundation damages crops and fresh water supplies. Storm surges erode lands. Fluctuating weather patterns cause unseasonable precipitation and extended droughts. These events kill terrestrial resources, animals and create unhealthy living environments.

Coral atoll dwellers have long experienced the changes brought about by climate change while the world debated its existence. In an effort to gain recognition, 42 states joined in forming the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). This coalition advocates for mandatory reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Members see themselves as the first victims of climate change and realize that their survival depends on changing public opinion and complacent behaviors.

The AOSIS brought an urgent message to the Conference of Parties (COP) 15 conference in December of 2009. Their message was simple; limit warming to 1.5 degrees (Sharma, 2009). With even moderate increases in greenhouse emissions, sea level rise could make many of their islands uninhabitable. Unfortunately, the coalition's political bargaining power was modest at best and crucially dependent upon sympathetic ears at worst.

With great hope, Pacific Islanders presented their cases, cultures and proposals to curb climate change throughout the conference. The conference's outcome was devastating for AOSIS members. Post conference headlines read, *1.5°C Rejected and Crushed in Copenhagen*. The Copenhagen Accord raised global warming limits to 2°C, which could raise sea levels above low lying atolls (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, 2009).

2.3.1 Adapting or Migrating or Adapting to Migration

Since 2004, the Kiribati government's official response to climate change has focused on adaptation. Adaptation projects may be useful over the next decade, but as climate change intensifies, more may need to be done.

Inherent in the concept of adaptation is having room to adapt, but we don't have room to adapt... we can only move so far before we end up on the other side of our islands (Galvin, 2007: 1).

If adaptation strategies are seen as short-term fixes, then mass evacuation may be the long-term solution. This raises the question of maintaining national sovereignty for nations that contemplate mass migration in response to climate change. A 2005 paper succinctly framed this future dilemma.

Whilst states are used to addressing issues of state succession, it would appear that the extinction of a state, without there being a successor, is unprecedented... Some people end up stateless because of legislative or bureaucratic accidents but not necessarily because someone has deliberately deprived them of their national identity (Colville, 2007: 1).

It is no surprise that AOSIS members see this scenario rapidly unfolding in their own backyards. National leaders are preparing for worst case scenarios as adaptation strategies fail to create sustainable solutions.

We are very conscious of the fact that neighboring countries will be reluctant to add us to their existing problems at the moment. The question as to what happens to our sovereignty? I don't think anybody has the answer (KInterview.8.3, 2008).

2.3.2 Environmental Refugees

The controversial term, 'Environmental Refugee' has been proposed and broadly defined. Essam El-Hinnawi first defined environmental refugees as those who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently because of a marked environmental disruption that jeopardizes existence and/or seriously affects quality of life (1985). Critics of this definition question its viability due to its broad qualifications, allowing the inclusion of individuals fleeing volcanic activity to poor soil quality (Bates, 2002).

Individuals displaced due to environmental conditions, including climate change, are not recognized as refugees under the 1967 Refugee Convention Protocol.

A refugee is someone who is outside their own country and cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion (UNHCR, 1967).

Many of those already impacted by climate change do not want to leave their lands. At the same time, many others seek opportunities to start new lives elsewhere in light of changing environmental conditions.

Global warming may result in detrimental effects on food supply and security, especially in developing countries. Even if developing countries adapt to climate change, they will not be able to completely avoid the problems associated with climate change. Furthermore, these harmful outcomes of climate change in

developing countries and potentially positive outcomes in developed countries will probably increase the gap in wealth, access to food, and health between rich and poor countries (Sacks & Rosenzweig, 2007: 1).

Eco-migrants, defined as individuals impacted by push and pull factors of both ecology and economy are at the center of focus in this study. Refugee populations remain one of the most complex migrant categories as they are frequently associated with extreme situations of war, civil strife, persecution and the search for security (Toole & Waldman, 1997). In the case of low lying coral atoll populations, ‘war against the ocean’ has been declared and physical security has been sought by many.

2.3.3 Preventing a Refugee Crisis?

A 1995 article on climate change and migration from Oceania, states that significant environmental changes could stimulate population movement, and in worst case scenarios could cause significant health and psychological consequences for environmentally induced migrant populations (Moore & Smith). The populations most prone to displacement would be those living on low lying islands or in coastal areas. Of the five world states composed solely of low lying coral atolls, four are in the Pacific Ocean (Connell, 2004). Within Kiribati, climate change has expedited the growth of poverty through natural resource depletion and population displacement.

Some Pacific Islanders are trying to re-adapt to the changing environment by moving away from shores, building stronger sea walls and dredging lagoon floors in order to build new inhabitable lands; while others are adapting by leaving islands all together (Connell, 2004: 262).

Tuvaluans, Marshall Islanders and I-Kiribati also feel anxious over their future. Carmen Bigler from the Marshall Islands confirms that the Marshallese do not know what to do about the rising water and are concerned for the future of their land and people: “we don’t want to move

from our homes, we want to stay” (Star News, 2007). Aside from migration, climate change brings a host of economic and ecological problems which have already impacted populations.

Sea water inundation damages food crops and deprives populations of vital nutrition. Inundation also depletes fresh water supplies and deprives populations of accessible safe drinking water. Stronger and more frequent tidal surges erode land at faster rates, decreasing livable land and protection for the Ghyben-Herzberg fresh water lens (Kelman, 2008). Changes in weather patterns have caused epic droughts and storms in the past, killing terrestrial resources, animals and people. In Tuvalu, bleaching of coral, reduced copra production, increased water-borne diseases and altered migrations of oceanic food sources (Roy and Connell, 1991; Chambers and Chambers, 2001; Connell, 2004; Lazrus, 2009).

Pacific Islanders have lived the realities of climate change while the world has debated its reality for decades. Many see themselves as the first victims of a pending global catastrophe and realize that their survival depends on hegemonic public opinion and behavior which have little to no interest in the consequences faced by these small and often unheard of populations. While many seek to adapt to their changing environments, many others look for opportunities to start new lives elsewhere. Although there were no official relocation programs for climate change refugees in 2012, there were long standing temporary work and permanent resident migration opportunities for *I-Kiribati* hoping to begin new lives elsewhere.

As time progresses and the ecological landscape of Kiribati becomes more unstable, larger numbers of *I-Kiribati* will seek safer environments elsewhere. How will larger nations help? Will immigration become the one and only enduring climate change adaption strategy? How will individual human rights violations be addressed and who will pay? As more nations experience

devastating impacts from climate change, will and how the larger global community react remains to be seen.

2.4 CLIMATE CHANGE AND POPULATION HEALTH IN KIRIBATI

Small islands, whether located in the tropics or higher latitudes, have characteristics which make them especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change, sea-level rise, and extreme events. Sea-level rise is expected to exacerbate inundation, storm surge, erosion and other coastal hazards, thus threatening vital infrastructure, settlements and facilities that support the livelihood of island communities (IPCC, 2007: 689).

Kiribati has experienced significant environmental changes over recent years. Warmer sea temperatures, loss of fresh water supplies, major coastal erosion, significant amounts of coral bleaching, harmful lagoon algae growth and more frequent king tides have inundated inhabitable lands (Climate Change Effects in Kiribati, 2010).

In a country that faces consequences from too much water, a severe public health dilemma exists in its lack of fresh water. Unusual rainfall patterns have contributed to terrestrial crop failures and inadequate fresh water supplies throughout the country. Since the majority of the population relies on man-made wells and/or rain catchment tanks, irregular weather patterns have had a profound impact on fresh water supplies.

2.4.1 Fresh Water

Coral atolls are composed of porous limestone, which act as filtration systems for the naturally occurring Ghyben-Herzberg fresh water lens located below the atoll's surface (Kirch, 2000: 47).

As storm surges rise and sea levels increase, the naturally occurring freshwater filtration system's capacity diminishes. Wells become unusable as supplies are contaminated with polluted runoff and sea water (Climate Change Effects in Kiribati, 2010). The first UN mission to Kiribati by the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque, occurred in 2012. This trip shed light on the precarious nature of the fresh water supplies in Kiribati. As she noted, urgent action needed to be taken to address water shortages for the country's 100,000 population (Pearl, 2012). Drastic weather patterns were also seen to contribute to fresh water shortages in the country.

There used to be two consistently occurring seasons in Kiribati. The dry season occurred from May to October, and the wet season occurred from November to April. Kiribati's weather patterns have become highly unpredictable, creating severe consequences for its citizens. A recent drought lasting from April 2007 to early 2009 severely impacted the southern Gilberts and Banaba, while the 2010-2011 droughts significantly impacted the northern Gilberts (Climate Change Effects in Kiribati, 2010). During these times, natural freshwater supplies became low, wells turned brackish, vegetation died, and lands turned dry.

2.4.2 Vectors and Intestinal Infections

Heavy rains following long periods of drought create new sets of health problems for Kiribati citizens. Water catchment tanks become breeding grounds for mosquitoes, which have

been linked to outbreaks of dengue fever. There have been four known dengue outbreaks in Kiribati, two during the 1970s and two more during the 1980s. Twenty cases were reported in 2010. South Tarawa is at a relatively high risk for dengue fever outbreaks due to the crowded urban environment and ideal vector habitat conditions (Kiribati Adaptation Project, 2008).

In 2010, the Kiribati Ministry of Health reported more incidences of diarrheal infections, malnutrition, and vector borne diseases than it had seen in the previous ten years (Climate Change Effects in Kiribati, 2010). Although too much water creates public health challenges, the fact remains that the availability of fresh water is essential for healthy populations. Access to safe drinking water not only increases one's general health but also reduces water-borne diseases incidence. Kiribati's precarious freshwater supply, especially on the main island, has caused many health problems. A UN mission focusing on safe drinking water in Kiribati found that a combination of high urban population density, unsustainable urban development, and a fragile fresh water supply were all major obstacles in providing adequate safe drinking water and sanitation to people living in the urban capital (Pearl, 2012).

A lack of safe drinking water is reflected in the health of the population. Kiribati is struggling with one of the highest infant mortality rates in the Pacific. Roughly 43 out of every 1,000 babies will die before their first birthday (SPC, 2009). While infant mortality has decreased over time, a disproportionate number of the infant deaths were attributed to waterborne illnesses (WHO, 2011). In 2009, one in five people required medical intervention for diarrhea or dysentery. Four children died from diarrhea every month in South Tarawa that year (Pacific Infrastructure Advisory Center, 2010).

In South Tarawa, all natural water sources are either polluted or at risk for pollution, meaning they cannot be used as safe water supplies. Sewage systems which were installed in

1982 after a cholera outbreak are now leaking into the atoll's natural aquifers. Waste in the main island pollutes groundwater and the lagoon, and makes reef fish dangerous to consume (Pacific Infrastructure Advisory Center, 2010).

Open defecation, poor hygiene education and a lack of toilets all contribute to the pollution of water supplies in an environment where nearly half the national population lives (ADB, 2012). In addition to several other social and economic factors, poor environmental health conditions found within Kiribati constitute additional significant push factors resulting in population emigration, a topic that I engage in the next section.

2.5 CLIMATE JUSTICE

For small island states in the Pacific, the factors that characterize climate-induced migration – the inability to return, collective migration in large numbers, and the predictable need for migration – might all occur in concert. The coincidence of all of these factors militates for a rapid and comprehensive global response. With their relative lack of responsibility for climate change and their relative poverty, Pacific climate migrants and their home states have a special moral, and perhaps legal, claim on wealthier and higher-polluting industrialized countries (Burkett, 2011:3).

Climate justice, often used in a social justice context, posits marginalized human populations as being most impacted by climate change, yet least responsible for its development.

Indigenous peoples themselves may argue that, despite having contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions, they are the ones most at risk from its consequences due to their dependence upon and close relationship with the local environment and its resources (Crate & Nuttall, 2009:12).

The first 'Climate Justice Summit' was held as a side event at the 2000 COP 6 meeting. While government delegates and mainstream environmental groups debated the details of market-based 'solutions' to global warming, Climate Justice Summit attendees met and shared their lived

experiences of climate change impacts. Speakers described human rights violations they faced and the environmental devastation brought forth by these changes (Karliner, 2000). To many, climate change blame rested on the shoulders of nations and corporations invested solely in an economy which puts pollution and profit over people and place.

Global warming is primarily a product of global capitalism, which is characterized by a constant drive for profits and ever-increasing emphasis on production and consumption. From the perspective of political ecology, capitalism is inherently at odds with the environment, which it views as a bottomless pit of resources and as a receptacle for the waste products of productions- the quantity of which tends to grow because of the intrinsic need of capitalism to relentlessly expand and increase profits (Baer & Singer, 2009:34).

Throughout history, low islands have been connected to high islands through economy, memory and people. Under present conditions, *I-Kiribati* migrants are inextricably tied to *I-Kiribati* in Kiribati through economy, technology, memory and identity. These connections hold migrants in a constant state of transition between two or more locations.

3.0 AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF DIASPORA

Classic migration literature suggests that once migrants arrive at their destination, they settle and begin the process of assimilation (Gordon, 1964; Alba, 1985; Alba and Nee, 1997). The immigrant assimilation model posits immigrants as travelers in a one way flow of people, transplanted from their unattractive native country and deposited in more fertile soil (Spickard, 2002). The common narrative throughout the assimilation model was always leaving worse conditions, most often with reference to European countries, for better opportunities in the United States. As a result, migrants had long been thought of as individuals who desired to cut ties with their former inadequate homelands in order to start new and better lives elsewhere.

As travel and technological advances afforded new connections to home, detachments from migrant origins were lessened. A new age of transnational thought entered into existence during the second half of the twentieth century. The transnational perspective afforded the existence of linkages between people and communities in their current places with their place of origin (Spoonley, 2000). This notion shifts attention from complete isolation and assimilation to sustained linkages through cheaper travel options and new communication capabilities. The assimilation model was challenged by these factors.

Following the assimilation model, a transnational model, which emphasized connections between sending and receiving points, emerged. Transnationalism became structured around links with, and returns to ethnic origins (Spickard, 2002). Today's migration patterns can no longer be viewed, and studied as isolated events occurring in separate disconnected contexts as it is and has long been an interconnected phenomena with continual flows of people and things, influencing and being influenced by migrant populations.

I argue that an examination of migration cannot be completed through a single-sited methodology; for even single-sited approaches are largely influenced by factors of globalization, transnational flows, and modern-day technologies which enable contact between people from even the most remote villages.

Conducting research within a geographically bounded social group no longer seems as possible as it once did, in that local contexts are increasingly connected to global flows of people, information and products and to other, non-local, contexts (Wilding, 2007: 335).

Contemporary studies on migration must be conceptualized as multi-sited, studying the sending regions, receiving locations, and the points in between. This contextualizes an enduring flow of people, ideas and things in ways that single-sited studies limit. Examining a single migrant sending place and the resulting individuals and migrant communities in multiple countries sets up natural quasi-experiment which explains how the act of migration and receiving contexts pattern resulting migrants lives (Fitzgerald, 2006).

Migration inherently means both emigration from some place and immigration to another, implying that research should include both sending and receiving areas (Fitzgerald, 2006: 3).

While this methodology produces a more complete picture of migration; the approach creates new challenges for the ethnographer(s). Combining multiple locations with in-depth understandings of different localities requires great amounts of time and travel that typical research budgets and timelines cannot accommodate. Once initial barriers to research are overcome, contextualizing the often fragmented bits of information into cohesive arguments and conclusions add to the challenges (Wittel, 2000).

Emerging technologies are further advancing the connectivity between migrants and migrant homes. With the onset of cyberspace- migrants, families and friends are now in constant virtual contact. These virtual connections not only maintain transnational ties between family

members, but also aid in the physical migration of others. The context of migration is rapidly changing through virtual interactions which necessitate computer generated clicks in place of physically bounded bricks.

Migrants and expatriates around the world have established Internet sites containing membership directories, chat rooms, political commentaries, advertisements for goods and services, and news about life in different nodes of the members' network – all of which are grist for the virtual ethnographer's mill (Fitzgerald, 2006: 4).

3.1 A MULTI-FIELD SITE METHODOLOGY

Anthropology, as a discipline was born into a colonial world in which the colonizing nations sought to learn more about the peoples they had subjugated. Anthropologists studied “over there,” with an eye to understanding primarily the differences between themselves and the other (Small, 1997: 206).

It can be argued that the multi-field site methodology is the basis of modern-day single sited anthropological fieldwork. Migratory peoples, things and the resulting social relationships were at the heart of Malinowski's ethnographic study of the Trobriand Islanders. Following things and recording intricate trade patterns, relationships and patterns of life of these people, the Kula Ring led him to conduct research in several different environments. Utilizing a multi-field site approach, Malinowski followed the exchanges of the *soulava* and *mwali*. At the same time, he observed and participated in the daily life which was impacted by this trade. An argument could be put forth claiming that each site is multi-sited in its own right since outside things, people and ideas have made their way into even the most remote locations. This suggests that conducting research within a geographically bounded social group no longer seems possible (Marcus, 1995;

Fitzgerald, 2006). Local environments are increasingly connected to global flows of non-local people, information, products, and environments (Appadurai, 1991).

Marcus's 1995 article on the emergence of multi-sited ethnography calls for a methodological shift in research design, from single sited to multi-sited fields of enquiry.

This mobile ethnography takes unexpected trajectories in tracing a cultural formation across and within multiple sites of activity that destabilize the distinction, for example, between life world and system, by which much ethnography has been conceived (Marcus, 1995: 186).

The larger transnational system that enacts power over the lives of individuals and communities, Marcus states, can easily be characterized by the transnational ties migrants create and maintain across lands, oceans, states and nations (Marcus, 1995). In fact, it is this new interconnected diaspora that extraordinarily rapidly has come to characterize contemporary migration in the south Pacific region (Connell, 1987).

I argue that this approach to field work, characterized as an emergent methodological approach to fieldwork, makes sense for researching migration. Typical "single-sited" ethnographic field work is built upon a "multi-sited" field. Our world today requires an interconnected research approach as globalization processes continue to intensify. Today's world is a trans-local, interactive system that is strikingly new (Appadurai, 1991).

Dominicans in New York City have been described as living "between two islands" - Manhattan and Santo Domingo (Grasmuck, 1991). Mexican villagers find that their most important kin and friends are just as likely to be living hundreds or thousands of miles away as they are to be living next door (Rouse, 1991). Nyiri, Glick-Schiller and Sayad assert that migration inherently means both emigrating from some place and immigrating to another, implying that research should include both sending and receiving localities (as cited in Fitzgerald, 2006: 3).

The modern-day Pacific-wide migration phenomenon has led to more island-born Niueans living overseas than remaining in the islands and more Tongans living outside of Tonga than in the country (Lee, 2004; Small, 1997). Migrants today experience a much more temporary separation through technological advances (Connell, 2004). Today's globalized world is a transnational world which links people and institutions across borders, changing the course of migration, where unification rather than separation becomes the end result.

With so much global attention focused on storms and heat waves just now being experienced in local arenas, small island nations have been, for decades, and remain today relatively unseen in larger global climate change conferences, making issues of water resources, coastal protection, agricultural production, human health, marine bio-diversity and social cohesion of the country to be resolved by themselves alone. As the president of Kiribati stated, at the 2009 COP 15 meeting:

Kiribati is on the frontline of climate change and it is a human issue, not an economic issue, which needs to be addressed now not later. Within the next twenty years, what are we going to do and where will our people go (Tong, 2009).

Kiribati's socio-ecological setting combined with growing environmental concerns necessitates a research design that uses a multi-sited approach. Rapid population increases coupled with stagnating economies that have been unable to meet the demand for wage employment have persuaded many Pacific Islanders to leave their countries in search of educational and economic opportunities elsewhere (McMurray, 2003). In 2007, 4,398 *I-Kiribati* citizens, nearly 4.75% of the national population, left Kiribati. National immigration records show that of these, over half ended up in Fiji, New Zealand or the United States (Kiribati, 2007). Many who leave on scholarships or labor contracts go with the intent of returning after graduation or employment contract completion. Many others leave permanently in order to start new lives

elsewhere. President Tong has repeatedly stated on the global stage that his country is in a dire situation, leaving him and his fellow 112,000 citizens to seek multiple exodus routes from Kiribati.

Climate change as a primary reason for migration has produced much research (Morrow-Jones, 1991; Wood, 2001; Bates, 2002; Castles, 2002; Perch-Nielsen, 2004; Frey, 2006; McLeman, 2006), which more often than not examines diverse populations experiencing similar environmental conditions, focusing less on those who migrate and more on the impacted environment. In this way, long-term/long-distance resettlement studies have generally been passed up for localized short-term displacement studies, under the assumption that permanent mass migration due to climate change does not take place (Morrow et al., 1991; Perch et al., 2008).

Kiribati's unique situation has created an extraordinary opportunity to further examine this. Its independent status adds to the complexity of relocation strategies. It does not maintain colonial ties or free association with larger nations as several other countries in the Pacific region do. It is an independent nation which may have to rely on the world's altruism as the country becomes more uninhabitable. Current sea level rise, changing weather patterns and more robust king tides have caused significant damage and have reduced fresh water supplies. These conditions necessitate a stronger reliance on imported materials, foods and remittances. Connections to families overseas allow for the purchasing of materials to construct sea walls, purchase food and imported materials.

Contemporary Pacific migration patterns break down boundaries and reposition migrants in marginalized positions as most migrants remain in unskilled jobs with lower wages, poorer working conditions and fewer benefits (Connell, 1987; Ahlburg, 1994; Connell et al., 1995; Anae,

2001). Migration emerging out of inequality reinforces inequality on a larger scale, widening social inequality for migrants in their new countries (Connell, 1987).

Due to cheaper labor costs, New Zealand employers indirectly encouraged a quasi-employee based chain migration, where current migrant employees assist in recruiting workers from Kiribati through a mandate in the Pacific Access Category migrant scheme. Sponsored work permits through a limited amount of employers ensures residential concentrations of migrant workers; making diaspora communities durable and visible in their new places of residence (Macpherson, 1999). Although economics has historically been a major pull factor for migration (Wood, 2001; Bates, 2002; Castles, 2002; Connell, 2004), deteriorating environmental conditions have brought new factors into migration.

Of the two larger nations in the Pacific, New Zealand has been the most receptive towards taking in Pacific Islanders. There were 265,974 people who identified themselves as Pacific Islander in the 2006 Census, representing around seven percent of the total population. This is an increase of 15 percent (34,173) since the 2001 Census (New Zealand Government, 2013). The number of U.S. residents who identified as Pacific Islander, according to the 2010 Census was 1.2 million. This group comprised .4 percent of the total population (United States Census Bureau, 2011). Primarily because of regional and historic ties to the Pacific Islands, the larger Pacific Islander population demands and receives much greater attention in New Zealand than in the United States (Keesing, 1989; Krishnan et al., 1994; Sahlins, 1999; Macpherson, 1999; Macpherson et al., 2001; Te'evale, 2001; Zemke-White, 2001).

Through the comparative examination of a single ethnic population residing in multiple locations, this research contributes in multiple ways to the general bodies of migration, environmental studies and anthropology. Theoretical implications of this methodological

approach allows for an examination of the way in which cultural identity is displaced from "location" and reproduced through various forms of global communication as a result of the environmental problems that has not only displaced people but changed how their identity is conceptualized, spatially and socially. Viewing the migrant assimilation model as a precursor to the transnational model, and a proposed virtual assimilation model this research contributes to the greater understanding of transnational development in a period when environmental conditions threaten the existence of a habitable homeland.

3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

There is little doubt anymore that global warming will have severe economic, social, political, and health consequences as the 21st century unfolds. Even though these consequences will not be equally distributed nor will they arrive all at once, it is clear that collectively human societies have never faced an environmental problem on this scale and complexity before. Despite such observations, most anthropologists, including medical anthropologists, as well as other social scientists, have been slow in coming to grips with the impact that global warming is presently having and will continue to have upon humanity for decades and possibly even centuries to come (Baer & Singer, 2009: 7).

Objectives of the research varied with each location. Within Kiribati, research objectives included documenting ecological conditions, interviewing *I-Kiribati* citizens about hardships they suffered as a result of changing ecological conditions, and learning about internal and international migration opportunities for those impacted. Overseas, research focused on the challenges and benefits migrants faced in their respective new countries. The various overseas locations allowed for a closed comparative examination of *I-Kiribati* migration.

During preliminary research, several high level Kiribati government leaders expressed the concerns they held over climate change and its impacts on their country and their people. They

felt this research could help answer questions of relocation and its impact on the Kiribati people and culture. Drawing from multiple Kiribati migrant endpoints with distinctly different social settings, research sought to answer whether the presence of certain migrant conditions facilitated or hindered the maintenance of the Kiribati culture overseas.

I hypothesized that the production and maintenance of a transnational Kiribati identity was aided by frequent interactions with either virtual or real *I-Kiribati* populations. Utilizing a multiple sites with different *I-Kiribati* populations allowed for a closed-comparative study on Kiribati migration and identity formation. Over a decade of connection with the study population facilitated the implementation of research.

3.2.1 Study Methodology

‘Being there’ as Geertz has advocated, implies a thorough engagement with place. This is core to ethnographic inquiry and is the basis of single sited ethnography. However in studies of migration, it is has become an established ideal to ‘be there’ at both points of departure and arrival, thus working at least bilocally (Hanzer, 2003: 201).

Home visits in Kiribati and the United States lasted approximately two months while a single home stay in New Zealand lasted approximately ten months. A combination of unstructured, semi-structured and in-depth interviews were used to acquire in-depth qualitative information, while closed ended questions used in surveys provided many quantitative data. Participant observation was utilized in various settings, from New Zealand pack houses to US backyards and Kiribati shorelines. Selected methods allowed for an overall cross-comparison of U.S., Australian and New Zealand migrants.

Kiribati objective I: Document the ecological conditions found in Kiribati and interview *I-Kiribati* citizens' experiences with climate change related events and possible migration.

Data had been gathered through semi-structured interviews and informal surveys. Interviews focused on current ecological conditions and weather-related phenomena in Kiribati. Questions sought to understand how individuals perceived the impacts of altering weather patterns, sea level rise, and migration. Responses were coded for thematic analysis, producing an aggregate picture of “the frontline of climate change” (Weir, 2007; Hall, 2012).

Kiribati objective II: Gather information on the migration operating in Kiribati, and their impact on families and individuals.

In-country meetings with foreign dignitaries, high commissioner representatives, Kiribati government officials, and Kiribati Adaptation Programme representatives were held to gather information on the local environment, migration and adaptation responses to climate change. Informal meetings with Kiribati citizens and host family members provided a more robust picture of the impacts migration already had on Kiribati families.

USA, NZ objective I: Document migrant experiences of life in their homes abroad with a specific focus on migrant connections to home and maintenance of Kiribati culture.

Living with a family who had recently arrived in New Zealand for ten months had allowed a more intimate experience with not only one family, but also the larger migrant community. Long-term connections with the US study population allowed for several short term homestays during which information was collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews.

USA, NZ objective II: Evaluate whether the presence of certain conditions, has resulted in different outcomes in the two studied migrant populations.

Upon return from the field, analysis of surveys and interview transcripts produced thematic sequences which were used for comparison. Common themes included loss, identity, climate change and community. Results highlight thematic concepts, building support for a transnational migrant theoretical model which brings forth roots of identity through routes of migration.

3.2.2 Schedule of Research

Research took place over a three year period. Preliminary research, took place in the summers of 2008 and 2009 in the migrant sending nation of Kiribati, New Zealand, and the United States. Formal dissertation research took place in 2010 in the United States, Kiribati, New Zealand and Australia.

Research carried out in the Republic of Kiribati produced 9 interviews and 98 short answer surveys. In the United States, 19 in-depth surveys along with 16 in-depth interviews were conducted. In New Zealand, 30 in-depth interviews, 24 in-depth surveys, and countless informal conversations were held. All inquiry focused on climate change and migration. Additional surveys and interviews were held with *I-Kiribati* living in Australia. Though their data is important and will be included in the final discussion, the major research focus remains on the Kiribati, US, and New Zealand data.

2008	May 23-27 '08	May 29- July 3 '08	July 4-9 '08	July 10-31 '08	August 2-6 '08
Location	USA	KIR	FJ	NZ	USA
Home-stays Participant observation in migrant communities	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Interviews and community observations	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Surveys		XXX		XXX	

Table 1: 2008 Schedule of research

2009	June 21 - July 15	July 15 – 31	August 1-11
Location	Illinois, Indiana, Ohio	Washington	Florida, California
Home-stays Participant observation in migrant communities	XXX	XXX	XXX
Interviews and community observations	XXX	XXX	XXX
Surveys	XXX	XXX	XXX

Table 2: 2009 Schedule of research

2010	Feb '10	Mar '10	April '10	May '10	June '10	July '10	Aug '10	Sept '10	Oct '10	Nov/Dec '10
Location	NZ	NZ	NZ	NZ	NZ	NZ	NZ/AUS	NZ	NZ	KIR
Home-stays Participant observation in migrant communities	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Interviews and community observations		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	
Surveys		XXX		XXX		XXX				

Table 3: 2010 Schedule of research

Research was screened and approved by the University of Pittsburgh's Internal Review Board (PRO08118228). Research was conducted with migrant adults who self-selected into the study, fully knowledgeable of the opportunity to self-select out at any time. Interviews and field notes were personally recorded, translated and/or transcribed. Pseudonyms are used to protect the anonymity of participants in this publication.

4.0 RESULTS

Research outcomes clarify liminal spaces between two worlds migrants frequently tend to occupy. Though migrants to the U.S. were much more dispersed than the New Zealand population of migrants, similar feelings of mutual appreciation and collective identity through migrant communities resonated. Each location had individuals who expressed doubt about and belief in climate change. Individuals who doubted climate change commonly referred to Biblical scriptures. Individuals who believed in climate change feared that environmental changes would render their lands uninhabitable in the future, forcing the population to relocate. While no research participant had left Kiribati because of climate change, all recognized that their experiences and knowledge gained from migration were valuable for future migrant populations.

All research participants were either first or second generation migrants who still maintained contact with families in Kiribati. Maintaining relationships with other *I-Kiribati* migrants in their new home countries varied. The following summary includes quantitative and qualitative results presented by country. The chapter concludes with a unique perspective from Australian migrants discovering their own Kiribati past. This case study could very well be a foreshadowing of what is to come.

4.1 KIRIBATI

Land is wealth, and the sea has made us poor...

KInterview 8. 2., 2008

King tides are the oceans' highest tides, which occur only a few times per year. These tides cause significant damage in Kiribati. They wash over villages, flood homes, and damage infrastructure. These rare events unmask climate change doubt and bring the realities of rising seas into the homes and minds of island residents. Informal discussions and short surveys carried out in 2008 produced a wide range of perspectives on climate change in Kiribati. Although not all participants understood or believed in climate change, it was evident that all surveyed were aware of climate change. Adaptation measures were seen as coping mechanisms in dealing with climate change land alterations.

If the rising seas keep destroying the land, people will have to move to their other lands. They have lands in the bush and that is their alternative, to move to their other lands if they have them (KInterview 8. 2., 2008).

Others saw migration as the only viable long term solution to the unprecedented changes they were experiencing in their islands.

Every chance I get to speak with foreign dignitaries I stress the moral obligation to help the plight of our people. Adaptation programs will work for some time, but we must start looking beyond just adapting (KInterview 8. 3., 2008).

Two informal surveys were developed to gauge main island residents' climate change knowledge and beliefs. The initial survey explored internal migration and climate change beliefs (see tables 4 -14).

4.1.1 Kiribati Quantitative Results #1

Twenty six females and 23 males participated in the first survey. The largest age set were those between 20 and 29. Over half of the population lived in three villages on the main island, the remaining in villages spanning the entire island. With the exception of two individuals, the entire survey population consisted of internal migrants. Most had come from islands in the Gilbert Chain.

Two-thirds of the respondents had more than one relative living overseas; most lived in either New Zealand or Fiji. Relatives worked in various positions overseas. The most frequently stated employment position was temporary farm laborer in New Zealand. This was seen in part due to the recently enacted RSE migrant work scheme program. Several of those listed in the office/factory could also fall under this migrant worker program.

During the 2006 UNGASS Meeting, President Tong stated that within the next 50 years, his country would be below the sea. This

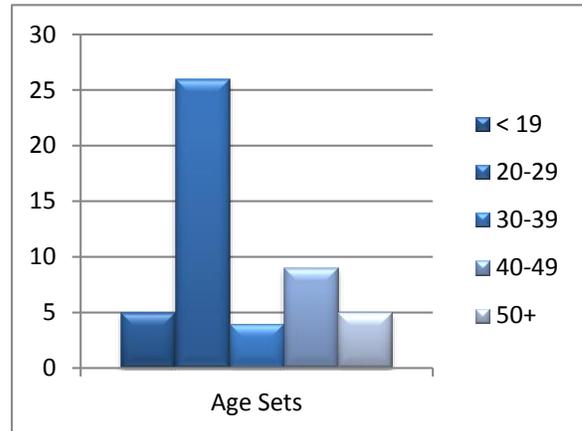


Table 4: Tarawa Survey 1 - Age Sets

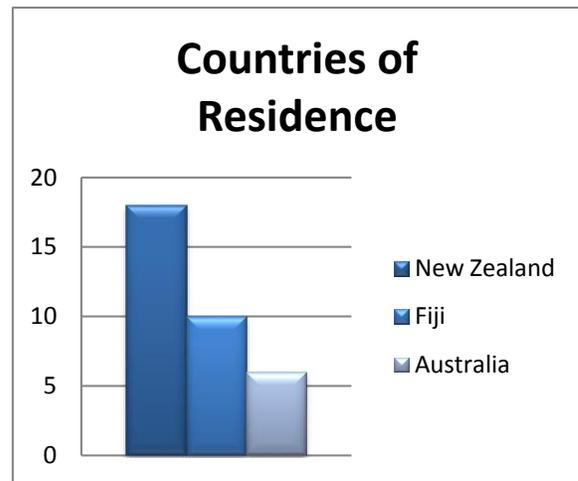


Table 5: Tarawa Survey 1 - Residence

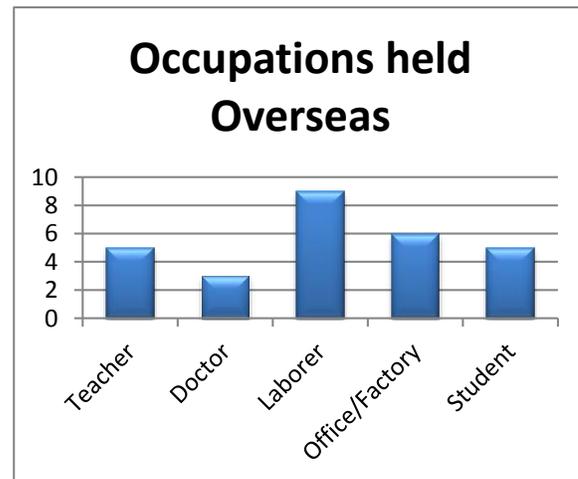


Table 6: Tarawa Survey 1 - Occupations

declaration was the first of its kind from Kiribati on such a large stage. It fueled debate over climate change within the country and brought to light the immediate consequences low-lying Pacific Nations face on the global stage. Within the country, the President’s statement caused many to argue against climate change with deeply held religious beliefs.

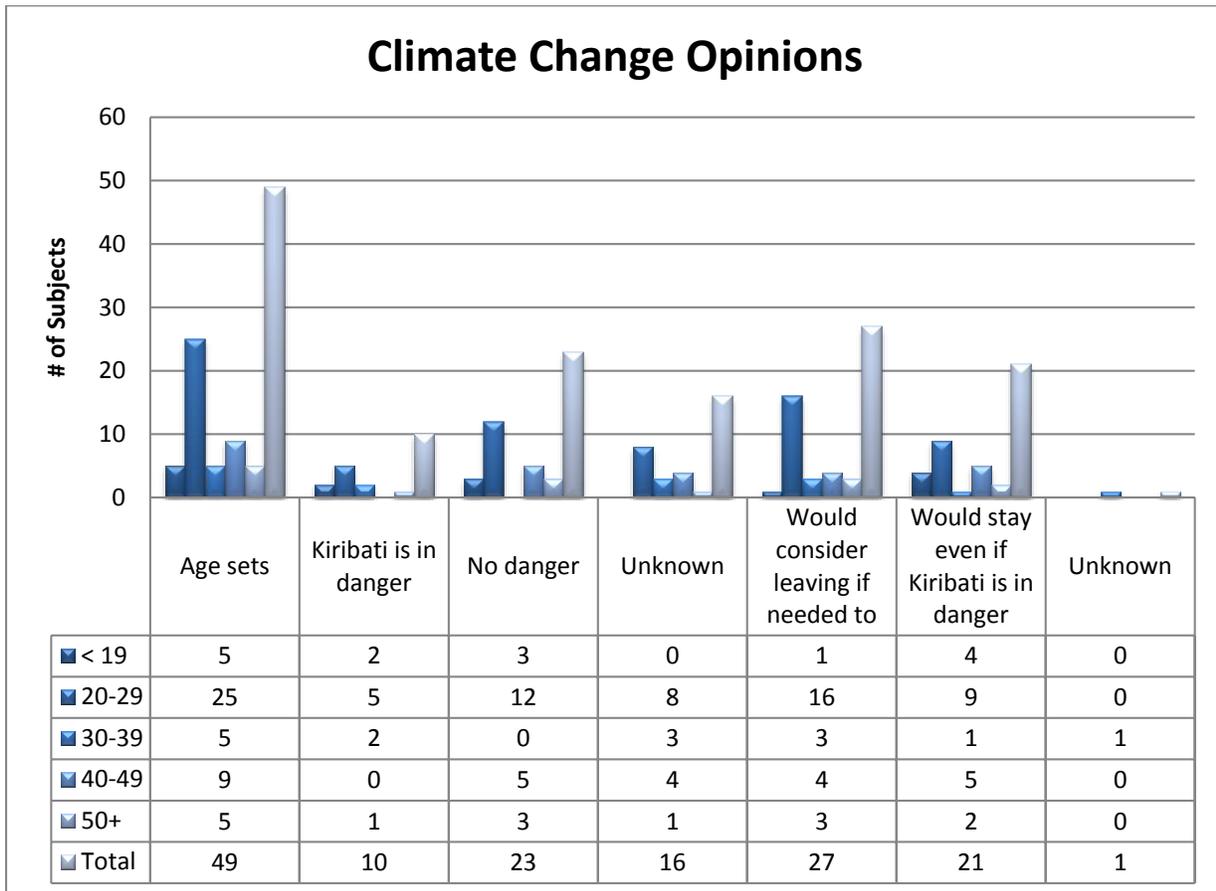


Table 7: Tarawa Survey 1 - Climate Change Opinions

Survey results highlighted a clear sense of division, between those who believed, those who did not believe or those who did not know. Like the larger global community, Kiribati was divided over the issue of climate change. Results indicated that more respondents believed that Kiribati was not in danger from climate change. However, more respondents said they would consider leaving Kiribati if they had to.

4.1.2 Kiribati Quantitative Results #2

Seventeen males and 33 females participated in the second survey. Like before, the largest age set represented was the 20 to 29 set. Like the first survey, a large portion of the respondents were internal migrants. Most had relatives living overseas. A substantially larger portion of the second survey sample did not have any relatives overseas. Such a large number of individuals without relatives overseas countered initial survey findings. These results could have been influenced by the large number of outer island subsistence fish market sellers surveyed.

Most respondents had either one or no relatives living overseas. The majority of relatives lived in New Zealand, followed distantly by Fiji and Australia. Most stated that their relatives were new migrants. Out of the 36 identified relatives, 20 had been in their new countries for less than one year.

Returning home is one way of maintaining relations with those left behind. However, returning home is not always the most affordable or practical way of maintaining ties. Depending on migrant situations, returning home may not be a viable option.

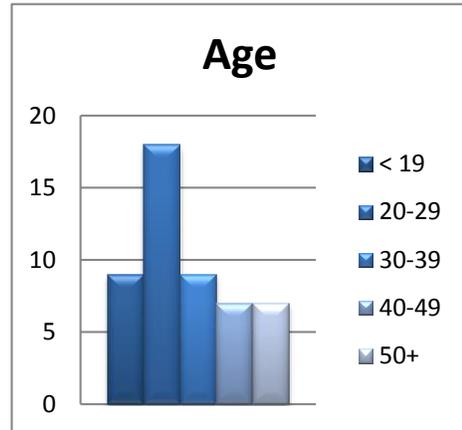


Table 8: Tarawa Survey 2 - Age

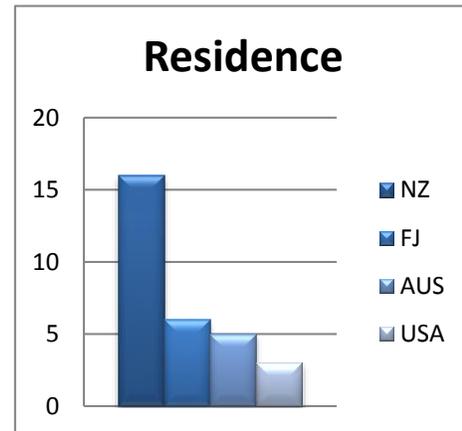


Table 9: Tarawa Survey 2 - Residence

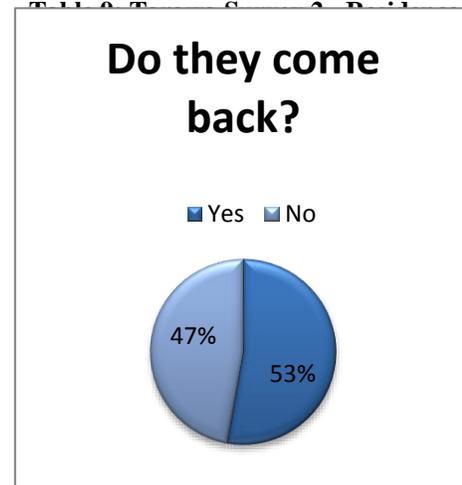


Table 10: Tarawa Survey 2 - Returns?

The majority of those who consistently returned were USP students or seafarers. Individuals returning less frequently were those who had become permanent residents or citizens of other nations.

Over a third of the respondents received remittances from these relatives. The economic sense in maintaining kinship relations through remittances is clear; remitting money is much more affordable than physically returning. Surveys showed that remitting money was a much more common practice. While remitting money is a much more affordable way of maintaining transnational ties, emotional longing for migrants' physical return remained.

Those who remitted money to spouses or parents on a constant basis were merchant seafarers. Remittances served to uphold an individual's importance and social status within the family and community. Those who remitted on a less frequent basis typically sent money on special occasions such as birthdays, baptisms, and independence or when relatives would make specific requests.

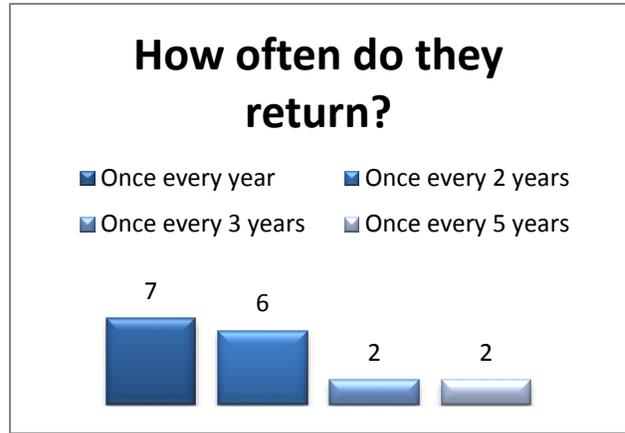


Table 11: Tarawa Survey 2 - Frequency of returns

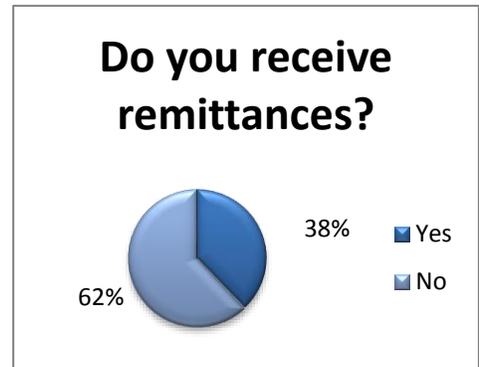


Table 12: Tarawa Survey 2 - Remittances

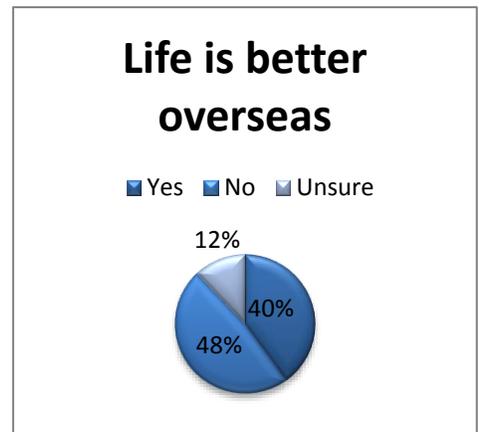


Table 13: Tarawa Survey 2 - Life overseas

It was clear that a large portion of respondents for both surveys were impacted by and held strong feelings on migration. The final survey questions gauged individual feelings on migration. Most felt that life was better in Kiribati, but when asked if they would want live overseas, the majority said they would, where, according to the survey, life was worse.

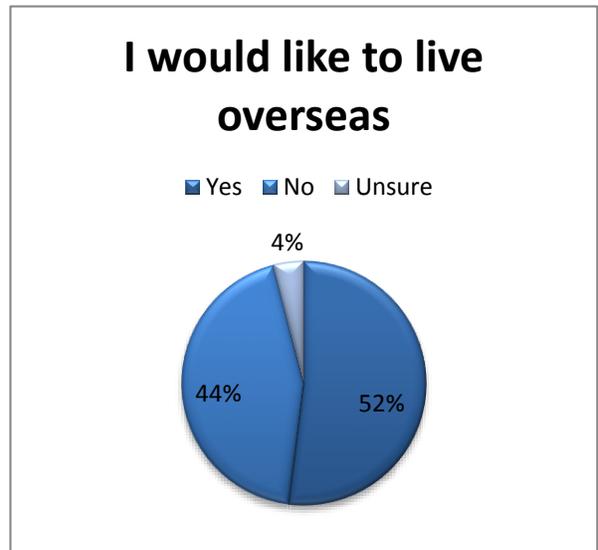


Table 14: Tarawa Survey 2 - Desire to live overseas

4.1.3 Kiribati Qualitative Data Results

Ten years ago, twenty coconut trees flourished in the front yard of my home on Tarawa. Today, only two remain. Each high tide floods my yard with salt water, killing the vegetables and coconut trees I cultivate for food. My problem is not unique. Climate change, the culprit behind the country's droughts and rising sea levels, is slowly threatening to destroy the islands and render us in to the world's first climate change refugees (KInterview 8. 2., 2008).

Formal and informal discussions were held with friends, family members and government officials. All recognized that Kiribati was experiencing more frequent droughts, king tides and unseasonal weather patterns. While not all attributed these occurrences to global climate change, all recognized that most people did not understand what was happening.

4.1.4 Adapting to Change

Upon my arrival in 2008, the land was brown and plants were dying or dead. "It has been like this since last year," my host mother yelled from the backseat of the car. The prolonged drought from April of 2007 to early 2009 impacted all of Kiribati. The Southern Gilberts and

Banaba were most impacted. During this period, ground water turned brackish and the leaves of most plants turned yellow (Ueneta, Tebwaau , Kireua, & Abeta, 2008).

The national Kiribati Adaptation Programme (KAP) office had just completed a national consultation with various island councils in which more than 50 specific problems resulting from climate change island residents faced. The most common concerns dealt with sea water inundation of taro pits and wells, rendering natural food sources unsafe for human consumption.

On South Tarawa, the amount of land used for cultivating crops is significantly less than on outer islands. South Tarawa's overpopulation has forced adaptation practices through reliance on imported foods and goods. Being a more industrialized setting, South Tarawa residents worried about damages to infrastructure from king tides and more frequent storm surges. Transportation infrastructure was as important to South Tarawa residents as ample amounts of fresh water supplies.

The government is building up sea walls along all of the causeways to stop the ocean and families have built their own walls to prevent the ocean from damaging their homes and taking their land. I fear that soon we will all run out of land and homes to protect (KInterview 8. 2., 2008).

Adaptation strategies reduce damaging impacts from climate change on local environments. The most commonly seen adaptation strategies at the time included sea wall construction and inland migration. Sea wall construction amplified climate change



Figure 5: Broken sea wall

impacts as individuals mined beaches for coral and sand for construction purposes.

Unfortunately, these man-made adaptation strategies proved to be of little use as broken seawalls and empty sand bags lined the island's shores.

The immediate need to protect land from higher waves and stronger storm surges was evident during my stay. After helping reconstruct a broken sea wall, I had a frank conversation with a host relative. He admitted that permanent relocation to another country may be the only solution to their constant problems.

Rebuilding seawalls and sandbags are only temporary fixes. I think if Kiribati is going to be flooded by the sea, there will be a big migration somewhere... (KInterview 8. 2., 2008).

Nearly all inhabited atolls have an enclosed lagoon which protects portions of the island from powerful tidal surges. While most of the population chose to live along the lagoon side, pictured here with lighter colored water and no cresting



waves, for its natural protection, there were families who lived on the less protected ocean side.

Figure 6: Areal view of coral reef village

The KAP office has promoted migration

away from the ocean shores as an adaptation strategy. However, in many parts of Tarawa, the land between lagoon and ocean is less than 20 meters.

The key to adaptation is having the ability to adapt. Our lands are so small that by the time we move inland, we are already on the other side of the island in many parts of this country (KInterview 8. 3., 2008)

There are few adaptation options when these strategies fail, yet those with the ability to move further inland do so at a cost. As one interviewee stated, the problem is moving all of their belongings and assets, their whole house.

Our land is not an easy thing to leave and the problem too is the cost... Money to move and the cost to the family... This is our land and land is wealth... the sea has made us poor (KInterview 8. 2., 2008).

The irony is that the sea, a source of great wealth and life in Kiribati, has now created great poverty and despair.

Whereas money is the measurement of wealth in many developed societies today, it is also the driving force behind climate change. Land, the traditional source of wealth in Kiribati is now threatened and may lose its intrinsic value and physical existence to capitalistic forces. Land in Kiribati connects individuals to past, present and future. Without land ownership individuals lose connections and become economically dependent on foreign lands and sources of wealth.

South Tarawa is the capital and people come here for education and employment opportunities. So the people living in South Tarawa, most of them are not land owners, they just get permission from the land owners and that's the problem. If they want to move because of strong winds and high waves coming onto the coast, there is nowhere to go (KInterview 8. 7., 2008).

4.1.5 Adopting New Countries

What we see from the President's office now is to adapt to climate change is to migrate. In the long term you will see that the adaptation strategy is not really helpful. When you think about long-term investment for us, you need to move on and migrate because you need to think about the future of your kids. I think the majority of the people would like to migrate and we can tell because our PAC applications keep growing...and you can tell people are thinking about it. They will get better opportunities in New Zealand (KInterview 8. 7., 2008).

Knowing that life overseas is vastly different from that in Kiribati, the government has actively encouraged its youthful population to become trained in technical skills through various educational institutions in Kiribati. The government wants to train its young population with skills that will bring them up to global standards as they compete for jobs in the global marketplace (UNFCCC, 2012).

The Kiribati Australia Nursing Initiative (KANI) is one initiative that seeks to build the skills and abilities of Kiribati youth. As stated by an Australian representative,

The program's goal is to develop the skills of I-Kiribati people that will allow them to get jobs overseas. The first stage is to get a nursing diploma and then move on to a R.N. degree. Once finished with the program they will be qualified to work in Australia or New Zealand (KInterview 8. 5., 2008).

The program was an AUSAID program developed to equip youth with skills, not to relocate people. However, the ability to migrate after completing the program is much more attainable if a job offer is made. This was very different from New Zealand's PAC scheme. The KANI program was not a guaranteed path to permanent migration. The director of nursing services at the national hospital voiced her appreciation for the plan.

There are two things that are good about the KANI initiative. The first is that it helps our unemployed youth and makes them marketable on an international level. Right now there are 30 in Australia and the second round will take 34. The last intake of 30 will happen in 2010. It gives them opportunities that they would not have gotten in Kiribati (KInterview 8. 9., 2008).

The government's aim of programs like the KANI initiative and the PAC scheme is to have Kiribati citizens migrate with dignity as skilled workers who can contribute to their new countries. They will go with dignity, as one interviewee stated rather than climate change refugees.

I believe 'refugee' has a negative tone, one of helplessness and despair, I do not want my people to be labeled like that, we are a proud people and [we] will remain proud [wherever we go] (KInterview 8. 3., 2008).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has yet to recognize a specific category for climate change refugees. This has not stopped individuals from claiming such a position in hopes of migration. In 2012, a Kiribati man sought climate change refugee status in New Zealand. Residing in New Zealand as a recent over-stayer he sought a more permanent solution to his sense of homelessness. He stated that he feared for his children's future

and sought refuge elsewhere. The New Zealand Government denied the application, citing that climate change fears did not fall under the UNHCR Refugee Convention (Meakins, 2012). Although he was denied such status, his fears were justified from evidence seen in Kiribati. His case has since gone further in the New Zealand court system and litigation looks to well into 2014. This has angered many in Kiribati as they view his desire to profit from Kiribati's position while breaking immigration rules in New Zealand.

Discussions with my host family highlighted a definite difference in opinion about migration as seen in the second survey results. I was able to speak candidly to five host family members about leaving Kiribati if conditions forced them to migrate. Some jumped at the thought of coming back to the US while others barely entertained the idea.

If you ask the old people, 70s-80s if they want to leave, they will say why? I don't want to leave. They have a traditional mind. Old people don't want to die in South Tarawa; they want to rest in their home island. Mostly the old people won't want to leave. The young would want to leave, because if you don't have employment how would you live? They will go to New Zealand or Australia and work on farms if they don't have the proper education. But if it comes that we all have to leave, I, we all have to choose the safer life and go (KInterview 8. 7., 2008).

That year, two more of my Kiribati family members would move to New Zealand under the PAC scheme. When thinking about our growing transnational family, our house became extremely emotional. Some were excited, some were sad and some just wanted to temporarily ignore the fact that more family members were leaving home. Google chat was used on a nightly basis to connect with family in New Zealand. This convenience, though greatly appreciated, may have done more harm than good on some nights, as it painfully brought forth the troubles migrants typically faced when separated from family.

He's been there for almost one year and he says he misses his family and he wants them there with him. He's lonely and not really happy being there by himself. He's living with other I-Kiribati but I'm sure it's not the same if you have your own family and your own house (KInterview 8. 8., 2008).

4.1.6 Kiribati Summary

Initial surveys highlighted several important themes which acted as starting points for discussions. There was a clear amount of migration activity happening within and outside of Kiribati at the time of survey. Within Kiribati, individuals typically relocated to South Tarawa from outer islands in the Gilbert chain. Beyond Kiribati borders, migrants most frequently relocated to Fiji, New Zealand and Australia for educational and/or employment opportunities. Once individuals left Kiribati, maintaining contact with migrants was seen as important.

Temporary migrants (contract laborers) returned to Kiribati more frequently than permanent migrants. Temporary migrants were those who left as contracted laborers, students or seafarers. Permanent migrants were individuals who became permanent residents or citizens of other countries and physically returned on a much less frequent basis. These individuals more commonly 'returned' through gifts and/or remittances.

While climate change awareness was high and viewed as a national concern, many participants were either confused over its existence or did not believe in it, most survey respondents thought that life was better in Kiribati and wouldn't want to leave if climate change rendered it uninhabitable. Yet, over half of the same respondents stated a desire to live overseas (with an eventual return to Kiribati).

A preliminary field survey conducted in 2008 with 100 South Tarawa residents showed that 44% would rather stay in Kiribati if ecological conditions necessitated a mass migration. Overwhelmingly, participants who refused to entertain the idea of migration stated that they would be happier dying in Kiribati than trying to live a foreign life elsewhere.

Migration is a threat, because all will be lost if we are forced to leave (Kinterview.8.19, 2008).

While several discussions revealed complete disbelief in climate change and trust in God's promise, other discussions highlighted unprecedented environmental challenges people were now facing. Of note were long droughts, brackish water supplies and land erosion due to changing weather and tidal patterns. With the introduction of temporary migrant work schemes, educational scholarships and permanent relocation opportunities, several interviewee relatives lived overseas. This made some view migration as an adaptive strategy to climate change if conditions rendered the land uninhabitable.

4.2 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

U.S. surveys and interviews were conducted during the summer of 2009 with *I-Kiribati* living across the U.S. mainland. The migrant population was widely dispersed with individuals living as far west as Hawai'i and as far east as Massachusetts. Twenty one interviews and 24 surveys were conducted with this population.

4.2.1 U.S. Quantitative Results

Utilizing a mixed methods approach, surveys and interviews were employed. Topics varied from those covered in Kiribati. Discussion focused on personal accounts of migration and acculturation to the United States. Because of the scope of information solicited from this population, surveys gathered much more information than those in Kiribati. Questions covered a range of topics which included: migration, identity and transnationality. The following tables represent participant responses (see tables 15-25).

A total of 19 females and 5 males participated in this portion of the study. The male to female ratio in the survey characterizes the Kiribati migration pattern found in the United States. Unlike the PAC, RSE or KANI schemes seen in New Zealand and Australia, the United States did not have specific migration schemes for Kiribati citizens. Most migrants came to the United States through marriage. Most commonly, Kiribati women married American men. Seventeen out of 24 respondents were in their 20s or 30s.

Over half of the surveyed population resided on the US west coast. The majority of the respondents were born in Kiribati. Those born outside of Kiribati were born to *I-Kiribati* parents studying, working or living overseas at their time of birth. The earliest migrant arrived in 1985. The majority came in the 2000s, with the most recent arriving in 2009.

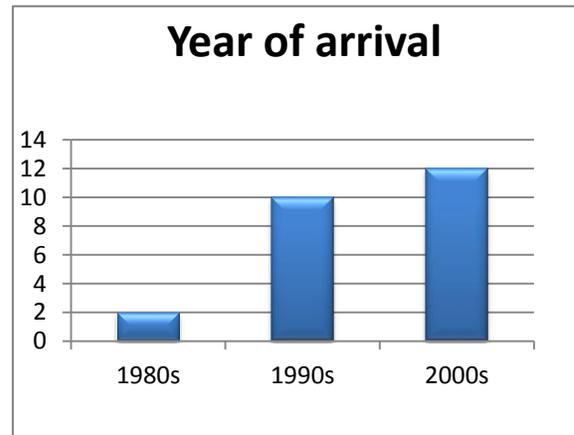


Table 15: USA Survey - Year of arrival

While most migrants came through marriage, several came through higher education channels. Unlike Fiji, most of the Kiribati students in the United States were not sponsored by the Kiribati

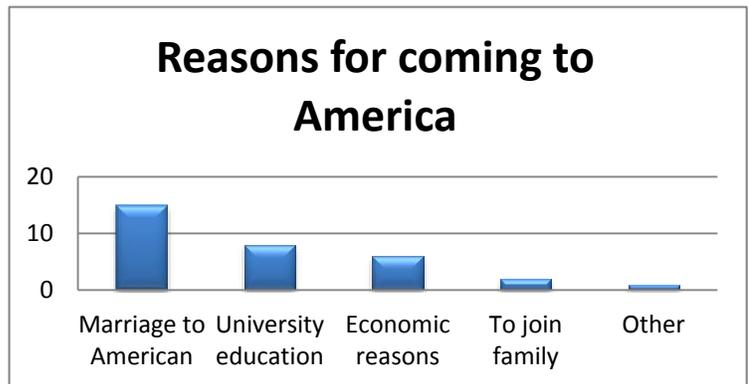


Table 16: USA Survey - Migration purposes

government. Most who came for higher education attended BYU-Hawai'i, where private funding was made available through the Church of Latter Day Saints.

A collective sense of belonging is essential to individual identity amongst the Kiribati people (Talu, 1984; Bataua B. T., 1985; Grimble & Maude, 1989). Nowhere is this more pronounced than with *I-Kiribati* migrant groups.

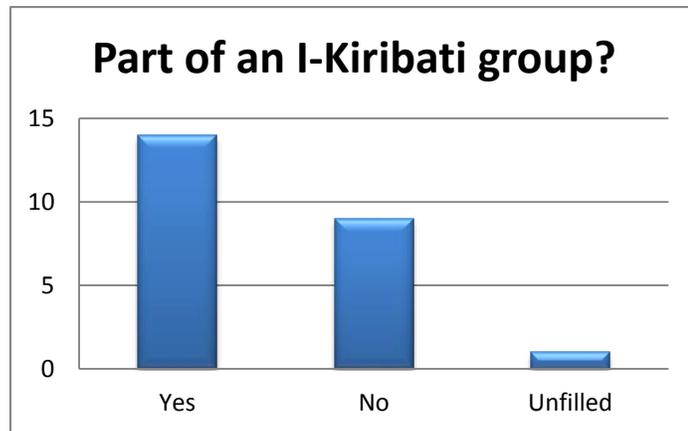


Table 17: USA Survey - Part of a Kiribati group?

More than half of the respondents stated that they belonged to a Kiribati group in the United States. Unlike community groups in Kiribati, migrants did not gather with others on a regular basis. The geographic distances between migrants forced many to hold weekly gatherings in phone or internet chat rooms.

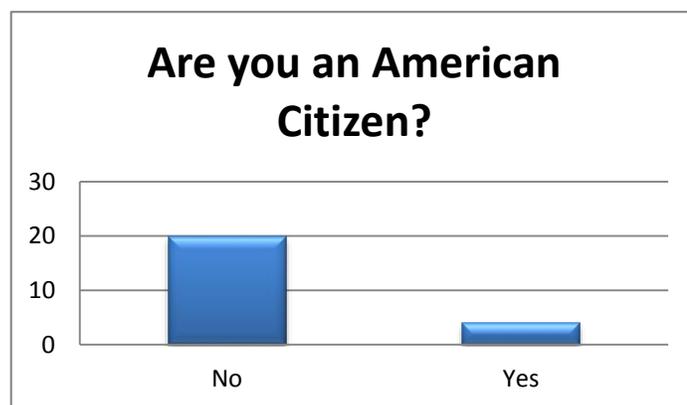


Table 18: USA Survey - Citizenship

Not one individual identified themselves as an American, though three identified themselves as I-Kiricans. An I-Kirican is an invented term generally used for those who find themselves in a mixed state of identity- part Kiribati/part American.

I would say I'm like 90% here and 10% there. I have been here for ten years and I haven't gone back to Kiribati yet, not even for a visit (UInterview 9. 1., 2009).

The majority of those surveyed were not US citizens. However, all surveyed were or had been, at one point in time, permanent residents. The minimum time one needed to maintain permanent residency in order to become eligible for citizenship was seven years at the time of study. Since most of the surveyed population had recently come to the United States, most were

not eligible to apply. Many, who were not US citizens, did have a desire to become citizens eventually.

Central to the culture of Kiribati is the idea of collective existence. The idea of independence is central to the US culture. Realizing this difference the following question solicited respondent



Table 19: USA Survey - Maintaining culture

opinions on the statement: *To get ahead in America, you have to let go of the Kiribati culture.* In a likert scale response format, respondents strongly voiced their disagreement with the statement. Those who agreed felt that adjusting to a new ways was vital to survive in their new country.

Keeping connected with relatives back home was important for all respondents. Although maintaining contact with home had become much easier with the introduction of the *Coconut Wireless*, this was not the only way respondents stayed in touch; other ways included mailing letters and packages and asking others returning home to bring things to relatives.

Migrants' definition of family expanded to include non-relatives through the development of fictive kinship ties. In many ways, migrant community groups became extended family.

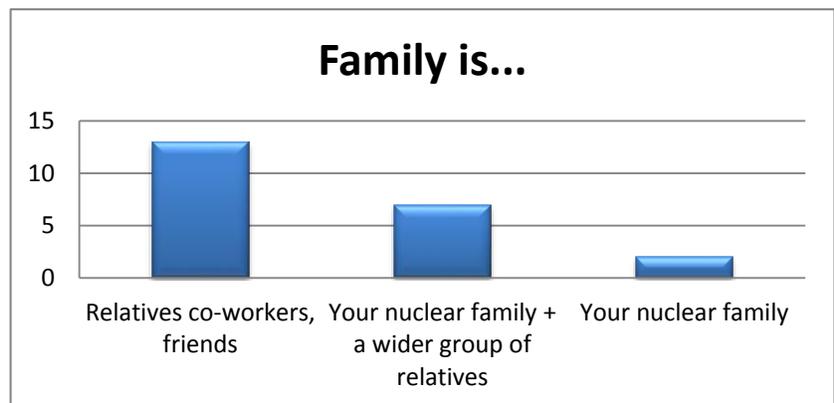


Table 20: USA Survey - Changing definitions of family

Migrants broaden the definition of family, which contributes to an understanding of why so many respondents stated that they had family in the United States.

While the majority felt more enabled to do what they wanted to do in the United States, several felt that the individual lifestyle made them feel trapped.

You don't know your neighbors here and everyone stays to themselves, you can't go over and ask for food or sugar like in Kiribati (Uinterview 9. 1., 2009).

Maintaining a strong connection with home was important. Though now tied to US life, respondents felt that their new physical position did not emotionally separate them from home. Since coming to the US, most respondents reported to have experienced

improvements in their social and economic situations. Those reporting a worsening in social status were recent migrants.

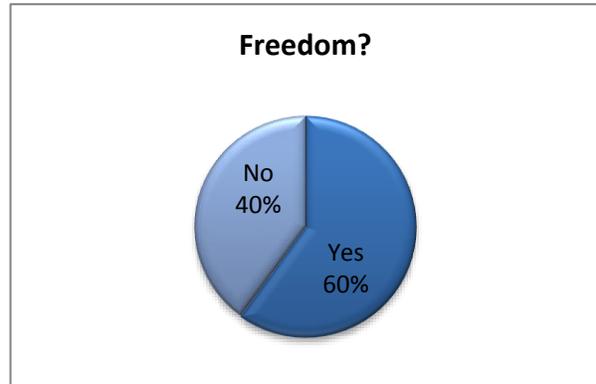


Table 21: USA Survey - Personal freedom

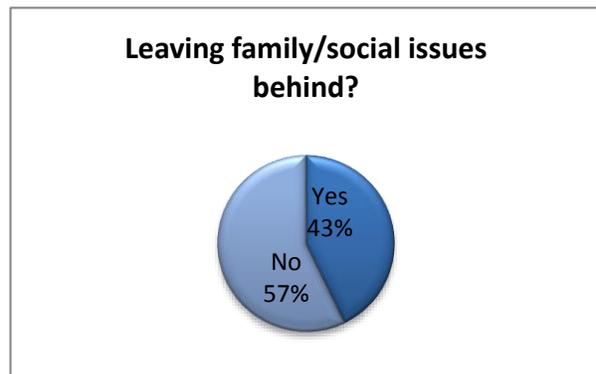


Table 22: USA Survey - Obligations to those left behind

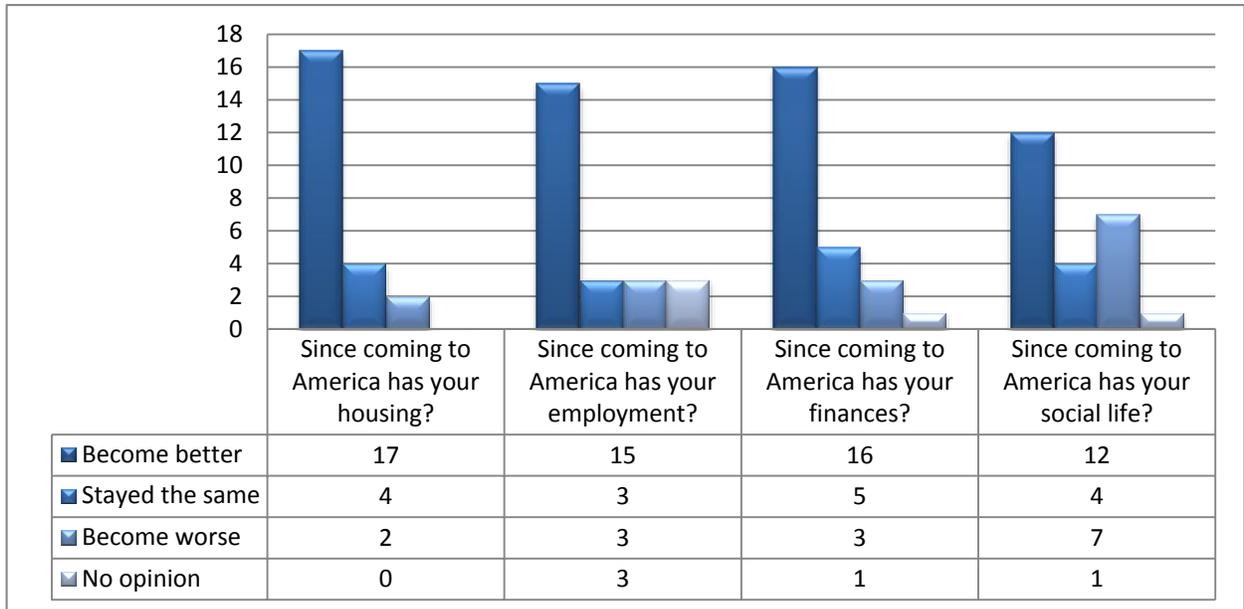


Table 24: USA Survey - Changes experienced since migrating to the USA

Gathering with other *I-Kiribati* or other Pacific Islanders was not a frequent occurrence. However, when it did occur most chose to gather with other *I-Kiribati*. Annual Kiribati Independence celebrations were the largest Kiribati events in the United States.

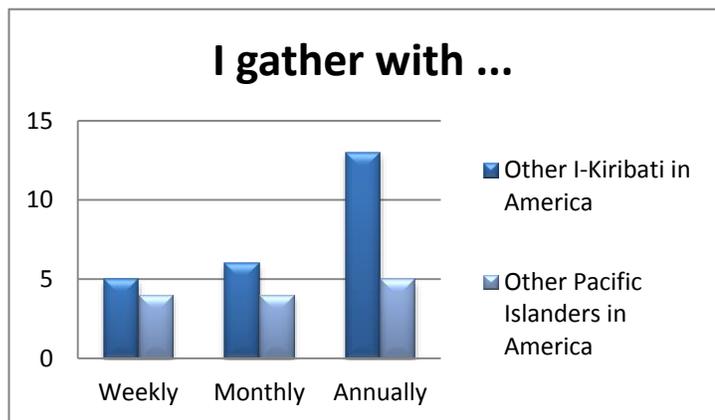


Table 23: USA - Social gatherings

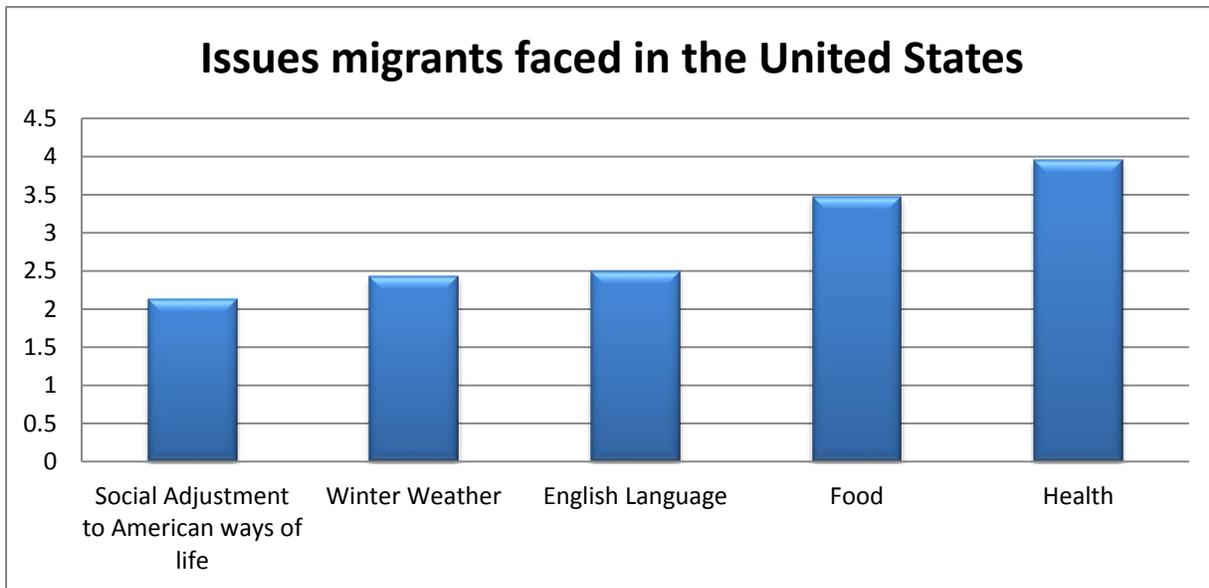


Table 25: USA Survey - Issues migrants faced

On average, most informants found greatest difficulty in adjusting to US social life. This was followed by adjusting to winter weather and constant use of English.

4.2.2 United States Qualitative Results

I haven't been back home since coming here; the only place I went back to was Hawaii. I have a desire to go back but the thing is money. If I hit the lotto then I'll go back. I gotta adjust. You know I know my roots, I gotta hold onto them. I hold onto my roots by communicating with my mom and family back home, I know it's hard, but you know, it's not like I try to be American but you gotta know where you from and you gotta respect where you come from (UInterview.9.14., 2009).

This informant summarizes much of what many informants expressed through their interviews. He is an individual separated from his own roots, and struggles to maintain his Pacific Islander identity in the United States. In 2009, an informal census of Kiribati people living in the United States was taken. This revealed a total of 76 individuals. Female *I-Kiribati* (67%), were more than double the *I-Kiribati* male (33%) population living in the United States. These individuals lived all over the United States. Though the geographic spread of migrants was vast,

the majority (66%) lived on the west coast of the United States (Hawai'i and Alaska included). Together, California (21) and Hawai'i (20) had almost 98% of the entire west coast population.

Most commonly stated reasons for migration included; marriage, educational opportunities and adoption. Interviews revealed that these individuals shared more than just a common language and homeland. They shared similar transnational experiences filled with powerful emotions, troubles, joys and a longing to return home. Whether coming to the United States for education, mission work, adoption, vacation, or marriage, every interviewee began their story with a detailed explanation of what it was like for them to leave their homeland. Each held a deep conviction of returning, but at the same time each was not sure of when or how. For many, a belief in returning is what supported them as they climbed up the steps of the 747 airplane.

It started from the day when I left Tarawa, a place I lived my whole life. When I stepped on that airplane I felt sick, and felt my own tears coming down my cheeks. I wanted to turn back and run back to my loved ones and hold on tight to them so I wouldn't have to leave. That was the first time in my life that I realized I was gone. I vanished to a foreign country, a wonderland. Flight after flight, I sat for many hours until I finally made it to the San Francisco Airport. This was in January of 2002. When I got off of the plane I was shocked, lost in my own gaze. It was like the movies I used to watch back home. But at that moment I was now a part of the movie, as if I was the main character. I felt so lost and confused. There were a lot of signs to follow; a language I once practiced back in high school was now everywhere. It kept going on and on; announcements here, reminders there all in English: I could not understand most of it, but I stayed alert and I followed the crowd until I saw familiar faces waiting for me at the exit (Uinterview.9.20., 2009).

For all interviewees, departure from Kiribati and initial arrival in the United States remained a vivid memory. Immigration procedures, elevators, escalators, lights that illuminated the night sky, tall buildings and the constant use of English only served to complicate things for each migrant. Some saw snow and felt the cold winter air for the first time as the plane door opened. *I had heard that America was rich, one informant told me, but I did not know they could*

afford to air conditioning the entire outdoors like that (Interview.8.1., 2008). Beginning with arrivals, their stories of a new life in a new world took research through unprecedented voyages.

In this section we hear from 20 *I-Kiribati* migrants who now reside in the United States. Eight interviewees came directly to the United States through marriage. Seven came to the United States to complete a university degree. Five of the seven who came for higher education eventually married a US citizen and stayed.

Unlike *I-Kiribati* patterns of group migration to New Zealand, most US migrants came to the United States individually. This resulted in great separation from other Kiribati migrants, which proved to be a significant difficulty for all migrants. Major themes highlighted throughout the interviews included: arrival issues, US culture, life back home, maintaining contact, remittances, returning home, independence celebrations/group gatherings, cultural maintenance, Kiricans (the next generation) and identity. Looking to the future of Kiribati, in light of climate change, participants discussed what they have seen in Kiribati, what they believe will happen and offered advice for possible future *I-Kiribati* migrants.

Arrival

Informants primarily came to the United States for either educational purposes or through marriage. Four informants came to the US in order to pursue higher education. Two came through the Mormon Church and attended Brigham Young University –Hawai'i (BYU-H). The other two were individually sponsored by relatives and attended west coast universities. With a focus on education, these migrants were intent on earning their degrees prior to marriage. Three informants stayed in the states after earning their degrees and began working as secondary mathematics instructors.

A lot of people marry at 23 or 25 and I said that I don't want to because I want my education first. I was so stubborn to marry because I knew that would be the end of my life if I got married in Kiribati (UInterview.9.10., 2009).

I said I would like to study in America, so I asked my teacher if he thought I could continue my education in America and he said he would be able to help. Both of my parents didn't work so I was very lucky that he agreed to help pay my fees to continue my education (UInterview.9.9., 2009).

It's good that I got my education because the life here is independent, it is a life of money and without education you can't get a good job to get good money to provide a good life for you. Teachers earn enough money to provide a good life in America (UInterview.9.11., 2009).

I came to BYU-H for school and met my husband in 2003 in Hawai'i, where he was serving in the Navy (UInterview.9.18., 2009).

For those who did not come for educational opportunities, their path to migration came through marriage. Most marriages consisted of Kiribati females and US males who had gone to Kiribati for Peace Corps service. For all informants, marriage coupled with a new life overseas was a significant change from their lives in Kiribati. Life in the US was filled with shock, homesickness, frustration, loneliness, joy, and confusion. Like the female migrants, males experienced problems with adjustment upon arrival.

I came to America twelve years ago after marrying my wife, a Peace Corps volunteer. I have no close family in America but just many distant members. When I came to America, the first and the second year was hard. I talked to all the I-Kiribati that I could find and found out that everyone was having or had many problems (UInterview.9.2., 2009).

I came to America in ninety four. I came here because I married (my wife) a Peace Corps volunteer who was serving in Kiribati. I have no family here ... my only family is my kids and wife. When I first came I came across many new things that surprised me; the light at night, the snow. It was the first time I saw snow (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

For some, the idea of leaving Kiribati to start a new life elsewhere had been a long held wish. For others, the idea of leaving the islands never occurred to them until it actually happened.

I did have a desire to come to America, I saw it so many times in the movies, so I did have a strong desire to see America and when I met my wife I knew I would get a chance (Uinterview.9.21, 2009).

I came in 1995 after marrying my husband who was a Peace Corps Volunteer. I thought that I would never leave Kiribati. I thought I would live there my whole life because I am from Kiribati, but... here I am (Uinterview.9.22., 2009).

Second to marriage, educational opportunities were the most commonly stated reasons for migrating to the United States. Most of the informants who came for education were members of the Kiribati Church of Latter Day Saints. Membership in this church opened opportunities for tertiary studies through attending BYU-H. Non-LDS informants who migrated for educational opportunities were sponsored through family. Like those who came through marriage, these informants faced various problems in adjusting to the US life.

I came to America in 2002 for school at BYUH in Hawai'i. All the students had stress in school from being homesick. (Also) the land was so big. In Kiribati the land is so small, if we were lost on a bus, we could find our way around. But here because the land was so big, there were many times I got lost on the bus because I would get off at the wrong stop or get on the wrong bus (Uinterview.9.4., 2009).

I came to America in 2000 to start school in California. I missed the social life, in Kiribati you went to school and came home with friends, but here I went to school alone... my spirit was lonely and sad to be so isolated here in America. In the neighborhood, you know that you know everyone and you can go eat at their house without problems, but here you just say hi and you don't even know your neighbors (Uinterview.9.10, 2009).

I came to America in 2001 in Washington for education; I was sponsored by my host family and lived with them for three years while I attended community college. Right by my school was a mall and I was when I saw people kissing in the mall. It was right out there for everyone to see. We didn't do that in Kiribati (Uinterview.9.9, 2009).

Beyond marriage and educational opportunities, there were others who came under different circumstances. These individuals tended to be older individuals who had migrated over ten years ago. The last case mentioned in this section highlights a unique situation as

the interviewee is married to an *I-Kiribati* man living in the mid-west. At the time, this was the only known case of an *I-Kiribati/I-Kiribati* couple living in the United States.

I came to Hawai'i when I was a child in 1994. Before then I went to the Marshalls, then Hawai'i and now to America. I consider myself fortunate because these in a way were stepping stones to living here and helped with adjustments to life in America. I left Kiribati when I was nine years old and I lived in the Marshalls with my mom who wanted to live overseas. She opened the door to America (UInterview.9.12., 2009).

Although each informant did migrate to the US, it was clear that a uniform desire and reason for migration did not exist among all informants. Some informants stated that they had no desire to come to the states. Some stated that they were influenced by relatives who had married U.S. citizens or moved to the states for university studies. Others developed a desire after seeing movies or interacting with Americans in their home islands. Though various paths were followed, the end result was the same for each informant.

Everybody wants to come here though, but you don't have a choice when you're a kid and so you gotta go with your parents, that's how I came here (UInterview.9.14., 2009).

I didn't have any desire to come to America, I wanted to go to Fiji for school and then come back when I was done with my schooling. But the big difference is that there are opportunities in America, there is nothing in Kiribati like going to college, going to work... when I came to America I thought that maybe I could have these kinds of opportunities and I do (UInterview.9.7, 2009).

When I was in Kiribati I had a desire to come to America after watching all of the movies. In high school, I thought one of these days I want to take a trip to America. What I found out was that the America in the movies was somewhat the same. The buildings, the dress they were the same, but the experience of living here... the life here is not the same (UInterview.9.5, 2009).

I really wanted to come to America when I finished my form six. I didn't pass my form six and so I went to church and prayed that I would go to America. I prayed so hard that God would bring me to America and it happened. My mom wanted to send me to Australia or Fiji to finish school and I was so stubborn I only wanted to go to America; she said we don't have family in America, you can't go there! And then the next day my aunt from America came for me, it was like God answered my prayer and fast (UInterview.9.10, 2009).

When I was in primary school I had two siblings come to America to go to school... and I was influenced to go get my education at BYU Hawaii, so I did want to come to America (UInterview.9.4, 2009).

Adjusting to the United States

Living in the United States created difficulties for migrants. Some of the more commonly stated initial troubles included using English on a constant basis, adjusting to colder environments and dealing with homesickness. Once the honeymoon phase subsided, more difficult adjustments to their new country began. Acclimating themselves to US culture, money, work, individualism and independence were frequently mentioned throughout all interviews. Female informants stated that they felt more free, more independent and more of an individual in the states than they did in Kiribati. This was due to the fact that they felt enabled to make and act upon decisions they made for themselves and their families. This was in contrast to Kiribati where household decisions were typically collectively made by older individuals. Along with freedom and individuality, respondents also stated that there were more educational and work opportunities than in Kiribati. Additionally, all respondents made reference to the better health care infrastructure and access to doctors and medicines not found in Kiribati.

Informants saw the US culture as very different from the Kiribati culture. All noted the need for work and money in the states. In certain parts of Kiribati, money is a vital element for daily living; however, communal and family connections remain more important than individual wealth.

Their culture (American) is nice, but I see that their culture revolves around work and school, even your family it revolves around your work (UInterview.9.2, 2009).

The culture is very different and sometimes I got mad about this, the things they ate, sometimes I just wanted fish and the problem is if you don't have money, you don't have a life here (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

In parts of Kiribati where money was a necessity, communal relations were still recognized as more important and long-term than individual wealth. Dependence on family in Kiribati was replaced with individualism in the states. Informants found the US life to be almost, if not completely, opposite from what they had known back home. This caused great difficulties for several informants.

When I first came to America I wasn't allowed to work because my papers weren't being processed fast enough. My husband was the only one working to support us and we had grandkids. I had many problems living here with my husband because sometimes we didn't have food to eat because we were poor. It's not like Kiribati where you can survive without money; you just go to the land or sea for fish and coconuts. Here you had to rely on yourself and you could not depend on the family for help. Now we live the life of money, but sometimes we would go to the big island and it was very different there. We could eat the coconuts. We could eat the fish and the taro, it was like Kiribati. We didn't have money to buy food so we have to live by land. In Hawai'i it was kind of like Kiribati, things were familiar (UInterview.9.16., 2009).

It [homelessness] was something new that I saw in America when I came here. In Kiribati it didn't matter if you were poor because you could always get what you needed from the ocean, from your family or from the bush. Here, NO! You need to budget well or else maybe you would stand in the street with a sign saying you are homeless, without a home, money or place. People say I come from a poor nation, but I don't think so, if you are lazy, you die of hunger but you never die of hunger in Kiribati, here people die of hunger for the money (UInterview.9.22., 2009).

Some people they come over here and they develop a life out here and it's good the life out here is good, but I'll be honest with you the life at home is the best. Over here the life is paying the bills. It's more relaxing back home. Stress is part of your life here cause all you're doing is working working working... you are alone with your job (UInterview.9.14, 2009).

Along with a greater sense of independence, informants felt they had more responsibilities as a result of smaller households. At the time of interviews, none lived with in-laws or extended family members. While several informants appreciated a smaller household, an equal amount felt otherwise.

The culture was different; in Kiribati you stay in the house and help your family, so that is what we did when I moved here in the first place. We stayed with my

husband's family but I was scared to clean or even cook because it wasn't my house, I felt horrible (UInterview.9.5., 2009).

You don't live with your family; you just live with your kids and husband. It's ok though because you get used to it. The culture too is different. (In Kiribati) we have a family that you can depend on. You don't live with the family here, so you are free and you don't have to be under the family. You are going to make your decision for your own self and your own family. You don't have people telling you what to do and honestly you don't care (UInterview.9.19, 2009).

Sometimes though I miss dependency, because there are things that I don't know. Here I have to make my own choices even if I don't know what I am doing. I can't rely on others to tell me what to do, so I guess I do miss it a bit (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

Female informants frequently mentioned the additional freedom from village gossip in the United States. This was seen as bothersome and even destructive.

I am very free, here because even if they are not your relative in Kiribati, they mind your business and gossip to your family. There is a lot of freedom here, but we have to use it well (UInterview.9.10, 2009).

I do think I am a lot freer here. I don't have my mom or dad to make sure I do this or that, or many eyes watching me because somehow they will tell my relatives where they saw me. In Kiribati they are very open, no privacy. You can drink at a party here, but in Kiribati it's bad. Here you can do what you want if you are self-confident, but there you can't. You have to go through so many channels to get what you want. Here is a lot more freedom than in Kiribati, and there is a lot more opportunity (UInterview.9.9, 2009).

Every informant recognized that there were greater numbers of opportunities in the United States. Those most frequently mentioned included employment and educational opportunities. For one informant, returning to school had been a long time goal. The only problem was that she was an older student. As mentioned by the informant, social expectations of adults in Kiribati would not allow them to return to school. However, these social limits did not exist in the United States.

I think the good things about America are that you have a lot of opportunities. You can work, go to school, eat well, and have health care. But with these there are big changes. You have to work hard here. It's not like back home where you just relax. You have to work hard. If you just lay back like at home then you end up in the streets (UInterview.9.3, 2008).

You know in America there is so much opportunity to go to school. I went to school when I was thirty, that wouldn't happen in Kiribati. If I wasn't here then who knows, I wouldn't get my opportunity. It is very different the school environment here from Kiribati (UInterview.9.11, 2009).

If you look at it over here there are more opportunities, they got good colleges, health care, and you can do a lot of things over here. I look at the US like, you know New Zealand and Australia is good, you got them... but I look at the US like the best in basically everything you know (UInterview.9.14, 2009).

Weather

Living on the equator, all informants were used to hot temperatures year round. Seasons, and more significantly snow, were things many informants had only heard about. However, physically experiencing such drastic climatic changes was a significant, often memorable event.

There were many problems when I first came here because it was so cold. I wore pants and socks in the house and turtle necks to go to school but everyone else was wearing tank tops and I felt that people thought I was crazy (UInterview.9.10., 2009).

The first time I saw snow, and exited the plane, my new family came with a jacket and I was surprised, like what is that. They said it's cold. And it was and the coat kept me warm. I fell asleep and I woke up and the whole place was white with snow. I was so surprised that I went outside and picked the snow falling from the sky and put it in my cup. My wife came out and yelled at me, what are you doing? I said it's snow. I saw it in the movie and they put it in their cup so I want to do that too (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

The winter was hard, and it made you sad with homesickness. If you worked or if you had school you didn't have these kinds of problems. If you were surrounded with the I-Kiribati family there would have been no problems, but I came and didn't have that kind of support or activity to keep me busy (UInterview.9.2., 2009).

Homesickness

All informants faced homesickness. Winter months seemed to increase the intensity of homesickness. Initial onset occurred within the first few months of moving to the US. Homesickness dissipated as individuals developed lives of their own in their new environments.

I was so homesick the first day, the second day, the third day. There was no one around me and I wanted to go back. I wanted to talk to the neighbors but they didn't say anything, I wanted to visit, but they were too busy, I was too shy to ask them for sugar when I ran out and it wasn't good, I was lonely (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

I went three months without talking to my family and it was hard. It was in the winter and the cold made it worse. I think my homesickness was taken care of by knowing that there was another I-Kiribati lady in my same city. I was able to speak to her in Kiribati and it was good. When I had a child, it was harder because it was just me and I was stuck in the apartment watching the baby (UInterview.9.5., 2009).

When I first came here I was very homesick I really missed my family. I really wanted to speak my language but I couldn't. The life and the culture was very hard. When I was here there were no I-Kiribati that I knew. I spent so long here in the States all by myself. It was in a flea market when I heard someone speaking my language. I ran to my husband and told him that I heard someone speaking Kiribati. I didn't go to meet them because I was very shy I ran away in surprise. Later my brother-in-law went to San Francisco and talked with some friends who knew Kiribati people in San Francisco. We set our time to meet, maybe three years after I came to America. All that time I was very homesick, there was no internet, I was pregnant, I wanted to eat Kiribati food but I couldn't, I wanted to meet Kiribati people but I didn't know there were any in America (UInterview.9.7., 2009).

Communal Gatherings

Informants looked forward to gatherings where they could speak the Kiribati language, eat Kiribati foods and be themselves. Several mentioned the fact that these gatherings helped in dealing with homesickness by creating new 'family' when they first came to the US. The geographic distance between *I-Kiribati* migrants in the continental United States was great. This distance prevented frequent migrant gatherings from occurring. However, that did not prevent them from virtually meeting with fellow *I-Kiribati* through chat lines, internet based discussion forums or personal phone calls on a more frequent basis. Work, school and other obligations added to the difficulties faced in gathering on frequent basis.

When gathering for birthdays or holidays, migrants stated they would drive and/or fly for hours to join in the celebrations. At gatherings, it was not unusual to see families arrive only to

drop off passengers and leave again for extended periods of time in order to pick up others who did not have access to transportation. For those living in close proximity to other *I-Kiribati*, group gatherings were more frequent and over longer periods of time.

I like to meet with I-Kiribati, I try to meet with them when I have free time, work makes me busy, but I try to meet once a month with others. I think the gatherings are very nice because you remember where you came from, you can talk with them and you can joke with them in the Kiribati way (UInterview.9.2., 2009).

We are lucky because we are close me and Eaubā, we are very close. Werema is close to us too, so it is good that we are close. Sometimes the Kiribati seamen [who port in San Francisco] call us if they want to go out shopping, if I can't make it I call Eaubā, if she can't make it she calls me. Sometimes I go get seamen and have a get together at my house... because they all know that we are close to the San Francisco port (UInterview.9.7., 2009).

The I-Kiribati in Hawai'i always get together, Thanksgiving, Christmas, all the time in the weekend for parties in the park. We get together for birthdays, fundraising and the biggest one is for independence every year. We celebrate it all the time with the Hawai'ian I-Kiribati we are happy to do it. It is a day of happiness because we are proud to be I-Kiribati. We play Kabotaeak (truth or dare type of competition) the funny games to raise money for the independence. On the days of getting together we also practice dances, Kiribati dances for the day and fun dancing for the good times (UInterview.9.16., 2009).

I often meet with I-Kiribati in America, for New Year's and for Independence. I think that these gatherings are good because if you don't have family here, you come to these gatherings and you feel like at home, the language, the food, the dancing, the stories, it's just like you are back home. The independence celebrations help us remember our culture and show it to others in America (UInterview.9.19., 2009).

Fictive Kinship

Kinship lineages are the basic building blocks of social activity and entrepreneurship in Kiribati. Kinship ties were seen as vital in New Zealand migration patterns and community life. When individuals migrated to New Zealand they, more often than not, participated in chain migration. Because of migration patterns to the United States, migrants had few biological kinship relations, and large familial networks were non-existent. The lack of kinship ties and

networks in the United States significantly contributed to the creation of fictive kinship relations within the migrant population.

I think that these (group) gatherings are good because if you don't have family here, you come to these gatherings and you feel like at home with your family (Uinterview.9.19, 2009).

I didn't know anyone when I came to America, I knew Uaaba was in America but I didn't know where she was. I came with a partner and then I found out there was a Kiribati about ten minutes away from me so I was very happy we became as close as real family (Uinterview.9.9., 2009).

I have friends in America and I call these like family to me now (Uinterview.9.19., 2009).

Cultural Loss, Maintenance, and Compromise

While in the United States, all informants noticed varying amounts of loss of Kiribati customs and even language. This increased the longer individuals remained in the United States. The process of assimilation to the U.S. culture was noted by each informant. The ways in which they dealt with these changes could be categorized in to three (culture loss, maintenance, and compromise) separate areas of change. Complete loss of Kiribati culture and language did not occur within participants; however, most recognized substantial loss in their children. Some maintained these aspects and actively passed them on to their children, while others found it difficult to teach their children and became resigned to letting them be 'American.' Aside from Kiribati gatherings, the practice of compromise culture was difficult to observe in everyday life.

One informant compared her experience of being *I-Kiribati* in the states to what she saw in Fiji with the *Banabans*. She feared that the same would happen with the *I-Kiribati* living in America at a much faster pace since most were married to US citizens rather than other *I-Kiribati*.

I think for me, my culture is strong, but it's better that since our population is small here for me to learn English, I still have my culture but I have to speak English. I don't think my language will disappear, but sometimes there are words that

disappear, sometimes I mix the influences from English with the talking from Kiribati (UInterview.9.9., 2009).

I think that when people go to these new places, the culture will be lost, for the new generation they will have a new katei, they will have a mixed ethnicity but it's going to be just like Rabi. When people moved from Banaba to Rabi our language changed, our dialect changed. The way we thought changed, our education and life was different. I went to Rabi for one year to learn the culture, just the culture. I learned only a little. Instead of learning Kiribati dance I only learned mixed Kiribati and Fiji dance. I fear that when people migrate their life is going to be like the Banaban people. Their life changed. The new generations are our future, you know kids. Just like the kids born in America they don't know anything. They just know ah yeah their mom or dad is from Kiribati. But if Kiribati disappears, you don't know. The older people will know, but oh yeah you from Kiribati, but where is Kiribati. You know like that, from onward. I think they will call themselves Americans or Australians or New Zealanders. I fear that because they won't know where their roots are from or who they are (UInterview.9.3., 2008).

Maintaining one's cultural identity, though difficult in seclusion, was seen as one of the most important things for all migrants. Meeting with other *I-Kiribati* at group gatherings functioned to encourage maintenance of and put into practice the language within migrants. This also created incentive for migrants to develop language proficiency and cultural knowledge within their own US born children. An undeniable sense of pride filled informants' faces as they explained how they actively pursued maintenance of language and customs within their own families.

I am very strong in my Kiribati culture, it will not be lost, I will hold onto it, every day of my life. It is very strong in me and in my house I tell (my kids) how to walk around people and things like that. I don't forget my Kiribati cause I talk in Kiribati to my wife, I call Kiribati people, and I sing with my Kiribati CDs. Sometimes I forget a couple of words and it is embarrassing. I have a lot of I-Kiribati living close to me so it is good, New Zealand is nice because I heard that everyone lives close to each other and it is good to be around other I-Kiribati (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

My family keeps the language in the house because my husband can speak the language and understands the culture. It's not hard to keep the culture when we do it in the house, but when foreigners come here they don't follow it and it confuses the kids (UInterview.9.5., 2009).

If you compare Banaba or Nauru with Kiribati, the people that left those places they still have their culture. Even though they have left their home land, even though they have lived in new places, you can see that they haven't forgotten their culture and neither have I (Uinterview.9.16., 2009).

Maintaining one's culture and language in a foreign land was not an easy task. Teaching and maintaining one's culture and language to one's children was even more difficult. Beyond a few key words, all migrants had difficulty in teaching their children the language. Many had given up, stating that it was not worth teaching them because they do not use or need it to survive here in the states. Kiribati cultural practices seemed even more out of place and less important to learn for everyday life in the US. Bowing one's head when walking between two conversing adults or completely avoiding such a scenario to show respect did not make sense to US born children. However, adjusting to life in the United States did not mean complete abandonment of every Kiribati way that informants brought with them. Incorporating Kiribati practices into US settings created unique challenges and opportunities for migrants, reflecting their desire to maintain the Kiribati culture overseas. Cooking pigs in backyard pits instead of earthen ovens, dancing with manufactured lava-lavas instead of processed pandanus and adjusting recipes for US ingredients were some examples individuals shared of how they carried on traditions from home.

I think that the food is different here. We substitute taro for babai, the fish is different, we make different things that represent home but we have to mix American things to remember our things (Uinterview.9.17., 2009).

The Next Generation

Opinions on US-born *I-Kiribati* varied. Some felt that it was better if their children were brought up in the American way, while others felt it important to teach their children the language, manners and customs of Kiribati. However, all agreed that teaching their children Kiribati ways

was difficult in the US environment. There was little to no support for a Kiribati/US upbringing once children grew past infancy. The lack of other *I-Kiribati* migrants in close proximity contributed to the lessening of its practicality and importance.

At certain times throughout the year, the sense of traditional knowledge's importance was significantly heightened. Emphasis on teaching children Kiribati dances, words and acceptable behaviors was seen during the times leading up to Independence celebrations, when families from all across the states would gather to celebrate the 2009 Kiribati Independence for several days on end.

Three informants stated that they had their mothers live with them for an extended period of time. All felt that having their children's grandmother stay with them was beneficial. None of the grandmothers spoke fluent English but were able to teach their grandchildren about Kiribati ways. With extra support in the houses, all stated that their children learned about Kiribati ways, dances and languages. However, all felt that having their parents in the US for extended periods was a challenge to both them and their parents.

Many realized that the Kiribati language and culture were not being passed onto their children. This worried some informants but many felt unable to do anything about it. *I think the future generations will... I don't know if it will slowly disappear but I hope not* (UInterview.9.10, 2009). Working parents seemed to be too occupied and in some cases too frustrated to take on such a daunting task. Older informants insisted that culture should not be lost in younger generations and took active roles in teaching the language, manners and dances of Kiribati.

I haven't tried to teach my kids the Kiribati language, I think it is better for them to learn English and all. It is worth a try, I tried, but my effort isn't very strong, only for the independence celebrations. I guess we are just lazy too, maybe if you go back to Kiribati for one year they will learn... maybe that is the way. My mom came over three times to help me, and she taught my kids Kiribati ways and I-Kiribati. Having her come really worked (UInterview.9.2, 2009).

I do talk in Kiribati to my husband at times, but not my kids. If you are born in Kiribati, if you are raised in Kiribati, your language and culture will stay, but if you leave, it is hard to keep since you are influenced by other cultures. My kids don't have the ability to speak. I tried to teach them but it just didn't work out (UInterview.9.22., 2009).

To me it is hard to keep the culture, the kids they are all I-Matang, the next generation sees a different life in school, in TV, in everything. They don't know the language or the culture (UInterview.9.2., 2009).

I think that the half and half children are very different from me. Our culture is very nice. I am old, my generation doesn't have degrees or diplomas but I know that our culture is strong and it helps us throughout our life. It is up to the family to instill this appreciation for our culture in the children. I am from Kiribati. I know that the kids in America don't know the Kiribati language, so I speak in Kiribati all the time to the kids. It's so important to not lose the language. I feel sad for the kids and the grand kids who don't know their own language (UInterview.9.16, 2009).

Kiribati Independence Celebrations

The independence is the biggest thing we look forward to. We look forward to meeting with other I-Kiribati and their families. Some of the kids never went to the celebrations before and when they go and met other kids who are like them they are really happy. It makes us happy because that is our first life you know, it stands strong in us and the celebrations bring out so much happiness inside of us (UInterview.9.15., 2009).

The one event that all informants had or were looking forward to attending was the annual Kiribati Independence celebrations held in early July. The first celebration occurred in 1990 in the state of California. Since then, celebrations have been held in a variety of states. The following is a first-hand account detailing the creation of this annual celebration in the United States.

When we started it was just a few of us, maybe five I-Kiribati in total attended. We held it in San Francisco. There were three families and two guests from Fiji. The only person to dance was Aeuab, she did the bino, the batarei, the kai matoa, all the dances, she was very multitalented. The next independence was held at my house. We had an idea to dance with fresh flowers this time, to make it very nice, the dances. So early in the morning we decided to go get our flowers me and Aeuab.

We drove on the freeway and stopped on the side of the road. I drove, she brought her knife and we parked on the side of the freeway and cut our flowers for dancing that afternoon. We put it in our plastic bags quickly and ran back to the car. We drove and looked for policemen when there weren't any around; we stopped, jumped out of the car and cut more flowers and then ran back into the car. Isn't that crazy, here were all these cars going sixty five miles per hour past us and then here we are two island girls taking flowers from the highway.

The people who did the batarei that time were another I-Kiribati's child and Aeuab's son. It was funny because they never had done that kind of dancing before. We tried to tell them how, but they didn't know and their hands were falling everywhere. We had a choir of three people and it was just so funny. It was funny, but it was our time. It was our time to be happy, to eat our food, to speak our language. We knew where to buy some of this food since there were a lot of stores that served Pacific populations around us.

Later on, Aeuab began to talk to more and more I-Kiribati and then more people started coming from other states. We always held the celebrations here and then people from the east came people from Hawai'i came... and that is when it started to move from state to state. This year it's in Ohio, and next year it's in Hawai'i (Uinterview.9.15, 2009).



Figure 7: Independence Celebrations in the United States of America

As in Kiribati, each celebration is filled with dancing, singing and food. Community groups begin gathering months prior to the celebrations in order to practice dances and songs. For the host community, the months leading up to the celebrations are filled with telephone

conferences sorting out venue reservations, food orders, supplies and guest lists. On the weekend of the celebrations, participants gather several days prior to the event in order to practice their dances, songs and relax in the company of other *I-Kiribati*. On the day of the celebration, performances are followed by a large feast and dancing which go well into the early morning hours. More than the actual performances and food, celebrations are seen as important for individuals' sense of self and remembrance of their homeland.

I meet with all of the I-Kiribati in all of the states once a year for Independence, to remember our food, our language, our culture, and our dances. It is a very good time to be with everyone. We show off our culture, speak in the language, sometimes we have to cater to the audience by speaking a mix of English and Kiribati. We prepare fish, bread fruit, coconuts; we play Kiribati games and have fun all the time, like we are in Kiribati again (Uinterview.9.21, 2009).

When I first came, I went to the Independence in Colorado, and that was my first time to get together with American I-Kiribati. It was very nice, we drove from California with other I-Kiribati and it was a good experience to have. I never saw most of the people who were there. There were so many from all over America and all over the islands. When we got together it was good, lots of playing Kiribati games, we taught the kids how to play games from Kiribati. It was games from home for the kids and it was a good experience for them. The activities were rich and the culture was rich (Uinterview.9.4, 2009).

What I see in the gathering is that they really want to make us feel like we are home. We make foods from home because we miss them, and the singing and the cards and the Kiribati talking, we miss it all (Uinterview.9.3, 2008).

It was clear that the independence celebrations and Kiribati gatherings brought informants “back” to Kiribati in a physical sense. However, most informants could be metaphorically characterized as frequent fliers in the sense that they constantly traveled between their island and US settings on a daily basis. For informants, ‘Going back home’ did not require a physical return to Kiribati. As seen in gatherings with other *I-Kiribati*, eating Kiribati food, dancing Kiribati dances and speaking the Kiribati language brought them “home.”

On a more frequent basis, memories of home were triggered through songs on a CD, programs on YouTube or phone/internet calls home. Technology became the means of transporting migrants between here and there. Frequent use of sites like the Kiribati Online Community, Facebook, Bebo and applications such as Google Chat and Skype were used to keep migrants connected to home. Those with family on South Tarawa (where internet capabilities existed) were able to communicate frequently. Communication between migrants and outer island relatives was significantly different as these islands relied on solar powered CB radios and weekly mail drops for inter-island communication.

Being so far away from home, I do keep in touch nowadays with family through the internet chat, phone, e-mail and letters. But not so much (letters) anymore because that way is so slow (UInterview.9.7., 2009).

I talk with my family sometimes mostly by chat because it is cheaper than calling but sometimes I call home (UInterview.9.18., 2009).

Remittances

Exchange maintains connections between migrants and their island families. The most often cited exchange informants discussed was cash remittances. According to informants, life in the United States required money. At the same time, life in Kiribati (especially on Tarawa) required cash as well. Due to a lack of economic earning opportunities on the main island, several migrants felt an obligation to send money home to their relatives. To them, remittances signified a bond that emphasized the importance of family.

Whereas family members living in the same village could rely on certain individuals to collect toddy (coconut palm sap), gather fish and cook food, transnational families with members living overseas could ask for financial assistance when needed. For families in Kiribati, remittances eased financial stress. However, sending money created financial difficulties for migrants in their new homes abroad. Not all migrants sent money home and the amount sent and

frequency of varied between all informants. Some felt obligated in order to support family back home. These individuals sent remittances on a frequent and consistent basis. Others felt they needed to keep their earnings in order to have a better life in the United States. These individuals did not send remittances. The majority had a negotiated approach towards remittances. These individuals budgeted remittances and sent money only on certain holidays or special events.

Most preferred to send money with friends or relatives who were returning to Kiribati for a visit. If no one was returning, people sought out Western Union.

I do send money to my family once a month. I have a nephew in school and I pay for his school fees with this money (UInterview.9.22., 2009).

I don't send money home to my family because we need money here to live. When I go back to Kiribati, I bring money to my family but if it's gone it is gone. I might give them money for their cigarettes, maybe ten dollars here and there. I have a set amount of money that I make a budget for, but that is it (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

I do send money home to the islands for New Year's, the Father's Day, Easter, the Mother's Day, Christmas... only for the occasions though (UInterview.9.19., 2009).

If I go back to live in Kiribati, the problem is the money... I can't support my family the way I want to. Not like if I work here, here I can work and send money to my family. You know the money here is stronger, it is double what they have there and if I work what I do now I can send money home to my parents. I could not do this if I worked in Kiribati because the money is not enough to support my whole family. I can't support their food and school fees which are what I currently do (UInterview.9.3., 2008).

Going Back

Physical return to the islands often took years of planning and saving. University students often did not return until they either completed or terminated their studies. Roundtrip travel time to Kiribati can take a minimum of six days. A single passenger plane ticket would cost thousands of dollars. These factors made returning home for all migrants difficult. Some felt it better to directly send money to their family instead of spending it on a costly plane ticket.

Once families had children, a return home became even more complicated and expensive. As individual lives take root in the United States, obligations and circumstances delay a return: *“The last time I went back to Kiribati was fifteen years ago”* (UInterview.9.16., 2009).

When migrants did return, they noticed many changes in the land, people and culture. Frequently mentioned were the changes they saw in the number of people on South Tarawa and the differences they observed in youth clothing styles and behavior. Westernization through internet, movies and music were seen as ominous agents of change. The influence of Taiwan and the United States through international aid and development programs were seen as causal factors for changes observed on Tarawa.

I have seen many changes in Kiribati every time I go back. The good changes, is the street it is new and even paved. The bad thing is that there is no space, it is overcrowded and too many people. The foods, the sickness, the westernization on Tarawa. There are many Chinese influences too that are changing life on Tarawa (UInterview.9.21, 2009).

I went back to Kiribati in 2004 and I saw a difference from when I left. Mostly in the youth, the girls are more out at night, drinking. Kids in high school were drinking a lot. So I see big changes and also they want to be the way they dress, they want to be American or modernized. Kids today like hip hop and that’s a big change too. I don’t think that’s good with our culture, because I believe our culture is tight, and we want our kids to grow up with a way that is good, the way I grew up. You already see the influence, the influence has already gone to Kiribati and they want to be like the hip hop songs (UInterview.9.3., 2008).

All informants stated that if they had stayed in Kiribati their lives would have turned out differently. Males stated that they would not have had the kind of employment opportunities and financial responsibilities that they had here. Females felt that their lives would be drastically different if they had remained in Kiribati. They felt that the culture would make them less independent and their husband’s families would relegate them to household responsibilities.

If I stayed in Kiribati, I don’t think I would be happy. I wasn’t a person in Kiribati. I am a person here. I am happy I am here because my husband lets me go. And in Kiribati I have seen it, you can’t go out, you will get hit by your husband, you

are not a person in Kiribati. There is so much I can do here that I couldn't do in Kiribati. It is very different (UInterview.9.16, 2009).

I know that in Kiribati I would be stuck in the house because I'm a girl and my dad would say that I can't do things. Here you can stand on your own two feet. There if you marry you are not free because you have to be a servant to the whole family. Here you marry, you live with just the husband and you are free (UInterview.9.18, 2009).

Migrants who returned to Kiribati had concerns over the future of the nation in light of climate change impacts on the land and people. These individuals commented on the crowded living conditions found on South Tarawa and the damage to the land they observed while there. They felt overpopulation had exacerbated the problems brought on by climate change related events.

I think it's true that the islands will go under like President Tong said. I believe it because I've seen it. When I went back in 2004, the road in Tarawa was taken out by the waves. I see that too, you know? I believe our country Kiribati is going to be affected by global warming. I believe it's going to disappear whether we like it or not. So me personally, in order to help my family, I have to start trying to get them over here or try to get them back into Fiji, because we have a place there. Or try to find a place for them in New Zealand or Australia or other countries because I think they will need to leave (UInterview.9.3, 2008).

I think the global warming is true. I haven't met with the I-Kiribati who don't believe it. I think it's true from all that I read. The bible says it's not true but the scientists say it's true. I believe it's true. I am not sure if it will disappear, I think it will disappear. They said it would disappear when I was in the Kiribati, but now I see the problems in the land, and I think it's a problem. Maybe because I don't live there and I see the big changes when I return. But, if you live there, maybe you don't see the changes because it seems the same day after day. If they have to leave Kiribati, then I would want my family to come here. I am not a citizen so I can't bring them here, but if I get my citizenship then I could bring my family here to live (UInterview.9.2, 2009).

I remember in 1999 that there was a problem with Dai Nippon, the island went under the ocean. I think global warming is true, but it will take a while for it to really hurt the land. If global warming causes mass migration, I would try to have all of my family come here. Maybe I would fundraise or do whatever to bring them here. I think it's important that we save the lives of many people and the culture. We know the disadvantages of migrating but the good thing is that we would save lives of all these people (UInterview.9.10, 2009).

While all informants had heard of climate change and were aware of the predicted implications this would have for Kiribati, not everyone agreed that the nation and its people were in danger. Of those who did not believe climate change would harm Kiribati, several stated that they believed in God's promise never to flood the Earth again.

I think that is a lie. Kiribati will never leave, it will never fall under the ocean because that is against God's will. I am sure of this (UInterview.9.22., 2009).

As seen in interviews and surveys completed in Kiribati, many informants felt that the question of climate change was beyond them, relegating the future of Kiribati and the world to a higher power.

I don't know about this, it depends on God above, maybe it will come, but the thing is that it depends on God. I am not sure, I am just human and I can't really tell (UInterview.9.15, 2009).

Maybe it's true, but I am not sure. I know that we are living in America and can help but it's not up to us it's up to the heavenly father to know when the time is to remove Kiribati from the sea. If our president says fifty years, I don't know, maybe yes maybe no (UInterview.9.16, 2009).

I don't think it is true that Kiribati will disappear. I think it is up to God to decide, not our president or scientists. There are problems, yes, but I don't think that it will go under the water. If it were true though, I think my family would move to New Zealand or Australia, because I have a lot of family in both countries. It's better for them there because there are a lot of I-Kiribati in those countries, not like here (UInterview.9.5, 2009).

4.2.1 United States Summary

Coming to the United States was a major change and challenge for everyone interviewed. The majority of those in the United States were females who came through marriage to either Kiribati Returned Peace Corps Volunteers or former US military personal. The first Kiribati migrant in this study arrived in 1987. The most recent came in 2008. These migrants live in individual settings as opposed to the extended family/communal living settings found in Kiribati.

Their geographical distance from each other only served to promote an individualistic lifestyle they had not been accustomed to in Kiribati.

Because of the distance, informants most frequently met with each other and other migrants through websites or phone chat lines as opposed to an in person meeting. These virtual connections served to decrease homesickness and help them cope with the difficulties of weather, US culture, money, and language they faced in the United States.

The definition of family was expanded to include adopted relatives. Fictive kinship relations were seen as important as they redefined a sense of home and identity for informants. Although meeting with other *I-Kiribati* did not occur frequently, the event that everyone attended or looked forward to attending was the annual independence celebrations. For those with children, independence gatherings were seen as an important event for teaching and passing on the culture of Kiribati. All informants with children noted their inability to communicate beyond a few select words, at most, in the *I-Kiribati* language. Parents were not upset by this as they realized their children's ability to succeed in the states depended more on their ability to adjust to US society as opposed to holding onto a place that most had never been.

The financial cost associated with returning home was seen as a significant barrier. However, returning home was something which all migrants looked forward. Maintaining contact with those back home was extremely important. Informants heavily relied on the internet and telephones to maintain contact with family in Kiribati. Though it was noted that a 'life of money' was becoming more prevalent in Kiribati society, frequent remittances were not something that migrants commonly sent. New lives and obligations necessitated money which took precedence over sending money home.

While most regarded their lives as better in the United States, all did miss life back home. Climate change was something about which everyone had an opinion. Opinions varied from lack of belief in global warming to an overwhelming concern for family members left behind in Kiribati. Those most concerned about climate change's impacts on Kiribati wanted to bring their families over to the United States or help them move to other countries where other relatives had relocated to. Those less concerned that climate change was an issue felt that it was out of their hands and placed the future of Kiribati in God's hands.

4.3 NEW ZEALAND

The last half of the 20th century saw rapid growth in the size of New Zealand Pacific communities. Growing from just 2,200 people in 1945 to 266,000 in 2006, the Pacific Islander population made up 7% of the total New Zealand population in 2010 (New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, 2010). According to the 2006 New Zealand Census, Samoans were the largest Pacific Islander population in New Zealand at 131,103. This was followed by Cook Islanders (58,011), Tongans (50,478), Niueans (22,476), Fijians (9,864) and Tokelauans (6,819). Smaller Pacific Islander populations included Tuvaluans (2,600) and *I-Kiribati* (1,100) (Statistics New Zealand Tatauranga Aotearoa, 2006).

Eighty-one percent of the Pacific population less than 15 years of age was born in New Zealand while 99% of those 70 years of age and up were born overseas. Age and place of birth highlight the fact that the majority of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand are newcomers. Most Pacific Islanders (97.5%) have established residence in urban areas (New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, 2010).

Migration to New Zealand from Kiribati occurred much later than for other larger, well represented Pacific Islander populations. A small migration scheme was established following a major review of New Zealand's immigration policy in 1986, granting visa-waiver status to Kiribati and Tuvaluan visitors that year. By the early 1990s Kiribati and Tuvalu had work permit arrangements that let to 100 migrant worker contracts which could be extended for up to three years (Bedford & Bedford, 2010).

Since that time, Kiribati did not have an outlet for permanent settlement until the PAC was introduced in July 2002 (Bedford & Graeme, 2008). Outside of Kiribati, the most populated country with *I-Kiribati* was New Zealand. Permanent migration to New Zealand mostly occurred through the PAC migration lottery scheme, which allows Kiribati families to migrate to New Zealand as permanent residents (Gibson, McKenzie, & Stillman, 2009). The PAC was established by the New Zealand government in 2000 after a three month "visa free" entry period for Pacific Island citizens displayed tremendous interest.

The original plan was really good but people just flocked into New Zealand. Two countries, not Kiribati, hired planes to bring people to New Zealand (KInterview 8. 6., 2008).

It was clear that New Zealand was not ready for the influx of Pacific Island migrants received during that three month period. As a result, the PAC became more defined, establishing migrant qualifications and quotas for participating nations, Kiribati's annual quota was set at 75.

Each year the program in Kiribati has grown. 2008 represents the eighth year of the program within Kiribati and each year the number of applications received by the New Zealand High Commission has increased. It is an opportunity that so many seek in Kiribati, not just for immediate jobs and income but for their children's future who travel with them. Many, who apply, apply with this in mind. They apply for their children. They have their children's future in mind (KInterview 8. 6., 2008).

In order to apply for the PAC, Kiribati citizens must be between 18 and 45 years of age, meet certain English proficiency levels, be in good health and meet certain character requirements (e.g. no arrests) before they register. It is often the case that many more applications are received than the quota allows. To deal with the overwhelming number of applications, the High Commissioner's office implemented a random drawing to select applicants. Once selected, applicants must find employment in New Zealand and present a letter of offer within six months to the selection board. Connection with other *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand becomes vital to securing job offers.

Once lottery winners receive permanent residency approval, they have one year to move to New Zealand. Typically, migrant timelines are shorter as employers want them to start within weeks of job offers. If winners do not migrate within one year, they forfeit their opportunity. The individual who registered the application becomes the principal applicant, who is able to list spouse and children, if applicable, as 'secondary applicants.' Unmarried primary applicants without sole custody of dependent children are not allowed to take parents, siblings or other relatives with them. In these cases, support for family typically falls to remittances.

In addition to the PAC scheme, the Recognized Seasonal Employer (RSE) work scheme brought *I-Kiribati* to New Zealand shores in large numbers. The RSE facilitated temporary three to six month stays for migrant horticulture and viticulture workers (Department of Labour: Te Tari Mahi, 2011). With the implementation of the PAC and RSE migrant work schemes, *I-Kiribati* began pouring into New Zealand and the migrant community grew fast.

A lot has changed here with the use of the PAC, every year there are new people coming and staying (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

Work was essential for both migrant schemes. The PAC required lead applicants to provide evidence of New Zealand employment before they were granted PR status.

I believe most I-Kiribati people's goal is to come here and get a job. They want to build a future for themselves and their children. I know the [welfare] benefits here are a great thing and can be really helpful in certain cases like mine when I came here but too many people can take advantage of them and that is not good. Kiribati people are not lazy people. We are hardworking and proud people. It is a good thing that the government helps people who can't get a job but most of our people always want a job. That is how we get here in the first place. I think you can see that our people are not relying on benefits unless they get sick and don't go to work. So I can say that it's a very good thing to get help from the government, but we are not thinking of coming here for benefits. We come here to work and help our families grow (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

In 2006, Kiribati PR and RSE migrants centered around three major regions in the north island, a site for this research. Unlike the widely dispersed migrant population in the United States, this population lived within a small geographic area. Research took place in the town of Morningside. I lived with a Kiribati family and became a quasi-member of the Morningside Kiribati community. Through prolonged fieldwork in this one location, relationships were built, allowing for detailed information to be gathered from informants.

Like most cities in New Zealand, Morningside had its share of economically depressed areas and affluent neighborhoods surrounding the city limits. Morningside is home to multiple institutions of higher education and a medical center. The specific areas where research took place were in the more economically depressed areas of Morningside. New Zealand gangs, police and dilapidated houses were common sights in the research setting.

4.3.1 New Zealand Quantitative Results

Seventeen females and seven males ranging from 18 to 56 years of age participated in this portion of research. All but one of the respondents was born in Kiribati. Most participants were from Tarawa in the Gilbert chain. Three participants were from the lesser populated Line and Phoenix Island chains.

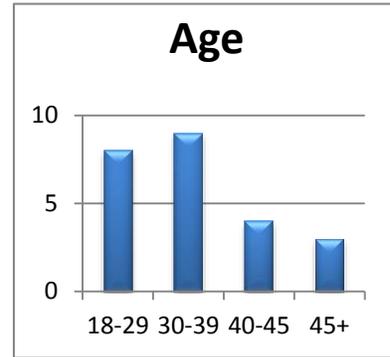


Table 26: NZ Survey - Age

The earliest participant arrived in 1987. A spike in migration was seen in 2005, three years after the PAC scheme was implemented. Most came to New Zealand for economic opportunities and to start a new life in New Zealand. Other reasons dealt with concerns over climate change, visiting relatives and educational opportunities at New Zealand Universities.

As for the United States population, most belonged to a Kiribati community. At the time of study, there were nine Kiribati communities in New Zealand. These groups were seen as valuable and supportive of community members.



Table 27: NZ Survey - Group affiliation

New Zealand *I-Kiribati* identified themselves as *I-Kiribati*, I-Kiwibas or a Pacific

islander. No one identified as New Zealander. Younger survey respondents tended to label themselves as I-Kiwibas or a Pacific Islander. Respondents felt that New Zealanders and other Pacific Islanders had a positive view of the *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand. They felt they portrayed attributes such as being hard working and being a good citizen.

The radio was cited as the most frequent method respondents kept up-to-date with news from Kiribati. An Auckland based radio station sponsored a weekly Kiribati radio program, which broadcasted news from Kiribati in the Kiribati language. Other ways participants kept in touch with Kiribati happenings included social networking websites and web based phone conversations through Skype and/or Google chat.

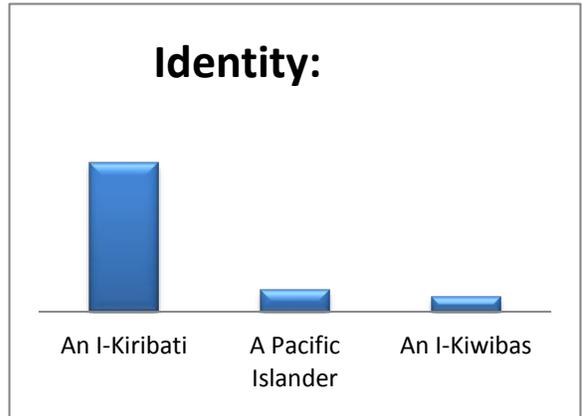


Table 28: NZ Survey - Migrant identities

Half of the survey respondents were New Zealand citizens. Those who were not, the most frequently stated reason as to why they had not become citizens were because of in-country time requirements which are necessary to change permanent residency status. Most who were not citizens at the time, felt positively about becoming New Zealand citizens in the future.

Like the US population, survey respondents overwhelmingly disagreed with the statement, *to get ahead in New Zealand, you must forget the Kiribati culture*. It should be noted though, that respondents who either ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ were younger participants

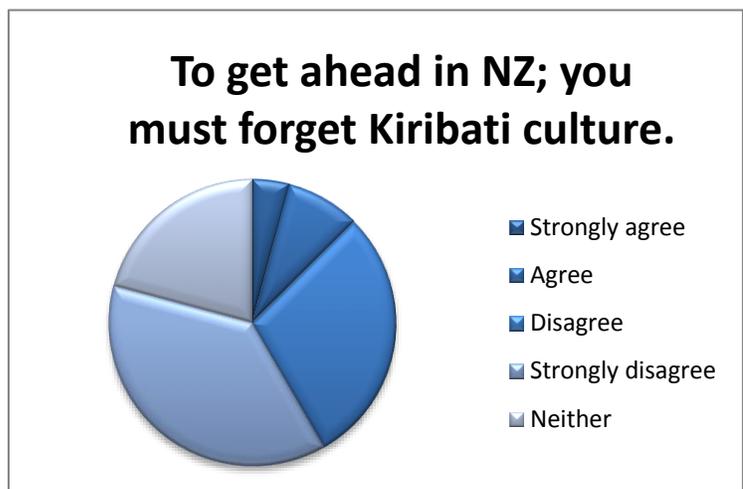


Table 29: NZ Survey - Getting ahead in NZ

who identified themselves as I-Kiwibas or Pacific Islanders, an indication of possible acculturation towards the New Zealand lifestyle.

Ninety two percent of the survey population indicated that they did have family in New Zealand. However, unlike the U.S. fictive kin, it was very likely due to the large number of *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand that biological family was present.

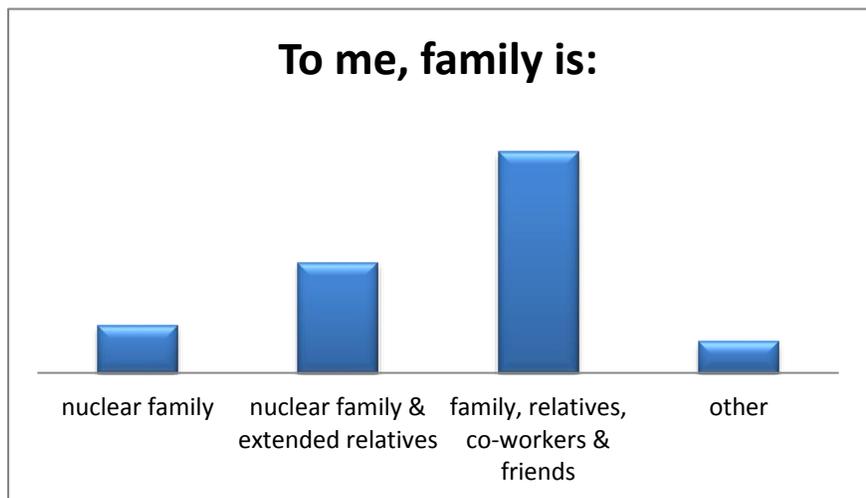


Table 30: NZ Survey - Changing definitions of family

Like the U.S. population, family was defined by the widest group of relations followed by the second widest definition of family. It is possible that because of this wide definition of family that nearly all had family in New Zealand. Although the New Zealand government has specific resources for migrants, most relied on family to help with the migration process and adjustment to New Zealand life.

Leaving home did not mean that one was free to forget family and leave social issues behind. In many ways migrating brought individuals closer to family back home as they prepared to bring other family member to New Zealand in the future.

Respondents were asked if leaving Kiribati afforded them a stronger personal sense of freedom. This question was intentionally left open ended for interpretation among survey participants. Some stated that leaving strict gender roles and obligations did make them feel freer. A 31 year old female stated *we are no longer scared to get drunk because there are no*

kids/responsibilities with us. Having more freedom was not something all felt in their new country. A 32 year old male stated, I feel tighter in my time. I have to work hard to get money to support my family. While both represented perspectives from their then perspective, and 18



Table 31: NZ Survey - Personal freedom

not exactly freer, but I am more focused on the future. It helped me learn how to be independent.

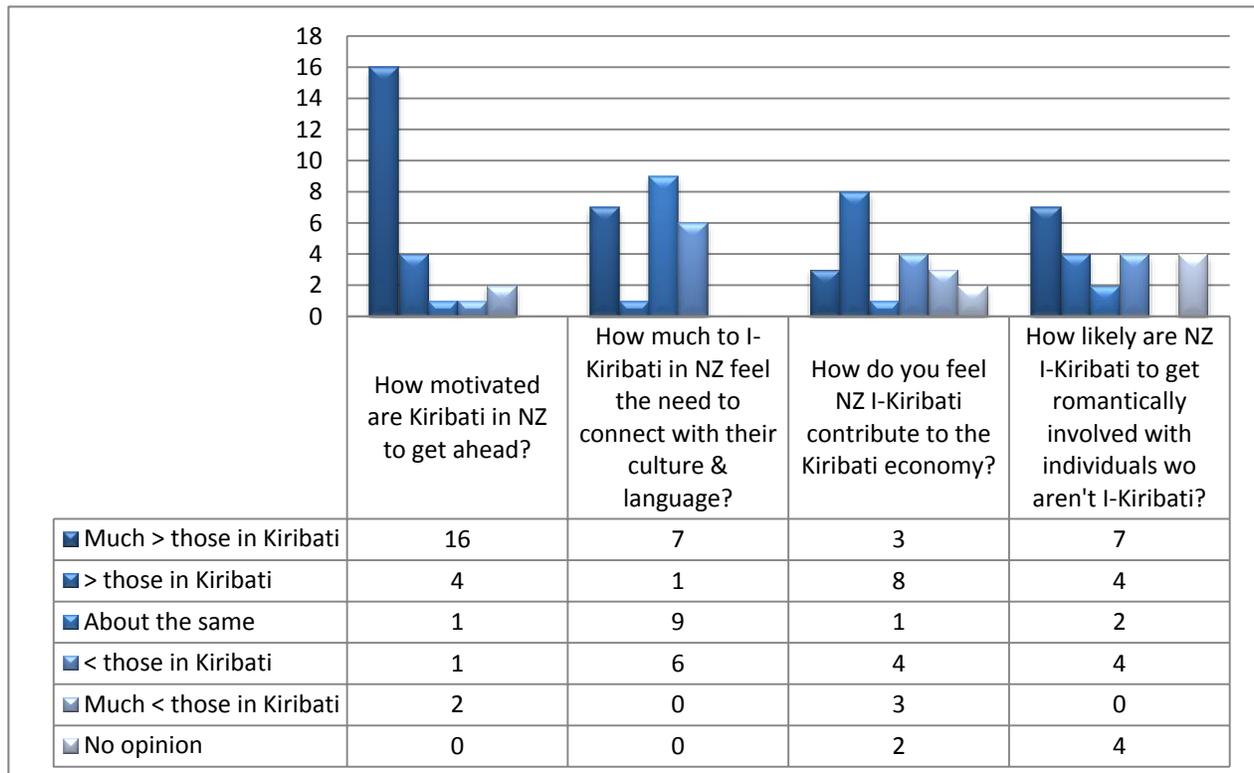


Table 32: NZ Survey - Kiribati motivations and intermarriage

Many felt that the Kiribati population in New Zealand was more motivated to succeed in life than those remaining in Kiribati. Overwhelmingly, there was a feeling that New Zealand *I-Kiribati* contributed more to the Kiribati economy than those back home. Unlike the U.S.

population, few New Zealand migrants were married to New Zealand citizens. All respondents agreed that their life was different in New Zealand, and held a deep longing for home. This desire for home served to create and maintain relations with other *I-Kiribati* in the local community.

Maintaining social relations was most frequently accomplished through visits and interactions with other migrants. The close geographical proximity between migrants aided in the formation of community groups and daily reliance on other migrants.

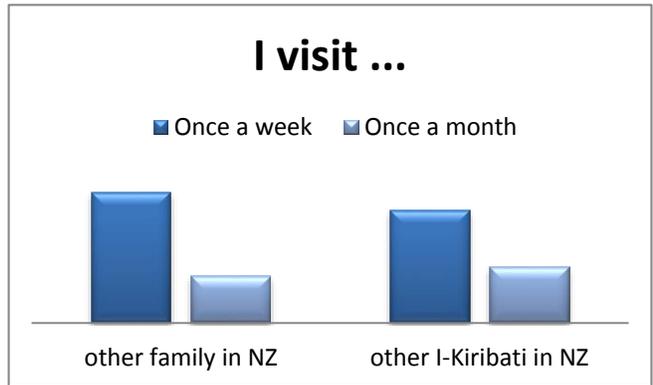


Table 33: NZ Survey - Social gatherings

Migrants felt that success in New Zealand was financially defined. This was followed by having a strong social life and maintaining a strong cultural connection through cultivating and maintaining social relationships with other migrants.



Table 34: NZ Survey - Success defined

Since coming to NZ has your own

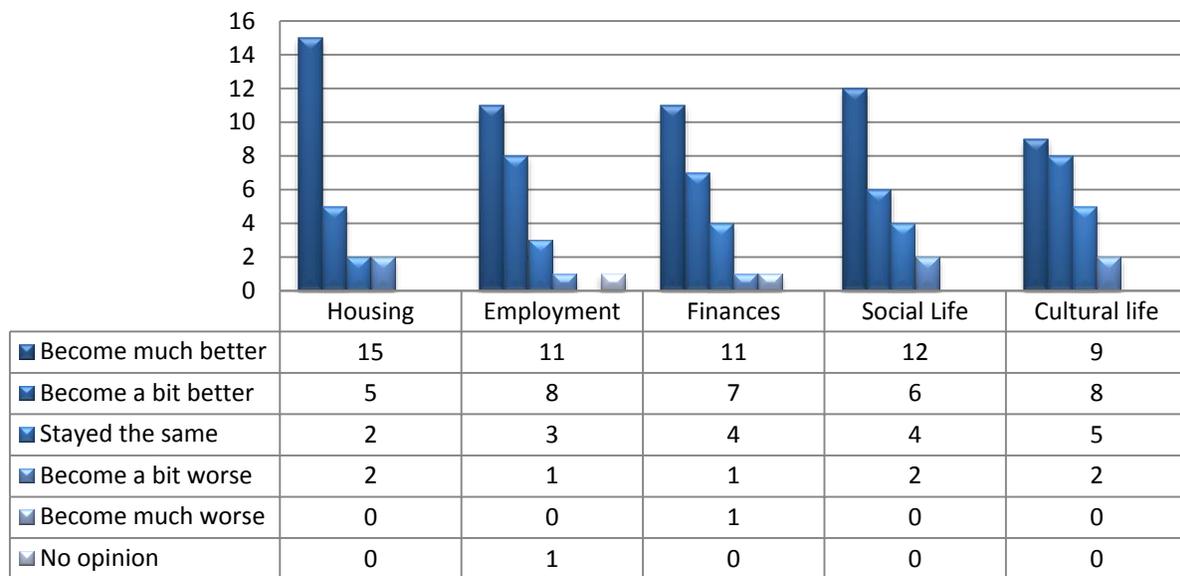


Table 35: NZ Survey - Social adjustments migrants experienced in NZ

All respondents experienced significant changes when they arrived in New Zealand. By far, almost everyone’s housing, employment, finances and social life became better since moving to New Zealand. However, by comparison, their cultural life and possibly identification with Kiribati did not improve as much. Those categories in which individuals selected “become worse or much worse” were minimal. Selections, “staying the same, becoming better and becoming much better” far outweighed the “becoming worse or much worse selections,” indicating migrants felt an overall improvement in these categories of their lives as a result of migration.

Respondents were asked to rank the difficulties they faced when moving to New Zealand. The number one represented the most difficult and the number five represented the least

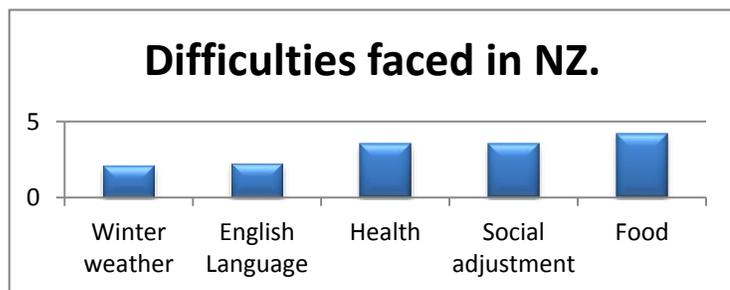


Table 36: NZ Survey - Difficulties faced in NZ

difficult adjustment. Results showed that the greatest difficulties individuals faced were winter weather and constant use of the English language. Other difficulties included a lack of formal work experience and problems with public transportation. Roughly half of the respondents said that they would return to Kiribati, but for visits only. As indicated by the survey, most all felt that they had a better life in New Zealand.

4.3.2 New Zealand Qualitative Results

New Zealand's 1986 Census established that 123 three individuals living in New Zealand had been born in Kiribati. By 2006, this number had increased nearly tenfold to 1,116 (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). Selected portions of interviews will paint a picture of what brought migrants and what life has been like for them while in New Zealand. Thematic analysis was conducted on 17 continuous field interview transcripts. Major narrative themes included arrival issues, assimilation to New Zealand, adjustment issues, work life, child rearing and the Kiribati community.

Unlike the individual migration pattern observed in the United States, Kiribati migration to New Zealand varied. Early migrants went as individuals for work and school while later migrants went in groups as seasonal work teams and nuclear families. It was more common than not to find clusters of *I-Kiribati* families living in the same town and on the same street in New Zealand as opposed to the dispersed *I-Kiribati* population in the United States. By the time fieldwork had commenced, chain migration had made a significant impact on the ballooning *I-Kiribati* population in Morningside.

Early Morningside Migrants

A small migrant scheme (less than 25 workers) was established following a major review of New Zealand's immigration policy in 1986 which granted visa-waiver status to a small number of *I-Kiribati* migrant workers. By the early 1990s a larger work permit scheme which allowed annual contract intakes was established by the government of New Zealand. Because of problems with over stayers, visa-waiver provisions and work schemes were terminated. These were eventually replaced by the permanent residency PAC scheme in 2002 (Bedford, 2008; Bedford & Graeme, 2008).

The earliest Morningside community members arrived through the 1986 agricultural temporary work scheme. Life for these early migrants was much different than the life encountered by current-day migrants who arrive through PAC and RSE schemes today. This is due in large part to the number of *I-Kiribati* migrants living in Morningside today.

I came through the apple work scheme in 1987. This was before the development of the RSE. My husband came on a visitor's visa in 1989 and then got a work visa which allowed him to stay in New Zealand. He worked in the timber company until our work permits expired. When he got a new job in a market, his permit was extended. We had two kids around that time and started our lives here in New Zealand (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

Like the US migrants, these early migrants arrived, worked and lived without much, if any, contact with other *I-Kiribati*. Adjustments were difficult and often faced without any help from friends, relatives or spouses.

The weather, the food, the money were all difficult things to deal with. It was a difficult life. It was boring because there were no other *I-Kiribati* at that time (NInterview.10.1, 2010).

It would be years until other *I-Kiribati* individuals and families would make their way to Morningside.

More I-Kiribati started to come in 1996 and 1997 looking for jobs. There were two students enrolled at the local school then. Auckland people and families came here because the life was cheaper and it was not too crowded (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

There was no large scale permanent residency migration schemes for which *I-Kiribati* qualified for until 2002. Migration to New Zealand was based on either work or educational opportunities, which contributed to the diversity of arrival circumstances and lived experiences of migrants.

I came in 1999 through a private business venture. I got the job because the people starting the childcare business came to Kiribati to find workers. They interviewed me in Kiribati and brought me to New Zealand. I had to get licensed for child care, so to pay for my school fee I agreed to work for free for a period of time. I also worked for free to pay back the cost of my airplane ticket to New Zealand. I didn't know all the details when I left Kiribati and it turned out to be a very difficult situation (NInterview.10.9., 2010).

I first came to New Zealand in 1998 for my undergrad, a BS in nursing and I was alone for one semester. My family joined me in 1999 and I went back to Kiribati in 2001. My husband began his graduate degree in 2005 and we were both attending university in 2006. I came back to New Zealand to work on my MA but at that same time, I won a spot in the PAC and that's how the whole family came over (NInterview.10.7., 2010).

I came in April of 2001. When I resigned from my former job, I had difficulty finding another job in Kiribati and that's when I heard about people coming to New Zealand for work (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

Auckland was the starting point for many of the Morningside community migrants. Early migrants faced many difficult situations in employment and living conditions that later migrants rarely faced. When early migrants arrived, there were no established migrant communities to assist new arrivals in settling and adjusting to New Zealand. These communities were to come with time and experience.

Adjusting to New Zealand was very hard when we first came. I had all of the children and I was a student in university at the time. I was on scholarship from the Kiribati government and it was hard. Sometimes my husband would send us money from Kiribati so that we could afford living here, because the scholarship was not enough for me and the children. The rent, the kids' lunches, everything

cost money. We struggled hard. Sometimes we bought tins and we ate one tin for one day. We all shared food because we didn't have any money. The kids knew that we didn't have a lot of money and they were very understanding. Everything we had was given to us, our beds, our clothes, even the car we had was given to us by others. I had four children at the time who were all coping with a new language and a new environment. We were very isolated. It was so different than what we have now; there was little support then for new people (NInterview.10.7, 2010; NInterview.10.8, 2010).

When I came on a work visa all the workers had to live in a two bedroom house. There were twelve of us, and eight lived in the garage and four lived in the house. That's from the employer. They lied to us. They said we were going to have our own rooms when we came here but they lied. When they came to Kiribati they said - oh we need some fruit pickers and we are going to take care of the workers - but they lied and took us to a garage and told us to share it. That is what I was in. It's a sad story because you don't have a place to go if you don't know anybody. You're stuck there because they own the house and it still happens today (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

In 2008 another New Zealand employer abused more than 20 *I-Kiribati* migrant workers by providing inadequate housing. Workers complained about their living conditions and were sent home early due to a lack of agricultural worker needs, leaving them unable to even for their flight back to Kiribati.

The returned Kiribati workers say they lived in overcrowded housing while receiving little work and little pay. The New Zealand Department of Labor says twenty-two Kiribati workers living in a three-bedroom house was the worst overcrowding it has encountered. According to a Department spokesman, the house was inspected before workers arrived and was deemed suitable for six or eight people (Quilliam, 2008).

In 2010, patterns of employer mistreatment continued for Kiribati agricultural workers in New Zealand.

This year in the south island an employer had twenty people staying in one house. They (New Zealand employers) sweet talk Kiribati government officials - Oh we need your people to do the job here. We will pay all the travel costs and we will take back the money from them when they start to work - It's a trap because they can't get people good jobs here it's just working the fields for no pay. The employer is lying when he is in Kiribati (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

Other early migrants had complex problems when they first arrived. Common to all migrants were the struggles for, and need of money. Here money replaced the extended family unit that would make sure all were taken care of. In the absence of family and/or friends, there was money.

When I first came to New Zealand I came on a visitor's visa. I struggled trying to find a job that offered a work permit. I was here a long time as an over stayer. I don't like that but it's true because it was very hard for me to go back to Kiribati to clear myself and then come back and start again. I did that two times but I couldn't afford to do that a third time, so the third time I was an over stayer.

(When I arrived) that time period was difficult. I had to tell lies if I was going to work and I had to work. They would ask "do you have a work permit?" I would say "yes." I didn't want to say that but if I didn't have a job, how could I survive? Without a job I couldn't pay the rent or food or petrol to run around and take the kids to school. So when my kids went to school, they took the car. They were on student visas at the time. I couldn't do much then; I always stayed in the house all the time. I didn't have freedom. I was always scared to go out. It was very hard. The church helped out a lot. They were looking after us in those days. They knew we were in trouble and they helped with food, furniture, and clothes and supported us.

When I got the PR (permanent resident status) I got my freedom. I moved my family from our little house to a bigger one. The children were really happy, the burden on our shoulder was finally gone (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

As more *I-Kiribati* migrants arrived, they began settling in closer proximity to one another. Living in close vicinity enabled the development of an informal financial and social safety net. As new migrants arrived, this safety net expanded its reach from a small New Zealand community to international arrivals gate. The community's support made a significant difference for new migrants as they adjusted to a new country and new life.

That is where the community groups come in for the new arrivals. They support the new migrants. I think that we all know the struggle; so we can all relate and try to help out (NInterview.10.7, 2010).

Many arrived as visitors, staying with relatives as they applied for PR status. Once approved, they took up employment and began new lives in New Zealand. New challenges

accompanied these new lives as many made references to being treated as second class citizens for their Pacific Island backgrounds.

When we came to NZ we couldn't work so that was a problem for us. Our visitor visas were blocking our chances. Our language was also a problem since English was our second language. We did try to talk but I don't know, maybe our talking made people treat us differently. We felt we were treated differently for who we were as islanders. Some people here were racist to us. I felt it at work when I didn't know how to do certain things because everything was new and different to me. When I asked for help I was treated badly. This made me remember certain people and I didn't talk to them because they treated me badly. I also notice it with patients in the rest house that I work in. Some old people didn't want brown people to take care of them (NInterview.10.5., 2010).

Once PR status was granted, the more common issues migrants faced were rooted in language as the following passage describes.

When I first came to NZ, the first challenge I faced was the language. It was really hard for me to communicate in English. That was a huge barrier when I went looking for a job. I remember I was afraid to answer the phone because I didn't know if it was an I-Matang and if it was, I was scared to speak to them because I couldn't. If no one else was at home I would just let it ring. I was scared because I wouldn't know what to say or what was being said to me. Another problem I had was being shy, I think it is from my Kiribati background. People are always shy in Kiribati. But the longer I stayed here, the less I was. I needed to find a job, even if I was bad in talking English. I had to get a job and it forced me not to be shy. That is what forced me to end my ways (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

In addition to a common homeland and language, migrants shared a common set of experiences. These often times difficult circumstances cemented relationships between migrants and further emphasized the need for a local Kiribati community organization.

Maybe this is why we started to become involved in the Kiribati community here, so that we could help others. Our experiences taught us something. It was like we learned in our hearts how it felt to be helped by others and we wanted to help others who were going through similar situations. We know that when new migrants come they need a lot of support and often times in the Kiribati language. The New Zealand government doesn't do that so it's on us (NInterview.10.8, 2010).

The New Zealand Government's Settlement and Support Services provided services to new migrants. However, *I-Kiribati* migrants felt uneasy about going to formal facilities for help.

While a few feared that they would not qualify for assistance because of their status, the majority feared having to use English. Unmet needs led to the development of self-reliance mechanisms in early migrant populations.

Life was so much more expensive. You pay for water, rent, electricity and we didn't have a car at that time. We also saw that everyone else was struggling. We fundraised to buy a car. It was a van that was used for all those who had transportation problems. We all worked together to survive (NInterview.10.7., 2010).

Recent Morningside Migrants (2002-)

High living costs, poor housing and overcrowded conditions encouraged early migrants and their families to move away from large urban centers. They migrated to rural areas where they found plenty of employment opportunities in the agricultural industry. Once established in their new towns, families brought relatives from Kiribati to New Zealand through short-term visitors' visas to help with household chores and childcare. Those who came on visitors visas typically helped their sponsoring families with household chores while they waited for their own PR status in New Zealand.

I came in 2006. When I came, it was on a visitor's visa. I babysat for the family for one year and then I took up courses at the education center because I got a PR through the PAC (NInterview.10.3., 2010).

We came in 2007 and stayed with family for nine months. We didn't work at that time because of the visitor's visa. We got our jobs when we won the PAC. We got it and that is what we are on now. We haven't gone back to Kiribati since we left (NInterview.10.5., 2010).

The Work

With the implementation of the PAC and RSE migrant work schemes, *I-Kiribati* began pouring into New Zealand and the migrant community grew fast.

A lot has changed here with the PAC, every year there are new people coming and staying (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

Paid employment was not only essential for life in New Zealand, but also a qualification for both migrant schemes.

I believe most I-Kiribati people's goal is to come here and get a job. They want to build a future for themselves and their children. Kiribati people are not lazy people. We are hardworking and proud people. It is a good thing that the government helps people who can't get a job but most of our people always want a job. That is how we get here in the first place (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

First jobs were frequently in pack houses, glasshouses, farms, cleaning companies and retirement homes. For some, these would turn into permanent positions with promotions, ensuring a sense of stability and familiarity for migrants and their families. In other cases,



Figure 8: Local pack house

individuals would take on multiple positions to make ends meet. On school holidays, families would often work together on local strawberry fields, kiwi plantations and farms to earn extra money. Because of a fervent desire not to rely on government welfare programs, the number of Kiribati families on benefit programs was small.

I know the (welfare) benefits here are a great thing and can be really helpful in certain cases like mine when I came here, but too many people can take advantage of them and that is not good. I think you can see that our people are not relying on benefits unless they get sick and don't go to work. We come here to work and help our families grow (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

Earning money and making it in New Zealand through working hard was a prominent activity in all migrant households. Work was not the only way in which families sought to better their positions in New Zealand society. Three families were making significant investments in education. The husbands of these families supported their wives as they attended a local trade

school. In three years' time, each would graduate and begin working in local medical facilities as RNs. Work was essential and seen as something that allowed for upward mobility.

New Zealand is very different than Kiribati. Here, I have to have a job, a paid job, because here everything is money. You need money in Kiribati too, but it's not like here. You have the sea, you have the lands, but if I have no money for food, you need to work. I think in Kiribati if you don't have work you can survive but I think here if you don't work you can't survive (NInterview.10.13., 2010).

When I got here I worked at the apple plantation, I lied and said I had experience. They asked where I had experience and I said on a farm back home! They believed me and I got the job. That job was my first job in New Zealand. I stayed there the whole season and then looked for another job when the season ended. I found a housekeeping position in a hotel. When I went for the interview they asked me if I knew how to make the bed and I lied again. I said yes, we do it in Kiribati all the time! They said ok, go do four rooms, clean the sink, do the beds and vacuum the floors. So I did it really fast and the manager was surprised at how fast I was. She hired me on the spot and when she saw my work she was surprised. I tied all the corners to the bed because I wanted to make it flat and didn't know how to make a bed. But I got the job (NInterview.10.6.,2010).'

The Glass House

Between 2001 and 2006 censuses, the number of *I-Kiribati* resident in New Zealand increased 72 percent largely due in large part to PAC quotas (Bedford & Bedford, 2010). It had been noted that PAC ballot winners were having difficulty obtaining employment offers from Kiribati. This has changed as more *I-Kiribati* have entered the New Zealand work force and established long-term relationships with New Zealand employers.

I have worked in the glass house for seven months, I like it. I am the only one who works in the family. We normally start at 7:00am and go till 4:30pm. There are five *I-Kiribati* who work there now and we know that what we do today can help future *I-Kiribati* who come to New Zealand (NInterview.10.4., 2010).



Figure 9: Local glass house

Working alongside other *I-Kiribati* in glass and pack houses brought to light the connection between glasshouse workers of today and migrants of tomorrow. This was further emphasized by the glasshouse manager:

We are always looking to hire good workers, but the problem is that New Zealanders don't want to work in our glass houses. So we found Erreit in 2008 and he has been wonderful, he brings out new people to see our glass house all the time. That's why there are so many Kiribati people working here (NInterview.10.30.,2010).

Workers stated that the wages they earned in the glasshouse were significantly higher than what they could have ever earned in Kiribati. While all agreed that the money was better, all worried about getting skin cancer as a result of constant long hours spent in the glasshouse. As much as all were concerned with future health conditions, none would speak up for fear of repercussions and loss of income.

Their inability to voice concerns was not only worrisome, but it also gave the wrong impression to the glasshouse supervisor.

It's great to employ people from Kiribati, because they are used to the hot climate that the glasshouses provide. Being raised on the equator, it's like they never left (NInterview.10.30.,2010).

Glasshouses may provide environments similar to 'home' but these are the exact conditions that individuals avoid in Kiribati.

The Money

Here you need money to survive; at home you can just go out fishing. It's an easy life down there. But there are advantages and disadvantages in both places. The disadvantages here are that you have a lot of expenses. If you don't work, you live on the street. I know we are not rich living here, I think we are poor. We may have plenty of money compared to those back home, but there are bills all the time. It is easy to get money, but it is also very easy to spend it. I'm not saying that we are rich even though relatives in Kiribati may think so. They keep saying "oh send us some money." Maybe we are because we work and they don't. They really want the money but here, no money, no life (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

A new focus on money changed people. Some enjoyed the different lifestyle, and felt that a focus on money gave them direction and purpose. At the same time, they disliked the stress that money caused in their new home. All agreed that their new life was significantly different from what they knew back in the islands because of money.

Living here has changed me. Money is such a main focus of my life now. In Kiribati, I was the only one who worked and I didn't care. But here I am very stressed (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

One thing I learned quickly after moving here was that everything revolves around money. Your land is not your land; your house is not your house, unless you buy it. The things in Kiribati that belong to family belong to money in New Zealand. You must rent everything with money. In Kiribati, you build your house on your land and if you need electricity you make your own with solar panels. To live in New Zealand requires money for everything (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

The Dole

New Zealand's Social Security Act insures that every citizen has 'a right to a reasonable standard of living' and that it is the community's 'responsibility to ensure that its members were safeguarded against the economic ills from which they could not protect themselves' (McLintock, 2009). To fulfill its goal of ending poverty in New Zealand, the act ensured ten social welfare categories of benefits that New Zealand citizens and permanent residents are eligible for (a full list of New Zealand benefits is located in the appendix).

While the benefit system, locally referred to as the dole, is extensive and available to all New Zealand citizens and permanent residents, no informant looked for or expected handouts upon arrival to New Zealand. All informants adamantly stated that *I-Kiribati* were proud people who support themselves and their families. Realizing that they have resided in one of the world's harshest environments for the past two thousand years, reliance on a bi-weekly government subsidy was seen as insulting. However, recognizing that some in New Zealand would need help,

all could appreciate the safety net which the Social Security Act provided. Again, none saw this as an entirely positive thing if abused.

I think they are good and bad because those from New Zealand take advantage and the government rewards them for not going to school and not working. Just from what I have seen. But the good thing is that people here aren't dead if they don't work because they will be taken care of (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

The benefits are good but I think it's a bad thing, because we pay high taxes to support the benefits. I worked two jobs and maybe for working two jobs I was punished because I was taxed a lot. I think it's not fair, if you work hard you should reap the rewards, not be forced to give it to others. I was mad because we are doing everything right and our money is taken. I don't know, maybe it's my own idea, I worked two jobs in 2007 and I learned that it was bad to work too hard here (NInterview.10.13., 2010).

To me they are a good thing because they are noticing how much we are struggling and stuff. It's good that they are taking a look at it and making a difference, on the other hand, I guess it's a bad thing if you are abusing it. I think it is just shaming, really... like shaming the people who use it. I think benefits make you lazy and not want to work. I think there are only a few people on benefits in the community, only the single parents and maybe students on the loan program. Everyone who comes here has to have a job, so there aren't many on benefits in the community (NInterview.10.3., 2010).

The Community

The Morningside Kiribati Community started long before most of today's members arrived in New Zealand.

In the 1990s, there were several I-Kiribati students attending the local University. There were also families, maybe less than ten houses total (NInterview.10.8., 2010).

As *I-Kiribati* established new lives in Morningside their ability to support new arrivals substantially increased.

A lot has changed here with the PAC. We know every year there are people coming and staying, now that they got the chance (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

With the large number of *I-Kiribati* migrating to Morningside, the original community split into two separate groups. The social and political fallout between groups caused many problems that lasted for years.

For me it's up and down, sometime good, sometime not too bad. For me a small community is good. But when it is getting bigger and bigger, it's not good. That's what happened here. In 2008 it was just one community. Then it was all good. But now it's separated. When there's too many, it's not good I think (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

Informal networks between New Zealand and Kiribati are often what facilitate the social aspects of migration. Communities act as links between established New Zealand *I-Kiribati* families and new migrants. While this is seen as a good thing, it also is seen as a bad thing.

I think you stay with other Kiribati when you first get here, maybe those that are related to you. They introduce you to the community and that is good, but maybe it can be the problem too. You only stay with I-Kiribati; you don't go outside of the community. Even though we work and go to school with pakheas, we stay with our own people. I keep thinking, I'm going to get friends outside of the community, but how can I? I work in a place that has a lot of people from different countries and I was invited to Tongan party by one of my co-workers. But the thing was I felt very uncomfortable because they all spoke Tongan and I didn't. That's how we are with our community. I know if people come to our community, they will feel just as uncomfortable. We always stick together and it is difficult to make friends with others who are not Kiribati (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

The Morningside Kiribati community has brought about a sense of home and security for its members. This feeling of a home away from home was profound from the first community event I attended. It was held in a Morningside house which belonged to a community member. Like in Kiribati, females and males were segregated in their own areas while children played in their own area. Females gathered in the garage to play bingo and males gathered by the grill sharing news from home and work over cases of green bottles. It was clear that the interactions between individuals and families of this community contributed to a sense of home. Over time, I would realize that the community members treated each other as an extended fictive kinship group. Households in Kiribati are made up of many extended family members. This household pattern has been maintained as extended 'family' members provided social and economic support for coping with life in Morningside.

Here in New Zealand we are more of a nuclear family. I think the change makes us feel more independent, but there are always a lot of people in our house because of the community so it doesn't make us feel out of place or homesick because there are a lot of people. It's like an extended Kiribati-New Zealand family (NInterview.10.7., 2010).

For many, a key aspect of dealing with life in Morningside was the ability to maintain a Kiribati identity. This was accomplished through frequent community involvement and other *I-Kiribati* family interaction.

The positives of the community are meeting with each other, holding onto language, eating foods from home, you know, the things that help stop homesickness. I belong because I'm Kiribati and I know that the community is from my islands. I don't want to miss that, it's who I am (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

For me, I joined because I want to get back my culture. I want to bring back my own language and socialize with other I-Kiribati. I don't miss the islands because I have the community. That is the positive thing; we meet together with others (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

Holding onto one's culture, language and food was seen as important by everyone. However, the overwhelming financial investment and time commitment in doing so were challenging.

We pay money at each meeting and they have to see, especially when you've got kids that you have to budget everything. Maybe in the beginning when we get here, it's good because we don't have much of a family but now we can see the hardships because everyone is experiencing it and the community adds to these (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

Community members' challenges were based in the larger context of maintaining a collective *I-Kiribati* existence in a more individualized New Zealand society. Collectivism as experienced in Kiribati prioritizes the group over the individual. This falls into direct conflict with New Zealand society, which prioritizes the individual (family) over a larger social group.

In Kiribati you could rely on family to support you, but not here. And even the community it is good for the support of having other I-Kiribati around, but honestly it costs a lot and it really puts added pressures of living in New Zealand on us. It costs a lot. They take contributions for this and this and this and it sometimes

breaks my own family budget when I pay twenty dollars for this, ten dollars for this and ... I have nothing left for my own family afterwards and you need to think like that here (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

The community gathered throughout the year for various events, meetings and activities. The frequency of these gatherings varied. The most active periods were between the months of May and July as the community prepared for the annual Kiribati Independence celebrations. Dance practices and the most common fundraising activity, bingo, occurred on a daily basis.

When I first arrived the community reached out to me and made me feel welcome and safe. But there is a downside too. Sometimes the community eats the money for the bingo, trips and meetings. Everything is money. In my point of view we can't pay our own bills and then we go to the community and give money. That is just stupid. If I spend it (on the community) we can't afford our bag of rice or lunch for the children (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

Financial obligations to the community were a source of conflict for all families. Most often, men who worked long hours in the glass/pack houses were upset with their wives for spending family income on the community. Many noted that they would have difficulties paying individual bills, groceries and rent as a result of allocating personal finances to the community. They primarily did this out of a desire to belong, fearing that they and their family would be shamed if they did not contribute on a regular basis.

There is too much fundraising for the community. Most people who can't afford to go, don't go. It's like church. Sometimes you can't afford it, you have bills to pay and food to buy. We have to be concerned with our kids first. But, you know we are really shy and don't want to be shamed by saying 'no we won't help' If we do then others will say why not!?! We always just say yes... yes... yes instead. It is good getting together but having the community take your money hurts (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

Individuals felt obligated to financially contribute to community activities since they were part of the community. Many informants mentioned that they would contribute to the community even if they could not afford to because they did not want to be shamed in the larger context of

the community. Some saw it as the cost for maintaining their family's standing in the community and their identity in New Zealand.

Here we have a community and a Kiribati presence but it is different. It is only during meetings, practices, fundraising that you see these people. You don't see them all the time. Money is always needed when we meet with the community so it comes with a cost to keep your Kiribati feeling. I think the community is good for the kids to keep their culture (NInterview.10.3., 2010).

Time commitments to community gatherings were also seen as a source of conflict. Meetings were often long and frequent during the months leading up to the Independence celebrations. Meetings often went well into the late night and early morning hours, causing many to struggle in work and school the next day.

There are too many meetings and they take a long time. If the meeting is an hour that's very good. But when it starts at seven pm and goes till one am oh your co-workers think, what happen to you? You are working to support your family on only three hours of sleep (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

Community meetings and obligations were less frequent after the July celebrations. This period allowed families to concentrate their efforts on their own households in place of the community. While this change in activity was appreciated, eventually members did long for social interaction with community members.

A lot of people think that maybe it's good that the community takes a break (after independence). Our families will have a lot more money and that may make people think twice like maybe they will settle their own bills first before they give to the community. I think that will be good for me and my family too (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

As in Kiribati, elders of the community were highly respected for their opinions and skills. Elders saw the problems that the community was causing for *I-Kiribati* families and children in New Zealand. These elders, who had resided in New Zealand for extended periods, were conflicted with the efforts placed on maintaining the community.

Sometimes the older people say, we need “to think like a good thinking because we are not in Kiribati anymore, we are in New Zealand and we need to live like NZ people.” They say, don’t spend too much money on the community, it’s nothing. They ask, what’s the use of spending it on the community? Why don’t you just think about spending it on your own house and keep the money for the good of your own children so they are well supported? Why do you spend a lot of your money on the community bingo? And then I say, I am still I-Kiribati (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

Despite the financial costs and extensive time commitments associated with the community, each informant overwhelmingly agreed that life in New Zealand was better because of their involvement in the community and stated that they would not want to live in New Zealand without a Kiribati community association.

If I wasn’t part of the community I would be sad. I-Matangas stay by themselves and they are okay. I know they have families but it’s different. I-Kiribati need people, not like I-Matangas (NInterview.10.3., 2010).

I think life would be worse. It’s a challenge to us because we love to meet with our people and catch up with them. So living without that support would be hard. We love community life. We love socializing and we would get really upset if we didn’t meet with other Kiribati (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

A Closed Community

In 2010, the community consisted of fourteen *I-Kiribati* families, two mixed couples and one American anthropologist. Aside from three non-*I-Kiribati* members, the community was entirely populated by *I-Kiribati*. Some saw this as a positive thing, while others felt that it limited the community’s ability to adjust to New Zealand society. Individuals who saw the closed community as a good thing felt that they were able to hold onto their traditions, and language, and maintain a Kiribati identity in New Zealand.

We don’t socialize with other groups and I think it’s good that way. It’s only us Kiribati people because we know each other, we know our own culture. We know us. I think it’s good to only socialize with other I-Kiribati (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

Palagis think always about their family and that's all. But back home, we are brought up in an extended family. The community is part of our new family. It is like our family, it is the heart of people in Kiribati. I think that's why we are a closed community (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

Those who saw it negatively reasoned that social seclusion prevented them from moving up in New Zealand.

Life would be easier without the community, because we would keep our money and we could use it for our own needs. But we were never looking at it like that. We end up spending a lot of money when we go to the community. If we stayed at home, our money would just go to help our family (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

I-Kiwibas Youth

Youth of the Morningside community were not interviewed; however their parents and a few young adults spoke on what it was like to raise and be raised in New Zealand. Parents addressed a range of topics, including difficulties faced, benefits realized and concerns over the future of their children.

Children were often mentioned as a reason for migrating to New Zealand. Parents felt that there were better education, health, and life opportunities in New Zealand than in Kiribati. Overwhelmingly, parents felt that their children were promised better futures if they left Kiribati.

The life here is very different than the life in Kiribati. There are a lot more opportunities. It is better for the kids' future in terms of education too. I think the life in Kiribati is good, but to me, life here is better. Day care is better because they do things with the children, not like family in Kiribati who just sit around the house and leave the children alone. Here, they will be fed at a certain time, they will play and learn. They won't just watch TV and stay in the house (NInterview.10.9., 2010).

From a distance, parents saw New Zealand as a means to a better end for their children. Many did not realize the difficulty they would encounter in New Zealand as their children negotiated life as both an *I-Kiribati* and as a Kiwi. These I-Kiwibas were often taught one thing at school and had to live a completely different way at home.

I have seen differences in the youth being raised in New Zealand. I have seen children standing up for themselves pointing out ‘their rights’ as children. They learn it in school and bring it home. But in Kiribati you listen to your parents. It’s like they are confused because what they are told to do in school: ask questions, talk back and don’t hit is different from what they live at home (NInterview.10.3., 2010).

Another issue that took parents by surprise was the amount of parental involvement New Zealanders had in their children’s lives. Parents commented on how children in Kiribati were more distant from adults than those in New Zealand, and to paraphrase an informant, children had their domain and adults had theirs. As a former Kiribati elementary school teacher, I confirm this informant’s observation. In my two years of teaching elementary school in Kiribati, I never held a parent-teacher conference. This was in stark contrast to the US elementary education system. Parents were motivated to get more involved in their children’s education as many cited their children as the main reason behind their migration.

Another thing is how we treat our kids here. We are to motivate our kids for their future plans. We get involved with their education here, but in Kiribati you send them off and they go. We don’t get involved because that is the teacher’s job. But they are here to stay in school so that they can get a big status and not be a fruit picker, like their parents, that status is very low (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

While all parents held great ambition for their children’s future, working towards it was often seen as a daily struggle. Many attributed these struggles to the changes they as parents and children experienced as a result of migration and community involvement.

Some of the things we do in the community are not good for the families and you can see it in the kids. They are wild at meetings and we have trouble every meeting. It’s not like that in Kiribati where the kids are behaved and respect the culture and adults. Here, they run, they cry, and they fight. We are saddened and we can’t control our kids. This doesn’t happen in Kiribati. They listen when it’s time to sit or time to stand. Me, I’m going to try and make my kids behave, but how we are going to control our kids in New Zealand? There is no discipline here (NInterview.10.9., 2010).

Child disciplinary measures used in Kiribati most frequently involve hitting. This practice is outlawed in New Zealand. For parents who were raised in this manner, disciplining children any other way seemed nearly impossible.

Back home we always talk and smack to guide their behavior, but in here a lot of children understand that it's against the law. They always talk back to us when we tell them something. It's a lot harder for some of the parents to guide their kids because of the policy. We are not very good in teaching the children in the palagi way, because we are used to our own way. The kids are palagi like but we are Kiribati. They talk to their parents in palagi ways and if we try to correct them in our way with a smack, it is not good. The behavior is a lot harder to correct now (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

High school aged youth posed different kinds of problems for parents. Teenagers who had recently moved to New Zealand had extreme difficulties with school, language, and making friends. Parents often did not know why or understand the problems their children faced as they would not open up to tell them what was going on, but they all guessed that the main problem was language.

I remember when we first came, my daughter always stayed behind with her cousin in the house. We would always go out to the community, but she just liked to stay home. I would always tell her to come and meet the others, but she stayed behind. At school she always stayed in the classroom. She didn't go out for lunch or morning tea break. Everyone else would be out talking and having fun, but she just stayed in the classroom. I think it was because of the different people and the language (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

When my son came, he couldn't speak the language, but he still wanted to try. He wanted to go to school, but then he said he was too shy and he didn't want to go to school any longer because he was shy. I made him go and he picked up the language very fast. He knew it in maybe five to six months and that was good. But suddenly when it was time for school, he didn't want to go. To me I didn't see a problem, he knew the language. I thought he would do well in school because he picked up the language fast, it was easy for him. He stopped going to school and now he works in a pack house (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

While parents recognized the importance of English outside of the home, Kiribati was the dominant language within. There was a sense of pride that existed among families who kept

Kiribati in the house. This was difficult to maintain as children became fluent in English. Parents noticed that the constant daily use of English not only improved their abilities but also challenged the practice of their mother tongue.

The youth are tired of speaking Kiribati. They want to speak English now. They know how to speak Kiribati but they only want to speak English. But maybe it makes sense because their life is now in English. They go to school from nine to three and then come home. Do homework in English, eat dinner and then sleep. They have very little time in the Kiribati language except for on the weekends and in the summer. I tell them to speak Kiribati at home. They can but maybe they are starting to lose their Kiribati language now (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

Looking forward, several parents expressed concern about their older children as they neared the end of their senior secondary educational career. Parents felt unequipped to support their children as they began thinking about post-secondary schooling. Only two adults in the community had university degrees.

There is little help for the youth within the community. Just how to be good I-Kiribati young adults and that is not good. We need to start thinking about this because I don't think it's fair. We brought them here for a better life, but what are we doing to prepare them for this kind of life (NInterview.10.3., 2010)?

While the parents had one set of concerns over their children's upbringing in New Zealand, the children had others. Parents put an emphasis on children remaining Kiribati, speaking the language, maintaining specified gender roles, and respecting adults through obedience. Youth were conflicted. For some who were not born in Kiribati or had only spent a few years of their childhood in the islands, their parents' ways did not make sense. Negotiating expectations of New Zealand friends in public while fulfilling Kiribati expectations at home was challenging.

Yeah, I have to be on both sides of the coin. Like the Kiribati girls should do this. But it's different because when I'm with my white friends and stuff their like we go out and party. I'm like can I go out and my family is all, you got to stay here and clean. And I say but my friends are... NO, it doesn't matter what your friends do (NInterview.10.10., 2010).

Youth also felt a definite gender bias. In Kiribati it was expected that girls help the family through taking care of domestic responsibilities. This often meant that they would interact only with other girls.

It's also house work, like it's training us to be good housewives. For us girls it's like they are more paranoid about us because we are the ones representing our family, you know? We aren't going to disrespect our family by our behavior and bodies and stuff. The boys are free to do anything, they just go anywhere. They're cared about but they're freer than the girls are (NInterview.10.10., 2010).

School is where differences became pronounced. Misunderstandings, cultural differences and acceptable behaviors at home were now vehemently discouraged.

When I am at school, there are often a bunch of misunderstandings because I'm like transitioning between island life and white life all the time. To me it's like I bring my cultural humor into school and I bring what I learn in school home. My family and our situation is crazy to the I-Matangas. We are extremely loud and we value things they don't. I don't have a lot of Pacific Island friends in school, maybe like two. So it's a big difference because my school is mostly white. I haven't adjusted to life in either place. In school, I laugh too loud and talk too much. At home, I want to do things that white kids do. I guess I've gotten used to it (NInterview.10.10., 2010).

A Return

Each day, each week, each month, each year away from the islands only served to intensify migrants' desire to return. It seemed inevitable. For migrants, it may not happen this year or even in the next few years, but without question, in their minds, it would happen. Sentiments expressing a desire to return were made by each community member. At the time, only two families had gone back. Upon return migrants were surprised at the changes they witnessed in the land and people. However, more surprising were the changes they realized in themselves.

I went back in 2008 and it was different for me. I had problems with the water and the dust and the heat. My mom said that I had changed and she could see it every

day. Life there is a local life. We don't have a shower, table, or chairs. When I went back in 2008 I couldn't sit properly on the floor. I always wanted the fan because it was so hot. I wanted so many things that are here in New Zealand but weren't in my home in Kiribati. I didn't have problems re-adjusting to the social life. I was happy. When I came back I was so cold because I got used to the heat again (NInterview.10.13., 2010).

When we went back my husband couldn't lie on the floor like everyone else, he wanted a mattress and people questioned what was wrong with him. 'Why can't you lie on the floor? Are you a pakhea now?' (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

I couldn't even climb the coconut trees. I used to be the number one climber to get the toddy but I only climbed halfway and my legs started to shake! I came down and said 'Oh I don't want to cut toddy now.' It's funny, but I couldn't do what I used to do. We can't know that we changed when we are in New Zealand, but we know it when we go back (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

Adults were not the only ones subject to ridicule. Children who once spoke only Kiribati and did Kiribati things were now seen as Pakhea challenged by their loss of tongue and acclimation to New Zealand comforts. Upon return, their ways were significantly different and family members were quick to take note.

I think we know our kids have changed when they go back home. We went with our two oldest and you know they couldn't eat without butter. And the local drink they did not want it, they wanted milo and milk. They couldn't even walk on their feet, "Oi I can't walk this way, my feet are too thin" she cried and people shouted you are a white person now (NInterview.10.1., 2010; NInterview.10.2., 2010).

When we went back, the kids asked for the toilet and we said (pointing) just go over there, like the in the beach. So they went to the beach and came back saying 'Oh no we don't want to do that!' We changed a lot but we don't recognize we change until we go home because we adopted New Zealand ways (NInterview.10.2., 2010).

Migrants frequently voiced their difficulty in adjusting to New Zealand. They commonly stated that life in New Zealand was so difficult, so complicated, and so fast compared to life back home. However, for New Zealand raised *I-Kiribati* children, going back to Kiribati created just as much confusion. Being raised in New Zealand accustoms individuals to certain comforts.

Toilets are a necessity, electricity is a must and indoor plumbing is not considered a luxury. All of these ‘basic’ comforts of life in New Zealand are infrequently found in Kiribati.

When I went back to Kiribati, ok first the toilet. There was a toilet, but there was no flush. I went to the toilet and there was no toilet paper. I was yelling from the toilet for toilet paper and they gave me hand towels. And then we had to get one of the little kids to fetch water for me from the well. He had to flush the toilet for me because I was doing it wrong. I just stared in amazement! (NInterview.10.10., 2010).

Despite these difficulties, going back to Kiribati also brought forth a sense of understanding for New Zealand raised children. They had a better understanding of why their parents acted and treated them in ways that seemed odd and out of place in New Zealand.

When I went back I was 17. The life there for us was actually more sociable. My parents actually let me go out. But I realized that the local girls couldn’t go out because they had to do house work. It’s like we were guests so we were more privileged to go around the island. It made me realize that the girls were treated no differently than I was in New Zealand. It opened my eyes and made me understand why my parents were strict on me. I would always compare myself with my older brother and get mad because they were less strict on him. ‘Why can he do this and I can’t’ I would ask. They would always say ‘because you are a girl’ and I would get all mad. That’s sexist! But going back and seeing how the girls are protected to make the families look good in Kiribati eyes made me understand (NInterview.10.15., 2010).

Migrants frequently stated their confusion and difficulty in adjusting to New Zealand life when they arrived. Life was so difficult, so complicated, so fast compared to life back home. Many were afraid to speak English for fear of being shamed or not saying what they meant to say. It was easier just to speak in their own language with people who could answer their questions. This feeling was felt and reflected by non-Kiribati speakers.

One time I was on the bus by myself and I didn’t want to say ‘stop here’ in the Kiribati language, because I felt shame like I was an outsider. I was waiting for someone else to say it. I passed my place and someone shouted stop here so I got off and then I had to walk forever to get back to my place (NInterview.10.15., 2010).

Returning to New Zealand was both happy and sad. The comforts of life were once again in place. Everyone spoke the same language and familiar foods were in plenty supply. However, the experiences in Kiribati seemed to leave a mark on these children. They began to miss things they had never missed before.

When we got back to New Zealand the temperature was so nice. Wind, fresh air and then... McDonalds, right next to the gate! I had to go to McDonalds. I was like buy me a hunger buster! It was like seven weeks without McDonalds, that's crazy. Having that experience was good but I missed the things here when I was in Kiribati and then when I got back here, I missed things there (NInterview.10.10., 2010).

Climate Change

Though Kiribati individuals have tried gaining PR status through claiming climate refugee status, none of the research participants had attempted this. When asked about the existence of climate change and its potential impact on Kiribati, the study population held a mix of opinions. Some believed that climate change was not true, crediting God's biblical promise never to flood the Earth again. Others believed it was happening, citing their own accounts of changes in the natural environment. Others remained uncertain, citing conflicting arguments they had heard from the media, and family members back in Kiribati. If Kiribati were to be rendered uninhabitable, all felt it was their responsibility to bring family members to New Zealand.

Those who believed were scared to return to Kiribati. They were afraid of being placed in danger from king tides, tsunamis, rising seas and unhealthy drinking water. It was understood that the larger world did not recognize climate change as an immediate danger causing large delays in immediate actions to help the most vulnerable populations. The peril faced in Kiribati was expressed by eyewitnesses who attested to changes of land in Kiribati. Frequently noted

were governmental plans to get Kiribati citizens out of harm's way through current migrant schemes and possible future climate change refugee status claims.

I want to go back to Kiribati but I am scared of global warming. Sometimes I think of going back and then there is a king tide or even a tsunami and who knows. I always think like that. My life is here in New Zealand now but I still want to go back. Kiribati is there, but who knows for how long. I will be so sad if it goes away while I am still alive. People said in fifty years' time it would still be around. Then they changed that to thirty years and now twenty years, maybe ten years next. The government has been looking for relocation places but no one has offered to take in Kiribati people (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

Yes I believe it, I've seen it and all the seas are going up. I think Kiribati will be in trouble with climate change. I think Kiribati people should be labeled climate change refugees because everyone can't be trained for jobs back home. So when they have a chance to come here it won't only be once a year for only a few families (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

Those who did not believe cited arguments made by scientists, world leaders and the biblical passage Genesis 9:11. Though individuals did not believe it would happen, many still planned on preparing for a worst case scenario of having their entire family live with them.

Lately there has been so much news about climate change in Kiribati. We saw in some years' time they say Kiribati will be underwater. I don't believe it but it conflicts my mind because some scientists say it will be underwater and in my thinking it won't (NInterview.10.13., 2010).

I still don't think it will happen. If it is so, I am preparing by making sure I get a lot of money and finishing my school to support them here (NInterview.10.13., 2010).

Seriously, in my opinion, I reckon when Kiribati is going to sink or whatever it's gonna sink. I don't believe in that whole climate change you know? To me if God wants to sink Kiribati now, he will let it sink. It's not the climate that decides, it's God. If people are being forced to migrate because of climate change then everything will be lost (NInterview.10.10., 2010).

Those who were not sure if it would happen claimed that all they knew was either hearsay from family or second hand accounts from the media. These accounts were still tempered by religious beliefs; however, reality was now beginning to discredit the pillars of God's promise.

I kind of don't know. Maybe I believe it a little bit but if so then why hasn't Kiribati disappeared before? Maybe it's true but I guess I have doubts. I guess I too believe that God won't flood the Earth but I know the storms are getting stronger. But they haven't washed away the islands completely. Maybe so, you know when I was little there was an islet that we used to walk to at low tide but when they built the causeway the islet began to go under water and now high or low tide that islet doesn't exist. It is always below the sea now. Maybe that is how our lands will be in the future (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

I'm not sure. The last time I went back was in 2003. The land was all the same. Here we only heard about the king tides. That was the only news we heard about on the radio and TV. But still we don't believe it will happen, maybe in the future. I think if the I-Kiribati people are labeled as climate change refugees it would save their lives. What is the bad thing about that if it is going to save our people? We all want our people to be safe (NInterview.10.6., 2010).

4.3.3 New Zealand Summary

I-Kiribati in Morningside outnumbered the *I-Kiribati* population in the U.S. mainland. Because of this, New Zealand offers a counter example to the *I-Kiribati* population in the United States. While the earliest migrants from both field sites arrived in the mid-1980s, there were stark differences between the New Zealand and the U.S. migrant populations.

Unlike the U.S. migrant population, migration to New Zealand was not on an individual basis. Beginning in the 1980s migrant work schemes brought groups of workers from Kiribati to New Zealand. Over time, work schemes developed into educational opportunities and eventually PAC and RSE migrant work schemes. All programs allowed multiple individuals, if not entire families to migrate temporarily or permanently to New Zealand. These migrants worked and lived in a close geographic area. Patterns of New Zealand migration created very different outcomes for these migrants and their families.

Morningside community members came to New Zealand for either employment or educational opportunities. All participants were members of a local Kiribati community in which they had regular, if not daily physical interaction with others from Kiribati. Many worked or

attended school with other *I-Kiribati*. This allowed for the development of a stronger transnational community and sense of identity in their new home away from home. Chain migration was a regular practice in New Zealand, which perpetuated the maintenance of culture, language and customs as elders and children interacted on a more consistent basis than those in the United States. This was appreciated greatly by members who were aware of the US migrant experiences.

I think that if people have to leave Kiribati because of climate change, then they should all go to a place or places together. You see we don't lose our ways because we are all together. But if we were to be separated from each other like in the USA, our ways would die within the first generation (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

Survey results showed that the majority agreed that their housing, employment and resulting financial situations became better than those which they had experienced in Kiribati. However, better circumstances were not as immediate as many thought they would be upon arrival; every migrant spoke of struggles they faced in getting to where they were at the time of research.

Unlike the U.S. bound migrants, the challenges New Zealand migrants faced were much greater and more complicated. Not having a New Zealand spouse to rely on made adjusting to New Zealand ways much more complicated and challenging. Early migrants faced similar issues of isolation and loneliness that U.S. migrants faced. This was further enhanced by an inability to communicate effectively when they first arrived. Work was the number one priority for migrants. For many, a job offer was required before they were able to migrate under migrant schemes in place. This was not only an immigration requirement; it was also a beginning step in economic upward mobility.

The most frequently stated reason for coming to New Zealand was children. Participants felt that not only would their children receive a better education in New Zealand, but because of

this education they would have better opportunities later in life. Kiribati in New Zealand rarely married non-I-Kiribati people. This reinforced the importance and existence of a closed Kiribati community. For some, this was a positive aspect of the community. For others, it was seen as negatively impacting their ability to meet others and get ahead in school and/or work. Personal contributions of time and money were required for community involvement. This made members feel overextended and torn between supporting their own families or the larger community. As difficult as this was for members, all recognized its importance as it helped to maintain language, cultural practices and a sense of home away from home.

Work was a vital component of everyone's life. All community members who were able to work did. They were proud to stand on their own, independent of government welfare programs. The benefits programs were viewed with tempered appreciation as all recognized its potential for abuse by other members of society. Although returning home was something all migrants longed for, few had done it. Those who did had an eye opening experience. Returning revealed much about themselves and how they had changed living in New Zealand.

Migrant views on climate change varied. For those who believed climate change was real and impacting Kiribati, concern for family prompted migrants to prepare and plan for hosting family members. While most worked agricultural fields in preparation, some sought better opportunities through higher education. Degrees would enable eligibility for more steady and constant employment which would allow them to support extended family members' migration applications. Youth enrolled in secondary schools were also beginning to focus on further education as opposed to the agricultural jobs that many parents worked in.

The community is an established point of contact for all new migrants. Members were actively reaching out to friends and family thinking about migrating to New Zealand. Unlike the

migrants of the past; current and future migrants have an overwhelming amount of support in Morningside, waiting to help with their adjustments to a new life in New Zealand.

4.4 AUSTRALIA

In 2005 I received an unexpected message from an Australian which read:

Hi, I was wondering if you knew anything about a country called Kiribati? If you do could you please contact me?

–Margie–

Having just returned from a trip to Kiribati, I immediately responded to Margie’s message. Margie’s initial messages were few and far between. She inquired about the basics of Kiribati; its location, language, temperature, and what it was like. Over years of contact I learned that Margie was an *I-Kiribati* who had never “been.” She was adopted at birth by an American, Jane, who resided in Australia. The ongoing discussions intensified when her adopted Kiribati sister joined the conversations. Kristen was also adopted by Jane a few years after Margie’s adoption. As both were now in their mid-20s, curiosity as to who they were and where they came from seemed to be at a peak.

When I found out that I would be conducting dissertation research in New Zealand, we made plans to meet. The Kiribati independence celebrations seemed like the best time and place to meet since they were being held close the country’s major international airport. The community committed to take Kristen and Margie in and teach them as much as they could about Kiribati after the celebrations ended.

The trip was an eye opening experience for both of them. They had never seen so many people who looked like them before. They had never heard the *I-Kiribati* language spoken in such fluency and they never imagined they would learn and perform a *mwaie*.

We chose to go to New Zealand for the 2010 independence celebrations because we wanted to experience an independence celebration. We didn't know their expectations of us because we are so used to the western culture. It was also kind of shocking because everyone spoke in Kiribati (AInterview103, 2010).



Figure 10: Observing the 2010 NZ Independence

Unlike more individualistic societies where individuals will spend nights in hotel rooms, *I-Kiribati* are more comfortable in communal living, especially when they are far from home. Instead of renting multiple hotel rooms, the community rented a *marae* for the two days of celebration. They ate, slept and practiced together in this communal setting. The experience was different and unnerving for both. Kristen remarks:

One experience I had was the marae, I mean sleeping in the marae. I thought, AH I'm not gonna get any sleep. It's gonna be so loud. Babies in there, men snoring and everyone were in there. But it was different. I felt safe. I was like wow this is really cool and I fell asleep in like ten minutes. That was an amazing feeling and even when I woke up I felt safe. And I've never been in that kind of environment. It was amazing, I felt so safe (AInterview103, 2010).

They spent the rest of the week in Morningside with the community. They learned basic Kiribati words, the Kiribati alphabet, Kiribati dance and talked to several community members about life in Kiribati. Community members inquired about their lives in Australia.



Figure 11: Impromptu Kiribati language lesson

Many couldn't get over the fact that these girls were Kiribati, looked Kiribati but were not *I-Kiribati*, as they knew *I-Kiribati* to be. One community member commented, *they are very I-Matang, but nice I-Matang* (NInterview.10.13., 2010). This caused as much questioning by the community as they of the community.

Kristen had a strong musical talent which no one else in her adopted family has. This has caused great confusion and wonder as to where this talent comes from. She has written and performed several songs detailing the struggle she feels as an adopted *I-Kiribati*. As a way to thank the community for their kindness and support, she performed several songs one afternoon. One song she performed was entitled Two Worlds.

I wrote that song when I was about eighteen. One verse goes 'No need to feel so lonely, I may feel torn between two worlds but one is where my heart is and the other my soul' and for a long time I had this battle within myself to figuring it out whether my soul was in Australia or my heart was in Australia. Whether my heart was in Kiribati or my soul in Kiribati. Performing that song in front of the community made me realize that my heart is with Australia but my soul is with Kiribati. I really want to go back to Kiribati and just see Kiribati. And that was what I got from going to New Zealand and meeting the Kiribati people, your family (AInterview103, 2010)!

On their final night, Kristen and Margie performed a dance which the community taught to them. Performing the dance with the community behind them cemented a relationship that grew over their short time in New Zealand. After their performance one community elder stood up to address the two girls.

We appreciate that you have chosen to stay with our community while you are in New Zealand. We have gotten to know you and you have gotten to know us. Even though you are Australian... in our eyes you are *I-Kiribati* first. And to have this desire to learn about your own selves sets an example for our youth who may want to forget in New Zealand. We thank you for having the courage to come here and teach them by your example. You show our youth that our culture is valuable. You have learned dance, some words and some manners of *I-Kiribati* people. The time was short but the memories will last. We hope you send our regards to your mother in Australia when you see her... and maybe one day, to your families in Kiribati. We are not far from Australia and our doors are open to you in the future if you

wish to return. We close by wishing you the blessings of Kiribati, Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao Te Tabomoa (Auntte, 2010).

When his speech was complete, Kristen and Margie were presented with women's clothing. They were given a *tibuta* and a *bei* to take with them back to Australia, as a way to symbolically reflect the I-Kiribati in them.

When we came back from New Zealand, we told our mum everything about the community we stayed with. How they really let us in and really opened their arms. It always felt like they were proud of us for being Kiribati, but more so for being there with them. Everyone told me to say hello to mum when we got back (AInterview103, 2010).

Three months later I made my way to Australia to see what their life in Australia was like. In many ways, it was similar to those of the US migrants: secluded. It was clear that their lives revolve around a 'known' and an 'unknown' world.

Adoptions in Kiribati function to strengthen ties between adoptive and adopted individuals. The most common adoptions in Kiribati are those between extended family members. Less commonly seen are those adoptions which occur between unrelated families as in the cases of Margie and Kristen. These kinds of adoptions have occurred in cases where *I-Kiribati* have taken residence overseas for employment in work camps (Teraku, 1985).

Adoptions in Kiribati serve to unite rather than divide families. This is fostered by feelings of love, that is, love to live together, to share things and to help one another. It creates new bonds and strengthens ties, extending the feeling of love from one kinship group to another (Talu, 1979).

In these settings, fictive kinship relationships develop in place of biological ones. In these circumstances, the exchange of children serves to bring closer together unrelated couples who have become close acquainted to one another (Talu, 1979). Adoptions typically take place when one of the couples is scheduled to return home after completing a labor contract. The adopted child is then taken to the home island of his or her new parents who will raise them as their own

child. They are responsible for the individual's education and life. The adopted child is free to visit their biological family when they return; however, after visiting them the child would return to their adopted family (Teraku, 1985).

Kristen's path to Tasmania was a lot more complicated than Margie's. Her adoption process took her from Nauru to Papua New Guinea and then to Australia. She seemed to bounce between multiple places and families until the age of five. Kristen states:

Margie and I have always known since we were little that we were adopted. Mum always told us, ever since I was four or five I knew I was adopted (AInterview101, 2010).

Kristen and Margie's seclusion from other *I-Kiribati* led them down very different paths than any other migrants in this study. They have had to define themselves in different social and economic circumstances than those found in migrant enclaves living in New Zealand and in the United States. While born to *I-Kiribati* families, life events brought them to call Australia home.

I never saw myself as being different growing up. Although the majority of kids were quite white, I don't think my friends saw me as different. As I grew older, people would come up to me and ask me where I was from and they tried to guess but they never got it right. I also get 'why are you here? Shouldn't you be in warmer weather?' But I always just say well I don't know because I've grown up here so I don't know anything different (AInterview103, 2010).

New Zealand children were brought up in a Kiribati community and experienced their Kiribati backgrounds on a daily basis. US children were sporadically exposed to their Kiribati backgrounds through weekend visits, various celebrations, and the annual independence festivities. Kristen and Margie waited over two decades to discover their biological past first hand in New Zealand.

4.5 FUTURE MIGRANTS?

Distant voyaging and resettlement have long been associated with the *I-Kiribati* people. Current day Solomon Island and Rabi Island populations project what future migrant *I-Kiribati* populations may face.

I am a migrant from Banaba, when the British took our land from us. We were forced to go to Fiji and that is where I went to school. We bought Rabi, in 1945 for 25,000 dollars. It was a lie by Britain... they told us it was a nice place like here in America so we wanted to move there, but when we arrived it was horrible, it was like the tents and poor land it had a drought and was not suitable for living. It was a lot of problems. We lived in the cave in Banaba, it never dried, but our land in Rabi was horrible (Uinterview.9.15., 2009).

There have been many mixtures of stuff with us, the Solomon/Kiribati the language from home is still the language from home, but the language now in the Solomons the young generation mixes Solomon, pidgin and Kiribati together. Their culture too is mixed. They do the similar thing with celebrating in dancing, singing and eating, but it is not the same as in Kiribati (Uinterview.9.7., 2009).

All interviewed agreed that life was different in their new homes abroad. Each stated that the experiences, for better or worse, had taught them something new about themselves and the larger world. In anticipation of struggles future migrants may face, informants generously offered advice for those who may come in the future. *I-Kiribati* living in the United States faced different circumstances from those living in New Zealand. As a result, some of their stated advice differed, yet the idea of maintaining one's culture remained constant.

If I had the ability to say something to the future generations, I would say to maintain the culture. New migrants should keep telling their kids where they come from, teaching their culture, how to weave, how to dance, the cultural manners (Uinterview.9.3., 2008).

My advice for them is to make use of the opportunity here in America, make sure you get your degree, get a bachelors, masters, doctors. And get a good job, be a nurse, be a professor work hard do something or whatever. You need to do that if you want to live here with your family. It's not an easy life here, it's a hard life here (Uinterview.9.3., 2008).

If I were to say something to people who wanted to come here, I would say to not forget the culture of Kiribati, not to forget where they came from, not to forget their kindness not to forget who they are (UInterview.9.16., 2009).

With the abundance of *I-Kiribati* now living in New Zealand as a result of the PAC and RSE schemes, advice for future migrants was plentiful. Advice on maintaining legal status, money issues, educational opportunities and health care were addressed by all.

I would tell them to work hard in whatever situation they find themselves in because if you don't have money here, it's very different than Kiribati. You can survive in Kiribati but here everything is money. It's not relaxed like the life is in Kiribati (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

It's a very nice life here. If you come, come for your future; come for your children's future, their schooling and their future (NInterview.10.8.2010).

There are a lot of benefit programs here but don't depend on them. Work hard to stand on your own feet. If you get a job, look after it. Don't waste your opportunity. Look after your money, don't waste it, it is your life here (NInterview.10.14.2010).

Don't come here just for work, go to school. Get your degree first. Then work because the bigger your degree the bigger your paycheck and the better your life will be in the end. Hold on to your culture and teach your children, pass down our culture! So they don't forget who they are (NInterview.10.16.2010).

Feeling that a pre-departure course offered to PAC winners in Kiribati would have been beneficial for them, three informants compiled advice that they wish they knew before arriving in New Zealand.

People need to know how to speak English to be here... how to get a job, how to get a house, how to get a bank account (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

They need to know about what is expected at work here and what they should expect from their employers. They should not be crammed up twenty people in one house to work on a farm. They should work hard because when they look for other jobs they will need references and if they don't work hard it will be hard to get good references. They should be aware that what they do, impacts others who will come after them. If a boss knows that Kiribati people work hard, he will hire more (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

They will be earning money, probably more money than they ever earned before and they need to know how to budget money and save money. You don't budget

or save in Kiribati. They need to know how to shop around for better prices at different places or wait for sales. When they move here, they should not be worried about getting everything they need all at once. Over time they can get things. Here people think ahead, not like us who only think about now. If they get it all at once, then they won't have money to live off of (NInterview.10.12., 2010).

5.0 BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

This study explored how different migrant settings and diaspora circumstances contributed to the creation of transnational identities amongst *I-Kiribati* migrants living in various settings. Economics, environment, education, and marriage were the most commonly stated reasons for migration. Migrant destinations and populations varied greatly between research locations due to differing individual and group migration patterns. When possible, *I-Kiribati* preferred to live in close proximity to other *I-Kiribati* migrants.

It is not unusual for Pacific Islanders, as it is for others, to move and settle... where there are already people of their own kind or others whom they know... confidence and security among Pacific Islanders are acquired through membership of a kin group or otherwise (Ravuvu, 1992: 330).

The Kiribati diaspora, shares common characteristics of other diaspora populations, defined by Safrin as a people with a shared: “history of dispersal, myths/memories of the homeland, alienation in the host country, desire for eventual return, ongoing support of the homeland, and a collective identity importantly defined by this relationship” (as cited in Clifford, 1994: 322). Large geographically centered diaspora populations permit the constant flow of people and things between sending and receiving points; which, for Kiribati migrants, encouraged the maintenance of a compromise culture and transnational identity. Additionally, these factors contributed to the confidence, and security of migrants in their new lives overseas.

Scholars who use the diasporic model to study migration emphasize connectedness between the sending region and the various receiving regions and comparison of the experiences of migrating people in various locations (Spikard, 2002: 12).

Due in large part to the limited interactions with other migrants, individuals in the U.S. quickly assimilated to their new environments. For these individuals, reliance on internet contact

and intermittent telephone calls with other Kiribati migrants expedited the assimilation process. Chain migration, most apparent in New Zealand, added a dimension to migration rarely seen in the United States. In addition to lessening the seclusion that early migrants to New Zealand and current migrants to the U.S. faced, chain migration actively transformed the act of migration from one of separation to one of unification.

If it were true that Kiribati would go under, I think my family would go to New Zealand or Australia, because I have family there, not like herein the U.S., its better [there] because there are a lot of I-Kiribati there (UInterview.9.5., 2009).

Due to the scattered migration movements of the *I-Kiribati*, research was not designed around one geographically bounded place. The typical single-sited ethnographic field is predicated on a multi-site construct as local environments are fabricated on external social, ecological and economic constructs. As seen, the local Kiribati environment was increasingly being impacted by global flows of people, information and products. These eventually had impacts on other local environments through the process of migration to New Zealand and U.S. communities.

Inspired by a security studies and cultural survival approach, research situates itself between anthropological inquiry and real world application, as growing concern over climate change pushes the Kiribati government to plan for future population relocation. Characterized as an emergent methodological approach to fieldwork, a multi-sited approach was employed. Inquiry began with an examination of the sending country and progressed to three migrant destinations in Australia, the United States and New Zealand. During the study, virtual destinations were uncovered, in which participants from research and non-research settings involved themselves in. The multi-field site design allowed for the development of a closed comparative study on *I-Kiribati* migration.

Within Kiribati, findings revealed a physical environment threatened by rapidly changing ecological conditions. Government representatives were adamant in their efforts to bring climate change to the forefront of not only the national agenda but also the world's attention. Interviews and surveys conducted in Kiribati produced mixed reaction to climate change. While many participants heard of climate change, belief in its actual presence and/or future consequences lacked. These sentiments were reiterated overseas by several informants.

Fueled largely by global political, economic and scientific opinions which perpetuate ideas that climate change is either, not real or something for only marginal future concern; climate change remains an unresolved social issue in the country, years after its scientific legitimization. Implications from these conflicting perspectives resonated within informants own minds as they remained conflicted over climate change. Research carried out in the summer of 2008 on *Abaiang* Atoll highlights this discord.

If our numbers are correct, insofar as micro atolls play a role in reef growth, the central Pacific atoll nations are in little danger of drowning as their upward growth potential, which is equal to the lateral rate of 2.0 cm/yr, is probably far greater than most global warming experts have predicted.... Even if Tarawa tide table values are correct, the micro atolls should be able to catch-up. Of course, if those who forecast the demise of reefs throughout the oceans because of global warming related to, anthropogenic accumulations of carbon dioxide etc. are correct, the people of these atolls will be in trouble. However, our data do not suggest such catastrophic changes in sea level (Flora, 2009: 9-10).



Figure 12: Taking micro atoll measurements

Scientific evidence which focuses on micro atoll growth in wake of rising sea levels supports climate change denial perspectives.

I don't believe that climate change is real. There are some lands that are now under the water but other lands are coming up in their place (KInterview.13.1, 2013).

What the paper did not account for was the human inactivity on the research field. Located 20 minutes walking distance from the nearest sparsely populated village, human contact with micro atolls under investigation was minimal at most. While these conditions are desirable in atoll development research, they do not represent the full picture of challenges faced by atolls supporting human populations. Significant changes to the natural environment and its ability to support human populations are becoming a stark reality in South Tarawa. Once staunch deniers of climate change are now starting to embrace a new perspective.

The majority of I-Kiribati have no wish to live in another country but mounting evidence suggests that we may soon have little choice in the matter, therefore migration may become the major element of adaptation (Uan, 2013).

Even prominent religious leaders are beginning to lessen their former strongly held climate change denial positions.

My strong belief in God, and understanding of scripture is that there will be no flood. I believe everyone on the islands will be safe, but with the help of others, and it is through God's hands that the others will come (IFAD, 2011).

Though many *I-Kiribati* in Kiribati and abroad are beginning to change their position on climate change, doing so does not come without significant costs. The emotional stress faced in doing so is painstakingly obvious as it is heart wrenching. *I'm sorry, I'm sorry... I can do this... I want to do this...* was frequently heard throughout a 2013 informal discussion with new migrants to the United States as we talked about what they were experiencing back home. The emotional cost of having to think about one's entire known world being rendered uninhabitable and the consequences for friends and relatives remaining in the islands exposed validity to *I-Kiribati* climate change deniers. Outright denying climate change's existence was easier than believing in it and its potential impacts on one's world and one's self. Personalizing disaster through

climate change acceptance has been shown to do two things; cause great pain and cause great anger, hold great potential to inspire activism through in-person, radio, television, film, print and web-based outreach efforts.

Most of the research participants in Kiribati had relatives already living overseas, and some stated that they would go and live with them if climate change rendered Kiribati unfit for human life. The general cause for migration at that point in time however, did not center on unfit living conditions due to climate change. Stated reasons included marriage to foreigners, educational opportunities, an annual migration lottery and work opportunities.

From Kiribati, research progressed to migrants' lives overseas. Objectives included documenting migrant experiences, community functions, and involvement. Those who migrated to the United States did so mostly through marriage. They were more often than not, physically secluded from other *I-Kiribati* migrants and relied on mail, phones or internet to maintain contact with other *I-Kiribati* at home and in the United States. These migrants initially faced severe bouts of homesickness and subsequent loss of language and cultural practice utilization in succeeding generations. While all wanted to maintain the Kiribati culture in themselves and their children, circumstances created significant challenges in doing so.

If I could say anything to the I-Kiribati who will come here, I would say, try to keep your culture, keep your identity. If you are born in Kiribati you know the culture, you know the language, so you have to keep it. It's very important (UInterview.9.19., 2009).

Early New Zealand migrants arrived under temporary work schemes. With the establishment of the PAC in 2001, recent migrants arrived under permanent resident migration allotments. Established migration schemes and policies funneled *I-Kiribati* into New Zealand society annually. The number of I-Kiribati living in New Zealand was much greater than in the United States, allowing these migrants to develop communities and interact with other migrants

on a daily basis. The Morningside community greatly eased the transition which new migrants faced as it provided a sense of belonging and safety to its members. Additionally, the community united migrants and enabled the transmission of language and cultural practices to succeeding generations. While the community provided significant benefits for an otherwise minority migrant population in New Zealand, it did have its share of shortcomings. Some of the most commonly stated problems included burdensome financial and time commitment. These were seen to constrain migrant's progress towards upward mobility in their new homes.

Australian migrants provided a glimpse into what life was like for those who had little to no knowledge of Kiribati. The circumstances under which these individuals migrated were like no other in the study. Their secluded Australian upbringing was unique and sheds light on what future non-Kiribati born individuals may be like if Kiribati were to disappear below the sea.

Classic migration literature suggests that migrants choose to permanently migrate for egocentric reasons, in which native customs, traditions and languages become replaced with migrant destination ways. However, migrants in this study chose to migrate for various reasons. The most frequently stated reasons included marriage, education and/or employment. As we look to the future, it could very well be argued that Kiribati migrants may have less of a choice and more of an obligation to migrate for their own existence.

5.1 COUNTRY CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 Kiribati

Climate change as a primary reason for migration has produced much research (Bates, 2002; Castles, 2002; Frey, 2006; McLeman, 2006; Morrow-Jones, 1991; Perch-Nielsen, 2004;

Wood, 2001) which more often than not examines different global populations experiencing similar environmental changes. In this manner, emphasis focuses less on the human component and more on ecological conditions. Because of this, long-term/long-distance resettlement studies have been passed up for more feasible and localized short-term displacement studies, under the rationale that mass migration of the permanent type does not take place (Morrow et al., 1991; Perch et al., 2008). Kiribati's unique situation has created an extraordinary opportunity to examine this rationale while expanding traditional anthropological methodologies of single-site to multi-site fieldwork.

Surveys conducted in Kiribati highlighted an intense internal migration process which accounted greatly for the overpopulated conditions seen on Tarawa. Individuals who migrated to Tarawa were there for two main reasons: school and/or employment. The scarcity of higher education and employment opportunities within Kiribati prompted the nation to seek assistance from neighboring foreign governments. All but three individuals had relatives or knew of individuals who were living in other countries at the time. The top three migrant destinations mentioned were New Zealand, Fiji and Australia; the United States was a distant sixth place.

Kiribati participants were asked about climate change and possible implications for future migration. There has long been skepticism within the country over scientific evidence that shows a viable threat from climate change. Most of the arguments against global warming in the past heavily revolved around Christian religious beliefs of God's promise to Noah never to flood the Earth again.

Through European missionaries, Pacific Islanders were introduced to a new religious faith with a Christian God that could protect them not only from the ill-doings of their own kind, but also those of the white men (Ravuvu, 1992: 330).

Surveys reflected these engrained religious beliefs as respondent after respondent indicated that Kiribati was not in danger of sinking because of God's promise. Follow-up hypothetical scenarios were presented, asking if the islands did have environmental problems as a result of changing conditions, would participants consider leaving. The majority of respondents did not believe they would.



Figure 13: Abarao Village, S. Tarawa, 2011

I-Kiribati have experienced both the challenges and opportunities that climate change has brought to them. Like the Tuvaluans, Tokelauans, and Marshallese, *I-Kiribati* argue that they are least responsible for what is happening to their islands and have become significantly impacted by the world's collective inaction.

Medical facilities have experienced an uptick in patients arriving for treatment of ailments such as dengue fever, diarrhea induced dehydration, ciguatera poisoning and other complications from vector borne and waterborne pathogens. Inundated lands have diminished agricultural production capabilities and turned livable land into swamps, forcing sharp increases in population densities on small plots of land.

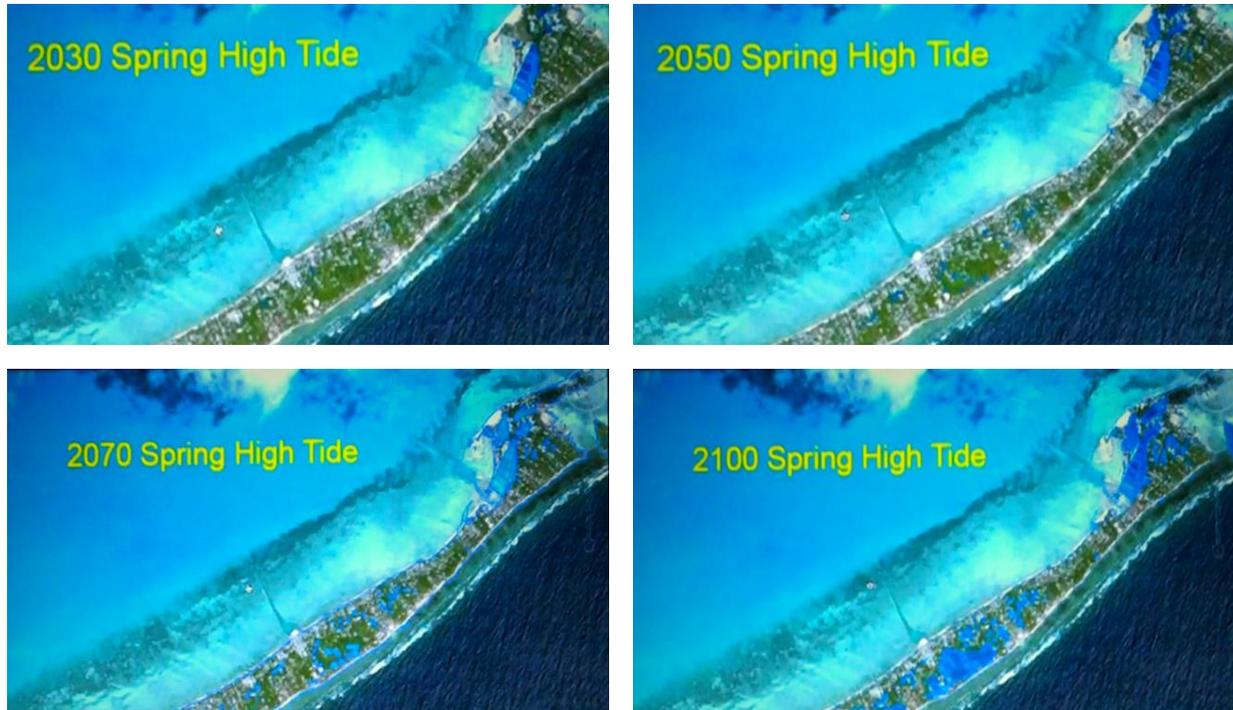


Figure 14: Permanent land loss predictions, Kiribati Adaptation Program

Slide images from a presentation given by the Kiribati Adaptation Programme project significant land loss on South Tarawa. Areas in blue are predicted to be permanently lost by dates shown. *Abarao* Village, pictured above in 2011 is well ahead of the predicted estimates as its land has already become inundated by the sea.

Without a large global recognition and/or support for Kiribati's predicament, adaptation strategies included sea wall construction, village relocation and land reclamation. In most cases, measures to stave off climate change impacts were undertaken by individual families.



Figure 15: Private residence sea wall, 2011

Adding to the complexity of the situation, overpopulation on South Tarawa has forced many to think about utilizing migration as an adaptation strategy.

Migration, I don't even want to think about migration yet. I think the government could be doing a lot more, it's like we are defeated and I don't even think we've started. Migration is a threat if we don't try to adapt, because it's our culture, our lands... everything is going to be lost (Kinterview.8.19, 2008).

In November of 2010, Kiribati held its first ever intergovernmental Tarawa Climate Change Conference (TCCC). Attended by 15 nations, its purpose was to build consensus and support for decisive action on climate change. The conference produced the Ambo Declaration, a non-legally binding agreement between nations promoting actions addressing climate change. The declaration was adopted by 12 of the 15 delegations. Canada, Great Britain and the United States took 'bystander' status and little came about at the COP 16 meeting as a result of the TCCC.

In 2011, Kiribati welcomed the first ever visit from a United Nations Secretary-General. Ban Ki-moon came to see what the front lines of climate change looked like. After his visit he stated that the world had to act immediately "so that our children and grandchildren never have to wonder how we could have been so irresponsible" (UNICEF, 2011: 1).

By 2013, adaptation through migration had become more palatable for once staunch advocates against migration.

The majority of I-Kiribati have no wish to live in another country but mounting evidence suggests that we may soon have little choice in the matter, therefore migration may become the major element of adaptation (Uan, 2013).

5.1.2 USA

Informants came to the United States as individuals. They most often migrated under conditional permanent resident status or as students. At the time of study, there were fewer than 100 known *I-Kiribati* living in the continental United States. These individuals lived great distances from one another and infrequently met in person. If migrants knew of other *I-Kiribati* living in the United States, it was most commonly through their US spouses or family in Kiribati. Fictive kinship relations between migrants were developed in the absence of biological family,

and community groups developed, bringing about a vital sense of collective belonging, safety and identity to migrants.

Individuals within the Pacific islands, many times, are defined by their communal affiliations. It is the WE vs. the I. In other places individualism is paramount, but in Kiribati collectivism trumps individualism because we belong and we know we belong (FInterview.10.1, 2010).

This explanation of communal identity and belonging justifies the idea that there is always a connection to other *I-Kiribati* somehow. In some locations where several *I-Kiribati* resided in the same general area, community groups developed. In locations where no other *I-Kiribati* lived, individuals would join virtual communities through various websites and interactive phone chat lines. It is in these settings that migrants found support, encouragement and help in living a new life in the United States.

As informants ranged in ages, the difficulties they faced spanned a wide spectrum. All could tell similar stories and experiences of initial culture shock and some could address issues of reverse culture shock as they recounted their trips back home. Nearly all informants attested to experiencing a loss in cultural practices. For those with children, this loss was most evidently reflected in them. Several informants noted that they were able to communicate in the Kiribati language with their US spouses who had lived in Kiribati.

Most felt the only time when cultural practices and language were intensely utilized was during the annual independence celebrations. This week long event was the single major event which gathered large numbers of migrants and their families. The celebrations began in 1990, and since then have grown in popularity, producing summertime independence gatherings all over the country due to the wide geographic dispersal of migrants.

Informants felt more comfortable in the U.S. the longer they had lived there. Time seemed to reduce homesickness and increase self-confidence. Many stated that this was because their

lives began to take root in the United States through work, school and children. As new obligations in the United States developed for migrants, returning home became less accessible. This is not to say that desire to return home did not exist. For those who had full time employment or were full time students, the time commitment and financial costs were too great.

Three informants brought their mothers to the United States for short stays. During these times, each saw the benefit in having their mothers live with them. Their children became acquainted with their grandmother who instinctively taught them how to dance the Kiribati *mwaie* way and speak the Kiribati language. While all grandmothers enjoyed living with their children's families, all expressed a desire which each informant held: a strong desire to return home.

My mum liked being here for the kids and for us, but she couldn't do anything and after one month I could tell that she wanted to go back. It was too cold and she couldn't talk to anyone except for us, unless we had other Kiribati people call the house or come over to visit (UInterview.8.1., 2008).

Negotiating identity for US migrants was essential for their lives in the United States. However in comparison to those migrants living in New Zealand, it seemed to be less of a complication and more of a frustration. Most in the United States had never heard of a country called Kiribati and assumed informants to be from Mexico, the Philippines or India. The lack of a broad knowledge of Pacific Island Nations in the United States made it easier for some to assume new identities as Mexican-Americans, most frequently experienced by those living in California and Texas. The general confusion and lack of knowledge on behalf of the US population only served to amplify a sense of *I-Kiribati* pride amongst informants.

Americans carry a bubble around them. We don't have that, for us it's not the bubble that's important. It is the space between. Like all land in Kiribati there is no empty land, There are spirits and we have a lot of respect for that. Now the space in between in our traditional sense of relationships is not an empty space that is meant to be divided. It is meant to be nurtured so that it unites us to each other (FInterview.10.1, 2010).

5.1.3 New Zealand

Migrants to New Zealand most commonly arrived in groups. The first migrants in the Morningside community went on work schemes. Over time, migration opportunities to New Zealand have increased for Kiribati citizens. This has steadily increased the number of Kiribati migrants found in New Zealand today. Informants arrived as whole family units or in work groups through the PAC or RSE schemes. In addition to the PAC and RSE migrant schemes, there were three individuals enrolled at the local university who had arrived on student visas throughout the research period. Their participation in the community was minimal and they did not formally participate in the research. Because of its access to plentiful employment and educational opportunities, Kiribati migrants concentrated in the town of Morningside, which produced a very different diaspora population than that found in the United States.

Where concentrations of large numbers of like-minded migrants with similar life histories exist, island world-views and life styles are widely supported and readily reproduced (Macpherson, 2001:66).

Once in New Zealand, migrants often found themselves living with or in close proximity to other migrants. This allowed for a smoother transition into New Zealand society. These connections with other *I-Kiribati* individuals and families allowed for the maintenance of the Kiribati language and cultural practices abroad. At the time, the Kiribati population in Morningside was larger than the recorded continental United States population. The Morningside community consisted of whole family units which gathered on a daily occurrence.

Annually, all communities gathered for Kiribati Independence celebrations. The celebrations were hosted by different communities in different parts of the country on a rotating basis. The selection of host communities would be decided by the formal KNC (Kiribati National Committee), the governing body over all of the Kiribati communities in New Zealand.

The Morningside community gathered months in advance to prepare for the annual celebrations. These events brought the community together in remembering their cultural identity, language and practices. Gathering for independence not only served the purpose of remembering Kiribati but also passing on Kiribati ways to younger generations.

I think belonging to the community is good because we can speak our own language, I can be who I am and we can eat our own foods...with our hands! We preserve our culture and dances and teach them to the kids. I think it's important to dance; it keeps our traditions alive by gathering everyone together. It is funny because I and so many other people in the community never danced when we were in Kiribati, but now that we are living in New Zealand we all dance. We perform and people pay us to perform at different events, so it is another way we fundraise for the group (NInterview.10.13., 2010).

While having a large Kiribati presence in Morningside was positively viewed by many, some saw it as a negative thing. Prior to 2010, the Morningside community was larger. The original organization split after leadership in the original community faltered.

I think it just got too big and people didn't like that. Both sides were involved in gossiping about the other and people wasted their time being angry (NInterview.10.16., 2010).

Because of excommunication, the Morningside community was not recognized by the KNC until nearly two years after the split. When it was formally recognized, some members acknowledged reinstatement while others joyously celebrated. On an individual level, members are highly dependent on fairly regular interaction with each other. This is reflected in the larger community as communities often sought support from other communities that enabled all to live out new lives in New Zealand.

Each family in the community had an average of 3 children, most were enrolled in either primary or secondary school. There were a few older school age youth who were not enrolled in school. Instead, these individuals were working in either glass or pack houses with other Kiribati migrants. Parents voiced concern over their older children who were now nearing the end of their

secondary schooling. All stated that their children's future was a major reason in choosing to migrate. For many parents, university was not an option, but for their kids it was a possibility. Parents did not want their children working alongside them in pack houses. This was not why they migrated to New Zealand.

The local university reached out to the Morningside youth and brought 13 high school students on campus for a full day of activities. They attended lectures, and tutorials, ate lunch on campus, took a campus tour and met with several administrators, enrollment counselors and students. When asked by a tour guide if they had ever considered going to university, most indicated that had not.

Two months later, the first Morningside youth was accepted into a university preparation course at the university. Since then, seven others have begun their tertiary programs at different schools across New Zealand.

5.1.4 Australia

The Australian case study looked at two individuals who were raised in complete seclusion from contact with their own biological background. Growing up, they were knowledgeable of their Kiribati backgrounds and were encouraged to learn more about it. However, it was not until early adulthood that both decided to learn firsthand about their shared Kiribati backgrounds. Interest in Kiribati grew from a young age when the girls recognized they did not look like the rest of their classmates. They had dark hair, dark skin and were living in a very white community. Happy though they were, their curiosity eventually got the best of them.

In 2005, that's when I got on the internet and began looking up stuff on Kiribati. I was interested in the history of it all and the people, so I started because I wanted to find out more (AInterview103, 2010).

In 2010 they ventured to New Zealand to attend the Kiribati Independence celebrations. For one week, they lived with the Morningside community. During their stay, they experienced many new things and difficulties as they returned to their biological roots. Communal living, language, and food reflected migrants' difficulties with independent living, language and money. As with the migrant populations, they became more comfortable with the changes over time and showed appreciation for the community's support. While both shared differences in opinion as to whether or not further experiences would happen, both admitted that they had learned a lot about themselves and Kiribati from the trip. These individuals were first generation migrants. However, without the knowledge of or personal connections to other *I-Kiribati*, they were essentially viewed as *I-Matang*s living in *I-Kiribati* bodies.

The significance of these individual cases is their potential to foretell future generational problems of the *I-Kiribati*. Unlike the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu and Tokelau, Kiribati does not have any formal associations with larger nations that would take in its entire population if climate change continues to make lands uninhabitable. It is possible that future generations will not know of Kiribati because it will lose its sovereignty due to these destructive environmental forces.

5.2 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

We are moving from subsistence to a cash economy and it is inevitable, it compels people to move towards individualism over communalism. The thing is, it may seem to move us there, but our obligations to each other remain (FInterview.10.1, 2010).

While both the United States and New Zealand migrant populations were dealing with similar adjustments to new lives in new lands, it was clear that both populations experienced very different outcomes as a result of the social and physical environments in which they found

themselves. Migrants in the U.S. were geographically secluded from other migrants, while those in New Zealand were in close proximity to others. Those who migrated to the U.S. came as individuals while New Zealand migrants, more often than not, migrated in work or family groups.

In New Zealand, the presence of several *I-Kiribati* families in a small geographic area enabled daily interaction, and encouraged the maintenance of customs and language. Here, migrants formally developed a community which supported and maintained several aspects of a quasi-Kiribati lifestyle. The community provided moral, physical and in some cases, financial support for members. US migrants did not have such a community and voiced tempered desire to have a community organization as in New Zealand. This was tempered by the fact that many felt that if there were too many *I-Kiribati* in one area, there would be too many problems, as seen in the Morningside case. Morningside community members voiced significant concerns over the financial and time commitment requirements associated with the community. Despite these hardships, regular contact with other migrants was seen as overwhelmingly beneficial for its members.

We miss our islands, but that's where the community comes in, and that is what wears us out with the time and money and then were back to the beginning again. We don't grow up, eh, we try to grow up but the community brings us down and we just try to serve the community and we, oh... come back again and again aweeee (NInterview.10.1., 2010).

U.S. migrants began their new lives as individuals, often separated by great distances from other *I-Kiribati*. These migrants intentionally planned visits to other migrants' houses which required significant preparation, travel and time. These circumstances made gatherings notable and seemingly more appreciated than the casual everyday Morningside functions.

No, you know, in many ways I think we are more I-Kiribati [here] because we work so hard to make things like food and these gatherings to be like home. That's stuff you don't really appreciate [there], because it's just there and you take it for granted (Interview K.A., 2008).

Additionally, physical seclusion from other *I-Kiribati* was difficult for US migrants. These individuals were accustomed to having support from large extended family networks. Migrants referred to these networks as the Kiribati ‘welfare’ system.

In their own way, New Zealanders are safe because of the welfare system. In Kiribati, the welfare system is your family. But here it’s very different. To live here, when we first come we must begin with the welfare system. I-Kiribati want to be here but not at the welfare counter. They see this as a *bubutii* and they are too shy to ask for such a thing. I think the I-Kiribati whenever they can help, they will help their own kind. To depend on the welfare system is the last thing we would do (NInterview.10.8., 2010).

Unlike the US population, New Zealand migrants were very much aware of the national welfare system. Though aware of the welfare system, few utilized the resource, preferring instead to work for their income. Knowledge of the welfare system in the United States was low and no informant reported utilization. Living in close proximity to other *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand allowed for continued communal support through large migrant networks, which US migrants longed for.

In Kiribati there are a lot of people to watch your kid... share food... and help you out. But here? No, it’s hard (UInterview.9.5., 2009).

Constant use of the English language was a major difficulty that all migrants initially faced. However, difficulties with the English language persisted longer for the New Zealand migrants. Several who had difficulty reasoned that the community was partly to blame.

I wish my English would get better but it doesn’t because I always am with I-Kiribati who don’t want to speak English to other I-Kiribati. I think that is a bad thing. Don’t get me wrong, I am happy to be around other I-Kiribati but I wish I was alone too so I could be forced to speak English (NInterview.10.11., 2010).

All migrants stated that work, time and money had become important parts of their lives now. To some this was a good change, as it encouraged them not to be lazy. Others saw it as a

negative part of their new lives, since it caused great stress. All agreed that this new focus on time, work and money greatly changed their lives.

Kiribati is very different than here. The life here is very hard because the life here is only the money. You need a job to survive but in Kiribati you can survive by just living off the land and growing or catching your own food. You don't need the money. But here you need the money to survive (NInterview.10.9., 2010).

Annual Independence celebrations were important to both US and New Zealand migrant populations. The celebrations were seen as a time to remember their country and their shared culture. It was a time when migrants could reunite with other *I-Kiribati*. New Zealand celebrations were much larger than the US celebrations due to migrant population size. Additionally, the fact that New Zealand is much smaller than the United States, allows more individuals to travel and participate in one large event. The United States migrant populations conduct several regional Independence celebrations to accommodate the widely dispersed migrant population.

It's nice to get together because you get to meet other I-Kiribati at these functions and you remember where you came from. There are the happy stories people share, the food, the dancing. It's funny because I never did Kiribati dance in Kiribati but I came to America and now I dance (UInterview.9.18., 2009).

In the United States, more often than not, individuals gathered in technologically enabled virtual settings. Communities held monthly or bi-weekly meetings through telephone chat lines, Skype calls or Google video chat rooms. Less formally structured communication took place in Facebook groups such as 'Kiribati living in Australia and around the world,' 'I-Kiribati pride,' and 'Kiribati Morningside Youth' or on the *Kiribati Online Community* website. While communication outlets were viewed positively, the single user application designs further alienated US born children and spouses from consistent involvement with the virtual community who do not speak, read or write in the Kiribati language. This disconnect was not seen in the

New Zealand community, where physical involvement by all family members was unconsciously incorporated by the physical environment alone. A physical migrant community required the entire family's involvement.

Significant differences existed between succeeding generations. *I-Kiricans* who were, more often than not, born in the United States and of mixed backgrounds had little knowledge of the language, customs, and mannerisms of Kiribati. *I-Kiribati* parents had mixed feelings about their children's inability to identify with their parents' language and their own background.

I think that the kids are bad in the Kiribati language. They only speak English. Maybe they don't appreciate it now, but at least they know its part of their parent's background. I think the future generations may not. I don't know if it will disappear but I hope not (UInterview.9.10., 2009).

Some felt sorry that they could not speak the language or know how to dance, while others felt that these things were not needed in the states. All recognized that their own contact with other *I-Kiribati* families was minimal, and in turn their children's' contact with other children like them as well.

A large portion of the children in New Zealand were born in Kiribati and had the ability to speak the Kiribati language, and dance the Kiribati *mwaie* but had trouble living the Kiribati way in their new country. Difficulties were most prominently seen in teenage females who were encouraged to be treated as equals in school, yet faced contradictory practices at home.

I would always compare myself with my older brother and get mad because they were less strict on him. 'Why can he do this and I can't' I would ask. They would always say 'because you are a girl' and I would get all mad. That's sexist aye? (NInterview.10.15., 2010).

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

I think that science is obviously a really powerful tool and very necessary but for climate change, what we really need, what the bottleneck is, is putting a human face on it. Understanding it from a human perspective, that's what people ultimately respond to. People don't care about facts about nature, scientists care a lot but people really don't and this is very necessary for us to persuade the world that climate change is important because I don't think that people are really listening to the scientists and I don't think we have clout to actually carry the message forward (Hall, 2012).

In December of 2011, the University of California in Los Angeles held a conference entitled *the Science and Art in a Climate of Change: A Dialogue of Nations*. Participants from Tuvalu, Kiribati and Tokelau participated in the conference. Following the conference, *Te Waa Mai Kiribati* dance troupe performed at 14 venues across the United States, raising awareness of climate change and its impacts on their people. Its goal was in essence, to place a human face on climate change for US audiences.

Natural scientists have adequate tools at their disposal to describe the anticipated physical impacts of warming with some precision, and have done so in the series of IPCC reports and elsewhere. These reports, however, do not address the impacts on *human* systems. They are restricted to so many hectares of agricultural land lost, temperature increases and desiccation in this or that region, disappearing water supplies, vegetation change, decreases in biodiversity, loss of fish stocks, and so on. This is climate change without a human face (Finan, 2009: 175).

Anthropology provides a unique lens to examine the nature of adaptation, vulnerability, and resilience of populations impacted by climate change. This research brings forth the stories of those populations most heavily impacted by climate change today.

Pedagogically, this research offers relevant additions to the disciplines of anthropology, environmental studies and the migration literature through descriptive, methodological, theoretical and practical contributions. It examines contemporary Kiribati migration and transnational connections between Kiribati and migrant destinations. Human migration as a result

of modern day climate change is rarely covered in today's literature, and while academics recognize the fact that the science of climate change may not be enough to impel the wider population into action, a humanistic perspective may.

A United Nations report published in November of 2013 underscores the vital contribution of the social sciences to human survival in the face of climate change. It stresses that global warming is more about people than carbon emissions and that human behavior must be at the heart of tackling the challenges brought forth by climate change.

Global environmental change impacts everything for everyone on this planet... social scientists need to collaborate more effectively with colleagues from the natural, human and engineering sciences to deliver knowledge that can help address the most pressing problems and sustainability challenges... and they need to do so in close collaboration with decision-makers, practitioners and the other users of their research (Amelan, 2013: 1).

Pacific Island scholars recognize that there is a much smaller amount of work produced on Micronesian societies than larger Polynesian societies. Combined, the distribution of attention and circumstances reflect several factors: the relative sizes of the various island populations, the research interests of scholars, and geo-political and economic forces as well as the priorities of research funding agencies. Micronesia in general and Kiribati specifically, is largely neglected in scholarship, leaving large descriptive gaps to which this study contributes.

This multi-sited examination of Kiribati migration permits a controlled comparative study. Theoretically, this study applies the transnational migration model. It examines factors related to transnational identity formation and presence within two migrant populations to better understand why differences in population outcomes occur. Practical applications of this study address specific calls for assisting *I-Kiribati* prepare for and adjust to new environments.

Resettlement plans have already begun to be implemented as families have migrated to New Zealand and individuals to Australia on various migration and education schemes. In a 2008

interview President Tong stated, “Hopefully, our people will spread out so that when the time comes they will assist with the integration of others into their communities, and also make it easier on the host country” (Powell, 2008: 1).

In a 2012 Australian Broadcasting Company interview, President Tong stated that his government was considering all options as it has become clear that his people would need to relocate to a different country in the future.

There haven't been a great number of offers coming forward but I'm very happy to say that a number of Pacific countries have come forward. East Timor has made a concrete offer and we've yet to discuss that in more detail (Tong, East Timor May Take Climate Refugees, 2012).

As the nation actively pursues relocation options, the applicability of this research is painfully obvious. Whether national exodus occurs quickly in mass or slowly through individual migration, this research sheds light on those who have already left and their experiences abroad. Researches practical application lies directly in informing two parties. First, leaders of the nation of Kiribati, as they wrestle with the issues of survival being pressed upon them in light of climate change; and second, the global population as Kiribati is a clear warning from the frontlines of climate change, they are our canary in the climate change coal mine.

5.3.1 The President's Climate Change Plan

It may seem counterintuitive that a president's focus would be on evacuating his country, yet that is what has occupied President Anote Tong's mind for several years. In the face of economic growth which every nation seeks, the country of Kiribati pays the environment price.

We are confronted with a number of countries wanting to achieve more economic growth than they already have. They say they should not be tied down by restrictions. To me it is insulting because this is not about their economic growth; it's about the lives of our people (KInterview.8.3, 2008).

Little has been done to help the people of Kiribati and other nations significantly impacted by climate change. Migrant schemes for work, education and permanent residency have been made available to Kiribati citizens within Kiribati. Work schemes take individuals to New Zealand and Fiji. Scholarships bring students to Taiwan, Fiji, Cuba, New Zealand, Australia and the United States. The Pacific Access Category migrant scheme permanently relocates entire families to New Zealand. While these initiatives help, by taking people away from the islands, the question remains as to what will happen to those left behind. This has led to an ‘all options on the table’ approach for the national government. President Aote Tong states,

The last time I saw the [floating manmade island] models, I was like 'wow it's like science fiction, almost like something in space. So modern, I don't know if our people could live on it. But what would you do for your grandchildren? If you're faced with the option of being submerged, with your family, would you jump on an oil rig like that? I think the answer is 'yes'. We are running out of options, so we are considering all of them (Marks, 2011).

Under the UN Refugee convention, environmental refugees are not recognized as a legitimate category. This is not to say that individuals have not tried migrating as climate change refugees. The Kiribati government has opposed its citizens being labeled as climate change refugees as many feel the label indicates a sense of helplessness.

We do not want to be environmental refugees; we want to train our people to fill the labor gaps within countries that need people... If we must leave, we don't want to go as refugees (KInterview.8.3, 2008).

As evidenced by the low utilization of state welfare systems, communal identity and self-cultivated migrant support systems; there is sense of dignity and pride that each *I-Kiribati* carries with them. It is not surprising that the thought of becoming a ‘refugee’ holds such a negative connotation. These migrants are not helpless. They are proud, hardworking individuals who seek to better their lives, their families’ lives, and fellow migrants’ lives. Because of the strong

connections between the *I-Kiribati*, diaspora populations are being called into action by government leaders, for the welfare of its people.

Diaspora communities should be prepared to take family members in. It is their duty to live a little harder so that they their relatives and others can live. But diaspora families shouldn't worry because the plan is to create skilled workers and send migrants over as assets instead of economic drains (KInterview.8.3, 2008).

Kiribati's future is in question. A sovereign nation does not exist without a physically populated territory. This leaves many to wonder, what happens if the islands can no longer sustain human habitation? Where will the people go? How will future generations maintain their *I-Kiribatiness*? Could small-scale chain migration work or would climate refugee status enactment be the only answer to growing national concerns?

5.4 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

There has long been and continues to be debate over the existence of climate change. Initial discussion on global warming in Kiribati began in the 1980s, long before much of the world even thought about the implications of a warming planet. Prolonged global skepticism influenced lasting doubt and reservation in Kiribati as local environmental deterioration persisted. While those in Kiribati did notice some changes to their natural environment few, for various reasons, directly attributed these events to climate change. *I-Kiribati* living overseas did not migrated primarily because of environmental circumstances at home. The three migrant settings examined revealed how migration patterns influence diaspora outcomes and cultural preservation overseas.

Research suggests that those uprooted will engage in a process of reinvention which will be intimately tied to social bonds and relationships with other *I-Kiribati* in their new settings

abroad. It can be predicted from observations that modern day remittance economies will become less important as focus turns away from supporting relatives back home to supporting lives in new countries.

It is possible that supporting new migrants would cause similar issues of resource depletion and overcrowding seen in Kiribati's urban centers. Crowded households and limited shared resources could exaggerate the multiple hardships migrants already face today. Single family houses could easily become occupied by 10 or more family members as chain migration takes hold. Kiribati's welfare system, *te utu*, family, will become more important than ever in these situations.

While the nation of Kiribati is planning for future national relocation, it is understood that nations would be reluctant to take in thousands of migrants, even if they were well educated and trained to contribute to a new national economy. With few options, migrants are leaving Kiribati on work schemes and bringing relatives over through chain migration processes. Many recognized that this strategy was not a viable solution if a potential climate change catastrophe were to occur.

Based on somewhat similar studies of forced migration on Pacific Islanders (Kiste, 1974; Barker, 2004), Kiribati migrants will face numerous challenges. Like the Bikinians who left their islands as a result of nuclear detonations by the United States Government (Barker, 2004), *I-Kiribati* will, if not already, hold strong resentment and a sense of injustice as they (currently) cannot seek remunerations from an undefined population to remedy the situation. As Kiribati's growing problems stem from a much more systemic and omnipresent push for global economic growth. The world has profited at their expense, contributing to significant damages of their

home lands through atmospheric changes in weather patterns and higher tides which have resulted in population displacement and irreversible ecological losses.

On July 8, 2013, Fiji's Acting Prime Minister announced that a 6,000 acre estate purchase had been signed by the nation of Kiribati for agricultural purposes only (Deo, 2013). Natoavatu Estate measures 5,451 acres or 15 times bigger than *Betio*, the commercial heart and most populated area of Kiribati (KAP III, 2013). Although food production is the stated purpose of this purchase, it is plausible that temporary worker relocation may lead to permanent human resettlement in the near future.

When these communities leave their islands, they will continue to rely greatly on each other in order to survive in their new lands. Eventually host society cultures will take root in New Zealand born, U.S. born or even Australian born *I-Kiribati* one day.

Each migrant remained tied to their Kiribati home and maintained that human connection in various ways through space and time. Central to this connection were the virtual and physical migrant communities. For those involved, these communities aided in the production of a transnational identity and maintained a Kiribati compromise culture overseas. Daily contact with other *I-Kiribati* through dance practices, fundraising activities and cultural performances emphasized the importance of the Kiribati culture, language and created opportunities for utilization. Virtual communities were more often relied on for Kiribati interaction in the United States. Virtual platforms centered on individual usage which limited the larger family unit to take part in Kiribati interactions. More often than not, the single users were migrants themselves who communicated only in the Kiribati language; further alienating children and spouses who could not speak Kiribati. Morningside migrants utilized virtual technologies to connect with family on

an individual basis, while maintaining daily contact with other *I-Kiribati* through a physical community.

5.4.1 From Assimilation to Assimilations

For *I-Kiribati*, migration, emerging out of global social and environmental inequality, reinforces, rather than conflicts with, the social hierarchy they find themselves in as second class migrant permanent residents and/or citizens. Finding themselves on the lower rung of the economic ladder in new worlds, many Pacific Islanders participate in remittance economies with home islands. In the case of Tonga, the reason most commonly given for emigration by both household members remaining in Tonga and individuals who immigrated to Sydney was motivated by the desire to “help the family” (Cowling, 2002:106).

Pacific nations are often considered MIRAB economies, with remittances often providing over half of the nations’ gross domestic product. Officially, 9.9% of Kiribati’s gross domestic product in 2006 consisted of remittances (Ratha, 2008). For the remitter, participation in a remittance economy socially ties an individual to his or her home island and acts as an investment for his or her eventual return while upholding kinship obligations. For the family, maintaining connections with overseas relatives ensures socio-economic well-being and influence in community affairs.

International migration has thus become a substitute for sustainable development rather than a short-term support for increasing the effectiveness of development efforts (Connell, 1987: 375-404).

Matters of ethnic, cultural and individual identities for Pacific Islands migrants to New Zealand have received much greater attention than migrants to the United States primarily because they are much more visible in New Zealand (Cook, 2001), whereas Pacific Islander immigrants comprised only about 1.5% of the United States’ 275 million people (Marshall, 2004).

In previous studied diaspora communities (Pau'u, 1994; Small, 1997; Spickard, 2002; Connell, 2004; Marshall, 2004), social and environmental changes embodied within individuals and material culture move towards a compromise culture.

In compromise culture, traditions are not “lost” to Westernization or commoditization; rather traditions are transformed by the new social conditions in which they exist (Small, 1997:36).

Cultural change, in this manner leads us to believe that no Island is an Island in itself (Marshall, 2004). Place, space and identity are inextricably tied to a point of origin which pacific people, either physically or mentally, are always in the process of returning.

In the opening essay of his edited volume *Pacific Diaspora: Island Peoples in the United States and across the Pacific*, Paul Spickard introduces three models of migration. These include the Immigrant Assimilation and the Panethnicity models which pose migration as a uni-directional flow, from point A to point B. Classic examples of this model include early migrations to the United States where European migrants traveled for months, escaping poor living conditions to find wealth and happiness in their new settings.

This model not only emphasizes not just first-generation enthusiasm for the United States, but also successive generations obliterating their ancestral identities and taking on an undifferentiated American identity (Spickard, 2002:10).

The alternative to the assimilation model is the transnational or Diaspora model, which views migration as a cyclical process. As defined by Vertovec (1997), transnationalism broadly refers to the multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states. Hence, transnational migration studies emphasize the connectedness between the sending region and the various receiving regions and comparison of the experiences of migrating people in various locations: *I-Kiribati* in Kiribati, New Zealand, Fiji and the United States (Spickard, 2002). Both models allow people to transcend borders with today's internet

technologies and cheaper travel costs, more individuals choose to participate in the second model of migration.

I-Kiribati, and more generally, Pacific Islanders' concept of family, responsibility and reciprocity extend far beyond those which are found in Western settings. An examination of gift exchange in Polynesia by Marcel Mauss (1924) shows that acts of gift giving and gift receiving are tantamount to acts of peace and war. Dependent upon how one gives, accepts or refuses a gift social relationships are maintained, enhanced, diminished or severed. Similarly, the contemporary Kiribati practice of *bubuti* can confer or tarnish relationships. Traditionally these acts of gift exchange were only exercised within the family. Great shame and social pressure by relatives powerfully forced the person to fulfill the *bubuti* (Tungavalu, 1975). Today, the intensity of the *bubuti* is measured by the relationships in which it is expressed. Research on *I-Kiribati* migrants has shown that familial obligations remain and, in instances, intensify with separation. Rather than being expressed solely through local means of exchange, transnational connections provide remittances for those left behind, as well as create opportunities for chain migration and further economic upward mobility.

Chain migration ensures that residential concentrations form within residential and occupational concentrations. Diaspora populations emerge within in workplaces in particular industries, making migrant communities both durable and visible (Macpherson, 1999). The President of Kiribati is relying on the cultural preservation of the *bubuti* and other culturally bounded responsibilities for future chain migration out of Kiribati.

In response to the possibility of asylum seekers through climate refugee status, he states: "I hesitate to call our people refugees: we would train them, and they would become people who would contribute to whatever country they choose to live in with meaningful lives" (Blair & Beck,

2008:2), further emphasizing the durability and visibility of emerging *I-Kiribati* diaspora communities.

This familial and *I-Kiribati* identity influence, in combination with technological advances over the past several years has enabled a new migration pattern to develop among the *I-Kiribati*. Aided by social networking websites such as MSN, Bebo, Hi5, KOC, Facebook, Tagged and MySpace, a virtual location has developed which enables great and frequent contact between *I-Kiribati* “expats,” transforming all end points of migration into one virtual locale. Aside from sharing pictures, videos, stories and news through these social networking sites, programs such as MSN Messenger, Skype, and Google Chat enabled the ability to talk and hold video calls between nations allowing *I-Kiribati* from Germany to contact other *I-Kiribati* in the United States, Taiwan, Fiji or any other location.

On August 22, 2006, Kiribati’s national telecom service, TSKL, launched a new broadband wireless service in the main island of Tarawa, aptly named The Coconut Wireless. With virtual connections to Kiribati, the larger global community was able to connect directly with families and friends back home on a daily basis, many for the first time. I argue that these technological advances have created new opportunities for communication, exchange and migration between points A, B and C in a virtual community. The freedom to instantly pass through borders has had many implications on all participants. Re-connecting with relatives and friends challenges the assimilation and the traditional transnational models of migration since virtual participants return not only to their origins on a daily basis, but also to other diaspora loci where they have never been physically present.

In 2000 an *I-Kiribati* citizen and her Swiss husband moved to his native country after their wedding. In the summer of 2008, I found this couple living in central New Zealand. They had

migrated not just for opportunity, as there was plenty in their previous residence, but for community. The *I-Kiribati* population in Switzerland is much smaller than those found in the United States, New Zealand and Australia. In 2008, there were 186 *I-Kiribati* living in the United States. There were a total of six *I-Kiribati* living in Switzerland. The wife’s desire to be closer to a larger *I-Kiribati* community and the husband’s willingness to migrate represents a pattern that I believe will continue to grow as more *I-Kiribati* begin to leave their island homes for higher ground and greater opportunities in various nations. Their desire to remain connected with families will encourage further migration to other migrant destination nations as more leave Kiribati in the future.

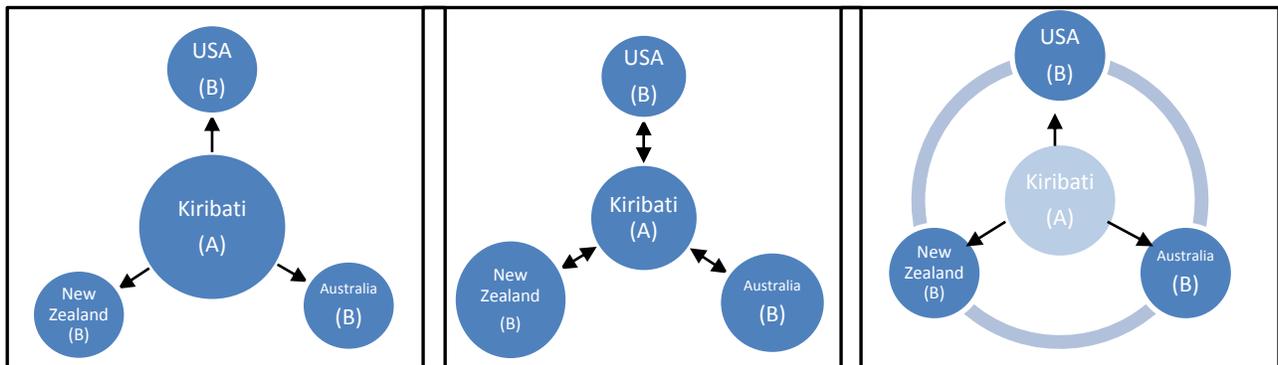


Figure 16: Assimilation Model

Transnational Model

Assimilations Model

As Kiribati has no set plan for climate change migration, citizens today are taking advantage of several different migration schemes, ultimately placing single families in a wide variety of countries. Internet technologies allow for instant visual virtual communication between dispersed users. Communication platforms allow both, one-on-one and multiple user access. Individual family members living in Australia, New Zealand, Kiribati and the United States are able to reunite with instant virtual video communication. In many instances, these communication outlets prompt the sending of laptops, netbooks, and I-Pads in place of cash and clothing in order to strengthen and maintain contact between home and migrant populations in a

new virtual space. Its utilization would only increase as deteriorating environmental conditions further jeopardize Kiribati's physical place.

The nation's future is unknown. A worst case, and most likely, scenario would negate the existence of a habitable homeland for the *I-Kiribati* people. As all Pacific peoples, *I-Kiribati* are voyagers with striking abilities to travel and resettle in foreign lands. However there remains the question of national sovereignty if all are forced to leave the country or stay through its demise, as many informants in Kiribati claimed they would. If migrants were to move to other countries as research has explored, could they then still be considered *I-Kiribati* if Kiribati failed to exist?

Is it possible to conceptualize a global community that embodies the transnational identity without a physical homeland center. Would transnational identity fail to exist for future generations of migrant populations at a time when there would no longer be a nation? Can the cultural features be maintained on a level at that is purely assimilation, but without a homeland? Sadly, these questions have very strong implications for not only Kiribati, but the other atoll nations of our world. The possibility of all of these scenarios come at a price no nation is willing to pay, yet the Maldives, Marshall Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Kiribati may be forced to pay the ultimate price.

5.4.2 A Personal Conclusion

Over a decade has passed since I first arrived in Kiribati. Since then, many social, political and environmental changes have occurred within the country since then. Climate change has grabbed the attention of the global community as more frequent devastating storms, droughts, heat waves and unusual weather patterns occur. The global community is beginning to focus on taking action to mitigate climate change impacts, but it may already be too late for Kiribati. The long standing cry to save polar bears and penguins from glacial melt is now being challenged by

even less audible human cries for help. The greatest tragedies go unheard, as populations with little global influence are ignored. Kiribati is on the frontlines of climate change, and its government questions what the future holds.

Peace Corps journal entry: November 10, 2000

It's so pretty here but scary too. I heard about global warming and I just wonder if it's true, because being here sure makes it real. But, I guess I trust the US Government, they wouldn't send us here if they thought it was a threat. I asked Mikaio what he thought about Global Warming. He assured me it was nothing serious. You know, Mike, he said, they said Kiribati would go under the ocean in the 1980s and look, we are still here, so don't worry.

There were many back then who, like me had only just heard about global warming but did not really know much more. *Mikaio* believed there was nothing to be worried about because God promised never to flood the Earth again. These Christian beliefs still persist in the islands today. However, with each prolonged drought, king tide, crumbled sea wall, washed out road, relocated village and salty well, religious beliefs are more questioned in the face of observable changes.

Life necessitates fresh water and healthy environments. Without these, there is no life. The lands in Kiribati are changing, the naturally occurring fresh water supplies are being inundated by the sea, and island populations continue to grow. Observable ecological changes are challenging even the strongest argument against climate change in Kiribati: God's covenant. Kiribati is our canary in the coal mine and the world should heed its warning. President Tong succinctly summed up this argument, when he stated:

We may be gone first, but someone will go next. This makes global warming the single biggest moral test to humanity today (KInterview.8.3, 2008).

After some 20 plus years of mounting concerns, many in Kiribati now wish that larger developed nations would change their ‘business as usual’ practices which continue unsustainable production and consumption habits.

2001

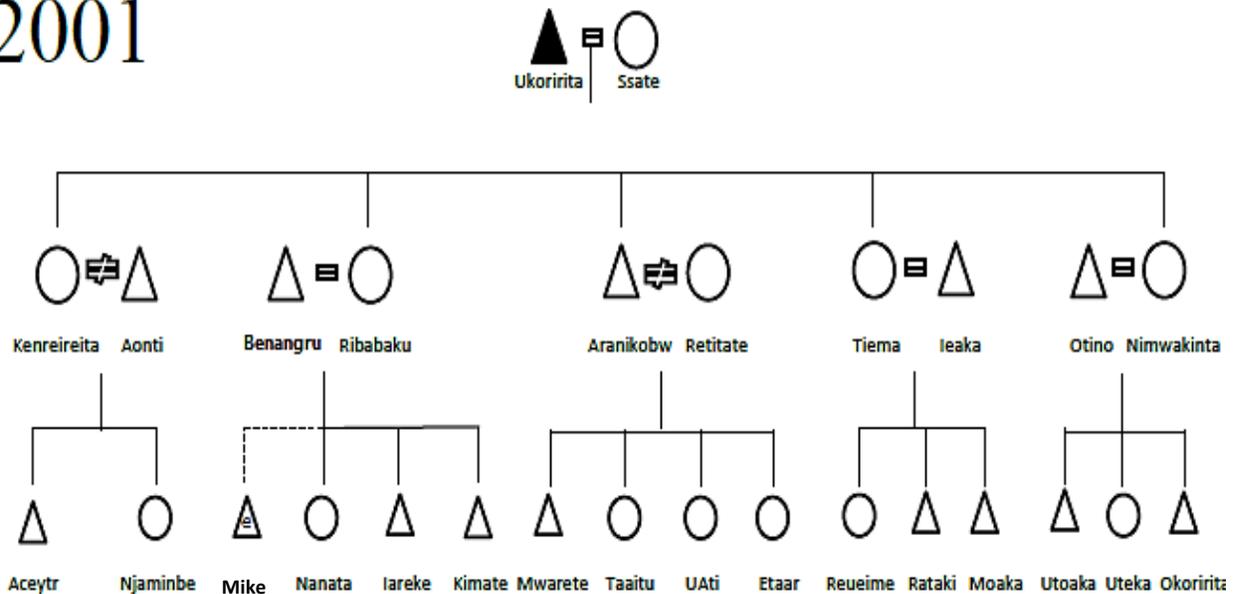


Figure 17: Author’s Peace Corps Kiribati host family in 2001

The idea for this research began with Peace Corps service over 12 years ago. Living with a small family in a small village on an island located in the middle of the world’s largest ocean. I often returned to Kiribati to reunite with family and friends. Upon each return, I could not help but notice the numerous family members and friends who had left the islands for various reasons. Many had permanently migrated to New Zealand through the PAC. When I returned in 2008 for this research, three of my host relatives had left, two had moved to New Zealand and one was working on a cargo ship. Since then, that small family has become much larger and unconstrained by the physical borders which separate villages, islands and nations. They have traveled to

Europe, Asia, Latin America, and all over the Pacific. Several have permanently migrated to other nations for various opportunities; preparing places for other family members to join them.

I-Kiribati are known for their voyages and in the modern day, contemporary voyages to new lands may be a sign of what is to come for millions of others living in close proximity to the sea. Voyages to other parts of the world have changed migrant lives just as my initial voyage to Kiribati has forever changed mine. I am proud to be an ‘adopted’ *I-Kiribati* son and look forward our future together, wherever that may be.

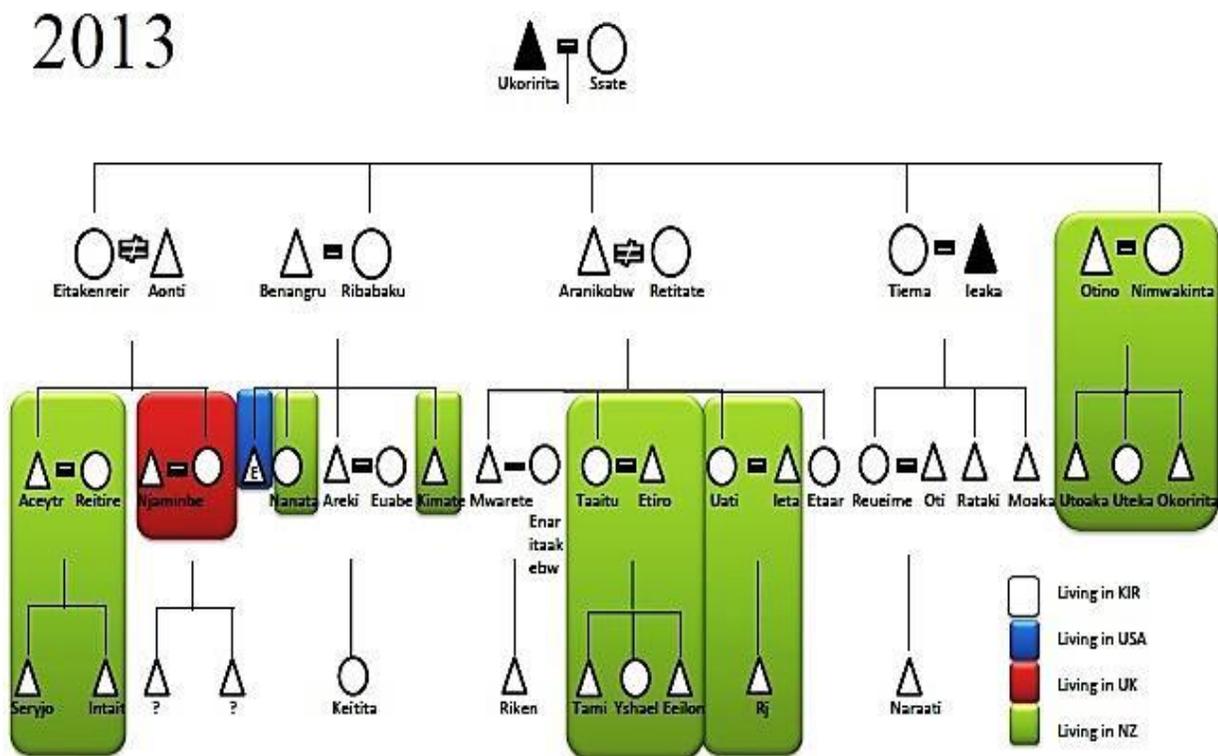


Figure 18: Author’s Peace Corps Kiribati host family in 2013

Migration makes you a different person. Maybe stronger? Or less dependent? You name it, it does it to you. I think that when people migrate, they have to adjust to their new setting. They have to adjust to the culture, the food, the weather, the language, everything, they have to adjust to it all. If people are going to come here I would advise them to not give up because they will have a lot of problems when they first come but it gets better as time goes on. Here it's hard, it's so big and the life is so fast, it's very different. But, if they want to come, we will help them ... but it will still be challenging (Uinterview.9.5., 2009).

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APPENDIX A – AMBO DECLARATION

We, Leaders, Ministers and Representatives of Governments participating in the Tarawa Climate change Conference held on 10th November 2010, recognizing that, climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and that there is an urgent need for more and immediate action to be undertaken to address the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, expressed;

1. *Alarm* at the impacts of the climate change crisis already being felt in our countries threatening the sustainable development and security of our countries, especially the immediate threat to the livelihood and survival of the most vulnerable States on the frontline, including Small Island States, Least Developed Countries and countries susceptible to drought and desertification;

2. *Grave concerns* over recent scientific findings on the worsening state of the global climate as a result of human induced climate change, especially the primary impacts such as sea level rise, ocean acidification and extreme weather events and their adverse consequences, threatening the survival of atoll and low lying nations, their people and biodiversity;

3. *Acknowledgement* that anthropogenic climate change can be mitigated through greater cooperation by Parties to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change* (UNFCCC) and through individual and global commitment to achieving deep cuts in current and future emissions levels, and agreed to pursue this vigorously;

4. *Ongoing commitment* to the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, the Bali Road Map mandate and to building on the political understandings of the Copenhagen Accord.

5. *Deep concerns* over the slow pace that international negotiations within the UNFCCC is taking to reach legally binding agreements necessary to meet the ultimate objectives of the Convention and call upon all Parties to work together to fast track the pace of these negotiations to safeguard the future of peoples, particularly those in the most vulnerable States in the frontline;

6. *Acknowledgement* that there are elements of common ground in the negotiations that can be agreed on to form the basis of action in the immediate term, elements which when implemented will reduce the vulnerability and enhance the resilience and adaptive capacity of developing countries, in particular, the most vulnerable States on the frontline, especially Small Island States, Least Developed Countries and those countries susceptible to drought and desertification.

7. Express concern over loss and degradation of biodiversity and its impact on human livelihood and welfare, in particular, in the most vulnerable States in the frontline, and also concern over the emissions added by land degradation;

8. *Recognize* the connection between low cost, sustainable adaptation and mitigation options and maintaining a healthy biodiversity and urge all nations to use aspects of biodiversity to increase

their climate resilience and pave the way for cost-effective, environmentally friendly and sustainable development especially in the most vulnerable States in the frontline and further support the initiatives to implement the outcomes of CBD COP 10 including the CBD Biodiversity Strategic Plan 2011-2020.

We, Therefore Declare our resolve in moving forward with our collective commitment to addressing the causes and impacts of climate change and:

9. *Call* for decisions on an “urgent package” to be agreed to at the COP 16 for concrete and immediate implementation reflecting the common ground of Parties, consistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention, and the Bali Action Plan, inter alia, to assist those in most vulnerable States on the frontline to respond to the challenges posed by the climate change crisis;

10. *Welcome* the growing momentum and commitment for substantially increasing resources for climate change financing and *call* on developed country Parties to make available financial resources that are new and additional, adequate, predictable and sustainable, and on a clear, transparent and grant basis to developing country parties, especially the most vulnerable States on the front line, to meet and address current and projected impacts of climate change;

11. *Acknowledge* that the new fund to be established under the Convention should be operationalized as soon as possible with efficient and transparent institutional arrangements that ensures improved access, a balanced allocation of resources between adaptation and mitigation and considers the unique circumstances of most vulnerable States in the frontline;

12. *Acknowledge* that the new fund should provide for developing countries and in particular, the unique circumstances of the most vulnerable States on the frontline to the adverse impacts of climate change;

13. *Call on Parties* to the UNFCCC to consider the need for establishing an international mechanism responsible for planning, preparation for, and managing climate change related disaster risks in order to minimize and address the environmental and economic costs associated with loss and damage;

14. *Urges* the developed country Parties to the UNFCCC to support the implementation of country-driven institutional strengthening and concrete adaptation priorities aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in developing country Parties, in particular, the most vulnerable States on the frontline to the adverse effects of climate change;

15. *Support* consideration of the development and implementation of strategies and actions directed at protecting people displaced within or across borders as a result of adverse effects arising from climate change extreme events;

16. *Call on* the developed country Parties to support the implementation of capacity building and transfer of technology priorities of developing country Parties to enhance their ability to contribute to the rapid reduction and mitigation of global emissions and to adapt to the adverse

impacts of climate change, and further supported by transfer of environmentally sound technologies on mitigation and adaptation;

17. Call on developed country Parties to give priority support to the capacity building and technology transfer needs and priorities of the most vulnerable States in the frontline due to the urgency of the climate change crisis facing them;

18. *Called on all* Parties to the UNFCCC, in recognition of the urgency of the climate change crisis, to aim for concrete decisions at COP 16 that will give an explicit mandate for the timely conclusion of negotiations towards a legally binding outcome in line with the Bali Road Map and the political understandings of the Copenhagen Accord;

Adopted in Tarawa, Kiribati, 10 November, 2010 by:

AUSTRALIA
BRAZIL
CHINA
CUBA
FIJI
JAPAN
KIRIBATI
MALDIVES
REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
SOLOMON ISLANDS
TONGA

10. Are you part of any *I-Kiribati* organization(s)?

Yes → Please give the name(s) of those organizations

No

Don't know any

11. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question. How do you think New Zealanders see *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand?

As hard working?

As a burden on New Zealand tax-payers?

As good citizens?

No opinion

As lazy?

Other → Please describe

12. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question. How do you think other Pacific Islanders (Tongans, Samoans, Tuvaluans, etc.) in New Zealand see *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand?

As hard working?

As competition for jobs?

As good citizens?

No opinion

As lazy?

Other → Please describe

As competition for jobs?

13. Please read all of these and tick the one that you think fits you best.

An *I-Kiribati*

A Kiwi

An I-Kiwibas

A Pacific Islander

14. Are you a New Zealand citizen?

Yes → Answer #17

No → Answer #15-16

15. Tick as many circles as you need to show the reasons why you have not become a New Zealand Citizen.

Don't qualify- haven't lived here long enough

Its too expensive

There's no need to do that

I want to stay a citizen of Kiribati

Just haven't gotten around to it

Other

16. Do you think you will become a New Zealand citizen in the future?

Definitely

Definitely not

- Probably
- Probably not
- Don't know

17. As far as New Zealanders are concerned, *I-Kiribati* culture is:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Pretty important
- Very important
- Don't know

18. How does that attitude to *I-Kiribati* culture affect *I-Kiribati* trying to live in New Zealand?

- Makes it much harder
- Makes it a little harder
- Makes no difference
- Makes it a bit easier
- Makes it much easier
- Don't know

19. As far as other Pacific Islanders (Samoans, Tongans, Tuvaluans, etc.) in New Zealand are concerned, *I-Kiribati* culture is:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Pretty important
- Very important
- Don't know

20. How does that attitude to *I-Kiribati* culture affect *I-Kiribati* trying to live in New Zealand?

- Makes it much harder
- Makes it a little harder
- Makes no difference
- Makes it a bit easier
- Makes it much easier
- Don't know

21. How do you feel about this statement: to get ahead in New Zealand, you have to let go of the *I-Kiribati* culture.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither

22. When you think of 'am utu' do you think of:

- Only your immediate family

- Your immediate family plus a wider group of relatives only
- Family and relatives, plus other *I-Kiribati* who you live and work or socialize with here in New Zealand
- Other, Please explain _____

23. Do you have family in New Zealand?

- Yes
- No, go to #24
- Don't know, go to #24

24. Are your ties more strong with:

- Your family in New Zealand
- Your family back in Kiribati
- Or is there no difference?

25. If you were born in New Zealand, go to question 26.

Tick as many circles as you need to answer this question. When you first came to New Zealand, did family in New Zealand help:

- With the move
- With finding a job
- In other ways
- Not at all
- Don't know/ don't want to say

26. Do you feel that when you left Kiribati you left *I-Kiribati* family/social issues behind?

- Yes
- No
- No opinion

27. Has leaving Kiribati made you freer?

- Yes, please explain
 - No, please explain
-

28. In each of the following statements, you are asked to compare *I-Kiribati* here in New Zealand with *I-Kiribati* back in Kiribati.

Compared to <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati:	Much more than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	More than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	About the same	Less than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	Much less than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	No opinion
How motivated are <i>I-Kiribati</i> in New Zealand to get ahead?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
How much do <i>I-Kiribati</i> in New Zealand feel the need to connect with their <i>I-Kiribati</i> cultural heritage?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
How do you feel <i>I-Kiribati</i> in New Zealand contribute to the Kiribati economy?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
How likely are <i>I-Kiribati</i> in New Zealand to get romantically involved with individuals who are not <i>I-Kiribati</i> ?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

29. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question: While you are in New Zealand, how do you get news about Kiribati?

Check	Source	Please write the name of the source.
<input type="checkbox"/>	From Websites/e-mails	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	From NZ Radio	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	From NZ Newspapers	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	From Friends/Family in NZ	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	From phone calls home	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	From other sources	_____

30. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question. What do *I-Kiribati* in Kiribati think of *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand?

- That they aren't really committed to *I-Kiribati* katei?
- That they think about money too much?
- That they are lucky?
- That they have a better life?
- That they have a harder life?
- That they are better than *I-Kiribati* in Kiribati
- That they are rich?
- Other \longrightarrow Please state _____

31. Can you speak the *I-Kiribati* language (more than greetings and a few phrases)?

- Yes, please go to 33
- No

32. Would you like to learn in the next 12 months?

- Definitely
- Definitely not
- Probably
- Don't know
- Probably not

33. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question. When you think of success for you or your family, which of the following do you think of?

- Financial
- Cultural
- Social
- Other, Please explain _____

34. Please answer by ticking one circle in each row.

Regular Contact:	Is not at all important	Is important	Is very important	No opinion
With family in New Zealand	_____	_____	_____	_____
With other <i>I-Kiribati</i> in New Zealand	_____	_____	_____	_____
With other Pacific Islanders in NZ	_____	_____	_____	_____

35. Please answer by ticking one circle in each row.

<u>I meet up with:</u>	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less often than once a month	Once a year
other family in New Zealand	_____	_____	_____	_____
other <i>I-Kiribati</i> in New Zealand	_____	_____	_____	_____
other Pacific Islanders in NZ	_____	_____	_____	_____

36. Please answer by ticking one circle in each row.

Since you have been in New Zealand, what has happened to each of these?

<u>Has your own:</u>	Become much better	Become a bit better	Stayed the same	Become a bit worse	Become much worse	No opinion
Housing	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Employment	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Finances	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Social Life	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Cultural Life	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

37. If you were to rank some of the difficulties *I-Kiribati* face when moving to New Zealand which would you place in order of greatest to least (1-greatest difficulty, 5-least difficulty).

____ Winter weather, ____ English language, ____ Health, ____ Food,

____ Social adjustment to New Zealand ways of living, ____ Others not mentioned

APPENDIX C – KIRIBATI SURVEYS

Age _____	Sex _____	Survey 1
Residence _____	Home Island _____	
Do you have any relative(s) who live overseas? Y/N		
If yes, what country/ies _____		
How many years have they lived overseas? _____		
Do they work overseas in a labor migration scheme like the seafarers or fruit workers in New Zealand or are they permanent residents of other countries?		
Labor migration/ Permanent residents		
What is their work if they are labor migrants? _____		
Do you think Kiribati is in danger of sinking in the next 50 years as stated by Anote Tong? Y/N		
If yes, would you consider leaving Kiribati? Y/N		

Age: _____	Sex: M/F	Residence: _____	Survey #2
Do you have any relative(s) who live overseas? Y/N			
Where/How Long _____/_____/_____/_____			
_____/_____/_____/_____			
Do they come back to Kiribati? Y/N			
If yes, (once every year), (once every 2 years), (once every 3 years), (once every 4 years), (once every 5 years)			
Do they send money home? Y/N			
If yes, (weekly) (monthly) (on special occasions only, birthdays-baptisms-independence-etc.)			
Do you think life is better overseas? Y/N			
Would you like to live overseas permanently? Y/N			

APPENDIX D – US SURVEY

Please fill in this questionnaire. It should only take about 15 minutes and it will give lots of never-before-seen information about people like you, *I-Kiribati* who live in America. Your information will be kept confidential. You are not asked for your name, and your individual answers will only be seen by Mike Roman. Thank you for your time in answering these questions. We know that the information that comes out of this survey will be interesting and useful to many people.

1. Which of these age groups are you in?

- 15-19 20-29 30-39 40-45 45+

1. Are you

- Male Female

2. What state do you live in now? _____

3. Were you born in Kiribati:

- Yes No

4. Please print your home island and the year that you came to USA.

_____ _____
Home Island Year of arrival

5. Check as many circles as you need to show the reasons that you came to America to live. If you came with family, check the reasons your family came.

- For a better chance to get work or a better job(s).
 To join family who were already here.
 For a new start in life.
 Marriage to American (Peace Corps, Military, Other) - Please circle one -

6. Are you part of any *I-Kiribati* organization(s)?

- Yes, please give the name of those organizations _____
 No

7. Please read all of these and tick the one that you think fits you best.

- An *I-Kiribati* An American A mix of American and *I-Kiribati* (Kirican)

8. Are you an American citizen?

- Yes No

9. If no, tick as many circles as you need to show the reasons why you have not become an American Citizen.

- Don't qualify- haven't lived here long enough Its too expensive
 There's no need to do that I want to stay a citizen of Kiribati
 Just haven't gotten around to it Don't know how to become one

10. Do you think you will become an American citizen in the future?

- Definitely Definitely not Probably not
 Probably Don't know

11. As far as Americans are concerned, *I-Kiribati* culture is:

- Very important Pretty important Slightly important Not known

12. How do you feel about this statement: to get ahead in America, you have to let go of the *I-Kiribati* culture.

- Strongly agree Strongly disagree Disagree
 Agree Neither

13. When you think of family do you think of:

- Only your immediate family
 Your immediate family plus a wider group of relatives only
 Family and relatives, plus other *I-Kiribati* who you live and work or socialize with here in America
 Other, Please explain _____

14. Do you have *I-Kiribati* family in America?

- Yes No Don't know

15. Are your ties stronger with:

- Your family in America Your family back in Kiribati No difference

16. Do you feel that when you left Kiribati your family/social issues behind in Kiribati?

- Yes No No opinion

17. Has leaving Kiribati made you freer?

- Yes, please explain No, please explain

18. In each of the following statements, you are asked to compare *I-Kiribati* here in America with *I-Kiribati* back in Kiribati.

Compared to <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati:	Much more than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	More than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	About the same	Less than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	Much less than <i>I-Kiribati</i> in Kiribati	No opinion
How motivated are <i>I-Kiribati</i> in America to get ahead?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much do <i>I-Kiribati</i> in America feel the need to connect with their <i>I-Kiribati</i> heritage?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How likely are <i>I-Kiribati</i> in America to get romantically involved with individuals who are not <i>I-Kiribati</i> ?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question: While you are in America, how do you get news about Kiribati?

Check	Source	Please write the name of the source.
<input type="radio"/>	From Websites/e-mails	_____.
<input type="radio"/>	From Friends/Family in USA	_____.
<input type="radio"/>	From phone calls home	_____.
<input type="radio"/>	From other sources	_____.
<input type="radio"/>	None of these	

20. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question. What do *I-Kiribati* in Kiribati think of *I-Kiribati* in America?

- That they aren't really committed to *I-Kiribati* katei?
- That they think about money too much?
- That they are lucky?
- That they have a better life?
- That they have a harder life?
- That they are better than *I-Kiribati* in Kiribati
- That they are rich?
- Other, please state _____

21. Can you speak the *I-Kiribati* language (more than greetings and a few phrases)?

- Yes
- No

22. Check as many circles as you need to answer this question. When you think of success for you or your family, which of the following do you think of?

- Financial
- Cultural
- Social
- Other, Please explain _____

23. Please answer by ticking one circle in each row.

Regular Contact:	Is not at all important	Is important	Is very important	No opinion
With Kiribati family in America	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With other <i>I-Kiribati</i> in America	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With other Pacific Islanders in America	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. Please answer by ticking one circle in each row.

<u>I meet up with:</u>	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less often than once a month	Once a year
other <i>I-Kiribati</i> family in America	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other <i>I-Kiribati</i> in America	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other Pacific Islanders in America	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. If you were to rank some of the difficulties *I-Kiribati* face when moving to America which would you place in order of greatest to least (1-greatest difficulty, 5-least difficulty).

- ___ Winter weather
- ___ English language
- ___ Health
- ___ Social adjustment to American ways of living
- ___ Food
- ___ Others not mentioned

26. Do you think that you will live permanently in Kiribati (again) someday?

- Definitely Probably Probably not Definitely not Don't know

27. Please answer by ticking one circle in each row. Since you have been in America, what has happened to each of these?

<u>Has your own:</u>	Become much better	Become a bit better	Stayed the same	Become a bit worse	Become much worse	No opinion
Housing	<input type="radio"/>					
Employment	<input type="radio"/>					
Finances	<input type="radio"/>					
Social Life	<input type="radio"/>					
Cultural Life	<input type="radio"/>					

APPENDIX E – NEW ZEALAND BENEFITS

Superannuation benefit - Payable to those attaining the age of 65 years and satisfying a residence condition.

Age benefit - Payable to those attaining the age of 60 years or, for an unmarried woman unable to undertake regular employment, 55 years with residence qualification.

Widows' benefit - Payable to a widow with a dependent child or children born in New Zealand. A widow who does not have a dependent child may qualify if certain conditions are met. Married women who have been deserted by their husbands may qualify for benefit as though they were widows.

Family benefit - Payable in respect of a child under the age of 16 years. Payment may be extended to the end of the year of attaining the age of 18 years if the child continues education as a full-time student, or if he is totally incapacitated from earning a living. Effective from 1 October 1958, a new provision enabled payment to be made for up to 52 weeks in advance on the birth of the first child of a marriage or in respect of a child commencing his first year of post-primary education.

Miners' benefit - Payable to a person who has been employed as a miner in New Zealand for not less than two and a half years and who has resided in New Zealand for not less than five years and, through having contracted miner's phthisis or other occupational disease associated with mining, or heart disease, is permanently incapacitated for work.

Sickness benefit - Payable in respect of temporary incapacity for work through sickness or accident. In order to qualify, an applicant must be not less than 16 years of age, must have suffered a loss of salary, wages, or other earnings, and have resided in New Zealand for at least 12 months.

Unemployment benefit - Payable to a person 16 years of age and over who has been in New Zealand for at least 12 months and is unemployed, is capable of and willing to undertake suitable work, and has taken reasonable steps to secure employment.

Orphans' benefit - Payment is made in respect of a child both of whose parents are deceased. Payment is made to the age of 16 years but may be continued to the end of the calendar year of the orphan's attaining 18 years, provided he remains at school.

Invalids' benefit - For permanent incapacity for work or total blindness. An applicant must be at least 16 years of age and not qualified to receive an age benefit. An applicant is residentially qualified and their incapacity arose in New Zealand.

Emergency benefit - Available when refusal of an application for one or other of the above-described benefits would cause hardship.