

importance of child registration, such as the signing of an MOU between the Ministry of Health and the Civil Registry Office (which is part of MISA) to enable the two government ministries to exchange information and ensure that more children are registered at birth. Further steps recommended by the baseline survey include forging partnerships between Government, schools and churches so that unregistered children can be identified when baptised or enrolled in school; and administrative improvements in the Civil Registration Office.

Q. Do caregivers and community leaders practice behaviour that protects children from violence, abuse and exploitation?

A. Despite demonstrating a high level of awareness of positive discipline techniques, 81% of adult survey respondents admit to physically hurting children in their household; 80% of them say this is for 'discipline' or 'education'. Community awareness on the rights of the child can be raised through activities at schools, church functions, Maneabwa gatherings etc, using drama and other community means of communication. The role of youth groups in protecting and promoting the rights of the child can also be reinforced and expanded.

Q. Do caregivers and community leaders know what to do if a child is badly hurt by someone?

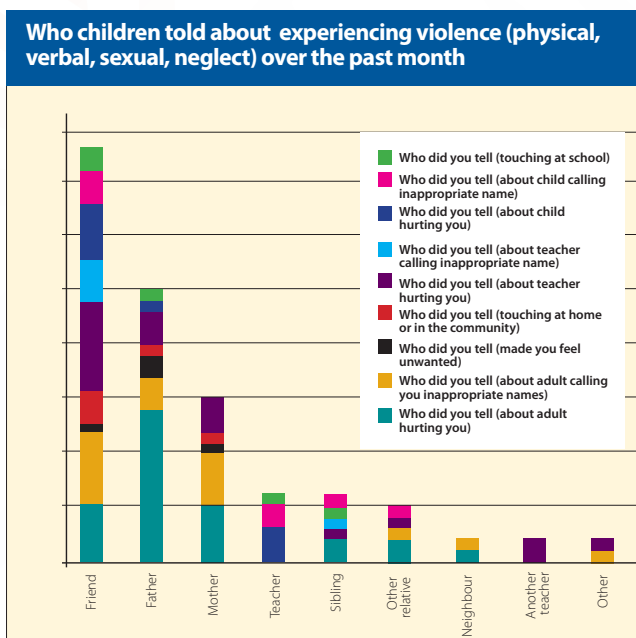
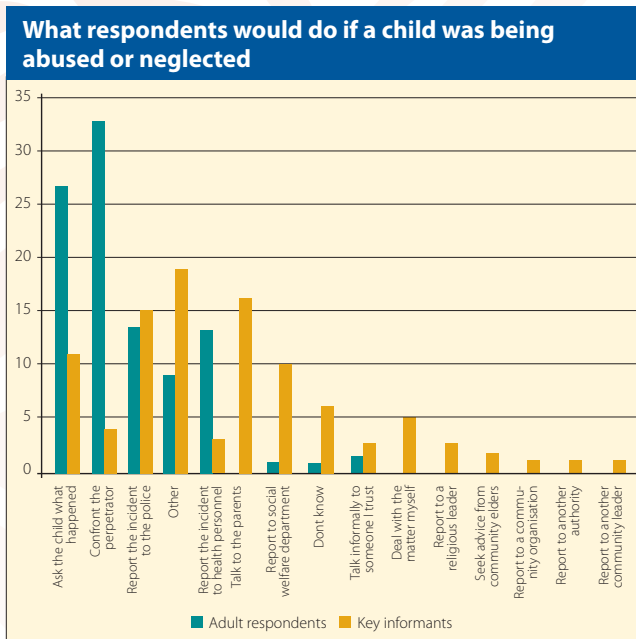
A. 89% of survey respondents report being confident about knowing what to do if a child in their household or community were badly hurt by someone. Caregivers' reactions are most likely to be informal – talk to the child and to confront the perpetrator – rather than refer the issue to state actors, although both groups cited mostly formal (state) services – especially police and health services – when asked about services available. Ongoing dialogue is needed with village leaders, religious leaders, police, school & health care workers in ongoing dialogue and action about building protective environments for children through participation.

Q. How aware are children of their protection rights?

A. 87% of children indicate they know who to talk to if they're badly hurt by someone, relying on immediate family and friends, rather than formal services, even though they are aware of formal services available (this is illustrated in the table below, which shows results of what children who experienced violence within a month of the survey actually did). However, children do not speak out in many incidences of violence, including 'inappropriate touching', and some do not fully understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable touching. Children and youth should be involved in preparing community child protection plans, which should consider both good and inappropriate community practices towards child protection.

Q. How do adults feel about the risks of sending their children to live away from home?

A. According to the survey, 25% of respondents had biological children of their own currently living outside their households. Approximately over half of these children are over the age of 16. These children live with



other relatives and are mostly away from home for the purpose of going to school. 9% of relevant respondents do not know whether their children are safe, and the 2% who seem to think that their children are not safe give no reasons for why this might be. 89% feel that their children are safe in their alternative places of residence, but this is based largely on assumptions, trust in the hosts (particularly when the hosts are family members) and feedback from the hosts rather than from the children themselves. The survey recommends engaging adults – village leaders, religious leaders, police, school & health care workers in ongoing dialogue and action about building protective environments for children through participation in existing as well as new venues and forums.



Australian Government
AusAID



unicef
unite for children



Key Findings

Protect me with love and care

A Question & Answer on the Baseline Report for creating a future free from violence, abuse and exploitation of girls and boys in Kiribati



Q. What is the Government of Kiribati/UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Programme?

A. The Child Protection Programme provides strategic direction for child protection interventions in the country. It takes a child-centred, holistic and long-term approach to keeping children from harmful situations, preventing child abuse and exploitation, and addressing the social reintegration and recovery of those who have been abused. It runs from 2008-2012.

Q. What is the Kiribati Child Protection Baseline Report?

A. The Kiribati Child Protection Baseline Report reviews legal provisions, social services and community involvement in child protection in 2008, develops recommendations, and aims to promote capacity-building, networking and inter-agency collaboration.

Q. What factors make children particularly vulnerable in Kiribati?

A. As one of the least developed Pacific Island nations, poor economic conditions result in many children living away from their families in areas that have better schooling and work opportunities but that are also overcrowded and dangerous. In this context, child sexual exploitation is also more prevalent. To tackle child sexual exploitation and abuse the survey strongly recommends seeking Cabinet approval for the comprehensive review and reform of the Penal Code 1977, drawing on existing work in the region to support the process.

Q. Are current national laws aligned with good Child Protection principles such as the CRC?

A. Of the CRC indicators assessed, the review found legal provisions were fully compliant with 40 indicators, partially compliant with 49, and non-compliant on 143 indicators. While no formal, detailed legal or policy

framework exists for child welfare/child protection and many related concerns, such as domestic violence, strong provisions do exist for sexual assault and abuse; minimum marriage age; and protecting children in conflict with the law.

Q. What initiatives are being put in place to bridge this gap?

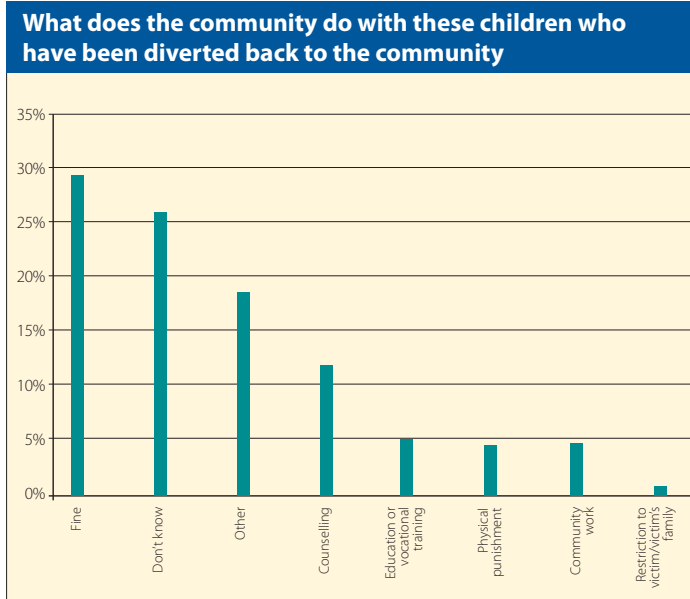
A. A number of policies are currently under consideration or have been recently implemented, including a Police Diversion Policy, a Juvenile Justice Manual and a 2008 Police Powers and Responsibilities Bill. But the baseline report recommends that cabinet approval be sought for the drafting of a new Child Protection Act outlining mandates and responsibilities for preventing child abuse, supporting children and families at risk, and providing strengths based, culturally appropriate interventions in response to child maltreatment.

Q. How well placed is the Kiribati Justice System to apply good principles of juvenile justice?

A. The Police Diversion Policy provides opportunities to improve relationships between the different parties involved in child welfare. However, in terms of policy, services and capacity, for all sectors are either non-compliant or only partially compliant. Recent policy documents have been introduced, including the Juvenile Justice Manual for Magistrates and Guidelines and Procedures for Juveniles in Need of Care and Protection. These need to be finalized, translated, printed, widely distributed and implemented, with comprehensive training. Further, in addition to reforming the Penal Code 1977, The survey recommends the amendment of other existing Acts, including the Criminal Procedure Code 1977, the Magistrates' Court Act 1977 and the Prisons Act 1977. It also recommends supporting the Police Powers and Responsibilities Bill 2008 and seeking Cabinet approval for the creation of a comprehensive Young Offenders Act.

Q. How do communities handle children in conflict with the law?

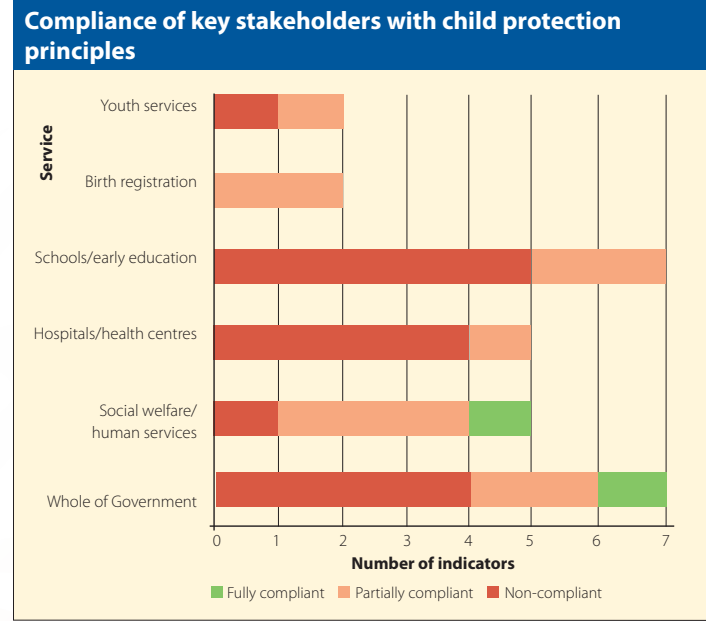
A. Traditional authorities, such as the unimanes are prevalent. Children are hardly referred to the police, and police regularly divert children who have committed crimes back to the community, who use fines, supervision, community work, education and vocational training to deal with these children. However, physical violence is also applied as a form of discipline. 61% of survey respondents agree that children who have committed crimes are accepted back into the community (a key component for the success of community-based diversion, alternative sentencing and rehabilitation). The survey recommends Undertake further research on the traditional justice system and how the formal and traditional systems can work together to protect children and to present training and awareness about child protection in terms of its benefits to the community and families.



Q. Are there services dedicated to child protection? How do key stakeholders currently handle child protection cases?

A. A number of key stakeholders are important for child protection, including government, social welfare/human service institutions; hospitals/health centres; Schools and early education; Birth registration; and youth services. The chart below illustrates their compliance with their child protection mandates. Kiribati also has a dedicated Social Welfare Division (SWD), which is responsible for child and family welfare, and based in the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs. SWD officers are deployed throughout Kiribati's islands. For SWD and other protection services to be more effective, the baseline report recommends the following: inter-agency protocols and intra-agency child protection protocols need to be established; draft procedures finalised; training and procedures support provided to Assistant Social Welfare Officers; referral mechanisms coordinated; data collection and record keeping implemented; community policing improved; and more female police

officers recruited and trained. A key recommendation from the report is the need to develop and implement a case management and referral system, incorporating all relevant agencies in Kiribati.



Q. Do schools provide a safe environment for children?

A. Teachers have received training about child protection but survey results indicate that corporal punishment by teachers is relatively common (admitted by 40% of education key informants). Additionally, 7% of child respondents reported experiencing inappropriate touching at school, 80% perpetrated by other children but 20% perpetrated by teachers. School rules are more relevant to regulating children's behaviour than child protection. The baseline report recommends the development and implementation of a non violent policy document for children in school and training of teachers on the non violence policy.

Q. How aware are children of protection services available to them?

A. According to the survey, the majority (87%) of children know who to talk to if they are badly hurt by someone. They rely mostly on immediate family and friends although they are aware of the existence of, and confident about approaching, a range of formal services (and indicate reporting the incident to the police as their second most likely option). The survey recommends engaging children and youth through peer networks and the mass media for awareness raising on child protection and child rights; child leaders and community adults that children can turn to should be identified and trained to provide support.

Q. How widespread is birth registration?

A. While birth registration is free and compulsory by law, most school-going children in Kiribati do not have a birth certificate. In the survey, only 35% of relevant respondents were able to show birth certificates their children. Steps are being taken to improve awareness about the

