**Millennium Development Goals: Kiribati**

**Progress to June 2015**

**Summary**

There are 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs cease in 2015. Most of the data below refers to the period from 1990 to 2014, the year in which the latest information is available for Kiribati. Of these 8 goals, Kiribati has achieved none outright. The goals to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty (Goal 1), to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (Goal 6), ensuring environmental stability (Goal 7) and developing a global partnership for development (Goal 8) are likely to be borderline. Another goal is close to achieving its targets (promote gender equality and empower women). According to the FAO, Kiribati has reached one of the three targets for the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Several other targets have been substantially met (eg HIV/AIDS) although the poor results of other targets in that overall goal (Reduce HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) have diminished the performance of that goal. Similarly many other targets have been achieved, but not the overall goal. Some goals have a mixture of qualitative and quantitative information which make it difficult to assess the true progress. The table below summaries the achievements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MGD</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDG 1</strong> Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Target 1A</td>
<td>Target of halving the proportion of people below the basic needs poverty line passed in 2006. The figure fell from 50% in 1996 to 22% in 2006. However, since the Global Financial Crisis, GDP per capita in Kiribati declined by 8% between 2007 and 2012.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Target 1B</td>
<td>Unemployment at the 2010 Population Census was 30.6%. Youth unemployment was 54%</td>
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<td>Target 1C</td>
<td>According to the FAO, food security milestones were achieved ahead of the global 2015 deadline</td>
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<td><strong>MDG 2</strong> Achieve universal primary education</td>
<td>Off Track</td>
<td>Target 2A</td>
<td>Net enrolment rate for males and females in primary education declined annually from 2002 to 2013 but positive trends occurred in 2014. The proportion of students starting year 1 and reaching year 5 has risen since 2006 to 89.5% in 2012.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MDG 3</strong> Promote gender equality and empower women</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Target 3A</td>
<td>Gender parity achieved in primary education but an increasing gulf between the proportion of boys and girls attending secondary school. Female cash workers (outside of agriculture) are on par with males. High proportion of women in the public sector with a high proportion of females in executive positions. Female Parliamentarian numbers are low. High rates of domestic violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MDG 4</strong> Reduce child mortality</td>
<td>Off Track</td>
<td>Target 4A</td>
<td>2015 target for child mortality rate is 30. 38.8 was achieved in 2010 but the current rate (2013) is 52.9. Proportion of children immunised against measles rose from 56% in 2004 to 91% in 2013.</td>
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| **MDG 5**  
Improve Maternal Health | Off Track | Target 5A | The number of deaths climbed in 2014 with a maternal mortality rate of 150.6, well above the target of 25. However other trends (proportion of skilled birth attendant deliveries) suggest that there has been significant improvement. |
| | | Target 5B | Contraceptive prevalence rate is low (22.3% in 2009). |
| **MDG 6**  
Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases | Mixed | Target 6A | New cases of HIV/AIDS have fallen in recent years with none reported in 2010, 2011 or 2012. One was reported in 2013 and two in 2014. |
| | | Target 6B | Universal access is available for all HIV/AIDS cases. |
| | | Target 6C | Tuberculosis and non-communicable diseases are at alarmingly high levels |
| **MDG 7**  
Ensure Environmental Stability | Mixed | Target 7A | There have been several initiatives to improve policy and some major gains in the proportion of protected land and marine areas. |
| | | Target 7B | Proportion without sustainable access to safe drinking was 33.9% in 2011, whereas the target is 25.4% in 2015. |
| | | Target 7C | Accurate information is not available in Kiribati. Continued migration from the outer islands has led to squatter communities on South Tarawa and resulted in a high level of population density. |
| **MDG 8**  
Develop a Global Partnership for Development | Mixed | Target 8A | Education is the predominant sector in the distribution of ODA. Levels of ODA have risen substantially in the past few years. Special trade preferences received because of LDC status therefore the levels of tariffs that exports of Kiribati faces are very low. Regional trade agreements ratified to support the free movement of goods and services in the Pacific. Customs duties were abolished in Kiribati in April 2014. |
| | | Target 8B | Debt service as percentage of exports of goods and services was 11.4% in 2012. In 2015, the present value of debt was 28% of GDP. However, the World Bank does classify Kiribati as being under high risk of debt distress. |
| | | Target 8C | In Kiribati, all drugs supplied through the hospital services are free. Access to medical facilities is limited in the outer islands. There are no privately run pharmacies in Kiribati. |
| | | Target 8D | The number of cellular subscribers per 100 people has risen substantially between 2008 and 2013 rising from 1.1 to 16.6 respectively. The number of internet users per 100 people has multiplied dramatically from 4.5 in 2006 to 11.5 in 2013. The telecommunications sector has been opened to competition and the State-Owned TSKL was privatised in May 2015. |

| On target. | Borderline. | Off target |
Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Result: The FAO has commended Kiribati for being one of 13 countries that have reached one of the three targets of this goal in 2014. According to the FAO, Kiribati achieved food security milestones ahead of the global 2015 deadline. Kiribati also passed the target of halving the proportion of people below the basic needs poverty line in 2006. The figure had fallen from 50% in 1996 to 22% in 2006. However, since the Global Financial Crisis, GDP per capita in Kiribati has declined by 8% between 2007 and 2012. A new Household Income and Expenditure Survey is required to provide updated figures on the level of poverty in Kiribati. The FAO data only concentrates on hunger and does not take into account the high unemployment in Kiribati. Unemployment at the 2010 Population Census was 30.6%. It would be difficult to achieve this goal overall.

Target 1.A. Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is below the basic needs poverty line.

Achievement

- Based on the 1996 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, Kiribati had 50% of people with per capita incomes below the National Basic Needs Poverty Line. In 2006, the proportion had fallen to 22%.

- There has been no Household Income and Expenditure Survey (which measures poverty levels) since 2006. The next survey has been scheduled for 2017.

- The poverty gap index in 2006 was 7.2% which means that the real incomes of those households falling below the poverty line would have to rise by 7.2% to move above the poverty line.

- However, since the Global Financial Crisis in 2007-08, GDP per capita in Kiribati declined every year until 2012 when GDP real growth was 3.4%. Real GDP per capita fell by 8.5% between 2006 and 2013.
Figure 1: Real GDP per capita and real GDP growth, Kiribati, 2002-13

Source: KNSO

Target 1 B. Achieve full and productive employment and decent employment for all, including women and young people.

Achievement

- From the 2010 population census, the labour force participation rate was 59.3% (66.8% males and 52.3% females) compared to 63.4% (71.3% males and 56% females) in 2005. In 2010, 30.6% of the population were unemployed. The youth unemployment rate was 54% in 2010.

- The private sector is small in relation to the size of government which has traditionally been the largest employer. Only 22% of employed paid workers in 2010 were in the private sector while 34% were employed in the public sector. Another 31% were producing goods for sale while 7% were self-employed and 6% were classified as employers.

- The actual number of posts in the public sector has risen from 4,288 in 2004 to 4,719 in 2015, an increase of only 10.1% whereas the population in the same period rose by 26%.

- Seafaring has been a vital source of employment for Kiribati. However, since the Global Financial Crisis, the number of seamen employed overseas steadily declined but has plateaued out in recent years. Besides economic conditions, changes in vessel technology, where ships have become larger, and increased competition from Asian nations has contributed to this decline. The number of seamen working overseas has declined from 1,067 in 2000 to 676 in 2014.

- At the 2010 Population Census the unemployment rate of 15-24 year olds was 47.6% for males and 61.8% for females making a total of 54%. Young people accounted for more
than a half (51.7%) of all the unemployed in 2010. Currently roughly 2,000 youth enter the labour force each year. Of these about 150 become students at the Kiribati Institute of Technology and 90 go overseas on scholarships. About 35 become students at the Australia Pacific Technical College annually. About 90 new recruits are made each year into the public sector. The Marine Training Centre takes 100 additional students annually. Most of the remaining labour force entrants must find employment in the private sector or become self-employed. The Government has introduced a Private Sector Development Strategy to increase employment activities in the private sector.

**Target 1 C. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from Hunger**

**Achievement**

- On 1 December 2014, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) commended Kiribati as one of 13 countries for achieving food security milestones ahead of the global 2015 MDGs. According to the FAO, the prevalence of undernourishment in Kiribati has decreased from 7.5% in 1990-92, to 3.5% in 2012-14. Over the same period, the number of undernourished has reduced from 5,400 to 3,600, thus reaching this MDG target.

- According to the 2006 HIES, 4.9% of the population had expenditure which would be insufficient to meet basic food needs as defined by the food poverty line. There has been no information produced since then which will provide an update on this indicator.

**Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education**

**Result:** Accurate data is a problem for earlier reporting, however the evidence suggests that this goal will not be entirely met although there are positive signs of improvement.

**Target 2A. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling**

**Achievement:**

- There is some conjecture about the accuracy of early statistics on education. Work is ongoing to try to improve statistical reporting.

- Nevertheless the current data shows that the net enrolment rate for males and females in primary education has continued to decline in 2013. The net enrolment rate in primary education fell from 101% in 2002 to 74% in 2013 but rose to 78% in 2014.

- Net enrolment rates for females has fallen from 103% in 2002 to 75% in 2013 but increased to 78% in 2014 and net enrolment rates for males has dropped from 99% in 2002 to 73% in 2013 but rose to 78% in 2014.
Figure 2: Net enrolment rates for females and males, Primary School, Kiribati, 2006-13

- The proportion of students starting year 1 and reaching year 5 has risen since 2006. In 2006 the proportion was 83.3%. This climbed to a most likely inaccurate figure of 109.5% in 2008 but dropped to 89.5% in 2012.

- For females and males, the proportion of pupils starting Year 1 and reaching Year 5 was 78.4 and 88.4 respectively in 2006. In 2008 the figures rose to 114.4% of females and 107.4% of males. In 2012 the rates had declined to 94.5% and 85% respectively. Notably females now were the dominant gender reaching Year 5.

Figure 3: Proportion of female and male students starting year 1 and reaching year 5, Kiribati, 2006-12

Source: MOE
Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

**Result:** Gender disparity has been eliminated for women in education but there is becoming an increasing gulf between the proportion of boys attending school and the proportion of girls. Female cash workers (outside of agricultural industries) are on a par with males. There is at least gender equality in the proportion of women in the public sector with a high proportion of females in Executive positions. However, the number of females who are Parliamentarians is low. Domestic violence is high.

**Target 3A. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015**

**Achievement:**

- Kiribati has achieved gender parity in primary education. In 2013 the gender parity index for primary education was 1.03. This follows a similar trend since 2006.

**Figure 4: Gender Parity Index, Primary Education, Kiribati, 2005-13**

![Graph showing gender parity index for primary education in Kiribati from 2005 to 2013](image)

- For secondary education, the gap is much wider with females outstripping the number of males attending school. For senior secondary education in 2005 the index was 1.34 while in 2013 it had increased to 1.53.
• In 2005, there were 4,423 women cash workers employed in non-agricultural industries or 39.6% of the total (11,201). In 2010, the figure had risen to a total of 10,709 or 50.7% of the total (21,113)

• Out of a total of 45 MPs, currently four women (8.9%) hold seats in the Parliament. Of these four women, three are Ministers and one also holds the position of Vice President. All three heads of diplomatic missions for Kiribati are currently women. A very high proportion of women are employed at Senior Executive level in the public service including at Secretary level.

• The Kiribati Family Health and Support Study published in 2010 shows that violence against women is prevalent. According to the study, 68% ever-partnered women aged 15–49 reported experiencing physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner. The number of women and children going through the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Crisis Centre has increased in recent years (see Figure 6).
Goal 4. Reduce child mortality

Result: This goal is unlikely to be met. Mortality rates are growing in recent years which has offset earlier gains. The 2015 target for child mortality is 30. 38.8 was achieved in 2010 but the current rate (2013) is 52.9.

Target 4A. Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Achievement

- The MDG target for Kiribati is an under-five mortality rate of 30. The under 5 mortality rate dropped from a high of 101 in 1992 to 20.1 in 2008 but rose again to 52.9 in 2013.

- The infant mortality rate is an important component of under-five mortality and assists in monitoring this target. It measures child survival and reflects social, economic and environmental conditions under which children live. The infant mortality rate has fallen from 49 in 1991 to as low as 1 in 2007 but since has climbed significantly to 37.6 in 2010. The rate was 26.2 in 2013.
Measles is regarded as a key indicator of child mortality since it is one of the most commonly supported childhood preventable diseases as part of the basic health care package. As well, measles is a leading cause of child mortality. The proportion of children immunised against measles has risen from a low of 56% in 2004 to 91% in 2013.
Goal 5. Improve Maternal Health

**Result:** This goal is unlikely to be met. The maternal mortality rate in Kiribati was zero in 2013 with no maternal deaths recorded. However the number of deaths climbed again in 2014 with a maternal mortality rate of 150.6, well above the target of 25. However other trends (proportion of skilled birth attendant deliveries) suggest that there has been significant improvement. The contraceptive prevalence rate is low.

**Target 5A. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio**

**Achievement**

- The maternal mortality ratio is the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. The target is to reduce maternal mortality in Kiribati to 25 by 2015. In 2013, the figure was nil because there were no maternal deaths that year. However, the figure was 150.6 in 2014, a significant variance from the target. The actual number of maternal deaths in Kiribati is quite low (5 in 2012 and 4 in 2014), but due to the small population and relatively low number of live births annually, the figure is multiplied up to calculate a ratio per 100,000 live births, magnifying small variations.

**Figure 9: Maternal Mortality Ratio, Kiribati, 1991 – 2014.**

- Births attended by skilled health personnel has improved from 64.3% in 1995 to 86.9% in 2014. In the same period the proportion of pregnant women who were still being delivered by Traditional Birth Attendants rather than skilled health personnel declined from 35.7% to 13.1%.
Target 5B. Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health

Achievement

- Contraceptive prevalence rates for women between the ages of 15-45 was 22.3% in 2009 and 21.5% in 2004. No more recent data have been collected.

Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Result: New cases of HIV/AIDS have fallen in recent years with none reported in 2010, 2011 or 2012. One was reported in 2013 and two were reported in 2014. However, other diseases such as tuberculosis and non-communicable diseases are still at alarmingly high levels. Because of the growth of these other diseases, it is unlikely that this goal will be met.

Target 6A. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

Achievement

- The first case of HIV was diagnosed in 1991 and since then the number steadily increased but has dropped off in more recent years. Kiribati’s incidence of
HIV/AIDS was one of the highest in the Pacific. The total number of people ever diagnosed with HIV in Kiribati is 58. No new cases were detected in 2010, 2011 or 2012. There was one new case in 2013 and two new cases in 2014.

Figure 11: HIV Positive Cases, Kiribati, 1991 to 2014

Source: MHMS

Target 6B. Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it.

Achievement

- Universal access is available for all HIV/AIDS cases.

Target 6C. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of tuberculosis

Achievement

- The incidence of tuberculosis is the highest in the Pacific. It has risen from 116 per 100,000 population in 1990 to a high of 605 in 1997 but has declined steadily since then until 2009. The incidence in 2013 was 497. Treatment rates have been declining from 2009 at 93% to 89% in 2012.
Non-communicative diseases such as diabetes are also a high determinate of death in the Pacific Islands and Kiribati is no exception. Data on the incidence of diabetes has not been recorded well in the past but recent information suggests that diabetes continues to be a major health issue. The number of new cases of diabetes fell from 1,036 in 2009 to 809 in 2013 but has risen to an all-time high of 1,123 in 2014.
Goal 7. Ensure environmental stability

**Result:** This is a difficult goal to actually measure empirically. There have been several initiatives to improve policy and some major gains in the proportion of protected land and marine areas. Carbon dioxide emissions are low compared to westernised countries and there have been improvements in sanitation and water supply. This goal is likely to be borderline.

**Target 7A. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources**

**Target 7B. Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss**

**Achievement**

- Kiribati has been moving for greater environmental protection with the launch of the Key Biodiversity Area Analysis report for Kiribati in August 2013. Protection of marine resources has occurred under the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) in 2006. The Kiribati Integrated Environment Policy (KIEP) was launched in August 2013.

- The proportion of land area covered by forest according to the FAO is 15% and this has not changed since 1990. However, projects have been undertaken to increase forest protection including the replanting of coconut trees and the planting of mangroves.

**Figure 14: Mangrove Plantings, Kiribati, 2008-2013**

![Mangrove Plantings Chart](source: MELAD)

- The proportion of the land area protected to maintain diversity is currently only 1% of the total terrestrial area. This is part of Kiritimati Island which is a wildlife sanctuary. The marine protected area is 11% of the total marine area and this is the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) which was totally closed to commercial fishing on 1 January 2015.
- GDP per unit of energy used (as a proxy for energy efficiency) has actually been declining since 1994 but the trend has plateaued out in recent years (figure 13) suggesting that energy efficiency has actually improved in the past decade.

Figure 15: GDP per unit of electricity consumed, Kiribati, 1990 to 2013

![Graph showing GDP per unit of electricity consumed in Kiribati from 1990 to 2013.](source)

- Carbon dioxide emissions per capita in Kiribati are low by international standards (see figure 12). CO2 emissions were 0.64 metric tonnes per capita in 2010 in Kiribati compared with 17.6 for the US and 16.9 for Australia. For Kiribati, CO2 emissions have remained reasonably low over the period 2000 to 2010 (figure 13) although the trend is rising steadily. There are no data on the consumption of ozone-depleting Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) in Kiribati.
The proportion of the population with access to improved sanitation has steadily grown in Kiribati since 1990. Although some gains have been made, however, the figure remains at only 39.7% in 2012 up from 29.0% in 1990 (see figure 14).
Figure 18: Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation (flush or water sealed latrines), Kiribati, 1990-2012

Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation

Target 7C. Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

Achievement

- The proportion of the population with sustainable access to an improved water source urban and rural (piped to household or standpipe) has grown from 49.6% in 1990 to 66.1% in 2011. This means that the proportion without sustainable access to safe drinking was 33.9% in 2011, whereas the target is 25.4% in 2015. On current trends, this target will not be reached in 2015.
Figure 19: Proportion of the population with sustainable access to an improved water source, Kiribati, 1990 to 2011

![Graph showing proportion of the population with sustainable access to improved water sources, Kiribati, 1990 to 2011.](image)

Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation

**Target 7D. By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers**

**Achievement**

- The measure of this target is the proportion of households with access to secure tenure but accurate information is not available in Kiribati. Continued migration from the outer islands has led to squatter communities on South Tarawa and resulted in a high level of population density. The population density in Betio from the 2010 Population Census was 9,434 people per km² which is high by international standards.

**Goal 8. Develop a global partnership for development**

**Result:** Again, this goal is difficult to measure but likely to be borderline. However, several indicators suggest that there has been some progress. Education is the predominant sector in the distribution of Official Development Assistance (ODA). The levels of ODA to Kiribati have risen substantially in the past few years. Kiribati receives special trade preferences because of its LDC status with countries such as Japan so therefore the levels of tariffs that the exports of Kiribati faces are very low. Kiribati has ratified regional trade agreements to support the free movement of goods and services in the South Pacific. Customs duties were abolished in Kiribati in April 2014. Debt service payments in Kiribati are relatively low.
Target 8A: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial systems, including a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally.

Target 8B: Address the special need of the least developed countries.

Target 8C: Address the special needs of landlocked countries and Small Island developing States.

Achievement

- The first measurement of this target is the proportion of ODA to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation). However, due to lack of information on these sectors in official information published by the World Bank and the OECD, it is not possible to reproduce these figures accurately for Kiribati. However OECD information does exist for education and health which suggests that the five year average between 2009 and 2013 was nearly a quarter (24.6%) with education one of the highest sectors at 16.7%.

Figure 20: ODA by Sector, Kiribati, 5-year average, 2009-2013

- The levels of ODA received in Kiribati as a proportion of its Gross National Income fell off sharply from its early levels in the 1990s but has risen significantly since 2010 (see figure 19).
Another measure of this target is the proportion of exports (by value and excluding arms) admitted free of duties and quotas for Kiribati. Kiribati has ratified the Pacific Island Country Trade Agreement (PICTA) where Forum island countries have committed to remove tariffs on most goods by 2021. In August 2009, leaders of the Pacific Island Forum agreed to start negotiating PACER plus, a free trade agreement that would include Australia and New Zealand as well as the Forum Island Countries and that would cover goods, services, and investment. Because Kiribati is an LDC it receives special trade preferences with the EU and Japan. The EU is currently negotiating a comprehensive regional Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with all 14 signatories of PICTA. Kiribati abolished Customs Duties from 1 April 2014.

**Target 8D. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long run.**

**Achievement**

- Debt sustainability is currently not a large issue for Kiribati. Debt service as percentage of exports of goods and services was 8.4% in 2011 and 11.4% in 2012. With repayments of large SOE debts in 2014 the figure is expected to drop substantially in 2015 to less than 10%. In 2015, the present value of debt was 28% of GDP. However, the World Bank does classify Kiribati as being under high risk of debt distress mainly because of the present value of debt/export ratio which is high, because of the very low level of exports from Kiribati.
Target 8E. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

Achievement

- The measure of this target is the proportion of the population with access to affordable, essential drugs on a sustainable basis. In Kiribati, all drugs supplied through the hospital services are free. Nevertheless, access to medical facilities is limited in the outer islands. There are no privately run pharmacies in Kiribati.

Target 8F. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Achievement

- The number of telephone lines per 100 people has doubled from 2008 to 2009 (4.2 to 8.6) but since then usage has plateaued out. The figure is 8.8 in 2013. The number of cellular subscribers per 100 people has risen substantially between 2008 and 2013 rising from 1.1 to 16.6 respectively. The number of internet users per 100 people has multiplied dramatically from 4.5 in 2006 to 11.5 in 2013 (see figure 20). The Government has opened the telecommunications sector to competition and has recently privatised the State-Owned TSKL.

Figure 22: Mobile Cellular Subscriptions, Telephone Lines and Internet Users, Kiribati, 1990 to 2013.