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# LABOUR IN KIRIBATI

**BASED ON ANALYSIS OF THE  
2019/20 HOUSEHOLD INCOME  
AND EXPENDITURE SURVEY**



**KIRIBATI  
NATIONAL  
STATISTICS  
OFFICE**



**SDD**  
Statistics for  
Development  
Division



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Edited by Michael K. Sharp; designed and layout by Gaëlle Le Gall-Queguineur



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## Acronyms and abbreviations

AUD	Australian dollar, currency used by Kiribati
EPR	Employment to Population Ratio
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HH	household
HIES	Household Income Expenditure Survey
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICSE-93	Revision of the International Classification of Status in Employment 1993
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISCO-08	International Standard Classification of Occupations 2008
ISIC Rev.4	International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities Revision 4
KILM	Key Indicators of Labour Market
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
WAP	Working-age Population

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This report describes Kiribati's labour market in i-Kiribati. It characterizes the labour force and provides information on labour market participation by industry and occupation, including participation in primary activities such as fisheries and agriculture, and other important information on wages and work conditions. This report identifies populations that are unemployed and underemployed, and those working in conditions with low or unequal access to employment and social security, with the objective of achieving event work for all and economic growth in Kiribati.

The Kiribati National Statistics Office (KINSO) would like to acknowledge and thank the respondents to the 2019/20 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES). Acknowledgement and thanks is also given to the staff of the KINSO, especially Aritita Tekaieti, HIES Manager, Tiriara Ikam, HIES Coordinator, and Agnether Lemuelu, Data Manager, as well as the Supervisors and Enumerators of the 2019/20 HIES, who were so crucial in the collection of the information labour markets in Kiribati. KINSO would like to finally thank and acknowledge our international partners, the Statistics for Development Division of the Pacific Community (Michael Sharp, Toga Raikoti, Bertrand Buffiere, Nathalie Troubat, Olivier Menaouer and Luis de la Rua and Gaëlle Le Gall-Queguineur), who provided technical assistance to all aspects of the HIES, and to the International Labour Organization Phu Huynh and Felix Weidenkaff for their support in collecting and processing the labour market data and in undertaking the analysis presented herein.

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## Foreword

The 2019 household income and expenditure survey (HIES) of Kiribati was only the third such survey conducted by the National Statistics Office (NSO), with the previous one dating as far in 2006 and first one in 1996. The 2006 and 2019 collected significant information on the country's labour market in line with latest standards from the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) of October 2013. The HIES 2019 was implemented during a 12-month data collection period from April 2019 to March 2020.

In 2019 the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Statistics for Development Division of the Pacific Community (SPC/SDD) developed a standard labour force module for inclusion in all HIES implemented in the Pacific Island countries. The module was approved by the Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB) in May 2019, following testing implemented in Kiribati. The labour force module, which is in line with the latest international standards on labour force statistics, and provides core data on the labour force, was then included in the full HIES 2019 of Kiribati. The report on Kiribati Labour Market Monograph – Results from HIES 2019, presents results of that labour force module of the survey.

The labour market monograph provides significant information on the country's labour market situation, by presenting the analysis of demographic characteristics and labour force characteristics of Kiribati. The report presents data of the labour force, employment, informal sector and employment, wages, working time, and labour underutilization with selected main disaggregation variables such as age, sex, and urban-rural areas. The report also covers data on the population outside the labour force, including persons involved in subsistence work and household (HH) care as their main activity.

The labour market monograph 2019 provides an updated picture of Kiribati labour market, which we hope will be useful in informing a wide range of national economic and social policies, as well as the country's decent work agenda.

## Executive summary

In 2019 the ILO and SPC Statistics for Development Division (SPC/SDD) developed a standard labour force module for inclusion in all HIES implemented in the Pacific island countries. The module was approved by the Pacific Statistics Methods Board (PSMB) in May 2019. Kiribati was among the first countries to implement the labour force module, which was in line with the latest international standards on labour force statistics (ILO, 2013) and provided core data on the labour force. The HIES 2019 was implemented during a 12-month period from April 2019 to March 2020.

This labour force module reports key characteristics on the country's employment-related statistics, with an aim to present a comprehensive labour market and socio-economic background. However, the full labour underutilization statistics cannot be presented as working time was not fully measured in this survey round.

### Summary of key labour market indicators

The total HH population in Kiribati was estimated to be 118,480 persons, of whom, 59,984 were male and 58,496 were female. Two third (64.5%) of population were at working-age (aged 15+), totalling 76,910 persons. In addition, 27,540 persons of working-age were in the labour force, marking an overall national labour force participation rate (LFPR) of 35.8%. There were 16,353 men and 11,187 women in the labour force, resulting in an average LFPR of 43.1% for men and 28.7% for women.

In the labour force, 25,172 were in employment, of which, 59.4% (14,956 persons) were male workers and 40.6% (or 10,217 persons) were female workers. Youth (aged 15–24) made up 16.7% of all employed persons. Meanwhile, 47.6% of employed persons were informally employed. Some 2,400 persons were unemployed, marking the average unemployment rate at 8.6%. Additionally, 1,033 persons between ages 15 and 24 years were unemployed, marking the youth unemployment rate at 22.5%. Half of young men and women (49.8%) were not in employment, education or training (NEET).

**Table 1.** Key labour market indicators by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Working-age population (aged 15+)	37,910	39,000	76,910
Labour force	16,353	11,187	27,540
Employment	14,956	10,217	25,172
Labour force participation rate (%)	43.1	28.7	35.8
Unemployment rate (%)	8.5	8.7	8.6
By age			
15–24	21.2	24.6	22.5
25+	5.9	5.7	5.8
25–64	6.0	5.8	5.9
65+	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*
By disability status			
With any disability	12.1	10.8	11.4
No disability	8.5	8.6	8.5
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (aged 15–24, %)	50.6	48.9	49.8
Informal employment rate (%)	49.1	45.5	47.6

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

**Table 2.** Selected indicators of the labour force by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Population (aged 15+)	37,910	39,000	76,910
Labour force	16,353	11,187	27,540
By educational attainment (% distribution)			
Less than primary or none	1.5*	0.6*	1.1*
Completed primary	17.4	10.6	14.6
Completed secondary	75.1	77.8	76.2
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	4.9	10.4	7.1
Level not stated	1.1*	0.7*	1.0*
Labour force participation rate (%)	43.1	28.7	35.8
Employment	14,956	10,217	25,172
By economic activity (% distribution)			
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	25.2	4.9	16.9
Industry	10.2	7.0	8.9
Services	64.7	88.1	74.2
By employment status (% distribution)			
Employees	70.4	62.7	67.3
Employers	1.4*	2.7*	1.9
Own-account workers	14.9	24.6	18.8
Contributing family workers	6.8	6.8	6.8
Workers not classifiable by status	6.5	3.3	5.2
Share of informal employment (%)	49.1	45.5	47.6
Average monthly wages, employees, main job (AUD <sup>1</sup> )	548	419	499
Unemployment	1,397	970	2,368
Unemployment rate (%)	8.5	8.7	8.6

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Notes: 1. Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding. This applies to all tables throughout this report.

2. (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

**Table 3.** Selected indicators of the labour force by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
Population (aged 15+)	41,270	13,330	5,650	10,900	5,760	76,910
Labour force	17,658	3,793	1,822	2,824	1,443	27,540
By educational attainment (% distribution)						
Less than primary or none	1.0*	1.2*	2.7*	1.3*	0.4*	1.1*
Completed primary	12.8	21.9	15.6	17.4	11.3	14.6
Completed secondary	75.8	74.5	79.3	74.5	84.2	76.2
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	9.2	2.3*	2.3*	5.0*	4.0*	7.1
Level not stated	1.2*	0.0*	0.0*	1.8*	0.0*	1.0*

<sup>1</sup> The Australian dollar (AUD) is the official currency of Kiribati.

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
Labour force participation rate (%)	42.8	28.5	32.3	25.9	25.1	35.8
Employment	16,007	3,628	1,649	2,538	1,351	25,172
By economic activity (% distribution)						
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	11.7	19.7	45.8	33.4	5.0*	16.9
Industry	9.8	12.0	5.5*	3.9*	3.2*	8.9
Services	78.5	68.3	48.7	62.6	91.8	74.2
By employment status (% distribution)						
Employees	74.9	50.4	35.6	48.5	95.6	67.3
Employers	2.2*	1.1*	1.8*	2.1*	0.8*	1.9
Own-account workers	12.1	34.0	30.8	40.7	2.7	18.8
Contributing family workers	6.8	3.3	24.8	3.4	0.4	6.8
Workers not classifiable by status	4.0	11.2	7.1	5.4	0.6	5.2
Share of informal employment (%)	41.9	64.1	69.9	58.3	24.1	47.6
Average monthly wages, employees, main job (AUD)	551	386	316	326	416	499
Unemployment	1,651	165*	173*	286	93*	2,368
Unemployment rate (%)	9.3	4.4*	9.5*	10.1	6.4*	8.6

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.



# 1. Demographic characteristics

Chapter 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the Kiribati population. It contains the statistics of the total population in the country, population disaggregated by age groups, educational attainment, and disability incidence by sex (Table 4) and by regions (Table 5).

## 1.1. Demographic characteristics of the population

In 2019, Kiribati reported a total HH resident population of 118,480, amongst whom, 59,984 were men and 58,496 were women. About 57.9% of Kiribati population lived in urban areas, counting for 68,551 persons, while 42.1% (or 49,929 persons) lived in rural areas.

Looking at the educational attainment, 31.6% of the population completed the primary education, 46.4% completed the secondary studies, and only 2% reached tertiary education. It is noticeable that women had a slightly higher tertiary attainment rate (2.3%) than their male counterpart (1.8%).

With regards to the overall incidence of disability in Kiribati, it is estimated that among all persons aged 5+, 5,738 persons (4.8%) had disability. Meanwhile, women had reported a higher incidence rate of disability (5.3%) than men (4.4%).

**Table 4.** Population by sex, age, education and disability status

	Male	Female	Total
Total population	59,984	58,496	118,480
By 5-year age group			
0–4	8,031	6,859	14,890
5–9	7,271	6,459	13,730
10–14	6,772	6,178	12,950
15–19	5,499	4,861	10,360
20–24	6,005	5,665	11,670
25–29	5,024	4,986	10,010
30–34	4,657	4,573	9,230
35–39	3,647	3,893	7,540
40–44	2,947	3,203	6,150
45–49	2,621	2,279	4,900
50–54	2,459	2,961	5,420
55–59	2,035	2,305	4,340
60–64	1,278	1,542	2,820
65+	1,739	2,731	4,470
By educational attainment			
Less than primary or none	6,796	5,997	12,794
Completed primary	19,647	17,846	37,493
Completed secondary	26,708	28,273	54,981
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	1,054	1,370	2,424
Level not stated	5,779	5,010	10,789
By disability status (aged 5+)			
With any disability	2,609	3,128	5,738
No disability	49,344	48,508	97,852

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table 5.** Population by regions, age and education

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
Total population	63,140	21,360	8,810	16,320	8,850	118,480
By 5-year age group						
0–4	8,720	2,410	1,110	1,740	910	14,890
5–9	6,950	2,880	1,080	1,850	970	13,730
10–14	6,200	2,740	970	1,830	1,210	12,950
15–19	4,850	2,120	820	1,600	970	10,360
20–24	6,470	2,040	820	1,430	910	11,670
25–29	6,210	1,440	600	1,180	580	10,010
30–34	5,460	1,500	620	1,050	600	9,230
35–39	4,310	1,230	550	920	530	7,540
40–44	3,310	1,100	440	850	450	6,150
45–49	2,480	870	400	750	400	4,900
50–54	2,580	950	460	980	450	5,420
55–59	2,190	680	350	760	360	4,340
60–64	1,390	540	210	460	220	2,820
65+	2,020	860	380	920	290	4,470
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	6,536	2,327	1,067	1,908	956	12,794
Completed primary	16,948	8,347	2,946	5,827	3,425	37,493
Completed secondary	31,260	8,952	3,997	6,967	3,804	54,981
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	2,013	108*	65*	177*	63*	2,424
Level not stated	6,383	1,626	735	1,441	603	10,789

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

The distribution of the total population by 5-year age band was based on the actual data collected in the HIES. Figure 1 indicates the size distribution of the age categories by males and females, respectively.

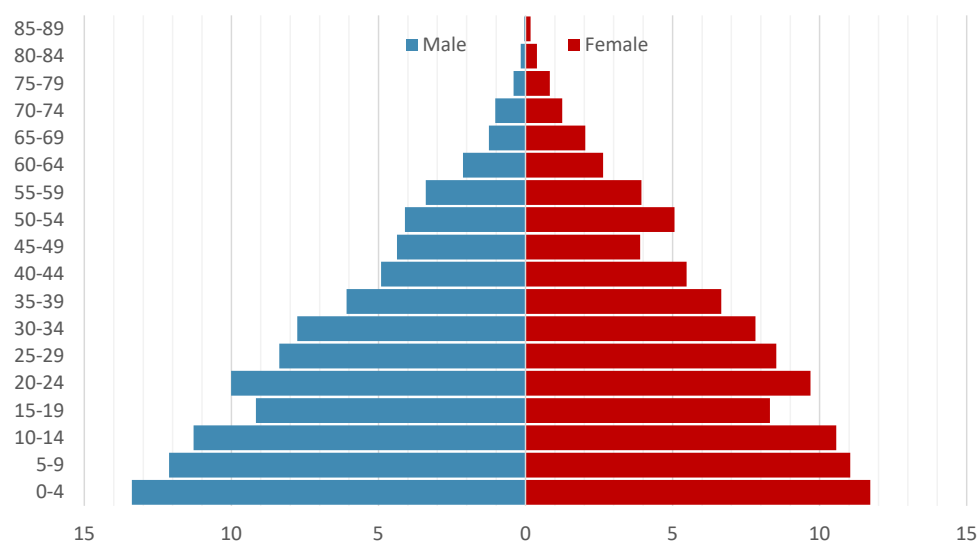
The population pyramid of Kiribati presented a large base and a small top, indicating the country has a young population. The demographic structure of the country is still at the early demographic dividend stage<sup>2</sup>, while this means a relatively low

share of the working-age population at the present, it also suggests a rapid growing labour force in the future. The lower numbers in cohort 15–19 date already from the 2005 census<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Early population dividend stage refers to a country with increasing working-age population share.

ILO (International Labour Organization). 2018. Asia-Pacific employment and social outlook 2018: advancing decent work for sustainable development.

<sup>3</sup> National Statistical Office (NSO). 2007. Kiribati 2005 Census Volume 2: Analytical Report. January. Available at: <https://nso.gov.ki/census/population-and-housing-census-2005/>.



**Figure 1.** Population pyramid by age

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

## 2. Labour force and labour force participation rate

Chapter 2 presents statistics of the working-age population, labour force, and population outside of the labour force by sex (Table 6) and by regions (Table 7). This chapter also displays information about the labour force disaggregated by age group and by educational attainment.

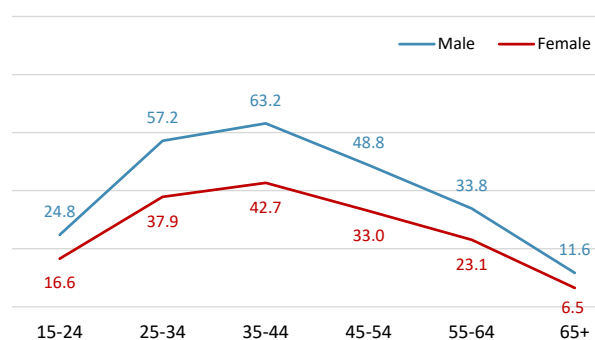
### 2.1. Economic activity rate

The working-age population refers to persons who are aged 15+. The total working-age population in Kiribati was estimated to be 76,910 persons, representing 64.9% of total population. Among those persons of working-age, 25,540 were in the labour force (previously known as the economically active population).

The overall labour force participation rate (LFPR) in Kiribati was 35.8%, and was low compared to the average Pacific regional rate of 62.7%<sup>4</sup>. Table 3.1 shows a noticeably higher LFPR for male than that for female. While 16,353 (or 43.1%) men of working-age were in the labour force, only 11,187 (or 28.1%) working-age were in the labour force. Among those who reported reasons for economic inactivity,

more than half were due to HH care responsibility (see details in Chapter 8) and skill mismatches.

The LFPR in Kiribati presented an inverse-U shape (Fig. 2), with the labour force concentrated among persons between ages 25 and 55-years. Men had higher LFPR than women in all age groups.



**Figure 2.** Labour force participation rate (%) by sex and age group

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

South Tarawa, the region that counted for more than half of total working-age population in the country, had the highest LFPR rate of 42.8%. The labour force in the rest of the country was less than 33% (Table 7).

<sup>4</sup> ILO. (2020). Pacific Labour Market Review 2020 – Pre-COVID-19 Baseline Labour Market Information for Post-disaster Recovery, available at: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-suva/documents/publication/wcms\\_754824.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-suva/documents/publication/wcms_754824.pdf)

**Table 6.** Working-age population and labour force by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Working-age population (aged 15+)	37,910	39,000	76,910
Labour force	16,353	11,187	27,540
By age group			
15–24	2,852	1,743	4,595
25+	13,501	9,444	22,945
25–64	13,298	9,267	22,566
65+	203	177	379
By educational attainment			
Less than primary or none	252*	64*	316*
Completed primary	2,840	1,186	4,025
Completed secondary	12,281	8,701	20,983
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	793	1,161	1,954
Level not stated	186*	75*	262*
Outside labour force	21,558	27,812	49,370
Labour force participation rate (%)	43.1	28.7	35.8
By age group			
15–24	24.8	16.6	20.9
25+	51.1	33.2	41.8
25–64	53.9	36.0	44.8
65+	11.6	6.5	8.5
By educational attainment			
Less than primary or none	22.1*	4.9*	12.9*
Completed primary	32.7	15.1	24.3
Completed secondary	46.3	31.0	38.4
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	75.3	84.7	80.6
Level not stated	36.3*	21.3*	30.2*

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

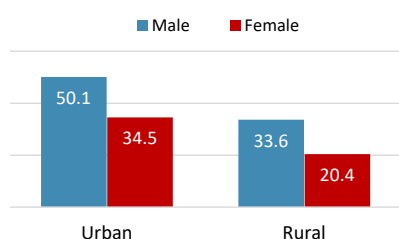
**Table 7.** Working-age population and labour force by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
Working-age population (aged 15+)	41,270	13,330	5,650	10,900	5,760	76,910
Labour force	17,658	3,793	1,822	2,824	1,443	27,540
By age group						
15–24	2,844	686	384	409	271	4,595
25+	14,813	3,106	1,438	2,414	1,172	22,945
25–64	14,569	3,035	1,406	2,389	1,166	22,566
65+	245	72	32	25	6	379
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	177*	47*	49*	36*	6*	316*
Completed primary	2,254	831	285	492	163	4,025
Completed secondary	13,390	2,827	1,445	2,104	1,216	20,983
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	1,626	88*	42*	140*	58*	1,954
Level not stated	211*	0*	0*	51*	0*	262
Outside labour force	23,612	9,537	3,828	8,076	4,317	49,370
Labour force participation rate (%)	42.8	28.5	32.3	25.9	25.1	35.8
By age group						
15–24	25.1	16.5	23.4	13.5	14.4	20.9
25+	49.5	33.9	35.9	30.7	30.2	41.8
25–64	52.2	36.5	38.7	34.4	32.5	44.8
65+	12.1	8.3	8.4	2.7	2.0	8.5
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	17.4*	9.8*	24.3*	6.9*	2.9*	12.9*
Completed primary	33.3	22.0	20.8	16.5	9.8	24.3
Completed secondary	43.2	31.7	36.4	30.5	32.1	38.4
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	80.8	82.0*	65.5*	79.2*	92.9*	80.6
Level not stated	45.9*	0.0*	0.0*	16.6*	0.0*	30.2*

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

More than two-thirds (68.5%) of the Kiribati labour force were concentrated in urban areas, totalling 18,867 persons. The LFPR of urban areas was 42.1%, which was considerably higher than in rural areas (27%). Meanwhile, gender gaps were salient when disaggregating labour force by urban-rural split. While half of men from urban areas participated in the labour force, only one in five women from rural areas were active in the labour market (Fig. 3).

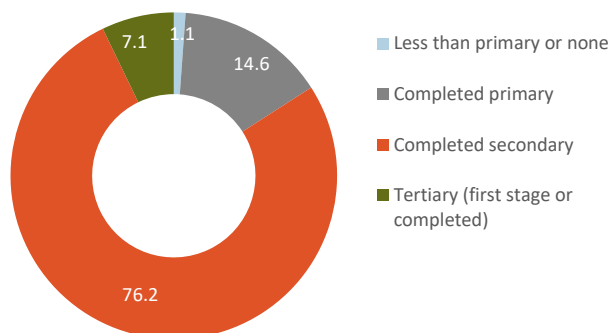


**Figure 3.** Labour force participation rate (%) by sex and geographic location

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

## 2.2. Labour force by educational attainment

In terms of labour force distribution by the highest level of educational attainment, it is estimated that more than three quarters of the Kiribati labour force reached secondary education as their highest level of attainment (76.2%), 15.7% had primary education or less, and only 7.1% reached tertiary education (Fig. 4).

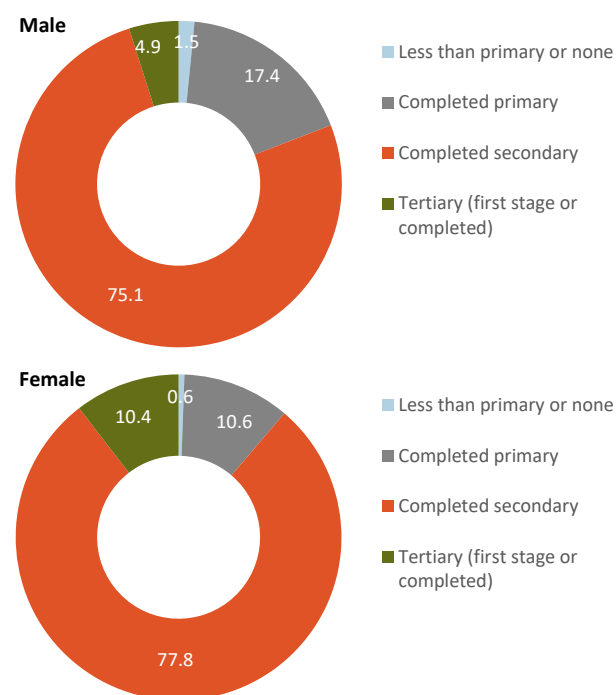


**Figure 4.** Distribution of labour force by educational attainment (%)

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

The share of female labour force who completed secondary or higher education was greater than the male labour force. Specifically, 88.2% of female labour force completed secondary or higher education, while the share of those among male labour force was 80%. The gender gap became larger

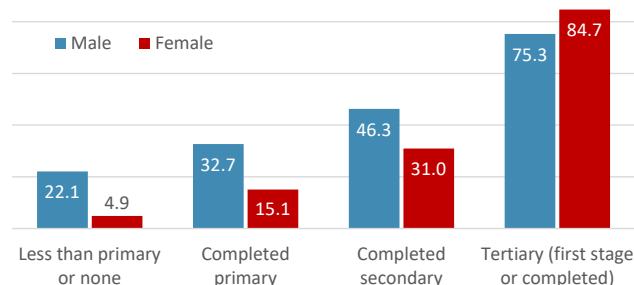
when it comes to the tertiary education. While one in ten women in the labour force received tertiary study, only one in twenty men in the labour force reached this level of study (Fig. 5).



**Figure 5.** Distribution of labour force by sex and educational attainment (%)

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

The LFPR increased as the level of educational attainment raised. The LFPR for tertiary, secondary, primary, and less than primary level was 80.6%, 38.4%, 24.3%, and 12.9%, respectively. Receiving tertiary education substantially increased the labour force participation, especially for women. The LFPR of women with tertiary education was 84.7%, which was three times as much as it is for women with lower educational attainment. Finally, women with tertiary education also had a higher LFPR than men with the same educational attainment (Fig. 6).



**Figure 6.** Labour force participation rate (%) by sex and educational attainment

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.



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### 2.3. The population outside the labour force

The population outside the labour force is defined as people who are neither in employment nor in unemployment, including students, old age, and those engaged in unpaid HH or family duties. Shown in Table 8, 49,370 persons (or 64.2%) of working-age in Kiribati were outside the labour force. Women were more likely to be outside the labour force. Specifically, it is estimated that there were 27,812 (or 71.3%) women and 21,558 (or 56.9%) men of working-age outside of labour force.

By educational attainment, persons with higher education were less likely to be outside of labour force. On average, 87.1% of working-age population with less than primary education were outside labour force, comparing to 19.4% of working-age population with tertiary education who were outside labour force.

**Table 8.** Working-age pop. outside the labour force by age group and educational attainment

	# of persons			% of total working-age population		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Outside labour force	21,558	27,812	49,370	56.9	71.3	64.2
By age group						
15–24	8,652	8,783	17,435	75.2	83.4	79.1
25+	12,906	19,029	31,935	48.9	66.8	58.2
25–64	11,370	16,474	27,844	46.1	64.0	55.2
65+	1,536	2,555	4,091	88.4	93.5	91.5
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	890	1,243	2,133	77.9	95.1	87.1
Completed primary	5,848	6,681	12,529	67.3	84.9	75.7
Completed secondary	14,232	19,400	33,633	53.7	69.0	61.6
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	261*	209*	470	24.7*	15.3*	19.4
Level not stated	326	279	606	63.7	78.7	69.8

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

### 3. Employment

Chapter 3 presents the statistics of the employed population by sex (Table 9) and by regions (Table 10). The employed population is defined as all persons of working-age (15+ years) who, during a specified reference period (seven days prior to the survey), were engaged in any activities to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit.

#### 3.1. Employment and its main classifications

In Kiribati, the total employed population was estimated to be 25,172 persons, representing 32.7% of the working-age population. Among those employed persons, 59.6% were men (14,956 persons) and 40.6% were women (10,217 persons). Disaggregated by age group, 14.2% or 3,562 persons were youth (aged 15–24), 85.8% or 21,610 persons were aged 25+.

**Table 9.** Employment by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Employment (aged 15+)	14,956	10,217	25,172
By age group (% distribution)			
15–24	15.0	12.9	14.2
25+	85.0	87.1	85.8
25–64	83.6	85.4	84.3
65+	1.4*	1.7*	1.5
By disability status (% distribution)			
With any disability	1.5	2.9	2.1
No disability	98.5	97.1	97.9
By economic activity (% distribution)			
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	25.2	4.9	16.9
Industry	10.2	7.0	8.9
Manufacturing	4.2	6.6	5.2
Construction	4.4	0.0*	2.6
Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas and water supply	1.5*	0.3*	1.0*
Services	64.7	88.1	74.2
Wholesale and retail trade	18.5	34.1	24.8
Hotels and accommodations	1.6	1.3*	1.5
Restaurants, food and beverage services	0.6*	2.9*	1.5*

	Male	Female	Total
Administrative and support services	4.4	0.8*	2.9
Public administration and defence	13.7	11.3	12.7
Education	4.2	17.7	9.7
Other services	21.8	19.9	21.0
By status of employment (% distribution)			
Employees	70.4	62.7	67.3
Employers	1.4*	2.7*	1.9
Own-account workers	14.9	24.6	18.8
Contributing family workers	6.8	6.8	6.8
Workers not classifiable by status	6.5	3.3	5.2
By occupation (% distribution)			
Managers	5.6	5.5	5.6
Professionals	8.0	23.9	14.5
Technicians and associate professionals	7.8	6.8	7.4
Clerical support workers	1.0*	6.9	3.4
Service and sales workers	18.9	38.1	26.7
Skilled agricultural, forestry & fishery workers	8.6	1.5	5.7
Craft and related trades workers	8.2	8.8	8.4
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	11.0	0.4*	6.7
Elementary occupations	30.8	8.0	21.5
Employment-to-population ratio (aged 15+, %)	39.4	26.2	32.7
By age group (ERP)			
15–24	19.5	12.5	16.2
25+	48.1	31.3	39.4
25–64	50.7	33.9	42.1
65+	11.6	6.5	8.5

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Notes: 1. Hotels and accommodations include ISIC Rev. 4 Division 55. Restaurants, food and beverage services include ISIC Rev. 4 Division 56.

2. (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

**Table 10.** Employment by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
Employment (aged 15+)	16,007	3,628	1,649	2,538	1,351	25,172
By age group (% distribution)						
15–24	13.3	16.9	18.0	11.6	17.3	14.2
25+	86.7	83.1	82.0	88.4	82.7	85.8
25–64	85.2	81.1	80.0	87.4	82.3	84.3
65+	1.5*	2.0*	1.9*	1.0*	0.4*	1.5
By economic activity (% distribution)						
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	11.7	19.7	45.8	33.4	5.0	16.9
Industry	9.8	12.0	5.5	3.9	3.2	8.9
Manufacturing	5.7	8.7*	2.3*	1.3*	0.3*	5.2
Construction	2.6	2.7*	3.3*	2.4*	2.2*	2.6
Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas and water supply	1.4*	0.6*	0.0*	0.2*	0.7*	1.0*
Services	78.5	68.3	48.7	62.6	91.8	74.2
Wholesale and retail trade	26.4	24.5	17.3	21.1	23.9	24.8
Hotels and accommodations	0.4*	1.3*	1.2*	1.1*	16.0	1.5
Restaurants, food and beverage services	2.1*	0.2*	0.9*	0.5*	0.1*	1.5*
Administrative and support services	4.1*	1.3*	0.0*	0.0*	2.2	2.9
Public administration and defence	11.1	12.6	11.7	18.1	23.6	12.7
Education	9.3	11.8	5.6*	10.5	11.7	9.7
Other services	24.1	16.6	12.0	11.3	14.4	20.4
By status of employment (% distribution)						
Employees	74.9	50.4	35.6	48.5	95.6	67.3
Employers	2.2*	1.1*	1.8*	2.1*	0.8*	1.9
Own-account workers	12.1	34.0	30.8	40.7	2.7*	18.8
Contributing family workers	6.8	3.3*	24.8	3.4*	0.4*	6.8
Workers not classifiable by status	4.0	11.2	7.1*	5.4*	0.6*	5.2
By occupation (% distribution)						
Managers	5.6	4.0*	4.2*	9.3	4.4*	5.6
Professionals	14.3	15.7	10.8	14.6	17.7	14.5
Technicians and associate professionals	8.4	5.5*	1.5*	6.7*	10.0	7.4
Clerical support workers	4.2	1.3*	1.2*	2.3*	3.8*	3.4
Service and sales workers	28.8	26.0	22.8	18.7	23.6	26.7
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	6.9	4.5*	6.0*	2.2*	1.8*	5.7
Craft and related trades workers	8.2	12.8	4.0*	5.6*	10.0	8.4
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	8.2	4.0*	5.0*	2.1*	7.0*	6.7
Elementary occupations	15.4	26.2	44.6	38.5	21.5	21.5
Employment-to-population ratio (aged 15+, %)	38.8	27.2	29.2	23.3	23.5	32.7

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
By age group (EPR)						
15–24	18.7	14.8	18.1	9.7	12.4	16.2
25+	46.4	32.9	33.7	28.5	28.8	39.4
25–64	48.8	35.4	36.3	31.9	31.0	42.1
65+	12.1	8.3	8.4	2.7	2.0	8.5

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

## Employment-to-population ratio

In Kiribati, the majority of the working-age population was outside of the labour force (Table 4.3), leading to a rather low employment-to-population ratio (EPR) of 32.7%. The employment-to-population ratio was higher in the urban areas (38.3%) than it in the rural areas (25%).

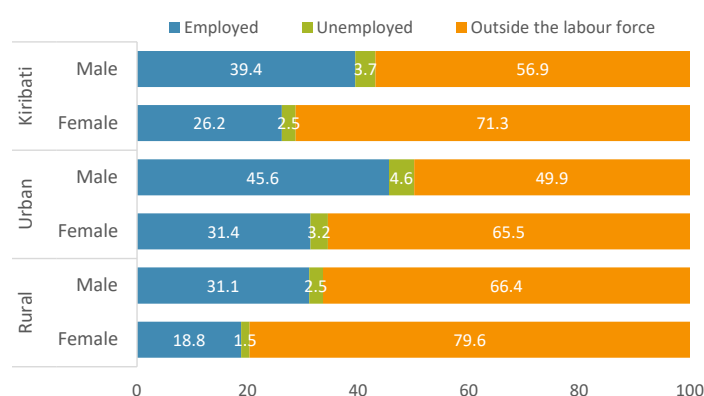
In both urban and rural areas, women had lower EPR than men. By main regions, South Tarawa had the highest EPR at 38.8%, while all the other regions had all less than 30% of EPR (Table 11).

Figure 7 shows that half of men in urban areas were in the labour force, and this group also had the highest EPR (45.6%). Meanwhile, only one in five women from rural areas were in the labour force.

**Table 11.** Population in employment, unemployment or outside the labour force, by sex and geographic location

		Labour force status		
		Employed	Unemployed	Outside the labour force
Kiribati	Male	14,956	1,397	21,558
	Female	10,217	970	27,812
	<b>Total</b>	<b>25,172</b>	<b>2,368</b>	<b>49,370</b>
Urban	Male	9,956	996	10,895
	Female	7,189	725	15,010
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17,146</b>	<b>1,721</b>	<b>25,905</b>
Rural	Male	4,999	401	10,662
	Female	3,027	245	12,803
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8,027</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>23,465</b>

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

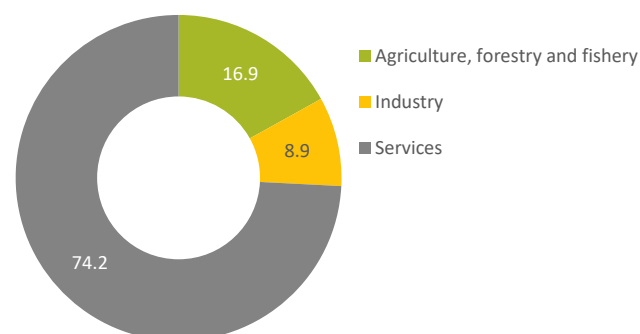


**Figure 7.** Share of population in employment, unemployment or outside the labour force by sex and geographic location (% in the working-age population)

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

## 3.2. Employment by economic activity

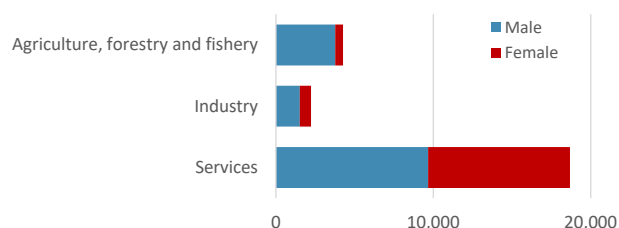
“Services” was the largest sector in terms of employment. It employed 18,676 workers, representing 74.2% of total employment. “Agriculture, forestry, and fishery” employed 4,264 workers, adding up to 16.9% of employed population. “Industry” employed 2,232 works, counting for 8.9% of total employment (Fig. 8).



**Figure 8.** Employment by economic sector (% distribution)

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

In all sectors, there were more male workers than female workers (Fig. 9). Respectively, the share of female workers in “Agriculture, forestry and fishery”, “Industry”, and “Services” sectors were 11.7%, 32%, and 48.2%. Women were more likely to be employed in the “Services” sector than men – 88.1% of female workers were in the “Services” sector, while 64.7% of male workers were in the same sector.

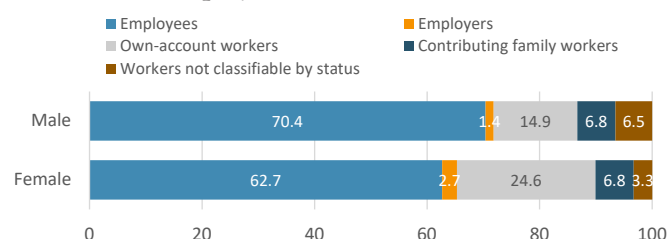


**Figure 9.** Employment by economic sector and sex  
Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

### 3.3. Employment by status in employment

The majority (67.3%) of employed persons in Kiribati worked as employees, followed by own-account workers (18.8%), contributing family workers (6.8%),

and employers (1.9%). More than 70% of male workers were employees, compared to 62.7% of female workers (Fig. 10). Consequently, women were more likely to be self-employed (34%) than men (23.1%).



**Figure 10.** Status in employment by sex (% distribution)

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

The labour market varied between urban and rural areas. In urban areas, 76.3% of employed persons were employees, while in rural areas less than half workers were employees (47.9%). Meanwhile, there were more own-account workers in rural areas (2,781 workers or 34.6% of rural employment) than it in urban areas (1,959 workers or 11.4% of urban employment).

## 4. Unemployment

Chapter 4 presents statistics of the unemployed population and the youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET). Statistics on the composite labour underutilization are not included in this report, as the measurement of working time was not sufficient enough to derive data on time-related underemployment.

### 4.1. Unemployment rate

Unemployed persons refer to those of working-age who are: a) without work during the reference period (seven days prior to the survey); b) currently available for work (for either paid wage employment or self-employment); and c) seeking work<sup>5</sup>.

It is estimated that there were 2,368 persons unemployed in Kiribati, resulting to an overall unemployment rate of 8.6% (Table 12). The youth (aged 15–24) unemployment rate was 22.5%, which was higher than the unemployment rate of people at other age groups.

**Table 12.** Unemployment by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Unemployment (aged 15+)	1,397	970	2,368
By age group			
15–24	604	429	1,033
25+	793	541	1,334
25–64	793	541	1,334
65+	0*	0*	0*
Unemployment rate (aged 15+, %)	8.5	8.7	8.6
By age group			
15–24	21.2	24.6	22.5
25+	5.9	5.7	5.8
25–64	6.0	5.8	5.9
65+	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

<sup>5</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). (2013). Resolution Concerning Statistics of Work, Employment, and Labour Underutilization. In 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Geneva: ILO.



**Figure 11.** Unemployed persons aged 15+, and unemployment rate (%) by sex and age group

The unemployment rates varied by region. Southern Is. had the highest unemployment rate of 10.1%, whereas Northern Is. had the lowest unemployment rate of 4.4% (Table 13). By urban-rural split, the unemployment rate was higher in urban areas (9.1%) than it in rural areas (7.5%).

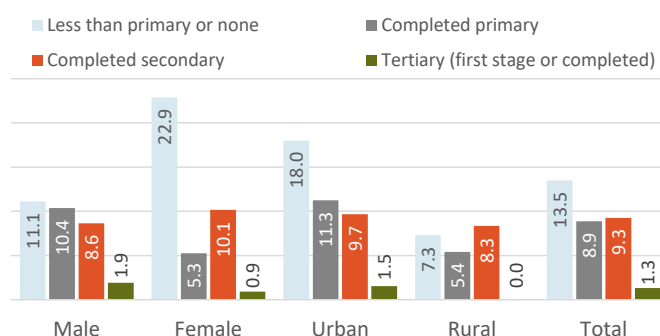
**Table 13.** Unemployment by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
Unemployment (aged 15+)	1,651	165*	173*	286	93*	2,368
By age group						
15-24	722	72*	86*	115*	38*	1,033
25+	929	93*	87*	171*	55*	1,334
25-64	929	93*	87*	171*	55*	1,334
65+	0*	0*	0*	0*	0*	0*
Unemployment rate (aged 15+, %)	9.3	4.4*	9.5*	10.1	6.4*	8.6
By age group						
15-24	25.4	10.5*	22.5*	28.0	13.9*	22.5
25+	6.3	3.0*	6.1*	7.1*	4.7*	5.8
25-64	6.4	3.1*	6.2*	7.2*	4.7*	5.9
65+	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

In terms of educational attainment, workers whose educational attainment was less than primary or none had the highest unemployment rate of 13.5%. This rate was 10 times higher than the unemployment rate of workers who reached tertiary education at 1.3% (Fig. 12).



**Figure 12.** Unemployment rate (%) by sex, geographic location and educational attainment

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

## 4.2. Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)

It is estimated that 10,967 youth, who were aged 15-24, were not in employment, education, or training (NEET), representing 49.8% of youth in Kiribati. More than half (50.6%) of young men were NEETs, and 48.9% of young women were NEET. There was a lower NEETs incidence rate in urban areas (44.9%) than it in rural areas (56.2%).

**Table 15.** Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) by sex

	Male	Female	Total
NEET (aged 15-24)	5,821	5,146	10,967
NEET rate (aged 15-24, %)	50.6	48.9	49.8

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES

**Table 16.** Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
NEET (aged 15-24)	5,054	2,289	837	1,776	1,010	10,967
NEET rate (aged 15-24, %)	44.6	55.0	51.1	58.6	53.7	49.8

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

## 5. Informal sector and informal employment

Chapter 5 presents statistics of persons employed in the informal sector and persons with informal employment.

Employment in the informal sector comprises all jobs in informal sector enterprises, or persons who, during a given reference period (seven days prior to the survey), were employed in at least one informal sector enterprise, irrespective of their status in employment and whether it was their main or a secondary job. A formal sector enterprise is defined in this report as either a public enterprise, or a private enterprise that is registered or has full bookkeeping for national reporting. In this report employment in the informal sector refers to main job only.

Informal employment combines both the enterprise-based concept of informal sector and a job-based concept of employment informality. Employees are considered to have informal jobs if their employment relationship is, in law or in practice, not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits. In this report, employees are considered as having a formal job if the employer contributes to a national pension or social protection system on their behalf, or if they received both paid sick leave and paid annual leave.

Informal employment can be carried out in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, or HHs. The informal employment rate is a key indicator of the quality of employment in an economy.

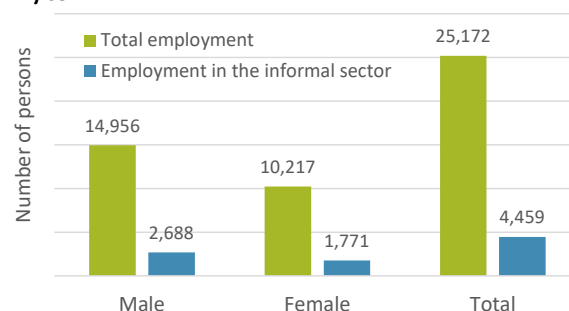
### 5.1. Employment in the informal sector

In Kiribati, 4,459 workers were employed in the informal sector, representing 17.7% of total employment (Table 17). The share of male workers (18%) in the informal sector was slightly higher than that of female workers (17.3%). Youth (18.4%) had a slightly higher rate of employment in the informal sector than adults (17.6%).

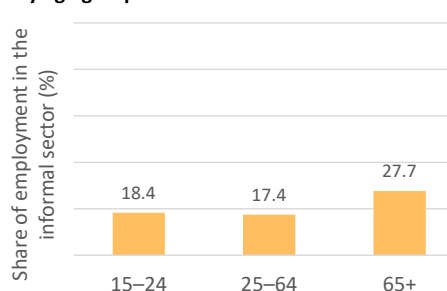
The share of employment in the informal sector went up as workers' educational attainment decreased. On average, 8.2% of workers with tertiary education were employed in the informal sector, while 16.9%

of workers who completed secondary education were employed in the informal sector. And the rate of employment in the informal sector went up to 26.1% among those who had primary education or lower.

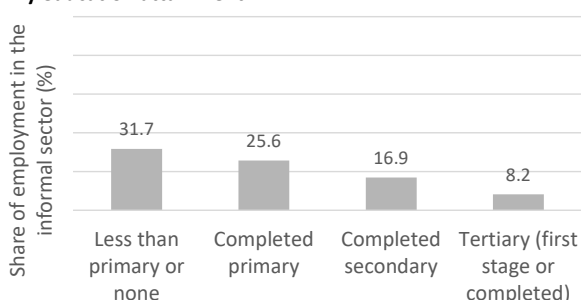
**By sex**



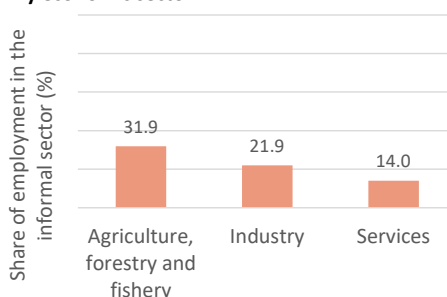
**By age group**



**By education attainment**



**By economic sector**



**Figure 13.** Numbers and share of employment in the informal sector by sex, age group, educational attainment, and economic sector

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table 17.** Profile of employment in the informal sector

	Persons			Share of total employment (%)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Employment in the informal sector (aged 15+)	2,688	1,771	4,459	18.0	17.3	17.7
By age group						
15–24	449	204*	654	20.0	15.6*	18.4
25+	2,239	1,566	3,805	17.6	17.6	17.6
25–64	2,219	1,482	3,700	17.7	17.0	17.4
65+	20*	85*	105*	10.0*	48.0*	27.7*
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	87*	0*	87*	38.7*	0.0*	31.7*
Completed primary	616	324	940	24.2	28.9	25.6
Completed secondary	1,897	1,330	3,227	16.9	17.0	16.9
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	55*	104*	158*	7.0*	9.0*	8.2*
Level not stated	34*	13*	47*	18.1*	17.1*	17.8*
By economic activity						
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	1,225	133	1,358	32.5	26.8	31.9
Industry	248*	242*	490*	16.3*	33.9*	21.9*
Services	1,215	1,396	2,611	12.6	15.5	14.0
By status of employment						
Employees	1,469	532	2,002	14.0	8.3	11.8
Employers	20*	83*	102*	9.3*	30.4*	21.2*
Own-account workers	730	858	1,588	32.8	34.1	33.5
Contributing family workers	169*	188*	356	16.6*	27.2*	20.9
Workers not classifiable by status	300	110*	410	30.8	32.7*	31.3
By main location (regions/ provinces/ islands)						
South Tarawa	1,523	1,196	2,719	16.5	17.7	17.0
Northern Is.	502	316*	818	22.5	22.6*	22.5
Central Is.	376	119*	495	34.3	21.6*	30.0
Southern Is.	224	120*	344	14.5	12.1*	13.6
The Line & Phoenix	62*	20*	83*	7.6*	3.9*	6.1*

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

By economic activities, jobs in “Agriculture, forestry and fishery” experienced the highest share of employment in the informal sector at 31.9%, followed by 21.9% in “Industry” and 14% in “Services”. Women were more likely to be employed in the informal sector in “Industry” and “Services” than men.

It is also worth noticing that some 4,300 persons were employed in HHs, making up 17% of total employment. Female workers were more likely to be employment in HHs (at 19.5%) than their male counterpart (15.2%). Much like workers in the informal sector, workers who worked in HHs also had high incidence of informal employment (see Table 19 for details).

## 5.2. Informal employment

About half (47.6%) of the workers in Kiribati were informally employed with male workers more likely to be in informal employment than female workers (Table 18). Youth had a higher rate (61.7%) of informal employment than adults (45.3%).

By educational attainment, the informal employment rate among workers with tertiary education level was the lowest at 12.2%. Women with tertiary education level had lower informal employment rate than men. The informal employment rate increased to 46% among workers with secondary education, and to 73.5% for those who had primary education or lower.

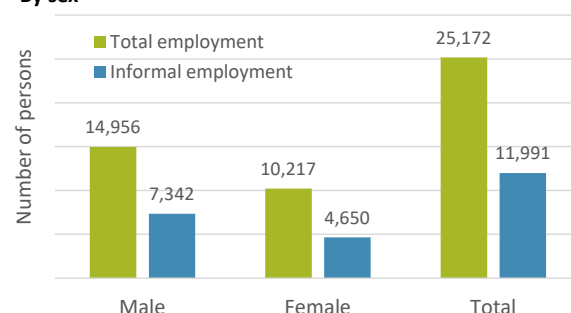
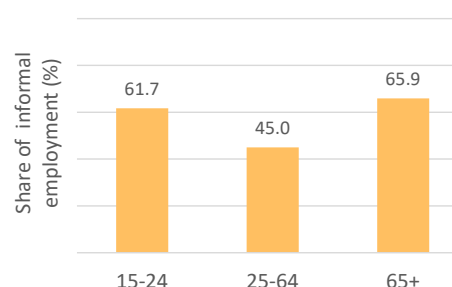
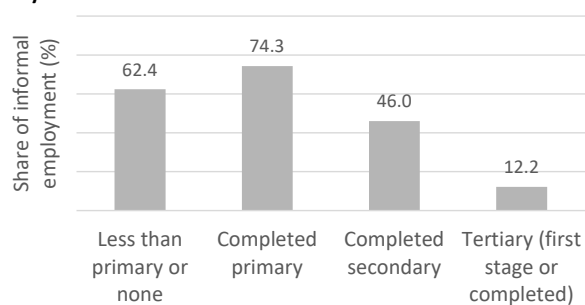
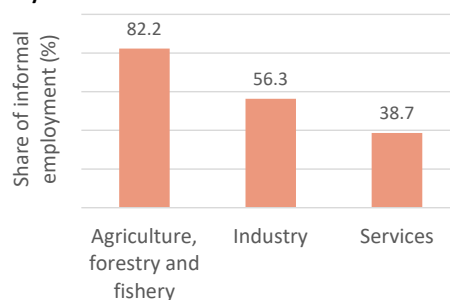
In terms of economic activities, the vast majority of those working in “Agriculture, forestry and fishery” were informally employed (82.2%), compared to 56.3 in “Industry” and 38.7% in “Services”. Women were more likely to be in informal employment in “Industry” and “Services” than men.

**Table 18.** Profile of informal employment

	Persons			Share of total employment (%)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Informal employment (aged 15+)	7,342	4,650	11,991	49.1	45.5	47.6
By age group						
15–24	1,497	700	2,197	66.6	53.3	61.7
25+	5,845	3,950	9,795	46.0	44.4	45.3
25–64	5,719	3,826	9,545	45.7	43.8	45.0
65+	126*	124*	250*	62.1*	70.2*	65.9*
By nature of production unit						
Informal sectors	2,610	1,757	4,367	97.1	99.2	97.9
Formal sectors	2,518	961	3,479	25.2	14.9	21.2
Households	2,214	1,932	4,146	97.2	97.0	97.1
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	146*	24*	170*	65.2*	49.6*	62.4
Completed primary	1,788	937	2,726	70.3	83.5	74.3
Completed secondary	5,191	3,567	8,758	46.3	45.6	46.0
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	146*	90*	236*	18.8*	7.8*	12.2*
Level not stated	70*	31*	101*	37.5*	41.4*	38.6*
By economic activity						
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	3,115	390	3,506	82.7	78.3	82.2
Industry	719	539	1,258	47.3	75.5	56.3
Services	3,508	3,721	7,228	36.3	41.3	38.7
By status of employment						
Employees	3,515	1,356	4,871	33.4	21.2	28.8
Employers	74*	149*	223*	35.2	54.9	46.3
Own-account workers	1,972	2,158	4,130	88.6	85.8	87.1
Contributing family workers	1,015	691	1,706	100.0	100.0	100.0
Workers not classifiable by status	766	295*	1,061	78.5	87.4*	80.8
By main location (regions/ provinces/ islands)						
South Tarawa	3,890	2,817	6,707	42.0	41.7	41.9
Northern Is.	1,436	891	2,326	64.4	63.8	64.1
Central Is.	785	367	1,152	71.7	66.4	69.9
Southern Is.	1,006	475	1,480	64.9	48.0	58.3
The Line & Phoenix	225	100*	325	27.3	19.1*	24.1

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

**By sex****By age group****By education attainment****By economic sector****Figure 14.** Number and share of informal employment by sex, age group, educational attainment, and economic sector

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Table 19 presents the joint distribution of the informal sector and informal employment. One in five (21.2%) workers in the formal sector had informal jobs, totalling 3,479 workers. These are essentially workers employed in paid jobs in the formal sector but on an informal basis, such as, temporary employment without social protection coverage.

Men in the formal sector were more likely to be informally employed than women. One fourth of male workers in the formal sector were in informal employment, while 14.9% of female workers in the formal sector were informally employed.

## 6. Wages

Chapter 6 presents information on wages from the main job of employees by sex (Table 20) and by region (Table 21).

In this report, information on income (wages and salaries) was analyzed for employees in their main job, combining both in cash and in kind payments. Where information on earnings in the main job was not paid on a monthly basis, it was converted into a monthly basis. All amounts were recorded in Australian dollars (AUD), the local currency of Kiribati.

### 6.1. Average monthly wages in the main job of employees

The average monthly wage of paid employees in Kiribati was estimated at AUD499. Male employees earned AUD548, which was considerably higher than what female employees earned, at AUD419, flagging an average gender pay gap of 23.5% in the country.

**Table 19.** Joint distribution of employment in the informal sector and informal employment

		Nature of Jobs		
		Informal jobs	Formal jobs	Total
Unit of Production	Informal sector enterprises	4,367	92	4,459
	Formal sector enterprises	3,479	12,964	16,443
	Households	4,146	125	4,270
	Total	11,991	13,181	25,172

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table 20.** Average monthly wage (in AUD) main job, by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Average monthly wages in main job of employees (AUD)	548	419	499
By age group			
15–24	391	375	385
25+	573	426	517
By economic activity			
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	977	305*	919**
Industry	469	477*	470
Services	473	420	450
By occupation			
Managers	652	622*	641
Professionals	559	438	477
Technicians and associate professionals	549	614	573
Clerical support workers	343*	445	426
Service and sales workers	333	299	316
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	1,164	672*	1,127**
Craft and related trades workers	434	300	393
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	553	226*	546
Elementary occupations	461	395*	455

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Notes: 1. (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

2. (\*\*) High averages influenced by only few cases earning above AUD2,000 per month.

**Table 21.** Average monthly wage (in AUD) main job, by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix Is.	Total
Average monthly wages in main job of employees (AUD)	551	386	316	326	416	499
By age group						
15–24	392	411	305	354	351	385
25+	575	381	317	321	430	517
By economic activity						
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	1,016	504*	372*	539*	416*	919**
Industry	480*	510*	225*	445*	423*	470
Services	491	361	318	307	415	450
By occupation						
Managers	816	230*	215*	253*	447*	641
Professionals	544	356	378	349	449	477
Technicians and associate professionals	665	273*	437*	354*	434	573
Clerical support workers	432	472*	580*	284*	391*	426
Service and sales workers	333	253*	207	160	384	316
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	1,142	1,248*	616*	547*	837*	1,127**
Craft and related trades workers	375	557*	229*	266*	444	393
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	587	281*	398*	811*	381*	546
Elementary occupations	509	312*	170*	374*	378	455

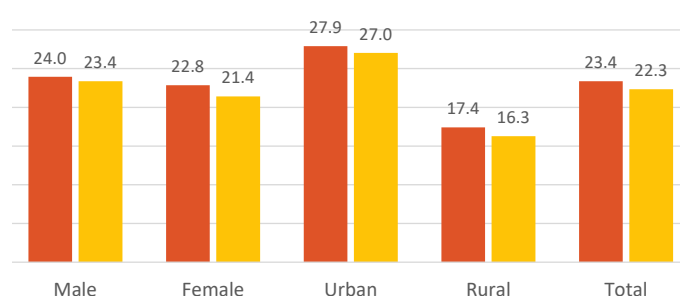
Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Notes: 1. (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

2. (\*\*) High averages influenced by only few cases earning above AUD2,000 per month.

As indicated in the notes of the tables above high earnings averages in agriculture are influenced by few cases earning about AUD2,000 and above. However, one may also note that some agricultural activities are indeed better paid in Kiribati, such as copra sales, and fishing and selling marine products. These cases although being somehow outliers, were not removed from the analysis as they may be reflecting a real situation in agriculture.

By age group, male employees aged 25+ in urban areas earned the highest monthly wage (AUD638) among all age groups, while female youth in rural areas earned the lowest monthly wage at AUD321. On average adults earned a higher monthly wage than youth in all groups, except for male employees in rural areas (Fig. 15).



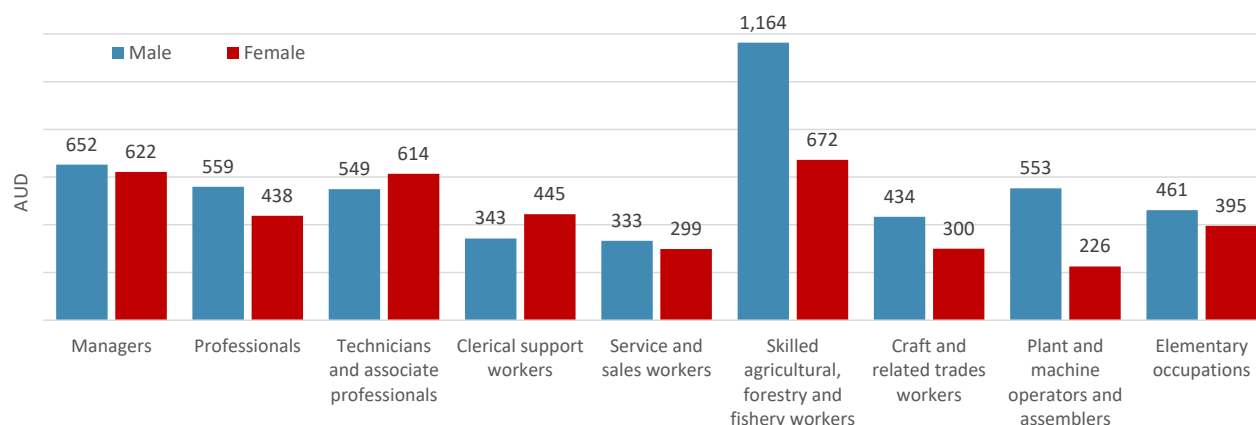
**Figure 15.** Average monthly wage (in AUD) main job, by sex, age group, and geographic location

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

By economic sector, the highest average monthly wage came from employees in “Agriculture, forestry and fishery” (AUD919), where male employees’ wage was more than three times higher than female employees. The average monthly wage in “Industry” was AUD470, followed by “Services” at AUD450.

By occupation, skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery employees had the highest average monthly wage at AUD1,127. Male employees on average earned more than female employees in all occupation except those who were technicians and

associate professionals and clerical support workers (Fig. 16). However one may need to remember that the conclusions above for agriculture are influenced by few special cases earning AUD2,000 and more in the sector.



**Figure 16.** Average monthly wage (in AUD) by sex and occupation

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

## 7. Main activity status and subsistence work

Chapter 7 presents statistics on the main activity status of the working-age population, as well as an estimation of persons involved in subsistence work. The results on the main activity status question reflect a self-assessment of the working-age population, i.e. a more social assessment of what people recognize as their main activity status at present.

### 7.1. Main activity status

Among 76,910 working-age population in Kiribati, 38,955 persons (or 50.7%) declared themselves mainly engaged in care works in HH or family. About 17,256 persons self-declared engaging in work other than HH care, namely, working in farming, raising animals or handicraft, working in fishing and gleaning seafood, working in government, NGO or private sector, and volunteer work, representing 22.4% of the working-age population (Table 22).

The share of women who self-declared taking care of HH or family as their main activity (57.1%) was higher than that of men (44%), while the share of women (16.9%) who self-declared to be mainly involved in work other than HH care was lower than that of their male counterpart (28.1%).

**Table 22.** Main activity status by sex (% in the working-age population)

	Male	Female	Total
Total working-age population	37,910	39,000	76,910
Main activity status			
Studying or training	8.5	10.4	9.4
Working in farming, raising animals or handicraft	0.8	0.3*	0.6
Working in fishing or gleaning seafood	1.5	0.1*	0.8
Working in another sector (e.g. gov., NGO, store, hotels, etc.)	23.8	15.3	19.5
Looking for work	10.6	6.9	8.7
Taking care of the household or family	44.0	57.1	50.7
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	2.0	1.2	1.6
Long-term illness, injury or disability	2.2	3.1	2.6
Retired or pensioner	3.0	2.7	2.9
Other activity	3.6	2.9	3.3

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

Of 22,030 young persons, 3,891 (or 17.7%) were looking for work, while the share among adults (aged 25+) was only 5.2% (Table 23). Taking care of the HH or family was the activity with most persons engaged across all age groups.

By geographic location, the share of working-age population who self-declared taking care of the HH or family as their main activity was higher in rural areas (62%) than that of those in urban areas (42.5%).

People who self-declared conducting work other than HH care as their main activity were concentrated in urban areas. About three quarters (75.3%) of working-age population mainly conducting work other than HH care were in urban areas, totalling 12,999 persons, while only 4,257 persons (or 24.7%) of those were in rural areas. What's more, 29% of working-age population from urban areas were in work other than HH care. This share was higher than their counterpart in rural areas at 13.2%.

**Table 23.** Main activity status by age groups (% in the working-age population)

	15–24	25+	25–64	65+	Total
Main activity status					
Studying or training	30.7	0.9	1.0*	0.1*	9.4
Working in farming, raising animals or handicraft	0.7*	0.5*	0.5*	0.3*	0.6
Working in fishing or gleaning seafood	0.3*	1.0	1.0*	0.0*	0.8
Working in another sector (e.g. gov., NGO, store, hotels, etc.)	9.2	23.6	25.4	3.4	19.5
Looking for work	17.7	5.2	5.6*	0.0*	8.7
Taking care of the household or family	37.6	55.9	56.6	47.4	50.7
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	1.3*	1.7	1.8*	1.2*	1.6
Long-term illness, injury or disability	1.2*	3.2	2.2	14.6	2.6
Retired or pensioner	0.0*	4.0	2.1	25.4	2.9
Other activity	1.3	4.0	3.7*	7.5	3.3

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

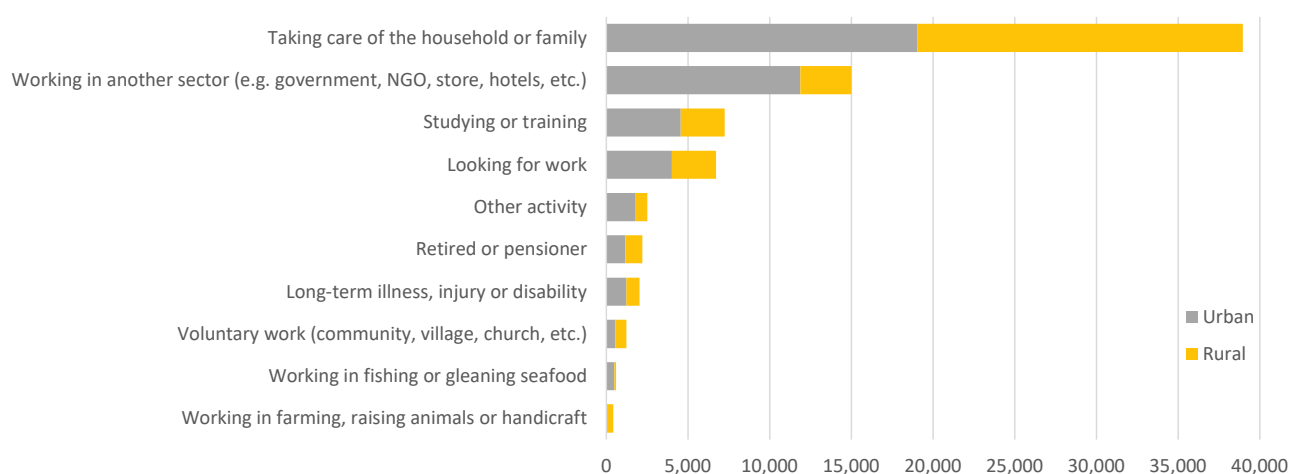
Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

**Table 24.** Main activity status by regions (% in the working-age population)

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix	Total
Main activity status						
Studying or training	10.1	8.2	10.2	7.7	10.2	9.4
Working in farming, raising animals or handicraft	0.2*	1.3*	0.8*	1.1*	0.1*	0.6
Working in fishing or gleaning seafood	1.2	0.3*	0.4*	0.4*	0.2*	0.8
Working in another sector (e.g. gov., NGO, store, hotels, etc.)	26.2	11.4	8.4	8.6	21.6	19.5
Looking for work	9.0	8.2	7.8	8.4	9.9	8.7
Taking care of the household or family	43.0	62.5	62.3	62.2	45.1	50.7
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	1.2	2.4	0.6*	2.6	1.6*	1.6
Long-term illness, injury or disability	2.7	2.6	2.5*	2.2	2.9	2.6
Retired or pensioner	2.5	1.8*	2.1*	4.8	5.3	2.9
Other activity	4.0	1.4*	4.9	2.0	3.2	3.3

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.



**Figure 17.** Main activity status by geographic location

## 7.2. Main activity status and labour force status

Table 25 indicates all self-declared main activities can be conducted by persons under all three labour force status, with the exception of those working in non-farm sector - they are considered as employed by definition. Almost all (92.7%) of persons of working-age working in agriculture and fishing as their main

activity were employed. And only 16.3% of working-age population who declared HH care as their main activity were employed.

As seen earlier, women were more involved in HH care activities than men were. Those women who self-reported HH care as their main activity also represented 29.2% of total women employment, against 22.4% for their male counterpart (Table 26).

**Table 25.** Main activity status by labour force status classification

Labour force status	Employed			Unemployed			Outside the labour force			TOTAL
Sex	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Total	14,956	10,217	25,172	1,397	970	2,368	21,558	27,812	49,370	76,910
Main activity status										
Studying or training	0*	35*	35*	55*	52*	107*	3,155	3,953	7,109	7,251
Working in farming, raising animals or handicraft	287	117*	403	5*	0*	5*	22*	0*	22*	431
Working in fishing or gleaning seafood	521	29*	550	0*	0*	0*	48*	0*	48*	598
Working in another sector (e.g. gov., NGO, store, hotels, etc.)	9,016	5,982	14,998							14,998
Looking for work	605	290*	896	689	373	1,063	2,732	2,027	4,760	6,718
Taking care of the household or family	3,352	2,981	6,333	571	492	1,063	12,771	18,788	31,559	38,955
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	251	102*	353	11*	29*	40*	499	337	836	1,229
Long-term illness, injury or disability	0*	0*	0*	10*	0*	10*	819	1,196	2,015	2,024
Retired or pensioner	63	65*	128	35*	14*	48*	1,040	989	2,029	2,206
Other activity	861	615	1,477	21*	11*	32*	471	521	992	2,501

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

**Table 26.** Main activity status by labour force status classification (% in the working-age population)

Labour force status	Employed			Unemployed			Outside the labour force		
Sex	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Main activity status (% distribution)									
Studying or training	0.0*	0.3*	0.1*	3.9*	5.4*	4.5*	14.6	14.2	14.4
Working in farming, raising animals or handicraft	1.9	1.1*	1.6	0.4*	0.0*	0.2*	0.1*	0.0*	0.0*
Working in fishing or gleaning seafood	3.5*	0.3*	2.2*	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*	0.2*	0.0*	0.1*
Working in another sector (e.g. gov., NGO, store, hotels, etc.)	60.3	58.6	59.6						
Looking for work	4.0	2.8*	3.6	49.3	38.5	44.9	12.7	7.3	9.6
Taking care of the household or family	22.4	29.2	25.2	40.9	50.7	44.9	59.2	67.6	63.9
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	1.7	1.0*	1.4	0.8*	3.0*	1.7*	2.3	1.2	1.7
Long-term illness, injury or disability	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*	0.7*	0.0*	0.4*	3.8	4.3	4.1
Retired or pensioner	0.4	0.6*	0.5	2.5*	1.4*	2.0*	4.8	3.6	4.1
Other activity	5.8	6.0	5.9	1.5*	1.1*	1.4*	2.2	1.9	2.0

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

### 7.3. Subsistence work and household care

The 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) introduced a technical term of own-use production work to define all inputs of labour involved in production of goods and services for own final use by the family. This concept includes the type of work that is commonly accepted as subsistence work and the provision of services which is also known as HH care work.

In this HIES, subsistence work included farming, fishing, and manufacturing of other goods for own use. In Kiribati, about 0.1% (or 75 persons) of working-age population have self-reported conducting subsistence work as their main activity.

Some 32,622 persons of working-age were exclusively involved in unpaid HH care, accounting for 42.4% of the working-age population. There were 19,280 women (or 49.2% of women in the working-age population), and 13,342 men (or 35.2% of men) engaged in unpaid HH care (Table 27).

**Table 27.** Subsistence work and household care by sex (% in the working-age population)

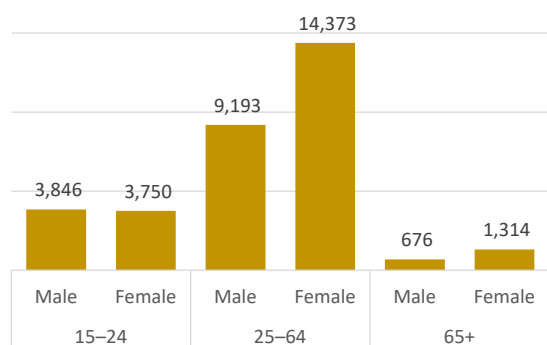
	Male	Female	Total
Subsistence work	0.2*	0.0*	0.1*
Household or family care	35.2	49.4	42.4
By age group			
15–24	32.9	35.6	34.2
25+	36.2	54.5	45.7
25–64	36.0	55.3	45.9
65+	38.9	47.3	44.0
By educational attainment			
Less than primary or none	37.5	50.5	44.5
Completed primary	44.0	62.4	52.8
Completed secondary	33.2	47.9	40.8
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	9.0*	7.3*	8.1*
Level not stated	36.4*	43.2*	39.2

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

By age groups, women between 25 and 64 years were the largest group engaged in unpaid HH care. More than half of women (55.3%) in this age group

were involved in unpaid HH care compared to 36% of men. Moreover, more than one third (34.2%) of young people at age 15–24 were involved in unpaid HH care (Fig. 18).



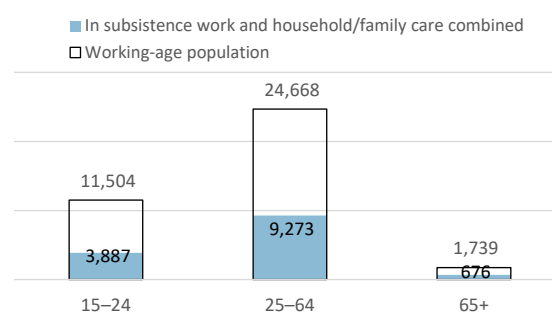
**Figure 18.** Numbers of male and female self-reporting household care as their main activity by age group

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES

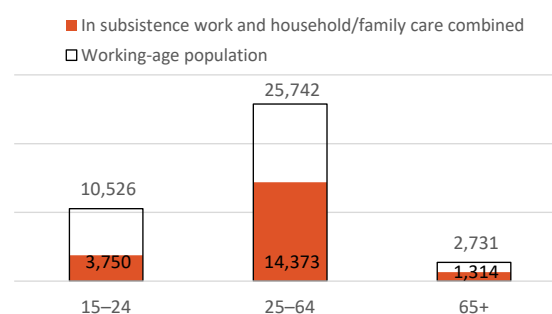
By urban-rural split, the number of working-age population who were in unpaid HH care were estimated to be similar, with 16,126 persons from urban areas and 16,494 persons in rural areas. However, the share of working-age population in rural areas who were in HH or family care was 51.3%, which was much higher than it is among those in urban areas (36%). In summing up, 32,697 persons in Kiribati were involved in subsistence work and HH or family care, representing 42.5% of total

working-age population (see details in Appendices, Table A.4.5). The share of women (49.4%) in subsistence work and unpaid HH care was higher than that of men (36.3%). This was the case across all age groups (Fig. 19).

#### Male



#### Female



**Figure 19.** Numbers of male and female self-reporting subsistence work and household/family care as their main work combined by age group  
Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.



**Table 28.** Subsistence work and household care by regions (% in the working-age population)

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix	Total
Subsistence work	0.1*	0.0*	0.0*	0.3*	0.0*	0.1*
Household or family care	35.9	51.1	47.5	52.4	44.8	42.4
By age group						
15–24	28.3	41.6	35.7	43.5	37.0	34.2
25+	38.8	55.5	52.3	55.9	48.6	45.7
25–64	38.8	54.9	53.0	57.5	49.7	45.9
65+	38.3	60.6	45.0	43.7	34.0*	44.0
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	35.1*	54.4*	38.6*	58.8	37.4*	44.5
Completed primary	46.5	56.0	58.8	58.5	55.6	52.8
Completed secondary	35.6	49.1	44.5	50.7	41.0	40.8
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	7.8*	18.0*	13.4*	3.4*	7.1*	8.1*
Level not stated	24.1*	100.0*	60.8*	50.0*	64.3*	39.2

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: (\*) Denotes small sample size of less than 30 cases.

## References

- International Labour Organization (ILO). 2013. *Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization*. 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), Resolution I. October. Available at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org/about/standards/icls/icls-documents/#icls19>.
- National Statistical Office of Kiribati (NSO). 2007. *Kiribati 2005 Census Volume 2: Analytical Report*. January. Available at: <https://nso.gov.ki/census/population-and-housing-census-2005/>.

# Appendices

## A.1. Main labour force statistical concepts and definitions

The labour force module of the Kiribati HH Income and Expenditure Survey 2019 was designed in accordance with the international standards on statistics of work, employment, and labour underutilization adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ILO, 2013)<sup>6</sup>. The main concepts and definitions used in this report are therefore in line with these standards and summarized below.

### A.1.1 Labour force statistics concepts

#### Work

Work is defined as:

- “Any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use”
- It is “irrespective of its formal or informal character or the legality of the activity.”
- It excludes “activities not involving production of goods or services (begging, stealing), self-care (personal grooming, hygiene) and activities that cannot be performed by another person on one’s own behalf (sleeping, learning, own recreation).”

#### Employment

Persons in employment are defined as all of those above a specified age who, during a specific reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit. It excludes persons engaged solely in activities to produce goods or services for own final use such as producing agricultural, fishing and gathering products for own-consumption or cleaning, decorating, gardening and maintaining one’s own dwelling or premises, durables and other goods.

Persons in employment comprise:

- (a) employed persons at work, i.e., who worked in a job for at least one hour;

- (b) employed persons not at work due to temporary absence from a job, or due to working-time arrangements, such as shift work, flexi-time and compensatory leave for overtime.

#### Unemployment (U)

The international standard definition of unemployment should satisfy three criteria simultaneously: “without work”, “currently available for work” and “seeking work”. The “unemployed” comprise all persons of working-age who during the reference period were:

- (a) without work – not in paid employment nor self-employed;
- (b) currently available for work – available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period;
- (c) seeking work – had taken specific steps in a specified reference period to seek paid employment or self-employment.

The definition of unemployment provides an exception in the case of future starters. They are considered as unemployed even if they did not carry out activities to seek employment during the specified period.

#### Youth vs. adult

The term “youth” refers to persons aged 15–24 years and “adult” is persons aged 25+.

#### Time-related underemployment (TRU)

Persons in time-related underemployment are defined as all persons in employment who, during a specified reference period:

- (a) wanted to work additional hours;
- (b) whose working time in all jobs was less than a specified hour threshold;
- (c) who were available to work additional hours given an opportunity for more work;

<sup>6</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). (2013). Resolution Concerning Statistics of Work, Employment, and Labour Underutilization. In 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Geneva, October.

In the Kiribati HIES, the underemployment threshold was set at 40 hours usually worked per week.

### Potential labour force (PLF)

Potential labour force is defined as all persons of working-age who, during the reference period, were neither in employment nor in unemployment but who were considered as:

- (a) unavailable jobseekers – who were seeking employment but not currently available; or
- (b) available potential jobseekers – who wanted employment, were currently available for employment but did not carry out activities to seek employment.

### Labour underutilization

Labour underutilization (LU) “refers to mismatches between labour supply and demand, which translate into an unmet need for employment among the population” (ILO, 2013; Resolution I, Para 40). LU comprises three main components: time-related underemployment, unemployment, and potential labour force.

Figure 20 illustrates the relationship of aforementioned concepts.

### Working-age Population (WAP)

The working-age population comprises persons who are aged 15+.

$$WAP \text{ (aged 15+)} = LF \text{ (Labour Force)} + NLF \text{ (Not in labour force)}$$

### Labour Force (LF)

The total labour force is the sum of the total of employed and unemployed population of the working-age population.

$$LF = E \text{ (Employed)} + U \text{ (Unemployed)}$$

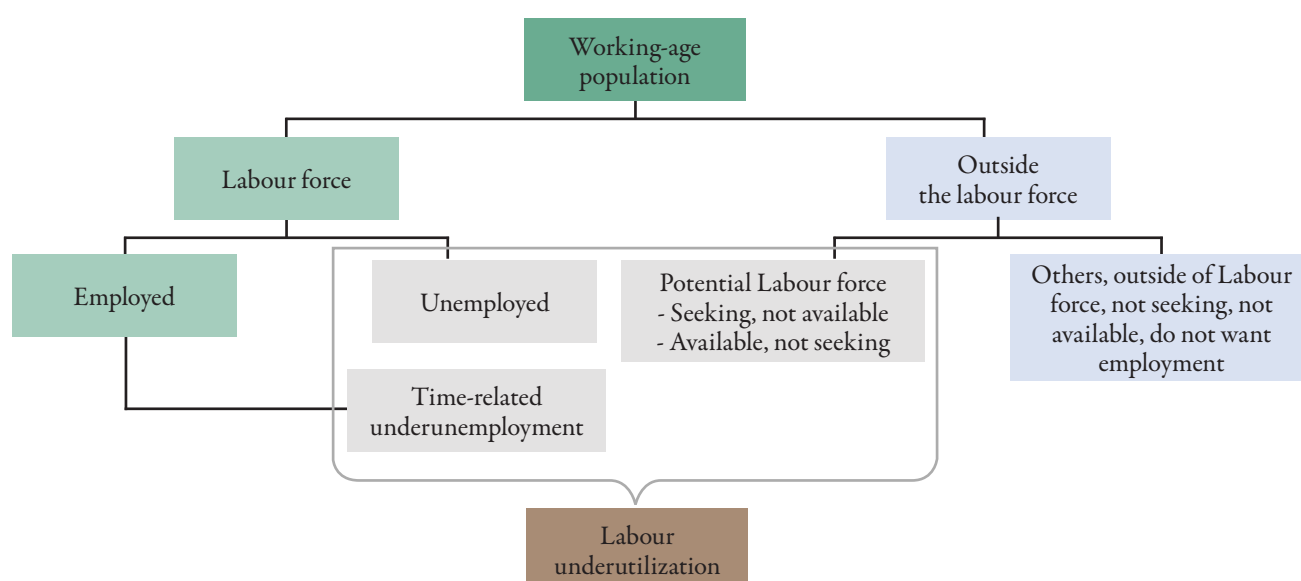
### Population outside of the labour force

Population outside of the labour force are persons of the working-age who are not part of the labour force. It also refers to the working-age population who are neither employed nor unemployed.

### Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)

Labour force participation rate is defined as the ratio of the labour force to the working-age population (aged 15+). It is a measure of the proportion of working-age population that actively engages in labour market, either by working or looking for work.

$$LFPR = \frac{LF}{WAP}$$



**Figure 20.** Components of Labour Underutilization relating to insufficient labour absorption

## Employment to Population Ratio (EPR)

The employment-to-population ratio is defined as the proportion of employed population to the working-age population. A high ratio means that a large share of a country's population is employed, while a low ratio means that a large share of the population is not directly participated in economic activities, as they are either unemployed or out of the labour force.

$$LU = \frac{\text{Employed population}}{WAP}$$

## Unemployment Rate (UR or LU1)

Unemployment rate is the proportion of unemployed population to the total population in labour force.

$$LU = U + TRU + PLF$$

## Informal sector

The informal sector consists of unregistered and/or small unincorporated private enterprises engaged in the production of goods or services for profits. It consists of all economic units (business enterprises) that are not covered or not fully covered by formal requirements by law; or informal arrangements in practice.

In this report, a formal sector enterprise is defined as either a public enterprise, or a private enterprise that is registered (with a national businesses registration system) or has full bookkeeping for national reporting.

Employment in the informal sector contains all jobs in informal sector enterprises.

## Informal employment

Informal employment is defined as the type of employment where the diversified set of economic activities, enterprises, jobs, and workers are not regulated or protected by the government, have no explicit or written contracts of employment, no certain employment benefits (such as social protection coverage, severance pay, paid sick and annual leave) or for which labour regulations are not applied nor enforced.

Informal employment comprises all persons with informal jobs, whether carried out in formal or

informal sector enterprises, or in HHs, during a given reference period, which includes:

- Own-account workers (self-employed with no employees) in their own informal sector enterprises;
- Employers (self-employed with employees) in their own informal sector enterprises;
- Contributing family workers, irrespective of type of enterprise;
- Members of informal producers' cooperatives (not established as legal entities);
- Employees holding informal jobs as defined according to the employment relationship (in law or in practice, jobs not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (paid annual or sick leave, etc.);
- Own-account workers engaged in production of goods exclusively for own final use by their HH.

In this report, employees are considered as having a formal job if the employer contributes to a national pension or social protection system on their behalf, or if they received both paid sick leave and paid annual leave.

## Subsistence production

Subsistence production constitutes the subgroup of persons who performed any of the specified activities to produce foodstuff from farming, fishing, raising animals, fishing, or making handicraft that contribute to the livelihood of the HH or family. Excluded are persons who engaged in such production as recreational or leisure activities.

## Reference period

For the employment section, the reference period is a week prior to the interview.

## A.1.2 Main classifications used in this report

### Status in employment

Status in employment is classified in accordance with the International Classification of Status in Employment of 1993 (ICSE-93), namely:

- Status in employment is classified in accordance with the International Classification of Status in Employment of 1993 (ICSE-93), namely:
- Wage and salaried employee – a person who works in any economic unit such as the government department, private business enterprises or organizations, including family businesses, and receives regular pay;
- Employer – a person who runs a business on his/her own or in partnership and engages at least one paid employee on a continuous basis in operating the business;
- Own account worker – a person who runs a business on his/her own or in partnership but does not engage any paid employee on regular basis (self-employed and not employing others);
- Contributing family worker – a person who works in his/her family business without receiving any regular pay.

### **Employment by economic sectors**

Economic sectors are defined in line with the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC Rev.4, of 2008), which classifies economic sectors according to the activity they carry out.

### **Employment by occupation**

The kind of work or group of tasks done during the reference period by the person employed, classified according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08, of 2008).

## A.2. Detailed survey methodology

### A.2.1 Introduction

HIES is a statistical exercise to collect data on Household Income from all sources of income and the expenditure of the HH.

### A.2.2 Objectives and contents of the report

#### Objective

HIES collects a wealth of information on HH expenditure, income, own account production and consumption. HIES also collects information on sectoral and thematic areas, such as gender, education, health, labour, primary activities, transport, information and communication and cash transfers and remittances.

The HIES data will be used to:

- derive expenditure weights for the revision of the Consumer Price Index (CPI);
- supplement the data available for use in compiling official estimates of various components in the System of National Accounts; and
- gather information on welfare and food security in Kiribati.

The data will inform indicators under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to guide social and economic policy.

#### HIES method

The HIES was implemented over an 11-month period, from May 2019 to March 2020. The survey was implemented over such a long period to capture seasonal fluctuations in income, expenditure, consumption and production patterns.

The survey scope was all occupied HH in Kiribati.

#### Sampling

The sampling approach was two stage stratified sampling. The sample was designed for the reporting of expenditure aggregates by the five groups of islands of Kiribati (South Tarawa – also the urban region of the country, Northern, Central, Southern

and Line Is. and Phoenix). The sample was designed based on the results of the previous HIES that was conducted in Kiribati in 2006.

The 2018 HH Listing of Kiribati served as the sampling frame. Enumeration Areas (EAs) were the Primary Sampling Unit (PSU) and they were selected by probability according to size.

The HIES sampling approach was designed to generate reliable results at the following levels:

- National: total HH income and expenditure.
- Urban and rural: total HH income and expenditure, by urban and rural areas. South Tarawa being the main urban centre in Kiribati.
- Division (group of islands): total HH income and expenditure, by the five groups of islands in Kiribati. Fieldwork was carried out by 5 enumeration teams under the management of Kiribati National Statistics Office.

The questionnaire was administered via face to face interview with data entry via CAPI using Survey Solutions CAPI software. The questionnaire was divided into 20 main modules and an additional 3 other modules.

#### HIES characteristics

The final response of 2,182 HH sample represents 12.2% of the HH population in Kiribati.

Sampling weights have been generated and all results presented herein are weighted, unless otherwise specified. The probabilistic sampling weights derived from the HIES were adjusted to match the projected population structure by age and sex.

Further information on the Kiribati 2019/20 HIES is available here: <https://microdata.pacificdata.org/index.php/catalog/760>

### A.3. Sample sizes and sampling errors for selected statistics

**Table A.3.1.** Sample size by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Total sample	6,360	6,121	12,481
Working-age population	3,856	3,940	7,796
By age			
<15	2,504	2,181	4,685
15–24	1,060	931	1,991
25+	2,796	3,009	5,805
25–64	2,605	2,701	5,306
65+	191	308	499
Labour force	1,597	1,034	2,631
Employment	1,466	947	2,413
By education			
Less than primary or none	20	6	26
Completed primary	260	101	361
Completed secondary	1,114	742	1,856
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	59	91	150
Level not stated	13	7	20
By employment status			
Employees	991	597	1,588
Employers	21	22	43
Own-account workers	257	231	488
Contributing family workers	98	66	164
Workers not classifiable by status	99	31	130
By economic activity			
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	398	59	457
Industry	129	62	191
Services	939	826	1,765
By occupation			
Managers	81	51	132
Professionals	112	240	352
Technicians and associate professionals	116	66	182
Clerical support workers	12	61	73
Service and sales workers	270	337	607
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	104	15	119
Craft and related trades workers	120	89	209
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	143	4	147
Elementary occupations	508	84	592

	Male	Female	Total
Unemployment	131	87	218
Outside labour force	2,259	2,906	5,165
Subsistence work	8	0	8
Household or family care	1,425	2,091	3,516

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.3.2.** Sample size by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix	Total
Total sample	4,287	2,094	1,430	2,397	2,273	12,481
Working-age population	2,798	1,243	882	1,520	1,353	7,796
By age						
<15	1,489	851	548	877	920	4,685
15–24	822	313	173	371	312	1,991
25+	1,976	930	709	1,149	1,041	5,805
25–64	1,830	832	632	1,022	990	5,306
65+	146	98	77	127	51	499
Labour force	1,186	366	290	406	383	2,631
Employment	1,072	351	265	365	360	2,413
By education						
Less than primary or none	10	5	6	4	1	26
Completed primary	138	84	35	67	37	361
Completed secondary	810	256	216	265	309	1,856
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	102	6	8	21	13	150
Level not stated	12	0	0	8	0	20
By employment status						
Employees	799	174	100	176	339	1,588
Employers	22	3	5	10	3	43
Own-account workers	125	121	82	148	12	488
Contributing family workers	79	11	59	11	4	164
Workers not classifiable by status	47	42	19	20	2	130
By economic activity						
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	123	76	115	123	20	457
Industry	106	38	15	15	17	191
Services	843	237	135	227	323	1,765
By occupation						
Managers	57	14	9	33	19	132
Professionals	155	49	34	52	62	352
Technicians and associate professionals	94	21	3	25	39	182
Clerical support workers	45	4	3	7	14	73
Service and sales workers	307	86	60	71	83	607
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	71	16	16	9	7	119
Craft and related trades workers	92	44	13	20	40	209
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	89	15	13	7	23	147
Elementary occupations	162	102	114	141	73	592
Unemployment	114	15	25	41	23	218
Outside labour force	1,612	877	592	1,114	970	5,165
Subsistence work	3	0	0	4	1	8
Household or family care	978	655	435	816	632	3,516

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: For cells where sample cases are less than 30, statistics presented in the report should be used with caution.

**Table A.3.3.** Sampling errors – employed population

Employed population (aged 15+)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Total employment	25,172	871	23,451	26,894
By occupation				
Managers, professionals, and technicians	6,921	467	5,998	7,844
Clerical, service and sales workers	7,576	415	6,757	8,396
Skilled agricultural and trades workers	3,565	241	3,089	4,040
Plant and machine operators	1,688	164	1,363	2,013
Elementary occupations	5,423	406	4,620	6,225
By economic activity				
Agriculture	4,264	368	3,538	4,990
Manufacturing	1,310	223	869	1,751
Construction	662	118	429	894
Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas and water supply	260	60	141	379
Market services	10,542	559	9,438	11,646
Non market services	8,134	551	7,044	9,223
By status of employment				
Employees	16,932	703	15,543	18,321
Employers	481	89	306	656
Own-account workers	4,740	394	3,961	5,519
Contributing family workers	1,706	261	1,190	2,222
Workers not classifiable by status	1,313	142	1,032	1,594

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.3.4.** Sampling errors – labour force participation rate

Labour force participation rate (LFPR)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Labour force participation rate	35.8%	0.9%	34.1%	37.6%
By gender				
Male	43.1%	1.1%	40.9%	45.4%
Female	28.7%	1.0%	26.7%	30.7%
By age group				
Age 15–24	20.9%	1.2%	18.5%	23.2%
Age 25–54	47.5%	1.1%	45.3%	49.7%
Age 55–64	28.1%	2.0%	24.2%	31.9%
Age 65+	8.5%	1.6%	5.4%	11.6%
By geographic location				
Urban areas	42.8%	1.2%	40.4%	45.1%
Rural areas	27.7%	1.3%	25.2%	30.3%
By regions				
South Tarawa	42.8%	1.2%	40.4%	45.1%

Labour force participation rate (LFPR)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Northern Is.	28.5%	2.2%	24.1%	32.8%
Central Is.	32.3%	2.7%	26.9%	37.6%
Southern Is.	25.9%	2.3%	21.3%	30.5%
The Line & Phoenix	25.1%	3.2%	18.7%	31.4%
By education attainment				
Less than primary or none	12.9%	2.7%	7.6%	18.1%
Completed primary	24.3%	1.3%	21.7%	26.9%
Completed secondary	38.4%	0.9%	36.6%	40.3%
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	80.6%	2.6%	75.5%	85.7%
Level not stated	30.2%	7.7%	15.0%	45.4%

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.3.5.** Sampling errors – unemployment rate

Unemployment rate (UR)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Unemployment rate	8.6%	0.7%	7.1%	10.1%
By gender				
Male	8.5%	0.9%	6.7%	10.3%
Female	8.7%	1.1%	6.6%	10.7%
By age group				
Age 15–24	22.5%	2.6%	17.4%	27.6%
Age 25–54	6.1%	0.7%	4.7%	7.5%
Age 55–64	4.2%	1.7%	0.9%	7.5%
Age 65+	0.0%			
By geographic location				
Urban areas	9.3%	1.1%	7.3%	11.4%
Rural areas	7.3%	0.8%	5.6%	8.9%
By regions				
South Tarawa	9.3%	1.1%	7.3%	11.4%
Northern Is.	4.4%	1.0%	2.4%	6.3%
Central Is.	9.5%	1.9%	5.7%	13.4%
Southern Is.	10.1%	2.1%	5.9%	14.3%
The Line & Phoenix	6.4%	1.6%	3.3%	9.5%
By educational attainment				
Less than primary or none	13.5%	6.5%	0.6%	26.4%
Completed primary	8.9%	2.1%	4.7%	13.0%
Completed secondary	9.3%	0.8%	7.6%	10.9%
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	1.3%	1.0%	-0.6%	3.2%
Level not stated	0.0%			

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.3.6.** Sampling errors – youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)

Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
NEET rate	49.8%	1.5%	46.9%	52.7%
By gender				
Male	50.6%	1.9%	46.9%	54.3%
Female	48.9%	1.9%	45.2%	52.6%
By geographic location				
Urban areas	42.8%	1.2%	40.4%	45.1%
Rural areas	27.7%	1.3%	25.2%	30.3%
By regions				
South Tarawa	44.6%	2.3%	40.1%	49.2%
Northern Is.	55.0%	3.4%	48.3%	61.8%
Central Is.	51.1%	3.9%	43.3%	58.8%
Southern Is.	58.6%	3.3%	52.2%	65.1%
The Line & Phoenix	53.7%	3.4%	46.9%	60.5%

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.3.7.** Sampling errors – informal sector working population

Informal sector working population (aged 15+)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Population employed in the informal sector	4,459	331	3,804	5,113
Population employed in the formal sector	16,443	701	15,058	17,828
Population employed in households	4,270	456	3,370	5,171
By gender				
Male	2,688	206	2,281	3,095
Female	1,771	209	1,356	2,185
By age group				
Age 15–24	654	104	448	859
Age 25–54	3,272	239	2,799	3,745
Age 55–64	428	77	276	580
Age 65+	105	40	25	185
By geographic location				
Urban areas	2,719	248	2,229	3,209
Rural areas	1,740	177	1,389	2,091
By regions				
South Tarawa	2,719	248	2,229	3,209
Northern Is.	818	139	543	1,092
Central Is.	495	102	293	697
Southern Is.	344	41	263	425
The Line & Phoenix	83	13	58	108

Informal sector working population (aged 15+)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
By educational attainment				
Less than primary or none	87	34	18	155
Completed primary	940	143	657	1,224
Completed secondary	3,227	229	2,774	3,680
Tertiary	158	44	72	245
Level not stated	47	28	- 8	101

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.3.8.** Sampling errors – informal employment population

Informal employment population (aged 15+)	Estimate	Standard error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Population with formal employment	11,991	599	10,808	13,175
Population with informal employment	13,181	654	11,888	14,473
By gender				
Male	7,342	389	6,574	8,110
Female	4,650	327	4,003	5,296
By age group				
Age 15–24	2,197	234	1,734	2,660
Age 25–54	8,289	414	7,471	9,108
Age 55–64	1,255	124	1,010	1,501
Age 65+	250	60	130	369
By Geographic location				
Urban areas	6,707	425	5,867	7,548
Rural areas	5,284	417	4,461	6,108
By regions				
South Tarawa	6,707	425	5,867	7,548
Northern Is.	2,326	246	1,840	2,812
Central Is.	1,152	201	756	1,549
Southern Is.	1,480	264	959	2,002
The Line & Phoenix	325	55	216	435
By educational attainment				
Less than primary or none	170	44	84	257
Completed primary	2,726	238	2,255	3,197
Completed secondary	8,758	468	7,833	9,684
Tertiary	236	62	114	358
Level not stated	101	41	21	181

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES

## A.4. Additional statistical tables

**Table A.4.1.** Key indicators of the labour market (KILM) by sex and age group

	Male	Female	Aged 15–24	Aged 25+	Aged 25–64	Aged 65+	Total
Labour force participation rate (%)	43.1	28.7	20.9	20.9	44.8	8.5	35.8
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	39.4	26.2	16.2	39.4	42.1	8.5	32.7
Employment	14,956	10,217	3,562	21,610	21,231	379	25,172
By education (% distribution)							
Less than primary or none	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.1	1.0	7.4	1.1
Completed primary	17.0	11.0	15.8	14.4	13.9	40.0	14.6
Completed secondary	75.0	76.5	79.6	75.0	75.6	39.7	75.6
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	5.2	11.3	3.4	8.4	8.3	11.0	7.7
Level not stated	1.2	0.7	0.1	1.2	1.2	1.9	1.0
By employment status (% distribution)							
Employees	70.4	62.7	65.9	67.5	68.1	41.9	67.3
Employers	1.4	2.7	0.7	2.1	2.0	3.7	1.9
Own-account workers	14.9	24.6	13.4	19.7	19.4	37.1	18.8
Contributing family workers	6.8	6.8	11.2	6.0	6.1	10.7	6.8
Workers not classifiable by status	6.5	3.3	8.8	4.6	4.3	6.6	5.2
By economic activity (% distribution)							
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	25.2	4.9	21.4	16.2	16.3	14.9	16.9
Industry	10.2	7.0	7.0	9.2	8.9	10.5	8.9
Services	64.7	88.1	71.7	74.6	74.8	74.5	5.2
By occupation (% distribution)							
Managers	5.6	5.5	2.2	6.1	6.1	6.4	5.6
Professionals	8.0	23.9	10.8	15.1	15.0	22.0	14.5
Technicians and associate professionals	7.8	6.8	6.6	7.6	7.6	4.0	7.4
Clerical support workers	1.0	6.9	5.1	3.1	3.2	0.0	3.4
Service and sales workers	18.9	38.1	26.9	26.7	26.6	31.9	26.7
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	8.6	1.5	5.9	5.7	5.8	1.0	5.7
Craft and related trades workers	8.2	8.8	8.4	8.4	8.4	12.0	8.4
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	11.0	0.4	4.4	7.1	7.1	3.9	6.7
Elementary occupations	30.8	8.0	29.5	20.2	20.2	18.8	21.5
Average actual hours of work per week	24.0	22.8	14.9	24.7	25.0	25.0	23.4
Informal employment rate (%)	49.1	45.5	61.7	45.3	45.0	65.9	47.6
Unemployment rate (%)	8.5	8.7	22.5	5.8	5.9	0.0	8.6
Youth unemployment rate (aged 15–24, %)	21.2	24.6	22.5				22.5
Youth NEET rate (aged 15–24, %)	50.6	48.9	49.8				49.8

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

Note: Time-related underemployment rate is based on less than 40 actual hours of work per week.

**Table A.4.2.** Key indicators of the labour market (KILM) by regions

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix	Total
Labour force participation rate (%)	42.8	28.5	32.3	25.9	25.1	35.8
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	38.8	27.2	29.2	23.3	23.5	32.7
Employment	16,007	3,628	1,649	2,538	1,351	25,172
By education (% distribution)						
Less than primary or none	0.9	1.3	3.0	1.0	0.5	1.1
Completed primary	12.5	22.7	15.7	17.6	10.6	14.6
Completed secondary	75.3	73.6	78.8	73.8	84.6	75.6
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	10.0	2.4	2.6	5.5	4.3	7.7
Level not stated	1.3	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	1.0
By employment status (% distribution)						
Employees	74.9	50.4	35.6	48.5	95.6	67.3
Employers	2.2	1.1	1.8	2.1	0.8	1.9
Own-account workers	12.1	34.0	30.8	40.7	2.7	18.8
Contributing family workers	6.8	3.3	24.8	3.4	0.4	6.8
Workers not classifiable by status	4.0	11.2	7.1	5.4	0.6	5.2
By economic activity (% distribution)						
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	11.7	19.7	45.8	33.4	5.0	16.9
Industry	9.8	12.0	5.5	3.9	3.2	8.9
Services	78.5	68.3	48.7	62.6	91.8	74.2
By occupation (% distribution)						
Managers	5.6	4.0	4.2	9.3	4.4	5.6
Professionals	14.3	15.7	10.8	14.6	17.7	14.5
Technicians and associate professionals	8.4	5.5	1.5	6.7	10.0	7.4
Clerical support workers	4.2	1.3	1.2	2.3	3.8	3.4
Service and sales workers	28.8	26.0	22.8	18.7	23.6	26.7
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	6.9	4.5	6.0	2.2	1.8	5.7
Craft and related trades workers	8.2	12.8	4.0	5.6	10.0	8.4
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	8.2	4.0	5.0	2.1	7.0	6.7
Elementary occupations	15.4	26.2	44.6	38.5	21.5	21.5
Average actual hours of work per week	27.5	18.1	16.6	20.8	39.4	23.4
Informal employment rate (%)	41.9	64.1	69.9	58.3	24.1	47.6
Unemployment rate (%)	9.3	4.4	9.5	10.1	6.4	8.6
Youth unemployment rate (aged 15–24, %)	25.4	10.5	22.5	28.0	13.9	22.5
Youth NEET rate (aged 15–24, %)	44.6	55.0	51.1	58.6	53.7	49.8

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.4.3.** Main activity status by sex and age group (number)

	Male	Female	Aged 15–24	Aged 25+	Aged 25–64	Aged 65+	Total
Main activity status							
Studying or training	3,210	4,041	6,764	487	484	4	7,251
Working in farming, raising animals, fishing or making handicraft	314	117	145	286	274	12	431
Working in another sector/activity (government or private sector, business)	569	29	72	526	526	-	598
Looking for work	9,016	5,982	2,033	12,965	12,812	153	14,998
Taking care of the household or family	4,027	2,691	3,891	2,827	2,827	-	6,718
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	16,694	22,261	8,289	30,666	28,549	2,118	38,955
Long-term illness, injury or disability	761	468	276	954	900	54	1,229
Retired or old person	829	1,196	263	1,762	1,107	654	2,024
Normally work but not last week (leave, sick...)	1,138	1,068	11	2,195	1,058	1,137	2,206
Other	1,354	1,147	288	2,213	1,876	337	2,501

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.4.4.** Main activity status by regions (number)

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix	Total
Main activity status						
Studying or training	4,159	1,087	575	840	590	7,251
Working in farming, raising animals, fishing or making handicraft	87	172	46	119	6	431
Working in another sector/activity (government or private sector, business)	484	34	23	46	10	598
Looking for work	10,821	1,523	473	938	1,242	14,998
Taking care of the household or family	3,704	1,089	441	913	571	6,718
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	17,726	8,332	3,521	6,776	2,600	38,955
Long-term illness, injury or disability	509	314	34	282	91	1,229
Retired or old person	1,126	352	139	242	166	2,024
Normally work but not last week (leave, sick...)	1,020	241	121	521	303	2,206
Other	1,633	186	278	222	182	2,501

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.4.5.** Subsistence work and household care by sex (number)

	Male	Female	Total
Subsistence work	75	-	75
Household or family care	13,342	19,280	32,622
By age group			
15–24	3,789	3,750	7,539
25+	9,553	15,530	25,083
25–64	8,877	14,239	23,116
65+	676	1,291	1,967
By educational attainment			
Less than primary or none	428	660	1,089
Completed primary	3,824	4,910	8,734
Completed secondary	8,808	13,456	22,264
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	95	101	196
Level not stated	187	153	340

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.4.6.** Subsistence work and household care by regions (number)

	South Tarawa	Northern Is.	Central Is.	Southern Is.	The Line & Phoenix	Total
Subsistence work	35	-	-	38	3	75
Household or family care	14,829	6,814	2,682	5,716	2,581	32,622
By age group						
15–24	3,209	1,729	586	1,319	697	7,539
25+	11,621	5,085	2,096	4,397	1,884	25,083
25–64	10,847	4,563	1,925	3,995	1,786	23,116
65+	774	521	171	402	99	1,967
By educational attainment						
Less than primary or none	356	259	79	311	84	1,089
Completed primary	3,148	2,118	806	1,741	921	8,734
Completed secondary	11,057	4,385	1,768	3,505	1,549	22,264
Tertiary (first stage or completed)	157	19	9	6	4	196
Level not stated	111	32	22	154	22	340

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.

**Table A.4.7.** Summary of SDG indicators from labour force module of HIES 2019-2020

SDG Indicator	Male	Female	Total
INDICATORS FOR WHICH ILO IS THE CUSTODIAL AGENCY OR INVOLVED			
1.1.1 Proportion of the population living below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographic location (urban/rural)			
3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex			
5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions		40.2	
8.2.1 Real GDP per employed person			
8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex			
By sex	49.1	45.5	47.6
By economic activity			
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	82.7	78.3	82.2
Industry	47.3	75.5	56.3
Services	36.3	41.3	38.7
8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities			
8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities			
By sex	8.5	8.7	8.6
By age			
15–24	21.2	24.6	22.5
25–64	6.0	5.8	5.9
65+	0.0	0.0	0.0
By disability status			
With any disability	12.1	10.8	11.4
No disability	8.5	8.6	8.5
8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training	50.6	48.9	49.8
OTHER EMPLOYMENT RELATED SDG INDICATORS			
9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment	4.2	6.6	5.2

Source: 2019 Kiribati HIES.



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