

European Union supports access to safe and sustainable water and sanitation in Kiribati

The European Union has approved a project for €3.4 million for increasing access to safe and sustainable water and sanitation and reduction of water, sanitation and hygiene related diseases under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). The project will target the small and remote outer islands of Kiribati.

"Kiribati outer islands are one of the most remote places on the Planet. This project attempts to mitigate the disadvantage of their remoteness by increasing access to safe water and sanitation in the outer islands communities. This way, we hope to foster sustainable social and economic development in Kiribati" said Ambassador Wiepke van der Goot, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Pacific.

The overall objective of the project is to address the current socio-economic imbalance between urban and rural areas by achieving a more equitable distribution of resources to the outer islands, as agreed in the Country Strategy Paper for 10th EDF signed between the Republic of Kiribati and the European Union. Through this project, it is hoped to achieve better access to safe drinking water, adequate and socially acceptable sanitation facilities, combined with an effective education/awareness raising campaign to improve peoples' understanding of water, sanitation and hygiene issues and to encourage behavioural changes at the outer islands.

The project will focus on conducting hydro-geological assessments of groundwater resources, assessing existing water and sanitation infrastructures, repairing faulty structures and installing new rainwater harvesting systems with safe storage facilities. It will also enhance capacity at community level to build strong governance structures that will ensure sustainable operation and maintenance of the water infrastructure facilities. Intensive training/awareness raising campaign on water sanitation and hygiene issues throughout the outer islands will be an important component of this project.

UNICEF was chosen as implementing partner of the project, due to their permanent presence in Kiribati, their long and reputable experience in the implementation of projects in the field of water, sanitation and hygiene, and their specific expertise in working on training/capacity development/awareness rising at community level.

For further information please contact:

Mr. Stefan Stantejsky
EU Delegation for the Pacific
Suva, Fiji Islands
Tel: (679) 331 3633
Email: stefan.stantejsky@ec.europa.eu

