

Institutions and Values: Climate Change Adaptation Mainstreaming Implementation in Kiribati

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August 2016

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of
Philosophy

Discipline of Anthropology and Development Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social
Sciences

The University of Adelaide

Contents

Abstract.....	5
Thesis declaration	7
Acknowledgements.....	8
List of acronyms.....	9
Chapter One - Introduction	11
The problem.....	14
Purpose and case selection.....	15
Methodology.....	17
Analytical framework and argument	19
Overview of the dissertation.....	23
Chapter Two - Understanding CCAM Implementation	25
UNDP/UNEP model	27
Critique	29
IIED model.....	30
Critique	35
OECD model.....	37
Critique	40
World Bank model.....	41
Critique	44
Summary of the analysis so far	46
Neo-institutionalism overview.....	47
Normative neo-institutionalism overview	48
Pre-conditions for successful reform implementation	50
Pre-condition 1: Normative match between reforms and institution	50
Pre-condition 2: Normative match between reforms and society	50
Pre-condition 3: Ambiguity of reformers' intentions	51
Pre-condition 4: Institutional capacity to organise reform	51
Epistemic communities.....	52
Applying a normative neo-institutionalism and epistemic communities framework to understanding CCAM	53
Understanding CCAM outcomes in Kiribati	55
Conclusion.....	55
Chapter Three - Kiribati: Background and Context.....	57
An overview of Kiribati	57
Historical background	59

Traditional society.....	59
Contemporary society.....	60
Formal political institutions and processes.....	60
Economy and poverty.....	62
Urbanisation and environmental changes.....	63
Environmental and socio-economic vulnerabilities associated with climate change.....	63
Land.....	64
Water.....	64
Food security.....	65
Climate change policy context.....	66
International climate change policy initiatives.....	66
Regional environmental policy initiatives.....	68
National environmental policy initiatives.....	70
Conclusion.....	72
Chapter Four - The Competing Epistemic Coalitions.....	73
UNDP and MELAD.....	74
United Nations Development Program (UNDP).....	74
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development (MELAD).....	78
World Bank and the Office of the President.....	84
World Bank.....	84
The Office of the President (OB Office).....	88
Conclusion.....	95
Chapter Five - The Politics of Climate Change Adaptation Mainstreaming in Kiribati.....	96
The nature and evolution of the NAPA and KAP.....	97
National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA).....	98
Kiribati Adaptation Program (KAP).....	101
NAPA and KAP joint work program.....	101
Review.....	101
Restructuring.....	102
The pilot implementation phase of the KAP.....	104
Completion of the NAPA.....	104
Mid-term review of the KAP.....	105
Re-design of the KAP.....	106
Negotiations for the final phase of the KAP.....	110
Negotiations for the NAPA-2.....	116
The outcome of the NAPA and the KAP.....	117

Political analysis	119
Pre-condition one: The normative match between reform and institution	119
Pre-condition two: The normative match between reform and society	121
Pre-condition three: The ambiguity of reformers' intentions	123
Pre-condition four: Institutional capacity to organise the reform process	124
Conclusion	127
Chapter Six - Conclusion	128
Research question one: Why has the Government of Kiribati failed to effectively implement climate change adaptation mainstreaming?	128
Research question two: What does this case suggest about the conditions under which developing country governments successfully adopt and implement CCAM?	129
Research question three: What are the implications vis-à-vis the development of effective strategies for implementing CCAM in SIDS?	131
Country-specific step-by-step guides for mainstreaming implementation	131
Participation	132
Collaboration	133
Bibliography	135
Appendix one: Interview participants	150
Appendix two: Interview questions	153

Abstract

Climate change adaptation mainstreaming (CCAM) is considered an effective way of integrating climate change adaptation and sustainable development agendas in policy and practice.

Conventional approaches to CCAM emphasise either: a) a technological response that focuses on ensuring climate change projections influence decision-making; or b) the need for CCAM to incorporate an understanding of the underlying drivers of vulnerability that expose people to climate change impacts. However, both approaches give inadequate attention to political and social conflict in shaping CCAM implementation.

This dissertation presents a case study from the Republic of Kiribati to explore the role of political and social conflict in shaping CCAM. It argues that the Government of Kiribati, in partnership with United Nations Development Program (UNDP), via the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA), and the World Bank, via the Kiribati Adaptation Program (KAP), failed to effectively implement mainstreaming. Yet the KAP made more progress than the NAPA.

Why was mainstreaming largely unsuccessful in Kiribati? Why did the KAP have more success compared with the NAPA? What does this case study tell us about the political and social pre-conditions for successful CCAM implementation? And what are the implications for CCAM policy and implementation in developing countries?

In addressing these questions, I draw on normative neo-institutionalism and the notion of epistemic communities. Normative neo-institutionalism, and especially Olsen's four pre-conditions for successful reform, provides a powerful framework for understanding the role of political and social factors in reform processes, while the notion of epistemic communities helps us to understand the nature of the values and actors that characterise these factors. According to this approach, successful CCAM implementation depends upon: a) a high degree of normative matching between the reform and implementing institution; b) a high degree of normative matching between the reform and the relevant society; c) a high degree of clarity about reformers' intentions; and d) the capacity and resources of the institution implementing the reform.

CCAM implementation in Kiribati was largely unsuccessful because: a) two competing coalitions became embroiled in political struggles over CCAM; and b) Olsen's four pre-

conditions for successful reform were not met. In regards to the first point, I show that the Ministry for Environment, Land and Agricultural Development formed a coalition with UNDP to support a vulnerability-based approach to CCAM, while the Office of the President formed a coalition with the World Bank to advocate for a technology-based approach.

On the second point, I argue that the NAPA initially succeeded because performance against a majority of the pre-conditions was strong, but it ultimately failed because the government became disenchanted with the coalition's vulnerability-based approach to CCAM. The KAP had more success long term because its coalition of support had greater resources and support from the government to push their technology-driven approach. However, tension within its supporting coalition led to reduced normative matching and capacity to support CCAM implementation. In policy terms, the implication is that CCAM strategies, and the step-by-step guides designed to inform implementation, should take politics and values into account.

Thesis declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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Signed by Felicity J. Prance

Acknowledgements

I am incredibly grateful for the unwavering love and support given to me by my Dave, and my parents, throughout this piece of work.

Thanks to my supervisors, Andrew Rosser, John Gray and Nicholas Harvey for their patient assistance.

Generous financial support provided by the Lions Club of Unley, the Unley City Council, the Walter and Dorothy Duncan Trust (administered by the University of Adelaide) and the United Nations Association of Australia – SA Division, enabled my fieldwork trips.

Adam Jarvis provided editorial assistance, restricted to ASEP Standards for “Language and Illustrations” and for “Completeness and Consistency”.

List of acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CCAM	Climate change adaptation mainstreaming
CCST	Climate Change Study Team
COP	Conference of the Parties
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	International Panel for Climate Change
KANGO	Kiribati Association of Non-Government Organisations
KAP	Kiribati Adaptation Program
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEAs	Multilateral Environment Agreements
MELAD	Ministry of the Environment, Land and Agricultural Development
MFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MPWU	Ministry of Public Works and Utilities
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
NAST	National Adaptation Steering Committee
OB Office	Office of the President
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEI	Poverty-Environment Initiative
PICCAP	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme
PICTs	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PPN	Policy and practice note
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SNPRA	Strategic National Policy and Risk Assessment
SOPAC	Secretariat of Pacific Community Applied Geoscience and Technology Division
SPREP	South Pacific Environment Programme
STUD	South Tarawa Urban District
SWAP	Sector-wide approach
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNEP United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change