

Portraits of Resilience



Portraits of Resilience is a photography project that works with youth and schools in the Arctic and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to document the effects of climate change in their communities. Through this project, the students have written essays, learned to take photographs, and worked hard to show their homes to the rest of the world. These peoples and places share characteristics of vulnerability and resilience, especially to the effects of human-caused climate change.

Portraits of Resilience brings personal stories about human-caused climate change's impacts to the attention of decision-makers and people around the world. It shows that the peoples of these regions are not helpless victims of climate change and that their youth has a profound sense of place and identity with a strong desire to see their cultures and communities live and thrive. Their work has been featured at major museums, numerous conferences, and many other venues.

The Sun

The sun used to come February the fourth, but now it comes one day earlier. The reason why it comes earlier is climate change. As the climate changes, the air gets warmer, the snow and ice melts. The Greenland ice sheet shrinks and the sun comes up over the mountains earlier. North Greenlanders are positively affected when the sun comes sooner because it is dark the whole winter, and because it is lovely to see the sun again.

— Lola Mørch, Aputsiaq Jensen and Aviaja Borgnæs



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GREENLAND

KIRIBATI



© Eneri Reiher

Planting Mangroves with the President

The youth group from Teoraereke planted baby mangroves with the President of Kiribati. His name is Anote Tong and he is concerned for our future and the future of Kiribati. Planting mangroves is very important because it holds the sand together to reduce the effects of coastal erosion. And it protects our homes and families like the coral reefs. It stops or slows down the waves from destroying us. We feel happy and proud that President Anote came to plant mangrove trees with us.

— Eneri Reiher, Kabebea & Teuea Moutu, Tirua Kaumai, Terikano Toromon, Tarataake Reubwatu & Taabuti Matikee

Portraits of Resilience was led by Christine Germano, a professional photographer who has worked with the young people in the Arctic communities of Shishmaref (Alaska, USA), Uummannaq (Greenland), Unjárga (Norway), Pangnirtung (Nunavut, Canada), Enmelen, Sireniki and Novo Chaplino (Chukotka, Russia), as well as the Island states of Fiji, Tuvalu, Samoa, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Barbuda, and Seychelles.

Portraits of Resilience is part the Many Strong Voices (MSV) programme which connects the peoples and places of the Arctic and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to promote their well-being, living, and thriving through art, science, and exchange.