

Portraits of Resilience



Portraits of Resilience is a photography project that works with youth and schools in the Arctic and Small Island Developing States to document the effects of climate change in their local communities. These geographically distant societies share characteristics of vulnerability and resilience, and are amongst the first to feel the effects of climate change.

Portraits of Resilience illustrates the ethical dimension of climate change, helping to bring personal stories about its impacts to the attention of decision-makers and people around the world. It shows that the people of these regions are not helpless victims of climate change and that their youth have a profound sense of place and a strong desire to see their cultures and communities survive and thrive.

Portraits of Resilience has worked with young people in the Arctic communities of Shishmaref (Alaska), Unjargga (Norway), Pangnirtung (Nunavut, Canada), and Ummannaq (Greenland), as well as the island states of Seychelles and in the Pacific Islands of Fiji, Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands, Samoa and Kiribati.

Portraits of Resilience is part of the Many Strong Voices (MSV) programme which links people in the Arctic and Small Island Developing States to work together on climate change adaptation and mitigation. MSV is jointly co-ordinated by UNEP/GRID-Arendal and CICERO in Oslo.

Kiribati

Planting Mangroves with the President

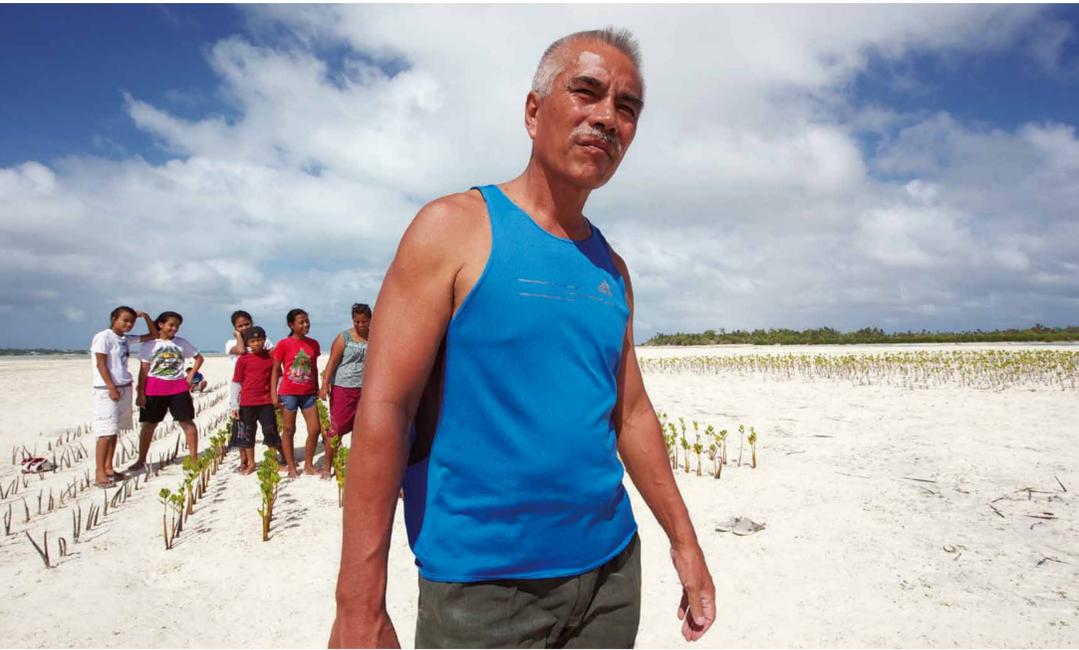
Today the youth group from Teoraereke planted baby mangrove plants with the President of Kiribati. His name is Anote Tong and he is concerned for our future and the future of Kiribati. Planting mangroves is very important because it holds the sand together to reduce the effects of coastal erosion. And it protects our homes and families like the coral reefs.

It is like a wall that stops or slows down the waves from destroying us. We feel very happy and proud that President Anote came to plant mangrove trees with us.

Even though we planted 1000 trees, our work is far from done. We must plant more and we have to take care of them because now barnacles are starting to kill the baby plants. It makes us feel angry because there is another problem to solve.

But today when the President helped us it made us feel like our government is strong, cares about the youth and our future. And as Anote said, "the problems are not just about the future but are affecting us right now."

— Eneri Henry Reiher, Kabeha Moutu, Tanea Moutu, Tirva Kaumai, Terikano Toromon, Tarataake Reubwatu and Taabuti Matikee



Ummannaq, Greenland

Maybe

Greenland's inland ice is melting. Maybe Greenland is going to be like a green land. Maybe there will be strange animals and new vegetables. Maybe the life of Greenlanders will change in the future. Maybe the fish will disappear and new fish will come instead. Maybe Greenlanders cannot fish anymore. They have to look for new jobs. Maybe there will be no ice.

— Aqqa Lange

