

# IMPACT

THE UNICEF AUSTRALIA SUPPORTER MAGAZINE

unicef 

AUSTRALIA

for every child

ISSUE  
**02**  
2019



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in Kiribati

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What's on the  
minds of Australian  
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Mozambique was devastated by Cyclone Idai. Only weeks later, the country was hit with another Cyclone, causing more grief to the community. © UNICEF/UN0305883/OCHA / Saviano Abreu

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## 2018 UNICEF Delivered for Rohingya



**17,299**

Children under 5 treated for **Severe Acute Malnutrition**

**250,628**

Children under 5 received **vitamin A supplements**

**134,954**

Children under 5 received **primary health care**

**334,650**

People accessed **safe drinking water**

**147,558**

Children aged 4 to 14 years received emergency **non-formal and early learning education**

**ABOVE:** Rohingya children line up during UNICEF's 10-day nutrition campaign in Kutupalong-Balukhali refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh to receive various nutrition supplements including Vitamin A, July 2018. Photo: Kate Geraghty/SMH

**ON THE COVER:**

On 28 April 2019 in Mozambique, Brazilian Military Firefighters rescue children in the Shibaburi area in Pemba, flooded after heavy rains poured down in the Pemba region. © UNICEF/UN0306047/ De Wet



## EDITORIAL

## Tony Stuart, CEO

In July's IMPACT we speak to the effects of climate change and the environment for children and young people - whether they live in war zones in the Middle East or rural Afghanistan; confronted by drought and cyclones in Africa or indeed in Australia and the Pacific - climate change is impacting on children's access to food, water, shelter, safety and a healthy environment.

In February we told you we visited the drought-affected New England region of New South Wales. Our report "In their own words" highlighted the devastating life pressures and the need for mental health support in schools.

The NSW Government has since announced a significant investment in professional mental health support for public high school students. Equipping teachers with the skills to have supportive conversations with students and teachers about mental health helps normalise speaking up.

In the lead up to the recent federal election we were reminded how important climate change is to children. Our own Young Ambassador program released its report 'A Climate for Change'.

After consulting with and polling more than 3,000 children and young adults around the country, we now know mental health, bullying, violence against women and children, inequality in accessing quality education, increasing pollution and inaction on climate change are major concerns. You can read more about this on pg. 6.

We also believe that our foreign aid policy should prioritise children and that the Australian Government should reverse its trend of freezing this budget – a higher proportion of spending of our aid budget should be on kids' development in the region.

Our impact on the lives of children in our region is important – last year UNICEF ensured the vaccination of three million children in Papua New Guinea against polio following an outbreak.

The recent spate of measles and flu cases in Australia, some fatal, highlights the importance of strong public health policy – every parent must get their child vaccinated because every child's life matters.

Our contribution to children in the world is partly ours to make but it's also definitely yours to claim. Inspiring people like you and Robyn Byrne on pg. 7 are the reason that we keep striving to deliver on our promise to every child, a fair chance.

**Tony Stuart**  
Chief Executive



## NEWS UPDATE

## Afghanistan

In May UNICEF raised the alarm on a malnutrition crisis unfolding in Afghanistan where among the two million children under the age of five years who are suffering acute malnutrition, 600,000 are suffering more severely and at risk of death if UNICEF cannot increase its limited supplies of Ready-to-Use therapeutic food (RUTF). A decade-long drought in Afghanistan, compounded by conflict, climatic extremes (flash floods) has left the country utterly devastated with more than 13 million people food insecure. Roughly 1.4 million children under the age of five require treatment for acute malnutrition each year. UNICEF is the sole provider of RUTF for children in Afghanistan and last year was only able to reach less than 50% of children in need. In 2019 UNICEF needs 107,000 cartons of RUTF to supply 1300 health centres in all 34 provinces in order to reach 60% of the 6,000,000 children at extreme risk.

**ABOVE:** Helal, two-months-old, is malnourished. Undernutrition at an early age can have serious effects on the physical and mental development of children. © UNICEFAfghanistan/Fazel



BEIRA, MOZAMBIQUE: Louisa Pedro Luis, 24, from Buzi. She has 3 children, the third child is 2 year old Anna Luis, who was treated for Malaria at the Ifapa Accommodation Centre in Beira. © UNICEF/UN0302081/Oatway

## NEWS UPDATE

## Mozambique

Two strong tropical cyclones have hit Mozambique this season - Cyclone Kenneth struck on 25 April – following on the heels of Cyclone Idai on 14 March which left more than 600 people dead.

UNICEF launched a response in 21 most affected districts of Sofala, Manica, Inhambane, and Zambézia provinces, vaccinating more than 700,000 children against Polio and more than 650,000 children against Measles and Rubella. UNICEF teams also reached nearly 700,000 children with vitamin A supplements; dewormed more than 550,000 children; 650,000 adolescent girls received Iron and folic acid supplements; and nearly 700,000 children were screened for malnutrition and acute cases referred.

In the immediate aftermath of the Cyclone Kenneth, UNICEF rapidly restored damaged urban water systems and treated water sources in contaminated rural wells and boreholes. UNICEF also distributed water purification tablets to households in cholera "hotspots" throughout the city of Pemba, reaching 134,000 people.

# Tackling Rotavirus in Kiribati

BY VIVIEN WONG, INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICER



Globally, diarrhoea takes the lives of more than 1,300 children each day and 480,000 every year. Its impact is greatest in developing countries where access to clean water, sanitation, and urgent medical care may be limited. Rotavirus is the most common and deadly form of severe diarrhoea. Nearly every child will contract rotavirus before the age of five, however it is far more severe where treatment is out of reach and can spread much more quickly. Rotavirus causes one-third of diarrhoea-related deaths among children under five every year and the hospitalisation of millions more around the world.



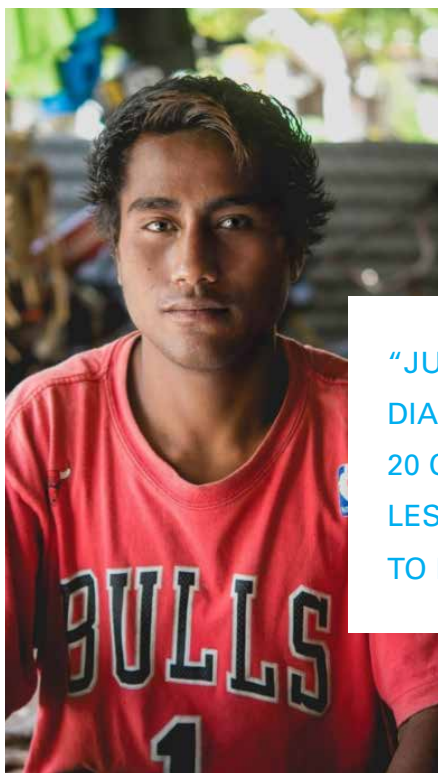
**MAIN:** Children filling a bucket with rain water from a water tank in Taniau Village on Abaiang Atoll. Five water tanks were installed in the village by UNICEF as part of UNICEF supported Kiribati Water and Sanitation program KIRIWATSAN. ©UNICEF/UN0202329/Sokhin

**INSET:** On 9 February 2018, six month old baby Tate isn't fazed by Nurse Rooti Kiteon squeezing her cheeks and administering the Rotavirus vaccine. This will protect her against severe diarrhoea, one of the leading causes of child mortality rates across the Pacific region. ©UNICEF/UN0200260/Knowles

**“ONE CLINIC REPORTED A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN DIARRHOEA CASES IN CHILDREN UNDER FIVE. BETWEEN 2016-2018, THEY SAW THE NUMBER OF DIARRHOEA CASES REDUCE BY AROUND 80%.”**

**K**iribati (pronounced Kiribas) is a small island state in the Pacific Ocean, spread out over 33 atolls and across 3.5 million square kilometres of ocean, an area larger than the size of Western Australia and New South Wales combined. Home to a population of 110,000 people, it is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts.

In 2015, Kiribati had the highest mortality rate for children under five among the 14 Pacific Island countries and territories, at 60 deaths per 1000 live births. Primarily, this was caused by infectious diseases, namely pneumonia and diarrhoea. From 2010-2015, Kiribati experienced repeated diarrhoea outbreaks with up to 70% of cases in children under five. A study of an outbreak in July 2013 revealed rotavirus was the main cause. This outbreak saw 1,118 reported cases and six deaths of children under five.



Burerue Teriamaki, one of the amazing volunteers at the Bonriki village health clinic in Kiribati, encourages families to get their children vaccinated against rotavirus, so that they can be healthy during the most important time of their development. Credit: 2017/UNICEF/Kataotao

### **THE PROJECT**

In 2015, with your support, UNICEF and the Kiribati Ministry of Health and Medical Services started a program to introduce the rotavirus vaccine as part of a comprehensive package to reduce childhood diarrhoea, including:

- training for all health workers on prevention and treatment of rotavirus and other forms of diarrhoea;
- delivery of rotavirus vaccines to newborns, and catch up vaccination for children under 2 years old;
- provision of supplies for prevention and treatment of diarrhoea, including Vitamin A, soap, hand sanitiser, oral rehydration salts (ORS) and zinc, and necessary equipment (such as cold chain refrigerators) to health clinics; and
- integration with other health programs including Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and nutrition to ensure the results are effective and sustainable.

**“JUST LOOK AT THE FIGURES. DIARRHOEA HAS DROPPED FROM 20 CASES IN A MONTH TO ONLY FIVE. LESS AND LESS BABIES ARE LIKELY TO DIE YOUNG.”** BURERUE TERIAMAKI

Nearly 90% of child deaths due to diarrhoea could be prevented with vaccination and treatment such as Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS), zinc and improved hygiene behaviours. Vaccination is one of the most equitable, effective, safe and inexpensive public health interventions. Vaccines reduce the incidence of vaccine-preventable disease and improve child survival and cognitive

development. Immunisation coverage is high in Kiribati, but at the start of this program, the rotavirus vaccine was not included in the immunisation package.

### **STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS**

UNICEF's support to the Kiribati government has improved child survival by strengthening national healthcare systems so that health workers across the country have the knowledge, resources, and supervision they need to be able to successfully prevent and respond to childhood diarrhoea.

This program has been highly successful in the introduction of the rotavirus vaccine to newborns, with 85% coverage in Kiribati. There was a clear reduction of diarrhoea and acute gastroenteritis over the program period. This is also due to UNICEF's work in immunisation, nutrition, and WASH, which also help prevent childhood disease.

Health workers have seen fewer cases of diarrhoea since the introduction of the rotavirus vaccine. Of the cases that they have seen, they tend to be milder than previous years, and often in children who have not received the vaccination, sometimes due to their age.

One clinic reported a significant reduction in diarrhoea cases in children under five. Between 2016-2018, they saw the number of diarrhoea cases reduce by around 80%.

Burerue Teriamaki volunteers at the Bonriki village health clinic in Kiribati, ensuring that babies in the village get vaccinated and protected at their most vulnerable development stage. He was trained at a workshop run by UNICEF and the Ministry of Health in Bonriki village in January 2016.

“Just look at the figures. Diarrhoea has dropped from 20 cases in a month to only five. Less and less babies are likely to die young,” said Burerue.

The success of this program has been made possible by the generosity of individual donors, and with the assistance of UNICEF's corporate partner IKEA Australia.

# Finding out what children in Australia think

BY BRINSLEY MARLAY, EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Over the year leading up to the recent federal election we saw loud student strikes about climate change. But did you ever wonder, during all the debate about whether children should be allowed to protest or should more appropriately stay at school, what these young people were exactly worried about and why?

Well, now we can tell you - they are very concerned about action – or lack of it – on many fronts. They say that their adult leaders, mainly in government and business, are not taking enough action to ensure that the world (the Australia) they get passed to them is in good shape. But how do we know this?

UNICEF's reason for being is to ensure that each and every child has a fair chance – this mandate is derived from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Australia has been a signatory to since its inception in 1989. Among the many rights it lays out for children and young people are their rights to express an opinion and to be heard, as well as to share and shape ideas and information.

With this in mind, our eight UNICEF Australia Young Ambassadors spent a large part of last year consulting with children all around Australia - to find out what matters concern them the most and impact their ability to live positive and healthy everyday lives now and into the future. They spoke to over 1,500 children and young people aged from three to 22 years. We also surveyed over 1800 young people aged 14 to 19 – who would be new voters.

The research, which the Young Ambassadors will be taking to politicians in Canberra next month, is very revealing. The recently released *Climate for Change: 2019 Young Ambassador Report*, shows that children and young people in Australia are often dissatisfied and frustrated by the ideology and politicisation that has enveloped the huge issues that they consider are shaping their lives.

It showed that, from a very young age, many children begin to actively engage with the information available to them, assess it and arrive at deeply considered positions. In fact, the Young Ambassadors found this process becomes more sophisticated as they grow older. Their views on climate change,

energy, mental health and education are vivid examples of this.

Children as young as 10 and 11 (Year 5) raised mental health issues in consultations, generally concerned that these issues were not well discussed at school. In fact, a very concerning one quarter (24 per cent) of young people aged 14 to 17 years consider themselves to be in poor mental health and 25 per cent consider themselves to be in poor control of their emotions. Children and young people also commonly cited stress created by workloads at school as being at unacceptably high levels, often identifying anxiety associated with the transition from primary to high school.

Across age, location and gender, children and young people in Australia view education as the foundation for successful futures and positive wellbeing.

And, from Year 5, they started to raise thought-through concerns about the environment – pollution, animal welfare and extinction of wildlife - becoming a more sophisticated conversation about climate change and energy as they grew older. It was overwhelmingly clear their views are informed by engagement with the science and a rejection of ideology.

And, from primary school onwards, children said they simply did not trust politicians.

We are really proud of this research from our Young Ambassadors, and intend to continue it each year, helping to form a comprehensive long term picture of the way children and young people think in our country, and the issues they want tackled by our leaders and decision-makers.





#### FIELD WORKER PROFILE

## Harriet Dwyer

### UNICEF EMERGENCY ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST

When Australian field worker, Harriet Dwyer, landed in Mozambique after Cyclone Idai tore through the country leaving hundreds of thousands of people without a home, she saw more than just devastation.

When the cyclone hit in March, families including young children rushed to higher ground like the roofs of buildings, or tall trees, where they waited up to six days to be rescued. Watermarks still stain the walls of those buildings.

But just three weeks on from the disaster, Harriet noticed an incredible change.

When she visited the child-friendly spaces set up by UNICEF, she saw incredible resilience from kids whose lives had been ripped apart.

"You walk in and you see smiles and laughter. The local volunteers are like parents to all the kids and it is very clear the positive impact that they have and are having on children recovering from trauma."

Child-friendly spaces are also

a place where children who are particularly vulnerable - perhaps separated from their families - are able to be identified and reunited with their loved ones.

"To me they are some of the most important interventions," Harriet says.

**"THE LOCAL VOLUNTEERS ARE LIKE PARENTS TO ALL THE KIDS AND IT IS VERY CLEAR THE POSITIVE IMPACT THAT THEY HAVE AND ARE HAVING ON CHILDREN RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA."**

HARRIET DWYER

"It was very clear that the money that gets given for this type of response turns into an actual mosquito net, health services offered to someone, school books.

"Seeing the school-in-a-box come from the helicopter and straight to a child - I had never seen that quick of a response."



#### DONOR PROFILE

## Robyn's Story

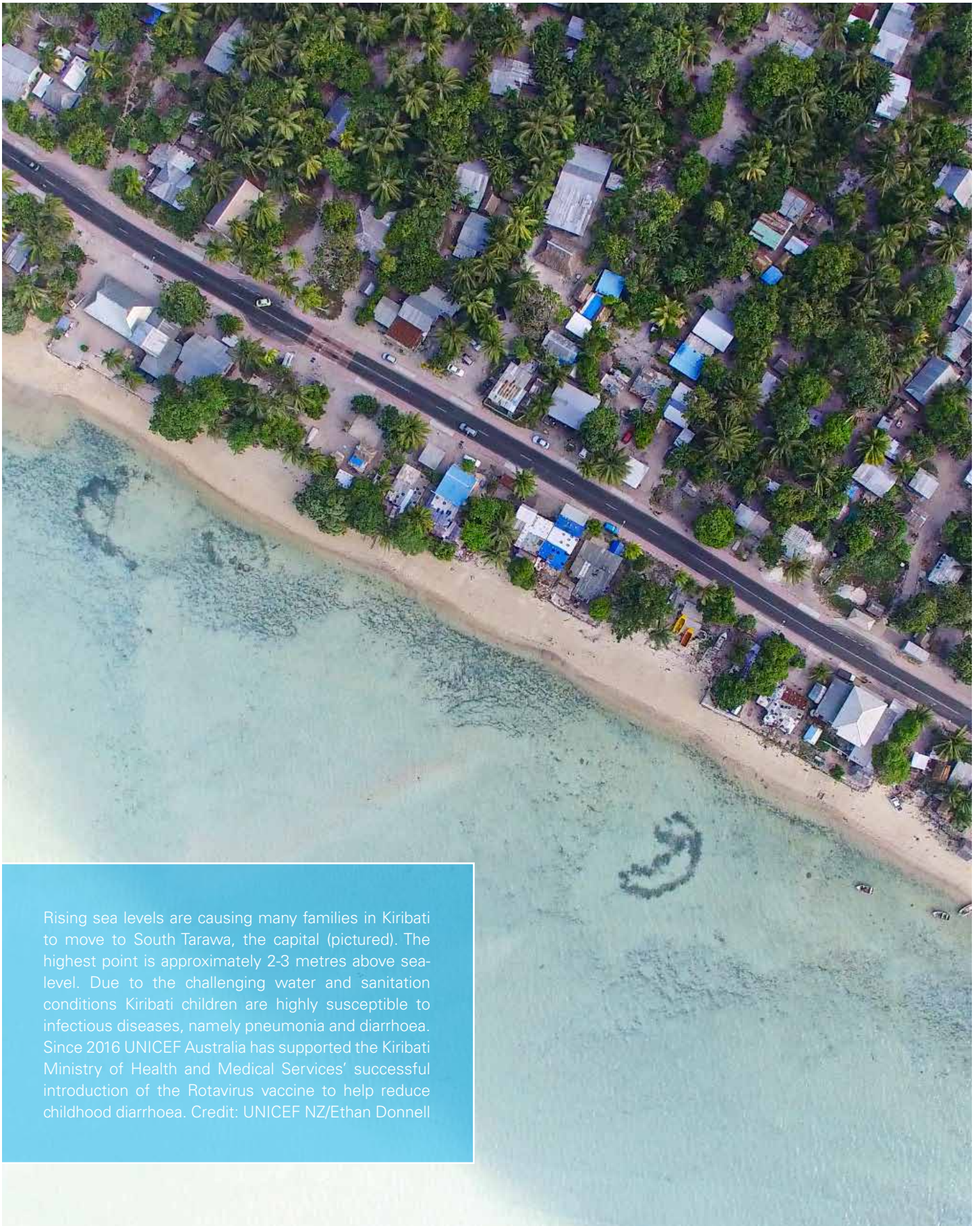
### ROBYN BYRNE, GLOBAL PARENT, MELBOURNE

I have a really rewarding job working with young children as a Paediatric Occupational Therapist. I like working with kids particularly in the preschool years, looking at their whole development and mental and emotional wellbeing.

I see a lot of kids who are experiencing developmental difficulties and when assisting I also seek to understand that child's relationships, especially with their parents and caregivers – that special attachment. These relationships are so important in the early years as they set the foundation for kids. Help in these early years can positively impact on a child's trajectory of emotional and social development.

I've admired UNICEF for a long time before I came across the Global Parent program. I think the concept of helping kids in the first 1,000 days of their life really resonated with me – again that critical time period – which prompted me to get involved. UNICEF seems really focused on supporting the child's community and their caregivers, which is just so important.

I'd like to say to other Australians donating to UNICEF that even though you feel like it might not be much, it actually is. If everyone does their small part it actually builds a community that can create big change. I feel really privileged and happy to be doing even just a small part that's helping in some way. I'm looking forward to meeting other members of the Global Parent community at upcoming events who share this like-minded vision



Rising sea levels are causing many families in Kiribati to move to South Tarawa, the capital (pictured). The highest point is approximately 2-3 metres above sea-level. Due to the challenging water and sanitation conditions Kiribati children are highly susceptible to infectious diseases, namely pneumonia and diarrhoea. Since 2016 UNICEF Australia has supported the Kiribati Ministry of Health and Medical Services' successful introduction of the Rotavirus vaccine to help reduce childhood diarrhoea. Credit: UNICEF NZ/Ethan Donnell