

# **Settlement Experiences of Kiribati Migrants Living in New Zealand**

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## Abstract

This thesis explores the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. In depth qualitative interviews were carried out with a group of Kiribati migrants to elicit data on the main events and activities that influenced their settlement experiences. Using constructivist grounded theory methodology, the analysis revealed a set of common themes that were indicated as shaping the settlement experiences of participants and their families. Starting with the formation of expectations, of a better life in New Zealand, participants and their families received considerable assistance and support from their family and friends (conceptualised as ‘strong ties’) so that they could establish their settlement base in New Zealand. This settlement base, which comprised of securing full-time permanent employment, entering the rental housing market and accessing educational and health services, formed the foundation for the on-going settlement of participants and their families.

Gender differences were evident in how male and female participants sought to improve their positions in the labour market. While male participants used ‘weak ties’ in the form of chance encounters and acquaintances to move into better-paying and more career-oriented jobs, female participants, who did not have these same opportunities, invested in further education to improve their positions in the labour market. Language proficiency, however, was a key determiner as to which female participants would be able to invest in further education, or who would continue to work in their jobs as caregivers. Overall, labour market mobility was indicated as having the most profound influence in the settlement experiences of participants and their families, with those families where both adults continued to work in minimum-wage jobs facing the greatest struggles, particularly in terms of their quality of housing. Those participants trapped in inadequate housing indicated detrimental health impacts for their children and detrimental mental health effects for adults.

The retention by children of their Kiribati culture and language was an overriding aim of the settlement participants and their families. Although children sought to extend their social connections, the lack of a desire of participants to form social connections with other New Zealanders underpinned tensions between children and their parents, and raised questions

about the nature of participants' integration in New Zealand. The complexity of settlement was also affirmed by the detrimental migration impacts on the health of participants, underpinning the finding that seeking 'a better life in New Zealand' was not a straightforward process for many participants.

## Preface

In this thesis, meaning is constructed by the participants and me. As a child of refugee parents and as the wife of a Kiribati migrant, I have constructed my own world-view on what comprises settlement. Among the most significant personal experiences that have had an important part in the construction of my world-view of settlement are those that have arisen from walking in two distinct cultures (that of my parents' culture from Romania and that of being a New Zealander). While born in New Zealand, with my parents I personally travelled through much of their settlement journey including learning to speak English; hearing my mother's anguish of shop keepers ridiculing her inability to speak English well and her accent; made to feel different at school as though my surname indicated automatic failure; and internalising my mother's strong sense of turmoil in being separated from those she loved dearly, particularly her parents whom I never got to meet. Only through this research have I come to make sense of the personal nature of the settlement journey of my parents. In contrast to my father's resilience and forward-looking drive to his family a better and safer life, my mother's focus on separation from those who shaped her past led to a life-time of sadness. As someone who was very close to my mother and who listened to the impact that forced separation had on her well-being that was not well understood by others even with-in our family, this was both a privilege and a burden.

This burden, however, has in my opinion served me well in my research. The ability to have empathy was not something that had to be learnt, but came naturally. As someone who struggled to speak English, I too understood the impact of low language proficiency. Also as someone who witnessed the hardship of my parents coming to New Zealand, I was well-equipped to understand how hard it was for participants, particularly those with little or no familial support. Lastly, when participants spoke of issues such as discrimination, I remember the stories from my parents being laughed at their lack of language skills or their accents. Finally, when participants spoke of keeping a tight hold on their children, I recalled how tight my parents held on to me and my siblings, not letting us go out to visit school friends or go away on school trips. The stories told by participants of the importance of language retention was also understood as I believe that my being able to speak Romanian was one of the best gifts provided to me by my parents, even though mainstream educators

saw this as a deficit, to me it was the most valuable asset that defined me for whom I have been and am today.

Another set of experiences that has had a part in the construction of my view on settlement has come from seeing my husband undertake his own personal settlement journey. While not a refugee (like my parents), my husbands' settlement experiences have in parts been surprisingly similar. Like my parents, when coming from Kiribati to New Zealand as an adult, my husband had to adjust to a different culture, master a different language, and cope with separation from family and friends. He also had to deal with anxieties concerning the well-being of his family left behind in Kiribati, particularly in relation to the day-to-day necessities of life, such as access to food, fresh water, and medicine. Other sources of concern related to the ability of his family to cope with increased environmental risks, such as increased rates of dengue fever and gastrointestinal diseases. While remittances ameliorated some of these concerns, news from 'home' about the death of family members, particularly children and young people in their twenties and thirties, from preventable disease, always struck hard and only went to underscore a sense of unfairness in his ability to migrate and have a better life.

Finally, my experiences as a public servant also provided me with key insights into the policy issues relating to migration and settlement. During my twenty years as a public servant, I had the privilege to leading or making a contribution to the development of policies that have had an influential role in the settlement of Kiribati and other migrants. These have included, the Pacific Access Category (a key immigration policy used by Kiribati and other Pacific migrants to gain permanent residence in New Zealand); the Recognised Seasonal Employer (a scheme which provides seasonal work opportunities for Kiribati and other migrants to work in the horticulture and viticulture industries in New Zealand); and the New Zealand Settlement Strategy (that set out a policy and operational plan to assist migrants to become settled in New Zealand).

Overall, I believe that the combination of these and other experiences, including my love for the people of Kiribati and the culture, allowed me to gain greater insights into the meaning of the settlement experiences of participants and their families living in New Zealand. For this I am eternally grateful.

# Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to those who so generously gave of their time to share their stories of leaving Kiribati to migrate and settle in New Zealand. I was privileged to hear those stories and to gain insights in the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand.

I also wish to express my deep gratitude to all the members of the Kiribati community for their support, assistance, and love throughout my research. I particularly wish to thank the then acting President of the Wellington Kiribati Community, who circulated the Information Sheet translated into Kiribati by Father Michael, inviting Kiribati migrants to participate in this research.

I am particularly grateful to the University of Otago for accepting me as a doctoral student and for providing me with a scholarship to undertake my research. Most importantly, I thank my supervisors Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman and Geoff Fougere for their intellectual stewardship and their personal support. Your patience and kindness in my own personal journey will never be forgotten.

I wish to thank the wonderful support I have received from my family, my mother, father, brother and sister, and nephews and nieces. As a child of refugee parents, I too became a traveller, experiencing settlement in a new society and culture while trying to retain our Romanian culture and language. I acknowledge my parents for their courage and their love of their children.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge my dear husband, Barauti Teariki, and our large and loving extended family. Thirty years ago I went to a strange land, a place of white sand and blue waters, a place that would take my breath away, Kiribati that became a part of me. In Kiribati I found a place of happiness and peace. In Barauti I found kindness, unwavering support, and someone who could make me look to the future.

I dedicate this thesis to Barauti Teariki, my parents, my Imatang and Kiribati families, the Kiribati Community of New Zealand, and the people of Kiribati.

## **Statement of Contribution**

My thesis was supervised by Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman and Geoff Fougere. This supervision entailed individual and collective discussions on all facets of the thesis. My supervisors provided me with comments on the scope of the research, methodology, literature review and comparative analysis. Some of the most extensive discussions focussed on the different qualitative methodologies, in particular the key tenants of grounded theory.

Significant discussion also took place on the approach to the interviews and my status as both an insider and outsider of the Kiribati community. Comments were provided on the structure of the thesis, drafts of chapters, the ethics paper, and my presentations at the post-graduate research days.

Others who made an important contribution in guiding me with the field research included members of the Wellington Kiribati Community and Father Michael who was visiting from Kiribati. These individuals provided me with sage advice on how to inform and invite people to participate in this research, but also how to make all members of the Wellington Kiribati Community feel included.

The literature review, data collection, data analysis, and the development of the theoretical model were prepared by me.

## List of Abbreviations

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IMSED	International Migration, Settlement & Employment Dynamics
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MSD	Ministry of Social Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAC	Pacific Access Category
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RSE	Recognised Seasonal Employer
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Committee
WHO	World Health Organization
WKC	Wellington Kiribati Community

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis examines the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. Set against a wealth of academic research conducted in New Zealand on migration and the settlement of migrants and refugees, very little was known about how Kiribati migrants, a relatively new migrant group to New Zealand, went about their settlement. While remedying this knowledge gap was a significant impetus for this research, the context of increased outward migration pressures from Kiribati to New Zealand, due to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts, added a greater level of importance to the research. Set against the objective to further our understanding of the settlement of Kiribati migrants, the following research question was developed for this thesis:

*What are the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand?*

The central argument presented in this thesis is that employment is the key determinant of the settlement outcomes for Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. In particular, labour market mobility is indicated as being a major influencer of the ability of migrants to afford adequate rental housing, meet extra-curricular expenses, and perceptions of their settlement success.

## Research Method

Selecting which methodology would be most appropriate for this research was inextricably linked with what was being sought by the research question. As the aim of the research question was to gain an understanding of the key events that shaped the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families, including how they felt about those experiences, qualitative methodology was considered the most suitable approach for this research. Within the gamut of qualitative methodology, a significant level of deliberation was undertaken in assessing which method or mix of methods should be used for analysing the settlement stories of participants. It was decided that a mix of narrative analysis and

constructivist grounded theory methods would be most appropriate for analysing participant's stories while recognising the co-creation of narrative texts and meanings. The objective for using this mixed methods approach was for theoretical findings to emerge that were grounded in the words and ideas of participants. This meant not only exploring for commonalities and differences in the data, but developing theoretical constructs and a theoretical model through inductive reasoning.

## Capturing the Voices of Participants

An important aspect of the research methodology involved thinking through the best process for capturing the voices of participants. This involved deliberation on the social and cultural environmental settings that would maximise the chances of participants feeling respected and comfortable in sharing their stories and their innermost thoughts. Significant consideration was given to my status as both an 'insider' and 'outsider' of the Kiribati community through my marriage to my I-Kiribati husband of 28 years and our Kiribati family living in New Zealand and back in Kiribati. The importance of my relationship with the Kiribati community led me to view the process of data collection not simply as a means to an end, but as a process of enduring engagement based on the respect of cultural values. To that end, the process of data collection was as important as achieving the goal of gathering rich data for this thesis. Nothing in that process was allowed to diminish or threaten my on-going relationship with members of the Kiribati community, an important essence of my and my family's identity.

Consistent with this approach, the linguistic preferences of participants were also observed with participants being able to communicate in Kiribati, English, or a mix of the two languages, with translation facilities at hand if and when required. While providing participants with choices worked extremely well, it also reinforced my view of the intricate linkage between culture and language and that without having spent time in Kiribati and immersing myself in the Kiribati culture, the dialogue would not have made sense. It was my understanding of the culture that allowed me to realise a fuller range of observations, including the sources of humour, feelings of anxiety and shyness and even perceptions of self-worth. Set within the context of these complexities and my reflections, a chapter setting

out the process of data collection was considered as a worthy addition alongside the chapters on the results of the field research and the analysis of those findings.

## Literature Review

A review of the literature on migration and settlement constituted an important first step in the research process and was conducted prior to the collection of the data from participants. The aim of conducting the literature review in this way was to deepen my understanding of the subject of settlement that would enrich my field research. While the literature review identified recurring themes as most likely to influence the settlement of migrants and refugees, it also served as an important reminder of the complexity of the settlement process and that the essence of understanding the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families was through their words. Revisiting the literature after the data collection, also served as a critical process for testing ideas and encouraging me to go back to participants to deepen my understanding of particular topics and sub-topics. The aim of the literature review was to open my mind to possibilities rather than constrict my search for insights and meanings. While the literature review on qualitative methodologies could be viewed as a formal requirement for the presentation of a thesis, there is no doubt that immersing myself in some of the debates on grounded theory allowed me to become a better researcher. The need to understand those debates and how one would position oneself in the research process forced me to consider the opportunities and limitations of this research. This led me to conduct a considerable number of candid conversations with myself about how to distil simplicity from complexity in a way that was faithful to the interview data and withstand scrutiny. Focussing on the factors for change, rather than on the descriptions of events alone, was a key way in making sense of commonalities and differences among the settlement experiences of participants.

## Shape of the Research

This thesis is structured into eight chapters. *Chapter Two* reviews the literature on the factors influencing international migration with a focus on Kiribati and New Zealand. The chapter also notes that although the literature has strongly indicated that no region or country would be immune from the impacts of climate change, the low-lying deltas of Asia and the atolls of the Pacific have been identified as being among some of the most vulnerable in the world

from the impacts of climate change. In particular, low-lying atoll countries in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, such as Kiribati, have been identified as vulnerable to increased sea-levels and climatic extremes such as storms and droughts. In Kiribati, this vulnerability in combination with extreme poverty and increased anthropogenic pressures due to increasing urbanisation in Tarawa, has led to concerns about the ability of its environmental ecosystems to sustain its local population in the longer-term.

This chapter also examines the difficulties facing those ‘forced’ to leave their usual countries of residence due to climate change impacts in the absence of international legal protection. The discussion identifies the sensitivities involved in the development of such a legal framework for fear of destabilising the well-established international legal regime for the protection of refugees. It also discusses why the world’s largest emitters of greenhouse gases are reluctant to engage in discussions on the topic of protection for fear of becoming financially liable for their part in the problem. The chapter notes that in the absence of progress on the issue of protection, outward migration pressures in countries such as Kiribati are beginning to build with New Zealand their most likely destination.

*Chapter Three* reviews the literature on the settlement of migrants and refugees. The chapter discusses the presence of two main literature streams on the issue of settlement. In the first of these, the chapter discusses the use of different political policy settings commonly used in western jurisdictions (assimilation, integration and multiculturalism) and the rise of newer policy settings in parts of Europe and Scandinavia referred to as ‘ethno-pluralism’. The discussion serves as a pertinent reminder that migration and settlement does not occur in a policy vacuum. In the second of these streams, the chapter discusses the vast empirical research conducted on the settlement of migrants and refugees. The discussion focuses on the emergence from the literature review of six recurring themes identified as influencing the settlement of migrants and refugees (employment, language proficiency, housing, social networks, health of refugees, pre-migration information and expectations). The chapter also discusses the findings from the literature regarding the association between migration and acculturation effects and detrimental health of migrants and refugees over time. The discussion notes that while policy settings have focused on the short-term adjustment of new migrants to their new host society, settlement is a complex process, one which typically gives rise to differences of settlement outcomes within as well as among migrant and refugee groups.

*Chapter Four* examines the literature on qualitative methodologies considered for use in this thesis, with a particular focus on narrative analysis, grounded theory, and constructivist grounded theory. The chapter discusses some of the key debates that have shaped the emergence of different approaches within grounded theory, including how and when literature reviews should be conducted. It also examines the key characteristics of constructivist grounded theory and the role of the researcher in the co-creation of narrative texts and meanings.

*Chapter Five* discusses the sampling framework and inclusion criteria used to identify the purposive sample for this research. It also sets out in detail the process used to gather data from participants and how social, cultural and linguistic considerations shaped the interview environments for participants. The chapter identifies how my personal relationship with the Wellington Kiribati Community, contributed to my ‘insider’/‘outsider’ status, and how that status assisted my ability to gather rich data on the meaning of participants’ lived settlement experiences, including insights on areas of similarities and differences.

*Chapter Six* discusses the analytical results of the qualitative interviews. Through an iterative process of deductive and inductive analysis, categories representing the key events that influenced the settlement experiences were uncovered during the data analysis and subsequently compared against demographic dimensions, employment, language proficiency and nature of their social networks. To give voice to the stories told by participants, this chapter makes significant use of direct quotes to illustrate their personal accounts of their settlement experiences. The chapter also incorporates an examination of the influence of immigration policy settings on how participants approached their settlement in New Zealand.

*Chapter Seven* discusses the analytical findings of field research. Using constructivist grounded theory, the results from the field research are compared against findings from the literature review and areas of convergence and divergence scrutinised. The chapter also discusses the development of some theoretical concepts and presents a theoretical model to illustrate the settlement experiences of participants and their families living in New Zealand.

*Chapter Eight* sets out the key conclusions of this research. The chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the research and discusses some of the limitations of the study. The chapter also sets out recommendations for policy development and future research.

## Chapter 2: Influences of Migration

### Introduction

Migration is defined as the movement of people and can refer to those relocating within their borders, or migrating externally to another country. The term migration covers both the voluntary and involuntary movement of people, which can be either temporary or permanent. The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the literature on the influences of international migration with a focus on Kiribati and New Zealand. It has drawn on literature internationally, as well as New Zealand literature, on the topic of migration (see for example, Bedford 2007; Bedford and Cooper 2009; Bedford and Bedford 2010; Mayda 2007; McLean and Smit 2006; Mortreux and Barnet 2009; McAdam 2011a) and on research conducted by international organisations and agencies with responsibilities in the area of migration (for example, International Organization for Migration; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; United Nations, OECD, World Bank, Immigration New Zealand).

A particular focus of this chapter is the topic of migration in the context of climate change including an analysis of the terminology of international law and human rights frameworks relating to the protection of people ‘forced’ to migrate. The review highlights the complex relationships between climate change impacts and migration and type of migration flows (temporary, permanent, voluntary, involuntary and those seeking protection). The review presents evidence that some progress is being made by international policy makers in the area of human rights and migration. However, international law still continues to harbour significant gaps about how the international community should deal with those migrants ‘forced’ to move beyond their national boundaries due to environmental degradation resulting from climate change and other pressures. The complexity of the subject coupled with extreme caution by large greenhouse emitters to engage in dialogue on such issues raises the real prospect that some citizens forced to migrate (such as I-Kiribati, a native of Kiribati), are likely to have to do so in the absence of international legal protection.

## Background

The movement of people known as migration has been a feature of mankind since the beginning of time. In the earliest days people moved from place to place in search of shelter, food and water and from more vulnerable to less vulnerable places. Over the centuries people have been also been on the move in response to environmental impacts, conflict and to maximise income opportunities. A focussed review of the literature on migration and climate presented evidence from archaeological findings indicating that climate has played an influential role in human settlement patterns of early civilisation (McLeman and Smit 2006: 32).

Nowadays, migration has become an important feature of globalisation with 232 million people estimated to be living in a country other than the one in which they were born (United Nations 2013). Overall, people migrate for many reasons such as for work, tourism (which is a category of immigration), education, permanent migration, family reunification and refugee protection. Generally, the global movement of people is conducted in an orderly manner within the laws and regulations set by individual countries, or groups of countries comprising a regional pact. In contrast to the vast number of people who migrate voluntarily, a smaller number of people, referred to as ‘refugees’, cross international boundaries to seek protection from the fear of persecution (defined under the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951). A much smaller class of migrants are individuals or groups of individuals (such as boat people) who cross international borders with the aim of claiming asylum. Other smaller migrant categories include those subject to illegal trafficking and human smuggling.

It is against this largely established international order of the global movement of people that the discussion on climate change and migration has begun to emerge. The possibility that hundreds of millions of people may be forced to migrate (estimated at 200 million by 2050) (International Organization for Migration 2009; IPCC 2007, 2014; World Bank 2006), as a result of climate change impacts has commanded international attention albeit with few insights about how any large movement of people will be accommodated and what legal

protections will apply. Part of the complexity relating to the discussion on climate change and migration has been the difficulty in distinguishing between climate change and other anthropogenic influences of migration. This complexity can be seen in the case of Kiribati, where the dynamic interaction between endogenous and exogenous influences on environmental systems supporting human habitation makes it difficult to discern the weight of causality that should be apportioned (Fitz 2010; McLeman and Smit 2006; Bedford and Bedford 2010).

The main reason for these difficulties is that the relationship between climate change and migration is not necessarily linear, but rather, influenced by other anthropogenic factors including how societies interact with their environments (Fritz 2010: 4). According to McLeman and Smit (2006), these anthropogenic influences can include social, economic and political factors making it difficult to isolate the impact of climate change from these and other influences. Another complexity is the level of resources people can draw upon to enable them to mitigate, adapt, and if required move to less vulnerable locations. It is these complications that have resulted in much of the discussion on climate change and migration to be subject to so much conjecture. Despite the difficulties in identifying climate change as a cause of migration, some researchers have gone on to conclude:

*“...it is reasonable to go forward with the assumption that climate change may affect human migration in the future.” (McLeman and Smit 2006: 33).*

To assist in assessing the relationship between climate change and migration, much of the discussion in the literature has emphasised the need to understand not only the vulnerability facing societies, but also how these risks can be managed (see for example McLeman and Smit 2006; Mortreux et al 2009; IPCC 2014). This has led an increased focus in the literature on how societies may be able to mitigate and adapt to the threats posed by climate change (IPCC 2014; World Bank 2006; Mortreux and Barnett 2009). Rather than viewing migration as a failure of adaptation, some researchers (see for example, Black et al 2011; Tacoli 2009; Mortreux and Barnett 2009; McLeman and Smit 2006) have argued that as with internal relocation, outward migration could be posited as an adaptation response. This is argued by Tacoli (2009):

*“What we do know is that mobility and migration are key responses to environmental and non-environmental pressures. They should therefore be a central element of strategies of adaptation to climate change. This requires a radical change in policymakers’ perception of migration as a problem and a better understanding of the role of local and national institutions in supporting and accommodating mobility.”*

(Tacoli 2009: 513)

Given the complexity of the subject and drawing on research on morphology and anthropogenic impacts on the atoll environment in Kiribati, my approach in this chapter has been to take a broad view of the issue of climate change and migration and to examine migration responses as a consequence of environmental degradation, whether from climate change, climatic events or other anthropogenic impacts. My approach is consistent with the argument put forward by Limon (2009) that climate change is a *process* that has impacts on the environment and the ability of people to cope and not an end in itself (Limon 2009).

My assumption is that there is a wide gulf between voluntary and forced migration and that people make the best decisions they can with the resources at their disposal to manage risks. While for some societies that may mean building vast structures to manage the risks of increased sea-levels, for some of the poorest and vulnerable societies, migration may become the only viable adaptive option. The fundamental premise is that migration is seldom a first choice, but often a last choice. The prospect of large numbers of people such as those from Kiribati being ‘forced’ to leave their country with the loss of their cultural and linguistic icons should be viewed as a grave response and, therefore, not taken lightly. Unfortunately, the following discussion indicates that this will not be an easy task given the inability of the international community to reach commitments to reduce greenhouse gases.

## **Approach to the Literature Review**

To assess the scope of the literature review on migration and settlement a detailed search of internet databases was undertaken (including, Advanced Google Scholar, Safari, PubMed, Elsevier, United Nations, World Bank, IPCC, OECD, International Organization for Migration, Oxford University, and various immigration agencies recognised for conducting migration and settlement research). A number of prompts were used to stimulate the search

of databases (including, ‘migration’, ‘immigration’, ‘refugee’, ‘climate change refugee’, ‘climate change and migration’, ‘climate change and atolls’, ‘climate change and health’, ‘migration theories’, ‘push/pull influences’, ‘settlement’, ‘resettlement’). The initial search using these prompts resulted in over three million references being identified. Refining the prompts further on climate change, migration, settlement, resettlement, atolls and Kiribati reduced the number of references to just over 30,000. Concentrating the search further to the most cited journal articles and books from New Zealand and internationally, the references were reduced further to just over 2,000. Reading through the abstracts of these references, 170 articles and books were identified as being most pertinent and relevant for inclusion in this literature review. These references comprised the sample for my literature review for this thesis.

## Drivers of Migration

The review of the literature indicates that migration, the movement of people across national borders, is a dynamic response to a range of complex inter-linking factors, including economic, social, environmental, political and cultural influences (McLeman and Smit 2006; Bedford 2007; Bedford and Cooper 2009, 2010; Locke 2008; International Organization for Migration 2008; Perch-Nielsen et al 2008). Other factors include demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, and family size) and human capital features (such as education, skills, work experiences and language proficiency), and policy parameters (immigration policy settings and regulations). While, the global movement of people is overwhelmingly voluntary, the topic of migration also includes the ‘forced’ movement of people referred to as refugees. More recently the topic of migration has been associated with climate change and other anthropogenic impacts on environmental systems. The following section examines the issue of climate change and migration with a specific focus on the debates on the protection of those ‘forced’ to migrate outside of their usual country of residence.

## Climate Change and Migration

Since the early 1980s, a number of terms have emerged in the literature to describe the relationship between climate change and migration. While there is widespread acceptance

across academic researchers that climate change impacts will result in large flows of migration (internally within countries and externally), there is still a lack of consensus about how to define this ‘forced’ type of migration. Biermann and Boas (2010) summarise this problem:

*In sum, there is no consensus definition of “climate change refugee.” (Biermann and Boas 2010: 63)*

The lack of an international consensus amongst policymakers and researchers has led to the use of many terms all designed to describe people ‘forced’ by environmental change to migrate outside of their usual country of residence. In 1985 El Hinnawi (1985) introduced the term ‘environmental refugee’ to describe those people *‘forced’* to seek refuge (either temporarily or permanently) as a result of the impacts of climate change, climatic events and environmental degradation. Other terms used to refer to people forced to migrate due to climate change impacts have included:

*“environment migrant, forced environmental migrant, environmentally motivated migrant, climate refugee, climate change refugee, environmentally displaced person (EDP), disaster refugee, eco-refugee, ecological displaced person and environmental refugee-to-be (ERTB”) (Knox 2010; International Organization for Migration 2009).*

The use of a wide range of terms to refer to ‘forced migration’ can be explained by two broad influences. The first of these is the use of general terms so as not to disturb the long-standing definition of refugees as defined under the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugee 1951 (Brown 2007; Limon 2009; Biermann and Boas 2010; International Organization for Migration 2009). Under this Convention, a refugee is defined as:

*A person owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (International Organization for Migration 2009).*

Unlike the precise definition of ‘refugee’ in international law, the absence of an accepted definition of climate change refugee has led some academic researchers to warn against the

use of terms that have no accepted standing in international law (Limon 2009; Knox; Biermann and Boas 2010).. For example, Knox (2009) argues that in the absence of an international agreement on the use of the term ‘refugee’ in relation to climate change, it is important to note that the term ‘refugee’ has no particular meaning, or sense that the term confers any obligations on countries to offer protection. It is within this context that some academic researchers (Biermann and 2010; Limon 2008, 2009) and international organisations (International Organization for Migration (2009) have developed their own definitions of ‘forced’ migration due to climate change impacts. According to Biermann and (2010) an important first step in developing a definition of ‘refugee’ related to climate change is deciding what climate change impacts should comprise the definition of climate change refugees.

To make clear what comprises the definition of ‘climate change refugees’, Biermann and Boas (2010) have proposed a specific notion of climate change-induced alterations of the environment (Biermann and Boas 2010: 63) based on four key exclusions. These exclusions include climate change impacts that have no, or only a marginal link with forced migration (such as heat waves and spread of tropical diseases), displacement of people due to the construction of structures to mitigate against climate change impacts (such as dams), other types of environmental degradation (such as accidents and pollution), and secondary or indirect impacts of climate change (such as conflicts over declining resources) (Biermann and Boas 2010: 63-64). Working within these restrictions, Biermann and Boas (2010) argue that:

*“In sum, we propose to restrict the notion of climate change refugees to the victims of a set of three direct, largely undisputed climate change impacts: sea-level rise, extreme weather events, and drought and water scarcity. Extreme weather events and drought and water scarcity are only partially related to climate change, yet their severity, scale and/or occurrence is predicted to sharply increase because of climate change. Thus, it seems imperative not to restrict the notion of climate refugee to migration caused by sea-level rise alone, but to also include victims of more severe tropical storms, and increasing and more frequent water scarcity and drought.”*

*(Biermann and Boas 2010: 64)*

Incorporating these restrictions, and taking issue with the stance of the International Organization for Migration against the use of the term ‘refugee’, (International Organization

for Migration 2009), Biermann and Boas (2010) propose that ‘climate change refugees’ be defined as:

*“...people who have to leave their habitats, immediately or in the near future, because of sudden or gradual alterations in their natural environment related to at least one of three impacts of climate change: sea-level rise, extreme weather events, and drought and water scarcity.” (Biermann and Boas 2010: 67)*

In contrast to the precise definition of the climate change drivers of migration and the use of the term ‘refugee’ used by Biermann and Boas (2010), the International Organization for Migration (2009) has argued strongly against the use of the term ‘refugee’ in relation to climate change. Three arguments have been put forward by the International Organization for Migration against the use of the term ‘refugee’. In the first of these arguments, the IOM argues that since the majority of people displaced by climate change are likely to remain within their jurisdictional borders, this would seriously underestimate the extent of the problem (International Organization for Migration 2009: 14). The second argument is that the term ‘refugee’ implies a right of return once the reason for the original flight has dissipated or ceased and that this would be impossible for those who had to leave their country of residence if this ceased to exist. The third argument against the use of the term ‘refugee’ is that the term would dilute the available international mechanisms and goodwill to cater for existing refugees (International Organization for Migration 2009).

In contrast to the complexity of debate on how best to define victims of climate change and how best the international community might offer protection to these victims, a second reason for the lack of an internationally accepted definition of ‘forced’ migration resulting from climate change impacts is the reluctance of the international community to engage with issues relating to climate change and migration in any meaningful manner. Three possible explanations can be put forward to explain the lack of this commitment. The first is the unwillingness of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases to accept responsibility for climate change impacts such as ‘forced migration’, fearing that any such admission may lead to significant costs related to the protection of migrants, including the possibility of compensation. A second explanation could be based on the view that climate change impacts leading to migration is an issue for the future, rather than a current issue requiring an immediate response. Thirdly, and as noted previously, another explanation could be the sheer

complexity of getting the international community to agree to the development of an international legal framework for the protection of ‘forced’ climate change migrants, without undermining the legal framework for the protection of refugees.

In an attempt not to disrupt the long standing definition of refugee, the International Organization for Migration (2009) has proposed the following definition to describe those ‘forced’ to move as a result of environmental factors:

*“Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons, who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or chose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad.” (International Organization for Migration 2009: 15).*

While the definition developed by the IOM could be viewed as a clever tactic not to disturb the long-standing agreement on refugees, the definition has a number of commonalities with the definition proposed by Biermann and Boas (2010), but also some significant differences. The most significant overlap between Biermann and Boas (2010) and IOM (2009) is an acceptance that climate change impacts may be sudden, or occur progressively. This is an important point given that the picture commonly portrayed by the mass media is the ‘end’ point of climate change impacts, whereas migration is likely to occur well before atoll islands may disappear or landscapes forever change. A second common point is reference in both definitions to migrants ‘forced’ to migrate, defined by Biermann and Boas (2010) as having to leave their habitats and ‘obliged’ to leave as defined by the IOM (2009).

While on the basis of these two common overlaps the two definitions may seem similar, it is important to note that differences set these definitions significantly apart. The most important of these differences is the precise definition used by Biermann and Boas (2010) to explain the specific parameters to explain climate change-induced migration (for example, sea-level rise, extreme weather events, and drought and water scarcity) compared to the lack of specific parameters used by the IOM to illustrate climate change impacts. This is not to say that one definition is necessarily better than another, other than that the preciseness of the definitions is a point of difference. Notwithstanding this, it could be argued that the precise definition developed by Biermann and Boas (2010) has the advantage of describing the particular impacts of climate change requiring protection. At the same time, the preciseness

of the definition proposed by Biermann and Boas (2010) may dilute some of the direct and cumulative effects of climate chance impacts that may force people to migrate beyond their country of residence.

A second significant difference between the two definitions is the emphasis placed on the ‘forced’ nature of the movement of migrants. By the IOM encapsulating ‘choice’ in its definition, the definition could be viewed as diluting the very fact that people become forced environmental migrants, or climate change refugees, because they are ‘forced’ to leave their place of habitat or country of residence. Unfortunately, by trying so hard not to disrupt the long-standing definition of refugee, the IOM has diluted the reasoning that some climate change migrants (such as those living in atoll environments) may be forced to leave their countries of residence, just as refugees are forced to leave (albeit for different reasons). At the same time, the notion that ‘forced’ migrants may indeed exercise some level of choice in the early stages of climate change impacts has some validity. It could be that those with financial, human capital and social resources may seek to leave before impacts to their environments decline to such as point that they are forced to leave. Neither definition fully captures the gradual build-up in the momentum for outward migration due to environmental changes and declining economic prospects due to climate change impacts.

Despite the definitional difficulties related to climate change-induced migration, some academic researchers from New Zealand (Bedford 2007; Bedford and Cooper 2009, Bedford and Bedford 2010) have posited that outward migration pressures from some Pacific countries (such as Kiribati) will continue to increase resulting from climate change and other anthropogenic influences. Overly stressed environmental systems coupled with increasing urbanisation resulting in high unemployment and declining economic prospects are expected to lead to more families seeking to migrate. According to Bedford (2007) and Bedford and Cooper 2009, and Bedford and Bedford 2010), some of these migration pressures could be managed by greater access to New Zealand’s labour market (such as the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme, known as the RSE) and expanded access to the Pacific Access Category (up from 75 places annually). While expanded right of entry into New Zealand could alleviate some of the migration pressures from Pacific countries, such as Kiribati, over time, increased environmental impacts from climate change and other anthropogenic influences are likely to underpin the continuing growth in outward migration from these countries.

This then raises the question of how the international community might seek to deal with increased outward migration pressures, including ‘forced’ migration due to climate change impacts. One option would be to expand the international refugee regime to include those ‘forced’ to migrate due to climate change. This option has not received any support from academic researchers working in the field of climate change and migration and indeed some researchers have gone to great lengths to argue why such an approach would not work (see for example, Biermann and Boas 2010; Williams 2008; McAdam 2008; Brown 2007). A favoured approach by many researchers is the development of a new international instrument purposefully negotiated to deal with climate change-induced migration (Biermann and Boas 2010; Williams 2008; McAdam 2008; Brown 2007). Biermann and Boas (2010) have gone further than many other academic researchers to outline five key principles that underpin the development of an international agreement on how to support climate change refugees.

These principles comprise of: planned relocation and resettlement, resettlement instead of temporary asylum, collective rights for local populations, international assistance for domestic measures, and international burden-sharing (Biermann and Boas 2010: 75-76).

Unlike the regime on the protection of refugees, Biermann and Boas (2010) note that:

*“Thus, at the core of a regime on climate change refugees is not programs on emergency response and disaster relief, but instead, planned and voluntary resettlement over longer periods of time.”* (Biermann and Boas 2010: 75)

## **Human Rights Approach to Climate Change**

Another approach to protect and support climate change migrants or refugees advocated by Limon (2009) is the development of a new human rights framework, or the attachment of a new protocol to the current international human rights regime already in place. The argument put forward by Limon (2009) is that deliberations at the United Nations Human Rights Committee in 2009 led to the recognition that climate change-related effects have a range of implications, both direct and indirect for the effective enjoyment of human rights (Limon 2009: 439). While the recognition of human rights could be viewed as a positive move in acknowledging the impacts of climate change on people, to date very little has been achieved due in large part to the attitude of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases (led by the United

States). In its submission to the UNHRC, the United States set out three arguments against the development of a human rights approach to climate change or the placement of ‘environmental rights’ in international law (Limon 2009; Knox 2009). The first argument was that due to the long chain of steps between human activities and the production of greenhouse gas emissions and eventual physical impacts, it would be difficult to identify, with any certainty, responsibility for climate change impacts (Limon 2009: 457). The United States argued further that it would be difficult to distinguish between natural climate variability and anthropogenic climate change.

The second argument against the development of a human rights regime for climate change put forward by the United States related to the breadth of climate change as a global phenomenon and that many players, both developed countries and poorer countries, played a part in the “*...anthropogenic greenhouse emission levels.*” (Limon 2009: 457). The third argument related to the length of time over which greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide have accumulated in the atmosphere (estimated at over 100 years) and that:

*“...the impacts of climate change today are caused not by recent emissions but the accumulation of greenhouse gases over long periods of time by a diffuse set of actors, most of whom would not have been aware of any potentially adverse future impact....”* (Limon 2009: 457).

While the arguments put forward by the United States could be viewed as having some level of reasonableness, Limon (2009) notes that unwillingness of countries such as the United States to accept a link between human rights and climate change was based on the view that ‘human rights’ were strongly linked to litigation and the provision of remedies to victims of human rights violations. It was because of these concerns that the United States (supported by Canada) argued that a human rights approach to climate change was unlikely to be as effective as a process of international cooperation based on the development of an international political agreement.

In my view, the argument for the development of an international political agreement put forward by McAdam (2008) and Brown (2007) has merit. The reason for this view is that it would be impossible to force states to comply with a legal regime that they did not agree with. Even if states were obliged to comply with a majority imposed legal or political

regime or understanding, evidence shows the propensity of states to procrastinate, reinterpret obligations and either not ratify or not implement the law. An example of this is the United Nations Convention on Indigenous Peoples, where the unwillingness of some developed countries such as New Zealand to initially ratify or implement the Convention has rendered it as more of an agreement between like-minded countries rather than an international regime.

This complex reality highlights the importance of political dialogue at the international level as a foundation for the development of legal structures, just as was the case in the development of the international obligations for the protection of refugees. While it would be fortunate for a political process to occur on the subject of climate change and migration, it is likely that some level of forced environmental migration will be needed for this dialogue to occur. I would argue that it would most likely take a significant group of forced environmental migrants to influence countries to come together to dialogue on the issue of climate change migration.

An alternative to the development of an international agreement, gaining favour among some academic researchers, is the development of regional political agreements among nation-states on how to support climate change migrants (see for example, McAdam 2011; Williams 2008). A preference for regional solutions and the expansion of existing political and legal instruments is argued by Williams (2008):

*“However, perhaps the best way forward lies with harnessing regional cooperation between states and building on existing geopolitical, economic, cultural, and environmental relationships that already exist within many regional frameworks.”*  
(Williams 2008: 502)

While regional agreements may prove to be more efficient mechanisms for dealing with the effects of climate change-induced migration (compared to the complexity of negotiating an international agreement), issues such as who bears the burden of resettlement, are still likely to be highly problematic. For countries such as Kiribati and Tuvalu, the issue of whether support is delivered at a regional or international level is less important compared to the framework within which this support is offered. An example of this is the rejection by Kiribati and Tuvalu to this support being framed within the notion of ‘refugee’ status (McAdam 2011; Farbotko et al 2012). Indeed, according to McAdam (2008), both Tuvalu

and Kiribati have rejected the notion of ‘refugee’ based on the view that rather than invoking a sense of resilience, the notion is perceived as invoking a sense of helplessness and a desire to ‘escape’ their country (McAdam 2008: 12). It is because of these concerns that some researchers have advocated that care needs to be taken rather than simply positioning the complex issue of climate change migration within the ‘refugee’ framework (McAdam 2008: 13; Farbotko et al 2012). Farbotko et al (2012) argued that there is a need to take into account the views of the people of countries that are likely to be affected by climate change impacts, such as Tuvalu:

*“We posit that islander perspectives and practices offer alternatives for equitable and effective policy to address climate vulnerability in the Pacific. A strong alternative perspective is emanating from Tuvaluan civil society, with calls for a reframing of the debate on the future of the country in terms of human rights and global citizenship.”*

*(Farbotko and Lazarus 2012: 16)*

The desire of some Pacific countries, such as Kiribati and Tuvalu, to reposition the debate on climate change migration away from connotations of helplessness towards one of being more in control in dealing with climate change has also been reflected in the discussion among some researchers as to whether relocation and migration can be considered as forms of adaptation (see for example, Warner 2010; Farbotko and Lazarus 2012; Fitz 2010; Adger et al 2003, 2012). Overall, the discussion notes that migration could be viewed as a form of adaptation (see for example, Adger et al 2003, 2012; Black et al 2011; Tacoli 2009; Mortreux and Barnet 2009; McLeman and Smit 2006)). In contrast, Warner 2010 notes that it could be argued that migration is beyond adaptation “*...abandoning locations in which adaptation is not possible.*” (Warner 2010: 403)

In my view, it could be argued that both arguments are legitimate given the continuum between climate change-induced migration constituting elements of both voluntary and forced migration. As noted previously, the gradual impacts of climate change do enable citizens living in affected locations to make decisions as to whether to manage their family risks by migrating to other countries either temporarily, or permanently for work and residence. While this phenomenon could be viewed as adaptation on a broader scale, forced migration due to the destruction of environmental systems as a result of climate change could

be viewed as the inability of citizens to adapt to changing environments. Warner (2010) summarises this complexity:

*“...migration and displacement are part of a spectrum of possible responses to environmental change...Some forms of environmentally induced migration may be adaptive, while other forms of forced migration and displacement may indicate a failure of the social-ecological systems to adapt.” (Warner 2010: 403)*

An important caveat on whether climate change-induced migration can be viewed as a feature of adaptation or not, is how those countries, likely to be most affected by the impact of climate change, wish to convey their response to these impacts (as noted by Farbotko et al 2012). By placing a greater emphasis on climate change-induced displacement and migration within a framework of adaptation, countries such as Kiribati, have advocated greater investment in training its citizens to become skilled migrants (Farbotko and Lazarus 2012). Interestingly, this advocacy could be viewed as assisting Kiribati citizens (as voluntary or forced migrants) to be better placed to settle and adapt to their new country of settlement and thereby adapting to their changed circumstances.

### **Claims for Climate Change Refugee Status in New Zealand**

The complexity of whether climate change-induced migrants should or could be viewed as refugees has recently come to the fore in New Zealand in two cases where migrants and their families have argued to be allowed to stay in New Zealand due to detrimental climate change impacts back in their usual countries of residence. This was first exemplified in 2013 by a Kiribati migrant Ione Teitiota, who argued that he and family should be granted refugee status (that would allow him and his family to live permanently in New Zealand) on the basis that there was no future back in Kiribati, due to negative climate change impacts. Borrowing the phrasing from the definition of ‘refugee’ under the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugee 1951, the claimant argued that he and his family faced persecution if they were forced to return back to Kiribati.

Although this claim was particularly useful in highlighting the detrimental impacts of climate change on the citizens of Kiribati, the claim was unsurprisingly rejected by the regulatory

body overseeing immigration appeals and subsequently by the High Court of New Zealand on the basis that the claimant did not fit the description of a ‘refugee’ as stated in international law. The ruling by Justice Priestley in rejecting the application was based on the argument that the claimant would not be subject to ‘individual persecution’ if he and his family returned to Kiribati. Not only was the claim rejected on the basis that the claimant did not fit the description as a refugee as set out in international law, but also that it was not the place of the High Court to alter the scope of the Refugee Convention.

This was noted by Justice Priestley as follows:

*“Humanitarian concerns and the issues of economic and environmental migrants or refugees are topics which individual states in the international community generally have to consider. But the Refugee Convention is not an available avenue for such migrants and refugees. Certainly it is not available to this applicant and his family.”*  
*(Ministry of Justice 2013: paragraph 44)*

While it could be argued that this claim was useful in highlighting gaps within the law on climate change induced migration, the claim itself was always going to be difficult given the precise definition of the term ‘refugee’ within international law and the unwillingness of New Zealand Courts to set a precedent. What this claim did highlight, however, was the lack of legal and policy development in how to deal with migrants ‘forced’ to leave their countries due to climate change impacts.

In another case, a claim by a Tuvalu family for refugee status was similarly rejected on the basis that they did not meet the definition of ‘refugee’ under the United Nations Convention for the Protection of Refugees 1951. Making their argument to stay in New Zealand, the Immigration and Protection Tribunal agreed to grant the family residency visas on humanitarian grounds (Immigration and Protection Tribunal New Zealand 2013). While the family argued that, among other things, climate change impacts was responsible for increasing levels of socio-economic deprivation in Tuvalu, the Tribunal considered that it was not necessary to reach any conclusion on this matter. Rather, the Tribunal was satisfied that on the basis of the family’s deep familial and social connections in New Zealand that these factors constituted exceptional humanitarian grounds for the family to be granted residence visas. This decision was conveyed as follows:

*“It is not, however, necessary on the facts of this appeal to reach any conclusion on this issue in relation to any of the appellants as the Tribunal is satisfied that by reason of the other factors identified in this case, there are exceptional circumstances of a humanitarian in the sense contemplated...and that it would be unjust or unduly harsh for the appellants to be deported from New Zealand.” (Immigration Protection Tribunal New Zealand 2014: 9)*

This case also underpins the reluctance of legal authorities to make immigration decisions based primarily on climate change. An examination of the decision by the Tribunal on the Tuvalu family would indicate that, in the absence of deep familial and social connections in New Zealand, this claim (like the Teitiota claim) would have also been rejected, even on the basis of humanitarian considerations.

These legal cases underscore the inability of current legal frameworks in New Zealand and internationally to adequately deal with supporting and protecting citizens forced to migrate due to climate change impacts. Whether through regional or international responses, I would posit that it will take a significant event of displacement, forced migration and even statelessness to provide the necessary impetus for the development of a new international agreement or regional agreements to emerge that will underpin the development of international law on climate change migrants. In the absence of this development, forced climate change migrants will continue to be at the mercy of individual immigration systems, as has been the case in New Zealand.

Due to the complexity of associating climate change migration with refugee status, I have chosen to use the term ‘forced environmental migrant’ to describe those migrants compelled or forced to leave their usual country of residence due to climate change impacts. I would argue that the benefit of this term is not only its capacity to deal with longer-term climate change impacts (such as increased sea-levels that are expected to threaten the viability of environmental systems to sustain human populations), but also its relevance in relation to short to medium-term environmental impacts from climate change and other anthropogenic influences. Unfortunately, no term can cover the transition between voluntary migration (those migrants who may feel compelled to leave their usual country of residence due to increasing climate change impacts) and truly ‘forced’ migrants, who have no option but to

leave due to the inability of environmental systems to support their habitation. Overall, I would argue that much of the debate on climate change will be focussed on the continuum between voluntary and forced migration, until such time that significant outward migration pressures become evident.

To gain an appreciation of the drivers of migration, the following section discusses some of the key theories of migration pertaining to voluntary migration. The discussion indicates that there are many drivers of migration and ways of managing risk, some of which will continue to be pertinent in future thinking on outward migration due to climate change.

## Theories of Voluntary Migration

The review of the literature on migration highlights that people move over distance and time for a multitude of reasons (see for example, McLeman and Smit 2006; King 2012; Adger et al 2002). Given the complexity and diversity of migration, no single theory has been recognised as explaining migration. Rather, the literature indicates the progressive development of theoretical models to expound why people make the decision to migrate. Among these, the most prolific group of theories is the classic migration theory based on neoclassical economic theory, which posits that each rational individual migrates by choosing an optimal combination of wage rates and job security (King 2012; McLeman and Smit 2006). At the heart of this theory, differentials in wages and employment opportunities between the home countries of migrants and other countries resulting in higher incomes are the key influencers of migration.

A variation on the neoclassical economic theory is the new economic theory of migration which contends that migration decisions are not made by isolated individuals, but by larger units such as families and households, where people act collectively to maximise expected income. This theory explains that through distribution in labour markets beyond their country of origin, families and households can rely on migrant remittances for support (Massey et al 1993). The theory can explain the different types of migration, pertinent to Kiribati, where Kiribati men migrate to work as seafarers on foreign vessels and others come to New Zealand to take part in seasonal work in the horticultural and viticulture industries

under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) policy (Bedford 2007; Bedford and Bedford 2010).

Another theoretical framework to explain international migration is the world systems theory which contends that international migration has less to do with wage and employment differentials and more to do with the structural influences of the global economy. Drawn from Marxist and dependency theories, the world system theory maintains that, driven by profits, companies set up base in countries with lower labour costs (often in countries with past colonial ties) (King 2012). According to King (2012), aside from lower labour costs, the creation of transport and communication infrastructures, administrative links and linguistic and cultural commonalities developed through colonial ties have had a role in influencing the establishment of business ventures by transnational corporations in former colonies (King 2012: 16). The theory asserts that as a result of these economic activities, people learn to become more mobile by migrating to cities where new employment opportunities exist, while others are drawn abroad influenced by the material and ideological links enhanced by globalisation (King 2012).

Underpinned by the arguments of asymmetric power relationships, the theory notes that foreign workers are often forced to accept poor paying and unfavourable workplace conditions in other countries, due to a lack of bargaining power. This begs the question of why workers would seek to migrate to countries to work in low-wage industries and in poor workplace conditions. Research on migration indicates that despite poor labour market conditions, jobs in foreign countries are still viewed as preferable to the poverty, unemployment and underemployment prevalent in their home countries (McLeman et al 2006; King 2012; Haller et al 2011). This argument can be used to explain the poor labour market and housing conditions of temporary African migrants working in industrialised countries such as Germany and undocumented Mexican migrants working in the United States (Haller et al 2011).

King (2012) outlines three main weaknesses with the ability of the world system theory to explain international migration. The first is that migration flows are not all influenced by the movement of capital and that migration can be much more spontaneous and swayed by the perception of opportunities (King 2012). The second is the inability of the theory to acknowledge “*...the agency of migrants is denied.*” (King 2012: 19). Thirdly, King (2012)

argues that this and other theories of migration (such as neoclassical and new economic theories) do not pay enough attention to the role of government policies (such as immigration policy settings) as drivers of migration (King 2012: 19). The field research, conducted as part of this thesis validated the concerns put forward by King (2012), particularly in relation to the importance of perceived opportunities and governmental policy settings in influencing migration patterns.

Another theory that seeks to explain internal and external migration posits that networks have a critical role in influencing migration decision making (see for example, Massey et al 1998; Arango 2004; King 2012). Informal networks based on family, friends and ethnic community links have been identified as having an important role in ‘chain migration’ and supporting new migrants in the initial stages of their settlement (King 2012; Massey et al 1998; Burton 1998; Simich et al 2003). According to Massey et al 1998, these networks:

*“...can be considered a form of social capital stretched across migrant space, and therefore facilitate the likelihood of international movement because they provide information which lowers the costs and risks of migration.” (Massey et al 1998: 42)*

While these networks have been recognised as being important for new migrants, more recently an increasing number of academic researchers have raised concerns about migrants limiting themselves solely to these networks (see for example, Rose et al 1998; Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000). The role of networks is explored further in this thesis as part of the literature review on the recurring themes of migration.

Finally, variations on all of these theories of migration is the long-established ‘push/pull’ theory developed by Lee (1966) to explain the factors attracting and pushing people to migrate. While economic maximisation has always been a strong feature of this theory, unlike the neoclassical economic theory, or new economic theory, the ‘push/pull’ framework encompasses factors beyond simply economic. These factors include language proficiency, cultural issues and personal factors that recognise that different people will react differently to various combinations of pushes and pulls, according to their human capital attributes, social networks, life-stage and personal resilience (King 2012: 13; McLeman and Smit 2006). In the case of Kiribati migrants, ‘pull’ factors of migration to New Zealand could include improved employment opportunities, higher incomes, improved housing and access to social

services. On the other hand, ‘push’ factors could include poor unemployment prospects, low living standards, severe over-crowding and poor social services (such as access to secondary school education and limited health services).

Overall, the literature review showed that in the absence of a grand theory, a range of different theoretical frameworks has emerged to explain the behaviour and pattern of migration. Despite different points of emphasis many of the theories stressed the critical role of economic factors in influencing migration decision making. This was apparent in the neoclassical economic and new economic theories of migration which stressed economic maximisation and economic diversity respectively. Consistent with the emphases placed by these theories on economic factors, the world system theory of migration asserts that structural economic power relationships between transnational corporations and nation states influence patterns of internal and external migration. Alongside these economic hypotheses, other elements such as social networks and ‘pull’ and ‘push’ factors have come to provide a wider perspective of the drivers of migration.

While these theories on voluntary migration identify a multitude of factors that may account for the behaviour of migrants, very little research has been undertaken on how vulnerable societies may respond to the environmental stresses that may emerge due to climate change and other anthropogenic influences. As a low-lying atoll nation, Kiribati, may well become a test case for the protection of forced environmental migrants, should the pressure for outward migration increase, due to the inability of its environmental systems to sustain its population due to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts. To gain an understanding of the relationship between the state of the environment and migration, the following section examines the literature on the influences of climate change, climatic events and other anthropogenic factors on the morphology of the Kiribati atolls and potential impacts on the Kiribati population now and into the future.

## **Climate Change Impacts on Atolls**

A substantive body of research has indicated that low-lying regions (such as the deltas of Asia and Africa) and atoll countries (such as Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Marshall Islands and Maldives) are among the most vulnerable land-masses to effects of climate change and severe climatic events (IPCC 2007, 2013, 2014; World Bank 2006; McGinley 2010; White 2009;

Nunn 2007, 2009). Although many researchers expert in the field of the morphology of atolls point to dynamic and adaptive capacity of these land masses to withstand climatic events (Webb and Kench 2010; Woodroffe 2008), the porous nature of the land and the low-lying features of atolls (virtually all atolls estimated to be between two to three metres high, McGinley 2010), make them particularly vulnerable to increased sea levels, increased storm activities and powerful sea surges.

Within the literature on climate change, increased sea levels have been identified as one of the most significant risks facing atolls (see for example, Woodroffe 2008; World Bank 2006; IPCC 2007, 2013; Stern 2006). While this has led to concerns that atoll nations may physically disappear due to increased sea levels in the longer-term, others such as Woodroffe (2008) have argued that risks to atolls should be viewed more in terms of environmental degradation, due to incremental climate changes and increased climatic events such as storms. Viewed in this way, Woodroffe (2008) notes that environmental damage has already begun to be evidenced in Kiribati and Tuvalu due to the increased prevalence of king tides during storms, which will only be exacerbated by increased sea levels.

Another factor that has an impact on the ability of atolls to withstand incremental climate change will depend on the health of the coral reef systems that support them (Nunn 2009). While research has indicated that coral reefs are resilient ecosystems, the combined risks of increased sea-surface temperatures and increased seal levels mean that atoll environments are likely to face a multitude of risks which they may be unable to manage (Woodroffe 2008; Nunn 2009; Coral Adventures 2011). Any increase in sea-surface temperatures is expected to thwart any coral regeneration as ecosystem thresholds are breached (Woodroffe 2008; Barnett and Adger 2003; Coral Adventure 2011; World Bank 2006). In addition to these longer-term risks, shorter-term threats facing atolls countries (such as Kiribati) stem from increased extreme climatic events such prolonged drought and flooding from increased storm activities. The question that emerges is how do these risks to the morphology of atolls influence outward migration?

One of the most significant concerns relating to climate change and severe climatic events relating to atolls is the impact on the supply and quality of freshwater necessary to sustain human habitation (Falkland 1999; Nunn 2009). Three climatic factors associated with climate change have been identified as having direct detrimental impacts on the sustainability

of freshwater lenses in atolls such as Kiribati. The first is the adverse impact of reduced rainfall on the quantity and quality of freshwater supplies. A lack of rainfall resulting from prolonged drought, which has been a prevalent feature of the southern Gilbert group, means that the supplies of freshwater in the underground lenses are unable to be renewed. The second is the impact of increased sea levels or the sea persistently over-topping atolls which results in sea water entering freshwater lenses through the porous coral. The third is the direct impact of a loss of land from erosion reducing the thickness of the base of underground freshwater lenses leading to a reduction in the size of the lens. The loss of thickness in the freshwater bases exposes the lens to damage (such as cracks) from anthropogenic activities, including until recently, the use of explosives in Kiribati for creation of causeway links between atoll islets.

Falkland (1999) has argued that, on its own increased sea levels of around 40-50 centimetres may not form the greatest risk to freshwater lenses, compared to a reduction in the islands' land mass due to inundation and erosion. The reason for this is that a small rise in sea-levels may have the effect of raising freshwaters lenses to more permeable layers on some atolls (Falkland 1999). As well, many researchers have highlighted concerns that the loss of land mass would lead to the shrinkage or even disappearance of freshwater lenses on small atoll islands, such as those in Kiribati (Roy and Connell 1991). These concerns were affirmed by the East-West Center (2001) which examined the likely impact of increased sea levels on the Bonriki freshwater lens in Tarawa. The East-West Centre estimated that the lens which supplies drinking water for over 50,000 living in Tarawa could shrink by 30% due to persistent inundation and flooding as a result of increased sea levels (East-West Center 2001). Any concurrent climatic events, such as 25% reduction in rainfall combined with an increased sea-level of 50 centimetres, could have the effect of reducing the Bonriki freshwater lens by over 60 percent (Falkland 1999). Research on the Bonriki freshwater lens in Tarawa showed that the thickness of the freshwater lens reduced by 50% during the 1998 – 2001 drought and water elevations dropped by around 400mm from its long-term mean (White and Falkland 2007: 5).

The reality is that any one of a number of events (including increased global temperatures, increased sea-surface temperatures, increased sea-levels and prolonged drought and storms) can result in significant environmental degradation and have significant detrimental impacts on the underground lenses supplying freshwater for human habitation (White and Falkland

2007). Significantly, this has led an increasing number of researchers to argue that while atolls, such as Kiribati may continue to exist in some geomorphic form, these atolls may become so environmentally stressed as to undermine the sustainability of human habitation resulting in increased pressure for outward migration (Barnett and Adger 2003; Woodroffe 2008).

This has led some experts (for example, Barnett and Adger 2003; Woodroffe 2008; Nunn 2009) to advocate for a better understanding of the tipping points or thresholds of atolls and reef ecosystems. This is aptly summarised by Barnett and Adger (2003):

*“...ultimately, atoll environments may be unable to sustain human habitation, a possibility with even a modest amount of climate change over the next century.”*  
*(Barnett and Adger 2003: 236).*

Adding to the complexity of environmental impacts from climate change and climatic events on the morphology of atolls is the impact of people on their local environments as an influencer of outward migration. The following section examines the impact of anthropogenic pressures on the environmental systems in Kiribati and how those impacts may influence outward migration.

## **Anthropogenic Impacts: Urbanisation in Tarawa**

While it is acknowledged that climate change and severe climatic events present significant risks to the 32 low-lying atoll islands (and one raised island) that make up the nation of Kiribati, it would be unwise not to also consider the threats to environmental systems stemming from increasing anthropogenic pressures, most evident in Tarawa (see for example, McAdam 2012; Rappaport 1990; Kelman 2009; Nunn 2009; Adger et al 2003; Barnett 2001; Barnett 2003; Bedford and Bedford 2010). While the internal movement of people from the outer islands to Tarawa is not a new phenomenon, having started in the 1950s with children being sent for schooling and young adults searching for work in the cash economy, over time this has resulted in over 50% of the total population residing in Tarawa (Kiribati National Census 2010).

**Figure 1: Map of Tarawa**



(Source: Yahoo Travel)

The move away from the traditional way of life in the outer islands in preference of a more western urban lifestyle in Tarawa, coupled with high population increases, has resulted in some very high population densities, predominantly in South Tarawa (the region between Betio and Buota, just north of Bonriki). In 2010, the South Tarawa region was shown to have a population density of 3,184 inhabitants per square kilometre (Republic of Kiribati Island Report Series 2012). While this population density is viewed by the Kiribati Government as being high, the much higher population densities being experienced in Betio (6,000 inhabitants per square kilometre) and Bairiki (7,500 inhabitants per square kilometre), through to Bikenibeu, has raised concerns about the impact of these population densities on the natural ecosystems needed to sustain the Tarawa population in the future.

A combination of very high population densities, in combination with poor infrastructure, has led to concerns being raised in relation to poor sanitation, increased pollution, and

contamination of fresh water lenses, unsustainable demand for fresh water, and the over-harvesting of natural resources. Aside from detrimental impacts on natural systems, these problems have also been associated with increased levels of communicable diseases, high infant mortality and increased poverty (Republic of Kiribati Island Report Series 2012).

## **Urbanisation and Environmental Impacts**

Unsurprisingly, the vast population increase in urban Tarawa has been linked with a number of detrimental environmental impacts, including impacts on freshwater supplies, coral reefs and land. Foremost, among these concerns, is the impact of over-crowding and increasing pollution contaminating underground freshwater lenses that supply drinking water to over 54,000 living in Tarawa (Kiribati National Census 2010; White 2009; World Health Organization, WHO 2009). According to White (2009), the main reason for this is the short transit time for pollutants on the land to reach freshwater lenses. As a result of this high rate of absorption, groundwater lenses have been found to be especially vulnerable to contamination from surface sources particularly microbial pollution, such as faecal matter and other pollutants from general waste. The contamination of freshwater supplies is, according to the WHO (2011) for the high rates of diarrhoeal diseases among those living in Tarawa and a leading cause of death of those aged five years and under.

Notwithstanding the benefit of switching from private bore wells to the supply of reticulated drinking water for those living in Tarawa, White (2009) notes that movement of squatters from the outer islands and their animals in proximity to the vital Bonriki freshwater lens (responsible for supplying over 80% of the total population of Tarawa with drinking water) have been responsible for the presence of E-Coli, and other microorganism contaminants in the freshwater supplies. This result has drawn strong criticism from White (2009) who claims that local administrators have shown a derogation of duty in not adequately protecting one of Tarawa's most important natural resources necessary to sustain the vast population of Tarawa.

Other detrimental impacts of urbanisation on the environmental systems critical in sustaining the population of Tarawa identified in the literature include: the degradation of the reef from over-fishing (Rapaport 1990; Nunn 2009; World Resources Institute 2007), the loss of

mangroves significant in defending coastal systems from erosion (World Bank 2006), and poorly designed structures such as sea walls that actually promoted coastal erosion rather than mitigating against the risk of increased sea surges (Gillies 1993; Kench 2000; World Bank 2006). In addition to these impacts, Kuruppu and Liverman (2010) noted that those living in Tarawa were less confident than those living in the outer islands about their ability to deal with the incremental effects of climate change and severe climatic events such as prolonged drought. This research indicated that, unlike those respondents living in the outer islands, who could draw back to their past experiences about how they could manage climatic events such as prolonged drought, respondents from Tarawa looked to government services to get them through difficult times.

While it could be argued that those working with the natural atoll environment through subsistence living may be more at risk from the effects of climate change (Nunn 2009: 212), the findings by Kuruppu and Liverman (2010), indicate that the attitudes of those living in the outer islands point to a greater sense of hope in their willingness to try to manage the challenges associated with climate change and extreme climatic events. I would argue that even if the responses from those living in the outer islands were overly upbeat and lacking realism about future climate change risks, the deep sense of determination conveyed by respondents indicates a strong resolve of these people not to give up and to do whatever it takes to ensure their survival in their distinct atoll environment. This is a poignant point given the image often conveyed in the popular press of the people of Kiribati being victims to the vagaries of climate change.

### **Climate Change and Anthropogenic Impacts in Kiribati: Influencers of Migration**

Although climate change and severe climatic events, such as a prolonged drought and storms, pose considerable risks for the state of the environmental and human systems in Kiribati, anthropogenic pressures, led by urbanisation will continue to pose some of the most significant risks for people living in Tarawa over the short to medium-term. Overall, the literature indicates a high level of concern among academic researchers that the socio-ecological systems in Tarawa are already under extreme stress regardless of climate change (World Bank 2001; 2006; Rappaport 1990; Kelman 2009; Nunn 2009; Adger et al 2003; Barnett 2001; Barnett 2003; Bedford and Bedford 2010).

The concern from these researchers is that climate change and extreme climatic events will only add a further level of unsustainable stress to the ecosystems of Tarawa that are already suffering from environmental degradation. This has led some researchers to argue that outward migration may be an option for those living in Kiribati, particularly for those living in Tarawa (Bedford and Bedford 2010; Patton 2009). It could be argued, therefore, that while the gradual deterioration of the environmental systems in Kiribati is already influencing the migration decision of I-Kiribati, outward migration pressures are only likely to intensify as increased impacts from climate change and severe climatic events begin to take further hold.

In addition to these influences on outward migration, detrimental impacts from climate change on human health may also contribute to the pressure for people from Kiribati to seek to migrate. The literature on climate change and human health indicates a number of risks that will face human populations (see for example, Frumkin et al 2008; Preston et al 2006; Hales et al 1996; Hales and Woodward 2006; Costello et al 2009). For example, in the case of Kiribati, where dengue fever is already prevalent, it has been predicted that an increase in global temperatures of up to 2°C could result in increased levels of dengue fever by 11-28% (World Bank 2000: 188). Other risks include the promotion of bacterial growth and more rapid food spoilage and increased incidences of contaminated water supplies increasing the risk of rate of diarrhoeal diseases (Costello et al 2009; World Bank 2000). Furthermore, increased sea-surface temperatures are projected to raise the risks of ciguatera poisoning (a marine toxin), with a prediction that an increase of sea-surface temperatures up to 2°C expected to increase the incidence of ciguatera poisoning in Kiribati from 35-70 per 1000 to 160-430 per 1000 (World Bank 2000: 186). These and other downstream effects related to poverty and severe overcrowding and climate change are expected to underlie the ‘push’ factors for people in Kiribati (particularly those living in Tarawa) to migrate.

The dynamic interaction between anthropogenic pressures on the ground in Kiribati and climate change and extreme climatic events brings to the fore the importance of understanding the nature of short-term, medium-term and long-term pressures for outward migration. While much of the global attention and the popular press has been on the longer-term focus of atoll countries, such as Kiribati facing the spectre of disappearing from increased sea-levels (see for example, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007; McLean and Smit 2006; Fritz 2010), the reality is that the environmental systems that support

the morphology of the atoll and human habitation in Kiribati are already under significant stress and currently the source of outward migration pressure.

It is within this context of the interplay between climate change impacts and other anthropogenic influences that McAdam (2012) rightly argues that it is inherently fraught to attribute climate change as the sole cause of human movement:

*“...even though its effects may exacerbate existing socio-economic or environmental vulnerabilities...climate change will have ‘incremental impact’, ‘add[ing] to existing problems’ and compound[ing] existing threats’.” (McAdam 2012: 16)*

McAdam (2012) makes a convincing point in highlighting that outward migration will result not simply as a result of climate change, but from the interaction of slow onset climate change impacts and existing vulnerabilities and socio-economic-environmental variables.

While I agree with McAdam (2012) that detrimental impacts from climate change will have negative effects on the society and the environment of Tarawa, it raises the risk that the international community may diminish the role of climate change as an influencer for outward migration pressures. At the same time, it may be less than prudent to attribute many of the problems facing Kiribati simply to climate change impacts. Rather it will require careful analysis to understand the direct and indirect pressures from both climate change and other anthropogenic effects likely to bear down Kiribati now and into the future.

With outward migration pressures already beginning to build due to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts in Kiribati, the following section examines how New Zealand’s immigration policy settings have influenced Pacific migration to New Zealand.

## **New Zealand Immigration Policy Settings and Pacific Migration**

New Zealand has a history of strong constitutional and political relationships with the nations of the Pacific. These have been led by the special constitutional arrangements with Niue, Tokelau and the Cook Islands where their citizens are deemed to be New Zealand citizens. Another long-standing relationship has been with New Zealand’s former colony Samoa,

which until 1982 (with the passing of the New Zealand Citizenship (Western Samoa Bill), Samoan citizens were considered to be New Zealand citizens.

These historical relationships have provided an important context for the increased immigration relationships between New Zealand and its Pacific neighbours. By way of background, the history of inward Pacific migration to New Zealand had its genesis in the Post-World II period when significant growth in New Zealand's manufacturing and building industries led to increased demand for labour. Pacific peoples were encouraged to migrate to New Zealand to take advantage of the increased employment opportunities and to provide a good standard of education for their children. With high economic growth in New Zealand during the 1950s to mid-1970s period, the Pacific population grew as family members joined those that had earlier migrated to work. Over time, the Pacific population, as a proportion of the total population of New Zealand, has increased from 0.1% in 1945 to 7.4% in 2013 (see, Wright and Hornblow 2008:21; Statistics New Zealand 2014).

The immigration relationship between New Zealand and the Pacific can be broken down into four main categories. The first relationship represents a special constitutional relationship between Niue, Tokelau and the Cook Islands, whose citizens are deemed to be New Zealand citizens (Prior et al 1974). The second relationship represents the special association between Samoa and New Zealand through a distinctive immigration category (the Samoan Access Category) that provides for up to 1,100 successfully balloted Samoan citizens annually to apply for permanent residence on the basis of securing full-time, permanent employment meeting an income threshold and meeting character and health requirements. The size of this category reflects the special historical relationship between New Zealand and Samoa that previously provided for Samoan citizens to be deemed New Zealand citizens.

The third relationship provides for a distinctive immigration category (the Pacific Access Category, the PAC) that provides for citizens from Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Fiji (currently suspended), who have been successful in a ballot, to apply for permanent residence on the same basis as the Samoan Access Category. Under this immigration policy, the annual allocation for each country is 250 persons for Tonga and Fiji, 75 for Tuvalu and 75 for Kiribati. The fourth relationship provides for Pacific countries to send workers to take part in seasonal work for up to nine months per year in New Zealand's horticultural and viticulture industries

While the development of special immigration categories reflects the special relationships New Zealand has with countries in the Pacific, New Zealand along with other industrialised countries has not invested in the development of strategic policy thinking on the issue of climate change and migration. Some academics such as Bedford and Bedford (2010) have argued that New Zealand's immigration categories could be adjusted in the shorter-term to allow for a greater number of citizens from Kiribati and Tuvalu (two countries particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts) to work or migrate permanently to New Zealand. This could be achieved through a number of mechanisms such as increasing the PAC allocations for these countries, or expanding other opportunities for these citizens to participate in the New Zealand labour market. Bedford and Bedford (2010) notes that this could be achieved by the development of other Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE)-type schemes that would allow temporary workers from these nations to work in sectors experiencing labour shortages.

In the short-term, New Zealand's special immigration categories could be adjusted and expanded to accommodate increased inward migration pressures due to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts. A longer-term view would suggest that expanding these immigration categories for countries such as Tuvalu and Kiribati would enable the community groups from these countries to continue to grow in New Zealand, which in turn, would assist with the absorption of any future climate change-induced migration. The use of these immigration categories would also have the benefit of allowing for climate change migration to occur in a more orderly fashion, something that would be significantly more difficult to achieve if New Zealand had to deal with mass forced environmental migration in a crisis situation. A committed approach to this issue would also ensure that greater co-benefits could be explored and realised for both 'forced' environmental migrants and New Zealand.

## Conclusion

This literature review has highlighted the complex nature of migration. This complexity was revealed in the many factors influencing the decision of people to leave their usual country of residence to live in a new country. Although economic and familial connections have been recognised as influential factors in the decision to migrate, more recently new issues have begun to emerge relating to the movement of people due to climate change and other

anthropogenic movements. Despite predictions by international organisations and academic researchers (see for example, IPCC 2014; World Bank 2006; Mortreux and Barnett 2009; Biermann and Boas 2010), that environmental degradation due to climate change is likely to result in people being ‘forced’ to migrate, the literature review confirmed the challenges in countries agreeing on a regime that would offer protection to ‘forced environmental migrants’. As Biermann and Boas (2010) argue, this political void does not mean that the issues of protection and the need to well-functioning governance structures on climate change and migration will not be required. Rather, the literature review indicated that academic researchers and international policy makers have important roles to play in generating new ideas on options for the protection of ‘forced environmental migrants’ and that it would be prudent for these issues to be debated prior to the emergence of any migration crisis situations.

# **Chapter 3: Literature Review on Settlement**

## **Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the settlement literature related to the external movement of migrants and refugees. The primary purpose of the review is to provide a research context to assist the qualitative research component of this thesis on the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. In the absence of research on the settlement of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand, the approach to the review was to take a broad examination of the literature. The review revealed a rich level of research conducted in New Zealand on various aspects of Pacific settlement and specific issues related to particular Pacific ethnic groups (see for example, Anae 2010, 2002, 1998, 1997; Brown Pulu 2013, 2014; Huntsman and Hooper 2012, 1996, 1976, Pitt and Macpherson 1974; Macpherson et al 2000; Spoonley et al 2003; Wendt 1999; Beaglehole et al 1977; Prior et al 1987, 1981, 1974; Stanhope et al 1981; Stillman et al 2007; Tukuitonga 2013; Pene et al 2009). Although this New Zealand research provides an important context of the issues facing Pacific peoples living in New Zealand, the objective of understanding the key issues and the sequence of steps taken in settlement encouraged me to take a wide and open approach to the literature search.

To assist in this process, a search of online databases was undertaken using a number of search terms (Advanced Google Scholar; Academic OneFile; LexisNexis Academic; JSTOR; Oxford Reference Online; PubMed; Sage Journals; Springer Link; Safari; PLoS Bio; Wiley Online Library; IOM, World Bank; IPCC; UNHCR; WHO; Department of Labour, New Zealand; Metropolis; Institute of Labor). The initial search term to scan these databases was the use of the ‘settlement’ which proved to be too general to yield useful results given the use of the term in relation to the settlement of mankind over time and the settlement of biological and physical resources.

In an effort to refine the search process further, the term ‘settlement’ was combined with the word ‘migrant’ and ‘immigrant’. This search also proved to be overly general given that the term migrant was often used to refer to the movement of people within their own country, including internally displaced persons or in the context of rural-urban drift. While the term

‘resettlement’ was useful in capturing research on the settlement of refugees, people forced to migrate outside their usual country of residence, the term did not cover voluntary international migrants. Faced with these problems, new search terms were developed to explore databases on the topic of the settlement of voluntary migrants. These search terms included: ‘immigrant settlement’; ‘migrant adaptation’; ‘migrant health’; ‘migrant services’; ‘settlement strategies’; ‘acculturation’; ‘assimilation’, ‘integration’, ‘multiculturalism’, ‘ethno-pluralism’; ‘Pacific migrants’; ‘migrant employment’; ‘migrant education’; ‘migrant housing’; ‘migrant language proficiency’; ‘migrant networks’; ‘refugee resettlement’. Through this process, just over 1200 abstracts were read, with 140 journals and books identified as being relevant to the research on the settlement of migrants and refugees.

As the review progressed, it became apparent that the literature on the subject of settlement was characterised by two broad areas of research. The first of these areas was the analysis of government policy settings framing immigration policy approaches within and across different sovereign jurisdictions. The topics in this area focussed on different political approaches and policy settings relating to the settlement of migrants, including among other things discussion on: ‘assimilation’; ‘integration’; ‘multiculturalism’; ‘ethno-pluralism’; ‘acculturation’; economic growth and social cohesiveness (see for example, Berry 1992; Portes and Böröcz 1989, 1993, Koopmans 2009; Thorns et al 2010; Brown et al 2006; Burnett 1998; Westin 2000; Pearson 2000; Freeman 1995; Ongley and Pearson 1995; Jupp 1995).

The second broad area of the literature on settlement was comprised of empirical research on the settlement experiences of migrants. This area of the literature included analyses of the settlement experiences of migrants and refugees in relation to some of main factors influencing settlement, which are discussed later in this chapter. These were:

Employment (Colic-Peisker 2002, 2003; Mahuteau and Junankar 2008, Pescarus and Bauaissa 2007; North 2007; Ward and Masgoret 2007; Ward and Masgoret 2008; Vasta 2008; Watts and Trlin 2000; Westin 2000; Simich et al 2003);

Language Proficiency (Beiser 2010; IMSED 2010; Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007; Chen 1973; Beckhusen et al 2012; Burnett 1998; Chiswick and Miller 2012; Carrington et al 2007; Westin 2000; Simich et al 2003);

Housing (Burnett 1998; Baker et al 2013; Baker et al 2012; Bierre 2013; Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000;; Beckhusen et al 2012; Fanjoy et al 2005; Texeira 2007; Asselin et al 2006; Haller et al 2011; Howden-Chapman et al 2012, 2007; Bonnefoy et al 2003; Simich et al 2003; Early et al 2006);

Networks (Granovetter 1973, 1983; Doflin et al 2010; Liu 2013; Rose et al 1998; Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000; Burnett 1998; Mahuteau et al 2008; Fanjoy et al 2005; Haller et al 2011);

Expectations and Information (Simich et al 2003; Fanjoy et al 2005; IMSED 2010; Burnett 1998; Ward and Masgoret 2007; Immigration New Zealand 2012); and

Health (Tukuitonga 2013; Baker et al 2012; Howden-Chapman et al 2012; Blakely et al 2011; Borrows et al 2010; Schluter 2011; Singh et al 2011; Prior et al 1974, 1981, 1987; Gushulak 2007; Abbot et al 2003; Lindencrona et al 2008; Wilson et al 2008; Roizblatt and Pilowsky 1996; Dunman 2006; Lie 2002; Weine et al 1998; Beiser 2010; Beiser et al 2003; Wilson et al 2008; Stillman 2007; Sobrun-Maharaj et al 2008; Abbot et al 2003; Pahud 2008; Gifford et al 2007; WHO 2003, 2013, 2014; Harris et al 2012; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; Gifford et al 2007; Krieger 2010; Williams and Collins 2001; Wright and Hornblow 2008).

A recurring theme found within each of these themes was the issue of discrimination (see for example, Harries et al 2012; Spoonley et al 2007, 2005; North 2007; Vasta 2007; Texeira 2007). Consistent with the cross-cutting nature of this issue, the subject of discrimination is discussed within the analysis of each of these themes later in this chapter.

## **Definitions of Settlement**

The literature review confirmed that there is no universally accepted definition of settlement, other than it is a process of adjustment. In place of an internationally accepted definition, the literature most commonly referred to particular aspects or features of settlement including specific concepts to illustrate the intended outcomes of settlement (such as equality, fairness,

freedom, participation and normalcy (for refugees) (Burnett 1998). The term ‘settlement’ has been variously described as:

*“...a complex process which takes place over a period of time after immigration, with the period of initial settlement being significant, in a particular and changing environment. It is constructed by the immigrant’s interaction with the various elements of political, economic and social structures of the host society, into, which the immigrant is incorporated.” (Burnett 1998: 61)*

*“...settlement is a process, not an event or a mechanical procedure.” (Fincher et al 1993; 103)*

*“...a process during which a refugee, having arrived in a place of permanent asylum, gradually re-establishes the feeling of control over his/her life and develops a feeling that life is back to normal.” (Colic-Peisker2003: 62)*

In New Zealand the use of the term settlement has been used to describe the process of integration, inclusiveness, responsiveness and cultural diversity.

*“New Zealand’s prosperity is underpinned by an inclusive society, in which the local and national integration of migrants is supported by responsive services, a welcoming environment and a shared respect for diversity.” (IMSED 2008)*

For the purposes of this research, the term ‘settlement’ refers to a process of adjustment by migrants and refugees in their new host environment, as set out by Burnett (1998) in the quotation above. While the term ‘settlement’ has often been used by policy researchers to refer to the initial short-term period of adjustment, researchers (Burnet 1998; Haller et al 2011; Simich et al 2003; Fanjoy et al 2005) have noted that for some migrant groups, in particular refugees and some migrant groups (who are older, with on-going poor language proficiency or in poor health), settlement may be life-long with intergenerational impacts. However, unlike refugees who are typically provided with a range of services to assist them in their settlement (such as free initial accommodation, government-supported accommodation, employment-search assistance, and free health services for a period of time), voluntary migrants, irrespective of their circumstances are expected to deal with their

settlement themselves, often with the assistance of their social networks already resident in their new host country of residence.

These findings emphasise that as a process of adjustment and establishment in a new host country, ‘settlement’ for migrants and refugees is not defined by a specific time-period. As much of the literature implies, while for some other migrants, the process of settlement will be relatively straightforward, the process for other migrants may be fraught with complexities and hardships that continue for a generation or longer (Haller et al 2011). It was this ‘wider’ view of the process of settlement (in the sense of the diversity of migrants and settlement over time) that formed a working definition for my primary research on the settlement of Kiribati migrants and their families, who have lived in New Zealand for up to ten years.

As a point of clarification, for the purposes of this thesis, the term settlement pertains to both voluntary migrants and involuntary migrants (referred as refugees). When the term migrant is used on its own, it is intended to convey the inclusion of both voluntary migrants and refugees. On occasion that the term *refugee* is used on its own, the aim is to highlight particular settlement experiences pertaining to involuntary migrants.

## **Settlement Pathways: Some Theoretical Thinking**

An interesting revelation from the literature review was the disproportionate level of empirical research and political discourse relative to theoretical development. While this may reflect the complexity of the subject and the lack of longitudinal research on the settlement of voluntary migrants, to date no theoretical development has surpassed the seminal work of Berry (1992) on the adaptive processes underlying the settlement of migrants. The theoretical thinking put forward by Berry (1992) which is extensively referred to in the literature by others (see for example Fanjoy et al 2005; Haller et al 2011; Westin 2000) is based on the argument that the adaptation of migrants occurs through a process of acculturation. According to Berry (1992) acculturation is defined as the cultural change that occurs to individuals and groups, due to constant face-to-face contact between two distinct cultural groups throughout the process of settlement and beyond.

Based on research on the adaptive processes of migrants, Berry (1992) posited that minority groups face a number of acculturation options in their settlement. These options include: ‘integration’, ‘assimilation’, ‘separation’, and ‘marginalisation’. In the case of integration, Berry (1992) notes that while it implies a certain degree of integrity among migrants, it also implies a movement to join and become part of the mainstream. By way of contrast, the option of ‘assimilation’ is referred to by Berry (1992) as the absorption of the minority culture into the mainstream, while ‘separation’ is viewed as representing different combinations of acceptance and rejection of migrant/host convergence. Finally, ‘marginalisation’ represents a strategy that rejects both the dominant and minority culture as a focus of identification and acceptance (Berry 1992). The four acculturation options are represented in the following Table 1:

**Table 1: Acculturation Options**

	Maintaining Identity with Minority Culture	Maintaining Identity with Minority Culture
	Yes	No
Accepting identification with host society: Yes	Integration	Assimilation
Accepting identification with host society culture: No	Separation	Marginalisation

(Source: (Berry 1992)

While these acculturation options are commonly referred to in the literature on settlement, some noteworthy differences apply particularly in relation to the notion of ‘marginalisation’. This option is more commonly referred to in the literature as a failure of new migrants to fully integrate into their new host society. This lack of migrant/host convergence is most often denoted in the literature as being due to poor settlement outcomes (rather than a choice) arising from poor relative socio-economic outcomes. These outcomes include inter alia: low wage employment, inadequate housing in marginalised locations, fewer skills and poorer health. These outcomes are most frequently referred to in terms of migrants’ human capital (education, skills, employment experience, language proficiency); migrants’ social resources

(breadth of social networks, breadth of formal networks, housing and health); migrants' economic resources (financial resources including the ability to accumulate wealth) (Pescarus and Bauissa 2007). What is less clear is the role of cultural resources in leading to the marginalisation of migrants. Academic discourse on multiculturalism, discussed later in this chapter, would indicate that cultural separation may play a part in the marginalisation of migrant groups in terms of restricting the level of economic and social inter-connectedness between migrant groups and the host society (see for example, Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000; Macpherson 2008). I would argue that great care needs to be taken in simply identifying any one settlement variable as determining settlement outcomes in the absence of in-depth research.

While Berry's (1992) model on acculturation is particularly useful in identifying the settlement outcomes of settlement, no theoretical model was identified to explain the multi-level dynamic relationships that explain differences in settlement outcomes of migrant groups and their host society. A number of reasons could be posited for the lack of theoretical development on the subject. A key reason is likely to be the difficulty of distilling complexity and diversity of influences to produce an 'elegant' account to illustrate the varied settlement pathways of migrants. In the absence of theoretical constructs on settlement, the approach to the literature review was to identify the commonly recurring themes that emerged in the research on the settlement of migrants. The aim was to compare the findings of these themes with my empirical research on the settlement of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. Prior to examining the key themes identified in the literature, the next section discusses the political policy settings and constructs used by governmental administrations of most western countries, including New Zealand.

## Political Constructs Influencing Migration and Settlement

A number of concepts have been used by governments to describe the socio-political policies implemented to shape the interactions between migrants and their host societies. The most common among these political constructs have been 'assimilation', 'integration', and 'multiculturalism'. Up until the 1960s and early 1970s the construct, 'assimilation', was a significant policy feature of many western countries (Australia, France, United Kingdom, Spain, Denmark, Sweden and to some degree New Zealand). The term 'assimilation' denotes

the absorption of new migrants to the cultural values and norms of the host society such that migrants come to resemble the host society (Brown 2006; Thomas and Nikora 1992). Early references to this term, in countries such as New Zealand, Australia, and Canada, usually symbolised the need for new migrants to become ‘Anglo-conformist’ (confirming to white Protestant values).

Weinstock (2004) argues that ‘Anglo-conformity’ was a component of a phenomenon called ‘majority nation-building’ (MNB), where all ethnic minority groups, including migrants, were expected to conform to the:

*“...culture, language, and symbols, and in some countries, to the religion, of the majority national group. I would argue that the grand phase of European nation-building in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries was driven principally by the desire to propagate the culture of the national majority. Anglo-conformity models of integration in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have also been variants of MNB.”*

(Weinstock 2004: 53)

Cummins and Donesi (1990) note, however, that some of the most significant detrimental impacts of Anglo-conformity were on indigenous groups, who became ethnic minorities in their own countries due to large inflows of migrants, resulting from colonisation. In the case of New Zealand, Williams (2001) noted that Anglo-conformity of the education system, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, up until the latter part of the 1960s, led to the demise of the Māori language and culture. Although Williams (2001) acknowledges that a underlying reason for banning the use of te reo in schools was to encourage the uptake of the English language among Māori children, this strategy, coupled with the move of Māori from rural to urban living, had significant negative effects for Māori, until the beginning of the revival of teaching of te reo in the 1980s. An instruction to teachers from the Education Department, in 1930, exemplified the Anglo-conformist approach:

*“Do not speak to your pupils in Maori, and do not permit them to speak in Maori to you, or to one another, if you can help it. The less they hear of Maori the better it will be for their English. Do not, however well you may speak the language, give orders in Maori, or attempt explanations.”* (Williams 2001: 130)

In terms of the settlement of migrants in recent times, Brown (2006) concludes that the impact of assimilation is to achieve ‘similarity’ of migrants with the majority culture:

*“...immigrant/ethnic and majority groups becoming more similar over time in norms, values, behaviours and characteristics.” (Brown 2006: 4).*

In contrast to the concept of ‘assimilation’ that sets out an expectation of migrants to become more similar with their host society, the concept of ‘integration’ places a greater emphasis on the *two-way process* of adjustment between migrants and new host societies. This two-way adjustment denotes a process whereby new migrants and their host society learn and adapt to each other over time (see for example, Bauböck 2003; Burnett 1998; Henderson 2004).

Nowadays, the concept of ‘integration’ has become increasingly popular as a mid-way point between the imputed intolerance of ‘assimilation’ and liberalism of ‘multiculturalism’. This third concept, ‘multiculturalism’ broadly refers to the management of cultural and ethnic diversity (UNESCO 1995).

Unlike the relative simplicity of the concepts of ‘assimilation’ and ‘integration’, the concept of multiculturalism is significantly more complex, due to the three intertwined, yet distinctive aspects of the concept, comprising ‘demographic-descriptive’, ‘ideological-normative’ and ‘programme-political’. At the descriptive level, multiculturalism can be used to refer to countries with populations that are culturally diverse. On this basis, many western nations, including New Zealand (with over 200 ethnic groups and over 25% of the total population born overseas), could be described as being multicultural. At the ideological-normative level, multiculturalism refers to:

*“...a specific focus towards the management and organization of governmental responses to ethnic diversity... multiculturalism is an enrichment for the society as a whole. In Australia, there is the further contention that cultural diversity actually provides an important national resource for foreign economic, political and cultural relations.” (UNESCO 1995: 6)*

This view underpins a theory promulgated by Macquarie (1985) that:

*“...it is beneficial to a society to maintain more than one culture within its structure.”*  
*(Macquarie 1985: 1125)*

It is on the basis of these benefits, that some countries (such as Canada and Australia) explicitly or implicitly used quotas through their immigration programmes to achieve a cultural mix of migrants. According to Fincher et al 1993, the multicultural policy setting was linked with promoting richness in the arts, languages, music, food and underpinning social and economic wealth. Unlike the aim of the policy settings of Australia and Canada to achieve diversity, New Zealand’s significant cultural diversity has come about by from immigration settings, which are based on accepting skilled migrants from wherever in the world they come from. As noted previously, while New Zealand does have two immigration policies that use quotas to attract (and control) migrants from some Pacific countries under the Samoan and Pacific Access Categories, these schemes were not developed to promote cultural and ethnic diversity, but rather to assist citizens of these countries to connect to the New Zealand labour market. This connection to the labour market would not only promote the well-being of the migrants coming to New Zealand, but also assist their families back in the islands through remittances, thereby generating broader economic benefits.

At the ‘programme-political’ level, multiculturalism refers to the political promotion and articulation of multiculturalism. In many western countries (Australia, Canada, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark) political administrations during the 1980s and 1990s promulgated the importance of having a multicultural society (MacDonald 2008). In New Zealand, discussions on multiculturalism and diversity have been particularly muted given the bicultural nature of the constitution and the critical role of the Treaty of Waitangi. On this basis, I would argue that while New Zealand has become an extremely diverse society, this diversity has not come about from the use of quotas and promulgation of diversity, but rather from neutral policy settings based on the intake of skilled people internationally. Although I would argue that as a bicultural nation, New Zealand has embraced diversity in its own distinctive manner, rather than on the basis of multiculturalism, it is important to recognise that the assimilationist policies that characterised New Zealand up until the 1970s resulted in the lack of cultural and linguistic recognition of Māori as the tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand (Thomas and Nikora 1992; Boston et al 2006).

The literature review indicated that while the events of September 11 2001, exacerbated a review of risks associated with multicultural policy settings across many western countries (Benson 2012; Veldhuis and Bakker 2009), misgivings about the policy stance had begun to emerge in Canada and Sweden during the 1990s (Bissoondath 1994; Westin 2000). In Canada, these misgivings were based on concerns that multiculturalism policy was driving a wedge between Canadians of different ethnic backgrounds, because of a perception that it intensified misunderstandings and hostility and pit one group against another in the competition for power and resources. Taking this further, Bissoondath (1994) concluded that the promotion of cultural and social differences was responsible for the emergence of a ‘psychology of separation’ in Canada.

Following the events of September 11, and the increased incidences of home-grown terrorism in Europe and the rise of racial violence in Europe, Scandinavia and Australia, many western governmental administrations began to question the appropriateness of multiculturalism as a policy setting. In particular, the shock that well-settled migrants could threaten terror on the citizens of their country of settlement, led to concerns at the highest political levels that multiculturalism had played a part in encouraging migrants to ‘separate’ from the rest of society and pursue their own cultural and social values and identity. The high profile murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004 in the Netherlands also led to concerns about the association of Muslims and violence (see Veldhuis and Bakker 2009; Strabac and Listhaug 2008). More recently the possibility that a British citizen was responsible for the beheading of journalist James Foley in Syria has only gone to raise concerns of radicalisation of western citizens resulting from cultural separation.

As a western democracy embracing biculturalism rather than multiculturalism, New Zealand did not have to express a view on the pros and cons of multiculturalism. Despite this and in parallel with other western countries (Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, Canada, Denmark and Sweden), New Zealand invested considerable resources to build the capacity of risk profiling as a means of screening the inward movement of new migrants. In addition to this, those countries that had promulgated multicultural policies put in place stricter immigration and settlement policies designed to communicate their expectations of the need for new migrants to integrate into their new host societies, rather than purely celebrate their cultures (Benson 2012).

To manage the risks associated with multiculturalism, new migrants were provided with greater levels of information about the values underpinning their new host society and what they could expect in their new host country, including how to access services. At the same time, access to citizenship (a main measure of identity) was significantly tightened in a number of countries, including Australia, United Kingdom, United States, and Denmark. Citizenship tests in all of these countries required migrants to learn more about the values underpinning their host societies, but also required migrants to have a higher level of language proficiency than had been the case previously, a significant barrier for some migrant groups. While it is unclear whether tighter citizenship tests have led to increased levels of migrant/host convergence, these changes were intended to signal to migrants in these countries that access to citizenship was a privilege, rather than a simple consequence of migration.

While the fall in favour of the policy of multiculturalism (in Australia, United Kingdom, United States, Sweden, and Denmark) has led to a greater emphasis on the expectation that new migrants should integrate into their new societies, concerns about the impact of multicultural policy has been even more stark at the political level, with the rise of the populist new right movements in Europe (most notably East Central Europe) and Scandinavia (see for example, (Minkenberg 2013; Rydgren 2010; Rydgren and Ruth 2011; Spektorowski 2003). In contrast to the central tenets of multiculturalism that is based on the *inclusion* of cultural diversity, the philosophy of populist new right movements based on the principle of ethno-pluralism, is founded on a system of *exclusion*, or the ‘right to difference’ expressed in the form of ethnic and/or racial separation (Rydgren and Ruth 2010; Spektorowski 2003). In Europe, the genesis of ethno-pluralism has been grounded on increased levels of xenophobia (Minkenberg 2013) and concerns about the demise of indigenous identities from immigration (Spektorowski 2003).

Examining the rise of new-right political influences in Sweden and Denmark, Rydgren and Ruth (2011) note that opposition to immigration and multicultural society (which is focussed on the inward migration of refugees and less skilled migrants) is based on four main arguments against migrants: perceived threat to ethno-national identity; perceived criminality and social insecurity; assumption that migrants take jobs away from locals; and perception that migrants abuse social services which results in fewer subsidies and the like for ‘natives’

(Rydgren and Ruth 2011: 209). Rydgren and Ruth (2011) argue that while the first two factors can be treated as a manifestation of the ethno-pluralist doctrine:

*“...that is, that different ethnicities should not ‘mix’ lest cultural specificities disappear...the last two can be treated as part of a welfare chauvinist doctrine in which immigrants and ‘natives’ are depicted as competing for limited economic resources.”* (Rydgren and Ruth 2011: 209)

Analysing increasing voter support for right-wing populist parties in Sweden (Sweden Democrats) in the 2006 and 2010 elections, Rydgren and Ruth (2011) concluded that increased competition for scarce resources underpinned support for far-right populist parties (Rydgren and Ruth 2011: 215). In comparative research on the rise of right-wing populist parties in Sweden and Denmark, Rydgren (2010) noted that while both countries shared several important influences such as anti-immigration sentiments, the two countries diverged in some important ways:

*“First, while the socioeconomic cleavage dimension lost much of its importance in Danish politics, it was still highly salient in Swedish politics. Secondly and related, the issue of immigration has been much more politicized in Denmark than in Sweden. While immigration has dominated the political agenda in Danish politics during the last decade, in Sweden the socioeconomic dimension has taken center stage.”*  
(Rydgren 2010: 57)

Declining support for multiculturalist policies has also come about from supporters of a number of ‘new’ theories developed to understand the increasing complexity of migrant settlement. One of these models, referred to as ‘interculturalism’, denotes that identity is more fluid and transitory than multiculturalism (see for example, see for example, Cantle 2012a, 2012b; Meer and Modood 2011; Adballa-Pretceille 2006). Cantle (2012a, 2012b) argues that, unlike multicultural policies that enable different cultures to live side by side, none of which take precedence or have higher value, interculturalism recognises that heritage and identity are dynamic and that cross-cultural interaction is increasingly globalised. The argument made by Abdallah-Pretceille (2006) is that cultures can no longer be understood as independent entities, but need to be conceptualised in terms of social, political, and

communications-based realities. This intricacy is also highlighted by Werbner (2015) in a study of British Pakistanis living in Manchester, which found that Pakistanis can:

*“...recreate their culture and traditions, their common images, idioms and values. It is in this context that they must re-negotiate the social categories they share and which link the present with the past.” (Werbner (2015: 1)*

Other paradigms that recognise the fluidities and complexities of societies are ‘transnationalism’ (see for example, Guarnizo et al 2003; Glick-Schiller et al 1999, 1992; Vertovec 2001; Castles 2010) and ‘super-diversity’ (see for example, Vertovec 2007; Bloomaert and Rampton 2012, Arnaut 2012). With regard to the first of these models, ‘transnationalism’ refers to the enhanced transnational connections between social groups (Vertovec 2009). These links include the maintenance of on-going social connections by migrants settled in their new host countries, with the polity of their country of origin (Glick-Schiller et al 1999). This is defined further as:

*“In transnational migration people literally live their lives across international borders. Such persons are best identified as ‘transmigrants’.” (Glick-Schiller et al 1999: 344)*

Another model developed to make sense of the increasingly complex globalised world is that of ‘super-diversity’. Consistent with the model of ‘interculturalism’, the concept of ‘super-diversity’ also recognises the fluidities and complexities of diversity (Arnaut 2012). Vertovec (2007) describes this greater complexity as including not just ethnicity but:

*“...religious affiliations and practice, regional and local identities in places of origins, kinship, clan or tribal affiliation, political parties and movements, and other criteria of collective belonging.” (Vertovec 2007: 1031)*

Vertovec 2007 goes further to argue that the ‘super-diversity’ model points to the need for policy makers to consider the multi-dimensional conditions and processes affecting immigrants, such as their plurality of affiliations. The argument being made by Vertovec (2007) and others (Arnaut 2012; Fanshawe and Sriskandarajah 2010), that by forging a greater understanding of the plurality of factors influencing the settlement of migrants, will

result in policies better suited to the issues facing immigrants, ethnic minorities and the wider population of the host society. In conclusion, while it could be argued that these newer models of settlement are an extension of multiculturalism, each of them ('transnationalism', 'interculturalism', and 'super-diversity') seek to highlight that complexities associated with globalisation mean that there are many issues influencing the settlement experiences of new migrants, their identities, and their social ties.

The discussion above highlights how issues and concepts relating to migration and settlement are founded within political and social discourse. In the time before nation states when people either freely moved from place to place, or fought over territory, the movement of people in modern times (since after World War I) has been regulated and influenced by political administrations (although this has not stopped fighting over territory). The discussion is a pertinent reminder, that migration and settlement does not occur in a policy vacuum, but is at the centre of politics across all western democracies and is significantly shaped by state policy. As noted previously, a major short-coming of migration theories is the lack of understanding of the role of governmental policy settings in influencing international voluntary migration. Although economic factors are accepted as powerful influences of migration, the ability of migrants to take advantage of these influences stem from the policy settings implemented by governments.

The following section examines the literature on settlement from a different stance, by examining the vast research on the settlement of migrants (including refugees), in many cases drawing on empirical research on how migrants have viewed their own settlement experiences.

## **Settlement Themes from the Literature**

The literature review revealed six recurring themes that best capture the greatest influences on the settlement experiences of migrants. They were: employment, language proficiency, housing, networks, and health and expectations specifically for refugees and the economic and political and policy issues that shape these factors. These themes did not represent all the influences identified in the literature, but rather the most commonly recurring themes identified across the literature on the settlement of migrants. Some important issues, such as

host societal attitudes and discrimination, were also identified in relation to specific themes (such as employment, housing, and health) and were discussed as part of the six recurring themes, rather than in isolation. As noted previously, the literature confirmed that settlement is a complex, dynamic process, rather than a linear process determined within a specific time period. Where possible, connections between themes are highlighted and discussed.

### **Settlement Theme One: Employment**

Employment was identified as one of the key determinants of migrant settlement (see for example, Beckhusen et al 2012; Colic-Peisker 2002, 2003; Burnett 1998; Westin 2000; Henderson 2004; Fincher et al 1993; Uhendorff and Zimmermann 2006). Participation in the labour market and the nature of that participation were shown as having profound influences on a range of settlement factors, including where people choose to live, the quality of housing they could afford, and the breadth of social connectivity with the citizens of the host country (Burnett 1998; Henderson 2004; Haller et al 2011). The literature noted that, although, entry into the labour market was relatively straightforward for some migrants (such as skilled migrants), it was also accepted that this was not the case for many migrant groups, particularly so for refugees.

The literature highlights three crucial issues that have important impacts on the ability of migrants to enter the labour market or access sustainable employment. The first of these critical issues was the importance of language proficiency in securing employment (see for example, Burnett 1998; Macpherson 2008; Westin 2000; Henderson; IMSED 2010; Haller et al 2011). Language proficiency was not only identified in terms of influencing migrant entry into the labour market, but also how migrants went about searching for employment, irrespective of educational qualifications. Indeed, poor language proficiency was identified as a major barrier to entry, not only for those with little or no education (including illiteracy in their own language, but also for those highly educated (such as doctors, dentists and nurses) (Dunman 2006). Even with language proficiency, an added issue for many migrants (particularly for refugees) was the lack of recognition of educational qualifications. This was aptly recalled by Dunman (2006) of a Bosnian dentist settled in the United States who faced the reality of his qualifications not being recognised:

*“After a year, the realities start kicking in of the loss of life as they know it.”*  
*(Dunman 2006: 83).*

A second issue identified as impacting on the ability of migrants to enter the labour market and find ‘good’ jobs was the role of employer discrimination (based on race, religion, accent, ‘cultural fit’, and fears that some migrants might disrupt the workplace due to cultural differences) (North, 2007; Ward et al 2007, 2008; Vasta 2007; Constant et al 2008).

Discrimination in the labour market was commonly referred to in settlement research across many countries, including New Zealand (North 2007). Interview-based research of New Zealand employers highlighted a number of discriminatory practices used to ensure ‘cultural fit’ in the workplace:

*“When recruiting employers described a sense of responsibility that led them to take a path of least resistance and minimise risk when hiring that, in practice, discriminated against an immigrant job seeker competing with New Zealanders.”*  
*(North 2007: vii).*

In New Zealand, research by Ward and Masgoret (2007) noted the use of discriminatory practices by recruitment agencies against Chinese migrants. It was not clear whether this behaviour was based on second guessing employer attitudes, or whether discriminatory attitudes had begun to pervade the recruitment industry, but it nevertheless, represented discrimination from agencies expected to assist people into the labour market. At the employer level, research in New Zealand also noted discriminatory behaviour in their unwillingness to adequately recognise the pre-migration experiences of migrants, resulting in migrants having to take on lower wage jobs (see for example, ISMED 2010: 25; Pescarus and Bauaissa 2007; North 2007). By underutilising the skills of migrants, Watts et al 2000 concluded that these forms of discrimination led many New Zealand employers to overlook the potential of migrants to make a significant contribution to their businesses.

The literature review revealed that employer discrimination against migrants was a commonplace feature across most western countries. For example, research on prejudice in Europe found extensive employer discrimination towards the employment of Muslims (Strabac and Listhaug 2008). Discriminatory practices were also evident in Germany where employment opportunities for migrants from Italy, Croatia and Spain did not differ from non-

migrants, whereas Turkish migrants were found to have significantly lower probability of leaving unemployment for a paid job (Strabac and Listhaug 2008).

Evidence of the frustrations of having to deal with discriminatory practices in the United States labour market can also be evidenced in the following quote from a young Sudanese refugee:

*“First you are a refugee, second you are black and third you are female. Have so many things pushing you down.” (female refugee youth from Sudan, Beiser 2009: 48)*

Likewise, research on employment practices in Australia found the presence of extensive discrimination against the employment of Pacific migrants, resulting in high unemployment rates amongst this group. Research on the employment of Pacific migrants in rural Australia (Wollongong) identified two predominant forms of discrimination: discrimination based on colour, and discrimination based on stigmatisation that Pacific migrants were uneducated, untrained and only useful for unskilled labour (see Vasta 2007).

A third issue affecting the performance of migrants in the labour market was a lack of relevant skills resulting in the concentration of certain migrant groups (with lower human capital, such as education, skills, and work experience) becoming concentrated in low-wage industries with high levels of migrants (Portes and Böröcz 1989; IMSED 2010). In the United States this was exemplified by the vast number of Mexican documented and undocumented workers being employed in agricultural, horticultural and viticulture industries (Haller et al 2011). In New Zealand and Australia, the concentration of migrants was identified as occurring in low-wage services and manufacturing industries (such as, cleaning, caregiving, abattoirs, unskilled or semi-skilled labour in agricultural, horticulture and viticulture industries (IMSED 2010; Burnett 1998; Mahuteau et al 2008).

Another explanation put forward by some researchers (Mahuteau et al 2008; Dunman 2006) to explain the concentration of migrants in certain parts of the labour market was the tendency of migrants to accept any job, even ‘bad jobs’, and then over time move onto better jobs, as they gained higher levels of employability. Given the low-paying nature of these jobs, many migrants who could not move into high-paying employment, were often forced to

take on more than one job to survive. This was identified by Dunman (2006) as being particularly the case for refugees living in the United States:

*“...just take whatever job they can...and a lot of them work two jobs just to have some sort of normal providing lifestyle.” (Dunman 2006: 89)*

This inclination of migrants to take on any job, has led to concerns that migrants are more likely to take on dangerous jobs, associated with poor workplace conditions, and with high injury rates (Burnett 1998; IMSED 2010). Commenting on the employment of migrants in Australia, Burnett (1998) has also raised concerns about the plight of low-skilled women migrants becoming over-represented in low-wage, vulnerable and “...exploitative industries...” such as in cleaning, clothing and hospitality industries (Burnett 1998: 31). Counteracting these concerns somewhat was the finding by Fanjoy et al 2005) that for migrants being in work (any work), was better than not having work. This was particularly relevant for the case for refugees, as participation in the labour market was identified as providing a number of positive externalities including greater social connectivity, access to on-the-job training and further educational opportunities, and greater access to social services (Fanjoy et al 2005).

Consistent with the argument put forward by Fanjoy et al (2005) of the benefit of employment, was the relationship between employment and the mental well-being of migrants, particularly refugees. Research by Pahud (2008) on the settlement of refugees in New Zealand concluded that:

*“Most of the participants (81%) who were employed indicated lower feelings of stress in contrast to those who were not employed. In that respect, the impact of employment on self-esteem and mental health appeared to be more pertinent to refugees whose identity and self-esteem were already threatened. Additionally, the more individuals could communicate in English, the fewer the feelings of stress they experienced.” (Pahud 2008: 33)*

Overall, this discussion has underscored the critical importance of employment in the settlement experiences of migrants. Not only did participation in the labour market provide an avenue for migrants to generate their own income and become increasingly independent

(particularly for refugees), but it offered a number of important positive externalities that were identified as being particularly relevant for their settlement. For many migrants, employment was a stepping stone for future opportunities, including investment in further education and upskilling that would provide on-going settlement benefits, if migrants were in a position to avail themselves of these chances.

## **Settlement Theme Two: Language Proficiency**

Alongside employment, language proficiency was identified from the literature as another important determinative influencer of settlement for migrants (see for example, Burnett 1998; Robinson et al 2007; Beiser 2009; Beckhusen et al 2012). While the term ‘proficiency’ was not defined in the literature, the ability of migrants to communicate in the language of the host country was viewed as a key enabler for maximising their economic and social participation, leading to improved settlement outcomes and integration (Burnett 1998; IMSED 2010). Language proficiency was not simply closely associated with the ability of new migrants to participate in the labour market, but also their ability to access vital social services that, in turn, could assist them in their settlement process. Language proficiency was also viewed as a critical capability for migrants to form wider social connections and, therefore, influence the two-way relationship between migrants and their host society (Westin 2000). While the importance of language proficiency was stressed in much of the literature, this was not intended to convey the need for migrants to give up speaking their own language (Burnett 1998).

While some researchers have acknowledged that it takes time for migrants, particularly older migrants, to build up their language proficiency (Burnet 1998; Abbot et al 2003), others have also emphasised that low language proficiency of some migrant groups, even after many years residence in a country, can be attributed to migrants’ limited social connections outside their ethnic and cultural groups (Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007). Other influences leading to low language proficiency identified included: the role of concentrated housing (Robinson et al 2007; Haller et al 2011); unemployment; and limited social networks. Finally, unlike refugees who are provided with free language training, a lack of accessible language training was also noted as an issue for some migrants (IMSED 2010).

Research on the uptake of language training by migrants living in New Zealand identified Pacific migrants (those who gained permanent residence under the Samoan and Pacific Access Categories) as having the lowest uptake of English language training of all migrant groups (IMSED 2010). Although the Pacific migrants surveyed attributed their low commitment to language training on a lack of time, this issue was not explored further in the research (IMSED 2010). Explanations put forward by researchers for the low uptake of language training in the United States by refugees included the cost of training, a lack of knowledge about how to access language training services, and in the case of mothers, the inability to balance the demands of looking after children and attending courses (Fanjoy 2005; Simich et al 2003). Whatever the reasons behind the lack of investment in language training, the general view in the literature is that low language proficiency, over time, is a major barrier to full social and economic participation of migrants in their new host country (Westin 2000; Fanjoy et al 2005; Carrington et al 2007).

Most important was the impact of a lack of language proficiency over the longer-term settlement of migrants. Research on the impact of language proficiency for refugees settled in Canada found that, while in the initial period of settlement language proficiency was found to have no effect on depression, by the end of the first decade, language proficiency was a significant predictor of depression and employment (Beiser 2009: 41). This was found to be particularly significant:

*“...among refugee women and among people who did not become engaged in the labor market during the earliest years of resettlement.”* (Beiser 2009: 41)

The research by Beiser (2009) on refugees settled in Canada, indicated that young well educated male refugees were more likely to learn English during their first two years of settlement compared to female and older refugees who had received less educational opportunities and exposure to English. Aside from constituting a barrier to social and economic participation, noted previously, low language proficiency among refugee adults has also been associated with added risks of acculturative stress (Pahud 2008) and ‘linguistic isolation’ (Dunman 2006).

Overall, the general consensus in the literature is that there is a direct relationship between language proficiency and participation of migrants in many facets of their settlement,

including employment and wider social connectivity. This was aptly summarised by Fanjoy et al (2005) in relation to the settlement of Sudanese refugees in Australia, United States and Canada:

*“The ability to communicate in English appears to have the greatest effect on respondents’ evaluations of their participation in their new country and therefore on their perceptions of their own success.” (Fanjoy et al 2009: 51).*

### **Settlement Theme Three: Housing**

Housing was identified as another important factor influencing the settlement experiences of migrants and their families (see for example, Robinson et al 2007; Beiser 2010; IMSED 2010; Haller et al 2011; Fanjoy et al 2005; Burnett 1998; Texeira 2007). Some of the most common topics identified in the literature review on migrant settlement and housing, related to their entry into the housing market (see for example, Texeira 2007; Fanjoy et al 2005; Robinson et al 2007; Simich et al 2003), the quality of housing and the detrimental health impacts of inadequate housing (see for example, Baker et al 2012; Baker et al 2013; Butler et al 2003; Early et al 2006; Krieger et al 2000; Krieger 2010; Howden-Chapman et al 2012; Howden-Chapman 2013; Chapman et al 2009; Bierre et al 2013), and migrant preferences concerning housing location (see for example, Asselin et al 2006; Beckhusen et al 2012; Bonnifield 1979; Burnett 1998; Robinson et al 2007; Williams and Collins 2001; Grbic et al 2009).

On the issue of entry into the housing market, experiences differed between voluntary migrants and refugees, due to the provision of housing assistance to refugees in many western countries including New Zealand. In contrast to refugees, upon entering their new host country, migrants are expected to make their own arrangements to secure their housing. This requirement relates to the full range of migrants, including those with few financial resources. For migrants, as for non-migrants, research suggests that *affordability* is one of the most critical factors influencing entry into the housing market (see for example, Robinson et al 2007; Haller et al 2011; Howden-Chapman 2013; Bierre et al 2013). In countries, such as New Zealand, where home ownership has been a strong feature of housing, differences in the

rate of home ownership across social and ethnic groups has been used as an indication of economic success.

The latest data on housing in New Zealand, collected as part of the 2013 New Zealand Census, showed noteworthy differences in the rates of home ownership across specific ethnic groups. One of the most significant of those differences was the low rate of home ownership of Pacific peoples (comprising of all ethnic groups from the Pacific) compared to the rate for the New Zealand population. For example, while the 2013 Census identified that just under half of the total New Zealand population (49.8 percent) owned or partly owned, their usual place of residence, the rate for Pacific peoples was only 18.5 percent in 2013, down from 21.8 in 2006. In the case of the Kiribati ethnic group, the rate of home ownership was even lower with merely 11 percent of I-Kiribati in 2013 identified as owning or partly owning their homes (Statistics New Zealand 2014). While Statistics New Zealand (2014) suggests that differences in the rate of home ownership among ethnic groups could be related to age and geographical characteristics, lower personal incomes levels was identified as the most influential factor for the low rate of home ownership for Pacific peoples (see also, IMSED 2009).

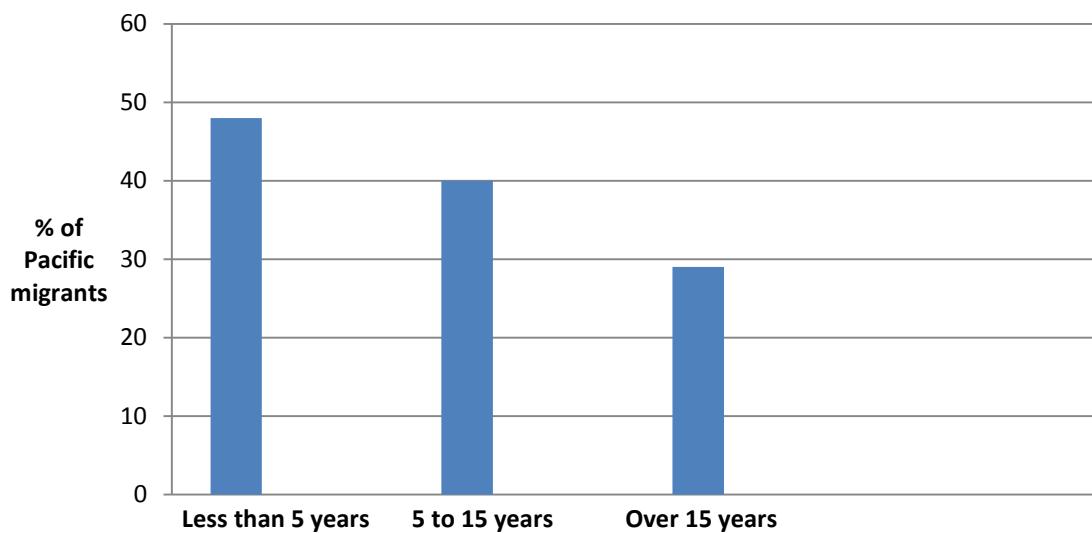
Consistent with the lower rates of home ownership, Pacific peoples were identified as being more likely to rent their accommodation, with 63.9 percent living in households in rental accommodation in 2013, compared with 32.9 percent for the total New Zealand population (Statistics New Zealand 2014). Dependence on rental housing was even higher for the Kiribati ethnic group, increasing from 61.8 percent in 2006 to 74.7 percent in 2013. As a relatively new migrant group, 80.8 percent of the Kiribati ethnic group lived in private rental housing with only 11.6 percent living in state housing in 2013, compared to over 41 percent of Pacific peoples living in state housing (dominated by Samoan, Tongan, Tokelauan, and Cook Islander ethnic groups). In recognition of the increasing problem of affordability facing many New Zealand families (particularly for Māori and Pacific households), researchers specialising in housing (see for example, Baker et al 2013; Howden-Chapman 2013; Bierre et al 2013) have argued in favour of policies and programmes to increase the proportion of social and affordable houses, as a proportion of the total New Zealand housing stock. In addition, Bierre et al (2013) and Howden-Chapman (2013) have noted that state and council tenants also have an important role in community renewal.

Research on the settlement of migrants and housing in the United Kingdom (particularly refugees and migrants with few financial resources) also found that economic issues, particularly affordability and other factors influenced the tendency of migrants to fill spaces in the housing stock left behind by non-migrants (Robinson et al 2007). In addition to affordability, Robinson et al (2007) found that the unwillingness to try to find housing in other location reflected concerns about how they might be treated in areas with little history of diversity and differences (Robinson et al 2007). Despite these constraints, Robinson et al (2007) have argued that these migrant groups could, and did, exercise greater choice about where they lived as they secured resources during their settlement. Research from Canada also indicated how discrimination in the housing market affected some migrant groups more greatly than others.

An examination of incomes by ethnicity, presented in the 2013 Census, which showed that Pacific peoples (as a group representing all Pacific ethnicities living in New Zealand) had the lowest median personal incomes of all major ethnic groups. More concerning was the finding of the declining position of Pacific peoples as a percentage of the national median personal income from the 2006 Census to the 2013 Census. While Pacific peoples were recorded as constituting 84 percent of the national median personal income in 2006, this proportion had declined to 69.1 percent of the national median personal income in 2013 (Statistics New Zealand 2014). In comparison, the median personal income for the Kiribati population constituted only 65.9 percent of the national median personal income in 2013 (Statistics New Zealand 2014).

One factor for the low median personal incomes of Pacific peoples, identified by researchers (see IMSED 2009) was the finding that in the early stages of their settlement Pacific migrants experience high rates of low incomes, declining over time of their settlement to match New Zealand's total population (see Figure 2 below).

**Figure 2: Percentage of Pacific migrants within low-income category in 2006**



(IMSED 2009: 18)

These results suggest that Pacific migrants are likely to experience more complex settlement issues compared to other migrant groups, including being less likely than others to own their own homes, and consequently experiencing a greater dependency on rental housing (private and social). Related to the issues of affordability and greater reliance of some migrant groups (such as Pacific migrants) on rental housing, another important area of research in New Zealand and internationally has focussed on the link between the quality of housing and health.

Research in New Zealand has, for example, indicated a strong association between the quality of housing and the health of Pacific groups (see for example, Tukuitonga 2013; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; 2011; Howden-Chapman et al 2007; Lane 2005; Pene et al 2007). This research has concluded that, among other things, poor heating and ventilation (cold and dampness) was associated with increased health risks, particularly in children exposed to several allergens commonly found in homes such as moulds and dust mites). These factors and a greater proportion of Pacific children and young people living in over-crowded households has been linked with higher rates of asthma, respiratory diseases, tuberculosis and meningococcal disease (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs 2011).

Consistent with these findings, research from the United States (see for example, Early et al 2006; Holmes 2006; Hovey et al 2000; Krieger 2010), noted that positive health impacts were confirmed from the retrofitting of insulation in existing homes. In New Zealand, these results were indicated by lower self-reported days off school and work, visits to doctors, and hospital admissions for respiratory diseases (Howden-Chapman et al 2007). While these results were also replicated in research in the United States, the scale of substandard housing prevalent on the periphery of vast urban centres, led Krieger (2010) to conclude that multi-trigger and multi-component approaches were preferred over single interventions. The complex web of influences impacting on health has also been raised in relation to the settlement of migrants. For example, concerns have been raised about high levels of vulnerability to cumulative health impacts for migrants if inadequate housing is found to exist with low language proficiency, limited social networks, and over-crowding (Robinson et al 2007; Fennelly 2007; Haller et al 2011; Westin 2000; Burnett 1998; Krieger et al 2000; Krieger 2010).

Overall, the quality of housing has been found to be an important factor in the health and well-being of Pacific households in New Zealand. This finding has important implications for new migrants who often enter the rental housing market at the cheaper end and who have to endure inadequate housing conditions. While many migrants may make the transition through such housing, those households with lower incomes may find themselves trapped in poor quality housing for long periods of time, including over generations (see for example, Haller et al 2011; Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007). While household income has been recognised as an important factor in determining the actual day-to-day living standards of migrant and non-migrant households, research in New Zealand (see Ministry of Social Development 2014) has noted that other factors also matter. These factors include the basic household items that make a positive difference, particularly if household income is low. Looking more directly at how households are actually living, rather than simply relying on household income, MSD's Economic Living Standards Index noted that Māori and Pacific peoples and families with four or more children experienced significantly higher hardship rates than European and other ethnic groups and families with one or two children respectively (Ministry of Social Development 2014). Later in this chapter, the issue of migrant health is examined against the influences of settlement and the socio-economic determinants of health.

In contrast to the high level of unanimity among researchers on the link between inadequate housing and detrimental health effects, the issue of where some migrants and refugee groups chose to live was characterised by significant debate. While there was general agreement among researchers (see for example, Robinson et al 2008; Grbic et al 2009; Burnett 1998; Texeira 2007) that a number of key factors influenced where migrant groups chose to live (such as proximity to family and employment, and discrimination in the rental housing market), there was wide-ranging debate on the impact of ethnically concentrated housing on socially connectivity and integration. For example, while some researchers, such as Asselin et al (2006) and Burnett (1998) have argued that housing proximity to family, friends and the respective ethnic communities, is a choice made by migrants, others have argued that the concentration of ethnic housing, and often poor housing, is a reflection of negative factors including affordability, discrimination in the rental housing market (Texeira 2007; Haller et al 2011), and limited social networks (Robinson et al 2007). A more extreme interpretation, put forward by Westin (2000) regarding migrant and refugee housing in Sweden, was that ethnically concentrated housing reflected the desire of some groups to ‘separate’ themselves from the rest of their host society.

Some of the most vocal opposition to the development of concentrated ethnic housing has emerged from Europe and Scandinavia where concentrated housing estates has led to concerns about the social isolation, social separation, and social marginalisation of migrant communities (Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007). These concerns have been added to by other researchers who have argued that concentrated ethnic housing not only provides a breeding ground for violence but can lead to more extreme threats including radicalisation (Benson 2012; Veldhuis et al 2009). Whether as a result of being ‘pulled’ or ‘pushed’ into ethnically concentrated housing (and often poor housing), some researchers (Haller et al 2011; Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000) have raised concerns that such housing can

*“...reinforce social inequality.”* (Westin 2000: 39)

An area of concern raised by Haller et al (2011) was the finding of a direct correlation between the concentration of ethnic housing, particularly in poor areas of large urban centres in the United States, and on-going generational effects of poverty and lack of social integration. Research by Haller et al (2011) found that the settlement of Hispanic migrants living in poor areas of large urban centres was responsible for the tendency of disaffected

second generation youth, who grew up in poverty, to find their identities in ethnic gangs (Haller et al 2011: 757)

In addition to concerns about concentrated migrant and ethnic housing in relation to integration, the discussion on this topic also raised concerns that inadequate housing could have negative downstream impacts in stymieing upward mobility such as: limiting the development of diverse social and formal networks from organisations and institutions; limiting the search for work; and adding to the greater ‘pull’ towards low-wage industries that further constrained upward social mobility, and thereby further entrenching social inequalities (Robinson et al 2007). One indicator often used to measure upward mobility has been home ownership.

In New Zealand, the increased migration of Māori from rural to urban centres in the 1950s, coupled with increased inward Pacific migration to support the growth of local manufacturing, led to the investment of state housing in Epuni, Naenae, and Taita in the Hutt Valley, and the development of Porirua City. These local expansions underpinned the ethnic concentration of Pacific migrant families living in affordable state and community housing and low private rental housing (see for example, Pene et al 2009; Maclean 2012). More recently, exploring the patterns of residential segregation in New Zealand for three ethnic minority groups (Asian, Maori, and Pacific) from the majority European ethnic group between 1991 and 2006, Grbic et al (2009) found that Pacific people experienced the highest levels of segregation among the three ethnic groups, particularly in Auckland. Grbic et al (2009) concluded that:

*“...the association between economic mobility and segregation was uniform for all three – the closer the ethnic minority group’s mean household income to European’s mean household income, the lower the levels of segregation...On the other hand, nativity has no association with the levels of Pacific people-European segregation. The lack of an association between nativity and segregation for Pacific people suggests that there are varied pathways to integration among Pacific people that require further examination.” (Grbic et al 2009: 11)*

Overall, the review of the literature on the settlement highlighted the important role that housing has in, influencing the settlement experiences and outcomes of migrants. While the

review of the settlement literature highlighted an expanding knowledge base on the link between the quality of housing and health, comparatively, there was little research in New Zealand and internationally on the pathway of housing for migrants and, in particular, the factors that are influencing the geographical locations where migrants chose to reside.

## **Settlement Theme Four: Networks**

Social networks have been widely recognised by researchers on settlement as having a significant role in assisting and supporting migrants and refugees to settle in their new host country (see for example, Rose et al 1998; Burnett 1998; Fanjoy et al 2005; Beiser 2009; Simich et al 2003; Roizblatt and Pilowsky 1996; Liu 2013). Among other things, linkages through family and friendship ties have been identified as having a profound influence in settlement processes of migrants and refugees, including the search for employment and housing, childcare, and the provision of safety nets in times of hardship and sources of credit (Doflin et al 2010; Simich et al 2003; Robinson 2007). In the case of refugees, these ties have also been recognised for their ability to provide emotional support and assistance to deal with complex issues such as grief and forced familial separation (Simich et al 2003; Pahud 2008). In relation to refugees, Simich et al 2003 note that:

*“Families, friends, and other members of an ethnic community take on a particular importance when refugees have been separated from those they knew in their countries of origin. Affirmation from family, friends, or like-ethnic community members may be part of the attractiveness of any place for newcomers.” (Simich et al 2003: 883).*

In addition to these support functions, family and friendship ties have also been noted as having an important role in assisting new migrants and their families to maintain critical aspects of their ethnic identity, including the continuance of their language and cultural traditions (Portes and Böröcz 1989: 615). For refugees, often unable to practice their cultural traditions in their home countries for fear of persecution, or detained in refugee camps for considerable lengths of time, these ties have also been acknowledged as being particularly important in assisting refugees to recapture their sense of cultural and national identity (Burton 1998: 23).

Drawing from the influential research by Granovetter (1973, 1983) on social connections, ‘strong ties’ are defined as:

“*...densely knit clump of social structure.*” (Granovetter 1983: 202)

Granovetter (1973) also notes that:

“*...the stronger the ties connecting two individuals, the more similar they are, in various ways.*” (Granovetter 1973: 1362)

The argument by Granovetter (1973, 1983) is that ‘strong ties’ are not about *who*, but about patterns of connections. Granovetter (1983) goes further to clarify why the patterns of connections and inter-linkages displayed by familial links and ‘close’ friends are often referred to as ‘strong ties’. According to Granovetter (1983) the reason social networks based on families and friends are ‘strong ties’ relate to these social ties to offer:

“*...greater motivation to be of assistance and are typically more easily available.*”  
(Granovetter 1983: 209)

Granovetter (1983) also explains why as a result of these characteristics, strong ties play an important role in assisting those seeking employment:

“*I suggested, moreover, that those in urgent need of a job turned to strong ties because they were more easily called on and willing to help, how-ever limited the information they could provide.*” (Granovetter 1983: 211)

As noted previously, notwithstanding the many settlement benefits associated with strong ties, more recently some academic researchers have begun to raise concerns about migrants limiting their social ties simply to these networks (see for example, Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000; Rose et al 1998; Liu 2013; Haller et al 2011; Portes et al 1993, 2005). Based on the earlier work of Granovetter (1973, 1983), these researchers argue that weak ties such as acquaintances and those ties generated by chance encounters provide improved opportunities for socio-economic mobility of migrants and better chances for their successful integration into their new host society.

Exploring the genesis of this thinking further, Granovetter (1973, 1983) argues that acquaintances, defined as weak ties, have the ability to act as:

*“...bridges between networks segments... Weak ties are asserted to be important because their likelihood of being bridges is greater than (and that of strong ties less than) would be expected from their numbers alone.” (Granovetter 1983: 229)*

Based on the initial thinking by Granovetter (1973, 1983), writing on the settlement of refugees in Canada, Simich et al (2003) notes that:

*“Intimately related sources of support or “strong ties” are particularly important sources of emotional support whereas “weak ties” such as casual acquaintances or community organizations in the larger society provide instrumental resources for long-term social integration.” (Simich et al 2003: 886).*

Consistent with Granovetter (1973), Simich et al 2003 does not dispute the importance of strong ties but, rather, argues that weak ties can have a vital role in extending social connectivity. Others such as Rose et al (1998) have also argued that weak ties can have a critical role in assisting new migrants to search for employment in areas that they had not previously considered, not only resulting in broader employment opportunities, but also broadening social connections. The arguments in favour of weak ties should not, however, be interpreted as meaning that they are more important than strong ties, but rather they should be seen as having different sets of functions. The importance of both strong and weak ties is explained by Granovetter (1983):

*“Lest readers of SWT and the present study ditch all their close friends and set out to construct large networks of acquaintances, I had better say that strong ties can also have value. Weak ties provide people with access to information and resources beyond those available in their own social circle; but strong ties have greater motivation to be of assistance and are typically more easily available. I believe that these two facts do much to explain when strong ties play their unique role.”*  
*(Granovetter 1983: 209)*

The importance of strong and weak ties propounded by various researchers on settlement (for example, Simich et al 2003; Rose et al 1998; Burnett 1998; Liu 2013; Haller et al 2011; Portes et al 1993, 2005) is, however, in contrast to other academic researchers who have taken a stronger stance against strong ties (see for example, Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007; Barker 1991). Rather than viewing both sets of social connections as important, these researchers have gone further to argue against strong ties viewing them as threats to social cohesion. This is based on concerns that the strong bundling of social connections based on family, friends and cultural networks can lead to social separation and marginalisation undermining integration with the broader society.

This thinking was exemplified in the research by Barker (1991) on the settlement of Samoan migrants living in the United States. Barker (1991) provocatively concluded that the strong cultural ties of migrants, based on a complex web of kinship dynamics, were responsible for the poor integration of Samoan migrants in the United States. Barker (1991) went on to argue that the creation of a ‘cocoon of Samoan-ness’ was unsustainable over time, eventually becoming burdensome for migrants. This research went on to conclude that the tensions between communal nature of the aiga (based on strong ties) and the competitive individualism of the United States culture were responsible for the increased levels of physical and psychological stresses experienced by many within this migrant group (Barker 1991).

Another source of tension recognised in the settlement literature is the desire of the children of migrant parents to seek to build social connections beyond their social and cultural group, that is, weak ties (Burnett 1998: 24). While the broadening of networks has been recognised as being particularly important for younger migrants as a way of ‘fitting in’, some researchers have argued that this outreach can have unintended consequences, such as the loss of proficiency in their own language, a critical aspect of cultural identity (ISMED 2010). This risk to language proficiency, has underlined the desire of many Pacific communities living in New Zealand to argue for interventions (such as language nests at the pre-school level) to prevent further language loss and to rebuild the linguistic resources of these communities. While the development of these nests has been accepted as part of the diversity of New Zealand, this has not been the case in other countries such as Sweden, where the development of similar language nests has been often viewed as interfering with the process of integration (Westin 2000).

Undoubtedly the debate in the settlement literature on the role of networks was one of the most thought provoking for this research. While strong networks have consistently been recognised as having a critical role in migrant settlement, the highlighting of the importance of other social connections was a reminder of the value of ‘weak ties’. This finding provided a useful basis for exploring how social networks have impacted on Kiribati migrants as part of the field research for this thesis.

### **Settlement Theme Five: Health of Refugees**

A commonly recurring theme identified, particularly in relation to the settlement of refugees was the impact of pre-migration health factors and their impact on the on-going health of refugees. Many researchers have noted that the unique experiences of many refugees, such as persecution, torture and the loss of family have detrimental mental health impacts on refugees and their families (Wilson et al 2008; Lindencrona et al 2008; Pahud 2008; Sulaiman-Hill and Thompson 2011). According to Wilson et al 2008, pre-migration experiences and stressors:

*“...constitute salient risks and stressors to their mental health.” (Wilson et al 2008: 45)*

Research on the settlement of Tamil refugees in Canada found that up to 12% of the study group of Tamil refugees suffered from high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder compared to an estimated 1% of the total population of Canada (Beiser 2003). In addition, an estimated 50% of Tamil children, who had witnessed violence, were identified as being more likely to experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Beiser et al 2003). Other stressors that were identified as having a detrimental effect on the mental health of refugees included the forced nature of their migration and separation from their families and other strong networks and incarceration in refugee detention centres and camps. All of these experiences were found to be linked to a number of psychological and mental disorders including depression, anxiety, acculturative stress and unexplained psychosomatic complaints (Pahud 2008).

In the Pacific, the detention of asylum seekers in Nauru and Papua New Guinea has come under considerable criticism from the UNHCR (2013) relating to the state of the detention centres and the lack of progress regarding the consideration of refugee claims. Drawing from

research on the pre-migration factors impacting on the mental health of refugees (see for example, (Wilson et al 2008; Lindencrona et al 2008; Pahud 2008; Sulaiman-Hill and Thompson 2011), the UNHCR (2013) noted:

*"In both Nauru and PNG the current policies, operational approaches and harsh physical conditions at the centres not only do not meet international standards – they also have a profound impact on the men, women and children housed there...Despite a processing system being in place under Nauru law, only one decision has been handed down in the 14 months since the centre reopened. At both centres, the psycho-social well-being of vulnerable people – including unaccompanied children and survivors of torture and trauma – is an issue of concern." (UNHCR 2013)*

Post-migration stressors, such as separation from family, were also identified as having significant detrimental emotional and mental health impacts for vulnerable refugees, particularly refugee women (Wilson et al 2008: 47). Other factors identified as having an impact on refugee women included experiencing loneliness, due to having to stay at home to care for their children, or due to other difficulties such as their lack of education and low literacy (Wilson et al 2008). Other post-migration stressors identified in the literature included, among other things, feelings of loss and grief, family changes, unemployment, parental psychosocial distress, discrimination, intergenerational conflict and acculturation (Wilson et al 2008; Pahud 2008).

An important finding on the topic of health and refugee settlement was the association between poor mental health and the ability to learn a new language (an important factor in the settlement of migrants) (Wilson et al 2008; Dunman 2006). The understanding behind this finding is that traumatic experiences and associated mental stress impaired the ability of some refugees, particularly the elderly, to learn a new language. This not only had an impact on the ability of these refugees to become integrated in their new host country, but in some cases the lack of language proficiency had profound negative impacts. This was particularly visible in the case of the United States where, unlike New Zealand refugees are conferred citizenship, refugees are required to pass their United States citizenship test where they have to demonstrate language proficiency to have access to on-going welfare benefits.

Regrettably, the inability of some refugees to pass this test has been associated with increased

levels of post-migration stress including depression and anxiety (Dunman 2006), underpinning the cumulative effects of pre and post-settlement influences.

According to Dunman (2006) another influence on the settlement outcomes of refugees in the United States is the tendency of service providers to treat refugees as a homogeneous group. To illustrate this, Dunman (2006) notes that refugees settled in the United States, not literate in their own language received the same amount of language assistance as those already fluent in English (Dunman 2006: 85). This was found to be a particular problem for women with little education and the elderly who found it particularly difficult to learn a new language. Not only was this found to impact on their ability to gain citizenship, but directly correlated with reduced labour market participation and, in turn, increased feelings of stress from isolation and hardship (Dunman 2006; Pahud 2008).

In addition, low language proficiency was also identified as constituting a significant barrier for refugees in accessing health services (Wilson et al 2008; Carballo et al 1998). Research in the United States indicated that refugees with poor language proficiency were much less likely to use public transport, or taxis, to make their medical appointments, either choosing to walk very long distances, or missing their appointments altogether (McGrath et al 2007; Wilson et al 2008). Similarly, research in Europe also noted that poor language proficiency and cultural issues lay behind the lower take up of reproductive health care among refugee women and some migrant ethnic groups (see Carballo et al 1998). This finding highlighted the lack of appropriately focussed resources for certain migrant groups on an issue (family planning) which is a key aspect of settlement.

## **Settlement Theme Six: Pre-migration Information and Expectations**

Access to pre-migration information on the host country was identified as being an influential factor in framing the settlement expectations of refugees (see for example, Fanjoy et al 2005; IMSED 2010). For example, research on the settlement of Sudanese refugees settled in Australia, Canada and the United States found those who had access to information encountered less stress from the challenges of settlement, compared with those that had little or no access to such information (Fanjoy et al 2005). This research noted that many refugees made attempts to obtain information from their families and friends living in their destined

country of settlement (Fanjoy et al 2005: 9). Interestingly, while family and friends already settled allowed, intended refugees to ask about life in their impending country of settlement, the research by Fanjoy et al (2005) found that many settled family members were often too shy to provide an accurate picture of the difficulties and hardships of living in a new country. This was exemplified in one of the responses from a Sudanese married female living in the United States:

*“It is bad, it is sensitive to discuss these things. When you move away you are not supposed to complain because it is everyone’s dream to be here. They would think we’re complaining so we wouldn’t have to send money. You cannot tell them how hard it is, they will not believe and they will think poorly of you.”* (Fanjoy et al 2005: 28)

The importance of refugees receiving a realistic account of what to expect, combined with information failure from family and friends, has underpinned the efforts of some countries such as New Zealand and Australia to provide refugees with a good level of formal information to allow them to receive a realistic picture of what to expect (ISMED 2010; Fanjoy et al 2005; Department of Labour 2004). In addition to the provision of information, some countries have invested considerable resources to provide new refugees with programmes to assist them with their settlement. While in many countries these programmes are provided by a mix of informal and formal agencies (assisting with education, health and housing), in New Zealand this has been achieved by the requirement of all quota refugees upon arrival to attend a six-week residential course at the Mangere Refugee Centre. Programmes at the Centre include, among other things: on-going health screening; language classes for adults; school for children; and information on central and local services.

While New Zealand’s approach has been recognised by those international agencies responsible for the resettlement of refugees (UNHCR and the IOM) as constituting best practice, the central point here is that the provision of information (no matter how it is delivered) is critical in setting the expectations for live in a new country. Without access to good information and, for many refugees, the reliance on (mis)information from family and friends has been identified in the literature as leading to increased levels of post-migration stressors including higher levels of anxiety, sense of loss and control, depression and grief (Simich et al 2003; Fanjoy et al 2005).

## **Settlement and Migrant Health (an example of settlement impacts)**

While the aim of the literature review was to identify the key factors influencing the settlement experiences of migrants, one area within the settlement literature, that best exemplified the two-way impact of adaptation and acculturation, was the impact of settlement on migrant health. Two broad bodies of research on settlement and health were identified from the literature review. The first, was a significant level of research both in New Zealand and internationally on the association between acculturation and the health of migrants (see for example, Borrows et al 2010; Schluter et al 2011; Ho et al 2003; Sobrun-Maharaj et al 2008; Prior et al 1971, 1981, 1987; Stanhope et al 1981; Gershon 2007; Renzaho et al 2013; Frisbie et al 2001; Fennelly 2007). The second area of research (which did not necessarily distinguish between migrant and non-migrant groups) was on the link between socio-economic status and detrimental health impacts (see for example, Singh et al 2011; Haller et al 2011; Early et al 2006; Frisbie et al 2001; Holden 2001).

### **Healthy Migrant Effect**

Overall, the starting point for much of the discussion on migration and health in the literature on settlement is the proposition that on arrival in their new host country, new migrants (with the exception of refugees) are typically healthier than their host population (see for example, McDonald and Kennedy 2004; Fennelly 2007; Gushulak 2007; Borrows et al 2010; Schluter et al 2011; Hajat et al 2010). Commonly referred to as the “healthy immigrant effect” or “healthy migrant effect”, research on migration and health indicate that while most migrants are healthier than their host population, over time this positive health differential erodes over time to convergence with the host population (McDonald et al 2004; Fennelly 2007; Gushulak 2007; Borrows et al 2010; Schluter et al 2011; Hajat et al 2010). Fennelly 2007 notes:

*“Over time, however, the migrant health advantage diminishes dramatically.”*  
*(Fennelly 2007: 1)*

Gushulak (2007) notes that this healthy migrant effect is the result of a number of factors, including the background of the migrant (required to indulge in physical activity),

demographics (younger migrants) and screening (the requirement to meet an adequate standard of health). While these factors are generally accepted by other researchers (McDonald et al 2004; Schluter et al 2011), others such as Hajat et al (2010) have argued that this general proposition may not necessarily apply for all voluntary migrant groups, for example, in the case of Pacific migrants arguing that:

*“However, our results for the Pacific population suggest some migrant groups come to the host country with a health disadvantage and with no apparent healthy migrant effect.” (Hajat et al 2010: 531)*

While it could be argued that the ‘healthy migrant effect’ may not be significant among Pacific migrants, the high standard of health required under immigration policy would posit that at the very least these migrants arrive in New Zealand with a higher standard of health than the general population of New Zealand. This is not unexpected given that a prerequisite for obtaining permanent residency for Pacific migrants (including those entering under the ballot system of the Samoan and Pacific Access Categories) is meeting the health standard set out in immigration regulations. This issue provided interesting context for the field research which is discussed later in this thesis.

## **Acculturation and Health**

The literature on migration and health from New Zealand and internationally indicated that acculturation and socio-economic factors influenced the health outcomes of migrants (see for example, Ho et al 2003; Abbot et al 2000; Sobrun-Maharaj et al 2005, 2008; Borrows et al 2011; Prior et al 1971, 1981, 1987; Stanhope et al 1981; Stillman et al 2007, Gershon 2007; Renzaho et al 2013; Frisbie et al 2001; Fennelly 2007; Portes et al 2005; Haller et al 2011). Research that compared the objective and subjective well-being of successful Tongan applicants under the PAC and those who stayed in Tonga, Stillman et al (2013) noted that, although, international migration brought about significant improvements in material well-being (in terms of increased incomes), subjective well-being such as mental health (using mental health inventory questioning) improved, while self-reported happiness declined. This was explained by Stillman et al (2012):

*“Even though there is a rise in absolute incomes, the aspirations of migrants may have risen by even more when they observe the high incomes in their new environment, and these unmet expectations cause frustration and reduce subjective well-being.” (Stillman et al 2013: 24)*

Other research on the association between acculturation and health of Chinese migrants living in New Zealand found a strong link between acculturation stress and detrimental health impacts such as depression and anxiety. For this migrant group, the strains of settlement and ‘fitting in’ was found to be largely responsible for the high levels of stress experienced by this migrant group (Ho et al 2003; Sobrun-Maharaj et al 2005, 2008, Abbot et al 2003). In particular, four settlement factors were identified by Ho et al (2003) as having detrimental mental health outcomes for this group. These comprised of: language difficulties (particularly for older Chinese migrants); difficulties in finding employment due to the lack of qualifications and New Zealand experience; disruption of family and support networks (particularly for those migrating between New Zealand and their country of origin, referred to as *Astronaut families*); and the inability of poorly equipped families to deal with conflicting demands of their dual cultural environments (Ho et al 2003: ix-x).

Research on the effects of acculturation in New Zealand and internationally has also found that changing lifestyles, led by dietary change in particular, is associated with detrimental health effects of migrants (see for example, Borrows et al 2011; Hajat et al 2010; Gushulak 2007; MacDonald et al 2004; Prior et al 1971, 1981, 1987; Stanhope et al 1981; Stillman et al 2013, 2007, Gershon 2007; Renzaho et al 2013; Frisbie et al 2001; Fennelly 2007; WHO 2011). While this finding is not new (see the Tokelau Study, Prior et al 1971, 1981, 1987; Stanhope et al 1981), the move from traditional diets to the consumption of western food, high in sugar and fat, has been credited for the increased levels of western diseases (such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer) among migrant groups in New Zealand and internationally (Australia, the United States, and Canada) (Gershon 2007; Renzaho et al 2013; Frisbie et al 2001; Fennelly 2007; Burton 1998). The association between diet and detrimental health impacts has also been indicated in the Pacific where the consumption of imported western foods has come to replace traditional diets (WHO 2011).

In the case of migrants, the link between acculturation and health is described by Gushulak (2007) as follows:

*“There is evidence that the process of acculturation is associated with changes in diet and activity level and use of medical services in some immigrants. Increased body index, altered glucose metabolism and behavioural changes (e.g., use of tobacco, alcohol or other substances) following arrival may increase the risk of adverse health outcomes.” (Gushulak 2007: 1439)*

The risks to health outcomes from acculturation have been further supported by research in Australia and New Zealand. For example, research on Ghanaian Africans living in Sydney noted that the weight of men and women settled between seven and ten years in Australia increased at an average of 0.46kg per year (Renzaho et al 2013). This research also determined that the weight gain that migrant children experience following migration to higher-income countries occurred relatively rapidly within the first five years of settlement. These findings were supported by research on the impact of settlement on the health of Tongan children living in New Zealand that indicated dietary change, rather than direct income effects, underpinned the increased stature of infants and toddlers and increased BMI among pre-teen Tongan children of migrants (Stillman et al 2007). Aside from dietary change, a lack of physical exercise associated with a more sedentary lifestyle was identified as being responsible for increased levels of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease among Asian and Pacific adult migrants living in the United States (see Frisbie et al 2001; Gershon 2007). Frisbie et al (2001) went on to conclude that:

*“...there was an almost perfectly consistent pattern of deterioration in health as the length of residence in the United States increased.” (Frisbie et al 2001: 379)*

The length of time for the convergence of migrants with the host population suggests that the ‘healthy migrant effect’ may differ across migrant groups depending on the impact of acculturation and other factors such as socio-economic factors. Research in New Zealand and internationally indicates that social and economic factors, such as income and poverty, employment and occupation, education and housing, comprise key determinants of health (Baker et al 2012; Howden-Chapman et al 2012; Stillman et al 2013, 2007; Tukuitonga 2013; Williams et al 2001; National Health Committee 1998).

Other important influences impacting on health outcomes include the level of social support networks, access and use of health services the psychosocial environment at work (WHO

2014, 2003), experience of racial discrimination (Harris et al 2012), cultural and ethnic factors (not well specified but related to the consumption of food) (National Health Committee 1998), and the up-take of risk behaviours such as smoking, alcohol and use of drugs (WHO 2003; Harris et al 2012; Blakely et al 2011). The impact of socio-economic determinants and health in New Zealand is set out below:

*“Most of these studies have tended to find higher rates of ill health among those socially and materially disadvantaged individuals, and these gaps (in relative terms at least) have widened in rich countries, including New Zealand.” (Pearce et al 2007: 348)*

*“Prevailing disease patterns largely reflect the socioeconomic conditions under which they live and poverty is a major contributor of ill health among Pacific families. It appears that the most important factors that adversely affect their health are low educational achievement and health literacy, high unemployment rates, crowded, cold and damp houses and inequities in access to and quality of health care provided.” (Tukuitonga 2013: 67)*

## **Settlement ‘Separation’ and Migrant Health**

Interestingly, some researchers (see for example, Borrows et al 2011) argue that those migrants willing to take a more ‘separator’ approach (such as invest in their culture and seek not to integrate as much) had better health outcomes compared to those migrants seeking to ‘fit in’. While the ‘separator’ approach may be viewed as providing migrants with some level of health protection, any support for this approach would be seen by some researchers (such as Gershon 2007; Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000; Haller et al 2011) as against the goal of integration and social cohesion.

## **Conclusion**

The literature review has highlighted the complex and multidimensional nature of the subject of settlement. This complexity was reflected in the lack of an internationally accepted definition or theoretical framework on what constitutes migrant settlement. There was broad

consensus among researchers that settlement is a process of adjustment that takes place between migrants and their respective host societies at a number of levels and over time (Fincher et al 1993; Burnett 1998; Colic-Peisker 2003). In the absence of an international standard of what it means for migrants to be settled, governmental administrations of western countries with inward migration have typically used broad politico-social policy settings to communicate and influence the nature of migrant settlement.

It was the discussion in the literature on the broad policy settings of western countries that underscored for me that migrants and refugees do not enter their new host countries in a vacuum. Rather, they enter and seek to settle in their new host country enveloped not only by the policy settings of the day, but the social attitudes of their host societies. Another key finding from the discussion in the literature was that political settings and social attitudes are not static, but can change over time as a result of external and internal influences. At the external level, perceptions of increased security risks, post-September 11, have led to increased policy interventions in many western countries aimed at managing immigration threats (Benson 2012). Internal factors including concerns about increased competition for resources by some migrant groups and perceptions of the diminution of indigenous people have been associated with the rise of xenophobia and the emergence of populist new-right parties (Veldhuis and Bakker 2009; Westin 2000; Bissoondath 1994; Strabac and Listhaug 2008; Minkenberg 2013; Rydgren 2010; Rydgren et al 2011; Spektorowski 2003).

Increased threats stemming from migrant separatism associated with increased incidences of ethnic violence and threats of home-made terrorism have led to questions being raised about the efficacy of policies designed to secure ethnic and cultural diversity or multiculturalism. Unlike the relative stability of policy settings in New Zealand towards migration and diversity, other western countries have not only changed their attitudes to immigration but also sought to more greatly influence how migrants go about their settlement. The discussion in the literature at the level of broad policy settings of host countries underscored the dynamic and fluid nature of host environments within which new migrants need to adapt to in order to successfully settle in their new country.

The discussion in this chapter also highlighted the development of a large body of research on the settlement experiences of migrant groups (including refugees). The identification of the recurring themes during this review underpinned the importance of certain settlement

influences, such as, employment, housing, language proficiency, and social networks. Of the many interesting findings discussed in this chapter, a number of key issues stood out for me due to the nature and insightfulness of the arguments put forward on settlement. One of these key insights was the importance, not only of human capital resources, but also of social capital in influencing labour market mobility and learning.

While strong ties in the form of family, friends and community links have long been established as having a critical role in supporting and assisting new migrants in their settlement (Burnett 1998; Fanjoy et al 2005; Beiser 2009; Simich et al 2003; Roizblatt et al 1996), the discussion among researchers on the benefits of weak ties is relatively new to the discussion on migrant settlement (Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000; Rose et al 1998; Liu 2013; Portes et al 1993, 2005). Weak ties, such as acquaintances and chance encounters have begun to be recognised not only in broadening social connectivity and therefore integration, but have come to increasingly recognise as ‘bridges’ in assisting migrants to connect with people they would otherwise not have been able to by being solely dependent on strong ties. While the discussion on the benefits of broader social connectivity has been made in relation to integration, drawing on the seminal work of Granovetter (1973, 1983), greater insights have been provided by researchers on just how such ties practically enhance settlement opportunities for migrants.

Another area of discussion in the literature that provided new insights on aspects of settlement was the issue of housing location. Although there is a rich literature on ethnic housing location in New Zealand and internationally (see for example, (see for example, Johnston et al 2008; Manley et al 2015; Kapoor 2013; Strait and Gong 2015; Grbic et al 2009), little is specifically known about the factors influencing the housing location of Kiribati migrants settled in New Zealand. What is known is that Pacific peoples are the most residentially segmented ethnic group in New Zealand (Manley et al 2015). In other international jurisdictions, for example, Europe and Scandinavia, the issue of ethnic housing concentration, whether by ‘choice’ or due to housing affordability constraints and/or discrimination, has begun to be viewed as posing threats to social cohesion and integration (Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007). While these concerns have not emerged in New Zealand, further research on migrant housing location would assist in broadening our understanding of the role of housing in settlement.

Finally, another insight pertinent to my field research was the impact of migration and settlement on migrant health. The issue of migrant health which occupies a large space in the literature on migrant settlement underpinned the two-way influences between migration and settlement. The broad view in the literature is that over time, through the process of acculturation, the health of migrants' declines to meet the standard of health of the host community (see for example, Borrows et al 2010; Schluter et al 2011; Ho et al 2003; Sobrun-Maharaj et al 2008; Prior et al 1971, 1981, 1987; Stanhope et al 1981; Gershon 2007; Renzaho et al 2013; Frisbie et al 2001; Fennelly 2007; McDonald et al 2004; Gushulak 2007; Hajat et al 2010).

Life style changes led by dietary change and less exercise and the social determinants of health have been credited for the decline of migrant health over the time of their settlement (Prior et al 1971, 1981, 1987; Stanhope et al 1981; Stillman et al 2013, 2007; Howden-Chapman 2012; Gushulak 2009; Renzaho et al 2003). In New Zealand research on the 'healthy migrant effect', the conclusion that Pacific migrants did not present any such 'effect' (Hajat et al 2010) was questioned given that all migrants (except for refugees) have to meet the standard of health specified in New Zealand immigration policy. Despite this, the findings of Hajat et al 2010) deserves further enquiry to further our understanding of how the process of acculturation impacts on certain migrant groups, particularly Pacific migrants.

Overall, the literature review had a profound effect in broadening my view on the complexities and intricacies of migrant settlement. By taking a broad approach which included examining the settlement experiences of migrants and refugees, the review enabled me to gain a greater level of knowledge on the web of influences that comprise migrant settlement.

# Chapter 4: Methodology and Methods

## Introduction

This chapter examines the literature on the appraisal of qualitative methodologies that I considered in relation to my thesis topic. The decision to embark on qualitative research for my thesis was based on my deep interest in understanding the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand, using their own words and points of views. Given the focus on gathering personal stories on settlement, including their feelings and emotions, I considered that qualitative rather than quantitative methodology was the most appropriate for my research. This chapter is thus focussed on the key characteristics of narrative theory, grounded theory, and constructivist grounded theory, which I concluded were the most pertinent to my intended research.

## Preferences and Assumptions

The literature on qualitative methodology and methods was one of the more complex features of this thesis. This complexity rose from the range of qualitative methodologies and the intricate debates that have shaped many of the methods that could have been chosen to analyse the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand. Another aspect of this journey was the fact that I came to the literature with my own set of views about how I wanted to collect the data and how to analyse it. The first of these preferences was to collect the data through face-to-face interviews and to analyse the data by grounding the emergence of any theoretical constructs in the data. A second preference was to immerse myself in the literature on settlement, prior to the field research, to gain an understanding of the main recurring themes defining settlement for voluntary migrants and refugees in New Zealand and internationally. Finally, I made the assumption that the stories and insights by participants about their settlement experiences would be a function of their own social constructions and that while some stories might contain similarities; others were likely to indicate significant points of difference.

## Qualitative Methodologies

An exploration of the literature on qualitative methodologies identified a considerable array of philosophical foundations underpinning qualitative research. According to Liamputong and Ezzy (2005) *methodology* is the principles underlying a particular research approach and *methods* are the ways of collecting data (Liamputong 2012: 6). An overview of the literature on methodology clearly showed that there are a considerable number of methodological approaches that have shaped qualitative research. Indeed, Patton (2002) has identified 16 methodologies that have underpinned qualitative research arising from a range of research disciplines (Patton 2002: 132-133). Some examples of these methodologies include: *ethnography* (arising from anthropology); *phenomenology* (philosophy); *heuristics* (humanistic psychology); *constructionism and constructivism* (sociology); *hermeneutics* (social psychology); *symbolic interactionism* (social psychology); *grounded theory* (social sciences); and *feminist inquiry* (sociology, political and cultural sciences) (Patton 2002: 81-140).

Reading of the literature led me to consider two possible methodologies for my research. The first was *narrative analysis* which would assist me to understand what participants' settlement stories revealed about them, their world including the life and culture that created these stories. The second was *constructivist grounded theory*, a variant of grounded theory that would assist me to examine what theory emerged that was grounded in the fieldwork while recognising the part that I played, as interviewer, in the co-creation of narrative texts and meaning (Charmez 2000: 510, 2014).

## Narrative Analysis

Given that my aim was to elicit the stories of participants about their settlement experiences, I considered it appropriate that I began the literature review on qualitative methodologies on the role of stories for recounting meaningful experiences. The use of stories as a way of expressing and sharing lived experiences had a particular resonance for me given that I often recalled my parents' migration and our family's settlement experiences in the form of a story. For me, the construction of my family's settlement story allowed me to recall the various components that shaped our experiences, starting with the decision of my parents to leave

Romania, to our family's early settlement experiences and our longer-term settlement outcomes. It is from this personal standpoint and my knowledge of Kiribati storytelling that I considered that there would be best in focussing my interactions with participants on the *steps* they took in their settlement journey (starting with their decision to migrate while still living in Kiribati, to their earliest settlement experiences in New Zealand, and their longer-term settlement outcomes).

According to Riesman (2003) narrative analysis refers to:

*“...a family of approaches to diverse kinds of texts, which have in common a storied form... What makes such diverse texts “narrative” is sequence and consequence: events are selected, organised, connected, and evaluated as meaningful for a particular audience. Storytellers interpret the world and experience in it; they sometimes create moral tales – how the world should be. Narratives represent storied ways of knowing and communicating... ” (Riesman 2003: 1)*

Going into further detail, Riesman (2008) and other researchers (see for example, Polkinghorne 2007; Lieblich et al 1998; Clandinin et al 2000; Franzosi 1998), note that stories are narratives that have sequential and temporal ordering including changes arising from particular circumstances and peoples' life experiences with their surrounding environment. Stories are usually recognised as having content, characters, plot, pace and a start, middle and an end. It is these features that are recognised in the term 'narrate', which is derived from the act of 'telling' (narrare) and 'knowing in some particular way' (gnarus) (Bruner 2002: 27). In other words, one way of structuring interwoven experiences is to organise them into meaningful units such as a story, a narrative (Moen 2006: 2). Franzosi (1998) concludes:

*“Without a story there is no narrative.” (Franzosi 1998: 520)*

Aiming to elicit the settlement stories of Kiribati migrants, I was reminded that over the ages there have been many media for the recollection of stories, beginning with ancient cave drawings depicting life many thousands of years ago (Moen 2006). Other mediums have included: the development of ancient scripts, jewellery, folk lore and fairy tales, poetry, theatre, oral and written discourse going back to the time of the ancient Greek philosophers

such as Aristotle and Plato (Moen 2006; Franzosi 1998). More recently, stories have been represented in a wide range of other mediums such as films, books, autobiographies, interviews and the popular use of modern mediums such as emails and Facebook. For I-Kiribati, oral storytelling is a key part of the cultural identities of Kiribati families, who are the custodian of family traditions, spiritual practices and cultural identity. Irrespective of how stories are told, a common view among many researchers of narrative analysis agree that stories have an important role in providing valuable insights into the meanings that people attribute to life events (see for example, Polkinghorne 2007; Riessman 2003, 2008; Moen 2006).

Examining different ways of undertaking narrative analysis, Riesman (2003) identifies four contemporary approaches suited to the study of oral narratives. The first of these approaches is the use of ‘thematic analysis’ which allows researchers to group themes into categories that can be used to develop theoretical concepts or hypothesis, which in turn can be used for the development of a theory. Although consistent with the key analytical tenets of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978, 1992; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1994, 1997, 1998; Strauss 1987), a major constraint of ‘thematic analysis’ identified by Riesman (2003), and by Charmez (2000, 2006, 2014), in the development of constructivist grounded theory, is the lack of understanding of the role of the interviewer in the construction of narratives from which such themes emerge.

A second typology of narrative analysis is referred to as ‘structural analysis’ which is focussed on “*...the way a story is told.*” (Riesman 2003: 2). Detailed analysis of the how narratives are structured can according to Riesman (2003) build theories relating to language and meaning. Although highly interesting, ‘structural analysis’ was considered to be outside the scope of what I was seeking to achieve in this thesis. The third typology referred to as ‘interactional analysis’, which is focused on the process of dialogue between the interviewer and respondent, aims to elicit stories, recognised “*...as a process of co-construction, where the teller and listener create meaning collaboratively.*” (Riesman 2003: 4). As with constructivist grounded theory (Charmez 2000, 2014), while it was important to acknowledge that I, as the interviewer, had a role in the ‘co-construction’ of meaning, the focus of the analytical process for my thesis was less on examining the process of dialogue, and more on the results of that dialogue.

The fourth typology of narrative analysis, referred to as ‘performative analysis’ (Riesman 2003), is defined at an analytical process where:

*“...interest goes beyond the spoken word and, as the stage metaphor implies, storytelling is seen as performance – by a “self” with a past – who involves, persuades, and (perhaps) moves an audience through language and gesture, “doing” rather than telling alone.” (Riesman 2003: 5)*

Aimed more at understanding the power of persuasion through the art of storytelling, this approach was not my focus of analysing the stories told by participants, other than acknowledging the expression of emotions and feelings related to certain themes.

Overall, understanding how narrative analysis can be used to scrutinise stories was highly relevant in thinking through what I was seeking to focus on in my field work. It also led me to appreciate the links between narrative analysis and other qualitative methodologies, such as grounded theory and constructivist grounded theory particularly in relation to the analysis of themes in narratives and the part that the interviewer has in the construction of meaning. Important also was sharing an insight of researchers involved in qualitative analysis (for example, Polkinghorne 2007; Riesman 2003; Lieblich et al 1998; Moen 2006; Charmez 2000, 2006, 2014) that narratives such as stories should not be treated as either fact or fiction. This took away a significant level of my anxiety about the realism of participants’ settlement stories, understanding that stories are commonly constructed around core facts and life events, allowing for a wide freedom of individual expression and creativity, including the selection to, emphasis on, and interpretation of peoples’ remembered facts (Polkinghorne 2007).

## **The Evolution of Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory methodology refers to a group of methods (including inductive and deductive methods) that designates that any theoretical construct has to be grounded in the evidence obtained through the empirical research process (see for example, Glaser and Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss and Corbin 1997; Charmez 2000). Developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the grounded theory methodology refers to a process of analysis that

enables theoretical constructs or hypotheses to emerge from the data, which can then be used to develop a theory. While this methodology has been attributed to the seminal work of Glaser and Strauss (1967) some researchers (see for example, Charmez 2000, 2006, 2011; Heath et al 2004; Thomas 2006; Patton 2002), have further linked the development of grounded theory with the thinking underpinning symbolic interactionism, which postulates that social interactions create meaning.

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), the aim of grounded theory is for issues of importance to participants to emerge and be analysed, and that by coding these data into categories of meanings and the integration of those categories into concepts, theory can emerge (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 41). Examining the literature on qualitative research, it was unsurprising to discover the large number of researchers (Charmez 2000, 2011; Heath and Cowly 2004; Mills et al 2006; Patton 2002; Key 1999; Thomas 2006) who have credited the approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967) as being revolutionary (in its time) by challenging the prejudices about the ability of qualitative research to contribute to theory development.

Despite being revolutionary in its time, the literature on qualitative research (Charmez 2000, 2014; Moen 2006) notes that the development of grounded theory has been characterised by differences and debates, particularly between those credited for the development of grounded theory, Glaser (1978, 1992, 2001) and Strauss (1987) and Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1994, 1998). An example, of these differences was the role of literature in research using grounded theory. In contrast to Glaser (1992, 1998) who argued against researchers undertaking a literature review for fear of contaminating, inhibiting, interfering or impeding the analysis of emergent issues in the data (Glaser 1992:131), Strauss and Corbin (1998) argued in favour of research engaging with the literature from the beginning of the research process. Their view was that the interweaving of the literature throughout the research process allowed another *voice* to contribute to the construction of theory. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998) a key benefit of the literature is its ability to:

*“...stimulate our thinking about properties and dimensions that we can use to examine the data in front of us.” (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 45)*

In response, Glaser (1992, 1998) having argued that the data should speak for itself with no outside influences, criticised the stance of Strauss and Corbin (1998) as being akin to

conceptual description rather than grounded theory and that the purpose of grounded theory was to generate theory, not verify it. The differences of views set out in this section is not intended to infer a '*right*' or '*wrong*' approach but, rather, that there is a need for researchers, such as myself, to understand the genesis of these arguments and to recognise the limitations of the different approaches.

Notwithstanding the differences on the role of literature, the different permutations of grounded theory that have emerged over time, have tended to comprise a common set of characteristics (Mills et al 2006: 27), such as the use of theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, constant comparative methods, coding, development of categories, and the emergence of theoretical constructs (all discussed later in this chapter)

### **Constructivist Grounded Theory**

One important permutation of grounded theory developed by Charmez (2000, 2006, 2008; 2014) is constructivist grounded theory. While sharing some of the key characteristics of grounded theory (that categories, concepts and theoretical constructs must be grounded in the data), the focus of constructivist grounded theory on understanding the meaning of peoples' lived experiences was of particular importance to me. Unlike, some proponents of grounded theory (such as Glaser 1992, 1998; Strauss and Corbin 1998), who have argued for the need to achieve '*objectivity*', the emphasis on '*meaning*' rather than the '*truth*' (as argued by Charmez 2000, 2006, 2014), reflected the essence of what I was seeking to achieve through this research.

Reflecting on my personal experiences, as a child of a migrant family, I recognised that my own story was a construction of many voices, interpretations and reinterpretations throughout my life, and a product of my interactions with my social and cultural environments. In developing the constructivist grounded theory approach Charmez (2000) has argued that:

*"We can claim only to have interpreted a reality, as we understood both our own experience and our subjects' portrayals of theirs." (Charmez 2000: 523)*

*“...multiple voices, views, and visions in their rendering of lived experiences.”*  
*(Charmez 2000: 524)*

The implications of these principles within constructivist grounded theory for my research were not just about understanding the actions participants undertook during their settlement (such as finding employment), but why they took those actions and what those experiences meant to them. To achieve this, required me to think carefully about my interactions with participants and how I should structure the interviews (described in detail in Chapter Five). According to Charmez (2000, 2014), seeking the meanings of peoples’ lived experiences, requires the researcher to go further than simply the surface meaning or presumed meanings and look for views and values as well as acts and facts. Charmez (2000) further argues that by studying tacit meanings, researchers are able to clarify participants’ views about their reality. To do this, Charmez (2000, 2014) advises researchers to build a relationship with participants which enable participants to tell their stories on their own terms. To achieve this, researchers are counselled to listen to the stories of participants with openness to both their feelings and experiences (Charmez 2000: 525).

At the analytical stage, Charmez (2000) argues that researchers need to immerse themselves in the data in a way that the narratives of participants are reflected in the coding language and helps:

*“...to keep that life in the foreground...”* (Charmez 2000: 526).

Consistent with the grounded theory approach, Charmez (2000, 2014) notes the importance of researchers staying close to participants by keeping their words intact throughout the analytical process and routinely viewing the data afresh as new ideas are developed. Furthermore, Charmez (2000) notes that researchers can code and recode data numerous times and that posing new questions can result in new analytical points coming to the fore. In addition, not only can researchers go back and forth between the data and the drafts many times, but they can go back to participants to clarify or seek further information.

Irrespective of which method of grounded theory is utilised (including constructivist grounded theory), the essence of research using these methods is that theoretical findings are grounded in the words and ideas of those interviewed. This means not only exploring for

commonalities and differences in the data, but developing theoretical concepts and a theory through inductive reasoning (see for example, Charmez 2000; Glaser 1978, 1992, 2001; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1994, 1998; Strauss 1987; Walker and Myrick 2006; Polkinghorne 2007; Thomas 2006; Moen 2006; Feldman et al 2004; Mills et al 2006).

## Interviews

The literature on narrative analysis, grounded theory, and constructivist grounded theory notes that interviews are a common method for gathering data from participants (see for example, Riesman 2003, 2008; Patton 2002; Polkinghorne 2007; Moen 2006; Franzosi 1998). A key maxim across all these qualitative methodologies is that interviews represent a dialogue or discourse between the interviewer and the participant. In narrative analysis and constructivist grounded theory, this maxim is further broadened to include the interactive dialogue and sharing of information between the interviewer and the participant, and that narrative texts are generated by processes which are, in reality, a ‘co-creation’ or ‘co-construction’ between the interviewer and the participant (Riesman 2008; Charmez 2000, 2014).

The view by Charmez (2000, 2014) that narratives from interviews are ‘co-constructed’ by the interviewer and participant reflects considerable debate in grounded theory methodology about the objectivity and subjectivity of interviewers seeking to gather data from participants through the interview process. At one end of the spectrum, Schwandt (2000) has argued that interviewers have the capacity to rise above their own world-views and ‘objectively’ record and interpret the meaningful experiences of participants. At the other end of the spectrum, other researchers such as Charmez (2000, 2014) and Polkinghorne (2007) have strenuously argued that texts cannot be objectively interpreted by interviewers given that researchers invariably approach the interpretations of texts from with their own personal circumstances and experiences.

While these divergent views are difficult to reconcile, Polkinghorne argues the importance of researchers disclosing the approach that informs their data gathering and interpretative processes. As noted in my personal statement, my personal experiences and strong associations with the Wellington Kiribati Community over the past 28 years have, in my

view, influenced how I view the settlement of migrants, and in particular, the settlement of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. Importantly, these experiences influenced the selection of my research topic in my desire to build knowledge on the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants as they tell them. My personal experiences also influenced how I went about in recruiting participants and how I set and conducted my interviews, and is set out in detail in Chapter Five.

On how the personal experiences of interviewers influence data collection, Fontana and Fry (2000) note:

*"Ethnographers have realized for quite some time that researchers, are not invisible, neutral entities; rather they are part of the interactions they seek to study and influence those interactions...Interviewers are increasingly seen as active participants in interactions with respondents, and interviews are seen as negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents that are shaped by the contexts and situations in which they take place. (Fontana and Fry 2000: 663)*

Examining the literature on grounded theory, it became apparent that many researchers teaching in the area have sought to advise new researchers about important techniques in conducting interviews (see for example, Sellitz 1965; Polkinghorne 2007; Riessman 1993, 2005; Charmez 2000, 2006; Moen 2006; Thomas 2006). Much of the advice from these researchers has centred on the importance of interviewers making sure that the interview environment generates a comfortable setting for the participant and the interviewer. In the early work of Sellitz (1965), advice on how to go about undertaking interviews included:

*"The interviewer's manner should be friendly, conversational and unbiased... Above all, an informal, conversational interview is dependent upon a thorough mastery by the interviewer of the actual questions in his schedule. He should be familiar enough with them to ask them conversationally..." (Sellitz 1965: 576)*

Consistent with the research advice put forward by Sellitz (1965), Polkinghorne (2007) advises the importance of interviewers having a non-judgement attitude to participants and the information gathered from participants. This advice is based on the view that participants are more likely to share meaningful experiences if they believed that the interviewer was

open to accept their felt meanings without judgement (Polkinghorne 2007: 12). To assist in this process, Charmez (2014) highlights the importance of researchers paying attention to language and discourse and that by doing so participants are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences during their interview in useful ways for advancing theory construction (Charmez 2014: 95).

At the same time, given the range of methods under grounded theory methodology, Charmez (2014) notes that:

*“The focus of the interview and the specific questions asked will likely differ depending on whether the interviewer adopts a more constructivist or objectivist approach. A constructivist would emphasize eliciting the participant’s definitions of terms, situations, and events and try to tap his or her assumptions, implicit meanings, and tacit rules. An objectivist would be concerned with obtaining information about chronology, events, and problems that the participant seeks to resolve.”* (Charmez 2014: 95)

Although the details of how I went about interviewing participants for this thesis are set out in detail in the next chapter, within the background of the literature review on grounded theory and approaches to interviews, a key consideration for me was making sure that my interviews were founded on respect for the Kiribati culture and language. My view was to provide a welcoming environment based on Kiribati cultural attributes that allowed for participants to share their stories and emotions at their own pace. In keeping with these cultural considerations, including respect for the Kiribati language, I believed it appropriate to that participants be offered the choice to speaking in English or in Kiribati (with the assistance of a translator as required).

## Coding

According to Charmez (2000, 2014) the first analytical step in grounded theory comprises of coding which seeks to ask analytical questions of the data gathered. This is explained further by Charmez (2014):

*“These questions not only further our understanding of studied life but also help us direct subsequent data-gathering toward the analytical issues we are defining.”*

*Grounded theory coding consists of at least two phases: initial....and focused coding (Charmez 2014: 109)*

In the initial phase, fragments of data collected from participants are assessed for their analytical importance and coded into groups of text or categories. Closely studying the data is often referred to as ‘interrogating the data’ which means taking the data ‘apart’ and examining how these data are constituted (Charmez 2014: 113; Glaser and Strauss 1967, Glaser 1978, Strauss and Corbin 1990). According to Thomas (2006), an important feature of this process is to identify and group similar statements together under a common code using participants’ own wording, so that the key themes can be identified (Thomas 2006: 242).

Through this coding process, Charmez (2014) argues that:

*“...you define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it means. The codes take form together as elements of a nascent theory.” (Charmez 2014: 113)*

At the next level of coding, referred to by Charmez (2014) as ‘focussed’ coding, researchers are expected under grounded theory to be:

*“...concentrating on what your initial codes say and the comparisons you make with and between them.” (Charmez 2014: 140)*

It is at this level in the coding process that codes are examined in relation to each other and theoretical concepts emerge (Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998; Charmez 2014). As an iterative and comparative method of inquiry, this grounded theory approach enables researchers to go back and forth between the data and the drafts, including going back to participants to clarify points of view and to elicit a greater understanding of the meaning of texts. Through this process, new ideas can emerge generating new questions and further follow-up inquiry with participants (Charmez 2014). To assist with the coding process, electronic software has been developed to assist researchers interrogate their data (for example, NVivo). While I considered using this software, a number of unique features of this research (particularly the mix of English and Kiribati language), and Kiribati cultural nuances, led me to undertake the analysis myself, without the aid of the electronic software programmes.

Another deliberation relating to the focussed part of the coding process is to consider how much complexity to introduce in order to convey the meaning of texts with depth and clarity, and at what point does collapsing categories that have emerged from the data result in conceptual muddiness and oversimplification. Saldaña (2009) discusses the benefits and risks associated with “splitting” and “lumping” of data arguing that:

*“Lumping gets to the essence of categorising a phenomenon while splitting encourages careful scrutiny of social action represented in the data.” (Saldaña 2009: 20)*

At the same time Saldaña (2009) notes some of the downsides of both approaches:

*“Lumping may lead to a superficial analysis if the coder does not employ conceptual words and phrases while fine-grained splitting of data can overwhelm the analyst, when it comes to categorising the data.” (Saldaña 2009: 20)*

The reflections of Saldaña (2009) (also posited in research by Polkinghorne 2007; Charmez 2014; and Thomas 2006) serves as useful reminder of the balance between complexity and simplicity in conveying the key meanings of participants in grounded theory research. Overall, researchers such as Charmez (2014), Moen 2006, Thomas 2006, Polkinghorne 2007, point to the importance of researchers conducting grounded theory analysis to undertake an iterative approach by immersing themselves in the data while at the same time, reflecting on the data from an analytical distance in order to gain a better understanding of what is being conveyed by the data.

## **Symbolic Interactionism**

Underpinning constructivist grounded theory is the theoretical perspective referred to as symbolic interactionism (see for example, Fidishun 2002; Charmez 2000, 2006, 2014, Thomas 2006). A major theoretical perspective in sociology, symbolic interactionism signifies that experienced meanings arise from the interactions between people and their environment and that:

*“Collecting data in the natural field gives an opportunity for the researcher to understand experiences and behaviours of human beings as they understand them, to learn more about their world, discover their interpretation of self in interactions, and share their definitions of their worlds...” (Aldiabat and Le Navenec 2011: 1071)*

Reviewing research on symbolic interactionism, Aldiabat and Le Navenec (2011), identify seven assumptions underpinning the philosophy of symbolic interactionism. They are that: humans live in a symbolic world of learned meanings; humans act toward things on the basis of meanings that things have for them; meanings arise in the process of interaction between people; meanings are handled and modified through the interpretative process; the self is a social construct that develops through social interaction with others; and self-concept (or self-interaction) provides a motive for behaviour (Aldiabat and Le Navenec 2011: 1070).

According to Aldiabat Le Navenec (2011), Fidishun (2002), and Charmez (2014), these assumptions about human behaviour underpin how individuals define their own reality. Using the tenets of symbolic interactionism as a foundation, the aim of the constructivist grounded theory is to analyse the meaning of the participants’ narratives and their interactions with their environment. In this thesis, the meanings of these narratives are examined against their experiences with their environment in Kiribati and against their new environment in New Zealand.

## **Constant Comparative Method**

The constant comparative method refers to the constant comparison of data across people, time, incident, and category and between categories. By using a systematic process of constant comparison, the aim is to intimately know and test the data to assist in the development of theoretical concepts and ultimately, if possible, the development of a theory. Although it was unclear at the outset whether the data gathered would lead to the development of a theoretical model on the settlement of migrants and their families living in New Zealand, the aim was to develop a set of theoretical constructs that could be assessed against the literature and used to develop a theory.

## Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling refers to accessing and collecting relevant data in an area of theoretical interest. Charmez (2000) notes that as categories are developed and refined, it is likely that we will find gaps in the data and in the themes (Charmez 2000: 519). These gaps require researchers to go back to the field and collect additional data to fill those conceptual gaps and to clarify ideas. The objective of this sampling is:

*“...to refine ideas, not to increase the size of the original sample.” (Charmez 2000: 519)*

This process of refining theoretical concepts is recognised in grounded theory methodology as a pivotal part in the emergence of formal theory (Charmez 2000, 2014; Polkinghorne 2007; Thomas 2006). It also highlights a common view in the literature that researchers cannot produce a solid grounded theory through:

*“...one-shot interviewing in a single data collection phase.” (Charmez 2000: 519)*

Rather, according to Charmez (2000) theoretical sampling demands that researchers have completed the work of comparing data with data and the development of a provisional set of relevant categories for explaining data. In turn:

*“...our categories take us back to the field to gain more insight about when, how, and to what extent they are pertinent and useful.” (Charmez 2000: 519)*

As noted in Chapter Five, my research design involved my ability to return back to the field and undertake repeated interviews.

## Theoretical Sensitivity

Theoretical sensitivity in grounded theory refers to having an understanding of the importance of the data by immersion in the data (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Although theoretical sensitivity can be encouraged through the reading of relevant literature and by

personal and professional experiences, the grounded theory literature recommends that researchers keep a level of open-mindedness and flexibility to gain a sound understanding of the data (see for example, Dey 1999). One complexity in achieving theoretical sensitivity is the ability to use the knowledge gained from the wider literature without allowing it predetermine the final result (Dey 1999). This can only be achieved by researchers immersing themselves in the data, which in the case of this thesis, meant listening to the voices of Kiribati migrants and recognising what settlement issues were important to them and their families through their stories of settlement.

## Memos

Grounded theory literature highlights the value of using memos throughout the data gathering and analytical stages of research (see for example, Thomas 2006; Moen 2006; Polkinghorne 2007; Charmez 2000; Patton 2002). In this view, memos are considered as having a number of practical uses during the different stages of grounded theory research. At the data gathering stage, memos can be used to reflect on the interviews including points of emphasis including what was excluded. They can also be used to identify relationships between various emerging themes and to identify areas for further investigation.

At the analytical stage, memos can be used to raise issues to a conceptual level (see for example, Charmez 2000; Thomas 2006; Patton 2002). These memos can include drawings setting out logical reasoning and other analytical thoughts particularly in relation to emergence of theoretical concepts. They can also be used to raise analytical questions and hypotheses including initial thoughts on the relational influences among concepts (Charmez 2000: 513). Put simply, memos are a useful tool for capturing ‘reflective’ thought that can be used to assist in the formation of theory.

## Writing

Charmez (2000, 2006) goes further than many other academic researchers to suggest how research findings should be written. As a first step, Charmez (2000, 2006) notes the importance of researchers’ knowing their intended audience (Charmez 2000: 526), advising

researchers to think of the *rhythm* and *timing* in writing. Charmez (2000) argues in favour of writing about participants to be placed in the *past* given that events described took place in the past (Charmez 2000: 527). Within the constructivist grounded theory world-view written images are viewed as portraying the tone the writer takes towards the topic including reflecting the writer's relationship with participants (see Charmez 2000: 528).

Also writing in this area, Saldaña (2009) also offers some sage advice about the nature of writing:

*"An experienced writer knows that he or she cannot write about everything he or she has seen or heard, and also realises that writing is a multiple-level process that begins the moment the writer enters the field and starts writing fieldnotes."* (Saldaña 2009: 293)

## Conclusion

Overall, any one of the qualitative methodologies discussed could have provided a means for gathering and analysing the data on the settlement experiences of participants and their families. Two key considerations led me to use narrative analysis and constructivist grounded theory for understanding the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. The first was my wish to capture the settlement stories of participants. The second was my aim to gather the meanings of participants' lived settlement experiences, in the knowledge also, that each participant and me brought together our own meanings in the co-construction of the narrative texts on settlement.

Four principles underpinning constructivist grounded theory (Charmez 2000, 2014) were particularly valuable in guiding my research. The first was that the researcher can only claim to have *interpreted a reality*, both from their own experiences and participants' portrayal of theirs. Second, in the schema of peoples' meaning recollections, *there is no single truth*, and only an image of reality can be constructed, not reality. Third, there are *multiple voices*, views and visions of lived experiences, and fourth, the emergence of any *theoretical constructs must be grounded in the evidence*, that is, the data.

# **Chapter 5: Data Collection**

## **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the sampling framework and inclusion criteria used to identify the purposive sample for my research. It also sets out in detail the processes used to gather data from participants about their settlement experiences in New Zealand. Among other things, the chapter discusses how I set about to create a welcoming environment for participants to be interviewed centred on Kiribati social and cultural values and customs to enable participants to feel comfortable in telling their settlement stories. The chapter identifies how my personal relationship with the Wellington Kiribati Community, contributed to my ‘insider’/‘outsider’ status, and how that status assisted my ability to gather rich data on the meaning of participants’ lived settlement experiences, including insights on areas of similarities and differences.

## **Setting: Kiribati Population in New Zealand**

The 2013 Census identified that the Kiribati ethnic group comprised of 2,115 people living in New Zealand, an increase of 89.5 percent since 2006 (Statistics New Zealand). Of this group, 93 percent lived in the North Island, with 75.6 percent of those living in main urban centres (populations of 30,000 or more). The most common regions to live were the Auckland region (45 percent), followed by the Waikato region (17.9 percent) and the Wellington region (13.9 percent). The 2013 Census confirmed that the Kiribati ethnic group is largely a migrant group with 67.2 percent being born overseas and 32.8 percent born in New Zealand. Of those born overseas, 36.3 percent had arrived in New Zealand less than five years ago, compared with 52.8 percent in 2006 (Statistics New Zealand 2014).

Consistent with the profile of the Pacific ethnic group living in New Zealand, the Kiribati ethnic group was identified as being significantly younger than the New Zealand population, see Table 2 below.

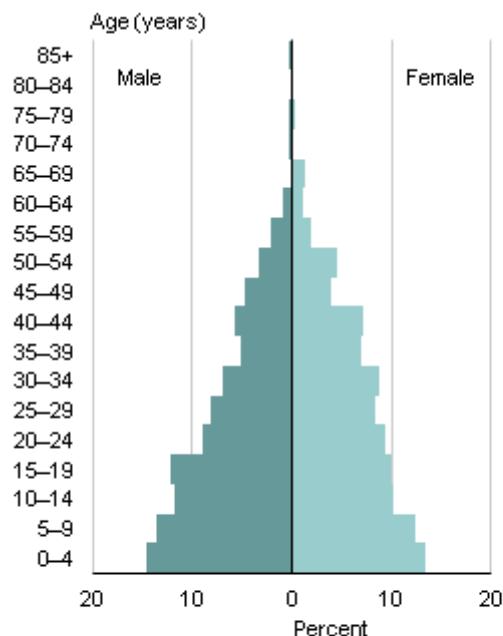
**Table 2: Age Group Kiribati, Pacific Peoples ethnic groups, and New Zealand Population in 2006 and 2013**

Age Group Years	2006 Census Kiribati	2013 Census Kiribati	2006 Census Pacific	2013 Census Pacific	2006 Census Total NZ	2013 Census Total NZ
Under 15	38.7	37.9	37.7	35.7	21.5	20.4
15-29	27.2	28.7	25.3	25.9	20.2	19.9
30-64	32.3	32.3	33.2	33.8	46.0	45.4
65 + over	2.2	1.3	3.8	4.7	12.3	14.3

(Source: Statistics New Zealand 2014)

The 2006 and 2013 Censuses (Statistics New Zealand 2014) confirm the young demographic profile of the Kiribati ethnic group in New Zealand relative to other Pacific Peoples ethnic groups, and relative to the New Zealand population. This is further exemplified in Figure 3 setting out age group and sex of the Kiribati population in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand 2014).

**Figure 3 Age group and sex of Kiribati ethnic group in 2013**



Note: Some percentages may be too small to show on graph.  
Source: Statistics New Zealand

(Source: Statistics New Zealand 2014)

Other important aspects of the socio-economic profile of the Kiribati ethnic group living in New Zealand included 22.3 percent of the adult Kiribati population had no formal educational qualification and 11.8 percent identified themselves as unemployed. Of those employed, the most common occupations were labourers (35.8 percent, community and personal service workers (18.1 percent), and professionals (12.6 percent). Men were most likely to be employed as labourers and women as community and personal services workers and labourers.

The 2013 Census also showed that the Kiribati ethnic group experienced relatively low incomes, with 56.0 percent of those aged 18 years receiving an annual income of \$20,000 or less. The median income (half received less and half received more income) was \$14,700, down from \$18,000 in 2006 (Statistics New Zealand 2014). While the median income for men was \$22,100, the median income for women was \$10,500). Interestingly, those born in New Zealand had a median income of \$17,100, compared with \$14,000 for those born overseas.

## **Sampling Frame**

Given the aim of this research was to analyse the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand, the sampling frame related to those within the Kiribati ethnic group who had migrated to live in New Zealand rather than those born in New Zealand. Of the 1401 I-Kiribati identified as being born overseas in the 2013 Census, the 86.9 percent identified as having been born in Kiribati (1217 people), were those identified as comprising the sampling frame.

## **Inclusions**

A number of inclusions were identified to find the purposive sample for this research. With the emphasis of the research being on the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants, a key inclusion was for the sample to comprise of Kiribati people who entered New Zealand on a Kiribati passport and had migrated to New Zealand from Kiribati, rather than a third country. The reason for this was to identify the settlement experiences of Kiribati citizens who had

migrated from Kiribati to New Zealand. Also with the focus on settlement, another important inclusion was for those in the sample to have gained permanent residence rather than be on temporary visas (such as visitor, student, work, or seasonal work visas). Another important consideration was to include those Kiribati migrants with permanent residence who had lived in New Zealand less than ten years. While this could have been set close to five years (to capture a sense of newness to a new host country), the evidence from the literature that settlement could involve a much longer process (even potentially life-long), led me to consider a longer settlement timeline of ten years (see for example, Burnett 1998; Haller et al 2011).

As a point of clarification, while the PAC has been shown to have had a considerable impact on the number of Kiribati migrants entering and gaining permanent residence to live in New Zealand, for the purposes of this research the term migrant is inclusive not only of the PAC but of other immigration categories (such as skilled, business, family). Finally, another important inclusion to analyse the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families, was for the sample to comprise of adult families with children. Adults for the purposes of this research were Kiribati individuals aged 18 years and over. The inclusion of children was designed to make sure that this research captured the fuller depiction of complexities associated with the settlement of Kiribati families.

With those inclusions identified, another important consideration was identifying the geographical focus for my research. Identifying the geographical focus was clearly dependent on how I sought to conduct my research. While a wide geographical spread might have been appropriate for conducting the research using computer based interviews, including the use of the Kiribati intranet community, I was mindful that not all Kiribati families might own or have access to a computer or enjoyed using such a medium. Another approach could have been to conduct face-to-face interviews across a wide geographical range of locations. This approach was also discounted on the basis of the vast distances that would constrain my ability to go back to participants to dig deeper, seek clarification and pursue other emerging issues in a timely manner. Given these complexities, (outreach and connectivity), I considered that the most appropriate approach was to identify a purposive sample that allowed ease of contact to conduct in-depth face-to-face interviews with the ability to personally go back to participants as and when required. To that end, I decided that

the purposive sample would come from those Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand, in line with the inclusions discussed above, living in the wider-Wellington and wider-Kapiti regions.

## Purposive Sample

To summarise the discussion above, the purposive sample was identified as consisting of those who are:

- Adults, aged 18 years or older, with one or more dependent children; and who
- Migrated to New Zealand as a Kiribati citizen; and who
- Migrated to New Zealand from Kiribati; and who
- Granted permanent residence to live in New Zealand; and who
- Lived in New Zealand for less than ten years (including any time spent in New Zealand prior to gaining their permanent residence status); and who
- Reside in the wider-Wellington and wider-Kapiti regions

With the assistance of members of the Wellington Kiribati Community (WKC), the formal body representing Kiribati families living in the wider-Wellington and wider-Kapiti regions, a group of 25 families was identified as meeting the criteria for the purposive sample. Initial information about these families (from members of the WKC), indicated that the group reflected a significant level of diversity, particularly in relation to the size and structure of families, employment experiences, language proficiency, and housing. The objective was to interview an adult from each family within this group about their settlement experiences, and continue to add new informants until the issues raised became repetitive and no new further issues emerged.

The aim was to interview approximately an equal number of men and women, with the ability to go back to the families comprising this group if this balance could not be achieved in the first instance. As noted previously, a significant benefit of the geographical spread of this group was the ability to conduct face-to-face interviews and go back to participants to dig deeper and clarify issues, as required. Having identified the purposive sample, the next step in the process was to develop a communications strategy to inform those families selected in the sample and invite them to participate.

## **Development of Information for Circulation**

As set out in the ethics paper, approved in December 2012, a pivotal part of the strategy was the development of an Information Sheet (see Appendix 1) to inform those families in the purposive sample of the intent of the research and to invite them to participate. A critical component of the information was to highlight that participation in the research was entirely voluntary and that there would be no disadvantage to any family, if they chose not to participate. Another important aspect of the information was to communicate the rights of participants choosing to participate and that every effort would be made to treat all information in a private and confidential manner.

The information sheet developed also identified that participation in the research would be in the form of face-to-face interviews that would be recorded and that my husband would be accompanying me to assist with any translation as required. With the aim of providing as much information as possible to families within the purposive sample, the open-ended questions intended to be used were included in the Information Sheet. These questions asked about expectations formed about life in New Zealand, their initial settlement experiences and longer-term settlement experiences.

Given differing levels of English language proficiency and, as a means of showing respect to the Kiribati culture, it was considered vital from the outset to have the Information Sheet translated into the Kiribati language. The aim was to identify a suitable person to undertake the translation, particularly someone who had the skills in communicating complex issues related to climate change and settlement in an easily understood manner. While a small number of members of the WKC were identified as having the skills to translate the Information Sheet, it was considered prudent to have someone outside this community to take on the task. This reasoning was based on the need to manage the risk of being seen to favour one person over another that could result in inadvertently offending some members of the Kiribati community, of which I am also a member.

Whilst deliberating on this issue with my husband, it became apparent that a distinguished and highly regarded visitor from Kiribati holidaying in New Zealand would be most suitable for this task. Not only did this person have a high level of English language proficiency but also had a great deal of experience in communicating across all Kiribati population groups

both in Kiribati and in New Zealand. It was also known that this person had a significant interest in how environmental impacts were beginning to impact on the daily lives of villagers living in the outer islands of Kiribati. When he was visiting our home over the Christmas holidays I took the opportunity to ask whether he would be willing to translate the Information Sheet. After reading the Information Sheet, he agreed to undertake the translation which was completed over a two day period. A high level of praise from members of the community regarding the quality of the language and the clarity of the text was testimony of the high standard of the translation (see Appendix 2).

## **Distribution of Information**

To assist in building co-operative relations between the Wellington Kiribati Community and the research, the acting President of the WKC was personally informed about the aim and methodology of the research. At the end of the briefing, the acting President was asked whether she would be willing to assist me to distribute the Information Sheet and to encourage those families meeting the criteria to participate in the research. While the primary aim was to communicate to those families comprising the purposive sample, I considered it prudent that this distribution be widened to encompass all Kiribati families living in the wider-Wellington and Kapiti regions. The rationale for this approach was that there was a wider public interest in this topic given that relationship between climate change and settlement was likely to affect all community members, not only those participating in the research.

In agreement with this approach, the acting President of the WKC distributed the translated Information Sheet on 16 February 2013 to all Kiribati families living in wider-Wellington and Kapiti regions recorded on the WKC database (beyond the selected sample). The email accompanying the Sheet, noted that Kiribati families meeting the criteria could expect to receive a call from me to invite them to be interviewed as part of the research. This communication was followed by a personal email from me thanking the acting President of WKC for her support and inviting those families meeting the criteria to get in contact with me directly, either my email, phone or in person to arrange for their participation.

Throughout this process, a number of Kiribati families took the time to contact me to inform me of their support for me personally and for the research. They also took the opportunity to comment favourably on the quality of the translated Information Sheet. Unfortunately a number of those who identified themselves as willing to participate (mainly women), fell outside the scope of the criteria, by virtue of the length of time of their settlement and their place of residence. Whether meeting the criteria or not, all who contacted me were thanked for their support and their willingness to participate in the research. Those meeting the criteria were informed that I would get back to them to arrange a suitable time for the interview.

This initial positive response was largely dominated by I-Kiribati women from the community who knew me well. On the whole, Kiribati men appeared much more reluctant to come forward to offer their support or indicate a willingness to participate in the research. Rather than approaching me directly, most men took the opportunity in social settings to offer their support of my research to my husband. Those that approached my husband were asked by him whether they would consider taking part in the research. While many indicated a willingness to participate, many highlighted their lower English language proficiency as constraining their ability to be interviewed. These language concerns were allayed by my husband, who informed them that he would accompany me during the interviews to assist with any translation required by participants. In addition, any cultural concerns, relating to men being alone with me during the interviews were also dealt with at the same time.

Regrettably, these initial positive responses led me to mistakenly assume that getting participants to be interviewed would be relatively straightforward. Rather, it became apparent that a new approach, ‘cold-calling’, needed to be implemented to increase the number of Kiribati migrants to participate in this research. My cold-calling efforts led a further two women willing to participate in the research. A number of other women approached declined my invitation to participate, citing significant time constraints due to work and family commitments. Regrettably, my own shyness stood in the way of getting in touch with those Kiribati families I had previously not met and approaching I-Kiribati men that I did not know well. This situation led me to conclude that I needed my husband’s assistance to cold-call within the group of 25 households initially identified, to invite families to participate in the research. These efforts increased the number of participants from seven

to fourteen who agreed to be interviewed for the purposes of this research, for which I was very grateful.

## Setting interviews in a Normal Family Setting

Supported by the constructivist grounded theory approach (as set out by Charmez (2000, 2006, 2014), highlighting the importance of collecting information from people in their natural settings, a key deliberation was to ensure that the interviews were set in familiar environmental settings, that would assist participants to feel as comfortable as possible. To achieve this, I considered it important that the interviews take place in a normal cultural environment, centred on the family rather than in an office. In addition, by placing the participant at the centre of the interview process, each participant was invited to nominate a suitable date and time for the interview to take place. Though participants were informed of my willingness to come to their homes to have the interviews, each participant was also provided with the option of coming to our family home in Titahi Bay. The provision of this option was a means of showing respect for participants to determine where they felt more comfortable to be interviewed.

Unsurprisingly, the significant majority of participants indicated their preference to be interviewed at our home, choosing either to come alone or with some or all of their immediate family members. A number of reasons can be posited for the preference of participants to be interviewed at our home. The first of these is that some participants may have been reserved to have me, an Imatang (a foreigner), into their homes particularly if they perceived their homes to somehow be inadequate. Another reason may have been the desire of participants to achieve some level of ‘space’ from the complexities of their home environments.

Irrespective of where participants sought to be interviewed, the aim was to have all of the interviewed grounded in a customary Kiribati setting underpinned by Kiribati cultural values and customs. The objective of placing the interviews in this natural setting was not only based at putting participants at ease, but was, as argued by Miles et al (1994) to achieve a greater understanding of the “...*real life...*” of participants (Miles et al 1994: 10). Another objective was to provide an environmental setting that assisted my developing a good rapport

with each participant but, in a manner that did not undermine my ability to do the research (see Patton 2002: 349).

Overall, my knowledge of the Kiribati customs and culture assisted in the development of a good rapport with each of the participants. This rapport came about not just by focussing on the participant, but making sure that all accompanying family members were made to feel welcome and provided with hospitality in the usual Kiribati way. The aim was to create an environment that approximated not only life at home in New Zealand, but how things would have been done back in Kiribati. In this relaxed environment, it was not uncommon to see small children perched on the knees of their parent while being interviewed including one mother breast-feeding her baby.

Having the interviews centred in this way was also the approach used by participants interviewed in their own homes. In each case, my husband and I were warmly welcomed into the homes of the participants and provided with a very generous level of hospitality. Two experiences that will not be easily forgotten include being invited to a ‘light lunch’ that turned out to be a feast, followed by many extended family members making the effort to come and meet me and my husband. In one instance, the line of family members stretched from a dining room, down a corridor and out the front door. When standing up to greet and kiss each family member, the participant began to explain the relationship of the various family members, when realising my state of confusion, the participant and I burst out laughing. It was at this point that I came to realise that this and other experiences that have shaped this research are likely to form part of my life-long memories. As a small token of our appreciation of being hosted in their homes, small gifts were presented to newly born babies of each of the households (with one baby being two days old).

While, as noted above, the grounding of the interviews in an appropriate cultural and familial setting brought about many benefits, one unforeseen impact of this environmental setting was the difficulty that a high level of background noise had on the transcription of some of the interviews. As the person who transcribed the interviews, not unexpectedly, those interviews with high levels of background noise were found to take considerably longer to transcribe. While in most cases higher noise levels did not impede the successful transcription of the interviews, on a few occasions, single or a few words could not be heard. This was particularly the case where the interviews took place in participants’ homes and where very

young children played nearby to the interview. Viewed within the wider context of the rich level of data collected from the interviews, these minimal omissions were considered to be immaterial.

## Pre-Interview Arrangements

The pre-interview phase consisted of two key requirements. The first was requiring participants to read a one-page summary sheet reminding participants of the objectives of the research, the process for the interviews and their rights throughout the process (see Appendix 3). Importantly, the summary sheet also noted that every attempt would be made to keep their privacy so that they would not be identified. Following this, the second requirement was to request each participant, if they were happy, to sign a Consent Form indicating their approval to be interviewed (see Appendix 4). While this process was expected to be relatively straightforward; in practice asking participants to read the summary sheet was not successful. It became apparent very early on that participants were uncomfortable in reading the summary sheet, while I waited for them to finish. Not only did the participants look flustered and appear not to read the sheet, but very early on in the process one participant requested that I provide them with an oral briefing as to its contents.

The oral briefing consisted of working through the contents of the sheet and highlighting the key points in a way that was easily understood. This approach resulted in a greater level of eye-to-eye contact and the development of a greater level of rapport. The oral briefing was, in hindsight, more culturally appropriate given that was consistent with a more ‘normal’ two-way conversational exchange. After the first two interviews, each participant was provided with a choice of either reading the summary sheet or having an oral briefing as to its contents. In all cases, participants chose to be orally briefed with all agreeing to sign the Consent Form and to be interviewed.

Another interesting feature of the making participants feel more comfortable prior to their interviews was letting them get used to the prospect of being recorded. It was very surprising to see the level of nervousness at the presence of the small audio device, with some participants pointing at it as if it was more than an inanimate object. The advice to participants to ignore its presence and concentrate on the conservation of the interview

appeared to work well, although on two occasions it became apparent that it would be beneficial if the device was covered with a piece of paper. In addition to these efforts, having the interviews over a cup of coffee and crunchy biscuits seemed to have a normalising effect on the conduct of the interviews.

## Interview Approach

On completion of these formalities, the starting point for all the interviews was the collection of a small amount of demographic data (age bracket; marital status and number of children) beginning with participants being asked to identify which age bracket they fell into.

Although a small number of participants appeared to answer the question on age very earnestly, the vast majority of participants simply divulged their ages, as if seeking to ‘put me out of my misery’. This and the request by participants to be verbally briefed were the very first indication of the unique qualities of the Kiribati way.

Unlike the shyness associated with revealing one’s age in many European cultures, because getting older is viewed in the Kiribati culture as an honour, most participants did not feel compelled to conceal their ages by the use of age brackets. The free and frank manner in which the issue of age was communicated (often blurted out before I had the chance to go through the age bracket selection) turned out to be quite a light-hearted event with most participants taking the opportunity to chuckle at my Imatang ‘sensitivity’. This reaction led me to laugh at myself, which in turn assisted to break the ice for many participants about the impending interview.

The collection of demographic data was followed by the first of three, previously developed, open-ended questions. The first of these open-ended questions was aimed at gathering information from participants on what they thought life would be like in New Zealand prior to their migration. The central objective was to gather data on participants’ expectations about life in New Zealand and consequently how these expectations shaped their settlement experiences. The warm reaction from participants to this question underlined the benefit of centring the first question on their migration expectations.

Despite this positive reaction, participants exhibited sadness and became introverted when articulating their expectations of what life would be like in New Zealand. This resulted in most participants appearing to ‘freeze’ as to how to explain the reasons for seeking to leave Kiribati. This in turn gave rise to single word or short sentence responses and signs of extreme shyness at the level of naivety regarding what they expected New Zealand to be like. These reactions were a significant surprise to me given my expectations that such a question would provide an opportunity for participants to respond in detail about their expectations and their settlement experiences.

It became apparent, however, from the first couple of interviews that the first and additional two open-ended questions referred to in the Information Sheet were not going to stimulate the rich and detailed responses from participants I had expected to collect. Rather, I concluded that if I did not make a change to my questions that there would have been a very high risk that the research question of this thesis would not be able to be answered. My instinct was to dispense with the use of the open-ended questions and move to a conversational interview approach, which was based on some commonly asked questions about why they wanted to come to New Zealand (including questions on the events that shaped their settlement) and then letting the conversation flow in a natural way as possible. In marked contrast to the problems generated with the use of open-ended questions, by posing the questions in the form of a story (for example, “and where did you go when you arrived in New Zealand?”), participants were much more willing to share their settlement experiences and for conversations to naturally develop. This line of inquiry also assisted participants to always come back to their settlement stories (including sharing their feelings and emotions relating to those experiences).

While the need to abandon the use of the open-ended questions (which were purposefully crafted for this research) was a surprise, I was pleased that I had taken the time to talk to the first two participants about the use of open-ended questions, which in turn, led me to reflect on how best to advance my interview technique. One of the first points of reflection was that no amount of academic literature can prepare one for the veracities of working in the field. For example, whereas the literature notes the usefulness of using open-ended questions for capturing the breadth and depth of peoples’ meaningful experiences (see Patton 2002), my experience in the field showed that this approach was not a suitable approach in this case.

Reflecting on this reality, I identified two possible explanations why open-ended questions were not suitable for this group of participants. The first explanation was a strong cultural preference for two-way, rather than one-way, conversational discourse. The second reason that became increasingly evident during the course of the interviews was the strong focus of participants on the ‘present’ given that the day-to-day activities continue to define their settlement experiences. This emphasis on the ‘present’ is very likely to have impacted on the ability of participants to articulate their stories in the ‘past’ in a long stream of reflective consciousness. Indeed for those participants recently settled in New Zealand, it could be argued that the ‘past’ was actually the ‘present’.

Irrespective of the precise reasons behind the lack of traction of the open-ended questions, there is no doubt that the move to the conversational interview method had a profoundly positive effect in generating a high level of rapport which, in turn, led to the collection of rich and deep descriptions from participants about their settlement experiences. Of great benefit was the ability to weave the conversations to mirror the actual settlement journey experienced by each of the participants. This logical approach allowed participants to reflect on the important experiences that defined their personal journeys including: the decision to migrate; expectations about settlement; landing at Auckland Airport and their first accommodation experiences; search for work and rental housing; to where they find themselves today.

The ease of these conversations also allowed me to probe (in a culturally appropriate manner) about how participants felt about their settlement journeys. This led me conclude that while for some families this journey was relatively straightforward, for others the settlement journeys have been fraught with major disappointments, loss and a lack of belonging (discussed in the next chapter on analysis). Unsurprisingly, the rich data collected indicated an extensive range of similarities and differences including points of emphasis derived from the diverse nature of settlement experiences.

## **Insider/Outsider Status**

On the completion of the interviews I considered it important to reflect on the interview process and, in particular, the level of openness shown by participants in sharing their settlement experiences with me. The context to examining this was to ascertain the balance

of my being both an insider and outsider. To assist me in understanding the dynamics between being an insider and an outsider, I discussed this with my husband who had accompanied me throughout the interviews. His view was that my understanding and empathy for the Kiribati culture and its people led participants to feel close to me. This closeness was evident in not only the level of openness displayed by participants, but also the many times participants noted that I knew ‘the Kiribati way’ and that I was I-Kiribati. While not seeking to take this for granted, these experiences have led me to believe that I was more of an insider than I had previously thought was the case.

Being treated as an insider is likely to have also come about from my contribution to the Wellington Kiribati Community and my willingness to always assist those in need. Aside from the importance of cultural knowledge, another important aspect for being regarded more of an insider rather than an outsider is likely to have been my approach of treating everyone (adults and children) with kindness and respect. Knowing how to behave including showing respect to elders and how to move with respect between people were two critical components for being viewed more of an insider than outsider. Another added feature that is also likely to have assisted in the interview process is likely to have also come about from my limited, but still useful, knowledge of the language and language expression.

An example of this was having a cultural understanding when participants indicated through their behaviour of being ‘*maama*’ about their settlement experiences and their ability to provide for their families. Not unlike the term *whakamaa*, that can only be understood within the Māori culture, the term *maama* can only be understood by having familiarity with the Kiribati culture. Understanding when participants felt *maama* was one of the most critical issues in understanding how participants felt during the interviews including in some cases how to interpret long pauses.

By way of background, while the term ‘*maama*’ is often referred to in English translation as shyness, the concept of ‘*maama*’ is significantly more complex and more aligned to the term ‘*whakamaa*’ (see Metge 1986). Like the term ‘*whakamaa*’, ‘*maama*’ does not pertain solely to an individual, but can include others, or on behalf of others (Metge 1986). As with ‘*whakamaa*’, ‘*maama*’ can be found to be the source of group and community conflict. At its most extreme, it has also been associated with expressions of self-harm including suicide particularly for younger people.

Within the interviews, the expression of ‘maama’ came about in a myriad of different ways that could not have been understood if I did not have a good understanding of the Kiribati culture and some knowledge of the language. Some of the most common expressions of being ‘maama’ included: participants laughing or chuckling when talking, covering their mouths, or casting their eyes downward. While those with little or no knowledge of the Kiribati way may have interpreted these acts as expressions of hilarity or amusement, this could have not been further from the truth. Rather, these expressions were in reality examples, of profound shyness and in some cases anguish relating to the daily struggles of survival defining their settlement experiences, including in some cases a sense of not being able to cope, particularly in adequately providing for their children.

My knowledge of Kiribati, allowed me to distinguish between genuine happiness and participants being ‘maama’. Not only did this assist me to interpret what participants were seeking to convey but also contributed to the development of a good rapport with participants. The willingness of participants to share with me why they felt ‘maama’ not only added to the richness of the data, but also allowed me to explore some of the underlying issues in a culturally appropriate manner. On the few occasions that emotions, associated with being *maama*, resulted in open sadness, I was able to reassure participants not to be *maama* and to acknowledge that settlement was indeed a challenging journey. This very smallest act of personal kindness seemed to put those participants at ease that they were not being judged as inadequate parents. My ability to draw on my personal experiences of the settlement difficulties experienced by my parents also assisted participants to recognise that these struggles are not unique, but in many ways were part of a journey experienced by many migrants living in New Zealand and internationally.

My exchanges with participants were always greeted with kind smiles and some level of observable relief that I somehow understood the sacrifices they were making for their children. The development of a good rapport also assisted me to dig deeper on a number of these issues, which at times brought emotions to the surface. In one case, I am not shy to say that when one participant cried, I also cried as they recalled the kindness of a family in the community that assisted them at a time of personal crisis. My own reaction was simply a natural response and not one that I had time to analyse or ability to stop. At other times I became very sad as some female participants became very ‘maama’ when speaking about

their experiences as victims of domestic violence. This sense of ‘maama’ was not simply directed at themselves, but rather at the family to which that they belonged.

Fortunately being ‘maama’ did not always gravitate to this level of personal intensity. Other examples of being ‘maama’ were much more light-hearted, but still had to be dealt with in an appropriate manner. An example was the case of one participant that was so ‘maama’ at being interviewed by me that they fiddled so excessively with their cell phone that they simply could not function. When I asked them not to be so ‘maama’, the phone was put away and the participant burst out laughing and got on with the interview. Another example was a participant, who in an attempt to avoid eye contact leafed vigorously through a magazine while attempting to respond to my questions on demographic characteristics. On telling the participant not to be ‘maama’, the magazine was closed and put it away and after a chuckle and smile the interview proceeded.

An important part of my approach was not to take myself too seriously, that I lost the essence of who I was. An example of being able to laugh at myself when after 30 minutes of intense questioning I still could not fathom the steps taken by the participant and their family on how they came to live the geographical areas specified by the criteria. While part of the problem was the complex way many I-Kiribati tell their stories (something I learnt from my husband, family and friends); the humour was borne from my inability to keep up with the participant. Despite many questions, my lack of progress in understanding the order of their settlement journey led me to laugh out loud with the participant laughing so heartily that I thought they might fall off their chair. I will never forget that event, as it was so very funny to me and so very Kiribati. Fortunately after a few more questions, I was able to make sense of what had occurred and was able to conclude that part of the interview.

Alongside the many benefits brought about from participants treating me as an ‘insider’; perversely my also being an ‘outsider’ may have also influenced the level of openness displayed during the interviews. The rationale for this conjecture is that innermost reflections particularly relating to difficulties are almost never shared outside the realm of the family group. Being an ‘outsider’ is likely to have assured participants that there was no purpose in gathering information on their settlement experiences other than for this research. On reflection, I consider that being regarded as both an ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ may have actually assisted participants to share a wider level of information, compared to if I was either just an

‘insider’ or an ‘outsider’. Being an ‘outsider’ with a great love of Kiribati, its people and culture is likely to have come together to generate the greatest influence in participants willingness to share their settlement experiences.

## Language Issues

Overall the interviews worked well in being a mix of English and Kiribati. While most of the participants spoke English throughout the interviews, a number of Kiribati language traits remained most particularly around the use of inflections. These modulations most often included the Kiribati word ‘kee’ which was widely used by participants to stress a point in the form of a questioning affirmation like ‘yes?’ The English equivalent of this inflection used by a few participants was the use of the word ‘no’ that was also used to stress the importance of a point in the form of ‘no?’ Without some knowledge of the Kiribati language and the use of these inflections, it is likely that many of the transcripts would not make sense. Even as a poor speaker of the Kiribati language, I have come to use these inflections even when speaking English to my Kiribati family and friends.

Another language complexity of the interviews was the way that participants responded to questions posed in the negative. Although I tried to avoid using these questions, on the odd occasion they were used to clarify a point, agreement by participants to the question did not mean that they disagreed with me, but rather that they agreed. For example, when I asked “*....so you don’t like the cold houses in New Zealand?*” the common response was “yes” meaning: “*yes I don’t like the cold houses in New Zealand*” whereas the correct response in English should have been “*no I don’t like the cold houses in New Zealand.*” As someone who has had to decipher these responses from my husband, family and friends, I was able to understand what the participants were seeking to convey. In the case that I was not entirely clear what was being communicated, participants were asked to clarify their responses.

A final observation relating to language was the relationship between English proficiency and the emotional state of the participants. I observed that as participants became more engrossed in expressing their feelings or emotions about their settlement experiences, the greater the inability to communicate in English. For example, while in several instances participants were conversing well in English, they appeared to come to a stop when seeking to convey

how they felt about their settlement experiences. In these cases participants requested my husband to translate their responses, particularly relating to emotional issues related to feelings of sadness, inadequacy and lack of resources.

In some instances, most commonly male participants asked if I could call my husband to assist them even when they were expressing their feelings and emotions in English. On these occasions, my husband would come and sit on the floor next to the participant and listen to the conversation. While my husband did not need to translate, it appeared that these participants felt reassured at having him nearby, as they became more vulnerable in the recollections of their settlement experiences. It was not uncommon for these participants to touch my husband on the shoulder as they shared some of their innermost feelings about their personal experiences. This display of seeking reassurance was also directed by female participants to me, most often in the form of touching or tapping me on the arm.

As noted earlier, these verbal and non-verbal experiences underscored the importance of presenting a culturally appropriate and safe environment that enabled participants to be open in sharing their innermost reflections on settlement. To that end, an interesting observation was the greater propensity of male participants to express their feelings, compared to female participants. While this outcome was a surprise, one conjecture could be that this reflected the more stalwart nature of Kiribati women in staying strong in the face of the many challenges posed by settlement. Another reason could be the significant pressure that male participants face given their cultural responsibility to provide for their families. This pressure was displayed by those male participants, who felt that they were unable to adequately provide for their families, as a result of their low wage employment and their inability to save.

## Note taking

The intention was to take notes during the interview to record verbal and non-verbal points of emphasis. It became apparent from the first interview, however, that taking notes was going not going to add any value to the collection of information and that there was a very high risk that it would detract from the quality of the interview. I was surprised to see the inordinate level of attention by the participant on my taking notes and how this interfered with the

natural flow of dialogue of the interview. A key reason for this is likely to have been the foreign nature of my being seen to take notes about the participant, leading me to conclude that this method of data collection was culturally inappropriate.

My desisting from taking notes had a number of positive impacts, most particularly in the level of comfort displayed by the participant. Other positive indicators included increased eye-to-eye contact and an increased injection of humour in the participant's responses. These positive impacts on the participants also had an affirmative flow-on effect on me with me becoming more relaxed and therefore a more effective interviewer. A key reason for this was my own unease at participants viewing me as somehow judging their responses, which was not intended to be the case.

The taking of notes was replaced by the development of short memos at the end of each of the interviews. This allowed me to reflect on the main themes raised during the interviews, points of emphasis, and linkages between issues. It also allowed me to reflect on aspects of body language, the flow of the interviews and reflect on my own competency. When the interviews were conducted at our home, these memos were completed as soon as possible after each of the interviews, while participants were provided with hospitality by my family. Further in the process, short memos were also drafted on the development of theory building.

## **Exhausting the Data**

As noted previously, the approach for this research was to interview participants within the purposive sample about their settlement experiences until the issues raised became repetitive and no new issues were brought forward by participants. On completion of one-on-one interviews with 14 participants and faced with a high level of repetition and no new issues coming forward, I took the opportunity to reflect on the substance of the data collection. The key consideration was whether the data represented a level of detail and richness necessary to answer the research question posed in this thesis:

*“What are the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand?”*

A starting point for this deliberation was whether the group of 14 informants interviewed could be assessed as representing the settlement of Kiribati migrants living in the wider-Wellington and Kapiti regions, and more generally New Zealand. Although the group of 14 informants could be viewed as being particularly adequate, but not expansive, an analysis of the group revealed that the group represented a total of 91 people (including adults and their children). Set against the 1,217 of I-Kiribati identified as being born in Kiribati and living in New Zealand, the 91 people represented in this research, comprised 7.5 percent of the total Kiribati population born in Kiribati and 30 percent of the Kiribati-born population living in the Wellington region (Statistics New Zealand 2014). Of the group of 14 informants, seven first settled in Auckland and two in the South Island, moving to the Wellington region in search of better paying employment. The other seven respondents began their settlement in Wellington, influenced by having family already residing in the Wellington region.

An important aspect of the diversity of the informant group was the wide range in the size of families, extending from a family with one child to a family with ten children. The size of the family units represented by the 14 respondents is set out in Table 3 below, which also includes the definitions used to refer to the size of families throughout this research.

**Table 3: Size of family units of informants**

Number of Children	Number of Adults	Definition of Family Size	Number of Informants with these Size Families
1-2	2	#Small	2
3-4	2	#Medium	6
5	2	#Large	3
6 +	2	#Very Large	3

In addition to family size, the group of 14 respondents was also characterised by considerable diversity with regard to educational qualifications, skills, employment experience, and language proficiency. For example, the skill set of the participant group ranged from those with marine sector skills and New Zealand acquired tertiary nursing degrees to some respondents with no secondary school education and limited English language proficiency. The group of participants also covered a wide range of geographical residential locations ranging from Tawa and Lower Hutt to Otaki on the Kapiti Coast.

While the initial aim was to have an equal number of men and women participants, the group comprised of eight women and six men covering a wide range of age groups and geographical locations. The age brackets ranged from 26 to 30 years of age to 45 to 50 years of age, albeit that 64 percent was aged 41 years or older. Information from the Wellington Kiribati Community confirmed this profile mirrored the general profile of Kiribati families gaining permanent residence under the PAC living in the wider-Wellington and Kapiti regions. Within this context all participants (with the exception of one) gained their permanent residence under the PAC.

Two possible explanations can be put forward regarding the older profile of participants in the purposive sample compared to the demographic profile of the Kiribati ethnic population in New Zealand (see Statistics New Zealand 2014). The first is that migration from Kiribati to New Zealand requires families to be in a financial position to self-fund their migration. The interviews with participants identified that this was most commonly achieved by participants and/or their partners drawing down on their savings from the Provident Fund administered in Kiribati, other personal savings or borrowing from extended family members to assist them to migrate to New Zealand. In most instances, participants noted that they personally were responsible for self-funding their migration, which could only had been achieved by them being in employment for some time (either in Kiribati or working offshore) to allow them to save enough funds to contemplate applying for the ballot (under the PAC). Another explanation, also identified by participants, was the strong emphasis of their migration to New Zealand as a means of offering improved opportunities for their children. With the research question also posed on families with dependent children and the need for families to fund their migration, the profile of participants was unsurprisingly -older than the profile of the wider New Zealand Kiribati community.

Aside from the importance of diversity, another two factors examined to determine the suitability of this group was the richness of the data collected and whether the data collection had been exhausted. In the first of these factors, the interviews undertaken were in-depth face-to-face interviews with all participants. The interviews took their full course and were not rushed, allowing me to dig deeper on critical issues of importance on understanding participants' settlement experiences in New Zealand. The interviews were undertaken in the form of conversations allowing participants to relax and discuss their settlement experiences in a relaxed manner, most commonly over a cup of coffee. This approach worked very well

given the usual shyness of the participants, who had not ever shared their settlement stories with others. The process of the two-way conversational interview approach also allowed for a more natural way of obtaining key information, that did not appear to be foreign or stilted and was in my view a culturally appropriate for the group. Allowing the participants to choose where to have these interviews, also allowed them to relax being in the environment that they chose.

The data collected included an extensive range of topics, for example: underestimating the struggles of living in New Zealand, discrimination in workplaces, cultural loss, impact of poor housing on health and sense of achievement and the benefits of chance-encounters and weak networks. The depth of the data collection also included personal views regarding mental stress associated with poverty, over-crowding and a sense of failing to adequately provide for their children. This degree of openness also included personal reflections from female participants about the benefits of living in New Zealand given the strong legal stance on the protection of women and children. The richness of the data gathered during the first round interviews can, in my view, be attributed largely to the interviews being framed in a cultural setting and having the interviews flow naturally at the pace set by the participants. I went back to four participants for clarification and to two further participants to dig deeper on career enhancement options.

Examining the data and reflecting on the interviews, a key consideration was assessing whether there was a need to go beyond this group of participants to gather additional information on the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand. This was discussed with my supervisors (both of whom had read the transcripts). On the basis of the rich data collected during the interviews and the very high level of repetition within the last three interviews, including the lack of any material issues coming forward from participants, it was decided that it was not required to go beyond the group of participants. It was concluded that the group of 14 participants provided the critical data required to address the research question posed in this thesis.

# Chapter 6: Findings

## Introduction

Using constructivist grounded theory, this chapter discusses the results of the initial coding of the data (Charmez 2000, 2014). By interrogating the data (Charmez 2014; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990; Glaser 1978), categories and sub-categories emerged to explain the settlement experiences of participants and their families living in New Zealand. Through iterative processes of deductive and inductive analysis, the categories representing the most influential settlement experiences of participants and their families were distilled from the data. These key categories were: expectations of migration and settlement; networks; employment; housing; children's success; New Zealand way of life; and sense of belonging in New Zealand.

To gain a good understanding of the complexities underpinning the settlement experiences of participants and their families, the data were compared against demographic dimensions (age, gender, size of families), access to information, skills and employment experiences, language proficiency and nature of social networks. To give voice to the stories told by participants, this chapter makes significant use of direct quotes to illustrate their personal accounts of their settlement experiences. The analysis of the data in this chapter is enhanced further in Chapter Seven when the results of the initial coding are examined against the literature, connections between categories are explored, and the emergence of theoretical constructs are discussed.

This chapter is structured into three main parts. The first part examines the pre-migration influences and the formation of expectations of what life would be like in New Zealand. The second part discusses the key influencers of the settlement experiences of participants and their families, including how the policy settings under the PAC had an impact on their behaviour, particularly in relation to their search for employment. The third part discusses what participants had to say about their overall settlement experiences and their sense of belonging in New Zealand.

## **Part 1: Background context to migration and initial settlement**

### **Positive Expectations about Life in New Zealand**

The decision of participants and the families to migrate was inextricably linked to positive expectations about life in New Zealand and negative expectations about the future of Kiribati. This was most commonly articulated by participants as a desire to provide their families, particularly their children, with ‘a better life’ that offered more opportunities than were available in Kiribati. The notion of ‘a better life’ was articulated by all participants, irrespective of demographic factors, education, skills, language proficiency, and employment status back in Kiribati. The recurring themes comprising this notion centred primarily on participants’ expectations that their migration to New Zealand would enable them to provide their children with fresh food, and access to good education and health services. A key influencer for these expectations was the commonly held view across participants, that there was no future for their children back in Kiribati due to the constrained nature of the economy, wide-spread poverty and very few employment opportunities to sustain the well-being of families.

#### ***‘A Better Life’: food, environment, education and health services***

Interestingly, expectations of life in New Zealand were not expressed in terms of economic success, but in much more unassuming terms such as access to fresh fruit, vegetables, education for their children and access to health services. A common starting point for participants in their discussion of expectations of living in New Zealand and their main reasons underpinning their decision to migrate was their ability to provide their children with the day-to-day necessities of life that they considered was becoming increasingly difficult to provide in Kiribati. On the issue of food, many participants noted that access to local fresh fruit and vegetables that had once sustained their families, was increasingly difficult to grow due to severe over-crowding in Tarawa, and climatic events such as prolonged drought and over-topping by the sea during storms. In addition, the prohibitively high costs of imported fresh foodstuffs into Kiribati were viewed as constituting a major barrier for most participants to afford good quality food for their children.

*“...heard from someone else they told me it nice and clean, a lot of stuff for especially kids...” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

*“Oh yeah we look forward to see um...um like when we... when we in the islands so we heard that lots of apples, fruits like that...the apple fruit...” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

*“...We so happy when we first get a chance to come here after our application for the PAC and that’s what we think like and for me am really happy cos I never been in like... overseas before yeah and that what the happiness I’ve got I think I be on the big plane and all my kids were very happy too cos that one he said, especially for fruit, they going to see it in real. Like we had it back in the islands is too expensive there like the ice creams that what they said.” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

Even those participants that had previously visited New Zealand defined prospects of a ‘better life’ in terms of the day-to-day issues that would make a difference to their and the lives of their families:

*“Um I wasn’t really um expecting anything special, I have been to New Zealand before I came, before I migrated and I’ve seen what life in New Zealand is all about so but I had some expectations that it would be a much better life than Kiribati you know. Um, a much better way of quality of life and what I mean is we get milk every day. We don’t get any milk in Tarawa, you know. We sort of couldn’t afford a bottle of milk there and ah no trains and (laugh) and the food and the sort of food you know.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

Alongside expectations of access to an abundance of fresh food, not found in Kiribati, half of the group of participants recalled their expectations that New Zealand would offer a clean ‘green’ environment, in contrast to the significantly dusty and polluted environment of Tarawa. This expectation was often gleaned from seeing foreigners, who had travelled to Kiribati or through information from personal contacts living in New Zealand and social media such as films. This was nicely described by one participant:

*"I made that idea cos I saw people that came from the...from the New Zealand or other overseas you know countries and then I look at them and they looked nice dressed up and looked clean you know their faces is clean and think it's the food here or whatever. It's the, the environment is there really nice and you know in my place is dusty or whatever eh? We are happy as we are but we can just tell the change you know with those people that came from overseas. Apart from that you know I always watch movie about you know these places and I say "oh everything's available there" so that's what my thinking is." (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*"...heard from someone else they told me it nice and clean..." (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

*"And then thinking of New Zealand...I heard from my family, some part of my family, friends and they said "New Zealand is a green place..." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

Most participants also drew direct linkages between expectations of improved access to fresh food and a clean environment to prospects for better health outcomes, particularly for their children. This view was further reinforced by expectations that New Zealand had a superior health system to what was available in Kiribati, providing for better life-outcomes for families.

*"Prior to coming here I think life will be more easier here in terms of um like food... and yeah things like that especially the health care." (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*"...as you know Kiribati, you don't really get first class...like facilities or everything like that... And I thought um being in New Zealand with qualifying you know doctors and people you know that belongs to different jobs like that, I thought I came to the right place..." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Yeah, more or less in Kiribati if you got a bit of heart disease or something like that it’s more like a death sentence you know.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

### ***Educational opportunities***

In addition to these expectations, all participants referred to enhanced opportunities for their children to receive a good education in New Zealand as a key driver for their migration. Two issues stood out in respect to this expectation. The first was the ability of a good education to enable their children to secure a ‘better life’ for their future by securing high quality jobs. The second was the expectation that New Zealand offered free education, something that was not available in Kiribati where fees are required to be paid for children to attend secondary school. These costs were viewed as prohibitive particularly for those with large families and those with little or no means to pay. The barrier to education in Kiribati was clearly expressed by one participant:

*“The children yes because back in the island we know we comes to ... when it comes to the time, three of my elder kids were in the secondary schools and that where we see there a big problem for us for the fee, to pay the fee for them it’s too expensive for three of them...” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“...the main why we want to come, to migrate to New Zealand for the kids especially, for the school yeah, cos it’s more good than, more better than... the schools in Kiribati.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

*“Just want them for their better education... for them for their future....” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*“...I think that New Zealand is the best one for the school that’s why I travel to come here...” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

The expectation of a good education for their children was also conveyed by many participants as the main reason why they chose to leave Kiribati and come to New Zealand.

Nine participants of the group spoke of their decision to migrate in the form of a ‘sacrifice’ they needed to make for their families by having to leave the place they loved so dearly for a new life in New Zealand. This sentiment was articulated across gender, age and education and skills, but expressed most strongly by those who were reasonably successful in Kiribati compared to those who were struggling. In two cases, participants clearly noted that the chances of them deciding to migrate would have reduced significantly had it not been for their children:

*“But in this case where...where we have kids it’s more than that, it’s about 80% “oh we have to go, we have to go, for the kids yes we will” but when it’s...I think when it’s only me and my wife it’s gonna be a 50:50 chance.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

The importance of a better education for their children for participants was not only seen in the articulated words, but also in the manner that this topic was discussed. Unlike the cheerfulness that was a characteristic of the conversations on improved access to fresh fruit, the discussion on education for their children was conveyed in a serious manner, with most participants making eye contact with me as a way of conveying a point of emphasis.

### ***Economic opportunities***

In contrast to the discussion on the benefits that would accrue to their families (such as food, clean environment, health and education), only three participants (all male) spoke about expectations in the form of economic improvement. In two of these cases, the participants were unemployed, while in another, the participant did not wish to return to his work as a seaman. In each of these instances, participants voiced their expectations about improved economic opportunities in New Zealand in terms of a lack of opportunities in Kiribati.

*“I really want to stay in New Zealand because I think no future back to the islands you know, um. Yeah that what I reckon it better here to spend my life for my kids, whatever they want I’m going to work hard for them, that why I want to stay in New Zealand for-especially for them. That the only thing that what I worry for because before I was in the island I didn’t have any job, something like that, so no future for my kids. But now I got a chance for me yeah once I got a job I want to spend my life work hard for them.” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

## **Negative Expectations: Future of Kiribati**

Aside from the positive expectations participants held about life in New Zealand as an influencing force for migration, many participants also voiced negative expectations about the future of Kiribati as a reason underpinning their decision to migrate.

### ***Lack of a future in Kiribati***

All participants voiced their expectations that there was no future in Kiribati particularly for their children. This was expressed very strongly by male participants, who saw themselves as the main providers for their families. This negative view ranged from those male participants who were ran small home-grown businesses to those earning significantly more working in the marine industry.

*“...very hard to earn the money and try to get some money like I start from like a bakeries, little bakery you know try to bring it...before I come to New Zealand. And then I know is very hard in the night you know. I think more stress before I’m coming yeah? Because you can’t get the money and once depend if you send to the shop but the shop didn’t buy your doughnut whatever you put it and you come back not the money all you thought was nice ....We try find something how what sort of recipe to make people attract “oh that one very nice”. Very struggle Mary Anne I tell you honest.....my wife come back “oh...we put in the shop doughnuts 100 and now there’s only 90, ten sold” “what you going to do the rest of that?” That’s how you know but very hard do business in the island but lucky we got a fish beside there....Working hard there, you sweat for nothing you know. When you going to get, we plant the tree and the tree another ten years and the coconuts fall down and cut it and it give you, no you can’t see all the sweat...”*

**(# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)**

One participant eloquently conjured a picture of their children wandering from one end of the island to the other in the futile search for work.

*“...I said “why we have to move...when we are almost there. We had the job we had a good income in here, we have the house: we don’t pay rent, we had a...a piece of land, we have other things too we don’t need more than this...but...for this and for*

*that and for the kids mostly, they have to get the opportunity because in their future they gonna be walking around here from ‘end to end’ and they...they won’t...won’t get the job...” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

Concerns about the future of Kiribati were also expressed in terms of constraints associated with a small economy. The views about the smallness of Kiribati was raised by those male participants, who had the opportunity to work abroad as marine seafarers and who had had the chance to experience different countries and places. The frustration associated with the ‘smallness’ of Kiribati was expressed by one such male participant in terms of concerns about the small size of the Kiribati economy and, in particular, the monopoly of government in the economy:

*“Another driving force behind it too Mary Anne is, I was working in Kiribati you know. Most of my life I have been working on ships, at sea. I came to a stage where I staying a bit a while in Tarawa, not going out to sea and things like you know it a monopoly drive in the government you know in Kiribati. You only got one bank, one telephone company, one insurance company...and they all run a monopoly sort of thing you know. They charge you... the telephone company wants to charge you 300 bucks this month you know (laugh). I mean, horrendous charges you know and the bank too. There is only one bank; you can imagine what sort of damage they can do. And I was just getting frustrated with the government and bodies like the ministries you know?” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

Interestingly, while all participants noted that there was little or no future for their families in Kiribati, only one participant raised the issue of climate change as constraining future prospects:

*“I think...we heard that Kiribati is nearly sink.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

While the lack of reference to the issue of climate change was somewhat surprising, it could be understood in terms of the focus of all participants’ attention on the day-to-day difficulties they experienced in providing for their families in Kiribati. These difficulties were not

attributed to any one factor, but rather on the totality of problems facing participants and their families, including the lack of adequate food resources, over-crowding, increasingly stressed environment (particularly in Tarawa), and the lack of services (such as a lack of free secondary school education and inadequate health services). It was the combination of these difficulties that led all participants (whether employed or unemployed or running successful businesses to conclude in some way that it would be best for them and their families to migrate:

*“We do like Kiribati but um we like to go further for life.” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

### ***Migration and returning to Kiribati***

The sense conveyed by many participants (predominantly, but not exclusively, female participants) that they had no choice but to leave Kiribati to carve a better life for their families, should not be interpreted that they had in some way lost their love for their country. Indeed most participants told of the deep love they had for Kiribati, with half of the group of participants expressing a desire to live their final years and pass away in Kiribati. The discussion about returning to Kiribati was very emotional for some participants (particularly female participants) who reflected on passing away and being buried in the land of their ancestors. In contrast, those participants who conveyed in more dismissive terms that Kiribati had nothing to offer them (four of the six male participants), indicated that they had no desire to return to Kiribati, even in their old age.

*“....I think when we getting old so we need to go back to the islands. “I don’t want...to pass away.” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

*“I’m just not thinking of going back.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

Analysing this dichotomy further, the data indicated that all those participants that had expressed a desire to someday return to Kiribati to live were younger than those participants who did not express this sentiment. Many of these participants were female, who had never previously travelled and who still had one or two of their parents still alive. With many of

these strong familial connections, these female participants indicated that they not yet formed a deep connection with New Zealand and consequently were less settled than many other participants.

## **Expectations and First experiences**

### ***'Shock' and surprise***

Although all participants recalled the difficulties of settling in their new host country, the ‘shock’ of settlement was most profound among female participants, who had never previously travelled outside of Kiribati. All female participants (with the exception of one) and half of all male participants (who had not worked out of Kiribati) recalled their naivety in the formation of their expectations about life in New Zealand. Female participants indicated the highest levels of misperception about what they could expect, to the extent that they thought that they would be provided with a free house and employment to kick-start their settlement in New Zealand.

*“...For the first time it’s a shock for us that we just found out that you’re gonna get your own house pay everything, everything for the house...and when we find out when we are here you going to have your own house you need to have your own house and pay everything...” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“We didn’t know (laughter) we think that while we were lucky balloted in that scheme we think that our job is already here things were ready for us, like the job, the house...”*

*(# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“You know the buildings and I said: oh I am, I’m going to live in one of those houses but how? Are they, are they offering it for free? Wow it’s a nice buildings up there...felt embarrassed cos you know like I was expecting to step into that environment that I was expecting but no it’s the great barrier to me like stepping into*

*that environment is kind of a challenge to me.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

While the unrealistic expectations of many female participants was a revelation, it was not a surprise to discover that these expectations had led to these participants’ experience a sense of shock in their initial settlement in New Zealand. It was in the context of this shock that many of these participants had contemplated, in their first few days of their settlement, returning to Kiribati. None of these participants could say how they had developed such false expectations, other than to indicate that in the absence of good information their expectations had formed from what they had been able to glean for themselves.

*“We look forward for this and nice place “oh” and when we get there stay for a week and “oh we need to go back to the islands” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

Another but related aspect of surprise for many participants (including some that had previously travelled) was the important role that money had in the New Zealand economy. Unlike Kiribati, where everyday life was characterised by a mix of money, barter, self-dependence, or extension of gifts, many participants recoiled at the way they thought every aspect of the New Zealand way of life was expressed through the exchange of money. Many participants recalled the importance of money, for example:

*“I think, you know it’s funny you know when I first came here all my expectation was like... some of them were met but some of them, most of them were like it’s a kind of disappointment to me, embarrassment to me too like. Oh my gosh, oh so it’s money, everything is money so what can I do now? See I’ve been thinking of these better ideas but I have to struggle now yeah and it’s like it’s a kind of a challenge to me I first step in New Zealand.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...it’s harder than Kiribati cos Kiribati you can live without money, you can survive without money but you have to work hard.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

When asked about how and why they had formed their expectations that had led to their sense of shock and surprise, all participants (with the exception of four) disclosed that they had not sought information from family and friends already living in New Zealand. Digging further on the issue, participants could not say why they had not attempted to collect information from their families living in New Zealand, other than to say that they did not wish to disturb their families and appear to be a burden on them. The few participants, who made an effort to acquire information from their family and friends living in New Zealand recalled that the information provided was generally ‘light’ in nature, typically focussed on confirming many I-Kiribati migrants’ expectations that New Zealand was a good place, particularly for children. In one case, family members living in New Zealand stressed the importance of new migrants finding employment, as without work it would not be possible to survive.

Additional exploration revealed that the poor exchange of information was predicated on a number of sensitivities between the providers of information and those seeking to gather information. On the provider end, one participant clarified that those families already living in New Zealand would not want to present a negative picture of their struggles, concerned that this could be misconstrued by prospective migrants that support of them would be too much of a burden for them. On the receiver end, many migrants said that they did not want to disturb their families and indicated that it was rude to pump their families for information. In a few cases, participants noted that they thought they had obtained a reasonable level of information from various sources (including movies and conversations with those that had been to New Zealand).

While this poor exchange of information was a barrier to the formation of realistic expectations, surprisingly even some of the participants that had visited New Zealand had formed misconceived ideas of what it would be like to live here:

*“I thought it was going to be easy...I came to...Auckland and that’s when I thought meeting all the community in Auckland you know their life I thought it’s easy and cool eh. You know they came and pick us up and I thought it was just happiness eh. They always gathered and you know...but there’s more things behind them. I believe back at home some of them are struggling like what I am experiencing...when I first came to New Zealand.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

This was in contrast to those participants who had studied or worked in New Zealand or abroad and expressed less surprise about the struggles they expected to endure in their initial settlement. One participant recalled this:

*“Since I came for school just before the 2009, before we moved here and um yeah that’s what I’m thinking at that stage that um, I told my wife it’s gonna be hard for us to go there but if we have to we will...that’s the way...that’s the way of life and in here you can’t get away with that. We struggle and struggle and struggle everyone did...did the same thing...I mean it’s gonna be more... more harder and...and we’ll be struggling to start off from scratch, that’s what I believe because I know-I’ve been... I’ve been here before and um I know what’s life’s in here.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

The difference in expectations between those that visited and those that had studied and/or worked abroad and those who had not left Kiribati can be explained by how participants went about gathering information. In one case, a participant who had visited New Zealand noted that information about life in New Zealand was gathered purely by observation, rather than through enquiry. Certainly probing on sensitive issues, such as whether their relatives and friends were struggling, would not be appropriate. At the same time, those hosting visitors would make every effort to show the best they had to offer, rather than spend time discussing their difficulties. On the other hand, those participants that had studied or worked in New Zealand, or overseas, indicated that they were less reserved in gathering information about life in New Zealand from other social contacts (such as those they studied or worked with).

Drawing on their own experiences, many participants noted that they were making a greater effort to inform any prospective migrants that asked them for information about New Zealand. Interestingly, while some male participants were rather flippant about what they would tell new migrants (such as the need to bring warm clothes), many female participants recalled that there was a need for them to provide new migrants with a rich and truthful account of what to expect in their settlement in New Zealand:

*“We tell them the truth that its good here, life here is good especially for the kids but ...everything is money... you pay for everything.” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“...it’s harder than Kiribati, cos Kiribati you can live without money, you can survive without money but you have to work hard...you need a job... to get your good money for your rent because it’s more expensive than...” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*“We just give them an advice like um because they will struggle finding their...their job back in the island, but it’s better for them to come over here cos it’s a short time to struggle, but you can get a job after then and like money that you can support yourself rather than staying back in the island you struggle all the time.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

The differences in approaches to providing information to new migrants between male and female participants can, in large part, be explained by their own experiences. For many male participants (four of six male participants), who had worked or studied outside of Kiribati (and had not experienced a high level of settlement ‘shock’), the provision of information to new migrants was not indicated as an issue of significant importance. In contrast, many female participants (seven out of eight female participants) who had not previously worked or studied out of Kiribati and had experienced significant levels of settlement ‘shock’, indicated a sense of obligation to provide new migrants who asked for information with a realistic account of what they could expect in New Zealand.

One female participant expressed this:

*“...would ring next time and if they could put the time back that’s what exactly they’re going to do, ring their friends here and relatives to tell them what they should do and what’s life like in New Zealand and something like that so they...they well prepared before they come to New Zealand.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement, translated)*

## **Policy Setting Obstacles**

A recurrent theme impacting raised by all participants (with the exception of one who did not migrate under the PAC), related to the difficulties they experienced due to the lack of recognition of the PAC policy by New Zealand employers. All PAC participants attributed this lack of recognition for the struggles they experienced in securing job offers in a timely manner. These participants noted that while under the PAC, participants were expected to obtain job offers for full-time permanent employment, New Zealand employers did not wish to provide these job offers in the absence of participants' possessing work visas. To complicate matters, for participants to obtain work visas, New Zealand employers had to prove to Immigration New Zealand that they had genuinely attempted to recruit New Zealanders to fill vacancies. This conundrum was explained:

*“...they didn’t recognise that scheme.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

*“It was very hard, cos most of the employers didn’t want give you a job if you’re not a resident and this is before we become a resident. You know we have to secure jobs before to become residents and most of them, most of the employers were scared cos they might get convicted by the government for giving us... And most Kiribati people, even today are still experiencing that. If the government sort of had another...a letter... and reassure them like these people are qualified to do this and that and give them a job and you won’t be prosecuted. They need a job to become residents. Well, it was actually the amount of money we had to spend to... we had to redo our health assessments and all that, again, you know for the immigration purpose and that could be quite expense as well, you know... “They need a job to become residents.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...it’s hard for me to get like um cos immigration is um permanent job but you can’t get it at the first time cos you are visitor’s visa.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

The difficulties associated with finding a job was identified as one of the most significant sources of stress faced by participants in their settlement. The reason for this was that finding a job offer that met immigration policy was a prerequisite for participants and their families being granted permanent residence and consequently secure their future for a ‘better life’ in New Zealand. All participants that came to New Zealand under the PAC were fully aware of the dire implications if they could not secure a job offer within the eight-month time limit set by policy, they would have to return to Kiribati and try again under the ballot system. As the discussion on employment will show, participants went to great lengths to find any job, with some participants recalling being willing to move anywhere in New Zealand to secure a job offer that would allow them to meet the PAC policy criteria.

Only with the success of securing a job offer that met policy criteria did participants consider that the migration and the settlement of their families could begin. For many participants it was only at this point that decisions were made back in Kiribati about what to do with their assets to secure their migration to New Zealand. This was recalled by participants:

*“She trying to get the job offer and everything else to...to start off with and then...yeah... We got the job offer, you get...you better get ready” “sell everything” “start moving.”*

**(# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)**

*“...we only sell what we can sell and the rest I give it to...give it to everyone else who need it...you see back in the island we have to sell most of our stuff like you know, like when you have to move from house to house you...you have to think of your stuff, either bring most of all or sell the other ones that you don’t need and that’s exactly what happened. We have to sell the cars and the other stuff, the houses and ... lands that we can’t sell...” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

Securing a job offer also indicated that the family unit that had been separated would once again be reunited. Many participants, particularly female participants, recalled the stress they endured about being separated from their families, particularly their children. In the case of PAC participants, the principal applicant was readily provided with a visitor’s visa to come to New Zealand to search for a job offer. With the exception of one, all PAC participants had

the principal applicant (identified in the PAC registration) come to New Zealand to search for a job offer. This was in line with immigration operational policy that placed a greater emphasis on facilitating the travel of the principal applicant (by the provision of a visitor's visa) to come to New Zealand to search for work. While all male PAC participants indicated that they first came to New Zealand on their own to search for work, most female participants told of bringing their youngest child with them.

*"...I came by myself for about a month and then my wife came later." (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*"I came first with my small boy..." (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

*"My children still stay back in the island with my husband but after I get my residency permit...I went back to the island and I came back with them..." (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

Many participants recalled those first few months of their migration as being dominated by searching for employment and subsequently applying and obtaining a work visa. It was at this point that the spouses of the principal applicant came to New Zealand to join in the search for a job offer. This was driven by the requirements under the PAC for applicants having children to meet an income threshold that often required both adults in the family to work. It was at this stage, with both adults working, that many participants recalled making plans to have their children, left behind in Kiribati, join them. This last stage of migration of family members was not influenced by the need to meet the requirements of the PAC but, rather, on the ability of participants and their spouses to pay for their children's airfares. Those with resources recalled bringing all their children while those participants with few resources and/or large families recollect the efforts that had to make to save enough to have their children join them. Commonly in very large families this was done in stages:

*"...that's the main struggle for me to work hard for their fares even though couldn't like afford the fare straightaway so the thing that I have to do is to, to pay for my husband fare so he can come over and we, we can both work together aye for our kids' fares." (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

One female participant shared her great anxiety of being separated from her adolescent daughters in the absence of parental protection. Consistent with her assessment of risk, this participant prioritised having her adolescent daughters to come to New Zealand first, followed by her sons and younger daughters, in line with her and partner's ability to save.

*“Yes until we get our jobs, we didn’t get our permanent residence yet but we invite our girls first because we worry about them when we left them. I think you know about the custom for the daughters.” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

The issues raised by participants migrating under the PAC raised concerns about the unintended consequences of the policy settings. One of the most perverse of these consequences was the inability of participants to obtain work visas that would facilitate them to secure job offers. The delay in finding New Zealand employers willing to provide job offers not only had an impact on the length of time of family separation, but was also identified by participants as underpinning their need to rely on strong ties, such as family and friends, to search for work. This reliance on these social networks (which will be explored further in this chapter), resulted in many participants congregating into industries, where their family and friends were either employed or had connections with previous employers. These first jobs were commonly in low-wage services industries (cleaning, care-giving, and supermarket work).

For the two participants who came to New Zealand under immigration categories, other than the PAC, (one of which applied and was successfully in the PAC ballot), the stress of separation was indicated as being even more pronounced. This was due to the fact that there was no clear route to gaining permanent residence compared to those seeking permanent residency under the PAC. To that end, working in New Zealand did not mean that they and their families would be allowed to settle in New Zealand. For one participant in this situation, the only way of being allowed to stay in New Zealand and to have their family join them was to try their hand in the PAC ballot. After four years of trying and being separated from their family, they were successful in the PAC ballot and the migration of their family and settlement could begin. For another participant, certainty about their ability to live permanently in New Zealand was finally achieved after nearly four years of uncertainty.

For these and all other participants, these difficult initial settlement experiences were recalled as being part of a process that they needed to get through to achieve their goals of being able to provide their families with a ‘better life’. Gaining this certainty was recalled by many participants as a source of great joy and happiness and the removal of much of the stress they had previously encountered:

*“I very happy now, all my stress gone, never worry about anything now you know.. I’m really happy cos I know it’s going to be, a different life you know?” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

## Part 2: Settlement Experiences

### Introduction

As noted earlier, by interrogating the data, five themes were identified as underpinning the settlement experiences of participants and their families. These themes were: networks, employment, housing, children’s success, and the New Zealand way of life. This section sets out the findings from the data regarding these central settlement experiences using the voices of the participants.

### Social Networks

Social networks (as discussed in Chapter Three), were identified by all participants as one of the most significant influences in their settlement experiences. Foremost among these networks, ‘strong ties’ (as defined by Granovetter 1973, 1983) comprising of family and close friends (not kin) were recognised as having played a major role in assisting and supporting participants and their families settle in New Zealand. Within the Kiribati culture any support and assistance provided by ‘strong ties’ did not carry the expectation of payback. This ‘exchange’ was commonly referred to by participants as ‘the Kiribati way’. Another approach was for participants to make a request for assistance from family and friends in the form of a ‘bubuti’. Although ‘bubuti’ did not necessarily require payback, financial or in-kind, it did mean that those who resorted to requests in this manner might themselves be called upon to provide support and assistance from those who helped them in the future. It

was within this cultural context that the following sections discuss how different types of social networks, such as those characterised as ‘strong’ and ‘weak ties’ influenced the settlement experiences of participants and their families living in New Zealand.

### ***Strong Ties: accommodation and housing***

Many participants recalled the important role that their ‘strong ties’ had in their settlement experiences, the day they landed in New Zealand. Ten participants of the group with ‘strong ties’ in New Zealand noted how their families and friends supported them in their settlement from the time they landed at Auckland International Airport:

*“When I first came my aunty staying here and they....they pick me up at the airport...” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*“Yeah I came out of the plane and I was expecting but I, I knew that my sister-in-law will be there at the airport so I came out of the plane (that’s my first travel in my life) everything’s really new, everything’s amazing and it’s kind of one (laughter) stepping into one (laughter). Was thinking like “I was Alice in Wonderland... “...it’s like looking at you know outside then all things I haven’t seen before.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

From being met at the airport, many participants told of being taken to the homes of their relatives to begin their new lives in New Zealand. The willingness of relatives to accommodate participants and their families until such time that they could establish their own households was recognised by all participants as a vital form of support at a most critical time in their lives as new settlers. Many participants expressed their deep appreciation for the efforts their relatives made in taking them into their homes despite the fact that many already lived in over-crowded conditions:

*“I stay with them like four months or three.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“We here, stayed with our families for like two months and we start looking for our own place.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“When we first arrive and the family...pick us there and when we came there we thought that’s a big house..... but when we get there we just realise that it’s one bedroom...ten people one bedroom...they nice family.” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

Although some participants spoke of the challenges of living in such difficult conditions, many, however, noted that this situation provided a greater incentive for them to organise themselves to enable them to establish their own households. Many participants also came to the view that the ‘closed nature’ of New Zealand homes was not suitable for large families compared to the open style houses found in Kiribati that could readily manage the accommodation of different family configurations:

*“...we still live with our sister-in-law but it’s really hard to live as an extended family here cos on the island we are happy live in a open house so it’s one of the challenge to me now wanting to find a home, home aye.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...we really want to move and stay on our own rather than like staying with people that already have children that we use their room at the time, they move out because of us.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“...it was quite difficult Mary Anne. When we first arrived here we were staying with my sister-in-law...in a crowded little house. Well that’s the situation you know and I think most Kiribati people migrating here would have to go through that.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

Despite these experiences, most participants mentioned that living with relatives provided a large number of benefits including receiving support in getting their children enrolled in school and getting help in filling the necessary immigration to obtain visas. A few female participants also stated how living with their relatives allowed them to gather first-hand information about how family life functioned in New Zealand. In one case, a female

participant described how she took the opportunity to gather this information by observing the daily routines of their families:

*“...just take me there to their home so we didn’t talk about living in house life in New Zealand...I just go with the flow with their routine...both working at that time you know so the kids you know went to school and they both work together...I observe what is happening every day...they were like you know, in the morning they have to get up early, prepare their kids to school get their lunch you know to prepare the lunch...” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Was at the first time I stay with aunty in Auckland and they help me to get a job offer and to do the immigration paper work to apply for a work permit and then I move to Wellington to my brother and his wife and I stay him until I get my permanent residence...only my family help me.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

*“My sister-in-law, yeah was the one who helped me yeah find the school... otherwise I don’t know where to go, so it’s really nice of...having a family.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

### ***Strong Ties: search for work***

Other than initial accommodation living with family and friends, participants with ‘strong ties’ noted that one of the most significant benefits from these strong ties was the assistance they received in searching for work. With permanent residency status depending on securing an employment offer, strong ties used their own networks that they had developed during their time in New Zealand to assist participants find employment. A common pattern of assistance recalled by many participants involved either ‘strong ties’ asking their employers to take on participant family members or widening their own social connections within the Kiribati community to call on others to also assist with the search for work.

Unsurprisingly, the use of these social networks resulted in all participants with ‘strong ties’ living in New Zealand finding their first jobs in industries with concentrated numbers of I-Kiribati workers (such as cleaning, caregiving, supermarket jobs such as night stacking).

Those participants with no ‘strong ties’ in New Zealand, either went alone to search for work by searching through the internet, or reached out into the Kiribati community, even if they did not know the people. In one case only, a participant told how their partner took the initiative to search for work on their own using the internet and found work in an industry, where no other Kiribati migrants worked, only to entice new Kiribati migrants to become employed in the security industry.

*“...so it’s to, um during my first week we hunted for a job, asking friends in our community to help us find a job and luckily I found a job from one of my friends that worked in the rest home.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“I was lucky...a mate already working with Straight Shipping and he sort of guided me through, where to go you know, who to go and see and what to do- write a letter, get your CV prepared and all that. So I had all of that done and I went and approached them in the office, Head Office, and ask them for a job.” “He was already working there.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

The impacts of these social ties (explored further in the section on employment in this chapter), also identified how those in work were often called upon by employers to vouch for newcomers entering the labour market. Some employers with a high presence of Kiribati workers, tapped into these connections in the process of screening new Kiribati migrant applicants as to whether they should be considered for employment. Participants noted that this process of vouching was commonly conducted in an informal exchange of information, rather than part of a formal process of recruitment.

*“There is um Kiribati friend to worked there before and so the good thing he was, he was really helpful with us cos he promoted...how we work...” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Some friends...they know somebody that works at the OCS and that’s how we no like they give them our names and we just go through the procedure and then we go and*

*interview and stuff like that and we got the job." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

The ability of strong ties, to assist participants to find work was recalled with an immense amount of gratitude by participants and their families. The capability of these networks to achieve positive results in the labour market was recalled by one male participant, who arrived in New Zealand with a low level of English language proficiency and was assisted by his sister to find work. This participant recalled being taken to see many prospective employers and subsequently to a company that already had some experience with the employment of Kiribati workers. After his sister spoke for him and assisted him to fill in his application form, this participant recalled being offered a job with the company.

*"My sister she take me to everywhere and then take me to...and then that's how we get the job she talk because at that time I not quite better talk English you know and she talk on behalf of me and they fill it up the form." (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

In another case, a female participant recalled how a friend working in the same company, referred to above, assisted her husband to also become employed. In this case, the friend already employed, advocated for this participant's husband by drawing attention to the hard-working nature of Kiribati people.

*"...we were hunting for a job but the thing he doesn't speak English so we have...to communicate on behalf of him so we have to go and talk on behalf of him because he doesn't talk...yeah there is um Kiribati friend too worked there before and so the good thing he was, he was really helpful with us cos he promoted our you know how we work, the way we work here on the islands like...hard working people yeah, they do, they completed their tasks manually with all their strength so that's how the boss get tempted or whatever in what's their promotion...so he just want to take my husband for a trial...seeing that my husband's really...a hardworking man and he just concentrate on his work so they, they took him, as one of their...employee."*  
*(# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

### ***Strong Ties: entry into the private rental housing market***

Many participants also identified the important role that ‘strong ties’ had in their search for their first rental property. ‘Strong ties’ played a pivotal role in assisting participants and their families search and find rental housing, while at the same time many participants sought to obtain rental housing in close proximity to their family and friends. For seven participants with ‘strong ties’ living in New Zealand, the depth of dependency on family and friends extended to them taking over the rental properties vacated by their ‘strong ties’ or the friends of their ‘strong ties’. A common occurrence of this type of ‘chain housing’ was for ‘strong ties’ leaving their properties to vouch for their family and friends to their landlord resulting in half of the participant group taking over the rental property of other I-Kiribati families as they moved into better quality housing.

*“...we’re lucky we...they told us about the house “you looking for the house? Just come and live in the house because... we’re going to stay with...there’s no place to...to store the things” “Ok” and then...we talk to the landlord about that and then we move.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

In another case, a female participant recalled living with her brother and family and then staying on in the house when they decided to move out:

*“My brother cos...they rent that house before... But when we move in with them and my kids came they move out to another house and I stay in the house and rent it myself with my kids.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

All ten participants, with ‘strong ties’ in New Zealand recalled the important role that these ties had in assisting them get into the rental housing market. The dependence of these participants on ‘strong ties’ resulted in many of them acquiring their first rental properties in close proximity to family and friends. Many of these participants attributed this outcome to the local knowledge held by their ‘strong ties’ of housing in the areas where they lived and their own desire to live in proximity to their families and friends. Unlike those with ‘strong ties’, those with no family living in New Zealand often moved into rental housing in proximity to the place of female adults’ place of employment. Over time, those participants

who experienced upward labour market mobility became more often distributed across the suburbs that they already knew, but not in close proximity to their strong ties.

### ***Strong Ties: role of back-up***

Strong ties were also identified by many participants as being an important source of support in times of adversity. Assistance with unexpected shocks such as high electricity bills and specialist medical costs were cited by many participants as an important function of strong ties. Referred to as ‘back-up’ in times of need, this assistance was also cited as being in-kind, for example, offering families accommodation in times of extreme hardship such as the loss of jobs through redundancy and unemployment. The discussion with participants on how they coped in hard times and the support they received from ‘strong ties’ provided some of the most evocative emotional responses in the interviews.

The willingness of people with few resources themselves to assist new settlers in need was one of the most humbling experiences of these findings. In the case referred to, the female participant told the story of how her family were taken in by another migrant family when they could no longer afford to pay the rent. Through tears this participant recalled how this family (not kin) went out of their way to take them in to live with them for nearly two years; during which she gave birth to a baby. An interesting revelation identified by the participant was the fact that the family that provided this assistance was also interviewed for this research and did not mention it.

While interested to hear of this connection, the humbleness shown by the participant by not raising it within their own account of their settlement experiences was not so much of a surprise. Within Kiribati culture, showing kindness and doing good deeds is not something that is lauded, indeed to do so would be frowned upon as seeking attention and going against the principle of doing the right thing. In this case and all other similar cases of assistance and support provided to others, it is up to those who received assistance and support to raise it rather than those who provided it.

*“It’s about two years... I was pregnant there and I give birth... she’s a kind woman.”*  
**(# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)**

In another example of ‘back-up’, a male participant recalled being supported by his siblings when his family fell on hard times such as during times of unemployment.

*“...they always support me I’m run out of work or something like that, that’s why I always like um I call them my back-up, always “I got a problem can you help me”. There’s a lot of support from them...I don’t know when I’m going to leave, leave them or like a moving but at the moment I still have to good prepare like a back-up or something then I can move but at the moment not really settled properly (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

In each of these two examples, participants stressed that the ‘back up’ they received was not a desire to be, or become dependent on others, but more of a chance of ‘strong ties’ to smooth their settlement path in times of need, particularly if hard times impacted upon their children. Consistent with this, all participants expressed their strong desire to be independent, including living in their own home (not with extended family), working hard, and making their own way in New Zealand. Aside from the rare provision of financial ‘back-up’, many examples of ‘back-up’ were recalled in the form of assistance with child care in assisting participants to successfully juggle work and family. All female participants and many male participants told stories of how members of their ‘strong ties’ network assisted them with picking up their children from school and looking after them until they returned from work. This form of ‘back-up’ was described in terms of informal reciprocity, where they assisted with child care in times when their ‘strong ties’ required assistance.

Half of the participant group noted that the provision of this type of assistance influenced their decision to live close to their ‘strong ties’ in the earliest stages of their settlement. This was exemplified by a male participant who recalled purposefully searching for rental housing to be situated in close proximity to his extended family:

*“...was just a few blocks away from my aunty’s so every now and then she could come and help with the kid as well especially cos we only got one vehicle at that time so... sometimes I work and there’s no one to pick up my kids so they have to walk and if it’s raining then eh, then I have to call my aunty to pick them up you know they just attend the school...I want to stay close to my aunty so, you know, so she could help*

*out with transportation and also with my immigration papers" (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

Another story of the role of ‘back-up’ told by a female participant emphasised the reciprocal nature of this form of assistance. Living next door to another Kiribati migrant family, she talked of how both households shared responsibility for picking up their children from school. If her husband could not make to pick up the children, the person next door would pick up their children and her children with reciprocal arrangements also in place. Discussing this further, the participant told of how this form of reciprocal assistance had influenced her decision to stay in the house she lived in, although it was considered too small for her family.

Another form of ‘back-up’ recalled by some participants was (if and when finances permitted) the bringing over of grandparents from Kiribati to assist with child care. Many younger participants (female and male) told of efforts they had made to bring one of both of their parents or parents-in-law to assist with the birth of a new child, or to assist with child-care arrangement with other children. This type of support was particularly important when participants and their spouses were working, or if one of the adults sought to study to further their career.

*“We decide both of us...to get our family to come over here to look after... the baby...” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

*“By that time my mum...came down from... the island, that helps.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

Interestingly, one participant noted some positive trade-offs accruing from having parental assistance, in terms of the retention of language and cultural traditions. One male participant told of how his children had to speak in Kiribati to their grandparents in order to communicate with them and that another benefit from his children having their grandparents was their ability to further embed important cultural values and behaviours in his children (such as showing respect at all times to the elderly) and language retention, that he was concerned could dissipate over time.

*“...I invite my family, my parents over just to stay with us a few month.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

The cultural and language benefits to children from regular visits from grandparents were also mentioned by five other participants (four female and one male participant).

### ***Strong Ties: the Kiribati community***

While not as close as family and long-time friends, ‘strong ties’ were also indicated as including members of the Kiribati community in New Zealand. This did not mean the need to forge a relationship with every member within the Kiribati community, but rather, that strong ties developed within the Kiribati community. Participation in cultural events such as traditional dancing (or maie) for their children was viewed by many participants as a way of not only steeping their children in cultural activities, but building ‘ties’ with others in the community. While most female participants (and one male participant) stressed the importance of ‘maie’ and other cultural activities as the conduit for the development of these ties, for most male participants, it was the social aspects of these gatherings that was viewed as adding to their ‘strong ties’.

*“I think the main important to me... to ensure that my kids are keeping the culture is to encourage them to participate in the Kiribati... like community things and the church...” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“We had a discussion with, the other day, with my wife. These kids...will lose their culture especially the...the language as well...like: you know in Kiribati we mostly once a week or twice a week we have to get involved with some activity you know...”*  
*(# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

For male participants, in particular, the social aspects of the community made them feel as though they were experiencing something important, that they had left behind in Kiribati. Many male participants, especially newer settled migrants and those who identified themselves as struggling in their settlement noted that connecting with other I-Kiribati in social functions assisted them to manage some of the day-to-day stresses they faced.

*“I like to join all the Kiribati community all the time, to catch up and update each other...” (# middle aged male, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“....you are in a social, in a social relationship with everybody else and since we can’t....we can’t go back to Kiribati, you know, to...to have the life that you normally have in...in the past. It’s...it’s better than nothing you know, waiting always in the house rather yeah yeah and I mean when we met...met in the community is you are happy you know. I believe that coming to a community.... I. ...de-stress...in Kiribati we mostly once a week or twice a week we have to get involved with some activity you know.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“...when we met... in the community is you are happy you know...it’s really like you are back in the island.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“I always try to attend functions yeah I also try to take part in as many as I could eh.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

An interesting aspect of many participants’ desire to broaden their social connections within the Kiribati community was their desire to curtail their children’s ability to broaden their social connections with other New Zealanders, outside the Kiribati community. For example, while three male participants expressed being relatively comfortable in having their children (aged over the age of 16) attend social activities, such as DJ events, all other participants voiced concern about allowing their children attend such events. Despite attending these social events themselves, many participants said that it was inappropriate for their children (even males aged 18 years and females aged 21 years old) to attend these social events for fear that they would somehow ‘change’ and take up behaviour such as drinking and smoking (that their parents did) and become spoilt and behave in a way that would be at odds with the Kiribati culture.

These concerns were particularly relevant in relation to their female children, restricting their social activities to participation only to cultural events:

*“Only the Kiribati dancing something like that but not every weekend, only once in a while...” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

*“I try to like make them participate in things like cultural stuff.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“I’m scared to be honest. I’m quite terrified. That’s what I was given a lot of options like you know the first option was not to interact with the community a lot you know...that was the first option that I was received... from many people...our youth are quite spoilt you know in some ways but yeah that was the first option I was given...” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

Concerns raised by participants about their children becoming spoilt was commonly referred to in terms of their children losing their cultural and family obligations, resulting in the loss of cultural identity. Many participants noted the tendency of their children to ‘push back’ against their parents, reminding them that they no longer lived in Kiribati, a round-about way of telling them that their rules were no longer compatible with their new life in New Zealand.

*“Oh mum but this is not Kiribati” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

Out of ten participants with teenage children, seven participants emphasised the importance of the settlement process for their children being centred on their children maintaining their Kiribati culture. In contrast to this group, the other three participants expressed being content in their children developing social relationships outside the Kiribati community with non-Kiribati New Zealanders in order for them to succeed in New Zealand. Consistent with this wider view of social connectivity, these three participants also noted that school was not only important in ensuring their children secured a good education, but also recognised that schools provided an important role, as ‘agents of change’, in assisting their children to become settled in New Zealand.

*“...when they first came over here like they...hardly find a friend...the older ones were the ones they mostly nagging...of going back and they thought they could not fit*

*into the system...and even the younger ones pick up the language as well. As they go along with the school work and maybe finding friends and stuff like that it just like at the end of that year I never heard anything else..." (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

Despite the view by respondents of the importance of the ‘Kiribati community’ in maintaining their links to their culture, it was also acknowledged that the ethos of ‘community’ was not necessarily strong, and that many of those links were being replaced by religious affiliations. In the absence of Kiribati churches and non-government organizations that could further support and assist respondents with the process of settlement, the most important ‘strong ties’ continued to be family and friends, with the occasional coming together of informal networks springing from Kiribati community groups. Unlike other Pacific ethnic groups, that have had a much longer historical immigration association with New Zealand, and who have well developed social and cultural infrastructure through community groups and churches, it is difficult to ascertain just how Kiribati community groups in New Zealand will develop in the future. This is an area worthy of research in the future, particularly as the Kiribati population grows in New Zealand.

### *Social Ties: church affiliations*

In addition to ‘strong ties’, four participants (two female and two male participants) noted how ‘weaker’ social ties made through church, had an important role in supporting them in their initial settlement experiences. These participants recalled their surprise in experiencing the kindness and generosity shown to them by New Zealanders, including providing them with warm clothes in winter, food, and support with searching for work. In one example, a female participant recalled the excellent support her husband had received from members of a Warkworth Parish in helping him find employment. This support included the preparation of her husband’s curriculum vitae, sending the curriculum vitae with supporting letter to a marine company based in Wellington, which resulted in her husband securing employment in his area of skills.

*“...the community part of the church and the church itself has...has been participating in our transition... warm clothes and.....they give us some food in.... the*

*hard days you know" (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*"They help him to um...to....like to make a CV... and they send his um application down here to... InterIslander... they really helped..." (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

In another case, relating to church affiliations within the Kiribati community, a male participant recalled how members of his Kiribati prayer group (people he knew but were not family, and more acquaintances than friends) donated money to assist him raise \$1,000 for him to see a specialist, as part of his immigration health assessment. In this case, it was the nature of connections that had formed within the framework of the church that led to people, who were not related to the participant to donate substantial amounts of money for his well-being, rather than being an example of the practices of 'strong ties'.

*"...When they heard about I'm gonna to go and check what's that the cardiologist and then the cardiologist need a thousand something... and then I went there but one of the member of the group... she gave the money to me... to help like \$300...and then ... some of them they give like \$150 like that... that's why I can afford to go there before I'm stuck." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

While the social ties from church affiliations widened the participants' perceptions of New Zealanders, these participants and all other participants (with the exception of one) noted that they had difficulties in making social connections with those in closest proximity to them, their neighbours. Indeed, the next most prolific form of 'weak' social ties identified by most participants was 'friends' from work. The following section examines the role of 'weak ties' (as defined by Granovetter 1973, 1983) in the settlement experiences of participants and their families.

### ***Weak Ties: impact on employment***

The formation of social ties beyond 'strong ties' and church affiliations for most participants was not identified as being particularly important either, at a personal level, or in their

settlement. Indeed, all participants conceded that other than the formation of social ties with work colleagues, they did not have any connections outside of the Kiribati community.

*“I have some Imatang friends and other people from other Pacific ethnicities but Kiribati people are first friends... like they are most important to me. They are my close friends I might say” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

Many participants, irrespective of gender or age, considered their work colleagues as important social outreach with other New Zealanders. Despite this, most of the participants who regarded these social ties as important conceded that they had never invited their friends into their homes. Male participants noted that they generally connected with their work colleagues within the confines of workplace activities and events, such as Friday drinks. While female participants also noted that they socialised with their work colleagues within the workplace (such as lunches), they also noted that they sometimes met their colleagues outside their workplace, such as restaurants for special occasions. The key finding was that ‘weak ties’, such as work colleagues, were considered as extensions of their workplace and that, but for these workplaces, the formation of relationships with non-Kiribati would not have occurred.

*“...only friends at work... friends at work and sometimes my friends sometimes after work go and meet them for a little drink.” (# middle aged male, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“...after work you know if there’s a function on somewhere... we are more comfortable sticking to our people yeah. We still make friends outside. (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...have a friend just from my workmates.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

Despite this finding, most participants (female and male participants) were able to articulate some positive aspects generated by ‘weak ties’. Different points of emphasis were identified between female and male participants with women accentuating the opportunity to connect with people from different ethnic and cultural groups. In contrast, men noted that workplace

acquaintances were useful for obtaining up-to-date information on work issues and career prospects.

*“I do now working with Māori people which is really good so you know the, the Māori culture now... and other Pacific friends so you know their culture too so it is really good... and that comes from work...being stick with the Kiribati friends aye you can’t explore any other cultures where in New Zealand you have to accept all other cultures cos we’re in this...” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*I would ask them for advice like what sort of prospect can I ...what sort of contacts I can get out of them or what’s happening where. Where’s all the action happening, in Australia or here in New Zealand? (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

Other than work colleagues, another example of ‘weak ties’ identified by two male participants was ‘weak ties’ created by chance encounters (as defined by Granovetter 1973, 1983). In one case, a male participant told how while at work doing his grave-yard shift at a petrol station he had the chance to meet some who ran his own company delivering newspapers throughout the lower North Island. Through a chance meeting, the participant took the opportunity to enquire about the work of his company, during which he was offered a job on the spot.

*“...I work...and do a graveyard shift during the night, from 10 till 6 in the morning...And then the guy that drops the magazines... I actually met the owner of the company... That’s...when I ask him for a job...he accepted that...and he just ask me to put in resignation and I did for two weeks and started straight on the spot...” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

In an even more complex example of the value of ‘weak ties’, another male participant recalled his story of a string of chance encounters that led to two employment opportunities and the development of a new career.

*“...I was actually working as a security officer...at one...of the hospitals I think it was in Lower Hutt and...there was this inmate housed right next to the room so I met this...Corrections Officer...that’s when he told me to come over because he used to work in the same security company as well...he recognised the uniform so he approached me and told me stories then he encouraged me, you know, to sort of follow in his path...I starting looking for a house to purchase and there was an agent...and that was the very agent that helped me out with the purchase and he used to be a Corrections Officer as well.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

These stories of chance encounters underlined the value of ‘weak ties’ in creating new opportunities, particularly in the area of employment. In contrast to the employment and career prospects generated by ‘weak ties’, exemplified above, no female participants raised the issue of chance encounters. Unlike, the two male participants, who worked in workplaces that allowed them to interact with the public, all of the female participants (with the exception of one) who worked in the caregiving industry, spoke about their jobs being focussed on the well-being of their clients with few opportunities to interact with people outside their workplaces. These constraints were also identified with respect to male participants working as commercial cleaners.

### ***Weak Ties: neighbours***

The difficulties of developing ‘weak ties’ outside of the workplace were also evident in relation to participants’ responses about neighbours. All participants (with the exception of three) noted that they did not know, or had never spoken to their neighbours. None of the participants appeared particularly troubled by the lack of connections with their neighbours, although two female participants noted that had they been more proficient in speaking English they would not have been as shy to interact with their neighbours. In two other cases, participants thought that their neighbours should have been more welcoming in greeting them, as they were new to the area.

*“...because English is not our first language...” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

*“..we just look at them but they’re not...too shy to say hello first because they not look at us like...” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

*“...we didn’t even know who our neighbours were and we just stick to ourselves at home, watch television every day...” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

A story told by a male participant highlighted how, with some assistance, he and his family were able to develop a relationship with his neighbours. Pressured by his neighbours to participate in a community organised Neighbours’ Day event, this participant was ‘forced’ to meet his neighbours that enabled him to develop a wider set of social networks:

*“I wasn’t thinking of going around and you know meeting them but there were three...of my neighbours came over so that’s when I started ...to continue to the other side...that was good because there was one house from behind, we share the boundary fence so at first ... cos like they have their clothes line right next to us. So before we hardly say anything...so right now...we can have a good chat you know...and her went around and met the other three houses just down the road, that’s when I realised... there wasn’t any Pacific Islanders around (laughter)...the ones right next door are old couples but yeah there was a young couples as well on the road.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

This story, along with the findings of the formation of social ties in the workplace, highlighted that, with the right environment, formally organised events, and the initiative of others, ‘weak ties’ offered important opportunities for participants and their families to connect with those beyond their strong ties.

## Employment

Finding work was identified by all participants as the most important event shaping their settlement in New Zealand. Not only was employment identified as providing a critical pathway for gaining permanent residency for those who migrated under the PAC, but also as a vital first step in participants determining their own settlement outcomes and becoming less

reliant on their ‘strong ties’. All participants associated employment with their ability to rent their own homes and establish their households. The following sections discuss the findings with respect to the search for work, workplace experiences, language proficiency and the progression of career options through in-house training and tertiary study as aspects of participants’ settlement experiences.

### **Work**

All participants told of the importance that ‘strong ties’ played in assisting them to find their first jobs. Utilising these ‘strong ties’, all participants told how family and friends assisted them to gain employment in areas where high levels of Kiribati representation already existed (most commonly in the services sector, such as cleaning, caregiving and supermarket). While all participants expressed their delight in finding their first jobs and the willingness of New Zealand employers on taking a chance on them, some participants (particularly male participants with skills in the marine sector) viewed these jobs simply as a starting point to their employment in New Zealand.

*“...at that time you accept the first one that come’s in you know?” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...during my first week we hunted for a job, asking friends in our community to help us find a job and luckily I found a job from one of my friends that worked in the rest home.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

Aside from providing a valuable entry point in the New Zealand labour market, all female participants noted that one of the best features of working in industries such as cleaning and caregiving was the ability to opt for work shifts that best suited their families. In the cleaning industry, one of the most common entry points into the labour market for participants and their spouses, participants noted that most often women worked during the day and the men worked at night. In another case, a male participant told the story of him and his wife working together as night stock stackers; made possible by having an older child that could look after the younger children while they went out to work.

*“I work at night time and um she used to a job like from the afternoon until before I left home she came home.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*“...the older ones are old enough to look after....like they didn’t even know what we’ve been doing every day because we leave at 1am in the morning when we get back they’re still asleep.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...I work in the day and she work in the night...” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

While none of the participants, working in the caregiving and cleaning industries (six female participants and two male participants), were particularly unhappy about having to undertake shift work, all of the women noted the stress of having to juggle their commitments at home so that they could adequately look after their children. One mitigating factor against this work stress was the ability to work alongside other Kiribati workers already employed. These ‘in-work ties’ were identified as providing an important way of learning about what their jobs entailed and what was expected of them. Other benefits included the ability of these ‘ties’ to translate the New Zealand workplace culture, something that many participants initially found difficult to understand.

Armed with their initial employment experiences, some participants (one female and five male participants) told how, after a period of time, they proceeded to search for new employment opportunities. Upon gaining their permanent residence, two male participants recalled how they immediately went about to search for employment in the areas of their skills, as seamen in the marine industry. These male participants utilised a mix of ‘strong and weak ties’ to obtain employment as seaman. For two other male participants, chance encounters had a profound influence in influencing them to move into new jobs, in one case leading to the development of a new career path.

*“Once we settle down with the job, eight months later I try, while I had the job at the Pak N Save, I tried as well to ring everywhere...” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“The second time much easier...I saw it on Trade Me jobs so I decided to have a go you know and apply there and I was successful.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

The search for subsequent jobs was significantly different for all female participants (with the exception of two participants), who indicated considerable levels of immobility. Six of the participants who worked as caregivers continued to do so noting little prospect of moving onto other types of employment. In the case of the two female participants, who went undertook tertiary education and became registered nurses, one left the caregiving industry, while one became employed as a nurse in the caregiving industry. The findings indicate that while human and social capital influenced job searching, in the case of female participants, the move from their traditional caregiving jobs was through their investment in further education (this is further explored later in this chapter).

*“Oh this time I...I go for like advertisement on the internet. I did it myself and I went through a proper interview. Yeah I think at this time I did it on my own because of like comparing what I know now...and what I knew before. It's a big difference cos I know more things now and I know my way out... yeah... yeah but that's how I get... my job I'm in at the moment, I got it through um...um applying through the process.”  
I'm very happy yeah I'm very happy I...I feel like I achieved...” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

### ***Workplace experiences***

Responses from participants about their workplace experiences provided a rich level of data and sentiments. Workplace experiences spanned a wide spectrum of views, ranging from positive views about the level of professionalism practised in some workplaces to extreme negative views about managerial incompetency and racism. In between these two extremes were a small number of participants who did not express any views one way or the other about their workplace experiences, even though other participants that worked alongside them raised serious issues about how their workplaces operated.

A commonly employed strategy referred to by many participants was (particularly in their initial jobs) to ‘go with the flow’, work hard, observe and not ask too many questions. The responses on workplace experiences indicated a dichotomy between those participants employed in career jobs (such as seafarers, marine deckhands, nurses and correction officer), compared to those working in low-paid jobs as cleaners and caregivers. All those participants (male and female participants) utilising their skills in their career jobs, indicated high levels of contentment about their workplace experiences.

*“I just went in there and did my job, I knew I was in a different nation, in a different country, and there will be cultural issues to somewhere around there you know so I just went with the flow you know.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

For example, the male participants working in the marine industry noted that compared to their often difficult conditions and work experiences that they had encountered working on German registered container vessels, their workplaces in New Zealand were of a ‘high professional standard’, characterised by good management and workplace practices and prospects for career enhancement. These participants also lauded the presence of a union that could represent their interests and protect their rights in the workplace. While these participants noted that it took some time to get used to their new working conditions, it was noteworthy that they provided among the most positive views about their workplace experiences.

*“They’re quite professional, very professionally. In New Zealand it’s all professionally done.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

*“It’s all, it’s really different....different from what we’re used to have in...in the German ships. It’s...in here it’s, you...you were like one of them, you know. Everybody is the same, everybody....” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“There’s a union there, fighting for you, you know when something is wrong and...and other stuff. It’s...it’s really...it’s very good how they...how, you know, how*

*they treat people, the crew, especially the crew.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

In sharp contrast to these positive responses, four of the seven female participants working in the caregiving industry and one male participant working as a commercial cleaner noted that they had experienced racism. These participants noted that they had experienced racist attitudes and prejudice from those in authority, typically from their managers and supervisors. Common among their complaints were perceptions of being belittled in the way they were spoken to and how shift work was allocated, most often not in their favour. All these participants told of being spoken down by their managers and supervisors in one-way commands and snapping back at them if they raised any issues.

Those working as caregivers noted that any ideas they proffered on how to improve services to their elderly clients were typically dismissed, making them feel that they had little to offer in terms of the future care of their clients. When questioned further about what they did to challenge their managers and supervisors, all female participants working as caregivers (with the exception of one participant who subsequently became a nurse) noted that it was not in their Kiribati culture to challenge those in a position of authority, leaving them with little choice but to do as they were told.

*“Hard yeah to... for the care you know... by like following orders or being advised to do this and this which you think you can think of a better way to do it....some people are a bit hard on you like giving you your decision or whatever they going to advise you to work... but you have no way yeah so you follow what they ask you to do. I feel really like, you know, I wasn’t happy... I really want to fight back but I can’t cos I know they are bosses...in my culture in my... really hard for me to... so I just keep quiet and do what they said. I feel really like, you know, I wasn’t happy.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Like they gave them the good...good hours first. Only 20 weeks, 20 hours a week ... but not like the one I liked.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

The female participants working in the caregiving industry who raised the issue of racism raised the possibility that racist attitudes towards them were predicated on the fact that they were a different ethnic migrant group new to the industry.

*“....some they are racist as well... I can feel it...the way they talk and how they treat you... to me I’m just... just ignore it...I feel not good...just think about my children.”*  
**(# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)**

*“That’s the problem, another problem like they... We can find from the way they look... the people we work with... but now they, it’s getting good now”* **(# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)**

Six female participants working in the caregiving industry noted that these negative experiences, among others, lay behind their desire to study to become qualified nurse. In one case, a female participant who was now working as a nurse in the same rest home where she had worked as a caregiver, vowed not to treat caregivers as she had been treated, but to treat them on the basis of equality as health workers with different roles in the care of the elderly.

*“As a nurse...I could tell that you know like I won’t do these kind of things...to the caregivers. Well I’m a nurse now I have to the... we are all the same as health care workers but we are different in a way like delivering medications and they do the caregiving.”* **(# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)**

Interestingly, this female participant noted that on becoming a nurse she raised her concerns about racism in the workplace, only to have these concerns refuted by those in managing caregivers. Her view was that the racist attitudes exhibited towards caregivers reflected negative attitudes based not simply on race, but on race and hierarchy, with caregivers viewed as the ‘bottom of the pecking order’.

*“That’s the main thing because I was thinking because I’m black and they’re white, that’s... that’s always my thinking aye but they told me they didn’t mean it that way it’s just me like but it’s kind of like they’re treating us like black... brown people like*

*the same...and that's give me a challenge to go to... to their position too." (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

Another aspect of racism in the workplace, raised by four female participants working as caregivers and one male participant working as a cleaner, was the racist attitudes of co-workers. Many of these participants noted that their experiences of racist attitudes against them came from Māori and other Pacific co-workers.

*"Sometimes I have a problem and sometimes I'm alright... some from your colleagues, work mates. They blah blah blah." (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*"It looks like it's good now only with our Pacific ones, like the....lady still from before till now but we can cope with her." (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

In an attempt to tease these issues further, two of the group of five participants who had raised their concerns about racism in the workplace, with their senior managers noted that while they were told that their concerns would be looked into, nothing came of it, with racist attitudes continuing to be part of their workplace experiences. These participants noted their frustration and considered themselves being seriously let down by management in dealing with issues that affected their day-to-day working lives.

*"But the problem in the night shift...but I already talked to my boss and they haven't solved the problem in nearly two years." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

While the issue of racism was one of the most poignant issues raised by participants, other issues were also noted. In one case, a female participant emotionally recalled how her manager simply said "no" to her request to take time off to allow her to take her sick baby to see a doctor. This outright rejection to her request, even after she argued that the baby needed her, was viewed with a great deal of disdain by this participant and interpreted as a management system that did not care about her and her obligations to ensure the well-being of her family. This and other examples cited by female participants, who had worked or

continued to work as caregivers, were often viewed by these participants as expressions of racism.

In one case, a female participant noted that she was lucky to have a manager who seemed to care about issues, such as racism in the workplace:

*“Yes, but one more thing that was very good is the manager, she talk to me ‘when you’ve got something that you didn’t want...come and see me, she’s the one she’s doing her job very great. Once you had a problem you go straight to her. She would sort it out...” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

Although the female participant was very happy at having such a good manager, she remained concerned about the possibility that, if her manager decided to take leave or change her employment, her concerns about racism in the workplace would continue unabated. Aside from the specific issues identified in the caregiver industry, other participants told of how they had to adjust to operation of their workplaces in the New Zealand environment. In one case, a male participant told of how he had to learn to cope with working in an environment with a significant level of conflict between staff, a situation that he had to work out how to deal with himself.

*“...there’s always conflict between the staffs...when I first joined that’s what they told me that “you better watch out for the staff rather than the... the inmates. I think it’s about responsibilities eh. They...want to show they’ve been there for...long time and they can do whatever they want to do. They want you to follow them yeah, even though it’s a little bit out of the book. I deal with it yeah...I think I can deal with that.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

### *Role of language proficiency*

An important issue that came up with many participants was the impact of language proficiency, employment, and work experiences. Many participants indicated having trouble either understanding those they worked with or being understood, irrespective of their level of English education in school. Across all work fields, gender and age, many participants

noted that New Zealander employers did not make enough effort to ensure that workers understood what was being asked of them. A common difficulty recorded by many participants was the fast pace of the language being spoken and the accent of New Zealanders, which many I-Kiribati found difficult to understand.

At the same time, all but four participants recognised that many of their co-workers found it hard to understand what they were trying to say, attributing this to their accents. These participants recalled being repeatedly asked the same question by co-workers and managers in an attempt to understand what they were trying to say.

*“...even my English they got lost with it...I got lost with them as well in certain parts...because...they’re fast...though you speak English: there they go and you can’t really track what...they talk about...especially....some of the slangs in New Zealand...sometimes they...they have to ask you a question twice.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“Oh it seems that we don’t understand English” because of the accent that was new to us at the time so it took us a while to learn and understand what the people are saying and at the same...I think it’s vice versa from us to them” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“... I understand the one the things when... some people when they talk to me like a Pakeha sometimes I understand, sometimes I’m not because cos they really fast, that the problem that why I... and the written is not good as well... because I’m... I not enrolled in the secondary school in Kiribati.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

By way of contrast, four participants who had not identified as having any language difficulties noted the benefits of being able to effectively communicate with those they worked with. A key benefit was the ability to engage in two-way conversations with those they worked with and, in particular, to be understood in their communications. These participants acknowledged that possessing language skills had made their working lives easier.

*“It makes things easy... yeah communication is easy so it making things easy for you to communicate to the people... it makes things easy...” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

Notwithstanding these different experiences, all participants acknowledged that it was necessary for them to make every effort to speak English as much as possible if they wanted to succeed in their settlement. Many participants told of the great efforts they made, working through extreme shyness, to speak English at work. They also spoke of feeling frustrated at being able to understand what was being said to them but having difficulty in responding.

*“I hardly speak English at that time cos I was a bit shy to talk to like people in another language but yeah I have to force myself to do so cos that’s the only thing you can approach the bosses I only can communicate to, to get a job.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Yes I can understand but... sometimes it’s hard to reply back....” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

*“We shy to talk...” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“It’s the main language and I think we have to learn and if I need to go back to Whitireia to go and apply there I maybe need to take a course first... English course.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

Unfortunately, four participants (two female and two male participants) who identified themselves as having low English language proficiency noted that, while they had considered going back to school, they had discounted the idea due to their inability to afford to take time out of work to study. This conundrum was communicated by these participants with a level of sadness and regret, but also with a hint of optimism that should their personal situations improve they may be able to take time off work to enrol in language training.

*“...I need to enrol with the English because I need the good job but the prob...I think that I’m too late because my kids, I got to support my kids first.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...is a little bit hard because I’m not like a well-educated...” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

### ***In-house training and further study***

Training and further study options comprised important subjects for all participants (with the exception of one male participant who identified himself as having very poor English skills) in their discussions about future employment intentions. All female participants working as caregivers highlighted the benefits of having access to NCEA accredited qualifications that could be gained through in-house training and through externally-run and assessed courses. Not only did these participants consider these opportunities as an important component of their jobs, but they also recognised that increased salary increments were dependent on their ability to gain these qualifications.

As important as access to in-house training was for these participants, the issue of further study outside of their place of work was identified as an even more important aspect of their future employment aspirations. For example, all female participants who worked as caregivers conveyed their strong desire to train as nurses.

*“I’m not too sure I’m think about like studying a nurse...” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“I’m planning to do my nursing next year.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*I’m interested in nursing.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

All female participants (with the exception of the two caregivers who had already trained to become nurses) described how a group of four female Kiribati caregivers, who had trained to

become nurses, had influenced them to also consider this pathway out of their minimum wage jobs. The attitude of all female participants working as caregivers was that, if the other Kiribati women could make the transition from caregiving to nursing, that perhaps they also had a chance.

*“I did my training cos as I said I think it’s quite hard for me to get like a decent job. I just finished my training, got a job last year...” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“I have to complete those expectations which I think I can manage...: because I, I came here and I worked in the rest home looking after the elderlies and I was admiring people, you know, the nurses talking to patients. The way, the way they talk, it really touched me like you know they really care and it didn’t meet the way that our nurses did on the islands so they really kind of well-trained here and you know once they talk to the residents you just could tell that they are good nurses and I want to be one of them.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

While all female participants indicated their desire to become nurses, five out of six female participants raised concerns about their ability to afford to take time from work to study full-time. As noted previously, each of these five female participants noted that there was a need for both adults in their respective families to work to be in a position to adequately provide for their families. In the case of younger female participants, child care was also identified as a barrier to further study, at least in the short-term. In discussing the issue of government support at the tertiary level, a few female participants indicated that they would consider bringing forward their study plans if they could. Four of the six female participants working as caregivers, acknowledged that another constraint in them being accepted into tertiary education was the difficulties they were having in being able to effectively communicate in English. One way of finding out whether they could succeed at the tertiary level, mentioned by four female participants, was the possibility of taking up foundation courses. Only four female participants were willing to enrol into the relevant foundation courses, depending on other circumstances such as affordability, in taking time off work.

*“Not just like...back at home you can’t get help from your government that...like here in New Zealand that I see that the government can help with your student loan...” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

In contrast to the homogenous responses received from female participants about their desire to undertake further study, the responses from male participants were significantly more diverse. Overall, while all male participants (with the exception of one) indicated a desire to take up some form of training or further study, these participants noted that financial constraints and a lack of formal education, particularly poor language proficiency stood in their way in undertaking further study. Although the two male participants (who owned their homes) raised the issue of them and their respective partners undertaking sequential courses, the financial obligations related to their mortgages meant that, for one of these families, this would not be possible. Interestingly the two female participants who invested in further education to become nurses, both had partners earning well and none of them had the financial burden of a mortgage.

*“I really want to go back to school some more but what’s holding me back now is my mortgage. I got to work for the mortgage you know...” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...what makes it slowing the moves and stuff like that because of the education... that I had from where I come from...I just wish I could have done more...with my qualification...it was a barrier like I never thought of...because it was nothing in my head that...will brings me to New Zealand...you have your own skill...but with no qualifications you are nothing...yeah yeah.” (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

## Housing

Setting up their own households was heralded by all participants as a key event in their settlement experiences. Whereas in Kiribati, living with extended family or in close proximity to family members of family land was common place, a common feature of all of the stories told by participants was that upon gaining full-time permanent employment, they all set about to find rental housing and to establish their own households. While this did not

pertain to parents (where the expectation is for children to look after their parents), the desire of participants and their families to live independently from other family members was somewhat surprising, challenging the presumption that Kiribati families (as Pacific families) may have somehow sought to live in extended family settings.

*“We started getting wages, you know, the both of us so we put our money together we rented a house yeah make our deposit first you know.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

*“She rent the house in Waikanae at...at that time once she got the job” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

### ***Search for rental properties***

Ten participants told of the significant support and assistance they had received from their ‘strong ties’ in helping them search and find their first rental property. For many of these participants, this support extended to financial assistance from family members to enable them to make their deposit, required as part of their rental agreement. Participants told how their ‘strong ties’ used their own social networks to collect information about the availability of rental housing in their geographical locations. Key considerations for all participants seeking to enter the rental market for the first time were affordability, distance from work and proximity to their ‘strong ties’, including to other Kiribati families.

As noted earlier, many participants who used ‘strong ties’ to help them get into their first rental property, told how through word-of-mouth, they were often able to find their rental homes from other Kiribati families vacating their own rental properties. In these cases, rental properties were passed from one Kiribati family to another with those vacating their property advocating to landlords to hand their properties to other Kiribati families. These stories portrayed the intricate complexities of the movement Kiribati families in and out of the rental market. Many participants described how those Kiribati families moving out of their first homes made way for those Kiribati families seeking to enter the rental market. In one set of stories collected individually, three participants were identified as having been linked with each other through this system of entering and exiting rental properties. In another case, two

participants noted that they had vacated their rental properties, only to pass them onto other participants and their families.

The stories told by participants regarding their search for rental properties (which took a great deal of effort to unravel), indicated how those vacating rental houses assisted new migrants gain entry to these rental properties, while at the same time assisting the property owners to minimise the down-time the house stayed vacant. It also reduced the advertising costs to the property owner and the need to go through the process of selection. At the same time, the ability of those vacating their houses to vouch for those seeking to enter the rental market, allowed first-time renters such as these participants to get through the process in the absence of important documentation such as references. While this churn in the rental market, a characteristic of some participants living in Porirua and Tawa, provided an efficient way for first-time renters, to enter the rental housing market, many participants indicated that in these cases, nothing was done to improve the property, as the high demand from new migrants reduced the incentive for property owners to invest in enhancing the quality of their rental properties.

*"I have to ask for... um a friend for a house to help me cos, you know, I don't know how to... it is a Kiribati friend too and you know that Kiribati lived in the house before and they're going to move out from that house. So I just went to that lady and ask her "would you please ask your landlord if I can stay there?" Yes so it's really hard for me to hunt for a house, I think that is the best way that I can get a house just to go and ask her cos they moving out and so just to step in that house." (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*"My brother cos...they rent that house before." (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

*"Ah my cousin...they live there before..." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*"...she got it on the internet, the Trade Me and there she goes." (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

In contrast to the relatively easy process of entering the rental housing market (with the assistance of ‘strong ties’), the process of moving into better housing was recalled by one participant as being considerably more complex, due to discrimination in the rental housing market. This was exemplified in the case of a female participant who spoke of the extreme difficulties she and her family encountered in finding another rental property in the wider-Kapiti region. Although the possibility of her large family was raised as a possible barrier to entry, this female participant had formed the view that discrimination was the cause of the problem she and her family faced. This view was formed by the way agents and landlords interacted with her, leaving her feeling that she was not taken seriously.

To manage this risk, she noted that she took up an offer from a member of her church (not I-Kiribati) to assist her to secure her new rental property, and eventually purchasing her new home on the Kapiti Coast.

*“He said to us that “you know sometimes people here they are not good, they’re racist so if you can’t find you house just come with me I have a lawyer cos I knew the problem...we ask him to be one of our reference because he always come and visit and he’s “oh I just saw one that they rang me one of the house you apply for, rang me and I said to them that you are good tenants, you are...” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

### ***Cost of renting***

A recurring theme relating to housing raised by all participants was the cost of rental properties in New Zealand. Many participants referred to the cost of renting as a ‘shock’, coming to the realisation that the high costs of renting required both adults in each of their families to work to pay for the rent and other basic necessities, such as food and household expenses. With all participants (in their first jobs) on the minimum wage, the search for their first rental properties was geared towards the lower end of the rental market, in locations where other Kiribati families lived and as much as possible in proximity to their work.

*“...it was a shocking when you first hear the rent...Like “how much is the rent?” Three hundred something to four hundred and oh man you think....how would I pay this? Where you come from you face a rent of \$50 a week you know or so or a month*

*you know like that... \$300 to 400 but then as we got a job and as we work, it's alright we could manage to pay for the rent..." (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*"...was not bad you know to start off with just a \$240 a week yeah....\$250 three bedroom." (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*  
*"...paying rent is like paying others' mortgage..." (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

### ***Quality of housing***

Aside from the cost of housing, all participants voiced their satisfaction in setting up their own households and living independently from extended family members. Notwithstanding this, participants were split regarding the adequacy and quality of their rental homes. Those who voiced the highest levels of satisfaction about their homes were the two participants who had gone on to own their own homes and five participants who had experienced upward labour market mobility and could afford to move into better quality rental housing. None of the participants were in state or council housing; all were renting in the private rental housing market.

*"The Mrs is very happy because in our culture you know ... lady always doing everything you know... prepare the cook, prepare...clean all the kitchen but everything next to her you know...got a shower, saving from walking to get some water from the well." (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

*"It's dry and warm. We're lucky we found a good house." (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

In contrast, one male participant and three female participants who remained in minimum-wage jobs and could not afford to move into higher rental properties and more adequate housing, raised concerns about the poor quality of their rental housing. The common set of issues included, extreme over-crowding, cold and damp properties, and in one case extreme

pest infiltration. In one case, a male participant sadly recalled how his children wanted to invite their friends to come to their home, but was too shy to do due to the poor conditions of their home.

*“Oh it’s good but it’s too small for our family because we got four children and we got only two bedrooms.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*“The problem inside there the house is really bad....” that’s why I always go to find a house looking for the house...” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“We want to bring our friends but we shy with the house...it’s very old and I said oh no you can bring them but just eat and they leave like that.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“The fireplace didn’t work as well so we have to get, to purchase the heater and the heater panel, the heater panels... ...it was quite damp as well...” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*“She think about finding another house... she thinks the house is...cold.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement, translated)*

### ***Relationships with landlords***

Another factor that was identified as having an important influence on the satisfaction of those participants that lived in rental properties was the quality of their relationships with their landlords. Three participants, who stated they had a good relationship with their landlord, voiced their satisfaction in having their concerns taken seriously and the willingness of their landlords to go further and upgrade their homes. In one case, a female participant mentioned her happiness at the willingness of her landlord to address her concerns about some aspects of the rental property, in particular the lack of warmth and heating.

*"Before I wasn't happy cos you know like before studying nursing I was just happy as I was...with our my family in the house yeah not insulating you know when the colds is there we just cover ourselves with blankets and shivering all the season around. Yeah but now my landlord is working on it now because I have to approach my landlord and ask for everything you know so yeah...he's, he's working on them now. Like I don't care about the cost more but I have to focus on my health and my family. He working now on the windows, working now on the insulating the house... apart from that you know toilets and showers, kitchen is the most important parts so he has to focus on that...that landlord is good. My older daughter is having asthma before but now like I couldn't hear her coughing a lot now which helps a lot... "*

**(# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)**

*"They been...been insulating the house a while ago and it's really good, it's what we need. Yes really grateful that they give me...give us...warm hands."*  (**# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement**)

In contrast to those participants, who indicated that they had a good relationship with their landlords, two participants who voiced high levels of dissatisfaction with their rental experiences noted that they had a poor relationship with their landlords. In one case, a male participant told of his deep frustration related to the refusal of his landlord to deal with a range of on-going problems, including an unrepairs leak and a large infestation of cockroaches. The participant noted that the lack of progress on these issues was having detrimental impacts on the health of his children and his own mental well-being.

The participant noted that a lack of financial resources meant that he was not in a position to deal with the pest issue which he considered that the landlord knew about prior to renting the house.

*"...we found that all the cockroaches the small one before we came in and then we stay there and they growing all growing the one and then we talk to the landlord but the landlord don't want to do that. I talk to my landlord...say oh no that's not my job to do that you...must do that one because you bring the cockroach."*  (**# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement**)

In a similar case, a female participant recalled her frustration with dealing with her landlord about a leak that took some time to get fixed.

*“Yeah I could remember that the house um like there’s a leak cos um after weeks after we moved in there was a heavy rain that came and what we noticed is that the ceiling like... it’s like a something falling down like that and we just think of it maybe it’s rain coming through... we collect the water with the bucket... and we report everything to the landlord but it doesn’t fix that like... he didn’t fix it straight away, it took like some more weeks to...get someone to come.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

While these stories presented several common themes that some participants experienced with their landlords, an important difference identified was the relative differences in mobility among participants. Unlike those participants with good incomes, who could search for better rental properties, a few participants (principally those with large families and low incomes) noted that they could not move beyond low quality cheap rental housing, which also indicated poor conditions.

*“My cousin he help me to find the... to contact her landlord and then the landlord told her...he have some property in Porirua and then we check yesterday but...it’s very old as well, the same with our house and I said ‘the same when we moved to here, the same house, the one they can’t renovate first before you moving’. But the same problem, the window is like the bench when you wipe all the white comes... it’s cold as well.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

Aside from affordability and the quality of the rental housing stock, another barrier identified by one male participant was the demand by his landlord of exit charges, associated with the wear and tear of the rental property. This participant noted that his landlord did not want him and his family to leave, as he would find it difficult to rent out and that by demanding exit costs, the landlord would retain the participant and his family. When questioned further, this participant noted he had not contemplated using the Tenancy Tribunal (due to a poor English language proficiency and other skills) and that it would be easier for him to find another Kiribati family searching for a rental property, as a way of not having to pay the exit costs demanded by his landlord.

### ***Housing location***

An important part of the discussion with participants about their housing experiences in New Zealand centred on the issues that influenced where they chose to live. On leaving the accommodation provided by their ‘strong ties’, most participants told of a mix of factors that influenced their housing location. As noted previously, these were proximity to ‘strong ties’ and proximity to work, particularly for female participants and female partners of male participants. In the case of those participants residing in the wider-Kapiti region, the decision to live in this area was most strongly influenced by the employment of female participants as caregivers in the retirement villages and hospitals in the region. In all of these cases, female participants enjoyed relatively short distances to their work, while their partners travelled significantly further afield to work.

In contrast, most participants living in the wider Porirua region told of being most greatly influenced by their desire to be in close proximity to their ‘strong ties’. While some of these participants (particularly more recent settlers) stressed the ability to access support such as child care assistance from their relatives living nearby, other participants spoke more of their desire to live in proximity to other Kiribati families, at least early on in their settlement

*“I pick it up on purpose ....it was just a few blocks away from my aunty’s so every now and then she could come and help with the kid as well especially cos we only got one vehicle at that time so... sometimes I work and there’s no one to pick up my kids so they have to walk and if it’s raining then eh, then I have to call my aunty to pick them up you know they just attend the school ...” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*“Close to my sister and then...most of the times, sometimes they always support me...” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

For many participants their desire to stay in proximity to their ‘strong ties’ waned over time as they became more financially stable. For these participants other factors influenced their housing location, including closeness to the sea (something that reminded them of Kiribati), and living in the same general area from the time they settled due to familiarity with transport and access to services.

*"I'm close to my cousins here and some friends here...It's the first place we came to when we immigrated here, the first place I was living in Wellington, because I've never been to Wellington before you know and I sort of fallen in love with Titahi Bay you know. It's a nice place and why not find a home here. I am home here, close to the water." (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

### **Home ownership**

Many participants articulated their aim to purchase their own homes, not only to provide suitable accommodation for their family, but also as a means of deepening their connection with their new country of settlement, New Zealand. This connection with the land was confirmed by those few participants who had had the chance to purchase their homes, as strengthening their sense of belonging to New Zealand. It was also viewed by one participant as being a way of keeping the family together, not unlike having a base on their family land back in Kiribati. In addition, some participants noted that owning their own home allowed them to pass on something tangible for their children when they got old and eventually passed away.

*"You feel like you belong yeah it's the sense of belonging eh. You feel like, right now I feel like I belong to New Zealand now cos I got my own house..." (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*"...we want to build our own house or buy our own house yeah...cos we got a kid and yeah when we gone or pass away she can stay and not struggle with their future."*  
*(# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

The two male participants who had managed to purchase their own homes told of the process they undertook to purchase their own homes. In one case, a male participant with a small family said that the move from renting to owning was only made possible by him and his wife working full-time in their areas of qualifications and skills. Their combined income allowed them to save for a deposit and obtain a mortgage to finance the purchase of their first home. In another case, a male participant with a medium-sized family told how he and his wife were able to purchase their first home with the assistance of his parents, who paid for

their deposit. This type and level of financial support provided from parents living in Kiribati was identified as a rare occurrence and not indicated by other participants.

*“My wife and I decided to mortgage a house and we’re slowly paying it off, we earning wages all the time and keeping the family together you know.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Yeah, at first like when I purchased my house it was my parents you know that backed me up with all these like a deposit and everything even though I paid just part of it but most of it my parents so I think they really have a big impact on... helping us settle down in New Zealand yeah” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

In both of these cases, the human capital of participants coupled with the small to medium-size of their families enabled these participants to sustain a mortgage, something that was significantly more difficult for participants with large and very large families. Despite the financial commitments associated with purchasing their own homes, seven out of the twelve participants renting their homes said that they had already implemented plans to save for their deposit to enable them to purchase their first home in New Zealand. These participants and others who expressed their aim of owning their own home also stressed how this would provide them with the freedom to live in the way that they wanted, something that was not possible if renting. Aside from the ability to exercise greater choice, other participants stressed how owning their own home would further imbed their sense of settlement in New Zealand. In one case, a participant noted how his children linked the issue of home ownership with greater freedom and settlement.

*“...me and my husband were expecting to get our house in 10 years’ time so we were thinking of saving now. We’ve been saving now for our own house. I think it is a good feeling aye to be in your own house, rule your own house aye, do whatever you-do the gardening aye like organic fruits and vegetables where, whereas you always go and buy the fruit...you don’t know whether they they’ve been like... sprayed or not”*  
*(# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Renting: “...that’s what’s hold us down now...When you live in a rent house we can’t do anything. You’re just like in, yeah, in a small cell...it’s proves to me that we have come to that, almost at the end you know, end of...the achievements and...and especially...the kids um are a bit worried ‘Daddy are we going...to buy a house and settle down or are we gonna rent like this.’ ” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“I must say that I like a house that’s going to accommodate like my family...a place that we have...like some land outside that our kids can play...somewhere that is near to the sea or we can see the sea cos I think the sea is part of us.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

All participants, who still rented their homes, linked home ownership with the ability to develop a deeper connection with New Zealand, expressed in the form of ‘belonging in New Zealand’.

*“...so you have something belongs to you...yes achieve better life you know like live on you own, like having a house...” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

## **Children’s Success**

A key settlement factor identified by all participants was to have their children succeed in New Zealand. This success was defined most commonly in terms of their children receiving a good education and gaining qualifications and skills that would equip them for their future lives in New Zealand. The importance of this factor was confirmed in the statements of all participants who identified that the most important motivation underpinning their decision to migrate was the ability to provide their children with a better future.

*“I explained to them, I came here for them for their future not for me.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“...the main point that I migrate to New Zealand for them and I always I remind them.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

## *School*

Consistent with the stories told with respect to employment and housing, an important first step for most participants was, with the assistance of their ‘strong ties’ to find a school in proximity to where they lived for their children to attend. Of all the settlement experiences discussed, the process of getting their children into school was relatively straightforward, as the children of most participants were placed in schools, where the children of their ‘strong ties’ attended. Through ‘strong ties’, ten participants told of how they had their children enrolled either into their local schools or for Catholic families in faith-based schools and colleges. In one case, a female participant who had lived in Tawa with her relatives continued to have her children attend school in that suburb, even though she and her family had subsequently moved to Porirua. In this case, the underlying reason was not to disturb her children’s education by having them move at a time of already great transition by their migration to New Zealand.

*“My sister-in-law, yeah was the one who helped me yeah find the school... otherwise I don’t know where to go, so it’s really nice of...having a family. I took my kids to Tawa school and it’s... kind of far school from where we live now so I have to travel dropping them. I feel sorry to disturb their education so I just let them stay there...”*  
**(# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)**

*“...lucky that from our families that we stayed with they already have their kids in some schools that they arranged for our kids to go to the same school and that’s the school they stayed until now. (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*“That’s why I... before I still worry about...I’m not worry about the kids because they are at school now but I just need them to study hard. That’s why I support them drop them and...pick them up because I need them to not be tired and they’re gonna to study hard. I always talk with them about that- their future because...I told them to*

*not care about me but just spend their time with their study.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

### ***Adjustment to school***

The stories told by many participants of their children’s adjustment to school life in New Zealand were a microcosm of many of their own settlement experiences. In common with their own settlement stories, participants told of how their children had initially struggled in school due, in large part, to a lack of English language proficiency and a lack of friends and acquaintances. At the same time, many participants spoke of how proud they were in seeing the progress their children were making in learning English and becoming more settled in their new environment.

*“The language is a bit hard for them to...cope with and then, you know, things have been: the teaching is in the English, you know, they have to understand everything and if they don’t understand everything they got lost, in parts in certain parts and that what’s they...they, the teacher and the school we been communicating with the school.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“My highlight is that um two or three years like my, my kids they don’t know how to speak English really well and now they just kind of talk in English fluently now and it’s, it’s a great feeling to for me to cos you know like um they have their um their prizes now at school yeah so it’s kind of giving me more encouragement to work for them aye, work hard for them. For their fees and whatever they want at school just to complete their education that’s my way of encouraging them.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

*“Because when they come back from school they always talk about the school is very nice and before they struggle with English and now they... they...they get better now, they get used to talk in English and they say the school is really nice...” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

Notwithstanding these successes, one male participant told of his anguish in seeing his children struggle at their new school as a result of constant bullying and the inability of the school to adequately deal with the problem. Attributing the change in the language and behaviour of his children to their school environment, his response was to move his children to faith-based schools, even though these schools were a greater distance from their home. Despite higher transport costs, this participant went on to express his happiness in securing a safer environment for their children and his ability to provide them with the best education possible.

*“...the first problem I saw in Cannons Creek School. When...I enrol three kids there...four (first time four) then....they always come back and crying and crying all the time. Yeah they bully them like that, the one when they cry but I already talk to the teacher and the teacher say ‘we already talk to the kids like that...we try to stop them like...’ but...how many times I talk to the teacher about that. That’s why I need them to move to the other school...the way to say the f-words and I don’t like it that’s why I always praying and praying because I need them to...to religion school...”*  
**(# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)**

Although many participants lauded the possibility of providing their children with a sound education in New Zealand, a few participants (who had identified themselves as struggling in their settlement) noted that they faced considerable difficulties in meeting the varied costs associated with their children’s schooling. The main complaint of these participants was the costs of extra-curricular activities (such as school trips and camping) that children were expected to attend as part of their education. These participants told of the stresses they faced in making sure their children did not miss out, including borrowing from their ‘strong ties’ or taking out short-term high interest loans and getting further into debt.

*“...that’s why it makes me a little bit stress you know. I worry about them...especially kids what they want to from school you know? And then you feel sorry when they, they never join because...I don’t have money...and then ‘I very sorry you know and then alright we catch up later on’. Yeah just only those things for especially kids what they want you know.”* **(# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)**

### ***Education for success***

While having their children receive a good education was the aim of all participants, a few participants emphasised the importance of their children doing all they could to excel to assure that they could do well in the future. The need to go beyond the average was particularly emphasised by those female participants, who had re-trained to become qualified nurses. Drawing from their own experiences, these participants recognised the competitive nature of the employment market in New Zealand and that to get a ‘good’ job required more than just an average mark. A context for the need for their children to succeed in their education was the realisation that, unlike the availability of significant familial support back in Kiribati, their children could not expect others to support them in the future.

*“I just encourage them to have this thinking that um having a average is not good but just aiming high is better than aiming low and this is New Zealand- it’s a big country, there’s a lot of people here who are like better in education level...and another thing is to, like to remind them that coming here is not like our place that we can rely on families... sometimes it comes to the point that us parents we just think of ‘oh yeah it’s too hard I’ll get the kids survive at school’...but I think another important thing that um I learnt or I know at the moment it is that there are um after school services that they provide like special classes. Yeah I know it costs, it’s going to cost but um if us parents think of the long term investment in our kids, it’s like a very good investment that we spend money like rather than go to play housie we spend the \$50 a day for one hour for our kids to access this extra um help from this um services. That’s what I do to my kids and I want to add for the better of... the betterment of our people to settle better in New Zealand.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

### ***Cultural maintenance a factor for success***

A vital aspect of their children’s success communicated by all participants was the ability of their children to maintain the Kiribati culture and speak the language. Despite this common stance, different approaches emerged across participants about how they steered their children to maintain the culture and language that embodied their identity as I-Kiribati. One approach articulated by most participants was for their children to limit their social connections within the Kiribati community. A second approach (supported by one female

and three male participants) was characterised by a greater degree of acceptance that their children could decide for themselves the balance between staying connected with their culture and forming connections with other New Zealanders.

*“I can see in my kids that they really adapted into that, they are sort of adopting the New Zealand culture... I’m really happy for that.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

Those participants, who strongly enforced cultural maintenance by controlling their children’s social connections, expressed their concerns that the formation of wider social connections could dilute the retention and maintenance of the Kiribati culture. Unlike other settlement matters discussed, the strong views expressed by these participants emerged most consistently from those participants and their families living in the Porirua, centred in Cannons Creek. These participants spoke of their deep concerns about the risks they perceived in their neighbourhoods, such as access to alcohol, smoking, drugs, bad language and behaviour and youths wandering the streets at night.

In contrast, the three male participants, who expressed less concern about their children forming wider social connections argued more voraciously about their children making their way and succeeding in New Zealand. Although these participants also noted that the loss of the culture and language was a risk over time, they also noted that limiting their children’s social connections was not a long-term viable approach.

*“...As long as they still have their Kiribati culture with them I’m really happy with that.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

*“We always keep them at the house because my husband said that once they, like because like what... we’ve seen with the Kiribati people, the Kiribati children here they been changed and that what we didn’t like to our children to copy them especially about the drink and the smoke. That’s why we keep them with us not... sometimes when someone asks them but when they go, they go with what they always got in their minds.” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“Like when they finish from school “remember when you finish, if you want to study-study but don’t go around with the friends” or something like that. But now, until now they haven’t gone with the friends like after school they always call “we’ve finished now” I pick them up yeah before, when they first came till now.” (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“I support other things like sport or something like that but like a, like follow the life in here, like most of them around the streets you know, that’s the only thing I don’t like.” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

Digging deeper on the issue of parental control, one male participant recalled how a Samoan man living in his neighbourhood asked about the number of Kiribati people living nearby only to express surprise in being told of the number of families living in Cannons Creek, Porirua. On explaining how Kiribati families kept a tight hold over their children, the participant recalled how the man asserted that Kiribati parents were “killing” their youth. The participant noted that while he had tried to stress that it would be unacceptable for Kiribati youth to be seen walking around, particularly late at night, he did not believe that he was well understood.

*“...I think it’s very good I never seen all the Kiribati, that’s why some other friends from Samoa or somewhere ‘hey is the many Kiribati in here?’ ‘yeah there’s a lot’ ‘haven’t see all the youth walking around’ ‘oh you can’t see on the side of the street because everyone in our culture’ I try to explain a little...yes they said ‘you guys kill your youth’ ...(# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

Irrespective of which approach participants identified as appropriate for them and their families, the importance of cultural maintenance was palpable in all of the conversations with participants. Those with young children raised the strongest concerns about cultural and language loss particularly among those children who had spent little time in Kiribati or were born in New Zealand. Many participants spoke about getting the family together to reinforce the importance of cultural traditions and language.

*“...what we’re trying to...to....to minimise the loss. We don’t wanna ask....we all....all discuss in the house most of the time, you know, and try to correct them and*

*they...because they're picking up other stuff from school and some...some other, you know. Especially the boys, you know, we're trying to...to keep things in tact."*

**(# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)**

*"...I still worry about because they're grown up just the little kids, just the little ones. They grown up here and I don't know if they...but I keep them in the Kiribati culture like talk to them about the things they gonna do and not do and like that." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

### ***Language retention***

An important aspect of cultural maintenance emphasised by many participants was the retention of the Kiribati language by their children. Many of these participants raised concerns about the possibility of their children losing their Kiribati language skills as they became more fluent in English and as they became increasingly integrated in New Zealand. A key focus of concern was the loss of these language skills among the youngest children who, as mentioned previously, had either not spent much time back in the islands or were born in New Zealand. In one example, a male participant voiced his shock in realising that one of his youngest children did not understand the meaning of words that he had expected them to know. In another example, a female participant recognised that her children had begun to lose their ability to write and read the language that they once had been fluent in back in Kiribati.

*"...I'm really surprised at...at some of the boys or the girl asking me 'what's the meaning of other Kiribati words...what's that Daddy what you mean by that' and I said you supposed to know this and even...even they don't understand...if they can't understand some of the words, they can't even write the words anymore. They...they lose all these writings and how to spell... the words." (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*"I teach them to write in Kiribati..." (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

With respect to the retention of the Kiribati language, a number of strategies were identified by participants to encourage their children to continue to speak and learn the Kiribati language. The most common strategy implemented by most participants was to make the speaking of the Kiribati language compulsory within the family home. This line of attack was considered a good way of getting their youngest children to stay immersed in the language during their time at home.

*“...at home we don’t allow the English language at home. Kiribati all the time. Out of the house they can talk English but at home we going to, we promise them all the our identity cos once we lost one custom or what likes then like’s we going to keep it.” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

A variation on this approach cited by one participant was to strike a 50:50 balance between the use of the Kiribati language and English.

*“...we plan that we have to speak...try to speak 50:50 in the house because we don’t wanna lose some of the...the language.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

A few participants shared their stories of how they encouraged their children to learn and maintain their skills to read and write the Kiribati language. One male participant spoke of obtaining children’s books and the local newspaper from Kiribati and using these texts to teach his children to read in Kiribati. In another case, a female participant told of how she encouraged the daily use of the Kiribati language by texting her children in Kiribati with the rule that they always had to text back in Kiribati.

*“...that’s what I’m doing now trying to tell him you know as many stories and also trying to get books from the islands especially newspapers and everything so they could read and....: write” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*“...another way is to text them in Kiribati language and I expect them to text me back in the same language. I don’t... I don’t want them to text me back in English cos English is already...you know English better than me like in the way like aye. “You*

*“come here as young kids but I want you to like maintain your own language and I want you able to speak and able to write and that’s um shows that you are Kiribati people” so every time I texted you I expect you to text me back in Kiribati... ”*  
*(# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

## **Adjusting to ‘the New Zealand Way of Life’: Health, Safety and Belonging**

All participants noted that adjusting to ‘the New Zealand way of life’ was a significant issue that had an impact on their settlement experiences. Most commonly this adjustment was referred to in relation to learning the culture, values and social behaviours of New Zealand society, how workplaces operated, the establishment of new social ties, and how to access social services. For most participants, adjusting to ‘the New Zealand way of life’ was viewed as an on-going process, learning more about the values, customs and social behaviours of New Zealanders throughout their settlement.

One of the most commonly cited issues raised by participants in relation to their adjustment in New Zealand was the impact of life-style changes on their health and well-being. Unlike the preceding sections in this chapter that examined the main influences on the settlement of participants and their families, this part of the chapter discusses how adjustment to the New Zealand way of life has had an impact on the settlement experiences of participants. A particular focus of the discussion with participants was how they considered their health and sense of well-being had changed since they had settled in New Zealand and whether they felt healthier in New Zealand or Kiribati. In examining the data, it is important to note that like other migrants (with the exception of refugees), these participants and their families were obliged to meet an ‘acceptable standard of health’ stipulated by immigration policy for them to obtain permanent residency, irrespective whether they migrated under the PAC (by ballot) or other immigration categories.

### ***Migration and health***

In discussing where they felt healthier (New Zealand or Kiribati), all but two participants considered themselves as being healthier in New Zealand. Their perception about their health in New Zealand was firstly based on having access to fresh fruit, vegetables and safe drinking water, and the ability to live in a clean environment. A few participants also noted that they felt healthier in New Zealand, due to the safe way of life in New Zealand compared to

Kiribati where people had to work hard in harsh conditions and there was greater access to riskier social behaviour such as high levels of drinking and smoking.

*“I think because of the air, the food we eat yeah. It’s cleaner air than Kiribati and ah the food we eat yeah. We have more access to vegetables you know not like in the islands they are quite expensive so I think New Zealand I feel more healthier than back in Kiribati.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*“I feel healthier here in New Zealand.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*“I think because the like the vegetables and the fruit very cheaper...” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“It’s clean and we have many vegetables and...good food... good environment and good hospital.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

*“I think I’m breathing the cleanest air, the cleanest air in New Zealand...And I’m, and I’m much healthier over here...” (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“I think I found New Zealand now that it’s a good place for my health and my kid... cos of the environment here, cos of the food you know, the way we clean yourself you know with the water cos we... our water is not that really good and our skin can get like... diseases yeah and the food we can run out of food from the shops and yeah as, as in New Zealand now we get whatever we want.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

Another reason put forward by many participants, as to why they considered themselves to be healthier in New Zealand, than in Kiribati, was having access to good primary health services, particularly for their children, and access to specialist health services, if and when required.

*"It's really obvious is in here more healthy. One thing...I'm really sure is that it's more healthily to [be] close...to doctors and everything else medical stuff is really good and....One thing's that's really affect me in the island is...you know we don't have much um responsibility as we have in here so most of the other time you spend with like drinking and having a good life, you know..." and in here it's more responsibility, you can't go around and on drunken and drive is really forbidden and very, very strict in here so things have been changed so much as well."* (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)

The fact that most participants considered themselves to be healthier in New Zealand was interesting given that most participants, upon being questioned identified themselves and their partners as experiencing a myriad of health problems. These included: obesity, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, gout, hepatitis B and mental stress. Even among younger participants who considered themselves healthy, many conceded that they had begun to gain weight since their settlement in New Zealand.

*"we eat less fish cos fish is very expensive here in NZ yeah? Um we eat more meat, fresh meat from the shop, and a lot of McDonalds...I'm actually a diabetic."*  
(# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)

*"...yeah the problem is work for my kids but I know the problem if I... like I cut down my hours now but the doctor told me to cut out cos I got the sick, the one high blood pressure."* (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)

Irrespective of how they assessed their health, most participants conceded that dietary change and a lack of exercise were beginning to have significant detrimental health impacts, particularly for them and their partners. Even though all participants noted the benefits of having greater access to fresh fruit and vegetables in New Zealand, some participants conceded that their simple diets back home consisting of fish, coconut and root vegetables had actually sustained them well. Many participants (particularly younger participants) noted that lack of transportation in Kiribati had forced them to walk considerable distances and that organised sporting opportunities was something they greatly missed in their new lives in New Zealand.

*"I think that's an issue here for us Pacific people cos um we use the car a lot of times here rather than back home we walk a lot yeah and like thinking of like having the...taking the car here and there where can we burn the energy that we eat from the food (chuckle). It's an issue here Mary Anne I think it's a big issue for us Pacific people. So it's important to like um educate our young generation to be aware of that and to be mindful of... what they eat and their future." (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

*"...she feels healthier in Kiribati where she felt fitter. In New Zealand she has starting puffing from lack of exercise and putting on weight and that in Kiribati you are able to play sport." (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement, translated)*

When questioned further about whether dietary change was occurring in Kiribati, all participants (with the exception of one who did not live in Tarawa prior to their migration to New Zealand) acknowledged that increased levels of westernisation in Tarawa was having detrimental health impacts, with a greater prevalence of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. These participants attributed these negative health impacts on an increased reliance on imported foodstuffs, in particular, sugar, flour, rice, and fatty canned meat.

In addition to the data confirming significant levels of western diseases among participants and their partners, a few participants (two male participants and two female participants) noted the irony that, while life in Kiribati was so much more difficult than in New Zealand, they felt more stressed and suffered from a range of mental health issues here, than they had in Kiribati. In all of these cases, with the exception of one, participants attributed the experiences of suffering from depression and anxiety in relation to living in poverty and anxiousness about how they could adequately provide for their family, particularly their dependent children. In one case, a participant noted that was very unlikely that she would ever feel settled in New Zealand, as her thoughts and sense of well-being was dependent on returning back to Kiribati. This complexity was even more vexed given her recognition that New Zealand offered a better future for her children.

*"Yeah better here I think plus the food sometimes aye, got a ....something like that. That what I reckon yeah and I think is better here but only thing sometimes a little bit*

*stress you know like a coming on your head.” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

*“I think back home I feel healthier than here because um to me I don’t have worries about like going to work and who’ll look after my kids cos I have all my families back home to help around to...” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

While some participants lauded the ability to have access to a greater variety of food that was less expensive compared to the prohibitive costs back in Kiribati, some participants noted that lower prices, coupled with accessibility, was to blame for their children’s preference for poor quality sugary foods. One female participant noted that her children’s penchant for sweets was of great concern given the risk of obesity and diabetes.

*“I have worry myself is that um is that my kids used to eat like the sweet things a lot of time like compared back home we don’t eat cakes, ice-cream or fizzy drinks all the time cos it costs money and we don’t have the luxury back home to...but here it’s like acceptable even we give it to them or they can get it from the dairies cos they’re cheap things...That just my worry cos...I think of like looking back when I’m a kid, I don’t have those things like every....as a everyday food or to take every day but I just think of them like having this stuff almost, I may say... three days a week. It’s too much for them as...as from a younger age and I’m just worried like for them coming to like forties, they might get diabetes” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

A key finding on the issue of migration and health was that, while most participants considered themselves to be healthier in New Zealand than Kiribati, changing life-styles, led by dietary change, less exercise due to increased dependence on transportation and less access to sporting events had begun to have detrimental health impacts on participants and their partners. By interrogating the data further, it can be revealed that ten participants of the group of fourteen (five male participants out of six, and five female participants out of eight), would not have met the health criteria set under immigration policy if they attempted to migrate to New Zealand today. In addition, four female participants (two of which are not

represented in the group of ten participants mentioned above), noted that their male partners had health problems (associated primarily with obesity, diabetes and hypertension).

While the identification of health problems among the participant group was expected, particularly among older participants (over the age of 50), the large number of participants (from the youngest to the oldest, female and male), who indicated they were experiencing health problems, was somewhat surprising. This was even more the case given that all participants had lived in New Zealand for less than ten years, raising questions about the relationship between migration and settlement and detrimental health impacts among this group. On the positive side, many participants noted that fresh fruit and vegetables, clean water, and access to primary health services in New Zealand had led to an improvement in the health of their children.

### ***Access to health services***

The data indicated that all participants attributed access to highly qualified health professionals, as one of the most positive features about living in New Zealand. As noted previously, access to primary health services was considered particularly important in relation to providing a high standard of health care for their children, something that most participants noted was lacking in Kiribati. Some female participants, who had mentioned that their children had suffered from ‘uncontrolled’ health problems (such as asthma and skin diseases in Kiribati), told of how the health of their children had significantly improved during their time in New Zealand.

*“...says that her children are healthier in New Zealand. Her daughter had asthma but her attacks have been less often in New Zealand and that she had been able to put on more weight as she was very thin in Kiribati. (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement, translated)*

In all aspects of health care (primary, secondary and tertiary), all participants agreed that New Zealand’s health system, as a totality, was significantly superior compared to what was available back in Kiribati. A few participants (who experienced a number of complex health problems) spoke of the levels of skills and professionalism found in the New Zealand health system. Those who had availed themselves of specialist services noted that their ability to

access such services had given them a sense of hope in dealing with the complexities of their health issues, which was lacking in Kiribati.

*“...as you know Kiribati, you don’t really get first class...like facilities or everything like that... And I thought um being in New Zealand with qualifying you know doctors and people you know that belongs to different jobs like that, I thought I came to the right place...” (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“In New Zealand cos we sort of get more treatment here as well if we fall into anything like diabetes or anything like that you know.” (# middle aged male, married, small family, 7 years settlement)*

Despite the views that New Zealand offered a high quality of health services compared to what was available in Kiribati, a number of issues were raised by three male and seven female participants in regard to their relationship with health services in New Zealand. These participants admitted that the costs of primary health services were a barrier to them going to their local general practitioners. In addition to the costs associated with health services in the mainstream, these participants (particularly female participants) spoke of feeling considerably more comfortable accessing these services (which were cheaper and culturally friendly) delivered by Pacific health organisations, such as the one based in Porirua.

The high level of support for these services was revealed by the finding that all but one participant noted that they and their families used these Pacific health organisations as their primary health provider. This support was also indicated by the vast distances some participants were prepared to travel to access these services, with participants from as far away as Otaki, Waikanae and Lower Hutt willing to travel considerable distance to use the Pacific health organisation based in Porirua, in preference to using mainstream health services offered in proximity to where they lived.

*“I use the... the Pacific Health.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*“...because it’s a Pacific Island and it’s more cheaper.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*“For health...we found it very cheaper here. Can get it at very low price.”*

**(# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)**

Aside from cost, many participants (particularly female participants) spoke of their negative experiences when they used mainstream health services in their areas. In one case, a female participant who witnessed an argument between a mother with her sick baby and the receptionist at her local doctor, spoke of how the incident made her feel very uncomfortable about how clients were treated in non-Pacific environments.

*“There’s one time that we going up there too they been, like there’s a Māori young lady been shouting and talk because her child is very need help at once and she been asked to be wait...”* (**# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement**)

Another female participant with knowledge of the disinclination of Kiribati people to register with local health centres underlined the importance of Kiribati families enrolling with Pacific health organisations. Her concern was that if Kiribati families did not enrol with these Pacific health organisations, Kiribati migrants to New Zealand would miss out from accessing important primary health services altogether.

*“...to encourage them to register with the health centres for better health and to know... cos I think um through this health centres people can get health like to get to other services and especially the Pacific health organisations that they provide cheap um health service to people with low income.”* (**# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement**)

Overall, acculturation was found to have had a considerably negative impact on the health of participants and their partners. Even though participants spoke of their health having deteriorated since they had migrated to New Zealand, their concerns about their health status was ameliorated by perceptions of having access to high quality health services compared to what was available back in Kiribati. The strong likelihood that ten participants out of the group of fourteen would not meet the health requirements set out under immigration policy if

they sought to migrate today raised serious concerns about the rapid decline in the health of these participants and the factors underpinning their health outcomes.

## Personal safety

Drawing from their own experiences, four female participants raised the issue of personal safety as an important aspect of their physical and mental well-being. These participants noted that New Zealand's strong legal protection towards women and children allowed them to experience a greater level of safety for themselves and their children than was possible back in Kiribati. In contrast to the level of openness displayed by participants in their discussions on all other settlement issues, when talking about the issue of personal safety, these female participants conveyed their messages in a very quiet and shy manner. Although it was one of the more difficult issues that emerged during the interviews, the willingness of these participants to discuss how personal safety impacted on their lives, added to the richness of the settlement stories conveyed by female participants.

*“Oh yes that’s the one reason is good, it’s good women’s here cos it’s so you can’t um, the husband abuse you.” (# younger aged female, married, small family, 8 years settlement)*

*“Yes more safe in here... you, you know the difference now...you, you know the difference now.” (# middle aged female, married, large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“I think we feel safer here, I...one of thing like women ... when they were... hit by their husbands...better here than back at home.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

## Settlement and Belonging

Towards the conclusion of the interviews, participants were asked whether they felt settled in New Zealand and to what extent they had developed a sense of belonging to their new country of residence. The concept of ‘well-settled’ was discussed with participants as meaning how well they considered they had adjusted to living in New Zealand, while the

concept of belonging was discussed in terms of how deeply they felt that they ‘fitted in’ and had a sense of ‘having a place’ in New Zealand.

### ***Well-settled and, for some, a sense of belonging***

Half of the participant group (three male and four female participants) stated that they considered themselves and their families to be well-settled, and had gained a sense of ‘belonging in New Zealand’. This group was dominated by older participants, who (all but one), had experienced upward labour market mobility, or whose partners had moved into higher-paying jobs. These participants, who generally did not have as many obligations back in Kiribati as did some of the younger participants, expressed sentiments of ‘standing on their own two feet’ and no longer requiring the help of their family and friends to survive. Overall, this group of participants viewed themselves as being increasingly financially stable and succeeding in setting aside saving and planning for the future.

*“...been here for almost seven years now... It was quite overwhelming; it made me really happy you know that I can actually afford what I wanted now ... When I get up every day that I’m belong to New Zealand...” (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“I feel really good. Feel really settled now that I think I got everything that I’ve been expecting. I got my own money now. I think I am one of the New Zealand’s assets to the community.” (# middle aged female, married, medium sized family, 7 years settlement)*

Another characteristic of this group was a strong emphasis that New Zealand was now their permanent home, with some within this group going further to indicate a desire to become New Zealand citizens. Those who had indicated their desire to become New Zealand citizens were dominated by those whose children and/or grandchildren were New Zealand citizens, conveying a sense that an increasing number of ‘roots’ were being planted in New Zealand.

*“...at the moment I have two grandchildren...and they’re holding the New Zealand citizenship...like, they are New Zealanders...with the passport...like that...and I thought well I can I’m eligible for applying for a passport...like to be a citizens...But*

*like as I, as I see my grandchildren with...you know... to be New Zealander like that, I am really proud of that..." (# middle-aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

For two participants, who had retrained and built new careers in New Zealand, obtaining New Zealand citizenship was viewed as an additional asset that would allow them to migrate to Australia temporarily, or permanently. Perversely, in these two cases, settlement and a sense of belonging was tied up with greater mobility for economic success.

*"...one of the important things that happened since I came to New Zealand, I've applied for citizenship...and I got it last year. Second priority is to get the rest of the family to get the citizenship...cos the thing is that what we think is that we can still keep our identity from home but I think it's like something to add to us... as a privilege cos we thinking of travelling in Australia with a New Zealand passport, it's gonna be more easier and we have plans to, just plans but we don't know if, yeah but we have plans to migrate maybe..." (# middle aged female, married, large family, 8 years settlement)*

### ***Not yet settled and not yet belonging***

The rest of the participant group expressed a range of views on their settlement and sense of belonging ranging from ambivalence to a yearning to return back to Kiribati. These seven participants indicated that they needed to build up their economic resources and establish a stronger settlement base before they could say that they felt as though 'belonging' in New Zealand. While some of these participants emphasised the need for them to achieve a greater level of income stability to feeling well settled, other participants stressed the loss of connections with their strong and weak ties back in Kiribati (including the cultural way of life) as standing in the way of them fully committing to their new lives in New Zealand. Although human capital was identified as being a key factor in achieving greater labour market mobility and, therefore, higher incomes, the size of families also influenced whether participants considered themselves as financially coping. The findings suggest that the most vulnerable were those participants with lower human capital and with large and very large families.

Those participants, who stressed the need for them to achieve greater economic stability, saw their way to a better future through investment in further education, including the attainment of improved English language proficiency. Unfortunately, most of these participants could not see how they might go about to achieve this goal, given that they could not afford to take time off work to study. This conundrum was most strongly indicated by two male participants, who had identified themselves as struggling, but could not see how they might improve their personal circumstances given their need to work. These participants noted that they had much to gain by furthering their education, given that they did not have the opportunity to attend secondary school in Kiribati. At the same time, their lack of formal secondary education was now viewed by these participants as leaving them trapped in low-wage employment and, therefore, thwarting their ability to go further in their settlement.

*“...firstly just my wife have to get a job so yeah that’s what will make me feel more settled.” (# younger aged male, married, medium sized family, six years settlement)*

*“at the moment I have a little struggle because I got two jobs you know... cos I can’t afford to one job to feed my family...wake up in the morning and leave before 7 o’clock because we start 7.30... from there straight to cleaning... around 9.30 in the evening...” (# middle aged male, married, large family. 8 years settlement)*

*“80% we’ll...we’ll make it yeah but what I’m...struggling...with my wife to plan again, a bit of a plan: how we’ll...make it with the kids. Everything gonna be ok but it’s just like how...how we will deal with the other part which is, a mortgage or...finding the house. How we’re gonna do that? And I don’t know how long I will stay at work, how my....my own strength or my... own health...” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

Among this group of six participants, who expressed ambivalence or a desire to return to Kiribati, three younger female participants and one male participant noted that if things did not work out in New Zealand they would consider returning back to Kiribati. These participants indicated that had not been able to make a full mental shift to New Zealand due to on-going obligations and concerns about the well-being of their parents and siblings. Although it was not possible to discern whether these participants’ ‘back-up’ plans to return to Kiribati stood in the way of these participants fully committing to New Zealand, these

participants indicated it was a way of stabilising their concerns that they had somewhere to go if all else failed. This sentiment was in sharp contrast to those participants, who had identified themselves as being well-settled in New Zealand, with no intention of returning back to Kiribati, even if their circumstances changed.

Those participants, who had either indicated ambivalence or desire to return to Kiribati, were most vocal in expressing how much they missed their home country, the Kiribati culture, language, and the day-to-day connections of family and friends. Many participants in this group conceded that they felt a greater sense of happiness in Kiribati, due in large part, to the depth and breadth of their social ties. Although they said they enjoyed meeting other I-Kiribati in New Zealand, the level and type of social connectivity was not enough for them. These participants also indicated having fewer social ties with non-Kiribati New Zealanders, compared to those who identified themselves as being well-settled and having a sense of belonging in New Zealand.

*“I had so, so much love for the island I really, it’s dragging me down, you know. It’s holding me in...on parts...certain parts of life like I know the...the kids and the wife really settling in here but from my....my side deep somewhere inside is...and I think it’s...it’s some of the worries that left back in the island that’s really dragging me down as well cos I’m still worried about stuff you know, other part of the family.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“It’s too hard. I’m happy because I am going to be with my family here but my heart is still in ....like I still worry about them...” (# younger aged female, married, very large family, 5 years settlement)*

*“...my heart is still back at home.” (# middle aged female, married medium sized family, 6 years settlement)*

*“Tarawa...we knew the place, we grew up there and we knew every... our neighbour and because we have all our family live there so I think that it is more fun there compared to New Zealand.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

Another feature of this group was the significant emphasis they placed on home ownership as a means of deepening their connection with New Zealand. While many participants raised the issue of home ownership, as an indication of their commitment to New Zealand, the degree of emphasis was much greater for this group. Home ownership and owning some land in New Zealand was viewed by many participants as a vital achievement to feeling settled and belonging to New Zealand and a replacement for the social connections they left behind in Kiribati

*“I believe that yeah, the...tree has strong roots in the ground when we have...a house.” (# middle aged male, married, medium size family, 4 years settlement)*

*“If you have our own house here, then we don’t have to go back again to the island.” (# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)*

### ***Not settled and not belonging***

At the most extreme, a female participant told of not feeling settled in New Zealand and candidly spoke of her desire to return to Kiribati. While very happy for the opportunities available for her children in New Zealand, this participant noted how much simpler and more satisfying her life was in Kiribati compared to New Zealand. She also voiced missing the nature of deep and broad social ties that could not be replaced by living in New Zealand. In addition, the central role of money to pay for rent, electricity, insurance was voiced in critical terms as interfering with the essence of life. In this case, as with others in the group of participants, who indicated that they did not feel settled, the kinds of social connectivity and happiness found in Kiribati out-weighed the benefits of living in New Zealand.

*“If I have a chance again, maybe I will stay in the island because back there run, we run a small business and maybe we just keep the saving for our kids to have a good education overseas, maybe they come to New Zealand. But as for life, I prefer to stay back in the island. Tarawa...we knew the place, we grew up there and we knew every... our neighbour and because we have all our family live there so I think that it is more fun there compared to New Zealand...for the schools for the kids it’s really good and about the other side for life we found out that it’s more hard than Tarawa, than living back in the island...here we have to pay rent, we have to buy food and pay*

*the bills and I compare to Tarawa we live there and we don't pay rent and most of the time it cheap and we can. Like Tarawa, when you live in Tarawa it's more easy."*

**(# younger aged female, married, medium sized family, 5 years settlement)**

This participant, who admitted struggling to settle in New Zealand, returned to Kiribati to live, only to eventually come back to New Zealand and try again to settle here.

## Conclusion and Next Steps in the Analytical Process

The results discussed in this chapter reveal the complex nature of the settlement process for participants and their families. The analysis of the data indicated that, while the recurring themes were a common set of influences in the settlement of all participants, there were significant differences in how these themes determined the settlement experiences of participants. The human capital and social capital of participants were identified as the most influential factors in the settlement experiences of participants and their families. These influences accounted for the different employment and housing experiences of participants in their settlement and, ultimately, whether they indicated themselves as feeling settled in New Zealand and their sense of belonging.

While 'strong ties' were identified as playing a critical role in the earliest stages of the settlement of participants, it was the ability of participants to become more upwardly mobile in the labour market (whether through investment in further education, or through 'weak ties') that influenced participants' perceptions about their settlement success. For all participants this perception of success was intertwined with the vision of owning their own homes. Indeed home ownership was inextricably linked with a sense of participants laying down firm roots in New Zealand, something important in making them feel connected to their new country of settlement. While for some participants the vision of home ownership was on the horizon, for others the realisation that this was unlikely to be achieved in their life-times led to concerns that they would be confined to inadequate housing with few prospects of improving their settlement experiences.

Irrespective of their economic results in their settlement, a key focus of all participants was to provide their children with a better future in New Zealand while at the same time ensuring that their children maintained their Kiribati culture and language. How participants went

about ensuring their children's success varied greatly across participants and was not directly linked with how they viewed themselves as succeeding in the labour market or in the quality of their housing. The decision of some parents to hold on tight to their children, while others were relaxed in having their children form social connections with other New Zealanders, was more related in whether participants had formed a strong view that their future lay in New Zealand, as compared to those participants who viewed acculturation as a threat to their cultural identity.

To further the analysis of the data, the next discussion chapter examines these findings against the literature on settlement, identifying areas of similarities and differences. The analysis also examines the relationship between the themes identified in the data and discusses the emergence of theoretical concepts that may assist in the development of a theory on the settlement experiences of participants and their families. As noted previously, as an iterative and comparative method of inquiry, the next chapter seeks to elicit a greater understanding of the meaning of the texts, including how the themes and sub-themes interact with each other to influence the settlement process of participants and their families.

# **Chapter 7: Discussion**

## **Introduction**

Using narrative analysis and constructivist grounded theory, this chapter discusses the analysis of the data on the settlement experiences of participants and their families living in New Zealand. To extract further meaning from the data, the results from the field research were compared with the literature findings aimed at uncovering areas of convergence and divergence. To assist in the presentation of the comparative analysis, the discussion is divided into two main sections, strategic issues and detailed analysis of thematic content. Later in the chapter the discussion extends to the emergence of some theoretical concepts to explain the key events and issues that influenced the settlement experiences of participants and their families. Finally, the chapter presents a theoretical model to illustrate the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand.

## **Comparative Analysis**

### **Strategic Issues**

Consistent with the view of many academic researchers working in the area of migrant settlement (see for example, Burnett 1998; Haller et al 2011; Simich et al 2003; Fincher et al 1993; Colic-Peisker 2002, 2003), this research has confirmed that settlement is a complex process of adjustment. In this research, this complexity was evidenced by the multi-faceted events and sentiments that were recalled by participants as shaping their settlement in New Zealand, ranging from their first experiences associated with their arrival in New Zealand, to on-going issues associated with their settlement. Due to these intricacies, this research indicated a high degree of congruence with the research findings by Haller et al (2011) and Burnett (1998), that the process of settlement should not be considered simply in terms of short-term period of adjustment, but a process that may be on-going with inter-generational impacts.

What was less clear was whether the special immigration category (the Pacific Access Category) that 13 out of the 14 participants used to gain their residency in New Zealand represented greater or lesser complexity than was the case for migrants utilising other mainstream immigration streams. What did become clear was that, but for the PAC, very few of the participants would have been able to gain residency status, other than through the family category (which would have required participants to show close family relationships and/or the centre of gravity of siblings being weighed towards New Zealand, rather than Kiribati). The only exception to this may have been for two male participants, who had skills in the marine industry, although even in their case, their skills are unlikely to have been enough to have them selected under the skills immigration category. The unique features of the PAC in using a ballot system to select applicants, would suggest that some level of caution should be exercised in extrapolating the findings from this research to apply to the migration of Kiribati and other Pacific citizens through New Zealand's mainstream immigration categories (such as skilled, business, and family streams). Despite this, the finding that all participants (with the exception of one) gained residency in New Zealand through the PAC would indicate that this research provides a reasonable account of the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants immigrating under the PAC.

It is very likely that the random ballot system used to select applicants to migrate to New Zealand (under the PAC) accounted for the diversity of the participant group in relation to education, skills, employment experiences and language proficiency. While it could have been assumed that such diversity would have led to early differences in the settlement experiences of participants and their families, this research indicated that this was not the case. Rather, uniformly, all participants received support from their family and friends living in New Zealand to enter the labour market, working in the services sector as cleaners, caregivers and supermarket stackers. It was from this point forward that diversity in the settlement experiences of participants was observed, not only in terms of mobility in the labour market, but also in relation to human capital formation and housing experiences.

While the detail comprising these differences are explored in detail later in this chapter, an issue for consideration was the usefulness of referring to participants' settlement experiences as acts of 'adjustment' to their new host country. If the concept of 'adjustment' was to be used to describe the settlement experiences of participants, it begs the question as to when and how that process of adjustment would be completed. Consistent with the lack of an

internationally accepted definition of settlement, there was a high level of ambiguity when the process of adjustment ‘came to an end’ or ‘was completed’. Out of the many definitions of settlement found in the literature, the definition by Colic-Peisker (2003: 62) which referred to the act of refugees re-establishing a sense of control over their lives resonated with the findings from this research. The issue of participants gaining ‘control’ was close to the sentiments provided by participants about their desire to ‘establish’ themselves in their new host country, in their own way, according to their social and cultural values.

While the seminal work of Berry (1992) provided key insights about how to think about the settlement or acculturation outcomes of migrants (assimilation, integration, marginalisation and separation), the responses from participants centred on how they set about to establish themselves in their new host society, rather than how they sought or not sought to acculturate themselves in New Zealand. This may account for the finding that while all participants sought to participate in the economy, none of the participants expressed a desire to form social connections outside the Kiribati community (other than attending social functions at work). Based on these findings it could be concluded that participants were ambivalent about how they would be assessed in terms Berry’s (1992) acculturation categories. The concept of gaining ‘control’ (Colic-Peisker 2003) may explain why all participants stressed the importance of finding full-time permanent employment, not only as a pathway for residency, but as an act of determining their future.

Although many researchers have also stressed the importance of employment in the settlement of migrants and refugees (see for example, Beckhusen et al 2012; Colic-Peisker 2002, 2003; Burnett 1998; Westin 2000; Henderson 2004; Fincher et al 1993; Uhendorff and Zimmermann 2006), the literature review revealed a dearth of research that examined the interplay of the main settlement factors of migrants and refugees (with the exception of the Department of Labour 2004; Immigration New Zealand 2012). Unlike these longitudinal studies, that tracked the settlement outcomes of refugees living in New Zealand, there is little known on how Kiribati or Pacific migrants go about settling in New Zealand, from the earliest stages of their settlement experiences to their longer-term experiences. What the literature review uncovered was instead a rich plethora of research on specific aspects of migrants’ settlement experiences, across a number of subject areas including: employment, housing, health, and social cohesion (see for example, Abbot et al 2003; Beckhusen et al 2012; Beiser 2010; Borrows et al 2010; Chae et al 2008; Gushulak et al 2011; Kokaua et al

2009; McDonald et al 2004; North 2007; Pene et al 2009; Prior et al 1974; Renzaho et al 2013; Singh et al 2011; Sobrun-Maharaj et al 2008; Spoonley et al 2011, 2007; Stillman et al 2013; Texeira 2007; Ward and Masgoret 2007, 2008). It was the rich insights gathered from the research across these areas that informed my findings on the settlement experiences of participants and their families.

A key step in this comparative process was assessing the similarities and differences between the main influencing factors of settlement identified from the literature review and the main influencing factors identified by participants. In terms of the settlement themes themselves, this research identified a significant overlap with the settlement themes found in the settlement literature (see Chapter Two) in relation to employment, housing, strong ties, and expectations. In contrast, the areas of greatest thematic divergence between this research and the settlement literature related to the role of language proficiency, health, and importance of children's success as an influencing factor of settlement. To draw out in detail the basis for these areas of convergence and divergence, the following section compares the findings from this research with the literature in relation to the key settlement themes.

## **Thematic Findings**

### *Expectations and the role of information*

This research affirmed the findings by Fanjoy et al (2005) and ISMED (2010) of the importance of information and the formation of expectations as an influencer of the efficiency of settlement. Unlike refugees entering New Zealand, who are provided with information about key settlement issues such as housing, employment, social values, participants and their families (as all other migrants) were expected to gather their own information about what life would be like in New Zealand. While the differences in approach towards refugees and migrants could be understood given the high needs for refugees, the findings from this research affirmed concerns by Simich et al (2003) and Fanjoy et al (2005) that the dependence of participants on poor information and the creation of unrealistic expectations was associated with incidences of 'shock', loss of control and, I would argue, to settlement inefficiencies.

An area of significant congruence between this research and the findings by Fanjoy et al (2005) in relation to the settlement of Sudanese refugees in Canada was the inaccurate information provided by family and friends about what they could expect in their country of settlement. In both the case of the Sudanese refugees and participants in this research, sensitivities by those already settled about how they would be perceived if they shared information setting out their difficulties led to the exchange of very little accurate information on what they could expect. While it would be remiss to consider those who participated in this research as approximating the settlement needs of refugees, the finding that all participants gained residency through the special immigration programme (the PAC) raised questions about how improved information could be provided to those migrating under the PAC). This research would suggest that settlement experiences such as shock, anxiety, and settlement stress could have been lessened if participants and their families had been able to access good quality information in their own language prior to their registration for the PAC. The provision of information would have been particularly helpful for female participants, who were significantly disadvantaged compared to most male participants, given their lower propensity to have previously travelled out of Kiribati.

### ***Strong Ties: the role of family and friends***

Strong ties, as defined by Granovetter (1973, 1983), such as those with family and friends were found to have played a critical role in assisting participants particularly in the earliest stages of their settlement in New Zealand. This finding converged with international research on the settlement of refugees and certain migrant groups, for example, those emigrating under family immigration streams and undocumented migrants (see for example, Rose et al 1998; Burnett 1998; Fanjoy et al 2005; Beiser 2009; Simich et al 2003; Roizblatt et al 1996; Liu 2013). Consistent with the findings from these researchers, this research found that strong ties provided valuable assistance in providing participants and their families with accommodation upon their arrival in New Zealand and subsequently with finding employment, rental housing, and assisting them to access important social services such as education for their children and health services.

Where divergences arose between the findings from this research and Westin 2000 and Robinson et al 2007, related to their arguments that strong ties were somehow to blame for the lack of upward socio-economic mobility, particularly as it related to employment and

housing. This research indicated that while strong ties played an important influencing role in the initial stages of the settlement of participants in relation to where and how participants entered the labour market and where they found their first rental housing, the influence of strong ties did not form an enduring aspect of their settlement process. Unlike the accounts of migrant settlement put forward by Westin (2000) and Robinson et al (2007) in Sweden and England respectively, where it was argued that migrants and refugees were influenced to live and work in close proximity to their ethnic groups, strong ties in this research were found to exert influence at the early stages of settlement, rather than over the medium to longer-term. Rather than strong ties, the findings from this research indicated that participants' human capital, and in particular, language proficiency greatly influenced where participants chose to work and live.

Likewise, while all participants used strong ties to enter the rental housing market in New Zealand and often choose in the early stages of their settlement to live in proximity to their relatives and friends, after a year or two, income and proximity to employment (particular for women's employment) played a greater influencing role than strong ties. This research would suggest that the concerns promulgated by Westin (2000), Robinson et al (2007) and Barker (1991) that ethnic concentration in employment and housing locations resulted from the 'pull' of strong ties, which had the effect of working against the integration of migrants in host countries, was not upheld by this research. Rather, strong ties were viewed by all participants as a resource that made up a continuing part of their lives and it did not matter where they worked or lived, they did not have to always stay within their orbit of influence.

Overall, the findings from this research points to the important role of strong ties particularly in assisting participants in their early stages of their settlement. While expressed as such in the settlement literature, strong ties were indicated as minimising the transaction costs of participants by offering free accommodation in the first instance, assisting them to find work and housing and access to social services. This research indicates that the costs of absorption by the Kiribati community were not insignificant, but that these costs would be distributed across the growing Kiribati population living in New Zealand, as participants recalled assisting other family and friends as part of their duty of care as settled migrants.

In comparison with the vast level of research on the influence of strong ties, there was little discussion identified in the literature on the role of weak ties (see, Rose et al 1998) on the

settlement of migrants and refugees. While this could be explained by the tendency of many researchers to focus on the early stages of settlement, this research indicated, as argued by Granovetter (1973, 1983) that weak ties could have a valuable role in providing new opportunities, particularly in relation to employment. This research indicated that chance encounters played an important role in providing new employment and career opportunities for two male participants, in particular, that otherwise would not have occurred had they not been able to make social connections with members of the public. While the number of participants who came across these chance encounters was limited, the accounts of how these participants took advantage of these weak ties provided unique insights of the benefits of participants making new social connections that would not have previously contemplated. The benefits of these types of social links were also evidenced in the stories told by two participants about how links with members of their churches had assisted them to find employment using their skills, such as the preparation of curriculum vitae and letter to prospective employers. The findings from this research would indicate the usefulness of furthering our understanding of the role of weak ties and the settlement of migrants and refugees, not only in respect to employment outcomes but also in terms of wider social interaction and exchange.

Finally, another area of complexity was the ambivalence indicated by all participants towards making connections with other New Zealanders, other than those developed in the workplace. While some researchers (such as Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007; Barker 1991) would view this ambivalence as a failure of the settlement process, this research suggests that the stance of participants was a ‘choice’, based on their cultural and linguistic preferences. Whether the ambivalence identified in this research could be associated with marginalisation or separatism (as referred by Berry 1998) is not upheld on the basis of social ties. Rather, I agree with the view proffered by Grbic et al (2009) that there may be “*...varied pathways to integration among Pacific people that require further examination.*” (Grbic et al 2009: 11)

### ***Employment***

This research upholds the findings by many researchers working in the area of settlement (see for example, Beckhusen et al 2012; Colic-Peisker 2002, 2003; Burnett 1998; Westin 2000; Henderson 2004; Fincher et al 1993; Uhendorff and Zimmermann 2006), that employment is a key determinant of successful settlement. While it could be argued that securing employment was even more important in the case of participants given that it was a

prerequisite for participants to secure full-time permanent employment, that met an annual income threshold as a means for gaining residency, employment was the most significant determinant of their on-going settlement outcomes. Of the three issues identified in the literature review as determining how and where migrants and refugees entered the labour market (language proficiency, discrimination, and skills and work experience) (see for example, Burnett 1998; Dunman 2006; Vasta 2007, Beiser 2009, Strabac and Listhaug 2008; Pescarus and Bauaissa 2007; North 2007; Ward et al 2007; Hersech 2008), all of these potential constraints were mitigated by the way participants were assisted by their strong ties. The most likely reason is that strong ties had already taken into account these issues when assisting participants to find their work, and drawing from their own knowledge and experiences targeted those sectors of the labour market constantly experiencing shortages or those New Zealand employers with experience of Kiribati workers (such as cleaning and caregiving industries)

By targeting those industries and employers that provided the greatest chances of offering employment, participants bypassed the possibility of rejection based on language proficiency, discrimination and skills and work experience. This explained why none of the participants raised concerns on the basis of these issues relating to entry into the labour market, but why some of these issues featured later in their employment experiences. In addition, unlike concerns raised by Dunman (2006) about barriers to entry into the labour market arising from the lack of recognition of educational qualifications, the two male participants who had qualifications in the marine sector did not have any difficulties in having their qualifications recognised. The most likely explanation for this outcome was recognition by New Zealand employers of the qualifications gained by the internationally recognised marine training institution in Betio, Kiribati.

It was beyond these initial experiences, however, that this study indicated greater levels of convergence with research on the labour market experiences of migrants and refugees. Among the most significant of these findings was the critical role that human capital played in influencing the upward labour market mobility of participants. Consistent with research (Portes and Hepburn 2011; Portes et al 2005; Portes and Zou 1993; Portes and Böröcz 1989; Mahuteau et al 2008; IMSED 2010; Burnett 1998), participants with limited human capital resources, particularly in relation to education qualifications and language proficiency found themselves ‘trapped’ in low-wage employment in service industries working as cleaners and

caregivers. This was particularly the case for female participants, who congregated in the caregiving industry, an industry that paid notoriously low wages, but found it difficult to move into better paying more satisfying jobs. While it could be argued that participants were content to find any work (as maintained by Fanjoy et al 2005) and that employment conferred many benefits over being unemployed, the high level of representation of the female participant group working as caregivers resonated with concerns raised by Burnett (1998) about the plight of low-skilled women migrants being over-represented in low-wage, vulnerable and exploitative industries (Burnett 1998: 31).

These concerns were exacerbated by stories told by half of the female participant group regarding their poor working conditions and having to deal with managers and colleagues who discriminated against them. This was in contrast to all male participants (with the exception of one working in the cleaning industry), who did not raise any issues relating to their working conditions, or to discriminatory practices in their workplaces. While ethnic concentration in the caregiving industry provided some buffer for female participants in having to deal with their difficult workplaces, in relation to issues such as discrimination and prejudice, these issues were associated with stress and anxiety, as indicated by other researchers (Harris et al 2012; Chae et al 2005).

One finding relating to the issue of discrimination in the workplace that stood out, because it was not expected, was the identification of discriminatory attitudes of other Pacific workers and managers working in the caregiving and cleaning industry directed towards many female participants and one male participant. While it was difficult to glean from participants why this would be the case, insights provided by two participants indicated that their treatment probably replicated the treatment that those Pacific workers and managers themselves had experienced. Another explanation could be that, as a relatively new migrant group to New Zealand (from Micronesia), these participants were not well understood and, therefore, vulnerable to discrimination and prejudice from other migrant and ethnic groups, such as Pacific migrants who had come from Polynesia.

Irrespective of the reasons underlying the experiences of discrimination in the workplace, the concerns raised by Burnett (1998) about the vulnerability of female migrants working in low-wage industries was particularly poignant in relation to the workplace experiences of four female participants working as caregivers. In these instances, and including the experience of

one male participant who worked as a cleaner, none of their concerns about discriminatory behaviour was dealt with effectively, leaving these participants to feel as though their concerns were not serious enough to warrant the attention of senior managers. For these participants, indications of discrimination in the workplace were associated with negative impacts on their mental well-being such stress, anxiety, and depression. This finding was found to be consistent with the results by the World Health Organization on the Social Determinants of Health (WHO 2003) which argued that while having a job was better for health than having no job, the social organisation of work, management styles and social relationships in the workplace all mattered for health. As with the findings from the World Health Organization (2003), this research indicated that the psychosocial environment at work was an important determinant of health.

An interesting dichotomy in relation to the workplace experiences of participants was the finding that workplaces provided opportunities for all participants (with the exception of one male participant working as a night-time cleaner) to interact at a social level with other New Zealanders, adding further weight to the importance of employment in terms of economic and social capital formation. For male participants, the social aspects of employment provided unique opportunities to enquire about new opportunities within their industries and gather useful information about how they could move into better-paying jobs. For female participants, the social aspects of employment provided opportunities to learn about new cultures, particularly Māori culture and the values of New Zealand society.

With a wider distribution of male participants in the labour market compared to female participants who congregated in the caregiving industry, gender differences were evidenced in how male and female participants became mobile in the labour market. In the case of male participants, who had greater opportunities to interact with the public, chance encounters were identified as providing new prospects to move into better paying and more career oriented employment, strengthening the case for importance of weak ties. In the absence of these opportunities for female participants, the favoured course to become mobile in the labour market was through investment in further education, primarily by training to become qualified nurses. While all female participants indicated their desire to become nurses, this research indicated that what distinguished the two female participants, who did become nurses and those who had not yet done so, was less associated with completion of their secondary schooling back in Kiribati, but with their language proficiency. Difficulty in

effectively communicating in English was identified by four female participants as the most significant barrier in being accepted into tertiary courses such as nursing.

### *Language proficiency*

Although this research converged with the findings by other researchers of the importance of language proficiency as an influencer of settlement (see for example, Burnett 1998; Simich et al 2003; Fanjoy et al 2005; Chiswick and Miller 2012), none of the participants who could have benefitted from the uptake of language training had done so at the time of the interviews. This finding paralleled the results of research on the uptake of language training by migrants living in New Zealand, which identified Pacific migrants (who gained their permanent residence under the PAC and the Samoan Access Category) as having the lowest uptake of English training courses of all migrant groups (IMSED 2010). As in that study, participants who identified themselves having low language proficiency, argued that a lack of time due to work and family commitments stood in their way to taking English language courses.

This research also indicated an association between the combined factors of low language proficiency, and a lack of labour market mobility, with detrimental impacts in terms of mental well-being (Beiser 2009). While this is undoubtedly a complex area, this research pointed to links between low language proficiency and five female participants and three male participants having few options, but continuing to work in low-wage service industries with poor workplace conditions and with limited prospects of furthering their socio-economic circumstances. Whatever the reasons behind the lack of uptake of English training courses by participants, this research confirmed the concerns of some researchers (Carrington et al 2007; Fanjoy et al 2005; Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007) that limited language proficiency, over time would constitute a major barrier to participants' aspirations to achieve full economic participation.

While these researchers (Carrington et al 2007; Fanjoy et al 2005; Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007) also noted that limited language proficiency had negative impacts on the social participation of migrants and refugees, this research indicated that language proficiency was not an influencer of the formation of social networks, given that all participants (irrespective of their language proficiency) expressed little or no desire to extend their social ties outside their ethnic community, except for the formation of social networks in the workplace.

Rather, this research suggested that language proficiency alone could not explain the reticence of all participants to form social connections with other New Zealanders, but a combination of wariness by participants in speaking English combined with the I-Kiribati cultural reserve underpinned all participants' shyness, or feeling 'maama' in forming wider social connections.

What this research did not confirm were the arguments made by Westin (2000) and Robinson et al (2007) that housing concentration influenced the language proficiency of participants. Although nine out of the fourteen participants lived in the wider Porirua area, language proficiency was indicated as being influenced by how much English they had learnt during their secondary school years and where they worked rather than their residential proximity to other Kiribati families. Other influences accounting for the divergent findings from this research and Westin (2000) and Robinson et al (2007) included the different styles of housing (large housing estates in Europe and Scandinavia compared to more individualised housing in New Zealand) and that unlike the very high levels of unemployment experienced by those living in low-cost housing estates, there was no unemployment among those who participated in this research.

Rather than housing influencing language proficiency of participants, this research indicated that the level of secondary schooling and how much participants were required to communicate in English in their work was linked to how well they learnt to speak English after many years of settlement in New Zealand. Those participants with lower human capital resources, who migrated to New Zealand with low English language skills and who worked as commercial cleaners (working at night), or who worked as caregivers were indicated as having lower language proficiency compared to the two male participants, who had worked overseas as seafarers. Overall, this research confirmed the arguments made by many researchers in the field of settlement (see for example, Burnett 1998; Simich et al 2003; Fanjoy et al 2005; Beiser 2009; Pahud 2008; Dunman 2006; Carrington et al 2007; Westin 2000; and Robinson et al 2007) that language proficiency is linked to where participants found themselves in the labour market (beyond their first jobs), which in turn, was linked to their broader settlement experiences.

*"...I need to enrol with the English because I need the good job..." (# middle aged male, married, very large family, 7 years settlement)*

*“The ability to communicate in English appears to have the greatest effect on respondents’ evaluations of their participation in their new country and therefore on their perceptions of their own success.” (Fanjoy et al 2009: 51).*

### **Housing**

Housing was identified by all participants as an important feature of their settlement experiences in New Zealand, not least because it represented a critical chapter in them becoming independent from their dependence on strong ties. As with other factors previously discussed, the housing experiences of participants converged in some areas and diverged in others. The comparative analysis uncovered significant areas of convergence relating to entry by participants in the rental housing market and their experiences with inadequate housing. In the first of these, this research indicated that in the absence of knowledge of how the rental market worked and coupled with a lack of relevant references, participants like many other migrants and refugees relied on strong ties to assist them to enter the rental housing market which, in the case of these participants, was exclusively in the largely unregulated private rental market (see for example, Robinson et al 2007, Haller et al 2011).

Consistent with the findings by Robinson et al (2007) that factors such as affordability influenced migrants with few financial resources to fill voids in the housing stock left behind by non-migrants, this research indicated that entry into the rental housing market in New Zealand by seven participants was achieved by taking over the leases of other Kiribati families vacating their rental properties. While affordability was indicated as an important factor influencing the behaviour of these participants in taking over the rental leases of Kiribati families vacating their rental housing, this ‘churn’ was also indicated as being a way of getting round their need to provide basic entry requirements such as references regarding their previous rental housing experiences (which they could not provide).

This method of entry into the rental housing market was associated, however, with the most acute stories of inadequate housing across the participant group. With no pressure placed on private rental property owners to make improvements, participants simply took over the inadequate housing being vacated by other Kiribati families. The movement of participants into inadequate rental housing was consistent with research on the settlement of new migrants

(with few financial resources) across many national jurisdictions (see for example, Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000; Haller et al 2011; Fennelly 2007; Burnet 1998). While experiences with inadequate rental housing were not confined to only those participants who took over the leases of other Kiribati families vacating their rental properties, stories depicting some of the worst incidences of bad housing came from this group of seven participants.

Irrespective of which way participants entered the rental housing market, this research indicated an association between inadequate housing and detrimental health impacts, particularly in relation to children which was consistent with research from New Zealand and internationally (see for example, Howden-Chapman et al 2007; Lane 2005; Pene et al 2007; Tukuitonga 2013; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; 2011; Early et al 2006; Holmes 2006; Hovey and Magaña 2000; Krieger et al 2000; Krieger 2010). While for ten participants and their families, inadequate housing was a transitional experience correlated with their upward mobility in the labour market, for the other participants and their families, inadequate housing was an on-going feature of their settlement many years after their initial settlement in New Zealand, raising concerns about the on-going negative health effects of inadequate housing.

In contrast to convergence between the findings of this research and other researchers, indicated above, on the issue of housing and health, two other issues (home ownership and location of residence) were significantly more complex and divergent. On the issue of home ownership, the most significant area of divergence between the findings from this research and other researchers (see for example, Westin 2000; Robinson et al 2007; Haller et al 2011), was the high ‘value’ placed by participants on home ownership compared to indications of neutrality ascribed to migrants by researchers on home ownership versus rental housing. Due in large part by the different culture of housing found in Europe, Scandinavia, the United States, and to some extent Australia, where renting is part of the way of living in these jurisdictions particularly in large urban centres, home ownership was indicated in this research as embodying a sense of success of participants’ migration and settlement in New Zealand.

While to some extent, the desire of home ownership was driven by the dislike by some participants in having to deal with difficult landlords, this research indicated that home ownership was viewed by participants as a proxy for a place to call ‘home’ and a foundation

in New Zealand that could be passed onto their children in the future. Whether influenced by economic or cultural considerations, a worrying feature of these findings was the strong association (drawn by all participants) between home ownership and achieving a sense of ‘belonging’ in New Zealand, given the low levels of home ownership of Pacific peoples referred to previously.

Finally, an issue raised by many researchers relating to settlement experiences and housing (see for example, Robinson et al 2007; Westin 2000; Haller et al 2011; Grbic et al 2009; Pene et al 2009) which was of an interest in relation to this research related to the housing location of participants and their families. This research indicated that while living in proximity to other Kiribati families was identified as a feature of all participants’ early settlement experiences influenced by affordability and a desire to stay close to their strong ties (also indicated by Simich et al 2003; Fanjoy et al 2005; Burnett 1998), over time and depending on their ability to achieve upward labour market mobility, the need to stay in close proximity to strong ties diminished. This was consistent with the research by Grbic et al (2009) which found an inverse association between upward economic mobility and the housing ‘segregation’ of Pacific people living in New Zealand.

Despite convergence with the research findings by Grbic et al (2009), this research indicated that the move away from close proximity from participants’ strong ties by those who had experienced upward labour market mobility was tempered by their desire to continue to live within the broader geographical area that they had come to know and their desire not to disrupt their children’s schooling. An example, of this dispersed association was the move by three participants who experienced upward labour market mobility from Cannons Creek (Porirua) to Titahi Bay and Ascot Park (still within the wider Porirua region), and a further three participants who also moved from Cannons Creek to Tawa (a neighbouring suburb of Porirua). Resisting that trend, in one case, a female participant who had experienced significant upward labour mobility, chose to stay in her rental home in Cannons Creek, successfully persuading her landlord to make improvements as a condition of her continuing to renting the property she had lived in upon coming to Wellington.

Whether this research affirms or disproves convergence with the findings by Grbic et al (2009) is moot. What this research indicated was that the quality of housing and proximity to employment (Pene et al 2009) constituted a greater influence on where participants choose to

live than proximity to strong ties. Another important factor indicated by this research was the importance of locational familiarity as an influence of housing location for participants (also as argued by Robinson et al 2007). For participants, familiarity related to knowledge of how the infrastructure worked, links with the schools their children attended, and access to important services (such as health services). An important consideration indicated in this research was the strong desire by all participants not to interrupt their children's education (particularly for those attending secondary school). Aside from not wanting to disturb their education, another consideration put forward by six participants which resonated with their own experiences was the important role that schools played in assisting their children to settle in New Zealand, and that forcing their children to move schools could have negative impacts particularly on their older children who, in some cases, struggled to adjust to separation from their own strong ties left behind in Kiribati.

Based on the factors indicated as influencing the housing location of participants and their families, the argument put forward by Robinson et al (2007) that migrants avoided housing locations due to concerns about how they might be treated was not upheld by this research. Rather, this research indicated a willingness by female participants to move into locations they did not know well (such as Waikanae and Otaki) to be close to their place of employment, but that there also was a preference across all participants (with the exception of one) to live within the wide vicinity of other Kiribati families. While it is not necessarily clear whether this complex picture converges or diverges from the findings by Grbic et al (2009), it certainly points to the usefulness of further research on the housing preferences and constraints of Pacific people living in New Zealand that influence their housing location. What this research suggests, however, is that the intent of participants was not to 'segregate' themselves from other New Zealanders, but to live in locations that they and their families (and children) were familiar with and in proximity to their children's schooling.

Possibly as a result of how participants moved into rental housing, the issue of discrimination within the rental housing market that was an important feature of other research on the settlement of migrants and refugees (see for example, Texeira 2007; Asselin et al 2006; Robinson et al 2007), was not indicated in this research (with the exception of one participant). At the same time, it could be argued that by encouraging churn at the bottom of the rental market by allowing rental home owners to get away with not making improvements, discriminatory practices resulted not in the form of constraints, but in the

form of affirmation of apportionment of inadequate housing to certain ethnic groups and low-income households desperate to move into rental housing. Although the issue of discrimination was not indicated as significant issue in relation to the housing experiences of participants per se, due to the complexities associated with the housing experiences of participants, this research suggests the need to further research on the issues of adequacy of housing and housing location of Pacific people living in New Zealand.

In conclusion, this research indicated that those participants who had improved their economic circumstances by experiencing upward mobility in the labour market exercised choice regarding where they wanted to live. Although this research suggested that familial and ethnic ‘closeness’ was not an enduring aspect of participants’ housing experiences (particularly for those who experienced upward labour market mobility), the desire expressed by most participants to move away from their strong ties, but not so far away that they missed out on aspects of familiarity and became isolated, strengthened the case for further research to be undertaken on the influences underpinning the housing location of Kiribati and other Pacific migrants living in New Zealand. An important aspect of any further research would be to examine whether the location of housing reinforces the social inequality of migrants (as argued by Westin 2000: 39) and to what extent housing location can have negative inter-generational impacts on migrant groups (as argued by Haller et al 2011: 757).

### ***Children’s success***

Unlike the vast amount of research on certain aspects comprising the settlement experiences of migrants and refugees in relation to employment, social ties, housing and health (see Chapter Three), research on the association between children’s success and migrant settlement has only relatively recently begun to command the attention of researchers:

*“Until the recent past, however, scholarly attention has focused on adult immigrants to the neglect of their offspring, creating a profound gap between the strategic importance of the new second generation and the knowledge about its socioeconomic circumstances.” (Zhou 1997: 63)*

Concerns about the lack of research on the role settlement outcomes of children, promulgated by Zhou (1997) and supported by other researchers (see for example, Arzubiaga et 2009; Atwell et al 2009; Haller et al 2011), may account why the issue of children’s success raised

by participants in this research did not emerge as an important recurring theme influencing the settlement experiences of migrants and refugees. Although the topic of the settlement experiences of the children of participants fell outside the scope of this research, the importance of ‘children’s success’ was indicated by all participants as a key determiner of how they assessed their own settlement success and sense of satisfaction with their experiences of living in New Zealand. Consequently, within the context of a dearth of research on the influencing role of children’s success on settlement, this section discusses some of the key issues raised by the data.

An important starting point for this discussion was the convergence between this research and the findings by Atwell et al (2009) who concluded that the aim of migrants was that future generations would have happier, easier, and more fulfilling lives than they had had. This research also indicated that the aim of participants was to ensure that their children would experience easier and more fulfilling lives that would lead to greater happiness and prosperity. Also consistent with Atwell et al (2009), however, was the recognition by participants that in seeking to ensure their children’s success, they had to come to grips with the different social and cultural structures inherent in New Zealand. This was aptly noted by Atwell et al (2009) as follows:

*“Parents quickly realize that the opportunities available to them and their children are embedded within a broader social and cultural environment very different from that of their home country.” (Atwell et al 2009: 677)*

In this research, children’s success was defined by participants as being comprised of their children receiving an education and retaining their Kiribati identity through the retention and maintenance of the Kiribati culture and language (see Chapter Six). Despite this unanimity, differences in how participants went about to ensure their children’s success, indicated a number of issues relating to their own settlement objectives. The most significant issues which would benefit from further research was the finding relating to the desire of most participants (eleven out of the group of fourteen) in implementing methods to ‘regulate’ the extent of their children’s social connections, outside of the school environment. For these participants (represented by a wide range of human capital resources and labour market mobility), social connectivity of their children was commonly viewed as having the potential to threaten the ability of their children to maintain their Kiribati culture.

For these participants, the schooling of their children in New Zealand presented them with a dichotomy that they had to deal with as part of their settlement experiences. For example, while on the one hand, schools were regarded as providing their children with a good education, schools were also viewed as playing an important role in the acculturation of their children, leading to concerns about the maintenance of the Kiribati culture (see for example Burnett 1998; IMSED 2010). It was against this background, that the desire by these participants to control their children's social connections was indicated as an attempt to stymie the exposure of their children to the pressures of acculturation. The question that arose was whether the actions of these ten participants led to their children's separation (as defined by Berry 1992) from New Zealand society?

Further analysis of the data indicated that, despite the efforts of these ten participants to control their children's social connections, access to social media such as Facebook, meant that their children were not 'separated' from making connections with other New Zealanders. This conclusion was based on participants' own accounts regarding the use of social media by their children and the difficulties they faced in controlling how their children used these electronic pathways. Exploring this further, it was found that the attitude of participants particularly to cultural loss was a greater influence on how they treated their children, rather than demographic and economic factors.

Unlike the eleven participants who emphasised 'push' factors as underpinning their decision to migrate in New Zealand, the four participants (two male and two female participants), who expressed a greater degree of relaxation about their children's wider social connections and were confident that their children would not lose their Kiribati identity were indicated as placing a greater emphasis on 'pull' factors as influencing their migration decision. These three participants exhibited less anguish about leaving Kiribati and were overall significantly more positive about what New Zealand had to offer them and their family. Consequently, these four participants indicated less areas of tensions they had to resolve in their settlement experiences compared to the other participants who, despite looking forward to the opportunities New Zealand had to offer, often expressed sentiments about what they had had to 'give up' to migrate to New Zealand.

This discussion should not be interpreted as implying a 'right' or 'wrong' way in how participants went about controlling the social connections of their children in an effort to

reduce the risks of acculturation, but rather, to highlight that the personal attitudes to migration by participants was associated with how they went about influencing the settlement experiences of their children. The tensions between the desire of the children of migrant parents to build social connections beyond their social and cultural group has been recognised by many researchers working in the field in the settlement (see for example, Burnett 1998; Bhugra 2004; Colic-Peisker 2002, 2003; Zhou 1997). Further research would be required to assess how the tensions between the children of migrants and parents influence the settlement experiences of migrants and their families, including how the acculturation of children impact on the psychological stresses of migrants (as posited by Barker 1991).

In contrast to the significant data collected on the importance of cultural capital, the data did not reveal much on how the children of participants were faring at school. While all participants stressed the importance of educational achievement for their children, only four participants (two of whom had invested in further education and two who had significant human capital resources) had stressed that the success of their children was not dependent on them simply finishing school, but doing well enough to allow them to enter university or other tertiary training. Drawing from their own experiences, these participants sought to influence their children to do well at school, recognising that their children would have to compete for entry into courses and in the labour market. What was less clear from the research was to the extent that participants understood how their children were faring at school, particularly those participants with less language proficiency and to what extent language proficiency influenced the interaction between participants and the schools their children were attending. In addition, the research was not in a position to shed light on any gender issues relating to children's success and whether participants played a role in the choice of further education, particularly in relation to their daughters. The decision of one male participant not to allow his daughter to pursue a career of her choice, as it was considered to be overly male-dominated, raised issues about the perceptions of labour market segmentation based on cultural preferences.

### ***Migration and health***

Of all the settlement themes examined in this research, the strongest area of convergence between this research and the findings of other researchers (see for example, Borrows et al 2010; Schluter et al 2011; Ho et al 2003; Sobrun-Maharaj et al 2008; Prior et al 1971, 1981,

1987; Stanhope et al 1981; Gershon 2007; Renzaho et al 2013; Frisbie et al 2001; Fennelly 2007), was related to the association between migration and the detrimental health impacts of migrants over time.

As noted in Chapter Three, a key starting point for much of the research on the topic of migration and health, is broad recognition that migrants contribute to what is commonly referred to by researchers as the ‘healthy migrant effect’ (see for example, Gushulak 2007; Borrows et al 2010; Schluter et al 2011; Hajat et al 2010; McDonald and Kennedy 2004; Fennelly 2007). Under the proposition of the ‘healthy migrant effect’, upon their arrival in New Zealand, migrants (such as participants and their families) could have been assumed as being healthier than the population of New Zealand. This is because, as with other migrants (not refugees), participants and their families would have had to meet an acceptable standard of health required under immigration policy. Although some such as Hajat et al (2010) have argued that some migrant groups, such as Pacific migrants, come to New Zealand with no apparent healthy migrant effect (Hajat et al 2010: 531), this research indicated that being required to meet the standard of health required under immigration policy, participants and their families would have presented some ‘healthy migrant effect’, even if it was for a relatively short period.

Despite this research questioning the argument made by Hajat et al (2010) regarding whether Pacific migrants, such as participants and their families, led to some ‘healthy migrant effect’, overall this research indicated a strong level of convergence regarding the erosion of participants’ health during their settlement in New Zealand. As noted by Gershon (2007) with respect to Samoan migrants living in the United States who considered themselves as feeling healthier than they did in Western Samoa, this research indicated that all participants (with the exception of two participants) considered themselves as being healthier in New Zealand than when they were in Kiribati. This perception of feeling healthier in New Zealand by participants was associated with increased levels of surety about access to health and hospital care, rather than their assessment of their own health.

This disjunction was indicated in this research also, with twelve participants who considered themselves to be healthier in New Zealand, compared to the finding that ten participants described themselves as suffering from a range of medical problems (that would have likely deemed them not to have met the acceptable standard of health required for them to gain

residency), such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, gout, hepatitis B, and health disease. Complicating this further, an additional two participants who described themselves as feeling healthier indicated that they were now suffering from obesity, but that they nonetheless felt healthy. Adding to the concerns from these findings was the indication by participants that many of their partners were now experiencing detrimental health effects since their migration to New Zealand.

While this research was unable to decipher all the intricate influences impacting on the health of participants, participants who attributed lifestyle changes, led by dietary change and a more sedentary lifestyle converged with the findings of many researchers (see Frisbie et al 2001; Gershon 2007; Renzaho et al 2013; Fennelly 2007; Burton 1998; Prior et al 1971, 1981, 1987; Stanhope et al 1981; Stillman et al 2007). As argued by Stillman et al (2007) that dietary change, rather than direct income effects, underpinned the increased stature of pre-teen Tongan children of migrants, this research also indicated that lifestyle changes rather than socio-economic impacts had a greater influence on the health of participants. This was suggested by the finding that the detrimental health effects of participants were not associated with either the human and social capital resources of participants, or their experiences in the labour market.

This result was in contrast to this research indicating an association between participants' human and social capital resources and labour market mobility and mental health impacts. In particular, those participants with lower human capital resources (particularly language proficiency) and who experienced no upward labour mobility indicated a greater propensity of suffering from stress, anxiety, and depression. While these results converged with some of the findings put forward by Ho et al (2003) which made a link between acculturation stress and the detrimental mental health impacts of Chinese migrants settled in New Zealand, the most significant difference was that unlike many older Chinese migrants who faced barriers to entry (such as discrimination) into the labour market, all participants were employed, with most having gone onto their second or third jobs.

On this basis, it could be argued that participants faced less acculturative stress than some other migrant groups, such as Chinese migrants due to the ability of participants and their partners to find employment. At the same time, however, as previously noted, poor workplace environments including discriminatory behaviour against many female

participants and one male participant was identified as a source of considerable stress for these participants. Adding to the complexity, however, was the finding that poor workplace practices on its own was not viewed by participants as the most significant source of their detrimental mental health impacts. A greater influence indicated by this research was participants' perception of their inability to experience upward labour market mobility and their inability, therefore, to secure higher incomes that would enable them to more adequately provide for their children. Feeling 'trapped' in 'bad' jobs where they were expected to work hard for the minimum wage, in poor workplace environments that led participants to feel exploited was indicated as the combination of factors that was most associated with stress, anxiety, and depression. This was particularly pronounced in the case of two male participants (one of whom experienced workplace discrimination and one who did not) who not only viewed themselves as 'failing' to adequately provide for their children and who (unlike all female participants who held hope they could improve their labour market outcomes through further education) considered their 'entrapment' in the labour market as a permanent feature of their settlement.

These detrimental mental health impacts were indicated as being further exacerbated by feeling 'trapped' in inadequate housing, based not only on concerns for their children but on their own self-image of how they lived. Unlike the vast level of research on the detrimental physical health effects of inadequate housing on health (see for example, Howden-Chapman et al 2012, 2007; Baker et al 2012; Lane 2005; Pene et al 2007; Tukuitonga 2013; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs 2011), the issue of the mental health impacts of inadequate housing was not a significant feature of research on housing. While some researchers such as Westin (2000); Robinson et al (2007); and Haller et al (2011) have suggested that housing segregation was associated with social isolation, this research indicated that, rather than housing location, inadequate housing was linked with social isolation, not only having negative impacts for adults, but also for their children. This finding underscores the need for some regulatory regime to guarantee a minimum standard for rental housing, not only to protect new migrant groups, but as a way of protecting all New Zealanders reliant on rental housing.

More positively, this research indicated a positive association between settlement in New Zealand and improved female mental health and improved children's physical health. On the first of these issues, the four female participants who identified themselves as being victims

of domestic violence noted that New Zealand's strong stance on this matter, allowed them to feel safer in New Zealand than they did in Kiribati. On the second issue, despite concerns raised by some participants about the detrimental health impacts of inadequate housing, this research indicated a positive relationship between settlement and children's health outcomes, due in large part to access to primary health services and hospital care. Thus, while the health of participants, as a group, was indicated as declining during their settlement in New Zealand, the health of their children, as a group, was indicated as improving.

## **Climate Change and Migration**

As discussed previously, climate change-induced migration is expected to become a reality as climate change impacts test the sustainability of human habitation in some of the most vulnerable regions. As noted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2007), McLean and Smit (2006) and Fritz (2010, low-lying regions, such as deltas and atoll islands, are most at risk from climate change effects, due to predicated sea-level increases over the longer-term. Interposed with these predictions is the issue of the adaptive capacities of states and their societies to stave off the effects of climate change impacts (such as the building of coastal levies to lessen these threats. In Kiribati, efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change impacts, has recently included the replanting of mangroves in an effort to reduce the destructive impacts of increased wave surges and over-topping of coastal regions.

Alongside these efforts, the Kiribati government and researchers (Republic of Kiribati Island Report Series 2012; McAdam 2012; Bedford and Bedford 2010; Patton 2009) have argued that the anthropogenic pressures evident in Tarawa need be reduced, not only so natural systems can be in a stronger position to withstand the effects of climate change, but so that they can manage the additional anthropogenic impacts associated with population increases. I would liken the twin effects of climate change and anthropogenic impacts as a 'double burden' facing Kiribati that will underpin the build-up of pressure for outward migration already occurring, and likely to intensify greater over the medium to longer-term (the term 'double burden' is borrowed from the World Health Organization (2011) who used it to refer to Kiribati facing high levels of both communicable and non-communicable diseases).

If climate change will pressure people to move, it begs the question as to why none of the respondents raised the issue of climate change in their interviews. I would posit from the responses put forward by participants that a lack of economic opportunities and the increased difficulties in carving a sustainable life in Kiribati, particularly Tarawa, is the reason for their decision to migrate to New Zealand, whether it be from unsustainable population pressures and/or increased climate change impacts. As argued by McAdam (2012), the slow-onset of climate change is exacerbating existing socio-economic and environmental vulnerabilities, compounding existing problems, and it is the totality of these pressures that underpinned the outward migration of respondents, rather than simply one event. While in the future, the relationship between climate change and migration may become more easy to discern (for example, sea-level increases displacing residents), in the shorter-term, it will be a mix of issues that come to bear placing pressure for outward migration. This does not mean that climate change is not a factor now in I-Kiribati seeking to migrate to New Zealand, but just that it is more difficult to identify.

## The Emergence of Concepts

The comparative analysis confirmed that there were areas of significant convergence and divergence between the settlement experiences of participants and their families living in New Zealand and findings from other researchers on the settlement of migrants and refugees. This section discusses the key conclusions emanating from the comparative analysis, and presents some theoretical concepts that can further our understanding of the settlement experiences of participants and their families. An important starting point for this discussion is to acknowledge the critical role that the specific immigration policy, the PAC, played in providing a policy avenue for all participants (with the exception of one participant) to gain permanent residency in New Zealand. It can be concluded from this research that the high use by participants of the PAC (utilising a ballot system) was indicative of the difficulties most participants would have faced in using mainstream categories to migrate to New Zealand.

An analysis of the human capital resources of participants indicated that, depending on the skills shortages facing New Zealand at the time of their migration, only three male participants would have had possibility of migrating to New Zealand, most likely under the

work to residence policy. The relevance of this finding is that, it can be posited that the human capital profile of eleven out of fourteen participants would have been similar with those migrating under the family category, rather than the skills, investment and business categories. Given that the vast number of studies on the settlement of migrants is also focussed on migrants with these characteristics (see for example, Beckhusen et al 2012; Bonnefoy et al 2003; Borrows et al 2010; Browning and Rodriguez 1982; Burnett 1998; Gershon 2007; Haller et al 2011; Macpherson 2008; Portes and Zou 1993; Portes et al 2005; Robinson et al 2007; Rose et al 1998; Schluter et al 2011; Stillman et al 2013, 2007; Texeira 2007; Vasta 2007; Ward and Masgoret 2007, 2008; Westin 2000), comparative analysis of this study and the wider research identified in the literature review was applicable and relevant.

This research confirmed that like all voluntary migrants (to be distinguished from refugees), the decision to migrate by participants was based on their desire to improve the lives of their families, in particular, their children. Although both ‘pull’ and ‘push’ factors played a part in the decision making process to migrate, all participants concluded that their families would experience a ‘better life’ in New Zealand. A concept that links pre-migration understandings and the settlement experiences of participants is the *‘formation of expectations’*, referred to in participants’ own words as the expectations of *‘a better life in New Zealand’*. For participants the formation of expectations encapsulated a desire to secure for them and their families an easier, happier, and more prosperous life. The concept also denotes that, while participants used various means to inform themselves about what life would be like in New Zealand, this process was not always straightforward due to a number of obstacles, including a lack of good information from their strong ties living in New Zealand.

Despite a number of inefficiencies associated with the provision of information to participants, strong ties played a critical role in assisting participants and their families to establish their settlement base in New Zealand. Not only did strong ties perform a vital function in absorbing many of the initial transaction costs associated with participants’ settlement, but they also played an important role in assisting participants and their families establish a foundation from which they could continue to develop over the course of their settlement. The concept that represents the many day-to-day activities that shaped the lives of participants and their families is the *‘establishment of a settlement base’*. This concept denotes settlement activities, including searching and securing full-time, permanent employment, moving into rental properties, and accessing education and health services. The

concept also symbolises the strong desire of participants to achieve their settlement independence, through the establishment of their own households.

It is from the concept of the '*establishment of a settlement base*' that the settlement experiences of participants and their families began to indicate different trajectories. As noted earlier, while participation in the labour market was identified as a vital step for all (but one) participant in gaining permanent residency under the PAC, labour market mobility was indicated as the most important influencer of the settlement experiences of participants over the medium-term. Gender differences were indicated in how participants went about achieving upward labour market mobility by moving into better-paying and more career-oriented jobs. Unlike, the two male participants who had specific skills that were recognised by the New Zealand marine industry and who were able to use those skills in their employment, weak ties (as defined by Granovetter 1973, 1983) in the form of chance encounters provided male participants with new employment opportunities. It is from these settlement experiences that the concept of the '*extension of social capital*' emerged to denote the addition of new social ties.

In contrast to the experiences of male participants, female participants (who did not have the same opportunities to develop weak ties) invested in further education to improve their employment prospects. It was this pathway, used by two female participants that the concept of '*extension of human capital*' emerged. This concept denotes the adding to the human capital resources of some female participants that allowed them to move up in the labour market from caregivers to qualified nurses. Importantly, for both female and male participants, who experienced an extension of human and social capital, upward labour market mobility was associated with improved housing outcomes and overall increased levels of settlement satisfaction. In contrast, those participants who did not experience these opportunities were much more likely to associate their settlement experiences with poor-paying employment, poor and exploitative workplaces, and being forced to live in inadequate housing, with poorer health outcomes for their children.

Another influencer of the settlement experiences of participants and their families was the retention of cultural identity. All participants viewed that maintaining their Kiribati cultural and linguistic capital was a necessary aspect of their settlement and, indeed, their connection to New Zealand. Although the desire of participants to have their children retain and

maintain their Kiribati culture could be viewed as going against their decision to migrate to New Zealand, the retention of the Kiribati culture was indicated as a necessary requirement for them to view their settlement as a success. The concept that captures this sentiment is the '*retention of cultural identity*'. This concept denotes the importance of culture, which together with many other elements (such as language, and the retention of social behaviour such as respect), come together to make up the identity of I-Kiribati. This concept also symbolises the tensions indicated in the research between participants and their children regarding the formation of social ties. While the approach of many participants was to curtail the development of social links with other New Zealanders, due to their fear that this could result in the loss of the Kiribati culture, participants acknowledged that their children wanted to form wider social links, as a way of influencing their own settlement experiences.

Finally, the last concept to emerge from the research was that of '*belonging in New Zealand*'. This concept denotes the transition made by many participants from their time as new migrants in New Zealand, to becoming increasingly attached and connected to their new host country. This concept recognises that, over time, influenced by attributes such as economic success and their children growing up and having their own families, the links to New Zealand emerge and become stronger. Unlike other jurisdictions, such as the United States, where permanent residence is based on becoming US citizens, this concept is not based on the requirement for participants to become New Zealand citizens. Rather this concept is based more on the 'hearts' and 'minds' of participants feeling a connection to New Zealand now and into the future.

## **Theoretical Model: The Settlement Experience of Kiribati Migrants**

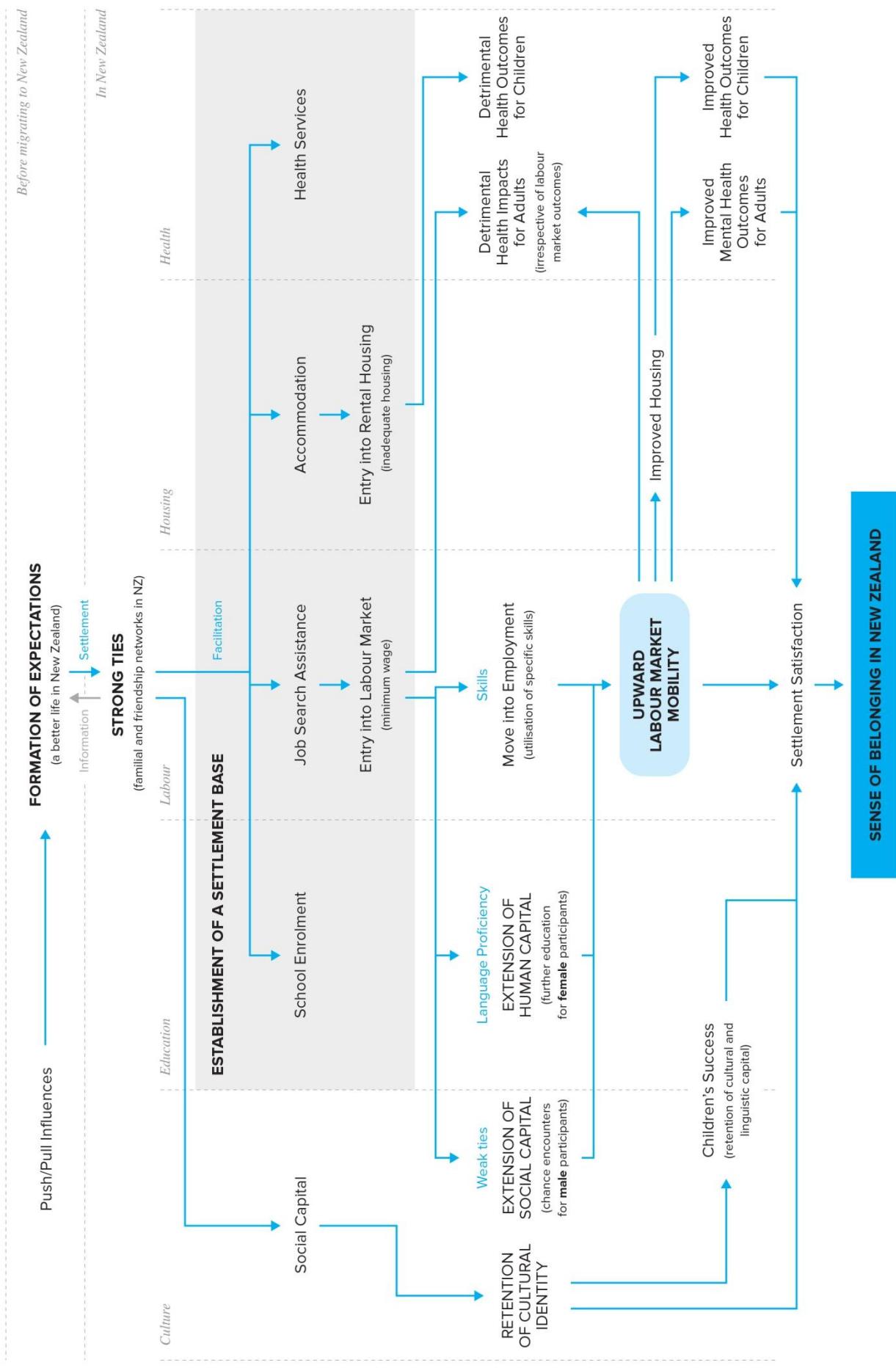
A theoretical model comprised of these concepts and the linkages between them that emerged from the in-depth interviews with participants is set out in Figure 4 below. This theoretical model illustrates how with 'push/pull' influences and the formation of expectations of 'a better life' in New Zealand participants made the decision to migrate and settle in New Zealand. The model illustrates the important role that strong ties played in assisting and supporting participants and their families in the early stages of their settlement. One of the most important functions of strong ties was assisting participants with the 'establishment of a settlement base' that would provide an important foundation for their settlement in New

Zealand. The settlement base comprised of participants securing full-time permanent employment, moving into the rental housing market, and accessing educational and health services for their children.

It was from the settlement foundation of the settlement base where differences between the settlement experiences of participants began to emerge. This is illustrated in the numerous pathways used by participants to achieve upward labour market mobility. Aside from the two male participants who possessed relevant industry skills recognised by the New Zealand marine sector, the main routes for upward labour market mobility was through the extension of social capital for male participants and the extension of human capital for female participants. Weak ties, in the form of chance encounters and acquaintances are illustrated as having significant positive impacts for male participants leading to new employment opportunities. For female participants, language proficiency is illustrated as a key influencer of who would be able to invest in further education and who would continue to work in their jobs as caregivers.

The model illustrates the positive downstream impacts of upward labour mobility, depicted by the ability of participants to move into better quality rental housing that was associated with improved health for their children. In contrast, those participants, who along with their partners continued to work in low-wage jobs, continued to reside in inadequate housing with detrimental health impacts for their children, mitigated only by access to primary health services. Those participants stuck in low-wage jobs, poor workplace environments and poor housing are indicated as suffering from negative mental health outcomes. The model illustrates that some issues, such as children's success, the retention of cultural identity, the lack of a desire by participants to connect with other New Zealanders, and the health outcomes of participants were not influenced by labour market outcomes and stood in their own right as influencers of settlement. The retention of cultural identity is depicted as being associated with settlement satisfaction and with the sentiment of 'belonging in New Zealand' underpinning the importance of the retention of cultural capital as a determinant of settlement. The model also illustrates that over time, settlement is an influencer for the detrimental health outcomes of participants, demonstrating some of the contradictions of migration as a driver of 'a better life in New Zealand' (see Figure 4 below).

# Settlement Experiences of Kiribati Migrants and their Families Living in New Zealand



# **Chapter 8: Conclusion**

## **Introduction**

This research has explored the research question: *What are settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand?* Using narrative theory and constructivist grounded theory, this study has sought to understand the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. Rich data collected through the process of interviews with Kiribati migrants enabled this research to gain some key insights on the factors that influenced the settlement experiences of these migrants and their families. Most importantly, this means that the conclusions drawn in this thesis were drawn from the ground up based on the stories, words, and sentiments shared by participants. To assist the discussion on the conclusions arising from this research, this chapter has been structured into seven sections: approach to the research, reasons for undertaking this research, summary of major findings, research limitations, recommendations for policy development, recommendations for future research, and conclusion.

## **Approach to the Research**

The approach to this research was to gather rich data from Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand that would, through the use of narrative analysis and constructivist grounded theory, elicit some of the main factors that influenced the settlement experiences of this migrant group. An important starting point to the study was identifying a sampling frame which was related to those within the Kiribati ethnic group who had migrated to New Zealand. A number of inclusions were considered to refine the purpose sample for this research, the most significant of which were: the requirement for participants to have migrated to New Zealand with one or more dependent children, to have resided in New Zealand for less than ten years, and to have gained permanent residence status. These inclusions were intended to capture the complexities associated with the settlement of Kiribati families, and who had made the decision to migrate to New Zealand on a permanent basis, and who had experienced settlement beyond the initial short-term period of adjustment.

An important starting point for this research was tapping into formal and informal connections within the Wellington Kiribati community that could assist me in identifying Kiribati families living in the wider-Wellington and Kapiti regions that met the criteria established for the purpose sample. The intention for approaching the field research in this manner was to ensure that the study was embedded within the Kiribati culture and, therefore, the ‘Kiribati way of doing things’. At a personal level, this approach was necessary, not simply to achieve the goal of answering the research question, but to ensure that the research process had academic and cultural integrity. On advice from members of the Kiribati community, an information sheet, written in Kiribati and English, was distributed to all members of the community informing them of the research and inviting those fitting the purpose sample to participate. The decision to inform the Kiribati community in this way was intended to acknowledge all members of the community, recognising that interest in this research was likely to go beyond simply those participating in this research. After a process of self-identification and cold-calling fourteen participants (eight female and six male Kiribati migrants) were selected to participate, on the basis of exhausting the data.

A key tenet of the process underpinning this research was ensuring that the interviews were centred in a cultural setting, that ensured participants felt comfortable, respected, and safe. The process to the field research was also based on ensuring flexibility and willingness to learn and adapt to enhance the data collection process. It was on this basis, that the use of open-ended questions was changed in favour of a conversational interview approach. This adjustment resulted in a significant increase of information from participants about their settlement experiences. Armed with the findings from the review of the settlement literature, the data was analysed, focussed on understanding some of the issues that influenced the settlement experiences of participants and the linkages between those factors. The comparative analysis noted that, while there were areas of convergence, there were also areas of divergence that shed insights into the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. This analysis enabled this research to contribute to some of the emerging debates within the domain of settlement research, such as the benefits and risks of migrants’ housing location preferences. Overall, the approach to this research was to give voice to the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants, within the context of rich New Zealand and international research on the settlement of migrants and refugees.

## **Reasons for undertaking the research**

Two interlinked factors motivated the undertaking of this research. The first of these was the absence of research on the settlement of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. Although this could be explained by the relative newness and small size of this migrant group, the importance of undertaking this research was related to the wider context of climate change and other anthropogenic impacts. It was this context that constituted the second reason that influenced the decision to undertake this research. The aim was to gain an understanding of how Kiribati migrants went about settling in New Zealand, with the intention that this additional knowledge could form a foundation for future settlement research, such as in the area of forced climate change migration from Kiribati to New Zealand.

## **Summary of Major Findings**

In general, this research generated a number of important findings on the settlement of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. These are:

- 1. Human capital is a critical factor in the settlement of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand, with language proficiency being one of the most important influencers of settlement outcomes.**

This research indicated that human capital is a major determiner of the economic success of Kiribati migrants, influencing their ability to experience upward labour market mobility to generate increased incomes. Among the factors comprising human capital, language proficiency was identified as a key factor influencing the ability of Kiribati migrants to secure better paying jobs. Language proficiency also influenced which Kiribati migrants could access tertiary education, improve their skills and earn higher incomes, and which would continue to be ‘trapped’ in low-wage industries. In turn, these labour market outcomes had on-going impacts throughout the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants, including access to quality rental housing and the ability of parents to fund out of school activities for their children.

**2. Family and friends play a vital role in assisting and supporting new Kiribati migrants to settle in New Zealand, but ‘weak ties’, such as chance encounters and acquaintances have an important purpose in generating new employment opportunities.**

Family and friends have a critical function in assisting and supporting new Kiribati migrants settle in New Zealand. An important role of these ‘strong ties’ (Granovetter 1973, 1983) was their assistance in helping new Kiribati migrants enter the New Zealand labour market and secure full-time permanent employment that would meet the requirement under PAC immigration policy to gain permanent residence status. Other forms of assistance provided by these networks included entry into the rental housing market, and facilitating access to social services, such as education for children and primary health services. Although these findings were not particularly surprising, the preparedness of ‘strong ties’ to absorb a considerable level of settlement costs, and improve the efficiency of the settlement process for Kiribati migrants and their families was very revealing. What was less expected was the important role that ‘weak ties’ (Granovetter 1973, 1983), such as chance encounters and acquaintances, played in providing Kiribati migrants with new employment opportunities. An interesting conundrum identified in this research is how the benefits of ‘weak ties’ can be extended given the high level of ambivalence among participants towards the development of social connections with other New Zealanders, outside the Kiribati community.

**3. Upward labour market mobility is a key factor influencing the settlement experiences and outcomes of Kiribati migrants and their families.**

Upward labour market mobility was identified as the most important influencer of the settlement experiences and outcomes of Kiribati migrants and their families. The move by participants into higher paying and more satisfying jobs with career advancement prospects was associated with a number of positive settlement outcomes, including access to better quality housing, positive mental health outcomes for adults, and improved health of children. These results were, in turn, linked to higher levels of self-worth and a greater likelihood among participants to look positively to their on-going settlement. In contrast, those Kiribati migrants, unable to move on from their low-wage jobs, were more likely to consider themselves as being ‘trapped’ in bad jobs, inadequate housing, with on-going settlement struggles. These migrants were more likely to convey sentiments of stress, anxiety, and a

sense of not doing enough for their children. Overall, these results underpinned the critical importance of labour market experiences of Kiribati migrants, not only in terms of direct effects, but also in relation to downstream and cumulative effects.

**4. Taking over the leases of other Kiribati families vacating their rental properties assists new Kiribati migrants to enter the New Zealand rental housing market, but the unintended consequence of this approach is a lack of incentives for rental property owners to make improvements.**

As a way of getting around the need for documentation, such as written references, many Kiribati migrants entered the New Zealand rental market by taking over the leases of other Kiribati families vacating their rental homes. While this method of entry into the rental housing market enabled new Kiribati migrants to secure affordable rental housing in the private sector, the ready churn in the market meant that rental property owners did not face any incentives to make improvements. As a result of this, the rental properties obtained by Kiribati migrants in this way were typically described by participants as being cold, damp, unsafe, and on occasion, pest infested. Although the plan of many of Kiribati migrants was to stay in these inadequate rental properties for a short period, as they transitioned into better quality rental housing, those families, who did not experience upward labour mobility and could not afford to move into better quality rental housing, continued to live in poor rental housing. Inadequate housing was associated with detrimental health effects for children and mental stress for adults of Kiribati migrant families, underpinning the need for enforceable regulations to improve the standards of the private rental housing in New Zealand.

**5. Housing proximity to ‘strong ties’ is important for Kiribati migrants during their initial stages of settlement, but over time, other factors exert greater influence, such as proximity to the workplaces of female family members and better quality housing within broader areas of familiar housing locations.**

The choice of rental housing location in the early stages of settlement for many Kiribati migrants and their families was influenced by their preference to live in proximity to family and friends. This inclination was based on ease of access to ‘strong ties’, which they could call upon to assist with child-care, transportation of children to and from school, and the establishment of new households. Over time, the preference for proximity to ‘strong ties’

was replaced by the desire of Kiribati migrants to live close to the place of work of female members, and to move into better quality housing. Some of the benefits of greater proximity to places of employment for female Kiribati migrants included improved work-life balance, and greater sense of safety in not having to travel far at night. At the same time, familiarity with a region where participants had lived in also influenced where they chose to search for better quality rental housing.

**6. Even over time, Kiribati migrants do not have a desire to form social connections with others outside the Kiribati community, except for the development of social links within their workplaces.**

Irrespective of the length of time living in New Zealand, Kiribati migrants did not indicate any desire to form social connections outside of the Kiribati community, except for forming social associations within their places of work. This research indicated that the workplace constituted an important environment for social connectivity. Organised work events, such as functions and social gatherings played an important role in assisting Kiribati migrants to experience other cultures and learn about other people and communities. It also enabled other New Zealanders to learn and find out more about a group of migrants few New Zealanders know a great deal about. The only group of Kiribati migrants who did not experience these social work opportunities were those who worked as commercial night cleaners.

**7. Many Kiribati migrants experience detrimental health impacts during their settlement in New Zealand, irrespective of socio-economic outcomes.**

Irrespective of which immigration category Kiribati migrants used to gain permanent residency status, all would have been required to meet ‘an acceptable standard of health’, as defined by Immigration New Zealand policy. With that baseline established, it was surprising that the vast majority of participants identified themselves and/or their partners of having experienced detrimental health outcomes, since their migration to New Zealand. Among the most common health issues included, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and gout. Although all participants acknowledged the high standard of primary health services in New Zealand, compared to Kiribati, many participants considered dietary change and reduced physical activity as key factors negatively affecting their health outcomes. The

widespread negative health impacts, identified in this research, cut across the socio-economic status of participants. While mental health well-being was more difficult to assess, those participants who identified themselves as feeling stressed, anxious, or depressed were associated working in low-wage employment with poor workplace practices, and living in inadequate housing, with little prospect for improved socio-economic outcomes.

### **8. Economic success and the retention of cultural capital of the children of Kiribati migrants are factors that influence the perceptions of Kiribati migrants' sense of belonging in New Zealand.**

Upward labour market mobility resulting in higher incomes and greater employment satisfaction was associated with the propensity of Kiribati migrants to plan and look forward to their future lives in New Zealand. An interesting link was revealed by many participants between home ownership and the development of a sense of belonging. Home ownership and 'owning a slice of New Zealand' was characterised in the form of laying a foundation for their future, including the ability to leave something behind for their children. Other sentiments expressed in relation to home ownership was that of 'freedom' and 'sustainability', concepts that underpinned the lives of I-Kiribati back in the islands but which was becoming more difficult to sustain. In addition to 'growing roots' in New Zealand, another important attribute of 'belonging' was the requirement of the children of Kiribati migrants to retain their culture and language, that is, the preservation of their Kiribati identity. Although different participants utilised different techniques to ensure that their children retained their Kiribati identity, this goal was unanimous across the participant group.

### **Research Limitations**

While this thesis extends our knowledge of the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand, it is still only an in-depth study into a small aspect of the settlement experiences of this migrant group. Although the participant group, which comprised of 14 Kiribati migrants, is acknowledged as being relatively small in size, the approach implemented of interviewing Kiribati migrants until the data was exhausted went some way to mitigate the risks associated with the size of the participant group. Indeed an important benefit of the small size of the participant group was the ability to undertake in-

depth interviews and to dig deeper on issues of interest as they arose during the interview. It also enabled follow-up interviews on matters that required clarification to be undertaken. Rather than the size of the participant group, the more significant limitation of the research was drawing the purpose sample from the wider-Wellington and Kapiti regions. For example, it is unclear to what extent geographical differences between Wellington and other parts of New Zealand influenced the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families. In particular, it is uncertain whether the pattern of human and social capital of participants was representative of Kiribati migrants living in other geographical areas, or whether the patterns of entry into the labour market and rental housing market were similar. Given the probability of regional differences impacting on the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants, this research should be considered as a starting point, rather than an end-point, in understanding how these migrants go about their settlement in New Zealand. This is particularly pertinent given the context of increased outward migration pressures from Pacific atoll countries, such as Kiribati, due to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts.

## **Recommendations for Policy Development**

This research highlighted a number of areas that would benefit from policy development. The first of these is the need for the development of strategic policy on how New Zealand intends to respond to increased migration pressures that are continuing to build in Pacific countries such as Kiribati, due to climate change and other anthropogenic pressures. Although, New Zealand is unlikely to want to position itself as a ‘first mover’ on the protection of ‘forced environmental migrants’ or ‘climate change refugees’, the risk is that, in the absence of policy thinking, this gap may lead to uncontrolled policy creep based on judicial appeals on the basis of individual immigration cases. Another risk is that in the absence of strategic policy thinking, New Zealand may have to respond in a mounting crisis situation which would not be ideal.

At a lower level of policy development, another policy issue arising from this research that would warrant consideration is an increase in the Kiribati PAC quota from the current level of 75 places per year. Given the size of the Kiribati population (relative to other PAC countries) and given the context of increased climate change impacts, it could be argued that the current PAC quota is insufficient to make a meaningful difference and iniquitous when

compared to the PAC quota for Tuvalu and Tonga. Although the modest PAC quota, established for Kiribati in 2000, was based on the small size of the Kiribati population in New Zealand, the increased population of the Kiribati population (Statistics New Zealand 2014) coupled with the findings of this research about the willingness of the Kiribati population to assist in the settlement of new Kiribati migrants, suggests that an increase in the PAC quota for Kiribati would be appropriate. An increase in the PAC quota for Kiribati would not only provide an important immigration outlet for I-Kiribati individuals and families, but could also serve as a useful strategic tool in providing for an ‘orderly’ increase in the Kiribati population in New Zealand that would assist in the absorption of new Kiribati migrants should the outward migration pressures continue to increase, due to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts.

With the importance of human capital, and language proficiency, indicated as key attributes for upward labour market mobility, a policy area that would warrant attention is how New Zealand can support Kiribati to increase the skills of I-Kiribati, not simply for men (through the Marine Training College), but for also for women. Assisting Kiribati to ensure that no children miss out from attending secondary schools could also form part of an improved focus on education, training and skills. In addition, the finding from this research regarding the vital role that language proficiency had in the settlement experiences of participants, raises the opportunity for New Zealand to provide assistance to Kiribati to increase the provision of English training as part of the school curricula in Kiribati. All of these initiatives could be explored as part of New Zealand’s aid programme, with the aim of improving the ability of I-Kiribati to come and work in New Zealand, emigrate under the PAC, or come to reside in New Zealand in the longer-term as a response to climate change.

At an operational policy level, the provision of accurate information to prospective Kiribati migrants about what they could expect in New Zealand would go a long way in reducing the high level of misinformation indicated by many participants (particularly female participants). Information written in Kiribati, available electronically or at the New Zealand Embassy in Tarawa would assist in mitigating the risks associated with poor quality information indicated in this research as leading to settlement shocks and surprise.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

This research has highlighted a number of areas which would benefit from further research and add to the knowledge of the settlement of Kiribati and other migrants living in New Zealand.

### ***Settlement experiences of children of Kiribati migrants***

Although much has been written on the settlement experiences of migrants and refugees, very little is known about the settlement experiences of young adults of migrants. In interviewing participants for this thesis, I became aware about how little was known about the settlement experiences of young Kiribati adults (aged 18-24) who migrated with their parents. Drawing from this research, it would be enlightening to explore to what extent the different approaches, indicated by participants influenced the settlement experiences of young adults, particularly in relation to social connectivity.

### ***Impact of migration on the health of Kiribati migrants***

Another settlement issue that would also benefit from further research would be to examine in detail the migration influencers that can account for the detrimental health outcomes of Kiribati migrants. Although the association between migration and health has been well established in New Zealand and international research (see for example, Prior 1971, 1981, 1987; Renzaho et al 2013; Stillman et al 2007, 2013; Schluter et al 2011; Singh et al 2011; Gushulak 2007; McDonald et al 2004), little is known of the key drivers of health change and why, for example, the speed of detrimental health impacts for participants was so fast. Gaining a greater understanding of the key influencers of the health outcomes of Kiribati migrants would be particularly prudent given that, as noted earlier, the likelihood that New Zealand will come under pressure to accept ‘forced environmental migrants’ from Kiribati, due to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts.

### ***Impact on settlement from housing concentration or dispersion***

An additional issue that could benefit from further research is gaining greater insight on the benefits and risks of concentrated or dispersed housing location of ethnic communities. The comparative analysis, conducted as part of this study, indicated a high level of debate among settlement research on the positive and negative aspects of housing location. While some

(such as Burnett 1998; Grbic et al 2009) viewed migrant and ethnic housing concentration as a ‘choice’, others (such as Westin 2000; Robinson 2007; Haller et al 2011) viewed such concentration as an indication of settlement failure (marginalisation or separation as argued by Berry 1992). Although in New Zealand we understand that some housing localities were purpose-developed to provide affordable state, council and private rental housing for Pacific migrants during the 1950s and 1960s, very little is understood about whether concentrated migrant and ethnic concentration is an exercise of choice or simply a reflection of economic outcomes. Understanding this issue further would assist in understanding the housing dynamic of ethnic minority communities, including shedding important light on how to plan for sustainable cities.

### *Gender differences in the labour market*

The gender differences, indicated in this research, regarding the segmentation of male and female respondents in the labour market is worthy of further research. In particular, it would be important to understand whether this segmentation is further reinforced over the period of their settlement or whether, with time, female respondents are able to experience further dispersal in the labour market and upward labour market mobility. A further area of interest would be to examine how changing employer attitudes to Kiribati workers, who often leave their first jobs upon gaining permanent residence, may impact on the high concentration of female Kiribati migrants in low-wage industries.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, this research has been able to make a modest, but useful contribution in understanding the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in New Zealand. The research underpinned the complex nature of settlement, and the central roles of language proficiency and upward labour market mobility had into determining the settlement outcomes of this group. It also highlighted the critical role that family and friends had, particularly in the initial stages of settlement, but how ‘weak ties’, such as chance encounters and acquaintances had in providing new employment opportunities for migrants. The highlight of the research was being able to develop, from the ground up, a theoretical model explaining the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants and their families living in

New Zealand. I am eternally thankful to all of the participants who kindly shared their settlement stories, their sentiments, and emotions.

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## **Appendix 1: Background Information and Invitation to Participate**



### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF KIRIBATI MIGRANTS IN NEW ZEALAND**

#### **Background Information and Invitation to Participate**

##### ***Kam Na Bane ni Mauri***

My name is Mary Anne Thompson, wife of Barauti Teariki. I am a PhD student at the University of Otago undertaking research on the experiences of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand. The aim of this research is to gather information from Kiribati migrants about their settlement experiences. This will allow New Zealand to be better prepared should more Kiribati migrants come to New Zealand as a result of climate change.

As we all know, climate change has already begun to have a number of negative impacts on the natural environment in Kiribati. Events such as hotter temperatures, long periods of no rain, loss of land from stronger waves and higher seas have begun to have a big impact on the lives of I-Kiribati. Some of these impacts include lower levels of freshwater, more salty or muddy water, loss of land near the coast and the loss of foods such as babai and breadfruit and less fish and seafood around some islands such as Tarawa.

These impacts and future concerns about the role of climate change are behind thinking that more I-Kiribati will try to migrate to New Zealand. Over the short-term, say over the next 3-4 years, this migration from Kiribati will be voluntary as people will make up their own minds whether to leave or stay in Kiribati. Over the longer-term, say over the next 10-20 years, people are likely to be forced to leave Kiribati if the environment is unable to provide for people to continue to live in Kiribati. It is with this in mind that this research is seeking to understand how Kiribati migrants and their families have gone about settling in in New Zealand. By gaining this knowledge, New Zealand governments, non-governmental organisations and Kiribati settlers themselves can all be better informed about how to assist Kiribati migrants.

## **Participating in this Research**

As you all know the Kiribati community across New Zealand is made up of I-Kiribati who have lived in New Zealand for a very long time and those who have more recently arrived. The aim of this research is to identify and invite members of Kiribati families who meet a number of criteria to be interviewed by me about their settlement experiences. These criteria are as follows:

- 18 years or older with one or more dependent children
- Migrated to New Zealand as a Kiribati citizen
- Migrated to New Zealand from Kiribati
- Have permanent residence
- Have lived in New Zealand for less than 10 years (this includes any time prior to gaining permanent residence)
- Live in the wider-Wellington and Kapiti regions (including Wellington South, Wellington City, Karori, Johnsonville, Tawa, Linden, Elsdon, Porirua, Titahi Bay, Ranui Heights, Whitby, Waitangirua, Cannons Creek, Papakowhi, Aotea, Ascot Park, Wainuomata, Petone, Lower Hutt, Taita, Naenae, Upper Hutt, Totara Park, Paraparumu, Waikanae, Otaki)

I would like to invite one adult meeting the criteria above from each family to take part in this very important research. The aim is get a balance of men and women if possible but I can go back to families if this balance is not able to be achieved in the first instance. Taking part in this research is completely up to you. For those of you that decide to participate, I would like to thank you very much. If you decide not to participate please understand that there will be no disadvantage to you and I wish to thank you for considering my request. It is important for those selected to participate in this research that every effort will be made to treat all information in a private and confidential manner.

## **Research Process**

Selected participants will be interviewed and the interviews recorded using an audiotape. I will be accompanied by my husband Barauti to assist me with any translation that may be required. Participants will be free to choose to respond in English, Kiribati or a mix of the two languages. The interview will start with three open-ended questions about your experiences of settling in New Zealand. These are as follows:

1. Tell me what did you think living in New Zealand would be like for you and your family before you left Kiribati?
2. Tell me what it was like for you and your family in the first year of living in New Zealand?
3. Tell me what it was like for you and your family after the first year up till now living in New Zealand?

These open-ended questions are aimed in getting participants to tell their own stories about moving and settling in New Zealand. These questions will follow by a number of specific questions on particular issues on searching for work and employment, English language skills, housing, networks and sense of well-being. The specifics of these questions will depend on the way in which the interview develops. At the end of the interview participants will be asked some questions regarding their age, number of dependent children and the time settled in New Zealand. Participants have the right to decline to answer any questions and withdraw from the research at any stage without any disadvantage.

The information collected during these interviews will then be analysed to:

- Identify the most important settlement issues for Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand;
- Ascertain similarities and differences in the settlement experiences among participants;
- Enable the comparison of settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand with other research findings found in the settlement literature;
- Develop some theoretical ideas that can inform the development of settlement theory and inform future policy thinking in New Zealand.

The written research will not use any names to identify participants. Any quotes used in the research paper will refer to general characteristics for example: *middle-aged woman settled in New Zealand two to five years*. It is also important to know that all the data collected during the research will be securely stored in such a way that only the Supervisors of the PhD will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the research any personal information gathered will be destroyed immediately while the raw data (without names) upon which the research depends upon will be retained in secure storage for five years at the University of Otago, after which it will be destroyed. The PhD research may be published and will be available at the University of Otago library (Dunedin, New Zealand). As noted earlier, every attempt will be made to preserve your privacy so that participants cannot be identified.

### **Change of Mind and Withdrawing from the Research**

Should you change your mind about taking part in the research, you can withdraw at any time with no disadvantage to them of any kind.

### **Questions That May Arise**

If anyone has any questions about this research, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

<b>Student</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
<p><i>Mary Anne Thompson</i>            Department of Public Health, Wellington,            University of Otago            Telephone Number: 021850254            Email: maryanne.thompson.nz@gmail.com</p>	<p><i>Philippa Howden-Chapman</i>            Department of Public Health, Wellington,            University of Otago            University Telephone Number: (04) 9186047            Email: philippa.howden-chapman@otago.ac.nz</p>

This research has been approved by the Department stated above. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (03 479-8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

## **Appendix 2: Invitation to Participate and Information Sheet (translated into the Kiribati language)**

### **BIBITAKINI KANOANI BONG AO MAINGIA I KIRIBATI NI MAEKA I NEW ZEALAND.**

Kam na bane ni Mauri!

Arau bon Nei Mary Anne Thompson, ao I iein ma Barauti Teariki. I reirei n te reirei ae rietata ae arana te Otago University ae mena I New Zealand, ao I karaoa iai au beba n Taokita (PhD). E boboto au ukeuke iaon aia namakin ma maiuia I Kiribati ake a mwaing mai Kiribati nako New Zealand. Iai te kaantaninga ba au ukeuke aei e na buokia ara koraki ni I-Kiribati ao ma ni katauraoia imain kitanakin Kiribati.

Ti kakoaua ba e a tia n noraki ana urubai bibitakini Kanoan bong nakon maiun ara otabanin. E kakoauaaki rikiraken te kabuehue, teimaanin aki babakan te karau, kanakinakon mataniwin abara mani korakoran te nao ma rietatan te iabuti ike e a rotaki iai maiuia I-Kiribati. Teuana naba te bai ae rotaki boni rikiraken tarikan te maniba, buan ma kanakinakon abara ao ai rotakini mairua n ai aron te babai, te mai karakon te ika ao amarake ake a reke mai tari n airon ae noraki n aba nako n ai aron ae noraki naba I Tarawa.

Mani kanganga aikai ao a karika te raraoma nakon maiuia I-Kiribati nakon taai aika a na roko ao ai te katautau ba a na boni maiti riki I-Kiribati aika a na mwaing nako New Zealand. Tao te katautau n te tai ae uarereke ba tao nakon 3-4 te ririki mangkai. E kakoauaaki ba n taai aika a na roko te tai are e nang bon inaomata iai te aomata ao mani iangoia ba e na tiku ke e na mwaing nakon te tabo ae na mano iai. Teuana naba te katautau bat ao ti na kangai bat ao man 10-20 te ririki mangkai ao a na boni imanonoaki kaini Kiribati ni kitana abaia riki ngkana e a kakoauaaki be a rotaki maiun aia otabanin are boni ngaia raoi maiuia ara koraki ni I-Kiribati. Ao boni ngaia anne te iango iaan karaoakin te ukeuke aei, e na kamatata bukin kitanakin Kiribati ao bukin te mwaing nako New Zealand.

#### **Aroni karaoakin te ukeuke/kakae**

E riai n ataaki ba koraki ake a roko ngkai ni maeka I New Zealand mai ibuakoia boni iai aika a tiba roko ao iai naba aika a rangi ni maan.n te ukeuke aei ao a rangi ni kaungaki iai utu ni Kiribati aika a maeka ngkai I New Zealand ba N na maroro mangaia iaon aron mwaingia ma aia namakin. Aio ngkana te kainibaire iaoia koraki ake a na titirakinaki:

- 18 ana ririki ke are i aona riki ao ae iai temanna ke e maiti riki natina
- Boni I-Kiribati ngaia ake a mwaing nako New Zealand

- I-Kiribati ake a kitana Kiribati nako New Zealand
- Koraki ake a reke bebaia ni kaina New Zealand
- Koraki ake a tia ni maeka i New Zealand n te maan ae riaon 10 te ririki (aio are e na ikotaki ma mania ni maeka i main etin taekan tikuia)
- Koraki ake a maeka i Wellington, n te aono ni Kapit (ni ikotaki ma Wellington maiaki, i Wellington, Karori, Jonhsonville, Tawa, Linden, Elson, Porirua, Tatahi Bay, Ranui Heights, Whitby, Waitangirua, Cannons Creek, Papakowhai, Aotea, Ascort Park, Wainuomata, Petone, Lower Hutt, Taita, Naenae, Upper Hutt, Totara Park, Paraparaumu, Waikanae, Otaki)

Ni karoakin te kakae ae kakawaki aei ao N na maroro ma temanna te ikawai man taian utu nako are e roko n te kainibaire. N na boni kataia ni kabaeranta te maroro ma mane ao aine, ma ngkana e kanganga reken aio ao N na manga boni okiria utu nako ao ma ni katabanina te kakae ke te ukeuke nakoia. E a bon nakoia aron katabaninan te ukeuke aei. Ai boni banaau ni karabaia koraki ake a na irekereke ma katabaninan karoan te ukeuke aei. Ai boni banaau naba ni karabaia koraki ake tao aki tauraoi moa ni ibuobuoki nakon te ukeuke aei. E na riai n uringaki ba maroro ni kabane ake a taekinaki a boni bane ni butimaeaki ma te nano ni karinerine.

### **Aron makurian te ukeuke**

A na rineaki koraki ake ana titirakinaki ao e na kabonganaki te teibi ae te bai n rawerawe. E na bon raonai Barauti ibukini kainnanoakin te rairairi ngkana e noraki riaina ma kainnanoana. A bon anganaki te inaomata koraki ake a na titirakinaki, ba tao a na kaeka n taetae ni I-Matang, ni Kiribati ke tao a rengana te taetae ni I-Matang ao ni I-Kiribati. E na moanaki te maroro man titiraki aika teniua ni kaineti ma aron te maeka i New Zealand. Ao aikai ngkanne titiraki:

1. Ko kona n taekina aron iangoakin te maeka i New Zealand imain kitanakin Kiribati?
2. Ko kona n taekina ami namakin n ami moan ririki ni maeka iaon New Zealand?
3. Ko kona n taekina aromi ma ami utu imuin ami moan ririki ni maeka i New Zealand?

Man titiraki aikai ao a kona iai koraki ake a titirakinaki ni karakina aron moan mwaingia mai Kiribati nako New Zealand. E na bon rimuiaki titiraki akanne ma te titiraki iaon aron kakaean aia makuri, aia kanganga n te taetae ni I-Matang, rabakauia ma aia konabwai, te maeka n auti, aroia n reitaki ao baai ake a noraki kainnanoakia. A boni iai riki titiraki ake a na tabekaki n noran kainnanoakia ma riaina. N tokin te maroro ao ana bon titirakinaki naba araia, aia ririki ao maitin natiiia,

ao ai mania maeka i New Zealand. Iai inaomataia koraki ake a titirakinaki ni kaeka ke n aki butimaea te titiraki.

Ana manga rinanoaki rongorongo ake a reke man te maroro ao ni baireaki raoi aroia n aron:

- Kamatatakin ma katebenakoan baai aika kakawaki ni irekereke ma te maeka i New Zealand
- Kamatatakin baai aika kakaokoro ao baai aika ti tebo ni irekereke ma aron maekaia.
- Te kona ni kabotaui aroia taani maeka ake mai Kiribati ma muin taiani kukune ake a tia ni karaoaki
- Karikirakean ma katamaroaan taiani iango ibukin te waaki ni kamaeka iaon New Zealand.

A na boni aki kaotaki araia koraki ake a karaoaki te maroro mangaia. Baai ni kabane ake a taekinaki ke ni maneweaki n te beba aio, a na boni bane n taekinaki n te aro aio: *rorobuaka ke aine ake a mena aia ririki n te nimabwi tabun ake a maeka i New Zealand n te maan ae nimaua te ririki*. A na boni bane ni kawakinaki raoi muin taian maroro n te aro are bon akea riki ae na kona ni kaukia ao ni warekia ba ti te tia reirei. N tokin te makuri iaon te kakae aio ao a na boni bane ni kabuokaki rongorongo ni kabane, bon ti rongorongo ake iai kainnanoakia aika a kawakinaki n te reirei ae rietata I Otago inanon nimaua te ririki. Imuin tabanin ma bobongan raoi te ukeuke aio, ao e na kona n noraki n toka n te tabo n tangoboki n te reirei ae rietata I Dunedin, New Zealand. Ao n aiaron ae e a tia n taekinaki mai maina ba a na boni bane kamanoaki muin taiani maroro ni kabane ni kaineti ma inaomatan te aomata.

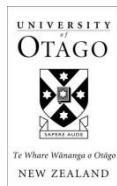
### **Bitakin te iango ao te bubai man te kakae aei.**

Bitakin am iango iaon karaoakin te maroro ma katabaninakina, e boni butimaeaki n akean te kanganga iai.

### **Titiraki aika kona ni kaoti**

Ngkana iai titiraki aika a rio inanon tain karaoan te beba aio ke tao rimui, a boni butimaeaki ao ko kona n reitaki ma te aomata aio:

## **Appendix 3: Background Information for Participants**



### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF KIRIBATI MIGRANTS IN NEW ZEALAND**

#### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS**

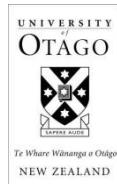
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research on the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand. This research is being conducted by Mary Anne Thompson (wife of Barauti Teariki) for the degree of PhD at the University of Otago. The aim of this research is to understand the settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand within the context that New Zealand is very likely to come under increased pressure to accept more migrants from Kiribati as a result of climate change.

The collection of these settlement stories will be gathered by way of an interview conducted by Mary Anne Thompson. Your responses can be made in English or a mix of English and Kiribati. The interview will start with some general questions about your settlement experiences and followed up by some more specific questions. At the end of the interview some demographic information will be also be gathered. The interview is expected to take around 1½ hours and will be recorded using an audiotape. The aim is to have a relaxed conversation about your settlement experiences and to fit in with your family commitments.

Should any issues arise, the interview can be stopped and resume at a later time or date. In the event that you become uncomfortable with any line of questioning, you will be reminded that you have the right to decline to answer any question including the ability to withdraw from the research at any stage without disadvantage to you of any kind. Every participant will be provided with a copy of the written text of the interview to check for accuracy and to raise any points of clarification.

The written research paper will not use any names to identify participants and all data collected during the research will be securely stored in a way that only the Supervisors of the PhD at the University of Otago can gain access to it. At the end of the research any personal information collected will be destroyed immediately while the raw data will be stored for 5 years, after which it will be destroyed. Every attempt will be made to keep your privacy so that you cannot be identified. If you are happy to participate in this research, you are asked to sign the attached Consent Form.

## **Appendix 4: Consent Form**



### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF KIRIBATI MIGRANTS IN NEW ZEALAND**

#### **CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS**

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the research project is entirely up to me
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage
3. Personal identifying information contained in the audiotapes will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years
4. The interview will start with three open-ended questions about my experiences in settling in New Zealand. These are:
  - Tell me what did you think living in New Zealand would be like for you and your family before you left Kiribati?
  - Tell me what it was like for you and your family in the first year of living in New Zealand?
  - Tell me what it was like for you and your family after the first year and up till now living in New Zealand?
5. These open-ended questions will be followed by a number of specific questions on particular issues raised in the literature on employment, English language skills, housing, networks and sense of well-being.
6. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular questions, stop the interview and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

7. Should any issues arise, such as family commitments, I may stop the interview and resume at a more convenient time.
8. The results of the project may be published and available at the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand). Every attempt will be made to preserve my privacy.

I agree to take part in this project.

.....  
.....  
(Signature of participant)

Date