



# **MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES**

## **DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND SEWERAGE**

### **RURAL WATER AND SANITATION POLICY**

**JULY 2021**

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## Minister's Foreword



Access to safe drinking water and sanitation is equally vital to all. The Rural Water and Sanitation Policy ('**Policy**') promotes the need for effective coordination of Government agencies and stakeholders in ensuring access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities for rural communities.

The Policy was initially developed and implemented in 2012 and is being reviewed to facilitate Sections 35 and 36 of the Constitution on the right to housing and sanitation and adequate food and water for all Fijians; the Government's decision to waive the 10% community contribution; and to meet the targets under Fiji's National Development Plan of 100% access to clean and safe water in adequate quantity and 60% access to central sewerage system for rural communities by 2031.

Relevant sectors are encouraged to address water and sanitation as part of Fiji's contribution to the global efforts in ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation to benefits all Fijians. The Policy supports Fiji in meeting its international commitment to the United Nation Sustainable Development Goal 6.

I take this opportunity to thank all the stakeholders for their hard work and support to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Meteorological Services.

I commend this reviewed Policy and encourage all of us to continuously work and persevere in our efforts to address water and sanitation challenges in this country for the betterment of all Fijians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'J. Usamate', with a horizontal line of dots underneath.

**Mr. Jone Usamate**  
**Honourable Minister for Infrastructure and Meteorological Services**

## 1.0 Definitions

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ground water</b>          | : refers to water located beneath the ground surface in soil pores spaces and in the fractures of rock formations e.g. aquifers, springs;                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Implementing Agencies</b> | : refers to relevant Government agencies including Water Authority of Fiji, Non-Government Organisations and Donors;                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>NDP</b>                   | : refers to the 5-Year and 20-Year National Development Plan for Fiji;                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Peri-urban</b>            | : refers to the areas outside of the Central Business District that are connected to the Water Authority of Fiji reticulation system and pays water tariffs to the Water Authority of Fiji;                                                                                        |
| <b>rain water harvesting</b> | : is the accumulating and storing, of rainwater for reuse. Rainwater collected from the roofs of houses, tents and local institutions can make an important contribution to the availability of drinking water;                                                                    |
| <b>rural</b>                 | : refers to all areas outside of the metered Urban and Peri-urban water reticulation systems;                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>safe water</b>            | : refers to water that is free of any harmful substance (contaminants) including physical, chemical, biological and microbiological agents that can cause serious health effects. It is suitable for human consumption and use such as cooking, drinking and for personal hygiene; |
| <b>sanitation</b>            | : refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human excreta and wastewater;                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>SDG</b>                   | : refers to Sustainable Development Goals;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>surface water</b>         | : refers to water found on the land surface usually as a result of run-off precipitation. It can be running (rivers and streams) or quiescent (lakes, dams and reservoirs);                                                                                                        |
| <b>urban</b>                 | : refers to the Central Business District that is connected to the Water Authority of Fiji reticulation system and pays water tariffs to the Authority; and                                                                                                                        |
| <b>WSMP</b>                  | : means Water Supply Management Plan and refers to the holistic, systematic and integrated management approach used to address Water and Sanitation issues ensuring the project's sustainability through the community's ownership and participation.                              |

## **2.0 Introduction**

Water affects all spheres of life and anticipates our rural population receiving the same quality of water our urban population currently enjoys. A policy to govern the implementation of rural water and sanitation schemes is therefore needed to ensure access to sustainable, safe and clean water and proper sanitation in the rural areas.

## **3.0 Preamble**

This Policy aims to present an efficient and effective management system and mechanism to ensure the sustainable development of water resources and sewerage systems to benefit the rural communities in Fiji. Overall, the relevant vision, mission, mandates and underlying policies encompassing this Policy are set out below.

## **4.0 Vision**

Clean and safe water in adequate quantities and proper and adequate sanitation for every Fijian household.

## **5.0 Mission**

- 5.1 To provide accessible, safe, affordable, sustainable drinking water and sanitation for rural and maritime islands.
- 5.2 To provide water and sanitation facilities using affordable and appropriate technologies that are environmentally safe.

## **6.0 United Nations Mandate under Sustainable Development Goals**

- 6.1 The Policy is aligned to SDG 6 of ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Targets under SDG 6 that are relevant to this Policy include:
  - (i) by 2030, to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all;

- (ii) by 2030, to achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations;
- (iii) by 2030, to improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimising release of hazardous chemical materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increase recycling and safe reuse; and
- (iv) by 2030, increasing water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.

## **7.0 Enabling Government Policy Instruments**

Water and sanitation are reflected in the Constitution, Green Growth Framework, NDP and the National Adaptation Plan. The targets in relation to rural water and sanitation in the NDP are:

- (i) access to clean and safe water in adequate quantities to 100% rural population by 2031; and
- (ii) access to central sewerage system to 60% rural population by 2031.

## **8.0 Relevant Laws and Policies**

8.1 This Policy runs in concurrence with the following laws and policies:

- Constitution of the Republic of Fiji;
- Environment Management Act 2005;
- iTaukei Lands Trust Act 1940;
- Land Use Act 2010;
- Mining Act 1965;
- Public Health Act 1935;
- Rivers and Streams Act 1880;
- Water Authority of Fiji Act 2007;
- Rural Land-Use Policy;

- National Climate Change Policy;
- Fiji Forest Policy 2007;
- Fiji Food and Nutrition Policy 2008; and
- The National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2018 -2030.

## 9.0 Background

- 9.1 The Rural Water and Sanitation Policy was approved by Cabinet on March 2012 (**2012 Policy**) after consultations with key stakeholders in the water and sanitation sector.
- 9.2 The 2012 Policy was earmarked for review in 2016 however due to changes in Government focus on fully funding of rural water and sanitation project, the 2012 Policy was reviewed a year earlier in 2015.
- 9.3 The requirement under the 2012 Policy was for the assisted communities to provide 10% cash contribution towards the total cost of the water project. The water project costs ranged from \$30,000 to \$250,000 and communities were required to contribute \$3,000 to \$25,000 as cash contribution.
- 9.4 According to the 2012 Policy, the implementation of Government funded projects depended on Government budget allocation and projects were prioritised based on contributions from the communities.
- 9.5 However, with the provision of sections 35 and 36 of the Constitution on the right of every person to housing and sanitation and adequate food and water; the Government in 2015 directed the waiver of the 10% cash contribution on all rural water and sanitation projects and the review of the 2012 Policy.
- 9.6 Furthermore, statistics provided by the World Health Organisation showed that, 88% of diarrhoea cases worldwide are attributed to unsafe water and inadequate sanitation. This 88% constitutes 1.5 million deaths a year worldwide and most

being children. For Fiji, statistics provided by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services indicated that average deaths were around 10 deaths per year from water borne diseases.

9.7 In addition, the 2017 Population Census by the Fiji Bureau of Statistics showed that 55.9% of the country's population lives in urban centres while 44.1 % lives in the rural areas. The rural and urban population are utilising the various sources of water namely:

- (i) rain water;
- (ii) surface water;
- (iii) ground water; and
- (iv) sea water.

This population distribution effectively puts a strain on water resources and sanitation systems in Fiji.

## **10.0 Problems and Challenges**

10.1 Similar to other countries in Oceania and the rest of the world, Fiji has its own problems and challenges. The scattered outlying communities in various rural and maritime communities in Fiji is a major challenge for the Government in relation to providing water and sanitation services. On the larger islands there are local streams and surface water, but in other islands, freshwater is limited to groundwater and rainfall with seawater not considered at all. However, the use of local water sources has not always been optimal for the following reasons:

### **(i) Design for a single source of water**

The design of local water supplies has focused on one source alone without taking into account other sources. It has been the norm for investigation of water sources to be limited to either local streams or a local aquifer. Some areas do not have permanent surface water and therefore the only permanent freshwater source is groundwater. A less than optimal result is obtained when rainwater harvesting capacity or

seawater is not also taken into account. In some cases, possibly most cases, the combination of rainwater harvesting with other local supply could make the difference between adequate supply and periodic shortages which may have to be supplied by the temporary and costly transport of water from another location (by land or sea).

(ii) **Lack of initial training in operation and maintenance**

The construction of water supply and sanitation schemes has not included training of water committee/local people on maintenance and operation of the systems. When local water supply and sanitation schemes are constructed, the Implementing Agencies' task are completed and the scheme is left with local hands. Without training in operation and maintenance, the system will deteriorate with time and will eventually become unworkable. This problem has occurred because a clear responsibility for providing initial capacity building and on-going back up had not been provided.

(iii) **Lack of support for maintenance**

Maintenance back up is not provided by the Implementing Agencies; training is required in both the operation and maintenance of schemes. Maintenance is important even for such basic schemes as rainwater harvesting roofs, gutters and tanks, because failure of materials are mostly beyond the capacity of villagers to carry out repair works. Such deterioration over time has been a deficiency of locally installed water supply schemes. Therefore, initial training and subsequent support is needed in addition to the design and construction of the scheme itself. Such support may require both expertise and material resources.

(iv) **Inadequate estimates of water demand**

Estimates of water use have been limited to existing levels for domestic use. When the demand for water in a local situation is made, it is not

adequate to assume that current levels of water use will apply after a piped scheme is installed. Water usage increases dramatically when people have access to water taps, and the production of wastewater similarly increases. This may lead to two problems: firstly, the water supply may not be adequate for the community, as assumed, and secondly increased disposal of liquid waste is a problem for local water sources, in particular small streams and shallow groundwater in unconsolidated sand beds.

(v) **Wider impacts of water exploitation and wastewater management**

The broader impacts of the use of a water source have not been properly assessed. The impacts of exploitation of water sources may be significant. An aquifer, if not investigated, may be drawn down to the point where it causes the deterioration of vegetation, trees and food sources. In worst cases, salt-water intrusion takes place and freshwater lens are affected. The impacts of water withdrawal on small streams may not be so dramatic but are likely to occur in a local stretch of stream downstream of the location where the water supply is located. The impact will be serious if increased wastewater is disposed to the stream.

The wastewater can threaten the quality of shallow groundwater. Some types of water quality pollution have serious impacts on human health but are not perceived by the local people who do not realise that their own actions are causing the problem.

(vi) **Increasing Impact of Climate Change on Water Resources**

Approximately 27% of the Fijian Population live within 1 kilometre of the coastline and approximately 76% live within 5 kilometres. Global studies highlight that the growing impacts of climate change is bound to affect the quality and quantity of fresh water supply in coastal and island regions

due to rising sea levels and changes in precipitation levels. This gives rise to climate-induced issues such as salt-water intrusion and slow replenishment of natural water resources. Moreover, climate adversities threaten to significantly impact human health, particularly in rural areas that do not have adequate sanitation. These aspects are not actively factored into current water resource planning in Fiji and this must be changed by factoring in climate change consideration in all facets of rural water and sanitation development.

(vii) **Lack of clear management responsibility**

The clarification of local responsibility and understanding of the water resources has not been developed adequately at the local level. From the foregoing, it is obvious that construction of a water supply and sanitation scheme must be accompanied by a capacity to operate and maintain it.

(viii) **Demand for Water and Sanitation in Rural Areas**

Demand for water is infinite because water is a necessity of life. This is true anywhere in the world including Fiji and its rural areas. Given the infinite demand for water, any policy including this one, should be done holistically and be integrated to take care of the usage and sustainability of this resource. Due to the impact of COVID 19 in Fiji, the population of the rural areas may have increased slightly as some Fijians have relocated due to unemployment from major employment sector such as Tourism.

(ix) **Supply of Water and Sanitation Services**

In general, the water supply resources for certain locations and periods in the year, is considered finite. In some locations, water is considered a scarce commodity until it is replenished by nature. This is quite true for many small islands in Fiji especially in the outer islands. The relationship between water supply and the increased production of wastewater should also be considered.

(x) **Water and Sanitation Management System and Sustainability**

Since water in any setting is a finite resource, trying to satisfy an infinite basic need of life, its usage, management and utilisation is very important, to ensure of its long-term sustainability. Hence, for this Policy, management system for rural water and sanitation is critical to support sustenance and livelihood of people in Fiji's rural areas.

## **11.0 Scope and Policy Objectives**

11.1 The objectives of the Policy are to ensure that:

- (i) all sources of water are investigated and jointly developed and managed to provide the optimum long-term supply for the local community and as far as possible eliminate the risk of water borne diseases from the drinking water;
- (ii) the impacts of increased water use and wastewater disposal are properly estimated and measures taken to manage them to ensure they are not polluting the water sources;
- (iii) water supply schemes once installed will be properly operated and maintained and that a maintenance plan and supporting services is developed and reviewed regularly;
- (iv) local communities regard themselves as responsible for the operation and maintenance of their water supply and sanitation schemes and have clearly assigned responsibility to the Water Committee to ensure that the physical infrastructure is maintained with proper training provided to carryout timely maintenance of the infrastructure; and

- (v) water sources are not damaged by over-exploitation and they are sustainably used and that their quality is maintained and natural benefits protected.

11.2 This Policy will guide the design and implementation of rural water and sanitation schemes and provide rural communities with water supply and sanitation services that are:

- (i) available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
- (ii) affordable and sustainable;
- (iii) treated in compliance with the Fiji National Drinking Water Quality Standards and Environment Management Act 2005;
- (iv) competently planned, designed and installed;
- (v) effectively maintained and managed; and
- (vi) user friendly and environmentally safe.

11.3 This Policy will ensure that the Government will monitor donor agencies and non-government organisations to ensure that they abide by the regulations and standards of setting up rural water and sanitation schemes that are sustainable.

## **12.0 Policy Principles for Designing of Rural Water and Sanitation Scheme**

12.1 Water supply schemes must be designed taking into account all water sources, including seawater and rainwater harvesting.

12.2 Water supply schemes must be designed and implemented with careful disposal of wastewater.

12.3 Water supply schemes should not adversely affect local water sources by depleting them or causing deterioration of the quality of the water.

- 12.4 Sanitation systems must be designed taking into account both black water and greywater. Implementing agencies must also consider improvement to sanitation systems when new water projects or upgrading works are implemented.
- 12.5 Communities, which use water from local water supplies, should consider the water as a resource, which is limited, and not to be wasted and should use the water wisely regardless of any apparent abundance of water in their area.
- 12.6 There should be measures for water supply, wastewater disposal and the protection of water sources from pollution, which are complementary, and these should be identified before a new water supply scheme is developed.
- 12.7 Improved water supply and sanitation schemes should reduce and minimise health risks in drinking water.
- 12.8 The provision of water supply and sanitation schemes by the Government is by mutual agreement with the local community receiving the schemes and the obligations and benefits on both sides should be identified and accepted;
- 12.9 The provision of Government financial resources towards improving water supply and sanitation schemes will largely depend on the local community's record in managing any existing water supply scheme.

## **13.0 Policy Requirements and Mechanisms**

### **13.1 Policy Requirements**

All Implementing Agencies are required to provide the following:

- (i) written request from the community for water and sanitation project;
- (ii) consent of land owners and evidence showing that the community agrees to provide land for rural water and sanitation development;

- (iii) evidence of the establishment of a water committee, with the inclusion of female members, in the community; and
- (iv) written consent from members of the community allowing the Implementing Agencies to carry out water source investigations, WSMP surveys, project implementation and trainings/awareness.

### 13.2 Water Supply Management Plan

A WSMP must be submitted to the Department of Water and Sewerage for vetting and approval. The following must be adhered:

- (i) All water and sanitation projects must be developed in line with the “Practical Guidelines for Rural Water Supply Management Plan”. WSMPs will be valid for 3 years from the date of approval by the Department of Water and Sewerage. The WSMP should include the following:
  - (a) **Review of Water Sources:** all water sources are to be considered. The four main sources are rainwater, surface water, ground water and seawater. The WSMP should indicate why each of sources are appropriate or inappropriate. Investigations are to be carried out to determine the quantity and quality of raw water and the need for appropriate treatment if required.
  - (b) **Estimate of Future Water Demand:** the demand estimate should take into account the likely increase in water use that will result from installing a piped supply or more convenient supply and the possible installation of flush toilets and use of appliances.
  - (c) **Wastewater and Sanitation Measures:** the WSMP must comment on whether sewage or wastewater is likely to increase and, if so, the WSMP must develop the appropriate measures and facilities for disposal without contaminating local water sources.

- (d) **The operational and maintenance requirements:** the operation and maintenance needs of the scheme must be included in the WSMP or in technical guidelines attached to the WSMP and these should guide the local community as to how to keep the scheme in working order in the long term.
- (e) **Rules for water extraction:** the assessment of local water sources must identify the limits, if any to the full operation of the scheme and whether operation should be rationed from time to time;
- (f) **Health guidelines:** if water sources are likely to be in danger of contamination from the disposal of solid or liquid waste, the WSMP must indicate what measures need to be taken to reduce that risk. Sanitation schemes must follow the principles and objectives in the Environment Management Act 2005 and must be designed to eliminate or reduce the possibility of the pollution of water sources.
- (g) **Training and Education Measures:** the WSMP must identify and provide for the necessary funding for:
- operation and maintenance training and up skilling; and
  - community awareness and practices to maintain water resources in good quality and quantity.
- (h) **Management Arrangements:** those who will be responsible for the oversight of the water supply and sanitation schemes must be identified and their responsibilities confirmed. The WSMP will not be approved until the management arrangements have been decided, agreed to and signed accordingly.

- (i) **Agreement between the parties:** the WSMP must include the formal agreement, by signing, of the Implementing Agencies as the funding and resource management parties, and the community as the party that will benefit and manage the supply locally. The WSMP must be signed by a person or persons who can guarantee that the obligations of the community will be carried out as stated in the WSMP. The parties must agree to the terms of the WSMP.
- (ii) All rural water and sanitation project requests for iTaukei villages must be endorsed by the village council and Tikina council and the Roko Tui's Office with the four requirements under paragraph 13.1 before it is submitted to the PA/DO's Office
- (iii) All rural water and sanitation project requests for non-iTaukei communities must be endorsed by the community meetings and District Advisory Council with the four requirements under paragraph 13.1.
- (iv) WSMP for all water and sanitation projects must be completed and approved by Department of Water and Sewerage before funding is requested and projects installed.
- (v) Rural communities to establish water committees to manage operate and maintain water supply and sanitation projects. The composition of the water committee must include one or two female members and similarly youth members of the communities.
- (vi) Government has waived the 10% cash contribution required from the community.
- (vii) All rural water and sanitation projects are free and community can provide labourers and natural resources such as sand and gravel if available.

- (viii) All Implementing Agencies should notify the Department of Water and Sewerage on the implementation date and duration of water and sanitation projects.
- (ix) The Department of Water and Sewerage should ensure that the Implementing Agencies adhere to the work program dates as per the WSMP.
- (x) All Implementing Agencies should ensure that the Water Committee is actively involved from the planning stage, implementation phases until completion and handing over of water and sanitation projects.
- (xi) All Implementing Agencies shall be penalised with the sum of 1% of contract cost per year for incomplete projects.
- (xii) All Implementing Agencies shall be penalised with the sum of \$500.00 for unimplemented approved WSMP.
- (xiii) All Implementing Agencies installing projects without approved WSMP shall be penalised with a fine of \$1,000.00.
- (xiv) The Department of Water and Sewerage shall issue a stop notice on the installation of projects without approved WSMP. Implementing Agencies will be directed to submit WSMP for approval before continuation of project installation.
- (xv) All Implementing Agencies shall ensure non-compliance highlighted in Department of Water and Sewerage inspections reports are actioned accordingly and within agreed timelines.

- (xvi) The Implementing Agencies may hire labourers from the communities to work on the projects in their villages or settlements.
- (xvii) Implementing Agencies must utilise standard construction materials.
- (xviii) All rural projects must have 6 months Defects Liability Period and the Implementing Agencies will be responsible for remedy of defects within this period until the project is fully taken over by the village or water committee.
- (xix) The Implementing Agencies are to provide Closure Reports and the As Built Drawings to the Department of Water and Sewerage.
- (xx) The Water Committee to ensure sustainability of the water and sanitation system in close collaboration with Water Authority of Fiji and the Department of Water and Sewerage.

#### **14.0 Policy Implementation - Stakeholders Roles and Responsibilities**

To ensure that this Policy is implemented and coordinated effectively, the following stakeholders shall liaise and work together to fulfil their roles and responsibilities in regard to rural water and sanitation schemes.

##### **14.1 Department of Water and Sewerage**

- (i) The Department of Water and Sewerage has been the leading agency on the formulation of this Policy and therefore will vet and process all WSMP applications to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Policy and WSMP Guidelines.
- (ii) The Department of Water and Sewerage will ensure that all WSMPs are vetted and responded to within 5 working days upon receipt of the WSMP.

The Department of Water and Sewerage will update relevant data submitted by Implementing Agencies to their Rural Water and Sanitation Database as part of its monitoring processes.

- (iii) The Department of Water and Sewerage will monitor the implementation of all approved WSMP for Government funded and Non-Government funded schemes to ensure projects are implemented according to approved WSMP and standards.
- (iv) The Department of Water and Sewerage will also monitor the water quality standards of these projects.

#### **14.2 Ministry of Rural & Maritime Development**

- (i) Community request submitted to the District Officer's Office should be endorsed by the Village, Tikina and Roko Tui's Office with the four requirements under Section 13.1
- (ii) Projects from non-iTaukei communities to be endorsed by the community meeting and the District Advisory Council with the four requirements under Section 13.1.
- (iii) The District Officer to assist in the establishment of Water Committee in the communities
- (iv) The Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management to submit the WSMPs for all their water and sanitation projects to Department of Water and Sewerage for vetting and approval.

#### **14.3 Ministry of iTaukei Affairs**

- (i) All Tikina (District) rural water and sanitation projects and needs are to be recorded and endorsed by the Roko Tui's Office of the relevant

province before it is forwarded to the Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Implementing Agencies with the four requirements under paragraph 13.1.

- (ii) The Roko Tui's Office shall monitor Water and Sanitation programmes including Water Conservation awareness in the villages.
- (iii) Assist Implementing Agencies with land consent issues and the establishment of the water committee.

#### **14.4 Ministry of Health and Medical Services**

- (i) Monitor the water quality standards together with water safety planning of the rural water schemes.
- (ii) Monitor of drinking water quality in rural schemes and urban reticulation Systems.
- (iii) Consider and approve of sanitation systems and sewage treatment systems through the Central Board of Health.
- (iv) Coordinate the implementation of drinking water safety and security plans (DWSSP).
- (v) Lead Agency and coordination of the Fiji WASH Cluster.
- (vi) Responsible for advocacy and awareness on safe WASH practices.

#### **14.5 Water Authority of Fiji**

The Water Authority of Fiji is responsible for the following:

- (i) design and construction of rural water and sanitation projects funded by the Government;
- (ii) coordinate, prepare, formulate, compile and fund WSMP for projects;
- (iii) monitor the water quality standards for rural projects; and
- (iv) carry out water conservation awareness in rural communities.

#### 14.6 **Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources**

- (i) Mineral Resources Department oversee and advice on the development of groundwater resources in Fiji through groundwater assessment, investigation, borehole drilling and reticulation.
- (ii) The Department monitors water level and quality on selected monitoring boreholes on monthly basis, quarterly basis for the reticulated boreholes and annually for boreholes in the maritime region.
- (iii) The Department is tasked to monitor chemical and bacterial analysis of groundwater quality for safe consumption.
- (iv) The Department compile and formulate WSMP, survey and awareness for better management of groundwater resources to vulnerable communities.
- (v) Monitoring and implementation of groundwater projects in rural communities.

#### 14.7 **Ministry of Economy**

All project proposals requesting donor assistance must be submitted to the Budget Aid Coordination Committee Secretariat, which is the Aid Unit of the Ministry of Economy. The Ministry is also responsible for the budgetary allocation for rural water and sanitation schemes.

#### 14.8 **Donor Agencies/Non-Government Organisations**

Donor Agencies and Non-Government Organisations funding projects of their preference are required to submit all Policy requirements and WSMP to Department of Water and Sewerage for vetting and endorsement.

#### 14.9 **Water Committee**

Water Committee will have to ensure the following:

- (i) manage, maintain and operate water supply and sanitation schemes after handing over;
- (ii) ensure water sources and reservoirs are accessible at all times;

- (iii) record number of stand pipes, households connected to water, type of bathroom and toilets and ensure that all leakages are recorded and repaired;
- (iv) collect levy for purchase of parts and tools for the sustainable management of the water system in the village and settlement;
- (v) work with the Turaga ni Koro recording damages to water and sanitation system due to disaster for reporting purposes to Water Authority of Fiji, the Roko Tui and District Officer's Office;
- (vi) ensure the cleaning of water sources, dams and reservoir on a monthly or quarterly basis and flushing of water mains after heavy rainfall; and
- (vii) ensure proper drainage systems for wastewater are in place and promote safe and hygienic environment in the villages and settlements.

## **15.0 Policy Benefits**

15.1 The Policy benefits are as follows:

- (i) reduction in reliance by communities on external emergency water supply in conditions of water scarcity (drought) with potential reduction in water carting costs to the government;
- (ii) greater sense of accountability within local communities in looking after their water supply and sanitation schemes;
- (iii) long-term sustainability of water supply and sanitation schemes;
- (iv) reduction of health threats from the contamination of water sources and supply; and
- (v) communities become better educated about water, sanitation and health.

15.2 In order for the Policy to achieve the best outcome, all of its elements must be applied consistently.

## **16.0 Performance Indicators**

16.1 Quality of water meets the Fiji Drinking Water Quality Standard.

- 16.2 Sanitation arrangements meet Environment Management Act and Public Health Act requirements.
- 16.3 Increase in the number and coverage of rural population having access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation.
- 16.4 Local communities are able to take full responsibility of their water supply and sanitation systems.
- 16.5 Decrease in the number of water and sanitation complaints from rural communities.
- 16.6 Decrease in the number of incidents of WASH related diseases within the communities.
- 16.7 Approved WSMPs.
- 16.8 Communities are educated, informed and aware of water and sanitation issues.

## **17.0 Review of the Policy**

This Policy will be reviewed as and when required or every five (5) years from the date of approval.