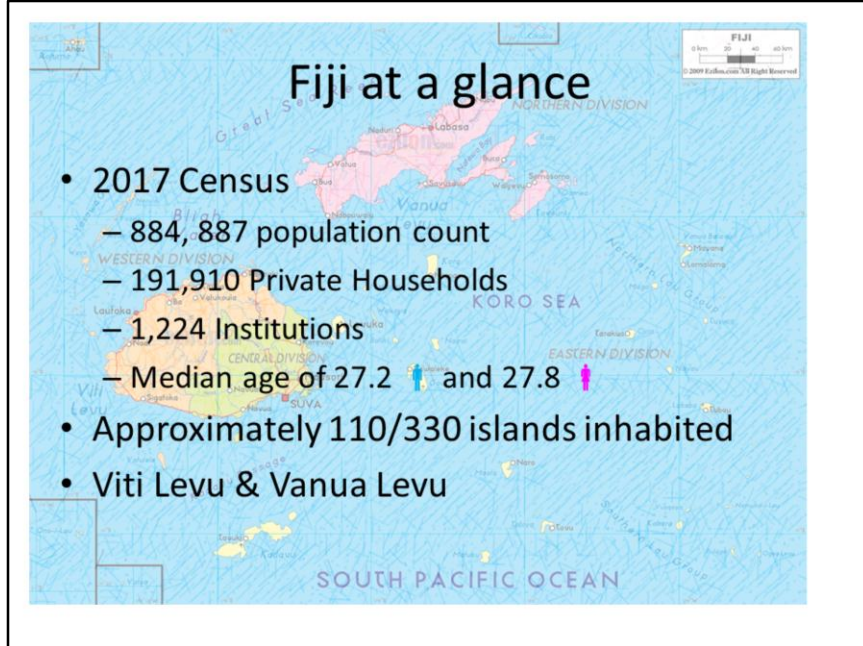




Post disaster WASH risks
amongst vulnerable population -
Fiji perspective

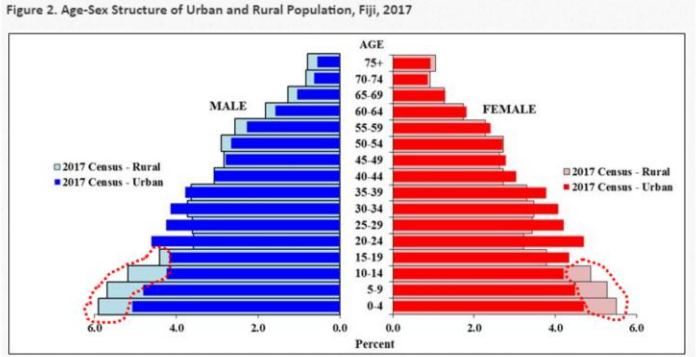
IWRA Seminar 22nd August 2018
“Water Challenges of Oceania: Today to 2025”

Dr Amelia Turagabeci
Assistant Professor - Environmental Health
Head of Department – Epidemiology & Environmental Health
Fiji National University

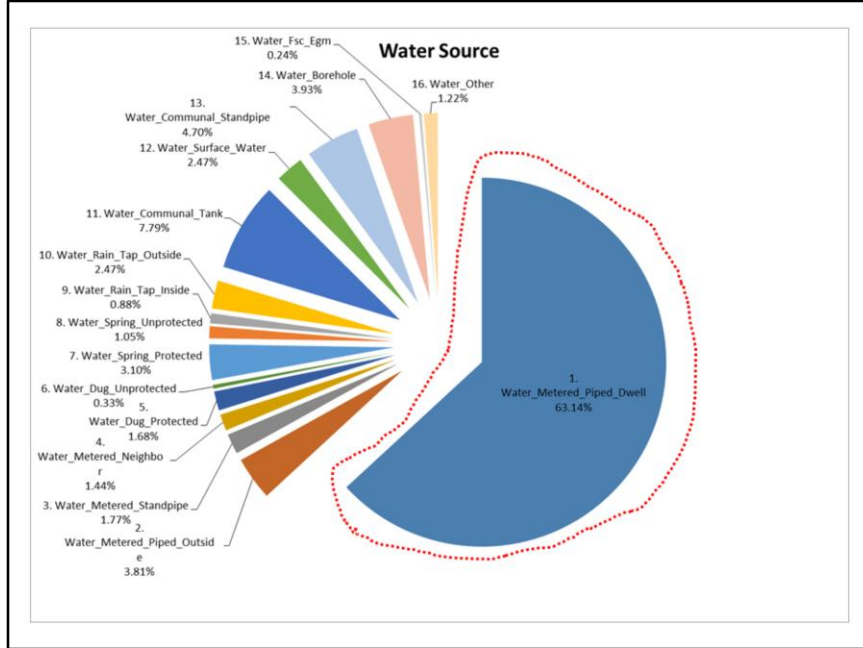


Fiji has a very young population

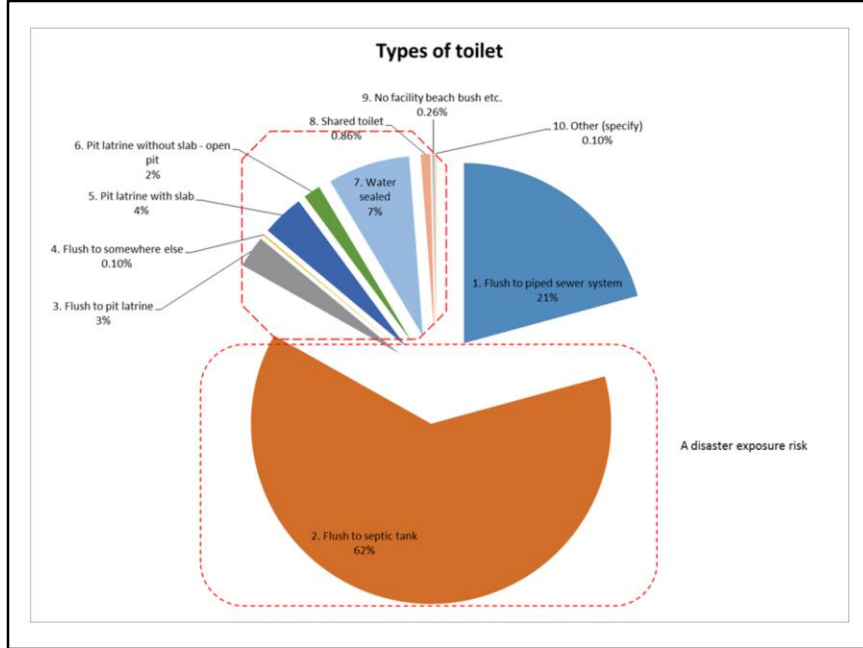
Population Structure



Vulnerable population – the young and the old



- Water supply is not an issue in Fiji
- More than 90% have access to water supply
- 70% have access to treated water supply
- 63% direct water supply to DH
- Toilet facility not accessible to 0.4%
- 21% sewerage system connection
- 62% ST, access to SS??



- Access to water supply is crucial
- Proper disposal and treatment of human excreta is also vital
- Risk of seepage of untreated or raw sewage into water course is high
- Disaster or post disaster - risk of contamination is higher
- High percentage using Septic Tank system – how that is treated or disposed (bailed) is of concern given the extreme weather conditions Fiji has been having with floodings after a minimal rain. Seepage issues for health concern

Post disaster assistance

- Emergency services - Medical (sites - EH service)
- Shelter - development control (EH service)
- Water supply - Safe drinking water (WAF/EH service)
- Food services - Safe food handling (EH service)
- Sanitary facilities - proper & safe (EH service)
- Burial grounds - (EH service)

- EH services in Fiji - challenged - organizational structure, Local Authorities: Rural and Urban (Councils)
- Services that have been shifted from Rural to Urban - development control, licensing (inspection for business licenses) other related roles from stakeholder ministry
- Opportunity to make EH important again

Current Practice

Disaster - EH serves as the peripheral agency looking at WASH and Safety of population

Safety aspects are covered under OHS/Building Regulations/Vector Control/ etc.

EHO's trained for OHS/Built Environment/ Sanitation/Disaster response/Food Safety Hygiene etc.

Managed response and recovery - total health of population

Establishing an Environmental Health Ministry or Central Board of Health as Ministry

Existing structure of the CBH (Rural /Urban)

Align its services with line ministries or departments to come under one Ministry

Local Government/ Department of Environment/Town
Planning/Housing/
Key partners - Water Authority/ Energy/ PWD/
Disaster - development control & WASH & energy mostly affected →
vulnerable population

WAY Forward

EH service is a holistic unit in Fiji and key to Pacific Public Health

Unique in integrating Environmental Services of Public Health importance

EH services can forecast risks based on environmental conditions that can pose risks
from exposures

Disaster is not predicted, prevention services through EH work can reduce more
disasters..

QUESTIONS