

Vanuatu National Implementation Plan for Safe and Secure Community Drinking Water

A Guide to the Capital Assistance Programme

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1 PURPOSE

This guide supports Section 3.5 of the *Vanuatu National Implementation Plan for Safe and Secure Community Drinking Water: A Guide to the Plan* (the *National DWSSP Guide*), describing the eligibility criteria for financial assistance to improve community water supply schemes, the process for applying to government for financial assistance, and the process used to assess applications.

The guide includes the prescribed application form.

2 BACKGROUND

There are over 2,000 community water supply schemes throughout the six provinces of Vanuatu that require support to develop a Drinking Water Safety and Security Plan (DWSSP) before 2030, and will require on-going support to implement and regularly review and update DWSSP.

Based on past experiences, many of the improvements identified in a community water supply scheme DWSSP will be beyond the financial means of the community, requiring assistance from provincial government or the Government of Vanuatu (GoV).

Funding is limited, so a process has been developed to make fair and transparent decisions on allocation of financial assistance to individual communities. GoV, through the National Water Resources Advisory Committee (NWRAC), will implement a Capital Assistance Programme (CAP) fund, administered by the Department of Water Resources (DoWR). This guide describes the CAP.

2.1 PREREQUISITE

The CAP aims to help communities improve the safety and security of their drinking water supply schemes by providing financial assistance if they can demonstrate a need for the assistance. An approved DWSSP is the essential prerequisite to making an application. An approved DWSSP ensures that:

- The requested financial assistance addresses priority threats to providing safe and secure drinking water.
- The requested financial assistance is for a sustainable upgrade or improvement option.
- The community has done everything possible itself to address the priority threats, but still falls short of what is needed.
- The community is operating and managing its existing water supply appropriately within its means.

Following Sections 3.2 through 3.4 of the *National DWSSP Guide* will achieve this prerequisite.

3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THIS FUND

All communities must have met the prerequisite (Section 2.1).

All applications must be submitted to provincial government. This ensures that the request has been considered for provincial government assistance and is beyond the financial means of provincial government.

All applications must use the prescribed application form.

3.1 WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THIS FUND?

The water supply must:

- Have a registered Rural Water Committee, as defined in the Water Resources Management (Amendment) Act No. 32 of 2016. The Act also requires at least 40% of a RWC must be women.
- Serve a water supply scheme owned and operated by the community, as defined in the Water Resources Management Act (Amendment) Act No. 32 of 2016.
- Operate for the benefit of the community as a whole.
- Serve, or propose to serve, a community from a common water source, i.e. be reticulated from the source to at least one shared distribution point within the community.
- Rural community-service facilities (i.e. government departments, education and health facilities) are also eligible.
- Have a plan for ongoing financial, operational and managerial sustainability of the water supply, administered by the Rural Water Committee.
- Not be in dispute with other parties that may affect the proposed improvements if the application is successful.

3.2 WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THIS FUND?

- Institutional water supply systems (i.e. those operated by a professional operator), covered by the Water Supply (Amendment) Act No. 31 of 2016.
- Individual domestic household water supplies.
- Commercial organisations or businesses such as restaurants, accommodation or private tourist premises, or industrial facilities.
- A private entity that involves charging fees to the community for access to water.
- Water supplies for stock, horticulture or other non-human consumption purposes.
- Entities such as church-based supplies or private schools supplies that do not serve the whole community.

3.3 WHAT CAN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BE USED FOR?

Applications can only be made for improvements that address priority threats to providing safe and secure drinking water and have been identified in the community water supply scheme DWSSP.

Communities can apply for CAP funds more than once, but must provide evidence of a new and approved DWSSP with each application, and that the improvements in the previous DWSSP have been made and are being adequately maintained.

Financial assistance is available for both water quality (safe water) and water quantity (secure water) aspects. Financial assistance is available for:

- Investigations, where these are beyond the normal business of GoV.
- Construction.
- Purchase of equipment, and operational expenditure for a defined and limited period.
- Training.

3.3.1 Investigations

In some situations an investigation may be required before a decision can be made on the specific details of an improvement. In the first instance, the expertise of GoV must be asked first. If more specialist expertise is required, this can be part of the request for financial assistance.

Examples of what financial assistance may be used for includes:

- Information for community drought management planning, for example calculation of rainwater harvesting capacity or groundwater availability especially during times of drought, and adequacy of infrastructure to meet demand.
- Water quality survey of a source water suspected to be contaminated by geothermal contaminants such as fluoride and arsenic, or by agricultural chemicals. May include sampling and testing for seasonal variability, and likely to need the assistance of laboratory facilities outside of Vanuatu.

3.3.2 Construction

If the improvement involves construction, the design of works **MUST** be approved by DoWR before the financial assistance is granted. Examples of construction include:

- Headworks at the point of extraction/abstraction.
- New storage tanks.
- Laying a pipe to transfer water from the point of abstraction to the village.
- Installing a reticulation system and tap stands throughout the village.
- Fencing around a wellhead.

Within reason, the community is expected to make itself available to provide manual labour for tasks such as clearing and levelling ground, digging trenches, carting materials and equipment to the works site.

Financial assistance may be used for:

- Purchase of construction materials.
- Purchase or hire of construction equipment.
- Paying professional fees for advice, supervision, construction or installation services, or commissioning.

3.3.3 Purchase of Equipment and Operational Expenditure for a Defined and Limited Period

Water supply systems require on-going operational maintenance and monitoring, which often requires specialist equipment. The CAP fund will consider requests for essential equipment that could reasonably be expected to be beyond the means of the community, for example:

- A basic toolkit for maintenance and repair of pipes and pumps.
- A basic toolkit for clearing vegetation and debris from intake structures.
- Monitoring equipment to assist with anticipating the onset of drought conditions, which will trigger actions in the community's drought management plan, for example a rainwater gauge and storage tank level indicator.

The CAP fund does not support on-going operational expenditure or replacement costs over the long-term, but will consider requests for the short-term, provided an operational expenditure plan and budget is included with the application that explains the transition to [community or provincial government] self-funding for operational expenditure.

3.3.4 Training

The CAP fund will consider requests for training expenses that could reasonably be expected to be beyond the means of the provincial government or GoV. The community is expected to cover the costs of hosting the training where it is delivered in the village. The community is expected to cover its own travel and accommodation costs where it is delivered away from the village. The CAP fund will consider requests for engaging technical experts to deliver the training.

3.4 WHAT CANNOT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BE USED FOR?

- Items that have not been identified in the community supply DWSSP.
- Fuel and oil for pumps.
- Salaries for staff or the community RWC.
- Land purchase, and legal costs associated with land purchase.
- Construction costs for work that have already begun.
- Monitoring of water quality for compliance with drinking water standards.
- Any infrastructure associated with an individual house.

This list is not exhaustive.

Provincial government makes the assessment of what is and is not eligible to receive CAP funds. The National Water Advisory Committee (NWRAC) will make the final decision.

4 PRIORITISING APPLICATIONS

Recognising that the requests for financial assistance will likely exceed the available government funds, the CAP fund uses a prioritisation approach that focusses support where it is most needed, targeting the most at-risk or vulnerable communities first. In addition the community's ownership and commitment to managing their water supply is taken into account.

4.1 RISK SCORES

The prioritisation approach makes use of information contained in each community water scheme DWSSP and summarised in the community application form to calculate overall risk scores. In addition, information on past waterborne disease occurrences (from Ministry of Health) and drought (from Vanuatu Meteorological Services) is considered.

There is a separate score calculated for quality of water (safety) and for quantity of water (security). Each of these scores is made up by combining scores for (i) the current primary source water risk, (ii) infrastructure risk, and (iii) known health and drought risk. The scores are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Calculation of risk scores

Primary source water risk to health (Safety) (Select one from the list, plus 'Source in volcanic area' if applicable)	Score	Primary source water risk (Security) (Select one from the list)	Score
Desalination	0	Desalination	5
Deep groundwater (more than 10 metres) deep	5	Deep groundwater (more than 10 metres deep)	5
Source in volcanic area	5	River/lake in an isolated area	5
Community rainwater with first-flush device	5	Stream/spring or shallow groundwater in isolated area	10
Community rainwater without first-flush device	10	Dug well	15
Spring/shallow groundwater (less than 10 metres deep) in isolated area	10	River/lake with several settlements using same source for water supply	15
River/stream/lake in isolated area	15	Stream/spring or shallow groundwater (less than 10 metres deep) with several settlements using same source for water supply	20
Dug well away from settlement	15	Community rainwater	20
River/stream/lake/spring/shallow groundwater in farming area and/or several settlements upstream	20	No community water supply	20
Dug well within a settlement	20		
No community water supply	20		
(maximum = 25) Score A		(maximum = 20) Score D	

Infrastructure risk to health (Safety) (select as many as relevant from list)	Score	Infrastructure risk (Security) (select as many as relevant from list)	Score
No effective treatment for protozoa and bacteria and chemicals	10	Technology (desalination, pumps) susceptible to breakdown, e.g. power failure, no fuel, mechanically complex	5
Storage tank in poor condition, unable to cover or prevent contaminants entering	10	Dam, intake or well, storage tank or pipework in poor condition, significant leaks	5
No community water supply	20	Stored water volume <15L/person/day, for 14 days	10
		No community water supply	20
(maximum = 20) Score B		(maximum = 20) Score E	

Known Health Risks (Safety) (Select one from the list) Information from PHO, MoH, Area Secretary	Score	Known Drought Risk (Security) (select one from the list) Data from MetService & DoWR	Score
Strong evidence of recent waterborne disease outbreaks or endemic, or evidence of other diseases related to water and poor hygiene	20	Drought Severity Index (HIGH)	20

Some evidence of recent waterborne disease, or evidence of other diseases related to water and poor hygiene	10
No evidence of recent waterborne disease, or evidence of other diseases related to water and poor hygiene	0
(maximum = 20)	Score C

Drought Severity Index (MEDIUM)	10
Drought Severity Index (LOW)	0
(maximum =20)	Score F

Overall risk score (Safety)	A + B + C
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Overall risk score (Security)	D + E + F
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4.2 CATEGORIES OF RISK SCORES

Communities with the highest overall risk scores are considered the most at-risk of receiving unsafe water or not enough water especially during times of drought. Table 2 places overall risk scores into five categories, depending on the combination of safety and security scores. Some communities will score high in both safety and security. These 'Category 5' communities are most in need of improvements, so funding should be made available to these communities first.

Table 2: Risk score categories

		Safety overall risk score		
		<20	20–40	>40
Security overall risk score	>40	Category 4	Category 4	Category 5
	20–40	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
	<20	Category 1	Category 2	Category 4

4.3 PRIORITY ADJUSTMENT

The final step in determining community priorities for CAP funding requests is to assess community ownership and commitment to manage the water supply, and its willingness to contribute to the cost of improvements and on-going operations and maintenance. If this is judged HIGH, then the community can be adjusted up one category from its risk score category (see Table 3).

Table 3: Overall priority incorporating community commitment

Table 2 Risk Score Category		Overall Priority Adjustment
Category 1	→	Category 2
Category 2	→	Category 3
Category 3	→	Category 4
Category 4	→	Category 5
Category 5	→	Category 6

4.4 THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Once provincial government, supported by PWRAC, has received applications from communities, it will:

- Check that each application meets the CAP eligibility criteria (sections 3.1 and 3.2 of this guide).
- Check that each application contains all of the required documentation (application form and an approved DWSSP).
- Calculate the overall risk scores (safety and security) for each application (see Section 4.1).
- Use the overall risk scores to categorise each new application (see Section 4.2).
- Make adjustment to the category for community commitment (see Section 4.3).
- On a quarterly-basis, prepare a summary report of applications awaiting financial assistance, and submit to DoWR all applications for Category 6 and 5 *[and possibly Category 4]* communities for detailed works design and costing.
- On an annual basis, complete the application form to NWRAC, recommending the priorities for allocation of CAP funds.

NWRAC will, on an annual basis, review and make decisions on which community improvements will proceed, within the annual budget it has allocated to each province. NWRAC will notify provincial government of these decisions. NWRAC will also notify provincial government of the likely date when CAP funds will become available. Provincial government will notify communities of the outcome.

Decisions on annual allocation of funding from government to each provincial government, and decisions on which community improvements will proceed will be made public.