



STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Review of Nadi Town Council Annual Report for the Year 2016



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI
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CHAIRPERSON’S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Standing Committee on Social Affairs report on the review of *Nadi Town Council Annual Report for 2016*.

As mandated under Standing Orders 109(2) (b), the Committee looks into issues related to health, education, social services, labour, aviation, culture and media.

Nadi Town Council, being one of the oldest municipalities, and known for actively contributing to the tourism sector in Fiji. The potential for investment has been optimistic and these foreign investments has led to an increase in development and in population as well. The Nadi town Council is therefore embarking on a proposal for an extension of its town boundaries to cater for the increasing population and to continue with the necessary processes of declaring Nadi as a city.

The year 2016 was a year that affected most people in Fiji, and Nadi was no exception with widespread devastation and loss of life on the infrastructure and the environment.

The Committee noted concerns raised by the Council in its key findings, particularly the constant flooding of Nadi Town.

I extend my gratitude and appreciation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and management of Nadi Town Council for their contribution in this review process.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank the former Chairperson of the Committee Hon. Alitia Bainivalu for her leadership and guidance. To the former Committee Members; the Hon. Parveen Bala, alternate members Hon. Ketan Lal and Hon. Penioni Ravunawa for their constructive input and tremendous teamwork, and the Current Committee members for the finalization of this committee report.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, I commend this report to Parliament and request that all members of this august house take note of the report.



.....
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu
Chairperson

ACRONYM

Acronym	
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
MP	Member of Parliament
SO	Standing Order

COMMITTEE REMIT AND MEMBERS

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs (**‘Committee’**) is established under Section 70 of the Constitution and SO 109. The Committee’s mandate and functions are provided under SO 109 (2) and 110 (1) (a)-(d) & (f). The Committee consist of the following members:



Chairperson
Government Member



Deputy Chairperson
Government Member



Member
Government Member



Member
Opposition Member



Member
Opposition Member

RECOMMENDATION

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs conducted the review of *Nadi Town Council for the year 2016* and recommends that Parliament take note of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs ('Committee') was referred the *Nadi Town Council Annual Report for the Year 2016* on the 14th of July 2023, as pursuant to SO 38 (2). Therefore, the Committee was referred to review the annual report as pursuant to its mandate as stipulated in SO 110 (1) (c).

1.1. Committee Procedure

The previous Committee reviewed the *Nadi Town Council 2016 Annual Report*, and formulated questions. Following this, the Committee held a Public Submission at the Nadi Town council office on 16 May 2024. The executive management presented its responses. Upon receipt of all relevant information, the committee compiled its findings. The current committee finalized the report.

The committee received a written response from Nadi Town Council for this annual review. It is available on the Parliament website at the following link:
<https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

2. Nadi TOWN COUNCIL

2.1. Background

Nadi township was established in 1947. The elected system was introduced in 1967. Dr. AH Sahu Khan was the first elected chairman of the Nadi Township Board. With the introduction of the Local Government Act in 1972 the Board changed its status to Council. Mr. H.M Lodhia became the first Mayor of Nadi Town Council in 1972 and remained Mayor until December 1973.

3. KEY FINDINGS

Below are the key findings that the committee compiled through its deliberation and review of Nadi Town Council 2016 annual report:

- 3.1 The current state of Prince Charles Park does not meet international standards. The council has engaged the services of a consultant in trying to get an overall costing in terms of the upgrade to host international tournaments.
- 3.2 Due to the increase in population the council is embarking on a proposed extension of new Town boundary. The council is in the process with the relevant agencies for this exercise.
- 3.3 The recurring flash flooding in Nadi. The implementation and execution of Nadi Flood Alleviation Project is currently underway.
- 3.4 The Vandalism of plants and council's assets.
- 3.5 There is no landfill or rubbish dump site, and this leads to illegal dumping hotspots.
- 3.6 The construction of a fully equipped Leisure Park, Multi-Purpose Court and the development of Wailoaloa picnic spot.
- 3.7 The Nadi Town Council under the period of review collected around 92% of its town rates having 8% in arrears. The council has come up with strategies for the efficient payment of rates.
- 3.8 The council is in the process of declaring Nadi as a City.
- 3.9 The installation of new pay and display parking meters.

4. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon deliberation and review of the annual report, the committee recommends.

- 4.1 The new design of Prince Charles Park to be in line with international standards so that it can attract international events and tournaments.
- 4.2 The Prince Charles Park to be renamed King Charles Park.
- 4.3 The Council to work closely with Local Government Committee and key stakeholders in the process of the extension of its town boundary to be included in the Nadi municipality for better service delivery.
- 4.4 The Ministry of Waterways to reinstate the annual grant to maintain the open drain and manhole within the municipalities.
- 4.5 The Council to continue working closely with Central government and other donor partners in terms of Nadi Flood Alleviation project.
- 4.6 Nadi Town Council to seriously identify a suitable dump site for the rate payers of Nadi and to save cost in terms of transportation to Lautoka.
- 4.7 The reintroduction of Challenge Fund to the municipalities to assist in the identified Capital projects such as Leisure Park, Multi-Purpose Court and the development of Wailoaloa picnic spot.
- 4.8 All efforts be made by the council to collect the outstanding rates in terms of house-to-house visits, face to face meetings with rate payers, Small Claims Tribunal and the last resort to take defaulters to court.
- 4.9 The Council to work closely with all relevant stakeholders to declare Nadi town as a city.
- 4.10 The Council to replace all the old Lolly pop meters with the pay and display parking meters to generate additional revenue for the Council.

5. Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 11 – make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

- Boundary extension exercise was undertaken to ensure that the basic services such as garbage collection services were introduced to these areas.
- Namaka market project was embarked on to provide vendors with better places to sell and create more opportunities for the people.
- Eco bags were introduced where Councils collect the waste cloths from the garment factories then gives the same to the ladies' groups to sew which was bought by the Council and sold. This created opportunities for the ladies to earn money.

6. Committee Public Submission at Nadi Town Council office.

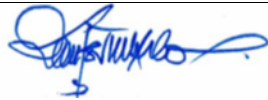






7. CONCLUSION

In this review report, the committee highlighted various areas that needs to be strengthened by the council and relevant recommendations formulated for resolution.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

We, the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, hereby agree with the contents of this report:

Committee Member	E-Signature
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu Chairperson	
Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure Deputy Chairperson	
Hon. Sashi Kiran Member	
Hon. Viam Pillay Member	
Hon. Ioane Naivalurua Member	
Date: 2 September 2024	

ANNEXURE

Published evidence

Written evidence, transcripts and supporting documents can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link:

<https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

[VERBATIM REPORT]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON **SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

ANNUAL REPORT

2016 Annual Report

SUBMISSION: Nadi Town Council

VENUE: Nadi Town Council Conference Room,
Nadi Town

DATE: Thursday, 16th May, 2024

VERBATIM REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS
PUBLIC CONSULTATION HELD AT THE NADI TOWN COUNCIL CONFERENCE
ROOM ON THURSDAY, 16TH MAY, 2024, AT 2.35 P.M.

Interviewee/Submittee: Nadi Town Council

In Attendance:

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1. | Ms. Muni Reddy | - | Acting Chief Executive Officer |
| 2. | Mr. Saliceni Raiwalui | - | Chairman |
| 3. | Mr. Prem Singh | - | Special Administrator |
| 4. | Mr. Ravinesh Nair | - | Manager, Finance and Corporate Services |
| 5. | Ms. Premila Pathak | - | Manager, Community Services |
| 6. | Mr. Meli Naevo | - | Manager, Building, Planning and Engineering |

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, Executive and staff of Nadi Town Council, the Secretariat, ladies and gentlemen; a very good afternoon to you all. It is a pleasure to be here this afternoon.

For information purposes, pursuant to the Standing Orders of Parliament, specifically Standing Order 111, all Committee meetings are to be open to the public, except in few specific circumstances which include, national security matters, third-party confidential information, personal or human resource matters and meetings whereby the Committee deliberates on all issues before it develops its recommendations and reports.

This public hearing will be open to the public and media, so for any sensitive information containing this inquiry that cannot be disclosed in public, this can be provided to the Committee either in private or in writing.

At the outset, I wish to remind honourable Members and our witnesses that all questions asked are to be addressed through the Chair. This is a parliamentary inquiry and all information gathered is covered under the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act. However, please, note that the Committee does not condone libel or slander of any sort.

In terms of the protocol of this Committee meeting, please, be advised that movement within the room will be restricted, minimise the usage of mobile phones and all mobile phones are to be on silent mode while the meeting is in progress.

[Introduction of Committee Members]

As clearly outlined under Standing Order 109(2)(b), the Standing Committee on Social Affairs is mandated to look into matters related to health, education, social services, labour, culture and media.

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs is currently deliberating on the Nadi Town Council 2016 Annual Report and the Committee is here to engage and have a fruitful discussion with you on the issues and achievements during the period of the Report, and what are some of future plans that the Authority has in moving forward.

Honourable Members, before us we have representatives from the Nadi Town Council - the CEO and his Team, who are present to make a submission on the Nadi Town Council 2016 Annual Report.

May I now take this time to invite the witnesses to introduce themselves before they proceed with their presentation.

(Introduction of Nadi Town Council Officials)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, again, for availing yourselves to be part of this meeting. I think you have a presentation for us. You may proceed with the presentation and the responses to the question that we have submitted to you. We will leave the questions until the end.

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, on behalf of the Council, we have got a brief presentation that we would like to present before moving on to the questions and our responses.

Madam Chairperson, the population of the Nadi Town Boundary as per the 2017 Census (current population that we have at the moment) is around 12,000. As it is, the Council has also embarked on to a boundary extension exercise. After the boundary extension exercise is completed, we are anticipating a population increase of around 27,000 people. So, we will be having a total population of around 27,000 after the inclusion of the Nadi Extended Boundary.

In terms of a brief overview of population, we can see that this is part of the Nadi Town Extension Boundary and the areas in blue, which is portrayed in the middle, basically covers the area which is the existing town boundary. The areas with brown in colour is the proposed boundary that the Council is working on.

Basically, the reason that we have embarked on this exercise is to declare Nadi as a city and also to take out the services that we are currently providing to the existing boundary to this peripheral areas which are fast growing. They lack basic services such as garbage collection, streetlights, road upgrade, et cetera. Basically, this is the only reason why we intend to take it within the boundary.

Madam Chairperson, from 2018, we have already started doing this - the garbage collection services that has already been implemented to these areas.

Moving on, the total number of ratepayers is around 3,047, and then the breakdown of the ratepayers into residential and businesses. So, basically, we have around 583 business ratepayers and 2,464 residential ratepayers.

The breakdown in terms of rates that was set for the year and what was collected. So, very briefly, total rates was \$2.4 million and then collected was around \$1.74 million, which accounts to around 64 percent of the total rates. We still have around \$1 million to be collected.

Rates in arrears - We have got rates in arrears which is around \$2.63 million. Collected for this financial year is around \$243,000, which is 11 percent of the total amount. The balance still stands at around \$2.4 million. So, total outstanding, inclusive of both current and arrears, stands at \$3.4 million.

Madam Chairperson, some of the projects under planning for the next financial year which is upcoming now and we have already started our budgeting, et cetera, are listed below:

- Wailoaloa Picnic Spot;
- Multipurpose Court;
- Addition of Kiosk at Namaka Market (upper level);
- Upgrade of Sports Facility;
- Acquisition of Truck, Cherry Picker; and
- Construction of a fully equipped Leisure Park.

Wailoaloa Picnic Spot - currently, we just have an open space without many facilities, so what we intend to do is to have additional facilities such as washroom, car park, public convenience, et cetera. We have already acquired a piece of land in Wailoaloa, through Ministry of Lands, which has been approved in principle and we are progressing with the paperwork, and then a concept design has also been put in place.

Multipurpose Court - we have also embarked in the design and construction of a multipurpose court. So, designing is in progress. We have also put a Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) to our Ministry for funding request.

Addition of Kiosk at Namaka (upper level) - while the market was designed and there was space to accommodate additional kiosk. We have seen that the demand is there for the market, and we intend to construct this kiosk.

Upgrade of Sports Facility - this is our current Prince Charles Park. We have already engaged the services of a consultant in trying to get an overall costing in terms of the upgrade to host international tournaments. So, there is quite a lot of things that we are looking at and one of the major factors that we are trying to look at is the cost benefit analysis. If we are going to do those upgrades, then what are the possibilities that we will be able to, sort of, get the international games to be played at our Prince Charles Park, because until and unless we have that, then just with the local games will not be able to sustain the upgrades. So, these are some of the exercises that we have already undertaken.

Acquisition of Truck and Cherry Picker – for the acquisition of a Garbage Compactor Truck, we have already called a tender. For a Cherry Picker, we did call a tender, but we did not get good outcome, but we will be readvertising for the tender.

Construction of a fully equipped Leisure Park - basically what we currently have is majority of our open spaces are not developed, it is empty. The ratepayers are not getting the maximum out of it, except for just leisure work, et cetera, because there are no facilities. So, for this one, we have also advertised for the play equipment.

Moving on to the next slide, we have the Nadi Flood Alleviation Project which has been ongoing for quite a long time. Just this morning, we had a discussion with the Ministry of Finance and the donor partner which is the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP).

This project is basically divided into three parts, Part A, B and C. Part A basically comprises of works to the Central Business District up to Nawaka Village. Part B basically concentrates on upper Nadi Town, which is from the Nadi Bridge towards Nadi Backroad and the other areas which is out of the Nadi Central Business District. Part C of the project basically encompasses the soft components, which is the legislation amendments, et cetera, to the upper catchment. Basically, Component A, which was undertaken by JICA, the designs have already been completed and they

have already allocated certain funding for that. What they are basically waiting for is the finalisation of Project B.

As per our meeting this morning, we are told that the timeframe is still July for the donor agencies to compile a report to be submitted to our Government for further action. So, now, we have seen that the pace has really picked up in terms of confirmation for Project B. So, that is one of the major conditions that JICA has - until and unless Project B has been sanctioned, they are not going to commence Part A.

This is briefly the project and the components. So, some of the components that are associated with the project is partly river widening, diversion channels, replacement of bridges, construction of surrounding dikes, creation of retention dams, et cetera. So, basically that is just an outline of the works and how they are constrained within the town boundary and the upper catchment.

Moving on to some of the challenges that the Council is facing. First is that we do not have a landfill nor a garbage site in Nadi. Basically, what happens is with all these increase in fuel cost, it really increases our cost in terms of transportation. So, overall, garbage collection cost increases almost every year, while our garbage fees is still the same for quite a long time.

Flash flooding is also a challenge. I have already elaborated in terms of quite a lot of work that has been undertaken.

Littering and illegal dumping - we have got quite a good enforcement in terms of this but still, there are lot of illegal dumping hotspots that we are encountering. Then as these hotspots are coming up, we are devising measures and controls. I will just share an experience that we recently had with Wailoaloa.

Wailoaloa is one of the most visited places for recreational and picnic activities by the ratepayers and residents. What we were encountering was that our ratepayers were complaining that there was not adequate bins placed. So, we got in partnership with a few resorts, they came on board and provided us with bins. Jacks Fiji also came on board and provided us with two Skip Bins. Then people started dumping their household waste into those bins. The situation got so worse that some people start setting fire to those bins and eventually, because Jacks had sponsored, their name was on it, they eventually pulled out from that arrangement.

Those are some of the active challenges that we are encountering and to curb that, we are effectively liaising with few companies who are providing solar cameras. We are also looking at ways in which we can, sort of, prevent this from happening.

Laws for building prosecution and grass cutting of overgrown grasses - basically, we all understand that quite a lot of our laws and penalties are quite archaic. While we are trying to prosecute people, it becomes a challenge for us. Now, a classic example is, if people put green waste out of their compound, basically the content or the amount of the waste is near to a truck load, what happens is if we issue a fixed penalty notice, we are only going to get \$40. Then people find it easier to get a fixed penalty notice and pay. So, that is an active challenge that we are also encountering.

Stray dogs' nuisance - this is one area where we are, sort of, in active discussion with the Ministry of Agriculture in trying to curb this issue but there is a lot of insistence from NGO on 'no dog trapping'. While we are trapping, our traps are being vandalised. So far, we have just managed to form a taskforce where the Fiji Police Force is assisting us. We have started from the town, but this is one area where we have quite a lot of issues in.

Vandalism of plants and Councils assets - while we are trying to upgrade our facilities, we have also noted that there is quite a lot of vandalism too happening. We have just embarked on planting palm trees along the Queens Road. Almost 60 percent of the palm trees have been chopped and damaged. So, while we are trying to provide this to the people, there are active damages.

Last year, we upgraded our public convenience which costed us almost \$27,000 to \$30,000. Then we sustained damage of around \$17,000. So, these are some of the deliberate damages that take place, and we are not able to place cameras, et cetera. We are trying our best to see how best we can and then now, we have placed security camera, et cetera, but we are still continuing to receive certain vandalism, graffititng, et cetera.

Basically, what we have done now is also trying to empower our ratepayers to come on board. We have started with ratepayers' meetings so that they can be empowered and also be our eyes and ears on the ground. These are some of the activities that we are concurrently running in trying to address the issues that we are having.

Management of Rural Boundaries - while we took over the rural boundaries, what we got was substandard subdivisions, which led to a lot of wastewater runoff, et cetera, which has now, sort of, impeded the Council in terms of way forward, because there was substandard subdivisions approved.

What we are encountering is that the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) is not taking over these roads. Residents are coming to us in terms of improvement and the conditions of the roads. We are trying to get all these authorities, as a way forward, and see how best we can. So, we have been able to get few roads resolved within few subdivisions. We are continuously making submissions to FRA if they can assist in terms of upgrading because the developers are out, individual residents have already bought the lots and it is beyond their means now to go ahead and repair the roads. So, those are some of the active discussions that we have had with FRA, and we have been managing.

Increasing costs - as it is, the fees remain the same. So, this is another area that we are all aware of. After the impact of COVID-19, then the Ukraine-Russian War, they really had a huge impact on fuel prices. What we are encountering is that, with each shipment that hardwares bring, the cost increases. It just spreads across, so those are some of the issues that we are battling with.

Outstanding rates - this is one area that is really, sort of, a pain for the Council but we have come up with several solutions. Some of the solutions that we are undertaking is, house to house visits, and then issuance of demand notices. We are also correcting our records through profiling.

Now, we have also been placing caveats. In some of the properties, we have placed caveats. While some of the developers are trying to develop their properties, what we basically do is we stop the development until they clear their town rates. Until they clear their town rates, we then allow them to continue. They come up with arrangements.

Recently, we have recruited a lawyer, who is a full time working for the Council. Now, what we anticipate to do is, we will be taking the matters to the Court as well. So, this is one area that we were not touching, but now we will be taking the matters to Court. What we believe in is that once few matters are taken up, automatically they will serve as a deterrent to others and that will assist the Council in terms of collection.

So, very briefly, this is the presentation that we have, Madam Chairperson and honourable Members.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will move on to your responses to the questions that were sent to you. You may continue with that.

Question No. 1

(i) In terms of operations of the Municipality, what was achieved during the years under review?

We are referring to the 2016 Annual Report. Very briefly, the:

- Handicraft Centre was upgraded at a cost of \$30,000.
- Health Office was relocated, as the office was small. There were quite a lot of constraints that the Officials were having in terms of the space and the office was relocated.
- Floodlights were replaced to provide better lighting for the Prince Charles Park. This was done in order to achieve better playing environment for our sports fraternity.
- New compactor truck was provided by the Embassy of Japan.
- Drainage works were carried out in Waqadra and other areas.
- Building application processing and inspections.
- Health monitoring.
- Enforcement of traffic by laws and litter enforcement.
- Park upgrades also took place.

(ii) What was not achieved?

Very briefly, the:

- total recovery of town rates was not achieved, and 8 percent was still in arrears. So, in 2016, our collection was around 92 percent.
- Nadi Flooding issue, which was undertaken but is still continuing, as I have already elaborated on.
- Declaration of Nadi into a city. This was already planned but because of the process that we are undertaking, it has taken quite a bit of time. In 2016, we had *TC Winston* as well, which also created additional resource constraints for the Council.

(iii) How could this be improved in the future?

- Through better collection techniques, such as legal action, which I have earlier elaborated on. This is in terms of the collection of town rates.
- Implementation and execution of Nadi Flood Alleviation Project which is currently underway. We have noted that the momentum, in terms of the work that was happening, has picked up and we are really thankful to the current Government.
- Thorough and better planning and follow-up. So, basically, declaration of Nadi into a city. While we were embarking into this, we then realised that we were also working on the Nadi Town Boundary Extension. We also encountered quite a lot of challenges so, now, we are managing those challenges.
- Then the city declaration which was planned, and it is ongoing as planned.

Question No. 2

What was the targeted outputs (in terms of services provided) and what was the percentage achieved during the year under review in terms of targetted outputs?

We have noted from the Report that majority of the targeted outputs which was planned for the year had been accomplished, which are as follows:

- Completion of the handicraft market upgrade;
- Completion of PC park lights upgrade;
- Park maintenance and equipment upgrade;
- Clean school and eco bag promotion; and
- New gardens were created.

Very briefly 95 percent of targetted outcomes were achieved. Out of that 5 percent that was not achieved was basically the declaration of Nadi and the collection of town rates.

Question No. 3

What were some of the weaknesses and challenges of the Municipality?

(i) Weaknesses

Auditor's Report clearly outlines the weaknesses in terms of the controls and weak measures in the financial controls that we have been having. A lot has been implemented in terms of control measures, such as bank reconciliations, daily banking reconciliations, proper record keeping, salary and wages reconciliations, debtors and creditors aging reports, et cetera. So, those are some of the weak areas that we had and then we are continuously working on improving those. Those are some of the measures that we have already implemented.

(ii) Challenges

I had already discussed this with honourable Members, as follows:

- illegal developments.
- recoveries of parking meter tins.
- *TC Winston* came and we are also affected by flooding, so whenever we have natural disasters, they greatly impact our overall budget.
- Quite a lot of time, what we have seen is that the planned projects are on hold. It not just affects the current year, but it also has an impact on the coming years because it really disrupts a lot of work. A lot of money goes into cleaning.
- Because we do not have a landfill or a dumpsite in Nadi, our transportation cost to Lautoka increases. So, this has a huge impact on the Council budget.
- Rubbish disposal to Vunato.
- Illegal dumping on peripheries of the town boundary.

We have already, from 2018, started to provide garbage collection to the extended boundaries in the informal settlements within the peripheral areas, together with the villages. But what we have noted now is that the areas that are not being serviced are now doing illegal dumping onto the peripheries of the areas that we have started to collect. So, solid waste is still a big issue that we are facing.

(iii) What were some areas of opportunities?

Town boundary extension - currently, we have engaged the Ministry of Lands to carry out the valuation for rates purposes. So, once this is completed, we are going to do an assessment in terms of the cost benefit analysis in regards to what we are actually going to receive from the extended

boundary and what other services we have to actually provide. So, that is how we will determine the areas that we intend to susnd and the areas that we intend to bring in as part of the boundary.

Namaka market extension - by way of Namaka Market extension, it started in 2016 and it was completed in 2021. That has provided an increase in the revenue for the Council. This was a very good project which increased the revenue for the Council. It also provided a better space for the vendors and this also resulted in the creation of the vendors hostel (ladies vendors), which was not there.

Clean school programme - through projects and donor agencies assistance, we have also been able to get clean school programme going. So, this is through JICA. This is where we have got majority of the urban and some of the rural schools in.

Solid waste management is a big issue that we are facing. We thought it right, through the agencies, that children who are our future are educated in terms of best practices, such as composting. That will infiltrate to the adults, and it will go a long way, so that is how we have started to get this going. This is completely managed by the Council budget. We had actually stopped this during the pandemic period but from the coming financial year, we are going to recommence this programme.

Donation of tents, tables and chairs through UN Women - UN Women is also an agency that has been assisting our markets through the Markets for Change Project.

Question No. 4

What is the progress of all capital projects initiated in the years under review?

I am happy to report that all projects have been completed, while the other project that started was Namaka Market, which started in 2016 and completed in 2021.

Question No. 5

In terms of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), how is it relevant and achieved during the years under review?

Madam Chairperson, SDG 11 specifically talks about making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Very briefly some of the projects that we are undertaking aligns to SDG 11 by way of boundary extension exercise. This is basically undertaken to ensure that the basic services such as garbage collection, is introduced to these areas. While we got this commenced from 2016 to 2018, garbage collection has already started, of course, through the Government subsidy.

The Namaka Market Project, which we have already discussed, provides good space and better selling place for the vendors.

Eco bags were introduced, and this was also through the JICA project. With this Project, what we were basically doing was collecting waste cloths from garment factories and giving them to the ladies' groups. The ladies from these groups sew eco bags. We name it eco bag because it was, sort of, made from recycled material which was the waste garment factory cloths. We bought it from these ladies and sell it. So, this was an initiative that we learned where the ladies also earn money.

Some of the arrangements that we have done in terms of collection of rates also is:

- offering discounts for early payment;
- Regularly reviewing calls and follow-ups;
- Payment plans;
- Offering discounts for early payments;
- Visits;
- Demand notices; and
- Legal action to be instigated from mid-June.

Question No. 6

What is the Town Council doing to ensure that there is a timely collection of town rates on an annual basis and arrears, and at the same time reducing expenses?

We have already discussed this, in terms of:

- Calls and follow up.
- Offer repayment plans.
- Implementing online payment systems - opened new NTC Bank Accounts at respective Banks. Before, we were just having an account with Westpac. Now, we have other accounts with HFC and BSP, so it is easy for people to do payments and direct deductions.
- We have been placing caveats on properties.
- House to house visits.
- Development application/Business Licence are no more. We only target development applications, so unless and until rates are cleared, we put that on hold. So, we have seen that this is also a good measure whereby we have been able to recover rates.
- Demand notices are being issued.
- Legal action.
- Reducing Expenses - basically what we are doing is procurement of machineries. In 2022, we procured a backhoe. Before, all these services were being outsourced, but the cost of outsourcing was quite high. By getting it in-house, we have been able to save a lot of money.
- Similar measures have also been put in place in terms of installation of GPS in all vehicles, to ensure trips and runs are managed, as well as sharing of vehicles for inspections by health and building teams. These are some of the ways in which we have tried to reduce expenses and also some of the measures that we have put in place to strengthen our revenue sectors by way of installation of pay-and-display parking meters.

Before, we were having lollypop meters which were really outdated and we are not getting the parts, et cetera, so out of the 100 percent meters that were placed on our main street and in our Central Business District, only about 10 percent of the meters were functioning properly. So, we were losing a lot of revenue. What we did was we got the

pay-and-display parking meters and with that, we have been able to increase our revenue parking meter collection from around \$500 to \$600 a month, to around \$12,000 a month now. So, that is a good investment that we have embarked on.

Question No. 7

Can the Council update the Committee on the plans in place to mitigate flooding in your Municipality?

As discussed and was presented, in terms of the Nadi Flood Alleviation Project - Plan ABC, that is underway because this requires a significant investment which is in the tune of millions, the Council does not have that sort of budget, so the Central Government is taking on this project through donor partners.

Question No. 8

(i) What changes/processes and procedures improvement have the Council put in place to correct failures and weaknesses, and prevent any recurrences?

As elaborated earlier, the Council has implemented several changes, processes and procedures to address failures and weaknesses and prevent their recurrence. Some of the improvements include:

1. Strengthened oversight and accountability

The Council has implemented additional layers of oversight and accountability to ensure that decisions are made transparently and in accordance with established protocols. So, we also have adopted a Manual of Accounts which is strictly being followed. Also, our monthly reports are being submitted to the Ministry of Local Government.

2. Enhanced training and development

We are also embarking on a lot of training and development for our staff so they could come up to par with the changes that have been taking place in and around the fraternity.

3. Updated its policies and procedures

The Council has reviewed and updated its policies and procedures to ensure they are aligned with best practices and the Ministry of Local Government, and other regulatory requirements. So, by way of that, we have brought in the Human Resources Policy, Whistleblower Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, and so many other policies that have been introduced and adopted in our full Council meeting.

4. Regular audits and internal reviews

We are also getting audits and reviews done. There was a backlog, but we are really focusing on getting this addressed. One of the challenges that we are facing was the absence of Manager Finance, the position was vacant, but we have just recently recruited a Manager Finance.

(ii) How will the Council ensure that these changes, processes and procedures are strictly followed?

Basically, regular monitoring and reporting, performance evaluations, consequences for non-compliance; all these are reflected through the Manual of Accounts, Human Resources Manual, et cetera, as well as communication and training.

Question No. 9

How has the Council, in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government, streamlined the process of obtaining approval and what is the timeline for rezoning and subdivision of land?

Obtaining development approval process has been streamlined and is being piloted by Suva, Lautoka and Savusavu through the online tracking system. This work is in progress at the moment. This ensures that the Ministry of Local Government, the Council and the developers will get live tracking information of where the application is, and who is the respective worker dealing with the application. This will provide more accountability and transparency.

Rezoning application turnaround time for the Council is around seven day to ten working days, provided there are no delays from applicants for submission of information or amendments that is required from our respective departments.

For subdivision applications, the Council does not have a bylaw, therefore, all applications are lodged at the Department of Town and Country Planning. It comes to the Council for comments, and then later, once the Scheme has been approved, then there is issuance of compliance certificate. So, basically, we take around seven days to ten 10 working days, or less, to work on these applications.

Question No. 10

How is the council dealing with complaints from ratepayers?

This is one area that we have really improved on and we now have a dedicated Grievance Officer, who manages all complaints that are received by the Council. Basically, what happens is, she receives the complaints and then they are referred to respective Departments. In every three days, a follow-up is done. So, while she does the follow-up, she then responds or provides an update to the ratepayers. What we had noted was, the reason our ratepayers were frustrated was that timely responses were not given to our ratepayers. So, through this process, we have ensured that these gaps are closed, there is still a bit of work that we are doing with this, but a lot of improvement has already been done.

There are instances when there are certain complaints which takes quite long to be resolved, where third parties are involved, for instance, FRA. If a streetlight is not working, then what we basically do is we receive that complaint and then we lodge that with FRA. Then we get the timeline from FRA, which is then reflected back or updated to our ratepayers. So, those are some of the challenges that we are facing on the ground.

While our ratepayers are paying us rates, they demand services from the Council as well. When we tell them that there are other parties involved and it is beyond our control, they feel that because they are paying rates to the Council, we are accountable. So, by way of these updates, we are trying to mitigate that.

Madam Chairperson and honourable Members, those are what we have for the Committee, and we are open for any questions or clarifications that the Committee may have.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, CEO, for the presentation and for presenting the Council's responses to the questions that was submitted by the Committee. Before I give the floor to honourable Members, I have few questions for you. Have you identified a possible dumpsite for Nadi Town?

MR. M. REDDY.- We had actually identified almost 25 sites to 30 sites which all got refused because of proximity of either the area being susceptible to coastal inundation, being in the flight path, or being close to river systems. Now, there has been a consortium formed and the application has already been made to the Ministry of Finance.

For a common dumpsite, we should take into account all the areas right from Rakiraki to Sigatoka. And that has been proposed to be situated around the Lomolomo area towards the highlands. So, we are really anticipating that, that project comes through fruition, so that will really assist the Council. There is quite a lot of study that has already been undertaken.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- When did JICA complete the Nadi Flood Alleviation Project?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, they have already completed the studies. They have finalised the study and the structural measures and components that will go with that because they have allocated funding. So, that was done way back in 2020.

The project is pending. They have already got the funding and the design is completed. But their condition is that they will only commence the project on the ground once ...

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Government does B.

MR. M. REDDY.- ...B has been finalised. So, as soon as Project B is finalised, they will commence with the work on the ground.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The reason I asked is because if the study they did was completed in 2020 and given that Nadi Town is prone to flooding, four years on, what has the Council done to request Government to look into the issue because it is a need for the town and the survival of Nadi Town as well?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, I totally agree with the concerns. Basically, what we have done is, we continuously raise it in all our forums that we attend - the CEO forums and SA forums that we are having. So, by means of that, we have it addressed to the honourable Minister and the Ministry of Local Government. We have also been raising it in all the budget submissions and public hearings that we have been having.

What eventually happens is, as soon as we are nearing the flood season, the businesses, residents and ratepayers start to come to the Council asking, is there any feedback? So, we continuously raise this in all the forums. What we have noted and seen is that the work has really picked up pace now, and we are happy about that. We just received a timeline from DFAT and AIFFP that they have been given a timeline to complete the studies and bring up a recommendation to the Government by July.

Madam Chairperson, some of the other interventions that took place while this was ongoing was by way of construction of five retention dams. These retention dams, three have been constructed in Nadi River and two in Nawaka River. What we have seen is that, that is also assisting in terms of flood mitigation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- *Vinaka*, CEO. I will give the floor to the honourable Members for any questions.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Thank you, CEO, for the presentation and the response to the questions. My question is, how are you managing the Municipality drains within the Municipality, are you still receiving the grant from the Ministry of Waterways?

MR. M. REDDY.- Through you, Madam Chairperson, basically what we are doing currently, all the drains are being managed by the Council through our funds. But we have made a strong submission during this budget submission to our Ministry and to the Budget Team for them to reintroduce the Challenge Fund.

Madam Chairperson, through the Challenge Fund, we have really been able to upgrade quite a lot of drains. The other reason for requesting this additional funding and additional support from the Government is because of the fact that quite a lot of drains are not directly linked or related to the Council boundary. They come from rural areas, sugarcane areas, and then they enter the Council boundary. They, sort of, go through the Council. And then because of the developments that have been taking place elsewhere, we are already receiving it. So, this is one of the major reasons why we are asking for the Challenge Fund to be reintroduced to the Council.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Madam Chairperson, this is in regards to the drainage. I recall when the Ministry of Waterways was introduced, there was an annual grant to the municipalities for the upkeep and maintenance of drainage and not through the Challenge Fund. The Challenge Fund was for other capital projects. So, we want to know whether that has been in place, or no?

MR. M. REDDY.- No, Sir. We have, again, requested for that to be reintroduced.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Because it will be good for the Committee to do the recommendation that, that fund must be reintroduced because it has been discontinued. This is the problem with other Municipalities as well whom we have met. That was the whole purpose of the Ministry of Waterways to have an annual grant to the Municipalities. I think you have to ask for it.

MR. M. REDDY.- Thank you, Sir. We have made submissions to our Ministry as well in terms of the funds that we have been receiving through the Ministry of Waterways. Now, we were one of the Councils that managed to complete majority of the projects. We actually utilised majority of the funds. We had projected around 10 drains to be upgraded but through that fund, while we undertook this project, there was additional savings which means, instead of competing 10 drains, we managed to complete around 15 drains. We still had some savings of around \$5,000 or \$6,000 which were returned. This fund was very fruitful for the Council, and it really assisted us in terms of timely upgrades.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Still on drainage, you have talked about these farm drains and all really causing problems, I mean, it is nothing new to us, we are very much aware of that. Late last year or this year, the Drainage Board has been reintroduced. So, you will have to basically work hand in hand with them. However, in the Report that I have gone through, the 2016 Report, it says that you have a Master Drainage Scheme Plan.

MR. M. REDDY.- Yes.

HON. P.K. BALA.- So, that is for the Municipality itself.

MR. M. REDDY.- Yes.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Now, if you are talking about this Scheme Plan and you are also complaining about this farm drainage, I do not know how it is going to work and whether it is going to work in your favor or no. That is something that you need to work it out with the Drainage Board as well. I mean, this issue is everywhere.

I am just more interested on Prince Charles Park. You have talked about engaging a consultant. Is that for the ground itself or for the pavilion?

MR. M. REDDY.- Through you, Madam Chairperson, while we had engaged this consultant, what we had intended to know was not just basically the upgrade of ground because if we were just to do that, then we will not be able to host international events. What we are looking at is to upgrade the ground in such a manner that we can attract international tournaments.

For us, if we are going to do that, then we are looking at upgrading the turf which is the grounds, the upgrade of seating facilities and additional seating facilities has to be done, the upgrade of the washrooms, so we are looking at the overall facilities that we have. Even our change rooms, referees' room, commentary booths, all those need to be upgraded to cater for international requirements. So, that is what the consultant is working on.

HON. P.K. BALA.- You have also talked about the installation of new parking meters, and if it is true, then may be other Councils can also look into that. I have seen these new parking meters. You have said that before the collection was \$500 to \$600, which has increased to \$2,000 per annum.

MR. M. REDDY.- No, Sir, per month.

HON. P.K. BALA.- So, has the rates been increased?

MR. M. REDDY.- The rates is still the same.

HON. P.K. BALA.- So, corruption.

MR. M. REDDY.- No, Sir. A lot of lollypop parking meters were not working, and we were not getting the parts. While we did an exercise on this, then we thought it fit to procure these meters because there was a lot of revenue loss. So, when we did it, we did it on behalf of other Councils as well. We were the first Council to do a bulk procurement, so while we did that, we provided it to another 10 Councils. Now, they have also realised that this is the way forward and now they are trying to get in additional meters for themselves.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Bribe *reh!* Because from \$600 to \$2,000, I mean, I can understand some mechanical issues with the meters, but to jumps from \$600 to \$2,000 a month is something. Anyway, I will rest my case there.

You have talked about retention dam. What is the total number of dams that you will require?

MR. M. REDDY.- Sir, the retention dams that have already been constructed is five. That was done through Ministry of Waterways. They are the ones who did the studies in terms of hydrology, and they got this implemented. In accordance with the ongoing reports, there are more retention dams proposed but the actual number is yet to be determined.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Alright. In the Report, I mean, it is an old Report, but it only talks about JICA. During your presentation, you talked about a new partner from the Australian Government. When did they come into the picture?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, before, the Part B of the project was being undertaken by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and we do not know for what reasons, ADB did not continue. Then, it was handed over to DFAT and AIFFP.

HON. P.K. BALA.- When was that?

MR. M. REDDY.- This was done around 2021.

MR. P. SINGH.- In fact, this was relayed to us this morning, Madam Chairperson, that there is a new partner that has come in. I know the constraints they are going through because with JICA, the reports were done some time back and for donor agency funding, as you know, they would need something very strong to come up. This is why the new partners are there.

HON. P.K. BALA.- You have talked about declaring Nadi a city and that is one of the reasons why the town extension took place, but I think you are still short of numbers?

MR. M. REDDY.- Through you, Madam Chairperson, we have attained the number - the only requirement for a city declaration is 20,000 people and by way of this extension, we have been able to get around 27,000. But then because of the pandemic, et cetera, this was, sort of, shelved and now, we are re-embarking on to this project.

HON. P.K. BALA.- So, this new extension will be included in the Municipal Election?

MR. M. REDDY.- Yes, Sir. The requirement for the election boundary is the proclamation plan and it has already been gazetted for the extended boundary.

HON. P.K. BALA.- So, this extension boundary will have its own ward or is it going to merge with the existing wards?

MR. M. REDDY.- As it is, Sir, it is proposed to be merged with the existing wards that we have.

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- Madam Chairperson, through you, thank you very much, CEO, for your presentation - very brief and informative for us as a Committee. I have a couple of questions.

I will start off with the presentation that you have just presented to us with regards to projects under planning for the next financial year, and you have six. Do you intend to complete these? What is the timeline of these six projects that you are planning? Are you funding them internally, or where are you accessing your funding from?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, through you, for Wailoaloa Picnic Spot, this will be done in phases. So, the first phase that we have embarked on was the acquisition of land. The application has already been done and we have received approval in principle from Lands Department.

For them to formalize in terms of the issuance of lease, they have requested for the concept plan. So, we have already done the concept plan and submitted. Now, we are just awaiting their feedback in terms of the approval to survey. As soon as we get that, we will straightaway commence to survey the place. Once it is surveyed, then we will be able to do a detailed design. So, we are anticipating that in the next financial year, we should be able to complete the survey and the final designs.

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- Just a follow-up question on that, do you intend to fund this through the Ministry or your internal mechanism or donors or grants?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, through you, what we have basically done is, while we are working on this, we have already gone ahead to private developers. Some of them are very eager to assist us with this project. Currently, we do not have a public beach with all the facilities for the public. So, there are few private organisations and hotels who have already vouched to support us, but they want us to provide them with the detailed plans. We are also going to allocate certain funding which will be directly from the Council, and we will also request for additional funding from the Government.

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- That, CEO, is basically the same for all the planned projects for the next financial year. With regards to the multipurpose court, where do you intend to install this multipurpose court?

MR. M. REDDY.- We have two locations for the multipurpose court; one is near the Viti Minivan Stand that is near Prince Charles Park, which is the Koroivolu Park; and the other proposal is at Waqadra grounds which is next to Challenge Plaza.

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- The reason why I ask this question because I thought that you would see somewhere near Prince Charles Park. I was thinking out loud because of your intention to expand that ground for international games, so just be mindful of that because you want to rope in international competitions. If you are installing this, I am not sure how it will go. It might be a hurdle, I am not saying it will be, but am just thinking going forward.

Madam Chairperson, I see that you have mechanisms in place in your responses with regards to rate arrears. One of the responses that the Council has given is legal action. You have also notified the Committee today that you have an inhouse Counsel.

MR. M. REDDY.- Yes.

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- That is very great and I thank you for that because it shows that you are moving forward. It is about time that Municipalities have their inhouse counsel. It is very costly for you to hire outside council so that is good.

Since you will be having an inhouse counsel and you intend to instigate legal action, mostly this will be going to those who are lagging behind with their rates or traffic infringements with regards to parking and you will be instigating this in June, are you intending to backdate these all the way back. meaning those who have not paid their rates all the way then or you are just starting fresh?

MR. M. REDDY.- The way the rates work is, it accumulates. As we go through years, it accumulates with the principal and the interest. So, when we take them to task, basically, the whole

amount will be the matter of litigation and that applies to all the other arrears that we have in terms of bus station charges, rental arrears, et cetera.

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- So, just for some clarity for the Committee, this action will only be instigated once all options have been exhausted?

MR. M. REDDY.- Yes.

HON. P.K. BALA.- While we were on Wailoaloa Beach, I remembered something, and I do not know I may be right or wrong. When we approved the project by Punjas, that was approved subject to include the creational bit, has that been done?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, through you, while that subdivision was undertaken, what was provided was the 20-metre public access reserve and there was no other conditions attached to that. But then the 20-metre access reserve was provided, just to ensure that public get access to that area.

Madam Chairperson, we are in active discussions with Punjas because they had just lost some plans to commence development and then we are trying our best to see how best we can assist Punjas, and at the same time, get some facilities there for the public.

HON. P.K. BALA.- This is not only an issue with the Nadi Town Council but maybe it would be good for the Committee to understand and know what Nadi Town Council feels about it, and this is in regards to this outstanding town rate. For Nadi, it is about \$3 million. What is your peoples view because as you have said, it is an accumulated fund? To have a clean book or something like that, get rid of this figure, et cetera. What is your ratepayers' view on that?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, through you, while we have looked at the figures, we have also started a thorough investigation in terms of, first, correcting our records and see where we have not, for example, supposed to pass certain journal entries, discounts, et cetera, so the team is undertaking that.

On the same note there were certain areas, for instance, Palm Beach Subdivision done by Punjas which is a newly constructed subdivision. While that was being done and transferred from the initial developer to the lot owners, lot owners were not notified. So, now, they are coming back to us because their rates have also accumulated. That is one issue that we have identified, so we are trying to see how best we can mitigate that.

Then we have Matavolivoli Housing. Again, transfers were done, but then people were not notified. We had continued to bill it to Housing Authority, and then that amount got accumulated. So, we are actively liaising with Housing Authority in trying to get that sorted.

One of the major rate arrears that we have is through Saunaka Land Purchase Co-operative which is in the sum of almost \$300,000. Now, for Saunaka Land Purchase Co-operative, there is quite a lot of members involved. They have a Committee and there are a couple court cases within the Court. As soon as someone tries to do a subdivision, then there is an injunction or other case comes up. So, that subdivision has not been able to progress and get completed, therefore, people are not paying town rates and that has been accumulating. So, that is a big challenge that we have.

What we have basically done is, now, we have profiled our arrears in certain categories, which is from highest to lowest. While we are doing that, we are also thoroughly going into all these

amounts and cross-checking into our system if our system reflects the correct amount, then only we will take it to Court because if not, then we might be challenged again. So, those are some of the things that we have actively been undertaking.

MR. P. SINGH.- Madam Chairperson, just to add on to that, I think it is a very great question from the honourable Member. I think you asked whether it is good to carry on our books showing so much of arrears, it is not only for the rates but then other services as well. I think even the Public Accounts Committee when we appeared before them, they had, sort of, advised us to look into ways and means of getting rid of this problem.

The only way we can see the Council, we have submitted to the Ministry of Local Government, that we devise a bad debts policy, incorporating all these fees and charges which are in arrears. I think the national conference next month, this should be discussed at length, and we want this to come from the Ministry because under the Local Government Act, everything rests with the Minister.

HON. V. PILLAY.- (Inaudible)

MR. P. SINGH.- Yes, we did.

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- Madam Chairperson, just a follow up question to that. So, that will be just a one-off so that we can just clear the books and start afresh?

MR. P. SINGH.- Yes. At present, as you know, we have this hardship clause. People can come in individually and request for exemption. But then, we are limited by scope to do that. If there is a national policy on it - a legal framework, make all the laws in harmony, and then we can do that. In fact, it will be good for all the Councils.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, honourable Members. I have two questions. Your building surveyors report for 2016, what do you do with the illegal works and the notice served, how do you deal with them?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, what we do is, once we identify that there is an illegal construction ongoing, we serve them with a 'stop work notice' or notice under the Town Planning Act. There is a certain notice period. We give the applicant an opportunity to lodge the application. If they fail to lodge the application, then we escalate the matter to Court. Once it escalated to Court, then the Court, again, gives them an opportunity to lodge the application to the Council. Now, if they still fail to lodge, then they issue the demolition order. We have received few demolition orders, and there are fines too given. Apart from the fixed penalty that is given, there are additional fines, if the non-conforming use and all these continues.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- How is the Council planning to improve the submission of your Annual Reports? We are now deliberating the 2016 Annual Report, so what you are doing to ensure the timely submission of the other Annual Reports?

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, there is one issue that we had been faced with so we are continuously working on this. Our 2017 Annual Report has already been submitted to Cabinet and 2018 Accounts has been submitted to the Office of the Auditor-General for auditing. We have called for tender for the preparation of Financial Statements from 2019 to-date. Why we are taking

this measure so that we can fast-track in terms of the preparation and then there are quite a lot of issues that we need to check in terms of qualification.

We basically do not want to load our Team with this because there are three things that we are getting them to work on now, the -

1. completion and submission of the pending accounts;
2. overall daily operations they have to undertake; and
3. qualification that has already arose.

Madam Chairperson, to better curb this, we are going to tender out the preparation of the accounts so that our Team is relieved of that, assisting only with the preparation. So, the Team can then have more time to deal with issues that we have within the Financial Statements that have been raised. So, this is the process that we are undertaking.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- CEO, you might have recalled that last year when we visited Namaka Market, there were few issues that were highlighted by the vendors. We would kindly request an update from your end. This is with regards to bird droppings that fall on the tables that affect the producers or the vendors and the smell from the drainage. If you can please just provide the Committee with a quick brief on the two issues they face.

MR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chairperson, I am happy to report that we have already completed the bird netting works. Now, you will not get to see the issue of bird dropping, the Market is very clean and tidy, and that costed us a sum of around \$86,000 to get the bird netting works completed both for Namaka Market and Nadi Market.

In terms of the cleanliness of the drains, yes, we had issues in terms of the drains. So, there were two things that were there, first, the vendors disposing of their produce, et cetera, into the drains which ended up stinking and, second, the cleanliness from our contractors. So, both areas have been strengthened. We are also giving litter notices to our vendors if they are not complying in terms of cleanliness because then it affects them and it becomes an issue for other vendors as well who are around that area. These are some of the issues that we are working on.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- *Vinaka*, any more questions from honourable Members?

HON. RATU R.S.S. VAKALALABURE.- It is not a question but a request, CEO, if we could have a copy of your presentation which would help us in our Report back to Parliament, please.

HON. P.K. BALA.- I read a few months ago somewhere that you were talking about littering and you were very upset about it. So, is there any action or plan in this regard on that?

MR. S. RAIWALUI.-Through you, Madam Chairperson, we have already started preaching. Right now, as I speak, our Team is out in the field every Thursday from 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m., in selective areas, lecturing people about littering and it has changed. I have said many times and I continue to say, we are coming across a generation of recklessness, people just do not care about the environment. One example, last month, I was following one couple and their child. They just came out from the shop and they were having choc attack. The father of the child just opened up the pack and threw the cover, then the wife followed and then the child looked at them and also threw the

pack. I called them, I picked it up myself and talked to them. They said, “Please, give it to us. I said, “It is alright, I will pick it up for you”.

So, those are some of the things that we are going through everywhere, and I am strong about that. I said, what you practice outside is what you do at home. Even at Church, and I am a former chief steward of Namaka Methodist Church, I was asked to deliver words of encouragement and I told them to pay up their rates, just as what Jesus told the Pharisees, “Give to Ceasar what belong to Ceasar”, and clean up your area.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, since there are no other questions, I would like to thank the CEO and your Team. Thank you very much for the presentation and thank you for the clarifications on the questions that was raised by the Committee. The Committee, indeed, had very constructive exchanges with the members of the Council, so thank you so much for that.

We have definitely took note of all the issues that were raised that will assist in the compilation of our Committee Report which will then be tabled to Parliament at a later sitting. If there any further clarifications or further queries from the Committee, we hope that the Council is open to accommodate our request. Once again, *vinaka vakalevu*, and have a blessed afternoon.

The Committee adjourned at 4.00 p.m.



NADI TOWN COUNCIL



**PRESENTATION TO THE HONORABLE
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

16TH MAY, 2024

NADI TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS



Population



Summary of Population _Nadi District

Nadi Town Boundary			New City Boundary		
Locality	H/Hlds	Tot Pop	Locality	H/Hlds	Tot Pop
Nadi Town Bdy	2953	12028	Nadi City Bdy	6807	27731
Nadi Peri Urban	11795	51999	Nadi Peri Urban	7941	36296
Nadi Rural	2560	11516	Nadi Rural	2560	11516
Total	17308	75543	Total	17308	75543

Source: Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2017 Population & Housing Census.





Finance



1. Total number of ratepayers - 3047
2. Breakdown of rate payers into residential and business
Business: 583
Residential: 2464
3. Amount of rates collected for the financial year, percentage collected and balance to be collected
 - Total rates struck – 2.475m Rates in arrears - 2.653m
 - Collected – 1.47m (64%) Collected - 243k (11%)
 - Balance - 1.005m Balance - 2.410m
 - Total outstanding – 3.415m





Projects under planning for next financial year



- Wailoaloa Picnic Spot
- Multipurpose court
- Addition of kiosk at Namaka Market (upper level)
- Upgrade of sports facility
- Acquisition of truck, cherry picker
- Construction of a fully equipped leisure park



Nadi Flood Alleviation Project



NAME OF PROJECT	PROGRESS AND COMMENTS
Master Plan For Nadi Flood Control Structures	<p>The JICA has completed its task and submitted the plans to the Government for its consideration.</p> <p>Recommendation from JICA is :-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">for widening and realignment of Nadi RiverReplacement of 2 bridges (Nadi and Meigunyah)Construction of surrounding dikes to protect the Nadi Town from water coming inCreation of retention dams from up the hills to hold excessive water





Nadi Flood Alleviation Project

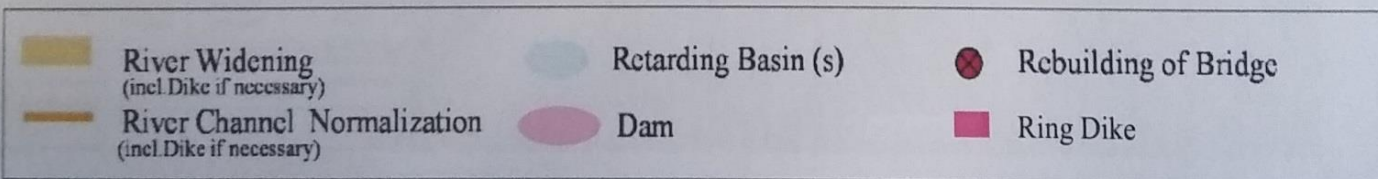


<Final Component of Master Plan>

Figure-1



*Number in figure corresponds to the item of Table-1





Nadi Flood Alleviation Project



- Other component of the project is Part B which is being looked after by Australian Government
- The project is being directly managed by Ministry of Finance
- Scoping has already been conducted in November by the Australian Team with their funding agencies.





Challenges

- No land fill/garbage dump in Nadi
- Flooding/Flash flooding
- Littering and illegal dumping
- Laws for building prosecution and grass cutting
- Stray dogs nuisance and NGO's insistence on no dog trapping
- Vandalism of plants and Council Assets.
- Management of rural boundaries
- Increasing costs
- Outstanding rates



Thank
You!

