Typhoid cases spark alert

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Sakiasi Dakua brushes his teeth in a river at Draubuta in the Navosa highlands. Picture: Baljeet Singh

THE Health Ministry is considering a mass stool screening exercise for Draubuta villagers in Navosa as the Sigatoka Hospital records that over the past six months two cases of typhoid from this community have been diagnosed each month.

National adviser communicable diseases Mike Kama said a team of officers from Nadroga Navosa had been deployed to the village.

"For July, two cases of typhoid from Draubuta Village were admitted and subsequently diagnosed at Sigatoka Hospital," he said.

"The Sigatoka Hospital's inpatient records indicate that in the past six months, two cases of typhoid have been diagnosed from Draubuta Village each month.

Mr Kama said the deployment was to assess the situation.

The group will implement preliminary intervention and prevention measures to control transmission.

"It is envisaged that all the identified risk factors and challenges in Draubuta that may contribute to the continued occurrence of typhoid in the village will be identified and resolved via the support of the Ministry of Health and key multisectoral partners," he said.

Mr Kama said with the introduction of typhoid to Draubuta, other villages could be at risk.

"So there is a need to ramp up personal and community-driven prevention and control activities in the nearby villages to mitigate possible transmission across communities," he said.

Dr Kama urged the villagers to take precautionary measures and take heed of the advice from health officers.
"The typhoid precautionary measures go back to the very basics of living which is to assure good personal and environmental hygiene and sanitation.

"Washing hands after using the toilet or before eating. Heating food up before consuming it, ensure water is treated, if it isn't then boil it well, cool and then drink it."