



Work is in progress along the Matokana Village Access Road. **INSET 1:** Seventy-five-year-old Paulina Buki is happy to witness a long-awaited dream come to reality when Fiji Roads Authority contractors and equipment arrived to start work at Matokana Village. **INSET 2:** Marama-ni-Koro Ivamere Kobua and her son, Joave Nailumu. **Photos: SUPPLIED**

# Long-awaited dream becomes reality

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**S**EVENTY-FIVE year Paulina Buki witnessed a long-awaited dream turning into reality when she saw Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) contractors and equipment at Matokana Village, 60km inland from Sigatoka.

The FRA has begun construction of 14 kilometres of the Matokana Village Access Road which is in the mountainous range of Nadroga/Navosa Province.

The project site commences at stage one at Nawairabe Village junction and ends at Matokana Village.

“Matokana Village is one of the most isolated villages in the Nadroga/Navosa province and we have to trek for several hours through

the mountainous terrain, forests and cross two rivers to reach the village,” Ms Buki said.

She said they had been waiting for this improvement for many years and they are now very happy that their lives will become much easier and they will finally be connected to other villages.

“We acknowledge the Government for availing its assistance in developing a new road that will provide us with proper access and help improve our livelihood.”

Marama-ni-Koro Ivamere Kobua said with the new road, the villagers will no longer have to make a long tiresome journey to reach their farm, schools, health centres as the new roads will ease transportation.

“At the moment there is no RSL Rural Service License (RSL) and the commute takes

hours because we have to trek across mountains to reach our destination. We also use horseback as a mode of transportation.”

She said Matokana was home to close to 200 villagers and they were looking forward to having proper access.

FRA Chief Executive Officer Jonathan Moore said works are progressing well and they are expecting to complete the project by December 2018, weather permitting.

“The FRA is committed to reach out to the communities in the most remote locations and provide them with proper access,” Mr Moore said.

Meanwhile, the FRA is conducting a feasibility study on the two crossings located earlier along the Matokana Village Access Road.