



MINISTRY OF RURAL AND MARITIME DEVELOPMENT AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

PRESS RELEASE 24/2022

Date: 08/03/2022

**** For Immediate Release ****

New Footbridge benefits Tavuki villagers



Caption: ***Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu says the newly constructed footbridge will help students get to school safely.***

KADAVU – The Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management has completed a much-awaited footbridge in Tavuki, Kadavu to help people – especially children – get to their destination without risking their lives.

For many years, villagers had to walk on tree trunks when crossing the river beside their village and it was hard to keep up because the trees would be easily swept away by strong currents during disasters. Villagers said they were at risk of being injured when the trunks were slippery.

Last week, villagers witnessed a new beginning as Minister responsible for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu commissioned the new footbridge.

In his remarks, Hon. Seruiratu said the newly constructed footbridge would ensure the safety of the villagers, especially the vulnerable groups.

“Children from the seven villages in the district of Tavuki will use this footbridge to get to school not only on time, but safely as well and that will give parents and guardians the satisfaction of knowing a safe way has been provided by the Government,” Hon. Seruiratu said.

“The footbridge will also help adults in carrying out their daily chores but with improved infrastructure that guarantees safety.

“It also gives us the satisfactory feeling of knowing that we are keeping up with our mission of leaving no one behind.”

The new footbridge which costs Government more than \$27,000 is aligned to the Ministry’s objectives of risk informed development in the construction of infrastructure for better access to assist in raising the living standards of people residing in rural and maritime communities.

Ms. Timaima Qaranavua, a 70-year-old villager of Tavuki, is relieved to see her granddaughter walk on the newly constructed bridge after she finished school last week.

“I’ve been so worried of my granddaughter’s safety, but today I’m happy knowing there’s improved accessibility that can help her get to school safely and chase her dreams,” the emotional Ms Qaranavua said.

Her granddaughter joins more than 147 students that cross the river daily to get to school.

“I thank the Government for its commitment in making sure that we safely move from one place to another, especially our children.”



Caption: ***Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu at the opening of the new footbridge last week.***

-ENDS-

For press enquiries:

Aqela Susu, MRMDDM, Tel. +679 3216456/+679 9985670 , aqela.susu@govnet.gov.fj