



## Village Life

### **Niugini Nickel values relationships and partnerships with local stakeholders.**

The Wowo Gap Nickel Project is remote, only accessible by helicopter or by foot. There are no roads only walking tracks. Infrastructure is extremely limited and there is no electric power transmission, telephone access or water supply.

It is therefore important that we understand the context and background culture of the society we are working in.

The closest largest villages to the project site are Embessa and Obea, with surrounding smaller villages or hamlets, and it is a day's walk to the project site.

These villages have access to the nearest large town, Popengetta by boat. This requires traveling down the Musa River then by open sea to the town. The journey usually takes two days.

The main villages of Embessa and Obea have airstrips, with the Embessa airstrip being the one most utilised. In south east PNG, 93 per cent of the indigenous population is Melanesian who can trace their ancestry back over 50,000 years when archaeologists believe the first people arrived in PNG by island hopping from the north.

Most of the land is owned by tribes, clans, sub clans and family groups. The land to this day is still traditionally used for hunting and gathering purposes.

Village life is influenced by Chiefs who preside over village affairs. Most villages are small and typically isolated so language groups abound.

The leadership structure, while it remains traditional in form, has taken on western values and qualities. The election of councillors meant that traditional leaders could confirm their popularity or otherwise.

With an awareness of the opportunities available to them and around them, the idea of education and business took hold, as the people realised the value of being educated, the rewards of hard work and the luxury of earning money.

Houses are constructed of bush materials with a limited life span and their location is often dependent on varying environmental factors.

It is common in all rural Papua New Guinea villages that food crops are cultivated and animals are farmed either for personal consumption or used for cash income.

Niugini Nickel respects the culture, customs and leadership relationships that exist within the society in which we operate and has an active corporate social responsibility program to improve health, education and employment outcomes for local villagers.