



Well maintained roads translate into a well-connected community.



Coastal protection works along a section of Natewa West Coast Road in Vuinadi Village.

FIJI ROADS COMMITTED IN BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENT ROAD NETWORK

Climate change poses a significant threat to Fiji, particularly impacting the coastal roads that connect rural villages to urban areas. These roads are essential for the movement of goods, access to services, and overall community connectivity. However, as sea levels rise and weather

patterns become increasingly unpredictable, the infrastructure supporting these vital routes is under increasing strain. Inundation from intense rainfall and flooding has become more frequent, often rendering coastal roads impassable and isolating communities from essential services like healthcare

and education. This isolation can have dire consequences for rural populations, exacerbating vulnerability and limiting economic opportunities. Additionally, coastal erosion is gradually undermining the foundations of these roads, especially those situated near coastlines. As the

land erodes, the risk of road collapse increases, leading to costly repairs and prolonged periods of disconnection for affected communities. The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) has recognized the profound implications of climate change and is actively working to rehabilitate and maintain these roads. The FRA is not only focusing on road rehabilitation but is also incorporating coastal protection measures into its plans. Routine rehabilitation works include reinforcing road structures and encouraging villages to implement natural solutions such as mangrove planting, which helps buffer against wave action and reduce erosion.

These dual efforts aim to mitigate the immediate impacts of climate change while promoting long-term sustainability. By investing in resilient infrastructure, the FRA is striving to ensure that rural roads can withstand future climate challenges. Moreover, the FRA is committed to integrating climate resilience into all future road projects. This approach involves using durable materials, innovative engineering

practices, and careful planning that takes into account projected changes in weather patterns. By adapting to these new realities, the FRA aims to create infrastructure that not only survives but thrives, fostering economic growth and social cohesion in rural areas. The importance of these coastal roads cannot be overstated; they are lifelines for rural communities facilitating access to markets and resources that are vital for livelihoods.

As Fiji continues to face the challenges posed by climate change, the ongoing efforts of the FRA will be crucial in maintaining these connections. Ultimately, building climate-resilient infrastructure is not just an engineering challenge but a necessary step towards safeguarding the future of Fiji's rural communities in an increasingly uncertain climate. Through collaboration and innovation, Fiji can work towards a sustainable future where its coastal roads remain functional and reliable, empowering its rural populations to thrive despite the looming threats of climate change.



Rural road rehabilitation works in Natua Labasa.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES: FRA'S COMMITMENT TO RURAL ROADS

The significance of these road upgrades extends beyond mere connectivity; they are particularly beneficial for women and students. Improved rural roads provide safer travel conditions, enabling students to attend school more regularly and fostering educational opportunities. This access is crucial in helping to break the cycle of poverty, as education is a powerful tool for social mobility. For women, enhanced road access facilitates greater participation in the workforce and community activities, promoting gender equality and empowerment. When women are able to travel safely and

easily, they can engage more fully in economic and social life, contributing to the community's well-being.

The FRA's ongoing initiatives in Vanua Levu exemplify a comprehensive approach to infrastructure development. By concentrating on rural roads, the authority addresses immediate transportation needs while laying the groundwork for sustainable community development. The FRA remains committed to engaging with local communities throughout the rehabilitation process, ensuring that their needs and concerns are prioritized.

to Napuka within the Tikina of Tunuloa, to name a few. Achieving connectivity in these areas will unlock significant economic potential, facilitating greater economic activities, boosting tourism, and enhancing access to essential services such as schools and healthcare.

In addition to road connectivity, the FRA recognizes the importance of drainage improvements, ongoing pavement works, and vegetation control along these rural roads. These measures are essential for ensuring the longevity and safety of road networks, particularly in areas prone to flooding or overgrowth that can obstruct travel. By integrating these elements into their infrastructure development strategy, the FRA aims to create a more resilient and sustainable transportation system that meets the diverse needs of Fiji's rural communities.

In conclusion, the FRA'S commitment to upgrading and maintaining rural roads is a vital aspect of fostering economic growth, social equity, and community development throughout Fiji. By focusing on improving connectivity, enhancing access to essential services, and engaging local communities, the FRA is not only addressing immediate infrastructure needs but also building a foundation for a more prosperous and inclusive future for all Fijians. As these initiatives progress, the vision of a well-connected Fiji, where every citizen has equal access to opportunities and resources, becomes increasingly attainable.



Drainage works on a section of rural road in Vanua Levu.

This community involvement is essential for the success of infrastructure projects, as it helps to tailor solutions that directly address local challenges and aspirations.

Currently, several villages remain unconnected to the road network, including Duavata Secondary School to Nukusa, Nukudamu, Nabouono, and Vunikodi in the Tikina of Udu within the Macuata Province, as well as Tawake to Wainika, Vatu, Nagasauva, Vatulevu, and Yasawa in the Tikina of Tawake within the Cakaudrove Province along the Udu Peninsula. Also, from Wailevu, Salia, Nailou

Looking towards the future, the FRA's medium- to long-term vision for Vanua Levu is to connect all rural roads, thereby providing safe accessibility to all communities.

NORTHERN UPDATE: ROAD WORK CONTINUES ON BUCABAY ROAD

The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) is steadfast in its commitment to maintaining and upgrading the country's sealed road network, recognizing the vital role these roads play in the overall development and connectivity of Fiji. As part of its strategic plan, the FRA places significant emphasis on innovative engineering designs that ensure the longevity and durability of national roads. This approach is particularly evident in ongoing projects like the road works on the Bucabay Road in Savusavu, located in Vanua Levu. This crucial highway serves as a lifeline, connecting the town of Savusavu to Vatuyalewa Jetty in Natuvu, which facilitates the movement of goods and people to and from Taveuni Island.

The Hibiscus Highway along the Bucabay Road is more than just a road; it is a critical infrastructure component that supports local economies and enhances accessibility to essential services. By improving this route, the FRA aims to create a more connected and resilient road network that can withstand the challenges posed by increasing travel demands and the changing climate. The highway's upgrade is not only about enhancing the physical infrastructure but also about ensuring that it can support economic activities, especially in tourism and agriculture, which are pivotal to Fiji's economy. The Hibiscus Highway was significantly impacted by prolonged periods of rainfall, which led to erosion, potholes,

the FRA is exploring various solutions that encompass not only technical innovations but also strategic collaborations with local suppliers and stakeholders. By fostering partnerships, the FRA aims to streamline the supply chain for construction materials, ensuring that projects can proceed without unnecessary delays. Additionally, the FRA is committed to employing resilient construction methods that take into account local environmental



Road work on Hibiscus Highway, near Savusavu Airport.

become more unpredictable in recent years. Moreover, logistical issues, such as delays in the supply of essential materials like bitumen from the suppliers, can hinder progress and delay routine maintenance of such roads. These factors underscore the need for adaptive strategies and proactive planning to mitigate potential setbacks in road construction and maintenance. To address these challenges,

weather-related damage. This forward-thinking approach is essential for building infrastructure that not only meets current needs but is also prepared for future challenges.

The ongoing road rehabilitation work along the Hibiscus Highway is a pivotal step in actualizing the Fiji Government's vision of transforming Vanua Levu into a prominent tourism hub. This initiative aligns seamlessly

more visitors but also to foster economic activity, thereby creating sustainable growth for the region. As more tourists explore the natural beauty and cultural richness of Vanua Levu, local businesses will thrive, generating employment opportunities and boosting the economy.

Ultimately, the investment in road rehabilitation is more than just infrastructure development; it is a strategic move to position Vanua Levu as a competitive player in the tourism sector, supporting the broader goals of economic diversification and community resilience. The combined efforts of the government and FRA in this endeavor reflect a commitment to nurturing the island's potential and enhancing the livelihoods of its residents.

Ultimately, the FRA's dedication to maintaining and upgrading the sealed road network is pivotal for Fiji's growth and development. The upgrades to the Hibiscus Highway serve as a prime example of how targeted infrastructure investments can lead to broader economic benefits.

As the FRA continues to navigate the complexities of road construction in the face of environmental challenges, its commitment to innovative solutions and resilient infrastructure remains unwavering. Through these efforts, Fiji can look forward to a more connected and prosperous future, where the road network supports not only the movement of goods and services but also the overall well-being of its communities.

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One of the key objectives of the FRA is to ensure equal access to essential infrastructure and services for all communities. Rural roads act as critical arteries, linking residents to markets, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions. The upgrades being undertaken by the FRA aim to provide local residents with reliable access to these essential resources, ultimately enhancing their quality of life. By making it easier for farmers to transport their produce to markets, these road improvements directly boost local economies and livelihoods, creating a ripple effect that benefits entire communities.