



Solar Power for Public Buildings: Clean Energy, Lowers Costs

Design work to bring clean solar power to six public buildings in Labasa and Savusavu will commence in January 2026. This initiative will help reduce electricity costs, support cleaner energy use, and improve services for the community. By investing in solar energy, these public facilities will not only save money over time but also contribute to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly North.

Labasa and Savusavu Cityscape Improvements: Welcoming, Safer Town Centers

Stakeholder consultations are already underway on immediate cityscape improvements in Savusavu and Labasa, focusing on waterfront access, wayfinding upgrades, park enhancements, and coastal protection, with construction in 2026. The upgrades will provide better waterfront access, clearer signage, improved parks, and stronger coastal protection, ensuring that the towns are prepared for both community enjoyment and future tourism growth.



Capacity Enhancement and Project Management

International Visitor Survey (IVS): Improving Tourism Through Visitor Voices

A six-month pilot phase of the Island Visitor Survey (IVS) began in July 2025, with data collection continuing through December 2025. The survey has been split into two components, one focusing on visitor expenditure and the other on visitor experience and satisfaction, allowing for a more detailed understanding of both the economic and experiential aspects of tourism in Fiji.

The survey is designed to provide more accurate and timely information to guide both government planning and business decision-making. The first IVS report from the pilot phase is expected in early 2026, providing valuable insights that will inform strategies to improve visitor experiences and support sustainable growth across Fiji including the Northern Division.



ABOUT NA VUALIKU PROJECT

The Fiji Tourism Development Program in Vanua Levu (Na Vualiku Project) is a flagship government-led initiative financed by the World Bank that aims to transform Vanua Levu into a leading sustainable tourism destination.

Spearheaded by the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MTCA), in partnership with Fiji Airports and the Fiji Roads Authority, the Project is anchored in long-term, coordinated investments.

By enhancing infrastructure, boosting local enterprise and safeguarding cultural and natural assets, the Project will empower communities, unlock private sector growth, and deliver authentic, high-quality experiences for visitors.

Contact Us:

+679 892 6220 | info.navualiku@mtca.gov.fj | www.navualiku.com
 Level 3, JKS Building, Main Street, Savusavu, Fiji | @Navualikufiji

IMPACT

Fiji Tourism Development Program in Vanua Levu
 Tourism that lifts all, benefits all | Newsletter | December 2025

Na Vualiku MSME and Community-Based Tourism Grant Applications Now Open Across Vanua Levu and Taveuni



The design of the Program comes directly from what communities asked for during field visits to 12 CBT communities across Vanua Levu and Taveuni earlier in 2025.

Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs), women's cultural enterprises, and Community-Based Tourism (CBT) operators across Vanua Levu and Taveuni can now apply for targeted training and CBT grant support under the newly launched Na Vualiku MSME and CBT Capacity Building and Grant Funding Program.

The Program provides structured access to business training and competitively awarded grant financing for eligible enterprises. It aims to strengthen local tourism businesses, improve visitor experiences, and ensure that tourism growth delivers direct benefits to communities at the grassroots level. Applications are now open and will close on 13 February, 2026.

Registered CBT operators with majority community ownership are eligible to apply for grants to upgrade tourism products and facilities. Supported investments include small-scale infrastructure improvements, safety and quality upgrades, development of visitor spaces, and installation of waste facilities. The grants will prioritize projects that enhance visitor experiences while safeguarding environmental and community assets.

In parallel, MSMEs, women's cultural enterprises, and CBT operators can access capacity-building support covering business registration and regulatory compliance, financial literacy and record-keeping, marketing and digital promotion, tourism quality standards, and business readiness for financing and investment.

The Na Vualiku Project directly addresses a long-standing constraint faced by small tourism operators in the North: limited access to structured training, investment readiness, and formal business support. This has limited their ability to grow, access new markets, and consistently meet tourism service standards.

Through a supervised delivery mechanism, the Program will channel grant support and technical assistance in a transparent and accountable manner to strengthen enterprise performance. This approach is designed to promote income generation, job creation, women's economic participation, and improved preparedness of northern tourism businesses for increased visitor demand.

Applicants may collect and submit application forms at the Na Vualiku Office in Savusavu, the Macuata Provincial Council in Labasa, the Bua Provincial Council in Nabouwalu, the Taveuni District Office in Waiyevo, and the Assistant Roko Tui's Office in Somosomo, Taveuni. Applications may also be submitted online through the Na Vualiku website.

The design of the Program comes directly from what communities asked for during field visits to 12 CBT communities across Vanua Levu and Taveuni earlier in 2025.

By responding to real village needs, the Na Vualiku Project ensures that tourism growth translates into direct income, stronger businesses, and long-term self-reliance for local people.

Explore this Issue:

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- Pg 2 – Tourism Planning • Environment • Waisali Forest • Emergency Preparedness
- Pg 3 – Airports • Roads • Waste • Sanitation
- Pg 4 – Solar • Cityscapes • Visitor Survey



Integrated Tourism Master Plan (ITMP): A Clear Future for Jobs, Investment, and Community Growth

Communities and tourism businesses across Vanua Levu and Taveuni will soon benefit from a single, long-term plan that guides where tourism is focused, where infrastructure is built, and how investment reaches local areas. This will mean better roads and services, stronger protection for areas of high conservation value and important heritage locations, more tourism spending in villages, and clearer opportunities for local businesses and job creation. The ITMP team consulted widely in September 2025 to gather views from communities, businesses, and key stakeholders. A local Advisory Group is now shaping the direction of the Plan to ensure it reflects real community needs and industry priorities. Work has also begun on a Baseline Analysis, due in January 2026. This will create a clear starting point for measuring growth in jobs, income, tourism numbers, and business performance. It will guide future investment so that tourism development delivers real, measurable benefits to families, villages, and local enterprises across Vanua Levu and Taveuni.

Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA): Protecting Communities, Land, and Livelihoods

Communities across Vanua Levu and Taveuni will benefit from tourism growth that protects the environment, respects culture, and safeguards people's livelihoods. The Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) will ensure that future tourism development under the Integrated Tourism Master Plan remains environmentally responsible and socially inclusive. A coordinated SESA and ITMP consultation session is planned for January 2026. During this process, local stakeholders will review key recommendations, test proposed actions on the ground, and help shape decisions so that tourism development strengthens communities while protecting natural and cultural assets for future generations.

Waisali Forest Reserve: Eco-Tourism that Creates Jobs and Protects Nature

Design work to revitalise the Waisali Rainforest Reserve and strengthen its role as one of Vanua Levu's most important environmental assets will begin in 2026. The project will deliver upgraded walking trails and a modern Visitor Centre offering rich guided nature and cultural interpretation, helping visitors better understand the unique biodiversity that Waisali protects. The Project will work with the National Trust of Fiji and the Fiji Roads Authority to improve access and parking, ensuring a seamless arrival experience.

Tourism Emergency Preparedness: Keeping Communities and Businesses Safe

Work to strengthen tourism emergency preparedness will get underway in the first quarter of 2026, through a National Tourism Emergency Management Preparedness and Response Plan, which will outline clear policies, roles, communication protocols, and preparedness measures to support the tourism sector before, during, and after disaster events. Alongside this, a Northern Division Sub-Plan will tailor these national approaches to the specific needs of Vanua Levu and Taveuni, where tourism, particularly diving and other nature-based experiences, is highly exposed to coastal hazards and dispersed infrastructure. It will include a localized risk and vulnerability assessment, targeted consultation with operators and communities, and practical response and recovery protocols. It will also identify priority investments that can be supported by the Project, such as improved early warning systems, upgraded medical and emergency equipment, training, and strengthened coordination capacity.



Airports and Aviation: Safer Travel and Stronger Connectivity

Labasa Airport will close from 16 February 27 March 2026 to allow critical runway strengthening works. The upgrade will improve safety, reliability, and the runway's load-bearing capacity, allowing it to safely accommodate ATR 72 aircraft operations once completed. Fiji Airports is working with airline partners and transport providers to ensure alternative travel options remain available during the temporary closure. Design work for other improvements at both Labasa and Savusavu airports is well underway, including a new terminal building for Savusavu Airport. Work on installing a Remote Tower Aerodrome Flight Information System (AFIS) for Labasa Airport will begin in early 2026. This technology will significantly enhance aviation safety by enabling air traffic to be monitored and managed using modern, remote-operations capability. In parallel, work on assessing a potential new domestic airport for Vanua Levu is expected to commence soon. Together, these coordinated investments are setting the foundation for safer operations, stronger regional connectivity, and the long-term tourism growth of the Northern Division.

Labasa-Savusavu Cross-Island Road and Scenic Lookouts: Safer Journeys, New Visitor Stops

Travel between Labasa and Savusavu will become safer and more attractive, creating new opportunities for villages along the road to benefit more from visitors. New lookout points and safety improvements will encourage travelers to stop, explore, and spend more in local communities. The engineering team is now in the field undertaking the detailed design work for the road upgrades, rest stops, and the strengthening of a 600-metre coastal section to protect against ongoing erosion. This will help ensure the route is both safer and more resilient for the future.

Solid Waste Management: Cleaner Towns and Healthier Seas

Improving solid waste management is essential to protecting the natural assets that underpin tourism in Vanua Levu. At present, waste leaching into nearby mangroves and coral reefs poses a threat to both ecosystems and the visitor experiences. Design work will begin early in 2026 to improve solid waste so that towns and coastal areas remain cleaner, healthier, and more attractive for residents and visitors alike. This will include design work for a new Savusavu landfill, along with the rehabilitation of the existing dump site. The assignment will also address waste management needs in Labasa and Taveuni. Once completed, the upgraded system will help safeguard public health, protect reefs and coastal waters, and strengthen Vanua Levu's profile as a high-quality tourism destination.

Sanitation Strategy: Health, Dignity, and Environmental Protection

Work will begin in the first quarter of 2026 on the development of the Savusavu Participatory Sanitation Master Plan, a comprehensive initiative to improve sanitation services across the town and surrounding areas.

The Master Plan will follow a Citywide Inclusive Sanitation approach, considering the full sanitation service chain—from household containment to safe treatment and disposal

The Master Plan will also identify pilot investments to be supported by the Project, including priority infrastructure. By embedding sanitation within good urban governance and planning, this work will help make Savusavu cleaner, healthier, and more attractive as a vibrant tourism destination.