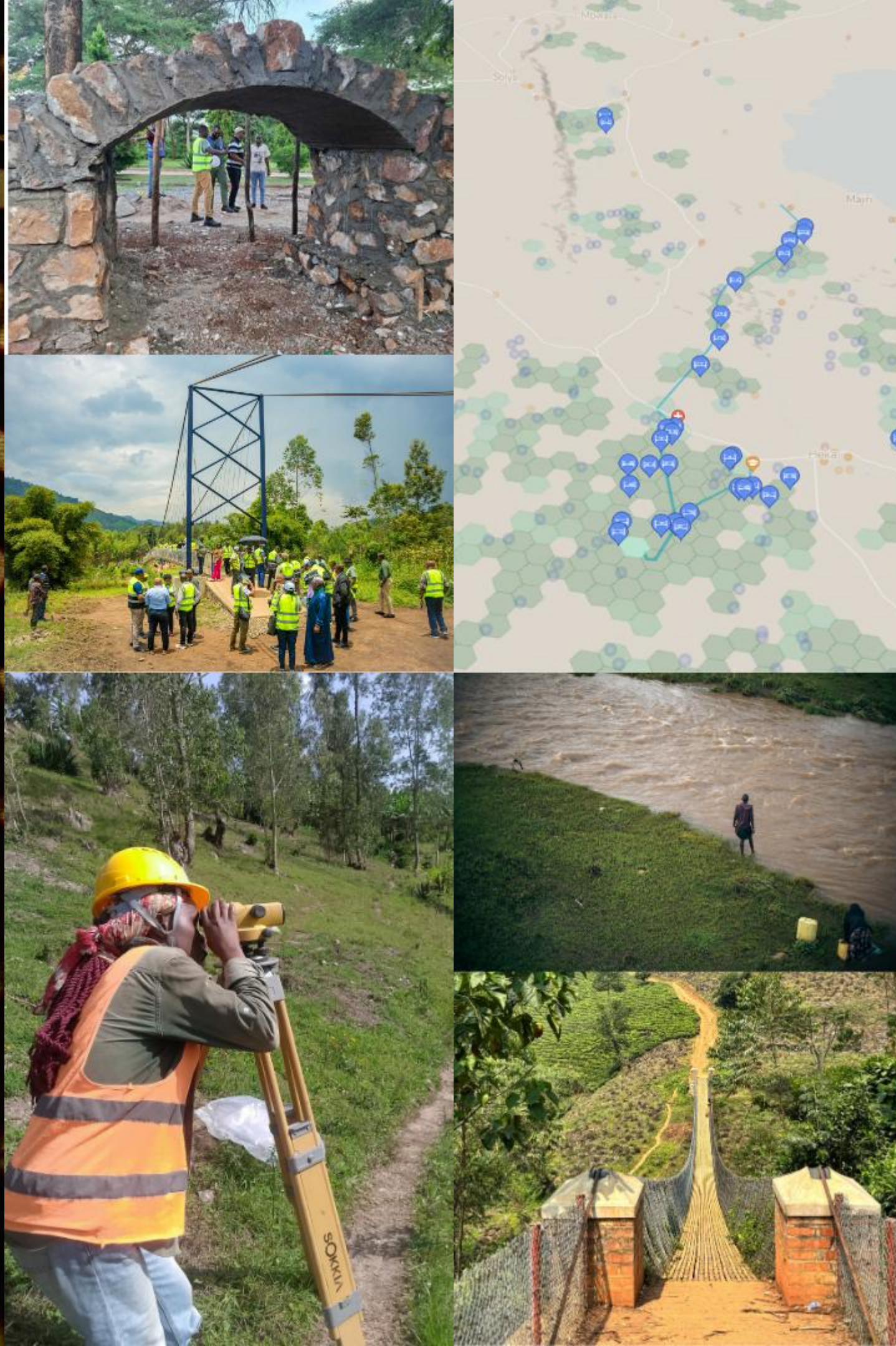




*Rural Networked Transport Infrastructure for the Most Vulnerable
Devin Connell, Chief Programs Officer | Fika*

*June 3, 2026 | SSATP / AARSLA Webinar
Safe Infrastructure for Active Mobility in Africa*



OUR MISSION

We enable safe, reliable
rural transport access.

OUR VISION

Safe arrivals for everyone,
everywhere.

...For rural communities, safe arrival depends
on the whole journey, not only the road.



A photograph of a man wearing a hat and a striped shirt, standing on a narrow, muddy path next to a river. He is holding a bicycle. The path is flanked by tall grass and reeds. The river is calm, reflecting the surrounding vegetation. The overall scene suggests a rural, possibly underdeveloped area.

THE SAFETY GAP

At least a billion people lack basic transportation access to critical destinations.

- **NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF RURAL PEOPLE LIVE MORE THAN 2 KM FROM AN ALL-SEASON ROAD**
- **OVER 80% OF RURAL TRIPS ARE UNDER 5 KM AND NON-MOTORIZED**

Yet most infrastructure investments stop at the main transport network. First-mile links paths, crossings, footbridges, hillside links, and informal routes, are left out of scope and budgets.

That is both an access gap and a safety gap.



RNTI MAKES THE MISSING NETWORK VISIBLE

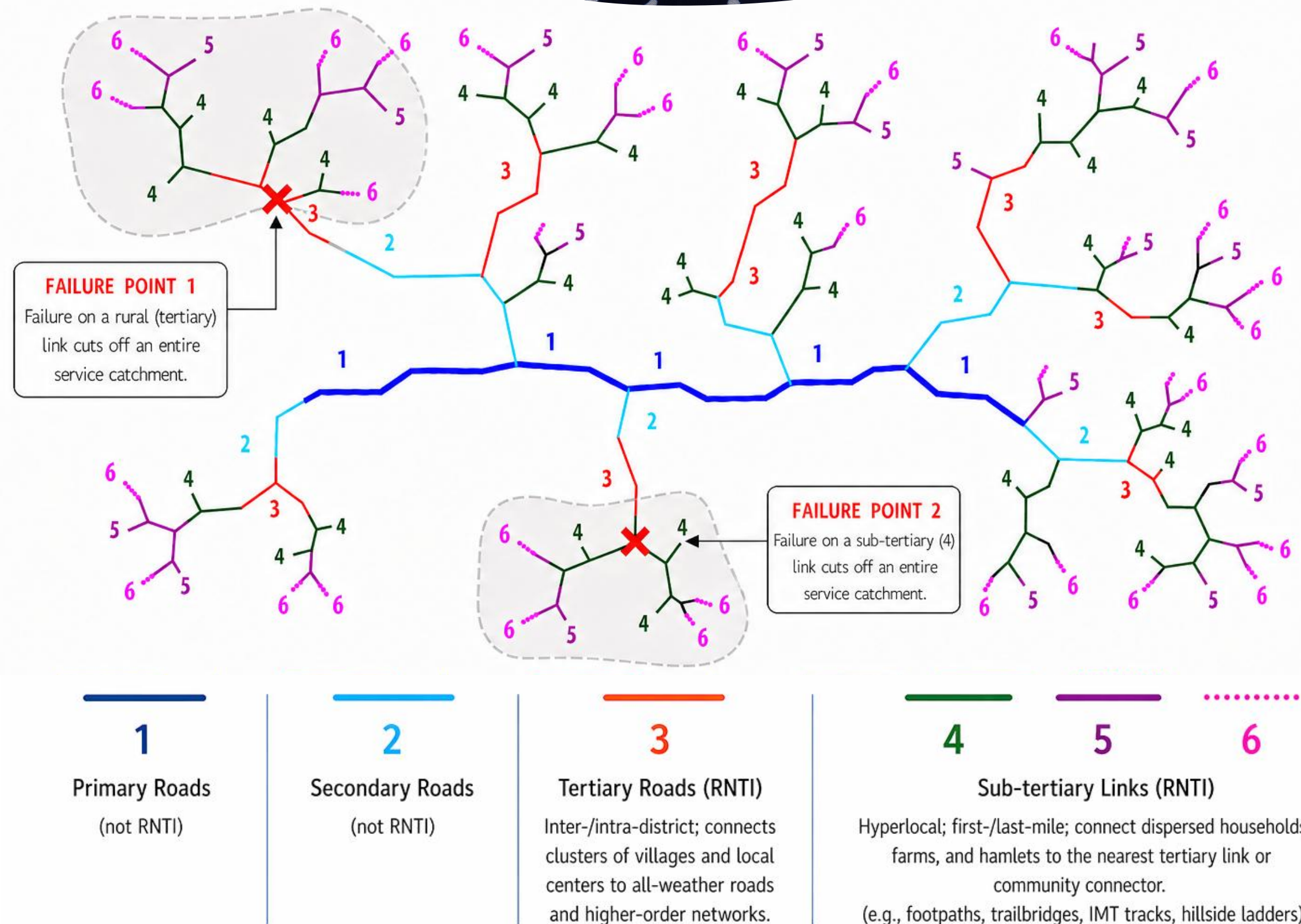
Fika facilitates Rural Networked Transport Infrastructure (RNTI) construction, design, and deployment at scale.

Rural journeys depend on a hierarchy of links primary, secondary, tertiary, and sub-tertiary.

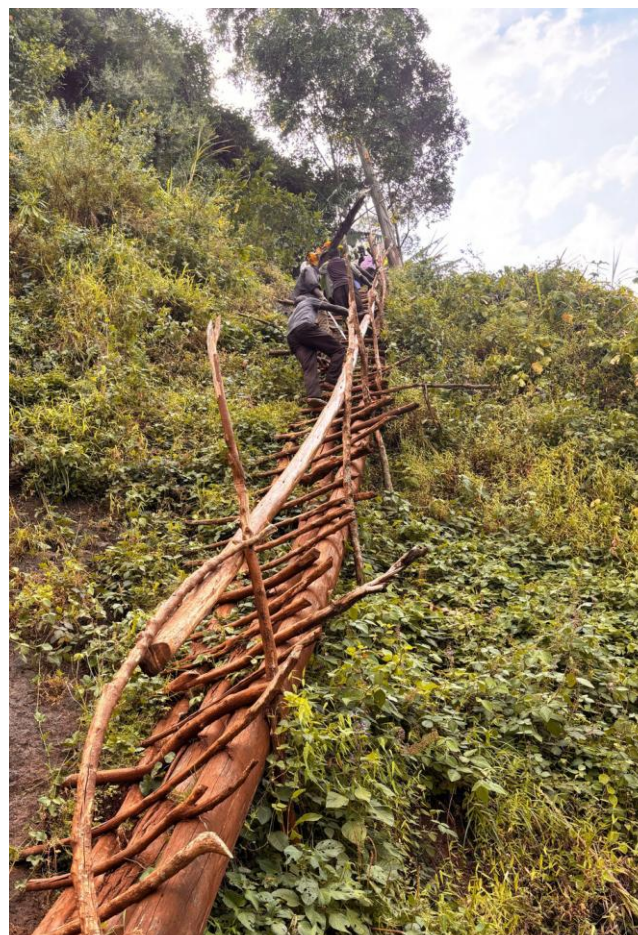
Sub-tertiary links include:

- footpaths and tracks
- hillside links
- crossings and footbridges
- informal connectors into higher-order roads and services

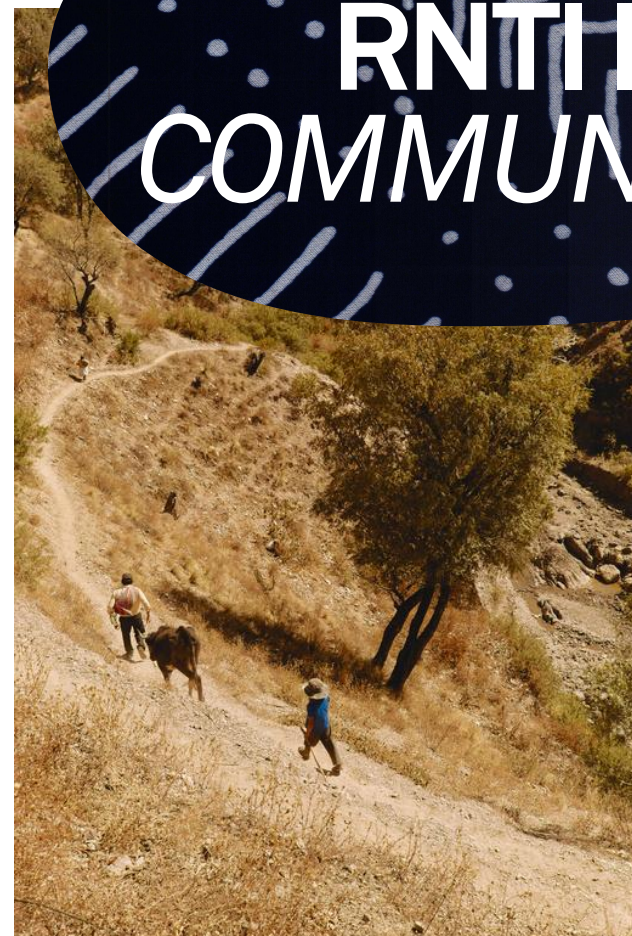
When these links fail, communities can lose safe access to roads, schools, clinics, markets, and transport nodes.



RNTI IN COMMUNITIES



Vertical link - hillside ladder



Low-capacity hillside footpath



Low-capacity flat valley IMT tracks & footpaths



Engineered trail bridge for pedestrian and IMT use



Engineered trail bridge with organic footpaths – Multi-link types



Improvised crossing – community-built log bridge



Non-fixed water crossing – motorized canoe





THE SAFETY GAP BEGINS BEFORE THE ROAD

Road safety planning often starts at the formal road.
But rural users face risk earlier:

- unsafe crossings
- washed-out paths
- informal ferries
- steep terrain
- missing first-mile links
- routes that force pedestrians and cyclists into higher-risk traffic environments

If these incidents are not tracked, they are not planned for, funded, or maintained.

RNTI helps road agencies see and address these safety-critical links.





THE SAFETY GAP BEGINS BEFORE THE ROAD

Our advisory, planning, and evidence generation services can be seamlessly embedded in the pre-investment and project design phase:

- Community-based, participatory rural access **needs assessment & site prioritization** with Fika Collect
- **Geospatial mapping & transport barrier modeling** with [Fika Impact Map / WaterNet](#)
- **ESG screening** for corridor, energy, and concession projects
- **Feasibility and technical studies** for RNTI solutions
- Community **consultation** design and **social baseline**
- **Infrastructure data integration** into MIS and asset management systems
- **Resource mobilization** strategies and blended finance structuring



WHERE WE PARTNER



Fika is the leading rural transport technical assistance provider in sub-Saharan Africa with active government MoUs in four countries and pipeline programs in five other geographies:



Rwanda



Uganda



Ethiopia



Zambia

Fika's portfolio spans Latin America and the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia, with our global impact to date reaching: Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Eswatini, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Philippines, and Timor-Leste



A woman in a purple dress with a gold pattern and two young girls in school uniforms are crossing a narrow suspension bridge. The bridge has a metal grate floor and chain-link railings. The background is a dense green forest. On the far left, there is a vertical strip showing a close-up of a dark fabric with gold-colored circular and geometric patterns.

WHAT ROAD AGENCIES CAN DO NOW

To protect vulnerable rural users, road agencies can:

- Build a thorough understanding of rural transportation gaps in your region
- Incorporate rural transport tools into the transport solutions library
- Include rural transport planning in broader infrastructure planning and funding cycles
- Invest in rural infrastructure to improve safety for the last mile



Learn more:

- Visit Fika.org
- [Email: devinconnell@fika.org](mailto:devinconnell@fika.org)

