



## Wholistic Rural Transport in Rwanda

**6.4M rural Rwandans lack access to all season roads, according to the Rural Access Index**

This results in a massive number of communities coping with rural isolation. Connectivity plays a vital role in the social and economic prosperity of rural communities, by providing access to essential services, goods, and employment. This is recognized by the Government of Rwanda (GoR), who has worked in partnership with Bridges to Prosperity (B2P) to address rural access through the provision of durable, cost-effective, and highly impactful trail bridges since 2012.



**208 bridges**  
completed  
to date



**802,000 people**  
connected to  
essential services



**49% annual**  
return on  
investment<sup>1</sup>

### Phase I MOU and groundbreaking research

In 2019, the GoR and B2P signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together to build more than 300 trail bridges. This was a strategic investment, as previous research<sup>2</sup> indicated that trail bridges alone can stimulate a 36% increase in labor market income and 75% increase in farm profits for rural residents. This partnership also made it possible to launch a large-scale, first-of-its-kind research study examining the broad effects of trail bridges on critical outcomes related to livelihoods, health, education, and resilience. That research is currently in its final round of surveying, and is being led by The Mortenson Center in Global Engineering at The University of Colorado, in close partnership with Yale University, Arizona State University, and Amazi Yego.





## Phase II: A More Sustainable and Connected Future

An MoU extension signed in 2023 includes a three-year phase for preparing for the integration of trail bridges into Feeder Roads Development Project (FRDP) and a two-year implementation phase which will kick off the FRDP. The five-year Phase II period will include:

- Expansion of cost-effective and durable design offerings, including steel truss and stone-arch bridges to accommodate motorized transport
- Integration of rural bridges into the FRDP for private sector design and construction
- Establishment of locally-led training and procurement programs, with a focus on materials and infrastructure Made in Rwanda
- Construction of approximately 30 B2P bridges per year during the preparatory phase
- Construction of rural bridges by private-sector entities within catchment areas of selected feeder roads



### Safe and reliable connection for all of Rwanda

After the five-year MOU extension period is complete, the FRDP will continue, with the private sector able to design and build rural bridges to extend the impact of rural feeder roads to communities with the greatest need. All projects will be maintained by the districts in their standard framework contracts. Through this partnership, we can create a more sustainable and connected future, where rural communities have access to safe and reliable transportation. The integration of trail bridges into the FRDP will help ensure that these communities have the infrastructure they need to thrive and grow, the focus on local training and procurement channels will help to create economic opportunities and support local businesses, and the foundation of rigorous evidence through research will ensure that transport dollars are invested in high-impact projects.

1. Based on preliminary results from a large-scale randomized controlled trial currently underway on trail bridges in rural Rwanda. Whitepaper available on request or at [bridgestoprosperty.org](http://bridgestoprosperty.org).

2. Brooks and Donovan, Eliminating Uncertainty in Market Access: The Impact of New Bridges in Rural Nicaragua, *Econometrica*, 2020



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