



# *Adaptation and stagnation in the Fijian periphery: The case study of Kadavu Island*

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# The aim

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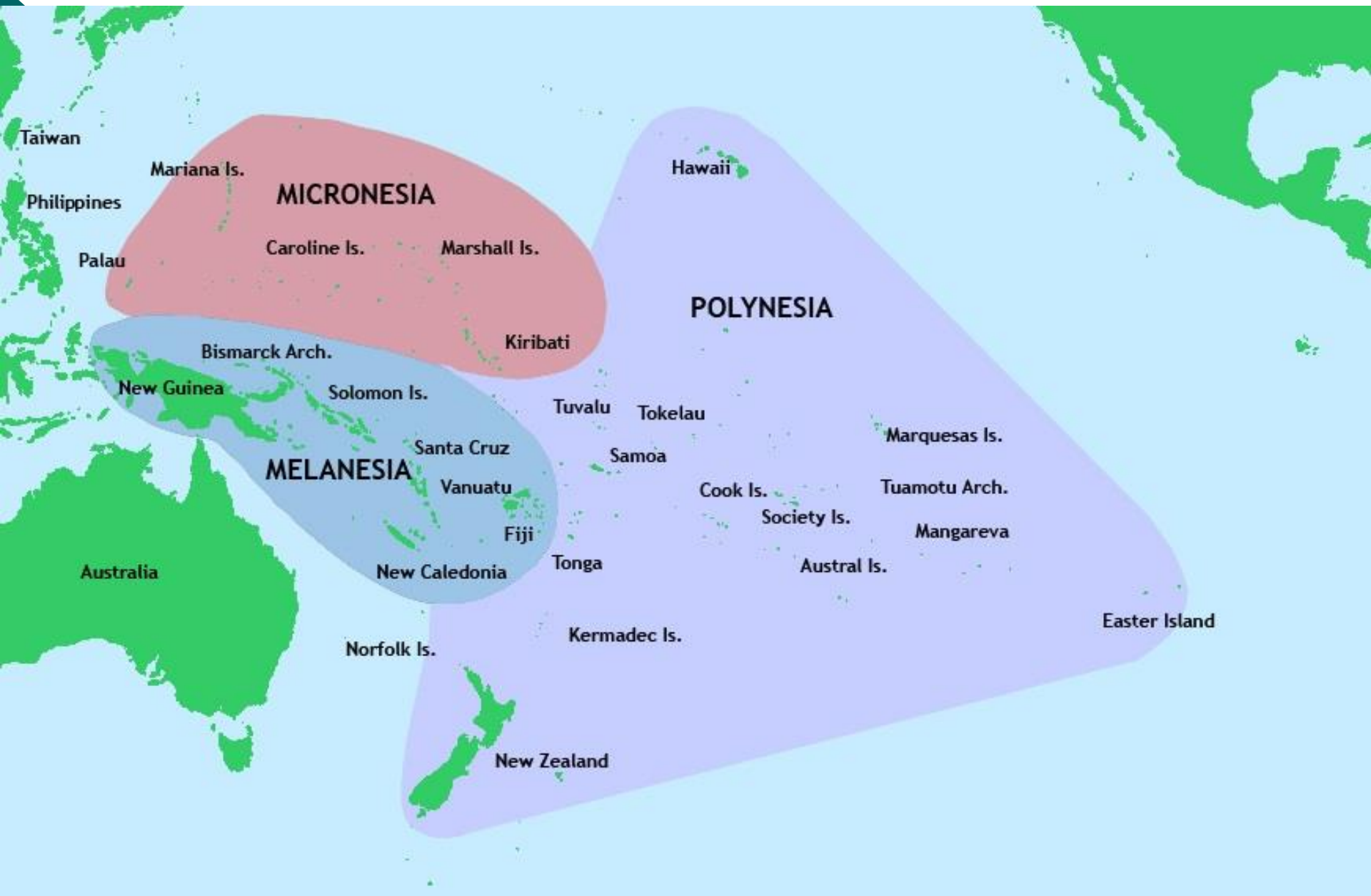
I am practicing a revisiting process.

The aim of this presentation is to discuss a number of development issues concerning Kadavu Island, Fiji, and the resulting changes in its peripheral status during the last 30 odd years.

# Content of presentation

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1. Kadavu Island – general characteristics
2. Demographic characteristics
3. The local production pattern
4. Infrastructure and trade pattern
5. Adaptation and stagnation?



### MICRONESIA

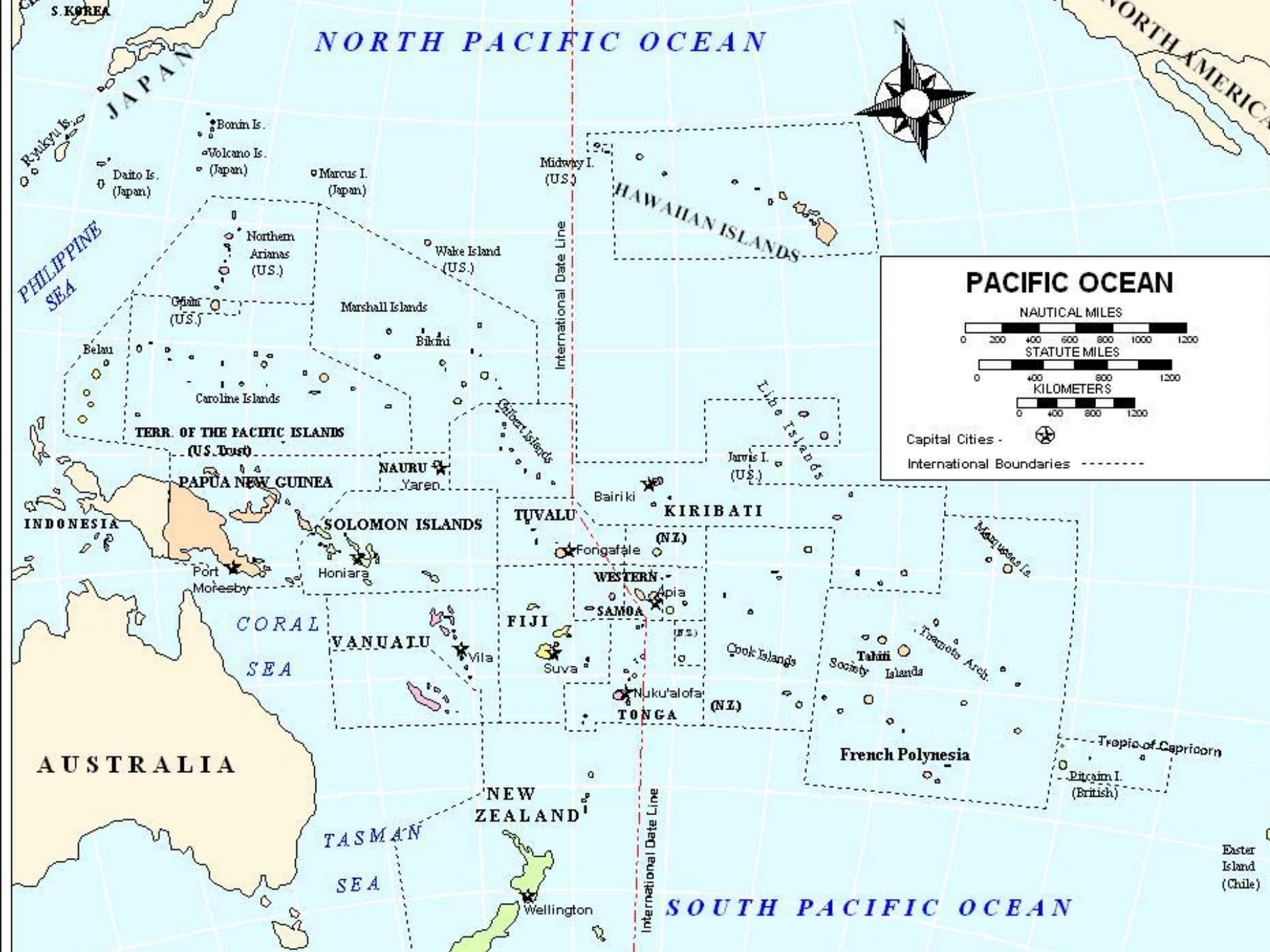
- Mariana Is.
- Caroline Is.
- Marshall Is.
- Kiribati

### POLYNESIA

- Hawaii
- Tuvalu
- Tokelau
- Samoa
- Cook Is.
- Society Is.
- Austral Is.
- Marquesas Is.
- Tuamotu Arch.
- Mangareva
- Kermadec Is.
- Easter Island
- New Zealand

### MELANESIA

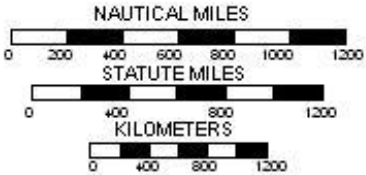
- Bismarck Arch.
- New Guinea
- Solomon Is.
- Santa Cruz
- Vanuatu
- Fiji
- New Caledonia
- Norfolk Is.




# NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN



## PACIFIC OCEAN



Capital Cities -   
International Boundaries - - - - -

S. KOREA  
Ryukyu Is.  
JAPAN  
Bonin Is.  
Volcano Is. (Japan)  
Daito Is. (Japan)  
Marcus I. (Japan)

Midway I. (U.S.)  
HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

PHILIPPINE SEA

Northern Marianas (U.S.)  
Wake Island (U.S.)  
Marshall Islands  
Bikini  
Caroline Islands

International Date Line

TERR. OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (U.S. Trust)

INDONESIA  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
Port Moresby  
NAURU  
Yaren  
SOLOMON ISLANDS  
Honiara

Gilbert Islands  
Jarvis I. (U.S.)  
Line Islands

AUSTRALIA  
CORAL SEA  
VANUATU  
Vila

TUVALU  
Bairiki  
KIRIBATI (NZ)  
Fongafale  
WESTERN SAMOA (U.S.)  
Apia  
FIJI  
Suva  
Cook Islands  
TONGA (NZ)  
Nukualofa

French Polynesia  
Tahiti  
Society Islands  
Tokelau Arch.  
Tropic of Capricorn  
Pitcairn I. (British)

TASMAN SEA  
NEW ZEALAND  
Wellington

# SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

Easter Island (Chile)

# Island states in Melnesia



# The meaning of the name

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Melanesia [from Greek: Melas (μέλας) meaning black, (and nesos (νῆσος) meaning island], a literally translation is "islands of the black-skinned people".

The term was first used by Jules Dumont d'Urville (French explorer – explored the Aegean Sea and Melanesia) in 1832 to denote an ethnic and geographical grouping of islands distinct from Polynesia and Micronesia.





# Fiji – basic information

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- Land area - 18,274 km<sup>2</sup>
- Population - 926,276 (2018)
- GDP per capita (nominal) - \$5,341
- GDP per capita (PPP) - \$13,944
- Ethnic groups:
  - 56.8% Indigenous Fijians
  - 37.5% Indo-Fijians
  - 1.2% Rotumans
  - 4.5% Others

# 1. Kadavu Province

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- Administratively the Kadavu group makes up one province. Part of the Eastern Division.
- Land area:  $478\text{km}^2 = 2.6\%$  of total area of Fiji.
- Geologically it is a string of ancient volcanic cones and craters. The landscape is largely mountainous and only about 10% of the total area is relatively flat.
- The population is confined to the coastal area.
- The main form of settlement is the Fijian communal village: 75 villages lie all along the coast.

# Kadavu







Dravuwalu village



Nalotu village



# Labour force characteristics (2017)

	Fiji	Kadavu
<b><u>Indicator of economic activity</u></b>		
% of 15+ years in labour force	55.0	69.1
% of labour force employed for money work	77.2	28.7
% of labour force practicing subsistence agriculture	28.1	94.2
% of labour force practicing subsistence agriculture with no money work	14.2	70.1



### 3. The local production pattern

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Kadavu was incorporated into the cash economy through selling cash crops.

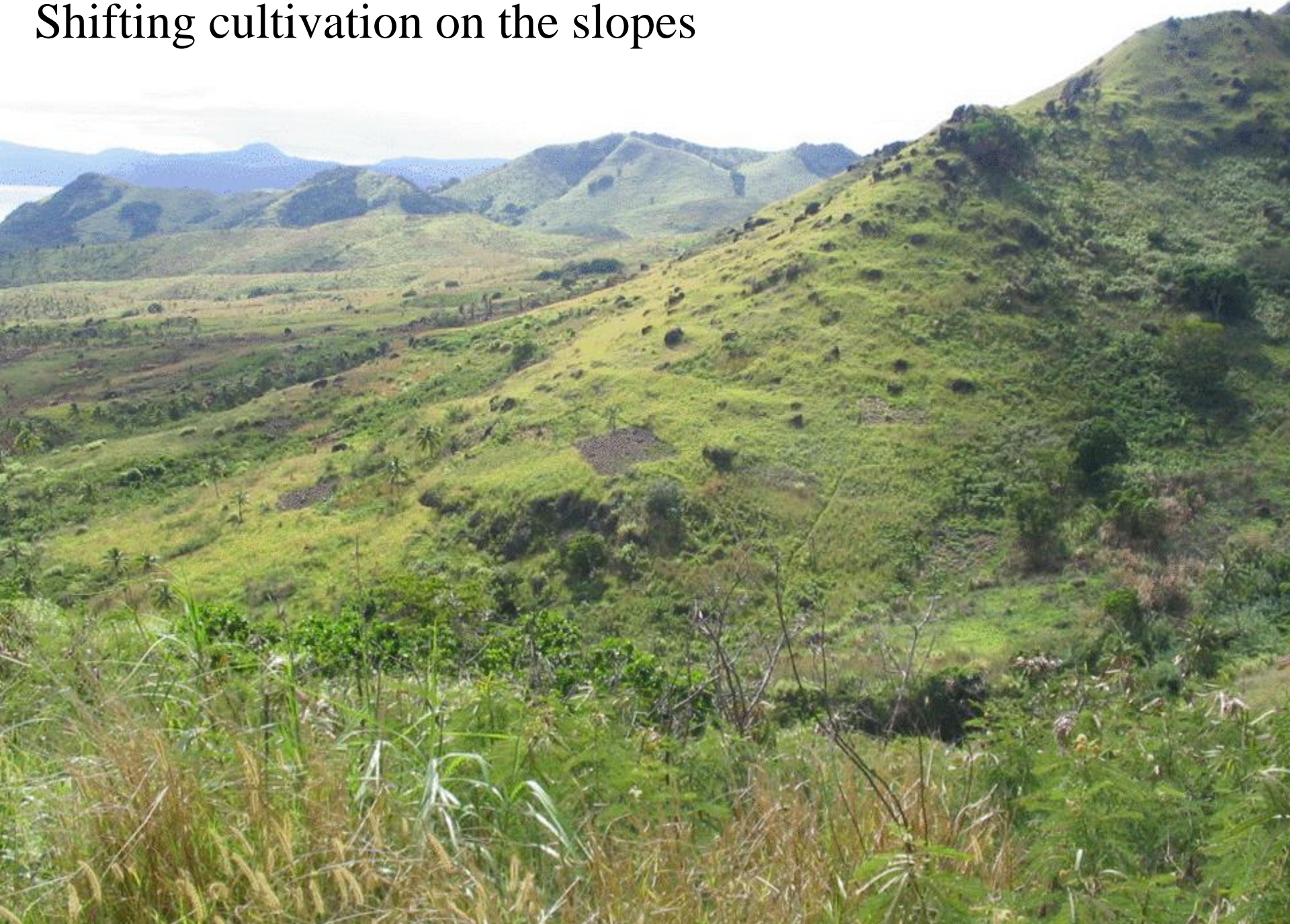
**In the past:**

- Coconut – for the production of copra
- Banana

**Today:**

- Yaqona – the source of the South Pacific Kava which is a traditional Fijian beverage (the Pacific elixir).  
(Piper Methysticum: Latin 'pepper' and Latinized Greek 'intoxicating')

# Shifting cultivation on the slopes





Taniela in his garden



# Yaqona production, 2014

Districts		Average Yaqona plants per Farmer	Yaqona Plants (qty)	Yaqona Value (\$\$)
Tikina	No. of Villages			
Nabukelevu	11	375	137,250	\$5,505,000.00
Yawe	6	880	125,000	\$ 5,137,500.00
Ravitaki	8	673	165,500	\$ 6,352,500.00
Tavuki	10	1,135	378,000	\$ 12,727,500.00
Sanima	11	215	115,000	\$ 4,837,500.00
Naceva	6	559	61,500	\$ 3,232,500.00
Yale	5	302	27,750	\$ 2,220,000.00
Nakasaleka	12	627	208,750	\$ 7,650,000.00
Ono	6	114	15,000	\$ 1,837,500.00
<b>Total</b>	75	542	1,233,750	\$ 49,500,000.00

# Proportion 2014

**Yaqona  
\$49.5  
million**



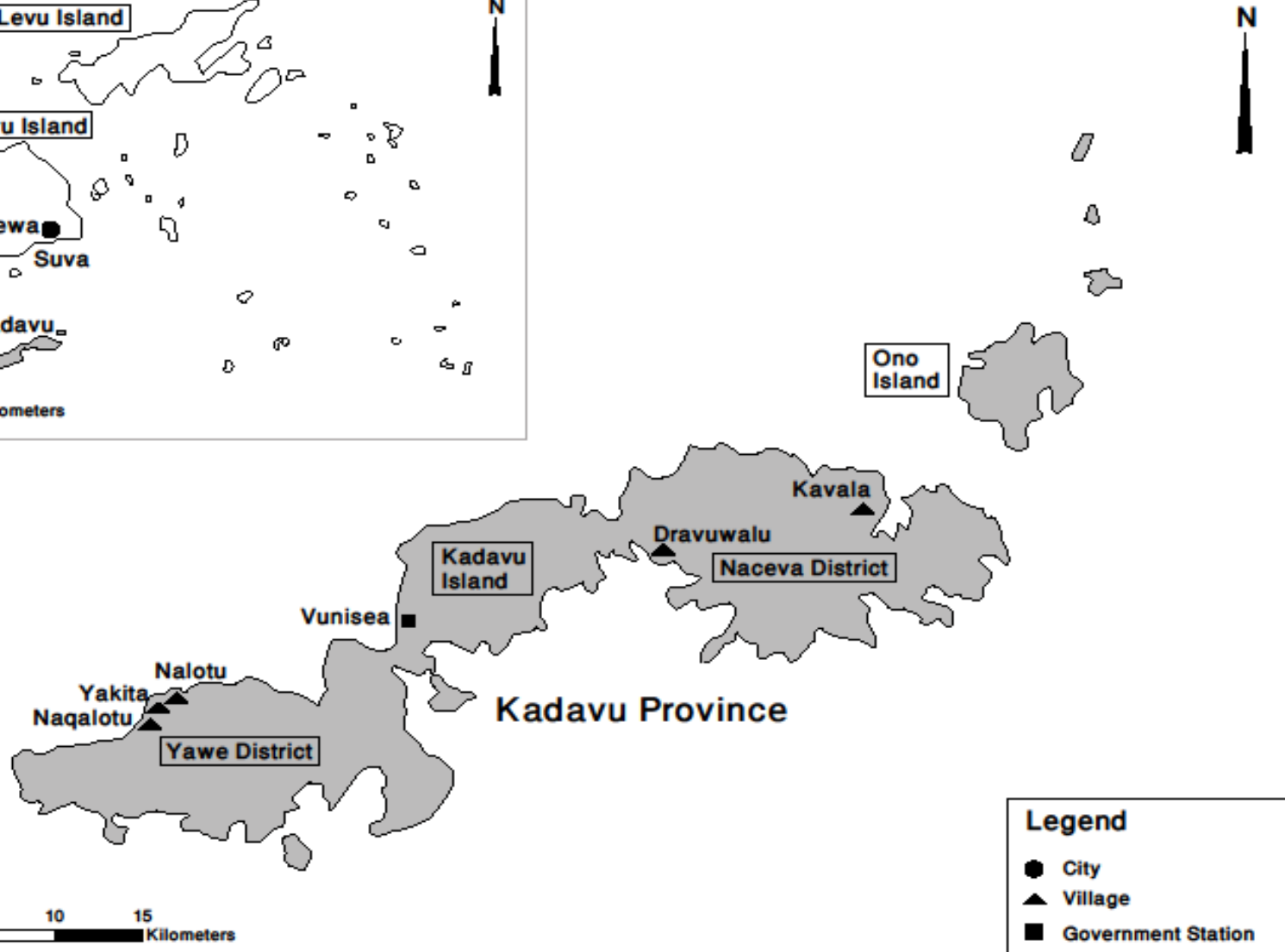
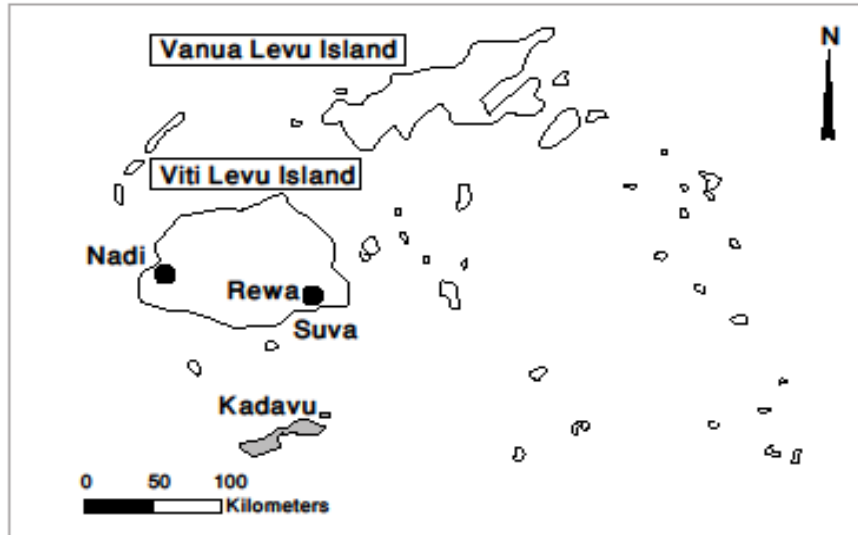
**All other  
crops  
\$13million**



**Source – Ministry of  
Agriculture**



# Location of villages









# End use of production for Nalotu – 2005 and 2013

	<b>Percentage of end use</b>					
	<b>Subsistence</b>		<b>Reciprocal exchange</b>		<b>Cash</b>	
<b>Product</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2013</b>
Yaqona	19.7	9.6	9.6	9.2	70.7	81.2
Dalo	81.2	76.9	14.5	21	4.3	2.1
Yams	85.0	89.0	12.0	11.0	3.0	0
Cassava	86.8	80.8	11.4	19.2	2.0	0
Sweet potato	92.8	94.3	7.2	5.7	0	0
Vudi (Plantain)	93.3	97.7	6.7	2.3	0	0
Vegetables	93.2	83.3	3.4	1.7	3.4	15.0
Fish	90.0	92.1	7.0	5.0	3.0	2.9
Handicrafts	43.8	57.1	11.7	12.9	44.5	30.0

## Percentage distribution of sources of village households cash income - 1982, 2005-6 and 2013 (%)

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Source of income	Nalotu			Dravuwalu		
	1982	2005	2013	1982	2006	2013
Agriculture and fishing	21.8	63.5	73.7	44.1	66.2	74.8
Handicrafts	5.1	2.6	8.3			1.4
Remittances	47.5	28.5	11.3	7.5	14.5	12.4
Wages	21.9	5.4	2.5	42.0	11.8	1.4
Business			2.3			2.7
Other	3.7		1.9	6.4	7.5	7.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

1. Remittances have been under-reported.

Sources: Sofer, 1985b; Fieldwork, 2005, 2006, 2013



Yaqona - a two years old plant



Yaqona - a four years old plant





Drying yaqona







## Income dependency

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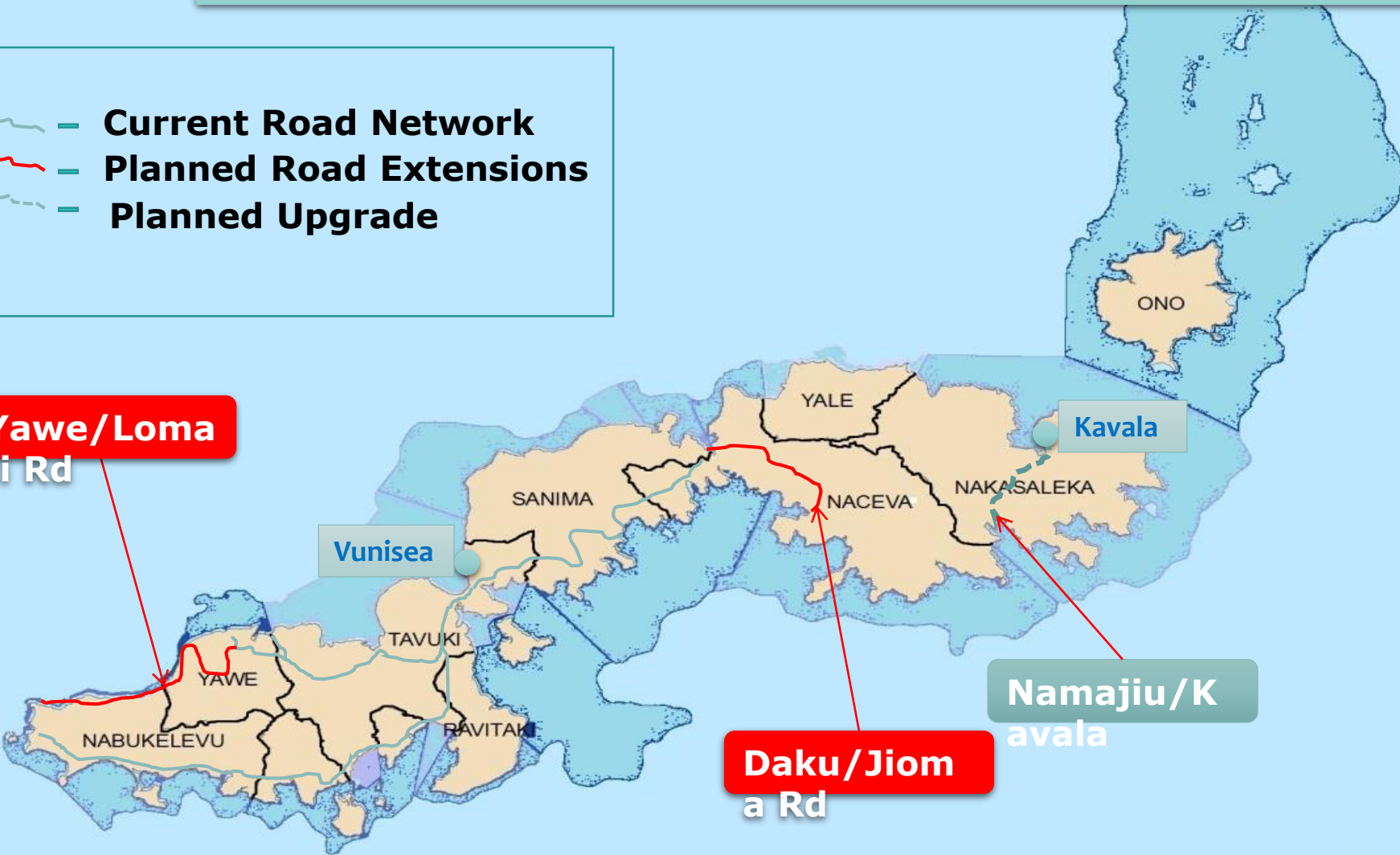
The percentage distribution of the various sources of cash income highlights the changing role of agriculture and the declining role of non-agricultural activities, particularly remittances. The inflow of money contributes to the level of welfare. It allows to retain a higher consumption pattern than what is permitted by local production.

# 4. Infrastructure

## Road Network

- Current Road Network
- Planned Road Extensions
- Planned Upgrade

**Yawe/Loma  
ti Rd**



Yunisea

Kavala

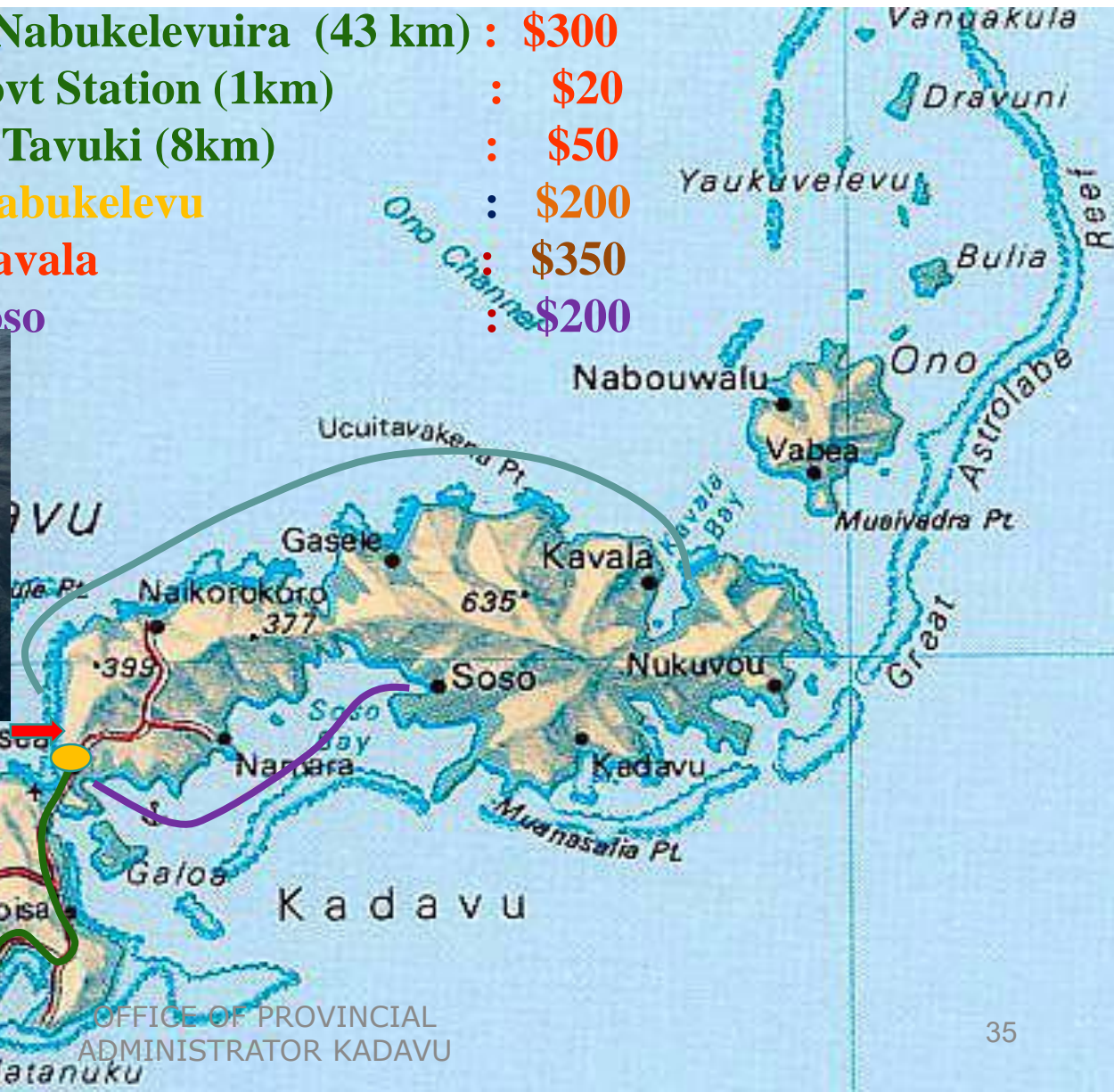
Namajiu/  
Kavala

**Daku/Jiom  
a Rd**



# Transportation costs 2013

- Land Transport:** Vunisea to Nabukelevuira (43 km) : \$300  
 Jetty to Govt Station (1km) : \$20  
 Vunisea to Tavuki (8km) : \$50
- Sea Transport:** Vunisea / Nabukelevu : \$200  
 Vunisea/ Kavala : \$350  
 Vunisea/ Soso : \$200



# Jetties and shipping routes

- - Current Jetties
- - Proposed Jetty sites



0 4,350 8,700 17,400 26,100 32,700  
Meters

# Trade characteristics

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## **The cargo carried in is made up largely of:**

- Consumption commodities including food (store supplies)
- Building materials
- Fuel (for village boats)

## **The cargo carried out is made up largely of:**

- Yaqona (more than 90% of the cargo)
- Fish, shells and handicrafts

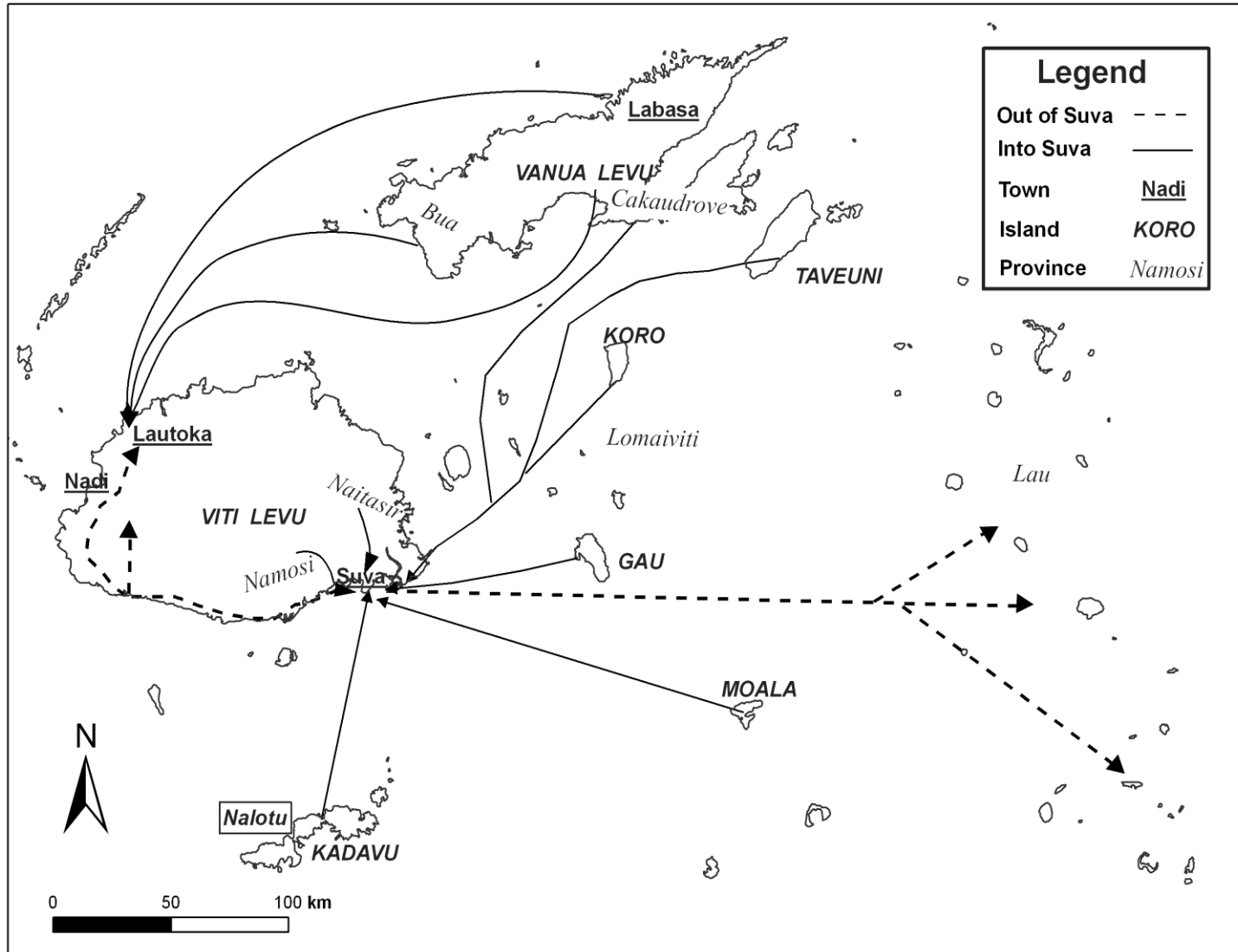
## 5. A specialised exchange economy

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- Export dependency on yaqona
- Increasing demand for introduced goods

The consumption pattern is closely connected to the increasing commercialisation of yaqona compared with 1982.

# The yaqona trade





What is in the box?



## 6. Challenges 2016

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### **I TRANSPORT**

1. Weak & unreliable road condition (although slowly expanding)
2. High cost of transportation within Kadavu
3. Unavailability of public transport

### **II POWER & WATER – improved by 2019**

1. Limited power & water supply
2. Unreliable power supply & No sewerage system

### **III COMMUNICATION NETWORK – improved by 2019**

1. Limited mobile network coverage

# 7. Stagnation and adaptation

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What can we learn from such patterns about Kadavu?

The case of Kadavu highlights the core-periphery relationships and its persistence over time.

Yet there are some changes which may signify a certain degree of change.

# Characteristics of Core-Periphery structure


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- **Administratively** – decisions are made in Suva with marginal local input.
- **Cash production pattern** is determined by external demand based on a major crop (yaqona).
- **The crop is traded** with the core – the sole trade partner.
- **The population consumption pattern** has been modified to accommodate external influences (all modern goods are imported).
- **There are no links** with other peripheral parts of the country and communication is maintained through Suva.
- **Local entrepreneurship** (concerning capitalist production?) is limited. Yet, initial change?

## The structures and linkages displayed:

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1. Loss of “working age” population – shift of able labour force towards other areas in Fiji, particularly the core (empty houses in the village).
2. Persistence of the pattern of crop production (yaqona).
3. Specialisation in a primary product in the form of a sole cash crop - an increased dependency on a sole export commodity.
4. Income dependency: yaqona and inflows of money.

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5. **A pattern of trade** dominated by core demand and core imposed peripheral demand.
  6. **Lack of links** between various peripheral areas (disharmony of interests between peripheral areas) - emphasizes the monopolization of inter-regional contacts exercised by the core area.
  7. **Shipping services** provided by core agents according to external standards of economic viability.

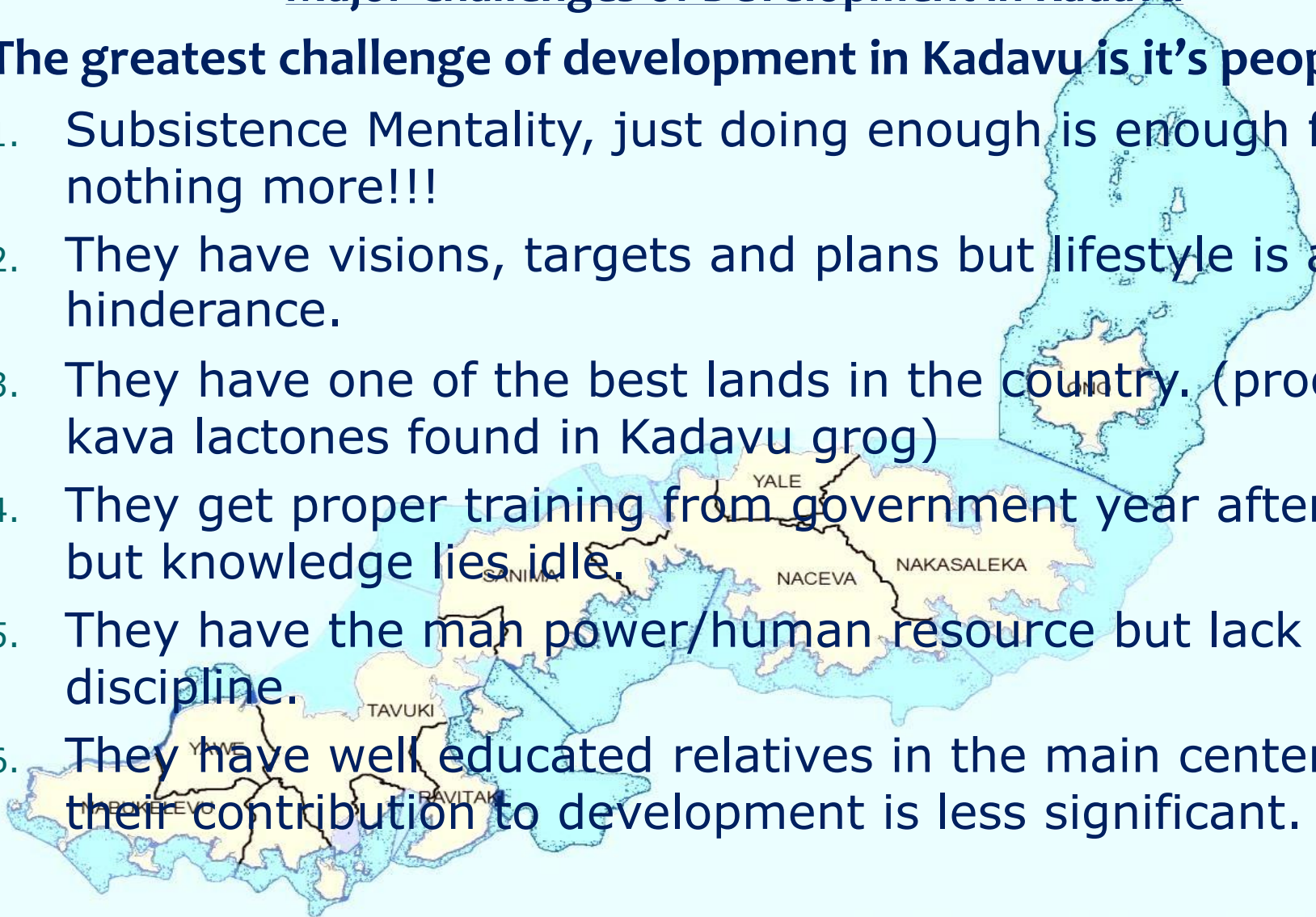
# PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR KADAVU - 2016



## Major Challenges of Development in Kadavu

**The greatest challenge of development in Kadavu is it's people.**

1. Subsistence Mentality, just doing enough is enough for me, nothing more!!!
2. They have visions, targets and plans but lifestyle is a hinderance.
3. They have one of the best lands in the country. (proof: kava lactones found in Kadavu grog)
4. They get proper training from government year after year but knowledge lies idle.
5. They have the man power/human resource but lack the discipline.
6. They have well educated relatives in the main centers but their contribution to development is less significant.



# Mechanisms of preservation

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Four different inter-related mechanisms operate:

1. Internal migration – permanent or circular – contributes to the village household income.
2. Communal production.
3. Cash inflows associated with non-productive activities. Part of them are shared through redistributive mechanism embedded in the village social structure.
4. State intervention based on ideology and political action – subsidising life in the periphery.

# Signals of change

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1. Increased individualisation
2. New boats in the village
3. New sources of energy
4. Middlemen in the village
5. Changing consumption pattern

## Yet

1. More empty houses
2. Remittances still exist
3. Absence of new crops



## 8. To conclude

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All these factors, production pattern, trade pattern and the essence of such trade combined with an integration through relatively deficient infrastructural services and the preservation mechanisms, make the peripheral region still dependent on the country's core.

The changes might serve as early signals of local development but more significant changes should be recorded before concluding that a real restructuring process is operating and the persistence of a polarization process is diminishing.

## A number of publications

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- Sofer, M. (1985) Yaqona and the Peripheral Economy, *Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 26(2), pp.415-436.
- Sofer, M. (2007) Yaqona and the Peripheral Economy Revisited, *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 48(2), pp. 234-249.
- Sofer, M. (2009) Twenty Years of Change in the Fijian Periphery: The Case of the Kadavu Island, Fiji, *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, Vol. 30, pp. 343-357.
- Sofer, M. (2015) Kadavu Island: Adaptation and stagnation in the Fijian periphery, *Miscellanea Geographica: Regional Studies on Development*, Vol. 19(2), pp. 14-20.
- Sofer, M. (2018) Revisiting the Fijian Periphery: A Thirty Year Perspective on Kadavu Island, in: J. Connell and H. Lee (eds.) *Change and Continuity in the Pacific: Revisiting the Region*, Taylor and Francis Books, pp. 166-186.



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Thanks for listening