

## **Call for Papers – 2025 AFERA Annual General Assembly**

The African Road Maintenance Funds Association (AFERA) will hold its next Annual General Assembly (AGA) around the following general theme: “Innovative Financing and Sustainability of Road Infrastructure in the Face of Climate and Mobility Challenges in Africa.”

### **Context and Rationale**

This main theme is driven by the central role of roads in the continent’s development: a reliable road network enhances access to markets, services, and employment, and fosters economic growth.

It is evident that road infrastructure plays a vital role in regional integration, economic growth, and poverty reduction across the African continent. However, the World Bank highlights that poor infrastructure conditions hinder African growth by approximately 2% annually and reduce productivity by up to 40%.

Furthermore, climate change is expected to place an increased burden on roads, with extreme rainfall and drought episodes severely affecting their longevity.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest rural road accessibility rate globally, with only 34% of the population having access to an all-season road. The ECA notes that this deficit hampers economic integration, exacerbates inequalities, and limits productivity gains in key sectors such as agriculture, industry, and services.

The African Development Bank (AfDB), for its part, estimates that economic losses due to inadequate infrastructure account for 2 to 4% of annual GDP in many African countries. It assesses transport infrastructure financing needs at over \$60 billion annually, with a particular emphasis on the necessity to ensure the maintenance of existing assets, which is too often neglected.

Moreover, urban and rural mobility issues have become priorities in the context of rapid urbanization, the demand for inclusive connectivity, and environmental imperatives.

The development of sustainable and resilient road infrastructure must align with a broader vision of mobility, incorporating territorial planning, population needs, and intermodality.

In this context, the 2025 Assembly will focus on exploring resilient solutions combining technological innovation and new sustainable financial mechanisms. In particular, the discussions will aim to explore innovative road financing models (including PPPs, dynamic tolls, green bonds, etc.) while integrating the environmental and social dimensions of roads.

This session will notably examine:

Innovative Financing and Sustainability of Road Infrastructure in the Face of Climate and Mobility Challenges in Africa, with sub-themes.

## **Proposed Sub-Themes**

To delve deeper into the issues outlined above, contributions are expected around the following sub-themes:

- 1. Innovative Financing for Road Infrastructure**
  - Sustainable Road Maintenance Fund Models
  - Mobilization of Domestic and International Financing
  - Green Bonds, PPPs, Climate Funds, and Blended Mechanisms
- 2. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Risk Management**
  - Enabling Regulatory Frameworks
  - Case Studies of Successful Projects
  - Risk Sharing and Attractiveness for the Private Sector
- 3. Sustainability and Governance of Road Maintenance Funds**
  - Results-Based Management
  - Transparency, Accountability, and Process Digitalization
  - Good Governance Practices
- 4. Climate Resilience of Infrastructure**
  - Integration of Climate Risks into Planning and Design
  - Innovative Technologies and Materials for Sustainable Roads
  - National Resilience Plans
- 5. Digitalization and Infratech for Road Maintenance**
  - Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Sensors, Real-Time Monitoring
  - Predictive Maintenance and Open Data
  - Innovation in Performance Monitoring
- 6. Sustainable and Inclusive Mobility**
  - Accessibility in Rural and Marginalized Areas
  - Intermodal Integration (Roads, Public Transport, Freight)
  - Urbanization, Congestion, and Urban Mobility Planning
  - Active Mobility (Pedestrians, Cyclists) and Road Safety
- 7. Capacity Building, Research, and Knowledge Transfer**
  - Sharing Best Practices Among Road Maintenance Funds
  - Continuous Training for Managers and Technicians
  - Role of Universities, Research Centers, and South-South Partnerships

Contributions may focus on:

- Practical case studies
- Sectoral research or analyses
- Institutional and operational experiences
- Proposals for public policies or innovative financing tools

## **Expected Contributions**

Contributions (presentations, case studies, analyses) are expected from all stakeholders in the African road sector.

### **Particularly concerned are :**

- Chairs of AFERA focal groups (e.g., regional or technical thematic groups): share national or regional experiences, activity reports, and strategic recommendations.
- Technical experts and road engineers: present innovative technical solutions (new maintenance methods, resilient structures, construction site digitalization) and case studies of completed projects.
- Policymakers and government agency leaders: outline public policies, regulatory frameworks, and national or regional road plans, as well as ongoing reforms to strengthen road maintenance.
- Financial partners and donors (development banks, multilateral funds, private investors): provide insights into innovative financing models (green bonds, climate insurance, PPPs) and present financial tools supporting the sustainability of road funds.
- Regional organizations, NGOs, and universities: analyze sectoral and cross-cutting issues (social integration, equality, gender, tender procedures, road safety, etc.) and contribute to knowledge sharing.

## **Submission Guidelines**

- Accepted languages: French, English, Portuguese
- Abstract format: 300 to 500 words, specifying the title, authors, institution, theme addressed, objectives, methodology, main results, or recommendations
- Submission deadline: 30 June 2025
- Submission:
  - By email: [alkassoumali@armfa.africa](mailto:alkassoumali@armfa.africa) or [ceo@armafaafrica.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:ceo@armafaafrica.onmicrosoft.com)
- Evaluation criteria:
  - Relevance to the main theme
  - Clarity of objectives and content structure
  - Originality and contribution to collective reflection
  - Applicability and potential for replication

Each proposal will be evaluated by AFERA's scientific committee based on its relevance to the main theme and sub-themes, its methodological quality, and its practical contribution. Authors of selected contributions will be notified in writing (email) a few weeks before the Assembly.

Selected contributions will be presented at the 2025 Annual General Assembly and other AFERA meetings and may be published officially through channels designated by AFERA after evaluation by the scientific committee.

**ESSAIE MOUSSA Aubin**  
**President of AFERA**  
Administrator, Cameroon Road Fund

**Dr ALI ALKASSOUM**  
**Executive Secretary**

