



Call for Papers – ARMFA 2025 Annual General Meeting

The African Road Maintenance Funds Association (ARMFA) will hold its next Annual General Meeting (AGM), around the following general theme: "Innovative financing and sustainability of road infrastructure in the face of climate and mobility challenges in Africa".

Background and rationale

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

Road infrastructure plays a vital role in regional integration, economic growth and poverty reduction on the African continent. However, the World Bank points out that the poor state of infrastructure slows down African growth by about 2% per year and reduces productivity by up to 40%.

In addition, climate change is expected to place an increased burden on roads, with extreme rainfall and drought severely affecting their sustainability.

Also, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest rate of rural road accessibility in the world, with only 34% of the population having access to a year-round road.

ECA points out that this deficit hinders economic integration, aggravates 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 caused by inadequate infrastructure represent between 2 and 4% of annual GDP for many African countries. It estimates that more than \$60 billion per year is needed for transport infrastructure financing, with a particular emphasis on the need to ensure the maintenance of existing assets, which is too often neglected.

In addition, urban and rural mobility issues have become a priority, in a context of rapid urbanization, the need for inclusive connectivity, and environmental imperatives.

The development of sustainable and resilient road infrastructure must imperatively be part of a broader vision of mobility, integrating territorial planning, the needs of populations, and intermodality.

In this context, the 2025 Assembly will focus on finding resilient solutions combining technological innovation and new sustainable financial mechanisms.

In particular, the work will aim to explore innovative road financing models (including PPP, dynamic tolls, green bonds, etc.), while integrating the environmental and social issues of roads.

This session will 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 deepen these issues mentioned above, contributions are expected around the following sub-themes:

- 1. Innovative financing of road infrastructure**
 - Sustainable Road Maintenance Fund Templates
 - Mobilizing domestic and international financing
 - Green bonds, PPPs, climate funds and blended facilities
- 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 the Road Maintenance Funds**
 - Results-based management
 - Transparency, accountability and digitalization of processes
 - 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 technologies for road maintenance**
 - Geographic Information Systems (GIS), sensors, real-time tracking
 - Predictive maintenance and open data
 - Innovation in performance monitoring
- 6. Sustainable and inclusive mobility**
 - Accessibility of 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 skills transfer**
 - Sharing of best practices between maintenance funds
 - Continuing education of managers and technicians
 - Role of universities, research centers and South-South partnerships

Papers may include:

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

Expected contributions

Papers (presentations, case studies, analyses) are expected from all the actors of the African road chain.

The following are concerned:

- Chairs of ARMFA Focal Groups (e.g. regional or technical thematic groups): share national or regional experiences, activity reviews and strategic recommendations.
- Technical experts and road engineers: present innovative technical solutions (new maintenance methods, resilient structures, digitalization of construction sites) and case studies of completed projects.
- Policy makers and government agency officials: outline national or regional public policies, regulatory frameworks and road plans, as well as ongoing reforms to strengthen road maintenance.
- Financial partners and funders (development banks, multilateral funds, private investors): provide feedback on innovative financing models ("green bonds", climate insurance, PPPs) and present financial tools supporting the sustainability of road funds.
- Regional organizations, NGOs and universities: analyse sectoral and cross-cutting issues (social issues, integration, equality, gender, tendering procedures, road safety, etc.) and contribute to knowledge exchange.

Submission procedures

- Accepted languages: French or English or Portuguese
- Abstract format: 300 to 500 words, specifying the title, authors, institution, theme, objectives, methodology, main results or recommendations
- Submission deadline: June 30, 2025
- Submission:
 - Par email : alkassoumali@armfa.africa ou ceo@armafafrica.onmicrosoft.com
- Evaluation criteria:
 - Relevance of the topic to the main theme
 - Clarity of objectives and structuring of content
 - Originality and contribution to collective reflection
 - Applicability and potential for replicability

Each proposal will be evaluated by the ARMFA Scientific Committee according to 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 prior to the meeting.

The selected papers will be presented at the 2025 Annual General Meeting and other ARMFA meetings, they may be the subject of an official publication by the media defined by ARMFA after evaluation by the scientific committee.

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Fund

Dr. ALI ALKASSOUM
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