

AFERA
Association des fonds
d'entretien routier africains

ARMFA
African Road Maintenance
Funds Association

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GENERAL SUMMARY
MEETING OF THE CENTRAL AFRICA
FOCAL GROUP ARMFA
Libreville, 28 to 30 July 2010

The fourth meeting of the “Central Africa” focal group of ARMFA held in Libreville, Gabon on the 28, 29 and 30 July 2010.

The following delegations took part in the deliberations: Cameroon, Congo, Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and Chad. Burundi was absent and asked to be excused.

Equally present was the Minister Delegate in charge of the Economy who enhanced the importance of this opening ceremony.

The agenda of the meeting adopted by members enabled the treatment of the following points:

1. Opening ceremony;
2. Summary presentation of the assessment of 2009 activities;
3. Presentation of the SSATP 2010-2011 programme;
4. Accounting systems of RMF
5. Report of RMF activities;
6. Relations between RMF and their supervisory structures;
7. Update of the performance indicators of RMF.
8. Review of the Statutes and the Rules and Regulations of ARMFA proposals for amendment;
9. Themes retained for the technical workshop of the annual meeting scheduled to take place in Ethiopia in November 2010.
10. Miscellaneous

1- OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony was presided over by **General Raphael MAMIKA**, chairperson of the Board of Gabon RMF.

In his introductory statement, Mr. Landry Patrick OYAYA, Director General of the Gabon RMF, welcomed participants and thanked government authorities and sponsors for the facilities provided for the organization of the Libreville sittings. He equally expressed the wish that the discussions be fruitful and contribute further in the strengthening of friendship and co-operation ties among member States of ARMFA.

Taking the floor, Mr. **Samuel Donatien NENGUE**, President of ARMFA, first of all expressed in the name of all the delegations present, his profound gratitude to the senior authorities of Gabon who facilitated the holding of this meeting.

After a brief reminder of the birth of ARMFA in Libreville in December 2003, and of the themes treated during past meetings of the focal groups in Cameroon and in Congo Brazzaville, he revealed the objectives to be attained at the end of these meeting, with a view

to preparing the General Assembly to be held in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia in November 2010. The objectives are as follows:

- Proposing amendments relevant to the present Statutes and Rules and Regulations of the Association;
- Opening of avenues aimed at transforming the present Permanent Secretariat into an Executive Secretariat;
- Evaluating the evolution of the present RMFs;

In his opening remarks, **General Raphael MAMIKA**, chair of the Gabon RMF, corroborated the ideas of his predecessors, and exhorted all the participants to make fruitful contributions and pertinent recommendations during this meeting.

II. EVALUATION OF 2009 ACTIVITIES

Representatives of member institutions presented their respective balance sheets of activities in the year 2009 (collection of resources, achievements, difficulties encountered).

During the discussions that followed the various presentations, participants stressed mostly on the major difficulties encountered within the context of their respective activities. A summary of the difficulties is found in the table below:

No	country	Difficulties
1	Cameroon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surplus funds due to a low absorption(late start of maintenance programmes)
2	Chad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low rate of realization; ○ Non mastery of resources collection ○ Lack of expertise of SME in the area of public works
3	DRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Difficulties in the collection of resources (mostly in the East of the country) ○ Absence of a competent SME fabric; ○ Drastic drop of 20 % in the level of revenue .
4	Congo Brazzaville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organisational structure remains unadapted to a second generation RMF
5	CAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Insufficient resources in relation to needs ○ Very few competent SME; ○ Guaranteeing of resources outside RUR.
6	Gabon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low capacity of absorption of resources; ○ Lateness in the execution of programmes ; ○ Relations with supervisory structures; ○ Levelling up of resources.

Some of these problems started having solutions during the discussions and the others shall be seriously discussed during the next sittings.

For recommendations made at the end of the discussions, we shall retain: the safeguarding of light structures in the management RMF while encouraging the optimal use of existing

resources, concessions with regard to the mobilization of resources, notably those from tollgates, delegation to custom services and others with regard to actions relating to the importation of fuel.

States were equally recommended to work with their supervisory bodies and other partners in close collaboration, in the strict respect of the trade of each actor. The main role of the RMF being that of mobilization, and the securing of resources and the rapid payment of allowances.

III. PRESENTATION OF THE SSATP PROGRAMME 2010 -2011.

Mr. **Kingson APARA**, expert at the World Bank in charge of projects, seized the opportunity offered him to present the SSATP programme (Transport Policy Programme of Countries South of the Sahara), the main objective of which is to assist States south of the Sahara in the improvement of their transport policy. The RNET tool (Road Network Evaluation Tools) was also presented and should help the actors of the road sector in the planning, efficacious and efficient management of their networks.

With that in mind, Gabon, Congo Brazzaville and Chad volunteered to send two representatives per country for the training of trainers on the use of RNET by experts of the World Bank, scheduled for a later date.

An annual meeting within the context of this meeting has been planned between the World Bank and ANSARA and the other actors of the road business in Southern Africa (in Uganda) in October 2010.

The need to hold seminars between this sponsor, RMFs, Managers of road networks and other partners of the sector of the Central Africa zone, was recognized by participants. In this regard, a request shall be made by the ruling authorities of ARMFA.

IV. ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS OF RMFs

The Libreville meeting took note of the fact that all member countries practice a commercial type of accounting. The various RMFs have thus been recommended to practice using this accounting system and share their experiences. On the other hand, an assessment of the evolution of this point shall be done in the course of the next sittings, with a view to retaining the pertinent and reliable indicators.

V. REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES

It has been noticed that reports of activities are written by all RMFs present in the Libreville sittings. There has been the need for standardization.

For the purpose of taking resolutions, a draft shall be written by the Cameroon RMF and transmitted to all, with a view to standardizing the writing plan in order to facilitate comparisons. In this regard, each member of the sub region shall transmit to the Permanent Secretariat its report before the holding of focal point meetings, as from next year, in order to prepare a synthesis of the various activities.

VI. RELATIONS BETWEEN RMFs AND SUPERVISORY ORGANS

In order to know if there existed conflicts between the different RMFs and their respective supervisory organs, the Libreville meeting observed that there are still several misunderstandings, due to a large extent, to the poor interpretation of texts or their non implementation.

Participants suggested that the World Bank be solicited with a view to a rapprochement with Administrative supervisors, in order to allow for a better readability of the running of RMFs.

VII. UPDATING OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OF RMFs

At the end of the updating of the Matrix, the global situation of member countries was presented. It emerges from this presentation that for the exception of Chad who supplied significant figures relating to the state of its network, the other RMFs have to date not yet come up with reliable information.

The Libreville meeting therefore recommended that road Administrations be encouraged to put enough effort in the collection of data through the use of scientific methods, in order to avail themselves of a base to serve in the effective programming of maintenance campaigns. With that in mind, the use of RNET may encourage and help in the management of data.

The idea of a filling guide for the IGR matrix was accepted. The idea being to come up with the conceptualization of a RMF model.

VIII. REVISION OF STATUTES AND RULES AND REGULATIONS OF ARMFA AND PROPOSAL FOR AMENDMENT

At the end of the discussions, we retained amendments concerning :

- Examination of the form;
- The densification of the preamble;
- A redefinition of the management organs and their powers;
- The creation of an Executive Secretariat;
- Revision of contribution rates;

Texts adopted during the Libreville sittings were found appended to this report.

IX. THEMES RETAINED FOR THE TECHNICAL WORKSHOP OF THE ANNUAL MEETING TO HOLD IN ETHIOPIA IN NOVEMBER 2010.

Themes proposed by the President of ARMFA and adopted for the technical workshop in Addis Ababa are the following:

- RMFs and quality of expenditure: how to limit the necessary interference of RMFs in their relations with partners aiming at efficiency.
- Appropriation of resources of RMFs and the efficacy of road maintenance network in Africa.
- Performance follow-up indicators: Valuation, Aim, Justification, and Adjustment of rates- what can be done?
- How to reconcile the requirements of commercial management with the public obligations of the payer. What solution for RMFs in the future?

X. MISCELLANEOUS

In order to enable a better understanding of what a second generation RMF is all about, a brief reminder of the criteria which characterize this type of set up has been made; notably: (1)- have a solid legal background; (2)- be a financing organ; (3)- have a Board of Directors or a Management Committee majority private; (4)- have financial autonomy; (5)- have a light management structure; (6)- carry out technical and financial audits.

In the light of all these criteria, it will be necessary to indicate here that a good number of these criteria have not yet been fulfilled by some RMFs.

The migration of RMFs towards the Road Funds was equally the subject of discussions and exchanges on this subject have proved fruitful.

Participants in the Libreville sittings recommended a careful approach to this issue. They insisted on the formulation of flexible texts which will permit a better revision without which, the efficacy and efficiency expected from RMFs will be downplayed.

This meeting was also the occasion to remind members of the imperious necessity to observe the principles of good management of the funds placed at their disposal, in order to encourage the support of the authorities and donors who contributed in making the funds available.

The proposal by Chad to host the next meeting of the focal group was unanimously accepted by all participants.

Doe i Libreville, on July 30, 2010.

