



The Renewed Hope Agenda for Resilient Road Infrastructure in Nigeria: Policy and Practice

Keynote address

by

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... for good, safe and friendly roads

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Outline

- Renewed Hope Agenda: Vision for Road Transport Infrastructure
- Transport System Resilience
- Policy Commitment: Building Resilience by Design
- Cooperation: Creating a common future
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RHA: Vision for Road Transport Infrastructure

Under His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda, the Federal Government has positioned infrastructure at the center of economic development, not only as projects but as avenues for **opportunity, unity and cohesion, economic growth, job creation, and productivity amongst others.**

Our socio-economic endeavours still relies heavily on road infrastructure. In Nigeria, **more than 90% of both passengers and commodities** are transported by road. However, these networks are frequently overburdened by **changing traffic needs, poor construction quality, climate-related issues, aging and inadequate maintenance.**

Therefore, the demand for robust transportation infrastructure is existential rather than rhetorical.



RHA: Vision for Road Transport Infrastructure

Renewed Hope - Road Transport focus:

“Embark on the creation of a truly nationwide highway system, connecting all major cities and regions with modern, safe, multilane highways. As part of that highway system, we shall rehabilitate and expand existing federal roads and expressway.

We shall accelerate the construction of new roads as well as the rehabilitation of existing ones via creative funding mechanisms, including accessing capital markets and PPP”

Transport System Resilience

Defining Resilience

Transport system resilience refers to the system's capacity to deal with, adapt to and recover from disruptions.

There are two important aspects to the resilience of transport systems:

- **Robustness.** The robustness of a system determines the extent to which a deterioration of a system's functions is due to the disruption. The more robust a system, the less the system functions are affected. Another term to describe this aspect is absorptive capacity. Transport systems are more robust or absorptive if they provide additional and alternative capacity (redundancy).
- **Rapidity of recovery.** This is the time needed for a transport system to get back to the service level or level of operations before the disruption took place (time of recovery). A related concept is the adaptability of the transport system

Transport System Resilience

Potential shocks on road infrastructure

Road transport can be disrupted by various shocks, categorized into natural/environmental events, human-made incidents, and economic/political factors. These events can cause physical damage to infrastructure, lead to operational delays, and result in significant socio-economic consequences.

- **Natural and Environmental Shocks:** Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, which are a major source of disruption.
- **Human-Made Shocks:** These disruptions stem from human activity, ranging from minor incidents to large-scale crises (Accidents and incidents, infrastructure failure, labour issues, pandemic and health crisis, cyber attacks, war and terrorism etc)
- **Economic and Political Shocks:** Macro-level factors can influence the stability and operation of road transport networks (Economic instability, political and legal risks, etc)

Policy Commitment: Building Resilience by Design

The revised National Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (NIIMP) emphasise the need to build resilience infrastructure, it states that:

“The cost-benefit analyses of investing in climate-resilient infrastructure must be made on a project-by-project basis. But given the cyclical nature and prevalence of certain extreme climate events, the upfront costs of building more durable infrastructure are likely to be lower than the forestalled maintenance and replacement costs.”

Policy Commitment: Building Resilience by Design Cont'd...

Nigeria's road resilience policies must focused on building durable infrastructure through the use of materials like concrete, improving maintenance, and enhancing road safety. Key initiatives include President Tinubu's administration's emphasis on high-quality, long-lasting roads.

Focal points include:

✓ **Infrastructure and construction**

- Use of durable materials: The government is shifting from asphalt to concrete for new highway projects to ensure a lifespan of up to 100 years.
- Improved construction methods: Practices like milling, stabilizing, and strengthening are being prioritized over simple patching to improve the longevity of existing roads.
- Funding for quality: A strategic, milestone-based funding system (Sukkuk, Renewed Hope Infrastructure Development Fund, etc) is being used to ensure contractors deliver projects on schedule.

Policy Commitment: Building Resilience by Design Cont'd...

✓ Maintenance and management

- Strategic regeneration of FERMA: Institutional strengthening of FERMA to make it more effective and responsive to the needs of national highway infrastructure maintenance.
- Preventive maintenance: The Agency is focusing on sustained surveillance, accelerated repairs, and preventive maintenance to tackle failed roads and extend the life of the existing network.
- International collaboration: There are existing and ongoing plans to build more collaborative relationships with international road agencies and the private sector to improve service delivery.
- Exploring other sources of funding and support.
- Process improvement using technology

Policy Commitment: Building Resilience by Design Cont'd...

✓ Road safety and regulation

- Nigeria Road Safety Strategy (NRSS): This is a medium-term strategy that provides a framework for improving road safety across the country, as outlined by the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC).
- Public education: The Agency and FRSC provides public enlightenment on the proper use of highways.
- Standardization: The FMW, FRSC have developed standardize highway traffic codes.
- Weight bridges are being considered to regulate overloading on the road network

Policy Commitment: Building Resilience by Design Cont'd...

Three interconnected concepts currently influence government policy in order to further this vision:

- Sustainability by Design, which incorporates lifecycle and environmental factors into each phase of road construction.
- Technology-Driven Maintenance: this method shifts from reactive to proactive maintenance by utilizing data, digital mapping, and predictive analytics.
- Institutional Strengthening and Accountability: making certain that organizations in the road sector ecosystem function with precise directives, open procedures, and quantifiable results.

As a key custodian of Federal Roads, FERMA is essential to this policy framework, guaranteeing the continued safety and serviceability of Nigeria's enormous road investments.

Policy Commitment: Building Resilience by Design Cont'd...

Classification of mitigation measures

Type of measure	What does't aim to do	Example of measures
Avoid	Mitigate disruptions (e.g. climate change) Avoid settlement in high-risk areas Produce networks that reduce the risk of cascading	Climate-change mitigation policies Land-use planning, relocation policies Strategic planning (hubs and minor hubs)
Coping capacity	Increase resistance of infrastructure to disruptions Protect critical infrastructure	Infrastructure investment (e.g. in drainage, permeable road surfaces) Investment in elevated roads, runways, dikes, seawalls and bridges Prioritising maintenance of "critical networks"
Redundancy	Add links to create more alternative routes Provide buffers for crucial inputs (including electricity, workers and equipment)	Infrastructure investment planning Prioritising redundancy budgets for infrastructure managers

Cooperation: Creating a Common Future

It is not possible to construct resilient roads separately. Stakeholders in the road infrastructure space (Government, academics, professional associations, road users, and the corporate sector) must work together.

It involves aligning national and sub-national policy frameworks (e.g., National Climate Change Policy, 2023) with asset-management systems and directing investment toward climate-proofing road infrastructure

Effective adaptation is not a one-off intervention but an ongoing process of institutional learning, resource mobilization, and integration into maintenance regimes.

Cooperation: Creating a Common Future Cont'd...

This session brings together researchers who create, policymakers who facilitate, and contractors who deliver—exactly the kind of collaboration that FERMA aims to encourage.

In keeping with the Renewed Hope Agenda, we also anticipate utilizing public-private partnerships (PPP), development finance, and knowledge-sharing platforms to expedite infrastructure renewal.

Government agencies must aim to develop roads that are better, more intelligent, and more durable rather than just mere roads, through innovation, resilient construction materials and methods, maintenance for resilience, safe usage amongst others.

Cooperation: Creating a Common Future Cont'd...

It demands that all stakeholders (engineers, reserchers, contractors, road infrastructure managers, road users etc.) approach durability as a moral and technological duty and innovate with integrity.

Every kilometer of resilient pavement must be viewed as a promise fulfilled to the Nigerian people: a promise of quicker trade, safer travel, and national cohesion.

Conclusion



- Natural/Environmental, Human-made and Economic & Political events are present realities that are reshaping the way road infrastructure is built, maintained, and managed across the world. These changes have forced many nations to move from reactive maintenance to proactive adaptation — using better materials, improved drainage systems, advanced engineering techniques, and local community participation to strengthen road resilience and reduce long-term costs.
- In Nigeria, the challenge is even more serious. The country's roads are already in poor condition due to underfunding, weak drainage systems, and maintenance backlogs. When these weaknesses combine with extreme rainfall, flooding, and heat, the result is faster road deterioration, higher repair costs, and reduced connectivity.
- The destruction caused by recent floods in different regions of the country shows how climate-related hazards directly threaten national development, food security, and the movement of goods and people. Therefore, climate change adaptation in the road sector is not optional — it is essential for economic survival and national progress.

Conclusion

- To achieve resilience, Nigeria must adopt both engineering and nature-based measures suited to local realities.
- Institutional adaptation. Federal and state road agencies must integrate climate information into design standards, maintenance planning, and budgeting.
- Road projects should be guided by up-to-date hydrological data and include funding for routine drainage maintenance.
- Training engineers and local workers on climate-resilient construction techniques will build capacity for sustainable maintenance.
- Policies such as the National Climate Change Policy (2023) and Nigeria's commitment to international climate frameworks should be translated into actionable programs for road resilience.

Conclusion



- Ultimately, effective adaptation requires coordination between government agencies, local communities, and private contractors. When people are involved in maintaining their roads by clearing drains, reporting damages, and managing vegetation, resilience becomes a shared responsibility.
- By combining modern engineering knowledge with indigenous practices and community engagement, Nigeria can transform its road maintenance system from reactive repairs to proactive, climate-smart adaptation.
- The impacts of climate change and extreme weather on road infrastructure will continue to intensify, but with the right mix of engineering innovation, local participation, and institutional commitment, the country can build a road network that withstands the pressures of a changing climate.

Conclusion



- Strengthening road resilience today will not only protect investments but also ensure safer travel, better connectivity, and sustainable development for future generations.

By working together, we can make our road system durable, dependable, and future-ready, transforming it from a means of transportation into a platform for national advancement.



Thank You

God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria