



29TH FIDIC AFRICA INFRASTRUCTURE CONFERENCE

**HELD AT AVANI HOTEL,
LIVINGSTONE, ZAMBIA**

21-23 MAY 2023

**GREEN
INFRASTRUCTURE
FOR THE FUTURE**

CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE

#FAIC23

Overview

The 29th FIDIC Africa Infrastructure Conference took place from 21st to 23rd May 2023 in Livingstone, Zambia at Avania Victoria Falls Resort. The conference brought together Africa's premier engineers and stakeholders from the construction and infrastructure sector to discuss the future of infrastructure provision under the theme: 'Green Infrastructure for the Future'. The conference had 211 delegates from across Africa and the rest of the world. The 29th FIDIC Africa Infrastructure Conference was organised by FIDIC Africa and hosted by the Association of Consulting Engineers of Zambia (ACEZ), a Member Association of FIDIC.

The 29th FIDIC Africa Infrastructure Conference was graced by the Mayor of the City of Livingstone Her Worship the Lady Mayor Constance Muleabai who represented the Minister of Southern Province, Zambia, Hon. Cornelius Mweetwa. The Ministry of Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development, the line Ministry for ACEZ, was represented by Eng. Clive Khan. The conference keynote speakers included Eng. Anthony Barry (FIDIC President), and Dr. Nelson Ogunshakin OBE (FIDIC CEO). The welcome notes were given by the ACEZ President, Eng. Oliver Makungu, The Engineering Institution of Zambia President, Eng. Abel Ng'andu and FIDIC Africa President, Eng. Abe Thela. The FIDIC Board, inclusive of the FIDIC President Elect, Catherine Karakatsanis, FIDIC Executive Committee and several former FIDIC Africa presidents were among the officials present.

On Day 1 the pre-conference meetings included the Directors and Secretaries meeting (DNS) and the Future Leaders symposium.

During the DNS meeting, Member Associations (MAs) gave verbal presentations with brief written submissions. MAs highlighted key issues affecting the sustainability of their Associations. It was discussed that MAs could use the FIDIC logos on their letter heads. It was further discussed that FIDIC had accredited more trainers making it easier for MAs to engage trainers. MAs were informed that those wishing to translate the FIDIC contract into their local language could do so upon request.

The Future Leaders held their symposium under the main conference theme. The Future Leaders' symposium was graced by the FIDIC President, Anthony Barry, the FIDIC President Elect, Catherine Karakatsanis, and FIDIC Africa President, Eng. Abe Thela. During the symposium, a keynote address was presented by Joseph Munalula (ACEZ Future Leaders Patron) in which he expressed how Future Leaders had a lot to offer in to the green agenda in terms of educational excellence, implementation of good practices and application of technological advances to implement green infrastructure development for the future. Dr. Nelson Ogunshakin also gave an address in which he reminded the Future Leaders of the need to utilise their energy and technological skills in promulgating green developments in infrastructure. The Future Leaders had four paper presentations and an interactive session where they considered planning and implementation of green infrastructure taking into account, the political, legal, social, and economic aspects. The interactive session resulted in group presentations in which they asked themselves the following questions:

- (1) What is your understanding of green infrastructure and how does it impact you as a Future Leader?
- (2) What active role can you play as future leader towards promoting green infrastructure development?
- (3) How can the Consulting industry assist towards empowering FLs?

Highlights

During the symposium, the Future Leaders and attendees discussed that:

1. Green Infrastructure is an essential component of sustainable development involving the implementation of unique, innovative and environmentally friendly solutions that will restore, as well as protect the ecosystem.
2. Future Leaders are earth's custodians and as such, should be the drivers of green development.
3. Future Leaders should be dedicated to improving the industry by upholding integrity, which the lack thereof, is a key issue in Africa.
4. Future Leaders need to be societal change makers and advocates of green livelihoods.
5. There is a need to pay attention to environmental, social and health needs as we incorporate green design, while reducing implementation costs and efficiently using available resources.
6. Consideration of green design should be made through all stages of development, from inception stage, through to the implementation, operation, decommissioning and end use with the aim of reducing the carbon footprint.
7. We need to ensure our solutions are climate resilient in all stages of design and consider environmentally friendly materials.
8. Incorporating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) frameworks into our projects is essential and can be stimulated through international collaborations and using already implemented projects as case studies and client bases
9. Collaborations between different skilled professionals within the green space is beneficial to project implementation for a broader knowledge base, a people-centric approach and inclusivity.
10. We need to do more cost analysis of completed projects to aid in making informed decision making on future project investments.
11. Member firms can contribute to the growth of the consultancy industry through the promotion and implementation of training programmes, research, skills transfer, capacity building and more company collaborations.

12. Member firms should foster opportunities for Future Leaders to take part in green projects at all stages of implementation in order for them to learn best practices and gain practical experience from the entire project lifecycle.
13. Deliberate investment of funds and resources should be made towards research and development, as well continuous professional development of Future Leaders
14. Member Firms should create an enabling work environment that welcomes ideas and new ways of thinking of Future Leaders, and include them in decision-making processes
15. Consultancy is a business, and as such, Future Leaders should also be considered as key players with possible considerations for partnerships and company shareholding.
16. Reasonable consideration should be made in relation to salary structures for Future Leaders that is responsive to the current economic climate and the current nature of applicable skills on projects which are less traditional.

Over 50 delegates attended the Future Leaders' Symposium.

The Main Conference was held on Day 2 and 3. During the Main Conference, two keynote addresses and 13 papers were scheduled for presentation. The sub-themes under consideration included:

- Building sustainable, resilient and viable Green Infrastructure;
- Green construction methods and materials for sustainable future infrastructure development;
- Global progresses addressing African burgeoning youth population and paradigm shift towards green economies; and
- Integrated approach in planning and implementing Green Infrastructure.

The Conference also had a panel discussion which sought to address key questions around green infrastructure within the African context.

Highlights

Over the 2-day period of deliberations, participants at the Conference:

1. Recognised that population growth will continue to put pressure on the existing infrastructure hence the need for more concerted efforts in infrastructure provision.
2. Acknowledged that much of the Green House Gas (GHG) emissions emanate from global infrastructure.
3. Noted that Africa's GHG emission levels are relatively low, accounting for only 3.8% of the global emissions.
4. Agreed that Africa to keep pressure on the developed world act responsibly in reducing GHG emissions.
5. Acknowledged the effects of climate change and the need to decelerate its progression considering that there are no boundaries in a climate crisis.
6. Acknowledged Africa's infrastructure gap and the need to continue with provision of the much-needed infrastructure using sustainable approaches.
7. Stressed the need for Africa's infrastructure to be resilient and robust enough to withstand the effects of climate change.
8. Agreed that Consulting practitioners should embrace circular economies and promote designs that lower the carbon footprint.
9. Agreed that Africa's approach to green infrastructure should be adaptive and not restrictive.
10. Acknowledged that consulting practitioners in Africa have the requisite tools and skill set required for greening our continent.
11. Discussed the need to consider longer planning horizons for infrastructure projects so as to account for possible effects of climate change.
12. Discussed on best approaches to ensure compliance with ESG requirements within contracts and on infrastructure projects.
13. Stressed the need for MAs to have interface with clients to promote the inclusion of ESG requirements, and innovation in the early stages of projects.
14. Echoed the need for Member Firms to invest in Research and Design, collaborate with universities and spearhead the climate action.
15. Agreed that Green Infrastructure requires local heroes, and it was imperative for each delegate to be a local hero within their places of work.

16. Acknowledged that implementation of green infrastructure required extra resources and that some clients may not be willing to pay the extra costs for making the infrastructure robust and resilient.
17. Acknowledged the availability of financial resources from developed countries including pension houses within Africa which can be utilised in promoting green infrastructure.
18. Acknowledged the challenges of scarcity of coherent data, bring about information asymmetry and low access to financial resources due to perceived risks within Africa.
19. Noted the effects of perceived corruption in Africa as a hinderance to access to financial resources later the implementation of green infrastructure.
20. Demonstrated the efforts of practitioners in development and implementation of green infrastructure within Africa.
21. Acknowledged the role that the burgeoning youth population can play in promoting green infrastructure and economies.
22. Demonstrated how youths are already innovatively contributing to provision of green infrastructure using locally available resources.
23. Acknowledged the need for more case studies showcasing success stories of green infrastructure implementation in Africa.
24. Acknowledged the need to encourage reverse mentorship, where senior practitioners can learn from tech-savvy Future Leaders, for enhanced planning, design and implementation of green infrastructure.
25. Recognised the need for African firms to have succession plans in place that will ensure continued existence beyond the founder's tenure.
26. Agreed on the need for MAs and FIDIC in general to bring policy makers and politicians on board when discussing green infrastructure and other developmental aspects.
27. Observed the need to encourage gender parity in future conference presentations.
28. Stressed the need to bring together all built environment stakeholders and take a multi-disciplinary approach to green infrastructure provision.
29. Admonished to put in to action the principles of our faiths and integrity in carrying out the green agenda.
30. Encouraged to record conference successes and hand down to the next host to help with planning successive conferences.
31. Called for MAs and volunteers to actively participate in FIDIC Africa Committees to help push our engineering agenda forward.

Resolutions / Recommendations

Based on the above observations, delegates at the 29th FIDIC Africa Infrastructure Conference resolved as follows:

1. It is imperative for Africa to persist in investing in infrastructure that embraces adaptive green practices utilizing locally available resources.
2. The establishment of data repositories is crucial to elucidate Africa's position, diminish information asymmetry, and promote the flow of resources into Africa for the provision of green infrastructure.
3. The developed world bears the responsibility to act equitably by providing the resources required to redress the effects of their actions that have contributed to the climate crisis.
4. The Member Associations (MAs) and their members should become local champions in the adoption and promotion of green practices within the built environment.
5. Governments and Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) should collaborate with MAs to augment awareness of green practices that will support the continent's infrastructure provision agenda.
6. The MAs should persist in upholding the highest standards of integrity, ethics, and morality in the provision of infrastructure.

Appreciation

Delegates at the 29th FIDIC Africa Infrastructure Conference expressed profound gratitude to FIDIC Africa for allowing ACEZ to host this timely and important conference in the emerging global dynamics that calls for new insights on infrastructure provision. Special appreciation also went to the Government of the Republic of Zambia, that recognises the important role of green economy and the need for sustainable infrastructure. Hosting of the 29th FIDIC Africa Infrastructure Conference was made possible through support received from various stakeholders including our sponsors. Appreciation went to our sponsors who included: Tomorrow Investments Limited, ZESCO, CES Consulting Engineers Salzgitter GmbH, The Engineering Institution of Zambia EIZ, GOPA Infra GmbH, Bari Zambia Ltd, CPP Botswana Ltd, Herbco Technical Services, Oaktic Systems Ltd, ALLiONE Consulting Engineers Ltd, Mupapa Wood Ltd, and ACEZ Member Firms.

Further appreciation went to the session moderators, speakers, discussants, delegates and all organising committee members for making the 29th FIDIC Africa Infrastructure Conference memorable.

