



**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA  
MINISTRY OF WORKS  
TANZANIA NATIONAL ROADS AGENCY**



# **GUIDANCE NOTE TO REGIONAL MANAGERS**

**Preparedness and Emergency  
Response for El Niño / Adverse  
Weather Events**

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Prepared in July 2026

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Guidance Note provides a proactive framework for TANROADS Regional Managers to prepare for the anticipated El Niño and adverse weather events expected in October 2026. It shifts the approach from reactive emergency response to risk-based preparedness aimed at protecting road users, bridges, culverts, and other critical infrastructure assets.

Regional Managers are required to identify and map vulnerable locations through GIS-based risk registers, including flood-prone roads, weak bridges, damaged culverts, unstable slopes, and inadequate drainage systems. Priority “Top 20” risk locations should guide preventive interventions and resource allocation.

Before the rainy season, Regions must undertake inspections of bridges and culverts, clear drainage systems, remove debris, strengthen erosion protection, and implement preventive maintenance to minimize infrastructure failures.

Emergency readiness shall be enhanced through availability of materials, equipment, contractors, and technical specialists for rapid deployment. Regions must also conduct simulation exercises to test emergency communication, response procedures, traffic management, and coordination with relevant stakeholders.

During emergencies, Regional Managers will serve as Incident Commanders responsible for coordinated response, accurate reporting, road safety decisions, and escalation of major incidents. Unsafe roads, bridges, and culverts must be restricted or closed until technical assessments confirm safe reopening.

The Guidance Note emphasizes environmental protection, proper documentation, post-flood assessments, and resilient rehabilitation to ensure sustainable restoration of damaged infrastructure. All Regions must submit preparedness reports, including risk registers, emergency resources, contractor arrangements, and funding requirements, before the end of September 2026.

Overall, the required institutional posture is preparedness before rainfall, effective control during emergencies, and resilient recovery after damage, ensuring continuity of transport services while reducing risks, costs, and disruption caused by extreme weather events.



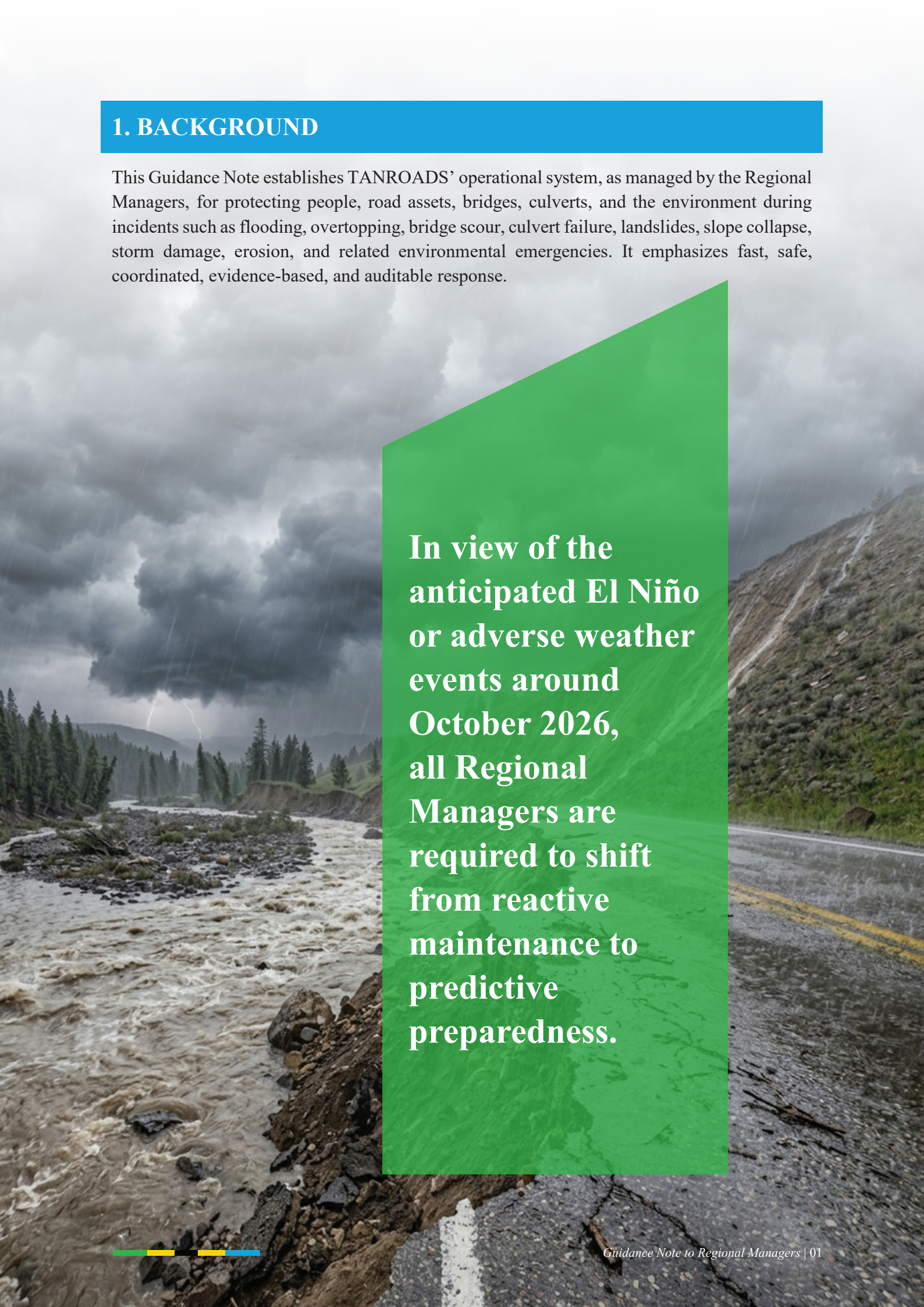
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**Chief Executive**  
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## 1. BACKGROUND

This Guidance Note establishes TANROADS' operational system, as managed by the Regional Managers, for protecting people, road assets, bridges, culverts, and the environment during incidents such as flooding, overtopping, bridge scour, culvert failure, landslides, slope collapse, storm damage, erosion, and related environmental emergencies. It emphasizes fast, safe, coordinated, evidence-based, and auditable response.



**In view of the anticipated El Niño or adverse weather events around October 2026, all Regional Managers are required to shift from reactive maintenance to predictive preparedness.**

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE NOTE

The purpose is to ensure that every Region is ready before the onset of heavy rainfall by:

Ensuring all critical roads, bridges, culverts, causeways, slopes, and drainage systems are inspected and risk-mapped; confirming emergency stocks, contractors, equipment, and response teams are ready; strengthening coordination with local disaster committees, Police, Fire and Rescue, NEMC, Basin Water Boards, TMA, and LGAs; and ensuring that all emergency actions are properly documented for accountability, cost recovery, audit, and future planning.



## 3. IMMEDIATE ACTIONS REQUIRED FROM REGIONAL MANAGERS

### 3.1 Identify and Map High-Risk Locations

Each Region shall urgently prepare and submit a **Regional El Niño Road Infrastructure Risk Register** covering:

- Bridges with history of scour, overtopping, drift accumulation, settlement, or abutment erosion.
- Culverts that are undersized, blocked, silted, damaged, or located in flood-prone sections.
- Low-lying embankments, causeways, flood plains, coastal roads, river crossings, and valley sections.
- Cut slopes and embankments susceptible to landslides, washouts, or slope instability.
- Road sections with poor drainage, damaged side drains, blocked mitre drains, or inadequate outfalls.

The Guidance Note requires Regions to maintain a living GIS-linked risk register and extract a “Top 20” risk list to guide pre-season works and stock placement.

### 3.2 Conduct Pre-Season Inspection of Bridges and Culverts

Regional Managers shall direct Maintenance Engineers and Bridge Engineers to inspect all vulnerable structures before October 2026. Particular attention shall be given to:

- Debris accumulation at piers, abutments, culvert inlets, and outlets.
- Scour around foundations, wing walls, aprons, and cut-off walls.
- Cracks, settlement, exposed reinforcement, spalling, bearing movement, deck distress, and approach slab failure.
- Blocked culverts, silted waterways, damaged headwalls, failed aprons, and erosion downstream.
- Weak approaches, damaged guardrails, missing warning signs, and unsafe temporary crossings.

Any bridge or culvert showing distress, scour, undermining, flooding, debris accumulation, ground movement, or approach settlement must be treated as a priority emergency-risk asset.

### 3.3 Clear Drainage Systems Before the Rainy Period

All Regions shall immediately undertake preventive maintenance of drainage infrastructure, including:

- Desilting culverts, side drains, mitre drains, catchwater drains, and outfalls.
- Removing debris, vegetation, waste, and drift materials from bridge waterways.
- Reinstating eroded drainage channels and lining critical outlets where necessary.
- Opening blocked waterways in collaboration with local authorities and communities.
- Protecting vulnerable outlets using riprap, gabions, energy dissipators, or temporary erosion controls.

This should be done before heavy rains begin, not after flooding has already occurred.



## 4. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS REQUIREMENTS

### 4.1 Emergency Stockpiles and Equipment

Every Region shall verify availability and serviceability of emergency response materials, including:

- Sandbags, gabion baskets, lacing wire, geotextiles, riprap, selected rock, and timber for shoring.
- Silt fences, erosion-control materials, drain covers, spill kits, absorbent booms, and PPE.
- Pumps, generators, lighting towers, fuel, warning signs, barricades, traffic cones, and reflective devices.
- Bailey bridge components or alternative temporary crossing arrangements where applicable.
- Grab-and-go kits in patrol vehicles, including forms, power banks, measuring tools, GPS-enabled devices, and basic emergency supplies.

The Guidance Note requires each Region to maintain minimum stocks based on its risk profile and to ensure critical consumables are stored both centrally and at peripheral depots to reduce mobilization time.

### 4.2 Contractors and Service Providers

Regional Managers shall identify and pre-arrange emergency support from contractors and service providers capable of rapid deployment, including:

- Excavators, loaders, graders, tippers, compactors, cranes, pumps, and low-bed transporters.
- Bridge inspection teams, divers, drone operators, geotechnical specialists, hydrologists, laboratories, and emergency waste handlers.
- Local suppliers of rock, sandbags, fuel, gabions, culvert pipes, and temporary traffic-control devices.

The Guidance Note emphasizes framework or call-off arrangements to allow rapid mobilization without procedural delay during emergencies.

### 4.3 Training and Simulation

Before October 2026, each Region shall conduct at least one tabletop or field simulation covering flooding, bridge scour, culvert blockage, landslide, or road washout. The exercise should test:

- Incident detection and notification.
- Call-tree functionality.
- Traffic diversion.
- Deployment of equipment and emergency materials.
- Communication with HQ, LGAs, Police, Fire and Rescue, and communities.
- Reporting, photographs, GPS records, and incident documentation.

The Guidance Note requires simulation drills and after-action reviews, with corrective actions closed within defined timelines.

## 5. COMMAND AND CONTROL DURING AN EMERGENCY

During an incident, the Regional Manager shall act as the **Regional Incident Commander**, unless formally delegated. The Incident Commander shall establish a clear command structure covering operations, safety, logistics, planning/documentation, environmental/social safeguards, and communications.

The Guidance Note requires a scalable command structure from Regional Incident Commander to Operations Lead and Field Team Leaders, with escalation to HQ or the National Emergency Operations Center where incidents exceed regional capacity.



For significant incidents, the Region shall establish a Forward Command Post at a safe location, preferably upstream, upslope, or away from the hazard. The site must have safe access, communication, staging space, and visibility of the incident area.

## 6. INCIDENT DETECTION, NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING

All reports of flooding, overtopping, bridge distress, culvert failure, landslide, washout, or road closure shall immediately be recorded in an incident log. The first report must capture:

- Road name, chainage, district, and GPS location.
- Nature of the incident and visible hazard.
- Whether people, vehicles, settlements, water sources, or utilities are at risk.
- Whether the road is passable, partially passable, or closed.
- Weather trend and water-level trend.
- Immediate resources required.

For high-risk incidents, flash notification should be issued immediately to HQ, the Director of Maintenance, relevant technical directorates, and local emergency agencies. The Guidance Note requires structured reporting using Incident IDs, situation reports, photographs, GIS records, and action logs.



## 7. TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CLOSURE

Regional Managers shall not allow traffic to continue using flooded, undermined, overtopped, or structurally uncertain bridges, culverts, or embankments. Closure or restriction must be imposed where:

- Water overtops the carriageway or bridge deck.
- Scour or erosion is visible near abutments, piers, wing walls, or culvert outlets.
- Approaches show settlement, cracking, voids, or pavement collapse.
- Debris accumulation threatens hydraulic capacity.
- The structure has not been assessed by a competent engineer after flood recession.

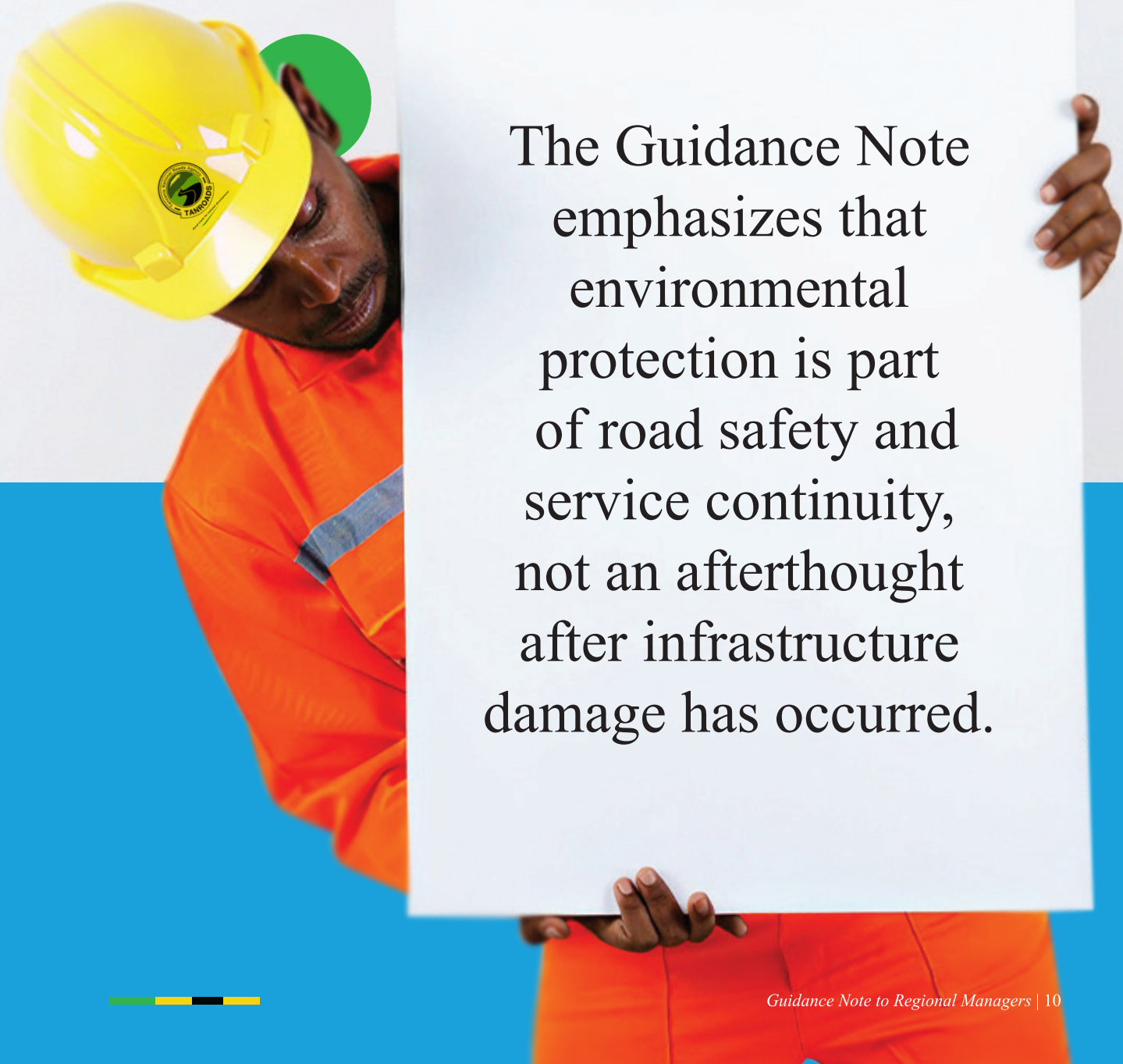
Reopening shall only be permitted after water levels fall, scour is assessed, debris is removed, approaches are stable, environmental controls are in place, and clear communication is issued to road users.



## 8. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

During emergency works, Regions must avoid creating secondary environmental damage. Emergency repairs must include:

- Silt fences, straw bales, check dams, or sediment traps at disturbed drainage points.
- Safe refuelling areas with bunding and spill kits.
- Proper handling of oily water, contaminated soil, and waste materials.
- Controlled disposal of debris and spoil in approved areas.
- Protection of water sources, wetlands, farms, fisheries, and settlements.
- Community communication through local leaders where water users or residents may be affected.



The Guidance Note emphasizes that environmental protection is part of road safety and service continuity, not an afterthought after infrastructure damage has occurred.

## 9. POST-FLOOD ASSESSMENT AND RECOVERY

After water recedes, Regional Managers shall ensure immediate technical assessment of affected roads, bridges, and culverts. The assessment shall record:

- Rainfall and water-level information.
- Scour depth and location.
- Damage to abutments, piers, wing walls, aprons, culvert barrels, and approaches.
- Pavement failures, washouts, embankment erosion, and slope instability.
- Temporary works undertaken.
- Permanent rehabilitation required.
- Cost estimate and implementation timeline.

The Guidance Note requires post-flood rehabilitation to restore banks, revetments, energy dissipators, aprons, cut-off walls, toe protection, drainage capacity, and environmental function to design or improved standards.



## 10. REPORTING DEADLINE

All Regional Managers should submit to Headquarters, before the end of September 2026:

1. Regional El Niño / Adverse Weather Preparedness Report.
2. Top 20 vulnerable bridges, culverts, and road sections.
3. Status of drainage clearing and preventive works.
4. Emergency stock and equipment readiness checklist.
5. List of emergency contractors and service providers.
6. Proposed diversion routes for critical corridors.
7. Regional incident command structure and emergency contact list.
8. Funding requirements for immediate preventive interventions.



## 11. KEY MESSAGE TO REGIONAL MANAGERS

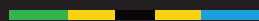
Regional Managers are reminded that El Niño or adverse weather preparedness is not routine paperwork. It is a direct responsibility for safeguarding public safety, preserving national road assets, protecting bridges and culverts, ensuring continuity of transport services, and minimizing emergency rehabilitation costs.

Each Region must therefore act early, inspect thoroughly, clear drainage systems, pre-position resources, coordinate with stakeholders, document all risks and respond decisively when incidents occur.

The expected institutional posture is preparedness before rainfall, control during emergency and resilient restoration after damage.



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Preparedness and Emergency Response for  
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