Jane Karuku, Board Member of GRI and president of the Green Revolution in Africa; and Teresa Fogelberg, Deputy Chief Executive, worked and lived 8 years in West Africa (Ghana, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinee Bissau, Mali, Cape Verde).

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Jane, you and I have been asked to reflect on the huge continent of Africa. This morning, we heard Ernst Ligteringen state that South Africa’s leadership role is a reminder that the perception held among some people that Sustainability Reporting is ‘a European or an American thing’ simply couldn’t be more wrong. It is definitely a South Africa thing as well.

But what about the rest of Africa? We have welcomed here today representatives—many of which longtime friends of GRI—from Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. They were happy to travel the long distance to Joburg. We will have the pleasure to hear them in the next panel.

But first we have this dual conversation: you Jane and I, Teresa.

Jane, you are wearing many hats: a global hat—representing GRI; an African hat—leading the Green Revolution in Africa with Kofi Annan; and a Kenyan business leader’s hat. Jane, Would you like to kick off? Your fellow countrywoman and Nobel Prize winner Wangari Maathai called in her book “the challenge for AFRICA” for a concrete application of the three principles of sustainability, accountability and equity. She calls for action by business, governments and civil society to ensure that business and private interest do not flourish at the expense of local citizens and long-term survival of Africa. Do you agree with Wangari Maathai on sustainability and accountability; both key concepts of sustainability reporting?

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Reaction Teresa:

So you agree with Wangari Maathai that sustainability and accountability are relevant; they both are key concepts of sustainability reporting. Does that mean that sustainability reporting is just as frequent in those countries as it is in South Africa? It obviously is not. The sustainability reporting landscape is not all that well

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known in sub Saharan Africa. On the one hand, there are a modest number of companies in Kenya, Nigeria, and Mauritius that have registered as GRI reporters. Yet, if we look at the KPMG global survey from about 2 years ago, we can observe that some 70% of the largest 100 Nigerian companies issue sustainability reports. There seems to be some kind of inconsistency there.

We obviously need to get the numbers right; and having Douglas Kativu based on Johannesburg will contribute to that.

What we also see is an imbalance in sectors: many reporters in the mining sector and the banking sector. Few reporters in the food and agriculture sectors, which are so crucial to food security and the African Economy.

So there is huge opportunity for sustainability reporting, but a huge gap.

Ernst stated this morning that Sustainability Reporting and successful business go hand-in-hand, and that is something that should be applauded. But is sustainability reporting also relevant for development?

*What do you think, Jane?*

Jane, sustainability reporting IS important for development.

**Reaction Teresa:**

That the private sector is a key contributor to development is now globally accepted. This was accepted both at the OECD international development agreement in Busan amongst major donor governments; as well as at the Rio+20 conference.

There is consensus that companies, both at individual level; at sector level; as well as at global level, should measure and report on their performance and contribution to development in a transparent way. That disclosure and reporting is a key element of all this, is demonstrated at all kinds of international agreements: for example in the Great Lake Zone. There are many examples; but let me mention here the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas\(^2\); as well as the United states Frank Dodd act. So sustainability reporting is seen as a tool for companies to demonstrate their contribution to development.

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GRI has its own sustainable development agenda, with four overall objectives:

First, to enhance the understanding, ownership and capacity of all stakeholders in developing countries. We do this through training and capacity building.

Second, we aim to empower stakeholders in developing countries;

Thirdly, we aim to enhance transparency regarding the impact of multi-national companies that invest and operate in developing countries. This can be achieved in two ways, the first being through direct reporting by individual companies. And the second by engaging in international policy work at the UN, or with international organizations such as the OECD. For example, GRI provided expert input into the above mentioned conflict mineral guidelines; but also to the United Nations Guiding principles for Business and Human Rights. And as Ernst mentioned this morning, we are part of the movement that is discussing the so-called post 2015 development goals and the idea of Sustainable Development Goals, and how the contribution of business to these goals can be measured.

And last but not least: the 4th development goal: to strengthen the sustainability performance of local business actors in developing countries and to help them being prepared to confront sustainability and competition challenges.

Jane, which of these four objectives do you find the most important? And how does that relate to your Green Revolution in Africa?

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So let us now return to the panel:

Is sustainability reporting relevant in sub-Saharan Africa beyond South Africa? We have Special guests from near and far in Africa.

- What are the main sustainability challenges for African countries?
- What are the roles for governments, companies, and civil society organizations to address these issues?
- Is sustainability reporting an issue or a solution in sub-Saharan Africa?
- What would need to happen in African markets to make reporting relevant?

How relevant, how alive and kicking is sustainability reporting to you in your countries, in your circles?
1. **Rodney Ndamba**, Lecturer University of Zimbabwe/ACCA Zimbabwe, CEO Institute for Sustainability Africa- Insaf (Zimbabwe)

2. **Professor Dr. Daniel Ofori**, Head Organization and Human Resource Management, University of Ghana Business School (Ghana)

3. **Rajiv Ramlugon**, Chief Sustainability Officer, Omnicane Limited (Mauritius)

4. **Dr. Claude Kabemba**, Director, Southern Africa Resource Watch (South Africa)

5. **Mr. Jekwu Ozoemene**, Managing Director, ACCESS Bank, Zambia, previous Nigeria

**EXTRA ON AFRICA**

**World Bank Africa Regional Brief October 2012**

The economic outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is positive, with growth rising to 5.3 percent in 2012, and an expected 5.6 percent in 2013.

Growth has been widespread, with over a third of SSA countries posting 6 percent of growth.

Among fast-growing economies in 2011, were resource-rich countries such as Ghana, Mozambique, and Nigeria, as well as other economies such as Rwanda and Ethiopia, all posting growth rates of at least 7 percent in 2011.

In addition, Africa is making progress on reducing poverty. The World Bank’s latest global poverty update shows that the region’s $1.25 a day poverty rate has fallen from 58.1 percent in 1999 to 47.5 percent in 2008, a 10.6 percentage point decline.

The decline in poverty accelerated in 2005-2008, with 9 million fewer people living below $1.25 a day – the first such recorded decline in the number of poor.

In 2011, foreign direct investment flows jumped 25 percent to an estimated $35.6 billion, The business climate is improving and favorable economic prospects are attracting investment flows in the telecommunications, real estate, and retail sectors.

Remittances have rebounded as well, posting a high of $23 billion in 2011.

**BUT**

Despite this success, serious development challenges remain in Africa, where governance and transparency remain weak; and 645 women die during pregnancy and childbirth per 100,000 live births, although maternal deaths fell by 26 percent.; child mortality rates are also falling; HIV infections are stabilizing; primary school completion rates are rising faster than anywhere else in the world; and the number of people living in extreme poverty is falling.

Vulnerability and resilience - Africa’s poor are directly affected by shocks -- economic, health-related, natural disasters and conflict -- which keep them in poverty.

Governance and public sector capacity - Critical services, in education, health and basic infrastructure, are too often either not delivered or delivered badly because of weak management of public funds.