

## **Special Issue Proposal: Corporate Governance—The International Journal of Business in Society**

### **Title: Corporate Governance and Sustainable Development Goals in Africa**

#### **Guest Editors**

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At the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York, all United Nations member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development as a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity which seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom (United Nations, 2015). At the core of the Agenda are 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) with 169 associated targets, which are a call for action by both developed and developing countries, including African countries. The goals range from taking actions to combat climate change, water and food crises, to eradicating poverty, conflict and inequality, balancing economic, social and environmental development (United Nations, 2015). A core feature of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the emphasis on the important role of businesses and industry in advancing sustainable development initiatives, working in partnership with governments, civil society and other stakeholders. In particular, businesses could support sustainable development by integrating sustainable development goals into their corporate strategies and operations. In relation to this, indeed, business and industry contributed, working with political leaders and civil society in designing the SDGs.

However, whilst sustainability issues have attracted considerable international policy debates and academic research around most of the world (see Oldekop et al., 2016; Kolk et al., 2017; Lim et al., 2018; Dahlmann et al., 2019; Rosati and Faria, 2019), there is still a paucity of research about the role of businesses in the African context. In particular, our knowledge about

whether and how corporate governance contributes to the SDGs remains very limited. The African continent deserves special attention because of the many challenges it faces including extreme poverty, the rampant corruption, human rights abuses, environmental degradation (due to extractive industry activities), extreme inequalities, HIV/Aids, conflicts and weak rule of law. Given these many challenges, the continent is strongly featured in the UN 2030 sustainable development goals as most vulnerable and deserving special attention (United Nations, 2015). Thus, it is apposite to provide understanding of whether or how corporate governance supports sustainable development on the continent given its role of ensuring that businesses, both small and large (including multinational businesses), are engaging with the most important sustainable development goals on the continent. Such understanding is critical for policymakers and many other stakeholders (including the UN) interested in the development of the continent. This is even more important in the context of the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic which may have implications for the ability of businesses to allocate investments towards engagement with SDGs.

The purpose of this special issue is to encourage research on corporate governance and sustainable development in Africa. In particular, we are interested in understanding how corporate governance affects or influences the corporate sector's engagement with sustainable development goals initiatives on the continent. In addition, we are also interested in understanding how the institutional environment within the individual African countries facilitates or constrains the role of corporate governance in enhancing and achieving sustainable development goals initiatives. Studying these issues is important as it provides understanding, not only by the academic community, but also policymakers, practitioners and businesses as they work towards achieving sustainable development goals by 2030. For example, policymakers and businesses would understand the consequences of their actions or strategies with implications on the direction of travel towards achieving the development goals.

We invite submissions, both theoretical and empirical, and applying different and appropriate methodologies, and addressing any aspects associated with Corporate Governance and Sustainable Development in Africa. These include, but not limited to the following themes:

- Corruption, corporate governance and sustainable development goals across Africa

- Corporate governance and sustainability reporting, including integrated reporting and assurance of sustainability reports
- The effects of board structures (for example, board independence, diversity, etc) on sustainability initiatives, including human rights issues, and inequalities
- The impact of ownership structures, including multiple block ownership, on sustainability initiatives
- The role of institutional investors and responsible investments in sustainability initiatives, including reporting
- The integration of sustainability performance targets in executive compensation contracts and sustainability initiatives
- Corporate governance of multinational companies and sustainable development goals
- Corporate governance, COVID-19 pandemic and implications for sustainable development

### **Paper Submission and Dates:**

The papers of between 5,000-7,000 words in length should be submitted by 1 November 2021 via the online submission Scholar One Manuscripts: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/cg> (select the appropriate special issue from the dropdown menu). Please note that the submission portal for the special issue will open on 1 July 2021

- Portal Open on ScholarOne: 1 July, 2021
- Submission Deadline: 1 November, 2021
- Reviewers' first report: 31 January 2022
- Revised paper submissions: 31 March 2022
- Planned Publication: Vol 22 Issue 5 (2022)

### **Special Issue Workshop**

We will hold a workshop in respect of the special call at the African Accounting and Finance Association (AAFA) Conference in Cairo, Egypt in September 2021. Those wishing to present at the workshop should contact the guest editors, Dr Karim Sorour ([karim.sorour@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:karim.sorour@northumbria.ac.uk)) or Dr David Mathuva ([dmathuva@strathmore.edu](mailto:dmathuva@strathmore.edu)). Attendance and/or presentation at the workshop is, however, not a prerequisite for submission to the special issue.

[Note: Please direct any queries or enquiries to any of the guest editors as show above.](#)

