



# EMPOWERING SUSTAINABLE DECISIONS

GRI'S ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



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## About this Report

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This report covers the period of operations from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 of Stichting Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). GRI's previous report *Leading for a New Era of Sustainability* was issued on 18 December 2015 for the period 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015, which corresponds with GRI's financial year, upon which we report annually.

There were no restatements necessary from information provided in the previous report, and there are no changes to the scope and aspect boundaries this year.

There were no significant changes to GRI's size, ownership, supply chain or location in this reporting period.

This report covers information on all of GRI's entities: GRI's main office in the Netherlands, the Regional Hubs based in Africa, Brazil, China, Hispanic America, North America, and South Asia, unless stated otherwise.

This report has been prepared 'in accordance' with GRI's G4 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines' Core option and uses the NGO Sector Disclosures.

The Board of Directors has approved this report, with direct guidance provided by a subgroup, which consists

of two members.

We value feedback on this report and welcome comments and questions at [grisownreports@globalreporting.org](mailto:grisownreports@globalreporting.org). The feedback will be taken into account when preparing GRI's next annual report.





# Foreword

*Christianna Wood, Chairman, Board of Directors, GRI*

## G4-I

Sustainability challenges affect us all, every region of the world, every community, every market, every business, every person. For almost 20 years, GRI has pioneered sustainability reporting to ensure these sustainability challenges are accounted for and today, GRI offers the most widely used and internationally recognized Sustainability Reporting Standards in the world.

The success of our work stems largely from the multi-stakeholder approach upon which GRI is built. Our active network includes governments, labor, civil society, business, investors, academics and professionals. This holistic approach is built into our DNA and is what makes GRI's community so vast and effective: it's how we develop our Standards; it's how we are governed; it's reflected in the diversity of those using the GRI Standards.

## DRIVERS OF SUSTAINABILITY AND REPORTING OVER THE PAST YEAR

Two major developments occurred on the global sustainability stage which will shape our world for the coming 15 years: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with 17 Global Goals at its core; and

the Paris Agreement, in which all nations committed to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. Both have transparency and accountability mechanisms built in, which GRI aims to support.

These global agreements take place against the backdrop of a changing world, a changing global context for how we live and do business with increasing resource constraints, changing climate, rapid growth in emerging economies, and increasing global connectedness.

## GRI WILL CONTINUE ITS PIONEERING ROLE IN THE SUSTAINABILITY LANDSCAPE

Globally accepted sustainability reporting standards are critical in our increasingly interconnected world because they create the common language that organizations can use to communicate their environmental, social and economic impacts.

Through its reporting guidance, GRI has transformed the way organizations around the world identify, communicate and act on their sustainability impacts by addressing issues such as climate change, human rights, corruption and many others. And we continually seek ways to do this – pushing the agenda on digital

reporting, on use of data, and on better tracking of progress on key sustainability issues.

We recognize that reporting must do more. There must be a focus on the value of the reporting process rather than solely the report itself, where robust sustainability information can be used by diverse stakeholders to inform better decision making in a multitude of ways.

With the departure of our Chief Executive in July 2016, we have been searching for a new leader to spearhead our vital work in helping reporting meet its full potential for the betterment of organizations around the world. We will have a new Chief Executive in place in January 2017. In this interim period, GRI is being led by a long-standing leader in our network, former Global Sustainability Standards Board Chair, Eric Hespenheide.

We have entered a new era where the need for transparency and disclosure to address global sustainability challenges has never been more real and urgent. GRI and its Board have a responsibility to lead this shift which we believe will support the transformational change needed to build a sustainable global economy.



# GRI'S VISION, MISSION & STRATEGY



# GRI's Vision, Mission & Strategy

GRI is an international independent organization that helps businesses, governments and other organizations communicate their impact on critical sustainability issues such as climate change, human rights, corruption and many others.

Since the late 1990s, GRI has pioneered sustainability reporting, transforming it from a niche practice into one now adopted by a growing majority of organizations worldwide. GRI's reporting guidance is the most trusted and widely used in the world.

## We believe:

- In the power of a multi-stakeholder process and inclusive network
- Transparency is a catalyst for change
- GRI Standards empower informed decision making
- A global perspective is needed to change the world
- Public interest should drive every decision an organization makes

**Our Vision:** to create a future where sustainability is integral to every organization's decision-making process.

**Our Mission:** to empower decision makers

everywhere, through our sustainability reporting standards and multi-stakeholder network, to take action towards a more sustainable economy and world.

**Our Theory of Change:** Our ultimate aim is to contribute to a sustainable global economy. The development and use of GRI Standards is one of the necessary inputs to this ultimate aim. The availability of globally accepted credible reporting standards, combined with the skills and knowledge to apply them, and an optimal enabling environment, will result in companies producing reports that detail their economic, environmental and social impacts. This greater transparency will give companies and their stakeholders the information they need to make decisions for change. This changed behavior, toward reducing negative impacts and maximizing positive impacts, is an important part of realizing a sustainable global economy.

**Our Strategy:** Our work focuses on four strategic areas:

## I. Enabling Smart Policy

We advocate the use of GRI Standards by governments and capital markets to ensure a level playing field for transparency and comparability among businesses.

FIG. 1

## STRATEGIC FOCUS



## 2. More Reporters, Better Reporting

We champion sustainability reporting, promoting its uptake among all types of organizations around the world and support organizations to improve and maximize their reporting efforts.

## 3. Moving Beyond Reports

We push the dialogue on extracting the most value from the reporting process, helping the increasingly diverse range of data users tap into sustainability information.

## 4. Innovation and Collaboration

We drive a combined effort across sectors to unlock the power of sustainability data and innovate new collaborative reporting solutions.

### G4-DMA

**Our Organizational Goals:** To translate our four strategic areas into concrete outcomes, we set ourselves four organizational goals for the year 2015-2016:

### 1. Increase GRI's influence on the global stage and in public policy.

Participate in key processes shaping the sustainability agenda such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UN Framework on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP21), to promote the need for reporting and transparency. Support and convene governments and policymakers, including market regulators, to incorporate reporting into policy instruments, and track policy development trends.

**Progress:** Together with our partners, GRI was a leader in the business engagement stream at the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York, and we collaborated on a number of SDG enabling initiatives (see page 19 for details). GRI was referred to in 14 policy initiatives this reporting year (11 from stock exchanges), and we used our voice to support the transparency agenda at COP21.

**2. Transition to GRI Standards.** Implement a new GRI Standards governance structure by filling all vacant roles and activating governance bodies. Prepare the draft GRI Standards and release for public comment. Promote the public comment opportunity widely and inform the network on the main proposed changes so as to optimize input from stakeholders.

**Progress:** The new governance structure became operational during the reporting period. The draft GRI Standards were released for public comment, and received over 1,100 individual comments, capturing a diverse set of stakeholder opinions to inform GRI Standards' development.

**3. Host the 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference.** Convene a global community of sustainability leaders and practitioners to explore cutting-edge topics in reporting, transparency and sustainability.

**Progress:** The Conference attracted over 1,100 sustainability leaders and practitioners from over

70 countries, covering 36 sectors including business, government, NGOs and academia (see pages 40-46 for more details). The Conference voiced a call for companies to truly embrace the new era of sustainability and disclosure, and gave participants a preview of the forthcoming GRI Standards. The role of technology, and the SDGs in particular, sparked exciting conversations and debates. We also announced over a dozen new partnerships during the Conference.

**4. Grow and diversify income streams.** Build on our long-standing relationships with governmental donors and include new partners. Improve and innovate revenue streams to add more value to GRI's network. Achieve a balanced and diversified funding base.



**Progress:** We achieved our aim for a diversified revenue stream. We welcomed one new governmental partner, Germany, who joined long-standing partners in working with us to advance sustainable economic development through greater transparency. We also expanded our offerings to the GRI GOLD Community (formerly known as Organizational Stakeholders), and innovated our service lines to better meet the needs of the network and optimize revenues.

Based on our Theory of Change, we have identified measures that help us better understand our indirect impacts (see Figure 2). Understanding our indirect impacts can help us determine whether our assumptions and activities are indeed leading us toward our ultimate goal – a sustainable global economy.

**Our Operational Goals 2015-2016:** We had four operational goals as shown in Figure 3. These are highlighted throughout this report.

**Operational Goal 1:** Report on indirect impacts of GRI and its Sustainability Reporting Framework

FIG. 2

### GRI'S INDIRECT IMPACTS

G4-2

#### Indirect impact – Our work helps:

Governments to develop policy instruments to increase sustainability disclosures

Companies and other organizations to develop and publish reports

Stakeholders to develop tools and campaigns that utilize the data

Professionals to work in jobs such as sustainability reporting managers, chief sustainability officers, consultants, assurance providers and others

#### Quantifying the impact:

Almost 400 instruments in 64 countries documented in 2016

33,828 sustainability reports registered in the GRI Database as of 30 June 2016

We documented a selection of 50 case studies of NGOs, investors, journalists, and consumer groups utilizing reported data for campaigns, apps, tools and stories during the reporting period

The UK alone has an estimated 4,000 sustainability professionals and 25,000 people with significant work-related interests in this field<sup>1</sup>

FIG. 3

### GRI'S OPERATIONAL GOALS

- Goal 1** Report on indirect impacts of GRI and its Sustainability Reporting Framework (page 8)
- Goal 2** Establish a solid base year and a consistent measuring methodology for travel related emissions (page 46)
- Goal 3** Continue diversifying funding sources in line with the strategic focus (page 51)
- Goal 4** Continue to strive for balanced gender representation in the governance bodies (page 59)

<sup>1</sup>) Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/institute-corporate-responsibility-icrs-sustainability-professionals>





# Strategic Context: Opportunities and Challenges for GRI

G4-2

The sustainability landscape is broad and dynamic. It's important for us to have a good insight into current and future challenges and opportunities that will shape our work, and that we can influence by advancing the role of reporting and transparency in this rapidly changing arena. Here we present a selection of the key trends that are currently shaping our landscape.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Growing global focus on sustainability

As major agreements such as the UN Sustainable Agenda and the Paris Agreement move into implementation stages, there are more opportunities for GRI to advance the transparency and accountability agenda. We will do this through partnerships and our main activities and network channels.

### Policy instruments on the rise for sustainability reporting, especially from market regulators and stock exchanges

The sharp increase in the number of policy instruments over the last three years, with more than 400 in effect

today<sup>2</sup>, and the EU Directive on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information (Directive 2014/95/EU) coming into effect in January 2017, create the conditions for sustainability information to truly become a part of mainstream decision making.

### Launch of GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards

With the evolution of GRI's core product into a global standard, we expect to see a rise in the number of companies using GRI Standards; improved ability of governments to reference GRI Standards; and the innovation of diverse applications of GRI Standards, such as for SMEs. We expect a significant increase in data and the active use of reported data as a result.

### Greater collaboration taking place between organizations, across sectors

Organizations of all types are increasingly working together to create new solutions and consolidate existing tools and approaches under the new Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda. We envision better alignment of tools and therefore improved utility of such tools as a result.



<sup>2</sup>) KPMG, 2016. [Carrots & Sticks: Global Trends in Sustainability Reporting Regulation and Policy, 2016.](#)



## CHALLENGES

### Challenging funding environment with development aid budgets on the decline, and a highly competitive market for services

We will focus on building out our well established income streams, for example through our report services and the GRI GOLD Community, to ensure we continue to add value to the network and also maintain our financial reserves. In this reporting period we formed a new unit for Institutional Funding and Program Partnerships which increases our capacity to forge new partnership opportunities with governments and foundations.

### Fast changing and experimental landscape for corporate reporting

The overall practice of corporate reporting is in the spotlight, and there is much innovation around metrics, valuation, and defining the reporting needs of sectors and stakeholders. The increasing pace of emerging issues and the proliferation for standards, frameworks and protocols combine to create a dynamic arena. As the provider of the most widely used sustainability reporting standard, we will continue to position GRI as an open source platform upon which others can build and experiment, but also balance this with the need for clarity, greater

value and reduced reporting burden for organizations.

### Being a truly global organization

This has been one of the challenges from GRI's inception. With very little direct in-country representation, we can't always be involved in the conversations and action as much as we would like. We appreciate our wide network of partners such as Certified Training Partners, Data Partners, and members of GRI's governing bodies specifically GRI Stakeholder Council members, who help bridge this gap, and will look to activate our wider network even more intensively going forward.

# THE VALUE OF SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING

The reporting process enables organizations to consider the sustainability risks and opportunities they face, spanning the economy, environment, corporate governance and society. By reporting and communicating about the impacts they create as a result of their daily business operations, organizations and their stakeholders have the information they need to make better decisions to optimize positive impacts and reduce risk. This helps build and maintain trust, improve performance, and ultimately leads to a more sustainable economy and world.





## GRI STANDARDS



# GRI Standards Highlights



**70,000+**  
**downloads of**  
**G4 Guidelines,**  
supporting documents  
and translations<sup>3</sup>



**36 GRI Standards**  
**created** through  
the reorganization of  
G4 Guidelines into 3  
universal Standards  
and 33 topic-specific  
Standards



**350+ participants**  
**attended**  
**stakeholder**  
**workshops** on the  
draft GRI Standards



**1,100+ individual**  
**public comments**  
received on the draft  
GRI Standards<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>) These numbers are based on the 'User' variable in Google Analytics. The User variable indicates the number of users that had at least one session within a given time range. It includes both new and returning users. The G4 Package includes G4 Reporting Principles and Standard Disclosures, Implementation Manual, and FAQs.

<sup>4</sup>) The Public Comment Period for the draft GRI Standards was open from 19 April to 17 July for the first set of draft Standards, with a second set released for public comment from 3 June to 17 July. Therefore, some of the public comments were captured outside of this reporting period, but the full number received (over 1,100) has been stated here.



## ABOUT

### G4-4

GRI's core product is the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards which helps businesses, governments and other organizations understand and communicate the impact of business on critical sustainability issues. Developed by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) – GRI's independent standard-setting body – GRI Standards are unique: all elements of the reporting framework are created and improved using a consensus-seeking approach, and considering the widest possible range of stakeholder interests. This includes business, civil society, labor, accounting, investors, academics, governments and sustainability reporting practitioners.

GRI Standards are aligned with international instruments including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the ILO Conventions, the UN Global Compact 10 Principles, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, among many

others. Additionally, guidance is provided on how GRI Standards link to many of the common national and international frameworks, helping organizations to streamline their reporting processes for optimum efficiency (see page 16).

### WHAT'S NEW?

In November 2015, the GRI Board formally established the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) to transition GRI's Sustainability Reporting Guidelines into a set of global Standards. By creating the GSSB to oversee this crucial work, we are able to demonstrate that GRI Standards are developed and maintained in an objective and independent manner.

The GSSB initiated the transition from GRI G4 Guidelines into GRI Standards at their first meeting (all GSSB meetings and their related materials are made public on the GRI website). This aim was to restructure content from the G4 Guidelines and Implementation Manual into a set of modular, interrelated GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards



"Transparency is oxygen for markets. The more there is, the better everybody can breathe. GRI has spent nearly two decades making it easier for companies to disclose their performance across dozens of previously overlooked categories. The result is dramatically more transparency, exactly where 21st century investors increasingly need it." *Eric Roston, Sustainability Editor, Bloomberg LP<sup>5</sup>*

In December 2015, the G3 and G3.1 versions of the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and related supporting services were discontinued and the G4 version came into full effect. G4 will be valid until 1 July 2018, after which, only the GRI Standards will be valid for use by organizations.

5) Quote taken from GRI news article [Bloomberg LP announced as Lead Media Partner for the GRI Global Conference 2016](#), 9 March 2016.



(GRI Standards) which would ultimately be launched in October 2016.

The shift from Guidelines to Standards meets three key needs:

**Faster response times for new and revised reporting measurements:** There are ever-changing demands for new and improved disclosures; by creating a modular structure it will allow for timely updates and expansion.

**Marketplace demand for a global platform to consolidate sustainability reporting:** Requirements and demands for non-financial information are growing. GRI Standards will give organizations the flexibility to meet the information needs of all their important stakeholders – from comprehensive reports to selected disclosures for targeted purposes.

**Increased credibility:** Reporting standards developed

with true multi-stakeholder contributions and rooted in the public interest make GRI Standards more suitable for referencing in policy initiatives around the world.

The Transition to Standards was carried out in line with the GSSB's Due Process Protocol, which requires public exposure of all draft Standards. Exposure drafts of each of the proposed 36 GRI Standards, as well as the GRI Standards Glossary were released for public comment, with the first set of documents available from 19 April to 17 July 2016, and the second set available from 3 June to 17 July 2016. [View the full timeline of the development of GRI Standards here.](#)

#### FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Key audiences for sustainability information, such as investors and market regulators, are increasingly calling for more and better quality performance data, which will prompt more organizations to begin reporting,



“The modularity of the GRI Standards is really helpful, especially for SMEs where it’s really important to have a low entry point where they can pick the metrics that are useful for them to start their reporting.” *Maria Stoll, BSD Consulting*

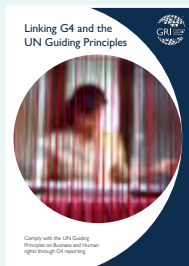


“Some of the definition clarifications are really useful. The restructuring is going to cause some confusion but when people get their heads around it I think it will be fine.” *Jason Perks, GNV DL*

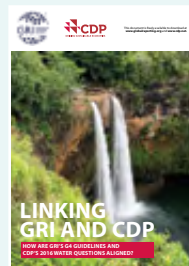
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## Aligning GRI Standards

We work to ensure GRI Standards are aligned with other tools and frameworks, and can be used to comply with regulatory requirements. The following guides were created with our partners during the reporting period:



[Linking G4 and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#)



[Linking GRI and CDP: How Are GRI's G4 Guidelines and CDP's 2016 Water Questions Aligned](#) (Developed with CDP)



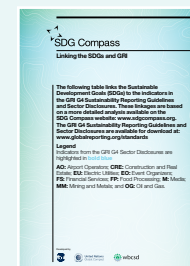
[Linking GRI and CDP: How Are GRI's G4 Guidelines and CDP's 2016 Climate Change Questions Aligned?](#) (Developed with CDP)



[A Resource for Australian Stock Exchange \(ASX\) Listed Companies](#) – Guidance on using the GRI G4 Guidelines to comply with ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations (developed with CPA Australia and KPMG Australia)



[Linking G4 and The Hong Kong Stock Exchange \(HKEX\) ESG Reporting Guide](#) (Developed with support from Business Environment Council, Bloomberg, CLP Group, NWS Holdings)



[SDG Compass: Linking The SDGs and GRI](#) (developed with UN Global Compact and World Business Council for Sustainable Development)

This is especially important in light of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. To gain input on our specific plans to evolve the GRI Standards, the GSSB published its work plan for the coming years in September 2016 for public comment.

### FUTURE CHALLENGES

In addition to attracting more first-time reporting organizations, the challenge over the coming months will be ensuring all current G4 reporters make the

switch to the new GRI Standards as smoothly as possible. We believe that the benefits in transitioning to the Standards will outweigh the risks and will put organizations at the forefront of sustainability reporting practices.

A further challenge will be ensuring all supporting materials such as linkage documents, translations, training courses and services are updated in a timely manner to reflect the new GRI Standards.



“The GRI Standards will provide a lot of credibility and technical precision, and also the opportunity to develop new topics faster. It’s a fast-moving world these days so you can’t just do an update once every five years.” *Anna Nefedova, Deloitte & Touché LLP*





## OUR FOUR STRATEGIC AREAS IN FOCUS



## Enabling Smart Policy Highlights



**14 new references to GRI Standards in policy**, compared with 4 new references in the last reporting period. Total of 41 references.

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**Released the SDG Compass** with UN Global Compact and World Business Council for Sustainable Development at the UN Sustainable Development Summit

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**Developed SDG Target 12.6 Live Tracker** with Tata Consultancy Services for monitoring sustainability reporting globally

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**Co-hosted 2 key events at COP21** playing a role in influencing the Paris Agreement

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# Enabling Smart Policy

## ABOUT

### G4-DMA

As sustainability reporting becomes ever more integral to global action on environmental and social issues, so too do the policies, regulations, standards and other instruments that require or encourage organizations to report.

We advocate the use of reporting standards by governments and market regulators in their policy instruments to help ensure a level playing field and increase transparency and comparability among businesses.

## WHAT'S NEW?

We've seen a surge in sustainability reporting policy instruments in the last few years, with nearly 400 instruments in 64 countries documented in 2016.<sup>6</sup> Capital markets in particular are increasingly issuing reporting guidance, and using the GRI Standards as a reference. Out of the 14 new specific references to GRI in policy and reporting requirements this reporting period, 11 came from stock exchanges, with the growth of reporting instruments in Europe, Asia Pacific and

Latin America particularly strong. This upswing marks a distinctive shift in the policy dialogue – evolving from supporting sustainability reporting in general, toward supporting standardized sustainability reporting.

### GRI's work on the SDGs

The UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015 represented a truly momentous landmark in history: more than 150 world leaders gathered to adopt the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will inform sustainable development policy and related agenda until 2030.

We organized an official side event, 'Enabling and tracking business contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals', with the Permanent Mission of France. During the event, the SDG Target 12.6 - Live Tracker was launched. Developed by GRI in collaboration with Tata Consultancy Services, the Live Tracker enables governments and other interested stakeholders to visualize and track the state of sustainability reporting in all countries.

At the Private Sector Forum (PSF) we launched the SDG Compass – a tool developed jointly by GRI, the



6) KPMG, 2016. Carrots & Sticks: Global trends in sustainability reporting regulation and policy. Accessed via: [www.globalreporting.org/resource/library/Carrots%20and%20Sticks-2016.pdf](http://www.globalreporting.org/resource/library/Carrots%20and%20Sticks-2016.pdf)

UN Global Compact (UNGC) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), which guides companies in taking a strategic approach to the SDGs and enhancing their contribution to sustainable development through core business activities.

### Influencing the historic outcome at COP21

Our main aim at the 21st annual meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris was to advance the need for transparency and reporting as an integral part of the solution for both governments and business. For the first time, every nation on Earth committed to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions, to keep warming well below 2-degrees Celsius.

In partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), we hosted two key events at COP21 with business, government and civil society; and were invited to speak at many sub-conferences including the Sustainable Innovation Forum, and the WBCSD's event: Turning Global Catastrophic Climate Risk into Opportunities with New Tools. We also actively engaged with government delegations, UN representatives, business leaders, and media to help influence the historic outcome.

### GRI enabling business action on human rights

In November 2015, we participated in the Fourth United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights, the world's largest gathering on the subject. During the Forum, we launched our reporting resource [Linking G4](#)

[and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#). The publication highlights the connections between the two instruments and supported the overall theme of the event which was measurement and reporting on implementation of the Guiding Principles.

### Governmental Advisory Group

The Governmental Advisory Group is a high-level advisory body that provides GRI's Board and Executive Management with a direct source of advice from governments. To ensure breadth of perspective, where possible the Group includes representatives from ministries and agencies with a direct interest in sustainability and reporting. The GRI Chief Executive and/or Deputy Chief Executive participate on an ex-officio basis. In addition, the Chair of the GRI Stakeholder Council attends Group meetings.

Over the reporting period, the Group met twice. In October, 2015 the meeting focused on the newly adopted SDGs. Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw shared some critically important insights on the process of development and universal relevance of the SDGs. The Group further looked at policy developments worldwide on corporate transparency and discussed the developments of National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights. The Group reconvened at a working dinner just before the GRI Global Conference in May 2016. The Group was enriched by contribution of several guests from



“The SDG Compass guides business on aligning strategies and reporting with the SDGs to mobilize even more action.” *UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon*<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>) This quote was taken from [UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's speech](#) at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York 26 November 2015.<sup>1</sup>



security exchange commissions and stock exchanges, and national statistical offices. The main themes of the meeting were closely related to the those discussed at the Conference, in addition to a brief policy update and a review of the latest edition of [Carrots & Sticks: Global Trends in Sustainability Reporting Regulation and Policy](#).

### FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

As the SDGs become increasingly incorporated into government policies and business strategies, GRI is well placed to provide the reporting tools to capture and monitor private sector progress towards the goals. Going forward, we will work closely with the UN Global Compact to define this space. We will also focus our efforts on building alignment between private sector data, national sustainability statistics, and global level statistics.

We plan to increase our collaboration with organizations such as the Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative (SSE) to help maintain the momentum among stock exchanges and market regulators for reporting. In 2017, the EU Directive on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information comes fully into effect, and we are ready to support all EU member states with reporting guidance.

### FUTURE CHALLENGES

While GRI Standards are the most widely used and trusted in the world, there is still work to be done informing policy makers of the use and benefits of GRI Standards. This year's transition from reporting guidelines to standards will help significantly, since the new GRI Standards have been developed with true multi-stakeholder contributions and are rooted in the

public interest. Further improvements to the structure and format of the content also make them more suitable for referencing in policy initiatives around the world.

A second challenge will be to work with governments and other partners to expand the benefits of reporting to SMEs and supply chains, without creating unnecessary reporting burden for these smaller organizations.



For full details on how GRI helps enable smart policy, take a look at our publication [Enabling Smart Policy: The Role of GRI Standards](#).



## More Reporters, Better Reporting Highlights



**3,500+ people in 54 countries attended GRI Certified Training Courses**, taking the total to over 26,000



**811 alignment services performed** namely: Materiality Disclosure Service, Content Index Service, and Application Level Service<sup>8</sup>



**9,240 reports added to the GRI Sustainability Disclosure Database** taking the total to 33,828



**54 SMEs completed the GRI Business Transparency Program** an in-depth year-long training on sustainability reporting

8) Application Level Service was discontinued from 1 January 2016.



# More Reporters, Better Reporting

G4-4

G4-9

## ABOUT

We provide tools and services to guide and equip report preparers at every stage of the process, which includes: preparation, alignment, communication and analysis. We also provide tools to assist report users in their data search.

## WHAT'S NEW?

### Supporting organizations in their SDG commitments

We launched an SDG Mapping Service to assist organizations looking to report on their progress related to the SDGs in their sustainability reports. In this reporting period, 9 organizations utilized the service (it was launched in February 2016). This was a higher number than we were expecting considering the timeframes needed for businesses to incorporate the newly launched Global Goals into their business strategies and reporting processes. In light of this early adoption, we have high expectations for the service in the coming year.

### Building skills for reporting

GRI Certified Training Partners (CTPs) help generate a deeper understanding of the value of sustainability reporting among organizations around the world, and support organizations in getting the most out of the reporting process.

This year, we welcomed seven new training partners, taking it to a total of 79 CTPs covering 54 countries and regions. These training partners collectively trained over 3,500 participants around the world.

To respond to changing conditions in the market, greater demand for diverse content, and the need to scale up the program to ensure all markets are adequately served, we worked with existing and potential CTPs to review the terms and conditions of the program. We streamlined and standardized our contracts with all CTPs and engaged intensively with all partners to transition them to the new system. One of the main changes is that we are now in a profit-sharing arrangement where GRI is incentivized to support its partners even more.



“We have been GRI Certified Training Partners for more than three years. This program helps many Japanese companies and organizations gain a better understanding of sustainability reporting. The program helps remove the misunderstanding Japanese organizations have over sustainability reporting, gives them a good understanding of the reporting process and also the expectations from stakeholders.” *Hiroshi Ishida, Executive Director, Caux Round Table, Japan*



“Being a GRI Certified Training Partner has allowed us to be part of a network where we’re able to tap into best practices and tools and further develop better, more accurate reporting.” *Nancy Mancilla, Co Founder ISOS Group*



### Transparency vital in tackling global challenges

In an effort to demonstrate why reporting is an important part of the business response to global challenges, we took on four key issues this year and developed new learning material in an effort to help companies boost their reporting practices: gender equality; anti-corruption; supply chain; and climate change.

### Access for all: E-Learning Platform

To maximize our global reach in a sustainable way and to continue building expert knowledge on sustainability reporting, we developed a new e-learning program, and populated it with our new courses listed above, plus an introductory course to sustainability reporting; and new material on biodiversity, emissions, and child labor. In a four-month period, the platform attracted over 250 registrants, signaling a solid level of interest.

### FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

#### Increasing demand for GRI learning courses

Sustainability reporting is increasingly filtering down

from the big multinationals and seasoned reporters, to the small and medium sized organizations in their supply chains. Reporting is also fastest growing in emerging markets like Asia and Latin America. There are hundreds of new reporting-related policy instruments affecting tens of thousands of companies globally. Taken together, this is likely to raise the demand for both in-person local and e-learning courses as more companies and practitioners are tasked with building their internal capacity to report in a cost effective way.

### FUTURE CHALLENGES

#### Ensuring our current users are supported in the transition to Standards

We need to ensure that we continue to develop useful, impactful support and services that correspond to the new GRI Standards as they evolve. Our priority is to help make the transition as easy and smooth as possible for existing reporters.



“The course was very detailed with videos and related material and brings out the sustainability concept in a very clear way.” *Nandkumar Vadakepatth, Regional Manager – Sustainability Services, DNV GL – Sustainability*



“I have been able to acquire knowledge of the key terms and topics around sustainability reporting and I would be comfortable conversing with a professional who works in that field.” *Katharina Jungblut, Sourcing Manager, Danone*



“The GRI Certified Training Program is extremely important in Hong Kong. With help from GRI’s Certified Training Team, we are working to increase the quality of sustainability reporting in Hong Kong.” *Tony Wong, Founder Alaya Consulting Limited*

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## GRI Sustainability Disclosure Database and Data Partners

It is our ambition to compile the most complete collection of sustainability reports possible for information seekers worldwide. We work with 36 Data Partners in 49 countries to collect and process information about published sustainability reports – both GRI and non-GRI aligned. We capture this information in the publically available Sustainability Disclosure Database.

In this reporting period, 9,240 sustainability reports were added to the GRI Sustainability Disclosure

Database, taking the total to 33,828 reports by 30 June 2016. This is an increase of 144% on the number of total reports added in the previous reporting period. This surge in reports added to the database comes from GRI's proactive efforts to add new reports.

For more information, please visit the GRI Sustainability Disclosure Database at: <http://database.globalreporting.org>.

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### COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF REPORTS CAPTURED IN THE GRI DATABASE IN 2015<sup>9</sup>

- 1 **Taiwan**
- 2 **USA**
- 3 **Brazil**

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### SECTORS WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF REPORTS CAPTURED IN THE GRI DATABASE IN 2015<sup>9</sup>

- 1 **Financial Services**
  - 2 **Energy**
  - 3 **Food and produce**
- 

<sup>9</sup> See disclaimer in Annex III for details on these statistics. The country statistics above are influenced by GRI's proactive efforts to collect sustainability data from certain regions during the reporting period and are therefore not necessarily representative of the global state of sustainability reporting in 2015.



## Moving Beyond Reports Highlights



**546 GOLD Community members from 70 countries**, including 41 developing countries



**GOLD Community members from 6 new countries:** Taiwan, New Zealand, Malaysia, Tajikistan, Costa Rica and Venezuela



**8 Leadership Labs and 8 GOLD Roundtables held**, furthering the discussions on reporting trends and best practice



**7 thought leadership publications** produced highlighting emerging trends in reporting



## Moving Beyond Reports

Our role in thinking beyond the sustainability report is to help the increasingly diverse range of users tap into the sustainability information they need, enabling them to use this information in more innovative ways.

### ABOUT

GOLD Community members form the core of GRI's global network and through their participation they play a crucial role in enabling us to carry out our mission. Formerly known as the Organizational Stakeholder (OS) Program, the GOLD Community includes representation from civil society, business, mediating institutions, academia, labor, public agencies and intergovernmental agencies.

With last year's arrival of the post-2015 Development Agenda and the ambitious agreements made at COP21, businesses have been called upon to take action towards a more sustainable world. The GRI GOLD Community helps its members unlock the real value of sustainability information to support these important goals.

We provide exclusive benefits and opportunities to

the GOLD Community, keeping them up to date on the latest insights and trends.

G	GATEWAYS TO NETWORKING & COLLABORATION
O	OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFILING & VISIBILITY
L	LEADING EDGE KNOWLEDGE & INSIGHTS
D	DEDICATED SERVICES & SUPPORT

### WHAT'S NEW?

The GRI GOLD Community was launched in February 2016. The best aspects of GRI's former OS Program (as advised by OS members) were merged with additional benefits, in order to create the new GRI GOLD Community program.

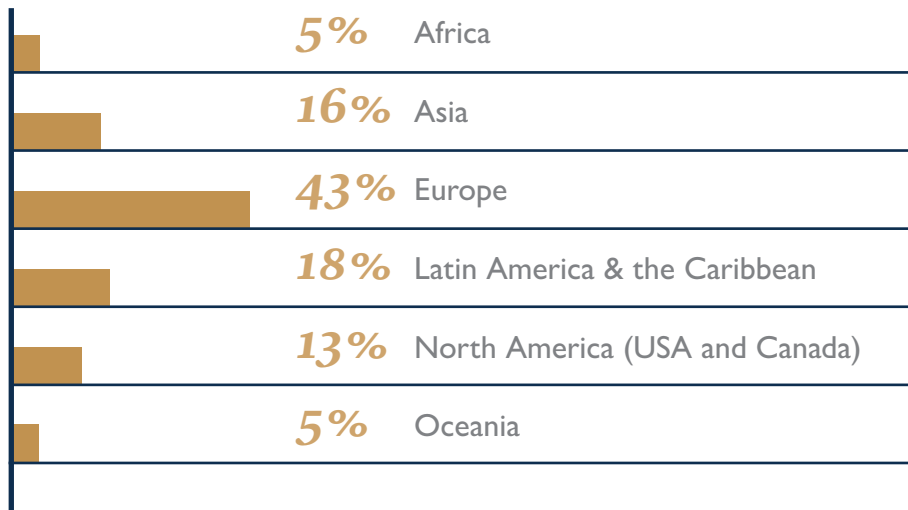


“The GRI GOLD Community provides us with important networking opportunities and essential skills and tools to ensure that social and environmental reporting becomes increasingly more embedded in our company's policies.” *Licia Veronesi, Intesa Sanpaolo*



“We want to give our clients the best advice and support we can in their efforts to drive more responsible behaviors in their business. Being a GRI GOLD Community member helps us achieve our mission to support entrepreneurs and ‘intrapreneurs’ who are helping make business a force for good in the world.” *Adam Garfunkel, Managing Director, Junxion*

FIG. 4 GOLD COMMUNITY – REGIONAL OVERVIEW



An exclusive program full of learning opportunities, both on and offline was developed. The online program is centered around the implementation of the GRI Standards and major sustainability topics, such as human rights, climate change and the SDGs.

The offline program includes GOLD Peer Learning Roundtables which were launched in the USA in February 2016 and rolled out in Brazil, Colombia, Germany, and the Netherlands thereafter. The Roundtables aim to guide reporters through every

phase of the reporting cycle (see more details on page 31).

Compared with the end of the previous reporting period, the number of members has stayed approximately the same (546 GOLD Members on 30 June 2016 compared with 568 Organizational Stakeholder members on 30 June 2015).

The program has seen an increase in popularity in North America, especially among larger companies,



“We believe that a major step towards better reporting and transparency is to be part of a leading global group of organizations working towards more sustainable practices, and the GRI GOLD Community provides that through a valuable member network, high-level discussions and workshops. We expect to learn from several experts and GRI GOLD Community partners with different points of view and experiences, helping us improve our actions and our sustainability reporting.” *Álvaro Lorenz, Global Technical Director, Votorantim Cimentos*

providing more financial support for the program. Considering the USA is the second largest GRI reporting country in the world according to our Sustainability Disclosures Database, we plan to expand the GOLD Community further in this important reporting region.

The 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference that took place in May was also a big success for the GOLD Community, with three exclusive sessions on materiality and country-level activities, and members having the opportunity

to network during the GOLD Community evening celebration.

### FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The program for the coming year will be heavily influenced by the transition to GRI Standards with substantial outreach during the launch of the GRI Standards including numerous GOLD Community exclusives and in-person events. We will also aim to scale up our GOLD Peer Learning Roundtables in various countries around the world. A new online program to provide our GOLD Community with the most up-to-date and in-depth information is also planned.

### FUTURE CHALLENGES

The ongoing economic crisis in certain regions in the world makes it more challenging to recruit organizations to the program, especially in places where weak or fluctuating currency against the Euro makes it more difficult for organizations to join. We are pleased to have so many leaders in our network, but we still meet so many others where sustainability is not yet embraced at the highest levels and therefore reporting and participation in such networks as GOLD are still not valued. We do expect to see an increase in interest as more policies and regulations come into place, effectively raising the profile of sustainability for business globally.

### Sustainability and Reporting 2025

The Sustainability and Reporting 2025 project was

established in 2015 to identify and explore the main issues facing companies 10 years from now. In this reporting period, two publications were launched summarizing the key findings of the project (see box on page 30).

We also convened business executives and thought leaders from various fields at a trends forum in Rome in October 2015 to explore what the next 10 years of sustainability and reporting might look like.

Based on the main findings, the next phase of the Sustainability and Reporting 2025 project will focus on how the use of data technology can unlock the power of sustainability data to create transformational change.

### Corporate Leadership Groups

To advance the global discussion around the future of reporting and explore innovative solutions to common challenges we created two Corporate Leadership Groups (CLGs) made up of GOLD Community members and other experts.

The Corporate Leadership Group on Reporting 2025, made up of 13 members, looked at four macro trends: climate change, human rights, wealth inequality and data and technology. Four leadership labs were held during the reporting period to address questions related to the trends, and a publication, to be released at the end of 2016, will share the insights to further stimulate international discussion. Going forward, with the

## We predict new formats for sustainability reporting and real-time stakeholder interaction

The future will involve new formats with organizations moving from annual reports to sustainability data exchange, while focusing on major challenges like climate change and human rights. All of this will be coupled with a new role for stakeholders, who will be empowered by almost real-time interactions with companies.



“As members, we have the opportunity to hear and learn from the different points of view that are expressed around the same table – this is how good decisions are made.” *Michel Washer, Deputy Chief Sustainability Officer, Solvay*



“It’s really nice to be in the company of people who think very similarly to you. They have similar issues, but not the same, so it really enhances each other’s thinking.” *Eda G. Pogany, Group External Affairs Director, Coca-Cola HBC AG*

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up-take of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the CLG on Reporting 2025 will continue as Reporting 2030, exploring the mega trends in sustainability and the SDGs, the implications for business, and ways to improve sustainability disclosures.

The Corporate Leadership Group on Integrated Reporting, made up of 11 members, focused on how to leverage existing robust sustainability practice for the purpose of integrated reporting. Four leadership labs were held during this reporting period to explore the topic, and a publication, released in October 2016, shared the insights on the discussions. Going forward, the CLG will collaborate with the International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) to explore ways to leverage the GRI Standards and International Integrated Reporting <IR> Framework to further embed sustainability into business strategy.

## Thought leadership on reporting

Our long-standing knowledge of sustainability reporting combined with our access to a diverse range of experts and collaborative work with other international organizations enables us to capture innovative and emerging trends in reporting. Here is an overview of the thought leadership resources we created this year:



[Carrots & Sticks: Global trends in sustainability reporting regulation and policy](#). Developed in partnership with KPMG, UNEP, and CCGA.



[Defining What Matters: Do companies and investors agree on what is material?](#) Research conducted with RobecoSAM, and supported by the Alcoa Foundation.



[Extractives Sector Reporting in Australia – Current Trends and Emerging Topics](#). Research conducted by EY and supported by DFAT.



[Land Tenure Rights: The need for transparency among companies worldwide](#). Supported by DFID.



[Sustainability and Reporting Trends in 2025](#). An output of the Sustainability and Reporting 2025 Project. Supported by Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship, Enel, EY, and SAP



[Sustainability Disclosure: The ASEAN Extractives Sector](#). Research conducted by CSR Asia and supported by DFAT.



[The Next Era of Corporate Disclosure](#). An output of the Sustainability and Reporting 2025 Project. Supported by Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship, Enel, EY, and SAP.



## Regional Hub North America

### FOCUS COUNTRIES

***USA and Canada***

**Located:** New York and Boston, USA

### CORPORATE OUTREACH

Engaging with sustainability reporters is a key part of our work in North America, which is why the GOLD Community Roundtables were first launched globally in San Francisco and Atlanta.

The GOLD Roundtables work by promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing among local reporting organizations and empowering them to generate better reports and to unlock new ways to use their sustainability data. Roundtable participants work together to tackle issues related to important reporting topics and explore ways to advance sustainability reporting practices, going beyond the technical 'how to' of reporting to consider embedding data as a strategic business tool.



## Regional Hub Brazil

### FOCUS COUNTRIES

***Brazil***

**Located:** São Paulo, Brazil

### CORPORATE OUTREACH

Brazil continues to show a growing interest in reporting: 31% of all Latin American GRI reports submitted to the GRI Sustainability Database in 2015 came from Brazilian organizations.

To tap into this significant region, showcase the value of the GRI Global Conference and hear local views on sustainability reporting, the Regional Hub Brazil held events in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Curitiba in November 2015 as part of the run-up to the 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference. The events provided lively discussions about sustainability progress, challenges and the plans for the next 10 years.



## Innovation & Collaboration Highlights



**30 members joined the GRI Technology Consortium**

to explore how sustainability data can transform both business and policy decision making

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**The GRI Digital Reporting Alliance was launched** to

address key challenges: the lack of structured data and the lack of demand for digital reporting

---



**30+ partnerships between GRI and other international organizations** were

formed to develop new initiatives in the reporting landscape

---



**Over 1,100 sustainability leaders and practitioners** from

business, government, NGOs and academia attended the 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference

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# Innovation

## ABOUT

We aim to unlock the power of sustainability data from the thousands of reports created over the past 20 years, and ensure that future reporting practice results in easily accessible and usable data. Technology plays a key role in this context. As our Sustainability and Reporting 2025 initiative highlighted, the future of sustainability disclosure and its influence on critical decision-making processes will be defined by our ability to use innovation to unlock the value of sustainability data.

## WHAT'S NEW?

### GRI Technology Consortium

As a first step we launched a technology and innovation think-tank, the GRI Technology Consortium, convening leaders in innovation to promote a dialogue about how sustainability data and information can enable better decision-making. Chaired by sustainability thought-leader and author John Elkington, the Consortium brings together over 30 organizations and individuals who share the common goal of creating innovations from data and bringing the sustainability movement into the digital age.

The Consortium highlighted current and future solutions that use sustainability data to enhance decision making for both business and government, and provided recommendations regarding sustainability, technology, and data. The group presented a first set of recommendations at the GRI Global Conference in May 2016:

1. Reports and communications should be data enabled
2. Ensure closer alignment among digital taxonomies for all corporate reports
3. An open global repository of public sustainability data is needed
4. Build on the work of the last two decades rather than reinvent the wheel
5. Collaboration is crucial

These recommendations resulted in the formation of the Digital Reporting Alliance.

### GRI Digital Reporting Alliance

Launched during the 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference, the GRI Digital Reporting Alliance was created to address two key challenges: the lack of structured data and the lack of demand for digital reporting. The Alliance

will address these issues by organizing the technical infrastructure around digital reporting, namely in XBL taxonomy, and creating a platform to file reports. The Alliance also aims to create demand for digital reporting by uniting stakeholders in a concerted effort to request digital sustainability information from companies.



"TCS is proud to be associated with GRI to emphasize on the value GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards deliver as well as the role of technology in unleashing the power of sustainability information to attain positive change." *Girish Ramachandran, Head of the Asia Pacific (APAC) region of TCS*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Quote taken from GRI article '[GRI and TCS combine strengths to drive change](#)', 9 March 2016.



# Collaboration

## ABOUT

G4-24 G4-25 G4-26 G4-27 G4-DMA

UN Sustainable Development Goal #17 calls for a renewal of global partnerships for sustainable development, and declares that the SDGs can only be achieved with a strong commitment to cooperation. We try to bring this to life every day through our network and partners.

### Our Network

GRI is a network-based organization, and one of the longest running multi-stakeholder platforms advancing sustainability in the world. Our global community spans tens of thousands of leaders, partners, reporting organizations, experts and others involved in sustainability and reporting. We engage these groups to govern our organization, build our reporting standards, share knowledge about how to report, build capacity to use reported data, advance policy and regulation on reporting, raise funds and work in collaboration on projects and other activities.

### Feedback, complaints and action

In Figure 5 we present a close look at our affected

FIG. 5

## AFFECTED STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder group	Examples of stakeholder feedback
Contributors to Draft GRI Standards	1,100 individual submissions were received via official channels; all comments were analyzed by the GSSB and GRI Standards Division in the finalization of the Standards.
Corporate Engagement Program members	Organizational Stakeholder (OS) feedback was central in the design of the new GOLD Community program which was launched in February 2016.
Governments and multilaterals	GRI's four largest institutional donors met at the inaugural All Donors Meeting to advise GRI on its development programs and identify synergistic opportunities for future partnerships.
Professional network: training partners, data partners, and GRI's own service clients.	3,500 people took courses offered by our Certified Training Partners this reporting period, and to receive their certificate they had to undertake a survey on the quality of content and trainers.
GRI Employees	The GRI Works Council (independent body of Amsterdam-based employees) collected feedback from Amsterdam-based staff regarding their level of satisfaction and human resources topics they would like to see addressed which resulted in the review of the Performance Management Approach.
General public engagement	Anyone is able to interact with GRI through our social media sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter. We track comments, most popular posts and other data to understand what content our network appreciates, and use this to shape our editorial plan.

stakeholders, or those that may be intentionally or unintentionally impacted by our work, and to whom we are therefore accountable. We treat stakeholder feedback and concerns seriously and address issues as promptly as possible. GRI's definition of a complaint is "an expression of dissatisfaction to an activity or service not conducted as committed to by GRI and where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected". Complaints are identified, registered, assessed, actioned, and evaluated as per GRI's Complaints Policy & Procedure. In this reporting period, GRI received no complaints.

## WHAT'S NEW?

G4-I5 G4-I6 G4-DMA

### Our Partners

Successful innovation requires a new spirit of collaboration and inclusiveness in the reporting field, ensuring organizations work together towards a common goal of building trust in businesses and governments. Over the past year, we have been building exciting new relationships with a range of organizations, both inside and outside of the reporting field, and deepening existing relationships through joint projects and initiatives to further the sustainability agenda.

We coordinate with a wide array of other organizations to advance reporting and transparency in the following

general ways:

**Alignment with other normative frameworks and principles:** Demonstrating how GRI reporting can help support the accountability and transparency mechanisms of codes, principles and other commitments companies make. In this reporting period, for example, we aligned or reconfirmed our alignment with the United Nations Global Compact 'Ten Principles' and the UN 'Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights'.

**Technical synergies with other reporting frameworks or requirements:** Aligning our Standards with other widely used or generally accepted reporting frameworks to contribute ease of use and value for companies and data users alike. This year we re-aligned our reporting guidance with CDP and the Australian and Hong Kong stock exchanges, among others.

**Partnerships to advance knowledge and skills:** Working together with partners to share knowledge or build capacity for reporting through our networks. Examples of our strategic partnerships in this reporting period include the International Organization of Employers (IOE) – the world's largest private sector network – the Danish Institute on Human Rights (DIHR), and Transparency International.

More information about our [strategic alliances](#) is available online.



“We are pleased to renew our long-standing and essential collaboration with GRI on sustainability reporting. Together we can help companies measure and report on their efforts around the new Sustainable Development Goals, in ways that both show impact and are aligned with emerging best reporting practices.” *Lise Kingo, Executive Director of the UN Global Compact*



“The alignment between GRI and CDP on climate change and water disclosure facilitates more consistent corporate reporting on these physical, regulatory and reputational risks, and their sources, whilst reducing the reporting burden for companies. This also enables financial stakeholders to better understand and compare how businesses are managing climate-related issues for a resilient future.” *Pedro Faria, Technical Director at CDP*<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Taken from GRI news article '[Action on Climate Change: GRI and CDP Announce Latest Guidance for Organizations](#)'.

## Our involvement in other organizations

G4-I5 G4-I6

GRI has been a signatory of the UN Global Compact (UNGC) since 2003, fully supporting the UNGC principles and will continue to promote this initiative going forward. GRI is also a member of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

Our leadership was involved in the following boards related to GRI's mission over the past year:

### Chairman of the GRI Board, Christianna Wood:

- Member of the International Integrated Reporting Council

### (Former) Chairman of the GSSB, Eric Hespeneide:

- Member of AICPA Assurance and Advocacy Sustainability Task Force



**GRI representatives spoke at 249 events in 48 countries during the reporting period.**

- Member of the International Integrated Reporting Council
- Member of the Corporate Reporting Dialogue

### (Former) Chief Executive, Michael Meehan:

- Member of the Global Child Forum Board
- Member of the International Integrated Reporting Council
- Member of the Corporate Reporting Dialogue
- Vice-Chair of National Capital Coalition Board

### Deputy Chief Executive, Teresa Fogelberg:

- Member of Eminent Persons Panel of the Human Rights Reporting and Assurance Framework (RAFI)
- Member of the Netherlands Transparency Benchmark Expert Panel
- Member of the Questionmark Foundation Board



On the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by the UN General Assembly last September, the IOE expressed the firm commitment of the private sector to make a positive contribution to the achievement of the SDGs. Partnering with GRI creates a unique synergy that will allow us to work more effectively towards our shared vision in this area.”

*Linda Kromjong, IOE Secretary-General*



“We have collaborated with GRI for the past 15 years to promote human rights in the corporate sphere. Now we are turning to governments. They too have to realize that human rights are not a cost but an investment with high returns. Protecting and promoting human rights is both the right thing and the smart thing to do.” *Eva Grambye, Deputy Director Danish Institute of Human Rights*

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EMERGING MARKETS

Sustainability issues can often be particularly challenging in emerging markets and developing countries where people are living in conditions of poverty, and where social and environmental protections may not be in place. Our work through our Regional Hubs in Africa, Asia and Latin America contributes to sustainable economic development by helping to improve transparency on the nature and extent of these challenges through better reporting. Our emerging market teams are on the front line of applying the GRI Standards in challenging sustainability conditions and also gathering valuable lessons learned.





## Africa

### FOCUS COUNTRIES

***Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa***

Located: Johannesburg, South Africa

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Integrating sustainability into capital markets**  
We supported the Nigerian, Zimbabwean, and Mauritian stock exchanges as they implemented various reporting instruments for listed companies.
- **Training and capacity building**  
We worked with local partners to provide workshops on sustainability reporting, climate change risk and disclosure, and the SDGs, in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.
- **Knowledge development**  
The results of a three-year research project, undertaken by Incite, on the value of GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines to South African companies were published. Most responding companies stated that their reporting practices have a positive impact on performance. A few however were skeptical of the impact.



## Greater China Region

### FOCUS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

***Hong Kong, Macau, Mainland China, Taiwan***

Located: Beijing, China

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Addressing the challenges Chinese companies face when going global**  
We developed the 2015 Report on the Sustainable Development of Chinese Enterprises Overseas, with SASAC Research Center, CAITEC and UNDP China.
- **Enabling better reporting**  
We launched a linkage document with the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, and Chinese translations of G4 Sector Disclosures. We also held Annual GRI Reporters Meetings in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Taipei.
- **Policy innovation**  
We took part in various projects that aim to upgrade business and sustainability-related policies in China, mainly through providing experts' opinions at consultation meetings.
- **Reporting trends**  
We partnered with BCSD-Taiwan to analyse 400 reports to establish a baseline for continuing observation of the quality of non-financial information disclosure in Taiwanese companies.



## Hispanic America

FOCUS COUNTRIES

***Argentina, Chile, Colombia,  
Mexico, Peru***

Located: Bogota, Colombia

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Thought leadership**  
We focused on sustainability leadership and Latin American Boards, the quality of human rights reporting by Colombian companies, and an exploration of the impacts of sustainability reporting in Colombia and Peru.
- **Building capacity and awareness**  
We organized more than 57 events in collaboration with partners, reaching over 5,500 individuals in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.
- **Supporting SMEs**  
We supported a further 39 SMEs in the region during their first reporting cycle through GRI's Business Transparency Program.



## South Asia

FOCUS COUNTRIES

***Bangladesh, India,  
Sri Lanka***

Located: New Delhi, India

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Capacity building in the region**  
We held workshops in India and Bangladesh on sustainability reporting with a focus on the extractives industry, and held introductory workshops in Sri Lanka. We supported 40 delegates travelling from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to attend the GRI Global Conference.
- **Collaboration with key partners**  
We formed a new partnership with the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) to help companies adopt best practices for reporting, and to help investors factor sustainability into their decisions.



# 5<sup>TH</sup> GRI GLOBAL CONFERENCE



# 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference Highlights



**208 speakers with a gender balance**

of 46% female, 54% male



**12+ new partnerships across sustainable development, data, and technology**

were announced during the Conference



**88% of all participants' expectations were either met or exceeded,** and

plenary sessions were rated 4 out of 5 for overall satisfaction



**#GRI2016 was trending over all three Conference days**

and we received over 4 million impressions on social media

## 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference

The 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference took place in May 2016 and explored the new era of corporate disclosure by convening over 1,100 sustainability leaders and practitioners from business, government, investors, NGOs and academia.

Over 200 expert speakers delivered engaging sessions and plenaries, providing a host of perspectives and approaches to sustainability issues and the future of corporate disclosure.

There was a call for companies to step out of their comfort zones and become truly innovative to embrace the new era of sustainability and disclosure. This new era will be ushered in by the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards – the draft of which were available for further discussion and examination at several sessions and a dedicated information booth at the Conference. The role of technology, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular sparked exciting conversations and debates throughout the Conference.

We also announced over a dozen new partnerships during the Conference, including those with the UN

Global Compact, the Bombay Stock Exchange, and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, to further the sustainability agenda.

We worked together with partners to deliver 14 interactive Master Classes which provided practical guidance on a variety of key sustainability and reporting challenges, ranging from materiality, human rights, stakeholder engagement and communicating sustainability performance.



A number of audience polls were held during the event to gauge a better understanding of current opinion, some of the results are shown on the next page.

[Read a round-up of the Conference here](#), and take a look at the [highlights video](#). Read about our sustainable choices at the Conference on page 5 of the [Conference Highlights report](#).

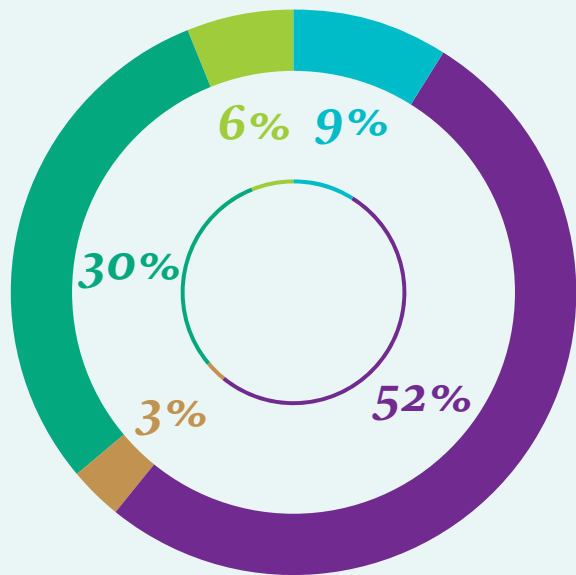


“What inspired me most was the quality of the attendees and the appetite to debate reporting’s hottest topics. I walked away with a head packed full of ideas on how sustainability reporting is currently shifting. GRI succeeded in creating a space which engaged me, got the creative juices flowing, and encouraged me to make new connections.” *Jonathan Morris, Manager BSR*

## Audience Poll Results

FIG. 6

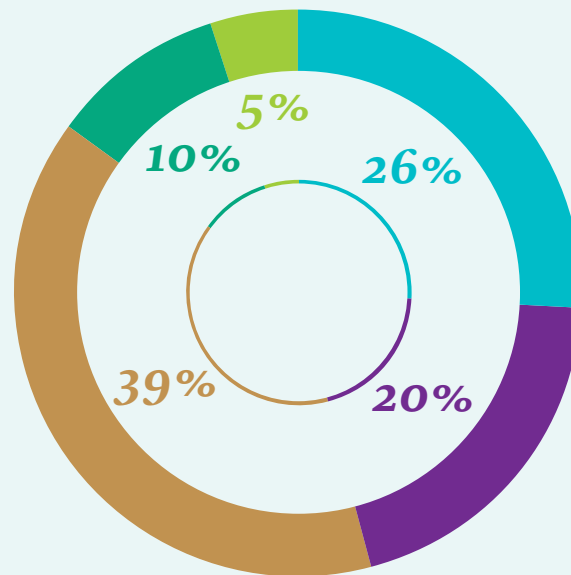
WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO UNLOCKING THE USE OF DATA TO EMPOWER SUSTAINABLE DECISIONS?



- Availability of relevant data
- Data consistency and comparability
- Timeliness of data
- Resources required to collect the information together
- Other

FIG. 7

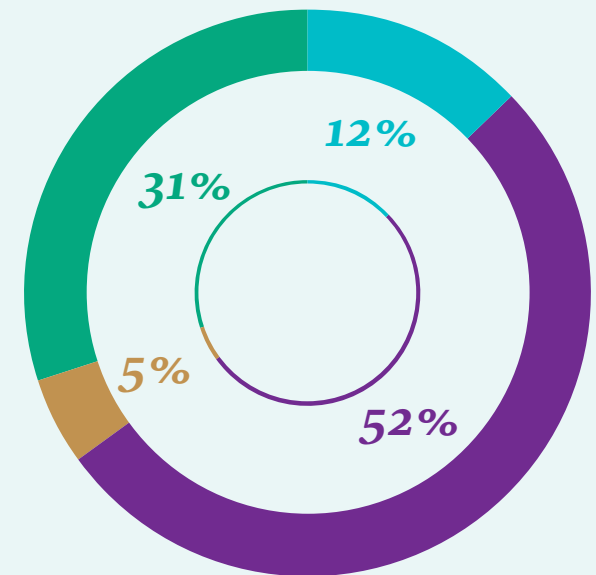
WHAT CHANGES IN SOCIETY ARE DRIVING CHANGES IN REPORTING



- More regulation
- Better corporate leadership
- Increased investor/capital market demand
- Opportunities in "big data"
- Clearer reporting processes

FIG. 8

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BIGGEST BARRIERS ARE TO USING SUSTAINABILITY INFORMATION FOR DECISION MAKING?



- Lack of harmonization across frameworks
- Credibility and comparability of information
- Lack of regulation
- C-Suite engagement



“This is such an exciting time for sustainable business. The SDGs offer huge potential for driving sustainability reporting and trust in business. The SDG framework is the lighthouse guiding us towards a better future.” *Lise Kingo, Executive Director, UN Global Compact*<sup>12</sup>

12) Taken from the GRI news article 'Trust and Transparency: Building Better Business and Policy worldwide'.

“Governments can promote the circumstances for inclusive economic growth but private sector-led investment is the only sustainable engine of inclusive economic growth.” *The Right Honorable Desmond Swayne TD Former Minister of State at the Department for International Development UK*<sup>13</sup>

13) Taken from the GRI news article [Innovation for Sustainable Development: The role of private sector collaboration](#) on 19 May 2016.

“The GRI Global Conference brings together global thought and action leaders who are committed to transforming the way that non-financial information is used to enable strategic decision making, and we are proud to be a media sponsor.” *Peter Grauer, Chairman of Bloomberg LP*<sup>14</sup>

14) Taken from the GRI press release [Bloomberg LP announced as Lead Media Partner for the GRI Global Conference 2016](#) on 9 March 2016.

“Innovation is needed to reach every last child. The private sector can move quicker and smarter than other actors, and companies need to integrate children’s rights into their supply chains.” *Elisabeth Dahlin, Secretary-General, Save the Children Sweden*<sup>15</sup>

15) Taken from the GRI news article [Innovation for Sustainable Development: The role of private sector collaboration](#) on 19 May 2016.

**EMISSIONS**

**G4-DMA G4-EN17**

The Conference is one of the biggest contributors to our overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, with participants travelling from 77 countries to attend the event in Amsterdam. We worked closely with Greenstone, an external agency to calculate the total emissions for the Conference: 542.05 metric tons CO<sub>2e</sub>. This was a reduction of 55.4% compared to the 2013 Conference. With 1,117 delegates attending the three-day event, average emissions were 0.49 tons CO<sub>2e</sub> per delegate (a 37.1% reduction). The reduction in emissions can

be explained by a number of factors: fewer attendees from outside of Europe attending (37% of attendees came from outside Europe in 2016 versus 45% in 2013) meaning shorter journeys and fewer plane journeys compared with the 2013 event (68% in 2016 versus 75% in 2013); combined with the venue making advancements in their sustainability efforts, for which they won an international award in 2016.<sup>16</sup>

**OTHER SOURCES OF EMISSIONS**

Engaging with our network is the major contributor to our overall emissions. Although engagement takes place through a variety of channels – from social media,

webinars, conference calls, email, it also occurs through in-person meetings.

We calculated the GHG emissions resulting from the air business-related travel of all secretariat staff, Regional Hubs, governance bodies and other stakeholders who attended in-person meetings. We also included the emissions from daily commuting by all secretariat staff based in Amsterdam.

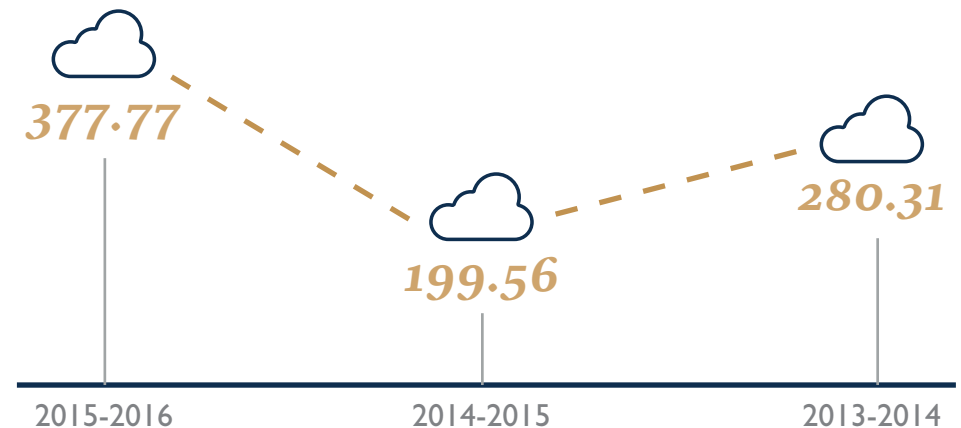
We experienced a significant increase in GHG emissions in this reporting period by nearly 180 metric tons - almost 90% over the previous reporting period.



<sup>16</sup> The RAI Convention Center won the International AEO 'Best Sustainability Award' in June 2016  
<sup>17</sup> We used slightly different methodology to capture emissions over the past three years as explained on the next page, so these figures cannot be taken in direct comparison.

FIG. 9

**OTHER INDIRECT GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS (SCOPE 3) IN METRIC TONS OF CO<sub>2</sub> EQUIVALENT<sup>17</sup>**





This was mainly due to an expansion in the number of staff employed at GRI; an increase in governance body members; and holding a board meeting in Asia.

Our total emissions (Conference and other) for the reporting period were 919.82 metric tons. We offset our emissions through Climate Neutral Group, by supporting the GHG offsetting [Paradigm Project](#), whereby Improved Cooking Stoves are produced and sold through a participatory approach with local communities across Kenya. Replacing open fires with fuel-efficient cook stoves dramatically impacts lives and reduces degradation of the environment.

**Operational Goal 2:** Establish a solid base year and a consistent measuring methodology for travel-related emissions

This year we used an external agency (Raptim Travel) to calculate all business-related travel emissions (aside from Conference-related travel, for which we worked with Greenstone). In previous years, we used a mixture of an in-house system to calculate travel emissions, combined with an external agency for event-related emissions. This new method ensures consistency of measurement and provides a solid base year for future reference.



***During the reporting period, 48% of employees based in the Amsterdam office used a bike as part of their daily commute, and just one employee used a car.***



## OUR PEOPLE, FUNDING & GOVERNANCE



# Our People

## WORKFORCE PROFILE

G4-DMA | G4-9 | G4-10 | G4-56 | G4-LAI

As a reflection of our ambition to transition to standard setting, we invested in a series of new positions mainly in the Standards Division, Services Department and Marketing and Communications team. The number of staff working for GRI increased by 21% compared to the previous reporting period. On 30 June 2016, we had 91 employees, seven interns and one volunteer in total working across our seven offices. Our turnover rate of 13% (or 12 people) was slightly lower than last year.

View Annex I for the total number and rates of new employee hires and employee turnover by age group, gender and region.

### GRI STAFF VALUES:

Respect | Engage | Forward looking | Accountability

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The Chief Executive leads GRI's global activities, and, in collaboration with the Management Team, implements the strategic work plan defined by the Board.

In July 2016, GRI's Chief Executive, Michael Meehan, left GRI and Eric Hespeneide, the then Chair of the GSSB, took up the interim role of GRI Chief Executive.

The Management Team meets weekly and is comprised of the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer, and directors of GRI's main units: Standards, Marketing and Communications, Corporate and Stakeholder Engagement, Services, Knowledge, and Fundraising.

GRI's Works Council, elected by staff in the main office, plays an important role in funneling the voices of the workforce to the Management Team. The Works Council engages staff through regular surveys, a radio show, and other means to ensure their input is considered in the policies and procedures that affect them. Regular meetings between the Works Council



**23 different nationalities**



**91 employees, 24% male,  
76% female**



**27 languages are spoken  
at a native level**



and management provide an arena to discuss and exchange views on employment-related topics.

### STAFF PERFORMANCE AND TRAINING

G4-DMA G4-LA9 G4-LA11

We use a Performance Management Methodology (PMM) as a foundation for recognition and acknowledgement of employee performance and contribution to the organization. The PMM includes processes and tools for performance appraisal, salary review, professional development and growth and

succession assessment. The percentage of senior management that received a Performance Appraisal during the reporting period was 42%, partly due to various members of the leadership leaving the organization during the reporting period.<sup>18</sup>

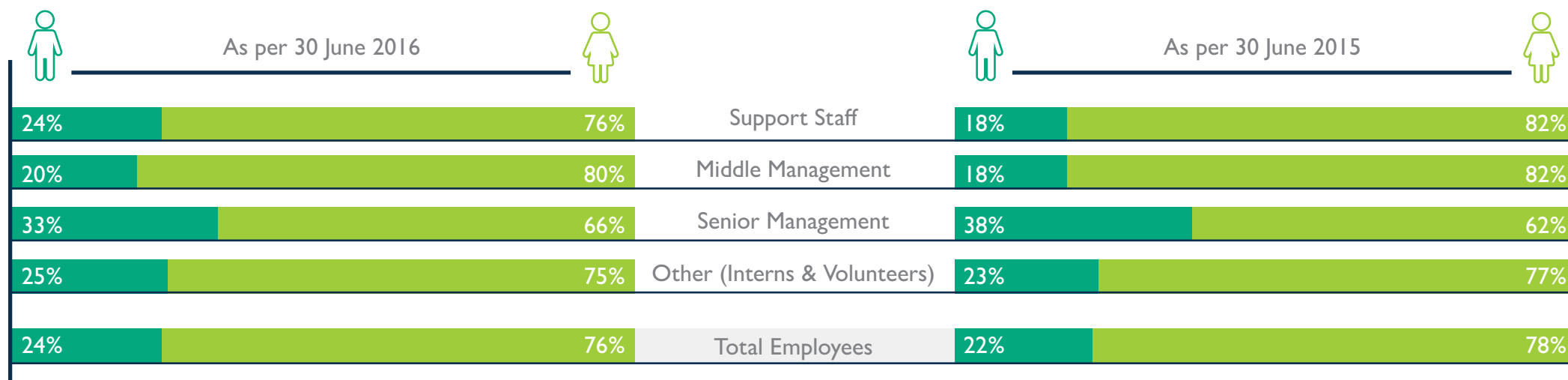
The Works Council, together with management, initiated a joint redevelopment of the PMM in May 2016 and it is anticipated that this will result in a process that allows for more frequent interactions between employees and line managers.

The average number of training hours for all GRI employees was 8.9 hours, which is about half of what was provided in the previous reporting period. This drop in average hours is mainly due to the high number of new hires in the course of the year, for which more personalized training requirements had not yet been defined.

View Annex I for the full overview of training and performance/career development reviews.

FIG. 10

### GENDER DIVERSITY AMONG GRI EMPLOYEES



<sup>18</sup>) Interns and volunteers are not eligible to receive a Performance Appraisal. Their performance is assessed weekly and at the end of their contract.

## DIVERSE, EQUITABLE WORKPLACE

G4-DMA G4-LA12

We encourage a working environment that respects and celebrates diversity. We are committed to providing equal opportunity of employment and career advancement on the basis of ability, qualifications and suitability for work regardless of gender, age, civil status, sexual orientation, color, race, creed, religion, and national or ethnic origin. Measuring the gender diversity within our operations

is one way of evaluating our performance against commitments.

## GENDER DIVERSITY

G4-LA12

Among our employees there is a strong female majority as shown in Figure 10 on page 49. The gender breakdown has remained more or less constant compared to the previous reporting period.

## AGE DIVERSITY

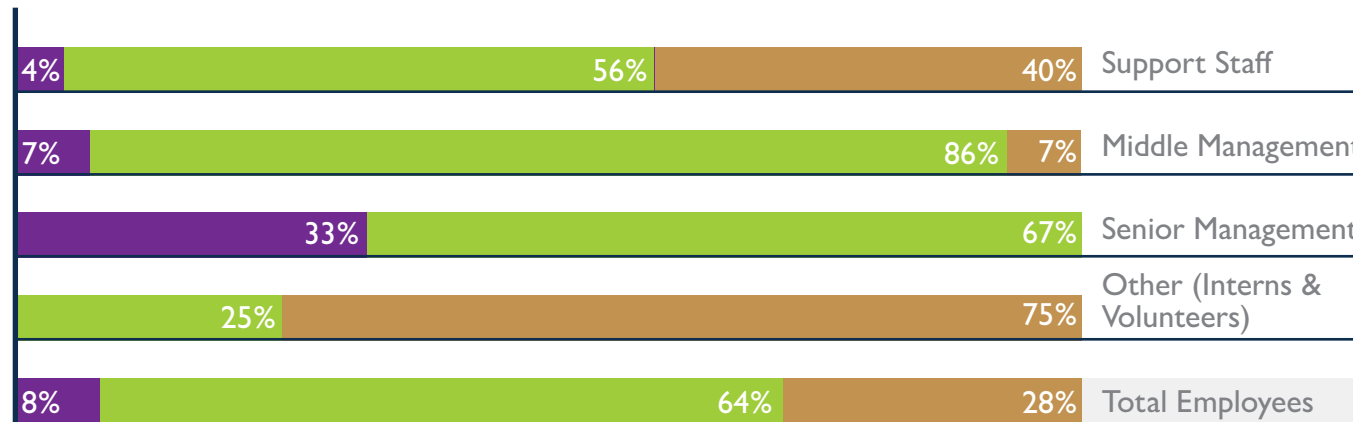
G4-LA12

About a third of GRI's staff are under 30, reflecting a young and ambitious workforce. Figure x shows the breakdown of employees per employee category according to age group.<sup>19</sup>

FIG. 11

### AGE DIVERSITY OF GRI EMPLOYEES

<30 30-50 >50



<sup>19</sup> Indicator G4-LA12 requests that we report information on minority group membership, but this is not done by GRI as collection of such information is prohibited by Dutch constitution.





## Our Funding

G4-5 G4-6 G4-7 G4-8 G4-9 ECI

GRI has been registered in the Netherlands as a “Stichting” or non-profit foundation since 2002.

We harness three key income streams to fund our global work: grants from governments and foundations, revenues from services and events, and funds from our GOLD Community and other corporate engagement programs. We aim for a stable and diversified funding base to ensure long-term support for the GRI Standards, and to fund our activities related to policy engagement, education and outreach, skills building, and our work in emerging markets.

Figures stated in this report include GRI's main secretariat in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and our small offices, known as ‘Regional Hubs’, based in Africa, Brazil, China, Hispanic America, North America, and South Asia.

Our services, conferences and corporate engagement programs are designed to add value to the network by helping to share knowledge about reporting and

improve practice, while also generating important income for us to reinvest in GRI Standards and other outreach activities. Figure 12 on the next page shows our income for the reporting period.

**Operational Goal 3: Continue diversifying funding sources in line with the strategic focus, specifically 30% from governments and foundations, 25% from corporate programs, 25% from services, and 20% from the 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference.**

As shown in Figure 12, the targets for diverse funding sources were generally achieved (the Global Conference accounted for 16% of revenue, with the additional 1% coming from other GRI events).

Our total income was up by over 30% (EUR 2 million) on last financial year's totals due to significant increases in both governmental donors and corporate program revenues, and the GRI Global Conference which we host once every few years. Despite these successes, the 2015-2016 period was challenging financially. With a total income of over €9.1 million, the financial year

closed with a deficit of €268,423, leading us to dip into our reserves and implement cost saving measures to offset the shortfall in income.

Expenses were high for several reasons: we invested heavily in the transition to GRI Standards process; formed and activated a new governance system involving more people and bodies than in the previous model; and hired key senior staff to implement our strategic programs such as GRI Standards development. We also invested in our revenue generating areas like our GOLD Community and Services with a longer-term outlook on returns. Please see Annex II for the full financial statements.

The Board and management will continue to monitor GRI's financial position and achieve an optimal balance between the program goals and the need to strengthen the organization's financial position.

FIG. 12

INCOME BY SOURCE

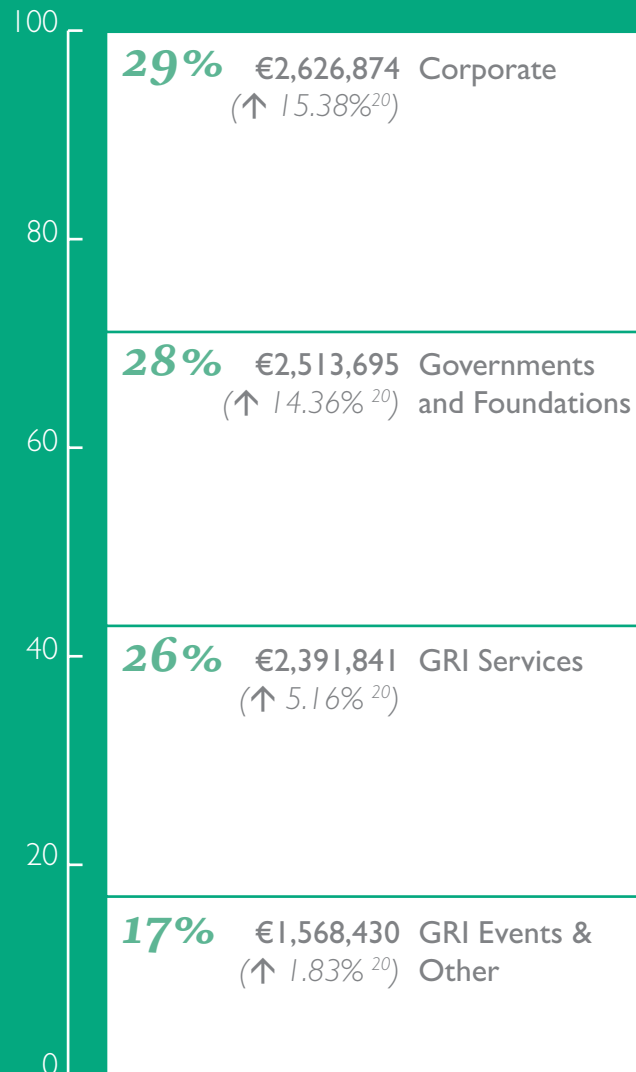


FIG. 13

SPEND BY ACTIVITY

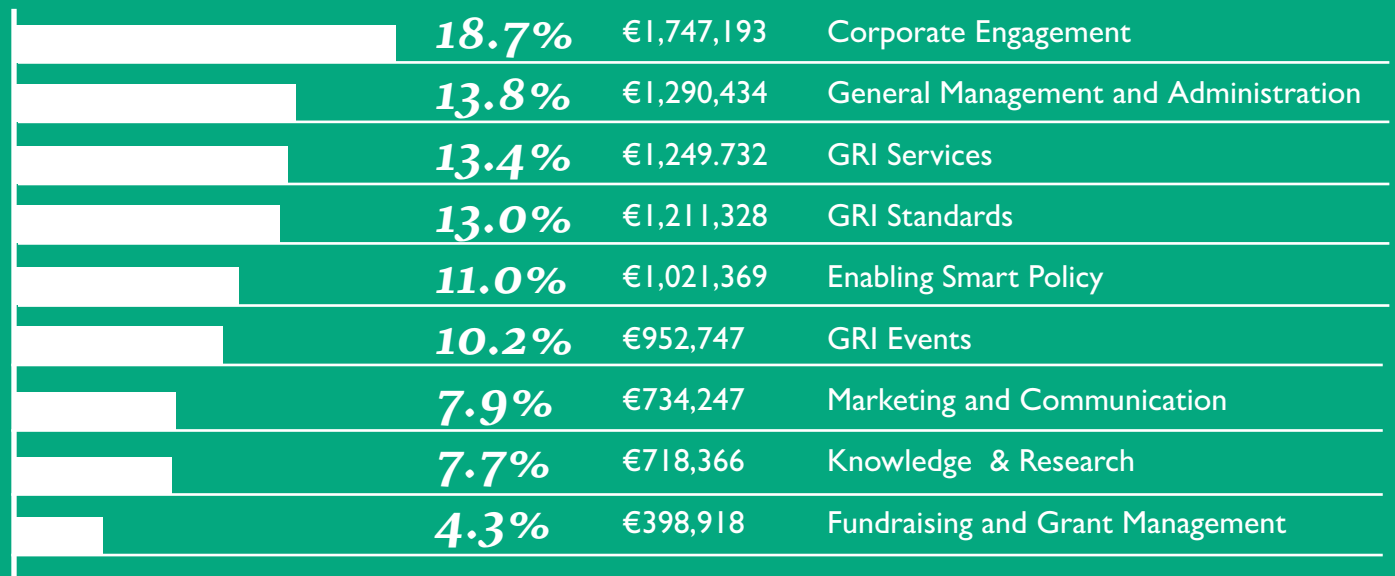
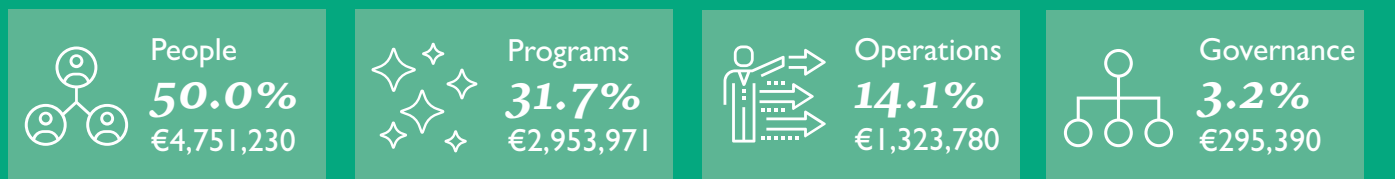


FIG. 14

SPEND BY ECONOMIC VALUE DISTRIBUTED



<sup>20</sup>) The arrows denote the percentage increase on last year's income by source.



# Fundraising

## ABOUT

### NGO8

Our fundraising strategy is to diversify and sustain support mainly from governmental donors, and to align our partnerships and funds with GRI's five-year strategic plan (2015-2020), ultimately maximizing program impacts.

Figure 15 on the next page shows the top 12 financial supporters of GRI. We listed all contributions over €100,000, and the percentage of total annual budget each contribution represents.

## WHAT'S NEW?

### G4-DMA

By the beginning of November 2015, a new unit for Institutional Funding and Program Partnerships (IFPP) was in place, with a team of three tasked with building our opportunities and diversifying our funding sources.

One of the priorities of the IFPP was to establish new fundraising procedures to ensure efficient and ethical use of resources. A Fundraising Committee

was created, with the mandate to analyze, discuss and decide on new funding opportunities on a monthly basis. Ethical funding issues such as the funding source or the objectives of a funding opportunity or other issues that may pose an ethical dilemma or a potential conflict of interest for GRI are brought to the Fundraising Committee. Further internal guidance for ethical fundraising will be developed going forward.

## FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

By further aligning our work with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, we hope to benefit from the greater global focus by governments on sustainable development, and hence expand our funding sources and outreach. Funding diversification will remain an important goal as well as ensuring a coherent, programmatic positioning of GRI's four strategic areas in new proposals to funders.

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

We are operating in an increasingly competitive environment for funding, due to changing paradigms in the donor aid community about what works for development and how to harness the private sector. There is also general uncertainty about the availability

and priorities for funding due to the fast changing socio-economic and political forces unfolding in our world today. While we hope to benefit from a greater global focus on the Sustainable Development Agenda, there is also likely to be increased competition for funding in this area.



FIG. 15

## TOP LARGEST DONORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Organization	Amount (€)	% of Total Income
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	884,196	9.7
UK Department for International Development (DFID)	705,680	7.8
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)	605,035	6.6
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development (BuZA)	217,119	2.4
EY	200,000	2.2
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) Switzerland	150,928	1.7
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH	138,985	1.5
ENEL	111,786	1.2
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	109,678	1.2
Bloomberg	108,773	1.2
KPMG	104,610	1.1
Deloitte	100,000	1.1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,436,790</b>	<b>35.1</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>9,100,840</b>	<b>100.0</b>



## DONOR PROGRAMS

We strategically partner with a number of governments and their agencies to advance our mutual areas of interest around sustainability and transparency. These partners help shape our agenda and support our work, especially in developing countries and emerging markets. Here is a brief overview of the various programs which GRI works on with support from these organizations:



### Business Transparency for Sustainable Development

*Focus areas:* Developing countries; the role of reporting in ending poverty; outreach and capacity building; and the standardization of sustainability reporting.



### Advancing Business Contributions Towards Sustainable Development - Sustainability Reporting for Enhanced Business Transparency and Accountability

*Focus areas:* GRI Standards; outreach and awareness in Africa; and GRI's Monitoring Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system.



### Accelerating Sustainable Economic Development through Sustainability Reporting

*Focus areas:* Facilitate trade and investment in the Indo-Pacific by assisting businesses in their efforts to improve reporting on social and environmental issues.



### Corporate Sustainability Management and Reporting for Competitive Business in Developing Countries Phase I (joint program with the UN Global Compact)

*Focus areas:* Improve sustainability performance through better reporting to result in increased competitiveness and access to markets for local businesses in developing countries.



Reino de los Países Bajos

### Contributing to a Green and Inclusive Sustainable Economy in Colombia

*Focus Areas:* The establishment of the GRI Regional Hub Hispanic America; stimulate sustainability reporting to strengthen competitiveness and access to markets.



### Accelerating Climate Investment Through Better Data and Reporting

*Focus areas:* Demonstrate how sustainability reporting can be used by policy makers to create the conditions needed to unlock private climate investments.



### Advancing Business Contribution Towards Sustainable Development

*Focus areas:* Support for GRI's core activities to develop and build capacity for the use of the GRI Standards.



# Our Governance

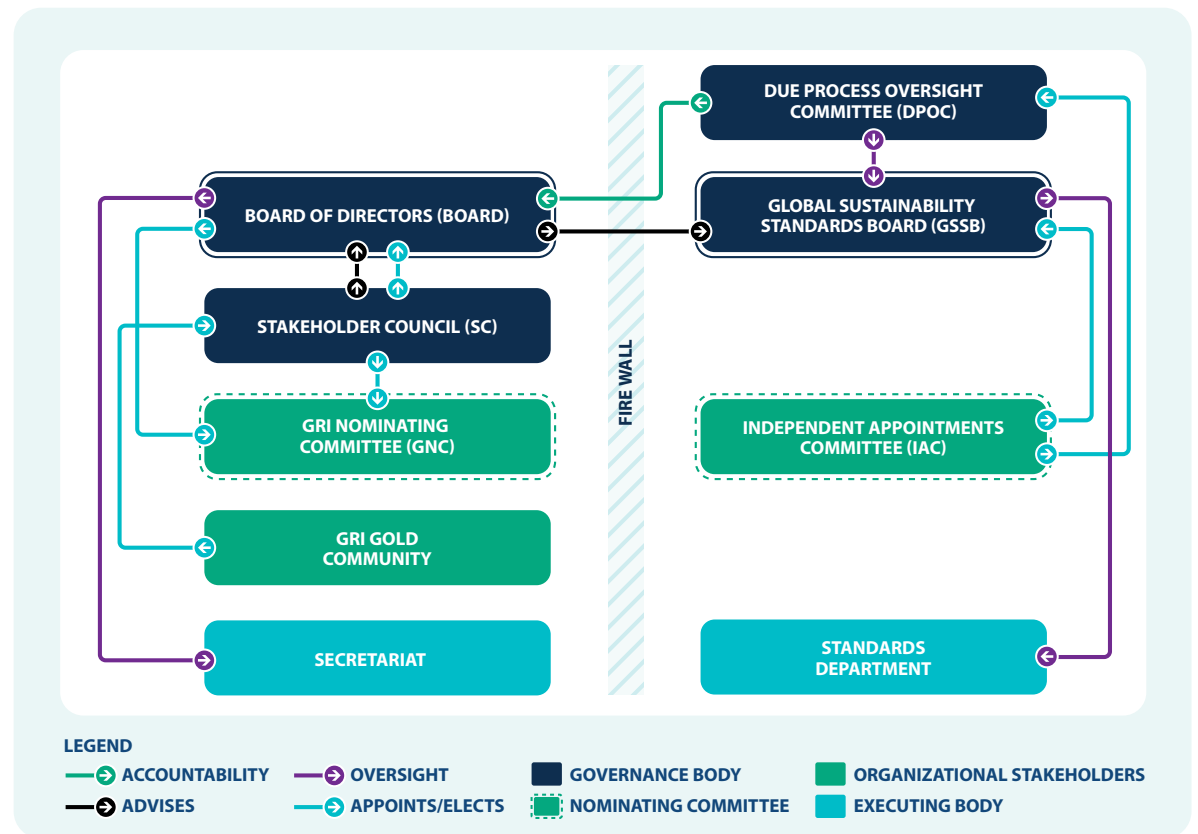
G4-34

GRI's governance bodies are designed to maintain multi-stakeholder representation, consisting of members from business, civil society, labor, investing and mediating institutions. In January 2015, we evolved our governance structure to reinforce GRI's credibility and role as a standard setter and to ensure that the standard-setting activities of the newly formed Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) are conducted in accordance with due process and in the public interest. By April 2016, our new governance structure was fully operational. Figure 16 illustrates the structure, with a strict fire-wall separating the GRI Standards work from all of GRI's other operations.



FIG. 16

## GRI'S GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE





## THE GRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

G4-34 | G4-38

 10  4 | 14 members

The GRI Board of Directors has final decision-making authority over all aspects of GRI's work, with the exception of standard-setting, which is conducted under the auspices of the Global Sustainability Standards Board. Board members are non-executive directors, with the exception of GRI's Chief Executive who is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board.



“This reporting year, the Board’s focus was twofold: the initiation of the new governance structure for GRI, and supporting the 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference. We were very happy with the outcomes of both. The changes to GRI’s governance structure provided significant enhancements to the autonomy of GRI’s standard setting work, allowing us to proceed with developing a global standard for sustainability reporting. The Conference enabled us to meet face to face with our most engaged stakeholders and discuss solutions to some of the most pressing sustainability issues of our time, including how to enable business action on the SDGs and how to respond to the systemic

trends of data, technology and innovation.”

*Christianna Wood, Chairman, GRI Board of Directors*

## THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS BOARD

 12  3 | 15 members

The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) oversees the Standards Division in the creation of the GRI Standards, with the GSSB having sole responsibility for developing and approving the GRI Standards. GSSB members represent the best available combination of multi-stakeholder perspective, technical expertise and diversity of experience.

The GSSB held its first public meeting in November 2015, where it approved plans to transition the GRI G4 Guidelines to GRI Standards.



“This year has been a milestone year for the GSSB. In November 2015 we gave our official approval to begin transitioning the GRI G4 Guidelines into GRI Standards – a crucial development for GRI. Globally accepted sustainability reporting standards are critical because they create the common language for organizations to communicate their

environmental, social and economic impacts. In April and May we approved the draft Standards for public exposure. Later in May we held a session at the 5<sup>th</sup> GRI Global Conference to present the draft Standards, collect feedback and answer questions on the changes. We also held roundtables and consultations to gather direct feedback from stakeholders. All feedback was fully reviewed and amendments made before the final GRI Standards were approved.” *Michael Nugent, Vice Chair, Acting Chair GSSB*

## THE STAKEHOLDER COUNCIL

 21  21 | 42 members

The Stakeholder Council (SC) is a central part of GRI's multi-stakeholder governance structure, appointing Board members and providing strategic advice to the Board. Members come from all United Nations-defined regions: Africa; Asia Pacific; Eastern Europe; Latin America and Caribbean; and Western Europe and Others (North America, Australia).



“The GRI Stakeholder Council represents a global and diverse body of knowledge which we put to use in advising GRI on its strategic decisions and activities. This year we have engaged on a number

of topics, including the GRI Standards, GRI services, the GOLD Community program, and GRI's own sustainability reporting. At the 2016 Conference, we held our first 'Meet the SC' session, where conference goers could learn more about who we are and what we do, and I believe it helped us get one of the largest-ever slate of candidates for election to the SC. Going forward, the SC will continue to deliberate on different aspects of GRI's strategic priorities and actively support the milestone launch of the GRI Standards." *Helena Barton, SC Chair*

#### THE GRI NOMINATING COMMITTEE

 3  3 | 6 members

The GRI Nominating Committee (GNC) reviews all nominations made by candidates to become a GRI Board member. Thereafter, it presents its recommendation(s) to GRI's SC. The Nominating Committee is composed of three members of GRI's Board of Directors and three members of the Stakeholder Council.



“In addition to our regular work in reviewing nominations to the GRI Board and Stakeholder Council, we also filled all five places on the newly formed Independent Appointments Committee

(IAC), which represents the very first body of its kind in the GRI Governance Structure. These appointments were made in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and International Labour Organization. Going forward, this new committee will help reinforce the independence of GRI Standards governance and the continued prioritization of multi-stakeholder input. It was important to get the foundations of this Committee right.” *Paul Boykas, GNC Chair*

#### THE DUE PROCESS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

 3  1 | 4 members

The Due Process Oversight Committee (DPOC) has the full responsibility for ensuring that the standard-setting activities of the GSSB are conducted in accordance with its due process, in order to increase stakeholder confidence that the standards are properly responsive to the public interest. The DPOC members are all senior individuals of the highest integrity and reputation, and are appointed by GRI's Independent Appointments Committee.



“We've had a busy year establishing ourselves as a new committee and starting our review of the entire development process of the GRI

Standards. As members of the DPOC, our first priority is to ensure that the GRI Standards are developed in the public interest and thus maintain their global standing and reputation.” *Riva Krut, DPOC Chair*

[Read all about the Due Process Protocol here.](#)

#### THE INDEPENDENT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

 2  3 | 5 members

The Independent Appointments Committee (IAC) is tasked with appointing qualified and competent members to GRI's standards-setting governance bodies – the GSSB and the DPOC. Members are appointed to the IAC by GRI's GNC.



“In this reporting period, the IAC appointed two new members to the GSSB (the other members transitioned from the former Technical Advisory Committee) in order for the GSSB to reach its full complement. In addition, the IAC appointed four members to the newly created DPOC. The appointment process takes into account the candidates' experience, the constituency they represent, as well as gender and geographic diversity. Balanced representation may not always

be achieved over one appointment cycle, as was the case in this reporting period with gender, where we appointed a majority of male members (over 75%). The IAC will continue to address this going forward.” *Denise Esdon, IAC Chair*

**Operational Goal 4:** Continue to strive for balanced gender representation in the governance bodies.

G4-LAI2

We set this goal to bring greater awareness of the need for gender balance in our governing bodies over the past year, and to help guide our outreach and recruitment efforts for incoming members. The ultimate authority for filling governance positions sits with the IAC and the GNC.

The gender representation in our governance bodies was more balanced this year compared to last year, with women holding 40% of positions, up from 34%, and a total increase of eight positions as shown in Figure 17.

**AGE DIVERSITY OF GOVERNANCE BODIES**

G4-LAI2

Age diversity among our governance members was relatively varied in the reporting period, as shown in Figure 18.

FIG. 17 GENDER DIVERSITY AMONG GOVERNANCE BODIES

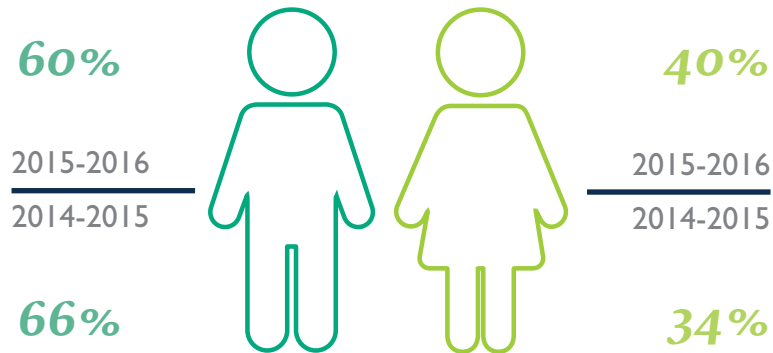
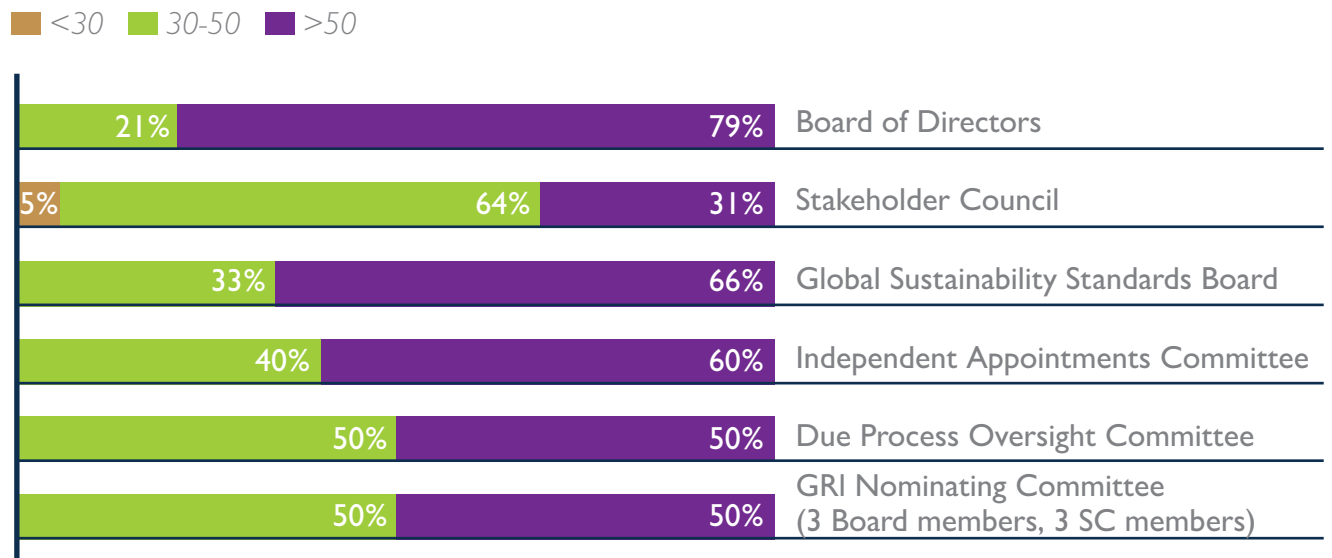


FIG. 18 AGE DIVERSITY AMONG GOVERNANCE BODIES





## THE PROCESS BEHIND OUR REPORT & PRIORITIES 2016-2017



# The Process Behind Our Report

G4-18 G4-19 G4-20 G4-21

## MATERIALITY

We undertook a comprehensive and structured approach to defining our material impacts for our last report, [Leading for a New Era of Sustainability](#) covering the financial year 2014-2015 – see pages 59-63 of that report for a full description. We designed a four step process and implemented the first three: identification, prioritization, and validation, which engaged stakeholders intensively and resulted in our materiality matrix and list of material topics.

The fourth step – review – was reserved for this reporting period. The reporting team conducted a review of both the process and the resulting material topics and made a recommendation to the Management Team that we reconfirm our list of material topics and use the process and results from the last reporting period as a basis for this reporting period. This was accepted by the Management Team and the Board subcommittee responsible for the report.

FIG. 19

## MATERIALITY MATRIX

Note: the NGO Sector Disclosures Aspects are marked in green

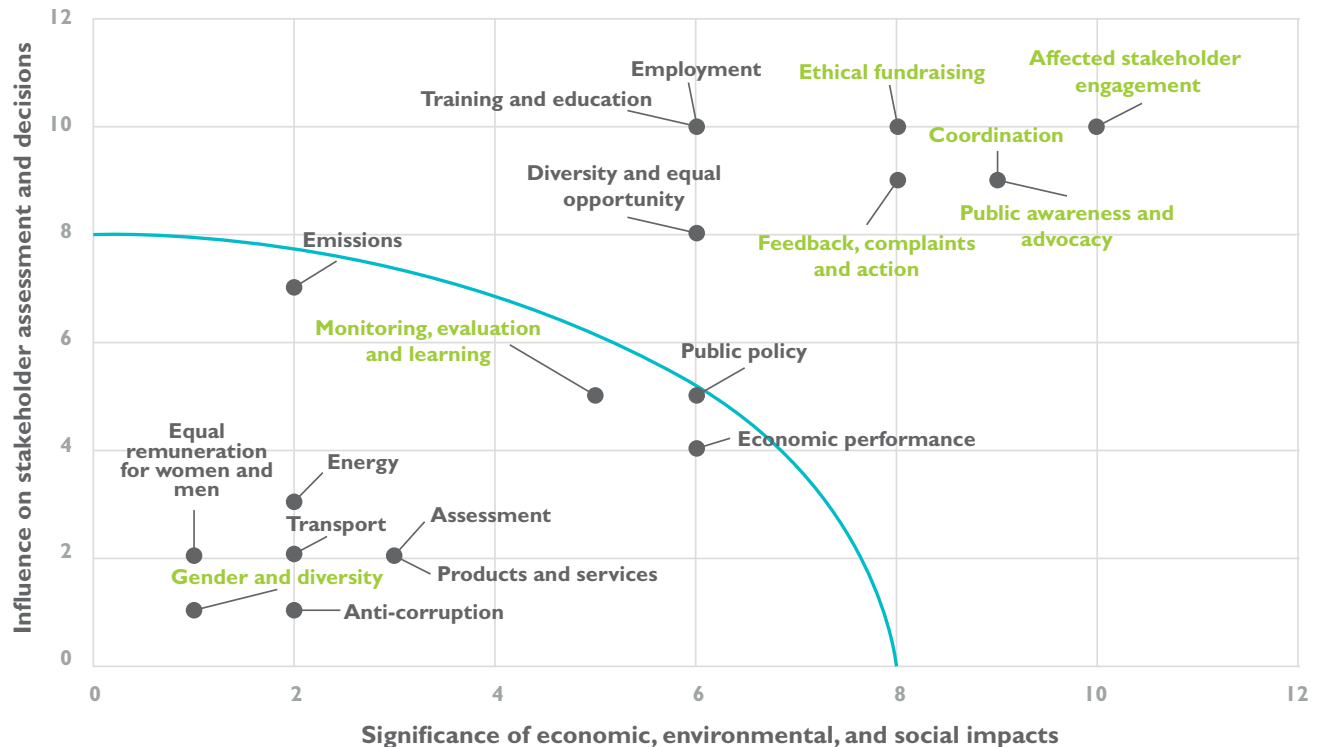


FIG. 20

MATERIAL ASPECTS AND THEIR BOUNDARIES

Aspect	Where impacts occur within GRI	Where impacts occur outside GRI	Aspect	Where impacts occur within GRI	Where impacts occur outside GRI
Affected Stakeholder Engagement	Main office and Regional Hubs	GRI Certified Training Partners and participants Industry associations and other membership organizations that have certain GRI-related requirements for their members/ participants Partner organizations  Policy makers and regulators (government agencies)  Service clients (including clients of Alignment Services, Certified Software and Tools Providers)	Emissions <sup>21</sup>	Main office and Regional Hubs	GRI Certified Training Partners and participants that travel to the training courses  Participants that travel to conferences and events organized by GRI
Coordination	Main office and Regional Hubs	Donors  GRI Certified Training Partners Partner organizations  Policy makers and regulators (government agencies)  Service clients (including clients of Alignment Services, Certified Software and Tools Providers)	Employment	Main office and Regional Hubs	
Diversity and Equal Opportunity	Main office and Regional Hubs		Ethical Fundraising	Main office and Regional Hubs	
			Feedback, Complaints and Action	Main office and Regional Hubs	
			Public Awareness and Advocacy	Main office and Regional Hubs	Civil society organizations  Industry associations and other membership organizations that have certain GRI-related requirements for their members/participants Partner organizations  Policy makers and regulators (government agencies)
			Training and Education	Main office and Regional Hubs	

21) GRI only reports emissions related to business travel by air under the Emissions Aspect.

## ASSURANCE

### G4-33

For the previous reporting cycle we engaged with ERM CVS to provide assurance on the sustainability information in our report and our reporting process. Summarized in Figure 21 is a subset of the recommendations arising from the assurance process which the Management Team prioritized to address over the coming two years. A short update on progress is also provided.

We were able to tackle some of these recommendations, such as improving our emissions tracking process. Other recommendations will require more time to implement, such as better harnessing our existing stakeholder engagement channels to inform the reporting process. As we still have a way to go on implementing the recommendations we decided not to have this year's report assured – but we will undertake assurance for our next report as a way to check on our progress over time.

FIG. 21

## ERM CVS RECOMMENDATIONS 2014-2015

### Recommendation from 2014-2015

### GRI Action taken 2015-2016

#### Stakeholder dialogue

Use GRI's ongoing business-based stakeholder engagement to inform the materiality assessment.

The Management Team identified all business-related stakeholder engagement opportunities and designed the process we could use in future, but need more time to implement across all channels.

#### GRI's strategy

Increase the emphasis on strategy to determine material issues for reporting and report more extensively on the implementation, monitoring and results of GRI's strategy.

We aligned the report with the major strategic pillars and reported on outcomes and direct/indirect impacts for the first time.

#### Report ownership and governance

Appoint a member of the Management Team with overall responsibility for guiding the reporting structure, content and process.  
Appoint a content owner for each section to ensure data are correct and narrative is complete, balanced, accurate and transparent.

The Chief Financial Officer was appointed to have overall responsibility for the report. Two other Management Team members, a project manager and a communications specialist rounded out the team. The Management Team discussed the report on a weekly basis during the development phase.

**Recommendation from 2014-2015****Telling GRI's story**

Structure the report top down from the start in terms of communications objectives and relate these to the content plan and length.

**GRI Action taken 2015-2016**

The report team took this approach and found it led to a more streamlined development and review process, and identified opportunities for further improvements in future.

**Ethical fundraising**

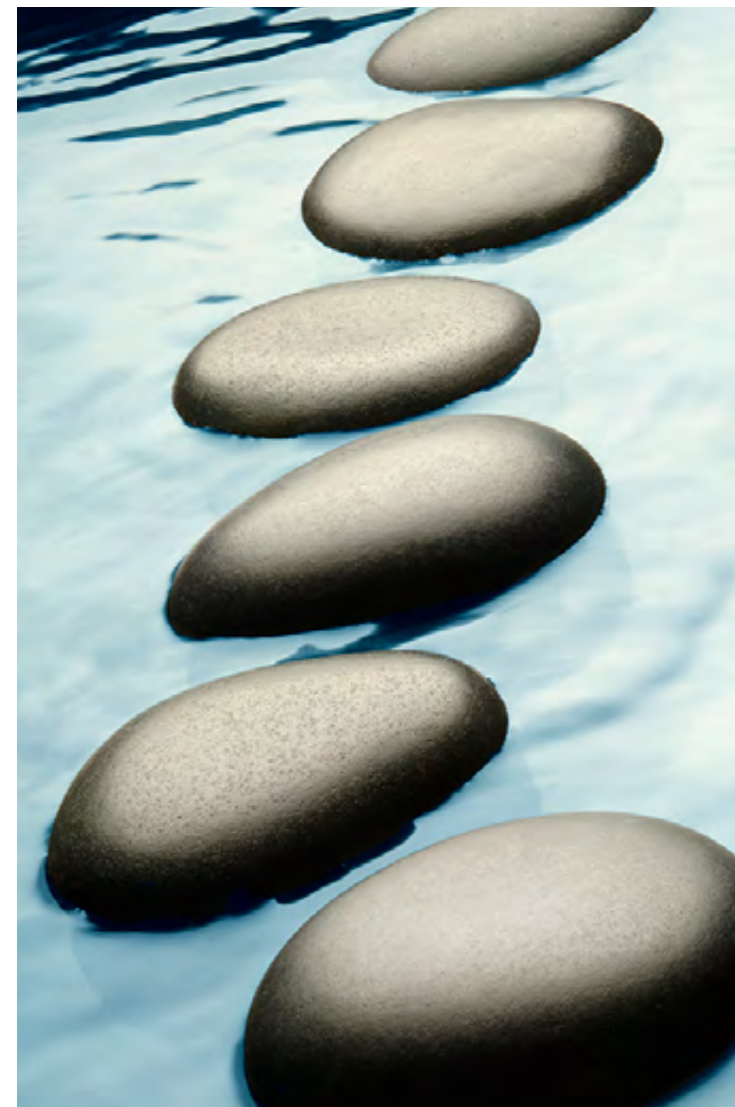
Develop a policy and procedure for ethical fundraising including inclusion/exclusion criteria and sources used to determine the status of donors. Undertake a documented assessment of each donor against the criteria before accepting donations.

Ethical funding issues are now considered by a newly formed Fundraising Committee that meets monthly. We disclosed more information than in previous years about our economic impact and income sources as a result of looking at this material issue in greater detail. Further internal guidance for ethical fundraising will be developed on an ongoing basis in the years ahead.

**GHG Emissions**

Simplify the collection and reporting of GHG emissions from GRI's operations. Use an internationally recognized GHG methodology.

We have channeled all travel-related emissions having the most significant impact through one external agency for tracking, calculating and reporting, aligned with the GHG Protocol.







## Priorities 2016-2017

### GRI ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS 2016-2017

The following overarching organizational goals have been set by the GRI Board for 2016-2017:

#### Steward the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards

Complete the transition from G4 Guidelines to GRI Standards by acknowledging public comments and publishing the GRI Standards. Introduce the GRI Standards to new and existing stakeholders worldwide, and offer a suite of supporting services and materials.

#### Advance GRI reporting in the global sustainability agenda and public policy

Champion the transparency and accountability element of influential global mechanisms, primarily the SDGs. Deepen and expand partnerships to enhance sustainable development through use of GRI Standards. Promote the benefits of policy instruments based on GRI's widely-used global standards.

#### Engage GRI's vibrant multi-stakeholder network to innovate around reporting and data

Through key channels such as the Stakeholder Council, GRI GOLD Community, Corporate Leadership Groups, events, publications, workshops, partnerships

and interactive online fora, enable the exchange of cutting edge knowledge on integrated reporting, value chain reporting, data use, and urgent sustainability issues.

#### Maximize effectiveness of GRI's diverse income streams

Collaborate with longstanding donors on impactful programming to advance sustainability through reporting, and form new relationships with funders to expand our reach. Innovate new and existing services to add more value to GRI's network mainly by supporting users of the new GRI Standards. Achieve balanced and diversified funding base of approximately one-third grants, one-third program-based, and one-third service revenues.






## ANNEXES

# Annex I - GRI's Employee and Workforce Profile

FIG. 22

EMPLOYEES BY CONTRACT TYPE AND GENDER<sup>22</sup> G4-I0

2015-2016				2014-2015			
	<b>13</b>	Indefinite	<b>40</b> 		<b>11</b>	Indefinite	<b>37</b> 
	<b>9</b>	Definite	<b>29</b> 		<b>5</b>	Definite	<b>21</b> 
	<b>2</b>	Internship	<b>5</b> 		<b>3</b>	Internship	<b>10</b> 
	<b>0</b>	Volunteer	<b>1</b> 		<b>0</b>	Volunteer	<b>0</b> 
	<b>24</b>	Total	<b>75</b> 		<b>19</b>	Total	<b>68</b> 
	<b>2</b>	Part-time	<b>15</b> 		<b>1</b>	Part-time	<b>9</b> 
	<b>20</b>	Full-time	<b>54</b> 		<b>15</b>	Full-time	<b>49</b> 

22) There were no supervised workers employed during the reporting period.

FIG. 23

TOTAL WORKFORCE BY REGION AND GENDER G4-I0

■ Male ■ Female ■ Total

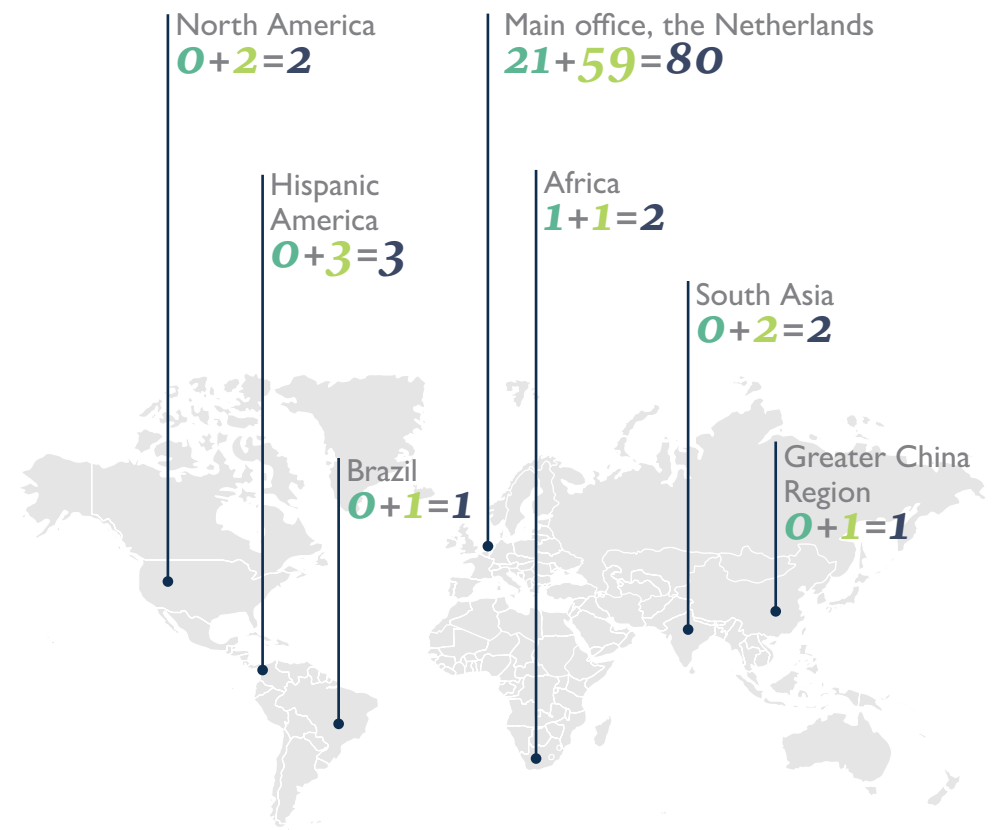


FIG. 24

## NEW EMPLOYEE HIRES

G4-LAI

One new hire was made in the North America Regional Hub (female, age group 30-50), the rest were in the Amsterdam main office as shown below.

	Age Group			Gender		Total
	<30	30-50	>50	Male	Female	
<b>2015-2016</b>						
New hires (numbers)	10	17	1	8	20	28
Total employees (numbers)	28	63	8	22	69	91
New hires (%)	36%	27%	13%	36%	29%	31%
<b>2014-2015</b>						
New hires (numbers)	6	13	0	4	15	19
Total employees (numbers)	30	49	8	19	68	87
New hires (%)	20%	27%	-	21%	22%	22%

FIG. 25

## EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

G4-LAI

Two employees left the China Regional Hub (one male, one female), and one employee (female) left the North America Regional Hub. All were in the age range 30-50. The rest of the figures shown below relate to the Amsterdam main office only.

	Age Group			Gender		Total
	<30	30-50	>50	Male	Female	
<b>2015-2016</b>						
Employee turnover (numbers)	2	8	2	2	10	12
Total employees (numbers)	28	63	8	22	69	91
Employee turnover (%)	7%	13%	25%	9%	14%	13%
<b>2014-2015</b>						
Employee turnover (numbers)	3	7	3	4	9	13
Total employees (numbers)	30	49	8	19	68	87
Employee turnover (%)	10%	14%	38%	21%	13%	15%

FIG. 26

AVERAGE HOURS OF TRAINING PER YEAR PER EMPLOYEE BY GENDER, AND BY EMPLOYEE CATEGORY

G4-LA9

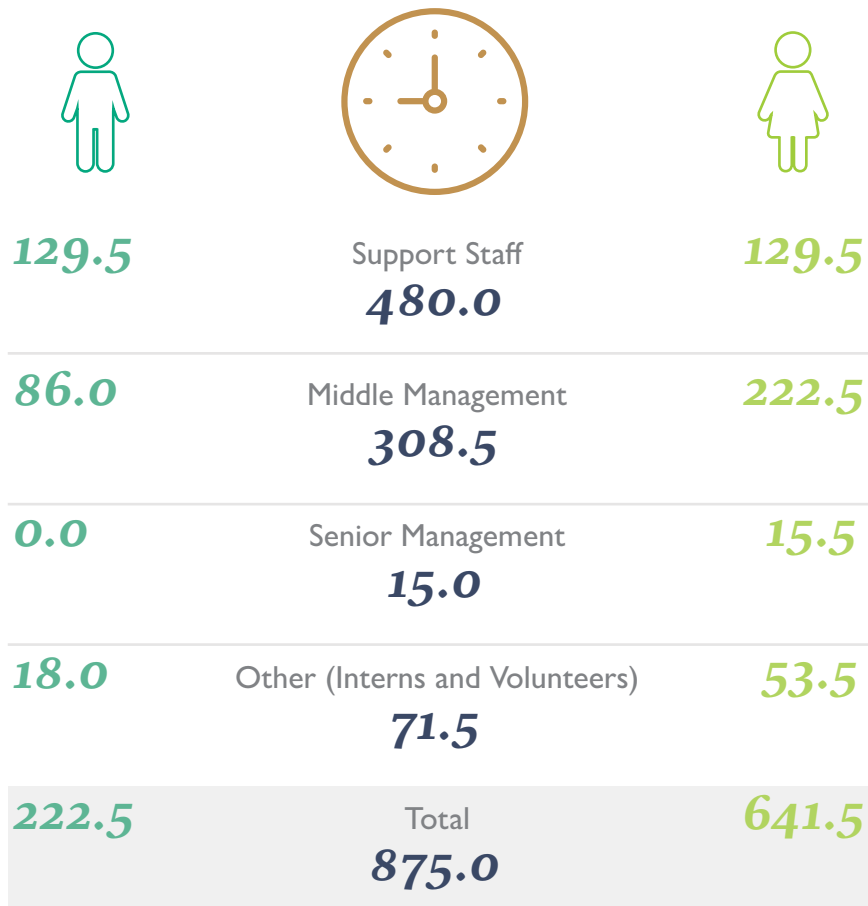
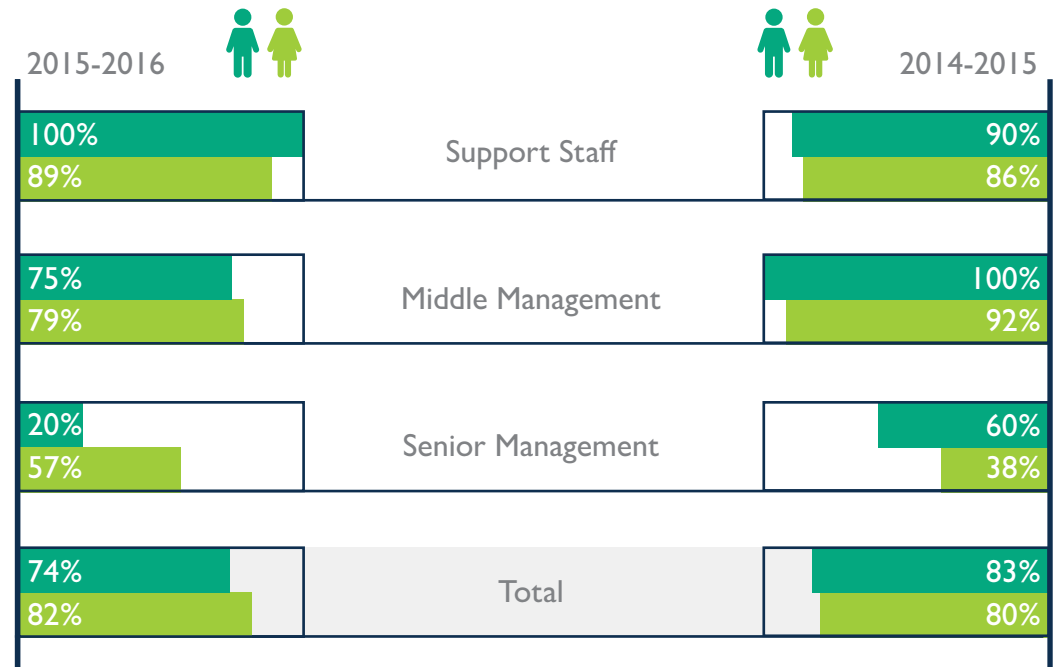


FIG. 27

PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES RECEIVING REGULAR PERFORMANCE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS, BY GENDER AND BY EMPLOYEE CATEGORY

G4-LA11



Reasons for not all employees receiving reviews include: long-term sick leave, termination, maternity leave. Additionally, those that reported directly to the Chief Executive did not receive performance reviews during the reporting period.

# Annex II

## - Financial Performance

G4-9 G4-17

The entities included in GRI's financial statements are GRI's main office in the Netherlands, the Regional Hubs based in Africa, Brazil, China, Hispanic America, North America, and South Asia.

FIG. 28 INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

### Income

GOLD Community/Organizational Stakeholders	1,683,805	18.5%	1,623,105	23.6%
Unrestricted Donations	109,678	1.2%	4,402	0.1%
Programs (Restricted)	2,353,709	25.9%	2,082,583	30.3%
Projects (Restricted)	993,377	10.9%	764,719	11.1%
Support and Services	2,391,841	26.3%	2,274,355	33.1%
Conferences and Events	1,481,110	16.3%	30,533	0.5%
Other	87,320	0.9%	91,631	1.3%

### Income

**9,100,840** 100.0% **6,871,328** 100.0%

### Operating Expenses

Personnel Costs	4,279,820	47.0%	3,727,129	54.2%
Social Security	471,410	5.2%	403,656	5.9%
Programmatic Costs	2,953,971	32.5%	1,915,343	27.9%
Office Expenses	513,201	5.6%	264,874	3.9%
Operational Expenses	463,847	5.1%	330,211	4.8%
General Expenses	425,795	4.7%	296,069	4.3%
Depreciation	216,290	2.4%	213,450	3.1%

Total Operating Expenses

**9,324,334** 102.5% **7,150,732** 104.1%

### Operating Surplus/(Deficit)

**(223,494)** -2.5% **(279,404)** -4.1%

Income from Interest/(Cost)	(280)	0.0%	2,414	0.0%
Exchange Rate Gains/(Losses)	616	0.0%	25,812	0.4%
Other Financial Income/(Cost)	(40,934)	-0.4%	(50,524)	-0.7%

### Ordinary Surplus/(Deficit)

**(264,092)** -2.9% **(301,702)** -4.4%

Result Participations

(4,331) 0.0% **(34,319)** -0.5%

### Total Surplus/(Deficit)

**(268,423)** -2.9% **(336,021)** -4.9%

**FIG. 29** INCOME BREAKDOWN

**GOLD Community/Organizational Stakeholders**

**Restricted Program Income Recognized**

Global and regional awareness

Transparency in the supply chain

Building learning capacity

Translations and publications development

Knowledge research and development

**Total Restricted Program Income**

**Restricted Project Income Recognized**

Standards development

Topic research

**Total Restricted Project Income**

**Unrestricted Donations**

Governments, corporate foundations

**Total Unrestricted Donations**

**Support and Services**

Learning Publications/Brochures

Training and Coaching

Software and Tools Certification

Alignment Services

Featured Reports

Other

**Total Support and Services**

**Conferences and Events**

**Other**

In-kind support (hardware/software)

Reimbursements, honorarium and miscellaneous

**Total Other**

**Total Income**

	2015-2016	
	€	€
		1,683,805
	1,434,708	
	198,854	
	200,698	
	85,064	
	434,385	
		<b>2,353,709</b>
	963,034	
	30,343	
		<b>993,377</b>
	109,678	
		<b>109,678</b>
	5,325	
	493,918	
	110,625	
	1,767,190	
	10,783	
	4,000	
		<b>2,391,841</b>
		<b>1,481,110</b>
	74,769	
	12,551	
		<b>87,320</b>
		<b>9,100,840</b>

**FIG. 30 BALANCE SHEET**

	30 June 2016		30 June 2015	
	€	%	€	%
<b>Non-current assets</b>				
Furniture and IT costs	395,553	20.4%	530,107	19.1%
Equity Investment	2	0.0%	2,308	0.1%
<b>Current assets</b>				
Receivables	1,130,673	58.2%	916,806	33.1%
Cash	416,342	21.4%	1,324,550	47.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,942,570</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,773,771</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Reserve Account	253,204	13.0%	521,627	18.8%
Long-term liabilities	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Short-term liabilities	1,689,366	87.0%	2,252,144	81.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,942,570</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,773,771</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



# Annex III - End Notes

## DATA DISCLAIMER

All references made in this report to the GRI Sustainability Disclosure Database are accompanied by the following disclaimer:

1. By **Sustainability Reports** we refer to any report in which the organization discloses information on its economic, environmental, social and governance performance (being either non-GRI reports, GRI-referenced or GRI-based reports).
2. By **GRI reports** we refer to reports which use the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework and have a GRI Content Index (report types: G3, G3.1 and G4 reports).
3. The data available in the database is collected by GRI in collaboration with its data partners and captures all reports of which GRI is aware.

## EMPOWERING SUSTAINABLE DECISIONS GRI'S ANNUAL REPORT 2015–2016

### WRITING

Sarah Fencott, Writer/Editor, GRI

### DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Mark Bakker, Scribble Design, Amsterdam

### IMAGE CREDITS

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GRI  
PO Box 10039  
1001 EA Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

Contact: [info@globalreporting.org](mailto:info@globalreporting.org)  
Website: [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)

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# Annex IV - GRI Content Index

This report has been prepared 'in accordance' with GRI's G4 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines' Core option. The Content Index below indicates the reported disclosures, the location of information in this report and if external assurance has been sought.

G4-32

GENERAL STANDARD DISCLOSURES	
General Standard Disclosures	Page number
<b>STRATEGY AND ANALYSIS</b>	
G4-1	4
G4-2	8, 9
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE</b>	
G4-3	3
G4-4	14, 23
G4-5	51
G4-6	51
G4-7	51
G4-8	51
G4-9	23, 48, 51, Annex 2 (p.70)
G4-10	48, Annex 1 (p.67)
G4-11	None of GRI's employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements
G4-12	Please see page 15 on GRI's report 2014-2015, available at: <a href="http://www.globalreporting.org/resourcelibrary/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf">www.globalreporting.org/resourcelibrary/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf</a>
G4-13	3
G4-14	Please see page 15 on GRI's report 2014-2015, available at: <a href="http://www.globalreporting.org/resourcelibrary/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf">www.globalreporting.org/resourcelibrary/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf</a>

GENERAL STANDARD DISCLOSURES	
General Standard Disclosures	Page number
G4-15	35-36
G4-16	35-36
<b>IDENTIFIED MATERIAL ASPECTS AND BOUNDARIES</b>	
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G4-19	61
G4-20	61
G4-21	61
G4-22	3
G4-23	3
<b>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</b>	
G4-24	34
G4-25	34
G4-26	34
G4-27	34
<b>REPORT PROFILE</b>	
G4-28	3

## GENERAL STANDARD DISCLOSURES

General Standard Disclosures	Page number
G4-29	3
G4-30	3
G4-31	3
G4-32	3, Annex 4 (p.74)
G4-33	63
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	
G4-34	56, 57
G4-38	57
G4-48	3
G4-54	The ratio of the annual total compensation for the highest-paid individual at GRI to the median annual total compensation for all employees (excluding the highest paid individual) is 4.86.
G4-55	The ratio of percentage increase in annual total compensation for GRI's highest-paid individual to the median annual total compensation for all employees (excluding highest-paid individual) is zero. <sup>23</sup>
<b>ETHICS AND INTEGRITY</b>	
G4-56	48; Please see pages 76 and 77 in GRI's report 2014-2015. GRI's report 2014-2015 is available at: <a href="http://www.globalreporting.org/resource/library/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf">www.globalreporting.org/resource/library/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf</a>

23) The compensation of the highest-paid individual and for all other employees consists of a base salary, which includes holiday allowance, and pension and health insurance contributions. Full-time equivalent (FTE) pay rates were used for the part-time employees in the calculation. Both figures were calculated from GRI main office data and do not include Regional Hub data.

## SPECIFIC STANDARD DISCLOSURES

DMA and Indicators	Page number	Identified omission(s)	Reason(s) for omission(s)	Explanation for omission(s)
<b>CATEGORY: ECONOMIC</b>				
<b>Material Aspect: Ethical Fundraising (NGO Sector Disclosures)</b>				
G4-DMA	53			
NGO8	53			
<b>CATEGORY: ENVIRONMENTAL</b>				
<b>Material Aspect: Emissions</b>				
G4-DMA	45			
G4-EN17	45			
<b>CATEGORY: SOCIAL</b>				
<b>SUB-CATEGORY: LABOR PRACTICES AND DECENT WORK</b>				
<b>Material Aspect: Employment</b>				
G4-DMA	48			
G4-LA1	48, Annex I (p.68)			
<b>Material Aspect: Training and Education</b>				
G4-DMA	49			
G4-LA9	49, Annex I (p.69)			
G4-LA11	49, Annex I (p.69)			
<b>Material Aspect: Diversity and Equal Opportunity</b>				
G4-DMA	50			
G4-LA12	50; Please see page 78 on GRI's report 2014-2015, available at: <a href="http://www.globalreporting.org/resource/library/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf">www.globalreporting.org/resource/library/GRI%20Combined%20Report%202014-2015.pdf</a>	Minority group membership information	Legal prohibition	<a href="#">Article 1 of the Dutch constitution</a> prohibits discrimination, which prevents GRI from collecting information on minority group membership

SPECIFIC STANDARD DISCLOSURES				
DMA and Indicators	Page number	Identified omission(s)	Reason(s) for omission(s)	Explanation for omission(s)
<b><i>SUB-CATEGORY: PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY</i></b>				
<b>Material Aspect: Affected Stakeholder Engagement (NGO Sector Disclosures)</b>				
G4-DMA	34, 35			
<b>Material Aspect: Coordination (NGO Sector Disclosures)</b>				
G4-DMA	35			
<b>Material Aspect: Feedback, Complaints and Action (NGO Sector Disclosures)</b>				
G4-DMA	34			
<b>Material Aspect: Public Awareness and Advocacy (NGO Sector Disclosures)</b>				
G4-DMA	Organizational goal I (p.7), 19			



**GRI**

Barbara Strozziiaan 336  
1083 HN Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 (0) 20 531 00 00  
Email: [info@globalreporting.org](mailto:info@globalreporting.org)



[www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)

