

SANNE GROUP

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM

 **MEMBER
PROFILE**



Rubina Toorawa
Head of Sanne Mauritius
Sanne Group

Sanne Group is an award-winning FTSE 250 listed company and leading specialist alternative asset fund and corporate administrator.

Sanne plays an increasingly important role in the global financial community, standing for professionalism, innovation and quality, working in partnership with clients to ensure that they develop a competitive advantage that empowers their business and allows them to concentrate on what they do best.

AVCA speaks with Rubina Toorawa, Head of Sanne Mauritius, about the opportunities in Africa, how Sanne Group is leveraging technology to support clients, and ESG implementation in African private equity.



Q: Tell us about Sanne Group and how the company has grown over the years. How does Sanne distinguish itself from competitors?

We are a professional service provider, delivering tailored fiduciary services to a highly valued international client base through a global network of offices, spread across the Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia-Pacific.

Sanne employs over 2,000 professionals across 23 jurisdictions globally, administering in excess of £500 billion in assets.

We are leaders in the provision of fund and corporate administration services. Specialist expertise is delivered across private debt, capital markets, real assets, private equity, hedge and corporate services.

Sanne's private equity offering provides a complete range of solutions to private equity fund managers to meet all their administrative requirements including Fund Services, Corporate Services, Loan Agency Services, AIFM & ManCo Services and Depositary Services. As of 2021 we are also able to provide data and portfolio management, and ESG services. We achieve this by providing a client led service model delivering tailored solutions to meet all our client's needs.

Clients are serviced through regional businesses which are led by global leaders with deep experience in alternative asset and corporate services.

In addition to our organic growth, over the last few

years we have continued to grow our global business by inorganic activity. Our latest acquisition saw further growth in our capabilities with the addition of 55 new colleagues spread across Guernsey, Denmark and Sweden and 60 in Dallas, Texas.

Q: What are the opportunities that Africa presents for Sanne Group's fund and portfolio services?

With the geographical distribution of investors into Africa now spreading across the globe, Sanne is strategically positioned through its 23 global offices to act as a servicing platform for Africa-centric managers and investors willing to reach the continent.

Our African credentials are further enhanced through our substantial presence in two of the largest African international financial centres (IFCs) – Mauritius and South Africa – where we have a pool of over 750 qualified staff delivering best-in class services tailored to local and regional exigencies.

Through our client-centric approach, we have also been able to adapt our product spectrum to the requirements of an African client base. Other than our strong track record in fund administration, financial reporting and administrative capabilities, the market was particularly receptive to the introduction of our ESG advisory & reporting services which further support Fund Managers in capturing a growing base of investors looking for meaningful impact through their portfolio.

The real-time access to information and deep-dive analytics, powered by our exceptional technology offerings has also helped in building the trust and virtually bridging the distance to the unique offer of the African continent.

Through flexibility and innovation, Sanne has positioned itself as a leading service provider to global firms willing to contribute to the next phase of the African's growth story.

Q: The technology sector thrived over the past 18 months during the Covid-19 pandemic. How is Sanne Group leveraging technology and digital to support Africa-focused clients?

Sanne leverages its global cloud-based platform to support our clients in accessing and deploying capital in Africa. Core to this is **Sanne.Live**, which is our digital platform. We provide investors and managers with access to data real-time, to support better decision-making and transparency at both the fund and, increasingly, investment level. The economic disruption of the pandemic was not the sole initiator of this need for more timely data in private markets, but further demonstrated that, to access institutional investors, timely investment performance information was essential to manage risk and identify opportunities in a rapidly evolving market.

We also see technology gaining pace as part of distribution strategies to improve the access and speed to capital through more efficient fund raising using online subscription and KYC platforms. This can be particularly useful for impact investment funds looking to increase distribution and reduce minimum investment size efficiently.

Q: Responsible investing continues to gain traction in African private equity. How does Sanne Group support clients to meet investor requirements for ESG implementation and reporting?

Major themes in Africa driving large scale investment are affordable healthcare, financial inclusion, food production and demands for energy solutions. Renewable energy is one of the fastest-growing segments in African countries due to demand for energy.

This is coupled with declining costs of renewables, particularly solar energy, making infrastructure projects hugely attractive. The growing interest in responsible investment and impact investing aligns well with the UN's social development goals and makes Africa an attractive destination for future investment.

The Sanne Rio team offers advisory and reporting services that produce decision useful ESG strategies and metrics that can be included in mainstream financial reporting. Our specialist experts provide custom guidance to help private equity firms develop a sustainability strategy, set targets, implement effective reporting processes, and achieve real results.

By centralising ESG data, Sanne Rio helps private equity firms gain unprecedented visibility into the ESG performance of their portfolio companies and conduct ESG due diligence on investment targets. Sanne Rio tracks carbon emissions and progress toward net-zero targets and makes it easy to measure social responsibility performance and report on social impact metrics.

By managing and monitoring ESG impacts, private equity firms can improve the quality of their investments and ultimately the performance of their funds.

Q: How do you see Africa's private investment landscape evolving over the next few years?

As per the report of Capital Economics¹, it is estimated that Africa shall require at least US\$700 billion per year over the next decade to meet its Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 with at least half of the funding expected to come in from the private investors and the remaining coming in from resource mobilisation from governments, foreign aid and investment from local businesses.

While the longer-term economic consequences of Covid-19 in Africa remaining uncertain, we have already seen the pre-covid fasting growing continent plummeting to a growth rate of 3.4% for the Sub-Saharan region far behind the global average of 5.5% as per the latest report of the IMF for 2021. This will further impede the capability of the governments and local businesses to mobilise resources to fund the investment needs of Africa. Furthermore, the pandemic has reshuffled the priorities of the traditional donor countries resulting in lesser foreign aid dedicated to the development of the continent

We expect to see a much larger contribution of private investors to fund the ambitious growth plan of the continent with a focus on sectors such as financial services, IT, Healthcare, Infrastructure and consumer goods. However, the success in fund raising would depend substantially on the willingness of the respective governments to create a conducive, safe and regulated ecosystem to attract capital.

Q: How has AVCA been of value to Sanne Group?

AVCA has provided us a great platform to connect with a wider African database and community in the fund management space and offers interesting industry research and reports not necessarily available elsewhere. It has also offered us an additional platform to share our own thought-leadership content.

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 African Private Equity and
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¹ Capital Economics – Facilitating Growth, Employment and Prosperity in Africa