

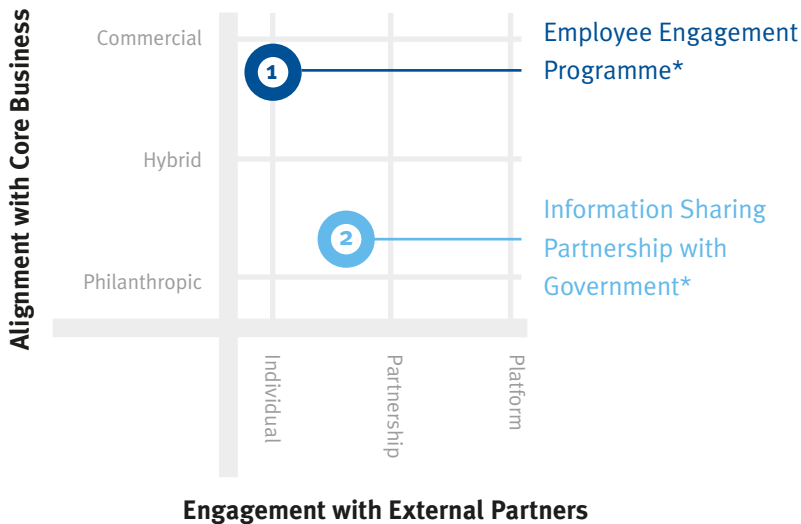
ORGANISATION NAME:

# SAHARA GROUP



The Sahara Group, a leading energy and infrastructure conglomerate with operations across Africa, Europe, Asia and the Middle East, founded the Sahara Foundation in 2006. The Sahara Foundation's activities are spearheaded by the Sahara Group's CSR department, which has a mandate to align CSR with the core business initiatives of the company.





**\*1.** Programme promoting the ideals of punctuality, focus, discipline, integrity capacity building and innovation in the workplace.

**\*2.** Feedback workshops with government to attune them to local community needs.

Buoyed by several engagements, learning sessions and Employee Volunteering Initiatives, sustainability at Sahara Group has become an established concept driven by the Groups Personal and Corporate Social Responsibility policy.

Employees are expected to become engaged with the company’s social programmes, and as a result have taken on ownership.

The company operates in a sector—oil and gas—which is often viewed negatively by society, and as such faced considerable challenges in making its case for sustainability externally. By engaging in advocacy and capacity building, the company has been able to demonstrate that sustainability is genuinely important for the company and how its programmes benefit society at large.

Partnerships are a big part of this as they allow Sahara to build trust and demonstrate integrity.

The United Nations is a good brand to impart this perception of integrity and to help projects achieve scale. The UN has the charisma, the capacity and the influence to get large-scale projects off the ground. The Sahara Foundation has found that companies can leverage the UN’s strength and connections with governments to drive development outcomes. The institution can also carry out important advocacy work and assist in capacity development. The UN could usefully connect companies to its own networks and make the private sector aware that the possibility for partnerships exists.

“The most important part of sustainable development is to make sure each stakeholder has a strong sense of ownership, and that the unique strengths of the partners involved are leveraged,” said Tonye Cole, Sahara Group’s Executive Director.

## SUPPORTING THE SDGS

The following are two illustrative examples of initiatives that are supporting the SDGs.

### Capacity Building and Development in Local Communities

#### Partners: Local Communities

As part of Sahara's core philosophy, local/indigenous businesses are encouraged to be part of the organisation's specialised training on governance to qualify for participation in Sahara Group's projects.

A typical example of this is the reorientation of local/host communities with regards to their participation in onshore drilling activities. Sahara's community relations policies encourage hiring of locals to boost capacity building and socio-economic development. However, experience has shown that local hiring presents the challenge of workers refusing to show up after being admonished for poor performance. Sometimes, the affected workers demand money to return to work or instigate actions that threaten overall productivity.

To address this issue, Sahara Group implemented a robust employee-focused engagement programme that promoted the ideals of punctuality, focus, discipline, integrity, capacity building and innovation in the workplace. The programme highlighted the virtues of employee satisfaction beyond remuneration.

This resulted in full attendance at work by community employees and improved skill sets.

### Information Sharing Partnership with Government

#### Partners: Nigerian Government

In Nigeria, the Sahara Group's operations in the energy sector require it to engage with the government which is a major stakeholder in the sector.

Working with government agencies affords the Group the opportunity to partake in social investment projects and to share with the government what the communities they are working in require in terms of development. Sahara has held workshops to let government officials know what social work it is involved with, community needs and findings on actions that should be taken to address the identified needs sustainably. This role enables Sahara to connect local communities to the mainstream government, boosting development in the process.

The Sahara Group works with various governments of countries where it operates to ensure it actively contributes to initiatives and projects that enhance sustainable development. At the heart of such collaborations is the need for probity and good governance of the company itself. Sahara consistently reviews its policies and processes to reinforce good corporate governance across the Group. This is achieved through capacity building for staff, submission to audits by globally acclaimed standards organisations and collaboration with local/international bodies that promote good governance.