

TEMPLARS

# Responsible Business *Report*

Corporate Social Responsibility | 2022



A blurred background of a modern office interior. In the foreground, a wooden sculpture resembling a comb or a series of vertical slats is visible. The background shows a hallway with a glass door and a potted plant on the right.

# Engaging and Supporting Communities around Us

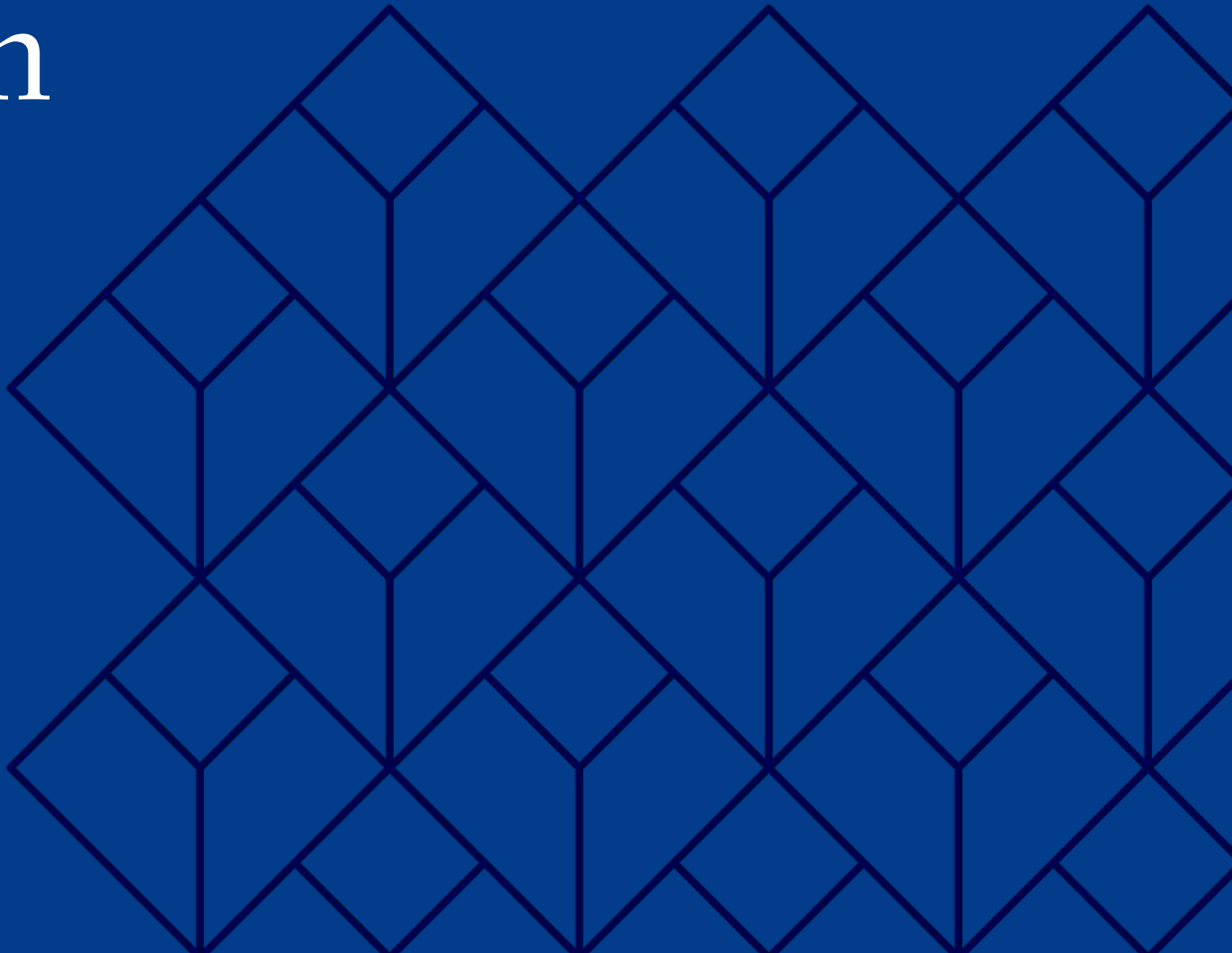
We seek to bring our unique, solutions-oriented  
advice to the communities where we operate



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# Introduction





The commitment to provide **value to all stakeholders** in our ecosystem is central to how TEMPLARS operates. As a firm, our most valuable contribution to society is to use our **knowledge and expertise** to make a **meaningful impact** on the lives of the less privileged by bridging the gap in **access to legal services**.

Oghogho Akpata  
**Managing Partner**



Responsible businesses prioritise more than just profits, and TEMPLARS is committed to making a positive impact beyond the bottom line.

TEMPLARS has prioritised taking up "impact real estate" to benefit its stakeholders. Our Responsible business framework draws inspiration from global standards like the United Nations Global Compact and responsible investing principles, focusing on how our business can contribute to addressing significant social and environmental issues.

We are committed to adding value to all stakeholders within our ecosystem, from employees to clients to the broader society. We are dedicated to addressing important societal issues such as promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, improving access to justice, and supporting gender equality.

TEMPLARS recognises that we have a critical role to play in addressing the challenges faced by our communities, especially in areas such as Health, Education, and Youth Development.

In line with our commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices, we have prioritised the well-being of our employees and implemented policies and initiatives aimed at creating an equitable and sustainable workplace.

We updated our health, safety, and environmental policies to ensure compliance with ESG standards and to minimise our environmental impact. Additionally, we launched gender-focused initiatives to promote diversity, inclusion, and gender equity, which are critical components of ESG. Through our ESG initiatives, we strive to have a positive impact on our employees, the community, and the environment while maintaining our commitment to delivering exceptional legal services.

At TEMPLARS, we believe that prioritising ESG is not only the right thing to do, but it also makes good business sense. By creating a positive impact beyond just profits, we contribute to creating a better future for our stakeholders, society, and the environment.

# TEMPLARS at a *Glance*



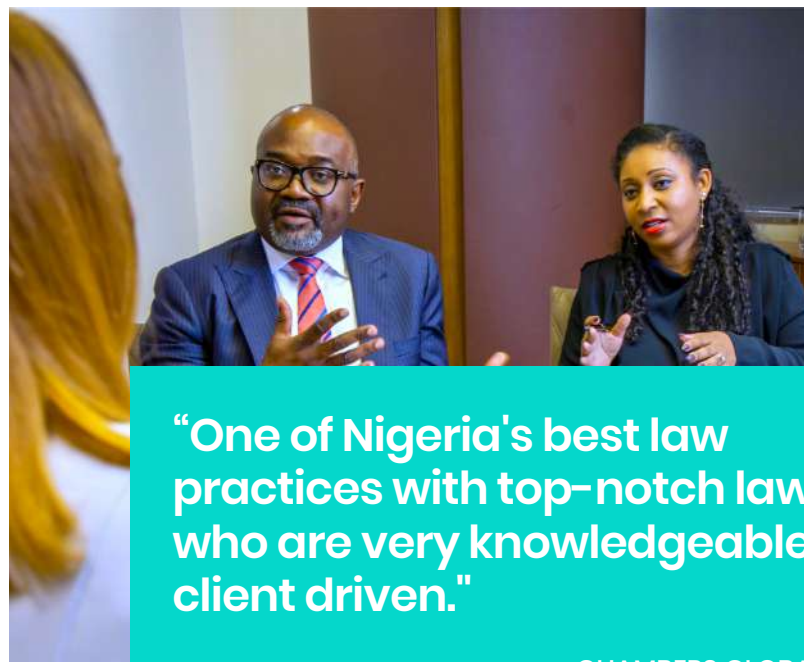
At TEMPLARS, we have redefined our legal approach to provide clear, concise and insightful answers to complex questions.

We have offices in key commercial centres in Nigeria and Ghana: Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt and Accra. As such, the firm is strategically placed to offer quality legal services to clients in Africa.

The Firm, which was founded to fill a gap in the market for high-quality legal advice with a commercial imperative, has proven experience in legal advisory and strategic consultancy in a wide range of areas within the major economic sectors across Africa.

We assist our clients to analyse the risks involved in their transactions; and we mitigate and hedge against those risks by deploying or devising appropriate risk management tools.







Consistent with our commercial approach in the service of our clients, we constantly employ cost-effective procedures in the pursuit of each mandate.










**“One of Nigeria's best law practices with top-notch lawyers who are very knowledgeable, and client driven.”**

- CHAMBERS GLOBAL

## PRACTICE AREAS

<b>Corporate &amp; Commercial</b> 	<b>Dispute Resolution</b> 	<b>Energy and Natural Resources</b> 	<b>Finance</b> 	<b>METIS</b> 	<b>Tax</b> 
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 <p><b>Tier 1 Firm</b></p>	 <p><b>2 Countries</b></p>	 <p><b>4 Cities</b></p>	 <p><b>6 Practice areas</b></p>	 <p><b>21 Partners</b></p>	 <p><b>27+ Years of experience</b></p>	 <p><b>100+ Lawyers</b></p>
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# Our *Strategy*

For our people and communities



At our core, we believe in being a responsible and sustainable business. We understand that longevity is not something that can be taken for granted, which is why we strive to make a positive impact that lasts for generations to come.

Our purpose is to help our clients navigate the challenges of the future, and it's equally important that we do the same for our planet, our people, and our communities. We're committed to driving sustainable change in every aspect of our operations, collaborating with our clients and wider network to achieve positive environmental, social, and governance outcomes.

We believe that true sustainability requires a long-term perspective, responsible actions, and a commitment to supporting our people's development and well-being. To this end, we're constantly pushing beyond expectations, embedding sustainability into all that we do across our objectives with focus areas of People, Planet, and Governance.

### People:

In the realm of people, we prioritise the health and well-being of our employees and strive to create an inclusive, supportive workplace that fosters growth, collaboration, and innovation. We also recognise our responsibility to the wider community and actively seek out opportunities to make a positive impact through our philanthropic endeavours and volunteer efforts.

### Planet:

In the environmental sphere, we are committed to minimising our footprint and promoting sustainable practices throughout our supply chain. We have set ambitious targets to reduce our carbon emissions, water usage, and waste generation, and are continually exploring new ways to reduce our impact on the planet.

### Governance:

Finally, we recognise the importance of strong governance as a foundation for sustainable business practices. We are committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in all of our operations and have implemented robust systems and processes to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with all relevant regulations and standards.

By taking a comprehensive approach to ESG, we are confident that we can create long-term value for all of our stakeholders while contributing to a more sustainable future for all.



Generally, our CSR approach is rooted in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles.

- a. **Focused Contribution:** Our primary objective is to create a focused contribution to areas with significant need and opportunity for high impact, including sectors such as health and wellness, education, youth development, justice delivery, and advocacy. To achieve this, we provide established initiatives and not-for-profit organisations with the necessary knowledge, support, and philanthropy to drive sustainable solutions.
- b. **Strategic Partnerships:** We believe that strategic partnerships are key to achieving our ESG objectives, and we collaborate with established experts to support laudable initiatives that align with our values. Through our extensive network of partners, we work towards shared objectives in philanthropy, sustainability, and advocacy.
- c. **Advocacy:** As advocates for positive change, we leverage the expertise of our talented professionals to champion key developments and provide guidance to stakeholders on holistic and solution-driven approaches to ESG challenges.
- d. **Sustainability:** We recognise the importance of sustainability and have implemented internal practices that align with global best practices. These include rethinking the design of our work environment to improve our environmental vision and meet ESG standards. We also make cultural changes that sustain design thinking around sustainability within the legal services industry.
- e. **Excellence:** Excellence is a core tenet of our CSR approach, and we remain accountable for all our projects and commitments. We strive to deliver excellent solutions to ESG challenges and make a positive impact on society. By remaining committed to our principles, we aim to foster long-term value creation and drive sustainable growth.



At **TEMPLARS**, we are committed to eradicating **gender-based** issues and **domestic abuse**, and we stand ready to assist organisations in **spreading knowledge** about what legal measures to take when these societal issues arise. Additionally, our establishment of the **Fair Justice Initiative**, reinforces our fight against **prejudice and marginalization** of both former and **current inmates**.

Femi Asante  
Partner, Pro Bono and CSR



# People

## Building a Culture of Empathy and Understanding



[L-R] Dupe Saba née Dabiri (Partner), Ijeoma Uju (Partner), Debisi Omole (Chief Practice Officer), Sesan Sulaiman (Partner)

**53% of our lawyers across all offices are women**

In 2022, we at TEMPLARS continued to demonstrate our commitment to making a positive impact both within and outside our organisation. We are proud to have supported several organisations in our community outreach efforts, while also striving to effect internal positive changes for our people at work.

**Here are some of the ways we worked towards social good:**

Firstly, we connected our lawyers with over 1,100 hours of pro-bono work in 2022.

In our efforts towards diversity and inclusivity, we have consistently made it a priority to ensure that no one is left behind or feels left behind, irrespective of their gender, race, and/or sexual orientation. This is reflected in the fact that 43% of our partners are women, and over 53% of the total number of lawyers across our offices are women.

Our CSR initiatives are based on a deep understanding of the surroundings from which we operate. To tackle prevalent social issues such as domestic violence against women and children, we have partnered with third parties such as Women at Risk International Foundation (WARIF).

Finally, we introduced Experience Templars, an event aimed at highlighting the work we do as a leading commercial law firm in Nigeria. This initiative is designed to enlighten law students and graduates on the possibilities and opportunities available to them in the legal profession.

Overall, we are proud of our achievements in 2022 and remain committed to making a positive impact in all areas of our operations.

# Environmental

Protecting Our Planet: Environmental Responsibility at the Heart of Our CSR

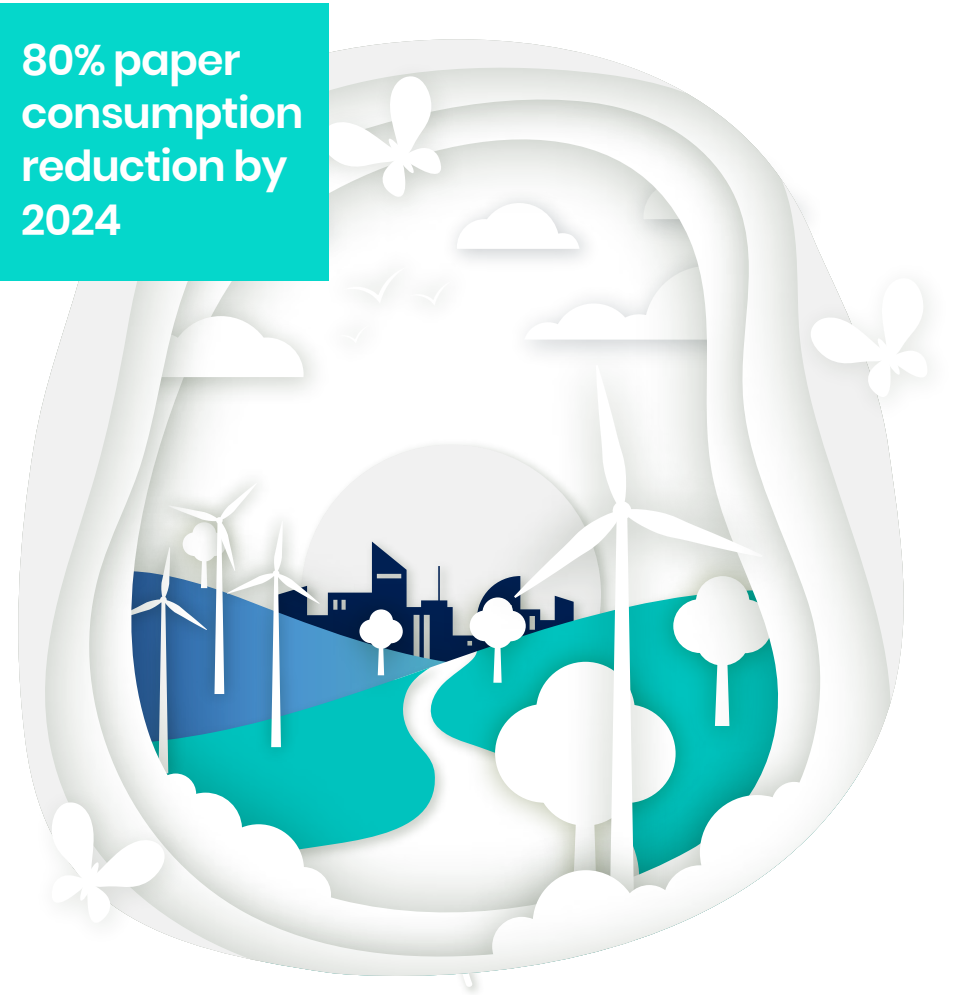
At TEMPLARS, we take our social responsibility to the environment seriously. In line with this commitment, we have implemented various initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable organisational behaviour.

One of our key initiatives is our paperless workplace policy, which has been embraced by everyone from management to support staff. Through digitisation, we have introduced electronic signatures, internal communication platforms, and sophisticated tracking systems for time, bills, accounting procedures, and human resources operations. As a result, about 75% of our client communications are now electronic.

Additionally, we are exploring the installation of solar panels at our Lagos office building to further reduce our carbon footprint. Our ultimate goal is to reduce our paper consumption for administrative processes by 80% by 2024.

Through these efforts, we are driving sustainable practices into our business strategies and internal processes, promoting a more sustainable organisational behaviour in our community.

80% paper  
consumption  
reduction by  
2024





“We are deeply committed to sustainability, environmental efficiency, and **promoting human rights and justice**. Through increased awareness and education on compliance and our strategic partnerships with organisations such as the **Sickle Cell Foundation Nigeria** and **Women at Risk International Foundation**, we continue to advocate for **social responsibility**. Our **pro-bono efforts** in 2022 resulted in over **1,100 hours** of volunteering with a charge-out value of **\$500,000**.”

Debisi Omole  
Chief Practice Officer

# Governance

## Accountability, Diversity, and Equality: Templars' Commitment to Good Governance

In 2022, the partners at our firm demonstrated an increased commitment to accountability, not only to our employees but also to the community we operate in. This commitment is reflected in our diverse partnership, which now includes partners from Ghana and boasts a total of 21 partners, with 9 of them being women. Majority of the partners also have experience working with domestic and international organisations.

Our efforts to improve are intentional and we are optimistic about what is to come in 2023. We are committed to putting in the work to make this happen.

Equal opportunity is at the heart of our governance. From senior management to associates and business support staff, we strive to ensure an equitable work environment for all our employees. As of December 2022, we admitted four new female partners to our partnership across Nigeria and Accra, as part of our transition into a pan-African firm.

**Gender diversity takes center stage at  
TEMPLARS, with 9 out of 21 partners being  
women, reflecting a strong commitment to  
inclusivity**

### Data Protection

At TEMPLARS, we understand that cybersecurity, data privacy, and other data and information concerns are of utmost importance to our clients. We recognise that handling clients' sensitive data requires a high level of responsibility and care, and we take this responsibility very seriously.

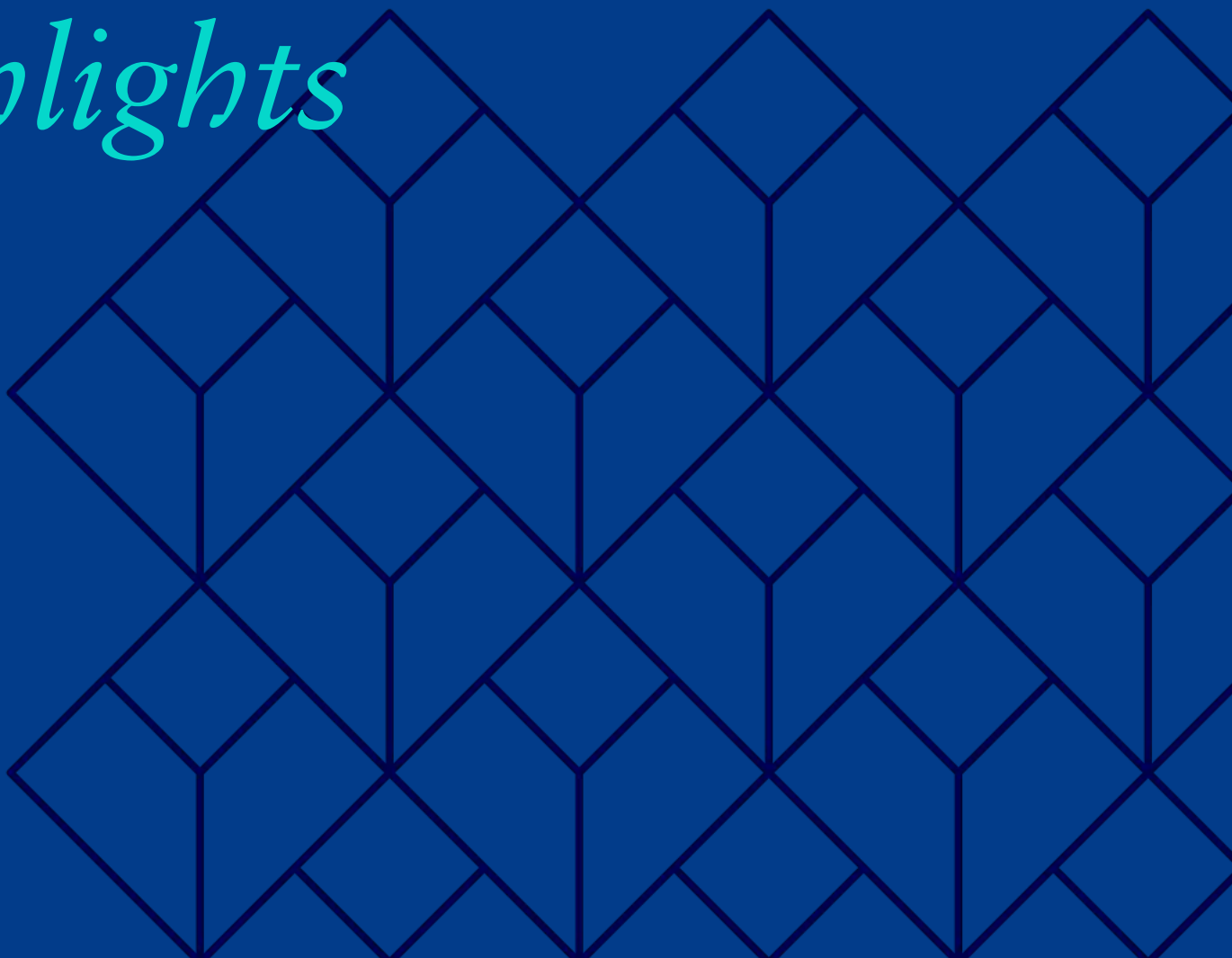
From onboarding new clients to advising and sharing complex and sensitive data, we have put in place measures to ensure that we safeguard our clients' information. We have implemented strict data protection policies and procedures to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of our clients' data.

Moreover, we regularly educate and train our employees to be conscious when interacting with information available to them, and we have implemented robust cybersecurity controls to protect against cyber threats and attacks.

Our commitment to data protection and cybersecurity is an ongoing effort, and we continuously review and update our policies and procedures to ensure that we remain up-to-date with the latest industry standards and best practices.



# 2022 *Highlights*





TEMPLARS Counsel, Dr. Jude Odinkonigbo presenting a prize at the WIMBIZ 20th Anniversary Legacy Golf Tournament



[L-R] Omowonuola Adekanmbi, Associate, Ijeoma Uju, Partner, and Kemi DaSilva-Ibru, founder of Women At Risk International Foundation (WARIF)



Adebola Williams, RED Media speaks at WARIF's 'No Tolerance' March



TEMPLARS Partner; Dayo Okusami speaking at the Maiden Edition of the 2022 State of Enterprise (SOE) Report, by EnterpriseNGR



Managing Partner, Oghogho Akpata, participating at WIMBIZ 20th Anniversary Legacy Golf Tournament



Ngazi Agada, Head of Human Resources, Yemisi Awonuga, Partner, Oyindamola Opadiran, Human Resource Executive, Debisi Omole, Chief Practice Officer, Adejoke Odocha, commercial lawyer, and Abiodun Segilola, Secretary to the Managing Partner, all smiles at the maiden edition of SHE THRIVES



TEMPLARS sponsors the 4th Edition of the Edo State Secondary School Cricket Competition



TEMPLARS Sponsored Flag Football Team; TITANS in competition

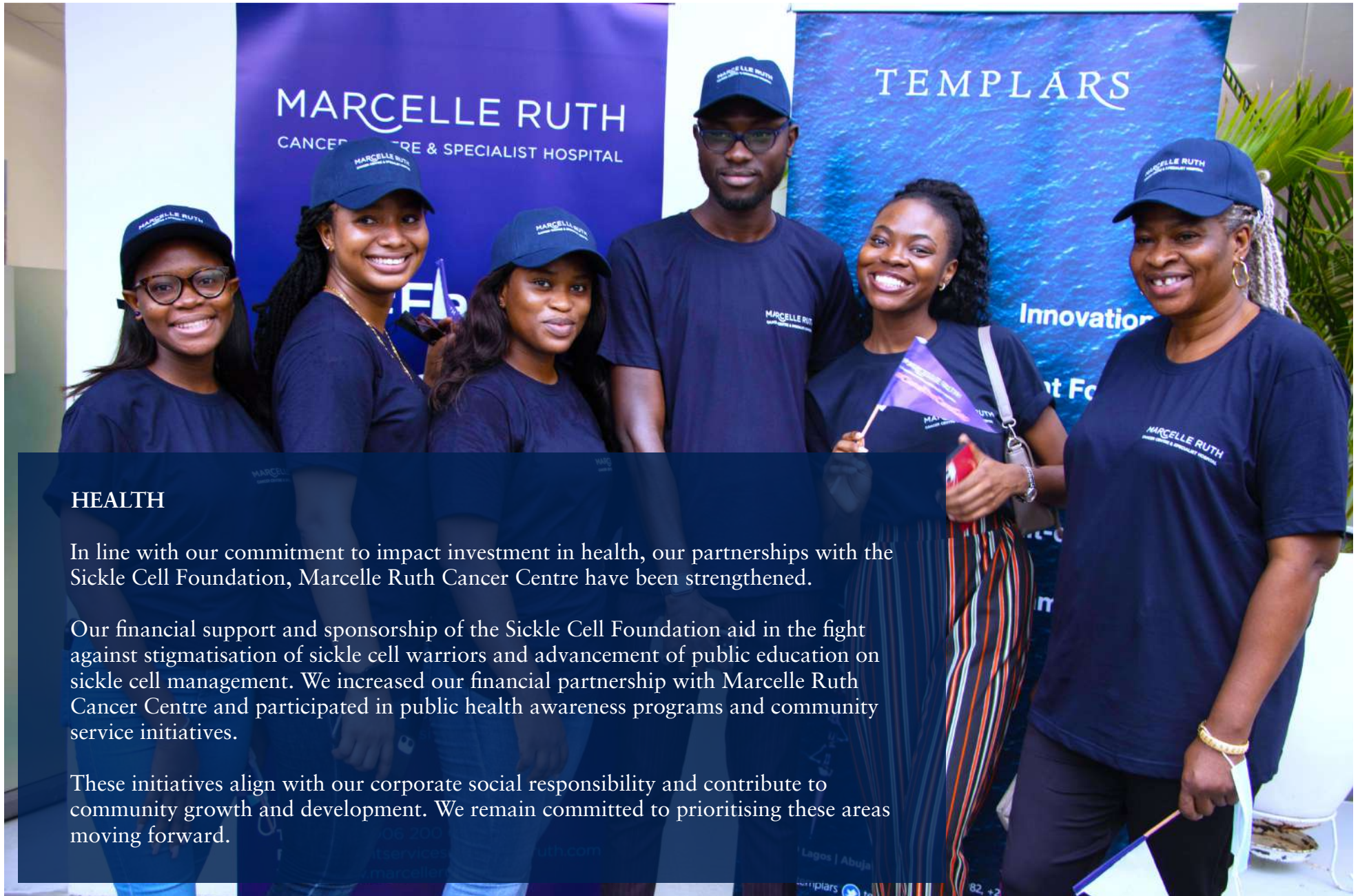


We launched Experience TEMPLARS, a program for law students. Hosted at our Lagos office, it provided participants with firsthand exposure to our firm's culture and practices. Through mentoring, guidance, scholarships, and knowledge sharing, our aim was to equip these students with valuable insights to fuel their legal career growth and development.



To increase focus on diversity and inclusion, we introduced varied fora for employee wellness focus groups, including a wellness programme for Templars' women titled "SHE THRIVES". We conducted re-orientation and training sessions on workplace interpersonal relations to ensure the protection of vulnerable employees.

We also introduced a formal mentoring scheme to ensure targeted attention at the development of our employees. We had transparent conversations with colleagues around objective setting, career development, and ongoing performance and feedback conversations to elevate the capacity of our employees.



## HEALTH

In line with our commitment to impact investment in health, our partnerships with the Sickle Cell Foundation, Marcelle Ruth Cancer Centre have been strengthened.

Our financial support and sponsorship of the Sickle Cell Foundation aid in the fight against stigmatisation of sickle cell warriors and advancement of public education on sickle cell management. We increased our financial partnership with Marcelle Ruth Cancer Centre and participated in public health awareness programs and community service initiatives.

These initiatives align with our corporate social responsibility and contribute to community growth and development. We remain committed to prioritising these areas moving forward.



## EDUCATION AND SPORTS

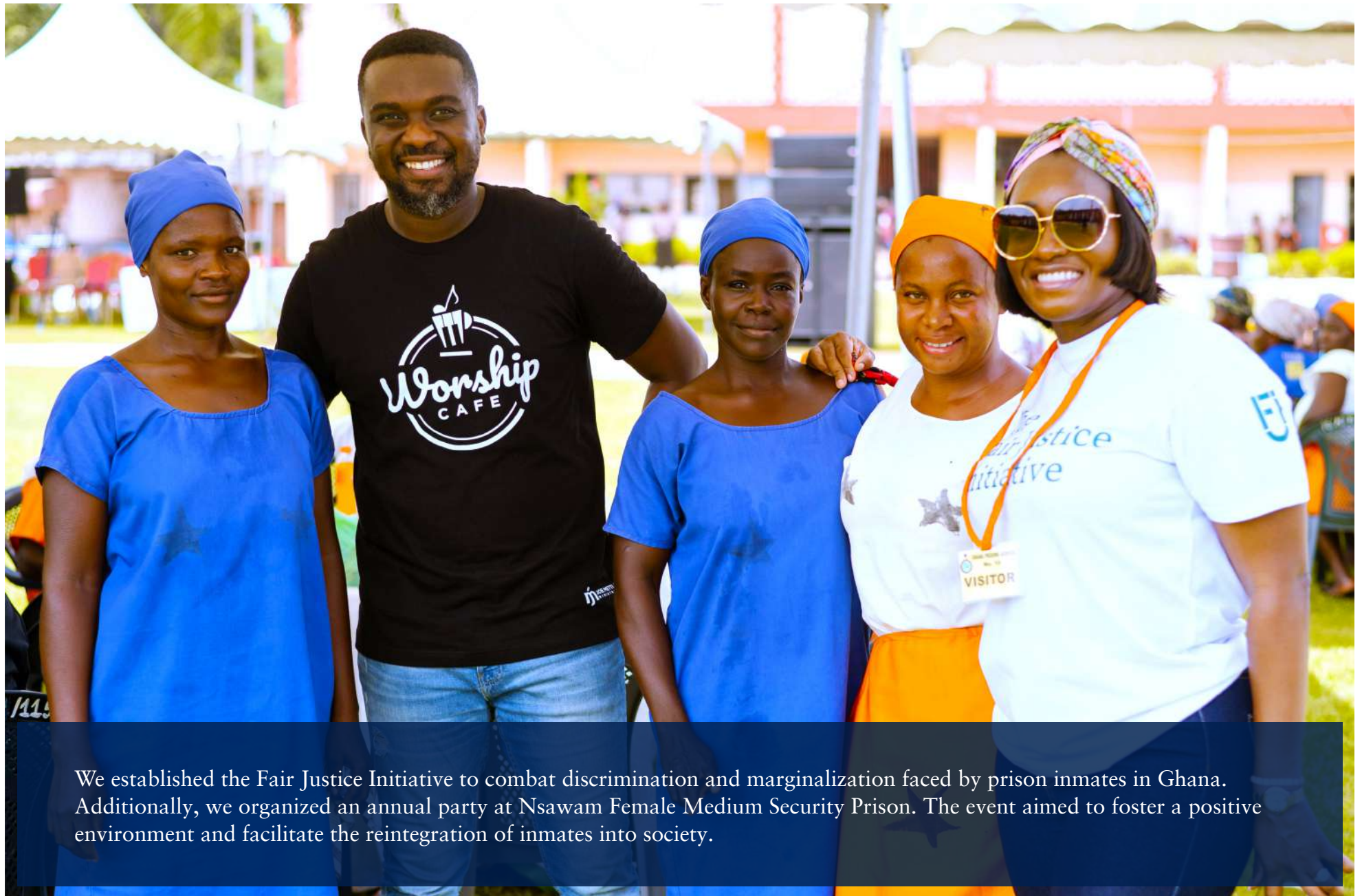
To address national youth unemployment and under-employment trends, we partnered with the Youth of Enterprise Internship Programme developed by EnterpriseNGR. Through this partnership, we provide leadership, governance, and advice on crucial issues in the financial sector.

We also partnered with the Ovie Brume Foundation, a youth-focused organisation that provides free educational, social, and recreational programs and activities for under-served children from low-income homes.

We maintained our perennial sponsorship of the Cricket League, a youth development initiative of the Edo State government. Over the years, our continued partnership has resulted in over 400% development and increased integration from 4 schools to 20 schools.

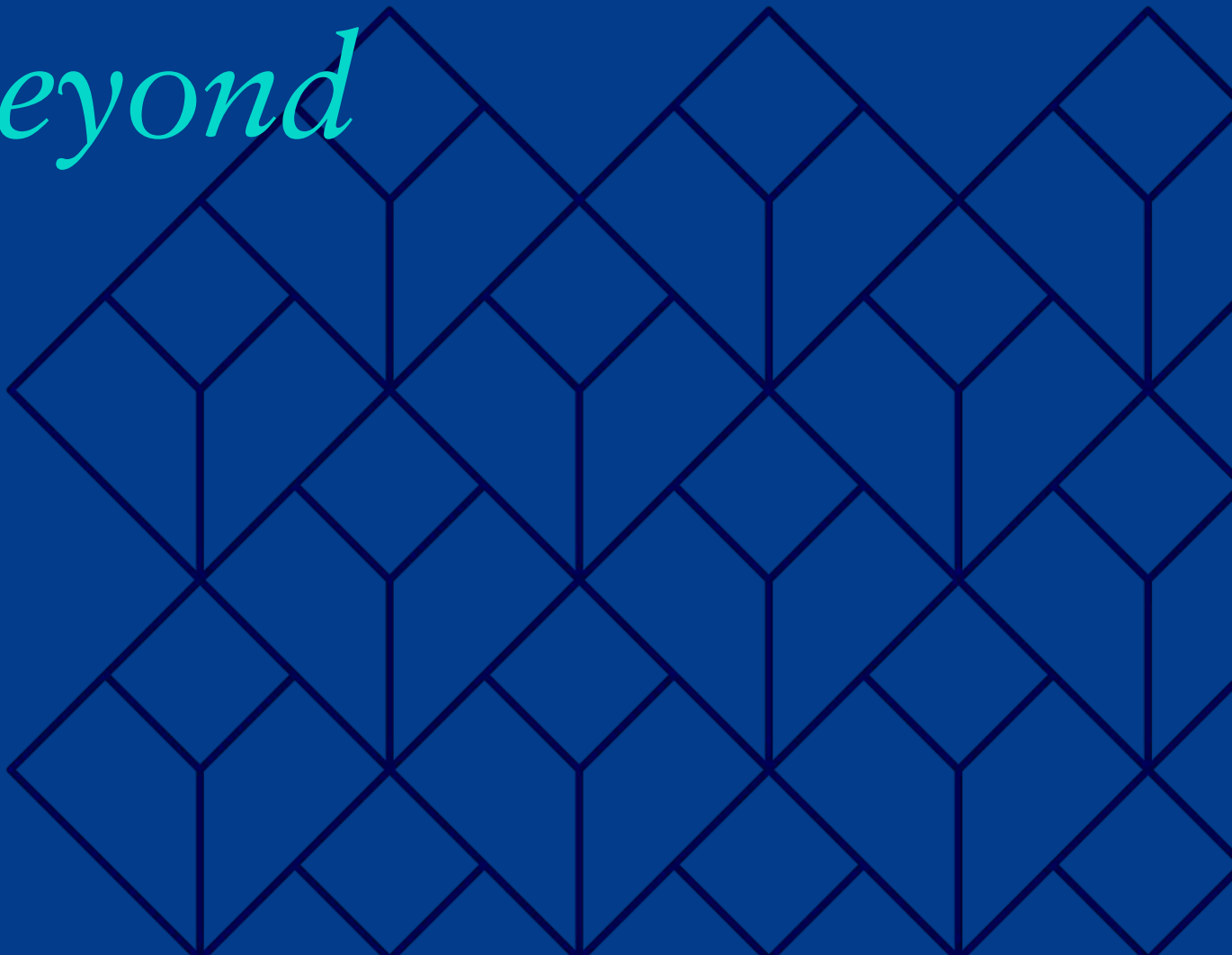
We also sponsored Team Titans, an American flag football team, for the 8th season of the Shitsuke Flag Football League, a co-ed American flag football league with thousands of participants.

Lastly, we partnered with the government of Edo State in providing support during the Alaghodaro sports festival.

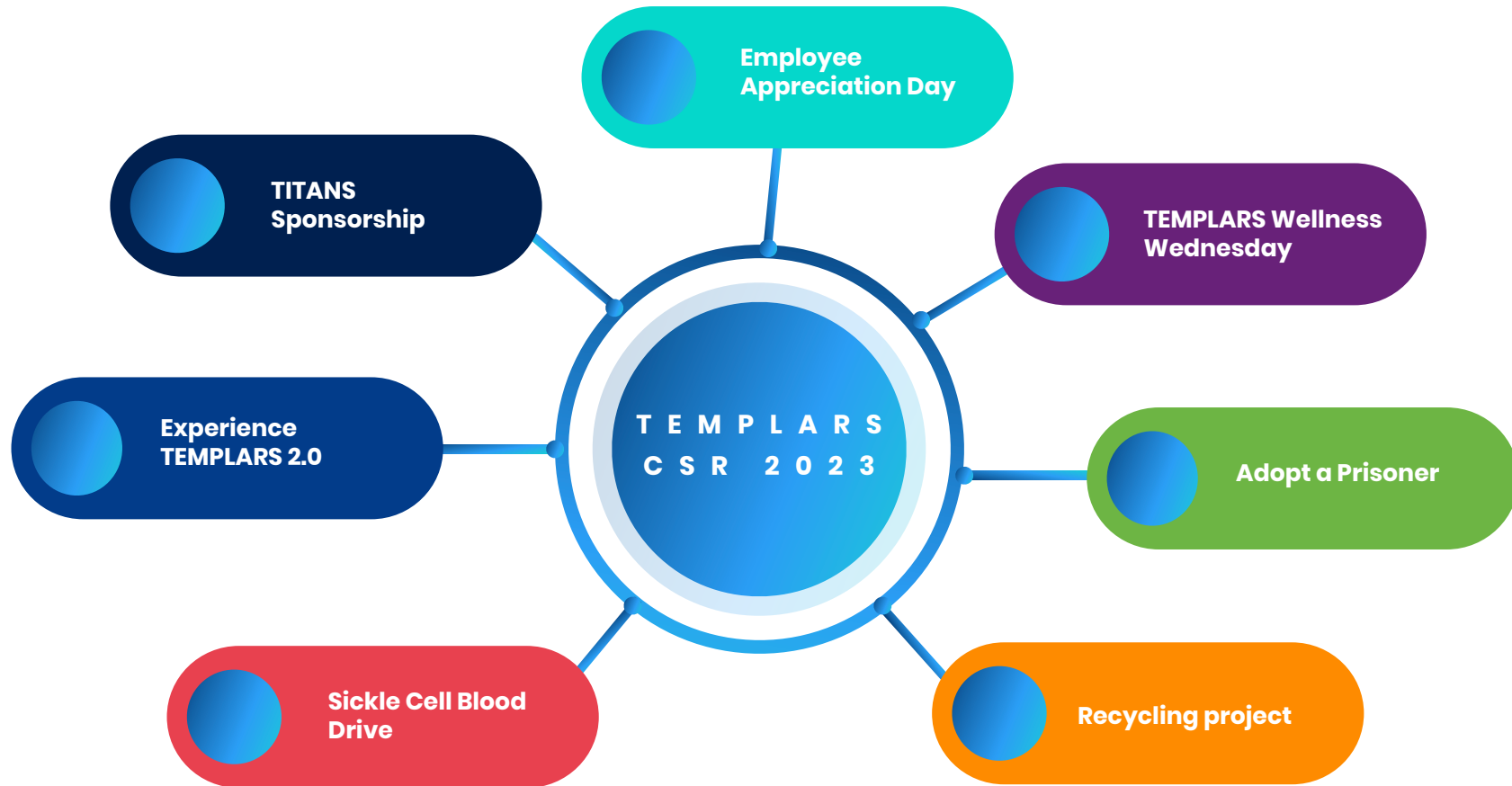


We established the Fair Justice Initiative to combat discrimination and marginalization faced by prison inmates in Ghana. Additionally, we organized an annual party at Nsawam Female Medium Security Prison. The event aimed to foster a positive environment and facilitate the reintegration of inmates into society.

2023 & *Beyond*







As business advisers and legal partners, we are committed to working collaboratively with you to protect your interests today and support your ambitions for tomorrow.

We leverage our expertise to deliver solutions that address unique business challenges and help you capitalise on emerging opportunities.

Our long-term thinking is reflected in everything we do, from building strong relationships with our clients to prioritising sustainability in our actions. We are committed to putting people, communities, and the environment at the forefront of our work, ensuring that our actions have a positive impact on both the present and the future.

# Our Partners



**Oghogho Akpata**  
**Managing Partner**  
 ogh.akpata@templars-law.com



**Kofi D. Asante**  
**Partner,**  
**Consultant**  
 kofidarko.asante@templars-law.com



**Olumide Akpata**  
**Partner and Head,**  
**Corporate and Commercial**  
 olumide.akpata@templars-law.com



**Adewale Atake, S.A.N**  
**Partner and Head,**  
**Dispute Resolution**  
 wale.atake@templars-law.com



**Chike Obianwu**  
**Partner and Head,**  
**M&A**  
 chike.obianwu@templars-law.com



**Godwin Omoaka, S.A.N**  
**Partner,**  
**Dispute Resolution**  
 godwin.omoaka@templars-law.com



**Dayo Okusami**  
**Partner and Co-Head,**  
**Energy and Natural Resources**  
 dayo.okusami@templars-law.com



**Inam Wilson, S.A.N**  
**Partner and Head,**  
**Labour, and Employment**  
 inam.wilson@templars-law.com



**Dipo Komolafe**  
**Partner and Head,**  
**Tax**  
 dipo.komolafe@templars-law.com



**Zelda Akindele**  
**Partner,**  
**M & A and Competition**  
 zelda.akindele@templars-law.com



**Igonikon Adekunle**  
**Partner,**  
**Dispute Resolution**  
 igonikon.adekunle@templars-law.com



**Ijeoma Uju**  
**Partner,**  
**Corporate and Commercial**  
 ijeoma.uju@templars-law.com



**Desmond Ogba**  
**Partner,**  
**Finance, Energy and Natural Resources**  
 desmond.ogba@templars-law.com



**Yemisi Awonuga**  
**Partner and Co-Head,**  
**Energy and Natural Resources**  
 yemisi.awonuga@templars-law.com



**Sadiku Ilegieuno**  
**Partner,**  
**Dispute Resolution**  
 sadiku.ilegieuno@templars-law.com



**Cyriacus Orlu**  
**Partner,**  
**Dispute Resolution**  
 cyriacus.orlu@templars-law.com



**Dupe Dabiri**  
**Partner,**  
**Finance**  
 modupe.dabiri@templars-law.com



**Sesan Sulaiman**  
**Partner,**  
**Tax and Dispute Resolution**  
 sesan.sulaiman@templars-law.com



**Sarah F. Asante**  
**Partner,**  
**(Pro Bono & CSR)**  
 femiasante@templars-law.com



**Dorothy Mensah**  
**Partner,**  
**Finance and M&A**  
 dorothy.mensah@templars-law.com



**Funmi Iyayi**  
**Partner,**  
**Dispute Resolution, Corporate & Commercial**  
 funmi.iyayi@templars-law.com

## Contact *information*

### **Lagos**

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, The Octagon, 13A A.J. Marinho Drive, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria

T: +234 1 461 1294 | +234 1 270 3982 | +234 1 279 9396 +234 1 461 1889-90

### **Port Harcourt**

28 Tombia GRA Phase 2, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

T: +234 1 461 1294 | +234 803 723 5285

### **Abuja**

No. 6, Usuma Close, Off Gana Street, Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria

T: +234 9 273 1898 | +234 9 273 1877

### **Accra**

18, Labone Crescent GL-014-5445 Accra, Ghana

T: +233 30 825 5704 | +233 50 490 1281

