

TEMPLARS

NIGERIA | GHANA

TEMPLARS  
RESPONSIBLE  
BUSINESS REPORT

2024



# Creating Sustainable Impact



# Creating Sustainable Impact

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RESPONSIBLE  
BUSINESS REPORT  
2024

Tradition of Excellence,  
Future of Possibilities.

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At TEMPLARS, our fundamental commitment transcends traditional business paradigms. We view profit not as an end goal, but to create lasting, meaningful changes in the communities where we operate.

Our approach is rooted in an understanding that true corporate success is measured by the positive impact we generate beyond financial metrics.

## **Our Commitment to Sustainable Impact**

Our approach to corporate social responsibility is a carefully orchestrated symphony of global best practices and local insights. Guided by internationally recognised frameworks such as the United Nations Global Compact, Global Reporting Initiative, and ISO 26000, we have developed a nuanced strategy that addresses fundamental societal challenges with precision and compassion.

The year 2024 marked a pivotal moment in our journey of social impact. We reimagined our internal policies, introducing extended parental leave and comprehensive mental and physical health programs that reflect our deep commitment to our people. Our initiatives expanded beyond traditional corporate social responsibility, seamlessly integrating pro-bono legal representation, educational support, environmental sustainability, and mental health advocacy.

What distinguishes our approach is its holistic, collaborative nature. These programs are not top-down mandates, but collective efforts embraced by every team member across our offices. Throughout the year, we engaged with over 15 communities, centres, and organizations, providing not just financial support, but educational resources and training designed to create sustainable, long-term positive change.





At TEMPLARS, we view the law as a bridge to equity and opportunity. In 2024, we made giant strides on our Corporate Social Responsibility by advancing education, legal empowerment, and welfare in underserved communities through strategic partnerships. Rooted in integrity, compassion, service, and a tradition of excellence, we remain committed to shaping a just, inclusive future, filled with possibilities, across Nigeria and Africa.

**Oghogho Akpata**

MANAGING PARTNER



## Social Investment

# \$700,000

Total Financial Commitment



# 2,000+ Professional Hours

Human Capital Investment



# 10,000

Individual Lives Touched



## Strategic Focus Areas



### **Education Enhancement**



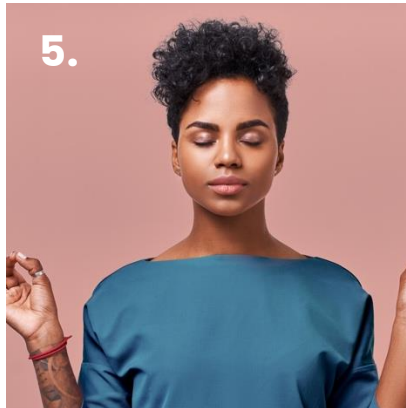
### **Environmental Sustainability**



### **Healthcare Support**



### **Legal Aid and Welfare Support**



### **Mental Health Awareness**



### **Youth Development**



# Our Strategy for Sustainable Impact

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles are not mere buzzwords for us, but fundamental pillars that guide every aspect of our operations. In 2024, we transformed these principles from conceptual frameworks into tangible actions that drive meaningful change.

Our environmental stewardship took concrete form through innovative digitalization initiatives. We achieved a remarkable 70% reduction in printing, transitioning to electronic business cards that symbolise our commitment to sustainability. Regular internal communications ensured that environmental awareness remained at the forefront of our operational consciousness, engaging our entire team in our collective mission to reduce our ecological footprint.

In the social sphere, we recognise that our greatest asset is our people. We cultivated an inclusive workplace that prioritises both professional growth and personal wellbeing. This internal commitment naturally extends outward through our community engagement initiatives, where we leverage our expertise to create meaningful impact in the lives of others.

Governance excellence remains the bedrock of our operations. We maintain rigorous ethical standards and transparency, ensuring that our efforts not only create positive change but do so with the highest level of professional integrity.



# Healthcare Initiatives

## A Comprehensive Approach to Community Wellness

Our collaboration with the **Sickle Cell Foundation Nigeria (SCFN)** continues to break new ground in awareness and support, working tirelessly to dispel misconceptions and facilitate access to essential medical resources.

In Abuja, our staff joined the **Medicaid Cancer Foundation's** 5km awareness walk, which drew over 12,000 participants and provided free cancer screenings.

The third annual 'Walk for Cancer' with the **Marcelle Ruth Cancer Center** engaged more than 1,000 participants across Lagos State, ingeniously combining physical activity with crucial health education and support for cancer patients.



MARCELLE RUTH





## Standing Against Gender Violence

Our partnership with the Women At Risk International Foundation (WARIF) demonstrates an unwavering commitment to addressing crucial social challenges. The 2024 "NO TOLERANCE" March was more than a demonstration - it was a powerful collective statement against sexual assault, rape, and human trafficking, bringing together over 1,000 participants from across Lagos.

This collaboration extends far beyond public demonstrations. Through ongoing financial support and pro-bono legal services, we stand alongside WARIF in pursuing justice for survivors and preventing future violations. Our approach reflects a holistic commitment to community support, seamlessly combining advocacy, legal expertise, and direct action to drive meaningful social change.

# Adopt-A-Prisoner

## The Freedom Project

Our focus shifted to providing pro-bono legal services for male inmates in selected Lagos state correctional facilities.

The first quarter of 2024 saw a breakthrough when we successfully secured the release of three inmates from the Ikoyi Correctional Centre and Kirikiri maximum security prison and, more recently, the release of an inmate from Sokoto State Correctional Centre.

Two of these individuals had been held in maximum-security units, spending an average of three years in custody without legal representation.

Through persistent advocacy and meticulous legal expertise, we not only secured their release but achieved the complete dismissal of all charges against them. The emotional impact of these releases transcends legal documentation - each case reinforces our conviction that legal expertise must serve society's most vulnerable members.

The Adopt-A-Prisoner Initiative embodies our fundamental belief that justice should know no bounds. Building upon the success of our 2023 program at the Female Correctional Centre in Apapa – where we raised over NGN4,000,000.00 for inmate welfare - 2024 marked a significant expansion of our commitment to justice reform.



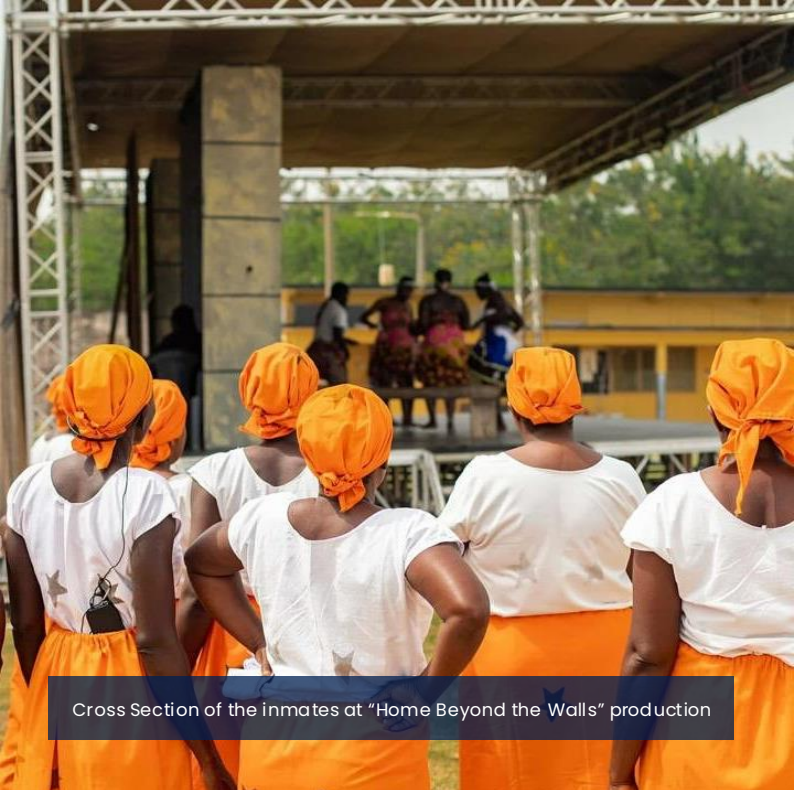
[Standing] TEMPLARS CSR Team; L-R: Chijioke Ukomadu; Victoria Gordon; Olaide Ajanaku; Nkem Isiakpona; Frances Ehigiamusor; and Nosakhare Iyamu].

[Sitting] Beneficiaries of the Adopt-A-Prisoner Initiative.





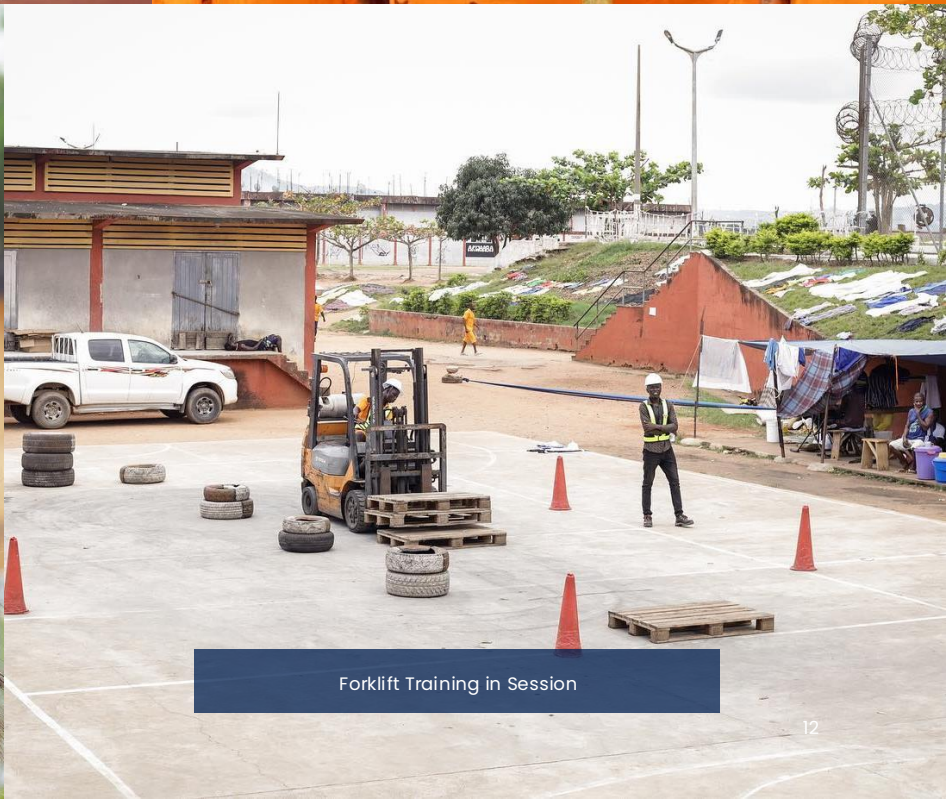
Shea Butter Making session



Cross Section of the inmates at "Home Beyond the Walls" production



TEMPLARS Partner, Femi Asante speaking at FJI's annual 9 lessons and Carol dubbed SING FOR JOY!! held at the Female Yard of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison



Forklift Training in Session

# TEMPLARS Fair Justice Initiative (Ghana)

## Expanding Impact Across Borders

The Fair Justice Initiative (FJI) in Ghana exemplifies our commitment to justice reform that transcends national boundaries. Through strategic partnerships with the Development Bank of Ghana, Zprime Professional Driving Institute, and Aprils Communications, we've developed a comprehensive approach to prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration.

A highlight of 2024 was our Mother's Day workshop at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison, where female inmates received training in floral arrangement and skincare production. This initiative, supported by Development Bank of Ghana and other partners, represents our belief in economic empowerment as a crucial element of rehabilitation.

The forklift training program, conducted in partnership with Zprime Professional Driving Institute, provided thirteen inmates and two prison officers with valuable vocational skills. This practical approach to rehabilitation combines technical training with psychological support, preparing participants for successful reintegration into society.

Our commitment to creative rehabilitation found expression in the "Theatre for Change" program. The production of "Home Beyond the Walls" at the annual Nine (9) Lessons and Carols event provided inmates with a powerful medium for self-expression while raising important questions about rehabilitation and reintegration.

The impact of these initiatives gained recognition when our Partner, Femi Asante, received the 'Activist of the Year' award at the Ghana Women of the Year Awards, acknowledging her tireless advocacy for women's empowerment and community development in Ghana.





At TEMPLARS, we are committed to maintaining high standards of legal expertise while also fulfilling our responsibilities as a corporate citizen. Guided by principles of integrity, community engagement, and sustainability, we strive to make a positive impact through pro bono work, active participation in local initiatives, and ethical business practices that include a focus on environmental sustainability.

Femi Asante

PARTNER, PRO BONO/CSR







Edo Boys High School emerges champions of the TEMPLARS Secondary School Boys Cricket Competition

# The TEMPLARS Secondary School Boys' Cricket Tournament

The TEMPLARS Secondary School Boys' Cricket Tournament is an annual cricket competition for secondary schools in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. For the past seven years, the firm has sponsored this initiative aimed at nurturing young talents and supporting the growth of cricket in Nigeria.

This grassroots initiative fosters integrity, discipline, and teamwork among young students. Over the years, it has provided a platform for Edo State's talented athletes to showcase their skills, with several securing national team spots and representing Nigeria internationally. Notably, six current National Senior Squad players emerged from this tournament.



# Law School Sponsorship for UNIBEN Students

The University of Benin (UNIBEN) Law School Scholarship emerges as a powerful testament to TEMPLARS' commitment to legal education and social mobility. This carefully designed financial assistance program goes far beyond traditional sponsorship, representing a strategic investment in the future of Nigeria's legal landscape.

In the 2023/2024 academic session, TEMPLARS extended its support through a meticulously coordinated scholarship program facilitated by the UNIBEN alumni platform under the leadership of Richard Oma Ahonaruogho, SAN. Four exceptional students were selected to receive comprehensive financial support; each awarded a tuition fee and a monthly stipend to ensure their educational journey remains uninterrupted.

The scholarship's impact transcends mere financial assistance. By removing economic barriers, TEMPLARS enables promising legal minds to pursue their academic dreams, simultaneously nurturing the next generation of legal professionals who will shape Nigeria's judicial ecosystem. Each sponsored student represents a potential catalyst for systemic change, embodying the firm's belief in education as a transformative power.



# Partnership with Cuppy Foundation and the University of Oxford

## Cuppy Africa Scholars Fund

The partnership between TEMPLARS, the Cuppy Foundation, the Africa Oxford Initiative, and the University of Oxford represents a visionary approach to supporting African academic potential. The Cuppy Africa Scholars Fund stands as a beacon of hope for graduate students facing unexpected financial challenges, offering more than just monetary support – it provides a pathway to comprehensive personal and professional development.

By expanding the Fund in 2024, TEMPLARS has reinforced its dedication to creating sustainable, transformative opportunities for African students. The initiative goes beyond traditional scholarship models, recognizing that true empowerment involves providing access to critical resources, developing essential skills, and creating robust networking opportunities.

This strategic partnership embodies TEMPLARS' holistic approach to social impact. It acknowledges that supporting individual academic journeys contributes to broader continental progress, investing in future leaders who will drive innovation, challenge existing paradigms, and create meaningful change across Africa and beyond.



DJ Cuppy with TEMPLARS Managing Partner, Oghogho Akpata at the University of Oxford



DJ Cuppy with TEMPLARS Partner, Dayo Okusami



The Cuppy Foundation Team in discussions with the TEMPLARS Team

# TEMPLARS & NHEF: Empowering Nigeria's Future Leaders



TEMPLARS partners with the **Nigerian Higher Education Foundation (NHEF)**, a transformative initiative supported by the MacArthur Foundation, committed to significantly increasing the number of well-educated Nigerians in leadership roles both locally and globally.

Through this collaboration, we offer **paid internships** to exceptional NHEF Scholars—high-achieving students from Nigerian universities selected for their academic excellence, leadership potential, and dedication to making an impact. These internships provide hands-on experience within a high-performing legal environment, complementing the career development and training opportunities offered by the NHEF program.

This partnership underscores TEMPLARS' commitment to corporate social responsibility and capacity building. By equipping young Nigerians with the mentorship, resources, and exposure needed to excel, we are investing in the future of transformative leadership and contributing to the sustainable development of Nigeria.



TEMPLARS is a member of EnterpriseNGR, an independent policy and advocacy group dedicated to fostering sustainable economic growth in Nigeria. As part of this commitment, we actively participate in the Leadership Enhancement and Development Programme (**LEAD-P**)—a collaborative initiative spearheaded by EnterpriseNGR, the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (**OHCSF**), and the AIG Foundation. The LEAD-P Programme is aimed at enhancing leadership skills and building capacity within Nigeria's public sector. Through structured internships within private sector organizations, selected civil servants gain hands-on exposure to management practices, operational strategies, and corporate culture that drive success in private enterprises.

TEMPLARS is also proud to continue its collaboration with EnterpriseNGR on its Youth of Enterprise (**YOE**) paid internship programme—an initiative designed to tackle youth unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria. This programme connects ambitious and talented graduates with high-value paid internships at leading organizations across the country. Through this partnership, we offer paid internships to outstanding Nigerian university graduates who have completed their NYSC. These internships provide YOE interns with the opportunity to develop critical skills, gain practical experience, and build a strong foundation for their careers.

Recently, TEMPLARS contributed to the State of Enterprise (SOE) 2024 Report – a financial report launched by EnterpriseNGR in 2024. The report highlights the substantial growth of Nigeria's financial sector in 2023, with the banking sub-sector boosting GDP by 4.6% and assets surging by 56.14% to ₦121.8 trillion. It also details advancements in the insurance and capital markets, reflecting a thriving financial landscape.

In 2024, Lami Adekola, Director of Policy and Public Affairs at Enterprise NGR also contributed to the 'TEMPLARS Through the Line' Podcast together with Zelda Akindele, Partner, TEMPLARS' Banking and Finance Practice Group in a nuanced exploration of "Social Impact on the Bottom Line". Their discussion traced the evolution of corporate social responsibility, critically evaluating how organizations can balance meaningful social initiatives with sustainable business practices.





We believe literacy is the foundation of opportunity, so we invest in education, to equip underserved communities to learn, grow, and lead. Healthcare is another pillar of our impact, because thriving individuals build thriving societies.

We are breaking barriers and creating pathways for progress, building a society where knowledge empowers and wellness sustains. Every book opened, every life uplifted, brings us closer to a brighter tomorrow.

Debisi Omole

COO, CHAIRPERSON CSR COMMITTEE





## Our Green Initiative



The TEMPLARS' Green Initiative (TGI) represents our proactive approach to sustainability, transforming environmental consciousness from a theoretical ideal into tangible, measurable action.

In 2024, we introduced comprehensive programmes that go beyond mere compliance, aiming to fundamentally reshape our interaction with nature. Among the most notable outcomes was a 70% reduction in printing, driven by strategic digitalisation initiatives that challenge long-standing workplace norms, including a gradual shift towards electronic business cards to reduce printed cards.

Regular internal communications have been instrumental in maintaining environmental awareness. By keeping sustainability at the forefront of our operational consciousness, we ensure that every team member becomes an active participant in our collective environmental awareness. This approach transforms sustainability from an institutional mandate to a shared organisational value.





# TEMPLARS Legal Education Fund

Investing in Legal Excellence

The TEMPLARS Legal Education Fund emerges as a beacon of hope and opportunity for exceptional legal talent. Conceived in the success of Experience TEMPLARS, this initiative represents our belief in the transformative value of education. We provide comprehensive support for Nigerian Law School students, addressing not just tuition but the holistic financial challenges that often impede promising legal careers.

Our fund has already benefitted seven (7) promising students, covering full tuition per student and providing monthly stipends. Each scholarship is more than a financial investment; it is a commitment to nurturing the next generation of legal minds who will shape Nigeria's judicial landscape.

# TEMPLARS' Pages of Possibilities

## A Literacy Initiative for Underserved Communities

The TEMPLARS' Pages of Possibilities Project (T-POP) represents our innovative approach to education that extends far beyond traditional boundaries. This mobile library initiative brings books and educational materials to young minds, focusing on children aged 8 to 16 in primary, secondary, and vocational schools.

Our inaugural effort at Doyisem Nursery and Primary School in Makoko, Lagos, created a meaningful impact that resonates far beyond the 1,500 books distributed.

Our team engaged students in discussions about leadership, integrity, and personal aspirations, transforming a simple book distribution into a transformative educational experience.

The distribution of TEMPLARS-branded educational materials - textbooks, exercise books, stationery and backpacks - created tangible excitement among students and staff supporting their educational journey and igniting possibilities for future success.



TEMPLARS COO and Chairperson CSR Committee giving her speech



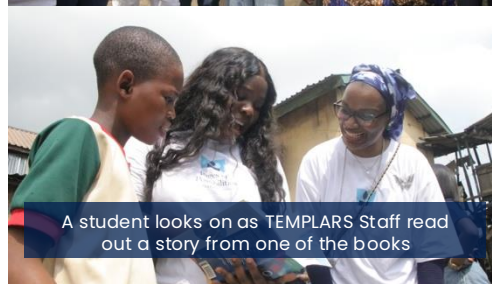
Cross Section of the donated books



Cross section of the students and the TEMPLARS CSR team



The Principal giving his Vote of Thanks



A student looks on as TEMPLARS Staff read out a story from one of the books





# Experience TEMPLARS 3.0

Nurturing Tomorrow's Legal Professionals

The journey of Experience TEMPLARS is a testament to our unwavering commitment to nurturing the next generation of legal professionals. What began as a modest initiative in 2022 has blossomed into a transformative program that captures the imagination of aspiring lawyers across Nigeria. From an initial cohort of 30 students selected from 100 applicants, we have witnessed exponential growth, with the 2024 edition attracting over 600 applications and expanding our participant base to 60 promising young legal minds.

Participants from faculties of law across universities in Nigeria were immersed in an enriching experience that transcended traditional internship models. The program commenced with an inspiring welcome address by our Managing Partner, Oghogho Akpata, setting a tone of aspiration and potential that would resonate throughout the initiative.





TEMPLARS Partner, Mr. Adewale Atake, SAN



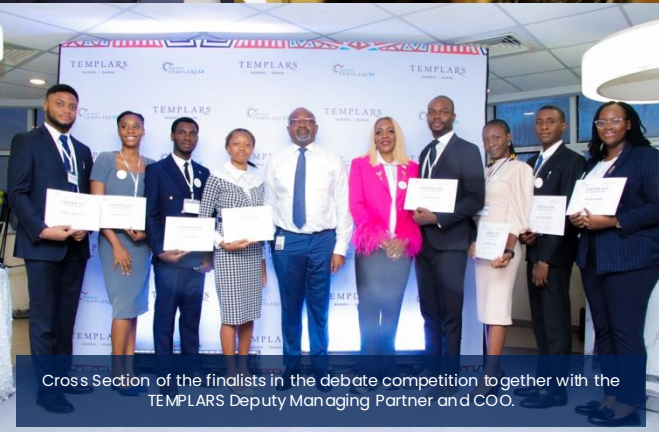
Temple Ezebuike (Senior Associate, Energy & Natural Resources) giving a brief overview of the practice group.



Kojo Amoako, Senior Associate) during a session.



Cross Section of the participants.



Cross Section of the finalists in the debate competition together with the TEMPLARS Deputy Managing Partner and COO.



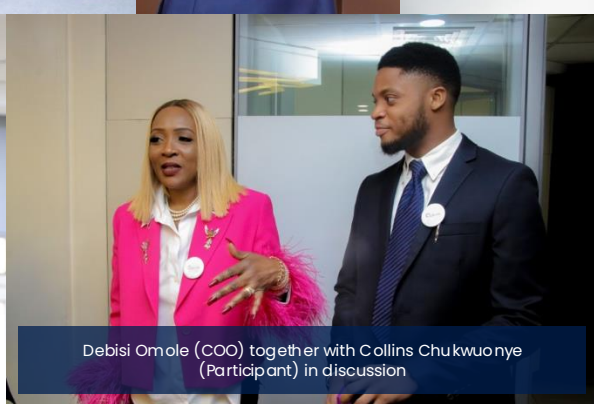
Debate Competition Finalist, Stephen Okangla



TEMPLARS HR Lead, Ngozi Agada takes the participants on a tour.



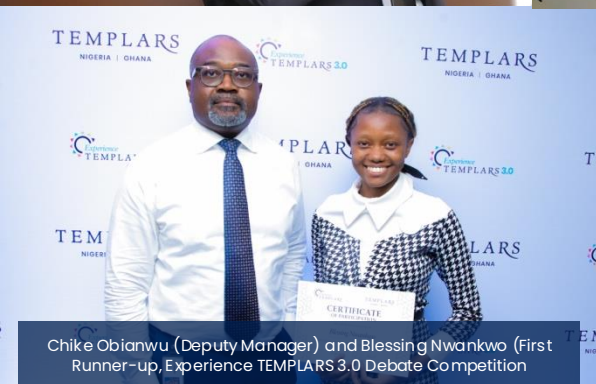
Chikwudifu Okoli (Winner, Experience TEMPLARS 3.0 Debate Competition).



Debisi Omole (COO) together with Collins Chukwuonye (Participant) in discussion



Some participants of Experience TEMPLARS 3.0.



Chike Obianwu (Deputy Manager) and Blessing Nwankwo (First Runner-up, Experience TEMPLARS 3.0 Debate Competition)



Debate Competition Finalist, Priscilla Ayorinde



TEMPLARS Associate, Susan Omeh, during one of the panel sessions

This year's debate competition broke new grounds by recognising four outstanding winners, each benefiting from the TEMPLARS Legal Education Fund and invaluable internship opportunities.

The Grand Prize Winner's contract of employment with TEMPLARS symbolises our commitment to identifying and nurturing exceptional talent.

Carefully curated interactive sessions with senior lawyers provided participants with insights that extend far beyond textbook learning. Students gained nuanced understanding of career development, explored the delicate balance of work-life integration, and delved into the ethical complexities of the legal profession. Office tours, mentorship sessions, and networking opportunities offered a comprehensive view of life within a top-tier law firm, bridging the gap between academic preparation and professional reality.

The debate competition emerged as a highlight, challenging participants to explore the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on the legal landscape. This year's competition broke new ground by recognising four outstanding winners, each benefiting from the TEMPLARS Legal Education Fund and invaluable internship opportunities. The Grand Prize Winner's contract of employment with TEMPLARS symbolises our commitment to identifying and nurturing exceptional talent.

Perhaps most remarkable was the program's digital reach. Live streaming enabled over 5,000 students to benefit from the sessions remotely, dramatically expanding our impact beyond the physical participants. This digital inclusion strategy reflects our understanding that opportunities in legal education must transcend traditional boundaries. Subsequent editions will be made available on the firm's YouTube page to reach and inspire a wider audience.

*Experience TEMPLARS 4.0 promises to be much more.*





# The Gertrude Sackey Tokornoo Moot Court Competition (Ghana)

Introduced between 4th and 6th September 2024 at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) Law School, the Gertrude Sackey Tokornoo Moot Court Competition brought together teams from five major universities, offering students a platform to refine their advocacy and legal reasoning skills. By engaging five (5) participating universities and positively impacting five (5) Ghanaian students, the competition represents our ongoing commitment to nurturing legal talent across the region. Monetary prizes were awarded, along with additional future opportunities at TEMPLARS.



# Through the Line



## TEMPLARS RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS PODCAST Amplifying Social Impact Narratives

Launched in 2024, the TEMPLARS Through the Line Podcast emerged as an innovative platform for exploring critical conversations surrounding social impact, corporate responsibility, and justice in an increasingly complex corporate world. With a remarkable reach of 15,000 listeners across multiple social media platforms, the podcast has quickly established itself as a thought-provoking medium for deep, meaningful dialogue.

The inaugural episode featured Dayo Okusami, Partner and Co-Head, TEMPLARS' Energy and Natural Resources Practice Group, and Femi Asante, Partner, TEMPLARS' Probono and CSR Initiatives, delving into the Fair Justice Initiative, offering intimate insights into TEMPLARS' work supporting inmates in Ghana and providing critical skill acquisition training. By humanizing the rehabilitation process, the discussion challenged listeners to reconsider societal perspectives on justice and redemption.

A powerful second episode brought together TEMPLARS Senior Associate Oyeyemi Aderibigbe and WARIF Founder Dr. Kemi DaSilva-Ibru to explore "Gender Violence: A Legal Perspective". The conversation fearlessly examined gender-based violence within business sectors, unpacking its economic implications and offering pragmatic strategies for employer intervention and employee protection.

The third installment featured Zelda Akindele, Partner, TEMPLARS' Banking and Finance Practice Group, and Lami Adekola, Director of Policy and Public Affairs at Enterprise NGR in a nuanced exploration of "Social Impact on the Bottom Line". Their discussion traced the evolution of corporate social responsibility, critically evaluating how organizations can balance meaningful social initiatives with sustainable business practices.

Each podcast episode reflects TEMPLARS' commitment to thought leadership, demonstrating how professional expertise can drive meaningful social transformation.

# LOOKING FORWARD



*2025 and Beyond*

As we look to the future, our commitment to sustainable impact continues to evolve and expand. The coming year will witness the launch of innovative programs including Pillars of Possibilities and Futures of Possibilities, alongside the expansion of successful initiatives like Experience TEMPLARS into Ghana. Our Startup Incubator and enhanced Green Initiative demonstrate our dedication to fostering innovation while protecting our environment.

These forward-looking programs build on our established foundation of success while pushing boundaries to create even greater positive impact in our communities. Through continued dedication to our core values and responsible business practices, TEMPLARS remains committed to creating lasting positive change across Africa.



Adopt a Prisoner



Experience Templars (Ghana) 1.0



Experience Templars (Nigeria) 4.0



Templars Green Initiative



Futures of Possibilities (A tuition and educational material project for underserved communities)



Pillars of Possibilities (An infrastructure-related project for underserved communities)



Templars Legal Incubator Programme (Ghana)



WARIF NO TOLERANCE Walk





**From L-R:** Debisi Omole (COO and Chairperson, CSR Committee); Femi Asante (Partner, Probono/CSR); Stanley Nweke-Eze (Managing Counsel); Inna Ali (Managing Counsel); Oyeyemi Aderibigbe (Senior Associate); Nkem Isiakpona (Senior Associate); Nosakhare Iyamu (Senior Associate); Adedayin Philip-Ladipo (Design & Communication Strategy Lead); Olaide Ajanaku (Admin Executive); Adwoa Owusu-Manu (CSR Executive); Victoria Gordon (Associate); Frances Ehigiamusor (Associate); Joshua Chizoma (Associate); Susan Omeh (Associate) Chijioke Ukomadu (Associate); Orumen Ojeaburu (Associate); Jumoke Ajide (Associate); Albright Emmanuel (Associate); and Onyinye Omenugha (Associate)

