

Sahara Group reaffirms commitment to Literacy and Skills Development

The ability to read and write is not only a fundamental human right but in the 21st century, it is an essential tool for human survival.

LAGOS, LAGOS, NIGERIA, September 10, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The ability to read and write is not only a fundamental human right but in the 21st century, it is an essential tool for human survival. Like Darwin propounded in his theory of evolution by Natural Selection, species that fail to acquire the abilities [skills] and features for survival or competitiveness in an ever-evolving world will die – commonly referred to as survival of the fittest. Survival of the fittest refers to the ability of a species to survive and reproduce its kind.

Literacy, at the very least, in its most basic form, the ability to read and write – is a critical evolutionary feature for any human in the 21st century. It is becoming unthinkable that any human can make any significant impact or progress in the times that we live without the most basic form of education.

The International Literacy Day is a day set aside every year to remind world leaders and policymakers of the importance of education/literacy to the development of a people and the growth of a nation.

Globally, it is estimated that at least 750 million adults, including 102 million young people (15-24 years old), lack basic literacy skills. Further estimates show that six out of ten children and adolescents (617 million) are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics. These are alarming statistics for the survival prospects of these millions of people. If they are to make it to the next generation, they must acquire these literacy skills for survival.

Literacy is the basis for lifelong learning and plays a crucial foundational role in the creation of sustainable, prosperous and peaceful societies. In addition, it equips people with the abilities/skills to make a living and develop key resources for their growth and development.

According to Bethel Obioma, Head, Corporate Communications, Sahara Group, the leading



energy, and infrastructure conglomerate has invested in and supported various projects and programmes aimed at improving youth and child literacy across Sahara's locations in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

In 2014 and 2015, Sahara Foundation implemented a book drive aimed at improving the interest of children in reading. The intention was to build up an interest in the children to learn early the importance of life-long learning. Staff members also volunteered to read to children in those schools. "The sessions remain evergreen in the minds of the children, providing the foundation for a strong bond between Sahara and the beneficiaries. Helping people pursue and realize their dreams is a venture that Sahara is passionate about," Obioma said.

In addition, undergraduates of the University of Lagos, through AIESEC Lagos were supported in their drive to equip other young students with the knowledge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how it relates to their development.

Sahara Foundation's support for the Vocational Centre in Surulere represents a sustainable platform for propagating skills acquisition and development. At the center, young people are equipped with vocational skills in catering, hairdressing, photography, and ICT among others. Sahara's core support for the center was for the upgrade of the industrial kitchen to a modern one for the beneficiaries to acquire skills that they need to become self-sufficient catering entrepreneurs. Through our support for this center, over 1000 young caterers have benefitted with more than half of them becoming gainfully employed or business owners.

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Oluseyi Ojurongbe, Sahara Foundation Manager

In a bid to develop the skills of young people at scale, Sahara Foundation launched the Saharahub digital platform to empower millions of young people from around the world with the needed skills for improved lives.

This year, Sahara Foundation in partnership with Realizing Education for Development (READ) International are empowering 30 young men and women in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, with entrepreneurship skills and built their vocational capacities. The support to these beneficiaries includes startup capital, vocational training, business advisory and post-training support as well market access. In line with our Extrapreneurship framework, the goal is to ensure that the supported beneficiaries - all youths - are able to start and sustain successful businesses while empowering other young Tanzanians as their business grows.



Oluseyi Ojurongbe, Sahara Foundation said the energy giant would continue to seek avenues for promoting literacy and skills development.

"At Sahara, we believe that education essential to economic sufficiency. As such, we support education and execute literacy and education programmes. The subject of literacy (and skills development) is so important to us that from inception, Education and Capacity Building has been one of the four pillars of our Personal and Corporate Social Responsibility focus. We have and will continue to support the literacy and skills development of young people."



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