

PRESS RELEASE

Helios Receives 2023 GPCA Social Impact Award

10 November 2023. Helios Investment Partners (“Helios”), a leading multi-strategy alternatives manager focused on investing across Africa, is delighted to announce that it has received the 2023 Global Private Capital Association (“GPCA”) Social Impact Award for its investment in Solevo Holding (“Solevo”).

Now in its third year, the GPCA Awards recognise private capital investments with extraordinary outcomes across Asia, Latin America, Africa, CEE and the Middle East, in particular acknowledging fund managers that have driven transformation in their portfolio companies.

Underpinned by over 75 years of heritage and brand recognition in Africa, Solevo has established itself as a key enabler in the continent’s drive for agricultural self-sufficiency and the stimulation of local industry.

During its ownership period, from Helios’ carve out of the business from Louis Dreyfus Company in 2017 through to its successful sale to a consortium of financial buyers in 2023, Helios is proud to have worked with Solevo management to execute a value creation strategy that resulted in strong financial, social and environmental performance. Solevo consistently achieved double-digit annual operating profit growth rates driven by revenue growth and margin expansion, demonstrating that a core focus on impact also serves to drive strong financial returns.

In this period, Helios supported Solevo to implement and develop a range of impact initiatives. These included helping over one million West and Central African smallholder farmers to increase crop yields by 2-3x and to reduce crop loss by 50%; providing over 2,500 training sessions, led by agronomists, to more than 100,000 rural farmers on the responsible use of agri-inputs to limit soil degradation; and enabling local municipalities to increase their supply of clean water by approximately 30%.

By helping to increase the share of crops grown for local consumption (such as rice, millet and cassava) through improved agricultural techniques and corresponding improved yields, Solevo has helped countries to reduce both their food import bills and reduce their CO2 footprint given the reduction in food imports and associated food miles. Moreover, by driving a significant increase in yields amongst smallholder farmers, Solevo has helped to reduce the amount of land under cultivation, thereby reducing the pressure on forests and natural landscapes - improving climate resilience on the continent.

In addition, Solevo currently supports c.37,000 formal jobs and helps to sustain c.65,000 indirect jobs across its value chain. The gender diversity of the business was also transformed over Helios’ tenure from less than 5% of women in key leadership positions to c. 20% of roles in a historically male-dominated industry.

In April 2023, the business announced its official participation in the United Nations Global Compact, in doing so pledging its commitment to sustainable business practices. This was also reflected in Solevo achieving the prestigious EcoVadis Gold Medal sustainability rating in May 2023.

Commenting on the award, Tope Lawani and Babatunde Soyoye, Managing Partners at Helios, said:

“Our mission is to generate globally competitive investment returns and simultaneously create positive socio-economic development outcomes by building profitable, value-creating and socially responsible businesses. In pursuit of this mission, ESG is integrated into everything that we do and is fundamental in guiding the growth trajectory of businesses like Solevo. We are proud to receive this accolade on behalf of the business and delighted to be recognised for our commitment to positive impact investing.”

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About Helios Investment Partners

Established in 2004, Helios Investment Partners is among the largest Africa-focused private investment firms, with a record that spans creating start-ups to providing expanding companies with growth capital and expertise. The firm has over \$3.0 billion in assets under management and is led and managed by a predominantly African team based in London, Paris, Lagos and Nairobi, with the language skills and cultural affinity to engage with local entrepreneurs, managers and intermediaries on the continent.

Helios leverages its local and global networks to create attractive proprietary investment opportunities, with an emphasis on building market leaders in core economic sectors and driving performance through a highly engaged approach to portfolio operations. The firm’s unique combination of a deep knowledge of the African operating environment, a singular commitment to the region and a proven capability to manage complexity, is reflected in its diverse portfolio of growing, market-leading businesses and its position as a partner of choice in Africa.

Helios is the second mainstream private equity firm globally, and the largest emerging markets focused private equity firm, to achieve B Corp certification. B Corp status recognizes the firm’s longstanding commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices.