PHOENIX GLOBAL

PERSPECTIVES

AUGUST 2026

No Industry Is Exempt

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Strategy for the world's most complicated markets.

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The sectors cast as villain or checkbook in the sustainability conversation have more to contribute, and more to gain, than anyone has asked of them.

Some industries have been told that the sustainability conversation is not for them. Oil and gas. Mining. Heavy manufacturing. Commercial development. The sectors that show up on the wrong side of the ledger have learned to expect one of two roles in any discussion of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: the villain or the checkbook. Neither role asks anything interesting of them, and neither produces much for the world.

We think that is analytically lazy and commercially wasteful.

At Phoenix Global, we measure every engagement against the Sustainable Development Goals, in every sector, and that discipline rests on a conviction that sounds almost naive until you test it: there is no industry, anywhere, that cannot find measurable contribution inside the business it already runs. Inside it. The contribution does not live in a foundation across town or a pledge on a website. It lives in the payroll, the supply chain, the product and the community where the company already operates.

Take an oil and gas producer. It will not become a solar company by Thursday, and nobody serious is asking it to. But it employs thousands of people whose children need educations. A scholarship program for the children of employees is a direct, countable contribution to Goal 4, quality education, and it strengthens the workforce the company depends on. The same company can look inward at its own culture: regular roundtables where women and men build mutual understanding of one another, policies that produce genuine workplace equity, and a percentage of women on the board worth saying out loud. That is Goal 5, gender equality, advanced from inside one of the industries the conversation wrote off.

Or take a real estate developer. Smart technologies designed into every home it was already going to build reduce energy waste for decades after the sale, a contribution to Goal 7 and Goal 11 that compounds with every closing. Commit a number of small, affordable homes to the community each year, and affordable housing gains an actual figure instead of a sentiment. The developer did not change industries. It changed what its industry proves.

> *Contribution that fights the logic of the business does not last. Contribution built into the logic of the business outlasts the leadership that started it.*

Notice what these examples share. Every one of them would survive a chief financial officer, because every one of them serves the business: retention, workforce quality, community standing, product differentiation, the standing that wins the next approval.

The obvious objection is greenwashing, and the objection deserves a serious answer. The answer is measurement. A scholarship fund with a number attached, a board with a percentage attached, homes with a count attached: that is impact. A sustainability page with adjectives attached is marketing. The line between the two is whether you can put a figure on the contribution and stand behind the figure when someone checks. Everything we are describing here sits on the defensible side of that line, and everything that cannot get there should be left unsaid.

This matters commercially because the world is already grading on it. Governments weigh it when they award. Investors screen for it when they allocate. Boards answer for it, and communities decide with it. Work that can prove its contribution carries more weight in every room where it is judged, and the weight is growing, in the Gulf, across Africa, in Europe and in the United States alike.

That is why we build the measurement in from the first day of every engagement, whether the client is a ministry, a manufacturer, a family enterprise or a farm. The goals are a lens for finding value that was always sitting inside the operation, waiting for someone to count it.

Every engagement can prove something. The firms that learn to prove it will spend the next decade being chosen.

Phoenix Global measures every engagement against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Larisa B. Miller, Co-Founder & Chief Executive Officer

Phoenix Global is a global strategic advisory firm working across Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the United States.

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Phoenix Global is a global strategic advisory firm advising businesses, governments and investors on market expansion, business models, revenue growth and complex development across Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the United States.

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