

MESA
ADVOCATES

Firm Profile

www.mesaadvocates.com

CONTENT

04. About our Firm

05. Pro Bono and Social Responsibility

06. Practice Areas

12. Meet The Team

14. People

22. Clientelle



About our Firm

MESA Advocates, formerly Elau & Ochom Advocates and Legal Consultants was registered and commenced operations in Uganda in the year 2015 as a duly established firm.

The firm, in pursuance of its broader objectives with respect to growth rebranded to MESA Advocates in 2022 bringing onboard more partners with diverse specialized skill sets with a view to provide world class, multi-disciplinary legal services and build solid, long term mutually beneficial relationships, while remaining attuned to the dynamic legal landscape. We understand and work to fulfill the myriad legal and business needs of our clients.

MESA is a specialized full-service law firm, combining a well-established dispute resolution, business and trade law practice that helps its clients overcome legal complexities and build solutions that address our client's needs. We are dedicated to collaboration, teamwork, and superior client service.

Pro Bono and Social Responsibility

Lawyers at MESA often take a break from billables to make a positive impact in Uganda. Through the Pro Bono and Social Responsibility program, the firm provides legal services to those that are unable to afford legal representation.

The firm also partners with various charitable organizations to empower underprivileged women and support micro-business entrepreneurs. We are dedicated to building stronger communities through local partnerships that make a difference to the people in Uganda.





Practice Areas

Dispute Resolution

Our dispute resolution practice encompasses litigation, arbitration, negotiations, conciliation, and mediation as approaches towards building solutions to a particular set of circumstances. We also advise our clients on how to identify and manage risks in their dealings. Our team is extremely agile and versatile whether before courts, arbitral tribunals, or any other special fora.

Our offerings stretch from, commercial and civil litigation, international and Domestic arbitration, mediation, and complex negotiations as well criminal litigation. Our team-based approach also focuses on the optimal path to obtaining a favorable resolution of the matter that is truly in the best interest of our clients.

Regional and international trade

Because the International and Regional Landscape is complex, businesses encounter a wide range of trade compliance issues like restrictions, controls, observing regional agreements and dispute resolution issues across various jurisdictions.

MESA handles large, varied, and complex trade matters in the region of the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite, AFCTA and the wider world market. They also advise lenders on structured trade financing and specialize in collateral management for trade financing transactions.

Crisis Management and Strategic Response

We provide instant and continuous support to organizations navigating complex and challenging crises throughout the world. The team advises in real time and proactively thinks ahead to the next stages and beyond to provide tailored solutions to address volatile and ever shifting crises attacking corporations and organizations on multiple fronts.

We have experience guiding clients through such crises by establishing and managing both the initial and long-term legal strategies and assisting with remediation efforts. These include providing due diligence and counsel on compliance, governance, corporate restructuring, anti-money laundering, litigation risks and potential exposure arising from alleged misconduct, corruption, and mass tort litigation.





Banking and financial Services

The team at MESA advises, negotiates, and drafts documentation relating to secured and unsecured debt facilities, syndicated loans, project finance as well as Islamic finance. It advises on preparation and reviewing financial documentation as well as providing legal opinions for foreign law governed contracts to evaluate their efficiency and validity under Ugandan law.

The team can ably take on and execute Islamic banking and finance advisory on all sharia compliant bankable products, sharia compliant securities and portfolio management.

We can ably structure transactions relating to debt restructuring, conversion of debt-to-equity, swaps, and derivatives.

Project finance and Infrastructure

We provide counsel, due diligence, contract negotiation and drafting to sponsors, lenders, investors, contractors, credit agencies, insurance companies and other service providers across virtually every major industry such as Energy, infrastructure, oil and gas, mining, as well as transportation.

We offer legal services relating to procurement, contract administration, claims, dispute avoidance and resolution to project employers, contractors and suppliers according to the PPDA, FIDIC and other applicable laws. We are trained in the use of the contemporary Project management methodologies such ad Prince 2 and PMP which aid in project management.

Corporate and Commercial Law

We have vast interaction with the stakeholders in the corporate arena who makeup our diverse clientele from all over the world. We coordinate complex transactions while dealing with regulatory requirements, due diligence, investigations and prepare all the necessary documentation as well as advise on the taxation implications.

On corporate advisory and business management, the firm advises Boards of Directors, Investors and in-house legal counsel on a wide range of company matters inclusive of governance, debt workouts/insolvency, insurance and mergers and acquisitions. MESA also acts as a Company Secretary to our clients globally.

The firm's private equity team has developed significant expertise in private equity fund structuring and investment transactions. The members of the team bring a range of experience from their commercial, finance, tax and corporate governance advisory practice areas to aid their work for private equity advisory.





Real Estate

The firm advises on the development and acquisition of the various tenure and property management under the Ugandan law. We also advise our clients on mortgages, land use and government entitlements pertaining to real estate.

We are well versed with the complexities of the various interests existing on the same land and regulations governing new construction and development projects. We also harness the knowledge of our experts in related areas such as income tax relating to REITS.

Tax and Revenue

We advise on all aspects of income tax, customs and excise, value added tax, stamp duty and all other government levies.

We also offer dispute resolution tax services; these include litigation in courts of law and the tax appeals tribunal. We offer tax planning and advisory services on all business transactions, administrative engagement with the Uganda Revenue Authority and lobbying with the Ministry of Finance.

Labour and Employment

Our labour and employment practice encompasses the regulation of the laws that govern the workplace and the relationship between employees, managers, and unions and between employers and the government. MESA advocates offer representation in both facets of litigation and offers counsel in claims of discrimination, whistleblower retaliation, sexual harassment, unlawful termination, unpaid overtime among other related employment issues.

We also offer advice on the compliance of employment laws such as wholesale employment policies and practices, employment aspects of business transactions like M&A or restructurings, management on union matters, collective bargaining, union strike avoidance and breaking as well as occupational safety, casual work in the gig economy and cross border migration recruitment.

Oil and Gas

We advise on all aspects of income tax, customs and excise, value added tax, stamp duty and all other government levies.

We also offer dispute resolution tax services; these include litigation in courts of law and the tax appeals tribunal.





Fintech

As the digital revolution changes and inverts traditional laws and services of financial transactions there is an increasing demand for fintech solutions around the world, MESA advocates serve as trusted advisers for the buy side and sell side clients.

Our experience in this area spans to services and products including artificial intelligence, block chain & crypto currencies, initial coin offerings, online lending, digital banking, mobile wallets, E-commerce platforms & payment gateways.

Intellectual property

MESA offers a full range of legal services for the acquisition, commercialization and enforcement of intellectual property and technology Assets in the areas of patent, copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, data privacy and security.

Our transaction's practice provides strategic and Commercial advice to our clients and counsels in all aspects of IT transactions. Our work ranges from negotiating all IP related transactions to structuring and implementing complex sourcing and strategic alliances.



Meet the Team



MABLE KISAKA MUTUNGI
Managing Partner



EMMANUEL ELAU
Partner



SOPHIA N. KIGOZI
Partner



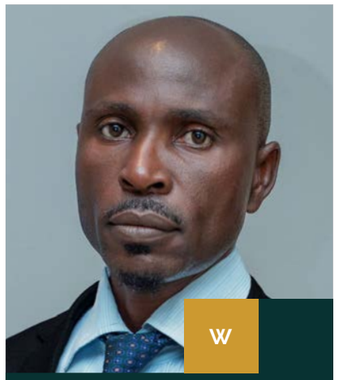
AGNES WAZEMWA NATALA
Partner



CAROL B. NABALEKE
Legal Assistant



HERBERT ODEKE
Legal Assistant



WANDERA SAMUEL
Clerk



MUWANDO SYLVIA
Administrator



MABLE KISAKA MUTUNGI

Managing Partner

Mable Kisaka was called to the bar in 2014. Other than being a Managing Partner and Head of the Corporate, Commercial and Project finance department of the firm, she is a Legal Consultant with the World Bank Legal Vice-Presidency.

She holds a Master of Laws (International Business and Economic Law) from Georgetown University Law Center, Washington DC, a Diploma in Legal Practice (LDC), a Bachelor of Laws degree (Makerere University), a Chartered Mediator Certificate (MTI-EA) and a certificate in Legal Tech and the Digital Transformation of Law (Universidad Austral).

With over 9 years' experience spanning from highly regulated corporate businesses, she has advisory and policy expertise in local, regional, and international institutions on several matters including foreign direct investments, Project financing, structured trade financing, collateral management, intellectual property, infrastructure development, private equity, debt workouts, regulatory and compliance, governance, trade, anti-corruption, and anti-money laundering.

While in Washington D.C, she represented the general counsel and director of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) in a project finance loan negotiation simulation for a toll road project in the Dominican Republic at Norton Rose Fulbright law firm.

Mable also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of Touch Africa Now. She is a wife and mother with a dedication to building stronger communities through heading the Pro Bono and Social Responsibility program of the firm.

Mable is a member of;
Institute of International Economic Law (IIEL)
East Africa Law Society
Uganda Law Society
Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliators, Kenya
Intellectual Property Cluster - ULS
Arbitration Cluster - ULS
Alumni Ambassador, Georgetown University Law Center



EMMANUEL ELAU

Partner

Emmanuel has practiced law for over nine years spanning litigation and arbitration both locally and internationally. He has represented clients on regulatory and compliance matters, trade, regional integration, labor, immigration, insolvency, media law, fintech law and dispute resolution. He heads the Arbitration, Trade and Regional Integration Department.

Emmanuel holds a Master of Laws degree (Regional Integration) from the University of Dar es Salaam, a Bachelor of Laws degree from Uganda Christian University and a Post Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Center. Emmanuel served as a partner at Elau & Ochom Advocates and Legal Consultants (now MESA Advocates) from inception in 2015 to 2022. He is also a Lecturer of the Law of Regional Integration, International Law, and Media Law at Uganda Christian University.

Elau is a published author and is widely published in the areas of regional integration, trade, and media law. He is a registered Insolvency Practitioner with Uganda Registration Services Bureau.

Emmanuel is member of;
The East African Law Society-trade and regional integration committee.
Uganda Law Society,
East Africa Law Society
Arbitration Cluster – Uganda Law Society
A listed practitioner at the International Criminal Court (ICC).
The Continuing Legal Education Committee - Uganda Law Society



SOPHIA N. KIGOZI

Partner

Sophia heads the Banking, Finance and Tax Department at MESA. Prior to joining MESA Advocates, Sophia practiced law for over 8 years, four of which she was a partner at a reputable law firm in Kampala. She advised on corporate governance, Tax planning and Management, Audit and Assurance, Mergers and Acquisitions, Project Finance and Risk, Venture Capital financing, Banking and Finance, crisis management and strategic response, securities and portfolio planning and management.

She gave guidance to boards as well as senior level executives on corporate law and ESG. She is dedicated to nurturing the growth of her corporate clients by offering legal support and advice suitable for their business development needs.

Sophia holds a Master of Business Administration from the International Business Science and Technology University, A Bachelor of Laws from Makerere University, and a diploma in Legal Practice (LDC). She is a certified practitioner in PRINCE2 – Project Management Methodology with Global Best Practice, AXELOS, UK. She has pursued the Claims Class training of the Practical use of the FIDIC construction suite of contracts and claims and dispute avoidance by the Hewitt Decipher Partnership -Dubai.

She is researched in different financial areas including Islamic Finance and has developed on behalf of the Uganda Securities Exchange, the Capital Market Rules for the Listing of the Sukuk pending adoption by the line Ministry.

She is a member of;
The East African Law Society,
Uganda Law Society
The institute of construction claims
Alumni of the Hewitt -Decipher partnership



AGNES WAZEMWA NATALA

Partner

Agnes was called to the bar in 2013 and heads the Oil and Energy and Litigation Department at MESA. She holds a Master of Laws in Oil and Gas from Uganda Christian University - Institute of Petroleum Studies, Bachelor of Laws from Makerere University and a Diploma in Legal Practice from Law Development Center.

Agnes learned the best practices on environmental management, project finance and regulations in the oil and gas sector from PetroSA Oil Refinery, Cape Town, South Africa in 2021. Since then, she has advised several Petroleum Companies on environmental management, project financing, employment and oil and gas taxation in Uganda.

Prior to joining the firm Agnes worked as a Regional Manager, Legal Aid Project, Uganda Law Society and Managing Partner Natala & Co. Advocates. Through these various roles, she has mastered the art of advocacy. She is also a part-time Lecturer of Business and Company Law at Uganda Christian University.

Agnes is a member of;
Uganda Law Society
East African Law Society
Natural Resources Cluster - Uganda Law Society
Land Law Cluster - Uganda Law Society



HERBERT ODEKE

Legal Assistant

Herbert is a Holder of a Bachelor of Laws degree from Makerere University and a Certificate in Legal Practice from The Law Development Center (pending graduation).

He joined Mesa Advocates in 2021 and has researched on various legal issues relating to dispute resolution, property law, corporate law, and Tax law.

Herbert has previously worked as an Empowerment Lead at Legal Hub Uganda, an IT based NGO that aims at taking the law to the last mile. He hosted and produced several products, one of which is the legal podcast.



CAROL B. NABALEKE

Legal Assistant

Carol is a Holder of a Bachelor of Laws degree from Uganda Christian University and a Certificate in Legal Practice from The Law Development Center (pending graduation).

She previously worked at Matovu, Katerrega & Company Advocates where she obtained experience assisting senior lawyers in the areas of Energy, Procurement, arbitration, and litigation all of which she has a keen interest.

Carol is passionate about the preservation of the environment and spends her free time volunteering under the ALEC Environmental Action Network.



WANDERA SAMUEL

Clerk

Wandera has over ten years' experience working for various companies and law firms as a clerk. These include Impala Legal Advocates, Uganda Wetlands & Resource Conservation Association (UWRCA) and Legal Hub Uganda.

Wandera spends his free time mentoring the youth in sports.



MUWANDO SYLVIA

Administrator

Sylivia is a holder of a bachelor's degree of Business Administration from Makerere University. She has great knowledge in financial management, accounting and purchasing principles, marketing, and small business management. She has previously worked for the Jinja Municipal council, Gomba fish processing factory and Natala and Company Advocates as an Administrative Assistant.

Sylvia is passionate about the value of life, she saves lives through blood donation, is a member of the Red Cross Project and loves scouting during her free time.

Our Clientele

gnuGrid CRB LTD
gnuGrid CRB
BUREAU OF INFORMATION

INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF UGANDA
SINCE 1967

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DEFINED BY EXPERTISE

CERTIFIED ISO 9001:2015
Travelcare

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fsme
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ensibuuko

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FOUNDATION

DÜMMEN
ORANGE

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UGANDA LIMITED
International Employment Agency

SYNERGY PROPERTIES
Real Estate Developers

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