

# Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

## Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Botswana

### Introduction

Botswana has a developing pro bono tradition, which is primarily driven by the legal profession's commitment to enhancing access to justice for all citizens, particularly those who cannot afford legal services. The Law Society of Botswana plays a significant role in promoting pro bono work among its members. Many law firms and individual lawyers in Botswana voluntarily offer their services to assist in various legal matters, including civil, criminal, and family law cases. The pro bono efforts in Botswana are often focused on vulnerable groups, such as women, children, and marginalised communities, ensuring they receive legal representation and advice. Additionally, there are collaborations with non-governmental organisations and international bodies to support and expand pro bono initiatives. While the pro bono culture in Botswana is growing, challenges such as limited resources and the need for more structured programmes remain. However, the commitment of the legal community continues to drive progress in making legal services more accessible to those in need.

### At a glance

Minimum pro bono hours requirement for lawyers?	Specific pro bono licence required?	May foreign lawyers practice pro bono?	Insurance required for law firm pro bono?	Insurance required for in-house pro bono?	Rules to limit advertising pro bono work?	Does pro bono work count to CLE credit?	Limitations for in-house lawyers to do pro bono?
No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

### The landscape

Professional regulation	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of legal services, including any licensing required to provide legal services. Please highlight any differences for lawyers working as in-house counsel.</li> </ol>	<p>In Botswana, the provision of legal services is primarily regulated by the Legal Practitioners Act, which governs the admission and practice of lawyers in the country. To practise law in Botswana, individuals must be admitted as legal practitioners by the High Court of Botswana. This requires obtaining a law degree from a recognised institution, completing a period of pupillage (practical training under the supervision of an experienced lawyer), and passing the necessary examinations. Lawyers working as in-house counsel for corporations or organisations are generally subject to the same admission requirements as those in private practice. However, they do not need a practicing certificate if they are not offering legal services to the public.</p>

Regulatory landscape for pro bono	
2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.	<p>There are no express regulations governing the provision of pro bono legal services in Botswana.</p> <p>There is no statutory minimum legal fee schedule imposed on legal practitioners in Botswana. Where Legal Aid Botswana succeeds in helping a client to recover or claim a financial benefit, a small percentage of such a claim is required to be paid to Legal Aid Botswana. The money would be payable upon actual recovery.<sup>1</sup></p>
3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?	In Botswana, lawyers do not need a separate licence to provide pro bono legal services beyond the usual qualifications required to practise law.
4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law)?	In Botswana, foreign-qualified lawyers do not need a separate licence to provide pro bono legal services beyond the usual qualifications required and admission to practice law.
5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?	There is no requirement in the Legal Practitioners Act for lawyers in private practice to undertake a minimum number of pro bono hours.
6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?	In order to get a practicing certificate, a legal practitioner must undertake to do pro bono work but a minimum number of hours is not prescribed. <sup>2</sup>
7. Aside from mandatory targets (if any), are there aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers set by the local bar association, regulatory body or other body?	There are no aspirational pro bono hour targets for lawyers set by the Law Society of Botswana.
8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	Lawyers in Botswana do not receive any CLE or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked.
Insurance and advertising	
9. Do lawyers need professional indemnity legal insurance cover for pro bono legal services they provide? Does the requirement differ for in-house lawyers?	Under the Legal Practitioners Act, every legal practitioner, other than a legal practitioner employed in a private entity or the persons

<sup>1</sup> See <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/botswana/20543.pdf> (last visited on 7 January 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<p>If insurance is required, can lawyers meet the requirement by working under the cover of another pro bono provider, e.g. in partnership with a private law firm or organization working on the same pro bono project?</p>	<p>specified in Schedule 2 thereto, is required to procure and maintain a professional indemnity insurance to the extent and value, as may be prescribed. Persons specified in Schedule 2 include legal practitioners employed by the Government, a statutory corporation, or Legal Aid Botswana.<sup>3</sup> The requirement differs for in-house lawyers, as they are employed in a private entity.</p> <p>The lawyers cannot meet the requirement by working under the cover of another pro bono provider.</p> <p>There is no explicit requirement for lawyers to obtain professional indemnity insurance specifically for pro bono legal services.</p>
<p>10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>There are no rules in Botswana that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients. In addition, the High Court had issued a landmark decision on the Legal Practitioners Act that prohibited lawyers from advertising and held that such a provision contravened Botswana's Constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression.<sup>4</sup></p>
<b>Pro bono practice and culture</b>	
<p>11. What are the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for pro bono? What are the major unmet legal needs?</p>	<p>The main areas of law that require or present opportunities for pro bono are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Family law</b>, including custody, adoption of children, maintenance, access, gender-based and domestic violence, and divorce;</li> <li>• <b>Land issues</b>, including allocation, eviction, encroachments, and trespass;</li> <li>• <b>Labour law</b>, including work contracts, benefits, dismissal, and unfair practices;</li> <li>• <b>Damages</b>, including patrimonial loss and non-patrimonial damages;</li> <li>• <b>Contractual claims</b>;</li> <li>• <b>Criminal law</b>; and</li> </ul> <p><b>Inheritance law</b>, including wills and the administration of estates.</p>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<p>In Botswana, the provision of pro bono legal services is primarily driven by a combination of individual lawyers, law firms, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and legal aid initiatives. Here are the main providers:</p>

<https://lab.co.bw/> (Last viewed on 20 January 2026).

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.sundaystandard.info/high-court-lifts-ban-on-lawyersoco-right-to-advertise/> (last visited on 7 January 2025).

- **Individual Lawyers:** Many lawyers in Botswana voluntarily offer pro bono services as part of their professional and ethical commitment to access to justice. They may take on cases for individuals who cannot afford legal representation, often focusing on areas like family law, criminal defence, and human rights.
- **Law Firms:** Some law firms in Botswana have established pro bono programmes or policies that encourage their lawyers to dedicate a portion of their time to pro bono work. These firms may partner with NGOs or community organisations to identify and address legal needs.
- **NGOs:** Various NGOs in Botswana focus on legal aid and human rights advocacy. These organisations often work with volunteer lawyers to provide legal assistance to marginalised and vulnerable populations. They may also engage in public interest litigation and policy advocacy.
- **Legal Aid Botswana:** While not strictly pro bono, Legal Aid Botswana is a government initiative that provides legal assistance to indigent individuals, particularly in criminal cases. This service complements the pro bono efforts of private practitioners and organisations.

**University Law Clinics:** Some universities in Botswana may have law clinics where law students, under the supervision of qualified lawyers, provide legal assistance to the community. These clinics offer practical training for students while contributing to pro bono efforts. For example, members of the Law Society of Botswana were requested to volunteer their time and expertise to assist law students in completing their coursework at the University of Botswana Legal Clinic.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See <https://lawsociety.org/bw/call-for-volunteers-ub-legal-clinic/> (last visited on 7 January 2025).

<p>13. Are there any noteworthy examples of how innovative technology or artificial intelligence is being used to enable access to pro bono or otherwise as part of pro bono cases or matters?</p>	<p>In Botswana, technology is beginning to play an important role in enhancing access to pro bono legal services. Digital platforms, such as those created by Legal Aid Botswana and other NGOs, help connect individuals in need of legal assistance with pro bono lawyers. These platforms streamline the process of requesting legal help, enabling individuals in remote or underserved areas to more easily access legal resources. Some law firms have also embraced online consultations and advice through secure email or video calls, further expanding access to legal support.</p> <p>Additionally, AI is being explored for tasks like document review and legal research in pro bono cases, helping reduce costs and improve efficiency. This technology can assist lawyers in handling large volumes of information in cases such as class actions or civil rights matters. As technology continues to evolve, it is likely to play an increasingly significant role in enabling pro bono legal work and improving access to justice in Botswana, particularly for marginalised communities.</p>
<b>Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts</b>	
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p>In Botswana, several sources contribute to the availability of pro bono matters and resources, helping to connect those in need of legal assistance with lawyers willing to provide services without charge. Notable sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Law Society of Botswana:</b> As the regulatory body for the legal profession, the Law Society of Botswana plays a role in promoting pro bono work among its members. It may facilitate connections between lawyers and individuals or organisations in need of legal assistance.</li> <li>• <b>NGOs:</b> Various NGOs in Botswana focus on legal aid, human rights, and social justice issues. These organisations often identify cases that require pro bono legal support and collaborate with volunteer lawyers to provide assistance. Examples include organisations working on women’s rights, children’s rights, and environmental issues. For instance, various law firms had joined the movement to fight against gender-based violence by offering their services to victims on a pro bono basis.<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> See <https://dailynews.gov.bw/news-detail/74943> (last visited on 7 January 2025).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community-Based Organizations:</b> Local community organisations may serve as a source of pro bono matters by identifying legal needs within their communities and seeking assistance from lawyers willing to provide pro bono services.</li> <li>• <b>Legal Aid Botswana:</b> While primarily a government-funded initiative providing legal aid to indigent individuals, Legal Aid Botswana can also be a source of referrals for pro bono lawyers, particularly in cases where additional support is needed.</li> <li>• <b>University Law Clinics:</b> Some universities in Botswana may operate law clinics that provide legal assistance to the community. These clinics can be a source of pro bono matters, offering practical experience for law students under the supervision of qualified lawyers.</li> <li>• <b>Public Interest Litigation:</b> Cases that involve significant public interest issues, such as constitutional rights or environmental protection, may attract pro bono support from lawyers and law firms interested in contributing to broader societal change.</li> <li>• <b>Referrals from the Judiciary:</b> In some instances, the judiciary may refer cases to pro bono lawyers, particularly when individuals appear in court without legal representation and are unable to afford a lawyer.</li> </ul>
<p>15. Is there any public or private organization with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities?</p>	<p>A local or foreign lawyer admitted in Botswana can register for pro bono work with the Law Society of Botswana.<sup>7</sup></p>
<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p>There are currently no awards, lists, or rankings related to pro bono work in Botswana.</p>

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Name of Law Firm: Laurence Khupe Attorneys

Name of lawyer: Larry Khupe

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<sup>7</sup> See [https://lawsociety.org.bw/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ProBonoWorkRegistrationForm\\_v1.pdf](https://lawsociety.org.bw/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ProBonoWorkRegistrationForm_v1.pdf) (last visited on January 7, 2025).

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