

Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Tanzania

Introduction

While the 1977 Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania does not explicitly define pro bono legal services, the right to legal representation and access to justice is implied under several provisions in relation to fair trial rights. In Tanzania, the terms “legal aid” and “pro bono” are used interchangeably, as both aim to ensure that indigent persons can access justice without financial concerns, and both state-funded legal aid programmes and voluntary contributions of legal counsel providing services without pay (pro bono) are recognised as forms of “legal aid”. However, for purposes of this survey, 'legal aid' generally refers to state-funded legal assistance programs (such as those under the Legal Aid Act 2017), while 'pro bono' refers to voluntary free legal services provided by private advocates, law firms, and organizations. Both state-funded legal aid and voluntary pro bono contributions are recognised forms of legal assistance in Tanzania. Pro bono services within Tanzania are mainly undertaken by advocates, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, and faith-based organisations. The Tanganyika Law Society (TLS), the Bar Association for mainland Tanzania, maintains the standards of conduct of the legal profession and is responsible for organising and overseeing pro bono services provided by practising advocates in mainland Tanzania. In Zanzibar, this responsibility is undertaken by the Zanzibar Law Society (ZLS).

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	Yes	No

The landscape

Professional regulation	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The court system in Tanzania is divided into courts with jurisdiction over mainland Tanzania and courts with jurisdiction over Zanzibar.</p> <p><i>Mainland Tanzania</i></p> <p>In mainland Tanzania, the legal profession is regulated by various laws and regulations, including the Advocates Act Cap. 341, the Advocates (Professional Conduct and Etiquette) Regulations, 2018, the Advocates Remuneration</p>

Order, 2015, the Advocates (Disciplinary and Other Proceedings) Rules, the Notaries Public and Commissioners for Oaths Act Cap. 12 R.E 2019, and the Tanganyika Law Society Act.

To provide legal services in mainland Tanzania, a person must hold a Practicing Certificate, which is issued together with a Certificate to Practise as a Notary Public and Commissioner for Oaths by the Judiciary.

Foreign-qualified lawyers may provide legal services in mainland Tanzania by applying to the Chief Justice to be admitted as an advocate if they meet, or are exempt from, the below requirements:

- authorised to practice in a Commonwealth country or any other country designated by the Tanzanian Minister for Constitutional and Legal Affairs;
- a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England, Northern Ireland, or the Republic of Ireland;
- a Writer to the Signet;
- a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Scotland; and/or
- a holder of any similar qualification accepted by the Council for Legal Education (the Council) as a professional qualification; and
- have been in continuous practice as an advocate in Kenya or Uganda or during the five years immediately preceding their application to the Chief Justice.

In addition, such person must satisfy the Chief Justice that he/she has adequate knowledge of the English language and must submit a testimonial of his/her character. If such person wants to be registered as an advocate in Tanzania, he/she must submit a petition for the same to the Chief Justice.

Zanzibar

In Zanzibar, the legal profession is regulated by the Advocates Act No. 1 of 2020.

To provide legal services in Zanzibar, a person

	<p>must hold a Practising Certificate.</p> <p>A foreign lawyer intending to appear in a case in Zanzibar as an advocate is required to seek permission from the Chief Justice and submit the name of a local advocate who will accompany them in that case. The term “case” includes an interlocutory, appeal, or execution proceedings connected with a case. The law is silent on whether a foreign lawyer may apply to the Chief Justice to practise law in Zanzibar where he/she is not appearing for a case.</p> <p>The above also applies to in-house lawyers in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, respectively.</p>
Regulatory landscape for pro bono	
<p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>	<p>In mainland Tanzania, while the Legal Aid Act 2017 regulates the provision of legal aid services to indigent persons in criminal and civil matters, there are no laws specifically governing the provision of pro bono legal services.</p> <p>In Zanzibar, the Legal Aid Act of 2018 and the Legal Aid Regulations of 2019 regulate both legal aid and pro bono services in Zanzibar. Any person or institution may provide legal aid services in Zanzibar in any area of law of their choice upon registration as a legal aid provider by the Department of Legal Aid. According to section 9(2) of the Zanzibar Legal Aid Act, a person may be registered as a legal aid provider if he/she is either an advocate, lawyer, vakil,¹ or paralegal.</p>
<p>3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>Other than the requirements to practise law and generally as set out in section a(1) above and adherence to the applicable legal and professional standards for lawyers, there is no requirement to obtain a specific licence to provide pro bono legal services.</p>
<p>4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>No. Other than the requirements for foreign lawyers to practise law in Tanzania as set out above, there is no requirement for foreign-qualified lawyers to obtain an additional licence to provide pro bono legal services.</p>

¹ Vakil is a term used to refer to any person admitted by the Chief Justice to practice as a lawyer in lower courts, i.e., primary courts and district courts.

5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?	No. While the TLS and ZLS have rules that indicate that lawyers should offer pro bono legal services, they do not prescribe a number of hours.
6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?	No. Aspiring lawyers in Tanzania are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services in order to become licensed lawyers.
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?	No. There are no mandatory targets, and neither the TLS nor the ZLS — nor any other body — prescribe any targets.
8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	Yes. Lawyers receive free CLE points for pro bono work. TLS maintains a database of advocates willing to take up pro bono work and awards continuing legal education points for undertaking pro bono work as per the Advocates (Continuing Legal Education) Amended Regulations of 2022. ²
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? 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?	Lawyers do not require professional indemnity legal insurance cover for any pro bono legal services that they provide, regardless of whether they are in private practice or in-house. It should be noted that while there is no explicit legal requirement mandating lawyers to hold professional indemnity insurance for the provision of pro bono services, it is recommended for all practising advocates to maintain insurance coverage.
10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?	No. There are no restrictions on advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients, provided that such acts are not contrary to public interest, do not compromise the integrity and dignity of the legal profession, and do not fail to maintain the ethics and code of conduct provided in the Advocates (Professional Conduct and Etiquette) Regulations 2018.

² <https://tls.or.tz/free-cle-points/>.

Pro bono practice and culture

<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 in which people need assistance include human rights (in particular, women's rights) and family law, i.e., child welfare and protection and wills, estates, and probate.</p> <p>Despite the presence of legal aid organisations and individuals providing pro bono services, there are major unmet legal needs in Tanzania and areas that need legal assistance, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of access to legal representation, particularly in rural communities; • gender-based violence and women's rights; • language barriers; • children and special groups' rights, including disabled person, people with albinism, etc.; and • provision of legal education and human rights awareness in rural communities.
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<p>Provision of pro bono services is mainly undertaken by non-state institutions in relation to various areas of the law, i.e., human rights, matters involving children, gender-based violence, etc., including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), private universities, private law firms, and faith-based organisations (FBOs), etc.</p> <p>There is a pro bono programme within the legal aid scheme and the judiciary (responsible for managing the legal aid scheme), which provides opportunities to lawyers to undertake pro bono work. Further, the TLS encourages its members to register and participate in the provision of legal assistance and representation to indigent persons pro bono.</p> <p>The TLS rules do not stipulate what forms of legal aid must be offered such that they are deemed to cover pro bono legal services (which are provided largely in respect of civil cases).³ The Registrar of the Courts also allocates pro</p>

³ https://www.humanrights.dk/files/media/migrated/legal_aid_east_africa_dec_2011_dihf_study_final.pdf.

	<p>bono cases to lawyers and works with the TLS,⁴ and the TLS maintains a database of advocates who carry out pro bono work.⁵</p> <p>State-funded institutions exist in Tanzania that are dedicated to the provision of legal aid for criminal and civil matters, which include legal aid clinics connected to the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs and the Judiciary. However, these are largely specific to legal representations in the courts of law in Tanzania, and they rarely provide pro bono legal services on advisory issues.</p> <p>The Tanzania Network of Legal Aid Providers (TANLAP) is a membership network that maintains a directory of NGOs, community-based organisations, faith-based organisations, and other institutions that provide legal aid in Tanzania.⁶</p> <p>The Mama Samia Legal Aid Campaign is a government program initiated in 2023 to collaborate with state and non-state institutions to provide access to legal assistance in rural and urban areas in Tanzania, particularly on sexual violence, land disputes, inheritance, alternative dispute resolution, and human rights issues in general. It includes a directory for NGOs, community-based organisations, faith-based organisations, and other institutions that provide legal aid in Tanzania.⁷</p>
<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 Tanzania, the adoption of innovative technology or artificial intelligence is still in its early stages, and as such, there are very few noteworthy examples and developments that demonstrate the potential of technology to enhance access to justice, i.e., Digital Legal Aid Platforms and organisations like the TLS,⁸ the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC),⁹ TANLAP,¹⁰ and Tanzania Women Lawyers</p>

⁴ https://tls.or.tz/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/SADCLA-Desk-Research-on-Probono-in-the-SADC-Region_.pdf.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ [https://grassrootsjusticenetwork.org/connect/organization/tanzania-network-of-legal-aid-providers-tanlap/#:~:text=Tanzania%20Network%20of%20Legal%20Aid%20Providers%20\(TANLAP\)%20is%20an%20umbrella,providing%20legal%20aid%20in%20Tanzania.](https://grassrootsjusticenetwork.org/connect/organization/tanzania-network-of-legal-aid-providers-tanlap/#:~:text=Tanzania%20Network%20of%20Legal%20Aid%20Providers%20(TANLAP)%20is%20an%20umbrella,providing%20legal%20aid%20in%20Tanzania.)

⁷ <https://www.mslac.or.tz/en>.

⁸ <https://tls.or.tz/>.

⁹ <https://humanrights.or.tz/>.

¹⁰ <https://tanlap.or.tz/>.

	<p>Association (TAWLA)¹¹ are used to facilitate legal aid programs and enable local communities to access legal assistance more easily.</p> <p>An example of how innovative technology has been used to facilitate easier access to pro bono is the Legal Aid Management System (LAMS) utilised by LHRC to manage its legal aid processes online, ensuring that client data and case profiles are securely stored and easily accessible. It has also increased LHRC's capacity to attend to a larger volume of clients on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Another example is Haki Kiganjani, a human rights monitoring digital platform designed specifically to document and aid in the response to human rights violations occurring all over the country. Individuals can report human rights violations securely through the platform to the relevant authorities, like the police and social welfare. Additionally, the platform provides access to legal aid services and resources like directories of legal aid providers, legal education, and legal presentations.¹²</p>
Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts	
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p>In addition to the response in section (d)(2), the notable sources of pro bono matters include private institutions, including NGOs, civil society organisations, CBOs, and FBOs, as well as international NGOs, such as Lawyers without Borders, which combats human trafficking in Tanzania.¹³ These institutions also provide resources on pro bono matters such as judgements, legal aid reports and journals, legal aid providers, directories, etc. Most of these organisations are listed in the TANLAP and Mama Samia Legal Aid campaign directories.¹⁴</p>
<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>Lawyers can register with the TLS and ZLS. TLS, in particular, maintains a database of advocates who do pro bono work in mainland Tanzania.</p>

¹¹ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/our-partnership/member-directory/tanzania-women-lawyers-association-tawla/>.

¹² <https://hakikiganjani.humanrights.or.tz/>

¹³ <https://www.lawyerswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/our-projects/human-trafficking>.

¹⁴ <https://www.mslac.or.tz/sw>.

	Lawyers can also register with TANLAP.
16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?	No.

Acknowledgements

In connection with this chapter, we are grateful for the support and insight of local counsel: **A&K Tanzania**

Learn more

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