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Malawi

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How lawyers are ranked

Every year we carry out thousands of in-depth interviews with clients in order to assess the reputations and expertise of business lawyers worldwide. The qualities we look for (and which determine rankings) include technical legal ability, professional conduct, client service, commercial awareness/astuteness, diligence, commitment, and other qualities most valued by the client.

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Msisha Modesai Nyirenda & Msisha Law Offices
Njobvu Davis Savjani & Co.
Savjani Krishna Savjani & Co.
Band 2
Hara Mabvuto Hara & Associates (ORL) ◇
Msowoya Alick Wilson & Morgan
Singano Duncan Savjani & Co.
Band 3
Chinula Allan William Faulkner Attorneys at Law (ORL) ◇
Nkhono Patrice Mbendera & Nkhono Associates (ORL) ◇
Purshotam Reena Savjani & Co.
Theu Manuel Lexon & Lords (ORL) ◇
* Indicates firm with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Savjani & Co.

See profile on p.1988

Savjani & Co. is a market-leading firm in Malawi that is renowned for its deep bench of experts covering multiple disciplines. Its all-encompassing corporate and finance practice is particularly proficient with regard to complex M&A, project finance, and capital markets transactions. The team recently assisted Blantyre Hotels with the acquisition of land for the development of a four-star hotel in Lilongwe. The firm's skill set extends to litigation, including tort cases

and labour disputes, as well as providing regulatory advice. An impressed client hailed the firm as "top notch," adding: "The quality of service they provide is top tier; they never fail to impress."

Davis Njobvu is an esteemed litigator who also handles major arbitration and mediation cases. He represents both local and international clients in matters relating to employment, personal injury, administrative and criminal law. One impressed client said: "He has a lot of experience, he is hands-on, practical, and able to manoeuvre his way through court cases." Founding partner **Krishna Savjani SC** is a well-established lawyer in Malawi. He is highly regarded for his expertise in banking and finance transactions, as well as M&A and restructurings. He is also an experienced litigator, with one impressed observer saying: "His grasp and knowledge of transfer pricing, tax litigation and disputes is impressive." **Duncan Singano** is a well-respected corporate and finance practitioner with notable experience covering M&A and structured finance, as well as a significant understanding of the mining sector. One source said: "The service he provided for us was very good; I would be happy to work with him again." **Reena Purshotam** is recognised for her work on corporate and financing transactions, including M&A, project finance, and PPP projects. She also provides governance and regulatory advice.

Band 2

Sacranie, Gow & Co

Sacranie, Gow & Co is a well-respected firm in Malawi, noted for its experienced corporate group. The firm's expertise also extends to project and energy finance, banking, and commercial litigation matters. It advises a range of domestic and international clients.

Shabir Latif impresses for his experience in contentious proceedings, as well as advising on non-contentious mandates including financing, commercial transactions, and projects. One source noted his "hard-working" approach and "well-rounded" service.

Band 3

Nyirenda & Msisha Law Offices

Nyirenda & Msisha Law Offices is a well-respected firm that is sought out for its broad expertise encompassing both corporate transactions and commercial litigation.

"Excellent lawyer" **Modesai Msisha SC** continues to be seen as one of Malawi's most prestigious lawyers. He is a seasoned practitioner who is renowned for his skills as both a transactional adviser and a litigator.

Wilson & Morgan

Wilson & Morgan is recognised for its significant advocacy experience, particularly in litigious proceedings. It has also assisted clients with a range of corporate and commercial matters.

Alick Msowoya maintains a broad practice covering corporate transactions and commercial contracts. He also has considerable litigation experience.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Allan Chinula has a respected practice covering a broad array of areas, including corporate finance and inbound investments. He is also noted for his knowledge of administrative law.

Mabvuto Hara is a well-respected lawyer with an impressive track record in the areas of project development and energy finance. He also has significant corporate transactional experience, as well as representing clients in contentious proceedings.

Patrice Nkhono is a respected attorney with a broad set of skills covering IP, corporate law, and finance transactions. He has also represented clients in litigation proceedings.

Manuel Theu is an experienced practitioner with a solid reputation as a litigator. He is also well known for his property and conveyancing expertise.

BOWMANS

www.bowmanslaw.com tel: +265 99 031 8152

Chairman: Robert Legh**Managing Partners:** Alan Keep (Group), Paras Shah (Kenya), Elton Jangale (Malawi), Fazil Hossenkhan (Mauritius), Wilbert Kapinga (Tanzania), Ernest Wiltshire (Uganda) and Mabvuto Sakala (Zambia)

Number of partners: 400+ Number of lawyers: 800+

Languages: *English***Firm Overview:**

Bowmans helps its clients overcome legal complexity and unlock opportunity in Africa. Its track record of providing legal services in the fields of corporate law, banking and finance law and dispute resolution, spans over a century.

With over 400 specialist lawyers, Bowmans draws on its unique knowledge of the business and socio-political environment in Africa to advise on a wide range of legal issues.

The firm delivers integrated legal services to clients throughout the continent from nine offices (Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Durban, Johannesburg, Kampala, Lilongwe, Lusaka, Moka and Nairobi) in seven countries (Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia).

Everywhere it operates, Bowmans offers its clients a service that uniquely blends expertise in the law, knowledge of the local market and an understanding of their businesses. The firm's aim is to assist its clients to achieve their objectives as smoothly and efficiently as possible while minimising the legal and regulatory risks.

Bowmans works closely with its alliance firms, Aman Assefa & Associates Law Office, in Ethiopia, and Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie, in Nigeria. The firm has a best friends relationship with Taciana Peão Lopes & Advogados Associados in Mozambique, regularly works with other leading law firms across the rest of Africa, and is a representative of Lex Mundi, a global association with more than 160 independent law firms across the globe.

Clients include corporates, multinationals and state-owned enterprises across a range of industry sectors as well as financial institutions and governments.

Bowmans Malawi is recognised as the leading specialist in COMESA competition law, mergers and acquisitions and public-private partnerships (PPP).

Main Areas of Practice:**Aviation:**

Bowmans' aviation specialists have a keen understanding of the industry based on a proven track record of involvement in major aviation-related matters.

Construction:

The firm assists clients throughout the project life cycle of complex infrastructure and construction projects including development, delivery, financing and disputes under all forms of construction contracts.

Consumer Goods:

Bowmans is uniquely positioned to advise consumer goods companies on all aspects of their businesses in Africa and has an exceptional track record of having advised some of the world's leading companies in this sector.

Education:

The firm's multi-disciplinary and cross-jurisdictional team is in a singular position to provide clients entering or operating in this field with a comprehensive spectrum of services covering transactional, regulatory, tax and employment law.

Energy:

Bowmans acts for a wide range of clients in the energy sector including developers, sponsors, public utilities, funds, commercial banks and other financial institutions, and governments.

Financial Institutions:

The firm has extensive experience advising clients in the banking, insurance, financial products and services sectors across the continent.

Hotels & Leisure:

Bowmans has specialist know-how and experience in the sector, having advised a number of international hotel groups as they commenced doing business, or have looked to expand their existing footprint, in Africa.

Industrials:

The firm's offering spans the full range of corporate services and extends to all the specialist areas of law associated with activity of this nature including competition and antitrust, employment and tax.

Infrastructure:

Bowmans helps its clients at all stages of the economic lifecycle of infrastructure projects – from developing to acquiring to managing to restructuring to selling assets, including advising on financing aspects.

Insurance:

The firm advises leading insurers and reinsurers as well as companies in industry sectors where risk is inherent, on issues impacting them across the insurance value chain.

Mining:

The firm has a strong record of acting on the most significant mining-related mergers and acquisitions across the African continent. Bowmans advises on every aspect of mining- and resource-related transactions from the initial due diligence through regulatory compliance to negotiating and closing the deals.

Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare:

Bowmans' pharmaceuticals and healthcare specialists have extensive experience in, and regularly advise stakeholders across, the healthcare services and products supply chain.

Ports, Transport & Logistics:

The firm delivers a comprehensive service facilitating relationships between land and sea users and owners of ports, terminals and equipment.

Technology, Media & Telecommunications:

Bowmans' understanding of the regulatory landscape in many African jurisdictions enables it to assist clients get to market quickly while avoiding many of the pitfalls of operating in a new jurisdiction.

PRACTICE AREAS

Banking & Financial Services Regulatory
Local Ownership & Empowerment
Commercial Property
Competition
Corporate Services
Data Protection
Debt Capital Markets
Dispute Resolution
Employment & Benefits
Environmental Law
Equity Capital Markets
Finance
Fintech
Governance, Compliance & Investigations
Government Contracting & Public Procurement
Impact Investment
Intellectual Property
International Arbitration
Litigation & Arbitration
Mergers & Acquisitions
Oil & Gas
Pensions Law
Private Equity
Project Finance
Regulatory Services
Restructuring
Shipping, Aviation & Logistics
Tax

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BOWMANS
MALAWI

SAVJANI & CO

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Managing Legal Practitioner: Krishna Savjani OBE SC

Number of lawyers: 11

Languages: *English*

Firm Overview:

Savjani & Co. is the largest law firm in Malawi and is the only Band 1 rated Malawi law firm. It was established in 1978 by Krishna Savjani OBE SC (the firm's managing legal practitioner). Based in Blantyre, the country's commercial capital, the firm offers extensive insight into the opportunities and intricacies of Malawi's economic and legal environments. Savjani & Co. offers a full range of legal services. The firm continues to anticipate the needs of the economy and the market.

Firm Culture and Ethos

Savjani & Co. continues to be a go to law firm. It consistently endeavours to provide top quality and focused legal advice, high level technical legal skills, reliable client services and commercial astuteness. The firm does so by subscribing to these core principles:

- Excellence at all times
- Unquestionable professional conduct
- Teamwork
- Commitment to making a difference to clients

Main Areas of Practice:

Capital Markets:

The firm has significant experience concerning capital markets. The firm has significant experience concerning capital markets. Mr. Savjani OBE SC was the chairman of the Malawi Stock Exchange for 10 years and before that was involved in the planning and establishment of the MSE. It has advised on:

- primary and secondary listing of companies on the Malawi Stock Exchange (MSE)
- various rights issues and capital raises on the MSE
- listing of global depository receipts on the London Stock Exchange

Corporate / Commercial:

The firm has comprehensive experience in corporate transactions.

It has advised on:

- mergers and acquisitions
- securitisation
- project finance and structuring

Financial Services:

Wide experience advising clients on the requirements of the Financial Services Act and all financial services laws including banking, microfinance, insurance, payment systems, pensions, securities, etc.

Competition:

The firm has wide experience in this rapidly expanding field, including flings with the Competition and Fair Trading Commission and the COMESA Competition Commission.

Infrastructure Projects, Concessions and Public Private Partnerships

Savjani & Co provides advice on the legal and regulatory frameworks for infrastructure projects, concession agreements and Public Private Partnerships.

The firm has advised:

- domestic and international actors in various transactions including but not limited to health care, hospitality, and infrastructure
- development and rail works
- project sponsors, lenders, and contractors on drafting and negotiating concession agreements, offtake contractual agreements and other long term contractual arrangements with state owned enterprises
- on structuring complex debt and equity financing arrangements, negotiating and drafting; commercial contracts including sub-contracts for civil works, mechanical and electrical works, logistics, access road construction and security documents in relation to PPPs and public procurement projects in general

Mining:

Advised mining companies and lenders on all aspects of mining starting from prospecting and mining licences, negotiation and drawing of state/development agreements dealing with, amongst other things, fiscal stability provision, dispute resolution and operations and closure of a mine. The firm has further advised on land ownership in project areas including rights of a project company in respect of land over which a mining licence had been granted.

Energy:

The firm has advised on local requirements on generation of electricity; connectivity issues; sale of surplus electricity generated to the state-owned power producing company. The firm has seen growth in this new area of activity over the past few years. Currently involved in advising IPPs on power generation issues (solar, thermal and hydro) and land acquisition.

Environment:

Advised various clients in environmental regulatory issues, including requirements for environmental impact assessments in relation to project developments.

Employment and Pensions:

Advising in relation to proposed restructuring and matters incidental thereto such as:

- redundancy processes (including severance packages)
- labour relations issues including statutory requirements on how employer should relate with trade unions
- advice concerning striking staff
- advice on the Pensions Act and mandatory pension schemes
- drafting employment contracts, employee handbooks and manuals
- advising on disciplinary and grievance procedures and termination of employment among others

Real Estate:

Dealing with all aspects of land transactions including advice on:

- mortgages and charges among others
- landowners rights and minerals ownership, ownership rights in relation to infrastructure built in the project area by a project company
- constitutional rights or other recognised legal rights of landowners, relocation and compensation arrangements between landowners and a project company

Tax:

Advised on a variety of tax issues including fiscal regime for a mining project and transfer pricing issues particularly as effecting international entities.

PRACTICE AREAS

Administrative Law
 Commercial
 Employment
 Banking, Project and Structured Finance and Securitisation
 Intellectual Property
 Insurance
 Capital Markets, Listings (Bonds, Bonus Issues, Rights Issues)
 Construction
 Real Property
 Corporate/Mergers and Acquisitions/Share Sales/Restructuring
 Contracts
 Tort (Negligence, Defamation Etc)
 Mining
 Derivatives
 Energy
 Water
 Payment Systems
 Information Technology and Data Protection
 Public Private Partnerships
 Competition
 Infrastructure Projects Concessions and Public Private Partnerships

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MALAWI

BLANTYRE: Hannover House, Hannover Avenue, Independence Drive, PO Box 2790

Intellectual Property:

The firm advises on various aspects of intellectual property.

Dispute Resolution:

The firm's extensive experience in handling a full range of disputes involving major corporates.

Recent Work Highlights

Derivatives

The firm advised on the entering into of a cross currency swap transaction, documented as an over-the-counter (OTC) derivative transaction under a ISDA Master Agreement between ICBCS and The Reserve Bank of Malawi.

Payment Systems

Advised a payment service provider on the regulatory framework in Malawi. Assisted in their successful application for registration with the Reserve Bank of Malawi. This is a growing area of work.

Infrastructure

The firm advised on all regulatory issues concerning the financing of construction of a railway line from a mine in Tete in Mozambique, cutting through Malawi to the port of Nacala in Mozambique under Malawi law e.g. customs, operation of railways, exchange control and inter-governmental agreements among others. The matter is important as it raises complex legal issues with concessionaires and concessions in different jurisdictions. The matter for transportation of coal for export. There are four concessionaires (borrowers) involved under five concessions in two jurisdictions.

Capital Markets

Advised on the conversion into a public company and listing of the same company's shares on the Malawi Stock Exchange in an initial public offering ('IPO'). This was the first IPO in Malawi after a break of 10 years. It is also the first listing after establishment of the central securities depository.

