

# OPT-LAW

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9 KG 628 St, Kigali  
Kimihurura Gasabo Kigali- Rwanda (East-Africa)

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## OPT-LAW > Firm Profile

**The firm:** OPT-LAW is one of the largest and highly regarded law firms. The breadth and depth of experience offered by its professionals, has kept the firm at the forefront of changes in the global financial market and the international business environment.

The practice has expanded with the increase in intra-regional cooperation and investments, with OPT-LAW's offices in Rwanda (East-Africa), providing comprehensive legal advisory services to its clients in Rwanda, the region, continent and around the world.

**Areas of practice:** Among the practice areas in which OPT-LAW is pre-eminent are:

### **Corporate and M&A, investment and restructuring:**

OPT-LAW specializes in providing legal services relating to foreign direct investments and has extensive experience of assisting national, regional and other foreign clients in establishing subsidiaries, joint ventures, branches and liaison offices in Rwanda (East-Africa). The firm also has represented both foreign and domestic clients in many of the largest cross-border M&A transactions and hostile takeovers in Rwanda (East-Africa).

OPT-LAW provides the full range of corporate services, including legal advice relating to issues of fair trade, monopoly and labour, and has extensive experience in the areas of broadcasting; information and telecommunications; energy and environment; real estate and construction; IT; WTO and international trade; customs; government contracts; and general commercial trade. The firm is noted for its creativity in finding solutions to the issues facing its clients.

OPT-LAW is a leading name in cross-border M&A, the firm acts for clients from a wide range of sectors, including banking, manufacturing, energy, biotechnology, retail, real estate

and Technology, media and telecommunications (TMT). It advises on regulatory matters, business practices and other industry-specific issues. Advocate *Okello Patrick* has expertise in private equity transactions, shareholder activism, corporate governance and corporate disputes. Patrick frequently handles both friendly and hostile M&A transactions.

The firm is widely recognized as having one of the leading bankruptcy practices in Rwanda (East-Africa) and has handled an extensive list of corporate organisation, composition and bankruptcy cases.

### **Intellectual property:**

Practice head *Advocate Kallagi Arnold* often takes the lead on securing IP rights in Rwanda, the region, across the continent and around the world. The team also takes on significant IP infringement cases. Beyond contentious work, the firm also handles a wide range of advisory matters, which includes assisting clients with trademark, design and copyright registration applications, as well as licensing and enforcement work. *'Excellent, experienced attorney Kallagi Arnold, who is particularly known for his expertise in matters relating to IP area of practice, heads up the IP team. OPT-LAW's IP practice has had an increased volume of instructions from various companies and individuals involved in disputes in Rwanda (East-Africa). The team 'takes litigation incredibly seriously' and is able to 'ask the right questions to leverage developments in worldwide litigation'.*

*'The OPT-LAWIP team is the most competent and strongest team in all aspects of IP matters.'*

*'The OPT-LAW team takes litigation incredibly seriously and ask the right questions to leverage developments in worldwide litigation'*

*'Arnold is an excellent, experienced Advocate'*

### **Real estate:**

OPT-LAW fields an *'impressive roster of capable attorneys'* who are well placed to advise foreign and domestic clients on all aspects of real estate-related transactions. The firm remains at the forefront of key market trends, continuing to assist normal and high-value outbound investments. The team is frequently invited on to assist with the acquisitions and subsequent sales of commercial buildings by foreign investors and Rwanda (East-Africa) n asset managers.

### **Testimonials**

*'Their service quality is excellent, not only in terms of book knowledge, but also actual market knowledge which helps to decide on very sensitive matters.'*

*'They have assembled an impressive roster of capable attorneys to advise clients.'*

*'OPT-LAW has one of the oldest real estate practices serving international investors.'*

### **Tax:**

OPT-LAW's tax team has seen considerable expansion and success, most notably with the addition of practice jurisdiction, serving clients in Rwanda, the region, continental and around the world, with the lead Advocate Kallagi who had his Post-Graduate-Industrial Training with Rwanda Revenue Authority. The firm continues to advise on tax planning, Tax waiver issues, Tax procedures, as well as tax-related work arising from M&A and corporate restructurings.

The firm has a highly regarded tax and accounting practice, staffed by tax attorneys and certified public accountants with in-depth experience and expertise. OPT-LAW's tax and accounting practice has been designed to provide a 'one-stop service' to a broad range of domestic and international clients.

### **Testimonials**

*'OPT-LAW has always been faithful to the goals the company wants to reach and has delivered the desired results – they study a lot to think from the customer's point of view'*

*'Kallagi Arnold is prudent, conscientious and has the expertise to predict results'*

### **Labour and employment:**

Although OPT-LAW is particularly well known for its excellent track record in litigation, its non-contentious work is gaining momentum; the firm is noted by a client for its 'excellent legal advisory skills' and its ability to provide 'the best strategy based on an accurate understanding of the characteristics and circumstances of an organisation'. Advocate Okello Patrick is noted for his 'excellent ability to spot issues that the client does not think of'. Other key practitioner is Advocate Kallagi Arnold

### **Testimonials**

*'Patrick and Arnold not only have a lot of experience in labour and employment matters, but also has an excellent ability to spot issues that the client does not think of.'*

*'This team has excellent legal advisory skills. It provides the best strategy based on an accurate understanding of the characteristics and circumstances of an organisation.'*

*'The team demonstrates outstanding abilities in legal theory and practice.'*

*'They are truly one team and work together organically to get the best results.'*

### **Banking and finance:**

OPT-LAW has a key focus on all matters related to acquisition finance, and it frequently receives instructions from both lenders and borrowers. Notable clients of the practice include Rwanda (East-Africa)'s leading commercial banks and securities companies, as well as leading global and domestic private equity firms. The practice is jointly led by *Advocate Okello Patrick* and *Advocate Kallagi Arnold*.

### **Capital markets:**

OPT-LAW fields separate specialist structured finance and IPO teams under the capital markets umbrella. It generates mandates from a wide range of notable domestic and global clients, such as securities firms, investment banks, issuers and originators. The firm is increasingly seen in the IPOs of REITs that involve innovative structures. *Advocate Okello Patrick* leads the team with finance expertise and his a key name to note for debt capital markets work.

OPT-LAW advises many of the leading financial institutions and other corporate clients on all aspects of their involvement in the world's capital markets. Since its inception, OPT-LAW has been a pioneer in securities, banking and finance law, having assisted in the establishment of the foreign-owned investment funds; and most of the existing domestic funds.

### **Insurance:**

OPT-LAW's insurance and reinsurance group comprises of '*exceptional lawyers*'. They have extensive experience of supervisory matters including insurer licensing; this enables the practice to maintain its reputation for particular expertise in regulatory compliance. Recent areas of growth for the firm include insurance claims disputes and transactions.

### **Testimonials**

*'The team is well known in the market.'*

*'They are exceptional lawyers who particularly understand the shipping market.'*

## **Projects and energy:**

The bulk of OPT-LAW's work involves handling transactions and projects for blue-chip clients (nationally recognized, well-established, and financially sound companies) in the energy and power, natural resources and infrastructure sectors. Alternative energy continues to be a core area of focus for the team, particularly in the context of complex cross-border wind projects. The team's wide geographical reach covers matters relating to Rwanda (East-Africa), the region and among others.

## **Technology, media and telecommunications (TMT)**

OPT-LAW's TMT group, which garners praise for its '*good communication with clients and government officials*', handles regulatory and compliance matters for high-profile names in Rwanda and around the world. It also demonstrates expertise in TMT-related M&A and corporate restructurings. The practice was strengthened by the collaboration of Avocate *Okello Patrick* and *Kallagi Arnold*.

## **Testimonials**

*'Great expertise in the TMT field.'*

*'Good communication with clients and government officials.'*

## **Regulatory: compliance and investigations:**

OPT-LAW is strong in a wide variety of criminal cases, including corporate, financial, tax and competition-related matters. The firm recently strengthened its offering with the launch of the application of scientific methods and techniques to the investigation of crime, which allows for the internal handling of forensics work; this is overseen by Advocate *Kallagi Arnold*, who also heads up the East African Court of Justice and international criminal defense practice. Advocate *Kallagi Arnold* is supported within the practice by Advocate *Okello Patrick*

## **Antitrust and competition**

At '*outstanding firm*' OPT-LAW, abuses of dominance and collusion cases form a key part of the antitrust practice. The team has represented numerous clients concerning allegations of abuse of market dominance and unfair trade practices. Advocate *Kallagi Arnold* brings his many years of experience as the practice head, and continues to define the antitrust landscape by leading high-profile cases involving untested issues. Advocate *Kallagi Arnold* is supported at the firm by merger filing expert Advocate *Okello Patrick*.

## **Testimonials**

*‘OPT-LAW is an outstanding firm.’*

*‘They are almost oracle-like in their ability to predict the outcome of the matter, which is always important for the client.’*

*‘Super-responsive, smart and diligent.’*

### **Dispute resolution:**

OPT-LAW fields a litigation team comprised of both Rwanda (East-Africa) and foreign industry experts in tax, national defence, insurance, logistics, trade and IP; this composition is key to the practice's excellent track record in sector-specific disputes and its reputation as a *'law firm that knows how to win'*. Advocate *Okello Patrick* has lots of experience. He takes the lead on local and foreign commercial disputes extending to general corporate law disputes, shareholder disputes and management disputes. Whereas, Advocate *Kallagi Arnold* focuses on commercial litigation, which involves issues related to intellectual property, product liability, M&A and corporate governance.

### **Testimonials**

*‘OPT-LAW is a law firm that knows how to win.’*

*‘Okello Patrick is the most logical and persuasive lawyer.’*

*‘The team includes rare specialists which really helps in dealing with special cases.’*

*‘Kallagi suggests astonishing ways to win despite any obstacles.’*

### **International arbitration**

International dispute resolution: OPT-LAW's experienced arbitration practitioners represent the firm's clients in large complex arbitrations all over the world and under the rules of all major arbitral institutions, including the Kigali Arbitration Centre KIAC,

OPT-LAW's *'strong'* international dispute resolution group comprises of an *'exceptionally talented group of lawyers'* who focus exclusively on arbitration cases across a wide range of industries and geographical regions. It receives instructions from almost all of the public generation companies in Rwanda (East-Africa), and is also known for its increasing strength in handling Input Service Distributor (ISD) work - the office of supplier of goods and / or services; a team led by practice head Advocate *Okello Patrick*.

### **Testimonials**

*‘An exceptionally talented group of lawyers providing legal services from a comprehensive and strategic perspective.’*

*‘An excellent firm with a strong international arbitration offering.’*

*‘Advocate Okello Patrick is undoubtedly one of the best lawyers in Rwanda (East-Africa), not only within the boundary of international dispute, but also in general.’*

### **Litigation:**

OPT-LAW is recognized as one of the premier firms in Rwanda (East-Africa) for litigation. The firm has been involved in many landmark cases.

### **Lawyer Profiles**

Advocate Kallagi Arnold [View Profile](#)

Advocate. Okello Patrick [View Profile](#)

### **Languages**

English

French

Swahili

Kinyarwanda