



UDO UDOMA &
BELO-OSAGIE



2022
PRO BONO
AND **SOCIAL**
IMPACT REPORT



2022
PRO BONO
AND **SOCIAL**
IMPACT REPORT



2022
**PRO BONO
AND SOCIAL
IMPACT REPORT**



in the Community

At Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie, pro bono service is an integral part of our firm's culture because we believe that we have a vital role to play in strengthening and developing our community and one of the ways we are able to achieve this is through our pro bono work.

Our pro bono practice is at par with our other fee-earning practice areas, and we have a dedicated pro bono team that is committed to our work in this field. While pro bono work is not taken into account in performance evaluations, we strongly encourage all lawyers in the firm to take part in pro bono service.

As part of our pro bono work, we collaborate with reputable international pro bono organisations that receive requests for free legal support and work with a network of local and international charities. And we are always on the look out to expand this network and take on new projects. We welcome opportunities where our services can be of maximum benefit and confer meaningful social impact.

We are proud to have partnered with several organisations, including TrustLaw, Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, the Thomson Reuters Foundation's global pro bono legal programme, Sidley Austin under the Sidley Emerging Enterprises Pro Bono Program, and Advocates for International Development (A4ID), a global charity that works in partnership with the world's leading law firms to provide free access to legal advice for non-governmental organisations ("NGOs"). Through these partnerships, our firm has had the opportunity to provide quality legal services and to help organisations and social enterprises achieve their social mission for free.

Looking Back:

Our Pro Bono Activities in 2022

In 2022, we contributed to the following research projects:



Gun Free South Africa

We were engaged by Gun Free South Africa (“GSA”) (through the TrustLaw network) to conduct research on the legal framework of firearm ownership and safety laws, as part of its objective to advocate for stricter gun laws to align with South Africa’s international obligations. The research spanned various jurisdictions, namely Colombia, Jamaica, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Our role involved conducting research into firearm ownership and safety laws in Nigeria and setting out our findings in the form of a memorandum. The final memorandum that will be developed from the research will be used as a resource for GSA’s lobbying, advocacy, and public education and awareness work. The memorandum will also be used to develop guidelines for the management of legal weapon and ammunition stocks based on global norms and standards, and best practices.

Along with the other law firms that advised on this project, namely Philippi Prietocarriozza Ferrero DU & Uría Colombia; ALN, Kenya; TASLAF Advocates and Consultants, Uganda; Mweshi Banda & Associates, Zambia; Machado, Meyer Sendacz e Opice, Brazil; and F5 Networks, Inc, India, we were nominated for the TrustLaw Collaboration Award at the 2023 TrustLaw Awards hosted by Thomson Reuters Foundation.



Norwegian Refugee Council

We were engaged by Norwegian Refugee Council (“NRC”) (through the TrustLaw network) in their bid to propose community land trusts (“CLTs”) as a practical solution to the challenges faced by refugees and internally displaced persons (“IDPs”) in relation to housing, land and property rights. Our role involved acting as the international coordinating firm in relation to a multi-jurisdictional research project across six countries – Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Bangladesh, Iraq, and Colombia. Our research focused on the existing legal frameworks for CLTs in these countries with a view to identifying gaps in these legislations to enable the NRC to develop humanitarian programmes which will introduce CLTs where practicable and ensure the protection of the housing and land rights of displaced persons. Our work in this regard is critical, because, as [reported](#) by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that around 30 million internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum-seekers live in Africa, representing almost one-third of the world’s refugee population. Beyond the need for shelter, these IDPs have the need for healthcare, education, protection, asylum, etc. At UUBO, we are happy to provide assistance in other critical areas as it relates to refugees and IDPs.

We also provided general corporate advisory services on a pro bono basis to the following charitable organisations:

We Care Solar



We Care Solar is an NGO established to promote safe motherhood and reduce maternal and infant mortality in rural and frontline health facilities by providing healthcare workers with reliable lighting, mobile communication, and medical devices using solar electricity. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) reports that for every 1,000 live births in Nigeria, 110 of those children die and lack of facilities such as power, contribute to their death. We were engaged by We Care Solar through the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation. Our legal support will help We Solar deploy more solar systems to areas where they are needed and consequently reduce the mortality rate in Nigeria.

CARE International



Care International is a major international humanitarian agency that delivers emergency relief and long-term international development projects. CARE's programs in the developing world address a broad range of topics including emergency response, food security, water and sanitation, economic development, climate change, agriculture, education, and health. CARE International began work in Nigeria in 2017, in response to the emergency crises between Boko Haram and the military counterinsurgency that led to tens of thousands of people being killed and the abduction of women and girls. It works in Borno and Yobe, two states in Northeast Nigeria that face extreme levels of food insecurity and hunger, worsened by more than a decade of conflict. We were engaged by Care International through the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation. We are proud to render support to CARE as it seeks to address issues relating to food and nutrition, security and livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health rights, women's economic empowerment, and gender-based violence in Yobe and Borno.

Growing Businesses Foundation



Growing Businesses Foundation ("GBF") is an NGO which partners with local, national and international institutions working to provide innovative solutions associated with social, economic and environmental challenges. One of GBF's approaches is to provide grants to small business owners. This is useful because, as of November 2022, the National Bureau of Statistics reported that over 63% of persons living within Nigeria (133 million people) are multidimensionally poor. Over 60 million persons are unemployed in Nigeria and the human development index for Nigerians keep dropping. We are happy to be supporting GBF in its quest to empower Nigerians to rise above poverty through entrepreneurship.

Linking Hands Foundation



Linking Hands Foundation is a charitable organisation that seeks to equip children to become tomorrow's leaders by focusing on education, health, and values. It does this by sponsoring internally displaced children to kindergarten, primary and secondary school as well as organising campaigns and initiatives to promote the health and well-being of children. We are happy to support Linking Hands as it equips today's children to become tomorrow's leaders.

We also provided company secretarial services on a pro bono basis to the following charitable organisations:

Edo Museum of West African Art Trust (“EMOWAA Trust”)



EMOWAA is a charitable organisation dedicated to recovering West African artefacts from around the world with a vision to reclaim ownership of the narrative of West Africa’s rich heritage and spark a modern-day cultural renaissance. The EMOWAA Trust is embarking on an endeavour to create a world-class arts, culture, and heritage complex to celebrate, research, and conserve West African art from antiquity to the modern day. We are happy to support the EMOWAA Trust in achieving its vision of creating a self-sustaining ecosystem in West Africa for heritage, craftsmanship, and contemporary arts.

Our SDGs

We also align our contributions in the pro bono space with the global agenda and international development by focusing on various sustainable development goals ("SDGs") that conform with our ethos. Some of our focus is on:



Goal 3

Good health and well-being



Goal 4

Quality education



Goal 5

Gender equality



Goal 9

Industry, innovation and infrastructure



Goal 10

Reduced inequalities



Goal 16

Peace, justice and strong institutions; and



Goal 17

Strategic partnerships towards achieving SDGs.

We believe that our contributions in the pro bono space over time will have a significant impact on the development and well-being of our community and we join our efforts with that of other institutions and organisations (both local and international) who are committed to the realisation of the SDGs. Together we believe that we can be the change that we want to see.

Our Achievements

Trustlaw Collaboration Award Nomination

We were nominated for the Thomson Reuters Foundation Trustlaw Collaboration Award for our collaborative work in 2021 with HACEY Health Initiative, counsel in Uganda (Bowmans) and Kenya (Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr (Kieti Law LLP)) in relation to comparative research on anti-female genital mutilation/cutting laws in Western Nigeria.



UUBO spent 84.9 hours and accrued notional fees of US\$29,000 (approx. ₦21,750,000) in 2022 on various pro bono projects.



We led, for the second time, a multi-jurisdiction research project coordinated by TrustLaw.



Our Plans for 2023



Client engagement

our pro bono practice is expanding in exciting ways, and we are looking to embark on more impactful projects. We are currently working with one of our clients (a foundation) to showcase the artwork of indigent children supported by the foundation by the end of Q2. We also plan to support events hosted by our pro bono clients in Nigeria through financial contributions and in-kind support.



Expanding our network

we are always looking to expand our pro bono network and this year is no different. We welcome introductions and referrals of reputable organisations and institutions that we can collaborate with to make an impact in our local community and worldwide.



Collaboration with other partners to implement pro bono initiatives

one such initiative is our collaboration with The Justice Project, a Nigerian pro bono service-offering initiative, to decongest prisons in key locations in Nigeria.



Publishing our work

we plan to contribute to thought leadership in the pro bono space. If you want to keep up with us, you can look out for our updates and articles on the UUBO website at www.uubo.org



Launch of our annual pro bono newsletter

since you are reading this, you know that we are on course for 2023 because this is the first edition of our annual pro bono newsletter. We hope you enjoyed reading it!



Yinka Edu
Partner



Ozofu 'Latunde Ogiemudia
Partner



Chisom Ndubuisi
Senior Associate



Babatunde Olayinka
Senior Associate



Titilola Olatunde Fasogbon
Senior Associate



Kelechi Ibe
Senior Associate



Itoribong Udom
Associate



Chidinma Chukwuma
Associate



Dumebi Anike-Nweze
Associate



Iheoma Njoku
Associate

If you love what we are doing and would like to reach us or refer any pro bono engagements to us, please send us an email at probono@uubo.org

 **uubolaw**  **uubolaw**  **uubo_law**  **@uubosocial**

www.uubo.org

