

Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr voted best in Africa

Business law firm Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr has been voted as the number one law firm in Africa in the recent Legal Week Client Satisfaction Survey. The firm, which is a member of the DLA Piper Africa Group, has to date been involved in many significant transactions in a range of sectors on the continent.



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Very often, the deals involve partnering with the other members of the DLA Piper Africa Group and working together for South African clients who benefit from in-depth local knowledge, South African specialist sector expertise and DLA Piper international expertise.

"This kind of feedback from our clients is exactly what we need in order to be assured that we are doing an excellent job on the continent for our clients," says Chris Ewing, a key director in Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr's Africa sector. "We are extremely active in many African countries so much so, that we have spent very little time speaking about the work we are doing. It is heart-warming to know our clients value what we do, and we plan to keep it that way."

Personal relationships

"Our modus operandi has always been to build strong personal relationships with our partner firms and to walk beside our clients throughout their business dealings in Africa. Our partnership with DLA Piper and the members of the DLA Piper Africa Group means that we have formed real relationships, built on friendship and trust, with lawyers who have specialist local knowledge in each jurisdiction. This, combined with our South African skill set and international DLA Piper backing for any specialised skills required, is a powerful combination and it works," he says.

James Kamau, the managing partner at Iseme, Kamau & Maema Advocates in Nairobi, backs up Ewing's sentiments. "As a firm we have found that the combination of local knowledge and international experience offers the best solutions to our clients. Working with Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr directly and under the umbrella of the DLA Piper Africa Group has enabled us to tap into international systems and precedents that hitherto we could not imagine. Through training and support from truly experienced lawyers, our clients are guaranteed of tried and tested legal products to support their business endeavors."

Culturally diverse friends

Barnabas Tumusingize, the managing partner of Sebalu & Lule Advocates in Uganda, explains the personal relationships that are the key differentiator in the group: "The DLA Piper Africa Group is more than an alliance of law firms - it is an intimate club of culturally diverse friends who view Africa as one big country."

"Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr is a leading law firm in Africa's biggest economy and legal market. The business opportunities this firm offers to its partner firms have been as important as the legal training and knowledge-transfer it selflessly shares. The firm has worked hard to improve its partner firms and must be commended for this. It shows that its interest is not just in referrals but in developing the skills of lawyers in Africa.

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