**BAREFOOT LAW**

**mSME Garage Project**

**FACT SHEET**

**mSME GARAGE PROJECT**

The micro, Small, Medium Enterprise Garage project is owned and run by BarefootLaw. The project was launched in May 2016 in Kampala, Uganda and to provide legal information, guidance and support for micro and small businesses (mSMEs). To date, **over 2600 businesses** in Uganda are supported. Of those, **over 400** are **active, registered businesses** and interact with the mSME Garage team at least once a month, using various platforms. Online, the Garage has **over 30,000 likes on its Facebook Page** which it uses to draw attention to the content on its website. Over **180 businesses** have benefited from the mSME Garage legal clinics carried out in Kampala and Mukono.

Uganda is recognized as one of the most entrepreneurial countries in the world. However, half of the businesses in Uganda fail usually within 3 years of formation due to many factors including ignorance of the law among other reasons.

**NATURE OF HELP MSMES REQUIRE**

1.     Incorporation support (laws and procedure of how to formalise a business)

2.     Business management (skills for maintaining and running a business)

3.     Raising capital for business (different modes of raising capital for business grown)

4.     Employment (laws on employment)

5.     Contracting (laws and formalities on employment)

6.     Government Regulation & Licensing

7.     Taxation (self-assessing tax liability and paying up)

**RESOURCES**

With a team of six lawyers and five support staff, it costs, USD $5 to help a beneficiary in person for an hour.

Because it is cost-effective, most of the interaction with beneficiaries is through the online platforms. It costs approximately US $10.40 to support one business for a month.

**You can find out more about the mSME Garage at www.msmegarage.org**

**ABOUT BAREFOOTLAW**

**WHAT IS BAREFOOTLAW?**

BarefootLaw (BFL) is a not-for-profit organisation which provides the public with free legal information and support using innovative approaches. In addition to technology, BFL uses traditional methods in an innovative way to offer its services to those persons who do not have access to its online platforms.

**HOW DID BAREFOOTLAW START?**

BarefootLaw was started to bridge the gap in legal knowledge between the justice system and those people not employed/ involved in it. The founder of BarefootLaw realised that most citizens were so ignorant of the law and legal processes that they had no idea what to do when faced with a legal problem. This deficiency manifests itself in various ways such as mob justice, human rights abuses and widespread domestic violence among others.

**WHAT M ARE HANDLED AT BAREFOOTLAW?**

BarefootLaw handles all matters that require legal assistance. For cases beyond their scope of operation, BarefootLaw works in partnership with other individuals and organisations including justice enforcement organisations, law firms, medical personnel and others.

**DOES BAREFOOTLAW CHARGE FOR ITS SERVICES?**

The legal information provided by BarefootLaw is free. However, for many to benefit from BarefootLaw services, the organisation needs resources. One of the ways BarefootLaw remains in existence is through receiving donations from friends. If you wish to support us, we have a provision for donation on our website.

**To donate, visit** [**www.barefootlaw.org**](http://www.barefootlaw.org)

**HOW ARE BAREFOOTLAW SERVICES ACCESSED?**

BarefootLaw uses technology in addition to the traditional methods to offer free legal information and assistance. In serving the public, BarefootLaw has embraced innovative approaches including: BarefootLaw Hive; BarefootLaw Social; BarefootLaw nodes; BarefootLaw SMS; Virtual Counsel; Dial-a-Lawyer; Email-a-Lawyer; Community Outreach; and Partnerships.

**DOES BAREFOOTLAW REPRESENT CLIENTS IN COURT?**

Barefoot Lawyers do not always represent clients in court. However, BarefootLaw will recommend and work together with reputable and competent law firms to ensure that justice prevails where the beneficiary requires litigation.

**WHO DOES BAREFOOTLAW WORK WITH?**

BarefootLaw works in partnership with other individuals and organisations including justice enforcement organisations, law firms, medical personnel among others.

**WHAT ARE THE TOP INQUIRIES AT BAREFOOTLAW?**

The top three inquiries we received at BarefootLaw out of 10 categories (first quarter 2017) are:

1. Land conflicts (24%)
2. Domestic/ family conflicts (20%)
3. Employment conflicts (16%)

**WHAT OTHER SERVICES DOES BAREFOOTLAW PROVIDE?#**

The Women’s Property Rights Initiative (WPRI) is focused on equipping women, especially the vulnerable and underserved, with knowledge and skills regarding their rights to property. BarefootLaw Uganda uses a combination of approaches including technology, audio-visual and traditional means to provide legal knowledge and assistance to women, both in rural and urban areas. WPRI is executed in partnership with Kubere Information Centre under WOUGNET and Teso Women Peace Activists (TEWPA).

**To learn more about BarefootLaw visit us at www.barefootlaw.org**