



ORARO & COMPANY  
ADVOCATES



International Women's Day 2019

#BalanceforBetter



**Oraro & Company Advocates joins the world in commemorating the InternationalWomensDay (IWD) and as part of #IWD2019 activities, we are celebrating the brilliant women who contribute to the everyday success of the firm. This year's theme #BalanceforBetter is well in line with our firm's endeavour to ensure a gender-balanced workplace. We caught up with our Director - Patricia Mutiso and two of our Associates - Anne Kadima and Sheila Nyakundi to get their views on this year's theme.**

**Q. Tell us about your journey at Oraro & Company Advocates?**

**Patricia:** I joined Oraro and Company Advocates one year ago and it is a great law firm to work for. Excellent mentorship, the culture is awesome and they fully embrace the gender balance concept.

**Anne:** I started working at the firm as a pupil in January 2016 and I was retained as an Associate in the litigation department at the start of the following year. I feel privileged to work here because I am able to interact with various matters touching on various legal issues. Every day is a learning curve and I get to see myself grow.

**Sheila:** I joined Oraro & Company Advocates in November 2017 with a desire to grow in different areas of law. Joining a top tier firm and delving into a new practice was both exhilarating and scary.

However, the past one and a half years have been an exciting experience to say the least. I have grown not just in my understanding of what I do and how I can better serve my clients but also in the depth of workplace relationships. There is never a dull moment at my desk. Whether it is trying to beat a deadline, learning something new (eureka!) or just engaging in captivating conversations with colleagues, it is always exciting.

**Q. How important is it for organizations to lift women up/make steps towards achieving equality?**

**Patricia:** Organisations should make it a priority to achieve gender balance because it is good for business. Not only does it grow the bottom line exponentially but it also makes the organisation to be more visible, relevant and competitive.

**Anne:** I strongly feel that women can bring as much, if not more to the table as men. Women bring a different dimension to any institution be it an organisation or a



family and that special impact is an important factor that needs to be encouraged and harnessed. Therefore, there is a need to embrace women in any institution.

**Sheila:** Lifting women and including women in all spheres of an organisation empowers them to know that they too have a right, shows fair treatment for all genders and is a statement that both men and women are valued in an organisation. Besides, lifting women liberates men to understand that both genders have a right to benefits and opportunities, breaks gender barriers and destigmatises the notion that women can only do certain things and not others and that they should be relegated to certain duties in society.

**Q. What drives you to work at Oraro & Company Advocates?**

**Patricia:** The inclusion and diversity of the law firm, the different challenging assignments, the myriad training opportunities offered to the staff to ensure that they are fully conversant with the changes that are taking place in the industry and that they are up to date with technological advancements.

**Anne:** I am always up for a challenge and the types of briefs I get to interact with at Oraro & Company Advocates are rich in terms of legal diversity and their capability to contribute to the legal jurisprudence in the country. Also, the family-oriented work environment at the firm gives me the assurance of support through different circumstances that I would be faced with.

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**- Patricia Mutiso, Director.**

**Sheila:** Oraro & Company Advocates has an outpouring family-like culture that is felt by everyone at the firm and this creates a feeling of belonging. The team spirit that is embodied in and out of the office is always evident. Whether it is in serious legal transactions, out of office interactions or the dedication to accomplish tasks in the various office committees. This culture not only sharpens one's skills in their area of interest but also provides avenues for one to make a difference among colleagues and the society.

**Q. Has the progression in your career conflicted with your personal life?**

**Patricia:** The progression in my career at OCO has not conflicted with my personal life because the culture is professional yet family oriented.

**Anne:** No. The firm has been very supportive. particular, I remember when I approached the management team to let them know that I wanted to pursue my Master in Laws degree, they were very open and supportive and allowed me to leave the office early

whenever I had classes and I also got days off to sit for my exams.

**Sheila:** Balancing work and personal life is easier said than done especially when you work in a busy environment and you are striving to deliver excellent and quality service to your clients. There have been instances where I have struggled to achieve some sort of balance because the desire to become good at what I do has led to deliberate changes such as prioritising time with my family.



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**- Anne Kadima, Associate.**

### **Q. Lastly, what does #BalanceforBetter mean for you?**

**Patricia:** #BalanceforBetter means gender balance. There is need to ensure that there is equal representation of all the genders at the work place.

**Anne:** We are now noticing a trend of women excelling in their fields without the need for affirmative action and I believe that #BalanceforBetter is giving women a seat at the table, not because of their gender but because of their competence.

**Sheila:** In my view, #BalanceforBetter means a true reflection of gender diversity at all levels in the work place.



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**- Sheila Nyakundi, Associate.**

