



RAVACH CONSULTING
ABSOLUTE TAX CLARITY

PRACTICAL GUIDE

Setting up a business in Kenya

A checklist for entrepreneurs, investors and international organisations — structure, registration, tax and first-year compliance.

BEFORE YOU START

Building on the right foundation

Starting a business involves more than registering a company. It requires consideration of the appropriate business structure, tax implications, regulatory requirements and ongoing compliance obligations.

Use this checklist to plan the journey from idea to an operating, compliant business. Tick off each item as you go — and talk to us where you need support.

1. Choose the right structure

- ☐ Compare a private limited company, branch of a foreign company, LLP or other vehicle against your plans.
- ☐ Consider ownership, liability, financing and how profits will be repatriated.
- ☐ Understand the tax implications of the proposed structure before you register.

2. Register the business

- ☐ Reserve the business name and prepare incorporation documents.
- ☐ Complete company incorporation and registration procedures.
- ☐ Foreign businesses: confirm the additional requirements for establishing a presence in Kenya.

3. Register for tax

- ☐ Obtain the entity's KRA PIN and confirm which tax obligations apply.
- ☐ Register for the obligations that apply to you — for example income tax, PAYE for employees, VAT and withholding tax where relevant.
- ☐ Set up access to the KRA systems you will use for filing and invoicing.

4. Permits and licences

- ☐ Identify the county business permit and any sector-specific licences.
- ☐ Diarise renewal dates and conditions attached to each licence.

5. Plan first-year compliance

- ☐ Build a compliance calendar for monthly, quarterly and annual filings.
- ☐ Agree bookkeeping, invoicing and record-keeping processes from day one.
- ☐ Review payroll, benefits and contracts for tax implications.

6. Keep it under review

☐ Revisit the structure as the business grows, raises finance or expands across borders.

☐ Monitor legislative changes that affect your sector and operations.

How Ravach can help

- ✓ Company incorporation and registration assistance.
- ✓ Guidance on business structures and their tax implications.
- ✓ Guidance on tax registrations with the Kenya Revenue Authority.
- ✓ Guidance on business permits and sector-specific licences.
- ✓ Post-incorporation compliance support.

This publication is general information only and is not tax, legal or financial advice. Requirements change and depend on your circumstances — speak to an advisor before acting.

Let's navigate complexity together

Whether you need assistance with company incorporation, tax compliance, international tax planning or a complex tax matter, Ravach Consulting is ready to support you.

Call / WhatsApp
+254 722 702 305

Email
info@ravachconsulting.com

Office
Nairobi, Kenya