

ABUAD LAW CLINIC REPORT
COLLEGE OF LAW
AFE BABALOLA UNIVERSITY ADO-EKITI

1.0 Background

Afe Babalola University is a strategic effort to revolutionize the tertiary education delivery system in Nigeria. This effort became necessary because there was a dire need to redeem the, hitherto, excellent reputation Nigeria had in the educational sector. Apparently, organs and structures within the University bear this vision of the Founder of Afe Babalola University, Aare Afe Babalola SAN, D. Litt, CFR.

Sequel to the above, many programmes and courses were ingeniously designed, not only to distinguish the efforts of the University but to prepare students for contemporary socio-economic realities. The Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) Law Clinic was designed by one of the foremost teachers in the University who is currently the Vice Chancellor and pioneer Director of the Law Clinic, Prof. Smaranda Olarinde, bearing in mind the vocational aspect of legal education. Thus, the Law Clinic was designed to help students meet the complex, dynamic and contemporary demands in the legal industry such that upon graduation, they would have served their communities in a service-learning programme and garnered the skills and experience needed to create critical value in the legal industry.

The ABUAD Law Clinic is an integral part of a course titled, "Introduction to Legal Practice," which is a mandatory 400 Level course in the College of Law, taken during the first and second semesters. The course exposes students to the practical application of the theoretical knowledge of legal practice, acquired in class and this includes alternative dispute resolution (ADR) skills such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration, conciliation and the hybrid variants such as med-arb, et cetera. In order to deepen the knowledge of the students, they are encouraged to take certified courses with the Nigerian Institute of Chartered Arbitrators. With these skill-sets, students are able to resolve conflicts or disputes that are brought to the Law Clinic, under the guidance of the staff-clinicians.

The knowledge of human rights that students acquire in classrooms inspire them to reach out to secondary school students in order to create awareness about their rights and obligations as citizens of Nigeria. Student-clinicians have also carried out advocacy visits in communities to sensitize women about their rights and interviewed detainees in the Nigerian Correctional facilities in Ado-Ekiti.

The physical structure of the Law Clinic which is situated strategically at the ground floor of the College of Law and gives clients easy access to the clinicians and ensures privacy. It has a large reception where prospective clients are welcomed and made comfortable by clinicians. The clients' bio data and requests are documented. The clinic also has four clients' interviewing rooms that ensure confidentiality and a favorable atmosphere for interaction between clients and clinicians.

The Clinic is manned by a Clinic Director, an Administrator, Staff-Clinicians and Student-Clinicians. The Administrator who is also a lecturer in the College of Law, administers and coordinates the activities in the clinic. The staff-clinicians are lecturers in the College of Law, ABUAD, who have been trained in clinical practice and the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to settle disputes. The student-clinicians are 400 Level students of the College of Law.

2.0 Mission and Objectives

The mission of the clinic is to birth twenty-first century lawyers who can compete favourably with counterparts in the legal industry anywhere in the world through service-learning and clinical legal education. In order to fulfil the mission of the Clinic, the following objectives have been set:

- a. Build the capacity of student-clinicians to be strong and responsible community leaders who can independently and collaboratively, design and implement legal solutions to social problems;
- b. provide free legal services to indigent people in the immediate community through supervised participation;
- c. instil integrity, **value of *pro bono* services and discipline in law students of Afe Babalola University;**
- d. train students to use Alternative Dispute Resolution methodologies in proffering solution to cases without recourse to litigation;
- e. foster peaceful coexistence and decongest the Courts; and
- f. promote peace and progress in the immediate society through strategic collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

2.1 Activities

In order to realize the objectives of the ABUAD Law Clinic, activities were planned and carried out during the period under review, which include the following:

- i. Strategic Advocacy
- ii. Symposium on Women's rights
- iii. Awareness campaign on human rights within and outside the University;
- iv. Client interviews and counselling;
- v. Symposium with the Nigeria Police and the Ekiti State Ministry of Justice;
- vi. Legal aid/sensitization at Odo-Ado Police Station;
- vii. Interview of prison inmates, Legal aid/humanitarian assistance at Ado-Ekiti Prisons; and
- viii. Sensitization of Children about their rights in Secondary Schools.

3.0 Strategic Advocacy

In view of its objective, the law clinic provided several opportunities for students to interface with political leaders, particularly the Attorney-General of Ekiti State and the Speaker of the Ekiti State House of Assembly. This high-level interaction serves the purpose of providing a channel for student-clinicians to engage with the operators of power on social problems which they are

working on. It also provides opportunities for mentorship for students. During the period under review, students interfaced with the Speaker of Ekiti State House of Assembly on the need to reform the Criminal Laws of Ekiti State. The Speaker, in acknowledging the need for reforms, registered his readiness to collaborate with the Clinic and provide mentorship whenever needed.



Dr. Okoeguale, with the Principal Officers in the Ekiti State House of Assembly



Student-Clinician, rendering her opinion at the Office of the Speaker of Ekiti State House of Assembly



Staff and Student-Clinicians and Principal Members of the Ekiti State House of Assembly



The Solicitor-General, Ekiti State, flanked by staff and student clinicians

3.1 Advocacy Visit to the Attorney-General of Ekiti

On **10th November, 2021**, student-clinicians embarked on a courtesy visit to the Attorney General of Ekiti State, Mr Olawale Fapohunda SAN, to intimate him about the activities of the Law Clinic, educate the students and explore areas of collaboration between the office of the Attorney General and the ABUAD Law Clinic. The A-G's representatives, the Solicitor General and Permanent Secretary of the Ekiti State Ministry of Justice, Mr Lawrence Babatope Ojo and a Director in the Ministry of Justice, welcomed the students and made commitments about reviving the existing Memorandum of Understanding which the Ministry had with the College of Law, ABUAD, and in the same vein collaborate in the area of law reforms and civic education.

4.0 Symposium

In line with the objectives of the Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD), which is to promote human rights, it organized a symposium on **8th March 2021** at the PTCF to mark the International Day for Women themed, '**Gender equality** today for a sustainable tomorrow.' The

symposium allowed students to engage with issues relating to discrimination against women through the eyes of seasoned and iconic women, Prof. Smaranda Olarinde, Vice Chancellor, Afe Babalola University and Hon. Justice Blessing Ajileye, Judge of the Ekiti State High Court. The symposium allowed student to join the international campaign on **Gender equality** today for a sustainable tomorrow. At the event, the Director of the Law Clinic, Dr. Hilary Okoeguale stated that the Law Clinic was poised to mobilize the students in the right direction in terms of promoting human rights and civic education. The Vice-Chancellor encouraged female students to take up leadership positions while stating the challenges generally faced by women.

A panel of discussants made up of Hon. Justice Blessing Ajileye, Prof Smaranda Olarinde, the Provost of the College of Law, Prof. E. T. Yebisi and Afolabi Ebunoluwa (the Student-Administrator of the Clinic), led the conversation about how women must engender **Gender equality** today in carrying out their activities so as to ensure a sustainable tomorrow and distinguish themselves in spite of social and economic challenges. Dr. Mrs. Olubiye moderated the conversation.

Students asked insightful questions which were addressed by members of the panel.



The Vice Chancellor, ABUAD, delivering her address



Panel of discussants



4.0 Human Rights Awareness Creation

Periodically in the year 2021, student-clinicians, embark on the awareness exercise of the existence of the Law clinic. Persons contacted are also educated about their rights. Some of the activities includes;

- Visit to the hostels where the porters and the Chief Security officer were met and turned out to be delighted about the idea of the law clinic.
- Interaction with students, one of whom had a real life problem; his phone was stolen and he wanted to resort to self-help and was successfully dissuaded.
- Visit to cafeterias where students met up with attendants and vendors who were also quite receptive.
- Interaction with a barber who figured out safe means of collecting his money from customers in the process.
- A written report was made followed by an oral presentation of their experience in the course of the exercise. This was commended by the Provost of the College of Law.



Student-Clinicians carrying out sensitization among colleagues

4.1 Result

Over 200 persons were encouraged to make formal complaints to the ABUAD Law Clinic, so that small conflicts do not exacerbate into a violent crisis which might lead to litigation. They were able to instill confidence in our potential clients, explaining to them that they were capable even as students to settle their conflicts at any point in time.

5.0 Client Interview

Six complainants, Mr. Adebayo (Baale/Chairman of the Reserve town), Chief Gabriel, Chairman of Igede Social Welfare, Mr. Bernard Simon, Mr. Edwin (Secretary of the Social Welfare) and one of the farmers from Poly made statements to the clinic regarding how their farm had been damaged by cattle. A call was put through to the Head of the cattle herdsman association and he promised to attend a meeting where issues would be resolved. The Law Clinic administrator asked them some questions relating to their complaints in order to clarify some assertions.

5.2 Results

- 1) The complainants were given relevant and appropriate legal advice.
- 2) They were also given the necessary legal options for resolving their disputes.

6.0 Sensitization at Erifun Community

In line with its objectives of sensitizing the community people about human rights, the ABUAD law clinic took a trip to Erifun Community in Ado-Ekiti, about half a kilometer from the University on Saturday, the 14th of November 2015. Erifun is a community having mixed dwellers including students of the Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti, non-indigenes, indigenes, illiterates as well as few literates. The Community is in the outskirts of Ado-Ekiti and the predominant occupation is farming and trading. Other than the Federal Polytechnic, there is little presence of the government. A staff-clinician talked about human rights in Yoruba dialect explaining the importance of the ABUAD Law Clinic and elaborated on the fundamental human rights as provided for in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended). Subsequently, the student-clinicians came up stage to perform a drama with a message on domestic violence and the rights of women against physical abuse. The clinicians distributed fliers to the community people containing the human rights provisions in the CFRN, 1999. The fliers were made in Yoruba, English and pidgin-English languages. Some of the student clinicians had a focused group discussion with members of the community.



Student clinicians posing for a snap shot with children in the community

3.3.1 Outcome

At the end of the event, at least 104 members of the community were sensitized about the human rights and how essential it is to be aware of these rights as provided for and protected by the constitution.



A cross section of participants at the sensitization

3.4 Visits to Ekiti Prisons

In conformity with our overall aim and objectives, the ABUAD Law Clinic have visited the prisons located at Afao road in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti state seven times; on the following dates; 17th of March, 27th of October, 2017, 11th November, 2018, 20th February, 1st and 20th of March, 2019, and 16th December, 2021, to interact with prison inmates and render legal aid. At least ₦ 132, 000 has been expended in offering legal aid to the inmates by paying for the fines of those who had been convicted and relief materials such as food stuffs have been offered to the prison inmates. As a result eleven inmates were released.

- a. The ABUAD Law Clinic, led by Mr. Fabamise, the Head of Department of Public and International Law, College of Law, paid a visit to the Nigerian Prison Service, on Friday, the 17th of March, 2017. The student-Clinicians raised some funds from amongst themselves to

help inmates who were imprisoned and had the option to pay fine in lieu of imprisonment. Thus three inmates had their fines paid and were subsequently released. The total sum paid for the fine was ₦17, 000 (seventeen thousand Naira). The breakdown with respect to each of the inmates was: ₦10, 000, ₦5, 000 and ₦2, 000.

- b. On the 27th of October, 2017, thirty nine ABUAD student-clinicians visited the Nigeria Prisons for the purpose of rendering legal aid. Having interacted with the officials in charge of the prisons, the ABUAD Law Clinic paid up the fine of five persons who had been convicted of various crimes to the tune of ₦ 40, 000. 00 (forty thousand Naira). They are as follows:

S/N	NAME	OFFENCE	JAIL TERM	FINE
1.	Abiodun Owoyemi	Stole Chicken	1 year	N 10, 000
2.	Lawal Sulieman	Broke into a shop	2 years	N 10, 000
3.	Adako Sunday	Fell a tree	2 years	N 5, 000
4.	Abdulahi Abubakar	Destroyed farm crops	5 months	N 5, 000
5.	Suraj Aliyu	Stole Beans	2 years	N 10, 000

- c. On the 11th November, 2018, the Director accompanied the staff-clinicians to the prison facility where they met with the Deputy Controller of Prisons (DCP). The DCP showed the clinicians round the facilities to identify the needs of the inmates. Eventually, a lecture about the prison was delivered by the second in command of the prison about the functions and structure of the Nigerian Prisons Service. Thereafter, thirty inmates were released for students to interview and ascertain their problems and challenges. Thereafter relief materials such as toilet papers, bathing soap, bathroom slippers and food items were delivered to the prison authorities. The sum of ₦ 60, 000 was also given to the prison authorities for the purpose of paying the fine imposed on five selected convicts. Those convicted persons were eventually released.
- d. On 20th February, 2019, having obtained the permission of the State Controller of the Prisons, a batch of two staff-clinicians and three student-clinicians visited the prisons and interviewed four convicted inmates with the intention of ascertaining their circumstances and paying off of their fines so that they might regain their freedom. After much deliberation amongst the clinicians, two persons were identified as meeting the qualifications. The qualifications included the facts that the crime they were convicted of was not violent and that the fines were affordable. One of such inmate stole yams because he was hungry; the second stole a motor-bike which had been recovered and given back to the owner. The total sum was fifteen

thousand Naira only (₦ 15, 000), which the clinicians raised. One of them was convicted at Aramoko-Ekiti and the other, Emure-Ekiti. The fines were paid and the inmates were released.

- e. On 1st of March, 2019. Twenty-seven students were in attendance, led by two staff-clinicians. On this occasion, we were able to meet the DCP who gave the go-ahead. Fifteen inmates were interviewed and the following items delivered at the prisons: one bag of rice (50 kg), four dozens of bathroom slippers, sanitary pads, dozens of bathing soap, amongst others.
- f. Visit to the prisons on 20th March, 2019 was upon invitation by the Chief Judge of Ekiti State. He invited the College of Law to join his entourage to visit the prisons on his annual visit to exercise his prerogative of mercy. On that occasion, ten students visited, led by the Director and the Administrator of the ABUAD Law Clinic; twenty one inmates were released on this occasion.
- g. The members of the Afe Babalola Law Clinic had visited the Ado-Ekiti Correctional Centre on the 16th of December and had been opportuned to witness an abridged trial. The members witnessed an abridged trial where inmates awaiting trial were brought before the Chief Justice for him to exercise his discretionary rights to grant freedom to detained accused persons who have awaited trial in most cases longer than they should and would when they get judgement. It was an eye opening trail for the students as well as another example of practical justice system to save accused persons from an undue long waiting periods to be tried. The Chief Justice attended to about 300 inmates, at various stages of trial, most of which were awaiting trial, the Honourable Chief Justice released some of the inmates who have exceeded their jail term if they were convicted for the offence they were charged. He also varied the bail term for others whose bail conditions were stringent. Those persons whose case files need further action by the DPP were however, not released.



Members of the Afe-Babalola Law Clinic in Ado-Ekiti Correctional Centre



The Vice Chancellor, ABUAD and Former Director of the ABUAD Law Clinic



The Vice Chancellor flanked by the Director of the Law Clinic and the Deputy Controller of Prisons



Nigerian Prison Service, Ado-Ekiti



A Student Clinician presenting fliers to DSP Sanni.



Prof. Fabamise and CSP Sanni with some student clinicians.



Student-Clinicians after delivering a letter at the Prison Headquarters



Released inmates from Ado-Ekiti Prisons



Staff & Student-Clinicians at Ado-Ekiti Prisons

3.5 Courtesy Visits/Collaboration

In the spirit of collaboration, the ABUAD Law clinic liaises with some other institutions with similar objectives such as the Legal Aid Council and FIDA. Accordingly, the Staff-Clinicians have paid visits to the Legal Aid Council and FIDA. This collaboration would greatly help in times when there is much needed support.

3.5.1 Visit to Legal Aid Council

In view of the objectives set out by the Law Clinic of Afe Babalola University, to offer *pro bono* legal services to citizens in Ado-Ekiti and environs, a courtesy visit was arranged and paid to the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, Ekiti State office on the 18th of March, 2015. The Legal Aid Council is a Federal Government Agency, established to offer free legal services, advice and aid to indigent citizens. The team from ABUAD comprised of Staff-Clinicians. The aim of the visit was to intimate the Legal Aid Council about the existence of the ABUAD Law Clinic and to explore areas of possible collaboration.

At the end of the meeting, it was agreed that the Legal Aid Council and the ABUAD Law Clinic would collaborate on Prison visitation and rendering free legal services to indigent inmates.

3.5.2 Visit to FIDA

In view of the objectives set out by the Law Clinic of Afe Babalola University, to offer *pro bono* legal services to citizens in Ado-Ekiti and environs, a courtesy visit was arranged and paid to the *Federacion Internacional De Abogadas*, (FIDA), Ekiti State office on the 24th of March, 2015. The team from ABUAD comprised of Staff and student Clinicians. The aim of the visit was to intimate the Association about the existence of the ABUAD Law Clinic and to explore areas of possible collaboration. FIDA is an Association of Female Lawyers, established to offer free legal services, advice and aid to indigent citizens, particularly, women and children.

The ABUAD Law Clinic team, who were made welcome by the Chairperson of FIDA, the person of Mrs. Rita Ilebare. Mrs. Ilebare introduced the FIDA members in attendance which included the secretary of FIDA.



Miss Chinenye Mbachu presenting a flyer to Mrs. Ilebare the meeting



Dr. Hilary Okoeguale at the meeting

3.5.3 Result

FIDA agreed to collaborate with the ABUAD Law Clinic in the area of workshop as it has agreed to invite and carry clinicians along in the FIDA week. The Association has also agreed to collaborate in the area of ADR by allowing students participate in mediation sessions taking place at their office. The Law Clinic may, subject to the approval of relevant authorities, seize the opportunities made available by FIDA.



ABUAD clinicians and Executives of FIDA

3.6 Symposium

In line with the objective of the ABUAD Law Clinic, to render assistance to the immediate community, the Clinic organized a symposium on the 15th day of March, 2018. Another purpose of the symposium was also to engage stakeholders in the security architecture in Ekiti State in order to address the issues of farmers/herders clash in the State. Thus, the Divisional Police Officer of Odo-Ado Police Station and the Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association, Ado-Ekiti Branch were in attendance. The Chairman attended through his representative.

The symposium featured two sessions; one session focused on farmers/herders clash and the second focused on insurgency and kidnapping. The discussants were the student-clinicians. At the end of the symposium, the guests were able to impart some knowledge in the students and they also learn something new from the students.



Members at the high table during the symposium (l-r): Prof. E.S. Olarinde(Vice Chancellor, ABUAD, Former DPO Odo Ado Police Station, Mr. V. Olotin, Prof. S.T. Fabamise, Former HOD, Public and International Law Dept., College of Law, ABUAD.



Prof. S. T. Fabamise(Middle) Dr. Hilary Okeoguale (4th from right) and A. A. Mashood (4th from left) flanked by students-clinicians after the symposium.

3.7 Visit to Odo-Ado Police Station

This visit was predicated on an earlier research conducted by the Clinic Administrator which found that there was a need to sensitize police officers about the rights of suspects contained in the relatively new Administration of Criminal Justice Law of Ekiti State. Accordingly, students mastered the relevant provisions of the law and dramatized same before police officers at their police station.



Student-clinicians dramatizing the rights of suspects



Police officers listening to and watching the presentation

At that seminar, a talk was also delivered by the Administrator of the Law Clinic concerning the new provisions contained in the Law. He emphasized on the need to inform suspects about the crime they are alleged to have committed as well as their rights to remain silent and to counsel at the point of arrest. Twenty police officers were in attendance including the highest ranking officer at the station, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO).



They appreciated the efforts and acknowledged that the police officers were still using the defunct criminal procedure law in dealing with suspects, hence, they were enlightened regarding the new law.

After the sensitization program, the staff and student-clinicians were permitted to interview the suspect in custody. It was discovered that before then, his relatives had not been contacted to facilitate his bail. Consequently, the staff-clinician contacted his relative on a phone call and gave him information about their relative in the police cell so that he could be admitted to bail.



3.8 Sensitization at ABUAD International School

Twenty seven student-clinicians visited AIS on 8th March, 2019 to sensitize the students about their rights as children and the mechanism for protecting their rights. Fliers were distributed which gave additional information about the rights of children. Students in classes ranging from junior secondary to senior secondary schools were contacted, numbering about 100. The students were

excited and gave intelligent answers to the questions asked. Some of them asked intelligent questions regarding their rights.



3.9 Sensitization at Ado Grammar School

Twenty five student-clinicians led by the Clinic Administrator visited Ado Grammar School on the 14th of March, 2019. Over five hundred students were contacted and enlightened about their rights as children. Student-Clinicians talked about “Early Marriage/Child Marriage,” “Child Trafficking,” “Child Molestation,” “Female Genital Mutilation,” “Child Labour,” and much more to different students of the school. The student-clinicians split into several groups and went into various classes to talk about the topics. Posters and fliers were also distributed for sensitization purposes. Gift items such as pens and mathematical sets were also distributed to the students of the school.





A. Strategic advocacy for policy reforms



Dr. Okeoguale, with the Principal Officers in the Ekiti State House of Assembly



Student-Clinician, rendering her opinion at the Office of the Speaker of Ekiti State House of Assembly



Dr. Okeoguale is flanked by student-clinicians and Principal Members of the Ekiti State House of Assembly

4.0 Challenges

The following were the challenges faced in carrying out the activities of the Law Clinic:

- a. Paucity of funds for proposed programs: the funds expended during the period under review were generated by contributions from the Provost of the College of Law who doubles as the Director of the Law Clinic, staff-clinicians and student-clinicians.
- b. Difficulty of outsiders to enter the school due to tight security at the gate; the potential clients complained that they were scared to enter the gate. We however, assuaged their fears.

5.0 Conclusion

The ABUAD Law clinic has made a mark in the lives of over 2, 000 persons by releasing eleven from prison, sensitizing others about their rights and opportunities open to them at the Law Clinic and contributing intellectually to nation building by engaging on national discourse on insecurity and human rights.

Thus, the ABUAD Law Clinic of the College of Law, Afe Babalola University, apart from rendering free legal aid directly or indirectly has exposed the students to some aspects of legal practice and accordingly, gives them an edge over some of their peers in other Universities. It is the resolve of the ABUD Law Clinic to improve on its tactics with a view to reaching out more effectively. Although finance is our constraint, we believe that with our doggedness, we will be able to increase the number of our beneficiaries.

The Law Clinic plans to collaborate with funding partners so as to attract funds for its activities. In particular, the Law Clinic intends to crystallize on its activities by reaching out to more persons in need of legal aid and at the same time, broaden the horizon of students in terms of exposure to legal practice.

APPENDIX



Some of the Prison's infrastructures.



Pictures of Student Clinicians outside the Prison

Pictures taken during the symposium in March, 2018





