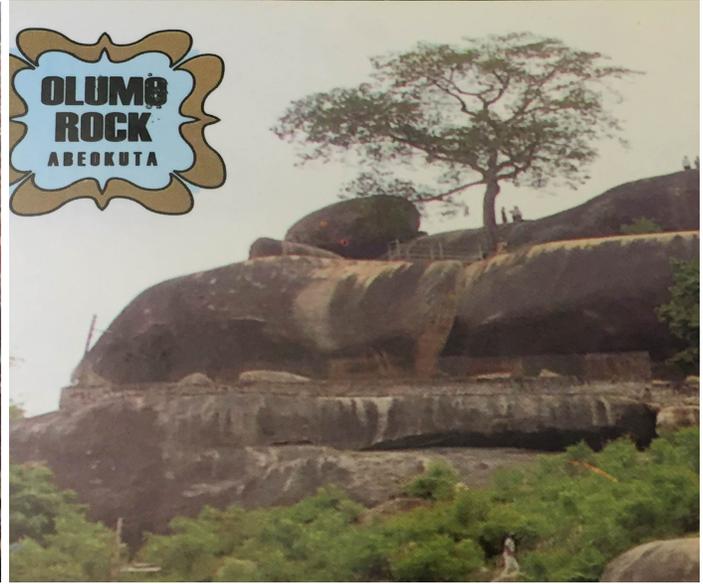
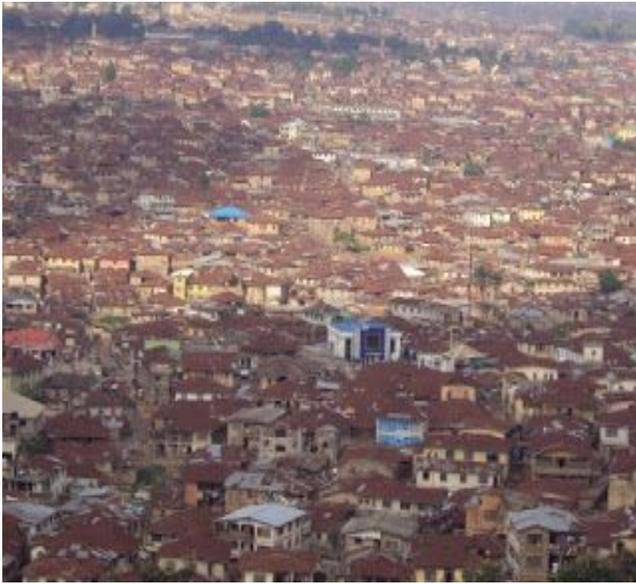


Customary Law in South Western Nigeria

July 2016

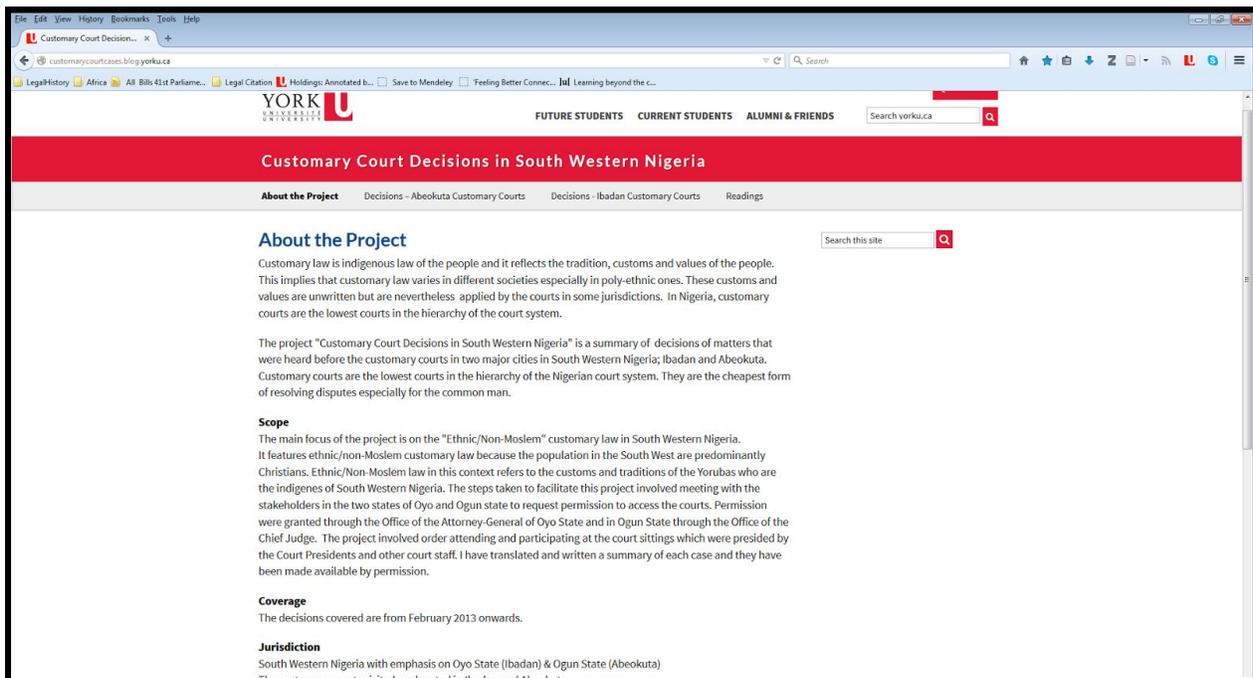


About the Project

- The project is about the application of customary law in courts in South Western Nigeria.
- It is an effort to report the activities of the court because there is no official documentation except random reporting in local newspapers.
- The customary courts are the lowest in the court structure of the Nigerian legal system.
- The project started with travel to meet stakeholders such as the Attorney General, Chief Judge, Court Registrar to obtain permission for site visits and participation at the courts.
- Case summaries were prepared and are now available on a blog.
- More details about the project is available in this article “Experiences with digitization of customary court cases in South Western Nigeria” - <http://www.aallnet.org/sections/fcil/newsletters/vol28/iss1.pdf>

Blog

The Customary Law in South Western Nigeria blog is a digest of cases heard before customary courts in two cities in South Western Nigeria. It can be accessed here - <http://customarycourtcases.blog.yorku.ca/>



Observation

- One of the observations made during my field trip was that there is a future for customary law in that jurisdiction.
- It is the one of the dispute resolving structure readily available to everyone in the society. It is a cost-saving initiative especially for divorce matters.
- Most of the issues raised had to do with divorce, child custody and rent disputes. Customary practices were enforced in the decisions especially in divorce and child custody cases.
- These courts have numerous challenges such as financial, training of staff, introduction of technology to its operations. As a result it needs a lot of support from different stakeholders such as the state government, bar association and non-governmental organizations.
- A work in progress for the next phase of the project is to find a way to engage and mobilize the different stakeholders.

Conclusion

This is the end of **Phase 1/Pilot stage** of the project.

The next steps include:

- Applying for long-term funding
- More site visits to customary courts in other cities in South Western Nigeria.