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**ABUJA**  
S T O R Y



# ABOUT (FCT)

**Federal Capital Territory is also known as Abuja. Abuja is the capital city of Nigeria and the eighth most populous city in Nigeria. FCT was created upon the promulgation of decree number 6 of 1976. It came into existence due to a need to find a replacement for the capital city of Lagos which had congested and had little space for expansion. The territory is located north of the confluence of the Niger and Benue rivers. It is bordered by the states of Niger to the west and northwest, Kaduna to the northeast, Nassarawa to the east and south and Kogi to the southwest.**

**The population comprises of 3,652,000 persons and counting. The Gwari, Koro, Ganagana, Gwandara, Afo, and Bassa form majority of the Ethnic Groups.**

# About SWAG Initiative

Stand with a Girl (SWAG) Initiative is a registered youth-led organisation dedicated to ensuring that every girl in Nigeria is empowered to fulfill her maximum potential no matter where she is born or found.

## About the DMS Project

### **GOAL:**

to ensure increased access to quality sexual and reproductive health information and services among young people in Nigeria

### **OBJECTIVE**

- Promote meaningful youth participation in data for decision making.
- Strengthen the capacity of State Actors on data use for informed decision making and programming.
- Interpret the AYSRH data in a simple, friendly, catchy, and responsive format for decision-making.
- Promote AYSRH storybooks to improve delivery of comprehensive contraception care and education.

# Disclaimer

**This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, business, events and incidents are the products of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental**



Bang! Bang! Bang!!!

That was the sound that jolted everyone awake from their sleep at 5.00 a.m. on that Saturday morning.

“Who is it?” Bola screamed.

In a distressed voice, Ngozi called out. “Open the door! Open the door! It is me, Ngozi.”

On entering the room, she burst into tears. Her clothes were torn and stained with blood.

“What happened to you?”, they all chorused.

Ngozi fixed her gaze on Talatu and continued to cry.

“I should have listened to you. I should have listened to you.”, she repeated.





22-year-old Talatu is a focused and vibrant undergraduate in her second year at the university. She shares an off-campus apartment with her friends: Ngozi, Bola, and Charity. Her friends live on the edge; having multiple sexual partners who gift them new gadgets, trendy clothes, and other eye-catching items. They always use these items to try to intimidate and ridicule Talatu. Somehow, even though they skipped lectures, they always managed to pass their examinations.

Talatu on the other hand, had a carryover owing to her refusal to bow to the sexual demands of one of her lecturers. This did not deter her from abstaining from sex as a result of the knowledge and understanding she has about her sexual and reproductive health



Talatu had shared the possible implications of her friends' behavior and the need for them to exercise caution and adopt healthy sexual practices, especially as they had multiple partners. They were uninterested in what she had to say and went on with their lives.



On the day Ngozi ran to the room, she had been assaulted and narrowly escaped being raped by one of the men with whom she used to hang out with. \*(Ngozi is 1 in 14 girls who have experienced Gender Based Violence.)

Ngozi, terrified, grabbed Talatu and said, “I have had enough of this, I am afraid. I won't be able to continue. I would have been dead!” Bola and Talatu consoled Ngozi and helped her to clean up. They tried to encourage and cheer her up.



“I’m glad you escaped because I wouldn’t want to lose another friend.” Talatu expressed.  
Bola raised her head and asked, “What do you mean?”  
Talatu sighed....and began. “It started when...”





On a hot Sunday afternoon in the Pasali community, Aisha, after she was done with all of her household chores, remembered she had a Mathematics assignment. She hurries into the living room, holding her schoolbag, and sat down on the floor to study. She goes through her bag and pulls out her mathematics book as well as the Comprehensive Sexuality Education Booklet she had been given in school. She drops the booklet on the floor, making a mental note to read it once she is done with her homework. Aisha's father, Baba Soldier (as he is called in the community) enters the house. “Welcome, Baba.” Aisha crooned.

“Yauwa. Ya gida?” He paused mid sentence, a frown darkening his face. “What is this I am seeing? Are you learning to have sex? Is this what they are teaching you in school?” Aisha began to stutter. “Er....ermmmm...” Baba-soldier grabbed the book from the floor and angrily stormed out of the room.





The following morning after her Mathematics class, Mr. Andrew –who was doing his teaching practice at the school – asked Aisha to come to the staff room to receive her class' test scripts. After getting the test scripts, they both walked out of the staff

room, and as they walked toward her class, Mr. Andrew began to talk to Aisha. "Are you aware that you are a beautiful young lady?" Aisha only musters a thin smile and murmurs a small response. "Thank you, Sir." Mr. Andrew pressed on. "You are such a great girl and you always score high in all of my classwork and assignments. I appreciate intellectual girls. But, you know, there is always an opportunity for improvement, and I can assist you." Aisha, stumped for words, nods her head in agreement and tries to speed up. "Thank you, Sir." This time, she says it a little louder.



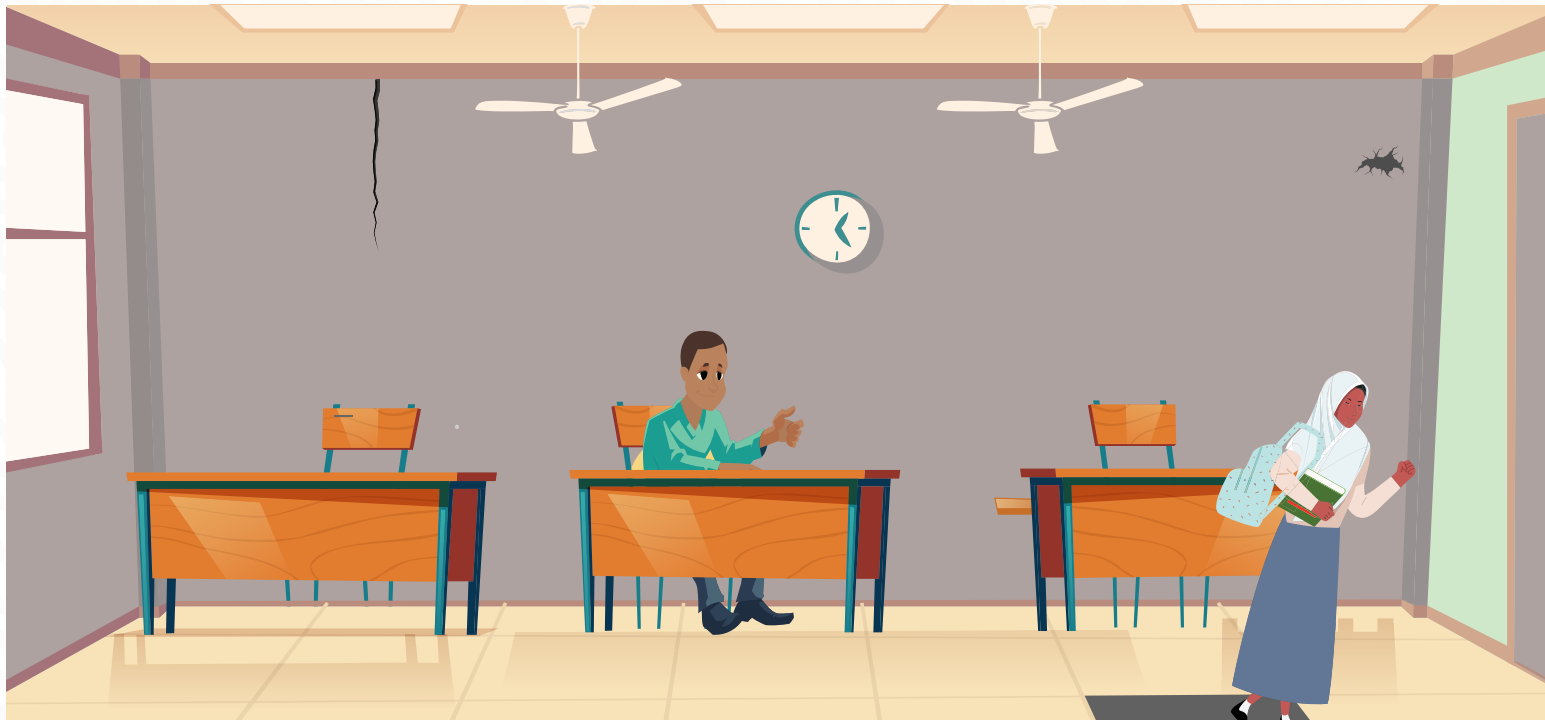
Aisha grew fond of Mr. Andrew as the weeks passed: he was funny and lenient with her, and had gone out of his way to get food for her on several occasions at break time. She had become more open to him and told him a lot about her family. One day, Aisha stopped by the staff room after school to say goodbye to Mr. Andrew before heading home. When she arrived, she noticed that all of the staff had gone home, leaving only Mr. Andrew in the office marking scripts. Mr. Andrew, sensing her presence, looks up. “Oh, Aisha. Come in. Have a seat.” He smiles as she tries to see into the scripts he was marking. “Mhmm Aisha. I've been meaning to tell you something.” Quite “Okay, Sir. But can that wait till tomorrow? I need to get home before my father returns.” In a persuasive tone, Mr. Andrew tries to get Aisha to stay. “Haba Aisha, please take a seat first. I like how mature you are in comparison to your classmates, and I like you.” Aisha looks down, shy at his compliment.

“Errh sir... thank you, Sir.” Mr. Andrew frowned a bit.





“No my dear, this isn't a ‘thank you’ situation. Don't you like me as well?” “Yes, Sir. I like you as well. In fact, all my classmates like you more than the other teachers.” After a little pause, Aisha speaks out again. “Sir, please allow me to rush home. I need to prepare something before Baba returns.” And she ran out of the staff room.



Aisha went out in the evening of the same day to buy a pen from Talatu's mother's shop. Talatu was her closest friend and they practically did everything together. When she arrived at the shop, she was happy to see her friend, and they quickly started talking. Aisha told Talatu of her conversation with Mr. Andrew.





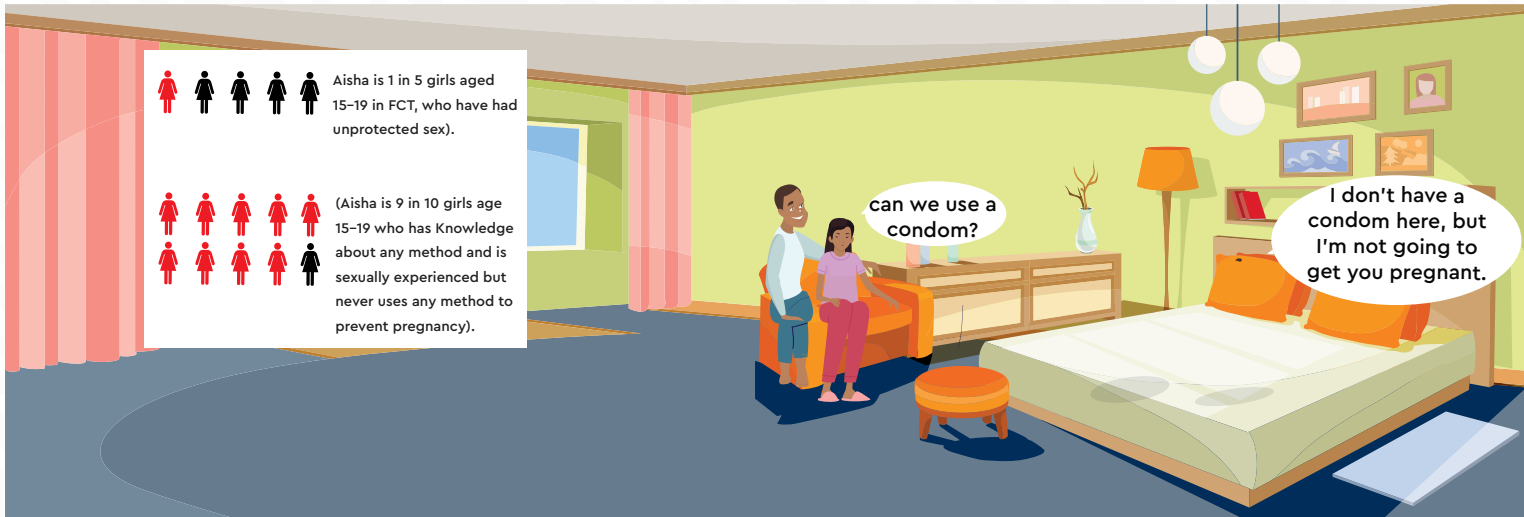
“Ahhh! See, I told you he likes you better than the rest of the class. So, tell me, Aisha, what did you say to him?” “Nothing. I just went away after telling him how much we all liked him.” “Eh! Mumu! Aisha, that is not the kind of ‘like’ he is talking about o! Do you know how lucky you are? The SS3 girls will be jealous of you because they all like him. So take advantage of this opportunity!”

They both laughed, and Aisha walked away, returning home. Aisha returned to school after a short mid-term break and was excited to see Mr. Andrew. They spoke, and she told him about her break. He asked for an answer to his question, and Aisha smiled shyly and went away, placing a little piece of paper on his desk that read, ‘yes’.



From that day, Aisha began to pay regular visits to his house to avoid suspicion from other teachers and students at school. She soon got accustomed to receiving all his presents and attention. On one of these days, Aisha paid a visit to Mr. Andrew. As they sat in his room, he began to make sexual advances toward her. "No sir! I don't think I'm ready yet. I'm scared, Sir. Please, Baba will kill me if I get pregnant." "Ahn ahn! I will be extremely careful, Aisha. You are no longer a child and you know how much I like you." he responded.

“I don't want to get pregnant, and I have heard that if you do this, you get pregnant. I don't want to end up like Mama, who gave birth almost every year and died as a result of that, leaving me with the responsibility of taking care of my six siblings.” “Aisha!” he chuckled deceitfully. “Nobody gets pregnant the first time having sex, naw! And I promise you, I will be careful.” “Okay, but can we use a condom?” “Ahh! Aisha, so you even know what a condom is?” “Yes. I saw it at Alabi's shop.” “I'm sorry. I don't have a condom here, but I'm not going to get you pregnant.” And so they had unprotected sex.





Afterwards, Aisha went over to see Talatu at her mother's shop to tell her about what had just happened with Mr Andrew. Talatu recommended an ampiclox capsule to help her prevent pregnancy. "Just go home and ensure you take the drug. We will talk more about it later. My mum is here."

They hugged and parted ways.

Mr. Andrew's teaching practice came to an end about a month later, and he left the school. Aisha, on the other hand, began to suffer extreme itching in her vaginal area, as well as a delay in her monthly cycle. She told Talatu, and they came to the conclusion that these symptoms were merely due to a vaginal infection (commonly called toilet infection), so she ignored the symptoms for a while. However, as the symptoms persisted, Aisha considered going to the Guidance and Counseling unit in her school to make a complaint, but she was discouraged by her friend's unpleasant encounter with the counselor; who scolded and insulted her for just enquiring about sex education.



Aisha and Talatu are 7 in 10 girls aged 15–19 who have no access to Family Planning information and messages)

Confused about what to do next, she confided in Talatu again, who suggested that she might be pregnant.

“Pregnant?!!” Aisha screamed. “Ah! Talatu, I can't be pregnant. Baba will kill me. I'm dead, very dead!”

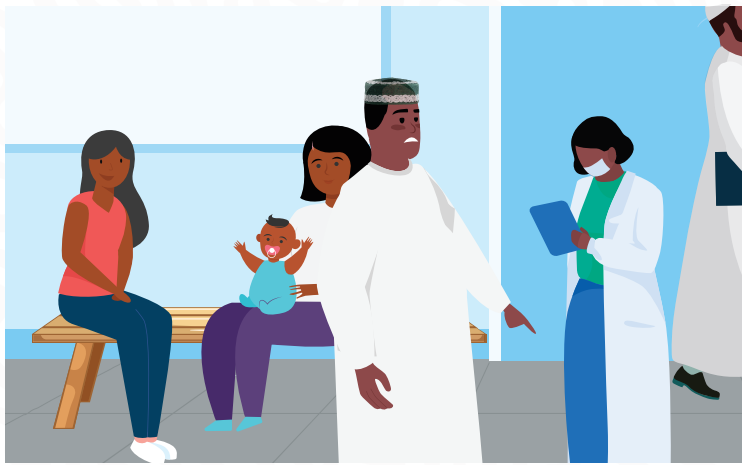


“Don't worry, Aisha. There is a woman who lives next door to the supermarket that my sister knows. She mixes herbs that can treat this problem, so don't worry.” Talatu assured her.



Over the next three days, after taking Mama Agbo's concoction, Aisha felt extreme pain progressively until on the third day, where she bleed heavy blood clots and tissue. The bleeding however continued for three more days and she began to feel feverish, until while at school, she fainted and was rushed to the school clinic and her father was called. She was immediately referred to the General Hospital where she was diagnosed with Syphilis, a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) and confirmed to have been pregnant.





Upon arrival, her father was informed by the doctor that she had passed away and it was as a result of sepsis, and anemia (blood loss) due to an incomplete unsafe abortion. Talatu sighs, tears in her eyes. “After my dear friend’s death, a group of youth health advocates visited our secondary school to speak to the students about adolescent sexual and reproductive

health: how we can plan our lives and make informed choices. After speaking to a youth health advocate, I found out that what happened between Aisha and Mr Andrew was statutory rape, as Aisha was still a Minor and Mr. Andrew, being an adult and our teacher, took advantage of her.



Aisha is 1 in 10 girls who are pregnant at their teenage years



and 1 in 50 girls who have had an STI in the last 12 months

I believe that Aisha's situation could have been avoided if, at that time, we were better informed about our reproductive health, contraception, self-esteem, and the ability to speak up for ourselves and demand that our choices were respected, irrespective of who is involved. This is why I decided to use my newfound knowledge to educate adolescents and youth about sexual health”.

“Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has been shown to empower young people to delay sexual debut, increases knowledge on SRH, and reduces HIV infection and teenage pregnancy.” by World Health Organization (WHO)

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Ngozi sighed. “Wow!! A lot of girls like me do not have complete and correct knowledge of their reproductive health. How can we enlighten more girls on campus and in secondary schools?”



# GLOSSARY

**Comprehensive Sexuality Education** - is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about aspects of sexuality aimed at equipping children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that empower them to realize their sexual and reproductive health well-being and rights

**Family Planning** - the ability of individuals and couples to anticipate and attain their desired number of children and the spacing and timing of their births by using safe and effective modern methods.

**Adolescent sexual and reproductive health** - a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system of people between the ages of 10 and 19.

**Statutory rape** - Statutory rape is based on the premise that an individual is legally incapable of consenting to sexual intercourse until that person reaches a certain age. The law mandates that even if he or she willingly engages in sexual intercourse, the sex is not consensual so it amounts to Rape.

**Contraception** – Ways to Prevent pregnancy

**Yauwa. Ya gida?** – OKAY! How is the house?

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# Reference

‘All data used in the creation of this storybook was sourced from  
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# CALL TO ACTION

1. Integration of Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services into two (2) existing to Primary Healthcare Centers by March of 2023.
2. Promotion of budget transparency and implementation; timely release of funds.
3. Implementation of the Family Life and Health Education curriculum in Government secondary schools within the FCT by September, 2023.
4. Training of 50 health service providers on youth friendly services by the March of 2023.



# KEY MESSAGES

- With Abstinence, you are 100% protected
- Comprehensive knowledge on sexual health protects your health
- An informed person makes healthy choices
- Availability and accessibility of youth friendly services promotes a healthy lifestyle.
- End the bias, promote access to sex education
- The first safe space is the home
- Teach them now! Save them tomorrow!

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The information provided in this storybook is the sole responsibility of Stand with a Girl (SWAG) initiative and does not necessarily reflect the views of Grand Challenges Canada or the Government of Canada.



FCTA



STAND WITH A GIRL  
**SWAG**  
INITIATIVE

*Motto: When the society invest in girls, everyone wins*