



An Ogun State Story

About OGUN STATE

Ogun State is a state in South-Western Nigeria. It borders Lagos State to the South, Oyo and Osun states to the North, Ondo State to the east and the Republic of Benin to the west. Abeokuta is the capital and largest city in the state.

Located in southwestern Nigeria, Ogun State is home to about 1.2 million adolescents and young people, who make up nearly one-third (30.7%) of the state's 3.8 million inhabitants.

It was created in February 1976 from the former Western State.

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



Our Data Made Simple for Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (AYSRH) emerged as a Global Knowledge Management (KM) Champion Innovation through a global competition to find game-changing ideas in Knowledge Management for Family Planning/ Reproductive Health programs. Our Data Made Simple for AYSRH Pitch was selected as one of the four (4) KM Innovations from Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

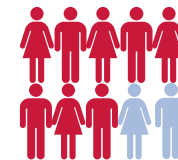
The DATA MADE SIMPLE Project was implemented in 5 States in Nigeria namely; Niger, Ogun, Plateau, Taraba and Edo States.

The project strengthened the capacity of Youth Data Advocates, Adolescent Health Desk Officers and Monitoring and Evaluation officers to interpret AYSRH data and simplify it objectively using creative tools to develop compelling AYSRH storybooks. These storybooks were then used to engage subnational policy makers, community gatekeepers, development partners and donors.

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.

Tunde, a researcher in a discussion with his colleague Kolade shares data he recently came across which reveals 18 years as the middle age a young person in Ogun state begins sex. Surprisingly, about 8 out of every 10 young persons are currently not using any contraceptive methods. His colleague affirmed by sharing the story of Simi, a 21 year old girl, the eldest daughter of the Bobagunwa family in Isale Ake, Abeokuta, who he met 5 years ago during his visit to the community.



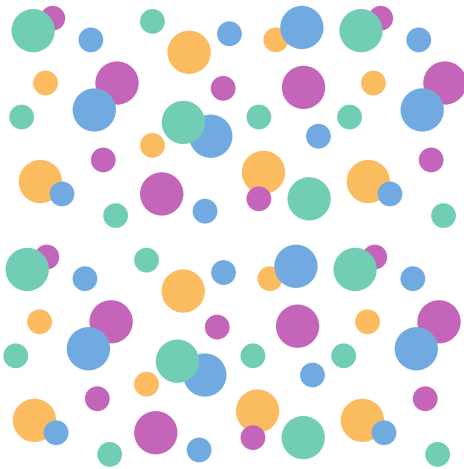
8 out of every 10 young persons are currently not using any contraceptive methods.



16 year old Simi attended a community secondary school, and she was in SS1. She was a decent young girl who enjoyed reading, hanging with friends and was also an active member of the Peer Education Club in her school. She had strong convictions on abstinence because of her religious beliefs and background. Simi falls among the 11.2% of young people who do not intend to get pregnant or prefer delaying pregnancy but are not using any contraception.



One year after graduating from secondary school, she gained admission into one of the prestigious universities in Ogun State. There she met Tayo and Kemi, who were studying law and also were her roommates. However, they were two levels ahead of Simi.



Tayo and Kemi were popularly known as the "campus big girls." To maintain their glamorous lifestyles, they engaged in sex with only rich men. One Saturday night after a party, they returned to their room full of excitement and woke up everybody, including Simi, who was visibly angry.



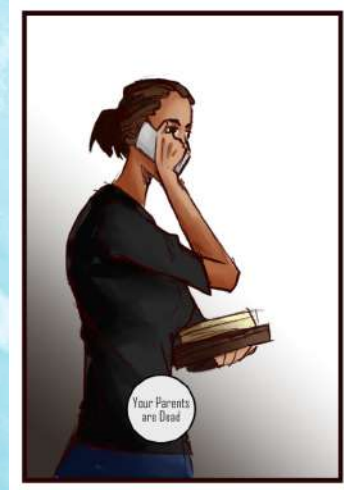
Kemi mocked Simi and asked why she was so uptight, and Tayo hissed and asked sarcastically if she had ever had sex. Simi replied that she would rather study to excel and make her parents proud than involve herself in sexual activities or get pregnant. Tayo and Kemi laughed hysterically at her and used the opportunity to tell her about all the cash they get from their lovers and how they prevent themselves from getting pregnant.

This experience shows that the fact that almost every young person (married or unmarried) would have had a sexual encounter by the time they are 29-years old in Ogun state.

After the conversation, Simi considered everything Tayo and Kemi discussed, had some deep thoughts and laid back to sleep.



Simi was preparing to go to her class the next day, she received a call and had to rush back home where she heard the sad news: her parents had died in a fatal accident. After a few days of mourning, her parent's family came to evacuate all the properties, leaving nothing for her siblings and her. They were split up, with Simi going to Mama Kasali, her mother's sister in Isale Ake, Abeokuta. She had to drop out of school.



Mama Kasali is a food vendor who runs a buka and sends Simi to hawk Ofada rice in town to meet her daily needs.



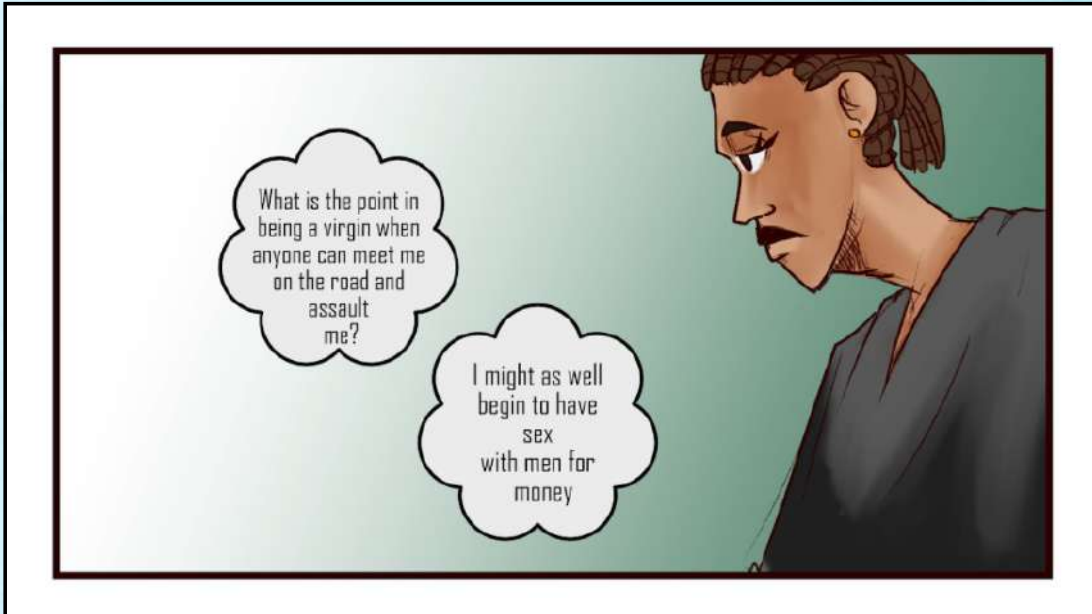
One day, while Simi was hawking, a carpenter working on a building called her to sell him some food.

Simi did not know he had an ulterior motive until he grabbed her and sexually assaulted her.



After the terrible act, he threw some cash at her and sent her away. On her way home - bruised, bleeding, and in tears - she pondered on what had just happened to her and wondered what the point of being a virgin was, when anybody could meet her on the road and assault her. Some months passed and her ordeal grew worse. She remembered her old friends and their glamorous lifestyle and the fact that after she was assaulted, her abuser threw money at her.

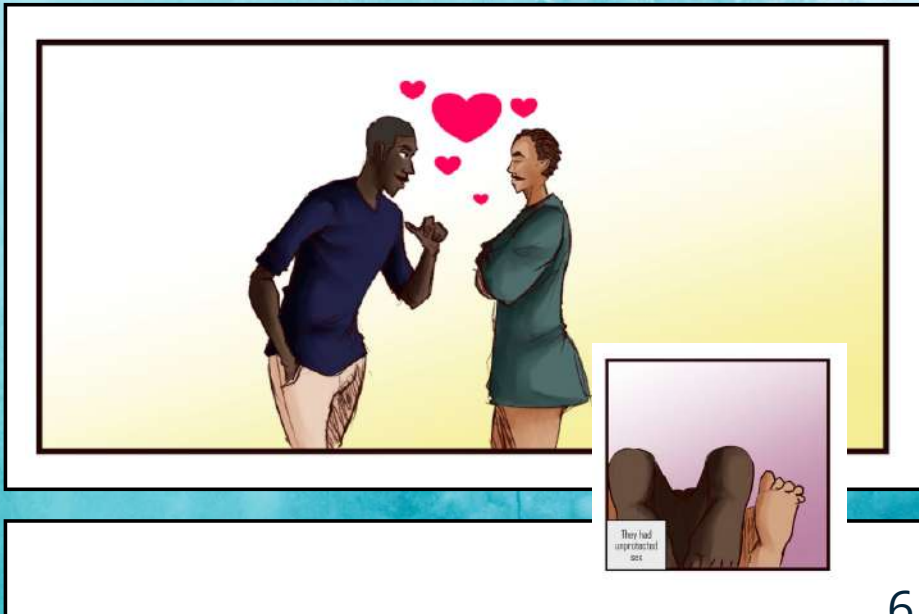




This made her resolve that she could use her body to make money and survive.

This was the beginning of her sexual escapades.

Months later, while Simi was hawking around Ake, she met Boye: a tall, dark, handsome young man wearing a Balenciaga shirt and Gucci shoes. She was impressed with his dressing as he walked towards her. When he uttered the sweet line about having a relationship with her, she smiled coyly and accepted his proposal. They began to have regular unprotected sex.



After a while, Simi missed her period and was constantly sleepy. Rukayat, her friend who is also a hawker, asked why she was always tired and jokingly asked if she was pregnant. Simi thought about all the times she had unprotected sex and wondered if Rukayat was right. The following day, she went to a patent medicine store to get a pregnancy test kit. When she took it, her worst fear was confirmed.



Later that night, she returned to the patent medicine store and bought drugs with an intention to abort the pregnancy.

Do You Know?

5.57%



of those that are currently pregnant or have at least one child or ever had a terminated pregnancy have had an abortion



In the middle of the night, Simi started having severe stomach pain and was bleeding excessively. When the pain became unbearable, she started screaming.



Mama Kasali heard her cries and was alarmed. She quickly tied her wrapper and ran to Simi. She saw her craving for death and knew all was not well. That was when she noticed the blood-stained bedsheet. She immediately gathered her up and rushed her to the nearest hospital for treatment. On arrival at the hospital, Simi told the doctor that she had taken drugs for abortion.



The doctor quickly arrested the bleeding and stabilized her. Later on, she was counseled on safe sexual practices and the options available to prevent pregnancy until she was ready to have children.

Upon her discharge, Simi decided to abstain from all sexual activity and broke up with Boye.

A year later, while Simi attended to customers at Mama Kasali's buka, she noticed one customer staring at her. Her instinct was to fight him, but then he smiled. She smiled back at him and continued her work. When the staring customer was about to leave, he walked up to her, introduced himself as Wale, an undergraduate studying in a neighboring State, and asked for her number. She gave him her number, and soon, they were constantly chatting on WhatsApp even though he kept going to the buka everyday to eat.

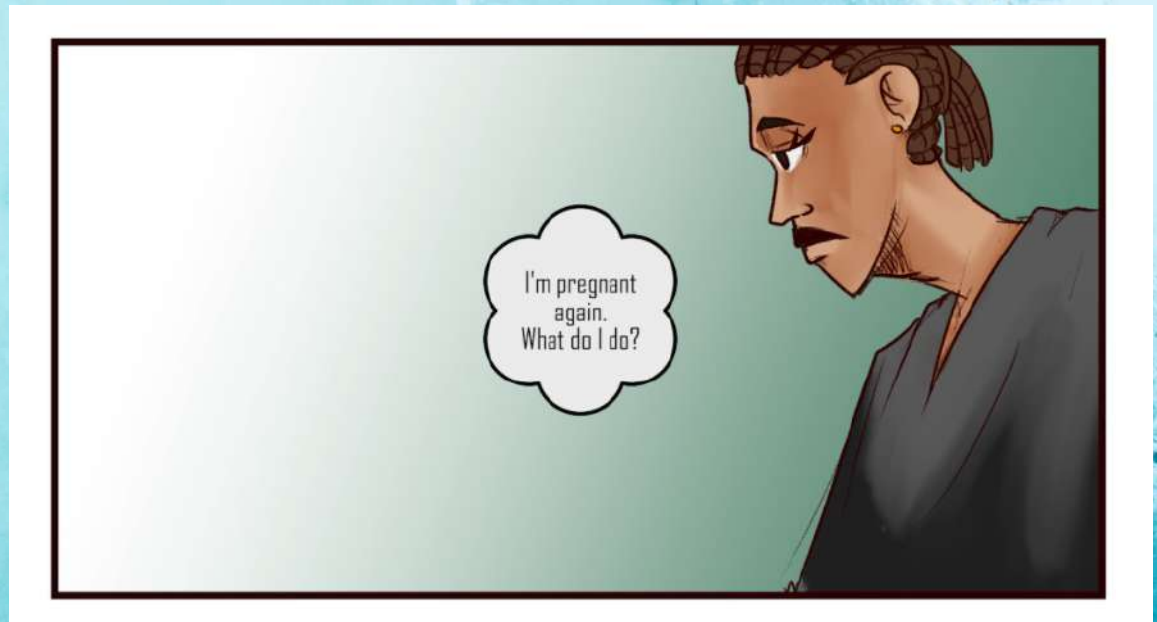


A week before Wale returned to school, he invited Simi to his house and asked her to be his girlfriend. She agreed and decided to have sex with him since he was going away for a while. For that entire week, they had regular sex, professed their love for each other and did not bother to use any form of protection.



A month after Wale had returned to school, Simi began to feel unwell, and because she had been pregnant before, she suspected she was pregnant again. She quickly sent Wale a message on WhatsApp informing him of her suspicion. Wale asked her to buy a pregnancy test kit, but because Mama Kasali was very popular in their community and had been very disappointed with her the first time she was pregnant, she pleaded with Wale to buy it from the city and bring it to her. Very late at night on that same day, Wale sent her a message to meet him at their usual spot to give her the test strip. She barely said 'hello,' collected the strip, and ran back to the house.

Very early in the morning, she tested herself, and it was positive. She wept profusely and felt terrible that she was repeating the same mistake all over again. She knew she couldn't keep the pregnancy because Mama Kasali would literally kill her, and she still wanted to complete her education.



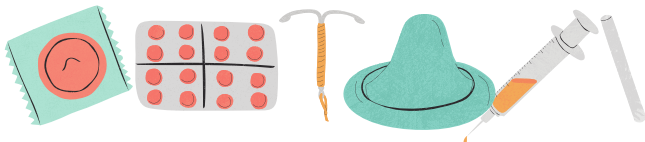
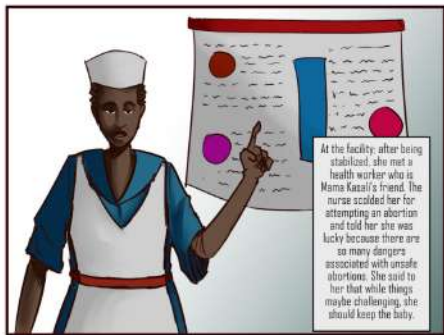
She told Wale about the result and said she was going to terminate the pregnancy. She also remembered that the last time she tried to abort her pregnancy, the drugs had many terrible effects. So, she decided to use traditional herbs that Rukayat was selling to terminate the pregnancy.



Two days after Simi took the herbs, she complained of unbearable stomach pain. Mama Kasali, on sighting her in pain, decided to rush her to a nearby hospital, where it was confirmed that she attempted to abort her pregnancy.



At the facility, she met a health worker who is Mama Kasali's friend. The nurse scolded her for attempting a second abortion and told her she was lucky because there are so many dangers associated with unsafe abortions. She said to her that while things maybe challenging, she should keep the baby.



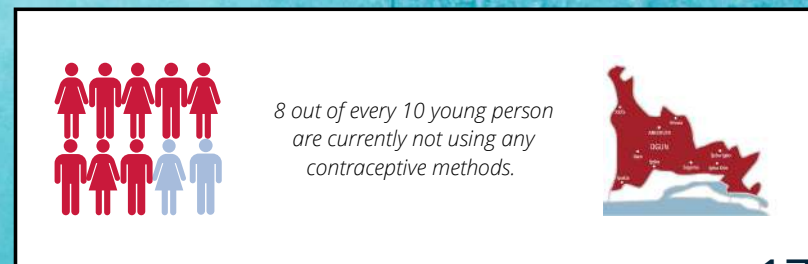
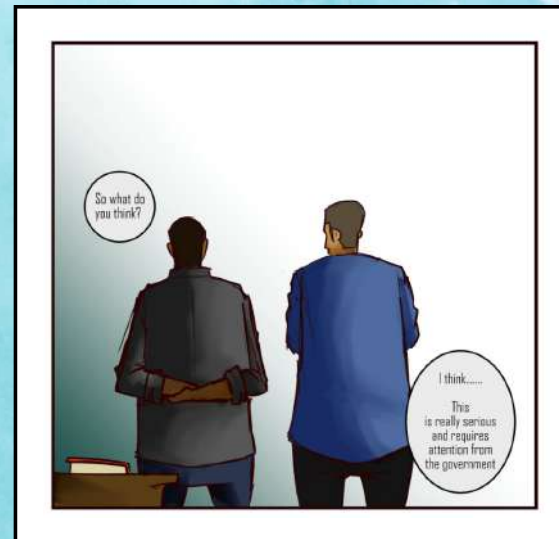
Even though the scolding was harsh, Simi reflected on what the nurse had said. She remembered the counseling she received after her first abortion, which explained the contraceptive options available to her. She picked up her phone, went on social media, and learned more about these different methods. Since she was still in the hospital, she asked the nurse about these contraceptive methods, and after they were explained to her, she decided to take up a family planning method after giving birth.



Simi decided she would never have an unplanned pregnancy again. She then joined a youth-focused organization which was recommended by the nurse to become an advocate for life and family planning. This made her to participate in weekly sessions with young people in the community.




So you see, Simi's story ended on a positive note; she learned from her choices and changed her life. However, this is not the case for many young people in Ogun State. About 9 out of 10 young people age 15 - 29 have had sex, with only 2 out of 10 using a modern contraceptive. This is not helpful because only 2 out of 10 young people (aged 15 - 29) have access to family planning messages. Tunde responded with a big sigh and they both left the office for home.



CALL TO ACTION

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

- Train more youth-friendly service providers by leveraging on the existing primary health care system 
- Track AYSRH budget line in the Annual Operational Plan in Ogun State
- Involve community leaders in the planning and implementation of the AYSRH programme in Ogun State

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- Integrate comprehensive sexuality education into Ogun State school curriculum from junior secondary schools

Civil Society Organizations

- Conduct outreaches for secondary and tertiary schools and out of school young people on AYSRH information and life planning skills

CALL TO ACTION

DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

- Provide Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Information toll-free number on health briefs and advertisement through media on TV, Radio, Print, Social Media, and many platforms

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

- Increase and/or integrate Life planning messaging during Church and mosques meetings including sermons 

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REFERENCES

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The information provided in this storybook is the sole creation of Stand With A Girl (SWAG) Initiative and does not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, the U.S. Government, Knowledge SUCCESS, or The Johns Hopkins University.



STAND WITH A GIRL
SWAG
INITIATIVE

Motto: When the society invest in girls, everyone wins