



**THE LONG
AWAITED VACATION**



ABOUT BAUCHI

Bauchi State was created in February 1976 from former North Eastern State. It is bounded by the states of Jigawa and Kano on the Northwest, Kaduna on the West, Plateau, Taraba, and Gombe on the South and Yobe on the East.

Bauchi State has a total of 55 tribal groups in which Hausa, Fulani, Gerawa, Sayawa, Jarawa, Bolewa, Kare-Kare, Kanuri, Warjawa, Zulawa and Badawa are the main tribes. It has 20 Local Government Areas.

According to the 2006 census, Bauchi has about 5 million people. It is one of Nigeria's main cotton-producing states, coffee and peanuts (groundnuts) and other cash crops.

Bauchi is referred to as the 'pearl of tourism' as it has many tourist attractions. There is the Yankari Game Reserve, Premier game Reserve, Rock Paintings at Goji and Shira, the State Museum among others.





ABOUT SWAG

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 Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (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.

Aliyah sang as she walked home with a beaming smile because her wish of going to the city was coming to pass.

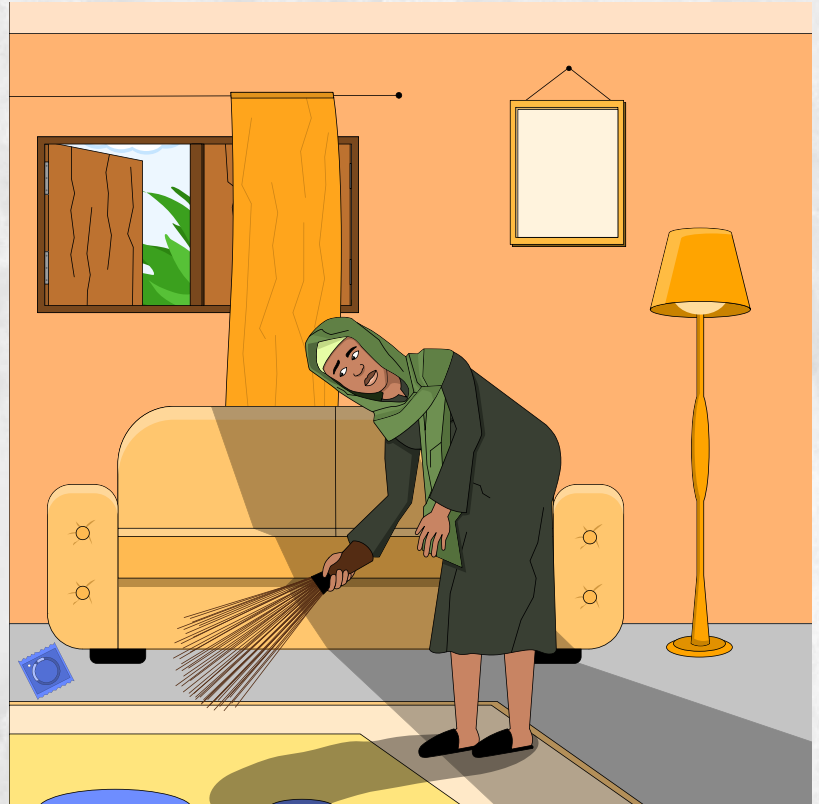
Aliyah is a 17 years old girl fondly called 'yar baba' (Daddy's girl) by her mother, Adama. She is a curious girl from Garin Malam in Bauchi State. One of her biggest desires is to spend her next holiday in Ganye where her Aunt Saude works as a community health worker. She is excited about exploring the city and has planned to make the holiday a memorable one. Aliyah told her friends that the visit to Ganye would be an opportunity to experience new things.



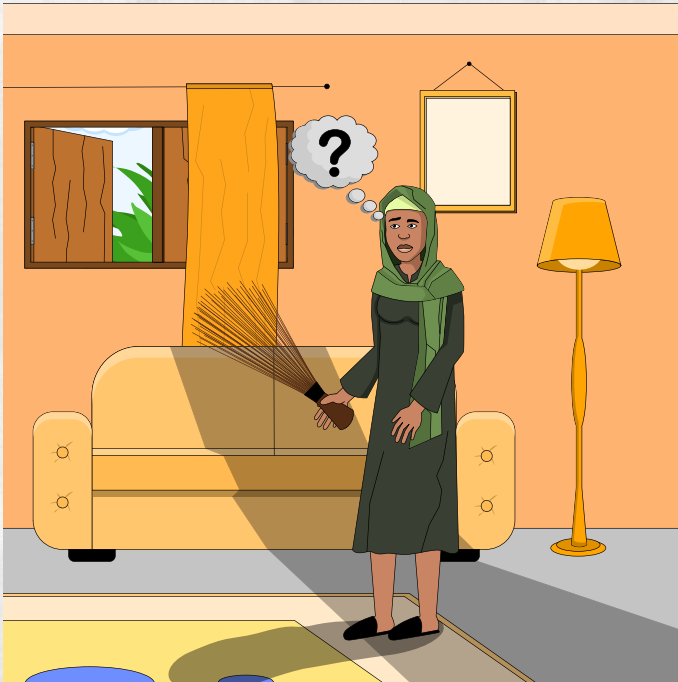


It was finally the holiday Aliyah longed for and as she sat down in a moving bus enjoying the scenery from her window, she began to reflect "who am I?". This was the way she spoke whenever her anxieties arose, lightening lanterns of expectations, slowly every word measured with optimism of what will be her experience in the city.

Aliyah arrived at her aunt's place and the weekend approached faster than she expected. On her first Saturday morning in Ganye, while doing the chores, she stumbled upon something; a neatly sealed latex like rubber ring with space in the circle that gripped her inquisitive mind. Aliyah showed her Aunt Saude what she found. Aunt Saude, smiling, said, "oh my ... your curiosity is a treasure, dear niece." Aliyah unsatisfied with her aunt's comments, said "thank you", her curiosity unfazed.



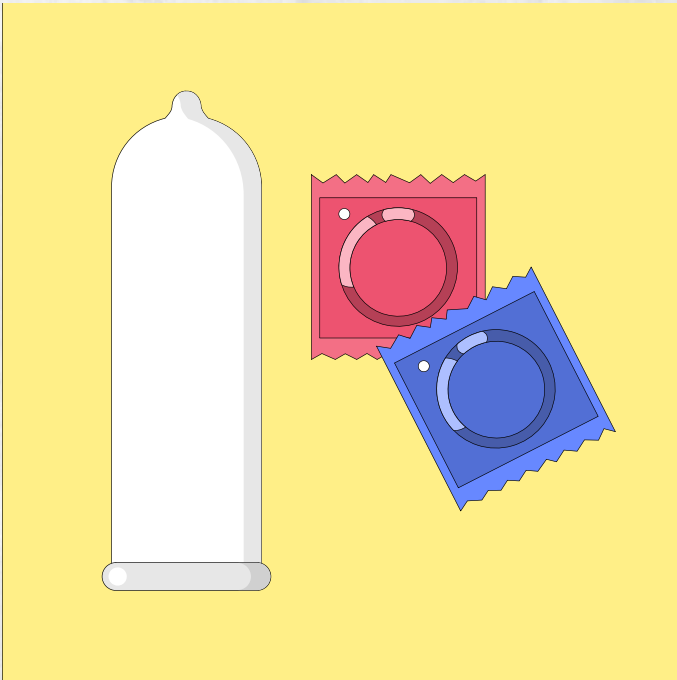
Enjoying the evening breeze with a chilled zobo and lavish conversations, Aliyah sought to clear her curiosity again., "Aunty, what was that thing I found? Is it for play?" Aunt Saude was surprised at the sudden change of topic, 'Tabdi!' she exclaimed. "I will tell you everything I know. Come closer, dear."

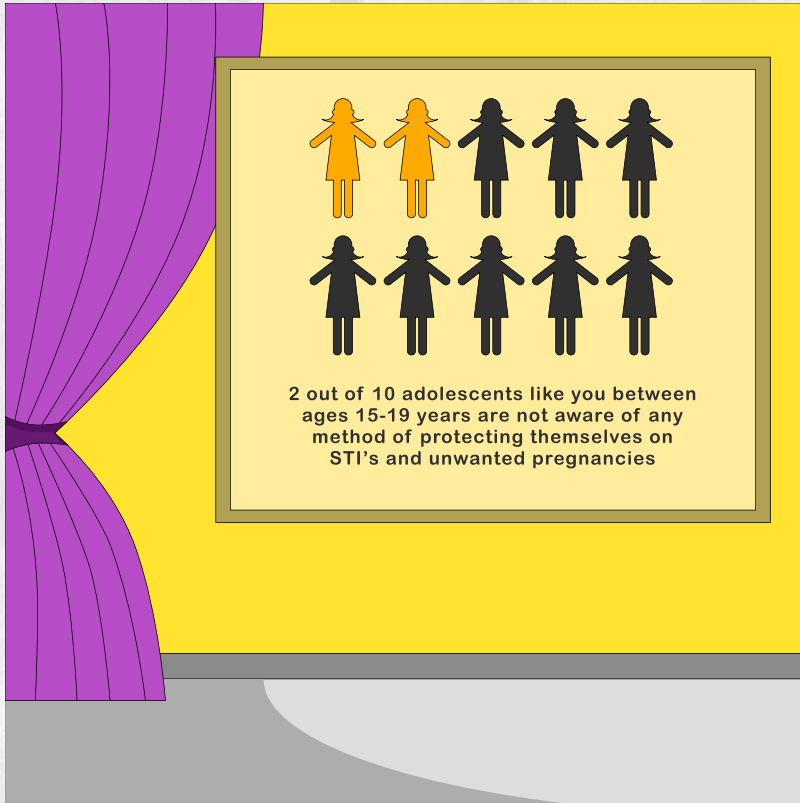


Aunt Saude began. "That thing is called 'kororon roba (condom) and it is used for protection."

"Protection? How? Are there witches here too?" Aliyah quizzed.

Aunt Saude laughed. "Noo ...ah ah, not that. i tsaya kijini da kyau (listen to me carefully)", she continued.





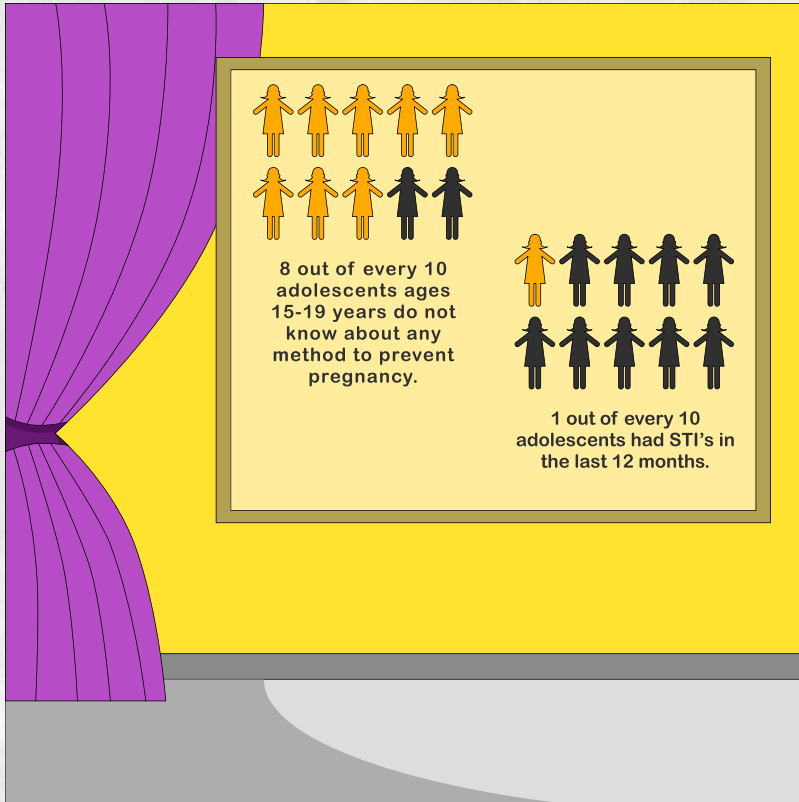
"A condom is used for protection from Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) and unwanted pregnancy.

Do you know that 2 out of 10 Adolescents like you ages 15 - 19 years are not aware about any method of protecting themselves from STI's and unwanted pregnancies? Ba dai kinzo birni ba (now that you are in the city). Don't worry: tomorrow, there will be a program on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health at the clinic where I work and you can come with me.

At the break of dawn, Aliyah prepared and waited for her aunt patiently so they could leave together for the clinic. On their way, Aunt Saude motioned and asked, 'Wai ke ma kina da saurayi ko? (Do you have a boyfriend?).' Aliyah smiled, 'Eh mana (Why not), and we both love each other.'

Upon arrival at the clinic, the program had already begun. Aliyah was excited to see girls in her age group all seated in a round circle. The health worker informed the gathering that the session will be for sharing experience and information on Sexual and Reproductive Health. She encouraged them to pay attention and assured them that it is a safe space to share. The health worker continued "...all we are saying is that society should give all the needful support to girls and encourage Adolescents to make decisions on their health."

While the conversation continued, Aliyah was surprised to learn that the age at first sexual experience for Adolescents in Bauchi is 15 years and sadly, 8 out of every 10 Adolescents age 15 - 19 years do not know any method and never use any method to prevent pregnancy. The community health worker went further to say that 1 out of every 10 Adolescents had STIs in the last 12 months. Also there are other issues that Adolescents go through that are not far-fetched from the communities. "We have in attendance



Asabe, who has volunteered to share her story so that we can all learn from her experience”, the health worker said, as she politely gestured to Asabe to come forward. “The stage is all yours now.”

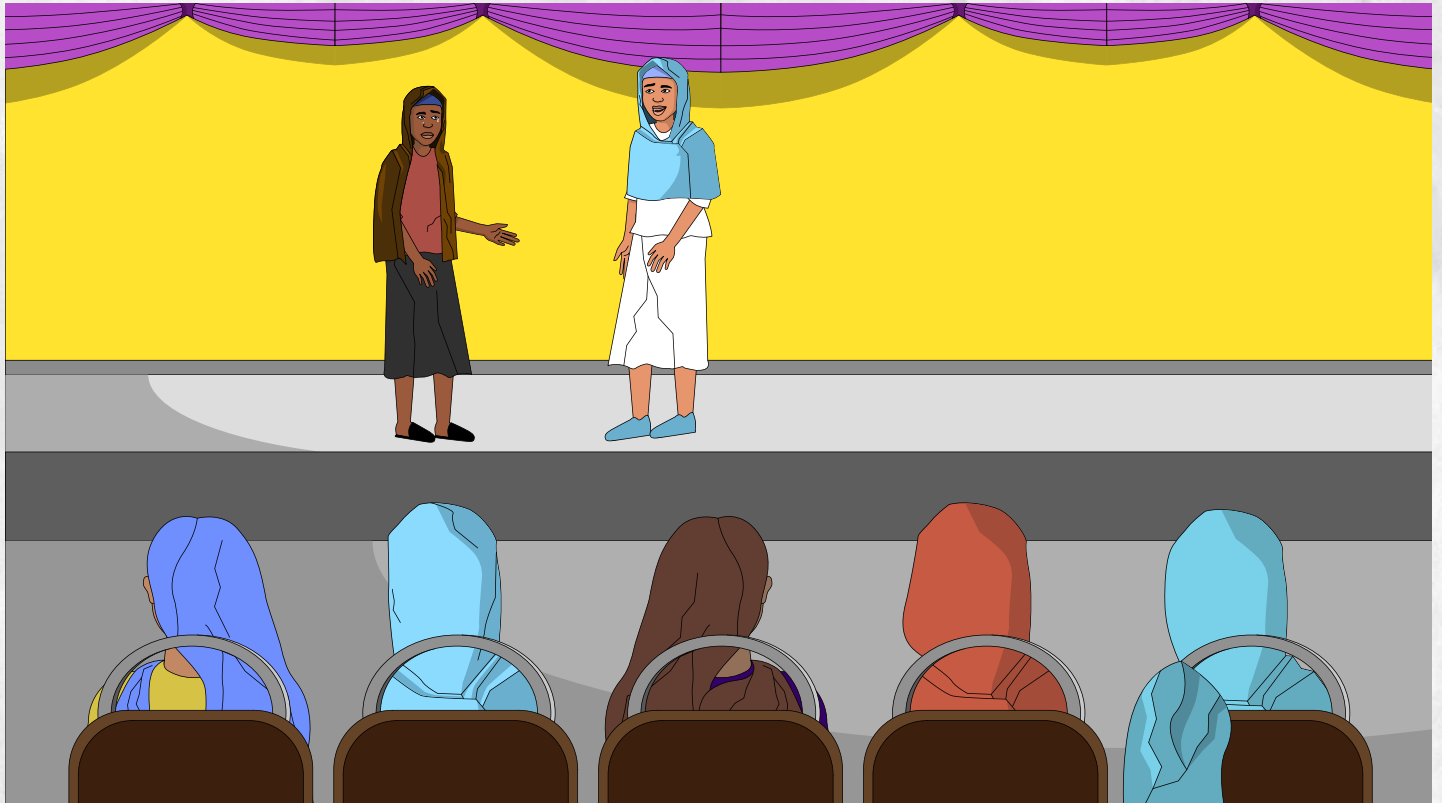
Asabe boldly stood and greeted the audience, “...sannum ku, ina kwana.” They answered ‘...lafiya’ with smiles. Then she began her story.

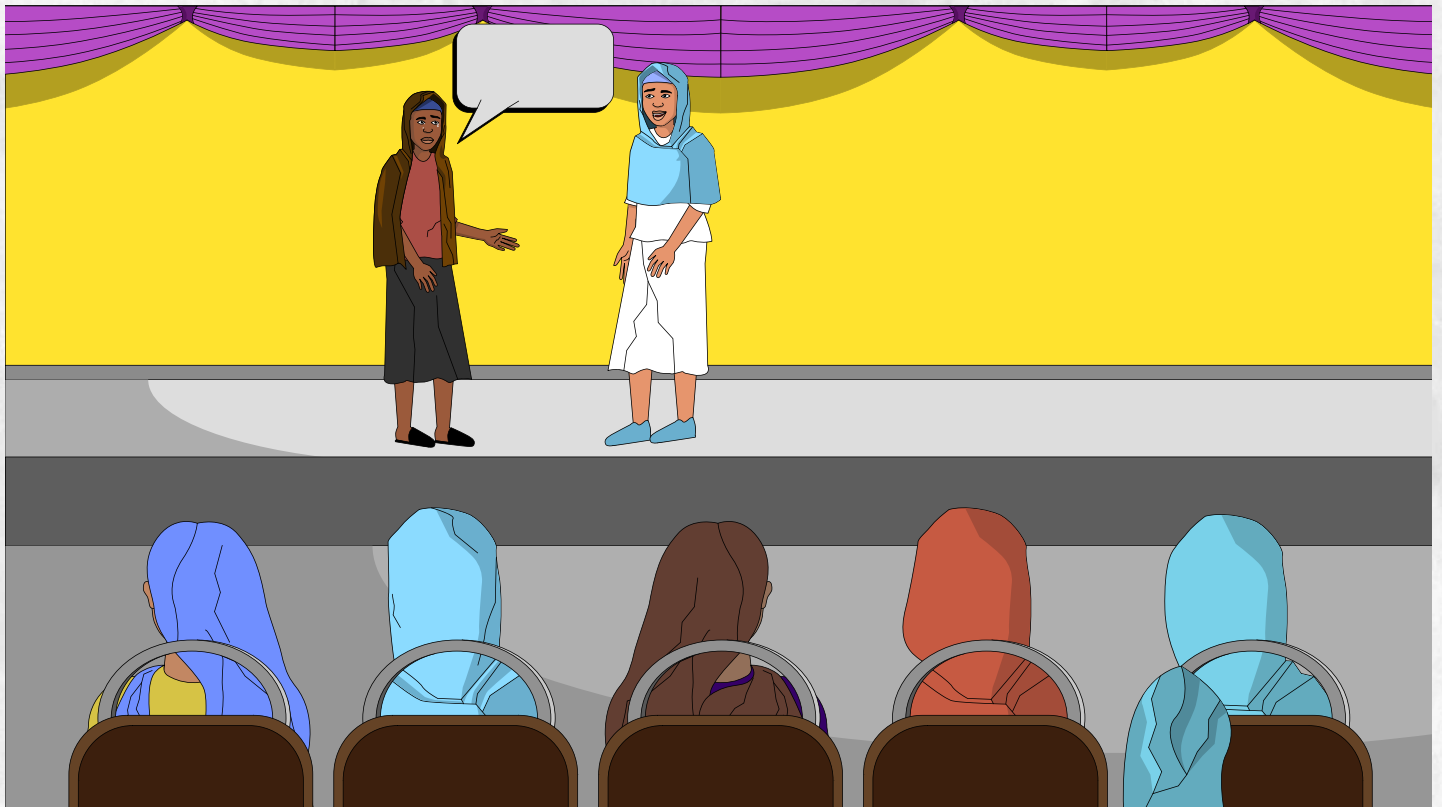
My name is Asabe, I am 17 years old. I live in Gawo community in Nigeria local government area (LGA) of Bauchi State. I'm the first daughter of my father, Mallam Danladi, who was a peasant farmer with three wives.

When I was in SS2 in Gawo Community Secondary School, I had an ambition of becoming a journalist because I observed that journalism is one of the professions that voices out the needs of the people in rural communities. My quest to seeing an end to sexual harassment, early marriage, maternal mortality and lack of healthcare facilities motivated me to inform my father of my decision to become one. My father who had limited knowledge about Sexual and Reproductive Health information and how to go about becoming a journalist - reached out to his brother Mallam Mudi, a clerk at the Local Government Secretariat, to guide me on how to go about my dreams and aspirations.

One faithful day, I returned from school and found my father very sick. Several attempts to get him good medical care proved abortive and he eventually died after three (3) days. Mallam Mudi took me in after the death of my father and I continued to go to school from his house. One day, I returned home to meet Mallam Mudi discussing with a prominent man in our community called Alhaji Naira.

Alh. Naira told Mallam Mudi that he would sponsor my education if my uncle allowed me to marry him. My uncle's limited financial capacity motivated him to agree with his proposal and that was how I became Alhaji Naira's fourth wife.





Sadly, Alhaji Naira didn't keep to his promise and my education came to an end.

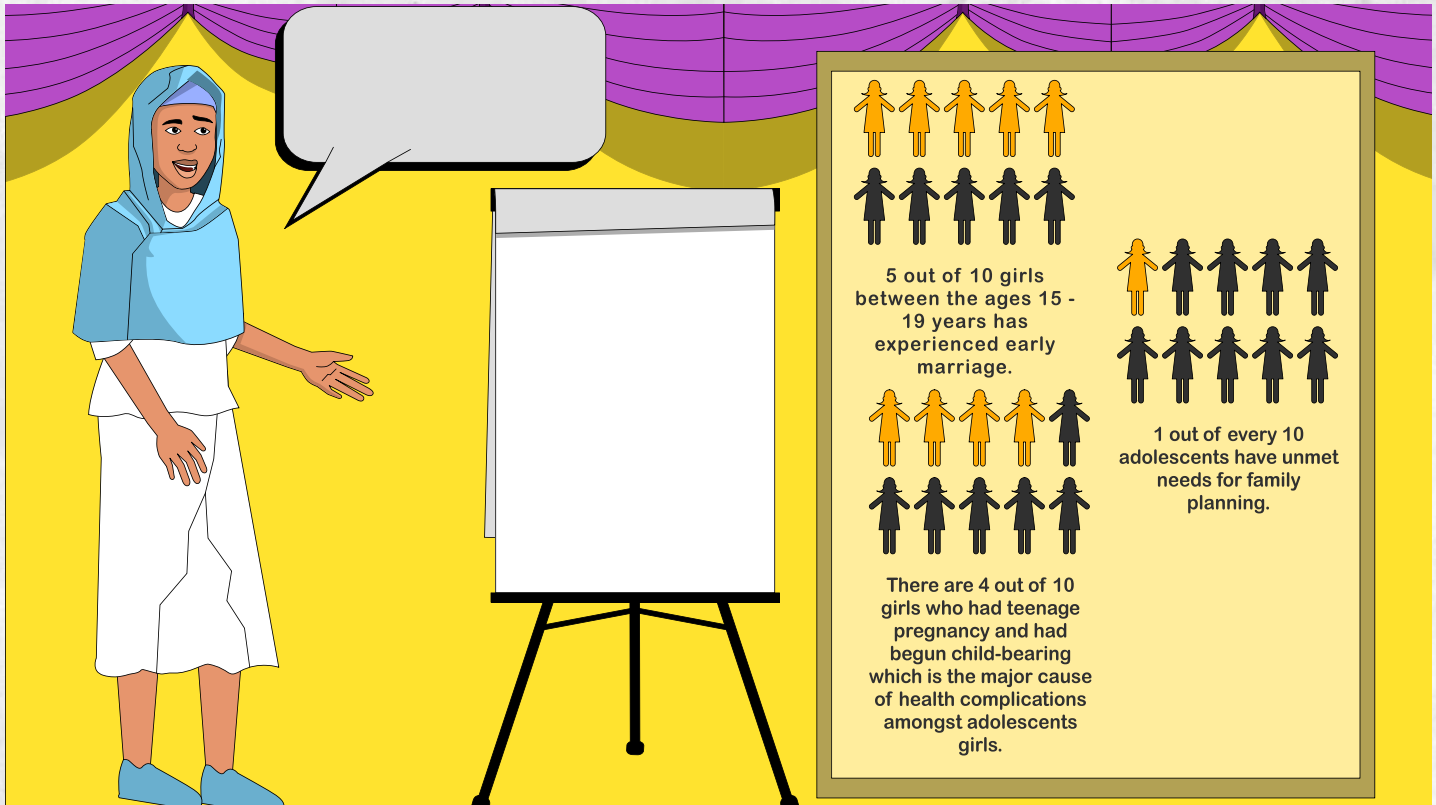
Two months after my marriage, I discovered I was pregnant. Due to my lack of knowledge on ante-natal, I was malnourished and it affected the baby's development in the womb and during delivery. I lost my

baby. I also developed severe complications and was referred to the Primary Health Clinic (PHC) in the neighboring community where I was diagnosed with Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF) and anemia that almost cost my life.

Asabe broke down into tears, she muttered "...and, and, and" unable to continue. The hall was caught in silence as she cried bitterly. The health worker embraced Asabe, comforted and thanked her for sharing her experience. Asabe went back to her seat, as Aliyah consoled her.



“Did you know”, the community health worker said, “that 5 out of 10 girls between the ages 15 - 19 years has experienced child marriage and that 1 out of 10 Adolescents have unmet needs for family planning? This implies they couldn't make informed choices about their Sexual and Reproductive



Health and as such, they are not able to achieve their life goals". She went further and said, "Just like Asabe, there are 4 out of 10 girls who had teenage pregnancy and had begun child-bearing, which is the major cause of health complications amongst Adolescent girls".

As the session came to an end, Aliyah was concerned about Asabe's testimony and was inspired and shared her interest with her aunt. Aunt Saude was happy with her niece's new passion for Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (AYSRH), and expressed her full support.

As her vacation ended, she returned home eager to share her new gained knowledge and Asabe's story with her friends, Jummai and Ladidi.

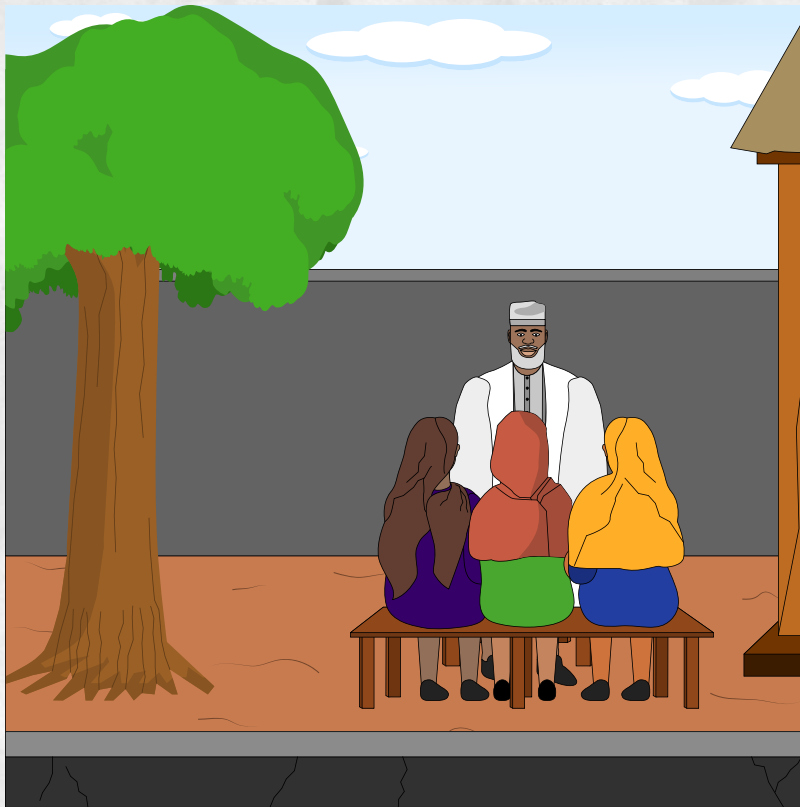




Aliyah, Ladidi and Jummai called all their friends and all other Adolescents around their community. In the meeting Ladidi asked, "what can we do now?" Aliyah thought for a while. "Let's talk to baba in the evening." Jummai also agreed. "Yauwa ni, ma dai haka naso (that's good, I also want that)."

Baba sat gracefully when Aliyah and her friends entered his hut. "Baba na", as Aliyah would often call him. He thought, "Oh! I know this voice, Hmm! Aliyah, Ladidi and Jummai laughed heartily then spoke in a serious voice, "Baba, we want to fight for our future, for all the girls and boys."





Baba, now confused, asked, "What do you girls mean?" Aliyah responded, "During my visit to Ganye, I attended a session on Sexual and Reproductive Health at the clinic where Aunty Saude works. Having shared the knowledge I gained with my friends, we decided to identify and educate our peers and parents on AYSRH issues in Garin Malam." Baba was pleased and encouraged Aliyah to plan smartly and promised to get them a chance to speak at the village town hall meeting.



GLOSSARY

- Yar baba: Daddy's girl
- Kororon roba: condom
- Tabdill!: Ah! (Unbelievable)
- Ba dai kinzo birni ba: now that you are in the city
- Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (AYSHR): a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system of people between the ages of 10 and 19
- Eh mana: why not
- Sannun ku, ina kwana: good morning
- Lafiya: fine
- Maternal mortality: is regarded as the death of a woman as a result of pregnancy-related issues during pregnancy



- Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF): is a medical condition. It occurs when a hole develops between the vagina after childbirth
- Anemia: is a condition in which the number of red blood cells or the haemoglobin concentration within them is lower than normal therefore decreasing the capacity of the blood to carry oxygen to the body tissues. It is a serious global public health problem that particularly affects young children and pregnant women - WHO
- Yauwa ni, ma dai haka naso: that's good, I also want that
- Baba na: my father



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REFERENCE

All data used in the creation of this storybook was sourced from the Nigeria Demographic Health Survey 2018.



KEY MESSAGES

- Adolescent have dreams too. Stop early marriage
- Give Adolescents the power to make decisions on their health concerns
- Adolescents should have free access to AYSRH information and services
- Give Adolescents your ears, it is their right to ask
- Encourage friendly interaction with Adolescent
- Make me your friend, so is the voice of every Adolescent
- AYSRH education is also part of education, don't shy away from it



CALL TO ACTION

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND PRIMARY HEALTHCARE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

- Executive Chairman of Bauchi State PHCDA integrate youth friendly services into selected existing Health facilities in all 20 LGAs in Bauchi State by Dec., 2023.
- Health educators per LGA in Bauchi State Partner with the existing LGA PHC team such as MCH, RIO1, M&E officers and strengthen on Adolescent and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health in the LGA.
- Monthly Supportive supervision on AYSRH data by LGA team in all health facilities across all the 20 LGAs in Bauchi State.
- Increase access to all AYSRH information and services in all 20 LGAs across Bauchi State.
- LGAs data collectors train 20 youth advocates on AYSRH data collation.
- Promote youths' participation in data reporting for decision making across all the 20 LGAs in Bauchi State.



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- Ministry of Health work with the Ministry of Education to revive AYSRH Guidance and counseling units in schools across the state.

TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

- Health educators and Youth Focal person to engage CAN, Imams, ward Development committee across all the 20 LGAs.
- Health and Youth Focal Person promote key messages on AYSRH from traditional and religious institutions across all the 20 LGAs.

MEDIA

- YDAs partner with media houses to promote AYSRH messages across the state.



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STAND WITH A GIRL
SWAG
INITIATIVE

Motto: When the society invest in girls, everyone wins

