

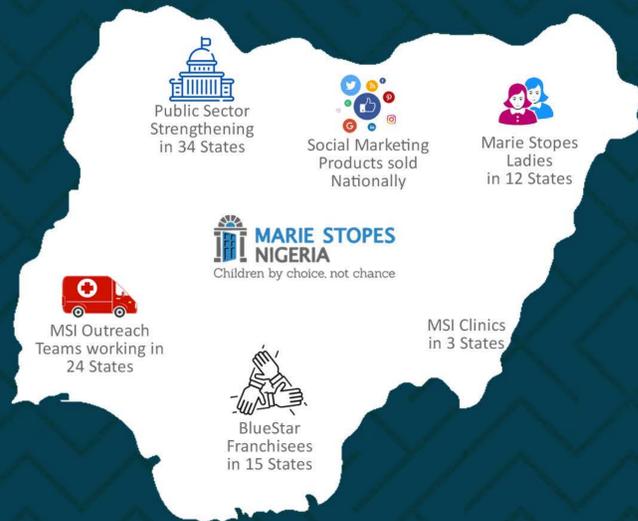
My Choice

A Quarterly Newsletter of Marie Stopes Nigeria | Volume 1 | April 2020



- **Contraception:
A precursor to Women's Empowerment**
- **Embracing Change**
- **When the Music Stopped**

ABOUT MARIE STOPES NIGERIA



Marie Stopes Nigeria envisions a nation in which every birth is wanted. Our mission is to empower women and couples in Nigeria to have children by choice and not chance.

We are a leading not for profit organization that is specialised in quality sexual and reproductive health interventions. We are part of Marie Stopes International (MSI)'s global partnership and was founded in 2009. Since inception, MSION has worked collaboratively with the government of Nigeria at all levels to redefine quality in sexual and reproductive health; and with donors and civil society to increase access to quality and affordable sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services focusing on promoting universal access to contraception (family planning) for all people in Nigeria. Our programmes are implemented across 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory.

At MSION, we provide comprehensive SRH services that enable women all over the world to choose their futures. Our services across Nigeria are free from stigma and discrimination and non-judgemental from stigma, judgement, and discrimination, regardless of age, gender, location, background, marital or economic status. Our services include Contraception, Comprehensive Post-Abortion Care (CPAC), STI

testing and treatment, Maternal and child health care, plus Health Systems Strengthening.

At Marie Stopes Nigeria, we do not do one-size-fits-all. We keep our clients at the centre of our intervention and tailor services and approach to address the unique challenges of the client. We employ several channels of service delivery to ensure no one is left behind. These include,

Centres: These are MSION operated clinics. Our centres set the standard for our services. Centres provide quality sexual and reproductive health services including family planning, cervical cancer screenings and treatment, vaccinations, well woman and laboratory tests.

★ **The BlueStar Healthcare Network (Social Franchise Channel):** These are private-sector provider network managed by MSION under the 'BlueStar' franchise. MSION supports these private providers with training, quality assurance, branding and demand generation support.

Outreach: We have been very successful in reaching women and girls, those underserved populations in remote locations, lacking reproductive health services through our outreach channel.

Marie Stopes Ladies (MSL): These are community-based healthcare

providers who deliver services door-to-door or from their own homes to women within their communities.

Public Sector Strengthening (PSS): MSION works collaboratively with the government to strengthen the health system through training of providers on long-acting methods of FP. By the end of 2019, MSION had supported the scaling up of service providers' training and supportive supervisions to over 5500 providers but currently supports over 2,100 public sector facilities and providers in 35 states.

Social Marketing: MSION uses modern management and marketing techniques to provide quality reproductive health care, child spacing and associated products that aim to reduce infant and maternal deaths.

Contact Centre: MSION's service delivery channels are reinforced by a toll-free free hotline for clients. Our contact centre provides professional, non-judgmental and confidential SRH information, counselling and referrals as part of our continuum of care.

Our Contact Centre numbers are:
0800-00-22252 (Toll-free);
22252 (Charges apply)

0908-00-22252.

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COVER STORY

Contraception: Precursor to Women's Empowerment



SPECIAL FEATURE

Cross River State Government Commends Marie Stopes Nigeria



Growing Up in a Digital World



CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Rising Above Social Norms

Community Chief Turned FP Advocate

Leaving No One Behind



GUEST COLUMN

When the Music Stopped



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Family Planning Critic Turned Advocate

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FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S DESK: EMBRACING CHANGE!



Change, they say, is the only constant thing in life. The realness of this saying has become more apparent with each passing day as Nigeria, and indeed the world adjusts to new realities of living occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to COVID-19, countries have imposed various measures to control the pandemic, including lockdowns, travel, and movement restrictions as well as social distancing. Besides, different guidelines have seen individuals and organisations altering routines, evolving strategies and systems to accommodate new ways of working and living; a change that permeates virtually every aspect of human lives... a change that is necessary to stay safe and healthy, a change that could well become our new reality!

At Marie Stopes International Organisation Nigeria (MSION), we are evolving our strategies and systems to ensure our commitment of empowering women and couples with the freedom to have children by choice and not chance is reasonably sustained even at this time.

I wish to personally thank all MSION team members especially those working in the frontlines for keeping MSION's activities and service delivery channels open all through this trying period. Your efforts remain key in the management of this pandemic and in ensuring that we stay committed to meeting the sexual and reproductive health needs of Nigerian women who need them most.

MSION understands that amidst the lockdown and restrictions, reproductive health services remain a critical need for women and men alike. In line with our mission as an organization, we

have still felt the responsibility to empower our clients to secure their sexual and reproductive health future even in emergencies such as the one necessitated by COVID 19. For this reason, MSION is working with Governments at National and State levels to enable continuous access to reproductive health services for women. Our teams in all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, are working collaboratively with Governments through the Primary Health Care Centres and privately owned hospitals and Clinics to reach women even in remote and hard to reach locations with family planning and other reproductive health services while supporting in the campaign for infection prevention which has remained a critical component of our quality protocol in service delivery.

Marie Stopes Clinics in Abuja, Lagos and Edo States are fully functional and open to serve our clients. We realize that some clients needing sexual and reproductive health services who reside in locations with COVID-19 government lockdown are experiencing serious constraints in accessing services. To ensure no one is left behind, MSION has introduced a home delivery service system launched in Abuja, Lagos, and Edo to support clients who have a need but cannot reach the clinic because of lockdown. MSION uses dedicated Clinic cars to support home service as well as pick up and drop off for clients needing facility-based services.

Our toll-free contact centre team are available daily to provide professional, non-judgmental, and confidential Sexual Reproductive Health information, counselling, and advice. The Contact Centre can be reached on 0800-00-22252 (TOLL-FREE); 22252 (CHARGES APPLY), WhatsApp/SMS: 0908-00-22252. I ask that you continue to take all preventive measures to protect yourselves. Maintain social distancing, wash your hands as often as possible, use your hand sanitizers, wear your face masks and above all, you need to keep safe always.

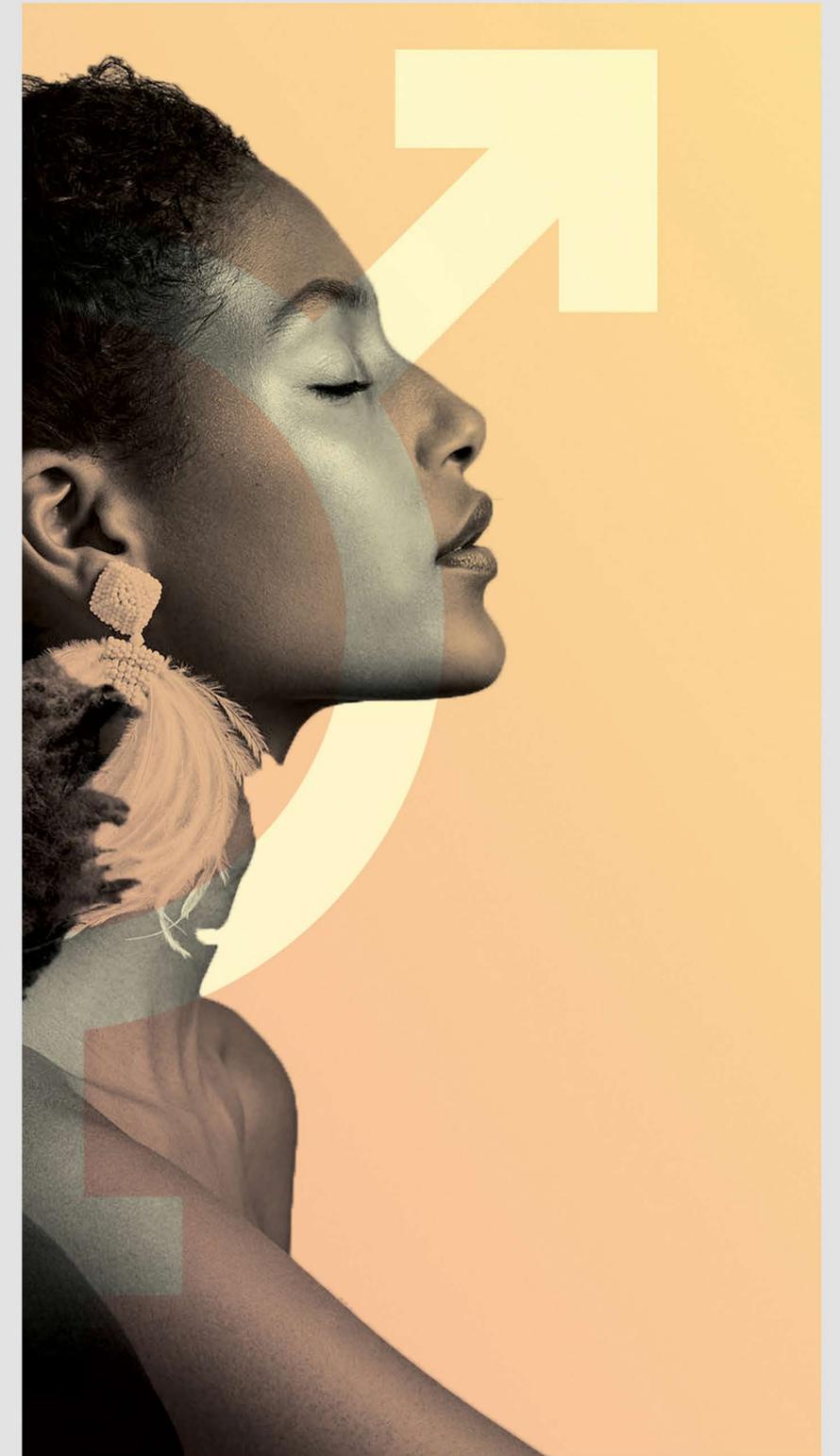
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CONTRACEPTION: A PRECURSOR TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Chinasa (not her real name) was a 15-year old girl from Orodo in Mbaitolu Local Government Area of Imo State in South-Eastern Nigeria. Nasa, as she was fondly called, like most of her peers, had the dreams of stepping beyond the boundary of Orodo to pursue further education after their secondary school education. Following in the footsteps of her Big Aunty who was a nurse, Chinasa had the dreams of gaining admission into the school of Nursing at Emekuku near Owerri the Imo State capital.

The dreams nursed by Chinasa was however cut short when she died three months to her 16th birthday at the twilight of sitting for the senior school certificate examination. The doctor at the community General hospital where Chinasa died mentioned she had profuse bleeding and that on admission they removed several sanitary pads from her cervix. On further interrogation, it was learnt that most of Chinasa's peers in the community were sexually active and depended on their waist bead as a form of protection against unwanted pregnancy. Nasa became pregnant and following the advice of her peers tried drinking a toxic potion of household chemicals to terminate her pregnancy. When that failed, she visited a quack in her community to have the pregnancy terminated. She had fainted after losing too much blood and was rushed to the nearest General Hospital, but the Doctor could not resuscitate her.

Our dear Nasa represents many girls and women facing risks of unplanned pregnancy due to inability to access and get necessary information regarding contraception. Many of these girls



and women like Chinasa have paid with their lives. A lot of sexually active Nigerian women and girls desiring contraception do not get it because of high unmet need. A review of the FP demand and the satisfaction level for married and unmarried women and adolescent girls indicate a gap, especially for the unmarried and adolescent. In 2018 Nigeria Demographic Health Survey (NDHS), reported demand for family planning among married women to be 35.5% of which 18.9% are unmet. Interestingly among sexually active unmarried women, the demand was more than double at 85.5% and 48.4% unmet need with even higher demand reported among adolescents aged 15 to 19 years at 93.9% demand for contraception and 65.6% this demand still unmet.

Every year, 41% of girls who start secondary education in Nigeria do not complete it. They drop out of school for reasons that include teenage pregnancy and child marriage. With improved access to contraception, the girl child who dropped out of school could stay longer and get an education. A 2009 Bloom and Colleagues study found that each birth on average reduces a reproductive woman's lifetime labour supply by almost two years. This goes to show that given the inherent benefits of contraception for women's health and empowerment, a lot more needs to be done in Nigeria to remove barriers that limit the uptake of sexual and reproductive health services.

This will include addressing funding and commodity supply gaps; provider bias and inequity in care provision, addressing cultural and religious norms that stigmatize and limit service uptake. Greater investment in strengthening awareness of family planning in communities through coordinated social-behaviour-change-communication to facilitate acceptance of Family Planning (FP) through changes in knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs and behaviours is required.

At the grass-root, this would include addressing social norms and strengthening support systems to ensure that all females needing contraception is empowered to demand and utilize contraceptive products and services as required.

In 2013, the Global Partnership for Maternal and Child Health (PMNCH) reported that 'a reduction in fertility of one child per woman in Nigeria would lead to a 13% increase in GDP per capita in 20 years, and 25% in 50 years. They estimate that US\$ 1.40 is saved on maternal and newborn health care for every dollar invested in family planning and another US\$ 4 is saved on treating complications of unplanned pregnancies." This means that controlling whether or when to have children is an essential aspect



of women's empowerment necessitating an urgent need for government and other relevant stakeholders to invest in Universal Access to Contraception.

To achieve universal access to contraception, we need to deliberately promote active male participation in FP intervention towards increasing community acceptance while addressing religious misinterpretation. Of priority also should be increasing demand for FP focusing on expanding reach to youth and persons with disability necessary to galvanise needed community support and ownership of family planning programming and policy interventions by government and civil societies.

The Guttmacher Institute published in their April 2019 fact sheet that if all unmet need for modern contraception in Nigeria were satisfied, unintended pregnancies would drop by 77% from 2.5 million to 555,000 per year. As a result, the annual number of unplanned births would decrease from 885,000 to 200,000 while reducing the number of abortions happening in Nigeria from 1.3 million to 287,000. In their 2015 reports, the Institute posits that annually over 1.2 million abortions take place in Nigeria and that more than six out of every ten of these abortions are considered unsafe, performed by quacks in unhygienic environments.

Having illustrated the link between the unmet need for family planning and the dangers of unsafe abortion, it is projected that with full provision of modern contraception combined with adequate care for all pregnant women and their new-borns, maternal deaths would drop by 68% from 61,000 to 19,000 per year; and new-born deaths would drop by 85% from 255,000 to 38,000 per year.

Every year on March 8, the world celebrates the International Women's Day. The theme of the 2020 celebration was "an equal world is an enabled world". This theme called on individuals, organisations, and nations to take action to forge a gender-equal world and celebrate women's achievement. Women's health

activists around the world used the opportunity of the celebration to further the case for universal access to contraception for women and girls and underline the connection between greater investment in women's sexual and reproductive health and their empowerment.

In line with the spirit of the celebration, Marie Stopes International Organisation Nigeria (MSION) marked the day with activities designed to amplify the voices of women and promote equality. MSION celebration began with a media appearance on March 6th, 2020 where our Country Director Effiom Effiom featured on the flagship weekly news and cultural affairs programme called public Square with Rotimi Sankore as the anchor on 99.3 Nigeria Info Radio in Lagos.

On that programme, Effiom

stressed the importance of women's right to contraception. He stated that contraception and the broader sexual and reproductive health and rights are key issues that have life and death consequences for women. He noted that contraception was a key determinant of women's ability to stay healthy, achieve educational goals, jobs, escape poverty, and have an impact on the economic development of any country.

As an organisation, MSION has promoted equal opportunity for women through the provision of contraceptive services and advocacy for women's empowerment to have children by choice and not chance. By giving women choice, the organisation has enabled them to keep their dreams and aspirations alive, to stay healthy and rise above poverty. This commitment to the woman at the centre has been the

core of all MSION intervention as we work to build a world where every birth is wanted.

In 2019 alone, we reached 2.4 million Clients with quality SRH services. This translates to 6.1 million Couple-Years of Protection (CYPs) and 2.1 million unintended pregnancies averted. We averted an estimated 13,577 maternal and 66,761 child deaths including an estimated 943,427 unsafe abortions due to provision of MSION's services. The organisation's interventions in 2019 saved £119.8million in direct healthcare cost. By preventing these unintended pregnancies, the beneficiaries have greater opportunities to participate actively in society, in the workplace and contribute to increased productivity and national development.



NEW

-  **DOTTED**
-  **FLAVOURED**
-  **ENHANCED PLEASURE**
-  **GREAT SEX**

SHOW HER YOUR MOVES

IGNITE YOUR PASSION WITH FIRE CONDOMS

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CROSS RIVER STATE GOVERNMENT COMMENDS MARIE STOPES NIGERIA

Cross River state Government has commended the contributions and support of Marie Stopes International Organisation Nigeria in enabling improved access to sexual and reproductive health services for the people of the state. The state Commissioner for Health, Dr. Betta Edu made this commendation during an advocacy visit by the Country Director of MSION and his team on Wednesday February 19, 2020 at the Ministry of Health complex, Calabar.

Dr Edu appreciated MSION for the venerable relationship and the organisation's strong commitments in reaching the last mile regardless of distance or difficult terrain with family planning services. She commended MSION outreach strategy, noting that it ensures access to family planning services for women in difficult and hard to reach communities across the state, and helping to deliver universal access to sexual and reproductive health services while ensuring no one is left behind.

Dr Edu recognized that state has many hard to reach areas deserving more interventions. She noted that the outreach strategy is a model the state government would love to explore as funding becomes available to expand access and reach.

Speaking earlier, MSION's Country Director Mr. Effiom Nyong Effiom thanked the state government for their responsiveness and support to MSION interventions in the state. He explained that the organisation is in the state to support and work collaboratively with the government to advance sexual and reproductive health outcomes for the people of the state. He noted that since entry into the state in 2014, MSION has contributed immensely in



developing human resources for health especially in training providers on family planning, providing equipments and commodities to aid service provision and above all, ensuring that women are reached with services regardless of the difficulty of the terrain where they live.

He noted that MSION operates several channels of service provision and support to the state. These include the Public Sector Strengthening interventions which works through Primary Healthcare Centers to strengthen capacity for

SRH, the Social Franchise which works through the private health sector to improve care and the mobile Outreach which combs the state to ensure that access is not denied to women in underserved locations. He noted that through the outreach team alone, MSION reaches about 3000 women of reproductive age with services every month.

Cross River State Representatives at the meeting were Dr Mrs. Betta Edu Hounable Commissioner for Health, Barrister Takon Asu Takon Permanent Secretary Ministry of Health, Dr Iwara Iwara Director Public Health, Mrs. Lucy Enakhirerhi State Family Planning Coordinator and Mrs. Nsa Ita State Reproductive Health Coordinator. Representatives of MSION were Mr. Effiom Nyong Effiom Country Director, Emmanuel Ajah Director Programme Operations, Ibekwe Samuel Regional Manager South East including Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, Mrs. Lucy Esege State Clinical and Training Officer.

“MSION reaches about 3000 women of reproductive age with services every month.”

AGAINST ALL ODDS: MSION KEEPS OPERATIONS OPEN DESPITE COVID 19

Despite the COVID 19 pandemic, resilient MSION teams spread across Nigeria are working collaboratively with governments at national and state levels to continue provision of family planning and other reproductive health services.

The organisation has sustained service provision in over 2000 primary health Care facilities and over 550 private healthcare facilities. The 23 mobile outreach teams still visit communities and work with government facilities to support service provision as well as increase awareness of COVID 19 precautionary measures amongst clients and communities in their localities. In Lagos, Abuja and Edo, MSION owned clinics are open to render services and are offering clients who are in lockdown conditions home services as well as transport support for facility-based services. MSION toll free call centre (08000022252) has remained active and open to respond and provide non-judgmental professional and confidential sexual and reproductive health advice for individuals despite the lockdown.

Effiom Nyong Effiom MSION Country Director is full of appreciation to the team for their demonstrated passion and commitment. He wrote in an advisory to the team " Dear Team, your passion, courage and commitment keep me optimistic and energizes my faith, that regardless of what the times and seasons bring, we will continue to deliver on our commitment to Nigerian women, men and all our stakeholders spread across the globe... I thank you for staying true, through these trying times." He assured team members of management's commitment to their personal safety and protection and charged them to follow all safety advice for their channels of service delivery.



GROWING UP IN A DIGITAL WORLD



© Marie Stopes International Organisation Nigeria | Youth Consultation on Digital Health and Technology 2020

Marie Stopes International Organisation Nigeria (MSION) partnered with PharmAccess, Nigeria Health Watch and Epic Africa to organise a one-day digital Health Technology Consultative Forum on the 12th of March 2020 in Lagos, Nigeria.

The event which took place at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Lagos, is part of the global intervention by The Lancet & Financial Times commission 'Growing up in a digital world: Governing health futures 2030'. This intervention aims to harness solutions that will increase the use of technology to address equity challenges in youth access to health care.

The forum discussed innovative ideas and opportunities in the use of artificial intelligence and digital health technologies to achieve Universal Health Coverage in Nigeria. Participants identified barriers to healthcare access particularly for

young people and proffered solutions that use digital technology to enable access to quality and affordable Healthcare. Speaking at the event, MSION's Head of Marketing and Corporate Communications, Ogechi Onuoha addressed the topic "Leveraging Technology for Increased Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Information and Service Uptake. She highlighted sexual and reproductive health as a major health concern for young people in Nigeria. Noting that access to contraceptives and other sexual health information and services is constrained for a lot of youths especially adolescent girls. She explained that "demand for family planning among the married female population in Nigeria is just at 35%, while for the unmarried and sexually active female population it is 85%, but over half of the sexually active females do not have their needs met."

Ogechi made clear that MSION is a

champion in data protection and goes the extra mile to protect the client's confidentiality. MSION understands that data privacy and data quality are important to protect the rights of the client and promote access to quality, non-judgemental Care. She stated that MSION piloted the use of mobile technology for collection, collation, and computation of internal quality technical assistance (QTA) data in 2019 across two channels. This technology makes real-time viewing of QTA results accessible at regional, states, LGA & facility level. She reiterated MSION's commitment to using technology to expand access to sexual health information and services in Nigeria.

Participants at the event were young health and technology experts, political and health leaders, and policymakers drawn from across the country.



MSION Team Members ahead of 10th Year Annivarsary Celebration



Advocacy visit to the Emir of Bichi Emirate Council Alhaji Nasiru Ado Bayero with 10 district heads to support Family Planning Services



Community Members Watch a Drama Performance during an FP Mobilisation Session at Alkaleri LGA Bauchi State



Country Director, Effiom Nyong Effiom, interacting with clients at an Outreach site in Aso Pada community in Nasarawa State.



Data collection at Tudun Wada PHC Potiskum LGA Yobe State



Male Engagement Session on FP and Uptake of Services at Burji settlement Jigawa State



Team member Distributes Implant Kits to Newly trained Providers Under the SAFIRE Project in Abeokuta Ogun State



Participants and Facilitators at the Mobilisers Retooling Workshop in Owerri



Effiom Nyong Effiom, MSION Country Director and Sue Holland, MSI Regional Director West and Central Africa during MSION @ 10 Event



2Baba 20 Years A King Concert, December 28, 2019 @ Eko Convention Centre, Lagos



Temperature of a participant being checked @ MSION Event in compliance to COVID 19 Safety Measures



Effiom Effiom @ Nigeria Info Studio for Public Square with Rotimi Sankore



International Condom Day



MSION Staff Teach Community Members to practice COVID 19 Safety Measures



Effiom Effiom @ Nigeria Info Studio for Public Square with Rotimi Sankore

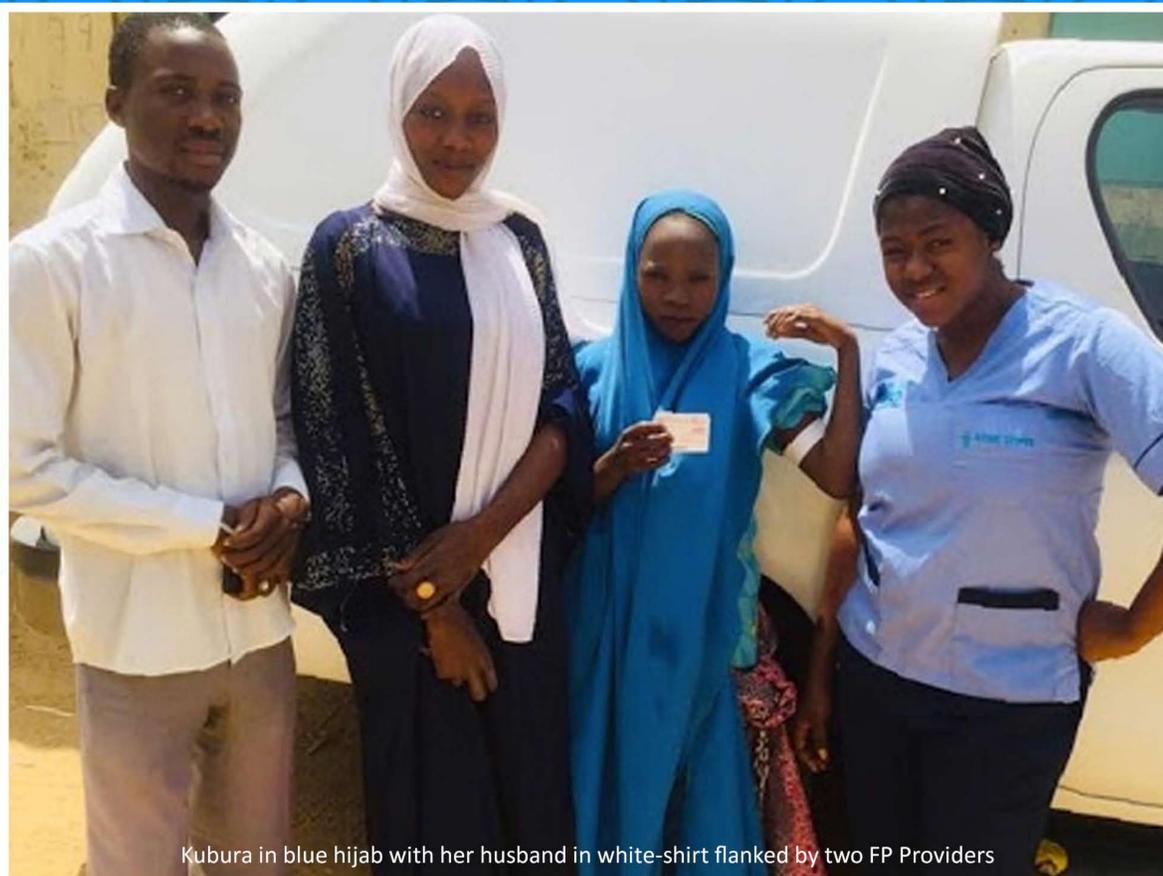


International Condom Day



International Condom Day

RISING ABOVE SOCIAL NORMS



Kubura in blue hijab with her husband in white-shirt flanked by two FP Providers

Kubura Isubus is an 18-year-old married adolescent girl from Iggi community in Birnin Kudu Local Government Area. She got married in January 2020 and would ordinarily drop out of school to bear children for her 25-year-old husband. Many girls in Kubura's community have dropped out of school under similar circumstance. The norm in her community is for couples to have children as soon as they get married.

This, however, was not an option Kubura wanted. She was secondary school and wanted nothing better than to complete her education but did not know how what family planning was about. For many girls in Iggi community, marriage signifies the end of schooling because of pregnancy and childbirth.

“**They were adequately informed on contraception and the benefits of planning pregnancy to have children at the time the couple was ready. Kubura with the support of her husband took up a method.**”

Kubura and her husband heard about Marie Stopes outreach intervention scheduled to hold in their community and visited the Iggi PHC FP venue of the outreach to seek information. They were adequately informed on contraception and the benefits of planning pregnancy to have children at the time the couple was ready. Kubura with the support of her husband took up a method. Adolescents often are not able to access SRH services in communities due to debilitating cultural and religious biases. Kubura Isubus and her husband represent a new group of adolescents and youths who are informed and now able to access SRH services without fear of ridicule or intimidation. Their story is a testament that access to SRH information is crucial to improve the uptake of services by sexually active young persons.

COMMUNITY CHIEF TURNED FP ADVOCATE



Chief Dayo Olatunji is the head chief of Lajoke community in Odigbo Local Government Area of Ondo State. He has more than five wives and records an average of two births every year. Just like Chief Dayo's wives, the women in Ladjoke community give birth frequently without proper spacing. They often have more children than they can comfortably cater for.

Chief Dayo did not plan to have too many children but found himself caught in the web. He notes, “*The way we reproduce in this community has been a cause of concern to me being the community leader. I have not shown very good example too. I have more than five*

wives who regularly give birth to children. Two births at least are recorded every year in my family. It has been so for the past four years and this has given me much concern.”

When Marie Stopes visited his community and met with him, he was educated on different family planning methods. “*When Marie Stopes came to my community, they wanted to see the community leader. I made myself available and to my surprise, they came with a solution to my concern. They cleared every misconception I had on family planning. I am happy I will not need to record another birth in my family by chance.*”

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Faith Adesina Rosemary is the Marie Stopes Community Mobiliser working in Oyo and mobilizing for the Public Sector Strengthening Channel. On the 5th of March while she conducted house to house mobilization at Moniya, Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo state in preparation for SAFIRE training practical session. She was directed by some concerned neighbours to visit a house where Mrs Eleshin Sadiat, a 30-year-old physically challenged woman lives. The neighbours were concerned that she had six children and was finding it difficult to cater for the children. Mr Eleshin Kazeem, the husband of Sadiat is an Okada rider who leaves home every morning in search of daily bread for the family. Sadiat is not employed and does not have any business.

Sadiat who was breastfeeding a one-month-old baby when Faith the CMO met her at her home said that the last baby came by chance. She explained that she was on a



traditional method of family planning (the ring) that failed and did not know she was pregnant till months after. After the CMO's conversation with her on why Marie Stopes is empowering women and couples to have children by choice and not by chance, Sadiat said she was ready to prevent unintended pregnancy and wanted to go to the facility that same day for family planning. On March 6th, the day for the Safire training practical, Faith the CMO

visited Sadiat's house to wheel her down to the facility who due to the bad road could not wheel herself to the facility. After counselling, she chose the Jadelle and was happy she took that decision. A week after taking up a method, Sadiat called Faith the CMO to refer two of her friends whom she spoke to about Marie Stopes services. Since that day she has been referring women to the facility for family planning services.

WHEN THE MUSIC STOPPED

The ambience of the University was a sight to behold and the serenity of the environment was one Folake could not hold back. She shouted with joy at her mum when she walked through the gates of the University of Lagos excited at the opportunity to finally leave home. But her mum kept quiet and flashbacks of her short days as a “Jambite” at the University of Ibadan raced through her mind.

The look in her eyes staring at her young excited daughter spoke a thousand words but the fear of leaving her sixteen-year-old who had never left home in the hands of the university walls was unimaginable.

She recalled her University days, 17 years ago when she walked into the arms of Deji, a 400level student and the unending romance that started. She was head over heels with him and her world centred around him,

“Sex is a very important discussion but it is interesting how many young adolescents today still do not know about sex.”



nothing else mattered, so she thought! No sooner did her love relationship with Deji moved to the next phase and they became sexually active. She had no idea what she was into but the love in the eyes of Deji was all that mattered.

It wasn't long when she missed her period although it took a while for her to realise that, as her naivety took the best of her. She was quick to tell him when this happened and the real demon appeared!!! Deji would not have it. He told her she was sent to ruin his academic pursuit and he would have no part in it. She had read playlets that spoke to these things while in secondary school but had always felt they were fiction until Deji told her he would have nothing to do with her again or the pregnancy. She froze in shock!!! The warm arms of Deji she once knew as “heaven” pushed her out of his room and reality set in. Not knowing what to do, she had to go back home.

The journey back to Akure was the longest the short commute had ever been and the wobbling of her feet as she trekked the dusty road on her street home flooded her mind with shivers. The image of that night when she had to break the news to her parent that she was pregnant as a 100level Architecture major rushed through her mind and the tears that streamed down her mother's eyes as she stared at her was still unforgettable.

Her father's silence as he shook his feet and head at the thought of a dead dream of being the Father of the first female architect in their community was one she would never forget. That was the day her music stopped.

The jerking from her excited daughter (who was the product of that dead dream) brought her back from her deep thoughts and at that point, she decided she would not let her daughter walk into school without talking about sex. It's all about Sex!!!

Sex is a very important discussion but it is interesting how many young adolescents today still do not know about sex. Sex is a scared topic in most homes as the most parent still find it uncomfortable to discuss with their children. What is sex, what happens when we have sex, what are the outcomes of sex, what should I do when the outcomes of sex happen, how can I protect myself from these outcomes and be prepared to face my future without fear? It all starts with that discussion about SEX.

If you are a parent, who is uncomfortable about having this discussion with you child, please talk to us (Marie Stopes Nigeria) as we render free, private and non-judgemental counselling about sex and the outcomes to young adolescents in the language they will understand. It all starts with a discussion about SEX.

“We render free, private and non-judgemental counselling about sex and the outcomes to young adolescents in the language they will understand.”

10 YEARS OF HEALTH IMPACT

2009 - 2019



31 million

More than 31 million family planning services delivered to over 24 million persons in Nigeria through Marie Stopes health system strengthening efforts in the public and private health sectors, as well as direct service delivery through MS Ladies, Outreach, and Centres in the past 10 years.

At all Marie Stopes Clinics, we offer the following health care services and assessments:



General Outpatient Services

- One-stop Integrated Family Clinic
- Resident Doctor Consultations
- Women's Health
- Ante-Natal Care
- Investigations
- Pharmaceutical Services



Family Planning

- IUD/IUS
- Vasectomy
- Tubal Ligation
- Injectibles



Health Assessments

- Cervical Cancer Screening and Treatment
- STI Screening and Treatment
- Wellwoman & Wellman Assessments
- Intending Couple Checks
- Domestic Help Screening



Sonology

- 4D Ultrasound
- Abdominal Scan
- Abdominal Pelvic Scan
- Breast Scan
- Doppler Scan
- Prostate Scan
- Vaginal Scan



Laboratory Services

- Haematology
- Serology
- Chemical Pathology
- Microbiology
- Endocrinology

Method Mix

LAPM 5 Million
Short Term 25 Million

31 million family planning services translate to 18.7 million Couple Years of Protection (CYP)

Public SPs Trained

6,000

Over 6000 healthcare providers trained in the public sector to provide quality counseling, LARC and PAC

Private SPs Trained

750

Over 750 healthcare workers in the private sector trained to provide quality FP and PAC services

mCPR

6%

MSION in the last decade has contributed 5.5% increase to mCPR.

Market share

72%

Our market share of modern FP services increased from 0% in 2009 to 72% in 2019

Maternal & Child Deaths and Unsafe Abortion Averted

3.3M

MSION prevented 3,311,744 maternal, child deaths and unsafe abortion

Staff spotlight.



GBENGA OMISILE
Head, Management Information Systems and Business Solutions, MSION

Gbenga Omisile has been a recipient of MSION's annual Outstanding Staff of the Year Award for two consecutive years (2018 and 2019). According to him, these awards make him appreciate the fact that his contributions to the vision and mission of Marie Stopes International are valued and that – 'Big Brother is truly watching'. He believes that diligence, commitment, and teamwork get the job done; and the most rewarding part of his job, he says, is helping others get their jobs done while contributing to the overall vision and mission of MSION.

It would interest you to know that Gbenga can never be caught in denim (jeans), he plays several musical instruments and write songs. He also loves to read novels and watch a lot of movies. While at work, ideation and analytics remain the favourite part of the job for him, but when he is not working, Gbenga loves to roam around in a mall.



PATIENCE EKPENYONG
Clinical Service Provider – Cross River Outreach Team

Patience, who joined MSION in April 2017, is the recipient of the 'client-centred' category of the Marie Stopes Stars Awards in 2019. She describes the award as a pleasant surprise which is also a testament of her contributions towards the vision of Marie Stopes International to create a world in which every birth is wanted.

'Bush Nurse', as she is fondly called, uses music and dance during outreach activities to attract young people and get them to open up and talk about their Sexual and Reproductive Health needs. The most fulfilling part of her job is when a client confidently and happily repeats or demonstrates to other clients her key points during a counselling session.



DR. BERNARD FATOYE
Centre Coordinator – Marie Stopes Clinic, Lagos

Dr Bernard Fatoye is the recipient of the 'Courageous' category of the Marie Stopes Awards (Regional/Country) in 2019. According to him, the award greatly encouraged him to work harder.

Dr Bernard, who describes himself as a pragmatic and open-minded optimist, has consistently demonstrated an unwavering drive to provide clients with lifesaving services.

The most rewarding part of the job, according to him, is the smile he gets from clients after being able to attend to their health needs. When he is not working, you'll either find him reading or travelling.

FAMILY PLANNING CRITIC TURNED ADVOCATE

"I will first go to my people (family and Community) and share the good news (about family planning). I also want to take a method. I want to work with you so that I can undo all the damage I have caused. I feel bad and will not rest until I visit communities and preach about family planning. I will pray to God for forgiveness".

These were the words of Christy Esom, a family planning critic turned advocate.

Christiana Namdi Esom hails from Kakwgom-Irruan in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State. Christy, as she is fondly called, is the first of three children. She is well known in her community and has lots of female friends. She aspired to have eight children (to make up for her mum's inability to have more children), be a good mum and a supportive wife to her husband.

To actualize her dream of having eight children, Christy resisted family planning including friends and relationships that thought otherwise. Commonly held myths and misconceptions in her community that family planning made women sterile and infertile further fueled her distaste and antagonism for family planning. As a child, Christy grew up listening to her grandmother's stories, so, hearing these myths from her grandmother and trusted family member made her believe them without question.

Christy made a personal commitment to discourage anyone considering contraceptives. She used her position as Prevention Program Officer for youths with a popular non-governmental organisation (NGO) to organize groups of young ladies and sensitize them against family planning, condemning it as dangerous.



However, on the 13th of June 2017, Christy had a life-changing encounter with Marie Stopes Nigeria outreach team. On the said date, the outreach team worked at the health post in Kakubuk Community, about 7 kilometres from Kakwgom, Christy's community. She got the information and decided to visit the outreach site to challenge the team and discourage prospective clients. Before unleashing mayhem, Christy decided to listen to the general health talk and counselling.

Gbam!!! That was the beginning of her transformation. She learnt for the first time the facts about family planning and became very curious to learn more as the veil of ignorance

began to fall from her eyes. Christy enquired and got details of Marie Stopes Nigeria office address in Ogoja and visited the office where she met Garand Friday, the Outreach Community Mobilisation Officer (CMO) who walked her through the benefits of family planning and answered all her questions.

After this encounter, Christy became sober for all her attacks against family planning. When asked by Friday what she had decided to do. Christy said, "I will first go to my people (family & Community) and share the good news. I also want to take a method. I want to work with you so that I can undo all the damage I have caused. I feel bad and will not rest until I visit communities and preach about family planning. I will pray to God for forgiveness".

On 22nd November 2017, Christy took up a method at Mbarakul Health centre, Ogoja LGA. Garand, the CMO later absorbed her as volunteer mobilizer in Ogoja and part of Boki LGAs where Christy worked as a community-based mobiliser (CBM) supporting mobilisation in over 15 communities including her community. She continued her support as community mobiliser and Family planning advocate until January 2019 when Christy applied for the position of Community Mobilization Assistant for Cross River State and was successful. She is now a full-time employee of Marie Stopes Nigeria, supporting Public Sector Strengthening (PSS) channel in Cross River State.

Christy is married with four children and would often show the site on her arm where she has an implant to show her clients that she is practising what she preaches.

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