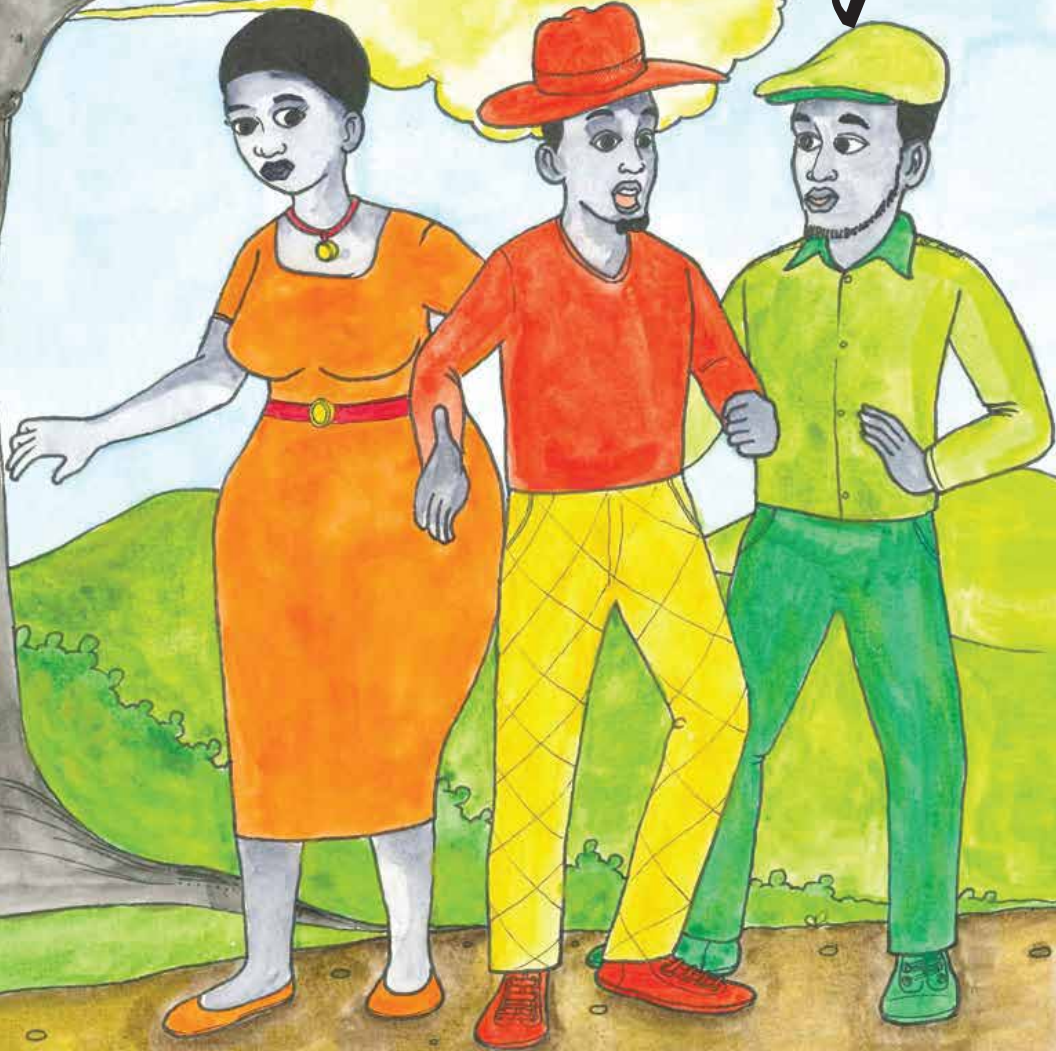


Paulus' Story



A Story of love that stood the test of time

Written and illustrated by:

Dr. Thomas MUYOMBO

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H.E.MADAM MONICA GEINGOS Message

While couples who conceive are perceived to be blessed, couples who can't are considered cursed. In too many communities, the anticipation, hints and pressure for a couple to conceive is swiftly followed by discrimination, disrespect and stigma. We know that male infertility constitutes 50% of the cause of a couple's inability to conceive. Despite this, infertility is perceived as a women's issue and women bear the brunt of negative consequences, including gender-based violence.

We need to re-assess and refine our social and cultural attitudes towards infertility as this will enable couples, particularly men, to better understand infertility as a shared responsibility. Too many couples have had to silently bear the pain of insensitive comments, bad advice, failed treatments, dashed expectations and financial pressure. We hope to play a small part in lightening this burden by focusing this campaign on prevention and information dissemination.

One in every four couples in developing countries suffers infertility. The majority of infertility cases can be due to untreated infectious diseases, such as sexually transmitted Disease (STDs), genital mutilation, abnormal sperm production, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, ovulation disorders and/or endometriosis. As prevention is key in many of these instances, it forms one of the main objectives of the "More than a Mother" Campaign.

I am delighted to be working closely with the Merck Foundation to empower both men and women who struggle to conceive. This campaign, and booklet, seeks to align our attitudes towards infertility to medical evidence. Through this story, a special focus has been placed on youth so that girls and boys know how to, where possible, prevent infertility and how to value themselves, and others, when faced with infertility.

As First Lady and Ambassador of this campaign, I am humbled to share this inspiring story of Paulus and Nangula.

Every woman is more than a mother, and every man is more than a father. We hope you enjoy this story.

H.E. MONICA GEINGOS
The First Lady of the Republic of Namibia



Dr. RASHA KELEJ Message

As an African woman and the CEO of Merck Foundation, I am very proud to introduce this inspiring story of Paulus and Nangula.

In many cultures, childless women still suffer discrimination, stigma and ostracism. An inability to have a child or to become pregnant can result in being greatly isolated, disinherited or assaulted. This often results in divorce or physical and psychological violence. Therefore we have created “Merck More Than a Mother” campaign with the aim to define many interventions to empower infertile women through access to information, health and change of mind-set.

This story is one of these interventions to break the stigma around infertile women and raises awareness about infertility prevention and male infertility.

It's important for parents and caregivers to start teaching respect and nurturing empathy from a very young age. We should teach boys these qualities at their schools and through media. I believe both boys and girls need the same kind of guidance.

Just like girls, young boys gradually learn how to control their behavior during their pre-school and elementary school years. This story is our way to empower our boys to develop true respect for women and know few facts about Infertility prevention and how it affects both men and women equally.

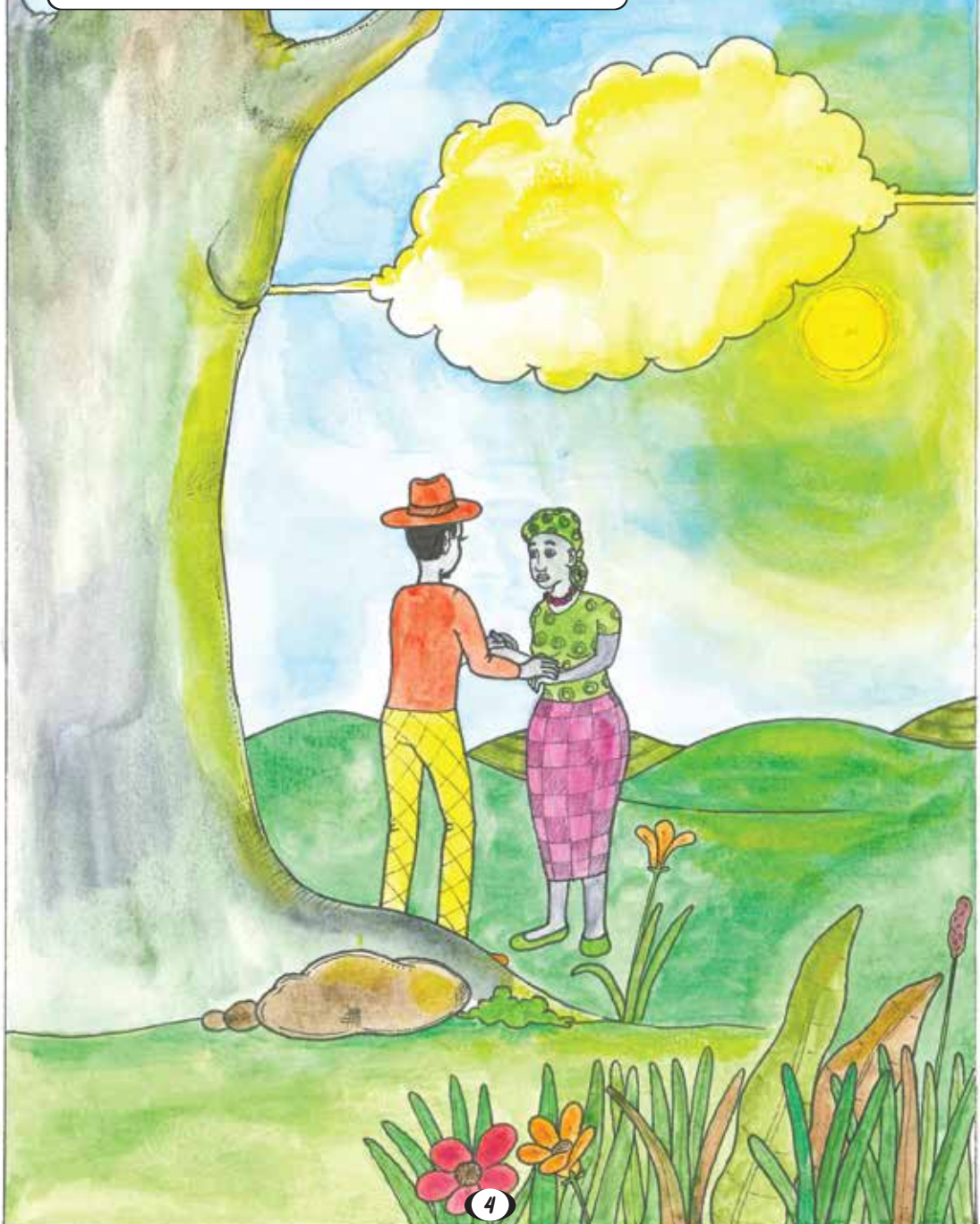
Reading Paulus' story will teach our children to respect and value all people Regardless of being parents or not. It will also help preparing our children for tomorrow with the right family values of love and respect. Everyone deserves respect and love, and should never ever be overlooked or, worse, abused — even if they are childless.

I hope you will understand the story's message “Having a child, takes both a man and a woman, every woman is more than a Mother, Every man is more than a Father “.

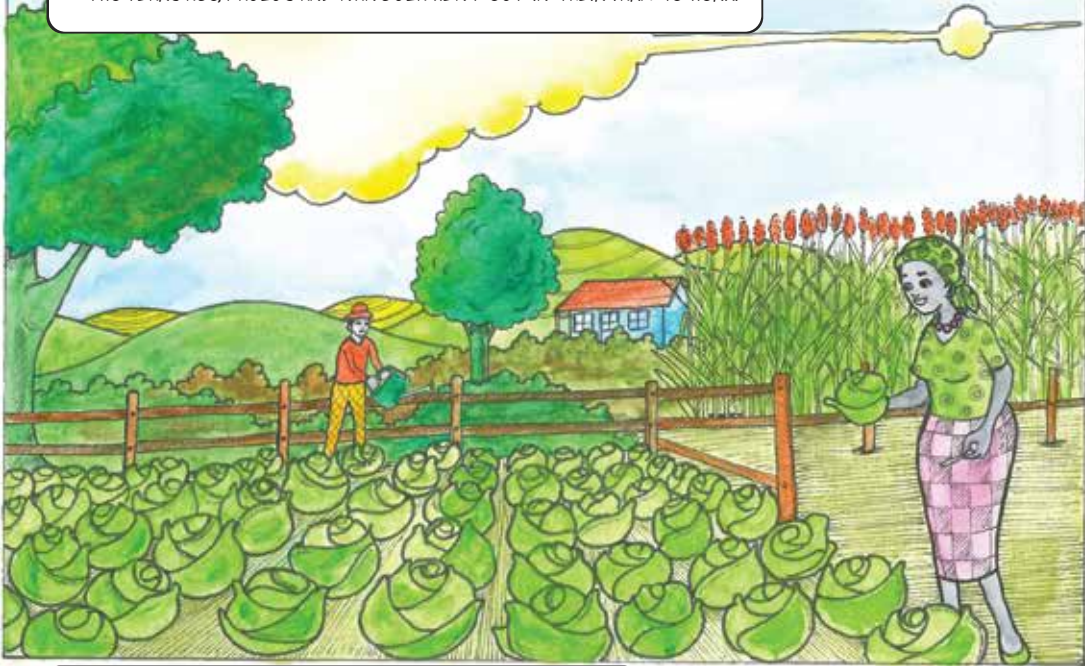
Enjoy reading Paulus' story.....

Dr. Rasha Kelej
CEO of Merck Foundation
President of Merck more than a Mother

IN A LAND FAR AWAY LIVES A MAN CALLED PAULUS
PAULUS IS MARRIED TO NANGULA HIS CHILDHOOD LOVE



PAULUS AND NANGULA ARE WEALTHY DUE TO THEIR HARD WORK.
TWO YEARS AGO, PAULUS AND NANGULA WENT OUT IN THEIR FARM TO WORK.



THEY WERE SAYING LOVELY WORDS TO ONE ANOTHER.



MY LOVE NANGULA, I LOVE YOU LIKE I NEVER LOVED BEFORE.



A LADY CALLED MARIA AND HER SON DANTAGO PASSED BY PAULUS AND NANGULA'S FARM.

DANTAGO, LET US SAY A GOOD HELLO TO PAULUS AND NANGULA I THINK YOU KNOW THEM, DON'T YOU?

YES I DO, MOTHER

I WONDER HOW THEY CAN BE HAPPY LIKE THAT WHEN THEY CAN'T HAVE CHILDREN. THE WOMAN IS INFERTILE.

I NEED TO LET THEM KNOW HOW MISERABLE THEY SHOULD FEEL.

HELLO LOVEBIRDS!

HELLO MARIA

AND THEN..

HOW CAN SOMEONE
BARREN LIKE YOU
NANGULA PRETEND TO
BE HAPPY? YOU SHOULD
BE MOURNING AND
HIDING YOUR FACE.

ARE YOU
SERIOUS?

NO!



MARIA WENT ON..

YOU SHOULD GIVE YOUR
HUSBAND A CHILD OR
ELSE RETURN TO
YOUR PARENTS. PAULUS
DOESN'T DESERVE THIS,
HE IS A KIND MAN.

AND NANGULA STARTED CRYING

MARIA HOW CAN YOU BE
SO CRUEL LIKE THAT?
WHAT DID WE DO TO
YOU?

PAULUS WAS SHOCKED

NANGULA MY LOVE, PLEASE
DON'T CRY. YOU KNOW HOW
I LOVE YOU, DON'T MIND
ANYTHING SHE SAYS.



AND PAULUS WENT AWAY

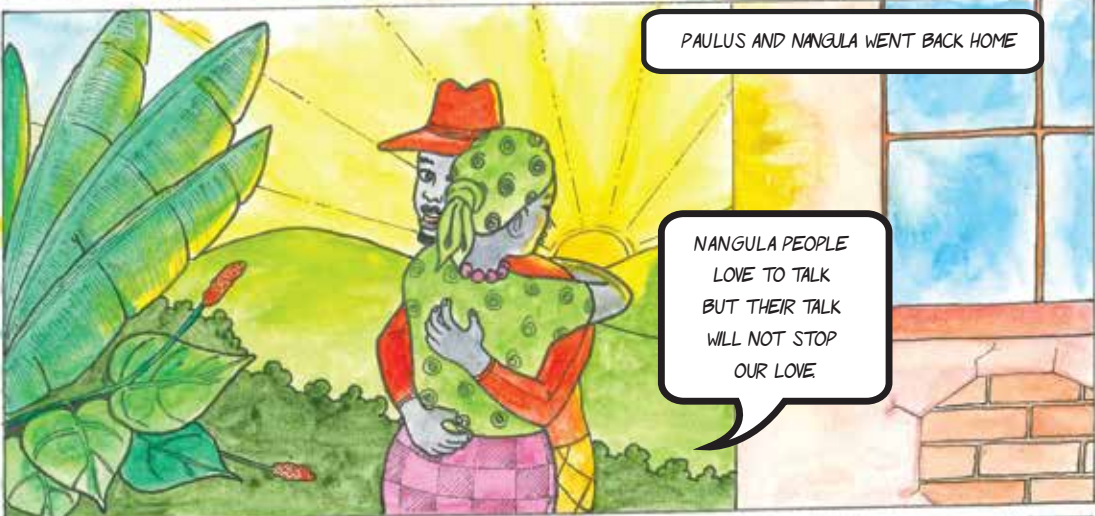
SHE JUST SAID
THAT I AM BARREN!
YOU KNOW I ALSO
LOVE CHILDREN
LIKE EVERY WOMAN.

DON'T THINK ABOUT
WHAT SHE SAID! I LOVE
YOU WITH ALL MY
HEART AND I DON'T
MIND NOT HAVING
CHILDREN

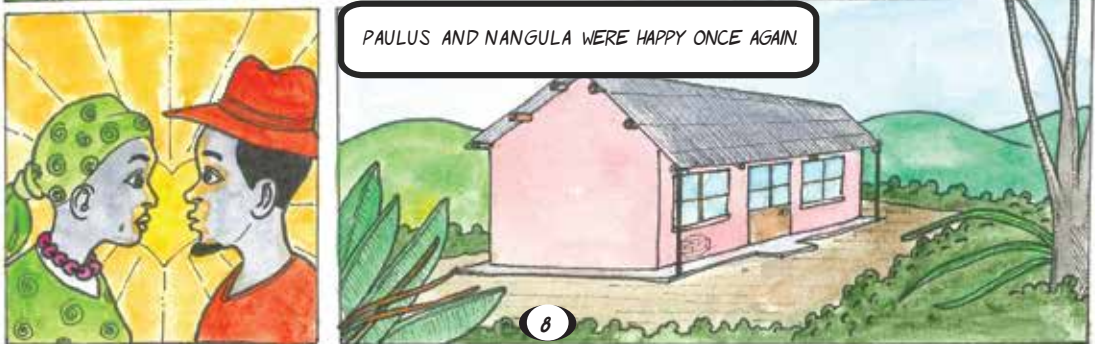


PAULUS AND NANGULA WENT BACK HOME

NANGULA PEOPLE
LOVE TO TALK
BUT THEIR TALK
WILL NOT STOP
OUR LOVE



PAULUS AND NANGULA WERE HAPPY ONCE AGAIN



ONE WEEK AFTER, NANGULA WENT TO THEIR FARM TO HARVEST ORANGES

I SHOULD HURRY, MY HUSBAND HAS A BUSINESS MEETING TO ATTEND



NANGULA WENT HOME FAST

PAULUS WAS STANDING IN FRONT OF THEIR HOUSE WAITING FOR NANGULA TO COME. HE DIDN'T WANT TO GO AND LEAVE NO ONE AT HOME.



NANGULA GOT THERE ON TIME

HERE SHE COMES SHE IS NEVER LATE

NANGULA SWEETHEART, LET ME RUN TO THE BUSINESS MEETING I DON'T WANT TO BE LATE

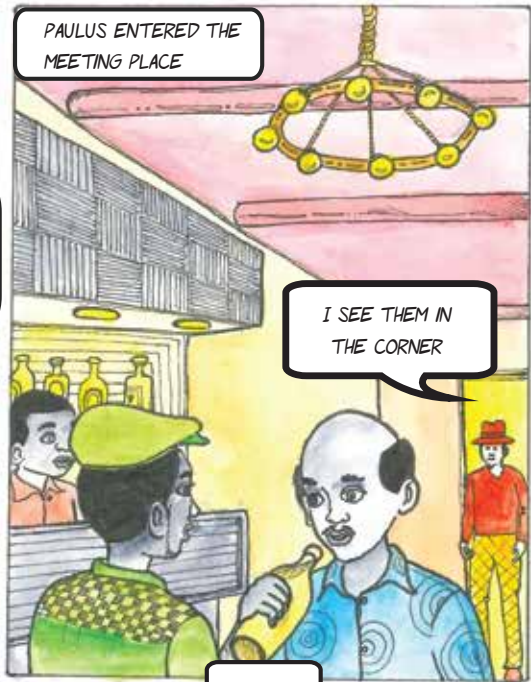
ON HIS WAY TO THE MEETING, PALLUS WAS WONDERING WHAT KIND OF BUSINESS HIS FRIENDS WANTED TO DISCUSS WITH HIM.

HE WONDERED IF HIS FRIENDS WANTED TO BUY ALL THE YIELD HE GETS FROM HIS FARM

OR IF THEY WANTED TO OFFER HIM SOME MONEY TO INVEST IN HIS FARMING BUSINESS



PAULUS ENTERED THE MEETING PLACE



I SEE THEM IN THE CORNER

HELLO PAULUS



HELLO

LONG TIME MY FRIENDS! WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE FOR ME?



FINALLY,



AND THEN,

YOU SEE PALLUS HAFENI AND I HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT YOU WE KNOW YOU ARE SAD BECAUSE YOUR WIFE IS INFERTILE LET'S HELP YOU AND FIND YOU A FERTILE YOUNG WIFE

WHAT?

OPERI IS RIGHT, WE THINK YOU SHOULD LEAVE THAT MISERABLE WOMAN YOU HAVE AS A WIFE

OKAY!!! NOW I SEE THE KIND OF BUSINESS YOU CALLED ME FOR!

LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING I CAN NEVER LEAVE MY WIFE INFERTILE OR NOT, I LOVE HER.

NOT ALL WOMEN ARE BARREN, LEAVE HER.

LET'S LEAVE THIS DISCUSSION HERE

THE NEXT MORNING PAULUS DECIDED TO TAKE HIS WIFE NANGULA TO THE HOSPITAL TO SEEK SOME MEDICAL HELP

NANGULA MY LOVE,
I PROMISE TO
DO EVERYTHING
FOR YOU TO BE
TREATED

THANK YOU
PAULUS MY
EVERYTHING



AT THE HOSPITAL

THEY ASKED TO TALK TO A
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PHYSICIAN

LET US
SEE IF THE
GYNAECOLOGIST
IS AROUND, HE
WILL HELP

I HOPE THIS
IS NOT
SERIOUS.

DON'T WORRY
MY LOVE

THE GYNAECOLOGIST

I WILL CARE
FOR HER NO
MATTER WHAT

HELLO

HELLO

DOCTOR,
I HAVE BROUGHT
MY WIFE FOR TREATMENT,
WE THINK SHE IS
INFERTILE.

THAT'S OKAY, BUT YOU
CANNOT TELL BEFORE
WE DO TESTS. IT
MIGHT BE YOU WHO HAS
INFERTILITY.



WHAT? ME?
NO WAY
A MAN IS NEVER
INFERTILE.

AFTER DOING ALL THE REQUIRED TESTS, IT WAS PAULUS WHO HAD THE PROBLEM THAT WAS CAUSING THE INFERTILITY. PAULUS HAD A LOW SPERM COUNT. THE DOCTOR TOLD THEM THAT INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI) PROCEDURE IS REQUIRED TO BE DONE. PAULUS AND NANGULA AGREED TO THE PROCEDURE. THE DOCTOR TOLD THEM THAT MANY CASES OF INFERTILITY ARE TREATABLE ONCE THEY ARE DIAGNOSED EARLY.



I HAVE NEVER
SEEN ONE
INFERTILE
MAN IN MY
LIFE.



MEN TOO CAN BE
INFERTILE.. LET US
HOPE YOU TWO ARE
JUST FINE.

HE MENTIONED THE FOLLOWING AS THE MAJOR CAUSES OF INFERTILITY;

- POOR NUTRITION
- UNTREATED SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES SUCH AS CHLAMYDIA AND GONORRHOEA,
- CONSEQUENCE OF INFECTIONS CAUSED BY PRACTICE OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILTION, UNSAFE ABORTION OR UNSAFE DELIVERY.
- THE USE OF HERBAL DOUCHES AND ENEMAS WHICH LED TO PELVIC INFECTIONS AND TUBAL BLOCKAGE.
- EXPOSURE TO SMOKING, LEADED PETROL AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANTS.

HE TOLD THEM THAT ONCE YOU GO FOR REGULAR CHECK UP AND CONSULT EVERY TIME YOU ARE SICK, YOU CAN EASILY PREVENT YOURSELF FROM HAVING INFERTILITY.



LET US
HOPE SO.



I DID NOT
KNOW THIS.

PAULUS AND NANGULA THANKED THE DOCTOR AND WENT HOME.

PAULUS AND NANGULA AGREED TO UNDERGO THE INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI) PROCEDURE



AT THE HOSPITAL, THEY MET WITH THE DOCTOR WHO WAS GOING TO PERFORM THE INTRAUTERINE PROCEDURE



PAULUS WAITED PATIENTLY.



THE DOCTOR PLACED PAULUS'S SPERM INSIDE NANGULA'S UTERUS TO FACILITATE FERTILIZATION.



NAVULA TOOK A PREGNANCY TEST AFTER FOURTEEN DAYS AND SHE WAS PREGNANT.

NINE MONTHS AFTER THE INTRAUTERINE (IUI) PROCEDURE, IT WAS TIME TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL TO GIVE BIRTH.



DO YOU HAVE A NAME FOR THIS LITTLE CUTIE IN THE WOMB?



I THINK I WILL NAME HIM PAULUS NAVULA.



THEY BOTH SMILED AND WENT ON...

PAULUS AND NANGULA WERE HAPPY TO FINALLY HAVE A BABY

I AM HAPPY NOW I AM A FATHER

NO PAULUS, YOU ARE MORE THAN A FATHER



YOU WERE MORE THAN A FATHER EVEN BEFORE WE HAD THIS BABY

PAULUS SMILED.

YES, NANGULA MY LOVE YOU ARE ALSO MORE THAN A MOTHER.



ONE DAY, PAULUS MET MARIA AND HAFENI ON THE WAY TO THE MARKET...

MY FRIENDS, I HAVE LEARNT THAT INFERTILITY IS NOT A CURSE, IT'S A CONDITION THAT AFFECTS BOTH MEN AND WOMEN AND CAN BE TREATED ONCE SOMEONE SEEKS TREATMENT EARLY NO ONE SHOULD BE STIGMATIZED BECAUSE THEY ARE INFERTILE

I APOLOGIZE FOR THE BAD WORDS AND FOUL MOUTH

NOW I HAVE LEARNT MY LESSON. WHAT YOU ARE SAYING IS RIGHT.

THE END



Spread the word to the world with us. Say no for infertility stigma

OUR HASHTAGS

#NoForInfertilyStigma

#MoreThanAMother

#MoreThanAFather

Share your story with us on social media and use the above hashtags and let the world know that infertility affects both men and women equally. No woman or man should suffer stigmatisation due to infertility.

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Paulus' Story

*How love withstands and conquers all.
You will discover how love is
everything.”*

the author

This book is a property of

