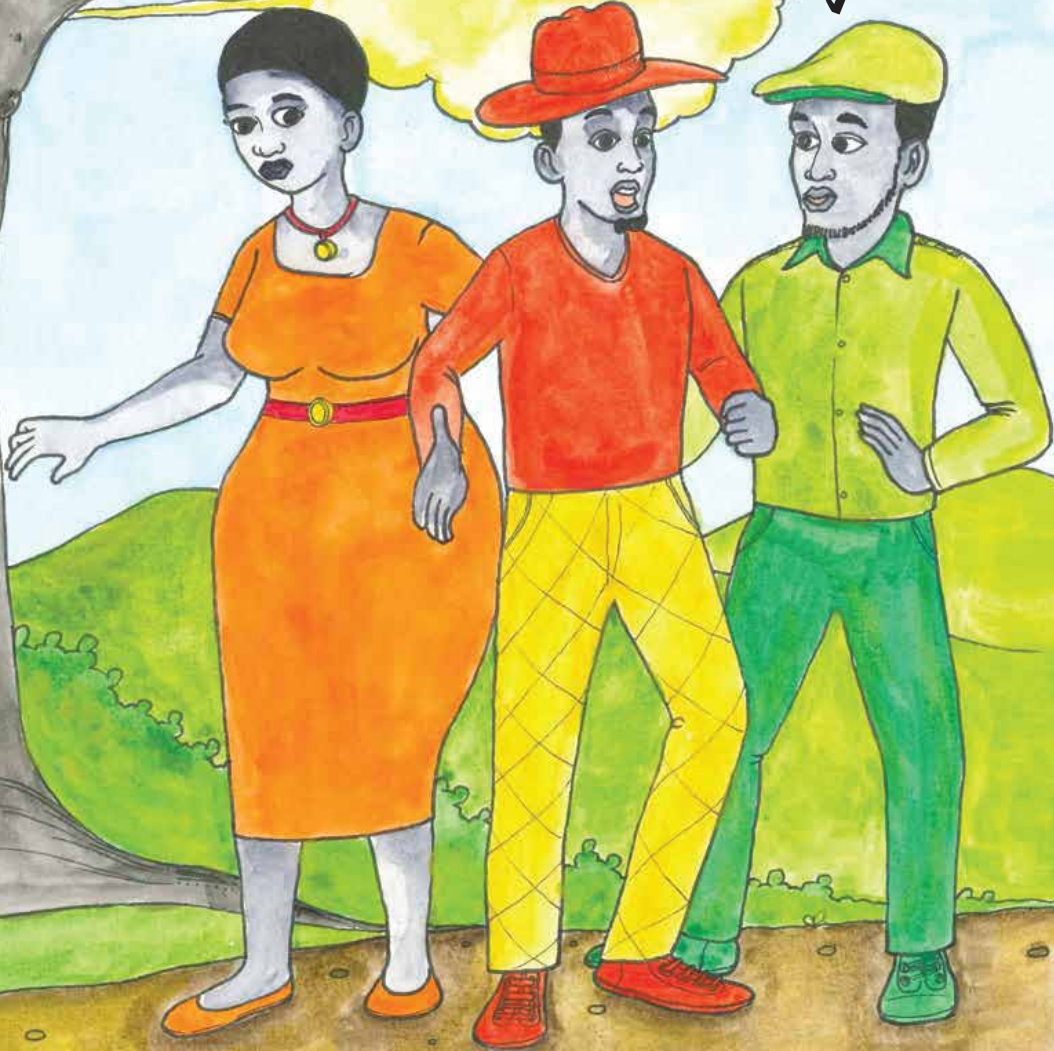


TUDU's Story



A Story of love that stood the test of time

Written and illustrated by:

Dr. Thomas MUYOMBO

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H.E. Mrs. AMAI AUXILLIA MNANGAGWA Message

I am humbled to be sharing with you this story which is very inspiring. I am doing this both as the First Lady of Zimbabwe and as Ambassador of “Merck More Than a Mother” campaign.

We are all aware how women who have no children are treated in our communities. We have met these women especially through their organization “Hannah’s Tears”. We have heard their harrowing stories where they are stigmatized, ostracized and violated.

In almost all cases, women are blamed for the infertility, yet science tells us that 50% of the times, the infertility is due to men. We need men to speak up openly on the issue of infertility. We need men to be supportive of their partners. I am pleased to inform Zimbabweans that I am now working closely with Ministry of Health and Child Care and Merck Foundation to address issues of empowering communities. We will be raising awareness specially to growing boys and girls, through distribution of this book. We have various other activities lined up to address stigma, improve knowledge on infertility. Knowledge is power!

This book is part of a broader objective of creating platforms to address infertility. I hope you will enjoy this story and also learn that it is everyone’s responsibility to address infertility. Both women and men have to come on board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amai Auxillia Mnangagwa', written in a cursive style.

H.E. Mrs. AMAI AUXILLIA MNANGAGWA
The First Lady of The Republic of Zimbabwe
Ambassador of Merck More Than a Mother



Dr. RASHA KELEJ Message

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

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 Tudu's 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.

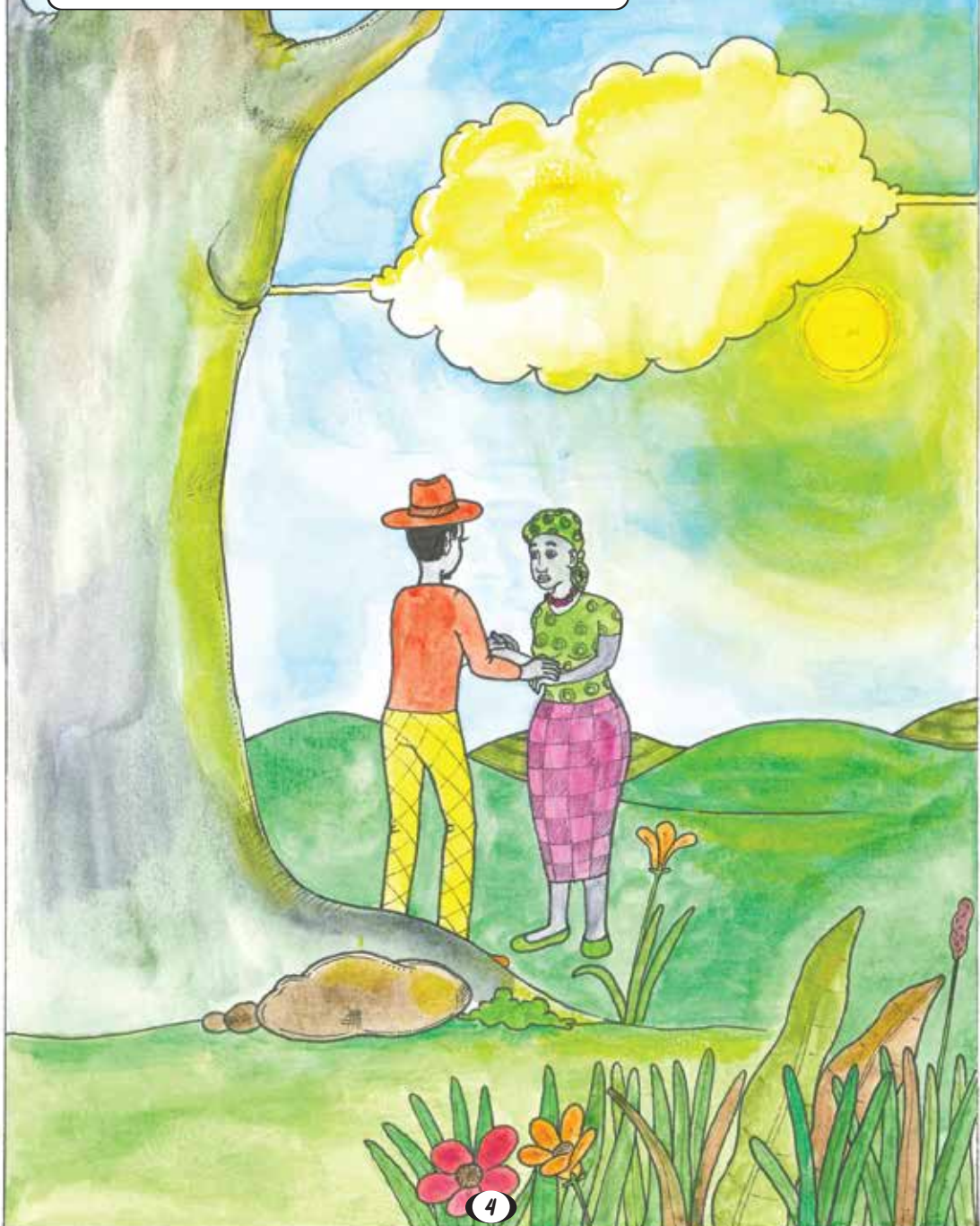
I hope you will understand the story's message “Having a child, takes both a man and a woman, every woman is more than a Mother, Every man is more than a Father “.

Enjoy reading Tudu's story.....

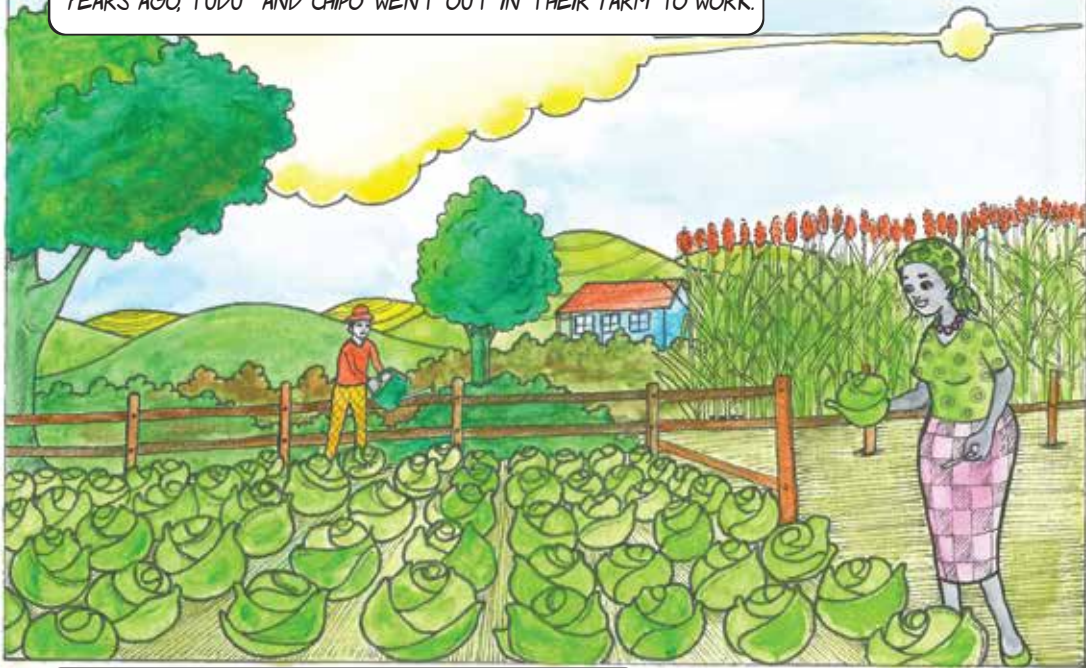
R.K

Senator, Dr. Rasha Kelej
CEO of Merck Foundation
Member of the Egyptian Senate (2020-2025)
Most Influential African (2019, 2020)
African Woman of the Year 2020
President of 'Merck More Than a Mother'

IN A LAND FAR AWAY LIVES A MAN CALLED TUDU
TUDU MARRIED TO CHIPO, HIS CHILDHOOD LOVE



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



THEY WERE SAYING LOVELY WORDS TO ONE ANOTHER.



A LADY CALLED SEKAI AND HER SON MUNASHE PASSED BY TUDU AND CHIPO'S FARM.

MUNASHE, LET US SAY A GOOD HELLO TO TUDU AND CHIPO. 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 SEKAI.

AND THEN...

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

ARE YOU
SERIOUS?

NO!



SEKAI WENT ON...

YOU SHOULD GIVE YOUR
HUSBAND A CHILD OR
ELSE RETURN TO
YOUR PARENTS. TUDU
DONESNT DESERVE THIS,
HE IS A KIND MAN.

AND CHIPO STARTED CRYING

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

TUDU BECAME
CONFUSED AND ANGRY

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



AND, SEKAI 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



CHIPO AND TUDU WENT BACK HOME

TUDU, PEOPLE LOVE TO TALK. BUT THEIR TALK WILL NOT STOP OUR LOVE



CHIPO AND TUDU WERE HAPPY ONCE AGAIN.



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

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



CHIPO WENT HOME FAST

TUDU WAS STANDING IN FRONT OF THEIR HOUSE WAITING FOR CHIPO TO COME, HE DIDNOT WANT TO GO AND LEAVE NO ONE AT HOME.



CHIPO GOT THERE ON TIME

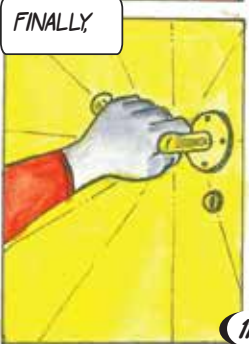
HERE SHE COMES SHE IS NEVER LATE

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

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

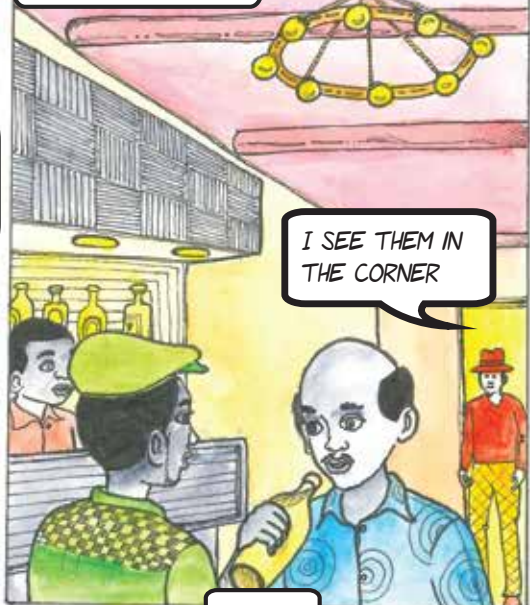
HE WONDERED IF HIS FRIENDS WANTED TO BUY ALL THE YIELD HE GETS FROM HIS FARM,

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



FINALLY,

TUDU ENTERED THE MEETING PLACE



I SEE THEM IN THE CORNER



HELLO TUDU

HELLO

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



AND THEN,

YOU SEE TUDU, TAKUDZWA 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?

CHAKANETSA 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, TUDU DECIDED TO TAKE HIS WIFE CHIPO TO THE HOSPITAL TO SEEK SOME MEDICAL HELP.

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

THANK YOU
TUDU 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 TUDU WHO HAD THE PROBLEM THAT WAS CAUSING THE INFERTILITY. TUDU HAD A LOW SPERM COUNT. THE DOCTOR TOLD THEM THAT INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI) PROCEDURE IS REQUIRED TO BE DONE.

TUDU AND CHIPO 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.



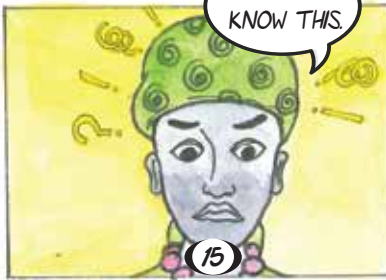
MEN TOO CAN BE INFERTILE.. LET US HOPE YOU TWO ARE JUST FINE.

HE MENTIONED THE FOLLOWING AS THE MAJOR CAUSES OF INFERTILITY;

- POOR NUTRITION
- UNTREATED SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES SUCH AS CLAMYDIA AND GONORRHOEA.
- CONSEQUENCE OF INFECTIONS CAUSED BY PRACTICE OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, 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.



LET US HOPE SO.



I DID NOT KNOW THIS.

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.

TUDU AND CHIPO THANKED THE DOCTOR AND WENT HOME.

TUDU AND CHIPO AGREED TO UNDERGO THE INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI) PROCEDURE



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



TUDU WAITED PATIENTLY.

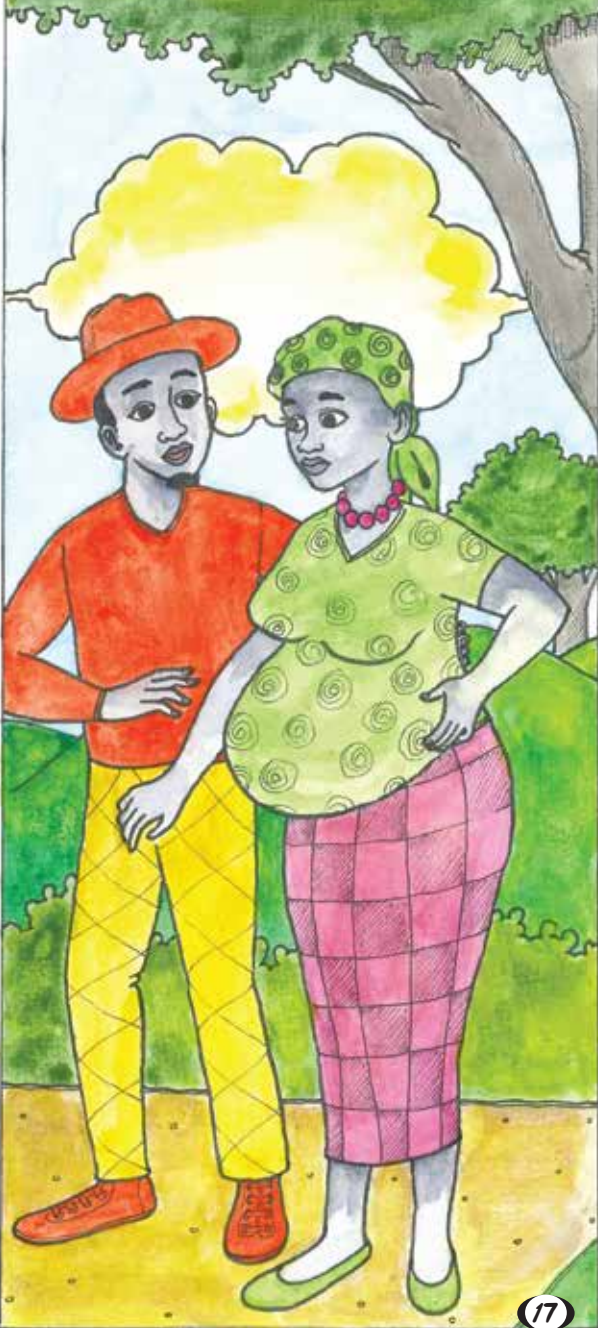


THE DOCTOR PLACED TUDU'S SPERM INSIDE CHIPO'S UTERUS TO FACILITATE FERTILIZATION.



CHIPO 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 TUDU CHIPO



THEY BOTH SMILED AND WENT ON...

TUDU AND CHIPO WERE HAPPY TO FINALLY HAVE A BABY.

I AM HAPPY NOW I AM A FATHER.

NO TUDU, YOU ARE MORE THAN A FATHER



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



TUDU SMILED

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



ONE DAY TUDU MET SEKA AND CHAKANETSA 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

#NoToInfertilityStigma

#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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TUDU's Story

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

the author

This book is a property of

