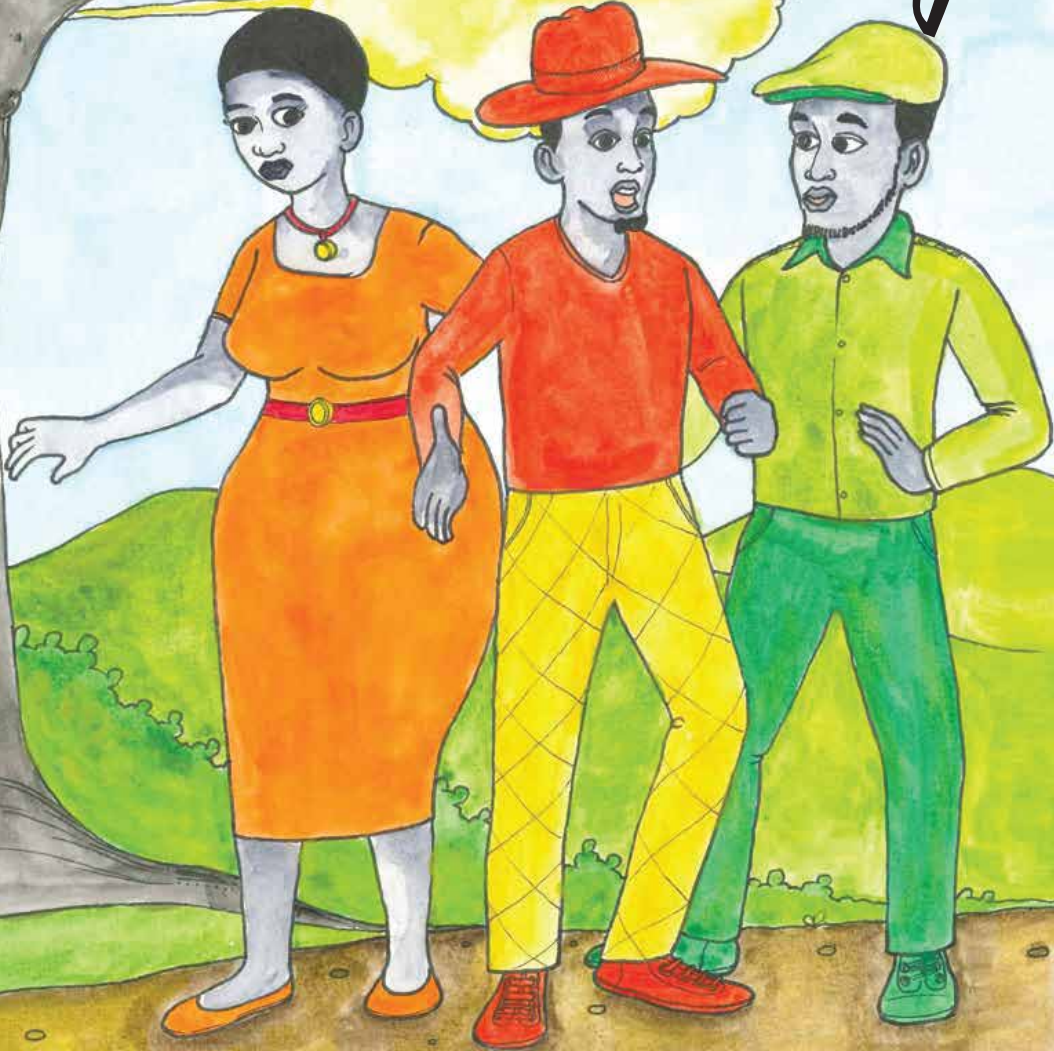


# *Limbikani's Story*



A Story of love that stood the test of time

Written and illustrated by:

Dr. Thomas MUYOMBO

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## **H.E. Mrs. ESTHER LUNGU Message**

As the First Lady of Zambia and ambassador of “Merck More Than a Mother” campaign, I am very happy to share with you this inspiring story of Limbikani and Waana.

As you all know, in many cultures, childless women still suffer discrimination, stigma and ostracism. It is sad to know that women are blamed for infertility, although 50% of infertility are due to men. We need to encourage men to speak up and discuss their infertility issues openly and know that fertility is a shared responsibility.

One in every four couples in developing countries suffer infertility. This prevalence rate is high indeed. Majority of infertility cases can be due to untreated infectious disease, such as Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Genital mutilation, unsafe abortion, and unsafe delivery, hence prevention is very important and this is one of the main objectives of the campaign.

Therefore I am very happy to work closely with Merck Foundation to empower women and raise awareness among our communities, with special focus on the youth (girls and boys) through this story, to know how to prevent infertility, how to protect themselves and also how to value themselves whether they are mothers or not. Women are more than just mothers, they are productive members in society and should be respected.

This story is part of the ‘Merck More Than a Mother’ campaign which is very close to my heart. I hope you will understand the message behind it. I believe we must prepare our children for tomorrow with the right family values of love and respect.

Having a child, takes both a man and a woman, every woman is more than a mother, every man is more than a father.

**H.E. Mrs. ESTHER LUNGU**  
**The First Lady of the Republic of Zambia**  
**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 Limbikani and Waana.

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.

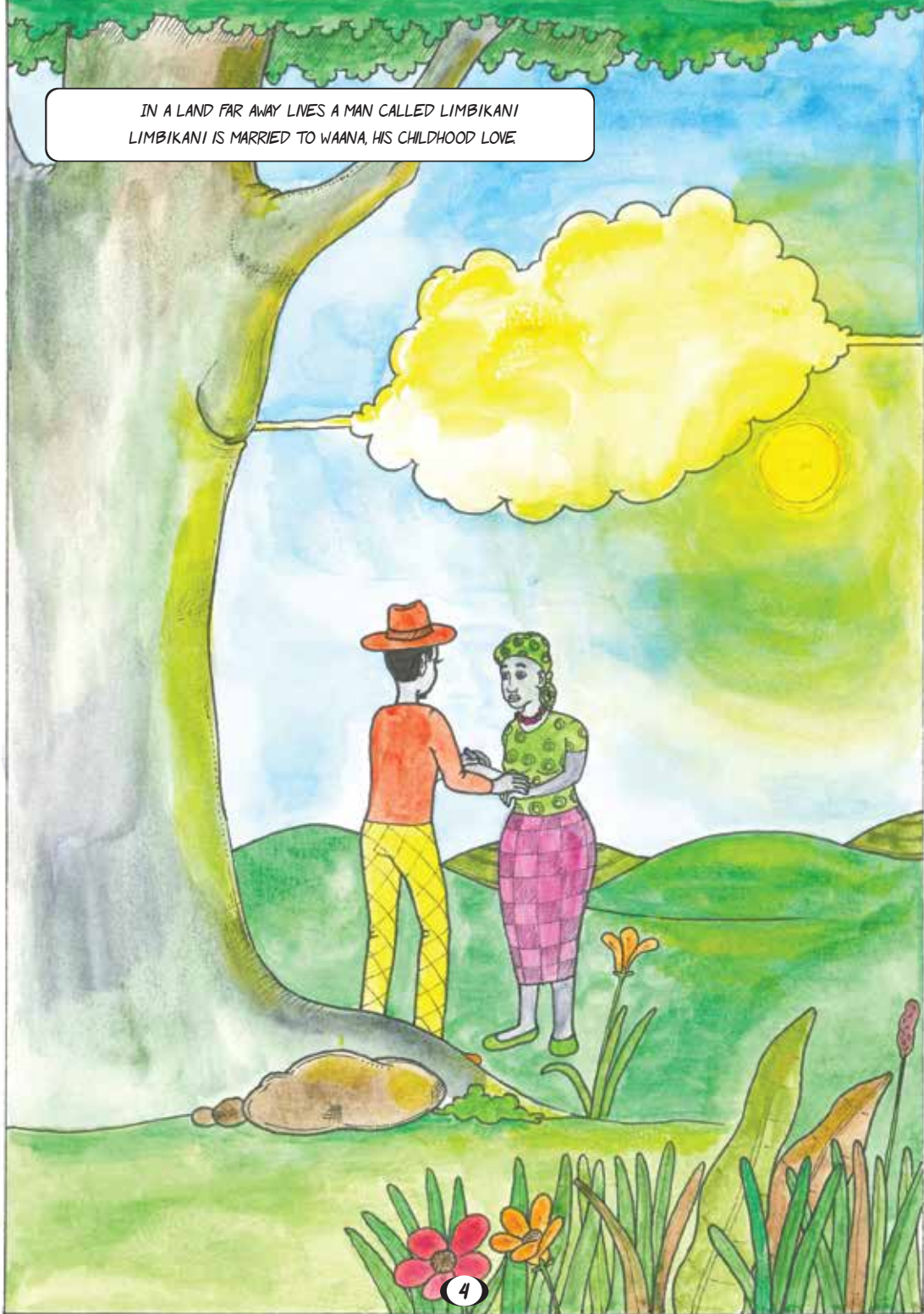
Reading Limbikani’s story will teach our children to respect and value all people Regardless of being parents or not. It will also help preparing our children for tomorrow with the right family values of love and respect. Everyone deserves respect and love, and should never ever be overlooked or, worse, 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 “.

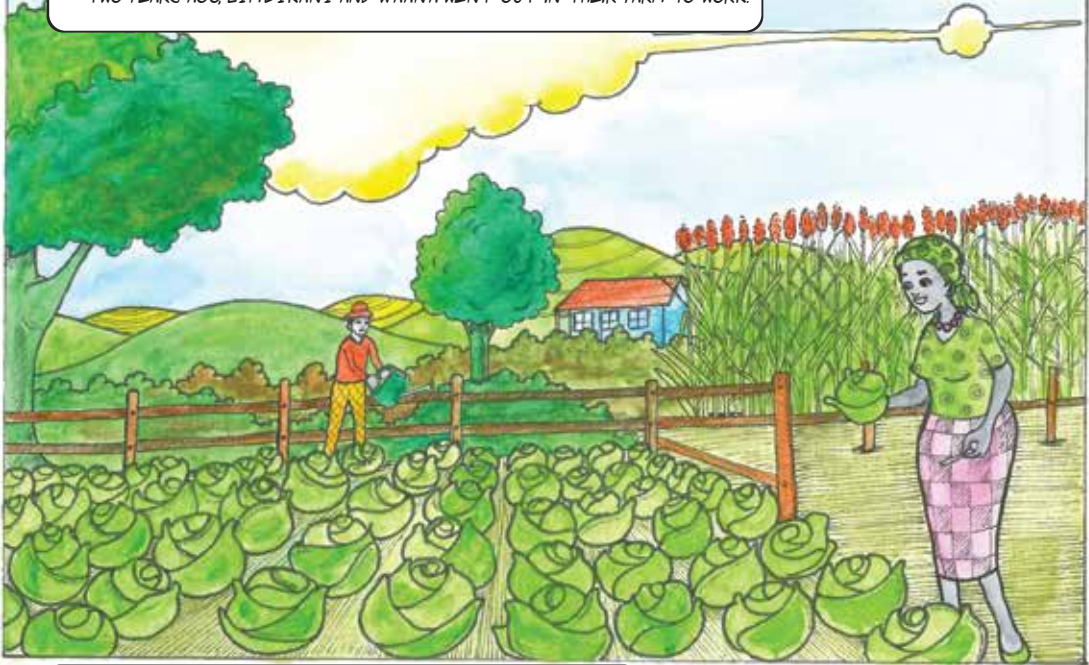
Enjoy reading Limbikani’s story.....

**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'**

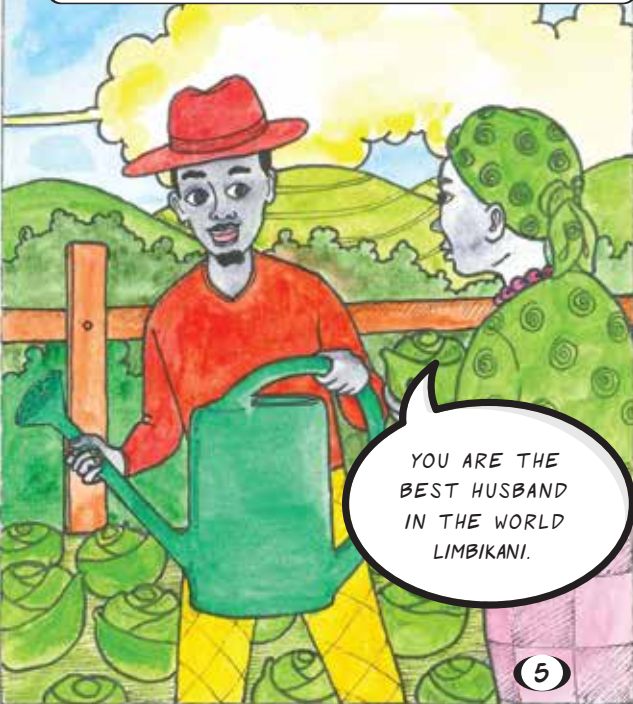
IN A LAND FAR AWAY LIVES A MAN CALLED LIMBIKANI  
LIMBIKANI IS MARRIED TO WAANA, HIS CHILDHOOD LOVE



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



THEY WERE SAYING LOVELY WORDS TO ONE ANOTHER.



YOU ARE THE  
BEST HUSBAND  
IN THE WORLD  
LIMBIKANI.

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



A LADY CALLED INONGE AND HER SON MWAMBA  
PASSED BY LIMBIKANI AND WAANA'S FARM.

MWAMBA, LET US SAY A GOOD HELLO  
TO LIMBIKANI AND WAANA I THINK YOU  
KNOW THEM, DON'T YOU?

YES I DO,  
MOTHER

HELLO  
LOVEBIRDS!

HELLO INONGE.

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.

AND THEN...

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

ARE YOU  
SERIOUS?

NO!



INONGE WENT ON...

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



AND WAANA STARTED CRYING

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



LIMBIKANI WAS SHOCKED

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



AND, INONGE 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

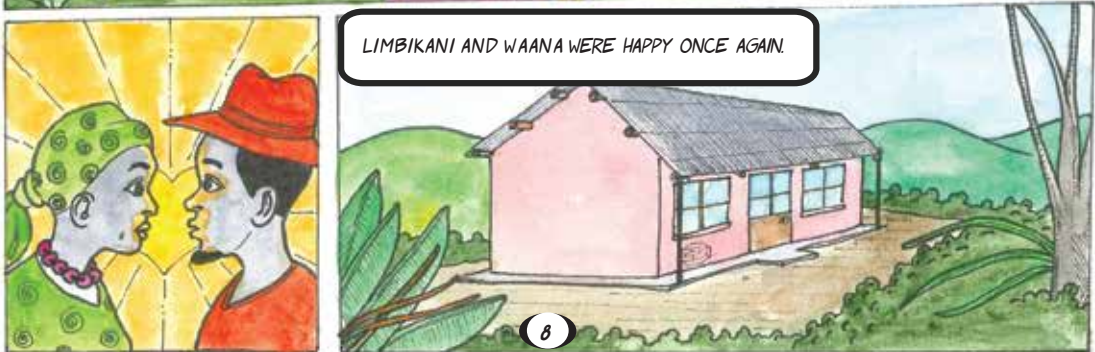


LIMBIKANI AND WAANA WENT BACK HOME

WAANA PEOPLE  
LOVE TO TALK.  
BUT THEIR TALK  
WILL NOT STOP  
OUR LOVE.



LIMBIKANI AND WAANA WERE HAPPY ONCE AGAIN.



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

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



WAANA WENT HOME FAST

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



WAANA GOT THERE ON TIME

HERE SHE COMES SHE IS NEVER LATE.

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

ON HIS WAY TO THE MEETING, LIMBIKANI 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.

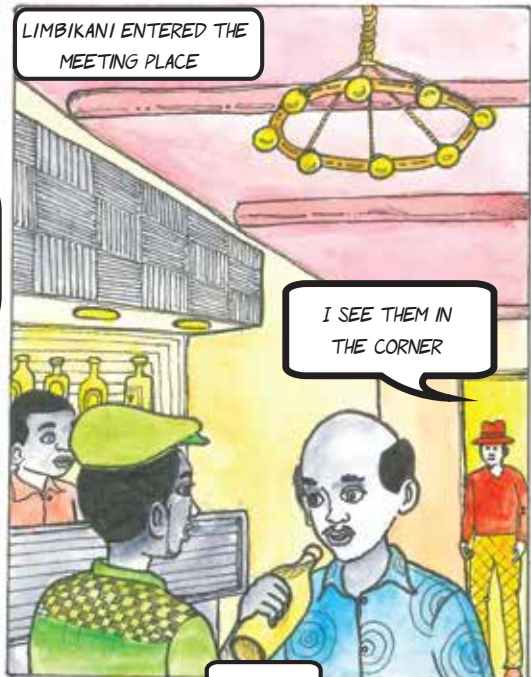
OR IF THEY WANTED TO OFFER HIM SOME MONEY TO INVEST IN HIS FARMING BUSINESS.



FINALLY,



LIMBIKANI ENTERED THE MEETING PLACE



I SEE THEM IN THE CORNER

HELLO LIMBIKANI!



HELLO

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



AND THEN,

YOU SEE LIMBIKANI, CHABOTA 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?

CHILOMBO 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, LIMBIKANI DECIDED TO TAKE HIS WIFE WAANA TO THE HOSPITAL TO SEEK SOME MEDICAL HELP

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

THANK YOU  
LIMBIKANI 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



AFTER DOING ALL THE REQUIRED TESTS, IT WAS LIMBIKANI WHO HAD THE PROBLEM THAT WAS CAUSING THE INFERTILITY. LIMBIKANI HAD A LOW SPERM COUNT. THE DOCTOR TOLD THEM THAT INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI) PROCEDURE IS REQUIRED TO BE DONE.

LIMBIKANI AND WAANA AGREED TO THE PROCEDURE.

THE DOCTOR TOLD THEM THAT MANY CASES OF INFERTILITY ARE TREATABLE ONCE THEY ARE DIAGNOSED EARLY.

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.

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.

LIMBIKANI AND WAANA THANKED THE DOCTOR AND WENT HOME.

LIMBIKANI AND WAANA AGREED TO UNDERGO THE INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI) PROCEDURE



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



LIMBIKANI WAITED PATIENTLY.

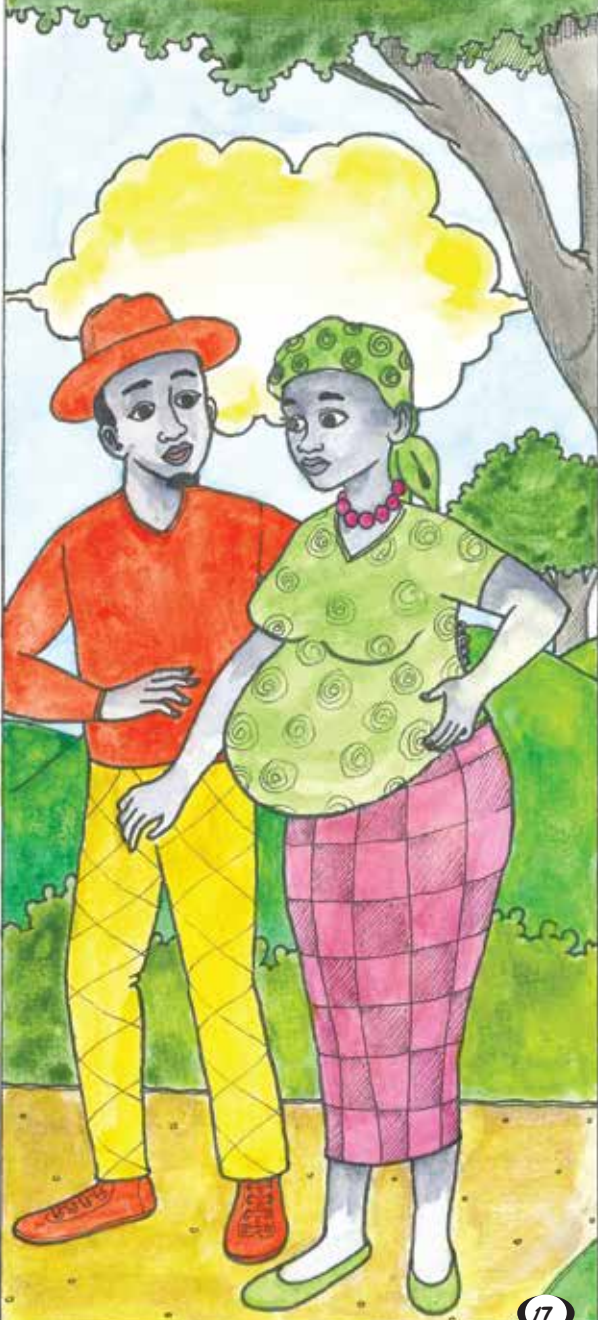


THE DOCTOR PLACED LIMBIKANI'S SPERM INSIDE WAANA'S UTERUS TO FACILITATE FERTILIZATION.



WAANA 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 LIMBIKANI WAANA.



THEY BOTH SMILED AND WENT ON...

LIMBIKANI AND WAANA WERE  
HAPPY TO FINALLY HAVE A BABY

I AM HAPPY  
NOW I AM A  
FATHER.

NO LIMBIKANI,  
YOU ARE MORE  
THAN A FATHER



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

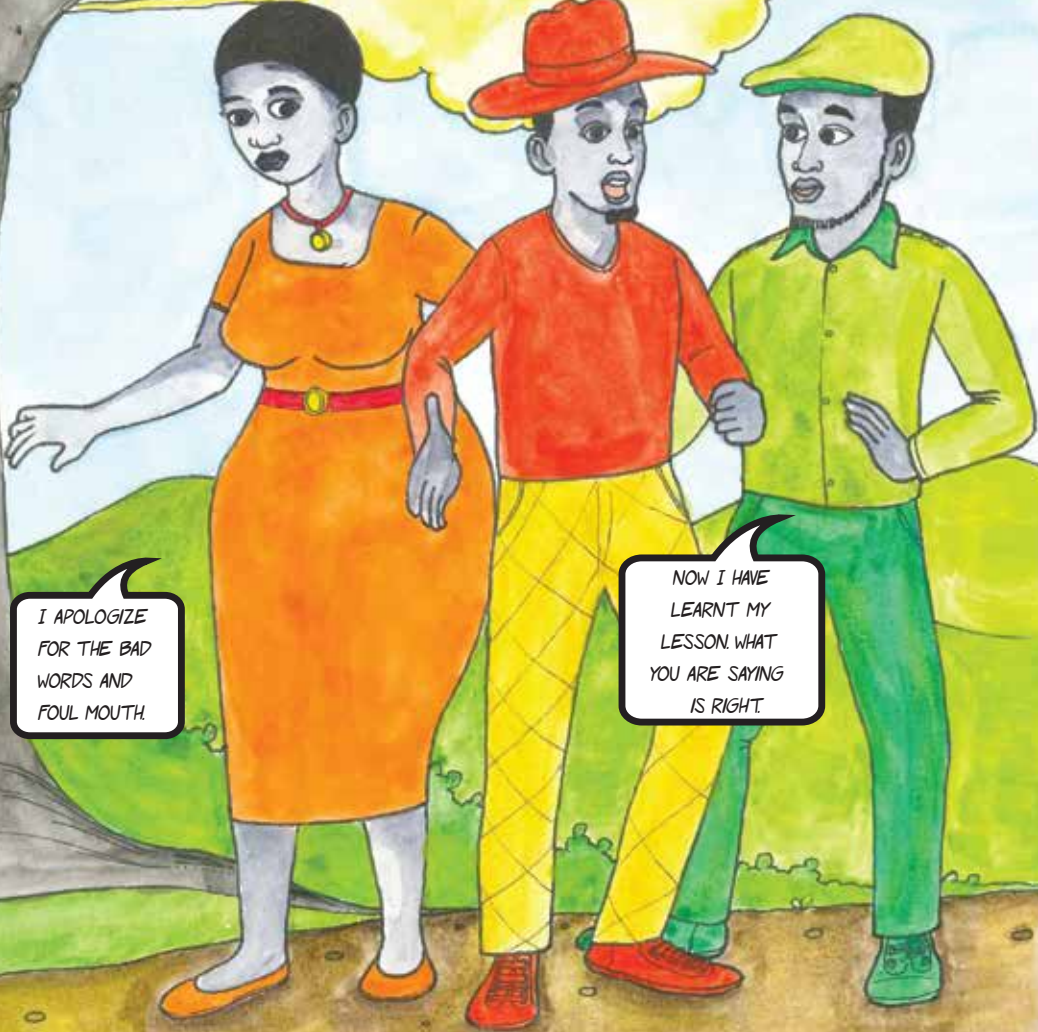
LIMBIKANI SMILED.

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



ONE DAY, LIMBIKANI MET INONGE AND CHABOTA 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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# *Limbikani's Story*

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

the author

This book is a property of

