



# Stories of hope & determination

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changing out-of-school adolescent mothers status quo

*Education is the strongest  
antidote and vaccine  
against poverty.*

**Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**  
Former Minister of Finance  
and the chairperson of Gavi Board



## African girls...

African girls are smart, intelligent and beautiful and they have rights to aspire to greater level of their dreams. The aspirations of an average teenage girl are cut-off by unintended pregnancy which occurs largely in rural areas of Nigeria especially among poor households. These young girls need to be empowered to achieve their goals irrespective of their past actions. SBF as an organization works to bring back out-of-school adolescent mothers to school in far remote areas of Ekiti State, Nigeria through her **Back to School Initiative (BSi) Program**.

## Back to School Initiative Program

The BSi program empowers out-of-school adolescent mothers through formal school sponsorship and entrepreneurial training. Also empowers them with relevant information to protect and promote their sexual and reproductive health with support from local health services.

SBF team engage the selected beneficiaries in weeks of counselling on self-esteem, importance of education, goal setting, career development, mentorship relationship and family planning among others. The essence is to reposition their focus and reawake their minds toward achieving their goals.

## How it works?



## A Space for a Fresh Start

So far, 15 out-of-school adolescent mothers have been engaged and benefitting from the program. Three of the beneficiaries have been sponsored into high schools, two are currently being helped to secure admission into Colleges of Education, four have been enrolled into fashion design vocational training and one enrolled into hair making (saloon) vocational training.

Indirectly, their parents have been relieved of shame and regrets as a result of their dropout from school. The community now take pride in seeing their girls going back to school and also learning new skills to become productive members of the society. We have received commendations from Kings in the different communities and entire rural dwellers on this initiative.

## Beyond Home Management

On the short term, this project creates a space for out-of-school adolescent mothers to have a fresh start of regaining their initial dream in life; the dream of becoming a professional in life which can be realized within a space of 3 to 5 years. Others in vocational training can be free from being liabilities, and grow to be independent and capable of sponsoring their babies in primary school to discontinue the chain of illiteracy. There is relatively low consideration of early marriage when young girls complete high school and they have more choices for the future and a low degree of dependency.

In the long-term, the young girls are more conscious of their lifestyle, bold and building potentials to contribute their quota to the transformation of the society. There is high tendency that they are going to be aware and know their rights to enable them expand their roles beyond home management and domestics affairs thereby contributing equally to social and economic developments of a nation.



▼ SBF Counselor during counseling session with a teenage mother at Osan-Ekiti

## Our Impact, their Stories...



**Alice\*** was only 16 years old when she got pregnant and dropped out from high school. Now 18, and back to school at Osan-Ekiti. She lives with her mother who does not have any stable source of livelihood, which was why she took to collecting money from the male folks and was eventually impregnated. She expressed her regret and advised teenagers to desist from early sex because it will cost them much more than any good.

**Dupe\*** was 19 years old when she got pregnant. When Dupe discovered she was pregnant she ran away from home to live with the boy who impregnated her. But the parents of the boy rejected her and sent her back to her parents. With the help of SBF, her admission into College of Education is ongoing.

**Bose\*** was just 17 years old when she got pregnant. Her pregnancy was the result of a relationship with a man out

of desperation. She had no one to feed or help her. With the help of SBF she is now back to school at Osan-Ekiti.

**Shola\***, a 19-year-old girl when she got pregnant, told SBF that it was her own fault for getting pregnant because the parents warned her but she didn't listen to them. She explained how people mocked and insulted her for the pregnancy. With the help of SBF, her admission into College of Education is ongoing.

**Bola\***, a 17 year old teenage mother, got impregnated when she was in high school and eventually dropped out from school. Bola has lost hope having been rejected by her parents and sent out to the street. The timely intervention of SBF, marked a total turn around in her life, she was enrolled as a tailoring apprentice at Ewu-Ekiti.

*\*Not real names*

**Sephamid Bridge Foundation (SBF)**, a youth led and Christian non-governmental organization registered in 2015. SBF is currently working in Ekiti State rural communities and our work includes: adolescents' sexual education and reproductive health services, offering dropout teenage mothers access to education and economic empowerment through training and skills building and engaging relevant stakeholders and leaders at all levels for policy development and resource mobilization.



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