

y.labs



Broken hearts
When I first started my relationship when I was still in Form 1 (mono) I began my relationship with a certain girl whom decided to love me and I gave her all my heart and she did it too. When we broke up with her due to me seeing her with many boys she started to throw words with me, then that's when I realized that we love should not be forced. We departed ways up to know. Now we don't write am always still single because of that girl, because the love she gave me was strong than any other girl. But still i believe even if we broke up with each other she can still remember the kind of love and support I gave her. I still love her.



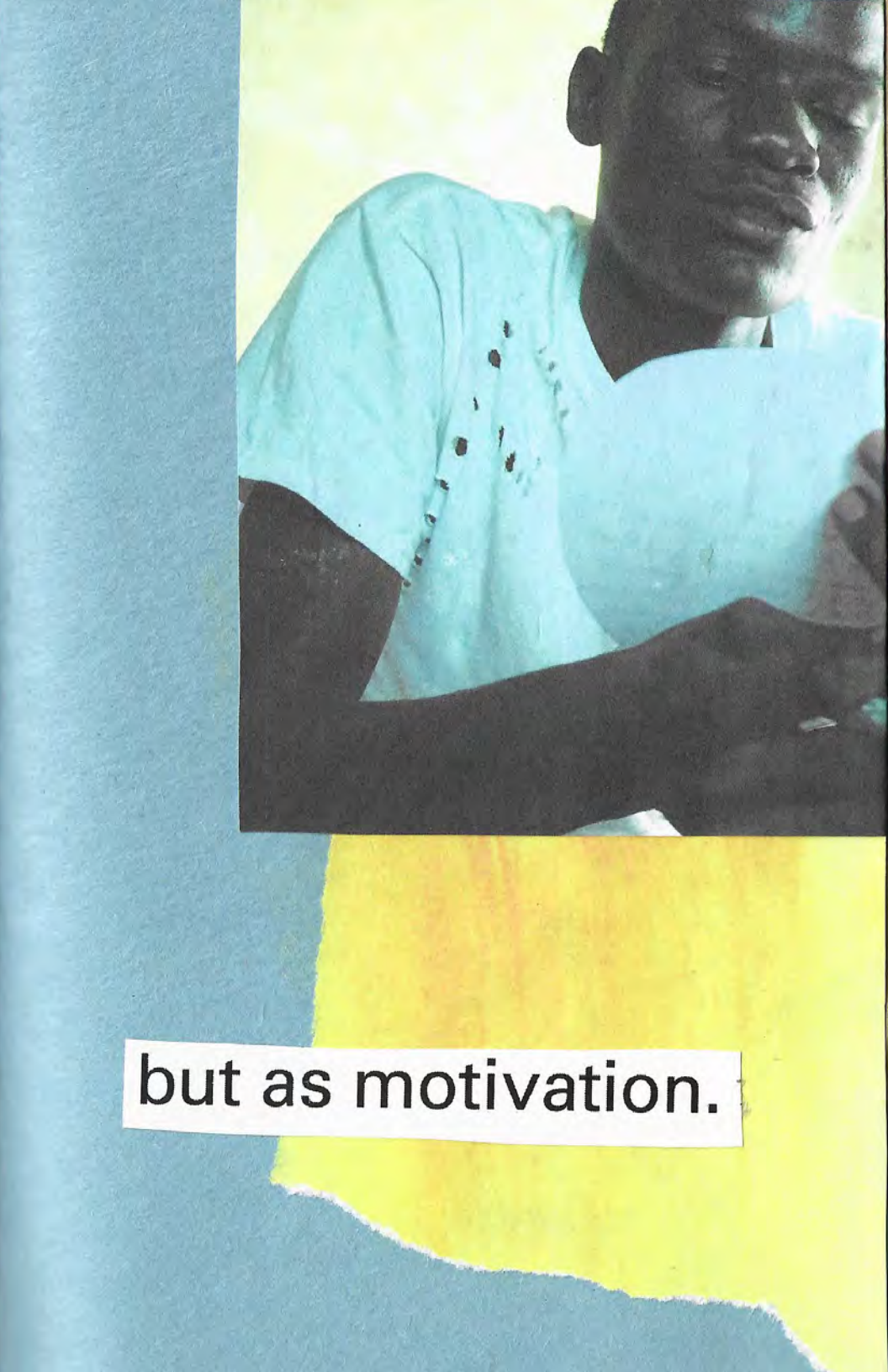
**MEN
STAND
UP**



Heartbreak

is a part of life.

I didn't take it as a wound



but as motivation.

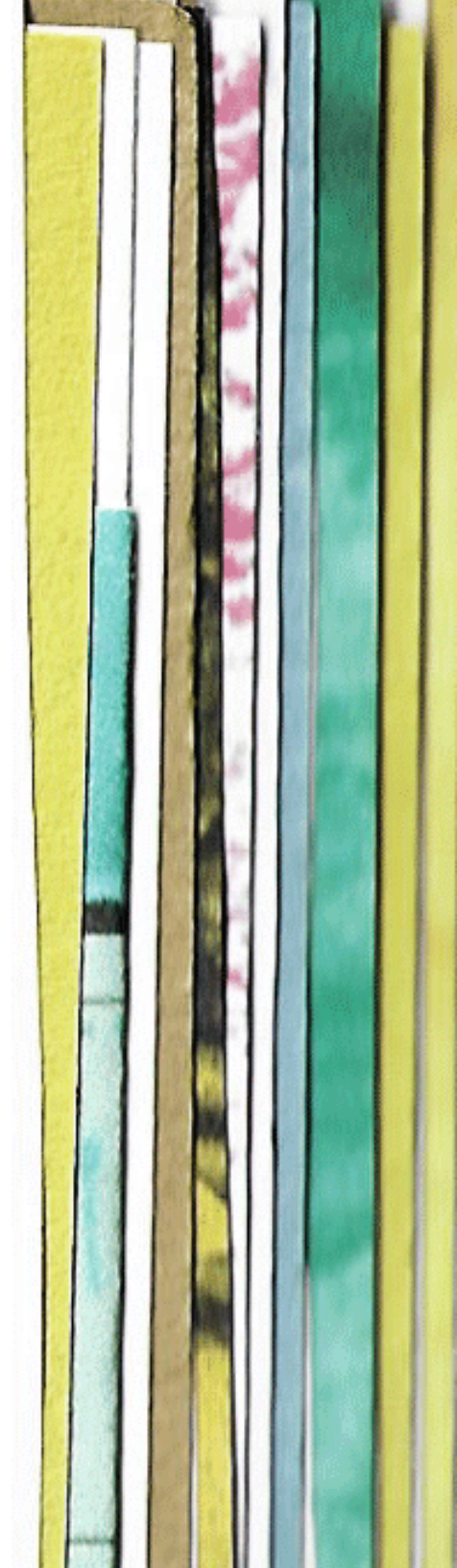
Our families depend on us. We're not only focusing on relationships but how we can help our families from poverty.

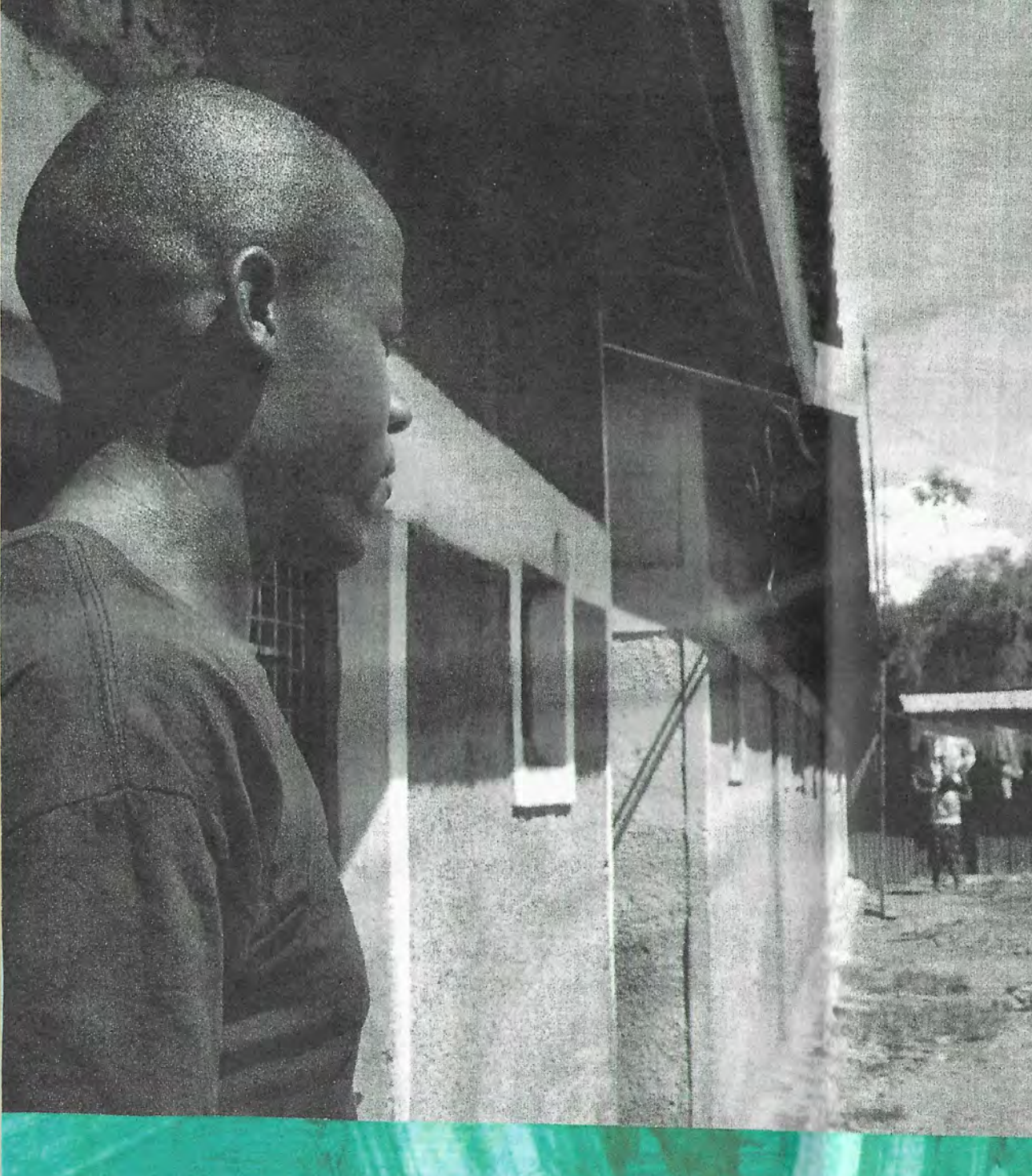
Success is a Journey
NOT A
DESTINATION

In a place where we come from, people believe that for you to be a successful man, you must go through school. You decide after school if you want to work hard or not. This will determine how you will be in the future. If you work hard at that time, at least you will have something in the future. If you do not work hard, you become something different. You want to get money.

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Introduction

Improving family planning uptake relies on user demand. As contraceptive users and decision-makers, young men have important needs. Understanding what drives young men's decision-making and behavior is key to informing creative, effective solutions to help young men and couples plan their family size and their future.

Using participatory design and quantitative research methods, YLabs is working to understand young men's perceptions of family planning. Providing young men with the opportunity to tell their stories verbally or through artifacts, enables researchers to understand what young men care most about.

The project aims to unveil young men's experiences, needs and vulnerabilities related to sexual and reproductive health. How do adjacent aspects of men's lives like economic opportunity, social networks, family pressures, romantic and sexual relationships, and gender norms intersect with and inform their ideas about family planning? We hope that the insights and stories about young men's experiences, needs and vulnerabilities curated here will inform the future generation and development of solutions meant for them.

Project Timeline

	2017						2018													
MONTH	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb								
STAGE	STAGE 1: Design Research				STAGE 2: Mobile Surveys				STAGE 3: Synthesis and Reporting											
TARGET USERS	Young men (15-24+) India and Kenya				Young men (18-24) India, Kenya, Mali and Nigeria															
DELIVERABLE	Early User Insights and Segments				Survey Design and Field Testing				Surveys and Focus Group Data				Data Analysis				Report: User Insights, Survey Data and Opportunity Areas for Design			

Objectives

- To understand young men's relationship with family planning, including how their environment, aspirations, activities and influences affect their decisions.
- To synthesize insights from young men and other key stakeholders that will inform the design of potential solutions to increase demand for and access to family planning.

Topics

- Knowledge and Perceptions of Family Planning
- Trust and Decision Making
- Earning and Spending
- Perceptions of Love and Relationships
- Life Planning and Parenthood
- Masculinity and Gender Norms
- Sexuality

Demographics

Nigeria: Mobile Survey

- 202 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 24% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 70% completed secondary school or university
- 57% sexually active

India: Mobile Survey

- 220 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 74% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 73% completed secondary school or university
- 44% sexually active

India: Design Research

- 46 Young men
- 15-24 Years old
- 14 Individual interviews
- Middle and low income
- Mixed educational attainment
- Mixed religious background and caste
- 5 Interviews with key influencers (parents, teachers, community health workers)

Mali: Mobile Survey

- 207 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 25% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 39% completed secondary school or university
- 59% sexually active

Kenya: Mobile Survey

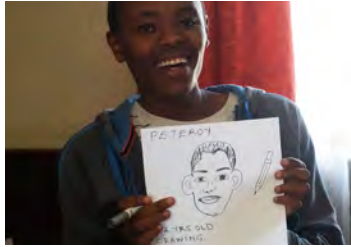
- 211 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 65% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 61% completed secondary school or university
- 80% sexually active

Kenya: Design Research

- 52 Young men
- 16-24 Years old
- 5 Focus groups
- 15 Individual interviews
- Middle and low income youth
- Mixed educational attainment
- Formally and informally employed and students
- 4 Interviews with key influencers (parents and teachers)



Design Research Methods



Ice Breaker: Self Portrait prompted young men to draw themselves doing an activity that they enjoyed. The activities built rapport between researchers and the participants and encouraged young men to creatively express themselves, an important tone to set for subsequent activities.



Life Course Mapping asked young men to use sticky notes to identify significant life events between boyhood and adulthood, and give rich detail about those moments. Young men depicted their experiences learning about sex, dating, having sex for the first time, and their aspirations and expectations about education, jobs, marriage and children.



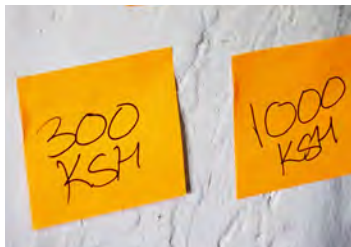
Hot or Not tasked young men to divide photos of women into two categories: Hot or Not. This activity was used to understand the qualities and characteristics that young men find attractive and unattractive in both casual and long-term partners.



Heartbreak/Mend required young men to write or draw about their heartbreak stories on a cutout of a heart. First, on the broken side of the heart, young men talked of their heartbreak experiences and emotions; and on the mended side of the heart, young men talked of how they overcame heartbreak and their emotional state today.



Method Match gave contraceptive method cards to young men, so they could overlay the cards on top of other activities like Life Course Mapping or Hot or Not. Young men matched girls with the type of method they perceived they might use, if any. They also provided details about their knowledge of each method and where to access each method.



Spending in Relationships had young men create a picture of their long term and short term spending and spending in different types of relationships. Young men compared and contrasted how they spend money and described the purpose of financial transactions in relationships.



Love and Break Up Songs allowed young men to play a song that represents heartbreak and a song that represents love or overcoming heartbreak. Through these selections, young men provided color to their stories of heartbreak.



Casual vs. Long Term Partner allowed young men to describe with whom they engage in romantic and/or sexual relationships. Young men identified multiple categories of women, beyond girlfriends and long term partners, and used sticky notes to assign characteristics, behaviors, and qualities to different women.



What Makes A Man/Woman prompted young men to post characteristics of 'what makes a man or woman' inside a large line drawing of a man and woman respectively. Outside of the drawn outlines, young men posted 'what a man and woman is not.'



Venn Diagram asked young men to fill in a venn diagram with men in one circle and women in the other with drawings, stickers, and magazine cut outs. Young men creatively depicted roles and attributes of men, those of women and shared qualities of both men and women.



KENYA

NAIROBI + KISUMU

Overview

In Kenya, young men told us it is common for them to have overlapping sexual relationships with multiple partners, and this influences their attitudes toward sex and contraceptives. Young men were discerning and systematic in how they enter and engage in sexual relationships. We heard that they select different girls for different types of relationships and treat them differently. Young men might have simultaneous relationships with so-called 'one-night girls,' 'casual girlfriends,' and 'marriage-material girls'. Beyond these relationships, some young men also have sexual relationships with 'sugar mommies,' older women who provide financial rewards to young men in exchange for sex and companionship.

Young men are also discerning in their thinking about contraceptives. Young men source information from their peers using contraception, which helps them justify their attitudes toward and decisions about contraceptives. The reliability of these sources is important to young men.

Different girls. Different agreements. Side dish. Girlfriend. The One.

*“[Polygamy]—
it’s in our blood.
Some things pass
over into the ‘Super
Digital Era.’”*

— YOUNG MAN, KISUMU



The customary practice of polygamy normalizes unmarried men engaging in multiple sexual relationships simultaneously. One young man noted that he is “looking forward to having many wives [because his] father had five wives [and] it’s in [their] blood.” Young men reported that they engage in different kinds of sexual relationships with multiple girls at the same time.

Young men calculate qualities of girls which informs the relationship type, relationship expectations, contraceptive decision-making process, and contraceptive method. Young men segmented their sexual relationships into three categories: ‘one-night’ relationships; ‘casual girlfriend’ relationships; and ‘marriage-material’ relationships. Young men are likely to participate in all three at once but their behavior is different in each one.

Young men explained that they expect one-night girls and casual girlfriends to see other people but do not expect a marriage-material girl to engage in multiple relationships at once. Contraceptive decision-making with one-night girls is straightforward with no discussion; young men generally used condoms, as they expect them to see other men. With casual girlfriends and marriage-material girls, young men described a more collaborative decision-making process, where the woman is consulted but the man has the final say on contraception.

Sugar mommy: an exchange of sex and money, and relinquishing of power.

“When you’re broke as a church mouse while you’re a student, I’ll be with a sugar mommy.”

– YOUNG MAN, KISUMU



We heard that financial instability may drive young men into transactional relationships with older women. A sugar mommy and a young man enter into agreements where he proves his loyalty by performing sexually, and she rewards him with gifts, money and sometimes lodging. Young men and key informants, including teachers and parents, explained that a young man’s level of poverty is inversely proportional to his obedience and devotion to the sugar mommy. Sugar mommies prefer young men who are extremely poor or in vulnerable situations, for example, without living parents. The resulting dynamic is one where the woman has more power than the young man.

In sugar mommy relationships, one young man spoke of his willingness to forgo condom use in return for financial gain. Notably, this is the only type of relationship where young men described disenfranchisement on their part and greater power of the woman. The young man acknowledged the risk associated with unprotected sex, yet the acceptability of taking such risks, as they saw it, was commensurate with the level of financial reward. Young men said they’d be willing to forgo using a condom in exchange for KSH 30,000 (\$300 USD).

Key informants, including teachers, and young men speculated that sugar mommy relationships may disincentivize young men from fulfilling their educational and employment responsibilities. One young man acknowledged that dating a sugar mommy makes young men lazy because: “if you need money, you’ll find it; sex, you’ll find it; food, you’ll find it.”

Collaborative relationships built on a foundation of one-sided power.

“Ladies can reason more than their age.”

— YOUNG MAN, KISUMU



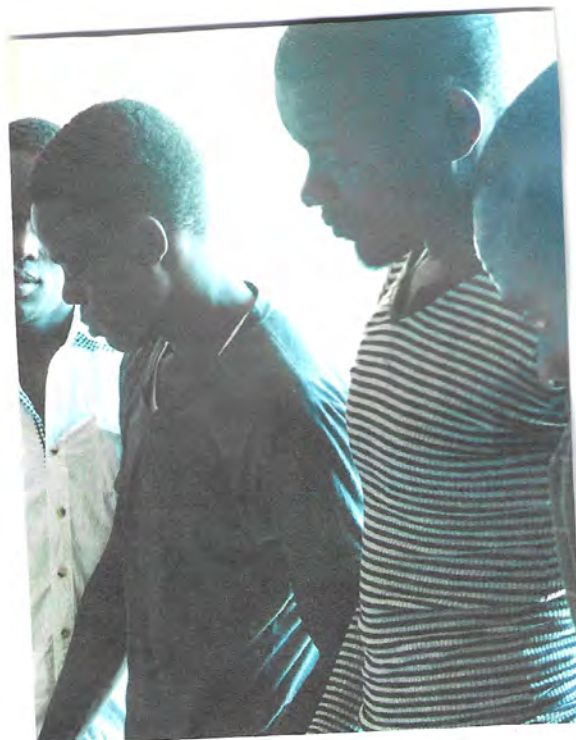
Power, age and maturity are intertwined. Recognizing that women mature faster than men, young men said they prefer younger women as wives. They perceive young women as less mature and easier to influence, thus placing the power in the hands of the husband. According to young men, guiding and shaping a wife enables a husband to have most influence on the relationship and household decision-making.

Young men acknowledged that a generational change is occurring in Kenya, where romantic relationships require more collaboration and discussion than before. They expected to marry educated women who work, and accepted that this meant more independence for women. They felt that this trend toward more independent wives and girlfriends necessitates more collaborative relationships. However, by securing a position of power in a relationship, the man could meet the new societal expectations of collaborative decision-making while simultaneously safeguarding against a wife's potential to oppose their husbands. A wife's semblance of independence is intact, but a man's position of power is not threatened.

Sex is a performance. Your reputation is at stake. The audience is the girls, your friends, and yourself.

*“Having sex is
the ‘in’ thing.
If you don’t have sex,
you’re not seen
as a man.”*

– TEACHER, NAIROBI



Young men described pressures to satisfy a woman sexually, acknowledging that poor performance or abstinence might justify a girl leaving her boyfriend or husband for another man. One man said that “a girlfriend is like a bicycle: if you don’t ride it, someone will steal her.” Failure to satisfy a woman has real consequences, according to young men, which include social stigma from other girls, public shaming on social media sites such as Facebook, and enduring teasing from friends. Porn is widely accessed via phones, memory cards and flash drives and was seen as a way to learn how to perform sexually, so as to not appear inexperienced.

Friends influence sexual experience in two important ways. First, young men reported that it is difficult to fit in with peers without being sexually active and there’s peer pressure from male friends to have a girlfriend. Second, sex and girlfriends dominate conversations among friends, and young men gain social capital by talking about their own sexual experiences. Young men told us they boast about their sexual prowess and inflate their number of sexual partners in order to gain status.

Curious to know about contraceptives. But where to learn from? And who to trust?

*“You can inform them
about contraceptives,
but they don’t know
how to get them.”*

– TEACHER, NAIROBI



Young men seek information about contraceptives from reliable sources. Curiosity drives their desire to know about contraceptive, but their sources did not usually provide accurate information. Misconceptions about contraceptives come from contraceptive users themselves, including female friends and teachers. According to young men, contraceptive users describe their experiences with side effects - including changes to weight and libido, infertility, and contraceptive failure. Infertility appears to be the most pervasive and troubling concern among young men and most associated with injections and implants. It seems that young men perceive the delayed return to fertility related to contraception as permanent infertility. Young men were concerned that if a girl used a visible method, such as the implant, it would provoke questions and problems from friends and family.

These stories on contraception, given legitimacy as they come from first-hand users, proliferate widespread skepticism about contraceptives. One negative story about contraceptive use colors young men’s opinions of all contraceptives and we heard generalized negative perspectives on contraceptives.

Insights: Kenya Summary

- Young men engage in multiple sexual relationships simultaneously with different types of girls, including one-night girls, casual girlfriends and marriage-material girls. Because young men expect one-night girls to be having sex with other men, there is no discussion about contraception, as they just use a condom. There is more collaborative decision-making about contraceptives with casual girlfriends and marriage-material girls.
- Young men believe that loyalty, which is hugely important to them, can be proven by termination of contraceptive use as it is a display of a woman's love and fidelity. Similarly, young men believe that a wife's use of condoms indicates infidelity.
- Young men are the main decision-makers about contraceptive use. Because young men want a future that includes children with marriage-material girls, and believe that long-acting contraceptives threaten fertility, they largely object to using these methods in long-term relationships.
- Financial instability leads young men into relationships with sugar mommies, older women who provide material support in exchange for sex. Because sugar mommies provide money, food, housing, and other things that young men would otherwise have to work for, these relationships disincentivize commitment to education and careers.
- The power dynamic in sugar mommy relationships favors the women, resulting in disenfranchisement in contraceptive decision-making for young men.
- In the emerging generation of Kenyans, women are more educated and career-oriented. To counterbalance this movement of independent women, young men seek younger wives, who they believe are easier to control.
- Satisfying a woman sexually is a requirement. Failure to perform sexually results in social stigma and degrading comments from partners and peers. Peer groups encourage sexual relationships, and boasting about sexual experience and prowess helps young men gain social capital.
- Young men become skeptical of long-acting contraceptive methods as they hear negative stories from contraceptive users, including female friends and teachers. Infertility is the most pervasive and troubling misconception about contraceptives, as young men perceive delay in return to fertility as permanent infertility.



INDIA

LUCKNOW

Overview

In India, young men told us that societal expectations and family norms drive young men's understanding of masculinity, relationships and sex. A man's family is the center of society, and usually his wife moves in with and cares for her husband's family. We heard that the institution of marriage can bring cohesion to communities and families, as families generally plan socially-accepted matches for their children and love marriages may strain family ties. The man's family's perspectives have a considerable influence for young men's beliefs about a man's role, sexual relationships before marriage, and family planning.

In a man's world, it's a man's family. Wives are seen as an investment to fulfill the needs of his family. Once child-bearing is complete, female sterilization is preferred to protect her husband's manhood.

“If a man gets sterilized, he will be called a non-man.”

— YOUNG MAN, VILLAGE



Young men described the family structure as revolving around a man's family. A wife moves in with her husband's family and cares for them. This structure informs how people view childbearing and family planning. The wife is expected to give birth to a male child in order to continue the husband's lineage. Highlighting the family's expectation of children, a father noted "I got all of these twigs together to make a mountain, and what's the use if no one is going to sit on it." While childbearing is important, young men acknowledged that the Indian government has long advocated for sterilization as the main form of contraception to stem population growth. The burden of sterilization generally falls on the wife. Men see fertility is a symbol of manhood, which reflects on their family's status. Young men argued that a husband who is sterilized diminishes his manhood and therefore diminishes his own family's honor and standing in the community.

When marriage ties form the fabric of society, men are expected to ‘carry the family forward’ through their sons. In men’s eyes, arranged marriages ensure a successful family legacy. Love marriages jeopardize it.

“Boys are free before marriage. After marriage you’re bound. You have responsibilities.”

– YOUNG MAN, VILLAGE



According to young men, marriage has two forms: arranged marriage, where parents organize the marriage and love marriage, where a man and woman date and then decide to marry with or without parental consent. Because a marriage seriously impacts and reflects upon an entire family, young men said that ideally, their families arrange a marriage with a wife from an equal or higher caste and of the same religion. In love marriages, young men acknowledged that differences in religion and caste can cause familial schisms and, because of the centrality of the family unit, can degrade the social fabric of society.

Though many differences exist between arranged and love marriages, the expectations about children, timing of childbirth, and attitudes about contraceptive use to delay childbirth seem to remain constant. The way that young men described negotiations about contraception between a husband and wife are similar in both types of marriages. Men typically have the final say in the contraceptive method used and when to have a child, though young men did say that their wife’s concerns and reasoning are strongly considered.

Society stigmatizes pre-marital sex as detrimental to a man's success, connection to his future wife and his family's reputation. Young men's internalization of this stigma was linked to their opposition to contraception.

“If you start tasting different chocolates you won't be satisfied with one.”

– YOUNG MAN, VILLAGE



Both young men and key informants, mostly parents, saw premarital sex as incongruous with a successful marriage because women will not want to marry men who have had sex with other partners. Young men discussed how pre-marital sex degrades a man's connection to his wife and family because it leads to sex addictions, infidelity and 'weakened sperm.' Young men also said that pre-marital relationships threaten career success, which many defined as procuring a government job. That is because young men and their parents believe that girlfriends distract from school, and good grades are essential to securing a government career.

Because of these views on pre-marital sexual relationships, young men described the main consequences of pre-marital sex as stigma, where community members gossip about the young man which in turn harms the family reputation. They noted, though, that consequences of pre-marital sex and pregnancy do fall more harshly on the girl. According to young men, parents will withdraw a sexually active or pregnant girl from school, beat her, and/or marry her early.

In secret relationships outside of the socially acceptable arranged marriages, young men are expected to procure contraception, but the risks of accessing it are high.

“In our traditions, it’s not that we can talk [about dating] to our elders. We have to hide it.”

— YOUNG MAN, LUCKNOW



Familial beliefs and expectations drive young men into secret relationships which augment barriers to contraceptive use. Though most young men have girlfriends, they hide these relationships from their parents. Young men supported and aided each others’ secret relationships. Men explained that they go to great lengths to protect their secret relationships and sexual encounters. While young men noted that they are the primary party responsible for providing contraceptives, they face risks of exposure and stigma through this transaction. To shield themselves, young men avoid buying condoms in places where they may be recognized. One young man said that he drives at least ten kilometers away from his home to purchase contraceptives. Other young men described pharmacists and other patrons scoffing at young men purchasing condoms. Though young men were open to using condoms, the stigma of purchasing them, especially for an unmarried man, makes contraceptive use challenging, even by young men who value contraceptive use.

The internalized and cultural stigma against pre-marital sex limits young men's learning opportunities for sexual health. This limitation leads young men to learn about sexual behavior and practice primarily from pornography.

“Watching porn makes you want sex. If you can't get it from your girlfriend, you need to force it.”

— YOUNG MAN, LUCKNOW



Porn was young men's 'go to' for learning about sex, though watching it induced considerable shame. It is easy to access, cheap and available on phones and memory cards. Negative beliefs about sexual curiosity and activities including watching pornography and masturbating are reinforced by families, school, the larger community, and legal frameworks. Young men saw masturbation as not only wrong, but a distraction from their success, especially in school. A teacher reported that in response to a young man masturbating, he called in health counselors and ordered him to join sports teams to help him focus his attention.

Young men said that pornography can lead to rape because it causes men to lust after women, who they must rape in order to get what they want. In an attempt to address sexual violence, Prime Minister Modi very publicly banned pornography sites. The move resonated with many young men who cited Modi's ban as well as a prominent Bollywood actor, Amitabh Bachchan, who famously tweeted his support for the initiative, encouraging people to avoid pornography.

While education is regarded highly, sex ed is viewed as irrelevant and even harmful to youth. Knowledge promotes pre-marital sex, which is self-destructive. With a moral and pragmatic lens, adults believe there's no need for youth to learn something that won't benefit their future success.

“Sexual education is very extremist in our country.”

— YOUNG MAN, LUCKNOW



Lack of knowledge about sex and contraception is pervasive, and young men told us that it largely stems from the absence of formal sex education in schools and parental sex education at home. Young men mainly seek out information about how to have sex and issues related to fertility. Limited availability of information means these young men learned about sex from real-life experiences or watching others have sex, friends and older classmates (who were also uninformed), mass media and porn. Several young men explained that friends will inform each other where they will be engaging in sex, so other men can watch, without the girls' consent. Young men also went to sex workers to gain experience, given the stigma around pre-marital sex. Young men of fifteen or sixteen were aware of the cost of paid sex and where to find it: “the more money, the more beauty.”

Key informants, including parents and teachers, justify the lack of sex education, explaining that young men will learn about sex ‘naturally.’ They said ‘natural’ education occurs at two formative stages in a young man’s life: puberty and marriage. According to key informants, young men will recognize and intuitively understand the feelings and bodily responses associated with puberty. Similarly, they will ‘learn by doing’ when having sex with their wife once they are married and begin to engage in socially sanctioned sexual activity. One teacher put it: “One doesn’t have to teach about sex; it’s an automatic process of learning.”

Young men's main exposure to family planning is through government adverts which strike an emotional nerve of doing what's best for one's country; sterilization is a means of alleviating the population crisis.

“If we do not control or consider contraceptives, then our population is going to be greater than China's by 2020.”

– YOUNG MAN, LUCKNOW



Young men's knowledge of and attitudes regarding family planning attitudes largely come from government campaigns propagating population control. These advertisements frame contraception as being for married couples. To young men, family planning means limiting the number of children one should have. They understood that Indians are responsible for stemming India's population growth through sterilization. For this reason, young men associate family planning with sterilization after marriage; seen as something for older, married adults. The main exception was condoms which most young men were familiar with and used. Young men were somewhat familiar with the oral contraceptive pill and emergency contraception and unfamiliar with other modern methods including female condoms, calendar method, injection, implant, and the IUD. Misconceptions were that the contraceptive injection is used to terminate pregnancy or is used to increase sexual desire among women: “you inject a female who's saying no to have them say yes.”

Threats to masculinity justify retaliatory acts towards women as a means of reclaiming power in a relationship, and boosting a young man's ego amongst male peers.

“If it's true love, you don't hack the ID of your girlfriend. Because there's trust.”

— YOUNG MAN, LUCKNOW



Ego was a dominant theme in conversations about masculinity, with even the youngest participants citing 'ego' as a cause for their behaviors. Young men equated ego with masculinity. Based on the pervasiveness of these conversations across multiple interviewees, it seems that masculinity rests at the core of who a young man is and how he perceives himself. Threats to masculinity are seen as dangerous and justify a young man to retaliate in response to such threats. Several young men described their retaliations which include verbal and physical abuse and invasion of privacy, especially in the form of breaking into social media accounts. One boy hacked his girlfriend's Facebook account in response to her perceived inappropriate behavior online. The respondent said: "he only did this because his ego was attacked." Sharing retaliatory acts with friends is a means of reclaiming masculinity and serves as an ego boost.

Claiming ownership and power over a partner develops during adolescence, and comes with expectations of loyalty. This behavior evolves into demands for female submission during adulthood.

“True love is equal to trust.”

– YOUNG MAN, LUCKNOW



Adolescence is a key period in these young men’s lives when they explore and assert power in their romantic relationships. Young men at age fourteen and fifteen talked of a sense of ownership over girls. They shared a specific, strict definition of cheating which included speaking with other men, befriending other men, not answering calls and texts expediently, and not telling a boyfriend where they are or where they are going. Male friends were seen as a threat to fidelity. These requirements for loyalty persist into adulthood and fidelity is a requirement for both girlfriends and wives. For girlfriends, loyalty and trust can be proven by providing passwords for social media accounts. Young men remarked that a wife working outside of the home may threaten a marriage because she may be tempted to be unfaithful.

Men are established as financial providers for women in relationships during adolescence to adulthood. A man's financial security is intertwined with his relationship's stability.

“If you don't spend on your girlfriend, then she will leave you.”

— YOUNG MAN, 21, LUCKNOW



When young men are dating secretly, their girlfriends expect financial support, including gifts, clothing, airtime and dates. Young men believe that girlfriends derive some freedom from boyfriends' financial gifts because they are able to engage in activities that their parents, who are their main financial providers, may not sanction.

A man also demonstrates his financial status, his potential for future earnings, and his devotion to his girlfriend through gift giving. One man put it: “when I have money, I will get any girl.” Relationship stability, young men say, depends on financial stability. Young men acknowledged that dating relationships are likely to end without financial exchanges and marriages are likely to suffer if the husband is not financially secure.

Additionally, one young man cited financial instability as a justification for crime and prostitution. He said, “Women will do any wrong work when their needs are not fulfilled.”

Insights: India Summary

- Women care for their husband's family, and bring prestige to the family with the birth of a male child. The burden of sterilization falls on the woman, as a sterile man was seen to reflect poorly on his family.
- Arranged marriage is the preferred marriage type, as love marriages may cause familial schisms due to differences in caste and religion. Though arranged marriages and love marriages are different in some ways, contraceptive decision-making is similar. Though wives are consulted in decision making, the ultimate choice lies with the man.
- Pre-marital sex threatens both future career success and marriage success. Girls incur beatings, early marriage and removal from school while boys face social stigma and harm to their family's reputation.
- Young men have secret relationships that they hide from family and community members. To protect secret sexual relationships, young men travel long distances to purchase contraceptives anonymously.
- There's a tension between tradition and

modernity: young men believe that men are heads of household due to their intellectual superiority. Good wives should be educated and career-oriented, yet reflect traditional Indian values through cooking and dress.

- Ego and masculinity are central to a young man's perception of himself and propped up by other male friends. If ego is threatened, young men described retaliation through violence and invasion of privacy in order to reassert their masculinity.
- Young men describe cheating as speaking with other men, befriending other men, not answering calls and texts with expediency, and not telling a boyfriend where they are going.
- Women expect financial support in dating relationships; this indicates financial status, potential for future earnings, and devotion to a girlfriend.
- Expressions of sexual curiosity like watching pornography and masturbating are perceived as distractions and, at worst, dangerous to young men. Some young men believe that these activities may lead to rape.
- Young men navigate awkwardness and stigma about sex through teasing. Young men who are sexually active are criticized

as 'ayash.' Conversations about sex become more serious before wedding nights, as post-marital sex is socially acceptable.

- Young men lack access to sex education in schools and at home, instead learning through friends and media, including porn, sex workers, and observing real life sex acts. Parents and teachers claim that young men learn about sex 'naturally' during puberty and marriage.
- For young men, the main source of family planning information is government campaigns advocating sterilizations to stem population growth and improve India's economic success.
- Young men confused contraception with other medical services related to sex and pregnancy, such as abortifacients and sexual enhancers.



SURVEY RESULTS



Mobile Survey Methods

We conducted a random population survey of 840 young men aged 18-24 years on knowledge, use and decision making related to family planning (sexual activity, contraceptive use, family size preference, decision making), as well as demographic data on marital status and education.

Mobile interactive voice response (IVR) surveys were distributed via random digit dial; inclusion criteria were aged 18-24 years and male. Only completed surveys were analyzed. Young men responded to a ten-question IVR survey delivered in local languages, and also were given the opportunity to respond to an open question: "Tell me one reason why you did not use contraception, including condoms, in the past when having sex."

Surveys were distributed in Mali, Nigeria, India, and Kenya, and available in English, Hindi, French, Bambara, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Swahili, Luo and Gikuyu, depending on country.

840
young men

18-24
years-old

Kenya: Mobile Survey

- 211 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 65% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 61% completed secondary school or university
- 80% sexually active

India: Mobile Survey

- 220 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 74% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 73% completed secondary school or university
- 44% sexually active

Mali: Mobile Survey

- 207 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 25% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 39% completed secondary school or university
- 59% sexually active

Nigeria: Mobile Survey

- 202 young men
- 18-24 years old
- 24% unmarried
- Mixed educational attainment
- 70% completed secondary school or university
- 57% sexually active

Results:

Four-Country Summary

	INDIA (n=220)	KENYA (n=211)	MALI (n=207)	NIGERIA (n=202)
DEMOGRAPHICS				
% unmarried	74%	65%	57%	63%
% sexually active	44%	80%	59%	57%
% with secondary education or higher	73%	61%	39%	70%
MEDIAN DESIRED FAMILY SIZE	2	3	5	4
USE AND KNOWLEDGE OF CONTRACEPTIVES				
% using condoms at last sex (sexually active men)	51%	52%	42%	42%
% who never use condoms (sexually active men)	14%	20%	33%	25%
% use a modern method of contraception, other than condoms (sexually active)	16%	27%	4%	3%
% report 'no knowledge of any methods' besides condoms (all)	45%	20%	37%	48%
DECISION MAKING ABOUT CONTRACEPTIVE USE (sexually active)				
Man normally decides	55%	31%	41%	44%
Partner normally decides	23%	18%	42%	23%
Decide together	15%	51%	18%	33%
Someone else decides	7%	0%	0%	0%

Key Findings

- 65% of all respondents were unmarried and 60% admitted to being sexually active.
- Overall, 43% of sexually active men claim to be the main decision makers on family planning, with a further 29% deciding with their partner.
- It's notable that in Mali and India, fewer men reported joint decision-making on contraception.
- Across all settings, knowledge and use of contraception was low. Over one third of respondents (38%) did not know of any contraceptive methods.
- Knowledge levels were similar between those who were sexually active vs those who weren't, but were markedly higher among married men in all countries except Kenya.
- Aside from condoms, on average 11% of men used a modern method; most commonly emergency contraception and the oral contraceptive pill. Use of 'natural' methods were most common in Mali (16%) and Kenya (15%); around 2/3 used calendar method.

Cross-Country Sub-Analysis

- KENYA
- INDIA
- MALI
- NIGERIA



“Tell me one reason why you did not use contraception in the past including condoms?”

Respondents’ verbal responses were transcribed and coded. It’s notable that most men interpreted contraception as condoms, also found in the qualitative research. Key reasons for non-use were lack of knowledge or fear of side effects, inconvenience, loss of pleasure, being with a trusted partner, trying to conceive, and marital status; both being married or unmarried were cited.

	Kenya	India	Mali	Nigeria
<i>Inconvenience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I don’t like them because they use a lot of energy.” “The condom was not within the reach and my partner really wanted it.” “They are expensive.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “That time the condom was not there.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “We don’t have time.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Sometimes I do search for condoms and I don’t see and I go to the chemist and don’t get or I don’t have money to do it like that.”
<i>Lack of Awareness/ Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I have never thought of using contraceptive.” “I don’t use the contraceptive because some bring cancer and others bring growth in the womb.” “This is because my partner was still a virgin.” “We went for HIV testing and we are safe.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I don’t have any friend who wants to know, who wants to use that.” “I have never used condom. I don’t want to use condom; it’s of no use.” “There is no problem if we do not use condom six days before periods and if the partner is not having relation with someone else, then we can do sex without using condom few days before the periods. That is, one has to eject outside not inside.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “What is in the condom? Because I don’t know the way you are saying it. What is its importance? I never use it. I’m looking for its duty.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
<i>Marital Status</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “This was because I was having sex with my wife.” “I will use it after marriage.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I haven’t gotten married yet.” “I don’t want to marry that’s why I used a condom.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “So I want to marry the lady. That’s the reason why I don’t use the condom...I don’t know if you understand. But I wish to marry her.” “The condom can make a distance between births and protect from some bad sicknesses. This was my opinion. If a man gets married, you are forbidden to follow girls illegally. If she is your wife, you must not use it, if you are looking for a child, you have to stop using the condom.” 	

	<i>Kenya</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>Mali</i>	<i>Nigeria</i>
<i>Safety/Trust</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I trusted my partner.” • “She was safe.” • “I never used the protective because I trusted her and we have had one child. The most important is to trust one another.” • “She was my girlfriend so I didn’t have to use a condom.” • “We just trusted each other and that’s why we don’t use anything.” • “I decide not to use any protective because it’s someone I trust.” • “She is my love and we trust each other.” • “I went for testing with her.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Earlier I was not aware. When I did it the first time then I came to know what happens. When I did first time, I saw what happens when we use it. If we don’t use this, it will trouble us.” • “I have a personal girlfriend. That’s why I do not want to use that.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I trust her and we are together since a long time ago.” • “Because I’m not concerned with these diseases. I’m not sure you understand. The majority of the girls that—as you said, the majority of women that I have penetrated—I trusted them. I have known them since childhood. We have done many things together. I’m not concerned, I hope you understand, I’m very not concerned about these sexually transmitted diseases.” • “Because I trust her.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I don’t go into that because I don’t value it. The person I am with—I trust that person so much and am able to take care of that person when she’s pregnant. Before then we would have gone for medical check up that we are both okay and that we don’t have any STDs.” • “That is because I don’t sleep around. I only have one partner. I only sleep with my wife. There is no other person.”
<i>Plan to Conceive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We had wanted a child.” • “My partner - we were having sex—we had known our status and also she was using family planning of injection. This prompted me also to use it.” • “She had wanted a child.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “So I say now what I want, the condom that you proposed is not my choice. Nobody can bear the charge of anyone except God. Only God can give you a child and help you to support their charge. I never use it and don’t want to use it until the end of my life. The case of pills that you said, I never use it. And my wife too, even if she did it, I’m not aware.” • “So I need a child, [that’s the] reason why I don’t use the condom. Because I have already married a wife, I don’t want to follow girls.” • “I don’t like nothing. I just want what God gives to me. I like that.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Why I don’t make use of condoms is because I want to give birth to like 50 children. That will be useful to me in the future. That is the reason I don’t make use of contraceptives or family planning, because making use of it might have side effects on women and I wish to add like three wives in future. That is my opinion. Am done. Stay blessed.”
<i>Loss of Pleasure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I wanted to feel the taste” • “It’s not fun.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Without condom we feel pleasure. If we use condom during sex, then it take more time to eject, I think it takes minimum one and half hour or so; till then it won’t happen. That is why I don’t try the condoms.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We don’t like it with the condom.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Because it’s not enjoyable.”

Results: India Summary

2

was the median desired number of children

51%

used condoms at last sex

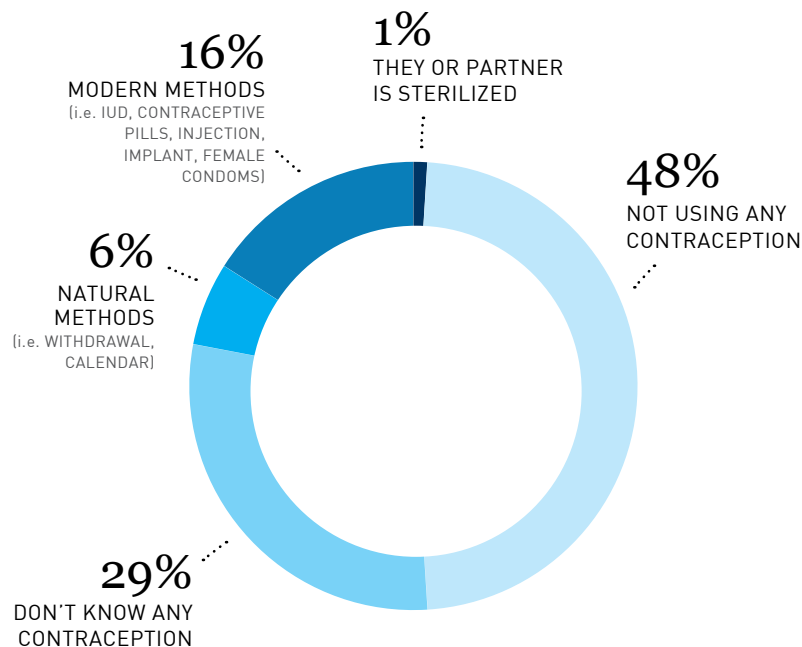
45%

had no knowledge of contraceptive methods

16%

of men were currently using a modern method of contraception

Use of Contraception



- Educational attainment was the highest of all countries: 73% had completed secondary school or university and most were unmarried (74%).
- One quarter of respondents use condoms 'all the time'; the highest proportion of those using condoms 'all the time' was among men with university education (26% vs 15% with primary/ no formal education).
- Knowledge of contraceptive methods was low; almost half (45%) had no knowledge of any methods. Knowledge was improved among married men and those with a university education.
- The proportion of men using modern methods was highest among university-educated men (17%) and those with no education (21%). 83% of those using modern methods were unmarried.
- Contraceptive pills, emergency contraception and condoms are the most commonly used modern methods of contraception. Injections, implants, and IUDs were rarely used (0.5%).
- Indian participants reported the greatest gender discrepancy in decision-making power. Among sexually active men, 55% (53/97) of men report they make the decision about contraception, and only 23% (22/97) report that their partner decides.
- India was the only country where men reported "someone else decides" their contraceptive use.
- A higher proportion of men with a university degree claimed to be the main decision makers on contraception (62% vs 52%).
- A lower proportion of married men use contraception (15% vs 20%).
- The most common themes for non-use of contraception were loss of pleasure and lack of knowledge and awareness of how contraception works.

Results: Kenya Summary

3

was the median desired number of children

52%

used condoms at last sex

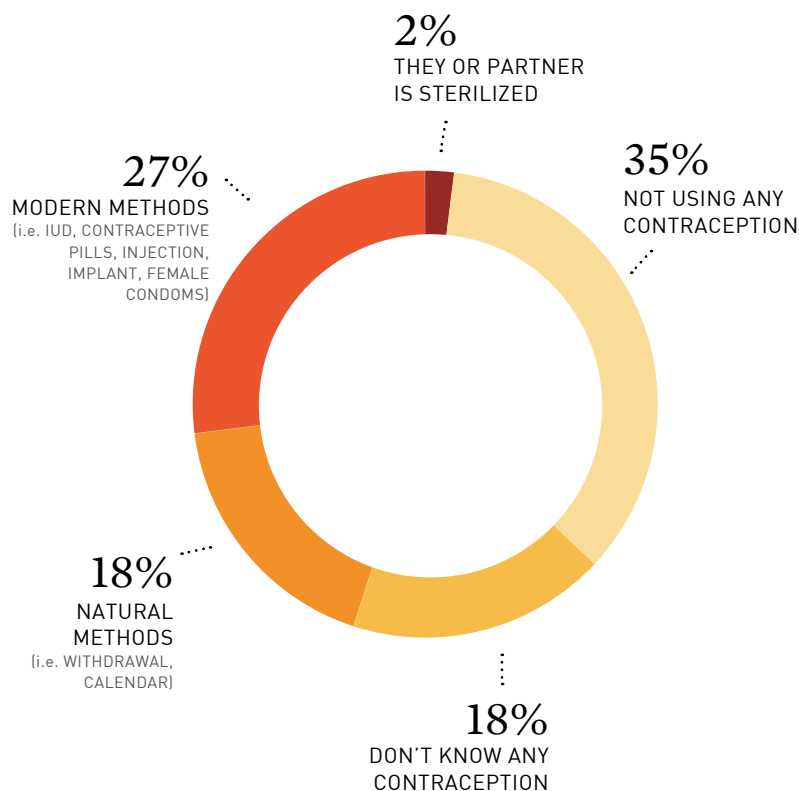
20%

had no knowledge of contraceptive methods

27%

of men were currently using a modern method of contraception

Use of Contraception



- 61% had completed secondary school or university and most were unmarried (65%).
- 80% of Kenya's respondents reported they are sexually active, the highest among countries.
- Kenya had the lowest proportion of men who did not know any contraceptive methods (20% vs 37-48%).
 - Kenyan men had the highest use of modern methods (27% 45/168) of sexually active men).
 - Use of modern methods was higher among married men (37% vs 19%); but was similar across levels of education.
 - In Kenya, the calendar method was the most common 'natural method' used (19/168).
 - Collaborative decision-making on contraception was highest in Kenya; 51% of sexually active respondents (85/168), as compared with 15% in India and 18% in Mali and 33% in Nigeria. Married and unmarried men reported similar levels of collaborative decision-making (52 vs 47%).
 - Only 25% of men with no education reported sharing decisions, compared with 50%, on average, of men with primary education or higher.
 - The most common themes for non-use of contraception were trust of the partner and the type of relation they were in (long-term/ married vs casual).

Results: Mali Summary

5

was the median desired number of children

42%

used condoms at last sex

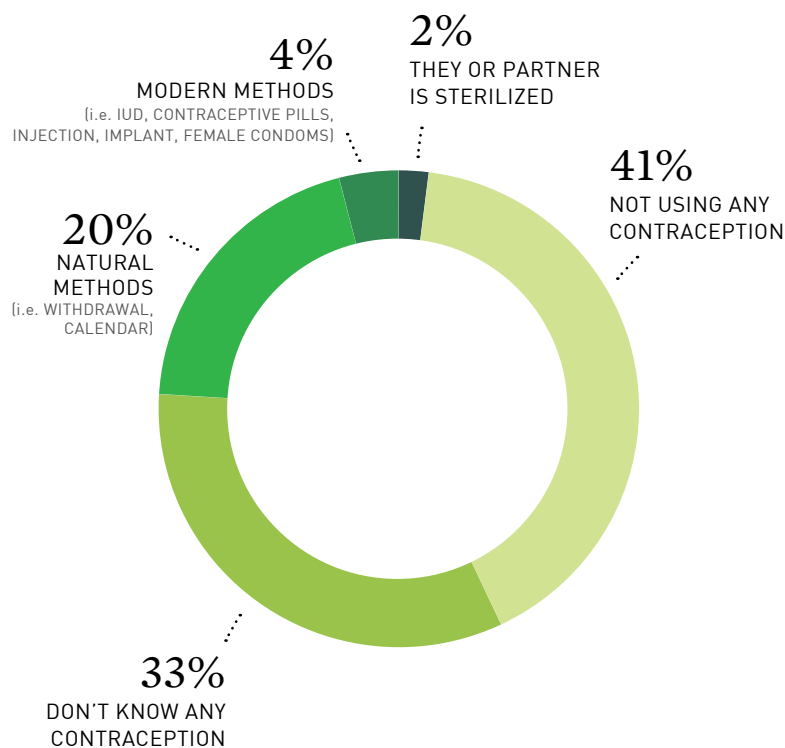
37%

had no knowledge of contraceptive methods

4%

of men were currently using a modern method of contraception

Use of Contraception



- This group had the lowest level of education: 39% had completed secondary school or university. Most were unmarried (57%).
- Desired family size was 5 (range 1-8), the highest across countries.
- Use of modern contraception was very low(4%).
- Condom use was low. Among sexually active men (123 of 207), only 42% reported using a condom at last sex and 33% reported never using a condom, the highest among all countries.
- Knowledge of contraception, other than the condom was low (37% don't know any methods),
- Knowledge improved among married men (28% have no knowledge vs 44% unmarried).
- Mali is the only country where zero respondents used contraceptive injection, IUD, or implant.
- Decision-making was evenly split between men and women, but collaborative decision-making was low (18%). Among sexually active men, 42% (50/123) of men report they make the decision about contraception, and 42% (51/122) report that their partner decides.
- Decision-making responsibility was similar across educational levels. Married men reported higher levels of sole decision-making (47% vs 38%).
- The most common themes for non-use of contraception were plans to conceive, religiosity, and trust of the partner.

Results: Nigeria Summary

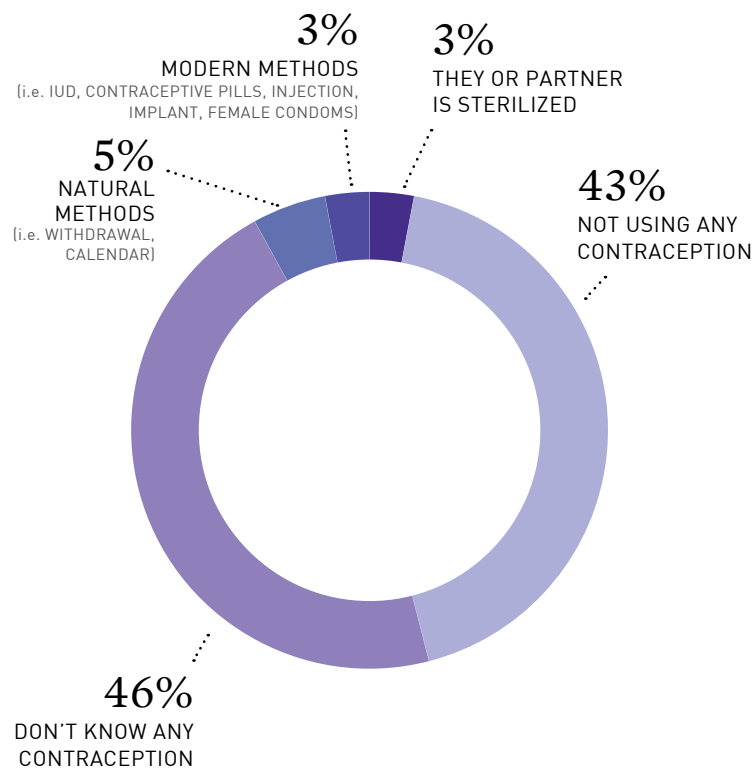
4
was the median desired
number of children

42%
used condoms at last sex

48%
had no knowledge of
contraceptive methods

3%
of men were currently
using a modern method
of contraception

Use of Contraception



- The level of education was generally high: 70% had completed secondary school or university. Most respondents were unmarried (63%).
- Desired family size was 4 (range 2-8), among the highest.
- Rates of condom use were among the lowest; among sexually active men, 25% (29/115) reported never using a condom. 'Never using condoms' was the most frequent response for both married and unmarried men.
- Nigerian respondents had the lowest knowledge of (48% have no knowledge) and use of modern methods (3%) of contraception, besides condoms.
- Knowledge was higher among married men (34% have no knowledge) and those with a university education (31%).
- Among sexually active men, 44% (50/115) of men report they make the decision about contraception, and 23% (27/115) report that their partner decides.
- One third (33%) of respondents reported collaborative decision-making; this was the second highest level of collaboration after Kenya.
- Decision-making responsibility was similar across educational levels. Married men reported higher levels of sole decision-making (47% vs 38%).
- The most common themes for non-use of contraception were plans to conceive and trust of the partner.

Takeaways

- Young men's behavioral patterns in relationships are heavily influenced by their social, financial and educational vulnerabilities and perceived inadequacy as providers and sexual partners. Negative experiences in adolescence— cheating and betrayal, heartbreak, and financial pressures, for example—led young men to protect themselves in relationships, often by claiming power and ownership.
- Young men are the main decision makers on use of contraception, but lack information, access and safe opportunities to learn about sexuality and relationships.
- Young men see having a child as a source of joy, as bringing societal and family approval, and proof of masculinity. Their desire to protect future fertility and manhood deters young men from using long-term or permanent methods of contraception.
- Attitudes toward pre-marital sex differed between Kenya and India. Whereas sex is largely seen as a healthy activity for men in Kenya, stigma around pre-marital sex in India created barriers to accessing contraception and drove young men to engage in voyeurism, porn use and frequenting sex workers.
- In both settings, young men experience considerable pressure to be financial providers. Lack of economic means affects their self-worth and their chances of relationship success, and might push them into risky decisions such as dropping out of school to engage in transactional sex.
- For these young men, being a man means putting up a strong front, despite experiences of heartbreak, pressure, and vulnerability. These young men often felt they had few people to confide in and trust with their questions.
- The four-country surveys revealed marked differences in contraception knowledge, use, and decision-making across geographies, which has implications for the design of approaches to engage and inform men.

Opportunities for Design

India:

- Engage other decision-makers and influencers such as families, teachers, peers and community leaders to support men to improve knowledge.
- Leverage the high use of technology, including social media, to engage urban men confidentially.
- Focus on basic sexual health education for young, unmarried men, in and outside schools. Puberty-specific modules for boys aged 10-14 years might help clear misconceptions surrounding masturbation, pornography, and desire.
- Peer-to-peer education on interpreting mainstream media, pornography, and consent and gender-based violence prevention.
- Train providers to support couples with language and communication tools for discussing contraception that improves collaborative decision-making.
- Prioritize interventions that address or bypass the stigma of unmarried young men using contraception.
- Explore points of private access to contraceptive methods, including condoms, outside of traditional clinics / community health workers.

Mali and Nigeria:

- Conduct additional participatory ethnographic research to inform design of interventions.
- Focus on birth spacing messaging and delaying first birth, in view of high desired family size.
- Interventions to encourage collaborative decision-making and open discussion between young couples.
- Focus on basic sexual health education for young,

unmarried men, especially in Nigeria.

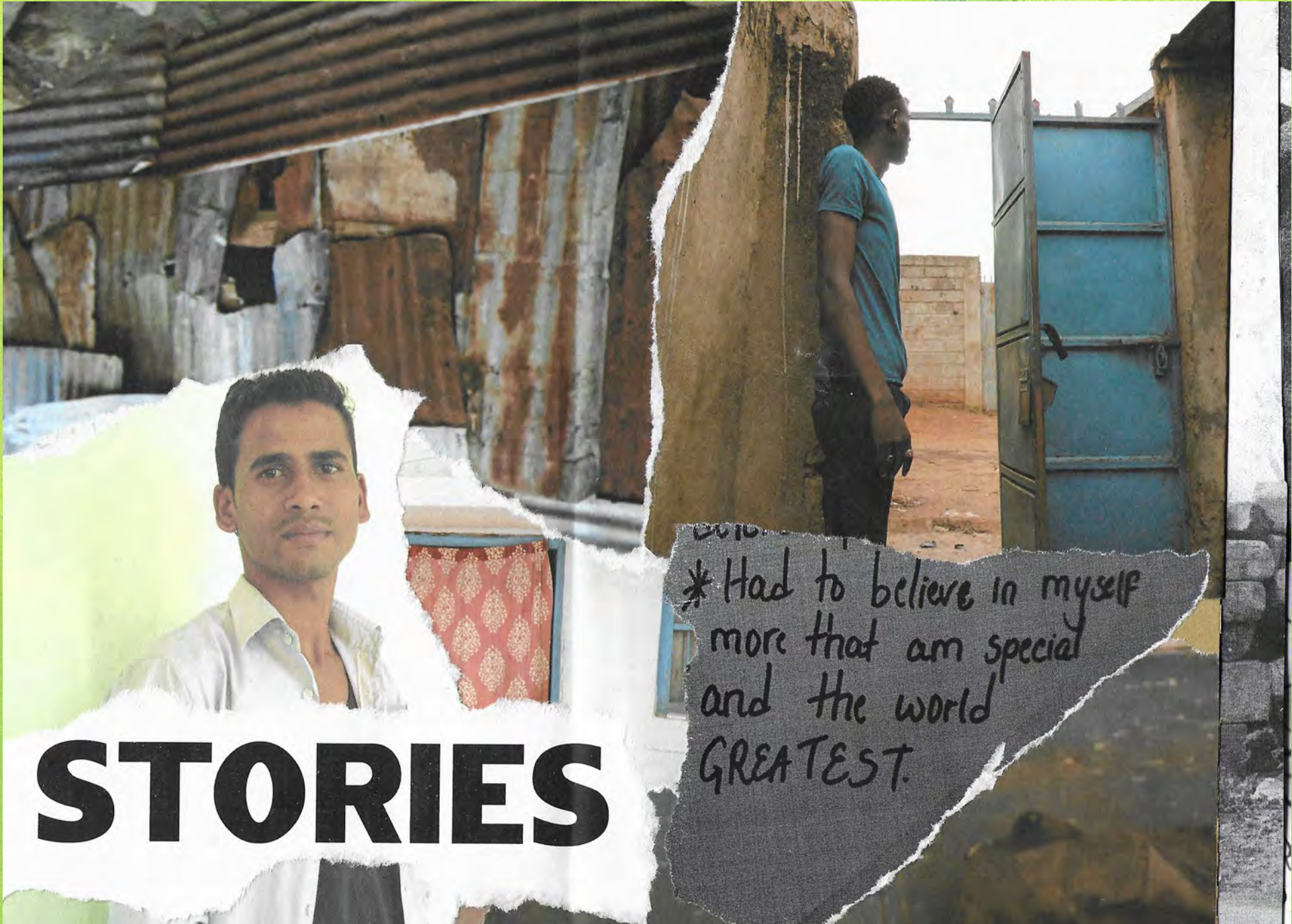
- Engage young men in conversations about planning family size and economic means e.g. leverage married men who are respected in the community to explain the financial and personal implications of large families.

Kenya:

- Address myths via accurate sources of information that specifically tackle fears about fertility
- Leverage the collaborative decision-making between men and women to facilitate couple conversations about contraception
- Target messaging around the segments of relationships that young men are in (casual vs long-term) e.g. messaging explaining that someone's "casual" partner may be someone else's "marriage-material" girl to support condom use.
- Prioritize interventions that combine sexual health and economic empowerment to engage men and address their financial pressures
- Use key stakeholders who are social models for young men to prioritize and incentivize staying in school and facilitate opportunities outside of transactional relationships.
- Conduct further research on the prevalence and circumstances of 'sugar mommy' relationships.



APPENDIX



STORIES

* Had to believe in myself
more that am special
and the world
GREATEST.



I'm His Living Legacy

Being a man means that you are in control of your own life. A man solves his own problems. A man is ambitious. A man cares for his family.

The death of my father was the greatest challenge I have ever faced. When he died, I was still in high school, and things got tough. Before his death, my family was comfortable. After that, money was tight. Our family had to move to an unfamiliar house in an unfamiliar place. Suddenly, my school fees became a large economic burden. When my father died, I was still so young. My mother and sister helped me get through it. I relied on them. These two women found a way to finish paying my school fee and encouraged me to pursue my education despite our difficult circumstances. My college life continues to be hard without my father. I have joined the hockey team which provides some financial stipends. I know that I need to find fulfillment in my life. I know that to be a successful man, I must work hard.

I was my father's only son. We had a good relationship, and it is because of him, his life and death, that I learned how to become a man.

NAIROBI, KENYA

Anger
Saddness
betrayal

Love, Lies and Money

When I was in high school, I started dating a girl who was older than me. I liked her for so long, and I finally made her my girlfriend. We had a good relationship, for a time. Eventually, though, money started causing problems for us. Money is always a problem in relationships. "You want credit, you want clothes, you want to have a good time." I was in high school at the time. I did not have a job or income, but she was older, more experienced and wanted things that I just could not provide. She would nag me about money, make fun of me for my financial instability and lie to me in order to pry money from me. Once, she told me she was pregnant and that I would need to get her money for an abortion. I was able to get the money together, and afterward she told me it was a lie, that she really just wanted to see how far I was willing to go to get money for her. My financial instability pushed her into relationships with other men, older men who could provide things for her that I could not. I was still so young and enamored by her that even these relationships did not drive me away. Eventually, though, the money problems became too much for her, and she was the one to break it off.



Guys don't share things like this with our friends. I was too embarrassed to tell my friends how she abused me, how she made fun of me, how she questioned my manhood, how she used personal things I shared with her against me. I kept all of my hurt inside.

NAIROBI, KENYA



Entered multiple
sexual relationships.

The Fat-Bellied Man

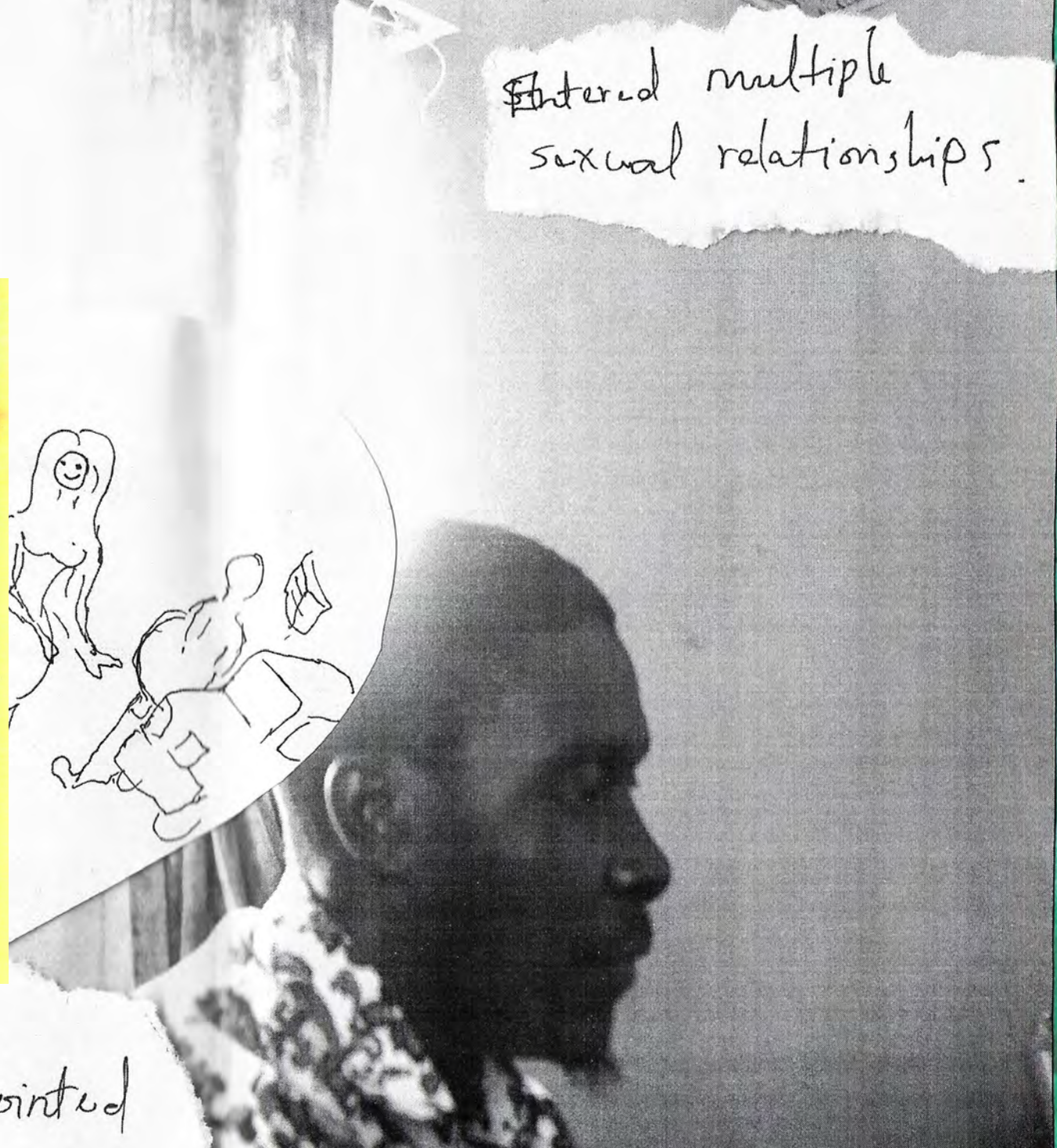
My beautiful girl found a fat-bellied man. A fat-bellied man has cash. He has a car. She was attracted to the money and to the car. I, on the other hand, could not offer her anything. Well, all I could offer was love; nothing more. She was not interested in love, though. "Love cannot be eaten," and she wanted a good life. She wanted food, and clothes, and trips to the salon: a good life. I could not offer her a good life. He was almost twice her age, but she left me for him anyway.

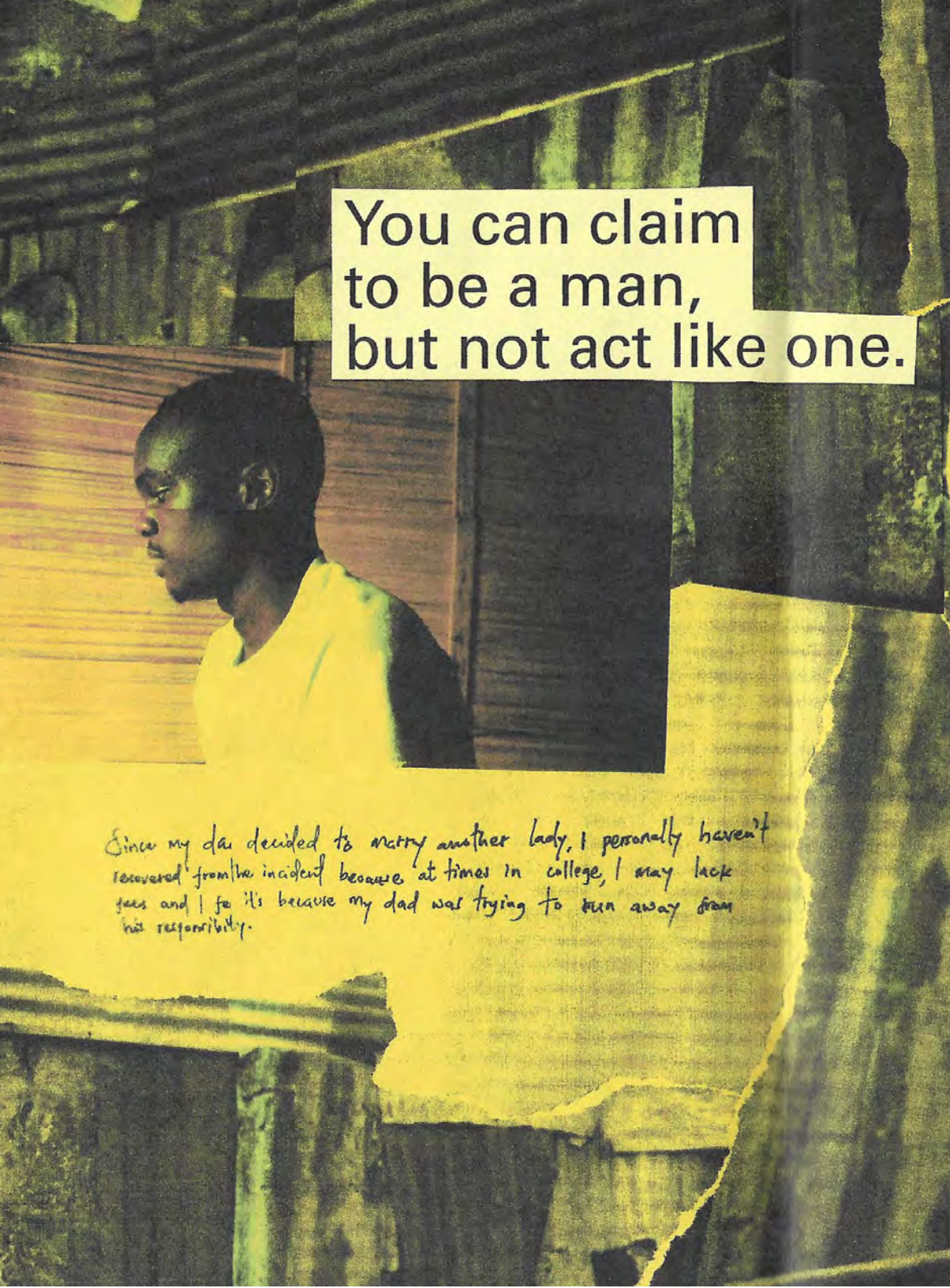
I was hurt. To make myself feel better, I started having sex with a lot of different girls. I forgot about how hurt I was, and I started to forget about the girl who hurt me. I know that entering into multiple sexual relationships is not a good thing; though, for me, it turned out to be "a blessing in disguise."

KISUMU, KENYA



Felt hurt,
disappointed





You can claim
to be a man,
but not act like one.

Since my dad decided to marry another lady, I personally haven't recovered from the incident because at times in college, I may lack fees and I feel it's because my dad was trying to run away from his responsibility.

Unforgivable Betrayal

My mom only wants my life to be good. She wants me to become a great man. That will make her happy. The women in my life have been so important. My father does not value education and is not supportive of our family, so I could not rely on him to help with school fees. I almost dropped out of school. My mother does not have much money because she is a primary school teacher, but gave everything to pay for my school fees.

One day she called crying, fearful that she herself would be unable to eat because she had no money to pay for food. All of her money went toward my siblings and my education. I decided that because I am a man, I should just drop out of school to hustle, but my sister would not let this happen. My sister decided to drop out of school herself, so that her school fee could go toward my education instead. She is older and married to a guy in the army, so she hopes that one day her husband will financially support her education. She sacrificed her own schooling for me.

My father betrayed my mother; betrayed my family. I call him the betrayer. He married another woman and took a piece of our land from us in order to build a house for his new wife. When my mother objected, though, my father threatened to beat her. I'm away at school now but my brothers, even though they are so little, protect my mother in the village. I know my little boys are there to stand up to my dad when he threatens to abuse my mom.



-My dad decided to marry another woman and build her on ~~our~~ our little piece of land (Betrayal).

My father betrayed my mother; betrayed my family. I call him the betrayer. He married another woman and took a piece of our land from us in order to build a house for his new wife. When my mother objected, though, my father threatened to beat her. I'm away at school now but my brothers, even though they are so little, protect my mother in the village. I know my little boys are there to stand up to my dad when he threatens to abuse my mom.

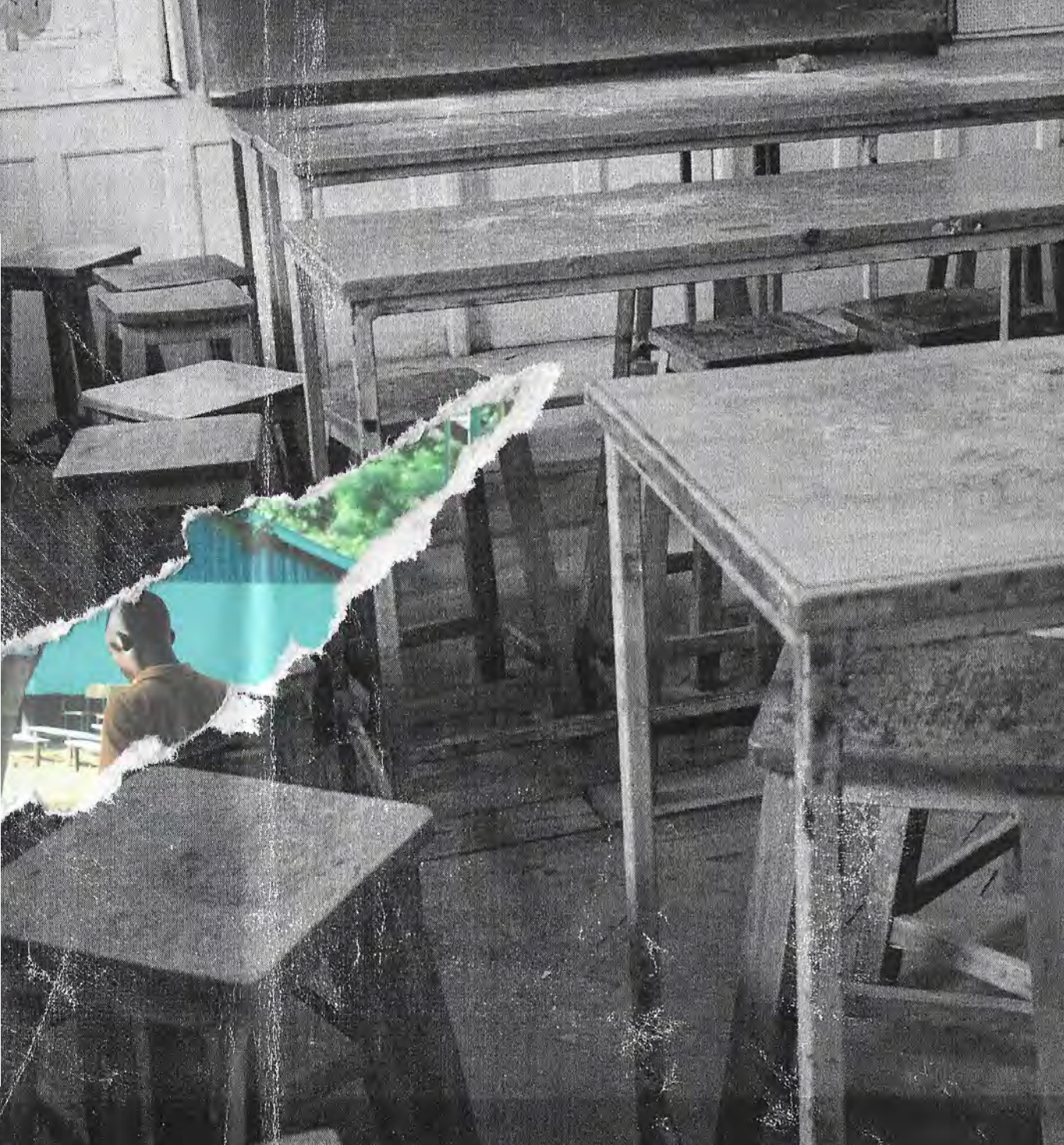
Gambling with Our Lives In Order to Survive

My circumstances were not good growing up. I was very poor. I was 8 when my father and mother passed away. At that point, family friends and well-wishers helped me complete my school fees. I could barely meet my basic needs. Once I entered college, those who had cared for me until that point told me “we’ve done our best to bring you up, but for the rest, you can hustle your way through.”

I was “broke as a church mouse.” At times, I did not even have 20 KSH to buy myself lunch. That’s when my friend told me he would introduce me to a sugar mommy. A friend knew how poor I was, and said that his sugar mommy could introduce me to one of her friends.

My sugar mommy was moved by my story, and said she would support me as long as I am loyal to her. She pays my school fees. She takes me on vacation. She gives me 10,000 KSH (approximately \$100) at a time. She’s promised she’ll give me a car if I “improve my game.” How could I say no to her?

KISUMU, KENYA





Looking to Her

What can I say about my grandmother?

We exist because of our grandmother, who gave life to our mothers. We're cousins, and our families live together. Though she's dead now, our grandmother lived with us most of our lives. She loved us so much.

My grandmother knew so much about me, even more than my mom because she stayed with me since I was a child. She knew about the girls I was dating, and advised me about how to be responsible in relationships.

She said to me 'do things that will make your people proud.' My grandmother also made my mother into the woman she is. My mother is a motivating force in my life, and because she is a single mother, she acts as both father and mother. She says to treat my cousin as my brother; be respectful of those around me.

Everyone trusted Grandmother. She was an amazing lady.

KISUMU, KENYA



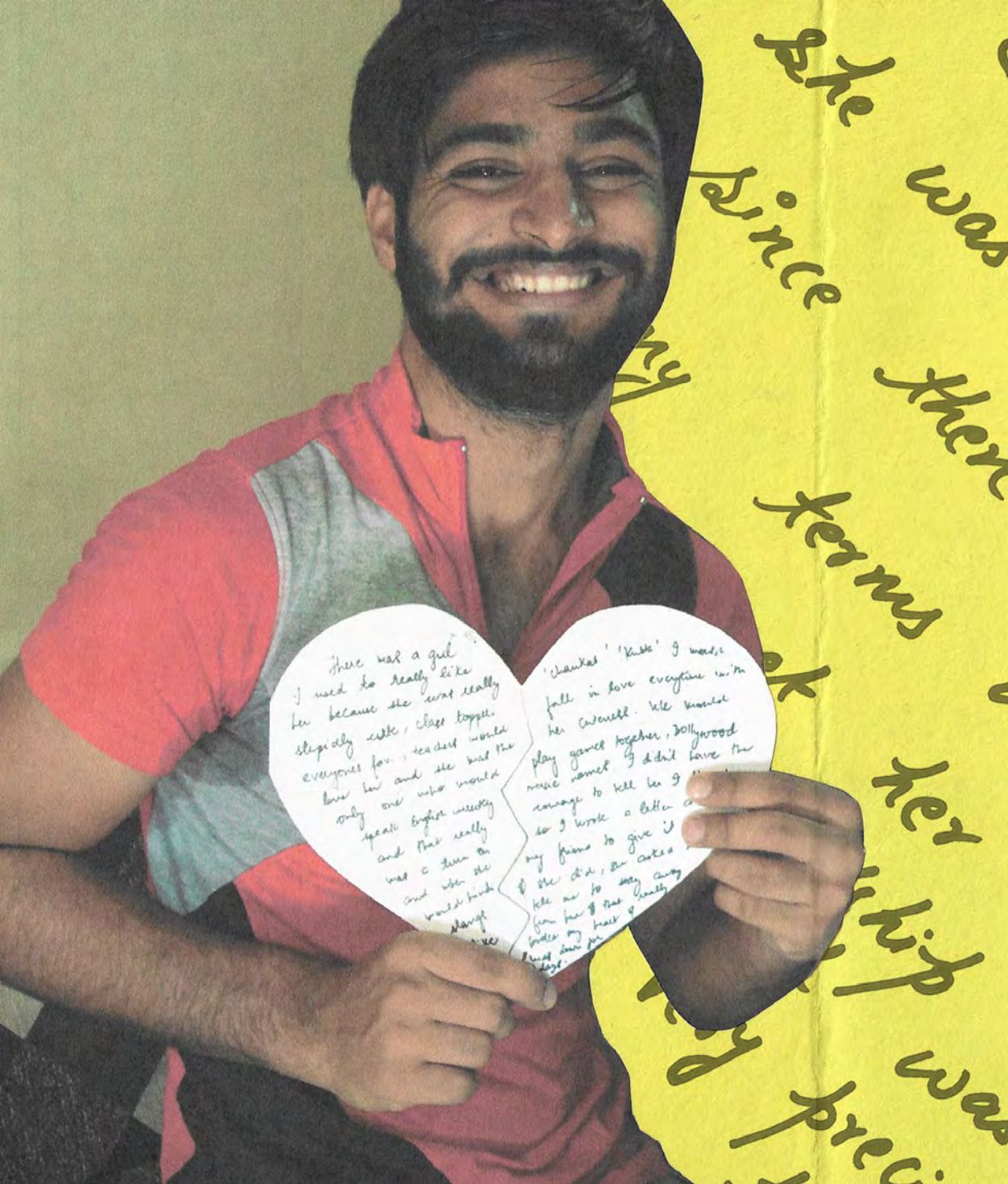
Behind Closed Doors

My girlfriend invited me over to her house. We just wanted to spend time together. I'm not sure why, but I decided to go through the back gate instead of the front door. Her parents came home, and found us alone. They were so upset that they beat her and locked me in a room. Her parents called my parents to try to sort the situation out. It was her fault, even her own parents admit that. She should not have called me over when they were out of the house.

Once we got home, my mother and father questioned me: 'Why did you go there without her parents?' 'Why didn't you inform anyone about where you were going?' 'What were you doing with her?' 'What were your intentions in going over there?' My parents thought I might have gone over there to have sex with the girl. I cried to my mother, and I cried to my father. I did not have poor intentions.

Eventually, the girl asked that we not speak anymore. She said that we both needed to focus on our studies.

LUCKNOW, INDIA



Game of Hearts

I played games with a girl. When I sat in front of her in class, she prepared Bollywood movie games for me to figure out.

I thought this girl was so cute and smart. Teachers loved her, and she really wanted to be the Class Proper. I knew if I told her how much I liked her, though, she would not accept me because she only wanted to focus on school. However, I found out she was playing games with other boys. That's when I knew I could not keep my feelings inside any longer, and tell her how I felt about her. I wrote a letter. In that three-page letter, I told her everything I felt about her; how cute I thought she was; how much I loved working on the same science project as her; how she was the only good thing about going to school; how I hated when she played games with other boys.

She rejected me. She never wanted to speak to me again after that, and I was shattered. I was too embarrassed, my ego was too tarnished, to talk to my friends about what had happened. I was hurt, but I knew I had hurt her too. I felt like I had done her wrong by writing that letter. She lost her friend just like I had lost mine.

LUCKNOW, INDIA

Don't Marry for Love

Love marriages are not successful here. You are disobeying your family by entering into a love marriage.

If a family finds out that a girl is in a relationship, they try to get her married early so she does not jeopardize her arranged marriage. I had to keep my relationship a secret for this reason. We all have secret relationships. In secret, you meet up in parks; avoid answering the phone when your family is around; and delete all of your text messages with the girl.

This girl was not good, though. She chatted with other guys behind my back. I had to break it off. She cut herself and threatened to commit suicide. I told her that if she kept it up I would tell her parents and get the police involved. She was cheating on me. I don't regret leaving her.

LUCKNOW, INDIA



I felt very heart-broken
ditched me. She
to other guys
few friends and
friend also
It made me
my close friend
me for a
trust

when my girlfriend
was talking
even a with
one of my
betrayed me
really sad
went against
girl. My
got broken.

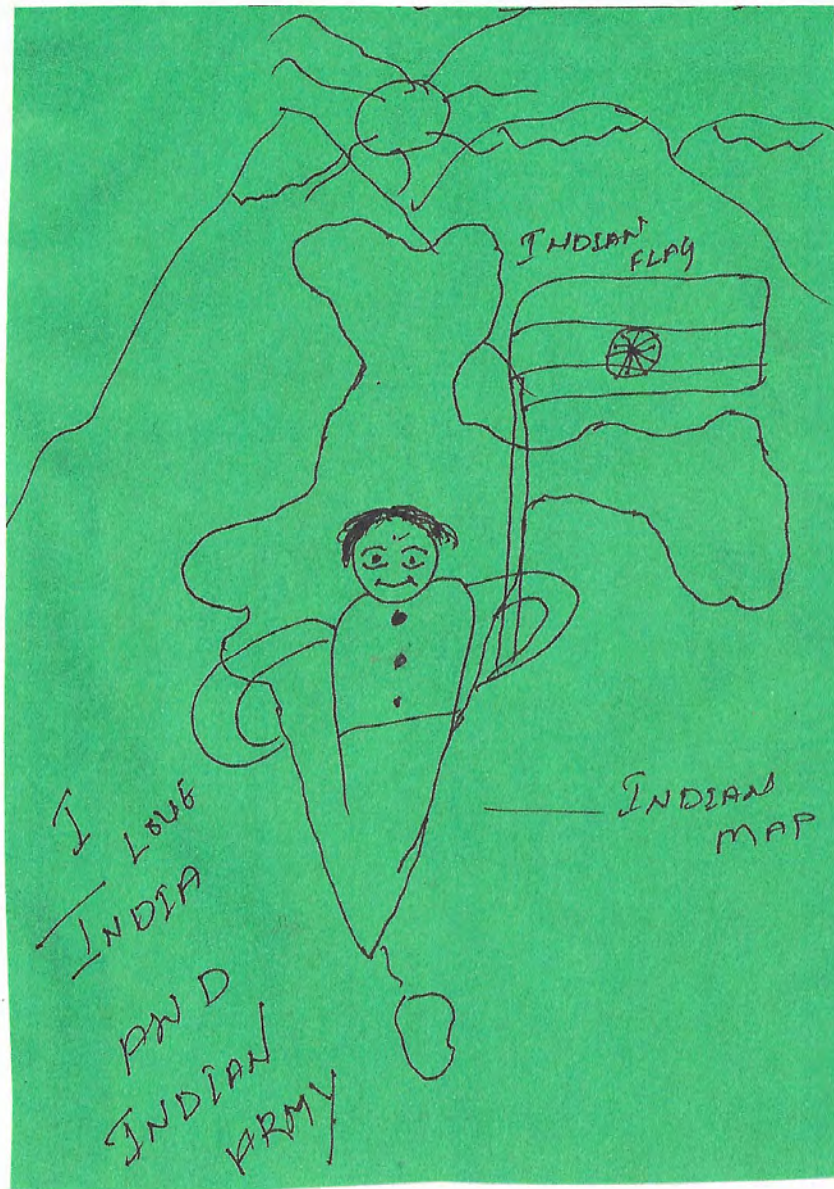


Nothing to be Done

I'm getting married soon. I am engaged to a girl whose father along with my father arranged for us to be married. Before this there was a girl I liked. She wanted to learn how to ride a scooty and knew that I rode a scooty. She asked me to teach her. I said to her, "I cannot teach you because you will get hurt." I did teach her how to ride, but it made me really nervous. If the scooty gets damaged, it's not a big deal: I'm a mechanic, I can fix a scooty. If she got hurt, though, I did not know how to fix her. This girl loved to study. When I wanted us to go out, she would say, "Let's go out later. We have to study." When we became boyfriend and girlfriend, we would talk on the phone or go to the park. We would go to the movies; we did not even care what movie was playing. We just wanted to go to the theater, so we could be together.

The girl I liked was Hindu. I am Muslim. We were together for two years before she married someone else. The last time we were together, neither of us knew she would be married. She knew her family was going to another state and heard something about marriage but didn't understand what was going on. As it turns out, her family had found out about me. They needed to get her married quickly in order to settle her. I found out when I called her. She told me she was married. That's how I found out.

We were able to meet one last time before she said she could no longer see me. I was hesitant to talk to her, but I asked why she got married without telling me. I was angry that she did not tell me even though she barely knew what was going on herself. Eventually, I thought, "She is married now. What can be done?" I just tried to be present with her because I knew this would be the last time we saw each other.



Protecting Our Futures

One day, I'll be in the army. I wake up at four in the morning for training. I go out and run. Then, I come back and study. I study chemistry, math, biology, and botany.

Though I have been dating my girlfriend for four years, no one knows about her. If people find out people are dating before marriage, they spread rumors and gossip about them. It's expected that we will have our lives settled before getting married, so we date in secret for now. The day that I am selected to join the army is the day that I will tell my family about my girlfriend. Until I can prove that I am independent with a solid foundation, I cannot share this part of my life with my family.

I am not physical with my girlfriend. What if I join the army and am posted in a region where terrorist attacks occur frequently and am killed? What if I am shot and become crippled? I would not want to ruin her life or her future by being physical before we are married. We have not spoken a lot about sex, but I have faith that she will think as I do. We are together because we think the same things, so I am not worried about disagreeing about sex.

LUCKNOW, INDIA



ARTIFACTS

Artifacts from the hands of youth

Researchers asked young men to create artifacts during interviews and focus groups. Through writing, drawing and collaging, young men had an opportunity to creatively express their feelings about relationships, expectations, social networks and family planning. Artifacts are physical representations of young men's experiences. For researchers, the artifacts provide insights that young men may not otherwise share through a traditional question and answer format. Artifact generation meant offering young men options in how to express themselves which augmented the collaborative design research process.

Broken heart

When I first started my relationship when I was still in Form 1 (mono) I began my relationship with a certain girl whom I decided to love me and I gave her all my heart and he did it too. When we broke up with her due to me seeing her with many boys she started to throw words with me, then that's when I realised that we love should not be forced. We departed ways upto now we don't talk to each other due to such a thing. Thank u

JIM.

upto know that I am writing am always still single because of that girl, because the love she gave me was stronger than any other girl. But still I believe even if we broke up with each other she can still remember the kind of love and support I gave her. I still love her and I know she does the same. Thank u

Heartbreak/Mend

This activity required young men to write or draw about their heartbreak stories on a cutout of a heart. First, on the broken side of the heart, young men talked of their heartbreak experiences and emotions; and on the mended side of the heart, young men talked of how they overcame heartbreak and their emotional state today.

Heartbreak/mend

Broken hearts
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-KISUMU, KENYA



-KISUMU, KENYA



-KISUMU, KENYA

ok I kinda got heartbroken sometimes when I tried to believe in love and had a serious relationship with some girl whom I think I loved but then it turned out that the girl was just some passer-by who had no feelings for me. After dating for some months the girl called and told me she didn't ever love me.

that she was just passing time with ^{me}. I got heartbroken and it was hard for me but I had to accept the situation and that's why I don't believe in love though it's there. I also got heartbroken when I lost my grandmother but still life has to move on.

-KISUMU, KENYA

Heartbreak/mend

ARTIFACTS: HEARTBREAK/MEND

I am a ~~man~~^{boy} who follows his thoughts and am ready to move on without being with such a girl because, for now I am looking on how to draw my future so that I can become a strong man who is capable of helping his family with others e.g. Community or Nation in terms of development. Girls are there and the one who I will love is still not yet born and I know when time arrives she will be there for me.

Heartbreak/mend

ARTIFACTS: HEARTBREAK/MEND

I had a girl who I met in class 1st and she was my crush since then. I increased my terms with her to get her friendship which was very precious to me.

Finally when we were in 5th class & in best phase of our friendship, I told her about my feeling towards her & she said 'Yes'. We cont. our relationship till 10th class.

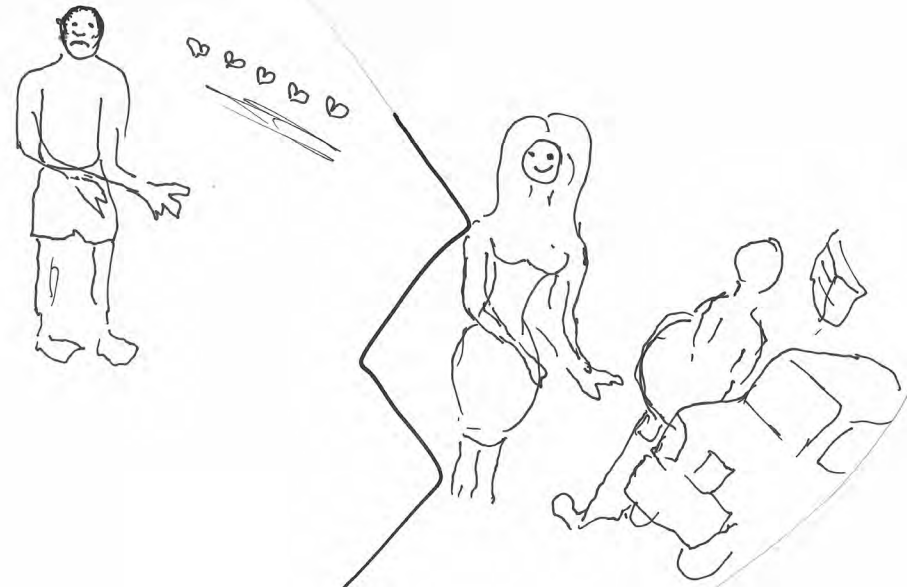
-LUCKNOW, INDIA

I FELT BETRAYED, REJECTED AND ALMOST COMMITTED SUICIDE BUT WAS COMFORTED BY THE FACT THAT THE GIRLS' POPULATION IS ACTUALLY TWICE THAT OF THE BOY. SO DEFINITELY I REALIZED I'LL GET MY BETTER HALF ONE DAY.

-NAIROBI, KENYA

The relationship was great but it came to an end bcz of money problems, I wasn't working then and she was older than me. She had needs which I couldn't fulfill.

-NAIROBI, KENYA



-KISUMU, KENYA

Heartbreak/mend

ARTIFACTS: HEARTBREAK/MEND

What broke my heart

1) When I was walking towards the market I found my girlfriend proudly sharing my love with someone else, so I was not happy with her and for that I broke up with her.

2) Another thing is that, when I recall the way she used to tell me how she loved me, I found myself miserable and for that I recall my heart was broken.

3) My heart was broken with that girl because if I figure out how I take much of my time singing for her the way I loved her, I cannot imagine myself.

-NAIROBI, KENYA

Heartbreak/mend

ARTIFACTS: HEARTBREAK/MEND

Broken

~~And about the size~~
~~Last year I was heartbroken by a~~
~~lady she left.~~
last year was heartbroken by a lady I loved so much. It was in the month of July 15. We had planned to get married. It was so traumatised such that I vowed never to love again. It was tough.

-NAIROBI, INDIA

Since my dad decided to marry another lady, I personally haven't recovered from the incident because at times in college, I may lack fees and I feel it's because my dad was trying to run away from his responsibility.

-KISUMU, KENYA



- felt unwanted
- Was ^{not} that romantic like the one he left me for.
- I liked something that someone else had.
- It was to time to let go since everything that has a beginning must have an end.

-NAIROBI, KENYA

- After getting into another relationship.
- ✓ Felt happy
- ✓ He started to become jovial
- ✓ Talking much about his new girlfriend.
- ✓ Active
- ✓ Hope in marriage.
- ✓ Boastful on his new girlfriend.



-NAIROBI, KENYA

- * Starting to do what I love most.
- * Going out more often to meet friends and create new friends.
- * Started to explore more by traveling outside town.
- * Listen to music.
- * Burnt everything that could remind me of her and deleted pictures.
- * Had to believe in myself more that am special and the world **GREATEST.**



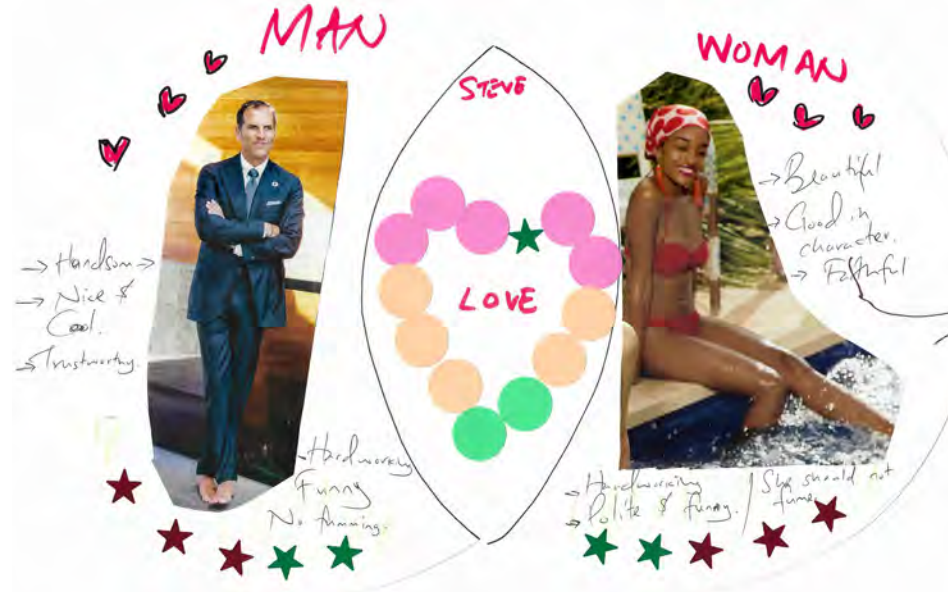
Venn Diagram

We asked young men to fill in a venn diagram with men in one circle and women in the other with drawings, stickers, and magazine cut outs.

Young men creatively depicted roles and attributes of men, those of women and shared qualities of both men and women.

Venn Diagram

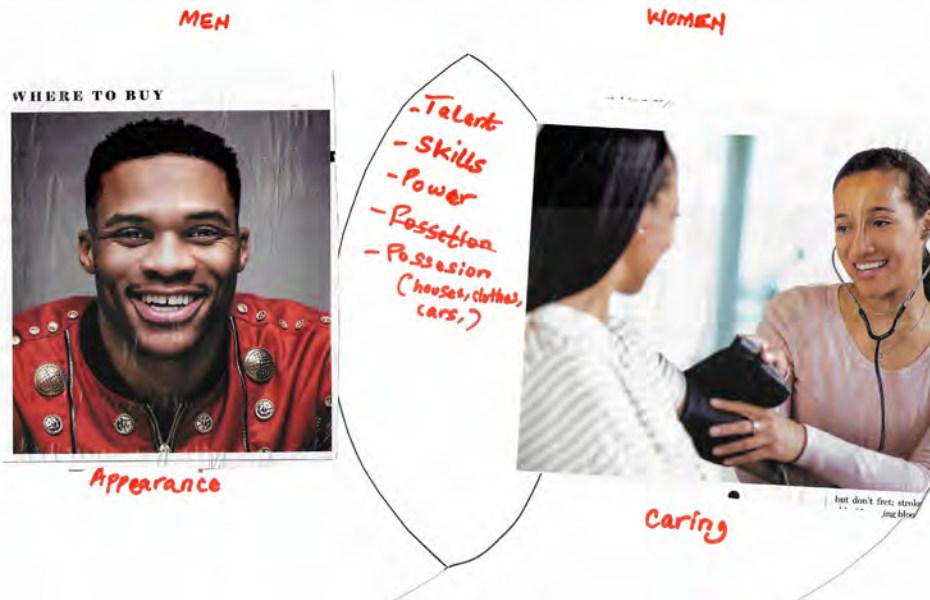
ARTIFACTS: VENN DIAGRAM



-KISUMU, KENYA



-KISUMU, KENYA

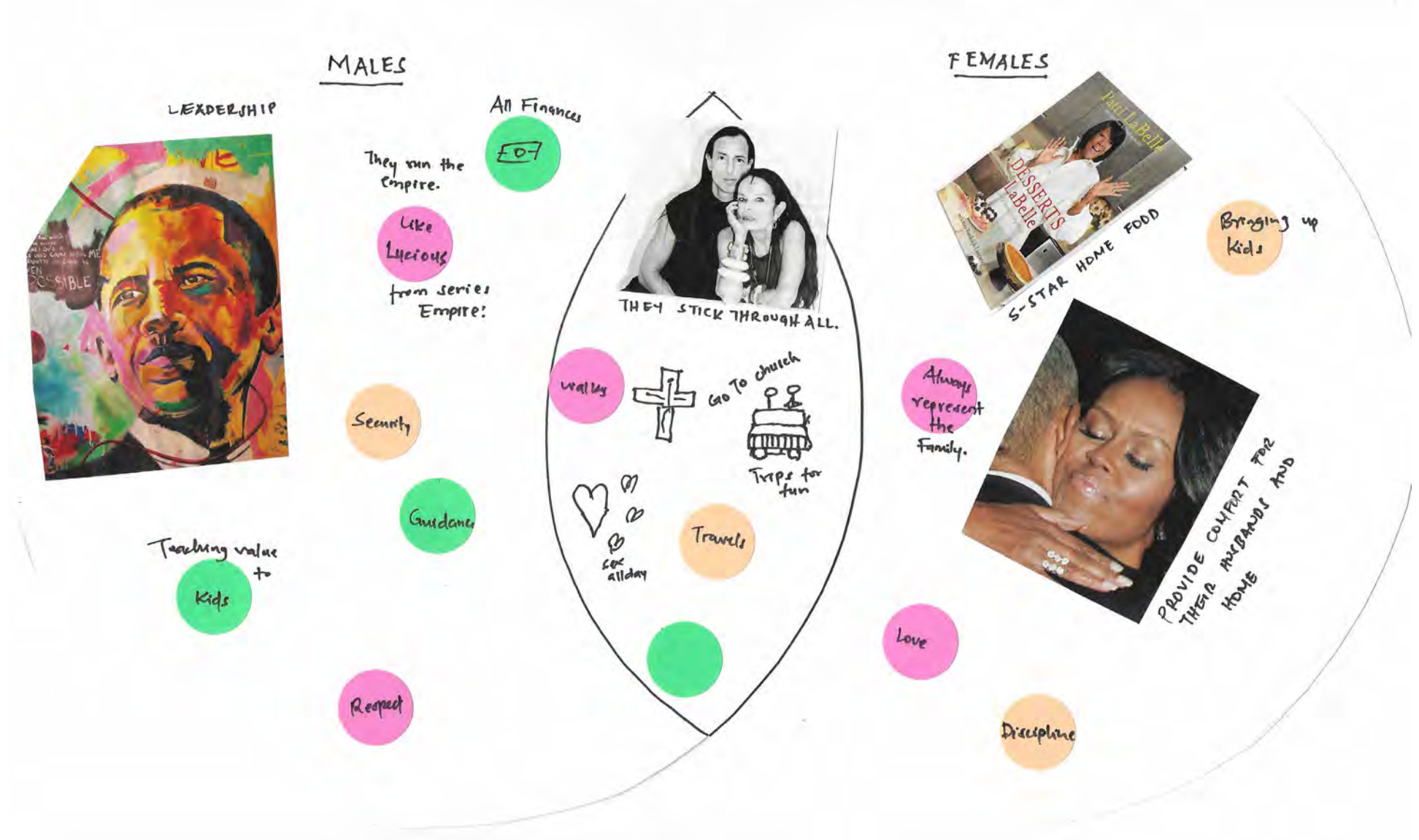


-NAIROBI, KENYA



-NAIROBI, KENYA

Venn Diagram



Venn Diagram

ARTIFACTS: VENN DIAGRAM

MAH

- * Head of the household.
- * Lead the family in terms of needs

WOMAN

- * She is the support of the husband.
- * Guide the family where possible

LOVE

- * Friendship
- * Act as Leaders
- * Problem solving
- * Loving each other

much love

-NAIROBI, KENYA

Men

- Head of the family
- Bread winner
- Take charge in Educating children

Women

- cooks for the family
- Takes care of family.
- Domestic chores
- Maintaining of the house relatives

BEAUTY

(Parental) care to the children & siblings children.

-NAIROBI, KENYA

MAN

- Source of income
- A Pillar
- Means of mobility
- courage.
- Problem solver
- Responsible

WOMAN

- * Beauty in everything
- * Social and Economical supporter.
- * Independent
- * Symbol of unity
- * Not barren

BOTH

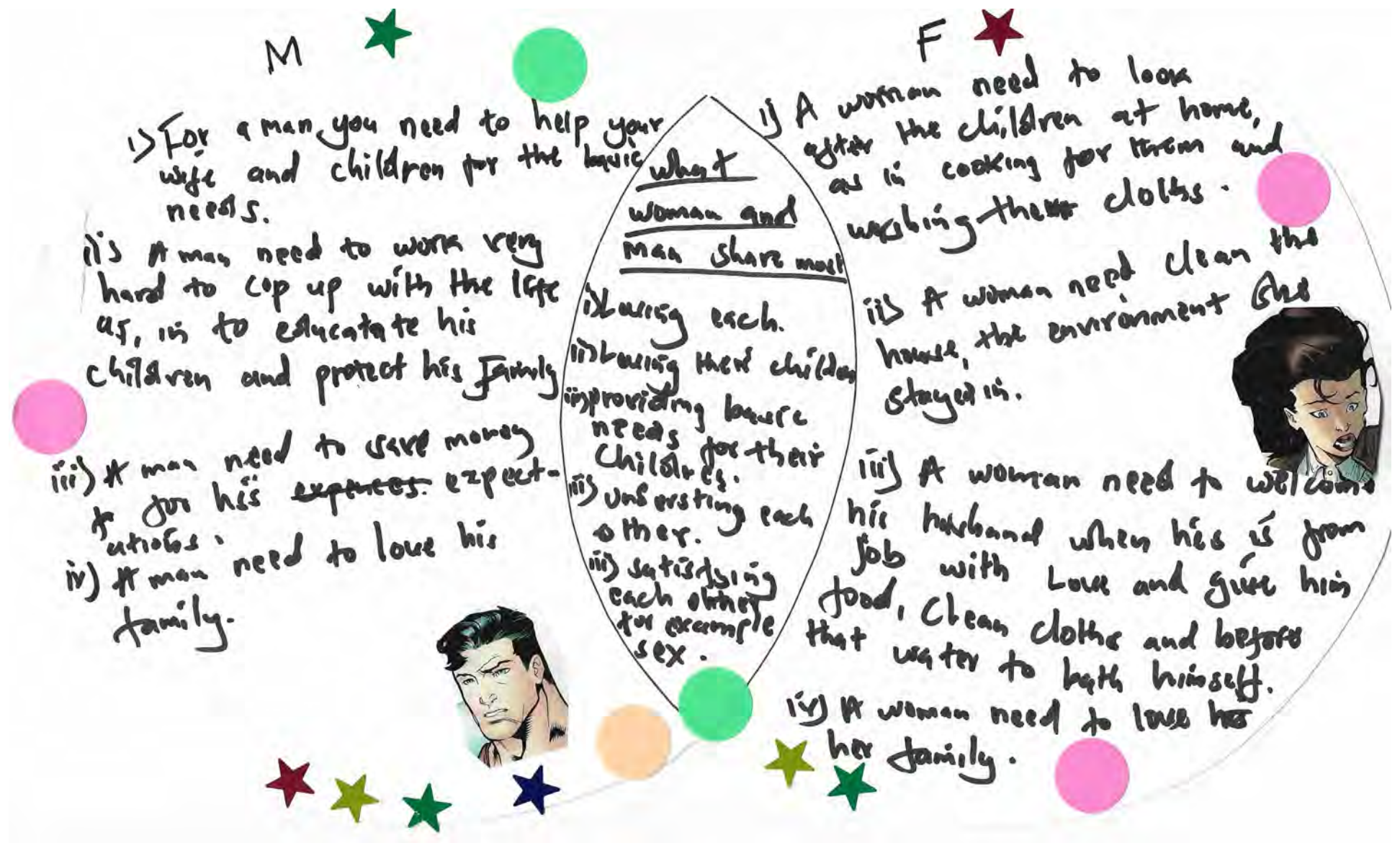
- Children Home
- CONFIDENCE
- COOK
- Source of peace

masculine

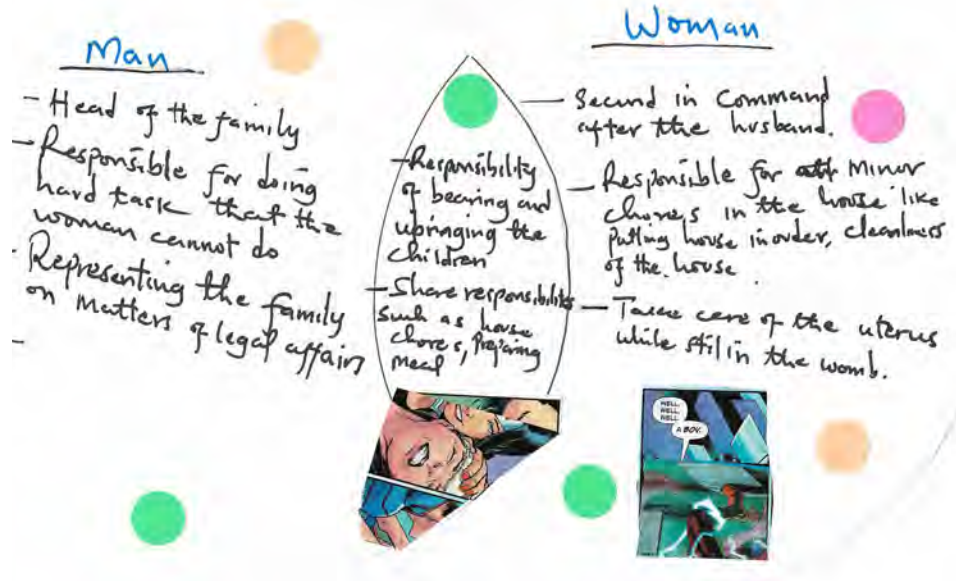
LIFESTYLE

-KISUMU, KENYA

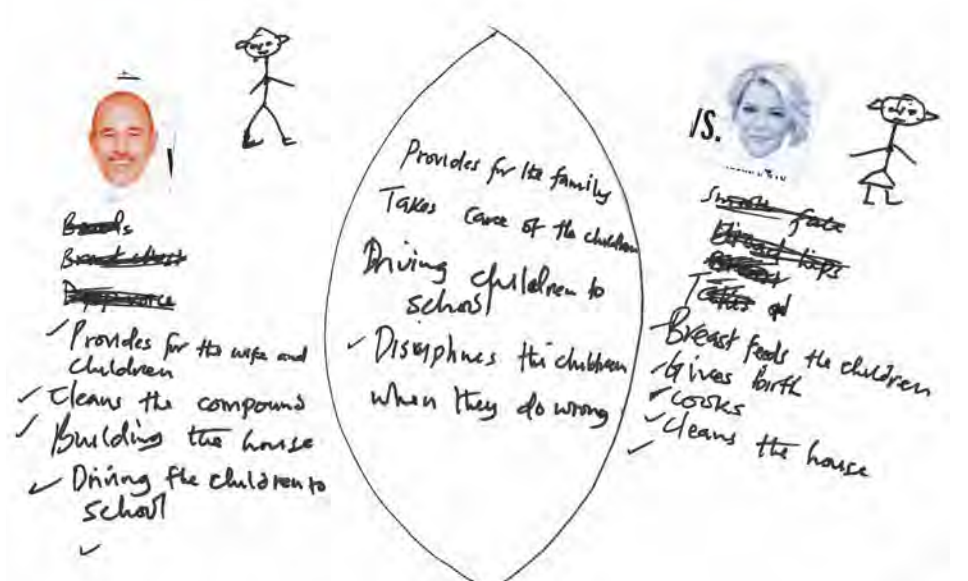
Venn Diagram



Venn Diagram



-NAIROBI, KENYA



-KISUMU, KENYA



-NAIROBI, KENYA



-NAIROBI, KENYA

I renew
my broken heart.

Healed

I have moved on since last year. I just said to myself that life has to move on. And my parents also encouraged me not to lose hope in life as someone ready to stay with me will pop up.

Men Stand Up aims to bring young men's voices to the forefront. We seek to uncover their perspectives on gender, fatherhood and family planning, masculinity and vulnerability, gender-based violence, and unemployment. The findings will help generate future directions for sexual and reproductive health and rights programming with young men. We recognize and appreciate the participation of these young men and their communities in sharing often personal and intimate stories to inform this work. This work was made possible thanks to the generous support of a Grand Challenges Explorations grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Special thanks to: Abbas Agha, Kate Barker, Amiya Bhatia, Sujeet Choubey, Alex Geertz, Gary Darmstadt, Katherine Heflin, Sarah Henry, Ruti Levtov, Clarissa Lord Brundage, Caroline Njhia, Ben Otieno, Melissa Persaud, Ankita Rawat, Suhuyini Salim Shani, Meera Seshadri, and Well Told Story Kenya and PSI India.

Citation: Choi G, Pizatella-Haswell R, Hope R.
Men Stand Up: exploring men's perceptions, behaviors and needs relating to family planning in India, Kenya, Mali and Nigeria. YLabs, 2017.

For more information, contact Rebecca Hope:
rebecca.hope@ylabsglobal.org. All photos and stories shared with written consent of participants. © YLabs 2017