

# 'Why I buried my one-day-old baby alive'

**W**HY will a woman kill her one-day-old child after nine months of pain?

That is the question Charity Obi Ikechukwu, 23, mother of two, who recently did the unthinkable by burying her one-day-old baby alive, has found no genuine answers to.

Charity, who hails from Kwale in Delta State, lives in Olowotodo Quarters, near Mowe, Ogun State. She is being interrogated by homicide detectives at the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) Ogun State. She narrated her experience to *Newsextra*.

"It was out of ignorance and also a mistake. It was the devil that provoked me and pushed me to bury her alive. I didn't want to carry an illegitimate child because the man who impregnated me had bluntly said he was not the father," she cried.

Continuing, she said: "I was married to Sheriff with whom I had two daughters. Unfortunately, my husband died two years ago. After his death, I came across one Kehinde Abeeb with whom I started another relationship. But when he realised that I was pregnant, he left me. If I had money, I would have gotten rid of the pregnancy a long time ago.

"To raise money and cater for the two other girls was a problem, let alone raising as much as N5,000 to carry out an abortion.

"Three months ago, I went to a nurse, Adedeji, (aka Iyabeji) and told her I wanted to terminate the pregnancy. It was then she said it would cost me N5,000. Since then, she had been calling me particularly on my intention to get rid of the pregnancy.

"Consequently, on September 8, I went to her based on our previous arrangement and she gave me an injection. I thereafter gave her N5,000. When I was going home with

my friend, Modinat, who went with me to the nurse, told me there was a stain on my dress.

"I thought the pregnancy would automatically come down with the injection she gave me. But, on getting home, I started having serious stomach ache and had to visit another nurse Mrs. Ishola in my area. She told me it was time to put to bed. I ignored her and went back home.

"On reaching home, the stomach ache persisted, forcing me to rush back to the nurse. I pleaded with her to help with the delivery, even though I had no money. I told her as a resident of the area, I had nowhere to run to and that I would definitely pay her once I had money. So, the nurse did everything for me, including baby items I needed to have taken to the clinic."

She went on: "I was delivered of the baby. We were to go home; Modinat strapped the baby on her back. When we got home, I was worried, especially on how to cater for my three children. The one that touched me was the shameful aspect of nurturing a fatherless baby.

"It was based on that that I told Modinat that I would kill the baby. She did not give any comment. When I was to carry out the act, she was the one that got me a digger. I dug the ground and threw the baby inside. Before I covered her with the earth, the baby was crying but I did not mind her. I covered her and went inside the room. It was later that Chairman sent for me," Charity said.

It was gathered that Modinat, her friend reported the burial of the child to a community leader in the area who alerted the police from Mowe Police Station.

The detectives swung into action and arrested all that were connected with the incident, including Modinat and the two nurses, Mrs. Omolara Ishola and Adeola Adedeji.

The four suspects are being interrogated by homicide detectives of the Ogun State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Eleweran, in Abeokuta, the state capital.

Narrating her experience, Modinat Rasaq said: "I am 21 years old and a trader. I live with Aunty Charity at Olowotodo Quarters, near Mowe in her one-room apartment she inherited from her late husband.

"On that fateful September 8, at about 11.00 in the morning, I felt like sleeping but Aunty Charity called me to come with her to Adesan bus stop, also within Mowe. I decided to go with her because I would be the only one left at home should I not yield to her request.

On getting to Adesan, we branched off and entered a building. The woman we went to see (Mrs. Adeola Adedeji) happened to be a nurse who uses a rented apartment as her residence and clinic. We all were in the sitting room. Having stayed for too long, Aunty Charity called the nurse to attend to her and that she had to

leave. It was based on that, she gave her injection and Aunty Charity gave her five pieces of N500 notes and we left the place.

"While we were waiting to take *okada*, I informed her that her cloth had some stains at the back and she told me it was as a result of the injection she took. On getting home, she lay on bare floor and began to writhe in pains. She then went to a nurse in our area (Mrs. Omolara Ishola) whom she said examined her and told her to go and bring her baby materials, more so that it was time to be delivered of the baby. She was delivered of the baby without paying kobo. After the nurse had dressed the baby up, I strapped her on my back and we went home.

"When we got home and the baby was crying, I placed her on a shawl and asked Aunty Charity to clothe her. She responded that there was no cloth. I then looked for her two-year-old daughter's, Rokibat, and wore it on her. She shocked me by saying she would kill the baby.

"Almost immediately, she gave me N200 to go and buy bleach for her. I suspected that Aunty Charity had the intention of poisoning the baby. I went back home and told her

that I didn't see any bleach to buy.

"When I got home, the baby was still on the floor, crying. Her countenance showed that she was not satisfied with the reply I gave concerning the bleach and she also knew that I would not allow her to carry out the act. So, she sent me to the first nurse who injected her. She actually forgot her handset there and asked me to go and get it for her.

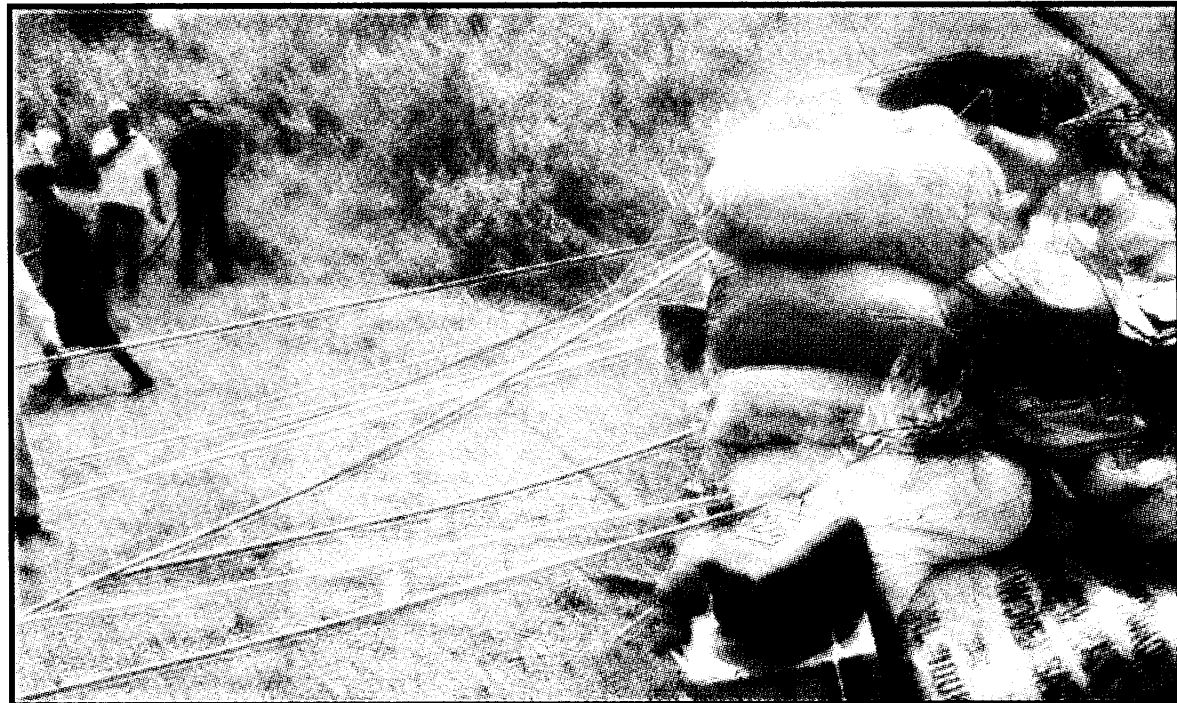
"Before I came back, she had dug a hole and buried the baby in it. I was sad about that development and I had to report to our quarter chairman, Chief Lateef Bashorun.

"The chairman hid me at the back of the door while she was invited into his office. On interrogation about her baby, she referred to me as her sister-in-law and said I had killed and buried the baby. That was how policemen were invited and arrested us.

However, Mrs. Adedeji, 33, the nurse who injected her claimed Charity came to complain of malaria; hence she gave her Paracetamol and Chloroquine injections. She denied giving her inductive injection.

She said: "I only treated her for malaria by injecting her with Paracetamol and Chloroquine. I am a trained and certificated nurse. I had my training at The Light Clinic and Maternity Hospital, Ibadan, Oyo State between late 2001 and early

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•Drugs seized by the NDLEA being burnt by officials of the agency and other agencies in Ekiti State at Ilokun area of Ado-Ekiti, capital of Ekiti State