

## A WORLD BEYOND PLASTIC

There was a time when shoppers at a well known mall in Anthony Village, Lagos, would leave the store carrying stacks of plastic bags. Every item; bread, detergent, snacks and what have you, packed in in plastic. I remember how the streets and gutters nearby often overflowed with these bags after a downpour. The damage was visible, but few paid attention.

Then, something changed.

The mall made a bold decision: they stopped using plastic bags and introduced reusable fabric bags. At first, many customers were unhappy (myself inclusive). Some forgot to bring their bags and had to buy another with them or carry items by hand. Yes, many of us complained about the extra cost of buying a reusable bag.

But slowly, things began to shift. People started adjusting. The colorful, durable bags are now a norm at the mall, as far as you want to shop with them. And of course, some even reused these bags for market shopping or schoolbooks. This isn't just a change in packaging but rather a shift in mindset.

Now, whenever I walk past the mall, I don't just see a store-I see a symbol of environmental responsibility.

This small step by the inspired me and it is a reminder that real restoration starts with simple choices. We, too, can shape a world beyond plastic, one reusable bag at a time.