



AFRICA IN IMAGES

DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC
OF THE CONGO

SEEDS
FIELDS
DEVELOPMENT

seraphine

LIVE YOUR SOLIDARITY!

Do you believe your actions can have an impact on people in the South? Are you concerned about injustice and human rights violations? In Canada, with Development and Peace you can learn about global issues such as access to natural resources, mining, land and water, and take the next steps into advocacy and action.

We live our solidarity by being part of the movement, leading action campaigns, fundraising for our partners, and engaging in advocacy. One by one, in university groups, in parish and school clubs young people are mobilizing to create change, take action and have a positive impact on people of the global South.

“DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE brings our world together by working as a movement with our brothers and sisters in countries where the reality is often quite different. We learn together, work together, and believe together that we can truly change the world.”

Justine Correia, 17, BC



Arriane Collin, CEC staff Aubrey Verzosa, and Kaitlyn Duthie-Kannikkatt. Kaitlyn leads a D&P group at Carleton University in Ottawa, and is the Youth Rep for Eastern Ontario.

“Before participating in the Youth Solidarity Trip to the Philippines, my understanding of the link between my activism in Canada and the work of D&P’s partners was purely theoretical. What impact could calling an MP or attending a rally for a mining bill truly have in the Global South? Then our group visited an island called Rapu Rapu, which has been severely affected by a foreign-owned open-pit gold mining operation. Thousands of fish have been killed by leaking tailing ponds, making it very difficult for the fisherfolk who inhabit the island to make a living.

With support from D&P members, the Centre for Environmental Concerns of the Philippines has organized a national movement seeking sustainable alternatives to destructive mining practices. By mobilizing around Bill C-300 in Canada, we directly support their work by forcing Canadian mining companies to take social responsibility seriously. Our activism transcends national borders, and our solidarity has a real impact on the lives of our partners and their communities. Now I know this movement is not just theoretical – it’s alive!”

Kaitlyn Duthie-Kannikkatt, 21, ONT

“Once I started there was no turning back. From learning about new campaigns that allows real movements and action to take place, the more knowledge I gained the more passionate I became. You do what you can one small step at a time to help others and being involved with Development & Peace is my small step that I take.”

Scotty Joe Smith, 23, PEI

“D&P is a great organization for youth looking to make an impact through social justice. Our voices are heard, recognized and we can make a difference!”

Desiree Nelson, 27, SK

What can you do? Join the movement, lead an action campaign, get involved in advocacy efforts, connect with local groups across Canada or start your own!

<http://youth.devp.org>
justyouth@devp.org

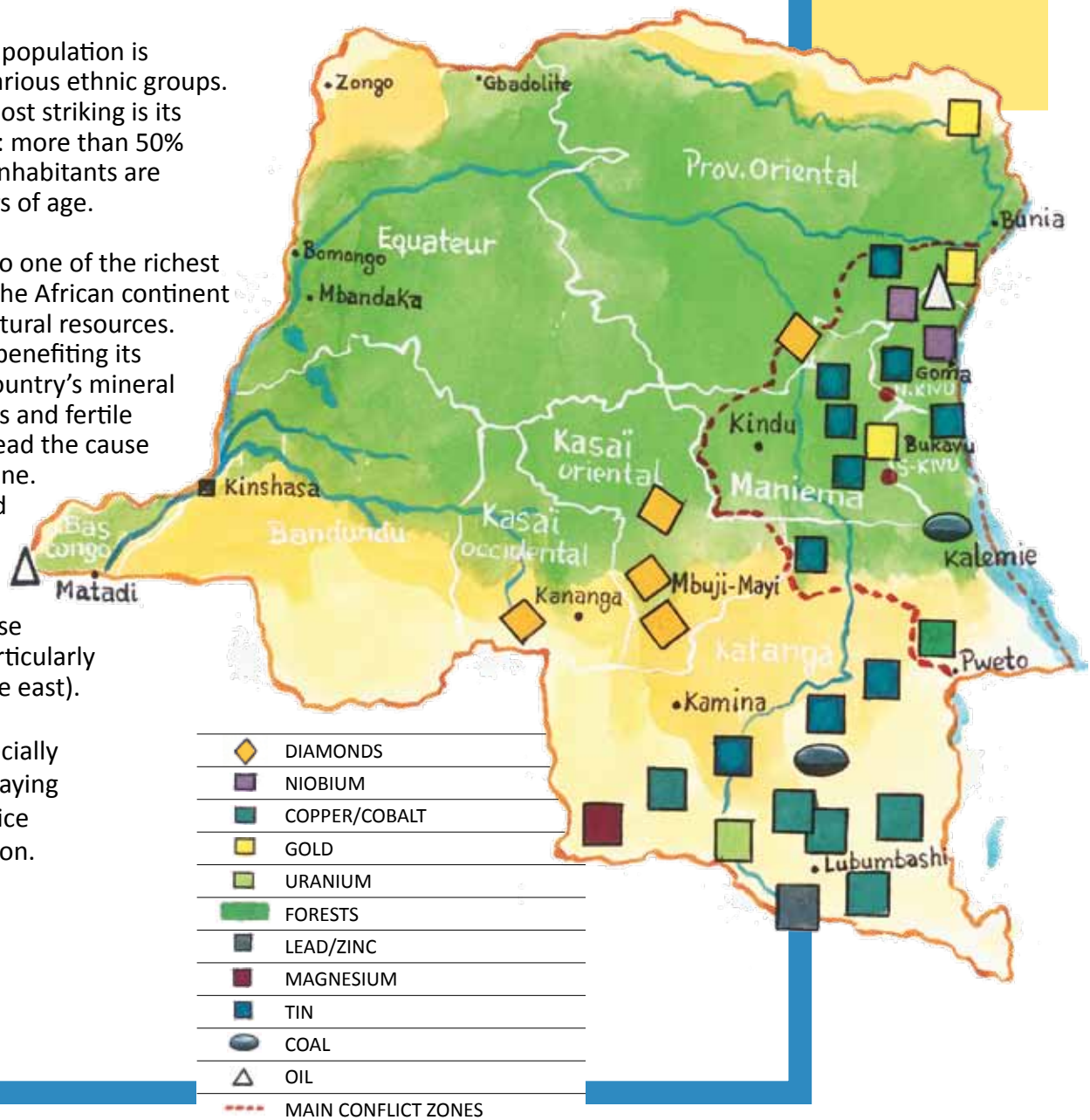
THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the third largest country in Africa. More than 2.3 million square kilometres, its area is equivalent to Quebec and Ontario combined.

The country's population is made up of various ethnic groups. What is the most striking is its young people: more than 50% of 70 million inhabitants are under 20 years of age.

The DRC is also one of the richest countries on the African continent in terms of natural resources. But, far from benefiting its people, the country's mineral wealth, forests and fertile lands are instead the cause of its misfortune. Various armed groups have been fighting for years to control these resources (particularly minerals in the east).

Civilians, especially women, are paying a very high price for this situation.



KEY DATES



TOWARDS THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES

When Portuguese navigators established the first links with the inhabitants of the Congo, the territory was organized into several kingdoms (Luba, Kuba, Lunda, Kongo). The European colonizers began evangelizing and trafficking in slaves. Until the middle of the nineteenth century they were only interested in the coastal regions. In the eastern part of the country, now known as Ituri and Kivu, the Arabo-Swahilis colonizers spread Islam and also practised the slave trade.

IN 1886

After the Berlin Conference that divided the continent among the European colonial powers, the Belgian King Leopold II became the owner of the *Congo Free State*.

IN 1908

Following the atrocities (forced labour, mutilation of women and children who did not meet rubber production quotas), King Leopold II had to cede the Congo Free State to Belgium. Belgium officially made the Congo a colony and called it the *Belgian Congo* (1908 to 1960).

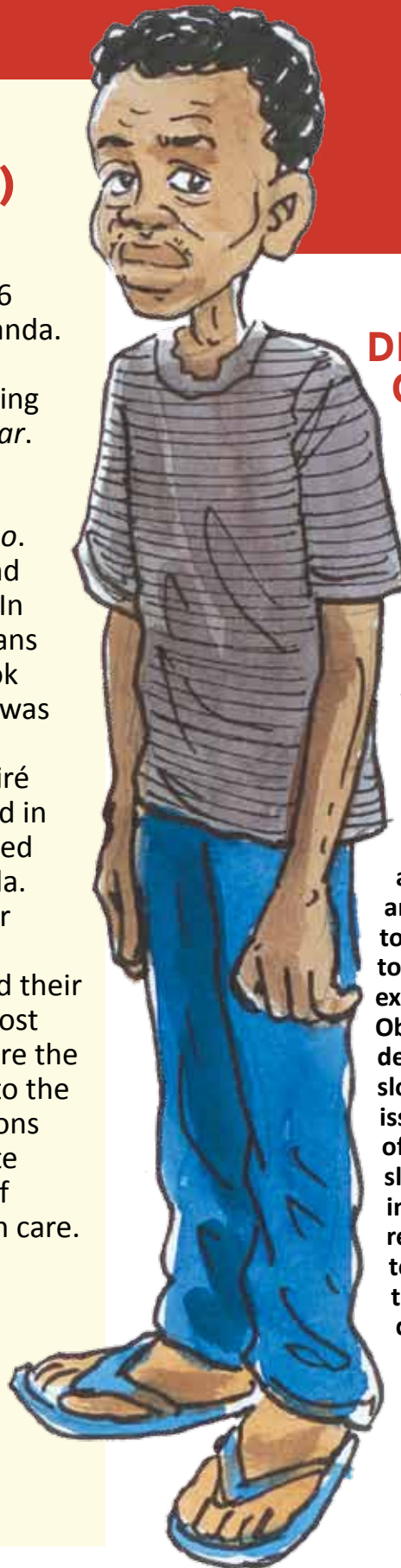
THE MOBUTU YEARS (1965-1997)

Mobutu Sese Seko took power in 1965, under the benevolent eyes of the Americans who saw him as a check against the rise of communism on the African continent. Mobutu declared himself a Field Marshal, renamed the country *Zaire* and established a dictatorship.

THE TROUBLED YEARS (1997-2006)

A rebel group, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL), was created in 1996 with the support of Rwanda and Uganda. Laurent-Désiré Kabila took charge of the AFDL with the goal of overthrowing Mobutu. This was the *First Congo War*. In 1997 Kabila proclaimed himself president and renamed the country the *Democratic Republic of the Congo*. In 1998 Kabila asked his Rwandan and Ugandan allies to leave the country. In response, the Rwandans and Ugandans created new military groups that took control of much of the country. This was the *Second Congo War*, which lasted

until 2003. Laurent-Désiré Kabila was assassinated in 2001 and was succeeded by his son, Joseph Kabila. It is estimated that over 5 million people were victims of conflicts and their consequences. The most vulnerable people were the greatest victims due to the displacement of millions of people, inadequate nutrition, and lack of medicine and health care.



DIFFICULT TASK OF BUILDING DEMOCRACY (2006 TO THE PRESENT)

A new constitution was adopted by referendum in 2005. In 2006, presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections were held and Joseph Kabila was elected. Even after the elections, complete areas of the eastern part of the country (rich in minerals like gold, cassiterite and coltan), are still under the control of armed groups. They are able to maintain their grip thanks to the income from the illegal exploitation of these minerals. Observers say that the democratic process has been slowed down by a number of issues including: postponement of local elections, the slow speed of reforming institutions, the work of redistributing power, threats to fundamental freedoms and the murders of human rights defenders and journalists.



DEMOCRACY
PEACE
JUSTICE
RIGHTS
JUSTICE
PARTICIPATION

FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

Congolese youth split between the promise of hope and the uncertainty of the day after

Government officials in the Democratic Republic of Congo are constantly using their speeches to push the slogan: “*Youth are the hope of tomorrow.*” Of course, there are laws that are supposed to protect the rights and freedoms of young people in the DRC. Unfortunately the good intentions of politicians’ speeches are far from reality.

Young people are faced with high illiteracy and unemployment rates. Many young girls’ lives are ruined by forced prostitution. Thousands of children have to survive on the streets or are forced to join armed groups. Thousands of others are forced to work in unsafe mines with no chance of escaping hunger and poverty.

More than half of the Congolese population is under 20 years of age. It is high time that young people’s concerns are taken into account and they are able to participate fully in building a peaceful country, one that is united and looking to the future.

To meet these many challenges, Congolese youth want stronger forums for discussion where they can participate. These forums would allow for dialogue between youth and government policymakers so that protection of children, access to education, and respect for their rights becomes a reality.

To achieve that goal, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE’s partners are constantly working to create the conditions that will allow young people, the country’s greatest wealth, to have access to the tools that will allow them to take their rightful place in society.

THE VOICE OF YOUTH

The voice of youth is key for community radio stations projects in the provinces of Orientale and Katanga. Initiated by partners of DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, seven community radio stations have become an important tool in connecting people so they can work together for greater peace, justice and development.

Since 2004, the stations broadcast in local languages and have more than five million listeners. Each station has groups of volunteers that are involved in the station’s programming, management and financing.

Since they began, these stations have helped to promote the broad and non-violent participation of people in elections, schooling for girls, peaceful coexistence between communities, improved agricultural production and better access to information. Thanks to important outreach work, the groups of volunteers have today become local development committees that are taking charge of their destiny.

Youth are an active part of the radio stations and use their involvement to share their concerns and hopes. The stations provide a safe space for youth to dialogue and to experience their future as belonging to them. These community radio stations are *their* radio stations. Today, youth are no longer condemned to silence.

The popularity of these stations has made them partners of the UN’s Radio Okapi and Radio France Internationale. Their experience is even being sought to help create other radio stations across the country.

THE COMIC

The story of this graphic novel is inspired by the **Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Reviving Production Skills of Communities in South Kivu** project. The project is aimed at reintegrating victims of sexual violence and ex-child soldiers into their communities through activities that include community mobilization, literacy training and employment training. The project is carried out in partnership with the *Commission for Justice and Peace* (CJP) of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

This comic book was written in French and Swahili to be used as an awareness-raising tool in the villages of South Kivu. The DRC, a former Belgian colony, has a long tradition of comics. This medium is a powerful educational tool, regularly used by young, socially engaged Congolese to spread their message.

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE is pleased to produce this graphic novel, the result of collaboration between the talents of Congolese artist Séraphin Kajibwami and the commitment of members of the Commission for Justice and Peace. We hope that this comic will allow you to enter into the daily life and experiences of the people of South Kivu, and to learn more about the courageous actions of men and women fighting for justice and peace.

THE AUTHOR

Séraphin Kajibwami was born in 1979 in the city of Bukavu, in South Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

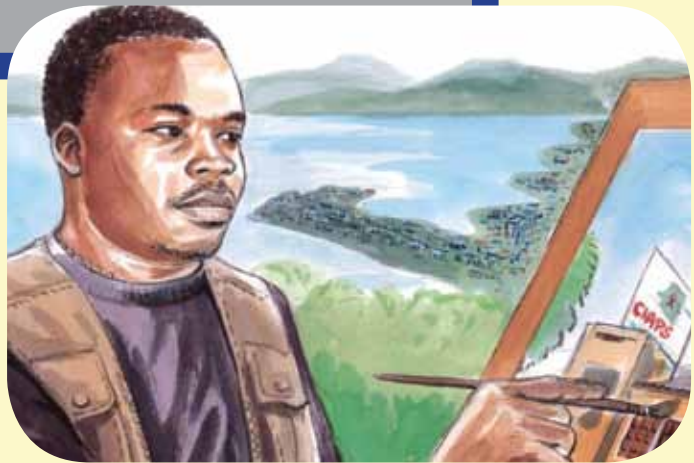
He became interested in drawing at a very young age and during his studies gradually turned towards creating comic strips, winning second prize in a provincial contest in 1997.

In 1998, a human rights activist entrusted him with drawing a 12-page black and white comic for the people of Bukavu, entitled *Katu and Sawa Sawa*. It was created to raise awareness about using methods of active non-violence against the abuses of the occupying forces. Séraphin produced this comic on a regular basis until 2007.

In 2005, Séraphin was invited to participate in the Fifth African Comics Forum, held in Kinshasa, capital of the DRC, where he won first prize in the competition.

Séraphin joined with other young artists who were aware of the power of a comic strip in spreading social messages and set up the ABBUK association, to promote this means of “parallel” communication. The headquarters of this association is at the Alliance Française in Bukavu.

A committed artist, Séraphin regularly works with community organizations by providing artwork, like his graphics, posters and comics, to support awareness-raising – always aspiring to contribute to the political education of Congolese, young or old.





ROZA

OR THE COURAGE
TO CHOOSE LIFE

SEEDS
FIELDS
DEVELOPMENT

seraphine



ROZA



ATOSHA



FEZA



CHIEF WAMEA



AMISI



FURAHA

AS IN SO MANY VILLAGES, ARMED MEN ARE COMING TO ATTACK PEACEFUL CITIZENS.

WE HAVE TO FLEE INTO THE BUSH RIGHT AWAY! THEY'RE COMING.

THEY'RE 2 KM FROM HERE. GET THE CHILDREN TOGETHER QUICKLY. DON'T WASTE ANY MORE TIME!

THE CHILDREN WENT TO FETCH WATER. GO GET THEM.

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF THE VILLAGE FAST!

GO AROUND IN THE BACK, WE'LL ENCIRCLE THEM. THEY MUSTN'T ESCAPE.

GO!

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF THE VILLAGE FAST!

PUT THAT SACK DOWN ON THE GROUND AND DISAPPEAR...

PAW! PAW!

GRAB ANYTHING OF VALUE AND THEN BURN DOWN THE VILLAGE! MAKE IT QUICK...

DLURING THE ATTACK, WOMEN ARE RAPED...



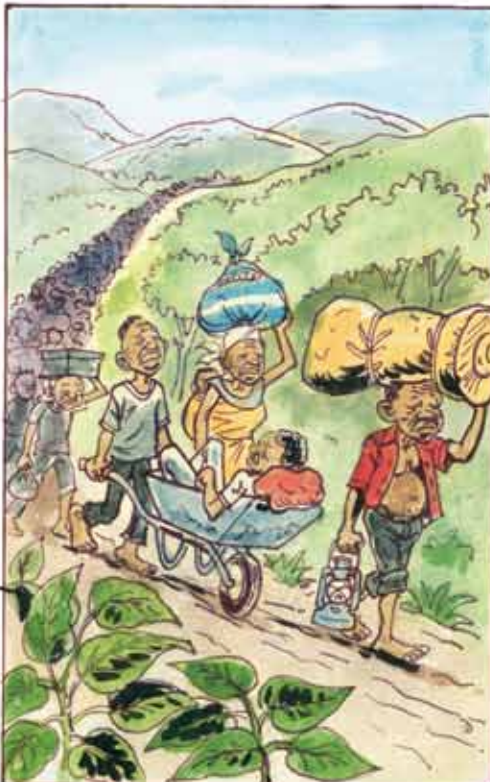
WHEN WILL
THIS DISASTER
END... MY
GOD!



...THEY TAKE CHILDREN HOSTAGE AND ENLIST THEM
IN THEIR ARMED GROUPS...



WHY THIS WAR? WHY
ARE WE KILLING EACH
OTHER? WHEN WILL
PEACE COME TO OUR
COUNTRY?

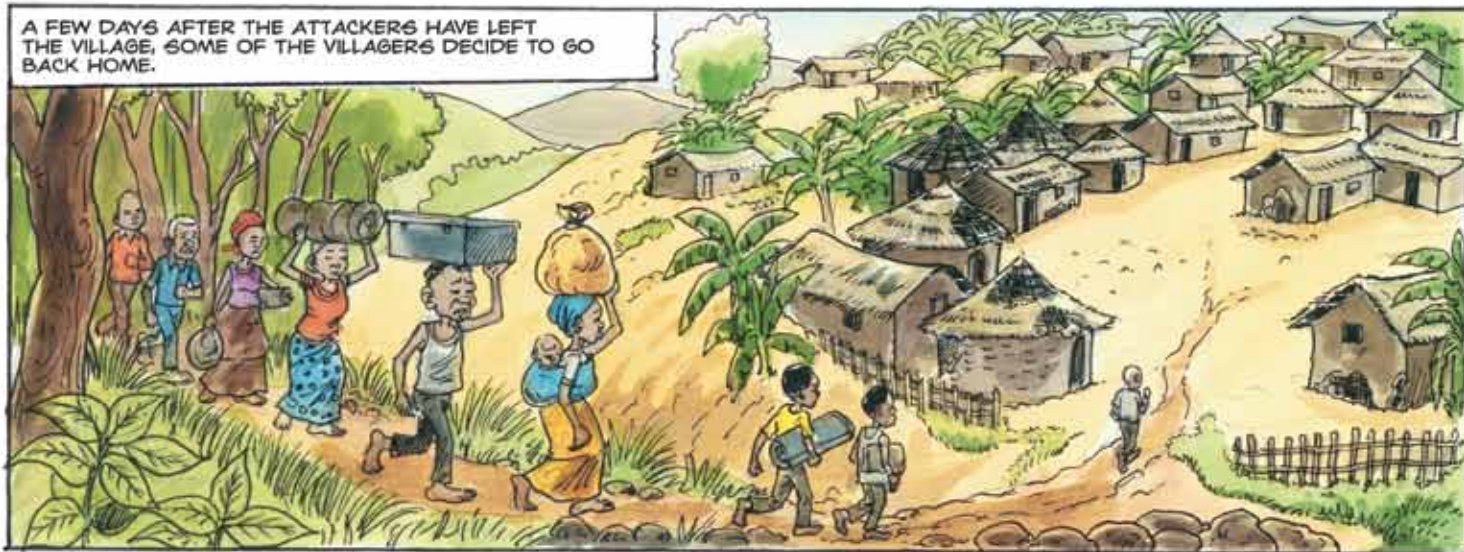


HOW LONG WILL WE CONTINUE TO FLEE OUR
LAND? WE ARE PEOPLE, NOT ANIMALS!
WE ARE ENTITLED TO PEACE AND SECURITY
IN OUR COUNTRY.

LET US TRUST
IN GOD. ONE
DAY ALL THIS
WILL END.



A FEW DAYS AFTER THE ATTACKERS HAVE LEFT THE VILLAGE, SOME OF THE VILLAGERS DECIDE TO GO BACK HOME.

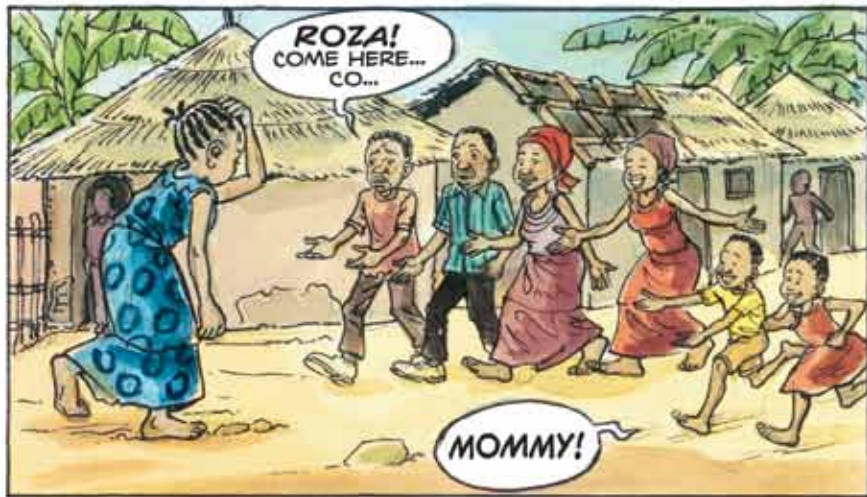


A FEW MINUTES LATER...



ROZA!
COME HERE...
CO...

MOMMY!

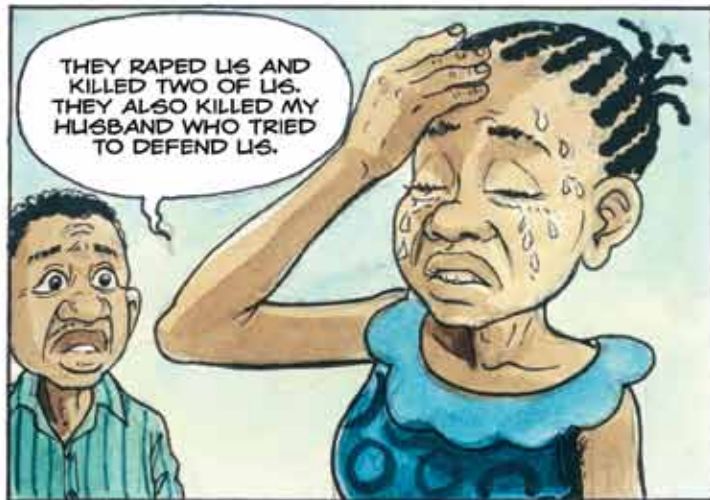


WHERE ARE
THE OTHERS?
ARE THEY
STILL ALIVE?

I DON'T KNOW. WE
WERE 11 WOMEN. THEY
KIDNAPPED US, BUT
I MANAGED TO ESCAPE
INTO THE BLUSH.



THEY RAPED US AND
KILLED TWO OF US.
THEY ALSO KILLED MY
HUSBAND WHO TRIED
TO DEFEND US.



WE'RE
HUNGRY, MOMMY.
WE HAVEN'T
EATEN SINCE
YESTERDAY...

IS THAT
TRUE?



I HAVE TO FIND
SOMETHING QUICKLY,
BECAUSE THEY MUST
BE AS WEAK AS I AM.

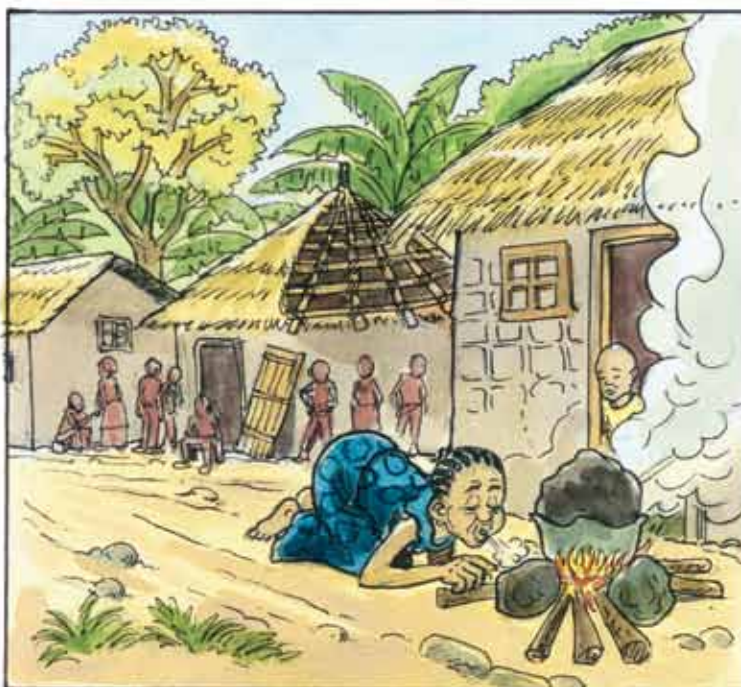


WAIT THERE,
I'M GOING TO
FIX THE MEAL.



LET'S SEE
WHAT'S IN
THIS BAG.



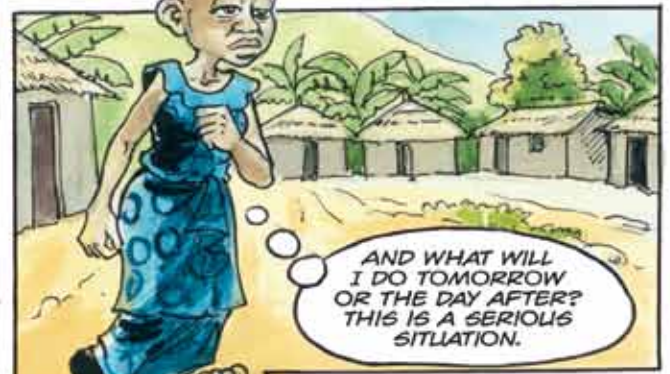
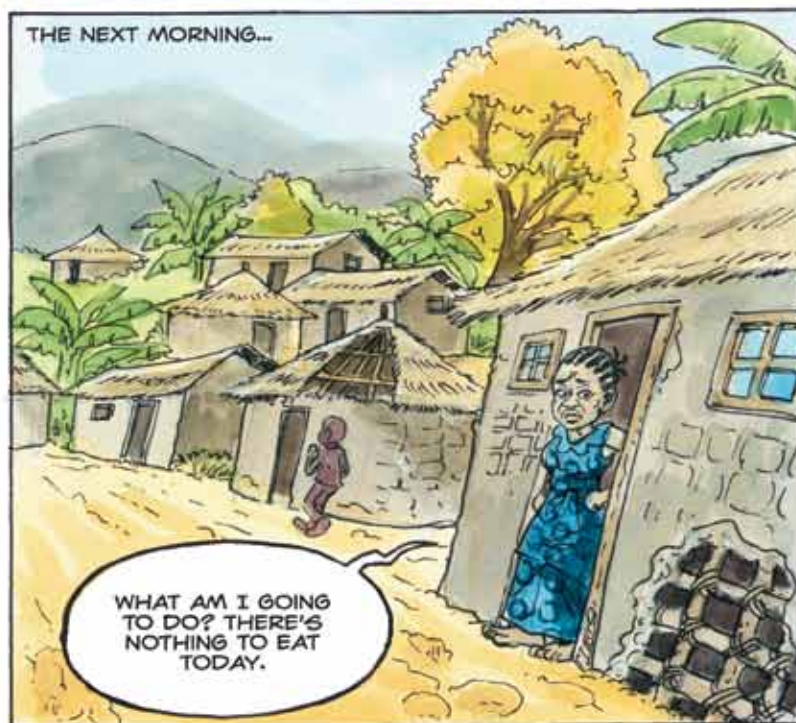


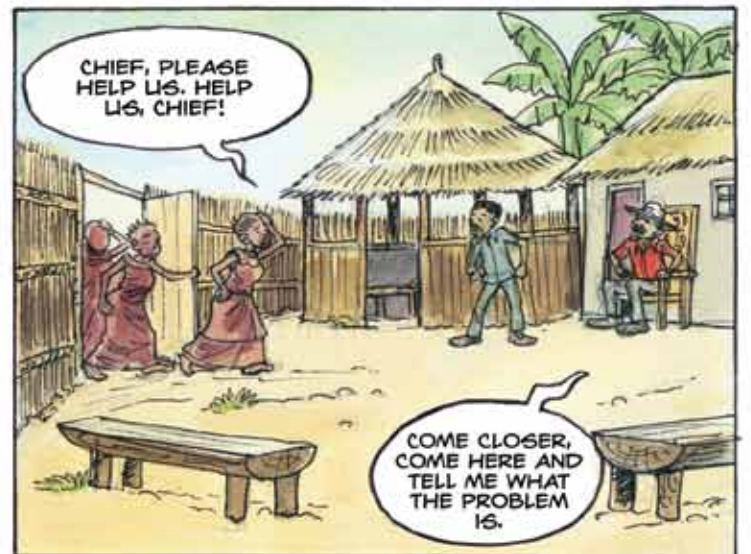
WHEN SHE FINISHES PREPARING THE MEAL, SHE GIVES SOME TO HER CHILDREN...



...THEN SHE DISTRIBUTES THE REST TO HER NEIGHBOURS WHO WERE STANDING THERE, THEIR ARMS CROSSED, NOT DOING A THING BUT STILL VERY HUNGRY.







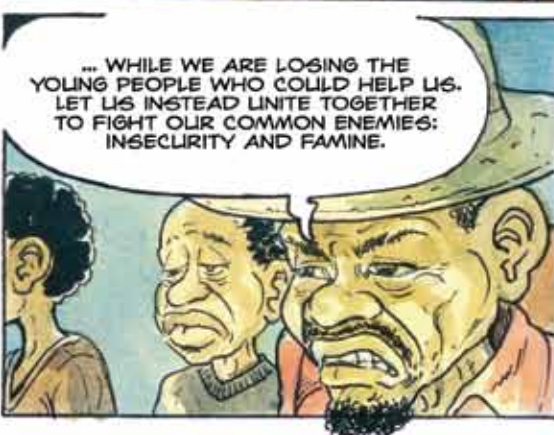




TOGETHER, THEY CARRY THE CORPSES BACK TO THE VILLAGE TO MOURN.



THAT EVENING...

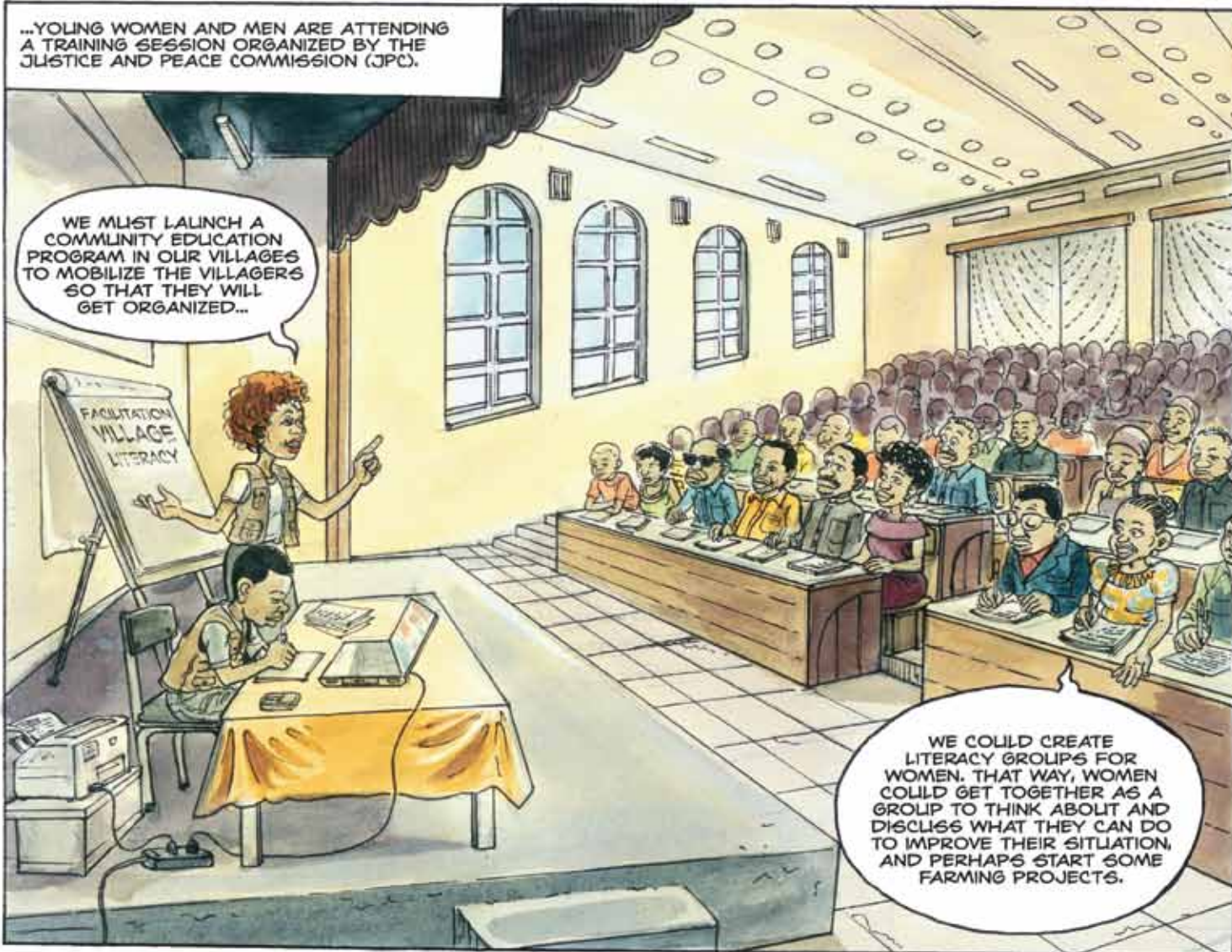




MEANWHILE, IN BUKAVU...



...YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN ARE ATTENDING A TRAINING SESSION ORGANIZED BY THE JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION (JPC).



WE MUST LAUNCH A COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM IN OUR VILLAGES TO MOBILIZE THE VILLAGERS SO THAT THEY WILL GET ORGANIZED...

WE COULD CREATE LITERACY GROUPS FOR WOMEN. THAT WAY, WOMEN COULD GET TOGETHER AS A GROUP TO THINK ABOUT AND DISCUSS WHAT THEY CAN DO TO IMPROVE THEIR SITUATION, AND PERHAPS START SOME FARMING PROJECTS.

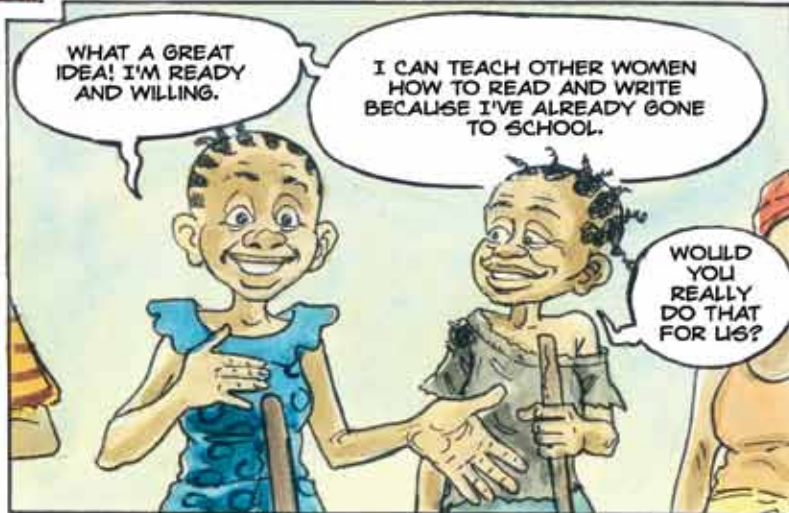


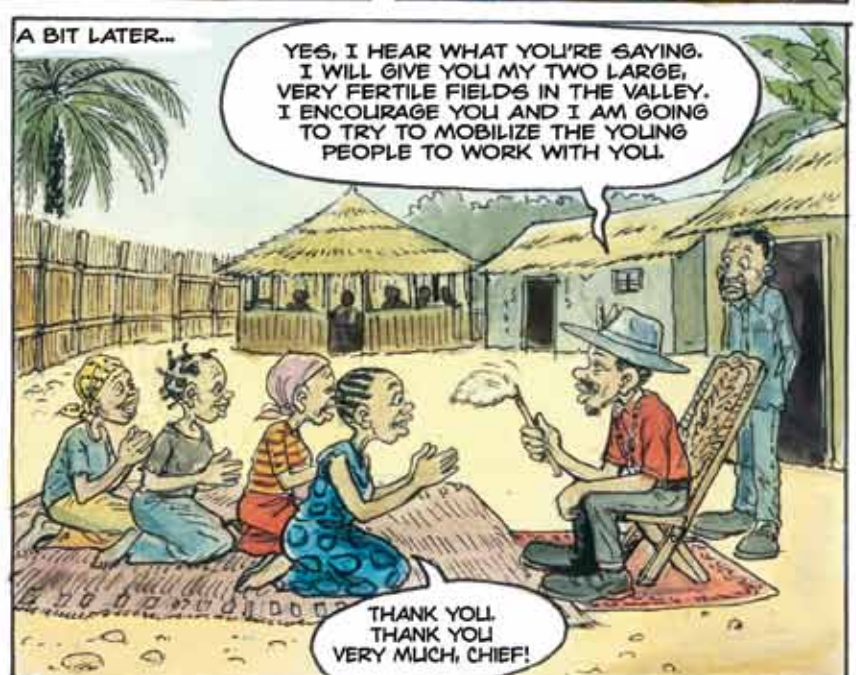
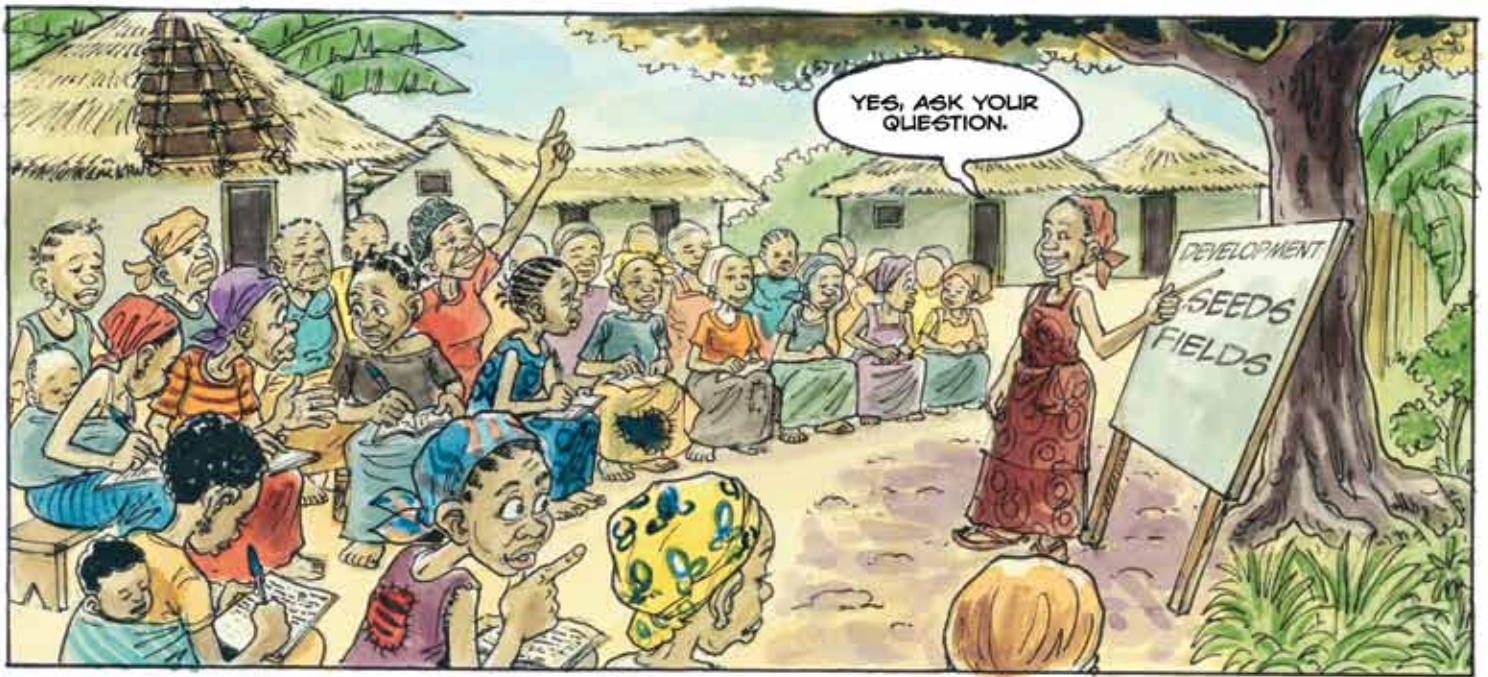
YES, WE HAVE TO ENCOURAGE MEN TO PRODUCE MORE IN ORDER TO PUT AN END TO THE HARDSHIPS THAT HAVE PLAGUED THE PEOPLE OVER THE YEARS.

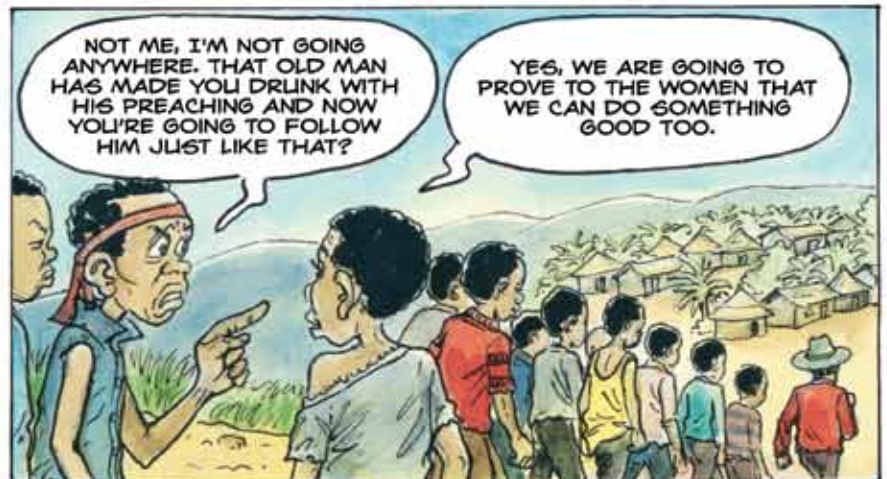
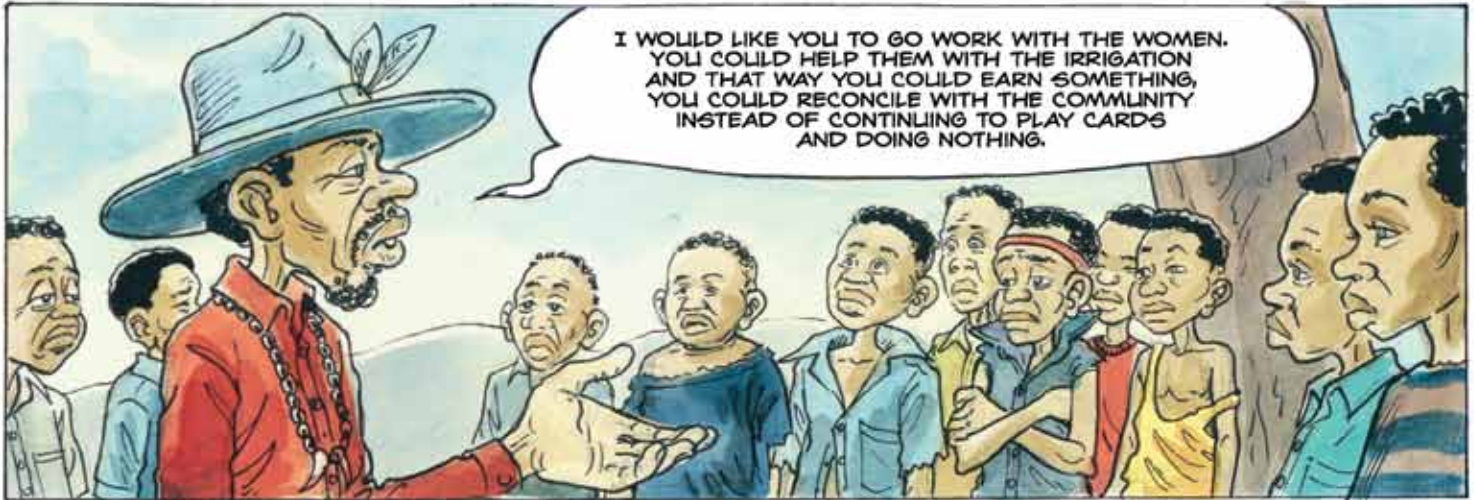
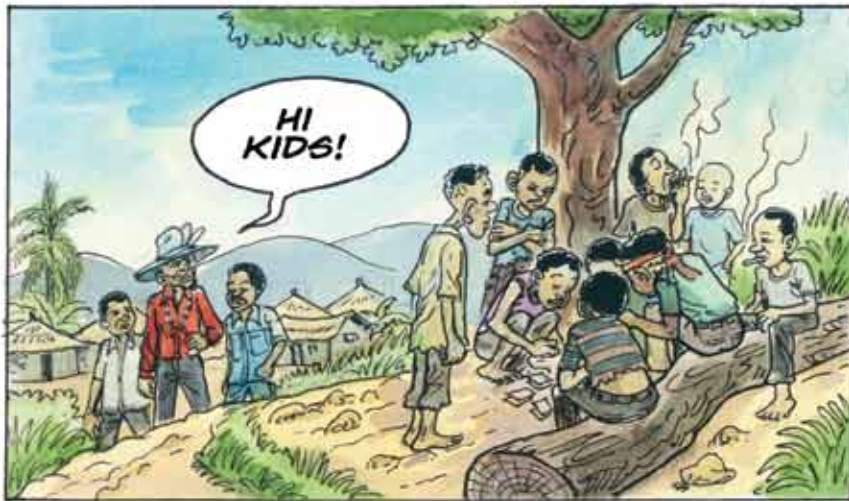


WHEN YOU GO TO THE MARKET HERE IN BUKAVU, YOU CAN ONLY FIND VEGETABLES FROM NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES. THERE IS NO LONGER ANY FOOD COMING FROM OUR VILLAGES, SO OUR MONEY GOES ELSEWHERE AND THERE IS HARDSHIP AND POVERTY IN OUR VILLAGES.









AFTER THAT, ALMOST EVERYBODY GETS TO WORK. THEY CULTIVATE THE FIELDS AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE DIG A CANAL SYSTEM FOR THE WATER.



SOME TIME
LATER...

HAVE YOU NOTICED THIS?
OUR CROPS AREN'T GROWING
PROPERLY. THE LEAVES ARE BURNING
AND ARE GETTING YELLOWER
AND YELLOWER.

IT'S TRUE!
I SEE IT TOO.



THEY'RE ALSO BEING
ATTACKED BY INSECTS.
THAT'S SERIOUS.



WE RISK LOSING OUR CROPS.
LET'S GO TELL THE VILLAGE CHIEF
RIGHT AWAY.

YES,
LET'S GO!



AS SOON AS HE IS TOLD, THE CHIEF
OF THE VILLAGE GOES TO THE FIELDS.

OH, THIS IS
TERRIBLE! WE
HAVE TO ACT
QUICKLY.



I'M GOING FOR
HELP RIGHT
AWAY.



WHAT DID I TELL YOU? "THE
EAR THAT IS GOING TO GET WET
DOESN'T HEAR THE DROP OF WATER."
BUT EVENTUALLY YOU'RE GOING TO
END UP BELIEVING ME...

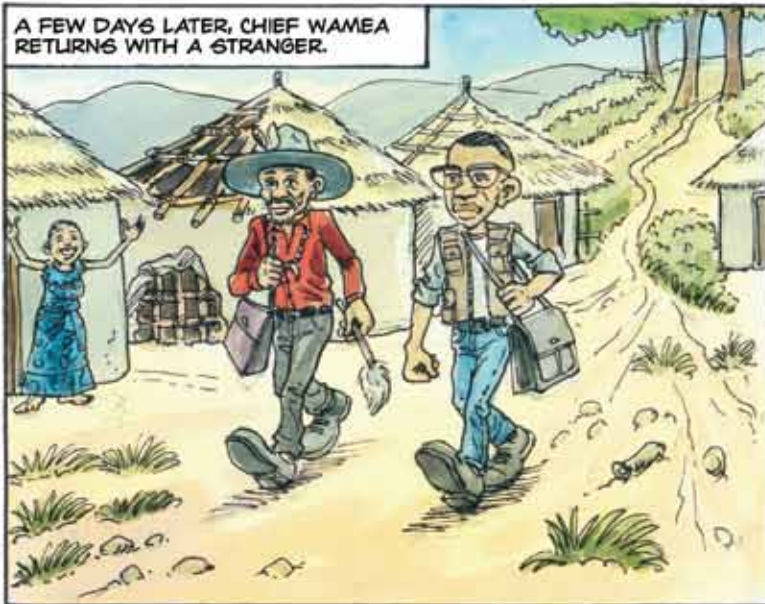


ROZA IS NERVOUS. SHE PACES
IN CIRCLES...

WHAT TO
DO NOW
?!



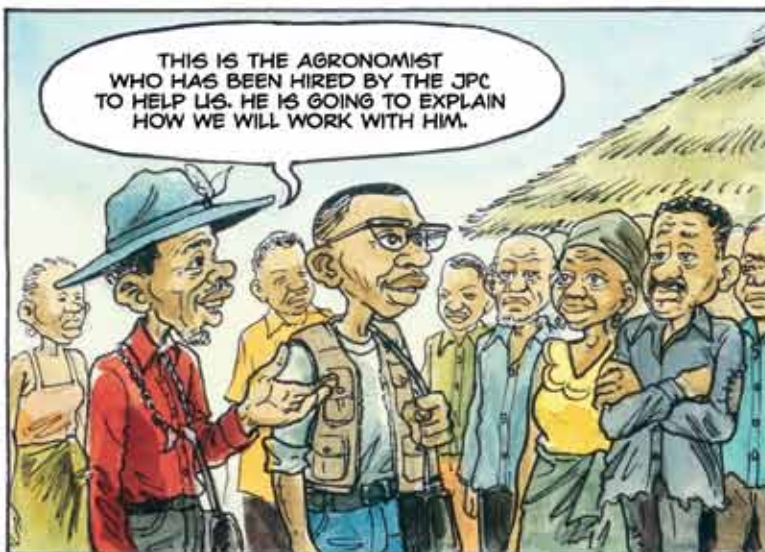
A FEW DAYS LATER, CHIEF WAMEA RETURNS WITH A STRANGER.



THE CHIEF IS BACK!



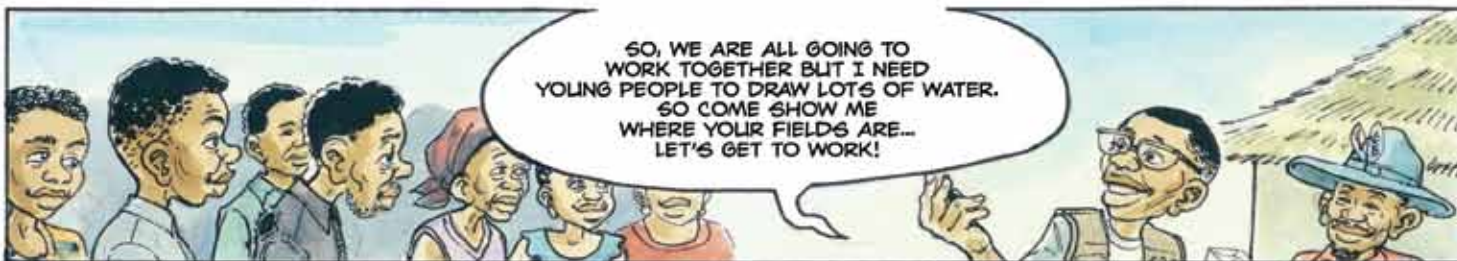
THIS IS THE AGRONOMIST WHO HAS BEEN HIRED BY THE JPC TO HELP US. HE IS GOING TO EXPLAIN HOW WE WILL WORK WITH HIM.



HERE ARE THE PRODUCTS THAT I HAVE BROUGHT TO SAVE YOUR CROPS AND KILL THE INSECTS... THESE PRODUCTS MUST BE MIXED WITH LOTS OF WATER AND SPRINKLED ON THE PLANTS...

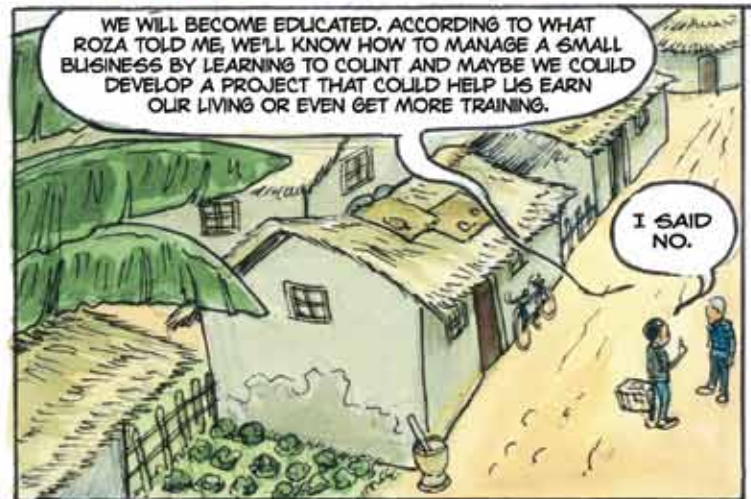
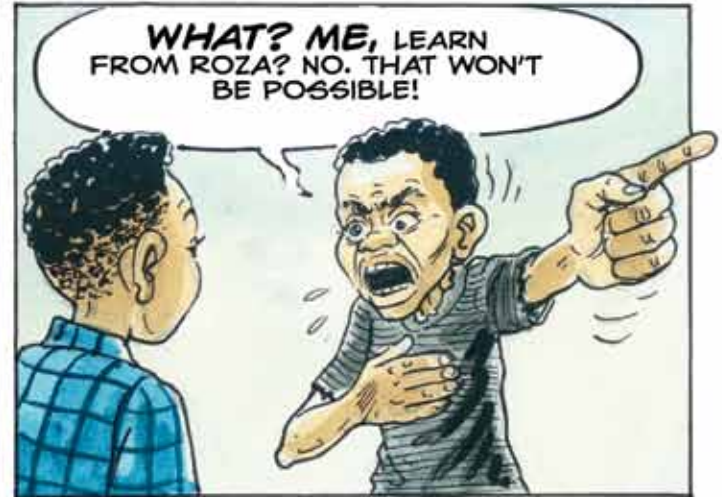
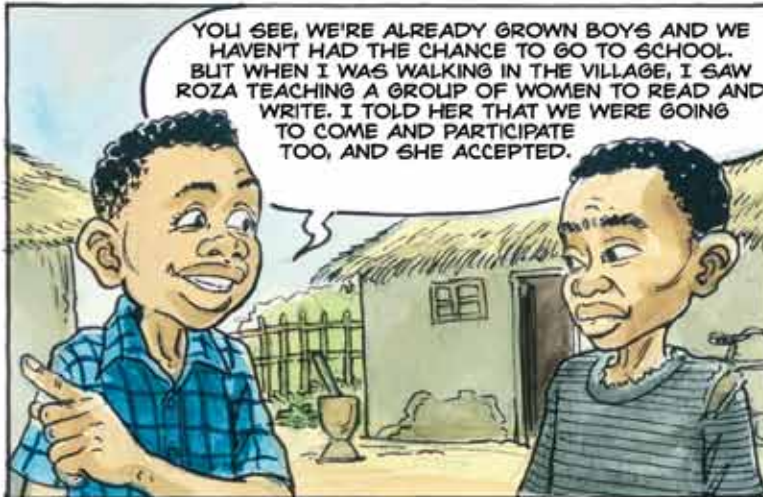


SO, WE ARE ALL GOING TO WORK TOGETHER BUT I NEED YOUNG PEOPLE TO DRAW LOTS OF WATER. SO COME SHOW ME WHERE YOUR FIELDS ARE... LET'S GET TO WORK!

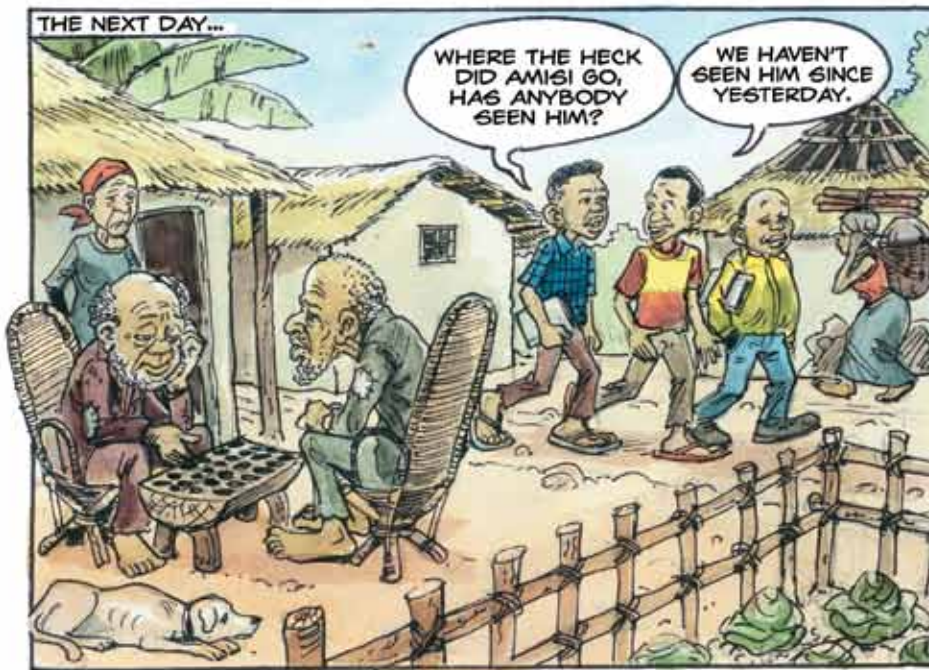


TAKE WATER TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FIELD AND DON'T STEP ON THE PLANTS. WE HAVE TO SPRINKLE WATER ALL OVER THE FIELD.



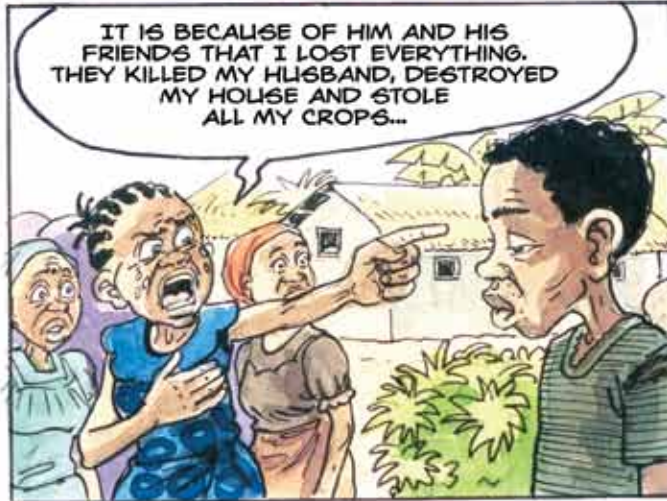
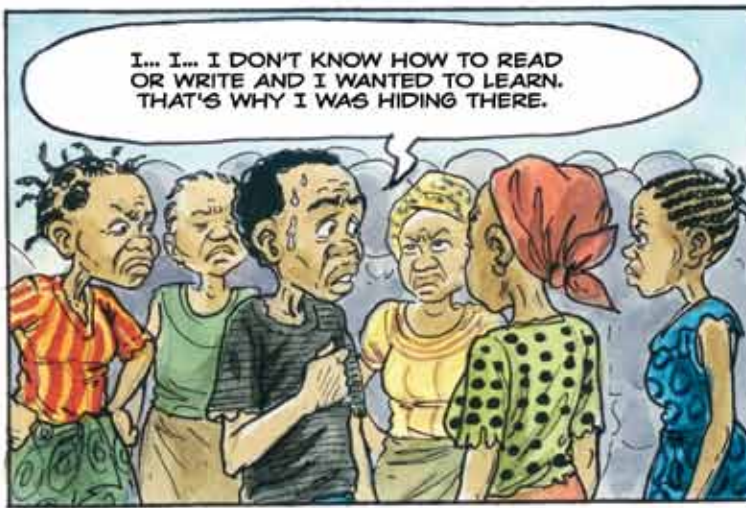


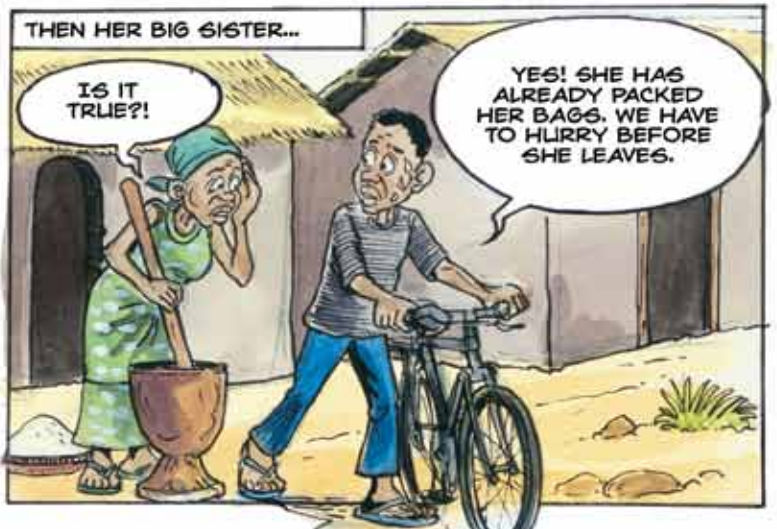
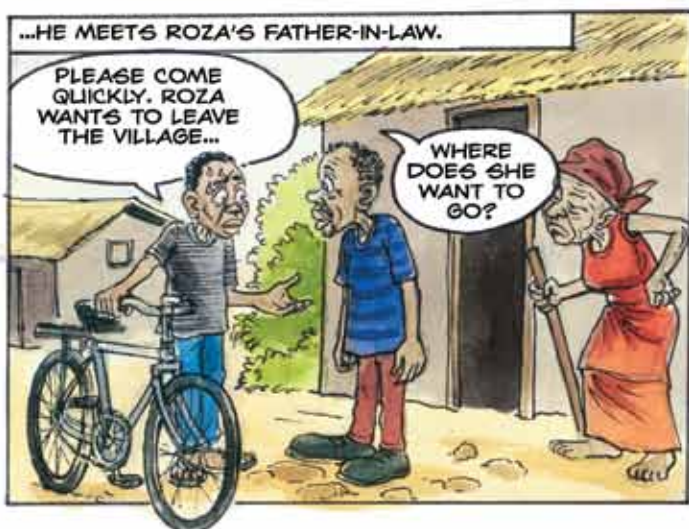
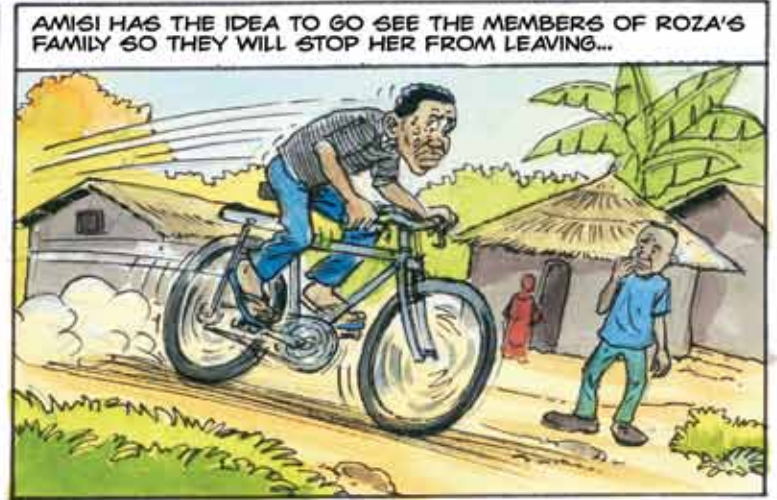
THE NEXT DAY...

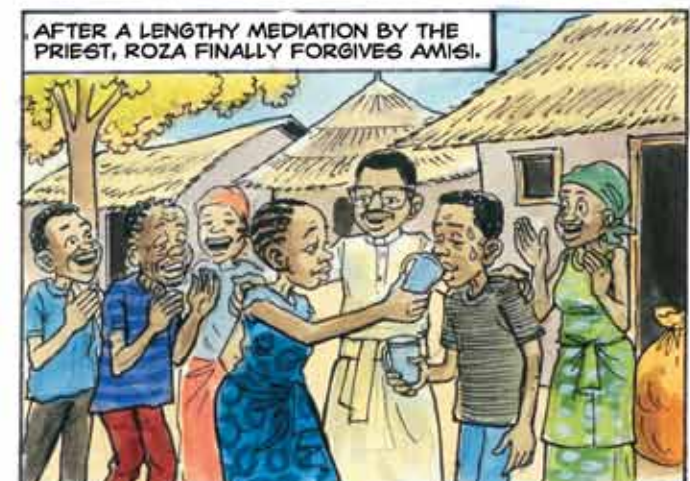
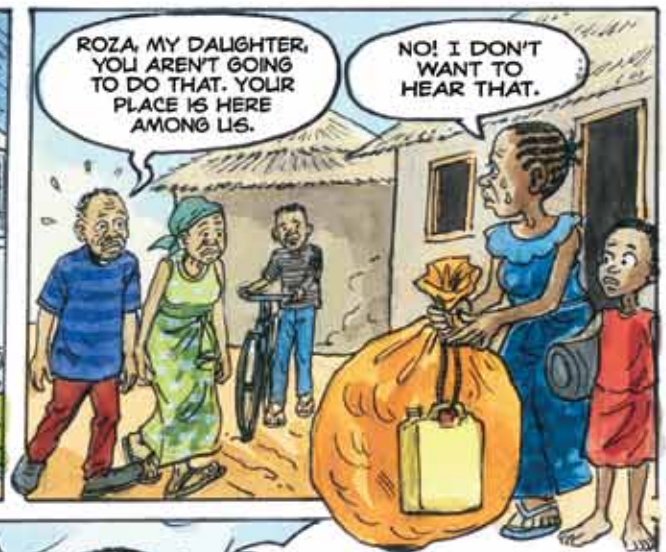
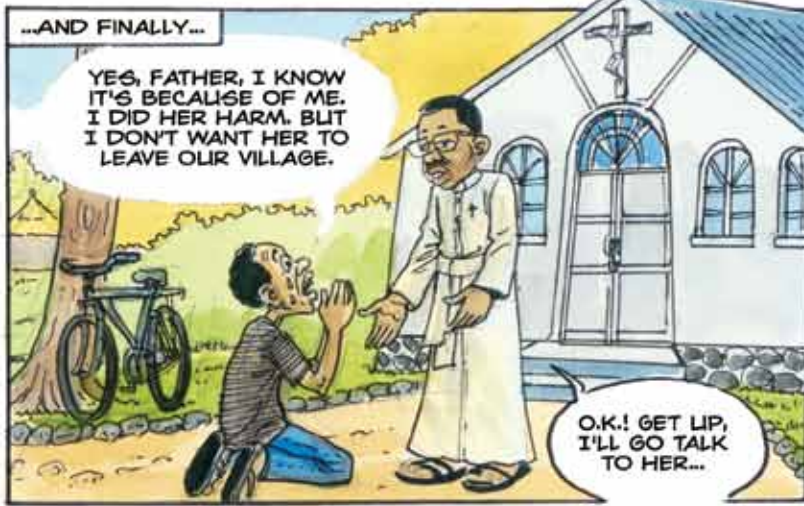


SLUDDENLY...





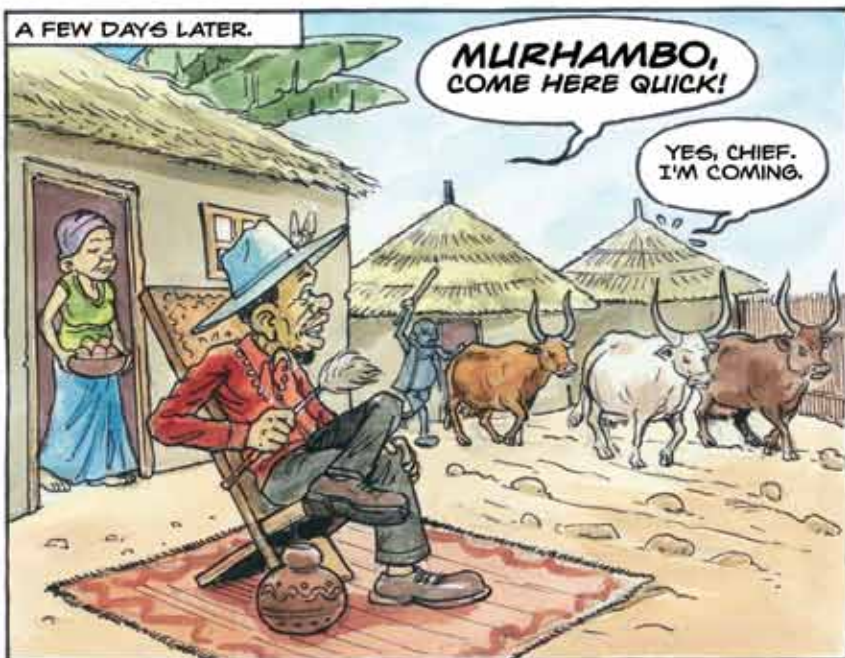




A FEW DAYS LATER.

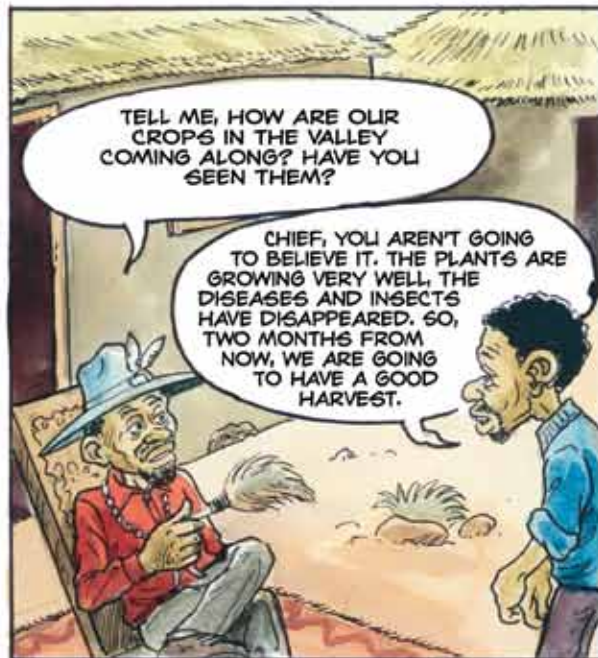
**MURHAMBO,
COME HERE QUICK!**

YES, CHIEF.
I'M COMING.



TELL ME, HOW ARE OUR
CROPS IN THE VALLEY
COMING ALONG? HAVE YOU
SEEN THEM?

CHIEF, YOU AREN'T GOING
TO BELIEVE IT. THE PLANTS ARE
GROWING VERY WELL, THE
DISEASES AND INSECTS
HAVE DISAPPEARED. SO,
TWO MONTHS FROM
NOW, WE ARE GOING
TO HAVE A GOOD
HARVEST.



IS THAT RIGHT?
NO, I DO NOT WANT TO BELIEVE
IT. LET'S GO TO THE FIELDS
TOGETHER. I WANT TO SEE IT
WITH MY OWN EYES.



IT'S TRUE, THE FIELDS
ARE IN PERFECT CONDITION. THE
VEGETABLES, MAIZE, CASSAVA,
SWEET POTATOES AND BEANS
ARE ALL GROWING GREAT.



SO CHIEF, YOU
SEE HOW GOOD
THE HARVEST
WILL BE!



**WE'RE
GOING TO
RESTART OUR
PRODUCTION.**



SLIDENLY...





DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is filled with fabulous wealth (water, fertile soil, forests, hydropower, gold, diamonds, copper, metals used in new technologies). But the majority of the population do not receive any benefit whatsoever from the country's natural wealth.

The result: 71 percent of the population live on less than \$1 a day, younger generations are less educated, diseases that used to be under control are reappearing, soldiers who receive practically no pay are stealing farmers' crops, and the rural people lack everything.

To find a way out of this situation, the country must identify the factors paralyzing economic activity and possible elements to leverage an economic recovery. The country has had to tackle the roots of economic collapse and war: the corruption of leaders who put their personal interests before the common good.

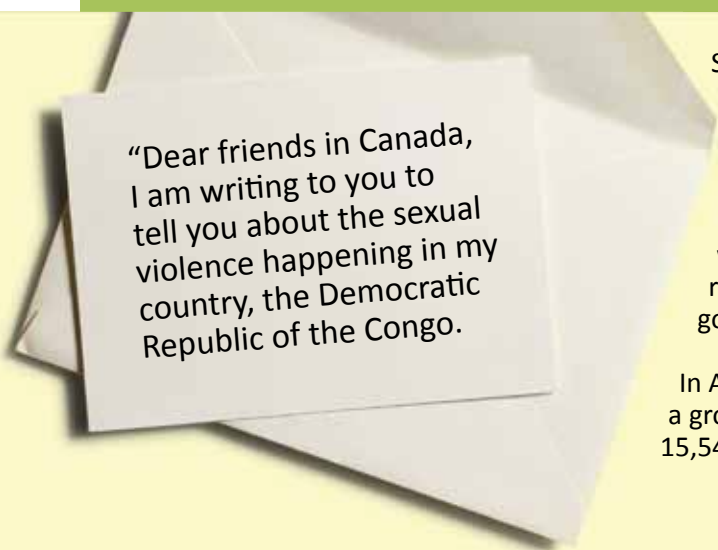
DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE believes in engaging communities in their local development and promoting the growth of democratic institutions. That is why we are funding **Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Reviving Production Skills of Communities in South Kivu**. The project reintegrates victims of sexual violence and ex-child soldiers into their communities with activities like community mobilization, literacy and employment training. The whole community is supported by a microcredit loan program and job opportunities rehabilitating rural roads.

At the same time, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE is supporting community radio stations that allow local people to speak out, discuss their problems and seek common solutions. We also support community organizations that use advocacy to promote human rights, peace and democracy.

THE CURSE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE DRC

Villagers in the Kivu region started being attacked in the mid-1990s by armed groups wanting to control their land. The land is rich and fertile, ideal for agriculture, raising livestock and... for the minerals found underground. At first, the groups who attacked the villages were armed foreigners. In response, vigilante self-defence groups were formed; but then some of the ringleaders started trafficking too. Finally, the Congolese national armed forces, soldiers who are very poorly paid, also showed up to take their share of the wealth.

Every single one of these armed groups used sexual violence as a strategy to discourage any attempt at resistance in the villages. Rape is not only the destruction of women; it is also the destruction of the community. In the villages, it is the women who teach the children the customs and rules of the community, and it is the women who hold the community's identity. By using rape as a weapon, the armed groups impose their power and demonstrate that any resistance will be severely punished.



"Dear friends in Canada,
I am writing to you to
tell you about the sexual
violence happening in my
country, the Democratic
Republic of the Congo.

Sexual violence causes major problems in the lives of its victims: they are mocked, and their husbands or families abandon them. As a result, victims are humiliated and lose all self-respect. Many women and girls hide or do not report what happened to them, even when they know their attacker. They carry within themselves the heavy psychological burden. Even worse, it seems that men whose wives or sisters have been raped violate other women—which raises fears that the cycle will go on forever!

In April 2010, the UN's 2009 report was published: reporting a growing increase in rape cases: 13,230 rapes in 2007, 15,545 rapes in 2008, and 17,507 rapes in 2009.

This means the average number of rapes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is 1,595 per month. Two other facts are important:

- The rapes involve all ages: from young girls to elderly women.
- The rapes are being committed by both civilians and armed men.

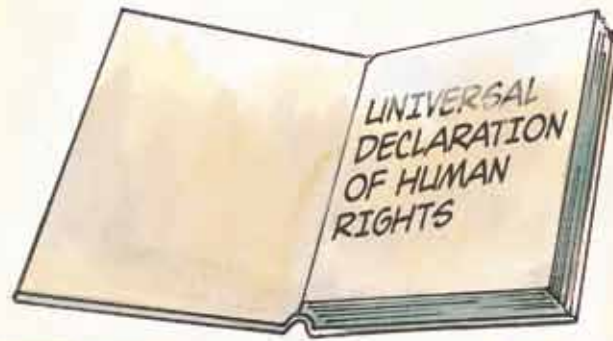
Rape is a very dangerous weapon, a barbaric act that kills many people. In most cases, the girls and women victims are abandoned by their families or by their husbands. And since they have no means to support themselves financially or to pay a lawyer to plead their case in court— and some, illiterate or uneducated, are not even aware that they CAN complain—they can only cry over their terrible fate. These traumas cause huge physical and psychological damage.

Rape plunges the entire community into anguish. It intensifies poverty in the provinces where rape is the most widespread, because every single family member's contribution keeps the family afloat. The women go to the fields, they draw the water from the well or the river, they take care of businesses. But women start to abandon their work or money-making activities for fear of being raped on the way to the fields, for example.

"I am speaking about all this because I want rape to stop in the Congo, because rape is a shameful disgrace. It is an unspeakable barbarity. It destroys the woman for almost forever!"

May all the men and all the women who are still committed to human dignity help my country stop these crimes, by all and any means available!"

KABENGWA MIISESO ARUSHA Madonna,
16 years old, Democratic Republic of the Congo



FROM MINES IN KIVU TO OUR CELL PHONES

The struggle to control the mines in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is responsible for the conflicts that have such terrible consequences for local people.

But why is so much war being waged for control over the mines? Why are minerals like tin, tantalum, tungsten, coltan or gold so precious and sought after? The answer is in our pockets, on our desks or in our ears. These minerals are essential for manufacturing the electronic components in the cell phones, video games, i-pods, and laptops that are part of our daily life.

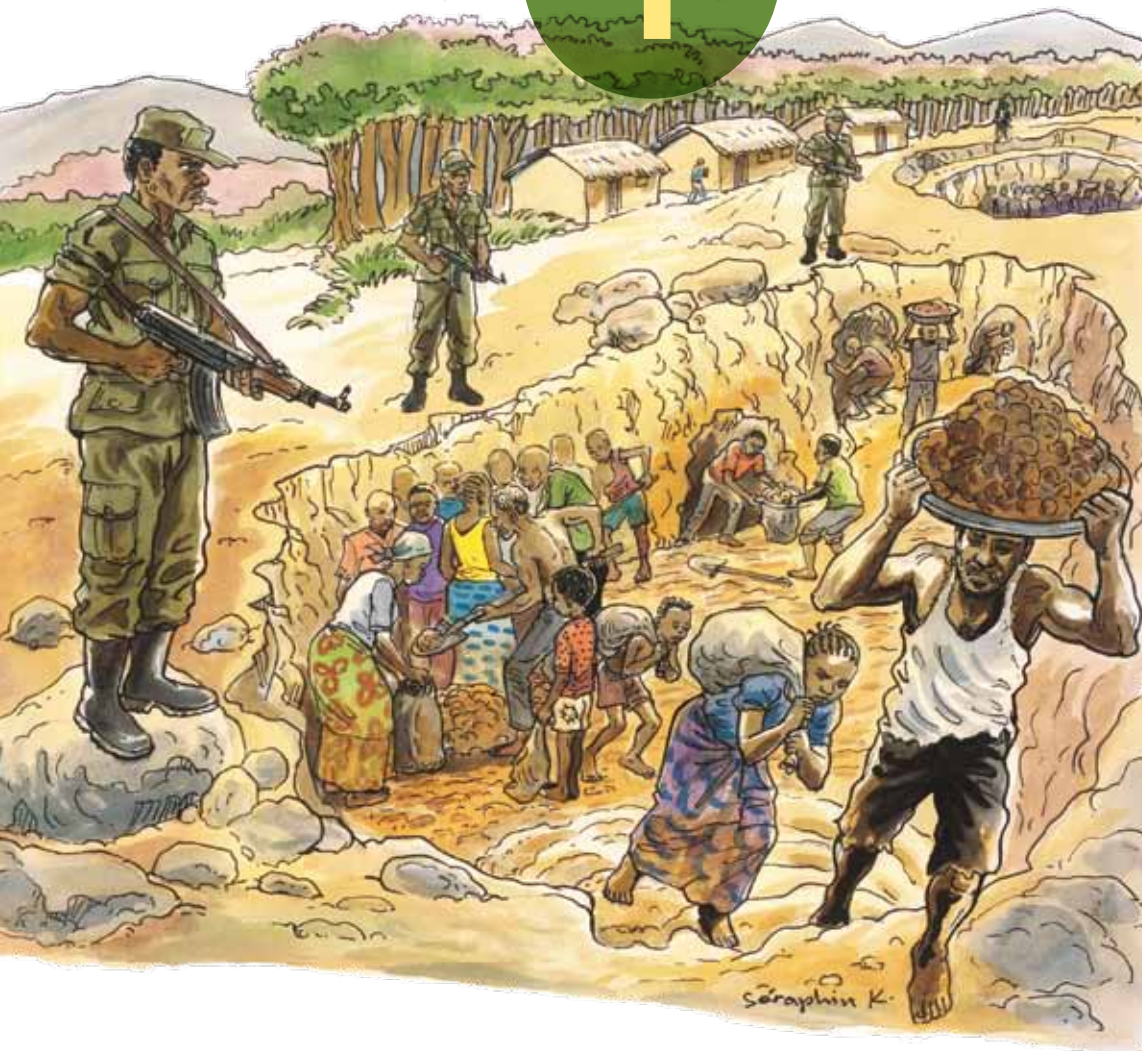
Do we have to stop using these devices to ensure peace and end the suffering of people in the DRC and many other countries in the world? Of course not. BUT, we could demand that companies producing these electronics guarantee the minerals they use do not come from conflict zones. To do that, first we have to understand the journey these minerals take, from the mines underground to the phones in our hands.

1

THE MINES OF DEATH

It all starts out in mines in the DRC. These mines are guarded by armed groups that do not hesitate to abuse, rape or kill to maintain their control. According to the UN, more than half of the 200 mines in eastern DRC are controlled by armed groups.

The miners earn between one and five dollars a day and their lives are permanently at risk from this slave labour. Let's not forget children are being forced to work in these mines too, some from a very young age. And we should keep in mind that every dollar the mines bring to the armed groups is a dollar not going towards improving the lives of the Congolese people through education, health care or job creation.



2



THE TRADING HOUSES LOOK THE OTHER WAY

When the ore comes out of the mines, it is transported to the two big cities in the region, Bukavu and Goma. It is brought to the trading houses, where the minerals are sorted and the seller is paid. According to Congolese mining laws, buying houses must have government permission to operate. In reality, 90% of these houses are not licensed.

The people who buy the ore and the government inspectors both say the same thing: it's easy to know which mine the minerals are coming from. Each bag has a distinctive colour and texture, allowing people to identify which bags come from mines controlled by armed groups. But buying houses prefer to close their eyes. They consider it too risky to speak up when millions of dollars are at stake.

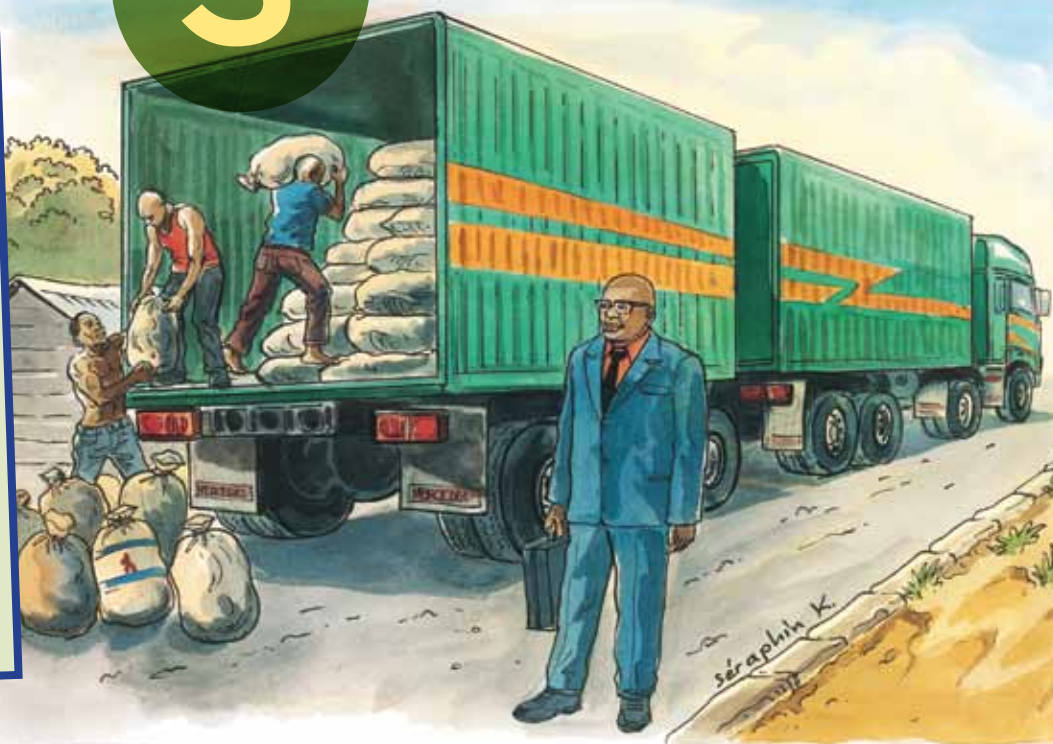
THE EXPORTERS: THE MINERALS GO ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET

The export companies buy the minerals, sort and process them with machines and then sell them to international buyers.

It is prohibited to buy minerals from mines run by armed groups, but there is no real control. Exporters simply ask whether the minerals are from rebel areas. If the answer is no, there is no other monitoring. In this way, a large amount of minerals from conflict zones can leave the country without any real barriers.

To give you a sense of how much, in 2008, only 120 kg of gold was legally exported from the DRC, while the total production was estimated at 5,000 kg.

3



4

THE COUNTRIES OF TRANSIT: A SILENT COMPLICITY

The minerals are then sent by truck, boat or plane to neighbouring countries like Rwanda, Burundi or Uganda. While a small portion of the mineral ore is exported legally, with taxes paid to the Congolese government, the majority of minerals from the conflict zones leave the country illegally. For example, in 2007, Rwanda produced only \$8 million's worth of tin but exported \$30 million's worth.

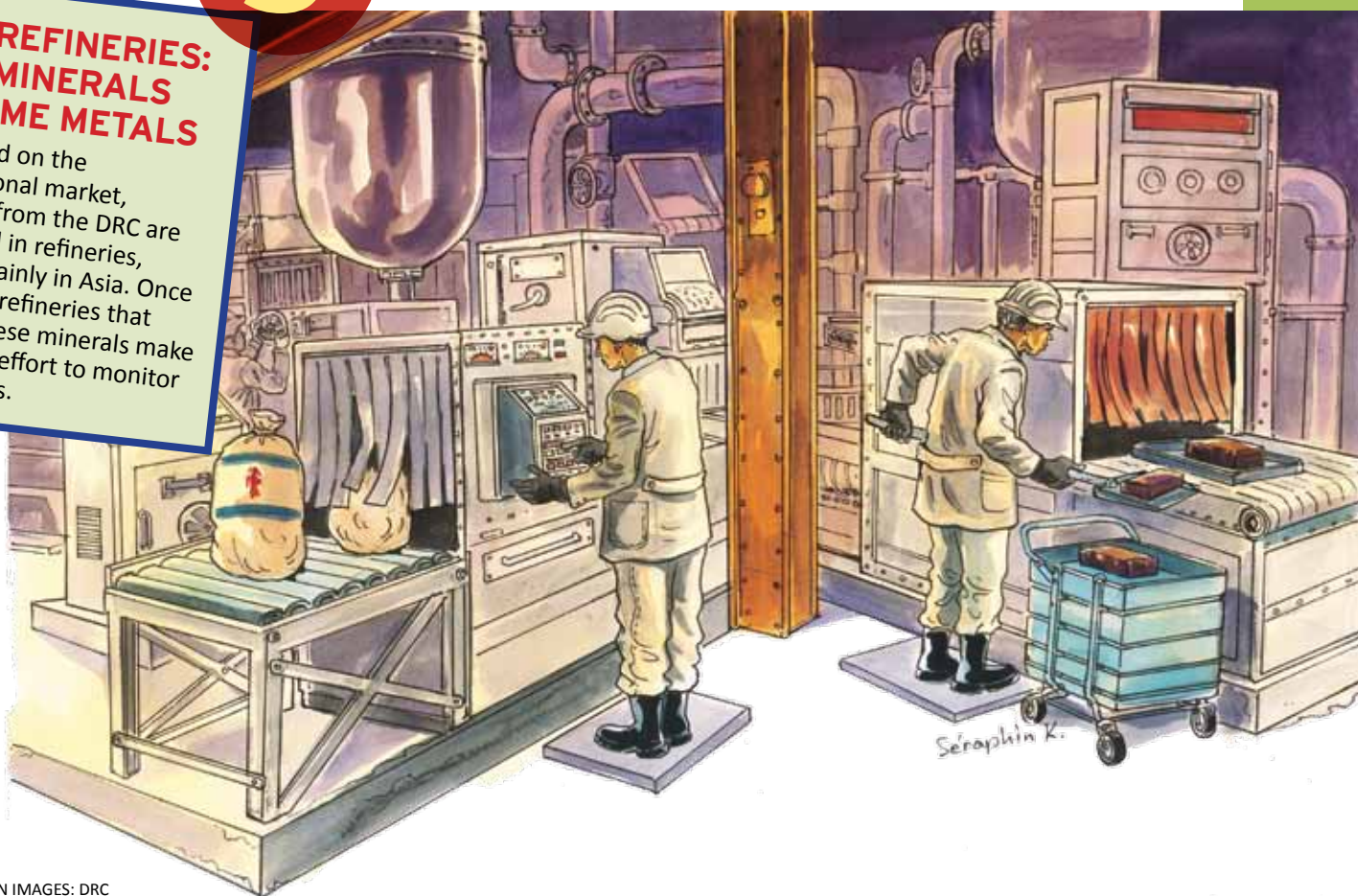
To combat the trafficking, systems for certifying the origins of minerals should be created and applied in the whole region.



5

THE REFINERIES: THE MINERALS BECOME METALS

To be sold on the international market, minerals from the DRC are processed in refineries, located mainly in Asia. Once again, the refineries that process these minerals make little or no effort to monitor their origins.



6



THE TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES: BLOOD-STAINED MINERALS IN OUR PHONES

Finally, the refineries sell the metals to the manufacturers to be used in making the components for our cell phones, computers and other electronics. Since these companies do not have a system for certifying or monitoring the origins of the minerals they use, our cell phones and our laptops may contain minerals that come from the DRC and its conflict zones.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Want to know more?

Want to take action?

Go to:

<http://youth.devp.org>

AFRICA IN IMAGES

Africa in Images is a series of educational tools that uses graphic novels to raise awareness among Canadian youth about problems facing the people in African countries where we work.

This first issue is focused on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the eastern part of the country, in the province of Kivu, armed groups are fighting one another for control of the region's important mineral resources. Local people in the area are paying a heavy price for these conflicts, especially women, who are victims of the worst violence.

Despite the atrocities suffered and despite constant danger, villages are deciding to resist by choosing the path of life and development.

With support from Development and Peace, in collaboration with the Congo's Episcopal Justice and Peace Commission and with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency, the projects that are being carried out in the villages of Kivu are a source of hope.

The graphic novel *Roza, or the Courage to Choose Life*, illustrates these projects and is a tribute to the brave men and women who participate in them.



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