



Leif Packalen and Sharad Sharma

GRASSROOTS COMICS

- a development communication tool

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Sharad Sharma

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

The Power of an Idea

Frederick Noronha

It never ceases to surprise you how powerful an idea can be. As they say, “a single drop of ink, can make a thousand people think”.

When I ran into Sharad Sharma (and later, Leif Packalen), it struck me how potent a concept these guys were playing around with. Not just potent. It’s also simple, elegant, and easy-to-replicate. What more could one ask for?

We dabble in currently ‘fashionable’ concepts like ICTs (information and communication technologies) and ICTs-for-development, and marvel at how useful an ally the computer can be. Both in giving people a voice, and a chance to communicate.

Yet, we overlook the very basics. Low-powered FM radio, for instance. The village blackboard. A newspaper shared on the street for everyone to read (despite the limitations of one-way communication here). Or just the humble cartoon -- created, photocopied and circulated.

Google reminds me of what I wrote many moons ago: “Comics and development? What’s the link, you might just as well ask. But a small band of campaigners and cartoonists are making a connection between these two seemingly disparate fields.”

“Problems in communicating a message in an effective way have caused immense frustration to development workers. How can people be taught new skills at a low cost? What would be a good way to deal with sensitive topics such as health issues? How can complicated new research, like that in agriculture for example, be simplified so that ordinary people can benefit?”

Sharad and Leif believe they have the answer. I too do. Question is: can they convince enough people in short enough a span? I’ve seen the impact of their work, and continue to be fascinated.

The more I look at Leif and Sharad’s work, the more I get fascinated with the impact of what they are doing. One gets simply bowled over by the charm and beauty of their campaign.

More than anything else, this is one attempt which can be scaled up. All it requires is an investment in people’s skills. Unlike so many other impressive but ever-so-costly pilot-projects, this doesn’t strike you as just a show-case which is good while small but can’t be spread sufficiently to make an impact.

I’m impressed. So why not just let me stop here and let you see what you think of it?

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[Frederick Noronha is a communications activist and independent journalist based in Goa, India. He is co-founder of BytesForAll. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers]

Cover photo by Sharad Sharma. *Rajpal Ganguli putting up his wallposter comic in Haathma village in Rajasthan*. Back cover photos by Leif Packalen, Johanna Rojola and Sharad Sharma.

This book is also available as a pdf-document on
http://formin.finland.fi/developmentpolicy/publications/grassroots_comics.pdf

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To the Readers

The material for this book has been compiled by us relying very much on the experiences gained by World Comics Finland and World Comics India in our cooperation with a multitude of organisations, movements and activists in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe. By nature, grassroots comics are local, and therefore not very visible in the media or as a subject of serious study. Therefore, the only readily available material comes from our own sources.

We believe that our book will give the readers an idea of what grassroots comics are and how they can be used in development communication in a wide variety of information campaigns.

In Finland, we wish to thank Ms. Katri Kaarniala, Director, and Ms. Outi Einola-Head, Information Officer, at the Unit for Development Policy Information at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, for their continuous support and vision in promoting comics as a method for development communication.

We are also grateful to Mr. Gary Hunt who has had the unenviable task of trying to standardise our Finnish and Indian interpretations of the English language for an international readership.

In India, invaluable support and advice has been provided by Mr. Tarun Bose.

Our thanks go also to all the creators of comics and the activists who let us use their material. Without them, this book would not have been possible.

Last, but not least, we wish to thank our families, especially R.N. Sharma and Rekha Sharma in India and Birgit Packalen in Finland for their support.

It is our humble wish that our book will inspire many more people, all over the world, to try the exciting, efficient, and inexpensive medium of grassroots comics as a communication tool.

Leif Packalen

Sharad Sharma

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CHAPTER I

Grassroots Comics Power!

Who can use grassroots comics?

Why use grassroots comics?

The comics formats





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Ms. Darathi Dadere Brahma, shows her anti-alcohol story, which she made in a workshop arranged in 2004 by the organisation Action Northeast Trust (ANT), in Bongaigaon, Assam, India.



© SHARAD SHARMA

The wallposter comics are distributed in the community, here they have been pasted on the Mapusa Bus Stand in Goa.

Grassroots Comics Power!

The use of comics as a campaigning tool for grassroots organisations is a relatively new phenomenon and has been tested so far only in India, some other South Asian countries, in a few countries in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. The purpose of this book is to share the experiences we have gathered over the last few years so that other non-governmental organisation (NGO) activists and movements can also try out this quite exciting and participatory development communication method.

Grassroots comics, i.e. comics that are made by socially active people themselves, rather than by campaign and art professionals, are genuine voices which encourage local debate in the society. Furthermore, they are inexpensive and the technology is not complicated – pens, papers and access to a copying machine are usually enough.

What makes these comics different from professional material, is the fact that they are made mainly for local distribution. The comics are pasted up in meeting places, bus stops, shops, offices, schools, on notice-boards and electricity poles, etc. The readers usually know the organisation which has put up the comics.

Proximity is important, the source of the communication as well as the readers are not very far apart. The comics will show that some persons in the community feel so strongly about an issue that they make local campaign material themselves, rather than rely on materials produced by some distant campaign professionals from the capital or even from abroad.

People are very much interested in what their local organisations and activists have to say. When they use wallposter comics, their message will get attention and create local debate.

A development communication method

Comics are stories, which are told visually. They become grassroots comics when they are made by NGO or community activists about some issue which is relevant to that particular community. The method is a set of instructions on how to proceed in producing the comics, how to make them readable and how to distribute them.

It is the drama of the story that engages the reader and makes the point.



© HANNA ARVEILA

Ms. D.K. Kalogosho from the Tanzania Gender Network Programme, in Dar es Salaam, points to the comic she made at a workshop there in October 2006.

Grassroots comics dramatise specific issues and bring them into the debate in the community. The comics are always related to some activity of an NGO or a community group, and are rarely the work of an individual in his/her own capacity.

Grassroots comics are made mainly in workshops

In workshops the trainers never give advice to the participants about the content of the stories, this has to be worked out by the NGO activists themselves. The trainers concentrate on showing the participants how to visualise the story, make the story in a logical sequence, and make it easy to read and to understand correctly. The trainers must also boost the participants' confidence in their drawing.

Many of the participants in our comics workshops have never made comics before, but most of them are eager to give it a try. The results have been very encouraging. In our experience, NGO activists are able to pick up this new communication method quite easily. Over time, when creating more stories and comics, the messages of the stories will also develop and become more to the point.



© LEIF PACKALEN

A wallposter comic pinned on a telephone pole in Magomeni, Dar es Salaam. The comic is about the constant water problem in the suburbs. It was made at a workshop with community activists from a local organisation EMAJA "Elimu, Maendeleo na Jamii" (Education, Development and Society) in 2006.

Why use grassroots comics?

If we look at life from the perspective of a community activist we can easily understand that the mainstream media rarely reflect the views the activists want to put across. The media in general tend to look at the larger picture and pays most of its attention to political and business stories. The stories of the common man are featured less.

Because grassroots comics are created by common people and activists, they give a first hand view – *first voices* – to the issues in the community. Therefore the grassroots comics are interesting also for outsiders and help them to learn how people in these particular communities look at life.

We should not underestimate the knowledge of the common man about his own community, most probably he knows much better what is right or wrong there than any well-meaning outsider. By anchoring the grassroots comics to the community activists and to their NGOs, the messages in their stories are more exact, to the point and relevant to the debate within the community. Their impact in the local debate is quite strong.

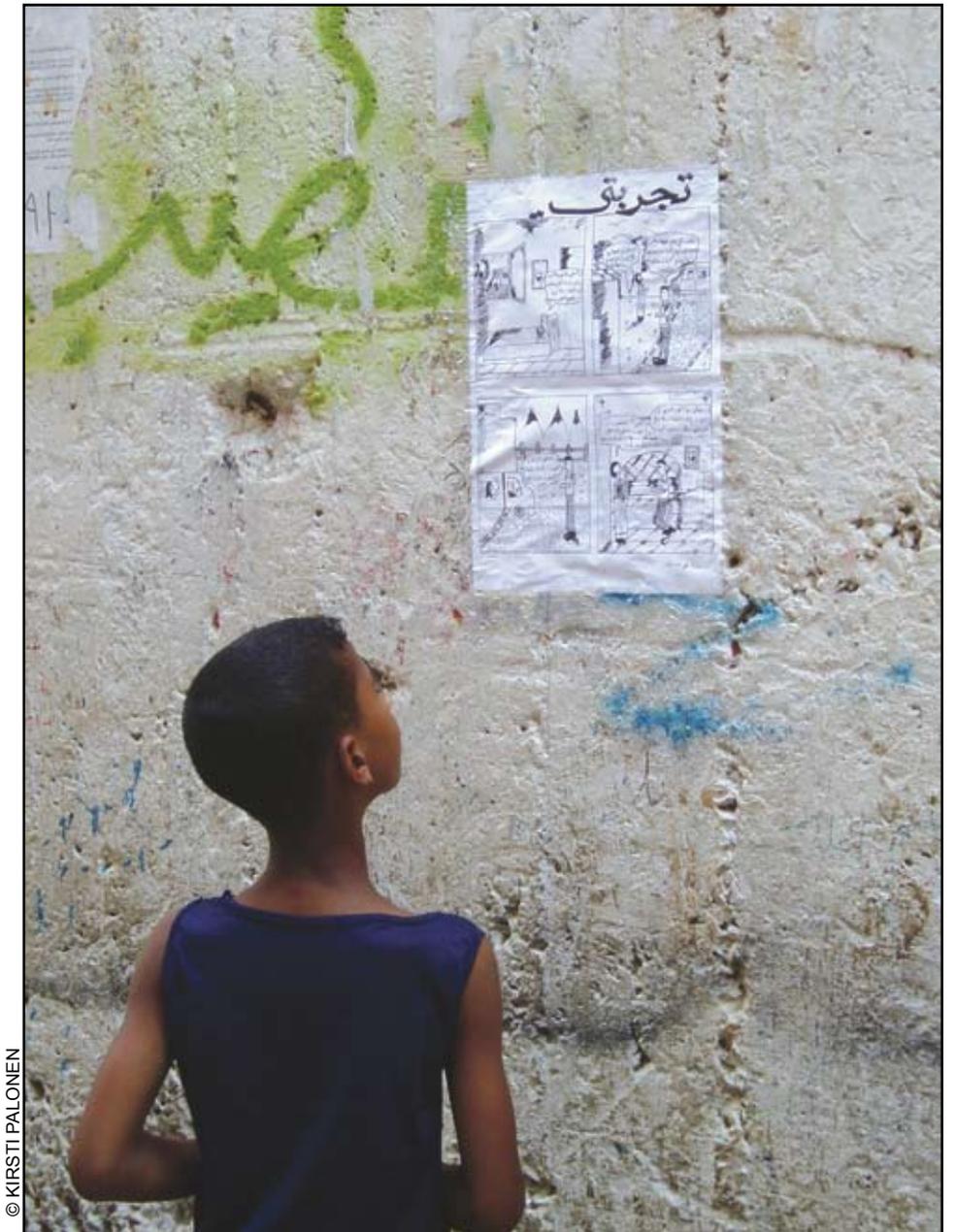
The grassroots comics, especially wallposter comics, emerge as a medium which is available to groups and individuals, who normally have little or no access to media.

Since comics stick out, they are attractive for NGOs, which always have to look for new and innovative ways of communicating with their target audience. Furthermore, to distribute comics in communities is not very expensive as the NGOs can use photocopying or low-tech black and white printing methods.

Who can use the medium?

Grassroots comics are best suited for local campaigning and peer communication in local languages. The comics have been successfully used in campaigns involving human rights, health education, corruption, environmental concerns, etc. Further on in the book you can see samples of the comics and how they have been used in campaigns in countries and communities very different from each other.

Any group with an identity, a message and a target audience can produce and use grassroots comics as a communication tool.



© KIRSTI PALONEN

A Palestinian boy reads a comic on the wall in the Shatila Refugee Camp in Beirut, Lebanon. The comic was put up by youngsters in a preventive mental health programme run by BAS, a Palestinian NGO with centers in all refugee camps in Lebanon. Read more on page 89.

The technology involved is not very complicated and the comics deal with local issues, and use local languages, local visual culture and local meanings and metaphors. In our experience, very diverse groups on different levels of literacy and technical sophistication can with some encouragement all learn to produce comics which are of great interest to their groups or communities.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Comics on the girl-child issue were exhibited in Rajasthan in preparation for a larger campaign.

The comics were all made by villagers and local activists.

Campaigning

There are different levels of campaigning with grassroots comics, from peer group distribution within a local community to using local comics in mass distribution. Obviously, the available resources will always be the determining factor.

Grassroots comics which have been made for a local audience can also be used for mass distribution. This was the case in the Barmer Girl Child Campaign (see page 33), in which the comics were made by villagers and activists in Barmer, but the comics were later distributed in a large part of Rajasthan, because the messages were relevant for the whole area. A first voice communication by a community member has much more credibility and impact than a slick presentation by a communication professional.

Exhibitions and publications of grassroots comics

Grassroots comics from different groups and countries can also be shown in exhibitions or published in order to give an insight into how members of a particular group look at their lives and which issues are important to them. From their comics we can get a first-hand view of how they tackle their issues.

The exhibitions and publications are filled with a lot of local cultural information, but sometimes it is difficult to translate that to a mainstream audience. Even when the comics are not drawn on a professional level, the passion and confidence in the message come through.



© SHARAD SHARMA

The Girl Child Campaign "Rights for our Daughters!" spread more than 2500 comics in Western Rajasthan. Read more on page 33.



© LEIF PACKALEN

Grassroots comics have a lot of interesting local information which can be collected into exhibitions. A selection of Indian wallposter comics was displayed in the Museum for Contemporary Art in Helsinki in 2004.

Grassroots comics formats

What is common to all grassroots comics formats is that they always use simple, widely available duplicating methods, such as:

Photocopying for issues up to 30-40 copies

Screen printing for issues from 100 copies upwards

Offset printing for issues from 200-300 copies upwards

Some of the comics will often later be converted for publication in newspapers, magazines and brochures, so it is also a good idea to consider this when choosing the format.



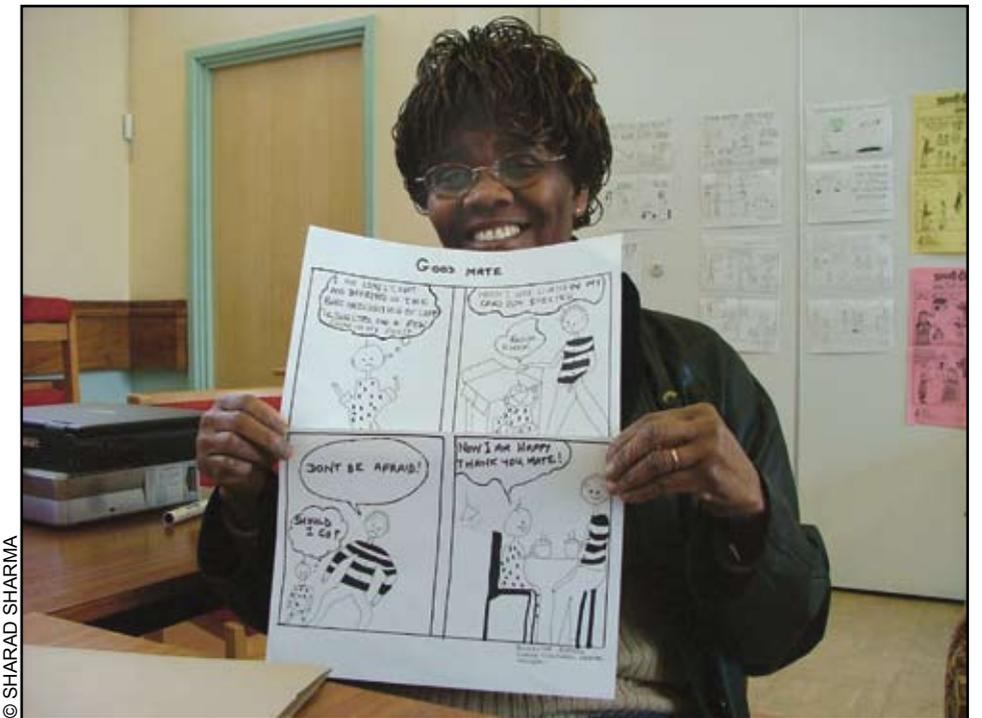
© SHARAD SHARMA

Wallposter comics, which were printed on vinyl sheets to withstand rain, included the logos of the sponsors. From the organisation CINI-Asha's parenting campaign in West Bengal, 2005.

Wallposter comics

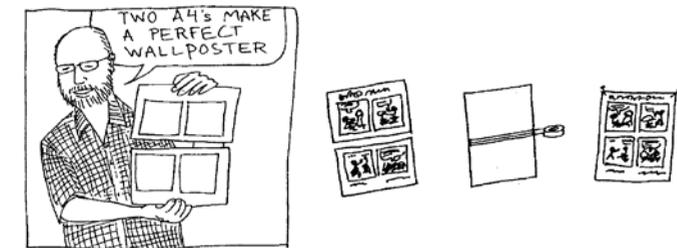
By far the wallposter comics are the most common and most cost-effective format. The advantages are obvious; you can cover a whole village population by pasting two or three wallposter comics in strategic places. All this for the cost of a few photocopies!

The wallposter comic is a story which is told visually in four parts, so it is a compact format. Most messages, however, can be converted into a short and precise story. Many of the traditional development communication posters normally have only one message or a slogan, but in the wallposter comic you can put in a lot more information and feeling as in the story there can be drama and a sequence of things that happen.



© SHARAD SHARMA

An activist with the Manchester-based Community Pride Initiative (CPI), shows the comic she made in a CPI workshop in 2005. Read more on page 92.



Photocopied wallposters

Normal photocopying, using A4 sized paper, is widely available in the world, even in rather remote areas. Therefore the simplest wallposter format is to combine two A4-photocopies and join them. This makes a wallposter of A3 size, which is big enough to be noticed from a distance. The wallposter can be comfortably read standing, from a distance of about 1 meter. If a bigger (A3) photocopying machine is available, then the copies can be made directly to this size.



© LEIF PACKALEN

Screen printed wallposters distributed in Jharkhand, India, in 2003.

Printed wallposters

When you need a big amount of wallposters, photocopying becomes an expensive option. There are, normally, in towns some small printing shops which cater to the business printing needs in the area. Most of these small printers can make inexpensive print runs of a few hundred copies either on screen printing or offset printing equipment using simple newsprint paper. There might be some requirements for what type of original the printer can use, but these should not be too difficult to master quickly.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Beeti of Mizoram Arts Society, demonstrates an environmental wallposter comic, "Kawhmuhtu", which is distributed on a regular basis to school and government office noticeboards. This noticeboard is in the office of the Director for Information and Public Relations in Aizawl, Mizoram, India.

Booklets

Comic booklets are useful because the stories can be much longer than in a wallposter comic. You can increase the number of turns the story takes, introduce more characters, and make the story more dramatic and lively when you have more space. A booklet can be distributed to participants in meetings or seminars, to people that are motivated to take a stand on an issue, and to visitors to an NGO office, etc.



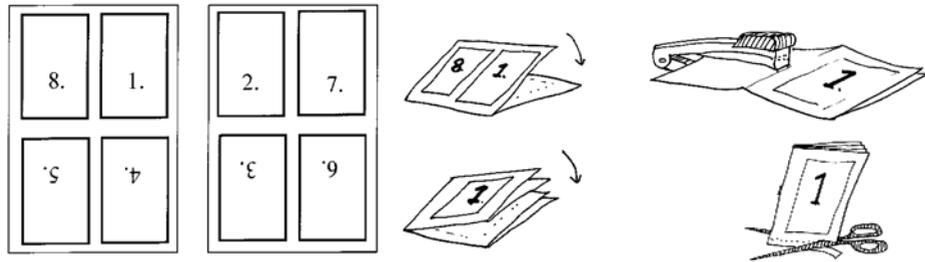
© SHARAD SHARMA

Ms. Anthea from Xavier College in Goa, India, shows comic booklets made during a workshop by UNIFEM and Metamorphosis there in 2006. Read more on page 39.

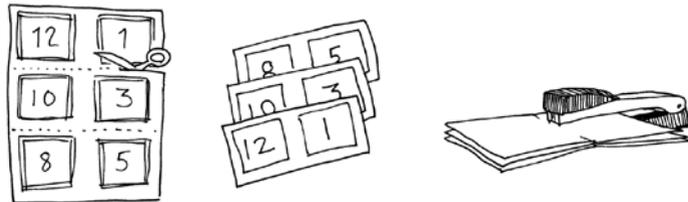
8-page story from one doublesided photocopy

This format is the basic booklet. When the pages are set in a specific order (see next page) and photocopied on the same sheet of paper, it can be folded into an 8-page booklet.

The booklet is stapled in the back and one fold is cut open with a knife.

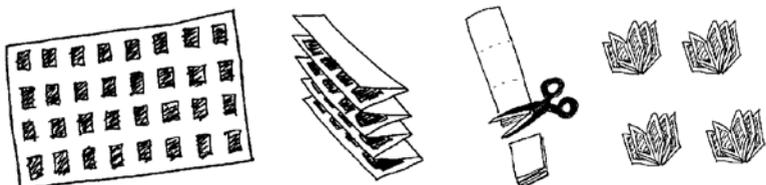


You can also make a 16-page story by folding a doublesided photocopy. This is the format to use when you need to make a longer story without having to draw a lot of detailed action. The page order and booklet assembly is shown in Appendix 5.



12-page story from one doublesided photocopy

This format is made by cutting the doublesided photocopy into three parts, assembling them and stapling them from the back. The page order and booklet assembly are shown in Appendix 5. It is a neat, almost-square format, which is very useful when you need to deepen the story a little bit.



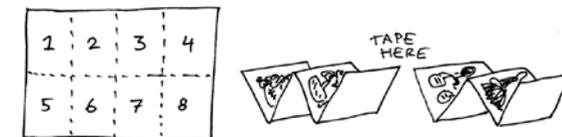
Accordion minicomics

Accordion comics are folded into an accordion and read either as a long strip or a minibooklet. The format is especially useful for discreet distribution because from the outside of the minicomics you cannot see what it is about as the covers are blank.



© KIRSTI PALONEN

These young women work in Beddawi, Lebanon with a Palestinian organisation (BAS). The accordion comic is one of the formats that they plan to use in a preventive mental health project. Read more about the organisation on page 89.



The simplest accordion comic is made from a photocopy of a story which is drawn in eight panels on a sheet of paper as shown above. The paper is cut in half and the two pieces are joined with a piece of tape. Although it includes a bit of handwork, the size of the panels is OK and this format is easy to photocopy as you need to copy only on one side.

A mini-accordion can be made if you have access to a photocopying machine that can reduce the original to 50% of its size. Take the original 8-panel story (A3), reduce it to 50% and make four copies. Cut the two strips and assemble them on an A3 sheet of paper as shown in Appendix 4. Then fold the A3 into an accordion and cut it into four parts – you have got four accordion minicomics for the price of one A3 – photocopy!



Wallposters are read standing so they are normally clear enough to be reduced down to 25 %. Then the panels are rearranged and can be easily published as strips.

The sample is a story about self-help groups and was made by Ms. Ku Sunita Ketwas from Bhopal, India.



Ku Sunita Ketwas
N ZINWED Oshov-dangai Bekul
(M.P.)

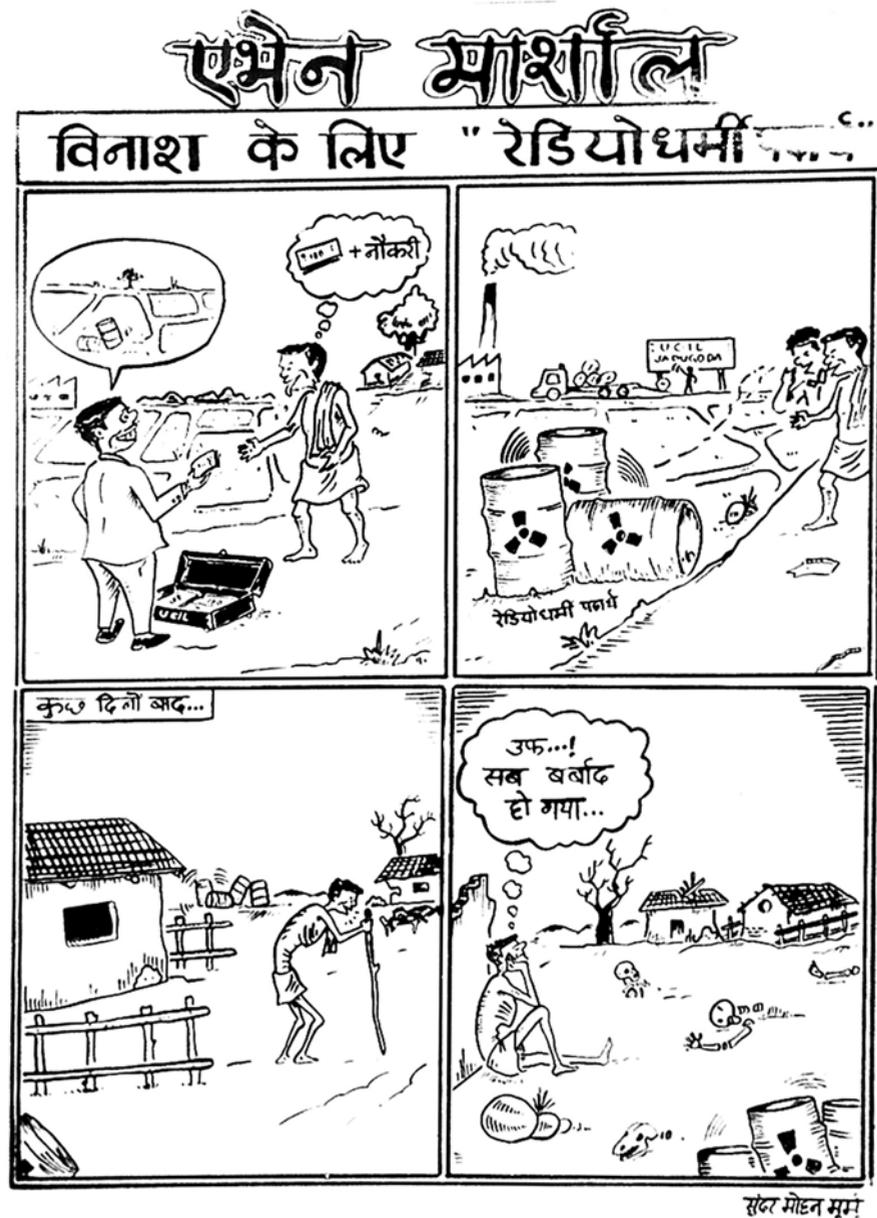
CHAPTER II

India
Sri Lanka
Nepal
Pakistan

Converting comics into strips

You can convert comics into strips to be published in magazines, newsletters and brochures, but you have to remember that the reduction from the original size can be very drastic and you will have to make sure that the original artwork has sufficiently thick lines and that the text is big enough.





"Radioactive destruction" by Sundar Mohan Murmu, Jaduguda, 2006.

The Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) officials promised jobs to the villagers of Jaduguda if they gave land. Once the mines were operational, then UCIL started dumping radioactive waste. The villagers were afflicted by many ailments and radiation started killing them. They realised now that the mines had destroyed everything.



A BIRSA meeting, where the theme of the monthly wallposter *Sain Maskal* is discussed. The artist Thomas Sundi is second from left.

Walls unite people in Jharkhand

Jharkhand is a small state in eastern India with a tribal majority. The state is rich in minerals but the indigenous people are neglected. Several organisations work there on various issues such as tribal rights, environmental problems, patent rights, displacement of people, etc. The wallposter comic was introduced in the state by BIRSA (Bindrai Institute for Research Study & Action), a local organisation in the western Singhbhum district, which had been looking for new, more effective means to spread information in the area. Now, since 1997, a wallposter comic called *Sain Maskal* is regularly published in the state.

The press in the region rarely reports on local issues. It was thought within BIRSA that the wallposters, if made attractive enough, could catch the interest of the people.

At first, the wallposters had only text, and nobody really paid attention to them. Later they were replaced by visually interesting posters which had stories with local characters and humour, and converted into four-panel comics. Nobody had seen anything like this before: cartoon characters speaking in Ho, the local language! These wallposter comics were pasted on the walls in the surrounding villages.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Somewhat disrespectfully, a wallposter comic has been pasted on a signboard in West Singhbhum, Jharkhand.

Over time, they caught people's attention and the demand for them increased.

Now, every second Tuesday of the month, people from far-flung areas come to BIRSA's office to collect wallposter comics for distribution in the villages. In the beginning, only a few villages were covered, but soon the circulation touched one thousand. Often, the villagers write to the organisation, asking it to cover some issue or other. If the wallposter fails to reach a village, it sends a representative to collect a copy.

Over the years, BIRSA has covered topics such as witch-hunting, alcoholism, population control, cultural pollution, migration, displacement, patent issues, etc., with their wallposter comics. The comics have mainly been used by the human rights organisation, JOHAR (Jharkhandi's Organisation for Human Rights), in its activities.

BIRSA's top artist Thomas Sundi still holds his brush tight to conquer social evils through comics when the wallposter comic *Sain Maskal* is entering its tenth year. Lakhindra Nayak, Geeta, Babita, Sunder Mohan, Budhram and many others have followed suit.



बिरसा (B.I.R.S.A) चाईबासा सिंहभूम द्वारा प्रकाशित एवं ललित स्क्रीन पिचिंग द्वारा मुद्रित।

"Value education!" by Thomas Sundi, Jharkhand, 2002. A mother gives money for school fees to her son. The other children who come from well-off families tempt him to join them in going to the movies, but he insists on going to school. They are in the grip of films, hazard, tobacco, love affairs, drink and betel. They leave school and marry early. At the end they regret that they did not study more (translation from Ho).

KA SIM ANG.

KHAW PAKHAT- AH HIAN MI
PAKHAT DRUGS TI NASA EM EM
MAI HI A AWM A.



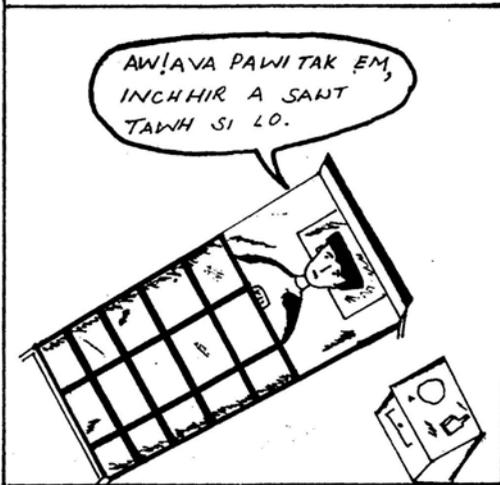
NIKHAT CHU A THIANPA NEN AN
IN CHIU ZO CHU AN HO A.



DOCTOR HNEN ATANGIN HIV/AIDS
HRIK A PAI TIH A LO HRIAT
CHUAN.



THLA THUM HNUAH CHUAN
DAMDAMI INAH A AWM A LO
NGAI TA HIAL A.



EVA LALRUATKIMI (16 yrs)
AIZAWL.

"I shall repent" by Ms. Eva Lalruatkimi, Aizawl, 2003.
In a village there was a man who used drugs heavily. He spread the habit to his friends, too. One day he was told he had HIV and had to be hospitalised. There he laments his fate and says: - Regretting does not help (translation from Mizo).



© SHARAD SHARMA

Raltawnkima "Tawna" Ralte Kawini Chalchung is an active member of MAS, and has participated in several comics workshops. He is now training others to make comics.

Literate Mizoram speaks in visuals

Mizoram is a small state in India with a high literacy rate, second only to that of Kerala. Its mountain terrain makes communication and movement difficult.

Mizoram Artists' Society (MAS), which promotes fine arts in the North Eastern states of India, agreed in 2002 to collaborate with World Comics India. Before coming to Mizoram, WCI had mainly worked in low literacy areas of the country. Many people raised their eyebrows at the idea of introducing visual communication in a state where the majority of the people are literate.

At a workshop held in Aizawl in 2002, the participants learned how to draw, write their stories and convert them into wallposter comics. The participating youth had a deep grasp of local issues confronting the state. In their comics, they depicted water scarcity, drug addiction, intoxication among youth, HIV/aids, traffic problems, etc.

Later, more workshops were organized regularly, and MAS formed a "Comics Division" which produces and distributes comics. A wall-poster comic titled *Kawhhmuhtu* (the Pointer) is printed regularly. The



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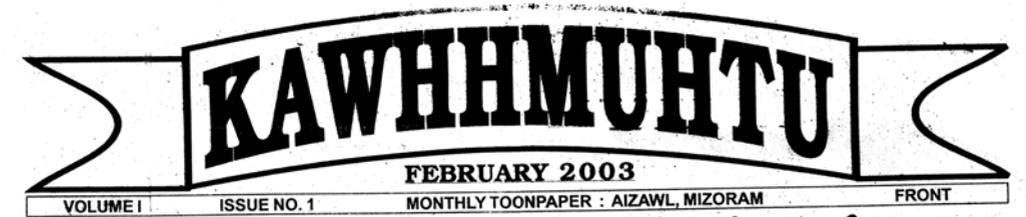
The monthly wallposter comics are distributed on notice boards in schools and offices.

first issue dealt with the problem of slash and burn cultivation, locally known as *Jhoom*. It was printed in two hundred copies which were distributed among locals.

MAS volunteers, who were involved with the workshops from the very beginning, reported extensive viewing of the wallposters by the people. They could relate to the stories because they were in their own language and they featured local characters. In no time, these posters became so popular that the Forest and Environment Department decided to sponsor them and use them in their awareness campaigns.

Mr Rosamlia Ralte, the Secretary of MAS, recalls how the posters were distributed. At various places, such as schools, colleges, government and NGO offices, and press clubs, wooden frames serving as notice boards were installed and the wallposters were put on them.

Many of those who participated in the workshops have now become comics tutors themselves, and are busy spreading the idea of comics in other parts of the state.



Ram kang, a va paw em!



Published by - MIZORAM ARTISTS' SOCIETY, Comics Division.

Copy Right Reserved by - MAS

"The agony of forest fire" by Rosamlia Ralte, Kawhmuhtu-poster, issued in February 2003.

The government allows *Jhoom* (slash and burn) cultivation after March 15. The farmers admire the beautiful valley before the burning. After the burning, the farmers look at the same valley, lament the loss of wildlife and beauty, and decide they should start campaigning in churches for other types of agriculture (translation from Mizo).



"Don't do this" by Kabbu, 12 years, Barmer, 2005.

In a village, two young sisters Shanti and Intri are married off early because their father wants to save money. After some time, Intri becomes pregnant and develops severe complications. Her parents realise that they should not have married off their daughters at such a young age. Their mother shares her experience with other women and they promise her that they won't commit the same mistake.



Kabbu (left) and her friend show their drawing exercises to their fellow participants in one of the preparatory workshops for the "Rights for our Daughters"-campaign.

Girl Child campaign: ownership brings involvement in Rajasthan

World Comics India and Dream on Wheels had for quite some time planned cooperation with Vikalp, an organisation in Barmer for building capacity in communication skills. Barmer is in Western Rajasthan, in a very harsh desert area.

Finally, at the first comics workshop in Barmer in 2005 seventy participants turned up, but they were all male. Clearly this was not acceptable. A local activist said: "What to do? People don't want to send their daughters".

However, somehow the local organisers managed to find some school girls to fill up the gap. The deplorable situation of the women in Barmer strengthened our commitment to work for the empowerment of women there, and it also gave direction to the six-day workshop where comics on discrimination against girls, eve teasing, female foeticide, widow marriage and related issues were developed.

In this area, infanticide, i.e. killing of baby girls, is at times practiced.



Young girls from Haathma village in Rajasthan want to know what exactly the wallposter is about.

Later, the comics were exhibited in a tent at a busy cross-section of the city, drawing the attention of thousands of people. People identified with the problems raised in the comics.

Whenever we visited Barmer we found amazing interest and excitement about the comics. Follow-up workshops were organised by WCI within a few months, and this time, girls from remote villages participated. The overall theme was "Rights for the Girl Child".

When we were distributing the comics in the villages, we saw some boys raising the slogan "Long Live Comics Power". They had not participated in any of our workshops but had learned how to make wallposter comics by watching others drawing.

Within a span of a few months, over 300 wallposter comics were developed in this difficult area where children took to them as entertainment. A campaign called "Rights for our Daughters", popularly known as *Aapri Dikri Ro Hak* was launched, and it took the wallposters to



Campaign poster made by Bhairoo Lal, 14 years, Barmer, 2005. A man called Sham is talking to his pregnant wife. He tells her that since they already have a daughter, he does not want another girl. They go to a hospital. After an ultrasound, the doctor confirms that the foetus is a girl. Since ultrasound for sex determination is banned in India, the doctor conducts an abortion secretly and tells them not to tell anyone. But a nurse overhears this and reports to the police, so both Sham and the doctor are arrested.



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About 30 bikers took part in the three-day bike rally from Barmer to Jodhpur in Western Rajasthan. The lead biker was Bittoo "Bikewallah" Sondhi (in white helmet), a celebrated bike racer in India and founder of the organisation Dream on Wheels.

Below: The comics were distributed everywhere, in every town and village where the "Rights for our Daughters" bike rally passed.



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The campaign banner at the launch in Barmer.

hundreds of villages. Different ways for creating awareness of the plight of girls were used, from door-to-door campaigning to cyclists moving out to reach the villagers, and to torchlight processions. Comics were distributed everywhere.

The overwhelming support inspired us to launch a bigger campaign so that even more youngsters would be involved. We arranged a motor cycle rally in January 2006 which took us from Barmer to Jodhpur with stop-overs in the roadside villages. We distributed wall-poster comics, strips and comic books at every stop. What made our campaign material so special and attractive, was the fact that it was produced by the local people themselves. Many of the local NGOs and social action groups came forward to extend their support to the campaign.

The bike rally is over, but the campaign "Rights for our Daughters" still goes on. More comics are created all the time. Six months after the rally, Hansaram of Haathma village said: "A wind of change is blowing in the area, and this year many more girls are enrolled in the schools."

Some of the comics were distributed as stickers.





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© ANIRBAN DUTTA

Left: Goenkar Changemakers paste wallposter comics in Mapusa bus stand. Upper right: A College student distributes posters among the tourists on the beach. Lower right: About 200 comics were on display in the Kala Academy, Panjim, 2006.

In different parts of Goa, the students then formed into groups and distributed the comic material among the people. The wallposters were pasted up in hotels, road side food stalls, bus stops, beauty parlours and barber shops. All the comics were also displayed in an exhibition organised at Kala Academy in Panjim.

In the second phase of the campaign forty participants were selected for training of trainers (ToT) workshops. Later, these new trainers formed a group called Goenkar Changemakers. They have conducted workshops for the children in migrant communities, in schools and shelter homes.

The Goenkar Changemakers even got support from the State Government's Child and Women Welfare Department to exhibit the comics in sixty remote villages of Goa.

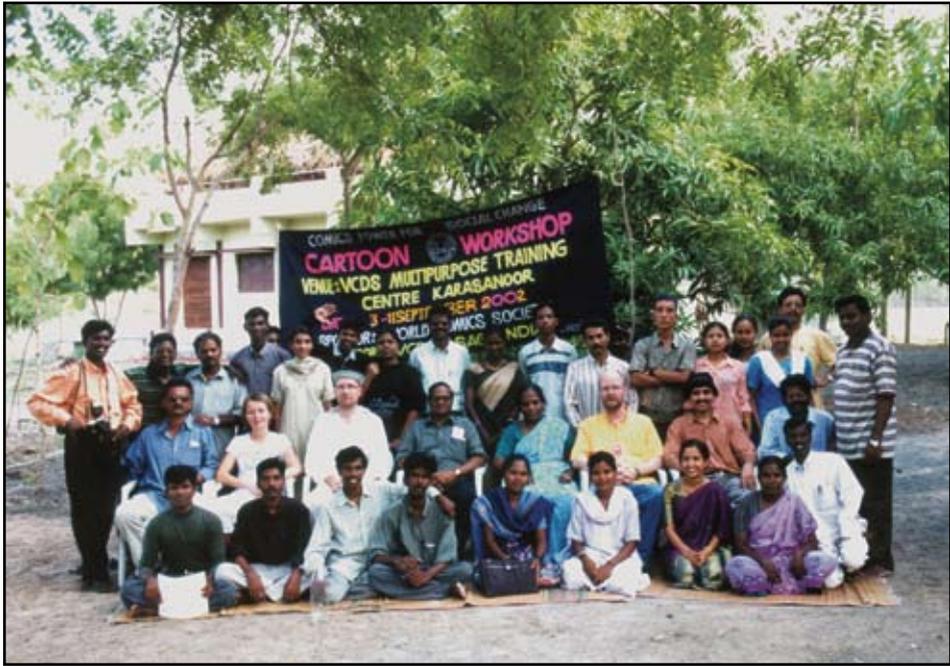
The success of this campaign was largely due to ownership. The students who pasted wallposter comics in the streets had a strong sense of involvement since they were themselves the creators of the campaign material.

आँख खुले तो सबेरा



COMIC BY : BHAVIKA HALANKAR

"Better late than never" by Bhavika Halankar, Goa 2006. A girl comes to Mumbai with dreams of becoming an actress. Some city cons drug her and make her appear in a pornographic movie. When she regains consciousness, she speaks to other girls who have been duped in a similar manner and together they decide to inform the Police. The girls then realise that they were better off in their homes and that one should be very careful in big cities.



© LEIF PACKALEN

The comics workshop in 2001-2002 had participants from Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Tamil Nadu. These workshops helped to lay a base for spreading the grassroots comics concept in India.

cartoons to encourage illiterate women to participate in local self-government. In many villages, women win the elections but their husbands hold the real power. Lately, through the impact of the ideas presented in the comics and cartoons, more women have started to exercise their power. To make comics and have them displayed in public give the women a sense of self-worth, dignity and self-confidence.

VCDS also pioneered the arranging comics workshops with participants from different parts of India. In 2001-02, activists from Jharkhand, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka joined their Tamil Nadu colleagues at the VCDS Karasanoor Centre in learning how to use the medium of comics in NGO information work.

As VCDS has a long experience of cooperation with Nordic organisations it has provided a good base for the tutors from Finland to gain experience in how to run comics workshops in India.



"Girl Power!" by Ms. D. Thanuskoodi, Karasanoor, 1999. The girl walks out happily, but is spoken to in a rude way by a boy. She answers him back and in the end gives him a slap. A policeman, who happens to pass by, says "Good girl!".

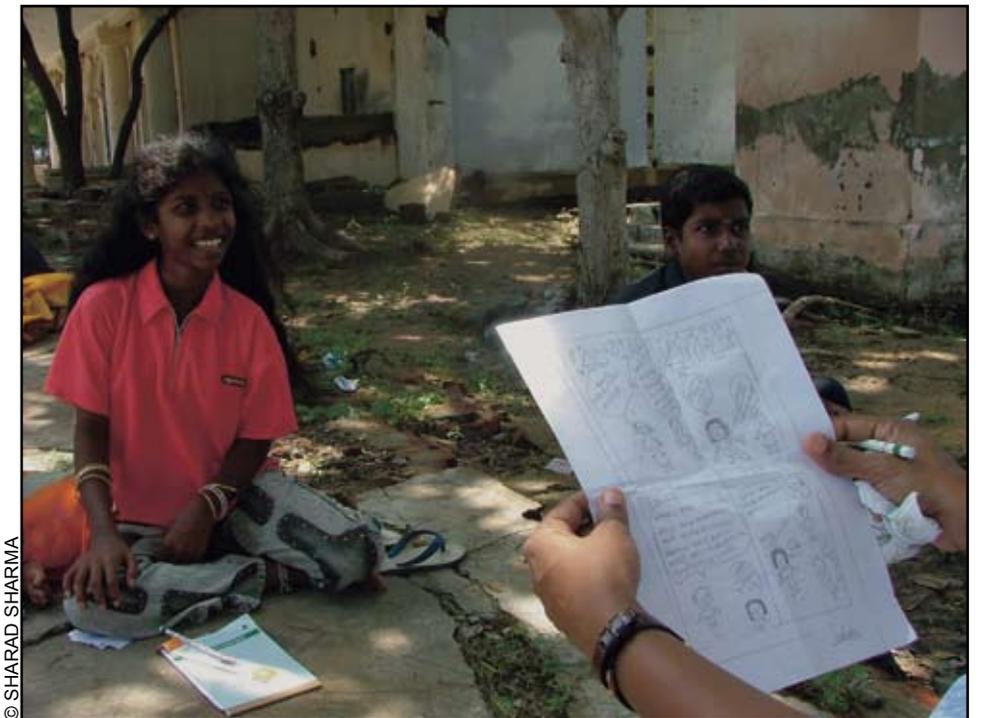


"Water and the Dalits" by Ms. Epsiba Sarojini, Karasanoor, 2001. The upper caste people resent the fact that the Dalits use the same water pond as themselves. After a petition by the Dalits an official intervenes and the upper caste people have to allow the Dalits to the water pond.

கிணாட



Comics drawn by Sivabalan during a comics workshop in Karaikal, Pondicherry, 2005. A boy, who witnessed the tsunami is so badly traumatised that he does not step out of his house even to play. He is taken to a doctor, who assures him that a tsunami will not occur again for the next 60 years. Thus assured, the boy returns to the beach to play.



Children in a comics workshop in Karaikal, Pondicherry, 2005.

Tsunami comics: “I tell and draw, and feel OK”

Comics have the potential to communicate serious and complicated issues in a gentle and light manner. After the tsunami, which ravaged the coastal areas of the state of Tamil Nadu, India, in 2004, several comics workshops were arranged there in collaboration with NGOs or small social action groups. Many people took to the medium, especially children.

They were asked to describe their feelings by depicting them in comics, which they did in earnest. In the workshops they wrote stories about the tsunami’s devastation and converted them into comics. Sometimes these exercises created some joy in the faces of the children who had experienced nature’s fury and the severe losses which resulted from it.

One of the girls showed in her comic how she was hanging in a coconut tree for two hours and came down only when the gushing of the waves had subsided.

Another story described how the children feared going near the shore after the tsunami. They even stopped playing outside. Then, one day a doctor told these children that there would not be another tsunami for at least 60 years. After that the children in the story overcame their fears and started playing near the sea again.



Laxman Singh Negi explains the contents of his comic on the Day of General Discussion of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva in 2006.



The two last panels from Laxman's comic about the drunkard who gives his son alcohol. The boy dies of alcohol poisoning, and the father repents - but it is too late.

How 11-year old Laxman went to Geneva

Eleven-year old Laxman Singh Negi who lives in Gairsain, a small town located in the hilly state of Uttarakhand, was one of the participants at a comics workshop organised by Plan International. His drawing was ordinary and the comics of average standard. At the end of the workshop, we did not know how the participants would use the medium of comics. Neither did Laxman know how to use his new skill.

Later, Laxman heard very disturbing news about his friend. His alcoholic father had brutally smashed a bottle over his head so that he had to get twelve stitches. Laxman decided to dramatise the entire incident in a four-panel comic. Then he made twenty photocopies of the story and pasted them on the walls nearby his house.

When his friend's father saw how he had been portrayed in the comics, he was ashamed and promised to stop drinking. The comic had also a similar impact on some other drunkards in the village. The local traders' committee heard about this, and encouraged Laxman to draw more comics. The committee promised to have them photocopied.

In 2006, Laxman got the opportunity to participate as an Ambassador of Child Rights on the Day of General Discussion of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, in Geneva, Switzerland. In a discussion on the Child's Right to be Heard, he pointed out that if a father remarries he should first ask for his children's opinion. When he was asked how to present this to people, he at once replied, "I can make a comic".

He was given pen and paper and he drew a four-panel wallposter comic on the issue. Nine-year old Archana Bisht, who also attended the Geneva Assembly, made a comic on child labour.

When the village children ask Laxman and Archana how they got the chance to go to Geneva they answer simply that it is because of the comics they draw.

Now Laxman trains other children in his village how to draw comics.

स्व सहायता समूह द्वारा महुआ एवं लघुवनोपज का संग्रह हो



प्रकाशक - ग्राम सेवा समिति, तरौंदा जिल्दा चित्रांकन - चंपालाल कुशवाहा

"Cut out the middleman" by Champalal, Madhya Pradesh, 2005. The Mahua farmers harvested their produce and sold everything to a local businessman. However, the farmers realised soon that the money they got was very little. They teamed up with a local self-help group, and started to sell their produce directly to the buyers.



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Champalal at the World Comics workshop in Bhopal in 2006.

Campaigning farmers in Madhya Pradesh

Champalal is a World Comics activist who lives in a remote village in Madhya Pradesh. He has made wallposter comics mainly on farmers' issues.

Champalal's first wallposter comic promoted organic farming. He made it together with an activist friend, Shiv Narayan Gaur. The impact of this wallposter was so powerful that a local organisation called *Gram Seva Samiti* asked him to draw a series of posters on the problems of vegetable farmers. These posters described farmers' problems but also showed some solutions.

In one of the stories a vegetable farmer realises that most of his profit goes to the middleman who charges a lot for the transportation of the produce to the city. The farmers decide to collect money among themselves to buy a vehicle.

Another story is about *Mahua* farmers (*Mahua*, *Madhuca Indica*, flowers are used for making an alcoholic drink) who are exploited by a rich middleman who always buys their crop at a very low rate. The farmers call a meeting and decide to find a solution to the problem. They decide to turn to a local self-help group to sell their crop.

Champalal who was trained in several WCI workshops himself has now trained some female activists in his area. These new trainers now help him to run small comics workshops. They have created several wallposter comics on local issues, especially on gender.



© SHARAD SHARMA

The tutors' workshop was held in the premises of the Gandhian organisation Peaceful Society, in Madkai, Goa, in 2005. Here, one of the four tutors' groups conducts their test group training in an open tent in the garden.

Extending the chain - training comics tutors

Grassroots comics have become a very powerful and at the same time inexpensive means of communication in India. The demand to train activists in the art of making comics has greatly increased in the last few years. To meet this demand, the World Comics network decided to shift its focus from general comics workshops to trainers' workshops. The persons who had attended some of the comics workshops and continued to use comics as a tool for communication were potential participants of the training of trainers (ToT) workshops.

In 2005 a trainers' workshop was organised in Goa. Eighteen activists, who had already participated in workshops in Mizoram, Nagaland, West Bengal, Orissa, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Maharashtra, attended this workshop. During the first two days, the concept of grassroots comics and



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Ms. Lakshmi Dave, from the organisation Vikalp in Rajasthan, gives instruction to Mangal Singh and Sonu Verma of the local test group at the tutors' workshop in Bhopal, 2006.

its use throughout the world was discussed. Then the participants were divided into four groups. Each group gave a presentation on its understanding of the comics training and its utilization. The entire process of identifying the issue, writing a story, illustrating it and then giving a final touch to the comics was repeated.

The next three days were meant for testing the skills of the new trainers. They now had to organise a workshop for workers and activists from various NGOs of Goa. The trainers and trainees were divided into four batches and for the next three days, four comics training workshops were held simultaneously. The new trainers-to-be successfully accomplished the task of teaching the participants amidst different cultures, languages and environment. Twenty-one comics in languages like Konkani, Marathi, Hindi, Kannad, Mizo and English were made. The new trainers seemed very confident and eager to put their new skills to practice.

A similar workshop for twenty-four tutor-trainees was organised in Bhopal in 2006 with local NGO activists as test groups.



"Raped by rumour" by T. Jegatheswary, Sri Lanka, 2005.
One night in Mullaitivu, two thieves make an attempt to rob a house. Seeing a girl alone in the house, they gag her by forcing a cloth into her mouth. The scuffle wakes up the grandmother and she scares away the thieves before anything happens. The next day, the neighbours spread a rumour that the girl was raped by the thieves. Nobody is ready to hear the truth.



© SHARAD SHARMA

The participants of the comics workshop for the Oxfam campaign pasted up their comics in a fishing village near Pollanaruwa in 2005.

Comics Power in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka the concept of grassroots comics was very quickly adopted as an efficient tool in campaigns. In 2005, Oxfam launched a South Asian campaign involving a large number of youths, the Change Makers, with the idea of building up movements to fight violence against women. World Comics India was invited to sharpen the communication skills of the youths.

Thirty young women and men participated in a four-day workshop in Colombo in 2005. The trainees depicted in their Tamil or Sinhalese-language comics different kinds of violence against women.

On the last day of the workshop, these comics were displayed and distributed in a nearby fishing village. The villagers appreciated the comics and some of the women said that they portrayed the realities of their lives. The villagers also requested more comics of the same kind.

A few days after the workshop, Oxfam published many of the



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The participants in the workshop interviewed the villagers to find out what they thought of the comics. Many of the villagers wanted to have more comics that reflected the life and realities in the villages.

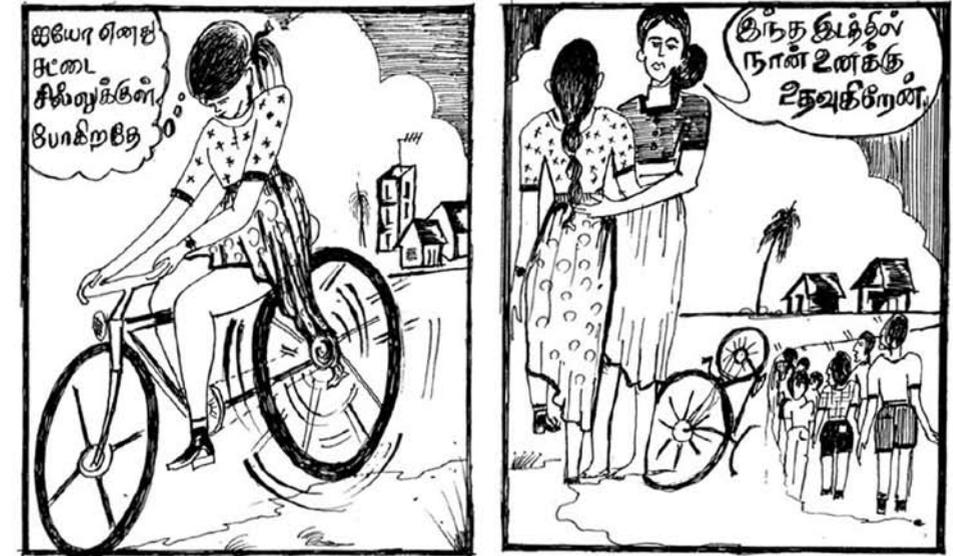
comics and distributed also 40,000 copies of wallposter comics in both Tamil and Sinhalese throughout the country. In addition, some of the comics were converted into leaflets, of which an amount of 100,000 were distributed as newspaper inserts.

After some months, a trainers' workshop was organised in Colombo for fifteen participants. In addition to skills to organise and conduct comics workshops they were also trained in how to write proposals and reports.

A new eight-page campaign booklet was made here. Forty thousand copies of the booklet were later printed and added to the Change Makers' kit.

Now, this new trainer group, popularly known as "Comics Power in Sri Lanka", organises small workshops. In 2006, two of its members were invited to an advanced tutor-training workshop in Bhopal, India, conducted by World Comics India and World Comics Finland.

சிக்கிய சிந்தனைகள்



SHANKAR, NESED-2005110
Comics Workshop with Oxfam

"Entangled thoughts" by S. Shanker, Sri Lanka, 2005. A girl goes to the market on a bicycle. On her way, her long frock gets entangled in the rear wheel and is torn revealing her legs. Alarmed, she wants to hide her legs. An old lady helps her to return home. A few days later when she is on her way to the market bystanders make lewd remarks. One of them realises his mistake and asks for forgiveness.



© HATEMALO SANCHAR

Saurav Shreshtra, the interpreter who turned into a comics tutor, instructs two girls in Hatemalo Sanchar - a children's organisation.

Below: The children of Hatemalo Sanchar displayed their wallposter comics in Chabahil Chowk, a busy market area in Kathmandu.



© HATEMALO SANCHAR

Nepal - everybody likes a good story

Grassroots comics now have many fans in Nepal as well. In 2005, a comics workshop was organised in Kathmandu for children from South Asia, including Afghanistan. The workshop was organised with Save the Children-Sweden. Since the participants spoke different languages, there had to be interpreters to help them. But when the sessions began, even the interpreters started drawing and making their own comics. The workshop ended with an exhibition. Everybody liked the idea of comics.

Saurav Shreshtra was one of the Nepali interpreters at the initial workshop. Later, he teamed up with one of the workshop participants, Nirijana Bhatta and together they organised a comics workshop for 24 children of Hatemalo Sanchar - a children's organisation in August 2005. The result was overwhelming and the participants were enthusiastic about making comics themselves. So they organised many more workshops later in 2005 and in 2006. Two more trainers, Santosh Maharjan and Pinky Bijayananda, also joined the team and helped to spread the grassroots comics in Nepal.

This year (2007) the group got an invitation from two local organisations CWISH and Loo Niva to organise comics workshops. So far, the group has trained 172 children and youths in the art of making comics.

Among the issues which have been raised in the comics, we can find child labour, discrimination against girls, alcoholism, positive thinking, etc.

These comics have been published in *Sunkeshra*, a monthly children's magazine which is widely distributed in different parts of Nepal. Furthermore, ten thousand copies of the magazine *Bal Sansar's* (Children's World) special comics edition was published in 2006.

The group has also exhibited their comics in public places on Children's Day (August 20, 2005) in the premises of the District Development Office, Lalitpur and on New Year's Day, 2007 at Chabahil Chowk, Kathmandu.



ASIM SINDHI = SAP.PK

"Who's offence???" by Asim Sindhi, Lahore, 2006. Ahmed, as a male has all the right to date a girl but puts all restrictions on his sister. One day, when she goes out to fetch water, Ahmed warns her not to talk to anyone. After filling up water, she stops to give directions to a stranger. One of the villagers sees her and informs Ahmed about it while at the same time distorting the facts. Infuriated by this, Ahmed attacks his sister and kills her in the name of 'honour'.



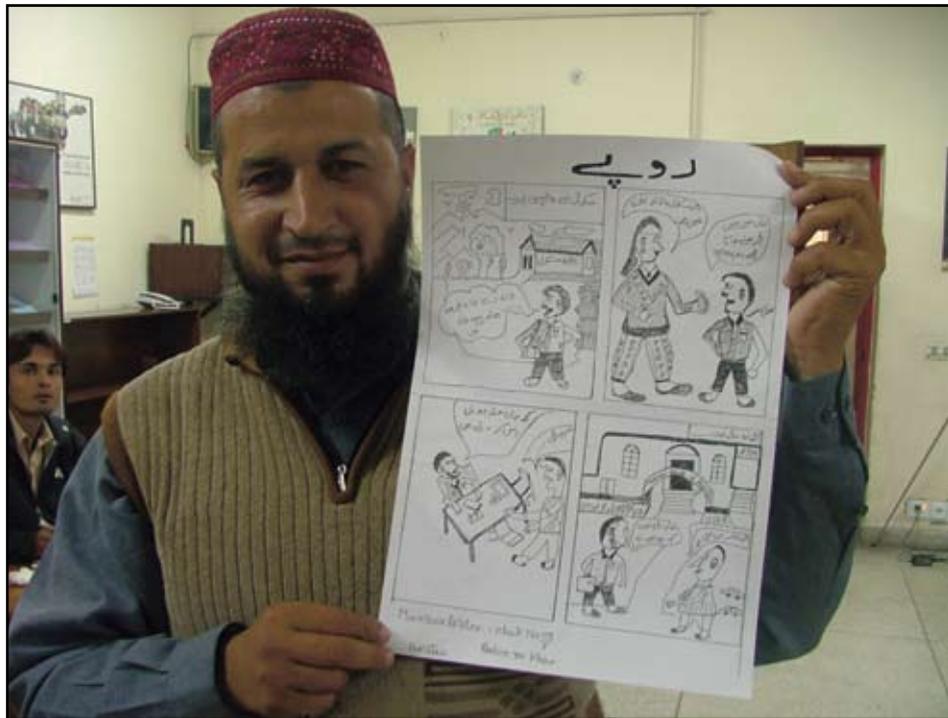
© SHARAD SHARMA

The first grassroots comics workshop in Pakistan was held in Lahore in 2006. Sharad Sharma (under banner, middle) led the workshop.

Pakistan – a new chapter

At the end of the year 2006, a new chapter was opened in grassroots comics - the Pakistan Chapter. World Comics India had previously had the opportunity to work with Pakistani nationals on various occasions in India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the UK, but this was the first chance to organise a comics workshop on Pakistani soil. The love and hate relationship between India and Pakistan has made the situation so difficult that it took us more than two years to get a visa.

Working in Pakistan for an Indian is quite easy, since people on both sides of the border speak the same language, have similar cultures and even the same food habits. Though NGOs are emerging there, people's participation is low, and people's movements almost non-existent. In this setting grassroots comics were introduced as an alternative means of communication, and the cooperation started with a three-day workshop in collaboration with Lahore-based Insan Foundation. Eighteen people from different walks of life participated, discussed matters, shared their views and drew their stories.



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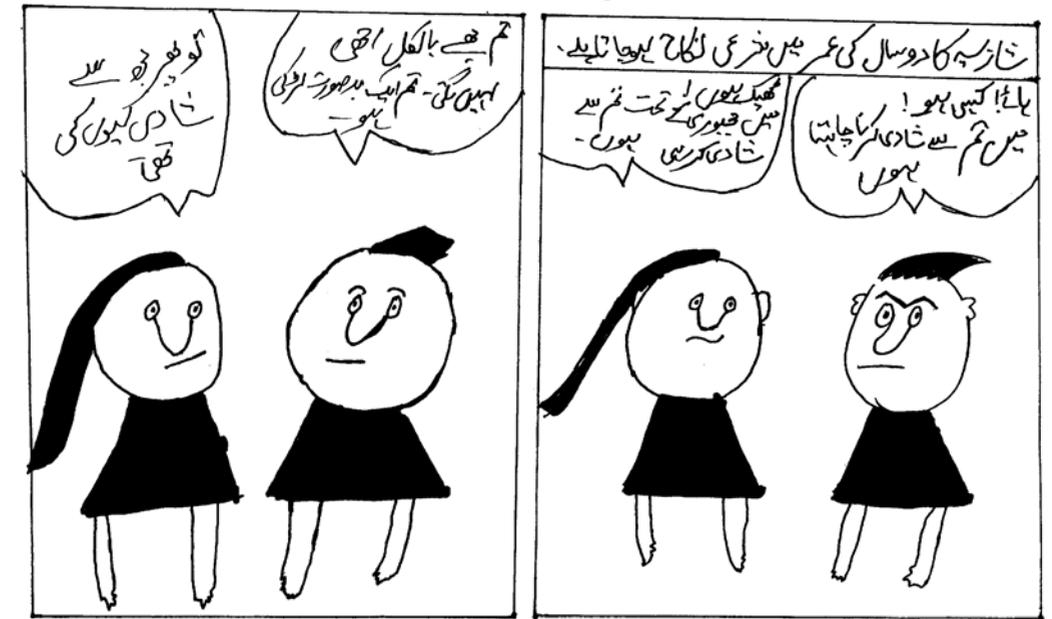
Mansoor Akhtar, from Rahim Yar Khan, shows the comic he made on the issue of parenting.

Grassroots comics was a new idea for every one of the participants. Prominent among the issues were discrimination against women, honour killing, eve teasing, parenting, education, water crises, feudalism and the generation gap. During the discussions, gender was at the centre of everything. The participants also dwelt on how much liberty they could take with the comics while dealing with serious issues.

During the last day of the workshop one of the participants, Adnan Sattar, said that he was not willing to finish his comic since he was not happy with his drawing. He showed a drawing made by another participant who was a fine art student and said "see how others draw so well and realistically". We showed him comics from other workshops where people like him drew in a similar style and where it was appreciated by others. Somehow he felt reassured and finished his drawing. He left the workshop early to catch the evening bus. During the critique session everyone at the workshop was of the opinion that the comic drawn by Adnan Sattar (see opposite page) was visually very attractive.

As he had drawn in an unusual style, the comic caught the attention of the readers. We wished he could have been present during the last session to hear the comments on his own comic.

نتیجہ



عدنان سٹار

"The Result" by Adnan Sattar, Lahore, 2006.

Shazia is married at the tender age of two years. When she is grown up her spouse sneers at her and brands her ugly. Exasperated at such insults, Shazia wants to divorce him. But the spouse does not retract. Rather his sadism comes to the fore when he says that she can't divorce, as she does not have the right to do so.

CHAPTER III

Tanzania

- TANGO

- UKWATA

- TAPOMA

Benin - AMWCY

Mozambique - ADPP



MWANAMKE NA SHERIA YA ARDHI 1999



By Grace D. (WLAC)

"Women and the Land Act of 1999" by Grace Daffa, from Women's Legal Aid Centre, Dar es Salaam, 2003. A woman dreams of having her own farm and finally goes to the land bureau to make an application. The Land Officer says that women cannot get land. Then enters another woman who informs him that according to the new law, women too can own land. The Land Officer is taken aback, but when hearing this is the law, he acts and in the end the woman gets land and starts farming.



Grace Daffa from WLAC.

© LEIF PACKALEN



Final touches.

Introducing grassroots comics to Tanzanian NGOs

After the enthusiastic response to the concept of grassroots comics in India, we decided to give it a try also in Africa. We started with Tanzania.

In April 2003, the Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO) and World Comics-Finland arranged a four-day workshop on grassroots comics production in Dar es Salaam. TANGO is an NGO umbrella organisation.

All participants were drawn from TANGO member organisations. None of the participants had made comics before or had any professional training in drawing. Once again, the workshop proved the point that it is the story, its message, its drama and humour, which is important in grassroots comics.

The objective of the workshop was to introduce the medium of comics as an inexpensive and effective communication method for the use of NGO-activists.

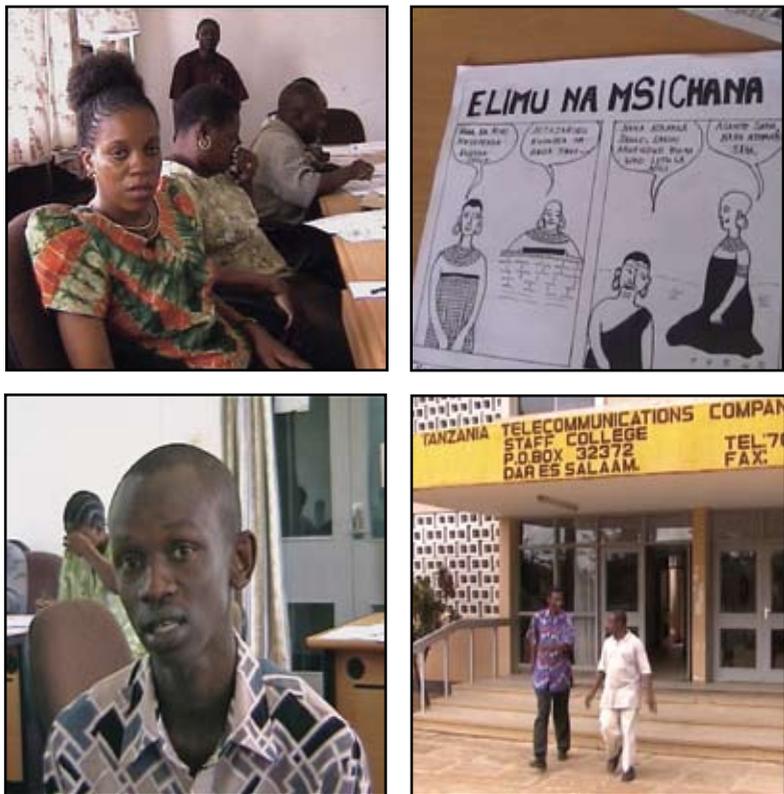
TANGO selected and invited the participants from their members, and nine different organisations took part in the workshop. All participants were NGO activists with a thorough knowledge of their own organisations and their communication needs. Half of the participants were women which was very good, as comics are often seen as something

which only men make. Stories made by women are of great value in NGO campaigning when it comes to issues dealing with gender, sex and family matters, just to mention a few.

The comics were made as photocopied four-panel wallposters.

The participants were at first mainly worried if they could draw at all. It took a lot of persuasion and encouragement from the tutors to overcome that. As no grassroots comics had been made in Tanzania before, we could only show samples from Indian NGOs, which were not that interesting to the Tanzanian NGO activists.

However, at the end of the workshop, we had a good collection of Tanzanian real-life grassroots comics which were relevant for the involved NGOs and their people. Later, this collection proved to be very useful when introducing the concept in other African countries.



© LEIF PACKALEN

Top: Koku Katunzi of HAKI ELIMU and her comic being prepared. Below: Samwel Matiko, a participant, and the tutors Nathan Mpangala and Katti Ka-Batembo.

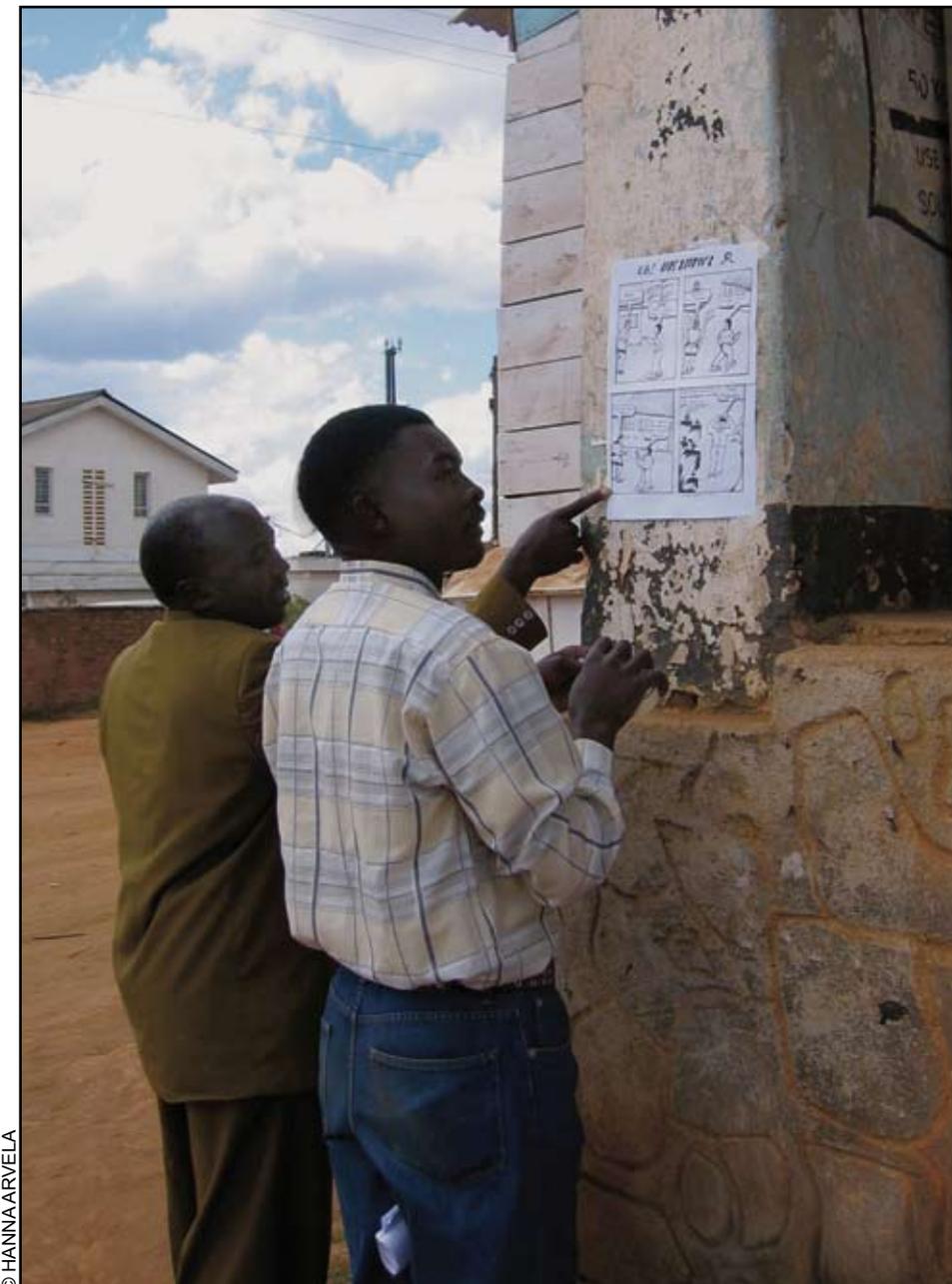


"The education of girls" by Ms. Koku Katunzi, from the organisation HAKI ELIMU (Right to Education), Dar es Salaam, 2003. The story is about a Maasai girl, who wishes to go to school. Her mother talks to her father, who in the end supports the idea, but only on the condition she will not be subjected to a "foreign" culture in the school. In the last panel she is going to school together with a friend.



"Tuache ngono" (slogan meaning let's abstain from sex) was made by Ms. Naomi Nyalusi, Njombe, 2005.

A young couple has been going out for a year. The boy wants to have sex with the girl and threatens to leave her if she does not agree. The girl says OK and later on becomes pregnant. She asks the boy for help but he turns his back on her. A friend advises the girl to get an abortion. There are complications and the girl starts to bleed and dies after her illegal operation.



Michael Nyamba and Lusajo Tusiwene paste up comics in Njombe.

HIV/aids campaigning in Njombe

Ushirika wa Wanafunzi Wakristo wa Tanzania (UKWATA), is a Christian youth movement with representatives in all Tanzanian regions. The UKWATA Branch in Njombe region in Southwest Tanzania ran an HIV/aids awareness programme 2003-2005 in about 40 schools in the region. They used mainly self-written dramas, songs and poems as means of communicating their message.



© HANNA ARVELLA

UKWATA wallposter in Njombe town, Tanzania.

The movement activists also wanted to add grassroots comics to their campaigning tools. A workshop on how to produce and use grassroots comics was held in Njombe in June-July 2005. The workshop was sponsored by the Finnish-Tanzanian Friendship Society.

Most participants were new to making comics, but they quickly appreciated that the comics format was a powerful communication tool.

Sammi Mwamkinga, a Tanzanian cartoonist, who worked as a trainer in the workshop said that he was quite nervous about whether or not the youth activists could draw. Later, however, he concluded that it is the desire to say something that is the main force in making comics, not the ability to draw well.

When the workshop participants pinned up the comics in the centre of Njombe town they received immediate feedback from the townspeople. Many were astonished that the youngsters had made the comics themselves.



"KUMBE!" (OH!) by Simon Wililo, Njombe, 2005. The barber congratulates Zito who is a wealthy man and spends his money wisely. Zito wants to spend his money on helping his relatives. One day Zito decides to get HIV tested just in case. Unfortunately, the doctor finds him HIV-positive. He wonders where he could have got the virus because he has never had sex. Soon he realises that he must have got it from the barber's knife. Zito joins the Angaza Association that gives help to HIV patients.



© LEIF PACKALEN

After training instructions, the tutors were immediately exposed to a test-group of community activists and had to work out themselves the best ways to train them in producing grassroots comics.

This picture is from the NGO "EMAJA" in Tandika, Dar es Salaam, with about 20 activists in the test-group. The tutors ran their first workshops for three days and all participants finished their comics.



© LEIF PACKALEN

Bishop Hiluka (left), a Tanzanian cartoonist, shows a TGNP-workshop participant how to ink his comic.

Teaching was new for most of the cartoonists in the training.

Training comics tutors in Tanzania

Because there was growing interest in the Tanzanian NGO community for grassroots comics, TAPOMA, the cartoonists' association, decided to run a training course for their members to become tutors of comics. A training workshop was held in October 2006 in Dar es Salaam.

The tutor-trainees were all professional or semi-professional cartoonists or artists with experience of making comics for both the press and the NGO community. However, only a few of them had previous teaching experience.

The new tutors were instructed for three days in how to run a comics workshop, how to encourage their participants and how to explain the grassroots concept. They were divided into three groups and each group had a test workshop with 15 - 20 participants from different



© LEIF PACKALEN

Nick Mtui (right), a Tanzanian cartoonist, leads a drawing exercise in the EMAJA workshop.

community groups. A 30-page Swahili-language comics manual was distributed to the test workshop participants.

The test workshops went very well, as all participants finished their comics within the scheduled time. The tutors knew what should be achieved and in which order, but they had to find out themselves how to go about it in the test workshops. It is obviously better not to give too detailed instructions as the circumstances for giving training at local level workshops vary very much.

We can rely much on the tutors' dedication and interest in promoting the grassroots comics method. The method itself is not very complicated, so the teaching of it should not be too difficult either.

The next challenge will be to market the skills of the newly trained comics tutors to the NGO community in Tanzania (and the region).



© LEIF PACKALEN

There were five tutors for each test-group workshop of about 15 - 20 participants. Here is the test group in TGNP (Tanzania Gender Network Programme), Mabibo, Dar es Salaam.

UCHAFU SOKONI



THERESIA BONEPHACE

"The market place stinks" by Ms Theresia Bonephace from the community organisation EMAJA in Tandika, Dar es Salaam, 2006.

The vendors complain about the smell at the market place. One of them thinks that the food smells bad because it is too dirty. Another says that the customers are the ones who throw garbage around. The vendors decide to clean the place themselves and the market becomes clean again.

FATI ACCUSEE DE VOLE



EJT SENEGAL: MARIE LOUISE SARR

"Fati accusé de vole"(Fati is accused of theft) by Marie Louise Sarr (Senegal), Cotonou, 2005. Fati works as a maid and she is accused of stealing a piece of jewellery from her employer. Fati is taken to the police. The police demand that the employer should prove that this was a case of theft by providing some evidence because youth workers also have the right to be treated justly.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Ousseini and Isaak from Niger and Mali participated in the AMWCY grassroots comics workshop in Cotonou, Benin.

West Africa, Benin and working children

The African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) is an organisation that tries to organize child workers to improve their own conditions. They support education, literacy, health care, freedom of expression and work safety and resist child trafficking and exploitation. AMWCY has branches in 20 countries with an emphasis on West Africa. AMWCY has about 400 local groups. AMWCY's twelve priority rights for working children are:

- The right to be taught a trade
- The right to stay in the village (not to migrate)
- The right to work in a safe environment
- The right to light and limited work
- The right to rest when sick
- The right to be respected
- The right to be listened to
- The right to healthcare
- The right to learn to read and to write
- The right to play
- The right to self expression and to form organizations
- The right to equitable legal aid, in case of difficulty



© SHARAD SHARMA

Leif Packalen and Sharad Sharma were tutors in Cotonou. Here they check the progress of workshop participants Bibiane and Pascaline.

A workshop to introduce the communication tool of grassroots comics to 17 AMWCY activists from nine different countries was arranged in Cotonou, Benin in May, 2005. The workshop was sponsored by Plan Finland and arranged in cooperation with ENDA, Senegal.

The children and youths were able to pick up the needed skills easily and there was no shortage of stories they wanted to tell. Especially the twelve rights produced a lot of stories as well as topics concerning vulnerable female workers.

The goal was to make grassroots comics a communication tool for AMWCY. This calls for systematic training of tutors and also for making space for comics in the publications of the movement.

Ms. Romaine Dieng, the coordinator for the comics activities within AMWCY, said after the meeting of the World Movement of Working Children in Siena, Italy 2006, where the comics from AMWCY were exhibited: "The comics created interesting moments of exchange and discussions between us and the participants. Thanks to them the participants have an idea of the situation prevailing in Africa. In short, the comics just summed up what was to be written in the reports or explained verbally".

DROIT AUX REPOS



MAÏGA MOUSSA EST DU BURKINA

"Droit aux repos" (Right to free time) by Maïga Moussa (Burkina Faso), Cotonou, 2005.

The young welders lament that they have no free days off from work and decide to seek help from the local AMWCY office. The AMWCY officers talk to their employer, who then promises to give the youth workers regular days off.



Luisa Xavier
E.P.T - MAPUTO
Escritora

"A discriminacao de pessoas viviendo com HIV" (Discrimination of persons living with HIV), by Luisa Xavier from ADPP Maputo College, Chimoio, 2005.

Manuel is HIV-positive, and his teacher, the headmaster and his school-mates are all supportive. Manuel is grateful and reminds everyone to go for testing.



© LEIF PACKALEN

Comics workshop in the Teacher Training College in Nhamatanda, Mozambique.

Introducing grassroots comics to future teachers in Mozambique

The Mozambican Association Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo (ADPP) runs nine Teacher Training Colleges in nine provinces of Mozambique. ADPP produces about 70-90 new primary school teachers each year from each Teacher Training College. The new teachers will also have a role as development workers in the rural areas where they will be posted. ADPP has a cooperation programme with UFF in Finland, who invited World Comics Finland to arrange training in grassroots comics to support ADPP's development communication skills. Thirty persons - students, some tutors and people from some ADPP-associated NGOs from Maputo, Beira, Chimoio, Nacala and Nhamatanda attended the tutor-training workshop in Chimoio in September/October 2005.

The idea was to train the participants to become comics tutors. Since most of them were used to teaching, we felt we could assume they needed mainly basic comics-making skills and an understanding of the concept.

At first, we trained the participants for four days in making comics

themselves. After a one-day orientation in tutoring comics, the tutor-trainees were divided into four groups and sent to four different locations to run their first comics workshop themselves. They had back-up from the workshop facilitators, who did not involve themselves in the actual teaching, but helped the tutors with advice.

The tutors took charge of their workshops with admirable eagerness and ran them quite successfully, and almost all test workshop participants were able to finish their comics within three days and in most cases also distribute them in their communities.

The skill of making comics and of teaching comics improves with practice. The core group of comics tutors in ADPP and its affiliated groups have now run several workshops in different parts of Mozambique.

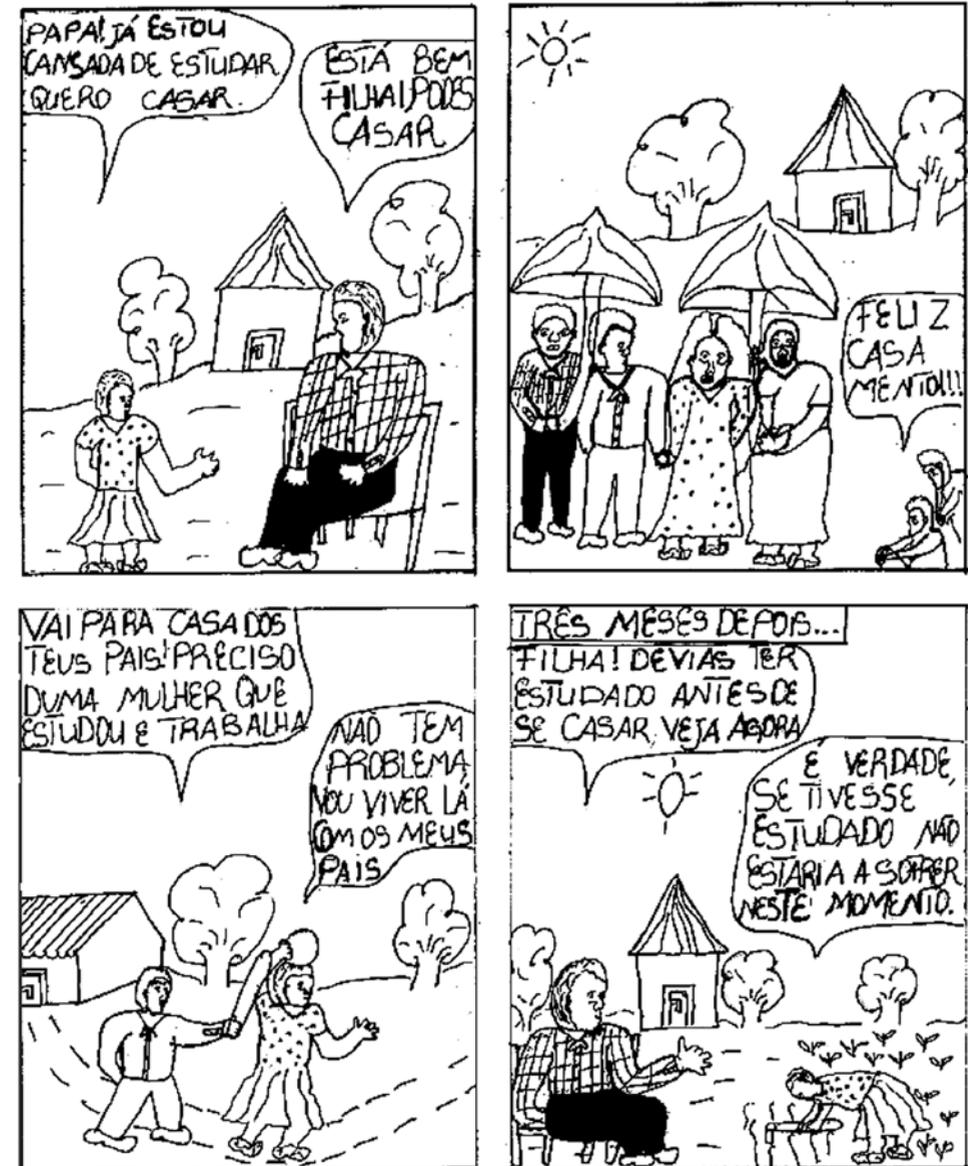
By the end of 2009 there will be more than 1300 persons who have gone through training in making grassroots comics and thirty new tutors will be trained. Because grassroots comics build on local issues, local community involvement, and local visual culture, there is no need for further outside intervention once the basic skills have been learned.



© JOHANNA ROLLA

Workshop participants in Nacala paste up wallposter comics in a village.

O CASAMENTO PREMATURO



ANA BELA AMÓS CALEMBENE

"O Casamento prematuro" (early marriage), by Anabela Amós, Chimoio, 2005.

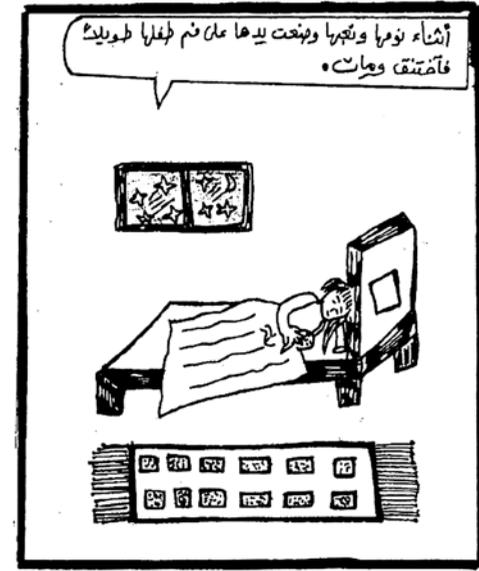
The girl tells her father she is tired of going to school and wants to get married. The father agrees to this. However, she finds married life too hard and returns to her old home. The father realises he should have insisted on her continuing with her studies.

CHAPTER IV

**Comics as a medium among
refugees, in community groups,
and in self-expression.**



« الزواج ليس لعبة باليد »



جمانا خالد عزام

"Marriage is not a joke" by Jumana Khalid Assam, Rashidieh Refugee Camp, Lebanon, 2005.

The girl gets married. Soon she realises that married life is not easy or fun. She is pregnant, but divorces her husband anyway. While asleep, she accidentally suffocates her baby. She then realises that she is free and vows never to marry again. **Note: read from right to left.**



A wallposter comic under close scrutiny in the Shatila Refugee Camp in Beirut in 2005.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

The Finnish Psychologists for Social Responsibility (FPSR) has had cooperation with a Palestinian Refugee organisation in Lebanon for more than twenty years. The cooperation has included various programmes to promote mental wellbeing, offering psychologists' counselling services, training in special counselling skills, etc.

The organisation, Beit atfal Assomoud (BAS), covers ten Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and has an activity center in each camp. These centers offer day-care services, educational courses, handi-craft groups, activities for youth, etc.

It was felt within BAS that comics could be an effective additional communication tool in many of the activities. Therefore, FPSR and BAS asked World Comics Finland to run a grassroots comics training workshop especially for BAS' youth.



© KRISTI PALONEN

BAS youth activists, Rasha, Rima and Nerveen work on their stories at the Barr Elias workshop in June 2005.

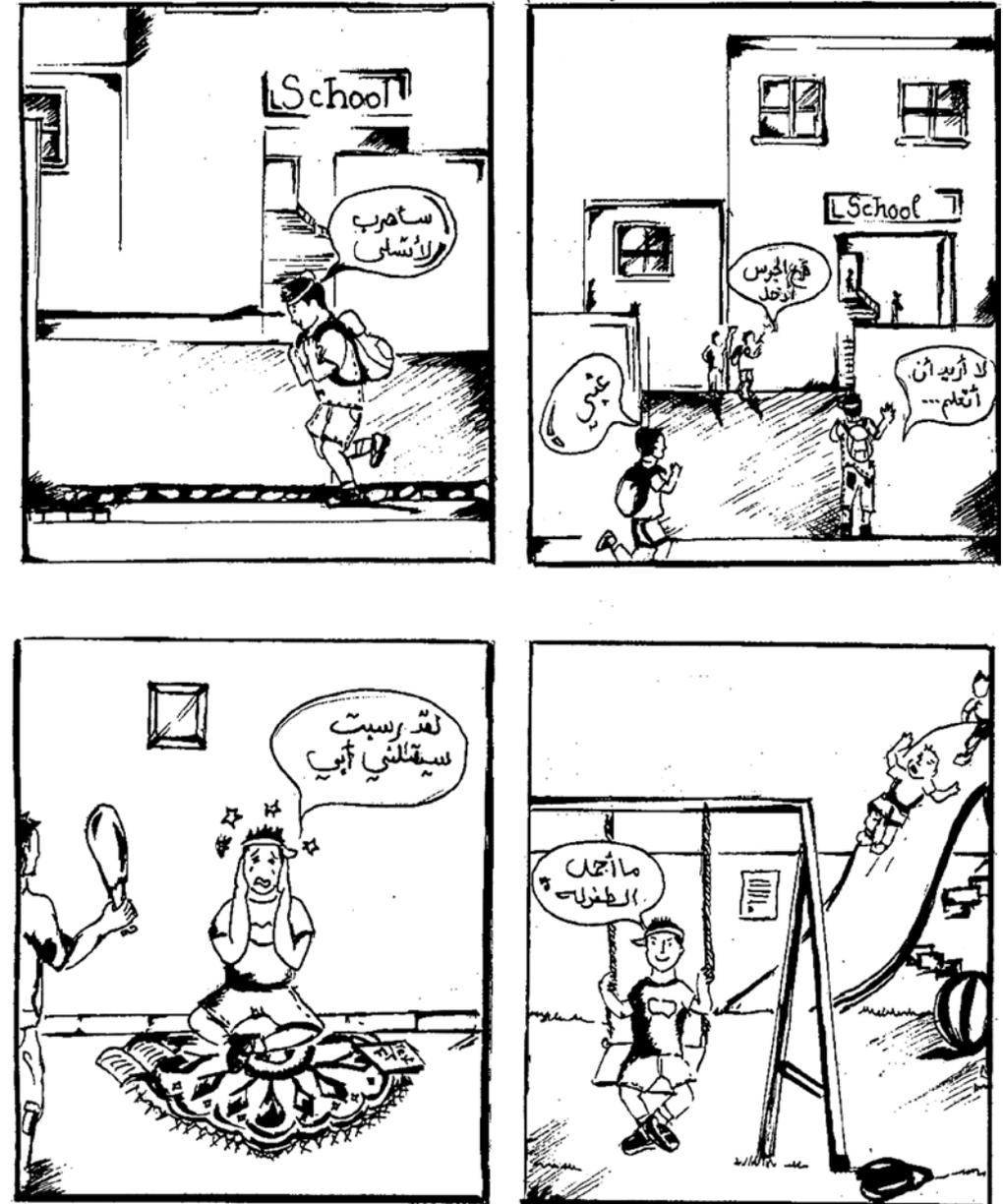
The workshop was arranged in July 2005 in Barr Elias, Lebanon. Fifteen youngsters were taught how to make and use grassroots comics. They took up in their stories problems of early marriage, how boys chase girls, the importance of education, better garbage collection, anti-smoking, and of course the unsolved political dilemma of the Palestinian refugees.

The experiences from the workshop proved again the fact that for a group or organisation with a clear identity and something to say, grassroots comics offer an effective alternative for getting the message across.

After the workshop, the comics were pasted up in some of the camps, and now several groups in the BAS network make comics on a regular basis.

A follow-up workshop, mainly to train grassroots comics tutors, was planned for July 2006, but had to be postponed due to the Israel-Lebanon war.

صوت بعد ففوة



Omar Abu Staiti

"Learn from your mistakes" by Omar Abu Staiti, Beddawi Refugee Camp, Lebanon, 2005.

When the school bell rings, a boy decides to stay at home to play. It feels wonderful to go to the playgrounds. But in the end the boy realises when he fails his grade that his father will be very upset.

Note: read from right to left.

Europe: Self-expression, drama and humour

In Europe, comics have been used as a medium for self-expression in small and alternative groups. There is a constant demand for training and new workshops. Both children and adults are keen to learn how to create and draw their own stories. Telling one's own story in a comic can also be a therapeutic experience for people in problematic situations. It is always the story, which is important, not the quality of drawing.



Sharad Sharma ran several workshops in Manchester in 2005 - 2006 with different community-based organisations there.

Manchester, UK. Comics in community work

In May 2005, members of voluntary and community groups in Manchester and Salford took part in the first ever World Comics workshop to take place in the UK. The event was organised by a small organisation called Community Pride Initiative (CPI) which works in the area.

Led by Sharad Sharma of World Comics India, participants learnt both how to make their own comics and how to train others to do so. Comics were produced on a range of topics including education, gender, community networks, gangs, bullying, government policies, the media, and refugees.

COMPUTER PHOBIA



Ms. Rabia Qureshi's story "Computer Phobia", from the Community Comics' workshop report, May 2005. RABIA QURESHI Salford.

After the training, the Community Comics UK network developed. They met often and facilitated several workshops. Two members of the group participated as observers in a grassroots comics workshop in Goa, in August 2005, arranged by World Comics India. Later on, in 2006, three more small workshops were organised by World Comics in Manchester, including a master class for new trainers. Now, in 2007, comics workshops on the themes of neighbourhood, identity and belonging will be arranged for disadvantaged groups in the area.



Smiling Sheila Hoekstra from the Netherlands presents her comic on how the harsh winter in Finland affected her social life.

Comics – mirror of culture and daily life

In Finland, several organisations have tried out the methods of grass-roots comics. One of them is the European Youth Exchange Organisation (CIMO) which arranged a comics workshop in 2006. Youth exchange volunteers made comics about their experiences of daily life in Finland and their encounter with a new culture. These comics gave in a subtle and humorous way valuable cross-cultural information to the organisers.

Several comics workshops, courses and exhibitions with immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers have been arranged in the Helsinki area. For people with limited language skills, to learn to use comics as a medium for self-expression is often very rewarding. Moreover, to publish and exhibit these comics helps to increase tolerance in the society. They can also be used in global education in schools.

An exhibition of comics made by members of the African Movement for Working Children and Youths and members of the Children's Board of Plan in Finland was made by Plan-Finland in 2006. It has been on display in West-Africa and in Finland, and it can also be viewed on the internet (www.expo-bd.net). It gives examples of how children look at their reality in different cultures.



"Frozen fingers" by Ms. Fadumo, is the story of a Somali refugee, whose hands were so frozen in the Finnish winter that he had to ask the bus driver to pick up his wallet from his back pocket. From the Nuoriso-Kanava (Youth Channel) grassroots comics exhibition in Helsinki in 2002.



This comic strip was made by "Muuse", an asylum seeker in Finland, in a comics course arranged by the Finnish Comics Society and World Comics Finland in 2000. The story is about the shock two Somali girls get when they see white people for the first time.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Maryam Saeed showing the comic she made at a comics workshop in Lahore, Pakistan, in January 2007.

New avenues

There are several new uses for grassroots comics that seem quite promising.

1. Comics in conflict prevention and to promote communal/ethnic understanding

When people tell their own stories on a local level, they can reach out to other groups in the society that have misconceptions or adverse opinions of them. Genuine, heartfelt stories are convincing and they have credibility. These comics can be distributed by organisations working with ethnic, political or communal problems. In some of the workshops in India problems of communalism and stereotyping have already been addressed.

2. Comics in advocacy work

People in decision-making positions often have very little direct contact with grassroots organisations or local activists. By using the attention-grabbing medium of comics, these activists can send

their stories on specific issues directly to the decision-makers. Busy politicians and officials may welcome the opportunity to read a comic rather than to look through another pile of papers. If the comics are sent to the local press at the same time, it could also increase publicity for the issue.

3. Comics in preserving local history and stories from the older generation

For youngsters to learn about the older generation, it could be a good idea that they would look up older people, interview them and then together with them finalise comics about some events from the past. The young people can quickly grasp the know-how of how to make comics and the old people would probably be pleased to tell their stories.

Comics promote literacy

Many people think that it would be better to have comics with no texts at all, as these would be more easily understood by illiterate persons. In our opinion it is better to have comics with both images and texts as the story becomes more interesting in this way.

People who do not know how to read will usually find somebody to read the comics to them. This encourages debate in the society, and also increases motivation to learn reading.

In India, illiterate activists have participated in some workshops. They had a lot of stories to tell and could often draw quite well. Other participants helped them with the texts in the comics. They wrote the text in pencil and the illiterate participants inked both their own drawing and the text.

In many workshops, towards the end, these participants started to identify words and letters and even managed to write some words themselves.

A young boy reads a comic to some women in their village in Bharatpur, Rajasthan, India.



© SHARAD SHARMA

APPENDICES

We have compiled the appendices to this book as a set of tools to be used for making grassroots comics and running comics workshops.

- Appendix 1. Wallposter comics (a manual)
- Appendix 2. Printed wallposter comics (a manual)
- Appendix 3. Eight-page booklets (a manual)
- Appendix 4. Accordion minicomics (a manual)
- Appendix 5. Other photocopy formats, descriptions
- Appendix 6. Training plan for a wallposter comics workshop
- Appendix 7. Sample project documents
- Appendix 8. Web resources





A drawing by Sharad Sharma (from a report on Mizoram).



A wallposter pasted on the wall in a seaside village in Sri Lanka. It is about violence against women and it was made during a comics workshop for the Oxfam "We Can" campaign in 2005. Here, two photocopies are joined together.

Wallposter comics

Wallposter comics are inexpensively produced educational stories by local NGOs. These stories, which are pasted up on walls in the communities, create a lot of interest. The wallposters are either made with a photocopying machine or they are screen printed. This appendix is a guide to how to make them.

To draw well is not the most important thing when making a wallposter comic.

It is more important to have a good story, with interesting and engaging characters which the readers can identify with easily.

The wallposter format

The wallposter measurements

heading area



नारी प्रताड़ना

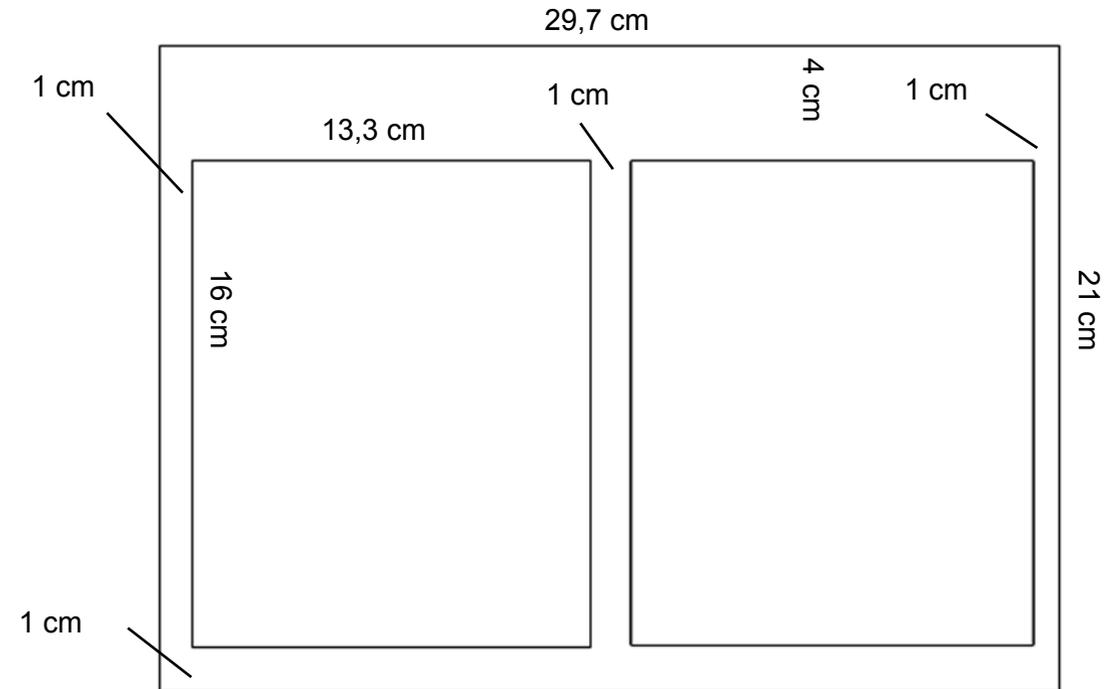
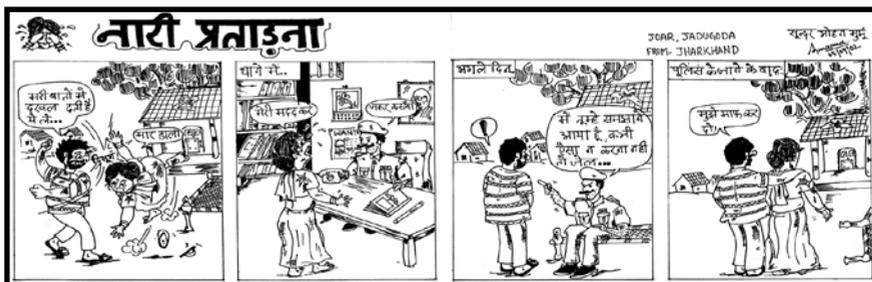


JGAR, JADUGODA
FROM- JHARKHAND

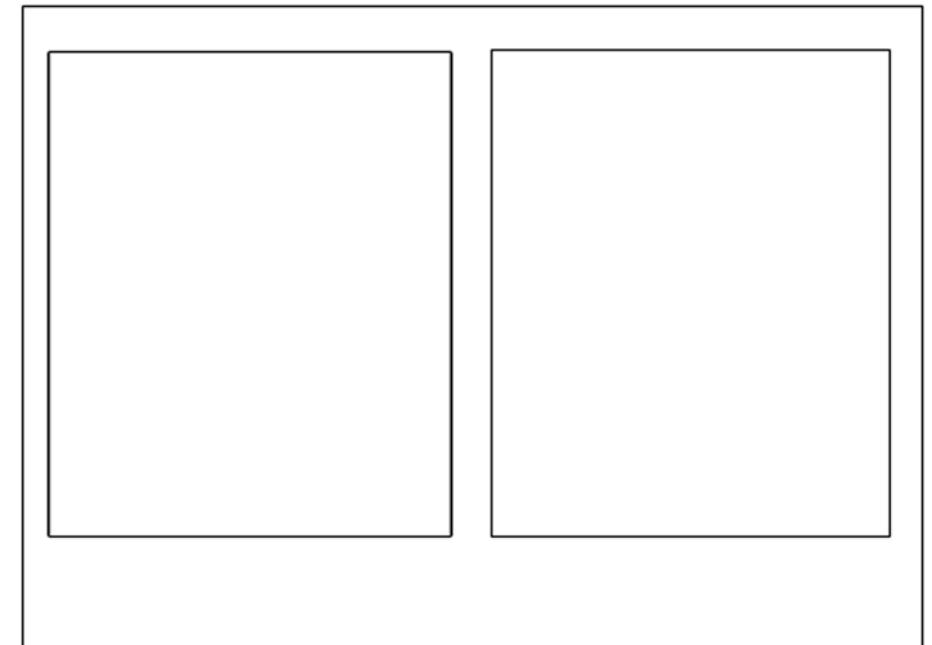
सुन्दर मोहन सुर्म
Amarnath
05/09/02

organisation information area

It is easy to reduce the size of the panels with a photocopier and to rearrange them into a 4-panel strip, which can be published in a newspaper, magazine or pamphlet.



The two parts should be glued together with a 0,5-1 cm overlap.



How to create a story

First you need to decide what you want to say with your story, what you want to change or point out.

Then think of a short story that will express the point you want to make. It is good to write the story in four or five sentences and read it aloud to your fellow activists, who can give their comments immediately. The story should not have too many characters and/or complicated action.

It is important to have an interesting beginning, some action and an end that emphasises the point you want to make.

Example: You want to talk against witch-hunting, where villagers accuse old women of being witches and chase them from the village so that they can grab their land.

It is best to first write the story on paper and think about it in terms of scenes, i.e. each panel is one scene. After this you will make a visual script.

Story	Scene
Two neighbours drive an old woman away from the village, claiming she is a witch.	village + chase
She goes to the village council to complain.	village council from the outside
The village council hears both parties, but despite its condemnation, the neighbours continue to claim the woman is a witch.	village council in meeting
The police from town is called in and the neighbours are arrested.	village + police

Make a visual manuscript

You now have the story in four parts and you should decide what images and texts should go into each panel. Here you have two important things to remember:

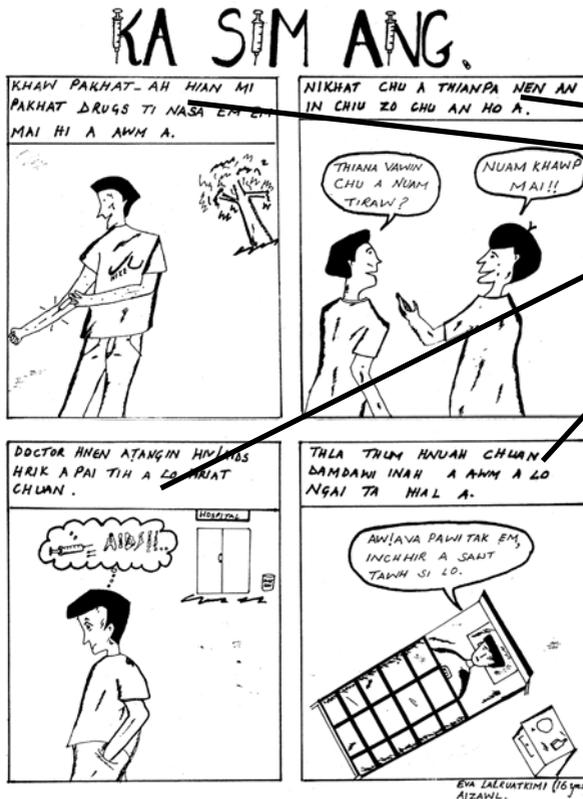
1. Use as little text as possible. Never explain in the text what can be seen in the drawing.
2. Important matters should get more space and be in the foreground.

Your manuscript could look like this:



Remember this should be a sketch only, there is no need to overwork the drawing.

How to place texts and pictures



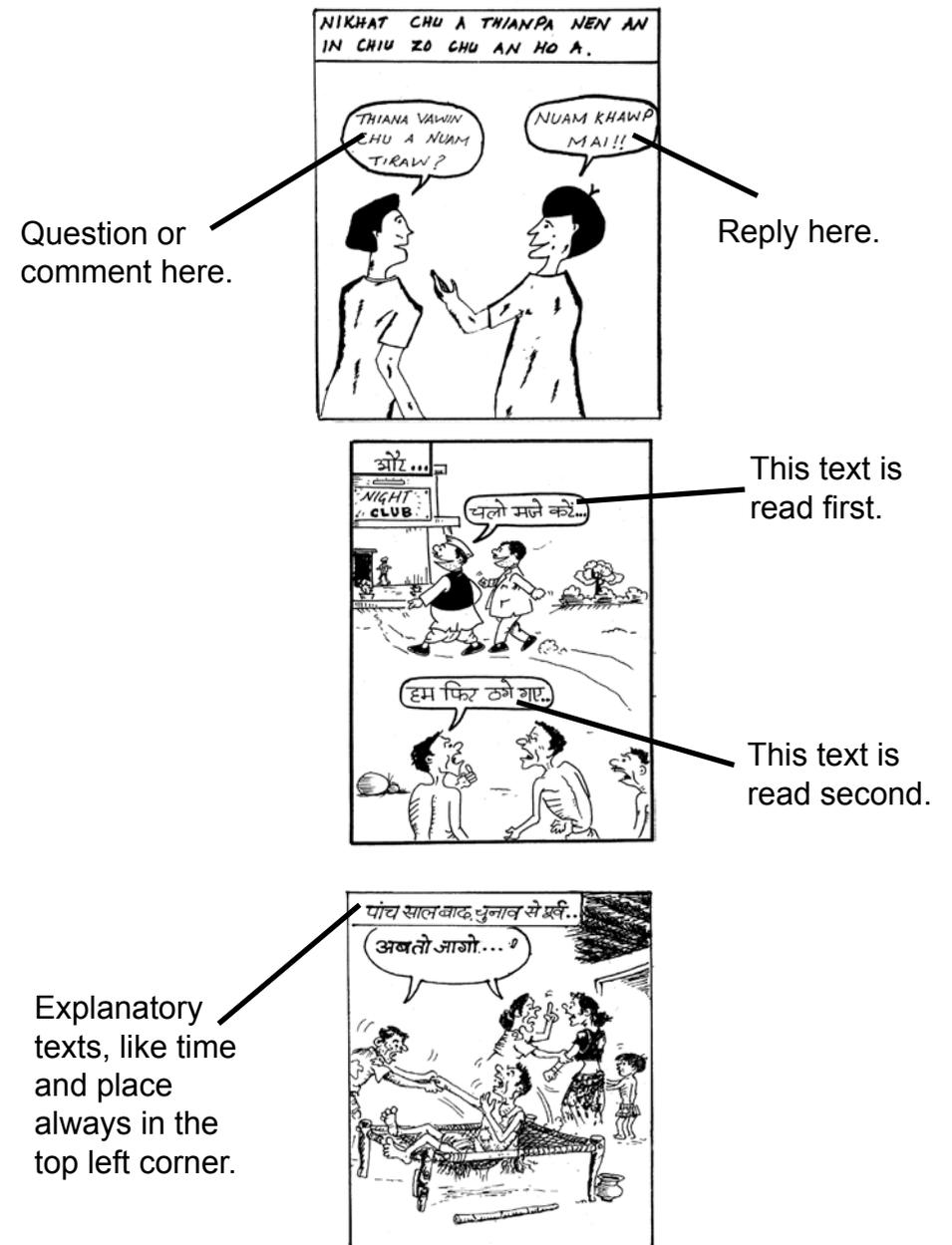
When you have a narrative (a text which takes the story forward) always place it uppermost in the panel, so that it is read first.



Another alternative is to have the narrative completely outside the panels. However, that is close to illustrating the text, not visual storytelling.

Reading order

Reading order is from left to right and from top to bottom.



Question or comment here.

Reply here.

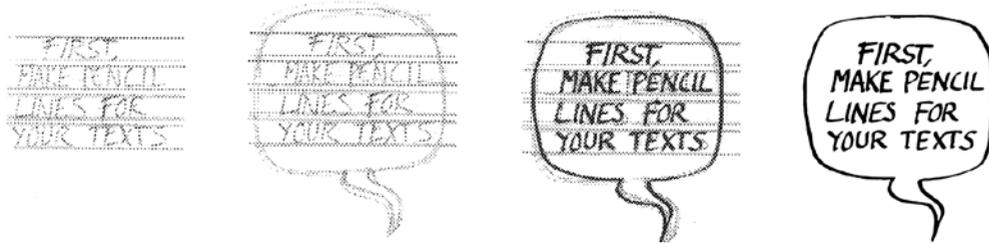
This text is read first.

This text is read second.

Explanatory texts, like time and place always in the top left corner.

N.B. In cultures where the text is read from right to left (like Arabic), also the pictures are read in the same order.

Texts in the comics



Pencil your lines first, then sketch in your letters, proof-read and ink them. After this you can draw the balloon line, making sure that there is a bit of space between the letters and the line. This space improves readability.

Text balloons can take almost any shape as long as the pointer clearly indicates who is talking:



COME TOMORROW THEN!

MY TIME WILL COME SOON.

COME AGAIN LATER - WE WILL SURPRISE YOU

NO WAY, ABSOLUTELY NO WAY!

IF YOU WILL BE THERE IN TIME, SO MUCH THE BETTER!



Texts in wallposters should be at least 1 cm high. They should be readable from about 1 meter. This is also important if the same comics will later be used in strips as the text will then be reduced about 50%.



Wallposter headings

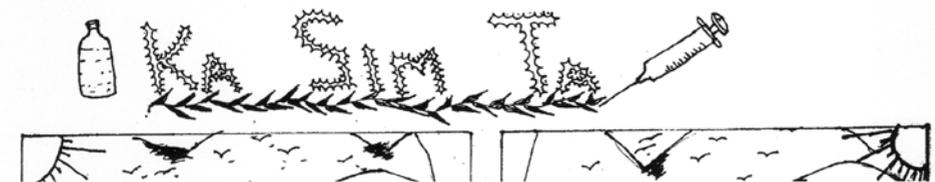
You can put a lot of information in the heading. It should not, however, give away the point of the story, only set the stage. If possible, some visual element should be used, as this improves readability a lot.



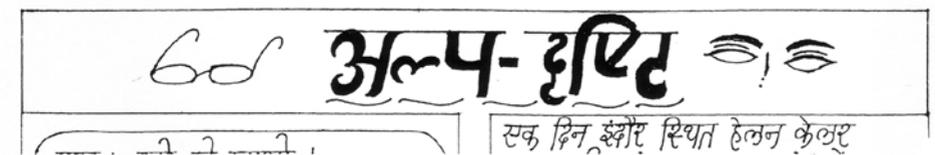
From Sindhu Singh's story about afforestation, Jharkhand 2003.



From Hmingmawii (Amoii) Chaitlang's story about the neighbour's pig, Mizoram 2003.



From R. Lalnunpari's story about the drug addict, Mizoram 2003.

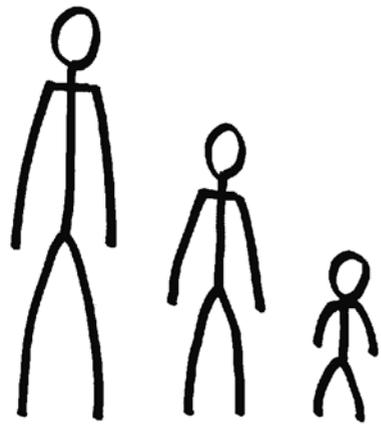


From Meenakshi Sengar's story about the eye-doctor, Madhya Pradesh 2002.



From Sunder Mohan's story about local elections, Jharkhand, 2002.

Drawing people I



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

Drawing people is not so difficult. You start with a stick figure and then try out different positions.

The human body is roughly proportioned as the table to the left shows. The length of a fully grown human body is about 7 times the length of the head.



Drawing people II



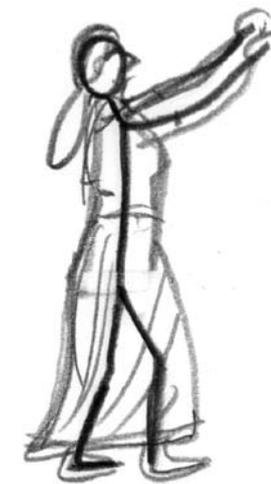
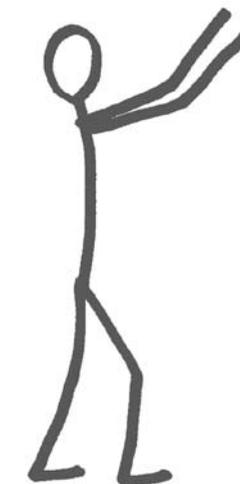
Step one: draw the stick figure.



Step two: add flesh and clothes.

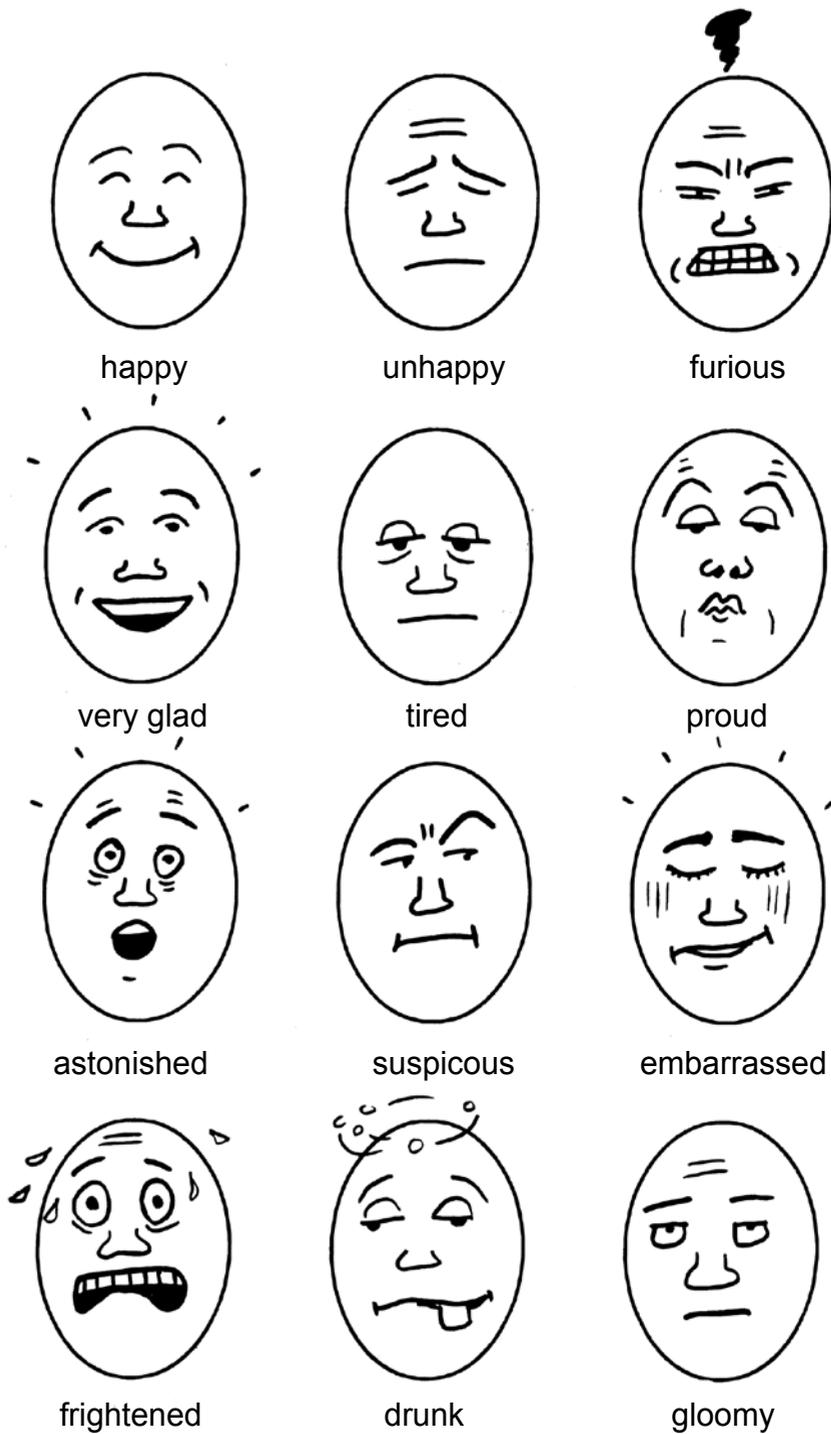


Step three: ink the drawing and erase the pencil marks.



Drawing expressions

Drawing facial expressions is mainly to change the shapes of the eyes, eyebrows and the mouth.

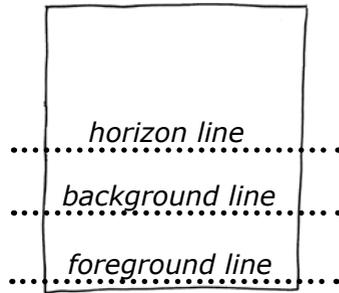


Drawing movement, sound and other effects

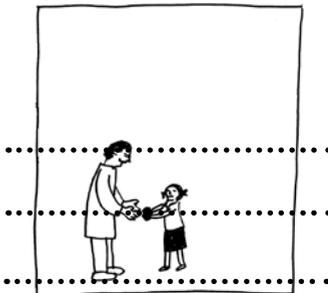


Adding depth and perspective in the panel

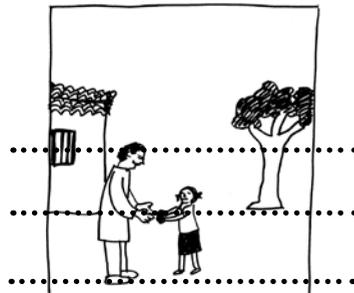
Exaggeration works!



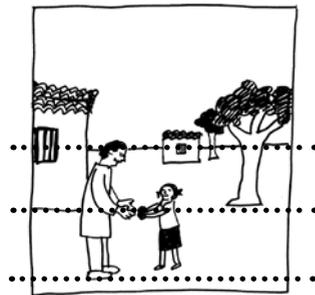
Draw three pencil lines to help you place everything.



Draw the main characters on the foreground line.



Draw background items on the background line.



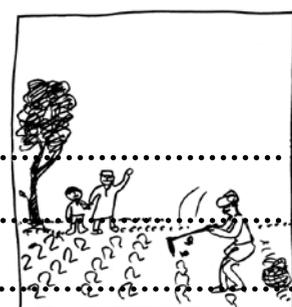
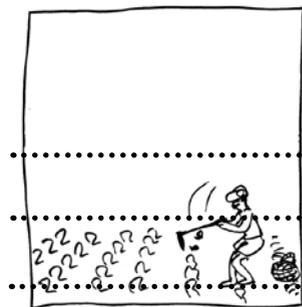
Draw far-off items and a horizon line.



Now, erase the pencil lines.



Add a few details, if you like.



To exaggerate size, as in this story on a malaria mosquito, underlines the message.

The reader of course knows that in reality mosquitos cannot be of this size.

In one story you should not have too many exaggerations.



Movement exaggeration. The man hits the woman so that she flies up in the air.

Again in reality a movement like this is not possible, but here it gives an increased dramatic effect.



The man had an accident while drunk and had both his hand amputated. His wife comes to the hospital with a jar of local wine and says: "NOW, try to drink a little of this wine!".

This type of behaviour could most likely not take place in real life, but adds to the story a very dramatic effect.

Inking the drawing



First finish your pencil sketch.

Draw the outlines with a thin pen.

Remove the pencil lines with an eraser.



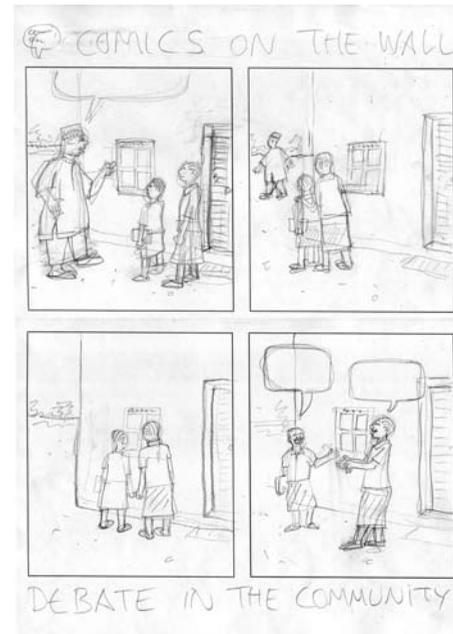
Fill in the solid black areas.

Finish with drawing texture and other details.

Inking is to draw with black ink on top of the pencil sketch all lines, black areas and structures.

The pencil sketch is erased as soon as the basic ink lines are drawn.

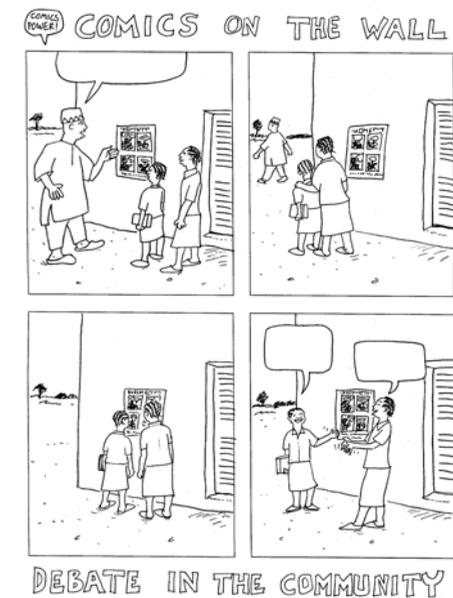
Final artwork process



Step 1. Make your pencil sketch.



Step 2. Draw the outlines of your sketch with a thin-line pen.

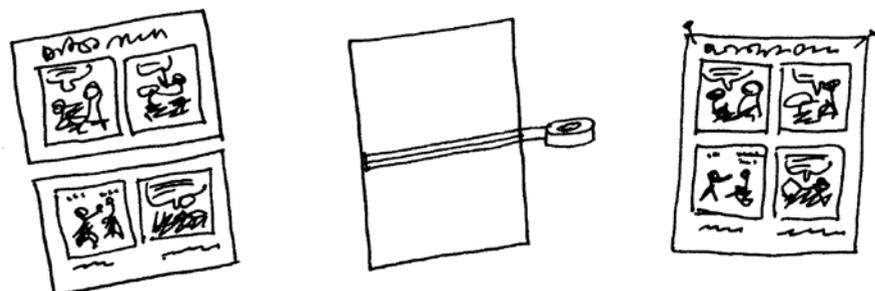


Step 3. Erase all pencil marks from the drawing.

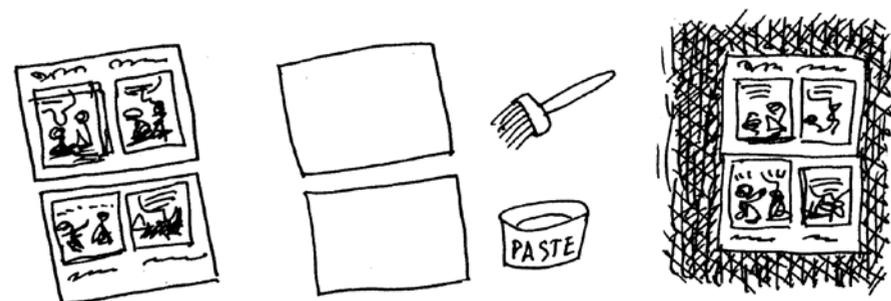


Step 4. Finish the drawing, add solid black, textures and details.

Putting up wallposter comics in the community



If you put up the wallposter in a dry area, you can tape them together from the back, and pin them on the wall.



If you put up the wallposter on a wall outdoors it is better to paste the pieces directly to the wall.



The posters should be put up in places where people move about. But you will have to get permission from the owners if you put up the posters on their walls.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Here each panel of the comic has been drawn on one A4-sized paper, making them easy to assemble into a full-sized wallposter for printing. The comic was drawn by Vikalp activist Hansa Ram, Rajasthan, India in 2006.

Printed wallposter comics

When you need to distribute more wallposter comics than can reasonably be made by photocopying machines, you must print them. Normally, the printing methods are offset or screenprinting. Typically, in a campaign you might need six to ten different comics and you can use the same basic design for all of them, just change the stories.

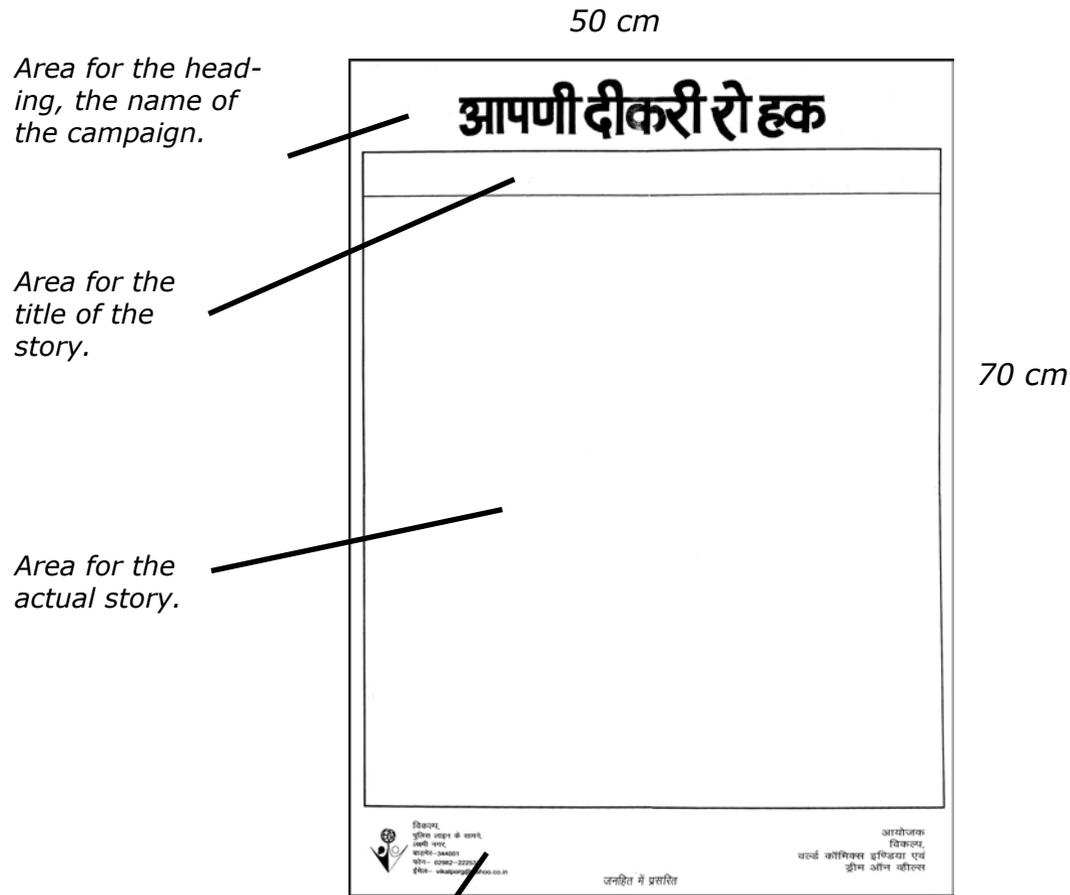
Before you start working on the comics, you should visit the printers and discuss with them what paper sizes they have available and what requirements they have for the originals.

By planning the layout in advance, you can streamline the production of the comics and give exact measurements to those who will contribute their stories.

The design

A very common printed poster size is 50 cm x 70 cm. It is quite large and very visible, especially if you can use coloured paper.

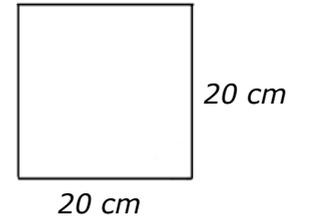
The idea of the design is that the heading and the organisational information are always the same and you change only the stories and their titles.



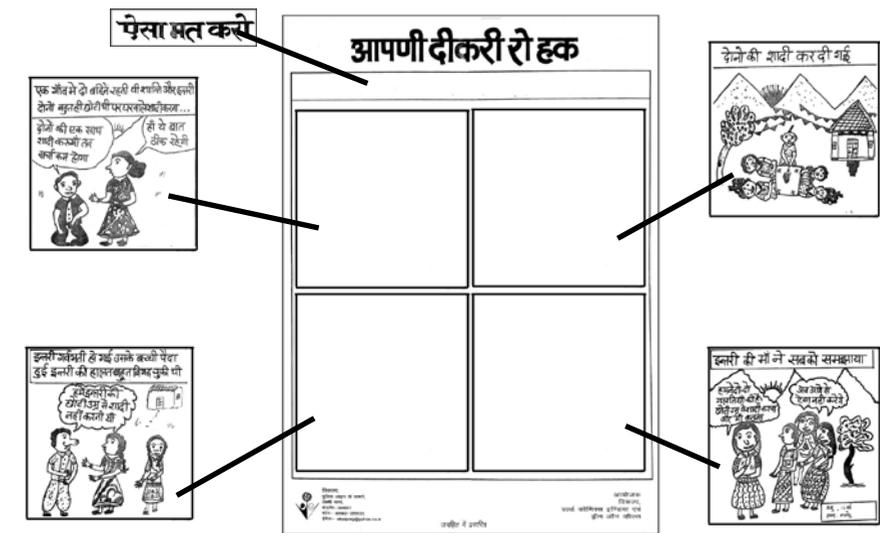
In this area you can put information about your organisation, logos, names of sponsors, slogans, etc. This will be the same in all wallposters.

How to assemble the comics

Measure the size of a panel which can fit four times in the story area. Here it is about 20 x 20 cm. Each panel can be drawn on one sheet of A4 size.



Add the title, draw the story and assemble the panels in the basic design.



The printed version



© SHARAD SHARMA

A wallposter comic on the wall of the Haathma village Community Hall in Rajasthan, India, 2006.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Printed wallposter comics of the "Save our Daughters" campaign on a well in Rajasthan, India, 2006.



© SHARAD SHARMA

Eight-page booklets made in the South Asian Youth Assembly in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in 2006. The campaign theme was violence against women.

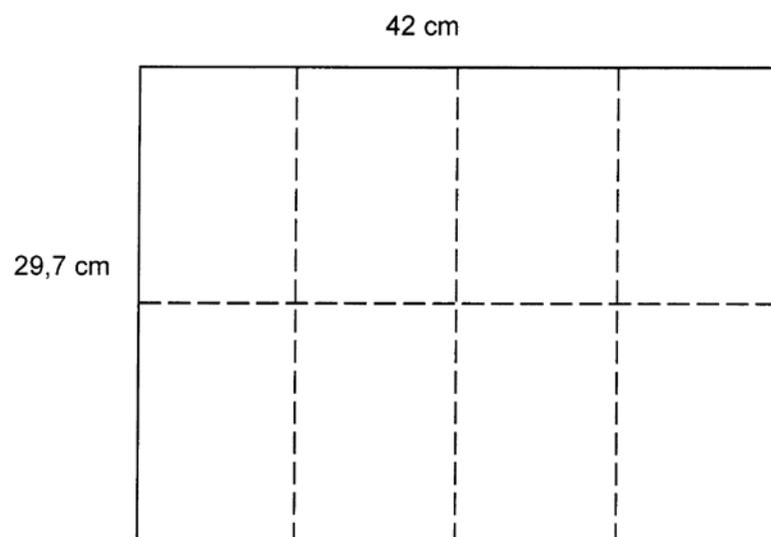
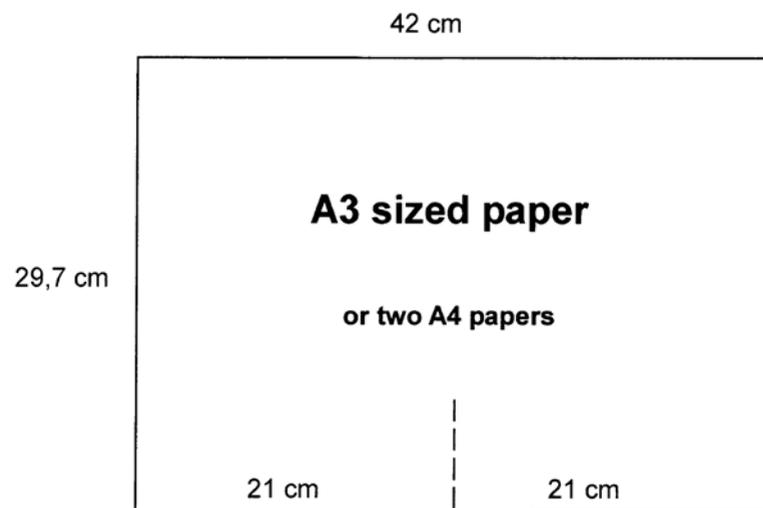
HOW TO MAKE 8-PAGE BOOKLETS

Make an 8-page booklet from one double-sided A4-sized photocopy. You can tell a quite comprehensive and interesting story in eight pages. The booklet is pocket-size (A6).

The booklet is very useful as a hand-out in smaller meetings and workshops. It is something people like very much to take home with them.

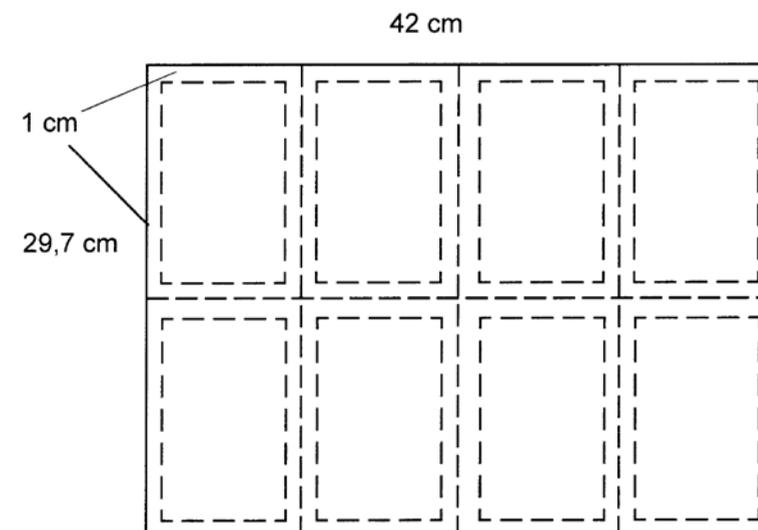
Paper and division

To make the booklets, you need an A4 photocopier. If you are also making an accordion minibooklet from the same original, it is better to use an A3 sized paper. But if you make only the folded eight-page booklet, you can use two A4 sized papers side by side, as below.

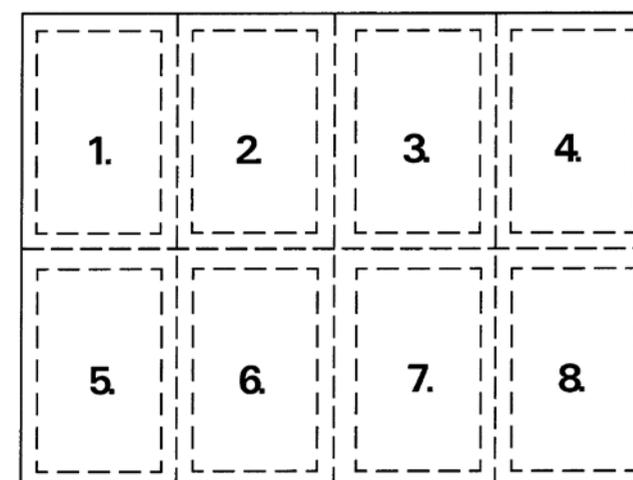


1. Divide the sheet of paper in eight parts as above, draw thin pencil lines along the divisions.

Guiding lines and drawing order

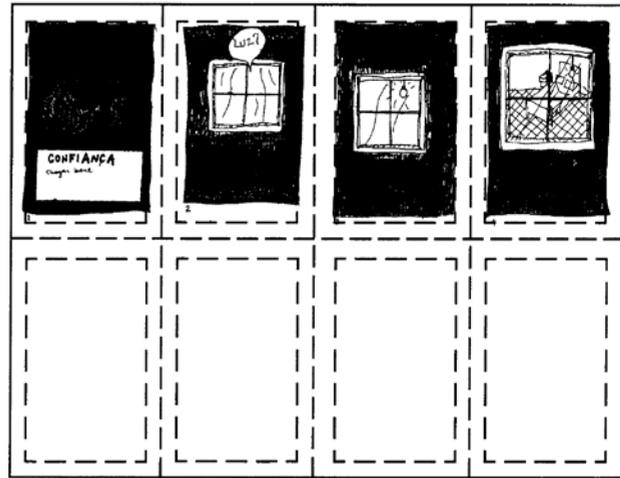


2. Draw guiding lines 1cm inwards from the dividing lines. You should draw within these boundaries.



3. Start drawing in the sequence shown above.

Proceed with the drawing

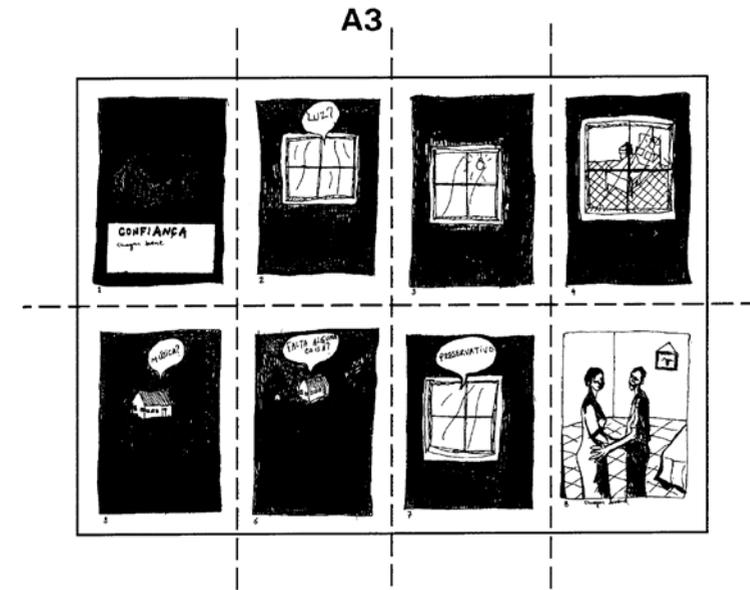


4. Proceed like this.

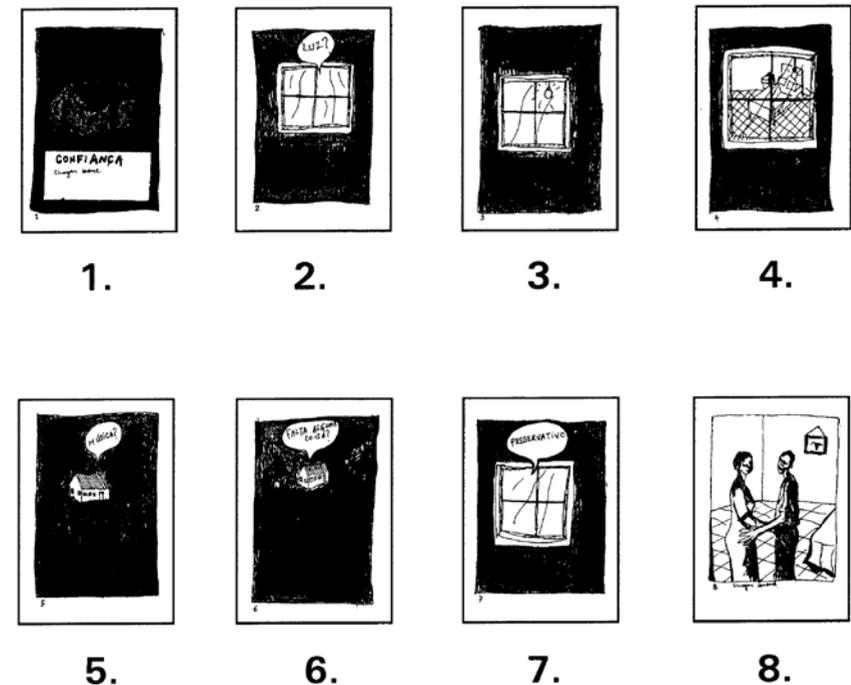


5. Finish the drawing and erase the guiding lines.

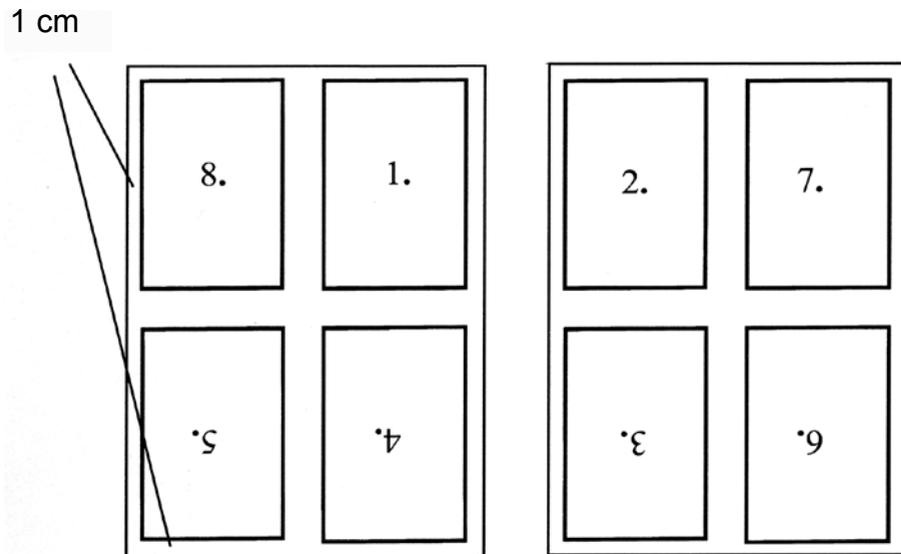
Cut the drawing



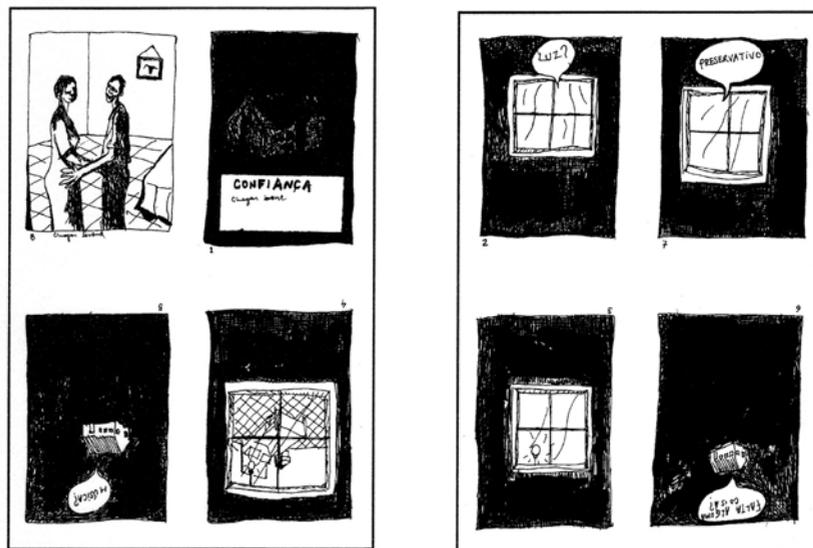
6. Cut the original (after having photocopied it for the accordion minibooklets, if you plan to make them too) so that each page is 10,5 cm x 14,8 cm, according to the model.



Paste the cuts

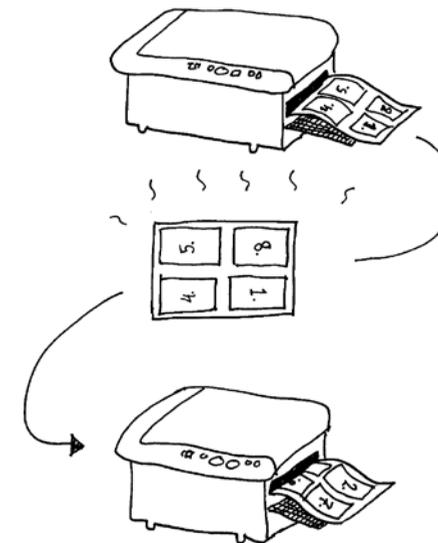


7. Paste the pages on two A4-sized papers in this order.



8. Now you are ready for photocopying.

Photocopy and fold

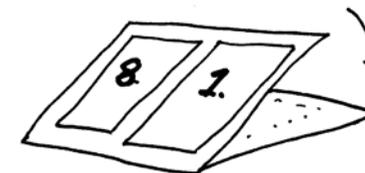


9. Photocopy the two assembled pages on one sheet of paper.

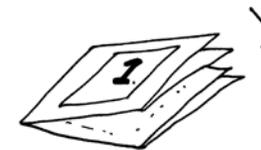
Make sure the direction is right when you photocopy the second time.

When you have photocopied one side, let the paper cool a little before you do the other side. This will avoid the paper to get stuck.

Now you are ready to start folding the photocopies into booklets:



10. Fold the page, so that page number 1. is up with the last page number 8. next to it.



11. Fold once more, so that page number 1. remains on top.



12. Staple the booklet in the middle of the long fold. You will need a slightly bigger stapler.

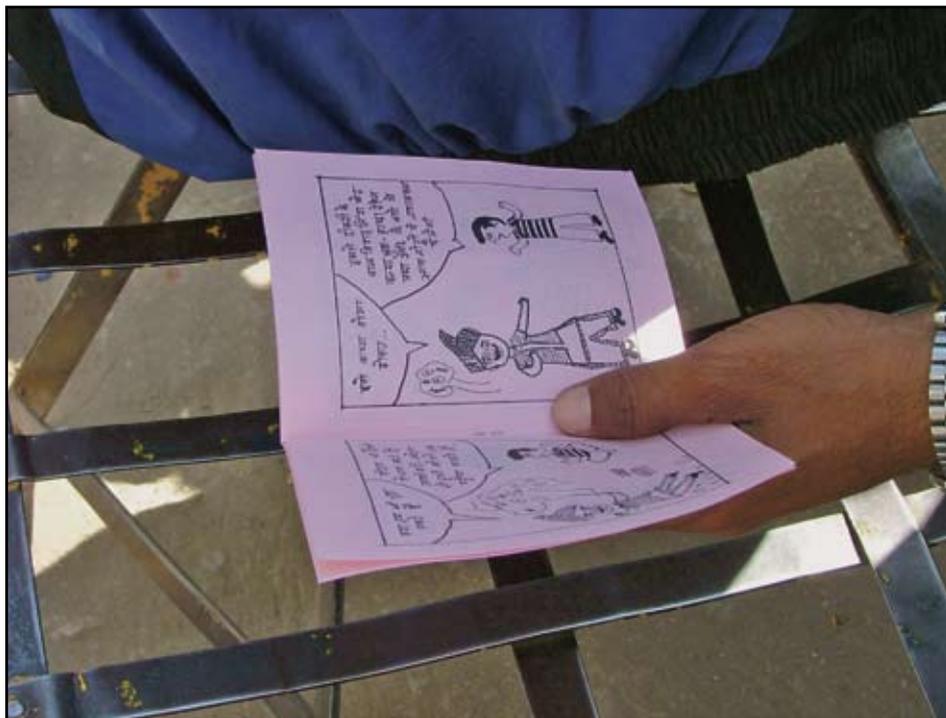
Cut open the fold



13. Cut open the bottom fold with a knife.

... or use scissors.

14. Your booklet is ready!



© SHARAD SHARMA

Small and handy, here is an eight-page booklet from the "Save our Daughters" campaign in Rajasthan, India in 2006.



© KIRSTI PALONEN

Rajaa, Abdel and Omar from the Palestinian NGO Beit atfal Assumoud fold minibooklets in a comics workshop held in Lebanon in 2005.

Accordion minicomics

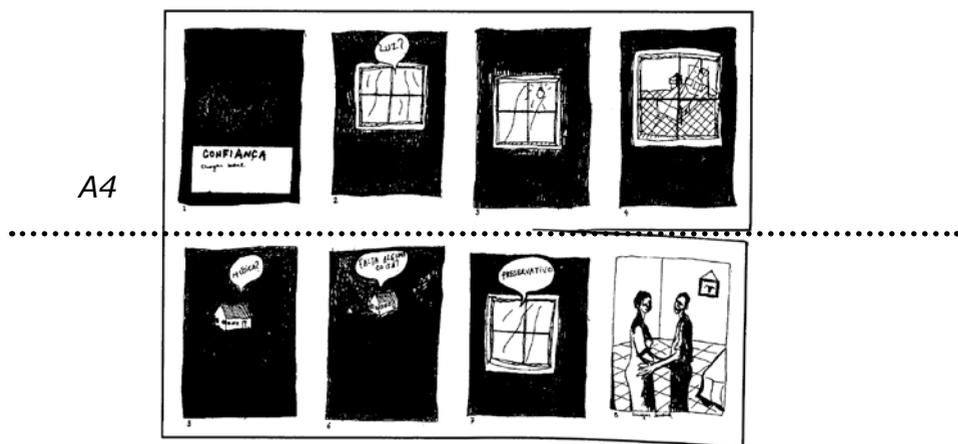
Minicomics are especially useful when you need a discreet handout. It is small and the texts and images can be seen only when it is opened, as the covers are blank.

You can use both A4 and A3 photocopying machines. From an A4 you will get one eight-page minicomics (10,5 x 7,4 cm). From an A3 photocopy you can get four eight-page minicomics (7,4 x 5,2 cm).

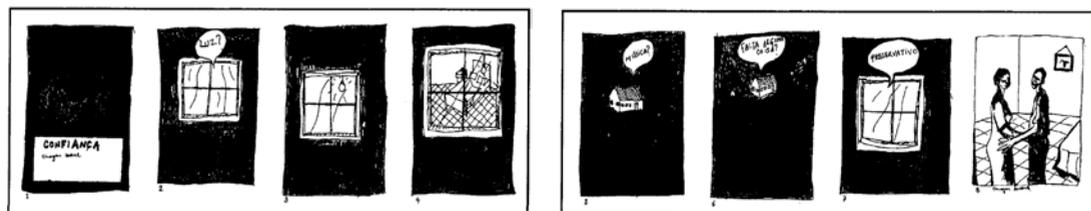
If you already have an eight-page booklet story (see appendix 3) you can easily convert it into the minicomics format.

Prepare your story, cut, join and fold

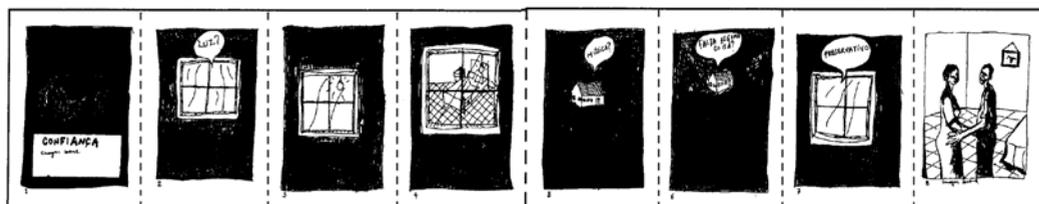
1. Create your eight-page story and cut the paper into two strips.



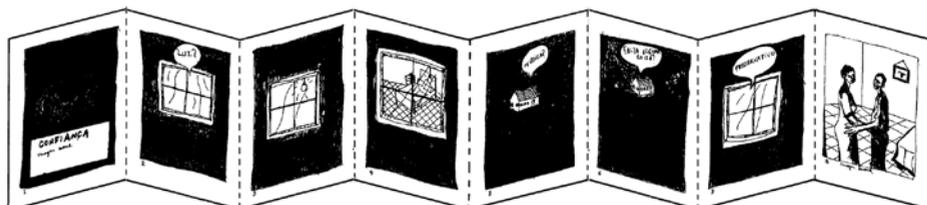
tape here



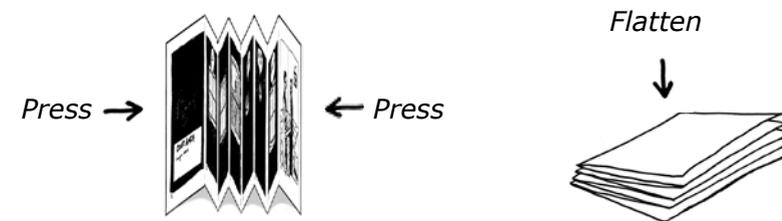
2. Join the two strips from the back with a piece of tape.



3. Fold along the dotted lines as shown below.



Press and flatten

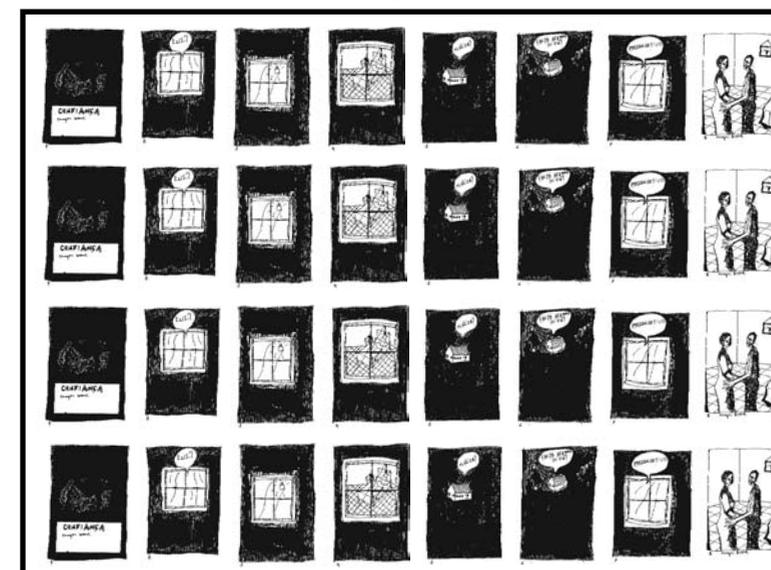


4. Your accordion minicomic is ready.

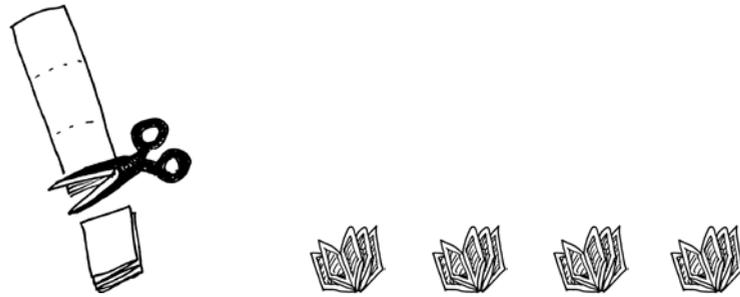
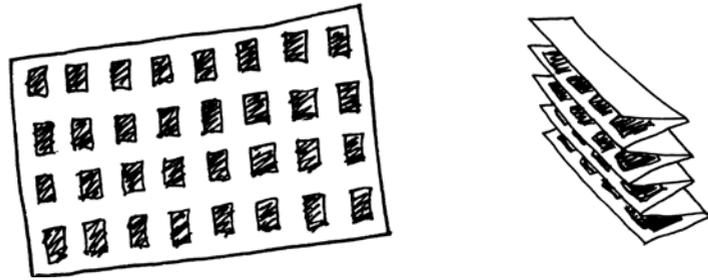
Make four accordion minicomics from an A3 photocopy

1. You can make four minicomics from one A3 size photocopy. First reduce the originals so that they can fit two strips after each other as shown below. Copy four sets and paste on an A3 size paper. Photocopy as many as you need.

A3



2. Fold the photocopy into an accordion, flatten it and cut it into four pieces. You now have four minicomics (7,4 x 5,2 cm).



© KIRSTI PALONEN

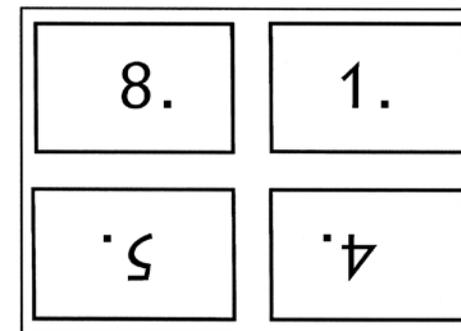
A group of Beit atfal Assumoud (Palestinian NGO) activists checks out the minibooklet format at their centre in Beddawi, Lebanon.

Other photocopy formats

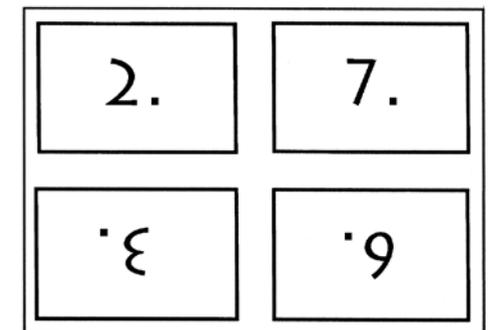
You can make a variety of formats with doublesided photocopying, folding and cutting. It is best to use widely available standard paper sizes, such as A4 and A3. In this appendix we will show you some formats, but with a little of experimenting, you can easily work out your own too.

Eight-page booklet comics, wide format

You can make an eight-page story (see Appendix 2) also in a wide format. You can even make two small panels on one page. The procedure to make it is the same as in Appendix 2, you only draw in a wide format and start to fold the photocopy lengthwise.



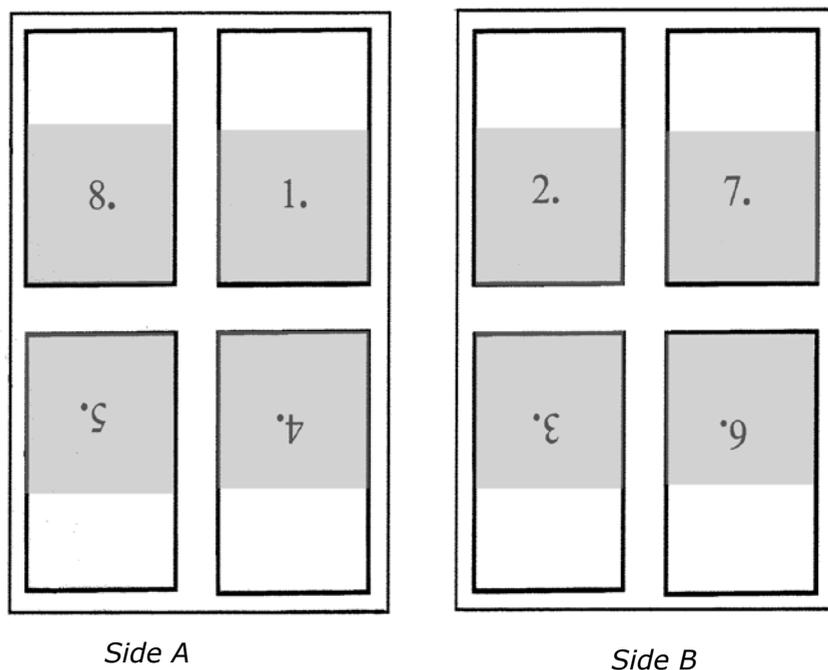
Side A



Side B

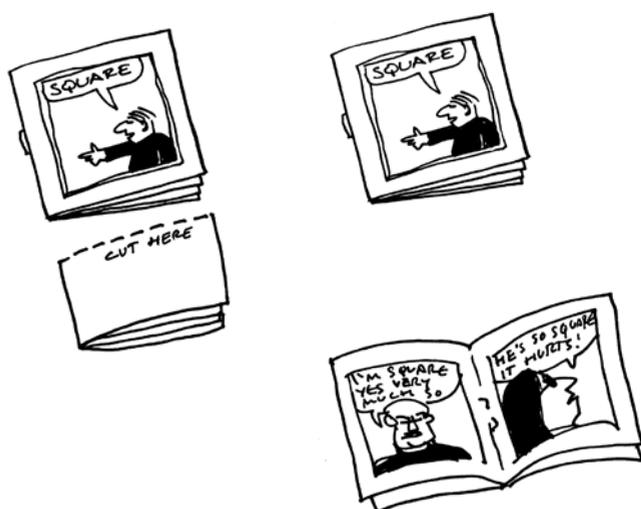


Eight-page booklet, square-cut

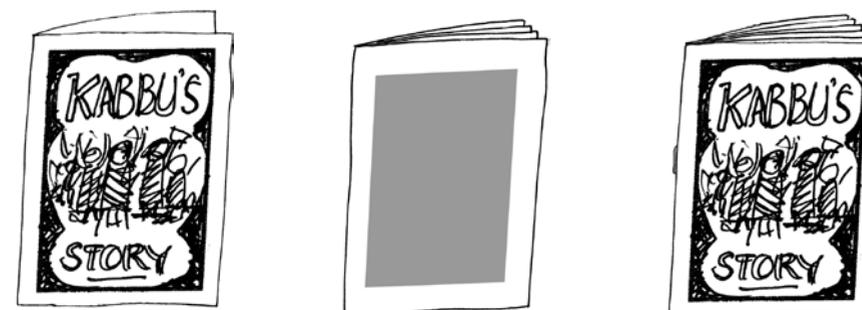
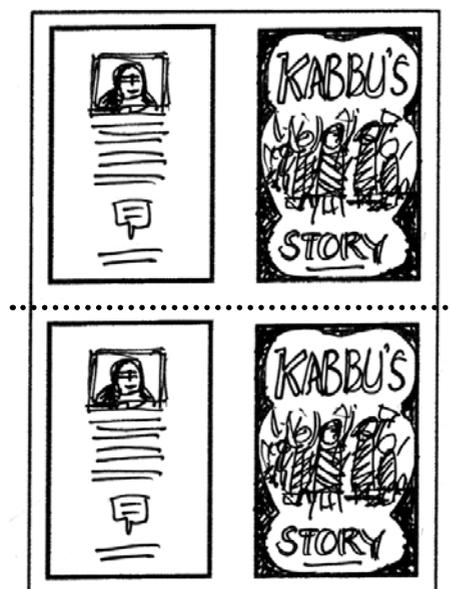


You can make a small, square-cut booklet by following the normal eight-page procedure (see Appendix 2) but then you trim off a larger portion than normally, to make the booklet square.

You will have to assemble the pages and make sure the panels face each other as indicated above.



Eight-page booklet, with cover

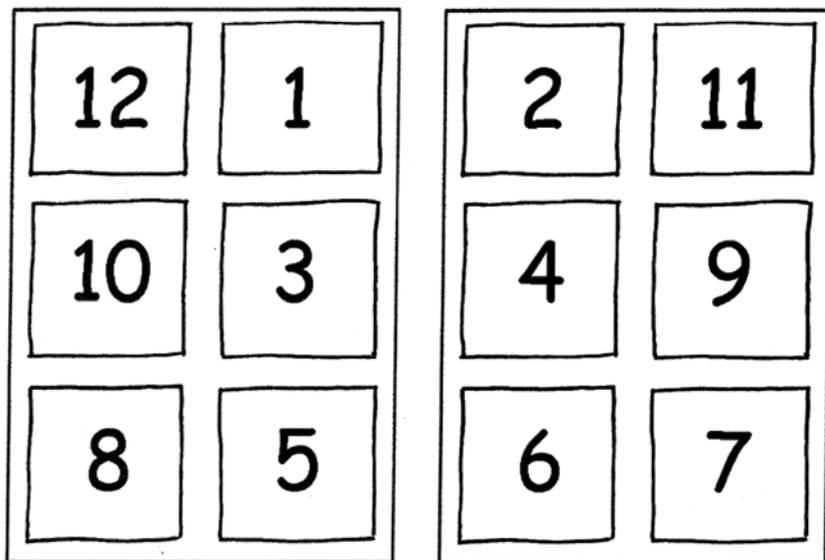


First make an eight-page story as explained in Appendix 2, but do not staple it yet.

Then photocopy the cover twice on an A4, which you cut in half. This makes two covers. Then staple the covers together with the eight-page booklets.

You can also make the covers from a doublesided photocopy. Then you can add images and texts also on the inside cover.

Twelve-page booklet

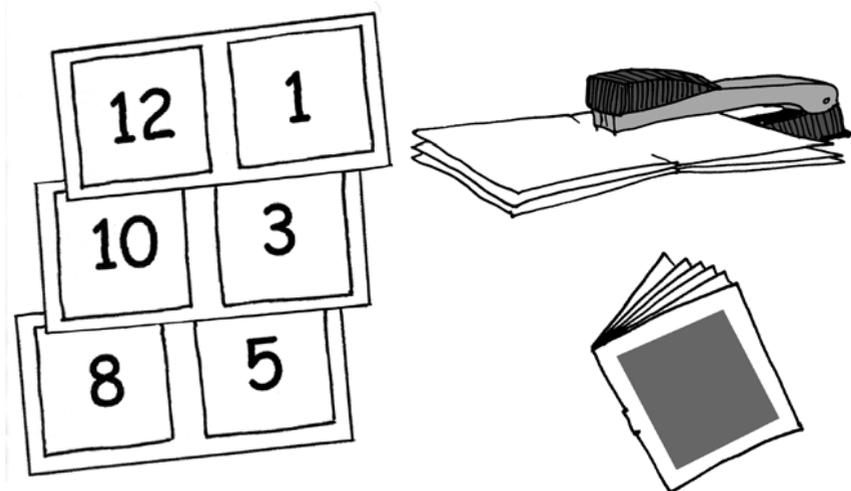


Side A

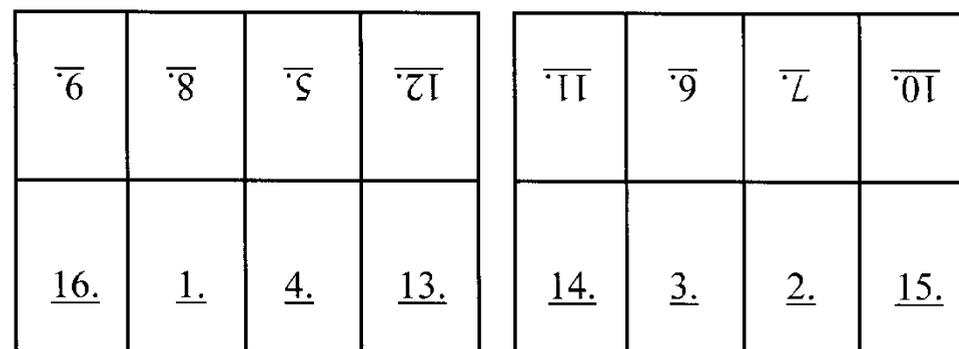
Side B

You can make a 12-page, small and compact story from a doublesided A4-sized photocopy. Divide the paper in three strips and paste the original pages in the order shown above.

Cut the photocopy, assemble the pages and staple them from the back.



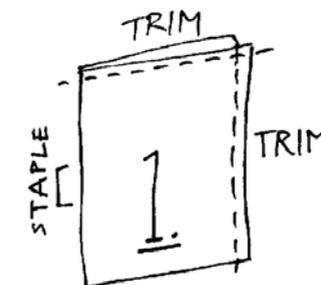
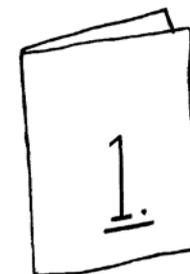
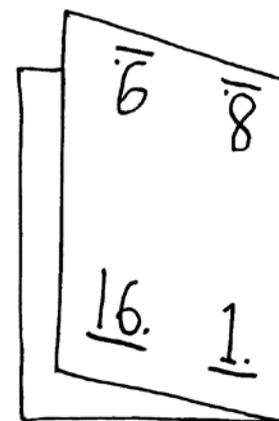
Sixteen-page booklet



Side A

Side B

You can make a 16-page, ultracompact booklet from one doublesided photocopy. Make your story and assemble the pages in the order shown above. Then fold it three times according to the scheme below and staple the booklet from the back and trim off the folds from two sides.



Training plan for a wallposter comics workshop

This training plan is a step-by-step guide to how to run a wallposter comics workshop. It can be used in workshops where a training manual (like the one in Appendix 1) is given to the participants.

Step 1: Introducing the tutors and the participants to each other

Description: A host presents the tutors, who then briefly introduce themselves, say who they are and what they have done in relation to grassroots comics. After this, the participants introduce themselves, one by one. At this stage the tutors can also ask what expectations the participants have and if they have some special worries.

Results: Everybody knows each other and their roles at the workshop.

Step 2: Orientation to the grassroots comics concept

Description: The tutors explain:

- that comics are stories with a message
- that grassroots comics are made by activists, not professional artists
- that grassroots comics express a genuine voice!

- that grassroots comics are made for photocopying (show how two A4 sheets are made into one A3 sheet)
- show samples from different groups from other countries and also from like-minded groups of similar background
- explain how different organisations have used comics in their campaigning, especially their campaign messages and their target groups.

Distribute the manual “Wallposter comics - a great campaign tool for NGOs” to the participants.

Results: The participants understand that they are not going to make the kind of comics they might have seen in newspapers or comic books. They understand the basic technologies involved. They are inspired by like-minded efforts by groups similar to their own, and gain confidence. Everybody has the manual for easy reference.

Step 3: Decide the theme

Description: Divide the group into subgroups of 4 - 5 participants and ask them to suggest three themes on which they would like to make their comics. Then each group chooses one of the themes.



© LEIF PACKALEN

Test group at work at a Training of Trainers workshop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in 2006.

Below: Participants at a workshop arranged by GNK-Plan in Maharganj, Uttar Pradesh, India, near the Nepalese border in 2005.



© SHARAD SHARMA

If the group is already very much involved in a specific activity, the theme might be ready and there is no need to go through the choosing process.

Results: The participants have chosen a theme, which is important to them.

Step 4: Explain the concepts of focus, message and target group

Description: The tutor explains:

- a focus is necessary, otherwise the message becomes too general. A specific message is always more powerful than a broad one.
- the message should be clear: which change or result is desired?
- the message should have a defined target group
- refer back to the sample stories in Step 2, point out the target groups in them.

Results: The participants understand that a focused message is better than a broad one, and that if the desired outcome and the target group are defined well, the resulting story is more to the point.

Step 5: Choose focus, message and target groups

Description: Each group is given the task of choosing a focus for their theme, spelling out the exact message and defining their target

group. This should be written down. After doing this, each group presents their choices in a full session and everybody is allowed to comment.

Results: The message and the target group are defined, the building blocks for the stories are now ready.

Step 6: Propose storylines and characters

Description: Each participant is given the assignment, i.e. to propose a story which carries the message to the earlier defined target group. The tutor explains that the story cannot be very complicated or have a lot of characters as the story must fit into four panels.

Stress that a message with drama in it works better than a strictly educational one. Stress that the beginning must be interesting, so that the reader wants to know what happens in the end.

Each participant reads out his/her story in a full session and the tutor (and the other participants) comment.

Results: Each participant has a story with a defined message and target group to work on.

everybody. The tutors give only encouraging feedback.

Results: Building up confidence in drawing ability.

Step 9: Drawing exercise II - body postures

Description: Explain the stick figure method.

- ask the participants to copy some postures from the manual
- have a live model posing for 3 minutes, 4 - 5 postures.

The drawings are put up on the wall and looked at by everybody. Again, the tutors should give mainly encouraging feedback.

Step 10: Drawing exercise III - objects

Description: Ask the participants to draw some object in the classroom, a chair, a table, a bag, a window, a cupboard – anything. Put the drawings up on the wall.

Step 11: Drawing exercise IV - outdoors

Description: Ask the participants to go outdoors and draw:

- a building
- a tree
- a vehicle
- a landscape with a horizon

Step 7: Break the story into four parts

Description: Explain that the story must be divided into four parts, one part for each panel. This means: only one action/location per panel. Show how a story can be compacted by adding information in an explanatory box in the beginning.

After this each participant writes his/her story in four parts and shows it to the tutor. The tutor gives individual advice to each participant.

Results: Each participant has a story which is possible to fit into a four-panel wallposter comic.

Step 8: Drawing exercise I - faces

Description: Set the stories aside and start drawing. Begin with a drawing exercise of facial expressions.

- ask the participants to copy some faces from the manual and also invent new ones.

- arrange the participants in pairs and ask them to draw each other's facial expressions (posing for 1.5 minutes) 3 or 4 times.

The drawings are then put up on the walls and quickly looked at by

Results: Building up confidence in drawing, understanding that perspective exists and what it is.

Step 12: Foreground, background and horizon

Description: Explain that in comics the important things happen in the foreground. Background and horizon are secondary and only indicate environment. Show many examples, also the grid from page 11 in the manual.

Results: The participants understand basic use of panel space.

Step 13: Readability

Description: Explain the concept of readability:

- texts should be easy to read (straight lines, size 1 cm, spacious balloons)
- images should be big enough and not cluttered with details
- the reading order should be logical
- the picture is read first, then the texts
- the amount of text should be minimized, as the medium is primarily visual

Results: The participants understand that both pictures and texts are read and that comics should have a logical order.

Step 14: Reading order

Description: Explain that comics are read from left to right (first criteria) and from up to down (second criteria). Show a panel with a question and an answer.

This rule is absolute, except in Arabic and other right-to-left languages, where the direction is the opposite.

Results: Participants understand that the reading order is a cornerstone in visual storytelling.

Step 15: How to write and place texts in comics

Description: Explain to the participants:

- they should avoid writing in the text what is clear from the picture (texts must always bring something new to the story)
- size of text is important especially if the comics are later converted into strips (recommended size is 1 cm).
- guiding lines should be drawn first, and then the text should be pencilled in.
- after this, the shapes of the speech balloons should be made.
- different types of texts should be shown: explanatory boxes, speech balloons, thought balloons, mechanical sound, etc.
- it is best to have speech balloons in the upper part of the panel

above the speaking characters.

Results: Participants understand that they will have to work with the texts quite a lot and that there are many things to consider.

Step 16: Visual effects for sound, movement, etc

Description: Explain to the participants that sound and movements can be represented by visual clues. Show sound, movement, pain, smell, and other effects.

Explain also that these effects are not universal, that they are different from one culture to the other.

Results: Effects can be included to enhance the stories.

Step 17: Heading of the comic

Description: Explain to the participants that the heading is important as it is the first thing that will be read.

Explain that the heading should not reveal the point of the story – it will be a disappointment to the reader. The heading should be interesting so that the reader is eager to know what the story is about. The heading can be decorated with visual elements which have some relevance to the story.

Results: The participants understand that the heading is an ele-

ment to attract the reader.

Step 18: The visual script

Description: Explain to the participants that a visual script is necessary because it shows that all parts of the story are in the right place. The script is still open for changes and can be shown to friends and colleagues for additional opinions.

Especially point out:

- the visual script is a sketch – the drawing should not be too elaborate.

Results: The participants understand that a visual script is a necessary step.

Step 19: The visual script is shown to the tutors

Description: Ask each participant to bring his/her visual script for checking. Go through the following:

- is the story easy to understand correctly?
- is the heading ok?
- is the reading order correct?
- are there any writing errors in the text?
- is the balance between images and texts ok?

Results: The participants' stories are gone through in detail and they will be confident to move on to the next step (making final artwork).

Step 20: Measurements and procedure for final artwork

Description: Explain the measurements

- why A4? Two A4s with the same grid make an A3
- position the A4s correctly
- paper should be of good quality (stiff but not glossy)

- sketch lightly with pencil on the final artwork, because the pencil lines have to be erased anyway.
- ink with a thin line, then erase pencil lines
- fill in solid black areas
- explain crosshatching, textures and fill-ins

Results: Confidence in procedure and equipment

Step 21: Inking exercise

Description: Explain inking:

- always in black, no colours or pencil (grayscale)
- drawing textures, decorations
- ask the participants to test their inking equipment on the visual script

Results: Confidence in inking, testing of equipment.

Step 22: Actual artwork

Description: the participants re-draw the sketch in full scale

explain:

- the importance of guiding pencil lines for texts
- the artwork should be lightly drawn with pencil
- the tutors can help but not change the story or other content
- individual tutoring with inking and correction problems

Results: The artwork is ready to be copied.

Step 23: Artwork copying

Description: All originals are now taken for copying and a sufficient number of copies (8 – 10) is made. If A3 size is available, make the wallposter comics in that size, as it is more convenient to handle them. Take the participants to see the photocopying procedure, if convenient. The experience of seeing one's own artwork being reproduced for distribution is rewarding.

Results: The artworks have turned into comics.

Step 24: Critique session

Description: All comics are pinned up on a wall and all participants should spend enough time looking at them.

The tutor comments on the comics, one by one:

- is the message understood correctly?
- is the balance between text and images ok?
- are they readable?
- does the comic attract attention from a distance? (enough black portions)

After this the tutor can invite the other participants to give comments and also give the creator of the comic an opportunity to share his/her views.

Results: Each participant will get proper feedback on his/her work.

Step 25: Distribution I - on walls

Description: The wallposters are distributed in the community or put in places where they can be read by many people.

However, it is very important to tell participants not to put comics up on walls without permission from the owners.

School noticeboards and offices are also good places where comics can be put up (provided you get permission from the people in charge).

Trees and fences, ordinary house walls are options, too.

Results: the comics can be read by the target group.

Step 26: Distribution II -in print media (optional)

Description: The original artwork of the wallposter comics can be reduced in a photocopier (50 %), then cut out and rearranged in a strip form.

Results: the same comic can also be used for print media.

Step 27: Distribution III -at events (optional)

Description: The photocopies are mounted on cardboard and covered (optional) with polythene film. The comics become an exhibition which can be displayed at special events, such as meetings, seminars, rallies, etc. If you can afford to laminate the comics, the exhibition will be less bulky and very durable.

Results: The comics will be displayed at events that gather people who are interested in the issues of the society.

Step 28: Collect feedback

Description: Ask the participants to collect at least 5 opinions on the comics from local people. They should write down the main points. The whole workshop is brought

into full session and each participant reports on the response from the local people. If you have many participants you can restrict each one to reading out only two opinions, one positive and one negative.

Results: The participants get feedback from the target group and, hopefully, become inspired to continue using the medium.

Step 29: Workshop review

Description: All participants are brought into full session and asked to write down their impressions of the workshop:

- what was positive?
- what could have been improved?

Collect the opinions, and then let the participants give their views to the full session. Encourage constructive criticism.

If you plan to make a report, make sure you collect all addresses and ask general permission to use the workshop material in the report (and on your website, if applicable). The originals should be returned to the participants, unless there is a special reason for not doing so. If you would like to use the workshop comics for promotional purposes later, now it is a good time to ask permission from the participants.

Results: The organisers get feedback.

Step 30: Workshop final words

Description: In a full session the participants should be thanked for their work and enthusiasm.

The certificates (if any) are distributed to the participants. Allow time for photographing.

If you plan to have another workshop, mention it now and say if these participants are eligible to join that.

Explain how the participants will be supported in their grassroots comics efforts in the future (if applicable).

If there are plans for publication (exhibitions, compilations, websites, anthologies, etc) of the participants' future comics, explain about them now.

If you plan to send a report to all participants, give an approximate date when it can be expected. Make sure you have up-to-date addresses and contact information for the participants.

Take a group photograph and declare the workshop ended.

Results: The participants will leave the workshop with a sense of being

part of a larger movement and feeling that their comics are interesting and important.

Step 31: Workshop report

Description: Prepare a short report on the workshop, stating the number of participants, their names and affiliations, contact information, the resource persons, the programme, the venue, etc.

The report should also have samples of the comics made at the workshop. The report is important, as the activity of arranging comics workshops is so new and spreading reports is a good way of promoting the idea.

Results: The participants will feel connected to the grassroots comics movement and be proud that their comics are part of it.



Comics Power! is the slogan that grassroots comics people use. Examples from the Kiasma exhibition in Helsinki, the Bhopal workshop, Nhamatanda, Mozambique, Barmer, Rajasthan, a banner at the Bhopal workshop, and from the World Comics Finland office.

A comics workshop programme, budget, material list, and a sample proposal

We will give you samples of programmes, budgets, lists, etc. which are typical, but that does not mean you must follow them to the letter. Treat the samples in this annex as suggestions on which you can base your own plans.

I. How to plan a comics workshop programme:

We assume that you will use a minimum of four days for your workshop, ideally five. If you have four days only, the feedback interaction with the community would be difficult to fit in.

The first day should give the participants an orientation in the grassroots comics concept and what can be done with the medium.

Suggested programme for Day One:

Comics communication basics - why it is clever to use comics
Samples from different parts of the country (or world), in-depth analysis
Drawing exercises
Various formats of comics
Thematic discussions start

On the second day the focus of the stories and the basic rules of comics-making will become clear.

Suggested programme for Day Two:

Thematic assignment continues (individually or in groups)
Messages, desired change and target groups are decided
Work on initial stories – feedback and discussions
Comics rules, reading order, placement of texts, balloons, effects, etc.
Drawing exercises
Work on the scripts

On the third day the participants will work on the scripts and then on the final artwork.

Suggested programme for Day Three:

Visual scripts - feedback and discussions

Inking exercises
Final artwork starts

On the fourth day everybody will have finished the artwork, and some have started a second story.

Suggested programme for Day Four:

Finalising artwork
Photocopying starts
Critique session
Distribution plan, division into teams

The fifth day will give the participants an insight into how the comics work in the community.

Suggested programme for Day Five:

Distribution/exhibiting of the comics in the community
Collecting feedback on the comics from the community
Practical advice on how to make a project proposal and budget
Final discussion and evaluation of the workshop

These are suggestions only, you will have to accommodate the programme to local circumstances, how participants are available, what premises you can use, how much time you have at your disposal, etc.

II. Sample budget for a comics workshop:

You must remember to budget realistically, and first find out what everything costs and decide how many people will attend.

1. External team

You will need one or two experts to run your workshop. Most of the time they have to travel from somewhere and you must calculate their professional fees, travel, accommodation and food allowances. The experts will normally inform you these costs.

Sample budget for an external team of two persons coming from abroad: (currency euro)

1. Professional fees, two persons 8 days á 200 = 1.600
2. Compulsory social security insurance (if applicable) = 400

3. Travel costs:

air fare 850

visa 100

local travel 80

travel insurance 60

total = 1040, for two persons = 2080

4. Accommodation and daily allowances

hotel (alternatively, you will provide accommodation at the workshop) 6

days á 40 = 240

allowances for food (alternatively, you can provide it at the workshop) 8

days á 20 for two persons = 320

2. Local team

You will need at least two local facilitators at your workshop. Both should be familiar with the organisation that arranges the workshop and it would be good if one of them has some experience of drawing or other artwork.

Sample budget for the local team:

1. Professional fees two persons á 80/day for 5 days = 800

2. Accommodation, daily allowances, travel = 400

3. The workshop participants

The participants should ideally be from the same area and background, but sometimes it is necessary to invite some from other areas. Those who have to travel, must have their travelling costs, meals and accommodation covered for the whole time they are away from home.

When you have local participants, normally you only need to cover their costs for daily transport to and from the workshop premises, and their meals during the day.

Sample budget for workshop participants' costs:

1. Participants' food (lunch, midmorning and afternoon tea/coffee) 20 persons á 8 for 5 days = 800

2. Local participants' local travel allowance, 17 persons á 4/day = 340

3. Upcountry participants travel, allowances, accommodation, 3 persons á 150 = 600

4. Workshop premises, 100/day for 5 days = 500

5. Workshop materials

paper, pens, inks, copying, etc = 500, see training plan for details

4. Other project costs

The organisations that arrange the workshop will spend both time and money for administration. If this (extra) administration is not covered from other sources, you will have to calculate telephone costs, e-mails, mails, photocopies etc. To arrange a workshop will include quite a lot of negotiation, spreading information, preparation of tuition materials, and coordination work.

Sample budget for Other project costs:

1. Tuition material, handouts to the participants, photocopying = 250

2. Tuition material, photocopying transparencies/ OH- or LCD projector hire = 60

3. (if applicable) press material = 50

Administration

4. External team, mail, telephone, e-mail = 100

5. Project audit (often compulsory for external funding) = 200

6. Local organisation, administration, telephone, mail, photocopying = 500

Budget for unexpected costs 2 - 3% of the total amount.

7. Contingency = 260 **Project total: 10.000****III. Checklist of basic material requirements for a comics workshop:**

1. A hall or a room that can accommodate all participants and have enough space for them to be able to draw. A whiteboard or a flipchart is needed too.

2. Rough paper for sketching.

3. Pencils, erasers, sharpeners, and rulers (ordinary school material).

4. Inking pens: could be fibre-tipped, thin marker pens, gel pens, pigment ink pens, etc.

- proper black (not dark blue, brown or grey).

You should test them first before buying many. The ink shouldn't smudge. Test the pen like this: first make pencil lines, then ink them in, let them dry a little, then erase the pencil lines - the ink lines should not smudge.

5. Paper for final artwork, ideally the paper should be slightly thicker than photocopying paper. However, avoid glossy paper as it smudges easily.

6. Access to a photocopying machine.

7. Tape, bluetack, pins and paste to put up the comics with.

8. Blank certificates.

9. Grassroots comics demonstration material such as prints, photocopies, compilations, transparencies, etc.

10. Handouts, manuals, reports, flyers, etc.

IV. Sample proposal for funding

GRASSROOTS COMICS AS AN NGO COMMUNICATION MEDIUM - CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

Organisations: Names and addresses of the organisations involved.

Overall objective of the project: To make the voice of the NGOs heard in the debate in the society.

Project purpose: To train NGO activists in producing comics for information purposes.

Expected results: Increased readiness and ability within the NGO community to use the highly attractive medium of comics in their information work, e.g. advocacy, public education or internal NGO communication. The participants will learn the steps needed to produce grassroots comics for information campaigns. Different inexpensive formats for internal NGO use will be demonstrated and practised. After the workshop the participants should have the ability to initiate a comics communication project within their own NGO.

Proposed activities: To run a capacity building workshop for xx association members in year xxxx.

Duration: 5 days.

Location: xxxx.

Participants: 15 - 20 NGO activists, who are interested in using comics in their information work. The participants should have a good understanding of the issues their NGO is dealing with, as this knowledge is the basic building block for the information material. Artistic talent is not a must for participating in the workshop. The workshop will concentrate on the contents of the comics - the stories and how they convey the messages.

Resource persons: Two comics tutors from xxx-organisation.

Local resource persons: Two local activists and/or artists (who will also act as interpreters when needed).

Responsibilities of the two organisations:

External organisation:

Preparing the tuition material

Identifying and preparing the resource persons

Running the workshop

Local organisation:

Identify workshop participants

Contribute knowledge to the overall themes to be addressed at the workshop

Make arrangements for workshop location and catering

Make arrangements for distribution of the workshop comics

Press contacts and documentation

Funding arrangements: State which organisation will seek funding and who will be responsible for reporting, accounting and disbursement of funds.

Attach the programme and the budget to your proposal and submit it.



Resources on the web

As the concept of grassroots comics is quite new, there are only a few websites with relevant material:

www.worldcomics.fi

This site is provided by World Comics Finland. It has a large, downloadable collection of practical manuals in different languages on how to make grassroots comics and on how to train tutors. The site also includes several downloadable workshop reports and video clips. It is regularly updated with new material.

www.worldcomicsindia.com

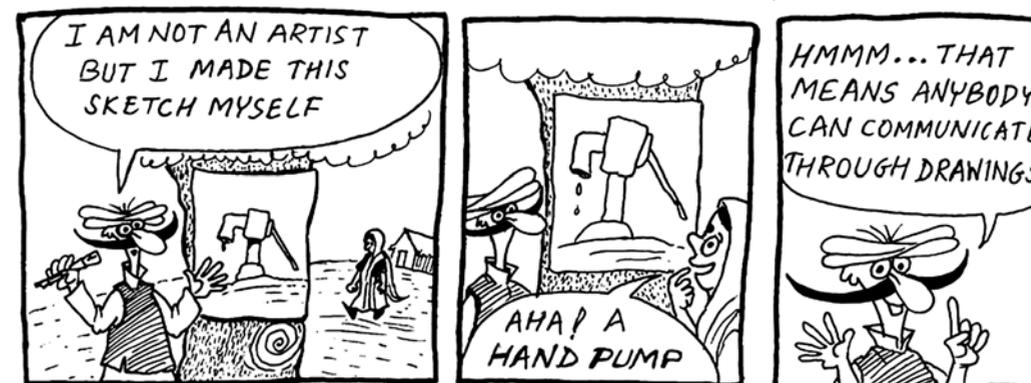
This is the website of World Comics India. It includes a very thorough collection of samples of grassroots comics from all over India, as well as information on workshops and a variety of local initiatives with comics.

www.halfworld.blogspot.com

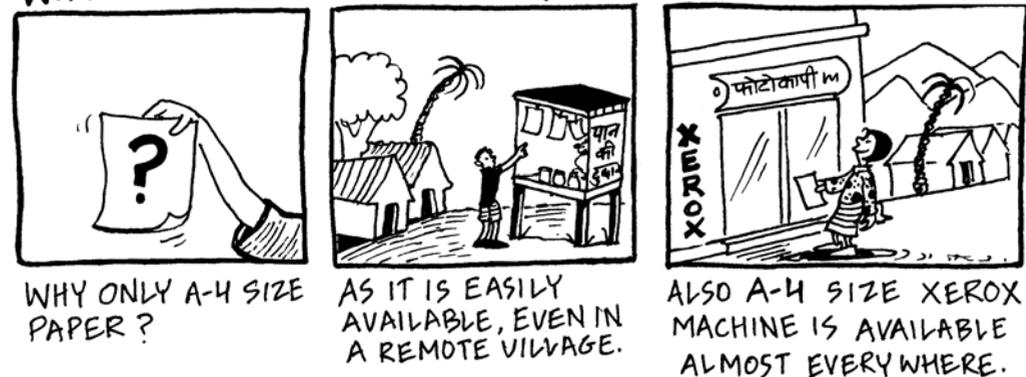
This is a campaign blog kept during the *Rights for our Daughters* - bike rally in Rajasthan, India, in January 2006. It gives a vivid description of how grassroots comics can be used in a campaign.

If you are interested in development communication campaigning using comics made by professionals, there is a book on the subject called "*Comics with an attitude...*" by Leif Packalen and Frank Odoi, first published in 1999 by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The book is out of print, but available as a pdf-document on http://formin.finland.fi/developmentpolicy/publications/comics_attitude.pdf

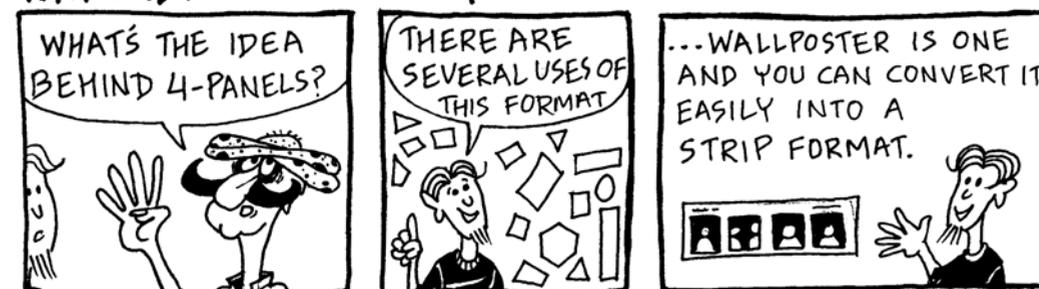
I CAN'T DRAW, SO HOW CAN I MAKE COMICS?



WHY ONLY A-4 SIZE PAPER?



WHY ONLY FOUR PANELS?

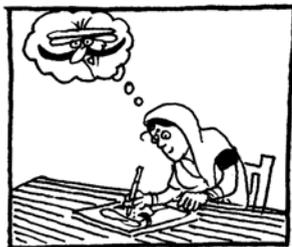


Comic strips by Sharad Sharma

WHY NOT ARTIST ?



HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM THE COMICS DRAWN BY AN ARTIST?



LOCALS KNOW BETTER THEIR CULTURE, DRESS, LANDSCAPE...



LOCAL DIALECTS & HUMOUR ARE THE POWER OF THESE COMICS.

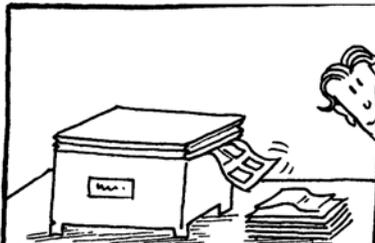
WHY ONLY BLACK & WHITE ?



WHY NOT IN COLOUR?



TO DRAW B&W YOU DON'T NEED MUCH RESOURCES



...AND IT IS EASIER TO PHOTOCOPY.

Can you make comics about serious issues?

Yes, comics is a story-telling medium and your story can be funny, serious, or anything you wish it to be.

Are comics for children only?

No, although comics are used a lot for telling stories to children and youths, you can also make stories that are interesting for grown-ups.

If the drawing is not good, will people read the comic?

If the subject of the story is interesting to the reader (i.e. a local issue), then the quality of the drawing is not so important.

If you have an dull story, no amount of good drawing will lift it.

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Plan International, Eva Qvarnstrom: page 48

Hatelmalo Sanchar: page 58

VCDS: page 43



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Leif Packalen and Sharad Sharma in Benin, 2005.

The authors

Leif Packalen has a background in development cooperation, civil service and NGO-work. He is the founder and current Chairman of World Comics Finland and works now as a free-lance comics consultant and cartoonist in Helsinki, Finland.

He lived and worked in Africa for more than ten years. He has run comics workshops in Benin, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Morocco, Mozambique, Tanzania, Togo, and in several European countries.

Packalen has written several manuals on how to make comics and how to run comics workshops.

Sharad Sharma has a background in cartooning, journalism and TV-work. He is the founder and the current Secretary General of World Comics India.

He has worked since 2004 as a free-lance cartoonist, comics instructor and consultant. He has been in charge of close to a hundred comics workshops over the years, both in India and internationally.

Sharma was awarded an Ashoka Fellowship in 2005 for introducing grassroots comics as a socially innovative development communication method into the Indian civil society.

COMICS
POWER!



Grassroots comics are made by community or NGO activists themselves and used in local campaigning. Most activists can learn the methods in a few days. It is the story, its drama and message which are central, not the drawing skill.

This book shows samples of grassroots comics and the methods for producing them are thoroughly explained.

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MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
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