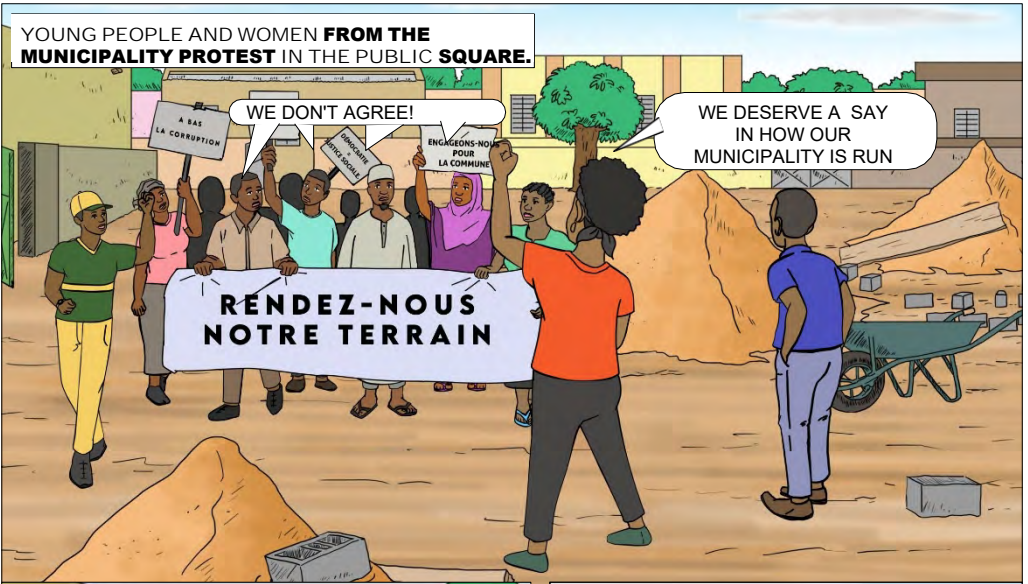
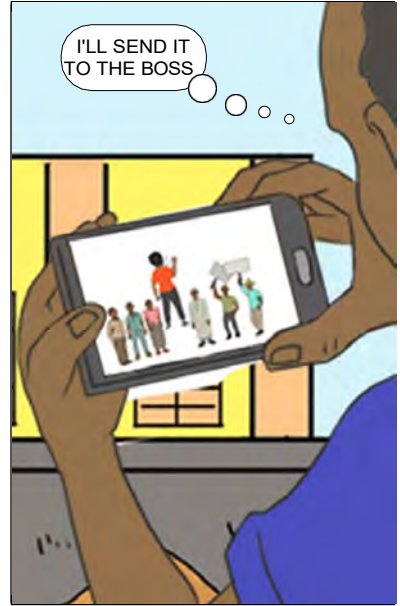


L'ÉLUE

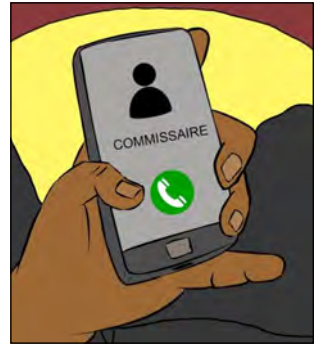
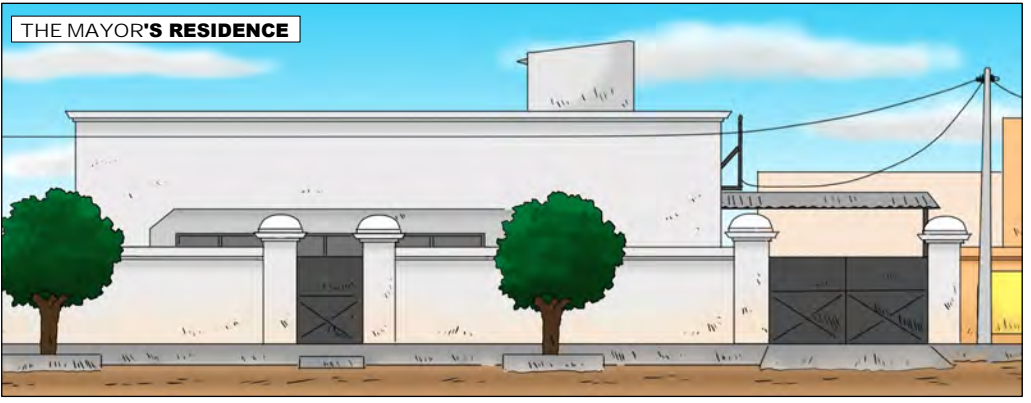


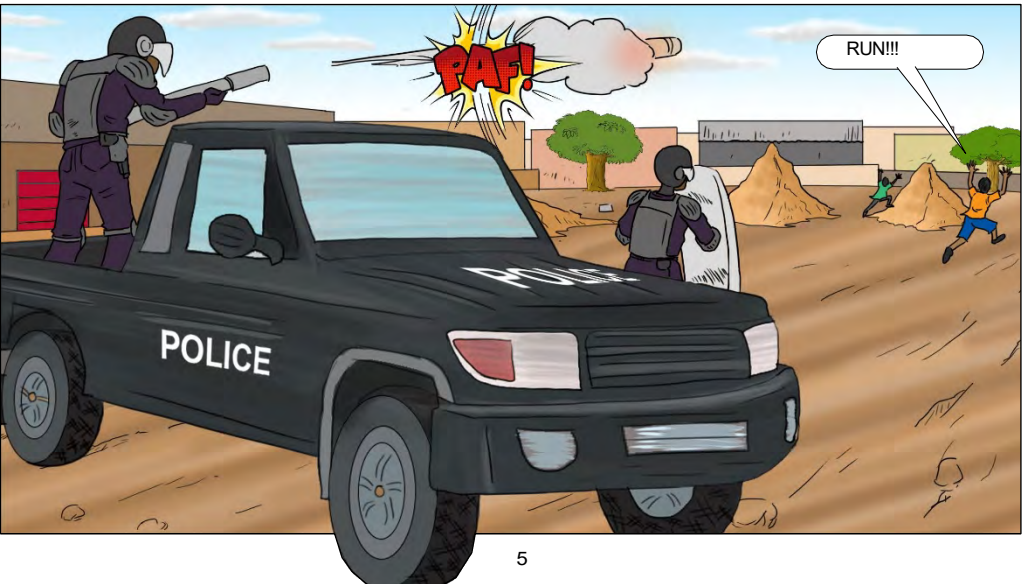
YOUNG PEOPLE AND WOMEN FROM THE MUNICIPALITY PROTEST IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE.





THE MAYOR'S RESIDENCE

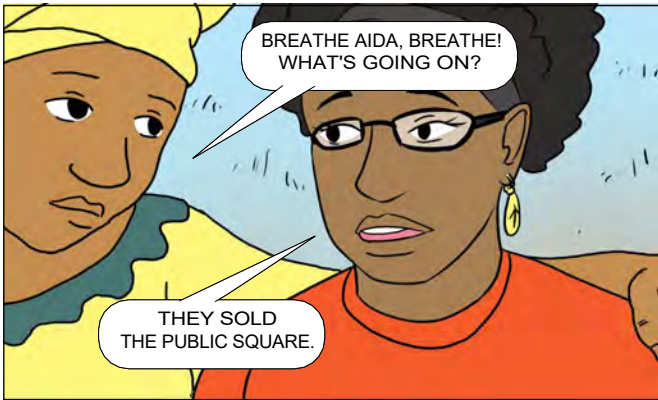






AIDA AND **OTHERS** TAKE REFUGE IN THE HOME OF MAH, THE **CHAIR** OF THE YOUTH AND WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION.







HERE'S THE MAP OF THE MUNICIPALITY AND HERE'S THEIR MAP.



MY OPPOSITION TO THE PROJECT HAS EARNED ME THE WRATH OF THE MAYOR AND HIS INNER CIRCLE.



THESE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES CAN'T BE TRUSTED, THEY'RE NOT THERE FOR PEOPLE.



WE HAVE A SUPERFICIAL DEMOCRACY AND IT IS THE FUTURE OF YOUNG PEOPLE THAT IS BEING SACRIFICED.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR FRUSTRATION. THE ROLE OF A MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR IS TO REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF ALL CITIZENS AND RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.



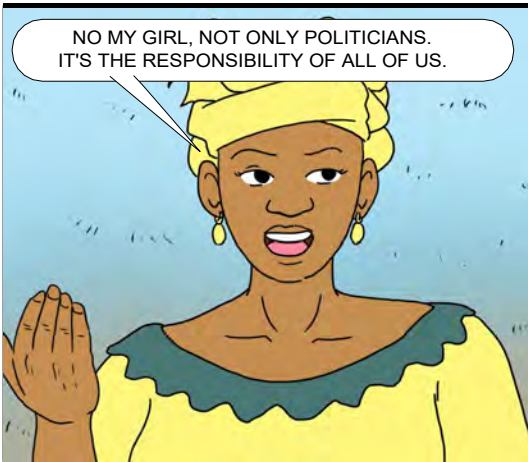
BUT HERE IT'S THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE. THEY'LL DO ANYTHING UNDER THE GUISE OF DEMOCRACY.



YES - DEMOCRACY!... IT'S IMPORTANT TO EDUCATE CITIZENS ABOUT DEMOCRACY.

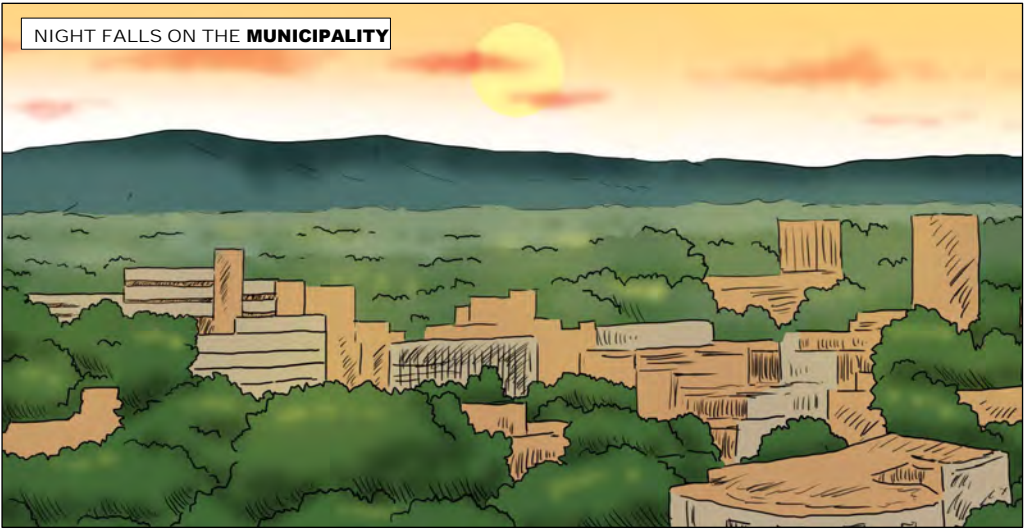


IT WILL ENABLE THEM TO LEARN ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS, DUTIES AND ROLES IN DEFENDING THE FREEDOMS WON SINCE MARCH 1991.

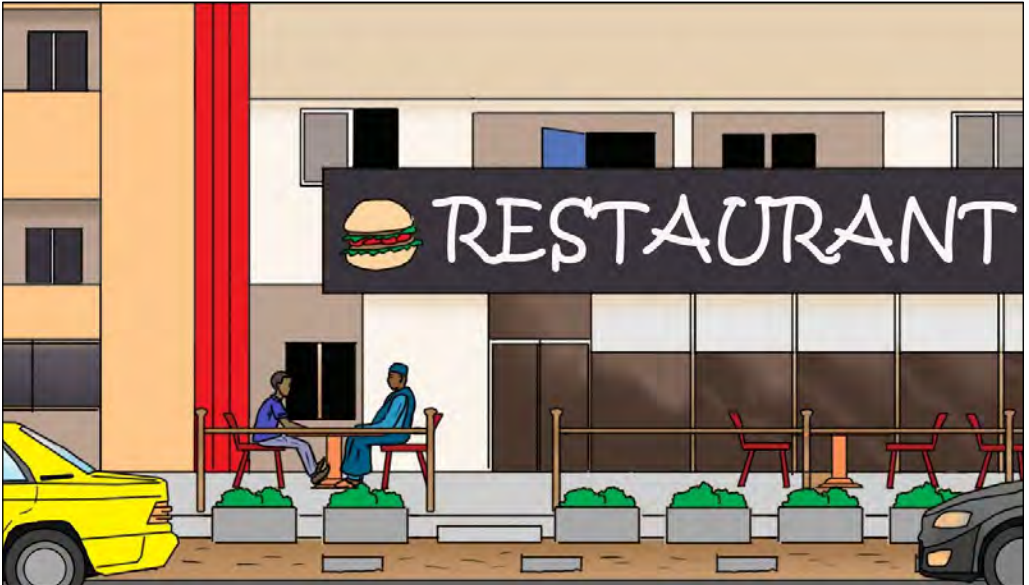
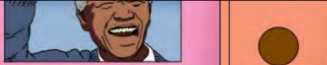


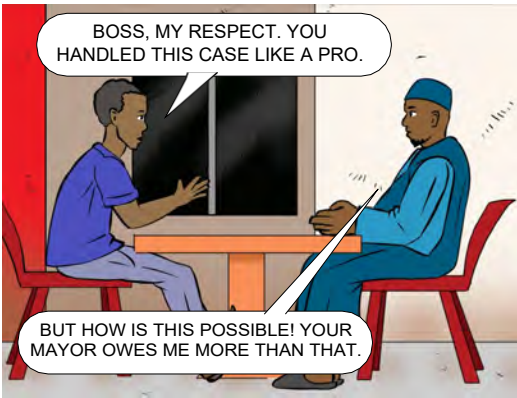


NIGHT FALLS ON THE **MUNICIPALITY**



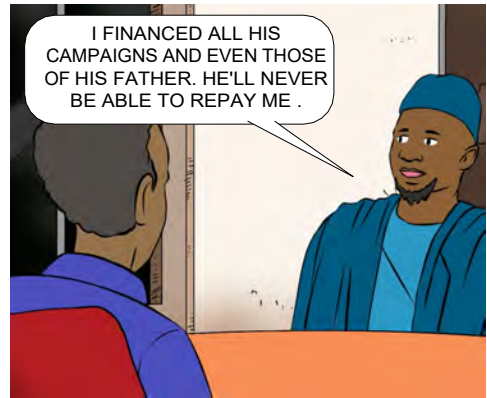
AIDA CALLS ON **HER FELLOW ACTIVISTS** TO REMAIN MOBILIZED





BOSS, MY RESPECT. YOU HANDLED THIS CASE LIKE A PRO.

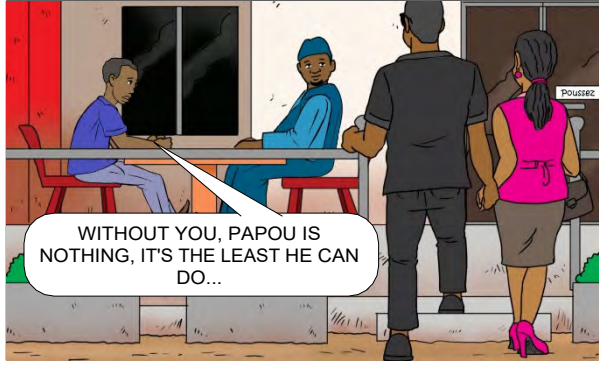
BUT HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE! YOUR MAYOR OWES ME MORE THAN THAT.



I FINANCED ALL HIS CAMPAIGNS AND EVEN THOSE OF HIS FATHER. HE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO REPAY ME .



OH COME ON! THOSE ANARCHISTS SHOULD NOT HAVE GOT AWAY.



WITHOUT YOU, PAPOU IS NOTHING, IT'S THE LEAST HE CAN DO...



YOUR EXCELLENCY, MR MAYOR, PLEASE TAKE A SEAT

GO AND HAVE A LITTLE CHAT OUT FRONT, WHILE WE FINISH THINGS UP.



BOSS, HOW ARE YOU? I HOPE YOU'VE HAD A GOOD DAY.

IT'S ALL GOOD, EXCEPT... YOU'VE LOST CONTROL OF THE MUNICIPALITY



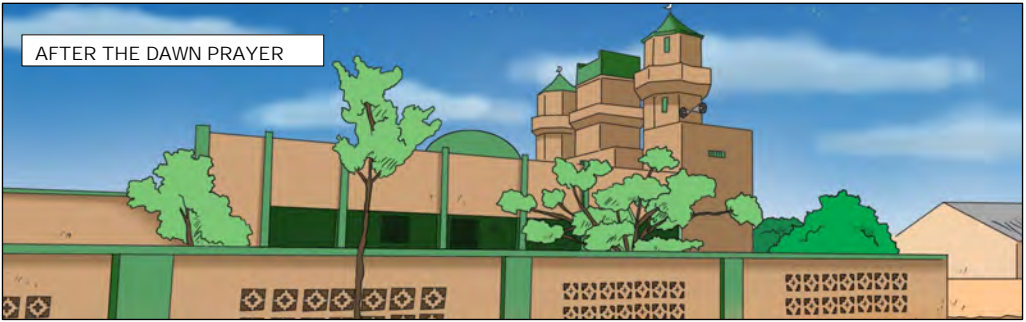
IT'S JUST AN UNFORTUNATE MINOR INCIDENT. THE POLICE ARE NOW PROVIDING SECURITY

YOU KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE. YOUNG PEOPLE ARE VERY ATTACHED TO THEIR LAND, AND TAKING IT AWAY FROM THEM WILL REQUIRE A LOT OF SACRIFICES.



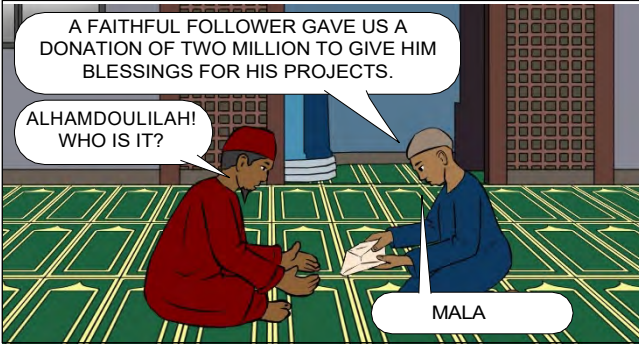
WHAT KIND OF SACRIFICES?

AFTER THE DAWN PRAYER



A FAITHFUL FOLLOWER GAVE US A DONATION OF TWO MILLION TO GIVE HIM BLESSINGS FOR HIS PROJECTS.

ALHAMDOULILAH!
WHO IS IT?



MALA

I UNDERSTAND. MAY GOD ACCEPT HIS SACRIFICE!



AAMIN!!!

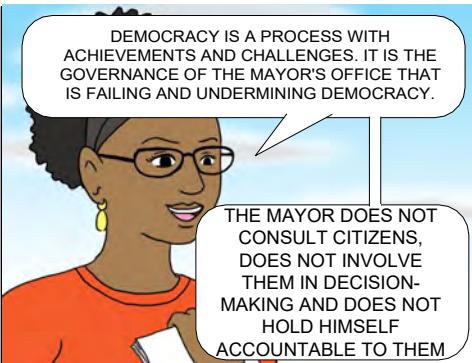
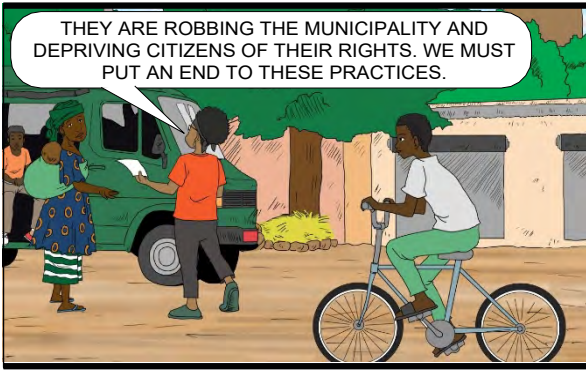
LA MAIRIE





AT THE BUS STATION, AIDA AND HER **FELLOW ACTIVISTS** CONTINUE TO MOBILIZE.







DEMOCRACY IS NOT LIMITED TO ELECTIONS; ITS PROPER FUNCTIONING DEPENDS ON THE COMMITMENT OF ALL OF US, TO ENSURE CITIZEN OVERSIGHT.



I SUPPORT THE CAUSE. THE CONCERNS OF CITIZENS MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

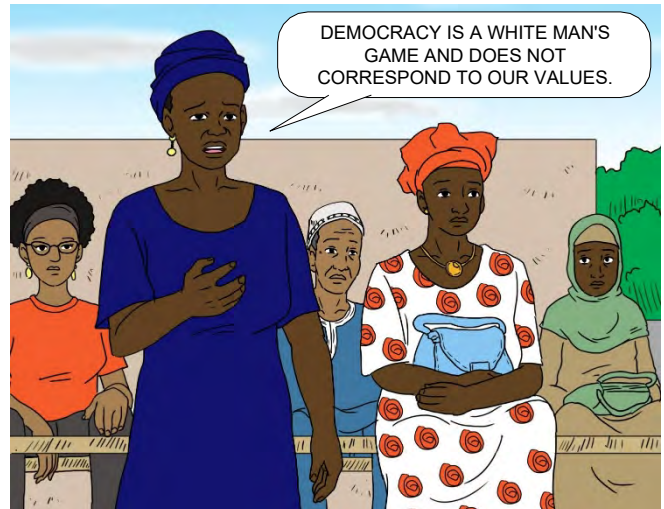
MEETING AT MAH'S HOME.
THE DISCUSSIONS WILL FOCUS ON DEMOCRACY.



WELCOME EVERYONE. WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT DEMOCRACY. MANY OF US MISUNDERSTAND IT. AND SOME EVEN REJECT IT. BUT LET ME TELL YOU THAT DEMOCRACY IS, FIRST AND FOREMOST, THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT.



LET'S WORK TOGETHER FOR THE GOOD OF THE MUNICIPALITY'S RESIDENTS.



DEMOCRACY IS A WHITE MAN'S GAME AND DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO OUR VALUES.



I AGREE. DEMOCRACY IS NOT FOR LOWER INCOME COUNTRIES. THIS SYSTEM IS UNATTAINABLE!



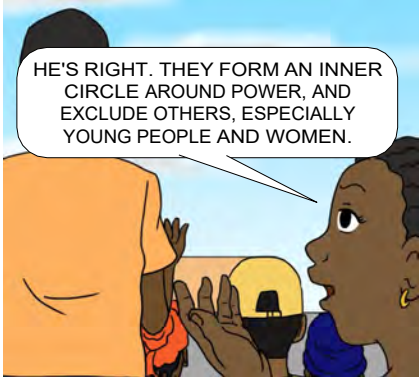
THINK AGAIN! DEMOCRACY HAS ITS ROOTS IN AFRICA.



THE MANDEN CHARTER, PROCLAIMED IN 1236, IS ONE OF THE OLDEST CONSTITUTIONS IN THE WORLD. NOT TO MENTION THE EXPERIENCES OF "KALATA" IN THE BAMBARA KINGDOM OF SÉGOU. SO DEMOCRACY AS AN INCLUSIVE AND CONSENSUAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT IS NOTHING NEW TO US.



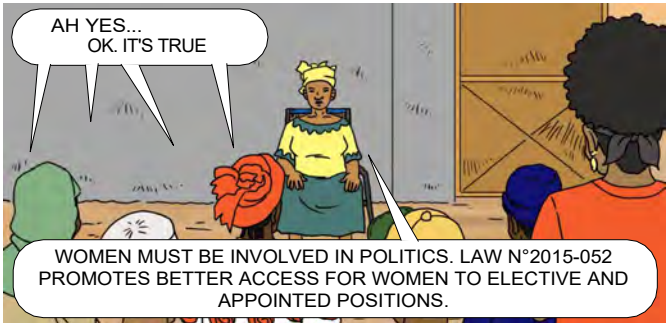
IN OUR COUNTRY, IT'S A DEMOCRACY OF THE STRONGEST, A DICTATORSHIP IN DISGUISE. YOUR DEMOCRACY SERVES ONLY THE LEADER OF THE DAY, HIS FAMILY AND HIS FRIENDS.



HE'S RIGHT. THEY FORM AN INNER CIRCLE AROUND POWER, AND EXCLUDE OTHERS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE AND WOMEN.



EVERY DEMOCRACY NEEDS DEMOCRATS. DEMOCRACY HEARS ALL VOICES. DIALOGUE BETWEEN THOSE WHO GOVERN AND THOSE WHO ARE GOVERNED IS A PRACTICE THAT STRENGTHENS THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.



AH YES... OK. IT'S TRUE

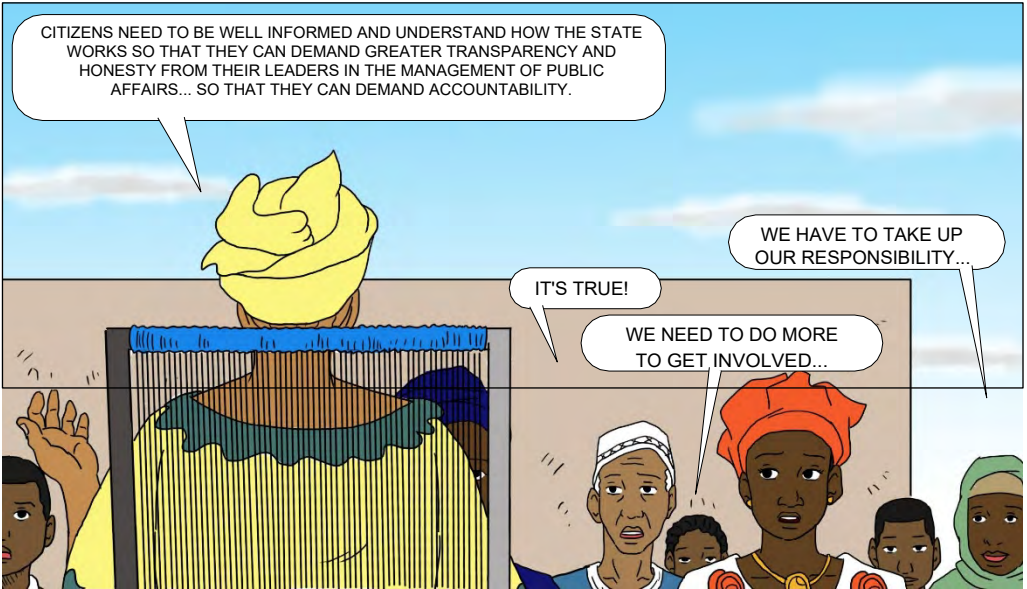
WOMEN MUST BE INVOLVED IN POLITICS. LAW N°2015-052 PROMOTES BETTER ACCESS FOR WOMEN TO ELECTIVE AND APPOINTED POSITIONS.



WITH THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS COMING UP, THIS COMMITMENT FROM YOUNG PEOPLE WILL CHANGE THINGS.



MALIAN DEMOCRACY IS RUN BY THE PRESIDENT, THE MARABOUTS AND BUSINESS PEOPLE. WE WOMEN DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MEANS, NOT EVEN IN OUR DREAMS! SO, WHAT KIND OF CITIZEN IS LEADING US? I ASK YOU!



CITIZENS NEED TO BE WELL INFORMED AND UNDERSTAND HOW THE STATE WORKS SO THAT THEY CAN DEMAND GREATER TRANSPARENCY AND HONESTY FROM THEIR LEADERS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS... SO THAT THEY CAN DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY.

IT'S TRUE!

WE NEED TO DO MORE TO GET INVOLVED...

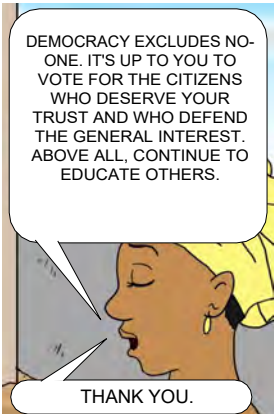
WE HAVE TO TAKE UP OUR RESPONSIBILITY...



WE HAVE TO RECOGNISE THAT WE HAVE SEEN CANDIDATES WITH INTEGRITY WIN ELECTIONS WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF MARABOUTS AND BUSINESS PEOPLE.



IT'S TRUE!



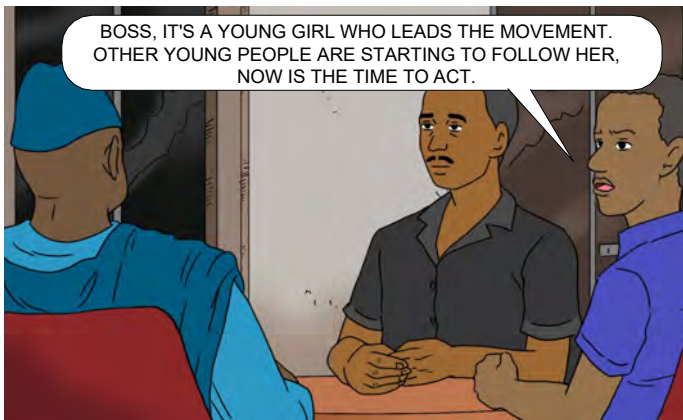
DEMOCRACY EXCLUDES NO-ONE. IT'S UP TO YOU TO VOTE FOR THE CITIZENS WHO DESERVE YOUR TRUST AND WHO DEFEND THE GENERAL INTEREST. ABOVE ALL, CONTINUE TO EDUCATE OTHERS.

THANK YOU.

MALA, PAPOU AND KALIFA **HOLD AN EMERGENCY MEETING**
TO RESPOND TO THE ACTIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE



BOSS, IT'S A YOUNG GIRL WHO LEADS THE MOVEMENT. OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO FOLLOW HER, NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT.



WHAT DOES SHE WANT?



HMM!!!



GIVE HER A LITTLE. I HOPE THE MARABOUT AND THE COMMISSIONER HAVE HAD THEIR SHARE.



YES, I HANDLED EVERYTHING
WORK CAN CONTINUE WITHOUT ANY WORRIES.



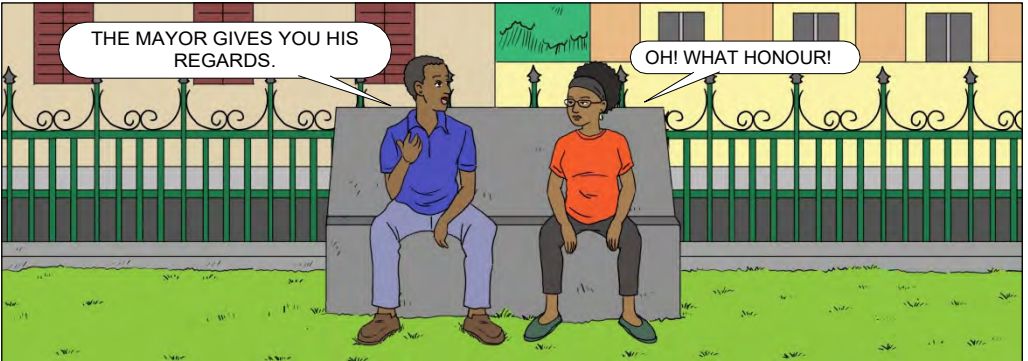


KALIFA AND AIDA MEET AT THE PLACE DE L'INDEPENDANCE.



THE MAYOR GIVES YOU HIS REGARDS.

OH! WHAT HONOUR!



HE APPRECIATES YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE MUNICIPALITY AND WANTS YOU TO JOIN HIS TEAM, OUR TEAM.

AFTER EVERYTHING HE'S PUT US THROUGH. NO!

POLITICS RUNS DEEP, YOU KNOW,





AIDA AND HER TEAM TAKE TO THE STREETS, MARKETS, PUBLIC SQUARES AND SOCIAL NETWORKS TO **SPREAD** THEIR MESSAGE.



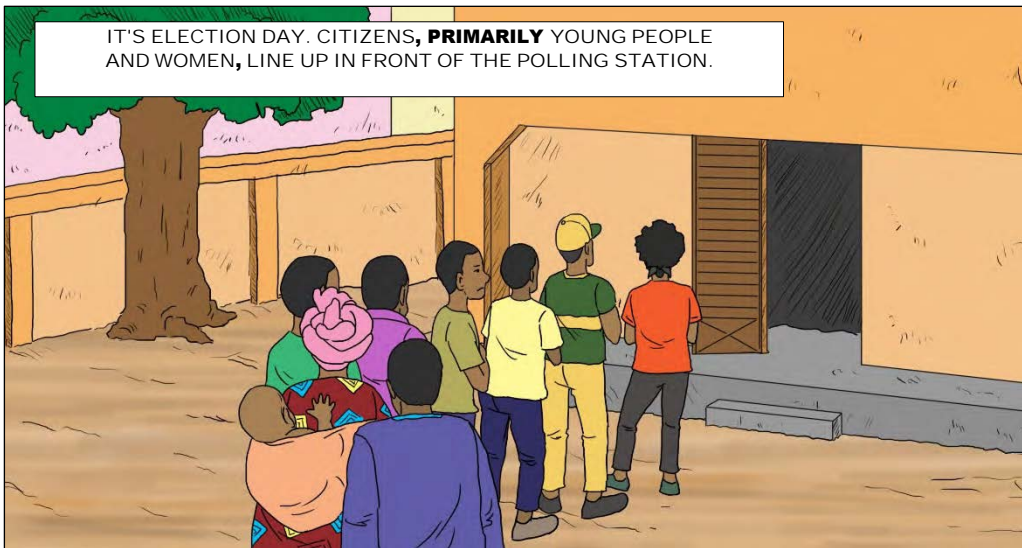
KALIFA TRIES TO CORRUPT YOUNG PEOPLE WITHOUT SUCCESS.

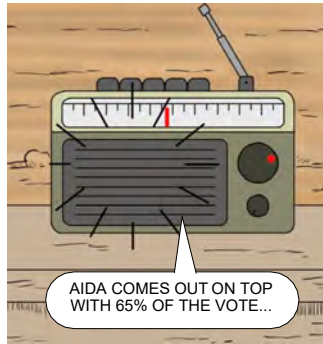
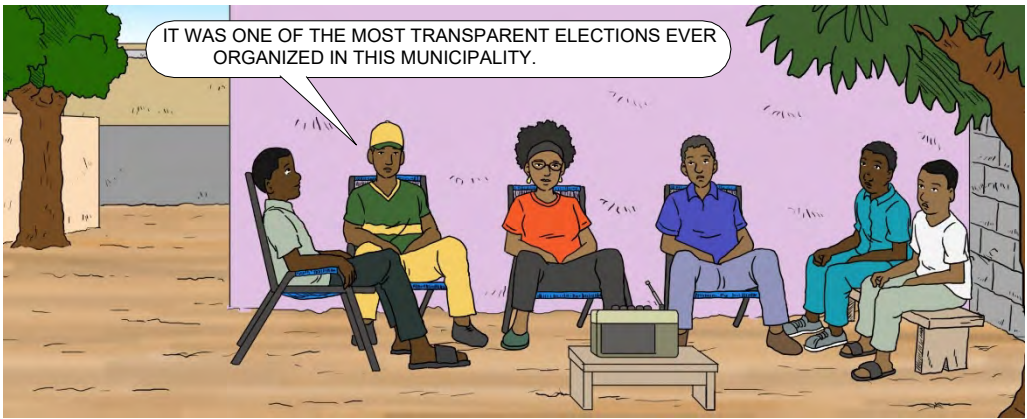


KEEP YOUR DIRTY MONEY!



IT'S ELECTION DAY. CITIZENS, **PRIMARILY** YOUNG PEOPLE AND WOMEN, LINE UP IN FRONT OF THE POLLING STATION.







AIDA INAUGURATES THE SCHOOL SHE AND HER
FELLOW ACTIVITSTS FOUGHT
SO HARD FOR.

WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE UNDERSTAND AND GET INVOLVED
IN POLITICS, DEMOCRACY IS STRENGTHENED FOR THE
GOOD OF ALL PEOPLE.

L'ÉLUE

(THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE)

What is democracy? What does it represent, and is it truly for us? In Mali, we've been discussing democracy for decades, and not all the talk is good! Sometimes perceived as an "import" from the West in the 1990s, democracy was once associated with movements calling for greater freedoms and improved living conditions, raising many hopes. But today, it faces criticism - even rejection - by those who see it as a system ill-suited to our societies.

Is this really the case? Does democracy as we have known it since March 1991 align with our aspirations? What does democracy mean for Mali today?

Can we build a democracy rooted in our values and reflective of our current reality?

This book, produced by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) in Mali, is based on the findings of a study into preconceptions and misperceptions about democracy. It aims to address these questions and serve as a teaching tool to enhance our understanding of democracy, so that every citizen can take ownership of its values and principles and become one of its architects.

Democracy needs informed and trained democrats, capable of building a fair and effective governance system. This graphic novel is dedicated to that vision.

Targeting young and older readers alike, we hope it will contribute to the consolidation of Mali's democracy, one that is secular, modern, dynamic and deeply rooted in positive cultural and universal values.

A special thanks to the team of researchers who carried out the study, including Dr Mariame Sidibé, Amadou Bathily and Karim Konaté. And to VortexGroups for designing the graphic novel.

Enjoy reading!