

TUGIRE UBUMWE

Let's Unite!

Teaching lessons from the Rwanda genocide



By Rupert Bazambanza

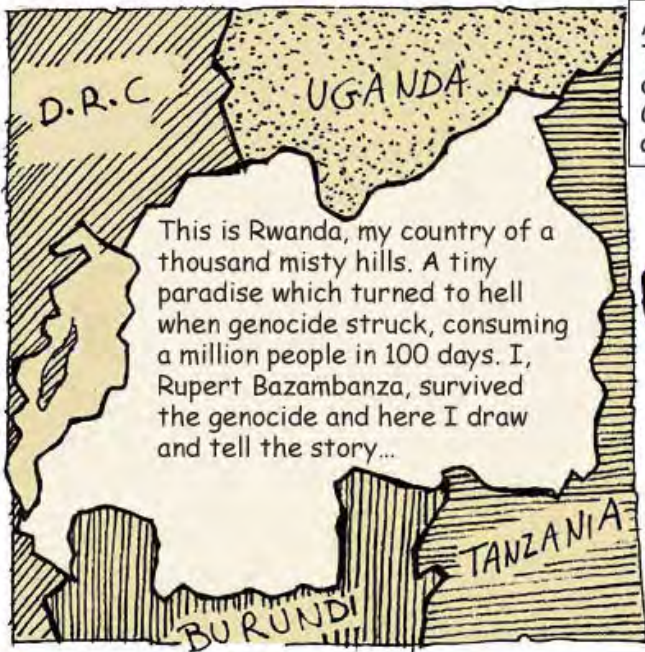
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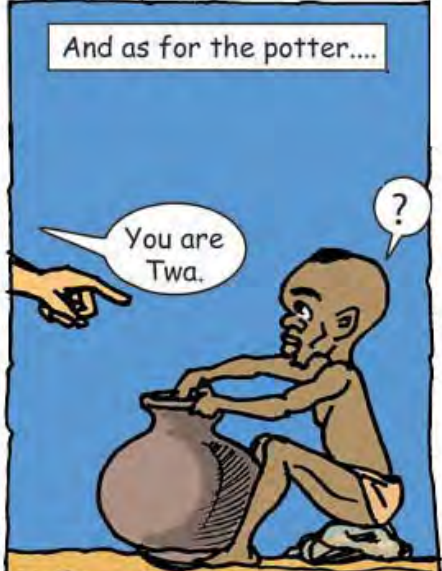
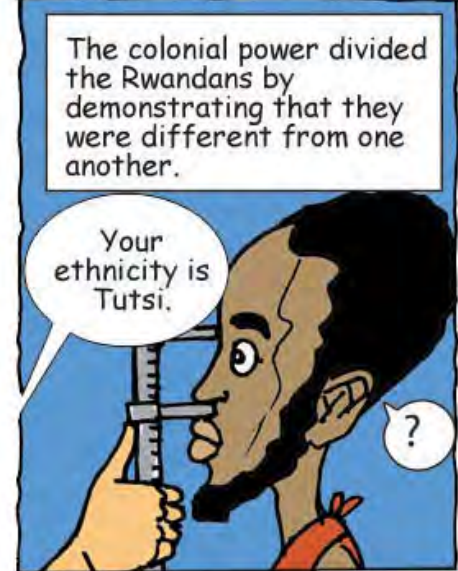
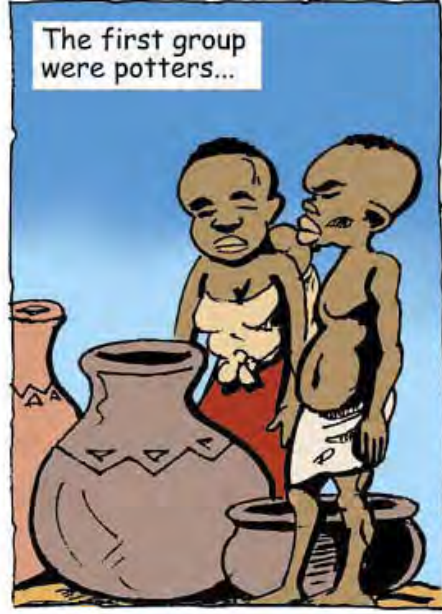
HISTORY OF DECOLONIZATION



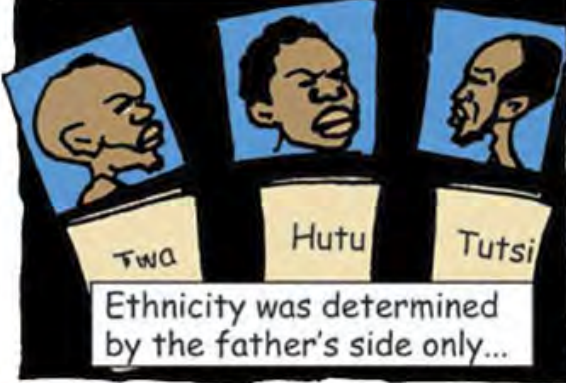
After the First World War: The League of Nations declared Rwanda - a former German colony - under the administration of Belgium...



The Belgian colonial power and the Catholic Church found three groups within the Rwandan nation...



The ethnic identity card was introduced in 1931 by the Belgians...



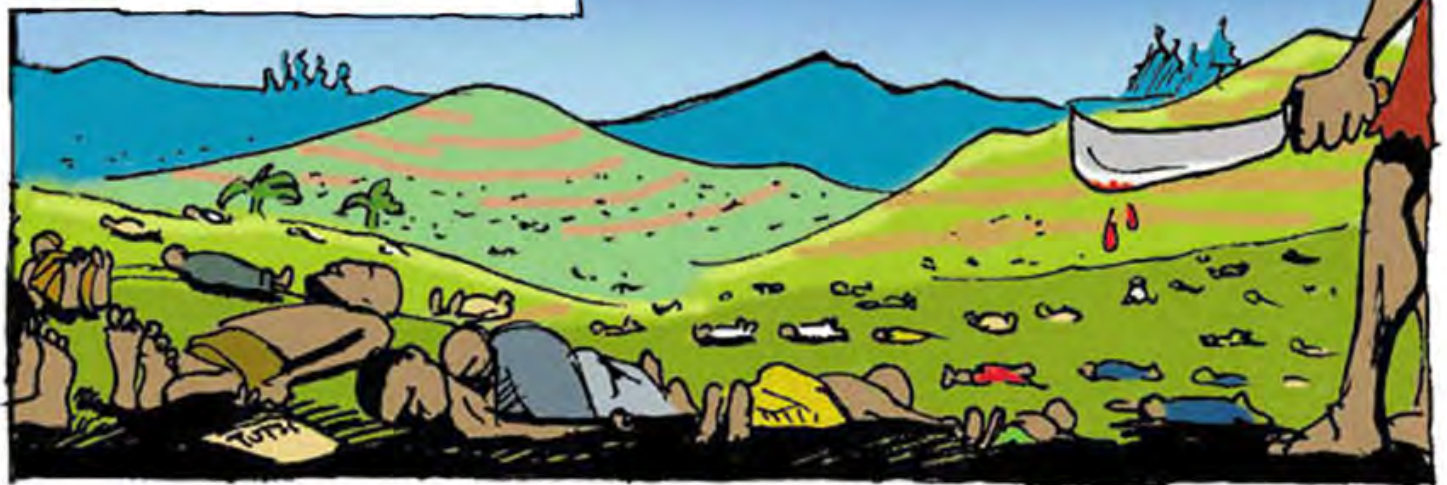
In 1962, Rwanda obtained its independence and the colonizers were obliged to leave power...



In 1959, the hutu majority supported by the colonial power and the Catholic church overthrew the Tutsi monarchy. Many were massacred and thousands fled to neighboring countries...



Over the next three decades tensions deepened and ethnic division drove the nation towards a major genocide in 1994. My father was among those massacred...



SYLVIE'S STORY

Meanwhile, in 1979, the Byusa family welcomed their first daughter. Her name was Sylvie...



Seven years later, Sylvie begins primary school....



Mr. Byusa, himself a teacher, refused to separate the students in his class into separate ethnic groups...



Because of this, Mr. Byusa was taken away and never seen by his family again...

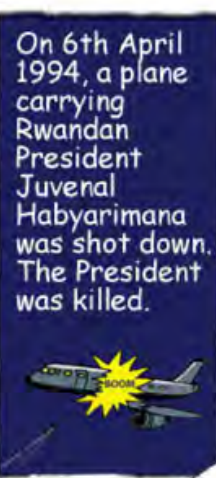


Sylvie was able to advance to secondary school. But the politics of discrimination had not changed...





Next time, let's refuse to separate! We are all the same!

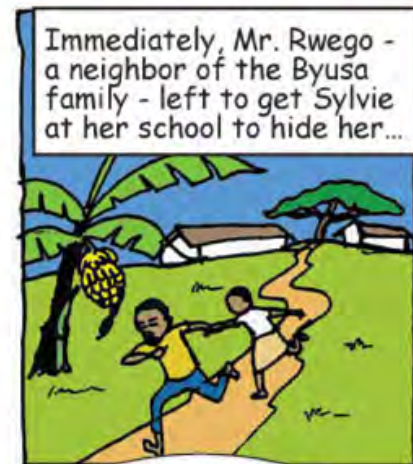


On 6th April 1994, a plane carrying Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana was shot down. The President was killed.

On 7th of April, 1994, without even knowing who shot down the plane, Hutu Power* and the national army set in motion a genocidal plan to kill all the Tutsi...



Quickly! The Hutu on one side and the Tutsi cockroaches on the other side!



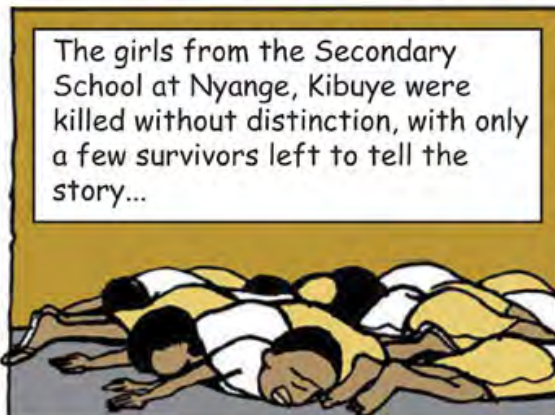
Immediately, Mr. Rwego - a neighbor of the Byusa family - left to get Sylvie at her school to hide her...



At Sylvie's school...



Here we do not have Hutu and Tutsi. There are only Rwandans. That is why we will not separate into two groups.



The girls from the Secondary School at Nyange, Kibuye were killed without distinction, with only a few survivors left to tell the story...

When Sylvie heard the news...



My dear classmates, I'm sorry that I abandoned you.

After the genocide, Sylvie was the only survivor in her family. She decided to study hard for her future



To honor your memory and your courage my dear departed, I will become a teacher. Education is the key to ensuring that never again will there be genocide in this world.



With her university diploma in her pocket, she braided her hair...

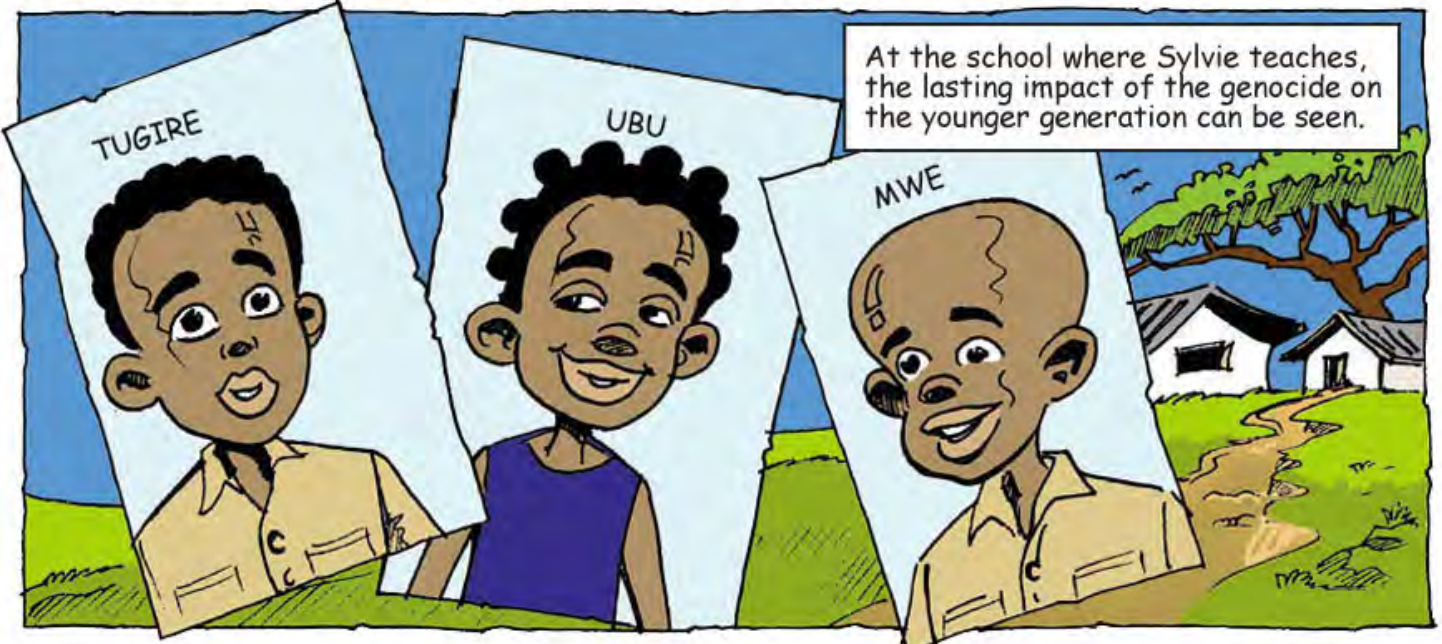


With a new look, Sylvie began her new life...

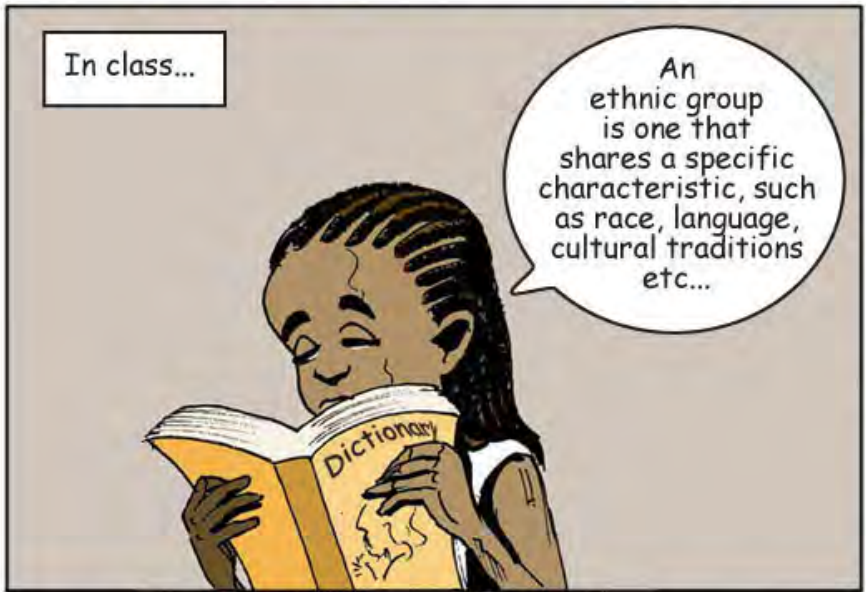
* MRND: Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour le Développement (National Revolutionary Movement for Development) Habyarimana Juvénal's political party

* Hutu Power: the MRND had managed to divide the main opposition parties along ethnic lines. Deserters from these parties regrouped around the *MRND in a Hutu extremist faction called Hutu power.

ALL RWANDANS ARE AFFECTED



At the school where Sylvie teaches, the lasting impact of the genocide on the younger generation can be seen.



In class...

An ethnic group is one that shares a specific characteristic, such as race, language, cultural traditions etc...



We Rwandans have always shared all these values, language, culture and race. That is why we do not have ethnic differences and we had never had them!

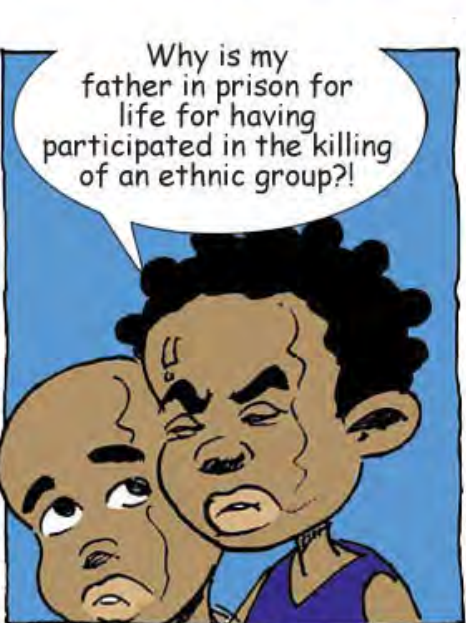


During a break from class...

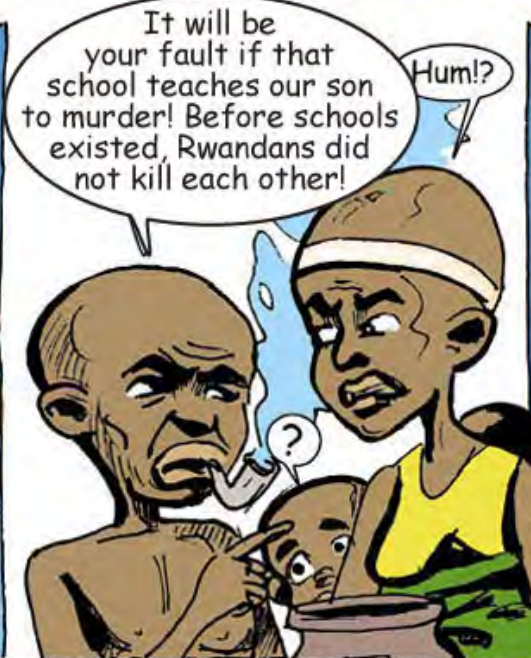
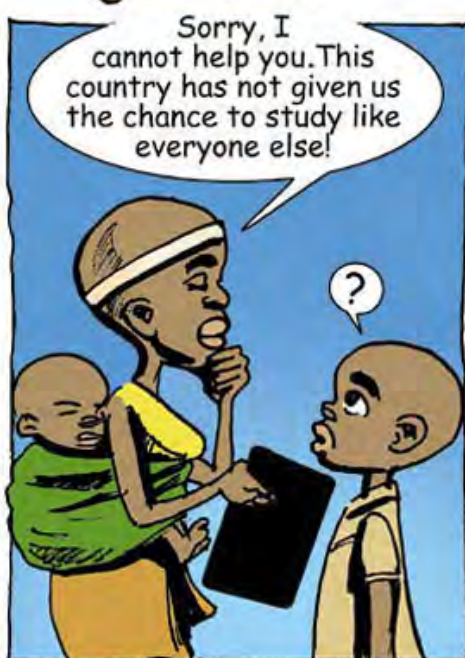
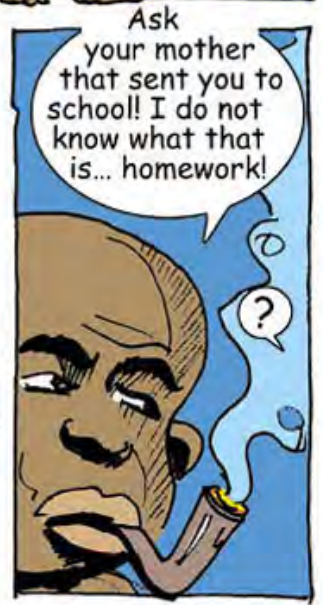
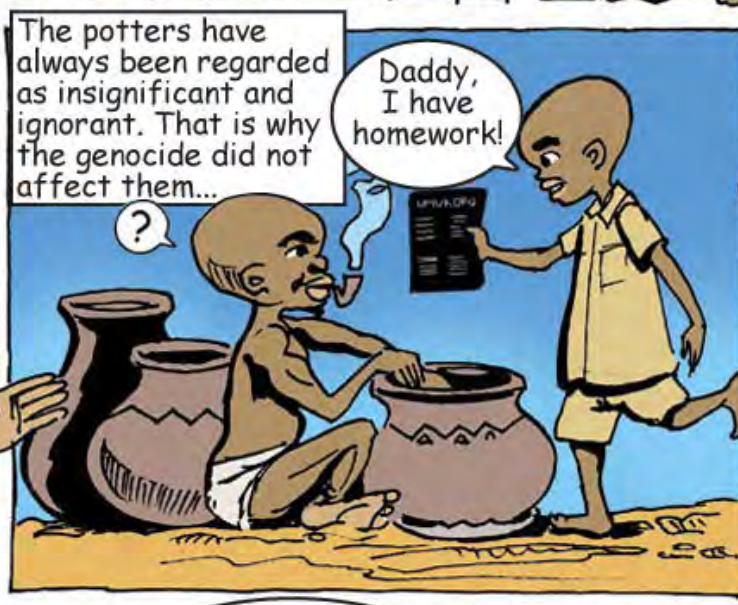
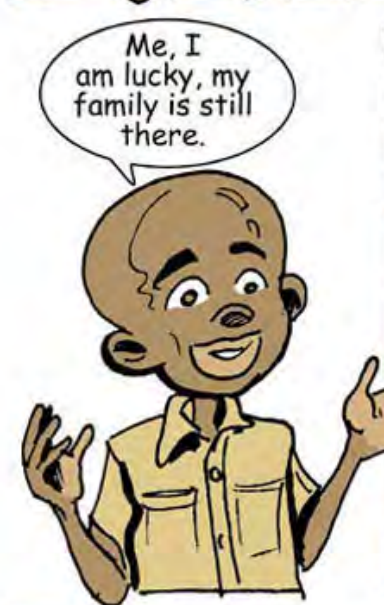
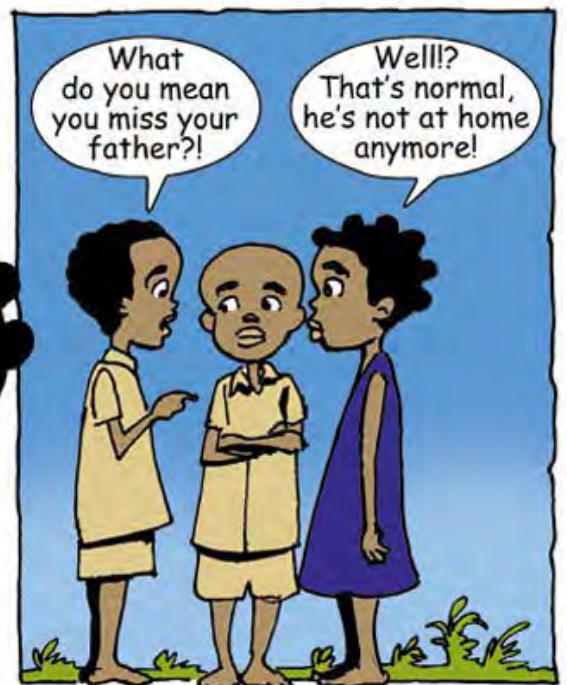
What's this? We don't have ethnic differences?



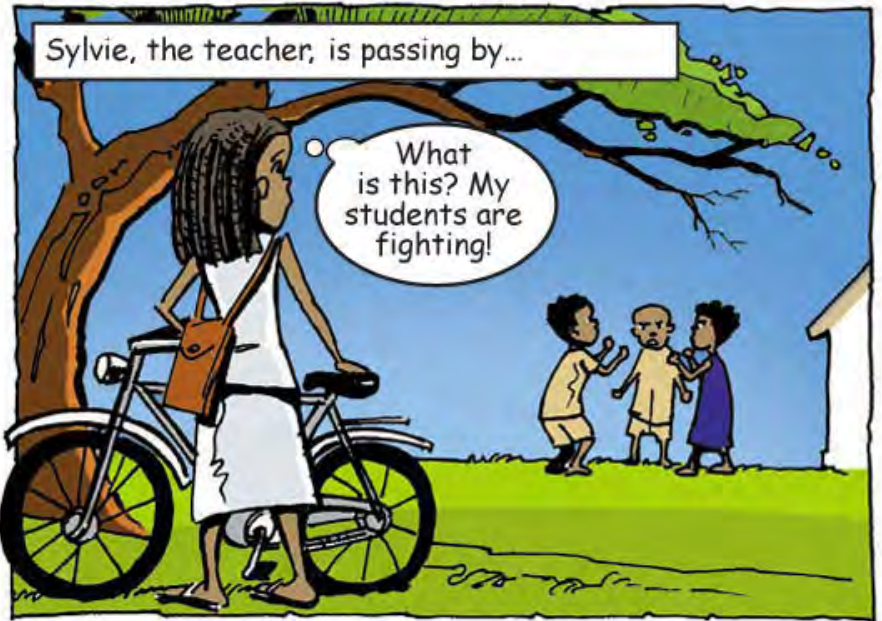
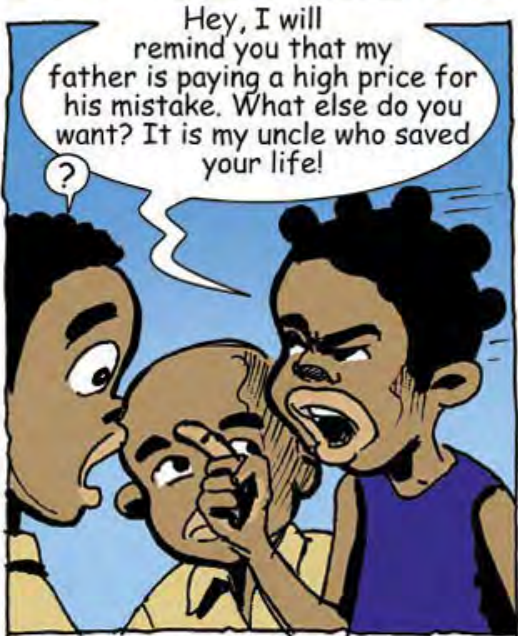
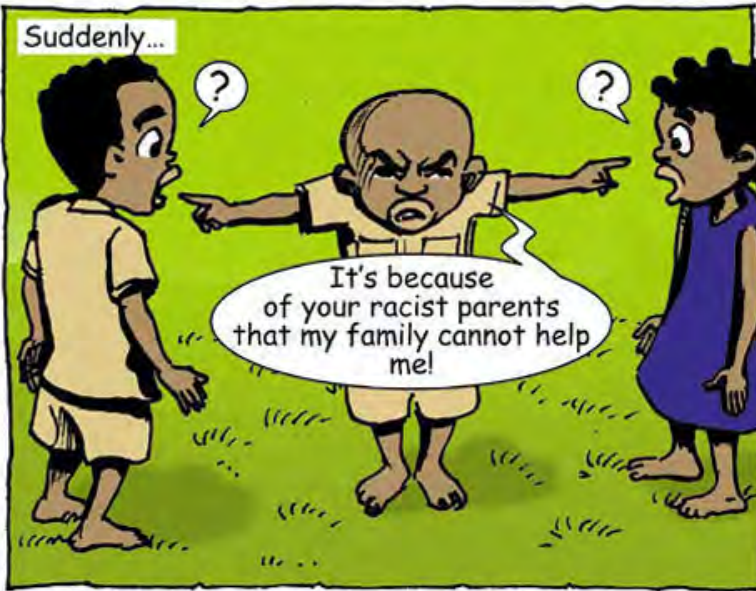
Why is it that my family is dead because of its ethnicity?

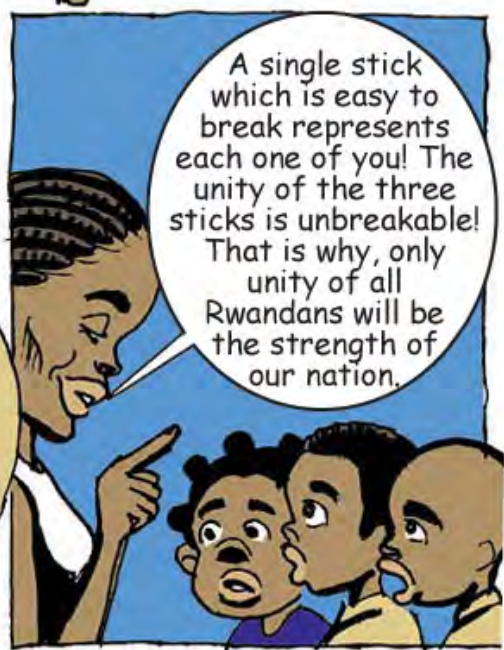


Why is my father in prison for life for having participated in the killing of an ethnic group?!



LESSON ONE: UNITY IS OUR STRENGTH





LESSON TWO: CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Imagine the work force our country lost during the April 1994 genocide! More than 800,000 dead! All victims of racism...



During the Second World War, racism and discrimination cost the lives of six million Jews in the holocaust...



In Cambodia in the 1970s, many people were killed or died as a result of discriminatory policies...



And in the early 1990s, "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia led to the deaths of thousands...



In Darfur, Sudan, mass killings of civilians have taken place. Rwandan soldiers are serving as UN peacekeepers to help protect civilians...



A few individuals who were responsible for these crimes have been judged by international criminal tribunals...



...throughout the world as in Africa...

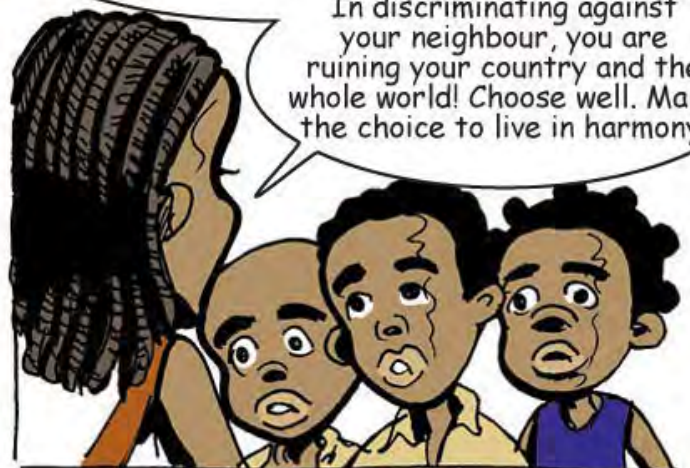


Others have been judged in their own countries. Here in Rwanda, we have revived our traditional justice system called the Gacaca tribunals...



A crime against humanity never dies! There are some people who have been tried in their eighties.

In discriminating against your neighbour, you are ruining your country and the whole world! Choose well. Make the choice to live in harmony.



BENEATH THE CLOUDS

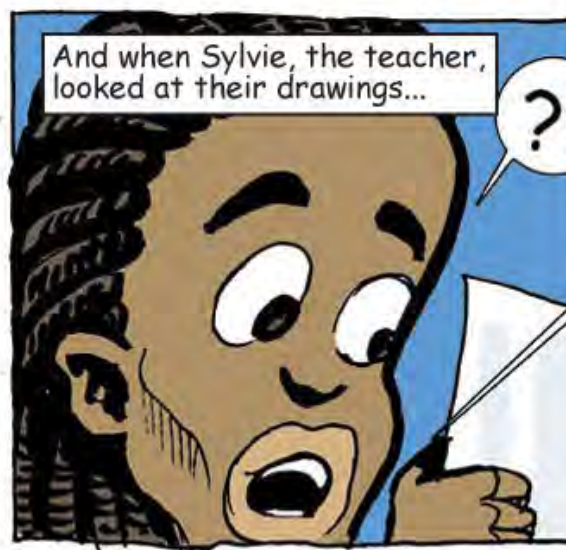
A few days later...

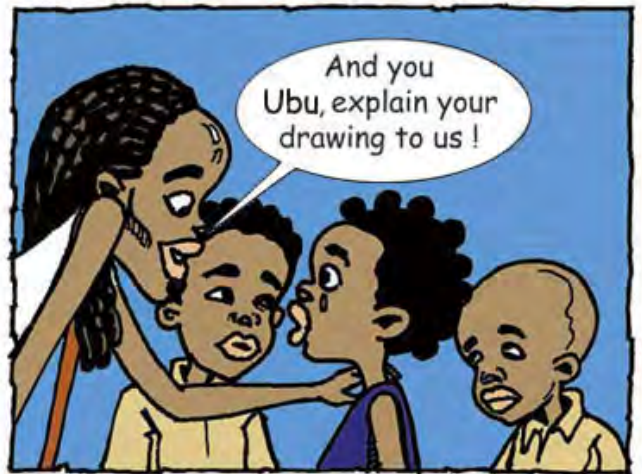
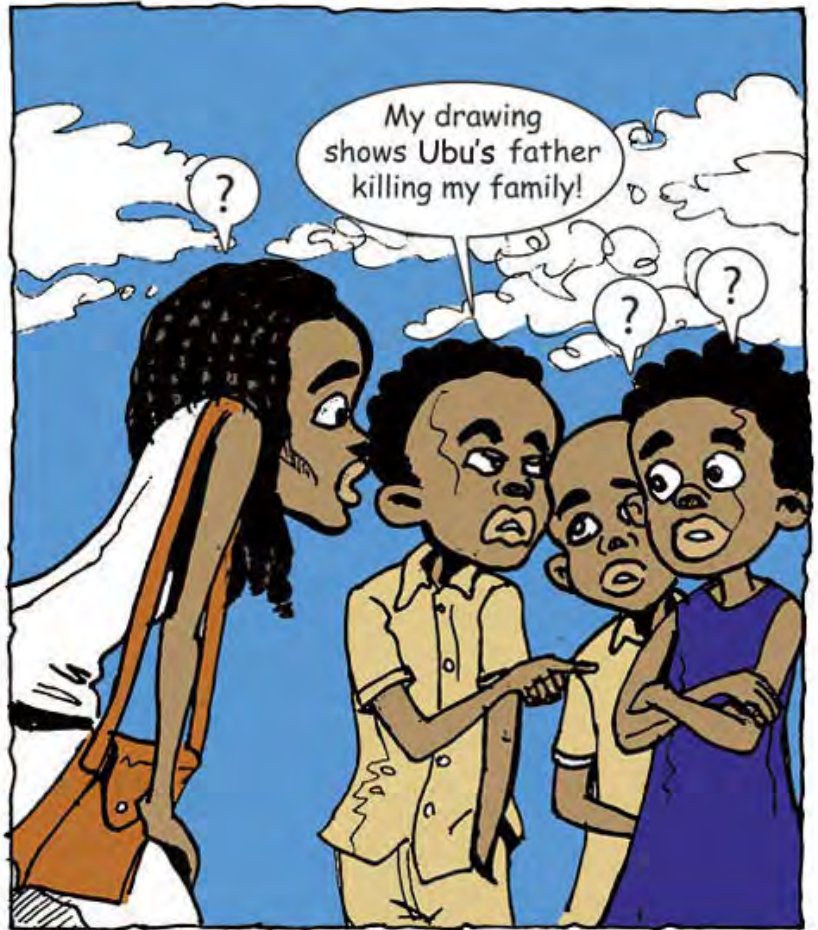
I have your workbooks here... I would like you to draw me some drawings!

There are many things that we can draw in our beautiful little paradise!

Draw me these clouds! I want to see many clouds in your drawings.







And the two children look at each other without knowing what to do...



Children, you should try to make a step towards forgiveness and reconciliation.



Realising that they share the same sad story, suddenly...



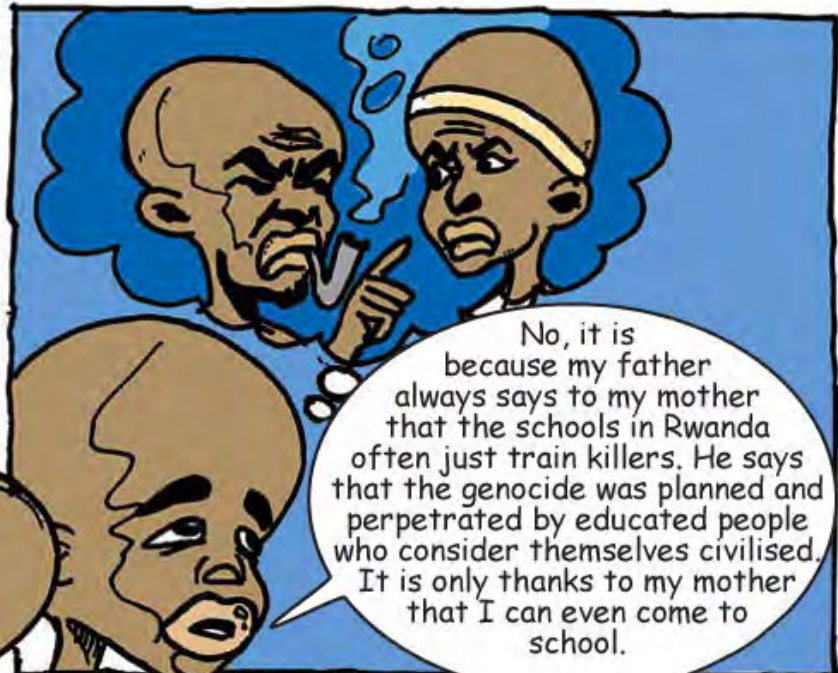
Sorry to interrupt your happiness but Mwe also has to explain his drawing to us!



My drawing shows a pupil who is going to kill me at school!

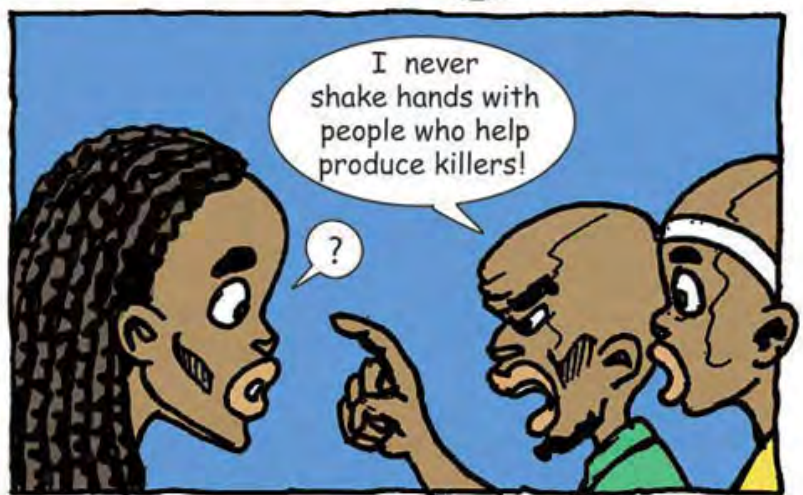


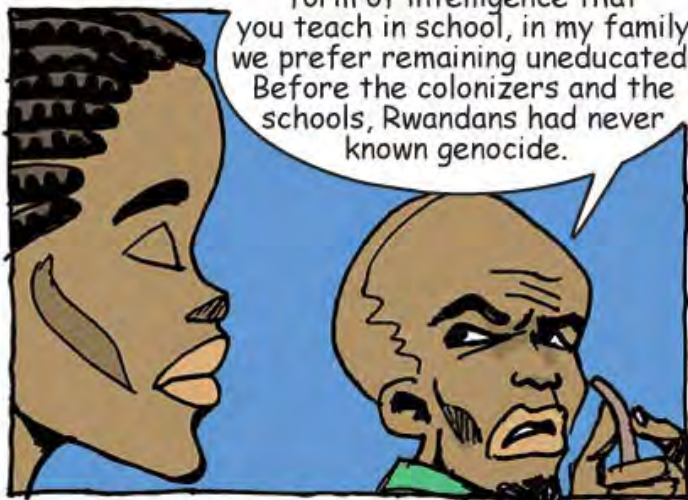
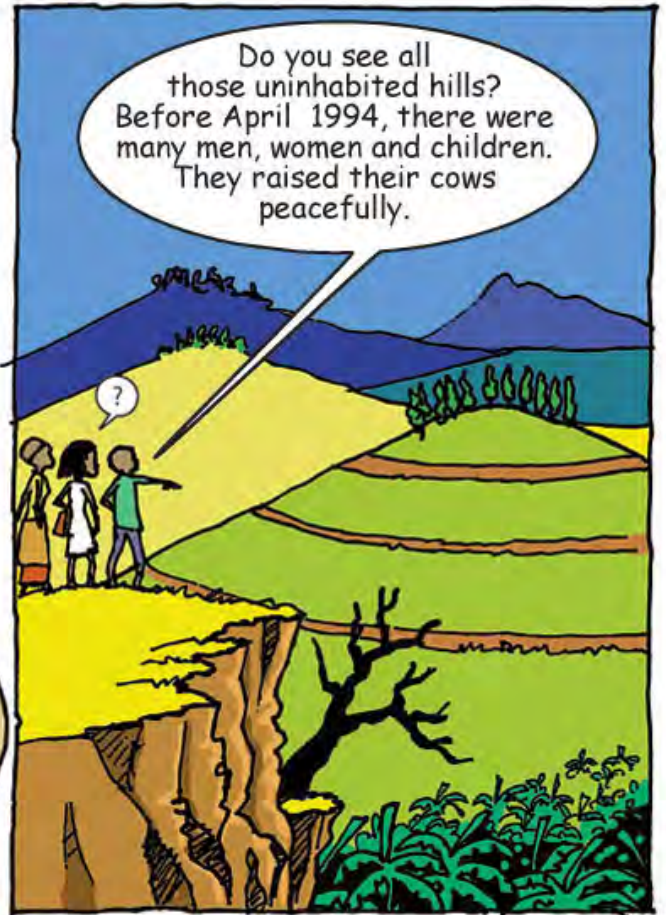
But why would a pupil kill you at school? Is there a pupil who has already threatened you?



No, it is because my father always says to my mother that the schools in Rwanda often just train killers. He says that the genocide was planned and perpetrated by educated people who consider themselves civilised. It is only thanks to my mother that I can even come to school.

MWE'S STORY: EDUCATION FOR A BETTER FUTURE







There is no lesson of killing in our schools!

In fact, our country has developed a framework for Rwanda's development called "Vision 2020". We will need well-educated young men and women if we are to reach the Vision's objective of a sustainable, knowledge-based economy....

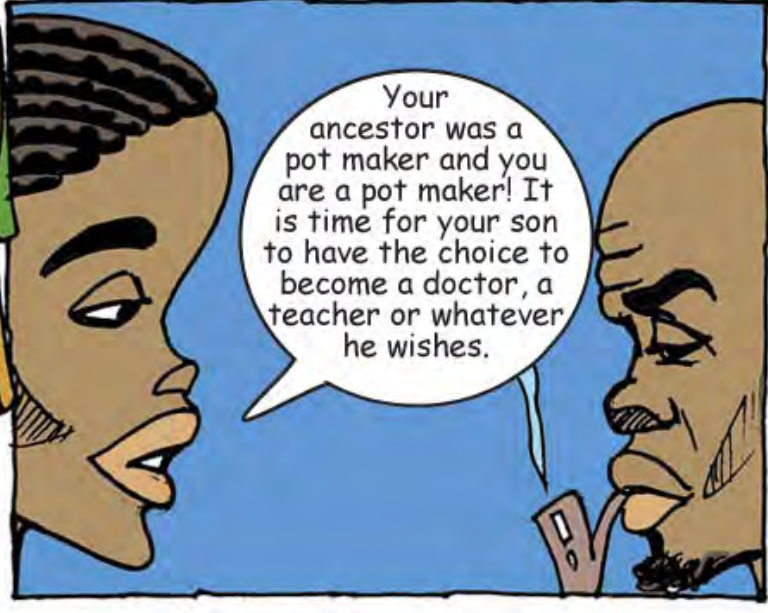


This is the only way to ensure that your children can make a new path in their lives.



Look at what your son has drawn this afternoon! He is scared.

? ?



Your ancestor was a pot maker and you are a pot maker! It is time for your son to have the choice to become a doctor, a teacher or whatever he wishes.

LESSON THREE: RESPECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT AND OTHERS

Another day in class...

Being educated doesn't necessarily mean being civilised! A civilised person respects human rights.



We all have a right to live, that is most important. A civilised person respects and preserves the environment.



That is the reason why our country decided to promote cleanliness and respect for the environment!



We cannot throw things just anywhere any more...



We also cannot use plastic bags...



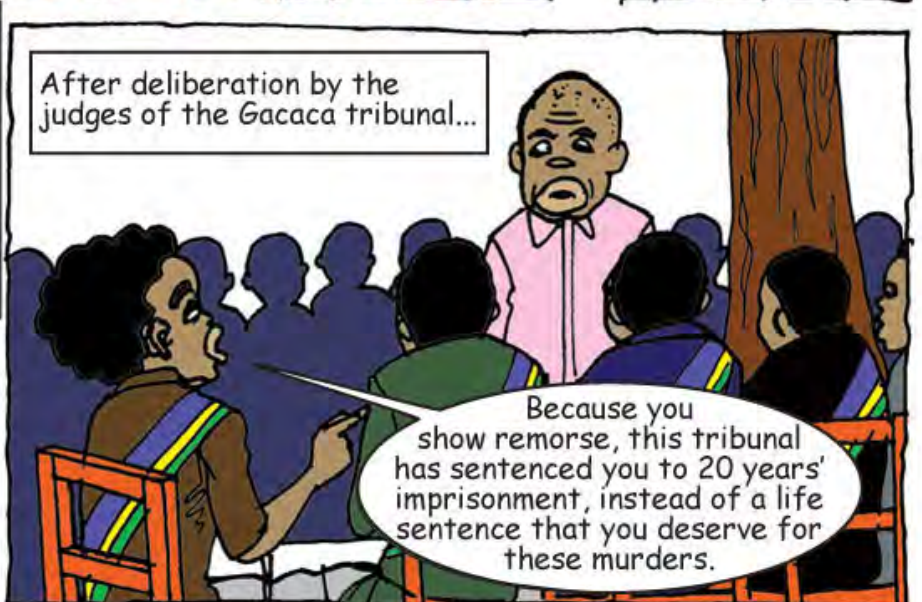
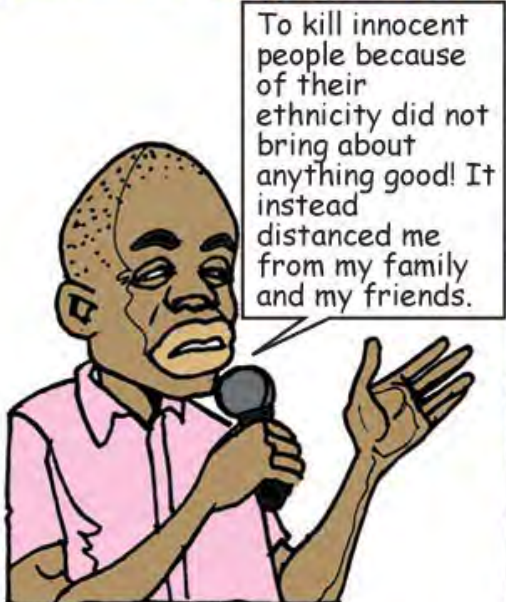
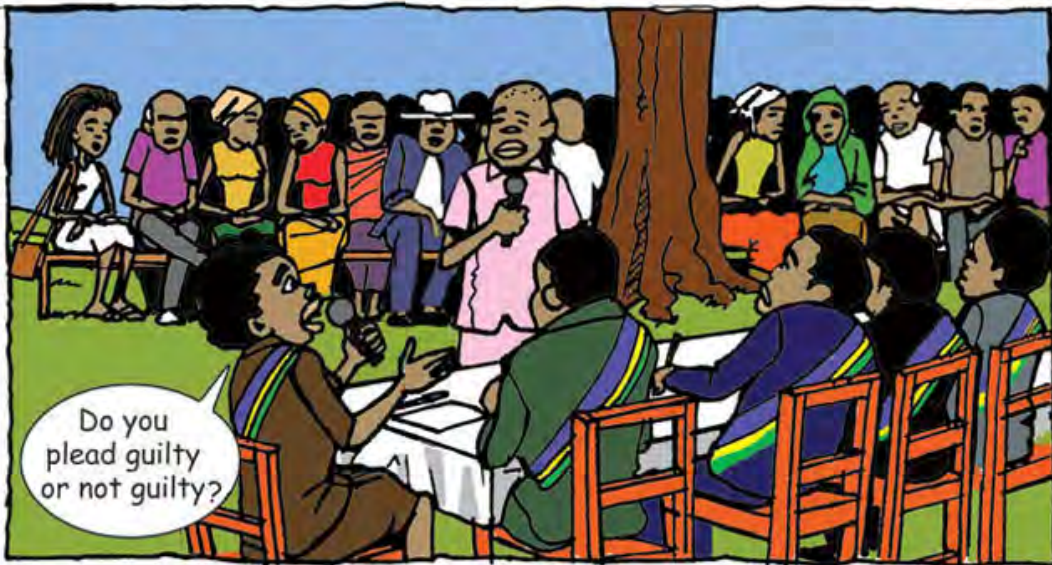
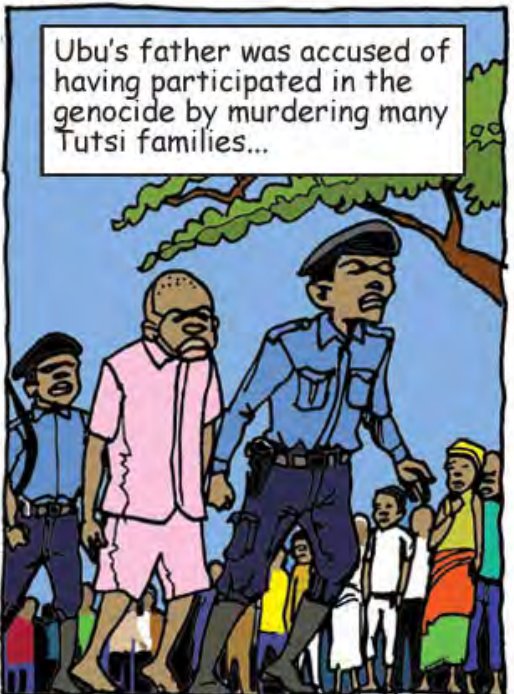
Similarly racism and discrimination are like garbage that must be thrown in the trash can and disposed of...

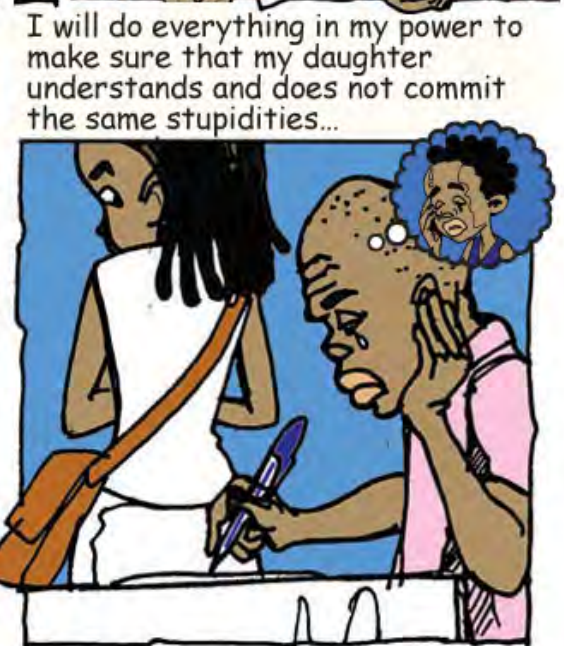
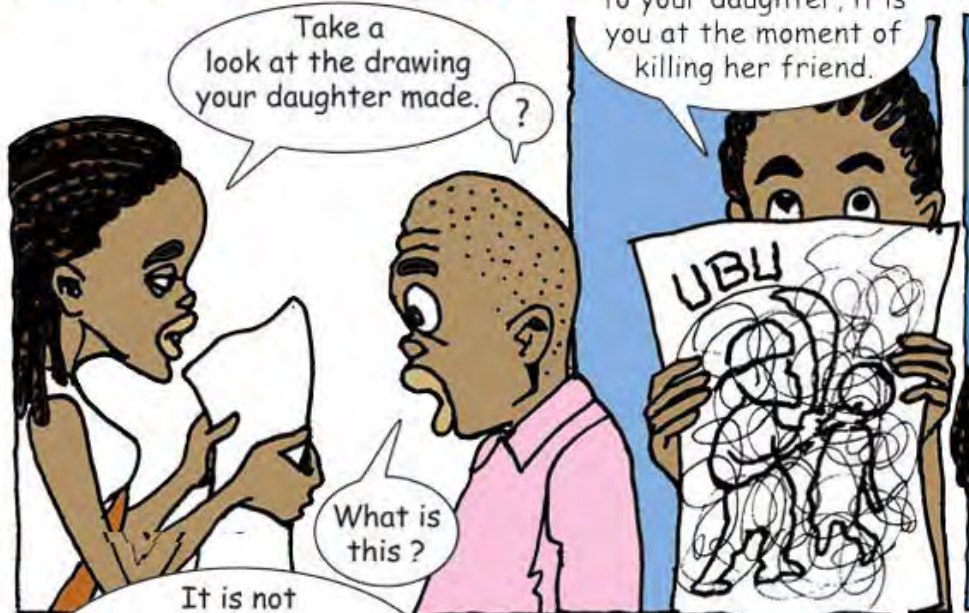
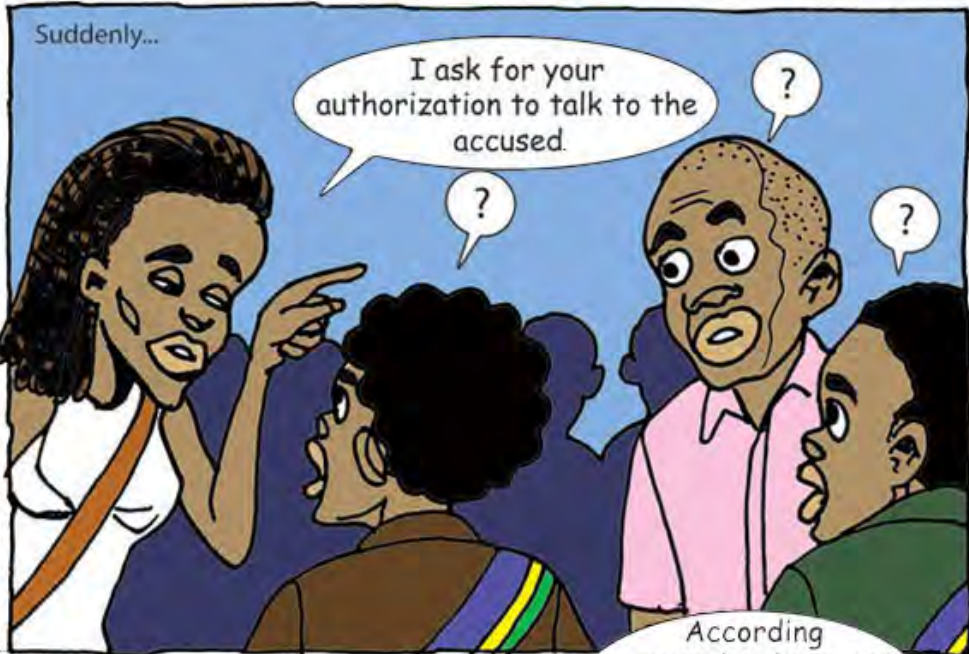


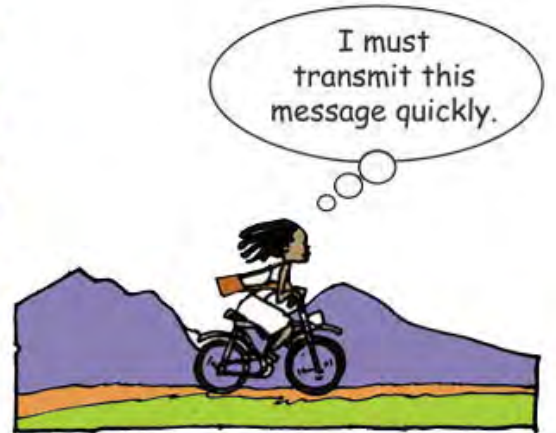
UBU'S STORY: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION



The Gacaca tribunals were set up because of the large number of people who participated in the genocide. The country's usual justice system was overloaded. Gacaca tribunals also had a role in uniting the country by way of confessions, testimony and forgiveness between victims and perpetrators...







Your husband was courageous in asking pardon and regretting his crimes. He even wrote to his adored daughter.

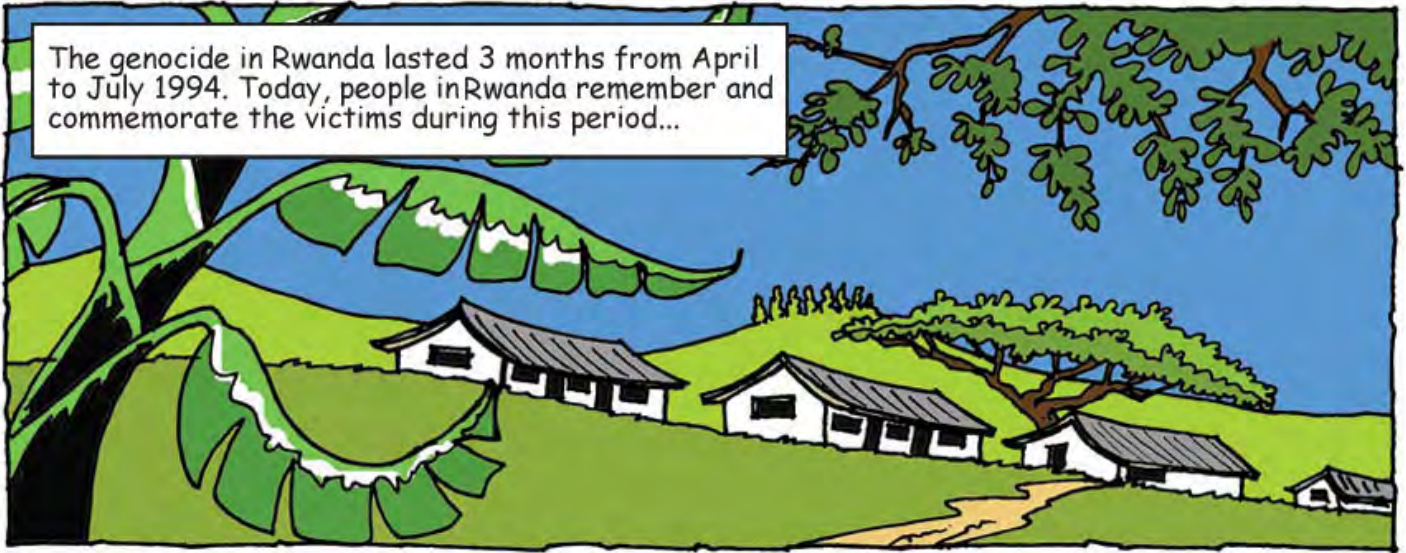


After reading her father's letter, Ubu was very happy and read it to her mother who felt comforted...

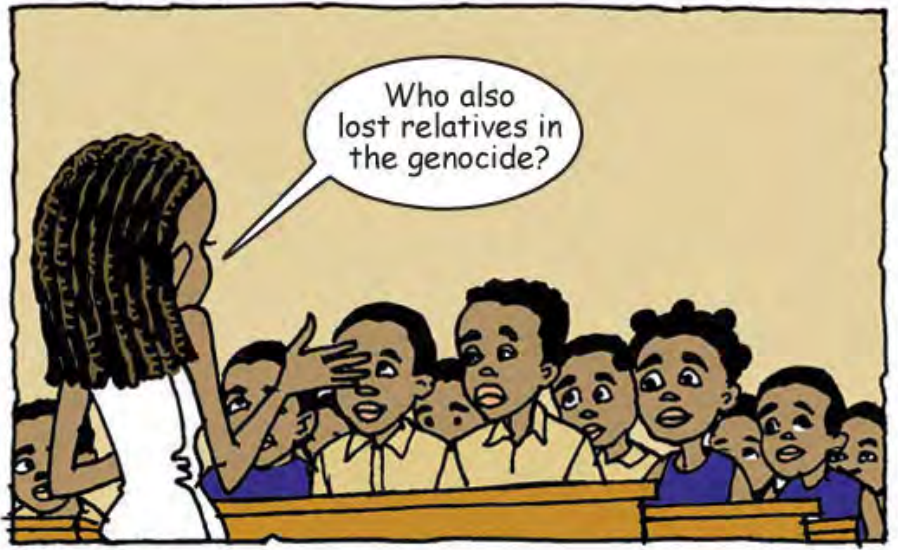


TUGIRE'S STORY: REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS

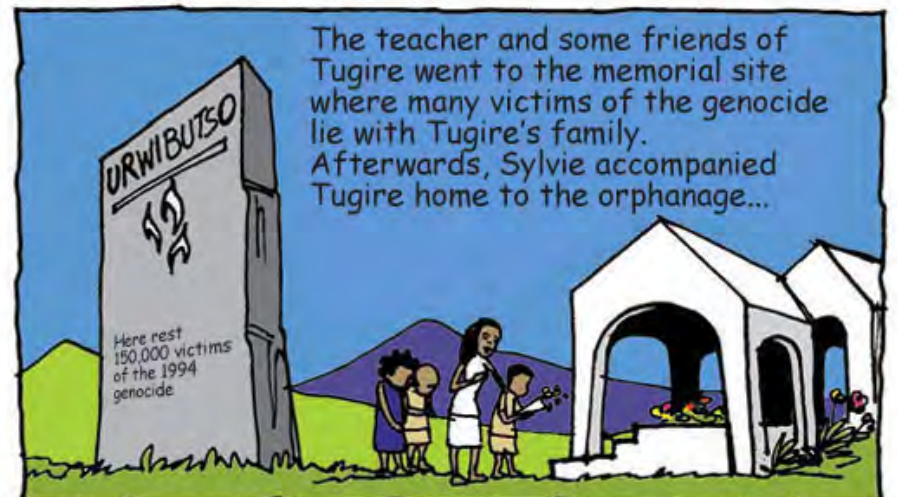
The genocide in Rwanda lasted 3 months from April to July 1994. Today, people in Rwanda remember and commemorate the victims during this period...



All our prayers are with your family. This day should not be an occasion to feel down! It is an occasion to reflect, to be strong and to struggle against injustice.



Let us observe one minute of silence for our dearly, unjustly departed



The teacher and some friends of Tugire went to the memorial site where many victims of the genocide lie with Tugire's family. Afterwards, Sylvie accompanied Tugire home to the orphanage...

LESSON FOUR: POSITIVE FORCES UNITED



Suddenly the teacher stopped the music...



The kids were very disappointed. Their fun was interrupted...



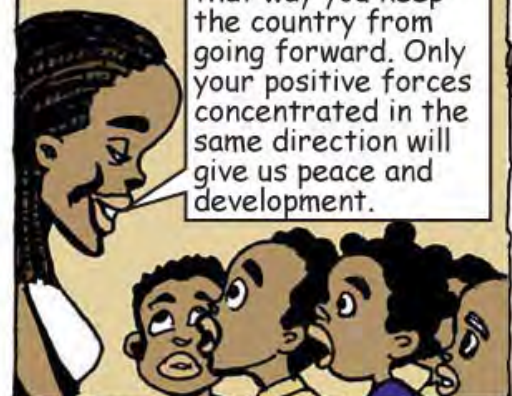
Due to the reversed battery, the radio does not work...



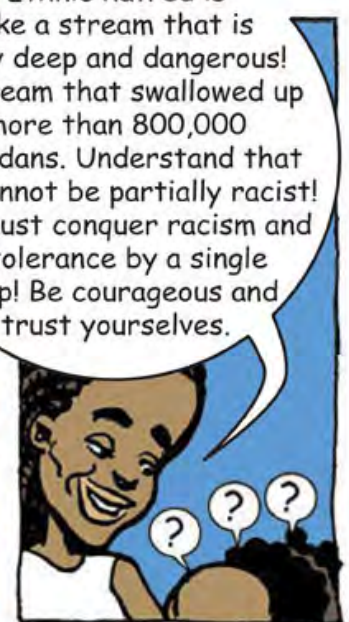
You are the batteries of our country. Like a battery, you also have positive and negative forces. When you discriminate against other people you are like a reversed battery. In



that way you keep the country from going forward. Only your positive forces concentrated in the same direction will give us peace and development.

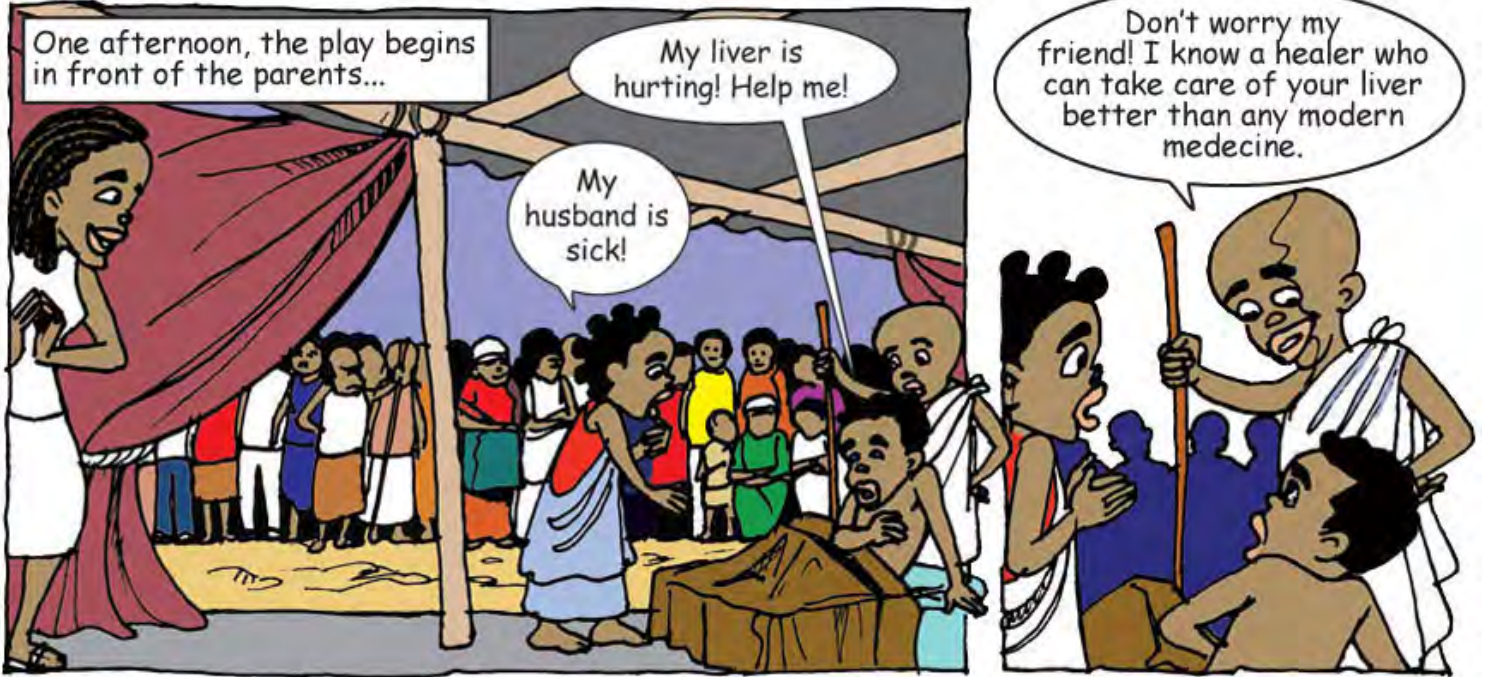


LESSON FIVE: OVERCOMING ETHNIC INTOLERANCE



COMBATTING GENOCIDE IDEOLOGY





One afternoon, the play begins in front of the parents...

My liver is hurting! Help me!

My husband is sick!

Don't worry my friend! I know a healer who can take care of your liver better than any modern medicine.



The traditional medicine arrived...

Thank you my friend.

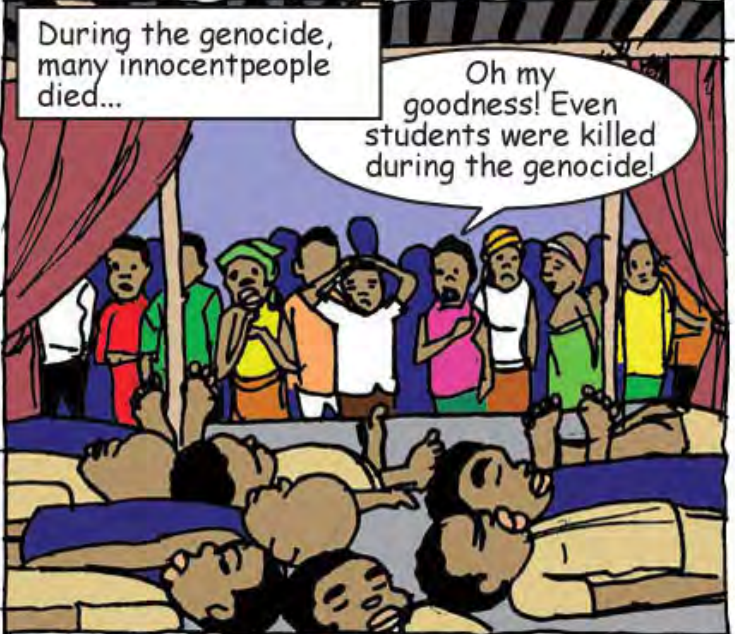
The sick man felt very relieved...

I have recovered

Later, the genocide started and the man participated...

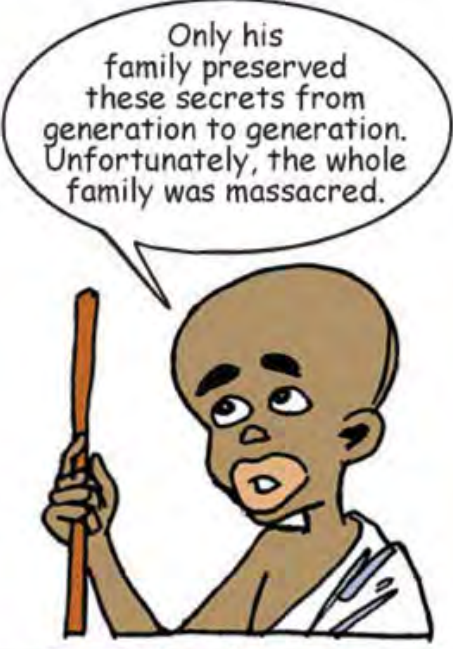
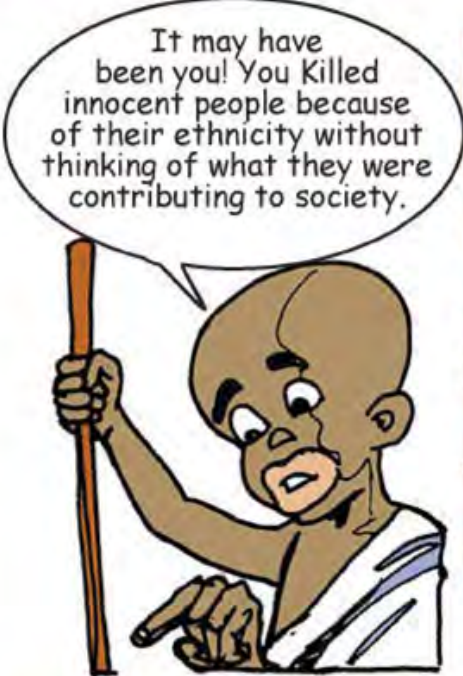
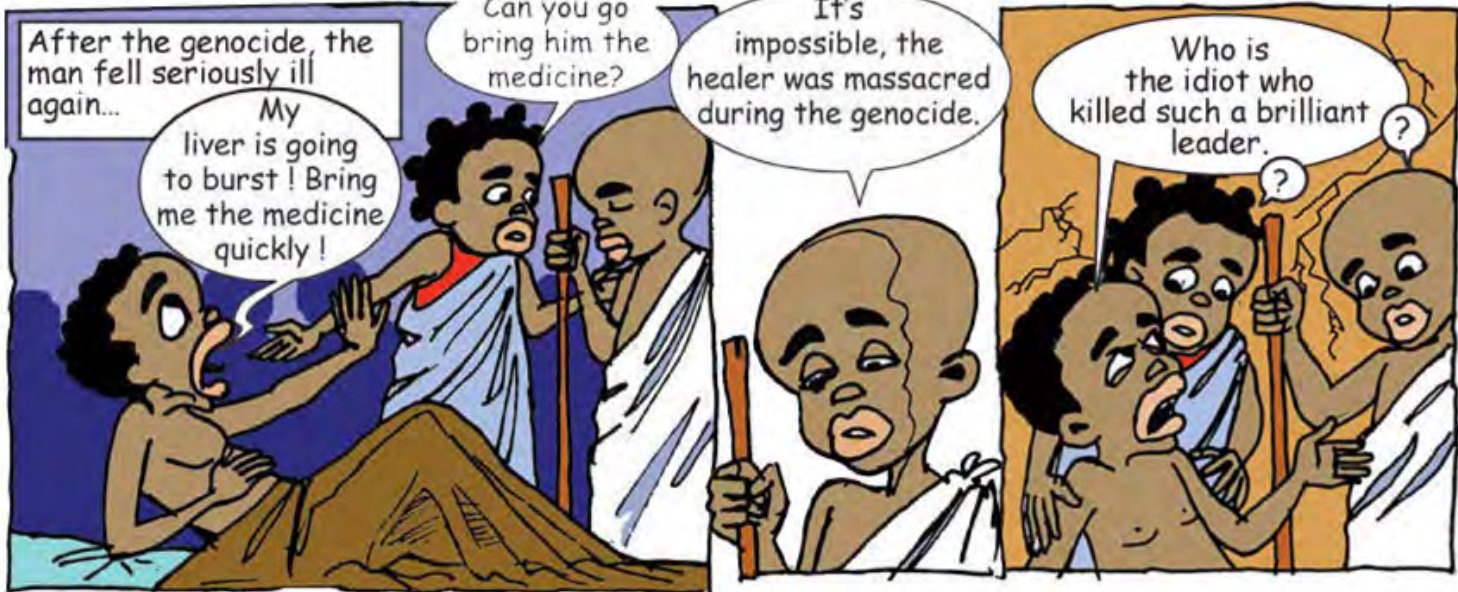


He killed and drank a lot during the genocide...



During the genocide, many innocent people died...

Oh my goodness! Even students were killed during the genocide!



IMAGES OF HOPE





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www.un.org/preventgenocide/rwanda