

▪ THE ADVENTURES OF DJIBRIL ▪

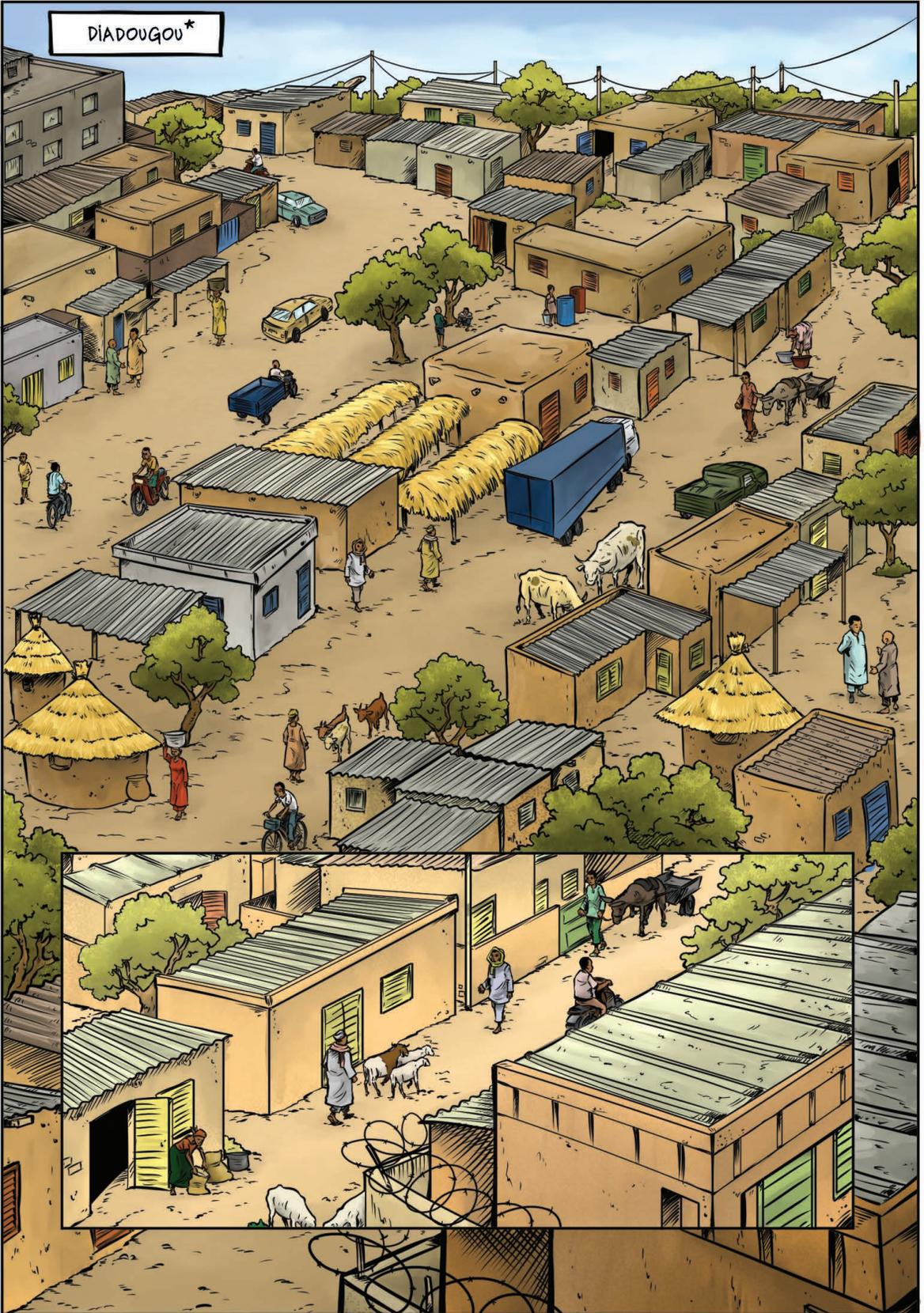
A JOURNEY TO A SAFE SCHOOL



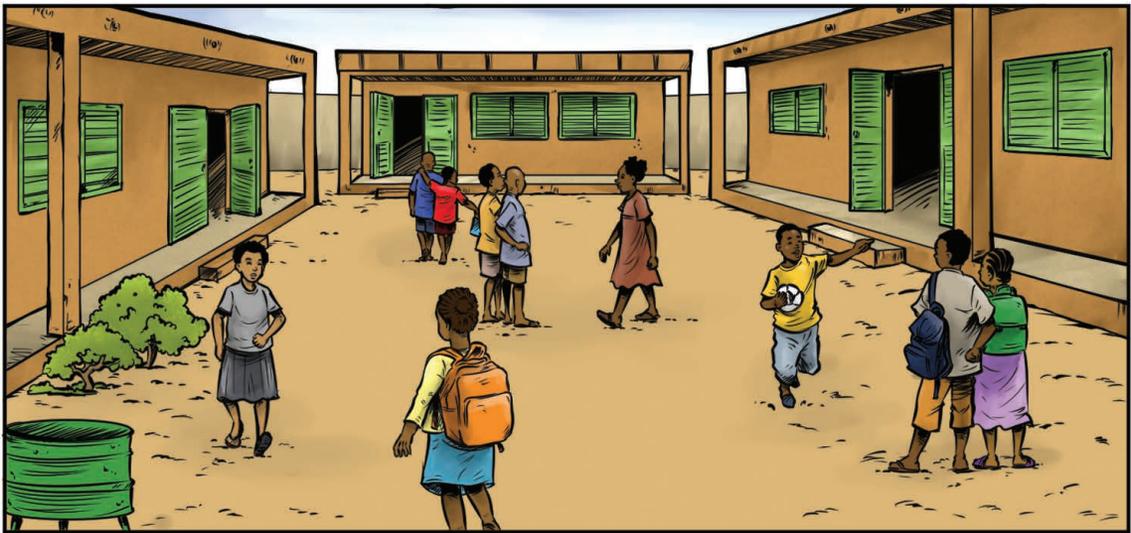
This publication was developed by Art to Face Consulting, by Joël Alessandra (France), Albane Buriel (France) and Christian Bassole (Burkina Faso), as part of the project on humanitarian engagement for the protection of children and education, with the financial support from Luxembourg and technical support from Geneva Call.

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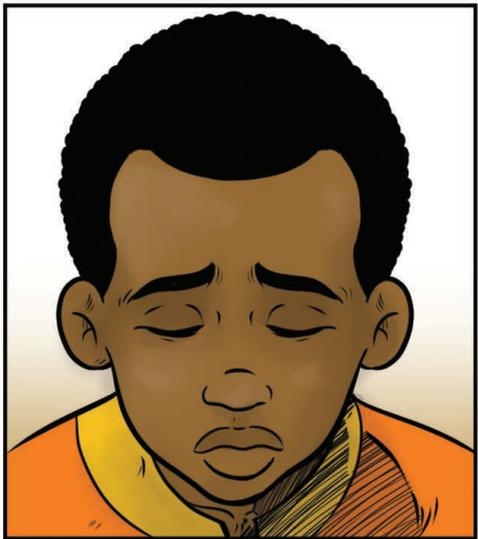
DIADOUGOU*



* DIADOUGOU: FICTIONAL CITY









* SANABOU; FICTIONAL CITY



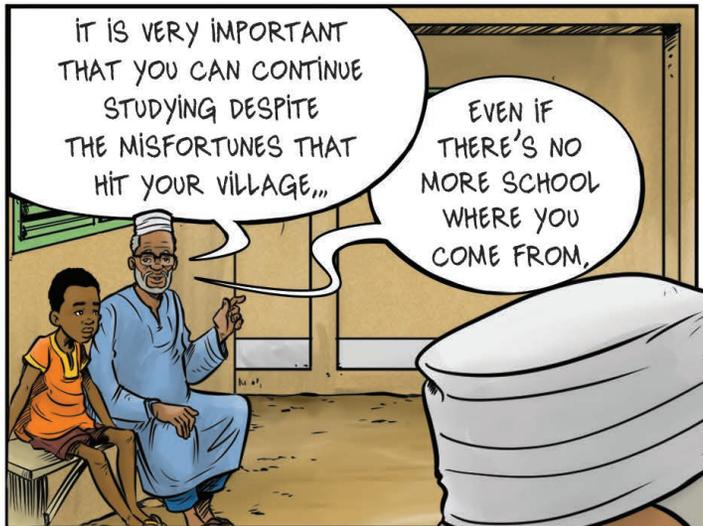
THE NEXT DAY.



WE ARE GLAD TO WELCOME YOU HERE,,,

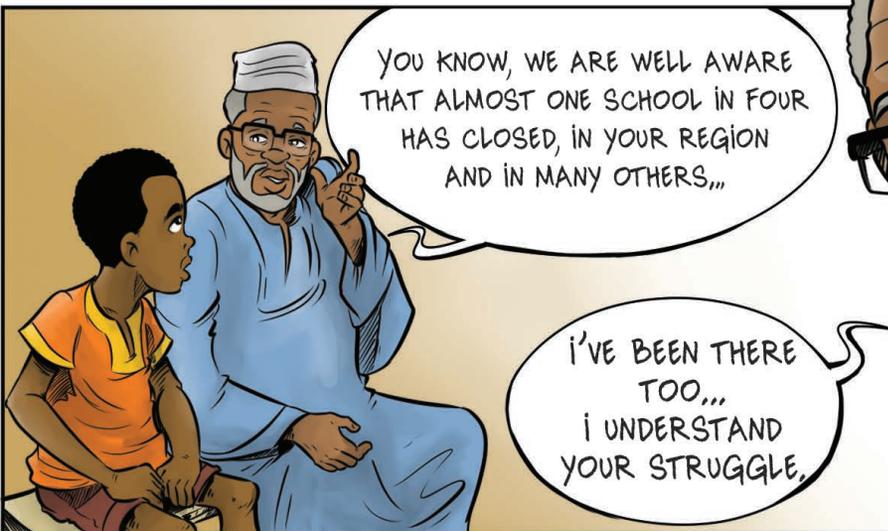


IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU CAN CONTINUE STUDYING DESPITE THE MISFORTUNES THAT HIT YOUR VILLAGE,,,



EVEN IF THERE'S NO MORE SCHOOL WHERE YOU COME FROM.

YOU KNOW, WE ARE WELL AWARE THAT ALMOST ONE SCHOOL IN FOUR HAS CLOSED, IN YOUR REGION AND IN MANY OTHERS,,,



I'VE BEEN THERE TOO,,,
I UNDERSTAND YOUR STRUGGLE.



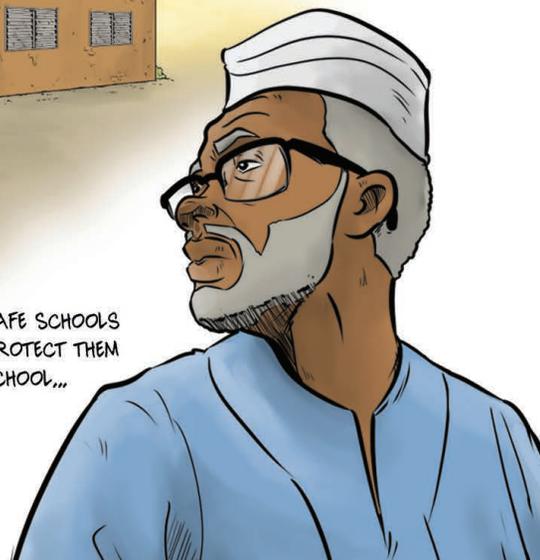
I WAS A TEACHER IN A SMALL VILLAGE NEAR KOUDOUGA*, ONE DAY THEY ARRIVED, FIRST, THEY DISRUPTED LESSONS, CAUSING A BIT OF A MESS,,, IT BECAME IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO CONTINUE GIVING LESSONS TO THE CHILDREN, I WAS IN CHARGE OF MY CLASS, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO REACT OR WHAT TO DO! THEN, LITTLE BY LITTLE, THEY THREATENED US AND TOLD US THAT THE CURRICULUM WASN'T IN LINE WITH THEIR IDEAS, IN THE BEGINNING, THEY REGULARLY WENT INTO THE CLASSROOMS AND SHOUTED AT US, SOMETHING THEY WEREN'T ALLOWED TO DO!



THEY WERE SPREADING RUMOURS ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND ABOUT US TEACHERS, THE PARENTS STARTED TO GET SUSPICIOUS, THEN CAME THE INTIMIDATION, WHICH BECAME MORE AND MORE INTENSE, WITH EVEN DEATH THREATS! AND THEN THE HARASSMENT ESCALATED INTO VIOLENCE, I SAW ONE OF MY COLLEAGUES MURDERED,,, IT WAS HORRIBLE, YOU KNOW, THEY MUST NOT CONFUSE SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES WITH TARGETS! THEY SHOULD NOT USE THEM AS MILITARY STORAGE EITHER! THIS CANNOT BE PART OF MILITARY TACTICS! IT IS PROHIBITED! WE HAD TO TRY NOT TO GIVE IN,,, SO WE, THE TEACHERS, WITH THE HELP OF THE PARENTS, REACTED, BECAUSE EVEN ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL, THE CHILDREN WERE BEING THREATENED!



SO TOGETHER WITH LOCAL ORGANISATIONS, AN ASSOCIATION AND A COMMITTEE ON SAFE SCHOOLS FROM THE CAPITAL CITY, WE SET UP COMMUNITY GROUPS TO ACCOMPANY CHILDREN AND PROTECT THEM ON THEIR WAY TO AND FROM SCHOOL, BUT ONE DAY, THEY ENDED UP CLOSING THE SCHOOL,,,



* KOUDOUGA: FICTIONAL TOWN

WE ALL HAD TO FLEE OUR VILLAGES TO PROTECT OURSELVES, THIS IS THE REASON WHY I BECAME A SCHOOL PRINCIPAL; I WANTED TO GET EVEN MORE INVOLVED AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED



ONCE AGAIN DJIBRI, YOU ARE NOT ALONE, YOU MAY NOT REALISE IT, BUT MANY OF US WERE FORCED TO FLEE INSECURITY, THE CLOSURE OF OUR SCHOOLS AND TO AVOID OUR CHILDREN BEING RECRUITED,



WE'VE ALL BEEN
LOOKING FOR
PLACES TO BE
ABLE TO KEEP
GOING TO
CLASS!



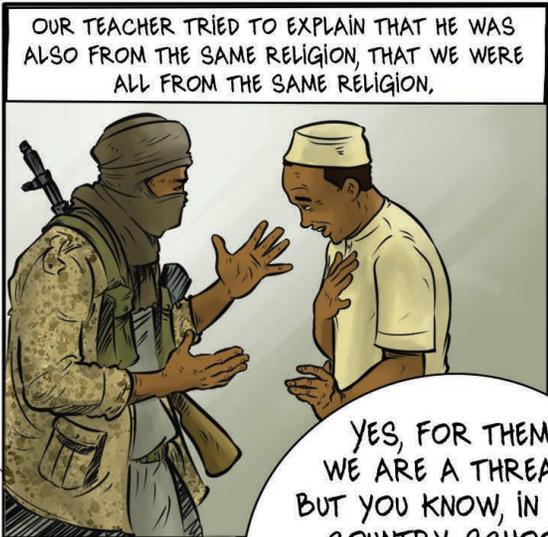
THEY ALSO TOLD US THAT THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM WENT AGAINST RELIGIOUS RULES...



YES, YES, I REALISE, IT MAKES ME REALLY SAD, WE LEFT EVERYTHING BEHIND.



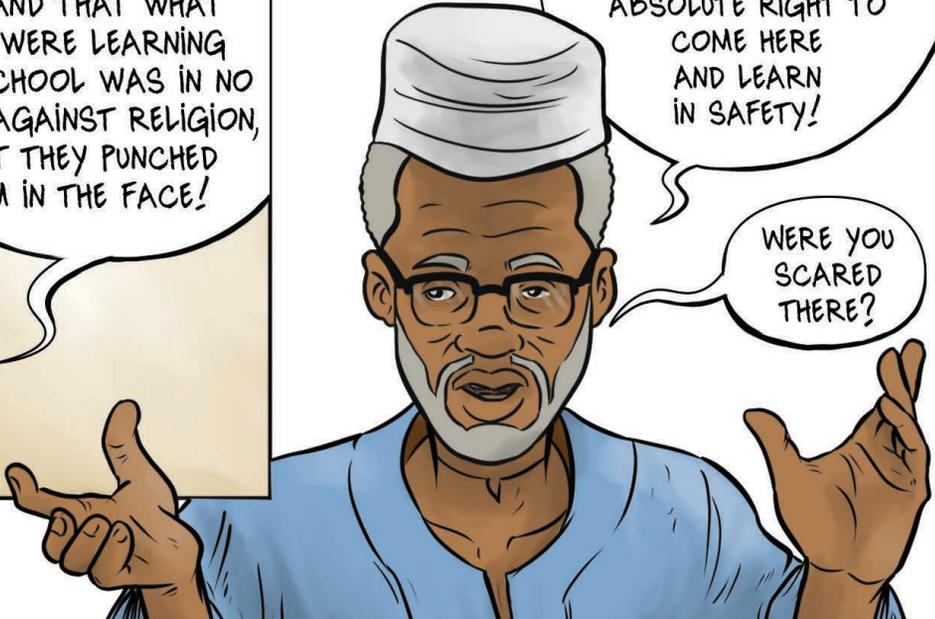
OUR TEACHER TRIED TO EXPLAIN THAT HE WAS ALSO FROM THE SAME RELIGION, THAT WE WERE ALL FROM THE SAME RELIGION.



YES, FOR THEM WE ARE A THREAT, BUT YOU KNOW, IN OUR COUNTRY, SCHOOL IS SACRED! IT'S YOUR ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO COME HERE AND LEARN IN SAFETY!



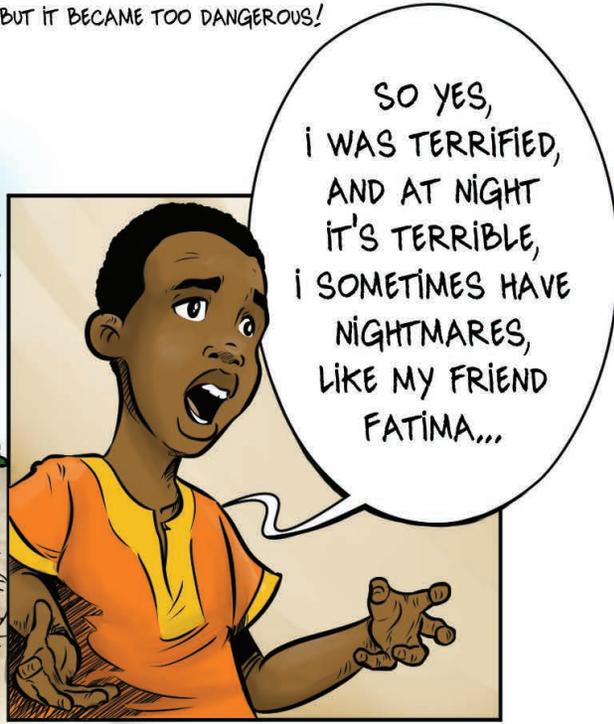
... AND THAT WHAT WE WERE LEARNING AT SCHOOL WAS IN NO WAY AGAINST RELIGION, BUT THEY PUNCHED HIM IN THE FACE!



WERE YOU SCARED THERE?



THERE WERE MEN WITH GUNS WHO TOOK MY CLASSMATES KADIJA AND OMAR AWAY BY FORCE, I THINK KADIJA COOKS FOR THEM, BUT I HEARD TERRIBLE THINGS... I SAW OMAR AFTERWARDS, HE WAS CARRYING A WEAPON AND WAS ACTING PROUD, HE PRETENDED NOT TO RECOGNISE ME... THEN THE SCHOOL WAS OCCUPIED FOR SEVERAL WEEKS BY THESE PEOPLE, THEY WERE TRAINING IN THE PLAYGROUND, AFTER THAT, THEY ORDERED THE CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL FOR GOOD, JUST LIKE YOUR SCHOOL, MR DIRECTOR, HOWEVER, THE TEACHER TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT THE SCHOOL WAS NOT A THREAT, BUT IT BECAME TOO DANGEROUS!



SCHOOL IS VERY IMPORTANT YOU KNOW,
AND CHILDREN ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT VALUE
OF A SOCIETY AND YOU SHOULD BE PROTECTED,
I UNDERSTAND THAT IN TIMES OF CRISIS, FAMILIES
HAVE THEIR PRIORITIES...



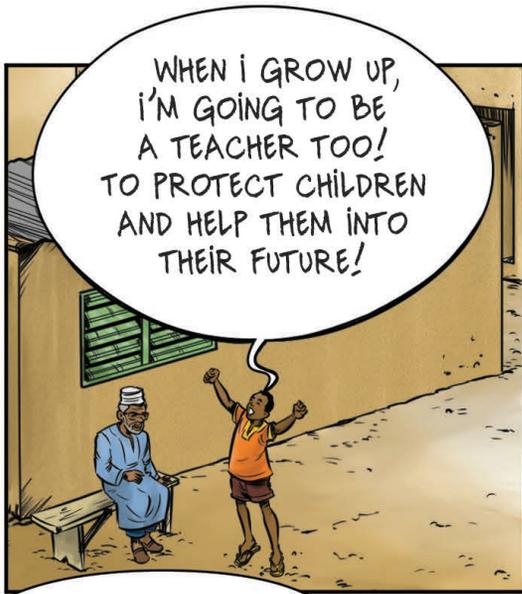
BUT
GOING TO
SCHOOL
GUARANTEES
A BETTER FUTURE,
KNOWLEDGE
AND A JOB
FOR YOU...

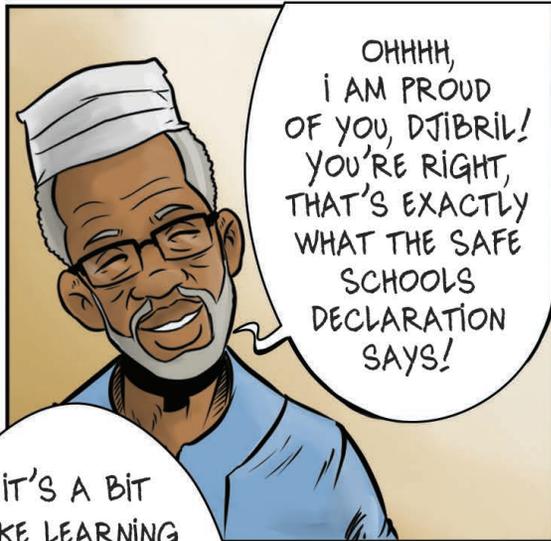


... FOR YOU OF
COURSE, BUT ALSO
FOR YOUR FAMILY,
YOU ARE YOUR OWN
FUTURE AND THAT
OF THE COUNTRY!

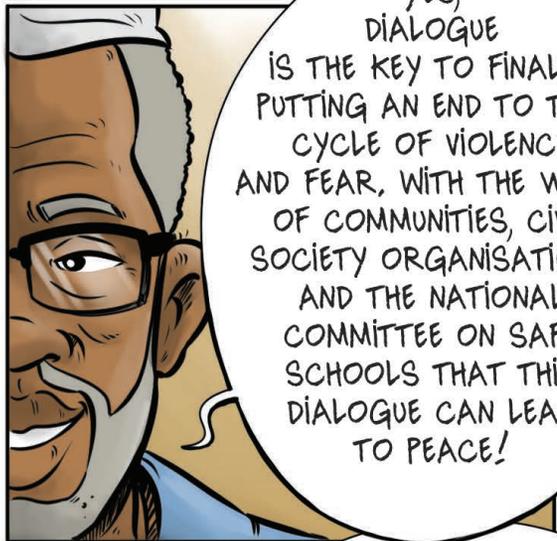


YES!
WELL, YOU'RE RIGHT,
MR DIRECTOR!





OHHHH, I AM PROUD OF YOU, DJIBRIL! YOU'RE RIGHT, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THE SAFE SCHOOLS DECLARATION SAYS!

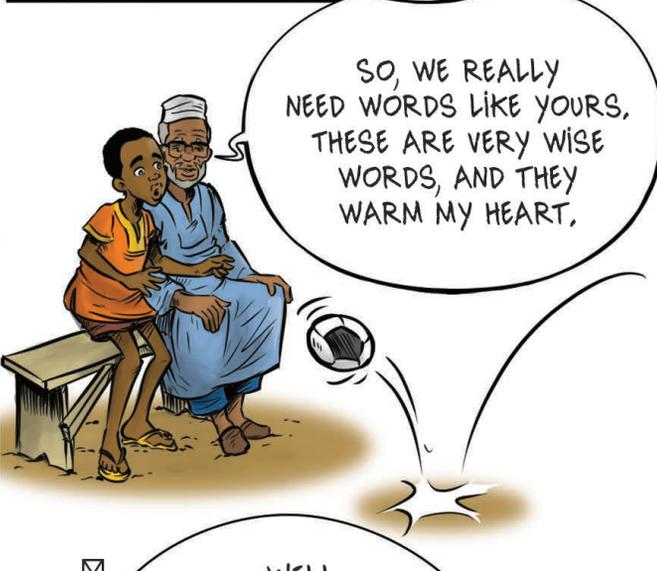


YES, DIALOGUE IS THE KEY TO FINALLY PUTTING AN END TO THIS CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND FEAR, WITH THE WORK OF COMMUNITIES, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON SAFE SCHOOLS THAT THIS DIALOGUE CAN LEAD TO PEACE!

IT'S A BIT LIKE LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER AND NOT LETTING CONFLICT DIVIDE COMMUNITIES! IT'S THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT EDUCATION,



THAT WAY, WE CAN IMPROVE THE SITUATION PEACEFULLY!



SO, WE REALLY NEED WORDS LIKE YOURS. THESE ARE VERY WISE WORDS, AND THEY WARM MY HEART,



WELL, DON'T BE SHY, DJIBRIL, THESE CHILDREN ARE LIKE YOU, THEY COME FROM DIFFERENT REGIONS TOO

THEY'VE BEEN THROUGH THE SAME THINGS, YOU ARE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE !



JAM,
WAALIL ! ¹

NEI
WAONGO ! ⁶

NEI
BEOGO ! ³

A
DANSE ²

IN'DEKAN
ISSALAN ⁴

ASSALAM
ALEYKOUM ⁵

nbp : 1 : «Jam, waalil!» («Hello» in peul) - 2 : «A danse» («Welcome» in bambara) - 3 : «Nei beogo» («Hello» in moore)
4 : «In' dekan issalan» («how are you?» in touareg) - 5 : «Assalam Aleykoum» («Hi» in arabic) - 6 : «Nei Waongo» («How are you doing?» In moore)



Today, despite the insecurity in the East, North and Northwest regions of Burkina Faso many actors are taking action to protect children and education, particularly through the direct involvement of various stakeholders.

Despite the large number of schools closed in these regions, many schools have been able to equip themselves with approaches and tools to protect education.

WHY ARE STUDENTS, TEACHERS, SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES BEING ATTACKED?

students, teachers, schools and universities have been attacked by non-state armed groups and government armed forces for various purposes, including:

- ➔ to destroy symbols of government control, or demonstrate control over an area by an anti-government group;
- ➔ to block the education of girls, or any type of education perceived to teach or impose alien religious or cultural values, biased history, or an unfamiliar language of instruction;
- ➔ to restrict teachers' trade union activity and academic freedom;
- ➔ to abduct children for use as combatants, sex slaves or logistical support in military operations, or abduct students and teachers for ransom;
- ➔ because the school or university was being used for military purposes by opposition forces; and because of indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks.
- ➔ Due to indiscriminate and/or disproportionate attacks



KEY PROVISIONS PROTECTING SCHOOLS

Schools and universities are protected under international humanitarian law against attacks as civilian objects. The protection provided to schools and universities must be read in conjunction with other relevant rules, in particular the special protection provided to children in situations of armed conflict.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

International Humanitarian Law requires parties to a conflict to take precautions to protect civilians and civilian objects under their control against the effects of attack. To the extent feasible, parties to the conflict shall avoid locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas and endeavor to remove civilians and civilian objects under their control from the vicinity of military objectives. Precautionary measures to protect civilian objects against the dangers of attack play an important role to protect schools and universities. For example, locating a military objective such as a military base near a school or university increases the risk that a school or university may suffer incidental harm from an attack against the military objective.

PROTECTION AS CIVILIAN OBJECTS

Schools and universities are normally civilian objects: International Humanitarian Law protects civilian objects against attack. Pursuant to the principle of distinction, 'the parties to the conflict must at all times distinguish between civilian objects and military objectives' and 'attacks must not be directed against civilian objects'. Schools and universities lose their protection if they are used to make an effective contribution to military action and thus become a military objective. However, the presumption is that schools and universities are not used to make an effective contribution to military action in case of doubt and thus retain their protection as civilian objects.

SPECIAL PROTECTION AS CULTURAL PROPERTY

Buildings dedicated to education are included in the scope of cultural property. Each party to a conflict must respect and protect buildings dedicated to education, which implies two obligations for parties to a conflict: First, all parties to a conflict have a duty of special care to avoid damage to buildings dedicated to education. Second, all seizure of, destruction or willful damage to institutions dedicated to education is prohibited.

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WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO TO PROTECT EDUCATION FROM ATTACK AND MILITARY USE

Actors involved in protecting education at local and community level:

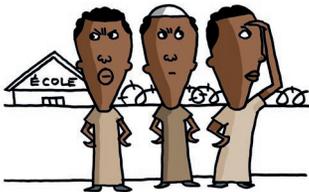
- School directors
- Teachers
- School management committees
- Parents
- Students
- Community and religious leaders
- Community organisations and local civil society

”



➔ 6 MEASURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON EXPERIENCE IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS:

1 UNARMED PHYSICAL PROTECTION MEASURES



The use of escorts and unarmed guards to secure schools is preferred. Buildings and equipment are reinforced to make them more solid and secure. Protection committees and the protective presence of community members can be implemented. Specific measures against gender-based violence, such as accompaniment on the way to and from school, are also deployed to protect students and educational staff from the risks associated with armed conflict.

2 NEGOTIATIONS AS A STRATEGY TO PROTECT EDUCATION



In some places, school directors and local leaders have negotiated with non-state armed groups and the government to prevent schools from being attacked or used for military or political purposes. These negotiations often involve the intervention of a neutral person accepted by all parties, and can take the form of direct discussions or through a mediator.



3 EARLY WARNING / ALERT SYSTEMS



Schools may work with ministries, the UN or non-governmental organisations to set up early warning systems. These systems enable rapid communication about potential threats or attacks against schools. In case of an alert, education staff and parents temporarily close schools, move students to safe areas or offer alternatives to school. Mobile phones, particularly SMS, are used for communication and to activate emergency services.

4 ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION



To prevent attacks, schools have taken various measures in collaboration with the community, NGOs and ministries. Modification in time, locations and teaching methods, such as distance learning, have been put in place in the event of damage to or occupation of school sites. These adaptations ensure continuity of access to education, offering a safe place and psychosocial support.

5 PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT



At school, psychosocial support includes initiatives, such as temporary educational activities in learning environments adapted to meet children's needs, creating a safe and stimulating environment. Teacher training incorporates psychosocial approaches to strengthen their emotional skills. Adapted resources are made available to children. Services are also available for victims of gender-based violence.

6 COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL-BASED SAFETY AND SECURITY PLANS



In several countries, schools have set up safety and security plans, often with the support of ministries, the UN or non-governmental organisations. These plans require strong leadership from head teachers and protection committees, actively involving the community and parents. They include a range of protection, mitigation and response measures that can be integrated into a comprehensive approach to school safety and security planning.



PROTECTING MY SCHOOL

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Are you a social worker, or teacher who works with children? We suggest that you carry out activities on the theme of education and child protection. Just as Djibril does in this story, encourage them to express their ideas, emotions and dreams by giving them a voice through creative activities such as the «Our dreams for our schools» artistic mural. We hope this fact sheet will help children read and understand the key messages of the comic strip.



DID THE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND THE COMIC BOOK?

Discovering and understanding questions can be used as a prelude to the following activity. To explore these questions, you can first set aside some quiet time where children are invited to read the comic book. If children are not able to read it independently, you can bring them together and sit them in a circle in front of you, reading to them and showing them the cartoon panels of the comic book.

Before everyone presents their favourite passage, you can introduce the discussion by asking children:

- 1 • How long has it been since Djibril has been to school?
- 2 • What led the headmaster to flee his village?
- 3 • What did the armed groups do and what did they have no right to do?
- 4 • Why were community support groups set up?
- 5 • Why did the villagers have to flee?
- 6 • Who are Djibril's friends who have been recruited by armed men? What are they doing with the armed group?
- 7 • Why does the director think it's important to attend school?
- 8 • What job does Djibril want to do when he grows up and why?
- 9 • Which organisations are important to talk to?
- 10 • What does the director think is the best way to protect education?

Once this time has elapsed, children can share their impressions in small groups:

What did I like most about the comic book and why? What surprised me?

What messages are important to me?

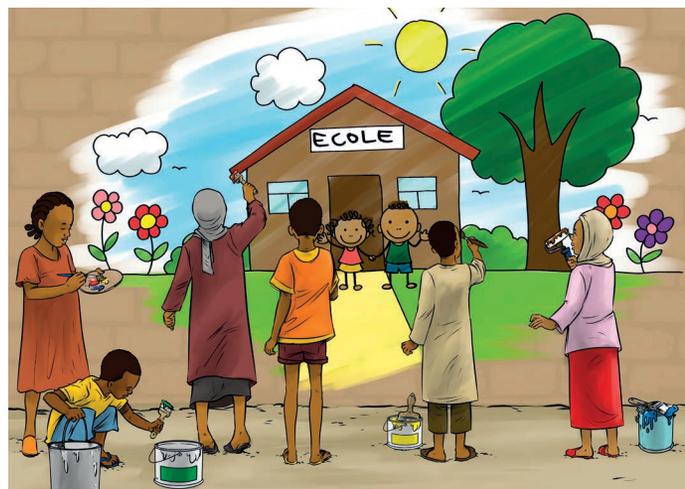
Each group can share its impressions.

What does it mean to “feel protected”?

Once the discussion is over, you can ask children what it means to them, in their village and at school, to feel protected. Don't hesitate to ask them to elaborate on their answers. If they mention respect and politeness, ask them to give concrete examples. If they mention safety ask them to specify how this can be achieved (*the fact that there is no violence, no weapons, etc.*), *not being afraid to go to school*). Ask children what the steps or conditions are to achieve this.

SET UP A WORKSHOP ON « OUR DREAMS FOR OUR SCHOOLS »

After this discussion on safety, we suggest that you create a collective fresco in which children draw together on the same material to share their vision of protection and their dreams for the future. This fresco could be displayed in the school or in a community space in the village.



What materials should be used?

It is important to use what children feel comfortable using what is available. Don't hesitate to prepare the materials and the creative space before the workshop.

- We recommend using a large sheet of stiff paper, but it can also be on a wall or on a wooden board. It's important that the children are comfortable and have enough space to draw. Remember to choose a material that can be fixed, glued or hung wherever you like.
- You can make several murals if you have a large group of children.
- If you have paints, pencils or felt-tip pens at your disposal, make sure they are suitable for the chosen surface.
- You can also use collage to incorporate children's work into the fresco. In this case, you'll need a pair of scissors and glue suitable for the surface.
- Drawing a horizon line (separating the earth from the sky) will help children to find their bearings better when drawing the village and/or the school.

How does the workshop work?

- 1 • Ask children to choose a specific element to draw. You can ask them what they have chosen to ensure that the ideas are original. You can also guide them by taking up the elements that were shared during the discussion. Before children draw on the fresco, we recommend that they make small sketches.
- 2 • Take some time with children to present the fresco to them: it represents their village or their school (depending on what you want). Everyone can now divide up the space. This involves cooperation between children.
- 3 • Once the drawings have been copied onto the mural, we recommend that you colour or paint the large areas first. Children can then colour or paint their drawings. It's important to ensure that children don't rush and take care of their work.

How do you end the workshop?

Once the fresco is finished, take some time for children to explain what they have seen and done.

Ask them how they feel about what they see and what they understand.

After the workshop, you can plan to display the mural in a public place and have children present it to their parents and the community.



▀ THE ADVENTURES OF DJIBRIL ▀

A JOURNEY TO A SAFE SCHOOL

THE SAFE SCHOOLS DECLARATION

An intergovernmental political commitment to protect students, teachers, schools and universities from the worst effects of armed conflict:

- Every boy and girl has the right to an education without fear of violence or attack.
- Every teacher, professor and school administrator should be able to teach and research in conditions of safety, security and dignity.
- Every school should be a protected space for students to learn and fulfil their potential, even during war.
- Every university should be a safe place for students and academics and to foster critical and independent thinking and to harness knowledge.



In situations of armed conflict, Geneva Call, as a neutral, impartial and independent international humanitarian organisation endeavours to strengthen the respect of humanitarian norms and principles by armed groups and de facto authorities in order to improve the protection of civilians.



GENEVA CALL

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