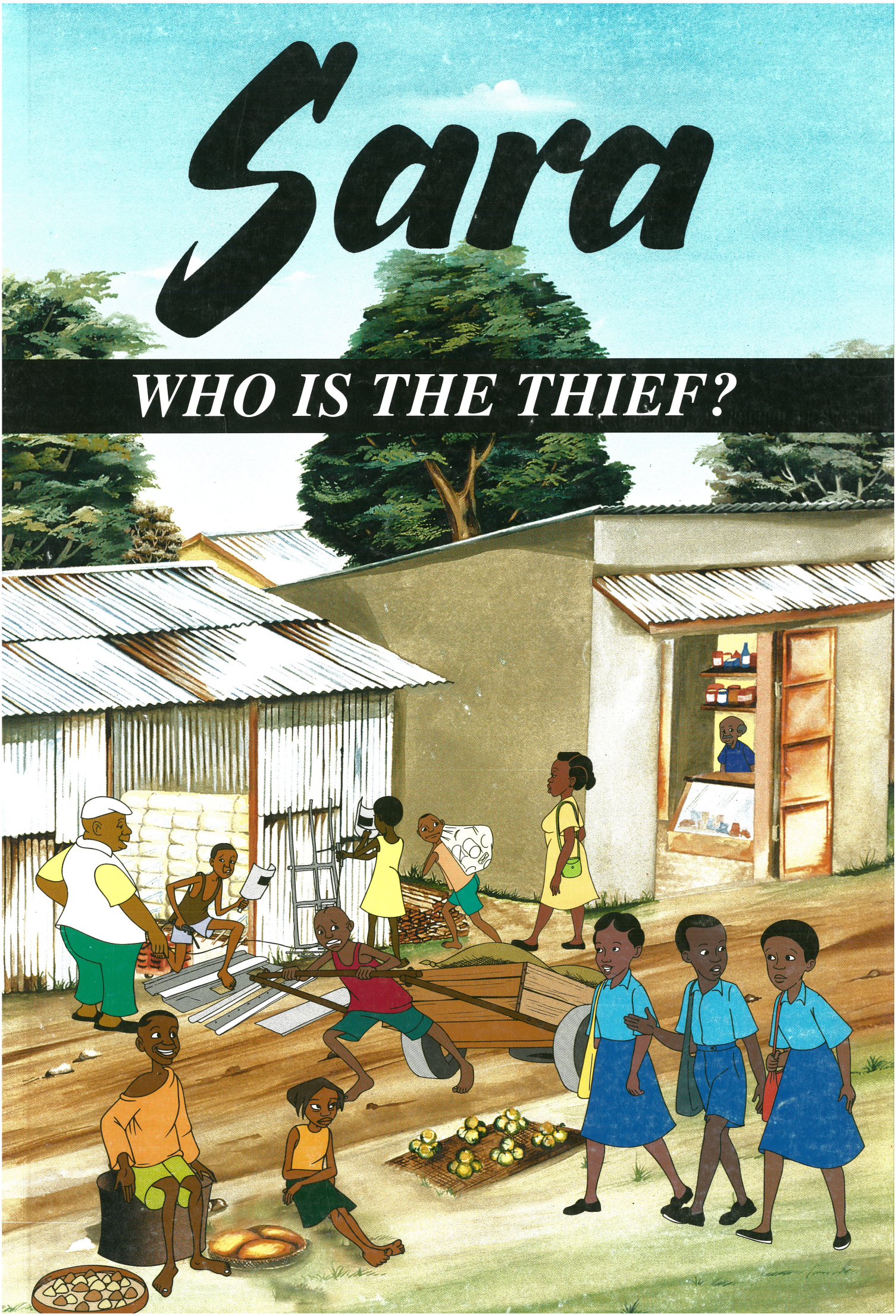
# Sara

## WHO IS THE THIEF?



# WHO IS THE THIEF?

This is the sixth of a series of comic books produced by UNICEF in Eastern and Southern Africa on the adventures of Sara, an adolescent girl. She is gradually becoming a heroine and a dynamic role model for girls' as well as boys empowerment in sub-Saharan Africa. The story is about domestic child labour and the rights of the children. The main theme unfolds how Sara is whisked off to town by a rich relative with false promises of admission in a better school, and is tricked into becoming a domestic maid instead. She is further accused of stealing money by her employers but finally, Sara with her wit, intelligence and psycho-social life skills, manages to catch the real thief and solve the mystery of the stolen money. With her parents' timely intervention, she returns to her village and to her former school.

**Who Is The Thief** contains elements of education and entertainment. It is an intense drama that focuses on the problems of children who are employed as domestic labourers in other people's households. The story addresses the issues of rights of children to education, and other child development and protection issues.

The comic book is a part of a package of communication materials, including a users' guide (see back) and a poster. An animated video of the story may be produced in the future.

**Who Is The Thief** is the product of a large team of African writers, researchers and UNICEF personnel who have worked together since 1994, evolving characters, settings and stories of the Sara series through in-depth discussions with hundreds of villagers and peri-urban dwellers in 12 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa as well as in some countries in West Africa. This story was researched in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Mozambique. Through this extensive research process, the respondents became partners in the creation of the stories.

**Who Is The Thief** has been produced by the Communication Section, UNICEF-ESARO, with financial support from the Government of Norway and UNICEF Committees in the Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States, and in collaboration with UNICEF country offices in Eastern and Southern Africa as well as Western and Central Africa.

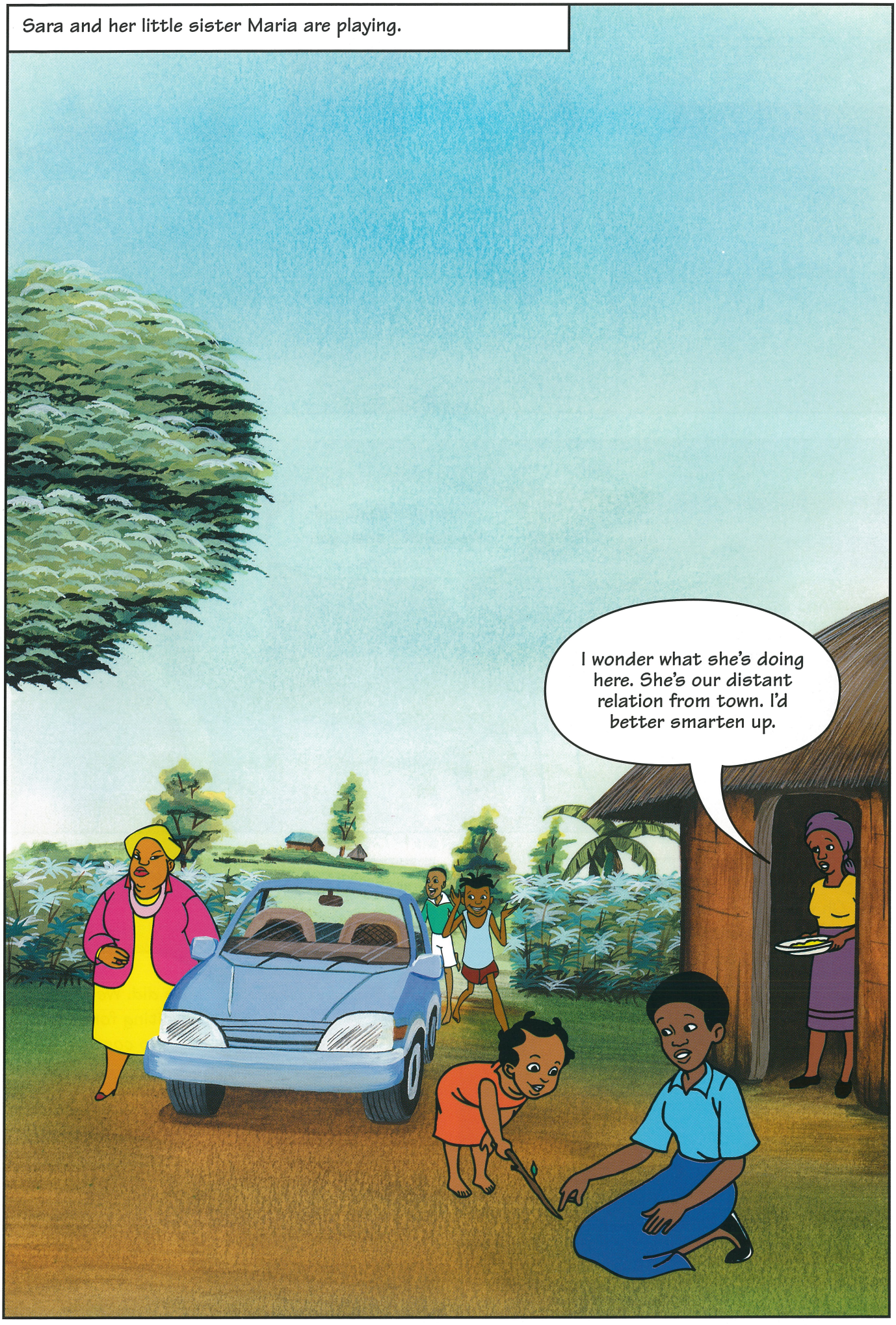
Six other packages are currently available on the themes of:
- girls staying in school;
- HIV/AIDS and avoiding sexual abuse;
- Female genital mutilation;
- Sugar daddies, or sexual exploitation of young girls by older men and HIV/AIDS;
- Teenage pregnancy;
- HIV/AIDS and living positively with HIV/AIDS.

Other communication packages on different themes are under development. These are:
- Children in armed conflict situations
- Malaria

For further information contact:
Maskew Miller Longman
PO Box 396
Cape Town 8000
South Africa
Tel: 27-21-5317750
E-mail: lorraine@mml.co.za

NOTE: No portion of this comic book may be reproduced without the written permission of UNICEF-ESARO/May, 2000.

©unicef
United Nations Children's Fund


Sara and her little sister Maria are playing.
I wonder what she's doing here. She's our distant relation from town. I'd better smarten up.

Welcome! Welcome! We haven't seen you for years.
Is everyone well in town?

Oh yes... life is just too busy. Didn't you get my letter?

We did. We were waiting for you to come.

I am afraid I can't stay. I've come about... you know.
No problem. Just leave it to me.

Oh, come in Mama Sara.

We're so pleased to hear about Sara's progress at school.
We'll take her to Mujaba Academy in town where she can really develop her talents.
That's very kind of you. But...

Mujaba Academy offers the chance of a lifetime for Sara. Who knows what she can become?

But this is so sudden. I mean... I need to consult Sara's father.

We always make important decisions together.

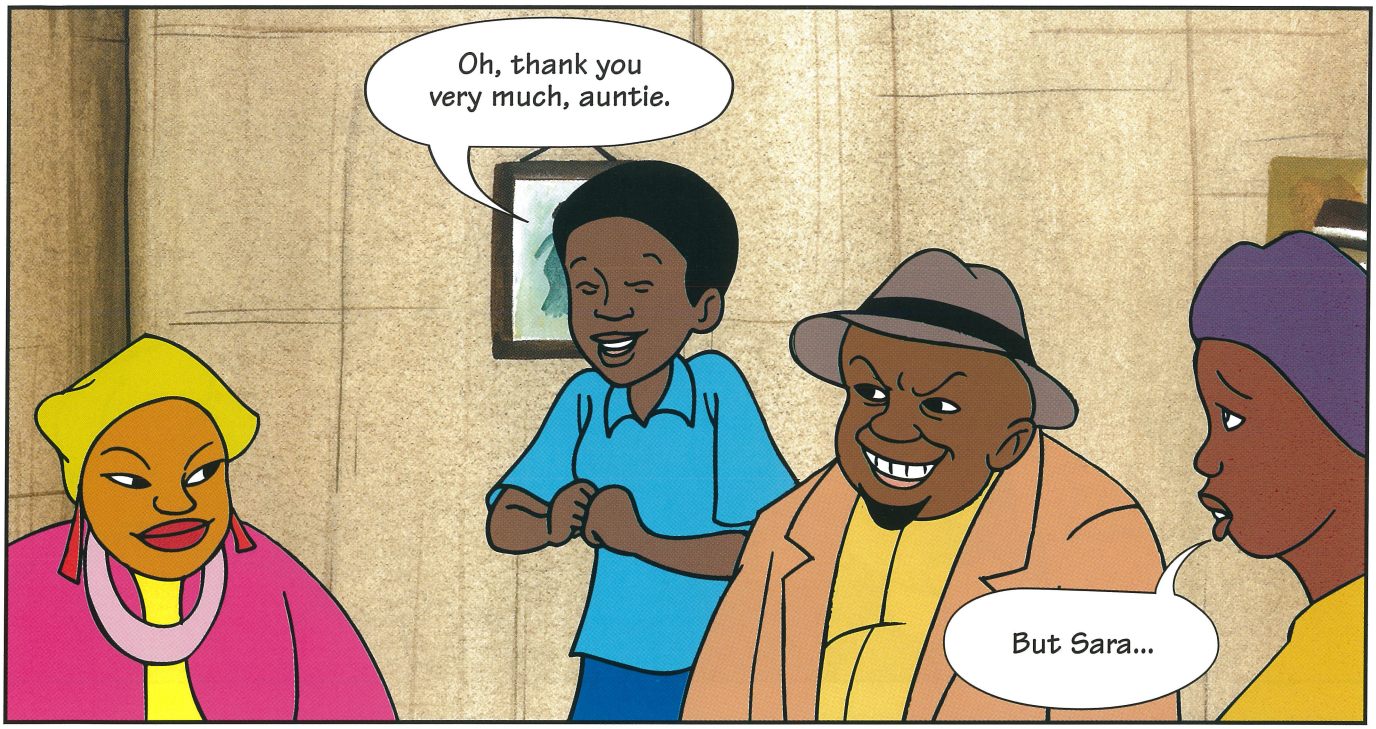
Look, why don't we ask Sara herself. She'll be the only girl in this village to get such a chance.

Uncle beckons Sara.
Sara, come here.

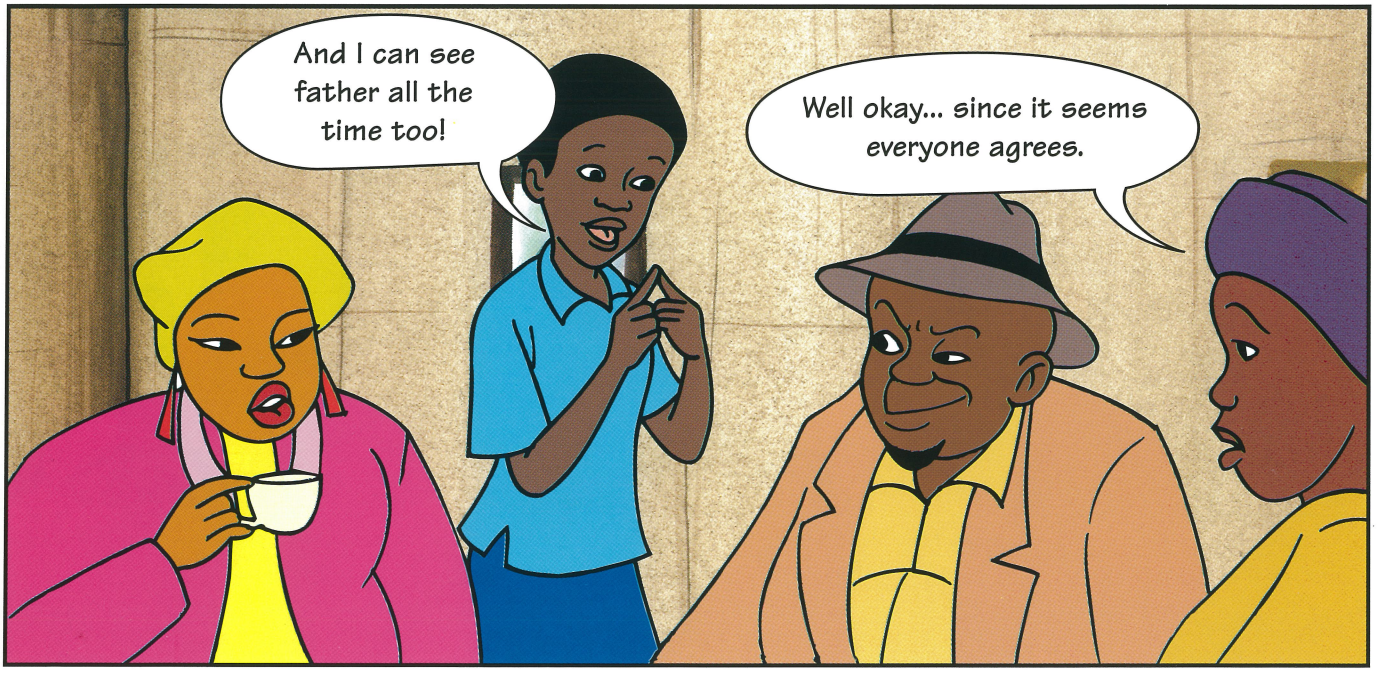
Mrs. Mdomo looks at Sara closely.
Sara, this is Mrs. Mdomo, our relative from town. She has heard about how intelligent you are.

So, she wants to give you a chance to go to school in town.

Sara is excited.
Yes, you'll live with me and I'll send you to school.


Oh, thank you very much, auntie.
But Sara...

Please, Mama, I won't let you down. This is my big chance.


And I can see father all the time too!
Well okay... since it seems everyone agrees.

Of course. She is a very lucky girl.

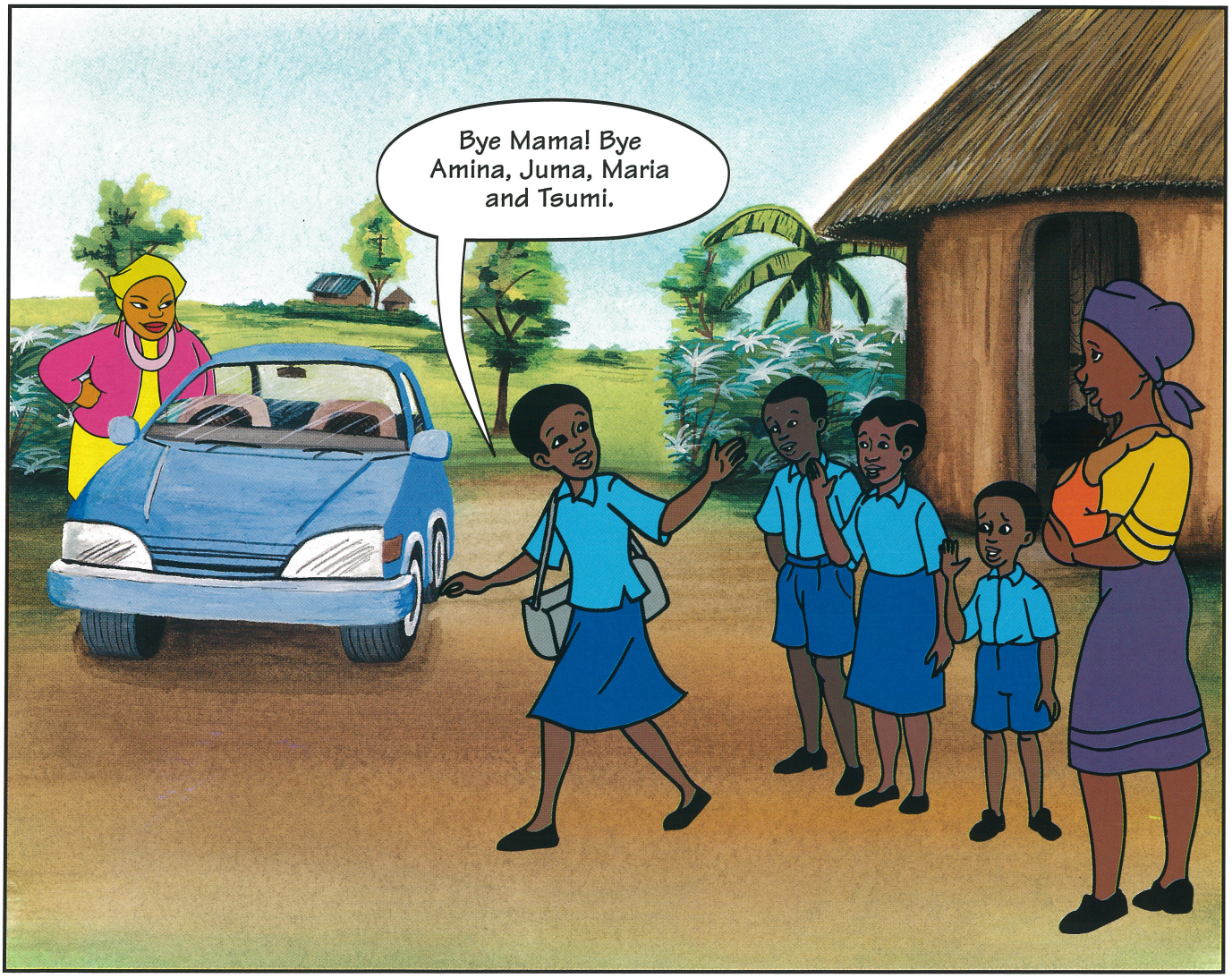
Now go and pack, Sara. We have a long drive.

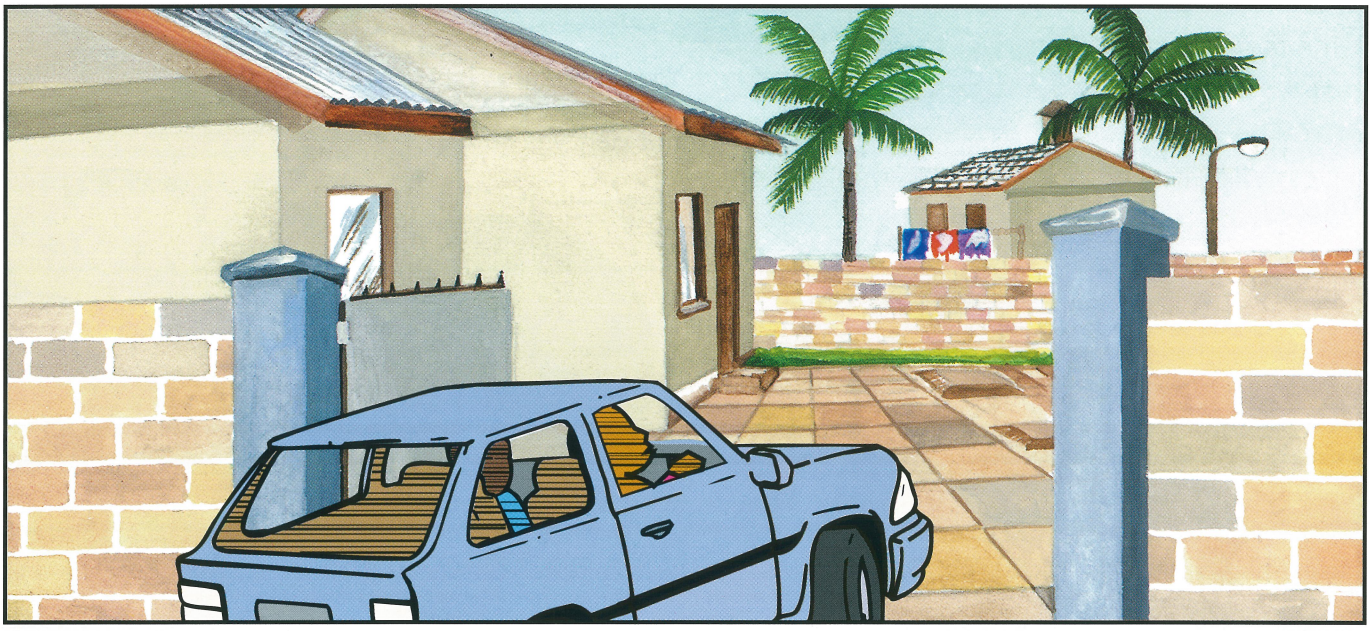
Tsumi, please call Amina and Juma. I'm going to town!

Mama, I love you but this is my big chance.
But it all seems so sudden. What am I going to do without you?

I'll miss you so much, Mama. But just wait and see. I'll study hard...
... and I'll be coming back for the holidays.
I know you are going to a good home. But you can never be sure these days.
So, keep this money. And if there is ever any trouble, just come home.
And take this letter to your father as soon as you get to town so that he knows where you are living.

You never know, I might come to town and visit you too.


Bye Mama! Bye Amina, Juma, Maria and Tsumi.



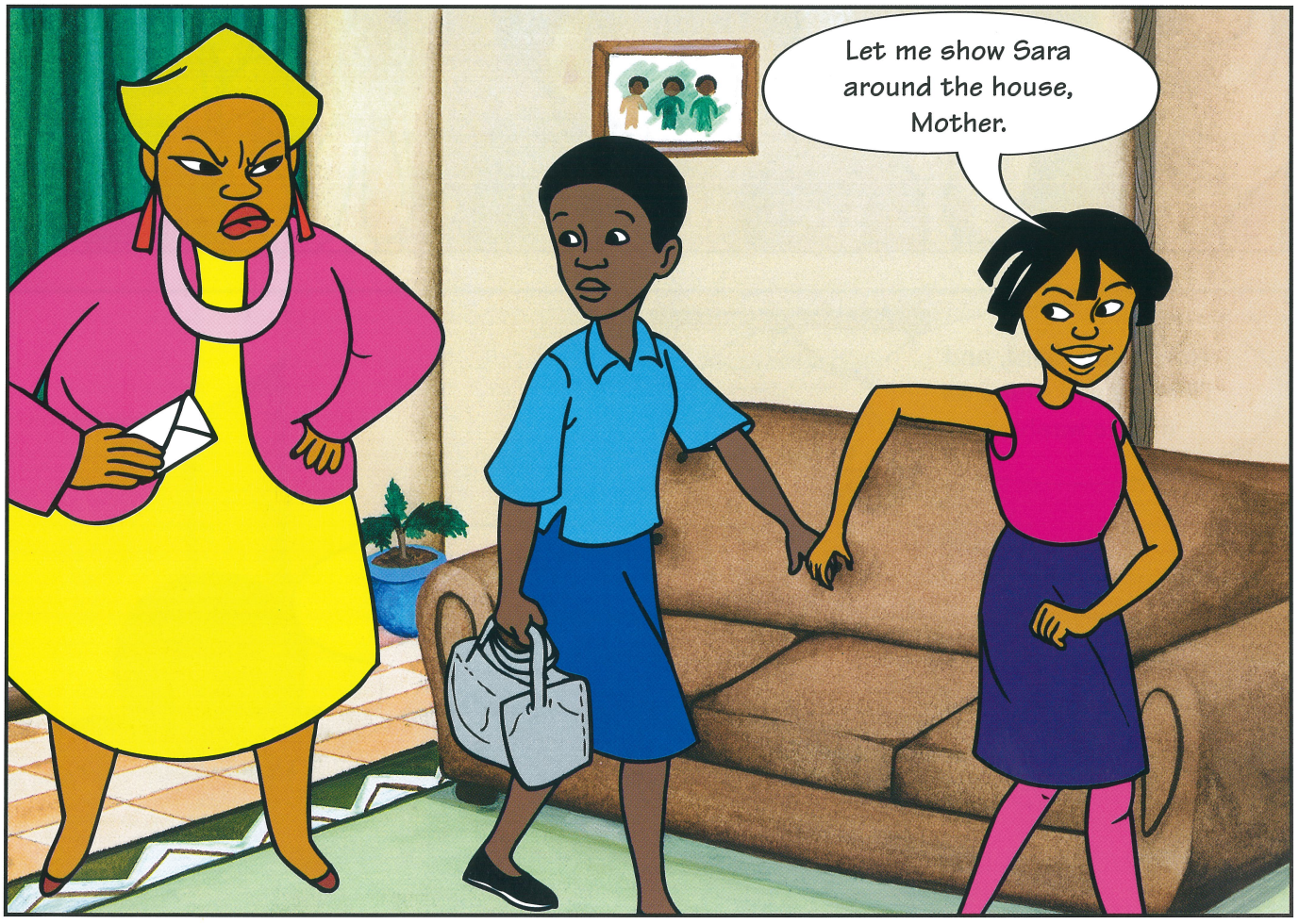
Is this the new maid, mother?
This is your cousin, Sara. She's going to stay with us and go to school.

Mr. Mdomo comes in.
It's alright. That's only father. He's come from his butcher's shop.

Take off those dirty clothes and we'll show Sara how to make them clean for the morning...

Now come, Sara, and I'll show you where we do the washing.
Tomorrow can I take this letter to my father?

Mrs. Mdomo is angry.
You think the city is like the village?
You'll get lost. Give me the letter and I'll take it to him.


Let me show Sara around the house, Mother.

At night...
Knock!
Knock!

... Mr. Mdomo returns home, drunk...
Who told you to fall asleep?

You should open the door even before I knock. Do you hear?
Yes sir.

Well, just make sure you hurry up next time. Otherwise you'll be in trouble.
Yes sir.

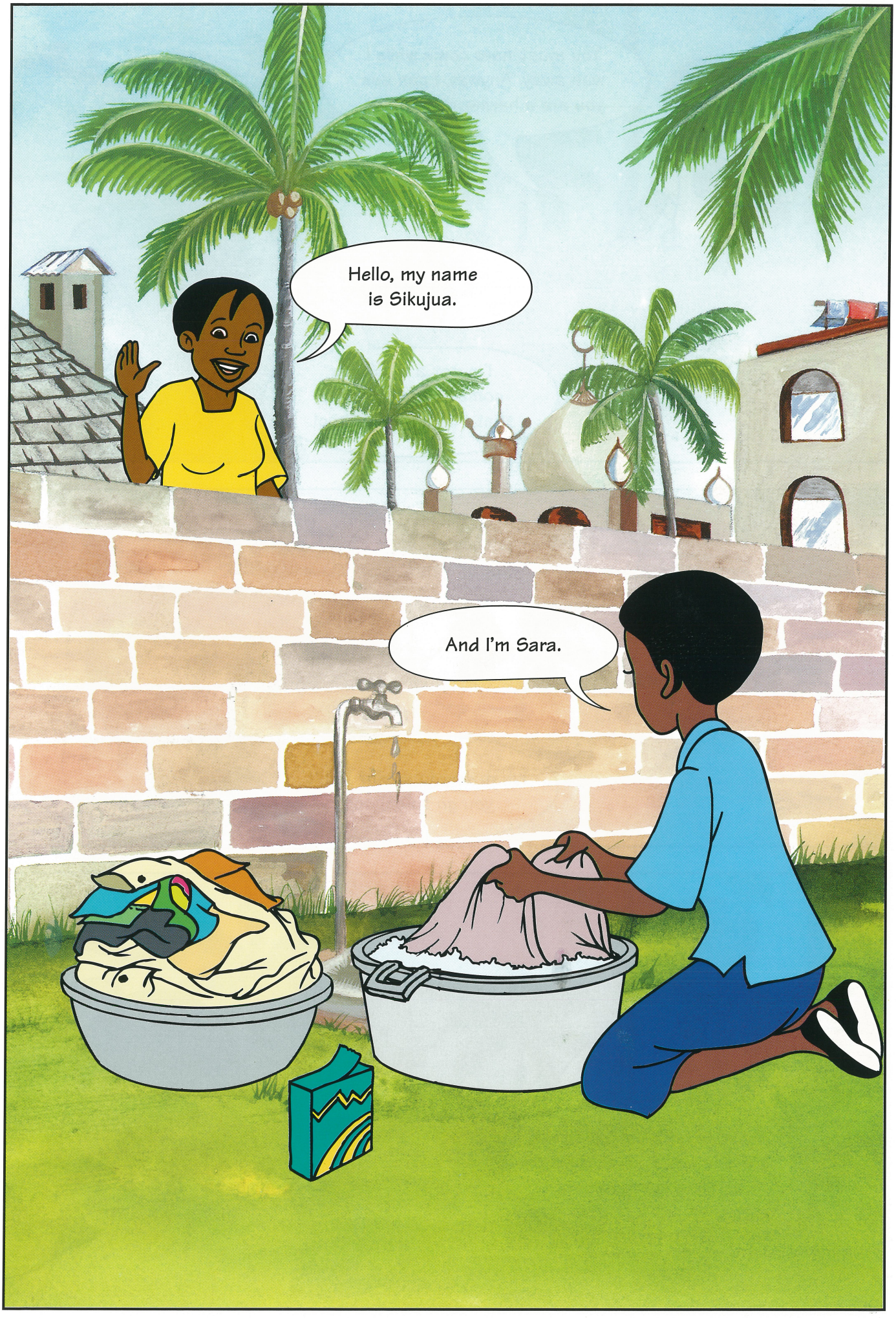
No, don't...
I'll scream...

Next morning...
It's five o'clock. How can Mr. Mdomo go to work early when you're still asleep?
Do you want me to prepare breakfast?

Of course. It'll be one of your duties.
Will I be going to school today?

No, no, not today...

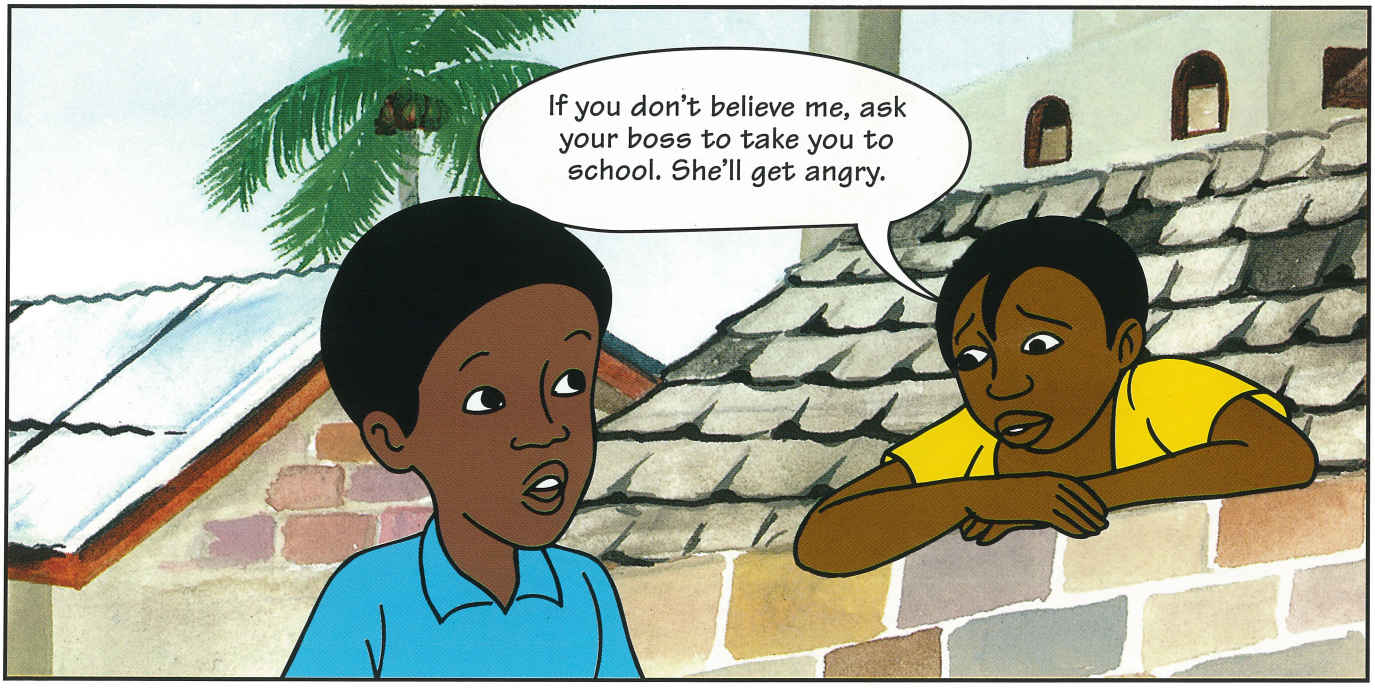
Sara sings as she works.
I'm going to school
I'm nobody's fool.
I'll study so hard.
Never stop till I drop...
I'll show to the world
I'll get to the top...
I'm going to school
I'm nobody's fool...


Hello, my name is Sikujua.
And I'm Sara.

You must have come while I was away. Anyway, I can see you are a hardworking maid.
I'm not a maid! I've come to stay here so that I can go to school.
That's what they all say when they first come.
What do you mean? Don't you go to school?
My boss isn't unkind to me, but she would never think of sending me to school.

But you're much too young to be working.

What about you?
I tell you, I am going to school.


If you don't believe me, ask your boss to take you to school. She'll get angry.

Here, wash this.

Mr. Mdomo's son sneaks in...

I'm... going to... school
I'm... no... body's... fool...

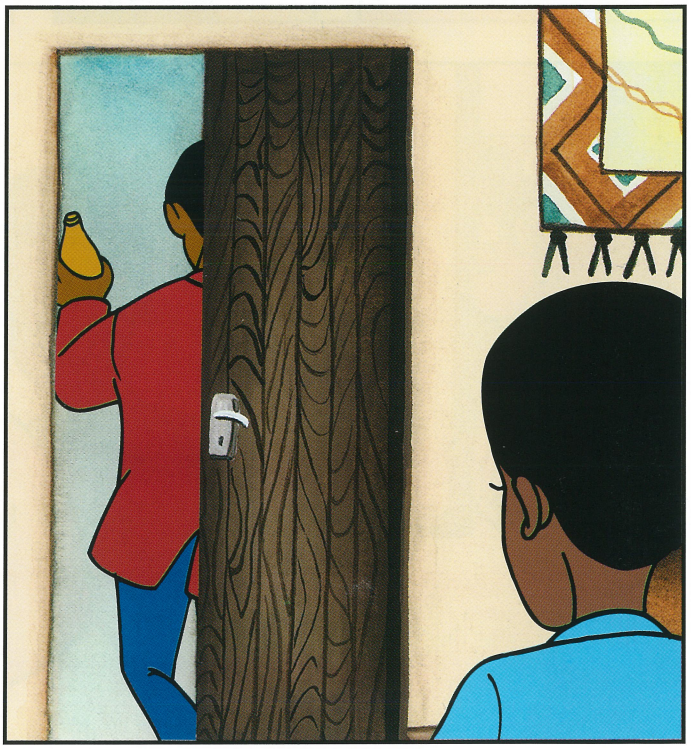
Tomorrow will you take me to school, Auntie?
You came from the village last week and you already expect to go to school.

You must be joking! You have to work hard first to earn your keep, and show that you will be a good student.

But...
How dare you question me?

I bring you to town to teach you good manners and you start going but... but...
Get out of my sight.

At night, Mr. Mdomo returns, drunk as usual.

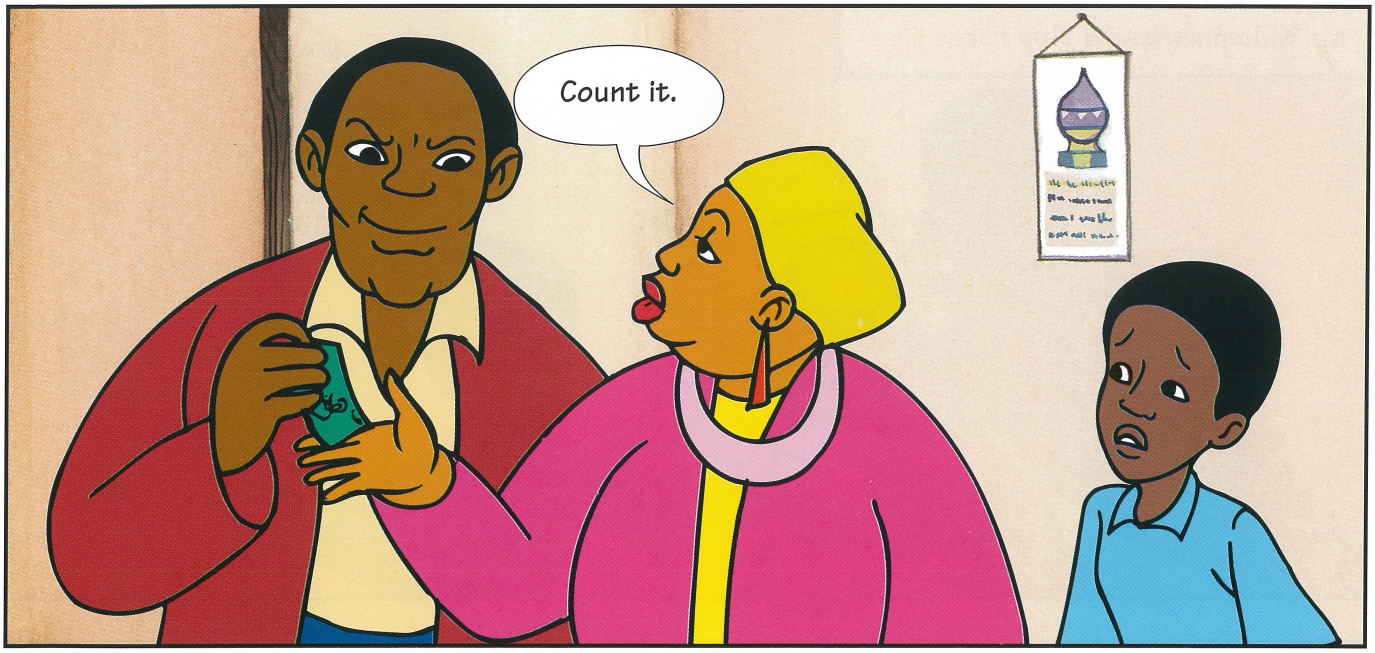


Where is my money? I forgot it in my coat.

It must be her.
But there was no money...

Shut up you little thief! Let's search her bag.

Here it is.


Count it.

Mr. Mdomo counts the money eagerly.
That's not all of it. Where's the rest, you little thief?

But that's my money. I was given it by my mother.
Don't tell lies you stupid little girl.

Mr. Mdomo tries to slap her...

Mr. Mdomo locks her in the kitchen.
And you can stay in there until morning.

This is not fair. And why hasn't father come to see me? A whole week has gone by. I must find him.

It's early in the morning. Mrs. Mdomo comes in.
I hope you're sorry for what you did.
But I didn't take the money...

Don't answer back to me. And don't think you'll see school until you've paid back all the money you stole.

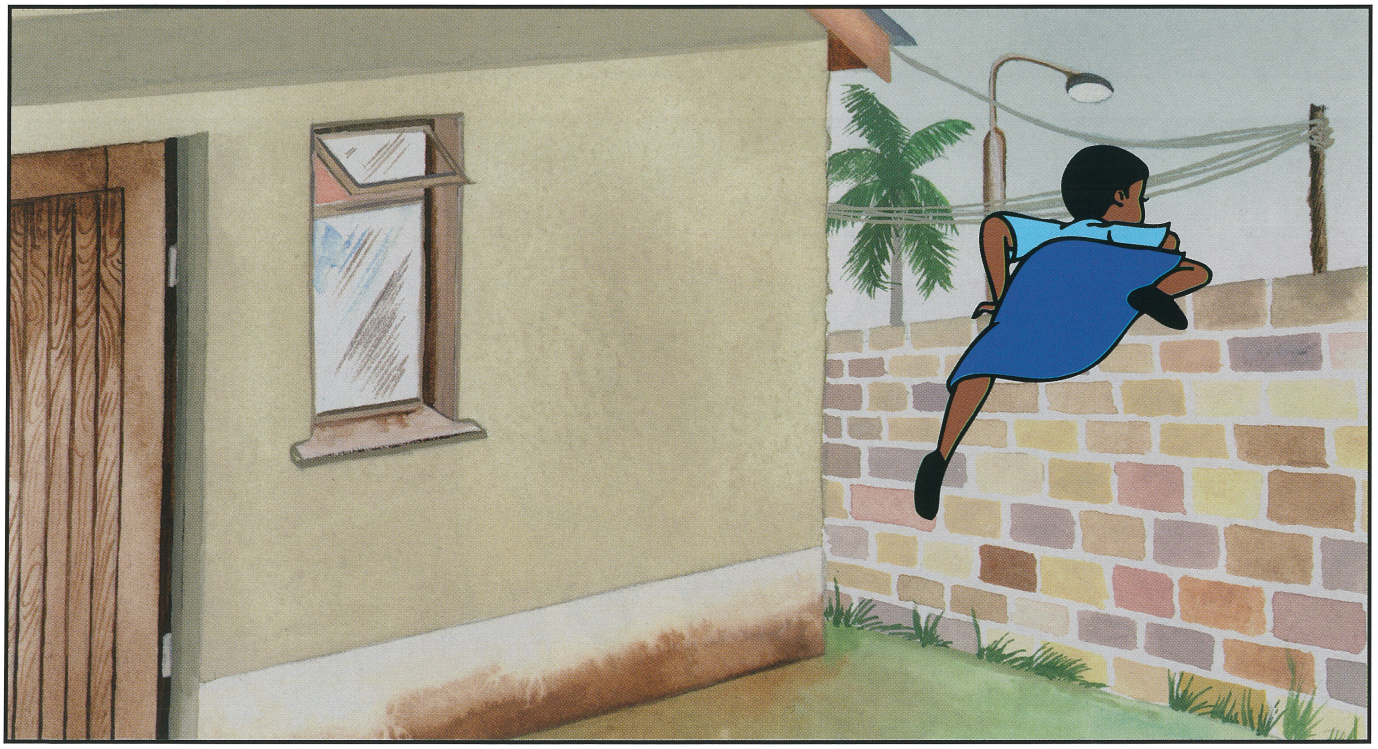
And if you make any more trouble, I'll take you right back to your hut in the village, do you hear me?

Sara goes out into the compound...
Sikujua... Sikujua...

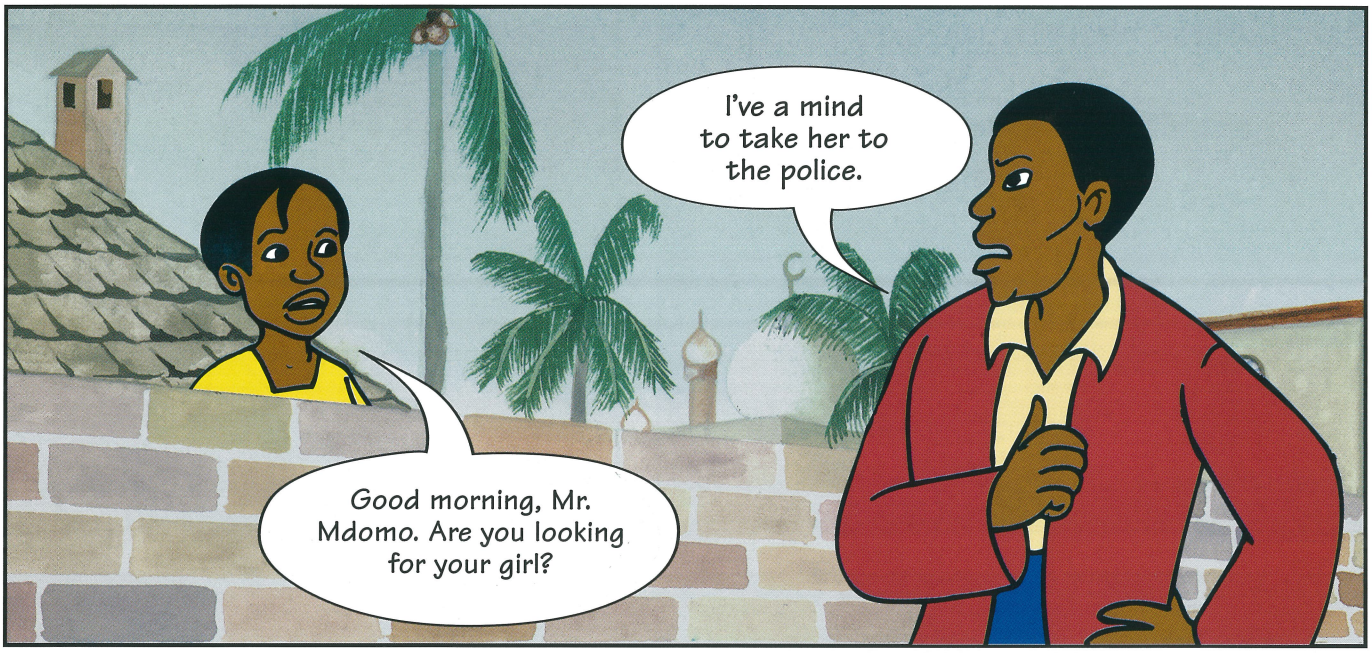
Please, sister, can you lend me a little money?
Why, what's happened?

I can't tell you now but you were right...

Just then Mr. Mdomo calls out...
Sara.

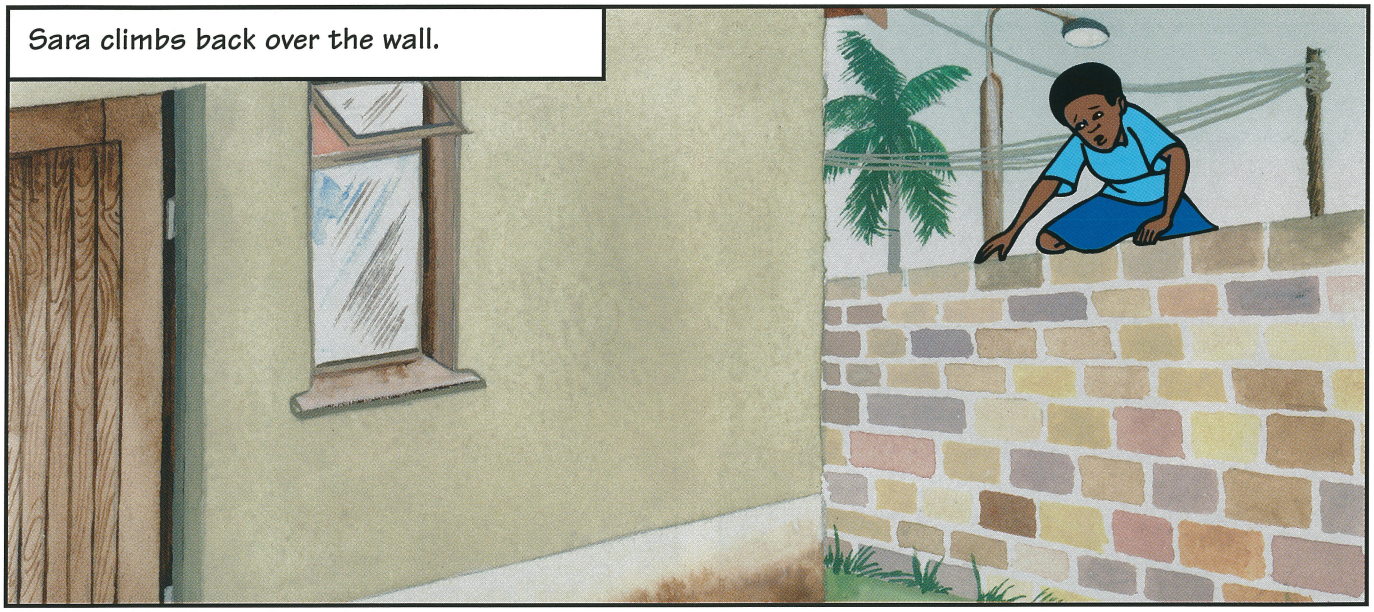


Where's that stupid girl? First she steals my money and then she disappears.

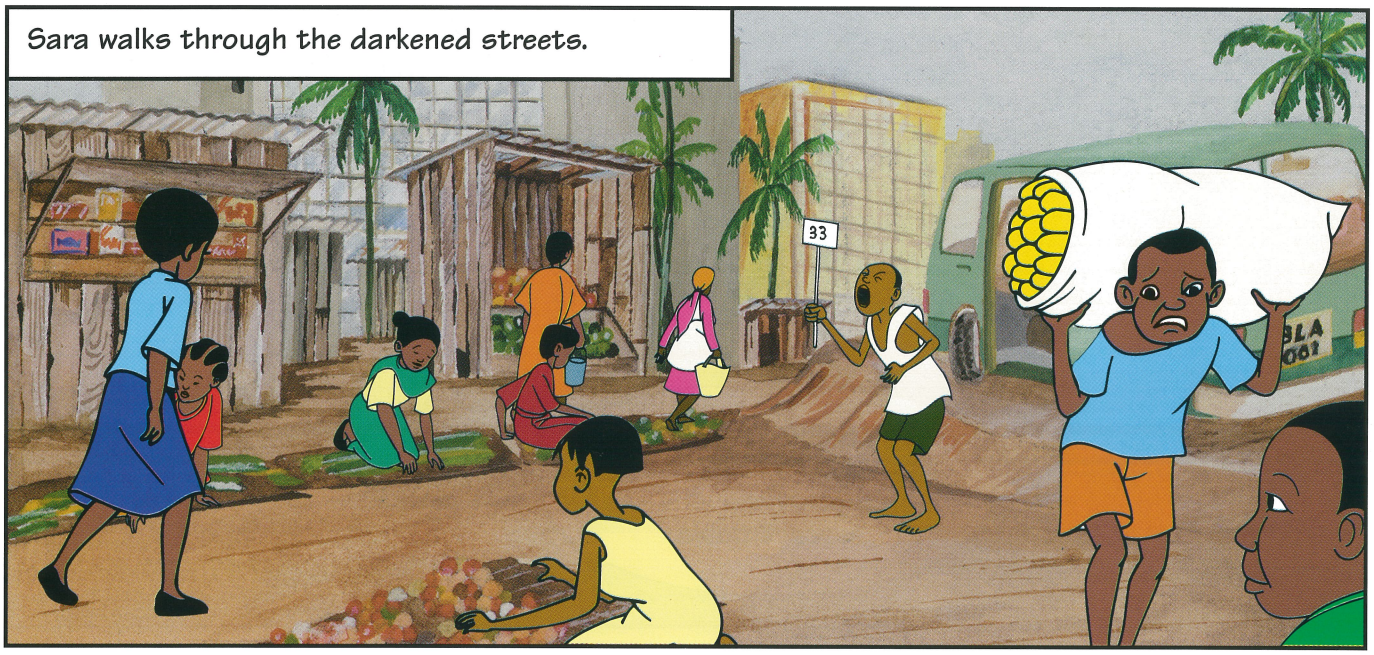

I've a mind to take her to the police.
Good morning, Mr. Mdomo. Are you looking for your girl?

Yes, where has the little fool gone?
She went to buy soap.

Well, tell her my clothes had better be whiter than white; otherwise she'll be in real trouble.


Sara climbs back over the wall.

Here's some money. And watch out for that son of theirs. I don't trust him.
Thank you sister. I'll be back.

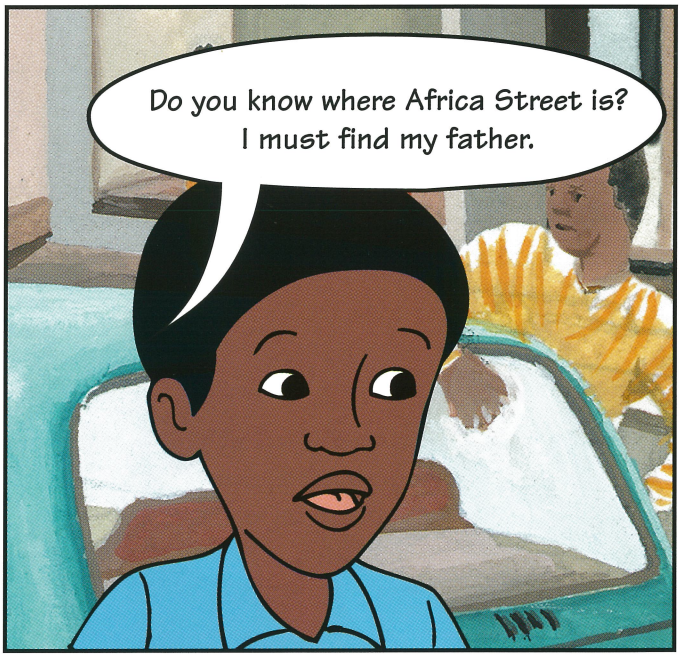

Sara walks through the darkened streets.
33

Thank you for that.

But why did he try to steal your money?
That's the way it is. The little boys do the work. The big boys take the money.

Who cares?
But that's terrible. Is there no one to protect you?
002X JJ X 2

Adults should.


Do you know where Africa Street is? I must find my father.

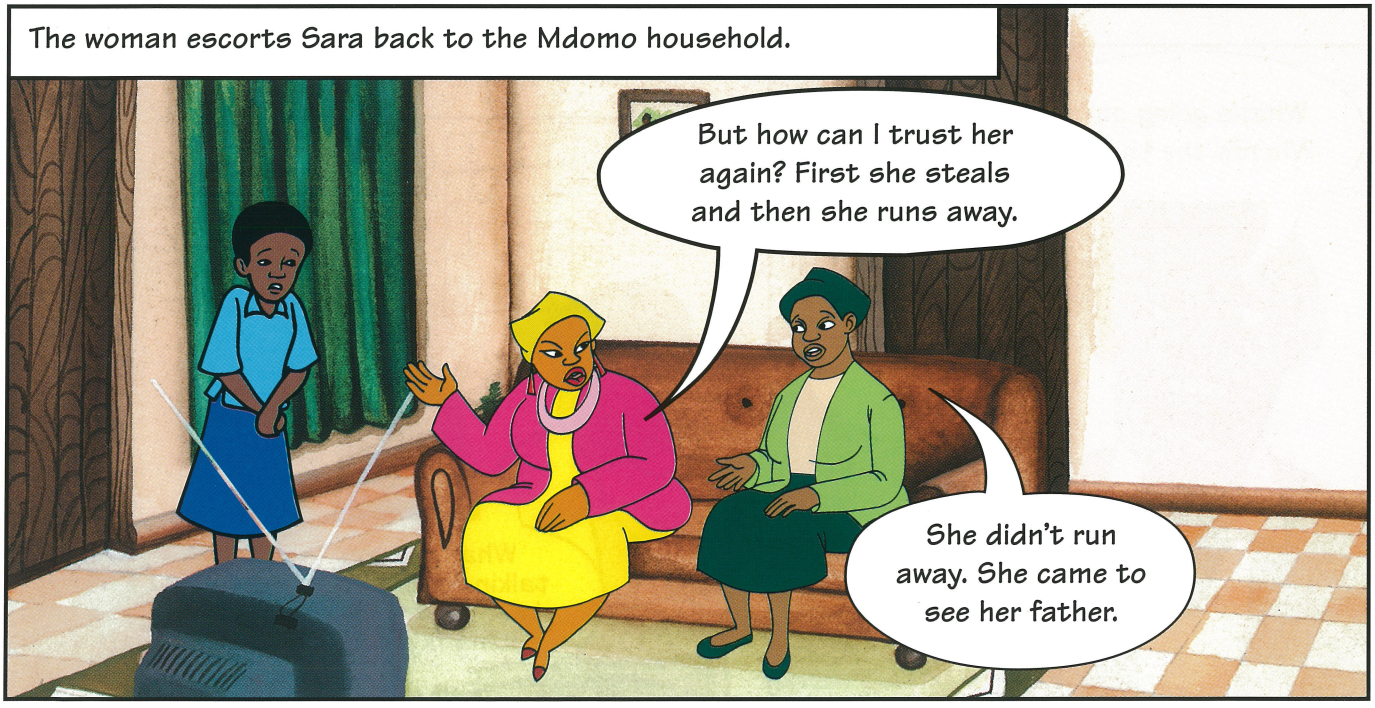
Why? Have you run away or something?
Just show me the way and I'll explain everything.

AFRICA St.
Bye!
Goodbye!

Good morning, Sir. I'm looking for my father.
You must be Sara. He's always talking about you.

Yes, Sir. Can I see him please?
You've just missed him. His boss sent him on a journey.

The woman escorts Sara back to the Mdomo household.



Okay, I'll give her another chance but no school until I'm satisfied that she has paid back the money.
Later...
Come quickly, Sir. There's a thief in the house.
What's going on? Where's the thief?
It's your son. He took the money out of your coat.
Mr. Mdomo unlocks the door.
What are you talking about? I've been sitting here doing my work.

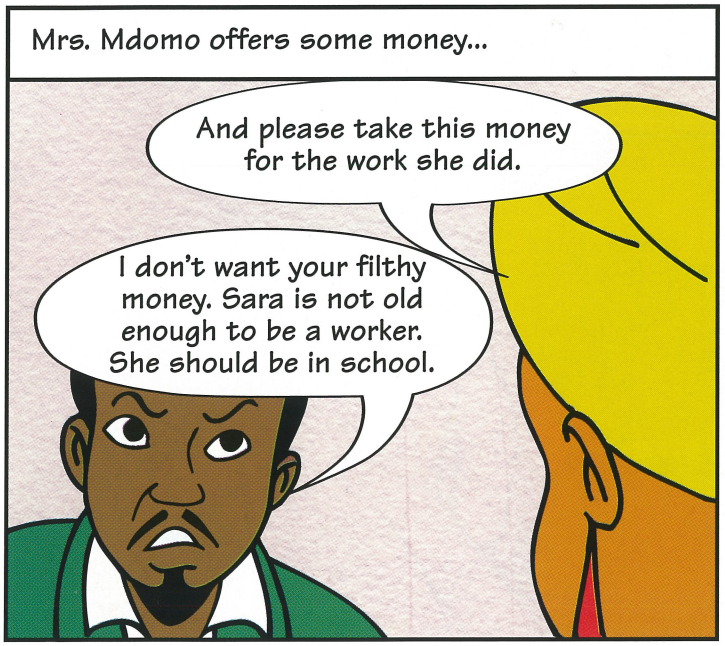
I haven't left this room all morning. How dare you...
Mr. Mdomo is suspicious...
... the pile of money is under the pillow.
So you're the one who's been stealing my money. And what are these cigarettes?
This is terrible. Why? Why?
I don't know. But first what are we going to do about that girl? She caught him and she'll blame us for accusing her.
What... these village girls? I'll give her one of my old dresses and she'll forget all about it.
After a few hours...
Knock knock.

We're not staying long. We've come to take our daughter.
What do you mean? We've just enrolled her in one of the best schools...
Is that true, Sara?
No, father... Mrs. Mdomo said I had to work to earn my place in school. It was so hard... And they accused me of stealing money but it was their son.
Sara's father is very angry.
Stop exaggerating! I often give him money to buy things for the shop.
Who's exaggerating? I was suspicious from the beginning... you took the money I gave her and hit her!
We're very sorry. The money disappeared so we had to suspect someone.

Sara, get your things. She is not staying another minute.
You come to our village and make false promises so that you can get cheap labour. You deserve to be taken to the police.

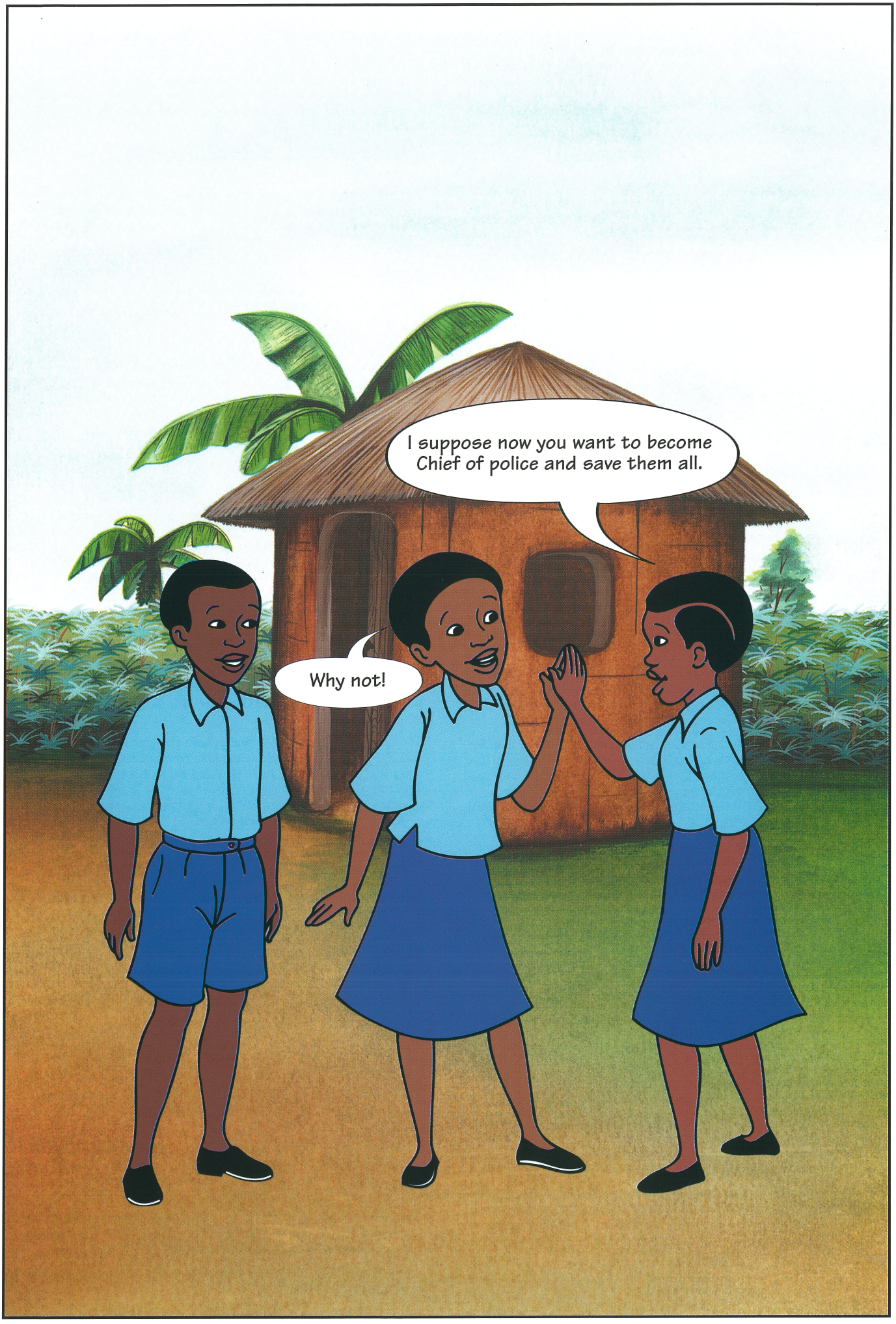
Yes, who is the thief here anyway? You stole my daughter...

Here's your money.


Mrs. Mdomo offers some money...
And please take this money for the work she did.
I don't want your filthy money. Sara is not old enough to be a worker. She should be in school.

And if I hear you coming to the village again to look for children, I'll take you to the chief.
Come on Sara, let's go home. We have to talk to your Uncle.

Sara is back at home.
I was a fool. I was so keen on going to a good school!
What was it like, Sara?
Awful! There are so many children working like slaves!
Why does it happen?
Because many people want to use children to make money!


I suppose now you want to become Chief of police and save them all.
Why not!

Sara
Communication Initiative

# USERS' GUIDE TO "WHO IS THE THIEF"

Traditionally, work around the household has been regarded as a natural part of a child's upbringing, especially for girls. However, with widespread poverty and limited economic opportunities for adults, more and more children, particularly girls, are now sent out to work in other people's houses, in potentially exploitative situations. "Child domestics or domestic workers are defined as children under the age of 18 who work in other people's households, doing domestic chores, caring for children and running errands, among other tasks."

Domestic service is one of the world's oldest occupations in which children have traditionally been involved. It is probably the most widespread, and at the same time most neglected and hidden form of child employment. Around the world today, some 250 million children aged 5-14 are involved in many different forms of labour. About half of them work in hazardous conditions, which are harmful to their health, safety and well being. In developing countries, millions of girls are employed as domestic workers. The acceptance of an attitude of servitude enforced by this occupation poses additional dangers to these girls in the form of violence and sexual abuse, in addition to the violation of other human rights.

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION ISSUES:

There are some key issues to be taken into consideration to understand what child domestic labour actually entails:

- **servitude issue:** the child domestic worker is under the full control of adults who are not her/his parents. The child's labour serves the employer's needs and is not in the best interests of the child. In most cases the child receives little or no remuneration.

- **"false adoption issue":** the child is being taken in and cared for in order to be exploited, although this is not what the employer or the parents of the child would like to think. In most cases, it is quite difficult to persuade the employers to realize that the children employed in their households have exactly the same rights as their own children. Most employers believe that they are doing the children and their families a favour.

- **economic exploitation issue:** domestic work is not a recognized form of labour in many societies, and as a result, not governed by employment regulations. The child domestic is usually made to work throughout the day and into the night, constantly on call at the whim of the employers.

- **child development and protection issues:** children in domestic employment are usually denied schooling, parental care during their upbringing, opportunities for play and recreation, and other rights and attributes of normal childhood.

However, not all child domestic workers suffer gross abuse, neglect and exploitation. For many parents and some child workers, especially orphans, placement in a secure household, living at a higher standard than in their own home under the supervision of relatives or sympathetic employers, may appear to be beneficial. In some instances, the employers view themselves as "benefactors", finding suitable husbands for the girls employed by them. However, for these children too it is important to ensure that their other rights are met, in particular to education and recreation.

Child labour laws can play a catalytic and supportive role in protecting children against hazardous working environments. The growth of formal and informal employment of children in developing countries has led to many policy programmes and legislative initiatives.

UNICEF supports children's participation in forms of work both inside and beyond the home that enable them to learn skills and assist in daily family activities. It is when such work harms the child, denies the child access to education and other rights, and thereby threatens a repeating cycle of poverty, that it must be eliminated.

Minimum standards for the employment of children have also been provided by the International Labour Organization. Various factors are considered in this analysis, including: whether the child's basic education can be completed; whether the work is likely to jeopardize the health, safety and morals of the child; whether specific instructions or vocational training in the relevant activity are provided; and whether it will prejudice the child's attendance in school or vocational programmes.

After many years of work by concerned organizations around the world, in June 1999, the International Labour Conference adopted a new convention to protect children from the worst kinds of child labour. The new convention prohibits four categories of child labour:

- slavery and similar practices, including sale and trafficking of children.

- commercial sexual exploitation of children.

- hazardous work that can negatively affect a child's health, safety and morals e.g. work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or small spaces,with dangerous machines or tools, heavy loads, high noise, temperature or vibration.

- involvement in other illegal activities, such as drug trafficking.

However, laws seldom change behaviour and attitudes. Such change can come about by persuasion and awareness creation and other forms of social pressure or social mobilization, including through the example of those in influential positions.

## EDUCATION ISSUES:

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Article 28, acknowledges that every child has a right to education. In Article 32 the CRC states the child's right to be protected from, "...economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with a child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development".

UNICEF is committed to the goal of universal access to basic education. With its partners, UNICEF has been supporting activities to end child labour in several dangerous occupations, e.g. charcoal pits and cane fields, etc., also aiming to create a social demand for quality education for all children. It sponsors pilot programmes that offer "education-grants" or scholarships to girls from poor families and also promotes curriculum reforms to make education more attractive and relevant to children. UNICEF also supports community-based non-formal education programmes, which help to prepare out-of-school children to return to school.

## WHO IS THE THIEF:

"Who is the Thief", produced by UNICEF-ESARO's Communication Section, is designed to support and strengthen existing programmes on the elimination of child labour/child domestic labour. It is a well-researched package that can be used as an educational tool by organizations, programmers and service providers working in gender and human rights programmes.

Though UNICEF and many other concerned agencies are working to end child labour, it is still very prevalent in different forms in many cultures and societies. The discussion guide provided below is expected to be used by community workers/service providers to help people think about the complex issues behind child labour, as well as to recognize it as harmful to children's development and well being.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STORY

The story has a strong appeal and is both educational and entertaining. It can be used with different communities to raise awareness about the harmful nature of child domestic labour and to initiate broader discussion on other forms of harmful and hazardous child labour. Research has shown that it can be effectively used to:

- Initiate in-depth and constructive discussions among parents on: the benefits of educating the children, the harmful effects of child domestic labour, how child labour affects the protection, overall development, safety and moral issues which are essential for children's well-being.
- Create awareness in the communities regarding the value of educating children, the negative effects of child domestic labour and ways to advocate for the elimination of child labour that is hazardous and harmful to children's growth and development.
- Create awareness among parents regarding the rights of the children in their workplace and to come up with community solutions to end child labour.
- Stimulate discussion amongst children and adolescents on their rights to safety, growth, development, education, play and recreational activities, and protection from all kinds of abuse and sexual exploitation.
- Create an understanding among young people on how to be assertive concerning their rights in adverse circumstances, and how to deal with the situation by acquiring appropriate life skills and supportive relationships among peers, including between girls and boys.
- Encourage the participation of young people in problem solving and community development.

## BEFORE YOU START

Tell the group that you will hold a discussion on the story. During the session, you can either divide participants into teams of two for reading the story together or give the story out to all to read, one day prior to the discussion session. This depends on the availability of sufficient numbers of comic books.

## BEGIN WITH QUESTIONS ON THE STORY

- Did you like the story?
- What the story is about?
- Who are the characters in the story?
- Who do you think is the main character of the story? Why?
- Which characters did you like best in the story? Why?
- Which ones didn't you like? Why?

YOU MAY ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ON THE COMPREHENSION OF THE STORY:

- Who came from the town to visit Sara's uncle? Why did she come?
- What was Sara's mother's reaction to Mrs. Mdomo's proposition?
- What was Sara's reaction?
- What was the uncle's reaction? Why?
- How did Mrs. Mdomo's children react to Sara?
- What happened when Sara was in Mrs Mdomo's house? Was she happy there? Did she go to school?
- What was Mr. Mdomo's job? What kind of a man was he?
- How did he react to Sara?
- Who was Sikujua? What did she tell Sara?
- Why do you think she worked as a domestic labourer?
- Who stole the money from Mr. Mdomo's pocket? Who was accused of the theft? What happened?
- What did Sara do after she was called the thief?
- What did she see on the streets as she was going to her father's house?
- What happened there? Why did she come back to Mdomo's house again?
- Who was the real thief? How did Sara prove herself innocent?
- What were Sara's parents' reactions when they came to see Sara?
- What was the Mdomos' reaction when they saw Sara's parents? What did they do?
- Why didn't Sara's father visit her earlier?
- Did her parents decide to do anything about the uncle's role in sending Sara to town?
- What happened in the end?
- Do you think people like the uncle and the Mdomos should be punished? What kind of punishment? Can this happen in real life?

## REFLECTING ON THE ISSUES IN OUR OWN LIVES: ASK ALL

- Do you know of a similar incident to the one in this story?
- Are girls/boys taken to town or rich relatives' homes with false promises (of schooling, a better life)?
- Do parents willingly allow girls/boys to take up employment in other people's homes? Why?
- Do these girls/boys willingly go? Do they have any choice in such matters?
- What kind of tasks do they do? How many hours do they work each day?
- Do parents ever indicate what kind of behaviour is expected from the employers/relatives towards their children?
- How are these children treated in other people's homes? Are they allowed to go to school, or play?
- Do the parents ever visit them? Do they listen and try to resolve the problems that their child faces in her/his employer's house?
- Can the children contact their parents if there is a need?
- Are girls (or boys) sometimes sexually exploited in domestic workplaces? What happens in such cases? How does the mistress of the house react?
- Is the girl blamed for the situation by her employer?
- Who are these abusers? Do girls report them? To whom? What happens?
- **Probe:** Does the girl ever report such incidents to her parents? How do the parents react? What should be the role of parents?
- What can be the consequences of sexual exploitation? Do the girls get pregnant? Do they contract any sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?
- Are you aware what kind of STIs they can get? Have you heard of HIV/AIDS? What is it?
- Do you think sexual exploitation of girls (and boys) at the workplace can spread HIV/AIDS? What can be done to resist and stop sexual exploitation of children in their workplace?
- How does your community treat girls/people who get infected with HIV /AIDS and other STIs?
- Do children ever run away from their employers' homes?
- At what age can a person take up jobs outside of home? Any idea what kind of jobs s/he can do and cannot do?
- In your community, at what age do children take up jobs in other people's homes/workplaces?
- Does the government in your country have any laws about the legal age of employment?
- Do you think a child in her/his workplace can demand for time to play, read, rest and make friends? Does this happen in real life?
- Does the child in employment get any salary?
- If a child gets a salary, is it given to her/him directly? If no, who takes it? How is this money spent?
- Are some employers sympathetic? What kind of support do they provide to child domestic workers? Do they send them to school?
- Do parents care about what happens to their children while working in domestic households?
- What actions do the parents need to take to keep children out of the job market and in school?
- Do parents understand the value of educating children? Do they support their (children's) schooling? Why/Why not?
- Do you think educating the children can improve their present situation or end child labour? In what ways?
- What can parents do to keep children in school? What could be the community's role?

## SPECIFIC QUESTION GUIDE FOR GIRLS

- Do you like Sara? Why/Why not?
- Do you think it was a wise decision on her part to go to town?
- Can girls make such decisions in real life?
- Are domestic workers treated equally like the "children of the house"? Do the employers trust them?
- In domestic workplaces, can girls be as assertive as Sara? Why/Why not?
- What do you think of Sikujua and Sara's friendship? Is such a thing possible?
- Are there benevolent employers? How do they treat the child domestic workers? Do such employers support their domestic worker's development or send them to school?
- Do you think sending girls to school can be a solution to end domestic labour? Why?/Why not? Do you have any other solutions in mind?
- What can the girls themselves do to stay in school?
- Is it possible for girls and their parents to mobilize the communities to say "no" to child labour that is hazardous and harmful to children's growth and development?
- Who should take the lead in such a case? What could be the roles of girls themselves?
- Are there any agencies/people who can help the parents and the community find realistic solutions to end child labour?

## SPECIFIC QUESTION GUIDE FOR BOYS

- Do you like Sara? Why/Why not?
- Do you think girls can do what Sara did in this story? Why/Why not?
- If Sara were your sister and she were in trouble as we see in the story, what would you have done?
- What do you think of Mr. and Mrs. Mdomo? Do you think there are people like them?
- How do children who work in other people's homes get treated? Why?
- Do working children ever protest against oppressive treatment by their employers? What do they do?
- Do they inform their parents? Do parents take any action?
- Do the employers trust the domestic workers? Are there sympathetic employers?

- What kinds of jobs are boy domestic workers engaged in? Is their situation better than the girls'? In what ways?
- What do you think of Mdomo's son? Do children behave like this with children working in their house?
- Is it possible for boys and their parents to mobilize the communities to say "no" to child labour that is hazardous and harmful to children's growth and development? What can they do?
- Who should take the lead in this? What could be the roles of boys themselves?
- Do you think keeping boys in school can prevent child labour? In what ways?
- Are there any agencies/people who can help the parents and the community?

## QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

- Why do you think parents let their children work as domestic helpers in other people's/relatives' homes?
- Are their expectations fulfilled?
- Do you think parents understand the importance of educating their children?
- What can poor families do to keep children in schools instead of engaging them in work outside their homes?
- What kinds of jobs are children engaged in? What kind of work should they do?
- What kind of treatment do the children receive in their workplaces?
- Do the parents intervene in cases of mis-treatment? Is it reported to them? Should they intervene?
- What can parents do to stop the mis-treatment of children employed in domestic work and in other workplaces?
- Do you think it is possible for the parents together to mobilize the community against child labour that is hazardous and harmful to children's growth and development? What can they do?
- Is it possible for a community to ensure that every child receives basic education?
- Who should take the lead in these activities? What could be the roles of parents themselves?
- Are there any agencies/people who can support these activities?
- What can parents do to help children to achieve their full potential?

## FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

The following are suggestions for activities which will improve people's understanding of this story and how it relates to the existing situation of working children in their own communities. The activities focus on the issue of children, especially girls, (as majority of the domestic workers are girls), developing life skills, such as assertiveness, coping with emotions and stress, critical thinking, decision making, etc.; and the role of parents and the community in supporting such development in young people.

Encourage the group members to participate fully in planning and carrying out these activities.

### A. Group Discussion

Let the group discuss the story amongst themselves. One member can facilitate the discussion, allowing others to join in with their opinions. This can be done in groups of six to ten.

### B. Drawings

The group members can draw pictures of their favourite section of the story and use it as a discussion point. They can elaborate on why they like that part, what lessons can be learnt from it, etc. Chose this activity depending on the age of the participants.

### C. Survey

Ask the group to conduct an informal survey in their community to find out how many children are employed in jobs outside their homes, the nature of the jobs, the age of the children, whether they are attending school and what their working conditions are like. Also, the group should find out if parents and employers are aware about the harmful effects of child labour and if there are agencies working on children's rights in the community that can be contacted if necessary.

### D. Drama

Create a drama or role play on some of the themes and situations in Sara's story, to show how girls can be assertive in the workplace, and how supportive parents can intervene if the children face oppression in the workplace. Show how girls can build their self-esteem and reject sexual advances. Show how benevolent employers/relations who have taken children into their houses are treating them with dignity and allowing them to attend school. Show parents recognizing the benefits of sending children to school. Ask group members to act out different roles.

### Ask questions

How did you feel when you acted as a girl/boy/employer? How did you feel about the situation in which you found yourself in the play? Did it feel real? Ask other members to react to the play.

### E. Brainstorming

Brainstorm on a list of actions to be undertaken:

- **for parents and teachers** to mobilize the community against child labour and to promote the benefits of educating children, both girls and boys. Where children have no option but to be employed as domestic workers, what can be done to ensure they are treated with dignity and care, and allowed to attend school,
- **for young people** to learn to exhibit self-esteem and negotiate with the employers if they are mis-treated, to report incidences of sexual exploitation to their parents, school or to agencies (if accessible) that work on children's/ women's rights issues.
- **for adults and young people** to share correct information and create awareness on HIV/AIDS and other STIs and to prevent the spread of these infections.
- **for adults, young people and the community** to create awareness regarding the exploitation of working children and the importance of education for both girls and boys, as well as the need to stop oppression of working children and to advocate against child labour that is hazardous and harmful to a child's growth and development.

### F. Community involvement

The group could share the ideas of Sara's story with their community through some of the following activities. They can perform these in public, with friends, women's groups, in churches and other religious and community venues:

- A brief drama or skit with alternative endings, followed by discussions.
- Story telling with alternative endings and discussions.
- Debates on the issues in the stories.
- Puppet shows with Sara characters.
- Songs, dances, poems and games on the themes of the story.

Some of the activities can be undertaken on an open stage so that more people can watch and participate in discussions. You can think of other activities to popularize the themes of the story and to create awareness among people.

- In parents-teachers' meeting (PTA), mothers' group meetings or community meetings you could discuss the issue of how to create awareness and take action on these child labour issues.
- You may want to form a club, committee or forum for girls and boys where they can discuss various issues that affect their development. Such fora can serve as a resource center and a support system where young people can share experiences and access correct information. In groups, the girls and boys should be able to discuss how they can acquire self-esteem and confidence to cope effectively in adverse situations and resist unwanted sexual advances. School teachers and NGO workers, who are involved in human rights and women's issues, can be active members of such committees/ fora. They can discuss with the community how to build a supportive environment for young people's development, especially for girls who are in employment.

### G. Discussing results

After a few weeks, the group can meet to discuss:

- What actions were taken at home and in the community?
- What were people's reactions?
- What activities were successful? What problems arose?
- What further role can the community play in preventing child labour, improving working conditions, evolving a caring and environment of dignity in the workplaces and in promoting education for all children.

**SCRIPT**
Richard Mabala
In collaboration with the Sara research team

**ORIGINAL CONCEPT**
Neill McKee, UNICEF-Uganda

**ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT**
**Creative Effects, Kenya**
Ham Kakembo
Tony Okuku
Francisca Odundo
George Mogaka
Patrick Gichuhi

**Principal character artists**
Joel Chikware, Zimbabwe
Vic Kasinja, Malawi
Joseph Kariuki, Kenya

**Artistic consultation and training**
Ram Mohan and team,
Light Box Moving Pictures, Mumbai

**Electronic production and printing supervision**
Radhika Madan

**Sara Logo**
Elizabeth McKee

**RESEARCHERS**
**Research training and direction**
Dr. Mira Aghi, India

**PRINCIPAL RESEARCHERS**
Ethiopia: Getachu Makuria
Debebe Tegegne
Ethio-Education Consultancy (ETEC)

Kenya: Wangari Mwai
Justus Olielo

Uganda: Violet Mugisa
Gertrude Ziwa

Tanzania: Richard Mabala
Nazarina Boma
Esther Kiondo

Mozambique: Francisca Serrão
Maria A. Sebastião

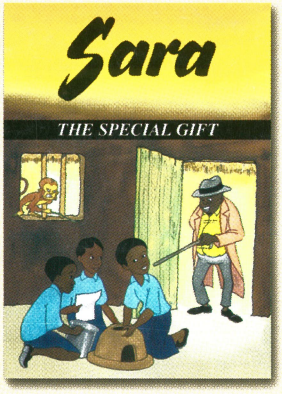
**CREATIVE CONSULTANTS AND FACILITATION**
Rachel Carnegie, UK

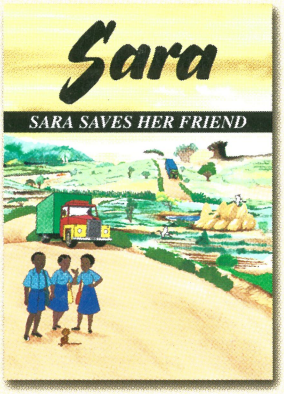
**TECHNICAL CONSULTATION**
Dr. Urban Jonsson, UNICEF-ESARO
Lisa Kurbiel, UNICEF-ESARO

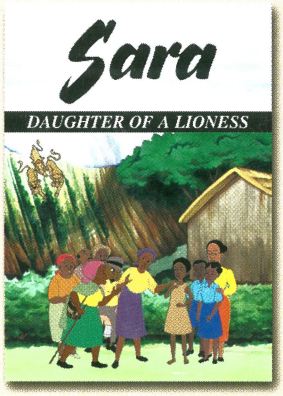
**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**
Nuzhat Shahzadi, UNICEF-ESARO
Eunice Wambugu, UNICEF-ESARO

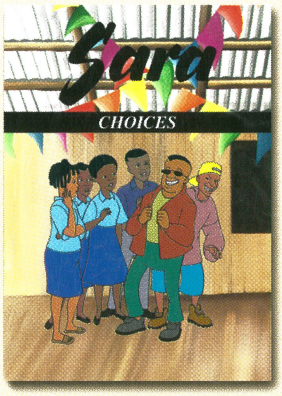
Sara is delighted when her sophisticated aunt invites her to come and live with her and attend a good school in the city. It's the chance of a lifetime! However, when she gets there she finds that instead of going to school she is expected to wash and cook and clean. It seems that she is destined to be a child slave like other children she meets in the city. Then some money goes missing and Sara is accused of being the thief. Will Sara's father ever get her letter and come and rescue her?

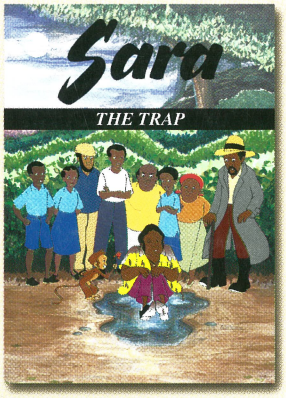
*Who is the Thief* is a part of a series of exciting comic books about the adventures of Sara and the issues that affect her and other girls in Africa. Read them all and look out for the posters and the videos.

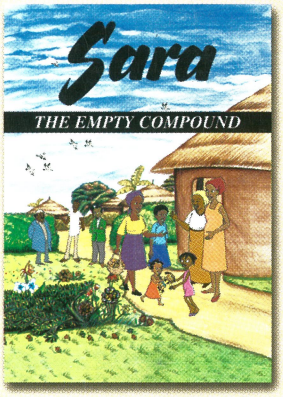



unicef
United Nations Children's Fund

LONGMAN

ISBN 0-636-04730-X
9 780636 047303