

WORLD COMICS

Leif Packalén



WALLPOSTER COMICS
- A GREAT CAMPAIGN TOOL FOR NGOs



WORLD COMICS-FINLAND

World Comics-Finland (WCF) was founded by comics artists and aid activists in 1997. It has members and affiliates in a worldwide network. The main common interests are:

- **local comics as a mirror of culture**
- **local comics as an information tool in development and human rights work**
- **comics as a medium for self-expression in small and alternative groups**

World Comics arranges lectures, exhibitions, courses and comics workshops in Finland and abroad. Currently we have cooperation with organisations in Tanzania, Mozambique, Benin, Morocco, Lebanon and India. We have also invited comics artists from several countries to Finland and presented their work there.

World Comics-Finland

Leif Packalén

Vanamontie 4 E 156

01350, Vantaa, Finland

telephone +358-9-8736751 or cell phone +358-40-5318235

e-mail leif.packalen@worldcomics.fi

website: www.worldcomics.fi



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Wallposter comics are inexpensively produced educational stories by local NGOs. These stories, which are pasted up on walls and similar places create a lot of interest in the communities. The wallposters are either silk screen printed or made by photocopying. This booklet is a guide in how to make wallposter comics.

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TO DRAW WELL IS NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO MAKE A GOOD WALLPOSTER COMIC.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO HAVE A **GOOD STORY**, WITH INTERESTING AND ENGAGING CHARACTERS WHICH THE READERS CAN IDENTIFY WITH EASILY.

The wallposter comics

Heading and title area

HAKI SAWA YA MIRATHI

panels



Organisation information and credits area

Naomi Makota: Women Advancement Trust (WAT)

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

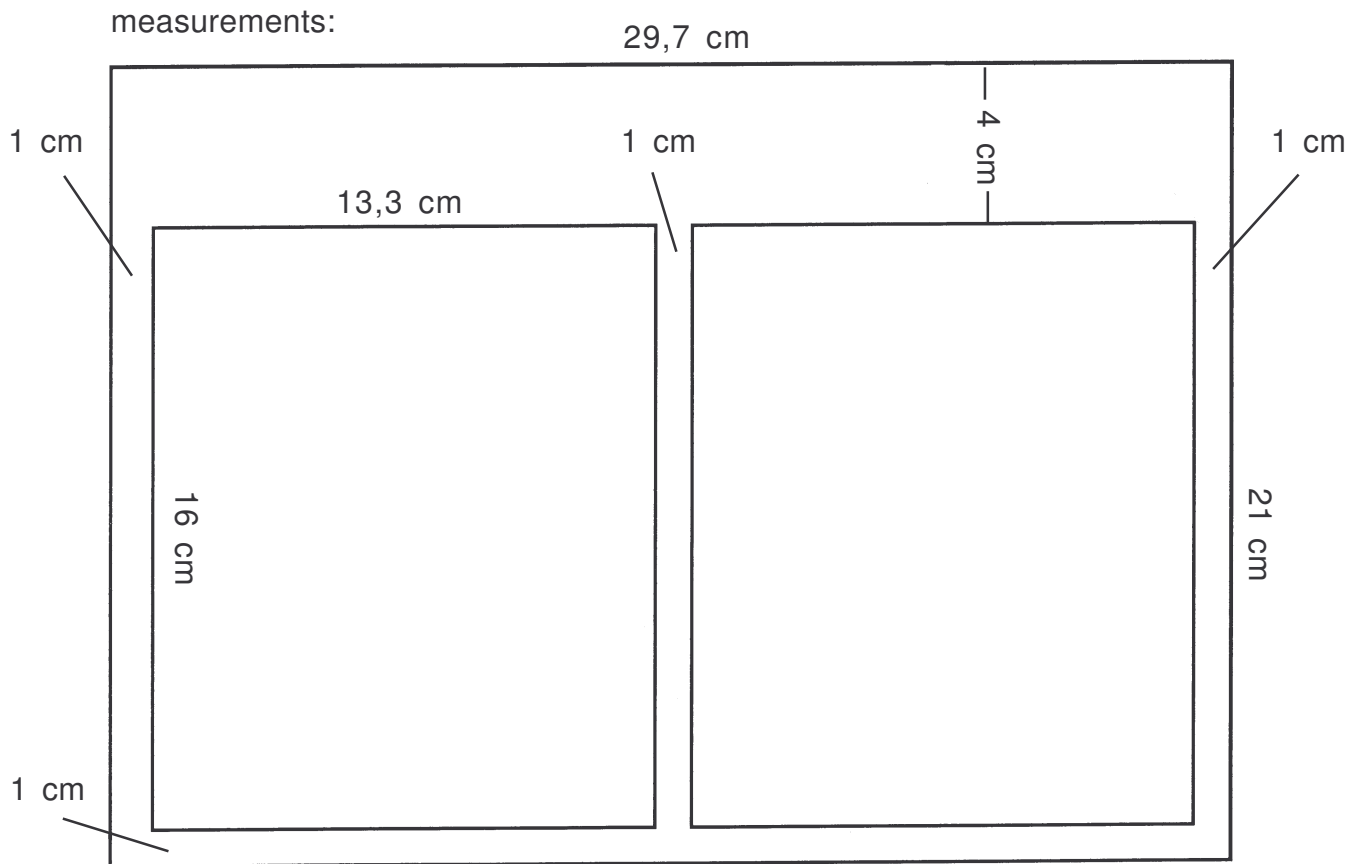
HAKI SAWA YA MIRATHI

Naomi Makota: Women Advancement Trust (WAT)

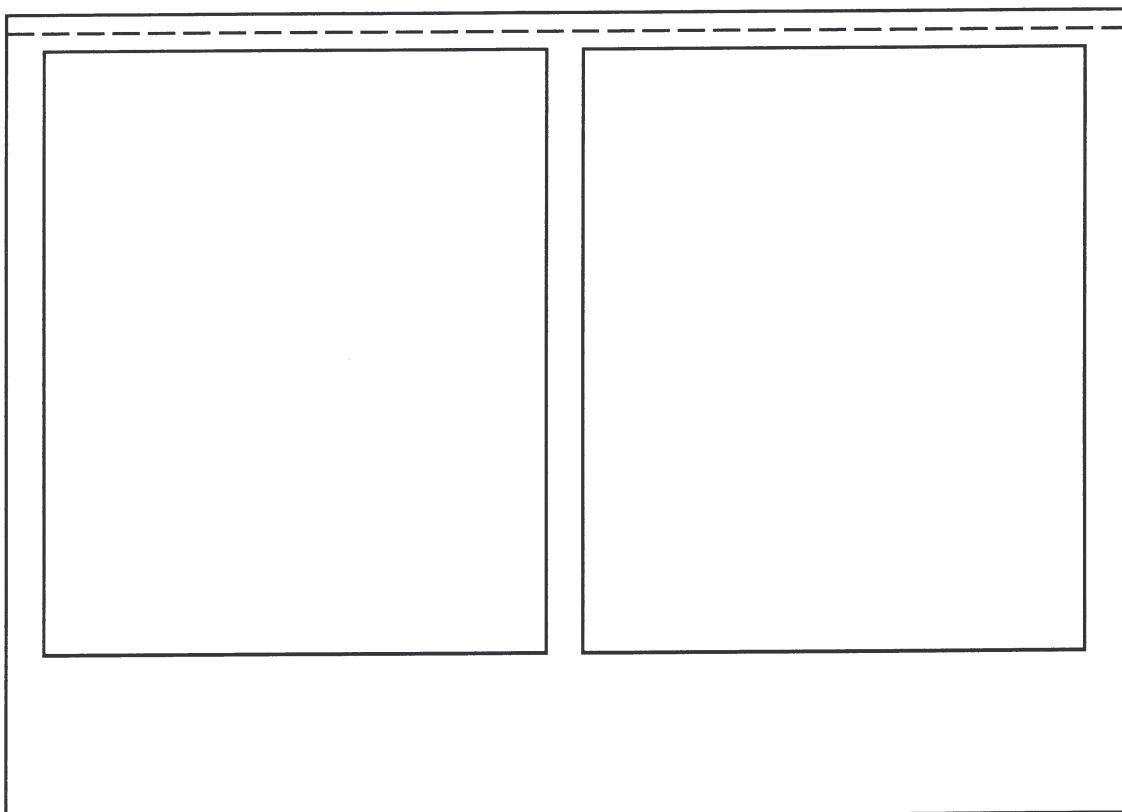


The wallposter measurements⁵

The idea of the wallposter is to combine two A4-sized papers into a small poster. Both parts have the same layout and measurements, but the parts are combined with the panels facing each other.



The two parts should be glued together with a small overlap



How to make your story

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

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

The story should have an **interesting beginning**, some action and an end that emphasises the point you want to make.

Example 1. You want to talk against witch-hunting.



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

Example 2. You want to emphasise the right to water.



The story: Two women discuss their plight as the landlord refuses them to take water from the tank. The women decide to speak with a women's NGO. They have a meeting and then decide to demonstrate against the landlord. The women gather with placards and in the end a policeman arrests the landlord.

Next step is to make a **manuscript**. The best thing is to think in terms of **scenes**, i.e. each panel is one scene.

To make a manuscript

You need to break down the story into four panels and decide what should go in each panel. Here you have two important things to remember:

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

Your manuscript can look like this:

Example 1



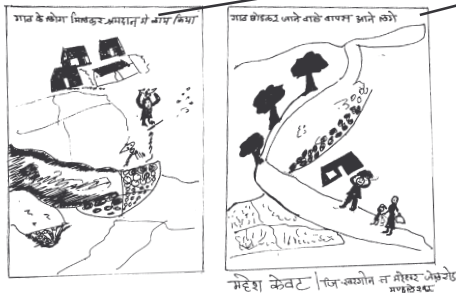
Example 2



How to place texts and pictures



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



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



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



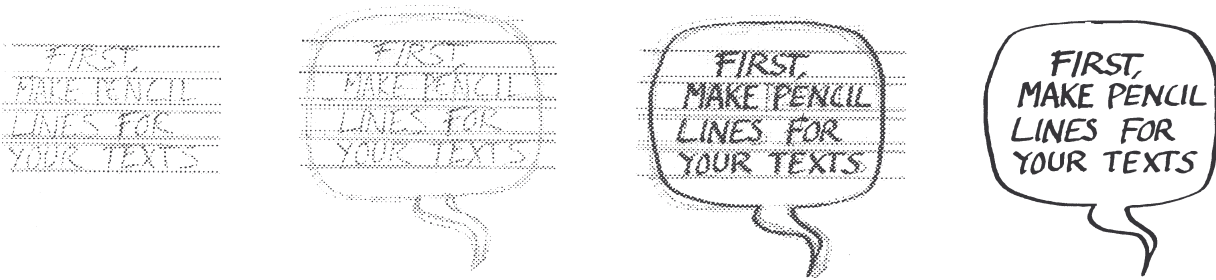
question here

reply here



explanatory texts (like time and place) always in the top left corner

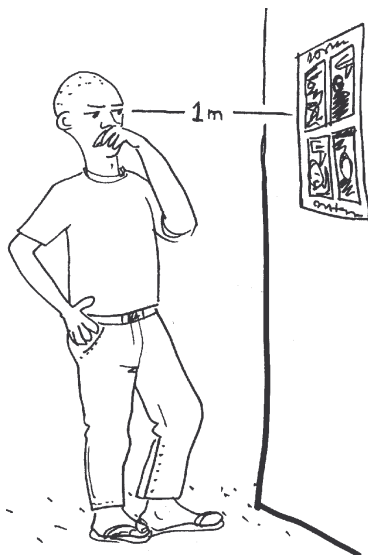
Texts in the comics



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



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



Texts in wallposter comics should be at least **1 cm high**. They should be readable from about 1 metre. Reading distance from something in your hand is about 20 - 30 cms.

Text size is also important if the same comics will later be used in strips (see page 4) as the text will then be reduced about 50%.

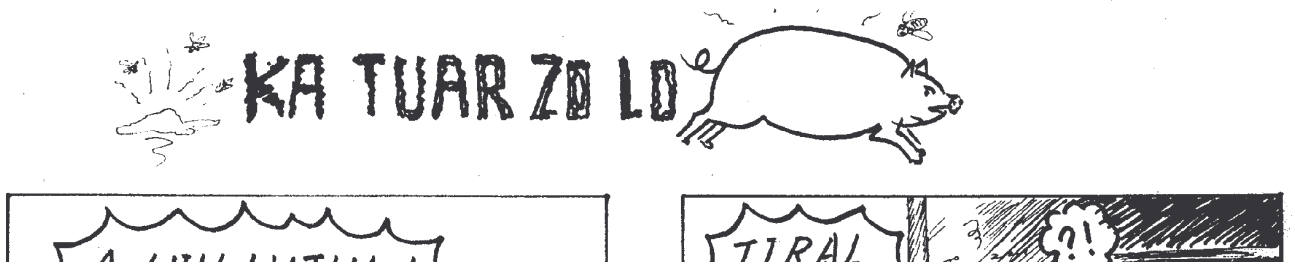


Headings in the wallposter

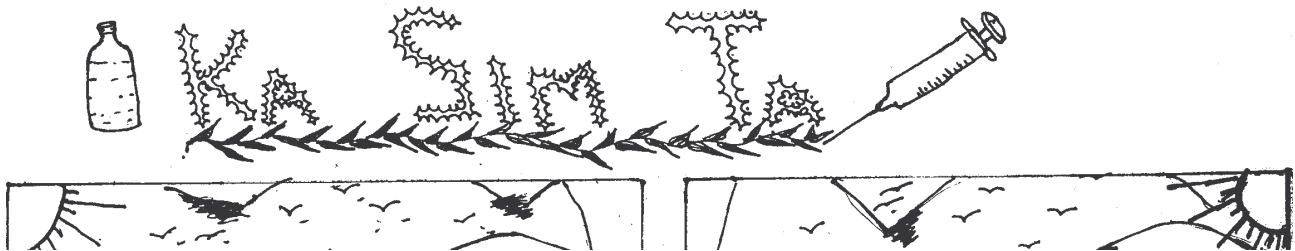
In the wallposter you can put in a lot of information in the heading. But the information should not give away the point of the story, only set the stage. If possible, some visual element should be used in the title, this improves readability a lot, as can be seen in these samples from World Comics workshops in India:



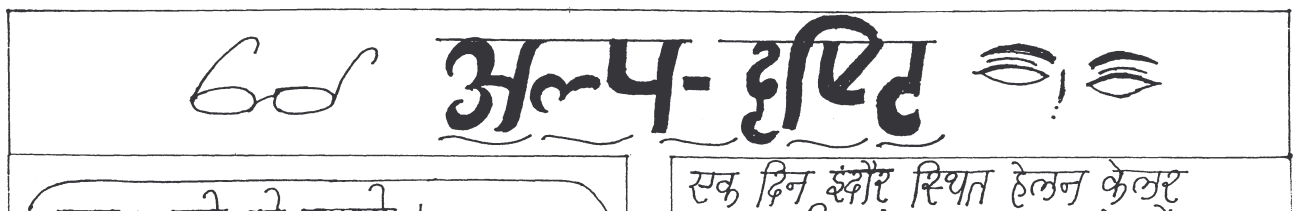
From Sindhu Singh's story about afforestation. Jharkhand 2003.



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



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



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



From the JOHAR workshop in Jharkhand, 2003. The story is about elections.

Foreground and background



Activities and dialogue that are central for the story should be in the foreground. Activities that support the story visually can also be put in the background (here: the person taking goods behind the locked-up shop).



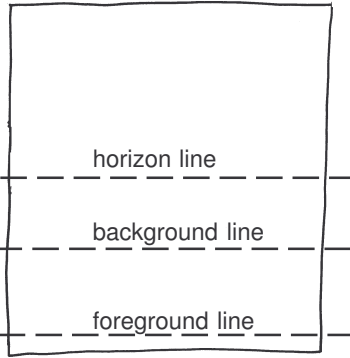
Here the dialogue takes place in the background. For the story it is important to show it takes place outside the school.



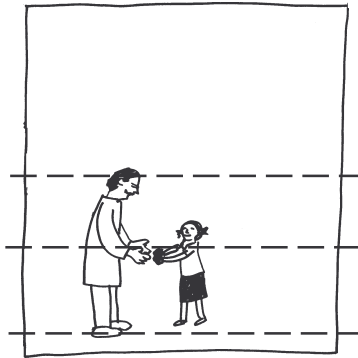
In this story the demonstrating crowd is as important as the policeman arresting the landlord. The open space around the arrest makes it easier to read the picture correctly.

To give space is to give importance.

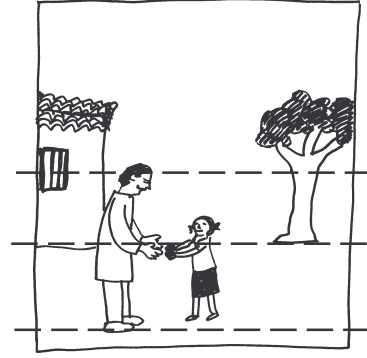
Adding depth and perspective



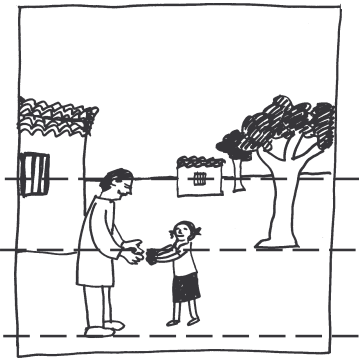
Draw three pencil lines to help you place everything



Draw the main characters on the foreground line



Draw background items on the background line



Draw far-off items and a horizon line

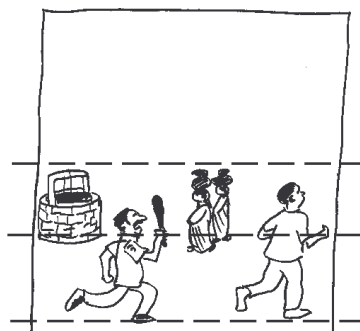
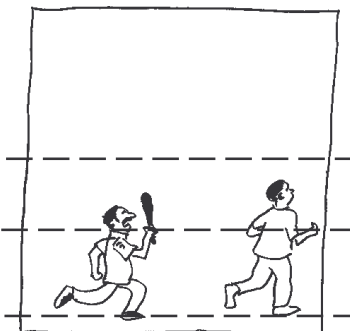
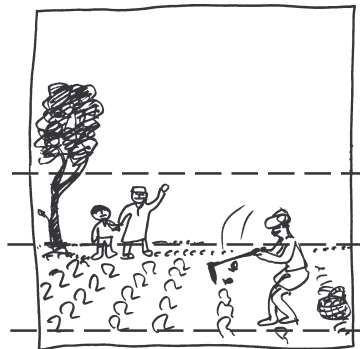
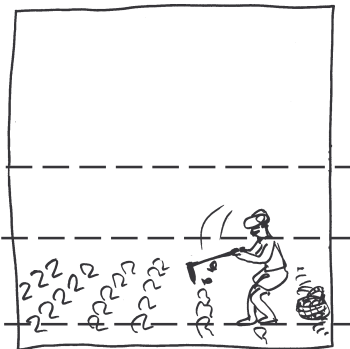


Now, remove the pencil lines

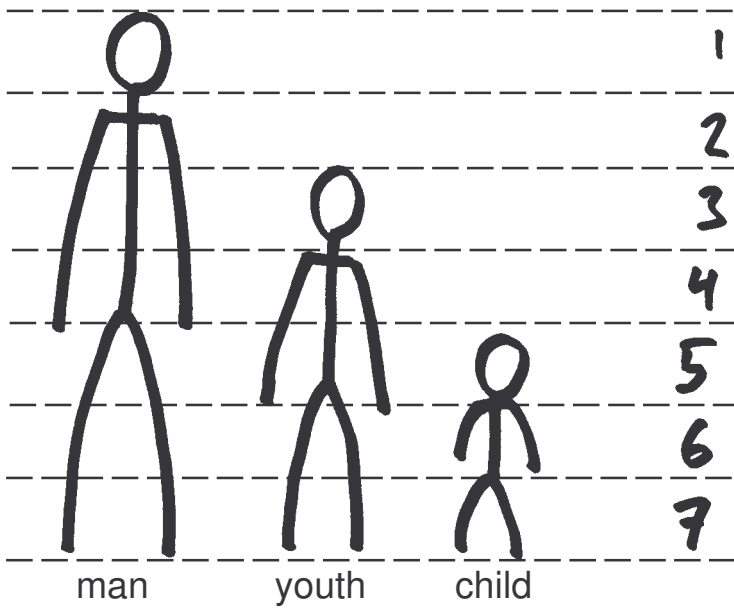


Add a few details, if you like

More samples:

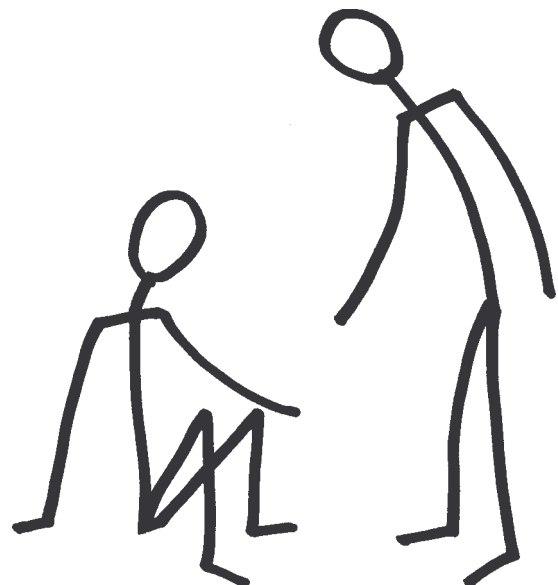
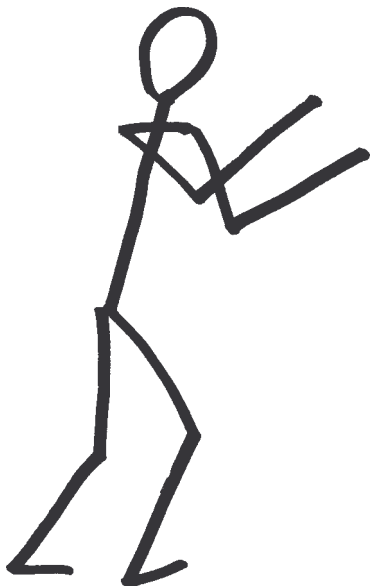
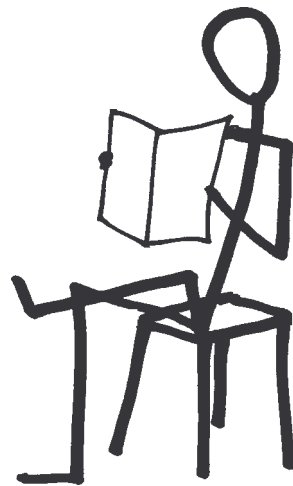


Drawing people I



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

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





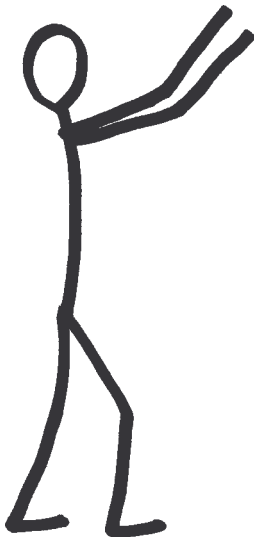
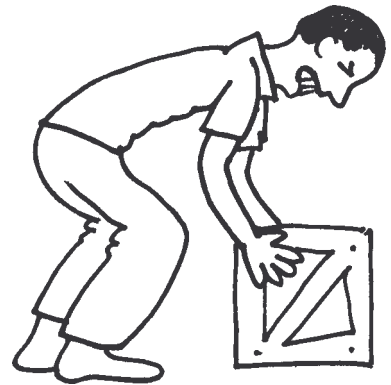
Step one: draw the stick figure



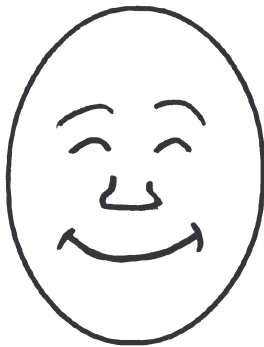
Step two: add flesh and clothes



Step three: ink the drawing and erase the pencil marks



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



happy



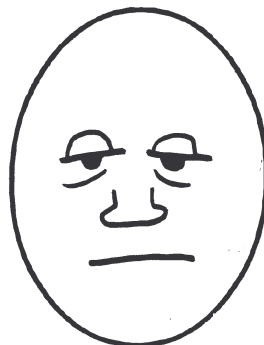
unhappy



furious



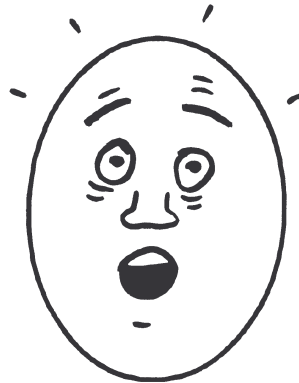
very glad



tired



proud



astonished



suspicious



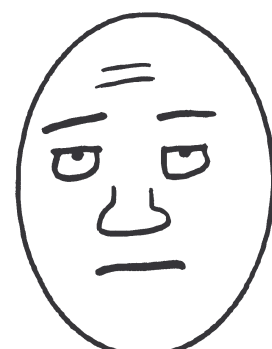
embarrassed



frightened

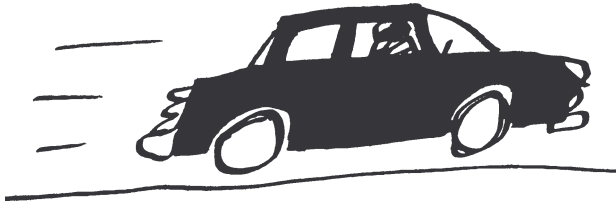


drunk



gloomy

Drawing movement, sound and other effects



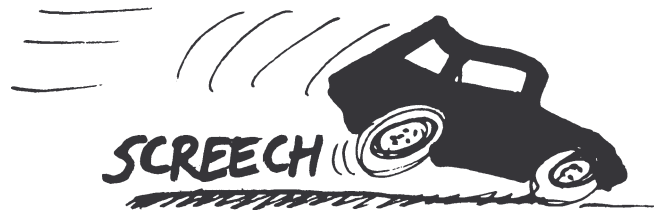
speed lines



direction and motion



bouncing ball with sound



hard braking and sound



pain in the thumb



music



rolling movement



slight hand movement

Exaggeration works!



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

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

In one story you should not have too many exaggerations.



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

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



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

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



First finish your pencil drawing

Draw the outlines with a thin pen

Remove the pencil lines with an eraser



Fill in the solid black areas

Finish with making cloth structures and other details

The inking process is to draw with **black ink** on top of the pencil artwork all the lines, black areas and structures.

The pencil artwork is erased as soon as the basic lines are finished.

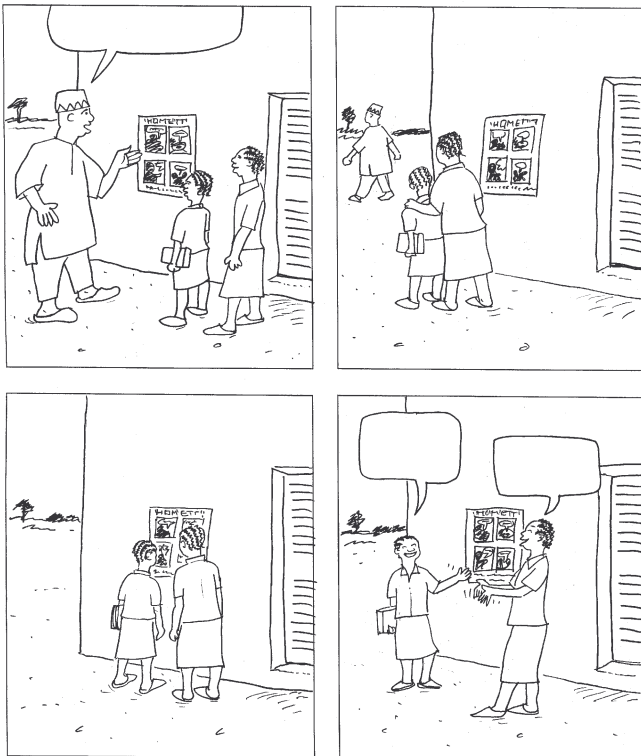


1. pencil sketch



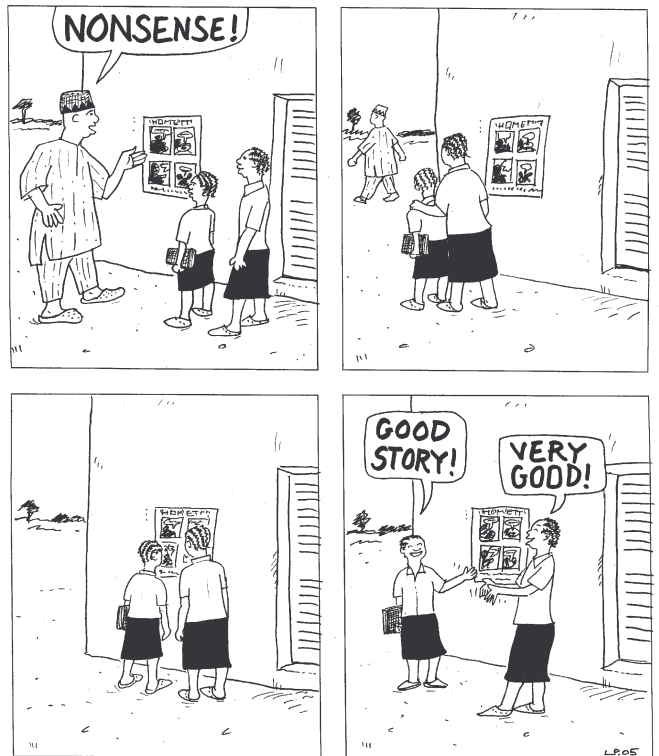
2. thin ink line

COMICS POWER! COMICS ON THE WALL



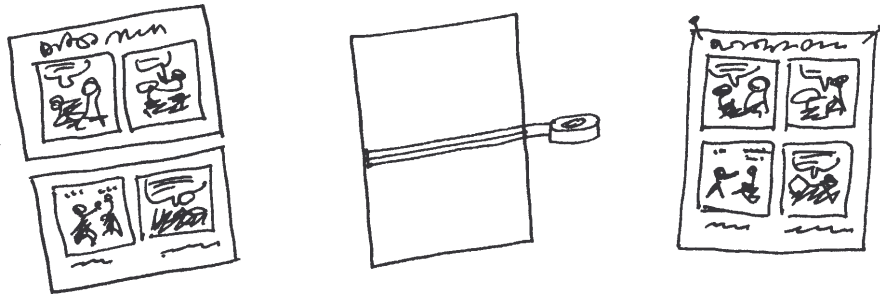
3. pencils removed

COMICS POWER! COMICS ON THE WALL

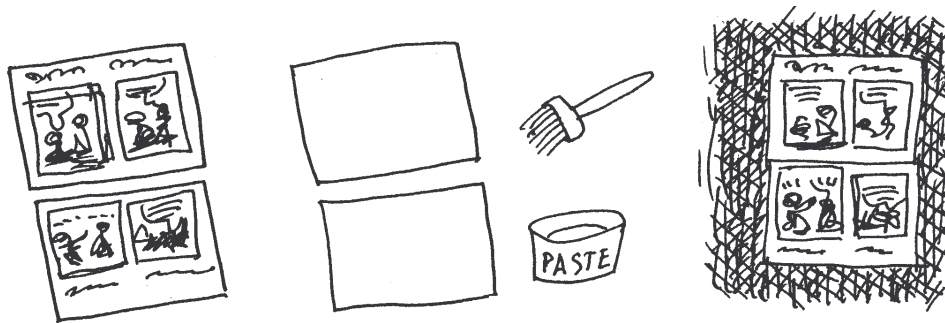


4. solid colours and details added

Putting up wallposters



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



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

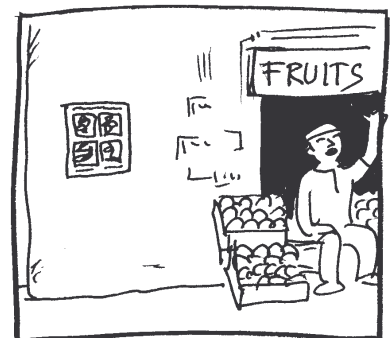
The posters should be put up in places where people move about. But you will have to get permission from houseowners if you put the posters on their walls.



On house walls



On trees



Next to a shop



On notice boards

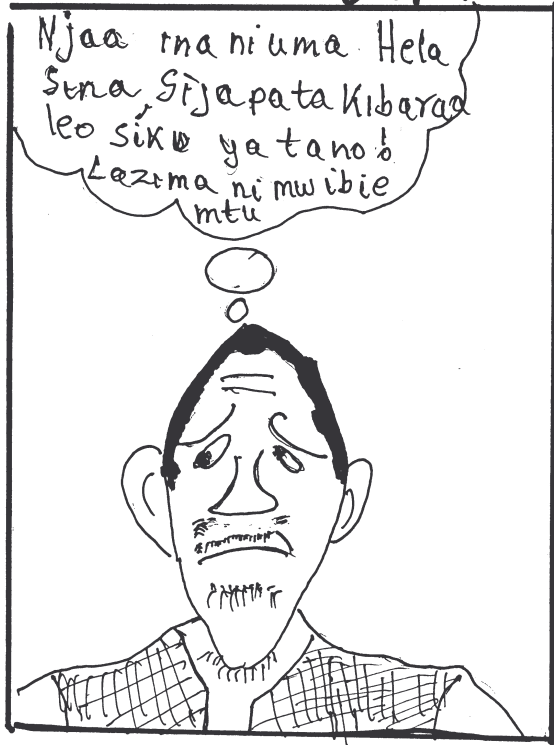


At bus stops



On outside walls

UKOSEFU WA AJIRA HUSABABISHA UHARIFU



MATHIAS KIMIRO

Kimiro



BY KIMI ARTS © 0003

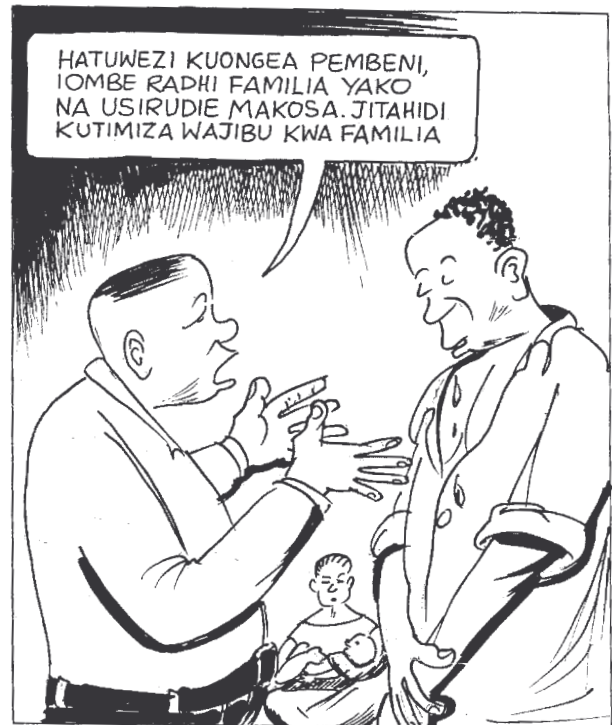
“Unemployment causes bad events” by Mathias Kimiro, Coordinator at Kinondoni Intermediary Gender Network, Tanzania. An unemployed boy turns into a robber and is finally burned alive by a mob. In the last panel some vocational training students congratulate themselves for not being in the robber’s position.

Mwana mke ana haki°



"Women have rights!", A village woman is widowed and the late husband's relatives chase her away from the property owned by her husband. She does not accept this and takes the case to court, which decides that the property must be inherited by her, not the husband's relatives. *Story and art: Ms. Rose Dauda, Tanzania.*

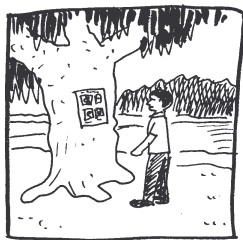
TUZITUNZE FAMILIA ZETU



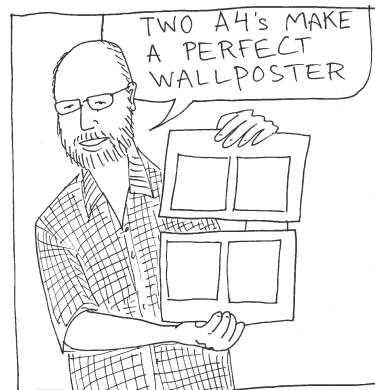
TUTIMIZE WAJIBU

NA WILLY LYAMBA

“Take care of your family matters”, The father in the family explains to his friend that he has a big family problem and needs to borrow some money urgently. He immediately goes and squanders the money on drinks and bar-girls. When his friend finds out, he complains bitterly and says that a father in a family should take responsibility for family matters first. *Story and art: Willy Lyamba, Tanzania.*



**WALLPOSTER
COMICS CAN
BE PUT UP
ALMOST ANY-
WHERE.**



**WALLPOSTER COMICS
ARE SIMPLE TO MAKE.
THEY ARE ALSO COST-
EFFECTIVE...**

World Comics-Finland
Leif Packalén
Vanamontie 4 E 156
01350, Vantaa, Finland
telephone +358-9-8736751 or cell
phone +358-40-5318235
e-mail leif.packalen@worldcomics.fi
website: www.worldcomics.fi

**COMICS
POWER!**

always!