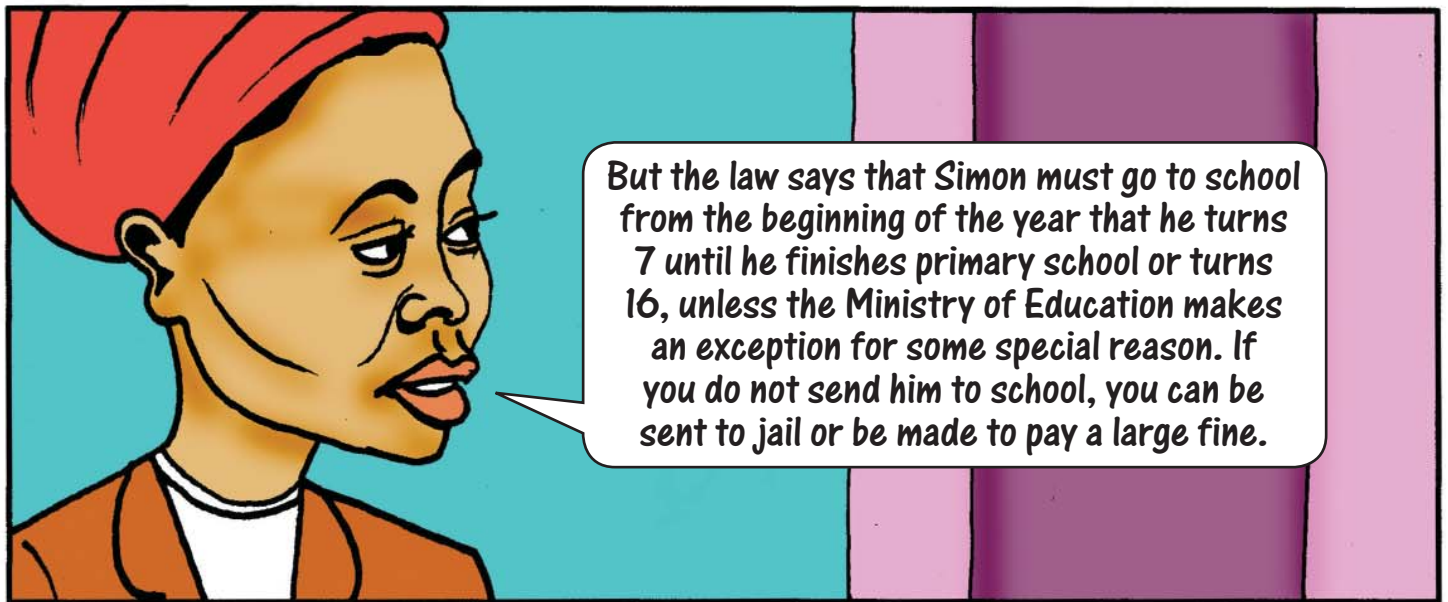


What to do if you can't pay the School Development Fund contribution

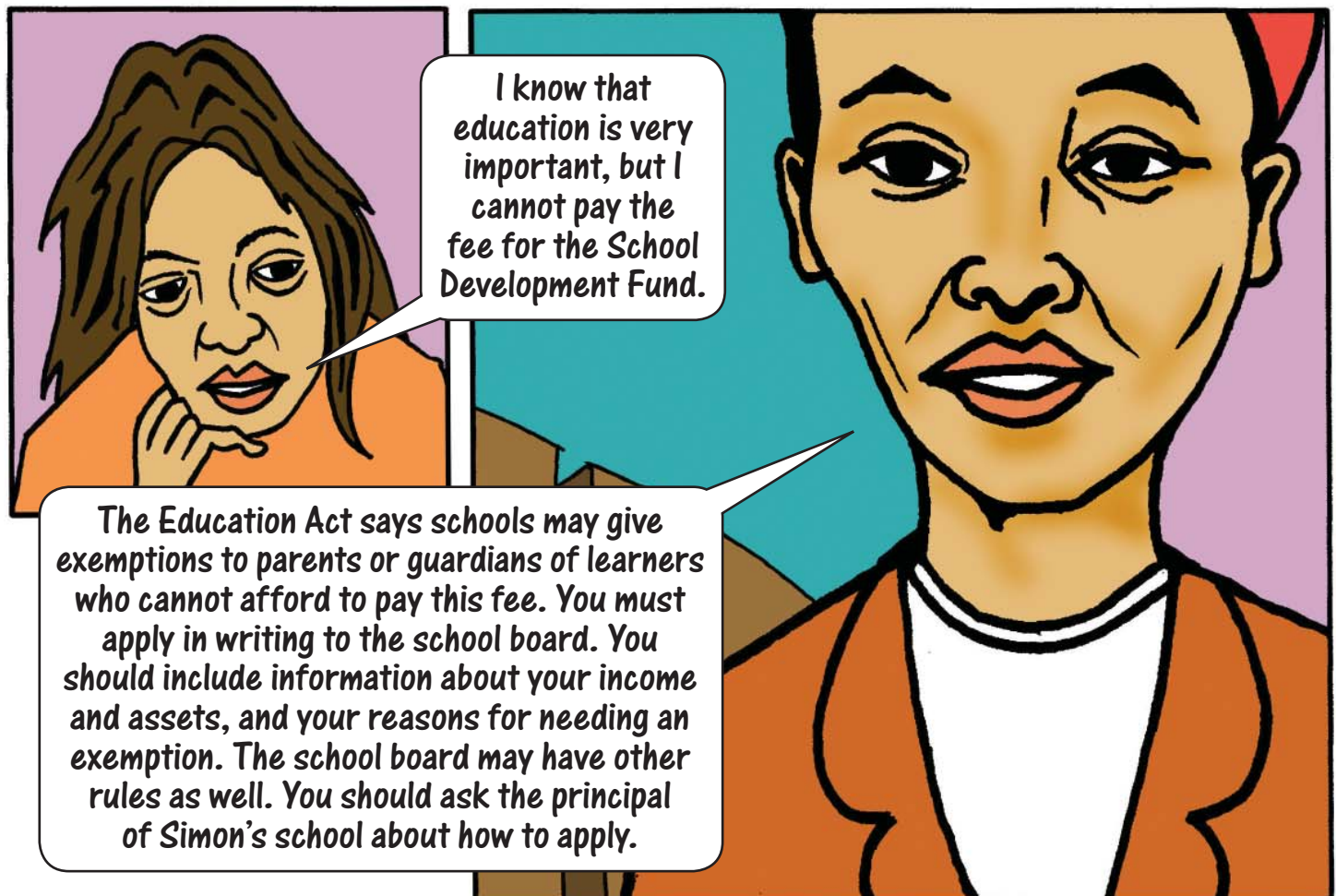




But the law says that Simon must go to school from the beginning of the year that he turns 7 until he finishes primary school or turns 16, unless the Ministry of Education makes an exception for some special reason. If you do not send him to school, you can be sent to jail or be made to pay a large fine.

If you fail to send your child to school, the law says that the Minister of Education must send you a notice requesting that you send the child to school. Failure to comply with this notice could result in a fine of N\$6 000 or imprisonment for up to 2 years, or both.

Education Act, 53(5) and 77(2)(b)



I know that education is very important, but I cannot pay the fee for the School Development Fund.

The Education Act says schools may give exemptions to parents or guardians of learners who cannot afford to pay this fee. You must apply in writing to the school board. You should include information about your income and assets, and your reasons for needing an exemption. The school board may have other rules as well. You should ask the principal of Simon's school about how to apply.

[A] principal or teacher of a state school may not, in any way, prejudice a learner or discriminate against a learner on the reason that a parent has failed or refused to pay the school development fund contribution for such learner.

Education Act, Regulation 9

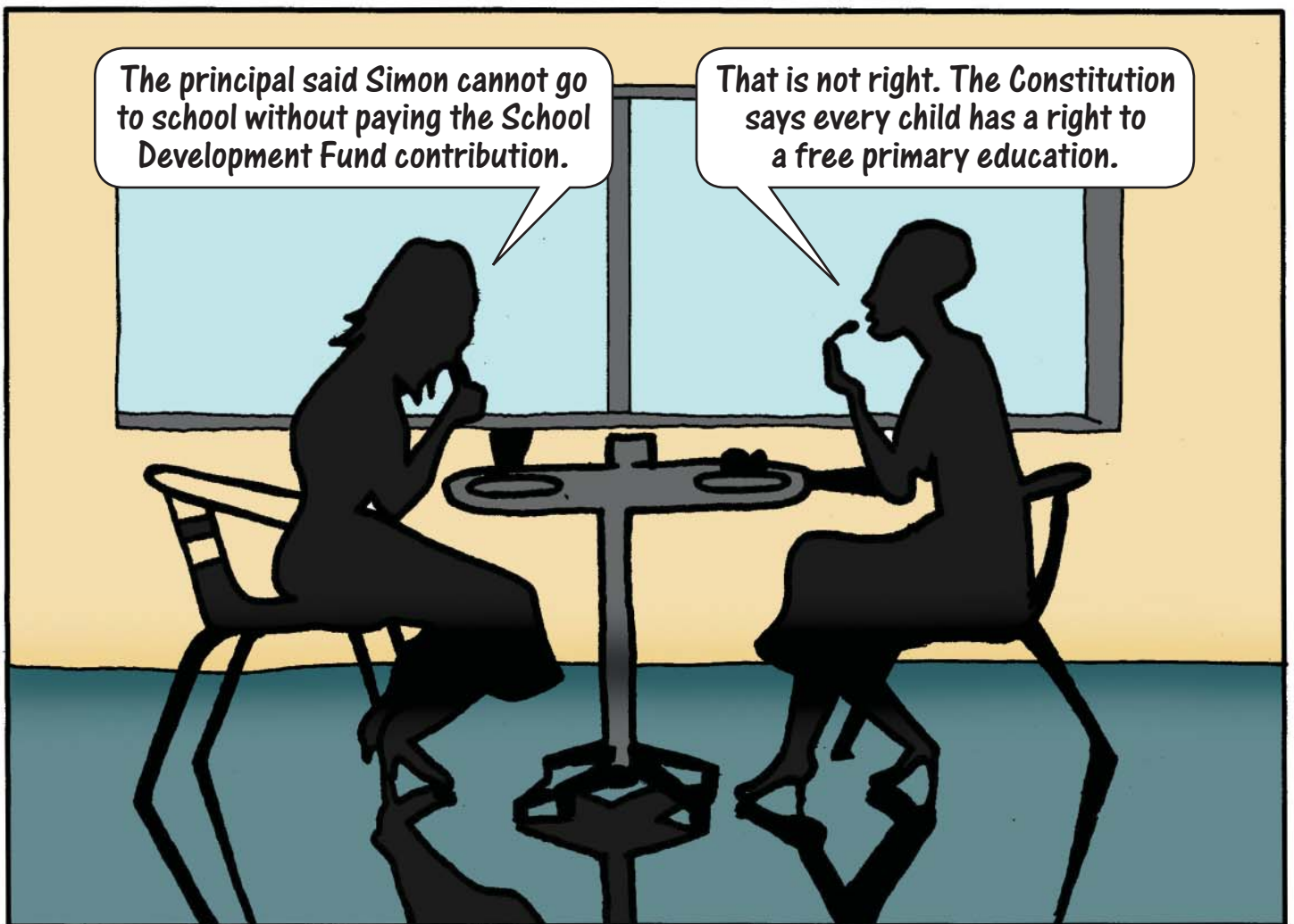
IN THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE ...

Hello Mr Davids. I want to send my son Simon to school but I cannot afford to pay the fee for the School Development Fund.

I am a domestic worker and I earn N\$1500 per month. I have two children and my niece and nephew also live with me. The father of my children does not have a job. He helps to look after the children on the weekend, but he does not give us any money.

All children who go to THIS school must pay the School Development Fund contribution! No exceptions!






Primary education shall be compulsory and the State shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge.


Constitution of Namibia, Article 20(c)



IN THE SOCIAL WORKER'S OFFICE ...




You were right to come and see me. I will write a letter to the Regional Director of the Ministry of Education to tell him that we have assessed your case and you should be allowed to have an exemption.

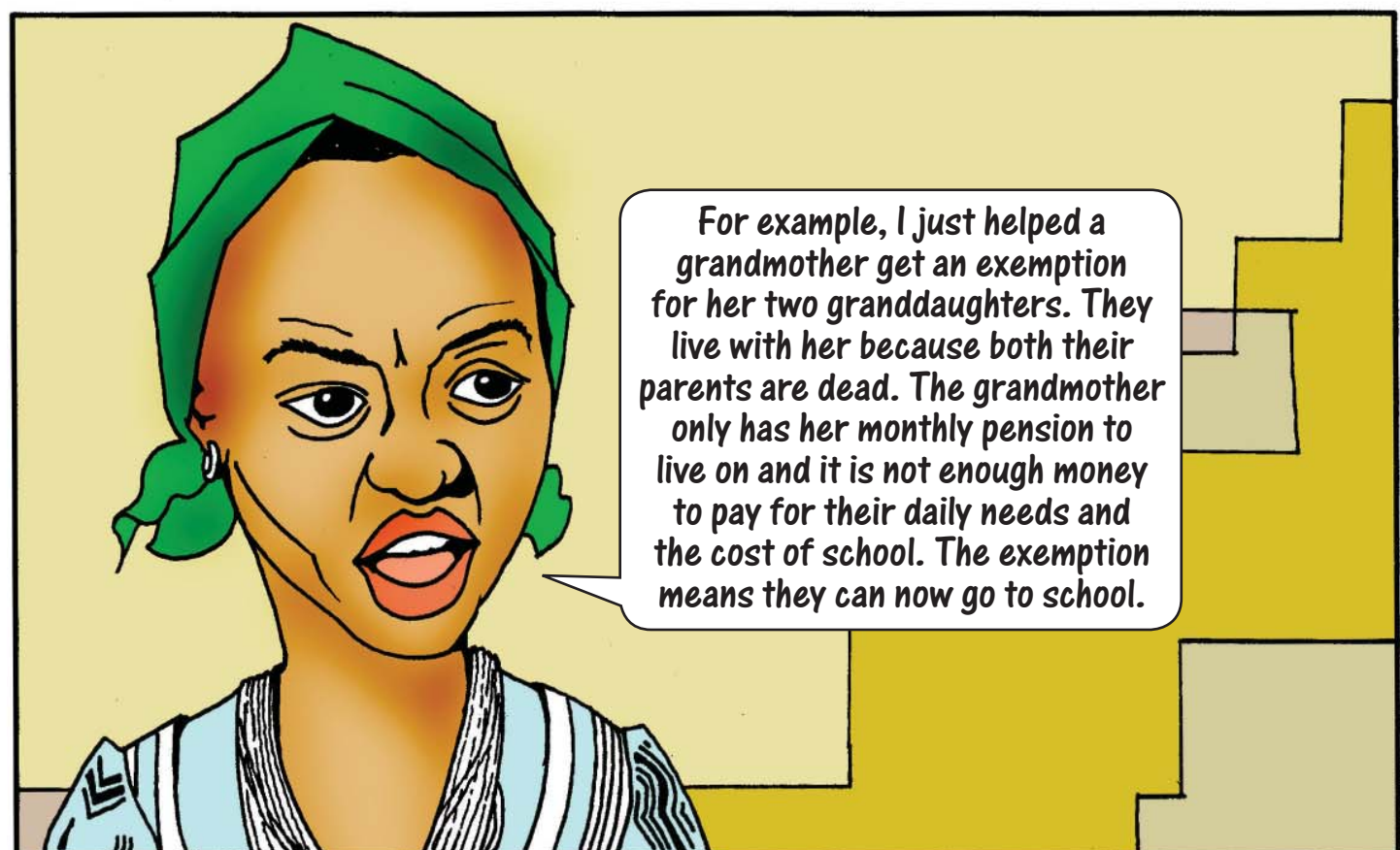
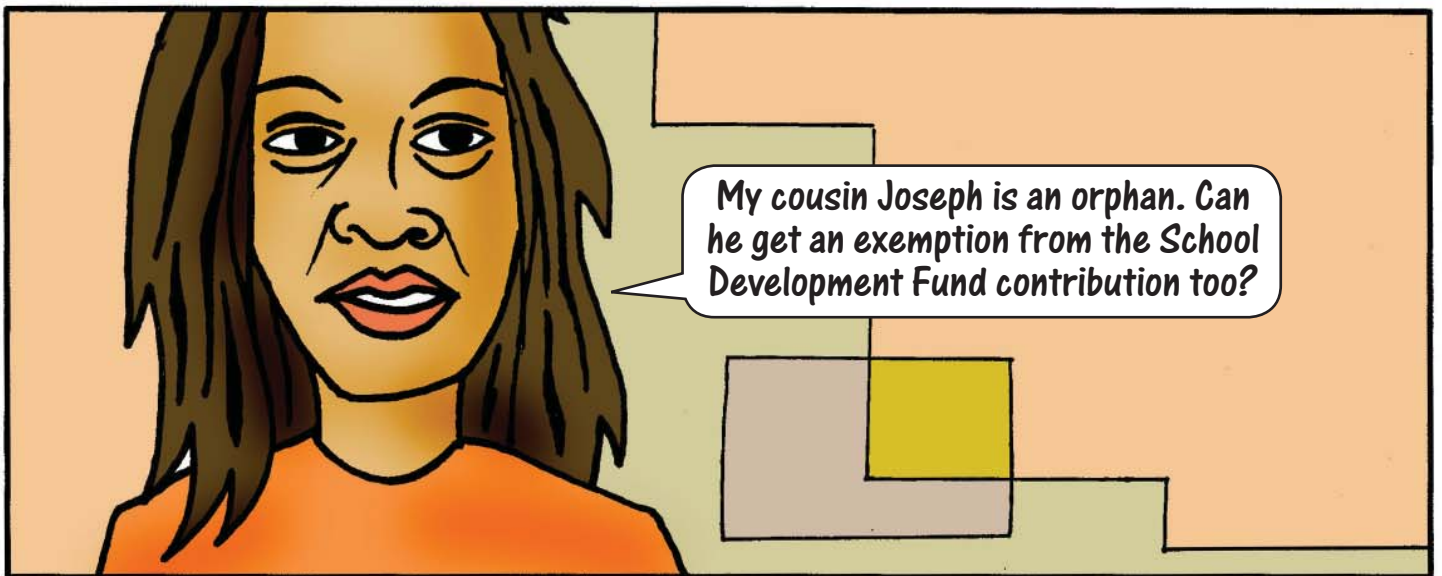


I have heard that sometimes the school will not give a child his or her report if the parent does not pay the School Development Fund contribution. What if the principal says that Simon can attend school but he cannot have his report?

The school is not allowed to do that. If you do have any problems, you can complain to the school board or the Regional Director.

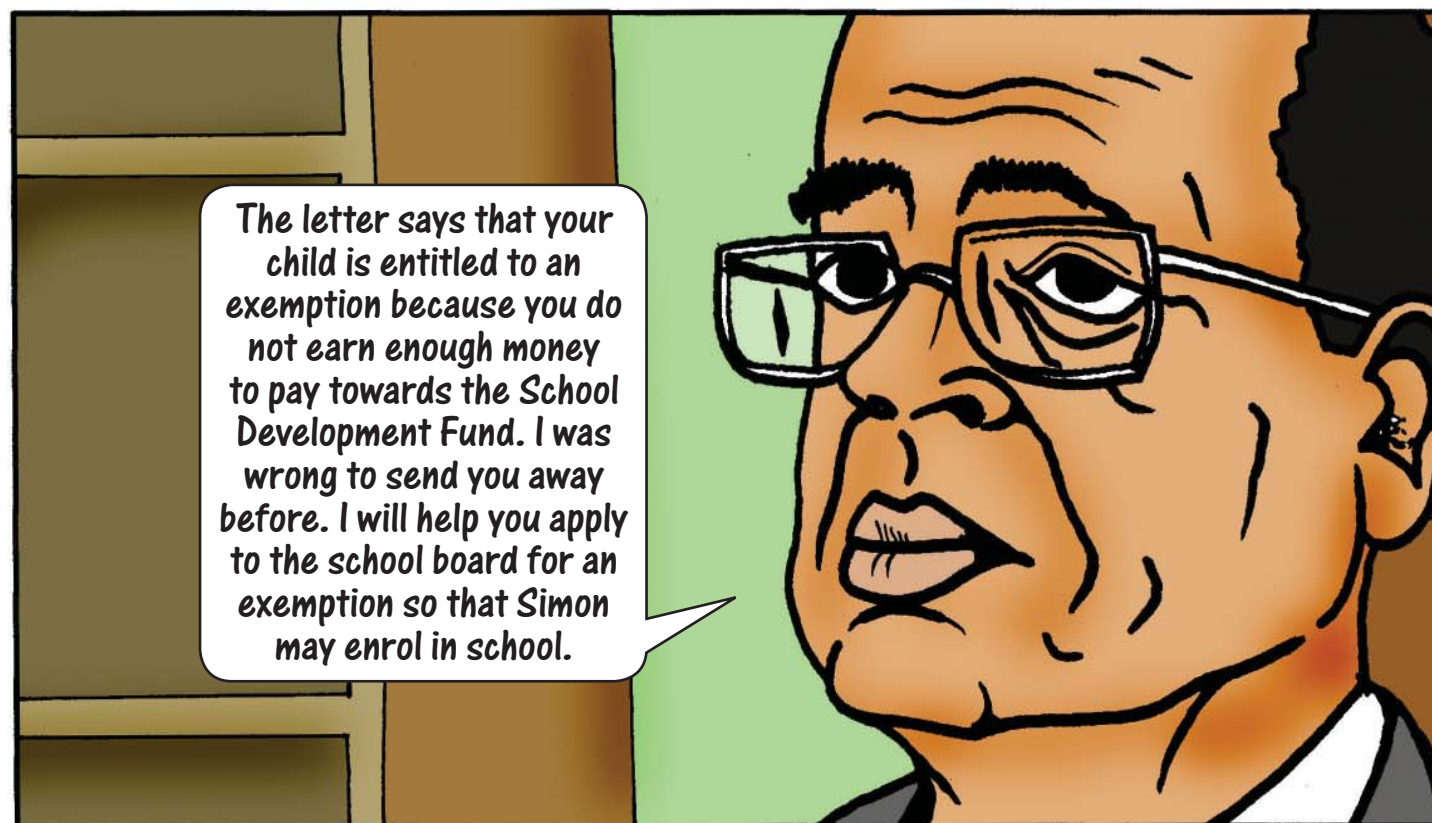


A school is not allowed to refuse primary education to a child because the child's parents cannot pay a contribution to the School Development Fund. But you must get an official exemption if you cannot afford to pay.





Thank you for coming to see me. I have received a letter from the Regional Director.



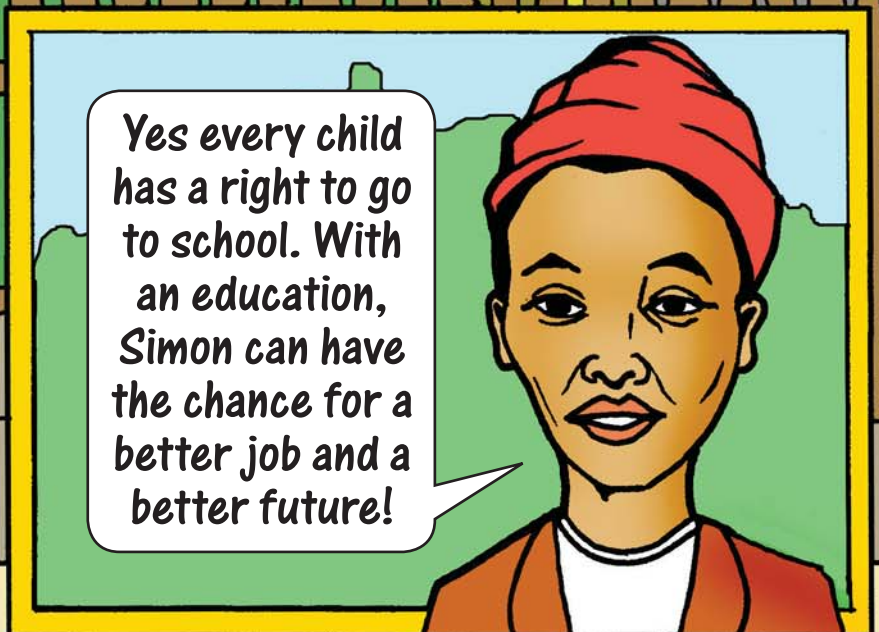
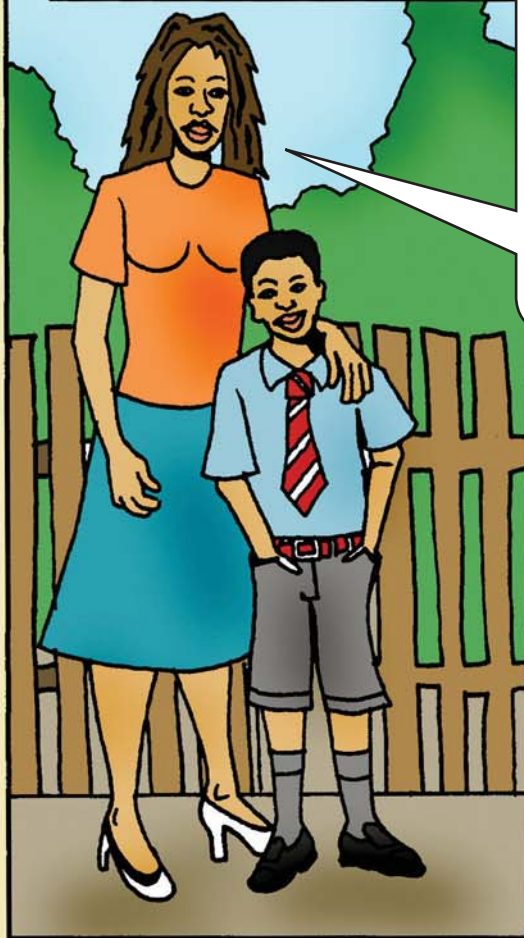
The letter says that your child is entitled to an exemption because you do not earn enough money to pay towards the School Development Fund. I was wrong to send you away before. I will help you apply to the school board for an exemption so that Simon may enrol in school.



Thank you. I am so happy that Simon will be able to attend school.



Thank you for your help, Patricia. Now I know my child has a right to education even if I cannot pay towards the School Development Fund. If I cannot afford to pay, I can ask for an exemption. If the school turns me away, I can ask for help from a social worker, village headman, church leader or constituency councillor. I can also complain to the school board or the Regional Director of Education.



Yes every child has a right to go to school. With an education, Simon can have the chance for a better job and a better future!

If you have a comment or question about this comic, contact the Legal Assistance Centre:

SMS: 081-6000098

Email: comic@lac.org.na

Fax: 088-613693

Post: P.O. Box 604 Windhoek

We would like to hear your feedback about this comic.

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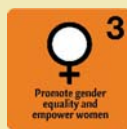
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IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM PAYING THE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT FUND, PLEASE SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE RECOMMENDED IN THIS COMIC BEFORE CONTACTING THE LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTRE.

