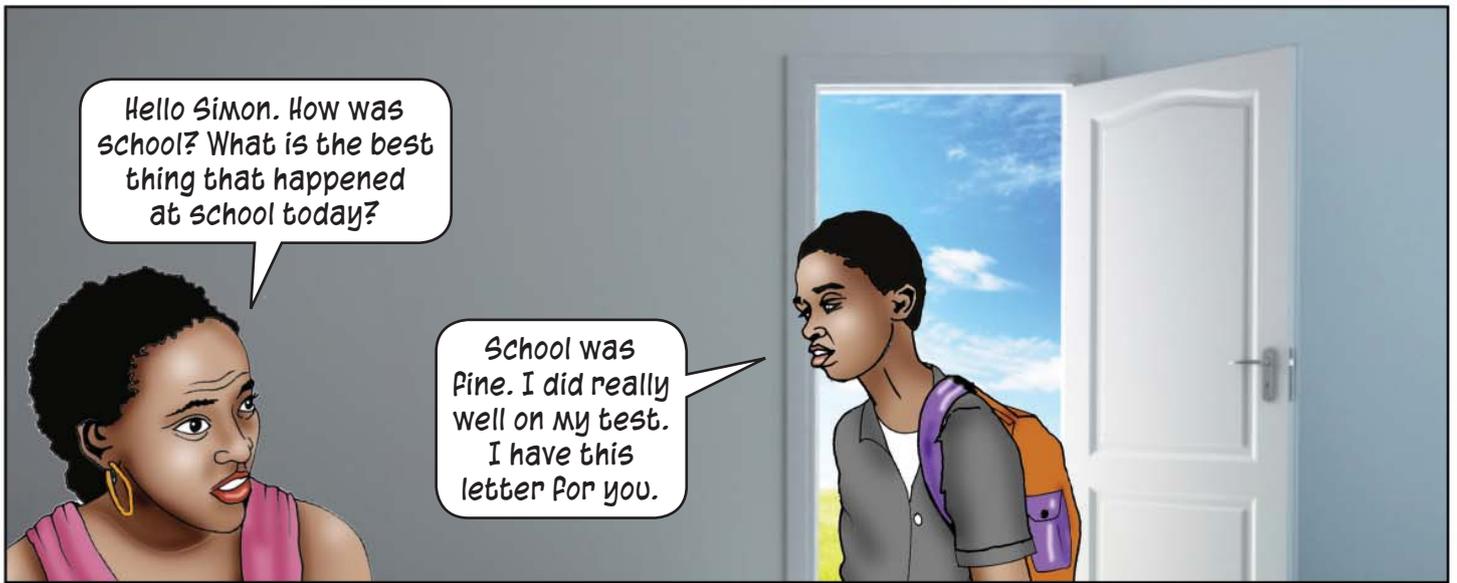


# Making **YOUR** child's education affordable

Every parent, caregiver and learner can play a role in holding their school accountable **for providing quality education in a safe environment.**





Hello Simon. How was school? What is the best thing that happened at school today?

School was fine. I did really well on my test. I have this letter for you.



I am so proud of you for doing well in your test, Simon!



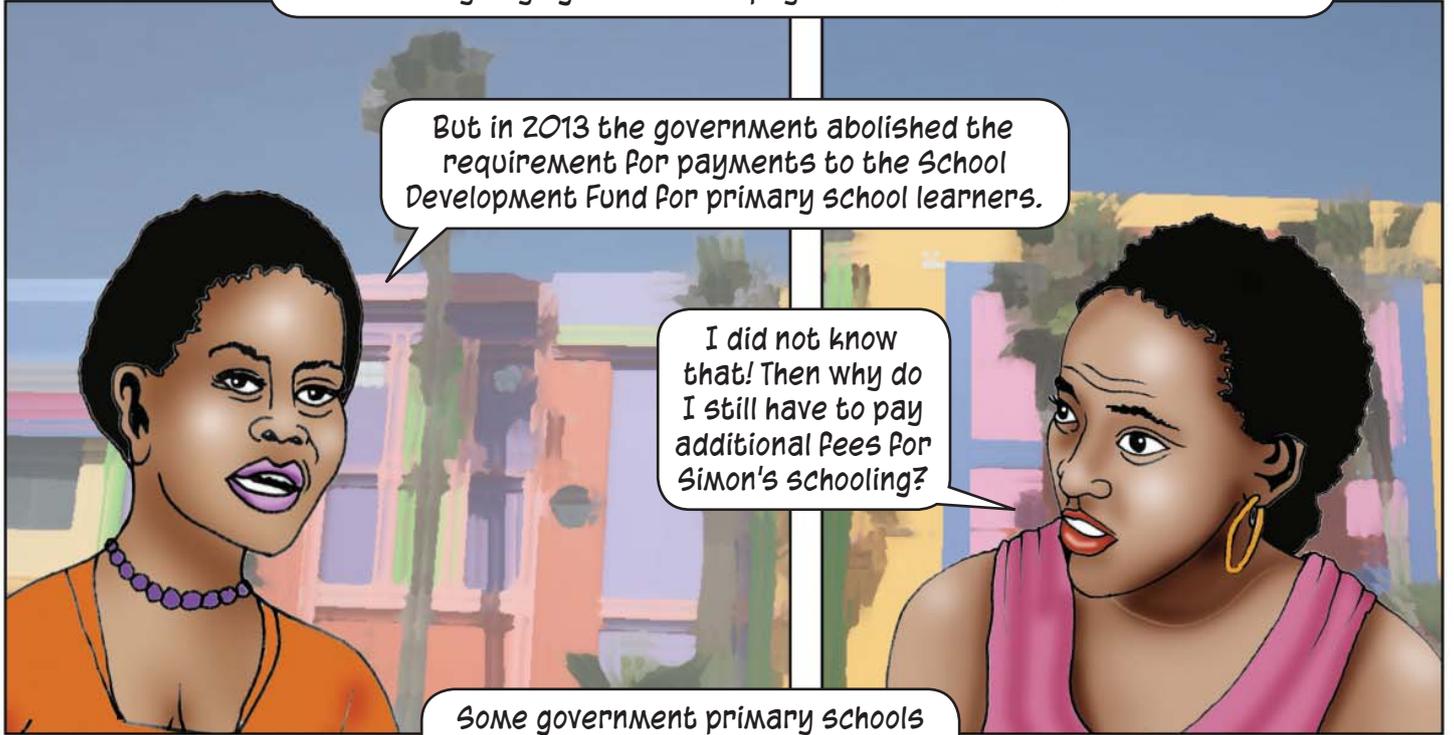
Oh no! The school says we must pay an administrative fee. If we do not pay the fee you cannot go to school. I do not have enough money! The law says that you have to go to school, but how can you go if we cannot pay?





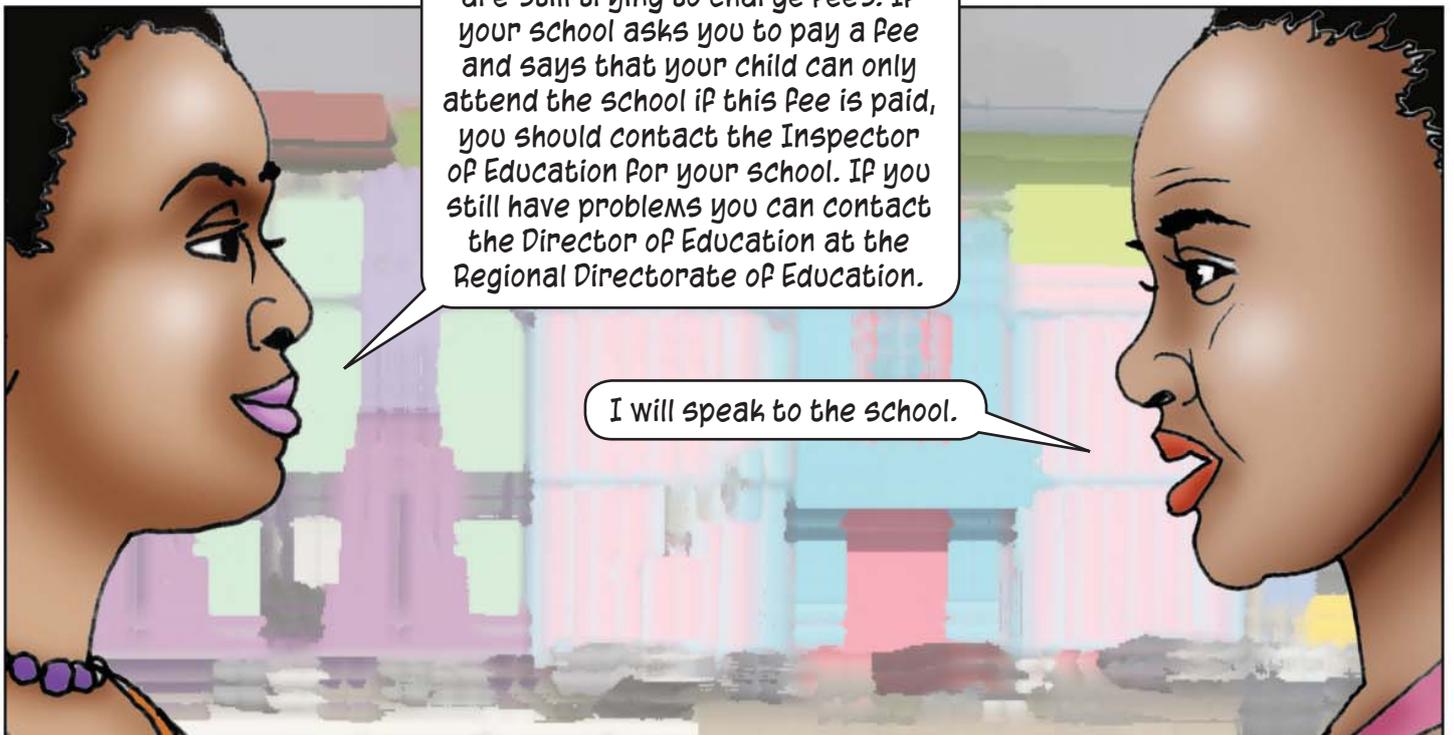
Hello Anna, hello Simon. Have you found a job yet? How are you coping?

We are managing, but it is difficult. Simon brought a letter home from school today saying that I must pay an administrative fee to the school.



But in 2013 the government abolished the requirement for payments to the School Development Fund for primary school learners.

I did not know that! Then why do I still have to pay additional fees for Simon's schooling?



Some government primary schools are still trying to charge fees. If your school asks you to pay a fee and says that your child can only attend the school if this fee is paid, you should contact the Inspector of Education for your school. If you still have problems you can contact the Director of Education at the Regional Directorate of Education.

I will speak to the school.



Hello I received the letter you sent asking me to pay an administrative fee. I cannot pay it because I am not working.

Then your child cannot come to school.

But ...

No excuses. Please leave and take your son with you.

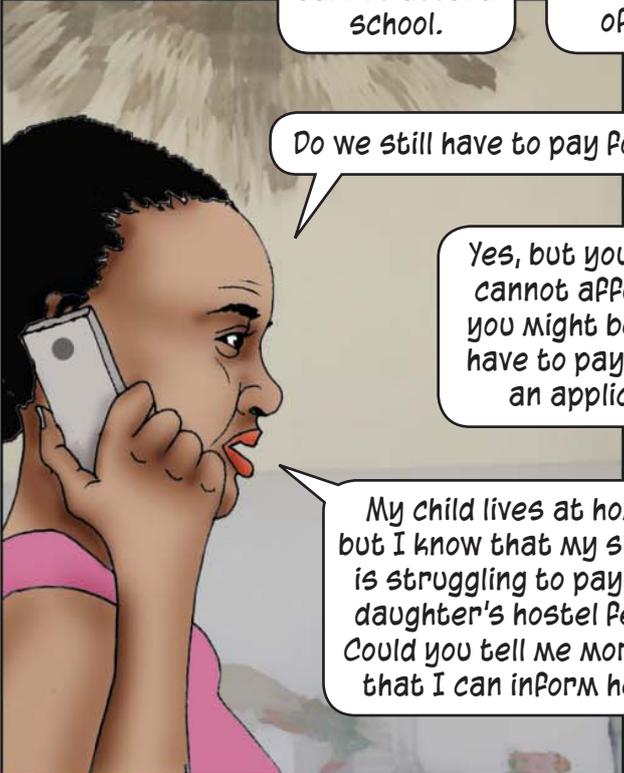
LATER THAT DAY, ANNA PHONES THE INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION FOR THE REGION.



My son's school says that if I do not pay an administrative fee my son cannot attend school.



In 2013 the government said that parents or caregivers of primary school learners are no longer required to pay towards the School Development Fund. Voluntary contributions may be allowed if they are TRULY VOLUNTARY, and if they were AGREED ON BY THE PARENTS AT A SCHOOL MEETING. But there must be NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE LEARNER IF THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION IS NOT PAID. No primary school may insist on payment of any fee. We will contact the school and work this out.



Do we still have to pay for the hostel accommodation?



Yes, but you can apply for an exemption if you cannot afford the hostel fees. If you qualify, you might be able to pay less, or you might not have to pay anything at all. You must complete an application to request an exemption.

My child lives at home, but I know that my sister is struggling to pay her daughter's hostel fees. Could you tell me more so that I can inform her?

I will give you the information that you need. Do you have a pencil and paper handy? You can take notes to share with your sister.

## Do you qualify for an exemption from hostel fees at your child's school hostel?

If your child is boarding in a hostel and you cannot afford to pay hostel fees, you may apply to the Ministry of Education for a partial or full exemption.

The application form asks all parents or guardians to provide the following information:

- name, address and occupation of parent/guardian
- address of employer
- proof of income and expenditure.

Income includes your salary, pension or annuity, any maintenance payments you receive and any other income or benefits. Expenditure includes all your regular monthly payments for the necessities of life.

Also, if you are farming on private or communal land, you must give information on your assets (such as the market value of any land you own and the value of your livestock) and debts (bonds on your land, bank loans, etc). Your Traditional Chief, Pastor or Regional Councillor may provide you with supporting evidence such as a letter indicating that you are truly unable to pay full or partial hostel fees for your child.

The form must be signed by a commissioner of oaths. You can do this at any police station.



My sister will be so relieved to know about this. I will arrange to meet with her so that I can tell her the good news.

Hi Rosa! I have good news for you. I spoke with an Inspector of Education and he gave me information on how to apply for an exemption from hostel fees. You can get an application form from the Hostel Superintendent at your child's hostel, the Inspector of Education for your school or the Administrative Officer at the Regional Directorate of Education.

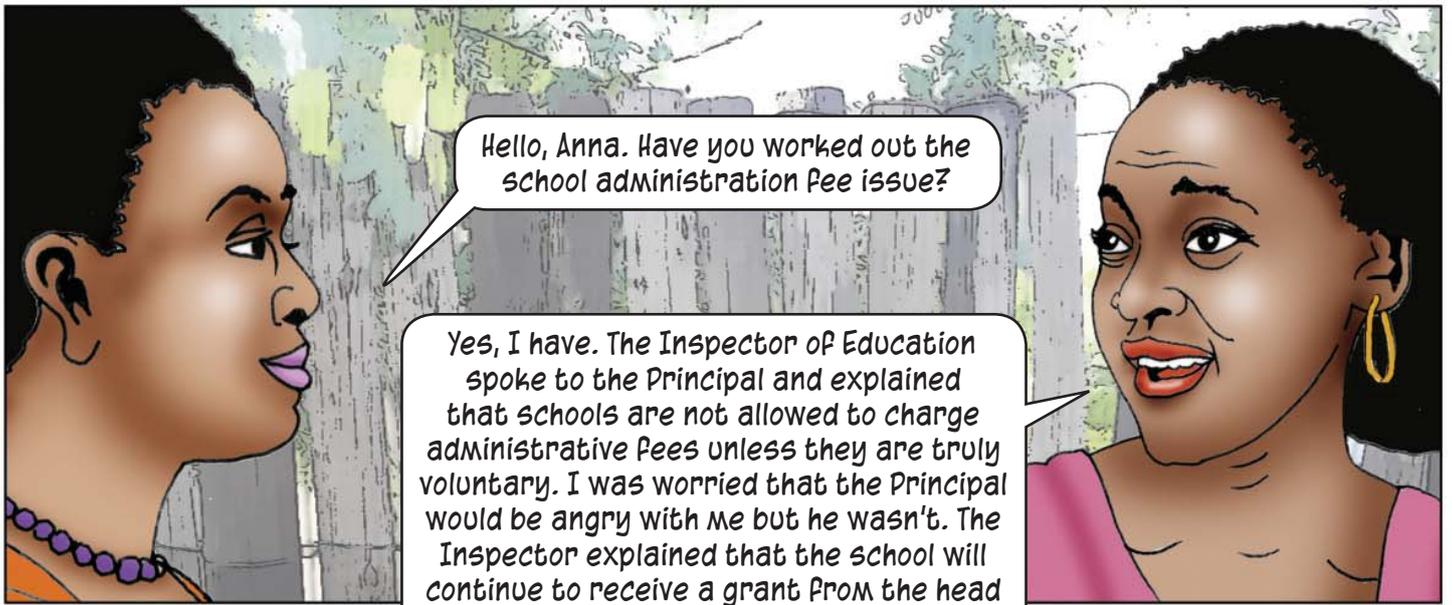
Thank you so much! I hope that we will qualify. Mary was very worried that she was not going to be able to live in the hostel next term.



I have some good news for you! We have been granted an exemption from paying the hostel fees. Now you will not have to worry about having to walk long distances to school each day or having to stay with a family you do not know.



This is such good news! I didn't know how I was going to do my homework if I had to do all that walking!



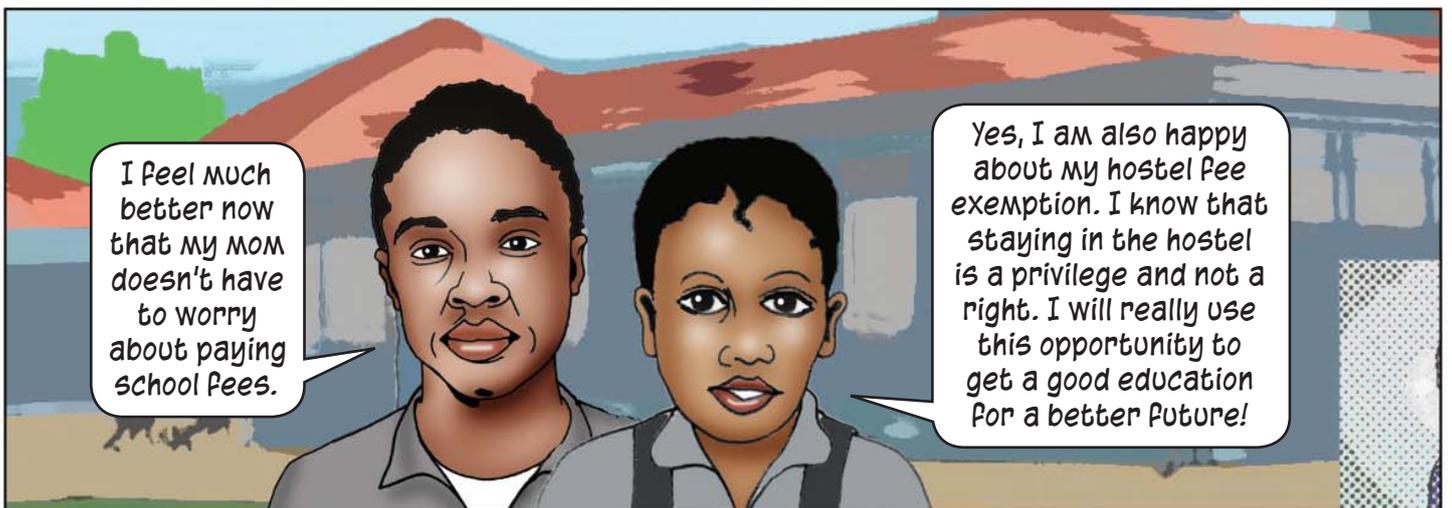
Hello, Anna. Have you worked out the school administration fee issue?

Yes, I have. The Inspector of Education spoke to the Principal and explained that schools are not allowed to charge administrative fees unless they are truly voluntary. I was worried that the Principal would be angry with me but he wasn't. The Inspector explained that the school will continue to receive a grant from the head office to buy the supplies they need.



That's great! I am glad that the Inspector was so helpful.

Yes, the Inspector also gave me information about exemptions from hostel fees, and my sister succeeded in getting an exemption. She was very pleased.



I feel much better now that my mom doesn't have to worry about paying school fees.

Yes, I am also happy about my hostel fee exemption. I know that staying in the hostel is a privilege and not a right. I will really use this opportunity to get a good education for a better future!

If your primary school is charging any kind of compulsory school fees, contact your school's Inspector of Education to discuss the situation.

If you are struggling to afford hostel fees, you may qualify for an exemption. You can get an application form from the Hostel Superintendent at your child's hostel, the Inspector of Education for your school or the Hostel Officer at the Ministry of Education's regional office. You can complete and submit the application form to see if you may be completely or partly excused from paying hostel fees.

**Every school in Namibia should provide quality education for its learners in a safe, protected environment.** Learners, their families and community members can hold schools accountable for meeting this standard. But learners and parents can only hold schools accountable if they know about the standards that the schools should be meeting. The Ministry of Education is working with development partners to provide this information. Learners, their families and community members can then use this information to work with the schools in their community to ensure that every school provides quality education in a safe, protected environment.

**We all have a duty to make our schools better.** All learners must commit to learning, respecting their teachers, looking after school property and preventing wastage of school resources. Learners can contribute to quality education by working and studying – and also by caring for and supporting each other. Parents and other caregivers must be active participants in their children’s education. Schools must implement Namibia’s laws and policies on education to the best of their ability, and reach out to parents and community members to encourage them to work together with the school to deliver quality education to all children in Namibia.

This comic is one of the materials produced for the Ministry of Education’s **Social Accountability and School Governance Project**. There are three other comics in this range, and three posters. To get printed copies of these and other materials produced under this project, contact your Regional School Counsellor, or the office of the Ministry of Education in your region, or the National Resource Centre (contact details below).

**National Resource Centre**  
Ministry of Education  
Government Office Park, Luther Street, Windhoek  
Telephone (+264) (0)61-2933004

## Holding your school ACCOUNTABLE

### Step 1:

Start at your school. Talk to your Life Skills teacher or teacher counsellor, your Principal and your School Board. Talk to any member of your Learner Representative Council.

### Step 2:

If you need to look further than your school for help, contact the Regional School Counsellor or the Inspector of Education responsible for your school. You can get their contact details from your school. The Inspector’s job is to ensure that the school follows all the relevant laws and policies.

### Step 3:

If the Regional School Counsellor or the Inspector cannot help, contact the Director of Education at the Regional Directorate of Education, or the Chief Regional Officer at the Regional Council, or the Regional Governor.

### Step 4:

If Step 3 also does not help, you can contact the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education at the Head Office in Windhoek:  
**Permanent Secretary**  
**Ministry of Education**  
**Private Bag 13186, Windhoek**  
**Tel: (061) 293-3523/4**



This comic was produced by the Legal Assistance Centre for the Social Accountability and School Governance Project on behalf of the Ministry of Education. The project is supported by UNICEF and the European Union. The contents can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

Text: Gender Research and Advocacy Project of the Legal Assistance Centre  
Illustrations, design and layout: Dudley Viall and Perri Caplan  
Printing: \_\_\_\_\_

This comic may be freely copied for educational purposes, as long as the source is acknowledged.

An electronic version of this publication is available on the following websites:  
[www.moe.gov.na](http://www.moe.gov.na); [www.lac.org.na](http://www.lac.org.na) and [www.unicef.org/namibia](http://www.unicef.org/namibia)