

A Digital Odyssey



The **bumpy road** to digital livelihoods
for forcibly displaced people

Introduction



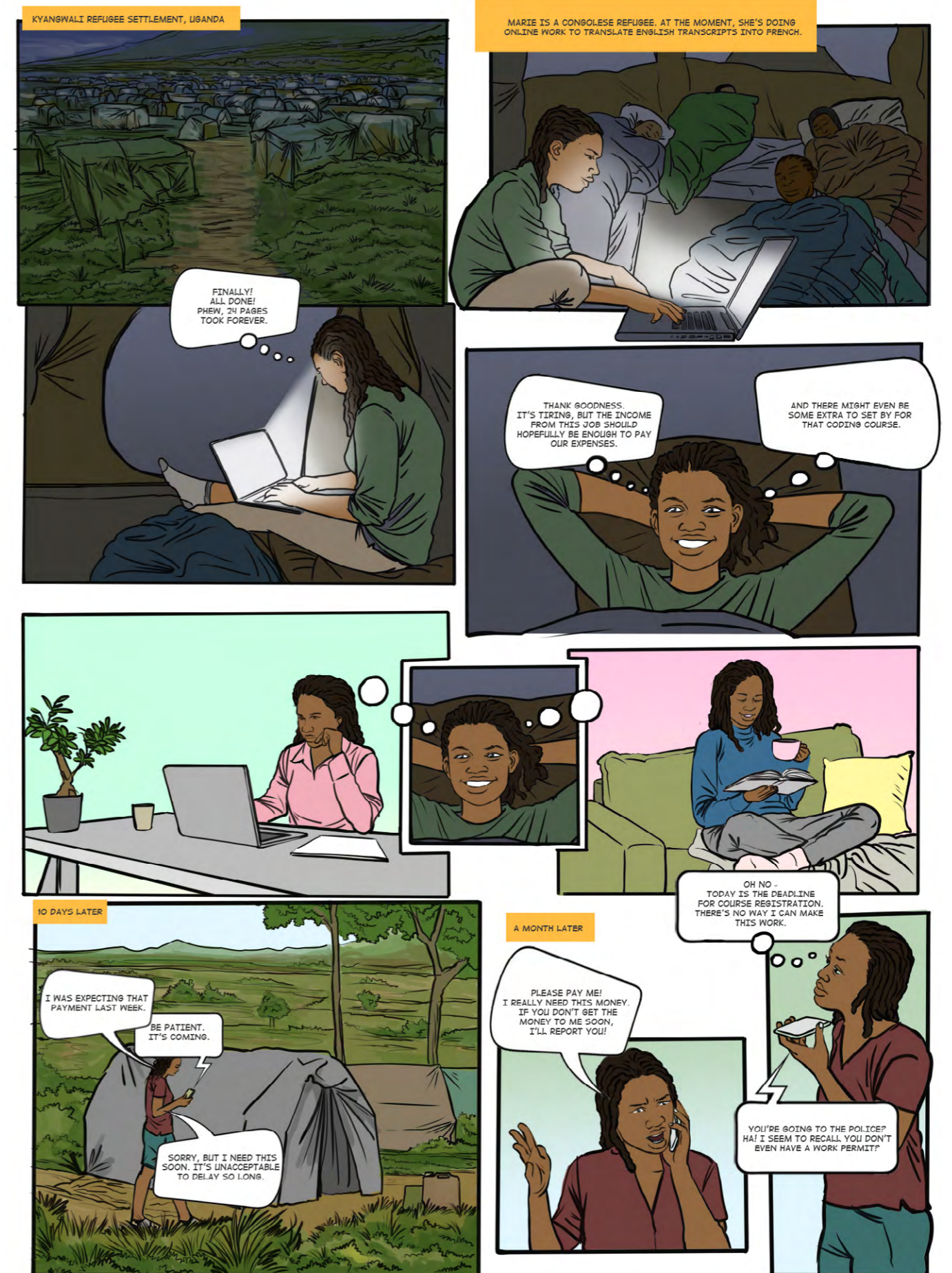
With historic numbers of people forcibly displaced around the world, millions of families and individuals are compelled to seek work in unstable and challenging circumstances. Meanwhile, the digital economy – in other words, economic activity that is enabled by and conducted using digital technology – is an increasingly important livelihoods generator.

At UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, we believe digital technology is an important tool, with the potential to deliver economic empowerment and self-reliance for refugees. But forcibly displaced and stateless people also face challenges and potential risks as they seek to engage in the digital economy. These include a lack of decent working conditions, digital protection risks, legal limitations to their safe engagement, and the digital divide.

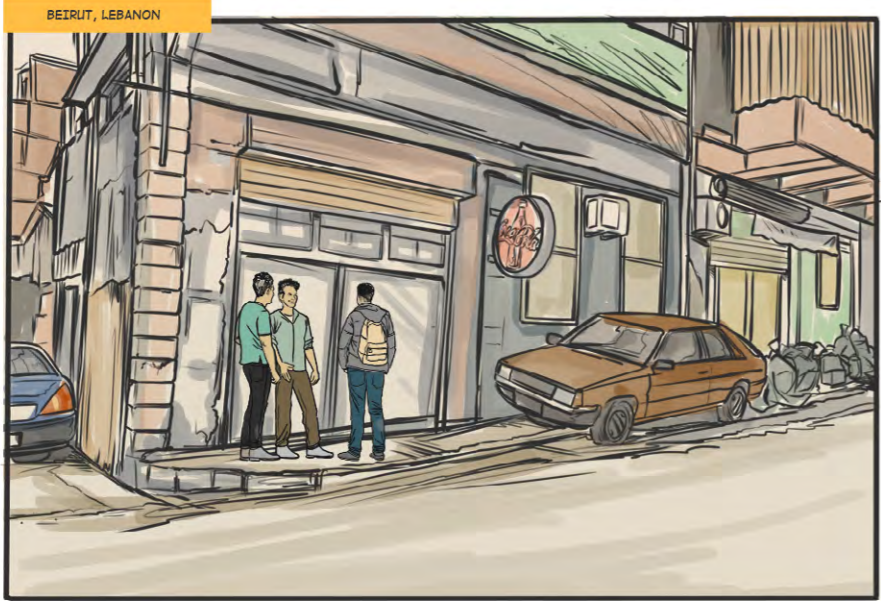
A joint project run by UNHCR's Innovation Service and the International Labour Organization aims to investigate and address these risks and opportunities. As part of this PROSPECTS Partnership Project on the Promotion, Inclusion and Protection of Refugees in the Gig Economy, we conducted a series of initial research initiatives and workshops to understand the challenges facing refugees who are working to access digital livelihoods.

The stories in these comics were inspired by information gathered during these activities. The characters featured here do not represent real individuals, nor are their stories intended to directly mirror any of the real experiences shared with us. Instead, these stories convey some of the risks and challenges commonly encountered by forcibly displaced and stateless people as they try to access the digital economy.

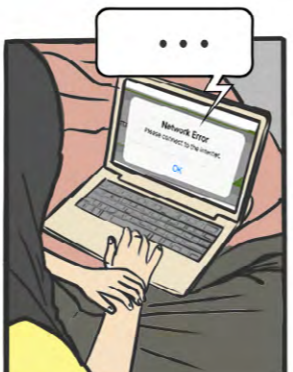
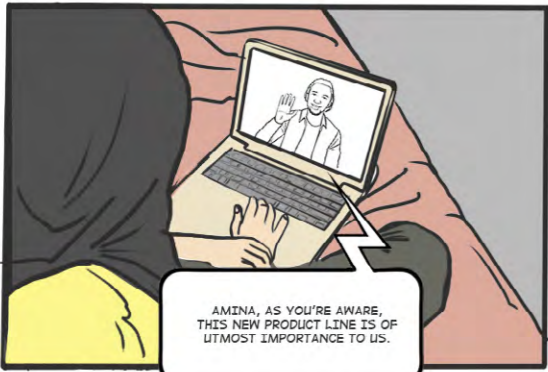
Marie's story



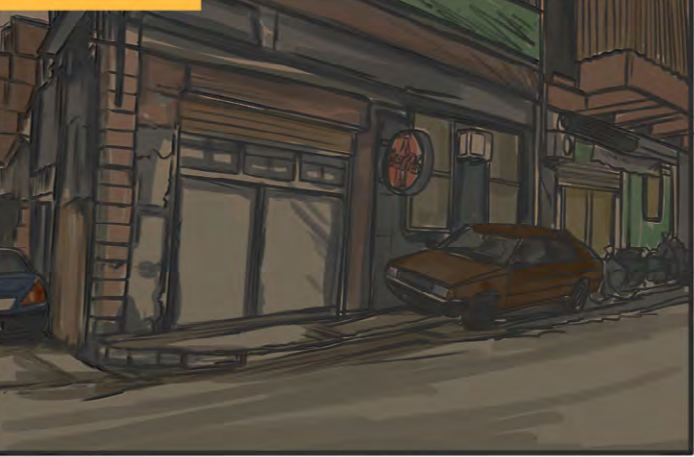
Amina's story



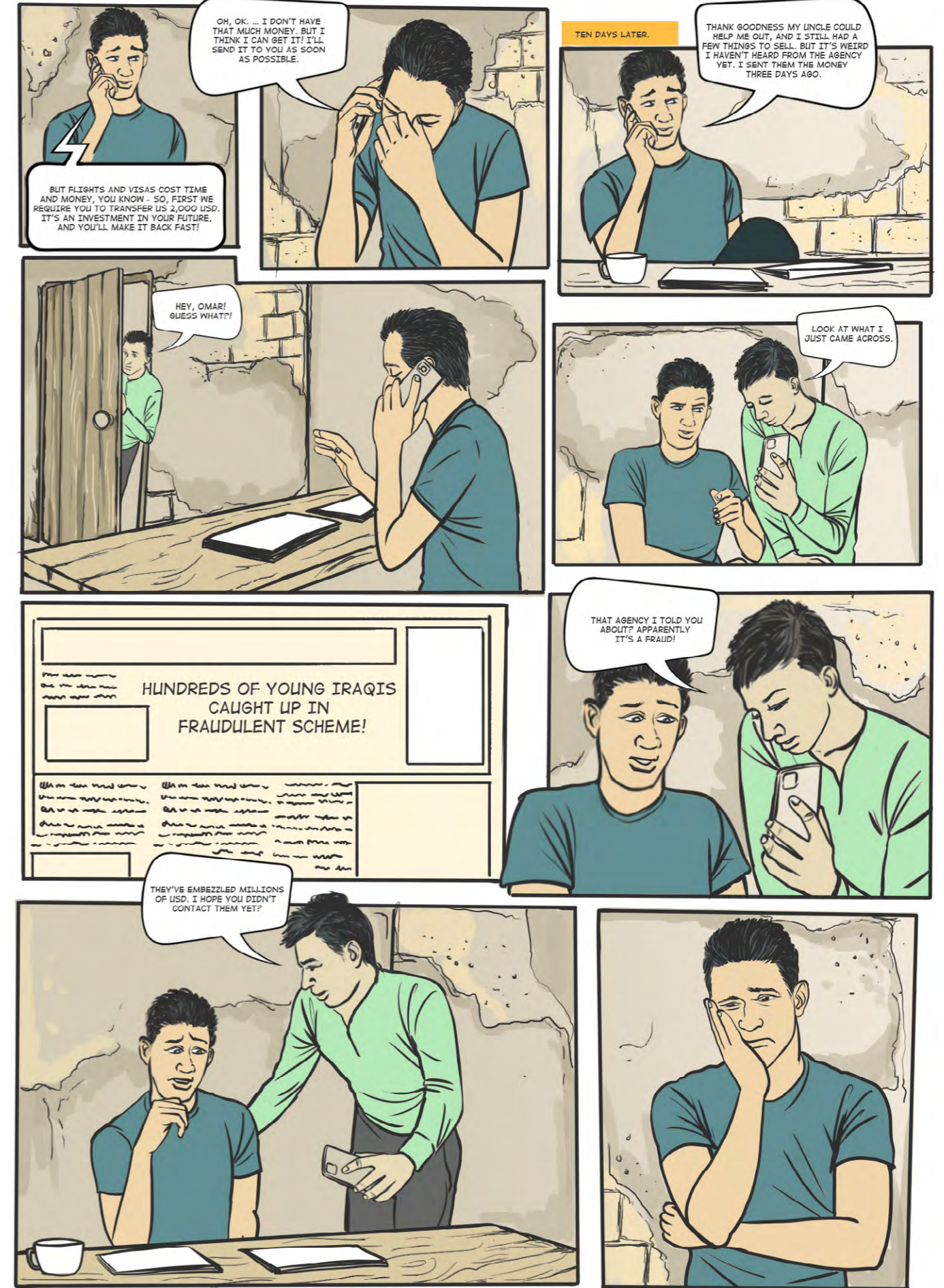
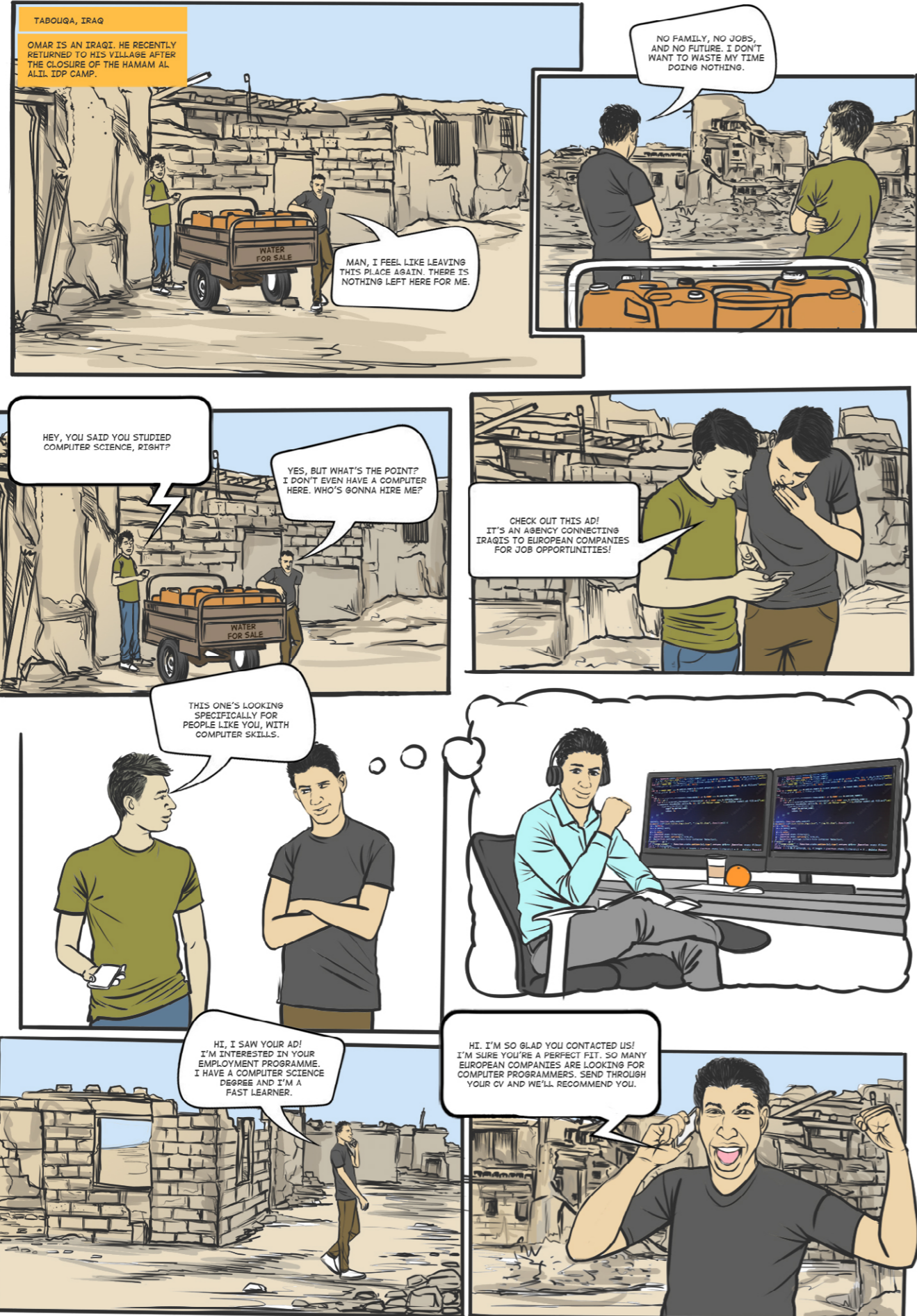
AMINA IS A SYRIAN REFUGEE. SHE'S WORKING REMOTELY AS A GRAPHIC DESIGNER FOR AN AMERICAN COMPANY SHE CONNECTED WITH ONLINE.



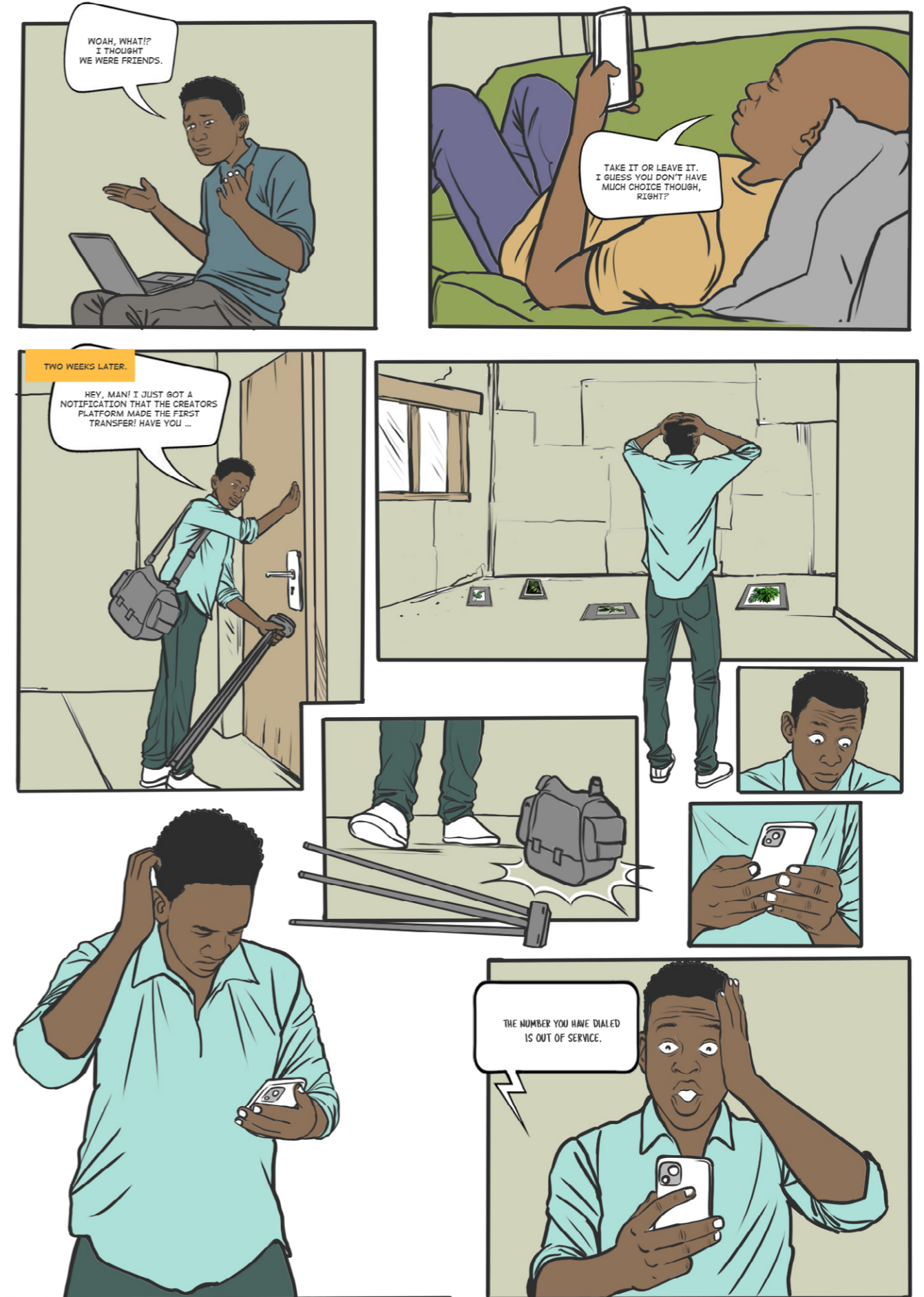
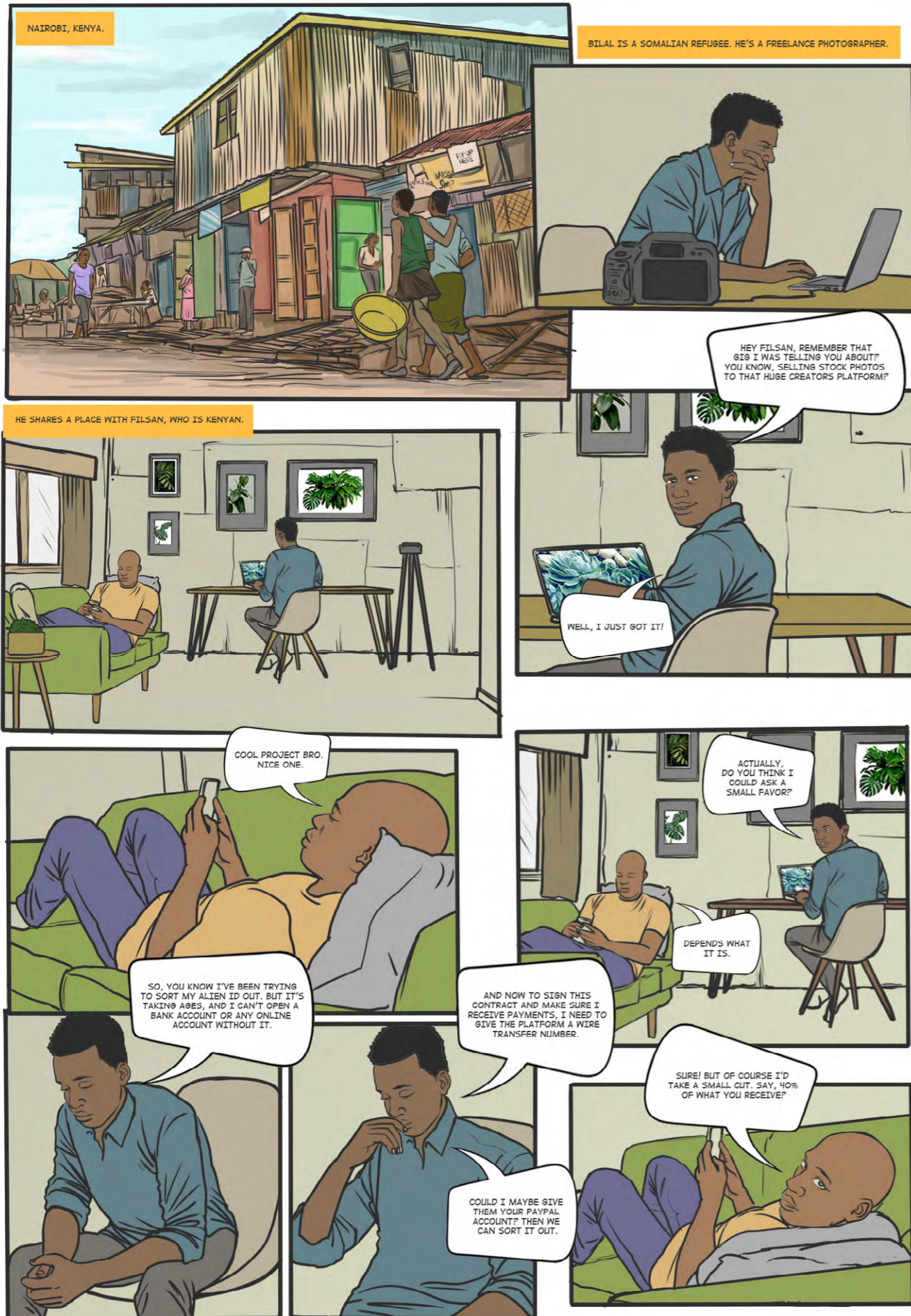
THREE HOURS LATER



Omar's story



Bilal's story



These stories highlight just a few of the many challenges and risks that forcibly displaced people face when attempting to engage in the digital economy. Such risks can confront individuals at any stage of their journey into digital work, and they can have a devastating impact on both personal safety and livelihood outcomes. In response, and in alignment with our protection mandate, UNHCR has mainstreamed a focus on digital safety throughout the activities developed under the PROSPECTS Partnership Project on the Promotion, Inclusion and Protection of Refugees in the Gig Economy.

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