

TRANS SUPERHEROES





2024

Story development:

Rikky MF

Mama Atha

Dr Katie McQuaid

Dr Desy Pirmasari

Leka Putra

Scriptwriter:

Yara

Illustration:

Leka Putra

Translation Indonesia to English:

Novia Stephani

This comic is funded by:

Produced by:



TRANS SUPERHEROES

Every story in this comic is inspired by the real life experiences of transwomen.

TARA



* DEROGATORY TERM FOR TRANSWOMAN

FREQUENTLY BULLIED BY HER CLASSMATES AND TEACHER BECAUSE OF HER GENDER IDENTITY, TARA STOPPED GOING TO SCHOOL DURING GRADE 2 OF MIDDLE SCHOOL.



CAT CALL!
WOLF WHISTLE!

YO, BABY, WANNA
COME WITH ME?

AT ONLY 14 YEARS OLD, TARA HAD TO SURVIVE BY WORKING AS A STREET ENTERTAINER.



SHE OFTEN SEES OTHER TRANSWOMEN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE FROM CUSTOMERS AND STREET THUGS WHERE SHE WORKS. AND PEOPLE JUST LET THESE INCIDENTS SLIDE.



ONE DAY, TARA SEES HER TRANSWOMAN FRIEND LISA BEING CORNERED BY A THUG TRYING TO ROB OR EVEN ASSAULT HER.

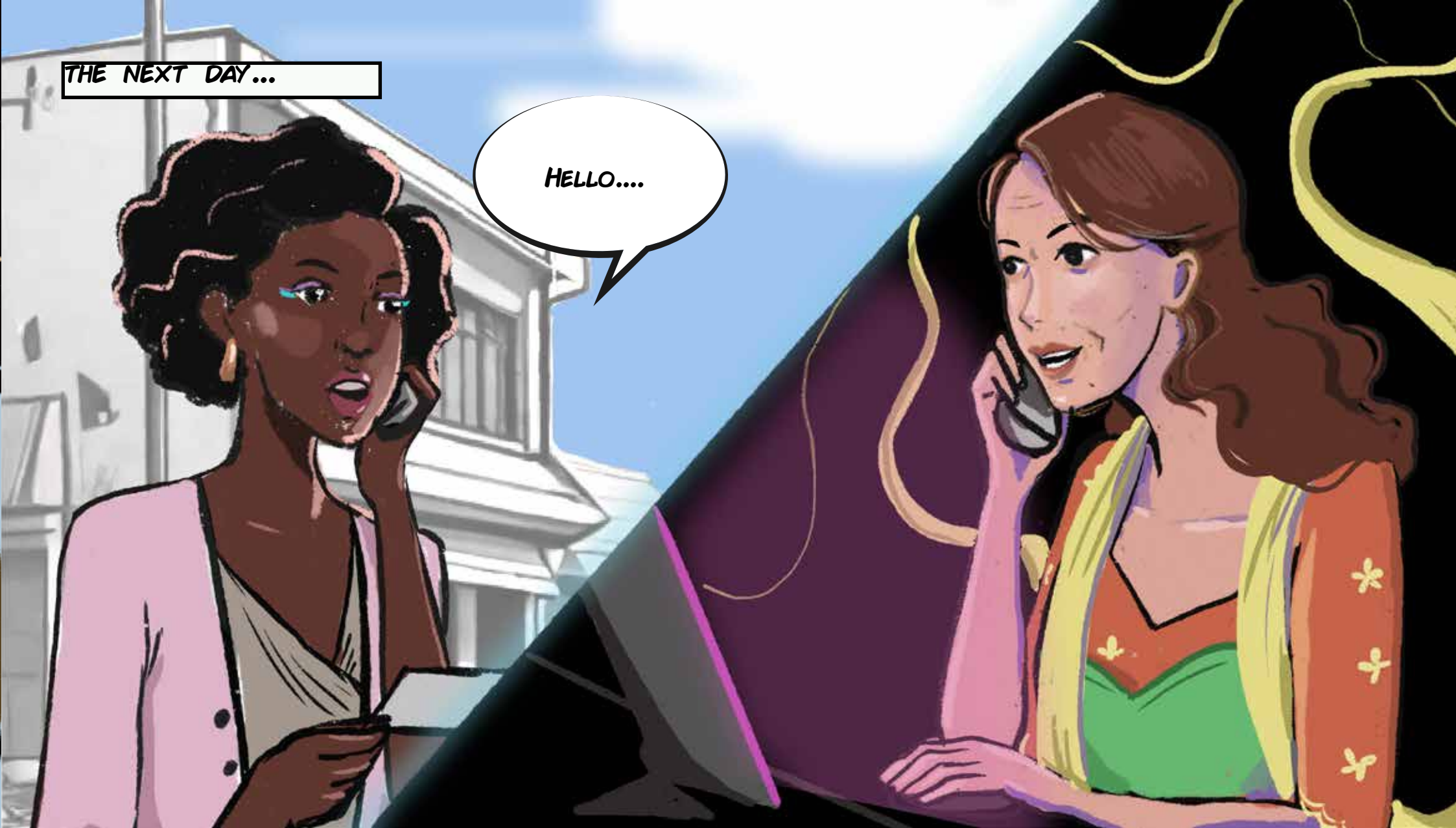
TARA RUSHES TO CONFRONT THE MAN AND HELP LISA ESCAPE.



LISA IS AMAZED BY TARA'S BRAVERY. SHE GIVES TARA THE CARD OF A SECRET ORGANIZATION CALLED "LEAGUE OF EQUALITY". SHE TELLS HER TO CONTACT THE ORGANIZATION AND SAYS IT'S LOOKING FOR NEW SUPERHEROES LIKE TARA.

THE NEXT DAY...

HELLO....



A MYSTERIOUS WOMAN CALLED "MAMA ATHA" RECEIVES TARA'S CALL. SHE ASKS TARA TO VISIT LEAGUE OF EQUALITY'S SECRET HEADQUARTERS IN KAMPUNG DURI.



AT THE HQ, MAMA ATHA EXPLAINS THAT THE LEAGUE OF EQUALITY IS A GROUP OF TRANSGENDER HEROES WHO DEFEND MARGINALIZED PEOPLE. MAMA ATHA TELLS TARA OF HER WISH TO RECRUIT HER AS A NEW SUPERHERO.



TARA AGREES TO JOIN. SHE IS THEN TRAINED TO HANDLE LEGAL CASES LIKE MURDER AND VIOLENCE, WHICH ARE OFTEN PERPETRATED AGAINST TRANSWOMEN. A YEAR LATER, TARA QUALIFIES AS A PARALEGAL WHO IS WELL-VERSED IN LEGAL MATTERS.



SEEING THAT TARA IS NOW READY, MAMA ATHA APPOINTS HER AS A NEW SUPERHERO. TARA IS GIVEN A MAGIC RING THAT GRANTS THE WEARER SUPERPOWERS AND A HEROIC SYMBOLIC COSTUME. IN THIS WAY, SHE IS REBORN AS A SUPERHERO.



THE EMERGENCY ALARM AT THE LEAGUE OF EQUALITY RINGS. A REPORT COMES IN ABOUT THE DISCORD GANG THAT IS RUNNING AMOK IN KAMPUNG DURI, KIDNAPPING AND PERSECUTING THE TRANSWOMEN WHILE THEY GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS. MAMA ATHA DECIDES TO MAKE IT TARA'S FIRST MISSION TO FIGHT AGAINST THE DISCORD GANG ATROCITIES AND RESCUE THE TRANSWOMEN. CAN TARA CARRY OUT HER FIRST MISSION?

DANA



DANA IS THE SIXTH CHILD OF A FAMILY OF THIRTEEN. SHE FOUND HER STRONGLY RELIGIOUS FAMILY FROM BANTEN SUFFOCATING. SHE LEAVES FOR KAMPUNG DURI IN JAKARTA TO GAIN THE FREEDOM TO EXPRESS HER GENDER IDENTITY.



BUT IN KAMPUNG DURI, SHE BECOMES ADDICTED TO DRUGS. ALL THE MONEY SHE MAKES SINGING AND ENTERTAINING ON THE STREET GOES TOWARDS HER ADDICTION AND NOTHING ELSE.

A comic-style illustration depicting a violent assault. A woman with dark hair, wearing a white short-sleeved dress, is on the ground, looking up in pain and shouting. A man in a grey suit and white shirt is leaning over her, delivering a powerful punch to her face. The background shows a dimly lit room with a window where silhouettes of other people can be seen. On the floor near the window are a glass and a bottle. The overall color palette is dominated by blues, greys, and the white of the woman's dress, with a pinkish-purple glow on the left side.

HELP...!

ONE DAY, A GANG COMES TO RAID AND PERSECUTE THE TRANSWOMEN IN KAMPUNG DURI. DROWNING IN DEBTS DUE TO HER ADDICTION, DANA GETS BEATEN UP BY THE GANG TO FORCE HER TO PAY UP.



TARA BLAZES IN, RESPLENDENT IN HER SUPERHERO COSTUME. WITH HER LEGAL KNOW-HOW, SHE SUCCESSFULLY UNITES THE COMMUNITY AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP TO PUT AN END TO BOTH GANG VIOLENCE AND GENDER DISCRIMINATION. THEY ALL AGREE TO EMBRACE EQUALITY AND SAY NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST TRANS- AND ALL WOMEN, INCLUDING DANA.



DANA APPROACHES TARA FOR FURTHER PROTECTION. SHE TELLS HER THAT AS LONG AS SHE IS RIDDLED WITH DRUG-RELATED DEBTS, SHE CONTINUE TO BE HARASSED BY CRUEL DEBT-COLLECTORS. TARA DECIDES TO TAKE DANA TO THE LEAGUE OF EQUALITY HQ.



AT THE HQ, DANA MEETS WITH MAMA ATHA AND ASKS FOR HER HELP. MAMA ATHA AGREES TO PAY OFF ALL OF DANA'S DEBT ON THE CONDITION THAT SHE STOPS USING DRUGS AND JOINS THE LEAGUE OF EQUALITY.



FOR A YEAR, MAMA ATHA TRAINS DANA ON HOW TO MANAGE FINANCES. FINALLY, DANA IS PUT IN CHARGE OF "JEOPARDY" THE FASHION UPCYCLING OUTLET THAT IS THE BUSINESS FRONT OF THE LEAGUE OF EQUALITY.



WHEN HER TRAINING IS COMPLETE, MAMA ATHA GIVES DANA THE MAGIC RING THAT WILL TURN HER INTO A SUPERHERO. DANA SUCCESSFULLY MANAGES THE LLEAGUE'S FASHION UPCYCLING BUSINESS, AND PROVIDES TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE TO GROUPS OF TRANSWOMEN AND WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE.



COPY THAT!

ONE DAY, WHILE INSPECTING A "JEOPARDY" OUTLET, DANA RECEIVES A CALL FROM TARA. SHE IS TOLD THAT ANOTHER VIOLENT INCIDENT IS HAPPENING IN KAMPUNG DURI.



SLIPPING ON HER MAGIC RING, DANA TRANSFORMS INTO A SUPERHERO AND FLIES ACROSS TO KAMPUNG DURI.

ASIH



BORN INTO A POOR FAMILY IN BOGOR, THE EIGHTH CHILD OF 14, ASIH HAD LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL IN GRADE 2 OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TO SEEK WORK.

PLEASE DONT..



BECAUSE OF HER GENDER IDENTITY ASIH'S FATHER REGULARLY BEATS HER ON THE HEAD WITH A BROOM AND CALLS HER BY THE INSULT 'BENCONG'. TERRIFIED, ASIH COULD DO NOTHING TO DEFEND HERSELF.



THE BEATINGS CAUSED ASIH TO HAVE DIFFICULTY READING. AS SHE GREW UP SHE BECAME RECLUSIVE AND INTROVERTED, AND MANY PEOPLE THOUGHT HER RUDE. THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC MADE IT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR ASIH TO EARN A LIVING BY BUSKING. HER SITUATION BECAME DESPERATE AS SHE ACCUMULATED DEBTS JUST TO BUY FOOD AND PAY RENT.



ONE DAY WHILE BUSKING, ASIH IS FOLLOWED BY DEBT-COLLECTOR THUGS. NOTICING THEM, ASIH STARTS TO RUN. THE THUGS CHASE AFTER HER, CAUSING A COMMOTION.



IN COMES DANA IN HER SUPERHERO COSTUME TO STOP THE THUGS. SHE HAS GAINED A REPUTATION AS A POWERFUL HERO OF THE LEAGUE OF EQUALITY. THE THUGS CHOOSE TO FLEE RATHER THAN FIGHT A LOSING BATTLE AGAINST HER.



STRANGELY ENOUGH, ASIH REFUSES TO THANK DANA FOR HELPING HER. SHE SAYS DRIVING THE DEBT COLLECTORS AWAY DOES NOT SOLVE HER PROBLEMS. DANA OFFERS TO DONATE MONEY TO PAY OFF ASIH'S DEBT. ASIH COLDLY SAYS THAT THIS WILL NOT SOLVE HER MAIN PROBLEM: CHRONIC POVERTY.



ASIH RECEIVES A CALL FROM ANOTHER TRANSWOMAN, TELLING HER THAT THEIR FRIEND LARA HAS BEEN ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL. ASIH AGREES TO ACCOMPANY LARA FOR THE NIGHT. ASIH TURNS HER BACK ON DANA AND WALKS AWAY. YET, STILL STUNG BY ASIH'S WORDS EARLIER, DANA DECIDES TO QUIETLY FOLLOW HER.



AT THE HOSPITAL, ASIH HELPS LARA WITH EVERYTHING SHE NEEDS, FROM PUSHING HER WHEELCHAIR TO SPOON-FEEDING HER. WHEN LARA TELLS HER SHE HAS NO MONEY FOR THE HOSPITAL BILL, ASIH GIVES HER WHAT SHE HAS. SECRETLY WATCHING IT ALL FROM THE WINDOW, DANA IS STRUCK BY ASIH'S COMPASSION THAT HAD SO FAR BEEN HIDDEN.



THE NEXT MORNING AS SHE IS LEAVING THE HOSPITAL, ASIH IS AGAIN FOLLOWED BY THE DEBT-COLLECTOR THUGS. BUT OUT OF THE BLUE MAMA ATHA APPEARS, STOPPING THE THUGS AND PAYING OFF ASIH'S DEBT.



AGAIN, THERE IS NO THANK YOU FROM ASIH, ONLY A CYNICAL GLARE. MAMA ATHA UNDERSTANDS WHAT SHE FEELS. SHE SAYS THAT SHE IS AWARE THE LEAGUE OF EQUALITY HAS SO FAR ONLY DEALT WITH SUPERFICIAL ISSUES LIKE FIGHTING CRIMINALS AND PAYING OFF DEBTS. IT HAS NOT SOLVED THE MORE SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS OF POVERTY, LACK OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION, ETC. MAMA ATHA GIVES ASIH A SIM CARD AND TELLS HER, "YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL. IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, JOIN US. MAYBE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE." THEN SHE DISAPPEARS INTO THIN AIR AS ASIH STARES AT THE SIM CARD SHE HAS BEEN GIVEN.

YEI LAN



BORN IN RURAL SUKABUMI WITH A DEFORMITY IN HER FINGERS AND LEG, YEI LAN PURSUED HER PASSION OF STUDYING SCIENCE.



BEFORE MOVING TO JAKARTA, YEI LAN SOUGHT A LIVELIHOOD AS AN ILLEGAL MIGRANT WORKER. SHE THEN FLED TO KAMPUNG DURI AND STARTED TO EARN A LIVING BY BUSKING



YEI LAN SEES THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A NEW FREE SCHOOL FOR TRANSWOMEN SPONSORED BY FASHION UPCYCLING BUSINESS "JEOPARDY". TARA, DANA, AND ASIH ARE AMONG THE INSTRUCTORS. SEEING IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE HER STUDIES, YEI LAN ENROLS HERSELF AND CHOOSES TO FOCUS ON CLIMATE CHANGE.



YEI LAN LEARNS TO MAKE ECO-ENZYME, A MULTI-USE LIQUID FROM FERMENTED ORGANIC WASTE. SHE DISTRIBUTES THE ECO-ENZYME AMONG KAMPUNG DURI RESIDENTS, WHO USE IT TO WASH DISHES AND CLOTHES, EVEN TO TREAT SKIN CONDITIONS.

HEI PEOPLE OF
KAMPUNG DURI!



ONE DAY, A MAFIA BOSS AND HIS THUGS COME, ANNOUNCING THAT HE HAS GOTTEN A GOVERNMENT LICENSE TO BUY THE LAND IN KAMPUNG DURI AND TURN IT INTO A LANDFILL. HE SAYS KAMPUNG DURI HAS GOTTEN TOO DIRTY, IT MIGHT AS WELL BE CONVERTED INTO A GARBAGE DUMP. HE THEN TELLS EVERYONE, THE TRANSWOMEN INCLUDED, TO LEAVE KAMPUNG DURI.



HELPPP....!!

PLEASE, NO SIR!

AN ARGUMENT ERUPTS BETWEEN RESIDENTS WHO REFUSE TO LEAVE AND THE MAFIA BOSS. IT CULMINATES IN A BRAWL, WHERE THE THUGS BRUTALLY BEAT UP THE RESIDENTS.



IT'S AT THIS MOMENT THAT TARA, DANA, AND ASIH TRANSFORM INTO SUPERHEROES AND FIGHT BACK AGAINST THIS CRUEL OPPRESSION. AND YET, EVEN WHEN HIS MEN ARE DEFEATED, THE MAN IS UNDETERRED. HE SAYS AS LONG AS KAMPUNG DURI REMAINS A DIRTY NEIGHBORHOOD, THE GOVERNMENT LICENSE IS JUSTIFIED, AND HE WILL COME BACK WITH STRONGER ENFORCERS. HE LEAVES WITH A SMUG SMIRK ON HIS FACE.



WATCHING IT ALL UNFOLD, YEI LAN SPEAKS UP. SHE INSISTS THAT THERE WILL BE NO END TO CONFLICT WITH THE MAFIA, SO LONG AS KAMPUNG DURI REMAINS DIRTY. SHE PROPOSES A CLEAN-UP PROJECT, INCLUDING SORTING AND RECYCLING OF WASTE. UNDER YEI LAN'S LEADERSHIP, KAMPUNG DURI MANAGES TO CLEAN ITSELF UP IN TWO MONTHS.

HELLO, MAMA ATHA, I'M CALLING TO REPORT ON YEI LAN'S PROGRESS.



TTARA, DANA, AND ASIH ARE AMAZED WITH YEI LAN'S CAPABILITIES. WITH MAMA ATHA'S APPROVAL, THEY INVITE HER TO JOIN LEAGUE OF EQUALITY'S CAUSE. YEI LAN AGREES AND SHE IS FITTED FOR A PROSTHETIC AND COSTUME THAT WILL TRANSFORM HER INTO A SUPERHERO.



TARA, DANA, ASIH, AND YEI LAN BECOME KAMPUNG DURI'S FOUR ICONIC SUPERHEROES. THEY SHOWCASE THE CAPABILITIES OF TRANSWOMEN AND MARGINALIZED PEOPLE IN LEADING CHANGE. THEY WORK SIDE BY SIDE TO FIGHT AGAINST PERSECUTION, DEBT COLLECTORS, THUGS, AND THE MAFIA AND OTHER GROUPS THAT OPPRESS THE PEOPLE. THEY UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF FIGHTING AGAINST DISCRIMINATION, POVERTY, AND OTHER FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES FACING SOCIETY. NOW, HOW ABOUT YOU?

