



Village Bicycle Project

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A project of Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute



2006 –The year in Review

A focus on women

The biggest news for 2006 is the initiation of women's programs, led by American volunteer Jaye Marolla. Jaye has been training up three young Ghanaian women to be bike repair instructors. The three, Gloria Adoboe, Esther Drayi and Liz Agbeleke have been assistant instructors in VBP's Earn-a-Bike since that program's beginning in 2004.

Key to the women's programs is the confident presence of these young competent female leaders. As home-based Ghanaian role models they are far better suited to nurturing the potential of other Ghanaian females than us foreigners.

In much of southern Ghana cultural stigma keeps women from bikes, so that less than 1% of cycling there is done by women. Women tend to be excluded from such high tech and prestigious equipment as bicycles. This holds true in Mankessim, where in December, fifteen high school girls trained and got bikes.

Women cyclists and repairers often tell us that other women are saying, "If she can do that, so can I." If that's the case in Mankessim, we can look forward to breakdown of some of these barriers, which could double demand for bikes!

"When you teach a man you teach a person, when you teach a woman, you teach a community," said David Mozer of International Bicycle Fund speaking of Africa.

In Ghana's north where women commonly bicycle, we learned that none of the women in our one-day women's workshop (WW) had ever used tools, like screwdriver, pump, pliers, or wrench. They did that day and eight of them returned the next day for more training and to buy discounted tools. (photos inside) In this group of the Talensi Area Women's Development Project, (TAWODEP) nearly a dozen women were interested in training to become bike repairers. We plan to return to all WW sites to help women grow as much as they want in bike repair, as we are convinced that it only takes one female cyclist or mechanic to begin the cultural shift.

Both men and women tell us they never realized they could fix their bikes themselves. Our programs break down the common notion that bikes are too complicated for an ordinary person. And as they become more confident in their ability to repair, they grow more confident in the utility and



From left to right; Gloria Adoboe VBP trainer, Jacqueline Koomson, Liz Agbeleke VBP trainer, Jemima Abbans, Esther Drayi VBP trainer, and Grace Nyanney, in Mankessim. Jacqueline, Jemima, and Grace each have their bikes and some tools they were awarded for being most engaged during repair practice sessions.

By the end of February '07, nearly 100 women will have gotten bikes and repair training through our Women's Workshops. By then our Ghanaian women instructors will be ready to lead without the presence of the foreign organizer.

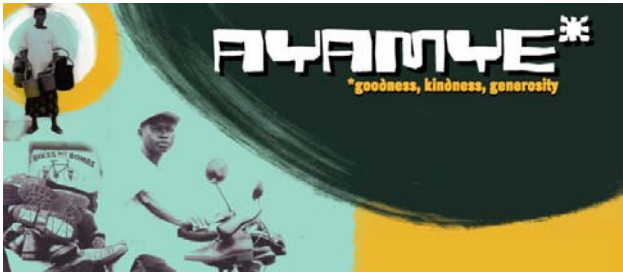
For more info on our women's programs see Jaye's blog, ghanabikeadventures.blogspot.com or mine, villagebicycleproject.blogspot.com or the web page pcei.org/vbp/ww.htm

VBP on the big screen?

The other big story for 2006 is the completion of an independent documentary film ***Ayame**** about VBP and rural lives touched by bicycles.

Coming soon?

see inside ---->



AYAMYE* Directors Eric Matthies and Tricia Todd wanted to make a film that reflected something positive about Africa to counteract all the despairing news from there. *Ayame** got its world premier at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival in January 2007, and was nominated for the Social Justice Award. *Ayame** does a fine job of telling about VBP's work. The music and visuals nicely weave the story of how bikes get to Ghana and change lives.

For more info www.ayame.org or vbp@pcei.org

Reviewing 2006

Tool sales stable

We've been selling about \$5500 in tools for about \$4200, for a couple of years and 2007 should be about the same. Tools are a crucial piece of the bicycle puzzle. We buy about \$1000 worth of the basics in Ghana and sell them half price in the Advanced class (1/2 day). The rest come from Taiwan, are specialized for modern bikes, and are mainly sold to mechanics and dealers at slightly below cost. Tools are essential to the project, always have been. Tools are key to the maintenance part of bicycle empowerment, and are a great way to meet people who work with bikes. But this vital piece wont truly be a success until VBP doesn't run it anymore. I'm starting to realize that as long as I sell below cost, no one in Ghana will want to start importing, so Taiwan tool prices are going up in '07.



Akosua Christine caught-on quickly in the workshop, and bought these tools half-subsidized. She's holding

a 12" crescent wrench, and from right to left has a pump on her lap, patch kit, wire brush, light oil, and open end wrench set. VBP bought all these tools in Ghana.

A good year for bike donations

This was our biggest year yet for sending bikes to Ghana, (we say that every year); more than 5800 bikes in thirteen shipments.

Ghana partners George and Samson sell 80% of the bikes, (mostly wholesale) to cover shipping costs, and some of the best bikes are set aside for the workshops. Occasionally we're criticized for selling bikes, but if we didn't, how would we pay for shipping costs averaging more than \$5500 per shipment? How would we choose the lucky winners, how would we pay for program outreach, and how would we possibly call that sustainable?

We want to thank all the individuals and groups who donated bikes last year, especially our shipping partners-

Bikes Not Bombs	Boston	4 cans*
Bikes for the World	Alexandria, VA	3 cans
Working Bikes Cooperative	Chicago	2 cans
Bike Works	Seattle	1 can
Rotary Club District 5060	Wenatchee, WA	1 can
Community Cycling Center	Portland, OR	1 can
Spokes for Folks	Boulder	1 can

(* one can/container equals about 440 bikes)

An extra special thanks to Working Bikes Cooperative, who donated much of the shipping costs of their two shipments, essentially making a major donation to our programs, our largest donor of the year. Thank you Working Bikes, for your big boost to the programs!



20 women with their bikes, January 25, 2007, at the TAWODEP office, Balungu, Ghana. None had ever used a handtool before, including Christine, (left). The people kneeling in front are VBP trainers, TAWODEP staff and volunteers. (story p. 1)

**All the news that didn't fit,
villagebicycleproject.blogspot.com**

Reviewing 2006 Bicycle Repair Education

2006 was our second year of training close to 1000 people on how to keep up the bikes they were getting at bargain prices. We held 43 one-day workshops with 20 students each, 860 people, in 19 villages. Peace Corps Volunteers were local hosts and organizers, enabling us to work with a spectrum of people throughout Ghana.

Education programs got an important boost from our first ever training of trainers. In March, we brought all 15 of our trainers together from their three scattered parts of the country, for a week-long refresher in bike repair instruction, under the leadership of our Ghana Project Managers George Aidoo and Samson Ayine. It was great for everyone to receive some skills and confidence-building, and networking amongst Ghanaians. These are key to sustainability, the idea of people continuing to teach others about bikes when we aren't there.

The momentum of the trainer's training (TT) inspired the new Women's Program. TT organizer, Jaye Marolla, followed up with a program for Ghanaian women to teach bike repair to others. She was back in late '06 to continue the women's programs, training 80 more through March.



340 bikes for northern workshops, January 07, traveling nearly 600 miles before the last bikes were delivered.

This was first stop, unloading 60 here after Samson's phone call. That's VBP Assistant Trainer Morro Moussa. Check out the lean!



Earn-a-Bike under fire

2006 was a year of great expectations and disappointments for our Earn-a-Bike program. Started in 2004 by an American volunteer, and run since as a small program in three schools, the problems can be summed up as too much responsibility and not enough accountability.

Earn-a-Bike is the smaller of our two repair education trainings. About 50 youth received bikes through EAB in 2006, compared to 860 in our One-day workshops.

We learned that two of the three lead instructors have been charging money to the students for the bikes, in direct contradiction of the rules of the program. We've also found sloppy instruction, poor attendance, the isolation and exclusion of assistant instructors, and false records.

One of the programs has been sacked, the other is getting a second chance. The spared school is overseen by a UK based charity, and currently has a professional educator volunteering to improve teaching methods. Emma Jones, of England, has agreed

to help train the bike repair instructors in better practices. The lead instructor will have to share decision making and reporting with his assistant, making it all more transparent. This is a great opportunity to set some standards and get an improved program.

The school that's out had reported 12 students when there were only 10, with two boys listed as girls, reported an absent trainer present to collect his salary, made a false claim for guard's pay, etc.

Despite the setback, we're going ahead and building a **new syllabus for Earn-a-Bike**. Its designed to bring a Ghanaian teenager from zero to proficient in bicycle repair in 40 hours of instruction and practice. Presently 30 pages and growing.

Available for your use and revision, vbp@pcei.org

V B P budget-2007		expense	income
Bikes shipping	12 containers @ \$5500	66,000	
	Bike sales returns		72,000
Workshops	Collection logistics	1,000	
	42 One-day @\$350	14,700	
	Earn-a-Bike 3 sessions @ 2 schools, @\$350	2,100	
	Advanced, 10 @ \$100	1,000	
Tools	Women's wkshps 8@\$500	4,000	
	3,800 pieces	5,000	
	shipping and customs	1,000	
Admin	sales		4,500
	Office, comm., promo	1,600	
	travel US-Ghana	3,000	
totals		99,400	76,500
Balance to raise	22,900		

Budget notes--The big expense is the workshops, which teach basic maintenance skills, and give subsidized bikes

Send donations to Village Bicycle Project, c/o PCEI, Box 8596, Moscow, ID 83843. or donate on-line www.pcei.org/payment go to special gifts, there we are! All donations are tax-deductible VBP Coordinator and report writer, David Peckham, Women's Programs Coordinator Jaye Marolla Ghana Project Managers George Aidoo and Samson Ayine PCEI Executive Director, Tom Lamar published Feb. 15, 2007

and free tools. It costs VBP about \$17 for each person that gets a workshop bike. This is targeted outreach that touches people's lives in the villages, which are the most economically depressed. If we can raise the money, 1000 people will get bikes in our one-day workshops in 2007.

	2000-2005	2006	plans 2007
bikes shipped	11,878	5800	5400
container loads	28	13	12
One-day workshops	98	43	50
Workshop bikes	1,682	860	1000
Advanced class	9	8	10
Advanced class tools	821	800	1000
Earn-a-Bike classes	15	6	6
Earn-a-Bikes awarded	170	60	50
Total tools imported	11,560	3200	3700



Alex Sewornu at left, got his bike from a VBP workshop in August 2003. He uses it to travel from home to the school where he is headmaster three miles away. If he were to use transit, vehicles would leave him half a mile from school. So his bike saves him time and money. Alex has replaced the drive train and tires. He keeps the gears and brakes functioning. The mountain bike helps a lot in the deep sand he often travels in, for the shortest route from his home to school is through the bush. Like most rural Ghanaian teachers, he also farms to make ends meet, using his bike to haul produce, like the sack of corn he's taking to the mill on this day.

Special thanks to major donors Working Bikes Co-operative and the Norton and Barbara Peck Family Foundation for support of our Women's Programs, and everyone who donated money, time, services, and bicycles. This work wouldn't happen without you!

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