

# IN GEAR

THE NEWSLETTER OF PEDALS FOR PROGRESS

## A CYCLE-WHEELCHAIR IN ADA, GHANA

From the floor, the sitting host extended a muscled arm to meet my lanky reach. His brilliant smile in the dense shade of the entrance to his home echoed the bright outside sun of a hot West African mid-day. Self-conscious at how I towered over him, I placed myself on the ground opposite. Equally discomfited in return, and always a concerned host, he quickly had a friend bring in chairs for his visitors.

I had come searching for Akrofi Augustine while visiting the Volta River Estuary community of Ada, home to the Nene Ocansey I Technical Center (NEKOTECH), one of two Pedals for Progress partners in Ghana. Pedals for Progress has shipped four containers of bicycles and parts to NEKOTECH beginning in late 2000, and already there are more than 1,000 PFP-provided bicycles circulating in Ada district.

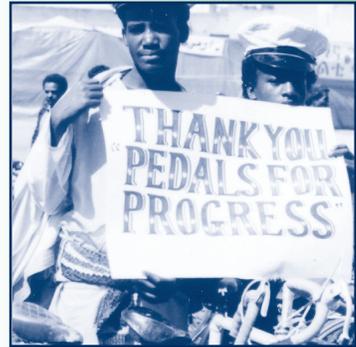
Akrofi ("first-born") lives in Amlakpo, a small village of the Ada district. Amlakpo is four kilometers out of Kasseh, the commercially-active crossroads where traffic parts, continuing eastward across the Volta River towards neighboring Togo, or turning south a few miles down river to Ada proper. Akrofi's family owned their modest home, and rented the other half of the simple concrete-block duplex to a Peace Corps volunteer. Through this contact we had heard of this energetic young man, who had established a reputation locally for exceptional initiative.

Akrofi, now 29, told me his story. He had suffered polio at age 2, crippling his legs and leaving them emaciated and useless. Through first grade, he lived with his grandmother, attending school nearby. Crawling to school and elsewhere, Akrofi developed exceptionally strong arm and chest muscles. However, after returning to live with his father, the one-mile distance to the new school eventually compelled him to drop out.

For many years, he stayed close to home, for a while feeling depressed and useless. On reaching his teens and hoping to make a financial contribution to the family, he began to work as a barber. For a while, he persevered, but waiting for people to come to his home to sit for a haircut was frustrating and didn't generate much income.



## ERITREA AGAIN!



Now that the recent border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia has ended and peace has returned to the Horn of Africa, PFP has resumed donations to the Cultural Assets Rehabilitation Program (CARP), an initiative of the Eritrean Ministry of the Environment.

Two PFP containers holding 834 bicycles, financed by the Department of Defense Humanitarian Shipping Program and originating in New Jersey and northern Virginia in late February, arrived in the Eritrean capital of Asmara in May 2002. These donations build on four shipments provided by PFP during 1995 and 1996, which put postal workers, teachers, students, health workers, and small entrepreneurs on bikes.

CARP's overall goals are: protecting historical monuments and sites; conserving the environment; and supporting the development of the arts, music, and literature. With PFP assistance, CARP is now seeking to reduce air pollution in Asmara. As well as generate employment, a greater use of bicycles will reduce emissions that are harming the historical monuments.

The program is aided by the existence in Eritrea of a strong cycling culture, as bikes were introduced and widely used during the Italian occupation of the country in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Thus there is a strong demand for bikes in rebuilding the country after the recent border war, and Eritrea's earlier, long war for independence from Ethiopia. PFP is pleased to provide timely help.

*Continued on Page 8*

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## PfP Partnerships as of 4/28/02

Country, City, Partner Name, Type of Program	#Bikes Shipped	Years
<b>BARBADOS</b> Bridgetown, Pinelands Creative Workshop <i>Youth development/small enterprise</i>	5,086	(1995-02)
<b>ECUADOR</b> Macas, Morona-Santiago, Salesian Mission of the Oriente <i>Education, small business development</i>	1,155	(1997-01)
<b>EL SALVADOR</b> San Salvador, Centro Salvadoreño de Tecnología Apropriada (CESTA) <i>Transport/small business/community development</i>	6,434	(1995-02)
<b>ERITREA</b> Asmara, Cultural Assets Rehabilitation Project <i>Transport/small business/community development</i>	2,348	(95-02)
<b>GHANA</b> Bawku, Community Welfare Foundation (ComWelf) <i>Rural development/appropriate technology</i> Ada NekoTech <i>Rural development/appropriate technology</i> Tema NekoTech <i>Urban development/appropriate technology</i>	881 813 764	(2000-01) (2000-01) (2002)
<b>GUATEMALA</b> Chimaltenango, Fundacion Integral de Desarrollo Sostenible y Medio Ambiente (FIDESMA) <i>Small business promotion, agricultural extension work</i>	951	(1999-00)
<b>HONDURAS</b> San Pedro Sula, Guaimaca, Instituto Hondureño de Educación Radial (IHER) <i>Literacy/small business development</i> El Progreso, Yoro, Choluteca Ecología, Economía, Vivienda y Desarrollo (EcoViDe) <i>Rural development/appropriate technology</i>	2,342 4,635	(1997-01) (1997-01)
<b>NAMIBIA</b> Otjiwarango, Clay House Project <i>Rural development/appropriate technology</i>	824	(1997-00)
<b>NICARAGUA</b> Jinotepe Ecotecología (Ecotec) <i>Community development</i>	4,219	(1997-01)
<b>PANAMA</b> Panama City Industria de Buena Voluntad (IBV & Panama City Rotary) <i>Transport/small business/community development</i>	2,418	(2000-02)
<b>SENEGAL</b> Dakar, Association des Bacheliers pour l'Emploi et le Développement (ABACED) <i>Community development</i>	890	(1999-00)

Other shipments between 1991 and 2001 have gone to non-profit agencies in Appalachia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, New Guinea, Peru, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, and Venezuela as well as other unlisted groups in Ecuador, Nicaragua, Ghana, Haiti and Honduras. 1997 total: 5,468, 1998 total: 6,287, 1999 total: 7,001, 2000 total: 8,983, 2001 total: 9,174, 2002 total: 3,585

Ten Year Grand Total 54,046

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## MOBILITY IN MOLDOVA

Following the disintegration of the USSR and the collapse of the Eastern Bloc economy, communities like Stefan Voda, in the former soviet republic of Moldova have seen incomes shrink, the cost of imported goods such as petroleum skyrocket, and their modest standards of living plummet. Personal mobility and productivity have suffered. As bus fares rose, the inhabitants of Stefan Voda could not afford to take public transport, the system collapsed, and a town once inter-connected via a bus system was left without transportation. Private cars are few. Moldovans are fond of bicycles, yet quality and price is a challenge for those on limited incomes. Nobody will sell a used bike, and new expensive imported bikes are the only ones available.

Local farmers on average walk 10-12 miles daily, to and from their fields. This takes two or more hours away from work. The average commute to work and school for teachers, students and others living outside the center of town is 30-45 minutes or more, exacerbated by the local tradition of returning home for lunch.

Peace Corps volunteer Marc Skelton, who works in a local non-governmental organization, Rural 21, coordinated with Stefan Voda. Marc teaches health to 6th and 7th graders, and facilitates HIV/AIDS seminars with local doctors and other medical professionals, to address the spread of this affliction resulting from the conversion of Moldova in general into a gateway for trafficking in women and drugs. Marc immediately saw that bicycles could contribute to better public health and the accomplishment of work and daily chores. Rural 21 agreed. The result is an initial request to PFP for 500 bicycles to establish a vocational educational program repairing and selling bicycles for local distribution.

PFP is presently seeking the \$5,000 in funding necessary to finance an initial shipment and effectively capitalize a new project. If you would like to support Marc's efforts, and those of Rural 21 and the people of Stefan Voda, send a check with the notation "Moldova" to Pedals for Progress, Box 312, High Bridge NJ 08829-0312.



## WORLD UNION FOSTERS COMMUNITY

From September 5-8, 2001, Pedals for Progress hosted representatives of Nine partner agencies receiving PFP bikes, and one North American bicycle-donation organization, at Pedals for Progress World Union, the first meeting of the PFP international network. This gathering, held in the picturesque setting of the Delaware Water Gap, provided our international partners the first face-to-face opportunity to share with and learn from each other, as well as to interact formally and informally with PFP staff, community volunteers, and corporate supporters. The result was the incipient creation of a global community of practitioners and advocates for using bicycles as a vehicle for empowering the poor to help themselves.

Workshops included the themes of shipping/logistics, microenterprise development, use of the worldwide web, digital technology, and graphics for publicity, and monitoring & evaluation. Other activities included PFP's tenth anniversary dinner, a successful bike collection sponsored by the Stroudsburg (PA) Rotary Club, and on-going displays by attending organizations.

Participants parted with the commitment to continue in contact, exchanging experiences and learning, via site visits, e-mail, and other means. Since that time, several exchanges have taken place. The Canadian attendee, Cyclo Nord-Sud, has expanded its shipments to developing countries, and operations in general, utilizing the Pedals for Progress methodology (see page 8 article on Cyclo Nord-Sud).

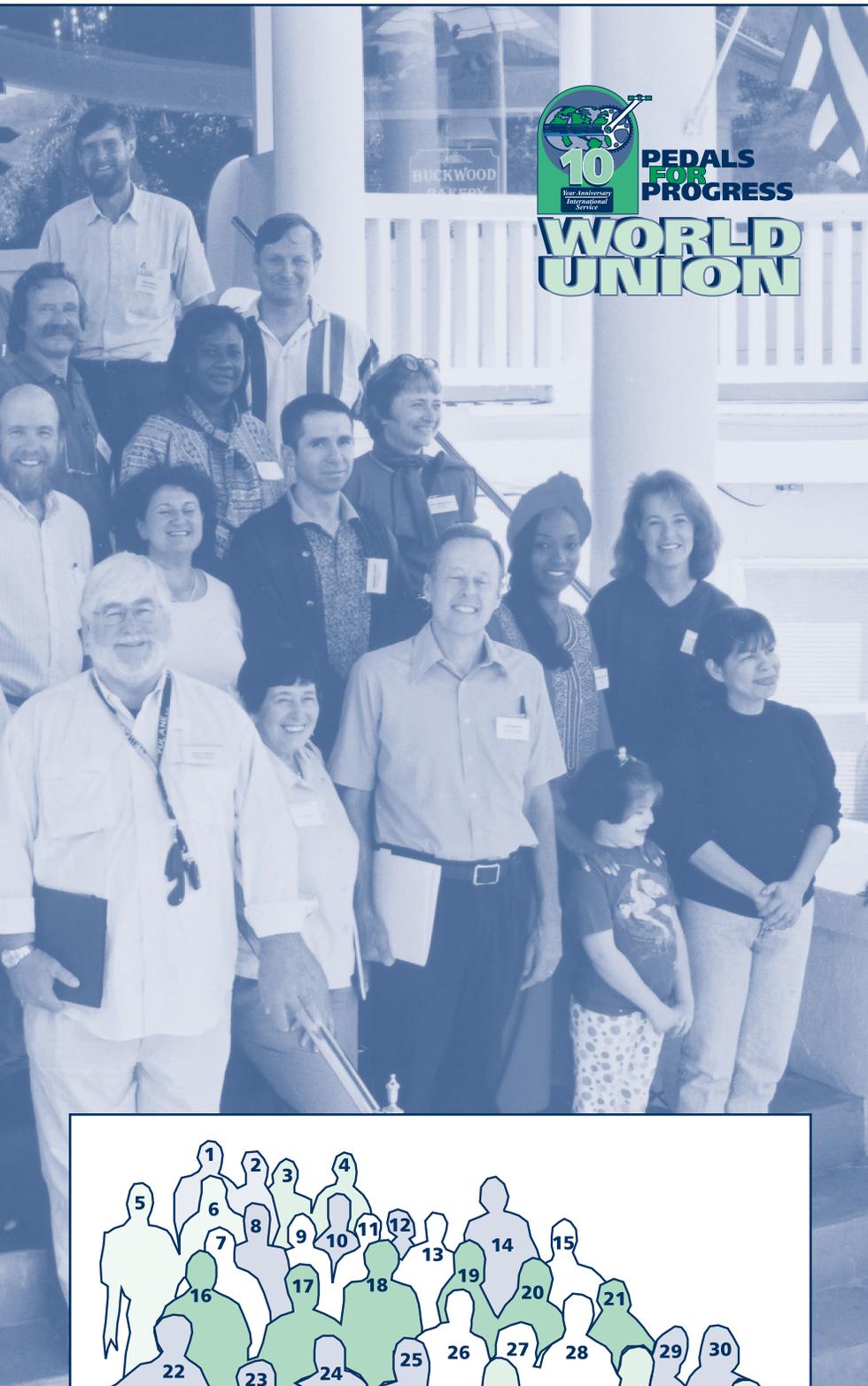
A 20-minute documentary video on World Union is also available from the PFP NJ office.



- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. <b>Jack Haughn</b><br>Trustee, PFP                            | 15. <b>John Strachan</b><br>Trustee, PFP                       | 27. <b>Sarah Rosen</b><br>French Translator for PFP World Union         |
| 2. <b>Donna Haughn</b>   | 16. <b>Ricardo Antonio Ramos Lara</b><br>CESTA, El Salvador    | 28. <b>Guillermo Chacon</b><br>Salesian Mission of the Oriente, Ecuador |
| 3. <b>Bob Nordvall</b><br>Secretary & Trustee, PFP               | 17. <b>Wilfredo Santana</b><br>EcoTech, Nicaragua              | 29. <b>Princess Asi Ocansey</b><br>NekoTech, Ada, Ghana                 |
| 4. <b>Rodney Grant</b><br>Pinelands Creative Work Shop           | 18. <b>Sheila Sanchez</b><br>IBV, Panama City, Panama          | 30. <b>Ann Marie Rolls</b><br>Administration Office Manager, PFP        |
| 5. <b>Basirou Kane</b><br>ComWelf, Ada, Ghana                    | 19. <b>Kurt Rhyner</b><br>Grupo Sofonias, Namibia              | 31. <b>Arnulfo Catu</b><br>Fidesma, Guatemala                           |
| 6. <b>Kim Murray</b><br>Pinelands Creative Work Shop             | 20. <b>Juana Lawson</b><br>NekoTech, Ada, Ghana                | 32. <b>Margarita Caté</b><br>Fidesma, Guatemala                         |
| 7. <b>Dave Schweidenback</b><br>President, PFP                   | 21. <b>Claire Morrisette</b><br>Cycle Nord Sud, Canada         | 33. <b>Maria Elizabeth Munoz Colindres</b><br>EcoVide, Honduras         |
| 8. <b>Victor Manuel Martinez Castillo</b><br>EcoVide, Honduras   | 22. <b>Arlene Goldberg</b><br>Cycle Nord Sud, Canada           | 34. <b>John A. Martin</b><br>Vice Chairperson, PFP                      |
| 9. <b>Shelley Durant</b><br>Pinelands Creative Project           | 23. <b>Kathryn Pozak</b><br>NJ Returned Peace Corps Volunteers | 35. <b>Cecilia Bardone</b><br>Spanish Translator for PFP World Union    |
| 10. <b>Salvador Fernando Santos Oporto</b><br>CESTA, El Salvador | 24. <b>Scarlet Bello Mejia</b><br>EcoTech, Nicaragua           | 36. <b>Chad Bardone</b><br>Chairperson, PFP                             |
| 11. <b>José Santos Oporto</b><br>CESTA, El Salvador              | 25. <b>Jose, Nassin Cuellar Tizando</b><br>CESTA, El Salvador  | 37. <b>Frieda Reyes</b><br>CESTA, El Salvador                           |
| 12. <b>Dina Taiani</b>   | 26. <b>Edward James O'Toole</b><br>IHER, Honduras              | 38. <b>Jaqueline Reyes</b><br>CESTA, El Salvador                        |
| 13. <b>Demba Dikaté</b>  |  |   |
| 14. <b>Keith Oberg</b><br>Vice President, PFP                    |  |   |

World Union was made possible through the generous support of the William Jelin Foundation, supplemented by a substantial discount by our hosts, former Peace Corps volunteers and owners of the Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort.





## **PEDALS FOR PROGRESS**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

#### **Vision**

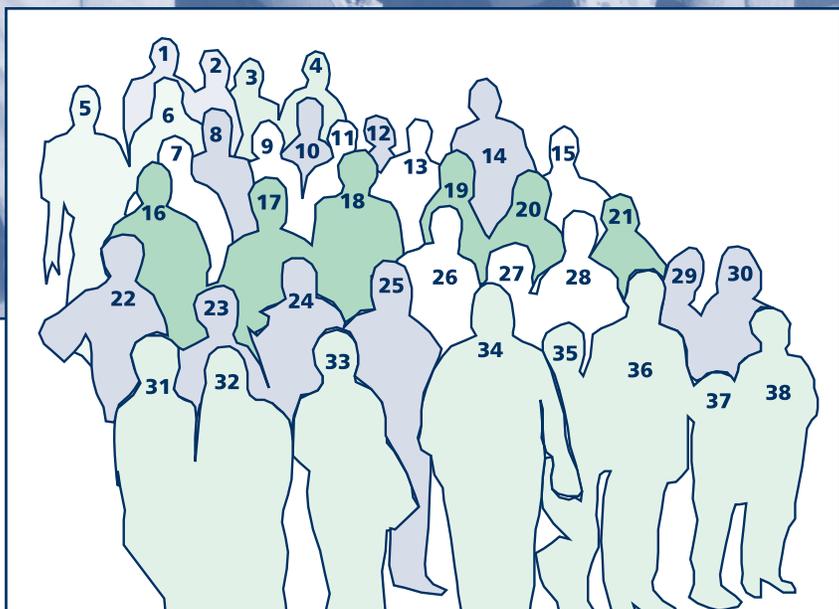
Pedals for Progress envisions a day when:

1. North America recycles over half of the five million used bicycles discarded each year, as well as unused parts and accessories for reuse overseas;
2. Poor people in developing countries have bicycles to get to work, obtain services and meet other needs;
3. The bicycle is an effective tool for self help in all developing countries;
4. Trade regulations enhance international commerce in bicycles and parts;
5. Policy makers in developing countries respect and support non-motorized transportation.

#### **Mission**

Our objectives are:

1. To enhance the productivity of low-income workers overseas where reliable, environmentally sound transportation is scarce, by supplying reconditioned bikes at low cost;
2. To promote in recipient communities the establishment of self-sustaining bicycle repair facilities, employing local people;
3. To provide leadership and innovation throughout North America for the recycling of bicycles, parts, and accessories;
4. To reduce dramatically the volume of bicycles, parts, and accessories flowing to landfills;
5. To foster environmentally sound transportation policies that encourage widespread use of bicycles worldwide;
6. To foster in the North American public an understanding of and a channel for responding to the transportation needs of the poor in developing countries.



## AFTER TEN YEARS, WHY A WAREHOUSE?

Since its inception, Pedals for Progress has used no-longer-roadworthy truck trailers as inexpensive storage. As we have grown, we have simply added trailers—now totaling 12 in 3 sites in New Jersey and Virginia—complemented by a small rented headquarters office and individual home offices.

This has worked for ten years, so why take on the up-front cost and continuing operational expense, of a permanent warehouse-office?

Well, on reflection, the PfP board found many reasons related to the increasing scale, velocity, and complexity of PfP operations.

Storage-wise, PfP lives on “the knife’s edge” between not having enough product to ship, and overflowing our limited storage capacity following an unexpectedly heavy inflow of bicycles from unpredictable collections, or an un-anticipated delay in arrival of a shipping container. The larger PfP gets, the higher risk it faces in managing inflow and outflow.

Another reason is that PfP’s increasingly diverse product mix requires more flexible storage space. Our growing relationships with the bicycle industry bring in an ever-larger quantity and range of parts and accessories. Over time, we have also added sewing machines, sports equipment, and computers to the list of items shipped overseas. With trailers, key items are often buried and inaccessible at shipping time.

Finally, to continue to improve our operational efficiency, we need an enclosed, atmospheric-controlled facility. Originally, PfP operations were highly seasonal, based on spring and fall bicycle collections. However, with growth, and in the continuing search for operational efficiency, PfP is increasingly year-round in receiving, storing, and shipping product.

Relatedly, we need work space to repair and compact bikes, repair sewing machines, and undertake other manual tasks apart from simple storage.

**We are now at a point where we have the operational need for, and the financial capacity to pay operating costs of, a permanent facility to:**

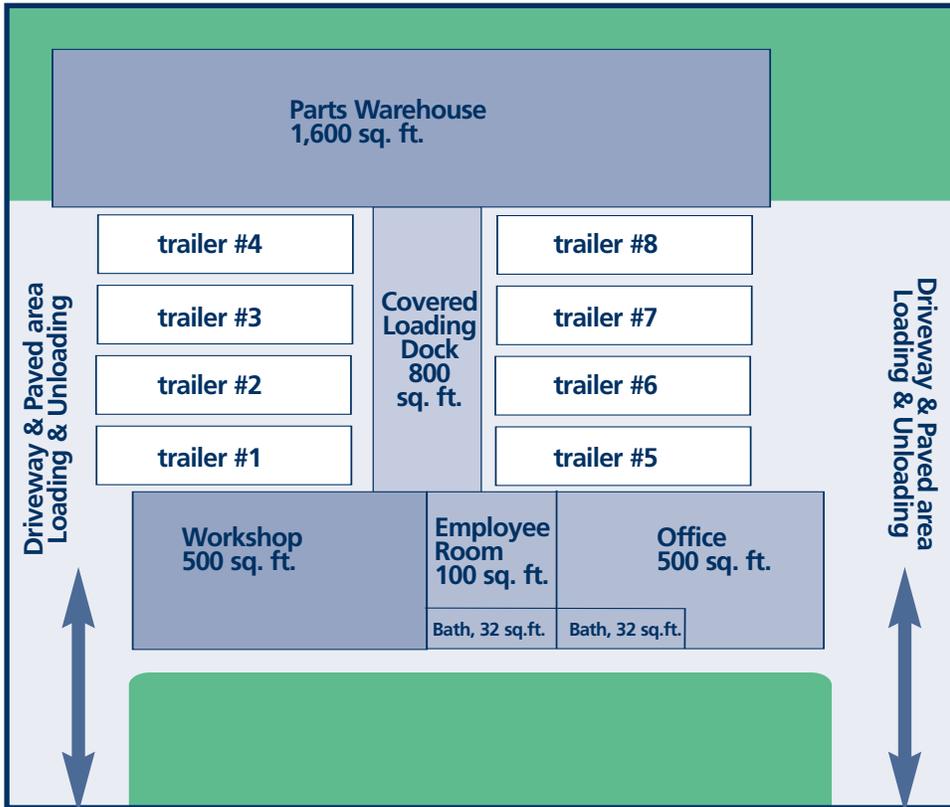
- enlarge the office and install bathroom facilities permitting additional staff and the greater use of volunteers;
- bring office, reception, and storage together, facilitating individual bicycle drop-offs by the public, greater integration of office and shipping functions, etc.;
- permit work year-round, providing space for sorting, compacting, repairing, and loading bicycles, sewing machines, and other commodities;
- provide flexibility to better organize, store and distribute the mix of product; and
- increase overall storage capacity through a combination of warehouse and trailers.

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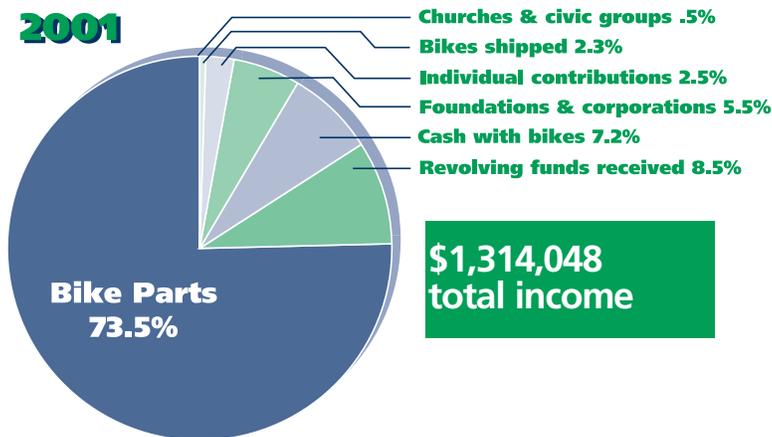
*Proposed site plan for the new Pedals for Progress warehouse facility. The plan is flexible and allows for adaptivity either to an existing site or to a tract of land. Trailers can still be used for raw storage while the indoor areas would enable processing, refurbishing and inventory control year-round.*

### **Opposite page, bottom**

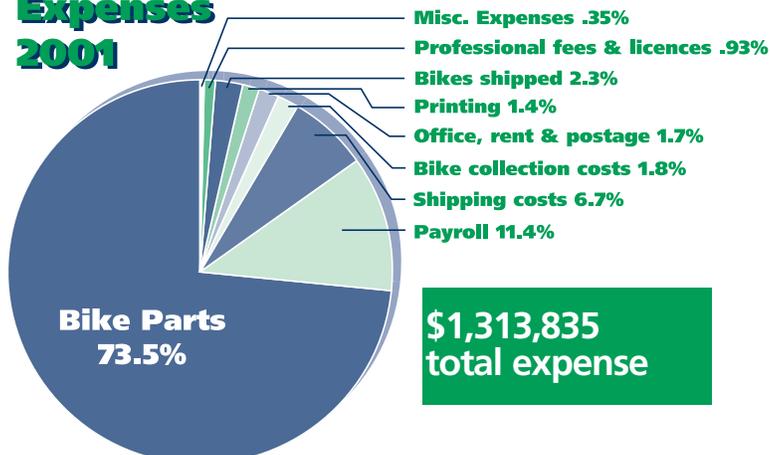
*Pedals for Progress’ income and expense activity for 2001. Virtually all income is redirected back into operations. Net profit was \$213, or just above .01% of the total income.*



### PfP Income 2001



### PfP Expenses 2001



## PFP CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUND

To establish a year round facility, the PFP board of directors established a Permanent Facility Capital Campaign Fund. Currently we have \$50,000 in the Fund, including proceeds of the recent Royal Geographical Society prize. Your support to the Fund is urgently needed. Please make an extra donation, with notation "PFCCF", and help us meet our goal of raising \$400,000 by December 31, 2003.



## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

Bell Sports  
 Phil Blumencrantz  
 Bristol, Myers, & Squibb  
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 Golden Rule Foundation  
 Issac Hayes Foundation  
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 New England BioLabs Foundation  
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 Presbytery of Newton, NJ  
 Public Service Electric & Gas Company  
 Rotary International  
 William Sloan Jelin Charitable Foundation



**A Cycle Wheelchair in Ghana**

His break came when the clinic in Batton, at the behest of his father who worked there, gave him a bicycle-wheelchair put together by a local workshop. The customized contraption, with the drive chain fixed high in front, permitted Akrofi to efficiently apply his brawny arms to moving around independently.

With the freedom provided, he was able to break out of home-bound isolation. Unable to make a living cutting hair at home, Akrofi set about to realize a long-held dream of learning to repair radios and televisions.

A childhood friend was a store owner and established electronics repairman in Kasseh. Akrofi, when not barbering, hung out there, and soon came to think that electronics repair was far more interesting than barbering. It was a career where his disability was not an impediment. When he barbered, it was difficult to cut people's hair because he couldn't readily circle around his customer like standing barbers do. With electronics repair, Akrofi could focus on his work at a table, relying on his hands alone.

In the months preceding our January 2002 visit, Akrofi apprenticed himself to the electronics repair shop. In exchange for the proprietor's time

and knowledge, Akrofi works for nothing, slowly acquiring the varied skills to run such a business. In spite of the five-kilometer distance, the young man is a regular sight on the road, outpacing pedestrians and greeting a growing number of acquaintances. Soon, he will be able to leave and begin his own business.

Akrofi is satisfied; he enjoys the challenges and variety of repair work, knows he will earn more money once he is on his own, and looks forward to becoming independent and his own boss. Once he has mastered the trade, he plans on moving near his father in Batton. And all because of a bicycle wheelchair.



Cycle North-South was set up in Eastern Canada, in the fall of 1999. Very much inspired by PFP, CNS organizes bicycle collection days in the east side of Canada, mostly in the province of Quebec. CNS has shipped nearly 2500 bicycles, to Cuba (1,241 bikes), Mexico (380 bikes) and to South Africa (876 bikes), and soon to Guatemala, Nicaragua and elsewhere. CNS hopes to ship over 3000 bicycles overseas in 2002.

**Cyclo Nord-Sud**  
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