

Fall 2017

**INGEAR**

THE NEWSLETTER OF PEDALS FOR PROGRESS

**INSTITCH**

THE NEWSLETTER OF SEWING PEACE

## New Jersey DEP 2017 Recycling Award

In October 2017, Pedals for Progress won a New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Recycling Award.

The award was for recycling activities in 2015 and 2016, but the application for the award was a chance to give the NJDEP an overall impression of P4P, which we did in two documents available on our website, [www.p4p.org](http://www.p4p.org):

- A 4-page Program Narrative with our goals, history, business model, and information on our domestic and overseas partners.
- A 14-page Supporting Documentation package with specifics on 2015 and 2016 shipments, financials, and collections.



We're not primarily a recycling organization, but when I did the math, I estimated that since 1991 we've shipped more than 4 million pounds of bikes and 74,000 pounds of sewing machines out of the U.S. Not all of this would have been dumped in landfills in the short term, but that's where it would be sooner or later. And let's not underestimate the encouragement we provide for cleaning out basements and garages!

Of course recycling is just a happy secondary consequence of our primary mission: to provide economic opportunity to people in developing countries.

Congratulations to P4P for this 2017 NJDEP Recycling Award. Now let's get back to work. ♦

# Treasurer's Message, Fall 2017

Hi.

I'm Johnny Alexander, Treasurer of Pedals for Progress. Dave and I were Peace Corps volunteers and roommates in Sucua, Ecuador, for all of 1979. He often tells the story of our Peace Corps landlord who put to productive advantage one of the few bicycles in Ecuador. Sr. Peña was part of the inspiration for the founding of P4P.

Several years ago I joined the Board of Trustees and was elected treasurer. My wife Jane Divinski and I are long-time donors. I am

starting this column to offer more financial insight and transparency to P4P.

You donors, volunteers, and stakeholders are the core of P4P. It is your time and treasure that sustain and power P4P. Because P4P operates as an IRS-qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit, your donations may be used to reduce your tax payments.

I want to lead off my first column with an innovative and tax-saving way for retirees to donate to P4P. If you have an IRA or a 401k plan, this should be of interest to you. At age 70.5, you must begin to take Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs). You of course may begin your distributions earlier if you need or wish to. All IRA/401k distributions, except those in Roth accounts, increase your taxable income. The IRS will permit you to direct your IRA/401k administrator to make directed donations to 501(c)(3) nonprofits like P4P. The benefit is that if the money goes directly from your IRA/401k to a nonprofit, you avoid including it in your taxable income. Many wealthier seniors dislike the RMD because it can push them into a higher tax bracket and raise their taxes. The direct donation approach prevents this tax bracket creep. The outcome is that your total tax is lowered by a greater amount than if you report the income and take the deduction for your donation. If you wish to read more, here is a really good article, with examples, from the Wall Street Journal: [The Benefit of Donating Your Required IRA Distributions to Charity](#).

I am sure that your tax advisor and financial institution can help you understand how advantageous this can be for you, given your financial situation.

In peace,



John Alexander

If you or your spouse is over 70.5 years and making a Required Minimum Distribution from an IRA, the greatest tax advantage is to direct your IRA to make an annual Qualified Charitable Donation to Pedals for Progress. Please think about this and check with your tax advisor to see if this makes sense for you.

# Pedals for Progress Bike 150,000

The Summer 2017 InGear newsletter has a partial report on bike number 150,000. The report was partial because at publication time we had collected, packed, and shipped the bike, but it did not yet have an owner. Now that it does, we want to tell the whole story in one place.

## Collected on Long Island

On April 1, 2017, the Long Island Returned Peace Corps Volunteers collected P4P bike number 150,000 from surprised donor Kathy Lowe, who wasn't expecting all the fuss.



The Long Island RPCVs have been one of our most successful collection partners. They rotate collections around Long Island to maximize their reach. Their first P4P collection was in 2003, their second in 2005, and they've held collections every year since.

## Shipped from New Jersey



On April 22nd, volunteers from the Warren Hills High School Chess Club helped us load 575 bicycles into a 40-foot container bound for Chimaltenango, Guatemala. The Chess Club and their faculty advisor, Daryl Detrick, are no strangers to P4P. Along with the Computer Science Club, they have run 8 collections and packed 4 containers.

This was our 18th shipment to our partners at FIDESMA, for a total of 9,460 bicycles.

## Arrived in Guatemala

Our partners at FIDESMA report that bike 150,000 arrived in San Andrés Itzapa, Guatemala, at midday, June 6th.

FIDESMA, our Guatemala partner, got our 100,000th bike in 2006. FIDESMA has been our partner since 1999. Besides their bike program, FIDESMA runs programs in health and special ed, job skills and training, and environmental conservation.

We are good friends as well as professional partners with the staff at FIDESMA. The summer 2012 InGear newsletter has an article about a visit to New Jersey from Señora Maria Margarita Caté de Catú, founder of FIDESMA.



*Thanks for thinking of us when you were ready to ship bike number 150,000. On behalf of our team and our community leaders, many thanks for your support.*

*Sincerely,*

*Margarita Cate, Arnulfo Catu, Isabel Luna, Pedro Catu, Roxana Cate, Paty Luna, Sebastian Quina, Jose David Catu, and all of us here at FIDESMA*

## Delivered to Its New Owner

The owner of P4P bike number 150,000 is Noelia Chiquitá, a 17-year-old in her third year of high school. Noelia lives in Chimaltenango, Guatemala.

She plans to use her bike every afternoon to buy supplies for the family store, where she helps her mother in the afternoon after school.

The bike will also help her stay in shape and stay healthy.



## Onward!

Recent collections have made a good start on our next 150,000 bicycles. Our trailers are full and we are waiting for the next opportunity to make a shipment. ♦

# The Path to Financial Stability and Better Health in Uganda, One Stitch at a Time

By Patricia Hamill

Unemployment is not an unfamiliar topic these days. Reports on the economy and job growth are broadcast daily with the intention to give us a sense of momentum and hope. What many realize of course is that there is still a dearth of jobs with adequate compensation. Are the openings that are listed truly available or are they only posted because of policy or legalities and already filled internally? As frustrating as this is, people in developing countries don't often have the opportunity to even question if a job is open, or to whom. There may not be any, filled or otherwise. This is the ongoing struggle we've been trying to have an impact on with our bikes and sewing machines, and our partners remind us how much our efforts change lives and futures.



We recently received a letter from Mathew Yawe, Director of the Mityana Open Troop Foundation (MOTF) in Mityana, Uganda, highlighting the success our program Sewing Peace has had in enabling young people and families to combat the devastation that the HIV/AIDS crisis has wreaked in the region. The loss of life to this epidemic has been reduced over the years, but the long-term effects on families and the economy are still quite apparent. That is why this Non-Government Organization (NGO) Mityana Open Troop Foundation has focused on

aiding people in creating financial opportunities for themselves. The resulting income allows children to go to school and graduate, and thus be more likely to qualify for steady employment or business ownership.

The direct correlation between education and employment and a lowered rate of disease and unplanned pregnancy is evident in much current research. So, of course, access to and use of doctors' services and preventative healthcare is more likely only when one is able to afford the services. As a partner in the cause to fight poverty and its consequences, Sewing Peace shipped 73 refurbished sewing machines to MOTF in July for their vocational workshop in tailoring and design. The project recruits and trains the most vulnerable of the local population in many skills, including tailoring and garment production. The ratio was 1 machine to 4 people. Some of the machines were also made available for program graduates as start-up machines so they could create their own businesses.

In August, MOTF met with 51 residents in the village of Semukombe Mpigi to donate 2 of the sewing machines. The need here is palpable. So often, parents cannot afford the fees involved in sending their children to school. The cost of uniforms, books, and even transportation is prohibitive. The lack of access to proper health education adds to young women being expelled from school because of unplanned pregnancies. There is also the issue of families that lack an adult because one or both parents have succumbed to HIV/AIDS and the children cannot begin to consider any option other than survival.

Here, the death of one particular man had greatly affected his two wives. One widow had 6 children. One had 5. The children had all dropped out of school because there was absolutely no income for fees. Access to medication, clothing, and food was all but eliminated. The donated machines would be the only tools these women have to reverse their circumstances and provide a stable future for the 11 youngsters. With care and maintenance, the sewing machines can also become the tools that some of the children can make use of to start their own businesses in the village or in areas like the capital city Kampala, about 22 miles away, where the population is much larger and the demand for school uniforms and other clothing promises a steady income. Ultimately, this kind of program can assist women in avoiding total dependence on their spouses or sons. Husbands and sons can rely on their whole family to participate in maintaining their wellbeing.

As our readers well know, project sustainability is always at the root of the success of an endeavor and MOTF must also consider the longevity of their vocational programs. Thus, some of the

machines were sold to local tailors, offered at a fair and more affordable price than one could find in Kampala. These donations from P4P and the reasonable selling prices offered by MOTF are not easy to provide because the cost of shipping to inland locations like Uganda is substantial. Transporting the containers from the port in the coastal city of Mombasa, Kenya, over the approximately 700 miles of road to Kampala, Uganda, is not a simple task. The logistics of viable routes and reliable trucking becomes quite complicated causing the endeavor to cost half again as much money as it would to ship from New York City, through the Panama Canal, past Singapore, to Sri Lanka, and then to Kampala. This extra expense cannot be transferred to those in need, so it is our supporters and volunteers who ensure that no obstacle prevents the machines from getting to their destination.

As always, the effort continues. The private vocational institution MOTF is now looking to expand its program to include embroidery once a reliable machine can be located so they can also provide logos and names of the local schools whose uniforms they sew. With a continued flow of funding and sewing machines for training and sale, the reality of healthy, long lives and income stability in this region of Africa is attainable. ♦



# Reports from Uganda, 2017

By Mathew Yawe

*[Our new partner in Uganda is the Mityana Open Troop Foundation, started as a Boy Scout group but now admitting girls. Their director Mathew Yawe has sent us several reports on their activities in 2017. Here are a couple.]*

## Report of 29 July 2017

On 24 July 2017 Mityana Open Troop Foundation received 73 sewing machines from Sewing Peace USA. There were manual and electric machines all in good condition and looking so attractive.

Currently we have been lacking sewing machines to be given to our vocational project graduates as start-up tools to enable them to start their own workshops.

Here are our plans for the machines:

- 23 Machines will be installed in our vocational workshop.
- 10 Machines will be sold to graduates of November 2017, each for 200,000 Uganda Shillings (UGX): US \$55. This money will be used to cater for shipping costs, custom taxes, ECU charges, handling charges, and transport to Mityana. The profits will be used to pay for the next shipment, which we hope to request this year.
- 40 machines will be sold to the artisans who need them at UGX 250,000 (US \$69). Currently a sewing machine in Uganda costs US \$83 or more.



## Report of 4 November 2017



Hi fellow scouters & friends,

Today on Saturday, 4 November 2017, Mityana Open Troop foundation vocational trainees and scouts have volunteered at the Mityana District Police Station: hair dressing, weaving, hair washing, hair styling, hair braiding, and sewing. All the services were free of charge, done towards our vocational project trainee commissioning, due to take place on 18 November 2017.

For that event, we would like to cater for food for 600 guests and for the purchase of start-up tools for the graduating trainees, to enable them to start their own jobs right away. ♦

# Ethiopia 2017: New Partner, Solar Energy Foundation

A Solar Energy Foundation (SEF) group based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is one of our new 2017 Sewing Peace partners. Their new program is entitled “Marginalized Women’s Training on Sewing and Tailoring”. This Solar Energy Foundation project has the following goals:

- To train marginalized women in sewing and tailoring to help them become economically self-sustaining.
- To rehabilitate marginalized women by creating an enabling environment for self-employment using their sewing and tailoring skills.
- To help and support women economically, socially, and morally.
- To contribute to the development of marginalized women and support their dreams for a better future.



With the generous help of the Clif Bar Family Foundation and the Jack & Pauline Freeman Foundation, we shipped the sewing machines in March, 2017, and published a post on Ethiopia #1 that you can see on our website. We were then in a bewildering bureaucratic nightmare with the Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority concerning what information they needed on each machine. The nightmare is over and we are happy to report that the machines have been delivered to our partner. (We’ve just gotten a report, included below, from Samson Tsegaye, the program director.)

The sewing and tailoring training will be held in Rema, one of the SEF training centers, located in the Mida Woremo district of North Shewa Zone, about 230km from Addis Ababa. The training is held in three three-month cycles starting in June 2017. Each session will include 20–25 trainees.

The trainees will be nominated from the North Shewa zone in partnership with the zonal education and women affairs office. Approximately seventy women will be the beneficiaries of this program. Those who successfully complete the training will be supplied with one sewing machine whereby they can begin their own business.

The training program covers the women’s travel cost as well as providing a daily allowance for basic needs such as food while they are in the training program.

We will report back when we have some results from the program. ♦

# Ethiopia Report, November 2017

By Samson Tsegaye

Ethiopia has a population of more than 100 million. More than 85% live in rural areas. Women have most of the household responsibilities. Women and girls in Ethiopia are strongly disadvantaged compared to boys and men in several respects, including literacy, health, livelihood, and basic human rights. They also suffer from low status in their society and lack social support networks.

Since 2005, we at Stiftung Solarenergie-Solar Energy Foundation are trying to solve some of these problems in Ethiopia by providing solar technologies.

When I met Mr. David and he explained what Sewing Peace (SP) is doing, I was very impressed and asked him to support our disadvantaged women in Ethiopia. He agreed and we started the procedure.

Sewing Peace promised to donate 72 sewing machines and we at the foundation promised to provide training and disbursement of the machines. We will select disadvantaged women to train and give them one sewing machine to generate income and improve their lives.

The process of importing the sewing machines to Ethiopia was very tiresome. Several times our customs and government offices requested new, authenticated documents from SP and required getting these documents from New Jersey to the Ethiopian embassy in Washington, D.C., to Ethiopia. For each machine, first they requested serial numbers, and then they requested date and place of manufacture. The process was complicated and expensive, but Mr. David made it happen — we received 72 sewing machines in Ethiopia on 24 July 2017. I would like to appreciate and thank Mr. David for his patience with the long, complicated import process.



We are now waiting for the training of the women and disbursement of sewing machines. But, due to the current political problems in the country, we couldn't proceed according to our plans. Travelling out of town is difficult. We hope that this situation will be better soon and we will proceed with our programs.

We will soon finalize our project and will report in detail to Sewing Peace. ♦

# Reports from Ghana, Fall 2017

By Ohemaa Sarfoa

## Bicycles

Because of its numerous uses, a bicycle could be a very cherished vehicle for its possessor. Forty-year-old Mr. Sapaku is a tailor. He has been using a bicycle in his daily dealings for the past ten years. Aside from the thrifty significance of the bicycle, it unknowingly gets rid of some health-related deficits in his body, as biking is a form of exercise.

As part of his schedule, he rides his bicycle to Winneba and back and so is able to keep fit. With his bicycle, he is able to procure all his sewing materials. Further, he distributes his finished garments on his bike. Owing to his work ethic, he never runs out of customers and this is so because of the bicycle. It has contributed a significant increment to his income.

However, recent years have not been so favourable for Mr. Sapaku. His bicycle broke down and efforts to repair it have been futile. Despite his efficiency in his work, his productivity saw a drastic decline. Without his bike, he was not able to deliver finished garments on time. Neither could he save money, now that he had to spend so much on public transportation.

Getting a new bicycle from WEBike caused a remarkable change for Mr. Sapaku. He is now able to save money he used to spend on transportation. In addition, he no longer has to deal with heavy traffic jams.

In summation, the bicycle is a frugal, time-efficient, and health-improving vehicle. ♦

## Water

One of the most important commodities in the lives of all living things is water: the body is made up of 70% water, and plants as well as animals need water for growth. Water is an undeniably substantive commodity in the livelihood of humans.

In spite of the importance of water, access to potable water is a great hurdle in some parts of West Africa, specifically Ghana. In some parts of the northern region of Ghana, human beings share the same water with animals. Animals also need water, but in these areas cattle drink and release their droppings in the same lakes and streams humans use.

Sabulugu is a village in the northern region of Ghana where there is little or no access to clean water. Inhabitants have to walk 3.5km to get drinkable water.

This has been the situation in Sabulugu for many years. Thanks to WEBike, though, there has been a change. The need to walk long hours for clean water has now been eliminated. Residents simply tie their water containers to their bicycles and bike to the stream and back in 30 to 40 minutes.

WE EXPRESS OUR PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO WEBIKE! ♦

Although we do not have a picture of the water carriers in Ghana, we have seen bicycle water-carriers before. In rural areas, the average Ugandan lives 4 miles from the nearest well. This photo is of a water carrier from Koytera Uganda. Water carriers put a 10-gallon jerrycan on each side of the back wheel, suspended from a piece of wood, and then place two more 10-gallon jerrycans on top. That is almost 350 pounds of water! Then they push the bicycle to someone's house where they dump the water into that person's cistern for a few shillings and then ride back to the well with the empty plastic containers on the bicycle. They repeat this process dozens of times per day to earn a living and to supply people with the water they need. ♦



## Report from Albania, Fall 2017

Albania has one of our most active partners, PASS/Ecovolis, which runs a wide variety of social and environmental programs. An Update from March 2017, available on our website, mentions two of their programs. One uses P4P/SP sewing machines to make reusable shopping bags and the other operates a children's library, LibrAria.

Ened Mato, the PASS director, recently reported on two other PASS projects.

The **School of Nature** is a children's program in the Albanian capital, Tirana. The goal of the program is to give urban kids some experience in nature while having fun and learning. Here are some examples of School of Nature activities:

- raise a tent camp
- plant different kinds of flowers
- read books
- paint
- take canoe trips on the artificial lake in Tirana

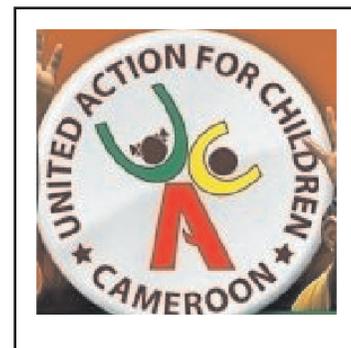


The **Elders' Academy** is a program to teach older adults to ride bicycles. Some of the riders have not ridden a bike for many years and some have never learned to ride. I don't know about you, but the thought of learning to ride a bike at age 50 or 60 sounds a little scary, especially in a busy city like Tirana. But in the photos we've seen, these "elders" look like they're having a blast. ♦

# Cameroon 2017: New Partner, United Action for Children

By Orock Eyong

United Action for Children (UAC), based in Buea, in southwest Cameroon, is proud to be one of the newest partners of Pedals for Progress and Sewing Peace. UAC was founded in 1996 and registered as a non-profit community-based child- and youth-centered organization engaged in Grooming Small Minds for a Big Future and developing a caring society for children and young people through innovative programs.



The overall goal of UAC is to contribute to the improvement of living conditions of affected populations such as rural families, children, and women. In line with its mission, UAC is involved in the following projects to meet the ever increasing needs of the affected populations:

- Basic Education to orphans and vulnerable children
- Entrepreneurship Education to out-of-school youths and low-income women
- School on Wheels programme to assist rural children and women
- Primary Health Care to cater for basic health needs of the rural communities
- Vocational Training to equip youths and low income women with employable skills and to make them job creators

The partnership with Pedals for Progress is very timely and important in helping UAC with its mission of strengthening rural children, women, and families. The job of equipping low income women, children, and young people with employable skills and making them job creators will be made easy as a result of strategic support from Sewing Peace through the donation of sewing machines. Indeed, 72 sewing machines are in transit now. ♦

## Report from Tanzania, Fall 2017

The Honorable Sophia Mwakagenda is a Member of the Parliament of Tanzania and the founder of the P4P/SP partner in Tanzania, the She Can Foundation. Starting in April 2016 she visited different constituencies in order to listen to the people and implement some of her She Can programs. A report in the Summer 2017 *InStitch* newsletter described the first part of that trip. We now have this new report on the next part of the trip: to the Chunya and Temeke regions of Tanzania.

MP Mwakagenda presented two sewing machines to the Chunya Tailoring group, which is mix of women and men in Chunya constituency. They are in a joyous mood. This group started in 2007. They have about 12 sewing machines and now with the two new machines they are starting a tailoring school for girls and boys. It has 10 Members who are John Joseph, Ande Mwimba, Martina Kibali, Ndongolela Matembo, Twalangete Mwendemseke, Rehema Ambindwile, Julia Mwabenga, Mulyambate Mtagete, Jane Jansi and Asia Syabakeke. The group is an economic empowerment group for both men and women.



### Temeke Constituency Visit



MP Mwakagenda gave a sewing machine to the women's group of the Temeke Moravian Church in Temeke Constituency. Also in the photo are the Reverend Timothy Mwankenja and Ms. Stella Sematela, Chairperson of the Women's Wing of the Church. The women's group gives food and clothes to needy people around the church. The sewing machines will increase the church income for that purpose.



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