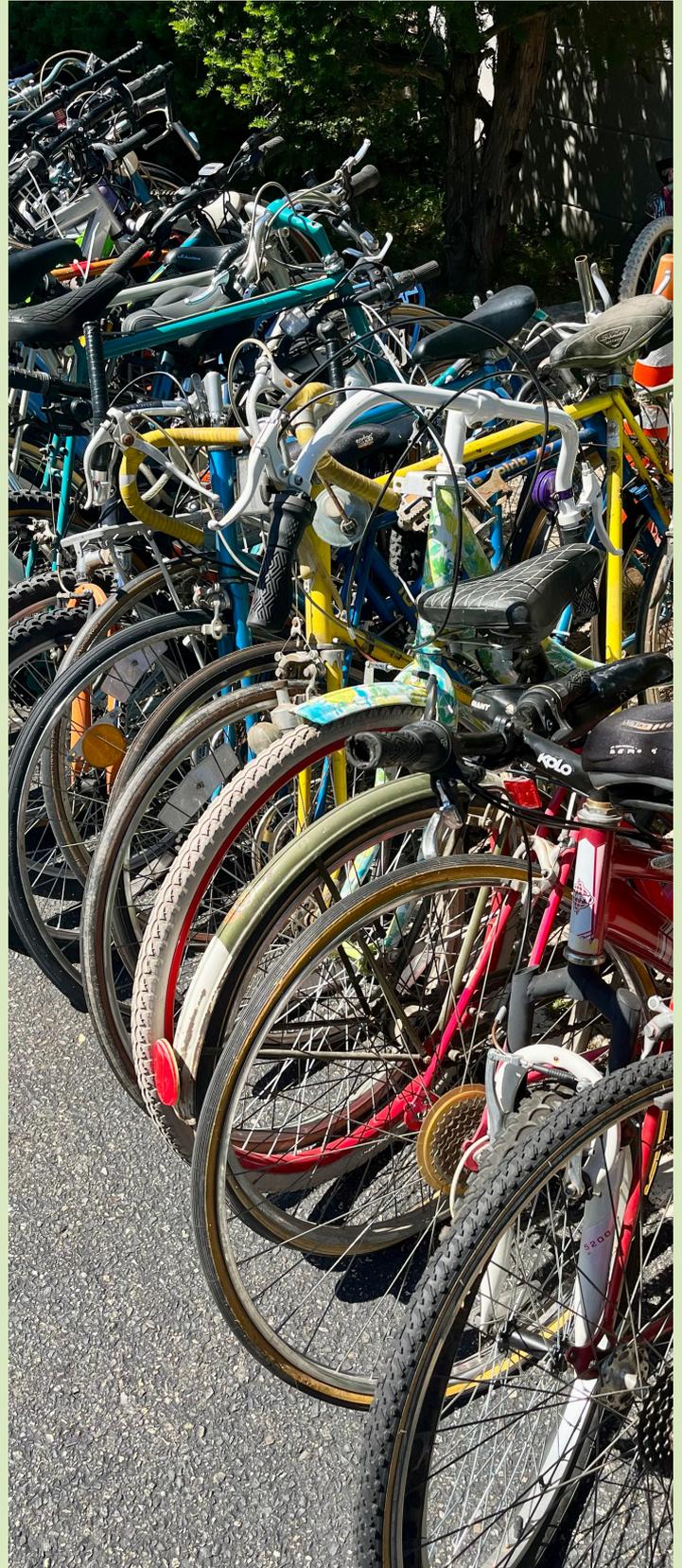




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INGEARINSTITCH FALL 2022



PEDALS FOR PROGRESS
NEWSLETTER FALL 2022

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Alan Schultz, President P4P/SP

It is that time of year again as we slow down operations for the winter until we resume collections for our Spring 2023 season. Our Fall 2022 season proved to be a short, yet jam packed collections season. We held a total 12 collections, mostly in the month of October, to close out the fall season shipping three containers of bikes and sewing machines and two loads of sewing machines. We sent 72 machines to a new partner in Somalia, and another 72 to our old friends with the Norbert and Friends missions in Tanzania. We also sent out three full containers to FIDESMA in Guatemala, P4P Belize and D.R.V.R in Togo!

While we may not have had a long list of collections like years past, we did average about 84 bikes per collection and noticed a large increase of sewing machines. We were able to send our third container just before Thanksgiving, giving us plenty of room to fill up our storage facility come spring.

Moving forward, my number one goal is to strengthen our domestic operations to fill our Spring 2023 season to the brim. I want to operate in more communities throughout the tri-state area to fulfill the extremely high demand for bicycles and sewing machines we have from our friends located around the world. While reaching out to more groups will be key, I also want to strengthen the potential for current groups that already run collections by helping them interact with one another and strengthen the inner P4P community of sponsors. Building a stronger internal network will allow collectors to interact with each other to share valuable insider information on running successful collections.



It finally feels as if we have full potential now with the Pandemic in our rearview mirror. It's now time to keep the truck moving forward, town to town, picking up as many items as possible. The growth of our domestic sphere will allow us to keep up with our projects overseas. The work we do here has a direct correlation with what we can do with our partners in the developing nations we operate. My fascination with Pedals for Progress has always been this fact. The bike that a donor drops off on a Saturday morning at one of our collections, is the same bike that arrives to a person in need of reliable transportation. This is how we operate; we build a bridge between our donors and someone else thousands of miles away. I am excited to build upon the bridges we have so that we may continue bringing aid to those in need. I encourage you to read more about what we've been up to and to join us as we continue our mission of sending use bikes and sewing machines to motivated individuals in the developing world.



SEWING PEACE IN THE BELIZE PRISON

ARTICLE BY DERICK PITTS OF
P4P BELIZE

Sewing Peace in the Belize Prison

With the sewing machines we received from Sewing Peace we were able to partner with the local prison to start a sewing program for the inmates at the Belize Prison. The objectives of the sewing program are:

1. To introduce the inmates to a marketable life skill. A skill which they can gain an honest income from.
2. To save the prison money at the same time.

With 1200 inmates at a prison facility that operates off 80% donations, the cost of taking care of these inmates can be burdensome. To the point that some inmates don't have proper clothing. After jumpsuits are laundered, the workforce inspects each one for tears and missing snaps. The prison sends out for repair an average of 200 jumpsuits per month at a cost of \$5 each. That amounts to \$12,000 per year. Since each jumpsuit costs about \$15 to \$17 to replace, damaged jumpsuits were disposed of after three repairs. However, through this partnership with Sewing Peace and Belizean volunteers we are able to teach inmates how to first sew and repair their inmates' jumpsuits. Which will be a HUGE cost saving instrument for the prison.



Using donated pieces of fabric and their own imaginations, "they are expressing themselves artistically," said one of the volunteers. Using their creativity, the prison will market their artwork so they can gain an income while in prison. The ultimate goal is to see inmates have a second shot at life when they reenter society. It is our hope and plan that when inmates graduate from our program and are released from prison, they will receive a sewing machine, fabric, and a business plan to help sustain themselves and family.

This is a win-win for the prison and the inmates. A huge thanks to Sewing Peace and their generous donors for making this program a life changing success.



DRVR-TOGO FALL '22 UPDATE

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS
COURTESY OF:
SIMON AKOUETE

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Togo has been a Sewing Peace partner since 2019 and a Pedals for Progress partner since 2020. Visit www.p4p.org/drvr-togo/ for an introduction to our partner in Togo, Association Défi et Révolution de la Vie Rurale (DRVR-TOGO, Challenge and Revolution in Rural Life).



REPORT FROM TOGO, FALL '22

In June 2019 we received our first shipment from Sewing Peace: 72 sewing machines. After that we got another 5 containers with both bicycles and sewing machines, the last of which we received on June 22, 2022 — a total of 2366 bikes and 395 sewing machines.

Our four-year partnership has enabled us to offer much needed support to our communities, as we've reported in earlier posts (see p4p.org for links):

- Togo #2 arrived in June 2019.
- Sandra Anani tells her story about the 1912 Singer treadle sewing machine she got in 2020 from a tailor from New York State.
- Togo #3 arrived in July 2021.
- Togo #4, 463 bikes and 53 sewing machines, was shipped in May 2021.
- Togo #5 arrived in December 2021.
- This report from spring 2022 has stories from 7 recipients of SP/P4P sewing machines and bikes.

Despite our successes, much remains to be done. This fight is far from over.

In addition to our work with P4P/SP, DRVR-TOGO has followed in the footsteps of the Togolese state in the process of modernization of our artisan community. We supervise, train, and promote our craftsmen to help them increase their production both for local consumption and for outside sales.

The first edition of the Togolese Crafts Day, in 2021, engaged artisans from all regions of the country. After the resounding success of the first Crafts Day, a very attractive program was planned for the second edition. It took place from June 23 to July 06, 2022. The event was celebrated in a special way in the prefecture of Vo with action-packed programs organized and financed by the artisans themselves.



The attendees included the artisans, members of the office and president of the finance commission of the chamber of trade of the prefecture of Vo, and the coordinator of DRVR-TOGO.

The festivities also included the graduation ceremony from the DRVR-TOGO sewing apprenticeship program and the awarding of sewing machines and other working materials to the graduates, who can now take their destiny into their own hands, open their own workshops and practice their trades in peace, and take care of their needs and those of their families.



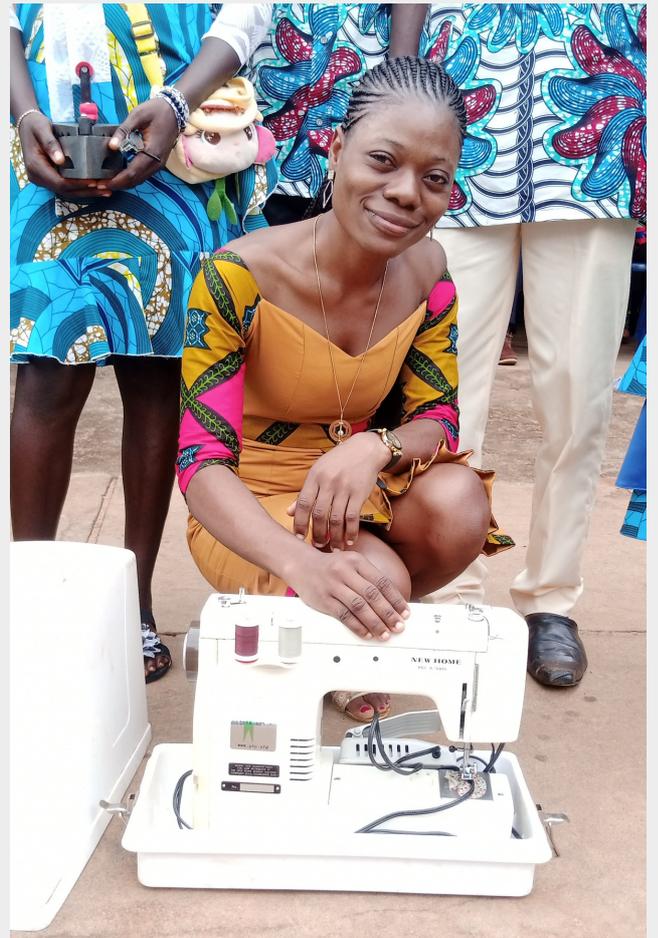
TOGO SUCCESS STORIES



AKOÉLÉVI ANTOINETTE ASSAGBAVI

My name is Akoélévi Antoinette ASSAGBAVI. I am 21 years old, and I have been one of the beneficiaries of the program of the DRVR-TOGO association for 3 years. I was born into a family of 7 children. We lost our mother very early and few girls in my community have the right to go to school like boys. We are made to accompany our mothers in the kitchen and various domestic activities. After the death of my mother, I was adopted by my aunt and brought to Nigeria at the age of 6 for a long period without education and also without learning a trade. Back in the village for my father's funeral ceremonies, I finally decided not to go back to my aunt's house to live this life of mistreatment and unhappy domestic life.

One day I heard a radio program about the possibility of free support for young people wishing to learn any trade of their choice. I quickly contacted their service and was admitted to the program. After 3 years of perseverance and courage, here I am, the holder of my end-of-training diploma in men's and women's sewing. At the beginning, I thought of a dream which finally became a reality: 12 other people and I who can now open our own workshops and save money to take care of ourselves and feed our families. Sincere thanks to DRVR-TOGO, P4P/SP, and all their staff and donors.



GRACE YAWA AGBOZO

My name is Grace Yawa AGBOZO. I was born in 2000 in a polygamous family where my mother has 5 other co-wives with several brothers and sisters at the family home in Agbozo-kpédji/VO. My story is a little sad to listen to, but I ask you to understand me. I am my mother's eldest; my parents never had the courage to enroll me in elementary school like all the other children of my age. When I was 10 years old, after a short illness, I was forced by my father to be admitted to a convent after a few ceremonies under the pretext of paying a family debt from our ancestors to the voodoo priest. The days and the months pass. It turns out that I have to marry the voodoo priest. I have just turned 12, but discussions about this contract started when I was born. I am at the end of my tether — how can a 12-year-old girl become a housewife? A few months later I had my first boy and then my second at less than 14 years old and then life goes on.

One evening, during a ceremony in a village not far from our home, my so-called husband had a stroke and he fell. We found a way to bring him to the hospital, but he didn't survive. We women have been subjected to weeks of widowhood ceremonies. One day, I decided to escape this prison life with my two boys and return to my parents. The chief of my village called DRVR-TOGO to help us. I was sent directly to the evening school for adults organized by the DRVR team. After I learned to read and write French, I was sent to the apprenticeship program for a period of 3 years.

Today here I am among the stars. On my return to my village I will go with my beautiful sewing machines to the chief by whom all this good news began. My life and that of my two children have changed and I will sing the glory forever. All my family and I give thanks from the bottom of our hearts to all near or far who have contributed to making me a winner forever: to DRVR-TOGO and to P4P/SP, whose actions change living conditions on the other side of the world.



MAWUSE FIOVI ADANLESSOSI-AVOUDE

I am 23 years old. Since I was a child I have had problems with my vision. My parents found an excuse or saw fit not to enroll me in school. A child who cannot see well is going to have to learn a trade to have financial means to go to the big hospitals for treatment. One day when I was 17, my father spoke with a nurse passing through our village with a mobile vaccination program against poliomyelitis, a disease that frequently develops in children under 5 years old in our community. My father learned that a humanitarian organization would send me to the city hospital for consultation and treatment. I was taken in and over a period of 2 years my eyesight improved.

So I decided to go and learn the trade of sewing, which had always interested me. Four years later I was ready to take my final apprenticeship exam when to my great surprise I discovered that I did not have a birth certificate — another problem but quickly solved by the dynamism and the determination by the team of the DRVR-TOGO. I had my birth certificate, and I also passed my exam on time. Today I have my sewing machine, which will allow me to open my own workshop to work and achieve all my ambitions. This work is really great. Congratulations for always being there for the well-being of others. Congratulations to you wherever you are. Continue to save other people in difficulties worse than mine. Once again thank you and please do what you can.



UNION SPECIAL SEWING MACHINE FROM THE 1930S

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS
COURTESY OF:
RICHARD DUTKO

Editor's note: Our bicycle and sewing machine collections can yield hundreds of donated items by a wide range of individuals in the greater tri-state area of New Jersey. Each item we collect has a backstory. During our collections we sometimes get to hear snippets of these stories. I always enjoy these tales as it helps me put into perspective the scope of our mission and injects a more personal connection to the otherwise inanimate objects we send overseas.

The story that follows is from a donor that I was able to speak with via email about a large industrial sewing machine dating back to the 1930s. The history and personal story behind this machine gets me incredibly excited to know that it will be able to develop an even more intricate life after sending it to our partners in Belize.

I was looking for a place to donate an old Union Special sewing machine, mounted on a thick piece of wood, that was in my father's basement for about five decades or so. It was heavy; the table measured 48" wide by 20" deep by 55"H at the top of the spool holders. My father passed away at 102 years old and his house was being cleaned out and listed for sale, which was difficult to do. I am definitely a reduce-reuse-recycle type of person and finding homes for a lot of my father's possessions was a priority of mine.



Family members had the opportunity for keepsakes but much of it was donated to various organizations. Finding a place for the heavy vintage Union Special was more difficult than most. I don't really use eBay or Freecycle or any of those sites, even though I should learn how to do so. We tried friends, a couple of dry cleaners/clothing repair stores and local charitable organizations without success. So I was thrilled when I found Pedals for Progress on the internet!

I must admit, my own memories of the sewing machine are fading. I recall my father using it several times in his basement, but can't pinpoint when and what for. I am pretty sure it was for repairs on heavy material such as a leather handbag for my wife or a duffel bag for myself or my children. I believe he made central air conditioning covers for all of us on that sewing machine, those types of things. He was so handy and was affectionately called "Mr. Fix-It" by us all. He would hand-sew all kinds of things for the family, had a regular Singer sewing machine for easier items, and the Union Special for the heavy-duty projects.

He had a standard Singer upstairs for most sewing repairs. That one was given to a friend of a family member. My father was an exceptional handyman, even in his 80s and 90s. I recall him going into the basement to sew something for someone within the past 10 years. In the 1940s and 1950s he was an upholsterer with his brother. I assume this machine came from his brother's business many years ago.



The photograph is of my father Albert Dutko (left) and his brother Joe, when he helped his brother run an upholstery business. We guess that the photo is from the 1940s or 1950s. My father was the youngest of ten children (he was born in 1919), and helped his brother with the business into the 1960s.

I recall as a youngster helping them take the material out of a chair or sofa being reupholstered. My job would be removing the fabric between the arms or back of the chair and the cushions. This fabric pocket would often have coins and other items that fell into them. My pay for the day were the coins and treasures I found inside the furniture. The Union Special was in my uncle's workshop where they did all their work. How or when my father got the machine, I do not know. He moved into his 'new' house in 1956, and I was born in 1958.

I wish I knew more of its origin. I never asked him where it came from, or if he told me, it was long ago and didn't register in my memory bank. After his death in July of 2022, we all admired the old machine, but none of us really knew how to sew or use such an antique, nor had the space for it. During my internet research to find out how old it was, I came upon a PDF of a manual that was printed in 1939 for this model 61300C. So that places it in the 1930s era. I am so glad to hear that this wonderful old machine is finding a new home in Belize. We hope that the machine has another few decades of life in it!

CAMEROON: RISING HOPE FOUNDATION

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS
COURTESY OF:
MBENJA CLOVERT ANAMANI

RHFC FASHION AND DESIGN SCHOOL TRAINING CLUBS

Rising Hope for Change (RHFC), Cameroon, donated sewing machines to SIRA Bilingual Nursery and Primary school to start a pilot school fashion and design training club in Cameroon schools. The aim of this pilot project is to install Rising Hope Foundation for Change fashion and design training clubs in Cameroon schools in partnership with Sewing Peace America.



In line with our objective to provide quality sustainable projects to impact communities, RHFC donated sewing machines to SIRA Bilingual Nursery and Primary School Makepe Douala fashion and design pilot training Club for pupils. The entrepreneurial school will train young students how to sew from primary levels. It was during their end of school year and prize award ceremony that the project was launched, and these machines were handed to the club by the CEO of RHFC in the presence of the proprietor, parents, pupils, staff, and the director of the school. Receiving the gifts, the head of the club together with the pupils expressed their gratitude to the CEO and the entire RHFC family for the timely gesture and initiative of RHFC. The proprietor of the school in turn thanked the organization for supporting their vision. The occasion ended with a family photo.



RHFC EMPOWERING WOMEN

The largesse of the RHFC team was extended to an internally displaced persons (IDP) family based in Logpom Douala in Cameroon. Growing up in the southwest region of Cameroon, life was okay until the crisis started in 2016. Mme. Arrey Christelle from Manyemen left the village when the crisis was at its peak. Together with her entire family, they left behind many of their belongings since they were in a rush, leaving behind the only thing that was helping them to feed their family, the sewing machine. Her mother taught them how to sew dresses using the sewing machine they had. With their livelihood surrounding the sewing machine, they grew up to become skilled seamstresses. When they settled in Douala, life was not the same as in Manyemen. Without a sewing machine they had no source of income, they could not stitch their worn-out dresses, thus rose difficulties to eat and take care of minor bills. They cried out for help, RHFC heard their cry and offered a free sewing machine. This machine boosted their moral and increased Mme. Arrey Christelle's income as she can again sew dresses for people and earn a living.



RHFC AND IDPS (INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS)

Under the initiative of "RHFC and IDPs Empowerment", RHFC has donated more than 20 Sewing Machines to Internally Displaced women and girls in the Southwest and other regions of Cameroon after some days of training. According to the Founder of RHFC, Mr Mbenja Clovert Anamani, this gesture will go a long way to improve the livelihood of these internally displaced persons and their families in one way or the other. Through their training, IDPs will be economically empowered, freed from sexual exploitation, and gain skills in business, enabling them to grow their sewing endeavors and have more investors to establish bigger and greater ideas. Innovative skills will boost their creativity in the world of technology, therefore foster entrepreneurship in the world of fashion and design.

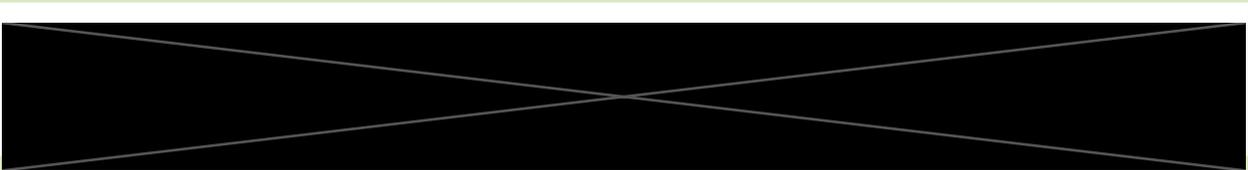
COLLECTION NUMBER 2: 2022

In all the years since 2007 I had been getting the P4P newsletter and feeling a little guilty that I hadn't done another collection but I was busy with other recycling projects and my husband and I were working on a building rehab project. But then David Petri bugged me again about getting rid of used bikes. I had a little trouble finding a contact at P4P, but I eventually got through and was put in touch with Alan, the new president. Alan gave me lots of advice about running a collection: processing the bikes, packing them into the truck using plywood for a second layer, publicity...

We ran the collection through the Otsego ReUse Center, a program of The Arc Otsego, a non-profit that provides support, services and advocacy to individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. Faith Tiemann, who does publicity for Arc Otsego, arranged for a spot on a local TV station, and for publicity on the Arc Otsego facebook page.

After we started publicizing the collection, woman after woman approached me with either a sewing machine or a bicycle and said they were pleased to donate to this wonderful cause.

We scheduled the collection for October 29th, and started the day with 13 bicycles, a bike pump, a bike horn that sounds like Clarabell's horn, and a very generous check delivered by a couple from Saratoga Springs. David Petri donated 10 bikes and extra seats.



INVENTION OF AN INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH PEDAL-REMOVAL SYSTEM

Once in a great while, we find a pedal that refuses to cooperate. One of our 70-year-old Schwinn's had such a pedal. Despite lots of elbow grease and WD40, by 11:15 we still had not been able to remove this pedal.

My 12 year old grandson, Oliver Clarvoe, had recently arrived to help climb into "Mom's Attic" at the front of the 15-foot U-Haul truck and run a rope around the machines on the shelf and then through sewing machine case handles to secure the machines. Oliver was listening to Bill Ralston, one of the volunteers, and Lars discuss the option of using a pipe to help remove the rusted-on pedal. Ralston went off for a fence-post driver he happened to have in his car(?!?) Oliver disappeared and came back with an 8-foot by 2-inch pipe, which he used to demonstrate some weight-lifting techniques.



The three of them proceeded to slide the fence-post driver over the pedal wrench, then slide the pipe over the crank arm of the other pedal, then apply severe torque with the pipe. The creaking and aching noises of the pedal being released was the sweet sound of success.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

We had a steady stream of donations. It was a long day. Our collection was scheduled to run between 9am and 4:30pm, much longer than the customary 3-hour P4P collection. At the end of the day we packed up the truck for the trip to New Jersey the next day, Sunday, October 30th.

I had arranged with Karen Sullivan, former Otsego County Solid Waste and Planning Director, to make the drive with me to New Jersey. A chance for us to catch up and I knew it would make the trip more entertaining. On Sunday morning we met at the truck, scraped the ice off the windshield, and made the 3-hour drive to the P4P containers in Glen Gardner. Alan and Michael met us there, we unloaded the 72 bikes and 29 sewing machines and headed back to Oneonta. Another long day.

Many thanks to the exceptional volunteers who made the collection such a success: Bill Hardy, Shelley Williams, and Ryan Eldred of Otsego ReUse Center; Faith Tiemann of The Arc Otsego, who helped so much with publicity; Lars and Barbara Schweidenback, who brought a wealth of expertise to the table; Oliver Clarvoe, the youngest volunteer; Bill Ralston, who apparently drives around with a fence-post driver in his trunk; and Karen Sullivan, who made the drive with me for the drop-off in New Jersey.

It was obvious to me at the beginning of the collection that I didn't have enough average volunteers but I did have exceptional volunteers and a supportive community to fill the truck before closing time. Thank you everyone in Otsego County, NY, and surrounding communities for your generosity to Pedals for Progress and Sewing Peace.



pedals for progress™

Putting used bikes to good use



REPORT FROM UGANDA, FALL 2022



BY MATHEW YAWE

Mityana Open Troop Foundation is a Community-based Organization started in 1997 by a group of Boy Scouts who had been affected by socioeconomic issues leading to dropping out of school and unemployment, while others had been affected by HIV/AIDS due to loss of their relatives/guardians. The high dropout rate led to high crime rates among youths in Uganda. The initiative started by conducting training on HIV/AIDS, health talk-shows, environmental protection, child nutrition in the most risky communities, promoting food security, providing support and education to vulnerable children and conducting functional adult learning to combat illiteracy.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECCT

Because of the above concerns, our organization started a Vocational Training project in 2007 by recruiting and training vulnerable youths, widows, and orphans in sustainable skills such as sewing and fashion design, cosmetology, hair dressing, motor mechanics, and agriculture.

However, while much of our interest was in training youths in sewing and other occupational skills, we lacked the funding to afford the tools and machines that we needed.

Our project UK partner, Mr. Chris Eldridge, found the Sewing Peace Project USA, and we wrote an application for sewing machines to Mr. David Schweidenback. Sewing Peace allocated us 72 sewing machines. This was a great miracle which we were not expecting to happen!!

At the beginning, the project had two manual sewing machines shared by 30 trainees!!



The donated refurbished sewing machines to the Mityana Open Troop Foundation were in very good condition, much better than the machines being sold in Kampala. The Sewing Peace machines were installed in our sewing workshop. Some of the machines were given out to the project graduating youths as start-up machines to enable them to start their own workshops within their communities. In Uganda, a sewing machine makes a very great difference in one's daily income!

DONATED MACHINES GENERATE INCOME FOR OUR PROJECT

Some of the donated sewing machines are being sold in our shop at a cheaper price to some of the Ugandan schools, community based organizations, and artisans, who can't afford buying the so-called new Chinese machines.

The profit from our shop is used to pay shipping costs, Ugandan custom taxes, teachers' salaries, and electricity bills.



ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SEWING PEACE PROJECT

- As a result of the donated sewing machines since 2010, the project has received over 800 sewing machines, 451 projects graduates were provided each a start-up sewing machine.
- The Mityana Open Troop Foundation has been selling at inexpensive prices the remaining sewing machines to other Ugandan charities, schools (both secondary and primary), and individual artisans. The income from the machines we sell has enabled us to pay teachers, electricity bills, and maintenance costs.
- The project has over 40 sewing machines in the sewing workshop. This has enabled more hands-on training than when we started in 2010 with 3 machines.
- The project has become an Ugandan sewing machine importer, paying import taxes to the Government.
- The project owns a Sewing Shop in our town, equipped with an embroidery machine able to create school badges, names on uniforms, making school uniforms. The shop is selling refurbished machines to artisans, schools, and charities. These machines are much better than the Chinese machines in the market.

Our project graduates have managed supporting their families: paying for food, medication, school fees, and scholastic materials for their young brothers and sisters, and paying rent for their workshops.

The majority of our project trainees are youths who had dropped out of schools due to socioeconomic factors. Some of them were even previously selling sex on the streets at a young age for survival and without thinking of becoming pregnant or contracting STIs.

CHALLENGES

- The project encounters challenges in raising machine shipping costs, including paying the Ugandan Custom import taxes.
- Lack of a toilet and washing rooms at our project.
- Insufficient permanent classrooms/workshops.
- Lack of clean water for trainees.

Conclusion: Many thanks to the Sewing Peace Project, USA, all volunteers involved in the collections of machines, including refurbishing activities. We also extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Chris Eldridge from the UK, who is always supportive to our project.



'The Good You Do to Others, Comes Back To You Unknowingly.'



THANK YOU!

PLEASE VISIT P4P.ORG FOR A LIST OF OUR 2022:

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Contact us at:

Pedals for Progress
PO Box 312
High Bridge, New Jersey
08829