

# VELAFRICA IMPACT REPORT

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June 2022

*velafrica*  
Mobility with perspectives

# VELAFRICA'S VISION

is a world in which everyone can use the benefits of bike mobility to improve their living conditions.



# LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

## Dear readers and friends of Velafrica

Leave no one behind is the central promise of the UN's 2030 Agenda and recognises the need to combat poverty and inequalities worldwide. At Velafrica, we also believe that leaving no one behind is crucial if we wish to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. A bicycle is ideal for this as it moves people forward.

**For many years Velafrica has been working to address inequalities by the provision and use of bicycles.** In this annual report, we explicitly document what we contribute to the achievement of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 through the promotion of bike mobility. By recycling bikes, training young people, and through mobility programs such as «Bike to School», our work in 2021 had a direct impact on 10 of the 17 SDGs.

**The story of Awa Ilboudo is an example of what our work achieves.** This young woman lives in the Burkinese capital of Ouagadougou and is the first apprentice at our Faso Velo Bike Centre. Thanks to the bicycle mechanic training program, she has the opportunity to acquire practical and theoretical knowledge in the bicycle sector. This training offers good prospects for a young woman in one of the poorest countries in the world. After Awa completes her apprenticeship, she wants to run her own bike shop.

**After the first pandemic year of 2020, 2021 was also a challenging year for us.** For example, in South Africa, our «Bike to School» program has been severely stalled. Nevertheless, we managed to increase our overall export figures and get more people mobile. We shipped 24,813 bikes in 54 containers to 7 African countries. A new record!

**This annual report is a review of our work in 2021: We document our work in Switzerland and Africa using figures, pictures, maps, words, and graphics.** We show that the promotion of bike mobility makes a significant contribution to sustainable development. We will continue to do our best in the future to ensure that no one is left behind. Thank you for supporting us in this.

Kind regards

**Michel Ducommun**  
Co-Director Velafrica



# MULTIPLE EFFECTS

Velafrica combines integration work in Switzerland with development cooperation in Africa and this makes our organisation unique. Since 1993, we have been collecting disused bicycles, repairing them in social institutions, and then exporting them to partner organisations in Africa. Locally, the donated bikes offer many benefits.

## Collection & Recycling

In 2021, Velafrica collects nearly 40,000 bicycles. This corresponds to approximately 5% of

all new bikes sold in Switzerland in the same year. 64 bike collections, various bike fairs, and three bike pick-up campaigns take place.

## Integration & Engagement

Across Switzerland, 34 social enterprises and institutions are involved in the processing of the donated bikes in accordance with Velafrica's quality standards. A total of 250 workstations are available for approximately 600 participants. Two thirds of the bicycles are repaired and exported, whilst one third is used for spare parts.

## Export

Velafrica exports 24,813 bicycles in 54 containers to partners in seven African countries. A new record! Most bicycles go to Tanzania (31%), Burkina Faso (18%), and Madagascar (12%). 39,365 spare parts are sent with the bicycles – a third more than in the previous

year. The spare parts ensure that the bikes are sustainable and can be used for a long time.

## Social Entrepreneurs

Velafrica supplies nine partners in Africa: These include five bike centres, they receive 77% of all bikes, and four bike shops. Local jobs are created in the workshop, in sales, and in administration.

## Vocational Training

Our partners in Africa are training 109 bicycle mechanics, thereby creating prospects for young people. The training programs ensure long-use of the bicycle because they convey theoretical and practical know-how.

## Mobility

With a bicycle, people move four times faster and can transport three times more goods, than by foot. With the «Bike to School» program, we specifically promote the mobility of school children: Thanks to a bicycle, children come to class safer and less exhausted.



## 2021 in Numbers



**24'813** more bikes bring people in Africa forward.



**1'851** additional children come to school quicker and safer.



**109** young people complete training with our partners in Africa.

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Through the recycling of bicycles, the promotion of bike mobility, the training of young people, and programs such as «Bike to School», Velafrica contributes to a sustainable development. In 2021, the work of Velafrica directly supports ten of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



**Bicycles provide mobility and enable economic development.**

More goods can be transported in less time. This enables access to markets and jobs, which results in a positive effect on income.



**Thanks to bicycles, children come to school faster and more safely.**

They arrive less exhausted, are able to perform better, and have more time to study or complete household chores. This is particularly important for girls as the availability of a bicycle can allow them to attend school.



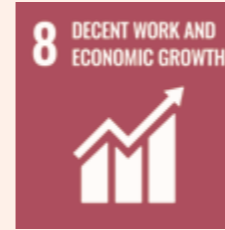
**Exercise on a bike is healthy.**

Furthermore, bike mobility facilitates access to medical treatment and the support of family or friends in medical facilities.



**Cooking, collecting firewood, and collecting water are traditionally women's tasks in sub-Saharan Africa.**

Consequently, a bicycle can change lives. Heavy loads can be transported more easily, which simplifies access to markets, and ultimately professional independence. This promotes gender equality.



**Our bicycle centres create jobs in mechanics, sales, and administration.**

Training programs in bicycle mechanics offer young people opportunities for the future.



**Velafrica not only invests in a specific location but in the entire bicycle sector.**

We are laying the foundations for a bicycle industry on the African continent.



**For many people, distance can be an obstacle.**

Thanks to the bicycle, people have greater access to markets and education. This helps to reduce societal inequalities.



**Urbanisation brings major challenges with it.**

Cities have an enormous ecological footprint. Therefore, bicycles are the key to sustainable mobility, particularly in cities.



**By collecting and repairing used bikes, Velafrica follows the recycling principle.**

Instead of disposing of unwanted bikes, they are repaired, reassembled or used for spare parts. The training programs for bicycle mechanics guarantee that the bicycles are also repaired in Africa and can remain in use for a significant period.



**Bicycles are an environmentally friendly mode of transport.**

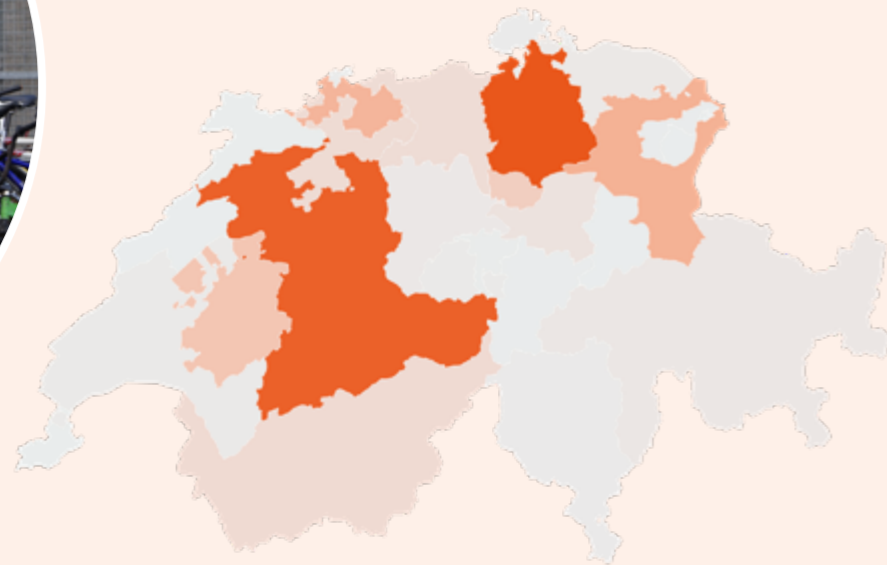
They produce no greenhouse gases or fine dust emissions. Promoting bike mobility makes a significant contribution to climate protection.





### Bike collections here and there

Committed volunteers, like the students at the Kantonsschule Solothurn and the Grünen Wohlen near Bern, ensure that used bikes find their way to the Velafrica workshops. The map below shows in which cantons more (orange) or less (grey) bicycles are donated to Velafrica.



### Riding a bike and collecting donations

Phillippe Reuland with a friend (left), Louis Eisenhut, Nalu Hajdu, and Ramona Kupferschmied (right) as well as Martin Vetsch, Marc Possa, and Remo Oswald all combined their passion for cycling with a good cause. While cycling they collect donations for Velafrica.



### Prominent Ambassador

Marlen Reusser, winner of the silver medal in the time trial at the 2020 Olympic Games, supports Velafrica as an Ambassador.

## FROM ARTH TO ZÄZIWI

Fortunately, in 2021, bike collections could be held in Switzerland almost as in previous years. Many volunteers throughout Switzerland – private individuals, school classes, associations, companies, communities, parishes – organised 64 bicycle collections during the key collection season of March to October and brought 4'677 donated bikes to Velafrica.

**Bicycle fairs, where unused bicycles can be handed over to Velafrica, are also taking place again, for example, in Bern,**

**Biel, Lyss, Langenthal, and Lucerne.** To bridge the months with limited collection activity, Velafrica offers pick-up campaigns where donated bikes can be picked up directly from the front door, for example in Bern, Basel and Köniz.



**«We are overwhelmed! We have collected 277 bikes for Velafrica.»**

Fabienne Freiburghaus, Kantonsschule Solothurn

**Velafrica thrives because people identify with Velafrica and want to contribute their efforts to the organisation's work.**

A class at the Kantonsschule in Solothurn demonstrated the many ways in which volunteering is possible. During a project week on the topic of «Velafrica», the school organised a bicycle collection and collected 277 bicycles. The students prepared an effective advertising campaign with self-designed posters, flyer distribution, and a cake sale. As well as collecting 277 bicycles, the school also donated 1'200 swiss francs to Velafrica.

**Velafrica's work in the area of collection and recycling has a positive effect on the following SDGs:**



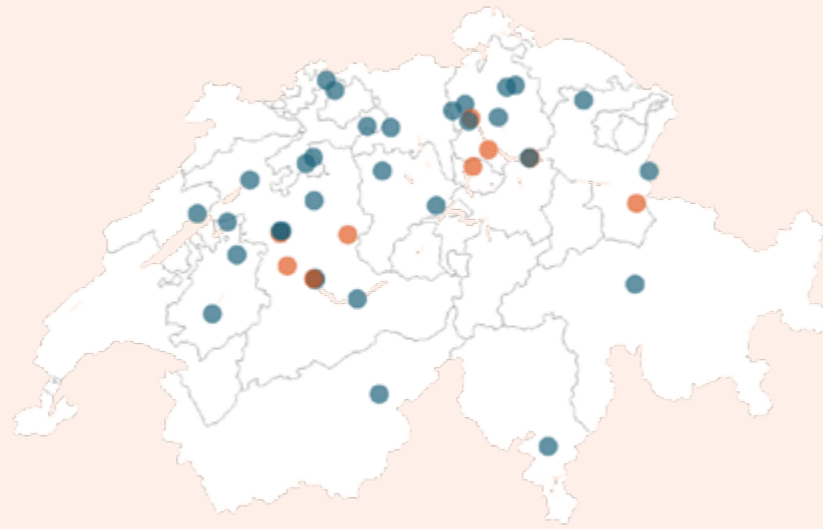
## 2021 in Numbers

**64 bicycle collections are organised by volunteers.**

**4'677 bicycles are donated at these collections.**

**5'718 bicycles are donated to Velafrica at SBB luggage counters.**

**36'987 bicycles are donated to Velafrica, more than in any other years.**



**Reliable Partners Throughout Switzerland**

At the network meeting in Pratteln in October, workshop and project managers from all partner companies involved in processing the bicycles and producing spare parts came together. The map above shows where the 34 companies in the Velafrica network are based and which organisations also produce spare parts (orange).



**Visit from Tanzania, civil service**

Hans Harrison, head of the Arusha Bicycle Company in Tanzania, visited Switzerland for the first time. He met with Velafrica founder Paolo Richter and volunteers in the Velafrica workshop in Liebefeld. Also involved are people doing civil service, including Théo Perriard, who helps with the container loading.

# DEDICATED NETWORK

Velafrica can rely on a broad network: Social work integration companies and correctional facilities are involved in the processing of donated bicycles.

**A total of 34 partner companies ensure that donated bicycles are transferred from the collection points to the workshops, where they are repaired in accordance with Velafrica's quality standards and prepared for export.** Bicycles in poor condition are broken down into spare parts.

These are used for bicycle repairs in Switzerland or sent to Africa to ensure the bicycles remain roadworthy for as long as possible. In 2021, 54 containers are shipped – a new record!



**«Velafrica is fun. The participants enjoy working with the bicycles. It is meaningful and practical, if you can mend a bike yourself.»**

Jonathan Graber, workshop leader of the Stiftung Wendepunkt

**New partners join the network in 2021:** New partners join the network in 2021: The correctional facilities Realta (GR) and Limmatal (ZH), Soziales Netz district Horgen (ZH), Fachhaus Schwerzenbach (ZH) and Stiftung Wendepunkt in Oftringen (AG). The former Velafrica export workshop in Liebefeld resumed operations in spring 2021 as an after-work project. A total of 250 workstations for approximately 600 participants are available in the network. **Velafrica's work in the area of integration and engagement has a positive impact on the following SDGs:**



# 2021 in Numbers

**25'099 bicycles are prepared for export.**

**39'365 spare parts are dismantled and exported.**




**3'000 bikes are repaired and finished at our partner in Deitingen, more than anywhere else.**

**54 shipping containers with bicycles and spare parts leave Switzerland.**

# 9 PARTNERS IN 7 COUNTRIES




## Bittaye Ngary Enterprise, Banjul

Bicycles arrive in remote regions via this small company and their extensive network.

-  **1436** bicycles delivered
-  **6** employees
-  **1** apprenticeship position




## Sport 3, Abidjan

This small shop also supplies the Abidjan Bicycle Racing Club with bicycles and regularly organises races and training sessions for young people.

-  **2425** bicycles delivered
-  **10** employees
-  **5** apprenticeship positions

## Future Survival Enterprise, Kumasi

This small company has been a Velafrica partner from the very beginning. Since 1993, it has received bicycles sent from Switzerland.

-  **998** bicycles delivered
-  **5** employees
-  **0** apprenticeship positions





## Faso Velo, Ouagadougou

The newest Velafrica bicycle centre was set up together with long-term partners and went into operation at the end of 2019. Faso Velo is a bicycle competence centre through which a state-approved dual vocational training scheme for bicycle mechanics is being established.

-  **5519** bicycles delivered
-  **9** employees
-  **2** apprenticeship positions





## Vijana Bicycle Center, Nshamba

Since 2011, young people have been able to complete an apprenticeship in bicycle mechanics at the Vijana Bicycle Centre in the rural Kagera region. Apprenticeship graduates can, for example, find employment in the branches that the bicycle centre has opened in the region.

-  **2264** bicycles delivered
-  **11** employees
-  **5** apprenticeship positions
-  **5** branches





## ABC Bicycle Company Ltd., Arusha

This bicycle centre which is well-known even beyond the national borders, has been offering two year training courses in bicycle mechanics since 2017 and also runs a branch in Moshi. ABC also promotes cycling for young people.

-  **6482** bicycles delivered
-  **19** employees
-  **0** apprenticeship positions
-  **1** branch




## Centre Akany Risika, Antsirabe

In the Caritas school and training centre, young people from precarious backgrounds can complete apprenticeships including apprenticeships in bicycle mechanics since 2012. Bicycles from Switzerland can also reach remote regions via two branches.

-  **4775** bicycles delivered
-  **27** employees
-  **57** apprenticeship positions
-  **2** branches




## Jokes Bay Enterprise, Kumasi

A small partner of Velafrica, who supplies surrounding regions and neighbouring countries with bicycles.

-  **926** bicycles delivered
-  **3** employees
-  **2** apprenticeship positions




## Sweetdale Skills Center, Margate

Due to strict Covid measures, in 2021 no bicycles could be sent to our partner company in South Africa.

-  **0** bicycles delivered
-  **5** employees
-  **37** apprenticeship positions



# 2021 in Numbers

-  **24'813** bikes are exported to our partners in Africa.
-  **95** people have a job and an income thanks to the bikes from Switzerland.
-  **109** training positions are available at our partner companies.
-  **8** branches provide bicycles for people in remote regions.



**Train the trainers**

Velafrica trainer Däni Grüter regularly visits Burkina Faso in order to teach future vocational trainers at the Bicycle Centre Faso Velo. This is where Awa Illboudo started her two year apprenticeship as the first apprentice.

**Vocational training in Madagascar and Tanzania**  
The Swiss Ambassador visits the training centre at Centre Risika in Madagascar, while in Tanzania, young people learn from their trainer, Ramadhani Juma.

# ENABLING EDUCATION

Last year, 109 young people participate in an apprenticeship in bicycle mechanics at our partner companies, 76 of whom complete their apprenticeship in 2021. After completing the training, there are many opportunities available for the young people: some get permanent jobs in bicycle centres, others work in local bike shops or start their own businesses.

**The establishment of a nationally recognised vocational training program in Burkina Faso is a quantum leap.** In the first step

teachers are trained and a pilot project with students is carried out. Velafrica has been active in Burkina Faso since 1999, and established a local bicycle centre in 2018. The program offers job and income opportunities and trains young people in bicycle mechanics. Although the cycling culture is firmly anchored in Burkina Faso, there is a lack of professionally structured training.



**«After completing my training, I would like to open my own bike shop.»**

Awa Illboudo,  
Apprentice Faso Velo

**The program in Burkina Faso is implemented by Velafrica with long-standing local partners.** The aim is to establish vocational training in Burkina Faso based on the Swiss model. A dual apprenticeship should transfer well-founded knowledge to young people and thus offer them opportunities for the future.

**The vocational training program contributes to the achievement of the following SDGs:**



# 2021 in Numbers

**243** students start an apprenticeship in our program in Burkina Faso.

**60** bicycle workshops train new apprentices.

**23** future teachers are trained.

**10** decentralised training centres are established.



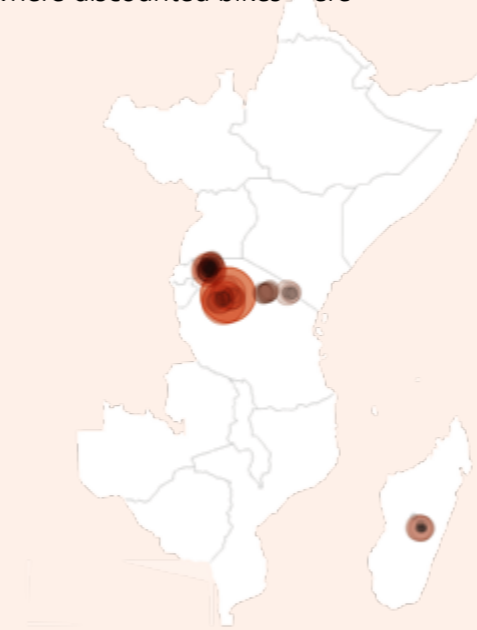


**Repair work in schools**

10 Flying Mechanics regularly visit remote schools in Tanzania and Madagascar and carry out 968 repairs. Most common repairs include patching flat tyres and adjusting brakes and shifter cables. In Tanzania, a total of 36 schools are provided with bicycles.

**Successful program in Tanzania and Madagascar**

The «Bike to School» program is particularly successful in Tanzania. Bicycles are given away for a reduced price to young people who have a long journey to school and whose parents cannot afford to buy a bicycle. The map below shows the locations in Tanzania and Madagascar where discounted bikes were distributed.



**SAFE TO SCHOOL**

Long, arduous school ways are the norm in rural areas of sub-saharan Africa. The nearest school is often many kilometers away and most villages have either no bus service or it is not reliable. In order to go to school, students have to walk long distances.

**Children often have to walk up to two hours and are exposed to a number of dangers.** This is where our «Bike to School» program comes in. Children and young people who have long walks to their school can

use the program to access a bicycle at a reduced price. To date, over 4000 students in Madagascar, Tanzania, and South Africa have benefited from the «Bike to School» program. By 2023, 4000 more children and young people will join – now also in Burkina Faso.



**«By bicycle I almost always get to school on time.»**

Ahadi Mhina Amani,  
Student

**Our surveys show what changes a bicycle can make:** Thanks to a bicycle, school children save an average of six hours of commuting time per week. Most of them use the time gained to study or help out at home. Furthermore, the students are more punctual, less exhausted, and feel safer on their journey to school.

**The «Bike to School» program directly supports the following SDGs:**



**2021 in Numbers**

**1'851 more students receive a discounted bicycle.**

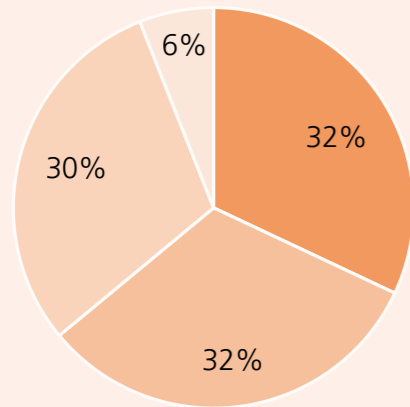
**206 minutes a day is the average time spent by school children in Tanzania and Madagascar walking to school.**

**75 minutes is the average time saved, thanks to a bicycle.**

**80 percent of students gain at least an hour a day, thanks to a bicycle.**

# THIS IS HOW WE ARE FINANCED

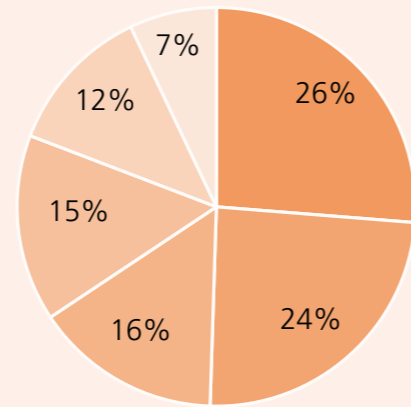
Velafrica operates as a social non-profit company with an annual budget of approximately two million Swiss francs. The company is part of the Sinnovativ Foundation and supported by it. The balance sheet for the Sinnovativ Foundation can be viewed at [www.sinnovativ.ch](http://www.sinnovativ.ch).



## Income

- 32% Donations towards large projects (Bike to School, vocational training in Burkina Faso)
- 32% Donations towards the bicycle value chain
- 30% Bike deliveries to Africa (partner contribution covering bicycle and delivery costs)
- 6% Local service revenues such as bike pickups, ongoing contributions, CSR events

**The export of a donated bicycle costs Velafrica 75 swiss francs.** Currently, the Sinnovativ Foundation contributes 9 francs per bicycle, from its own funds. The goal for Velafrica is to have a healthy and sustainable position with other sources of income. This is why we depend on additional donations. Thank you for your support!



## Expenses

- 26% Operational costs and impact measurement
- 24% Bike collection, awareness raising and local coordination
- 16% Export of bikes to Africa
- 15% Fundraising
- 12% Bike refurbishment, warehouse and logistics in Switzerland
- 7% Project overhead Velafrica

### Successful Ambassador

Marlen Reusser is one of the present day's most successful cyclists. She won the silver medal in the time trial at the 2020 Olympics. As an Ambassador, she volunteers to support Velafrica.



# THANK YOU!

Velafrica's work for mobility with perspectives is only possible thanks to the extensive support along the entire chain. On behalf of cyclists in Africa we would like to say a big thank you: To all bike donors for providing the raw material needed for our work, to all collection and processing partners and volunteers for their active support, to companies, private individuals, foundations, and public funding bodies for their financial and material donations, to the media for their reporting, and to our partners in Africa for the close cooperation. Thank you! Asante sana!

## Contact

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## Legal Disclosure

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**Mobility with perspectives**



**Your donation  
in good hands.**