



*velafrika*

Mobility with perspectives

**IMPACT REPORT 2025**

# VELAFRICA'S VISION

is a world in which all people can enjoy the benefits of bicycle mobility to improve their lives.



Cover page:  
«Bikepreneur» graduate  
Jackline Leonard (see page 16).

This page:  
Schoolgirls in Morogoro, Tanzania, with their  
«Bike to School» bicycles, August 2025.

## MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Dear readers and friends of Velafrica,

Where should I start? So much has happened over the past year. **In the following report, you will learn about some of the stories, people and statistics.** This is why I am limiting myself to just one number and one anecdote in this editorial.

The number I am truly proud of is 27,773. This is how many bicycles Velafrica exported to Africa in 2025. **It is the highest number ever recorded in a single year, thanks primarily to Velafrica's expansion in Germany.** The bicycles from Germany go almost exclusively to our new partner company, Green Economies Made Simple (GEMS) in Malawi, which has quickly become an important and reliable partner.

The anecdote I would like to share is my guest appearance at Zurich's packed Hallenstadion during the graduation ceremony for commercial apprentices in the Canton of Zurich. **This is an example of the huge interest that Velafrica's circular approach has generated.** After their initial use, our bicycles are repaired at social institutions in Switzerland and Germany, given a second life in Africa and then repaired again as needed by trained bicycle mechanics on site. This model is gaining broader and increasingly positive recognition in vocational training, integration work, development cooperation and among circular economy professionals.

While such successes bring us joy and give us strength, **we too are not immune to current economic and geopolitical developments.** Political instability in Burkina Faso, Tanzania and Madagascar is making our work considerably more

difficult, for example due to longer and more expensive deliveries or unstable currencies. We are counteracting this by staying in close contact with our local partners and, when necessary, jointly adjusting routes and projects as well as implementing safety measures for our staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks for your trust and your valuable support in the form of bicycle donations, monetary donations, volunteer work and much more! On behalf of the entire Velafrica team, I would also like to thank our partner organizations involved in the collection, processing and distribution of bicycles in Switzerland, Germany, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Malawi, Ghana, The Gambia and Ivory Coast. **It is only thanks to all of you that we can pursue our vision of a world in which everyone can benefit from bicycle mobility to improve their lives.**

I look forward to your continued support in 2026.

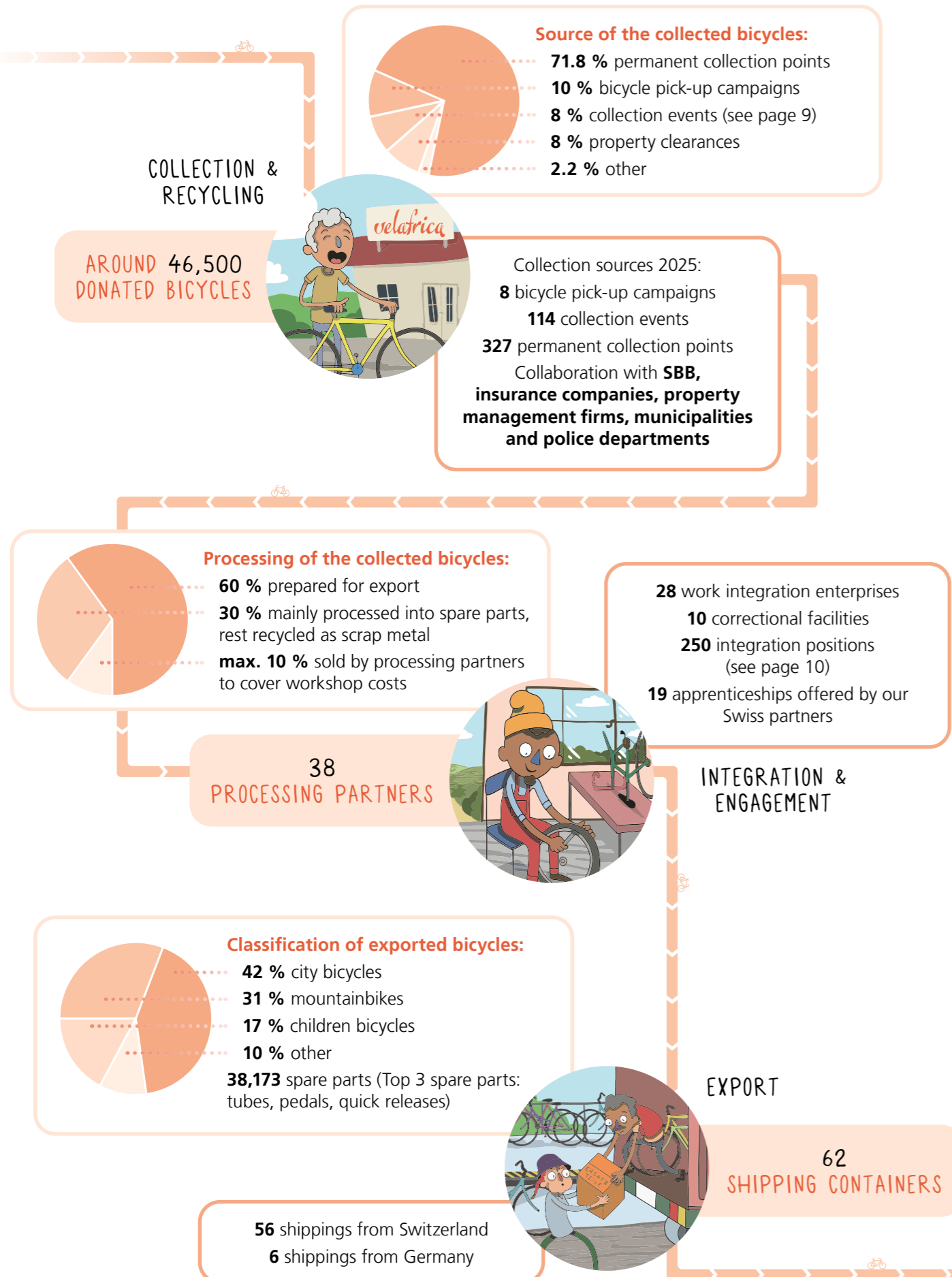
With kind regards

Michel Ducommun  
Co-Director Velafrica



Michel Ducommun presents Velafrica at the Hallenstadion in Zurich in July 2025.

# SWITZERLAND & GERMANY



# THE JOURNEY OF A BICYCLE

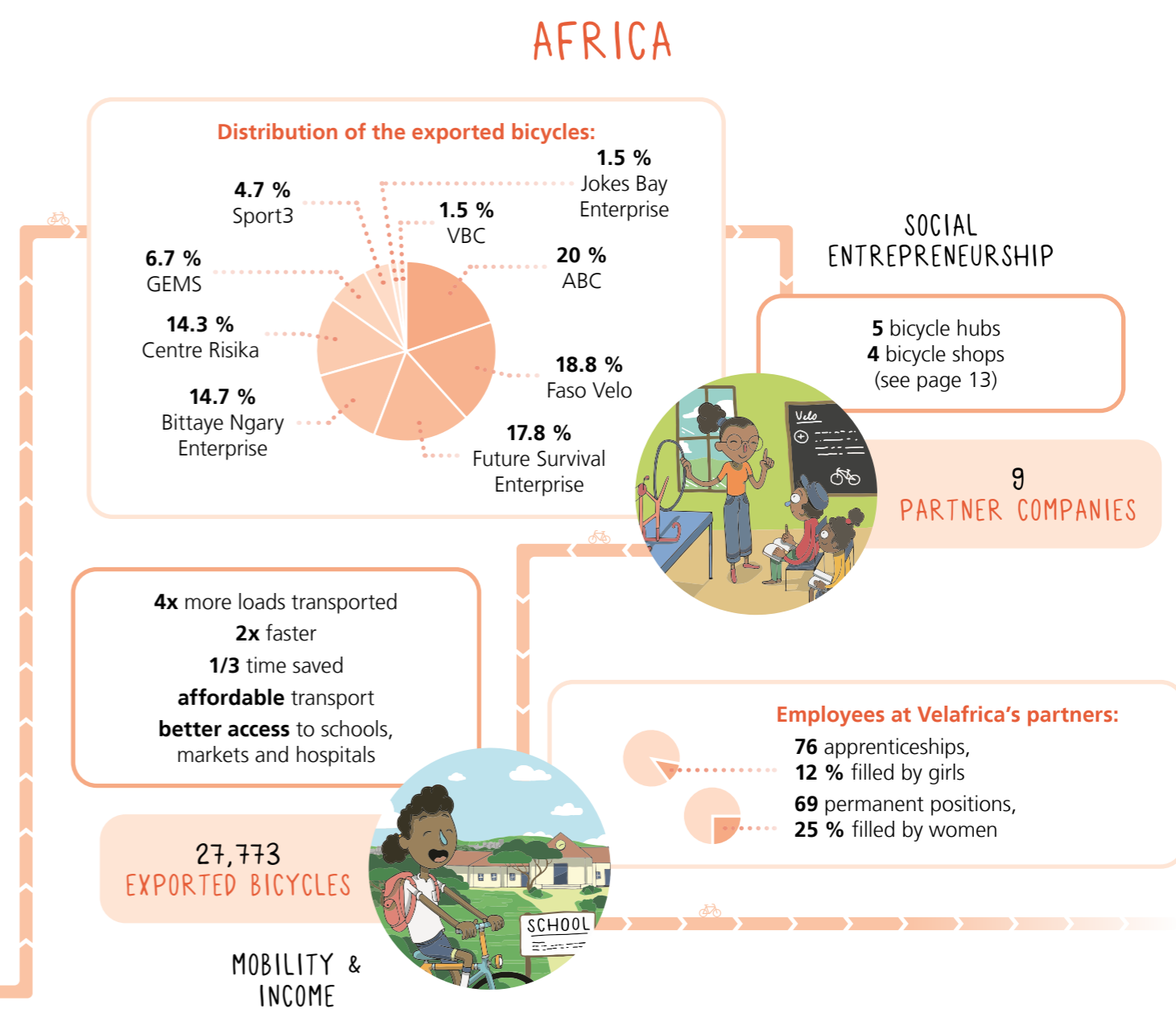
What are the steps a donated bicycle takes at Velafrica? **In short: There are quite a few!**

On this spread, follow the **journey of our bicycles in 2025** and discover the various paths a bicycle can follow in Switzerland, Germany and Africa.

To give an idea: **One possible scenario** is that a city bike is dropped off at one of over 300 collection points, repaired at a work integration enterprise and delivered to a bike hub in West or East Africa that Velafrica has established in collaboration with local partners.

**Another possibility** is that a bicycle originates from a property clearance and is dismantled at a correctional facility for spare parts to repair other bicycles.

In any case, a donated bicycle **not only promotes bicycle mobility in Africa** but also facilitates work integration, creates training and job opportunities and contributes to the sustainable use of resources.



# SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

Velafrica combines **integration work in Switzerland and Germany with development cooperation in Africa**. Along this impact chain, Velafrica contributes to sustainable development in several ways.

The reuse of bicycles, the training of young people and the promotion of bicycle mobility in Africa have a **direct impact on 10 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals**, as shown by the following indicators.



Cycling has **numerous health benefits**. Bicycles also make it easier to access medical care and to support family members and friends.



Students are **better rested and perform better** at school if they commute by bike. Furthermore, Velafrica's vocational training programs provide young people with prospects for the future.



Girls feel safer on their way to school on a bike. They are also faster, which makes it easier to balance school and household chores. This allows girls to **attend school more regularly**.



In Europe, bike repair work **empowers unemployed people** and provides meaningful activities in the correctional system. Our partners in Africa create jobs and apprenticeship opportunities.



Velafrica not only invests in its own **bicycle hubs** but also in the bike sector. This lays the foundation for a sustainable bike value chain on the African continent.



Distance can be an obstacle for many people. By cycling, they can get around faster and distances are easier to overcome. This helps **reduce social inequalities**.



Bicycles are an affordable and **ecological alternative** to motorized local transport. Especially in cities, bicycles are the key to sustainable mobility.



By refurbishing used bicycles, Velafrica extends the lifespan of **valuable resources**. The training of mechanics in Africa ensures that the bikes remain in use for a long time.



Bicycles are environmentally friendly modes of transport. They produce no greenhouse gases or fine dust. Promoting bike mobility makes a **significant contribution to climate protection**.



Bicycles provide mobility and allow people to **transport more goods in less time**. This enables access to markets and jobs, which positively affects income.



## AWARDS OVER THE YEARS



**2024**  
Velafrica wins one of the bonus prizes at the Bern Sustainability Awards.



Velafrica's vocational training program wins the ENTERPRIZE International award from the SVC Foundation.



**2017**  
The Drosos Foundation honors Velafrica for «Innovative work integration of people with a migration background and young adults».



**2016**  
The Swiss Re Foundation selects Velafrica as «Charity of the Year».



**2009**  
Velafrica is awarded the title «Swiss Social Entrepreneur of the Year».

A bicycle not only provides mobility but also facilitates education, income, health and environmental protection.

## COLLECTION & RECYCLING

Once again, last year surpassed all previous years: In 2025, Velafrica collected around 1,000 more bicycles than the previous year, **setting a new record with approximately 46,500 bicycles.**

This impressive figure is only possible thanks to many partners. In Switzerland, around 300 collection points accept used bicycles, **and for the past three years, Velafrica has also been collecting in Germany.** Around 4,000 of the bicycles were collected by the association Velafrica e.V. Germany.

It is particularly heartening to see the voluntary commitment shown by associations, schools and individuals such as Christoph Mertens (see profile). In total, they have organized 114 bicycle collections. **A big thank you to all the volunteers!**

Velafrica also collected **over 4,700 bicycles directly from donors' doorsteps during eight pick-up campaigns.** The highlight was the campaign held from April 1 to 4 in Winterthur, where 1,400 bicycles were collected – another new record.

And what happens to the donated bikes? **They are either repaired or dismantled for spare parts; unusable parts are recycled.** A maximum of ten percent of the collected bicycles are sold in Switzerland to finance the refurbishment and shipping of other bikes.

From approximately 46,500 collected bicycles, 27,773 roadworthy bicycles and over 38,000 spare parts were produced for our partner companies on the African continent. **This amounts to around 650 tons of metal that Velafrica returns to use annually,** thereby conserving valuable resources.

### WHAT A FORMER CORRECTIONAL OFFICER COLLECTS IN HIS GARAGE

**Christoph Mertens** is a former work program supervisor at the Aachen Correctional Facility. There, he worked with inmates to repair bicycles for Velafrica. Today, he collects over 100 bicycles a year in his garage and sends them to his former colleagues for refurbishment before they are shipped to Africa.

### You started repairing bicycles with the inmates at the Aachen Correctional Facility in 2023. What was the response like?

They were thrilled. It's work that allows them to give back to society while having fun at the same time.

### What motivated you to start collecting bikes in your own garage?

I've always had a connection to bicycles. When I heard about Velafrica, I started collecting bikes on a large scale. It's important to me to reuse resources – so collecting unused bikes was just the logical next step for me.

### Is there a situation that particularly touched you?

My first meeting with the Velafrica team really convinced me of the quality of their work: They have a great spirit and I especially liked the way they interacted with the inmates.

## 2025 IN NUMBERS

**114** bike collections take place thanks to volunteers.

**3,706** bicycles are donated during these collections.

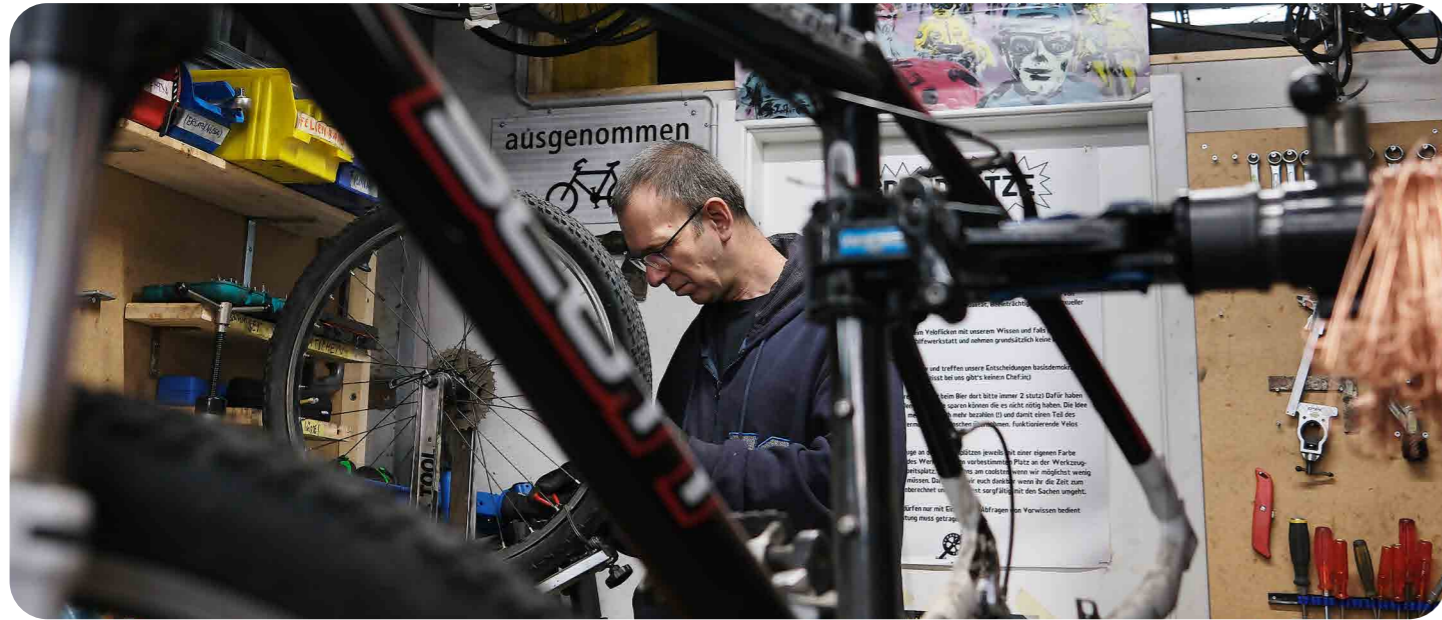
Approximately **33,400** bikes find their way to Velafrica through permanent collection points.

Velafrica receives a total of around **46,500** donated bicycles.

In 2025, Velafrica picks up bicycles from donors' homes during eight pick-up campaigns.



Every year, Christoph Mertens volunteers to collect over 100 bicycles for Velafrica.



## INTEGRATION & ENGAGEMENT

When it comes to transporting and processing the collected bicycles, Velafrica can rely on a large network in Switzerland and Germany. In 38 facilities, people repair the donated bicycles and produce spare parts; **28 of these are institutions focused on work integration and 10 are correctional facilities**. This processing of bicycles creates around 250 jobs. Together, these partners have refurbished 27,773 bicycles and 38,173 spare parts for export in 2025, in accordance with Velafrica's quality standards.

Velafrica receives additional support from committed businesses. As part of **«Corporate Social Responsibility»** days, teams visit the bike workshops of our partners, learn more about Velafrica's impact and help with the assembly or loading of the bikes. The CSR initiatives are popular and highly valued by participants. In 2025, over 400 people volunteered at one of 40 events.

One of the workshops offering such opportunities is Velafrica's own **community center, the «Velowerkstatt Egelsee»** in Bern. Since 2023, people from diverse backgrounds, ages and walks of life have been gathering here to volunteer and work on bicycles together. This meaningful work provides a relaxed setting for conversation and a space for people to connect. More than 20 volunteers now dedicate their time to Velafrica several times a week at the workshop. Together, they repaired 1,456 bicycles last year.

### NEW PERSPECTIVES AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER

One of the volunteers who repairs bikes at the «Velowerkstatt Egelsee» is 48-year-old **Oguz Ergün**. He came to Switzerland from Turkey for political reasons.

#### Why do you volunteer at the «Velowerkstatt Egelsee»?

I enjoy helping people and I love fixing all kinds of things. Plus, I like bikes – bikes represent freedom.

#### How has working here changed things for you?

My life has gotten better. I've learned a lot about bikes, I'm improving my German and I've made friends. We get along well and help each other out. This has made me more active and sociable. Fixing bikes is good for my mind and my soul.

#### What motivates you to repair bikes?

It's all of it: Repairing is good. Meeting people is very good. And knowing that these bikes are going to Africa and someone can use them is good. Recycling the bikes instead of throwing them away is good for society and the environment. At the same time, I'm learning a lot here and think this work could pave the way to a job.

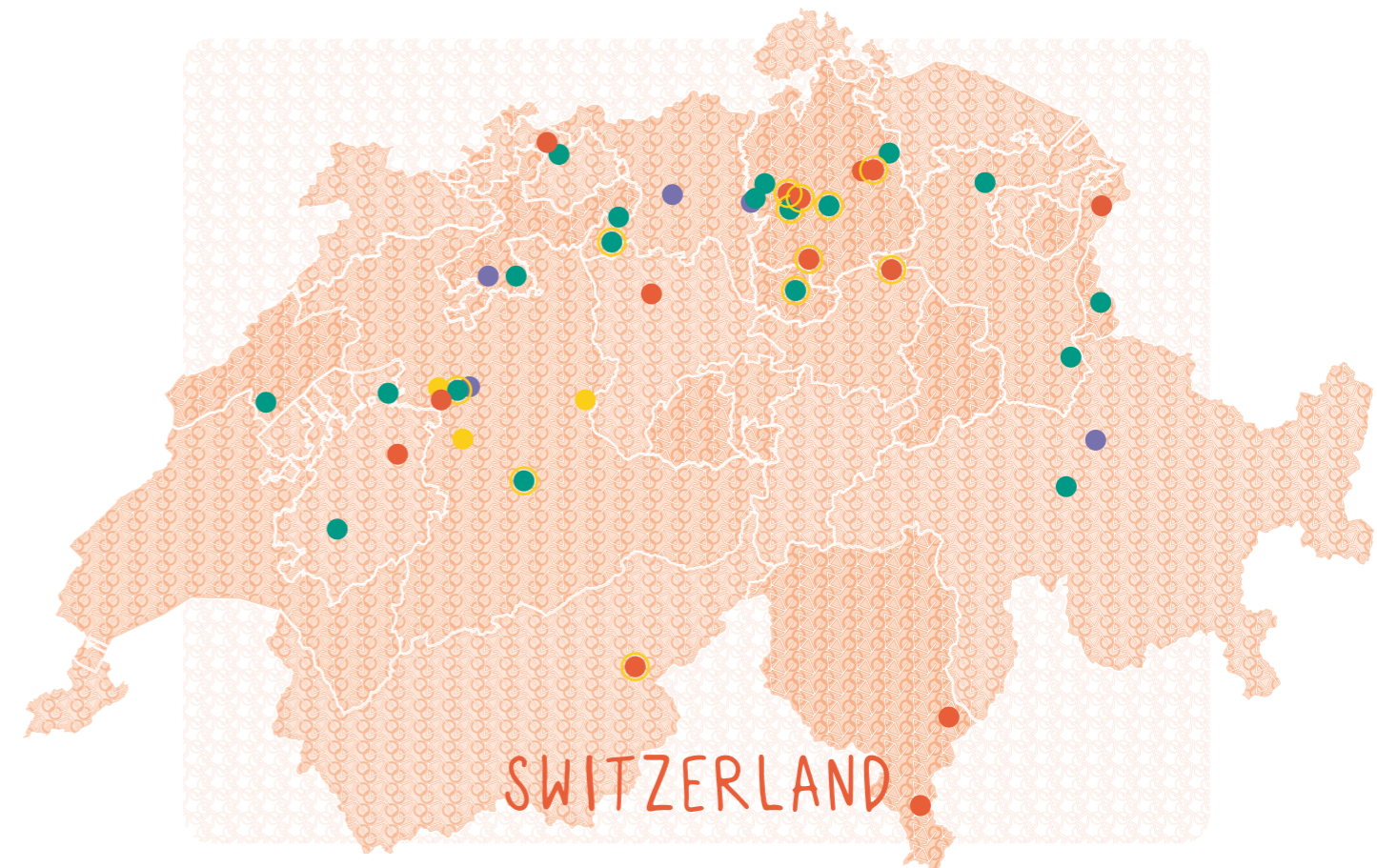
## 2025 IN NUMBERS

**38** processing partners are part of the Velafrica network in Switzerland and Germany.

**27,773** bicycles are refurbished for export.

**38,173** spare parts are disassembled and exported.

**62** shipping containers filled with bicycles and spare parts leave Switzerland and Germany.

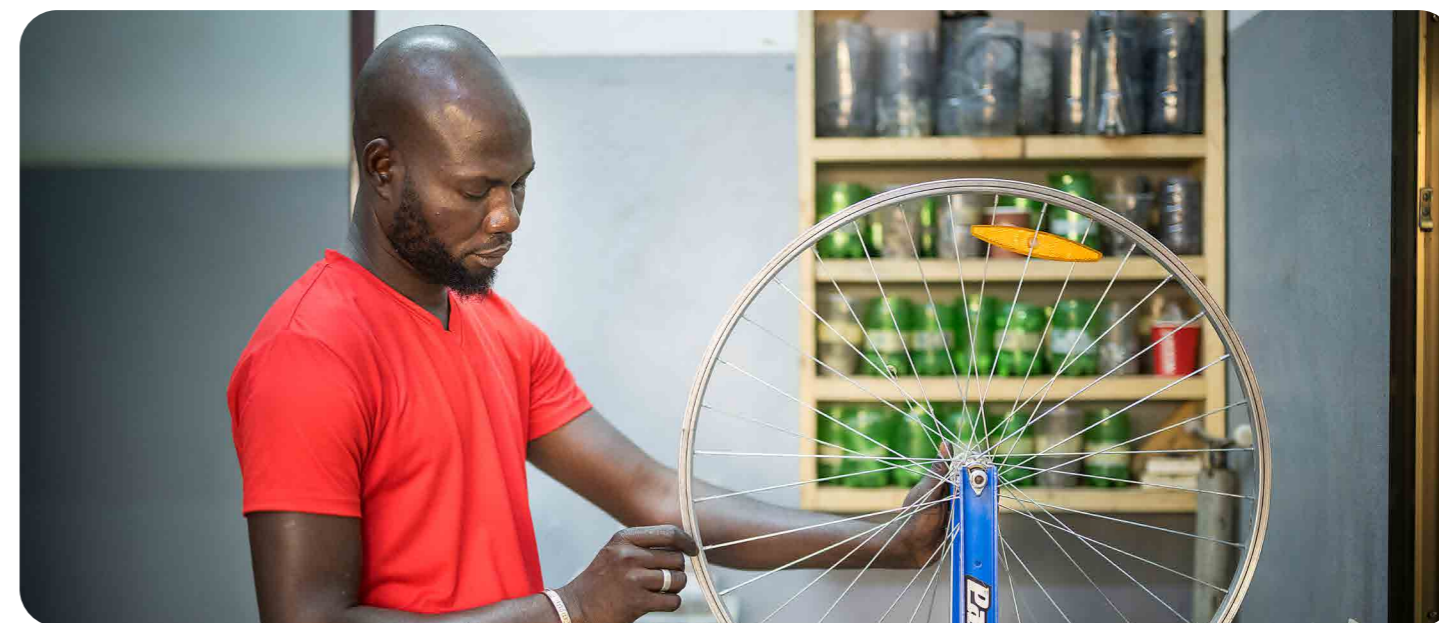


### Partner network

Velafrica can count on many reliable partners for bicycle and spare parts processing as well as logistics. In Switzerland and Germany, transportation companies, enterprises focused on work integration and correctional institutions help transport donated bicycles from collection points to workshops, where they are repaired according to Velafrica's quality standards.

- Bicycle processing
- Bicycle processing & container loading
- Processing bicycles into spare parts
- Third-party logistics

Karim Rouamba works at Faso Velo, one of Velafrica's nine partner companies in Africa.



## SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Velafrica currently supplies **nine partner companies** in Africa (see map on the left). In 2025, these companies received between 5,553 bicycles (ABC Bicycle Company Ltd.) and 421 bicycles (Jokes Bay Enterprise). Locally, jobs are created in the workshop, in sales and in administration.

Five of the nine partner companies are bicycle hubs, some of which Velafrica helped establish. Like Velafrica, these hubs follow a **social entrepreneurship approach**. This means that they not only sell bicycles and perform repairs but also invest a portion of their earnings in bicycle mobility and promote an active local cycling culture. Seven of the nine partner companies also offer **training positions or apprenticeships** in bicycle mechanics.

One such social enterprise is **Faso Velo in Burkina Faso**. Velafrica established the bicycle hub in collaboration with local partners and with the support of various foundations. It began operating in 2019 and has since distributed thousands of Velafrica bicycles each year through a large network.

In collaboration with Velafrica, Faso Velo has also established a **dual vocational training program for bicycle mechanics** and has been officially recognized as a private vocational training center. In February 2025, the first 214 participants completed the two-year program. In 2026, the program is set to be repeated and expanded to additional regions.

### WITH FASO VELO SINCE THE BEGINNING

**Karim Rouamba** is the technical manager at Faso Velo in Ouagadougou. He is responsible for quality assurance, manages the spare parts inventory and trains bicycle mechanics.

### How has Faso Velo changed since its start in 2019?

In the beginning, we were a basic workshop run by a small team of pioneers. Today, we are a widely recognized center of excellence for bicycle mechanics and known for our quality.

### What was your personal highlight in the past year?

My favorite moment was when the first class of bicycle mechanics received their certificates. It makes me very proud that my expertise is now in the hands of a new generation ready to further develop bicycle mobility in Burkina Faso.

### What are your hopes for the future?

I hope that Faso Velo will be the driving force behind providing everyone here with a reliable bicycle, thereby making their daily lives easier and boosting the economy. To achieve this, we need to further increase our visibility, get young people excited about cycling and ensure that our bicycles are high-quality yet affordable.



# VOCATIONAL TRAINING

A vocational qualification opens up better opportunities for the future. And once the bicycles from Velafrica have been repaired in Switzerland or Germany, they must be able to be repaired again in Africa whenever necessary. **This is why Velafrica supports vocational training programs in bicycle mechanics at our partner companies.** As a result, a total of 251 people – mostly young people – completed their training in 2025.

214 of them completed a **state-recognized apprenticeship in bicycle mechanics in Burkina Faso.** Velafrica developed this training program in collaboration with education authorities, local workshops and trade associations and was honored with the ENTERPRIZE International award in 2024 for this work.

In Madagascar, 21 young people completed training in metalwork, which includes bicycle mechanics, and in Tanzania, 16 young people participated in Velafrica's «Bikepreneur» program. This is a ten-month training program in bicycle mechanics and entrepreneurship that enables graduates to quickly enter the job market. **Starting in 2026, the program will also be offered in Malawi and Madagascar.**

Velafrica is also committed to helping newly trained bicycle mechanics find employment. This can be with partner companies, at external bicycle shops or as self-employed professionals. **This way, Velafrica creates income opportunities while strengthening the local bicycle industry.**

## A 24/7 BIKE ENTHUSIAST

**Jackline Leonard** (see cover photo) completed Velafrica's «Bikepreneur» program in early 2025 and has since been working as a bicycle mechanic at Velafrica's partner organization ABC Impact in Arusha, Tanzania.

### Why did you decide to become a bicycle mechanic?

Because the program was not only about bicycle mechanics but also entrepreneurship, and it included an exit plan that offered a clear opportunity for employment after completion. This really appealed to me after I had to stop pursuing my degree in accounting for financial reasons.

### How has your vocational qualification changed your life?

Through the training, I learned to ride a bike and came to see it as the embodiment of freedom. And financially, the program has enabled me not only to support myself but also to provide significant financial support to my mother and brother.

### What would you like to learn or do next?

The bicycle industry continues to innovate and I want to grow with it. And in the future, I plan to start my own bicycle spare-parts business!



Bicycle mechanic Jackline Leonard visits a school in Morogoro, Tanzania, for repairs.



## 2025 IN NUMBERS

**16** trainees complete the «Bikepreneur» vocational training program in Tanzania.

**44 %** of the participants are women.

The training in bicycle mechanics and entrepreneurship lasts **10** months.

**All** graduates of the «Bikepreneur» program have found employment.

Jackline Leonard is a graduate of Velafrica's «Bikepreneur» program.

Student Francia Santatrinirina has owned a Velafrica bicycle for three years.



## MOBILITY

Through the «Bike to School» program, Velafrica provides schoolchildren in rural areas of Tanzania and Madagascar with subsidized bicycles. Many students walk long distances of over ten kilometers every day, often under difficult conditions and without access to public transportation. Having their own bicycle makes a big difference: **Students get to school faster, face fewer dangers and can attend classes more regularly.** This improves their educational opportunities.

In 2025, a total of 2,044 students in Tanzania and Madagascar received bicycles. At the same time, **bicycle maintenance became increasingly important, as it is essential to the program's long-term impact.** As a result, mechanics from Velafrica's partner companies repaired the bicycles of 2,327 schoolchildren – the first time that more bicycles were repaired than distributed.

Students also learn how to **perform simple maintenance and repairs themselves.** To this end, schools have been equipped with tools and spare parts. This allows students to replace brake pads, for example, on their own, rather than having to wait for the next visit from a mechanic. This promotes their independence and reduces the amount of time a bicycle is out of service due to breakdowns.

The program's impact is clearly measurable: **Shorter commutes to school result in less fatigue, greater concentration and better academic performance.** The students also gain valuable time for studying. These are crucial foundations for their future education.

### BETTER GRADES WITH A BICYCLE

**Francia Santatrinirina**, a student from Madagascar, is 18 years old and has owned a bicycle from Velafrica's «Bike to School» program since 2022.

#### What was your commute to school like before you had your own bike?

I live about seven kilometers from my school and I used to have to walk there. Each way took an hour and a half. I had to hurry a lot, but I was still often late. Sometimes I could use my dad's old bike, but it was unreliable and often broke down.

#### How has your daily school routine changed since you got a bike?

With my bicycle, it only takes me 20 minutes to get to school. This means that I arrive on time and feel well-rested. My grades have improved, too, and I'm now one of the top students in my class. I also feel safer on the way because I'm back home before it gets dark.

#### What do you do with the time you've saved?

I use the time to do my homework, help my parents with chores or meet up with friends. My goal is to become a midwife someday – I'm confident that I can make it happen.

## 2025 IN NUMBERS

**2,044** students receive a subsidized bicycle.

**65 %** of the bicycles are given to girls.

**19** mechanics regularly repair bicycles at schools.

**71 %** of the students with a bicycle save at least one hour per day.

Francia Santatrinirina gets to school faster and safer by bicycle than on foot.

# HOW VELAFRICA IS FUNDED

Velafrica Income Statement	2025	2024
Donations and Bequests	931,110	899,488
Project-related Contributions	993,673	390,316
Sales of Goods and Services	986,919	738,747
Other Contributions	122,271	154,477
<b>Operating Revenue</b>	<b>3,033,973</b>	<b>2,183,028</b>
Cost of Materials	(51,033)	(52,386)
Operating Expenses	(734,188)	(775,531)
Operating Services	(506,254)	(306,866)
Personnel Expenses	(1,112,711)	(1,090,837)
Buildings, Machinery and Vehicles	(115,462)	(123,766)
Other Operating Expenses	(208,847)	(205,973)
Depreciation	(2,640)	(4,224)
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>(2,731,135)</b>	<b>(2,559,583)</b>
<b>Operating Result</b>	<b>302,838</b>	<b>(376,554)</b>
Financial Income	7,389	9,358
Financial Expenses	(13,123)	(7,489)
Non-operating Income	8,042	11,417
Non-operating and Extraordinary Income	-	2,937
<b>Other Income and Expenses</b>	<b>2,308</b>	<b>16,223</b>
<b>Result before Change in Fund Balances</b>	<b>305,146</b>	<b>(360,331)</b>
Allocation to Fund Balances	(1,924,783)	(1,289,804)
Use of Fund Balances	1,603,132	1,654,281
<b>Change in Fund Balances</b>	<b>(321,651)</b>	<b>364,477</b>
<b>Net Result for the Year</b>	<b>(16,505)</b>	<b>4,146</b>

All amounts are stated in CHF and rounded.

Velafrica is a part of the foundation Sinnovativ and is supported by it. Under [www.sinnovativ.ch](http://www.sinnovativ.ch), you can find the foundation's annual financial statements.

### Velafrica's annual results are nearly balanced.

This is made possible by broad support from individuals, funding partners, revenue from bicycle sales and the Sinnovativ Foundation which provides Velafrica with essential services.

**At the same time, our financial situation remains challenging:** To continue making an impact, we continue to rely on your support this

year. **Thank you so much for helping us set change in motion!**

### Making a difference beyond your lifetime

Would you like to pass on your values and support our work in the long term? With a bequest, you can make a difference beyond your lifetime. We would be happy to advise you personally and confidentially.



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# THANK YOU!

Velafrica's work is only possible thanks to support along the entire impact chain. In addition to the supporters mentioned, we would like to thank all the bicycle donors, volunteers and private donors.

**Thank you! Asante Sana!**

### VELAFRICA NETWORK SWITZERLAND

AIP plus, Anstalten von Bellechasse, Arbeitsintegration Winterthur AIW, Brühlgut Stiftung, Collectors Olten, Drahtesel, EEP Bellevue, Fachhaus, HALLE 44, hpz Liechtenstein, JVA Pöschwies, JVA Realta, JVA Solothurn, JVA Thorberg, JVA Wauwilermoos, Oeko Service GmbH, ÖKO-JOB Liestal, OPRA, Quellenhof-Stiftung, RG Altstätten, SCC La Stampa, Schlossgarten Riggisberg, SEB NAVI, SOS Ticino, Stiftung arwole, Stiftung Bächtelen, Stiftung Lebensart, Stiftung Wendepunkt, VAM Düdingen und Bulle, Velafrica Velowerkstatt Egelsee, Velostation Thun, Werkraum4, Werkstätten Buecherwäldli, WTL, Zweckverband SNH

### VELAFRICA NETWORK GERMANY

AKTIONfahRRAD, ALTERNAID Stiftung, Children e.V., Cyclits Cycling Collective, Fasselt Stiftung, GWR gemeinnützige Gesellschaft für Wiederverwendung und Recycling Frankfurt, Haus Maria Veen Münsterland, Jobrad, JVA Aachen, Kuwala Foundation, Lux-Stiftung, Peter Dornier Stiftung, Postcode Lotterie, Spectrum Aachen

### FOUNDATIONS

Bürgi-Willert-Stiftung, COFRA Foundation, Däster-Schild Stiftung, Fagus lucida-Stiftung, Gottfried und Julia Bangerter-Rhyner-Stiftung, Hans Rüdüsühli Stiftung, «ici. gemeinsam hier.», Lighthouse Foundation, Migros-Unterstützungsfonds, Peter Heule Stiftung, Robert und Rosa Pulfer-Stiftung, Stiftung ESPERANZA, Stiftung Symphasis, Stiftung Temperatio, The UK Online Giving

Foundation, The UsitawiNetwork Foundation, Veronika & Hugo Bohny Stiftung, Walter und Louise M. Davidson-Stiftung

### PUBLIC SECTOR

Einwohnergemeinde Münsingen, Gemeinde Köniz, Gemeindeverwaltung Rubigen, Gesundheits-, Sozial- und Integrationsdirektion des Kantons Bern, Kanton Basel-Stadt, Lotteriefonds des Kantons Bern, Lotteriefonds des Kantons Luzern, Swisslos-Fonds Kanton Aargau

### CONGREGATIONS

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### COMPANIES

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## Ambassador

Marlen Reusser is one of the most successful female cyclists of our time. Among other achievements, she is an Olympic silver medalist, world champion and European champion in time trials. Since 2021, the Bern native has been volunteering for Velafrica because she is convinced that bicycles can change lives. With her reach, the 34-year-old is raising awareness of Velafrica's work. In doing so, she supports Velafrica's vision of a world in which all people can enjoy the benefits of bicycle mobility to improve their lives.



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### Legal Disclosure

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bicycle mobility in Africa  
and **donate now!**



**Your donation  
in good hands.**

*velafrica*

**Mobility with perspectives**

**Trustee is the foundation Sinnovativ**