



Three women learn bicycle maintenance through the “Women and Bikes” program in Kenya.

Harry’s research focused on promoting good governance and institutional change in peacekeeping programs. In addition to conducting these interviews, Harry took a close look at organizational policies on the recruitment and training practices of female police officers as well as on the selection and preparation of personnel for peacekeeping operations. While these organizations are a reflection of the state, Harry recognized the importance of ensuring “that these professions are free and open to individuals of each gender. Limiting the opportunities or the capacity for advancement of women in the police or military services severely hinders the ability of the state to enact proper governance.”

Peace and security are essential for creating the conditions necessary for long-term development. Traditionally, there has been little recognition of the important role that women can play in peacekeeping operations. Harry believes that the publication of his report *Increasing the Operational Effectiveness of West African Female Police Officers on Police Support Operations* will help to raise awareness and “educate both the public and the police services on the necessity to increase female participation on peacekeeping operations.”

Riding bikes: a path to gender equality

In rural Kenya, women travel the furthest distances on a daily basis, yet have the least access to transportation. Rebecca Mancini, a third-year honours arts and history student from **St. Jerome’s University**, worked with a

local NGO, Ugunja Community Resource Center (UCRC) to help address this problem. Women in the community spend much of their day walking to local markets to purchase food, drawing water for their families and traveling to work. The project “Women and Bikes” sought not only to improve women’s access to bicycles, but also to establish community acceptance and enthusiasm for women on bikes – a form of transportation used primarily by men.

Rebecca and the UCRC organized an all-women’s bike race to raise awareness of the “Women and Bikes” program. The race raised incredible enthusiasm in the community and was widely supported by both men and women. As a result, many of the women were not only interested in learning how to ride, but also in purchasing their own bikes. The original bike loan project was transformed into a microfinance model through the development of a rent-to-own program.

The outcome was more than equal access to transportation. The UCRC explained that bicycles, which reduce the amount of time women spend traveling on a daily basis, “represent a viable way for women to confront the gender disparities by gaining more time to participate in community projects.” Bicycles have become a symbol of community efforts to strengthen the democratic participation of women in Ugunja. “While the race demonstrated the potential of bikes,” Rebecca noted, “it also brought together the community” and created a forum to discuss the issues affecting local women.



Philippines

Internship by Adam Halpert, an honours arts and business student at St. Jerome's University

“The internship has helped us look at ourselves with a higher degree of objectivity. The intern’s role was to collate and analyze the data that had been developed. The new reporting forms were an innovation for us. We expect to tighten the way we track performance. With the program assessment completed in time for the start of our annual planning period, we expect the knowledge that we’ve gained to filter into the planning process. The analysis of the data provided new insights and indicated possible new directions for our program.”

– Maria Olivia Lucas, President, Unang Hakbang Foundation