



ARTICLE FROM THE BOOK:

Cyclists & Cycling Around the World – Creating Liveable and Bikeable Cities

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Cycle events - Teaching children for a bikeable Lima

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The bicycle: an educational tool for sustainability

More and more cities define their sustainability guidelines in relation to the problems and impact of transportation systems, and adopt new concepts of sustainable mobility for city planning and managing urban travel and space in the city. The global trend to improve our cities and how we get around in them means leaving the traditional view of transport and beginning to visualise a city where walking, cycling and public transport take centre stage.

Education is the main axis providing the opportunity to keep ourselves updated, renew ourselves and to have a vision which is more consistent with the challenges ahead. Therefore, this axis runs through all programmes and actions that the Special Project for Non-Motorised Transport (CICLOLIMA) has been developing. We will not move on from the misconceptions entrenched in our habits if we don't educate ourselves, nor will our societies progress if we don't educate the young.

The bicycle has become a strategy and an opportunity to begin to open people's minds and to redefine the boundaries of building a sustainable mobility system in Lima. The CICLOLIMA team has integrated its various bicycle programmes and activities (Recreational Ciclovía, CICLODIA, Educational Program for Sustainable Mobility "Bicicole", Night Green, Fairs Cyclist and Fetibici, U.Bici University Educational Program) to create a system in which the different modes of transport exist harmoniously within urban space. It has created space where the educator and the learner reflect on the role they play and fulfill their responsibility, and how to contribute to the solution of the huge problems



Cycle Fair



University Seminar
Educational
Programme UBICI



3rd Edition of
The Green Night

of the city resulting from its unsustainable transport system. These different programmes give us the opportunity to get closer and closer to the changes we seek in our society, both in the classroom and in suitable and safe public spaces.

The strategic training of trainers in citizenship: the ZOOM project

It is no coincidence that most of our team began their careers as educators in the pioneering project "Humanising Transport", also known as "ZOOM" - in charge of FONAM and funded by the World Bank from 2005 to 2008. This school programme for sustainable urbanisation took them to schools around Lima to teach urban citizenship and provide environmental education, with the bicycle as an icon and tool. It was hard work, which did not begin in the classroom. The first workshops on urban cycling, road safety and environmental quality were given to students in streets and parks. In view of the good work and enthusiasm, little by little, the principals were persuaded to open the playgrounds and then the classrooms, where the project was consolidated for the benefit of children.



Cyclists & Cycling Around the World

Proyecto Zoom
Photo: Ciclolima File

The bicycle in schools, inside and outside the classroom: BICICOLE Programme

The Metropolitan Municipality of Lima, through CICLOLIMA, decided to continue and improve the project ZOOM, and make it the School Education Programme “BiciCole” fundamental axis of our strategy aimed at schoolchildren in the city. With this programme, we continue innovating the national education system for children between 9 and 12 years, through workshops on coexistence and citizenship, road safety, environmental issues, and practical urban cycling. The programme was expanded with two activities that promote environmental protection and sustainable mobility: the “Environmental Brigades” and “To School by Bike”, respectively, programmes carried out by biology teachers and university volunteer teams trained by us with those who promote environmental campaigns and rides to school, that amuse and stimulate the children.

It was challenging to get the support of teachers to strengthen and expand the programme. However, with great effort, agreements were reached and ZOOM educational material was improved and became manuals that met the technical requirements of teachers, principals and the Ministry of Education. With that, we reestablished our relationship with former colleagues and joined new partners, repeating the programme to the great interest of the Ministry of Education, which aims to replicate the experience nationwide.



'Bike to School' Programme
Photo: Ciclolima File

The "BiciCole" programme works because it manages to be included in the educational curriculum of three courses through our monitoring, supervision, and provision and maintenance of bicycles. The year 2012 closed the programme with 90,000 students from 11 schools in Lima. This year, 40 new schools in popular districts of Lima will be added.

The influence of BiciCole reaches family and friends in their homes and communities. Parents support the programme, because they allow their children to stay longer when there are special workshops. Before, they had a concept of just recreational cycling. Today they have a broader view thanks to lessons with their children. For example, the founding professor (senior), Ada Lopez, considered it wonderful and rewarding to learn to ride a bike as an adult through the programme. The bike has solved the problem of lack of exercise, except for walking at the weekend with her family. It has also influenced the habits of her home: "My husband went by car to buy bread three blocks away. He now goes by bike and, as it is not very far away and if he wants a bit more pedaling, he cycles to a bakery that is further away."

Space for fun and competitive education: FESTIBICI SCHOOLCHILDREN

Similarly, the “FestiBici” have been characterized by their effective drawing power. Thousands of schoolchildren from the capital involved in contests to make your school “Champion of Champions FestiBici Metropolitan”. Through games, drama, dances and crafts, the students put into practice the knowledge acquired in the BiciCole. It is a space that encourages more schools to become involved, in addition to those involved in the regular programme, and allows other sustainable transport authorities to interact with learners.

The FestiBici raises children’s awareness in an educational and fun way about the importance of using non-polluting means of transport such as walking, cycling, biking, skating and use public transport systems. This is facilitated by the creativity reflected in the different competitions of FestiBici.



Student at the FestiBici Competition
Photo: Ciclolima File



Day of the bike - 6 km of Life and Health on Ave. Arequipa
(Ciclolima File)

Each date FestiBici develops in the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Central City, and brings together teachers and students to enjoy a day full of music, games, contests, and entertainment, surrounded by a circuit of activities, where promotion stands are positioned with information from each of the organisations involved in the programme and others that contribute to sustainable mobility in Lima: the Ministries of Environment and Education, Electric Train Autonomous Authority (Metro de Lima), Protransporte (BRT “Metropolitan”), and the Municipal Managers of Education, Culture and Environment.

The street, unique space for forming citizenship: recreational bikeways

While we feel better in the streets and we want to stay longer in them, we will have a better quality of life and coexistence. However, when we grow up in a hostile, violent and insecure environment, which only rewards and protects the world of the car, the formation and change are more difficult. So, having adequate space is extremely important for the learning application for children and, at the same time, allows them to share the experience with their parents.

The city of Lima, a large city that is home to a third of the country’s population, is a flat and rainy city, with relatively moderate temperatures. The attributes that make the capital bike-friendly are enviable, but even so is not considered by locals as a city for cycles.

The bike has a totally different background from any other mode of transport, requiring an initial effort to transform human energy into forward momentum. Therefore, it is necessary to develop habits and customs in Lima to make cycling popular, which is why we consider it important to work with schools.

If children learn to use the bicycle as a mode of everyday transport, over time it may break the association between car use and social status or success. The programmes in the schools are good and have achieved active participation of children and teachers. However, it must not be seen only as an activity in the schools, thus CICLODIA programme, which is held every Sunday over the 6 km of Arequipa Avenue, one of the most historic and elegant streets in Lima, allows only the use of bicycles and non-motorised modes of transport.

Thus, children have the opportunity to use their bikes with their parents, siblings, grandparents and friends, contributing to the improvement of family relationships and promoting social dynamics in public space. This allows people of different social, economic and physical status living in different parts of the city, to share urban space characterised by equality and traffic safety. The children, who are excluded from the main streets on the other days of the week since they are unsafe and threatening, are the big winners on Sundays: one third of the users are children.

“When you enter a Recreational Bikeway, you feel that it is just the perfect community, protecting, caring and sharing and you feel safe.”
(Survey, Lima Cómo vamos, 2012)

Therefore, reinforce the great value of the Recreational Bikeways. Their strategic value in education and training citizenship should be integrated into a government plan, as is done in many cities (Recreational Bikeways of Americas).

Conclusion

Sustainable mobility, in particular cycling, is gaining strength in cities of all sizes, providing clean transport and a quiet, friendly and healthy environment. It's becoming a symbol of the values that we should encourage in children, also developing motor skills, promoting health by performing physical activity, improving balance, and allowing them to integrate and understand the social and urban environment. This makes the bike a teaching tool, an educational resource that is necessary to promote and advance the welfare and harmony of our current and future society, both in the classroom, through educational programmes, and outside them, in an appropriate and safe area such as recreational bikeways.

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