

## THE PORTABLE LAMP FROM AN OLD BIKE DESIGNED IN MALI

The pedal powered portable light *Foroba Yelen*, which in bambara language means *collective light*, is used in Mali to illuminate communities non connected to power grids. The [first prototype of this portable lamp](#) created from the recycling of an old bike dates 2011 and it was designed by the architect Matteo Ferroni in a community of the Segou region. Since then, local craftsmen have been involved and formed to replicate this light. The result is that now many communities in Mali have access to a collective light.

The pedal powered lamp is built by using locally found materials. It is easily transportable and is geared with little expense. The lamp is placed on top of a rod at about 3 meters height welded to a bicycle wheel and connected to a chargeable battery powered through solar energy. The whole structure is made by local craftsmen using materials that are easily found in the villages, with the exception of the LED light which is imported from China.

After the set-up of the first prototype, all neighboring villages requested to be provided with this lamp. The invention quickly turned into a project of general interest, involving the local government, artisans and youth organizations. The project is realized by the Swiss Foundation eLand which supports initiatives in the field of architecture for sustainable development. Within this context, the Foundation organized workshops teaching young people how to replicate the lamps.

The project is implemented in partnership with the local organization Faso Gnietaa and the Municipality of Cinzana whereby more than 90 lamps have been delivered to 75 villages and 3 health centers in the rural communities. The committees engaged to the collective management of street lamps in each community are committed to



contribute to the project each year by providing at least 10 old bicycles frames.

The portable lamp *Foroba Yelen* won the [City of Barcelona urban innovation award](#). The eLand Foundation supports this ongoing project in Mali and is promoting this innovation in other countries. For example, with the support of the University of Barcelona and the University of Mexico UNAM, the Foundation is starting a project with women's organizations in Mexico City, to strengthen security in remote communities. Furthermore, also the Senegalese community living in the suburbs of Marseille has established contacts with eLand to build and install the lamps. This lamp is patented and to have access to this technology is sufficient to establish a direct contact with eLand.

### To know more

[www.forobayelen.org](http://www.forobayelen.org)

[Article in Slaters design blog](#)

[Article in Treehugger.com](#)

[Video in Youtube](#)

[Article in News24](#)

[Article in Afriwap.com](#)

[Article in ArabNews](#)

[Article in Ecochunk.com](#)

[Foroba Yelen in México](#)

