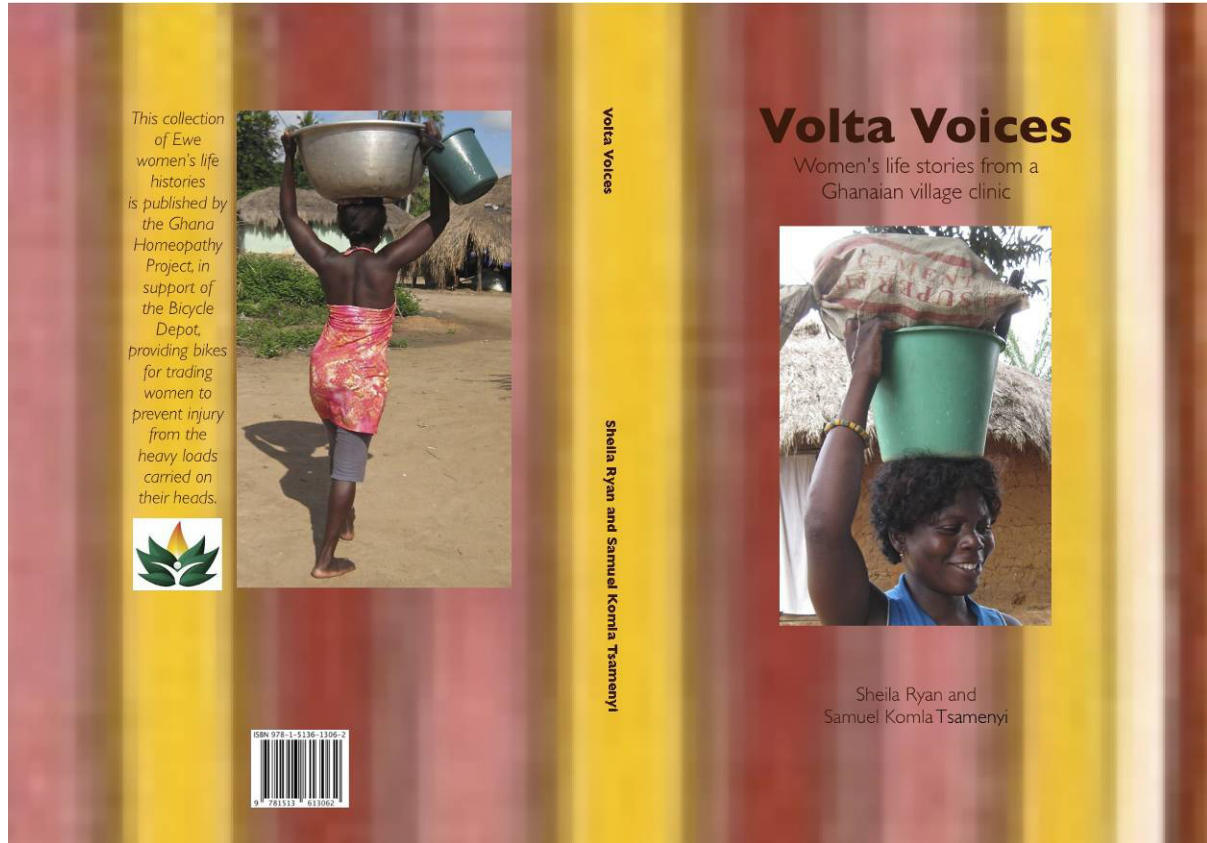




Ghana Homeopathy Project Fundraising Appeal

VOLTA VOICES BOOK LAUNCH



Volta Voices - Women's life stories from a village clinic

Volta Voices written by Sheila Ryan and Samuel Komla Tsamenyi. (Emperor) Researched over ten years at Mafi Seva homeopathic clinic, these life stories bear witness to rural women's lives and aspirations in modern Ghana. The book is also a cultural education for volunteers and funders. *Volta Voices* will be sold in support of the *Bicycle Depot* at the new *Hope Homeopathic Health Centre* in the Volta region where women traders will be able to use bikes instead of their heads to carry the loads. This project addresses the maintaining cause of many chronic ailments and injuries suffered by head trading women.

*'One story joins with another and together they build a luminous book. Strong and vibrant, **Volta Voices** will make you want to hear more, and make you want life to offer better and different choices.'* Jackie Kay, author of *Red Dust Road*; from the Foreword to *Volta Voices*.

Volta Voices will be launched at the **Society of Homeopaths Annual Conference on 16-18th September 2016 in Nottingham** and again in **London on 13th October 7pm at Piccadilly Waterstones**. The London launch will be a joint fund raising event with *Everyday Magic - Storytelling in Schools*, so spread the word and come for a Gala evening of story telling, song and music. This is a free entry event but please register at: piccadilly@waterstones.com, *Volta Voices* will be sold at both events and is available for £10 plus P&P from: info@sheilaryan.co.uk



Health for Head traders - The Bicycle Depot

'If you give a remedy to a woman with headache or back ache, but do not also provide advice or help to change the way she carries the load, it is like throwing water into a basket.' Emperor, Director of Hope Homeopathic Health Centre

Head trading women - That is: women who carry the great weight of their goods for sale upon their heads.

In rural areas women can walk for miles in between villages, in the often vain hope that they will lighten the load for the return journey by making even some small sales.

And what do the women carry to sell? It may be lengths of bright coloured cloth for dresses and wraps. It may be kitchenware, basins and buckets. It could be dried fish or herbs. It might be soaps and detergents, loaves of bread and trays of eggs. Great basins of cassava root and baskets of wood are carried this way. Whatever it is, there needs to be enough of it to warrant the days' walking and to provide sufficient choice for customers. It has to be a heavy load.

Women carry their goods in large metal basins or on flat trays or in plastic laundry style baskets. A coiled cloth pad is first put on the head and then, sometimes with help from another, the load is hoisted aloft. You see women walking the dusty roads and weaving in between village thatch and mud houses, walking tall, with beautiful postures, and in heat of up to 35 degrees or more.

The women are also mothers, farmers, cooks, housekeepers. They are strong, muscled, hardened by long days of very hard work. They are motivated by being often the only breadwinner in a family. They want to earn enough to save "little by little" to educate their children so that their future lives will not be as harsh as their own.

Head trading women have wonderful posture – when they are young. After 10, 20 or more years head trading, they come to Mafi Seva clinic in the Lower Volta region, typically with ailments like these:

Severe and chronic headache
Blurred vision
Jaw pain
Toothache
Sinus pains
Breathing problems
Backache and joint pain
Waist pain
Abdominal pain
Menstrual difficulties

The Bicycle Depot

See what happens when a Head trader moves her stock to the front and back panniers of a bicycle: She frees her head and spine from pressure. She can breathe more easily and recover the health of her lungs and abdominal organs. She can exercise joints and muscles instead of straining and damaging them. She can cycle farther than she can walk and therefore gain more customers. The Depot becomes a meeting place for her. Located as it is at a clinic, she can see a homeopath and nurse when she comes to pick up or drop off the bicycle.

The Bicycle Depot works like this:

The bicycles are in the Depot at **Mafi Kumasi Hope Homeopathic Health Centre**, a central location for women traders in this area of the Lower Volta. A woman signs for a bicycle for the day and loads her goods, leaving her basin in safe keeping at the depot. She returns the cycle at the end of the day and contributes 1 to 2 Cedis (about 25/50p) for the upkeep and repair of the bicycle.

The Depot has a bike repairer as well as storage facilities already on site at the newly developing **Mafi Kumasi Hope Centre**. A strong bicycle costs £50, another £20 for panniers, puncture repair kit and locks. That's only £70 to change the daily life, wellbeing & life chances of a woman Head trader!

Please help Head Trading Women. Please donate to the Bicycle Depot.
Just Giving – Ghana Homeopathy's Health for Head Traders
Contact info@sheilaryan.co.uk for more info.