My motivations…

why
Biodiversity Conservation in the context of Global Sustainable Development

how
• Explore various components of sustainable development and their relationships
• Innovate where there exists a nexus between inter-dependent issues
• Understand different models of changemaking

what
Singapore
• Empowering youth as activists
• Nature walks guiding

Middlebury College
• Broad-based education in the Liberal Arts
• Alternative break trips
• Center for Social Entrepreneurship (CSE) Fellow

International
• Sustainable Development policy negotiations at the United Nations
ThinkImpact
Ghana Institute
Asakraka, a rural village in the Ashanti Region

**how**

Approach: Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)
- Immersed in local culture through 7-week homestay
- Profiled and invited villagers to form a Design Team

Together, we
- Mapped assets and resources available in community
- Had activities/workshops to identify and solve problems using existing local resources
- Designed product/service and business plans
- Pitched our ideas to stakeholders and potential investors
- Created a long-term strategy

**what**

- Problem: washing clothes by hand is inefficient and causes hand sores
- Solution: wooden washboard that can increase washing efficiency and reduce hand sores
- Innovation: attached soap holder and standee
- Materials: hard wood from trees in the village and surrounding farms
- Workmanship: Local carpenter
- Sales: through village store run by a Team Peace & Love member
- Future expansion: to neighboring villages

**Takeaways**

- Rethink one-size-fits-all solutions – context and history are vital to understanding problems
- There is no perfectly right or wrong way, or only dichotomies, in approaching international development – think in terms of a spectrum of options, with different trade-offs
- Empowering people doesn’t just mean *telling* them what they can achieve, but *showing* them that they can
- Seek mindful courage
- Bring it home

**who**

Design Team Peace & Love:
- 5 villagers (3 women, 2 men)
- Ages 25 – 58