



# Bicycling Empowerment Network (BEN)

## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

BEN wishes to thank our loyal donors and partners who have assisted us to distribute 1971 bicycles into various communities of the Western Cape during the past year. Thanks to their generosity and support, we have trained another 3 individuals in bicycle mechanics and established another 2 BEC's (Bicycling Empowerment Centres).

### BEC's

Since 2002 BEN has established fourteen bicycle workshops in the Western Cape, by supplying community entrepreneurs with shipping containers which are then converted to workshops. The workshops are then stocked with bicycles and tools. BEC managers are trained by BEN in business management as well as bike maintenance.

#### Montagu BEC

The Montagu BEC was established in October 2014 through a joint partnership between BEN and SOTS Norway. Thanks to the fundraising efforts of Kevin Ablitt & Noelle Peacock, the container, tools and equipment were obtained for this project. Through this funding, BEN was also able to train BEC owner Willem Swanepoel in bicycle mechanics and basic business skills, as well as providing him with a startup supply of bicycles.



Above; Willem Swanepoel, Montagu BEC in his newly equipped workshop.

#### BEC Orlando

This Gauteng Bicycling Empowerment Centre was able to be established with funds raised from the Freedom Ride Jozi. The Freedom Ride is a free social cycling event bringing together people of different economic and social classes to promote the use of bicycles and highlight cycling routes within the city of Johannesburg. The funding also enabled BEN to train Siphon Tati and Bheki Mbele in mechanics and basic business skills.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

#### Driving change

BEN was fortunate to receive support from Lotto this year which enabled BEN outreach manager Trevor Knowlden to obtain his driver's license.

#### Computer Literate

Thanks to the generosity of BEN's founder and Chairman Louis de Waal, 4 BEN staff members received computer training during the course of the year.

### SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

#### Born in Africa (Plettenberg Bay)

In partnership with Rotary Club Stuttgart and Kuehne & Nagel, BEN imported a container with 212 used bicycles and this container was delivered directly to Born in Africa in Plettenberg Bay.

The project saw the donated bicycles being given out to learners who attained grades above a specific average in their last school report. The learners were delighted with their new wheels and with being rewarded for giving their best at school.

Below: Excited learners ready to ride their bicycles



#### Ubuntu Cycling project - Port Elizabeth

Through a joint partnership between BEN, EURIST (Germany), Tdh (Terre des Hommes), Ubuntu Education Fund and Siyanqoba Community Sports Develoement, 15 children from Zwide Township in Port Elizabeth received bicycles and helmets earlier this year. This project aimed to promote a cycling culture & its benefits among HIV/AIDS affected children in Nelson Mandela Bay Townships. The children, boys and girls between 12 and 18 years of age, were trained by BEN in bicycle safety and continue to receive mentoring in the sport of mountain biking through Siyanqoba Community Sports Development.





## Cape Town Cycle Tour

BEN provided 10 children with entry fees, shirts and helmets, enabling them to take part in the Cape Town Cycle Tour in 2015.

## Mandela Day, 18 July 2015

Following on from Nelson Mandela's vision of making a positive difference in the lives of others, on Saturday 18th July, **BEN handed 18 bicycles over to various individuals and organisations** based around the Western Cape. Makro kindly assisted us with a donation of helmets.

Mandela Day recipients were chosen according to their need and the impact a bicycle would make in their lives. Amongst those that were chosen were organisations or individuals who will use their bicycles to make a difference in their communities, by providing them with the transport needed to carry out their important work. Guests at the handover were joined by speaker WC Minister of Finance, Dr Ivan Meyer, who shared his thoughts on how cycling has changed his life. Recipients were given a safety demonstration on the correct use of their bicycles, hand signals as well as the importance of wearing a helmet.

**Middle left: Training Officer Beverley Roode instructing the recipients on how to wear their helmets correctly.**

**Bottom left: One recipient, Nathan, is now able to use his bicycle to carry out his environmental conservation projects in the community, allowing him to reach more areas than he would on foot.**



BEN attended 2 Open Streets events, one in Bree Street Cape Town, and one in Langa during 2015. BEN provided a bicycle repair service at both events as well as promoting the use of bicycles. Open Streets is a community driven initiative, changing the way our streets are used, perceived and experienced. [www.openstreets.org.za](http://www.openstreets.org.za)



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