



**Bicycles
for
Humanity**
.org

A little history

Bicycles for Humanity (B4H) began when a group of like-minded Canadians became interested in the issue of transportation in developing countries, and the role that bicycles could play. Transportation is a crucial missing link for the world's poorest people when accessing healthcare, education, water and economic opportunities. Bicycles are the most affordable means of transportation in sub-Saharan Africa, travelling at least twice as fast, three times further and carrying four times the load of a person walking.

B4H contacted many grassroots organizations in Africa, particularly those focussed on HIV/AIDS healthcare, and providing support to the millions of AIDS orphans on the continent. These groups coordinate volunteer networks, over 90 percent women, who walk long distances to support people affected by the disease, and educate communities in preventing its spread.

The connection was obvious: supply the grassroots organizations with bicycles and the means to maintain them, and their volunteers would become more effective in their ground work.

B4H contacted community groups throughout Canada and through these groups found hundreds of others who were keen to help by collecting donated bicycles, loading them into shipping containers and sending them to partners in Africa. Other groups are starting in the US, UK and Europe.

B4H has developed into a set of independent chapters, working together to share ideas and provide support. The chapters have access to web space and a set of tools that allows a community group, church, company, school or service club anywhere to collect and ship bicycles to developing countries.

B4H chapter members include professionals from many fields, including CEOs of large international companies, church leaders, educators, corporate communications experts and

Join our community approach to empowerment in Africa

The Bicycle Empowerment Centre (BEC)

Each year, millions of people in developed countries buy new bicycles for themselves or as gifts. Many of these purchases are merely upgrades for bikes that function perfectly well. The result? Millions of functioning bikes end up stashed in garages or taken to the dump.

Meanwhile millions of Africans walk long distances each day to fetch clean water, deliver their produce to market, get to school or work, deliver ARV drugs to AIDS patients, and to provide healthcare to people living with malaria.

Shipping bicycles to Africa is a



A Bicycle Empowerment Centre (BEC) in a Namibian village run by a HIV/AIDS support group supplies bicycles to healthcare workers and school children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

start, but it is not enough. Bicycles need repair, maintenance, safe storage, tools, spare parts and mechanics need training.

B4H has developed a package that addresses all of these issues. The Bicycling Empowerment Centre (BEC) is a bicycle workshop in a shipping container that is delivered to communities in need. Stocked with 350 bicycles, tools and spare parts, and accompanied by trained bicycle mechanics, it empowers people with their own transportation and the means to maintain it.

As of August 1, 2007, B4H currently has three BEC projects now in Namibia and another eight

Civic organizations, schools, religious groups or individuals can organize a BEC and ship it to a developing country partner. While prices vary between destinations, a container plus shipping from the west coast of Canada to southern Africa costs around \$8,000 CAD. As a bonus, the spaces between bicycles can also be filled with donated books and clothing, as pricing is calculated by volume and not weight.

How can your company get involved?

By sponsoring B4H your company will be partnering with other Canadians in sending a new beginning to communities in Africa. Here are a few communication opportunities that our projects provide:

*Bicycle Empowerment Centres: Each 12 metre container represents a branding opportunity. It is visible in Canada while being loaded, and in Africa where it stays permanently. Photographs of the BEC in both locations provide a powerful message of corporate social responsibility.

*B4H letter: A regular newsletter informs supporters of where bicycles have been shipped, and gives feedback from African communities on the success of the BEC projects.

*Bicycles for Humanity website: The site currently receives 15,000 visitors per week.

*Targeted media releases: Your company can generate news stories aimed at specific media.

Contact

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