



MEDIA RELEASE



For Immediate Release

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Bicycles for Humanity Bike Collection is a success! The first Bicycle Empowerment Centre has been shipped!

Ottawa, ON – Bicycles for Humanity Ottawa's first Bicycle Empowerment Centre (BEC) – a 40-foot shipping container filled with donated bicycles, spare parts, tools and other items – is now en route to a deserving community in Africa. This grass-roots initiative has successfully organized the support and funding required to acquire the container, transport it to Namibia, and has collected over 350 bicycles.

On the September 29th Bike Collection day, 30 volunteers were on hand to greet donors, prepare donated bicycles for transportation, and load them into the container. More than 350 bicycles were received from a steady stream of donors. More than 100 tires and wheels, several boxes of spare parts, and tools were also included in the BEC, to enable the receiving community to repair and maintain the bicycles.

When the BEC is delivered to the volunteers who run "The House of Love for Orphans and Vulnerable Children" (HLOVC) in late December, the shipping container itself will become a "building" to house a Bicycle Workshop. The volunteers will receive extensive training in bicycle repair, maintenance and project management, empowering HLOVC to maintain and prolong the use of bicycles as a sustainable means of transport.

The donated bicycles will make an incredible difference within the community. They will enable volunteers at HLOVC to visit children more often, take clothes and bread from their sewing project and bakery to market for sale, fetch firewood and clean water, transport sick children to the clinic and save huge amounts on taxi fares for general transport. They will also benefit other volunteer groups in the area that support HIV/AIDS, Home-Based Care, and Orphans and Vulnerable Children programs.

In addition, the BEC also included a ray of sunshine for the children in the community - backpacks, books and soccer gear! More than 400 soccer jerseys, 100 shorts, 80 soccer balls, shin guards and socks were collected and packed with the bikes. FC Capital United Soccer Club spearheaded all donations of soccer equipment, and will continue to do so in the future. In addition to public donations, contributors included Campea, Carlton Place Soccer Club and Nepean Soccer Club.

Bicycles for Humanity Ottawa is grateful for the enthusiastic support from the many supporters and sponsors who have donated funds, facilities and services and to the volunteers who have given their time and energy towards this initiative. We thank the City of Ottawa for providing the site for the Bike Collection, and Centrepointe Café & Deli and Bridgehead for supporting our volunteers.

Funds for transport of the BEC were raised through individual and group donations, including a significant contribution from FC Capital United Soccer Club – Mini World Cup Tournament Series. Other initiatives, such as the triathlete Cabot Trail ride, raised funds through pledges and contributed over \$1000. The Humanity Rocks! Benefit concert at Barrymore's on September 14th raised more than \$3500 for the initiative.

Going forward, Bicycles for Humanity Ottawa will continue its fundraising efforts to empower more communities with their own BEC. To support Bicycles for Humanity with a donation, organize your own fundraising event, or pledge your bike for the next collection, please email Ottawa@bicycles-for-humanity.org.



About Bicycles for Humanity: Bicycles for Humanity is a grass-roots initiative which aims to empower disadvantaged communities in developing countries through the provision of sustainable transport. Bicycles for Humanity is entirely volunteer run, with 100% of donations going toward the transportation costs of Bicycle Empowerment Centers. For more information, visit www.bicycles-for-humanity.org/ottawa.

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