

# Bicycle Recycle Project

A joint project of the Cape Town /  
Aachen Local Agenda 21 Partnership



# The Project

A project was initiated to "recycle" disused bicycles in Aachen by sending them to Cape Town where they were refurbished and distributed to poor communities



# The Partners

- Initiated through the Local Agenda 21 Partnership between Cape Town and Aachen in Germany as a joint initiative
- A joint project team was established in the north and south including the City of Aachen, Welthaus and ADFC in Aachen and the City of Cape Town and Bicycle Empowerment Network (BEN) in Cape Town
- GTZ provided funding for shipment

# BEN Competition



# Project Facts

- The project is currently being implemented for the fourth time
  - September 2001 : 180 bicycles and a wheelchair
  - June 2003 : 313 bicycles
  - December 2004 : 503 bicycles
  - December 2005 : 150 bicycles and 15 bicycles for the disabled



# First container – 2001



# The Purpose

- Collect disused bicycles from the Aachen community for distribution in Cape Town
- Provide disadvantaged (poor) communities with easy access to affordable bicycles
- Teach people about the benefits of cycling, such as saving money and improving health
- Provide training around the care and maintenance of bicycles
- Market the concept and principles of sustainable development (including benefits to the environment and promotion of non-motorised transport) through awareness about cycling



# Mr-T's Bicycle Shop





# The Benefits - North

- From a social perspective they gain a better understanding of the needs of the people in Cape Town
- Reduce potential waste in Aachen because these bicycles are refurbished and re-used in Cape Town, which has a positive impact on their environment

# The Benefits - South

- Social benefits through affordable alternatives
- Health benefits through exercise
- Financial benefits by not having to pay for buses or trains
- Job opportunities for staff that are doing refurbishment or maintenance work on the bicycles at BEN Workshops such as Mr T
- Training workshops at schools and community organisations
- Environmental benefits

# Clark Estate Elsie's Rivier





# The Challenges

- Co-ordination of this project between two continents in such a way that both partners feel that they are doing something that promotes sustainability without prejudice to the other
- Logistical requirements for collection and distributing
- The administration around the import of bicycles was also a nightmare which could have had extensive cost implications if BEN did not have the appropriate import license for used bicycles

# Unloading – Dec 2005



# Sorting – Dec 2005





# The Advice

- Find good partners
- Ensure good communication channels
- Partner up with an organisation who works closely with the community and can assist with the technical and administrative issues (such as Bicycle Empowerment Network)
- The benefits have also escalated as the project continues, so do not do it only once, but continue and learn from your lessons so that the project can grow and expand

# Imizamo Yethu Open Day



# A spoke in the wheel

Although this is a relatively small project in the bigger scheme of things, it has been useful as a mechanism over the last four years to constantly promote the use of bicycles in disadvantaged areas through working with BEN  
(Bicycle Empowerment Network)





# Thank you

For more info visit  
[www.aachen-kapstadt.de](http://www.aachen-kapstadt.de)

