



Bicycling Empowerment Network (BEN)



ANNUAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2021 - AUGUST 2022





Bicycling Empowerment Network

CEO Annual Report

1 December 2022

Overview

As we have come to expect, the year under review was anything but uneventful and straight forward. The year was book-ended by two very different experiences. The year kicked off on a tragic note with the sad passing of Tony Florence from Covid related complications in September 2021. His passing was a protracted affair which had a big impact on the firm from both an HR and morale point of view. Fortunately the year improved somewhat and in general, BEN had a successful and impactful year focusing heavily on the final phases of the Bicycle Distribution work that we have been doing as part of the Department of Transport's Provincial Sustainable Transport Programme. Indeed, at the time of writing, this three-year initiative had come to an end and the Final Report has been submitted. The next cycle of the programme has gone out to tender, and we believe that as the preferred bidder, we have an excellent chance of securing an important renewal of this project. We also concluded the year with the news that we have been successful in securing a tender to provide SMME support to the community bicycle mechanic sector as part

of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism's (DEDAT) Booster Fund initiative. The places us in good stead for the year ahead.

About Ben

BEN's overall impact mandate is to facilitate access to social and economic opportunity through bicycles and cycling.

This impact mandate is given expression through a number of intervention activity streams including:

- Access to Bicycles - Supply of affordable bicycles to disadvantaged communities,
- Enterprise Development and Support - Economic Empowerment and SMME Support – and the promotion of Cycling Townships,
- Safe Cycling Training - Foster safe cycling practices,
- Training and skills development/transfer - Formal capacity development of township and project based mechanics,
- Policy and advocacy – Growing cycling and contributing to stronger NMT policy and practice.

Our intervention logic, or theory of change is heavily dependent on working in partnership and collaborating with a wide range of like-minded organisations and individuals.



BEN continues to place
a premium on building
partnerships

Staffing and HR

Tony Florence's passing necessitated a need for BEN to review our staffing and HR requirements going forward and triggered a restructuring process. This process was concluded early in the financial year and resulted in a rationalization of roles and responsibilities which saw Sue Strybis taking on an increased office administration role and getting more involved in our monitoring and evaluation activities. Samantha Simon took an increased project management role. Other roles within the firm stayed as they were. Sadly, as we were settling into the new HR structure at the end of the financial year Samantha had to leave BEN under unforeseen circumstances, meaning that for the second consecutive year, we will need to embark on another round of restructuring, partly to address the gaps left by Samantha's departure and to deal with the increased work-flow

associated with the Booster Fund appointment and possible extension to the PSTP project. In the interim, two short-term, part-time contract appointments have been made with Faizel Manuel and Winston Richards joining us.

Training and skills transfer Internal

Despite the fluid HR situation at BEN and the residual of Covid-19, we were able to embark on some internal capacity building and staff development. While some of the training slated for the year had to be postponed due to Covid restrictions – Notably SETA funded Excel training initiatives for Jason Kapank, Samantha Simon and Sue Strybis, both Yvonne Tripod and Tim Mosdell were able to attend a week-long fundraising training initiative that has proven to be most valuable.





External

BEN's efforts to evolve our mechanic training offering into a properly recognized and accredited programme continue, despite losing Tony Florence early in the year. We are fortunate to have maintained a good working relationship with Dr Florus Prinsloo who is assisting us in taking this initiative further. We now have secured an operational Memorandum of Understanding with False Bay College who, in turn, have a funding MOU secured with the Wholesale and Retail SETA. We are currently working together to collectively procure equipment and resources in preparation for the future joint offering of formally accredited courses.

Funded Programmes

During the course of the year, BEN has been fortunate to have worked on a number of funded programmes. Some of the more significant of these is discussed below:

PSTP Bicycle Distribution Programme

The most significant of the funded projects worked on during the year is the Department of Transport and Public Works' PSTP Bicycle Distribution Programme which is in its final year of the current phase. Initially designed to have three cycles of distribution activity, the programme was extended and expanded in the financial year. An additional distribution cycle was added to support Covid related mitigation activities in response to the pandemic. Towards this end, an additional 400 bicycles and associated activities were programmed into identified Covid hot-spot



Re-Cycle in the UK has, over the past few years, emerged as our key supplier of second-hand bicycles

areas. Similarly, the programme was extended to support the Premier's awareness ride up the West Coast where an additional 100 bicycles and associated activities were added. These additions meant that over 2000 bicycles were programmed over the course of the project. This phase of the project has now come to a conclusion and the final close-out report has been submitted to the Department. The Department has issued a tender for the next three-year phase of the project. BEN has submitted a proposal to conduct this work. We are optimistic on the prospects of success.

DEDAT's Booster Fund Programme

Towards the end of the year under review, BEN was awarded a contract with DEDAT to provide SMME support to our expanded network of community mechanics and bike shops. This is a year-long initiative and will involve the organisation supporting some 40 SMMEs with premises upgrades, retooling, capacity development and mentoring support. Implementation work on this project begins in November 2022.

Hammanskraal

BEN was approached by the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation to develop a Non-Motorised-Transport Charter for Hammanskraal in Tshwane. This work was successfully completed and a number of spin-off projects have been identified going into the new year. This is exciting work for BEN as it represents an embryonic shift into other provinces and a possible area of growth for us.

Orion

Over the past few years, BEN has been working closely with Orion Mine in Prieska with a view to assisting them develop a viable bicycle programme to assist with community mobility in that area of the Northern Cape. During the year, we conducted mechanic training for a number of potential entrepreneurs in the area and helped the mine to develop a strategic intervention logic for the programme. This work is ongoing, and similar to the Hammanskraal initiative, represents a good opportunity for us to expand our footprint beyond the Western Cape.

Strategic Relationships

BEN continues to place a premium on building meaningful strategic and operational partnerships – we see this as a key success factor in achieving our impact objectives, particularly given the relatively small size of our organisation and associated capacity constraints. The following summarises some of these key relationships:

PPA represents our closest partnership from both a strategic and operational point of view. Over the years this relationship has deepened, despite something of a leadership vacuum at PPA until recently. Happily, the leadership void has been filled and we are now working actively with the new PPA CEO to formalize our relationship and to improve the way we work together operationally – particularly in terms of our Bike4All and Cool Kid on a Bike initiatives.

The Department of Transport and Public Works is another key strategic relationship for BEN with our work with the Department going back many years. It is fair to say that BEN is now considered to be a trusted advisor to the Department, and we are confident that this relationship will continue to evolve and grow.

Toward the end of the financial year, BEN was appointed to provide SMME support by the Department of Economic Affairs and Tourism's Booster Fund. This is a significant opportunity



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for the organisation, and we will be using this project to build strong strategic ties with that Department with a view to building a long-term working relationship.

BEN has also been working closely with the newly appointed Bicycle Mayor of Cape Town, Sindile Mavundla. We note the momentum that his office has been able to generate in terms of cycling advocacy and will be working closely with him to mutually support each other's programmes in an integrated and collaborative fashion.

Re-Cycle in the UK has, over the past few years, emerged as our key supplier of second-hand bicycles. This relationship has strengthened significantly over the past year with us having regular strategic meetings and conducting joint M&E work. BEN hosted a visit from Re-Cycle during the course of the year.

During the year, we also partnered with a new organisation, PURA, a health drink company. We collaborated with them and Ciovita on Mandela Day, and since then they have supported some of our events by supplying product and volunteers.

BEN also continues to work closely with Pedals for Peace, who leverage the AfrikaBurn festival to raise funds for bicycles for distribution. BEN is a key bike supplier to this initiative, and we also work collaboratively on distributing the bicycles that they fund.

Advocacy

BEN adopts a broad view of advocacy, recognizing that in order to grow cycling and unlock the benefits of this growth, we need to adopt a multi-pronged approach to advocacy. This goes beyond engaging with planning and engineering officials and infrastructure related processes and includes all activities that could contribute to the growth of the sector.

A significant development in the advocacy space has been PPA's strategic decision to begin focusing more on advocacy work and less on events going into the future. This has been boosted by the long-awaited appointment of a

CEO for the organisation. During the course of the year, BEN has worked closely with the new PPA CEO to align our efforts in this regard. Happily, the relationship between BEN and PPA appears to be strengthening under their new leadership arrangements and we can expect to see greater collaboration and alignment between the two organisations in our joint work, advocacy initiatives and messaging.

Over the last few years, BEN has played an active role in participating in the City of Cape Town's Integrated Transport Planning (ITP) Sub-Committee. This forum provides a good opportunity for coordination, collaboration and joint advocacy work.

Similarly, BEN was once again involved in the Premier's Awareness Ride. This year, the focus of this ride was on Safety and Security in the West Coast area, and the role that cycling can play in supporting neighbourhood watch and Community Policing Forum initiatives.

As mentioned previously in this report, BEN is also working closely with the Bicycle Mayor on advocacy related initiatives, and we see great potential in this regard.

Financial Position

As was the case in 2020 and 2021, 2022 has been a difficult year for all sectors, including the NPO environment. Once again, BEN has done relatively well at weathering the storm and has had an impactful and successful year.

Similar to what we observed in 2020 and 2021, this year once again saw a significant change in the composition of the funding dynamics of the organisation. Revenue from grants and donations is significantly up from the previous year, while income generated from project activities is somewhat lower. Part of this dynamic reflects the lumpy nature of our funding – for example, the project income does not yet reflect the successful Booster Fund funding which was awarded during the year, but the first tranche payment fell outside the reporting period.



BICYCLING EMPOWERMENT NETWORK
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
1 SEPTEMBER 2021 - 31 AUGUST 2022

Figures in R	2022	2021
Gross revenue		
Sales	423,904	385,800
Grants and donations	1,574,675	123,948
Project income	2,133,753	4,748,535
	4,132,332	5,258,283
Cost of sales	331,377	229,394
Gross income	3,800,955	5,028,889
Other income		
Interest received	60,159	64,382
Profit on sale of property, plant and equipment	-	13,391
Recoveries	3,306	1,777
Sundry Income	2,545	5,060
	66,010	84,610
	3,866,965	5,113,499
Operating expenditure	913,469	858,878
Net operating income before project expenditure	2,953,496	4,254,621
Project expenditure	2,852,445	4,092,712
Surplus for the year	101,051	161,909

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2022

Figures in R	2022	2021
Assets		
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	4,955	9,817
Current assets		
Inventories	42,679	22,512
Trade & other receivables	348,301	276,288
Cash	2,029,410	2,036,667
	2,420,390	2,335,467
Total assets	2,425,345	2,345,284
Equity & liabilities		
Equity		
Other components of equity		
Retained earnings	2,239,023	2,137,972
	2,239,023	2,137,972
Current liabilities		
Income received in advance	-	-
Trade and other payables	186,322	207,312
	186,322	207,312
Total equity and liabilities	2,425,345	2,345,284

comprehensive income

financial position

financial ratio

Financial Health of BEN	Take Action											
	Monitor											
	Celebrate											
	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
1 Current ratio												
Current assets to current liabilities												
Indicates liquidity of Organisation												
Evaluates the organisations ability to pay its short-term debt obligations (creditors, taxes, wages)												
Current assets	2 420 393	2 335 468	3 543 213	2 452 473	3 148 830	1 042 516	249 613	413 771	551 400	248 401	439 732	408 951
Current liabilities	186 323	207 312	1 583 736	1 066 035	3 020 353	1 036 425	278 735	124 123	164 220	217 575	316 518	328 020
Standard 2:1	13,0	11,3	2,2	2,3	1,0	1,0	0,90	3,33	3,36	1,14	1,39	1,25
2 Acid Test												
Current assets less inventory to current liabilities												
Similar to current ratio, but removes inventory from equation as inventory is more difficult to turn into cash												
Inventory is less liquid than other current assets												
Current assets	2 420 393	2 335 468	3 543 213	2 452 473	3 148 830	1 042 516	249 613	413 771	551 400	248 401	439 732	408 951
Less inventory	-42678	-22 511	-55 040	-150 607	-9 473	-92 115	-43 580	-236 306	-55 441	-176 138	-101 241	-350 607
	2 377 715	2 312 957	3 488 173	2 301 866	3 139 357	950 401	206 033	177 465	495 959	72 263	338 491	58 344
Current liabilities	186 323	207 312	1 583 736	1 066 035	3 020 353	1 036 425	278 735	124 123	164 220	217 575	316 518	328 020
Standard 1:1	12,8	11,2	2,2	2,2	1,0	0,92	0,74	1,43	3,02	0,33	1,07	0,18
3 Reserve Fund Indicator												
Net assets to monthly expenses												
If all assets were cashed, months of reserve available												
Indicates if all the assets were sold and all debts paid, how many months reserve would be available to continue operating												
Net assets	2 239 025	2 137 974	1 976 064	645	149 979	51 555	40 251	316 469	413 268	60 963	134 136	82 699
Monthly expenses	190 535	221 542	241 475	223 070	206 968	178 643	176 556	178 935	124 298	111 511	89 461	62 625
Standard 2:1	11,8	9,7	8,2	2,7	0,7	0,29	0,23	1,77	3,32	0,55	1,50	1,32
4 Survival Ratio												
Bank balance plus debtors less creditors	1 859 767	2 157 915										
Basic core cost	190 535	221 542										
Standard 6	9,8	9,7										

Donor Appreciation

In addition to the funded programmes outlined above, BEN continues to rely on donor funding from benefactors. This stream of revenue is crucial, as many of the funded programmes do not directly cover organizational overheads and additional revenue needs to be secured to cover these expenses. BEN would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the following donors who supported the organisation through the year:

Donor Partners

Annette Andre de La Porte
Louis de Waal
Nussbaum Foundation
ER Tonnesen Trust
Personal Trust Foundation
Bevan Summers
Caroline Petersen
HE Winkler
Anonymous
Andre du Toit
My School card
Shahil Juggernath
Roy Andrews
Russel Yeo
Rickus Jooste
Bertie Phillips
Ben de Lange
Re-Cycle UK



Strategic Focus going forward

BEN regularly its strategy and approach with a view to ongoing improvement and refinement. Our work is based on a dynamic Theory of Change and monitoring and evaluation framework that helps to shape our strategic direction. In addition to our ongoing programme of work, the organization has identified the following areas that require a particular focus in the year going forward:

Staffing

As indicated earlier in this report, our strategic planning, changes to our staffing, and a change in our funded project mix have triggered the need to review and potentially again restructure human resources within the organisation. Although we embarked on a similar process at the beginning of the year, staff changes have once again necessitated an HR review. It also needs to be noted that some of the operational and administrative/reporting requirements for the Booster Fund work are significant and it is likely that appointments will need to be made to cover this work. This will be conducted early in 2023. In the interim, a number of short-term contract appointments have been made.



BEN is one of the
few organisations in
the country offering
comprehensive bicycle
mechanic training

Evolution of our social enterprise development model

BEN is well known for its enterprise development model and network of Bicycle Empowerment Centres (BECs). Over the past few years we have focused on expanding our support envelope to a wider range of community bicycle initiatives. BEN has been actively engaging with other community mechanics across the province with a view to providing support services to them. Towards this end, BEN has developed and refined a new model of support for community bicycle initiatives. The model is based on developing a strong understanding of the dynamics of each enterprise using a multi-criteria approach – this enables the organisation to be more targeted and tailored in terms of its support offering to community SMMEs and bicycling focused entrepreneurs. This approach is partly reflected in the upcoming work supporting SMMEs as part of the Booster Fund Project which will provide us with an opportunity to refine our offering in this regard.

Formal accredited training

Building on the work started by Tony Florence towards the process of securing formal accreditation for our training programmes, BEN has deepened its relationship with False Bay College and the SETAs. BEN is one of the few organisations in the country offering comprehensive bicycle mechanic training. While we currently certify our training internally, we continue to work hard to integrate our training efforts into the recognized skills qualification mainstream. In the 2021/22 year, we made slow, but steady progress in terms of working with key players to set this up. Doc Prinsloo continues to help us move towards this goal and a series of MOUs have been set up with the TVET sector and the SETAs.

Strategic partnerships

As has been the case in recent years, an ongoing focus will be the maintenance and strengthening of our key strategic partnerships. During the past year, PPA has managed to fill the long-standing vacancy for the CEO position. This is a key relationship for us, and we have been working



very actively with the new CEO, Neil Robinson on a number of key joint initiatives, with a focus on bedding down and improving the Bike4All programme and the Cool Kid on a Bike cycling safety programme. We also note the momentum that Sindile Mavundla is beginning to create via the Bicycle Mayor position and we are committed to contributing to this.

M&E Capability

A dynamic Theory of Change guides our work and forms the basic core of our M&E efforts. Over the past few years, we have made significant improvements to track and monitor project and programme progress and to better understand the impact that our projects are having against our planned objectives. This is becoming more and more important as we increasingly take on funded programmes such as the Bicycle Distribution Project of the PSTP and the SMME support work under the Booster Fund initiative, where there is a strong need to understand the ongoing impacts that these interventions are having on target groups.

BEN's sustainability

As economic conditions continue to be constrained by events such as Covid, tensions in Ukraine, etc, most NGOs and PBOs continue to find themselves under continued financial pressure. While we have done well over the past few years in piloting BEN through troubled waters from a financial perspective, our contingency reserves have come under pressure this time. While we have improved our income generating capability significantly, we are under no illusions as to the difficulties ahead. We will need to be prudent, vigilant and agile in order to make the most of what is likely to be a relatively constrained set of funding opportunities. In the context of a shrinking pool of effective donors, we are going to need to continue work actively on securing financial resources over the coming year.

How can you help?

Volunteer

Become a volunteer. BEN often is in need of assistance of volunteers who can assist us with:

- Bicycle repair/maintenance
- Unpacking and sorting of donated bicycles
- Fundraising, marketing, social media or admin
- Events
- Administration

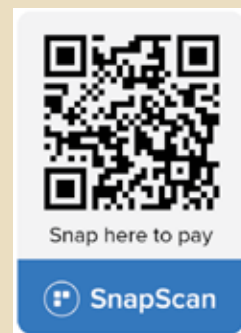
Donate bicycles & Equipment

- Used Bicycles
- Helmets & Reflective Safety Equipment
- Cycling Clothing & Shoes
- Bicycle Tools & Spares
- Bicycle Trailers & Attachments

Donations can be delivered to our office or you can contact us to arrange for collection

Financial donations

For ease of convenience you can donate via Snapscan using the following QR code:



Alternatively you can make a donation or set up a recurring gift using the banking details below:

Bicycling Empowerment Network

First National Bank

Branch 200409, Tokai

Current Account: 6203 4204 082

Swift Code: FIRNZAJJ

If you require an 18A Certificate to allow you to claim donation tax benefits, kindly contact the office directly.



“Ride as much or as little, as long or as short
as your feel, but ride.”

Eddy Merckx – Belgian pro racer



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