

BICYCLES FOR HUMANITY

START A CHAPTER



**BLOVE
BHOPE
BCHANGE
B4H**



Bicycles for Humanity



CONTENT

- 3 OVERVIEW
- 4 WHY WE GROW?
- 5 WHO IS LIKELY TO START A CHAPTER?
- 6 PARTNER PROGRAM
- 7 WHAT IS GRASSROOTS?
- 8 BICYCLES FOR HUMANITY'S ROLE
- 9 STARTING A CHAPTER
- 11 GETTING STARTED
- 15 SUMMARY
- 16 CONTACTS

Bicycles for Humanity (B4H) is a global grassroots movement of local chapters in developed countries that aims to empower the people of Africa and the rest of the developing world by helping them solve the basic problem of **mobility**. A bicycle allows a healthcare worker to visit 4 to 5 times the number of patients in a day. It allows a mother to transport water and get her goods to market. For students that have to travel long distances to schools, it allows them more time and energy for studies and helping at home. A bicycle can help in all these areas and many more.

B4H Chapters come together to collect bicycles and ship them to community based organizations in developing countries. Bicycles are loaded and delivered to the partner organizations in 40 ft containers, which remain and are run as community bicycle workshops called **Bicycle Empowerment Centres (BECs)**. All bikes are distributed locally, providing mobility to healthcare workers and other community members. **BECs** are also supplied with tools, spare parts and trained local community members provide valuable maintenance services.

Our projects are very rewarding on many fronts. Empowering others is the ultimate goal and, as a grassroots movement, **B4H** can also empower members of your community by getting involved and helping others in a direct and tangible way. We are developing a number of tools and templates to help you and your team to get going easily and efficiently. Every team has their own unique style and each group's approach is different, creative, exciting and fun. We are about global community and our movement grows through the stories told, here and in many developing countries.

WHY WE GROW?

In 5 short years, we have become the largest organization in the world sending bicycles to those in need in many countries. Many ask us how, with no staff, no budget of any kind for admin, and delivering a complete solution around the **BEC, Bicycle Empowerment Centre** model, it is costly, complicated and complex. In one level, yes it is, but at our heart, we are about people, about community and about the difference a bicycle can make. A bicycle is universal, everyone understands the power of a bicycle, and when you combine this with the stories of the difference the bike made to those receiving them and the stories of those donating and sending the **BEC's**, we end up with an integrated set of stories. As these stories are told, some that hear the stories, it simply resonates with them and they tell others or call or email and ask how they can help and get involved. It is through these stories, these experiences and telling them that we grow. We are a movement, we are viral, we continue to grow, but it is the stories of what a bicycle means to those donating and those receiving the bicycles that are the foundation to our movement. **Bicycles for Humanity** has no board or central management committee, every chapter and every volunteer is free to express, and deliver bikes to who they want in whatever manner makes sense to them. Every person in every chapter and partner organization are the leaders of this movement, it belongs to all and it always will. I'm just a volunteer. Yes, Brenda and I started this 6 years ago, but today many of the chapters are way larger than what we thought **B4H** would grow to, and all I can say is Wow. At the heart of **B4H** are hundreds of incredible leaders all telling the story in their own special way. When the stories of the chapters touch the stories of those receiving the bikes, well, that is where magic happens globally and together.

WHO IS LIKELY TO START A CHAPTER?

In the past, individuals had few choices to volunteer and make a difference. Large NGO's, non government organizations, were the only real choice. They had structure, international contacts, they were established in whatever area and you could join their effort and volunteer in areas they needed help. For some, this model works, but for many, it was not what they were looking for, plus many more are becoming frustrated with the high administrative costs and the rigid structures of many NGO's. **B4H** chapter leaders are individuals who want to make a difference. They want to connect directly with their community and with the people they are helping. Many have strong business skills, they have the energy and passion to create their own initiative, rather than join and be a small part of a large NGO's model. Accountability stays with the chapter in our model and many like this, plus they can grow and shape their chapter that best fits their skills, community and team. They know where every cent that they raise goes, accountability stays with the chapter and they are joining a global team that shares a common vision, focus and direction, a true grassroots movement. If you have a specific interest in Africa, Mexico, or wherever and want to help a community there with the gift of mobility, we support you, we are after all, **Bicycles for Humanity** and humanity includes everyone.

PARTNER PROGRAM

Bicycles for Humanity originally started with a chapter model focused on the supply side, organizing, collecting and sending the full containers or **BEC's, Bicycle Empowerment Centres**. Initially we partnered with BEB, the Bicycle Empowerment network in Namibia. There Michael Linke BEN's founder managed the process of finding community partners, training and support them, plus monitoring ongoing activities. As we grew as a movement, many chapters had very specific countries and communities they wanted to support. Today, we are in **8 countries** and that list is growing. To facilitate this growth, plus the hundreds of requests we get from all over the world by individuals and community based groups in the developing world, we have started a **B4H Partner Program**. The approved partner's are listed on our website on the left hand side. Being grassroots, sharing information is key. If an existing **B4H** chapter is operational in a specific country and you want to ship there, we suggest you contact the chapter that is active in that area. All **B4H** chapter contacts listed with the respective country. We also have new initiatives, that we have not sent bikes to yet, listed. These are partners that have exceptional skills, communities in need and agree to meet the accountability and high standards that we in the **B4H** movement set out for them. Tanzania and Northern Namibia are examples of new initiatives that we believe merit our support. If you are interested in the Uganda program, you can contact myself, Pat Montani or Thian with our Calgary chapter, we have both been there and **BEC's** have been delivered that, by **B4H** chapters.

WHAT IS GRASSROOTS?

Often when supporting an organization that works in developing countries with financial donations, supporters are not sure exactly where their funds go, and rarely have any direct input into projects on the ground. **B4H** chapters can choose their own partners or you can support approved partners identified on our home page, www.bicycles-for-humanity.org

Each chapter also defines the fund raising initiatives and bike collection strategy. You and your team handle all aspects and are free to take it in whatever direction you wish, raising funds as you see fit and knowing that all money raised goes directly to the costs associated with sending the **BEC**, and not a cent to any organizational or administrative costs beyond your control. Since day one we have been 100% grassroots and we will always be this way. **B4H** allows you to get directly involved, to make a difference and to know the people you are helping. Many of our chapters after they deliver a **BEC** go over to their partner community and help them organize. Together they tell the story and it is these stories and the opportunity to help others that powers our movement forward.

Many are attracted to our movement because we are 100% accountable, we are efficient and individually and as a global team we make a huge difference to the lives of so many.

BICYCLES FOR HUMANITY'S ROLE

Today's the internet and the explosion of social media, Facebook, and Twitter allows us to link, share ideas, tell the stories of the difference a bicycle can make and directly help others thousands of miles away. As the internet grows in many developing countries, it allows our community partners stories to be told and together as one, here and in the developing world, the story becomes one and it is very empowering.

We are a global movement, our main function is to help by providing a framework, templates and process to help everyone tell their story. Organizing fund raising, collecting bikes and following the journey of the container and how the bikes change lives is the fun and rewarding part. Drawing on the experiences of **B4H** chapters to date, we have summarized as much of the administrative, 'getting started' and operational issues as possible to help you start organizing in your community as soon as possible. With so many countries supported today, shipping and logistics becomes an issue, especially related to importing, tax's and dealing with local revenue and customs authorities. In 2012, we are working hard to put in place all of the templates and procedures along with the right partners in the shipping and logistics sectors to help all chapters. This is an evolving document and we've tried to address the issues in the order you are most likely to experience them.

EXPECTATIONS IF YOU GO AHEAD.

If you commit as a chapter we would expect that you contact myself, first, my name is Pat Montani, my contact information is at the end of this document.

All we ask is that you organize and create a team, be good representatives of **B4H**, be ethical and see the project through to the end. To maintain your status you would continue to commit to a container every two years after your initial container is sent.

Termination would be made official by notifying me, Pat Montani and any monies collected but not used would be passed on to an existing chapter to benefit that chapter. An official agreement is available to be signed, by a person starting a new chapter, in order to keep **B4H** credible and accountable. That agreement would be the starting point for beginning the new chapter. I or any chapter team member are more than happy to answer any questions you might have. If you are planning on going ahead, I will review the letter of understanding related to starting a chapter and send it over to you.

STARTING A CHAPTER

B4H WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

At the **Bicycles for Humanity** website you will notice on the left side links to the various chapters and partners by country. We will provide your group with a link to this site, plus a listing in our community and contact directory. Every chapter is responsible for their own website and they all use multiple approaches depending on their technical skills. If you want to register your own domain, than we encourage a common naming plan, www.b4h-whistler.org or www.b4h-mexico.org as an example. Every chapter should also create a Facebook page and a Twitter account to keep all informed and some use a Wordpress Blog in place of a website, it is up to you, but with Facebook, Twitter and a site or blog, you gain incredible reach. As you grow your chapter, you will begin to look for partner organizations and corporations to help you fundraise and collect bikes. Today, all corporations have corporate and social responsible programs and we touch many of the key issue's, sustainability, the environment, healthcare, empowerment, education and women's issue's. Our reach electronically is a great factor in many organizations wanting to partner with chapters. we are real, we are efficient and we are 100% accountable.

B4H LOGO'S, CONTENT IMAGES AND PROCESS

Bicycles for Humanity follows 2 themes of images and branding. The original wheel, Humanity Image created by Liz Woodside and the new logo and image created by Flavio Chan. These along with the process, and **BEC, Bicycle Empowerment Centre** model make up the intellectual property and process of the **Bicycles for Humanity** movement. It is all registered under **Bicycles for Humanity Inc** and available for all chapters to use how they feel best meets their needs. As you look across our movement, you will see many logo designs and images that reflect how each group views themselves and their work. We encourage you to use the new images created by Flavio Chan included in a document, **Guideline B4H** which we will send to you.

MENTORING

It looks like a daunting task, but with a communications infrastructure in place and a partner community that either we endorse or you choose, you are on the way to making it happen. Every new chapter has a learning curve, but I or any chapter head is more than happy to help you with any questions you might have, just reach out to any **B4H** chapter members, they will all be very helpful. Knowledge sharing is a big part of why we have no overhead of any kind. As a global team, we share a global view of the impact a bicycle can make. This is what binds us all together and it is the foundation of our movement.

FUNDRAISING

To send a container or **BEC** to Africa, there are 2 major costs, buying the container and shipping it there. We have great partners and connections in the shipping industry, but unfortunately we still have to pay. To give you an idea, we send 40 ft high cube containers, the extra foot over a normal container allows for about an extra 75 bikes to be loaded, bringing the number of bikes to around 500. A container costs around **\$3,200-3,500**. Shipping to Africa is around **\$5,000-\$7,000** depending on where you are located, bringing the total cost to between **\$8,000** and **\$10,000** to get the container to the closest port. Some chapters fund all the way to their final destination, but we also look for partners or our partners in Africa raise the monies locally to cover in country costs and applicable tax's. There are many ways to raise the funds and all this part of the process is a lot of fun. We suggest that after your team has come together you begin to think about how you want to raise the funds in your community.

GETTING STARTED

TAX STATUS

B4H the movement does not have charitable tax status. The prime reason being, we are now have chapters in 8 countries: Canada, the United States, Japan, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands, Italy and Mexico with even more countries coming on board in 2012. Each country has different tax laws, so the idea of us registering in Canada did not make a lot of sense. We have however come up with a number of creative ideas to help you with your fundraising efforts. In the United States it is very easy to get 501-C or charitable tax status and every chapter we have in the states has it. We also have the documentation process detailed and copies of the process that we can send you if you are interested. Every church has charitable tax status as well as all Rotary, Kiwanis and other civic groups. Talking to them and bringing them on board is another way to gain tax status and great partners to help you grow your chapter

CORPORATE

This is an area that I think will be very valuable to the fundraising cause both here and in developing countries. Corporations are looking for ways to show they care, that they are involved in sustainable, humanitarian and environmentally friendly projects. They need it for their image, their annual report and to make people aware of their products and services. With the amount of media you will receive there is a great deal of value to a corporate supporter. We are also a pure grassroots movement and collectively we are very proud to say that not a cent has gone to any overhead, staffing or organization of any kind. We simply appeal to a very wide audience and we are a great partner for many corporations to connect with.

MEDIA

The media simply loves this initiative and radio, print and TV will give you all the time you need. It is a great story for them because it's local, global, sustainable, environmentally friendly, grassroots, involves a lot of people and shows compassion and caring. Once you know what you want to do, and when, through the various aspects of the project, fund raising, collecting bikes or informing them of where the bikes are, the local and national media will be very supportive and give you all the media you need to get the job done.

LOGISTICS

Now that your team is organized, the website is up, you have a partner, fund raising has started, the next phase is planning and executing a Bike Collection and loading the container. We have done just in time collections where we collect and load the same weekend, but this can be a lot of work and a lot of hoping the right number of bikes come in. We suggest that you find a warehouse to store the bikes, this allows you to collect bikes over time and many groups can help you and bring them to the central location. Some chapters place a container on the ground and use this as their warehouse. All containers going to Africa are shipped from ports on all 3 coasts of the United States and Canada. With access to wholesale used container companies and shipping lines, we generally go to them a few months before the collection for pricing. The prices generally tend to hold, as they will commit. A number of us have experience in this area, and when the time comes, we will assist you in establishing the relationships.

GETTING STARTED

In 2012, we as a movement are spending a lot of time on streamlining this part of the program for all chapters. Ocean shipping and the logistics that go with it are not everyday areas we have skills in, so we are building a set of manuals and contacts, plus approved country partners as a guide for all. Many of the chapters also have contacts in these areas locally and they have been able to do incredible things to reduce price. My suggestion is to seek out local suppliers of both containers and shipping services and we can also get you in touch with the contacts we have. In 2012 now that we have sufficient volume, we will be going to the shipping companies asking for volume discounts.

ORGANIZING A BIKE COLLECTION

Once a date is established and the media made aware, a funny thing will happen, bikes will just begin to appear and the key is to cut it off at 500 or if you have the facilities to store more and are planning further shipments, than keep going. We really emphasize mountain bikes, as bikes with narrow tires are of little value in rural areas with sandy, thorny trails and no paved roads. With the evolution of the mountain bike to full suspension and disc brakes, there are literally millions of old solid frame mountain bikes sitting in basements and garages. These bikes along with all old tires, tubes, and working spare parts of all kinds are pure gold in Africa or wherever your **BEC** is going. You will often find that your local bike shops will be more than happy to collect working spare parts and bikes for you. The **B4H** program brings new customers into their shops on a regular basis and helps them brand in their community as a great community partner.

LOADING A CONTAINER

This is a science and we are finalizing a separate manual that details how to do this. When organizing volunteers, there are three main groups needed when managing a collection. The first group thanks the people for donating their bike, listens to the stories of what the bike meant to them and receives any cash donations from those donating bikes. A second group preps and loads the bikes into the container. Chapters generally follow one of 2 loading models. The standing bike model requires 2 people per bikes to be efficient and a prepped bike has the handlebars turned in the direction of the wheel, the pedals removed and tied to the frame, seat lowered and any baskets taken off. With the bike now reduced to a low and narrow profile it is ready to be loaded. Bikes are loaded in rows starting at the back with each bike pointed in the opposite direction to its neighbor. Bikes are loaded three rows on top of each other and all spare parts, soccer gear, etc. is packed between the bikes as they are loaded. A well packed row can hold 19 bikes across and a container well packed can get around 400 bikes in it using the stand up model. The second method, laying the bikes down, can hold up to 500 bikes. This method requires taking the pedals and the front wheel off. 2 piles are created at the back of the container, stacked in opposite directions and piled right to the ceiling and the wheels are crammed in the left over space at the top. These stacks are built to the front of the container and any wheels left over loaded in the area behind the doors. This is the method many chapters are beginning to use and it works well. Bicycles will not get damaged either way, after a few miles of travel, they tend to wedge themselves and find a secure solid place and on the other side, they will be fine.

GETTING STARTED

When the last bikes are loaded in, the doors closed, it's time to celebrate a job well done. The ritual of a photo of the full container with all volunteers in the picture has become standard at all chapters globally, plus this is usually followed by a party or celebration for a job well done.

SUMMARY

I know this is very basic, but it gives you an idea of the various pieces and tasks. From experience we have found that it is fun, your community will get behind it, it's a great way to meet new people in your community and in doing so build community pride in knowing that everyone who helped, donated a bike or donated funds to send the bikes to Africa made a difference and that everyone can feel proud of what they have accomplished. I or anyone in our movement will be more than happy to help you and as you gain experience, you can help others in our movement as it grows. One great way to learn is to visit all of the chapter sites and link to their Facebook and Twitter accounts. they are all listed on our home page. There are also a lot of great video's all over Youtube and Vimeo well worth watching and linking to your site.

CONTACTS

Our chapters around the world

AUSTRALIA

St. Kilda, VIC
Sydney, NSW
Perth, WA

CANADA

Calgary, AB
Edmonton, AB
Kelowna, BC
Vancouver, BC
Victoria, BC
Whistler, BC
Huron County
Saskatoon, SK
North Bay, ON
Ottawa, ON
Sault Ste. Marie, ON
St. Bart's, Brampton, ON
Thunder Bay, ON
Toronto, ON
Montreal, QC
New Brunswick
Nova Scotia

GERMANY

Dresden

ITALY

Rome

JAPAN

Tokyo

MEXICO

Mexico City

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam

SPAIN

Albarracín

UNITED STATES

Santa Rosa, CA
San Diego, CA
Colorado. CO
Aspen, CO
Clarkston, MI
Seattle, WA
Athens, GA
Alpharetta, GA
Indianapolis, IN
Helena, MT
Columbus, OH
Dallas Ft Worth, TX
Hartford, CT
Adirondack, NY

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