

## First steps to a bicycle project

### Who are we ?

Cyclo Nord-Sud's (CNS) mission is to collect used bicycles in Quebec and ship them to underprivileged communities mostly in Africa and Latin America, where they serve as tools for local sustainable development. We seek to promote social justice, empowerment, civic and collective commitment, sustainable mobility, solidarity and cooperation. Our head office is in Montreal, Canada, in the province of Quebec. Since 1999, CNS has sent more than 55,000 bikes to 19 beneficiary countries. The 1,000 members and the 500 volunteers who participate annually in its activities form the backbone of the organization. Each year, thanks to their support, we send approximately 4,000 bicycles to our Project Partners.

### Why do we promote bike projects in the South ?

- **To fight against poverty**
- **To protect the environment by promoting the recovery of a sustainable good and non-motorized mobility**
- **To promote community economic development**
- **To empower women**
- **To facilitate other activities considered beneficial for the host community**
- **To reduce the North-South gap and thus rebalance the global economy**
- **To foster collaboration, learning and exchange between communities**
- **To inform populations, particularly youth, of the injustices of global economics**

### What is a CNS «bike project» ?

The aim of a bike project is to contribute to sustainable community development in the municipality, region or country where the bikes are sent. A project promotes the use of bikes as ecological alternate mode of accessible transportation at low or no cost and directly improves the living conditions of underprivileged communities by providing better access to education and health services, increased empowerment for women, and respect for the environment. A project also aims to support an alternative local economy by facilitating access to microcredit and the creation of micro-enterprises.

The local Project Partner manages the project and is responsible for its development and success.

If your project is eligible and a sufficient amount of bikes is available, CNS will partner with you to determine your project's needs regarding materials, logistical assistance, counselling and various other services. This means assessing the amount of used bicycles and spare parts to send, the shipping of containers for bikes and parts to a port in your country or neighbouring country, advice in mounting a warehouse and a bicycle repair shop, providing bike mechanics training or suggestions for related teaching material, as required.

It may be helpful to view each bike project as having two components:

- The first is closely related to bicycles and includes including the clearing of customs and reception, storing, repairing and equitably distributing, renting or selling of bicycles.
- The second includes related community activities, for example: financing a social, educational, agricultural or health project in the community through the sale or bicycle rental, education and training for young bicycle mechanics, etc

### **Very important !**

- **The costs of maritime transport and/or importing taxes can sometimes prohibit an organisation from starting a bike project.**
- **The bikes shipped by CNS are not functional, but all bikes are in a repairable condition**
- **We encourage all organisations to search for seed funding for a better start of their bike project.**
- **The container shipping periods from Montreal are generally in the spring and fall, and it takes about 1 to 3 months for it to arrive at the final destination.**
- **Current Partners have priority for the bike containers. The possibility of adding new Partners is thus limited to the total bikes collected within a year by CNS.**

### Who is eligible ?

Cyclo Nord-Sud's partners are non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit organizations (NPOs) or cooperative associations that :

- Have been operating for at least the last three (3) years;
- Can produce annual reports and financial statements;
- Work to benefit financially disadvantaged individuals and communities in Latin America or Africa, in areas such as education, health services, female empowerment, environment, agriculture, micro-credit and micro-enterprises;

Moreover, in its selection process, CNS also prioritizes project proposals that have the following characteristics :

- A recognition of the bicycle as a tool for sustainable development;
- A respect for the natural environment and the people who live in it;
- A committed and significant democratic participation within the organization;
- The advancement of the status of women and an intention to ensure they benefit from, and actively participate in, the project;
- Practices that exclude racial, religious or political discrimination as well as nepotism and patronage;
- A vision of the project that will be comprehensive, strategic, structuring and long term;
- A good reputation as a supplier of services to the community;
- Recognized financial and logistics management capacities.

Lastly, for a project to be selected, it must demonstrate its financial feasibility. In the budget of the application form, all potential costs associated with the project must be articulated in order to calculate the average cost per bike sent by CNS. A shipment typically contains about 400 bikes, and the Partner must compare the estimated cost per bike from CNS with the cost of a low quality bike on the local market. This comparison will allow CNS to estimate if the project is sustainable overall.

When a project is chosen, the Partner is obligated to manage its operations and accumulate sufficient funds to reimburse the shipping costs of the container paid by CNS, including customs and taxes, by the required time. The Partner must then plan and save for the next container, meanwhile maintaining the cost of bikes at the lowest price possible.

## What are the responsibilities of the partner organisation once the project is approved ?

- Respect the agreement signed with CNS;
- Ensure the necessary steps to receive the containers. The candidate must obtain the necessary information in advance regarding taxes and fees, and ideally should try to get an exemption to import used bikes and parts;
- Provide a storage space for a minimum of 400 bikes and parts;
- Repair the bicycles. The bikes that we send are not functional and it so it is important to consider the costs of setting up a bike shop, hiring one (or more) mechanic(s) and purchasing tools and spare parts;
- Sell, rent or distribute the bikes, as stipulated by the signed agreement;
- Reimburse the maritime freight costs paid by CNS for the shipping of the container on the date stipulated in the agreement, including customs and taxes;
- Submit the reports, videos, photographs and information required in the agreement to evaluate the project and communicate with our members, donors and our financial partners. A picture is worth a thousand words!
- Keep CNS updated on all events and significant developments of the project;
- Inform CNS of any internal or external development that may have an important impact on your Project, including changes to the project personnel or in the direction of the organization.

## If the project is approved, CNS is committed to :

- Fulfill its obligations under the agreement signed with the organization;
- Collect used bikes, spare parts and other material to send;
- Prepare the shipping containers and support you with their release at the destination;
- Assist you in the realization, follow-up and evaluation of the project with field visits on site or in Montreal depending on the availability of funds;
- Post information (e.g. website, Facebook, Newsletter) about your organization and the project;
- Assist you in funding research to develop the bike project;
- Communicate regularly and inform you of developments, both internal and external, that could have an impact on your organisation and the project.

## How to present and start a partnership

If your organisation is eligible, we invite you to contact us for an application form. Please return the form along with a detailed letter of interest. Further information and the form “...” can be obtained by writing to :

**Katy Collet, Southern Projects Manager**

**[katy@cyclonordsud.org](mailto:katy@cyclonordsud.org)**