

CHAPTER 9

*Cycling Today for
a better Tomorrow*

COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING



9. COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING

9.1 Introduction

Lack of cycling infrastructure does not hinder current cyclists but it also does not encourage an uptake in cycling. The previous chapters have explored what infrastructure needs to be in place to ensure safe and accessible cycling.

The focus of this chapter is to look at how cycling can be promoted once the required infrastructure has been put in place. Promotional activities can range from simply providing information on cycling routes and associated infrastructure to running campaigns that aim to achieve an attitudinal shift towards cycling to addressing the socio-economic barriers to an uptake of cycling.

In a country like South Africa, there are diverse and contradictory views on cycling ranging from perceptions that it is a mode of commuter transport for the poor whilst a recreational activity for the wealthy to particular cultural views that it is undignified for women to ride bicycles. Any effective promotional intervention needs to be very clear about who it is talking to and what the barriers to the uptake of the message may be.

9.1.1 POLICIES AND MEASURES FOR SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE CYCLING:

- Well-maintained, extensive systems of cycling facilities;
- Intersection modifications and priority traffic signals;
- Traffic calming;
- Bike parking;
- Co-ordination with public transport;
- Traffic education and training; and
- Bicycle-friendly traffic laws.

Source: Pucher and Buehler, 2008

9.2 Basics of communication planning

Before one decides to promote cycling, there are four basic questions that have to be answered:

- **To whom is the information being directed?** This involves defining one's target audience and identifying what the possible barriers to receiving and acting upon the information to be shared.
- **What information is required?** Is it simple information on what infrastructure is available or is it aimed achieving more deeply-rooted attitudinal shift? At the heart of this question is the messaging that needs to underlie the information to be shared based on barriers to cycling.
- **What is the best way of conveying this information?** This could be through social media platforms, commercial media in all its forms, activities such as the Freedom Rides or school road shows. There has to be an alignment between the target audience, the message and the dissemination platform.
- **When should this information be supplied?** Typically behaviour change is most likely achieved when it directly accompanies a particular intervention such as the completion of the Orlando NMT infrastructure immediately preceded by a schools roadshow on cycling and safety.

9.3 Identifying our target audience

There are multiple target audiences that impact cycling one way or another. They

can be split into two groups: the riders and the ‘enablers’. The riders are further segmented into various groups but a key underlying division is the purpose of the commute. Furthermore, there are “active” riders, some of whom are uninhibited in their riding and others that are sceptical riders. There are “passive” or potential riders; those for whom cycling would make sense (distances, affordability) but do not as they do not associate with the activity. The active riders are often represented by cycling associations and form part of cycling communities that can be vocal in their needs and concerns.

The second broad category can be referred to as the ‘enablers’. They include a collection of professionals, some of whom are based in one of the three spheres of government; others in the private sector and the balance in civil society. These are responsible for regulations from national legislation to local by-laws; others are responsible for implementation and enforcement of this regulatory environment; and the balance are responsible for the planning and implementation of infrastructure that can either support or defeat the promotion of cycling. There is a cycling industry that supplies bicycles and has advocacy groups that voices and channels concerns and priorities for cyclists and would-be cyclists.

Each target audience requires proper identification, its perspective on cycling, its contribution to cycling, whether it hampers or enables cycling and what information needs to be targeted at it to enhance its contribution to the uptake of cycling. This analysis typically needs to happen at a national, provincial and local level so that appropriate action can be taken at each level for maximum impact.

The remainder of the chapter will consider examples of best practice that have supported the uptake of cycling through advocacy and promotional activities. It does not, however, aim to undertake the full analysis that is required to ensure consistent and sustained advocacy for the creating of safe cycling environments.

9.4 Advocacy for developing Cycling Cities

Developing cycling cities is an ongoing concern and requires sustained attention and collaboration. It enables officials access to practitioners both cyclists and professionals who can share crucial information and insights to enrich their approach

to non-motorised planning. One of the vehicles used to develop Cycling Cities, is through the Jozi Cycling Forum.

The Jozi Cycling Forum is comprised of a group of public and private stakeholders and partner organisations that are passionate about cycling and promote the use of the bicycle in all its forms. The Forum works closely with partners within the city and provincial and national government, and creatively uses the space between public and private sectors to build momentum around cycling initiatives. This forum focuses on the following issues as it aims to develop the City of Johannesburg into a cycling city:

- Integrating public transport, walking and cycling.
- Providing dedicated cycling infrastructure such as dedicated cycling lanes and bike storage.
- Promoting bike sharing schemes so that cyclists can ride from one part of the city to another.
- Bike promotion and safety including building public awareness of cyclists and their safety.
- Review by-laws and enforce the 1.5m safe passing distance for motorists.
- Increasing the accessibility of bikes especially to low-income residents through donation of bikes, enabling bike-sharing and engaging with the bike industry to produce more robust bikes.

Multi-stakeholders fora such as the Jozi Cycling Forum demonstrates the importance of building relationships among the multiple parties that collectively impact the development and uptake of cycling but whose efforts can be diluted when working in silos.



9.5 Providing information to NMT users

The provision of information is foremost of any basket of interventions to promote the uptake of NMT infrastructure. This information should at the very minimum provide route information, where bicycles can be safely stored, and which public transport interchanges and venues are bicycle-friendly.

9.5.1 ROUTE INFORMATION

The Cape Town Bicycle Map www.capetownbicyclemap.co.za developed by civil society organisation *rideyourcity* is a print, online and smartphone map.

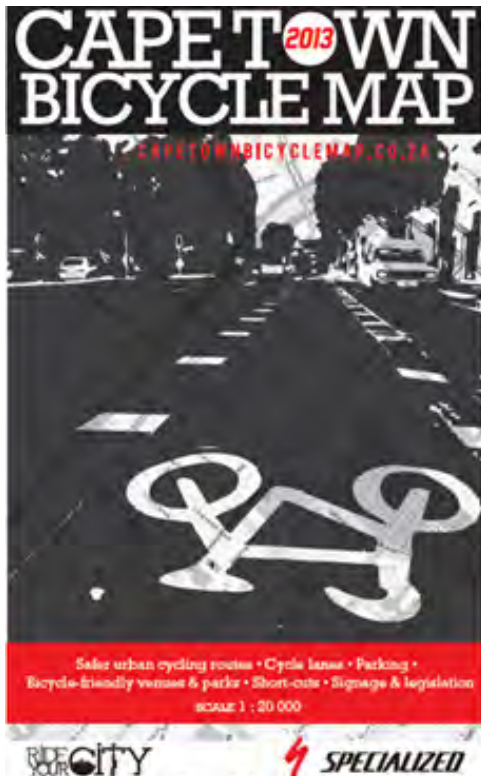


Figure 9.1 The Cape Town Bicycle Map – print edition

This map shows recommended routes for urban cycling, as well as bicycle-parking, public transport that permits “bikes-on-board”, and other bicycle-friendly facilities, and explains the meaning of bicycle signage and road markings.

9.5.2 LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

A brochure such as Figure 9.3 takes common ‘excuses’ given by people for not riding a bicycle as transport and attempts to find solutions to these challenges, looking at concerns such as distance, topography, time, and a lack of facilities such as showers or bicycle parking.



[Online Map](#) [About](#) [Find a Print Map](#) [FAQs](#) [Smart Phone App](#) [Sponsors](#) [Blog](#)



Figure 9.2 The Cape Town Bicycle Map online edition www.capetownbicyclemap.co.za

9.6 Addressing economic barriers to the uptake of cycling in poorer areas

A common reason for individuals to not own bicycles is that they cannot afford to purchase or maintain one. Qhubeka and Shova Kalula are two programmes aimed at increasing the supply of and access to affordable bicycles. Similarly, both play an important role in creating awareness of and interest in cycling amongst individuals who have limited exposure to cycling.

9.6.1 QHUBEKA

Qhubeka is a non-governmental initiative that fosters productivity in communities – access to bicycles promotes productivity as it reduces travel time, increases the distances people can travel, what they can carry, where they can go and how fast they can get there.

One of Qhubeka's educational programmes is the Bicycle Education Empowerment Programme (BEEP). Through this programme, in partnership with partner World Vision, Qhubeka provides bicycles to school children with the aim of:

- Increasing attendance and performance of vulnerable children in communities attending government schools;
- Retaining more girls in school;
- Improving teacher attendance and access to professional development activities;
- Uplifting the livelihoods of bicycle beneficiaries and their families; and
- Improving safety and security of students travelling to and from school.

BEEP is designed to empower schools and communities to select and have oversight of bicycle beneficiaries. The primary selection criterion for beneficiaries is 'need' and is based on the distance beneficiaries have to travel to school. Generally, 85% of bicycles per school are allocated to students and 15% to teachers and community supporters, and 70% of the students' allocation is designated for girl students.

Qhubeka runs regular media and communication campaigns (see below) aimed at raising awareness of its programmes as well as raising funds for the provision of bicycles.



A BICYCLE CAN CHANGE A LIFE. YOU KNOW THIS BECAUSE IT CHANGED YOURS.

RIDE FOR QHUBEKA AND HELP THE NEXT GENERATION DISCOVER HOW A BICYCLE CAN CHANGE THEIR FUTURE

Children who cycle a Qhubeka Buffalo Bicycle to school increase attendance by 20% and their marks by 32%. Each time you ride with a Qhubeka Charity bond you donate a bicycle. Email info@qhubeka.org and discover how a bicycle can change a life.

#BicyclesChangeLives

Qhubeka MOBILISING PEOPLE WITH BICYCLES
qhubeka.org

Figure 9.3 Poster for Qhubeka - How a Bicycle can Change their Future



Figure 9.4 Poster for Qhubeka - Mobilising people with bicycles

9.6.2 SHOVA KALULA

The DoT is involved in an initiative known as Shova Kalula, which means “pedal easy”. It aims to determine the potential for bicycle transport as a mobility enhancement tool for the urban and rural poor. Its purpose is to:

- Promote affordable bicycles;
- Train all bicycle users in riding and maintenance skills;
- Assist local entrepreneurs to develop bicycle micro enterprises; and
- Train official town planners and engineers on catering for safer and more cycling friendly infrastructure.

The initiative aims to supply public transport that is:

- Affordable
- Appropriate
- Economically sustainable with the benefits of skills transfer and job creation
- Environmentally-friendly.

Qhubeka as well as Shova Kalula are actively involved in the three pilot cities.

9.7 Activity-based Mass Mobilisation

Group rides or walks are an excellent way of persuading people who are contemplating changing their travel behaviour, by showing newcomers safer routes, and demonstrating that it is indeed possible and acceptable to ride a bicycle as transport, or outside of a race context.

9.7.1 FREEDOM RIDE JOZI

The Freedom Ride Jozi, supported by the City of Johannesburg, is an example of an event that promotes cycling as a way of getting around the city rather than racing or training.

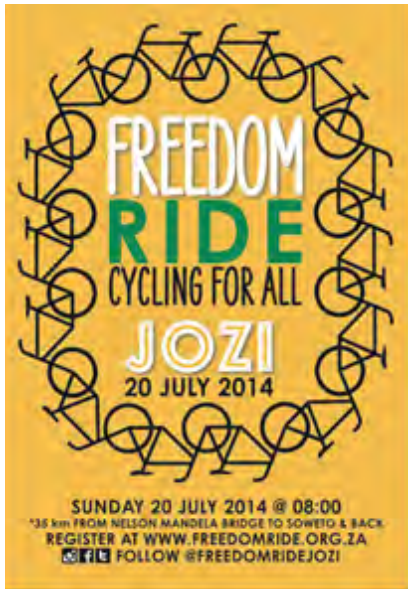


Figure 9.5 Freedom Ride in the City of Johannesburg

The route follows the 'Corridors of Freedom' launched by the City of Johannesburg, as a network of urban transport and development corridors. The purpose of the Freedom Ride is to profile and inaugurate some of the dedicated cycle lanes and demonstrate the commitment of the City of Johannesburg to proper safe cycling infrastructure and signage, as well as ensuring cyclist safety.

The Freedom Ride is marketed in a variety of ways, through personal emails, social media, a website, media releases, radio interviews as well as print and electronic posters and flyers.

9.7.2 CRITICAL MASS JOZI

Critical Mass Jozi is part of an international movement about reclaiming city streets on bicycles, and is re-using the inner city's facilities for social interaction. The event has been held in Johannesburg on the last Friday of every month since 2007. Critical Mass Johannesburg was formed to bring more people back into the inner city of Johannesburg, and now also focuses on raising awareness about the viability of cycling as a form of transport in and around Johannesburg, and cycling as a form of transport in and around Johannesburg, and actively lobbying for an infrastructure that will support this movement.



Figure 9.6 Critical Mass Jozi - the last Friday of every month

EThekweni Metropolitan Municipality also supports a monthly Critical Mass Ride. The movement is also finding traction in the City of Tshwane.

9.7.3 WALKING BUS, CAPE TOWN AND DAR ES SALAAM

'Safe routes to school', 'walking buses' and 'cycle trains' are concepts gaining in popularity in the US and UK, as well as in some South African cities. Safe routes to school programmes use a variety of education, engineering and enforcement strategies that help make routes safer for children to walk and bicycle to school, and encouragement strategies to entice more children to walk and bike.



Figure 9.7 School group walks to school - Walking Bus pilot project in Cape Town

In 2011, a walking bus experiment was carried out in Rondebosch, Cape Town, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. A walking bus is a group of children who walk to and from school under the supervision of adult volunteers, one of whom leads at the front (the 'driver') and another who supervises at the back (the 'conductor'). Children are picked up either from their homes or from designated 'bus stops' along a set route and dropped off at school. The concept is attributed to David Engwicht (1993), with the first walking bus trialled in the United Kingdom in 1998. The cycle train is the same concept using bicycles.

In a survey conducted at six Rondebosch primary schools, Muchaka et al (2011) found that the private car accounted for 90% and 88% of home-to-school and school-to-home trips respectively, before the walking bus

experiment. During and after the walking bus pilot project, levels of walking and cycling grew, and remained high.

One of the key lessons from the research experience in the case of Rondebosch and Dar es Salaam is that active support provided by the school and the local municipality is as important as the technical questions around setting up the walking buses and optimising routes and schedules.

9.8 Key Lessons Learnt

- The provision of NMT infrastructure alone will not necessarily attract “new” cyclists and pedestrians. **Behavioural changes** need to be facilitated using campaigns and promotions.
- The **promotion of NMT can take various forms** such as safety awareness campaigns at schools and mass cycling rides to encourage people to cycle to and within neighbourhoods they would never have done so previously.
- **There is no single solution when it comes to communication, marketing and promotions.** Informing commuters that non-motorised transport is ‘a good thing to do’ is not necessarily going to result in any travel behaviour change: messages need to be tailored for specific groups of people, depending on their level of knowledge, interest and confidence.
- Obtain **political buy-in and identify champions for promotional events** to encourage people to cycling, including the Mayor and senior officials taking part in mass cycle rides.
- Cities to develop an **NMT Promotion Action Plan** in consultation with the private sector and NGOs to set out specific targets and resources needed to achieve these.

- Cities to endeavor to **supply bicycles** to children in schools traversing or residing near implemented NMT infrastructure and facilities. This will require developing education and awareness training around cycling rules and behaviour.
- Cities to **involve NGOs** in various promotional activities.



Figure 9.8 City of Joburg's Mayor, Parks Tau at the Freedom Ride

9.9 Concluding comments

With all the best efforts in the world, the uptake of NMT infrastructure, especially among those that have shied away from either walking or cycling for safety reasons, will be limited without effective awareness-raising campaigns. This includes providing both sufficient logistical information about available infrastructure and then encouragement to make use of the infrastructure. There is also an important advocacy role as there are number of role-players from a national to local level who are yet to fully embrace a NMT agenda and to fully appreciate its multi-faceted requirements.