

Who We Are

The Townships Project is a Canadian NGO which promotes the success of viable small-scale businesses in South African township communities, with the aim of economic and social development.



❖ In 1998, **President Nelson Mandela** challenged the World Council of Churches to “do something about the poverty in my country”. Canadian Martha Deacon responded by founding **The Townships Project** to support micro-businesses in township areas.

❖ From 1999 to 2010, we focused on **Micro-Lending**, supporting local microfinance institutions making small repayable loans (starting at \$100) to groups of borrowers, primarily women, to start or expand businesses, with the bonus of basic business-skills training.

❖ Some examples of entrepreneurs **The Townships Project** boosted include home-based grocers, fruit and vegetable sellers, candy and snack vendors, butchers and meat providers, dressmakers, second-hand clothing sellers, school lunch suppliers, candle makers, TV receiver installers, sanitary towel manufacturers, and waste removal, security and housekeeping service providers.

❖ From 2010 to 2017, we moved into **Micro-Franchising**. We worked with the SA Department of Trade and Industry and profitable small-scale businesses to systematize, brand and clone them for sale to others. When the government adopted this program, we moved to take what we had learned to-date to build a new partnership with Rotary in South Africa.

Communities Benefit Through the Success of Small Businesses

❖ People know what they need, and are keen to use local businesses that reliably supply those services and products, thus increasing the potential of those enterprises.

❖ We started sponsoring, in partnership with Rotarians, a **Building Better Businesses Symposium** to help township business owners find financing, marketing, accounting, management skills, mentoring and networking opportunities.

Rotary is a perfect partner

Rotary brings together business and professional leaders in a service environment, across cultural, religious and political lines to provide humanitarian service, while encouraging high ethical standards in all vocations, and while building goodwill and peace in the world.



Building Better Businesses Symposium

September 26-27 2019

UNISA Kgorong Function Hall

Pretoria, Gauteng

❖ With momentum from the 2018 Symposium, we again partner with UNISA (University of South Africa) and Rotary to bring together 150 small business owners. They will network and learn from each other, and from experienced speaker-facilitators on topics such as Spotting an Opportunity, Finding the Capital, Sustaining the Business, and Growing/Scaling Up the Business.



❖ Participants will have access to digital accounting programs, basic legal assistance, mentorship, and surplus office furniture. As well, there are incentive cash prizes to reward businesses showing the strongest progress in the following year.

How We Work

❖ In Canada:

The Townships Project is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, and is authorized to issue charitable receipts for income-tax purposes. (Canada Revenue Agency Registration #86418 8420 RR001)

❖ Operations are managed by a CEO (Founder Martha Deacon), and overseen by a ten-member Board of Directors. Located coast-to-coast across Canada, they have a wide range of expertise and experience in business management, industry, the arts, investor relations, accounting, human resources, community development, and international service.

❖ Funds are raised from donors in Canada, by means of an annual letter and occasional special gifts. Money is transferred as needed to South Africa, where the Board of Trustees administers the account.

❖ In South Africa:

The Townships Project Trust is administered by three trustees: the Founder and two local Rotarians with careers in corporate governance and wealth management. As well there are two signing officers, who are also Rotarians with careers in banking and realty. All these connections have yielded strong partnerships, such as with UNISA and the Sesego Foundation.

❖ Funds are raised from corporate donors in South Africa, both by in-kind donations and by direct cash contributions.

Will Your Club Help?

❖ Your Rotary Club can sponsor an annual **Building Better Businesses Symposium**



in partnership with Rotarians in South Africa for USD 20,000, offering this opportunity to businesses outside the capital area of Johannesburg and Pretoria.

❖ You can contribute your ideas, your mentoring skills, and your business connections to help township entrepreneurs develop jobs and prosperity in their local communities.

❖ This has the bonus of spreading the good news of Rotary into new areas, with the potential for new members and new clubs.

❖ People with good ideas and willingness to contribute their skills do make things happen. Could your Club make a difference?

Contact

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THE
Townships
PROJECT



**Building Better
Businesses
in South Africa**