

Germans get bicycle project's wheels turning

HEIDELBERG - Cyclists in the streets of Ratanda may soon be a regular sight. HERAUT reported on June 19 about a container of new and secondhand bicycles that were donated to a group in Ratanda as part of a project in association with Radhof Bicycle House in Heidelberg, Germany.

In 2011 and again in 2012, Mandoza Radebe, manager of Corroboration Cultural Group in Ratanda, spent time at Radhof to do a course in bicycle mechanics. The German association Choir Imbongi – Voices for Africa agreed to sponsor a container of bicycles every eight months to Corroboration. German volunteers Hans-Jürgen Florent and Martin Rachfahl visited Ratanda on June 24 until June 28 to teach Mandoza and his helpers to mechanically maintain the bikes. Martin is the Practical Chief of Radhof and Hans-Jürgen is his friend that decided to give up time for this worthy project.

The bicycles will be allocated to needy children and the Germans say it is very important to them that the bicycles are maintained at a high standard. They are doing the same programme in Germany where they provide bicycles for students that can't afford vehicles. Martin says it is also more practical to ride a bicycle in Germany because of traffic and parking problems.

Mandoza wants to have regular riding lessons for the children and even adults at the sports ground of Ratanda Secondary School. "We will go out with them on the streets once we are sure that they are



German Volunteers Hans-Jürgen Florent and Martin Rachfahl with a group of school children and adults who came to test out the bicycles. The Germans visited Ratanda to teach Mandoza Radebe (left) and the Corroboration Cultural Group (front) to maintain the bicycles that were sponsored by Choir Imbongi – Voices of Africa in Germany.

comfortable riding and make sure that they know all safety precautions and rules of the road."

They are also planning on programmes such as 'rent a bike' for adults over weekends to help finance the maintenance of the bicycles. They are however in desperate need of safety equipment such as

helmets, bicycle locks, reflectors, reflective clothing and office equipment for the workshop.

Corroboration Cultural Group hopes to get the community involved in their bicycle programme. He can be contacted on 073 474 1048 for more information.