

Bee the Solution - Newsletter 5, March 2017

By Chrystel Vert-Pré

PROJECTS DETAILS

More details on Projects are available on Bee the Solution website @ www.projects.beethesolution.org

Each post is a short story about the people, how we came across each other, the seed of the projects... as we grow with the projects, more and more details will be added.

Also browse the website www.beethesolution.org for more information.



DONATION

We gratefully received donations of educational books, note pads for kids drawings/writing and a kit of bean bags for kids activities. We are very thankful to Sally, Ingrith and Gareth for their support! These are wonderful books, including teacher books following the South African curriculum, for Grade 1 to 7. Read more about it in a future edition.

FEATURE OF THE MONTH

[What is Bee the solution? a NPO? a NGO?](#)

Having defined some of the terminology ([NGO](#), [NPO...](#)) in the last [newsletter](#), the question that arises is: "So, is Bee the Solution an NGO or an NPO?"

Now, this is a very interesting question, which has different answers...

My initial thought is to answer that Bee the Solution is a NPO: Not for Profit Organisation.

This is firstly because this is the direct translation of our statuses in French - so, it makes sense.

However, as we saw last month, an NGO is also an NPO - and we fit the criteria laid down by the UN and the EU Council to qualify as NGO... so why not answer that we are a NGO?

From the usage of the term NGO, it generally refers to bigger, well established structures. Ones that often have greater means, both financially and in man-power. And we are not in that category for now. Hence the use of the more humble term of NPO.

Having said that, I do sometimes also refer to Bee the Solution as an NGO... because depending on countries where people are from, they do not relate to the term NPO, but know the context of NGO...

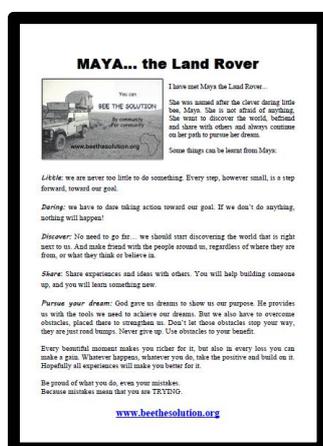
So while this seems a little complicated, altogether, Bee the Solution is both a **NPO** and a **NGO**. Simple!

[Little help along the way](#)

At the back of Maya, I have written some words to explain why she is called Maya.

I had mentioned a long time ago on the [blog](#) that this poster was the most popular picture taken of Maya. I really like this poster. And many people have seen it as an inspiring or motivating talk. While this was not necessarily the exact outcome I had in mind when I wrote it, I suppose that it was unconsciously the aim. Give some encouragements. Get people to take action for their own dreams. Motivate people to follow their ideas.

Over time, a lot of people have read it, commented on it, thanked me for what it meant to them or for what they had achieved upon reading it (not giving me the specifics but they were happy and grateful, and that's enough to also make me happy and thankful for being here and contribute to someone's happiness). This was my aim: that it would help make a difference in someone's life. That it would make someone happy. Regardless of why: we are all different and what makes me happy differs to what makes you happy.



The latest happy moment I had with this poster was on the car park of a shop in the Free State, South Africa. The car park attendant read it and was waiting for me to come back from shopping. He was very excited and happy. His English was not the best one, but the words meant something to him. He wanted to know if I had a paper copy to give him so that he could take home. I didn't so he asked permission to take a photo. And said that he will take great care to translate it in Afrikaans for his children.

This is the type of little things that makes this journey worth it everyday. One happy face because of us. Someone who might take action to improve his life. No matter at what level. An improvement for him.

Since, I have decided to adapt the wording to speak **about** Maya and not **as** Maya, include Bee the Solution in the poster and produce hand-out. I have also asked a friend to translate in Afrikaans (commonly spoken in South Africa and Namibia) and I will print some as well.

It is not a lot to do - but it has shown to have an impact on some people's life. And this is what we are all about.

The original text was posted [here](#) and the new hand-out can be found in pdf [here](#).

May it also bring a smile on your face and a happy moment in your heart.

[But what are the costs of being in the field? \(Continued - Part 2\)](#)

In the last [newsletter](#), we looked at the costs that we had for a 6-weeks period in Zimbabwe in 2016, to be there to support projects.

We mentioned that our cost amounted to around \$1'600 compared to \$5'900-\$6'200 if we were coming from Europe for the same 6 weeks. So how do we come to those costs?

A breakdown will help to understand the main expenses that would be incurred in that context:

Reason	Cost/Details	Total
Visa	\$30 for 3 months	\$30
Flight	London - Harare (return)	\$700/\$800
Car rental	6 weeks - based on WV Polo (smallest car)	\$2900
Fuel costs to reach the project site	800 km return to and from Harare	\$80
Fuel costs at the project site	500 km per month	\$75
Cost of living (accommodation - based on self catering) (6 weeks)	\$40 per day (budget accommodation)	\$1800
Cost of living (Food) (6 weeks)	Based on \$5-10 per day	\$225/\$450
Internet	\$40 per month	\$60

The high level comparison of the costs to be in Kariba show that the main savings come from the travel costs and accommodation: which was the reason to set-up a mobile house/office and operate from within the region.

Reason	Cost with Maya from South Africa (details here)	Cost from Europe (details above)
Visa	\$30	\$30
Travel to reach Project site	\$770	\$3680/\$3780
Cost of living (6 weeks)	\$600	\$2025/\$2250
Fuel costs at the project site	\$150	\$75
Internet	\$60	\$60

This comparison does not include the initial flight to South Africa (\$700) and the fixed yearly fees that we have to keep the house/office here (\$740). Even with those, the 6-weeks in Zimbabwe would remain lower in our context.

These figures help to give an idea of the expenses in both settings. While Zimbabwe is an expensive country for car rental, fuel and accommodation, you will see in the next edition that similar savings still apply in the region.

But do we need to be on the ground? Can't we do it from somewhere else in Europe? Find out next month what we think.

[CBO: what are they and why do we need them...?](#)

One issue that communities do have is to organise themselves to conduct a project. And from there, to secure funds. The common way to get organised is to register a CBO: Community-Based Organisation.

Names sometimes vary from country to country, but the principle remains the same: the community comes together under a structured organisation and develops a constitution that details aims and objectives as well as how the organisation will operate.

As we have seen in an [article](#) of the previous newsletter, they are not-for-profit organisations and the same rules apply to them.

We believe that local communities can help themselves - but they sometimes need a little help to do so and this is where we aim to intervene. In some cases, it is a matter of encouragement and moral support, but sometimes it is a little more and so we also aspire to help these communities to get organised so that they can conduct their projects.

Another term used for CBOs is **Local NGOs** or **Grass-Roots NGOs** - which does really illustrate their connections to the local communities.

CBOs are in essence an “official/legal” modern term to describe a community that works together to take action to tackle an issue they are facing.

They have always existed, albeit not as officially (registered) as they are today - and many community still have an informal support systems. These are the networks in the villages taking care of the orphans or elderly people. These are the farmers helping each other in difficult times.

They are **at the heart** of the action. They are **the heart** of the action. They are part of the community we want to serve. They know the problems. They know what has been tried and failed. They have/are the network for information and resources. And one critical point: they **are** the community - they have personal knowledge of the issues and individual contexts. They can adapt to each individual’s needs and have greater motivation to find a solution that works in the long term.

They are the key to successful sustainable projects.

We believe that an international NGO on its own cannot fully implement a successful sustainable project without the support/existence of local CBOs. For a project to succeed, the community has to understand and be keen on its realisation and success. And local CBOs are best placed to unite the community around the project, as it will come **from** the community, **for** the community. And when the community is involved in the set-up and running of the project, then the chances of success are far greater. The community has a better understanding of the why and how. The community is then running for success. The community owns the project/process.

There are a great multitude of CBOs. Find out in our next newsletters what issues they face, and how we could maybe help.

(in collaboration with Megan Giljam)

READ ALL OUR NEWSLETTERS AND ARTICLES

Find all our newsletters in pdf format @ www.newsletter.beethesolution.org

To make sure that you receive our monthly newsletter, sign up on the website, for the English and/or the French edition: www.newsletter.beethesolution.org

FEEDBACK

Please do not hesitate to contact us @ info@beethesolution.org.

Feel free to send us feedback. We are open to suggestions and comments. As we are young and learning, we value your opinion even more than usual and are very grateful for it.

Let us know about what you want to see in the Newsletter, which projects you are interested in, any ideas you have for a project.

Have a safe month ahead

Chrystel, (Maya), Odile, H el ene and Jean-Louis