

iThemba Phakama is a voluntary association of informal waste pickers providing tricycles and safety gear to its members. The tricycles are used as an alternative to stolen shopping trolleys that many in the informal waste picking sector use illegally.



iThemba Phakama, South Africa

🏆 SAG-SEED AWARD WINNER 2017 🏆

BUSINESS MODEL

Through no-cost lease agreements, iThemba Phakama provides informal waste pickers with safety gear and robust, locally manufactured tricycles for transporting waste. The enterprise is financed through advertising on the side of the tricycles. The members of iThemba Phakama make a monthly contribution until they have saved enough to fund their own tricycle.

This model allows new members to enter once existing members have their own tricycles. It also enables waste-pickers to become individual micro-entrepreneurs, who salvage recycling waste and sell it to buy-back centres.

ENTERPRISE FAST FACTS:

Location	Greater Cape Flats Region in Cape Town, South Africa
Year founded	2016
Sector	Waste and sanitation
Product/Service	Tricycles for waste collection

Contribution to the SDGs:



Social impacts:

- Addressing poverty in surrounding townships through formal recognition of informal waste pickers.
- Improving the health of members by providing safety gear and tricycles, which reduce the physical exertion of gathering waste.
- Building communal capacity on waste management through creative educational workshops.

Environmental impacts:

- Encouraging waste collection instead of burning or littering through awareness-raising workshops and offering door-to-door waste collection.
- Reducing carbon emissions from burning and landfills by collecting waste for upcycling and recycling.
- Rehabilitating waterways through improved waste management and awareness-raising.

Economic impacts:

- Reducing the number of shopping trolleys stolen from retailers.
- Increasing income and income security of waste pickers – structured waste picking can increase daily income by 400 %.
- Creating a local supply of sorted waste products – the first step of an integrated value chain.

” The enterprise’s activities are avoiding the combustion of waste which reduces Greenhouse Gas Emissions as the burning of waste is generally the norm in these informal settlement areas and townships.

Scaling up activities:

- Quadruple the current number of tricycles to at least 40 in the coming two years and roll out the concept into additional disadvantaged areas.
- Increase micro-entrepreneurs’ monthly income by 140 % – from USD 77 to approximately USD 185 per month – through improved efficiencies and volume.
- Ensure formal recognition of informal waste pickers who belong to the enterprise, which is recognised as a club by the local municipality.
- In the long run, establish a buy-back centre and a multi-purpose recycling facility that will allow for comprehensive waste collection and value-added recycling of the collected waste.



Partnership

• **iThemba Phakama Co-operative** leases the tricycles to its members.

• **iThemba Labantu** is the local community centre that initiated iThemba Phakama and is the home base (hub) of the co-operative’s operations.

• **The Western Cape Government’s Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP)** provided initial funding and technical assistance for scoping and initial project implementation.

• **DEA&DP, Uhambo Shonaquip and Phakama Pedal Power** manufacture and maintain the tricycles whilst supplying them at a reduced retail price to iThemba Phakama.

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About SEED

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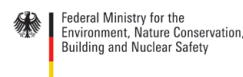
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