

**Strategic Thinking Workshop**  
**October 21/22, 2019**



***Purpose of the workshop:***

To set general directions for the organization ... identifying the

- (i) main/priority areas-of-interest, and
- (ii) types of work or project

we should be concentrating on in the intermediate future (two or three years, say)  
... with the additional value of connecting our Board's members, reinforcing 'team-ness'

**① *Looking at our history***

A reminder of development, through phases of micro-lending (1998-2010), micro-franchising (2010-2017), and now boosting entrepreneurship through motivation and practical supports by way of the BBB Symposium, partnering with Rotary and others ...  
... and considering some significant successes and strengths, and also short-comings or disappointments, and over-viewing the trends, principles and characteristics.

**② *'Mission': what TTP is, why it exists***

These are the elements which emerged ...

- ◆ We are two related organizations:
  - based in Canada as an incorporated non-profit association;
  - with a Trust incorporated in South Africa to administer financial affairs there
- ◆ Purpose: promote the creation and success of small businesses in South African township communities ... with the aim of economic and social development
- ◆ Work at the grass-roots/local-community level
- ◆ Help create opportunities for entrepreneurs ... to stimulate the economy and job opportunities, in and for their community
- ◆ Seek to improve the well-being of township residents (not just the entrepreneurs)
- ◆ Contribute to progress toward the goals of eliminating poverty and inequality, so as to achieve a harmonious and prosperous society
- ◆ Committed to enabling - not top-down charity ... empowering people -- motivating and equipping them -- to take action to help themselves achieve what they need
- ◆ Typical Roles/modes: finding opportunities, fund-raising, support - in financial, advisory and practical/operational ways
- ◆ Hopefully serve as an example of bridging between advantaged and disadvantaged/developing worlds, a model of working toward a just, caring and sustainable world

**③ *Past and Current Roles & Methods ... what we've previously done***

- Raising and disbursing money
- Micro-lending - investment by small repayable loans

- Micro-franchising - promoting cloning of successful enterprises for purchase by others
- Getting businesses started: loans, providing contacts, initial training
- Training - BBB Symposium to develop business skills
- Providing practical tools and supports (e.g. accounting system, equipment)
- Motivation - mainly via BBB Symposium: speakers; connection to 'models' and peers; arranging mentoring; incentive \$ prizes

#### ④ ***'Vision' for South Africa, and TTP's relation to that***

We recognize that what TTP does lies within a broad context of the United Nation's Goals for Sustainable Development, and can offer small contributions to a number of the goals. We should choose 'niche' roles — ways that will take advantage of our assets in relation to assets and opportunities in South African township communities.

#### ⑤ ***Assets to build on***

We listed

- a) characteristics and developments which offer opportunities to tap in the SA townships; and
- b) strengths and resources which The Townships Project can apply.

#### ⑥ ***Future Directions: potential Strategic Approaches and Projects/Activities***

We brainstormed twenty *broad types of work*, some of which we have been using, plus other possible new directions we might try ... and then went on to brainstorm twenty *particular projects* which could be promising. Examples: units of training in business skills, investment loans to support individual businesses, a mentoring program, a borrower/lender loan-brokerage system, motivational information sessions, smart-phone business-management training, internships

#### ⑦ ***Preferred/Priority Projects***

We ranked the brainstormed ideas and chose eight particular projects as having strong potential, which we would develop and suggest to our partners in South Africa.

As follow-through, individual participants undertook to write up a description of each project and an outline plan — what would be required to make it happen.

#### ⑧ ***Major conclusions***

- ❖ A strength has been the willingness to adapt and evolve to appropriately meet needs.
- ❖ For now, the major aim is continue and expand on the BBB Symposium.
- ❖ We know there will be an end to direct TTP involvement, and so we must prepare for succession — transition to local *South African* support for small-business development.
- ❖ The most promising strategy for that succession is the partnership with Rotary.