

## **Qhubeka Celebrates Tour De France Partnership With Bicycles In Tour Jersey Colours**

**South Africa, 10 July 2019** – Amaury Sport Organisation (ASO), the organiser of cycling's most anticipated annual event – the Tour de France (TdF) – has for the second year running partnered with Qhubeka Charity to provide a peloton of bicycles to help change children's lives as part of its "L'Avenir à vélo" campaign (which, translated, means "the future of cycling").

"We appreciate ASO's support because they share our belief that bicycles change lives," says Qhubeka Executive Director Tsatsi Phaweni. "As part of this year's TdF campaign, we're focusing on four beneficiaries and their Qhubeka Bicycles – painted the colours of the TdF jerseys. We want to show the world how the 176 bicycles funded by ASO (one for each rider who starts the Tour) will help to change people's lives in Africa."

The four beneficiaries selected each have a story of how receiving a Qhubeka bicycle has helped them to move forward – both literally and in their lives. The bicycles have been on display at the Tour, and will be auctioned off at the end of the event to raise funds for Qhubeka.

Sadly, the yellow bicycle was removed from the fan park, leaving only three bicycles. "We are sad that this has happened, but the support of athletes, fans and teams at the Tour in trying to help us find the missing bicycle has been touching," says Qhubeka Founder Anthony Fitzhenry. "They have come together under the banner #GiveItBack or #RendezLe, and we are hopeful that the bicycle may yet be found. Nevertheless, we are working to have a replacement bicycle painted and flown in from South Africa in time for the auction."

### **The beneficiaries and their "jersey" painted bicycles**

**Hlungwani**, a young man from a learn-to-earn Qhubeka programme in Limpopo, is represented by the bicycle painted to symbolise the yellow jersey. "Having this Qhubeka bicycle feels like having a friend I can trust," is his quote, emblazoned on the bicycle.

Hlungwani dreams of becoming a professional cyclist one day. He practices his cycling every day, as he rides to and from school. He also uses it for exercising in his free time, which he now has more of, because his commute time is so much quicker.

The yellow jersey is worn by the leader of the Tour and is an icon of the TdF. Lise Olivier, who heads up marketing at Qhubeka explains the link between yellow jersey and yellow bicycle. "We believe that by providing bicycles to people, we can help to equip the next generation of South African leaders to move forward and progress."

**Isaac** is a Qhubeka-trained bicycle mechanic, represented by a bicycle painted for the polka dot jersey. This jersey is awarded to the “King of the Mountains” (KOM) in the TdF. Points are awarded to the first riders to reach the peak of certain designated climbs. These points count towards the KOM jersey, which is worn by the rider with the most “climbing” points after each relevant stage.

“We believe that bicycles are tools that can help to address seemingly mountainous challenges South Africa faces, such as extreme poverty and unemployment. Bicycles can help people like Isaac to create micro businesses and generate income,” says Olivier.

Isaac says that becoming a bicycle mechanic has changed his life, especially the business training and resources he has received. “I have learned a lot about business – how it works and how I must operate as a mechanic and how to manage money and spare parts,” Isaac says. “My business goal is to own my own bicycle workshop.”

His quote, painted on his polka dot bicycle is: “The best thing about being a Qhubeka mechanic is helping students to cycle safely.”

**Ngobeni** earned her bicycle through a learn-to-earn programme and says “Having a Qhubeka bicycle is a good thing in my life.” This is the same quote painted on her bicycle – fashioned after the white TdF jersey, worn by the fastest overall rider under the age of 26.

“Qhubeka invests in programmes for children and the youth of South Africa because we understand that they are tomorrow’s leaders. Africa has the youngest population in the world, and bicycles can help our young people to progress,” says Phaweni.

Ngobeni says that the best thing about her Qhubeka bicycle is that it helps her to always be on time for school and to attend morning study sessions. “My dream is to be a lawyer. If I attend morning studies and afternoon studies, I will be able to reach for my dreams,” she says. “I also use the bicycle to go to the library.”

**Zondo** is represented by a bicycle painted for the green jersey – the sprinter’s jersey in the TdF. Olivier says that Qhubeka is aware that solving South Africa’s widespread poverty, inequality and unemployment is by no means a sprint. “However, bicycles are a cost-effective and immediate means of beginning to address the key challenge of a lack of personal mobility in the continent,” she says. “While there’s no quick fix to solve our transport challenges, bicycles can play an important role as part of the greater solution.”

This has certainly been true for Zondo, whose bicycle helps her to get to school on time and has reduced her commute time from 70 minutes to 40 minutes. She also uses her bicycle to go to the shops and to run errands for her parents. “The bicycle is helping me to keep my body fit and fresh,” she says, adding that riding her bicycle is a positive hobby that keeps her

from doing “bad things” like smoking. “One day I would like to join the traffic police. “I know that many people underestimate this choice, but I believe that if you like what you are doing, then you will not have any problems.”

Zondo’s quote on her green bicycle summarises the spirit of the entire Qhubeka and ASO TdF campaign: “The Qhubeka bicycle changed my life.”