

Eco-friendly fast food deliveries create jobs for young people

Finding no job opportunities in his home town of Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, 22-year-old Yandisa Mbhadeko came to Cape Town to look for work, with the hope of saving enough money to fund his journalism studies.



Siphe Mawuli and Yandisa Mbhadeko are among a hundred young people from Dunoon and Atlantis working as Green Riders. Photos: Peter Luhanga

While he was staying in a one-room shack with his brother and his brother's girlfriend in Dunoon, he noticed a man on an electric bike (e-bike) delivering groceries. He asked him how he could find similar work. The man directed him to Green Riders at the River Gate industrial area north of Parklands. There he signed up as an e-bike rider, delivering groceries in the greater Table View and Parklands area.

Green Riders provided Mbhadeko with a smartphone, phone holder, earphones, raincoat, helmet, safety vest, gloves and boots. He is one of 100 young people from Dunoon and Atlantis working with Green Riders — an “eco-friendly last-mile delivery service” — founded by Craig Atkinson.

The riders rent-to-own a delivery customised e-bike for R700 a week. They deliver fast food through e-hailing services. After covering the rental, Mbhadeko says he takes home R1,500 a week on average. He now has his own shack and has furnished it.

Siphe Mlawuli, who is 29 and the mother of a two-year-old, says she joined Green Riders in November and is still in training. "They [Green Riders] came to Dunoon to look for people and I showed interest. I want to prove to other women that jobs in construction, riding motorbikes, scooters are not only for men. I can also do it," says Mlawuli.

"We train all riders on various [delivery app] platforms, giving them every opportunity to capitalise on the full delivery market," said Atkinson. "We have 100 youths, some are technicians, others are dashboard controllers, administrators. We have employed predominantly from Dunoon, Joe Slovo Park in Milnerton and a few from Atlantis."

Green Riders Chairperson Richard Clarke said, "We train Riders in a thorough three-month course to become professionals and master every aspect of the business from customer service, planning, navigation and administration, to safety and advanced riding skills.

"We also place the Riders on an e-bicycle which saves them at least R2,500 a month in operating costs [compared to a petrol bike]. It is this combination of better-skilled riders plus reduced costs that makes a significant difference to take-home pay and what sets Green Riders apart."



Trainees ride in convoy near Bayside, Table View.

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