



April 07 Newsletter

EngineerAid Run Innovation Challenge... 'Scrapheap' Style!

On 24th March EngineerAid took great pleasure in running a 'Scrapheap' style Innovation Challenge at the Edinburgh Training Centre, in association with the Institute of Chemical Engineering (ICHEM), Chemical Industries Association (CIA) and Doosan Babcock Energy.

Nine teams battled it out against the clock and each other to put together a working machine from old junk, whilst raising money for EngineerAid and keeping a focus on the problems encountered within social development in less economically developed countries.



To start the day off and get everyone involved a communication exercise was used to help the participants appreciate the problems faced by EngineerAid and its engineer volunteers in trying to obtain the correct information about the problem to be solved – It's harder than it seems to use just 10 post-it notes, with a maximum of 5 words on each one, to ask the *right* questions and gain all the information about a problem.



Then came the hands-on exciting stuff. The participants were given a detailed brief of the problem - to construct a working water pump with limited materials (in the form of junk!) and scarce number of tools, all within a set time. The teams produced and presented some great and innovative working prototypes on the day. Although some teams seemed determined to turn the room into a swimming pool. Who knew that engineers could wield a mop so professionally?

Prizes were awarded to participants for their efforts at various levels, amongst these were:

- Most Innovative Design
- Best Working Design
- Worst Design of the Day
- Most Sponsorship Raised by Team



The event also worked as a networking event with engineers participating from organisations such as Edinburgh University, Fuji Films, Siemens, Reactec, Napier University, IChemE and CIA.

Great fun was had by all, with the event successfully raising up to £1,200 for the charity. Our thanks go to all the teams, judges and volunteers who made the event such a success. Requests are now coming in to hold the event again next year, so watch this space and register your team early, because next year will be even better!!! Check out the website at www.engineeraid.com for more pictures and videos of the event.



Building Science, Technology & Innovation Capacity on a National scale

It is now globally acknowledged that science and technology are vital for sustained development and the alleviation of poverty. Scientific and technical capabilities determine the ability of a country to provide clean water, good health care, secure infrastructure and safe food. Countries need to recognise the benefits to be gained from technological advances. Policy makers need to recognise and emphasise the important role of engineering and small enterprise development in poverty reduction, coupled with social and economic development. With this purpose in mind, Governments across the developing world are drafting science, technology and innovation policies, establishing Ministries of Science and investing more resources into targeted science development programs. It is crucial that engineers and scientists become more involved in this entire policy making process, adding their skills and experience, to ensure that the outcome is a great success.

In February (2007) the World Bank, in partnership with other development organisations, hosted a Global Forum on Building Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Capacity for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction. The forum brought together representatives from governments, industry, academia, foundations, donors and NGOs to discuss more effective ways to build STI capacity in low and middle income countries. Links to the STI forum, presentations and reports are available from <http://go.worldbank.org/DWODQ7E3E0>.

The World Bank Institute also produces the 'Development Outreach' magazine, available from <http://www1.worldbank.org/devotreach/>. Both sources are worth a look to give an overview of the current thinking surrounding STI development.

Recital for EngineerAid

Jenna Robertson, a volunteer engineer with EngineerAid, has organised a recital – "A Musical Journey through Europe", with proceeds going to EngineerAid and North East Children Scotland. Aberdeen, on the 2nd June 2007. Tickets cost £8.00. For more info, visit www.recitalaberdeen.co.uk. Our thanks to Jenna and her co-performers for their support!

EngineerAid Volunteers get creative

The only things missing from the recent volunteer team meeting were glitter, double sided tape and the classic Blue Peter line of 'here's one I made earlier'. Apparently we have some way to go before we regain the creativity of our childhoods. Despite that, through a series of exercises, the volunteers generated some interesting ideas about how EngineerAid might develop in the future. All meetings should be done like this one!

Donation Appeal

EngineerAid rely heavily on contributions from our supporters to enable us to administer and develop projects. Your support is much appreciated and valued by us and by those for whom we work. www.engineeraid.com/donate.php

Water Management Africa 2007

Following on from our article in the March newsletter about World Water Day, 22nd March 2007, here's an update about the Water Management Africa 2007 conference, which will be held from 23rd- 24th April in Pretoria, South Africa.

The conference is a Pan African focused event, aiming to provide solutions to the growing problem of water scarcity in Africa by acting as a platform for sharing water strategies and knowledge. The event will bring together African water stakeholders to find solutions for efficient water governance and productive water management strategies. The solutions for addressing water resources scarcity in Africa will range from productive water management and use strategies, legislature, infrastructure development, funding, coping with climate change and human resources development at both community, governmental and industrial levels.

Water is the engine for socio-economic development and access to it is a fundamental human right. Lack of access to water resources cannot only be attributed to the shortage of water, but lack of capacity to manage water resources efficiently at community, governmental and industrial levels.



Enquiry of the Month



People for Animals, Delhi

Nadeem Shezad, an honorary wildlife warden working with People For Animals in Delhi, contacted EngineerAid to seek support and advice for his idea of building a large birdcage for injured birds.

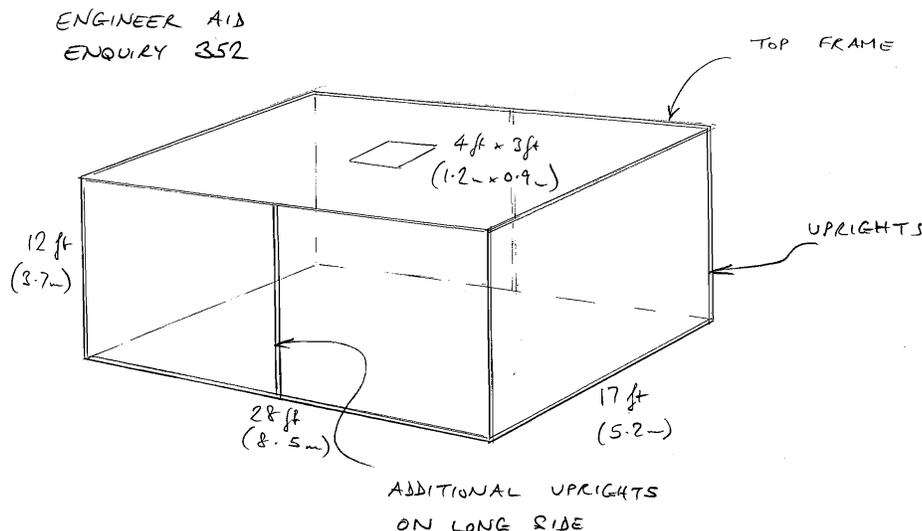
Birds are seriously injured during the kite-flying festival, and the local animal hospital is out of capacity. Nadeem and his brother have been treating and taking care of these birds in their home and are now expanding under the umbrella of People For Animals.

Each year, thousands of birds are severely injured or killed during *Uttarayan*, the annual kite-flying festival held in several provinces in India. Also known as *Makar Sankranti*, the festival marks the end of the winter season. But the festival is no celebration for India's birds, especially the Indian white-rumped vulture, a disappearing species. Out of a total population of 80-90 vultures in Ahmadabad, 16 were found injured following the festival in 2006.



Birds and other animals are at risk from the *maanja*, or kite string, in addition to the obvious hazards of thousands of kites in the air. These strings are coated with crushed glass so that competitors can try to slash one another's kites from the air. These exposed shards are so sharp that they often must be applied to the kite strings with gloves.

Larger birds such as flamingos, herons, eagles and cranes are most at risk because they have a broader wingspan; but pigeons, doves, crows and other smaller birds are also in danger. EngineerAid contacted over 50 engineers, and we were able to provide a design for the birdcage, shown below, which will be constructed.



Contact Details

EngineerAid  © Copyright 2007
Registered Scottish Charity No. SC037124 Telephone:
+44 (0) 131 455 6812 (Office)
Email: contact@engineeraid.com