ENGINEERS AGAINST POVERTY

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Improving occupational health and safety in the Tanzanian construction industry

EAP and the Institution of Engineers Tanzania (IET) recently launched a 5 year programme aimed at strengthening workers rights and improving occupational health and safety in the Tanzanian construction industry. Backed by a grant from the Department for International Development, the programme will help implement legislation recently introduced by the government and improve the workplace environment for thousands of employees.

A core group of men and women - drawn from government, trade unions and contractors associations – will be taught to deliver occupational health and safety training. This group will then be assisted to train others amongst their peers, co-workers and subordinates. Workshops will be held at regular intervals in all the major towns in the country and on large construction sites in rural areas. The programme aims to reach, directly or indirectly, all of the contractors and consultants in Tanzania and a large proportion of the 200,000 construction workforce, most of whom are poor and employed as 'casuals'.

EAP Programme Officer Jill Wells explained that "The project will raise awareness among this vulnerable group and those who employ them, of their entitlements and rights under the law and empower them with the essential technical knowledge to realise those rights. Sustainability will be built into the project by mainstreaming health and safety education into professional, technical and vocational training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses. The project will also collaborate with local procurement agencies to develop and implement new ways of reinforcing construction workers rights in contract documentation".

EAP addresses extractive industry leaders

EAP recently presented the findings from its extractive industries programme to the 'Local Content Management Asia Conference' in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The conference was attended by forty senior representatives from both International and National Oil Companies and industry regulators.

EAP Programme Officer Matthew Lynch shared lessons from work undertaken with the Overseas Development Institute in association with Amec Natural Resources in South East Asia. The latest report on Timor Leste was launched in London in February (see

Spark Issue 9), and the Malaysian conference was an opportunity to deliver the key findings in the region itself.

Matthew set out the opportunities for using the engineering supply chain as a mechanism for delivering local content and supporting high level social performance. Operating companies are

From the Director

In his recent Reith Lecture series, Jeffrey Sachs argued that the world faces challenges on an unprecedented scale - global warming, terrorism, extreme poverty, disease and bad governance. Many would probably agree with that analysis, but not necessarily with the way he framed it. He entitled the series 'Bursting at the Seams' and placed population at the core of his argument.

The relationship between population growth and development is a recurrent theme and one that tends to divide opinions sharply. We wanted to explore it further, so we invited David Nicholson-Lord of the Optimum Population Trust to debate the issue with author and journalist Daniel Ben-Ami. I think you will agree that it is a lively exchange that generates both heat and light.

EAP is building a strategic partnership with ARUP, based on the complimentary competencies of the two organisations. We believe it will help establish a benchmark of good practice for cooperation between business and civil society and will include more detail of our joint efforts in the next edition of the Spark. In this edition, we review ARUP's 'Poverty Action Network', an initiative that helps demonstrate why we consider ARUP a good partner.

Another strategic partner, one that is vital to our work in East Africa, is the Institution of Engineers Tanzania (IET). We are launching a joint 5 year programme, supported by DFID, aimed at improving occupational health and safety in the Tanzanian construction industry. This type of North-South partnership is now integral to our programme.

This edition also includes a number of examples of the high-level influence that EAP is able to assert. This includes discussion of our procurement work with the African Development Bank and procurement specialists in Tanzania and Kenya and a workshop that we facilitated with oil and gas experts in Malaysia.

These and similar discussions are shaped by the global issues that Jeffrey Sachs addressed in his Reith Lectures. But we believe that despite the unprecedented nature of these challenges, it is possible for individuals and organisations to act and make a difference. You will find more in this edition about how EAP and our supporters are making a difference.

The Spark is not a typical charity newsletter. In addition to updating readers on our work, we encourage debate and incorporate interesting ideas and news about what other organisations are doing. Our intention is to avoid sterility and provide an interesting and thought-provoking read. This 10th edition, I hope, exemplifies that approach.

Petter Matthews

Continued from front cover

having to deal with the challenges of increased regulatory and community demands to expand the quantity and quality of employment and business opportunities on their projects. The core competencies of engineering services contractors in contract management, supplier development and competency management can be a valuable tool in delivering these outcomes, particularly with these contractors managing significant quantities of project capital and operating expenditure.

Matthew also facilitated a half-day workshop looking at the relationship between 'social license to operate' and local content delivery. Extractive industry projects typically have large physical, social and economic "footprints" and can be vulnerable to legitimate and illegal 'stakeholder' action, particularly in areas characterised by poor governance. The reputation of extractive industry companies in dealing with communities is also being seen as increasingly critical to these firms being able to access resources in the future.

The workshop drew on EAP's body of knowledge of the intersection between social development, social risk management and conflict sensitive business practice. The participants explored a simple conceptual model of license to operate, and reviewed case studies to highlight the opportunities and potential social conflict dimensions of local content strategies.

EAP will soon publish a briefing note on social license to operate. For more information contact Matthew Lynch at m.lynch@engineersagainstpoverty.org.

EAP support ICE strategy development

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) will host the launch of the 2nd Civil Engineering Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan in July 2007. EAP welcomes the plan and has provided detailed comments during its development. The strategy is the product of a collaboration between the ICE, CIRIA, CIBA and CEEQUAL. EAP Programme Officer Ian Neal said "we will be available to support the implementation of the plan, particularly through drawing on our knowledge of international development, pro-poor engineering and corporate responsibility".

EAP support EWB-UK strategy development

EAP has a programme aimed at incorporating global issues, such as poverty and sustainability, into the higher education of engineers. As part of this work, we recently took part in a workshop convened by Engineers without Borders (EWB), who have won support from DFID for a programme of development awareness amongst engineering students. The programme will seek to facilitate partnerships between UK engineering faculties and development NGOs and businesses and provide students with opportunities to undertake research, design projects, internships and overseas placements in development fields. It is intended to work closely with university teaching staff to embed these opportunities within the engineering curriculum and give students a wider understanding of the contribution engineers can make to international development. The workshop was also attended by Practical Action and staff from the University of Nottingham. For more information on EWB, go to www.ewb-uk.org.

With his 2007 Reith Lecture series entitled 'Bursting at the Seams', Professor Jeffrey Sachs heightened the debate about the relationship between population growth and development. But is he right when he argues that population growth and its impact on the planet is the 'unique challenge of our generation'. Or is this view symptomatic of a failure of imagination rooted in a pessimistic or even misanthropic view of human growth and development? We asked David Nicholson-Lord of the Optimum Population Trust to debate these issues with writer and journalist Daniel Ben-Ami.

Dear Daniel

The Optimum Population Trust is the only organisation now campaigning on population issues in the UK and its rationale is simple. There is no environmental problem that is not either caused or made much worse by human population growth. We believe this is a self-evident truth yet it has been largely forgotten or ignored by the people who should be guiding our opinions on these matters? Notably environment and development groups and politicians.

World population has grown from a billion only two centuries ago to 2.5 billion in 1950 and 6.7 billion today. The UN says it will be 9.2 billion in 2050 if we are lucky and global fertility rates drop. It is no coincidence that the environmental movement arose in the second half of the 20th century since this is when population growth took off and when its destructive effects began to become clear. One of these was the devastating loss of wild habitats and species. Sir David King, the Government's Chief Scientist, said last year: "It is self-evident that the massive growth in the human population through the 20th century has had more impact on biodiversity than any other single factor."

Biodiversity is not the only casualty of population growth, however. The UK has grown from around 10 million people two centuries ago to 61 million today. That's seven London's more in about seven generations. And its still growing, fast. By 2074 it will be nearly 71 million. These numbers feed into a wide range of problems: housing shortages, high house prices, loss of countryside, shortages of key resources such as water and energy, congestion, crowding, noise, stress. Did you read the latest Social Trends report from (unbiased) Government statisticians which talked of an increasingly noisy, intolerant and bad-tempered Britain - a product of ever more of us living ever closer together at ever higher densities?

You might argue that such "quality of life" concerns are luxuries only developed nations can afford. In the developing world, however, population growth is a key factor behind poverty, malnutrition, water shortages, indeed, behind lack of development, conflict and war. I could cite you dozens of statements by developing country leaders to this effect. But the hard evidence lies in the fact that the proportion of the 50 least developed countries that viewed population growth as too high rose from 50 percent in 1986 to 80 per cent in 2005. The number of African Governments with population limitation policies rose from 25 percent in 1976 to 39 percent in 1986 to 66 percent in 2005.

These governments recognise the key role of population, even if we in the West have forgotten it. They also recognise that limiting population, both in the developed and developing world, is about social progress, quality of life - and survival. (Climate change, after all, is caused by climate changers). Far from being misanthropic, indeed, it's one of the most positive and life-enhancing things we could do.

Best wishes David

Dear David

Although you deny being misanthropic it seems to me your whole approach is defined by the premise that people are the problem. You see humans primarily as ravenous consumers. In your view they pollute the environment, generate waste, make noise and create shortages.

My starting point is different. I see humans as problem solvers. They may each have a mouth to feed but they also have hands to work with and brains capable of considerable ingenuity. Population growth means, among other things, more scientists, more doctors, more nurses and more engineers. You talk about the addition of the equivalent of seven London's to Britain's population as if that is a bad thing. I would welcome the growth of many more vibrant and dynamic cities such as London.

You also assume worsening indicators of human welfare as if they are beyond dispute, but that is untrue. Human well-being has improved enormously at the same time as population has grown. For example, average life expectancy at birth for the world as a whole rose from 31 years in 1900 to 66.8 years in 2003. Although the developing world still lags behind the West it has still benefited enormously from greater prosperity. Its average life expectancy has risen from 41 years in 1950 to 63.4 years. Many other key indicators of well-being have enjoyed similar improvements over the same period.

In contrast, environmentalists have an abysmal record of predicting disaster. Thomas Malthus, who can be seen as the intellectual godfather of environmentalism, first predicted in the late eighteenth century that there would be mass starvation as population growth outstripped food supply. In the event the Industrial Revolution helped pave the way for enormous increases in living standards. Closer to our time, one of your distinguished patrons, Paul Ehrlich, famously predicted back in 1968 that hundreds of millions would starve to death in the 1970s and 1980s. History too has proved him wrong. The world is far from perfect but human well-being has improved enormously as a result of greater prosperity.

Indeed the growth of population is itself a tremendously positive consequence of human advance. The main reason for rising population is that children die far less frequently. Improvements in public health and rising living standards have made it mercifully less common for parents to go through the pain of seeing their children die. Even in the developing world infant mortality has improved from 156.9 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1950 to 56.8 in 2003. Let us hope it improves further still to at least the developed country average of 7.1.

Perhaps you could also spell out how you see drastic cuts in population being achieved. Should we let babies die?

Should we give up the attempt to find cures for malaria and AIDs? Should we restrict women from having children? Or perhaps we should encourage bloody wars so that we return to what you regard as the correct number of human beings?

Best wishes Daniel

Dear Daniel

I'm afraid I don't understand your logic. It's perfectly reasonable to believe at the same time that people are problem-solvers but that too many people may pose a problem. It's also perfectly reasonable to believe that many indicators of human well-being have improved over the last century or two "as you do and as I do too (although the link you make with population growth is tenuous)" but that there comes a point in history when human numbers start to pose a problem in a way they did not before.

Have you heard the phrase too much of a good thing? If I say you should not over-eat, because it can make you obese, am I being anti-food? If I say don't drink too much water, because in some situations it can kill you, does that make me a water-hater? You appear to be implying that the more humans there are, ad infinitum, the better? Do you really believe that? Presumably on holiday you make a beeline for the most crowded places and avoid quiet, unspoiled ones like the plague? And presumably you also enjoy overcrowded trains, long queues and endless traffic jams?

More to the point, what about the concept of environmental limits that boring old idea that the planet, being physically finite, has a ceiling on the numbers it can support? If you want to argue that the planet, or indeed any non-virtual setting, can support ever-growing numbers of us, then I hope you steer clear of jobs that involve land or people management. If, by contrast, you think there may be a point at which limits impinge, then, first, you will have to accuse yourself of being a misanthrope, but, second, you will have to decide where that limit lies. Which is it to be?

Let me offer a clue. The Living Planet Report, possibly the most authoritative account of human impact on the planet, reported last year that humans are now consuming 25 percent more resources than the Earth can renewably provide. By 2050, on the most conservative trends, this overshoot will have increased to 100 percent, so that we will be consuming two planets each year. The report says population growth is a major force behind this overshoot. On "solutions", it comments: "Research and planning into ways to appropriately decelerate and eventually reverse continuing population growth will play a key role."

The implication is that there is such a thing as a sustainable planetary population. This is what the OPT believes: we put it at around 2-3 billion. And no, we don't want "bloody wars", plagues etc. We want decent family planning services plus education to produce some enlightened and responsible thinking about human fertility, a commodity in sadly short supply.

Incidentally, I note you rehash the various canards about Malthus, Ehrlich and so forth, to argue that they were wrong, disaster didn't happen and millions aren't starving. What's that statistic one hears about 800 million malnourished people worldwide? Maybe disaster has happened after all - but you missed it.

Best wishes David

Dear David

I am glad you raise the notion of "environmental limits" because it helps to illustrate the key differences between us. What you see as permanent natural limits on what humans can achieve I see as temporary social ones.

For instance, you give the example of long queues as if they were natural. What this view misses is that there might be a queue for food, say, if not enough of it is being produced. But as the economy becomes more productive then food becomes more plentiful and the queues subside. Indeed one of the great achievements of affluence in the developed world is that food is now cheap and plentiful. For the first time in human history we no longer live on the edge of starvation.

What is true of food is also true in principle of the other examples you give: overcrowded trains and traffic jams. These are not ordained by God, or the result of too many people, but the consequence of underinvestment. More spending on the railway infrastructure should make it possible for people to travel at speed and in comfort in efficient trains.

Traffic jams too could be alleviated by more investment in the road infrastructure. Did you know that between 1997, when New Labour was first elected, and 2004, only 284 miles of new major roads and motorways were built? Yet the vast majority of journeys taken by people are by car. More investment in roads could make the car even more of a liberating technology for all of us.

As for the Living Planet Report it embodies the same confusion of social limits with natural ones. You describe it as "authoritative" but a more accurate description would be "fundamentally flawed". What it misses is that as the economy becomes more developed then resource use becomes more productive. A smaller amount of resources can sustain a larger number of people. In addition, new technologies become available which our ancestors could only dream about. For example, until relatively recently uranium was not a valuable resource but as we have become more advanced we have learnt how to harness atomic power. So the conclusion I would draw is that, with economic growth and technological development, we can easily support far more people than are alive today.

As for the terrible record of environmentalists on predicting disaster it is you that has the selective memory. Paul Ehrlich, your distinguished patron, predicted in 1968 that hundreds of millions of people would, to quote his book, "starve to death" in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of food shortages. While it is tragically true that 800 million people are malnourished in the world today that is not the same as starving to death. Indeed the average number of calories available per day to individuals in the developing countries rose from 2,144 in 1975 to 2,666 in 2002. Things have improved considerably over time although they could be better still. The key to enhancing human lives is more economic growth, more prosperity and better technology.

Regards Daniel

Dear Daniel

I am not sure which is the more alarming – your boundless technological

optimism, your apparent dismissal of the concept of environmental limits, your belief that those things we know as "the economy" or "society" exist in a kind of virtual space, independent of the world of resources and environmental realities, or your confusion about issues of supply and demand.

Yes, of course congestion is partly about the "supply" of infrastructure – roads, railway lines etc – but it is also about the demand for that infrastructure. Would you just go on building roads to satisfy the (population-fuelled) demand for cars no matter how great that demand became? A policy of the sort you suggest – road-build our way out of congestion –has already been tried in the UK and didn't work: sensible transport specialists say it can't work. It would also turn much of the country into a traffic roundabout – not a very "liberating" prospect, I suggest.

Technological Utopians have always argued that human ingenuity/the market/technology/growth will solve our problems but they always project this wondrous problem-solving moment into the future. Unfortunately it's the present in which we live – in the future, to rephrase Keynes, we're all dead. If what you said about technology was true, for example, climate change would not now be killing 150,000 people a year – as the World Health Organisation says it is (or is the WHO "fundamentally flawed" too?). In other words, the evidence is against you. (I hope you aren't a climate-change denier as well). Technology improves many things but it usually has a downside and it rarely works instantaneously – in the meantime (i.e. the present) people suffer.

The words of yours that worry me most, however, are "as the economy becomes more productive then food becomes more plentiful". Food doesn't grow in "economies": it grows on land (and sea). Economies and societies - both, in a sense, convenient abstractions – depend for their survival on non-abstract things such as water, soil, wood, minerals. The Easter Islanders "invested" in some marvellous "infrastructure" but forgot about the trees and their civilisation collapsed in consequence. Take the example you mention – uranium. Studies have

shown that if the world went nuclear, supplies of economically mineable uranium would rapidly be exhausted. Both common sense, and the second law of thermodynamics, suggests that closed systems such as the Earth have limits which we transgress at our peril - limits on the amount of carbon we can emit, for example. All the signs of environmental crisis we are experiencing – and you still haven't said whether you agree we are facing such a crisis – indicate that this is what is happening now.

Common sense, and basic economics, also suggests that, in the demands we humans make on a world with limits, the numbers of us making those demands is a fundamental consideration. In the developing world, those trade-offs are laid bare. Eight hundred million people whose lives are drastically shortened or damaged by malnutrition – whether it's called "starving to death" or not - is a heavy price to pay for ignoring this fact.

Best wishes David

Dear David

You underestimate the differences between us. For example, I do not "apparently" dismiss the idea of environmental limits but flatly reject it as a flawed concept (reread my last email). And I certainly do believe it is wrong to attribute 150,000 deaths a year to global warming. As for climate change itself I vehemently deny that collective restraint is the best way to tackle it.

Rather than respond to all the confusions and misrepresentations in your email one-by-one it is probably better to go back to the basics. What divides us is a fundamentally different view of the relationship between humanity and nature. For you, human beings are part of nature. From your perspective, humans are essentially rapacious consumers who are disrupting the earth's natural balance by using too many resources. My view, in contrast, is that progress consists of humanity increasing its control over nature. As society becomes wealthier and technology becomes more advanced the trend is for human welfare to improve.

All the available evidence shows that humanity has benefited vastly as a result of such progress – I notice you

have studiously avoided the evidence for my case. Life expectancy has improved dramatically, infant mortality has plummeted, we are less prone to disease and have more leisure time. Technology has also enabled us to travel, communicate across vast distances and widen our cultural horizons. All this while population has risen sharply.

Of course the world is far from perfect but what we need is more development rather than less. More wealth, better technology and greater innovation. We should not forget that we live in a world where almost three billion people still live on less than $2 (£1) a day and almost a billion live on less than a $1. Such people could benefit enormously from having the same living standards that we enjoy in the West. More productive economies would also enable them to reshape the environment still further to the benefit of humanity.

This brings me to the spurious figures on the health effects of climate change. What has happened in recent years is that many diseases and problems have been reclassified as related to climate change. These include such maladies as malaria and yellow fever. But it is poverty rather than the climate that creates the conditions in which such diseases can flourish. For example, until half a century ago malaria was rife in America. But it developed the resources to virtually eliminate the disease including the use of DDT, air conditioning, draining swamps and building a modern water infrastructure. There is no reason, except for poverty, to stop Africa doing the same.

Your "end of the world is nigh" approach can only make things worse. The mistaken belief in an environmental crisis blinds you to the key problem we face: a crisis of confidence in human potential. The barriers we need to overcome are not natural but self-imposed limits on the human imagination. Despite your denials your approach is fundamentally mis-anthropic. I am confident that if humanity regains its confidence in prosperity and innovation it can overcome the challenges it faces.

Best wishes Daniel

ARUP POVERTY ACTION NETWORK

EAP promotes innovative ways for the engineering industry to contribute to poverty reduction. It is often the employees of a company who are the main drivers. Arup's Poverty Action Network (PAN) is an excellent example of a global company encouraging its employees to make a difference.

Arup is a global design and business consultancy with over 60 years experience. It provides a diverse range of professional services to clients around the world, with over 9000 staff working in 86 offices in more than 37 countries. Through an organizational commitment to 'shape a better world', Arup seeks to make significant and sustainable contributions to both the developed and developing worlds through an innovative and fully-integrated approach.

The Poverty Action Network (PAN) is an employee-initiated, internal network for all those in Arup who have a specific interest in poverty alleviation, human development and disaster relief work. The network was formed in August 2005, through the efforts of engineers Sarah Hindle and Jonathan Chew, to meet the increasing demand within Arup to take action and make a difference in terms of poverty alleviation. The PAN's central aims are to:

■ Connect staff globally with an interest in poverty alleviation.

■ Develop awareness and knowledge of poverty alleviation issues.

■ Enable staff to find out about opportunities, relevant events, organisations and placements.

■ Motivate and facilitate staff embarking on poverty alleviation initiatives, and supporting Arup in developing relevant skills in this sector-base.

Since its inception, the organisational team has expanded across the world to offices in the UK, Europe, Africa, Australia, East Asia and Americas in order to facilitate wider involvement within Arup. Members provide a strategic overview of activity in their region, and support local events and liaison with a variety of NGOs. They are encouraged to build regional teams of volunteers to get involved locally and ensure continuity. There are now over 220 people who are subscribed to the internal web-based PAN Forum, and the numbers are growing every week.

The PAN operates an intranet site which contains an enormous range of information. This includes data on humanitarian projects and experiences of people within the company, standards and background information on a collection of poverty related subjects, as well as the company policy on overseas work and secondments. The online forum on the intranet site allows discussion of key issues and facilitates the provision of technical support for those working in the field or to locate individuals who can provide this support.

Another popular activity is PAN's monthly talk series. Internal and external speakers present to up to 150 attendees through teleconferencing and Arup's 'See & Share' presentation technology.

The PAN has also enabled Arup people

Young Professionals at Arup discuss their involvement in the Arup Poverty Action Network

"As a grassroots network PAN is very exciting because as part of a team of relatively new graduates we were able to instigate things such as talks and online debates that engaged people all over the Arup world in issues of huge importance. It was fun meeting other people who are interested in development and also realising how many people there were. We as engineers need to understand development in a holistic way, not just from a technical point of view. We need to constantly challenge our own approaches and assumptions. It is also important that we see profit as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself."

Sarah Hindle

"We set up the network to raise awareness of poverty related issues within Arup. I also wanted to pool together the existing knowledge Arup had in poverty relief work, into one network. I realised that I was part of an industry and a company that could make a difference and challenge governments to tackle poverty, using engineers in a vital role."

Jonathan Chew

"Being involved in PAN and having to work with people of varying professions on the PAN Coordination team has enabled me to see poverty alleviation from different dimensions. Being an economist it has been very interesting to actually work on a multidisciplinary team in promoting the issues surrounding poverty alleviation across Arup as a company. Hopefully, my insights as an economist have also been useful to others of different professions. This model is ideal in addressing issues of poverty, which tend to require coordinated and cross-sector approaches in order to yield maximum impact."

Alice Clarke

"The engineering industry has a unique opportunity to contribute to poverty reduction due to appropriate infrastructure's role in underpinning society and its development. Appropriate is key, though, and looking around it's obviously often missing….I felt that with all the skills and experience around plus other young people having had involvement at university in EWB-UK, it seemed natural to try to build a relationship between the two organisations - I was not alone and now a team of people around the UK is working together on different activities with different EWB-UK university societies… "

Robin Campbell

"Following my experiences in Sri Lanka working on Tsunami rehabilitation projects, I realised that I needed to actually, "learn to be an engineer", both technically and in terms of project management skills, before I committed myself to anymore overseas work. Through PAN, a wide variety of opportunities to learn, network and generally stay involved with the humanitarian aspects of engineering has also been made available."

Robert Malies

with connections with NGOs to share these with others in the firm. Examples of this engagement include:

■ Engineers Against Poverty – PAN members have reviewed EAP reports and provided a consultant's perspective on our work.

■ RedR – fundraising and awareness raising for "Wear Red for RedR" day and RedR-IHE's Relief Challenge.

■ WaterAid - the PAN is a key mechanism for actualising Arup's substantial support for this international charity that aims to overcome poverty by enabling the world's poorest people to gain access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education.

■ Engineers Without Borders (EWB) – many PAN members around the world have become engaged with EWB to provide expertise and also to learn. Links between EWB-UK societies and Arup regional offices already exist and are being developed, including participation within the EWB-UK Professional Network.

The linkages with EWB are particularly important. The PAN provides a mechanism for maintaining the energy and enthusiasm generated by EWB as its student members move into the workforce. EWB is becoming enormously successful and is catalysing a fundamental change in the understanding, perspectives and expectations of young engineers. Internal networks that give graduate engineers an opportunity to maintain and develop their interest while they move through the ranks, will maintain this momentum as these engineers move into positions of influence or also into the international development field.

The future for the PAN is bright. The network is seeking to widen staff involvement in poverty issues and broaden the range of ways to engage and inspire staff. The organisational team are looking to further build on the strong UK core of the network, and to strengthen the network as a global group. This will also include more region specific talks, intranet sites and coordination teams.

For more information on the PAN please contact Jonathan Chew at Jonathan.Chew@arup.com.

EAP & ICE hold joint international workshops on procurement

EAP and the ICE recently presented findings of its research on procurement (see Spark 9) to a specially convened workshop at the African Development Bank. Authors of the report, Jill Wells of EAP and John Hawkins of ICE, were accompanied by ICE vice president Richard Coackley. The workshop was attended by 17 representatives from the Project Appraisal, Operations and Procurement Units within the Bank. The discussion focused on three questions:

■ Is there room to experiment with different procurement strategies in the AfDB?

■ How can implementation of social obligations in contracts be improved?

■ Is it possible to build the capacity of local industry through AfDB funded infrastructure procurement?

The participants suggested that the Bank's systems are adequate and that radical change is not required as there is sufficient flexibility within the existing rules. But they lack the tools to implement project objectives. For example, the Bank has good systems for evaluating social impacts of projects but the findings are not carried forward into tender and contract documents.

Participants expressed disquiet at the fact that very little of the expenditure on infrastructure projects stays within the region. If the continent is to develop, more of the money spent on infrastructure must stay in Africa and help strengthen indigenous capability. Building the capacity of local consultants and contractors is therefore a high priority. The increased funding for small water projects offers the best potential for developing local capacity and significant progress has been made in this area.

These findings were reinforced at workshops held subsequently with local procurement officials, engineering consultants and contractors in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. Participants reported significant progress in incorporating social objectives into water sector projects, as well as in programmes specifically targeted at communities through 'social action' or 'community development' funds. Projects under these programmes are generally implemented at the local level and designed to require community participation. They are regarded as special cases. The challenge for ICE/EAP could be to show how to incorporate the same objectives and methods into large national projects. However, donors have warned that this could meet with resistance from sections of the international business community.

Anglo American steps up support for EAP

The Anglo American Group Foundation recently contributed £5000 to EAP's programmes in Africa and Asia. Anglo American is a global leader in mining and natural resources and its Chairman, Sir Mark Moody-Stuart, is widely respected for his contribution in the area of international business and sustainability. Commenting on the support, EAP Chairman Douglas Oakervee said "Anglo American has become one of our most reliable corporate supporters. Our work is very relevant to the mining industry and we hope that other companies in the sector will follow its lead".

London Marathon runners raise funds for EAP

In late April, three hardy souls ran the London Marathon for Engineers Against Poverty in record high temperatures. The three runners were Clinton Leeks, Stuart Greaney and Matthew Lynch.

The London Marathon, reputedly the world largest charity event, winds its way past some of London's most famous landmarks including the Cutty Sark, Tower Bridge, the London Eye and Big Ben, before finishing in St. James Park near Buckingham Palace.

Clinton Leeks, Corporate Affairs Director for Crossrail, was running his 55th marathon! "It was a great London event, even in hot marathon-unfriendly weather. Running past the Civils, and then the Mechanicals, with the finish line in sight was a real boost to morale and clearly due to clever planning by EAP!" said Clinton with a chuckle.

Stuart Greaney, competing in his second marathon completed the course in a very fast 3:30. Stuart said "It was a tough morning's work, but the draw of the EAP support at Birdcage walk, the money it was raising, and the thoughts of a pint in the sun that afternoon kept me going - a great day!".

EAP Programme Officer Matthew Lynch was running his first ever marathon.

"The going was pretty tough, especially those last few miles, but it was great to hear spectators cheering on EAP!" Matthew said.

The three runners have so far raised £1,700 to support EAP's work.

EAP recruits new staff member

EAP has a new Finance and Administration Officer. Hongjie (Jeff) Wang joined Engineers Against Poverty in March, 2007. He obtained his MBA degree in 2003 from the University of Salford, UK. He has extensive work experience as a Human Resources Administrator in China and also worked as a Finance Officer for UNDP in Beijing. He was also self-employed for 6 years in the business travel industry. He is enthusiastic, proactive, and helpful.

He is keen to provide an outstanding service to the supporters of EAP.

Another way to support EAP

We have a limited number of good quality cotton EAP polo shirts (see picture). The shirts have the EAP logo stitched into the breast and sleeve. They can be bought by calling +44 (0)20 7304 6871 or by completing and returning this form to the address below.

Anti-Corruption Conference in London

UK Anti-Corruption Forum will host an Anti-Corruption Conference in London on 2nd October, 2007. The conference is entitled "Preventing Corruption in Infrastructure". Organisers have put together an interesting programme with high calibre speakers. The focus of the conference is on the practical aspects of corruption prevention. The majority of attendees at the conference are likely to be from the infrastructure sector.

Detailed information about the Conference can be found on the web-site www.anticorruptionforum.org.

If you want to book your place at the Conference, please contact Neill at neill.stansbury@transparency.org.uk.

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