

[Digital Dharma](#)

Category : [January/February/March 2008](#)

Published by Anonymous on Jan. 02, 2008

Digital Dharma

SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY

Marvelous Methods to Free the Poor and Stay Off the Grid

Do you live off the land? do you want to be independent of the local power company, help reverse global warming and combat poverty all at once? If the answer is yes, then <http://www.practicalaction.org> is the place for you. The site says, "In an increasingly divided and fragile world, Practical Action aims to demonstrate and advocate the sustainable use of technology to reduce poverty in developing countries. Practical Action is a charity registered in the United Kingdom which works directly in four regions of the developing world--Latin America, East Africa, Southern Africa and South Asia, with particular concentration on Peru, Kenya, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal." The focus is on small-scale technologies in the areas of energy, shelter, transport, water and sanitation, food and agriculture, manufacturing, disaster mitigation and information-communications technologies.

The many resources include guidelines and schematics for micro-hydroelectric energy production, decentralized rural electrification and ancient, human-powered water lifters that can move hundreds of gallons of water an hour. Refrigeration is critical for food processing, and this website offers three small-scale refrigeration methods. The no-moving-parts sorption system uses a non-toxic coolant, daytime solar energy and night-time low temperatures to make ice.

The site provides links to books, specifications for NGOs who want to use these

technologies and ways that each of us can contribute to getting sustainable technology into the hands of people who need it.

<http://www.hinduism.co.za>

While many new web 2.0 sites are coming online, they often lack substance. Meanwhile, others like <http://www.hinduism.co.za> are all about content. The site's lean design allows fast access to an incredible Hindu gold mine: "Understanding Hinduism." It is a simple model: a collection of excerpts from the writings of great saints like Swami Sivananda, the epics and Vedas, all organized under more than 200 in-depth pages. Links such as Hinduism-Brief Sketch, Founder of Hinduism, Vrat-Resolution, Marriage, Mind Power, Mantras, Sacred Fire, Cows Are Sacred, Guru, Silent Teachings, Caste System, Untouchables, Yuga and Dharma each take you into a mini-world of fascinating texts and additional links. The page on marriage alone is a treasure chest of information on this crucial life ceremony. Bookmark this site for future reading. It will take you months to peruse all the information. Thanks to the creators of this site for their meticulous attention to getting together so much content in one place, and so well organized!