Practical Action

Is small still beautiful? We think it is. 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 was founded in 1966, as ITDG (the Intermediate Technology Development Group), by the radical economist Dr EF Schumacher to prove that his philosophy of 'Small is Beautiful' could bring real and sustainable improvements to people's lives.

With our commitment to poverty reduction, environmental conservation and technology choice we think Practical Action is uniquely placed to contribute to a world free of poverty.

Practical Action has a unique approach to development – we don't start with technology, but with people. The tools may be simple or sophisticated – but to provide long-term, appropriate and practical answers, they must be firmly in the hands of local people: people who shape technology and control it for themselves.

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Using technology to change the world

Practical Action believes that the right idea – however small – can change lives. It can create jobs, improve health and livelihoods, and help people have better lives. That's why, since 1966, we've been working with poor people to develop the skills and technology that will enable them to build a better future.

Practical Action's approach really is unique – and we focus our work on four key areas:
• We help *reduce the vulnerability* of poor people affected by natural disasters, conflict and environmental degradation – events which, sadly, are increasing.

• We help poor people to *make a better living* – by enabling producers to improve their production, processing and marketing.

• We help poor communities gain access to basic services – like safe, clean water, food, housing and electricity.

• We help poor communities *respond to the challenges of new technologies*, helping them to access simple effective technologies that can change lives forever.

In everything we do, Practical Action is about bringing positive, lasting change to people's lives.

Read more about how we aim to change lives in *Technology Challenging Poverty*, or read about our most recent work in our *annual highlights*.

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**See also**

• Practical Action/Pages to port, where we are tracking progress on the Porting of numerous Technical Briefs originally published by Practical Action.

**Ported Pages**

See Category:PATB for a list of already ported work.