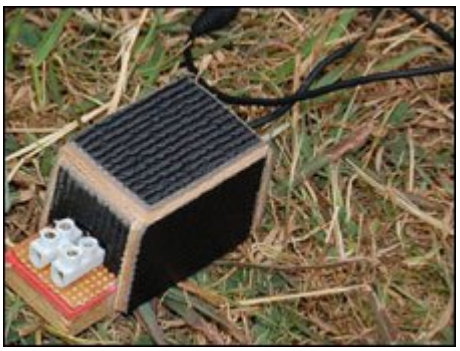
RENEWABLE ENERGY

Posted on July 24, 2009 by Eddie

Category: Africa

Renewable energy has to be a good idea. Getting electricity or heat from non-polluting, self-replacing sources surely has to be part of our future. Of course there are problems with the technologies. Solar panels are expensive and not very efficient and on a summer's day like today in England they are more likely to be washed away than to give any power. Likewise, wind, wave and other alternative sources of energy have their problems - but nothing that couldn't be overcome with serious research and investment. However, another problem is that we tend to think on an industrial scale in the West. We look for wind farms that will power a medium sized town, rather than making the best of small scale energy producing and saving capacities.



With that in mind, I love this invention by two Kenyan students: a bike powered mobile phone charger! Designed using cheap materials scavanged from a junk yard, the chargers are now going on sale. Each one costs about twice as much as a Kenyan would have to pay to have their phone charged in a shop. About an hour's cylcling gives the phone a full charge - brilliant!

This sort of ingenuity is what will get renewable energy into our lives in a big way. Small scale solutions to small problems, which can one day be scaled up.

Read the story here.