

Kickstart Martin Fisher

Martin Fisher is a social entrepreneur who has applied his passion for improving things to the challenge of eliminating poverty in rural Africa. He and Nick Moon cofounded ApproTEC (which later became Kickstart), a non-profit organization aimed at getting millions of people out of poverty. In collaboration with co-workers, he has invented low-cost, human-powered irrigation pumps and other simple moneymaking tools and a sustainable supply-chain model that enables subsistence farmers to double or triple their annual net family incomes.

Fisher has won numerous awards and recognition for his inventions and work as a social entrepreneur, including the IDEA Design Gold Medal, TIME Magazine's "2003 European Hero" award, 2005 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship, and the Schwab Foundation's "2003 Social Entrepreneur of the Year" award.

This case study is a bit different from the others in this series in the sense that UDM personnel did not actually interview Martin Fisher. Ken Weimar of Kickstart supported our development of the case study and provided us with a number of pre-existing videos and still pictures for our use.

At UDM, this case study is integrated into a Physics-1 course and the students are asked to do a work/energy calculation relating to pumping water. There is potential to integrate this case into machine design or many other courses too.