

The Indian Thread



“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in Humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” – Philippians 2:3-4

One of the eMi² teams gathered together in Mumbai for the purpose of serving at Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission (PRMM) in Kedgaon, Maharashtra. Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission seeks to provide a “Christ centered home where destitute women and children irrespective of their background are accepted, cared for, transformed, and empowered to be salt and light in the society.” There is much to be learned from this 120-year-old mission.



"Priti Sadan" (Home of Love)—a residence for elderly women

Forget about selfish ambition and vain conceit and take a look at God's faithfulness and kingdom work in the lives of one thousand women and children.

Our service is meaningless unless we place confidence not in our own abilities or previous experiences, but look to the One who calls and equips us to do the work. Some would say, "If it was easy, anyone could do it." **But, the question is: "what is it that needs to be done?"**, rather than "is it easy or hard?"

This was the second eMi² team to visit PRMM—this time in June 2009 for the purpose of assessing wastewater and water drainage conditions, structural stability of existing 100-year old buildings, and potential rainwater

harvesting options. The focus of this eMi² team was different from the previous visit in March 2008, where we focused on developing an overall master plan design for 160+ acres of land as well as architectural designs for a new English Medium School for 1,000 children.

Instead of a team composed of mostly architects and one engineer, a team of engineers was needed to conduct the assessments. Would you ever think of appointing an architect as project leader of such a team? God would and did. **Relationships with clients seem to take priority over discipline when it comes to project leading with eMi².** Besides, architects tend to have the "gift of gab" or rather good communication and project management skills, which proved to be

an asset for the architect on this team—especially conversing with the women and girls in Hindi to get permission for the engineers to enter into their homes and surrounding areas. PRMM is one of few places where a lady does not need to be escorted around the campus, but rather the men are required to have an escort! The engineers on the team found this quite restricting at times, while it was a refreshing change for the architect who typically is in their position.

Because this eMi² team was asked to assess the existing conditions and provide recommendations, there was not a need for detailed design at this point. Knowing the client's perceived need was important in developing a focus for the team so as to be good stewards of the time and skills given.

It was also important to know how PRMM would utilize the information given to them. In this case, the eMi² assessment and recommendations will be presented to their board members, who will then make final decisions on how to proceed and respond accordingly. Knowing this information helps us in developing the final report format, which should be easy for the client, board members, and an architect to understand and communicate to others!

Praise Him for enabling our team to serve in humility and look to the interests of others!

Gretchen West
eMi² Staff Architect



One architect among many engineers!



Aaron Reinke is a recent graduate from Kansas University in Civil & Environmental Engineering. When he's not scrambling over hospital rooftops in Bihar with a survey rod, he enjoys pestering Matthew about riding elephants, camels, and various other large animals during his Project+ internship. After leaving the beautiful mountains of Mussoorie, he will return to the U.S and head for the similarly beautiful mountains of New Hampshire. There he will start at Dartmouth Medical School in August. He is honored to have been a part of God's work at eMi² and is looking forward to all God has in store for the future.



Heidi Chan returns to eMi² this summer for her second project trip to South Asia, willingly submitting herself to the physical challenges of traveling and thinking creatively in India's hot season. Serving as a Project+ intern architect—equipped with a hefty supply of high-tech Chinese gel-pack cooling patches for the team and practical experiences from her hospital project last year—Heidi is ready for the season's design challenges. And this year, she's brought along her friend James, to show him the unique and exciting culture of India and afterward enjoy the cool highlands of Mussoorie where they hope to reconnect with friends and other ministries they support when back home.



James Sun decided to join his friend Heidi for the summer to serve at eMi² after hearing about the dramatic impact the experience made on her life last summer. Also an intern architect from Virginia, James chose to spend the portion of his summer break between undergrad studies at UVA and his upcoming Master of Architecture program at UNC to serve the poor and learn about a new place along the way. Although James briefly felt intimidated by the oppressive heat, he looked to God for strength and steadily served with the team (those Chinese gel-packs did help!). When not peeling his sweaty forearms off the trace paper taped to the table, James can be found smashing lakhs of mosquitoes—with his bare hands!



Michael Dirkse is from Downers Grove, IL, which is a western suburb of Chicago. He graduated in May of 2009 from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, with a degree in civil/environmental engineering. He served with eMi² as a Project+ intern in the summer of 2009 and participated in a project trip in Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh. During his two week stay in Mussoorie, Michael enjoyed running, hiking and enjoying the beauty of the mountains in Mussoorie. Games of Settlers of Catan and Puerto Rico with the other interns were also memorable experiences. Upon returning to the U.S., Michael will be looking for full time work in the fields of water resources or environmental engineering.



John Hurle is a 23 year-old from Hertfordshire, England. He graduated in July '08 from Bristol University. The last nine months in Tamil Nadu working as a construction manager for the site developments at the Missionary Upholders Trust campus through Interserve have been his first in Asia. He did one year of his degree in a German university and between graduation and India he helped build a church in Peru for a month. To cap off his time in India, John joined eMi² as a Project+ intern for the PRMM trip.

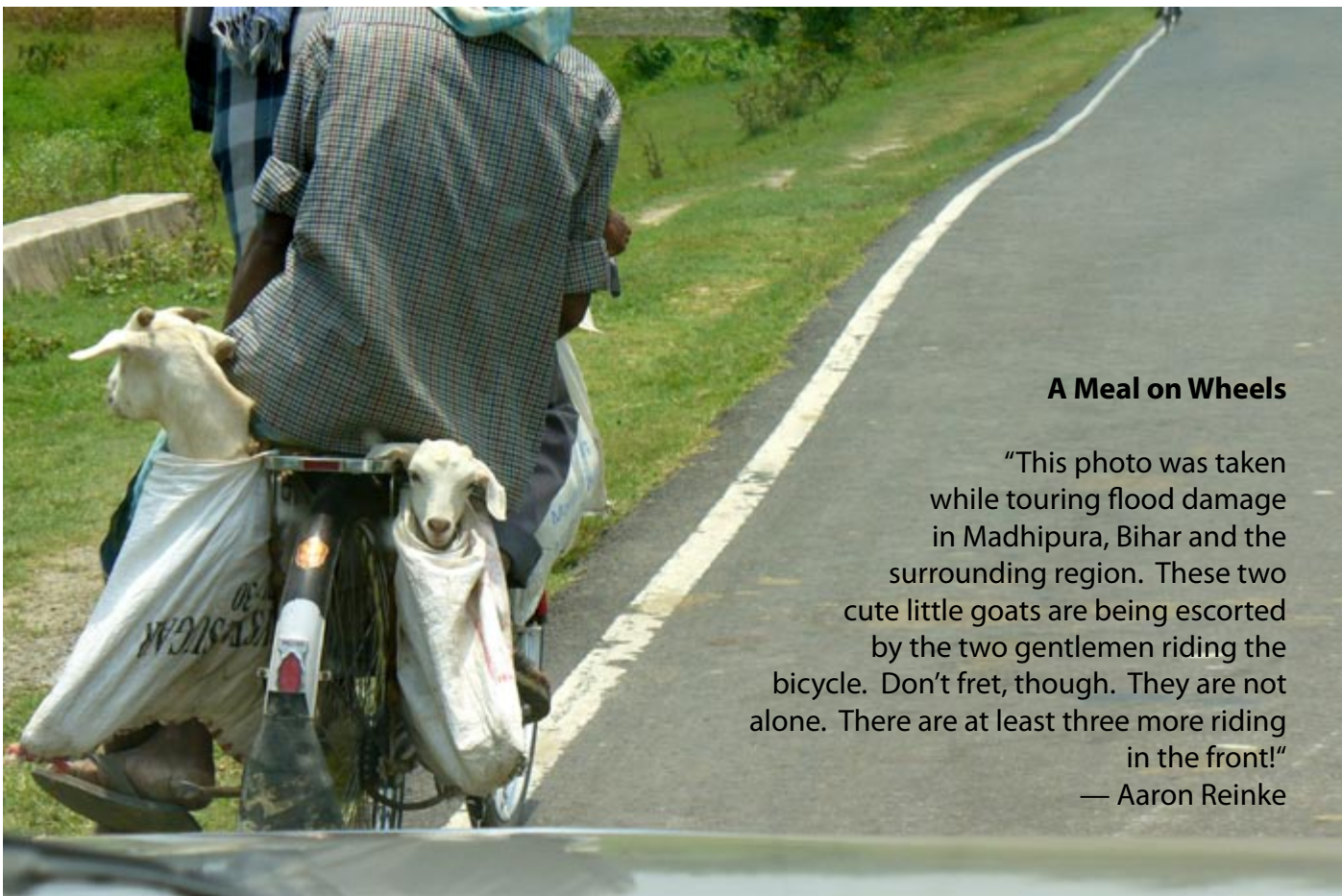


Caleb Skjervem is a 22 year old from Helena, Montana. He's finishing up his junior year in Civil Engineering with an emphasis in Structures at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City, SD. Having grown up in Montana, he enjoys a variety of hobbies including fly fishing, camping, mountain biking, and he's recently taken up rock climbing. He's always been interested in ways to use his technical skill set to serve in a foreign country, and this summer in India as a Project+ intern has been an exciting opportunity.



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A Meal on Wheels

“This photo was taken while touring flood damage in Madhipura, Bihar and the surrounding region. These two cute little goats are being escorted by the two gentlemen riding the bicycle. Don’t fret, though. They are not alone. There are at least three more riding in the front!”

— Aaron Reinke