

Project Fact Sheet

Project Title Academic Initiative for Renewables

Keywords Higher education, practice-oriented study courses, renewable energy technology, Southern Africa (Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe)

Project Details

Project Start 2016

Duration 4 Years

Grant Scheme University-Business-Partnerships between Higher Education Institutions and Business Partners in Germany and in Developing Countries
University-Business-Partnerships between Higher Education Institutions and Business Partners in Germany and in Developing Countries

Project ID 57218298

Funding Authority German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Project Budget 400.000€

Contact Person Prof. Dr.-Ing. Wilfried Zörner (Project Leader)
Stefan Schneider

Project Partners University Partners:
Botswana International University of Science & Technology (BIUST), Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), University of Malawi (UNIMA), University of Zambia (UNZA), University of Zimbabwe (UZ), Nelson Mandela University (NMU), Stellenbosch University (SU)
Industry Partners:
SWAP Botswana (Pty) Ltd, Peritus Investments (Pty) Ltd, Citrin Solar GmbH, Mulanje Renewable Energy Agency, Practical Action Malawi, Mocitaly Lda, EREL-ATSM, Stellenbosch Wind Energy Technologies, MICROCARE

Description

A lack of access to sufficient and sustainable energy supply affects much of the population in many Southern African countries. A majority of the population still depends on firewood and charcoal for cooking and hot water supply, which poses serious threats to economy, environment and health.

The sector of renewable energy (RE) is regarded one of the most promising sectors in the Southern African region and plays a key role when talking about sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation. Therefore, the increased use of RE and the implementation of renewable energy technologies (RET) are seen as central vehicles to meet the increasing energy demands of a growing population and to provide sustainable energy access to rural areas. However, despite the

enabling climatic factors in the target region, it is evident that RET still face many barriers, including the lack of technical capacity and experienced professional workforce.

Therefore, access to scientifically based and applied knowledge is a central factor, and higher education institutions are key actors to combine the needs of the labor market with formal education. Universities have to be strengthened in order to foster the creation of job opportunities and income generation in their respective countries.

This is the starting point for the Academic Initiative for Renewables (AIR) project that focuses on higher education in the field of RET with seven universities from Southern African countries and one German university. The aim of the project is to foster the capacities of the eight participating partner universities by working together with 15 industry partners in order to include their practical know-how.

Moreover, the AIR project includes an international student exchange programme for Master and PhD students from AIR partner universities. Students are offered the opportunity to undertake a 10-14 day exchange visit to partner institutions.

www.air-project.org