



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

Focus: Alternative Sources of Energy

In Zambia, the primary energy consumed by households is charcoal, firewood and hydropower.

As you can see, these primary sources of energy take many forms including non-renewable as well as renewable. Renewables include wind, solar, and hydropower energy.

Alternative sources of energy often refer to those sources that have no undesirable consequences.

A number of different renewable sources of energy exist and most of us have difficulty choosing or switching to them.

Zambia, for instance, receives a suitable sunlight for solar energy, but solar is under utilized.

The government through its power company, ZESCO, needs to invest in alternative energy sources at a national level instead of depending on solely hydro-power. Government investment is a solution to alternative energies.

The Weekly Information Resource Bulletin

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- Bring listeners in the project area the latest information on natural resources, the environment and agriculture
- Focus on solutions, what works and what people can do
- Encourage listeners to share both their questions and solutions (African solutions for African problems)
- Raise awareness of issues that need to be discussed to affect public policy.
- Bring the latest solutions and practices that have relevance to this region from around the world
- Identify and link other NGOs working in the region share the project interests and goals
- Give the participating journalists guidance and tips on their reporting on these issues

Problem: Power Shortages and Lack of Alternative Energy

Since May 2015, Zambia has been experiencing power shortages due to an erratic supply from Zambia Electricity Company or (ZESCO). These power outages negatively affect economic activities – including the mining industry, private businesses as well as individuals.

ZESCO has experienced low water levels in Kariba Dam where power is generated.

This has been attributed to the poor rainfall – an effect of climate change – says the Zambian Government. The result: unreliable electricity.

The situation has prompted

ZESCO to ration its electricity – and that has resulted in an increased demand for charcoal for cooking meals.

High demand for charcoal and firewood increases deforestation – and deforestation leads to a changing climate.

Trees are a vital resource for helping to control climate change.

There is an urgent need to curb charcoal production – and a strong need for people to think about other sources of energy – such as solar and wind.

Solutions: Activities for Journalists

Solar Energy- Solar energy is a source that is not only sustainable for energy consumption, it is renewable. The use of solar, wind and gas energy can greatly contribute to stable and reliable energy for the country.

Solar, wind and gas energy are not only cheap and environmentally-friendly, they also offer the best alternative sources to hydropower.

Keep in mind that despite the current power shortages being experienced only 22% of Zambian households have access to modern energy services. This is an indication that with the growing population and economic activities there is a need for alternatives sources of energy.

Ask your listeners if they have considered using alternative energy sources such as solar panels. Does anyone sell solar panels in your community? Invite them to discuss the long-term advantages of using solar power.

Does the government offer any subsidies to help people buy solar panels? If not, why not?

Talk to listeners who are using solar energy and get them to share their experiences on solar energy.

Zambia has already realized the significance

of solar energy and this has been seen under the rural electrification projects. Find out the target areas for this project? Check with Muhanya solar a local company dealing with solar energy in Zambia.

Talk to those who have benefited from the solar grid on rural electrification project.

What are the benefits of solar energy?

Wind Energy – In addition to solar, wind energy is the most important future energy source. Wind is everywhere and wind energy will play a pivotal role in the energy demand of the future and reducing carbon dioxide pollution.

Hydropower is clean energy, but it also requires diversification strategies.

Find out the harmful effects of charcoal production?

Talk to an expert about the consequences of

Useful Links

Information about farming and the environment:

Muhanya Solar Company +260 975 99 8340

MakwetiSishekanu, National Farmers Union Zambia: +260-211-252-649 or +260-965-098-360. Email: makwetiskanu@yahoo.com

Good source of information: Vincent Ziba, FAO Zambia; Email: vinceziba@yahoo.com. Phone: 0966-246-924 or +260 977 210 382

Good source of information; Mwape Sichilongo, WWF Conservation Manager. Email: msichilongo@wwfzam.org. Phone: +260 966442540