

REEECAP: ENERGY EFFICIENCY AT NAMIBIAN SCHOOLS

Executive Summary

Introducing renewable energy and energy efficiency concepts in schools is an effective way to equip Namibia's future citizens with the skills and understanding they need to use energy conscientiously. As microcosms of the nation at large, schools provide both the ultimate challenge and opportunity for building capacity and laying the foundation for wide-scale societal awareness on energy related matters, and associated change. They can either be the success stories which inspire students and teachers to carry good practices with them home and into the future, or they can illustrate the universally experienced "tragedy of the commons"—in this case, a school where lights remain switched on overnight, where no one feels responsible for energy-use or payment, and where collective negligence costs Namibia thousands of wasted kilowatt-hours and dollars every year.

In an ideal world—the future, hopefully—students and teachers would be fully aware of how their behaviours aggregate to save energy at their school, and at home. They would believe in the value of saving their school money and performing a service to Namibia as stewards of the environment. They would practice the simple behaviours which save energy every day. They would connect the importance of their actions to the bigger picture of preventing an energy crisis in Namibia by reducing demand. They would recognize the ease at which energy can be saved at school and at home, through a series of simple actions and a few sound and cost-effective investments.

It was with this vision in mind that the REEECAP Energy Efficiency in Namibian Schools project set out to investigate both the obstacles which prevent schools from achieving energy efficiency, and the yet to be realized opportunities which could enable them. The project discovered that lack of awareness about energy efficiency, poor school policies, and a perceived shortage of resources keep schools from striving for energy efficiency. Public schools are currently not responsible for their monthly energy fees, and so they are also unaware of the benefits of saving. It was also discovered, and reaffirmed through working with a handful of highly motivated teachers and student energy clubs, that taking a few small and low-cost steps towards energy-saving can be fun, easy, educational, and highly effective.

This report summarizes the project activities, findings, and recommendations for how Namibian schools can implement a first line of energy efficiency measures. It also serves as a school's guide, and should be read as such. The first two sections of the report describe the project in detail, and the final sections summarize the activities schools can initiate and the tools they can use to implement their own energy efficiency programs.