Press release

Knowledge from the Allgäu for the future of Africa

In April 2019, 18 trainers from 6 African countries (Benin, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo) came to the ecological education centre "CULTIVATED" in WILDPOLDSRIED to take part in a French-speaking training course entitled "Green Citizen Energy for Africa". The participants, mainly vocational school teachers, undertook to train at least 50 other lecturers in their countries in the field of renewable energies.

It was already clear to all participants that photovoltaics is a future energy for replacing fossil fuels, especially in Africa. Nevertheless, the developer of the course, Willi Kirchensteiner, always begins his training with the theoretical basics. In addition to ecological aspects, social and economic aspects are also taught. For example, the energy yield in Africa with photovoltaics is twice as high as in Europe and is also almost evenly distributed over the year.

An important concept of the training is a balanced mixture between theory and practice. As often as possible, the group leaves the conference rooms to measure the solar radiation outside and to identify and deduce technical correlations. Practical exercises such as soldering, assembly of electrical components are also on the programme. The goal is that after the two weeks the participants have set up their own mobile laboratory, the SOLAR CASE, and can take it home with them.

The head and coordinator of the measure, Günter Mögele, emphasizes: "It is very important that the participants identify with the solar suitcase. Because they have assembled it themselves and worked intensively with it, they know how it works inside and out and learn to appreciate the mobile laboratory".

In addition to photovoltaics and technology, other important aspects were taught: For example, they visited the Berufsschule I vocational school in Kempten to learn about the school-based part of the "dual vocational training" concept implemented in Germany. The participants showed their great interest in this education system, which is in demand worldwide. The group also visited two innovative companies operating in Africa: Steca, a manufacturer of electronic components, and Phaesun in Memmingen. Here, the participants used the opportunity to get to know suitable solar products and to establish valuable contacts.

The weekend was used to introduce the participants to technology and the Allgäu way of life. On Saturday, for example, the programme included a visit to the recycling centre, a tour of the various renewable energy plants in Wildpoldsried and the wind turbines. On Sunday we went to Hohen-schwangau to the Marienbrücke with an impressive view of Neuschwanstein Castle. After an obligatory Kässpatzen meal, a visit to the Sturmannshöhle and the Alpenwildpark Obermaiselstein with the feeding of wild red deer was the conclusion of the day.

When they proudly received their certificates at the end of the training, the participants were full of praise. They praised the quality of the course, the outstanding commitment and knowledge of the trainers and translators. They see the facilities in Wildpoldsried,

The Solar Functional Case

together with comprehensive documentation, serves to train specialists for the planning, installation and maintenance of systems for the generation of electrical energy through photovoltaics. With an integrated battery storage unit, the power supply for the many electrical appliances is thus made possible for 12 V DC and, via an inverter, for 230 V AC. At the same time 4 mobile phones can be charged.

In addition, all currents and voltages in the energy system can be measured with a measuring interface and the enclosed measuring instruments. Thus, the basics of electrical engineering can be taught everywhere in a practical and easily understandable way. In vocational training and further education, the teaching concept based on the dual principle enables both theoretical knowledge to be imparted and practical skills to be trained. On the basis of this tried and tested educational concept, qualified graduates can also plan, build and maintain larger energy systems.

which they experienced and saw for themselves, as an important motivation for their work and confirmation of the feasibility of an energy supply with renewable energies.

The promise of the participants sounded like a vow to do everything in their power to pass on this extensive knowledge and conviction to politicians, teachers and students in their country.

The project was launched in December 2017 in Wildpoldsried during the symposium "World with a future through vocational training". At this event, German Development Aid Minister Dr. Gerd Müller promised to support training courses for African teachers in Wildpoldsried and directly on site. In keeping with the minister's motto: "Africa needs energy, training and jobs! This requires young, motivated and well-trained specialists. Africa can make leaps of the century via decentralised energy supply, "green citizen energy cooperatives" and isolated solutions, as they have been tested in Wildpoldsried for years.

The Bavarian candidate for the post of EU Commission President, Manfred Weber, also emphasises time and again how important further training initiatives are for the African continent in order to combat the causes of flight and create new perspectives in Africa.

The project is a collaboration between various educational institutions: vocational training centres of the Bavarian economy (bfz), Academy for Teacher Training and Personnel Management (ALP) in Dillingen, the renewable energy community of Wildpoldsried, vocational schools from Bavaria and the German Association for International Cooperation. The training is carried out by active and retired vocational school teachers with the organisational support of the department bfz-International Hof, which uses contacts from various development cooperation projects in Africa to acquire participants.

The training course is a fundamental component of the project "World with a Future through Vocational Training", which is funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The supporters are already planning further courses in which a complete photovoltaic system with grid feed-in is to be trained and built in practice.

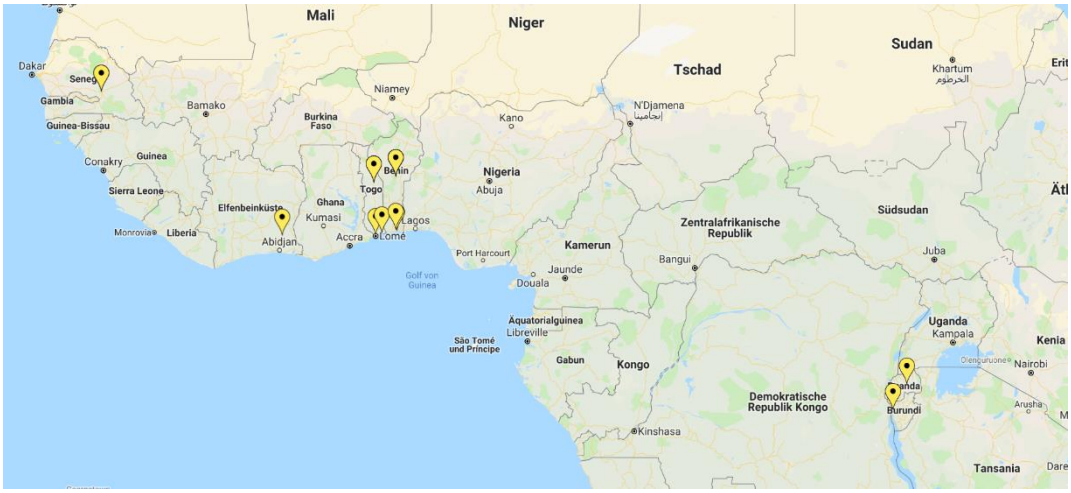
Coordination of the project "World with a future through vocational training“

- Ms. Marlyse Annoepel, Berufliche Fortbildungszentren der Bayerischen Wirtschaft (bfz) gGmbH- Internationaler Bereich, Schleizer Str. 5-7, 95028 Hof, email: marlyse.annoepel@bfz.de

- Mr. Günter Mögele, second mayor of the community Wildpoldsried, guenter.moegele@allgaeu.org

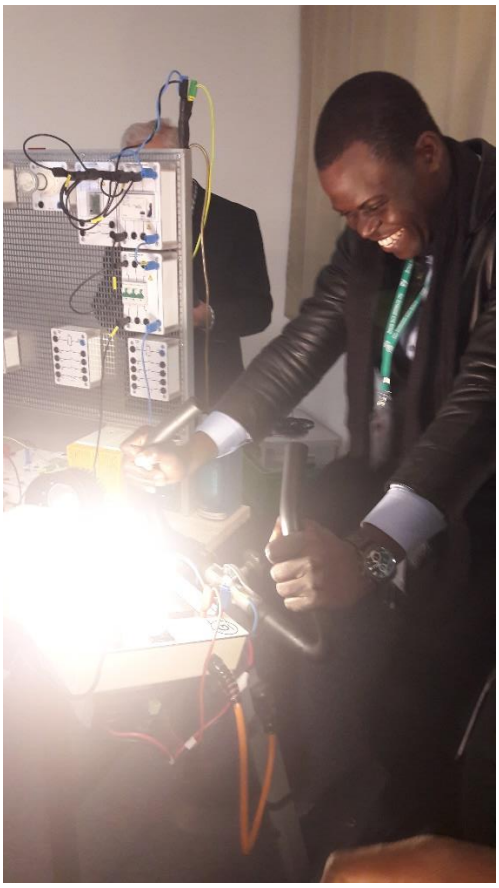
Overview of all participants of the project "Energy for Africa". [Picture: Thomas Pfluger]

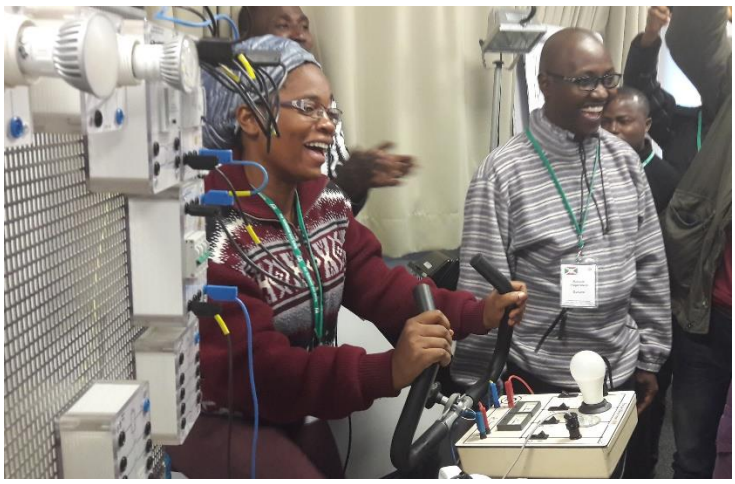
In yellow colour the 18 French-speaking participants of the 4th course from the countries Benin, Burundi, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo (partially covered, one symbol may represent several participants). Below detailed view:



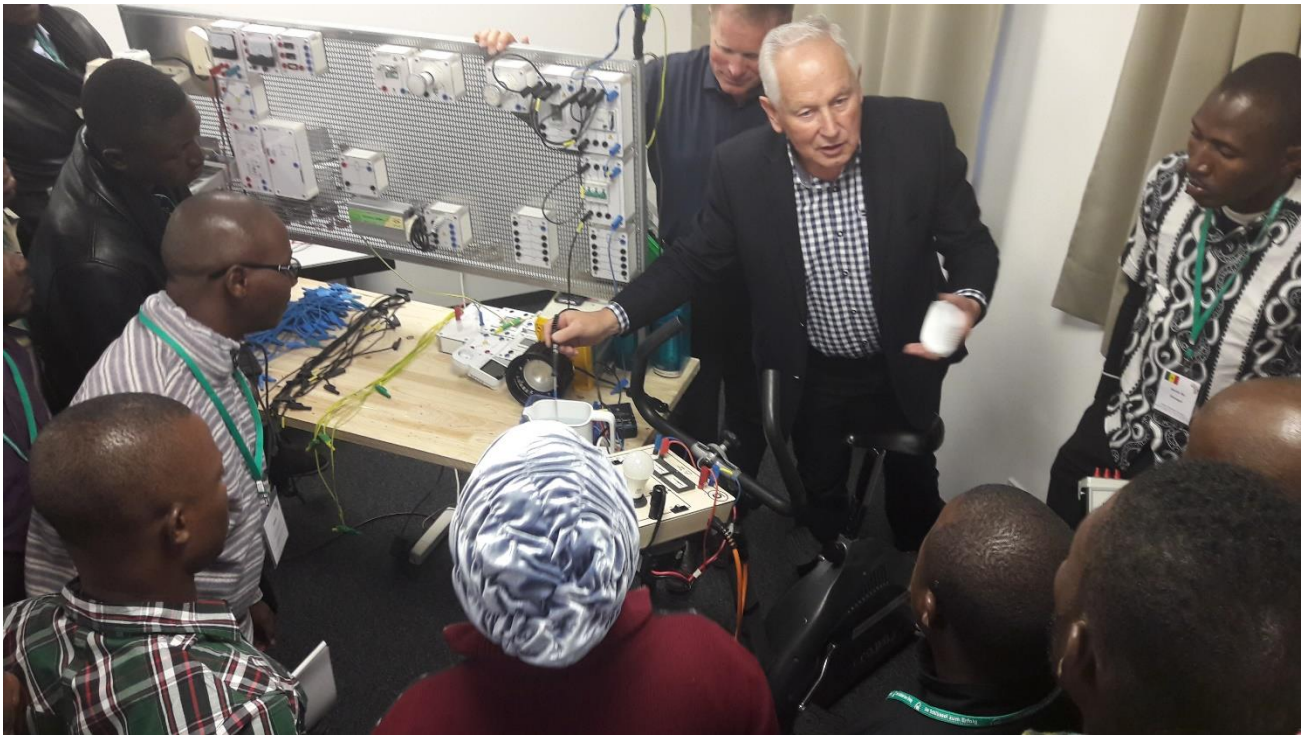
[Picture: Thomas Pfluger]

Group picture after the ceremonial presentation of the certificates [Picture: Adel Jaballah].





"Experience energy": Energy generation with muscle power on the energy wheel [Images: Anne Oertel]



Group work on the exercise board [Picture: Anne Oertel]

Start of construction of solar suitcases [Picture: Anne Oertel].

Soldering exercises in the training room [Picture: Anne Oertel].