

Bridging the gap between Agriculture and Solar Energy at UNAM

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The University of Namibia (UNAM) hosted a five-day workshop titled *Harvesting Sunshine: A Hands-On Workshop on Solar PV and Agrivoltaics* at the UNAM Main Campus. This workshop was organised by the Agri-PV: Sustainable Use of Agrivoltaics in Namibia project. This pilot initiative aims to investigate the suitability of Agri-PV systems as a climate-adapted and profitable solution for sustainable energy, vegetable, and fruit production in Namibia.



The first ever Agri-PV installation in Namibia, extensively funded by GIZ, is located at the Ogongo Campus as part of the Agri-PV project, which was made possible through a collaboration between GIZ and Inceptus Energy (UNAM).

The workshop drew a diverse group of participants, including UNAM's Master of Science (MSc) Renewable Energy students in the photovoltaics (PV) stream, trainers from TVETs, researchers from SASSCAL, NEI, and others.



Josephine lilonga, a renewable energy MSc student who was a participant in the event, emphasised the importance of hands-on experience in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and real-world applications. “Workshops like these provide invaluable opportunities for science students to work directly with cutting-edge technologies and learn from international experts,” she noted.

Josephine further mentioned the potential for students to engage in community social projects and educate local farmers about the benefits and implementation of agrivoltaics and photovoltaic systems. “The skills and insights from this workshop can also inform government consultations and stakeholder meetings to ensure that policies support sustainable practices,” she added.

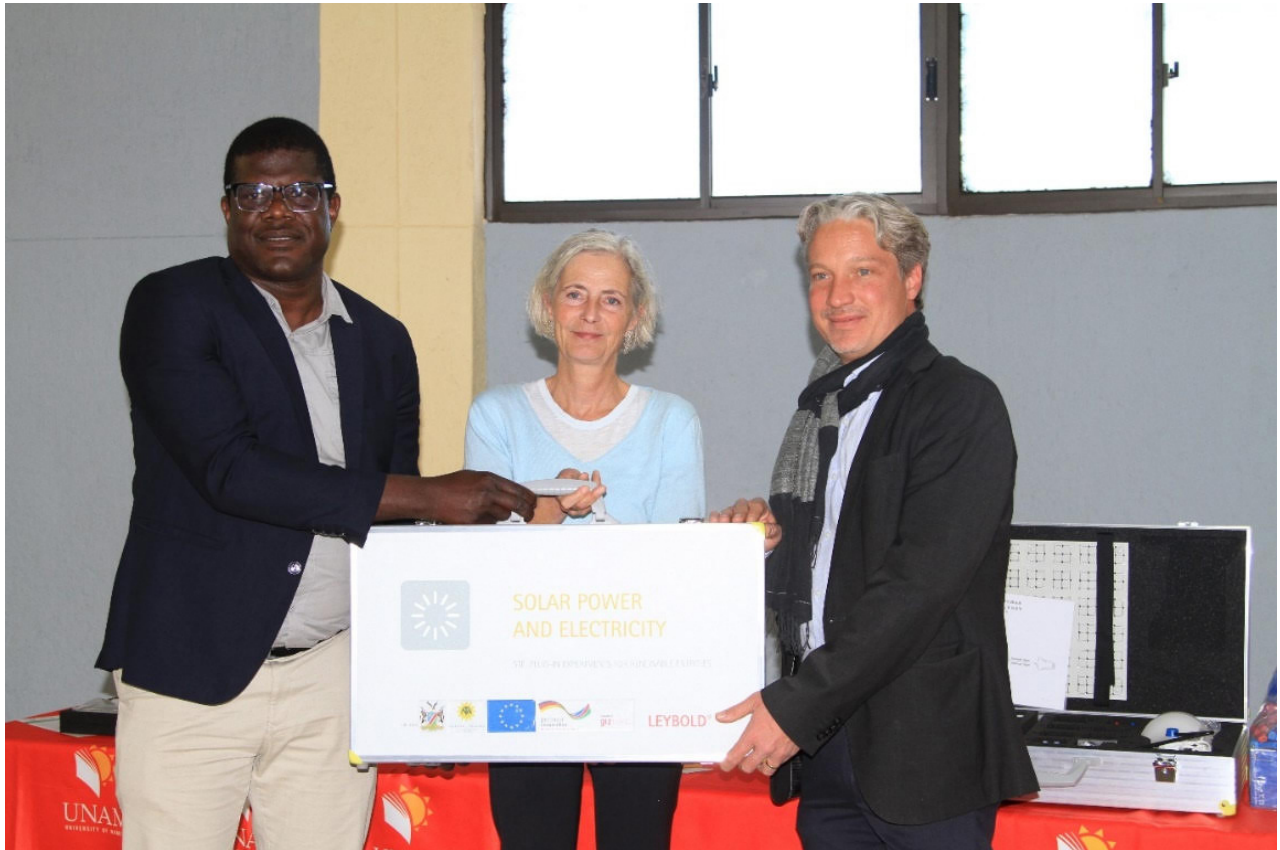


Kanisius Albinus, another renewable energy MSc student, reflected on the impact of the workshop on his academic and career aspirations. “Participating in the workshop has broadened my understanding of sustainable energy and farming practices and connected me with professionals and researchers, opening doors for future collaborations,” he shared.

Kanisius also praised the researchers from the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems, who served as facilitators of the workshop, for their knowledgeable and engaging approach.

Photovoltaic Testing Lab receives equipment

The workshop concluded with a high-value donation of PV boxes, which will be hosted at the Photovoltaic Testing Lab PVTL at UNAM. The PV boxes will be used for training MSc and undergraduate students at UNAM as well as for outreach activities.



The Project Leader of Agri-PV and a Senior Lecturer at UNAM, Dr. Petja Dobрева, expressed that: “We deeply appreciate the generous donation of equipment for the photovoltaics (PV) training programme, which marks a transformative step for our institution.

“Previously, we faced challenges in providing suitable, high-quality equipment, which often limited hands-on learning opportunities in this rapidly evolving field. This contribution not only fills a significant gap in our resources but also allows us to better prepare our graduates for the demands of the renewable energy industry, equipping them with the skills they need to excel in the renewable energy sector. This donation helps us foster the next generation of solar energy experts, whose knowledge and innovation will be crucial in addressing the energy challenges of the future.”

Original story by Delight, a Science Communication intern currently pursuing her 2nd year in a Bachelor of Science in Physics (Mathematics) (Honours).