

Project data sheet

Listening to the radio in Africa = living better, healthier and more enlightened!

Project name: Battery for local radio

Country / Region: Ghana, North, Tumu Region

Goal: Radford FM in Tumu should be able to operate independently of the grid in the long term

Project duration: October - November 2023

Financial requirements: 19'000\$

Project Description:

Battery storage for the local radio Radford FM in Tumu Ghana!

To promote renewable energies, specifically solar energy in developing countries, this is the goal we pursue with our commitment to the association FairTrade Energy. In the north of Ghana we support a radio station and collect funds for a battery storage so that the station can broadcast its valuable programs without interruption.



Radio Radford FM in Tumu produces almost 50% of its own electricity, thanks to a photovoltaic system sponsored and installed by FairTrade Energy. In the evenings, at prime time, the sun no longer shines. Then electricity must be drawn from the grid, which unfortunately often fails - one counts more than 100 power outages a year. During the rainy season it happens almost every day.

A battery station causes the following goals:

- Reduction of energy costs by more than 50% thanks to the solar system, which was already installed in 2017. Without battery, the excess electricity must be fed into the grid without remuneration.
- Ensuring the operation of the transmission (18 hrs/day) in case of grid failure.
- Ensuring the continuity of the radio station (salaries, infrastructure, maintenance).
- Regulation of the supply voltage for the transmitter (this is often much too high and causes interruptions and damage time and again)
- Broadcasting of important programs on education, children's education, health and agriculture (e.g. effective cultivation methods, correct use of fertilizers). Also, educational contributions for children in mathematics, science, language/reading, information for people with disabilities, and general information, cultural and entertainment contributions.

High reach and important function

Radio Radford FM has been on the air since 2010 and reaches over 20,000 people in northern Ghana. They live scattered in a radius of about 100 km from the radio station in Tumu. The region is very poor, about 60% of the population is illiterate. The radio station broadcasts in the Sisaala language. Since there are no newspapers in the region, the radio is the only local source of information for a considerable part of the population. It also serves as a platform for government and opposition information, for example during elections.

Reliant on partners

Radio Radford FM receives no government support and must cover its own costs. The station also does not broadcast commercial advertising and therefore relies on the support of partners. Various partners are involved, and in return they are given airtime. For example, the station regularly broadcasts "Wind of Change," a program supported by FairTrade Energy to help people read and understand the Bible better. It strengthens Christians in the Muslim-majority region. Through this project we are getting more air-time and it is our goal to be able to broadcast more Christian programs. We are working together with different local and international mission organizations. These radio broadcasts will also be used to distribute the 1000 Bibles that have been translated into the Sisaala language to interested people at a reasonable price.

Major challenges

- Energy costs have risen sharply recently and account for 40% of the total budget. Energy is mainly needed for broadcasting programs, air conditioning and infrastructure.
- The infrastructure is outdated and needs to be maintained or replaced.
- The staff works partly on a voluntary basis, at times wages cannot be paid.
- Climate change is also a reality here in Ghana. Often the rains fail, the people are under a lot of pressure and depend on reliable information and support.

CHF 17,000 for battery storage

A battery with inverter costs a total of CHF 17'000 - unaffordable for the radio station! We are raising funds for the project to install the solution on site in October 2023. All FairTrade Energy employees work on a voluntary basis. **Please help us to realize this project. Thank you!**

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