Namibia energy storage for grid stability

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NamPower"s Senior Manager of Generation Projects, Ben Mingeli, emphasised the importance of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in mitigating potential intermittency issues.

Mingeli said NamPower anticipates challenges in managing intermittency from renewable energy sources, particularly solar, as the company expects solar capacity to exceed 100% of midday demand in the coming years.

To address these challenges, the utility is developing and constructing Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), including the 54MW Omburu BESS near Omaruru and the 45MW/90MWh BESS at Lithops Substation.

"To mitigate intermittency and maintain grid stability, NamPower is developing and constructing Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) projects such as the Omburu BESS with a capacity of 54 MW (1 hour of storage), to be located at Omburu substation near Omaruru Town, and the 45 MW/90 MWh BESS to be located at Lithops Substation," said Mingeli.

“The Rosh Pinah 100 MW PV Project is more than just another plant; it represents our commitment to clean energy and reducing our carbon footprint,” Haulofu stated.

Deng Yan, managing director of China Jiangxi International Namibia, spoke about the company"s experience in renewable energy, including their work on the largest solar plant in East Africa.

NOTE *Earlier in the week, the Windhoek Observer incorrectly reported that Mingeli expressed concerns about Namibia’s increasing reliance on solar energy and the challenges it poses for the country’s electricity supply system. The Windhoek Observer apologizes for the earlier error and any confusion it may have caused.

A significant $138.5 million investment package to improve Namibia’s electrical infrastructure has been certified by the World Bank. The package places special emphasis on the integration of renewable energy through reinforced transmission lines and the installation of a second utility-scale battery storage facility. Under the leadership of NamPower, the national power provider, this historic endeavor represents the first energy project in Namibia to be funded by the World Bank.

To optimize its effectiveness and impact, the project is separated into three main components. The first part is the building of the second Auas-Kokerboom transmission line, a major piece of infrastructure that runs 465 kilometers from the Kokerboom station near Keetmanshoop to the Auas transmission station just outside of Windhoek. By using cutting-edge 422 series tower configurations with a compacted cross-delta conductor

arrangement, this new 400 kV line will effectively double the transmission capacity between these two crucial points.

In his remarks on the project, Satu Kahkonen, the Country Director of the World Bank for Namibia, highlighted Namibia’s remarkable renewable energy potential. Even with such an abundance of resources, Namibia’s entire energy generation comes from renewables at 30% at the moment, indicating substantial development potential that this project seeks to realize.

Kahenge Haulofu, Managing Director of NamPower, expressed his excitement for the project and emphasized the new transmission line’s crucial role in improving access to variable renewable energy sources within Namibia and facilitating broader regional electricity trading. Additionally, he emphasized the significance of the recently installed battery storage system, which will facilitate the growth of renewable energy facilities as well as their integration into the country’s grid.

With financing from the World Bank, NamPower’s ambitious project is expected to drastically change Namibia’s energy environment by lowering outages, promoting load growth, and creating new avenues for power trading within the Southern African Power Pool. It leverages Namibia’s renewable energy capabilities to promote economic growth and regional collaboration in energy resources, marking a significant advancement in the country’s commitment to a sustainable and energy-secure future.

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