



Power outages mozambique

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Nine hundred families from the neighborhoods of Polana Caniço, Triunfo, and Inhagoia in the city of Maputo were temporarily left without electricity due to floods affecting some Transformer Stations (TS).

According to a statement from the Mozambique Electricity Company (EDM), the floods caused disruptions in the power distribution network, leading to the interruption for 900 customers, with 800 from the Triunfo and Polana Caniço neighborhoods, and 100 from Inhagoia.

The statement further explains that connections are being made only to houses that meet safety conditions via neighboring TS. As a result, electricity has been restored to some residences in the Triunfo and Polana Caniço neighborhoods, while in the Inhagoia neighborhood, efforts are underway to identify a high ground location for the installation of a TS, as the area in question is low-lying and prone to flooding.

INSIDE a small bakery in Maputo, the morning's batch of 150 loaves of bread has just gone into the oven. But there's a problem: the electricity has gone out without warning for the third time that week. Yet again, the batch of bread is ruined. The owners of the bakery have just lost all the flour and yeast they used to prepare the bread, and they won't be able to sell the failed loaves either.

This is just one example of the daily reality for medium and small business owners in Mozambique. We set out to research what happens to small businesses when they have no regular, reliable electricity supply.

We found that 95% of Mozambique's small businesses rely on electricity, mostly from the national grid, to produce the goods they sell. They use electricity productively to generate sustainable livelihoods and create jobs. Yet 86% of the small enterprises we interviewed said they had an unreliable supply of electricity.

This is important because the small business sector is one of the most critical sectors of the economy. Small businesses are spread across the economy, including agriculture, which employs 80% of Mozambique's active workforce. They are often the only opportunity for self-employment and job creation. Because the electricity supply is so unreliable, it threatens business owners' ability to earn a living and destroys their ability to create jobs.

Mozambique has the 14th-largest natural gas reserves in the world. Over 74% of its electricity comes from hydropower, mainly generated at the Cahora Bassa hydroelectric dam. But the government agreed to export over 80% of this hydropower to South Africa under a 1969 agreement for South Africa to finance the dam's construction. Mozambique has recently said that when this agreement expires in 2030, it will keep this electricity for its own use.

Those people who do have power have an unreliable electricity supply that is far too expensive. The bottom



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40% of the most impoverished Mozambican households pay more than 15% of their average income for just enough electricity to power a few basic lights, a fan, a TV and to charge their phones.

We looked at household surveys on health, and information found in energy poverty indexes, which reveal how much people spend on energy and how much energy they can afford to use. We also spoke to 219 micro, small and medium enterprises to find out how they coped with electricity outages.

When the electricity system goes down without warning, enterprises such as bakeries, poultry farms and cement block factories can lose raw material. Chicken farms need electricity to hatch the eggs and grow the chicks. Cement block factories use machines to mix cement, sand and water and also to manufacture the blocks (manual work would be too slow). When the power cuts out during this time, the cement dries out. The frequent power cuts also damage equipment.

Most of the small businesses had no backup power and had to stop production until the electricity came back on. Power cuts can last minutes, hours or even days. We found that only 10.05% of bakeries had diesel generators, and only 3.35% had wood-fired ovens to keep baking their bread. Notably, 68% of the surveyed enterprises said they spent up to 14.7% of their revenues to cover electricity expenses, while the remaining 32% dedicated even higher percentages, up to almost 39%.

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