

Power outages kinshasa =

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According to the bank in a release, the substation was outdated and not fully utilising energy from the two largest hydropower plants on the Congo River, despite the fact that they have been modernised.

The substation's digitalisation, adds KfW, will help make the electricity supply in the DRC more stable, efficient, cost-effective and environmentally friendly.

Commenting in a release was KfW's country representative for financial cooperation with the DRC and the Republic of Chad, Markus Schlömann: "By modernising the substation, we have made an important contribution to making the electricity supply in the Congo more secure.

The new substation aims to ensure that the electricity from the two hydropower plants reliably reaches consumers, which significantly improves the living situation and facilitates economic development.

In addition to the €20 million, an additional €4 million (\$4.4 million) was allocated to connect four turbines at the hydroelectric power plant to the new, modern switchgear control system.

The Kinshasa control centre now has direct access to Inga II's substation. According to KfW, faults are detected and corrected early, thereby stabilising the entire power grid and minimising energy losses.

The challenge in modernising the substation was that only individual parts of the plant could be shut down while the plant was still operating. This meant that the different areas had to be modernised bit by bit, which made work more difficult.

The modernisation of the DRC substation and control equipment was also delayed due to work restrictions and supply problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, work concluded successfully this year with the integration of the four generating units.

They add that, of the country's roughly 18 million households, only 2 million have access to electricity at all, with major variation between urban and rural areas. This not only complicates living conditions, but also economic development. Power outages due to damage or overload also hinder business operations.

Two power plants on the Congo River, with installed capacity of more than 1.7GW, are the country's main energy suppliers – they alone generate 90% of the electricity consumed in the capital Kinshasa.

The two power plants are located in the west of the DRC, but in addition to the capital Kinshasa with its 16 million inhabitants, they also supply the south of the country via a high-voltage power line that is more than 1,000 km long.

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A substation provides the high voltage required to transmit the power over vast distances. In addition, the switchgear protects the power grid in the event of lightning strikes, short circuits or line failure.

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