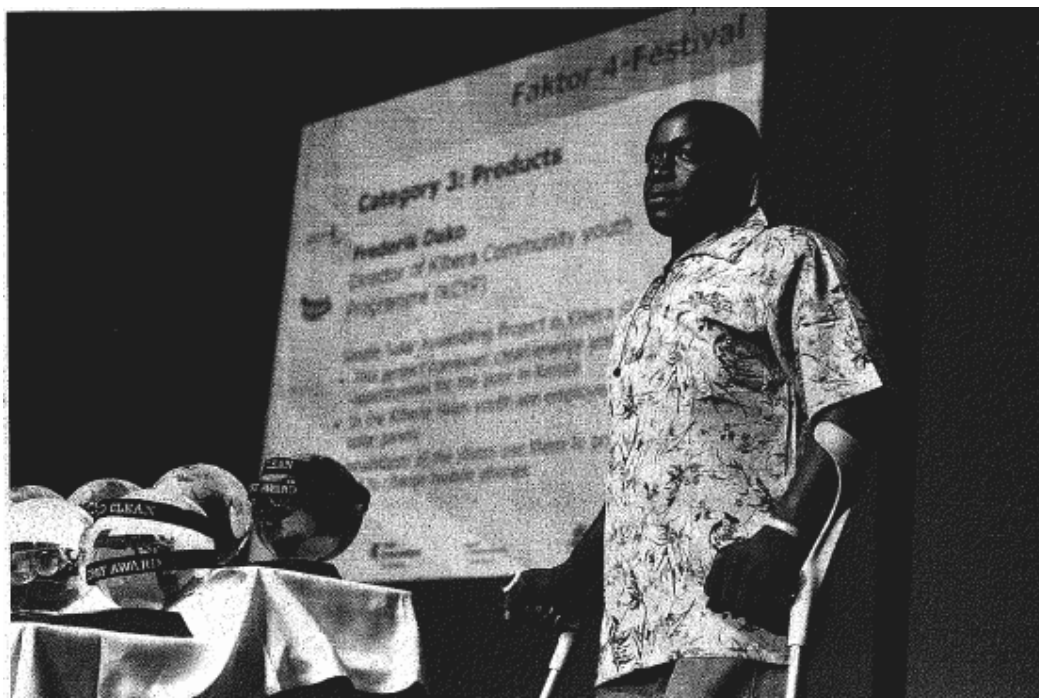


New prizes awarded for energy ideas

The 10th sun21-Festival highlights “clean energy”



Frederick Ouko conducts a solar panel workshop in Nairobi – also this idea was awarded. Photo Pino Covino

BY PETER POLDERVAART, Basler Zeitung

Translation by Thandi Warren (www.e-lang.ch)

Basel's 10th sun21 energy summit was opened this year with the presentation of a new energy award as well as the Factor-4-Festival.

In Rizhau, a 2.8 million city on the east coast of China, youngsters are taught in a solar classroom: “The children learn in this way that it is possible to generate power and heat solely from the sun; knowledge which they also convey to their parents. This positive attitude towards renewable energy sources will accompany them throughout their adult lives”, remarked Rizhau's mayor, Li Zahoqian, at the media conference.

The occasion was the first ever presentation of the “World Clean Energy Awards” (WCEA) for sustainable energy solutions. However, Rizhau, in English “sunshine”, does even more for clean energy: most of the 650 000 residents in the city centre take solar-heated showers, the street lights are based on solar energy and biogas from sewage plants is utilised for cooking and production of electricity. Mayor Li: “We are currently motivating farmers to power their greenhouses with biogas as well, instead of with coal”.

SEARCHING A BREAKTHROUGH. Solar energy alters everyday life elsewhere too. For instance, in the slums of Kibera in Nairobi, Frederick Ouko conducts a workshop where youths produce solar panels for the operation of radios and mobile phones and partly also for export. “Many of these units go to the rural areas where charging

of mobile telephones cost 50 cents – a lucrative business”, said Ouko. Furthermore, a wind farm on Sioux territory in the USA, the conversion of dirty diesel rickshaws in the Philippines and the sustainable city planning in a Stockholm neighbourhood counted among the total of nine winners, distinguished by the awards. The newly launched awards were presented by special guests, such as: Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Klaus Topfer and Amory Lovins.

The main criterium for the selection of the laureates was that the projects should demonstrate the feasibility of energy efficiency and the application of renewable energy sources on large scale. “Awards for technology as such already exist. We wanted to distinguish initiatives where the broad implementation of such technologies was successful,” explained Daniel Wiener, Head of the WCEA office.

SUN21 ON CLIMATE. The Factor-4-Festival of last night aimed to demonstrate how prosperity can be doubled by means of halving resources consumption. A series of events of the sun21 energy summit will take place next week. There will be a one-day energy forum in Riehen, Basel on Monday and experts will discuss questions about the impact of the climate change on the region on Wednesday evening in the Volkshaus in Basel.

Thursday’s theme is fermentation, where guests are invited for the 3rd Swiss biomass summit. Finally, a sports night will provide a sporty conclusion, by way of an “Energy-Bike” campaign, in which perspiration-powered electricity will be supplied to the public electricity network.

>www.cleanenergyawards.com

>www.sun21.ch