



## Manufacturing in Africa Showcase: **Roam Electric**

**Roam is a technology-driven electric mobility company that designs and develops electric motorcycles, electric buses, and solar systems for emerging markets, starting in Kenya.**

Roam's mission is to provide affordable, zero-emission transport solutions for the global south. Founded in 2017, Roam became the first company to deliver locally produced electric motorcycles and buses, providing green jobs in Kenya. Roam Park is the largest EV assembly and manufacturing plant in East Africa. The company has gained international recognition, including accolades like Time's 100 Most Influential Companies and the Earth Shot Prize.

### **ADVANCING RENEWABLE ENERGY MANUFACTURING IN AFRICA**

Roam is pioneering local manufacturing of electric vehicle components in Kenya. As an Original Equipment Manufacturer, Roam controls most intellectual property and tooling, allowing them to manufacture locally. This strategy reduces costs, creates value by retaining investment within the country,

and generates green jobs. The success of these efforts depends on stable, long-term policies that prioritize local manufacturing.

Key initiatives include:

- *Integrating Renewable Energy into Charging Infrastructure:* Roam's charging stations, known as Roam Hubs, in Nairobi, utilize solar energy as their primary power source. This reduces reliance on fossil fuels and promotes clean energy use.
- *Collaborating with Renewable Energy Projects:* Roam partners with projects like Wetu which operates in rural Kisumu, Homabay, Migori, and Siaya Counties in Western Kenya, providing affordable charging solutions for their operations and the local community.
- *Promoting Local Manufacturing of Renewable Energy Components:* Roam is investing in large-scale local production of solar panels and batteries at Roam Park. This facility not only supports local expertise and job creation but also reduces the cost of renewable energy technologies.



PHOTO: Ride Electric, Roam Electric bus



- **Supporting Policy and Regulatory Frameworks:** Roam actively advocates for policies supporting renewable energy and electric mobility. They work closely with the Kenyan government and regulatory bodies, contributing to initiatives like the tax exemption for producing the first 100,000 EVs.
- **Creating Sustainable Business Models:** Roam has developed models that integrate renewable energy, such as the solar-powered Roam Hubs which are solar-powered EV charging stations, to demonstrate the feasibility of combining renewable energy with electric mobility.

## VISION FOR KENYA AND THE CONTINENT

Roam aims to revolutionize the mass transit sector with products like Roam Rapid, Roam Move, and Roam Air. With Roam Air, the company seeks to reduce carbon emissions from internal combustion engines by providing electric solutions for Kenya's growing Boda boda sector. Roam Air is designed to fit the market's needs, offering durability, performance, and high payload capacity. With features like removable batteries and home charging, Roam aims to expand beyond Nairobi and enter new markets, even as charging infrastructure develops. Their vision includes helping market users earn more through lower operating costs, reducing emissions, and improving urban mobility.

## CHALLENGES FOR ACHIEVING THE VISION

- Government initiatives, such as manufacturing incentives or trade agreements, to support the export of African-made EVs.
- Community support for the market, particularly from informal sectors like bodabodas, to strengthen market resilience.
- Continuous product development to ensure scalability and financial viability.
- Partnerships with asset financiers to provide favorable payment terms and ethical business practices to support riders.
- Cross-sector collaboration to increase EV adoption and reduce costs, facilitating expansion.



PHOTO: Roam Electric on site

## IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Roam has conducted several pilots, proving the successful adoption of electric motorcycles in various market segments. The growing EV market signals the company's positive trajectory. **Key impacts include:**

- Riders report significant earnings increases, with some seeing a 60% improvement in daily income.
- Roam has already offset substantial amounts of carbon, displayed in real-time at their facilities.
- Passengers appreciate the comfort and smoothness of electric bikes, noting the absence of excessive vibrations found in petrol bikes.
- Vendors can transport more goods, thanks to the superior payload capacity of electric bikes.
- Enhanced safety features, such as improved electronic braking and controlled speed curves, have led to fewer accidents.
- Riders have efficiently interacted with our charging stations, taking advantage of cheaper rates during low peak hours and optimizing rental models for their daily errands.

## PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION WITH AFRICA REMI

Roam has benefited from policy advocacy efforts, particularly from SEforALL, which supports local manufacturing initiatives. The company is also exploring public and private funding opportunities to further their growth, with positive expectations for the future.

*Africa REMI and Roam are well aligned, as we both drive the growth of green manufacturing industries in Africa in support of low-carbon economic development.*

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