MOBILE POWER

Location
Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Uganda and Zambia

PROJECT SUMMARY

A company providing affordable energy and transport solutions to communities in Sub-Saharan Africa is expanding rapidly following the completion of its GBP 2m Series A funding round. The company provides daily household energy on a flexible basis to consumers, and is now expanding into urban generator replacement and e-mobility through the launch of its new product, the MOPOMax.

Mobile Power was established in 2013 to serve the needs of low-income end-users in markets that are underserved by existing electrification models.

Through the company's innovative rental model, customers rent smart lithium-ion batteries at a low cost and in 24-hour increments, making it easier for low-income people to access electricity as and when they need it. This energy can be used for domestic use, through the company's existing MOPO50 product, as well as productive use and e-mobility applications through its MOPOMax.

The "MOPO Batteries" are charged by solar-powered "MOPO Hubs". This provides a lower cost, lower carbon model than local alternatives, which include petrol motorbikes, petrol generators and disposable battery-powered torches. MOPO Batteries are managed by "MOPO Agents". The domestic MOPO50 product is suitable for lighting and fans, as well as phone charging, radios and TVs. The larger, commercial MOPOMax product runs e-motorbikes and e-tuk tuks, as well as fridges, businesses and larger households.

Payments are made either in cash or using mobile money, making the service inclusive to those without mobile money or areas with no phone signal. Additionally, the product requires no consumer debt or long-term commitment, unlike many alternative energy access solutions.

Prior to REPP's involvement, Mobile Power had already been operating in Sierra Leone, which is among the world's poorest countries with 60% of the population living on less than USD 1.25 a day, and had various partnership projects in Uganda, Zambia and the Gambia. It launched in Liberia in 2020 and entered the Nigerian market in 2021, with plans to enter both Chad and the DRC during 2022.

The successful Series A funding round in December 2020, led by a £1m equity investment from REPP, has enabled Mobile Power to deploy its MOPO Hubs at a rapid pace across Sub-Saharan Africa. As of June 2022, the company had 500,000 monthly rentals, connecting customers to clean energy for the first time. So far this has created 500 local full-time jobs, 37% of which are filled by women.Mobile Power is now scaling its e-mobility and generator replacement platform. The platform is based on the company's existing technology, manufacturing and operational experience, and provides battery rental for motorbikes, tuk-tuks, agricultural tricycles and other commercial applications.Prior to the Series A funding round, Mobile Power had raised equity from early-stage investors, and further capital in the form of innovation grants and loans.

Country policy alignment

Mobile Power is well aligned with national NDC targets and priorities of most portfolio countries, supporting: • Sierra Leone's national policy priority of promoting renewable energy development in rural areas and its 10% GHG emissions reduction target (Updated NDC, 2021); • Liberia's 2030 conditional targets to reduce its GHG emissions by 64% and increase the share of renewable electricity production to at least 30% (Updated NDC, 2021); • Nigeria's National Development Plan 2021-2025 electrification target of 75% by 2025; • Zambia's National Energy Policy's (2019) objective of diversifying the energy mix in the country; • Uganda's 100% electrification by 2030 target (Draft Revised National Energy Policy, 2019) with enhanced focus on diversification of the energy mix, off-grid renewables and increasing energy efficiency of the households (Uganda Vision 2040); and • Gambia's goal of improving access to electricity and enhancing household energy security (National Development Plan 201-2021).

AT A GLANCE

Technology:
Solar PV-powered battery hubs

Project type:
Off-grid

Offtaker:
Communities and motorbike taxi drivers

KPIs

GHG emissions avoided: 9,885 tCO_2e per year (target) / **Achieved: 120 tonnes CO_2e (cumulative)**

People with first-time access to clean energy: 273,800 (target) / **Achieved: 151,463**

MW Planned capacity: 4.5MW (target) / **Achieved: 0.36MW**

FUNDING STRUCTURE

Signed: 10 December 2020

Type: Equity

REPP funding: GBP 1 million

SDGs

"As a highly regarded energy access investor, REPP's participation in our Series A funding round was of strategic importance to us as we expand into new territories."

Chris Longbottom, CEO, Mobile Power

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