



Photographer: Sameer Halai, Co-Founder of SunFunder

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

ACCELERATING ENERGY ACCESS

RMI's Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (SEED) program is driving clean, reliable, and affordable energy access in sub-Saharan Africa.

Rocky Mountain Institute's (RMI) SEED program partners with developing countries to accelerate economic and human development by providing access to clean, renewable, and affordable energy to those without reliable electricity. We do this by partnering with governments and utilities, development actors, and private sector energy developers to create programs and build consensus to drive renewable whole-systems electricity solutions.

WHY SEED

Electricity underpins economic and social development. While the economies of sub-Saharan Africa continue to grow rapidly, [over 600 million people remain without access to electricity](#). For these economies to develop and for the [quality of life of those living in these countries to improve, their citizens and industries need access to electricity](#).

Current electricity consumption in sub-Saharan Africa is small

in comparison to the U.S., the EU, or China, but consumption is on track to grow by 2040 to equal the combined 2010 electricity consumption of Latin America and India. This rapid growth represents a tremendous opportunity to influence future electricity systems and emissions. These systems could be centralized and heavily dependent on fossil fuels, or they could take full advantage of recent developments in energy efficiency, cost-competitive renewables, and distributed generation.

Countries in sub-Saharan Africa are grappling with how to incorporate these recent developments affordably, equitably, and effectively. Development partners like the World Bank, the African Development Bank, USAID, and the UK's Department for International Development are faced with the related challenge of how best to marshal their financial and technical resources. At the same time, private sector energy developers and investors are eyeing rapidly changing and growing business opportunities.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

RMI is increasing energy access in developing countries through single-country engagements that follow three phases of work.

1. Drawing on our experience and knowledge of energy systems, we run a series of diagnostics to determine both the costs and opportunities of existing and potential generation, transmission, demand-side resources, and off-grid technologies. The team spends time on the ground working with stakeholders and gathering data. We deliver a diagnostic report and strategic recommendations to key players, including the government.
2. RMI then works alongside government, development partners, and private sector players to implement the strategic recommendations. Once again, the team spends time in-country to ensure local capacity is built.
3. Finally, RMI works with trusted long-term in-country implementation partners to hand off the work for implementation and provides ongoing, targeted support to ensure continuing impact.



Photo courtesy: Off.Grid:Electric / M-POWER



Photo courtesy: KivuWatt Power Plant, Rwanda

PROGRESS

Working with its first partner country, Rwanda, SEED has realized a number of accomplishments, including:

- Worked with development partners and the private sector to create a shared vision for and approach to rural electrification
- Identified \$20 million per year in immediate savings for the national utility and developed an energy efficiency program with the utility to capture savings
- Identified concrete opportunities to help the government meet its rural electrification targets to grow access to electricity from 22% to 70% using a combination of on-grid and off-grid technologies
- Revealed \$1B in long-term cumulative savings potential for the national utility

WHY RMI

We've been a leader in energy planning and strategic thinking in developed countries for decades. More recently, we've provided strategic support for the Chinese government and Caribbean island nations as they plan for the long-term clean energy transition. Our traditional focus on analysis and facilitation is well suited to both providing an analytical diagnostic to guide our recommendations, and to working with stakeholders to ensure adoption of our recommendations.



About Rocky Mountain Institute

Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI)—an independent nonprofit founded in 1982—transforms global energy use to create a clean, prosperous, and secure low-carbon future. It engages businesses, communities, institutions, and entrepreneurs to accelerate the adoption of market-based solutions that cost-effectively shift from fossil fuels to efficiency and renewables. RMI has offices in Basalt and Boulder, Colorado; New York City; Washington, D.C.; and Beijing.

GET INVOLVED

SEED is for governments, development partners, and private sector organization that are expanding access to electricity and driving economic development. SEED provides an unbiased and actionable program to accelerate sustainable development that considers both on- and off-grid approaches holistically.

Learn more at: rmi.org/SEED
or contact Callie Sasser at: seed@rmi.org