

E-MOBILITY PROJECT REPORT NO. 04

Women in E-Mobility Entrepreneurship Incubation Training and Short-Term Impact Assessment

August 2026

By Eleanor Browne,¹ James Gatimu,² Rodgers Jefferson Wekesa,² Ernest Chitechi,² Anne Maina,³ Yvonne Gitu,³ Esin Yoruk⁴ and Ann Kingiri³

Design and layout by Yvonne Gitu

- 1 - Independent Researcher & Consultant, UK
2 - Kenya Climate Innovation Centre, Kenya
3 - African Centre for Technology (ACTS), Kenya
4 - Centre for Resilient Business and Society, Coventry University, UK



PROJECT BACKGROUND

Electric mobility (e-mobility) technology presents a significant opportunity for socio-economic transformation in Kenya, particularly given the country's reliance on renewable energy sources. However, the e-mobility sector is predominantly male-dominated, with women comprising only 1 in 25 employees globally. This underrepresentation hinders gender equality and economic empowerment for women, who face institutional, cultural, and technical barriers to entry. This project explored the business pathways for women entrepreneurs in the e-mobility sector by assessing their needs and generating evidence through quantitative and qualitative research, to enhance their skills. Key activities include conducting large-scale surveys and in-depth interviews with women and men in e-mobility for a comparative assessment. Ultimately, this initiative aspires to increase awareness of gender gaps in e-mobility entrepreneurship and contribute to a more inclusive socio-economic landscape, thereby enhancing individual empowerment and societal well-being across Kenya. By addressing systemic barriers and fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem, this project aspires to create lasting socio-economic benefits for women, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as Gender Equality (Goal 5) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8) while contributing to Kenya's Vision 2030 objectives.

Over a 24-month period, this initiative generated:

1. Mapped the transformative pathway of electric mobility technology in Kenya for business opportunities through a gender and inclusivity lens (Report 1)
2. Identified individual and systemic factors that enhance or constrain high-growth e-mobility entrepreneurship activities related to women within Kenya's unique institutional and cultural context, by focusing on women's needs and challenges and collected quantitative and qualitative evidence (Reports 2 and 3)
3. Developed e-mobility focused entrepreneurship training programme for pre-startups and early startups for incubators, pilot trained 18 women entrepreneurs and assessed short-term impact of the training (Report 4)
4. Developed policy and industry focused report on e-mobility and women's entrepreneurship that outlines necessary support mechanisms and recommendations (Report5)

The project partners are Coventry University in the UK and the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) in Kenya, along with the Kenya Climate Innovation Centre (KCIC) and Dr Eleanor Browne, consultant in incubation process. Project funders are gratefully acknowledged:



Report 4

Women in E-Mobility Entrepreneurship Incubation Training and Short-Term Impact Assessment

Eleanor Browne

Independent Researcher & Consultant, UK

James Gatimu, Rodgers Jefferson Wekesa, Ernest Chitechi

Kenya Climate Innovation Centre, Kenya

Anne Maina and Yvonne Gitu

African Centre for Technology Studies, Kenya

Esin Yoruk

Centre for Resilient Business and Society

Coventry University, UK

Ann Kingiri

African Centre for Technology Studies, Kenya

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Note: Authors are listed in order of the parts of the report. Authors of Part A and Part B are credited with the design, organisation and implementation of entrepreneurship training programmes. Authors of Part C are credited with survey design, data collection and impact assessment. Esin Yoruk and Ann Kingiri supervised, integrated and organised the four parts.

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Introduction

This report presents E-Mobility focused entrepreneurship incubation programmes specifically designed for women entrepreneurs in this project, the short-term impact assessment of these pilot trainings and the case study of Oxford University Incubator as a best practice example.

The Women in E-Mobility Incubation Program was designed to address the underrepresentation of women in Kenya's e-mobility sector. Evidence from Report 2 and Report 3 in this series has identified lack of skills in e-mobility, finance, marketing, digital and networking skills as major barriers for women in e-mobility. Whilst women in e-mobility are highly educated, women e-mobility entrepreneurs are not many. However, the project identified that there are many women interested in the field of e-mobility entrepreneurship with ideas to be commercialised.

To address this gap, this project developed e-mobility focused entrepreneurship training programmes for two cohorts of women entrepreneurs: (1) Pre-startup stage encompassing potential women entrepreneurs in idea generation phase, and (2) Early startup stage encompassing women entrepreneurs who already have set up companies. The trainings were advertised on social media (KCIC website, LinkedIn, Facebook) during November and December 2025. From around 45 applications 18 women entrepreneurs were selected. The selection criteria included being a woman, operating in e-mobility sector in Kenya, owning a company or having an idea in e-mobility that can be commercialised. The selection was made by the KCIC team. The pilot trainings commenced in January 2026 with two webinars for pre-startup stage enterprises and then jointly with early startup and pre-startup enterprises in 7 webinars. A hands-on factory e-mobility training day took place on the 14th of July 2026 with all women entrepreneurs attending a full day in person training at Kiri EV production units lectured and trained by Chief Engineer Arnold Omolo.

Program Partners: Kenya Climate Innovation Center (KCIC), Coventry University, Africa Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), British Council (Funding)

Program Duration: January – July 2026

Cohort Composition: 18 Women-Led Enterprises (6 Pre-startups + 12 Early-Stage SMEs)

Program Overview and Phased Inception: The 6-month blended journey (knowledge webinars, practical workshop, networking conference) was executed in two phases.

- **Phase 1 (Pre-startup Cohort):** Six pre-startup entrepreneurs began their training on February 6, 2026, focusing on foundational ideation, validation, and resilience in two webinars.
- **Phase 2 (Merged Cohort):** Following the pre-startup sessions, the program onboarded 12 early-stage SMEs in a formal **Virtual Inception Meeting on March 11, 2026**. The two groups were merged into a single cohort of 18 enterprises. From this point forward, all joint six training sessions on entrepreneurship, business planning, financial modelling, go-to-market strategy, e-mobility technical training, empowerment were conducted as one unified team. A hands-on in person full day technical training for both cohorts took place at Kiri EV on 14 July 2026.

This report presents in three parts the training program developed for pre-startups by Eleanor Browne; the training program developed for pre-startups by James Gatimu and Rodgers Jefferson Wekesa and finally a short-term impact assessment of the programs by way of comparing two surveys conducted at the beginning of the program and at the end of the program by Anne Maina and Yvonne Gitu.

Part A: Pre-Startup Training Design and Conduct

By Dr Eleanor Browne

Introduction

This tailored pre-start training is led by Dr. Eleanor Browne, an expert and practitioner in business incubation and entrepreneurial education. The training design draws on pre-incubation programs and best practices from a range of contexts, cohorts, and industries. The training design is informed by the Kenyan e-mobility context provided through the project's research, case studies, and discussion with the KCIC and project team.

Specifically designed to prepare Kenyan female pre-start entrepreneurs in the e-mobility sector, this training acts as a foundational precursor to the KCIC e-mobility program. The pedagogical approach is grounded in constructivism, utilising inclusive, active learning to synthesise participant insights, reflections, and discussion to enhance the learning experience for all. Following this pre-start training, this group then join the broader KCIC cohort, where they integrate with early-stage startups. This scaffolded journey – combining specialised training with KCIC's access to funding and networks – creates a pre-incubation environment for women in the e-mobility sector.

The pre-start applications to the e-mobility training program demonstrate the entrepreneurs join the program with good business ideas and relevant industry experiences through prior employment. The curriculum for this pre-start training program is tailored for this group to practice and build confidence in validating their business ideas by testing core assumptions regarding their desirability, feasibility, and financial viability. The training introduces methods for refining and pivoting their business ideas where necessary. The sessions also emphasised entrepreneurial resilience and horizon scanning to help founders navigate resource constraints and a shifting landscape. Relevant real-world case studies on Ampersand and BasiGo were included to illustrate relatable startups pivoting their business models to generate discussion, understanding, and learning.

PRE-STARTUP ENTERPRISES (6)

#	Enterprise Name	Founder(s)	Brief Profile	Primary Focus
1	We Deliver	Diana Irungu	Tech-powered logistics platform using solar-powered e-bikes for last-mile delivery, targeting SMEs. Lease-to-own model for riders.	Delivery / Green Logistics
2	RAXI Safety OS	Sarah Elaine Koinange	Safety Operating System integrating crash detection, emergency triage, digital Guarantee of Payment, and ambulance dispatch for EV fleets.	Safety Software / Platform
3	Shamba Ride (Mizizi Mobility)	Maureen Wangeci	Load-carrying e-bikes for rural baobab farmers, combined with solar-powered charging hubs and community-based ownership models.	Delivery / Green Logistics
4	Zaroi Limited	Peris Nguhi Karanga	Route-based EV charging infrastructure deployment, partnering with petrol stations and roadside locations along key travel corridors.	Charging Infrastructure
5	Mustard Hub	Joy Chepkoech Soi	Modular battery swapping hubs for e-bikes, motorcycles, and cars, using standardized, swappable batteries with a pay-per-use model.	Battery Charging/Swapping
6	Joan's Battery Swapping Station	Joan Amondi Ouma	Promotes affordable electric motorcycles with rider education, basic maintenance training, and community awareness targeting women and youth.	Battery Swapping & Maintenance

Pre-Startup Training Webinars

Webinars were hosted by KCIC, with Dr Eleanor Browne leading the pre-start content and interactive activities with the cohort of six female pre-start entrepreneurs.

These webinars were scheduled for a repeat slot on consecutive Fridays to provide consistency for the cohort.

- Friday 6th February 2026 11am-1pm: 'Refining Business Ideas' Part 1
- Friday 13th February 2026 11am-1pm: 'Refining Business Ideas' Part 2
-



Pre-startup entrepreneurs introducing themselves to project training team

Session 1: Refining Business Ideas – Agenda Part 1 (Feb 6, 2026)

By Dr Eleanor Browne

Focus: Validating startup ideas within Kenya's e-mobility sector.

Key Content:

- **Welcome**
- **Incubator team introductions**
- **How we will work together**
- **Confidentiality & trust**
- **Today's webinar:**
 - Entrepreneur introductions

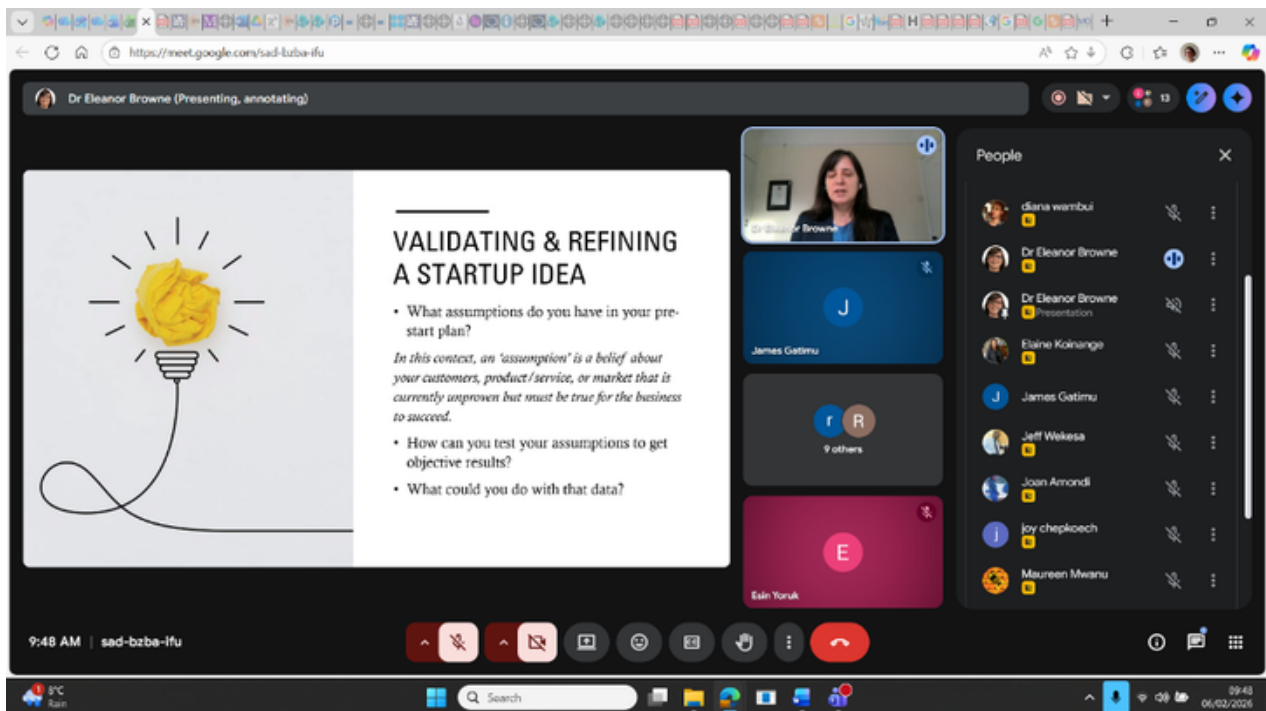
Entrepreneur Pitches: Six ventures presented, including:

- We Deliver:** Solar-powered e-bike logistics platform.
- Roxy Safety OS:** Crash detection & emergency response system.
- Shambaride:** E-bikes for rural baobab farmers.
- Zaroi Ltd:** Route-based EV charging.
- Mustard Hub:** Battery swapping models.
- Joan's Battery Swapping Station:** Battery swapping models.

- Introduction to idea validation & refining

Core Training: Emphasized identifying and testing critical assumptions (market demand, willingness to pay) before launch. Introduced the concept of using Minimum Viable Products (MVPs) for low-resource validation.

- Introduce next week's webinar: Pre-startup idea development and Pre-startup resilience



Dr Eleanor Browne delivering session 1

Session 2: Refining Business Ideas – Agenda Part 2 (Feb 13, 2026)

By Dr Eleanor Browne

Focus: Developing ideas in rapidly changing environments and building personal resilience.

Key Content:

- Welcome back
 - Reflections on last week
 - Any questions?
- Pre-startup idea development
 - Idea development in a rapidly changing context
 - Horizon scanning
 - Testing, iterating, pivoting

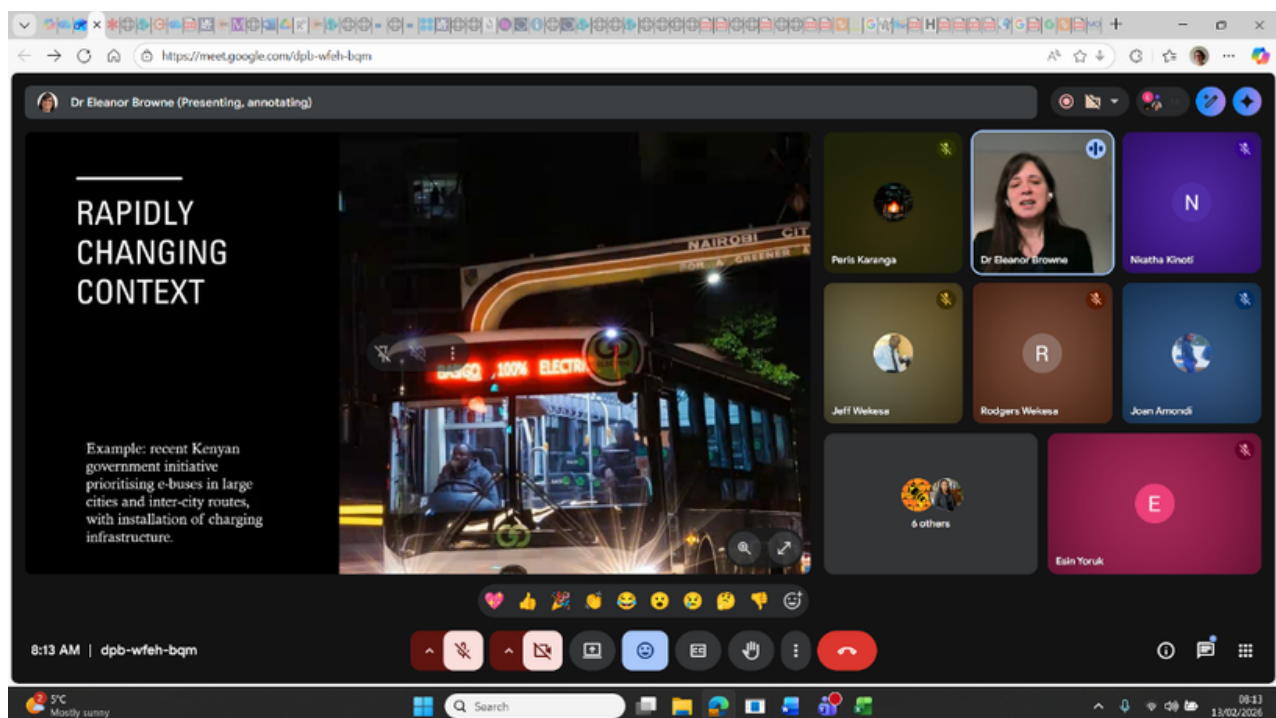
Idea Pivot Example: One entrepreneur shared a successful pivot from a hardware-focused model to a software-driven approach to reduce entry costs.

Horizon Scanning: Taught entrepreneurs to monitor external factors (legislative changes, tech shifts) while managing daily operations.

- Pre-startup resilience
 - Resource constraints
 - Dealing with challenges
 - Personal resilience toolkit

Resilience Toolkit: Introduced the concept of personal support systems (family, peers) as critical capital for solo founders transitioning from corporate environments.

Way Forward: Announced a 3-week break to realign the program, after which the cohort would be merged with incoming early-stage startups.



Dr Eleanor Browne delivering session 2

Engagement

The pre-start cohort were actively engaged in the webinars. They demonstrated openness and a willingness to build trust with their fellow entrepreneurs and the program team, share their experiences and questions, and contribute to the group learning experience.

Feedback

Following the two pre-start training webinars, participants are asked to provide feedback on their experience. Providing feedback is voluntary and their responses are anonymised. The prompting questions for feedback are:

1. How did you find the tone and level of information in the prestart sessions?
2. What resonated with you, that you intend to (or already have) put into practice?
3. In what ways did the webinars encourage you to speak openly from your perspective, and did you feel able to?
4. If you were describing the experience of these prestart webinars to another female founder, what would you say about how the information was delivered and discussed?

Feedback responses from four participants who gave feedback are collated below:

How did you find the tone and level of information in the prestart sessions?

Participant 1: I found the tone and level of information in the sessions good and very informative, especially the session on developing the MVP.

Participant 2: The tone of the sessions was very supportive, practical, and encouraging for early-stage entrepreneurs. The information was delivered in a clear and structured way, making complex business ideas easier to understand and apply to our own ventures.

Participant 3: I found the tone to be refreshingly respectful and grounded in reality. So often, as founders, we are pitching "expert" advice that feels disconnected from the hustle of Nairobi or the reality of onboarding an SME owner in a satellite town who primarily uses WhatsApp and Swahili voice notes. Eleanor's session was the opposite.

The level of information was targeted and practical. It wasn't a generic lecture on entrepreneurship. It felt like Eleanor had actually looked at our sectors; particularly the e-mobility and logistics space and tailored the conversation to the hurdles we are actually facing. For example, the discussion around validating unit economics before scaling resonated deeply with the numbers. It validated that our focus on getting to that \$0.77 per delivery cost and the 36% gross margin at scale is exactly where we need to be.

Participant 4: The tone and level of information in the prestart sessions were clear, engaging, and highly relevant to early-stage entrepreneurs. I appreciated how practical and actionable the content was, making it easy to see how it could be applied directly to my business.

What resonated with you that you intend to (or already have) put into practice?

Participant 1: One thing that stood out for me was the need to have a proof of concept in order to assess the feasibility of an idea. From the session [...], I also learnt the importance of working with professional partners who can help strengthen the work and improve its feasibility.

Participant 2: What resonated with me most was the importance of testing ideas, gathering data, and clearly defining the value proposition of a business. This has helped me think more strategically about my business idea, [...], especially in understanding customer needs and designing solutions for electric motorcycle riders.

Participant 3: A few key points from the session have already been playing on my mind:

1. The Power of "Why" in Storytelling: Eleanor emphasized that investors invest in the "why" behind the founder, not just the "what" of the product. With my 14+ years in commercial strategy across Africa, the session made me realize I need to connect those dots more explicitly. It's not just about my CV; it's about why I moved from stable employment to last-mile logistics—to build systems that truly empower the 6.5 million SMEs who are the backbone of our economy.
2. Deepening the Founder-Market Fit: The discussion encouraged me to lean into my own expertise. My experience with last-mile distribution through WHO/UN projects isn't just a bullet point; it's the core reason I understand the trust issues and technology barriers. I intend to rewrite my founder's story to make that connection more visceral for investors.
3. Validation as a De-risking Tool: It was affirming to hear that our strategy of building a waitlist of 1,000+ SMEs before launching the pilot is exactly the right way to de-risk the venture. It gave me confidence that we are on the right track.

Participant 4: What resonated most with me was the focus on identifying opportunities, building confidence in decision-making, and learning from real-world examples. I've already started implementing some of the strategies discussed in the sessions to refine our operations and approach to customer engagement.

In what ways did the webinars encourage you to speak openly from your perspective, and did you feel able to?

Participant 1: At the beginning, I had some doubts about my idea, but through the initial presentations and the process of conceptualising it, I was able to refine it further. I am still continuing to improve and develop it.

Participant 2: The webinars created a safe and inclusive environment where participants were encouraged to share their ideas and experiences. I felt comfortable contributing my thoughts and discussing the challenges and opportunities in the e-mobility sector, particularly for women entrepreneurs.

Participant 3: Absolutely, I felt completely able to speak openly.

Firstly, Eleanor created a "safe container." By actively listening and asking probing, non-judgmental questions, she made it clear that this was a space for honest reflection, not for showcasing perfection. This was crucial.

Secondly, the presence of other female founders in the cohort was empowering. Hearing [...] or [...] speak about their own challenges with supply chains or customer adoption made me feel less alone in the struggles. It gave me the confidence to speak openly about the specific challenges of building a tech-logistics company; like the difficulty of finding the right CTO with the specific M-Pesa and Flutter experience we need, without fear of seeming weak or underprepared. The session validated that these are systemic challenges, not personal failings.

Participant 4: The webinars encouraged me to speak openly by fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. I felt comfortable sharing my experiences and asking questions, knowing they would be met with understanding and constructive feedback.

If you were describing the experience of these prestart webinars to another female founder, what would you say about how the information was delivered and discussed?

Participant 1: The prestart webinars were delivered in a clear way and helped give some direction on the next steps a founder should take when building their product.

Participant 2: I would describe the sessions as interactive, supportive, and very relevant for female founders who are starting their entrepreneurial journey. The facilitators encouraged open discussion, practical thinking, and peer learning, which made the sessions both inspiring and useful.

I would tell her this: "Imagine a conversation where you are seen, heard, and challenged in exactly the right measure; that is Eleanor's session."

Here's how I'd describe it:

- **Information Delivery:** It wasn't a top-down lecture. It was a dialogue. Eleanor would introduce a concept, like the importance of market research and validation—turning research into actionable milestones—and then immediately turn it back to us: you have indicated a path to SAAS business model in 3 years, walk me through the assumptions behind that." It forced us to defend our thinking, to connect our research directly to our financial projections, which is exactly what we need to do with investors. She didn't just tell us validation was important; she made us prove we had done it.
- **Discussion Style:** The discussion was highly collaborative. It felt like we were all in the trenches together, sharing tools. When I spoke about our solar-powered model and the plan to monetize beyond delivery fees, the conversation naturally flowed to the mechanics of that and another founder jumped in to share her own research on the solar powered motorbikes service industry in Kenya. It turns a solitary struggle into a shared problem-solving experience. You leave the session not just with theory, but with practical leads and insights from women who are living the same reality.

For any female founder feeling like she is navigating the startup world alone, I would say: join this session. You will leave feeling sharper, more confident, and part of a powerful community.

Participant 4: If I were to describe these prestart webinars to another female founder, I would say that the sessions are insightful, well-structured, and delivered in a way that balances practical guidance with personal inspiration. They are an excellent platform for learning, reflection, and connecting with peers navigating similar entrepreneurial journeys.

Appendices

A – Session Plans

B – Webinars Outline

C – Slides Webinar 1 & 2

D – Case Studies (BasiGo & Ampersand)

Appendices are available upon request from authors.

Part B: Early Startup Training Design and Conduct

By James Gatimu, Rodgers Jefferson Wekesa and Ernest Chitechi

Introduction

This tailored early-start training is led by Kenya Climate Innovation Centre (KCIC) experts and practitioners in business incubation and entrepreneurship with support from e-mobility experts. The training design draws on pre-incubation programs and best practices from a range of contexts, cohorts, and industries. The training design is informed by the Kenyan e-mobility context provided through the project's research, case studies, and builds on the previous capacities of KCIC in delivering such entrepreneurship training to different sectors. It is the first time KCIC delivered their program to E-mobility entrepreneurs and specifically women. This training for early startups is preceded by a pre-startup cohort which joined them after two preparatory sessions on idea refinement. In these sessions entrepreneurs are trained on the basics of entrepreneurship, business planning, financial modelling, marketing, e-mobility technical training and empowerment and resilience of women entrepreneurs. Most importantly, this second phase of training involved a full day hands-on and in person e-mobility factory training where women entrepreneurs received training from Kiri EV's chief engineer Arnold Omolo. This day training has been highly praised by the women taking part in the program. The major feedback was that they needed more of such training broken down to e-mobility modules covering motorbikes and battery separately.

Early-Stage Operational SMEs (12)

#	Enterprise Name	Founder(s)	Brief Profile	Primary Focus
7	PandaBoda	Emma Nkatha Kinoti	Multi-lingual app and USSD platform connecting riders and clients in rural areas, focusing on safety, pricing consistency, and offline access.	Passenger Transportation
8	E-Safiri Charging Limited	Carol Ofafa	Solar-powered "Safiri Hubs" offering battery charging/swapping, EV leasing, and modular ice-making for cold storage in off-grid communities.	Charging Infrastructure
9	Xolani Women of Hope	Dorcas Moraa Nyamanya	Women-led CBO training women from informal settlements in e-motorcycle repair and green last-mile delivery services with childcare support.	Maintenance / Training

10	Go Green Gold Energies Ltd	Lilian Gicharu	Solar-powered, off-grid charging stations for e-bikes, e-cars, and cargo vehicles, designed to be modular and accessible for women operators.	Charging Infrastructure
11	Her Go Courier Services	Mary Kalunde Munyao	Lease-to-own e-bike financing for women farmers in rural Lamu to transport produce to market, reducing post-harvest losses.	Delivery / Green Logistics
12	Chixz Auto Garage	Irene Wali	Trains vulnerable young women from informal settlements in automotive mechanics, EV repair, and e-mobility infrastructure with NITA certification.	Maintenance / Training
13	Siganda Limited	Emily Ochanda	Integrates capacity building, distribution of bundled clean energy products (2&3 wheelers), and consultancy via SACCO-based green loans.	Distribution of E-Mobility Assets
14	Apah Pure Water Limited	Lydia Nyambura Anyangu	Water manufacturing and distribution company committing to e-motor vehicles for delivery, with a battery swapping station installed by Zoho.	Delivery / Green Logistics
15	Lithigen East Africa	Mary Wangechi Maina	Collects, tests, and repurposes retired EV batteries into second-life energy storage systems for homes, SMEs, and solar installations.	Recycling of E-Mobility Waste
16	Glohekita & Associates	Gloria Kitur	Women in Healthcare Cycling Network using e-bikes for commuting and wellness, targeting female healthcare professionals in Nairobi.	Capacity Building / Mobility
17	Makenak Holdings Limited	Mercy Murithi	End-to-end mobility systems integrator offering EV consultancy, vehicle supply, custom Modular Charging Racks, and fleet management training.	Sales of Assets & Infrastructure

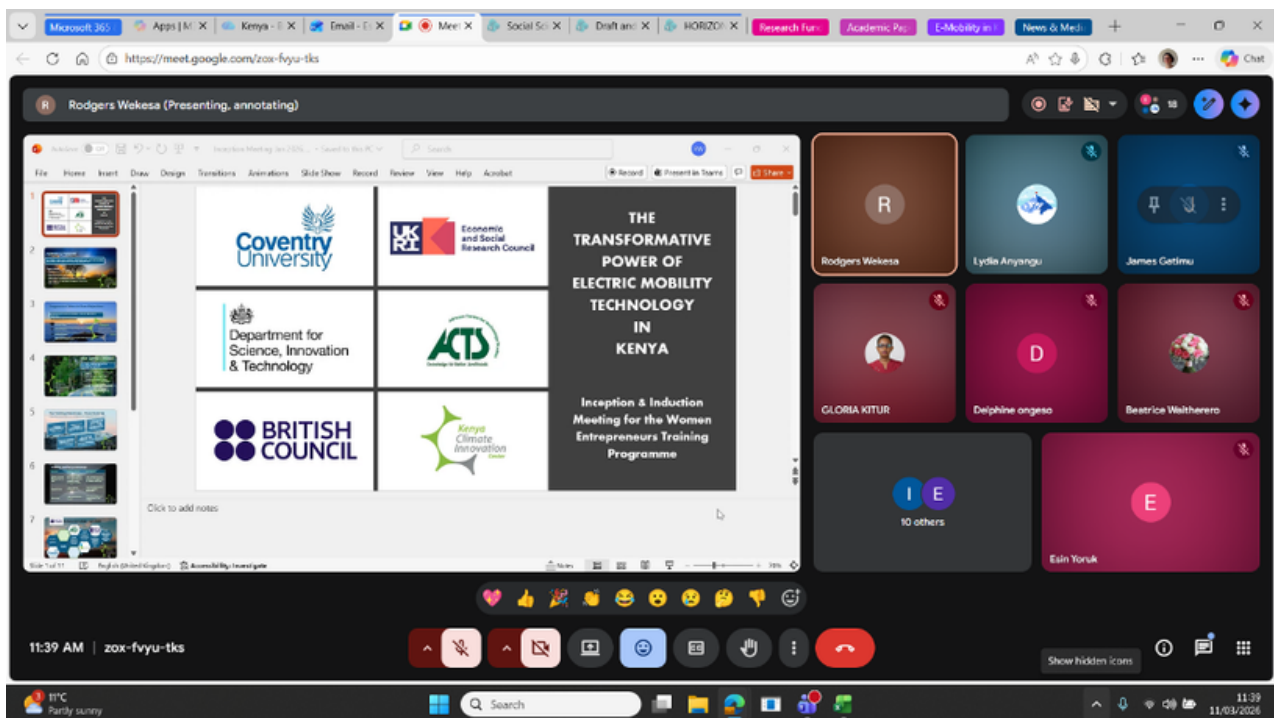
18	Waste Kikwetu	Beatrice Waitherero Waweru	Circular battery lifecycle service for lithium-ion batteries, including collection, diagnostics, second-life energy storage, and recycling.	Recycling of E-Mobility Waste
19	Hyacinth-EcoFiber	Margaret Saru Kalama	<i>(Inactive – Did not return signed grant agreement)</i> Converts water hyacinth into plant-based braiding fiber using e-mobility logistics.	Recycling of E-Mobility Waste

Session 3: Virtual Inception Meeting (March 11, 2026)

Focus: Formal welcome and onboarding of the 12 new enterprises and integration with the existing 6 pre-startups.

Key Outcomes:

- **Unified Cohort Confirmed:** 18 enterprises total (e.g., E-Safiri Charging, Chixz Auto Garage, Her Go Courier, Siganda Ltd, Lithigen East Africa, MakenaK Holdings).
- **Program Roadmap Reset:** Participants were informed of the joint 6-week webinar series, a 2-day practical workshop in May, and a networking conference in June.
- **Expectations Set:** Emphasized active participation, completion of baseline surveys, and submission of signed letters of agreement.



Early startup entrepreneurs joining pre-startup entrepreneurs

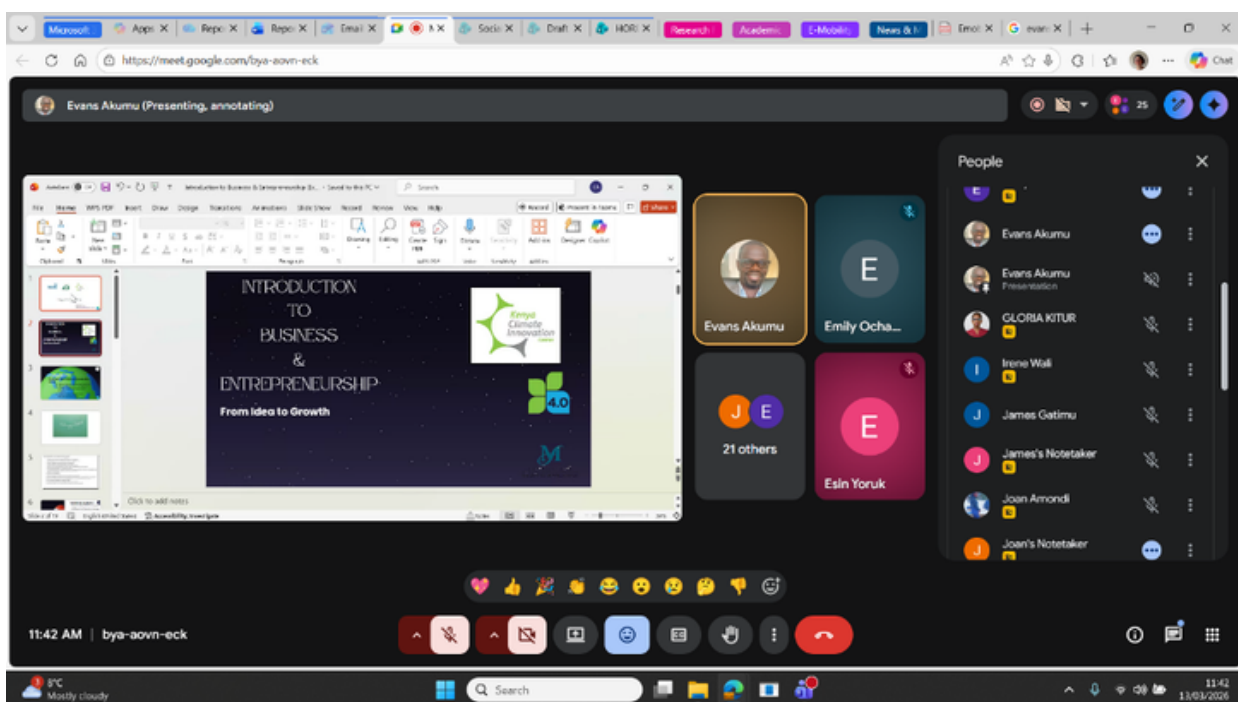
Session 4: Entrepreneurship Training (March 13, 2026)

By Evans Akumu (KCIC)

Focus: Core entrepreneurial principles for building sustainable, impactful ventures.

Key Content:

- **Business vs. Entrepreneurship:** Distinguished traditional profit-driven models from entrepreneurial ventures that identify gaps, take risks, and create systemic value.
- **Key Entrepreneurial Qualities:** Energy, risk-taking, leadership, creativity.
- **Management Style:** Advocated for horizontal management and ground-level leadership over a top-down "boss" approach.
- **Exit Strategy:** Emphasized the necessity of having a succession or exit plan from the outset.



Evans Akumu of KCIC delivering the session on Entrepreneurship

Session 5: Business Planning (March 27, 2026)

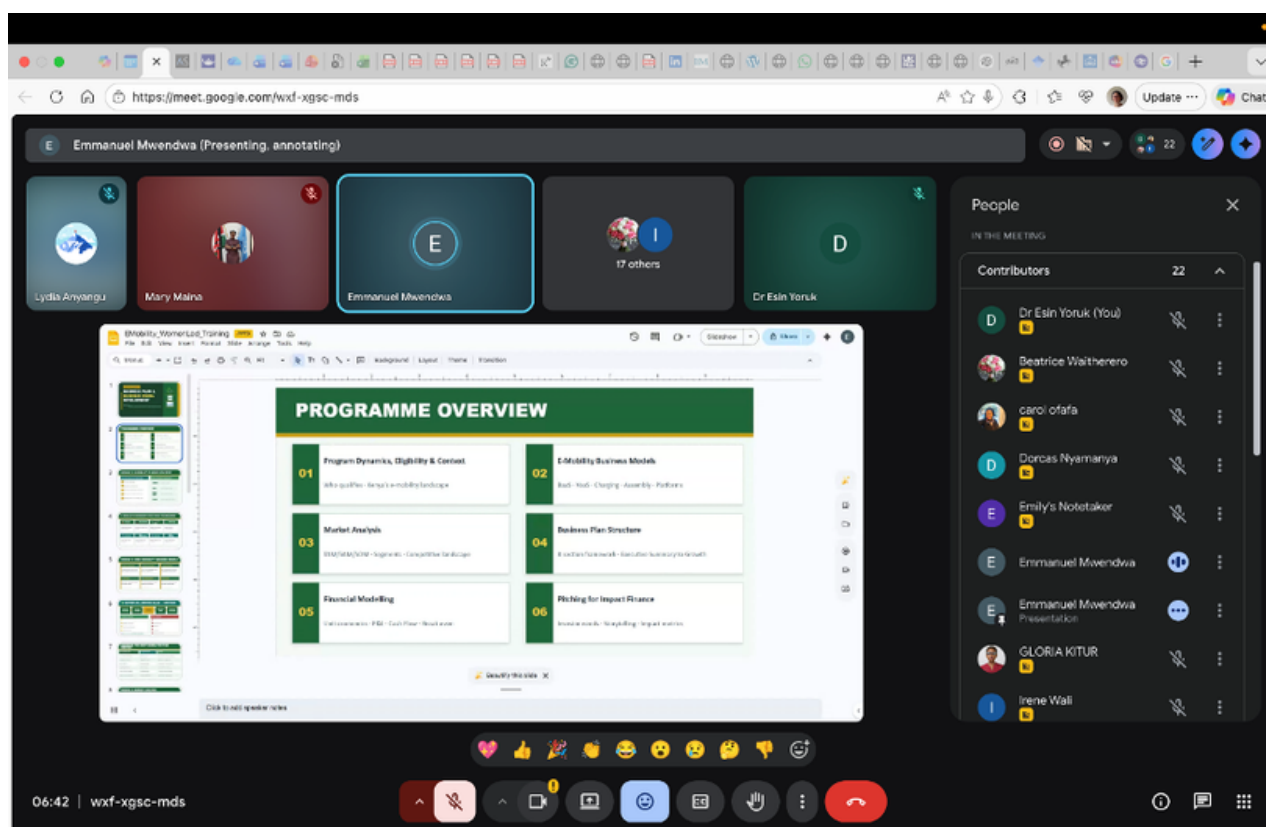
By Emmanuel Mwendwa (KCIC)

Focus: Developing robust business plans and financial models for the e-mobility sector.

Key Content:

- **E-Mobility Business Models:** Deep dive into Battery-as-a-Service (BAS) and Vehicle-as-a-Service (VaaS), including key revenue drivers (swap rates) and cost drivers (battery depreciation).

- **Investor-Ready Documents:** Training on creating pitch decks, business model canvases, and investment teasers.
- **Practical Tool:** Entrepreneurs were introduced to using AI tools (e.g., Claude AI) to draft business plans and financial projections.
- **Eligibility Reminder:** Reiterated the 51% women-owned requirement (evidenced by CR12 form).



Emmanuel Mwendwa of KCIC delivering the session on Business planning

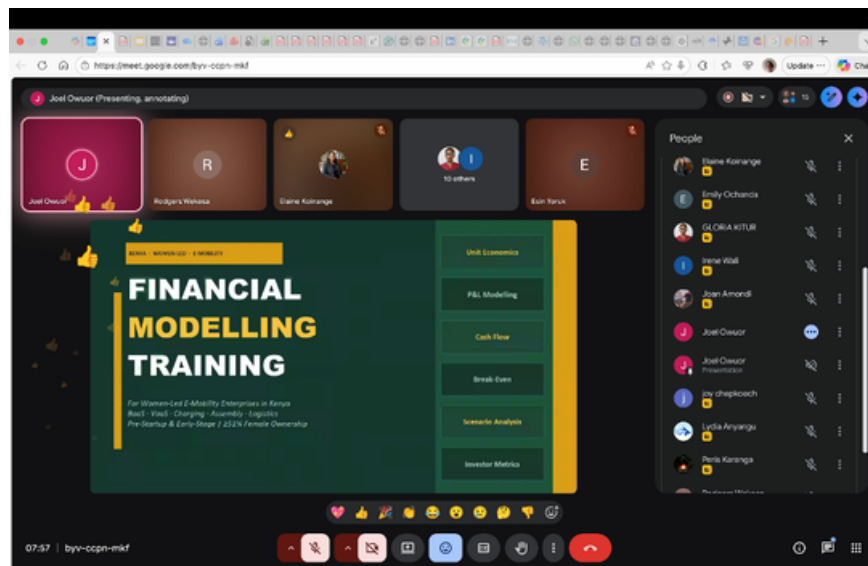
Session 6: Financial Modelling (April 10, 2026)

By Joel Owuor (KCIC)

Focus: Transforming business concepts into financially viable and investable models.

Key Content:

- **Purpose of Financial Models:** Valuation, understanding leverage buyouts, and IPO preparation.
- **Key Components:** Assumptions (market size, pricing, volume), unit economics, three financial statements (P&L, Cash Flow, Balance Sheet), and scenario/sensitivity analysis (conservative, base, optimistic).
- **Investor Expectations:** Emphasized models must be based on verifiable data. For e-mobility, investors require measurable impact metrics (CO2 avoidance, gender inclusivity e.g., 2x criteria) alongside financial returns.



Joel Owuor of KCIC delivering Financial modelling session

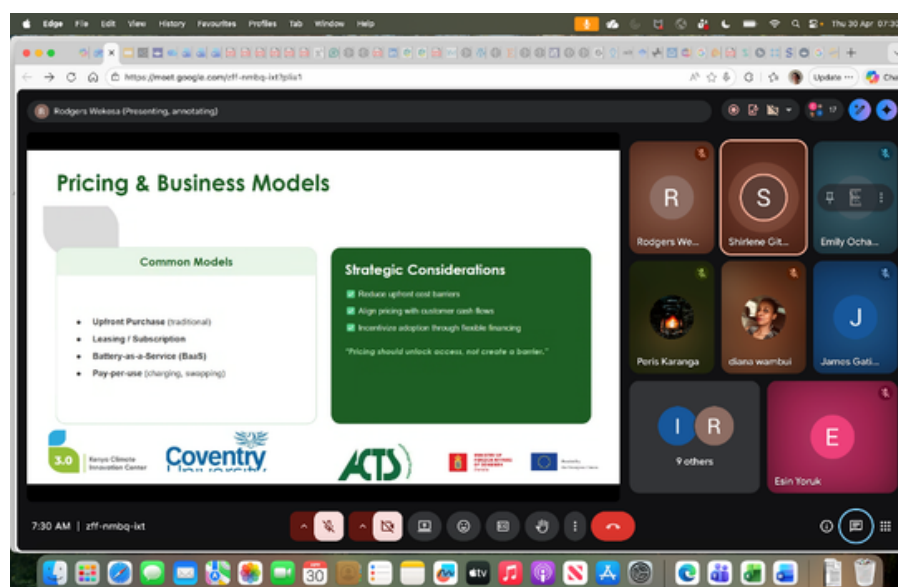
Session 7: Go-To-Market (GTM) Strategy (April 30, 2026)

By Shirline Gitahi (KCIC)

Focus: Defining target markets, value propositions, and actionable launch plans for the Kenyan e-mobility context.

Key Content:

- **Market Context:** Kenya's EV registrations grew from 800 to 9,000 units (2022-2024). Adoption barriers include high upfront costs and policy inconsistencies.
- **Strategic Components:** Segmentation (B2C, B2G, use case), value proposition ("purpose-built" products), and the critical role of partnerships (finance, energy, distribution).
- **Women-Focused Discussion:** Addressed financial barriers for women (high daily loan repayments, lack of asset ownership). Explored lease-to-own models, leveraging chamas (women's savings groups), and carbon financing to subsidize costs.



Shirline Gitahi of KCIC delivering the session on market strategies

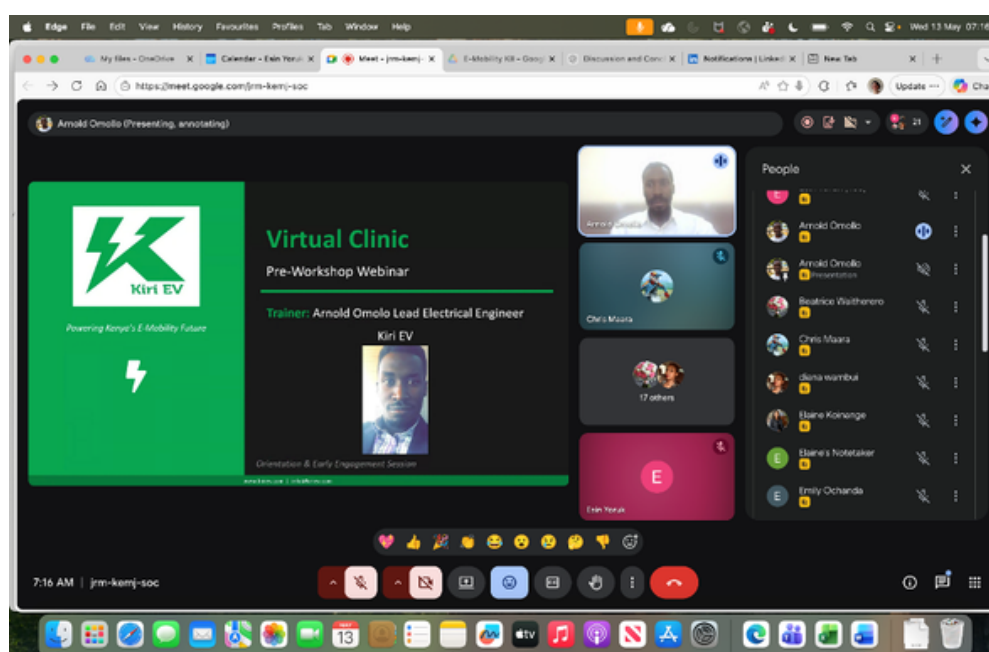
Session 8: Virtual E-Mobility Technical Clinic (Prep for Hands-On Workshop) (May 13, 2026)

By Arnold Omolo (Chief Engineer at Kiri EV)

Focus: Foundational technical knowledge ahead of the in-person e-mobility workshop.

Key Content:

- **Technical Components:** Detailed breakdown of EV systems: batteries (LFP vs. NMC chemistries), hub vs. mid-motors, controllers (the "brain"), and Battery Management Systems (BMS).
- **Safety & Troubleshooting:** Proper charger use, battery storage, daily checks (brakes, tires), and preventing thermal runaway.
- **Business Strategy:** Advised on piloting before scaling, ensuring strong after-sales support, and navigating regulatory uncertainties.



Chief Eng. Arnold Omolo of Kiri EV delivering technical e-mobility session

Session 9: Empowerment Training (May 22, 2026)

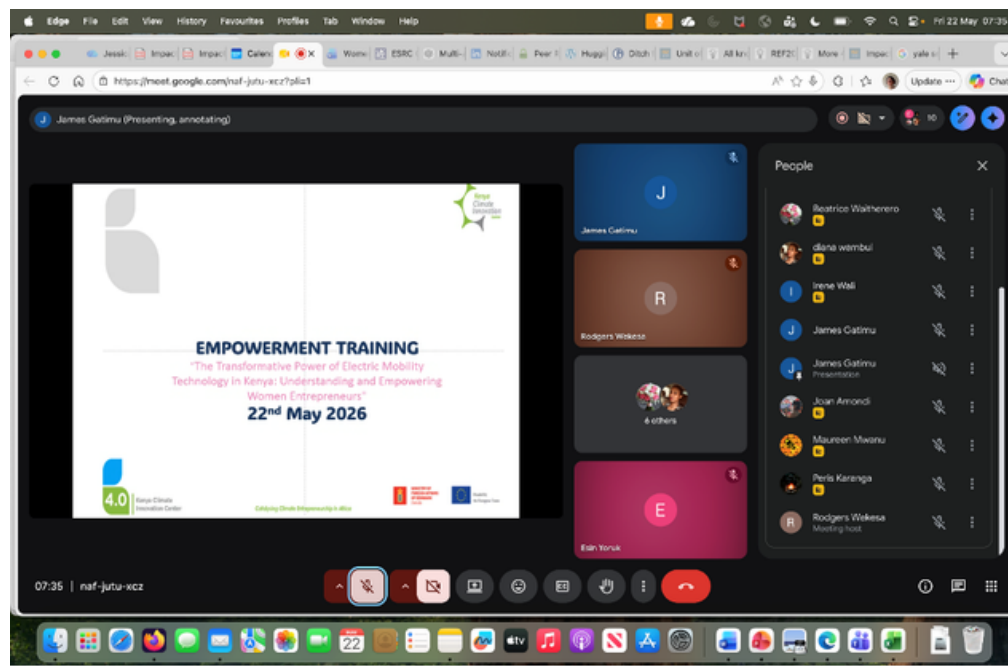
By James Gatimu (KCIC)

Focus: Intrinsic, agency-based empowerment for navigating a male-dominated sector.

Key Content:

- **Agency vs. Resource-Based Empowerment:** Focused on internal drivers (attitude, confidence) rather than external support alone.
- **The "Tree of Life" Metaphor:** A tool for self-reflection on history (roots), daily life (trunk), achievements (fruits), and future hopes (birds).

- **Cognitive Reframing:** Mental strategies to identify and replace limiting beliefs and negative thoughts, focusing on lessons learned.
- **Closing Context:** Facilitators noted that while women show high intrinsic motivation, they face systemic disadvantages in access to extrinsic resources (capital, networks). The program's conclusion was framed as a transition to ongoing support and the upcoming in-person workshop in July 2026.



James Gatimu of KCIC delivering women empowerment session

Next Steps (Post-Training)

The virtual training component of the Women in E-Mobility Incubation Program successfully merged two cohorts into a unified group of 18 women-led ventures. The training progressed logically from foundational ideation (Feb) to advanced topics like financial modelling and GTM strategy (April), culminating in technical and empowerment sessions (May).

Confirmed Next Steps:

1. **Hands-On Workshop (July 14th, 2026):** An in-person session at an e-mobility facility focusing on retrofitting, assembly, maintenance, and a factory visit.
2. **Networking Conference (July 15th, 2026):** A one-day event in Nairobi to connect women entrepreneurs with e-mobility industry leaders, funders, and policymakers, share results from the British Council project. Entrepreneurs who participated in the Entrepreneurship Training received their certificates.
3. **AI and Digital Workshop (July 16th, 2026):** A one-day event in Nairobi to connect women entrepreneurs with digital industry leaders, funders, and policymakers, raise awareness on the importance of digital skills and how women can hone such skills and embed them into their businesses.

4. Post-Program Support: Continued access to KCIC, Coventry University, and ACTS networks for advisory and potential policy advocacy. To this respect, KCIC has just announced a Founders Collective Initiative to build a lifelong community for Kenya's climate entrepreneurs. It is a platform that aims to keep climate entrepreneurs connected to capital, markets, mentorship and strategic partnerships long after they graduate from entrepreneurship support programmes. The Founders Collective was inspired by years of conversations with entrepreneurs about what happens after formal programme support ends. Entrepreneurs continued to ask: "What next? Can we keep calling KCIC even after the programme ends?" Those conversations became the catalyst for the Founders Collective.[1]

Session 10: Hands-on In-person Technical Training at Kiri EV (July 14, 2026)

By Arnold Omolo (Chief Engineer at Kiri EV)

18 women entrepreneurs took part in E-Mobility focused Entrepreneurship Training in a pilot, took part in a hands-on technical training on 14 July 2026 at the Kiri Energy e-mobility facility in Nairobi, as part of the project's incubation programme.[1] The training gave participants a practical, factory-floor introduction to the technologies underpinning Kenya's growing e-mobility sector. They toured the electric vehicle assembly line, gained hands-on experience retrofitting internal combustion engine motorcycles to electric power, explored battery diagnostics and Battery Management Systems (BMS), learned high-voltage safety protocols, and engaged directly with Kiri Energy's technical engineers on the day-to-day realities of EV assembly and maintenance.

Beyond building technical competencies, the session gave participants a clearer understanding of the technologies driving the sector and of the business opportunities emerging around them, from retrofitting and battery servicing to maintenance and fleet support. As the transition to cleaner transport accelerates, ensuring women entrepreneurs have access to this kind of technical knowledge, hands-on skills and industry networks will be essential to building a more inclusive and sustainable e-mobility ecosystem in Kenya. This day training has been highly praised by the women taking part in the program. The major feedback was that they needed more of such training broken down to e-mobility modules covering motorbikes and battery separately.



Photos capturing the hands-on training. © Zizina Pendo/KCIC

[1] We thank Kiri EV's CEO Mr Chris Mara and Chief Eng. Arnold Amolo for hosting the project team and women entrepreneurs.

Appendices

A – Session Plans

B – Webinars Outline

C – Slides Webinar 4 to 9

Appendices are available upon request from authors.

Part C: Baseline–Endline Short-term Impact Assessment of Women Entrepreneurs' Skills and Enterprise Progress

By Anne Maina, Yvonne Gitu, Rodgers Jefferson Wekesa and Esin Yoruk

Executive Summary

The e-mobility project supported women entrepreneurs via pilot Entrepreneurship Training at two stages of enterprise development: early start-ups with an operating business and pre-startups developing their business ideas. The impact assessment examined changes in skills, knowledge, enterprise development and selected business outcomes before and after the training. This section reports short-term (within 6 months) impact of the training received by women entrepreneurs.

The baseline cohort comprised 17 women entrepreneurs: 11 start-ups and 6 pre-startups. Sixteen participants were matched between baseline and endline, representing 94.1% coverage of the original cohort. Ten of the 11 start-ups and all 6 pre-startups were matched.

The strongest evidence of change is in participants' reported knowledge and skills. Across the six competency areas assessed at endline, average ratings increased in every area. The largest gain was in understanding e-mobility technologies (+1.81 points on a five-point scale), followed by technical e-mobility skills (+1.63 points). Financial management, access to funding, marketing and networking also recorded positive changes.

The early start-up group showed evidence of business progression. 8 of the 9 start-ups who reported on customer growth indicated that they had acquired additional customers, reporting 113 additional customers in aggregate. However, access to finance remained a significant constraint.

The pre-start-up group demonstrated substantial capability gains but had not yet translated these into commercial outcomes at endline. This is consistent with their earlier stage of enterprise development and the very short-term nature of the impact assessment.

Overall, the findings indicate that the intervention contributed to strengthening the technical and enterprise capabilities of women entrepreneurs in the e-mobility sector. The results also point to the importance of post-training market, finance and incubation support to convert capability gains into sustained enterprise outcomes.

Introduction

Project and impact assessment context

The e-mobility project was implemented to strengthen the participation and enterprise development of women in Kenya's emerging and fast advancing e-mobility sector. The intervention engaged women entrepreneurs at different stages of enterprise development and provided support intended to strengthen technical knowledge, enterprise management and access to sector opportunities. A comprehensive account of Entrepreneurship Training is provided in Part A and Part B of this report.

Purpose of the impact assessment

The assessment was undertaken to determine changes experienced by participating women entrepreneurs between baseline and endline of the Entrepreneurship Training, with particular attention to skills and knowledge, business development and the extent to which the intervention responded to participants' needs.

Impact assessment objectives

- Assess changes in participants' technical and enterprise-related knowledge and skills.
- Examine changes in business development and selected enterprise performance indicators.
- Compare outcomes between pre-startups and early startups.
- Document participants' experiences of the intervention and the changes they attribute to the support received.
- Identify persistent constraints and implications for future support to women entrepreneurs in e-mobility

Methodology

Impact assessment design

The impact assessment adopted a baseline–endline survey design covering the defined project cohort. The baseline survey established participants' initial characteristics, enterprise status, business performance, funding, customers, financial management, training experience and future support needs and entrepreneurial and technical skills and knowledge before the Entrepreneurship Training. The endline survey assessed these areas of skills, knowledge, business development and participant experience after the Entrepreneurship Training. The endline survey tool was accompanied by a two-minute video recording of testimonials from selected participants who agreed to onymity and where they voiced what changed for themselves as entrepreneurs and their companies after the Entrepreneurship Training.

The analysis distinguishes between the original baseline measurements and retrospective endline ratings. Selected skills and knowledge indicators at endline asked participants to assess both their current level and their perceived level before the intervention.

Data collection and ethical considerations

Baseline and endline information were collected using the project's baseline and endline survey instruments. Data were collected electronically using Kobo Toolbox survey software. The baseline survey was administered at the end of January 2026, and the endline survey was administered at the end of July 2026 shortly after the final day training on e-mobility on 14 July 2026. The video recordings of testimonials were administered on 15th of July 2026 during the networking conference.

Data collection abided by ethics legislations. All participants have given their consent to take part in the survey element of impact assessment exercise anonymously. Data gathered via surveys are anonymised. Participants who have accepted to give a video recording and testimonials have agreed for their names to be disclosed.

Data sources

Dataset	Cohort	Round	Administered on	Participants
Baseline start-ups	Early startups	Baseline	End of Jan 2026	11
Endline start-ups	Early startups	Endline	End of July 2026	10 matched
Baseline pre-startups	Pre-startups	Baseline	End of Feb 2026	6
Endline pre-startups	Pre-startups	Endline	End of July 2026	6 matched

Data management and analysis

Baseline and endline data records were exported from Kobo Toolbox and reviewed and compared. Participant records were matched using the identifier: id number for participants, supported by other participant information where required.

Quantitative analysis in baseline and endline surveys included frequencies, proportions, mean scores and changes between measurements. Matched participant data were used for paired analysis of skills and knowledge. Individual-level changes were also examined to determine the proportion of participants reporting improvement, no change or decline.

Qualitative responses in baseline and endline surveys were reviewed thematically to identify recurring changes in business models, markets, financial management, technical capability, networking and remaining support needs. Narratives from video recordings are shared for selective points that specifically highlight the main changes that had happened as a result of the Entrepreneurship Training.

Participant coverage

Indicator	Early start-ups	Pre-startups	Total
Baseline cohort	11	6	17
Matched at endline	10	6	16
Coverage	90.90%	100.00%	94.10%
Not matched	1	0	1

Findings

Changes in knowledge and skills

Participants reported positive changes across all six assessed competency areas of e-mobility technical skills, finance skills, marketing and networking skills on a scale of 1 to 5. The endline retrospective ratings indicate a substantial increase in perceived competency following the Entrepreneurship Training intervention.

Competency area	Baseline mean	Endline mean	Mean change
Technical skills in e-mobility	2.38	4	1.63
Understanding of e-mobility technologies	2.19	4	1.81
Company financial management	2.38	3.5	1.13
Access to funding	2.56	3.88	1.31
Marketing	2.5	3.81	1.31
Networking	2.56	3.75	1.19

Changes in early startups

Competency area	Mean change from baseline to endline
Technical skills in e-mobility	1.7
Understanding of e-mobility technologies	1.7
Access to funding	1.3
Marketing	1.3
Networking	1.2
Company financial management	1

On a scale of 1 to 5, e-mobility technical skills, finance skills, marketing and networking skills have increased between 1 to 1.70 (mean unit) after the Entrepreneurship Training in early startups.

Customer acquisition provides an early indication of business progression. Of the 9 start-ups who reported on customer growth, 8 reported acquiring additional customers, with 113 additional customers reported across these respondents.

At endline, 4 of the 10 matched early startups reported increasing revenue during the intervention period, 5 reported not changing revenue and one did not provide a response.

Access to finance remained a significant constraint, with 7 of the 10 matched early startups referring to funding, capital or finance among their current business challenges.

Changes in pre-startups

Competency area	Mean change from baseline to endline
Understanding of e-mobility technologies	2
Technical skills in e-mobility	1.67
Financial management	1.33
Access to funding	1.33
Marketing	1.33
Networking	1.17

On a scale of 1 to 5, e-mobility technical skills, finance skills, marketing and networking skills have increased between .17 to 2.00 (mean unit) after the Entrepreneurship Training in pre-startups. Commercial outcomes remained limited at endline. Revenue was reported by 0 of 6 pre-startups at baseline and 0 of 6 at endline; profit was reported by 0 at baseline and 0 at endline; and external funding was reported by 0 at baseline and 0 at endline. Pre-startups are companies at ideation stage; hence no reporting of revenue and profit is expected. However, none of the pre-startups had external funding for their ideas to be commercialised despite on of the women entrepreneurs had a patent in place for her idea.

Financial record-keeping showed an indicative improvement, with 2 of the six participants reporting at least one financial record at baseline compared with 6 at endline.

Business model and enterprise development

Participants' qualitative responses in baseline and endline surveys indicate changes in how they conceptualised and developed their businesses.

In terms of business development, Entrepreneurship Training helped them refine their business ideas, revenue models and value propositions. Regarding market orientation, they developed greater clarity on target customers, customer needs and routes to market. Financial management skills were gained for improved budgeting, income and expenditure tracking, pricing and financial planning. They expanded their connections with entrepreneurs, mentors, technical experts and sector stakeholders. Most importantly, they created a peer network to lobby for women e-mobility entrepreneurs at different levels in the sector and to facilitate access to knowledge and finance. In terms of technical capabilities, they widely improved their understanding of e-mobility technologies and its commercial applications.

Area	Key themes
Business model development	Refinement of business ideas, revenue models and value propositions.
Customer and market orientation	Greater clarity on target customers, customer needs and routes to market.
Financial management	Improved budgeting, income and expenditure tracking, pricing and financial planning.
Technical capability	Improved understanding of e-mobility technologies and their commercial applications.
Networking and relationships	Expanded connections with entrepreneurs, mentors, technical experts and sector stakeholders. Created a peer network to lobby for women e-mobility entrepreneurs at different levels in the sector.

Gender and women's economic empowerment

All 16 matched participants who responded to the relevant question indicated that the Entrepreneurship Training supported them particularly as women entrepreneurs.

Participant responses point to the value of peer interaction, networking with other women in the sector, mentorship and exposure to other women-led enterprises. The intervention therefore contributed to both individual capability development, bi-lateral knowledge flows and stronger participation within the e-mobility ecosystem.

Testimonials from participants

During the networking event and stakeholder workshop in Nairobi on the 15th of July 2026, participants were asked about what major change has happened personally to them as an entrepreneur and to their company after they've received the Entrepreneurship Training from KCIC. Nine women entrepreneurs agreed to be filmed and state their major gains from the project. The Entrepreneurship Training enabled women entrepreneurs to refine their ideas into commercial viable products or services and substantially increased their confidence levels to actually start their businesses:

"Participating in the mobility e-mobility training with KCIC, I've actually gained a lot of confidence, and what I mean by this is confidence as an entrepreneur, being especially since the sector is very male-led. So excited that I'm able to make networks with other women entrepreneurs and women in other sectors of e-mobility. In terms of real opportunities that KCIC training has provided for me, is that I have managed to do market validation for my business. I've also created a space where I can be able to meet with investors, so I'm investor ready and creating partnerships with other e-mobility entrepreneurs. So, I think the outcome for me, the most valuable outcome, has been a serious mind shift in terms of building my product and building a solution that I believe will be positive for the community." (Diana, We Deliver, Pre-startup phase)

"I have a health data science background, and in my research I was trying to find out where under five children were dying most, and I could see the areas in Kenya, but there was not enough data then, 10 years ago, to address the issue before it happens, and then fast forward, I had the question to try and solve road safety, with trying to tell that transport and health, and when I got the call to apply to the women in e-mobility incubation programme, the research idea turned in like a flash, turned into a business startup kind of project, so trying to go from idea to product. The programme has enabled me to turn that research question into a technical product that can then inform the data that I was looking to gather, so that I can solve the main question, road safety, and now with e-mobility quickly gaining pace in our country, KCIC and the programme has opened me up to the opportunity to see how my research question and business can then inform the policies that need to enable EV adoption to scale within Kenya, and hopefully within Africa. I appreciate that KCIC strengthened me with the information, or even like building up a resilience toolkit to enable me to start and scale my business and be in a position to safely transition out of employment to the business world I have witnessed greater opportunities, this is where we need to be, there is enough funding for women, we just needed perhaps the structured way of thinking, how to tie societal problems to business ideas...."

, and KCIC has given me that toolkit, as I mentioned, to be able to identify that my product is needed, so that I'm not only building for fun, but building something that's needed in the market, and that can impact other women to join in and contribute to society progression in our country.” (Sarah, RAXI Safety OS, pre-startup phase)

“I took [entrepreneurship] training with KCIC under the pre-startup stage. And before the program, I was still trying to refine my idea, and I was conflicted on what I was supposed to start on, which I was able to get clarity after the program in terms of what I wanted to do. For myself, I had a lot of doubt on whether this could work out because I was looking at the competitors and all the products that were in the market, which, after the sessions that we had, I was able to refine my key pain points and what I was addressing, and it gave me the confidence to work on my idea.” (Peris, Zaroi Ltd., Pre-startup phase)

“I joined KCIC incubator pilot program in e-mobility six months ago. My venture or business is in battery swapping and charging, and I'm very passionate in contributing to sustainable transportation solutions in e-mobility. This program, offered by KCIC, covered training in marketing, entrepreneurship, and business development, Business planning, financial modeling, and e-mobility technology. In addition to the theoretical training, we were able to receive technical hands-on experience in e-mobility technology repairs and battery management systems. The combination of all these skills has really broadened my perspective in this industry. That has opened my eyes to so many opportunities that are available in this sector, and the same program offered a platform to network with already established e-mobility sectors that can support the early startups and those already in the industry. I'm grateful to have been part of this program offered by KCIC because it has widened my knowledge, my skills, my network, and contributed to the wider knowledge of opportunities in e-mobility, and I'm delighted to contribute to the sustainable transportation solutions not only in Kenya, but globally.” (Joy, Mustard Hub, pre-startup phase)

The training provided early startup entrepreneurs gain knowledge in areas they lacked, identify issues that they haven't previously thought about, re-orient their business in line with new technological advances, gave confidence to make an attempt to expand their markets even in the short period of 6-8 months, increase their profits:

“We had implemented training for women repairing motorbikes, that is the ICE bikes. But then, looking at the future, we are moving into electric mobility. We're like, what will happen to these women that we've trained? So, from the [entrepreneurship] training, you are like there are different models, but for us, we chose a lease-to-own model. So, we were able to remove the barrier of the initial instalments that they are supposed to pay. The organization paid for them. We negotiated better terms with the organization, and then we went in as us being the buyers, so that we have a B2B, you know, connection with them. So right now, we started with five bikes, and our women are able to make their payment as early as 10. So, meaning they are able to make profits. Looking at going home with 1000 or 1,500 net profit, that is an impact. So going forward, we are looking at how we are bringing sustainability now into this project of lease to own, and that is why we are going now into the servicing and also sales of the consumables of the electric bikes.

So, I mean, the project came in at the right time. We had a few resources. We had the idea, but now how do we go out? So they [training] were able to enlighten us to now go into implementation.

..... for me joining the incubation program, it was like a candle that has been given to me in a dark room. Something that I can add that has benefited [me] is networking. You know, most of the time we deal with fear, like, am I doing this alone? The imposter syndrome, but being able to meet the women who are in this space doing things. Because they [training] were more of addressing my fears that I had. So that unity, that networking, the knowledge that you were able to share, it gave me acquired like you in the right path.” (Dorcas, Xolani Women of Hope, Early startup phase)

“So basically, from the [entrepreneurship] training, I'm able to confidently engage my clients in my business and also talk to the clients, involving them on how they should be operating the swapping activities, and again, I've also been able to associate with the innovators, and also share out my ideas, and they have also given us a bit of the business ideas that we can implement to make our business grow well. The outcome from the training is that I've developed an entrepreneurial mindset, and I'm able to program my entrepreneurial activities so well. Okay, since the training began, I have gained entrepreneurial skills, and I'm able to solve issues like the delay in battery swaps and how to talk to my clients, and I've also improved my knowledge skills in e-mobility sector. Okay, through the training, I've gained connections with mentors and also collaborated with fellow entrepreneurs. And my business is now exposed to people who have the opportunity to offer me funds and or entrepreneurs, other entrepreneurial ideas.” (Joan, Joan's Battery Swapping Station, Early startup phase)

“I'm a sustainable energy and business development expert and founder of Siganda Limited. I've just completed the e-mobility training at the Kenya Climate Innovation Center. What's changed [for me] is [that] I have a better understanding of the opportunities in the e-mobility value chain, and I'm particularly going to implement some of the insights from the survey, such as working around an integrated ecosystem model, as I build the capacity of entrepreneurs to create clean energy ventures and co-create business models.” (Emily, Siganda Ltd., Early startup phase)

“What I've gained from this program is that, first and foremost, the training has made me confident, confidence in the sense that initially I used to implement or operate very casually, but now through the trainings, the tools that have been provided, for example, the business plan, I'm very deliberate on what it is that I'm doing. Then the other thing, other than being deliberate about what I've been doing, my business has been able to grow. So initially I was in one county, but now I've moved to a different county, and into four other sub counties where now expansion is quite visible.” (Irene, Chixoto Garage, Early startup phase)

Discussion

The impact assessment indicates a clear pattern of capability development across the project cohort. Technical e-mobility competencies recorded the strongest gains, while enterprise management competencies also improved substantially. This is significant because effective participation in the e-mobility sector as an entrepreneur requires both technical understanding and the ability to manage, finance and market an enterprise.

The results differ by enterprise stage. Early start-ups had an established platform from which to apply the capabilities gained through the intervention and reported customer acquisition provides an early indication of commercial application. Pre-startups, by contrast, were primarily at the readiness and development stage; their gains are therefore more evident in knowledge, skills and business preparedness than in revenue or funding.

The strongest evidence of change is in participants' reported knowledge and skills. Across the six competency areas assessed at endline, average ratings increased in every area. The largest gain was in understanding e-mobility technologies (+1.81 points on a five-point scale), followed by technical e-mobility skills (+1.63 points). Financial management, access to funding, marketing and networking also recorded positive changes.

The early start-up group showed evidence of business progression. 8 of the 9 start-ups who reported on customer growth indicated that they had acquired additional customers, reporting 113 additional customers in aggregate. However, access to finance remained a significant constraint.

The pre-start-up group demonstrated substantial capability gains but had not yet translated these into commercial outcomes at endline. This is consistent with their earlier stage of enterprise development and the very short-term nature of the impact assessment.

The findings also highlight a distinction between capability and access. Participants reported stronger skills in seeking finance, yet finance continued to be identified as a business constraint. This indicates that skills development alone is insufficient to overcome barriers to capital and market access. Incubators can hold crucial role in putting into contact skilled women entrepreneurs and financiers responding to this institutional barrier.

Overall, the findings indicate that the intervention contributed to strengthening the technical and enterprise capabilities of women entrepreneurs in the e-mobility sector. The results also point to the importance of post-training market, finance and incubation support to convert capability gains into sustained enterprise outcomes.

The qualitative findings reinforce the quantitative results by showing changes in business thinking, customer orientation, financial planning and sector engagement. Taken together, the evidence supports a positive contribution of the intervention to entrepreneurial capability and sector readiness, while longer-term enterprise outcomes remain dependent on continued market and financial opportunities.

Conclusion

The baseline and endline assessments demonstrate substantial improvement in the skills and knowledge of women entrepreneurs participating in the e-mobility project's Entrepreneurship Training. The strongest reported gains were in understanding e-mobility technologies and technical e-mobility skills, with similarly positive changes in financial management, access to funding, marketing and networking.

For start-ups, these capability gains were accompanied by early signs of commercial progression, particularly customer acquisition. For pre-startups, the intervention primarily strengthened business and technical readiness, with commercial outcomes yet to emerge.

The findings further demonstrate that women entrepreneurs continue to face constraints beyond skills, particularly access to finance, markets, technical opportunities and continued mentorship. Future programming should therefore build on the capability gains achieved through the intervention by providing structured pathways from training to enterprise growth.

Recommendations

As shown in the pilot Entrepreneurship Training phase of this project, through incorporating the ‘incubator’ policy tool into e-mobility entrepreneurship the below objectives can be achieved. Entrepreneurship Trainings delivered through dedicated incubators such as KCIC play crucial role in upskilling potential and nascent entrepreneurs. The number of such incubators should be increased in Kenya in public-private partnerships to create job opportunities for young people with entrepreneurial aspirations. E-mobility is one strategic sector in Kenya this programme can be piloted.

- **Strengthen post-training enterprise acceleration** – provide structured mentorship and business acceleration support for start-ups to translate capability gains into customer growth, revenue, partnerships and investment.
- **Provide incubation support for pre-startups** – support pre-startups with product validation, market testing, business model refinement and pathways to commercialisation.
- **Strengthen finance and investment linkages** – complement funding-readiness training with direct linkages to investors, financial institutions, grant opportunities and corporate procurement channels.
- **Expand practical technical learning** – increase hands-on exposure to e-mobility technologies, diagnostics, maintenance, product development and other applied technical competencies relevant to participants' businesses.
- **Strengthen market access** – create structured opportunities for entrepreneurs to connect with customers, suppliers, corporates, industry associations and other ecosystem actors.
- **Sustain the women entrepreneur network** – maintain peer learning, mentorship and networking platforms that strengthen women's participation and visibility within the e-mobility ecosystem.
- **Track longer-term enterprise outcomes** – conduct a follow-up impact assessment after 6–12–24 months to measure impact of the intervention, i.e. changes in revenue, customers, funding, employment, partnerships, business survival and enterprise growth.

Part D: Case study – Oxford University Incubator

By Dr Eleanor Browne

Introduction

Members of ‘The transformative power of electric mobility technology in Kenya: Understanding and empowering women entrepreneurs’ project team visited the Oxford University Innovation (OUI) Incubator as an example of UK incubation best practice. The University of Oxford is ranked 1st globally for ten consecutive years by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. The incubator visit took place on Thursday 30th October 2025, attended by project team members: Dr Esin Yoruk, Dr Ann Kingiri, Dr Catherine Kilelu (all in-person), and Dr Eleanor Browne (online).

This brief case study is compiled from material collected during this visit, the interview with Head of Incubator Cath Spence, and from the incubator website <https://innovation.ox.ac.uk/create-company/incubator-support>. With thanks to Cath Spence and the incubator team.

Institutional context

The University of Oxford supports its community’s innovation, spinout, and startup activities through a cohesive ecosystem. Where the university owns intellectual property, commercialisation is addressed through licensing, consultancy, and spinout company formation. In spinout companies, typically, the university retains 20% ownership, and the founders and management own 80% of the company. Where the university does not own intellectual property, support is offered to founders to start a business through the **Incubator**.

- **Oxford University Innovation (OUI)** is the university’s innovation partner, the ‘technology transfer’ service supporting the identification and protection of intellectual property, company creation, patenting, licensing, and consulting. OUI is a subsidiary of the university and wholly owned by the university.
- **The Incubator** is part of Oxford University Innovation and supports startup ideas from the university’s entrepreneurial community, where the idea does not rely on university-owned intellectual property.
- **Oxford Science Enterprises** is the university’s investment partner. As an independent investment company, they invest in and build the Oxford science companies with potential to become unicorns (valued at £1BN+).

The University is a globally renowned innovation anchor institution, connecting partners in research, investment, and infrastructure for innovation-led growth, such as the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor.

This case study focuses on the Incubator as most relevant to the Kenyan e-mobility project.

Key features of the Oxford University Incubator

Eligibility to join the Incubator

- At least one founder is a University of Oxford student, staff, or alumni
- Idea not based on university-owned IP
- Defined a problem statement and are testing and validating solutions
- Team is based in or able to travel regularly to Oxford
- Plan to incorporate in the UK or USA
- Not a charity

Incubator Programme

Phase 1: Prepare	Phase 2: Build	Phase 3: Deliver
Validate the idea	Launch and grow	Deliver and scale
Up to 3 months	Up to 12 months	Tailored/ongoing
Pre-incubation	Incubation	Incubation
Free of charge	5% fully dilutable pre-investment equity stake	
Based around lean canvas	Receive up to £10k grant (for non-salary costs)	Prepare for life beyond the incubator
Clarify value proposition	Develop a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)	Help with governance, boards, and investor readiness
Understand market and customers	On-site workspace and meeting rooms	Ongoing access to training, networks, introductions
Test assumptions through early market validation	Access mentors, advisers, and investors	Continued connection to OUI's investment and startup ecosystem
Build confidence in business model	Tailored advice and coaching	Ongoing member of the OUI founder community
Present progress for the opportunity to move to phase 2	Pitch to a friendly investor panel	

Support, connections, and inclusion

The incubator is staffed by a team of three who coordinate the support provided, and each actively seeks funding for their startup portfolio. The incubator currently has 30 startups seeking investment, and they expect approximately six to ten of those deals to close within the year. Returns on the university's 5% equity stake are reinvested into the incubator programme to benefit future entrepreneurs.

A combination of the incubator's staff team, mentors, coaches, and professional advisors provide a supportive network that guides the entrepreneurs through the incubation phases. The incubator is a bridge between academic and industry cultures. Connections to friendly investors and the wider innovation and industry ecosystem ensure that the entrepreneurs are prepared for the world beyond the incubator. Membership of the founder community is one of the many valuable, ongoing benefits of participating in the incubator programme.

Inclusion of potentially marginalised entrepreneur segments in the incubator is addressed through the team monitoring that the entrepreneurs broadly reflect the demographic profile of the university's wider community they are drawn from. If gaps are identified, such as not enough participants from Oxford's African students, then the team tailor targeted engagement activities for that segment of the student and graduate community. Similarly, six years ago they conducted an analysis on the percentage of women founders and found that they needed tailored engagement for women to be aware of and encouraged towards this as an option for them. The incubator leadership team also carefully ensures that their mentors reflect the profile of the entrepreneurs in the incubator, and they apply a rigorous selection process to ensure mentors are aligned with the incubator ethos and nurturing approach.

Anecdotally, women entrepreneurs in the incubator are greatly impacted by seeing and working alongside other women in the incubator within their peer group, as well as the mentors and leadership team. Tailored support for women typically includes encouragement through a "yes, you can" approach and constructive, non-judgmental feedback. In the more advanced incubation phases, preparation for investment readiness is tailored, where women face systemic barriers and challenges in comparison to men founders. "That's the heart and soul of what we're doing, looking after human beings" (Cath Spence, Head of Incubator).

Incubator startup examples

MariTest has developed non-invasive malaria diagnostic technology. Tackling the problem of access to accurate and timely malaria diagnosis in remote regions, the founders have developed a portable device to diagnose malaria quickly and cheaply.

Onfido developed digital ID verification and fraud detection technology, launched in 2012 by Oxford Business School graduates. The COVID pandemic provided them with an overnight global scaling opportunity, and in 2023-24, Onfido prevented \$3.9B in fraud losses globally. In 2024, Onfido was bought by Entrust Corp, the most lucrative return ever achieved from an Oxford student-led startup.

Competency	N	Baseline mean	Endline mean	Mean change	Improved	No change	Declined	P-value
Technical skills in e-mobility	16	2.19	3.81	1.62	15	1	0	0.001
Company financial management	16	2.75	3.88	1.12	13	2	1	0.007
Access to funding	16	2.31	3.62	1.31	13	3	0	0.001
Marketing	16	2.69	4	1.31	12	4	0	0.002
Networking	16	3.06	4.25	1.19	13	3	0	0.001
Understanding of e-mobility technologies	16	2.31	4.12	1.81	15	1	0	0.001

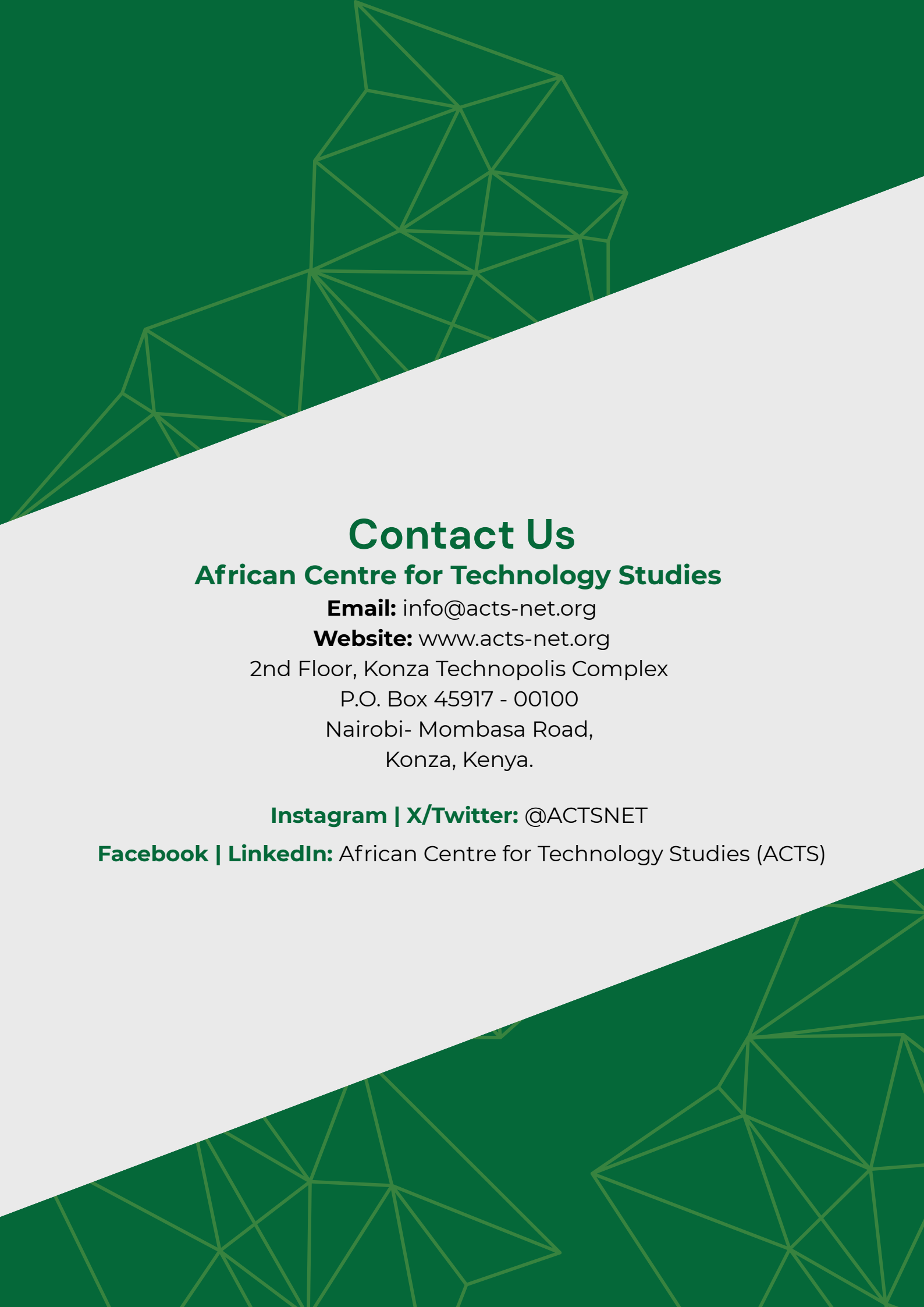
Annex 1. Paired skills analysis

Cohort	Baseline	Endline matched	Coverage
Start-ups	11	10	90.90%
Pre-startups	6	6	100.00%
Total	17	16	94.10%

Annex 2. Participant coverage

Annex 3. Data quality and comparability notes

- One baseline early start-up did not have a usable endline record and was therefore excluded from paired analysis.
- One endline pre-startup record was not part of the baseline cohort and was excluded from paired analysis.
- Where baseline and endline business questions were not directly comparable, results are reported descriptively rather than as measured change.
- Missing responses are excluded from the relevant indicator denominator where applicable.



Contact Us

African Centre for Technology Studies

Email: info@acts-net.org

Website: www.acts-net.org

2nd Floor, Konza Technopolis Complex

P.O. Box 45917 - 00100

Nairobi- Mombasa Road,

Konza, Kenya.

Instagram | X/Twitter: @ACTSNET

Facebook | LinkedIn: African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)