

Powering last-mile communities with affordable energy

In our Insights Series, TRANSFORM shares successes and learnings from our projects to:

- Help the SME and entrepreneur community gain knowledge and learn from our projects
- Showcase to funders what can be achieved through impact-led initiatives

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

BRIDGING THE ENERGY ACCESSIBILITY GAP IN AFRICA

Reeddi, a Nigerian start-up founded in 2019, aims to bridge the energy accessibility gap in Africa. Its innovative portable energy storage device, the Reeddi Capsule, provides reliable and affordable energy to households and businesses in communities with limited or no access to electricity. Through a rental model, people can access the capsules to power essential devices such as laptops and lighting, meeting daily needs without the burden of a high upfront investment. Under the TRANSFORM project, all capsules are exclusively charged using solar panels, providing a cleaner alternative to petrol and diesel generators.

THE CHALLENGE

In Nigeria, 86 million people live without access to electricity – the largest access deficit globally¹. Moreover, about 75% of electricity consumed in Nigeria relies on gasoline or diesel-powered generators². These solutions are not only harmful to people's health and the environment, but also come with high upfront costs, making them inaccessible for most households and businesses.



THE INNOVATION

TRANSFORM supported Reeddi with deploying its capsules to communities across Nigeria, enabling access to reliable, and potentially cleaner, electricity in energy-deficient regions. This support included optimising Reeddi's distribution system, and equipping local shopkeepers to manage capsule deployments.

Find out more

Collaboration is key to scaling impact enterprises. Learn more about the successful programmes that other enterprises and funders have delivered together. [Read more stories here.](#)

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¹ IEA, IRENA, UNSD, World Bank, WHO. 2024. Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report. World Bank, Washington DC. © World Bank. License: Creative Commons Attribution—Non-Commercial 3.0 IGO (CC BY-NC 3.0 IGO).

² <https://thesun.ng/the-power-sector-challenge-2/>

THE IMPACT

In collaboration with TRANSFORM, Reeddi has deployed 500 capsules in electricity-deprived communities across Nigeria. With an average 80% daily rental adoption rate, the capsules have reached more than 2,500 families and businesses. The project has also contributed to local economic growth, supporting small businesses and improving community living standards.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Reeddi will continue optimising its rental platform with the goal of expanding to more communities throughout Nigeria and across Africa. A key focus for the upcoming year will be securing financial partners to support the scaling of this project. In addition, Reeddi is developing higher-capacity products, such as the EnergyBox and BigEnergy, designed for more energy-intensive devices to support businesses, schools, and healthcare facilities.

INSIGHTS:

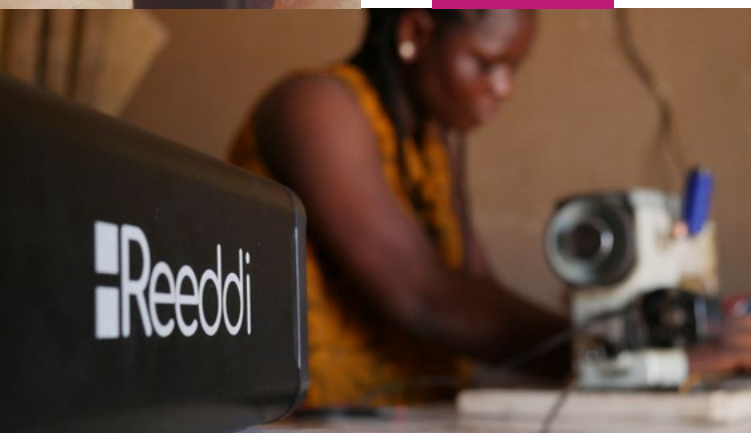
SUCCESSFULLY DEPLOYING NEW PRODUCTS TO LAST-MILE COMMUNITIES

1. ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS AND LOCAL AMBASSADORS TO DRIVE ADOPTION

Securing community acceptance requires local buy-in and endorsement from respected leaders.

Reeddi engaged critical community stakeholders, such as High Chiefs, to build trust, promote the Reeddi Capsule's economic benefits, and foster a sense of ownership. Reeddi also worked with local shopkeepers – many of whom are women – to adopt and help deploy the capsules in their communities.

Additionally, Reeddi hired over 40 local ambassadors to manage capsule rentals, offering a 10% commission on each rental. With support from TRANSFORM, Reeddi provided training on sales and business management, and implemented a mobile app to support ambassadors with driving adoption of the technology.



2. USE EDUCATION AND CUSTOMER FEEDBACK TO OVERCOME CUSTOMER RESISTANCE

Reeddi encountered initial resistance and uncertainty from communities unfamiliar with the rental model.

Recognising that many Nigerians are more familiar with ownership than rental models, Reeddi conducted educational sessions on the benefits of renting the capsule to meet everyday needs. By inviting early adopters to share their positive experiences, Reeddi eased doubts and encouraged broader acceptance.

3. LEVERAGE EXISTING DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

Establishing new distribution networks can be costly, time-intensive, and requires specialised expertise.

Reeddi leveraged existing distribution networks, such as pop-up shops used by other brands for product launches, to introduce the capsule efficiently to new communities. This approach enabled streamlined market entry without reinventing distribution methods or requiring new infrastructure.

4. MAKE SURE ACCESSIBILITY IS A PRIORITY

Scalability for start-ups can be hindered if products are not accessible or inclusive to diverse users.

With TRANSFORM's support, Reeddi developed a user-friendly mobile app available in multiple local languages for local ambassadors, making the capsule's rental system easy to navigate. This focus on inclusivity will support Reeddi's expansion across Nigeria, where language and cultural adaptations are crucial for product adoption.

5. LEVERAGE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK TO DRIVE INNOVATION

Incorporating customer feedback is essential for refining and evolving products to better meet user needs.

Supported by TRANSFORM, Reeddi gathered valuable feedback from customers, allowing them to adapt and improve the product. For example, customer feedback drove the development of a higher-capacity device designed to meet the demands of larger households and businesses.



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TRANSFORM is an impact accelerator that unites corporates, donors, investors and academics to support visionary enterprises across Africa, Asia and beyond. Together, we test and scale new solutions that tackle environmental challenges, improve health and wellbeing, and build inclusive economies.

Combining grant funding, business insight and research, TRANSFORM is advancing the development of innovative business models to help solve global challenges. It was established in 2015 and is led by Unilever, the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and EY.