Kenya-based electric bus supplier BasiGo has recieveed a $1.5 million grant through its Development Innovation Ventures program to support the e-mobility startup pilot program in Kigali, Rwanda.

Under the program, the grant awarded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), aims to demonstrate the cost-efficiency and viability of electric buses with some of Kigali's largest bus operators.

The award comes even as BasiGo announces that its first two electric buses designated for Rwanda have already arrived in East Africa and are currently in transit to Kigali.

The statup made a second entry into the African market with the launch of BasiGo Rwanda. The new entity is to focus on electrifying the public transport system in Rwanda.

Commenting on the award, BasiGo Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder, Jit Bhattacharya said, "We are grateful for the financial support of USAID in accelerating our public transport electrification plan in Rwanda. Rwanda is facing combined pressures from rising fuel prices and an urgent need for more public transport buses in Kigali.

" We believe our Pay-As-You-Drive solution will enable Kigali bus operators to rapidly scale the number of electric buses within their fleets. We look forward to working with USAID and the Rwandan government to create the future of clean electric public transport in Rwanda." he added.

BasiGo's first electric buses will begin road testing in Kigali in November and will enter passenger operations on a variety of Kigali bus routes shortly thereafter. Kigali Bus Service, Royal Express, and Volcano will operate the pilot electric buses.

The company will also provide all charging and maintenance services for the electric buses through their all- inclusive Pay-As-You-Drive model.

BasiGo has also partnered with AC Mobility to integrate its Electric Bus financing platform to the Tap-and-Go fare collection system present in most Kigali's public transport buses.

Through the pilot program, BasiGo said it will demonstrate the technical performance and financial competitiveness of Electric Buses in the Rwandan

market. The company will also use the pilot period to refine the Electric Bus design and financing model for Rwanda’s bus operators and for investors.

Together, USAID and BasiGo aim to scale the Electric Bus fleet in Kigali to 200 buses by 2025.

The Government of Rwanda recently announced an initiative to rapidly scale the size of Kigali’s public transport fleet while also aiming to convert 20 per cent of the public bus fleet to electric by 2030.

Founded in 2021, BasiGo has led the introduction of electric buses into Nairobi’s public transport fleet and is now looking to leverage that experience in the Rwandan market.

In Kenya, the startup has leased 19 Electric Buses to public transport operators in Nairobi, currently representing the largest fleet of electric buses in sub-Saharan Africa.

The electric buses have driven over 850,000 kilometers, carried over 1.1 million passengers, and mitigated approximately 400 tonnes of CO2 since March 2022.