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Wahu Mobility: Scaling an E-mobility Enterprise in Ghana

Valerie Labi, co-founder and CEO of Wahu Mobility Ltd., was catching a ride back to Wahu's facility in Accra, Ghana, when she spotted a delivery rider on a motorbike next to her and quickly rolled down the window to hand over her business card. "Call me to get an electric bike instead!" she said, smiling. With ambitious goals to scale up its electric bicycle (e-bike) business and expand into additional electric vehicle (EV) segments, Wahu was getting ready to recruit many additional gig economy workers interested in joining the Wahu fleet to make a livelihood delivering goods for a variety of local businesses.

Fully 7,000 potential delivery riders had expressed interest in having a Wahu e-bike by downloading the company's app. The company had patiently started production at a small scale during 2022-2025 while awaiting new regulatory clarity from the government. With more than 250 delivery riders using Wahu's e-bikes across Accra since Labi founded the startup in 2022, the company had proven and demonstrated that its sustainable mobility solution tailored to the African context offered riders valuable long-term benefits. Now, in 2025, Wahu planned to scale operations in other cities in Ghana and in other African countries. The company needed to reach substantial per-unit cost reductions in order to scale up. Therefore, Wahu needed to further optimize its supply chain.

Like many other e-mobility companies, Wahu was using components from China to build its e-bikes. This approach meant that it had to pay hefty import duties and wait an average of 45 days after ordering for the components to arrive in Ghana. This time-lag also posed a problem when spare parts were needed for the e-bikes, as they weren't available locally. In addition, depending on imports meant Wahu faced foreign exchange rate risks that impacted costs. Finally, company leadership feared that ongoing geopolitical tensions involving China could eventually jeopardize their ability to source such components, which would severely threaten their business.

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