



# Kenya's 5% Electric Vehicle Target (2020–2025)

## Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BEV	Battery Electric Vehicle
EMAK	Electric Mobility Association of Kenya
EPRA	Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority
EV	Electric Vehicle
GIZ GmbH	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
KEBS	Kenya Bureau of Standards
KNEECS	Kenya National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NTSA	National Transport and Safety Authority

## Executive Summary

In 2020, the Government of Kenya set a target under the Kenya National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (KNEECS) 2020–2025 for electric and hybrid vehicles to account for 5% of annual vehicle imports by 2025. This target represented one of Kenya's earliest formal policy signals to promote electric mobility and position the transport sector within broader energy efficiency and climate objectives.

As 2025 has passed, available evidence suggests that while the target's narrow import-based definition makes definitive verification difficult, electric mobility in Kenya has grown substantially. Registered electric vehicles increased rapidly after 2021, driven primarily by strong uptake in the 2 & 3-wheeler segments. By early 2026, indicative figures from the National Transport and Safety Authority suggested that total registered EV stock had grown substantially, reflecting strong market momentum. However, no official confirmation has been issued on whether the 5% import threshold was formally achieved.

The target's greatest impact was as a policy signal. It provided regulatory clarity, encouraged private sector participation, and catalysed investment in vehicle imports, local assembly, charging infrastructure, and innovative business models such as battery as a service and pay as you go financing. Supportive measures including fiscal incentives, electric mobility charging guidelines developed by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority, standards from the Kenya Bureau of Standards, provisions in the National Building Code 2024, and Kenya's renewable dominated electricity mix further strengthened the enabling environment.

Looking beyond 2025, Kenya requires a more inclusive and clearly defined electric mobility target. The new target should differentiate vehicle technologies, cover both imported and locally assembled vehicles, set segment specific goals, strengthen data systems and inter agency coordination, expand financing mechanisms, and accelerate nationwide infrastructure deployment.

# 1 Kenya's 5% electric vehicle target

## 1.1 Setting the ambition

In 2020, Kenya set itself a clear deadline: By 2025, electric vehicles (EV) were to make up 5% of all annual vehicle imports. The target, embedded in the [Kenya Energy Efficiency Strategy \(2020\)](#), signalled an ambition to transform one of the country's most energy intensive sectors.

Now that 2025 has passed, the question is unavoidable: Did Kenya meet its target, and what explains the outcome?

## 1.2 Understanding the target

Kenya's National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (KNEECS) 2020, established a 2025 electric mobility target, seeking to increase the share of electric and hybrid vehicles to 5% of Kenya's total annual vehicle imports.

First, it is important to note that this metric focused exclusively on annual vehicle imports rather than the total vehicle stock or total new vehicle registrations. Secondly, the target aggregated both fully electric vehicles (battery electric vehicles) and hybrid vehicles, even though in Kenya, hybrid vehicles are typically grouped with internal combustion engine vehicles in registration data based on their primary fuel type (petrol or diesel). Furthermore, domestically assembled electric vehicles fall largely outside the scope of this target, as it is limited to imported vehicles.

According to the strategy, electric vehicles accounted for 0% of vehicle registrations in 2019, (KNEECS 2020). While this figure did not necessarily capture early pilot deployments, it highlighted the definitional and methodological limitations of the target. Given that this target represented one of Kenya's earliest policy efforts to promote electric mobility, these limitations are understandable and reflect the nascent stage of e-mobility discussions in the country at the time; however, they constrained the target's effectiveness in accurately tracking electric vehicle uptake and assessing progress across the broader e-mobility ecosystem.

## 1.3 EV adoption in Kenya

Electric mobility growth in Kenya has followed a clear upward trajectory across vehicle segments over the years, driven largely by the rapid uptake of electric 2 & 3-wheelers.

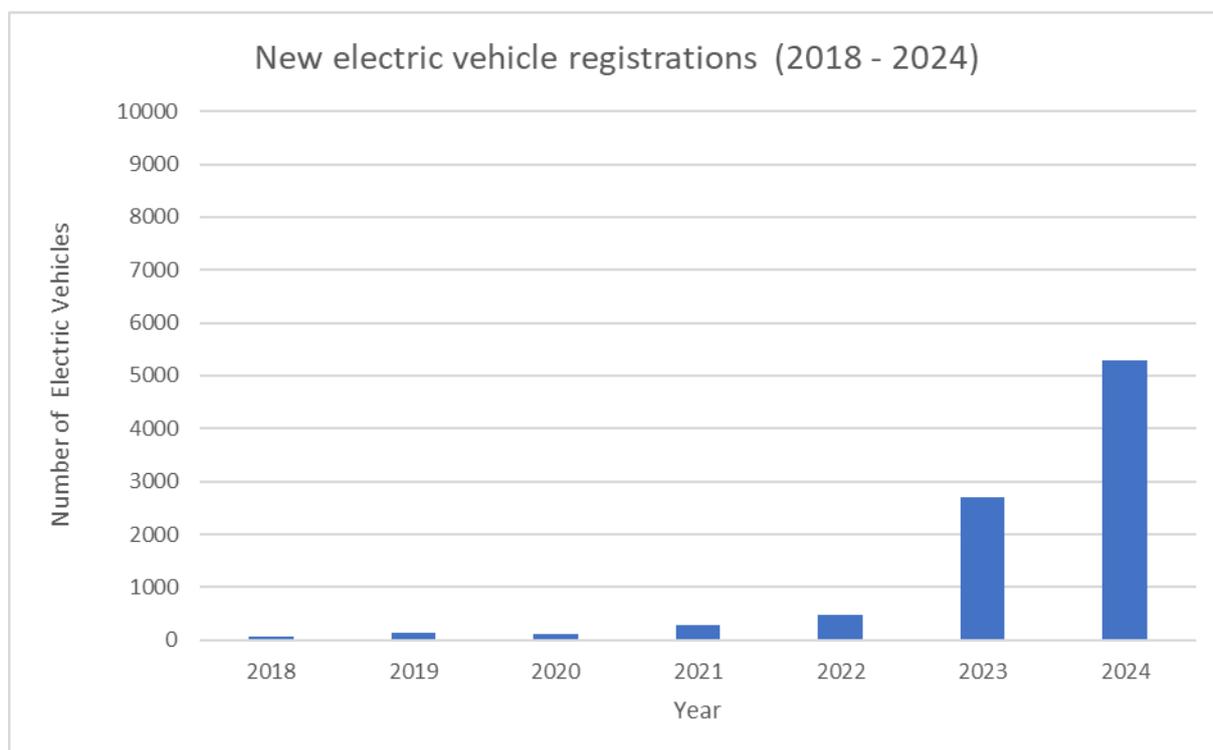
Figure 1 2025 Electric Mobility Parade Kenya



Source: Kenya Power 3rd Annual E-Mobility Stakeholders Conference and Expo, Nairobi

As illustrated in Figure 1, which presents annual electric vehicle registrations between 2018 and 2024, EV adoption remained modest in the early years but began to accelerate significantly after 2021. Registered EVs increased from just 65 vehicles in 2018 and 129 in 2019 to 284 in 2021, before rising sharply to 2,695 in 2023 and 5,294 in 2024, reflecting a rapid expansion of Kenya's electric mobility market.

Figure 2 Total Number of registered EVs from 2018 to 2024



Data source: EMAK 2025

According to the [Energy & Petroleum Statistics Report](#) for the financial year ended 30 June 2025, Kenya's electric vehicle stock has continued to grow, reaching 6,442 registered electric vehicles (EVs) as of June 2025. These numbers continue to grow however they are only indicative of EV stock in the country rather than the share of imported EVs in the country as per the KNEECS target. While a comprehensive post 2025 analysis is not yet available, several indicators show momentum: Imports of electric and hybrid passenger cars have increased steadily between 2020 and 2025; Electric motorcycles, including locally assembled and imports, have grown rapidly; Charging and battery-swap stations have expanded in key urban areas. These trends suggest that Kenya is steadily advancing toward greater EV adoption.

## 1.4 Did Kenya meet the target?

With the rapid growth in electric vehicle adoption observed between 2020 and 2025, a natural question is whether Kenya's 5% EV import target was ultimately achieved. Although the target was narrowly around imports, broader trends in vehicle registrations and total EV stock provide useful context for assessing progress toward this policy objective.

Indicative information presented by the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) in early 2026, though not formally published suggests that Kenya's total registered electric vehicle stock had grown to approximately 35,661 vehicles by January 2026. While this figure reflects total stock rather than annual imports, it points to a scale of uptake that is broadly consistent with the ambition underpinning the 5% target.

Figure 3 Electric Mobility Parade Kenya 2025



Source: Kenya Power 3rd Annual E-Mobility Stakeholders Conference and Expo, Nairobi

Based on observed growth trends, it is reasonable to infer that electric vehicle registrations by the end of 2025 were approaching levels aligned with a 5% share of new vehicles, even if this cannot be conclusively demonstrated using the original target definition. Importantly, no official government report has formally confirmed whether the 5% import target was achieved, and any assessment must therefore remain indicative rather than definitive. Taken together, the available evidence suggests that the 5% target functioned primarily as a policy signal and that market developments moved broadly in the direction envisaged while its narrow scope and data constraints limit its usefulness as a precise performance benchmark.

## 1.5 Drivers of Electric Vehicle Uptake in Kenya (2020–2025)

### 1.5.1 Policy direction and regulatory certainty

The clearly articulated national target for electric mobility, as set out in KNEECS, has been a key success factor for Kenya's early e-mobility growth. Although modest in scale, the 5% import target provided an important signal of government commitment and policy continuity. During the 2020–2025 period, this direction was further reinforced by the development of [Kenya's draft National E-Mobility Policy in 2024](#), which outlined a comprehensive framework to guide the transition to electric mobility across transport modes and strengthen alignment with climate and energy objectives. The subsequent launch of the [Kenya National E-Mobility Policy](#) in February 2026 builds on this momentum, providing a formal implementation framework and reinforcing long-term regulatory certainty for investors and market actors.

By embedding electric mobility within national energy and climate frameworks, Kenya has created a supportive and predictable policy environment that reduces risk for private actors and strengthens investor confidence. This evolving policy clarity has played an important role in catalysing private sector investment in vehicle imports, local assembly, and charging infrastructure.

### 1.5.2 Regulatory landscape and standards development

Regulatory institutions have also supported market development. In 2023, the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) developed [Electric Vehicle Charging and Battery Swapping Infrastructure Guidelines](#), aimed at promoting a safe, efficient, and accessible charging ecosystem. Additionally, the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) developed and enforced standards for EVs and charging equipment. Together, these measures improved safety, interoperability, and consumer confidence.

### 1.5.3 Private sector innovation and business models

Private sector led business models have been particularly effective in accelerating adoption, especially in the 2&3 wheeler segment. Innovations such as battery as a service, pay as you go financing, and leasing arrangements have reduced upfront costs and made electric 2&3 wheelers commercially viable for riders and fleet operators. In the passenger vehicle segment, corporate fleets, logistics companies, and ride-hailing platforms have driven early adoption. At the same time, the gradual expansion of charging and battery-swapping infrastructure, particularly in urban areas, has helped reduce perceived adoption risks especially on range anxiety.

### 1.5.4 Fiscal and non-fiscal incentives

Since 2020, Kenya has progressively introduced a range of fiscal, regulatory, and non-fiscal incentives to support electric mobility adoption. These include reduced excise duty rates for electric vehicles relative to internal combustion engine vehicles, as well as targeted tax exemptions and relief measures introduced through successive Finance Acts. More recently, reduced electricity tariffs for EV charging, approved by EPRA, have lowered operating costs for EV users and charging service providers.

Regulatory provisions in the National Building Code 2024, which require new commercial and multi-unit buildings to allocate at least 5% parking spaces for EV charging, further support infrastructure readiness. Collectively, these incentives signal growing government commitment to electric mobility and improvement of the overall investment and adoption landscape.

### **1.5.5 Renewable electricity mix and environmental benefits**

Kenya's renewable dominated electricity mix has further strengthened the environmental and economic case for electric mobility. With over 85% national electricity generation coming from renewable sources primarily geothermal, hydropower, solar and wind energy, electric vehicles in Kenya offer substantially lower lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions compared to conventional internal combustion engine vehicles, while also benefiting from comparatively lower and more stable electricity costs than fossil fuel-based transport fuels.

### **1.5.6 International collaboration and institutional coordination**

International collaboration has supported Kenya's efforts to advance electric mobility, particularly through close cooperation between government ministries and international partners. For example, the Promotion of Electric Mobility project implemented by GIZ, in partnership with the Ministry of Transport, has supported policy development and institutional coordination in the sector. Technical assistance and knowledge exchange have supported areas such as policy and regulatory development, standards, institutional capacity building, and cross-sector coordination.

This collaborative approach has helped embed electric mobility within national transport, energy, and climate policy frameworks, while strengthening institutional readiness and reducing early-stage uncertainties for market actors. Contributions from a range of international organisations and development institutions have played complementary roles in supporting evidence-based policymaking and fostering a more coherent enabling environment during the sector's formative phase.

## **1.6 Barriers of Electric Vehicle Uptake in Kenya (2020–2025)**

Despite notable progress in electric mobility adoption over the 2020–2025 period, several barriers continue to constrain the pace and scale of uptake in Kenya. These barriers span cost, infrastructure, financing, data, and institutional coordination, and help explain why adoption remains concentrated in specific segments and geographies.

### **1.6.1 High upfront costs and limited access to finance**

The high upfront cost of electric vehicles remains one of the most significant barriers to widespread adoption, particularly for passenger cars, buses, and heavy-duty vehicles. Although operating costs are generally lower than those of internal combustion engine vehicles, the initial purchase price of EVs continues to exceed that of conventional alternatives. This challenge is compounded by limited access to affordable financing, as many financial institutions remain cautious due to unfamiliarity with EV technologies, uncertainty around resale values, and limited historical performance data. As a result, EV adoption has largely been driven by early adopters, corporate fleets, and operators able to access innovative financing models, while private individual uptake remains relatively low.

### **1.6.2 Charging infrastructure gaps and uneven deployment**

While charging and battery-swapping infrastructure has expanded in recent years, coverage remains uneven and largely concentrated in major urban centres. Limited availability of public charging infrastructure outside cities and along highways continues to constrain long-distance travel and commercial operations, reinforcing range anxiety among potential users. Grid connection costs, land access, and permitting processes further increase the complexity and cost of deploying charging infrastructure, particularly in peri-urban and rural areas. For larger vehicles such as buses and trucks, the absence of high-capacity charging solutions remains a critical bottleneck.

### **1.6.3 Data gaps and limitations in monitoring progress**

Accurate and consistent data collection remains a challenge for assessing progress toward electric mobility targets. Existing data systems often do not differentiate vehicles by technology type as hybrids are typically grouped with internal combustion engine vehicles, since they are based on primary fuel type. In addition, import, registration, and fleet stock information remain fragmented across multiple data systems and reporting channels, limiting the ability to systematically monitor progress against policy targets such as those established under KNEECS 2020. These data gaps hinder evidence based policymaking and complicate post 2025 evaluations of target achievement.

### **1.6.4 Policy scope and metric limitations**

Early policy targets, including the 5% import target under KNEECS 2020, were valuable for signalling intent but were limited in scope. By focusing narrowly on imported vehicles, the target excludes locally assembled electric vehicles. In addition, the aggregation of battery electric vehicles and hybrids within a single indicator limits the ability to assess progress towards achieving the target. These limitations highlight the need for more refined, segment specific targets in future policy frameworks.

## **1.7 Recommendations: The Way Forward Beyond 2025**

Based on the assessment of Kenya's 5% electric vehicle import target and the observed drivers and barriers between 2020 and 2025, several key recommendations should be considered to guide the next phase of electric mobility development.

### **i. Establish a new, inclusive, and well-defined electric mobility target**

With the 2025 target having elapsed, there is an urgent need to establish a new post-2025 electric mobility target. Future policy frameworks should adopt more comprehensive and disaggregated targets that reflect the full breadth of Kenya's e-mobility ecosystem. Targets should be specific to distinguish between battery electric vehicles and hybrids, cover different vehicle segments, and account for both imported and locally assembled vehicles. Such an approach would improve the tracking of progress, support effective implementation of the E-Mobility Policy, and better align targets with high-growth market segments.

### **ii. Strengthen data systems and inter-agency coordination**

Improved data collection and harmonisation across import, registration, and vehicle stock databases are essential for evidence-based policymaking and effective monitoring of electric mobility targets. Standardised classification and registration of electric vehicles would enable more accurate monitoring of uptake and clearer evaluation of policy effectiveness. Strengthening coordination among relevant institutions would further support consistent reporting and accountability.

### **iii. Promote localisation and domestic value creation**

Future electric mobility policies should explicitly integrate localisation objectives, including support for local assembly, component manufacturing, battery value chains, and skills development. The narrow focus on imported vehicles under the KNEECS 2020 target overlooked the growing contribution of domestically assembled electric vehicles, particularly in the 2&3 wheeler segment. Embedding localisation targets and incentives within future e-mobility frameworks would support industrial development, job creation, and technology transfer, while strengthening the long-term sustainability and resilience of Kenya's electric mobility ecosystem.

**iv. Scale up access to affordable financing**

Addressing high upfront costs remains critical, particularly for passenger vehicles, buses, and heavy-duty applications. Policy measures that de-risk EV financing such as credit guarantees, concessional finance, or blended finance mechanisms could help unlock greater participation from financial institutions and expand access beyond early adopters and corporate fleets.

**v. Accelerate charging infrastructure deployment beyond urban centres**

Targeted support is needed to expand charging and battery-swapping infrastructure along highways, in major cities and in rural areas. Streamlining permitting processes, reducing grid connection costs, and supporting high-capacity charging solutions for buses and trucks would help address infrastructure bottlenecks and enable broader geographic and sectoral adoption.

**vi. Maintain policy consistency and investor confidence**

Sustained policy clarity, predictable fiscal incentives, and continued regulatory development will be essential to maintain private sector confidence. Building on the foundations laid between 2020 and 2025, Kenya can transition from early market creation toward scaled deployment, positioning electric mobility as a central pillar of a low-carbon, energy-efficient transport system.

## 1.8 Conclusion

Kenya's 5% electric vehicle import target under the Kenya National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (2020–2025) represented a valuable early intervention in promoting electric mobility. The target successfully signalled government commitment and helped elevate electric mobility within national transport, energy, and climate policy discussions.

Given the rapid growth of e-mobility in Kenya, between 2020 and 2025, the country is at a reflective point of analysing whether the target was ultimately achieved. Over this period, measurable progress was achieved, especially in the electric 2 & 3-wheeler segment, supported by policy clarity, private sector innovation, a renewable-dominated electricity mix, and support from international partners.

Although the target was defined narrowly around imports, broader trends in vehicle registrations and total electric vehicle stock provide useful context for assessing progress. Indicative information presented by the National Transport and Safety Authority in early 2026 though not formally published suggests that Kenya's total registered electric vehicle stock had reached approximately 35,661 vehicles by January 2026. While this figure reflects total stock rather than annual imports, it points to a scale of uptake broadly consistent with the ambition underpinning the 5% target.

At the same time, the targets narrow focus on imports, exclusion of locally assembled vehicles, and aggregation of BEVs and hybrids limited its effectiveness in tracking developments across the broader e-mobility ecosystem. In addition, persistent barriers such as high upfront costs, uneven charging infrastructure, and gaps in data and financing highlight the need for a more comprehensive approach.

Before establishing a new post-2025 target, a thorough stock take and analysis of whether the 5% import target was met is essential to evaluate its effectiveness, understand which measures worked, and identify remaining gaps.

Moving forward, Kenya requires a new, inclusive electric mobility target that:

- Covers both imported and locally assembled vehicles,
- Differentiates BEVs and hybrids,
- Is segment-specific (2/3-wheelers, 4-wheelers, buses, trucks), and
- Aligns with industrial, energy, and climate goals.

This new target, beginning from 2026, will serve as a clear policy compass, guide investment, align stakeholders, strengthen data and coordination mechanisms, and sustain momentum in Kenya's e-mobility transition. It will also support alignment with Kenya's national climate commitments, including its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), while accelerating progress toward an energy-efficient, low-carbon, and economically inclusive transport system.

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