



## Grantee Spotlight: RMI

The [Giving Green Fund](#) is awarding a restricted grant to [RMI](#) to help utilities and regulators in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) manage the rapid growth of distributed energy resources (DERs). RMI is an independent, nonpartisan nonprofit accelerating the clean energy transition, with power sector programs across Africa, Asia, and the U.S.

RMI's work falls within our philanthropic strategy of [derisking clean electricity investments in LMICs](#). Please see Giving Green's strategy report for more information, including potential risks and co-benefits, recommended sub-strategies, theory of change, funding need, and key uncertainties.

Last updated: October 2026

### What Is RMI?

RMI (formerly Rocky Mountain Institute) is an independent, nonpartisan nonprofit founded in 1982 that transforms global energy systems through market-driven solutions to secure a prosperous, resilient, clean energy future for all. In collaboration with businesses, policymakers, funders, communities, and other partners, RMI drives investment to scale clean energy solutions, reduce energy waste, and boost access to affordable clean energy. RMI was founded as a U.S.-based organization and now works in over 50 countries.

RMI's power sector work combines technical analysis with hands-on support for the institutions that make electricity system decisions. For example, it builds analytical tools and business models with utilities and regulators, translates that analysis into concrete regulatory and planning options, and convenes decision-makers so approaches developed in one market can be adopted in another. RMI is a founding partner of the Regulatory Energy Transition Accelerator, a peer learning initiative for energy regulators launched at COP26 alongside Ofgem, the International Energy Agency, the International Renewable Energy Agency, and the World Bank.

### What Are We Funding, and How Could It Help Address Climate Change?

This grant supports RMI's cross-cutting electricity work across Asia and Africa. It spans India, Nigeria, South Africa, the Philippines, and other LMICs, and includes work with

energy regulators, distribution utilities, and system operators. Instead of adding more distributed generation, RMI sees this as an opportunity to address the challenge of the fast, largely unmanaged growth of DERs through regulatory and system-planning innovations to ensure they support reliable and affordable power for everyone.

As part of our focus on improving grid planning, reliability, and utility operations in LMICs, we are funding RMI to help utilities and regulators prepare for rapid DER growth. Clean DERs, including solar and batteries, are expanding quickly, often driven by customers and deployed without utility registration or visibility. Without a clear picture of where these resources are located and how they affect the grid, utilities risk declining revenues, greater challenges managing distribution networks, and less accurate planning for future electricity demand. The grant will fund three connected activities:

- **Developing a practical regulatory playbook** that consolidates business model, planning, strategic direction, and regulatory options for managing rapid DER growth
- **Providing direct technical assistance to regulators, distribution utilities, and system operators** in one or two priority countries, or to a cohort of three to five decision-makers facing shared challenges
- **Convening a cross-regional learning platform** that connects decision-makers across countries experiencing rapid DER growth, through convenings, peer learning, study tours, and shared tools and resources

Countries experiencing rapid DER growth face a narrow window in which to make these planning and policy choices. By equipping decision-makers with tools to plan and use DERs, RMI's work will support faster, more durable clean energy deployment across participating geographies, replace fossil fuel generators, and ultimately reduce emissions.

### Why Do We Think RMI Will Use This Funding Well?

RMI already has experience supporting decision-makers in LMICs to better integrate DERs. For example, in South Africa, RMI is working with the City of Cape Town's municipal utility to aggregate municipal-owned DERs into a virtual power plant; in Nigeria, RMI has developed, tested, and scaled business models for utility-enabled DER adoption with utilities and the regulator, such as interconnected minigrids. Additionally, through its Regulatory Collaborative, RMI has brought regulators from nearly 30 U.S. states together to work through how DER growth can translate into utility and customer benefits. Given RMI's deep DER expertise and existing relationships with LMIC decision-makers, we think RMI is well-suited to develop tools that help LMICs integrate more clean DERs onto their grids.

We publish grant spotlights to offer transparency to [Giving Green Fund](#) donors and resources for those interested in the impact strategies each grant supports. Giving Green believes our [Top Climate Nonprofits](#) have the greatest impact potential for large, unrestricted gifts. [For several reasons](#), we also disburse and recommend grants to other organizations surfaced through [our research process](#) for work that we believe is at least as impactful as grants to our top recommendations.

*This is a non-partisan analysis (study or research) and is provided for educational purposes.*

*RMI is a registered nonprofit in the U.S.*