

Breaking News announcement made at the 2025 Investing In African Mining Indaba, Cape Town

MEGAMILLION ANNOUNCES JOINT-VENTURE PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FATHER OF CHINA'S BATTERY INDUSTRY, TO ESTABLISH AFRICA'S FIRST BATTERY GIGAFACTORY.

Megamillion, a champion of Africa's lithium-ion battery value chain since 2018, is proud to announce a groundbreaking joint-venture partnership with Dr. Henry Mao, recognized as the "Father of Lithium-Ion Battery Manufacturing in China." This partnership will launch **Giga-Africa 1**, the first-ever battery gigafactory in Africa, marking a transformative milestone for the continent.

Megamillion is dedicated to "energizing Africa for its own benefit first," with a mission to empower the continent through localization of the entire lithium-ion battery value chain. Today, that vision moves closer to reality with the collaboration between Megamillion and Dr. Henry Mao, whose industry expertise in battery manufacturing is unparalleled.

Dr. Mao, an esteemed electrochemist with a Doctorate from Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada, has been at the forefront of the global battery industry. Dr Mao holds 182 patents in Lithium-ion battery technologies, and his 1993 patent about Functional Electrolyte Technology was a world-first, becoming essential in today's global Li-Ion battery industry. In 1997, he co-founded Tianjin LiShen Battery, China's first large-scale producer of 18650 lithium-ion cells. Today, LiShen boasts an impressive annual production capacity of 31GWh. Dr. Mao has also played a key role as CTO and COO of Shenzhen BAK, a top 10 battery manufacturer that Dr Mao helped to list on NASDAQ. Suzhou YouLion Battery was Dr Mao's third venture in large-scale battery manufacturing. Now with Giga-Africa 1, Dr Mao continues his legacy of excellence.

Giga-Africa 1 will begin with an annual capacity of 1 GWh of lithium-ion cells, with plans to scale up to 32 GWh upon completion. The batteries produced at the facility will serve both stationary and mobility applications. Under the terms of the partnership, Dr. Mao will transfer cutting-edge technology, equipment, and skilled personnel to the South African operations in a carefully phased approach over the next few years. Initially, dry cells will be produced in China by Dr. Mao's team, with electrolyte-filling and all post-processing to be done in South Africa. Eventually, all manufacturing processes will be localized, ensuring a fully self-sufficient operation.

“This approach minimizes risk while rapidly developing local capabilities and skills,” says Nechan Naicker, founder and CEO of Megamillion. “Setting up a battery megafactory is no small feat, as evidenced by the challenges faced by battery startups in Europe. With Dr. Mao’s experience and guidance, we are ensuring a sustainable, long-term business model while also championing the full value chain, including the beneficiation and localization of Africa’s critical battery minerals.”

The need for energy solutions in Africa has never been more urgent. According to the UN Sustainable Development Group, nearly 600 million Africans—almost half the population—lack reliable access to electricity. While renewable energy sources such as solar and wind are useful, battery energy storage is crucial to ensure that energy is dependable, accessible, and most importantly, affordable. Locally-made batteries will go a long way to ensuring that Africa is not paying a premium for end-products that are critically dependent on Africa’s own raw materials.

By localizing battery production and tapping into Africa’s abundant battery minerals, Megamillion aims to encourage the continent’s transition from an extractive to a manufacturing economy. This initiative will create many thousands of jobs and will foster growth in critical industries such as electric vehicle manufacturing, paving the way for Africa to become a global leader in sustainable energy. According to Naicker, “This opportunity should prompt African countries to immediately create enabling environments for the establishment of their own local industries in support of the battery value chain. Megamillion is ready to work with anyone that wants to see the realization of Africa becoming the world’s battery powerhouse.”

“I was really inspired to help Megamillion make a difference in Africa, just as I did in China” says Dr Mao. “To be frank, I am super excited to be a part of GIGA-Africa.”

“Our vision of manufacturing lithium-ion cells and electrodes on African soil is finally becoming a reality, and we are thrilled to partner with Dr. Mao, whose experience and vision will be integral to our success, and to the continent as a whole” says Naicker. “Africa’s time has come.”

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