USAID is proud to work with Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL) in their commitment to improve gender equality in the energy sector as part of their path to long-term success.

When women serve as leaders and employees of companies – including those in the energy sector – businesses benefit and performance improves. USAID’s Engendering Utilities program seeks to strengthen the energy sector by increasing economic opportunities for women and improving gender equality in the workplace. In April 2019, Tata Power-DDL began working with USAID through the Engendering Utilities program to collaboratively design tailored interventions that directly increase opportunities for women within the company and enhance the utility’s operations.

Tata Power-DDL was formed in 2002 as a joint venture between Tata Power and the Government of NCT of Delhi. The company currently operates with a distribution area of 510 km2 in North and Northwest New Delhi, serving around seven million people. Since they began operating the distribution system, Tata Power-DDL has greatly reduced aggregate technical and commercial losses from 53 percent to 8.4 percent. Of their 3,547 employees, only around 28 percent are women. However, Tata Power-DDL recognizes the importance of gender equality, and the utility hopes to increase their gender balance and encourage more women to enter the electricity sector.
INDIA’S ENERGY SECTOR

When India achieved independence in 1947, electricity generation and distribution was primarily carried out by private utility companies and the country had less than 1.5 gigawatts (GW) of capacity. New generation, transmission, and distribution projects came under the purview of state and central government agencies. Currently, both the state and central governments participate in the development of the electricity sector.

India is now the third-largest producer and fourth-largest consumer of electricity in the world. The country has around 350 GW of installed generation capacity, with sources including conventional fossil fuels, nuclear, hydro, wind, solar, agricultural waste, and domestic waste. Renewable energy has been the fastest-growing source over the past five years, and the Government of India has released a roadmap to have 175 GW of renewable energy capacity installed by 2022.

In June 2002, the distribution network of the Delhi Vidyut Board was unbundled and split into six private entities managed by BSES Limited (now Reliance Infrastructure) and Tata Power. This was done in an effort to make the system more efficient and reduce aggregate technical and commercial losses. Both Tata Power and BSES agreed to reduce losses by 17 percent in their first five years, addressing issues of power theft, poor billing, and outdated metering systems.

The International Labour Organization reports that 23.4 percent of Indian women participate in the labor market, and the market share of women employed in senior and middle management is 13 percent, far lower than the global average.

GENDER EQUALITY IN ACTION

Prior to engaging with Engendering Utilities, Tata Power-DDL took the initiative to improve gender equality, most notably by developing a competency matrix used in the role changes all utility employees undergo every three to five years. Tata Power-DDL has also put several policies in place to create a better workplace for women, including maternity leave and flexible working hours.

To continue building on their positive efforts, Tata Power-DDL is working with USAID through the Engendering Utilities program to assess and identify high-impact interventions that can improve gender equality within the organization.

Through Engendering Utilities, USAID is providing tailored coaching to Tata Power-DDL staff on gender equity and business best practices, and select utility personnel will participate in a 12-month Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program in collaboration with Georgetown University.
A dedicated change management coach provided by the Engendering Utilities program is working with Tata Power-DDL to identify opportunities to address key challenges to establishing gender equality within field and operations roles. Through this coaching, the utility will develop a tailored action plan to best fit their needs. Tata Power-DDL will also place a strong emphasis on engaging influential male leaders as champions of gender equality.

**IMPACT**

Tata Power-DDL’s commitment to gender equality is further exemplified through their current programs and efforts, such as executive education programs, mentoring opportunities, and a Women’s Leadership League. This League conducts training needs assessments for participants, followed by a discussion with facilitators to integrate women’s interests into the development of their competencies. The utility is also home to a Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Committee which offers a portal for women to bring forth their complaints, helping to overcome any hesitation they may feel in filing.

Their current efforts, in addition to the utility’s adoption of gender-supportive work policies, have set forth a precedent for gender equality within Tata Power-DDL. In a recent survey conducted by the Chief of Human Resources on employee engagement and satisfaction, female employees reported a higher rate of satisfaction than their male colleagues. Tata Power-DDL views the Engendering Utilities program as an opportunity to enhance its existing gender equality programs.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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