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ENGENDERING UTILITIES PARTNER PROFILE TATA POWER-DDL, INDIA

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 and water sectors – businesses benefit and performance improves. **USAID’s Engendering Utilities program seeks to strengthen the energy and water sectors 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 and enhance the utility’s operations.

Tata Power-DDL was formed in 2002 as a joint venture between Tata Power and the Government of Delhi. The company currently serves a distribution area of 510 km² in North and Northwest New Delhi, with around seven million customers.

Of their roughly 3,570 employees, only around 15 percent are women. Most women work as professionals (19 percent), junior professionals (22 percent) or hold pre-entry level positions (30 percent). Currently, only seven percent of engineers and nine percent of field/line workers are women. **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. In the coming years, the utility will focus on achieving a gender balanced workforce.**

PHOTO: ARAI MONTEFORTE / USAID

INDIA'S ENERGY SECTOR

When India achieved independence in 1947, electricity generation and distribution was primarily provided by private utility companies. 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, with approximately 350 gigawatts (GW) of installed generation capacity from a combination of conventional fossil fuels, nuclear, hydro, wind, solar, agricultural waste, and domestic waste.² Renewable energy is the fastest-growing source,³ and the Government of India released a roadmap to install 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022.

GENDER EQUALITY IN INDIA

The Indian constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, but the position of women remains unequal. Women in India have long been subject to entrenched cultural biases that perpetuate the valuing of sons over daughters, who are often seen as an economic burden to families.⁴ According to the International Labor Organization, India has one of the lowest women's labor force participation rates, with women making up less than a quarter of the total labor force.⁵ Women who do participate in the labor market face an average pay gap of 34 percent compared to their male counterparts (performing the same job with the same qualifications).⁶ Furthermore, Indian women are not well represented in most sectors, including business.⁷ In fact, only roughly nine percent of firms have female top managers.⁸

In addition, women in India face great physical insecurity. In Delhi, the capital city, 92 percent of women reported having experienced sexual or physical violence in public spaces.⁹ In 2013, India's parliament passed a new law to further protect women against sexual violence.¹⁰

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 has been working with USAID through the Engendering Utilities program since 2019 to assess and identify high-impact interventions that can improve gender equality.



PHOTO: ARAI MONTEFORTE / USAID

Through Engendering Utilities, USAID is supporting Tata Power-DDL staff on gender equality and business best practices, and select utility personnel are participating in the Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program (GEELP) 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.

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NOTES

- 1 Figures provided by utility in 2019.
- 2 India Brand Equity Foundation. (2019). Power Sector in India. Retrieved from: <https://www.ibef.org/industry/power-sector-india.aspx>
- 3 Quartz India. (2018). India is now the world's third-largest electricity producer. Retrieved from: <https://qz.com/india/1237203/india-is-now-the-worlds-third-largest-electricity-producer/>
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- 6 Oxfam India. (2019). Mind the Gap: State of Employment in India 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.oxfamindia.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/Full%20Report%20-%20Low-Res%20Version%20%28Single%20Pages%29.pdf>
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