U.S. ENERGY ASSOCIATION PARTNERSHIP (USEA)

Integrating renewable energy sources into the Colombian power grid.

OVERVIEW

The U.S. Energy Association Partnership (USEA) with USAID helps the Colombian Government and Colombian utility companies integrate renewable energy sources into the national power grid. USEA, together with organizations like the U.S. National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), assists GOC entities and utility companies to improve the Colombian electricity system's reliability and facilitate system growth. USEA also strengthens energy utility executives and employees’ capacities to manage power systems, develop energy resources, and design off-grid power sources. USEA's Colombian work runs from January 2018-July 2023.
COMPONENTS

DESIGNING GREEN ENERGY POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

USEA assists the Colombian Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) to design policies and regulations for renewable energy like geothermal, green hydrogen, and offshore wind energy production. It does this by inviting international experts to review and comment on proposed policies and regulations, like Colombia’s Geothermal Decree and its Green Hydrogen and Offshore Wind Roadmaps.

STRENGTHENING ENERGY LEADERS’ CAPACITY

USEA organizes and disseminates a capacity building course for young professionals, especially women, in the Colombian energy sector. The purpose of this course is to increase young professionals’ understanding about renewable energy so that they can better incorporate renewable energy sources into Colombia’s electricity grid.

SCALING-UP RENEWABLE ENERGY BEST PRACTICES

USEA disseminates renewable energy success stories, best practices, and lessons learned by inviting renewable energy experts to participate in sector-specific events in Colombia, and by supporting executive exchanges on advanced renewable energy topics. The activity also trains energy sector professionals through online courses and workshops.

RESULTS

- Supported the Colombian Government to advertise and organize renewable energy auctions;
- Updated Colombia’s power grid connection code to better integrate solar and wind projects;
- Assisted the Colombian Mining and Energy Planning Unit (UPME) in publishing a solicitation for large scale battery storage;
- Strengthened MME proposals for a Geothermal Decree through a public consultation process and through reviews and recommendations from international subject matter experts;
- Worked with Colombia’s Energy and Gas Regulation Commission (CREG) to develop regulations for battery storage use to relieve energy grid transmission and congestion problems;
- Helped the Colombian Government design a regulatory framework for renewable energy auctions by organizing multiple workshops and by consulting international renewable energy experts; and
- Helped 73 Colombian participants become Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) certified through courses on renewable energy, battery storage, and distributed energy resources.