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ENGENDERING UTILITIES

Strengthening Gender Equality in Male-Dominated Industries

USAID's Engendering Utilities program supports organizations in developing countries to increase economic opportunities for women and improve gender equality in the workplace. Expanding women's participation in male-dominated sectors leads to tangible economic empowerment outcomes for women, such as formal employment opportunities and higher income. Additionally, increased gender equality improves business performance and helps utilities meet their bottom-line goals by enhancing employee satisfaction, reducing turnover, and driving productivity. Moreover, well-functioning organizations create stronger and more resilient economies and support developing countries on the pathway to self-reliance.

Engendering Utilities delivers a unique approach to improving gender equality in male-dominated sectors. Using customized tools and best practices, demand-driven coaching, and a Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program, Engendering Utilities builds staff capacity to implement gender equality interventions in their organizations. Engendering Utilities partners receive:

- **A framework to support the implementation of gender equality interventions.** USAID's [Delivering Gender Equality: A Best Practices Framework for Male-Dominated Industries](#) provides partners with the resources they need to implement gender equality interventions across the employee life cycle.
- **Demand-driven change management coaching.** Each organization is paired with an expert change management and gender equality coach who provides tailored technical support.
- **Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program (GEELP).** Developed by USAID and Georgetown University McDonough School of Business, this 12-month course empowers employees to integrate gender equality initiatives within their organization's structure.

OUR UNIQUE APPROACH

In 2015 Engendering Utilities commissioned ground breaking [research](#) to examine the role of women in male-dominated industries, looking specifically at gender disparities in the power sector. The data showed a wide variation in employment practices at power utilities and suggested that women were underrepresented in the majority of positions. A complex web of contributing factors prevents women from participating in the formal workforce and particularly in male-dominated industries, like the power and water sectors. Socio-cultural norms, education and training gaps, and the inability of women to balance work and caregiver responsibilities are some of the limiting factors that negatively impact women's workforce participation.

Engendering Utilities partners with 29 organizations across 21 countries to increase gender equality in male-dominated industries. The program works with organizations to co-design gender equality initiatives at each phase of the employee lifecycle; from recruiting and hiring to retention and succession planning. Staff from partner organizations participate in [Georgetown University's Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program](#), and receive change management coaching after graduation to implement, monitor, and evaluate gender equality interventions. The program also facilitates networking and knowledge exchange between partner organizations.

In FY21, Engendering Utilities will launch several impactful initiatives and partnerships. The program's new Accelerated Executive Course is a one-week intensive course that provides the practical and soft skills needed for organizations to increase gender equality, using the [Best Practices Framework](#) as the foundation for the curriculum. In partnership with Johns Hopkins University, Engendering Utilities will launch the [Self-Empowerment and Equity for Change](#) (SEE Change) Initiative, which provides a learning hub where participants can access gender equality training, resources, and education. Finally, Engendering Utilities will advance the program's male engagement initiatives by developing a workshop on creating male champions that will be piloted in 2021.

CONTACT

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As a result of Engendering Utilities interventions:

- Partner utilities are recruiting, retaining, and promoting more female employees
- Utilities have adopted or refined Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies to create a more inclusive work environment
- Utilities are utilizing sex-disaggregated employment and employee satisfaction data and are using this data in decision-making.
- Utility HR departments are addressing pay inequity
- Flexible work schedules and childcare programs are providing support for parents
- Utilities are engaging with their local communities to encourage women and girls to pursue STEM education and careers
- Partner utilities have put forward over \$1 million in in-kind contributions to implement gender equality interventions