

DELTA STATE URBAN WATER CORPORATION (DESUWACO), NIGERIA

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ANNOUNCEMENT

JUL 2021

Engendering Industries Welcomes New Partners

USAID's Engendering Industries program welcomes 13 new partners from 10 countries across Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East. [Read the announcement](#)

Engendering Industries Partner Profile

DESUWACO supplies water to over two million Nigerians in Delta state. The utility employs 445 people, but only 15 percent are women.

When women serve as leaders and employees, businesses benefit and company performance improves. USAID's Engendering Industries program works to increase women's participation in male-dominated sectors globally. In 2021, Engendering Industries partnered with **DESUWACO**—a water utility in Nigeria—to design workplace initiatives that will expand job opportunities for women and enhance the utility's performance. DESUWACO supplies water to over two million Nigerians in Delta state. The utility employs 445 people, but only 15 percent of staff at DESUWACO are women, and few occupy technical and field-based roles. Recognizing that diverse teams build better businesses, DESUWACO is partnering with USAID to increase gender equality across the company and encourage more women to enter **Nigeria's** water sector.

Gender Equality in Action at DESUWACO

Engendering Industries uses a globally-recognized **evidence-based methodology** to support women's participation in Nigeria's water sector. The program supports DESUWACO to increase opportunities for women by introducing gender equality initiatives at each phase of the employee lifecycle—from reducing gender bias at the hiring stage, to creating strategies that will help retain female talent. DESUWACO is in the early stages of corporatization and is eager to use the restructure as an opportunity to build gender-equitable policies into its business practices. Engendering Industries is supporting DESUWACO towards their goal of becoming a pioneer in gender equality among state-level water boards.

A dedicated change management coach supports the utility and works directly with three staff to become agents of change with DESUWACO. A baseline assessment is conducted to identify gaps and opportunities for improving gender equality across the company. The findings are used to develop a strategic action plan that will facilitate DESUWACO's gender equality goals. This is supplemented by the program's partnership with the Georgetown University McDonough School of Business, which delivers the **Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program** (GEELP) to three utility employees. The GEELP is a best-in-class 12-month executive course that empowers decisionmakers to integrate gender equality initiatives into their corporate structure.

Engendering Industries will also work to support and accelerate existing gender equality initiatives underway at DESUWACO, including:

- **Including women in decision-making roles**, which is prioritized at DESUWACO. The utility ensures that women are represented on all committees.
- **Strengthening capacity building training**, which DESUWACO ensures is available to both women and men at the utility.

About Engendering Industries

Launched in 2015, USAID's Engendering Industries 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. Increased gender equality also improves an organization's business performance, helping companies meet their bottom line by enhancing employee satisfaction, reducing turnover, and driving productivity. Well-functioning organizations are also vital in supporting stronger and more resilient economies. Through a customized best practices framework, demand-driven coaching and a Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program, Engendering Industries builds the capacity of leaders to implement gender equality interventions that increase the professional participation of women and improve business performance.

[Read more](#)

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