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WATER RESOURCES INTEGRATION DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (WARIDI)

SUCCESS STORY

Changing the lives of young water engineers in Tanzania through professional opportunities

No one understands better the challenges of accessing clean water in Tanzania than Zeidia John. As a child, Zeidia spent many hours on queue at water points. As a child she was woken up early every morning to fetch water for her family and other villagers, and the challenges of distance and safety that she faced fetching water have resonated with her over time. Those challenges inspired her to study engineering to solve these issues for future generations of Tanzanians.

Today, Zeidia is an environmental engineer and site manager for the Melela village scheme. She is one of 16 engineers under the WARIDI Internship Program, which started in 2017. The program not only provides the interns with invaluable experience, but it allows them to contribute to the greater good of their communities, who face challenges that they have known personally throughout their lifetimes.

“Being a team member of this project is an honor for me. The project has given me a platform to exercise the knowledge I’ve learned and work to attain project goals, grow my career, and pursue my passion,” says Zeidia. Thanks to WARIDI for helping our community to get access to clean and safe water and a great vision of trusting a young professional [like me] to do it for their own community.”

Zeidia’s role, like the other 15 engineers involved in the Internship program, is to supervise privately-contracted site engineers. Of the 16 engineers in the internship program, there are 4 women and 12 men who were selected from a stringent process that recruits fresh graduates from universities across Tanzania. Interns are given three initial months of placement with options to renew, and potentially, the opportunity to work full time as a permanent employee on WARIDI interventions. They oversee

site activities in 16 water schemes in the district councils of Kilombero, Kilosa, Kilolo, Mvomero, and Iringa. Collectively, they are assisting local contractors with overseeing \$2.1 million total in USAID investments through the WARIDI project. Of the 16 interns, their skills range from civil engineering, environmental engineering, irrigation and water resources, and agricultural engineering.

WARIDI's partner organization, Winrock International, is helping to manage the internship program, and works directly with them on skill-building. According to Muganyizi Ndyamukama, WARIDI's lead engineer, the internship program is significant because it provides young engineers with a unique opportunity to formalize their skills through hands-on, professional experience coupled with training and mentorship from operational and experienced engineers on the WARIDI project.

“Our interns are given an amazing opportunity to develop their theoretical experience practically in the field, and they are trained on how to use state-of-the-art tablets to submit daily progress and evaluation reports for the construction sites they oversee,” says Muganyizi.

The 16 interns, who are gaining the skills to work in professional, full-time jobs one day, have expressed their gratitude for being part of this internship program, as it provides them with the opportunity to learn professional skills and to contribute to the availability of clean water for hundreds of thousands of Tanzanians.



The WARIDI Internship Program's 16 interns pose for a group photo at a recent quality assurance workshop in Morogoro region.

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