Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Activity: Twinning BD-NL under UN Water Convention (25-0002108)

Id	25-0002108
Date	15-10-2025
SAP application number	

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Key data

Activity basics

Type	Standard
Short name	Twinning BD-NL under UN Water Convention
Contract party	Un Office At Geneva (30014784)
ODA	Yes
Amount and Currency	260511 USD
Amount EUR	260511
Start date	01-10-2025
End date	30-09-2026
Full name	UN Water Convention: Twinning Initiative between BANGLADESH & THE NETHERLANDS
Summary	The proposed Twinning Initiative will pair Bangladesh, a new Party to the UN Water Convention, with the Netherlands, an experienced Party, to strengthen Bangladesh's capacity for Convention implementation and transboundary water cooperation. Building on a long-standing bilateral partnership in delta and water management, the Initiative will focus on knowledge exchange, hydro-diplomacy, climate resilience, and international water law. Activities span national trainings, regional workshops, and global engagement

Activity details

Date of receipt of proposal	22-09-2025
Proposal's reference number	
Budget holder	Ambassade Dhaka (8241DHA)
Limit access	No
Related activity	

Accounting data

SAP application number	
Funds center	DHA BD Integ water managem contribution (1702U02030003)

Policy data

Cooperation modality	Non-earmarked contributions
Technical assistance	0% of the activity budget
CRS code	14040 River basins' developme
Policy Keywords	
Refugees & host communities	No
Team Europe Initiative	No
Policy Markers	
__Trade & The Economy	Not targeted
_Security & Stability	Not targeted
Biodiversity	Not targeted
Climate change: adaptation	Significant
Climate change: mitigation	Not targeted
Desertification	Not targeted
Equality between men & women	Not targeted
Migration	Not targeted
Integrated water management	Principal
Explain your choices	Adaptation is a significant component of integrated water management which is the principle marker

Beneficiary location

Beneficiary location	Country
Country	Bangladesh
Location type	Other
Specific location	

Policy Appraisal

Policy relevance

- The Netherlands and Bangladesh have a long and evolving partnership in water management, built on their shared experience as delta countries vulnerable to flooding and other water-related challenges. This cooperation, which began more than half a century ago. In 2023 an MOU was signed to cooperate on Adaptive Delta Management with special reference to the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 (BDP2100). Cooperation includes shared expertise in flood management, river and coastal zone management, and improving drinking water and sanitation.
- As Bangladesh transitions into a middle-income country, the relationship between the Netherlands and Bangladesh is shifting from traditional development cooperation to a partnership focused on mutual benefit. Embracing shared expertise and fostering a resilient partnership, the Netherlands and Bangladesh are creating a pathway towards a prosperous and sustainable future. Partners in the Netherlands such as IHE Delft will be key to capacity-building and enhancing the country's role as a "Knowledge Partner".
- The Netherlands is an active Party to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) under the UNECE in Geneva, underscoring the importance the Netherlands, as a delta country, attaches to advancing transboundary water cooperation. As part of this commitment, the Netherlands actively promotes the engagement of other countries in transboundary water cooperation and encourages their accession to the global framework of the 1992 Water Convention.
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Rationale

Beyond the strengthening of Bangladesh's national capacity and the bilateral cooperation between the Netherlands and Bangladesh, Bangladesh's milestone accession in June 2025 as the first Party to the Convention in South Asia offers a significant opportunity to promote and advance transboundary water cooperation at the transboundary and regional scales, utilising the convening power and community of Parties and partners of the Convention. Support to convening and/or participating in transboundary and regional workshops, dialogues and trainings, co-organised with regional partners, can help to facilitate Bangladesh in opening pathways for discussions and joint capacity-building on transboundary water cooperation and specific technical topics where possible, while factoring in geo-political sensitivities.

At the global level, there are opportunities to strengthen and enhance engagement of both countries within the framework of the Convention and its community of Parties and partners. The Netherlands has been and continues to be the co-lead state Party on Programme of Work (POW) Area 4 'Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins' which includes the Task Force on Water and Climate and Global Network of Basins Working on Climate Change Adaptation, in the current Programme of Work 2025-2027. Given Bangladesh's priority focus on strengthening climate resilience, strengthening their engagement in these institutional platforms of the Convention under Water and Climate would be beneficial. Moreover, technical topics such as the development and revision of agreements (POW Area 1.3) would also be beneficial for Bangladesh to engage in the trainings and workshops at global level.

In preliminary discussions with the Netherlands, the Bangladeshi authorities have prioritized the following thematic and technical areas in transboundary water management, where the co-development and exchange supporting the practical implementation of the Convention and transboundary water cooperation more generally, can be jointly explored:

a. Hydrodiplomacy;
b. Study tour and exchanges with river basin organisations in other regions;
c. International water law and the development/revision of agreements;
d. Water, climate and resilience.

Contextual analysis

The Netherlands and Bangladesh have a long and evolving partnership in water management, built on their shared experience as delta countries vulnerable to flooding and other water-related challenges. This cooperation, which began more than half a century ago, now supports Bangladesh's Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 (BDP2100) and involves shared expertise in flood management, river and coastal zone management, and improving drinking water and sanitation. Beyond traditional development aid, the partnership now emphasizes trade and investment, positioning the Netherlands as a key "Knowledge Partner" to advance sustainable water practices and address climate change in Bangladesh.

- The GoB officials and mainly officials of the Joint River Commission are the target groups as they are responsible for transboundary water issues. To ensure long-lasting results and capacity development, young professionals will receive special attention in selection for participation in specific activities. Gender balance in participants is always encouraged.
- Main stakeholders are the GoB and GoNL.

- The GoB is the main applicant of the Twinning and has extensively been discussion with UN Water Convention secretariat their expectations and requirements.

Added value

- The Netherlands has been and continues to be the co-lead state Party on Programme of Work (POW) Area 4 'Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins' which includes the Task Force on Water and Climate and Global Network of Basins Working on Climate Change Adaptation, in the current Programme of Work 2025-2027. Given Bangladesh's priority focus on strengthening climate resilience, strengthening their engagement in these institutional platforms of the Convention under Water and Climate would be beneficial. Moreover, technical topics such as the development and revision of agreements (POW Area 1.3) would also be beneficial for Bangladesh to engage in the trainings and workshops at global level.
- The twinning initiative can draw upon the Netherlands' extensive experience in cooperation on the Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt rivers. Through this twinning, the Netherlands can further strengthen its central role as a leading water nation within the framework of the global 1992 Water Convention, while also learning from Bangladesh's context—particularly regarding vulnerabilities caused by climate change and the solutions developed to address them in both deltas.
- The required multilateral engagement from all parties involved is minimal by combining planned activities with Twinning activities as much as possible. Training in the Netherlands is organized through IHE-Delft coverant with these activities and in-country workshops and training are planned back-to-back.
- For I&W-KAWI the contribution is fully in line with it's regular responsibilities as an active Party to the Convention and as Chair.

Lessons learned

- The growing interest in, and accessions to, the Water Convention is a testament to its usefulness and increasing relevance in helping countries face the challenges of tomorrow. With the growing interest in the Convention, further efforts are needed to assist states in their accession and implementation processes. The Convention, in contrast to other glonal MEAs does not have a financing mechanisms, hence other forms of support are needed such as through Twinning where financial and technical support can be sourced for new parties from Convention Parties and partners.
- Hence, there is an identifiable need for a Twinning Initiative, under the auspices of the Water Convention to support incoming/new Parties. On this basis, an exchange of experience will be fostered to benefit from good practices worldwide, in particular through the twinning of countries working on accession, or new Parties with experienced Parties, to enable exchange of experiences and assistance in the process of accession, implementation of the Convention, or specific activities agreed between countries. This Initiative falls under Area 1.1 of the Programme of Work 2025-2027 'Increasing capacity for implementation of the Convention and supporting national processes towards accession'.
- A Twinning Initiative should normally be undertaken utilising funding from the 'Experienced Party'.
- Other factors which are taken into consideration for developing an effective Twinning Initiative include:
  - Existing bilateral arrangements between countries on water or related issues;
  - Historical connections between countries which would support enhanced cooperation;
  - Similar contextual elements between countries such as similar legal or parliamentary systems.
- The Twinning Initiative aims to enable the transfer of practical experience and lessons learned between 'Experienced Parties' to the Convention and 'Incoming/New Parties' who have initiated their formal accession process and/or in the process of developing a national implementation plan. The main objective is to increase the capacity of, and support for, 'Incoming/New Parties' to undertake the necessary legal, technical, and other actions to accede to and implement the Water Convention successfully and to develop stronger cooperation with 'Experienced Parties' as part of these processes for potential ongoing or future cooperation on transboundary water management issues. The Convention Secretariat will serve as a facilitator to connect potentially interested countries, support initial discussions and developing a common understanding of the Twinning Initiative (which may include basic arrangement), and in providing technical guidance as needed based on available capacity.

Durability

- The Twinning can be seen as one of the activities under the BD-NL MOU on cooperation on Adaptive Delta Management. It will strengthen and deepen our bi-lateral ties. Attention to collaboration on transboundary water management in the Multi-Annual Country Strategy will pave the way for continuation, building on the shared lessons-learned and mutual interest in follow-up activities.

Gender

- UN climate policy integrates gender by promoting women's full and equal participation in decision-making, ensuring climate policies address the disproportionate impact of climate change on women, and leveraging women's expertise to improve climate action.

Climate change

- The activities do not require an analysis on possible effects on climate change and are not of such nature that they are effected by climate change.
- The training and capacity building activities under the Twinning are implemented under the umbrella of Programme of Work (POW) Area 4 ‘Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins’ which includes the Task Force on Water and Climate and Global Network of Basins Working on Climate Change Adaptation. This will help strengthen Bangladesh’s capacity to engage in transboundary cooperation under climate change uncertainties.

Cooperation, harmonisation and alignment

- UN Water Convention will facilitate and support implementation of the Twinning. IHE-Delft will train Bangladeshi officials in water diplomacy and I&W-KAWI will provide advice and information as the Dutch Focal Point for the UNECE Water Convention.

Digitalisation

- The UN Secretariat's policy on digitalization is articulated through the Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, which outlines a multi-stakeholder approach to a safe, inclusive, and equitable digital future. Key priorities include achieving universal and meaningful internet connectivity by 2030, promoting digital public goods, ensuring human rights online, strengthening capacity-building, and fostering global cooperation on artificial intelligence. This is further supported by initiatives like the Global Digital Compact to develop shared principles for digital governance and address issues such as data protection, digital inclusion, and internet fragmentation.
  Under the Water Convention is planned for May 2026 a global workshop on new technologies, including AI, for transboundary water cooperation, monitoring and assessment, Bangladesh will be invited to this workshop as new Party.

Additional remarks (if applicable)

Results

Water

3.1. Policy development and diplomatic outreach

Learning questions
What have we learned from this activity for policy development and diplomatic outreach?
Measurements:

Indicators
3.1. What has been achieved by this activity on policy development and diplomatic outreach?
Measurements:

3.4 Capacity building and technology transfer (policy for knowledge)

Learning questions
What have we learned from this activity for Capacity Building?
Measurements:

Indicators
3.4. What has been achieved by this activity on capacity building and technology transfer?
Measurements:

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring

- for this short activity, only a final narrative and financial report is expected from the implementing organization.

Throughout the activity the activity is monitored by:

- Contact with the implementing partners through regular meetings mainly before and after specific Twinning activities.
- regular meetings with the GoB officials mainly from the JRC to track applicability of offered interactions, workshop, training etc.
- we will also ask the implementing organization to evaluate individual Twinning activities.

Evaluation

Besides the final narrative and financial reports and an exit discussion with the implementing partners, no evaluation is planned nor required.

Finance

Budget breakdown

- Include an overview of the activity budget, including overhead costs.
  Budget for the activities facilitated by the UN Water Convention Secretariat:

Sl. No.	Name of the program/course & Location/Institute	Total Cost (incl. all expenses and 13% PSC) in EUR	Total Cost (incl. all expenses and 13% PSC) in USD
1a	Attending 6th joint meeting of the Working Group on IWRM and Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment under the Water Convention, in Geneva.	8500	9988
1b	Attending 6th joint meeting of the Working Group on IWRM and Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment under the Water Convention, in Geneva.	8000	9401
2	ICIMOD regional workshop on science diplomacy for climate resilience, in Kathmandu	13000	15276
3	Supporting Bangladeshi officials, for the Water Convention's Pan-Asia International water Law Training, in Bangkok	20000	23502
4	UN Water Convention Global Workshop on Agreements in Budapest, Hungary + Exposure visit in hydro diplomacy	20000	23502
5a	2-day National workshop on Implementing the Convention, in Dhaka	22000	25852
5b	3-day national training on hydro-diplomacy	15000	17626
6	2 day Regional workshop on Transboundary Water Cooperation, in Dhaka	35000	41128
7	Communication/advocacy	2000	2350
8a	Water Convention Secretariat P staff time	42000	49354
8b	Water Convention Secretariat G staff time	34000	39953
	TOTAL PROJECT FEES (incl. all expenses and 13% PSC)		**257932**
9	United Nations Project Levy 1% of total		**2579**
	TOTAL BUDGET (USD)		**260511**

- The budget is arithmetically correct.
- Standard UN rates are applied.
- The budget is given per program activity as well as support time from the UN Water Convention secretariat costs to organize and conduct the training.
- Overhead as standard for UN.
- 1% Levy will be applicable - to be booked as lumpsum.

Earmarking

- n/a

Prepayments

- This is a standard grant to the UN with an advance of 100%, covering maximum 12month expenditure is considered against the agreed deliverables.

Available resources

	USD	EUR
Implementing organisation's own contribution	0	
Firm commitments by other donors (for each donor)	0	
Dutch contribution	260511	
Total available resources	**260511**	
Budget needed	**260511**	
Still to be financed	0	
Soft commitments by other donors (for each donor)	0	
Uncovered balance	0	

Grant with a repayment obligation, loans, equity investment or guarantee

- Does the Dutch contribution take the form of a grant with a repayment obligation, a loan, an equity investment or a guarantee (either in whole or in part)? If yes, briefly set out the consequences for accounting and how correct processing in the financial records will be ensured.
  no
- Are there revolving funds? If yes, please explain what will happen to any residual funds, how closure will take place and which agreements should be made.
  n/a

Audit opinions

- Is an audit opinion required for the activity (see Help)? Briefly explain.
  no