Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Activity: Benin horti demo centers (25-0002573)

Id	25-0002573
Date	04-12-2025
SAP application number	

Contents

Key data **4**

Activity basics 4

Activity details 5

Accounting data 5

Policy data **6**

Beneficiary location **7**

Policy Appraisal **8**

Policy relevance 8

Rationale 8

Contextual analysis 11

Added value 14

Lessons learned 15

Durability 16

Gender 17

Climate change 17

Cooperation, harmonisation and alignment 17

Digitalisation 18

Additional remarks (if applicable) 18

Results **19**

Food and Nutrition Security 19

Private Sector Development 19

Monitoring and evaluation **21**

Monitoring 21

Evaluation 22

Finance **23**

Budget breakdown 23

Earmarking 24

Prepayments 24

Available resources 25

Grant with a repayment obligation, loans, equity investment or guarantee 26

Audit opinions 26

Key data

Activity basics

Type	Standard
Short name	Benin horti demo centers
Contract party	Van der Straaten A'Campo B.V. (30214583)
ODA	Yes
Amount EUR	1449745.5
Start date	01-01-2026
End date	31-12-2028
Full name	Demonstration centers to facilitate Dutch horticultural solutions adoption by Beninese farmers and entrepreneurs.
Summary	Benin and the Kingdom of the Netherlands have agreed to strengthen their trade relations. This follows several years of successful cooperation in the sectors of water, food security, and health. These partnerships have helped improve the business climate, promote inclusion, and enhance social well-being. The Beninese government has introduced reforms and created new tools to attract investments. These efforts open opportunities for sustainable investment projects in key Dutch expertise areas such as agriculture and water management. After the fourth trade mission on sustainable agriculture and water, a follow-up initiative was launched. It aims to build on the opportunities identified and to maintain collaboration between Dutch and Beninese partners. The Demonstration Program for Horticultural and Potato Solutions will be implemented through two demonstration centers, one in the north and one in the south of Benin. The program will last three years. It promotes sustainable and efficient farming practices and helps Beninese farmers increase productivity. It also creates a platform for Dutch companies to access the Beninese market. The project will start with an initial group of 10 Dutch companies, and more companies are expected to join in the following years. The initiative remains open to any Dutch agricultural company wishing to benefit from the project but can also contribute meaningful value through relevant technologies or expertise that can strengthen the local horticulture and potato sectors. The project is led by Holland Green Tech, a Dutch company that has been in Benin for almost six years. The company understands the local market and connects Dutch horticultural technologies with the needs of Beninese farmers and cooperatives. Building on successful models from Ghana, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Senegal, the centers will serve as places to showcase technology and business solutions. They will speed up the use of climate-smart farming technologies, create jobs for youth and women, and attract Dutch investments in Benin’s agribusiness sector.

Activity details

Date of receipt of proposal	11-11-2025
Proposal's reference number	MINBUZA-2025.2698863 & MINBUZA-2025.2698
Budget holder	Ambassade Cotonou (8221COT)
Limit access	No
Related activity	

Accounting data

SAP application number	
Funds center	COT BJ Private sector development grants (1701U03020041)

Policy data

Cooperation modality	Project support
Technical assistance	Between 10% (inclusive.) and 25% (exclusive) of the activity budget
CRS code	33120 Trade facilitation
Policy Keywords	
Refugees & host communities	No
Team Europe Initiative	No
Policy Markers	
__Trade & The Economy	Principal
_Security & Stability	Significant
Biodiversity	Not targeted
Climate change: adaptation	Significant
Climate change: mitigation	Not targeted
Desertification	Not targeted
Equality between men & women	Significant
Migration	Not targeted
Food security	Principal
Market access	Principal
Market development	Principal
Private sector development	Principal
Skills development	Significant
Youth employment	Significant
Explain your choices	The Dutch Horticultural Solutions Center aims to modernize Benin's horticulture sector, making it more productive, competitive and resilient. It strengthens the market, improves access for Dutch innovative companies and contributes to future food self-sufficiency in fruits and vegetables. The project also has strong social and territorial impacts by placing women and youth at the center, creating economic opportunities in both the North and the South and offering alternatives that reduce risks of marginalization or violent extremism. The adoption of Dutch climate-resilient technologies will introduce modern, efficient practices aligned with national priorities. The project therefore responds to key economic, social, security and environmental objectives shared by Benin and the Netherlands.

Beneficiary location

Beneficiary location	Country
Country	Benin
Location type	Province
Specific location	Ouidah and surrounding areas, Parakou and surrounding areas

Policy Appraisal

Policy relevance

- **What policy objectives, as set out in the annual plan, policy notes etc., will this activity contribute to?**

Promoting trade, sustainable investment and innovation is a shared priority for both Benin and the Netherlands. Since 2016, Benin has undertaken major reforms to modernize its economy, strengthen the business climate and develop high-value agricultural sectors, as reflected in the PAG 2021–2026, particularly its axes on structural economic transformation (modernization of production systems and establishment of horticultural infrastructure), youth employment (training, entrepreneurship and technical support) and women's empowerment (integration of women's cooperatives and improved access to markets). The Netherlands supports these national ambitions through the MACS 2023–2026 and the Annual Plan, which place private sector development at the center of economic diplomacy, with a focus on agricultural entrepreneurship, SME competitiveness, market access and the promotion of Dutch expertise in sustainable agriculture, horticulture and water management.

The establishment of Centers for the Promotion of Dutch Horticultural Solutions aligns closely with these priorities by ensuring continuity with past Dutch trade missions (2011, 2017, 2022, 2025), which sought to consolidate partnerships, identify new investment opportunities and position the Netherlands as a strategic economic partner for Benin. The centers will help translate these missions into long-term impact by providing a structured mechanism for demonstrating, adapting and anchoring Dutch innovations in the local ecosystem. The initiative also contributes to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 1 (poverty reduction), SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 12 (responsible production) and SDG 13 (climate action) which are shared priorities for both governments.

In this way, the activity supports Benin's objectives of modernizing its agricultural sector, structuring value chains, creating employment and reducing the trade deficit, while responding to the Netherlands' priorities in private sector development, sustainable investment and strengthened bilateral trade. By facilitating collaboration between companies, institutions and experts, the project contributes directly to economic diversification, job creation and sustainable development, and reinforces the long-term anchoring of Dutch technological expertise within the Beninese market.

Rationale

- **What issue/problem will be addressed by the activity**

Benin is a stable country with strong agricultural potential. Since 2016, major reforms have been carried out to modernize the economy, improve SME competitiveness and promote youth and women's employment. Urban demand for fresh vegetables continues to grow, and the country's strategic position gives access to regional markets of more than 300 million consumers. Which creates favorable conditions for developing a competitive horticulture sector. But despite these favorable conditions and the efforts of the PAG 2021–2026, the horticulture sector remains underperforming and cannot meet market demand.

Producers face structural constraints that slow the development of the sector. They have limited access to quality inputs, lack modern infrastructure such as greenhouses or efficient irrigation, and face very high post-harvest losses. The value chain is fragmented, with weak links between production, processing and distribution. Young people and women, who play a key role in horticulture, do not have the technologies or training needed to increase their productivity. As a result, local supply remains low and the country depends heavily on imports from Nigeria, Togo and Ghana.

On the other hand, Dutch horticultural companies such as Holland GreenTech, Rijk Zwaan, East-West Seed, Koppert, Van Iperen and Jiffy bring world-class expertise and show strong interest in Benin. However, their market entry is still limited. Processes are long and irregular, technologies cannot be tested or adapted locally, and there is no structured system that supports demonstration, knowledge transfer and long-term market anchoring.

These combined challenges reveal a central problem: there is no common space where the needs of Beninese producers can meet Dutch technological solutions in a practical and sustainable way. Solutions exist on both sides, but they do not converge. They either do not reach the field or are not adapted to local conditions.

The Center for the Promotion of Dutch Horticultural Solutions (Benin Horti Hubs) directly addresses this gap by creating a technological and commercial hub enabling (1) the demonstration of adapted horticultural technologies, (2) the support of SMEs and cooperatives in adopting innovations, (3) structured collaboration between Dutch companies and local actors, and (4) the progressive structuring of a competitive and resilient horticulture ecosystem. By bridging Dutch expertise with Benin's needs, the project lays the foundation for a sustainable transformation of the sector, supporting economic growth, job creation for youth and women, and the country's competitiveness on regional markets.

- **Why does the activity help to address the issue/problem?**

Drawing on successful HGT models in Ghana, Rwanda, Tanzania and Senegal, the activity will help sustainably modernize horticulture in Benin, create jobs for youth, strengthen economic opportunities for women and attract Dutch investment in agribusiness. The centers will serve as a concrete interface between Dutch horticultural innovations and the real needs of Beninese producers, cooperatives and SMEs. They will provide:

- demonstration plots in open field and greenhouse, integrating Dutch seeds, greenhouse systems, irrigation technologies and sustainable inputs;
- tailor-made support to help agricultural SMEs effectively adopt and integrate these technologies into their operations;
- sector-wide events (technical days, trade fairs, open days) to foster exchanges, stimulate demand and strengthen visibility;
- a structured collaboration framework between Dutch companies and local actors, ensuring practical and context-driven adaptation of innovations.

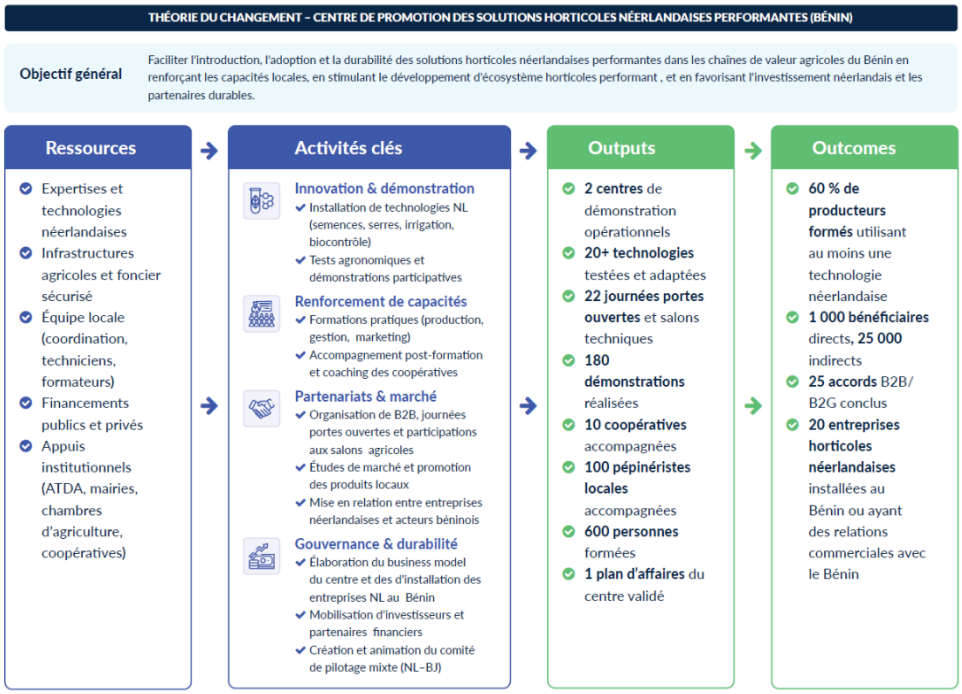
The activity will therefore accelerate the adoption of Dutch innovations by creating an active learning environment built on demonstration, hands-on training and continuous local support. Using the installed equipment (greenhouses, nurseries, open-field plots and post-harvest units) the project will deploy a coherent set of activities to build knowledge, develop skills and strengthen technical networks. Each site will conduct two demonstration cycles per year, supported by technical protocols, educational materials and guided visits.

SMEs will benefit from practical training, technical sheets, videos, coaching and sessions organized both on site and within cooperatives (relay fields). This approach will allow producers to test, adopt and progressively master modern technologies. Each center will also include a nursery, a combined theoretical and practical training facility, demonstration plots, and an aggregation/cold-chain hub connecting producers to markets.

The project will start with an inception phase to ensure strong alignment with local needs and to establish a solid bridge between Beninese agricultural priorities and Dutch technological solutions in a win-win, sustainable and scalable framework. Over three years, the project will achieve the following key indicators:

- 02 Demonstration and Training Centers established and operational (Ouidah South; Parakou – North).
- 20 Dutch horticultural technologies tested, adapted, and validated locally (seeds, irrigation, substrates, biocontrol, solar systems, etc.).
- 180 field demonstrations implemented across the two centers (18 crops × 5 seasons × 2 sites).
- 35 Open Days (JPO) organized with growers, cooperatives, institutions, and market actors.
- 10 (B2B/B2G) events organized to connect Dutch and Beninese actors and facilitate post-project commercial partnerships between Dutch suppliers and local SMEs, ensuring long-term sustainability of the value chain
- 600 direct beneficiaries trained, including at least 40% women and 30% youth, reaching an estimated 25,000 indirect beneficiaries in their communities.
- 600 training kits and one hundred 100 demonstration kits distributed to trainees
- 10 pilot cooperatives supported to test and adopt Dutch horticultural solutions (impacting 3,000 additional growers).
- 100 aggregators and nurserymen trained in post harverst tecnology and modern nursery management
- ≥ 60% technology adoption rate among trained growers, aggregators , nurserymen and supported cooperatives,.
- 20 business cases and five (5) market studies produced to guide investments, technology adoption, and market access pathways.
- 03 annual participations in the Greentech City exhibition, reaching cumulative 20,000 visitors to increase visibility of Dutch horticultural solutions through digital campaigns, agricultural fairs, media coverage, and institutional promotion.
- Sustainable post-project business model implemented for the centers with projected annual revenue of 200,000 € by 2031.

- **For ODA activities over EUR 250.000, please explain the Theory of Change**



The project's theory of change is based on the idea that by creating two demonstration and training centers capable of testing, adapting and disseminating Dutch horticultural technologies in a structured framework, Beninese producers, cooperatives and local SMEs will be able to sustainably adopt successful innovations, improve their yields and access new markets. Through these centers, the project creates a concrete bridge between Dutch expertise and local needs, and lays the foundations for a modern, competitive and inclusive horticultural ecosystem.

Long term result

The project aims for sustainable, competitive and inclusive Beninese agriculture, integrating efficient Dutch solutions that create decent jobs, improve rural incomes, strengthen food security and position Benin as a regional showcase for horticultural innovation.

The main indicators that will measure these structural changes are:

- the increase in the number of Dutch horticultural companies operating in Benin;
- the increase in average agricultural income;
- increased adoption of sustainable technologies;
- reduction of horticultural imports;
- the increase in regional exports;
- jobs created for young people and women.

This level of impact reflects the ambition of the project: to sustainably transform the horticultural sector through innovation, skills transfer, market access and long-term NL–BJ economic partnerships.

Medium term expected results (Outcomes)

The project should generate four structuring results, associated with hypotheses of success and quantified indicators:

1. Increased adoption of Dutch technologies by local producers and SMEs
   Hypothesis: the solutions are tested, adapted to the climate and accompanied by practical demonstrations and training.
   Key indicator: 60% of trained producers will use at least one NL technology (600 trained producers).
2. Professionalization of the Beninese horticultural sector
   Hypothesis: local players benefit from a complete technical and commercial ecosystem, conducive to moving upmarket.
   Key indicator: 100 horticultural SMEs strengthened; increased share of local production reducing imports.
3. Strengthening the technical and entrepreneurial capacities of young people, women and cooperatives
   Hypothesis: the training courses are accessible, practical and market-oriented.
   Key indicator: more than 1,000 beneficiaries trained; 80% post-training application rate.
4. Creation of a sustainable NL - Beninese commercial and institutional network
   Hypothesis: Dutch companies engage in medium-term business partnerships.
   Key indicators: 25 B2B/B2G agreements; 15 new Dutch horticultural companies are setting up or structuring commercial activities in Benin.

Short term expected results (Outputs)

The outputs are grouped into four key areas:

1. Demonstration and experimentation

- 2 operational demonstration centers;

- demonstration plots and functional greenhouses;
- 20 Dutch technologies tested and adapted;
- 35 open days / technical fairs;
- 180 demonstrations implemented across the two centers .

2. Training and support
   - theoretical & practical modules for producers, cooperatives and SMEs;
   - 600 direct beneficiaries (25,000 indirect);
   - specific programs for young people and women (at least 40% women and 30% youth);
   - post-training coaching;
   - 10 cooperatives supported.
3. Business model and governance
   - business plan of the center ensuring viability over 4 years;
   - joint and rotating steering committee (NL–BJ);
   - operational management by a reinforced local team.
4. Partnerships and market
   - consolidated NL–BJ network with 10+ companies;
   - facilitation of market access for local and Dutch companies (B2B/B2G);
   - post-project commercial agreements;
   - 20 business cases and 5 market studies produced.

Key activities

The activities are divided into four areas of intervention:

- Innovation and demonstration : selection and installation of Dutch technologies; agronomic tests; participatory demonstrations; nurseries; greenhouses; relay fields; adaptation to local conditions.
- Capacity building and professionalization : practical training; technical and commercial coaching; support for post-harvest processing; specific targeting of young people/women/cooperatives.
- Partnerships, marketing and visibility : organization of B2B, trade fairs, open days; market studies; facilitation of access to outlets; revitalization of integrated value chains.
- Governance and sustainability: implementation of the progressive business model; mobilization of investors; public/private partnerships; joint steering committee; communication and visibility NL–BJ.

Inputs (Resources mobilized)

The project relies on a combination of technical, financial and institutional resources:

- Dutch expertise and technologies (seeds, greenhouses, biocontrol, irrigation);
- agricultural infrastructure and secure land;
- local team (coordination, technicians, trainers);
- financial resources for construction, training and promotion;
- Dutch private co-investments and grants;
- institutional support (ATDA, town halls, cooperatives, chambers of agriculture).

The theory of change shows that if Dutch technologies are tested, adapted and demonstrated within a structured framework; whether producers and SMEs receive targeted technical and commercial support; if market access is facilitated; and if sustainable NL–BJ governance is put in place, then Benin will be able to modernize its horticulture, reduce its imports, create jobs and attract Dutch investments. This will lead to more sustainable, innovative and competitive agriculture.

Contextual analysis

- **Who is/are the target group(s) and why?**

The target groups are composed of the main actors in the agricultural sector value chain, including:

- market garden and potato producers;
- structured market gardening and potato production cooperatives;
- professional nurseries or those in the process of being formalized;
- commercial aggregators/collectors;
- food distributors and processors;
- partner Dutch technology companies.

The project aims to structure the chain in order to obtain optimal development, ensure sustainable opportunities and promote effective growth in harvest volume. This structuring is essential to achieve the expected impact. To achieve this, it is necessary that these players be rigorously selected in order to constitute a truly efficient development center or core.

- **Justification for the choice of target groups**

The project targets all key players in the horticultural value chain because the performance of an agricultural ecosystem depends on the solidity of each of its links. Each group plays a determining role in the adoption of innovations, the dissemination of

improved practices and the sustainable structuring of the market. Their selection is therefore essential to create a dynamic core, capable of developing and anchoring Dutch horticultural solutions in Benin.

1. **Market gardeners and potato producers**
   They are the first users of technologies. They are the ones who implement cultural practices and carry the potential for change. Their poor access to quality inputs, modern techniques and efficient equipment directly explains low local productivity. Targeting them ensures real adoption of Dutch solutions and quickly generates yield and revenue gains.
2. **Structured production cooperatives**
   Cooperatives constitute an essential lever for large-scale diffusion. They bring together several dozen to several hundred producers and facilitate replication, the pooling of equipment, the organization of purchases and collective marketing. Integrating them into the project ensures a broad, lasting and rapid impact in the territories.
3. **Professional nurserymen (or in the process of being formalized)**
   Nurseries are a strategic link in the genetic improvement and health quality of plants. Successful horticulture begins with quality plants. Training them in Dutch techniques helps secure the entire chain: productivity, uniformity, availability and quality of the plants.
4. **Commercial aggregators and collectors**
   Without them, volumes do not leave production areas and do not reach markets. They play a key role in structuring outlets, in negotiating with distributors, and in stabilizing prices. Supporting them helps reduce post-harvest losses, improve logistics and streamline access to the market.
5. **Food distributors and processors**
   They represent the formal market. They demand regular, standardized and quality products. Integrating them makes it possible to align the technical offer (producers) with commercial demand (supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, processing units). This encourages producers to adopt innovations to meet these standards.
6. **Dutch technology companies partners**
   They provide technical solutions that meet the identified challenges: greenhouses, precision irrigation, biocontrol, sustainable fertilization, post-harvest management, improved seeds. They are also drivers of investment. Associating them allows them to test, adapt and anchor their technologies in a local context, while creating lasting opportunities for commercial partnerships and implementation.

The joint selection of these groups guarantees that the project relies on a core of actors capable of bringing about change. Producers adopt, cooperatives disseminate, nursery growers secure upstream, aggregators and distributors structure the downstream and Dutch companies bring innovations and investment. This complementarity is necessary to obtain an efficient center, capable of driving a sustainable transformation of the horticultural sector in Benin.

Catégorie	Critères spécifiques de sélection
Producteurs maraîchers	Être actif sur au moins 0,25 ha Avoir une expérience d'au moins 2 campagnes Être âgé de 18 à 45 ans (quota femmes ≥ 40 %) Localisation dans les zones cibles Motivation à adopter des technologies innovantes
Coopératives agricoles	Statut juridique reconnu ≥15 membres actifs Champ collectif relais disponible Expérience en commercialisation groupée Engagement formalisé par signature
Pépiniéristes	Actif ou en structuration Espace de production sécurisé Capacité à suivre des formations Volonté de se lancer dans les 12 mois Jeunes et femmes priorisés
Agrégateurs	Actif dans la collecte/conditionnement Moyens logistiques (tricycle, camionnette…) Capacité de contractualisation avec ≥5 producteurs Volonté de suivre formation post-récolte/traçabilité
Distributeurs / transformateurs	Actif dans l'approvisionnement (cantines, supermarchés…) Intérêt pour les produits certifiés Engagement d'approvisionnement local Participation aux événements commerciaux
Entreprises NL partenaires	Technologie adaptée au contexte béninois Implication dans la démonstration et le transfert

	Stratégie d'ancrage local (représentant, filiale…) Co-investissement ou business model viable

- **Who are the other main stakeholders?**

The project mobilizes a set of institutional, technical and private actors who each play a determining role in structuring the horticultural sector and in anchoring Dutch solutions in Benin. The main stakeholders are:

- **The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP) :** acts as the strategic authority for the agricultural sector. It ensures that the project aligns with national priorities, provides institutional endorsement, and facilitates integration within sector-wide programs.
- **The Territorial Agricultural Development Agencies (ATDA) :** are responsible for technical supervision and coordination at the territorial level. They support field implementation and help incorporate project activities into regional agricultural development plans.
- **The Chambers of Agriculture:** serve as support structures for producer organizations. They act as relays for training, facilitate engagement with cooperatives, and reinforce the professionalization of actors in the value chain.
- **The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Benin (CCIB) :** plays a key role as an interface with the private sector. It supports business linkages, B2B facilitation, and the strengthening of local horticultural SMEs.
- **APIEx – Agence de Promotion des Investissements et des Exportations :** promotes and attracts business investments and could facilitates partnerships between Dutch technology companies and local SMEs. APIEx could also support in the establishment of the center *Guichet Unique* (One-Stop Shop), supporting business registration, administrative procedures, and investor facilitation.
- **EuroCham Benin :** provides a platform for European private-sector actors and fosters collaboration, co-investment opportunities, and the uptake of Dutch technologies in the local horticultural sector.
- **The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands :** ensures overall coordination of the bilateral cooperation framework. It provides strategic guidance, economic diplomacy, and alignment of the project with the broader Dutch–Beninese partnership.
- **RVO – the Netherlands Enterprise Agency :** offers technical and financial backstopping, supports monitoring of results, and mobilizes Dutch companies. RVO plays a key role in ensuring the project aligns with Dutch private-sector engagement strategies.
- **Dutch technology companies** : including Holland GreenTech, Rijk Zwaan, Koppert, Jiffy, East-West Seed, Van Iperen, VDS Acampo and others provide innovative horticultural solutions (seeds, irrigation, greenhouses, biocontrol, substrates). They co-organize demonstrations, support adaptation of technologies, and engage in B2B and market development activities.
- **Local authorities and municipalities** (such as Ouidah and Parakou) : facilitate access to land, provide local authorizations, support territorial anchoring, and ensure the safety and sustainability of the centers within their jurisdictions.
- **Local cooperatives and producer organizations :** are key beneficiaries and active participants. They engage in testing, validating, and disseminating Dutch technologies within their networks, ensuring community-level impact and replication.
- **Distributors and aggregators** federations : play an essential role in linking production to market demand. They support post-harvest handling, aggregation, grading, and commercialization, ensuring that improved production translates into real income gains.
- **Academic and training institutions** – including the University of Abomey-Calavi and technical schools : contribute to research collaboration, training delivery, and student involvement. They support the integration of project innovations into academic curricula and professional training programs.

These actors constitute the institutional and commercial ecosystem necessary to ensure the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

- **To what extent have stakeholders been involved in formulating the proposal?**

The proposal was developed through a progressive and inclusive process, nourished by the projects, interactions and collaborations carried out over recent years with the main institutions and technical partners in the sector. It is these accumulated experiences, rather than isolated meetings, which made it possible to identify the real and recurring needs of the Beninese horticultural sector.

- The projects carried out with the MAEP, the ATDA, the Chambers of Agriculture and the CCIB have repeatedly highlighted the same constraints: low productivity, lack of technical references, limited access to quality inputs, high post-harvest losses, difficulties in accessing the market. These recurring issues served as a basis for the design of this project.
- Technical partners such as SNV, IFAD, the World Vegetable Center, IFDC/ACMA, and Enabel, active in the market gardening sectors in Benin, have also made an essential indirect contribution. Their experiences, studies, interactions

with cooperatives and producers, as well as the lessons learned from their projects (SAFEVEG, EJASA, PADMAR, ACMA, etc.), made it possible to refine the needs analysis and strengthen the relevance of the project.

- The producers, cooperatives, nurseries and aggregators met in these programs have repeatedly expressed their needs for modern technologies, improved practices, capacity building and more structured access to the market. These findings strongly contributed to guiding the content of the project.
- Dutch companies (HGT, Rijk Zwaan, Koppert, East-West Seed, Jiffy, Van Iperen, etc.) participated in technical exchanges and commercial missions which made it possible to identify the innovations to be tested, the conditions necessary for their local adaptation, and possible models of collaboration with Beninese stakeholders.
- EuroCham and the CCIB, through their regular interactions with the private sector, shared information on commercial constraints, the needs of distributors, the expectations of the urban market, and the conditions for strengthening local outlets.
- RVO and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, based on the 2011, 2017, 2022 and 2025 trade missions and the ongoing dialogue with the private sector, coordinated the overall reflection, ensuring the alignment of the project with the priorities of the PSD strategy and the ambitions of bilateral cooperation.

Thus, even if the stakeholders were not formally brought together in a single co-design framework, their contributions from past projects, regular consultations, operational interactions and cumulative lessons were decisive in constructing a proposal that was realistic, useful and largely anchored in the needs of the field.

- **Is the intervention aimed at a specific geographical location, and if so, why?**

The intervention targets two strategic geographic areas to ensure a balanced national impact and better dissemination of horticultural technologies:

1. Ouidah (South) was chosen for its proximity to the urban area of Cotonou, markets with high demand (supermarkets, collective catering, hotels, institutional markets), logistics platforms and commercial companies. The South concentrates a significant share of fresh vegetable consumption and represents a major economic hub where innovations can be tested quickly, with direct feedback from the market.
2. Parakou (North) was selected to stimulate agricultural entrepreneurship in an area where the potential is still undervalued, facilitate access to inputs and equipment in a region that is often less served, reduce territorial inequalities by offering a modern center outside the coastal axis, bring together the innovations of producers from Borgou, Alibori and Atacora.

Fair and inclusive distribution is guaranteed:

- 50% of beneficiaries in the North, 50% in the South,
- at least 40% women and 60% young people in all activities (training, demonstrations, nurseries, cooperatives).

This dual implementation makes it possible to reach all categories of producers, to take into account the agro-ecological diversity of the country, and to ensure national appropriation of Dutch horticultural technologies.

Added value

- **What is the added value of the Dutch government being involved in relation to other donors, the EU, NGOs and local authorities?**

We can highlight three main added values:

1. Effective adoption of technologies thanks to the active presence of Dutch companies. The involvement of the Dutch government brings decisive added value through its recognized horticultural expertise and the strength of the bilateral cooperation. Unlike other projects that merely import technologies, this initiative enables real local adoption because the Dutch companies that develop these innovations are present on the ground, support their adaptation to the Beninese context, and directly transfer technical know-how.
2. The strategic role of the Dutch government: facilitating, coordinating and securing investments. The Dutch government plays a key role as facilitator and coordinator, connecting institutions, companies and local actors, which streamlines collaboration and secures investments. Its engagement strengthens the credibility of the project, supports the market entry of Dutch solutions, and ensures strategic alignment with Benin's priorities and past trade missions.
3. An innovative approach, aligned with bilateral priorities, that transforms the sector sustainably. This intervention introduces a new approach: accelerated access to high-performance horticultural technologies that are locally adapted and embedded within a training, demonstration and partnership ecosystem. It responds to the shared ambitions of both countries regarding agricultural modernisation, competitiveness, and job creation.

- **Are the recipients making an own contribution or co-participating in the activity, and if so, to what extent?**

  The project follows a co-investment approach, which is essential to ensure ownership, sustainability and strong stakeholder engagement. Contributions are expected from:

  Producers and cooperatives

  - Provision of land or relay plots

- Mobilisation of local labour
- Purchase of complementary small equipment
- Partial contribution to production costs during demonstration cycles

Nursery operators

- Light improvements to workspaces
- Purchase of substrates, trays, containers and consumables

Aggregators / collectors / distributors

- Provision of logistics (sorting, transport, storage)
- Contractual commitments for collection
- Participation in quality assurance processes

Dutch partner companies

- Free technical expertise through training and coaching hours
- Mobilisation of specialised technicians
- Provision of technologies for demonstration

Moreover, the implementing partner (main recipient) is making an own contribution of around EUR 474.000.

Lessons learned

- **What lessons learned (from previous or comparable activities, published evaluations, relevant publications) will be addressed by the activity?**

The design of the Dutch Horticultural Solutions Promotion Centre in Benin builds on lessons learned from similar initiatives carried out in West and East Africa. Several regional and international projects have attempted to establish horticultural or agricultural expertise centres. Their analysis reveals both major successes and recurring limitations, which the project integrates to ensure relevance, effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

Comparative studies show that a centre can only be successful if it is built on a complete ecosystem that integrates training, innovation, demonstration, market linkages, governance and financial sustainability. These lessons form the foundation of the project's architecture.

Tableau 2 : *Initiatives similaires de création de centres d'expertise horticole ou agroalimentaire*

Initiative	Localisation & Bailleurs	Objectifs principaux	Défis rencontrés	Axes stratégique pour la mise du centre
AgriPelago Expertise Center (Ghana)	Ghana – Ambassade du Royaume des Pays-Bas, NABC, NUFFIC	Centre de formation et d'innovation horticole liant entreprises néerlandaises, universités et PME locales.	· Gouvernance complexe entre partenaires NL et locaux. · Difficultés à maintenir une gestion partagée.	Clarifier la gouvernance : VDS Acampo comme entité contractante, HGT Bénin comme opérateur local.
Centre d'Excellence Horticole de Kpomassè (Bénin)	Benin-MAEP / PADMAR / Banque mondiale	Formation et développement de compétences horticoles pour jeunes producteurs.	Faible implication du secteur privé, absence de modèle économique autonome. Basé sur la recherche et l'innovation	Impliquer les entreprises néerlandaises dès la conception et intégrer des activités génératrices de revenus.
Centre Songhaï (Porto-Novo, Bénin)	Promoteur privée Gouvernement du Bénin / PNUD / FIDA / Coopération française	Formation à l'agriculture intégrée, innovation et entrepreneuriat rural.	Technologies peu adaptées pour un secteur l'horticulture qui veut croitre et être rentable moderne , marché urbain peu exploité.	Positionner le Centre comme version optimisée pour un retour sur investissement optimisée du modèle Songhaï, axée sur technologies horticoles NL.

Horticulture Innovation Lab (USAID)	Afrique de l'Est et de l'Ouest – UC Davis / USAID	Centres de démonstration pour technologies horticoles adaptées au climat.	Appropriation limitée après la fin du financement USAID.	Assurer la viabilité post-projet via la ventes services et redevances d'utilisation des infrastructures du centre par les entreprises
Centre of Excellence for Horticulture (Rwanda)	Rwanda – RDB / Nuffic / Delphy / Agriterra	Développement de compétences horticoles et transfert de technologies néerlandaises.	Dépendance au financement initial, lente montée du volet commercial.	S'appuyer sur des structures locales existantes (HGT, coopératives,) pour accélérer la mise en marché.
Centre d'Excellence en Agriculture Durable (Burkina Faso)	Enabel / IFDC / CABI	Centre de formation agricole durable intégrant production, post-récolte et transformation.	Visibilité limitée auprès du secteur privé, approche trop académique.	Orienter les démonstrations vers les partenariats B2B et la commercialisation concrète.

Tableau 3 : *Analyse comparative – Leçons clés pour le Bénin*

Domaine	Constats des autres initiatives	Réponses intégrées dans le projet
Gouvernance	Multiplicité des partenaires et lenteurs décisionnelles.	Structure claire : VDS Acampo (lead) + HGT (coordination locale).
Modèle économique	Centres dépendants de subventions sans plan de rentabilité.	Business model durable (vente de plants, formations, services).
Adoption technologique	Centres limités à la formation sans lien avec le marché.	Intégration complète du maillon marché (coopératives, agrégateurs, entreprises NL).
Viabilité financière	Absence de stratégie post-financement.	Autofinancement total visé dès l'année 4.
Institutionnalisation	Centres non intégrés aux politiques publiques agricoles.	Ancrage prévu dans les dispositifs ATDA, PADMAR et MAEP.

Experiences across the region show that horticultural expertise centres succeed only when they benefit from clear governance, a direct link with the market, strong private-sector involvement, and a viable economic model. Many past initiatives have struggled due to complex coordination mechanisms, weak local ownership, or prolonged dependence on external funding. These lessons guided the design of the Dutch Horticultural Solutions Promotion Centre, conceived from the outset as an integrated mechanism aligned with public policies and directly connected to the real needs of value-chain actors.

The project stands out through the active presence of Dutch companies, which adapt and transfer their technologies directly in the field, thereby strengthening the effectiveness and relevance of the solutions introduced. With a progressive economic model leading to financial autonomy and a strong institutional anchorage, the centre is designed to continue operating beyond the initial funding period. It provides Benin with a structuring tool capable of modernising production, strengthening value chains, and sustainably supporting the growth of the horticulture sector.

Durability

- **How will the results of the activity be sustained after its end date? What is the exit-strategy?**

The sustainability model has been designed both for the project structure and for the beneficiaries.

1) Sustainability of the Centre itself through a business model tested throughout the project and supporting an exit from donor funding. The exit strategy is based on the progressive consolidation of the Centres' economic model to ensure full financial autonomy by the 4th year (2029). The model combines the sale of horticultural products (seedlings, vegetables), service provision to Dutch companies wishing to use the Centre to test or introduce their solutions, and the rental of infrastructure (greenhouses, training rooms, cold-storage units). Revenues generated during the three years of implementation will be reinvested to consolidate and expand activities. The digitisation of services (client management, traceability, digital invoicing) will strengthen operational efficiency. The target is to cover more than 95% of operational costs and reach a positive EBITDA (>14%) from 2029 onwards.

2) Sustainability for Dutch companies through commercial anchoring and continuity of partnership. The project establishes a

mechanism that enables Dutch companies to maintain a long-term presence in Benin beyond the initial funding. A dedicated Business Developer/Marketer will facilitate market entry, build a portfolio of local clients, and coordinate technically with Beninese public and private partners. This approach guarantees continuity after the project: Dutch companies benefit from visibility, a market-testing environment, commercial support, and paid service packages that encourage long-term engagement and avoid the sporadic market entries observed in the past.

3) Sustainability for local beneficiaries through technical and commercial empowerment. The project provides practical training, close coaching, repeated demonstrations, adapted technical pathways, and support for market access, enabling producers, cooperatives, nursery operators and horticultural SMEs to operate independently after the end of the project. The skills acquired, the mastery of new technologies, increased productivity, and progressive integration into formal value chains ensure continuity of outcomes. The objective is for beneficiaries to maintain the introduced practices, increase their incomes, and generate added value without depending on continuous external support.

Gender

- **Does the proposal include a gender analysis? If yes, what are the main outcomes? If no, why not?**
  The project fully takes into account gender-related issues within horticultural value chains in Benin. Evidence from previous experiences and consultations with sector stakeholders shows that women and young people play a central role in production, processing and marketing, yet continue to face major barriers in accessing inputs, equipment, technical training and structured markets. These elements were integrated into the project design to ensure an adapted and inclusive approach.
- **Does the proposal justify the target group's gender-specific interests and needs (and why)? Please explain.**
  The project builds on field observations and national priorities (PAG 2021–2026, Axis 7) to integrate the specific needs of women and youth. It includes tailored practical training, support for the structuring of women-led cooperatives, professionalisation pathways for young agripreneurs, and mechanisms facilitating access to markets, particularly in processing and post-harvest handling. The objective is to ensure equitable participation, with at least 40% women among beneficiaries and strong representation of youth across technical and commercial activities.
- **Have women and young people been included in the stakeholder analysis? Please explain.**
  Women and youth were identified early as essential groups within the horticulture sector. The project ensures balanced representation between the North and the South, with significant participation from these target groups. During the inception phase, a deeper analysis of their roles, constraints and expectations will be conducted to refine activities and targeting criteria. This approach strengthens the project’s relevance and supports the social sustainability of results.

Climate change

- **Does the proposal include an analysis of the possible effects of climate change on the activity or its results?**
  The project considers the main climate risks affecting horticultural value chains in Benin: irregular rainfall, water stress, rising temperatures and the vulnerability of open-field crops. These risks, widely documented in national and regional agricultural initiatives, were incorporated into the design of the centres to strengthen resilience and relevance in a context of increasing climate variability. The very essence of the project is to provide producers with technologies that enhance climate resilience and equip local actors with adequate solutions for optimal resource management.
- **Does the proposal include any interventions to combat these effects (adaptation/mitigation)?**
  Yes. The centres include several measures that support climate adaptation and reduce vulnerability:
- dissemination of climate-smart Dutch technologies (drip irrigation, high-performance greenhouses, water-saving systems);
- practical demonstrations and training on climate-adapted technical itineraries;
- promotion of bio-inputs and post-harvest solutions to reduce losses and improve resource efficiency;
- market studies and diversification strategies to guide beneficiaries toward crops better suited to local conditions and climate trends. These interventions directly support PAG 2021–2026 objectives and SDG 13.

Cooperation, harmonisation and alignment

- **Does the activity involve cooperation with Dutch organisations, the EU or other donors (including delegated cooperation), local organisations or other parties?**
  Yes. The Centre builds on an ecosystem enriched by initiatives supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the European Union and organisations such as IFAD, SNV, ACED and World Vegetable Center. It involves close cooperation with Dutch companies supplying technologies (Rijk Zwaan, Koppert, Jiffy, East-West Seed, Van Iperen, etc.) and with local institutions and programmes (ATDA, MAEP, CCIB, cooperatives, nurseries). It also aligns with several existing projects (SAFEVEG, PADMAR, Benibiz, EJASA, HortiBenin, HortiPlateforme, ACMA 3) and addresses a critical gap: the absence of a structured mechanism for the adaptation, demonstration and commercial integration of Dutch horticultural solutions in Benin.

- **How does the activity contribute to harmonisation and/or multi-donor financing?**
  The project aligns with the intervention logics already established by these programmes, each bringing a specific contribution: safe vegetable consumption (SAFEVEG), value chain structuring (PADMAR), youth training (EJASA), business support (Benibiz), networking (HortiPlateforme). The Centre adds the missing link: a physical and technical platform where Dutch innovations can be tested, adapted and disseminated in a coordinated way. This enhances complementarity, avoids duplication, and reinforces coherence across donor-funded horticulture initiatives.
- **What is the degree of (policy and financial) alignment?**
  The project responds to PAG 2021–2026 priorities and to the Dutch PSD strategy and builds on a decade of commercial missions between both countries. It addresses a clear need expressed by public and private stakeholders: the establishment of a durable platform for integrating Dutch horticultural technologies. Financially, the project follows a co-investment model and complements investments from the EU, IFAD, the World Bank, Enabel, SNV and ACED. This convergence reinforces impact and ensures full alignment with national and bilateral strategic priorities.

Digitalisation

- Have proposed digital technologies been developed or chosen in collaboration with end-users?
- Does the proposal include an analysis of the local digital ecosystem?
- Is data security guaranteed?
- Are digital solutions locally sustainable/relevant?
- Is duplication avoided?

Not applicable

Additional remarks (if applicable)

A Quality at Entry (Q@E) assessment isn't required for this activity because the budget is less than EUR 5 million, it doesn't pose innovative risks, and the overall risk profile is moderate, not high. Since none of these criteria were met, a Q@E assessment was not conducted.

Results

Food and Nutrition Security

1. Ending hunger and malnutrition

Our 2030 target is to lift 32 million people out of undernourishment, especially women and children.

Indicators
Description how the activity contributes to the result area Ending hunger and malnutrition?
Measurements:

2. Improving the performance, sustainability and resilience of smallholder farming systems

Our 2030 target is to double productivity and income of 8 million small scale food producers and to convert 8 million hectares of farmland to sustainable land use.

Indicators
Description how the activity contributes to the result area Improving the performance, sustainability and resilience of smallholder farming systems
Measurements:

D. D. Knowledge & Innovation Systems

Indicators
D.1. Number of SSFPs applying new technologies/practices that aim to transform food systems towards desirable outcomes (disaggregated for male/female)
Measurements: Target: 360

B. Productivity and Income

Indicators
Outcome B.1.1. Number of SSFPs (disaggregated for male/female) who progressively realize a living income
Measurements: Target: 100

Outcome B.1.3. Number of female SSFPs who progressively became more empowered
Measurements: Target: 280

Reach B.2.1. Number of SSFPs directly reached with activities aimed at structural/systemic improvement of their agricultural performance
Measurements: Target: 3700

Private Sector Development

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

Indicators
Description how the activity contributes to this theme
Measurements:

1. Strengthening the business climate

SDG target(s): 8a, 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.8, 8.10, 10.2, 17.11. Short description: In the result area 'strengthening the business climate', the approach is to strengthen the local business climate through interventions relating to infrastructure, youth employment and entrepreneurship, policy and regulation, institutional capacity building and social dialogue to strengthen MSME's within their ecosystem and improve their access to financial and other services.

Learning questions
What have we learned from this activity for this result area, strengthening the business climate?
Measurements:

1.1 What can The Netherlands offer in terms of resources, approaches, knowledge and expertise in specific sectors, to sustainably scale up local MSME productivity in focus countries?
Measurements:

Indicators
Description how the activity contributes to the result area, strengthening the business climate
Measurements:

1.E. Number of MSMSEs gaining new or improved access to a value chain. (IATI code XXX0005)
Measurements: Target: 3700

1.G. Number of direct beneficiaries supported to have raised incomes. (IATI code XXX0007)
Measurements: Target: 700

1.R. Number of improved or introduced new products. (IATI code XXX0018)
Measurements: Target: 40

2. Strengthening trade for development

SDG target(s): 8a, 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.8, 8.10, 10.2, 17.11. Short description: In the result area 'strengthening trade for development' the focus is on improving market and trading systems, where conditions for economic activity to cross borders more easily are created. We also encourage transitions to more sustainable production and trade practices through economic and social reforms (market transformation) in lower middle income countries. We contribute to increased and more sustainable trade between the EU and lower and middle income countries.

Learning questions
What have we learned from this activity for this result area, strengthening trade for development?
Measurements:

2.1 What type of collaboration modalities with private sector actors (Dutch/local) are most effective for achieving development impact at scale?
Measurements:

Indicators
Description how the activity contributes to the result area, strengthening trade for development
Measurements:

2.D. Number of MSMEs that utilize business development services. (IATI code XXX0004)
Measurements: Target: 20

Monitoring and evaluation

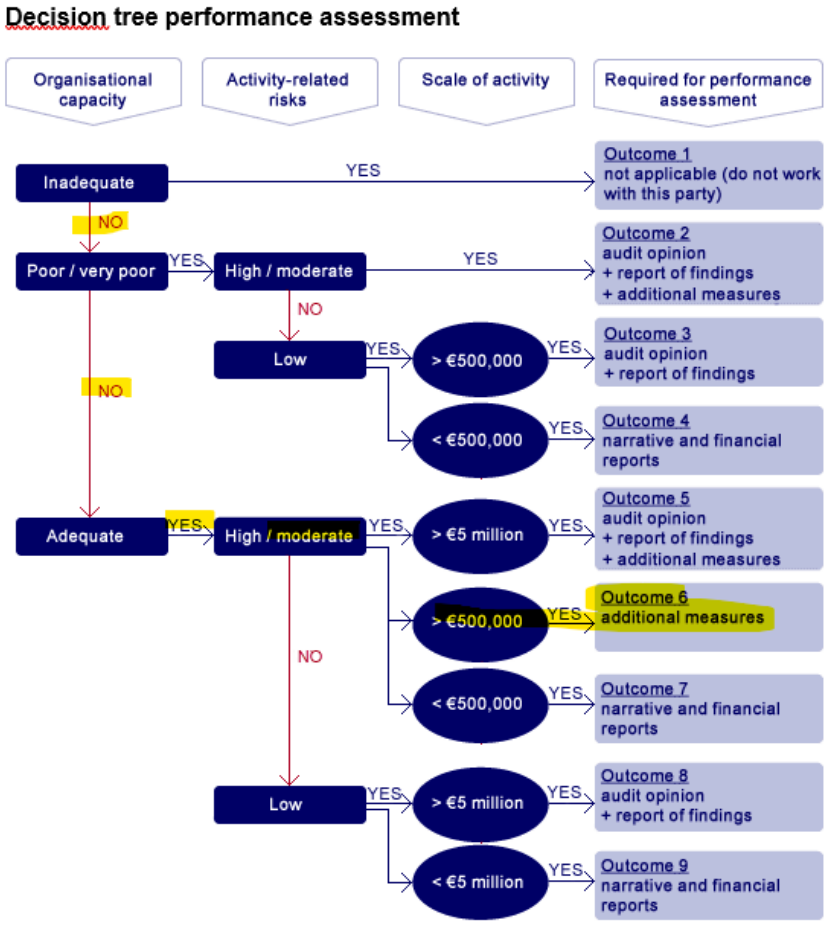
Monitoring

- **Specify what reporting information is required for this activity, based on the activity analysis decision tree (see Help).**

Include the following elements:

- **Planning versus realisation: tracking progress against predetermined objectives as laid out in the project proposal.**
- **Performance and quality: checking relevance and appropriateness of the implementing organisation's performance based on key assumptions in the proposal and the outcomes of the risk analysis.**

The organizational capacities of the implementing organization are considered *adequate*, the activity-related risks *moderate* (see chapter *Risks),* and the scale of the activity exceeds EUR 500,000. Consequently, per the activity decision tree (see below), narrative and financial reports as well as additional measures are needed. These additional measures will encompass an annual audit opinion and report. See table 2 below for full overview of reporting obligations.



The embassy will also schedule one or more – depending on necessity and capacity– field visits to see how HGT is implementing its activities and will participate in the different public events that will likely be organized. The embassy will also have regular meetings with the implementing organization to discuss progress. During these meetings, the results in the different result areas stated in the proposal and budget will be discussed.

Result reporting by the implementing organization will be tracked by the responsible COT policy and financial officers. The reported results are measured against the submitted proposal and budget, as well as the desired outputs, indicators, and overall objectives of the activity as described in the proposal. More specifically the policy officer is responsible for:

- Assessing the narrative report and financial reports;
- Checking whether results are correctly reported by the partner in IATI;
- Registering activity results in IMPACT;
- Maintaining communication with IDH to receive updates on and discuss the progress of the activities;

- Assessing the need for field visits and conducting them as necessary.

On the other hand the financial officers main monitoring responsibilities are:

- Assessing the financial, audit and narrative reports;
- Clear prepayments based on the aforementioned reports, and register this in the relevant administrative systems.

Table 2: Overview of reporting obligations

Type of report	**Period covered**	**Submission date**
Annual plan	01-01-2026 to 31-12-2026 01-01-2027 to 31-12-2027 01-01-2028 to 31-12-2028	Included in the proposal 01-11-2026 01-11-2027
Narrative report (including IATI reporting)	01-01-2026 to 31-12-2026 01-01-2027 to 31-12-2027 01-01-2028 to 31-12-2028	31-03-2027 31-03-2028 Included in final report
Financial report	01-01-2026 to 31-12-2026 01-01-2027 to 31-12-2027 01-01-2028 to 31-12-2028	31-03-2027 31-03-2028 Included in final report
Audit report	01-01-2026 to 31-12-2026 01-01-2027 to 31-12-2027 01-01-2028 to 31-12-2028	31-03-2027 31-03-2028 31-03-2029
Final narrative report	01-01-2026 to 31-12-2028	31-03-2029
Final financial report	01-01-2026 to 31-12-2028	31-03-2029

Evaluation

No official mid-term or end of project evaluation will be carried out as none of the four criteria that necessitate such an evaluation are met:

- A budget of EUR 5 million or more, or
- of strategic importance, or
- involving political risks/interests, or
- for which an evaluation has been agreed with Parliament.

Finance

Budget breakdown

- **Include an overview of the activity budget, including overhead costs.**

The budget is archived in Sophia: MINBUZA-2025.2698867. An overview of the multi-annual budget is also shown below.

- **Is the budget arithmetically correct?**

Yes. All calculations in the budget were verified to be correct.

			Année 1 - 2026	Année 2 - 2027	Année 3 - 2028	Total (2026-2028)
Composantes du projet						
Coordination et pilotage du projet			€ 211.120,0	€ 125.020,0	€ 133.420,0	€ 469.560,0
Installation physique des Centres de Promotion Horticole à Ouidah et Parakou			€ 399.500,0	€ 97.500,0	€ 7.500,0	€ 504.500,0
Démonstration technologique et renforcement des capacités			€ 181.666,7	€ 231.166,7	€ 231.166,7	€ 644.000,0
Amélioration de l'accès au marché et Communication			€ 48.666,7	€ 54.791,7	€ 64.791,7	€ 168.250,0
Budget total par année sans overhead			**€ 840.953,3**	**€ 508.478,3**	**€ 436.878,3**	**€ 1.786.310,0**
Contribution propre par année			**€ 99.300,0**	**€ 148.950,0**	**€ 157.350,0**	**€ 405.600,0**
Subvention sans overhead par année			€ 741.653,3	€ 359.528,3	€ 279.528,3	€ 1.380.710,0
Overhead (10 %) subvention		10%	€ 74.165,3	€ 35.952,8	€ 27.952,8	€ 138.071,0
Contribution overhead 5%		5%	€ 37.082,7	€ 17.976,4	€ 13.976,4	€ 69.035,5
Overhead (5%) demandée sur la subvention		5%	€ 37.082,7	€ 17.976,4	€ 13.976,4	€ 69.035,5
Total Subvention demandée par an			**€ 778.736,0**	**€ 377.504,8**	**€ 293.504,8**	**€ 1.449.745,5**
			€ 53,7	*€ 26,0*	*20,2*	*€ 100,0*
	Coûts totaux du projet 2026-2028:				100%	€ 1.924.381,0
	Subvention total 2026-2028				75%	€ 1.449.745,5
	Contribution total 2026-2028				25%	€ 474.635,5

- **Are the amounts/rates in the budget acceptable?**

Yes.

Salaries charged to the project range between EUR 750 and EUR 2.500 per month, which is in line with local market conditions in Benin. For the managing of the demonstration sites themselves the salaries range between EUR 200 and EUR 600 per month, which is acceptable.

The budgeted costs for assets, such as computers (EUR 1,200), tables ((EUR 500), chairs (EUR 150), cars (40,000), and motorcycles, appear to be in line with local market prices. As the financing modality is a grant, only actual incurred costs will be considerd eligible. In addition, the implementing partner's procurement policies are assessed as adequate (see chapter *Implementing Organization(s)*), which should help ensure that realistic prices are charged to the grant for these purchases. Because the implementing organization is a for-profit entity, the Embassy will assess at the end of the grant period, based on the final reports, how the assets purchased under this grant should be treated after the activity is closed.

An external audit is budgeted at EUR 3.500 per year, which is considered acceptable.

The costs charged for installing and managing the center are in line with other similar activities (see: 25-0002085)

- **Briefly explain the structure of the budget.**

The budget has the following components:

- Coordination et pilotage du projet (EUR 469,560);
- Installation physique des Centres de Promotion Horticole a Ouidah et Parakou (EUR 504,500);
- Demonstration technologique et renforcement des capacities (EUR 644,000)
- Amelioraiton de l'acces au marche et Communication (EUR 168,250)
- Overhead (EUR 138,071)

The total budget amounts to EUR 1,924,381, of which EUR 474,635 will be contributed by the implementing partner(s). The grant amount will thus amount to **EUR 1,449,745.5.**

Moreover, the budget also includes an overview of the expected yearly profit of the demonstration sites (with the goal being durable results also after the grant period has ended). Via e-mail the implementing organization confirmed that [see: MINBUZA-2025.2698867]: *"The projected profit in 2027 will be fully reinvested into the project and will not be treated as revenue for Holland Greentech. These funds are intended exclusively to reinforce the project's objectives and to support activities that contribute to an improved trade and investment climate between the Netherlands and Benin. In other words, any surplus generated will remain within the project structure and will serve to expand its scope rather than benefit the organization financially.*

If the profit exceeds expectations, it will not reduce the financial contribution requested from the Embassy. Instead, it will enable the implementation of additional activities that directly support the project's mandate. These may include, for example:

- enhanced facilitation services for Dutch companies interested in exploring or entering the Beninese market, such as additional B2B missions, tailored matchmaking, or targeted feasibility assessments;

- increased visibility and communication efforts around Dutch horticultural technologies, including extra demonstration days, extended outreach activities, or participation in regional or international horticultural fairs;

- advanced capacity-building activities for cooperatives, agripreneurs, and young professionals to accelerate the adoption and scaling of Dutch innovations;

- small-scale pilot interventions in emerging horticultural value chains where Dutch companies express interest, helping to prepare the ground for future investment;

- *reinforcement of the support structure for the one-stop service desk (guichet unique) to strengthen its long-term sustainability and service quality."*

- **Are overheads proportional to outputs? What is included? What is recharged?**

The implementing partner charged an overhead rate of 5% to the project budget, this rate is acceptable.
However, the implementing partner explained [see: MINBUZA-2025.2698867 *question EMbassy ORIA and budget]* that following the financial closing of 2023, the actual realized overhead for HGT Benin amounted to 13.8% of turnover, which composed the following elements: Office costs, Administration, Local management support, Financial administration and transaction costs, Basic communication and coordination, Group management, Finance and controlling, HRM, IT and communication systems, and Learning and compliance structures.
However, when preparing the project budget for this activity, the implementing partner deliberately applied a significantly lower overhead rate of only 5%. This was done to:

· Minimize the burden on donor funds,
· Remain conservative and competitive,
· And demonstrate strong institutional co-financing by HGT.

Consequently, based on the 2023 actual overhead level of 13.8%, the implementing organization is structurally co-financing approximately 8.8% of the total overhead from its own resources for this project. This is acceptable.
Moreover, Van der Straaten A'Campo B.V. (30214583) indicated [MINBUZA-2025.2698867] that, when preparing project budgets, they generally use a reference overhead rate of about 10%. This rate is based on their internal historical experience and their expected central and local support costs for project implementation. The 10% rate serves as a planning assumption only, not as a fixed or guaranteed overhead recovery rate. In practice, the contract party therefore applies an overhead rate of approximately 10%.

- **Is implementation conditional on the budget being amended in an inception phase? (Specify the requirements that the budget must satisfy and the date by which the budget must be amended)**

No.

Earmarking

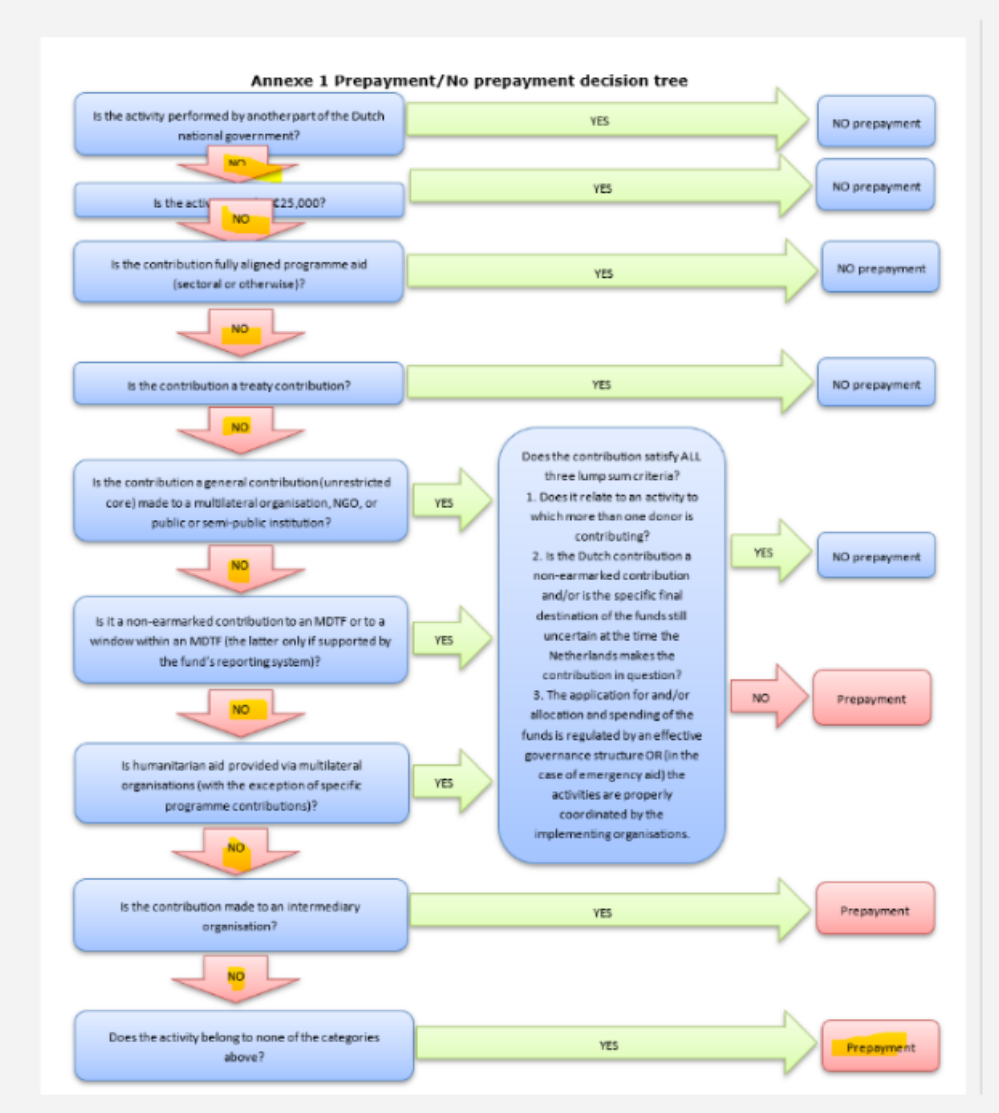
5. **Is the Dutch contribution to the programme earmarked (i.e. reserved for a specific purpose)? If so, specify the reasons why.**

Yes. The Dutch contribution is to be used for those budget lines linked to NL funding in the budget (market in yellow)

Prepayments

- **Based on the prepayment decision tree (see Help), do the payments need to be entered as prepayments and why? In the case of a lump sum, assess this against the applicable criteria and give the reasons for your choice.**

Yes. Based on the prepayment decision tree (see below), the payments should be entered as **prepayments. T**his is a subsidy-type grant to an organization with upfront personnel and fieldwork costs. The activity cannot start without initial liquidity, especially since the costs in the first year are relatively high due to the investments that need to be done to get the demonstration plots up and running.



- **What is the maximum percentage that can be paid as prepayment, and why?**

The maximum amount that can be paid as prepayment is **95%** for a maximum period of 12-months. This is justified as (i) the government of the Netherlands has previous positive experiences with the organization, (ii) most costs consist of personnel, fieldwork, and purchases for, and investments into, the demonstration plots, and (iii) the risk analysis and organizational assessment did not identify risks that would warrant a lower maximum prepayment.

The first payment will thus amount to **EUR 778,736.**

The second prepayment of up to EUR 377,504 will be made conditional on the installation of a supervisory board.

- **Which are the reporting obligations on the basis of which prepayments can be closed?**

Final narrative, financial and audit reports.

Available resources

	Foreign currency	EUR
Implementing organisation's own contribution		474,635.5
Firm commitments by other donors (for each donor)		0
Dutch contribution		1,449,745.5
Total available resources		1,924,381
Budget needed		1,924,381
Still to be financed		0
Soft commitments by other donors (for each donor)		0
Uncovered balance		0

- **Are there any non-financial contributions relevant to implementation of the activity, such as deployment of volunteers, availability of buildings, materials, etc.?**

No.

- **If there is an uncovered balance, how will this affect implementation of the activity (e.g. proportional reduction in outputs, omission of regions) and how will this affect the decision whether to fund this activity?**

No.

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.**

No.

Audit opinions

- **Is an audit opinion required for the activity (see Help)? Briefly explain.**

Not officially required, but will be requested nevertheless (see chapter Monitoring and Evaluation)

- **Should the audit opinion be accompanied by an additional auditor's report (for example, on the risks set out above, or on monitoring that the organisation carries out on its prepayments to other organisations)?**

Yes.