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Environmental Cooperation-Asia **SUSTAINABLE WATER SERVICES: TWINNING PROGRAM**



To facilitate dialogue between water service providers, ECO-Asia structures twinning programs that address specific priority needs.



Focused peer-to-peer technical exchanges, on-the-job training and technical assistance are the main activities of the ECO-Asia Twinning Program.

Background

Under the Environmental Cooperation-Asia (ECO-Asia) program, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) works with water and sanitation service providers to expand or improve water service delivery through pilot projects and regional activities targeting urban communities in Asia. As part of these activities, ECO-Asia promotes the sharing of best practices and experience and fosters linkages among water and sanitation service providers.

One principal ECO-Asia mechanism for facilitating regional exchange is facilitating a “twinning” arrangement between counterpart Asian or U.S. water and sanitation service providers. In a twinning arrangement, ECO-Asia develops multi-year partnerships that support pilot demonstration projects. Activities focus on facilitating practitioner-to-practitioner exchange to enable the transfer of best practices, expertise and technology.

Approach

ECO-Asia twinning arrangements support water and sanitation pilot activities in India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Focus areas for cooperation include:

- Improved corporate governance and management by service providers;
- Innovative models for expanding water supply to poor communities;
- Sustainable sanitation solutions;
- Improved enabling conditions for water and sanitation services; and
- Innovative financing mechanisms.

To develop and support twinning, ECO-Asia partners with U.S. and Asian networks and associations, including Water for People, a U.S.-based international water professionals volunteer organization, and the Southeast Asian Water Utilities Network (SEAWUN).

Program Activities and Volunteer Support

Focused peer-to-peer technical exchanges, on-the-job training, and technical assistance are the main twinning activities. Counterparts share experience, expertise and information on a volunteer basis, while ECO-Asia funds travel and other related expenses. In-kind contributions from key counterparts and pilot partners help define the types and duration of activities in the twinning arrangement.

Counterpart water and sanitation service providers prepare multi-year work plans that define partner priorities and needs, inputs and interventions. For each intervention in the work plan, partners agree on the completion of a measurable result or milestones. For instance, milestones may entail the formulation and adoption of a specific policy or system, installation of a new technology, drafting new or revised regulations/guidelines. As an expression of partner commitment, counterparts usually prepare a joint Memorandum of Cooperation detailing their contributions and commitments.

Asia-Asia Twinning

Many water and sanitation service providers in Asia have developed innovative strategies and capabilities for expanding and improving service delivery, and are interested in sharing their knowledge and experience with counterparts. To facilitate dialogue between utilities, ECO-Asia structures twinning programs that address specific priority needs defined in ECO-Asia pilot projects. To identify twinning opportunities and disseminate findings and results, ECO-Asia partners with SEAWUN.

U.S.-Asia Twinning

Led by Water for People, ECO-Asia facilitates linkages between U.S. and Asian water and sanitation service providers based on identified needs, capabilities and priorities. In addition to helping coordinate and structure international cooperation activities, Water for People also facilitates access to volunteer U.S. experts and practitioners who might address a specific technical challenge or provide access to information or technological solutions. Water for People works through such affiliated organizations as the American Waterworks Association and Water Environment Federation.

Expected Outcomes

Twinning partners define program outputs and outcomes through the adoption, implementation and replication of new systems, policies and practices to lead to improved or expanded service delivery.



ECO-Asia's Twinning Program enables water service providers from partner countries to develop strategies and capabilities for expanding and improving service delivery.

For Additional Information

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