

12th International Water Conference
The Hydro Commons and Intersectional Water Justice

24–25 January 2027

Organized by ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB)

Abstract Submission Guidelines

ActionAid Bangladesh invites academics, researchers, practitioners, policymakers, activists, youth leaders, and creative storytellers to submit their work for the **12th International Water Conference (IWC-12)**. Moving beyond technical governance, IWC-12 explores water as a shared living common shaped by structural inequalities, climate risks, and historical struggles. The conference bridges local realities with global processes to advance recognition, restoration, redistribution, and collective stewardship.

1. Conference Themes

The 12th International Water Conference will explore five interconnected thematic areas that reflect emerging challenges and opportunities in water, climate, technology, transboundary relations, and coastal ecosystems. Together, these themes will provide space for research, policy dialogue, practice-based learning, and critical reflection on pathways towards more equitable and sustainable water futures. Submissions must align with at least one of the following five core themes:

Theme 1: Water Stress and Shared Responsibilities

Water stress is increasingly caused by climate change – changing rainfall patterns, groundwater depletion, pollution, competing demands, and growing pressure on freshwater systems. While water stress is often understood through the lens of physical scarcity, it is also economic, social, and political. Thereby, it reflects questions of access, distribution, consumption, responsibility, and unequal pressures on water resources.

This theme explores how different actors can contribute to addressing growing water stress; how shared responsibilities, across both domestic and global dimensions, can support sustainable, equitable, and resilient water futures. It will also cover the role of water conservation, responsible water use, ecosystem protection, and collective action in responding to increasing water insecurity.

Theme 2: Politics of Transboundary Water

Water systems transcend political boundaries, making transboundary cooperation essential for sustainable water management and regional stability. Bangladesh's rivers and water systems are closely connected with upstream and downstream developments, leading to questions of river flows, equitable sharing, data exchange, ecological sustainability, and cooperation particularly significant.

This theme will examine the political, ecological, and institutional dimensions of transboundary waters, with particular attention to the possibilities of cooperation, dialogue, and water peace. It will explore how shared water systems can become spaces of collaboration rather than contestation.

Theme 3: Water Equity and Climate Risk

Climate change is intensifying water-related risks through floods, droughts, cyclones, sea-level rise, erosion, changing rainfall patterns, and salinity intrusion. Across the South Asian region, increasing salinity and freshwater stress pose significant challenges to water security, ecosystems, agriculture, livelihoods, and human well-being.

This theme will explore the relationship between climate risk, salinity, and equitable access to water. It will consider how climate impacts are differentiated across geographical and social contexts and how adaptation, resilience, and water-related interventions can address existing inequalities.

Theme 4: Water Futures – Technological Innovation and Beyond

Rapid developments in artificial intelligence, remote sensing, digital technologies, data analytics, and predictive systems are creating new possibilities for addressing water-related challenges. These technologies can support water monitoring, forecasting, early warning, climate risk assessment, water quality management, water justice, and evidence-based decision-making. However, technological innovation also raises questions around digital access, data ownership, transparency, accountability, affordability, and the risk of creating new forms of exclusion.

This theme will explore how technology can contribute to inclusive and equitable water futures while ensuring that innovation remains accessible, responsible, and responsive to real-world needs.

Theme 5: Blue Economy and Coastal Water Governance

Coastal and marine ecosystems play a critical role in climate regulation, biodiversity conservation, livelihoods, food security, and coastal resilience. Mangroves, tidal wetlands, estuaries, and other blue carbon ecosystems provide important ecological services while also supporting economic activities and livelihoods. Growing interest in blue carbon and the blue economy creates opportunities for climate action. But at the same time, it raises important questions around ecological integrity, resource use, benefit-sharing, and the governance of coastal and marine resources.

This theme will explore how blue carbon approach and coastal water governance can contribute to sustainable coastal futures while balancing environmental protection, economic interests, and equity.

2. Submission Guideline

Authors and participants may submit work under these distinct tracks. All Participants are requested to upload an optional 1 to 2 Minute video (in Section B).

A. Academic Research Papers

- **Abstract Requirements:** Maximum **300–350 words** summarizing objective, methodology, core findings, and relevance to conference themes. Include 4–6 keywords.

B. Optional Video

- Short video messages capturing participants' personal insights, lived water experiences, and expectations from IWC-12.
- **Duration:** Maximum 2 minutes (120 seconds).
- **Content Focus (please feel free to cover as many topics as you want):**
 1. Brief self-introduction (Name, Organization/Community, Location).
 2. Short overview of your work and connection with the theme.
 3. Understanding water justice or hydro commons.
 4. Expectation from the 12th International Water Conference.
 5. Future commitment for water justice.
- **Technical Guidelines:**
 - Orientation: MP4 format, Landscape mode (16:9), 1080p resolution preferred.
 - Audio: Clear audio quality recorded in a quiet environment.
 - Language: English or Bangla (In case of submissions in other languages, participants must include English subtitles in the video).
 - Do not use any transition in the video. Keep space on both sides and top and bottom of the video.
- **Usage:** Selected videos will be featured on ActionAid Bangladesh social media, live streamed during session breaks, or integrated into plenary sessions.

3. Important Dates & Submission Timeline

1 October 2026	Call for Papers: Portal Open for Submissions
31 October 2026	Abstract Submission Deadline
1 December 2026	Notification of Acceptance
15 December 2026	Submission deadline for full papers, along with presenters' information
24–25 January 2027	12th International Water Conference

4. Selection Criteria & Review Process

All academic submissions will undergo a double-blind peer review by the Selection Committee based on:

1. **Alignment with Themes:** Relevance to the conference themes and the intersectional water justice framework.
2. **Rigor & Originality:** Empirical validity, conceptual clarity, or innovative practice-based methodology.
3. **Policy & Action Relevance:** Clarity of presentation, logical coherence, and actionable insights for policy, advocacy, or community practice.

5. How to Submit

Abstract Submission Link: [Abstract_AAB_IWC_2027](https://forms.gle/VdqSJLFaz6ny1p9u6) (<https://forms.gle/VdqSJLFaz6ny1p9u6>)

Submission link can also be found on the official ActionAid Bangladesh website: [12th International Water Conference - ActionAid Bangladesh](#)

For any kind of queries, please contact us on internationalwaterconference@gmail.com