



ACTED KENYA

COUNTRY STRATEGY

2024-2026

ACTED GLOBALLY

We go the last mile. ACTED's mission is to save lives and support people in meeting their needs in hard-to-reach areas. We deliver programmes and approaches that look beyond an immediate emergency, towards opportunities for longer term reconstruction of livelihoods, and sustainable development. Founded in Afghanistan in 1993, against the backdrop of a forgotten crisis, ACTED pursues a dual mandate of emergency response and development interventions. We promote the relief, stabilisation and recovery of crisis-affected people in fragile areas, by putting affected communities at the centre of our work.

All ACTED programming has the shared objective of working towards a 3Zero world: a world with Zero Exclusion, Zero Carbon, and Zero Poverty. This vision is guided by the motto "Think Local – Act Global". For well over two decades, the phrase "Think Global, Act Local" shaped the rhetoric used by social movements and environmental activists critical of the globalisation narrative. However, we believe that when global ideas are implanted in local ground, they remain *global* ideas - and sometimes very foreign ones - which may take over or eclipse local concepts. Occasionally, this approach can lead to overpowering what is local, instead of empowering it.

We propose to turn the tables and, instead, work to "Think Locally, Act Globally" to ensure the empowerment of local communities, supported and guided by local knowledge, structures and capacities.

KEY FIGURES: 2023



Active in **43** countries worldwide



€**621M** budget
97% dedicated to operations



7,800 dedicated staff



Over **27 million** beneficiaries reached



580 projects

Global Programme Strategy 2020-2025

Zero Exclusion, Zero Carbon, Zero Poverty

- **Zero Exclusion:** because no one should be left behind.
- **Zero Carbon:** because we only have one planet.
- **Zero Poverty:** because poverty should not hold back potential.



KENYA COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Kenya, with a young, ethnically diverse population of 55.1 million inhabitants, reached lower middle-income country status in 2020, and is the largest, most dynamic economy in East Africa. The population of Kenya has more than doubled over the past 3 decades, resulting in what is referred to as the 'youth bulge' – with people and children aged below 35 years estimated to make up over 80% of the population.

The Kenyan economy has seen healthy economic growth and relative political stability over the past two decades, and the Kenya "Vision 2030" aims to transform the country into a 'newly industrialised nation' by the end of the decade.

Despite this, 37% of the population is estimated to live below the national poverty line in 2023 – a reduction in poverty of more than 10 percentage points since 2005, but a steady increase since 2019.

Growing gaps between rich and poor; rapid population growth and lack of sufficient job creation; and an unequal spread of growth between rural and urban areas mean that many Kenyans face persistent cycles of poverty and food insecurity.

Exacerbated by the accelerating impacts of climate change, this means that rural communities have seen much slower progress in terms of both economic development and poverty reduction, with over 80% of the population in some northern arid and semi-arid counties still living below the national poverty line in 2023.

Five consecutive failed rainy seasons resulted in the worst drought Kenya had seen for over 40 years in 2023-4 – culminating with flash flooding and extreme weather events across the country, destroying key infrastructure and displacing tens of thousands of households.



It is estimated that more than 70% of Kenya's population relies directly on agriculture, pastoralism and ecosystems for their livelihoods, and 5.4 million people are acutely food insecure. Over 80% of Kenya's land covers a fragile and largely pastoral arid and semi-arid ecosystem, but Kenya boasts a highly diverse range of ecosystems, including forests – which are the backbone of the economy, and provide essential ecosystem services – as well as grasslands, arid and semi-arid scrubland, dry woodlands, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems.

The impacts of climate change are intensifying competition over natural resources and driving conflict both between human communities as well as with wildlife. Kenya's 2020 National Determined Contribution (NDC) report to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) estimated 3-4% GDP losses annually due to impacts of climate change.



Various factors are fuelling rapid urbanisation, with over half of the population projected to live in urban areas including informal settlements by 2050. Fostering peaceful coexistence between communities remains challenging, with violent extremism continuing to pose serious security and economic risks, particularly in the far northern regions. Regional dynamics, conflicts and humanitarian crises across the Greater Horn of Africa are likely to continue weighing on Kenya's delicate humanitarian, development and security nexus in the medium term.

Supporting more equal, inclusive and sustainable economic growth; job creation; and food security; as well as peaceful dialogue and social cohesion, is key to building climate change resilience and long-term development in both Kenya and the wider East Africa region.



Against this backdrop, Kenya also hosts close to 1 million documented and undocumented refugees and asylum seekers. The country must therefore overcome the further challenge of identifying durable solutions to meet the needs of both refugee and host populations, in areas with already overstretched ecosystems and biodiversity loss.



KENYA IN FIGURES - 2024

582,650 sq km • 55.1 million inhabitants • 107.44 billion USD (GDP) • 5.6% GDP growth • 1950 USD (GDP per capita) • 37% of the population lives below the poverty line • 3.1% infant mortality rate • 0.601 HDI • 38.7 Gini Index • 39.6 ND-GAIN Index

ACTED IN KENYA

For almost 20 years, Acted has been present in Kenya delivering programmes that seek to meet the needs of communities affected by natural disasters, displacement and inadequate access to basic services, and to build resilience to future shocks.

Through Cash Programming projects, hard-to-reach families, including those in refugee camps, have been supported to improve their food security and invest in early recovery activities.

Across the Arid and Semi Arid (ASAL) counties, Acted responds to severe water scarcity by improving water management and governance, and rehabilitating strategic water assets. In the ASALs, Acted has also been actively training agro-pastoralists and providing them with production assets to practice climate-smart agriculture to improve food security, livelihoods and nutrition.

Acted also promotes the localisation of humanitarian, development and environmental interventions through actions aimed at building the capacity of local civil society to assess and respond to needs. Acted supports the ASAL Humanitarian Network (AHN), an alliance of 30+ grassroots NGOs across the ASAL counties, to play a stronger role in humanitarian coordination, accountability and advocacy. Over 70% of Acted's operational budget in Kenya goes through local partners.

In recent years, Acted's programmes in Kenya increasingly focus on combating the impacts of climate change, and supporting both adaptation and mitigation efforts through initiatives such as the solarisation of public assets; distribution of biogas cookstoves; and advocacy towards a circular economy.

In the context of increasing urbanisation and population growth, Acted's programmes also increasingly focus on youth – particularly young women – and creating inclusive access to decent green employment opportunities, as well as access to innovation, information and dialogue platforms.



2023 ACHIEVEMENTS



Multi-purpose cash assistance provided to **131,274** individuals



52,578 individuals supported to access basic services



66,645 individuals benefited from WASH activities



21 water infrastructure assets were built or rehabilitated



0.8 ha of degraded land was rehabilitated or regenerated



6 community infrastructure schemes were made more energy efficient



384 individuals were engaged in sustainable agriculture and lifestyle promotion

PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGY 2024-2026

Acted's Programmatic Strategy in Kenya is rooted in the global 3ZERO Strategy for the period 2020-2025: Zero Exclusion (because nobody should be left behind), Zero Carbon (because we only have one planet) and Zero Poverty (because poverty should not hold back potential).

In Kenya, building climate change resilience and inclusive economic growth are at the forefront of national, local and international efforts to achieve the goals set out in the Kenya "Vision 2030" as well as the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Acted's interventions recognise that ending poverty cannot be achieved without protecting biodiversity and ecosystem health, and ensuring inclusion – particularly of youth, women and girls – and tackling economic inequalities.

OUR OBJECTIVE

to advance poverty reduction, social inclusion & climate resilience in line with Acted's Zero Carbon, Zero Exclusion, Zero Poverty strategy, and the Kenya "Vision 2030".

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

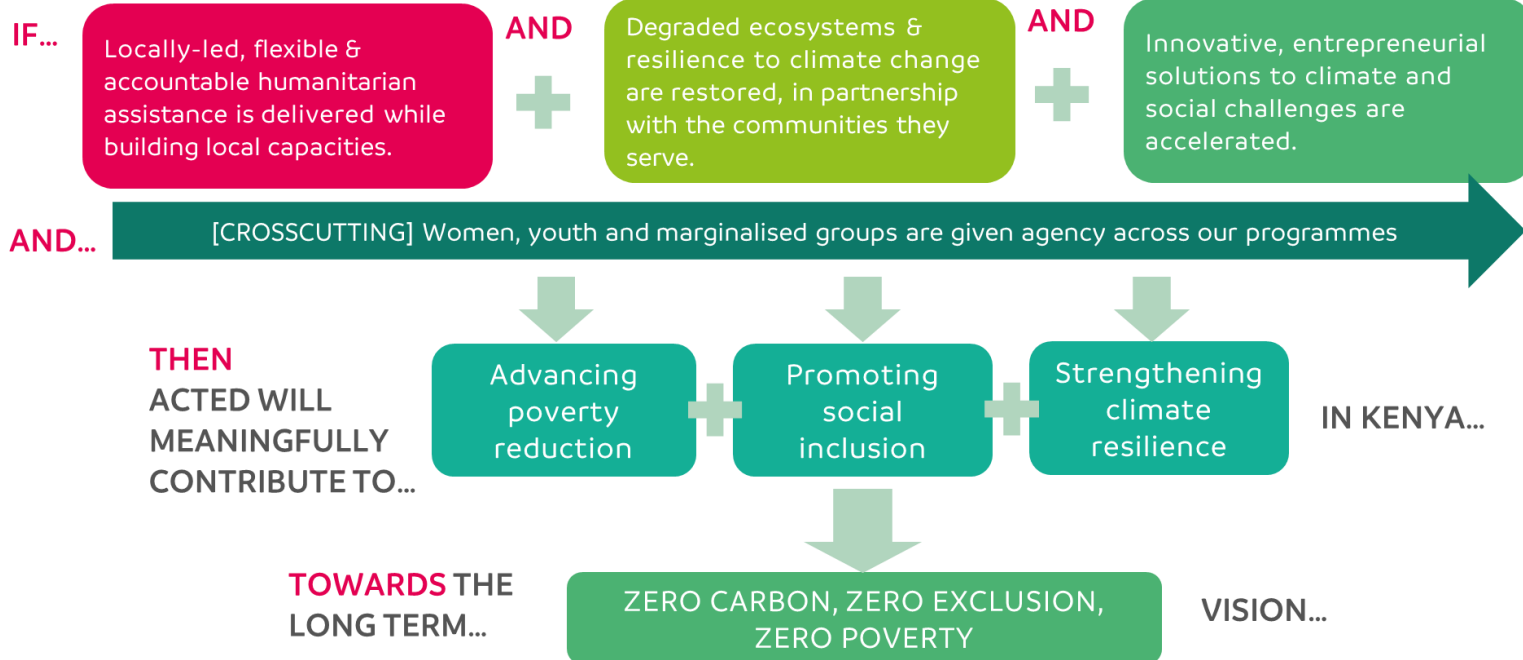
Acted aims to have a measurable, durable impact on accelerating the Zero Carbon, Zero Poverty, and Zero Exclusion strategy in Kenya by 2026.

To achieve this, it is essential to elaborate a coherent change theory rooted in supporting locally-driven action that meets the immediate needs of vulnerable communities while also protecting and strengthening the ecosystems and market systems on which they depend.

We aim to continue delivering locally-led, flexible and accountable humanitarian assistance to

meet immediate food security, nutrition and WASH needs; while also restoring degraded ecosystems and building resilience of agropastoral communities to climate shocks; and investing in Kenyan youth, civil society and private sector to ensure decent jobs as well as innovative, entrepreneurial, locally-owned solutions are generated.

Across all our pillars of intervention, we recognise the vital importance of giving agency to women, youth and marginalised communities to promote more equal, inclusive growth.



PILLAR 1: LOCALLY-LED HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Under this Pillar, Acted aims to provide flexible, multisectoral and accountable response through a localized approach focused on strengthening local humanitarian actors' coordination, delivery, monitoring and evaluation and advocacy capacities.



As part of the 2024-2026 strategy, Acted will continue to implement a range of interventions across the Arid and Semi-Arid Counties (ASAL) in particular, aimed at strengthening access to basic needs, and promoting food security and nutrition, and livelihoods for the most vulnerable households – through a strongly localised approach.

In Samburu and Marsabit counties, Acted works in close cooperation with the County Government water department and water service providers to repair, rehabilitate and solarise water assets and strengthen community-led water governance institutions.



Acted will continue to prioritise its work with the Kenya Cash Consortium (KCC), through which Acted supports local actors to deliver effective emergency response through Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance across the 9 arid counties (Baringo, Garissa, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Samburu, Tana River, Turkana, Wajir) as well as West Pokot and beyond.

Continuously active since 2019, the consortium has evolved in line with the humanitarian needs and evolving context. In 2023-4, the KCC is piloting its first flexible **Alert-Based Mechanism**, capitalising on the reach, scale and proximity to communities of the ASAL Humanitarian Network members to raise alerts of existing and anticipated humanitarian needs.



The ASAL Humanitarian Network

Together with INGO partners, Acted has been supporting the establishment and capacity building of the ASAL Humanitarian Network over the past 5 years as a platform uniting 30+ local NGOs across 10 ASAL counties.



The platform aims to amplify the voices of local humanitarian actors and the communities they serve, and to provide capacity building, learning, knowledge and information exchange.

PILLAR 2: CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE & BIODIVERSITY

Under this Pillar, Acted aims to support communities across the ASALs and beyond to build long-term resilience to climate change through biodiversity conservation, and sustainable livelihoods and food security.

Climate-related natural disasters are the major cause of recurring humanitarian crises in Kenya. Supporting adaptation to the impacts of climate change, in order to protect the livelihoods and food security of communities in the ASALs and beyond is therefore at the center of Acted's 2024-2026 strategy in Kenya.

Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

Acted focuses on nature-based solutions, such as rangelands restoration and earthworks to restore soil quality; agroforestry; perma-gardening; renewable energies and carbon offsetting; and supporting sustainable agricultural and livelihood farming practices.



Nutrition, food security and economic empowerment through sustainable agriculture

In pastoralist communities, women often lead the way in livelihoods diversification. Engaging women in sustainable small-scale agriculture – using perma-gardening principles and drought resilient crops – is one solution promoted by Acted in the ASALs to safeguard food security, drought preparedness and diversify nutrition as well as household income sources.

Carbon offsetting

In Kenya and Uganda, Acted is developing its first large-scale carbon offsetting project in partnership with Africa Biogas Programme Ltd. (ABPL). The project focuses on redirecting organic waste to produce biogas energy at the household level, simultaneously supporting the transition away from fossil fuels; improving energy security at the household level; providing a solution for organic waste management; and improving soil quality through the production of organic fertilisers.



Towards Holistic Resilience in Vulnerable Environments

Acted's THRIVE programme aims to build holistic resilience in agro-pastoralist environments through an integrated approach covering (1) nature-based solutions, (2) sustainable value chains, and (3) social cohesion through inclusive & effective governance of natural resources.

PILLAR 3: ACCELERATING INNOVATIVE, ENTREPRENEURIAL SOLUTIONS

Under this Pillar of the 2024-2026 country strategy, Acted aims to foster cross-sector, multistakeholder collaboration to accelerate innovative solutions to the climate crisis, food insecurity and poverty reduction, through supporting the green, circular and social economies, and promoting green job creation.

Kenya is the leading East African hub for innovation, entrepreneurship, and tech. It further has a large and growing youth population, educated and entrepreneurial population, keen to innovate and engage, and in need of decent work and employment opportunities.



The 3ZERO House – powered by Acted - works to connect actors from different sectors (private businesses, social entrepreneurs, experts, NGOs, tech, academia etc.) to develop and pilot new solutions to social and environmental challenges in Kenya, across Africa, and around the world.

Goals of the Kenya 3ZERO House:

- Accelerate the circular economy, social economy and green economy.
- Provide a physical and conceptual space for multi-sector collaboration, creativity and innovation.
- Support a vibrant civil society to drive forward climate action and social justice.

Youth, Innovation & Climate Action

Supporting youth in climate action is part of Acted's strategy to accelerate an inclusive, green and digitally empowered economy in Kenya. Acted seeks to support youth engagement, employment, and leadership in the interlinked green, digital and social economy.

Through Hackathons, ideation workshops, start-up incubation and acceleration, Acted aims to identify innovative solutions to climate and poverty challenges across Kenya, and provide young innovators with the support, coaching and financing they need to thrive.



Circular Economy

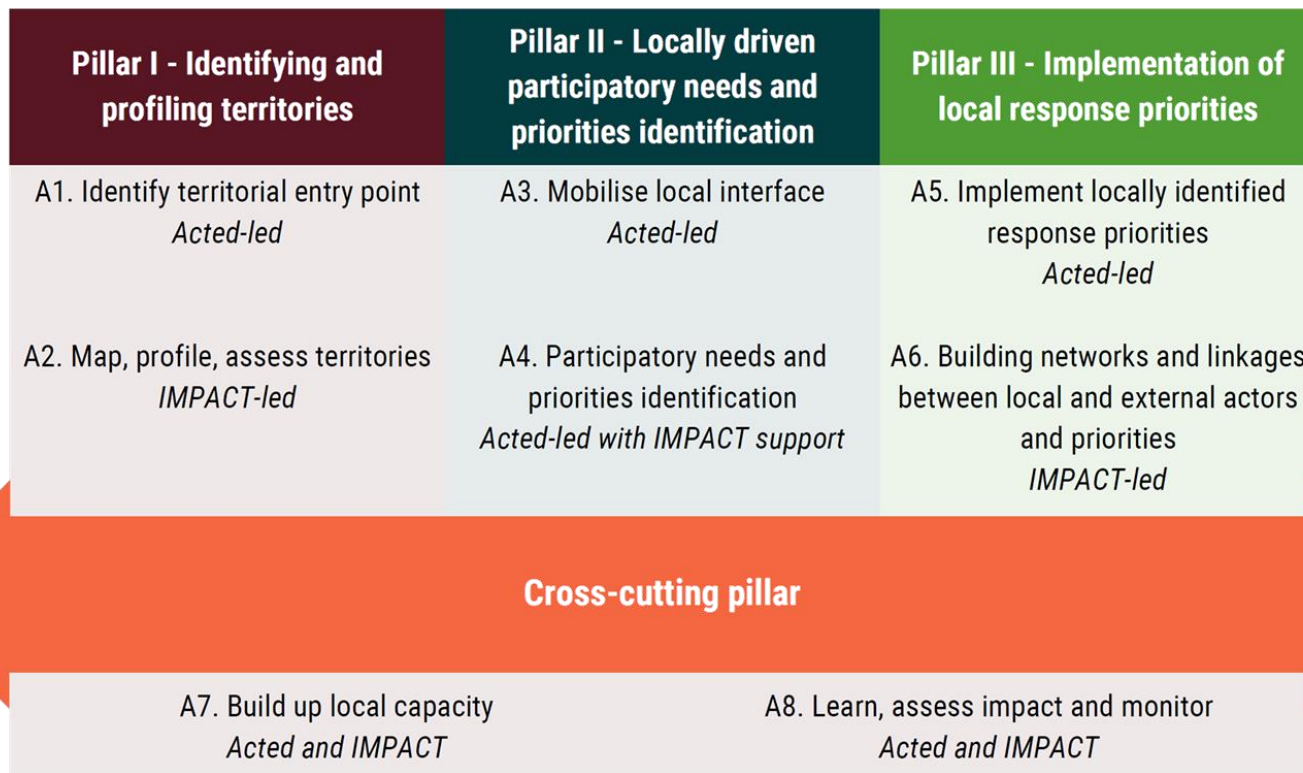
More than 90% of plastic and toxic waste in Kenya finds its way into rivers, forests and informal dumpsites. More than 50,000 people in Kenya are estimated to work as informal waste pickers, exposed to hazards, disease, and exploitation.

Acted's strategy 2024-2026 aims to engage with Kenyan and international private sector actors to develop innovative solutions for larger-scale recycling and reuse initiatives. The circular economy has the potential to stimulate both private and public investment in sustainable, safe waste management, as well as to generate green jobs for youth, women and informal marginalised groups, including refugees and asylum seekers.

THE AGORA PROGRAMME APPROACH

AGORA is Acted and IMPACT Initiatives' flagship area-based approach, designed to strengthen territorial resilience and enable more effective local governance programming in four key areas: improving access to basic services; DRR/climate change adaption; agroecology and natural resources management; and fostering durable solutions to displacement.

The AGORA methodology



Agroecology, Natural Resources & Ecosystem management

AGORA provides a strong evidence base for ecosystem-based interventions, programmes, planning and policy development, by mapping the availability, use and management of natural resources, and the formal and informal governance systems used to manage them, using an integrated spatial approach. It focuses on community engagement and participatory research, planning and monitoring; linking local indigenous knowledge with external evidence-base and innovation; and providing a granular understanding of natural resource-driven conflict, to enable sustainable and quality programme or policy interventions.

Protracted Displacement & Durable Solutions

In areas where displacement is protracted, such as largescale, long-term refugee complexes, AGORA can serve as a basis for research, participatory planning, delivery and coordination of Durable Solutions. AGORA supports longer-term recovery and development support that builds on and provides exit strategies for humanitarian assistance; fosters community engagement and ownership of context-specific durable solutions; and establishes networks by connecting local and external actors with the technical and/or financial capacity to support locally led solutions and advocate for durable policy solutions.

Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation

AGORA provides a comprehensive view of the specific natural hazards, risks and vulnerabilities within a particular territory to better prepare and respond to crisis. It relies on accurate hazard-exposure and risk mapping via remote sensing, geospatial analysis and geographic information systems (GIS). This covers hazard identification, exposure mapping, vulnerability analysis, capacity analysis, and risk mapping and analysis. By engaging multiple local stakeholders from the onset, the AGORA approach then integrates risk reduction into local planning processes and strengthens the capacity of local actors to prevent, prepare for and respond effectively to disasters.

Local Governance & Access to Basic Services

AGORA supports and strengthens local governance planning frameworks and service delivery, starting with a holistic understanding of relevant governance systems at the local level, including formal and informal systems, analysing functionality of public services and community needs. AGORA builds a comprehensive overview of access to and availability of basic services and livelihoods, and related governance and management systems. Finally, the approach establishes and/or strengthens platforms for local authorities and communities to link with external actors, donors and investors able to support local priorities, as well as national policy frameworks.

AGORA in Kenya

Acted Kenya's 2024-2026 Strategy aims to strengthen the use of AGORA approaches and methodologies across its strategic pillars; looking notably at how AGORA can be used to strengthen cohesion in landscape-based ecosystem conservation planning, Durable Solutions planning and design of circular economy initiatives.




The key value added of AGORA is:

- ✓ Working at the right geographical scale, enabling both meaningful engagement with local actors and the ability to scale-up the action
- ✓ Contextualising action through a strong evidence-base and reliance on local knowledge to inform programme approaches
- ✓ Putting local actors at the centre by strengthening their capacity, enabling them to identify their own needs and response priorities through participative research and planning approaches, and to participate in and monitor implementation
- ✓ Linking local and external actors so that the latter can contribute resources and capacity to implement local solutions and response priorities.

The Acted Feedback Mechanism (AFM)

Acted ensures Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) by placing affected communities at the centre of our work, decisions and actions. Acted's independent Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) UNIT and OUR operational project teams prioritise AAP to build better, more trusting relationships with the communities that we serve. Central to Acted's approach to AAP is transparent two-way communication with affected individuals, and active involvement of local communities in Acted's programme design, to ensure that our projects are relevant, meaningful, and Fit For Purpose. This includes the centrality of needs assessments, to ensure that affected populations are able to share their own priorities and preferences for receiving assistance, and open communication with communities, on topics such as Acted's background and mandate; beneficiary selection criteria; affected communities' entitlements and rights; and complaints procedures.

The Acted Feedback Mechanism (AFM) in Kenya is managed by the dedicated Accountability Team, with presence in every county of operation. The AFM is operated in English, Swahili, and local languages, through a toll-free hotline, SMS system, WhatsApp channel, as well as face-to-face consultations.

Kenya AFM: our channels

PHONE CALLS



SMS



REPORT TO
ACTED STAFF



REPORT TO
COMMUNITY LEADER



WHATSAPP



899

complaints/feedback
received in 2023

100%

complaints/feedback
came from project
beneficiaries

82%

complaints/feedback
concerned were made
by phone call/hotline

52%

complaints/feedback
were recieved from
women and girls



Contact: nairobi@acted.org · July 2024