



**ACTED**

**ZERO** EXCLUSION  
CARBON  
POVERTY

# **ACTED Tajikistan**

## **COUNTRY STRATEGY**

### **2021 - 2023**





# 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



Active in 40 countries worldwide



€393M budget in 2021



7,000 dedicated staff



Over 18 million beneficiaries reached



Over 520 projects a year

## Programme Strategy

### Zero Exclusion, Zero Carbon, Zero Poverty

- **Zero Exclusion:** because society is enriched when it can benefit from all the voices and ideas of its members, and no-one should be left behind;
- **Zero Carbon:** because we only have one planet, and we want to pass on to our children social, political and economic systems that respect and protect natural balances.
- **Zero Poverty:** because poverty should not hold back potential.





# TAJIKISTAN COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Tajikistan faces a range of humanitarian and developmental challenges; chief among them the impacts of **climate change**. Globally, the Central Asian region - and Tajikistan in particular - is considered to be among the most vulnerable regions to climate change.

**Extreme weather events** (such as floods, droughts, avalanches, and landslides) regularly destroy land, crops, infrastructures, and livelihoods. As result of climate change, those are further exacerbated by melting of glaciers, shifting raining patterns, prolonged droughts, etc.

At the same time, 53% of the population is employed in agriculture, with over 80% of the agricultural lands reliant upon rainfall alone. Coupled with inefficient **management of natural resources** (water, land, forest, etc.), regional competition for resources and limited investment into preparedness and response systems, climate change threatens not only livelihoods of agricultural workers but also overall food security, socio-economic development, and social cohesion.

**Economic development** remains challenging; as a result, the country suffers from labour out-migration with remittances representing over 30% of national GDP. While the government recognises the potential in creating a favourable business environment and in supporting **innovative industries**, concentrated efforts are still required.

**Civil society organisations** continue to be among the most dynamically developing actors in Tajikistan, despite the challenging operating environment. Government engagement with CSOs remains limited, with little effective cooperation on good governance policies, or economic and social issues such as gender-based violence. This is partly due to the need for strengthened technical capacity and financial sustainability of civil society actors.

## National Development Strategy

The focus of the National Development Strategy of Tajikistan (NDS) for the period up to 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is the concept of long-term human development.

It should be noted, that the NDS-2030 consists of three phases of development: (1) the transition to a new model of economic development (2016-2020 years); (2) rapid development of the economy to attract investments (2021-2025 years.) and (3) speeded up industrialization by increasing capacity, including the development of science and innovation (2026-2030 years).

The strategic priorities of inclusive human development; sustainable, green economic growth; climate and environment management; and people-centered governance and rule of law; were jointly identified.

## Key development challenges

- Increasingly frequent and severe natural disasters exacerbated by climate change
- Unsustainable natural resource management
- Lack of income opportunities
- High outbound labour migration
- Gender inequality
- Dilapidated infrastructure
- Challenging operating environment for civil society actors
- Food insecurity

## TAJIKISTAN IN FIGURES

142,326 sq km · 9,5 million inhabitants · 8.75 billion USD (GDP) · 9.2% GDP growth · 863.2 USD (GDP per capita) · 5.7% inflation · 26.3% of the population lives below the poverty line · 2.5% infant mortality rate · 0.66 HDI · 34 Gini Index · 26.3% live below the national poverty line · 31-44% of the population are food insecure

# ACTED IN TAJIKISTAN

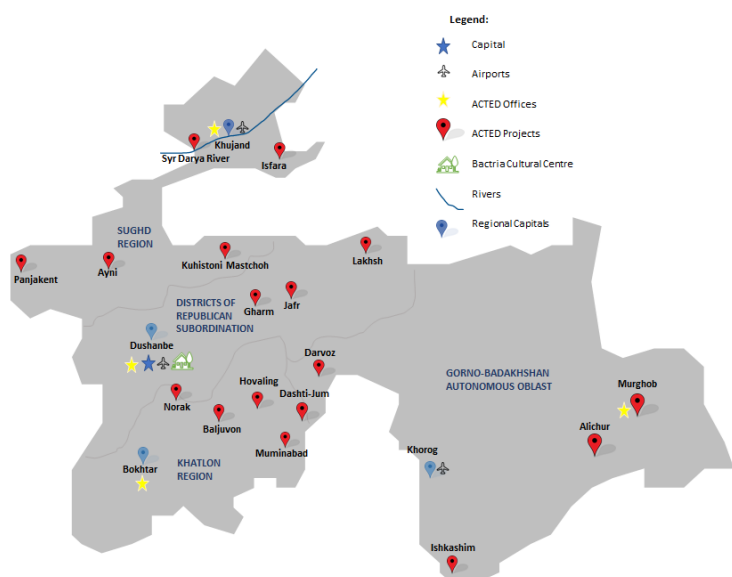
ACTED has been present in Tajikistan since 1996, contributing to addressing the country's main challenges and fostering opportunities for sustainable and inclusive development, especially in rural and remote communities. Throughout the years, ACTED has used a participatory, inclusive and multi-sectoral approach to respond to emergencies, build disaster resilience including through better natural resource management, and strengthen civil society.

## Main sectors of intervention:

- Integrated Natural Resources Management
- Adaptation to Climate Change
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Green economy
- Inclusive rural development
- Digital economy and industries
- Humanitarian response
- Strengthening Civil Society
- Gender equality and fighting gender-based violence



## ACTED'S OPERATIONS



With over 45 staff, ACTED operates across the whole of Tajikistan, with offices located in Dushanbe, Khujand, Murghob, and Bokhtar.

## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



**94,932** people supported with humanitarian and development assistance since 1996



**2,514** persons have increased capacity to cope, adapt and/or recover from shocks caused by disaster following engagement with ACTED programmes



Rehabilitation of **885** ha of degraded land



**90,000** children/persons have benefited from WASH activities



**Livelihoods** support for MSMEs and individuals' income generating activities



**64** Civil Society Organisations and government institutions supported

# PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGY 2021-2023

In line with development challenges identified, ACTED Tajikistan will focus its programming strategy for 2021-2023 on **three strategic pillars** of intervention that respond to the needs of Tajikistan's population in the 21st Century, aligned with the Government of Tajikistan's NDS and the SDGs.

The programmatic approach will focus on three key areas of intervention linked to ACTED's global 3Zero strategy:

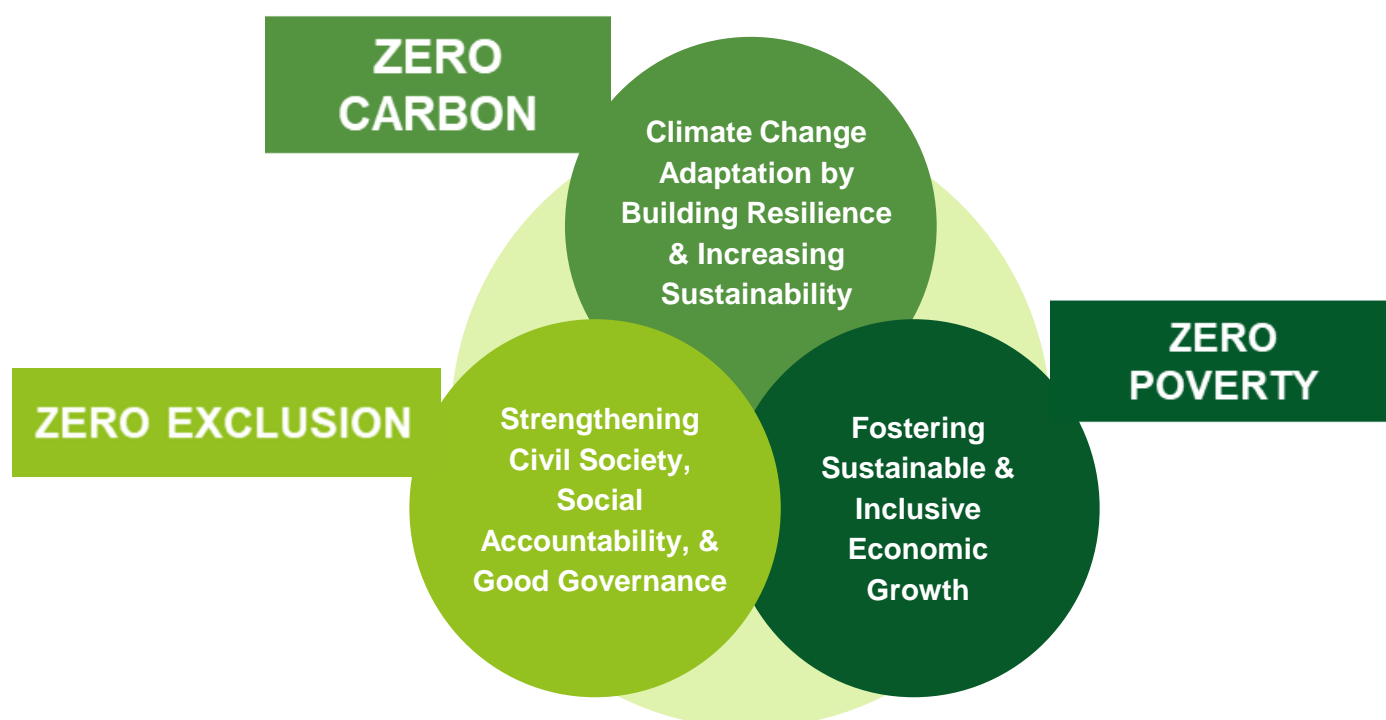
- **Zero Carbon:** supporting climate change adaptation by building resilience and increased sustainability;
- **Zero Poverty:** fostering sustainable, inclusive economic growth; and
- **Zero Exclusion:** strengthening civil society, social accountability and good governance.

This programmatic strategy will allow ACTED to increase **synergies** between existing and new projects, increase the **sustainability** of actions in Tajikistan, and fully capitalize on existing **lessons learned**.

**Regional approach.** While acknowledging the unique trajectory of each country, ACTED in Central Asia is operationalizing a regional approach among its missions in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. As many of the current development challenges in these countries share similar root causes, given their shared history, we strive for greater harmonisation to capitalise on our 26-year long presence in the region.

**Gender.** As a norm, ACTED is mainstreaming gender into its overall operations and is committed to promoting the transition from *gender sensitive* to *gender responsive* programming; with the overall objective of reaching *gender transformative* operations. Such a commitment will be made feasible through integrating gender gap analysis into project design and implementation as well as working on gender issues directly.

**Partnerships.** ACTED strives to share experience and expertise with other actors working in development cooperation and sharing common values. Partnership with local authorities and civil society is at the core of our operations as demonstrated by our commitment to good governance and launching the 3Zero House Dushanbe.





## OUR ACTION IN PICTURES



---

*Process of low-pressure rainwater drip irrigation systems installation in the households of Khitoy village Isfana watershed.*

---

---

*In Khishekat village, the farmers of the upper zone of Aksu watershed started to sow perennial esparcet seeds on snow cover in the rain-fed cropland taking into account the effectiveness of this method in achieving a high yield of grass used as fodder for livestock.*

---



---

*ACTED mobilized its operations in response to the pandemic and conducted a large-scale campaign to help raise awareness of COVID-19 prevention among children and youth.*

---

# STRATEGY PILLAR 1: Supporting Climate Change Adaptation by Building Resilience and Sustainability

## Our objective

Supporting climate change adaptation, building resilience and environmental sustainability, and promoting renewables

## Areas of Intervention

- 1) Promoting Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), through Integrated Watershed Management (IWM);
- 2) Promoting the use of Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE);
- 3) Strengthening the role of women in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

**ZERO  
CARBON**

Responding to the challenges posed by climate change, ACTED will continue developing its green programming in Tajikistan, and innovate through partnerships established with the framework of the 3Zero House. We will strive to: reduce the carbon footprint of our operations, in line with ACTED's organisational Greening strategy; ensure sustainable energy supply, through business development for green energy; attract green financing; continue advocating for improved policy for the green economy (policy recommendations, public-private dialogue platforms, etc.); and promoting eco-tourism, including through establishing eco-certification schemes in Tajikistan.

We acknowledge that the misuse of natural resources, disasters, and climate change are increasingly interconnected, and often catalyse one another. ACTED will strengthen its work on climate change adaptation and resilience-building through **participatory and integrated management of natural resources**. ACTED's integrated approach is based on an in-depth understanding of the needs of each community where we work, and



ensuring that women play a leading role in our interventions. In the early 2010s, ACTED pioneered its now recognised **watershed management** approach as a basis for integrated action that aims to prevent soil degradation, better management and more sustainable use of arable lands, pastures, forests and water. Such approach goes hand in hand with building communities' resilience to natural disasters and promoting conflict sensitivity.

## OUR ACTIONS

Energy Efficiency and  
Renewable Energy in  
Community-Based Tourism

Ecosystem Management

Pasture Management  
Networking platform

Promotion of Sustainable  
Agricultural Plots



# STRATEGY PILLAR 2: Fostering Sustainable, Inclusive Economic Growth

## Our objective

Poverty reduction and value chain development

## Areas of Intervention

- 1) Promoting access to knowledge, skills, and inclusive financial resources;
- 2) Supporting the development of digital economy, digital industries, and favourable business environment for entrepreneurship;
- 3) Minimizing economic effects of disasters by investing in disaster preparedness, mitigation and response.

**ZERO  
POVERTY**

ACTED will continue developing its programming on sustainable, inclusive economic growth across Tajikistan. This includes comprehensive programmes to strengthen existing value chains and foster sustainable economic growth, especially in rural communities. In addition, these programmes create inclusive opportunities, especially for small entrepreneurs and with focus on women. Existing initiatives on MSME incubation and acceleration, and social entrepreneurship will be strengthened.

Through new partnerships, we will innovate in our activities on providing capacity-building, knowledge, and skills to MSMEs in the tourism sector, empowering small entrepreneurs through fostering market linkages, supporting farmers and pasture users to invest in sustainable agricultural solutions, and providing access to inclusive financial resources especially in remote communities.

Increasingly, ACTED will pioneer dynamic, modern digital solutions to create new opportunities and strengthen the business environment in Tajikistan, to become increasingly entrepreneurship-friendly.



To ensure that people don't fall into poverty when disasters strike, ACTED will re-establish its programming on disaster preparedness, mitigation and response. We will strengthen our partnerships with national and local authorities, and explore new partnerships with local actors to strengthen existing capacity and response systems.

## OUR ACTIONS

MSME Incubation and  
Acceleration

Community-Based Tourism  
Development

Sustainable Livelihoods through  
Effective NRM

Disaster Preparedness,  
Mitigation and Response

# STRATEGY PILLAR 3: Strengthening Civil Society and Good Governance

## Our objective

Develop and enhance local civil society and social accountability mechanisms

## Areas of Intervention

- 1) Contributing to civil society empowerment and localisation, and building capacities of communities and local authorities;
- 2) Building social cohesion, promoting social accountability;
- 3) Strengthening CSOs to promote gender equality, women entrepreneurship, GBV prevention, and economic development.

## ZERO EXCLUSION

ACTED's conceptual approach to effective governance is based upon an empowered, pluralistic civil society, social cohesion, and effective and responsive public institutions.

We strongly believe that positive change comes from people. ACTED will continue focusing on empowering and building capacity of **civil society organisations** to work for the benefit of their communities, promote inclusive and sustainable local development, and gender equality. We will utilise our signature Grassroots Organizations Capacity Assessment (GOCA) tool to strengthen CSO's technical, financial and operational capacity.

We will work closely with **local authorities** and CSOs to promote good governance through data-driven decision making with the aim to strengthen social cohesion, while also building social accountability mechanisms. Supporting effective cooperation between authorities and CSOs, ACTED will work with CSOs to support them to produce, analyse and use credible data for advocacy with authorities; to engage public-private dialogue on economic policy issues; and to develop the capacity of media to deliver data-driven, analytical reporting on economic policy.



ACTED will focus its programming on promoting **gender equality** in Tajik society. We will aim towards preventing gender-based violence through raising awareness for women's rights across all layers of society, advocating for policy changes, supporting the establishment of local response mechanisms, and breaking gender stereotypes persistent in local culture. ACTED will also broaden its existing **youth** artistic and economic empowerment programs.

## OUR ACTIONS

Civil Society Capacity Building and Empowerment

Data-driven Decision-making for Economic Development

Women's Empowerment

Youth Empowerment

# FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME – Natural Resource Management

ACTED's flagship Natural Resource Management (NRM) program aims to foster sustainable use of natural water and land (pasture, forest, climate smart agriculture) resources to fight poverty, prevent disasters and contribute to socio-economic development on a local level. By pioneering integrated watershed management planning, we are strengthening NRM capacities, improving communities' disaster risk preparedness and response capacities, and empowering local civil society, especially women-led and youth organisations.

ACTED's regional presence allows us work with communities in the Ferghana valley through people-to-people approach to bolster dialogue and cooperation at the community, expert and local government levels, strengthen mutual trust, and contribute to beneficial natural resource management.

The program is aligned with the Government of Tajikistan's plan to provide water security as a precondition for food security through Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

ACTED and partners' flagship NRM program is recognized by the Government of Tajikistan as model for interventions on the watershed level.

**Integrated Approach:** Adopting and integrating land and water conservation, management, and use practices, and bringing together upstream and downstream resource users.

**Participatory Approach:** Emphasis on collective action and community participation with different stakeholders, local communities, CSOs, and government.

**Integration with local development processes:** A watershed is a unit in which all factors are interlinked. This approach requires integration with the development and planning processes taking place within administrative boundaries, as well as analysis of national legal frameworks and the formulation of goals.

## ACHIEVEMENTS



**3299** ha of land benefiting from the Green Engineering Measures to stabilize soil degradation processes inclusive of DRR elements



**677** individuals who benefitted from DRR measures implemented locally



Reinforcement of community **resilience** to disasters



**308** Community-Based Organisations benefited from capacity building in DRR/DRM





# FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME - 3ZERO House Dushanbe

## 3ZERO HOUSE DUSHANBE

A COLLABORATIVE SPACE FOR  
AGENTS OF CHANGE



### OUR COMMON OBJECTIVE

To break down silos and bring together diverse stakeholders to jointly fight against poverty, inequality and climate change.

In 2015, the international community made key commitments for the future of our planet with the adoption of SDGs and the Paris climate agreement. Building on these commitments and its historic programming in line with these goals, ACTED developed its 3Zero vision: a world with Zero Exclusion; Zero Carbon; and Zero Poverty.

**ZERO** EXCLUSION  
CARBON  
POVERTY

The multidimensional nature of social problems calls for active and innovative multi-sectoral networking to promote new approaches to contemporary challenges.

The 3Zero House will serve as a **unique hub that connects diverse actors from every sector** - local social enterprises, civil society, public sector, academia and other agents of change - mobilising them to fuel the ecological transition, and the digital transformation towards a Zero Exclusion, Zero Carbon, and Zero Poverty world. The 3Zero House serves as a connector, bringing these multi-sectoral actors together, to **collaborate on innovative solutions** for local problems.

The 3Zero House will partner with existing structures and services to support its vision and implementation. **Several key partnerships** will kick-off activities and services., while we aim to foster a **3Zero Alliance** of like-minded stakeholders as the 3Zero House continues to grow.



Why? Because it is important that diverse local stakeholders and communities have a space in which they can engage to address the issues they suffer from the most – exclusion, climate change and extreme poverty – collaborating and supporting each other to find solutions to the problems faced in Tajikistan.

ACTED's unique added value for the 3Zero House is **our capacity and experience working with social and solidarity actors across the globe**, tailoring support and programmes to their specific constraints and ambitions. Once solutions are found, CSOs and social enterprises will be connected to scale the solutions to communities across the country – allowing solutions to be replicated and spread widely.

# ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

ACTED ensures Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) by placing affected communities at the centre of our work, decisions and actions. ACTED's independent Appraisal, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (AMEU) and operational project teams prioritise AAP to build better, more trusting relationships with the communities 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.

ACTED has an established Complaints Response Mechanism (CRM) in Tajikistan, managed by the AMEU, for the participation of the communities we work with, and to help us use community feedback to improve the quality and relevance of our programming. The CRM enables community members to register comments and complaints, or ask questions in local languages, through a range of modalities, including via the hotline, in person or by email. All complaints are treated confidentially and with objectivity, and are recorded, categorised, and addressed, according to the category of the complaint.



92%

of the received complaints/feedback  
emanate from beneficiaries

77%

complaints/feedback are received in  
person during field visits

53%

of the received complaints/feedback  
concerned governance and natural  
resource management from 2019 to  
2022







**ACTED** **ZERO** EXCLUSION  
CARBON  
POVERTY

For questions or additional information please contact:

Jan Severa, Country Representative, ACTED Tajikistan  
Email: [jan.severa@acted.org](mailto:jan.severa@acted.org)