

ACTED • [Niger, Yemen, Syria, Iraq]

**ACTED MEDIA NEWS**

ACTED monthly Media News offers a selection of key media friendly updates, highlighting specific operations and activities worldwide.

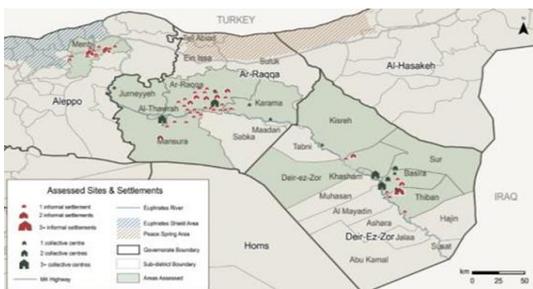
**Protecting frontline workers and safeguarding livelihoods in Niger**

ACTED teams in Niger have been responding to the growing epidemic with new activities adapted to these unprecedented times. In the region of Diffa, sewing activities, as well as soap manufacturing, have been supported by ACTED in order to involve local communities in the fight against COVID-19, as well as stimulating the local economy and safeguarding the livelihoods of Nigerien populations. These masks continue to be distributed to essential government staff and health workers at the forefront of the COVID-19 response.

In addition, hygiene awareness and prevention messages are being broadcasted in local languages by 10 community radios, therefore allowing the transmission of this messaging to a large audience.

**Displaced communities, vulnerable to COVID-19 spread, facing flooding in Yemen**

After months of drought, Yemen has entered its rainy season; however, by the time it arrived, the dry soils had lost its ability to absorb water, leading to devastating flooding. These floods have left thousands of households with lost livelihoods or income, notably for families in urban settlements, which are already at increased vulnerability due to COVID-19. "In Yemen, we have a perfect storm: five years of war, chronic food insecurity, floods that have swept away homes and livelihoods, cholera, and now COVID-19. Right now, in settlements of displaced people hit by all these shocks, our teams work to repair and rebuild critical water and sanitation infrastructure to save lives" states ACTED Yemen's Country Director. ACTED has responded urgently to families affected by the floods in IDP settlements: in the regions of Aden and Al Dhale'e, ACTED has reacted by providing soap and buckets, cleaning equipment for the shelters and basic food items to cover for the losses in food stocks caused by the flood. In addition, ACTED has coordinated the distribution of shelter materials to households to help those homes that have been destroyed or partially damaged by the heavy rains.

**Assessing the needs of affected communities in Northeast Syria**

Communities living in informal settlements all across the world have been globally identified as particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, notably those in northeast Syria, where both political and economic instability have shaped the context of most of the region. With informal settlements being often poorly equipped in water and hygiene infrastructure, and given the limited access to health care facilities, those populations are at high-risk of contracting the virus.

To ensure that their needs are being taken into account, REACH Initiatives has profiled 98 informal settlements in Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor governorates and Menbij sub-district. The subsequent report shows that in 76% of assessed settlements, residents did not have enough food to meet their needs and that there were issues with the quality of drinking water in 36% of them.



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## Scaling up WASH response efforts to combat COVID-19 in Iraq

As the number of cases and fatalities in Iraq increases, ACTED teams are scaling up their ongoing response efforts through hygiene awareness and promotion campaigns: in the Dohuk governorate, WASH and child protection teams are working together to deliver individual door-to-door hygiene promotion sessions to young people as well as parents and caregivers, in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In addition, ACTED is looking beyond the current health crisis by anticipating the longer-term impacts of the pandemic: in a secondary school in East Mosul, ACTED is rehabilitating key water and hygiene infrastructure such as hand washing stations to enable students to make a safe transition back to school when they reopen.



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## ACTED and the EU sign a EUR 14.5 million humanitarian partnership supporting displaced populations

Due to their living conditions and lack of access to basic services, displaced populations are among the most vulnerable to COVID-19. As the number of those globally displaced reaches its highest ever, ACTED and the EU have signed their first humanitarian Pilot Programmatic Partnership aimed at addressing the needs of such populations in Africa and the Middle East. "For ACTED, while we are facing the coronavirus and foreseeing its devastating long-term consequences, signing this programmatic partnership is a reason for hope. The partnership will immediately enhance our capability to act today and to better invest in tomorrow" states Marie-Pierre Caley, ACTED CEO. Through this three-year partnership, ACTED will be able to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable, including displaced populations, both in and out of camps in Syria, Iraq, DRC, South Sudan, Somalia, Burkina Faso and Nigeria. The programme will support displaced people in reconnecting to a normal and find durable solutions to emerge from this crisis through access to basic services and opportunities for their future.

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