



# Agency for Cooperation in Technical and Economic Development

## PROGRAM STRATEGY 2018-2022



EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

LIVELIHOODS

EDUCATION

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# Foreword

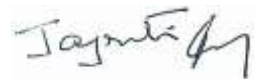


India has been at the centre of attention of Asia's economic development, reaching the position of the world's seventh-largest economy. India has also experienced significant social development, as demonstrated by improvements in the country's Human Development Index score since the early 1990s. Yet, if we take a closer look, we can grasp the flaws that turn these flashy figures into gloomy facts. Still in 2017, 27% of the population in India is living below the poverty line, and almost 30% of India's youth are unemployed or out

of school. What is more, women seem to be missing out on the country's growing economic development.

At **ACTED**, we are convinced that growth should be inclusive and sustainable. We focus our work on four strategic areas: **emergencies and disasters**, **water, sanitation and hygiene**, **livelihoods**, and **education**. With our experience and commitment, we help girls and boys access school, we build safe toilets for schools, we stimulate pro-poor economic growth, and we assist before and after disasters.

Let's work together to give those who need it most the chance to build a brighter future.



*Jagriti Roy, Managing Director*

The world is changing rapidly and despite significant progress that gives cause for optimism, challenges and obstacles still stand in the way of sustainable and peaceful development. Indeed, the growing gap between rich and poor, unregulated urbanization, climate change, resource scarcity, conflict, and many more, prevent vulnerable populations from escaping poverty. This is why **ACTED** chose not to turn its back on those who are often forgotten.



On behalf of **ACTED**, it is my great pleasure to share with you our Strategy for 2018-2022. This strategy constitutes a road map for **ACTED**'s activities in the coming five years. It aims to strengthen our effectiveness and relevance as we address the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In conclusion, it holds us accountable and tracks our progress against our strategic priorities.



*Marie-Pierre Caley, Director*

# About ACTED

## WHO WE ARE

The Agency For Cooperation In Technical And Economic Development (ACTED), a Section 8 company, was founded in 2016 with the objective of supporting vulnerable populations of India and accompanying them in the construction of a better future.

## OUR BACKGROUND

The Section 8 company was conceptualized out of the long-term presence in India of the French INGO, ACTED, - with the two founding members of the French organization also being part of the managing board of the Section 8 company. The French INGO has been working in India since the immediate aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami. Initially this was by providing emergency relief and recovery to the hardest hit areas of Tamil Nadu and in the following years, the INGO supported communities in Bihar, West Bengal, Madhubani, Sunderbans, Majuli and Assam focusing on disaster resilience and strengthening the capacity of civil society.

## OUR FOCUS

- Emergencies and disasters
- Water, sanitation and hygiene
- Livelihoods
- Education

## OUR VISION AND CORE VALUES



# EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS

## OUR **REASONS**: RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES AND REDUCING VULNERABILITY TO HAZARDS

Climate change is triggering sudden alterations in rain patterns: for example, monsoon rainfalls have decreased in recent years, causing severe droughts. Whilst at the same time, extreme and unpredicted monsoon rains are resulting in extensive floods and overflowing rivers damaging homes and livelihoods. With more than seven out of ten Indians relying on the agriculture sector to make a living, the country's population is extremely vulnerable to extreme weather conditions. Year-long harvested yields can be destroyed in a matter of hours and crops essential to livelihoods can be lost in seconds.



## OUR **GOAL**: RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES AND REDUCING VULNERABILITY TO DISASTERS

We work hand in hand with local communities to increase their preparedness to disasters through eco-system community-based disaster risk reduction plans. People in rural areas know the risks, can identify damages and prioritize areas of action. With their knowledge, as well as taking into account the local eco-system, we engage the government in defining emergency preparedness plans in order to reduce a population's vulnerability to natural hazards. After a natural disaster, **ACTED** works to provide essential support for the most vulnerable households. We provide temporary shelters to these families and distribute essential hygiene items to ensure basic health conditions and set up Cash-for-Work activities to support households recovering their normal lives.

## OUR **WORK**

- Stock piling of contingency reserves
- Responding to natural disasters by providing lifesaving assistance and relief items
- Training village disaster management committees
- Conducting mock drills
- Facilitating communities to develop eco-system community-based disaster risk reduction plans
- Raising awareness amongst school children and communities about how to respond to potential disasters in their locality
- Supporting local authorities and CBOs to access government funds for disaster risk reduction



## OUR **REASONS**: THE VITAL NECESSITY OF SAFE DRINKING WATER

Turning on a tap and having safe running water is only a reality for half of the Indian population. The situation is even worse in rural areas, where about 19,000 villages across the country still do not have regular water supply. Not having access to safe water and sanitation facilities increases the risks of water-borne diseases; and according to recent World Health Organization's data, 21% of diseases in India are water-related. On top of that, individual improved sanitation systems are only available for about 25% of the population and 40% practice open defecation, leading to major health issues such as diarrheal diseases.



## OUR **GOAL**: IMPROVED HEALTH FOR ALL

We work with communities and local authorities to improve access to safe water and sanitation facilities including the promoting of good hygiene practices. We strive to ensure that, even in the aftermath a disaster, communities have access to such basic, life saving facilities. As with all our actions, we stop and think twice about the needs of girls and women. For example, at **ACTED**, we work for gender equality when constructing school and community toilet blocks, building separate spaces for women and girls with appropriate facilities, including water supply and receptacles for discarded sanitary pads.

## OUR **WORK**

- Providing access to safe drinking water in schools and public buildings
- Constructing toilets in schools and community toilet blocks, taking into consideration the specific needs of girls and boys, women and men, as well as people with disabilities
- Promoting safe hygiene practices amongst school children and their wider communities



# LIVELIHOODS

## OUR **REASONS**: SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT

Striking differences can be found when looking at India's economic reality. In recent years, the country has gone through major economic growth to become one of the world's largest economies. Yet at the same time, rural poverty is increasing as most economic growth is concentrated in urban areas. The rural poor depend on agriculture - it is the only way of bringing bread to the table for almost 70% of these communities. Yet, the potential of such rural communities to participate in the country's economic development has yet to be fulfilled, and this is where **ACTED** comes into play.



## OUR **GOAL**: MAKING LOCAL BUSINESSES GROW

To fight the imbalance between rural/urban economies, and formal/informal markets, at **ACTED** we work to bring new opportunities to unskilled workers and local businesses. We support them by building their entrepreneurial capacities in order for them to manage successfully their businesses. In this way, **ACTED** is working to transform an informal workforce into skilled entrepreneurs, ready to meet market demands. We believe in the potential of those who are often forgotten but striving to escape poverty and encourage entrepreneurship among those who have yet to be given a chance to reach their full potential.

## OUR **WORK**

- Conducting value chain assessments
- Supporting fish farming and kitchen gardening livelihood activities
- Facilitating micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and self-help groups (SHGs) to develop individual business plans
- Promoting business registration, licensing and certification of MSMEs
- Building the business management, technical and marketing capacities of MSMEs
- Awareness on environmental sensitivity and equal employment opportunities





## OUR **REASONS**: 1.7 MILLION OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN

In India, children are more likely to go to work than to school. UNESCO's numbers are overwhelming: over 1.7 million children of primary school age across the country are not attending classes. In most cases, they are pushed into adult work without being given the chance to attend school. Indeed, poverty can become an insurmountable obstacle that forces children to contribute to their family's income and therefore drop out of the school system. From rag-picking in densely populated cities to cleaning dishes, mopping the floor or making bangles, girls and boys of school age often spend their days trying to make ends meet for their families instead of attending school and building a brighter future for themselves and their communities.



## OUR **GOAL**: IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

At **ACTED** we understand the challenges poverty brings. Vulnerable households who already struggle to have enough food every day or even a shelter to spend the night, simply cannot bear the cost of buying books, stationery, transport and meals for their children to attend school. That is why we support the most vulnerable households by lowering the cost of education: we provide school kits with books, school bags, shoes and shirts to make sure that poverty does not hindered children from reaching their full potential.

## OUR **WORK**

- Providing school kits (bags, stationery, books) to the most vulnerable households
- Providing bicycles to rural students in order to reduce barriers to school attendance
- Providing sports, arts and music equipment to underprivileged schools to promote diversified education
- Upgrading school infrastructures including safe water and sanitation facilities, classrooms and playgrounds



# OUR TEAM

We are an experienced and committed team who is striving to bring communities the support they need. As a multi-cultural team with international experience, we understand the realities of the people we help and work to build solid relations with government authorities and partners across India.

## The Governing Body:



Parag Gupta | Promoter



Mrinal Talukdar | Promoter

## The Board of Directors:



Marie-Pierre Caley  
Director



Frédéric Roussel  
Director



Jagriti Roy  
Managing Director

# CONTACT US

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