

AGORA

THINK LOCAL, ACT GLOBAL

An approach anchored in local territories and knowledge
to better support people in protracted crisis



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A joint initiative of



ACTED and **IMPACT**

Shaping practices
Influencing policies
Impacting lives

WHAT IS AGORA?

In 2016, AGORA was created to practically implement the ambition of **ACTED** and **IMPACT Initiatives** to ground humanitarian and development work in local knowledge, in keeping with their motto :

« Think local, Act global »

AGORA is a **bottom-up territorial approach** that promotes the resilience and recovery of crisis affected communities in fragile contexts by putting local territories and their people at the center, supported and guided by local knowledge, structures and capacities.

It does so in three ways:

- **Using territories that make sense to local people** as the basis for the planning, coordination and provision of assistance;
- **Ensuring** that this **planning, coordination and assistance** is **guided by local knowledge** and supports local structures and capacity;
- **Enabling synergies** between **local actors/needs and the aid system**.

AGORA is an approach providing concrete solutions to implement the humanitarian-development-peace Nexus, the Localisation and the Accountability to Affected People agendas.

AGORA'S COMPONENTS

IDENTIFYING AND PROFILING OF TERRITORIES

Identification of territory
Territorial assessment to support local planning

LOCALLY DRIVEN PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

Consultations with communities and local decision-makers to identify relief, recovery and development priorities

Support to local structures in target territories

IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIEF, RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Direct implementation of locally identified relief and recovery interventions

Support to community-based organisations for projects implementation

Promotion of local priorities and plans with external actors

LOCAL ACTORS CAPACITY BUILDING AND SUPPORT

Civil society empowerment and engagement
Local institutional actors capacity building and engagement

Sustainability,
Local ownership and
Local leadership

AGORA

THINK LOCAL
ACT GLOBAL

WHO? WHERE?



ACTED
ACT TODAY - INVEST IN TOMORROW

Experience in **aid delivery**

Experience in **local governance support and capacity building for civil society**

Field presence and **operational capacity**

AGORA

Partnership between sister organisations **IMPACT** and **ACTED**, that leverage on the added value of each organisation.

IMPACT

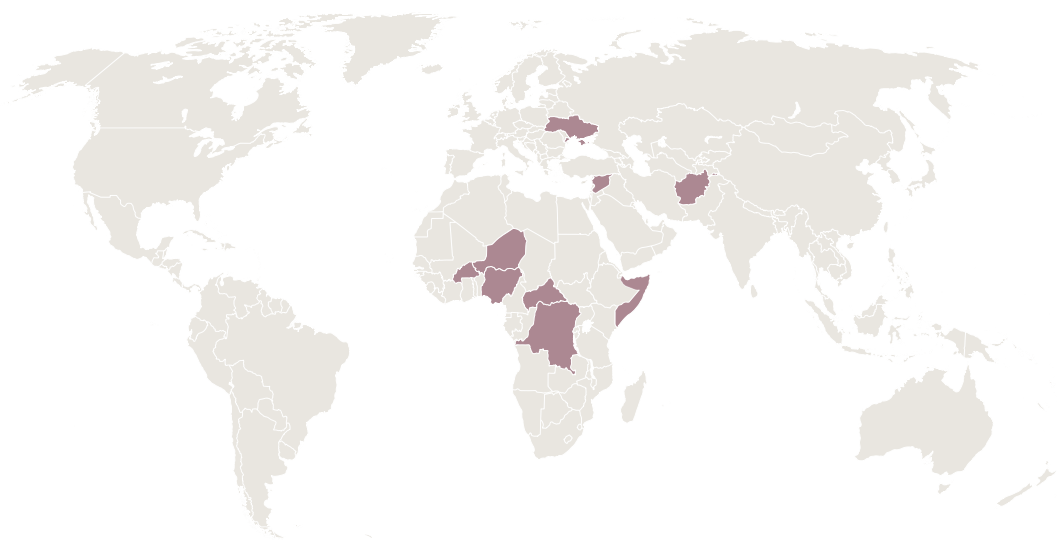
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Assessments, analysis and evaluation

Support to **coordination**

Global advocacy capacity

AGORA is a **multi-stakeholder initiative** that **partners with other international or local organisations** in implementing the AGORA model wherever doing so adds value, as has **already been piloted** in a number of countries.

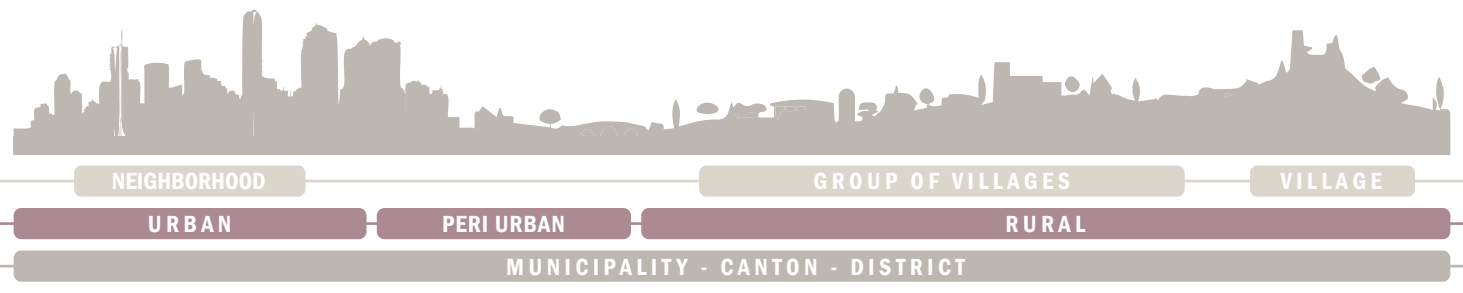


- Afghanistan**
- Burkina Faso**
- CAR**
- Niger**
- Nigeria**
- DRC**
- Somalia**
- Ukraine**
- Syria**

The boundaries of this map are provided by a third party and do not represent the views of IMPACT Initiatives. JS map by amCharts

AGORA has been **piloted in nine countries** through thirteen projects to date. **AGORA** builds on the **SDG's commitment to 'leave no one behind'** and the **Grand Bargain commitments** that call for a new way of

working with and through local actors, and draws on the experience of humanitarian action, recovery and peace-building efforts in **fragile or conflict affected contexts** over the last decades.



the AGORA model can apply to wide array of geographic and administrative scales

AGORA'S ADDED VALUE



AN INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO LOCALISE AID THROUGH TERRITORIAL APPROACHES

The aid system's commitments to localisation remain largely unfulfilled. As local aid actors and communities generally do not have direct access to the main institutional humanitarian and recovery donors and as current trends do not suggest that this will change soon, **AGORA provides an intermediary platform between exogenous aid stakeholders** (those who have access to institutional humanitarian, development or climate funding) **and local actors** (those with the local knowledge and capacity) designed to meaningfully empower and resource the latter across the program cycle.

AGORA supports local communities to develop their priorities and plans, and strives to support their implementation **directly** or by giving these priorities visibility for external aid and government actors including development and climate finance actors where they are present, so that they can use them to inform and prioritise their own responses.

AGORA therefore **promotes synergies** between the resources and expertise of **national and international aid actors** exogenous to the area and the knowledge, capacity and legitimacy of **local actors**, who are often the first and primary providers of support for vulnerable populations.

HDP A TOOL TO IMPLEMENT HUMANITARIAN - NEXUS DEVELOPMENT - PEACE NEXUS

By helping local actors formulate their own priorities outside of the traditional humanitarian / development divide and shifting from sectoral to multi-sectoral responses to the identified needs of crisis affected populations, **AGORA** has been designed as an approach to **practically bridge the humanitarian-development divide**.

When appropriate, **AGORA** can also be a vehicle for **peace-building** and **conflict resolution** through AGORA's engagement with and understanding of community dynamics. This may be particularly the case when AGORA focuses on **supporting local actors** with the **management of natural resources** such as water and pastures which can contribute to conflict dynamics between users.



AN APPROACH TO HELP IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT DURABLE SOLUTIONS TO DISPLACEMENT

By identifying and analysing linkages between areas of return and areas of displacement, AGORA provides **solid evidence to support Durable Solutions to Displacement**.



A COMMUNITY SUPPORT THAT OFFERS AN APPROACH ADAPTABLE TO EACH CONTEXT

The AGORA approach is designed **flexibly to adapt to both urban and rural contexts**, and to **different levels of state presence and capacity**. It is built on the knowledge that in many contexts where state capacity remains limited at sub-national level, resources essential to provide basic services and support livelihoods are often managed at community level by communities themselves without or with only limited government involvement. In such contexts, AGORA acknowledges the importance of complementing the traditional focus of development actors on supporting formal mechanisms with a greater focus on supporting existing legitimate community systems and linking them with formal systems.



AN APPROACH TO EMPOWER COMMUNITIES, ACCOUNTABLE TO AFFECTED PEOPLE

AGORA plans and implements with crisis-affected communities in the areas they inhabit. It uses **territorial** entry points that espouse existing socio-spatial realities, identifying **area-specific** vulnerabilities through **local knowledge**, and relying on local actors to tailor and implement responses.

The **AGORA** approach therefore **empowers local actors** and creates greater accountability to affected people by enabling communities to **identify their own priorities**, and working through communities and local organisations to plan and implement projects.



AN APPROACH TO MITIGATE AND RESPOND TO THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

As a recovery approach implemented in fragile contexts that relies on local knowledge, **AGORA** is able to mainstream **responses and prevention of environmental challenges** into recovery solutions it generates. This is particularly important given the dramatic impact that climate change and other environmental challenges are foreseen to have on resources and livelihoods in many fragile contexts in the coming decades.

Through AGORA, **local climate change related challenges are identified**, and humanitarian, development and climate financing resources to address them can be leveraged locally, complementing national level policies and frameworks.

> EXAMPLES OF AGORA IN PRACTICE ——— AFGHANISTAN

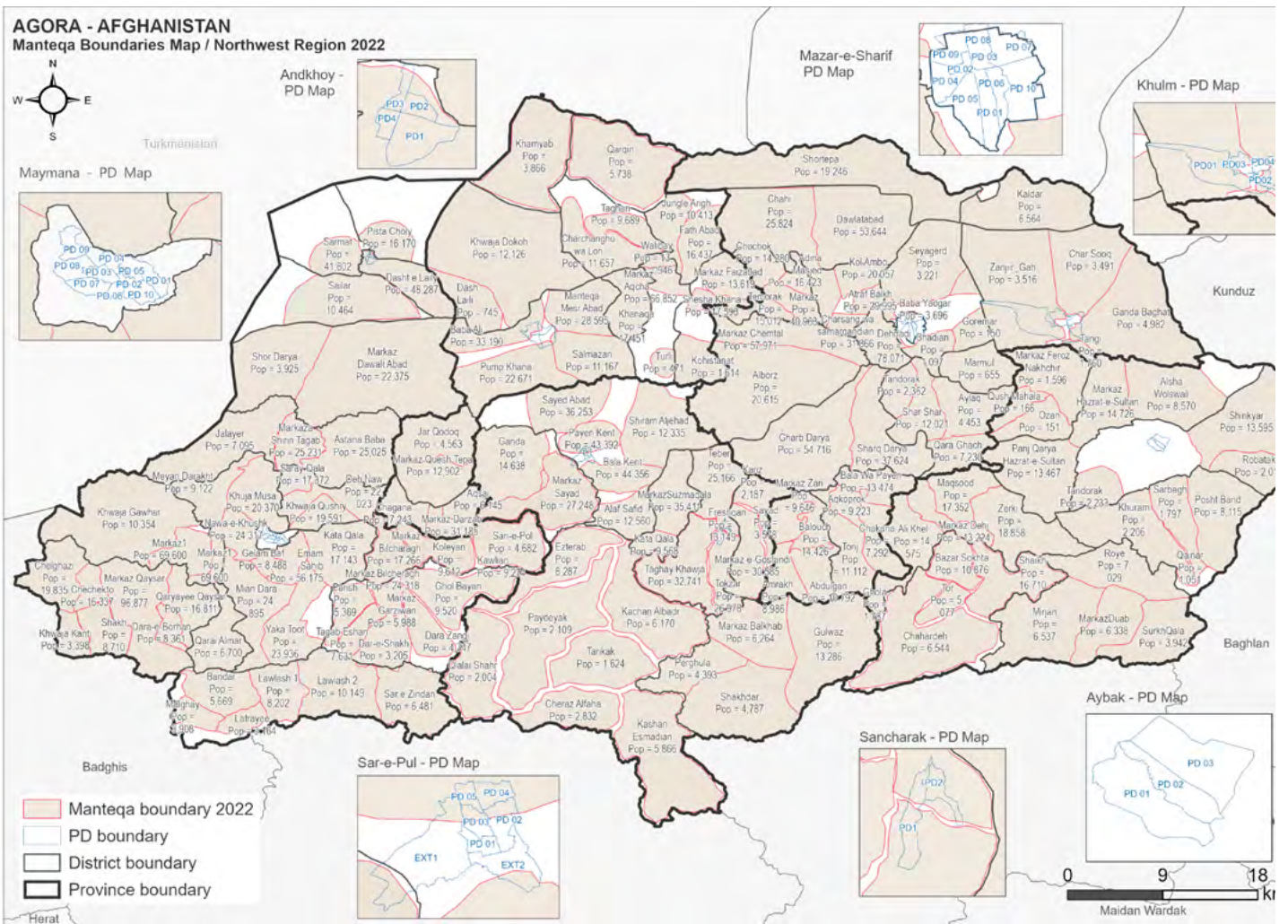


Since 2018, ACTED and IMPACT have been implementing a large **AGORA** project with the support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs covering four provinces in the **north of Afghanistan**. This project works through **64 rural traditional solidarity zones called 'manteqas'**. ACTED has implemented community priority projects identified in each manteqa worth US\$ 3 million in the last years. The project's reliance on **informal community governance mechanisms** that underpin much of rural livelihoods in Afghanistan has facilitated **community ownership and project sustainability**.



Participatory mapping in Faryab Province

MAP OF THE RURAL TRADITIONAL SOLIDARITY ZONES IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE AFGHANISTAN AGORA PROJECT



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC NIGER

Since 2018, in Niger and the Central African Republic, two consortia of NGOs funded by the European Union have supported 24 local communities in identifying and implementing priority recovery interventions, and have built the capacity of local authorities. AGORA supported local actors in each municipality to develop and implement their local recovery plan.



Participatory planning working group in N'guigmi, Diffa Region, Niger

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES FUNCTIONALITY SCORE AND SOCIO-SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF THE FUNCTIONALITY AND CATCHMENT AREAS OF EDUCATION FACILITIES IN DIFFA, NIGER

