



CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

GCERF FUNDING IN IRAQ

SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CVE STRATEGY

GCERF and the National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism (NCCVE) in Iraq invite national Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Iraq to apply for funding to implement prevention programmes that improve the overall community environment and facilitate community-led implementation of local Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) action plans.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 14 June 2026

(11:59 PM Iraq Time)

1. Background

The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) is an independent global fund headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, that serves as the first global effort to support local, community-level initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremist agendas. Operating at the nexus of security and development, GCERF is committed to working in partnership and consultation with governments, civil society, and the private sector in partner countries to support national strategies to address the local drivers of violent extremism. GCERF strengthens community resilience by supporting local, community-level initiatives to address the drivers of violent extremism that promote social cohesion, community agency, equal access to opportunities, and an individual sense of purpose.

2. GCERF's Investment in Iraq

GCERF's investment strategy is informed by various consultations with a wide array of stakeholders in Iraq. These consultations were undertaken in close collaboration with local and national authorities, donors, local experts, UN and key stakeholders as well as the communities to gain an in-depth understanding of

priorities.

The investment strategy in Iraq focuses on supporting the implementation of the national CVE strategy within the defined perimeters of the governorate and district level plans of action, and to assist with the Rehabilitation and Reintegration (R&R) of populations vulnerable to radicalisation and recruitment, including IDPs and people returning from Northeast Syria.

This call focuses on supporting the NCCVE in implementing national P/CVE priorities through communication strategies, online de-radicalisation and other key areas.

3. Call for Expression of Interest

GCERF is pleased to announce a call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for civil society organisations (CSOs) that are already registered and authorised to operate in Iraq. These initiatives aim at strengthening community resilience against violent extremism, with a particular focus on **combating online extremism, enhancing early detection mechanisms, and strengthening media and communication approaches.**

These projects are expected to address the growing role of digital platforms in the spread of hate and extremist narratives in Iraq and beyond by promoting positive alternative messages, improving digital literacy, and equipping communities and institutions with tools to identify and respond to early signs of radicalisation.

Funding will be provided **exclusively** through a consortium model, led by a Principal Recipient (PR) that manages funds and supports Sub-Recipients (SRs). Consortium grants are managed and overseen by the Principal Recipient, who serves as the legal recipient of GCERF funding and disburses funds to other consortium members ("Sub-Recipients," or SRs). The PR is responsible for overall grant management, including coordinating and implementing activities carried out by SRs.

PRs are strongly encouraged to form consortia with multiple grassroots organisations that are based in the target communities and have established credibility with local stakeholders.

4. Beneficiaries

- Local authorities, including:
 - Religious leaders, and Tribal leaders
 - Sub-district, district, and governorate-level council members,
 - Community influencers (including digital influencers)
- Vulnerable members of host communities, particularly those exposed to online misinformation or extremist content.
- Individuals prone to generating or amplifying violence, hate speech, or resentment toward returnees, including through online platforms.
- Youth, particularly active digital and social media users.
- Families, parents and educators, as key actors in the early detection and prevention of radicalisation mechanism proposed.

5. Geographic Locations:

While the grants can target a wide geography of Iraq, priority for investment will be given to Al-Anbar, Baghdad, Salahuddin, Babylon, Diyala, Kirkuk, Mosul, and Ninewa.

6. Priority Programming Areas:

GCERF will fund CSOs and local associations to implement programmes that:

- 1) Strengthen the implementation of the national CVE strategy at the governorate and district levels, with an increased focus on combating online extremism, including the prevention of digital radicalisation, the disruption of online extremist narratives, and the promotion of credible alternative messaging through community-based and media-driven approaches.
- 2) Enhance early detection and prevention mechanisms by building the capacity of local actors—such as families, educators, community leaders, and frontline practitioners—to identify early signs of radicalisation, particularly in online and offline environments, and respond through coordinated referral and support systems.
- 3) Supporting youth-led initiatives that foster inclusive, gender-sensitive access to digital and media-related skills, including digital literacy, critical thinking, responsible online engagement, and livelihood opportunities such as skills training, particularly for vulnerable groups, while ensuring young people play an active role in the design, implementation, and leadership of these initiatives.

- 4) Strengthen media and communication ecosystems through longer-term impact actions, including collaboration with technology platforms and government agencies to improve content moderation mechanisms and enhance the early detection of extremist content online, while supporting coordinated efforts that foster resilience against misinformation, hate speech, and extremist narratives and contribute to greater social cohesion.

The programmes will be implemented in close coordination with the National Committee for Combating Violent Extremism at the central level, as well as with subcommittees for combating violent extremism at the governorate and district levels, where applicable. Implementation will also be aligned with existing national and regional strategies, action plans, and policy frameworks related to preventing and countering violent extremism.

The priority interventions are designed to reinforce localised implementation of the national CVE strategy, with an integrated approach that combines online and offline prevention efforts, strengthens community resilience, and addresses underlying drivers of vulnerability, including socio-economic marginalisation.

Proposed interventions might include:

- Supporting CSOs in implementing P/CVE activities aligned with district and governorate-level Plans of Action, with a specific focus on **addressing online extremism and strengthening community-based digital prevention efforts**.
- Strengthening CSO engagement with local authorities to promote coordinated responses to online and offline drivers of extremism, ensuring that services are perceived as joint efforts and enhancing trust between communities and institutions.
- Providing specialised training on P/CVE to targeted beneficiaries, including modules on digital radicalisation, online safety, counter-narrative development, and strategic communication.
- Building the capacity of frontline actors (e.g., educators, community leaders, families, government staff, and youth workers) on early detection of radicalisation, particularly in digital spaces, and establishing referral and response mechanisms.
- Reinforcing and utilising safe and inclusive spaces (such as schools, youth centres, and youth councils) to promote digital literacy, critical thinking, and resilience to online misinformation and extremist content.
- Supporting youth-led initiatives that foster positive engagement, promote the use of culture, arts, and sports as tools for PVE, encourage peer-to-peer

awareness, and develop alternative narratives that counter hate speech and extremist messaging.

- Strengthening local media and communication efforts through longer-term impact actions that engage journalists, community media outlets, digital influencers, technology platforms, and relevant government actors to support responsible content moderation, enhance early detection of extremist narratives online, and promote content that fosters social cohesion and community resilience.
- Supporting women and girls, particularly those affected by violent extremism, including through safe digital participation, access to information, and targeted communication initiatives.
- Facilitating engagement with the private sector, including the tech and media industries, to support digital skills development and access to employment opportunities.

Local organisations are encouraged to propose integrated programmes that combine more than two priority intervention areas.

Grant size

Grant amounts start at **500,000 USD up to 700,000 USD.**

Grant duration

The grants will be **24** months in duration.

Eligible grantees

- Legally registered CSOs (consortia only) with proven experience in community-based initiatives, financial management, R&R, and PVE programming in Iraq.
- Each consortium should be led by a Principal Recipient (PR), who will be responsible for providing subgrants to other consortium members (Sub-Recipients). Only the consortium will be eligible to apply for this grant.

Expressions of Interest

Applicants are asked to demonstrate that they meet GCERF's established prerequisites and that they possess the required capabilities to be a PR of GCERF funding.

PREREQUISITES
(i) Experience in Rehabilitation, Reintegration, P/CVE, online

radicalization,
(ii) Appropriate legal registration of the consortium lead in Iraq
(iii) Willingness to accept and fulfil the role of a Principal Recipient (as described herein).
REQUIRED CAPABILITIES
(i) Experience and capacity in supporting community-level initiatives that address the local drivers of violent extremism.
(ii) Established trust relationships and credibility with the communities and population groups in the geographical areas identified in the Call.
(iii) Experience and capacity in programme design and management.
(iv) Experience and capacity in financial management and in the management of and accounting for international donor grant funding.
(v) Experience in managing sub-recipients, assessing and enhancing their capacities.
(vi) Experience in designing and implementing Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) programmes.
(vii) Experience in early detection and prevention initiatives related to violent extremism.

How to Submit an Expression of Interest

All Expressions of Interest must be duly filled and submitted electronically **in English** to contact.iraq@gcerf.org by **14 June 2026**. The email should be marked as '**EOI-IRAQ-PVE**', in the subject line. Failing to comply might compromise your submission.

Question and Answer Session

GCERF hosted an online Q&A session for potential applicants on **June 1, 2026**.

Selection Process

Applications will undergo the following stages:

- Eligibility assessment: Committee evaluation based on quality and relevance (minimum qualifying score: 70)
- Award decision based on merit, the quality of the project concept, and the coherence between the idea and the implementing partners' capacity to deliver it.

GCERF reserves the right to fund one, multiple, or none of the submitted proposals.

Required Application Documents

- 1) Copies of organisational registration documents
- 2) Summary of the organisation's community-based work and relevant previous experience.
- 3) Latest audit reports
- 4) Theory of Change (using the GCERF template)
- 5) Proposed project organisational chart (specific to the project, not the overall organisation)
- 6) Completed Annex A (Application Form)
- 7) Completed Annex B (Details of past projects)
- 8) Completed Annex C (Proposed budget)

Incomplete applications or missing documents will result in disqualification.