

**FOR INFORMATION**

**BM.02/DOC.05: REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL (IRP)**

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**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this paper is to provide the GCERF Governing Board (the “Board”) with: (i) a progress report on the activities of the international Independent Review Panel (IRP); and (ii) the technical guidance provided by the IRP to the Secretariat in the development of country Needs Assessment (NA) criteria to inform Country Support Mechanisms (CSMs).

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The IRP is an independent, impartial group of up to 14 experts appointed by the Board. Amongst its main functions are: (i) providing the Secretariat with technical expertise with regards to the criteria for country NAs; (ii) providing the Board with recommendations, on the relative weighting of funding to each beneficiary country under consideration during the period, and specific funding criteria for each beneficiary country; (iii) in conjunction with Country Support Mechanisms and in consultation with the Secretariat, selecting potential Principal Recipients based on Board-approved grant assessment criteria for applicants; (iv) reviewing funding applications against established technical standards; and (v) providing the Board with recommendations for funding.

2.2 In December 2014, the Secretariat issued a Call for Experts to apply for membership in the IRP. In total, 34 applications were received and screened by the Secretariat on behalf of the Chair of the Board. On 20 January 2015, 10 experts were proposed by the Chair; and on 30 January 2015, the members of the IRP were appointed by the Board. In March 2015, the IRP members selected by consensus Ms Humera Khan as the IRP Chair.

**3. ACHIEVEMENTS**

3.1 Since the IRP’s establishment, the Secretariat has worked closely with members to provide them with an orientation to GCERF; and support the development of country NA criteria.

3.2 GCERF convened the inaugural meeting of the IRP in Washington, DC, on 10 February 2015, on the margins of the White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism; six of the 10 members of the IRP were able to attend in person. The agenda included:

- a welcome to GCERF; introductions from the IRP members and their relevant expertise; and an overview of GCERF operations and the role of the IRP;
- the role of the IRP in GCERF’s operations; and a detailed, step-by-step orientation to the IRP’s terms of reference, including a discussion of the selection of the IRP Chair;
- identification of drivers of violent extremism and prevention; opportunities and challenges associated with small grants to community-driven initiatives; and good practices; and
- a discussion and review of a draft prepared by the Secretariat of the country NA criteria.

3.3 Through a collaborative process following the inaugural meeting, the IRP, in consultation with the Secretariat, finalized the country NA criteria, which appear as Annex 1 to this document.

3.4 The country NA criteria are designed to facilitate the completion of an analysis by CSMs of existing levels of community resilience against violent extremist agendas and the drivers of radicalisation to violence, including the identification of the demography and geography of communities at risk.

3.5 Posted on the GCERF website, the country NA criteria now serve as a resource for practitioners in GCERF beneficiary countries and in the global countering violent extremism community of interest. In this regard, the body of GCERF's knowledge is intended to elevate the practice and professionalisation of community engagement and resilience.

3.6 The country NA criteria have been finalized as a "working text," to highlight the intent of the IRP and the Secretariat to review the relevance and formulation of the criteria for potential improvements based on feedback received from, and in consultation with, CSMs that will have used them.

## ANNEX 1: NEEDS ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

In consultation with the GCERF Secretariat, the GCERF IRP offers the following guidance to beneficiary country authorities on assessment criteria.

### Understanding the Impact of Violent Extremism

1. What impact does violent extremism currently have on affected communities?
2. Does your country have a public debate or discourse around violent extremism and its impact? Are all stakeholders in agreement on the severity of the risk of violent extremism?
3. In the future, what is the potential impact of violent extremism on the country?

### Who, where, what, and how?

4. Who is most at risk of radicalisation to violent extremism?
5. Where are the at-risk people located?
6. What do affected communities say are the main factors that contribute to radicalisation to violence (for example, ideas, institutions, issues, trends)?
7. Where and how do violent extremist groups recruit new members?
8. What do affected communities say would be the most effective ways to prevent radicalisation to violent extremism?

### Research and Strategies to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism

9. Does your country have a national strategy/policy/working group to prevent radicalisation to violent extremism? If so, please describe. Who is responsible for implementing the policy?
10. Who are the main actors actively working to prevent radicalisation to violent extremism?
11. Are national and local governmental authorities in dialogue with civil society on the subject of preventing radicalisation to violent extremism?
12. Is radicalisation to violent extremism the subject of study or research in your country? If so, please identify by whom.
13. Is research regularly undertaken to measure community attitudes toward and relationships with local and national authorities?

### Support for Community Engagement and Resilience

14. In affected communities, who has credibility and legitimacy to speak out against violent extremism? Who is already speaking out against violent extremism?
15. How might additional support be provided to locally credible voices without undermining their legitimacy?
16. Who provides services to build local resilience to violent extremist agendas? What programs and structures are supporting these service providers?
17. Are there effective rehabilitation and reintegration programs for former violent extremists/returning foreign fighters/incarcerated violent extremists? Is there support for their families and dependents?
18. In affected communities, what role, if any, do private sector businesses/companies currently play in building resilience against violent extremist agendas? What more is needed?
19. Which international, multilateral, and/or regional donors or civil society initiatives are currently working to prevent radicalisation to violent extremism?