

GCERF in Bangladesh

Since 2016, GCERF has **lived up to its initial commitment**, investing three times in a country. GCERF's last round of investment began in July 2022 and goes until June 2024.

This round of investment is focusing on turning the already existing activities into more **sustainable** ones, specifically the youth clubs and digital literacy.

This is contributing to **increased community agency and positive sense of purpose**.

Portfolio overview as of August 2023

Active grants

Rupantar

2016-24 | *Principal Recipient with 5 sub-recipients*

- ❖ Established and ran peace clubs. Provided leadership, digital, and critical thinking skills to youth (including those in university and madrasas) and raised awareness on PVE.

Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)

2016-24 | *Direct grantee*

- ❖ Established and trained youth platforms; held community engagement events and fostered social cohesion, and established and ran women's courtyard platforms.



Photo: Peace Club members in the group work session of Social Media Entrepreneurship Training



Photo: Advocacy meeting with religious leaders



Current investment

- Rajshahi; Chapai-Nawabganj
- Khulna; Satkhira
- Chattogram; Cox's bazar
- Greater Dhaka; Dhaka

Investment started: 2016

Investment to date: USD 9.3 million

Current investment: USD 1.15 million

Active grants: 2

Investment Focus



Building resilience against violent extremism by supporting youth platforms to ensure financial and existential sustainability; strengthening the advocacy and fundraising capacity of grantees and youth groups.



Chattogram – Cox's Bazar, Greater Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna



Secondary school and madrasa students; University-level students; out-of-school and unemployed youth; virtual youth; Religious and Community Leaders; and Governance Actors.



2016-2024



GCERF in Bangladesh works in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs and other local government authorities, and the United Nations country team.

Violent Extremism in Bangladesh: Drivers

Socio-economic factors such as poverty and youth underemployment act as the push factors for youth to join violent extremist (VE) groups.

Political factors such as corruption exacerbate the lack of trust in the government by the citizens.

Cultural factors such as religious differences and the influx of Rohingya refugees also increase the potential of radicalisation.

43rd

On the Global Terrorism Index 2023

Current Programming: Systems Approach

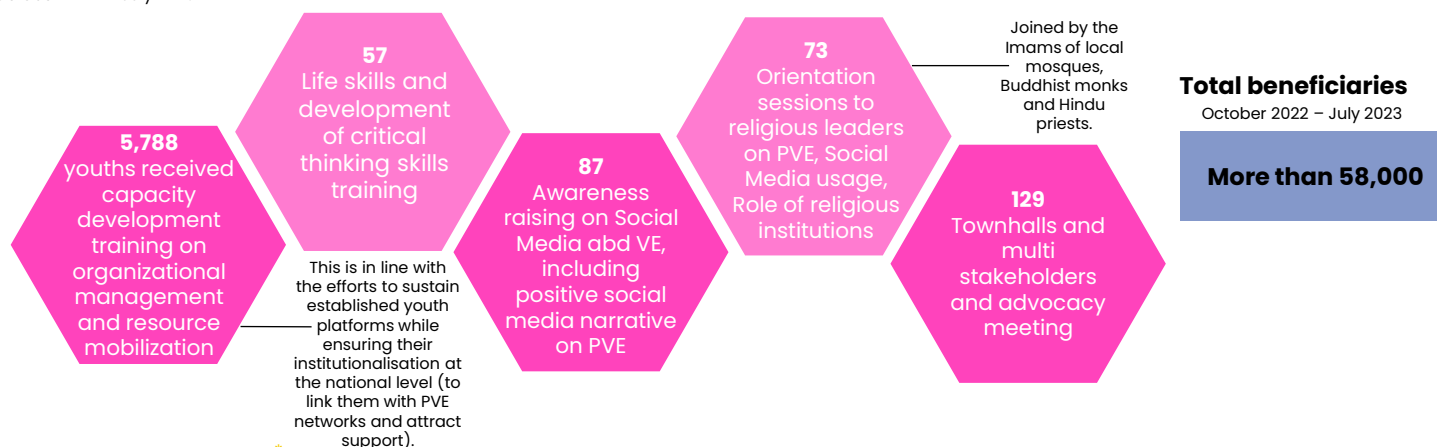
National: Advocating for the mainstreaming of preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) into national policies. Institutionalising and ensuring the sustainability of youth PVE/peace platforms.

Community: Promoting community-wide efforts at preventing VE through multiple community-level stakeholders' (youth, women, religious leaders, etc.) engagement and dialogue to build PVE capacity and raise awareness.

Individual: Building the individual's quest for social cohesion and tolerance, including youth's critical thinking and sense of purpose and increasing digital literacy.

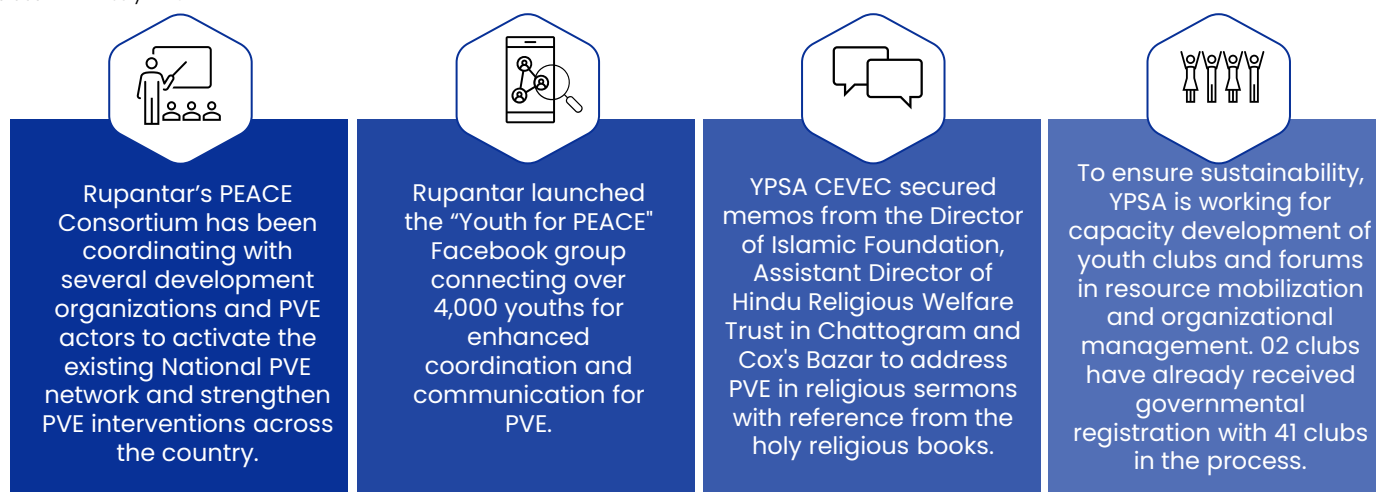
Key Outputs*

October 2022 – July 2023



Key achievements*

October 2022 – July 2023



During Q2 2023, which coincided with the time of the local governmental elections, PEACE Consortium implemented 25 Joint Social Action through 149 Peace clubs:



"Peace clubs have played an important role during the city corporation election period through making people aware and sensitize regarding online rumours, hate speech, propaganda. I can say, their initiatives played a vital role this time to avoid violence in this area during the election period."



- Samsuddin Ahmed, Ward Councillor, Khulna City Corporation

Story of Change

Gorokghat High School embraced PVE activities as part of the YPSA CEVEC project since 2019. Mr. Zia Uddin, an English teacher was nominated by the Headmaster for his dedication and skill. Mr. Zia Uddin's journey with PVE began with little knowledge, but through training provided by YPSA CEVEC, he recognized that PVE education is a vital tool against radicalization, fostering awareness and harmony. Mr. Zia transformed PVE from an abstract concept to an integral part of the school's fabric. Under his guidance, coupled with the support of the school management committee, PVE found its place with the institution's plan as an extra-curricular activity.

The school integrated a Life Skills Education (LSE) session on PVE into its curriculum, where Mr. Zia conducted LSE sessions among students in classes VII, IX, and X, making PVE awareness a central theme. His commitment extended to discussing PVE during school assemblies, using YPSA CEVEC's flipcharts as a guide.

Gorokghat High School's Head Teacher, Shristi Ram Dey, attested to Mr. Zia Uddin's impact, **"Initially we all were oriented on PVE and its importance in institution, but Mr. Zia Uddin played extra ordinary role to bring it in mainstream under Gorokghat High School. He succeeded to present the importance of PVE intervention and its priority as extra-curricular activity among them and included PVE intervention in their educational institutional plan."** This extra-curricular activity has been woven into the fabric of the school's efforts for lasting impact, going beyond the school compound, as it has become a vehicle for change, fostering unity and understanding among the young minds of Mahmudpur.



Teacher Conducting Life Skills Education Session on PVE at Gorokghat High School in Moheshkhali in Cox's Bazar District



Youth forum members organize forum meeting in their own initiative and discussed about PVE initiative that they can implement in the community.



Peace clubs established by Rupantar conducts inter-faith dialogue, campaign against online misinformation, court yard meeting, medical camp, cycle rally, reading corner, debate competition, wall painting, leaflet development and distribution etc. engaging youths, local government representatives, religious leaders and activists :

"The peace clubs made me interested in joining their cause after I met them. They have been very clear about their goals and objectives. They know what they want to do and what their means to make it happen is. They want to ensure that the community stays in harmony and mutual respect has been their weapons. It completely aligns with their depth of knowledge and understanding."

- Mr. Rahman, Religious Leader and Imam of the local mosque, Satkhira, Khulna, May 2023



GCERF's Added Value in Bangladesh



GCERF focuses on **building institutional capacity** e.g., CSOs, and government agencies.



GCERF invests in building a PVE-focused **community of practice** with CSOs, government agencies, and experts



Communities are at the **forefront of project design and implementation**, and the programme works with existing community structures for sustainability



All project design and implementation are done in coordination with **nationally-aligned**, locally-led programmes



GCERF connects CSOs, communities, and other stakeholders with government and security actors, leading to **better coordination** and relationships



GCERF's consortium model and capacity-building approach enables us to work in **remote areas**