

**CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

**GCERF FUNDING IN THE SAHEL**

**(BURKINA FASO, MALI, MAURITANIA, and NIGER )**

GCERF, in collaboration with the Sahel Regional Funding Panel (RFP), is looking for a Sahel based organisation to perform the role of Local Knowledge Partner in Sahel, supporting GCERF portfolio in the region. GCERF portfolio is implemented by Civil Society Organisations in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania (upcoming), and Niger.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: 24 July 2022 (23:59 CET)**

**1. Background**

The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) is an independent Swiss foundation established to serve 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 individual sense of purpose.

GCERF began its first investments in the Sahel region in 2016 with three rounds of funding in Mali. GCERF funded ten grants for a total commitment of USD 7 million, covering a wide range of locally driven resilience-building projects. GCERF, most recently expanded its programmes to Burkina Faso and Niger.

**2. GCERF’s Investment in the Sahel**

GCERF’s Regional Strategy for Investment in the Sahel focuses on Central Sahel, starting with the Liptako-Gourma region. It is informed by a macro-level formative review, a micro-level Regional Needs Assessment (RNA), and a Subject Matter Expert Workshop. These activities were undertaken in close collaboration with local and national authorities, in-country donors and local experts, and communities to gain a shared understanding of priorities and ensure that GCERF’s Sahel Strategy is fit for purpose and addresses real-time needs.

GCERF has engaged with national, regional, and global stakeholders to define its role within the Sahel. At the national levels, strategic and programmatic discussions were held with the relevant representatives of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, both in-country and in Geneva. Regionally, engagement with the G5 Sahel Secretariat concluded by establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the G5 Sahel and GCERF. The MoU outlines areas of collaborations within the scope of the G5 Sahel’s Strategy for Development and Security (SDS) and its appended Priority Investment Programmes (PIP).

GCERF’s engagement support G5 Sahel in delivering and promoting GCTF-identified good practices as per the MoU. With its community-based approach to P/CVE, GCERF’s Sahel investment strategy directly contributes to the implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) of the three countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger – all members of GCERF’s governing Board) in partnership with local, national, and regional partners. GCERF expects its engagement to expand to other areas of Sahel with the inclusion of Mauritania as GCERF partner country.

## Priority Programming Areas:

GCERF fund CSOs and local associations in the Sahel to implement programmes that 1) improve the social ecology**[[1]](#footnote-1)** to create conditions for prevention and resilience-building; 2) Facilitate community-led Rehabilitation, Disengagement, and (Re)integration, including of people disengaging from criminal, non-state armed and violent extremist groups. The programmes are implemented in collaboration with decentralised government authorities (collectivités territoriales), where applicable, and aligned with existing regional and national P/CVE action plans and strategies.

The priority interventions identified are:

**Improving the Social Ecology to create conditions conductive to prevention and resilience-building:**

1. Supporting resilient pastoralism;
2. Supporting the prevention and management of rural land conflicts;
3. Supporting the development of resilient and decent economic opportunities through revolving fund schemes, vocational skills training, and job placements;
4. Supporting equitable and gender-sensitive access to skills training and seed-funding;
5. Inter and intra community dialogue at social, religious, and political levels.

**Facilitating community-led Rehabilitation, Disengagement, and (Re)integration, including of people disengaging from criminal, non-state armed and violent extremist groups:**

1. Promoting prosocial interactions;
2. Creating spaces for disengagement through community-driven sensitisation;
3. Improving dynamics impeding the (re)integration of displaced communities, and former fighters;
4. Providing psycho-social and economic support to victims of violent extremism.

**3. Call for Expression of Interest**

GCERF, in collaboration with the RFP in the Sahel, is pleased to announce a call for expressions of interest for academic institutions, research centres, think-tanks and non-profits in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger to become a GCERF Local Knowledge Partner (LKP) through GCERF’s Core Funding Mechanism (CFM).

The LKP will assume a core function in GCERF’s Sahel programming with the overall objective to support GCERF portfolio regarding monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management, and research for GCERF portfolio in Sahel, strengthening the generation and consumption of evidence by both internal and external stakeholders. These include national authorities, regional institutions, donor community, and local civil society partners. By early 2023, GCERF will be funding mora than 10 grants in the Sahel.

The LKP will fulfil a fourfold requirement:

1. Third-Party Monitoring Exercises and Evaluations
2. Capacity Building on M&E and Learning
3. Knowledge Management
4. Research Generation for Policy and Practice

GCERF is therefore seeking to enter into an agreement with a local institution for an expected duration of 36 months to 48 months. The Local Knowledge Partner will work closely with GCERF’s country-teams for Sahel, and GCERF Performance and Impact Manager.

1. **Third-Party Monitoring Exercises and Evaluations**

The LKP will work with GCERF and its grantees in the Sahel to carry out independently at least 4 third-party monitoring exercises during the grant-cycle (2022-2025), including a data quality assurance exercises. The 3rd party monitoring exercises are expected to commence in 2023, and the Local Knowledge Partner is expected to provide recommendations on concrete actions to improve the data quality and programming overall.

The LKP will work with GCERF and its grantees in the Sahel to carry out at least six independent evaluations exercises of Sahel portfolio. Each exercise might cover one to two grants. The evaluation should follow OECD DAC evaluation criteria and use mixed-methods. If possible, the local knowledge partner should integrate more advanced research methods to evaluate the projects. Due to the timeline of the grants, these evaluations are expected to be conducted in 2024-2025.

The LKP is expected to conduct a regional evaluation of GCERF programs in the Sahel region by the end of 2025, in part relying on the data and experience gathered through the third party monitoring, impact evaluations and other activities.

1. **Capacity Building on M&E and Learning**

The LKP will provide support to GCERF grantees through a series of workshops to increase their monitoring and evaluation capabilities. These workshops are expected to cover at least :

* Monitoring and measurement tools to collect high quality data from focused population groups.
* Best practices in data gathering (including mobile data collection) and analysis
* Approaches to evaluation and how to use results for learning purposes and evidence-based decision-making.

The workshops should be conducted in French, with ability of support to local languages strongly desired.

GCERF expects that similar support to be given to national authorities on M&E and learning on a case-by-case basis .

Overall, the local knowledge partner is expected to deliver at least 8 workshops during the grant.

**Knowledge Management**

The LKP will maintain a support on knowledge management for the Sahel programme in close coordination with GCERF. The LKP will deliver at least 4 Communities of Practice per year at national level on experiences, lessons learned and insights of the country portfolio, with a summary document as output, starting in beginning of 2023. And one regional Community of Practice at the end of 2024 or beginning of 2025.

The LKP will also:

* + Support the harvest information and document learnings throughout the implementation of individual partner projects with a view to develop, publish and disseminate success stories and in-depth case studies on lessons learned.
  + Support grantees through the provision of a e-learning and content sharing platform, in which the LKP will help to curate and disseminate accessible contents on lessons learned, grantees’ innovations, and other knowledge products.
  + Streamline curation of knowledge from the programme in collaboration with GCERF Performance and Impact team, and develop innovative types of knowledge products with the objective to enhance dissemination and evidence uptake by stakeholders.
  + Work in close collaboration with GCERF Communications team to actively support the dissemination of products through collaborative partnerships with government bodies, research institutions, practitioners and other stakeholders.

1. **Research and Knowledge Generation for Policy and Practice**

The LKP will be tasked to undertake one major research project, and at least another additional discrete smaller operational research project. The topic of the major research project will be decided with GCERF at the beginning of the grant; while the other one smaller research projects will be chosen between 2023-2024.

The chosen themes will reflect the focus of grantee programming, be in line with existing National Action Plan requirements, and be agreed with the Country Support Mechanisms & Regional Funding Panel. GCERF will work with the LKP to share the findings of its research with the wider PVE community, linking LKPs from different countries to support discussions through its Global Communities of Practice.

* Some suggested topics: *Pastoralism and Violence; Natural Resources, VE and conflict; Talibes; Reintegration of former fighters into communities*
* Thus, the research outputs are expected of enough quality that enable its publication through journals or public reports.

**Grant size**

GCERF plans to sign grant agreements with the LKP by the end of quarter three of 2022. GCERF will use the Core Funding Mechanism (CFM) to provide the grant. The grant is expected to be around 750K USD.

**Grant duration**

The grants will be no less than 36 months and no more than 48 months in duration.

**Local Knowledge Partner/Grantee**

The Local Knowledge Partner should be a direct grantee or a consortia of academic institutions, research centers, and/or think tanks led by a PR which will be responsible for providing subgrants to other consortium members (Sub-Recipients). The most important element is the ability of the grantee (direct or consortia) to operate in the countries and regions listed.

Due to GCERF commitment to fund local actors, in case, the selected grantee is locally based and registered but part of an international network of organizations, GCERF expects its funds to support mainly staff and expertise based in the Sahel. Thus, any resources for extra-Sahel staff or support should not surpass 10% of the total value of the grant. The leading organization of this grant is expected to be a non -profit organization, but profit organizations can still be part of the consortium as sub-recipients.

**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.

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| **PREREQUISITES** |
| 1. Appropriate legal registration of the consortium lead in one of the four countries for this call. |
| 1. Willingness to accept and fulfil the role of a Local Knowledge Partner (as described herein). |
| 1. For the principal recipient, be a non-profit organization; |
| **REQUIRED CAPABILITIES** |
| 1. Thorough knowledge of M&E methodologies and tools; |
| 1. Experience and skills in M&E capacity building (e.g. workshop facilitation and mentoring). |
| 1. Experience on conducting third-party monitoring and external evaluations, especially on projects related to Peace and/or P/CVE. |
| 1. Expert understanding of current trends and challenges in P/CVE in the Sahel and community-based approaches to programming and implementation; |
| 1. In-depth knowledge of the Sahel; |
| 1. Excellent French, English and local language skills; |
| 1. Ability to draft concise reports and communicate clearly (including visualisation of results and findings when feasible); |
| 1. Ability to interact with various stakeholders and clients in a sensitive and effective way; |
| 1. Experience in working with civil society organisations is extremely relevant; |
| 1. Experience in working with governments, and multilateral organisations similar to GCERF is an added advantage; |
| 1. Experience on publishing reports (evaluations, research) is important |
| 1. Physical presence in the Sahel through the existence of the organisation Headquarters or local offices in the countries. |

**How to Submit an Expression of Interest**

**Please see below Annex A.**

All Expressions of Interest must be duly filled and submitted electronically to [**call.sahel@gcerf.org**](mailto:call.sahel@gcerf.org), with copy to **info.pi@gcerf.org**, by **24 July 2022 .** The email should be marked as ‘**EOI-Local Knowledge Partner**’ - in the subject line – depending on which country you are applying for. Failing to comply might compromise your submission.

Informal enquiries may be submitted to [**info.pi@gcerf.org**](mailto:info.pi@gcerf.org)

Following review of submissions, shortlisted applicants will be contacted to conduct a due diligence.

1. Social Ecology in this case refers to the transformation of communitarian views and outlooks in parallel with other developments within a specific social, political, and security environment. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)