

### BACKGROUND

Kosovo has been a leader in the rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R) of returnees from foreign conflicts, repatriating large numbers of Kosovar citizens and offering comprehensive support, including psycho-social and economic reintegration initiatives.

Previous GCERF-funded support has demonstrated that the needs of returnees are difficult to predict and can encompass a broad spectrum of assistance, including medical, psycho-social, educational, economic, financial, administrative, and legal support. Young people in Kosovo are particularly vulnerable to radicalisation to violent extremism.

Structural polarisation in education, high unemployment rates, challenging labour market conditions, identity crises, and widespread access to technology further contribute to an environment conducive to radicalisation.

Kosovo became a GCERF partner country\* in 2017. To date, GCERF has invested USD 7.4 million in the country, with three active grants worth USD 2.9 million.

GCERF's grantees in Kosovo work to ensure the sustainable R&R of returnees from conflicts abroad, as well as general prevention efforts within majority ethnic communities. They focus on building the capacity of local governmental R&R actors, advocating for the local role in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and R&R, and improving the accountability and financial sustainability of PVE and R&R initiatives.

The programmes aim to reduce the stigmatisation of returnees, monitor the National Strategy for PCVE, increase inter-ethnic tolerance, strengthen the capacity of community-based civil society organisations in PVE and R&R, and improve the civic engagement of youth.

### GCERF'S INVESTMENT STRATEGY IN KOSOVO

GCERF's investment focuses on the capacity building of relevant P/CVE and R&R actors at the local level and reinforcing local mechanisms and institutions to mitigate polarisation of children and youth. According to GCERF's needs assessment and consultations with relevant stakeholders, there are the following main drivers of violent extremism in Kosovo:

1. Lack of trust in institutions, limited dialogue between central and local government.
2. Economic factors including high rates of poverty and unemployment, difficult labour market conditions.
3. Political unrest and mis/disinformation.
4. Social factors including sense of isolation and marginalisation in rural areas and of minority groups.



### WHERE

- All the seven (7) provinces of Kosovo, in addition to 30 municipalities

### WHO

- National/local institutions and frontline workers
- Local and community based CSOs/ grassroots groups
- Children and youth, including returnees but also other minority groups including Serbian, Roma Ashkali, Egyptian, Turkish, and Bosniak youth
- Returnees and their family members or legal guardians

\*Partner countries are those in which GCERF funds civil society organisations to implement initiatives aimed at preventing violent extremism.

CURRENT GRANTS



IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p><b>Principal Recipient:</b> Advocacy Training and Resource Centre (ATRC)</p> <p><b>Sub-recipients:</b> Community Building Mitrovica, Balkans Investigative Reporting Network, Rin'On</p>		<p>Build capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors in R&amp;R and PVE.</p> <p>Support the implementation and monitoring of the national strategy for PCVE and CT.</p> <p>Coordination of PVE and R&amp;R relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Improvement of media coverage on PVE and R&amp;R.</p>	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Municipality of Mitrovica North, Municipality of Mitrovica South, Mitrovica region, Prishtina Region, Ferizaj region, Gjilan region		USD 1,450,000	January 2023 – June 2026

IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p><b>Principal Recipient:</b> Community Development Fund</p> <p><b>Sub-recipients:</b> Integra, Atifete Jahjaga Foundation, Institute of Psychology</p>		<p>Comprehensive training for municipality teams to proficiently identify and address VE vulnerabilities related to violent extremism.</p> <p>Education support within schools and capacity building of frontline workers and partners.</p> <p>Improve the personal capacities and socio-emotional development of RFTF and vulnerable children and their parents/caretakers.</p>	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Prishtina, Fushe Kosova, Podujeva, Viti, Gjilan, Mitrovica, Peja, Han i Elezit		USD 700,000	March 2024 – August 2026

IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p><b>Principal Recipient:</b> Syri I Vizionit</p> <p><b>Sub-recipients:</b> NGO Aktiv, Edutask Institute</p>		<p>Strengthen community mechanisms to address PVE and community safety and security.</p> <p>Strengthen existing multi-stakeholder actors (local leaders/councils, religious/village leaders).</p> <p>Facilitate inter ethnic and inter religious dialogue.</p>	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
North Mitrovica, Zubin Potok, Zvecan, Leposavic, South Mitrovica , Vitia, Peja		USD 750,000	October 2023 – September 2026

# STORY OF CHANGE

## INNOVATIVE HEALING AND EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS SMALL SCALE GRANTS FOR YOUTH COUNCILS

### Innovative healing workshops

Through innovative healing and educational workshops based on drama therapy, children from RFTF families and their classmates have developed essential emotional, social, and cognitive skills. The workshops were held in classrooms designated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which provided a safe space for self-expression and social integration. The children improved their emotional regulation, self-control, resilience, and self-esteem, laying the foundation for enhanced collaboration and learning.

The workshops included activities such as role-playing, storytelling, dance, and acting, which fostered positive peer relationships and enhanced empathy. These exercises encouraged participants to deepen their awareness of social issues and cultivate mutual respect, promoting a stronger sense of belonging. The children also developed critical soft skills, such as creative thinking, problem-solving, and communication, positively impacting their emotional and social well-being.



Drama therapy sessions © CDF



Small grants for youth councils © ATRC

***“Participating in this project has helped me express my emotions and thoughts through art. I have learned a lot about tolerance and coexistence, and I now feel more confident sharing these values with my friends”. – Student who participated in the art therapy sessions.***

***“When I heard the word extremism, I only thought of religious extremism. I’m very glad that I learned about other types as well”. – A participant of healing and educational workshop***

# KEY RESULTS

Cumulative from 2017 to March 2025

## 6,900

community members, judges, prosecutors, media professionals, municipal, staff, youth trained in conflict resolution, PVE to address grievances and foster solidarity

## 1,070

returnee and non-returnee children and community members participated in art-based healing, psychosocial support activities to foster recovery, inclusion and reduce stigma towards returnees

## 92%

mothers reported that their children demonstrated increased self-expression, reestablished positive peer relationships, actively participated in social activities, felt safe and positive attending school

## 780

frontline workers trained in referral mechanism for returnees, trauma- and-violence informed care, essential for effective rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees

## 74%

frontline workers trained demonstrated sufficient capacity in delivering R&R services

## GCERF'S VALUE PROPOSITION

GCERF'S UNIQUE MODEL OF INVESTMENT PRIORITISES:

**Community-ownership and localisation:** We invest in trusted grassroots civil society organisations that prioritise the needs and grievances of communities most affected by violent extremism. Many of these organisations have never received international funding before.

**Sustainability:** Our programmes involve all groups of society and strengthens trust between government, civil society and community members to build stronger, more resilient societies. This ensures that initiatives and structures continue to be relevant and effective.

**Robust monitoring and evaluation processes:** Our multi-layered monitoring and evaluation system, operating locally and globally, provides continuous feedback on programme effectiveness, identifies areas for improvement, and ensures objectives are consistently met.

**Knowledge sharing:** Our global network of civil society organisations working on PVE facilitates the exchange of good practices and lessons learned, fostering collaboration and enhancing the effectiveness of interventions. We also share our experiences through our participation in various conferences, publishing of articles and research papers in reputed journals to advance the understanding of PVE.

**Capacity strengthening:** We strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations to manage large-scale grants and implement effective initiatives, while also enhancing government capacity to develop comprehensive, holistic strategies to prevent violent extremism.