

BACKGROUND

Nigeria has faced violent insurgencies for decades, ranking 6th on the 2025 Global Terrorism Index and accounting for 6% of global terrorism deaths in 2023. Since 2007, over 11,000 people have been killed, with millions more displaced. These insurgencies, especially in the North-East, North-Central and North-West, have severely impacted Nigeria's local, state, and national socioeconomic fabric.

Nigeria was one of the first pilot countries to receive investment from GCERF in 2016, having officially become a partner country* in 2014. To date, GCERF has invested USD 13.75 million in the country, with active grants worth USD 3.5 million currently supporting two local civil society organisations (CSOs). The investment supports the active involvement of civil society organisations in the implementation of the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP/P/CVE).

GCERF pioneers a unique model of investment designed to promote a whole-of-society approach and ensure the sustainability of our programmes. Under this model, in each partner country, we support national governments in establishing a steering committee called the Country Support Mechanism (CSM).

In Nigeria, the CSM is chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA), and brings together relevant government agencies, civil society organisations, and donor representatives to provide strategic direction for the programmes, ensure results, and progressively inherit ownership of funding community-level efforts to prevent violent extremism.

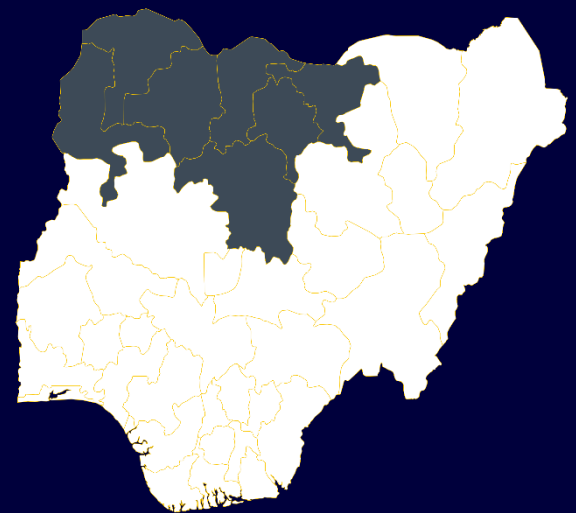
GCERF'S INVESTMENT STRATEGY IN NIGERIA

GCERF's investment strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to address the drivers of violent extremism and guides civil society organisations in designing their programmes. According to GCERF's needs assessment and consultations with relevant stakeholders, there are three main drivers of violent extremism in Nigeria:

1. Limited trust in the government, security forces, and the justice system due to exacerbated sense of marginalisation and exclusion of citizens.
2. Limited socio-economic opportunities, especially for the youth, lead to greater youth unemployment and poverty.
3. Religious conflicts: Religion in Nigeria has been politicised and can be used to manipulate and control vulnerable populations, particularly in the face of limited access to land and material resources and perceived lack of access to justice.

The primary objective of GCERF's investment is to mainstream PVE into governance and policy at the state level, community-led structures for alternative dispute resolution (ADR), community policing, and early warning systems.

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



WHERE

**Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto,
Jigawa, Kebbi, Zamfara**

WHO

- **Affected/host communities and IDP camps**
- **Rehabilitated/repentant bandits**
- **Youth (young women and men between 19 and 35)**
- **Religious, traditional, and community leaders**
- **Governance actors (Federal, State, and Local Governments, Security agencies and Justice Actors)**
- **CBO/CSO networks**
- **Women groups**
- **Secondary and tertiary students/teachers**
- **Prison authorities**

CURRENT GRANTS



IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
Principal Recipient: ActionAid International Foundation Nigeria (AAN)		Helping youth foster community resilience through radio programming, media campaigns, and community awareness events.	
Sub-recipients: Global Peace Development (GPD), Dispute Resolution and Development Initiative (DRDI-DAG)		Training traditional leaders, youth, and local authorities in alternative dispute resolution.	
		Establishing conflict early warning and management mechanisms.	
		Vocational skills training for youth employment.	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Kaduna and Kano States, Abuja, Lagos		USD 2,500,000	January 2022 – June 2025

IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
Principal Recipient: Northeast Youth Initiative For Development (NEYIF)		Creating violent extremism (VE) awareness through radio programmes and skits.	
		Creating safe spaces for women and girls.	
		Advocating P/CVE policy at the state level.	
Sub-recipient: Al-Yateem Charity Initiative		Establishing Community Action Response Teams.	
		Promoting conflict sensitivity in the media for P/CVE.	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Sokoto, Jigawa, Kebbi, Zamfara		USD 1,000,000	July 2022 – September 2025



Football match to promote friendship between young people at Cultural Peace Fiesta © ActionAid Nigeria



Monthly radio program to raise awareness on PVE, September 2024 © NEYIF

STORY OF CHANGE

THE POWER OF AWARENESS RAISING IN TRANSFORMING LIVES

Ayo (pseudonym) was a young man originally deeply entrenched in the vices of drug abuse and alcoholism in Gama Community. He destroyed properties and terrorised his community, vandalising schools, offices, and anywhere he felt he could find money to buy intoxicating substances to satisfy his desires.

Ayo was a menace until the members of the Gama community invited him to join their radio listening sessions. These sessions serve as knowledge hubs for Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), safe spaces for young people, and centres for raising awareness on social issues. The discussion resonated deeply with him, sparking his interest in learning more. He began to attend other sessions and gradually his behaviour changed and became visible.

After listening to the empowerment session, Ayo realised that financial independence was necessary to overcome his struggles. Determined to change his life, he decided to work and sell charcoal to meet his daily needs.

The change was noticed, and he was eventually hired as a security guard at the Government LEA Secondary School Gama, where the Gama Radio Listening Session is held. This opportunity not only provided him with stable employment but also allowed him to support the very community that helped him to change his life.

The Christian and Muslim religious leaders held a roundtable discussion on how to use religious messages to promote peaceful coexistence and prevent violent extremism in Kaduna and Kano states. The Interfaith Religious Dialogue serves as a platform for engagement, knowledge sharing and awareness raising on religious tolerance among community members, especially the youth. The religious leaders unanimously agreed to promote religious tolerance by educating their followers about religious and cultural diversity.

**“I am grateful to
ActionAid, GCERF,
and the SARVE III
project for coming to
our community and
changing lives.”**

Ayo (attendee of the series of sessions)



Key religious leaders and various stakeholders participated in interfaith dialogue sessions in Kaduna, June 2024 © ActionAid Nigeria

KEY RESULTS

Cumulative from 2016 to March 2025

11

grants in eight years to 24 civil-society organisations, including principal and sub-recipients

31,000

community members engaged through interfaith, intercommunity, intergenerational dialogues to foster solidarity and reject false narratives often used by violent extremist groups

12,340

trained in conflict resolution or mediation mechanisms to resolve grievances that made them vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremist groups

5,960

individuals at-risk of radicalisation received livelihood, economic or material support, undermining the economic driver of recruitment

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.



GCERF
Preventing Violent Extremism
and Terrorism

Find out more about becoming an investor, our work, and the collective impact we make at:
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