

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 with technical support by 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 recently completed grants with Northeast Youth Initiative for Development (NEYIF) in December 2025 and with ActionAid in September 2025. A new investment cycle is about to be launched based on lessons learned from the past cycle and the new investment strategy's scope and objectives.

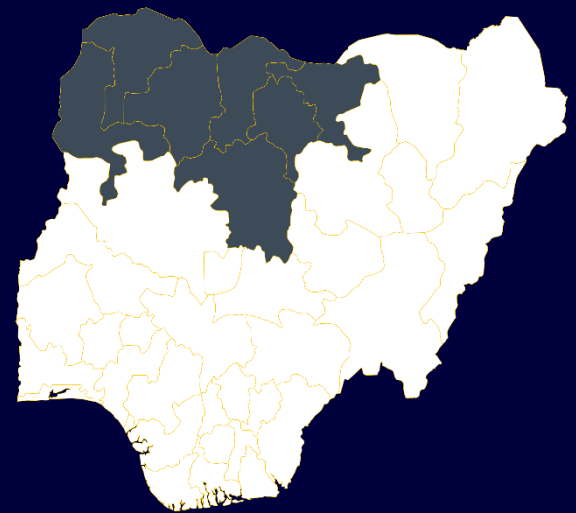
GCERF'S INVESTMENT STRATEGY IN NIGERIA

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 several drivers of violent extremism in Nigeria:

- Ideological and religious extremism
- Social, political and ethnic divisions
- Economic development and access to basic services
- Environmental degradation and natural resources scarcity
- Cross-border dynamics and regional geopolitics

The primary objectives of GCERF's investment are:

- Enhancing community resilience and preventing violent extremism by providing sustainable socio-economic opportunities to vulnerable populations
- Strengthening the institutionalisation of P/CVE through improved coordination, change management, learning, and stakeholder engagement



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**

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

STORY OF CHANGE

KNOWLEDGE HUBS STRENGTHEN COORDINATION OF PCVE EFFORTS

A coordinated effort to prevent and counter violent extremism (PCVE) in Northwest Nigeria is gaining momentum, underpinned by ongoing innovations and strengthened partnerships. The Knowledge, Innovation and Resource Hubs (KIRH), supported by GCERF funding, and implemented by ActionAid and NEYIF are spearheading initiatives that deepen local ownership, enhance inter-agency cooperation, and expand the reach of PCVE programmes across the region.

PCVE Knowledge Hub Boosts Coordination and Sustainability

Central to this evolving approach is the development of the PCVE Knowledge, Innovation, and Resource Hub (KIRH). The Hub, which includes a digital platform and knowledge repositories, aims to provide, with support from ActionAid Nigeria and NEYIF, a sustainable, community-anchored mechanism to support PCVE efforts over the long term. “The establishment of the KIRH Development Team and its coordination framework marks a significant milestone,” said a Partnership Against Violent Extremism (PAVE) Secretariat representative. “It ensures the Hub operates efficiently, remains responsive to stakeholders, and supports a structured approach to PCVE across Nigeria.” The Hub also facilitates collaboration among civil society organisations (CSOs), government agencies, and community actors, strengthening a locally driven approach. This shift aligns with growing recognition that sustainable prevention of violent extremism requires multi-stakeholder engagement and institutionalised mechanisms.

The PCVE-KIRH, supported by ActionAid Nigeria and NEYIF, is playing a key role in institutionalising PCVE through high-level advocacy visit led by Nigeria’s Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA). This includes working with seven Northwest State Governors and their representatives to strengthen PCVE networks and co-create State and Local Action Plans. Technical working groups and PAVE networks are actively involved in these efforts, supported by training and capacity-building initiatives. This regional approach aims to foster links across states for community-based prevention as well as rehabilitation, reconciliation, and reintegration. The Hub is facilitating the creation of State and Local Action Plans, developed jointly by state governments and civil society.

This co-creation process strengthens local governance structures and ensures interventions respond to communities’ specific needs.

Facilitating Regional Expansion and Collaboration

With its coordination mechanisms firmly in place, the KIRH is supporting the planned expansion of PCVE programmes into neighbouring states such as Jigawa, Kebbi, and Zamfara. By enabling real-time data sharing and strategic alignment, the platform helps partners adapt interventions to local contexts while maintaining a consistent regional approach. The Hub’s support extends beyond digital tools, offering capacity-building and advocacy support through established networks like the PAVE and engagement with the ONSA.

Driving Policy Influence

The PCVE KIRH is playing a key role in translating community-level insights into policy action. Through multistakeholder technical working groups and high-level advocacy, the Hub is contributing to the domestication of Nigeria’s national PCVE policy framework across several states. Its growing influence beyond the Northwest reflects the platform’s potential to serve as a model for PCVE coordination and knowledge exchange nationwide.

By integrating technology, local expertise, and collaborative governance, the PCVE KIRH is fostering a more coordinated, sustainable, and community-rooted response to violent extremism in Nigeria’s Northwest.



PCVE-KIRH hosting Training of Trainers to validate review of Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PF-NAP) across Nigeria © ActionAid Nigeria

KEY RESULTS

Cumulative from 2016 to June 2025

11

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

6,750

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

3,110

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

2,260

individuals at-risk of radicalisation trained in conflict resolution or mediation mechanisms to resolve grievances that make them vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremist groups

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.