

BACKGROUND

For years, the Philippines have struggled with violent extremist and separatist groups in the south of the country. A long-running movement for independence led to the formation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) following peace talks and negotiations between the central government and separatist groups. While this is a step forward for peace, violent extremist groups, including local groups inspired by ISIS, continue to operate and recruit members.

The Philippines became a GCERF partner country* in 2018. To date, GCERF has invested USD 10.1 million in the country. USD 4.8 million active grants are currently supporting six 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 – Philippines (NAP P/CVE-Philippines).

GCERF pioneers a unique model of investment designed to promote a whole-of-society approach and to 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 the Philippines, the CSM is chaired by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) 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 THE PHILIPPINES

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 the Philippines:

1. Frustration with the government
2. Cultural and geographical divide among tri-people communities
3. Socio-economic vulnerability due to lack of literacy, economic opportunity and sense of purpose



WHERE

- Manila
- Mindanao (Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao, Sulu, Cotabato, South Cotabato, Basilan, and Sarangani)

WHO

- Children outside or at risk of dropping out of school (14–18)
- Un- or under-employed Youth (young women and men between 19 and 35)
- Religious, Indigenous and Community Leaders (male and female)
- Governance Actors (Local Authorities, Security and Justice Actors, male and female)

*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	
Principal Recipient: Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society (CBCS) Sub-recipients: IMAN, KFPDAI, GMWI, TFI, LCRWOI		Local governance stakeholders and the private sector have collaborated for strengthening community development, good governance, and peaceful settlement of grievances at the Barangay level in BARMM. Community stakeholders have improved capacities and access to opportunities adopted relevant skills for economic opportunities for livelihoods improvement.	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Cotabato BARMM-SGA, Maguindanao, Tawi Tawi, Sulu, Basilan		USD 998,179	January 2023 – December 2025

IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
Principal Recipient: Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID) Sub-recipients: UNYPAD, KFI, TLWOI, BALAOD		Affected communities have improved knowledge and capabilities for peaceful conflict resolution, community participation, advocacy and claims, and peacebuilding. Civil society groups have increased collaboration for advocacy on community priorities' agenda. Local and national state authorities integrate community solutions and proposals to its peace policies, mechanisms and programs.	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Maguindanao, North Cotabato, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Metro Manila		USD 998,000	January 2023 – December 2025






IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
Principal Recipient: Mahintana Foundation, Inc (MFI) Sub-recipients: Kasilak, OND, MDFI, TLDFI		Tri-people have increased participation in local governance (including education) and peace promotion actions Governmental bodies (LGUs, Councils and Security Forces) have increased understanding of culture of peace. Vulnerable communities have increased access to livelihoods support and skills Sensitise security actors about R&R and coordinate R&R and PVE efforts	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Banga and Tupi, Lake Sebu and Klamba, Tboli, Alabel and Malapatan, Polomolok		USD 998,000	January 2023 – December 2025






IMPLEMENTED BY		PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
Principal Recipient: Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy, Inc. (PCID) Sub-recipients: CLRG		Local Knowledge Partner Mapping and capacity building on data management Third-Party Monitoring exercises and evaluations Research generation for policy and practice	
AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		\$ GRANT AMOUNT	PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Manila, Mindanao		USD 363,889	January 2024 – September 2026

CURRENT GRANTS



 IMPLEMENTED BY		 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p>Principal Recipient: Teach Peace Build Peace Movement (TPBPM)</p> <p>Sub-recipients: AMYL, GYAO</p>		<p>Security forces and local authorities have improved capacity on inclusive governance and leadership, conflict transformation and peaceful communication</p> <p>Education stakeholders and institutions adopt peace education strategies and are re-accredited to the Department of Education</p> <p>Socio-economically disadvantaged groups have access to, and adopt peaceful transitional justice solutions</p>	
 AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Lanao del Sur, Metro Manila, Maguindanao		USD 700,000	January 2023 – December 2025

 IMPLEMENTED BY		 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p>Principal Recipient: Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services (IDEALS), Inc.</p> <p>Sub-recipients: Ateneo de Davao University – Madaris Volunteer Program, Magungaya Mindanao Incorporated (MMI), Al Mujadilah Development Foundation (AMDF)</p>		<p>Communities inside and outside BARMM have increased awareness of peace-oriented Bangsamoro narratives</p> <p>Young people inside and outside BARMM have increased engagement in peace and non-violence initiatives</p> <p>Community actors (businesses and individual youth) in BARMM improve leadership skills by utilizing skills and leveraging partnerships</p> <p>Bangsamoro communities in selected conflict-affected and GIDA areas in BARMM have increased access to platforms to voice PVE and post-conflict concerns to duty bearers</p>	
 AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION		 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT
BARMM Island Provinces (Lanao, Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan), Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, and Metro Davao		USD 893,288	July 2023 – December 2025

 IMPLEMENTED BY		 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p>Principal Recipient: Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Inc. (ECOWEB)</p> <p>Sub-recipients: Iligan City Confederation of Madaris and Maahad Associations (ICOMMAS), Senator Ninoy Aquino College Foundation, Inc. (SNACFI), Thuma Ko Kapaginged Service Inc. (THUMA)</p>		<p>Vulnerable Bangsamoro youth and local community members outside BARMM have increased skills and livelihood opportunities</p> <p>Identified Torils and Madrasahs outside BARMM have improved access to resources and technical support to meet Department of Education standards</p>	
 AREA OF IMPLEMENTATION		 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Iligan City		USD 561,812.00	August 2023 – December 2025

STORY OF CHANGE

An Ustad's Path To Peace Education

In a world where education plays a critical role in shaping future generations, Madaris teachers stand at the forefront of guiding young minds toward peace and PVE. Ustad Mohammad Jabir Madale, one such teacher, reflects on his transformative experience during the Peace Education Leadership Formation Course for Educators (PELFC) of Teach Peace Build Peace Movement, emphasizing the importance of integrating Islamic teachings with peace education in schools and communities. Before attending the formation course, Ustad Madale had dedicated his life to Islamic education, teaching children the values of Islam in madaris (plural form of madrasah). However, despite his efforts, he felt there was a missing element in his teachings—something that could better equip him to guide students in the modern world. Learning Non-Violent Communication and Peaceable Discipline during the training, Ustad Madale experienced a profound shift in how he viewed his role as a teacher. One of the key learnings was the art of non-violent communication, which deeply resonated with him.

He reflected on how, as teachers, they often resort to shouting or stern discipline to maintain order in the classroom. The course introduced him to peaceable discipline—a method that promotes peace and respect without the need for harsh measures. "Through what I've learned, we can now implement peaceful discipline without raising our voices. This is a huge help for us ustads and teachers in the madrasah," he shared.

He now saw discipline not as a way to exert control but as an opportunity to nurture understanding and empathy in his students. Another valuable lesson he gained from the PELFC was the importance of raising peaceful children. He learned that children, when taught to cultivate inner peace from a young age, would grow into adults who could resist the pull of violent extremism. This concept aligned with the Islamic teachings of compassion and respect, which he had always instilled in his students. Now, he had a more structured and effective way to impart these values.

Ustad Madale returned to his madrasah with renewed purpose. "I will start by introducing these concepts during our orientations," he said, eager to share the knowledge with fellow teachers and students alike. He believed that by educating children early on about non-violent communication and peaceable discipline, he could help them grow into peace advocates themselves. He saw the need to involve parents and local leaders in these efforts. "One of the first things I'll do is share these learnings with our community, to work together in guiding our youth," he expressed, acknowledging that preventing violent extremism requires a united front.

"Through what I've learned, we can now implement peaceful discipline without raising our voices. This is a huge help for us ustads and teachers in the madrasah"

Ustad Mohammad Jabir Madale



KEY RESULTS

Cumulative from 2019 till April 2025

16

grants in six years to 50 civil-society organisations, including principal and sub-recipients

2,550

Marawi IDPs and community members were engaged in legal awareness, dispute resolution, and dialogue efforts that strengthened their access to justice, support claims processes, and promote peaceful conflict resolution at the community level

8,700

individuals including farmers, small and medium enterprises and madrasah-based organisations benefited from livelihood support, skills training, and market access initiatives, strengthening economic resilience and reducing vulnerability to violent extremism

14,500

mentors, teachers, parents, journalists, government authorities, religious leaders, returnees, women and youth have been trained in conflict sensitivity, conflict resolution and detecting early signs of radicalisation

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.