

FROM POTENTIAL PRINCIPAL RECIPIENTS OF GCERF FUNDING IN THE PHILIPPINES

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 20 September, 2025 – 06:00 AM (Philippines Standard Time)/19 September, 2025 – 11:59 PM (Central European Time)

Background:

The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) was established in 2014 to support efforts to prevent violent extremism. GCERF is a global fund, hosted by Switzerland, that supports local, community-level initiatives that address the drivers of violent extremism and strengthen resilience against violent extremist agendas. Learn more at <https://www.gcerf.org>.

The Philippines became a GCERF partner country in 2018 at the request of the Government of the Philippines, with a focus on prevention and the vital role of local communities. Since 2019, GCERF has supported grants that addressed the drivers of violent extremism in various contexts, with the following interventions and achievements to date:

- **2019–2022 (First Investment Cycle):** Prioritised tolerance, community agency, positive alternatives, critical thinking, and life skills. Targeted youth, their support networks, and social media users vulnerable to radicalisation. Geographic focus: Mindanao and Metro Manila. Investment: USD 4.5M in 9 grants, supporting 26 CSOs and reaching over 200,000 direct beneficiaries.
- **2023–2025 (Second Investment Cycle):** Prioritised inclusive governance, livelihoods, transitional justice, and Madaris integration, with peace education and strategic communications as cross-cutting areas. Targeted out-of-school children, unemployed/underemployed youth, religious/indigenous/community leaders, and governance actors. Geographic focus: Mindanao and Metro Manila. Investment: USD 5.5M in 7 grants, supporting 24 CSOs.

These investments have strengthened local partnerships, increased access to livelihoods, expanded community-based transitional justice, improved peace education, and enhanced CSO–LGU coordination.

Call for the Third Investment Cycle 2026 – 2028

The purpose of this Expression of Interest (EOI) is for applicants to demonstrate that they meet GCERF's prerequisites to receive funding and that they have sufficient technical, managerial and administrative experience to effectively implement a project that will seek to address the issues outlined below. Received application forms will be evaluated against standardised criteria and applicants will be duly informed whether their proposed projects will move to the

next stage of evaluation, which will include working with GCERF to add further detail to project design and budget.

WHAT:

GCERF's third round of investment in the Philippines from 2026 to 2028 will build on previous programming to deepen impact and ensure sustainability. Grounded in national frameworks such as the National Action Plan (NAP) on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, GCERF is now calling for proposals to implement the following objectives:

- I. To support community-based rehabilitation for returnees and for the victims of violent extremist groups and their families, including access to mental health support services
- II. To increase access to economic opportunities for people from vulnerable or marginalised communities
- III. To enhance access to credible and transparent transitional justice mechanisms
- IV. To support female leadership in PVE

Peace education and improving local governance will be included as cross-cutting activities. Local governance partners must be engaged from the earliest stage of grant design to ensure alignment with local development plans and sustainability.

Special Call: AI for Preventing Violent Extremism

GCERF is also launching a call for a special project to harness artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced digital tools in PVE. This stream seeks projects that:

- Ensure sustainability of PVE interventions through innovation and expansion – using AI to scale and maintain PVE interventions
- Deliver direct community benefits – AI-enabled early warning systems, personalised peace education, or livelihood matching platforms.
- Combine research with service delivery – data analysis must be linked to tangible, on-the-ground impact.
- Uphold ethical, inclusive AI practices – protecting privacy, security, and equality.
- Examples:
 - AI-driven monitoring of extremist narratives connected to trained response teams.
 - Predictive analytics for hotspot identification and targeted prevention.
 - Digital platforms combining AI with peace education and skills training.

Applicants must show both technical AI expertise and relevant PVE programming experience.

WHO

Target populations may include:

- Returnees, former fighters, and their families.
- Out-of-school or at-risk youth (14–18).

- Un- or under-employed youth (19–35).
- Religious, Indigenous, and community leaders.
- Governance actors (local authorities, security, and justice sectors).

WHERE

BARMM: Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao del Norte, Maguindanao del Sur, Special Geographic Area (North Cotabato), Sulu

Non-BARMM: Iligan City, Lanao del Norte, Sarangani, South Cotabato

Grant Size and Duration

- Duration: 36 months.
- Main thematic areas: Up to four grants, each valued at USD 1 Million.
- AI special project: Separate allocation of up to USD 100,000 based on proposal scope.

Eligibility

For this call, GCERF will only accept applications from organisations intending to serve as a Principal Recipient (PR) leading a consortium. Consortium grants are managed by **Principal Recipients (PRs)**, who are the legal recipients of GCERF funding and who then disburse funds and provide technical and administrative support to **Sub-Recipients (SRs)**. The PR will be responsible for overall grant management, financial oversight, coordination, and technical support to all Sub-Recipients.

PREREQUISITES and REQUIRED CAPACITIES:
1. Appropriate registration as an NGO in accordance with Philippine laws
2. Experience in managing and accounting for donor-funded projects
3. Capacity to manage a consortium
4. Established relationships and credibility with the communities and population groups identified in the proposed geographical locations
5. Previous experience and current capacity to deliver community-level initiatives that address the local drivers and strengthen resilience against violent extremism
6. For previous GCERF grantees: Performance in past GCERF-funded projects will be assessed, including delivery against objectives, financial compliance, reporting timeliness, and partnership management. Poor past performance may disqualify applicants.

For AI proposals: Applicant can be a Direct Grantee without leading a consortium. Applicant must establish AI/digital innovation capacity or partnerships with qualified providers, plus service delivery track record.

Submission Instructions

Submit EOIs to call.philippines@gcerf.org by **20 September, 2025 (Philippines Standard Time)/19 September, 2025 – 11:59 PM (Central European Time)** with the subject line: “*EOI Philippines*”. **Please ensure that your application includes the following documents (provided in attachment to this EOI):**

1. Annex A – Application Form
2. Annex B – Theory of Change
3. Annex C – Budget Outline
4. Last audited financial statements for 2023 and 2024

Applications must be submitted in English. Annexes will be provided in English only. Lack of any of the four required documents may disqualify the applicant. Shortlisted applicants will be contacted to take part in a due diligence assessment. All other applicants will be informed of their results.

Please also refer to the Philippines Country Investment Strategy 2026–2028 provided in attachment.

Information Session

An online information session will be held on **28 August, 2025 at 3.00 pm Philippines Standard Time/9.00 am Central European Time**. To register and for any questions, please email call.philippines@gcerf.org.