

GCERF in Albania

GCERF partners **build the capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors** in the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) and rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R); provide **direct assistance to returnees** from conflict zones covering medical, psycho-social, educational, administrative and livelihood support; contribute to **reducing the stigmatisation of returnees** and promote inter-religious tolerance and social cohesion.

Portfolio overview as of February 2024

Active grants

Counselling Line for Women and Girls (CLWG)

2021-2024 | Principal Recipient with 3 sub-recipients

- ❖ Building the capacity of religious leaders on PVE and social cohesion; operating a counselling line for violent extremism related issues; providing psycho-social, educational and livelihood support to returnees; building women's capacity on PVE.

Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM)

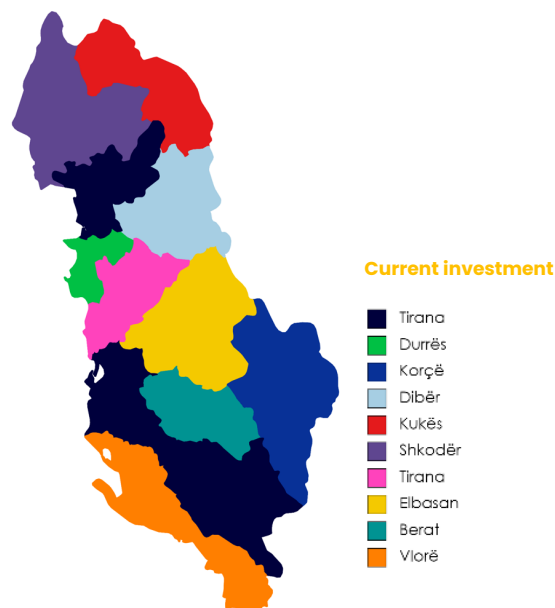
2021-23 | Principal Recipient with 2 sub-recipients

- ❖ Developing guidelines for and building capacities of central and local institutions on PVE and R&R; organising community events to reduce the stigma of returnees and improve social cohesion; providing livelihood support.

Terre des Hommes Albania

2020-23 | Principal Recipient with 1 sub-recipient


- ❖ Building the capacities of frontline practitioners in trauma-informed care; providing direct support to RFTFs and families; empowering and improving social cohesion among youth.





Investment started: 2020
Investment to date: USD 2 million
Current investment: USD 2 million
Active grants: 3


Investment Focus

 Community-based rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees

 Tirana, Durrës, Korçë, Dibër, Kukës, Shkodër, Elbasan, Berat, Vlorë

 Returnees from conflict zones; women, men, and children in receiving communities; frontline workers, local authorities, and other R&R actors, religious leaders.

 2020-2024

 In coordination with the Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism and local government actors.



Violent Extremism in Albania: Drivers

Returnees from foreign conflict zones:

Over 70 people returned to Albania from foreign conflicts, particularly from Syria and Iraq.

Post and pre-conflict context:

Political instability and inadequate reconciliation caused by previous conflicts have polarised communities along ethnic, religious, and cultural lines.

Socio-economic drivers:

High unemployment, limited trust in institutions, and established crime networks contribute to violent extremist narratives.

89th

On the Global Terrorism Index 2024.

Current Programming: Systems Approach

National: Supporting the revision of the National Strategy and development of an Action Plan on R&R and PCVE; developing the Standard Operating Procedures on R&R; building the capacity of central level R&R actors.

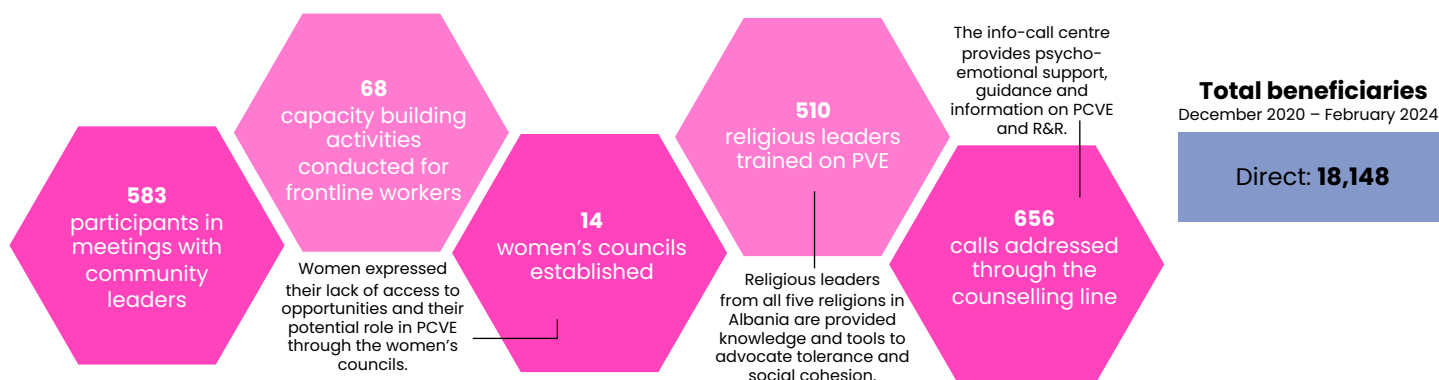
Municipality: Developing guidelines for local authorities for R&R and building capacity.

Community: Reducing the stigmatisation of returnees; increasing inter-religious tolerance; building capacity of women on R&R; providing access to a free counselling line for PVE and R&R related issues.

Individual: Providing direct support to returnees and vulnerable people including medical, psycho-social, educational, administrative and livelihood support.

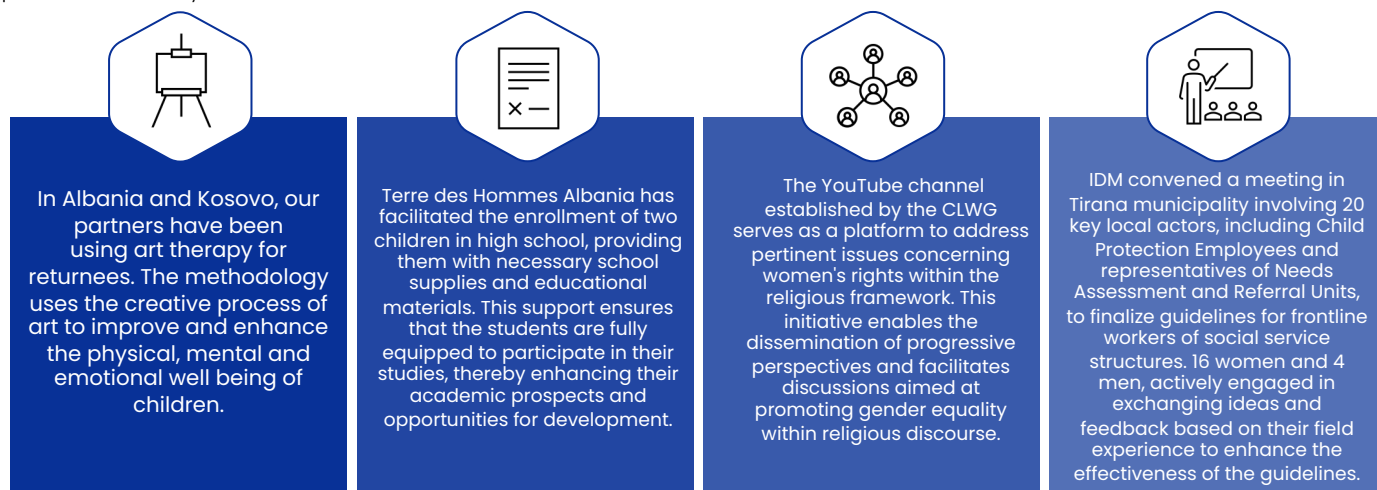
Key Outputs*

* December 2020 – February 2024



Key achievements*

* September 2023 – February 2024



The anonymous reporting [website](#) is available to the public and offers information to promote the info-call available to the public with violent extremism queries. Monthly content has been posted regularly according to the work plan. It used CLWG social media accounts to disseminate information and offer support on issues relevant to the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism.

Story of Change



Orsjola A. Miha, a psychologist at the "Kongresi i Manastirit" school, was one of the 15 participants in the IDM training program "Identification, Treatment, and Prevention of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in pre-university educational institutions," licensed by the Order of Psychologists in the Republic of Albania, with 4 credits. As a school psychologist, she emphasizes the importance of ongoing training to effectively manage new challenges, particularly in identifying early signs of violent extremism. She highlights the significance of endorsement from both the CVE Center and licensing institutions for such training programs, recognizing the value they add to psychologists' professional development in this field.

Effective management of cases involving children in need of protection requires the establishment of an integrated system, where all institutional components and civil society elements work together to develop and implement individualized protection plans. Empirical evidence from handling mothers and children returning from conflict zones highlights the importance of seamless integration between institutions and civil society entities.

Ms. Jonita Kabashi, Head of Sector at the Child Protection Unit in the Municipality of Tirana, emphasizes the significance of this collaborative approach, which is evident in specific cases and family units.

Terres Des Hommes: Amina's journey from a Syrian refugee camp to pursuing her passion for painting in Albania is a testament to resilience and determination. Despite the challenges she faced, including the loss of her father at a young age and the uncertainty of repatriating to Albania, Amina's story took a positive turn. Initially struggling with anxiety and insecurity stemming from her traumatic past, Amina found it difficult to envision a future that included education and integration into Albanian society. However, with the assistance of TDH's psychological services and GCERF's financial support, Amina and her siblings regained stability and hope for a brighter future. Enrolling in high school and pursuing her passion for painting marked a significant turning point for Amina. Despite initial concerns about cultural norms and religious beliefs, Amina found the courage to embrace her talent and pursue her dreams, thanks to the support of her family, teachers, and the psychological services provided by TDH.

"If someone would have told me during the dark days of my life while living in one of the Syrian camps that today I would be studying painting, just like my peers, I would have said in very affirmative way: this cannot be my story."

What are Amina's expectations for her life with this new chapter, full of self-confidence and a desire to live?

"I imagine myself at the Academy of Arts in a few years. But above all, I am happy with the fact that my life has taken a new journey, and I will serve as a positive role model for my siblings. Who knows, maybe one of them will have a similar talent and can follow in my footsteps. The path has already been opened."

GCERF's Added Value



GCERF focuses on **building institutional capacity** e.g., CSOs, and government agencies.



GCERF invests in building a PVE-focused **community of practice** with CSOs, government agencies, and experts



Communities are at the **forefront of project design and implementation**, and the programme works with existing community structures for sustainability



All project design and implementation are done in coordination with **nationally-aligned, locally-led** programmes



GCERF connects CSOs, communities, and other stakeholders with government and security actors, leading to **better coordination** and relationships



GCERF's consortium model and capacity-building approach enables us to work in **remote areas**