GCERF in Kosovo

GCERF partners build the capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors of Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) and Rehabilitation and Reintegration (R&R); provide direct assistance to returnees from conflict zones covering psycho-social, educational, and livelihood support; contribute to reducing stigmatization of returnees and promote inter-ethnic tolerance and social cohesion.

Portfolio overview as of January 2023

**Active grants**

**Advocacy Training and Resource Centre (ATRC)**

2021-22 | Principal Recipient with 3 sub-recipients

- Build capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors in R&R and PVE
- Support the implementation and monitoring of the national strategy for PCVE and CT
- Coordination of PVE and R&R relevant stakeholders
- Awareness Raising on R&R processes
- Improvement of media coverage on PVE and R&R

2023-24 | Principal Recipient with 1 sub-recipient

- Build capacity of local P/CVE and R&R stakeholders including government institutions and actors, CSOs, youth.
- Support the R&R of returnees and their families.

**Community Development Fund (CDF)**

2021-2023 | Principal Recipient with 1 sub-recipients

- Trauma-informed educational and recreational support for children
- Capacity building of frontline workers and partners
- Livelihood support for returnees and vulnerable people

Investment started: 2017
Investment to date: USD 4 million
Current investment: USD 2.4 million
Active grants: 3

**Investment Focus**

Community-based rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees

Ferizaj, Gjakova, Gjilan, Mitrovica, Peja, Pristina, Prizren

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

2017-2024

Ministry of Internal Affairs’ Prevention and Reintegration Division (DPR)

Violent Extremism in Kosovo: Drivers

- **Returnees from foreign conflict zones:**
  Over 250 people returned to Kosovo 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.
Current Programming: Systems Approach

**National**: Monitoring of the National PVE and CT strategy and improve accountability and financial sustainability of PCVE and R&R work; Build capacity and support coordination of PCVE and R&R actors;

**Municipality**: Build capacity of local governmental R&R actors; advocate for the local role in PVE and R&R; improve accountability and financial sustainability of their PCVE and R&R work;

**Community**: Reduce stigmatisation towards returnees; Increase inter-ethnic tolerance; Build capacity of community based CSOs in PVE and R&R; improve capacity and civic engagement of youth.

**Individual**: provide direct support to returnees and vulnerable people including psycho-social, educational and livelihood support.

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**Key Outputs**

- **January 2021 – December 2022**

  - **37** Returnee children took part in trauma processing sessions, and educational and recreational activities.
  - **28** Media representatives trained on sensitive reporting on PVE and R&R.
  - **100** youth leaders trained on implementing community activities at home.
  - **138** parents or caregivers trained on positive parenting and pedagogical skills.
  - **45** small-scale grants for self-employment and income-generating activities delivered.

**Total beneficiaries**

- **Direct: 74,807**
- **Indirect: 1.2 m**

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**Key achievements**

- **October 2021 – March 2022**

  - GCERF partners use art therapy for returnees. The methodology uses the creative process of art to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of children. In Kosovo, our partners support 37 returnee children in trauma processing.
  - Under the leadership of the Prevention and Reintegration Division, GCERF partners were part of the working group drafting the new strategy and action plan on PVE and R&R. The working group enables them to provide meaningful feedback on the documents, ensuring a civil society perspective is included.
  - GCERF partner CDF set up a partnership with the University of Pristina and the Government of Kosovo in order to provide a Training of Trainers for frontline workers on trauma-informed care for returnees that is certified through the University of Pristina.

**ATRC’s partner Birn developed social media guidelines for the 10 key municipalities involved in R&R work (Gjilan, Ferizaj, Komenica, Viti, Kacanik, Hani Elezit, Shtime, Lipjan, Obiliq and Drenas) setting out communication principles on informing the public on the R&R process and the results of their work.**

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**I have learned more about citizenship, volunteer work and its benefits. I have also learned about my role in society and how we can identify social problems and what initiatives we should take to address them.**

- S.P., 18 years old, Pristina region Youth workshops organized by PEN, March 2022
Story of Change

Zara*, a 31-year-old mother of five seems happy to meet. She says she used to be shy and uncomfortable around new people, but now that has changed. For the past year, Zara has been part of GCERF-funded activities in Kosovo organised by the Community Development Fund (CDF) Consortium and with coordination and support from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. CDF Consortium activities focus on community-based rehabilitation, reintegration, and re-socialisation (RRR) of returnees from conflicts abroad and their families.

The first activity Zara participated in was vocational training offered by CDF. Together with 18 other women, both returnees and women from vulnerable communities, Zara participated in sewing courses in Pristina. “I have grown professionally, and my communication has improved,” Zara says. “We discuss a lot, but we also laugh a lot.” Through a small-scale grant, she received a sewing machine and iron to complete a sewing course. In the coming year, CDF aims to provide Zara with market linkages to allow her to take the next steps in becoming a sewing professional.

A doting mother, she shares how her children are experiencing the RRR process. Despite the challenges, reintegration, the re-socialisation of Zara and her children in the community seems promising. “Children play happily with other children and the neighbours seem to be extra caring with them. They imagine all the bad things we have been through,” she says, with a determined smile. Zara appears confident about the future. Through GCERF-supported activities implemented by CDF, Zara has been able to acquire new skills and prioritise her children's education and future. She has a newfound interest in traveling around Kosovo and understand the small country that welcomed her back better.

Through the civic education school, CBM encourages youth to become active participants in their communities not just through weekly classes but also through community activities.

“I am trying to contribute to our community with all the skills that I have gained through this programme. [...] we learned how to address our needs and issues, how to resolve issues and how to stand up for ourselves and our rights”

— Genta Morina, 18, participant of the civic education school in Mitrovica (CBM)

GCERF’s Added Value

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

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

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

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

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

GCERF’s consortium model and capacity-building approach enables us to work in across the country

Find out more about becoming an investor, our work, and the collective impact we make at: www.gcerf.org contact wb@gcerf.org