



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL – RFP-2025-08 – Sri Lanka end of country evaluation

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## About GCERF

The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) is a global fund based in Geneva providing grants for national organisations to prevent violent extremism. It signed a Headquarters Agreement with the Swiss government in May 2015, providing it with privileges and immunities in Switzerland.

GCERF is the first global effort to support local, community-level initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremist agendas. As a public-private partnership operating at the nexus of security and development, GCERF works in partnership and consultation with governments, civil society, and the private sector in beneficiary countries to support national strategies to address the local drivers of violent extremism.

GCERF provides support to community-level initiatives that: seek to address locally specific drivers of radicalisation; provide tangible, positive alternatives to what violent extremist groups may offer; counter violent extremist narratives and messaging; and build capacity of governments and civil society to counter violent extremism.

## Description of Services

### Background

GCERF partnered with key stakeholders in Sri Lanka in 2019, following the Easter Sunday suicide attacks that killed more than 250 people and exacerbated long-standing ethnic and religious tensions. To date, GCERF has invested approximately USD 1.8 million in the country through an Accelerated Funding Mechanism (AFM) grant that has channelled support to thirteen local civil-society organisations across six districts (Ampara, Batticaloa, Colombo, Kalutara, Kandy and Kurunegala).

The implementation of the AFM model and funding of local CSOs through the main national partner, HELVETAS, resulted in the roll-out of prevention initiatives between 2021 and 2025, to empower youth who are unemployed, in secondary or tertiary education, or otherwise disenfranchised, to resist recruitment by violent extremist groups. Across these different ethnic and religious communities, the programme aimed to promote social cohesion, provided economic and vocational opportunities, and tried to strengthen a sense of purpose among young people. A key principle of the investment was to promote national ownership, which was integrated at the outset of the programme: the Accelerated Funding Panel, chaired by Sri Lanka's Government and comprising key government agencies, civil society and donors, steers the strategy and was expected to assume full responsibility for sustaining community level PVE efforts when GCERF funding concludes in December 2025.

### Objective

The overarching objective of the evaluation is to inform implementing partners, GCERF and government stakeholders of the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of community-based PVE activities implemented between 2020 and 2025.

The evaluation is expected to be sequenced with two interconnected stages. Stage 1 is an exercise to reach an evaluative judgement of GCERF's funded programmes using an adapted form of OECD/DAC criteria. Stage 2 is a realist assessment (context, mechanisms, outcome) of mixed programme results in different targeted districts.

Specifically, the evaluation is intended to:

**1<sup>st</sup> Exercise: Evaluation using an adapted OECD criteria**

*Relevance*

1. To what extent did GCERF-funded interventions in the selected districts respond to the needs, perceptions and priorities of primary target groups, in particular diverse youth and youth influencers, in communities affected by ethnic and religious tension and hate speech?
2. To what extent were programme designs informed by and sensitive to Sri Lanka's cultural, ethnic, religious, gender and language dynamics, as well as the political economy and institutional capacities at district and community level?
3. Were activities designed in an inclusive and equitable manner that reflected diverse perspectives of youth, religious leaders, women and men, local authorities, and community-based organisations? Who was involved in programme and sub grant design at national, district and community level?
4. Did the portfolio remain contextually relevant over time in light of evolving PVE risks, post-COVID, and wider political changes in Sri Lanka? To what extent were activities adapted in response to new trends in inter communal relations, online hate speech and emerging youth vulnerabilities?

*Coherence*

1. To what extent were GCERF programmes aligned with the emerging national approaches to youth engagement, social cohesion, and reconciliation?
2. Were programmes consistent with and clearly guided by the GCERF Country Investment Strategy for Sri Lanka, including its focus on youth resilience, social cohesion and sense of purpose in the priority districts?
3. To what extent did GCERF-funded activities complement, and avoid duplication with, other PVE, peacebuilding, and reconciliation initiatives supported by government, UN agencies, and bilateral donors in the same districts? How effectively did the principal recipient (HELVETAS) and sub-grantees coordinate with these actors?

*Effectiveness*

1. To what extent did the programme achieve its intended outputs and outcomes as articulated in the Sri Lanka investment strategy, particularly regarding enhanced social cohesion and a stronger sense of purpose and critical thinking among youth?
2. What is the significance of the achieved results when compared with the baseline and midline assessments? Which types of interventions (dialogue, youth leadership, media literacy, role model engagement, etc.) appear most and least effective?
3. How effective was the implementation of the Accelerated Funding Mechanism itself in Sri Lanka under the guidance of the GCERF and national stakeholders, including the speed and quality of grant making, responsiveness to local actors and ability to navigate the socio-political complexity to deliver on its mandate.
4. How did sub-recipients perceive HELVETAS's technical, administrative, and relational support, in the implementation of programme activities? Did this support enable them to deliver effective PVE programming?

### *Efficiency*

1. Were the implementation of activities and the achievement of results economically efficient, considering the Sri Lankan context?
2. To what extent were human and financial resources used as planned in an appropriate and optimised way at PR and SR levels, including for coordination and capacity strengthening?
3. How cost-efficient was the overall management model, including the PR's management of multiple SR and its coordination with the AFP, HQ Secretariat of the PR, and other stakeholders? Are there alternative models that could have delivered similar or better results at lower cost?
4. To what extent were GCERF-funded programmes timely in their key steps and milestones, including from expression of interest to first disbursement, from grant signature to activity launch and in the delivery of planned outputs within the funding period? Where were delays most significant and why?

### *Impact*

1. Did the implementation of programmes contribute to changes in preventing violent extremism in targeted communities, for example, through reduced acceptance of hate speech and violence, improved inter-religious and inter-ethnic relations, or strengthened youth engagement in constructive civic roles?
2. To what extent were programmes transformative, in the sense of contributing to enduring changes in social norms, including gender norms, narratives about "the other", and patterns of interaction between youth, religious leaders and authorities, whether intended or not?
3. What positive and negative unintended outcomes emerged from GCERF-funded work, including any risk of backlash, stigmatisation of specific communities, political instrumentalization or increased exposure of youth? How were these managed?
4. To what extent are the changes produced by interventions replicable and scalable to other districts in Sri Lanka, or to future GCERF investments including any transition from AFM to core funding, and what adaptations would be required?

### *Sustainability*

1. Did GCERF-funded programmes strengthen community-level structures, relationships, and capacities that can promote ownership and continuity of PVE efforts once funding ends, particularly among youth groups, SRs, and local authorities in the priority districts?
2. What is the likelihood that key mechanisms which produced positive changes under the portfolio for example youth led dialogue spaces, inter school activities, online content networks, trusted intermediaries will be maintained or further developed after the end of GCERF funding?
3. What potential risks and costs are associated with programme results over time, including changes in the political environment, civic space, security responses or donor funding patterns, and how might these affect the durability of outcomes and the safety of partners and participants?

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Exercise: Realist assessment case study

Sri Lanka is the second country where the AFM model was implemented, but the results in various targeted districts have been mixed. Given the changes in context during the implementation period, GCERF aims to better understand the mechanisms produced by context and how this may have facilitated or inhibited the achievement of outcomes via a realist assessment. The analysis will result in context-mechanism-outcome model(s) (CMO) for at least each district, explaining these connections.

The final analysis should compare all GCERF targeted districts to unpack the CMO configurations that help to explain the differences in why the AFM model produced stronger results in some districts, and why it under-delivered or produced mixed results in others. The report should also reflect on the ways in which the investment model and in-country arrangements should be adapted in the future to allow flexibility and safeguards in order to improve performance in the rollout of similar programmes under this model.

### Expected Deliverables

At the completion of the entire evaluation process, the following deliverables are expected to be achieved:

1. An inception report which details methodology, including data collection strategy, work plan, and a tentative list of participants to be contacted.
2. Tools for data collection, including those for the phase 2 assessment.
3. Raw data collected, both quantitative and qualitative
4. Draft and final reports in English, covering both exercises.
5. A two-pager summary on the evaluation purpose and key findings
6. One-day dissemination session for GCERF and partners on evaluation findings.

It is expected that the achievement of deliverables follows the timelines below:

| Task/output  | Suggested timeframe |
|--|---------------------|
| a. Award of Contract   | January 29, 2026    |
| b. Inception Report (5-10 pages)   | February 06, 2026   |
| c. Tools for data collection   | February 11, 2026   |
| d. Raw data collected  | February 27, 2026   |
| d. First Draft of the Report (both assessments) (15-30 pages, excluding annexes) | March 21, 2026      |
| e. Final draft of the Report (20 - 30 pages, excluding annexes)                  | April 21, 2026      |
| f. A two-pager summary on the evaluation purpose and key findings                | April 21, 2026      |
| f. A 1-day dissemination session on the evaluation findings                      | April 28, 2026      |

### Characteristics of the provider

GCERF is seeking to commission a service provider with demonstrated expertise in PCVE as well as excellent evaluation skills.

Bidders should have the following competencies:

- Experience and expertise in Evaluation, especially on P/CVE programmes.

- Thorough understanding of the sensitivities of P/CVE work in the context of Sri Lanka.
- Availability to start the work as soon as the contract is signed.
- Experience in conducting realist assessments will be considered a distinct asset.
- Both local and international organisations are eligible to apply.

The preferred bidder is a recognised, credible institution or company with extensive experience on Evaluation and P/CVE.

**Bidders without prior experience on P/CVE and Evaluation need not apply.**

Its staffing levels, qualifications and expertise should be appropriate to be able to provide timely and high quality services to GCERF. The provider should demonstrate a high degree of commitment to good customer service and willingness to listen to the ideas and priorities of GCERF.

The fees charged should be reasonable, competitive and related to services rendered to the extent possible. The provider must comply with all applicable laws and regulations. It should adhere to a strict confidentiality policy regarding client information. The provider should also abide to the following:

**Submission of proposals**

Proposals should follow the template provided below. Failure to follow the proposal structure or to comply with the instructions in this Request for Proposal will be at the bidder's risk and may affect the evaluation of the proposal.

Proposals should be sent latest by **January 5, 2026** by email in the form of "pdf files" indicating clearly under subject "Bid reference: 2025-08". The email should be addressed to [bids@gcerf.org](mailto:bids@gcerf.org).

**Period of validity of the proposal**

The proposal must be valid for a period of 60 days following submission.

**Cost of preparation and submission of the proposal**

The bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the proposal, including but not limited to the possible cost of discussing the proposal with GCERF, making a presentation, negotiating a contract, and any related travel. GCERF will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the selection process.

**Selection of bidders**

Bidders are requested to provide the most appropriate and most cost-effective proposal to meet the requirements.

The selection will be made based on a number of criteria that will be applied systematically to all bids received:

- Responsiveness to request;
- Proposed approach;
- Qualifications, experience and composition of the team;
- Credibility of the bidder organisation;
- Quality of the offer document; and
- Financial Offer.

## Proposal template

Bidders must submit their proposal following the template below:

The proposal is made up of four different sections

1. Disclosure form
2. Profile of the bidder
3. Technical proposal
4. Financial proposal

**Please keep the overall proposal within 10 pages.** You may annex additional information as needed.

1. Disclosure form

**To be completed by a duly authorised representative of the Bidder.** On behalf of (name of public institution/private or public business entity/myself) (referred to in this document as "the Bidder"), I (name and title of the Bidder's representative) confirm that I am a duly authorized representative of the Bidder and hereby submit this proposal in response to GCERF's Request for Proposal 2025-08. I confirm that all statements and representations made in the proposal are true and correct.

**Date submitted:**

**Submitted by: (Name of Bidder)**

**Name and Title of Authorised Representative:**

**Date:**

**Signature**

2. Profile of the Bidder

Please provide a brief background of the Bidder, highlighting relevant research and country experiences including existing relationships in the country.

Please explain the legal status of the bidder; including its registration with the relevant competent authorities.

Please explain your organisational/individual strengths and values and your customer service approach.

Please provide information on prior experience with similar requirements and references that GCERF may contact.

3. Technical Proposal

A. Business need: Please indicate your understanding of GCERF's business needs for which you are submitting this proposal.

B. Objectives and deliverables:

Please list the deliverables as specified in this Request for Proposal and indicate whether and how the Bidder commits to deliver these.

**Optional:** Present deliverables not listed in this Request for Proposal but which in your expert assessment, are necessary to achieve the objectives of this request.

C. Approach:

Please provide your ideas on the following:

1. Research design and methods that will be used to collect the data and answer the questions proposed.
2. Suitability of the proposed workplan and timeline: key tasks/phases, deliverables, indicative timeline and provisional dates of activities – may be presented using text and/or graphics;
3. Measures to ensure quality control over the delivery of services to GCERF.

D. Service Management Plan:

Please provide details for how your firm would ensure that it provides satisfactory services to GCERF. Please explain how you would coordinate the service offering, including proposed meetings and any proposed mechanism for feedback to and/or coordination with GCERF.

E. Team Composition:

Please provide the following information on the proposed team that would work with GCERF:

- Team organisation
- Individual team members; name, role in the team, area of expertise and relevant experience. Please include their CVs.

F. Risk Mitigation Plan:

Please list any identified risks, including potential security and ethical concerns, which may affect the successful delivery of services and any proposed mitigating measures.

G. Assumptions (optional):



Please list the assumptions on which your proposed approach and successful completion of deliverables are based that you think would be important for GCERF to understand.

H. References:

Please briefly provide recent examples of similar projects has recently undertaken. Please indicate if the name of the client may be disclosed and if GCERF may contact the client for references.

4. Financial Proposal

Please explain the basis of the proposed fees and any other charges to GCERF and their level. This should include costing for administrative tasks including travel, accommodation, and visa procurement. Please note that GCERF is exempt from VAT. Please include the basis for invoicing and terms and conditions for payment.