

# Tunisia



**Investment to date: USD 1,154,000**

**Investment started: 2019**

**Current investment: USD 470,000**

**Grant process: Round 2 underway**

## Drivers of Violent Extremism

GCERF has identified the following drivers of violent extremism in Tunisia:

- Lack of trust in **public authorities**
- Lack of **economic opportunities**, combined with corruption and a growth in criminality
- **Grievances with security** forces, in particular a perception that they can act with impunity. Measures taken to stem VE recruitment, such as increased surveillance of individuals, have become counterproductive, where already marginalised communities feel that they are being targeted.

These drivers were identified through programme assessments, extensive consultations, and ongoing research.

## Pathway to Change

GCERF started its investment in Tunisia in 2019, funding 5 local organisations to support implementation of the National Counter Extremism and Counter Terrorism Strategy through community-led activities across the country. GCERF works closely with the *Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre le Terrorisme*. Building on lessons learned to date, the upcoming round of funding will focus on Western Tunisia, with greater engagement of local governance and security actors.

Activities conducted in the last round of funding in Tunisia have included:

- Providing vocational and entrepreneurship training, supporting youth in creating income generating projects, and creating a network of coaches to ensure continuity of mentoring beyond the grant cycle
- Increasing the integration of religious leaders within local communities
- Developing a digital toolkit to prevent and respond to hate speech
- Increasing dialogue between local leaders and communities
- Providing access to counselling for victims of violence
- Supporting young leaders to develop community activities that increase social cohesion
- Broadcasting messages promoting peace and sharing success stories of preventing violent extremism on local radio
- Increasing knowledge and skills on identifying and responding to online violent extremism.



- Tunisia
- Bizerte; Sousse
- Mahdia; Tunis; Manouba
- Medenine; Le Kef; Monastir
- Sidi Bouzid; Ben Arous; Ariana

## PARTICIPANT TESTIMONY

"Thanks to [the GCERF programme], I do not confine VE to religious extremism only. I have discovered that extremism has various manifestations. I feel empowered to help other women protect their children from becoming involved in VE groups."

– Sameh B., Participant in VE awareness sessions run by a GCERF partner

## Portfolio Overview as of September 2021 (round 2 grant process underway)

Partner Name	Funding since	Focus populations	Key activities
Forum el Jahedh	2019	Religious leaders, local communities	Increasing the integration of religious leaders in their communities and developing alternative discourses on religious speeches
Mobdiun	2019	Vulnerable youth	Providing vocational skill training and counselling to vulnerable youth

# Results



**Total direct beneficiaries: 13,233**

**Total indirect beneficiaries: 56,328**

**Main leverage points: social cohesion, sense of purpose**

## Outputs to date (final data not yet available)

- 5,524 participants in awareness-raising activities
- 209 local government or other stakeholders trained
- 804 participants in interfaith, intercommunity, and intergenerational dialogues
- 122 people used conflict resolution platforms
- 151 people benefitted from entrepreneurship training and support
- 1,019 participants in leadership training
- 4,204 participants in life skills training, including critical thinking and conflict resolution skills
- 1 toolkit in radicalisation and preventing violent extremism produced for psychologists

## Using Online Tools to Sensitise Youth

Like young people around the world, young Tunisians are heavy users of social media. However, they often do not have the knowledge and experience to assess information properly, a vulnerability that local violent extremist groups exploit.

To strengthen youth resilience to online radicalisation, the Applied Social Science Forum (ASSF), an NGO in Tunisia that benefited from GCERF funding, is developing a solution that capitalises on the students' interest in online content in collaboration with 60 teachers and school psychologists. ASSF created an educational video game to foster students' critical thinking.

Designed for 11 to 14 year olds, the game can be used as an entry point to sensitise students and introduce prevention in schools. "We can start debates from this game," said Manel, a school psychologist. "We can use the game to really approach a subject which seems a bit taboo."

"At first, students are more interested in the form (the game) than the content, but after several uses, students have learned morals that they can apply in real life," said Mohsen, a teacher working in the governorate of Madhia with students between five and twelve years old who has already tested the game with his class.

ASSF has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education and is now discussing how to scale up the project with the National Centre for Technologies in Education. The NGO is also working on other digital tools that could be used to foster youth resilience to violent extremism, such as a chatbot that will enable parents to identify early signs of radicalisation.

## PARTICIPANT TESTIMONY

**GCERF's partner in Tunisia trained 30 educational psychologists and children's social workers on digital resilience to violent extremism. ASSF also shared their digital toolkit, a collection of online tools that can be used for PVE, with the participants.**

Thanks to [the GCERF-funded] programme, I feel confident to guide parents on how to identify signs of violent radicalisation and to promote non-violence in their education. The toolkit will also be extremely valuable for psychologists engaged in prevention of violent radicalisation of students.

- Aida C, an educational psychologist

## PARTICIPANT TESTIMONY

There is no doubt that this type of activity is very impactful for young people. We learn how to improve our public-speaking skills, but also to accept differences and diverging points of view.

- SAMRA R., participant in a debate club funded by GCERF

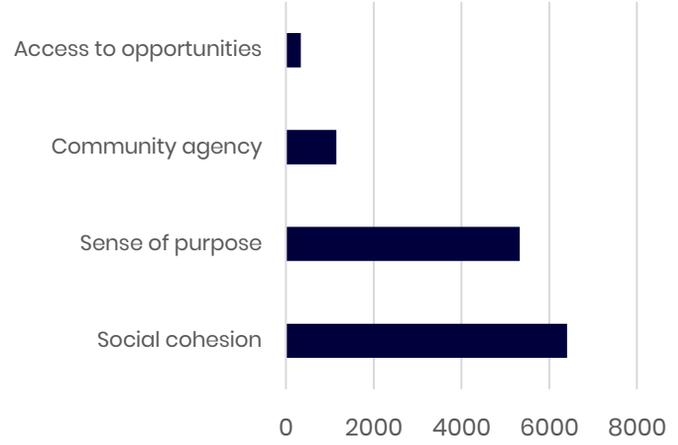


Figure 1: direct beneficiaries by focus area 2016-2021

### GCERF

Geneva, Switzerland  
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