Since 2016, GCERF has fulfilled its initial commitment of investing three times in a country. GCERF's last round of investment began in July 2022 and will continue until June 2024. The grant closing event, titled, *Prevention of Violent Extremism in Bangladesh: Graduation and Sustainability Summit* were organized in May 2024 in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This round of investment focuses on enhancing the sustainability of the existing activities particularly, youth clubs and digital literacy. These efforts are contributing to fostering a positive sense of purpose and increased community agency.

Investment Focus



Building resilience against violent extremism by supporting youth platforms to ensure financial and existential sustainability; strengthening the advocacy and fundraising capacity of grantees and youth groups.



Chattogram – Cox's Bazar, Greater Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna



Secondary school and madrasa students; University-level students; out-of-school and unemployed youth; virtual youth; Religious and Community Leaders; and Governance Actors.



2016-2024



GCERF in Bangladesh works in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs and other local government authorities, and the United Nations country team.



Portfolio overview as of June 2024

Rupantar

2016-24 | Principal Recipient with 5 sub-recipients

Established and ran peace clubs. Provided leadership, digital, and critical thinking skills to youth (including those in university and madrasas) and raised awareness on PVE.

Youth Power in Social Action (YPSA)

2016-24 | Direct grantee

Established and trained youth platforms; held community engagement events and fostered social cohesion, and established and ran women's courtyard platforms.

Violent Extremism in Bangladesh: Drivers

Socioeconomic factors

such as poverty and youth under employment act as the push factors for youth to join violent extremist (VE) groups.

Political factors

such as
corruption and
electoral
violence
exacerbate the
lack of trust
in the
government
by the citizens.

Cultural factors

such as religious differences and the influx of Rohingya refugees also increase the potential of radicalisation.

32nd

On the Global Terrorism Index 2024

BANGLADESH

Current Programming: Systems Approach

National: Advocating for the mainstreaming of preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) into national policies. Institutionalisation and ensuring the sustainability of youth PVE/peace platforms.

Community: Promoting community-wide efforts at preventing VE through multiple community-level stakeholders' (youth, women, religious leaders, etc.) engagement and dialogue to build PVE capacity and raise awareness.

Individual: Building the individual's quest for social cohesion and tolerance, improving youth's critical thinking and sense of purpose and increasing digital literacy.

Key Outputs

October 2022 - June 2024

Youth platforms
have been
established and 48
received registration
from the
Department of
outh Development
GoB.

Life skills
and development
of critical thinking
skills training.

This is in line with the efforts to sustain establishe d youth platforms while ensuring their institutionali sation at the national level. 1056 youths joined Awareness raising sessions on social media and VE,

including positive

social media

narratives on

PVE.

39,178

Community mem
bers engaged in
2325 Joint
Social Actions on
PVE.

prevention of electoral violence, PVE leaflet development and distribution.

Townhalls

and multi stakehold

ers and

advocacy meeting

Inter-faith dialogue, media & information literacy,

October 2022 – June 2024

1,432,084

Total beneficiaries

Key achievements

October 2022 - June 2024



Rupantar &
YPSA successfully
convened the National
PVE network with active
participation of 30
representatives from
different governmental
and nongovernment stakeholder
s across Bangladesh.



99%
Youth groups regularly delivered PVE activities or initiatives in their communities, and 79% of action points or plans have been implemented by the other community actors.



The consortiums have developed rapport with local elected bodies and governmental administration across all operational areas, leading to official issuance of Memos by 2 governmental, 5 educational and 3 religious organizations on discussing and conducting PVE actions.



To ensure
sustainability,
Rupantar &
YPSA have each
developed their own
Fundraising &
Resource Mobilization
Strategies
and currently
undergoing training
to begin
implementation.

During Q3-Q4 2023, PEACE Consortium implemented 44 Joint Social Actions through 1690 members of 149 Peace clubs along with 283 community representatives:



"Successfully we have implemented our joint social actions getting the authority support; which is essential for spreading social cohesion."

BANGLADESH

Story of Change – Transforming Hearts: Monk Sree Taposh Sen's Journey in PVE

In the serene setting of Rajarkul Union Historical Rangkut Buddhist temple, nestled in the heart of Cox's Bazar, a silent revolution unfolds. At the forefront of this transformation stands Monk Sree Taposh Sen, the revered residential chief of the temple. Monk Sree Taposh Sen's journey towards PVE began in November 2019 when he joined the YPSA CEVEC project as a religious leader of Ramu. Initially uncertain about the nuances of violence and extremism, Monk Sree Taposh Sen's understanding deepened through orientation and training provided by YPSA CEVEC, leading to an increase in his commitment to safeguarding his community against the dangers of anomy, smuggling, and terrorist activities.

Driven by a sense of duty, Monk Sree Taposh Sen embarked on a mission to spread awareness and understanding of peace. He engaged in dialogue with fellow monks and followers during each sermon, urging them to disseminate the messages of PVE to their acquaintances and practitioners, fostering a culture of resilience against VE and promoting brotherhood among all. Reflecting on his journey, Monk Taposh expressed, "I received training and information on PVE from the YPSA CEVEC project, and I shared these insights with my fellow monks. I urged them to disseminate these messages to their followers and practitioners. Furthermore, I engaged in discussions about this issue with my followers and practitioners, and I am committed to continuing these efforts."

Monk Sree Taposh Sen's advocacy for peace and unity reverberates beyond the temple walls, inspiring the larger community to join the cause, as he continues to plant the seeds of change, nurturing a future where violence and extremism hold no sway.



PVE messages are delivered during the Regular sermon in the Buddhist temple in Cox's Bazar.



Youth Forum members distribute leaflet and disseminate PVE messages in Tourism Fair in Cox's Bazar.

Peace clubs established by Rupantar conducts inter-faith dialogue, campaign against online misinformation, courtyard meeting, medical camp, cycle rally, reading corner, debate competition, wall painting, leaflet development and distribution etc. engaging youths, local government representatives, religious leaders and activists:

"It is the best initiative for promoting social cohesion in the society by empowering the youth dividends on PVE issues. In this intervention, we are always here to support them."

- Amitabha Bissas, Youth Development Officer, Khulna City Corporation



GCERF's Added Value in Bangladesh



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 capacitybuilding approach enables us to work in remote areas

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



@thegcerf





GCERF Outreach