



THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESILIENCE FUND

Creating a Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund

On September 27, 2013, at the Ministerial Plenary meeting of the Global Counterterrorism Forum in New York, the intent to establish a Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) was announced. GCERF will be the first global effort to harness the skills, capabilities and resources of both the public and private sectors to support local, community-based projects on education, vocational training, civic engagement, media, and women's advocacy aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremist agendas, which can create significant barriers to political and economic development. It is anticipated that GCERF will raise more than \$200 million over the next ten years for this purpose.

THE CHALLENGE: TERRORISM IS GLOBAL BUT STARTS LOCAL

Terrorism is a transnational and global problem frequently driven by local forces. While military, intelligence and law enforcement operations can help address the threat that terrorists pose, to succeed in the long-term, we must reduce their ability to recruit at the community level by addressing local drivers of radicalization to violence.

THE GAP: LACK OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Many local organizations with innovative project ideas have been unable to get off the ground because of the difficulty of attracting the necessary seed funding. Even where they have grown and had impact, they have faced challenges in securing sufficient funding to sustain their work beyond a single six-month or one-year project cycle. Local entities also often have difficulty navigating the application processes that foundations and large donors have in place. Many donors also prefer recipients from larger organizations, often international NGOs, with proven track records, and lack the broad networks and contacts to find trusted community-based partners in priority locations. As a result, small local organizations, which could have the greatest impact at the community level, struggle to find funding.

THE SOLUTION: A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO BOLSTER COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORTS

GCERF will be a public-private global partnership offering a unique and practical model to enable the international community to bolster grass-roots efforts where radicalization and recruitment are occurring. It will be an independent institution governed by a mix of government and non-government stakeholders that will fund locally driven projects and thus help close the gap between the needs of local organizations (whether civil society, NGO or local government) and the resources available to support their work. GCERF will include a robust vetting process and monitoring and evaluation mechanism, providing donors with confidence that the projects supported advance the goals that led them to contribute to this fund.

WHY IS GCERF DIFFERENT?

What distinguishes GCERF's objectives from broader development efforts is its emphasis on youth engagement, education, vocational training, and women's advocacy to promote resilience among at-risk populations. Such initiatives can contribute to economic growth and development in countries where international businesses are active, and provide opportunities to those susceptible to violent extremists' messages.

WHERE DOES THE PRIVATE SECTOR FIT IN?

Terrorism, and the violent extremism that underpins it, not only destroys innocent lives around the world, it also affects businesses globally. Terrorism disrupts the markets where businesses work, the supply chains that businesses depend on, and the communities that comprise the local labor market. GCERF represents an opportunity for both private sector and government entities to jointly advance the political and economic stability of many of these local, at-risk communities by promoting resilience through positive programs that provide an alternative to violent

extremism. GCERF also offers an opportunity to encourage social entrepreneurship and other innovative approaches to local investment.

GCERF FRAMEWORK

Partners involved in developing GCERF will continue to refine the following principles, scope, and approach over the next several months until GCERF is operational in mid-2014.

PRINCIPLES

GCERF would be guided by a series of principles and activities which might include:

- Serving as a mechanism to raise, disburse, and monitor funds for valuable projects
- Evaluating proposals through an independent and transparent review process
- Performing evaluations of projects to ensure funds are being spent effectively and wisely
- Operating with transparency and accountability
- Supporting projects – particularly at the sub-national level – that offer positive alternative to violent extremism
- Ensuring that projects have the requisite political support from national governments as well as contribute to the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy
- Complementing and advancing ongoing national, regional, and international efforts
- Encouraging social entrepreneurship and other innovative approaches to investment in grassroots programming
- Emphasizing country-led, bottom-up approaches to programming and activities

SCOPE

Support from GCERF would complement ongoing efforts of governments and community-based organizations to address violent extremism and build resilience to violent extremist agendas. GCERF will emphasize multi-sectoral participation and results-driven approach to develop solutions to the local drivers of radicalization and recruitment to terrorism. It will allow non-government and municipal government organizations to apply for grants in a range of areas depending upon local requirements/needs. These might include:

- Providing life-skills, vocational training, and other alternatives to youth at risk of recruitment and radicalization to extremist violence
- Providing platforms for community leaders and activities to promote and provide positive alternatives to violent extremism
- Designing and implementing mentorship programs and exchange programs for at-risk youth
- Supporting victims and survivors of terrorism, highlighting terrorism's impact on families, communities, and countries
- Designing education campaigns around messages of pluralism, diversity, and tolerance

APPROACH

GCERF will be established as a non-profit foundation in Geneva, Switzerland. It would be composed of a Secretariat with oversight from a multi-stakeholder governing board that includes a geographically diverse group with representatives of governments, the private sector, foundations, and non-government organizations. The GCERF will engage locally through Country Committee Mechanisms composed of public and private representatives, to help better direct funds to local priorities coordinate transparent proposal reviews.

SUPPORT FOR GCERF

Meetings on GCERF's mandate, structure, and legal foundation took place in Lucerne and Geneva, Switzerland in late 2013 and culminated with a final Steering Group meeting in Washington, DC, on February 20, 2014. Carol Bellamy, former UNICEF Executive Director and former Chair of the Global Education Partnership, facilitated the process. In this final meeting, included over 35 governments, the United Nations, the World Bank, NGOs, private sector, and foundation representatives review and refined the mandate and organizational architecture of the GCERF which will be established in Geneva, Switzerland by mid-2014.

Several countries already pledged financial contributions, and a number of others have expressed strong support with contributions expected to follow. Several recipient countries have also indicated an interest in serving as GCERF "pilot" countries whereby local organizations in their countries would benefit from GCERF grants. In addition, several multinational companies and foundations have shown strong interest in contributing expertise and resources to the GCERF.

Even in these early stages, GCERF has generated positive media attention, including a [New York Times](#) story on the day it was announced, an op-ed in the [International Herald Tribune/New York Times](#) and favorable pieces in [Foreign Policy](#) and the [Washington Post](#).