

BACKGROUND

Tunisia ranks 43rd in the Global Terrorism Index (2025), with a shift in violent extremist tactics since 2017, now involving lone actors targeting security forces. Despite diminished extremist group capacities, ongoing socio-economic decline, worsened by COVID-19, fuels recruitment drivers, with youth unemployment reaching 30% and poverty exceeding 15%, leading to increased migration, some linked to violent extremist groups.

Tunisia became a GCERF partner country* in 2017. To date, GCERF has invested USD 4.3 million in the country, with active grants worth USD 2.4 million currently supporting four local civil society organisations (CSOs). The investment supports the active involvement of civil society organisations in the implementation of the National Strategy against Extremism and Terrorism, developed by the Commission Nationale pour la Lutte Contre le Terrorisme (CNLCT).

GCERF pioneers a unique model of investment designed to promote a whole-of-society approach and ensure the sustainability of our programmes. Under this model, in each partner country, we support national governments in establishing a steering committee called the Country Support Mechanism (CSM).

In Tunisia, the CSM is chaired by the CNLCT and brings together relevant government agencies, civil society organisations, and donor representatives to provide strategic direction for the programmes, ensure results, and progressively inherit ownership of funding community-level efforts to prevent violent extremism.

GCERF'S INVESTMENT STRATEGY IN TUNISIA

GCERF's investment strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to address the drivers of violent extremism and guides civil society organisations in designing their programmes. According to GCERF's needs assessment and consultations with relevant stakeholders, there are three main drivers of violent extremism in Tunisia:

1. Social factors such as feelings of marginalisation, exclusion and difficulty in accessing social support systems.
2. Political factors, such as a perceived lack of governance.
3. Unfavourable economic factors, such as unemployment and a lack of sustainable opportunities.

The primary objective of GCERF's investment is to strengthen trust between youth, community leaders, and governance actors while increasing opportunities for at-risk youth. GCERF supports four local NGO consortia with skills training, mentoring, livelihoods, and tackling violence at schools, fostering collaboration and support networks. By doing so, GCERF seeks to facilitate prevention, resilience-building, and community-based integration by strengthening vertical community resilience and enhancing community agency.

*Partner countries are those in which GCERF funds civil society organisations to implement initiatives aimed at preventing violent extremism.



WHERE

- Grand Tunis
- Jendouba
- Kef
- Kasserine
- Sidi Bouzid
- Kairouan
- Siliana
- Sfax
- Sousse






WHO

- School-aged youth (young girls and boys between the ages of 14-18)
- Un- or under-employed Youth (young women and men between 19 and 35)
- Religious, tribal and community actors
- State actors (local authorities, security and justice actors)

CURRENT GRANTS



 IMPLEMENTED BY	 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p>Principal Recipient: Forum El Jahedh</p> <p>Sub-recipient: Tunisia Plus</p>	Supporting religious and community leaders to develop sustainable peer support networks, linking these with local authorities and providing livelihood support to vulnerable youth.	
 AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION	 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Great Tunis, Kef, Jendouba	USD 980,000	January 2022 - December 2025

 IMPLEMENTED BY	 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p>Principal Recipient: We Love Sousse</p> <p>Sub-recipient: ACTED</p>	Strengthening coordination mechanisms between local actors for increased support of people exposed to VE, reinforcement of the civic participation of young people in public life, support and assistance to victims of VE and socio-economic support to women's groups	
 AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION	 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT
Great Tunis, Kef, Jendouba, Kasserine, Sidi Bouzid, Sfax, Sousse	USD 1,000,000	July 2022 - December 2025

 IMPLEMENTED BY		 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
Principal Recipient: Friguia For Strategies Sub-recipients: Jeunesse et Horizons, Association Khmir Environnement et Développement, Société développements et citoyenneté		Supporting vulnerable youth in developing a sense of purpose, strengthening socio-professional support and integration of young people, and helping to build trust between local authorities and communities.	
 AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION	 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT	
Jendouba	USD 500,000	July 2022 - December 2025	

 IMPLEMENTED BY		 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES	
<p>Principal Recipient: Ifriky Center for Common Ground</p> <p>Sub-recipients: Organisation Tunisienne des Scouts, Union Nationale de la Femme Tunisienne à Kairouan (UNFTK)</p>		<p>Tackling violence in schools by providing peace education and creating school councils for dialogue mechanisms between different stakeholders.</p> <p>Promoting more active participation of women in sustainable community initiatives.</p>	
 AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION	 GRANT AMOUNT	 PERIOD OF THE GRANT	
Siliana, Kairouan	USD 420,000	April 2024 – December 2025	

STORY OF CHANGE

Local Ownership and Education Counter Extremism in Siliana and Kairouan (Ifrikyia Center for Common Ground)

Investment in education has been a top priority for Tunisia since independence in 1956 and remains crucial to ensure the promotion of free, inclusive, and quality education accessible to all. Public spending on education consistently ranks among the highest in North Africa, with over 15-20% of the national budget and around 6-7% of GDP regularly dedicated to education. This commitment is foundational not only for social and economic development, but also as a strategic approach to preventing violent extremism.

While progressive policies have laid strong foundations, realising the vision of truly inclusive education remains a work in progress. GCERF's support strengthens these efforts by supporting Ifrikyia Center for Common Ground (ICCG) in Tunisia through the funds of Swiss Development Cooperation.

ICCG implements the programme « My School – Attractive, Open, and Inclusive » together with the Tunisian Scouts and the National Union of Tunisian Women in Kairouan as sub-recipients, in partnership with the National Commission for Counter-Terrorism (CNLCT) and the Ministry of Education, targeting 128 schools (80 in Kairouan and 48 in Siliana).

In addition to implementing a comprehensive curriculum focused on peace, citizenship, empathy, tolerance, non-violence, gender equality, and positive masculinity, the program provides dedicated support and training to teachers and inspectors to ensure effective delivery in schools.

Moreover, the project facilitates 128 community-driven initiatives within schools in the regions of Siliana and Kairouan, adopting a deeply inclusive and participatory approach that places local

authorities at the heart of the process. By actively involving these regional authorities on all the phases, the project ensures strong local ownership, fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment to the initiatives' success. This collaboration empowers local leaders to contribute their expertise, resources, and networks, which not only enriches the quality and relevance of the interventions but also helped attract and leverage additional funding from the private sector, local public institutions, and the community, thereby amplifying the initiative's overall impact.

This partnership further prioritises the engagement of local stakeholders throughout the design and implementation phases, reinforcing community ownership and tailoring prevention actions to the specific needs and contexts of Siliana and Kairouan. By embedding prevention efforts within local structures and decision-making processes, the project enhances the effectiveness, acceptance, and long-term resilience in these regions.



Coordination meeting with Siliana Governor and local authorities to co-lead community initiatives in 48 schools in Siliana. From left to right: Mr. Wahid Labidi, former Vice-Chairman of the World Scout Committee; Mr. Khaled Ouaari, Governor of Siliana; and Ms. Imen Belhedi, President and Executive Director of ICCG.

© Siliana Governorate official Facebook page

KEY RESULTS

Cumulative from 2018 to July 2025

3,638

Youth, religious leaders and community members participating in PVE initiatives, peace clubs and awareness activities.

4,713

young people, educators, religious members and community members engaged through training to strengthen local prevention efforts and build resilience to violent extremism

4,165

community members joining Interfaith/religious, intercommunity, intergenerational dialogues, consultation, roundtable

969

community members engaged through civic and safe spaces established to foster dialogue, mental health, and well-being

GCERF'S VALUE PROPOSITION

GCERF'S UNIQUE MODEL OF INVESTMENT PRIORITISES:

Community-ownership and localisation: We invest in trusted grassroots civil society organisations that prioritise the needs and grievances of communities most affected by violent extremism. Many of these organisations have never received international funding before.

Sustainability: Our programmes involve all groups of society and strengthens trust between government, civil society and community members to build stronger, more resilient societies. This ensures that initiatives and structures continue to be relevant and effective.

Robust monitoring and evaluation processes: Our multi-layered monitoring and evaluation system, operating locally and globally, provides continuous feedback on programme effectiveness, identifies areas for improvement, and ensures objectives are consistently met.

Knowledge sharing: Our global network of civil society organisations working on PVE facilitates the exchange of good practices and lessons learned, fostering collaboration and enhancing the effectiveness of interventions. We also share our experiences through our participation in various conferences, publishing of articles and research papers in reputed journals to advance the understanding of PVE.

Capacity strengthening: We strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations to manage large-scale grants and implement effective initiatives, while also enhancing government capacity to develop comprehensive, holistic strategies to prevent violent extremism.



GCERF
Preventing Violent Extremism
and Terrorism

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

f @gcerf

X @thegcerf

in GCERF

GCERF Outreach

@thegcerf