WORKING GROUP 2

Refugees & Internal Displacement

Members of the Working Group convened for an inaugural meeting on the margins of the Strong Cities Network Global Summit in Antalya on 11th May 2016. Members and Chairs reviewed the Working Group Statement of Purpose and the Plan of Action. For members' own record, and for the benefit of new members to the Working Group, brief points of discussion are listed below.

In accepting the Statement of Purpose and Plan of Action, members noted that:

- In approaching issues around displacement, we need clear parameters around what initiatives or activities do or do not amount to either CVE-specific or CVE-relevant work.

- The SCN should be cognisant of the fact that displacement brings with it a legion of challenges which are not directly related to CVE; that humanitarian considerations are paramount; and that agencies working in this space would say that by stabilising affected populations – through the provision of food, shelter, education and employment – extremism and terrorism are undermined in any case.

- Evidence of, for example, the scale of radicalisation amongst displaced people has been inconsistent at best. Further research is required to analyse trends on a reliable basis and avoid making false assumptions.

- Displacement maps already exist, the most comprehensive being those held and managed by OCHA, UNHCR and the Red Cross. The SCN should seek to build on these, rather than replicate them. Such agencies should be approached for support with the creation of an augmented map that might be layered with additional classifications. Buy-in from the aforementioned and related agencies would be essential in seeking to establish this area of work.

- Although cities are often not the prime entities responsible for working with refugees or internally displaced people, they are an indispensable actor in creating a climate of inclusion for its new residents, and can work alongside national actors to ensure the paramountcy of humanitarian considerations while addressing and mitigating potential security concerns related to violent extremism.

The Strong Cities Network will take the above points into account in the research, policy and activities of this Working Group.