



## **WORKING GROUP 1**

### **Counter-Narratives and Communication**

*Members of the Working Group convened for an inaugural meeting on the margins of the Strong Cities Network Global Summit in Antalya on 11<sup>th</sup> 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:*

- 'Credible voices' can often be those most local to the communities a campaign is trying to reach. Working on the local and municipal level could facilitate access to and buy-in from these voices more effectively.
- Funding campaigns is a common challenge. Encouragement of in-kind support and donations of services can be essential in building a communications campaign.
- Support for individual campaigns should be based on full evaluation of their underlying aims and strategies.
- Regions around the world vary in digital capacity and internet access. Offline campaigns may need more support in these contexts. An example from Mali was raised, in which communication in local languages was seen as essential to gain access to communities. Terrorist groups in these contexts are often able to draw effectively on cultures of oral communication – something that needs to be taken into account and addressed in developing counter-narratives and communications campaigns.
- Similarly, those engaged in messaging against groups like Boko Haram have security needs and risks that need to be fully considered and factored into the design of any campaign, whether online or offline.

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