

**The Strong Cities Network is an independent global network of 160+ cities dedicated to supporting city-led efforts to prevent extremism, hate and polarisation, while protecting human rights**

Strong Cities facilitates the development and exchange of good practices and sustainable city-led prevention solutions. Through its Network, city leaders and practitioners collaborate nationally, regionally and globally through exchanges, workshops and dialogues, sharing their knowledge and accessing expertise and resources to support them in pursuing solutions to increase social cohesion and community resilience. From connecting cities in North America and North Africa, supporting development of Local Prevention Networks in the Middle East and East Africa, to connecting youth with local governments in South Asia and Southeast Europe, Strong Cities is committed to ensuring its activities are driven by and tailored to the needs and priorities of cities, supporting sustainable prevention, and respecting the principle of 'Do No Harm'.

Strong Cities works with all sub-national authorities, ranging from capital cities to rural towns, county and other regional governments.

'Cities' is used as a broad term to refer to all these variations of sub-national authorities.

### Strong Cities in MENA

In a region frequently focused on national security-oriented counter-terrorism measures, Strong Cities has engaged with local municipalities on a prevention and resilience agenda. This work has featured 'deep-dive', capacity-building programmes in municipalities in Lebanon and Jordan, focused on the prevention of violent extremism through the development of city-led, multi-actor Local Prevention Networks (LPNs).



With funding support from the Governments of Denmark and The Netherlands and informed by the relevant experiences of its members and other stakeholders, Strong Cities supported the development and implementation of locally-owned prevention initiatives in the municipalities of Al-Karak, Zarqa and Irbid in Jordan, and Tripoli, Saida and Majdal Anjar in Lebanon. Working with local officials and communities, key actors were identified and a local, bottom-up mandate for prevention was elaborated. This resulted in multi-stakeholder cooperation that harnessed existing infrastructures, and a wide diversity of community actors to work in partnership with municipalities. LPNs in these cities include a range of local actors – including teachers, civil servants, religious leaders, psycho-social support providers, CSOs and police – who work together at the sub-national level, aligning local initiatives with national efforts.

### Strong Cities Regional Hub

Strong Cities is establishing Regional Hubs to deepen its engagement with cities, mayors and other local leaders and to more fully leverage its impact:

- East & Southern Africa
- Europe
- **Middle East & Northern Africa (MENA)**
- South Asia
- West Africa & the Sahel \*
- Western Balkans

\* resources permitting



## Strong Cities MENA Regional Hub

By channelling support through dedicated [Regional Hubs](#), Strong Cities will offer cities a consistent and sustained resource to advance their prevention efforts and leverage the benefits of the global network. Coordinated by the Strong Cities Management Unit, the Hubs will be operated by [small, dynamic teams of local staff in each region](#), harnessing the Network's global resources and expertise at the local level, accessing local perspectives, responding to specific city needs, and engaging often overlooked local prevention stakeholders.

### Catalysing sustainable city-led prevention efforts

In the MENA region, with support from the [EU's Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism \(STRIVE\) Cities Initiative](#), Regional Hub staff will work with local governments to identify their relevant needs and priorities, and provide them with the support, resources and access needed to become leaders in prevention, ensuring their perspectives inform relevant national, regional and global policy and programme conversations.

Although the size, structure and focus will vary by region, scoped in consultation with Network member cities, the [Strong Cities MENA Regional Hub](#) will catalyse the Network's mission and prevention efforts as follows:



Engage cities across the region to build [blueprints for prevention](#), which local authorities can take to national and international stakeholders to realise.



[Build the prevention capacity of cities](#) and other local leaders on meaningful engagement with youth, multi-actor prevention and other topics based on local needs, supporting cities to [localise global good practice](#).



Convene local authorities and facilitate [city-to-city peer learning](#), help promote and strengthen [national-local cooperation](#) on prevention and provide support to city-led prevention efforts.



Connect local authorities across the [MENA region](#) with the global prevention architecture, [elevating the voices of mayors and other local leaders](#) and ensuring cities from the region can inform global decision-making on prevention.



[Facilitate coordination](#) between multilateral/regional, national and local approaches to prevention, regularly convening multilateral partners, national and local governments, civil society and the private sector to [improve collaboration and communication](#) in the region.

For more information about the [Strong Cities MENA Regional Hub](#), contact:

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