



# East & Southern Africa Regional Hub

## Catalysing sustainable city-led prevention efforts

**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 the 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 East & Southern Africa

Ten cities in East and Southern Africa have joined the Strong Cities Network since its launch in 2015, and there is potential and need for broader and deeper engagement. To date, much of Strong Cities' 'deep-dive' engagement has been delivered in Kenya, working closely with county officials and other local leaders and young people in Mombasa, Kwale, Nakuru and Isiolo. The Network's youth engagement programme, Young Cities, has trained youth in different Kenyan counties to launch their own advocacy campaigns and facilitated the development of more youth inclusive policies. Strong Cities worked with local leaders to develop Community Engagement Frameworks and tools for community-based interventions, and support for enhancing municipal and civil society efforts. Strong Cities Network members Mombasa and Kristiansand, Norway, also forged a remarkable collaborative partnership, involving city-level exchanges and youth workshops.

The role of cities and other local authorities in this region in prevention cannot be understated. Their immediacy to local communities, and an acute understanding of local dynamics, risks, needs and existing services, gives cities immense potential to become prevention leaders. They are often trusted more by local communities than national governments; often the first to respond to an attack; and suffer the fallout of intercommunal tensions and economic slowdowns. Yet, local governments face obstacles to getting involved, including a lack of mandate from and coordination with national governments, where overly securitised understandings of prevention inhibit them from devolving at least some responsibility to local authorities.

### Strong Cities Regional Hubs

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 East & Southern Africa 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 East and Southern Africa, 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. In 2022, Strong Cities led an [EU-funded project mapping the prevention needs and priorities of cities across Africa](#). The project engaged some 800 government and non-governmental and national and local stakeholders across the continent. The final report includes recommendations for greater local government involvement in P/CVE in Africa and will guide the work of the new Strong Cities Regional Hub.

Although the size, structure and focus will vary by region, scoped in consultation with Network member cities, the [Strong Cities East & Southern Africa 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 East and Southern Africa region](#) with the continental and global prevention architecture, [elevating the voices of mayors and other local leaders](#) and ensuring cities from the region can inform continental and 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 East & Southern African Regional Hub](#), contact:

**Allison Curtis**

Head of Partnerships & Networks  
Strong Cities Network  
[ac@strongcitiesnetwork.org](mailto:ac@strongcitiesnetwork.org)



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