JOB DESCRIPTION –

PROGRAMMES LEAD, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Role	Middle East and North Africa Hub, Programme Lead		
Reports to	Head of MENA Hub	**Direct reports**	0
Budgetary responsibility	N/A	**Resource responsibility**	N/A
Safeguarding	N/A	**Key relationships**	Head of MENA Hub; MENA Hub staff; Director of Global Engagement
Contract	1 year fixed-term contract	**Location**	Jordan, Morocco or Tunisia
Salary	*Competitive salary package dependent on experience*	**Level**	Manager

** This role is subject to confirmation of funding **

About SCN

Launched at the UN General Assembly in 2015, the [Strong Cities Network (SCN)](#) is an independent global network of 150+ cities and other local governments dedicated to addressing all forms of violent extremism, hate and polarisation, while promoting a human rights-based prevention framework in which local knowledge and practice informs national, regional and international approaches. The SCN is managed by the [Institute for Strategic Dialogue](#) (ISD).

Our mission is:

- To inspire, catalyse and multiply locally-driven, non-discriminatory, human rights-based, and gender-sensitive policies and programmes that prevent and counter violent extremism, hate and polarisation that rest upon trust-based partnerships with communities;
- To enhance the practical implementation of programming and practice at a local level aimed at building social cohesion and community resilience to all forms of extremist- and hate-motivated violence;
- To connect sub-national leaders and practitioners from a range of disciplines, including community relations, social and health services, education, leaders from the youth community, economic development, religious affairs, local community leaders and civil society, to exchange lessons learned and provide tailored training through face-to-face and online exchanges; and
- To elevate the voices of mayors and other local leaders and ensure the needs and priorities of cities and other sub-national authorities are reflected in national, regional, and international conversations around how to most effectively prevent violent extremism, hate and polarisation.

This role will be a within the newly launched Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Hub, employed by ISD but dedicated to SCN regional coordination, engagement and activities as the SCN seeks to deliver on a new strategy to enhance its impact at a city, national, regional, and global level.

Role Purpose

The purpose of this role is to support SCN engagement with cities and relevant partners across the MENA region as a core member of the "Regional Hub" team that fosters strong and effective relationships with municipalities across the region. The role supports network engagement with municipalities across the Middle East and North Africa to ensure the network is driven by – and ultimately responds to – the needs and gaps that cities themselves identify in their ability to prevent violent extremism, hate and polarisation at local levels. While municipalities in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia are expected to be the Hub's primary focus, the Network Officer is expected to engage other cities from the region should they express interest in the SCN and commit to supporting its guiding principles. Dedicated to regional engagement, there will be a need for strong internal coordination with HQ colleagues, so that HQ and 'Regional Hubs' function as a cohesive Management Unit serving SCN members around the world.

Key Responsibilities

1. **Strengthen and maintain effective long-term relationships with member cities (20%)**
   - Engage with regional membership on the refreshed global SCN strategy and functions of the new MENA Hub;
   - Conduct outreach with municipalities and mayors' offices to (re)engage key points of contact in the network's activities and build strong and lasting relationships with local governments throughout the region;
   - Carry out high level day-to-day communication with member cities in the region; sharing updates, engaging stakeholders in upcoming events and activities and being responsive to questions, concerns and needs of our members;
   - Oversee and ensure regional member/partner contact databases are updated and feed into centralised HQ databases.
   - Facilitate on-boarding of new/prospective member cities in coordination with HQ colleagues;
   - Keep track of upcoming election periods and identify other political events which may necessitate handover with/induction of new relationships with a different mayoral administration, working to minimise interruption to SCN activities;
   - Carry out *ad hoc* outreach to members in response to sensitive political events.
   - Capture and update key monitoring and evaluation data that enables us to track quality and consistency of member engagement.

2. **Identify, develop and deliver regional programming that responds to the needs of cities (25%)**
   - Build a consistent profile of member needs/gaps in preventing and countering violent extremism, hate and polarisation at the city level across the region, involving conducting interviews, running focus groups, holding informal discussions and roundtables, conducting desk-based research and literature reviews and developing and disseminating survey instruments.
   - Ensure that global SCN strategy is informed by needs, priorities and concerns of members in the MENA region, including through supporting regional strategy development processes.
   - Establish, promote and staff an SCN "help desk" to respond to member requests for support and expertise.
   - Work closely with other relevant capacity-building/ programme implementers to share and scale up lessons learned across the MENA region that are pertinent for municipal and other sub-national-level policy and practice.

- Design, deliver and support the evaluation of key regional engagement, training and networking activities including regional workshops, exchanges, webinars, mayoral fora, with responsibilities for technical input and content development.
- Support the allocation, where applicable, of technical support budget for local initiatives based on member needs.

3. **Facilitate city peer-learning through the identification and exchange of best practices (35%)**
   - Identify the critical thematic priorities for cities and other sub-national authorities across the region through general engagement and needs/gaps assessment processes.
   - Work with HQ colleagues to develop policy learnings, good practice case studies and recommendations that draw on the experiences of cities and other sub-national authorities in the region.
   - Develop policy briefings, training manuals, guidelines, blog posts, quick-turnaround research analysis briefings for dissemination to regional cities and global membership.
   - Lead the delivery of regional workshops which will unite mayors with relevant national and local stakeholders on key thematic priorities determined in accordance with local needs.
   - Lead the organisation and delivery of regional webinars on thematic issues that speak to the priorities of members, and ensure regional voices are represented in global-level webinars where relevant.
   - Ensure active involvement of MENA members in the International Steering Committee, working closely with HQ colleagues.
   - Secure engagement of MENA member cities with SCN Working Groups launched at the global level, contributing experience and expertise generated through local practice in the region as well as lessons learned and challenges.
   - Ensure that MENA city participants are represented in/engaged with SCN and relevant partner activities at global and multilateral levels beyond the region.
   - Support an annual SCN MENA recalibration by identifying member needs, progress towards implanting global SCN strategy in the region, and key policy/practice take-away that should inform discussion at global levels.

4. **Project management (15%)**
   - Contribute to weekly regional and global SCN internal team meetings;
   - Support the drafting of donor reports.
   - Support monitoring, evaluation and learning efforts at regional and, where necessary, global levels.
   - Ensure correct procurement processes are followed for contracting goods and services.
   - Use institutional and external project management tools to effectively manage projects and activities to time, quality and budget.
   - Ensure consistent internal coordination with regional and HQ colleagues.

5. **Development (5%)**
   - Contribute to the identification of development opportunities and partnerships.
   - Contribute to concept notes and proposal writing.

Outcomes (the way success will be measured)

- Strengthened relationships across regional municipalities demonstrated by increased engagement data and consistent representation in regional and global activities.
- Strong partnerships developed with regional organisations and relevant government agencies.
- Effective and successful delivery of regional workshops, webinars and other regional/international activities to a high standard.
- City needs addressed through the successful design, planning and delivery of joint SCN/municipal led-initiatives.
- Positive 360 feedback from colleagues and senior staff, working collaboratively to support the wider team to deliver on the SCN strategy.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Expectations

We expect all staff, consultants and volunteers to:

- Commit to ISD's vision, mission and Guiding Principles
- Foster diversity, inclusivity and equality of opportunity at ISD
- Demonstrate respect for others and safeguard those who are vulnerable
- Carry out their duties in accordance with ISD's policies and procedures
- Adhere to risk management and security instructions at all times

Competencies

These reflect ISD's Guiding Principles which we expect all members of the team to embody, regardless of seniority and role. How these competencies are assessed is outlined in ISD's Performance Review Process.

Guiding Principles	Competencies
Integrity	• Personal integrity • Focus on quality
Collaboration	• Respect for others • Commitment to the team
Agility	• Efficiency and effectiveness • Growth mindset
Courage	• Strategic thinking • Passion for driving change

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

ISD endeavours to recruit a range of candidates to strengthen our team and contribute to our organisational culture. We particularly welcome applications from candidates currently underrepresented across the organisation – including those from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, those with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Specific Requirements

These requirements are a priority for this specific role, and form part of our assessment during recruitment, probation and ongoing performance management. They are also a framework for focusing continuing professional and personal development.

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge, training and qualifications	• Bachelor's degree in international relations, political science, security, law, diplomacy or relevant. • Knowledge of counter-terrorism, preventing/countering violent extremism, rule of law, peacebuilding, conflict mitigation or international cooperation.	• Master's degree in international relations, political science, security, law, diplomacy or relevant. • Knowledge of existing SCN capacity-building and other engagement in the Middle East and North Africa region.

	• Relevant qualifications in international affairs or other relevant fields. • Knowledge of key security, development, governance, peacebuilding or related issues in the Middle East and North Africa region.	• Knowledge of local government structures in 1-2 relevant countries.
Experience	• Significant experience in developing and/or delivering peacebuilding/preventing violent extremism/local governance programmes with a range of stakeholders. • Experience of network building • Previous experience in either working with or in national/local governments, civil society and/or international organisations on prevention initiatives. • Knowledge of regional, national and local P/CVE and/or other relevant frameworks, strategies and structures. • Experience organising and leading meetings and events with national government and/or local officials • Experience in planning, organising and delivering regional or other events.	• Experience in working with an international team. • Experience in development.
Skills	• Excellent written and spoken communication skills. Ability to speak independently and confidently with city officials. • Native or working proficiency in Arabic. • Willingness and ability to drive work both independently and in collaboration with a global team • Fluency in English (verbal and written) • Highly organised with the ability to be flexible, multi-task and respond proactively • Ability to independently conduct open source desktop research • Intercultural and interpersonal awareness	• Knowledge of local government structures in 1-2 relevant countries. Working proficiency in French

	• Ability to travel regionally, and at points globally, for scheduled and *ad hoc* activities and meetings	