The Prison Management Initiative is implementing the GCTF’s Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders. The IIJ Prison Management Initiative is also supporting actions called for in UN Security Council Resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017), including measures to maintain a safe and humane environment, and tools to assess and help address radicalization to violence and terrorist recruitment within prisons.

Prisons often serve as incubators for radicalization to violence. Effective leadership, policies and procedures are therefore essential to deal with ever more complex risks affecting inmates, staff and the wider public. To this end, the IIJ’s Prison Management Initiative has, since 2015, been building and strengthening the capacities of prison officials through the implementation of good practices and sharing of practical skills and tools. The Initiative assists prisons to put in place proactive interagency strategies, which involve monitoring and assessing threats and mitigating risks; necessities for both prison and public safety. The influence of hardened radicalizers within prison systems, some who may have served as Foreign Terrorist Fighters, must be assessed and suitable operational strategies to minimize harm designed according to local legal and cultural norms. Networks developed between serving inmates, former prisoners and wider criminal and extremist associates can be used for current attack planning in the outside environment.

Next Steps

- In 2018-2019, the IIJ will continue to implement and operationalize the IIJ Prison Management Recommendations.
- October 2018, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia Regional Workshop.

Key Foci:

- Preventing and countering radicalization in prison
- Operationalizing internationally accepted good practices for prison management
- Helping countries to establish prison intelligence units
- Promoting the observance of human rights within the prison system
- Disseminating practices in how to best manage and identify terrorist prisoners
In September 2017, the IIJ, in cooperation with UNICRI, hosted a US-funded workshop on prison management in Turin, Italy, that focused on opportunities for prison management to mitigate terrorist recruitment and radicalization to violence. During the workshop, prison officials from eleven African countries learned how to develop and implement sound management and rehabilitation policies and programs to detect and address radicalization to violence in prisons. Participants shared national experiences and discussed regional and global trends in prison radicalization. International experts and IIJ staff provided tools to mitigate prison radicalization and emphasized the need for prison intelligence programs and risk assessment procedures.

In April 2018, following the IIJ’s July 2017 Global CT Prison Intelligence Workshop, the IIJ hosted a US-funded four-day regional workshop on Prison Intelligence in a Counterterrorism Context, in collaboration with the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Justice. The workshop provided a platform for 43 participants from 17 countries to engage in topics including Prison Risk Assessment Tools, Human Intelligence, Safeguarding Intelligence, Recruiting and Using Informants, and the benefits of Multi-Agency Approaches to Prison Intelligence. Experts facilitated participants’ responses to a set of Africa-specific hypothetical fact pattern exercises that challenged participants to consider strategies to address threats of radicalization and terrorist attacks in prison. The workshop culminated in a study visit to a Nigerian prison that houses terrorism suspects.

In 2016, the IIJ developed the IIJ Prison Management Recommendations to Counter and Address Prison Radicalization. These recommendations focus on promoting sound prison management policies and procedures that can assist states in preventing and countering violent extremist radicalization in prisons. Experts from diverse backgrounds and including prison wardens, administrators, representatives from international organizations, policy makers and correction reform professionals contributed to the development of the sixteen recommendations.

The IIJ Recommendations are available at: www.theiij.org

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