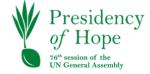
For Our Future

Best Practice for the Implementation of the UN Pact for the Future











Executive Summary

In September 2024, at the UN Summit of the Future in New York, all 193 UN Member States adopted the <u>Pact for the Future</u>. The Pact represents a renewed and collective commitment to modernising global cooperation at a time of escalating instability and reflects a shared understanding that existing international mechanisms are no longer adequate. Negotiated through extensive multilateral dialogue, it aims to equip global institutions with the tools needed to respond more effectively to rapidly emerging challenges.

The Pact responds to a world undergoing profound transformation. Advances in technology, shifting geopolitical dynamics, and widening inequalities have generated increasingly complex risks. Armed conflicts reached their <u>highest level in decades in 2024</u>, disproportionately affecting women, girls and other vulnerable groups, particularly in fragile and humanitarian settings.

At the same time, <u>unprecedented numbers of people</u> face acute food insecurity, famine-like conditions, and forced displacement. These developments have exposed the limitations of traditional peacebuilding models and underscored the need for more innovative, inclusive and preventative approaches.

Although widely welcomed as the most comprehensive framework for peace and security in a generation, the Pact's ambition creates a significant implementation challenge. Converting high-level commitments into meaningful progress requires practical, evidence-based strategies that can operate effectively across diverse political, social and cultural contexts. Drawing on best practice from organisations already working in conflict-affected environments provides a realistic and valuable route toward achieving this.

The International Communities Organisation (\underline{ICO}), a UK-based NGO with Special Consultative Status at UN Economic and Social Council (\underline{ECOSOC}), contributes to this effort by sharing lessons from its work supporting minority and marginalised communities.

ICO operates through three interconnected pillars: Communities, focused on cross-community engagement and reconciliation; Diplomacy, centred on dialogue facilitation and peace talks; and Societies, addressing economic and political inequalities that fuel instability.

The report highlights four examples from ICO's work in Cameroon, Cyprus, Kosovo, and the Middle East, selected for the specific best practices they demonstrate.

- The Cameroon case study seeks to illustrate best practice in delivering capacity reinforcement and capacity building in conflict affected settings.
- The Cyprus case study aims to exemplify best practice in delivering cross-community dialogue and inter-ethnic exchanges in divided settings.
- The Kosovo case study endeavours to highlight best practice in delivering non-majority representation and forums for engagement with government institutions.
- The Middle East case study seeks to demonstrate best practice in facilitating confidential peace negotiations and post-conflict agreements.



Best Practice

From the expertise and lessons outlined in the report, the following key considerations are proposed to guide strategy and methodology development:

- Develop local actors' capabilities with the skills needed to successfully instigate positive change in their communities whereby community beneficiaries may be the proposers, leaders and evaluators of proposals (as opposed to merely consulted bodies).
- Embark upon reconciliation efforts wherein structural and normative changes occur in parallel, recognising their nature as mutually reinforcing
- Integrate agility and adaptability to the the context and the situation on the ground, wherein a series of 'presently undetermined choices' is in-built in programme design so decision-making may be undertaken in conjunction with project evolution.
- Advocate and emphasise the value of long-term efforts aimed at enhancing communities' readiness
 to engage in constructive dialogue and reach peace agreements in approaches which are intergenerational and future-orientated.
- Empower local funding and leaders to help mitigate dependency dynamics and promote local agency
- Build and create sustainable mechanisms and frameworks which laterally nurture the civic space and grassroots organisations, enabling local actors to participate in the peacebuilding discussions, with transparent communication and accountability mechanisms.
- Promote marginalised, vulnerable and historically excluded communities in governance, peacebuilding and political dialogues and discussions, so outcomes may be both inclusive and lasting.
- Plan for changing interdependencies within socio-political systems and development contexts.
- Recognise in conflict affected settings, institutions and bodies commonly not only fulfil their original purpose, but assume a number of secondary purposes, with 'mandate acquisition' being particularly common in public service delivery.
- Ensure channels of communication between minority and marginalised communities to prevent the likelihood of misalignment between the governments' perception of the needs of the communities, which may leave communities' needs unmet, regardless of new government initiatives.
- Design reconciliation strategies which acknowledge conflict transformation must occur both at the level of the individual (individual perspectives shift to believe in reconciliation) and at the level of the community (collective narratives shift to frame reconciliation as possible and desirable).
- *Protect* the possibility of future peace by combatting practices where conflict and prejudice is 'taught' across generations through modalities such as formal education.
- Evaluate activities with the understanding that any intervention into a context will (from its conception) become 'part' of the context, and no longer external to it.



Looking Ahead

This report outlines specific examples of best practice drawn from ICO's core programmes in Cameroon, Cyprus, Kosovo and the Middle East, in the hope they contribute to the evolving debates concerning the implementation and lasting realisation of the UN Pact for the Future.

The report's launch marks a significant step in ICO's ongoing efforts to enhance its presence in New York in the years ahead, for better engagement with member states and other stakeholders on implementation of the actions and commitments set out in the UN Pact for the Future.

ICO has scheduled a review of its work against the Pact and its progress in September/October 2028, in line with the review of the overall implementation of the Pact during the 83rd session of the General Assembly, as mandated in resolution A/RES/79/1(UN 2024, <u>UN</u> 2025).

ICO notes the intergovernmental negotiations of the Pact took stock of input provided by diverse stakeholders through 'impact coalitions' and commends the efforts to ensure the actions and commitments set out in the Pact were holistic and inclusive.

Moving forward, ICO encourages the continuation of ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue regarding the implementation of the Pact, which centres best practice, recognising the benefit of cross-stakeholder learning, and preserving institutional memory when addressing systemic and structural challenges.

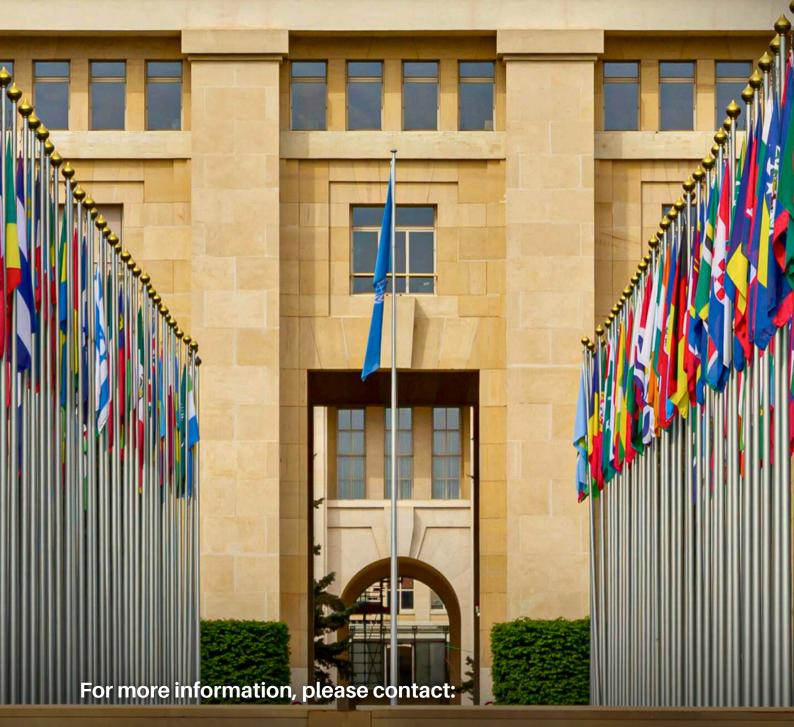




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