



**FIT FOR THE
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Good Practice - Women in Conflict Zones: Documenting and Promoting Cypriot Women's Voices

WP 2

Activity 1 (Good Practice)

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Good Practice Card

Name/ title of practice:	Women in Conflict Zones: Documenting and Promoting Cypriot Women's Voices
Location:	Nicosia, Cyprus
Size and scale of organization:	Small
Industry/Sector:	Civil society / Gender equality / Human rights / Peacebuilding
Contact info (for follow up, if available):	Mrs. Anna Prodromou President – WICZ+ Foundation
Additional details:	<p>The initiative began with a powerful multimedia campaign including interviews, photographic portraits, and exhibitions that highlighted the experiences of 19 Cypriot women living in a post-conflict/frozen conflict environment. It received support under an EU small grants scheme and was officially inaugurated with the presence of UN and international ambassadors. The action served as a catalyst for public engagement with issues of gender, peace, and civic participation.</p> <p>This was followed by the publication of the book <i>Women in Conflict Zones: A Collection of Interviews of Cypriot Women</i> by Anna Prodromou. The book has been presented in a series of public events both in Cyprus and abroad, further amplifying the voices and experiences of the women featured. These efforts led to the establishment of the WICZ+ Foundation—representing a transformative evolution of the original initiative. While the WICZ Initiative was rooted in promoting women's rights and civic participation in Cyprus, the WICZ+ Foundation has since expanded its mission to include other marginalized and disenfranchised communities, such as LGBTQI+ individuals, persons with disabilities, and people from migrant and asylum-seeker backgrounds. Through this broader scope, the Foundation actively works to promote inclusivity, advocate for equality, and drive systemic change across diverse segments of society.</p>
	Interview with Anna Prodromou, President



Sources of information/References:	https://www.womeninconflictzones.com/
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Good Practice/Content

<p>Key focus/bias observed:</p>	<p>Gender equality, women’s empowerment, civic participation, post-conflict identity, the underrepresentation of women in public discourse, and media visibility of women.</p>
<p>Description of the <i>Practice</i>:</p>	<p>The WICZ Initiative was launched in 2017 in Cyprus to shed light on the personal stories, experiences, struggles, and achievements of Cypriot women from diverse backgrounds, particularly those whose lives have been shaped by the Cyprus conflict. The first action consisted of 19 in-depth interviews with women of various ages, ethnicities, and professional sectors, accompanied by photographic portraits by Cypriot photojournalist Petros Karadjias. The narratives and visuals were shared through a series of exhibitions and online platforms, to amplify women’s voices in public dialogue, especially in peacebuilding and societal transformation</p>
<p>Implementation strategy:</p>	<p>The initiative was launched with EU small grants funding and began by identifying and selecting women whose stories reflected diverse perspectives on life in a conflict zone. Interviews were conducted and published alongside professional photographic portraits. A short video component was also produced, highlighting male figures who had inspired the participants and reinforcing inclusive narratives. The collected material was presented in multiple public photographic exhibitions across Cyprus, starting with an opening at the Home for Cooperation in Nicosia. The implementation placed strong emphasis on media visibility, public engagement, and collaboration with international institutions.</p>
<p>Key actors involved:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women interviewees from various communities and sectors in Cyprus • Petros Karadjias (photographer and creative collaborator) • Home for Cooperation (event venue and peacebuilding hub) • United Nations in Cyprus (inauguration by SRSG Elizabeth Spehar) • Embassies of the United States, Sweden, and Portugal • Broader public, including educators, journalists, youth, and peace activists
<p>Outcomes and metrics of impact:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 interviews and professional portraits publicly exhibited • Series of exhibitions held island-wide with significant public attendance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level visibility at the launch event, attended by ambassadors and UN officials • Media coverage and recognition from civil society actors • Strengthened the role of women in public discourse on conflict and reconciliation • Set the foundation for continued WICZ activities and collaborations
Potential challenges and barriers for implementation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigating sensitivities around the Cyprus conflict, including participant hesitations and political implications. • Limited financial and human resources for follow-up activities after the initial exhibitions. • Reaching diverse communities across the divide required trust-building and coordination.
Blueprint for success - recommendations for replication or adaptation of the Practice:	<p>When replicating or adapting this practice, it is essential to approach storytelling with contextual sensitivity, ensuring that all actions are informed by the community and mindful of potential trauma. Collaborating with local institutions and media enhances both visibility and credibility, while multimedia storytelling (portraits, video, and personal narratives) helps create emotional resonance and broader accessibility. It is equally important to engage both women and male allies to build inclusive narratives around peace and gender equality. Finally, while initiatives can begin on a small scale, they should be designed with scalability in mind, laying the groundwork for long-term impact through education, advocacy, and policy engagement.</p>
Key lessons learned:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal narratives can be a powerful entry point into complex topics like conflict and reconciliation. • Building trust with participants takes time but pays off in authenticity and impact. • Visibility matters meaning that exhibitions and media can elevate marginalized voices and shift public conversations. • Collaborations with international partners can provide not only legitimacy but also cross-border learning opportunities. • Sustainability requires a longer-term plan beyond initial funding. Momentum can fade without follow-up mechanisms.
Other info/notes:	



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