

Guidelines for Selection of Local Communities

Introduction

At the national and regional levels, expert support on recovery has been well-established through the formation of several vehicles; for example, the Reforms Delivery Office, Reform Support Teams at the national level, while on the regional level, there are Regional offices of the Agency for Restoration and the Capacity Building Office and Agencies for Regional Development. However, provision of expert support to communities directly has been lacking and delivered in an ad hoc manner, without strategic involvement of government to prioritize or even coordinate where assistance should go, nor are there any mechanisms in place to coordinate data collection, implementation progress, geographical mapping of support or partner interventions.

With the vision that territorial communities deliver a sustainable and inclusive social and economic recovery, the Ministry for Communities, Territories, and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine (hereinafter, Ministry of Restoration) has created the **Community Support Team Working Group** to:

- strengthen communities' capacity to manage recovery planning and implementation; and
- to coordinate both inputs (resources and expertise) and monitor progress.

The Community Support Team Working Group (hereinafter, CST Working Group) was created by Order of the Ministry. The WG will be supported by a secretariat, the Community-led Inclusive Recovery (CLIR) which consists of 13 experts at the Ministry of Restoration to undertake the coordination of inputs and monitor progress. CLIR also has field teams which are deployed to communities to strengthen their capacities to manage recovery planning and implementation.

Even in this early stage of recovery, there have been many questions raised regarding how support for recovery will be prioritized. The following guidelines have been developed to provide a transparent methodological approach to determining prioritization of provision of support. While the guidelines are advisory, all efforts have been made to include partners' viewpoints.

Selection of communities for pilots is made by individual initiatives/projects/programs. However, it is the intention of the Ministry of Restoration that Ukraine's partners follow the guidelines and coordinate with the CST Working Group to support the GoU's efforts to be as efficient as possible with resources, ensure transparency regarding priorities, and foster a recovery that adheres to the principles and methodology outlined below.

Further, it is recommended that decisions are made in consultation with representatives of the Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine and second, using the data provided in this list of eligible communities. Use of the list helps ensure transparency in decision-making and coordination of efforts. It is also recommended that initiatives/projects/programs work with the CST WG, use the templates provided/approved by MinRestoration and provide information on pilots for the better understanding of MinRestoration on work conducted in communities.

Principles of Community Recovery

Assistance to communities is based on the principles which are elaborated below.

Community-Led and Decentralized Governance. Respecting the fact that communities are independently self-governed, assistance should be provided to communities only upon their request and in the form that is determined to be acceptable to the community. That is, support will be provided only to those communities that apply for help.

Comprehensive Assessment and Planning. Community planning, both recovery and long-term development, must begin with high quality and complete assessment of communities, its governance, citizens and business that indicates not only the needs of the community, but its strengths and growth pillars. Further, recovery as well as long-term development must be comprehensive, including all aspects of life, social and economic, that attract citizens to the community, retain them and allows them to thrive. Determination of the needs of citizens, local government and business should be derived from those stakeholders themselves with respect to citizens.

Alignment with GoU Planning Processes for Efficiency and Clarity. Community recovery must be planned in alignment with the overall architecture of state planning documents, starting with local level documents, including the:

- *Comprehensive Plan for Spatial Development of the Community;*
- *Territorial Community Development Strategy and Action Plan;*
- *The Program of Comprehensive Recovery of the Community and*
- *The Plan for Recovery and Development of the Community,*

with regional level documents:

- *The Regional Development Strategy and Action Plan,*
- *The program of comprehensive recovery of the region)*

and aligned with national level plans and programs:

- *The Ukraine Plan,*
- *The State strategy for Regional Development 2021-2027;*
- *National sectoral strategies, action plans and state programs, and*
- *The Plan for the Recovery and Development of the Regions.*

Green Solutions and Future Generations. Rebuilding plans should consider environmental impact first, with the intention to make environmentally-informed decisions that do not further harm the environment and even seek to find ways to improve it whenever possible. Likewise, decisions should be made for the long term, rebuilding should consider needs for the future on a 25-year horizon, that will serve future generations, rather than solutions that suffice for current needs. Assistance to communities should be based on fairness between present and future generations, meaningful representation of future generations and their interests.

Inclusiveness. Assistance must consider the interests of the maximum number of community residents, adhere to anti-discrimination values, promote the involvement of citizens in decision-making at all levels of political life, and build a barrier-free human-centered space.

Social & Economic Development. It is necessary to maintain a balance between social and economic recovery and community development, promote sustainable economic growth of territories in harmony with national, regional and local priorities, support qualitative changes in the business environment and help implement green energy-efficient solutions.

Key Capacities for Recovery

The objective of the CST Working Group is to strengthen capacities of communities so that they can lead their own recovery. The Deputy Prime Minister for Restoration of Ukraine - Minister for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine defined several priorities for capacities strengthening at the Coordinating Council on Regional Policy and Decentralization on July 20, 2023, as recommendations for donor projects and programs in their work with communities.

<p>Strategic planning and project management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of strategic documents: Territorial Community Recovery and Development Plan, Territorial Community Development Strategy, Comprehensive Territorial Community Recovery Program; • identification and implementation of priority projects (based on strategic documents) from the definition and justification of the project idea (including pre-feasibility and feasibility study) to the development of project documentation and the start of construction works.
<p>Investment activity and interaction with donor organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of an investment portfolio of projects; • identifying the needs of local businesses and developing specific solutions to support and develop economic activity in the community; • assistance in fundraising, communication with donors and financial institutions, going through all formal procedures for obtaining funding.
<p>Anti-corruption activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis of the anti-corruption system at the level of local self-government and the quality of the work of authorized persons in matters of prevention and detection of corruption; • corruption risk assessment; • development of recommendations for improving the system of anti-corruption work.
<p>Digitalization and data-driven policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training on the operation and implementation of digital tools: Register of damaged and destroyed property, Geoinformation system of regional development, DREAM (Digital Restoration Ecosystem for Accountable Management), etc.; • assistance in the transition to electronic document management and the development of databases.

Urban planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assistance in the development of spatial planning documents: comprehensive plans for spatial development (CPSD) and programs for comprehensive recovery of the territories and communities; • assistance in the development of decisions and documents for the comprehensive reconstruction of settlements.
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Community Eligibility

Community eligibility is determined through four steps, all of which reflect the principles outlined above. Of key importance, with respect to decentralized governance, community participation is based on the interest of the community itself. **Assistance is provided based on community requests only. The process of selection has four steps:**

1. Invitation of eligible communities to participate, based on the broad selection of communities deemed to be most affected by war.
2. Determination of eligible local communities based on criteria outlined in this document.
3. Verification of data provided by local communities through interviews.
4. Finalization of the list of local communities and/or groups of communities in order of priority.

The definition of "affected communities" has been based both on data from open state portals (map.edopomoga.gov.ua) and on key normative legal documents; specifically, Government of Ukraine resolutions and orders of the Ministry of Restoration and the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, beginning with the [Law of Ukraine on the principles of state regional policy and the policy of recovery of regions and territories adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine](#). The criteria for the basic selection of local communities or associations of communities have been based first, on the [order of the Ministry on Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories dated April 25, 2022](#) and the updated wording and list of territories of the [order of the Ministry on Reintegration on the list of territorial communities on the territory of which hostilities took place or which are under occupation with changes from May 31, 2023](#).

Stage 1. Invitation of eligible communities to participate.

The Ministry of Restoration will send invitations to all eligible communities which meet the following two fundamental criteria:

1. Communities must be within the most affected regions of Ukraine, as defined in the [Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the activities of authorities on issues of recovery of regions, territories and infrastructure](#) and the [Resolution on the procedure for determining recovery regions](#) (a total of 12 out of 27 regions in Ukraine): Zhytomyr (66 communities), Kyiv (69), Chernihiv (57), Sumy (51), Kharkiv (53), Donetsk (66), Dnipropetrovsk (86), Zaporizhia (67), Kherson (49), Odesa (91), Mykolayivska

(52) and Luhansk regions (37).

Applications will be accepted from villages, settlements and city communities, with the exception of cities that are administrative centers of regions. This exclusion is justified by the fact that these city communities have the largest populations, budgets, and in the current situation, have a wide range of opportunities for capacity building than smaller communities.

2. The security situation in the community allows for recovery: there are no direct hostilities and demarcation lines on the territory of the community, and there is no decision by state authorities to evacuate the population of the local community, in accordance with the rules and procedure determined by the [resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the formation of a list of territories on which hostilities were or are being conducted or which are occupied](#).

Based on the results of receiving invitations, interested communities may independently fill out the online application form. Completed applications will be accumulated in a common database. Communities have the right to fill out applications independently or to submit a joint application in partnership with two or more communities, up to a maximum of 5 communities.

Stage 2. Initial Assessment of Applications

Applications will be assessed in two steps: first, on the basis of information provided by communities in their applications and second, on the basis of cross verification of indicators in applications with existing databases (in particular, the following criteria may be subject to such an assessment: work with other donor organizations, the number of IDPs, the number of destroyed objects, etc.).

Table 1: Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Scores points	Remarks
IMPACT OF WAR		
Fighting took place directly on the territory of the local community	+70	
The local community was under occupation	+50	
% of destroyed objects >30%	+50	
% population decrease (comparison of 2021 and 2022-2023 indicators) >15%	+50	
% of unemployment in the community >20%	+50	
CAPACITY		
The community is not included in the long-term (more than 3 months) donor program/plan for the reconstruction and development of local self-	+50	

government.		
The local community is able to appoint a high-level responsible person for constant cooperation and communication with the CLIR team (deputy head of the community, secretary, head of the financial department, chief of staff of the executive committee).	+130	
The community has significant investment potential or there is significant destruction of private enterprises that were budget generating before the war	+90	
Submission of an application questionnaire by a two and more local community associations (no more than 5 communities)	+40 +10 village council +20 Settlement council +30 city council (Max+190)	Points are awarded for each additional community in the combined Questionnaire.
Local self-government has been preserved in the community	+150	Communities in which military administrations have been implemented may be participants in a joint application
The local community has women leaders in local self-government in the highest positions in the community (head, deputy head of the community, secretary of the council)	+50	
The local community has a significant number of IDPs or a significant population outflow	+100	
The maximum number of points	1030	

Based on the calculation of points and compliance with the selection criteria, a list of applications from communities or joint applications of two or more communities will be formed in order from the highest to the lowest overall score.

Stage 3. Determination of the Short-List of Eligible Local Communities

The third step will be to determine the short list of communities that scored the highest points at the previous stage. Online interviews will be held with the community heads and responsible persons specified in the questionnaire application to verify information provided and clarify questions.

The key tasks of this stage are:

1. Score applications on the basis of data provided.
2. Pre-select communities based on scores.
3. Clarification of data from questionnaires and, if necessary, formation of a request for additional information.

Stage 4. Finalize list of local communities and/or associations of communities in order of priority

In the final stage of assessment, an initial and broad needs assessment will be undertaken in each short-listed community via a questionnaire and an offline discussion with each community to develop an initial understanding of key issues and recommendations for potential assistance.