

INTRODUCTION

Effective recovery and development initiatives rely heavily upon data collected at the local level. The use of data in recovery and development planning and implementation ensures that these processes are accountable, evidence-based and reflect the needs of the community.

This workshop sought to explore the current and possible role of data in locally led recovery initiatives in Ukraine. To do so, the workshop brought together representatives of the Ministry of Restoration, representatives of oblast and hromada authorities, donors, as well as international and Ukrainian humanitarian and development organisations. Through a series of structured panel discussions, the workshop participants examined the needs and challenges faced in generating and using data at the local level to meet requirements in accordance with the national strategy for recovery planning and garner the needed international assistance. This report summarises the rationale and outlines the main points of discussion, which were focused on the expected outcomes of the workshop. Finally, based upon these discussions, the report provides some conclusions and recommendations proposed by the participants.

RATIONALE

Established in 2014-2015, financial decentralization funding to hromadas have sought to reform democratic accountability and transparency at the local level, facilitated through a bottom-up approach to recovery and development. Since the full-scale invasion, hromadas have been responsible for providing information to the central government and soliciting funding for recovery. As a result, hromada territorial communities have become key partners for humanitarian and development actors in their efforts to support comprehensive reforms in Ukraine.

Given the large numbers of displaced persons and the dynamic nature of population movements in Ukraine, including returns, there is a substantial demand for data that is comprehensive, reliable and regularly updated. Territorial communities and hromada authorities have a good understanding of the current demographic situation and immediate needs in their localities and so are valuable sources of information for government ministries, as well as for humanitarian and development actors.

In this context, programming for recovery and development relies heavily upon data collected at the local level to enable evidence-based decision making. Some hromadas are legally required to prepare recovery plans and soon may be required to synchronise locally collected data with national registries. To achieve decentralization and transparency in recovery interventions and to ensure that local needs are adequately understood and addressed, the international community must support hromadas to lead and develop local information processes.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Develop a shared understanding of recovery-related data collection and analysis processes to inform local recovery interventions and identify data gaps.
2. Review barriers and ways forward for generating, managing, and using data at the hromada level.
3. Contribute towards the development of a unified approach that will enable hromadas to generate regular and reliable data for recovery planning and evidence-based interventions, thereby supporting the attainment of durable solutions.



SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

1. **Develop a shared understanding of recovery-related data collection and analysis processes to inform local recovery interventions and identify data gaps.**

Recovery is a central topic on the Ukrainian national agenda. The planning for national long-term recovery is outlined in the Strategy for Regional Development, which was initially elaborated in the pre-war context for the period 2020-2027 and has subsequently been updated. The state planning framework seeks to align with EU directives and regulations, as assistance from the EU makes up a potentially significant proportion of the recovery funding available.

Two key principles of recovery for the government are transparency and the ability to track the impact of recovery investments across the country. For this reason, the Government of Ukraine launched the [DREAM platform](#) – a pipeline for recovery project initiation, documentation, approval, monitoring and sourcing funding; as well as a Geo-Informational System (GIS) for regional development – a digital platform for local statistics and hromada profiling that will be the basis for monitoring national, regional and local recovery plans.

The DREAM platform will be interconnected with various other state informational systems, while the documentation for (proposed) projects is to be developed and uploaded by hromadas themselves. The documentation requirements for projects are codified in the government decrees related to Comprehensive Recovery Plans, which are mandatory for those hromadas situated in the territories of recovery (in accordance with state-defined criteria).

One of the key goals of the DREAM platform is to generate bottom-up recovery

project proposals, that are rich in detail and presented in an accessible format, thereby enhancing their potential to access funding. DREAM is predominantly designed for the registration of construction-focused projects, but it is possible to add soft-components to accompany the infrastructure objective.

While there are ambitious plans at the national level in relation to recovery, hromadas have limited capacities to meet all that is required of them. To facilitate and support hromadas to enhance their capacity to generate, manage and use data, the Government of Ukraine is trying to coordinate various international projects that focus on supporting hromadas with recovery planning and strengthening local data collection. In addition, certain oblasts have established offices to develop hromada profiles for international partners looking to collaborate with hromadas in the region, as is the case in Kharkivska Oblast.

As an interagency coordination group, the national Data for Solutions & Recovery (D4SR) is currently testing a framework of hromada data for recovery profiles in order to build cooperation between various actors and capacitate hromadas in filling gaps. Somewhat in contrast with governmental approaches to local statistics, this framework includes monitoring the needs of vulnerable groups in local populations and their access to necessary services. This is aimed at ensuring that recovery programmes are inclusive and incorporate all required measures in their action plans.

2. Review barriers and ways forward for generating, managing, and using data at the hromada level.

Hromada recovery planning processes require technical expertise in areas such as spatial analysis, evidence-based planning, community consultation and navigating various government databases. International initiatives such as the USAID-funded DOBRE (Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency), the SURGe-implemented CLIR (Community-Led Inclusive Recovery) with support from Global Affairs Canada, as well as projects being implemented by KMPG and UNDP in coordination with the Ministry for Restoration, are all trying to address the gaps in technical expertise at the local level that are required in order to assess the local context, facilitate community engagement and draft recovery planning documents.

Presentations by several hromada administrations revealed that communities are looking for support with recovery planning and implementation, mobilizing internal staff resources, and in engaging their local populations.

Representatives of hromadas in heavily conflict-affected oblasts present at the workshop testified that recovery planning in their hromadas had been significantly strengthened by local entrepreneurs. The incentive for their strong interest is due to their assets and facilities being based in the region, and they are unable to easily relocate to other regions. Economic recovery plays an important role in creating employment opportunities, an important factor for people considering returning to their home communities.

Although some hromadas are actively involved in recovery processes, many are not due to the constraints related partly to lack of equipment and lack of staff and expertise on how to work with data and generate meaningful insights for recovery-related decision making. Previously-occupied and more rural hromadas may be particularly exposed to such challenges.

The concept of local statistics currently being developed is not yet integrated into legislation. The context of the war has had significant implications for official statistics, notably local statistics, as such data is sensitive and cannot

3. Contribute towards the development of a unified approach that will enable hromadas to generate regular and reliable data for recovery planning and evidence-based interventions, thereby supporting the attainment of durable solutions to displacement.

While there are considerable ongoing efforts from governmental bodies, international organizations and civil society organizations across the country to explore area-based needs and contribute to better informed decisions, a lack of consistency and synergy in their assessments diminishes the potential impact of this work. While achieving a fully unified approach to local level data may be challenging, not least because of differences in purpose and motivation, a greater level of coordination is desirable. The workshop expressed widespread enthusiasm for closer collaboration and cooperation.

A potential forum for collaboration is the working group on local statistics, which is to be launched by the Ministry for Restoration in April 2024. The Ministry for Restoration stated that participation in the working group is open to those who would like to be involved. The goal of the working group is to develop a conceptual framework which includes a list of indicators and an achievable plan for implementation at the hromada level.

A further opportunity for collaboration is through the existing national Data for Solution and Recovery working group. This forum enables representatives from the Ministry for Restoration and various recovery planning related



be published. Legislation concerning the protection of personal data also presents challenges.

Finally, it was noted that the volume of state funding provided to hromadas is based upon how they compare with other hromadas, such as in relation to population size. Given that lower population numbers could mean less financial support for the next budget year, this may discourage hromadas from providing fully accurate demographic indicators without concerted support from international actors on data collection and transparency.

initiatives to participate in meetings to share information and exchange feedback on data gaps.

Finally, humanitarian and development actors could further support governmental tools and approaches to regional development, such as GIS; and/or the strengthening of regional and local capacities in recovery planning through the Centre for Excellence, which will soon be established by the Ministry for Restoration. This could be achieved through the provision of expert technical support in the development of methodologies and various types of training materials.

With regards to IDP statistics, workshop participants emphasized the importance of developing a nationwide study on IDPs. This would contribute to a better understanding and profile of area-based needs of IDPs among national, regional and local governmental bodies, as well as humanitarian and development actors. Improved synchronization in the methodological approach adopted in IDP assessments could contribute to the strengthening of data-driven management decisions, policies and programmes for integration, and other durable solutions for IDPs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **There is a need to develop a unified, simplified and flexible approach to support hromadas in developing plans and strategies for recovery.** This is challenging given the huge disparity in needs and capacities, linked to factors such as proximity to the frontline and shortages in skilled personnel.

To meet such challenges, there was widespread agreement on the importance of alignment between government-led recovery programmes and methodologies with those being implemented and supported by international partners. International partners should also look to strengthening their own collaboration to foster cohesion on community-based planning for recovery through existing forums of cooperation.

2. **It is crucial that the alignment in the coordination of recovery planning and programming is government-led, not least in order to promote sustainability and accountability.** The Ministry for Restoration will soon launch a Working Group focused on local statistics and data to support Ukraine's recovery and development, which could play an important role in this regard.

The Ministry for Restoration should be supported as much as possible through widespread and active participation of stakeholders in the Working Group focused on local statistics.

3. The Ministry for Restoration plans to establish a Centre for Excellence, where hromadas can share guidelines, templates, training tools, best practices, lessons learned, etc.

The proposed Centre for Excellence would provide an ideal forum for identifying and sharing examples of good practice among hromada authorities and in exploring how to replicate these at scale, such as in relation to developing plans and strategies for recovery and in data generation to support recovery project proposals.

4. Data requirements for recovery planning differ from those that hromadas are obliged to generate for official municipal/local reporting, such as for “social passports”.

Hromadas should be provided with accessible, step-by-step guidance and support in attaining minimal data requirements for both municipal/local statistics reporting, as well as evidence-based prioritization and targeting for recovery, that is inclusive, data-driven and community-led.

5. Recruiting, training and retaining qualified staff represents a huge challenge for many hromadas.

International partners should provide training and capacity building to hromadas on key skills for recovery planning and developing project proposals, including: data generation and data analysis; project management; and drafting budgets and narrative proposals. In addition, physical resources that are often in short supply, such as IT hardware and software.

ANNEX 1: WORKSHOP AGENDA

09:30-09:40	Welcome remarks — Joshua Phillip-Holmes , Assessment and Data Coordination Manager, IOM
09:40-10:00	Presentation: “Government of Ukraine’s Strategy for Recovery Planning at the Hromada Level” — Dmytro Turchak , Head of Department of Strategic Planning and Regional Policy of the Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine (Ministry for Restoration)
10:00-11:00	Presentation: “Using Data to Plan for and Monitor Recovery Activities at the Hromada Level”, Khrystyna Zelinska , project coordinator for the development and implementation of GIS and Viktor Nestulia , Head of the DREAM Project office
11:00 - 11:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15 - 12:00	Panel Discussion: “Identify Existing Data Gaps and Complementing Government-Led Recovery Processes” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siebe Geerts, Programme Officer at the Transition & Recovery Unit, IOM • Celine Lefebvre, Co-chair of CPDSR working group • Ivan Dudka, Head of the Economics and International Relationships Department at the Kharkiv Oblast administration • Khrystyna Zelinska, GIS • Ewa Gheeraert — Moderator, Coordination Officer (Durable Solutions and Recovery), IOM
12:00 - 12:30	Plenary Discussion
12:30 - 13:30	
13:30 - 15:00	Reality check: “How is Data for Recovery Managed and Used at the Hromada Level” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitalii Karabanov, Head of the Balakliska military administration • Ivan Kukhta, Head of the Snigurisvka military administration • Olga Shubina, USAID DOBRE Program expert • Andriy Tymoshenko, Director at KPMG • Andrii Fedotov, Moderator, Project Specialist (Evidence-Based Governance), IOM
15:00 - 15:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:15 - 17:00	Ways Forward: “Opportunities for Successful Collaborations between Government-Led Planning and International Initiatives” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lidia Yusina, Deputy Head of the Strategic Planning and Regional Policy Department at the Ministry for Restoration • Olena Nyzhnyk, USAID HOVERLA Activity Senior Expert • Anastasia Fitisova, Senior Research Manager at the Durable Solutions Unit, IMPACT Ukraine • Yuliana Hasanbekova, Social Passports Development Coordinator at the Stabilization Support Services Charity Foundation • Joshua Phillip-Holmes, Assessment and Data Coordination Manager, IOM
17:00-17:30	Closing Remarks

ANNEX 2: LIST OF ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED

1. Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine (Ministry for Restoration)
2. Balakliiska hromada (Kharkiv Oblast)
3. Snihurivska hromada (Mykolaiv Oblast)
4. Drohobyska hromada (Lviv Oblast)
5. Trostianetska hromada (Sumy Oblast)
6. Ladyzhynska hromada (Vinnytsia Oblast)
7. Mykolaiv Oblast administration
8. Kharkiv Oblast administration
9. Sumy Oblast administration
10. International Organization for Migration (IOM)
11. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
12. Community Planning, Durable Solutions and Recovery Working Group (CPDSR)
13. People in Need (PIN)
14. UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)
15. REACH
16. USAID Program, "Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency" (DOBRE)
17. Community-led Inclusive Recovery (CLIR), an initiative of the "Support to Ukraine's Government Reforms" project (SURGe)
18. KPMG
19. Digital Restoration Ecosystem for Accountable Management (DREAM)
20. Unified Geographic Information System (GIS) for monitoring and evaluating the development of regions and communities
21. Right to Protection (R2P)
22. Charitable Foundation "Stabilization Support Services"
23. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
24. Embassy of Canada to Ukraine
25. Embassy of Czech Republic in Ukraine
26. Kyiv School of Economics
27. The Ukraine Governance and Local Accountability (HOVERLA) USAID program
28. Ukraine – Local Empowerment, Accountability and Development (U-LEAD)
29. Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
30. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
31. Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Social Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
32. Relief Coordination Center (RCC)
33. Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)



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