



HAVEN III White Book: Strengthening Local Recovery Planning Through Data, Participation, and Targeted Support

HAVEN

Humanitarian Action
through Volunteers,
Enablers & Networks



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Glossary

Civil society organization (CSO) – is a voluntary and organized association of citizens (regardless of official legalization) that is created to pursue common interests (cultural, economic, age, regional, religious, professional, social, political, etc.).

Digital Restoration Ecosystem for Accountable Management (DREAM) – a government digital ecosystem designed to ensure transparent and accountable management of Ukraine’s recovery and development processes, covering the full lifecycle of public investment projects – from submission and planning to implementation, monitoring, and public reporting.

Hromada – the basic unit of local self-government in Ukraine, defined as a community of residents living in settlements (villages, towns, and cities), united by shared interests related to their livelihoods and the provision of essential living conditions, and exercising the right, within the limits of the law, to independently address matters of local significance, both directly and through local self-government bodies

Internally displaced person (IDP) – a citizen of Ukraine, a foreigner or a stateless person staying on the territory of Ukraine on legal grounds and being entitled to permanent residence in the territory of Ukraine, who was forced to leave or abandon his/her residence place as a result of or in order to avoid the negative impact of armed conflict, temporary occupation, situations of generalized violence, mass violations of human rights and disasters of natural or human-made origin.

Local authorities – for the purposes of this study, local authorities include representatives of the departments of economic development, social protection, and land maintenance at the hromada.

Local actor – local authorities and organizations, group or institution, with a permanent presence in the hromadas, which aims to respond to the crisis-related needs of the population (or a group therein).

Local Development Strategy (LDS) – a strategic planning document of state regional policy that defines strategic and operational objectives and tasks for the sustainable development of a territorial community. It is developed for the implementation period (2021-2027) of the State Strategy for Regional Development and the relevant regional development strategy, in accordance with the provisions of the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of State Regional Policy”.

Local Recovery Plan (LRP) – a state regional policy implementation document that defines, for a medium-term period (3–4 years), a set of measures, projects, and local development programmes corresponding to the tasks set out in the Local Development Strategy. The plan specifies responsible implementing entities, implementation timelines, volumes and sources of financing, and performance indicators for monitoring implementation.

Starosta district – a territorial unit in Ukraine that is defined by a village, settlement or city council to represent the interests of residents of one or more settlements (except for the administrative center of the hromada). This district is headed by a starosta, who is elected by the residents of this district and is responsible for their needs.

Ukraine Facility – a dedicated financial support instrument established by the European Union to assist Ukraine’s recovery, reconstruction, and modernization over the period 2024–2027, providing up to €50 billion in stable and predictable financial support. It aims to support Ukraine’s financing needs to ensure uninterrupted public services, mobilize investment for economic recovery and reconstruction, and assist in reforms necessary for Ukraine’s path toward European Union accession.

Vulnerability – the conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes which increase the susceptibility of an individual, a community, assets or systems to the impacts of hazards.

Introduction

This White Book has been developed as a complementary output of the HAVEN project “Humanitarian Action through Volunteers, Organizers, and Networks - Phase Three”, supported by UKAid. While the primary outputs of the project are the Local Recovery Plans and Local Development Strategies developed for participating hromadas, the White Book is intended to document the overall approach, methodology, and experience of supporting local recovery planning in Ukraine. It brings together lessons learned from the implementation of HAVEN III, with a particular focus on the use of data, participatory mechanisms, and targeted support to strengthen local planning processes.

The document is designed for a broad audience, including national and local authorities, development and humanitarian actors, and other stakeholders involved in recovery and development programming in Ukraine. By outlining the rationale, methods, and practical considerations underpinning the HAVEN III approach, the White Book aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on how to best support hromadas as primary actors in recovery through strengthening evidence-based and participatory planning processes.

Background and context

The full-scale invasion has triggered a protracted humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. Intensified hostilities and systematic strikes on energy infrastructure have disrupted essential services—heating, water, and healthcare—especially in frontline areas. This collapse of critical systems, combined with a massive displacement crisis (affecting over 10 million people), has exhausted local resources.

Against this backdrop, there is a growing recognition of the importance of localized recovery planning. Hromadas are uniquely positioned to identify priority needs, mobilize local resources, and coordinate stakeholders, as they possess first-hand knowledge of local conditions and community dynamics. The war has also created severe staffing challenges. The evacuation and displacement of the civilian population has resulted in the loss of experienced professionals in local government, healthcare, education, and the utility sector, reducing the quality and timeliness of service delivery. Concurrently, the weakening economy and shrinking tax base—caused by business closures, population loss, and declining incomes—have limited the financial capacity of communities to maintain services and implement development projects. The arrival of many internally displaced persons (IDPs) has placed additional strain on housing, medical, and social infrastructure. In many communities, the needs of IDPs exceed available resources, worsening access to services for all residents.

However, hromadas’ ability to fulfil their leading role in recovery planning effectively requires access to reliable and up-to-date data, inclusive mechanisms for engaging diverse stakeholder groups, and planning processes that are aligned with national and oblast-level recovery and development frameworks.

Institutional Transformation as a Prerequisite for Strategic Development

The decentralization reform has significantly transformed the institutional environment of territorial communities. The transfer of powers, resources, and responsibilities to the local level created a fundamentally new model of territorial development management. Communities ceased to be mere implementers of central government decisions and gained the status of full-fledged drivers of local development policy.

Until 2014, Ukraine’s system of local self-government formally complied with the requirements of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ratified in 1997), but in practice remained financially and

administratively dependent on the central government. Within this context, the basic administrative levels—village and settlement councils—were characterized by fragmentation, a limited tax base, and a lack of managerial capacity. Many communities were unable to provide even a minimal set of public services.

Following the 2013–2014 Revolution of Dignity and the declaration of an irreversible course toward European integration, decentralization became a key component of public administration reform. Its strategic rationale was based on several principles:

- bringing public services closer to citizens;
- creating economically capable territorial communities;
- increasing accountability of authorities;
- reducing corruption risks through power-sharing;
- strengthening the territorial resilience of the state.

Thus, decentralization was seen not only as an administrative reform but also as an element of state security and democratization.

In April 2014, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Concept for Reforming Local Self-Government and the Territorial Organization of Power, which established the reform architecture: formation of a capable basic level of communities, clear delineation of powers between levels of government, financial decentralization, and administrative-territorial reform. A key milestone was the 2015 Law on Voluntary Amalgamation of Territorial Communities, which initiated the creation of united territorial communities (UTCs) as a new basic unit of local self-government with direct inter-budgetary relations with the state budget.

The year 2020 was pivotal for the administrative-territorial system. The basic level was completed with the establishment of 1,469 territorial communities covering the entire territory of Ukraine. The voluntary consolidation process transitioned to its final stage, with the state determining the final community configuration. In July 2020, the Verkhovna Rada approved the consolidation of districts, reducing their number from 490 to 136, optimizing subregional governance and eliminating excessive fragmentation. The decentralization reform thus achieved its completed spatial configuration.

After February 24, 2022, decentralization gained new significance. Territorial communities became key actors in ensuring population well-being under martial law, including evacuation, humanitarian assistance, support for internally displaced persons (IDPs), and infrastructure restoration. Despite temporary restrictions (e.g. military administrations, centralization of certain decisions), the decentralization model has proven resilient. Financially capable communities were able to respond quickly to crisis challenges.

Legislative adaptation continues to address wartime conditions and to prepare the legal framework for post-war recovery. Issues of power delineation, legal oversight, and integration of the reform into the European integration process remain relevant.

Decentralization and the Public Investment System

Financial decentralization has been a key driver of community development. Assigning a portion of national taxes to local budgets (notably personal income tax), expanding own-source revenues, and introducing a new inter-budgetary transfer system have increased communities' financial autonomy.

For communities, decentralization provides the ability to independently determine budget priorities, increase the proportion of funds allocated to development, implement medium-term budget planning, and co-finance both state and international investment programs. This has meant that the community budgets have increasingly become a tool for achieving strategic goals rather than merely a mechanism for covering current expenditures.

The reform created conditions for integrating communities into a multi-level public investment system, including:

- the State Regional Development Fund (SRDF);
- socio-economic development grants;
- infrastructure grants;
- international technical assistance;
- EU and other donor grant programs.

Under the new model, the community assumes multiple roles: it serves as the initiator of development projects, the direct beneficiary of funding, a co-investor through its local budget, and the main actor responsible for implementing and managing these projects. This requires:

- an approved Development Strategy;
- a portfolio of investment projects;
- preparation of project and cost documentation;
- transparent management procedures.

In modern conditions, a community development strategy serves not only as a programmatic document but also as a key tool for managing public investments, attracting financial resources, and ensuring sustainable socio-economic development of the territory.

The architecture of strategic planning in Ukraine is a multi-level, hierarchically structured, and normatively regulated system of documents that spans national, sectoral, regional, and local levels. It integrates the state's strategic development goals with budget planning and public investment mechanisms. The strategic planning system is based on:

- The Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of State Regional Policy";
- The Budget Code of Ukraine (specifically provisions regarding medium-term budget planning);
- The Law "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine";
- Bylaws of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine concerning the development and monitoring of strategic documents;
- Recovery-related documents (Ukraine Recovery Plan, Ukraine Facility mechanisms, etc.).

At the national level, long-term development priorities are defined through the state vision and the State Regional Development Strategy, while medium-term priorities are operationalized through the Ukraine Recovery Plan, the Ukraine Plan under the Ukraine Facility, sectoral strategies, and the Budget Declaration, which together link reforms, targets, and financial frameworks. The regional level adapts these priorities to the territorial context through oblast development strategies and programs,

while at the local level, community development strategies, action plans, medium-term budgets, and project portfolios (including through the DREAM system) translate strategic objectives into concrete investment decisions and provide the basis for mobilizing state and donor financing.

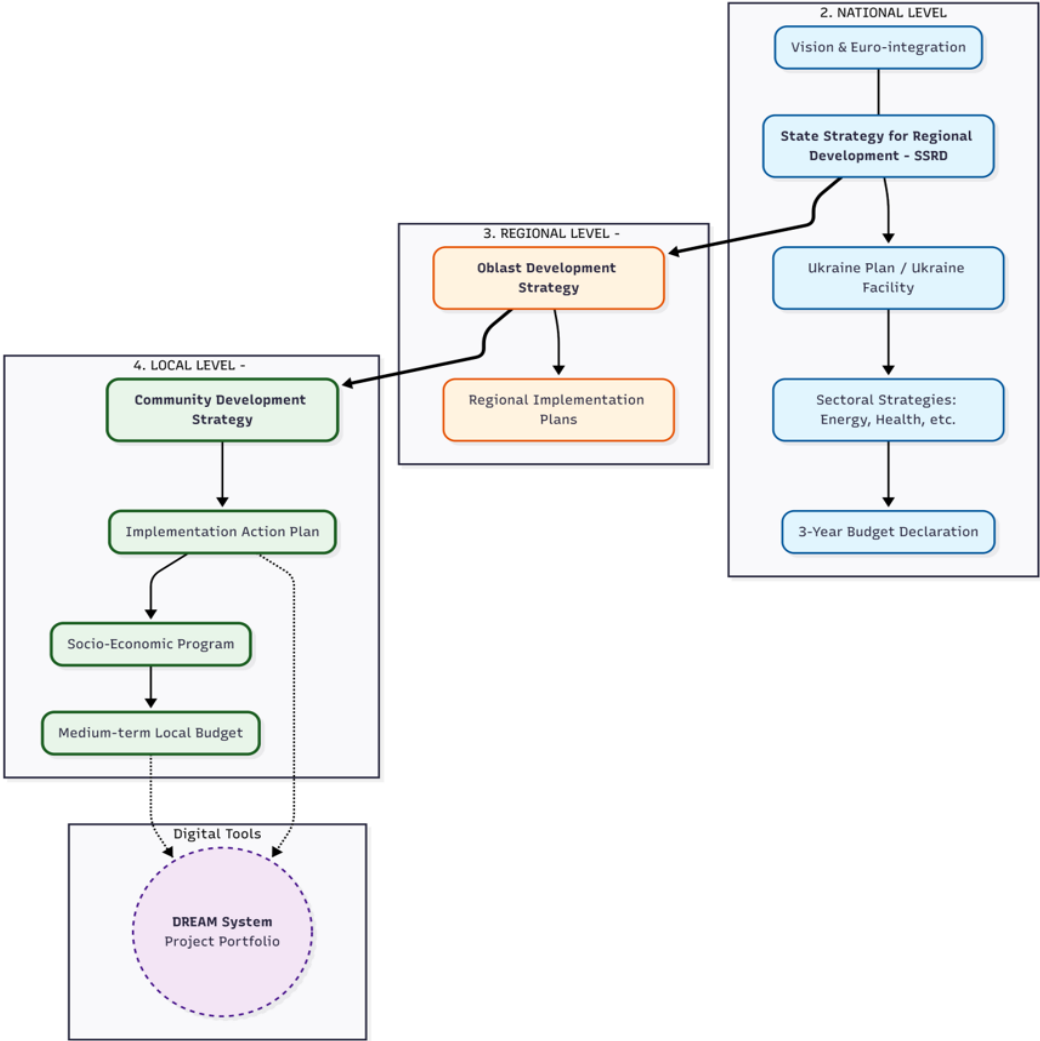


Figure 1. Architecture of strategic planning in Ukraine

Why is local planning a requirement for donors and government?

Strategy-based funding allows donors to understand a community’s long-term objectives, its priority needs, and its implementation roadmap. A focus on strategy ensures that resources are directed toward initiatives that address real community needs and development goals, rather than merely “symbolic” projects.

A strategy creates a coherent logic between various community projects and initiatives. This reduces funding duplication, enables the integration of state, local, and donor resources, and enhances the overall efficiency of capital utilization. A strategy demonstrates that a community possesses a systemic approach, a concrete action plan, and the capacity to sustain investments in the future, including the ongoing maintenance and operation of facilities.

The existence of an approved strategy enables donors to track progress and evaluate the community's results and accountability. This is particularly vital for international grants and programs, where rigorous reporting is a prerequisite for continued funding.

Examples of Initiatives Where a Strategy is a Prerequisite for Funding:

1. State Program: “Comprehensive Recovery Program” (CRP). This is the primary document for war-affected communities. A community cannot receive funds from the State Fund for the Liquidation of the Consequences of Armed Aggression for major reconstruction projects without an approved Comprehensive Recovery Program. To secure funding for post-destruction recovery, the community must present a development strategy or a recovery plan that aligns priorities, resources, and implementation timelines.
2. State Fund for Regional Development (SFRD, Ukraine). To access these funds, a community must have an approved Development Strategy and a portfolio of projects that correspond to regional priorities.
3. EU / “EU4Business” and “EU4Recovery” Programs. Grants for infrastructure or private sector development are provided only to communities with valid strategic development plans that demonstrate project alignment with local priorities.
4. Ukraine Community Recovery Fund (UCRF). This is a multi-donor UN mechanism that supports strategic local recovery and resilience initiatives. It aims to strategically coordinate assistance in communities, where projects should be based on an analysis of local needs and priorities.
5. The Ukraine Facility is a special financial mechanism of the European Union, created to support Ukraine from 2024 to 2027. Although the Ukraine Facility does not finance communities directly, it creates a general investment context where local development strategies become an important part of integrating communities into national investment processes (through alignment with the Ukraine Plan and regional frameworks).
6. EIB Loans (European Investment Bank). Under the “Ukraine Recovery Programme,” priority is given to projects that comply with regional development strategies and the “Build Back Better” principle.
7. International Humanitarian and Recovery Programs Technical assistance projects such as USAID HOVERLA and U-LEAD with Europe are among the largest partners for communities. The provision of equipment and resources is often conditional upon the existence of a Community Development Strategy.

Therefore, the process of developing local planning documents, in particular Local Development Strategies, is of paramount importance to hromadas.

Section 1. HAVEN programme overview

The HAVEN programme has been supported by FCDO since June 2023, with its first phase concluding in March 2024, followed by a second phase from April 2024 to March 2025, and a third phase from April 2025 to March 2026. This programme aims to strengthen humanitarian response structures and provide sustained services to war-affected communities. Specifically, programme activities are focused on addressing the priority protection needs of affected populations and strengthening the localized coordination of humanitarian assistance in close-to-frontline communities. The HAVEN programme is implemented by a large consortium of organisations, including Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP), Geneva Call (GC), Acted, IMPACT/REACH, the Relief Coordination Centre (RCC) and the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC).

The HAVEN programme maintains its relevance by designing, delivering and adapting operations in line with changes in humanitarian and conflict dynamics in Ukraine. Support is informed by regular monitoring and careful analysis of the target beneficiaries' needs ensuring support is directed to those most at risk – particularly in frontline and hard-to-access areas. Sub-granting is used in a flexible way, allowing partners to respond to emerging protection issues or support locally-driven initiatives. The HAVEN project is fundamentally designed around greater localization, centralizing the role of local authorities, CSOs, NGOs, volunteers, and networks to efficiently respond to needs on the ground and building sustainable capacity.

Despite similarities, consortium members have different approaches and focuses in both their overall work and within the HAVEN programme.

As members of the consortium, in Phase 3 of HAVEN project, IMPACT responded to hromadas' needs by supporting selected hromadas in strengthening their capacity to develop Local Recovery Plans (LRPs) and Local Development Strategies (LDSs) that are evidence-based, utilize participatory processes, and coherent with official planning processes. Building on lessons learned from previous phases of the HAVEN initiative and similar programmes, HAVEN III recognizes that effective recovery planning must go beyond the production of formal documents. It requires a structured process that combines data review, stakeholder engagement, and institutional capacity strengthening to ensure that planning outputs are both technically sound and locally owned.

A central premise of the HAVEN III approach is that data-driven decision-making is a prerequisite for meaningful recovery planning. In many hromadas, official data is fragmented, outdated, or incomplete, particularly in relation to post-2022 changes in population dynamics, infrastructure damage, service provision, and economic activity. Addressing these gaps involves not only collecting and structuring available administrative and spatial data but also validating and complementing it through consultations with local authorities and community representatives. By strengthening local access to, and use of, multi-sectoral data, HAVEN III supports hromadas in structuring and reviewing available information relevant to recovery and development planning.

Equally important is the role of participatory processes in shaping recovery and development priorities. The impacts of the war have not been experienced uniformly across communities or population groups, and recovery priorities may differ significantly between the administrative centers of hromadas and their peripheral settlements, as well as between residents, civil society actors, and local businesses. HAVEN III therefore places strong emphasis on engagement mechanisms that allow different stakeholder groups to articulate their perspectives, needs, and aspirations. Through structured consultations, focus group discussions, and joint analysis workshops, the project seeks to ensure that recovery planning reflects a broad range of voices and fosters a sense of shared ownership over the resulting strategies.

Section 2. Selection of Hromadas

The selection of partner hromadas under the HAVEN III project was a critical preparatory step designed to ensure that recovery planning support was provided in contexts where it was both feasible and most needed. Given the ongoing conflict, security constraints, and uneven distribution of recovery support across regions, the selection process was guided by a structured, transparent, and sequential methodology. This approach aimed to balance operational safety considerations with strategic relevance, avoiding duplication of existing initiatives while prioritizing hromadas with unmet planning needs and a demonstrated willingness to engage in a participatory recovery process.

The geographical focus of HAVEN III is on frontline and de-occupied areas in Zaporizka and Kharkivska oblasts. Within this scope, four hromadas were selected for participation in the project: Matviivska, Mykhailo-Lukashivska, and Stepnenska hromadas in Zaporizka oblast, and Berestynska hromada in Kharkivska oblast. The selection of these hromadas followed a comprehensive screening process consisting of three stages: security-based selection, assessment of relevance and need for strategic support, and confirmation of interest and readiness to engage.

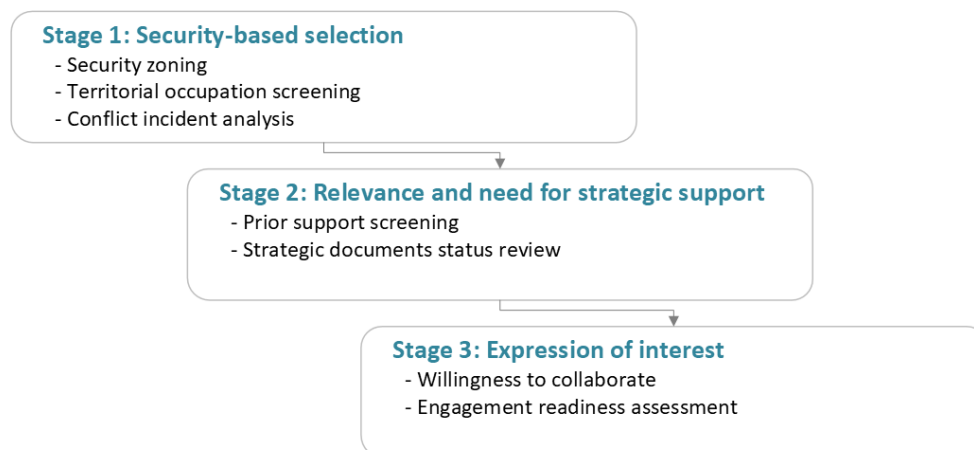


Figure 2. Methodology for selecting partner hromadas

Security-based selection

At the first stage of the selection process, one of the key criteria considered is the security situation, which determines the possibility of unrestricted access for project teams, proper logistical arrangements, as well as the organization of in-person engagement and participatory planning activities.

In particular, the assessment takes into account proximity to the frontline and the number of conflict-related security incidents recorded during the recent period. At the same time, selected hromadas should still be relatively close to the frontline, in order to ensure that they are among those most affected by the war and with the highest recovery needs.

To determine spatial security parameters, security zones (L3A–L3C), developed by the Acted security team, are applied. The territory of each hromada is analysed based on the share of its area falling within the respective risk zones, in particular L3A, L3B, and L3C.

Only hromadas meeting the following criteria are eligible for further consideration:

- $L3B \leq 50\%$ – no more than half of the hromada’s territory falls within the high-risk zone;
- $L3C = 0$ – no part of the hromada’s territory is located within the most dangerous zone.

Hromadas with any share of territory classified as L3C are excluded from the selection process, as conducting strategic planning activities in such conditions would be unsafe and inappropriate. The presence of temporarily occupied territories is also considered: hromadas with any portion of their territory under occupation are not eligible for selection.

In addition, conflict incident data from the ACLED database is analysed. Indicators reflecting the total number and density of security incidents (including shelling) over the past three years and the past three months are taken into account, allowing for an assessment of both the intensity of hostilities and the current level of risk.

This approach ensures the identification of hromadas that meet the defined spatial and security criteria and guarantees a well-justified, transparent, and reproducible selection process.

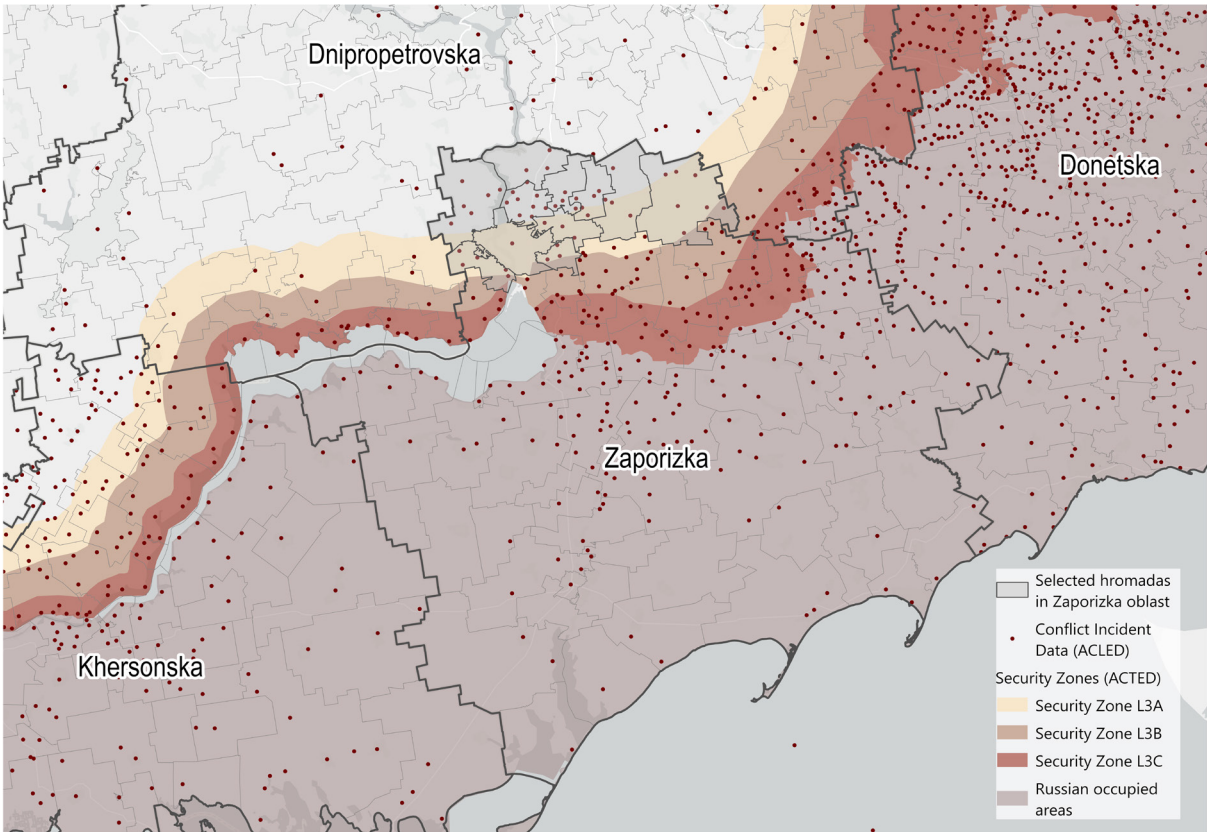


Figure 3. Visualization of hromadas selection based on security factors

Relevance and need for strategic planning support

Following the security screening, the second stage focused on identifying hromadas with the greatest need for structured recovery and development planning support. This stage aimed to ensure that HAVEN III resources were directed to hromadas where such support would fill clear gaps and complement, rather than duplicate, existing initiatives.

Hromadas that had previously participated in similar recovery planning programmes, including earlier phases of HAVEN or other internationally supported strategic planning initiatives, were excluded from further consideration. This criterion was applied to avoid overlap and to prioritize hromadas that had not yet benefited from comparable support.

The availability and status of existing strategic documents were also assessed during this stage. Publicly accessible information from official hromada websites and social media channels was reviewed to determine whether hromadas had active LDSs or LRPs. Hromadas were categorized based on whether they lacked such documents entirely, had strategies developed prior to the full-scale invasion that had not been updated, or had already adopted new or revised plans since 2022. Priority was given to hromadas without active or up-to-date strategic documents, as well as those whose existing plans no longer reflected the current conflict-affected context.

This assessment allowed the project to identify hromadas where the development of a LRP or LDS would provide clear added value and respond to documented planning needs arising from the impacts of the war.

Expression of interest and readiness to engage

The final stage of the selection process involved direct engagement with shortlisted hromadas to assess their interest in participating in HAVEN III and their readiness to engage in a collaborative planning process. Preliminary interviews with local authorities and in-person visits by project teams were conducted to confirm both feasibility and commitment.

During this stage, attention was given to the level of buy-in from hromada leadership and relevant departments, as well as the perceived capacity of local administrations to participate in data collection, stakeholder engagement, and joint analysis activities. This step was essential to ensure that selected hromadas were not only eligible based on security and need but also motivated to invest time and resources into a participatory recovery planning process.

Only hromadas that demonstrated a clear willingness to collaborate and engage with multiple stakeholders throughout the planning cycle were selected for inclusion in the project.

Outcome of the selection process

The application of this three-stage methodology resulted in the selection of four hromadas that met all security, relevance, and readiness criteria. These hromadas represent diverse local contexts within frontline and de-occupied areas, while sharing common challenges related to conflict-related damage, disrupted service provision, and the need to update or develop strategic planning documents.

By applying a security-first, needs-based, and participatory selection methodology, HAVEN III established a foundation for effective recovery planning support. The selected hromadas provided contexts in which data-driven planning processes could be meaningfully implemented, while also ensuring that project activities were feasible within existing security and operational constraints.

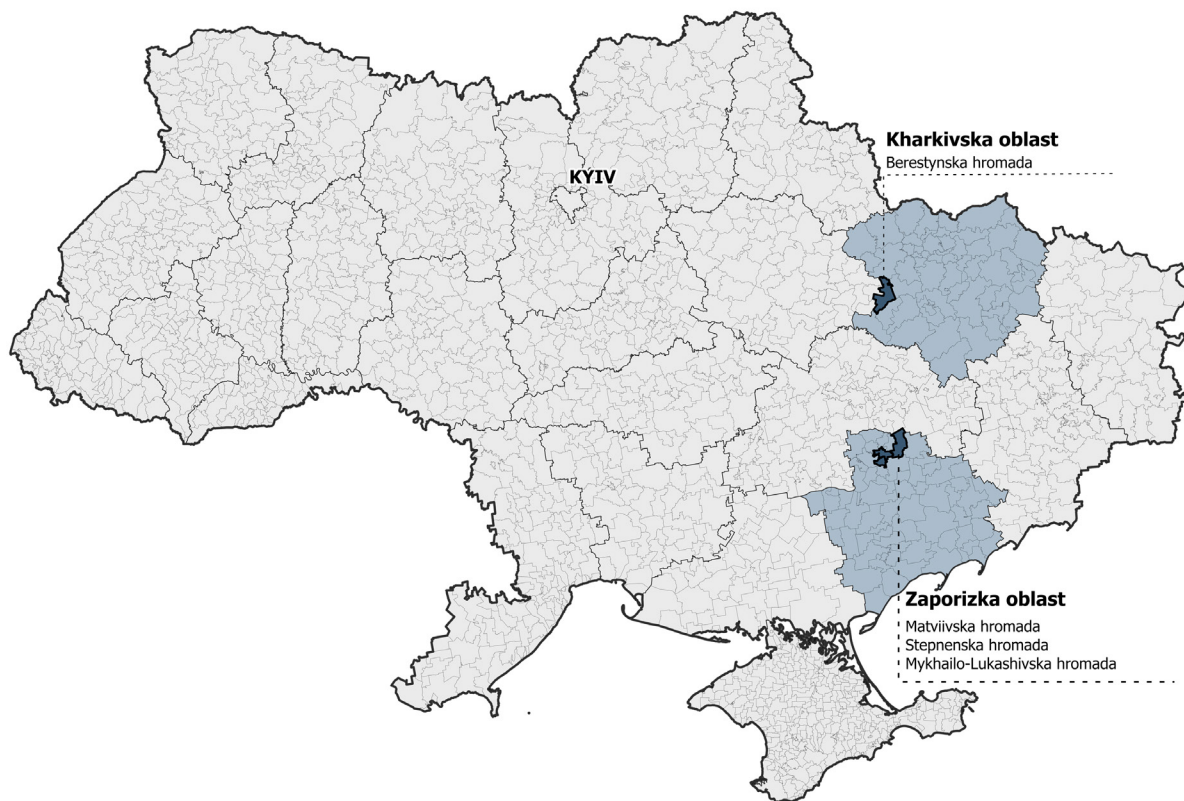


Figure 4. Final selected hromadas for the HAVEN III project

Lessons learned

- Forming a shortlist after the second selection stage that includes more hromadas than the final target number is essential to ensure flexibility and timely decision-making in case shortlisted candidates become ineligible at later stages.
- Conducting in-person field visits to candidate hromadas is critical, as key factors such as transport accessibility, infrastructure condition, and overall feasibility can only be fully assessed on the ground.
- The level of interest and political will of a hromada to engage in recovery planning should be given greater weight than purely technical or staffing capacity. While institutional capacity remains important, it should not dominate the selection process; a balanced assessment of needs, motivation, and capacity is essential for effective recovery planning support.

Section 3. Supporting Local Recovery Planning

3.1 Development of Local Recovery Plans and Local Development Strategies

Purpose and scope of LRPs and LDSs

Under the HAVEN III project, support to the development of Local Recovery Plans and Local Development Strategies is conceived as a structured and guided process rather than a standalone technical output. The approach recognizes that hromadas are operating in a dynamic and conflict-affected environment where planning needs vary depending on the level of war-related damage, institutional capacity, and the existence or relevance of pre-existing strategic documents. As such, HAVEN III provides tailored support to participating hromadas, co-facilitating the development of LRPs and LDSs while ensuring local ownership and decision-making throughout the process.

Differences between recovery-focused and long-term development planning

LDSs are oriented toward shaping future development trajectories and defining medium- to long-term priorities that guide decision-making across sectors. They establish a strategic vision and articulate strategic and operational objectives that reflect the hromada's desired direction over a multi-year period. LDSs therefore focus on structural aspects of development, including the identification of comparative advantages, longer-term risks and opportunities, and the positioning of the hromada within broader regional and national development frameworks. As a result, LDSs provide a stable reference for planning and coordination, even when specific interventions and implementation modalities may change over time.

Local Recovery Plans, by contrast, are recovery-focused and respond to the impacts and consequences of the war. They place emphasis on priorities that require practical and time-bound solutions, including the restoration and rehabilitation of infrastructure and services, and measures addressing constraints affecting local socio-economic well-being. In this sense, LRPs serve as instruments for defining and structuring recovery actions in the medium term, linking identified needs to a set of concrete measures, projects, and programmes. LRPs are therefore more operational in nature, while remaining aligned with the strategic objectives articulated in LDSs.

The relationship between LDSs and LRPs is defined by coherence rather than separation. Recovery planning is not treated as a parallel process detached from development planning, but as a recovery-oriented component aligned with longer-term objectives. This approach supports continuity between immediate recovery priorities and long-term development goals and enables hromadas to avoid fragmentation across planning documents. Where both instruments are developed, LRPs provide a structured pathway for prioritizing and operationalizing actions that correspond to the strategic direction set out in the LDS.

At the hromada level, the emphasis placed on each instrument may vary depending on local context. In hromadas where pre-existing strategic documents are outdated or no longer reflect current realities due to war-related impacts, LDS development provides an opportunity to redefine long-term direction and priorities. In hromadas where the strategic direction is already established or where the immediate need is to translate priorities into actionable recovery measures, an LRP provides a mechanism for structuring recovery interventions in the medium term. In both cases, the intent is to maintain coherence between recovery actions and longer-term development planning.

Institutional and procedural framework for local recovery and development planning

The development of LDSs and LRPs is embedded within a formally defined institutional and procedural framework at the level of local self-government. The planning process is initiated through an official decision of the hromada council, which establishes the legal and procedural basis for preparing the planning document and confirms the mandate of hromada executive bodies to lead its development. This decision marks the formal start of the planning process and defines its scope and timeframe in alignment with applicable national and regional policy frameworks.

Responsibility for coordinating the preparation of LDSs and LRPs lies with the executive bodies of the territorial hromada. Within this structure, a designated structural unit is identified to manage the planning process, ensure coordination between different departments, and serve as the focal point for interaction with external stakeholders. This institutional arrangement supports continuity in the planning process and facilitates the integration of inputs from different sectors and functional areas of local governance.

To support coordinated planning, the process involves the establishment of a working group. The working group brings together representatives of hromada executive bodies, state authorities, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders. Ensuring that different groups and perspectives (e.g. in terms of gender, age, etc.) are adequately represented is also taken into consideration. The mandate, tasks, and working procedures of the group are defined through an approved regulation, which sets out its role in contributing to analytical work, discussions, and reviews of draft planning materials.

Publicity and openness are integral elements of the institutional framework for the development of LDSs and LRPs. Information on the details of the LDS and LRP development processes, including timelines and formats for submitting proposals, is disseminated through official websites and other communication channels of the local council. Consultations with interested stakeholders, public discussions of draft materials, and deliberations within deputy commissions are conducted at different stages of preparation. These processes create structured opportunities for stakeholders to contribute input and to review how proposals are considered during the planning process.

Throughout the preparation of LDSs and LRPs, roles and responsibilities are distributed across local governance structures in accordance with existing mandates. Executive bodies are responsible for technical preparation and coordination, while the hromada retains decision-making authority with regard to approval and subsequent amendments of the planning documents. This procedural arrangement ensures that planning outputs are developed through a combination of administrative coordination, stakeholder engagement, and formal political endorsement.

Within the HAVEN III framework, this institutional and procedural setup provides the foundation for structured and transparent planning processes. By operating within established governance arrangements, LDSs and LRPs are positioned as formal planning instruments that can be integrated into local decision-making, budgeting, and coordination mechanisms, while remaining responsive to recovery and development needs identified through evidence-based and participatory processes. In addition, LDSs and LRPs create practical entry points for humanitarian and early recovery actors by articulating locally defined priorities and linking them to clear objectives and a transparent prioritisation logic. This enables organisations with specific mandates and time-bound resources to map discrete interventions to agreed local priorities and contribute in a way that remains coherent with the hromada's wider strategic direction, even when activities are constrained by donor timelines, budgets, or sectoral scope.

Methodological stages of Local Development Strategy and Local Recovery Plan development

The development of LDSs and LRPs follows a structured sequence of methodological stages designed to ensure that planning decisions are grounded in evidence, aligned with stakeholder perspectives, and coherent across different levels of governance. These stages form a continuous process that links data collection and analysis with strategic decision-making and the prioritization of recovery-oriented actions. Within HAVEN III, the legislative framework and existing methodological guidance informed the overall approach, while practical implementation was tailored to the local context and the operational capacity of the project team.

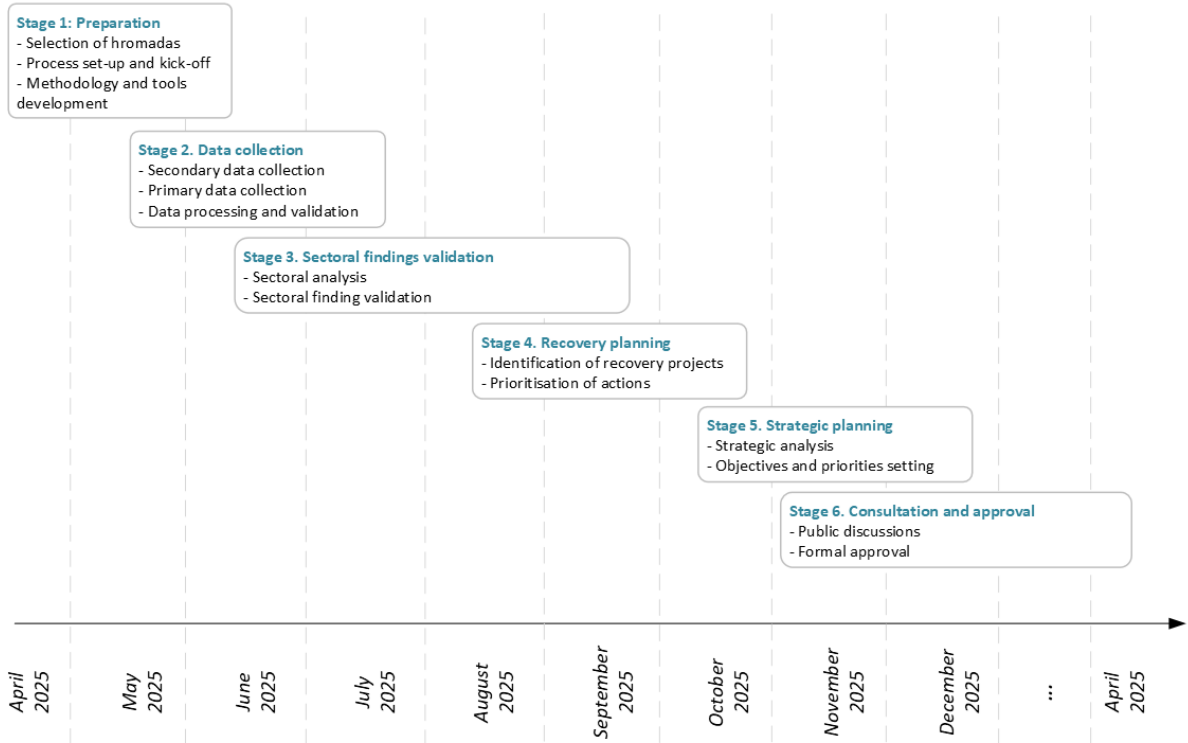


Figure 5. Roadmap for HAVEN III project

As outlined in the indicative roadmap for HAVEN III project, the process begins with preparatory activities aimed at establishing a solid analytical and organizational foundation. At this initial stage, available administrative, statistical, and spatial data are reviewed, alongside existing planning and urban development documents where applicable. In parallel, coordination mechanisms are put in place through engagement with local authorities and the establishment of working arrangements, ensuring clarity of roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This phase creates the necessary conditions for structured data collection and collaborative planning.

Building on this foundation, the process moves into comprehensive data collection. Both secondary and primary data sources are used to develop a detailed picture of the current situation of the territorial hromada. Secondary data collected includes official information provided by hromada administrations, as well as relevant regional and national statistics. These data sources are complemented by primary data collection activities, such as consultations, interviews, and

focus group discussions with local stakeholders. Together, these inputs capture information on demographic dynamics, socio-economic conditions, infrastructure and service provision, and other contextual factors relevant to recovery and development planning.

Once data collection is completed, attention shifts to thematic and sectoral analysis. Collected information is analyzed to identify key challenges, needs, and capacities across priority sectors, as well as to highlight disparities within the hromada where relevant. Analytical findings are discussed and validated with stakeholders through structured exchanges, ensuring that the analysis reflects both quantitative evidence and local perspectives.

On the basis of these analytical insights, the process transitions toward recovery-oriented planning. Identified challenges and needs are translated into a set of priority recovery and development actions, forming the basis for defining concrete recovery projects. This step serves as a bridge between analysis and planning, ensuring that proposed actions are grounded in evidence and aligned with locally identified priorities.

Strategic reflection then provides a higher-level framework for both recovery and long-term development planning. A strategic analysis is undertaken, including the assessment of internal capacities and external factors through tools such as SWOT analysis and scenario development. Alternative development trajectories are considered, and a shared strategic vision is articulated to describe the desired long-term direction of the territorial hromada. Based on this vision, strategic and operational objectives are formulated, establishing a clear hierarchy that links long-term ambitions with medium-term recovery priorities.

The process concludes with a phase focused on transparency, inclusiveness, and institutional ownership. Draft strategies and recovery plans are presented for public discussion and consultation, allowing stakeholders to review, validate, and provide feedback on the proposed directions. Following the integration of feedback, planning documents are finalized and formally approved by local authorities, marking the completion of the planning cycle.

Alignment with state and oblast frameworks to ensure coherence and investment readiness

Alignment with state and oblast-level policy frameworks is a core consideration throughout the development of LDSs and LRPs under HAVEN III. This alignment is essential to ensure that local planning documents are coherent with broader recovery and development priorities and can function as formally compatible instruments within the national system of regional development planning.

Ukraine's development planning operates within an established legal and policy architecture that links national priorities to oblast and hromada-level decision-making. At its core, the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of State Regional Policy" provides the overarching framework for regional development planning, while the State Strategy for Regional Development 2021–2027 (approved by CMU Resolution No. 695) sets national priorities and territorial development directions that oblast strategies and local planning documents are expected to reflect. Within this system, oblast administrations and relevant regional institutions play a coordinating role, translating national priorities into regional strategies, supporting coherence across territories, and providing a reference for investment prioritization. Hromadas, in turn, exercise their mandate under the Law "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine" by setting locally owned objectives and priorities through strategic and recovery planning processes, and by integrating these priorities into local

decision-making and budgeting. Development partners, civil society, and other stakeholders contribute by strengthening evidence, facilitating participation, and aligning technical support with locally defined priorities, helping ensure that planning outputs are both credible and usable for coordination and investment discussions.

LRPs are prepared in a manner that maintains consistency with the strategic orientation set out in the LDS and with applicable national and oblast-level recovery and development frameworks. By structuring recovery measures, projects, and programmes in line with these frameworks, LRPs support coordination between local recovery actions and higher-level policy priorities. This coherence reduces the risk of fragmentation across planning documents and enhances the relevance of local plans within broader recovery and development processes.

The use of structured analytical foundations, clearly defined objectives, and transparent prioritization processes contributes to the positioning of LDSs and LRPs as credible reference documents for recovery and development interventions. Planning documents developed through this approach provide a clear articulation of needs, priorities, and proposed actions, which support their use in discussions related to resource allocation and coordination. Alignment with established policy frameworks further strengthens their role as instruments that can inform the mobilization of financial and technical support.

Within the HAVEN III framework, coherence with state and oblast strategies is not treated as a formal compliance exercise, but as a means of enhancing the practical relevance and usability of local planning documents. By embedding alignment considerations throughout the planning process, LDSs and LRPs are designed to be compatible with existing funding, coordination, and implementation mechanisms. This approach supports the positioning of local recovery and development plans as structured and reliable planning instruments within a multi-level governance environment.

Lessons learned

- Offering hromadas a choice of which planning process or support to receive increases ownership and relevance, and reduces the risk that plans or assistance go unused.
- Synchronizing local planning horizons and structure with national and oblast frameworks ensures coherence and facilitates funding and investment alignment.
- Always apply national legal requirements and official methodological guidance as mandatory; any additional tools or support from external actors should complement, not replace, these minimum standards.
- Mapping all required formal steps (public consultations, council decisions, environmental assessments, and approvals) at the outset and integrating them into the workplan is critical, particularly allowing sufficient time for the final approval phase.
- Some hromadas may need technical, advisory, and organizational assistance to local teams throughout preparation and approval phases.

3.2 Data Collection & Review

The development of strategic documents requires the systematic and consistent use of reliable, up-to-date, and relevant information on the current situation of the hromada, socio-economic conditions and dynamics, and trends in territorial and population development. In the context of recovery, particular importance is attached to data sources that enable an assessment of the scale of damage, available resources, the hromada's recovery capacity, and its potential for sustainable development.

Core data sets

Data collected during the preparation of the socio-economic analysis and the hromada profile constitute the core analytical basis for identifying key challenges and needs, defining strategic priorities, setting development objectives, and supporting evidence-based decision-making in the areas of planning, recovery, and investment.

Table 1 below presents the basic data sets required for a comprehensive hromada analysis and for the development of strategic and planning documents. The list of datasets includes official statistical information as well as administrative, spatial, and socio-economic data, thereby ensuring a multidimensional approach to analysing hromada development.

Table 1. Baseline data sets for hromada analysis and strategic planning

Data sets	Description	Level of disaggregation	Potential data sources
Administrative structure of the hromada	Information on the administrative status of the hromada its territory, location, and composition of settlements	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, Master plans, OCHA
Area and land resources	Data on the total area of the hromada, land use structure, natural resources, landscape characteristics, and hydrography	Hromada	Local authorities, State Cadastre and Services, Sattelite data, OSM
Nature reserve fund	Presence of protected natural areas	Hromada	State Cadastre of Territories and Objects of the Nature Reserve Fund
Mineral resources	Availability of mineral resources	Hromada	State Service of Geology and Subsoil of Ukraine
Environmental conditions	Environmental status, natural constraints, climatic conditions, and environmental trends	Hromada	Environmental services, Analysis of Remote Sensing data

Data sets	Description	Level of disaggregation	Potential data sources
Environmental risks	Environmental situation, including pollution indicators, natural hazards, condition of natural resources, and key environmental challenges affecting hromada development	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, Environmental services, Analysis of Remote Sensing data
Population	Population size and structure by age and sex, migration trends, number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), socially vulnerable groups, and demographic dynamics	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, social protection bodies, National Health Service of Ukraine, State Statistics Service of Ukraine
Labour resources and labour market	Employment levels, employment structure by economic activity, unemployment rate, average wages, and labour market trends	Hromada / starosta district	Local authorities, employment centres, State Statistics Service of Ukraine
Local economy	Economic specialisation, number of business entities, main economic activities, investment potential, availability of industrial facilities, vacant land plots, and commercial properties	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, Clarity Project, Opendatobot, surveys
Budget and financial situation	Structure of local budget revenues and expenditures, fiscal capacity, tax revenues, key taxpayers, and budget dynamics over recent years	Hromada	State web portal “Budget for Citizens”, local authorities
Housing and basic services/utilities	Housing stock, access to utilities (heating, electricity, water supply, gas), wastewater systems, solid waste management, damage to housing and infrastructure caused by hostilities, list of municipal enterprises	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, municipal enterprises
Social infrastructure	Availability and condition of infrastructure and services in education, healthcare, culture, sports, and social protection, including the institutional network and level of service provision	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, National Health Service of Ukraine, ISUO

Data sets	Description	Level of disaggregation	Potential data sources
Transport	Transport accessibility, availability of public transport routes, road conditions, and types of transport connections	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, OSM
Connectivity/ Communications	Postal services and access to broadband internet	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities, telecom operators
Trade and service facilities	Availability of trade and service facilities (markets, retail outlets)	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities
Tourism resources	Availability of tourism assets, accommodation facilities, and routes	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities
Population needs and sociological research results	Information on the needs and challenges of different population groups (by age, sex, and social category), results of surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and stakeholder consultations	Hromada	Surveys
Civil protection	Availability of shelters, early warning systems, evacuation routes, and emergency services operating within the community	Hromada/ starosta district / settlement	Local authorities
Project activities	Ongoing, planned, or recently implemented partner projects within the hromada	Hromada	Local authorities, DREAM platform
Civil society organisations	Presence of civil society organisations and volunteer initiatives and their areas of activity	Hromada	Local authorities
Urban planning documentation	Inventory of existing strategic and spatial planning documentation	Hromada	Local authorities

Common challenges

As illustrated in Table 1, local authorities—particularly sectoral departments and municipal enterprises—represent the primary source of data for the development of strategic documents. As municipal data is generally not consolidated within a single centralised system, data collection requires engagement with a wide range of key officials involved in policy formulation and possessing sector-specific knowledge.

This approach has a direct impact on both the duration and complexity of the data collection process. Highlighting this, at least ten separate consultations were conducted with representatives of different structural units of local authorities in each hromada. These consultations made it possible not only to verify the relevance, reliability, and completeness of data obtained through official requests, but also to identify and partially address existing data gaps resulting from incomplete or inconsistent information.

The most common challenges encountered during data collection include:

- limited access to up-to-date statistical data at the local level;
- irregular updating of key indicators;
- differences in data formats and methodologies across institutions;
- fragmentation of information across multiple agencies;
- absence or limited availability of data disaggregated by sex, age, and social groups.

Taken together, these factors complicate data aggregation, verification, and use for comparative analysis and strategic planning.

Capacity-building needs

In this context, strengthening the capacity of local authorities in data collection, processing, and use is critical for effective governance and evidence-based decision-making. High-quality, timely, and well-structured data enable the hromada to better understand their needs and resources, define development priorities more clearly, plan interventions, and assess results. Enhancing data literacy, introducing standardised data collection approaches, and applying modern digital tools contribute to increased transparency, accountability, and resilience of local governance processes.

Best practices

In addition to consultations with local authorities, surveys of starostats were conducted, and focus group discussions were organised with residents, business representatives, and civil society organisations. This comprehensive approach enabled an in-depth examination of key hromada challenges from multiple perspectives, including those of the population, the private sector, and civil society.

Engaging hromada members played a critical role in complementing official and administrative data. Inputs from residents helped ensure that the picture provided by local authorities was not one-sided and reflected real user experiences across different sectors. Hromada-generated insights were particularly valuable for assessing the quality and accessibility of public services and infrastructure, identifying local priorities, and understanding everyday challenges faced by

different population groups. In sectors such as transport, public spaces, social services, housing and utilities, and safety, resident feedback provided essential qualitative evidence on service perception, unmet needs, and barriers that are not captured through administrative data alone.

The involvement of the local private sector was equally important. For several thematic areas, especially economic development, business environment, employment, and investment potential, local businesses served as a primary, and often the most reliable, source of information. Their participation helped identify structural constraints, market gaps, opportunities for economic diversification, and factors influencing business growth and resilience. These insights contributed to a more accurate assessment of the local economic landscape and informed the formulation of realistic and demand-driven development priorities.

Surveys of starostats served as an important supplementary data source, helping to address information gaps related to small or remote settlements and to update data on population size, vulnerable groups, and unemployment levels—issues that are not always fully captured in official statistics, particularly for individuals without formal IDP or unemployment status. Through this combined methodology, the data collection process captured both institutional perspectives and lived community experiences, ensuring a more balanced, inclusive, and evidence-based analysis to support strategic planning.

Stakeholders and data sources supporting strategy development

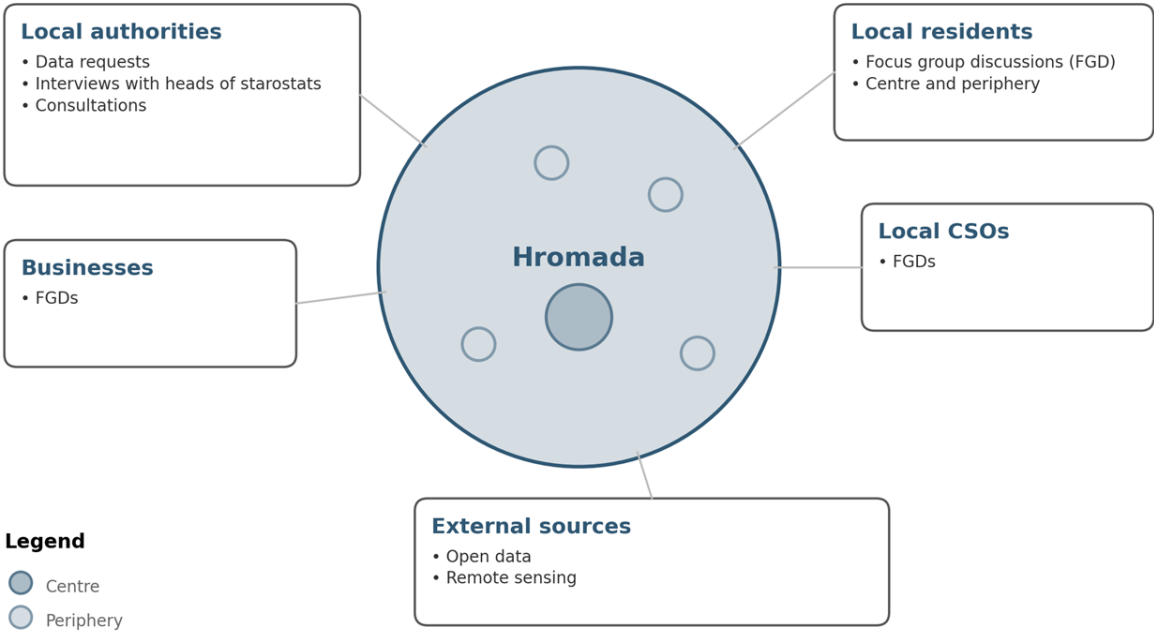


Figure 6. Hromada data ecosystem

Building such systems is essential not only for improving internal decision-making but also for ensuring the long-term usability of the data generated through the project. Strategic planning documents typically include components such as SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, a hromada vision, and priority-setting processes. These elements rely not only on factual data but also on perceptions—how residents, civil society, local authorities, and

businesses experience services, challenges, and opportunities in their daily lives. Capturing these perspectives is therefore crucial to ensure that strategic documents genuinely reflect hromada needs and are rooted in lived experience rather than administrative data alone.

As a result of the collaboration, the most effective approach is to transfer standardized datasets of the collected information (including statistical data, geospatial data, and anonymized results of social surveys) to local authorities, enabling their further use and helping ensure that other organizations engaging with the hromadas do not need to replicate the same data collection efforts.

Ideally, this process should be accompanied by capacity-building activities focused on data collection, management, and use, to strengthen local ownership and sustainability of the results.

Lessons learned

- Prepare a list of the required datasets to be used in the development of strategic documents, specifying the appropriate level of disaggregation (settlement, starosta district, or hromada). Identify the key indicators that need to be collected within each dataset.
- Submit official data requests to the relevant government authorities, in accordance with the datasets you have identified. Keep in mind that a significant portion of the requested information may be unavailable or require clarification, and response times may be extended due to limited human resources or administrative constraints. It is therefore essential to establish clear deadlines for receiving the requested data.
- Develop structured tables for each dataset, where all information from open sources and responses from authorities will be recorded. Enrich these tables with metadata, including the reference period, data source, units of measurement, and other relevant attributes. Since data for the same indicator may differ considerably across sources, it is important to document all available information regarding their origin.
- Where possible, it is considered good practice to align the structure and architecture of local datasets with national government geodatabases, including the requirements set out under the national geospatial data framework (Order of The Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories of Ukraine February 22, 2022 No. 56). Such alignment supports interoperability, facilitates future integration with state information systems, and strengthens consistency between locally collected data and national spatial data infrastructures. While the level of practical implementation may vary across the hromadas, maintaining awareness of these standards and gradually moving towards compatible data structures can enhance the long-term usability, exchange, and institutional value of collected information.

Назва	Охорона здоров'я
Опис	Ця таблиця містить дані щодо кожного закладу охорони здоров'я, що функціонують на території громади.
Громада	Михайло-Лукашівська
Дата оновлення таблиці	Червень 2025

Назва колонки	Опис
ID	Унікальний ідентифікатор установи
ID_B	Унікальний номер будівлі
ADM4_PCODE	Унікальний код 4-го рівня (населений пункт)
ADM4_UA	Назва адміністративної одиниці 4-го рівня (населеного пункту) українською мовою
ADM4a_UA	Назва старостинського округу українською мовою
ADM3_PCODE	Унікальний код 3-го рівня (громада)
ADM3_UA	Назва адміністративної одиниці 3-го рівня (громади) українською мовою
OWNER	Тип власності (державний, приватний, муніципальний)
LEV MED	Медична ланка
NAME	Повна назва установи
DAMAGE	Наявність руйнувань внаслідок військових дій
DAMLEV	Ступінь руйнувань (1-3)
REMED	Стан відновлення об'єкту
COND	Загальний стан будівлі (1-5)
COND_COMM	Коментарі щодо стану будівлі
PLAN	Заплановані зміни щодо установи (закриття, розширення, ремонт, проекти)
SHELTER	Наявність укриття
SHELTER_COMM	Коментарі щодо укриття та його стану
CAPAC	Кількість ліжок/місць
ADDRESS	Адреса закладу (вулиця, номер будинку)
SOURCE	Основне джерело даних

Figure 7. Example of table with metadata

B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
ID_B	ADM4_PCODE	ADM4_UA	ADM4a_UA	ADM3_PCODE	ADM3_UA	OWNER	LEV MED
1	UA2306017013	Максимівка	Максимівський	UA2306017	Михайло-Лукашів	муніципальний	Первинна
2	UA2306017001	Михайло-Лукашеве	Михайло-Лукашівська сільська	UA2306017	Михайло-Лукашів	муніципальний	Первинна
3	UA2306017001	Михайло-Лукашеве	Михайло-Лукашівська сільська	UA2306017	Михайло-Лукашів	приватний	Не застосо
4	UA2306017002	Антонівка	Антонівський	UA2306017	Михайло-Лукашів	муніципальний	Первинна

Figure 8. Example of structured table

- Conduct consultations with representatives of local authorities to verify the accuracy and completeness of the collected data, clarify contextual information, and supplement the tables with relevant insights. Consider potential limitations to their participation (e.g., leave schedules, technical interruptions, unstable electricity or connectivity). Consultations should involve sector specialists who possess the necessary knowledge. It is advisable to plan this process in advance and allocate 1–2 months to ensure the involvement of all key stakeholders.
- Organize additional surveys or group discussions with heads of starosta districts, local business representatives, and civil society organizations. This will help enrich the collected datasets, obtain additional qualitative insights, and capture diverse perspectives on key issues affecting hromada development.
- Qualitative inputs should be systematically documented and linked to the corresponding datasets, either as explanatory notes, validation inputs, or complementary indicators. In this way, stakeholder feedback does not replace quantitative data but strengthens its interpretation, helps identify data gaps, and supports the formulation of more grounded and responsive strategic priorities.

3.3 Geographic Information Systems: A critical tool to support strategic and recovery planning

In general, the use of spatial data layers and GIS tools in the development of strategic documents remains severely underutilized. However, the approach significantly strengthens the process at every stage – from planning and data collection to participatory mapping and spatial analysis.

Spatial data layers and tools

Understanding the spatial distribution of administrative units, available resources, and hromada infrastructure makes it possible to accurately assess their scope, allocation, level of accessibility, and interconnections within the territorial system. This, in turn, enables more evidence-based prioritization, identification of territorial disparities, and informed strategic decision-making.

The collected data, systematized into structured tables, as well as the results of spatial analysis and Earth observation data analysis, serve as the basis for the development of geodatasets intended for the cartographic visualization of data (Annex 1).

A significant portion of the required data is difficult – and in some cases impossible – to collect without the use of GIS tools and spatial analysis. In particular, this applies to the delineation and clarification of hromada and settlement boundaries, the assessment of natural resource potential, transport infrastructure, the total number of residential buildings and damage to housing stock

The collection of reliable data on housing stock and the extent of its damage remains one of the key challenges in local recovery and development planning processes. When collecting any data on a hromada, priority should be given to existing official data from local self-government bodies, in particular information on the number of multi-apartment and individual residential buildings disaggregated by settlement. Such information is usually stored by, and can be requested from, structural units responsible for architecture and urban planning. It may be available in the form of tabular datasets with aggregate numbers of buildings derived from official inventories, or in the form of master plans from which information on the presence and location of buildings can be extracted. In some relatively advanced urban hromadas, modern master plans are available in the form of ArcGIS projects, which significantly facilitates work with the spatial layer of residential development.

In the absence of relevant data at the hromada level, additional sources of information may include Earth observation (remote sensing) data, in particular building footprint layers provided by open geospatial services. Such data requires manual refinement based on up-to-date satellite imagery and does not provide the level of accuracy required by official to urban planning documentation. Nevertheless, they make it possible to develop an approximate understanding of the spatial distribution of the population within the hromada.

Damage to residential properties is one of the most pressing challenges faced by residents and hromadas. Accordingly, the accounting of damaged and destroyed property is conducted both at the hromada level and at the national level. As part of these efforts, hromadas collect and submit relevant data to a nationwide register of damaged and destroyed property. At the same time, such information is confidential in nature, and hromadas have the right to restrict its dissemination. In some cases, hromadas provide access to their own local registers of damaged property, which represent the most reliable source of information.

If it is not possible to obtain relevant data directly from hromadas, an alternative source may be damage assessments based on satellite imagery (in particular, Maxar imagery). However, this approach requires substantial time and financial resources, generates similar issues with sensitivity since this kind of information is meant to be confidential and is less accurate than primary data collected directly on the ground by local self-government bodies. Therefore, information on damage – at least at the settlement level – should preferably be obtained directly from hromadas, in particular through departments responsible for architecture and urban planning.

Spatial analysis of accessibility to social and emergency response services is applied as a tool for assessing the effectiveness of spatial coverage of service infrastructure and response capacity. This approach enables the identification of areas with insufficient levels of access to services and the incorporation of these spatial disparities into subsequent planning processes.

Furthermore, the use of remote sensing data provides opportunities for a comprehensive assessment of natural and climatic conditions, the identification of sources of hazards, and the evaluation of potential risks and barriers to territorial development. Within the HAVEN III project, an analysis based on satellite data was conducted covering the following indicators: the total number of fires over the past five years, the spatial distribution of critically high and low temperatures, as well as the drought index.

The spatial visualization of key indicators for each sector also supports both the analysts involved in drafting the document and its readers by improving their understanding of the contextual and spatial distribution of resources and infrastructure assets across settlements.

The following set of maps was developed for each hromada: the location of the hromada within the settlement system; nature resources potential; spatial distribution of the population; housing and utility infrastructure; availability of social and administrative services; public spaces; transport infrastructure; zones of the economic landscape; fire frequency based on satellite data; minimum and maximum temperature zones; drought index; zones of hazardous substance dispersion; civil protection shelters; and transport accessibility zones of emergency response services.

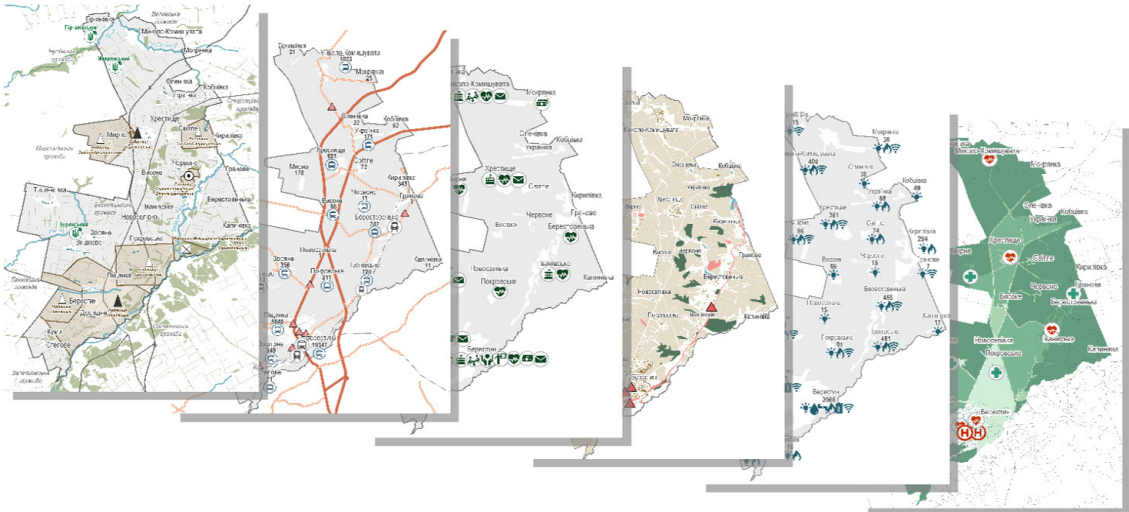


Figure 9. Part of the mapping products developed within the HAVEN III project

A multi-sectoral approach to assessing the situation of a hromada is most effectively captured and communicated through a shared, accessible, interactive, and user-centred online dashboard. The dashboard enables comprehensive data analysis across a wide range of indicators through systematic data disaggregation, including by sector and settlement. It serves as a particularly relevant and effective tool for shared data use by local authorities and other stakeholders engaged in hromada development, as it presents, in a clear and accessible format, information on available resources, infrastructure, damage, needs, active organizations within the hromada, and implemented projects.

A common challenge in developing information dashboards is that they rarely outlive the projects that support them (for example, due to cost, capacity, or relevance considerations). To ensure the sustainability of this dashboard, functionality has been implemented that allows representatives of local authorities to edit and update the data displayed on it. When used properly, this will help maintain the accuracy and relevance of the data over an extended period of time.

In addition, the organization Impact assumes responsibility for hosting and storing the data on the ArcGIS Online server for five years. This will provide hromadas with sufficient time to understand the practical value of this tool and to make further decisions regarding independent administration.

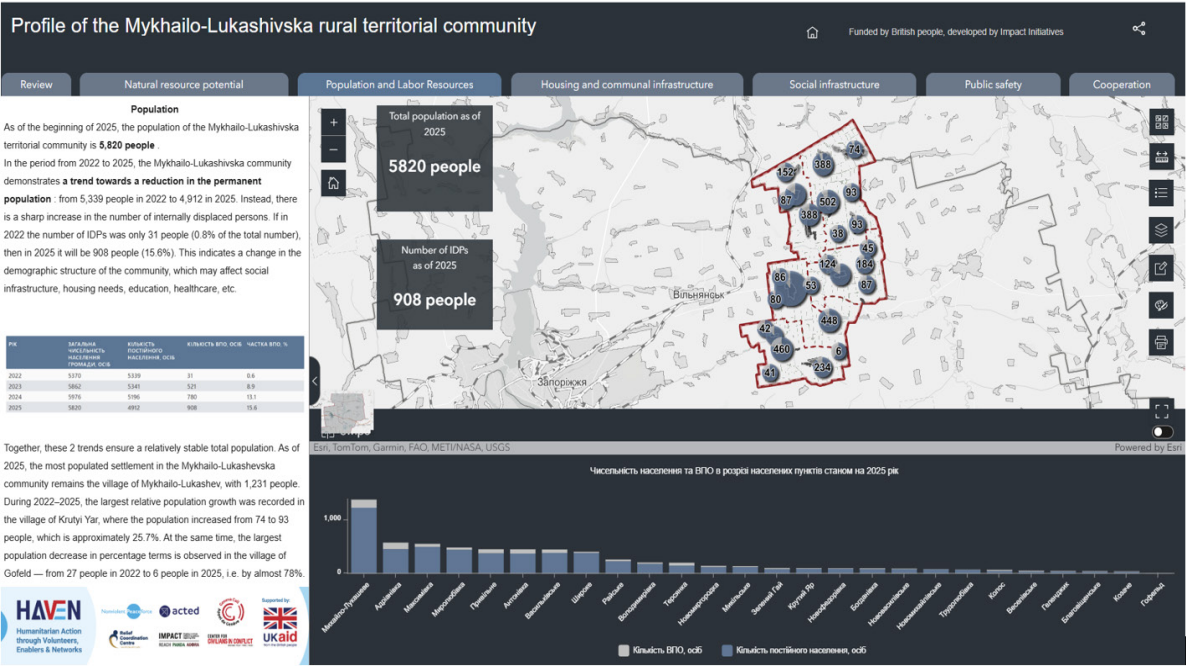


Figure 10. Preliminary dashboard for the Mykhailo-Lukashivska hromada

Public Safety

This domain is one of the vital preconditions for ensuring that planning processes are resilient and adaptive to the realities in frontline areas as perceived by both local authorities and residents. Essential information that needs to be collected includes the location of bomb shelters, air alert notification system, invincibility (heating) points and emergency services. Firstly, open sources at national (e.g., Diia), regional (websites of Regional Civil Protection Departments) and local levels (hromada’s websites) must be explored. Official documents at the local level, such as master plans, annual reports, or sectoral and operational documents, are also valuable sources of data at the

initial stage of data collection. Usually information about location (address), capacity and type of bomb shelters can be found there. But other important aspects, like accessibility, damage, or up-to-date status, might be received only upon requests to local authorities. Given that bomb shelters are hosted in public buildings (e.g., schools, kindergartens, hospitals), local authorities may refuse to provide details on geographic coordinates, which could prevent spatial analysis and accurate mapping. Combining bomb shelter data with information on the density of conflict incidents might be useful for prioritizing shelter expansion efforts. Additionally, accurate population data at the settlement or neighborhood levels allows the sufficiency of bomb shelters to be assessed, providing insights on any needed improvements (see example in Figure 11).

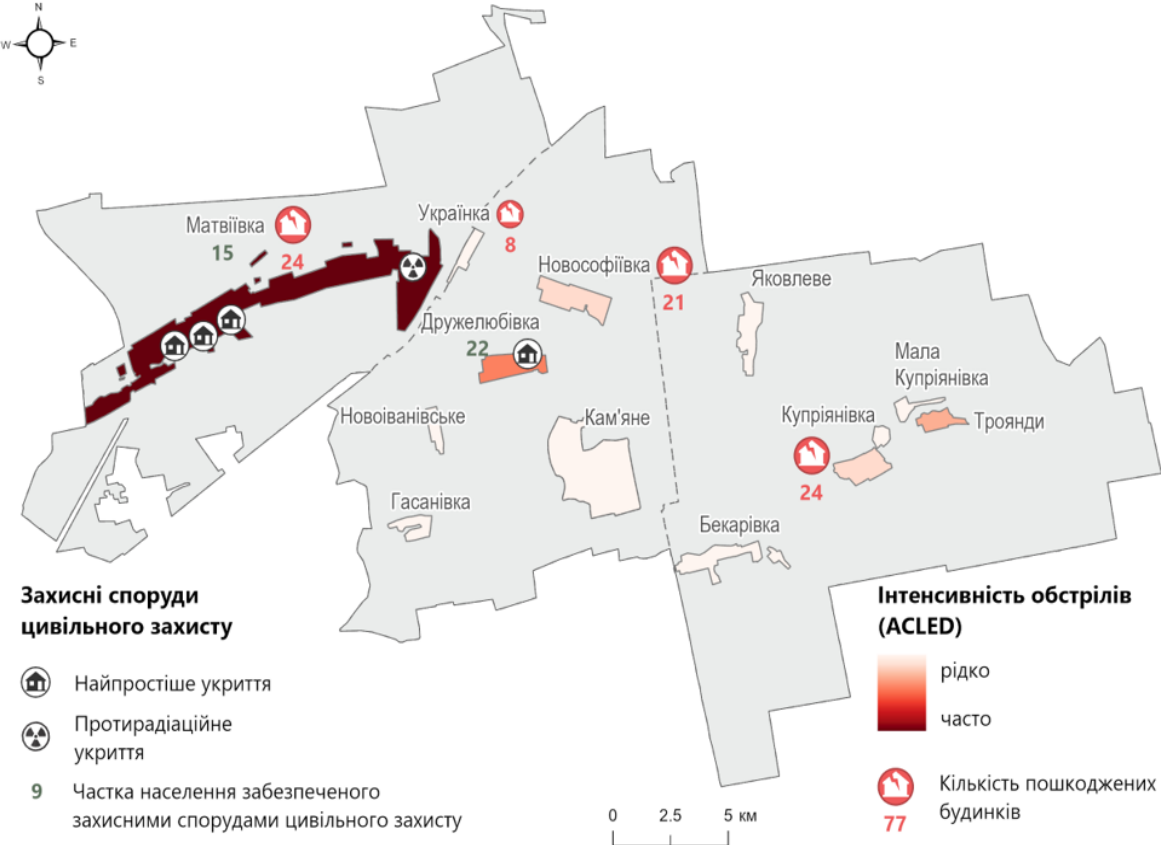


Figure 11. Bomb shelters and density of shelling: case of Matviivka hromada

Despite the presence of digital communication channels, conventional air alert notification systems in hromadas might be crucial in case of energy disruption and internet connection loss. The only reliable source of information on the presence, location, coverage, and actual state of the civil protection notification systems are local authorities. Requested and provided data may help to visualize and analyze gaps in the existing coverage of alert signals. In some cases, hromadas may partially be covered by air alert notification facilities installed in neighboring hromadas, therefore, such data also has to be requested from local authorities. An example of the structure of a data request on bomb shelters, air alert notification systems and invincibility points may be viewed in the Annex 2.

Emergency services in hromadas are usually represented by three entities/facilities: (i) SESU units, voluntary and local fire brigades; (ii) police department/ unit or officer; (iii) health care facilities

and ambulance units. Most of the information on these services can be collected from local authorities. The standard list of features requested includes name, location, capacity (staff and vehicles), service area as well as information on units covering the hromada's territory in case of emergency from other hromadas. This information enables modelling of the estimated travel time from facility to any point within hromada using GIS, thus helping to identify problem areas and the most appropriate locations for interventions and recovery measures (see example at Figure 12). Additionally, during participatory mapping or via data request it is possible to reveal the potential or existing transportation barriers which may impact the time of arrival of emergency services.

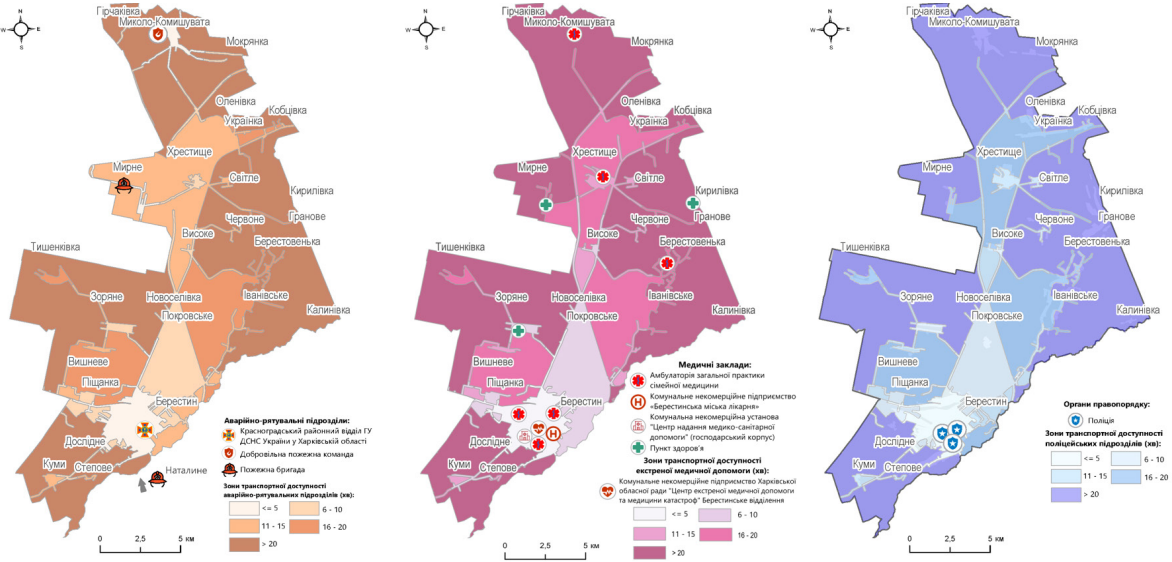


Figure 12. Accessibility modelling of emergency services in Berestynska hromada. Left to right: fire brigades, health care, police

Challenges

One of the key challenges in the data collection process is the lack of centralized and structured data at the hromada level, as well as the limited experience of local self-government bodies in working with geospatial information, which complicates systematic data analysis and its application in planning processes. Under martial law conditions, issues of confidentiality – particularly the protection of spatial data – remain an additional challenge in the data collection process, leading to cautious attitudes among hromadas regarding the provision of accurate information on the location of facilities.

In the collection of spatial data, the most comprehensive and reliable source of information is settlement master plans. However, the vast majority of master plans exist exclusively in paper form and date back to the 1970s–1990s. Sometimes hromadas have only one settlement with up-to-date master plan – most often the administrative center. Usually it is available as a set of graphical images without geospatial reference and attributive data, which requires additional time for processing. But due to limited resources, such processing is often impractical.

The absence of up-to-date settlement master plans leads to limited spatial awareness among local self-government bodies regarding existing resources and the development potential of settlements and the hromada as a whole. Given that the issue of outdated or missing master

plans is widespread at the national scale and hromada's resources to address this, especially in small settlements, remain limited, a relevant area of support may be the development of hromada's technical capacity in the utilization of GIS and data processing tools.

Lessons Learned

- GIS support should be considered primarily as a tool for data collection, integration, and validation, aimed at addressing information gaps, ensuring the availability of necessary data, and providing a high-quality and comprehensive analytical foundation for sectoral analysis.
- When collecting data for geo spatial analysis and visualization, priority should be given to official sources, regulatory documents, and data directly provided by hromadas. Conducting working meetings with representatives of local authorities is an important and integral component of the data collection, verification, and clarification processes.
- The spatial visualization of collected data, specifically in the form of maps, serves as an effective method for obtaining timely feedback from hromadas, validating information, and conducting working meetings in a clearer and more interactive format.

3.4 Participatory Processes

Stakeholder identification and engagement

Participatory processes constitute an important component of the HAVEN III approach to supporting local recovery planning. Recognizing that recovery and development priorities cannot be effectively defined through data analysis alone, the project integrates structured mechanisms for engaging a wide range of local stakeholders throughout the planning cycle. These processes are designed to complement administrative and statistical data with perspectives and priorities expressed by different stakeholder groups within the hromada.

Participation under HAVEN III is embedded across multiple stages of the recovery planning process, rather than being limited to a single consultation event. From the initial screening and stakeholder mapping phase through to joint analysis and validation workshops, engagement with local actors is treated as an ongoing and iterative process. This approach allows for the review and discussion of findings and priorities by local authorities, civil society representatives, and community members at different stages of the planning process. Participation also plays a role in strengthening relationships between local authorities, civil society, and community members.

Focus group discussions and consultations

A key element of the participatory approach under HAVEN III is the use of focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather qualitative insights from different segments of the hromada. In each participating hromada, four FGDs are conducted with purposively selected groups: residents from the hromada center, residents from the hromada periphery, representatives of local civil society organizations and volunteer groups, and representatives of the local business community. Each group is composed of a limited number of participants to facilitate in-depth discussion and interaction.

The FGDs are designed to complement and contextualize information collected through secondary data review and consultations with local authorities. Discussions focus on participants' perceptions of key challenges, service access, economic conditions, and recovery priorities, as well as their views on the future development of the hromada. Efforts are made to ensure balanced representation in terms of gender and age, as well as the inclusion of vulnerable groups where possible. This structure allows for documentation of perspectives expressed by different stakeholder groups.

To illustrate how FGDs complement secondary data and institutional perspectives, discussions frequently added nuance, revealed gaps, or corroborated constraints reported through official channels. For example, while local authorities reported a shortage of qualified specialists, FGDs added an important nuance: labor demand and labor supply often do not match. Participants described a situation where unemployment can coexist with skills shortages, as people frequently apply for roles outside their experience, which pointed to a structural mismatch in the local labor market rather than a simple lack of workers.

In another case, secondary data indicated that water supply services are available across the hromada; FGDs, however, suggested that formal coverage does not necessarily translate into reliable service in practice. Participants described ageing networks, frequent breakdowns, and seasonal shortages leading to interruptions of uncertain duration while repairs are carried out, shifting the focus from formal availability to the continuity and reliability of service delivery. Local authorities reported that transport links between villages are very limited, similarly, FGDs reinforced this assessment and added practical detail on how this affects daily mobility: residents

described long waits on the highway for infrequent minibuses, irregular schedules, and some settlements with no service at all, providing a clearer picture of the functional consequences of limited connectivity and the unevenness of access across the territory.



Figure 13. Focus-group discussion, Stepne, May 2025

In addition to FGDs, consultations with local authorities and public service providers are conducted to capture institutional perspectives on recovery needs, planning constraints, and implementation capacity. These consultations support mutual understanding between administrative actors and hromada representatives and help align participatory inputs with official planning processes.

Participatory workshops for joint analysis and validation

Participatory engagement under HAVEN III extends beyond data collection to include joint analysis and validation of findings. Following the completion of secondary data review and primary data collection, facilitated workshops are organized in each hromada to bring together local stakeholders for collective reflection and planning. These workshops serve as a space to review and triangulate findings from different data sources and to ensure that preliminary assessments accurately reflect local realities.

During these workshops, participants engage in structured strategic planning exercises and prioritization of recovery and development needs. Through facilitated group work, stakeholders assess internal strengths and weaknesses across key sectors, as well as external opportunities and threats linked to broader socio-economic and security dynamics. This collective analysis supports the discussion of priorities identified during data review and primary data collection.

The validation workshops also provide an opportunity to refine and adjust proposed priorities based on stakeholder feedback. By involving participants directly in the interpretation of data and the formulation of planning inputs, the process supports the validation and refinement of planning inputs.

Utilizing map-based visualizations for joint analysis, applied during workshops, creates an interactive space for presenting collected data, refining it, and jointly interpreting the findings.

This approach encourages constructive feedback and fosters deeper participant engagement in the analysis of information. To enhance clarity, it is recommended to structure the maps by sector, highlighting the key indicators on each of them.



Figure 14. Workshop, Mykhailo-Lukasheve, August 2025

Participatory Development Centers (PDCs) as spaces for hromada engagement and co-creation

Within the HAVEN III framework, participatory processes are supported using accessible physical and organizational spaces that facilitate dialogue and collaboration. These spaces function as platforms for co-creation, allowing stakeholders to engage in structured discussions, exchange perspectives, and contribute to the development of recovery and development strategies. The emphasis on accessible and inclusive spaces is intended to lower barriers to participation and encourage engagement from different actors.

Participatory Development Centers were established as dedicated physical spaces to support hromada engagement and participatory processes at the local level. These centers were created through the rehabilitation and equipping of existing hromada premises, with the involvement of local residents in the preparation and arrangement of the spaces.

The PDCs are equipped with basic infrastructure necessary for community-oriented activities, including access to the Internet, computer equipment, and facilities for hosting meetings and

training sessions. Each center is supported by designated administrators who received training to facilitate operations and interaction with hromada members.



Figure 15. Participatory Development Center, Mykhailo-Lukasheve

Functionally, the PDCs serve as accessible venues for participatory activities, including meetings, learning events, discussions on hromada-relevant issues, and the support of initiatives proposed by residents and hromada activists. Within recovery and development planning processes, these centers provide a structured setting for dialogue and exchange between different stakeholder groups, supporting their involvement in participatory engagement activities.

3.5 Supporting Local Planning Process through Mini-Grants and targeted Trainings

In the context of ongoing resource constraints and widespread capacity gaps, the Haven III project also provides hromadas with material and training support directly linked to the implementation of LRPs and LDSs. These are important measures that enable identified community recovery and/or development priorities to be partially addressed through pilot interventions while also strengthening institutional capacity among local stakeholders to support more transparent, coordinated, and evidence-based recovery and development.

Mini grants: Testing ideas and building momentum

The implementation of planning documents at the local level is a significant undertaking. However, these processes can be supported by additional non-standard and innovative solutions, including small-scale grants for local initiatives linked to a hromadas' strategic development objectives and recovery priorities. Mini grants provide a flexible mechanism to advance LRPs/LDSs by translating local priorities into concrete projects, while also facilitate interaction between local authorities and civil society and linking short-term interventions to longer-term priorities, ensuring that recovery efforts are inclusive, aligned with multi-year plans, and sustainable.

Under the Haven III project, ACTED has provided grants of up to GBP 3,000–6,000 to volunteers and CSOs, enabling them to implement small-scale, hromada-driven initiatives that directly contribute to objectives outlined in LRPs/LDSs. By providing targeted funding for activities aligned with locally identified priorities, mini-grants act as entry points for broader strategic recovery planning, allowing hromadas to test interventions, build capacity, and generate momentum for longer-term initiatives.

Aligning Humanitarian Timelines with Multi-Year Local Strategies: Mini-grants provide a practical mechanism for linking short-term humanitarian funding with the multi-year implementation horizons of LRPs and LDSs. Through participatory prioritisation and analytical mapping, each supported activity is explicitly connected to locally defined strategic objectives, ensuring that immediate results reinforce rather than fragment long-term planning. Successful mini-grant projects can be expanded, replicated, or incorporated into larger, multi-year programs by local authorities or other actors.

Balancing Support Between Local Authorities and Civil Society: Mini grants are designed to strengthen of civil society capacity and interaction with local government. By facilitating collaboration on project design, implementation, and reporting, grants help build bridges between authorities and community actors. Local authorities gain access to innovative, community-driven solutions that complement formal recovery processes, while CSOs and volunteer groups acquire the operational experience and resources needed for sustained engagement in planning and decision-making, promoting shared ownership of implementation. This dual support fosters shared responsibility and inclusive participation, reinforcing the overall governance and ownership of LRPs/LDSs.

Complementarity with Other Investments and External Actors: Mini-grants function as a catalyst within a wider ecosystem of support. They are complemented by capacity-building programmes, by medium- and longer-term funding that can scale successful initiatives, and by coordination with external actors to avoid duplication and address priority gaps. Together, these elements connect small-scale actions to broader recovery and development agendas while mobilizing local resources and expertise.

Case Example: Linking Grants to Local Priorities

Iryna, a volunteer from Ternuvatska hromada, had no prior experience in grant writing when she submitted an application for a mini grant to address waste management issues in her community during Haven Phase II. Successful, her mini-grant project delivered visible improvements aligned with her community’s LRP priorities. Encouraged by this success, she and other volunteers founded CSO “Ternuvate NEXT” in 2025. Under Phase III, the organization now implements larger-scale projects funded by medium-sized grants, continuing to advance the hromada’s longer-term LRP objectives. This includes creation of a veteran rehabilitation space in the city of Zaporizhzhia.

“Thanks to Acted’s support, we are gaining knowledge, tools, and the opportunity to strengthen our organizational capacity while contributing meaningfully to the future of our community.” – Iryna, Head of CSO “Ternuvate NEXT”.



Increasing the capacity of hromadas to implement strategic documents through tailored training

Many Ukrainian hromadas face significant challenges making informed decisions on recovery and development processes due to analytical and digital literacy skills gaps, including the use of GIS tools and spatial data. While large amounts of data on population, infrastructure, land use, and services, among other areas, is available, this information is rarely used in planning and decision-making processes in a consistent or systematic way. Therefore, the development and delivery of targeted training for hromada leaders, sector experts, and civil society actors is essential to strengthen institutional capacity, reduce dependence on external actors (e.g. consultants), and enhance evidence-based decision-making. The main stages of Haven III’s approach to training are displayed in the workflow below.

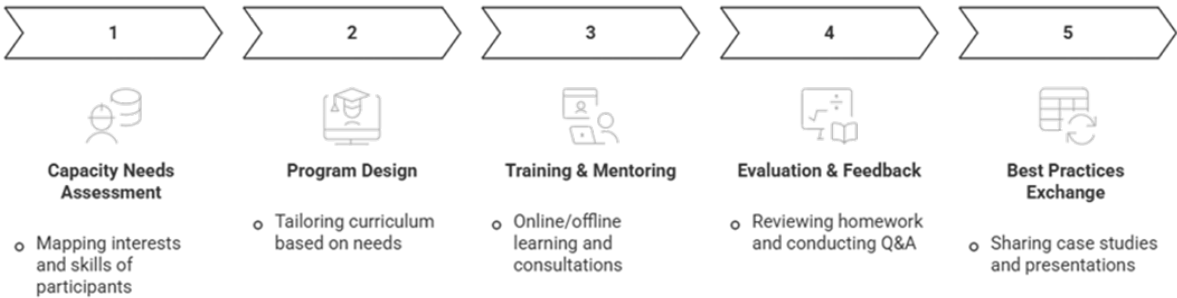


Figure 16. The main stages of organizing and conducting trainings

Given the central role of geo-spatial data in recovery planning and the need to regularly update this data to ensure ongoing relevance, capacity building training on GIS tools supports the long-term viability of strategy and planning documents.

Capacity Needs Assessment

Through online surveys, individual interviews and a review of available digital tools and datasets, targeted stakeholders’ of data literacy, and prior experience working with maps was assessed to develop a comprehensive understanding of existing capacity and related gaps.

Training Program Design

Care was taken to ensure training programs aligned with the actual capacities of local staff, with the aim of strengthening data use and GIS-based planning approaches in each hromada (see Figure 17).

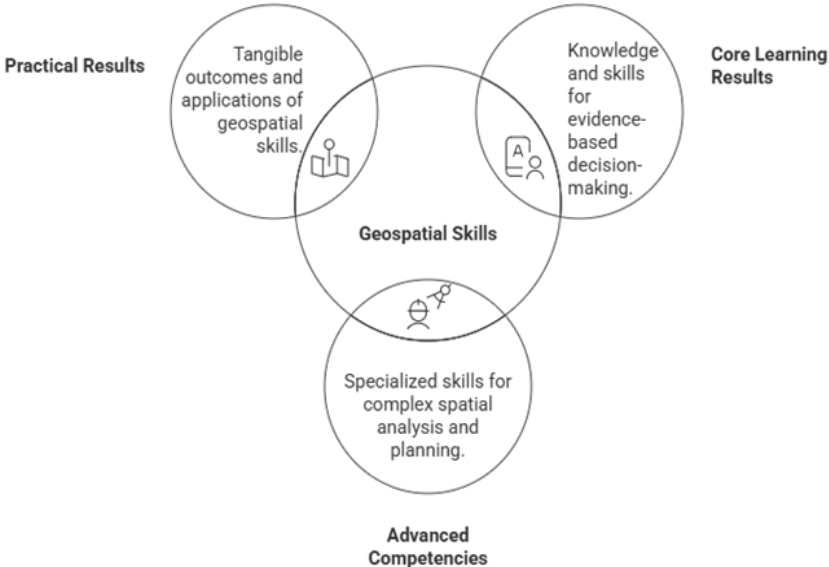


Figure 17. Geospatial Skills achieved after the training sessions

Training sessions were conducted in both online and offline formats, depending on the topic, security situation, and agreements between organizers and participants, as well as the availability of devices that might be used during training sessions. Training groups were formed based on location, thematic focus, and level of knowledge, ensuring alignment with existing capacities and contextual factors.

Delivery of GIS and Data Literacy Training

Based on the results of the capacity assessment, a flexible, practice-oriented training programme was delivered, adapted to the different experience levels and roles of participants. The training focused on building core digital and data literacy skills, including data collection, the use of open spatial data platforms (such as Google Earth and OpenStreetMap), creation of geodata bases, spatial analysis, and map-based visualisation.



Figure 18. Geospatial Skills achieved after the training sessions

All training was based on real local data, allowing participants to work directly with information from their hromadas, such as data on infrastructure, land use, and public facilities. This hands-on approach helps participants understand how GIS and data tools can be applied in their daily work and supports learning by guiding participants through a full practical cycle, from collecting and structuring data, to the production of ready-to-use maps and analytical outputs.

Evaluation and Feedback

Throughout the training period, all stakeholders have access to continuous technical assistance and individual GIS consultations to support their activities in mapping and integrating spatial data into recovery planning. During training, learning outcomes were monitored through ongoing feedback, pre- and post-training evaluations, and individual consultations. This enabled gaps and barriers in learning to be identified, informing adjustments and adjustments and improvements to training approaches.

Best Practices Session Exchange

The final training session exclusively focused on best practices, during which hromadas presented real-life applications of GIS in their daily work. This final stage provided an important opportunity to discuss the lessons learned from the entire course and address additional questions and requests from hromadas. When participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of the GIS training programme out of 100, the average across responses was 88. Certificates were also awarded to participants who completed the training and all related activities, providing proof of the skills they had gained.

Certificates were awarded to participants who completed the training and all related activities, providing proof of the skills they had gained. approach actively encouraged the participation of both male and female representatives from local administrations, while promoting inclusive practices, safeguarding standards, hromada engagement and accountability (CEA), and the responsible management of sensitive data in line with data protection principles.

Ensuring the sustainability of training outcomes can be achieved through:

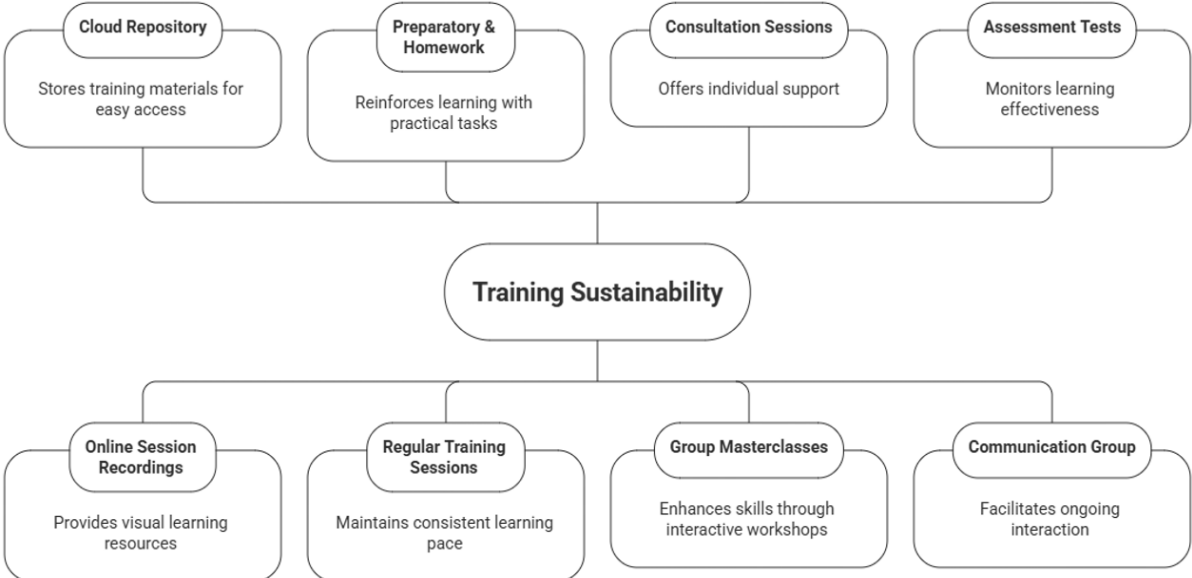


Figure 19. Ensuring sustainability of training outcomes

Section 4. Monitoring & Evaluation / Results

In addition to the lessons learned and good practices identified by the HAVEN III project team, it was essential to systematically capture feedback from the hromadas directly involved in the implementation of Phase III. Understanding how project support was perceived by local Working Group members provided an important complementary perspective on the relevance, effectiveness, and usability of the applied approaches. To this end, a structured questionnaire was administered to members of the working groups responsible for the development of Local Recovery Plans and Local Development Strategies in four hromadas supported under Phase III.

In total, 54 respondents participated in the survey. The questionnaire consisted primarily of closed-ended questions covering key dimensions of the planning process and IMPACT support, complemented by two open-ended questions at the end to capture qualitative reflections and suggestions (Annex 3). Overall, the responses reflected a high degree of satisfaction: nearly all respondents rated the experience of working with IMPACT “very positive,” considered the methodological support provided as “completely sufficient,” and highly assessed the quality and usefulness of analytical outputs produced with IMPACT’s support.

To what extent, in your opinion, did the hromada retain a leading role in decision-making regarding the content of the document?



Feedback from hromada WG members largely confirmed and reinforced the lessons learned and best practices identified by the HAVEN III project team across key components of the intervention. Survey findings validate the project’s emphasis on balancing expert support with local ownership. The high share of respondents that perceived decision-making as equally shared (70%), together with the consistently positive assessment of the balance between IMPACT support and Working Group independence (93%), directly supports the project team’s conclusion that recovery planning is most effective when hromadas retain a leading role, while external actors provide structured, methodological assistance rather than prescriptive solutions. Further reflecting this, while all formats used to engage hromada WG members were rated highly by respondents, offline workshops and joint analysis were the most positively received, with 95% of respondents rating them five (on a scale of one to five to assess effectiveness). This reinforces the continued use of co-creation approaches in future phases.

How would you rate the overall balance between IMPACT support and the Working Group’s independence?



The strong assessment of data collection, systematization, analytical conclusions, and GIS products (virtually all respondents rated these types of support at “very useful”) aligns with the project’s internal findings on the central role of high-quality, well-structured data in evidence-based planning. The survey confirms that investments in standardized datasets, geospatial analysis, and transparent analytical frameworks are not only methodologically sound but also perceived by hromadas as practically useful. This supports the project’s best practice of combining official data with community-generated inputs and transferring structured datasets to local authorities for long-term use. Highlighting the impact of these processes on evidence-based decision-making, a significant majority of respondents (83%) reported that the support had both increased their understanding of hromada needs and provided a strong foundation for the identification of recovery and development priorities “to a large extent,” with the remainder answering “mostly yes.”

WG members’ responses on the high likelihood of LRPs and LDSs being used for both internal management and external resource mobilisation (100% of respondents rated likelihood either four or five out of five for both, with the majority selecting the latter) substantiates the project team’s approach to aligning local planning documents with national and oblast frameworks. The findings suggest that coherence with higher-level strategies and compliance with formal requirements increases not only technical quality but also the perceived usability and investment-readiness of the documents.

All respondents reported that their participation in the process had led to strengthened institutional capacity within the hromada, with over 80% selecting the highest impact rating. At the same time, the survey also highlights capacity gaps and implementation constraints that mirror the project team’s observations. According to respondents, several relevant skills require further strengthening to support implementation of similar processes in the future. These included fundraising (93%), public engagement and the facilitation of group processes (76%), data management (61%), and data analysis (46%). Furthermore, commonly reported challenges faced by WG members throughout the process were high workloads (72%), a lack of time (67%), and the security situation (37%). Identified needs across different types of skills, together with existing capacity challenges in hromadas, indicate that one-off planning support is insufficient. These findings point to the need for follow-up capacity-building, the practical application opportunities, and phased support, particularly in areas that directly affect the implementation of recovery priorities.

Finally, qualitative feedback underscores the value of clear methodologies, hands-on guidance, and continuous communication, while also pointing to demand for peer learning, practical examples from other hromadas, and applied knowledge on economic recovery topics. This suggests that future programming would benefit from complementing planning support with communities of practice, peer-to-peer exchange, and targeted thematic follow-up, ensuring that planning outcomes translate into sustained action.

These findings suggest that future phases of HAVEN should continue to build on the strong foundations of collaborative, data-driven planning. However, greater attention may be needed – within the HAVEN framework or through complementary support – regarding follow-up assistance focused on implementation, fundraising, and sustained capacity development. Strengthening local ownership of data systems, expanding participatory practices, and linking planning outputs more directly to financing and project implementation will be critical to ensure that recovery plans translate into tangible and sustainable outcomes.

Conclusion

The experience of HAVEN III confirms that local recovery planning in Ukraine must be approached as a dynamic, adaptive, and continuous process rather than as the production of static planning documents. Ongoing hostilities, infrastructure damage, population movements, and evolving socio-economic conditions continue to reshape recovery needs at the hromada level. In this context, Local Recovery Plans and Local Development Strategies are most effective when they function as living instruments that are grounded in evidence, informed by hromada perspectives, embedded within formal governance and coordination frameworks, and tied to implementation support with both material and training resources. The HAVEN III approach demonstrates how structured, participatory, and data-informed planning processes can strengthen the ability of hromadas to navigate uncertainty while maintaining strategic coherence.

A central contribution of HAVEN III lies in the systematic use of data and GIS as the analytical backbone of the planning process. The consolidation of administrative, statistical, spatial, and project-level data enabled hromadas to develop a more comprehensive and territorially grounded understanding of infrastructure damage, service provision, socio-economic conditions, and recovery needs. GIS tools supported the visualization of complex information, identification of spatial disparities, and alignment of sectoral priorities across settlements. This evidence base provided a shared reference point for planning discussions and helped anchor recovery priorities in verifiable and comparable data rather than ad hoc assessments.

Participatory processes under HAVEN III were designed to complement and validate this analytical foundation. Structured stakeholder engagement, including focus group discussions, consultations, and joint analysis workshops, allowed local actors to contextualize data findings, identify gaps not captured through available datasets, and assess the feasibility of proposed priorities. Participation thus functioned as a corrective and interpretive layer, strengthening the relevance and legitimacy of planning outputs while maintaining the primacy of evidence-based analysis. The use of Participatory Development Centers as accessible venues further supported this approach by providing stable spaces for structured dialogue linked directly to the planning process.

The project also highlighted that planning effectiveness depends on the extent to which analytical and participatory outputs can be translated into early action. In this regard, the mini-grant component of HAVEN III played an important complementary role. By providing limited programmatic support to selected hromada-level initiatives, the project enabled hromadas and local actors to pilot priority interventions aligned with recovery planning objectives. These small-scale grants supported the testing of ideas, strengthened local implementation capacity, reinforced the credibility of planning processes by demonstrating tangible results, and helped ensure early-stage buy-in from local authorities and other stakeholders. While not designed to address large-scale recovery needs, the mini-grants helped bridge the gap between planning and implementation and provided practical insights into local delivery constraints and opportunities.

At the same time, the project highlighted persistent structural gaps that continue to constrain local recovery planning. Data availability and quality remain uneven across hromadas, with limited access to up-to-date, disaggregated, and standardized information. Institutional capacity for data management, GIS use, and facilitation of participatory processes varies significantly, while outdated spatial planning documentation restricts spatial awareness and long-term development analysis. Ensuring meaningful participation requires sustained facilitation and resources beyond

minimum consultation requirements. Without continued investment in local capacities, both analytical and participatory gains risk diminishing over time.

Addressing these challenges requires coordinated and sustained action. Continued support is needed to strengthen local data ecosystems, including standardized datasets, practical GIS workflows adapted to local capacities, and regular data updating. Participatory mechanisms should be institutionalized as an ongoing element of local governance, complementing administrative data with hromada perspectives and enabling continuous feedback as conditions evolve. Capacity-building for local authorities, civil society organizations, and hromada actors – particularly in data literacy, spatial analysis, facilitation skills, and project preparation – remains essential to translate plans into actionable, fundable recovery interventions. Stronger linkages between local planning documents and financing mechanisms are also critical to enhance investment readiness and implementation.

A range of actors are well positioned to contribute to this agenda. Hromadas themselves remain the primary agents of recovery, responsible for defining priorities, convening stakeholders, and maintaining ownership of planning processes. National and oblast authorities play a key role in providing policy coherence, methodological guidance, and access to financing frameworks. Humanitarian and development partners add value through technical expertise, facilitation of participatory and data-driven processes, and targeted capacity strengthening – particularly in conflict-affected and resource-constrained contexts. Civil society organizations, including newly established local CSOs emerging from initiatives such as HAVEN III, are essential partners in implementation, accountability, and hromada engagement. Donors and international partners can enable these efforts by providing flexible, multi-year funding that bridges humanitarian response and development objectives and supports locally led recovery.

In conclusion, the HAVEN III experience underscores that effective recovery planning is defined not only by the existence of plans, but by the quality, inclusiveness, and adaptability of the processes that produce them. Data, GIS, participatory engagement, and programmatic support are not standalone components, but mutually reinforcing elements of resilient recovery planning. By placing hromadas at the center of decision-making, strengthening their analytical and participatory capacities, and aligning local planning with broader governance and investment frameworks, Ukraine's recovery efforts can be better positioned to respond to immediate needs while laying the foundations for sustainable, locally owned development.

Annexes

Annex 1. Spatial data layers

SPATIAL DATASET	TYPE	INDICATOR	SOURCE
Boundaries			
Settlement	Polygon (settlement)	location, area	OCHA, State Land Cadastre, Master plans
Hromada	Polygon (hromada)	location, area	OCHA, State Land Cadastre
Environment			
Rivers	Line	length, condition	OSM, State Land Cadastre
Green area	Polygon	area	OSM, Satellite data, State Land Cadastre
Nature protected areas	Point, Polygon	category, type, condition	State Cadastre of Territories and Objects of the Nature Reserve Fund, OSM, Master plans
Mineral resources	Polygon	type, area	State Service of Geology and Subsoil of Ukraine
Land use	Polygon	category, area	State Cadastre , Local authorities
Demography			
Population and IDPs by settlements	Polygon (settlement)	population distribution by year and gender	Local authorities, social protection bodies, National Health Service of Ukraine, State Statistics Service of Ukraine
Population Hexagones	Polygon	population distribution by territory	Spatial analysis

SPATIAL DATASET	TYPE	INDICATOR	SOURCE
Housing Damage Utilities			
Housing, Damages and utilities cover by settlement (electricity, heating, gas, water, sewage, solid waste management, Internet)	Polygon (settlement)	count and damage of buildings, availability of utilities, number of users	Local authorities, Utilities company
Housing	Polygon	count, type, area	Buildings footprint, Sattelite data, Master plans
Social services			
Education facilities	Point	condition, damage, capacity, availability of shelters	Local authorities, ISUO
Health facilities	Point	condition, damage, capacity, availability of shelters	Local authorities, National Health Service of Ukraine
Administrative and social facilities	Point	condition, damage, capacity, availability of shelters	Local authorities
Transport			
Roads	Line	length, condition, damage	OSM, Local authorities
Railway	Line	length, condition	OSM, Local authorities
Public Transport	Polygon (settlement)	availability, frequency	Open source, Local authorities
Infrastructure Points	Point	type, condition, damage	OSM, Local authorities
Road segments for repair	Point	type, condition, damage	Local authorities
Heritage and Tourism			
Culture, youth and sport&Public places point	Point	availability, condition, damage	Open source, OSM, Local authorities

SPATIAL DATASET	TYPE	INDICATOR	SOURCE
Public safety			
Medical emergency response facility	Point	type, condition, damage	Local authorities
Medical emergency response availability zones	Polygon	emergency response time (minutes)	Spatial analysis
Police emergency response facility	Point	type, condition, damage	Local authorities
Police emergency response availability zones	Polygon	emergency response time (minutes)	Spatial analysis
SESU facility	Point	type, condition, damage	Local authorities
SESU availability zones	Polygon	emergency response time (minutes)	Spatial analysis
Shelter facility	Point	condition, damage, capacity	Local authorities
Shelter coverage (500 m)	Polygon	area of coverage	Spatial analysis
Fires Hexagon	Polygon	number of fires	Remote sensing analysis
Heat waves	Polyline	maximum temperatures	Remote sensing analysis
Cold waves	Polyline	minimum temperatures	Remote sensing analysis
Drought index	Polygon	index of drought	Remote sensing analysis
Hazardous objects risk zones	Polygon	risk level and affected area	Spatial analysis, Zoï Environment Network, FEAT

Annex 2. Structure of data request to hromada on public safety facilities

- **ID:** Unique identifier for each record.
- **ADM4_PCODE:** Unique 4th-level administrative unit code (settlement).
- **ADM4_UA:** Name of the 4th-level administrative unit in Ukrainian.
- **ADM3_UA:** Name of the 3rd-level administrative unit in Ukrainian.
- **GROUP:** Group of civil protection infrastructure in English (public notification system, shelter, invincibility point).
- **TYPE:** Type of civil protection facility/object in English (for public notification system: siren, loudspeaker; for shelter: anti-radiation, simplest shelter, shelter, dual purpose building/shelter, modular shelter; for invincibility point: permanent, temporary).
- **HOLDER_UA:** Name of the facility owner/holder in Ukrainian.
- **DAMAGE:** Presence of damage due to hostilities (yes, no).
- **DAMAGE_LEVEL:** Damage level from 1 to 4, where 1 indicates minor damage and 4 indicates significant destruction.
- **REMEDiate:** Recovery status (restored, partially restored, project documentation developed).
- **CONDITION:** Overall facility conditions from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates poor conditions, and 5 indicates excellent conditions in line with all required standards.
- **SHELTER_AREA:** Area of the shelter, sq. meters.
- **SHELTER_CAPACITY:** Capacity of shelter, people.
- **SHELTER_ACCESS:** Accessibility status of the shelter (public/free, restricted - only for visitors/employees).
- **SIREN_RADIUS:** Serving radius of the public notification system facility, meters.
- **LAT:** Latitude of the facility in the decimal degree format (e.g., 45.896235).
- **LONG:** Longitude of the facility in the decimal degree format (e.g., 26.365899).
- **DATE:** Date of the last data update.
- **SOURCE:** Source of the information.

Annex 3. Summary of feedback received from hromadas

How would you rate your level of involvement in the Working Group on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is minimal (rather formal) participation and 5 is a high level of involvement and contribution?



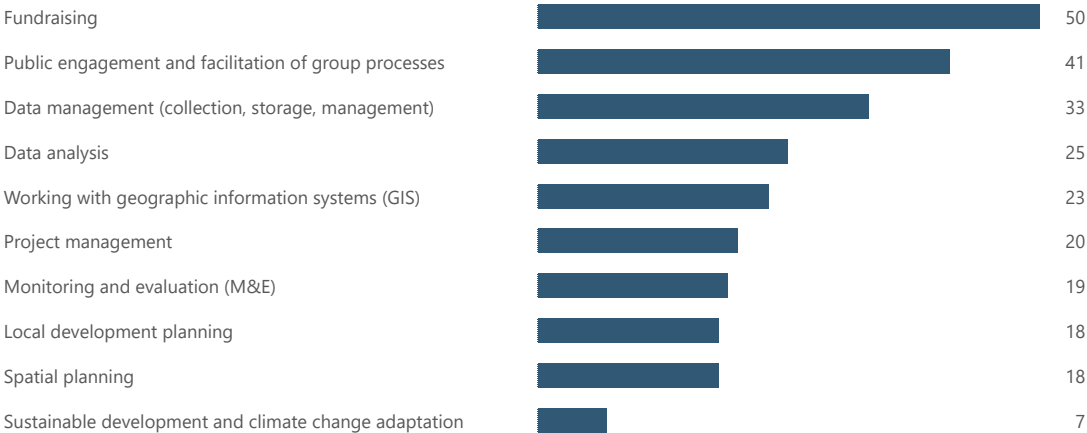
In what ways did you participate in the process of creating the document?



How would you rate your overall experience working with the IMPACT team on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very negative and 5 is very positive?



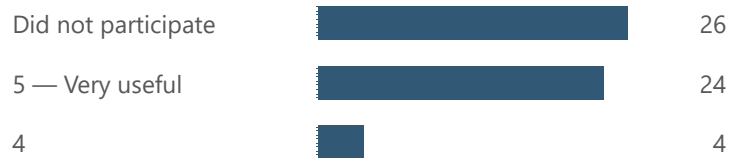
What knowledge and skills should be further strengthened for the independent implementation of similar processes in the future?



Did the support of the IMPACT team help to organise a structured and transparent planning process?



Please rate the usefulness of in-depth online consultations



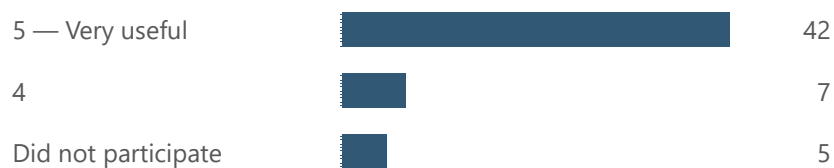
Please evaluate the usefulness of heads of starostats surveys



Please rate the usefulness of workshops/joint analytical sessions



Please rate the usefulness of the Working Group's online meetings



How useful was IMPACT's support in collecting and systematising data on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not useful at all and 5 is very useful?



Please evaluate the usefulness of the structured local sectoral data bases obtained



Please evaluate the usefulness of the analytical conclusions obtained



Please rate the usefulness of the GIS products received (dashboard, maps, data sets)



Did the analytics provided by IMPACT contribute to a better understanding of the hromada needs?



Did the analytics provided by IMPACT allow for a well-founded determination of priorities for recovery and development?



How likely is it that the document created will be used in the hromada's management activities on a 5-point scale, where 1 is very unlikely and 5 is very likely?



How likely is it that the document created will be used to attract funding for the hromada restoration and development on a 5-point scale, where 1 is very unlikely and 5 is very likely?



To what extent, in your opinion, did the document development process contribute to strengthening the institutional capacity of the hromada on a 5-point scale, where 1 means 'did not contribute at all' and 5 means 'contributed significantly'?



What difficulties did you encounter during your participation in the planning process?



How adequate was the expert and methodological support provided by IMPACT on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is completely inadequate and 5 is completely adequate?

